

THE CANADIAN REGIONAL THEATRE MOVEMENT

Thesis for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
DAVID AXEL GUSTAFSON
1971



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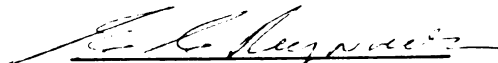
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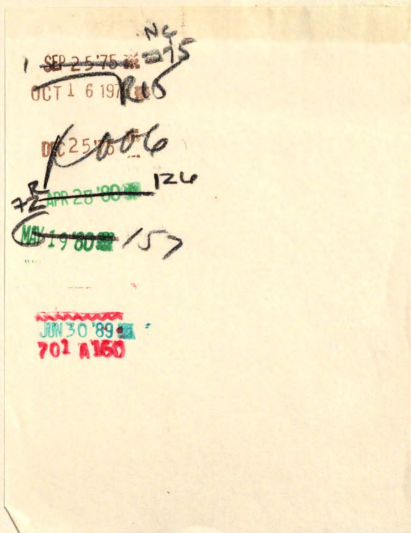
David Axel Gustafson

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Theatre


Major professor

Date May 10, 1971



THE CANADIAN READING OF THE PLAYERS

David ...

Canadian culture has ... 1950. Professional art forms ... and theatre companies have ... growth in the years between 1910-1970. ... of professional theatre in English-speaking ... has been so extensive, thorough, and expressive that one might easily speak of an "explosion" of art that amounted to a cultural void in that Nation twenty years ago.

Since the modern theatre movement ... with the creation of the Stratford Shakespearean Festival, Canada has given rise to two other Festival Theatres, to an active French-speaking theatre movement in Quebec, to a number of companies in Toronto, and to six Regional Theatres across Canada.

The Regional Theatres, located in Halifax, Fredericton, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver, have all ... steady growth in attendance, budgets, artistic ... and artistic standards.

The purpose of the study is to describe the Canadian Regional Theatre Movement from its inception up through 1975.

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in which (2) THE CANADIAN REGIONAL THEATRE MOVEMENT (3) their

funding process and artists (4) their administrative
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To accumulate data on the movement, literary research

and Canadian culture has been developing rapidly since 1950. Professional art forms such as ballet, opera, orchestras, and theatre companies have experienced revolutionary growth in the years between 1950-1970. The appearance of professional theatre in English-speaking Canada in the past two decades has been so extensive, energetic, and impressive that one might easily speak of an "explosion" in what amounted to a cultural void in that Nation twenty years ago.

Since the modern theatre movement started in 1953 with the creation of the Stratford Shakespearean Festival, Canada has given rise to two other Festival Theatres, to an active French-speaking theatre movement in Quebec, to a number of companies in Toronto, and to six Regional Theatres across Canada.

The Regional Theatres, located in Halifax, Fredericton, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver, have all experienced steady growth in attendance, budgets, artistic activities, and artistic standards.

The purpose of the study is to describe the Canadian Regional Theatre Movement from its inception up through 1970. The description has three phases: (1) the cultural context in which the six theatres have been established; (2) their founding process' and artistic activities; (3) their administrations.

To accumulate data on the Movement library research was undertaken. Since little has been written about the Regional Theatres, the bulk of information was collected through visits to the Canada Council and the Regional and Festival Theatres where records were examined and copied and where interviews were taped. 20,000 miles were traveled in a five-month period.

In the study it was found that the Canadian Regional Theatre movement is securely alive and active in the production of adult theatre. A number of the theatres have established additional community services and contacts through activities such as children's theatre, theatre schools, and studio theatre programs. The scope and range of production in the Regional Movement is ambitious, vital, and valuable. It has a respectable level of artistic merit--with occasional exceptions, and tremendous excitement.

The Regional Theatre Movement is backed by a growing number of talented performers, technicians, playwrights, and other performing arts companies. To push on, the Theatres

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need the courage and ability to experiment, to survive artistic failures without the loss of subsidies, and to suppress desires (usually originating with the Boards of Directors) to formularize play selections.

The Regional Theatres clearly have the potential to search for indigenously Canadian and other new and revived forms of meaningful theatre.

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Theatre

1971

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David Axel Gustafson

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The author is grateful for the assistance given by Dr. E. C. Reynolds, chairman of the dissertation committee, and by the committee members, Dr. E. M. Jaha, Dr. John Waite, and Dr. Colby Lewis.

Thanks are given to Dr. Victor Ross for his advice and for his financial assistance in the study. Through his Canadian-American Studies program at BCAS contributed nearly one-third of the \$7,200 spent. The work could not have been completed without his help.

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And, finally, warm thanks for my wife Wendy, who was helpful and understanding while on the road and as the typewriter.

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has been so extensive, energetic, and impressive that one might easily speak of an "explosion" in what amounted to a cultural void in that nation twenty years ago. The first venture in modern professional theatre in Canada was made in 1913, when, under the leadership of Sir Tyrone Guthrie, the Stratford Shakespearean Festival was founded. Then, in 1938, John Hirsch and Tom Hendry, encouraged by the success at Stratford, undaunted by the theatrical failures in Toronto (a tradition which continued up through 1970), and driven by fanatic will to succeed, established the first and only Canadian Regional Theatre: the Manitoba Theatre Centre in Winnipeg.

In the 1960's, two more Festival Companies were created, one in Niagara-on-the-Lake, another in Charlottetown. The Regional Theatre scene was expanded to include the province

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Canadian culture has been developing rapidly since 1950. Professional art forms such as ballet, opera, orchestras, and theatre companies have experienced revolutionary growth in the years between 1950-1970. The appearance of professional theatre in English-speaking Canada in the past two decades has been so extensive, energetic, and impressive that one might easily speak of an "explosion" in what amounted to a cultural void in that nation twenty years ago. The first venture in modern professional theatre in Canada was made in 1953, when, under the leadership of Sir Tyrone Guthrie, the Stratford Shakespearean Festival was founded. Then, in 1958, John Hirsch and Tom Hendry, encouraged by the success at Stratford, undaunted by the theatrical failures in Toronto (a tradition which continued up through 1970), and driven by fanatic will to succeed, established the first and model Canadian Regional Theatre: the Manitoba Theatre Centre in Winnipeg.

In the 1960's, two more Festival Companies were created, one in Niagara-on-the-Lake, another in Charlottetown. The Regional Theatre scene was expanded to include the Neptune

Theatre in Halifax (1963), the Playhouse Theatre Company in Vancouver (1963), the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton (1966), the Theatre New Brunswick (1966), and Theatre Calgary (1968).

The Festival and Regional Theatre Movements have been flanked by a vital and expanding French-speaking theatrical development in Quebec and they have been backed by a strong tradition of amateur theatre which peaks annually in the Dominion Drama Festival.

All of the professional theatres in Canada eventually receive and become dependent upon financial subsidies which are normally issued by three levels of government: most substantially, by a federal arts subsidizing body called the Canada Council; secondly, by provincial arts organizations; and, on the third level, by municipal grants. These subsidies sometimes constitute as much as two-thirds of the theatres' expendible income. The result of these substantial and increasing subsidies, coupled with growing audiences, has been to foster an environment in which the artistic directors of the theatres are able to pursue several levels of production activity with reasonable creative freedom.

In the English-speaking theatres the subsidy patterns have had a positive effect on, and have been positively affected by the results in audience development; this has, in turn, stimulated the number of productions and performances as we might see by a glance at five-year intervals:

	Productions	Performances	Attendance	Gov't Subsidy
MTC	8	<u>1959-1960</u>	44,000	\$17,300
		84		
MTC Playhouse Neptune	8	<u>1964-1965</u>	110,000	80,000
		240	54,545	37,600
	7	135	52,583	100,000
	<u>9</u>	<u>177</u>	217,128	217,600
	24	552		
MTC ¹ Playhouse Neptune (1969) Citadel TNB (1969) Calgary	4	<u>1969-1970</u>	58,570	241,100
		29	77,000	204,419
	6	141	58,368	230,500
	8	122	41,524	65,000
	7	161	13,450	37,500
	8	68	43,330	74,250
	<u>7</u>	<u>132</u>	292,247	852,769
	40	653		

¹During the 1969-70 season MTC was "homeless" and their rental of a 2,300-seat concert hall resulted in a drop in activity.

These indications of steady growth, coupled with newspaper and radio reviews of performances indicate a high level of artistic integrity in Regional Theatre productions. All of the theatre companies anticipate an increasing subsidy base and an expansion in their attendance tallies. Consequently, the climate is encouraging additional theatres: at least two new professional efforts were undertaken in the 1970-71 season, one in Regina and another in Ottawa.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe the Canadian Regional Theatre Movement from its inception up through 1970. The description will have three phases: (1) the context in which six contemporary Canadian theatres have been established; (2) their founding procedures and artistic activities; (3) and their administrative structure and operations. Through this approach it will be easier to understand the successful Regional Theatre Movement of Canada.

The importance of undertaking this study is underscored by the fact that Canada has created and is enlarging a vital theatre movement with a methodology of operations that is successful. The findings of this view-by-an-outsider might provide new insights into the theatres' artistic and administrative activities that could enhance future decisions of existing or projected Regional Theatre establishments.

It might also be discovered that certain indigenous Canadian methods could provide feasible answers to problems in American Regional Theatres (though comparisons between the American and Canadian Regional Theatres will not be discussed).

Organization

Chapter II of this study presents the cultural context in which the Regional Theatres existed up through 1970. Since an important part of that context has been the geography and population distribution, they are briefly evaluated. Then the emergence of opera, ballet and symphonic orchestras are discussed as are the patterns of subsidies for all the fine arts from the federal, provincial, and municipal levels of government. The significance of the Canadian Theatre Centre, the French-speaking theatre, the Dominion Drama Festival, and the Festival Theatres are considered in terms of their relation to the Regional Theatres. The purpose and operations of the National Theatre School in Montreal are then reviewed along with other potential training grounds for actors, directors, administrators, and designers.

Chapter III presents the ways in which the six Regional Theatres were founded. An examination is made of the artistic activities that have evolved in each of the theatres. Evaluations of the types of activities are posited and potentials for change are explored. Key Artistic Directors and their

policies are discussed. It will be seen that the scope and artistic integrity of the theatres vary considerably.

The general administrative structures and operations of the Regional Theatres are the subject of Chapter IV. Here, the make-up of the theatres' executive relationships is described and descriptions are given of the duties and potential dangers connected with the positions of Artistic Director, members of the Board of Directors, and Administrative Director. The chapter concludes with a list of revenue/expenditure charts for each of the theatres.

Chapter V is a summary of the study and it includes suggestions for change.

This study is not directly concerned with the activities of the French-speaking theatre of Canada. Quebec theatre is a large, indigenous movement that deserves an extensive study. Nor are the Festival Theatres in Stratford, Charlottetown, or Niagara-on-the-Lake considered in depth in this study. They are not, ". . . in the strictest sense of the term" Regional Theatres; they each have ". . . a very different set of priorities, responsibilities, resources and orientations."¹ They merit a separate, comparative study.

¹Letter from Thomas Hendry, Literary Manager of Stratford Festival, 28 January 1970, and addressed to David Gustafson.

Methodology

Travel

For the purpose of gathering primary materials for the study, four visits were made to Canada, and a distance in excess of 20,000 miles was traveled. The first visit was to Stratford, Ontario, for an interview with Tom Hendry, founding Administrative Director of the Manitoba Theatre Centre for six years, Secretary-General of the Canadian Theatre Centre for five years, and, at the time of the interview, Literary Manager of the Stratford Shakespearean Festival. The second trip was made for a supplementary interview with Mr. Hendry and for a visit to the Canada Council in Ottawa, and the Canadian Theatre Centre in Toronto. At the Canada Council, interviews were conducted with Miss Jean Roberts, Theatre Arts Officer, and Mrs. Monique Auby, who was Miss Robert's assistant (Miss Robert's term with the Council expired in November, 1970).

A thorough examination was made of the annual briefs and correspondence submitted for the Council files by the Regional Theatres in Halifax, Fredericton, Winnipeg, and Vancouver. Theatre Calgary consented to an examination at a later date. The Citadel Theatre refused a request for permission to study its files at the Council and at the Canadian Theatre Centre. Copies of relevant materials found

in the Council's files were provided by the Council. The theatres' correspondence files at the Canadian Theatre Centre in Toronto were also examined. Mr. Gilles Rochette, Secretary-General of the organization was interviewed about his concept of the new role of the Centre and its relation to the Regional Theatres.

With the third trip to Canada, visits lasting from four to ten days in length were made at the Neptune Theatre in Halifax, Theatre New Brunswick in Fredericton, the Charlotte-town Festival, the Stratford Festival, the Manitoba Theatre Centre in Winnipeg, Theatre Calgary, the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, and the Playhouse Theatre Company in Vancouver.

Since the theatres in Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver were not engaged in productions during the third trip, and since some first-hand knowledge of creation was considered essential, a fourth venture was undertaken. At that time, the author viewed productions in performance and rehearsal.

Interviews

The Artistic and Administrative Directors of the Regional and Festival Theatres that were visited were interviewed and their comments were tape-recorded. In most cases, members of the Boards of Directors of each theatre were also interviewed and recorded. The interviews focused primarily on the past and present problems, on accomplishments of the specific theatre, and on the National scene as a whole.

Interviews were also held with responsible artistic and administrative personnel of the specific theatres, at which time they were asked about their general views of the Regional Theatre Movement and about their specific duties in their own theatre. A number of informal conversation situations that occurred at social gatherings provided valuable "supplementary" information on the personalities and their problems in the theatres.

Theatre Records

The record-keeping process of the theatres varies considerably, but all theatres were found to be extremely generous in making copies available of the materials that have been preserved. All theatre companies keep scrapbooks that are filled with newspaper clippings which are normally obtained through press clipping services, and these scrapbooks were examined. All companies provided copies of their budgets, audited financial statements, performance-attendance records, examples of ticket campaign literature, theatre floor plans and technical data, and photographs. In addition, many theatres offered copies of special studies that have been commissioned by the theatres, copies of future plans, and copies of fund raising materials.

Questionnaires Regional Theatres and their problems in the

A short questionnaire was sent to each of the Regional Theatres prior to visiting them. The form yielded limited, -1967, specific data about the regions in which the companies operate.

Library Research The Term "Regional"

An extensive search for published materials relating to the purpose of this study revealed little of direct value. Very few efforts have been made to document any part or all of the Regional Theatre Movement in Canada.

Materials that have been published and that have had limited importance in this study were found in newspaper clippings, and in the monthly magazine that became a Quarterly in 1970, La Scene au Canada/The Stage in Canada, which began publication in 1965. Occasional articles have also been found in such periodicals as The Performing Arts in Canada, Cultural Affairs, Tulane Drama Review, and World Theatre.

Of specific interest as related background information, is an unpublished Doctoral dissertation by Walter Whittaker (1965): The Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; Its Origins, Formation, Operation, and Influence Upon Theatre in Canada, 1957-63. In addition to the purpose implied in its title, the dissertation presents an extensive account of the history of Canadian Theatre up to the beginnings of the Modern Regional Theatre Movement. Julius Novick's Beyond Broadway, provided a broad

introduction to Regional Theatres and their problems in the United States. Information on political, economic, social, and artistic developments was found in The Canadians: 1867-1967, edited by J. M. S. Careless and R. Craig Brown.

The Term "Regional"

"Regional" is a term that has appeared in much of the literature about Canadian theatres--particularly in the materials issued through the Canada Council and the Canadian Theatre Centre; it is a classification for fully professional theatres and distinguishes them from Festival Theatres (i.e., Stratford, Shaw, Charlottetown), Metropolitan Theatre Centres (i.e., Toronto, and Montreal), and the French-Canadian Theatre.

Geographic Barriers

An effort to measure the magnitude of that barrier becomes more meaningful if brief consideration is given to the vital statistics of Canadian Geography. Few people in Canada or the United States realize that the size of Canada is second only to Russia in square mileage. Canada's vast

¹ Thomas Handry, "The Performing Arts" in The Canadians: 1867-1967, ed. by J. M. S. Careless and R. Craig Brown (New York: SE. Martin's Press, 1967), p. 202.

CHAPTER II

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

According to Mr. Tom Hendry:

If one set out to design a country whose geographic, ethnic, economic, and political configurations would all conspire together to render the establishment and expansion of the performing arts all but impossible, one could do worse than to accept Canada as the model.¹

It is difficult to avoid wondering: "How much worse?"

The emergence and growth of the performing and fine arts in Canada has been organic: there has been no pattern, just a simple explosion that hastily brought culture to the Canadian hinterlands within two disorganized and exciting decades.

Geographic Barriers

An effort to measure the magnitude of that explosion becomes more meaningful if brief consideration is given to the vital statistics of Canadian Geography. Few people in Canada or the United States realize that the size of Canada is second only to Russia in square mileage. Canada's fresh

¹Thomas Hendry, "The Performing Arts," in The Canadians: 1967-1967, ed. by J. M. S. Careless and R. Craig Brown (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967), p. 675.

water area is the largest in the world, yet its population density is one of the smallest in the world. In 1969 there were slightly over 20,000,000 people in Canada which meant there were 5.88 persons per square mile; at the same time the United States' density was 50 persons per square mile.¹

Approximately three-fourths of the Canadian people live in urban areas, most of which are strung out in a narrow band that rarely stretches more than 100 mile north of the United States' border. These cities are connected by one major Trans-Canada Highway which runs for nearly 5,000 miles between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. The Trans-Canada is the world's longest highway inside of one country's boundaries. There are long, sparsely-populated stretches of countryside along that highway, and they impose vast separations between the few urban centres that are large and sophisticated enough to support the life systems of the performing arts. The spaced-out nature of the country has had a significant influence on the nation's social, economic, and identity problems. John Hirsch, one-half the founding genius of the Regional Theatre Movement, perhaps the most brilliant director to emerge from Canada, and a self-styled artistic prototype to Gautama, related the problem of spaces

¹C. J. Harris, ed., Quick Canadian Facts (26th ed.; Toronto: Quick Canadian Facts, Ltd., 1970), p. 60.

and theatre: "This is a terrible country, or it was a terrible country, because you could be doing the most marvelous things in the middle of British Columbia, and no one would know anything about it in Toronto."¹ Herbert Whittaker, a critic for the Toronto Globe and Mail, once mused: "Watching the progress of Canadian theatre is like watching a parade in which the floats are too widely spaced."² The Canada Council, in its Annual Report for 1967, noted that distances between cities was a real problem for Canadian arts, particularly to ballet:

It is particularly difficult to sustain a form of art that requires such large production expenditures in a country with enormous distances to be travelled between the centres of population which provide audiences.³

Canada's 20 million people do not constitute a large enough population base for a performance art like ballet:

Even the large centres of population in Canada cannot support a ballet company for more than a comparatively short season. Since the companies must remain together during a great part of the year (they are in a sense a group of athletes as well as artists) they must therefore go panting out to seek audiences elsewhere. This means that in addition to normal operating expenses they must add travel costs and out of town allowances. It has even been irreverently suggested that it costs more to keep a ballerina in the field than a U. S. soldier. Indeed,

¹ John Hirsch, from an interview published as "Questions and Answers, Performing Arts Magazine Interviews John Hirsch," The Performing Arts in Canada, Winter, 1965-66, p. 41.

² Herbert Whittaker, "The Audience is There," Saturday Review, October 14, 1959, p. 25.

³ The Canada Council, 10th Annual Report The Canada Council, 1966-67, (Ottawa: 1967), p. 5.

Canadian companies even find it difficult to maintain themselves by touring at home and often need the larger audience south of the border.¹

The vast stretches of land that separate the cities bloat the costs of transporting the arts, and, as of 1970, there was no feasible way of shipping the talent, technicians, and scenery of the Neptune Theatre Company or the Playhouse Theatre Company to the other end of the country. It is doubtful that the high costs of touring an arts company can ever be avoided, and yet there seems to be no alternative to touring: few people in Canada can hope to travel from the Maritimes to the Potlatch country with the leisure to absorb the efforts for art in between. Therefore, a kind of geographic fog exists that makes the evolving vision of "Canadiana," or an artistic identity, a slow and hazy process.

Though original Canadian works of art are beginning to appear with regularity on stages, bookshelves, and art galleries, these efforts are often restricted to localized display. The lack of distribution is exemplified in the Canada Council's 1967 Report on original efforts in music: "For the first nine years [of the Council's existence] the Council made regular grants . . . and as a result some thirty have found their way to an audience--but in too many cases on only one occasion."² In the same report, the Council went

¹Ibid., pp. 5-6.

²Ibid., p. 12.

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on to discuss the problems inherent in adding a National Theatre to the Cultural GNP:

At the 1961 Canadian Conference of the Arts at the O'Keefe Centre we went armed to a private meeting of theatre people with an idea previously developed--that the essential of a national theatre in Canada was that it should reach a national audience, even if this audience must for convenience be broken down into regional audiences. This idea was embraced and consequently with all prudence we supported initiatives for the development of regional theatres.¹

The concept of a chain of Regional Theatres was formally recognized in 1961--three years after the founding of the Manitoba Theatre Centre and prior to the establishment of five others.

At least a part of the thinking behind the term "regionalism" was based on the fact that the linear arrangement of cities across Canada has placed most of them in closer proximity to metropolitan centres of the States than to other Canadian cities. According to Jean Gascon the result is that:

People in the West. . . feel much closer to the United States than the people in the East of Canada. They call us the Easterners, we call them the Westerners. . . . It's like another country.²

Under these conditions any kind of systematic development of regionalism or of a unified national identity would seem impossible.

¹Ibid., pp. 21-22.

²Dr. Jean Gascon, private interview held at Stratford Shakespearean Festival, Stratford, Ontario, July, 1970.

The Social Problem

In addition to the problems created by geographic designs in the development of the performing arts in Canada, the Dominion has had to cut through contradictory or even schizophrenic ethnic configurations. The ethnic problem has arisen in part from the reactions of energetic people who have departed nations in Europe where the bureaucracies were over-regimented; they arrive in Canada and settle in urban or rural clusters of fellow-exiles where the language, customs, and views of living vary little from the "old country." With the softening effects of time and space the values of their old way of living continue to ride in their lives as strong influences and they resist redefinition and other changes which are necessary to identify with a new country and a new culture. The Canadian government has done little to alter the situation. The result has been to create a Canadian ethnic pot that has never melted--it just boils occasionally. For example, General DeGaulle fired up a lot of steam in it in 1967 by stoking the Separatists with "Viva Quebec Libre!" In the more placid regions of the Maritime Provinces, and in Ontario, Tory hold-outs still fly the Union Jack of the United Kingdom. In the prairies, Winnipeg is known as a Ukranian and Jewish settlement. Only in the far west is there a sort of blending or a marked disinterest in mother-countries, which may be attributable to the natural environment rather than to

anything in human consciousness. The ethnic problem in Canada is neither new nor minor--it is, as Tom Hendry has pointed out, a major tradition:

Divided by language and religion, we erected barriers at regular intervals along our frontier civilization in the form of provincial boundaries; we imprisoned education within narrowly regional walls and prohibited any possibility of a national experience on the part of our young people in the acquiring of appreciation of the arts. Burdened with memories of European economic, political, and religious inhospitality, we turned uncritically to English and American concepts of the responsibilities of the State, flung the cultural baby out with the political bath-water and eagerly affirmed the individual's right to go to the grave without every having seen and heard live theatre, opera, ballet, or music performances. Finally, when we did set up a national system of mass communications in the CBC, we ultimately divorced English from French in a form of cultural apartheid that effectively prevented any healthy, competitive cross-fertilization between our two principal traditions.¹

Though many Canadian immigrants have sought to escape European values, Canada has been haunted by a European pace with regards to change. Change in Canada has always been slow and legislated.

The economic class structure in Canada also tends to be European. There is really no Canadian prototype to the American Dream or the American Success Story. The economic base of the country, however, has, with the exception of the snowmobile, been limited to the development of branch offices of American industries.

¹Thomas Hendry, "The Performing Arts," p. 676.

The Canada Council, Annual Report, 1966-67

Canada then, is a nation that has been held back by virtue of its awkward size and urban arrangements; ethnically, it has had the quality of a house instead of a home; economically, it has been a shy child that has had to turn to a Big Daddy in the south for its allowance. Until very recently Canada lacked the leadership that any territory needs to function like a Nation. Consequently, in the artistic colonies people with a creative drive:

. . . could find little substance on which to base a lifetime of hard work. In a tightly structured country, in sociological terms, no possibility of structure had been provided in terms of cultural values.¹

Canada, for the most part, has been so busy watching the United States that it now seems a bit hesitant to recognize that it is beginning to flesh out as a nation.

Up to 1970, the prevalent attitude of Canadians has been, "if it's Canadian, it's second rate." In the thinking of most Canadians, First Class anything originates in the United States, the United Kingdom, or France. In 1967 the Canada Council noted: ". . . it is a Canadian fashion to make a reputation abroad."²

At least one aspect of the problem may tend to be universal. A disgruntled American director who spent several

¹Ibid., p. 680.

²The Canada Council, Annual Report, 1966-67, p. 10.

years in a Canadian Regional Theatre observed that it matters little whether a theatre company is American or Canadian or performing a play that is American or Canadian, the reaction is the same:

Canadian audiences don't want to think when they go to the theatre any more than American audiences. The average audience is largely composed of people in their middle years and on up, people who are bored and/or weary of the world's problems and come to the theatre for entertainment and escapism, not morals, propaganda or to be "educated."¹

In spite of these negative observations, however, Canada is now clearly experiencing indigenous changes and developments. On some levels (e.g., cultural, social, environmental consciousness) these changes may even be revolutionary. In at least one modern instance, the kidnapping and murder of Pierre Laporte by Separatists, the desire for change has gone beyond revolution to violent, insane anarchy.

Canadians are beginning to live on themselves. They are becoming cognizant of the weaknesses inherent in a monotonous process of turning to the Southern Father for their economy. Nationalism is lurching under conditions that bear a vague similarity to the phenomena that prompted American Blacks to recognize and cry out "Black is beautiful!"

¹Robert Glenn, "Canadian Theatres Seek Their Own Personality," Dallas Times Herald, May 16, 1968, p. 36-A.

Thomas Hendry, "The Theatre in Canada," Canadian Theatre Review, Vol. 16 (November 12, 1967), p. 412.

²Thomas Hendry, "The Performing Arts," Canadian Theatre Review, Vol. 16 (November 12, 1967), p. 413.

In addition, this North American minority group has begun to discover and take pride in the fact that their cities are not suffering from the chronic pollution, crime, and riots (with a near exception in Montreal) that plague many United States cities. Canadians have begun to realize that the vast spaces between their cities are assets and that all that fresh water area has, and will increasingly have, a special value for life on this planet.

Emergence of the Arts

These positive waves, and a sort of National Chauvinism, have affected the emergence and steady development of cultural forms. Canadian artistic leadership ". . . wishing to see its cultural aspirations given indigenous form appeared as though by magic."¹ Their appearance was inevitable:

After the Second World War Canada was blessed with an immigration wave from Europe that was largely bourgeois in its values and background, and in its ranks were contained most of the people destined to provide us with the leadership we have so sadly lacked.²

It is easy to see the changes effected by these leaders in the contrasts that become obvious:

. . . if one compares conditions now with those of the twenties or thirties. Gone are those days of interminable and regular Farewell Tours by British artists; of Donald Wolfitt and his company paddling their way across Canada like Mayfair voyageurs, offering glittering bits of Shakespeare as barter to the nervous

¹Thomas Hendry, "The Theatre in Canada," World Theatre, Vol. 16 (November 12, 1967), p. 412.

²Thomas Hendry, "The Performing Arts," p. 678.

natives; of Little Theatres drearily discovering the easily discernible parts of Ibsen and Shaw; of endless music festivals and lectures; of Chautauqua and the Minneapolis Symphony for unwilling school kids; of boring stock companies, and elocutionists executing any poetry that came their way; of the last pale shadow of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo blowing across the land like the slipper-shod and doomed crew of a choreographic Flying Dutchman; of a continent's hitting its cultural apogee every Saturday afternoon when the Met came on the radio; of Manitoba-Moorish neighbourhood cinemas where one received, besides an awareness of how low the film art could sink, gifts of disastrous dinnerware designed to lure one back; of Teachers' Societies doing Macbeth and vice versa. All, thank God, are no longer with us.¹

What has gone seems insignificant, even irrelevant, compared to what has come. Professionalism in the performing arts has replaced active amateurs who often adequately filled the years when professional artists could not hope to support themselves in Canada. However, there has been within two decades an almost sudden appearance of ballet, opera, and theatre companies, of symphonic orchestras, of the very unique Eskimo stone cut prints and stone carvings in addition to a flourish in Indian and Caucasian visual arts. These art forms have risen to recognition and critical acclaim on the strength of individual personalities and their energies and talents. There has been no plan; there have been no patterns; but there has been a tremendous amount of artistic action. The action was created by people who coordinated time, place, and finances

¹Ibid., pp. 677-8.

and backed them up with indefatigable determinism, ideas, and artistic sensibilities.¹

Ballet

In 1950 there was one ballet company in Canada. It had been started under the pioneer direction of British immigrant Gwenneth Lloyd in the 1930's and it was first known as the Winnipeg Ballet Club. Later the name was changed to the Winnipeg Ballet Company and today it bears the title given to it by the Queen: the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Since its beginning, the company has been small and has concentrated on compact classical and contemporary works. In 1970 there were, in addition to Winnipeg, two other significant ballet companies: the first of these to follow Winnipeg was the National Ballet of Canada, and it was founded by Celia Franca who came from England for that purpose in 1951. The National Ballet is the largest dance company in Canada; it plays works in the grand scale to the largest audience and it receives the greatest subsidies.

¹For general information on the appearance of professional arts in Canada since 1950, see the 13 Annual Reports of the Canada Council from 1958 to 1970 (particularly the 1957-58 Report which reviews the first ten years of the Council's existence), published by the Canada Council, 140 Wellington, Ottawa; also see Walter Whittaker, The Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; Its Origins, Formation, Operation, and Influence Upon Theatre in Canada, 1957-1963, (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1965); also see Thomas Hendry, "The Performing Arts."

The third ballet company was formed in 1952 when Switzerland lost Ludmilla Chiriaeff who founded a French-Canadian ballet troupe in Montreal: Les Grands Ballets Canadiens.

Since 1950, Canada has also been able to develop and sustain two modern dance companies: The Toronto Dance Theatre and Le Groupe de la Place Royale in Montreal. A company that has nearly made a success of sustaining itself financially on the basis of its box-office revenue has been the folk-dance company, Les Feux Follets, which creates and performs its own works.

At times the dance companies have had to face shortages in the supply of available talent. Since the style of dance varies considerably, training for the ballet had been handled by the individual companies until recently, when the National Ballet School was founded in Toronto. The School accepts young, lithe bodies and

. . . provides a complete secondary education and an intensive training in ballet, the fruits of which are just now beginning to show as young leading dancers and potential choreographers begin to emerge and take their place in the ranks of our companies at home and abroad.¹

The National Ballet School, like the National Theatre School, has sought to develop a style in training, but the direction of the training has always carried a pragmatic cognizance of

¹The Canada Council, 12th Annual Report, 1968-69, p. 28.

the demands of the profession and there seems to be little room for the purely academic that so often clutters efforts to train people at the University level. Mr. Vincent W. Bladen, President of the National Ballet School, recently pointed out that:

However independent we may be of the National Ballet Company, formally and financially, we and they remain fundamentally interdependent: the quality of our training is enhanced by association with its dancers and by opportunities to perform with it: and I venture to say that the quality of the Company as it is, and even more as it should be over the next decade, is and will be enhanced by the excellence of the training available in the School.¹

In the 1957-58 season about 270,000 people watched Canada's three ballet troupes. During the 1968-69 season, the professional dance companies performed before 625,000 people. The operating budgets in that twelve-year period have gone from \$730,000 to \$3.27 million. Total revenues have leaped from \$470,000 to \$3.11 million.²

Opera

The statistics expand in a similar fashion in the field of opera. There were no opera companies in Canada in

¹V. W. Bladen, "Economics of the Performing Arts," The Stage in Canada/La Scene au Canada, Vol. 5 (May/June 1970), p. 5.

²Statistics for the 1957-58 season for ballet, opera, symphonic orchestras, and theatre are taken from The Canada Council, 10th Annual Report, 1967-68; statistics for the 1968-69 season are from The Canada Council, "Study on Assistance to the Performing Arts in Canada," (April, 1970), Tables I-III.

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1950. However, in the 1968-69 season, 250,000 people went to the opera. At that time the Canada Council was actively supporting the Canadian Opera Company of Toronto, the Edmonton Opera Association, the Theatre Lyrique de Nouvelle France in Quebec, and the Vancouver Opera Association. There was also a choral group, known as the Festival Singers of Toronto, who offer a variety of musical selections in concert. The operating expense of these operatic groups and the Festival Singers reached \$2.1 million in 1968-69. If that seems significantly less than the \$3.27 million spent by ballet, it ought to be remembered that the opera companies gave only 171 performances in 1968-69 and the ballet spread its money over 431 performances. The average cost per performance then, works out to \$12,316 for an opera and \$7,592 for a dance concert.

Orchestras

In contrast, the symphonic orchestras of Canada performed for 1.2 million people in 756 concerts in the season of 1968-69. That represents a near doubling of the figures registered for the season of 1957-58. The Canada Council, however, has only increased its orchestral clientele from 10 to 14 in that twelve-year period. (The Council also hosts a number of quartets, choral groups, music festivals, and the Royal Conservatory of Music, plus a Canadian Music Centre in Toronto.)

The symphony orchestras of Canada met little opposition in establishing themselves; in fact, they have probably enjoyed an air of respectability from their beginnings as amateur and, later, as unionized organizations. However, they seem to have clung obstinately to an attitude of artistic exclusiveness. The theatre managers who have approached the orchestras to discuss any type of joint effort have felt the chill of musical dignity. The costs of supporting that dignity have risen sharply from a mere \$1.3 million in 1957-58 to \$6.04 million in 1968-69.¹ Revenues in the same period have gone up from \$720,000 to \$6.02 million, which indicates that the income gap may soon be closed.

Theatre

The greatest changes, however, in statistics for the performing arts have occurred in the theatre. There were no professional theatre companies in Canada in 1950. In the 1968-69 season the Canada Council was giving \$2.3 million dollars to assist 17 professional theatre companies. In 1957-58, 392,000 people went to the theatre; twelve years

¹ The small increase in the number of orchestras in the last twelve years, and the fantastic increase in operating expenses leads one to expect that significant changes have occurred in quality, rather than quantity. The Canada Council noted that in 1957-58, for example, the Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal rehearsed 325 hours--ten years later the rehearsal time had nearly doubled. In the same period of years the number of rehearsal hours for l'Orchestra Symphonique de Quebec quadrupled and the Winnipeg Symphony doubled. The Canada Council, 10th Annual Report, 1967-68, pp. 8-9.

later, as a result of strenuous efforts at audience development, the attendance figure rose to 2.12 million; operating expenses went from \$1.1 million to \$8.33 million. The revenues have gone up from \$1.06 million to \$7.78 million. In addition, in the 1968-69 season, the professional theatres presented 5,337 performances.¹

The Canadian Cultural GNP, then, has gone through something of a revolution. With the exception of a ballet troupe in Winnipeg, the second half of the Twentieth Century began without any fully professional activities in the performing arts. Residents of Canada had either lived without art, had bundled up for a trip to the local auditorium or gymnasium to watch a fatigued touring troupe, or had crossed the border. By 1958 beachheads had been established, and by 1969 the activities in the performing arts were formidable:

	1957-58	1968-69
Attendance	1,362,000	4,213,000
Revenues	\$2,250,000	\$18,842,000
Expenditures	\$3,130,000	\$19,749,000
Performances	not known	6,695 ²

¹The number of performances for the 1957-58 season is not known.

²Canada Council, unpublished study, 1970.

Theatre History

Canadian theatre history dates back a long time: the first theatrical activities in North America took place on November 14, 1607, at Port Royal in what is now Nova Scotia. Marc Lescarbot prepared "some jovial spectacle" that included a water pageant and a hastily written little play in rhymes, called Neptune Theatre. The pageant and play were presented on a floating stage in the Port Royal harbor on the return of an explorer named Poutrincourt.¹

The play did not start any trend or tradition, but it does seem significant that it was staged 59 years before any plays are known to have been acted in the colonies that are now part of the United States.² During the third and fourth quarters of the 18th century, acting troupes from America were transporting their repertoires to Canada with some regularity.

In 1789, Halifax opened the new "Grand Theatre" for productions by amateurs.³ Amateur efforts in theatre were on the way to becoming one of the major divertissements to life on the frontier. By 1825 amateur theatricals had become established in Montreal at the Theatre Royal, where performances were given in French and English.⁴ A home brew of repertory

¹Dr. C. Bruce Fergusson, "The Arts in Nova Scotia," (Paper read at Annual Meeting, Nova Scotia Arts Council, Wolfville, N.S., October 21, 1961, reproduced by the Department of Education, Halifax), p. 1.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 4.

⁴Thomas Hendry, "The Performing Arts," p. 683.

theatre developed in Toronto during the second half of the nineteenth century and in 1919 the first truly organized amateur effort in the movement was established in the Hart House Theatre that had been created through the gifts of the Massey Foundation to the University of Toronto.

Another significant effort, among many that were made to keep the pioneers of Canada in touch with some semblance of art and the finer pleasures of refined civilization, was undertaken in the remote settlement of Winnipeg in 1866. At that time, for the amusement of the little more than 100 inhabitants, the new Amateur Dramatic Society launched Winnipeg's rich theatrical history with "'dramatic readings and recitations, a pianoforte solo, and a comedy skit.'"¹

By the first part of 1871, when the community had expanded to 215 and had gone through several dramatic associations, the Ontario Musical and Dramatic Association had opened at the Theatre Royal and was presenting an original three-act comedy called "Toodles of Red River."² The organization folded in the Spring and was replaced a year later by another amateur organization. It was clearly the need to escape from the hardships and drudgery of life in such an

¹Bob Noble, "City Has Proud Theatrical Tradition," Winnipeg Free Press, July 13, 1970, p. 48.

²Bob Noble, "Winnipeg Stage Productions Have Glorious 100-Year History," Winnipeg Free Press, June 27, 1967, p. 44.

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undeveloped nation with such long winters that motivated the high-energy personalities of people who had fond memories of theatre productions that they had been in or had seen in England, France, or the United States to mount a local production of vaudeville entertainments, commercial plays, or original works. The spotted history of amateur productions across the country indicates that there was seldom a shortage of theatrical energies or of the leadership necessary to channel them.¹

The Amateur Tradition and the DDF

The suddenness with which amateur troupes appeared and disbanded is an indication of the transient nature of frontier life, and it shows that there was no organization of the amateur theatre movement. Once started, however, the lines of theatre in any community in Canada seem relatively unbroken; yet it is difficult to speak of chains of theatrical action unless the image includes different sized links that are made of different stuff. The evolution of amateur theatricals in Canada was eventually flanked by the emergence of vaudeville, radio-drama, and movies. So, in the 1930's an effort was made to give a unified direction to amateur productions: the

¹For further information see the two articles by Bob Noble (cited above); Dr. C. Bruce Fergusson, "The Arts in Nova Scotia;" Walter Whittaker, The Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

Dominion Drama Festival was created. With the advent of the Festival, amateur theatre became competitive and the idea of a national-level First Prize motivated many productions.

According to the Souvenir Program for the 1970 Festival:

DDF is a bilingual and bicultural organization created by the then Governor-General of Canada, Lord Bessborough. In 1932 he called some sixty interested theatre persons from across the country to meet in Ottawa and to discuss the feasibility of forming a national body to bring together the many community theatre groups in Canada. From this meeting the Dominion Drama Festival was born and the first festival was held in Ottawa in April 1933 and in 1935 it was granted a Royal Charter.¹

In that Royal Charter it was stated that the objectives of the Festival are:

"... to encourage dramatic art in Canada by the holding of a Dominion Drama Festival and such regional or other subsidiary festivals as may be deemed advisable, and by the granting of prizes and awards for distinctive effort in any of the arts relating to the drama, including among others the writing of plays, their presentation, mounting, costuming and lighting."²

The Festival was restricted to the production of one-act plays from 1933 to 1939 at which time the war ended the annual competitions until 1947; thereafter, the Festival was opened to full-length plays. By 1970 the Festival involved fourteen geographic regions that were grouped in four zones.

¹"What is DDF?," 1970 Souvenir Program, Published by Rothman's, p. 3.

²"Canada," in *The Oxford Companion to the Theatre*, ed. by Phyllis Hartnoll, (2nd ed.; London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 114.

Each region was administered by a committee and a regional chairman. The chairmen of the regions were joined by other representatives of the regions at the level of the National Executive Committee.

The productions in the festival competitions have always been adjudicated by professional theatre people. Professional talents have always been allowed to participate in the amateur productions. In spite of lofty aspirations and great ideals, however, a large number of professional theatre people maintain that amateur theatre in Canada is dominated by dilettantes, malcontents seeking psycho-therapy, housewives seeking anything, and a hefty dose of people who attend rehearsals for the coffee breaks and appear on the stage to practice waving.

The conditions that originally stimulated the formation of the DDF no longer exist--professional theatres have been developed and dominate the theatrical life of many communities. The professional companies are more qualified now than the amateur companies for training actors and technicians. The professional troupes are backed up in their efforts by the National Theatre School in Montreal and by a few significant, professionally-oriented training programs in University Drama Departments such as the University of Alberta in Edmonton and the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

The changing theatre scene and its influence on the amateur activities was observed by Tom Hendry:

. . . amateur theatre, which once dominated the Canadian theatrical landscape, which, indeed, for many years, provided the only Canadian stage experience, has, in general, lost its place of leadership.¹

Not wishing to be left behind with "museum" status, the DDF has taken steps, some of them quite bold, to redefine its purpose and objectives. A number of group meetings were held in 1969-70, and one of the most significant of these was sponsored by Rothman's, and held in Toronto. At this gathering on April 11, 1970, the Executive Committee of the DDF sat down with Mr. Peter Bone of Rothman's of Pall Mall Canada (a tobacco company that has made a large financial contribution to the arts), and a group of professional theatre people:

Alan Jarvis, Chairman
 Duncan Cameron, Assistant to the Chairman, Canadian
 Conference to the Arts
 David Peacock, National Theatre School
 David Gardner, Playhouse Theatre Company
 John Hobday, Neptune Theatre
 Yves Gelin, Comedie Canadienne
 Roger Thibault, A.C.T.A.
 Jean Fleury, A.C.T.A.
 William Wylie, Stratford
 James Gerrard, Theatre Passe-Muraille.²

¹Thomas Hendry, "The Theatre in Canada," p. 414.

²Rothman's Seminar, Report of Conclusions and Recommendations, meetings of April 10 and 11, 1970, (typewritten), p. 1.

In the spirit of positive cooperation this group overcame semantics and reached some solid recommendations. In prefacing their conclusions, the group stated:

We agree with the need for change in the policies and structure of the Dominion Drama Festival. We recognize the value which the organization has had, but we do not consider it representative of theatre today in its constant evolution.¹

Members of the DDF also evolved a sixty-six-point statement of "updated" objectives which contain the potential for a more meaningful and relevant existence.

As a result of the Rothman's Seminar, and other study groups, the following five-point plan for immediate change was drafted:

The officers and the Executive Committee of the Dominion Drama Festival recommend to the Governors of the Festival that:

1. the name of the organization be changed to Theatre Canada, and that legal means be taken to protect the use of the name Dominion Drama Festival by other groups.
2. a.) four zones with permanent secretariats be established as follows: Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario, Western Provinces, and a multiple option be allowed for minority groups.
b.) the new structure recognizes the predominance of the zones, from which will emerge the national policies.
3. each zone will be responsible, in the future, for the professional training programmes.

¹Ibid.

4. the national secretariat be maintained on a modest level. When the National organization has received the concrete needs and exigencies of the zones, it could revise its role and decide what work it should do; in the meantime, it would provide the liaison with the zone secretariats.

5. organize (in the first months of 1971) a Showcase Festival, in the National Arts Centre, non-competitive and invitational, without any limitations as to professional, amateur, classical, avant-garde, experimental, whether English or French, or other, provided the necessary financial arrangements can be made in negotiation with the appropriate authorities.¹

The new tack of the DDF suggests that the long and honored dominance of amateur theatre in Canada is acknowledging the presence and quality of a large and growing professional, Regional Theatre network. Theoretically, at least, and for the present, a desire exists to work actively toward the finest possible national Theatre Product and an appreciation of that Product.

However, the philosophy is still ahead of the reality and the actual sentiments of many professional and amateur theatre people are still providing many exceptions to the stated goals of the "new" DDF: private conversations reveal a continuation of the suspicions, fears, and animosities that have haunted efforts to establish a chain of professional Regional Theatres which ultimately seem to compete with the pride and shoddy products of amateur groups. There were hurt feelings in Winnipeg in 1958 when the Winnipeg Little

¹ Dominion Drama Festival, Minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee, 1970.

Theatre 77 went from amateur to professional status, and there were more in 1968 when Theatre Calgary was founded.

The Amateurs in Kelowna

An example of the kind of professional-amateur theatre collisions that still take place in enlightened Canada (and which may retard plans or efforts to create Regional Theatres in the country's smaller urban communities) occurred in Kelowna, British Columbia in 1970, only a short time after that city had played host to the National Finals of the DDF: During a four-day investigation of the community a would-be Artistic Director met with some of the community's responsible leaders and outlined to them and to the local newspaper a five-point plan for the gradual establishment of a professional Regional Theatre company that would service Kelowna and the Okanagan Valley. The first, and rather modest starting point, was ". . . to form the nucleus of a small group composed of four professional actors and a complement of 'non-union' technicians. The basic casting core would be implemented by local talent and acting apprentices who desire to make the theatre a career. . . ." ¹ To make this first point a reality, it was explained that "the company would spend two weeks in rehearsal, one week performing in the city and another week

¹"Professional Theatre a Dream for Kelowna," The Kelowna Daily Courier, August 17, 1970, p. 3.

touring the valley."¹ With the understanding that the theatre would be tied up for the second week of rehearsals and the first week of performances, it would, in a six-play season, be held by the company for an accrued total of three months out of the year.

The other four points involved a Children's Theatre Company, a theatre school for the community, a studio theatre with combined community-professional efforts to mount avant-garde works and original plays, and an outdoor summer-theatre program featuring original Canadian plays. Initial reaction to the proposal was restrained, but tactful, friendly, and reasoned. After the potential director departed, however; Kelowna, which, as a result of severe problems in leadership and in-fighting, has three amateur theatres, finally found a rallying point for unified confusion and righteous indignation. Letters to the Editor of the Kelowna Daily Courier lashed out at progress on all fronts:

"The article [describing the five-point plan] also mentioned the introduction to us the art-starved Kelownians of avant garde theatre. Personally I had my belly full during the D.D.F. with its garbage bag debacle--its crudity and profanity--but if this is what you, the public, desire, don't say anything, just keep silent and it will all come about."²

At another point, Mr. Len Marsh author of the Letter to the Editor, noted:

¹Ibid.

²Len Marsh, "Not Bloody Likely," Letter to the Editor, Kelowna Daily Courier, August 31, 1970.

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Our Community Theatre could so easily be turned into a white elephant once professionalism and its attendant unionism gets its feet into the door. Production costs would inhibit or even prohibit future amateur productions. . . .¹

Mr. Marsh dismissed the professional theatre proposal as an ". . . overnight approach by zealous promoters from stateside [sic.]," and as a "pipedream."²

Though it was pointed out by the Artistic Director that he would resign and the company would fold if the I.A.T.S.E. union ever moved in, the confusion about the unions continued: Dr. Gwenneth Lloyd, founder of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet felt that Mr. Marsh's Letter was "excellent," and in one of her own she pessimistically added that a professional ". . . permanent company would, I am sure, because of union rules make prices prohibitive, and make it difficult for our local groups to enjoy their own creative efforts."³ Curiously, however, Dr. Lloyd has little doubt about the values of employing foreign professionals in her own school of ballet as an article in the Courier pointed out: "Canadian School of Ballet Adds New 'Overseas' Staff."⁴

¹Ibid.

²Ibid. The "promoter" was David Gustafson.

³Gwenneth Lloyd, "Theatre Applause," Letter to the Editor, Kelowna Daily Courier, September, 1970.

⁴"Canadian School of Ballet Adds New 'Overseas' Staff," Kelowna Daily Courier, September 12, 1970, p. 6.

Mr. David Chapman, who headed a campaign in the late 1950's that led to the construction of Kelowna's theatre plant, which has since been called the Kelowna Community Theatre, refuses to reassess the philosophy that has always guided the use of the building. In other words, although time has brought a new evaluation of amateur ideals at the National level of the country's amateur theatre organization, Mr. Chapman, like many of his peers, remains adamant about local activities:

I . . . certainly feel that Kelowna must maintain control of the Community Theatre and its assets.

There is a tremendous amount of amateur and professional talent in our city which should certainly continue to be nurtured.¹

This kind of adamant thinking and philosophy which clearly disapproves of the introduction of professional theatre extends beyond Kelowna and apparently guides the thinking in St. John's, New Foundland, where a recently-built, multi-million dollar theatre is reserved for occasional amateur productions and one or two-night stands by touring companies.

The Kelowna frame of mind gives a practical indication that the well-intentioned plans of the DDF are going to meet with stiff resistance in the form of entrenched pride and chauvinistic defenses of mediocrity at local levels. This suggests that the two-decades of rapid development in the quantity of professional Regional Theatres may bog down in the

¹David Chapman, "Clarifies Stand," Letter to the Editor, Kelowna Daily Courier, September 12, 1970, p. 4.

boon-docks and level off to a simple holding pattern; that is, the limits of expansion may have been reached in terms of bringing theatres into communities that really want a professional company. There may be a temporary value in that, however, since, according to John Hirsch, the artistic limits of the country have been over-stretched already if consideration is given to the qualified artists available to run the existing professional companies. Hirsch feels that the national problem in Canada (and the United States) is a "lack of good people" from actors and technicians to artistic directors; the result is that quality is in a holding pattern, and, according to Hirsch: "Regional Theatres are populated with mediocrities."¹

The CBC

If the DDF deserves credit as a viable substitute for professional theatre until the regional system could be substantially developed, then the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation deserves recognition as a positive element in the theatres' environment for giving Canadian authors recognition and for giving actors' annual incomes significant supplements. The Percentage of actors that have supported or are supporting themselves entirely in the theatre, is extremely small. With

¹John Hirsch, private interview held at the Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis, Minnesota, July, 1970.

the exception of those people who were recently able to sign ten-month contracts with Stratford, there was not enough steady work nor high enough salaries to provide for a comfortable level of existence during fallow periods in the theatres' calendars.¹ CBC television commercials and the television and radio dramatic productions have had a strong influence on the economics of acting, writing, and even directing in Canada. Many performing artists would have had to abandon their profession or steal out of the country were it not for an occasional good contact with someone in the CBC. "The cost of CBC program production is about \$80 million annually, of which about one-quarter is spent in fees for performing artists, script writers, performing rights, special events and music."²

The CBC was a necessary antecedent to a national theatre, and it remains necessary as the one economic counterpoint to the greener grass in the United States. Unfortunately, too often, there has been a tendency to use the CBC checks to " . . . buy one-way tickets to Hollywood, New York, London."³

¹In this sense the Canada Council has a long way to go in meeting the humane challenge of assuring that actors, like other " . . . artists in Canada should live and work in such dignity and ease as it may be their wish and ability to command in society. . . . Of course, subsidy does not make good artists, but may make their life possible." Peter Dwyer, "Counselling Canada," Cultural Affairs, (July, 1969), p. 5.

²C. J. Harris, ed., Quick Canadian Facts, p. 113.

³Thomas Hendry, "The Performing Arts," p. 677.

As the Regional Theatres strengthen, however, that flow of talents may be reversed; indeed, many good people have already realized that they can go home again and enjoy increased economic support and artistic challenges.

Canadian broadcasting began in Montreal in 1919. Television started in the same city in 1952. By 1968, the CBC staff had expanded to 9,500 and there were French and English radio facilities in 25 communities and television production facilities in 13 communities.¹

Government control of the industry began in 1932 with the formation of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission. The CRBC was a failure, however, and it was succeeded in 1936 by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which assumed responsibility for the character and advertising content of all CBC and private stations. A shift of power came in 1968 with the creation of the Canadian Radio-Television Commission which was supposed to be freer of political influences.

Recent staff increases in the CBC, increases in the regulations governing its operations, along with new rulings from the CRTC, have turned the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation into a bureaucratic monster that has become lethargic with hideous inefficiency, and evasive with vaguely defined leadership and responsibility at all levels. Due to increased operating costs, and, therefore, increased public money, the CBC

¹C. J. Harris, ed., Quick Canadian Facts, p. 113.

has become timid in much of its bill of fare. However, a quick glance at a day's programming for the CBC-TV or Radio circuits reveals a sophisticated use of air waves that is vastly superior to the insipid shows that generally fill the commercial TV channels and radio stations in the United States.

A Theatrical Potential for the CBC

Unfortunately, the Community TV stations have allowed a creeping importation of United States' commercial fluff, which might be usefully restricted by 1970 legislation requiring 60% Canadian content in all programming, but common expectations hold that more Canadian football games and late night organ recitals by Canadian players will be used to fill the gap. Theoretically, it would be magnificent if Canadian TV could live on the artistic activities within its own national boundaries. With cooperation and planning, the nation could enjoy and develop pride in televised productions of the classics as they are mounted at Stratford, or of the modern works staged at the Manitoba Theatre Centre or Theatre Calgary, or of the bold original works done in the studio theatre at the Manitoba Theatre Centre. Perhaps the Playhouse Theatre Company could reactivate its Studio Theatre program and use it as a vehicle for original Canadian works that could honorably contribute to the 60% content ruling--even if it were shown late at night. From an economic standpoint, the theatre

ought to be able to pay for a studio program if it could deliver occasional productions to a TV studio.

According to Keith Turnbull, Resident Director of MTC who hopes to bring MTC into the CBC studios, televising the Regional Theatres' productions would have strong intrinsic merits for the CBC and the Nation's cultural development, ". . . not only is it an artistically viable suggestion, it is financially viable for the theatres, and, in my view, it is the only way to create a potential for freeing theatres from these . . . government grants. I do not mean that you stop taking the government grants, but they could become a lesser proportion of your livelihood."¹ There would be obvious benefits for the CBC, the people of Canada, and the Regional Theatres.

On a slightly different level of potential theatre-TV cooperation, the CBC could also provide a valuable theatre experience for the children of the hinterland, who now, if they are lucky, see one, and, rarely, two productions a year by satellite companies of the Regional Theatres. The Children's Theatre touring program is currently limited to four provinces, and there is absolutely no hope that the Holiday Playhouse could bring some of its exciting, original materials east to Manitoba or to the Maritimes. Nor is there much chance the

¹Keith Turnbull, private interview held at the Manitoba Theatre Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, July, 1970.

Children's Theatre company of MTC could ever play beyond its flanking provinces. A method of exposing all children in English-speaking Canada to the delightful, original work in Vancouver, Edmonton, or Winnipeg would be a TV airing over the affiliated stations of the CBC. It is understood, of course that there is no substitute for the "living" theatre situation, but televised theatre is better than none and unless it comes, there will surely be "none" of the Holiday Theatre east of Banff, "none" of The-Citadel-on-Wheels east of Saskatchewan, "none" of The Globe outside of Saskatchewan, and "none" of the Manitoba Theatre Centre's Young People's Company outside of Manitoba. It is difficult to understand why the local CTV stations in the West have not made occasional substitutes of real theatre for the usual Saturday dose of cartoons. Possibly some extra work could produce the necessary sponsors.

The CBC and the DDF have had significant relationships to the professional theatre in the past, and they might easily strengthen their relations in the future. Their role as a part of the Regional Theatre context, however, seems small by comparison to the influence of the Canada Council.

The Canada Council

The history of the Council¹ dates to a study undertaken by a Royal Commission in 1949. Mr. Vincent Massey took charge and:

After two years of examining the Canadian cultural scene and noting the great gaps in the lines where the banners of the legions of the arts, letters, humanities, and social sciences ought to have been proudly waving, the Massey Commission gave that most Canadian of advice: it recommended that a Committee be formed to deal with the situation. To be sure the Committee, in view of the Commission, ought to have a rather grand name--the Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Letters, Humanities and Social Sciences--but a committee it would be, none the less, composed of private citizens operating at arm's length from government, modeled largely--even to its name--on the Arts Council of Great Britain. Conservative in its administrative approach, the Massey Commission turned, in Canadian terms, rabidly revolutionary in its final paragraph where, for all to see, it recommended that the Council would find it possible to perform its varied duties effectively with an annual budget which would constitute a very slight charge upon all members of the Canadian population.²

On the 28th of March, 1957 an Act of Parliament created the Canada Council. The Council is made up of twenty-one members who are appointed by the Governor-in-Council. This body meets five times a year. There are two groups that assist the Council in formulating and implementing programs; these

¹For an extensive look at the history behind the formation of the Council and its initial influences, the reader is referred to the copious study by Walter Whittaker, The Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

²Thomas Hendry, "The Performing Arts," pp. 279-80.

are called Academic Panel and the Advisory Arts Panel. It is the second Panel, a sixteen-member group, that meets four times a year and affects grants to the theatres. The Arts Panel works with the Theatre Arts Officer, currently Miss Jean Roberts, and both secure recommendations and information from Review Committees that scrutinize each major art form, review group applications, and also consider the assessments made by separate juries consisting of three to six members who get down to actual cases and handle applications and view artistic works.

The money used by the Council for making grants or retaining consultant services started with the interest accumulated from a \$50 million Endowment Fund. The annual amount yielded by the Endowment was considered a large sum in the early days of the Council when its needs were still simple. The initial money:

. . . was used to some purpose, and so it contributed to the rapid development of the arts and became observably inadequate to meet the demand it had invented. Thus does the endowment principle contain within it the seeds of its own destruction: if it stimulates demand effectively, it must soon become inadequate.¹

Therefore, it became only a matter of time before Parliament began giving annual appropriations for the development of the Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities. For the 1969-70 financial year, the annual gift from the government, coupled

¹Peter Dwyer, "Counciling Canada," p. 5.

with the \$4.4 million interest from the Endowment Fund, reached \$29.5 million.¹ To equal that amount on a per capita basis the United States would have to give away \$300 million through the National Endowment for the Arts.

In the language of Parliament, the objects of the Canada Council are:

- . . . to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts, humanities, and social sciences, and, in particular, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the Council may, in furtherance of its objects,
- (a) assist, co-operate with and enlist the aid of organizations, the objects of which are similar to any of the objects of the Council;
- (b) provide, through appropriate organizations or otherwise, for grants, scholarships or loans to persons in Canada for study or research in the arts, humanities or social sciences in Canada or elsewhere or to persons in other countries for study or research in such fields in Canada;
- (c) make awards to persons in Canada for outstanding accomplishment in the arts, humanities or social sciences;
- (d) arrange for and sponsor exhibitions, performances and publications of works in the arts, humanities or social sciences;
- (e) exchange with other countries or organizations or persons therein knowledge and information respecting the arts, humanities and social sciences; and
- (f) arrange for representation and interpretation of Canadian arts, humanities and social sciences in other countries.²

In the vernacular, and in specific relation to the Regional Theatres, the Act mean that the Council gives out money; i.e.,

¹Ibid.

²Canadian Parliament, An Act for the Establishment of a Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, 5-6 Elizabeth II, 28 March 1957, Chapter 3, pp. 18-19.

it subsidizes theatres. It does so without having to answer to the government in power; technically: "The Council is not an agent of Her Majesty. . . ." ¹ This means that the Council is free to do as it pleases with no strings attached to Parliament above or the artists below.

Peter Dwyer, Director of the Council, translated the act as follows:

The main strategy of the forces we have deployed is directed to the end that artists in Canada should live and work in such dignity and ease as it may be their wish and ability to command in society, and that increasingly the society in which they live and work should by constant exposure and involvement come to value them for the grace they lend to our existence and for the healthy irritants they provide to our complacencies. We are far from having reached any such state of affairs, but it remains our ultimate objective. There is really nothing like an apparently unobtainable objective to stimulate short term advances. The Canada Council's attack is on three fronts and the first is directed toward the welfare of the individual artist.

With annual competitive Awards and Bursaries we buy time for artists to learn to be productive, or to gather new experiences which will enable them to be more productive.

The second strategic concern of the Canada Council after its provision for the artist as an individual is to ensure as best we can his means of communication to the public. I mean of course that we subsidize the orchestras, the theatres, the dance and opera companies, the art galleries and magazines.

The Canada Council's third main line of strategic attack is directed towards support services for the arts, and to special projects designed to reinforce the work of artists and their means of communication. Thus the

¹Ibid., p. 19.

Council sets great store by grants to our National School of the Theatre, to the National Ballet School and to the National Youth Orchestra.¹

Mr. Dwyer's second strategic point is what really interests the theatres. In 1969-70 the theatres of Canada received \$2,815,000 in Federal Subsidies.² Of this amount, the Regional Theatres were pledged the following grants:

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Citadel Theatre, Edmonton. | \$ 45,000 |
| Manitoba Theatre Centre, Winnipeg . . . | \$145,000 |
| Neptune Theatre, Halifax | \$130,000 |
| Playhouse Theatre Company, Vancouver . . | \$150,000 |
| Theatre Calgary, Calgary | \$ 45,000 |
| Theatre New Brunswick, Fredericton . . . | \$ 13,500 |
| | <u>\$538,500</u> ³ |

The total amount of money granted by the Council represents 63% of the \$850,000 granted to the theatres by all of the money-giving institutions in Canada. The Council's part also constitutes 34% of the total revenues for 1969-70 which amounted to \$1,863,843.⁴

To place the Council's grants to the Regional Theatres in proper perspective, it may be useful to point out that the three Festival theatres in Canada were awarded Council grants totaling \$630,000 for 1969-70.⁵

¹Peter Dwyer, "Counciling Canada," pp. 5-7.

²The Canada Council, 13th Annual Report, 1969-70, p. 61.

³Ibid., pp. 71-2.

⁴The figures used for these calculations were taken from The Canada Council, 13th Report, 1969-70, pp. 71-2, and from Council Application Forms on file in Ottawa and from Audited Financial Statements supplied by the theatres.

⁵The Canada Council, 13th Annual Report, 1969-70, p. 72.

In addition to straight grants, the Council has demonstrated its potential for indirectly assisting theatre organizations by financially influencing studies of cities that might support a theatre company: in 1961 the Council supported a study of Halifax, conducted by Leon Major and Tom Patterson, which resulted in the foundation of the Neptune Theatre. The time may be approaching when the Council might support similar studies of some of Canada's smaller communities; that is, if any can be found that do not reflect the attitudes of Kelowna.

The Council has also funded meetings which have resulted in the formation of service organizations such as the Canadian Theatre Centre and the Coordinated Arts Services. Both organizations have since been sustained by annual grants from the Council. In 1969-70 the CTC was granted \$66,500.¹

The Council has recently begun to support the travel costs for theatre personnel meetings. In January of 1970, for example, the Council helped to send people to the first Canadian meeting of theatre Administrative Directors in Vancouver. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss common problems in confidence. In the summer of 1970 the Council gave travel funds for another administrative meeting

¹Ibid., p. 71.

in the Gaspé Peninsula. Most likely the Council will continue to financially endorse the plans for other conferences of this type.

For the purpose of motivation, brain storming, reenforcement, and reward, P.R. people and season ticket directors (if separate individuals) from all the performing arts should be sent to an occasional (i.e.: annual or bi-annual) business convention. There they should hash out their problems and listen to the minds of specialists from other countries.¹

In addition to Danny Newman, the list of "specialists" might include advertising experts, graphics artists, industrial filmmakers, printers, and speech writers. The idea might be implemented by the CTC or the CAS with financial assistance from the Canada Council.

The total arts subsidy provided by the Canada Council for 1969-70 was \$9,470,000. Of that amount, \$58,000 was spent on "Consultant Expenses."² One of the finest and most beneficial forms of consultancy to come out of that continuing fund has been the service provided by a man who has probably sold (directly or indirectly) more season tickets to cultural events than anyone else in the theatre's history. The project was started in 1965, when, at the insistence of Tom Hendry, then Secretary General of the CTC, the Council provided a consultant grant (which had been paid for the year before by TCG) with which the Centre:

¹David Gustafson, ed., "Ideas and Methods for Selling Season Tickets in Canadian Regional Theatres," (paper prepared for Canadian Regional Theatres, October, 1970), p. 2.

²The Canada Council, 13th Annual Report, 1969-70, p. 61.

. . . retained the services of Mr. Danny Newman of Chicago as a consultant on season ticket campaigns. Mr. Newman, who has also assisted the Ford Foundation and the Theatre Communications Group of New York, is an expert in the mysteries of the advance sale of season tickets. Between 1965 and 1967 his advice was made available to a dozen organizations in Canada through the good offices and support services of the Canadian Theatre Centre. What resulted is shown in the following brief table.

| | Season Ticket Holders | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|----------|
| | 1965-66 | 1967-68 | 1969-70 |
| Playhouse; Vancouver | 1,500 | 6,150 | 7,500 |
| Neptune; Halifax | nil | 3,500 | 7,834 |
| Ballet Guild, Toronto | nil | 5,500 | |
| TNM; Montreal | nil | 8,300 | |
| Citadel; Edmonton | 1,350 | 2,500 | 5,000 |
| Canadian Opera; Toronto | 8,204 | 9,000 | |
| MTC; Winnipeg | 6,050 | 9,000 | 9,600 |
| MAC 14; Calgary | 300 | 1,400 | |
| Theatre Calgary | | | 3,600 |
| Royal Winnipeg Ballet | 300 | 2,000 | |
| Theatre de l'Estoc; Que. | 100 | 1,000 | |
| Theatre de l'Eglegore; Mont. | <u>nil</u> | <u>600</u> | <u>1</u> |
| | 17,804 | 48,950 | |

¹The Canada Council, 11th Annual Report, 1967-68, pp. 12-13; the 1969-70 figures for the chart were obtained through a study of theatre records, correspondance, and telephone calls.

It is understood, of course, that the increases are not the work of a single man, but a large part of the results are attributable to Mr. Newman's methods and to the enthusiasm for selling that he has consistantly managed to generate.

The Canada Council also assists in providing for the future by subsidizing the National Theatre School of Canada in Montreal, by sending its students to auditions, and by sponsoring guest artists or lecturers--all to the amount of \$291,164 in 1969-70.¹

There are also a number of ways in which the Council helps individual theatre artists: they provide sums of money ranging from coverage of simple travel costs to Awards of up to \$7,000.

There is growing concern, however, for the future appropriations and for the effects of theatre subsidy. The competition for the Council's attentions and funds is becoming fierce. The efforts of amateur groups to draw money continue in vain. The Council will not, and, understandably can not, support mere "plans" for creating professional theatre organizations. One official at the Council pointed out that serious consideration can not be extended to any group that is not fully professional (i.e., operated by people who are earning their living through the organization), and has not "succeeded"

¹The Canada Council, 13th Annual Report, 1969-70, p. 72.

on the strength of its own resources for at least two years.¹
 In 1969-70 the Council assisted 17 professional theatre companies--a small number, if all the requests that were made are taken into consideration--but a highly ambitious undertaking for a nation of only twenty-million people.

The Council's Crisis and
Possibilities for Change

Eventually, however, there may be loud protests about the policy for distributing money to those who "deserve" it. On the other hand, increased subsidies and the growing shortage in artistic leadership may have an adverse effect on theatre productions. But the immediate crisis is the Council's lack of money.

The noises of danger began sounding in 1968 when the Canadian economy went on a diet described as an austerity movement. On July 8th of that year the Council wrote to all of the organizations that apply for annual grants and warned:

. . . planning will be particularly crucial for the 1969-70 year which will be one of austerity in government spending. Although we can not yet be certain, it is entirely possible that the Canada Council will not receive sufficient funds for that year which would enable it to play its part in maintaining the rate of growth experienced in the past few years. We would therefore recommend that your organization plan for its 1969-70 season on the assumption that the Canada Council may not be in a position to provide increased subsidy.²

¹Monique Aupy, private interview held at the Canada Council, Ottawa, Ontario, May, 1970.

²Letter from the Canada Council, July 8, 1968, and addressed to Albert Cohen, President, Manitoba Theatre Centre.

On October 11th, the Council again wrote to all of its "clients" (the term was chosen by the Council): "We must now confirm. . . that there will be no increase for the coming financial year of the government appropriation to the arts."¹ The Council went on to note that it had not failed to inform the Treasury Board and Cabinet of the Government ". . . of the special problems that would result from including the arts in a general policy of stabilized government expenditures."² The Council failed, however, to have any effect on the austerity decision. In the 1968-69 Annual Report it continued to blow its economic fog horn by stating its desire ". . . to moderate vaulting ambition in the hope that it will not overlap the budget. . . ."³ The situation motivated Mr. Vincent W. Bladen to write in June of 1970:

We hope, and believe, that behind the scenes the Council is pressing for more funds to enable it to increase support. But I think it has been too ready to accept the Ottawa anti-inflation austerity as meaning indiscriminate limitation and reduction of funds for the Arts.⁴

Mr. Bladen went on to argue an important point in the issue of reductions in arts subsidy:

¹Letter from the Canada Council, October 11, 1968 and addressed to Edward Gilbert, Artistic Director, Manitoba Theatre Centre.

²Ibid.

³The Canada Council, 12th Annual Report, 1968-69, p. 10.

⁴V. W. Bladen, "Economics of the Performing Arts,"
p. 6.

One must distinguish two kinds of expenditure. The first sort can be decreased, postponed, stretched out, without ruining the quality but only reducing or postponing the quantity of the service. The second sort are those where temporary reduction may do long run damage which cannot be repaired in a decade.¹

Part of the problem lies in the limitations placed on the Council by the fact that it is an organ of the government, and is therefore unable to make strong pleas for increased annual appropriations. What is needed is a political lobby group that represents the arts and sues on their behalf for higher appropriations for the Council. It might be possible for the Council to provide conference funds so that representatives of the performing and visual arts could meet to discuss a National Arts Committee that could advance a unified front to stimulate the sagging annual allotment for the Council. A National Arts Committee could also launch fund-raising attacks on potential or reluctant industries and foundations. The Canadian Theatre Centre should go political and function as liason to the lobby on behalf of the theatres.

Undoubtedly, there would be traumas in determining who should receive a portion or whatever a National Arts Committee might acquire, but that problem seems to have been settled to most peoples' satisfaction through the methodology for distribution that has been devised by the Canada Council. The need for a National Arts Committee has long been felt; the lack of response is an indication of a greater need for strong leadership in Canadian Art.

¹Ibid., pp. 9-10.

In one way, at least, the Canada Council contributes to the leadership problem and fails the nation: its grants are directed toward supporting the kind of theatrical success which can be measured in box office tallies. To begin to receive money and to continue to receive money, a theatre is almost encouraged to develop a "formula" that will insure a steady pulse in ticket purchases. Thus, under the guise of balance the theatres tend, on an annual basis to arrive with near mathematical precision at the formula:

| | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| | 3 Broadway or London smash comedies |
| | 2 Modern, safe, well-known dramas |
| | 1 Classic--well known |
| Equals: | 1 season with a large body-count |

There are exceptions, of course, such as the annual "original" which has become a repeated tradition at the Playhouse Theatre Company in Vancouver, at Theatre Calgary, and an occasional event at the Neptune Theatre in Halifax.

The period of financial austerity that began in 1968 has had a strong restricting influence on the creative atmosphere that has been developing slowly in Canada's theatre arts. Canada has lost the "right to fail;" the Council has removed the encouragement and incentive to experiment, to stimulate controversy, to present old ideas in new frames of reference, to lead old traditions into new potentials. The Council's 1969-70 Annual Report clearly dictates the necessity to produce tried works or plays with predictable results.

They began their appeal for "formula" by first recognizing the potential "danger" of artistic experiments: ". . . performances of an unfamiliar opera, of an untried ballet, or of a new Canadian play may not please a general public that tends to be conservative. The result at the end of the season may be a considerable deficit; the result at the end of several seasons may be a serious deficit indeed."¹ This is a philosophy of following, not of leading.

The real danger for the arts in Canada, however, lies in the policy formulated out of fear by the Council in which it has recently

. . . required each of its clients to put forward a scheme for deficit retirement over a period of the client's choosing. Whereever an orderly and determined effort is being made to grapple with the problem, the Council will contribute each year to the retirement of the deficit.²

The Council goes on to report its new "conditions for subsidy" which begin:

In 1970-71, or in any year thereafter, if a performing arts organization subsidized by the Council makes expenditures larger than those accepted in its annual budget by the Council, it may not apply again to the Council unless it has guaranteed to retire the amount by which its actual expenditures in any year exceeded its budgeted expenditures. An exception will be made where earned income is higher than forecast and sufficient to offset the over-expenditure fully.

The Council recognizes that all performing arts organizations must face as a part of their operations the unpredictable factor of audience reaction and its effect on

¹The Canada Council, 13th Annual Report, 1969-70, p. 57.

²Ibid.

their revenues. . . . When in any year the earned revenues of an organization fall short of the budgeted amount accepted by the Council, then the client must provide for the retirement of this loss as an additional item reallocated over the planned retirement period.¹

Hesitations about producing original or thought-provoking works will undoubtedly increase since it is so difficult to predict ticket revenues or hidden expenses for untried works.

It is possible, of course, that stock bills of tried and true works might have a value in the hands of an artist. John Hirsch defended this kind of thinking: "It has to be a popular theatre, and you simply must start with what they [the audience] know, and lead them to what they don't know."² According to Hirsch, the problem with popular fare in the Regional Theatres is the "lack of good people," and the mediocrity they present to the public: ". . . I don't think what matters is the programs, but the way they do them--they are just not done well enough."³

The Canada Council now actively contributes to the mediocrity by failing to encourage experimentation. "We would like to be able to do [give financial support to,] all kinds of perhaps less lasting things. . . passing things. . .,"

¹Ibid.

²John Hirsch, private interview.

³Ibid.

says Miss Jean Roberts, Theatre Arts Officer of the Council, but ". . . since it's Federal money, we have an obligation to the public."¹ Miss Roberts feels that the obligation takes the form of a question when granting decisions are made: "Is there a public that wants this product?"² In as much as a positive response to that question conditions the Council's official benevolence to the professional theatres, it seems apparent that the theatres will have to follow public taste rather than play a part in shaping it.

The guiding concepts of the Council are certainly honorable, but the policy of granting money "in the public interest" sets up a paradox: the arts are guaranteed an existence, but the ideal of sufficient freedom to develop is stunted by the need to show quantitative success.

The Canadian Theatre Centre

One of the truly positive steps that the Canada Council took in an effort to assist and service the Regional and Festival Theatre development was in the formation of the Canadian Theatre Centre.

The Centre was created in 1957, in Montreal, as a part-time organization that was intended as a go-between for the Canada Council and recipients of Council grants. The

¹Jean Roberts, private interview held at the Canada Council, Ottawa, Ontario, May, 1970.

²Ibid.

Centre obtained a charter in 1959. In 1963 the quarters for the Centre burned and the charred remains of one wooden filing cabinet and its contents were shipped to Ottawa for storage in the DDF files. The files were moved again, in a paper bag, to Toronto in 1964, at the request of Tom Hendry, who had been appointed Executive Secretary. At that point, due to Mr. Hendry's efforts, the Centre began to take shape and within two years Hendry raised the Centre's membership list from seventeen to over a thousand names. Mr. Hendry brought to the job his experience of having co-founded and administered the Manitoba Theatre Centre. While at the Canadian Theatre Centre, he viewed his position as that of ". . . an Official Unpaid Consultant to the Canadian theatrical profession."¹ His knowledge of the theatre scene was extensive enough to endow him with the kind of opinions that make a "consultant" valuable. Through his own extensive travels and his efforts to secure funds for the Centre and to initiate programs of action through the Centre, Tom Hendry quickly developed a versatile, wide ranging and effective service organization. In the Fall of 1966, he published an Editorial in the Centre's bi-lingual magazine, The Stage in Canada/La Scene au Canada, called "The Centre Begins to Find Its Place." In that article, he showed that the Centre's revenues were up to

¹Letter from Thomas Hendry, Literary Manager of Stratford Festival, 16 June 1970, and addressed to David Gustafson.

\$98,500; the staff was up to eight people;¹ the activities completed, in progress, or planned had reached twenty-seven.² The first eight projects listed might give an indication of the Centre's ambitions:

- *Administer the Management In-Training Scheme
- *Administer the Apprentice Training Scheme
- *Administer the Consultants Programme
- *Administer the Traveling Posters Exhibition Programme
- *Administer the Play-reading Committees' Programme
- *Publish, edit and distribute 35,000 copies of "The Stage in Canada"
- *Reproduce and distribute at least 3,000 copies of original, unpublished Canadian plays³

Following the list of activities, Mr. Hendry noted:

The Centre was created in order to provide a focus for stage activity in Canada. Each of its areas of activity has been entered in order to further and enlarge this fundamental aim. All of these activities have been initiated pragmatically on the basis of demonstrated need. The Centre can only work on this basis, but must avoid a dogmatic, rigid view of its functions.⁴

Some of the Centre's projects were underwhelming or duds, but all were enthusiastically undertaken, with a real desire to improve the lot of Canadian Theatre and bring international attention to it. At times Mr. Hendry's energy and spirit gave the Centre the illusion of being a squad of

¹In 1966 the CTC staff consisted of an Executive Secretary, Publications Editor, Executive Assistant, Program Developer, Membership Secretary, Translator, Programme Secretary, General Secretary. Thomas Hendry, "The Centre Begins to Find Its Place," The Stage in Canada/La Scene au Canada, Vol. 2, (September, 1966), p. 2.

²Ibid., pp. 2-3.

³Ibid., p. 2.

⁴Ibid., p. 3.

dedicated cheerleaders. However, Mr. Hendry was always able to pre-test or judge ideas for action against his professional experiences in Winnipeg and his constant renewal with the specific problems of theatre companies through travel. The Canadian Theatre Centre was, in reality, the Tom Hendry Theatre Centre. He empirically and intelligently guided the policy and projects of the Centre. Some of the ideas met with stiff resistance, but were pushed through on the strength of convictions that often proved to be correct or in the best interests of the theatre. A good example of this is the consultant program that brought the services of Mr. Danny Newman to Canada on a regular basis. Mr. Newman has been most effective in persuading Boards of Directors to spend money on audience development and in showing season ticket campaign directors methods for increasing season ticket sales. Though often criticized or misunderstood, the results of Mr. Newman's Audience Development programs are extensive and have had a profound influence in turning the attention of the Canadian Public to their own performing arts.

Problems and Needed Changes for the CTC

When Tom Hendry left the CTC in 1969 to assume duties as a Literary Manager at the Stratford Shakespearean Festival, his successor was chosen in a typical Canadian fashion: in the sense of political fairness a French-Canadian was asked to assume the duties as Secretary-General. Mr. Gilles Rochette,

who has worked as Secretary-General with the Theatre du Nouveau Monde, took the lead position at the CTC and at the same time the role of the Centre, previously defined as vital by virtue of its high level of activities and its value as a communications clearing house and opinion centre, plummeted into confusion, inaction, and obscurity. At least a part of the problem lies in the fact that the Centre, like one of the Regional Theatres can only be as efficient, relevant, and active as the personality that controls the organization. Mr. Rochette's problem, which he freely admits, is his almost total lack of knowledge and opinions about the English-speaking theatres in Canada.¹ In terms of Mr. Rochette's understanding of the needs and desires of English-Speaking theatre people, the Centre might have done better to import an Englishman who at least had the advantage of a fluid control of the language, and a desire to travel. An informal survey of Artistic, Administrative, and Public Relations Directors in eight of Canada's English-speaking theatres revealed that the current Purpose of the CTC is vague, as defined by its actions, and Generally useless in terms of communications, contacts, and Plans.

Mr. Rochette has done little in the way of visits to the theatres, investigations of their operations, conversations with their personnel, and materials-gathering in the form of written reports, posters, programs, photographs, etc.

¹Gilles Rochette, private interview held at the Canadian Theatre Centre, Toronto, May, 1970.

Some people began to wonder if the Centre had not come to a total standstill when a four-month period passed without communications of any sort from the Centre to many of the theatres. The Stage in Canada/La Scene au Canada was not seen for nearly five months; then, in August of 1970, the theatres began to receive the May/June issue of the magazine. In that issue Mr. Rochette announced a policy change--the product of a year of groping:

From next fall on, we shall publish a new format of our magazine which will be issued every two months. Each issue will be devoted to a particular subject and will be thicker than the current issues. The Calender and Acts and Facts Chronicles will from now on be published separately and sent to all CTC members ten times a year.¹

The idea has value, but only for an extremely limited reading audience. A number of Canadian theatre people feel that a pamphlet might do a better job and free the magazine to carry information of value to the more than 1,1000 individual members and to people outside of Canada who wish to know something of the artistic activities in the Canadian theatres. The Centre might better serve the majority of its membership if its magazine continued to carry information on the types and range of artistic activities of the professional theatres. The issues might feature critical reviews of productions and

¹Gilles Rochette, "The Stage in Canada Turns Over a New Leaf," The Stage in Canada/La Scene au Canada, Vol. 5 (May/June 1970), p. 4.

contributions by foreign writers who have a message relevant to the needs of Canadians. The ten-times-a-year newsletter should be expanded to fifty-two or at least twenty-six issues and include as routine information, who is acting in what production and where, audition schedules and locations, and a column that provides a means of exchanging technicians' ideas and data about new methods, materials, and supplies for technical theatre. A new ideas column might also feature season ticket methods and fund-raising practices. The costs incurred in this expanded newsletter project might be covered through advertising, a request for increased funds from the Council, and an appropriate subscription charge.

A number of professional theatre people would like to see the Centre offer free audition halls (currently there is a \$15 rental fee for the only empty room at the Centre); there should be a free piano room, a western office and try-outs centre, and a video-tape-recorder at both places which might be used for rehearsals or for taping audition scenes when an actor or director can not coordinate a meeting time.

Members of the Centre's staff, particularly those writing the newsletter should devote considerable time to travel and phone calls to give them an in-depth understanding of the immediate problems and needs of the theatres. Subscribing members of the Centre should be given post card forms (on request) that can be sent to Toronto any time a

new role is accepted or a move is made that affects the availability status of an actor or a technician.

Knowing the whereabouts and availability of professional theatre people, providing the theatres with some measure of the activities that are in the "present" part of the cultural context in Canada, and consultant programs like the one involving Mr. Danny Newman were the most valuable parts of the CTC when Mr. Tom Hendry was in charge and they might easily be continued and expanded upon by Mr. Gilles Rochette.

The Canadian Regional Theatre Movement has been flanked by vigorous production activities in French-speaking Canada, by the three Festival Theatres in Stratford, Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Charlottetown, and by continual and enormous failures in Toronto.

The French Theatre

The major efforts at French-speaking theatre occur in Montreal. The life and death tempo of theatre ventures there is quick, but several theatres have weathered the fervent and frenetic style of that schizophrenic city; they have developed audiences and a continuity of existence. The oldest and most ambitious of these is the Theatre du Nouveau Monde, founded in 1951 by Dr. Jean Gascon and Mr. Jean-Louis

Roux. "It offers a wide-ranging repertoire extending from Brecht to Moliere, Shaw to Claudel, and always with a liberal lacing of original material."¹ The Theatre du Rideau Vert typically presents Shakespeare, French, and original French-Canadian plays, and like the TNM, has gained an international reputation through touring. There are two other French-Canadian theatres of merit: Theatre de Quat "Sous and Comedie Canadienne. These theatres have been significant in their ability to actualize their ambitions and in their relevance² to life in Quebec Province. According to Jean Gascon, who is currently the Artistic Director at Stratford: "French theatre can be active because French politics, or a common goal, have given the people something to look at in their own lives. They have been living on themselves for a couple of centuries."³ Therefore, the isolated but clearly identifiable and indigenous culture of Quebec has yielded a rich flow of artistic expressions. Dr. Gascon noted:

There is much more creation in Montreal than in the rest of the country, because the writers are there . . . writing for one community that they know, and they respond to it. In the rest of the country it's much more evasive. . . . Canadian identity is not defined at all as it is in French-Canada.⁴

¹Thomas Hendry, "The Theatre in Canada," p. 419.

²Admittedly, the term "relevant" is unfashionable--yet it seems to be the best word. As used here and later, it refers to that which has meaning and pertinence to current conditions.

³Jean Gascon, private interview.

⁴Ibid.

Beyond social ammenities, however, there is little in the way of exchange or mixing of the two lingual cultures. Most people in the English-speaking Canadian theatre lack sufficient ability with the French language to be able to appreciate or appraise the theatre as they should: en Francaise. The creation of the \$46 million National Arts Centre in Ottawa and the occasional employment of French-Canadian actors at Stratford may encourage more cultural exchanges between Quebec and the rest of Canada, though language barriers will undoubtedly continue to have a restraining effect.

The Stratford Festival

A few years ago, the Canada Council took the liberty of displaying a bit of National pride and bragged: ". . . the Stratford Shakespearean Festival Company. . . is recognized, without any reservation as the best classical theatre in North America."¹ That statement will most likely go unchallenged for many years. Since it first opened on 13 July 1953, the Stratford Shakespearean Festival has done more to mount splendid, full-scale productions of classical plays, regardless of cost and effort, has done more to establish "Continental" standards of excellence and discipline,

¹The Canada Council, 10th Annual Report, 1966-67, p. 3.

has done more to make historical views of life exciting to all types of people, particularly the young, than any other theatre company in the Western Hemisphere. The story of Stratford's founding and development has often been written about and need only be summarized here; the present state and future activities of the company might briefly be considered since they will influence the future direction of Canada's Theatre.

An excellent indication of the slowly expanding and steady growth of the Festival can be seen through a glance at the statistics that have accrued during the seventeen seasons that were mounted between 1953 and 1969 at the Festival Theatre (see chart on page 73).

Stratford has also presented an extensive program of musical productions at the Festival and Avon Theatres which has ranged in format from soloists to orchestras, from jazz musicians to operas, and has included a number of musical dramas. Most of these productions have been staged at the Avon Theatre, an 1,100-seat, proscenium arch theatre that is located about a mile from the Festival Theatre.

Between 1953 and 1969 the Festival produced thirty-one of Shakespeare's thirty-seven plays. Eleven of those thirty-one plays have been re-staged. The Festival productions of classics outside of the Shakespearean repertoire

| year | length of
season | attendance | drama
productions | performances | box office
gross |
|------|---------------------|------------|----------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| 1953 | 6 weeks | 68,087 | 2 | 42 | \$ 206,000 |
| 1954 | 9 weeks | 125,155 | 3 | 69 | \$ 392,000 |
| 1955 | 9 weeks | 126,791 | 3 | 72 | \$ 421,000 |
| 1956 | 9 weeks | 119,363 | 2 | 75 | \$ 402,449 |
| 1957 | 10 weeks | 163,432 | 2 | 83 | \$ 563,413 |
| 1958 | 12 weeks | 171,100 | 3 | 98 | \$ 579,174 |
| 1959 | 12 weeks | 165,257 | 2 | 99 | \$ 550,480 |
| 1960 | 12 weeks | 203,870 | 3 | 99 | \$ 683,514 |
| 1961 | 14 weeks | 218,454 | 4 | 113 | \$ 731,021 |
| 1962 | 15 weeks | 263,239 | 4 | 123 | \$ 913,205 |
| 1963 | 15 weeks | 228,389 | 4 | 124 | \$ 793,767 |
| 1964 | 16 weeks | 254,018 | 4 | 129 | \$ 932,452 |
| 1965 | 16 weeks | 264,395 | 4 | 129 | \$ 984,963 |
| 1966 | 18 weeks | 261,808 | 5 | 162 | \$ 987,453 |
| 1967 | 18 weeks | 287,237 | 5 | 155 | \$1,071,170 |
| 1968 | 18 weeks | 311,623 | 6 | 176 | \$1,312,999 |
| 1969 | 20 weeks | 329,966 | 5 | 188 | \$1,375,543 ¹ |

¹Stratford Shakespearean Festival Foundation, Stratford Festival Story, 1953-1970, (1970), p. 40. The numbers of drama productions were extracted from pp. 16-33.

include Oedipus Rex by Sophocles, Cyrano de Bergerac by Rostand, The Bourgeois Gentleman and Tartuffe by Moliere, The Country Wife by Wycherly, The Cherry Orchard and The Seagull by Chekov, The Dance of Death by Strindberg, The Government Inspector by Gogol, The Three Musketeers by Dumas, Waiting for Godot by Beckett, The Alchemist by Ben Jonson, Hadrian VII, by Peter Luke. Four original Canadian works were produced: The Canvas Barricade by Donald Lamont Jack, The Last of the Tsars by Michael Bawtree, Colours in the Dark by James Reaney, and The Satyricon with book and lyrics by Tom Hendry and music by Stanley Silverman.¹

The scale of finances involved in working with these kinds of plays can be appreciated by looking at the Auditor's Report and Financial Statements; specifically, the section dealing with income and expenditures (see chart on page 75).

Considering the artistic and attendance record at the Festival and bearing in mind that it is housed in one of the finest theatre structures in North America (where 2,258 people sit within sixty-five feet of the stage) and that it has been supplemented by an ambitious musical production schedule at the Festival-owned Avon Theatre and that it operates with one of the largest budgets for its production schedule, it is fairly easy to recognize that the original eight-point statement of objectives and aims has been reasonably fulfilled:

¹Ibid., p. 4.

STRATFORD SHAKESPEAREAN FESTIVAL FOUNDATION OF CANADA

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

for the year ended October 31st 1969

| | <u>1969</u> | <u>1968</u> |
|---|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Performance Revenue | \$1,760,245 | \$1,536,005 |
| Expenses: | | |
| Production | \$1,377,672 | \$1,200,773 |
| Operating and Maintenance | 238,598 | 223,477 |
| Administration | 201,824 | 200,932 |
| Publicity and Box Office | 359,858 | 336,607 |
| Other (Net) | (16,181) | 15,698 |
| Interest | 50,111 | 45,625 |
| | <u>\$2,211,882</u> | <u>\$2,023,112</u> |
| Operating Loss | \$ 451,637 | \$ 487,107 |
| Provision for Renewals and Replacements | <u>119,948</u> | <u>120,102</u> |
| | <u>\$ 571,585</u> | <u>\$ 607,209</u> |
| Operating Grants: | | |
| Canada Council | \$ 380,000 | \$ 400,000 |
| The Province of Ontario Council
for the Arts | 85,000 | 85,000 |
| Ontario Department of Education | <u>50,000</u> | <u>50,000</u> |
| | <u>\$ 515,000</u> | <u>\$ 535,000</u> |
| Net Loss for the Year | <u>\$ 56,585</u> | <u>\$ 72,209¹</u> |

¹"Stratford Shakespearean Festival Foundation of Canada, Auditors' Report and Financial Statements, October 31st 1969," Monteith, Monteith and Company, Chartered Accountants, (November 11th, 1969, typewritten).

To promote interest in, and the study of, the arts generally and literature, drama and music in particular.

To advance knowledge and appreciation of and to stimulate interest in Shakespearean culture and tradition by theatrical performances and otherwise.

To provide facilities for education and instruction in the arts of the theatre.

To provide improved opportunities for Canadian Artistic talent. To advance the development of the arts of the theatre in Canada.

For the purpose aforesaid to acquire and construct such property as may be required.

To conduct an annual Shakespearean Festival at Stratford, Ontario.

To collect money by way of donations or otherwise, to accept gifts, legacies, devices and bequests, and to hold, invest, expend or deal with the same in furtherance of the objects of the corporation.

To do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects.¹

Individual interpretations among Canadian Theatre people, however, vary as to how much or little this philosophy for a theatre has been realized (particularly "To advance the development of the arts of the theatre in Canada"). There have been questions about whether the original vision of the Festival's founders included sufficient consideration of the future. If the Festival has, in fact, turned the founding dreams into realities, then perhaps the Festival needs to re-evaluate its objects and look for new potentials.

¹Stratford Festival Story, p. 1.

Problems of Stratford

In view of Stratford's touring engagements in Europe and the United States, there is also cause to wonder about the Nationality of the Festival: is it Canadian--by virtue of its base of operations, or is it North American or International--due to its touring operations? Is it restricted to being a theatre by Canadians and for Canadians in a narrow nationalistic sense, or is it to be a theatre by the best of talents, regardless of origins, for the people, regardless of origins, most eager to see the finest productions of Classics anywhere? The actions of the Festival have created these questions, but they have not yet indicated what the answers may be. Undoubtedly the Festival will continue to mount lavish and exciting productions of Shakespeare and other classics that otherwise would fail to receive such a full treatment from the standpoint of talents and expenditures. Sometimes the glitter of production may even disguise the failure of the company to make a relevant statement through the play, as was evidenced in the numb treatments of Shylock, Antonio, and Portia in the 1970 staging of Merchant of Venice or in the miscasting that occurred in thinking Irene Worth was still young enough to play the lead in Hedda Gabler.¹

There is not another company in North America with resources equal to those at Stratford. There is no other

¹This critical opinion is held by the author of this study and by several members of the Canadian theatre scene who saw the productions referred to.

company that could hope for such continued and rising audience support, particularly when it succeeds with such obscure but massive-scale plays like Cymbelene, The Satyricon, Antony and Cleopatra, and Timon of Athens.

The problem that is building at Stratford and which seems to be reaching a size nearly equal to the Festival can be summarized as the need for change. The demands for new artistic ventures occasionally become loud, but they invariably seem to be suppressed by the reactionary forces, i.e.: The Executive Board, which, in the main, is a conservative group of businessmen in a very conservative community that has come to depend on the financial pattern of the Festival to a degree that is reminiscent of "Güellen," the community made famous in The Visit.

Mr. John Hayes, who has been the Production Director with the Festival since it started, is aware of the two sides of change:

We should never close our minds to new directions. We must keep our minds completely open. I think that no institution, or Festival, can necessarily run on the same lines, because personalities are involved New People coming in can not be expected to have the same approach to the Festival because it is now much larger than it originally was, it is now much more departmentalized, and with things being very big and organized, there is an impersonalization that takes place. You can not expect the people who [have] come in in the last two or three years to have the same approach as did the people who built it.¹

¹John Hayes, private interview held at the Stratford Shakespearean Festival, Stratford, Ontario, July, 1970.

The "new" people whom Mr. Hayes refers to, and that group would include men like John Hirsch and Tom Hendry, have met with frustration in their efforts to bend tradition. Mr. Hayes put his finger on a part of the problem when he began talking about finances:

We have experimented, very definately, but what one must realize is that we are not a small repertory theatre where one can take tremendous chances. . . . One must remember that. This is, in that sense, a tourist attraction, yes. You have the commercial aspect which you can not get away from. If you make a mistake in this [Festival] theatre and you do 60% [attendance] instead of 80% over the season, where every percentage of that house is ten or twelve thousand dollars, you've lost a quarter of a million dollars in that season and that can be a disaster.¹

In terms of hotel bills and restaurant tickets, the loss of 1% of Stratford's audience would amount to nearly a quarter of a million dollars in one week.

The natural attraction of the Classics at the Festival theatre is so strong, however, that Jean Gascon, Artistic Director of the Company, remarked:

. . . if we wanted to be quiet, we could do one season of the Classics in this theatre--we wouldn't even need a subsidy to do it. This place plays by itself--works like a charm.

Gascon then qualified that statement with an observation that the summer season of 1970 may have transformed into a sick reality:

. . . but we can not be self-satisfied because it means death--for me, for the company, for everybody.²

¹Ibid.

²Jean Gascon, private interview.

Changing an established theatre institution like Stratford may be beyond reality now. At least a part of the company's on-going "Success" is related to its predictability: one can make a pilgrimage to Stratford with the assurance that the large, rich cultural masque will contain preparations of a smooth, respectable nature that assure all who participate in the ritual of sufficient materials that might enrich conversation at numerous subsequent cocktail parties. Tom Hendry, Literary Manager of the Festival, lightly defined the present function of the Festival as

. . . a kind of cultural mecca that pilgrims come to, and we display the armbone of the prophet once a year and everyone goes away feeling like a better person for having taken part in this ritual exercise.¹

Hendry feels that the major part of Stratford's audience does not really visit the Festival to see an artistic representation of something in life that goes on around them, nor to see a criticism of life; instead, they seem to be seeking a

. . . high quality experience in the Western Tradition of Theatre. . . .

I think they experience a lot of theatre as opera. They don't really experience it as communication, but as an event where it's kind of self-contained and you experience the thing without really understanding what it's all about. Certain passages are familiar. . . and the audience here settles down during "To be or not to be. . ." and "The quality of mercy is not strained. . ." the same way they'll settle down during a really familiar passage in an opera. . . .

¹Thomas Hendry, private interview.

I've formed the impression that most people are not really understanding what was said in the theatre.¹

Stratford is the North American theatrical postcard industry. The industry is there for people who ". . . want to have Hamlet in their experience."² In a painless and extravagant way, Stratford puts it there.

Part of the rub at Stratford is that artists can not really move within the established patterns and political mashings. A vain effort was made to overcome this in the summer of 1970: left wing efforts managed to introduce a bill of original plays by three recognized playwrights; the bill included The Friends by Arnold Wesker, The Architect and Emperor of Assyria by Fernando Arrabal, and Vatzlav by Slawomir Mrozek. With a deep breath, and lots of courage, Stratford decided to take on a major effort in providing a stage for contemporary views and criticisms of life. For a while, at least, the operatic prototype to Shakespeare which had played at the Avon for years was going to be officially shelved,³ and the company was going to try to avoid becoming "stale and self-satisfied" as Jean Gascon had warned it might. Dr. Gascon pointed out why he wanted to produce a bill of original works at the Avon:

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Inceptive efforts to introduce original works at the Avon had started a few years earlier with the introduction of a new Canadian play in the summer bill.

It's not expansion I'm after, it's life. To keep alive you have to try, you have to go in all directions and break your neck regularly.¹

At the same time, prior to the opening of the 1970 season, he added that

. . . it's very difficult to sell the Arrabal, the Wesker, and the Mrozek, because people come here for festivities. They come with their kids for culture. It's very difficult to sell them things that are more provocative and less accepted than the Classics.²

In using the words "difficult to sell," Dr. Gascon put his finger on the key to what became Stratford's first disaster (in terms of body-count). The plays at the Avon only drew 38% of audience capacity. That figure is respectable in terms of what Stratford was attempting to do. It is a figure that surely would have risen in succeeding seasons of similar fare. It might even have been higher than it was in 1970, had Stratford's administration only realized that, for once in its history, it did indeed have to go out and sell something. But the Company had never had to sell before and so it had never developed the capacity to sell.³

The greatest part of the disaster was measured in dollars, but not so much from the standpoint of the loss to the company: it was the loss to hotel and restaurant tallies that resulted from a diminished audience, from an audience that did not stay in Stratford as long as they had in previous

¹Jean Gascon, private interview.

²Ibid.

³Tom Hendry, private interview.

seasons. The millions of dollars that were lost to local businessmen prompted the Board to demand an amputation of the left wing of the theatre. Consequently, Tom Hendry, who had backed the effort to initiate a season of original plays, resigned. He followed, by one year, the hasty resignation of another shortlived left-winger, John Hirsch.

The new plays might have been the first step to restoring a valuable theatre activity that has been trailing off slowly in New York for years. The chance to provide world premieres might have led to a new trend. There is talk of a small, third theatre at Stratford that will be used for staging new, experimental works, but after the reaction to the summer of 1970 and considering the departures of Mistfers Hendry and Hirsch it is doubtful that the idea will materialize with a policy that could be called bold or innovative.

Stratford will still continue to set a national standard of excellence. The refined quality of its classical productions will continue to impress people and introduce them to a living view of what Shakespeare ought to be like. But it is difficult to avoid wondering if the operations of the Classics Machine needs an artist or a man with an oil can. One other step that the Company might definitely undertake for the benefit of itself and Canada, is to forego the annual trips to England for talent, and, instead, send out talent scouts (a la Major League Baseball) to watch all of the productions

of the professional theatre companies in Canada and sign the good actors or technicians or directors that are being developed in companies like Theatre Calgary, the Neptune, The Playhouse, etc. Visits should be made and artists should be watched so that they can be evaluated empirically and through conditions that give them a proper chance to display their talents.¹ If the nation failed to supply the needs of Stratford, a trip might then be made to foreign markets.

The aims of Stratford need to be redefined so that they reflect a cognizance of Canada's Theatrical needs in the 70's and so that the Festival might rattle tradition occasionally and always relate its actions to artistic values.

In addition to Stratford, two other Festivals have been developed in Canada. Each of them has only two factors in common with Stratford: they are both based in Canada and they are both called Festivals. To varying degrees, each of the three Festivals has a specific thematic purpose: the Stratford Shakespearean Festival uses Shakespeare as its core, the Shaw Festival regularly features the plays of George Bernard Shaw, and the Charlottetown Summer Festival has built its reputation on its willingness to offer original Canadian musicals, performed by Canadian artists. The three festivals

¹This was about the only positive and constructive thinking about Stratford encountered in the interviews made across Canada--outside of Stratford. The thinking here is Christopher Newton's, from a private interview at Theatre Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, August, 1970.

all offer additional employment to Canadian actors and all operate in the summer months (though Stratford has recently extended its activities to a twelve-month period). There the similarities cease.

The Shaw Festival

The Shaw Festival was started in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario in 1962, and was incorporated into the laws of that Province on 22 July 1963. The Festival limited itself to productions of Shaw's works until 1967, when it altered its policy to include one of Shaw's major plays, one of his more obscure plays, and a significant non-Shavian work. It is doubtful, however, that Shaw, in spite of his volume of writing will hold up as well, or have as many works worth repeating as Shakespeare. The heads of the Shaw Festival seem to sense this and are struggling for a feasible policy in working with and around Shaw. The Festival also presents seminars and film festivals that relate to the life and plays of Shaw and they have made some significant efforts to relate to music concerts.

Audience response and the economics of the Festival have shown steady growth through the seasons to 1970.

The Shaw Festival productions are staged in a theatre that was created by re-modeling the old local Court House. An intimate theatre was created which seats 385 people. The

physical facilities needed in common theatre operations, however, have been minimal or non-existent. To be able to provide for growing production needs and an expanding audience (which often fills about 97% of the house), the Festival has undertaken a fund-raising campaign with a goal of \$2.5 million which will be used to build a new 800-seat, proscenium arch theatre directly behind the Court House Theatre. The Court House Theatre would be retained by the Festival for experimental productions.

Though the Shaw Festival has undertaken some limited off-season and pre-season touring, it plans to remain, essentially, a summer operation in the small pleasant border town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The Charlottetown Summer Festival

The Charlottetown Summer Festival, named after the city in which it is based--which has a population of 18,500 and is located on the south shore of Prince Edward Island, is as unique in its nature as it was in terms of its creation. In the city of Charlottetown, Mayor Moore turned a least-likely-to-succeed situation into a thriving Festival with a rapidly expanding international reputation. Having visited Prince Edward Island, this author concluded that the Charlottetown Summer Festival is producing musical dramas and comedies on

a lavish scale and with critical standards that easily vie with, if not surpass, Broadway's musicals.¹ And most of the work at Charlottetown has been composed, staged, and performed by Canadians!

The Festival is mounted in a theatre that no community the size of Charlottetown should have, and, indeed, it is doubtful that there are any other communities with fewer than 20,000 citizens that can boast of a \$5.5 million arts complex that includes a 946-seat theatre, a library, an art gallery, a restaurant, and a small convention hall. Many of the people of Charlottetown did not want the structure to begin with; many of them actively resisted the plan to tear down the city's market place, and some of them still refuse to enter the new complex that stands on the site of that old open market.

The Confederation Centre was conceived as a living memorial to the meeting that took place in Charlottetown in 1864 when the Fathers of the Confederation met to discuss the formation of Canada. Inasmuch as the meeting had National significance, it was decided that the shrine to the occasion should be National in character. Accordingly, the Federal Government backed the project with a grant equal to 15 cents per Canadian citizen, and the Provinces, due to

¹Some of the basic statistics of the 1970 Festival might help to indicate its potential: a basic acting company of 31 actors was hired, a 20-piece orchestra was brought in, a production staff of 30 people put it all together, and a budget of over \$300,000 paid for it all.

the persuasive powers of Dr. Frank McKinnon, also contributed amounts equal to 15 cents per capita of their populations.

The Confederation Centre, which many skeptics viewed as an enormous "white elephant," which they felt would ultimately have little value beyond use as a potato warehouse, opened in 1964 with token art events, that included a re-enactment of the Meeting of the Fathers of the Confederation. The opening of the theatre revealed a potential for an ambitious theatre venture.

In 1965 the Centre housed the first of its very successful Festival programs. Mr. Mavor Moore laid out the designs for a full company, planned a season featuring original Canadian works and Canadian talent¹ and secured a \$10,000 grant from the Canada Council. Anne of Green Gables was featured in the 1965 season and has since become a tradition--its reopening has become a ritual. Anne drew so much favorable attention to itself, that the play (without the Canadian cast) opened for a modest run in London. Anne was also sent (with a Canadian cast) to the 1970 World's Fair in Osaka, Japan, where it was warmly received and was even studied in the public school system.

By the summer of 1970, the Festival's fare had settled to a pattern of three musicals including Anne of Green Gables.

¹With the notable exception of Jamie Ray, who played the title role in Anne of Green Gables for the first two years; Miss Ray was born and educated in Texas.

In the six years that had passed, the expenditures and revenues of the Festival had more than doubled, the contribution by the Canada Council had multiplied geometrically to \$120,000, and the attendance records were reflecting steady growth.¹

Alan Lund, who succeeded Mavor Moore as Artistic Director after the 1967 season, continued through the 1970 Festival as the only director and choreographer for the three summer productions. Mr. Lund does not yet feel that he can trust another person with the responsibility of mounting a full musical production in the limited time that is available for rehearsals. Mr. Lund's own rehearsals tend to emphasize the validity of his point. Alan Lund is like Walt Disney: he waves his arms and with the apparent simplicity of Disney's famous paint-brush, everything falls into place. At the next rehearsal, if the colors seem the least bit out of place or faded, Mr. Lund starts painting from scratch again and with amazing speed he sets his dancing-singing choruses in new motions. Yet the new motions are never fixed either, the changes go on up through final dress rehearsal. Mr. Lund's sense of the needs of a given script or score comes through his reactions to the range and contributions of his actors.

After watching rehearsals of Jane Eyre for a few days, it became obvious that nothing in the production which

¹Based on information taken from Application Forms that were submitted to the Canada Council over a six-year period. The Forms are on file in the Council's offices in Ottawa at 140 Wellington. The files are confidential, but access might be granted if written permission is obtained from the Council's clients.

might have been pre-conceived had survived the changes in staging. Mr. Lund's energy and desire for re-staging contribute to a healthy state of insecurity in the Company about what the final product will look and sound like. What ultimately does occur is a balance of the professional experience of the actors with the alchemy of Alan Lund.

Unfortunately, Mr. Lund does seem a bit lost in the presence of actors who need strong close direction on the details of dramatic interpretation. Perhaps if he were to direct a few legitimate, small-cast dramas or make use of a dramatic director, the problem could be resolved.

The Charlottetown Summer Festival is an Entertainment industry. It produces glittering, large-cast musicals that are rich as sheer entertainment. There has been no attempt to work with contemporary criticisms of life or controversial material. Jack McAndrew, the Festival's new Producer, has no desire to offer anything other than musicals that are on the scale and of the nature of Anne of Green Gables. The philosophy of the Festival is, by virtue of its productions, a form of respectable escapism.

The 1970 season has produced some doubts about the sincerity of the Festival's frequent claim that it produces original, Canadian musicals; a studied look at the 1970 program reveals that Anne of Green Gables had its sixth

"original" opening, Private Turvey's War was mounted for its second premiere, and Jane Eyre, a thoroughly British product opened second to its world premiere which had taken place in London's West End seven years earlier. The Festival is becoming somewhat redundant in its success.

Failures in Toronto

In direct contrast to the achievements of the Festival and Regional Theatres of Canada, are the enormous failures that have plagued the city of Toronto right up through the first dismal, mismanaged season at the St. Lawrence Centre.¹

Mr. Herbert Whittaker, drama critic for The Globe and Mail, feels that failure is imminent among permanent companies in a city that is still visited so frequently by road shows bearing popular; i.e., Broadway, titles.

In 1967 the Canada Council admitted: "The story of Toronto is not yet the story of success."²

Miss Jean Roberts, who had once directed for the Canadian Players, admitted while reflecting on her experience:

Toronto is a very difficult theatre town. People have tried and tried and tried to find some way to establish an on-going theatre that would live there. . . . Somehow it hits snag after snag after snag.³

¹Herbert Whittaker, "What Went Wrong at St. Lawrence?," The Globe and Mail, May 2, 1970, p. 27.

²The Canada Council, 10th Annual Report, 1966-67, p. 23.

³Jean Roberts, private interview.

Enormous sums of government money have been poured and pumped into Toronto's theatre companies, but the result is always the same: (1) audiences fade, (2) costs outstrip even the most lavish grants, and (3) unpaid invoices finally bury the desperate final efforts to stay alive.

A small group with the title Toronto Workshop Productions has been struggling for nearly ten years with an approach to staging that represents an extension of the ideas and methods of Joan Littlewood. The group's modest operations have begun to develop a sense of continuity and a respectable level of success. In 1970 they accepted an invitation to play in New York, and were warmly received there though they were undersold.

The controversial St. Lawrence Centre opened with points for the skeptics as it offered four original works that seem to have been selected by a theatrical saboteur. According to Herbert Whittaker, the Centre opened for "an unsuccessful trial run" in which the selection of plays was bad, the directing was "heavy-handed," the actors were inferior, and, as a final blow:

In grabbing for the young audience and the workers, Moore and Major snubbed the audience that does support the theatre.¹

¹Herbert Whittaker, "What Went Wrong at St. Lawrence?."

The Talent Supply

In spite of the wreckage that is piling up in Toronto, that city retains an identity as a mecca for theatre talents. The concentration of actors is due largely to the extensive operations conducted there by the CBC. Though the city has little to offer in the way of live theatre employment, actors like the financial potential of the numerous broadcasting commercials, serials, and occasional dramas that originate in Toronto. Regional Theatre directors have complained on occasion that it is difficult to pull talent out of the city since some actors are afraid of losing a commercial.

The supply of good, available talents is being enhanced on at least two levels and diminished on a third. The negative factor is essentially a problem with emmigration. Canadian performers with developed abilities are easily lured to bigger, more competitive and more active markets in New York, Hollywood, London, and Paris. The challenge of these large capitals has retained the creative efforts of people like Lorne Greene, Donald Sutherland, John Hirsch, Zoe Caldwell, Raymond Massey, and Christopher Plummer. However the volume of theatre activities in Canada, higher standards, and better money are beginning to hold and draw more established talent. A number of Canadians now make forays into other countries and return to their home. Understandably, they return with new energies and ideas.

The pool of native talent is receiving significant additions through the training programs of the National Theatre School in Montreal. The School was created in 1958 under the direction of the Canadian Centre of the ITI with help and advice from Michel Saint-Denis. The School, originally run by Jean Gascon, Powys Thomas, and James Domville, annually produces a small number of highly trained people, who are normally absorbed by the professional theatre in Canada:

The purpose of the School is to prepare actors, designers and technicians for the theatre. The programmes of study are intensive, arduous, challenging and creative. The promise of the School to its students is not to produce accomplished artists, but rather to provide them with a concrete basis on which they may build their art.¹

In addition to the National Theatre School, the professional theatres of Canada are beginning to make use of a few graduates of University theatre programs. However, members of the profession generally regard educational theatre with contempt, or, at best (unless it might pragmatically serve their needs), with sighs of indifference or silent envious glances at the magnificent physical facilities that the Universities have been/are constructing.

There are at least two Universities that seem to be sensitive to professional needs and standards. The most impressive program (informally held in high regard by a

¹The National Theatre School 1970, School Catalogue, Montreal, 1970.

number of Artistic Directors) is found in the University of Alberta in Edmonton. The other program is in the University of British Columbia. There are other Universities and Colleges with drama programs that do manage to place their graduates in professional companies, but that occurrence is rare.

According to Harvey Chusid,

University drama is . . . an extremely important catalyst in the formation of a popular theatre In Canada, the organization of efficient campus theatrical communities under the direction of qualified artists is still deficient.¹

Educational theatre in Canada is generally younger than the modern professional theatre. Though a possibility may have existed for good academic-professional relations, the heavy infiltration of American teachers has cut off the chance of developing anything indigenous in Canada. The Americans have brought with them the open animosities that have plagued efforts to resolve educational-professional theatre differences and achieve a better theatre standard in the United States. Perhaps a loosening of the dogmatic attitudes of the Canadian University Theatre Association could be beneficially mixed with the new views of the Dominion Drama Festival and with the Canadian Theatre Centre as a kind of liaison for the Universities and the Profession.

¹Harvey Chusid, "University Theatres in Canada, Their Influence on Future Audiences," The Performing Arts in Canada, (Winter, 1966), p. 23.

Despite a number of shortcomings, it is evident that the cultural context for the Canadian Regional Theatre Movement is very active and on a positive, expanding track. The Culture of Canada is rapidly developing, and, as the following two chapters will show, the Regional Theatres are an integral and vital part of the whole.

CHAPTER III

THE FOUNDING AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL THEATRES

Conditions for Creation

There has been no pattern in the development of the Regional Theatre Movement. It simply began and expanded. There is no formula for the daily or annual activities in any one or all of the theatres. What has happened artistically, or inartistically as the case may be, has been due to the intellectual and physical energies and the resources of those people who have experienced theatre leadership. The attitudes and peak drives of artists change and artists in the theatre frequently change jobs. Consequently, anyone who enters or observes this organic theatre process will likely fail to see much order or direction. Very often the experience of one moment conditions the next moment and little thought is given to what will follow that.

The creation of vital professional theatre activities on a main stage, studio stage, or theatre school stage depends on proper timing, a sense of need, intellectual energy, and money. These required factors do not often emerge as a product of foresight; they rather tend to arise

through chance, and, if directed by talent, they become exciting. Attempts to sustain that excitement succeed sometimes, but usually fail or succumb to mediocrity as the energies that lifted the idea to a great reality are re-directed or disappear.

The Manitoba Theatre Centre, the Neptune Theatre, the Playhouse Theatre Company, the Citadel Theatre, Theatre New Brunswick, and Theatre Calgary were all created in response to a sense of artistic need that was felt within the respective communities. No one came into the communities from the outside with an organized company or a proposal for starting a company; the impetus was always born in the minds of men and women who had lived a good part, if not all, of their lives in a community that found itself wanting some form of contact with a living theatrical expression. With the exception of the Manitoba Theatre Centre, where the vision of a professional theatre company first occurred to John Hirsch and Ton Hendry--two dedicated theatre amateurs with professional standards and aspirations, the efforts to found professional companies and attract professional directors, actors, and technicians, began among influential and energetic people with amateur theatre experience, or with no theatre background at all--only a strong desire to see a theatre created.

The fact that each of the Regional Theatres was created with the strong support of ambitious and forward-looking members of the local citizenries, undoubtedly has had a positive effect on their survival, on their communications with the community, and on their potential for relevance. Without a volunteer squad of enthusiasts committed to the ideal of urban refinement through a living theatre, it seems unlikely that a Board of Directors with a "functional" view of existence (i.e.: from fund-raising to supplemental usher corps) could be created. And, certainly, the existing theatres have all found Boards crucial to their establishment and essential to their survival.

From a theatre person's point of view, it seems obvious that there is a need for a live professional theatre company in all communities; however, the resistance shown in Kelowna, British Columbia, and the failure of any material action in St. John's, Newfoundland, Windsor, Ontario, or Hamilton, Ontario, suggests that the essential presence of local "want" and the energy required to do something about it are lacking.

The study in this chapter, of the inception of six Regional Theatres, will show that the ideas for those theatres all arose within the cities and that the ideas, in all cases have followed a similar process; i.e., they have been turned into administrative and artistic structures that resemble what emerged at the Manitoba Theatre Centre.

The Manitoba Theatre Centre

The founding of the Manitoba Theatre Centre was partially inspired by the creation and success of Stratford; which, since 1953, had (1) proven the viability of professional theatre outside of New York, (2) inside of Canada, (3) based in a small town, and (4) sustained on a bill of Classics! However, the greatest force for turning the idea of MTC into a reality rests with a small group of men who provided the needed time, money, effort, and talent.

Winnipeg was ideal as a starting place for a chain of Regional Theatres, or a decentralized national theatre (though certainly no one ever thought of it that way).

The natural environment of Winnipeg is dull and offers little in the line of activities that might compete with the theatre for attention (as opposed to Halifax, Fredericton, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver). In addition, there are no other significant metropolitan areas within a normal day's drive; there is nothing but the vast, flat expanse of the prairie--and people. In view of the isolated nature of the city, the unentertaining countryside, and the cold, long winter nights, the Manitoba Theatre Centre has always been in a strong position to present theatre that reflects or comments on life, and the audiences have been attentive. At least this would seem to be the case, since John Hirsch, founding Artistic Director of the Manitoba Theatre Centre, observed:

Here there is nothing but you and the community. The community within the prairie and within a very wild and kind of empty space. Man is very much thrown back upon his own resources here and that is quite a challenge for the artist.¹

Since John Hirsch had lived in Winnipeg for almost half of his life, at the time he co-founded the Manitoba Theatre Centre, he was able to sense the pulse of Winnipeg and to understand the nature of local political, economic, social, and ethnic problems. His knowledge of the personalities that made up the problems and their methods of resolving or avoiding them allowed him to select plays and direct them with an obvious meaning for the local scene.

One of the inherent values in a decentralized national theatre complex is the potential for each theatre company to become an identifiable part of the local environment in which it operates. However, that can only be possible if the Artistic Director has had sufficient time (perhaps 3-5 years) to become acquainted with the sub-surface of the community in which he will work. Yet, with the exception of John Hirsch and Eddie Gilbert at the MTC, Joy Coghill at the Playhouse, and Heinar Piller at the Neptune, all artistic directors in the Regional Theatres have been brought in from places outside of the communities, and without any time for developing an awareness of local thinking, they have begun

¹John Hirsch, "Questions and Answers," p. 39.

directing. What happens then to the relevance of the Regional Theatre while the Artistic Director tries (hopefully) to see behind the mask of the city in which he works? Understandably, there is more to projecting theatrical appositions than time-in-residence, and there are other values in Regional Theatres besides showing a play's obvious relation to local conditions--but the point being made here is not merely academic: since the theatres can only be as effective as their artistic leadership and since the leadership has at least a theoretical responsibility to stimulate more than plain laughter or unchanneled shock in the theatre, there is cause to wonder how the theatres can avoid a level of indifference to their patrons when Artistic Directorships tend to be passed on to "outsiders" approximately every three years.

Hirsch succeeded in relating his work to Winnipeg.

Tom Hendry, who was also active in the founding of the MTC, and who, as first Administrator, strove to create a financial environment that permitted reasonable artistic freedom, reported:

The reason we started a theatre was because we wanted to work in the theatre and there wasn't any other way to work in the theatre except to start one.¹

¹Tom Hendry as quoted in "Theatre," Canadian Art, March/April, 1962, p. 155.

In 1957 Tom Hendry and John Hirsch started Theatre 77, and in the following year, through a merging action with the Winnipeg Little Theatre, the Manitoba Theatre Centre was created.

The Winnipeg Little Theatre began as an amateur organization in 1921, and continued a modest production schedule up to 1938, when it disbanded because of the war. The organization was re-incarnated in 1948, and in the ten years that followed it produced over forty plays and sponsored a series of Members' Nights programs which consisted of play readings and one-act performances that gave ". . . additional opportunities for directors and actors, besides much pleasure to members."¹

In time it became clear that in order to grow, the WLT would have to seek the service of a professional director and acquire a small theatre for their productions. To take care of the first need, the Board conceived, in 1955, of a Theatre Development Fund with a modest aim of raising \$5,000 a year to pay for the salary of a professional director. In 1956 a Trust was set up and for the 1956-57 season, Arthur Zigouras, a graduate of the Yale School of Drama, was hired to assume production responsibility for four shows and a group of workshops designed to assist in the development of local acting talents.²

¹MTC Brief to the Canada Council, 1958, p. 2.

²Ibid., p. 4.

During the first nine years of WLT's post-war existence, the group mounted its productions in the city-owned Playhouse. The arrangement had, because of rental fees and size of the theatre (capacity over 1,500), limited rehearsal time and restricted the number of performances to two. The need for a more manageable theatre became a factor of growth and so the group began exploring for a new home. In 1957:

An anonymous benefactor offered WLT the use of the Dominion Theatre, which is ideally situated close to Portage and Main [the city centre]; seats 850 and is in good condition for legitimate stage productions.

The agreement with the owner requires WLT to pay as rent only a sum equal to the owner's carrying charges, amounting at present to about \$5,000 a year. These are, of course, extraordinarily generous terms. . . .¹

The Dominion Theatre, which was to become the home of the MTC for nine seasons, had previously housed vaudeville, burlesque, movies, and local troupes like the Permanent Players, the Community Players, and the professional John Holden Players (" . . . the only stock company in North America which survived the five leanest years of the Depression"²). The theatre was originally designed to seat 1,100, but changes in the plans finally brought the number down to 850, with 450 in the orchestra and 400 in the balcony

¹Ibid., p. 5.

²Lynne Holt, "Exit--The Dominion," Winnipeg Free Press, April 20, 1968.

and gallery. The theatre first opened on December 12, 1904, and was closed for razing on April 20, 1968. During the time the theatre was occupied by the WLT and MTC, its proscenium arch was 35' wide, 18' 10" to 22' 10" high, and the stage depth was 25'. A sense of intimacy was possible as the back seat in the auditorium was less than 70' from the apron.

The values of having control of such a physical plant, at such insignificant cost to the organization, were immediately apparent: a permanent rehearsal and workshop space enhanced the quality of the productions and the reduced seating permitted a run extension from two to five nights. Attendance rose sharply, ticket revenues doubled and production costs per performance dropped. The availability of the theatre in 1957-58 ". . . enabled Messrs. John Hirsch and Tom Hendry to launch the venture 'Theatre 77' (the Dominion is 77 steps from the corner of Portage and Main)."¹

John Hirsch had come to Winnipeg at age 17, as a Hungarian refugee who had lost his parents in Auschwitz. He quickly adapted to Canada and applied his creative impulses to puppetry and to directing children's plays for the Junior League's Children's Theatre of Winnipeg (his first production for them was staged in 1947 and he was paid \$200). Then he

¹MTC Brief to the Canada Council, 1958, p. 6.

began to offer production assistance at WLT. He also started directing some of the productions at WLT and at the Winnipeg Summer Theatre Association which is now known as Rainbow Stage. He spent three years as a producer in the Winnipeg studios of the CBC, and then journeyed to England for theatre studies. He returned to Winnipeg when Theatre 77 became a sound possibility for lighting up WLT's "new" theatre on some of the many dark nights that spaced out their twenty-performance calendar. Also interested in sharing the Dominion and working with Hirsch on Theatre 77 was Tom Hendry, who had earned a degree as a Chartered Accountant, and who had accumulated a variety of theatre experiences as an actor, playwright, and manager for Rainbow Stage. The chemistry of Hirsch's and Hendry's personalities blended with a sense of purpose and resourcefulness that was to have a profound effect on theatre in Winnipeg, and, in time, on the whole Regional Theatre Movement in Canada. Hirsch and Hendry were bold, creative, and indefatigable. They balanced artistic impulse with plain hard work in enormous quantities and "produced" in the fullest sense of the word:

In 1957-58, Theatre 77 put on 41 performances of five productions, attracted a total audience of 25,000 (an average of 610 per performance), paid small fees to its principal actors, and returned a modest income for the two partners. The quality of its productions was generally considered high, and the response of Winnipeg audiences to this large extra supply of theatre performances was most encouraging.¹

¹Ibid., p. 7.

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It was soon recognized that the talents and energies existed for an organization that might transcend the separate efforts of WLT and Theatre 77 and provide Winnipeg audiences with a higher level of quality theatre. The directors of both organizations had also sensed the need for a theatre school, and to that end, Zigouras and Hirsch had, in 1957-58 conducted workshops. Their desire to develop a more comprehensive program encouraged a pooled effort. The advantage of avoiding the duplicate overhead costs of two organizations provided more impetus, and then the departure of Mr. Zigouras for the greener fields of CBC increased the desirability of having John Hirsch as Artistic Director of one larger and more efficient theatre company.

On July 16, 1958, John Hirsch and Tom Hendry, representing Theatre 77, sat down in Don Campbell's backyard with Ogden Turner, Gordon Horner, Bill Stobie, David Jones, and Don Campbell, who were representing WLT, and soon thereafter they all represented the Manitoba Theatre Centre, ". . . so named to indicate an intention to extend its activities beyond the limits of the city of Winnipeg."¹ In the transfer, John Hirsch assumed directing responsibilities for major productions, shared by Miss Zara Shakow, and for the theatre school. Tom Hendry became the first

¹Ibid., p. 8.

Administrative Director and the Board of Directors of the Winnipeg Little Theatre became the Board of Governors of the Manitoba Theatre Centre. The Board drew from a wide range of useful expertise:

| <u>EXECUTIVE</u> | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Position | Name | Occupation |
| President | Donald Campbell | Partner,
Price Waterhouse &
Co., C.A. |
| Vice-President | J. Ogden Turner | Professor of English,
University of
Manitoba |
| Vice-President | Miss A. Aparling | Publicity,
T. Eaton Co., Ltd. |
| Vice-President | Gordon H. Horner | Secretary-Treasurer,
Western Gypsum
Products, Ltd. |
| Past President | W. G. Stobie | Professor of English
University of
Manitoba |
| Honorary Solicitor | David Jones | Partner, Thompson
Dilts Jones Hall
& Dewar
Barristers &
Solicitors |
| Honorary Treasurer | Desmond R. Smith | Manager,
Price Waterhouse
& Co. |
| Secretary | Mrs. Adele
Nicholson | James Richardson &
Sons Ltd. |
| Secretary | Mrs. Alan G.
Graham | ---- |

Other Members of the Board

| <u>Name</u> | <u>Occupation</u> |
|------------------------|---|
| Percy Genser | President, Genser's Limited |
| R. A. Hubber-Richard | Managing Director,
Eastern Terminal Elevator Co.
Ltd. |
| Tom Kent | Editor, Winnipeg Free Press |
| Mrs. Jean Murray | ---- |
| K. W. McNaught | Professor of History
United College |
| E. B. Osler | Assistant Secretary,
Osler, Hammond & Nanton |
| Mrs. Ronald Richardson | Representative of the Junior League |
| Maitland B. Steinkoff | Barrister & Solicitor |
| Hugh F. Wheaton | Refinery Manager,
Imperial Oil Co., Ltd. ¹ |

All of these people assisted in pushing and pulling MTC through its first season and many of these people continued to help up through the organization's first decade. The concept here of a business managed by Artistic and Administrative Directors and governed by a Board of Directors with an Executive Committee has been duplicated by the five other Regional Theatres.

The lease for the Dominion Theatre, of course, was entrusted to the Manitoba Theatre Centre. However, the

¹Ibid., p. 9.

anticipated peace and security of possessing exclusive rights to a theatre was not permanent: in the season of 1959-60, MTC had to pack up its stage braces and typewriters and move to the Beacon Theatre while \$100,000 worth of renovations were undertaken at the Dominion. Although they were able to move back into the Dominion in the spring of 1960, the company still had to endure separate, spread-out quarters for different facets of its operations. Ogden Turner, then President of MTC, described the conditions in his 1962 report:

In general, we have been, during this past year, still too far spread: with offices in the Avenue Building; school, studio, and carpenter shop on Albert Street; a rehearsal room in The Playhouse; costume department in the Velie Building; and performances next door in the Dominion Theatre. . . .¹

Minor shifting of operations continued up to 1970 and will likely continue in the future. In addition, there were two more major shifts after the 1960-61 season: the first came in 1968 when the company had to evacuate the Dominion which was being torn down to provide space for a large office building. So the company considered the possibilities for a temporary home and decided on going into the very large and incompatible but new Concert Hall (with a capacity of 2,300 and a gaping 110' proscenium opening that swallows even the most dynamic legitimate theatre productions). Then they

¹Ogden Turner, "Report of the President of Manitoba Theatre Centre for the Year Ended May 31, 1962," (typewritten), p. 3.

moved again in 1970 when they were able to occupy a new theatre plant that had been designed by MTC and was fully owned by MTC.

MTC has learned, however, that there was more to running a theatre than owning one. Hirsch had to convince Winnipeggers of the values of a legitimate, resident theatre company; in looking back, he commented on a variety of negative attitudes and misunderstandings that had existed:

I think that in Canada and perhaps particularly on the prairies, people looked at the theatre as strictly a commercial venture.

Also I think that in Winnipeg at any rate, people did not accept the fact that an artist, an actor, a director can be a useful human being. It had to do, I suppose, with the general attitude towards work; that work is a chore, it is a kind of punishment and then you get paid for it. Consequently the artist who works because he enjoys himself and because he does something he loves to do, shouldn't get paid because he's not suffering. And I think this was the cornerstone of the attitude that existed and that made it very difficult to start a theatre here.

There was something slightly sinful about theatre, wasteful and extravagant.¹

In addition to changing audience attitudes, Hirsch also found that he had to develop a reputation in the international talent pool and to this end he became one of the most traveled Canadian directors. Hirsch noted that he took all the trips:

Because I had to make contacts. I had to. I couldn't live here by myself all those years without talking to other people who are working in the theatre. And it

¹John Hirsch, "Questions and Answers," p. 39.

was impossible to get actors, designers and directors to work here without knowing somebody. Knowing me.

I had to go out and travel a great deal because I needed help. I needed people and they were not here, and you can't get people in the theatre through letters.¹

Looking back on the same problems of founding, Tom Hendry recalled some of the keys that provided for success:

What we had in those days was more important than money: we had an artistic director whose ideas were right for the situation and we had a group of missionaries willing to work very hard to convert an entire Province to a certain way of thinking about Theatre. About this aspect of theatre-founding, no one knows too much.

. . . MTC represents the results of the individual efforts of many people working together within a framework of common aims.²

Hendry also said that John and he were cognizant of a number of large minority groups in the city and he pointed out that the result is that Winnipeg ". . . is a city of terrific contradictions, which we took account of in our programming," so that with Hirsch's sense of artistic purpose the theatre became ". . . a mirror of what was going on in the city. . . ."³

The stuff of the mirror was made up from an incredibly wide range of theatrical endeavors. MTC, from its beginning, undertook to present a mixture of light plays balanced by works with a comment. It also established a training school, a children's theatre program, a lecture series, a studio or

¹Ibid., p. 40.

²Tom Hendry, "A View from the Beginning," 1965-66 Souvenir Program, published by Rothman's, p. 4.

³Tom Hendry, private interview.

experimental wing that over the years presented everything from fashion shows to regular bills of off-beat works by men like Ionesco and Shepard and from poetry readings to plays written by, directed by and starring high school students.

In 1961-62 MTC was expanding rapidly and it offered the following eight main stage productions:

The Lady's Not for Burning--Christopher Fry
 Speaking of Murder--Audrey and William Roos
 Playboy of the Western World--J. M. Synge
 Arms and the Man--G. B. Shaw
 The Boy Friend--Sandy Wilson
 Separate Tables--Terrance Rattigan
 Thief's Carnival--Jean Anouilh
 Look Ahead--Len Peterson (original Canadian play)
 Waiting for Godot--Samuel Beckett (unscheduled Bonus
 Production, played for 8 performances)

Some of the critics' comments about these shows might cast light on the quality that was achieved. Ann Henry of The Winnipeg Tribune reviewed Playboy of the Western World:

Miss [Zoe] Caldwell is quite simply, superb. As Margaret Flaherty (called Pegeen Mike) she is passionate, earthly, the focus of the play. She holds the eye with her strength, beauty and power and the ear with the way she can make her voice croon or shout and project human emotion. It is a memorable performance and I am sure the most beautiful work we have ever seen on an MTC stage.¹

Miss Henry also reviewed the original musical,

Look Ahead:

Winnipeggers, who were lucky enough to have first night seats at the world premiere Friday at the Theatre Centre, of Look Ahead, witnessed, not only a smashing good musical that was fun from beginning to end; they saw a new era in Canadian theatre.

¹Ann Henry, "Playboy Opening was an Exciting Evening," The Winnipeg Tribune, December 2, 1961.

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Len Peterson has written and Morris Surdin has provided the music for a satire of hilarious but edged laughter at things Canadian. It is a first collaboration for the two. It is a riot. It is brilliant, the kind of comment on Canadiana we have waited for.

Director John Hirsch has, in this all-Canadian musical, a play he may have been preparing himself for all of his life. His direction is a manifestation of his regard for and admiration of what Peterson and Surdin are saying. It emerges as a triumphant piece of theatre, with the talents of all three blending perfectly.¹

Christopher Dafoe of The Winnipeg Free Press found much to admire in the production of Waiting for Godot:

It will, I think, be remembered by many, including myself, as the best production of the 1961-62 season.

The members of the MTC cast are, without exception, of the first order.

It was a performance that will burn long in memory.²

There was more than critical applause that season. On the other side, Robert Russell of Canadian Art had also seen Playboy of the Western World, and was strongly at odds with the reaction of Miss Henry:

I was disappointed by what I saw.

. . . All of the performances were in a different style, and this brings us to the core of the problem: there was no clear idea beneath the production, no raison d'etre to which everything should have related. Whatever director Desmond Scott had in mind, he failed to communicate to his actors, and it certainly didn't come across.

¹Ann Henry, "This Play Marks New Era in Theatre Here," The Winnipeg Tribune, May 12, 1962.

²Christopher Dafoe, "Waiting for Godot," The Winnipeg Free Press, April 3, 1962.

There are many reasons why a production might fail, but to me this is the least excusable; that a company would do a production without knowing why.¹

Mr. Russell's review may have had some validity, however, he was not content to simply condemn the production of Playboy:

In my four days with the company, I tried to discover what their artistic policy was: I left with the impression they never had one, but that they are seeking it through trial-and-error in their choice of play, and also somehow by trying to raise the quality of their acting team and of their productions. These may be admirable aims, but they certainly aren't a policy.²

Hirsch and Hendry have indicated that the policy of MTC was, in part, to mirror the contradictions and life styles of Winnipeg, and to envision the potentials of men thrown back on themselves in a prairie void. MTC was striving to relate to its own region and to respected insiders like Ann Henry and Christopher Dafoe (who may have occasionally been a bit influenced by local pride) many of the plays did manage to reflect upon the tempo and conditions in Winnipeg, or at least they provided a new level of theatrical experience; whereas to an outsider like Russell, with a Toronto or Montreal experience, the MTC "gestalt" might have little meaning. It is perhaps easier to become critical of the artistic policy of a Regional Theatre when the critic is a stranger to the region serviced by that theatre--just as it is perhaps dangerous, as has already been pointed out, for a stranger to

¹Robert Russell, "Theatre," Canadian Art, March/April, 1962, p. 156.

²Ibid.

assume control of a Regional Theatre's policy (although the event has already become common to the Regional Theatre Movement). On the other hand, incest usually is undesirable, and the best way to fight it is to bring in people from the outside who can bring fresh views with them, or to send members of the Regional Theatres (and newspapers) to other communities and theatre capitols. Unfortunately, a number of Artistic Directors have moved into their theatres and have given up travel.

Mr. Russell went on to posit a warning that time seems to have been rendered pertinent to some of the theatres in Canada (and many of the theatres in the United States):

The danger is . . . that the regional companies will attempt to build their following, not by digging into the heart of the great classics and modern dramas and comedies, but by taking the fashionable successes of the commercial theatre as soon as they become available and dashing them thoughtlessly upon the local stage.¹

MTC has offered a share of potboilers and fluff to satisfy the middle-class, but its record (see Appendix A for a complete list) also indicates frequent contact with substantial plays. The personalities that have controlled the artistic policy of MTC have been sensitive and have possessed strong opinions about life, direction, and Winnipeg. They have tried to contribute a vital subtext to the plays that have been worth it.

¹Ibid.

In terms of theatrical aims, the Centre has certainly tried, with uncommon energy, to make noble thoughts realities.

In 1959 the Centre articulated three basic aims:

1. The establishment of sound professional theatre to provide worthwhile entertainment at popular prices--and to develop and retain talent.
2. The establishment of a school of drama to provide a firm basis on which the theatre can operate, and to contribute to the educational and cultural life of the community.
3. The encouragement of good amateur theatre throughout Manitoba.

In 1966 the aims were condensed:

It is the aim of the Manitoba Theatre Centre to study, practice and promote all aspects of the dramatic art.

In the formative years the Centre pursued its aims with unavoidable restraint; indeed, it may have been some of the effects of that restraint that ruffled Russell. In its first year of production the Centre operated on a budget of \$65,000 which then rose to \$223,000 for 1961-62, and went up to \$528,000 for 1970-71 (of course season ticket prices also rose--from a range of \$10-\$12 in the first year to \$15-\$33 in 1970-71, and audiences, subsidies, and donations all rose accordingly). One method of holding down costs in the early days was by offering very small talent fees.

MTC's Brief to the Canada Council for 1959 noted that:

In the 1958-59 season a system of "scholarships" was used for the payments of actors. The sums were low and the endeavour to run a semi-professional series

[illegible]

along with an amateur series which was expected to be just as good proved unsatisfactory. We were therefore happy to receive \$8,000.00 from the Canada Council to set up a proper system of payment to actors. This has been worked out on a fixed, though modest scale, and has proven a great advantage.¹

By 1962, MTC was up to paying Equity minimum, and amateurs were being phased out of the productions (amateurs have not disappeared entirely: occasional large cast shows use local people for small or walk-on roles) as improving economics enticed better actors and production schedules conflicted with most amateurs' working days. The desire and ability to pay professional actors (those who support themselves on their income from acting) was to be emulated as a necessary standard for quality by the five Regional and two Festival Theatres that followed. Reflecting on the acting quality that money brought, Tom Hendry expressed a reaction in 1962 that was picked up as a policy with the founding of other theatres:

The Canadian Players failed. Why? Lack of quality. Stratford is a success. Why? Because (a) it is a terrific gimmick coupled with (b) quality. Nuoveau Monde succeeds because of quality.

Our error in thinking was that in using people who were semi-professional, part-time and everything, just because we were providing something that wasn't there at all before, we were going to attract an audience. That was wrong. We should have been presenting the best people from the start. As Stratford did.²

¹MTC Brief to the Canada Council, 1959-60, p. 5.

²Tom Hendry as quoted in "Theatre," p. 115.

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It was not long before this attitude rendered the Manitoba Theatre Centre a sort of winter haven for many of Stratford's actors. At times, when Stratford actors were not available in sufficient numbers, the Centre avoided a "talent regression" by going abroad. The review of the 1966-67 season cites such a case:

A marked shortage of suitable and available Canadian actors caused us to cast many roles in New York and some in London. It is now apparent that we must continue to import talent for some time to come in order to maintain and improve the quality of our work.¹

With that sort of acting potential in the programs, the artistic integrity of MTC could easily rise above most winter seasons on the North American Continent.

The Theatre School and Potential Dangers

In the beginning, however, there was a shortage of actors and the Centre recognized that it could not ". . . compete with more lucrative TV offers."² To replace defectors to TV, the Centre made a modest effort to establish a theatre school in 1958 (the formal program began in 1960). In that first season, theatre staff members and local supplements instructed about thirty students on Saturdays. In the following year Miss Esme Crampton assumed the position of School

¹MTC Brief to Canada Council, 1966-67, p. 1.

²Ibid.

Director and plans were made for a six-course curriculum and private lessons. The school's first brochure announced an opening date of January 11, 1960 and stated:

The purpose of the Manitoba Theatre School is to provide a foundation for the training of present and future actors of the Manitoba Theatre Centre--with headquarters at the Dominion Theatre in Winnipeg; and to help raise the standard of Drama within the Province.¹

In the ten years that followed, the school shifted its focus and purpose, which was understandable since increased theatre activity in Canada and the National Theatre School both contributed to the talent supply and since the standards of excellence in production on the MTC main stage outstripped the school's potential for training actors. Consequently, the brochure for the 1970-71 term registers an obvious difference:

The aim of the Manitoba Theatre School is to encourage freedom of expression through drama, and thus stimulate an interest in theatre.

We are not a training school for the professional theatre, but a place where students may freely find their own level of involvement from the purely recreational to the potentially professional.²

During the 1960 term the school featured seven areas of study:

1. Comprehensive course for theatre students
(over 16)
2. Voice II
3. Single classes in voice, acting, or theatre history

¹1959 Brochure for the Manitoba Theatre School.

²1970 Brochure for the Manitoba Theatre School.

4. Speech and Drama classes for children (8-11 years)
5. Drama class--teenagers (12-16 years)
6. General course in speech
7. Private lessons.

In 1962, in a fund request letter to the Winnipeg Foundation, MTC's President, H. W. Caldwell indicated a desire to expand the school's role in the Winnipeg community:

. . . [The] Manitoba Theatre School aimed originally to provide training for actors associated with the Centre and to offer courses in speech and drama for children and adults already interested in theatre. These courses were offered on a part time basis. Now, while still continuing the foregoing, the school aims more towards endeavouring to expose as many young people, on as broad a base as possible, to theatre--both through its own classes and through work within city and suburban high schools.¹

Mr. Caldwell went on to list six projects that involved the theatre in expanded or new community contact:

1. The High School Drama Class, made of representatives from all City High Schools will be continued.
2. "Project Drama," a continuing series of lecture-demonstrations on important aspects of Drama, will begin in four High Schools in January 1962, with all sessions to be conducted by professional members of our staff.
3. Five Suburban High Schools are being given assistance in the organization and improvement of Drama Clubs.
4. A course in Drama Appreciation, conducted as part of the curriculum at Technical-Vocational High School will begin early in 1962 under the guidance of Manitoba Theatre School personnel.
5. At the Centre, during May, Manitoba Theatre School will sponsor the first Winnipeg Inter-High Drama Festival.

¹Letter from H. W. Caldwell, President of MTC, and addressed to the Advirosy Board, The Winnipeg Foundation, January 1962.

6. Six apprenticeships in Theatre have been offered to young persons, giving them free tuition at the Manitoba Theatre School, a modest living allowance, and the opportunity to learn first-hand about the theatre under the guidance of our staff.¹

By 1970, "Project Drama" expanded to 98 visits to elementary, junior, and secondary schools--19 of those visits were made to schools outside of Winnipeg. As a sort of reversal of the project, the Manitoba Theatre School began inviting local schools to bus-in their students for a morning or afternoon session with the Theatre School's facilities.

In addition to serving as Drama Club consultants in 1970, the school offered teachers' workshops at the elementary and junior high schools. Forty-three teachers were introduced to creative dramatics, movement, techniques of improvisation, and development of creative dramatics ideas into a performance script.

During its first year, the High School Drama Festival drew four presentations, in 1970 there were fifty-seven entries and seven of those were from out-of-town. The Festival concept was also extended in 1970 to accommodate the "First Manitoba Elementary/Junior High School Drama Festival," and forty-four groups entered.

The school also ran its second Manitoba High School Playwriting Competition in 1970. Though it was clearly

¹Ibid. For a more detailed account of the Manitoba Theatre School's activities, 1969-70 season, see the Annual Report for that period, reproduced in Appendix B.

advertised as a competition for high school students, the MTS received forty-five scripts from an age group of 10-65 years. The concept of "high school" obviously could not be adhered to and so all of the entries were considered. The Curtain Raisers, or Women's auxillary of MTC, donated \$200 for prizes.

In the fall of 1970 the school turned its building complex over to a Creative Arts Festival that lasted for several days and ran the gamut of artistic activity from painting graffitti and murals on the school's walls and floors to setting up a coffee house complete with rotating entertainment; from a potter's wheel to a film festival; from sculpture to an original poetry reading festival.

For the 1970-71 term, the activities of the school are loosely structured to meet the needs of specific age groups. There is a Junior School for children aged 7-12, an Intermediate School for ages 12-15, and a Senior School for ages 15-23. The school now exposes children and young adults to the disciplines of theatre art in a range that extends from pantomime to painting, from costuming to film making, and the students are encouraged to undertake individual explorations into the potentials of the separate disciplines. In a way the school contributes to a part of MTC's future audience by developing in the students an understanding and appreciation of dramatic expressions and forms of training.

The school has carefully developed methods for encouraging a release of creative impulses. The methods currently used, were distilled from a wide-open approach to try and test all ideas and suggestions for creative theatre experiences. David Barnet, a graduate of Rose Bruford College in England, assumed the position of School Director in 1966-67 and set out to challenge the validity of the practices that were being used at the school. He also tested, and rejected, many of the theories he came in contact with through reading. His "system" in 1970-71 is an interesting mixture of the ideas that work and his own very creative personality and his understanding of the needs of the school's different age groups. Barnet, however, does not seem to be so interested in creating respect for the structured works that are staged a block away from the school on MTC's main stage, as he is in using a "game" approach to create receptivity to honest and revealing expressions.

In a sense, Barnet supplies materials; and students develop their own ways of working with them and of reacting to the results. It is easy to see how the supply of materials and a flow of ideas for using them are in abundance under Barnet's guidance.

Barnet said: "Theatre is an art and art is a creation. Creation and joy and beauty go together. Creative outlets like the theatre should be available to everyone. People

should at least have the opportunity!"¹ If students lack the fees or time to take advantage of the school's "opportunities," there is always the possibility of becoming involved by way of the High School Drama Clubs or Festivals or simply by waiting at a playground: for in the summer of 1969 Barnet organized two groups of the school's students and toured the playgrounds of Winnipeg with different levels of involvement theatre. The aim was to introduce ". . . children to the creative art on a level they can understand."²

To consider for a moment the view from the other side, there appear, on the surface, two dangers in running a theatre school: one is becoming dogmatic in the approach to instruction, or, antithetically, too loose and too far from structured theatre so that the student may go off into "group grope" and fail to see a connection between his own development and the highly disciplined activities on the main stage--in fact, the main stage may begin to seem irrelevant or old fashioned to the student; the second problem that a theatre school might encounter is budgetary, which could arise with desires to explore new fads such as light shows, film making, and other forms of mechanical tickling that involve expensive equipment. The Manitoba Theatre School has never had serious

¹David Barnet as quoted in Chuck Grieve, "Acting: New Playground Idea," Evening Times Globe, Saint John, New Brunswick.

²Ibid.

monetary problems. It has also clearly avoided dogmatism, but this author wonders, based on a very short visit to the school and an observation of its activities, whether the students for whom the school terms have become an annual event do not encounter the school experience with a certain level of narcissistic indulgence and a conceit that the real theatre is going on in their classes and the privacy of their own minds and: "Main stage, so what?" A lot of emphasis in the school is placed on inter-relating. However, the inter-relating often begins within the students own emotions, which lack control, as opposed to coming out of a simple reaction to a situation created by someone or something else--the students want to act instead of react. Often there is little that is technical or intellectual in the students' creations, or if it should start on that level it soon goes to the anus (i.e., "searching" yields to "groping"). Perhaps this response is unjustified--much of it is intuition--but the potential clearly does exist. Certainly terms like "game" and "recreation" are heard far more in the school than words like "skill," "theatre," or "discipline."

If a theatre school keeps its focus on the kinds of theatrical experiences that can advance its potential audience and their understanding, it can offer creation for the community and an expanding reward for the theatre. The Manitoba Theatre School has long done so, and it continues to be worthy of emulation.

The Studio Theatre

To return to MTC's quantitative measurements of success: it is notable that in 1961-62 the performance schedule had increased to 224 from 64 in the first season; attendance had grown from the first season's total of 32,000 to 112,000. MTC also continued its program of theatre for children at Christmas and Easter and in 1961-62 they presented two Canadian premieres (one of them an original Canadian script) twenty-one times. In addition:

A studio Night Series was inaugurated in the Theatre School premises in a studio theatre seating fifty. A programme of three one-act plays, one by Martin Lager of our own company . . . and two by Tennessee Williams, was presented on four successive Sunday nights. Audience and critical reaction was extremely enthusiastic.¹

The critical response to the experiment was warm and graphic.

Christopher Dafoe wrote of "A Rich Gift of Theatre:"

The Studio Theatre is located in the MTC Theatre School and is about as intimate and friendly as a theatre can be. The stage is low and sloped and the members of the audience are so close to the actors that they can easily involve themselves in the action of the play.

There are no curtains and no settings. The members of the audience must do more than simply sit and watch; they must become involved, they must pretend.

The MTC Studio Theatre is perfect for this sort of thing. As a member of the audience you feel so much more important; so much more a vital part of the success of the play. You almost feel that if one of the actors fell suddenly ill one of the audience could go up and take over. This is madness, of course, and wild

¹MTC Brief to Canada Council, June 20, 1962, p. 2.

dreaming, but shouldn't the ideal member of a theatre audience believe anything possible.¹

In the years that followed, the Studio Theatre concept was continued in a variety of intimate locations and explored an even greater variety of formats. In the 1967-68 season, for example, the activities included Arrabal's Picnic on a Battlefield, Ionesco's The Lesson (later broadcast on CJAY-TV), and a Christmas production entitled Henry Mouse. The low or no budget workshop productions also included Poison, Passion and Petrifaction by George Bernard Shaw, One Man Masque by James Reaney, and a dramatic collage based on works by Wilde, Ferlinghetti, Strindberg, and Lorca, called "Variations on Romantic Themes." The Centre gave a good indication of the Studio's range when they noted that in the same season:

Our programme of poetry and short story recitals has included an evening of T. S. Eliot's poetry, and a reading of their own work by poets from the University of Manitoba Faculty. There have also been evenings of Jewish and French poetry and song.

The "Sunday Evening" series of lecture/recitals usually made use of a combination of MTC actors and staff and University professors. Programmes included "Murder in the Cathedral," "Composing Music for Plays," "The Theatre of the Obscene," "Hamlet," "Endgame," and "Everyman." These proved so popular that the house was always filled to capacity.

. . . . The Studio has been almost fully booked.²

¹Christopher Dafoe, "A Rich Gift of Theatre," Winnipeg Free Press, March 28, 1962.

²MTC Brief to Canada Council, 1968-69, p. 2.

With the 1967-69 season, the Studio began a programmed series of experiments, which by 1969-70 had become an extension of MTC's main stage with a bill of safe and tried avant garde works, and a few classics:

Hail Scrawdyke--David Haliwell
 Harry, Noon, and Night--Ronald Ribman
 Mandragola--Niccolo Machiavelli
 Escurial--Michel de Ghelderode
 The Indian Wants the Bronx--Isreal Horovitz
 La Turista--Sam Shepard

The cost to MTC for these productions was over \$50,000, and the ticket revenues were only \$15,000. Consequently, the Studio Theatre program faced a drastic reduction for the 1970-71 season and with that, it renewed its challenge for inventiveness out of nearly nothing and the right-to-fail without financial grief. MTC's Studio Theatre is one of the most promising theatre ventures in Canada. Its current Warehouse setting with total flexibility in horizontal audience-stage relationships (maximum audience capacity is about 250), is an ideal testing ground for original plays from the Province or Nation.

If Keith Turnbull, who directed the Studio program from 1967 to 1969 and who was elevated to the post of Resident Director in 1970, receives the support and finances he deserves, a new studio with a large flat floor, an overhead grid with unlimited lighting and sound outlets and with TV camera outlets, will be constructed next to the new theatre.

In this space, with a basic capital outlay for production equipment, the Manitoba Theatre Centre could continue its national pace and precedent setting policy of testing new views of dramatic structures or non-structures. The Studio has demonstrated that it can be an author's workshop with the excitement of the "new" and "untried." It offers the rewarding possibility of discovering fresh, relevant views of life, but without having to apologize or worry about messages or shock or even the most dismal artistic failures. The creativity is in the trying and the possibility for trying is stronger in the Studio Theatre than on the main stage where even the finest of artistic policies and aims must occasionally bow to compromise.

Other Activities

MTC's Regional relations do not stop here, however: back in 1961-62 the company also sponsored an original pantomime production by Le Cercle Moliere of St. Boniface and a production of Measure for Measure that had been mounted by the University Stage Society. Then the theatre staff went on to sponsor a DDF Theatre Conference.

Moreover, in keeping with the concept behind the company's name, a 1961-62 Provincial Tour was booked into nine communities (in the previous season they had played in three communities, then in 1962-63 they went to twenty

communities, in 1963-64 they increased the number of visits by one, and in 1964-65 they were forced to cancel this aspect of their regional function due to finances). In the summer of 1961, MTC offered its third Summer Series and presented fifty-nine performances of four light plays and sustained a loss of \$4,000 (the program was subsequently cancelled).

Since one of the 1961-62 main stage productions, Arms and the Man, was being studied in the Manitoba High Schools, it was broadcast on CBC-TV. "Over 90% of the students in the Province who were studying the play saw the production, generally regarded as the best CBC-Winnipeg drama telecast ever."¹

MTC has also serviced its region through children's theatre productions, which it presents annually at Christmas and Easter, as mentioned earlier. The plays were originally sponsored and are still supported by Winnipeg's Junior League. Frequently the productions have featured original scripts by people such as Tom Hendry, James Reaney, and John Hirsch. For the 1970-71 season, MTC forecast a cost of \$21,900 for 20 performances of two children's plays; they anticipated 100% capacity in their new theatre, or 15,000 children, which would bring in a ticket revenue of \$11,000. The cost difference would have to be made up through grants and donations.

¹MTC Brief to Canada Council, June 20, 1962, p. 2.

The Second Company

MTC's The Young Company, which is a permanent company of professional actors, also brings theatre to the elementary, junior and secondary schools of Manitoba. They normally prepare and tour two or three productions which they take to the schools of Winnipeg and other cities in the Province. In an out-of-town school district they might give a morning performance for elementary students in a large classroom, gymnasium, cafeteria, or, if available, auditorium. In the afternoon they would perform for high school students in a similar playing area. The program for students:

. . . is designed primarily to stimulate the emotions of the young students. Sometimes a full-length play is presented, but more often a program of music and song, dance and poetry interests and excites this age level.¹

On occasion, the program for the elementary or junior-senior high students has incorporated literature that was included in the school curriculum. The early tours to the schools made obvious curriculum connections with programs like "Shakespeare Goes to School," and "The Moderns Go to School." Recently, the company tried to relate more to topical problems in society: A program based on the theme of violence was well received by the students, but it frightened school

¹Letter from Mrs. Ralph Drewitt, Vice-President of Education and Gerry Eldred, Administrative Director of MTC, and addressed to Winnipeg School Division #1, Board of Trustees, December 23, 1969.

administrators who were more anxious to present "safe" recitals of Shakespeare or Ibsen. This form of contact with young people could be a marvelous way of showing the theatres' potential for relevance to their lives. However, fidgety principals must be convinced of the values of head-on collisions with important issues to teen-agers such as drugs, war, sex, overpopulation, and pollution. These same critical problem areas might also be commented on in programs for elementary students.

The tours to the schools were started in 1962 with 27 performances for 20,000 students at the junior-senior level. In 1966 the Young Company added elementary schools to their itinerary for the first time and their first two-week tour was a tremendous success. Thereafter, the concept of playing to two age groups while on tour became a permanent feature. In the 1965-66 season the touring schedule had expanded to 140 performances. In the 1970-71 season the Company had cut back, due to financial pressures, to an anticipated schedule of 80 appearances (40 elementary, 40 junior-senior). Travel was restricted to less than 25 miles from MTC--the maximum distance allowed by Equity for an "in-city" salary scale. Still, the Company could look forward to contact with 27,000 students. The obvious difference in the performance-attendance ratio between 1962 and 1971 is

due to the restrictions in audience size that the Company has requested in the interest of promoting audience involvement, particularly at the elementary level.

The school tours were first offered on a free-of-charge and please-let-us-in basis. For the 1970-71 tours the Company asked for, but did not insist on, a guarantee of \$180 for each performance within the city of Winnipeg and \$280 for each performance without. A number of schools could not pay the full amount and some could pay none of it, but if the interest was strong enough the Company included those schools and hoped for balancing remuneration from the Winnipeg Foundation. (The Canada Council, of course, does not contribute to programs for educational or children's theatre.)

The Young Company which forms the nucleus of the School Touring Company has also been active in the Studio Theatre program, the Theatre School activities, and occasionally they become involved in main stage productions.

The variety of activities that the Manitoba Theatre Centre has engaged in would not have been possible without strong, visionary artistic leadership.

MTC Leadership

An excellent beginning was provided through the energies of John Hirsch and Tom Hendry--two artists who still attack the theatre with uncompromising conviction

and enviable sensitivity. They have always viewed the theatre as a possibility for communicating opinions about conditions in life and they have worked hard to avoid the creation of a theatrical tourist shoppe where middle-class people could indulge in collecting things as theatrical-souvenirs.

The standards established by Hirsch and Hendry succeeded their departures. Hirsch was followed by Eddie Gilbert, who was a little less aggressive than Hirsch, but still very sensitive to his environment and to the theatre. Gilbert had worked with Hirsch for two years as a resident director before he assumed the lead position as Artistic Director in 1966. When he accepted the position he was interviewed by Herbert Whittaker of the Toronto Globe and Mail, at which time he said:

The Manitoba Theatre Centre is the swingiest operation I've come across anywhere. Working there is exciting--just like watching a tightrope walker move step by step. It is keeping a balance between a community-oriented operation, very altruistic, and a professionally motivated operation, which means it has to be selfish.

It's an experience. I don't know where it is leading, I only know that the experience is exciting. My own path forward is motivated by that excitement but I can't talk of things I'd like to make happen. I am faced by a situation in which I can grow and one which I think will provide for a great many others the opportunity to grow.¹

¹Herbert Whittaker, "Edward Gilbert, New Boss of the MTC," The Globe and Mail, Toronto, April, 18, 1966.

The growth that Gilbert wanted, quickly began to occur as evidenced in a review by Nathan Cohen of the Toronto Daily Star:

Give the Manitoba Theatre Centre a hand for taking on, in its 10th season, Antigone by Sophocles. Such aspiration earns applause. Name another Canadian Organization with the nerve to try it.¹ Or with such faith in its public.

Now give director Edward Gilbert and his cast a big hand for doing the play well. The cool grandeur is there, and the emotional might. At their best, the acting and staging move powerfully toward a condition of agonized private intensity and larger-than-life social meaning.²

Eddie Gilbert moved on in 1969 and was replaced by one of Canada's leading free-lance directors, Kurt Reis. Reis took over the duties of Artistic Director with strong theoretical concepts about where the Regional Theatre Movement was, or was not, in Canada and about changes that had to occur if the Movement was to stay alive with a meaningful purpose. In November of 1969, Tom Hendry, who at that time was Literary Manager of Stratford, interviewed Reis and Reis' comments were presented in The Stage in Canada:

. . . If we are going to have life, if we are going to bring about some kind of change, we have to be aware that production of accepted material is not enough.

¹Actually, the Neptune Theatre company, under the direction of Leon Major had done Antigone in Halifax in 1963, but it only played to 41% capacity and was considered a disaster.

²Nathan Cohen, "Let's Hear It for the Manitoba Theatre Centre," Toronto Daily Star, December 2, 1967.

The challenges, I think, are reasonably simple to articulate. I think there is a challenge that all regional theatres across the country are going to have to face. They are putting on the same kind of plays, the same kind of actors for the same kind of audience: this is due in a large part to the principle of subscription. Well, subscription works fine if you're only after 3 or 4 percent of the population. We have to look for other ways of organizing audiences. The second challenge is to avoid looking like some sort of good cause. We have to avoid creating an illusion of holiness.

Regional theatres are leading respectability to mediocrity; many people are happy in the presence of mediocrity, they want mediocrity. There is a lack of vision; it is not enough to just put on plays; you have to have some kind of poetic perception of why you are doing the work at all. What the theatre stands for, what it articulates, what it has to say about life, what it has as a conception to communicate--this is what matters. The theatre must be willing to develop a style to express its point of view. . . .¹

Kurt Reis' desire to involve the theatre on new levels in the community was perhaps a bit over-zealous with a Board of Directors that had become, in the theatre's eleven-year "tradition," slightly over-reactionary. Reis confronted that established tradition and the "investment" of MTC people who had dedicated so many years of service to the theatre industry of their city. It was not long before the Board felt it had been misrepresented and even betrayed; for without their consent, the theatre leadership inspired a newspaper article entitled "Theatre Centre Joins Dissent on Vietnam:"

¹Kurt Reis as quoted in "Regional Theatre Works," The Stage in Canada/La Scene au Canada, November, 1969, pp. 10-14.

The Manitoba Theatre Centre has joined the ranks of the Vietnam war protestors,

The theatre said in a news statement Wednesday it is presenting a special peace program. . . .

The statement said the theatre "in its role as the cultural leader of the community, recognizes the need for such protest as a vital safeguard for a free and open society and adds its voice to the growing chorus of dissent.¹

The Board suddenly found itself involved in a theatre in which the Artistic Director was striving for political relevance. Using rock music, film, improvisations, and a cast of 200 Winnipeg students, Reis was seeking a new style of expression. Perhaps the Board was embarrassed by the theatre's new, close proximity to real life; perhaps the Lawyers and Doctors found it difficult to face their friends on the street and defend real political involvement, especially if it disagreed with their own philosophy on the issue--in any case, it was one of the bitter steps to alienation that the Artistic Director was to experience with the Board.

Reis also had to contend with a theatre-going public that had become disenchanted with the performance conditions that existed in the Centennial Concert Hall--he was in charge during the second of MTC's two-year stay there. In the first year, the audience subscriptions and increased considerably, due in part to the novelty that the Hall was brand new.

¹"Theatre Centre Joins Dissent on Vietnam," Winnipeg Free Press, November 14, 1969.

They came as much to experience the building as to experience the plays. But when their focus finally turned to the play, the experience in that new, enormous Hall was bad. People back in the twentieth row and beyond complained of not being able to hear or see. By the second year of producing in the Hall, the season subscriptions dropped from 12,000 to 9,000 and complaints began to appear in the reviews: for You Can't Take It With You the critic wrote an article titled "Vast Concert Hall Chills Domestic Comedy."¹ It is easy to understand how the intimacy required of such a play would be lost in a 110' proscenium arch and the expanse needed for 2,250 seats. However, largescale productions apparently suffered a similar fate: "Too-Big Hall is Cruel to Marat/Sade."² That play had been directed by Eddie Gilbert who had enjoyed a great deal of success a year earlier as Artistic Director.

Finally, after a series of misunderstandings, a considerable session of unhealthy gossip behind the scenes, bitter confrontations and mistakes on the part of the Board, the Artistic Director, and the MTC staff, Reis left. Hopefully, all involved in the mess were jarred sufficiently to take a long, re-defining look at the purpose of theatre.

¹Michael Kostelnuk, "Vast Concert Hall Chills Domestic Comedy," Winnipeg Free Press, March 10, 1970.

²Arnold Edinborough, "Too Big Hall is Cruel to Marat/Sade," The Financial Post, Winnipeg, February 7, 1970.

Most likely, however, the process left scars and people became even more committed to their own point of view. Polarized, entrenched thinking in pro-tradition or pro-change camps understandably submerge after battles and are hidden behind new smiles; the question MTC needs to answer by virtue of its actions is whether the defenses have gone down far enough to permit and encourage the re-assessment and flexible reactions to "progress" that all theatres must go through to have any value.

Keith Turnbull, who had worked with Gilbert and with Reis as Director of the Studio Theatre program, became MTC's Resident Director for the 1970-71 season which was the season for MTC's move to its new and permanent home. He was assisted by John Hirsch in that first year. Hirsch returned to MTC as Consulting Artistic Director and to provide a strong opening for the new theatre. Presumably, Turnbull will become Artistic Director for the 1971-72 season. When he does, at the age of 26, he will be the youngest Artistic Director in Canada.

Keith Turnbull and John Hirsch were part of a wild process that involved urging the carpet layers good speed and completion of their tasks for the much-heralded opening of the new MTC on November 2, 1970.

The new theatre is an excellent example of how to stretch \$2.6 million. The auditorium seats 786 people in straight rows arranged in a continental manner, all within 75 feet of the stage. The orchestra capacity is 532 and a wraparound balcony holds 254. The stage measures 111' wide from wall to wall and 49' deep. The grid is 75' above the fully trappable floor and the proscenium arch possibilities range from 77' wide by 44' high to 40' wide by 20' high. The decor of the theatre is stark and Spartan. The exterior and foyer walls are of unfinished concrete and their harsh quality and straight lines provide a striking, almost beautiful contrast to the softness and curves of the human bodies and colorful evening dress that is typically seen about the theatre prior to performance and during intermissions. The builders wisely sacrificed form for function and they substituted decoration money for technical equipment. That equipment and the plant's tremendous flexibility suggests an extremely wide range of possibilities for staging and levels of audience involvement. The many outstanding design features in the new building may make it the most practical, well-thought-out professional theatre in North America. One of those fine features involves the arrangement of the administrative offices which consist of a long open area, partitioned by filing cabinets and joined by an open walkway. That wall-less corridor permits the administrative staff an easy view through sound-proof

windows of the scenic and costume shops. The open areas of the business staff tends to encourage the actors to mix freely with them and the little time that is lost in conversations promotes a sense of "teamwork" that does not exist at any other theatre in Canada.

Another wise decision in planning was made in separating dressing rooms by partitions (as they had been at the Dominion Theatre) rather than solid walls, which encourages an opendoor policy and a non-stratified acting company; in other words, privacy and the seclusion that goes with it has yielded to a sociable atmosphere. The theatre was intelligently designed to encourage easy inter-relating and to avoid seclusion and ego trips.

The new building, like the Concert Hall when it was new, may have overpowered the experience of the first production in it. People frequently changed their focus from the stage to details in the auditorium during the performances. Conversation during the intermission centered on the location of the bars and the stench of the new concrete. The opening show, A Man's A Man by Bertolt Brecht, was a theatrical tour de force that competed admirably with the new structure for the audience's attention. The content of the first play may have chipped some of the glitter from the opening and the accompanying celebrations, but it was for a good end. According to director John Hirsch, who was quoted in Time:

We knew that perhaps 50% of the audience would not like the play. We could have chosen something easier for the audience, but one of the reasons for our success has been that we have not made our reputation on offering warmed-over Broadway hits.¹

Having reasserted his very high standards of artistic endeavour, Hirsch returned to New York and commitments with the Lincoln Center.

Keith Turnbull was in charge of carrying on the season. Turnbull is a sensitive artist with intense opinions about living. He also has a strong interest in the other and unglamorous side of being an Artistic Director: he pays close attention to the spread sheets, the budget, the theatre's technical requirements, and an endless list of socializing activities. These business aspects of the theatre became a significant factor in Kurt Reis' departure. However, Turnbull is avoiding that problem. His proficiency with the business side of the theatre quickly gained the dedicated respect of his administrative and technical staff. His understanding is enhanced by a cool and reasoned approach to the administrative decisions that confront him daily. His attention is demanded on more levels than any other Artistic Director in Canada currently deals with: he must

¹"Never More at Home," Time, Canadian Edition, November 16, 1970, p. 14.

make budget, talent and scheduling decisions and confirmations for the mainstage, the Studio Theatre program, the Young Company activities and the Theatre School. To allow all of these programs, with their many sub-projects, to function at a quality optimum, the controlling force has got to have a clear vision of artistic policy for all activities of the theatre and a clear sense of the purpose of each of the tangent groups. Turnbull, who first gave form to the Studio Theatre program as its director in 1968, and who has had a close practical relationship with the Young Company and the Theatre School is in an excellent position to understand MTC's off-stage machinery.

Keith Turnbull's most exciting potential is as a director of plays. This author saw him working with Death of a Salesman and The Egg at the Neptune Theatre in Halifax in the summer of 1970, and the experience was exciting. Turnbull brings extensive pre-production research and a profound concept of the play's potential to rehearsal. He works quietly and intensely with his actors. He obviously respects their integrity and their need to explore on their own. He slowly brings the actors' thinking into conformity with his own vision, and, in the case of Death of a Salesman, he found new values by emphasizing the destructive powers of the American Dream and the alienation of Biff. He clearly

managed to blend a weird mixture of ages and temperaments (produced by the repertory casting) to a forceful ensemble with a meaningful aim.

Turnbull's plans for the future indicate the MTC will undoubtedly retain its position as an artistic pace-setter and innovator in the Regional Movement. He is, for example, scheduling a local and national television broadcast of one of the main stage productions, and is engaged in legal negotiations to enter the TV cassette market with major and studio productions; he hopes to build a new flexible Studio Theatre with adaptors for TV production equipment, and he has distant visions of film making as an MTC activity. At the same time, Keith recognizes the immediate need to find a meaningful policy for the activities in the evolving MTC structure.

The sum of all of MTC's artistic activities and talents have placed it in a position of national leadership. That position was recognized at an early age in the organization as might be seen in a passage in the 1963-64 Brief to the Canada Council:

Because we exist, expand, grow and experiment in a completely new theatre milieu--the area of Regional Theatre in Canada--we have become unpaid consultants to the entire Regional Theatre Movement in English-speaking Canada. We have visited and have been visited by representatives from theatres from Halifax to Vancouver. When anyone, anywhere in Canada, thinks of establishing a theatre, he writes to us for budgets,

records, ideas and advice. No request for assistance has ever gone unanswered, and while it is difficult to count up the cost of the hundreds of hours spent in this type of service, we reckon the cost as not inconsiderable.¹

In the Brief for the following season, the Centre cited a comment by Nathan Cohen that MTC is "' . . . a model of how to establish a community theatre.'"²

In 1967 Peter Dwyer, Associate Director of the Canada Council, expressed his view of MTC in a letter to Eddie Gilbert:

. . . I would like to say that we have always considered the Manitoba Theatre Centre as an admirable example of what a North American regional theatre should be. Its steady growth and development since it first came to the Council for a grant has also been an admirable example of how a theatre can serve its community.³

In 1970 Time Magazine recognized the value of MTC as a regional service organization and as a national model. However, in addition to praising its past, Time went on to introduce a problem that relates to sustaining such an active organization:

That the theater should flourish in a city which presents an outward aspect of dereliction and decay may at first sight seem unlikely. In fact the performing arts in Winnipeg outsell sporting events by more than two to one, and the theatre center itself has become

¹MTC Brief to Canada Council, 1963-64, p. 3.

²MTC Brief to Canada Council, 1964-65, p. 1.

³Letter from Peter Dwyer, Associate Director of the Canada Council, March 9, 1967, and addressed to Edward Gilbert, Artistic Director of MTC.

a model for regional theatre in Canada. From the start, the MTC was designed not just as a vehicle for a few plays each year, but as a real center of theatrical activities.

Last week with the opening of the center's new home, Hirsch came to the careful conclusion that "the work we have done in building a model here for us and for all of Canada has somehow reached a peak."¹

Evaluation

Now that such excellent facilities exist, the policy of the theatre is clearly thrown back on the people who will run it and their choices for using the facilities. Once the obvious possibilities of the building have been explored and when the audience sits without glancing at the beams and without being distracted by the smell of fresh concrete and once the season ticket campaign approaches a sell-out--all of which might occur within the next few years--a number of serious policy and action questions will arise: How will students be brought into the theatre? Or blue collar workers--who tend to prefer casual attendance? What will be the provocative works in ten years? How reactionary will the Board be when it looks back on a theatrical tradition that is twenty-five years old? And in what ways might the Theatre School fight obsolescence or the dullness of routine because of the finite nature of theatre games and creative dramatics? Is it possible that the Studio Theatre program

¹"Never More at Home," Time, p. 14.

might, like off-Broadway, eclipse the parent activity with its unpredictability, its exploratory potential and vitality? Can the Young Company gain sufficient respect to allow itself to bring the excitement of honestly relating to the issues that really involve the elementary and secondary students?

Keith Turnbull plans to subject these kinds of questions to his own philosophy soon--with the benefit of John Hirsch's thoughts and those of his staff.

Activity on a peak deserves careful analysis.

The growth, then, of the Manitoba Theatre Centre has been an organic process which reflects desires to serve the people in the region with as many levels of theatrical art as possible. The establishment and growth of the various activities has always kept the theatre going at maximum output in terms of available resources. A few decisions have lacked wisdom, but most have been profitable in some way. Certainly many of them have been watched and studied by the theatres that have followed. In some cases they probably should have been studied more closely. MTC has been an excellent Regional Theatre model.

Once John Hirsch and Tom Hendry had conclusively proved that it could be done, investigative studies began and plans started materializing for other Regional Theatre companies. Stimulated by MTC's success and advice and by

the possibility of substantial subsidy, two separate groups undertook feasibility studies in Halifax and Vancouver in 1962.

The Neptune Theatre Foundation

The germ for Halifax came in November of 1961, when Tom Patterson, who had been instrumental in founding the Stratford Shakespearean Festival; Leon Major, who was an Assistant Director at Stratford; and John Gray, playwright, went to Halifax as part of their research for a Canada Council study: "A Report for the Establishment of a Theatre Centre in Canada." While in Halifax at that time, Tom Patterson addressed a group of interested citizens and said that Canada could not and should not develop a commercial, centralized theatre, but rather should strive to create a chain of Regional Theatres. Patterson went on with encouraging remarks for the people who live in economically depressed Nova Scotia by listing some of the values in starting a professional repertory theatre company in Halifax:

"Primarily, it would be a major tourist attraction of international importance. Such a theatre would attract a great deal of publicity to Halifax. The rest of Canada would be watching" said Mr. Patterson.

He suggested that a year-round resident company . . . would bring some prosperity if only by virtue of the theatre payroll.

"Attraction of industry would be a major benefit
A theatre is not only a prestige builder but a dollar
earner."¹

The Mayor of Halifax was obviously caught up by the remarks and said: "This is specifically the kind of project we require to make redevelopment a success in Halifax."² The Mayor backed his enthusiasm with a suggestion for the immediate formation of a theatre-sponsoring committee.

The Patterson-Major-Gray Report included a hypothetical plan for establishing a theatre in a Canadian City which, like Halifax, had no theatre. Halifax became the model in the study and was soon to be a real testing ground based on the study's conclusion:

. . . that enthusiasm can be found in the community and the region to support this theatre; and that in the beginning its major task will not be to serve the community but a region.³

Motivated by the Mayor's suggestion, by the findings of the report, and by a desire to actually have a professional theatre in Halifax, the Board of Trade set up a citizen's committee with Dr. Arthur Murphy as chairman. The committee conducted its own study into the practicality of founding a theatre in a city of 100,000 (with perhaps another 75,000

¹"Theatre Needed to Help Halifax," Halifax Chronicle-Herald, November 22, 1961.

²Ibid.

³Tom Patterson, et al., "A Report for the Establishment of a Theatre Centre in Canada," as quoted in "Theatre Must Develop in Time to Reflect Life of Community," Halifax Chronicle-Herald, June 29, 1963.

people in neighboring Dartmouth and the surrounding area). Their investigation revealed that the people of Halifax and Dartmouth wanted a professional theatre and would probably give generous support to the venture if the quality of production was high and the selection of plays was appropriate. They also became convinced that ticket revenues alone would not be sufficient to support a company; so they concluded that they would need assistance from the Province, the City, the Canada Council, and private donors.

The committee was then directed to hire a consultant firm which submitted a three-page report that confirmed the original findings of the committee's investigation and charged them \$4,500. The committee also maintained contact with Patterson, Major and Gray and occasionally brought them back to Halifax for consultation. Leon Major, who was to become the theatre's founding Artistic Director made good use of the trips and of his family ties in Halifax (his father-in-law resided there and was strongly interested in starting a theatre in Halifax) to get to know leading Haligonians and leaders of the Province such as Premier Robert L. Stanfield (an acquaintance that would prove to be extremely valuable in a few years).

The citizen's committee, convinced by their own and the consultant firm's findings, moved to establish a five-man provisional Board for the purpose of drawing up a

constitution and by-laws for Halifax's professional repertory company. Dr. Arthur Murphy passed from chairman of the citizen's committee to chairman of the Board, and was soon thereafter elected as President of the Neptune Theatre Foundation.

By June 28, 1962, the provisional Board ratified the Constitution and By-Laws for the Neptune Theatre Foundation. The document contained a lengthy ten-part statement of purpose. The first four parts were:

(A) To organize, establish and promote a professional repertory theatre in the City of Halifax.

(B) To present drama to the public at Halifax in particular and throughout the Atlantic Provinces of Canada in general.

(C) To encourage and stimulate public interest in the arts, particularly in drama of high quality.

(D) To Advance the development of a national professional theatre organization in Canada; and to co-operate with other professional repertory companies by way of exchange of companies and performances.¹

Shortly thereafter, John Gray, who became the founding Administrator of the company, summarized the aims of the Foundation in a slightly more pragmatic tone:

The Neptune Theatre is an attempt to establish a fully professional regional theatre presenting plays in repertory, based on the assumption that the theatre in Canada must be subsidized, both to open and to continue in operation. Its repertory season will include

¹"Constitution and By-Laws of Neptune Theatre Foundation," June 28, 1962, (typewritten), p. 1.

the best plays of the past in balance with new plays; Canadian whenever possible, but new.¹

Once the Foundation had become a reality it faced a \$4,500 consultant's bill and three other large tasks: a financial campaign with a goal of \$300,000, leasing and renovating a theatre, and hiring an Artistic Director. The last objective was quickly accomplished as Leon Major was rubber-stamped into the position almost immediately. At the age of 30, he was rapidly gaining national attention as a producer and director. He accepted the position with two conditions: that he have sole authority in play selection and in the choice of actors. His acting ensemble for the first season included four Haligonians who were selected from a group of 100 people that were seen and heard in three days of auditions. One of that group of four, John Hobday, later became Administrative Director of the theatre.

Leon Major explained the aims of his intended artistic policy:

We don't intend to reproduce Broadway or the West End. We will have a unique style of our own. It will not be experimental. It will primarily be entertainment. The community have sought to have a theatre of their own. It is not being thrust upon them and it will reflect the personality of its team of workers.²

The foundation's Board ran into trouble on the other two goals.

¹John Gray as quoted in Herbert Whittaker "Preparing to Launch a Major Theatrical Hope in Halifax," Globe and Mail, Toronto, January 5, 1963.

²Leon Major as quoted in Barbara Hinds, "Unique Style for Theatre," The Mail-Star, Halifax, November 7, 1962.

Problems with the Theatre

In the fall of 1962 the Board announced its intentions to lease the old Garrick theatre from Odeon Theatres Limited. They then decided that to have more control over the renovations that were needed and to establish a firm base for the company, they should try to get ownership of the building. They set out to raise the \$100,000 needed for purchase and failed. Col. Sidney Oland, a successful industrialist in Halifax, came to the rescue and bought the building and rented it to the Neptune Foundation for a nominal \$500 per month with an option to buy at any time.

Renovations were started in 1962, and two months prior to the opening, set for July 1, 1963, the Foundation undertook a major effort to raise \$300,000 to enable them to purchase the theatre from Col. Oland, pay for the renovations (which finally hit \$170,000 and were executed on a cost-plus-overhead basis), and underwrite the first season. They failed again. They only pulled in \$45,000 in cash and another \$20,000 in pledges.

Still, they had an Artistic Director and they had access to a marvelous old theatre which Nathan Cohen aptly described as ". . . a jewel box of a theatre, not tiny at all but splendidly intimate."¹

¹Nathan Cohen, "Jewel Box of a Theatre," Toronto Daily Star, August 29, 1964.

Originally, the structure was known as The Strand and it had opened in 1909 as a vaudeville house. It was prosperous in that function for almost three decades. For a few years the Theatre Arts Guild of Halifax used the building for dramatic productions and then, in the mid-1930's, it was converted to a movie house and was renamed the Garrick. The name and use of the building held until it was purchased by Col. Oland and renamed the Neptune after the structure built by Marc Lescarbot in 1606.

The renovations and the efforts to rid the building of the smell of popcorn were extensive. According to one Neptune official, after the last film was shown, the clearing out process involved dragging out tons of debris, one black brassiere, one pair of large pink panties, and enough old condoms to sink a ship. In the course of renovating, the stage floor was rebuilt, the apron was built out into the house, the seating was reduced by 100 seats, new seats were installed throughout, everything was painted, and the exterior of the building was given a new facade. The first performance at the Neptune was similar to the opening of the MTC in that carpets were still being laid down an hour before curtain time.

The outstanding and very pleasant feature about the Neptune is the intimacy that motivated Cohen to call it a "jewel box." The theatre has 525 seats, all within 61 feet

of the stage. The orchestra seats 340, and a steep balcony holds 185. To the actors, the auditorium becomes a virtual "wall" of humanity--one that can easily be reached with stage whispers. It also permits uncommon amounts of quiet tenderness and minute business as the audience can easily read subtle facial gestures from the back row. The narrow walls of the auditorium and the thrust of the semi-circular apron psychologically contributes to the physical closeness that an audience member can feel anywhere in the orchestra or balcony.

On the other hand, although the audience-actor contact and sight lines are idyllic, the technical conditions are ghastly. The theatre has never had the proper amount nor type of lighting equipment for a repertory production schedule, and even if it did have sufficient instruments and control units, it lacks the space needed to permit focusing general and specific lighting for two or three productions in repertory. There is no adequate space for a scene shop, there is practically no wing space on either side of the 24' proscenium opening and there is no storage space in the building except for a small temporary room that has been constructed off the back door, in the alley. This causes problems when there may be a need for three different groups of settings on three consecutive nights. Most

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settings are flown from the grid, which prior to 1969, was constructed of 60 year-old timbers that made a mockery of safety rules. Sets are built on the stage, forcing rehearsals to a variety of outside halls: in the summer of 1970 the company found space in a condemned spice warehouse (the odor was very stimulating). Sets are often transported for painting to the third and condemned floor of the school board building two blocks up a very steep hill from the theatre.

Dressing rooms are claustrophobic and unventilated and the greenroom is a grimeroom.

However, there is a marvelous sense of tradition in the old edifice and it is obvious that there must be a great sense of accomplishment accompanying the opening and closing of every production. In spite of the discomfort and inconveniences suffered by everyone connected with mounting a play at the Neptune, the clean auditorium, spacious lobbys and intimate seating offer the audiences a conducive environment for a strong theatre experience.

The Opening and the Debt

In spite of enormous, unsolved problems the Neptune did finally open in 1963 with a production of Major Barbara. The following night Mary Mary, which had replaced The Good Woman of Setzuan in mid-production, opened. Then on July 16,

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the sets were replaced again and Anouilh's Antigone and The Four Poster were added to the repertory schedule.

But somehow the citizen's committee, the consultant firm, and the Artistic Director miscalculated the cost of running a repertory company, and by the end of its first year of operations the Neptune turned in a deficit exceeding \$170,000. There was suddenly an ironic twist to an earlier newspaper article that reported on a visit Mr. Major had made to Winnipeg's MTC:

The Neptune Theatre Foundation will not be patterned entirely after MTC.

"Conditions are different; we are taking advantage of the lesson learned at MTC," Mr. Major said. "We will begin as a fully professional theatre."¹

He might have learned more from MTC. In starting as a fully professional theatre the Neptune Foundation budgeted \$340,000 for its production expenditures--only \$8,000 below the MTC budget for the same season, which was also MTC's sixth season (in a community four times the size of Halifax).

The plays offered during the first year, which included twelve adult and one children's play were certainly noble enough, though perhaps they were oddly balanced for a public that had to develop the theatre-going habit from scratch. Mary Mary and The Four Poster played to 89% and 69% respectively, but Arms and the Man only drew 28%, Romanoff and Juliet

¹"Halifax to Emulate MTC," Winnipeg Free Press, January 12, 1963.

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played to 40% and Antigone and The Fantasticks both pulled 41%. The opener, Major Barbara, played to 52%. It may have been a bad choice for a beginning, for four years later Nathan Cohen looked back at the selection and wrote that the plays:

. . . invoked an image of Neptune as the property of the very rich, the professional class, and the intellectuals (a tiny percentage of the population) without value to the public at large. The image is false, but its persistence has become Neptune's albatross.

The attendance for the whole season averaged 50% of capacity. The choice of plays was probably further dampened by the cost of seats which at first broke down to:

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|-----|---|--------|
| 90 | @ | \$3.85 |
| 294 | @ | 3.30 |
| 91 | @ | 2.20 |
| 50 | @ | 1.10 |

In an area where the average weekly income was a mere \$72, there could be little hope of attracting any but the rich. The Theatre later lowered the prices.

In a 1964 article titled "Neptune Theatre's Artistic Success, But Box-Office, 'No,'" it was reported that "Major is puzzled why the people aren't coming to Neptune."¹ In 1966, Major was beginning to understand the problem and he admitted that he found it necessary ". . . to fight wariness and resentment . . ." when he first arrived in Halifax:

¹ Donna Logan, "Neptune Theatre's Artistic Success, But Box-Office, 'No,'" Montreal Star, February 15, 1964, p. 4.

Although he knows he will never be accepted as a Haligonian, he thinks his children might make it.¹

Major explained his growing awareness in terms that remind one of an "Apologie for Arte:"

There is an apathy here that is hard to buck, a slowness, a kind of mania feeling in the province, which [Premier] Stanfield is fighting. Everything tends to gear down a bit; 'tomorrow we'll come, tomorrow we'll do it.'

The choice of a repertoire in a community is very different from a major centre. It's always a question of box office.²

On another occasion in 1966, Leon Major struck on a point that was introduced earlier in relation to John Hirsch's and Tom Hendry's "inside" relation to their community, and that a theatre, in order to serve and function within a community, must have leadership that clearly understands the nature and feelings of that community. In the Maritimes, the issue of insider/outsider had an effect on the theatre's acceptance in the community, and eventually Major became cognizant of it:

One of the major problems is coming into a community where the theatrical art is foreign. I think most people naturally distrust the foreigner and the foreigner's product.

The bulk of the community was suspicious. Our problem here has been to break down this suspicion, and I doubt we have really yet succeeded.²

¹ Ibid.

² Leon Major as quoted in David Nicholson, "How to Succeed in Cautious Halifax," The United Church Observer, Toronto, September 1, 1966.

Meanwhile, Dr. Murphy, in his President's Report, had listed mistakes that the Foundation had made:

*Being badly advised on possible ancillary income, the board overestimated its annual revenue . . .;

*The board underestimated the amount of necessary capital to convert the theatre from a movie house to a completely contained repertory theatre for a resident company;

*Lastly, the board had underestimated badly the support it might anticipate from the public campaign.¹

Nathan Cohen reviewed the causes and state of the dilemma and suggested:

. . . Much of the existing despair is due to a romantic and impractical expectation that the people would rise up in large numbers to welcome the theatre and to a mistaken notion of the general interest in theatre.

. . . The directors must, without making any creative concessions, persuade enough Haligonians that having the theatre is a necessity. Here Neptune should pay close attention to the Manitoba Theatre Centre in Winnipeg, a grass-roots development that remains the model for the Canadian scene.²

Neptune was saved at the end of its first season by a long-term, \$230,000 loan from the Provincial government authorized by Premier Robert Stanfield. In addition the Province made the first of many grants to the organization in the amount of \$25,000, equal to the grant of the Canada Council. The city gave another \$15,000. (Eventually, the

¹President's Report as quoted in Donna Logan, "Neptune Facing Cutbacks in Operating Expenditures," Halifax Mail-Star, December 12, 1963.

²Nathan Cohen, "Jewel Box of a Theatre."

Province would have to contribute a sum exceeding \$250,000 to redeem the theatre's debts.)¹

Neptune recalculated its priorities and production budgets and as it approached a deficit of a quarter-million dollars, it began to slow its financial descent and pick up a following in attendance, larger donations and grants, and it moderated its expenditures. Yet existence remained precarious, unpredictable, and sometimes unproductive.

In 1968 the company took a long look at its short history and began to confront nagging problems with honesty instead of idealism. The report they prepared recognized that the original ideologies could not be realized because it had been learned, via box-office tallies, that the theatre's approach had been wrong on two counts:

(1) the ideas that we were developing from the roots of the community had no substantial basis, in point of fact it was quickly learned that we were imposing ourselves on the community and;

(2) the dream of a theatre doing new and experimental plays with a company engaged for 52 weeks could not be supported.²

When the summer season for 1964 ended, the company reassessed their community status and found:

(1) The finances available from both public and private sectors could not tolerate a 52-week year, with over 240 performances.

¹Ibid.

²"Neptune Theatre--1963-1968--A Report," (typewritten), pp. 1-2.

(2) The kind of play which the public would accept was undetermined except that the esoteric, e.g., Antigone, was not acceptable.

(3) Neptune, in point of fact, had no basic audience except for a miniscule percentage of the population.

(4) There was a big educational job to be done, which consisted of: (a) proving that Neptune was not for the black tie, white jacket set; (b) proving that "live" theatre could be as entertaining as a film or television; (c) getting to the young, in order to develop the future audience; (d) simply letting the public know where the theatre was located.¹

In 1967, Neptune was able to enjoy a new level of freedom and response brought in part by assistance from the Centennial Commission which gave support for new Canadian works and permitted the theatre a more extravagant experience with Shakespeare, and by Festival Canada and Expo which provided national exposure and brought local and national praise.

Touring

The company was also managing to reach out into the maritime provinces with tours and several were made in the first five-year period in spite of increased costs and the feeling that one-night stands were injurious to the quality of the performances. Some of the tours were quite long; for example, in 1968 the company took The Odd Couple and an original romantic history called The Wooden World on a five-

¹Ibid., p. 2.

week, 5,000-mile journey into all four Atlantic Provinces. Of course, the values of the tour to the thousands of people who were able to enjoy live theatre are immeasurable.

In addition to touring, the Neptune has engaged in a few children's theatre productions over the years near the Christmas holidays.

Other Problems

The company has also served the region through speaking engagements and advice for university and high school drama clubs. But the scale of activity in this area has never approached that practiced at MTC. The Neptune has never been able to develop a Theatre School or a Touring Company for visits to the schools. Their single-season effort at a Studio Theatre program in 1968 failed artistically and financially. In fact, finances have been credited with retarding all plans for extra-regional activities. The money problem is understandable when one views Leon Major's expenditures for talent and the size of production costs. Also, Halifax is limited in having only one-fourth the population of Winnipeg and it is located in an economically depressed area where there is no industry, and the natural environment competes with the theatrical activity. There is also the problem of limited, over-taxed facilities and

over-worked, under-paid staff. It is difficult to avoid wondering, however, if the desire and the intellectual energy were present, couldn't sufficient space, time, and even money be found to offer a limited form of a Theatre School-- not to train actors, but to stimulate goodwill in the community, to contribute to the future audience of the main stage productions, and perhaps to generate some enthusiasm for forming a local amateur theatre group? An attack on the Department of Education might raise sufficient funds to support, at least in part, a Young People's Company that could tour to the local schools and supplement casting needs in the main stage productions.

In 1967 Leon Major turned the product of his founding efforts over the Heinar Piller and, at nearly the same time, Gary Learoyd gave the miseries of Administration to John Hobday.

When Piller was asked three years later, "What did you inherit as Artistic Director?" he replied:

Outside of a marvelous challenge, a great mess! Leon is one of the greatest idealists and he had run the theatre by really stretching everything to one degree before the breaking point in terms of over-extending services, particularly on the production side. . . . Financially, the theatre was a total mess.¹

John Hobday agreed and the two worked together to develop a realistic budget that could be adhered to. Leveling-off

¹Heinar Piller, private interview held at the Neptune Theatre in Halifax, June 1970.

the annual deficit was recognized as an essential step to stabilizing the theatre and planning sensible growth. Fortunately, Piller and Hobday were able to establish a positive working relationship (which was apparently a first at the Neptune at that level¹). Budget adherence was artistically expensive, however: the resident company had to be reduced from 24 to 14, the production calendar became stuck with an ". . . eight-show routine . . . doing five that are light, two which are semi-light, and only two which are meaty."² Both Piller and Hobday have recognized the danger of repeating a routine with little substance; both have realized that audiences, now averaging 85% capacity on a season basis, will begin to fall off unless the theatre moves into a higher frequency of substantial plays or experimental (new) works; both men fear artistic stagnation or regression. However, in the artistic leveling-off and the scaling-down of casts and costs, the theatre has learned to live within its means; it has substantially increased its audience (due, in a large way, to the advice of Danny Newman); it has changed its initial impression of "a theatre for snobs;" and it has begun to attract a greater range of Halifax people to an increased performance schedule.

By 1970, in fact, the theatre had become so cautious with its finances that Nathan Cohen was able to write a very

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

unusual article for the Canadian theatre scene: "Neptune Theatre Makes a Profit." Cohen pointed out that it was partly possible through subsidies from the Canada Council, the government of Nova Scotia, and the city councils of Halifax and Dartmouth; and it was also aided by an increase in ticket prices (that was implemented without protest):

But another reason it happened, the decisive reason really, is that Piller, administrator John Hobday and retiring board president Lloyd Newman, have worked tirelessly to run the theatre efficiently, and to adhere to a realistically composed budget.¹

Plans for expansion must still be tempered by financial considerations, and, in view of the size of the Halifax community, the problem will likely continue to exist for a while.

In 1968 IATSE moved in and the theatre had to plan for an extra expenditure of \$10,000 to \$12,000 in overtime alone (in 1970, IATSE moved out, since it became apparent that the theatre could not afford them); at the same time equity rates have been increasing on a yearly basis which shrinks the size of the resident company. Then there are the unpredictable expenses that arise in maintaining a 60 year-old theatre--in 1969 the grid had to be replaced, at a cost of \$40,000, and before that, there was a bad furnace to contend with. The next need is probably air conditioning.

¹Nathan Cohen, "Neptune Theatre Makes a Profit," Toronto Daily Star, March 20, 1970.

Stock vs. Rep.

One of the great cost factors that Neptune has never conquered in spite of shifts in season schedules and small cast plays is the expense of running a repertory as opposed to a stock season.

Leon Major and Heinar Piller have always been adamant about the values of the repertory system. The leading points in their arguments in favor of a rep system are:

Major: the purest form of theatre is the ensemble, i.e. all the elements of a production contributing to a final whole so that the result is a total effect rather than a series of beautiful elements unrelated to each other.

Piller: . . . The joy of working with a company that knows each other well. They know exactly what they're doing with one another; they know exactly how the other person will react, what kind of tension will arise out of the next moment. It's a joy to see them create with one another; you just sit back and control which is really what the director should do.

Major: In repertory when actors appear in several different parts in a season, each part is approached with freshness because it has not fallen into routine.

Piller: The stock system . . . caters consciously or subconsciously to the star system--you cast your lead parts and then you fill in the rest In a rep system you have all parts cast equally well.

Major: The actor in our society goes from job to job--always in his mind is "where do I make my next week's living?" Consequently much of the actor's energies channel themselves into worrying. In a repertory system where the actor is hired on a long term contract the weekly pay cheque problem is solved, and the actor's energies can be channeled into the perfection of his art. This has been proven in . . . Canada.

Piller: . . . The actors become public property in a way. The actors are engaged for the full season; they become members of the community. The moment they come in for the stock situation they come for the part, the money--nothing else. They don't give a damn about the theatre per se, about the community; they become selfish.

Major: The repertory system is more exciting for its audiences inasmuch as they may see an actor play two different roles on two succeeding nights.

Piller: You are forced to pre-plan a great deal for production. The whole process is more sane.

Major: Costs in a repertory system are initially higher than the straight run; however, as the theatre develops the costs gradually diminish.

Piller: The costs are slightly higher.¹

Major: . . . The greatest advantage is that it is a group of artists, technicians and individuals brought together to form an ensemble, whose purpose is to reflect the society in which it exists and to work toward the ultimate end--a TOTAL production.²

On the other hand, an informal survey of actors, technicians and administrative personnel at the Neptune Theatre in the summer of 1970 revealed that, with the exception of the set and costume designers, there was a unanimous feeling that the repertory system as used at the Neptune was wasteful, impractical and even anti-productive. As for the "Ensemble Spirit," a number of actors who had worked at the Neptune for several seasons felt that a strong directorial personality, such as guest director Keith Turnbull's, and a

¹Heinar Piller, private interview.

²[Leon Major], "Theatre Notes," a typewritten appendage to the Neptune Theatre's Brief to Canada Council, 1965, pp. 3-5.

good script, did more to create teamwork than a performance schedule could ever hope to. The actors also felt that it was very difficult to build a character or feel any sort of consistency in a run when they had to break the performance flow of one play to do another; occasionally the gaps between shows approached two weeks which caused drop-offs in character and lines. The actors recognize that repertory casting provides a stretching experience since they are often called upon to do second and third roles that they would not encounter in stock. They are put in these "stretching" roles in the interests of economy--and the directors must use the ensemble that is available. The frequent mis-casting that results can damage the production.¹ Quite often the theatre also winds up paying a full week's wages to an actor who might only perform two to four times, or perhaps not at all.

The real problem with the repertory system at the Neptune is with the technical staff. Costs multiply with the overtime needed for shifting complete settings late at night and for refocusing nearly every lighting instrument in the

¹This undesirable fact-of-repertory-life was made clear to this author when he had the opportunity to watch John Hirsch in the final stages of rehearsing a repertory cast in A Man's A Man at the Guthrie Theatre; a few month's later this author saw the same play performed by jobbed-in actors for a stock run at MTC: The differences resulting from proper casting were outstanding. The MTC cast made the Guthrie company look like bad amateurs who were incapable of responding to direction or the demands of the script.

house. As mentioned earlier, the theatre does not own enough lighting equipment for running a rep schedule, but even if it did, the space does not exist for mounting any more equipment.

Special problems in construction arise from the need to assemble and disassemble the settings so often, and storage space is a constant headache.

In a small community like Halifax, and in a limited physical facility like the Neptune Theatre there would always be significant problems in a repertory program resulting from factors of space, finances, and personnel.

Rising pressure in these three areas finally convinced the Foundation's Board that change was essential. The 1971 Winter Season will be programmed as stock and the Summer Season will be presented in repertory (a valid compromise in view of the tourist trade that passes through Halifax in the summer).

However, true to his convictions and convinced that there could be no artistic growth in the persisting financial restrictions (even with stock), Heinar Piller resigned in the fall of 1970.

In addition to his feelings about the repertory system, Piller had strong opinions about Neptune's relation to University theatres. (Dalhousie University, in Halifax, has a new and expensive theatre plant, a growing department, and no practical relationship with the Neptune Theatre).

Since Piller's thoughts were echoed, at least in part, by many of Canada's professional directors, and since educational theatre is just developing and will be rapidly expanding in Canada, his comments have a special meaning for the future of the talent supply:

What have you got in Drama Departments? You have teachers taught by teachers who are teaching teachers. Somewhere along the line they are frustrated professionals. They are bogged down in some Drama Department because of security; they have no contact with the immediate practical problems. The youngsters they train dream up great highbrow ideas, then they graduate with a stupid B. A. in Drama. They may have taken a design course, a directing course, and an acting course and they know it all! They say: "Here I am! I've designed a set, I've directed a show, I've acted in a play. I have marvelous ideas. I'm full of talent . . . here, take me! You can't afford not to take me." But sorry, when you start here . . . you do a walk-on and if you're really that talented you'll be noticed very quickly and you'll work your way up . . . because you don't know how to handle the professional situation. You can't. That is a problem that has to be overcome.¹

The solution probably lies in the distant future since the attitude of many members of the Canadian University Theatre Association is equally adamant. Since the supply of professional talents has increased and seems to outweigh the demand, it is likely that, with rare exceptions, the responsibility for any constructive action will rest with the university people.

The Neptune faces more significant problems, however, with regard to its future needs for funds and physical

¹Heinar Piller, private interview.

facilities. Both of those problems seem insolvable in view of the small population of Halifax and the financial depression that affects all of the Maritimes. It may be possible that the Foundation has reached a plateau. The only possibility for continued development rests with a significant shift in the proportion of subsidy from the Canada Council relative to the ticket revenues and the amounts of subsidy granted by the provincial and municipal governments.

The Playhouse Theatre Company

Back when Neptune was still simply an idea in the minds of interested citizens, there was another idea in motion for a Regional Theatre in Vancouver, a community fifteen times the size of Halifax.

The Neptune was the first modern effort at professional theatre in the Maritimes; in Vancouver on the opposite coast, a theatre committee was making its sixth effort since the second world war to found and sustain a professional company. Previous efforts had ". . . ultimately failed because the producers did not realize that the enterprise could not succeed without substantial financial support from the public and from the government."¹ Public support in Canada's third largest city was, and remains a problem.

¹"Playhouse Theatre Company," The Stage in Canada/ La Scene au Canada, January, 1967, p. 6.

There are at least two major reasons. One is the nature of Vancouver: it embraces such political and social extremes that it seems to cancel out any identity. The pace of life in Vancouver is slow. The relation between the people and the environment seems Oriental. It is a kind of lotus land that has gone wild in going nowhere. The natural setting of the city numbs aggressiveness and intellectual activity for many of the people there: it is enough to simply stare at the mountains or go into them or become depressed by the unrelenting overcast skies of the winter months.¹ In Vancouver man is not thrown back on himself and his own resources as he is in Winnipeg.

The distracting qualities of the environment, the contrasts, and the state of mind that dominates many of Vancouver's people, make it difficult for any organization to surface and be "identified" with. There is too much to choose from in Vancouver. In Winnipeg it is easier for a theatre centre to establish its presence and role in the community--the people of Winnipeg can identify with "their" theatre; they can more easily direct their focus to the distracting, escapist, and interpretive functions of theatre.

In other words, in Vancouver, public support is difficult to grasp because of the competition created by

¹Based on the author's experience of living in the area for a year and interview discussions with Christopher Newton, Tom Hendry, and Keith Turnbull.

the mountains and the ocean, by sporting activities and other artistic activities; and because the size of the city makes it difficult for any organization to achieve sustained, dominant attention. These factors affect attendance, and public donations. Apparently no substantial efforts were made to attack the public for funds prior to the creation of the Vancouver Theatre Centre (which operates as the Playhouse Theatre Company).

The other point, mentioned earlier in connection with the failure of previous efforts to establish a professional company, related to the lack of governmental subsidies. The timing of the formation of the Playhouse Theatre Company was critical in relation to the appearance of subsidies. At the time Vancouver's Community Arts Council was considering the formation of a professional theatre, the Canada Council was receiving the Tom Patterson, Leon Major, John Gray report that confirmed the Council's thinking in favor of the creation of a national decentralized theatre complex. So the Council was willing to offer financial support to Regional Theatres.

Two members of Vancouver's Arts Council went to Ottawa and then returned with the encouraging news that an effective local effort at founding a professional theatre designed to serve the immediate and surrounding communities might anticipate help from the Canada Council.¹

¹Malcolm Black, "Playhouse Background," a one-page typewritten history.

It also happened, that at that time the city government of Vancouver was anxious to have a professional theatre company so that the recently built Queen Elizabeth Playhouse, which had cost the city \$3 million, would not go unused for such long periods of time. When the city built the Playhouse, they allowed IATSE in to run the equipment and, as a result, the rental costs for the facility became so great that few organizations, and certainly no amateur groups, could afford to use it.

The arrangement that the city worked out with the founders of the Playhouse Theatre Company was a poor one. The shortsightedness of the 1962 arrangement has been a source of grief to the theatre ever since.

The basic result of the city-theatre arrangement is that the company cannot occupy the Playhouse full time. They must pay the city on a per performance basis when they do use it and hourly overtime is added for use in excess of five hours per day. A fee must also be paid for use of the theatre for technical rehearsals, for set up, and for strike. If an event is scheduled in the Playhouse at the time a setting is standing, then it must be struck for that event (at an average cost of \$350 to the company), and re-erected for the Playhouse's next performance. The theatre, by the way, is an early 1960's design with a fairly flexible stage space and a sterile decor. The seating capacity is 647 with 480 of those in a fan-shaped orchestra. The house is not large,

but it could not be called intimate either. The proscenium arch is 47' 6" wide and it can be raised to a height of 18' 7". The curtain-to-back-wall distance is 27' 6" and a near semi-circular, hydraulic orchestra pit can add another 10' to the downstage edge of the apron. Floor to grid distance is 47' and there is roughly 12' of wing space on both sides for accommodating scene shifts. The Playhouse Theatre does have rehearsal space (which must also be rented), but it has no shops or storage space and no administrative office space. So the company has had to work out of as many as six different buildings at one time and the lease and rental costs are tremendous. As a result of the divided quarters, there has often been a fragmentation in the company's esprit de corps.

The cost of renting the Playhouse in the first session was \$15,000; the cost for 1970-71 was set at \$28,050 with an anticipated hidden cost factor of \$11,000.¹ The grants from the city have always taken the form of reduced rent, and prior to 1970-71, they never equalled the charges against the company. In a sense, the city council has annually determined how much the Playhouse would have to grant the municipal treasury. A former Administrative Director of the Playhouse suggested in 1966 that the city ought to give the Playhouse Theatre over to the company and the company would then assume

¹Playhouse Theatre Company Brief to Canada Council, 1970.

responsibility for maintenance and rental programming. The idea still seems valid.

With the present situation the city of Vancouver proportionately does less for its professional theatre company than any other city in Canada, excepting Calgary. Apparently, municipal allocations are directly related to political expediency and to the Vancouver "state-of-mind" that was described earlier.

However, in spite of facility and financial problems, the first season of six plays as performed by the Playhouse Theatre Company was scheduled to open in the Fall of 1963. Though the Vancouver Theatre Centre did not have to combat a retarded renovations schedule as the Neptune had, they encountered other severe problems. In the interest of economy the Board appointed Michael Johnston as Artistic and Administrative Director. He was also responsible for Public Relations and all design work. He lasted one season. According to Jack Richards, a local Critic for the Vancouver Sun, he was "fired" by the Board ". . . for not being a take-charge personality."¹ Still, Johnston had pulled the Playhouse Theatre Company through a tumultuous season of flops with the help of one promotion assistant, a secretary, and an accountant. The first play, The Hostage, was to be

¹Jack Richards, "Playhouse Batting Average a Lowly .166," Vancouver Sun, April 8, 1964.

directed by John Hirsch, who quit his assignment three weeks prior to opening because of a depressing financial situation. Malcolm Black took over, but the show apparently ". . . inspired mostly disgust and disinterest."¹ Mavor Moore later came out from Toronto to direct Julius Ceasar in a modern dress staging: "The production was a shambles, High School kids threw pennies and candies at the actors and laughed uproariously at the tragedy."²

When Malcolm Black became Artistic Director in 1964, he was able to enjoy a considerable increase in company personnel. The Board hired an Administrative Director and permitted the hiring of a scenic and costume designer, a production stage manager, and a group of technical assistants and administrative people. The company also engaged a local firm to handle publicity.

Black noted in a letter to Peter Dwyer that:

The thing that attracted me to Vancouver was the presence of a number of talented people of the theatre who were floundering for lack of leadership. I saw in this group of people the possibility of realizing a life's ambition. The formation of a company. With the opening of THE SEAGULL I saw on the stage the beginning of the realization of that dream. I feel that the beginnings of work as an ensemble is well underway.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid. It is perhaps worth pointing out that Malcolm Black later acknowledged: "Michael Johnston ran into problems with the antagonism from the amateurs and even the university. The spokesman for this sacred sector of society was Jack Richards." Letter from Malcolm Black, Artistic Director of the Playhouse and addressed to Peter Dwyer, Assistant Director of the Canada Council, January 28, 1965.

Only lack of funds precludes a season contract for the ten or so actors who form the nucleus of my group.¹

Black was an aggressive and uncompromising artist.

Vancouver's mood never affected him. The plays selected during his three seasons of work were obviously a theatrical challenge to the tastes of Vancouver audiences. Black was apparently considered a brilliant Artistic Director and a difficult, driving individual.²

In his first season he inaugurated a Theatre Workshop program and a children's Christmas production. Both efforts involved personnel and actors from the Holiday Theatre, Vancouver's amateur children's theatre organization. Holiday Theatre had been active and busy since 1953 when Joy Coghill and Myra Benson founded it. A number of the actors in the Workshop demonstrated enough ability to be used in main stage productions. In some ways the Playhouse Workshop became an extension of the training that was available at the Holiday Theatre.

Black also started an actor-to-the-schools program and went with the actors to talk about theatre and moderate discussions after the actors' performances.

¹Ibid.

²Robert Ellison, private interview held at the Playhouse Theatre Company, Vancouver, British Columbia, August, 1970. Mr. Ellison became Administrative Director of the company in 1968.

In 1965-66, Black's second season with the Playhouse, he took advantage of Centennial Commission funds and commissioned two original works which were scheduled for the 1966-67 season. It was in 1965-66, however, that he began the Playhouse's record of doing original Canadian scripts and he started that record with a musical called Like Father, Like Fun by Eric Nicol. In that same year, the Playhouse featured eight major productions. One of those, Romeo and Juliet was toured as the Playhouse's second offering to BC's Interior (the other work was Stop the World. . .).

At the conclusion of the eight-play winter season, the company mounted two new productions for the Vancouver International Festival.

In 1966-67, the Playhouse's fourth season, the attendance went up from the first year's average of 40% to 71%. Unfortunately, financial problems forced a production cut-back and the company could only stage six main stage productions. However, they did go ahead and mount the two original works they had commissioned earlier.

Holiday Theatre

At the same time, the Playhouse entered a formal relationship with the Holiday Theatre. The Committee that was set up at that time to run the new "go-between" organization known as the Holiday Playhouse, was created by three

Board members of the Playhouse and three members of Holiday Theatre. Miss Joy Coghill became Artistic Director of the new venture.

With the partial merger, the Holiday Theatre found a way of sharing aims and costs with the Playhouse Theatre Company in the form of the Holiday Playhouse. The Holiday Theatre continued its separate program of presenting drama in Vancouver's elementary and secondary schools. Holiday Playhouse became the provincial children's theatre touring company that both organizations had recognized a need for. The Holiday people also became the complete educational wing of the adult company.

In May of 1969 Holiday Theatre and Holiday Playhouse were reconnected and both joined the Playhouse in a total amalgamation which created a new secondary group for the Playhouse known as Playhouse Holiday. These two groups were then incorporated as the Playhouse Centre of British Columbia which operates under the name of the Playhouse Theatre Company. It was planned at that time that Playhouse Holiday would continue to tour the Province and to give performances in the Vancouver schools. Unfortunately, the Metro program had to be cancelled in 1970-71 due to budget problems.

The touring part of the Holiday concept has always been active: in 1966-67, for example, the company of young apprentices gave 180 performances of Shakespearean excerpts

and a children's play to elementary and secondary schools in fifty communities. The company played to 35,000 children in that season. In 1953 they had visited only 20 communities and had played to 18,000 children. For the 1969-70 season they anticipated visits to 80 centres and a total audience of 192,000; they also planned to perform for 16,700 students in the Greater Vancouver area.¹

When touring, Playhouse Holiday plays three shows in repertory. Two of these are intended as participation theatre for elementary students; one is for primary children, grades kindergarden through the third, the other is for intermediate students in grades four through seven. The two plays are billed as one session and a school can book a session for \$160. The company can give two sessions in one day. The plays are performed in the round for a suggested audience of 200 with a maximum of 250. The advanced program is for junior and senior level students and is performed on a three-quarter, thrust stage for an audience of 400-450. Teachers are provided with background material for the plays and suggestions for follow-up work after the performances.

Approximately 50% of the Playhouse Holiday activities must be underwritten with subsidies from the parent organization and other sources.

¹"Playhouse Centre of British Columbia: Organization and Financial Structure," January, 1970, (typewritten), p. 11.

The Holiday School

In 1960, the Holiday Theatre had initiated creative dramatics classes in a summer school session that lasted for four weeks. The summer programs continued over the years and in 1969 they were offered to 108 students--enrollment had to be restricted in the interest of results. Similar expansion has occurred in the fall and winter classes which were started in 1961. Originally, the creative dramatics classes were developed for two age groups: 5 to 12 and 13 to 17 years, but the number of age groups has increased for both programs and the age divisions have been narrowed. With increased sections and a limited total enrollment, the number of students per section has decreased which allows greater personal attention.

The 1969 Brochure for the Playhouse Holiday School of Drama defined its objectives in a description of creative drama:

Creative Drama is concerned with the development of the whole individual through Creative group activity.

It is the exciting process of original "drama making" aided by the use of art, music and literature, that stimulates the imagination to explore new levels of experience and awareness; that strengthens concentration and self-discipline; that releases the ability and confidence to communicate and share ideas and feelings.

Creative Drama stresses the involvement, the DOING, not a final performance of any kind.¹

¹1969 Brochure for the Playhouse Holiday School of Drama.

Workshops

In 1966 Holiday Playhouse also established two Theatre Workshops which dealt with the different disciplines of theatre arts--as opposed to the less structured work in creative dramatics; one of these was created for amateurs and the other was for professionals who worked in the Playhouse's main stage program. For the amateur Workshop, fifty people were auditioned and sixteen were accepted for instruction under a variety of teachers that included Joy Coghill and Malcolm Black.

The workshop was an intensive 20-week, 160-hour programme, developing and improving in each individual a professional attitude, a flexible instrument, and the basis of an acting technique.¹

The students paid an enrollment fee which met the cost of the program. Some of the students were used in productions by Holiday Theatre and the Playhouse Company. At the end of the year, the group presented several adult dramas.

The Professional's Workshop was set up in response to requests made by Playhouse actors. The Workshop brought in specialists who gave instruction in acting, historical deportment, dance, and voice.² Fifteen actors advanced their skills in the fifteen-week Workshop. The Workshops, on both levels, continued for several years and were considered highly productive.

¹Playhouse Theatre Company Brief to Canada Council, 1967-68, Section 2, p. 2.

²Ibid.

As mentioned earlier, Playhouse Holiday has toured extensively within British Columbia: it has played in communities from border to border and in 1969 it did so with its one-hundredth production. Many of its productions have been original Canadian works. The organization, like MTC's Young Company, has been a training ground for many actors who have advanced to full union card status and occasional work on the main stage. The variations on the "Holiday" titles have been beneficial to the two original organizations that are now a more efficient "whole". As such, the Playhouse Theatre Company provides for its future audience and delivers vital theatre experiences to young people through-out British Columbia.

In the fall of 1966, Malcolm Black, who had become disenchanted with the restrictions under the Playhouse' financial ceiling, and who saw little potential in the Board for pushing that ceiling upward, resigned. He was also disgusted with the unresponsiveness of the city and province to the growth and quality of work at the Playhouse. He said:

Neither the province nor the city can go on much longer ignoring us on the scale they are. My responsibilities are the artistic development of the theatre, but I can't sit back and just shrug my shoulders and accept this sort of situation. Shortage of money may produce inventiveness, but it can't be allowed to overpower an organization.¹

¹Malcolm Black as quoted in James Barber, "The Intolerable Situation Behind the Resignation of Malcolm Black," The Province, Vancouver, December 2, 1966.

The company respects Black for his accomplishments when the organization was still in its infant stage:

It was the professionalism of Malcolm Black, his marvelous instinct for controversy, his intense devotion to talent and his unerring ability in casting and selection of plays, as well as his stubborn dedication that put the Playhouse Theatre Company into orbit.¹

Joy Coghill followed Black as Artistic Director and took the Playhouse into its period of greatest activity. Coghill was really thought of as a "local" person in view of her long term of activity with Holiday Theatre, Holiday Playhouse, and the Playhouse Theatre Company. She had worked with those organizations as an actress, director, teacher, and producer. She was in a good position to sense the nature of Vancouver audiences, though there was some question about whether her evaluations were applied correctly. Her choice of plays was generally a bit bland until the second season when she introduced two shock shows in the staging of The Filthy Piranesi and Grass and Wild Strawberries. On the positive side, however, she arranged a national tour for Holiday Playhouse with two original works that she directed herself. The plays were eventually performed at Expo. She was active in the final and total amalgamation process of turning Holiday Theatre and Holiday Playhouse into Playhouse

¹Playhouse Theatre Company Souvenir Program for 1970-71.

Holiday. She encouraged the development of a women's auxillary which was lead into action by Mrs. John Allen in the form of the Playhouse Club.

In 1967 a Playwright's Workshop was added by Miss Coghill to stimulate original works and test them through readings.

She also introduced three original works through main stage productions. One of these, The Ecstasy of Rita Joe by George Ryga, received wide national acclaim and was later taken to Ottawa where it was attended by Canada's Prime Minister and a large number of other political dignitaries. The play was considered a tremendous success and has since been published and given additional performances by a number of other professional theatre companies.

Stage 2

Joy Coghill also oversaw the actualization of an idea Malcolm Black had wanted: the creation of a secondary theatre company at the studio level. Using professional actors at studio rates, Stage 2, under the direction of John Wright, was activated in 1967-68. In their first season, the Stage 2 group performed in the Electrical Workers' Hall. The production schedule was an experiment, and the purpose, at first, was to provide an inexpensive vehicle for mounting new plays and rarely performed works. In the

first season of Stage 2, three plays were presented and an original by James Raeney, Listen to the Wind, was featured. For the second season the Stage 2 company moved to the 150-seat Arts Club Theatre and clearly became a commercial, though off-beat extension of the main stage bill. In the third season, when David Gardner had replaced Joy Coghill as Artistic Director, Stage 2 became known as Playhouse 2 and it increased its number of productions to six.

Recent Problems

A number of people were beginning to think that the real artistic action and the exciting thematic ideas of the Playhouse Company were to be found on the Playhouse 2 stage.¹ Unfortunately, some members of the Board of Directors were leary of some of the themes being explored at Playhouse 2 and they seemed utterly confused by the great cost and small financial return of the second company. When it was proposed that Playhouse 2 be continued in the 1970-71 season, and the Board saw a projected expenditure of \$36,000 and a projected ticket revenue of \$6,000, they insisted on canceling the growing program. They were motivated in part by the theatre's discovery of a working capital deficiency of \$146,000, but they were also generally

¹Robert Ellison, private interview; Robert Graham and James McQueen, actors, private interviews in Vancouver, August, 1970.

unable to resolve artistic integrity and excitement with the lack of ticket stubs. Mr. David Gardner, who became Artistic Director after Joy Coghill and who claims that he does not ". . . enjoy fighting for power," or "winning," let the excitement of the new, controversial theatre slide onto a shelf for an indefinite period.¹ It is unfortunate that there was no way of creating some sort of less expensive program. It also seems regrettable that the Canada Council could not make small sums of subsidy available exclusively for the support of studio theatre.

During Joy Coghill's two season's at the Playhouse, the company reached a level of activity that placed it on a quantitative level with the Manitoba Theatre Centre. In the area of children's theatre, the Playhouse even surpassed the activity of MTC's Young Company.

When David Gardner arrived to take control of the Playhouse, he was returning to the theatre after ten years as a producer and director for CBC. Prior to that, he had been active at Stratford and on the London stage. Gardner is a pleasant person with a polished executive look. His years of work within the large CBC structure made him a bit wobbly at the time he returned to legitimate theatre and he has remarked that it took him almost a full year to

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David Gardner, private interview at the Playhouse Theatre Company, August, 1970.

re-establish his "theatre legs".¹ He was taken back by the fact that he had ". . . never really lead anything before."² He tends to shy away from power struggles and the occasional need to use power.³ The result for 1969-70, when strong leadership and a definite policy were needed, was that ". . . it was not a hit season; the only hit was Royal Hunt of the Sun," and consequently Gardner was left feeling ". . . frustrated and hamstrung."⁴

Gardner also had to contend with a considerable loss of ticket revenue which resulted from a significant drop in season subscriptions for 1969-70 (due in part to bad productions in 1968-69 and a cutback in the audience development program). The \$60,000 spent on Royal Hunt of the Sun did not help the financial picture either. It was 10% above its budgeted cost. It was not the only show that involved over-spending, however, for the first four shows, or two-thirds of the main stage bill, exceeded their budgeted costs. In addition:

Only one Main Stage production, An Evening With Bernard Shaw, with a cast of three, brought in more than its production costs, but still fell many thousands of dollars short of its estimated income. Unlike the previous season, not one of the plays was a resounding success, let alone a sell-out.⁵

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ben Granat, "Behind the Vancouver Playhouse Crisis," Stage Door, Vancouver, April 16, 1970.

The drop in ticket revenues was connected to problems in the previous season. Unfortunately, the initial loss in season subscribers was followed by a consistent pattern of low casual sales, meaning that no new converts were being attracted to the theatre. This may have been due to the creation of:

A policy formed with the negative aim of not alienating people the way Grass and Wild Strawberries might have done, provided no interesting hits with which to draw in new audiences. By trying to appease too many, the company has succeeded in pleasing too few.¹

One of the effects of this was a lowering of morale in the company. Internal strife developed and the climate became almost antiproduktive. The tone of the problems reached the public: "The optimism which surrounded the company during the past two years, seems to have vanished without a trace."²

The financial loss dropped the Playhouse into a \$146,000 hole. The loss also created the first real threat of extinction for the Playhouse.

When the Board of Directors finally comprehended the seriousness of the situation they were able to see, perhaps for the first time, the responsibility that they had to raise money for their theatre corporation. Their first priority became money, and the alternative to meeting that priority was death for the theatre.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

The Board rallied and raised over \$100,000 through government grants and private donations. However, in the process the company had to eliminate the children's theatre activities in the Vancouver school system, and the company had to eliminate the Playhouse 2. They also had to give the government of British Columbia assurance that they would avoid the experimental, the vulgar, and the controversial.

Then Gardner talked about resigning in the Spring of 1970 to accept a position with the CBC. The Board began looking for a replacement. Before they located one, Gardner announced he would stay on. The Board contracted him for a second season.¹ Early in his second season, however, he accepted an offer to replace Jean Roberts as Theatre Arts Officer for the Canada Council. Within two weeks of his resignation, the Board hired Paxton Whitehead, Artistic Director of the Shaw Festival, as the fifth Artistic Director of the Playhouse.

The Playhouse Theatre Company became the first Canadian Regional Theatre to regress. Hopefully, it will be able to realize its plans for redeveloping and exceeding its 1969-70 peak of activity. The city government could certainly help by giving the Playhouse Theatre to the company or by tripling

¹This author saw Gardner's production of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead in November of 1970. The staging, pacing, and humor were brilliantly rendered. Gardner proved that he has the capacity to entertain an audience well. Credit for the tremendous artistic success in the production is also due to the acting of Alan Scarfe, Neil Dainard, and Paxton Whitehead.

its grant. It will have to help if it wants an active theatre instead of a dark building.

Evaluation

Though the Playhouse has been criticized for its staging, and, less frequently, for its choice of plays, it has run up an admirable record of substantial works and it has produced original material with greater frequency than any other Regional or Festival Theatre. The Playhouse needs strong leadership from a dynamic, uncompromising artist who relishes power and attacks complacency. The entire organization, in the opinion of this author, needs an infusion of energy and a stronger commitment to the ideals of theatre.

Criticisms about the Playhouse Theatre Company usually arise from failings in the attempts to mount good and original plays, and they deserve respect, if not praise for at least trying. Their continual gambles with original works in particular, is commendable, regardless of the criticisms that may be leveled at specific problems in the productions. The Playhouse has also been successful and industrious in going beyond its main stage bill to service its region with activities in children's theatre, Theatre Workshops, Playwright's Workshops, studio theatre, creative dramatics, readings, lectures, demonstrations, and free advice.

So they do try.

Some theatres do not try. Some simply aim for a perpetuation of middle-class taste, which means commercial fare. The argument is advanced that an effort is being made to develop an audience in an unsophisticated community that will not respond to challenging, controversial, or stimulating theatre. Therefore, warmed-over Broadway comedies are the rule, substantial dramas are the rare exception, and original or controversial works somehow become an impossibility. This kind of activity has been the policy of Canada's fourth Regional Theatre: the Citadel Theatre.

The Citadel Theatre

In Edmonton, Alberta, the Citadel Theatre Company was created and is still run by Joseph Shoctor. Shoctor bought a building, formed a company, became the President, and has maintained control of all three ever since.

As President of the Citadel's Board and life-time Executive-Producer for the organization, he has made a strong imprint of his own personality on the policy and quality of artistic and administrative work of the company. He had been associated with show business for many years before he began to promote the same in his own city. For, in addition to being a successful and ambitious lawyer in Edmonton, he had produced Broadway and Off-Broadway shows

with modest rewards. A number of local Edmontonians, who knew of his interest in commercial theatre, began urging him to do something at home. At the same time, the old Salvation Army Hall, known as The Citadel and located across the street from Shoctor's offices, was conveniently up for sale. In 1964, three years after the Hall had been vacated, a realtor showed Shoctor the building with the suggestion he convert it to a theatre. Shortly thereafter he paid approximately \$75,000 for the building and made plans to spend another \$150,000 on renovations. He then wrote to fifteen influential friends and asked them to join him in a meeting to discuss the creation of a professional theatre company. Thirteen people showed up and they all became members of the first Board of Directors for the Citadel Theatre Company. At that time, three other people decided to share the cost of purchase for the Citadel, which they did, and the renovations began.

The building had been erected in 1927 by the Salvation Army and had been used as a meeting hall. When the conversion efforts were started to turn the structure into a theatre the old Citadel was completely gutted except for its seats and heavy wooden ceiling beams which gave it the appearance of an old Tudor Hall.

To provide space for scenic construction, a small shop was built off the rear of the structure. The basement of the building was partitioned for dressing rooms, a green room, and a small costume shop. The larger part of the basement was reserved for the construction of a restaurant, complete with a liquor license. Shoctor felt the possibility for dinner-theatre activity and drinking was essential for enhancing the entertainment upstairs. So he and two of his theatre partners went into the restaurant business, lost \$40,000 in a few years, and turned it over to an independent operator who has made a success of it, and who still caters to theatre clientele.

The race to complete the rebuilding went to the eleventh hour as it had at the Manitoba Theatre Centre and the Neptune. When the theatre opened it became the most intimate Regional Theatre plant in Canada, with seats for 277 people within 47' of the stage. Shoctor strongly favors the intimacy of the Citadel:

I would never want a theatre like the new Manitoba theatre. It's a monument. It's not a theatre, it's too big. It's a monolithic concrete thing. A theatre has to be intimate, in the sense of warmth and communication between the actor and the audience.¹

The Citadel is also the most restricting theatre in terms of stage space. It has a proscenium opening 30' 9"

¹Joseph Shoctor, private interview in his office in Edmonton, August, 1970.

wide by 13' high; 3' of wing space on each side; 5' of fly space, and 21' of depth behind the curtain line. There is a 3' convertible apron. Twin turntables, 16' in diameter, provide the best measure of flexibility.

Acoustics and sight lines (the stage is 3' above the slightly raked orchestra floor) are excellent. It is also a simple task to sell-out a small house and the Citadel has recently managed to play to 85-95% of capacity. In the 1969-70 season the Citadel played to an average of 93.6% of capacity. At first sight, that figure seems astonishing, however, it loses a bit when compared to the two next smallest Regional Theatre structures in Canada: Theatre Calgary and the Neptune. Viz.:

| | 1969-1970 | | |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|
| | performances | attendance | % capacity |
| The Citadel | 161 | 41,524 | 94 |
| Theatre Calgary | 132 | 43,330 | 85 |
| The Neptune | 133 | 59,996 | 81 ¹ |

The Citadel Theatre opened on November 8, 1965, with John Hulburt as Artistic and Administrative Director. In

¹Based on 1969-70 box-office reports (typewritten) from the three theatres.

February of 1966, Hulburt resigned for health reasons and Robert Glenn came in from Texas as a replacement. At the same time Olive Finland became General Manager. Mrs. Finland worked alone for the first year and then with only part-time help for several years--she still works with the smallest administrative staff in the Regional Movement, with obvious effects.

Robert Glenn was instrumental in establishing the name of the theatre and in attracting a good social range in Edmonton. He was also an American and more familiar with the American theatre scene than with the Canadian, so he relied heavily on American talents for his productions. The list of works performed during his two and one-half seasons leaned heavily on bland comedy. He did manage to include one work of substance in both of the fall seasons.

After Glenn announced his plans to leave, The Edmonton Journal reported:

Glenn, to use his own words, "came here to give the theatre artistic stability, professionalism, and an audience education emphasis to help it become accepted by the Community."

"The theatre will probably always have to stay with an emphasis on popular works. That's what the box office has been telling us."¹

After Glenn's departure, Critic Barry Westgate, of the Journal reviewed his two years of work and pointed out that his directing style had been distinguished by his:

. . . attention to sharp production values.

¹Barry Westgate, "Glenn Leaving," The Edmonton Journal, March 29, 1968.

Even productions that failed to find that extra inner something were smooth and studied, confident, and always interesting in one form or another.¹

The article also discussed the choice of plays for the Citadel's first three seasons:

The Citadel is very definitely limited in the type of season it can successfully present here. Audience tastes must still be probed, titillated piece by piece, subtly altered. There is no place, yet, for an overnight crusade and summer-storm theatre hopefully intended to turn in a flash into a unique contemporary identity.

There will come a time when the theatre ought to be much more than it is--individual, outspoken, adventurous. But that time is not yet.²

A more accurate summary of the Citadel's situation was given by Glenn in an article he wrote for the Dallas Times when he got back to his home in Texas:

Canadian regional theatres, like most of their American counterparts, find it necessary to cultivate the patronage of the Establishment in order to survive, and their seasons are composed of the usual non-controversial stew of classical, commercial and serious plays. The "serious" plays usually embrace Arthur Miller, Albee, Williams and perhaps Pinter, certainly nothing anymore avant-garde than Murray Schisgal.³

Though his language is general, it clearly reflects his experience in Edmonton.

Glenn was followed by Sean Mulcahy, a talkative, confident Irishman, who may take his popular image as a

¹Barry Westgate, "Citadel Has a Big Job Open . . . ," The Edmonton Journal, May 3, 1968.

²Ibid.

³Robert Glenn, "Canadian Theatres Seek Their Own Personality."

leprechaun more seriously than his directing. He began his tenure by stating: "I want to bleed in good, middle-of-the-road theatre."¹ He also pointed out that: "The theatre is fortunate to get me. And I'm going to work very hard. What good comes to the theatre reflects on me."² Later he told Herb Whittaker of the Toronto Globe and Mail: "My aim is another Abby Theatre--a theatre nationally known and internationally, too. A famous theatre in Edmonton. I am prepared to spend the rest of my life there doing that."³

Mr. Mulcahy's Middle-of-the-Road-Abby opened its first season in 1968 with a Neil Simon comedy. In the middle of that season, according to critic Barry Westgate, was Irma La Douce, ". . . an unrelieved disaster with pedestrian performances The customers made it the most-attended play, but many of them must have gone away disgusted."⁴ Westgate also pointed out in his review of the season: ". . . more than half of this season was frivolous, and that's too much."⁵ Westgate recognized that Mulcahy had done

¹Sean Mulcahy as quoted in Barry Westgate, "His Aim: Good Middle-of-the-Road Theatre," The Edmonton Journal, September 6, 1968.

²Sean Mulcahy as quoted in Barry Westgate, "Confidence and Leprechaun Ebullience," The Edmonton Journal, September 15, 1968.

³Sean Mulcahy as quoted in Herbert Whittaker, "An Abby-Like Theatre for Edmonton?", Globe and Mail, Toronto, May 27, 1970.

⁴Barry Westgate, "Its first Profit made, What Now for the Citadel Theatre?", The Edmonton Journal, May 23, 1969.

⁵Ibid.

a lot to develop an audience by ". . . spreading the ENTER-TAINMENT word . . . ," but he was left wondering ". . . whether or not he is capable of giving the theatre an artistic identity as well" ¹

The cool, cautious, and commercial policy at the Citadel came under attack again in the following season, when the Citadel's competition, Theatre Calgary, offered its second original Canadian script in the form of a rock-musical Western called You Two Stay Here, The Rest Come With Me. Westgate went down to see the production, and though he felt it had some weaknesses, he was definately impressed by the effort and the audience response. He wrote:

. . . the production succeeds in reminding me that Edmonton audiences have seen no such enthusiasm and adventurousness from the Citadel.

The youthful enthusiasm by which Theatre Calgary approaches its projects is very evident. The Citadel just doesn't have any of that hopeful spontaneity and exhuberance.

Irrespective of its determined drive for capacity houses, The Citadel could depend a little more on the same youthful enthusiasm and community effort. ²

Much of what Westgate has complained about became clear to this writer when he saw a production of The Staircase in November, 1970. The strength and talents of actors Kenneth Dight and Tony Lloyd did much to make the production

¹Ibid.

²Barry Westgate, "Calgary's 'U2' Fails Courageously," The Edmonton Journal, January 16, 1970.

interesting, but the directing was dull and conventional. Much of it seemed to be in the tradition of Goethe's "Rules for Actors" as the two men were frequently placed downstage center, full front, heads turned one-quarter turn toward the other. In emotional or sentimental passages they often kneeled (in a barber shop!) and followed the same formula. Aside from blocking which echoed the "Weimar Classicism," the entire play seemed to run at one level throughout, and the variety that is possible, and intended by the author, to reveal the tragic pains and pleasures of the relationship, were either ignored or not understood by Mr. Mulcahy.

However, Sean Mulcahy is an extremely successful theatre businessman. He presents plays that most people like or can be persuaded to like. He is aggressive as a theatre spokesman and hard-sells the theatre and its program to any group that is willing to listen. He probably gives more time to more speaking engagements with more returns than any other Artistic Director in the Regional Theatres. In his first eighteen months with the company he spoke ". . . to more than 45,000--to meetings of as few as five persons and as many as 400."¹ In the season before Mulcahy's

¹"Man on the Go," Citadel Chronicle, a Newsletter for subscribers published by the Citadel Theatre, February/March 1970, p. 4.

arrival, the Citadel and played to 14,986 people--two years later that tally had risen to 41,524. (A good portion of that rise can be credited to Danny Newman's advice and methods which the Citadel and Mulcahy have followed closely.)

Mulcahy's confidence in his ability to raise ticket revenues led him to say: "I have always felt, and many of my colleagues disagree with me, that theatre can pay its own way. With a theatre of 800 seats I think I could fill it and function without Federal aid."¹

Mulcahy's feelings about finances and economy in the theatre are quite strong:

You'd be amazed at what goes on in some theatres--the money that's wasted. . . . They just aren't penny pinching.

I take it to an extreme. If I find somebody leaving a light switch on in a control room--electricity which is perhaps one-tenth of a cent--which he's wasting, I'll fire him if he does it again after I warned him once. Not that I'm worried about the tenth of a cent--I'm worried about his state of mind. I'm a bit pedantic about this.²

Mulcahy has been successful, with the assistance of General Manager Olive Finland and Joseph Shocter in retiring a \$44,000 deficit that was part of his inheritance in 1968.

The Citadel's 1970-71 season which includes The Staircase, Othello, and a promise for their first attempt at an original Canadian script are brave steps out of the land

¹Sean Mulcahy, private interview at Banff School of Fine Arts, July, 1970.

²Ibid.

of middle-class compromise. It may be that now that the Citadel has established a substantial audience, in terms of its capacity, it is ready to stop following the city's taste and begin to lead its audiences somewhere.

The School

The Citadel School of Performing Arts was first developed in the 1966-67 season for teens and pre-teens. Robert Glenn directed the School and supervised all classes and class projects. Glenn's wife, Sigrid, assisted as did Susan McFarlane and Joan Francis. Enrollment was limited to twenty in each group and the first term featured 12 sessions, the second term had 15, and there was an end-of-term program and party for both divisions. According to the School's second Brochure:

All classes will be designed to develop creative ideals and abilities as they find form and expression in the theatre arts. However, the purpose is not so much to develop professional actors among children, as it is to encourage self-expression and creative growth.¹

In the 1969-70 season the School increased its operations to accommodate 85 students over a 25-week period under the guidance of five teachers. The program of the school included basic speech, movement, dance drama, individual, group and

¹1967 Brochure for the Citadel Performing Arts School.

class improvisations, mime and the occasional use of scripted works. For the 1970-71 season the school made plans to expand to include a workshop for adults. As with the Manitoba Theatre School, the Citadel School strives to promote a desire for theatrical experiences within the individual and so it contributes, in the long run, to its potential audience. Like the Manitoba Theatre School and the Playhouse Theatre School, it must face the questions dealing with the fulfillment of a purpose that relates to main stage activities and appreciation, and budget scrutiny.

Student Matinees

The Citadel claims first honors for introducing special student matinees, six per production, in which students can purchase a ticket for the season's bill of seven shows for \$7 (or individually for \$1.25 per show). Called the Theatre Appreciation Program, it drew 5,000 students in 1968-69 and 8,000 in 1969-70. Busloads of students have traveled as much as 200 miles to attend these matinees. After the performances, the director and some of the actors engage the young audiences in a discussion. (Post-show discussions were initiated at the Neptune in 1969-70 as an added attraction for opening nights and the response has been enthusiastic though Heinar Piller feels they add little to the understanding or artistic merits of the plays.)

The Citadel has a good idea in making the theatre accessible to young adults at a low cost and with the added attraction of discussion after the performances. The program could undoubtedly contribute to the adult subscriptions when the students finish school. It is difficult to project, however, what kind of impact the commercial bill of plays at the Citadel would have on young and active minds.

The Second Company

In 1968 the Citadel developed a prototype of MTC's Young Company and of Playhouse Holiday. They called it the Citadel-on-Wheels. Its aims are quite simply: (1) to foster drama, and (2) to bring live theatre to Alberta elementary and secondary schools and communities. With a repertoire of three works, the Citadel-on-Wheels played to 60 elementary and 20 secondary groups in 1968-69. In the following season, the company gave a total of 203 performances. Part of the tremendous increase was due to the collapse of the Allied Arts Council in Calgary which had a touring company for children. The Citadel-on-Wheels was asked to honor the commitments of the Allied Arts Centre and was given a portion of the grant that the Provincial Department of Education had pegged for the Arts Centre.

A number of performances were presented at Indian schools and were sponsored by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

In the Spring of 1970 the company of five actors changed its name to Citadel-on-Wings and flew into the Northwest Territories and above the Arctic Circle. They gave 22 performances in 13 days. The venture was sponsored by the City of Edmonton as a Centennial Gift to the Northwest Territories:

At a cost of \$7,000 to the city, the group performed three different plays, designed specifically for younger audiences. Entire communities waited for the arrival of the players to welcome them and then they all attended the shows to sit enraptured

The plays, which depend on a great deal of audience participation got exactly that--giggling Eskimo women and non-English speaking Indians taking part.¹

The plays for the touring company are written for specific age groups and those for the youngest groups involve a lot of participation (as is the case with MTC's Young Company and the Playhouse Holiday). To encourage free expression on the part of the children, the Citadel sends out a season program to the teachers and principals. The program lists a number of performance conditions:

1. The plays are fully costumed and presented in a circle (12 to 14 feet in diameter) on the floor of the hall We would appreciate adults being seated away from the children.

2. The Company aims to arrive at schools one hour before scheduled time of performance in order to press costumes, prepare props, and "limber up."

A 15-minute interval at least is desirable between plays.

¹Marc Horton, "Citadel-on-Wings Knocks 'em Dead in the North," The Edmonton Journal, May 9, 1970.

3. It is helpful if a room adjacent to the hall can be used as a dressing room. The stage of most auditoriums is ideal for this purpose.

4. The maximum audience for these plays is 200. (400 is the absolute maximum for secondary audiences.) A successful performance cannot be guaranteed with a larger audience.

5. Members of the Company seat the children, this gives them an opportunity to build some bond prior to the play. (Not done at the secondary level.)

6. We would be grateful if whistles, bells, and announcements could be diverted from the hall when the play is in progress.¹

Evaluation

After developing the Citadel's School of Performing Arts, the Theatre Appreciation Program, and The Citadel-on-Wheels, the next logical step is a Studio Theatre program, but it appears that the present level of activities heavily taxes the facilities and resources of the Citadel. Studio activities will likely have to wait for the construction or renovation of another theatre, at which time the present main stage could yield a marvelous space for original and exploratory works.

Hopefully, some new or stimulating plays might make an appearance in the planning for the main stage soon. If the current, near sell-out audience has really become hooked on theatre, it should be possible to take them into the

¹Citadel-on-Wheels Programme for 1970-71, (type-written) pp. 203.

higher levels of artistic excitement that are found in productions of substantial works. In other words, the Citadel might now profitably consider abandoning its commercial policy in favor of an artistic policy.

Theatre New Brunswick

The Citadel produces in the smallest Regional Theatre structure. Theatre New Brunswick produces in the smallest Regional Theatre community.

How do you keep a fully professional theatre company alive in a city of 20,000? Stratford found a successful answer and Walter Learning, Artistic Director of TNB in Fredericton, seems to have found another.

The potential for TNB was created in 1964 when Lady Beaverbrook dedicated the Beaverbrook Auditorium, known also as The Playhouse, which was designed, built and furnished by her late husband. Lord Beaverbrook ended his series of grants and gifts to the Province of New Brunswick with The Playhouse which capped a quarter-century of "giving back" to the land an amount of nearly \$16 million.

The Playhouse cost \$1 million and is now operated by a Board of Governors that was set up in 1961 by the Province of New Brunswick. The Governors form a corporate body under the name of The Beaverbrook Auditorium:

The objects of The Beaverbrook Auditorium are to foster and promote the study and the public enjoyment and appreciation of the arts and in particular the arts of the theatre and music and other similar creative and interpretive activities . . . and in furtherance of such objects to erect, operate, and manage the auditorium.¹

Unfortunately, Lord Beaverbrook, who may have had the best interest of Fredericton of heart, had little feeling for theatre and its requirements.

The Auditorium's sightlines are fine and the acoustics are passable for large concerts, and though the building is not as restricted as the structures used in Halifax, Edmonton, or Calgary, it is vastly out of proportion to Fredericton's present population. It has 1,000 seats; 750 in the orchestra, 250 in the balcony. The back seat in the house is approximately 85 feet from the stage. Since the productions of TNB draw only a small percentage of the theatre's capacity, the balcony is always roped off.

The proscenium arch measures 45 feet by 19 feet and the stage is 35 feet deep. There is a hydraulic orchestra pit that can be raised to extend the stage another 9 feet. The building has no rehearsal space, minimal shops space, no storage space, and no fly gallery (" . . . it is said Lord Beaverbrook objected to the gallery because he found its extension aesthetically displeasing"²). It is unfortunate

¹Corporation Act as quoted in a letter from Walter Learning, Artistic Director, and addressed to Peter Dwyer at the Canada Council, May, 1969.

²Ronald Evans, "A Link in History's Chain," The Telegram, Toronto, September 28, 1964.

that a man of such generosity would not relax his aesthetic opinions and consult with theatre designers and directors so that the \$1 million might have gone into a more functional and intimate theatre. The mistake, however, has long been common to civic, high school, and university theatre planning.

To correct the deficiencies in the structure, the Beaverbrook Foundation has put up another \$1 million. This time the work has been designed by a combination of theatre consultants and artists. According to the Artistic Director, Walter Learning, the alternations will reduce the capacity by 200 seats as the proscenium will be moved into the house bringing the stage considerably closer to the back row (within 65 feet). The shift and addition of walls will provide a 60-foot fly space, new rehearsal and shops space, a new, lowered auditorium ceiling, an enlarged control booth with significant additions in light and sound control, and a new exterior for the front of the building. The renovations will be completed early in 1972.

At the time the Playhouse Auditorium was opened, it was intended to house amateur theatricals, concerts, films, fashion shows, and other forms of booked-in entertainments. Lord Beaverbrook had set aside \$100,000 for maintenance of the building but any thoughts he may have had for a resident performing arts company were cut off by his death. In the first year the costs for the Director of the Auditorium, his

staff and the structure itself, exceeded the rental revenues by \$33,000. That figure became an annual average, and in three years the "running" money was gone. This occurred in spite of solid September to June bookings.

In the first year, Alexander Gray, Director and Administrator of the Auditorium, organized an amateur theatre group called the Company of Ten which scheduled seven productions over a seven-month winter season. In the summer of 1965 he mounted a bill of comedies with a semi-professional troupe and he lost a considerable sum of money.

For the summers of 1966 and 1967, Brian Swarbrick was employed as the Auditorium Director. Between his winters of booking amateur fare, films, and fashion shows, Swarbrick brought in professional actors and did a bill of three shows in the summer of 1966 and four shows in the summer of 1967. Swarbrick succeeded in raising the attendance from 4,092 in the first season to 9,208 in the second season. Unfortunately, the IODOE which helped him raise the season ticket tally from 336 to 1,111 did not like the choice of plays and has since refused to work with anyone at the Auditorium.¹

In spite of Swarbrick's abilities in bringing about a 230% increase in attendance, he lost money in both summers. Swarbrick also had no interest in the business of winter bookings and subsequently left Fredericton to pursue other interests.

¹Walter Learning, private interview at the Beaverbrook Auditorium, June, 1970. The IODOE, by the way, is comparable to the DAR in the United States.

Due to the losses in theatre operations in the first three summers the Beaverbrook Foundation lost interest in supporting them and suggested to the Auditorium Board that a general manager be hired for administering rentals. The Board, however, was anxious to see live theatre continue in Fredericton and moved to hire Walter Learning who had recently returned to the city from an incompleted PhD program in Philosophy in Australia. Learning, who had developed a strong interest in theatre while in Australia, and who had been active in the amateur theatre program at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, accepted the job, re-thought the function of the Auditorium and the professional theatre activities within it, and eventually organized Theatre New Brunswick.

The Beaverbrook Foundation would not consider assisting Learning for his first summer season.

The budget for the season, therefore, had to be calculated entirely on the basis of ticket revenues, and so it was projected to come in under \$22,000.

Learning finally managed to get a \$5,000 grant from the Provincial government, and so, with the smallest budget yet registered by a Regional Theatre in Canada, four plays were put on in the summer of 1968. Learning's frothy bill of The Little Hut, Any Wednesday, Springtime for Henry, and Barefoot in the Park attracted 5,883 people who paid

\$12,832.50. A few extra private donations were added to the revenues, and, in the end, the books showed a loss of \$100.54. Costs had been kept down in many ways; scenery was very simple, actors were paid Equity minimum, and the staff was limited-- Learning served as Director of Artistic, Administrative and Publicity activities and he was assisted by seven other backstage people. (By contrast, the Playhouse Theatre Company employed 63 people for the same areas in 1969-70.)

Touring

In the Fall of 1968 Learning suggested to his Board that the company ought to begin thinking of Winter operations and of a regular schedule of performances outside of Fredericton. He proposed a schedule of four plays to be performed for a week in the city and then on the road for a week with scheduled stops at other provincial centres. "This was done and Theatre New Brunswick was born."¹ In its first season, TNB toured to Woodstock, St. Stephen, St. John, Moncton, Newcastle, and Charlottetown, PEI. Local sponsors in each community bought the four shows for \$600 each and sold them to their communities on a season or casual ticket basis. In a pleasant way, it became a local convention for the six communities to turn every fourth Monday or Tuesday, etc.,

¹Letter from Walter Learning to Peter Dwyer.

into TNB night. Nearly 22,000 people came out to watch the plays in the first two years. The average attendance per show was as follows:

| town | population | four-show
average
1969 | four-show
average
1970 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Woodstock | 5,000 | 800 | 250 |
| St. Stephen | 4,000 | 540 | 510 |
| St. John | 101,000 | 400 | 600 |
| Moncton | 60,000 | 500 | 750 |
| New Castle | 4,000 | 600 | 650 |
| Charlottetown
(only two shows) | 18,000 | 350 | - |
| Sussex | 4,000 | - | 350 |
| | <u>196,000</u> | <u>3,190</u> | <u>3,110</u> |

The guarantee for the second tour continued at \$600 per show so attendance figures were not critical in terms of TNB's finances. It also happened in that second year that three of the communities formed TNB Patrons Associations which then undertook the task of selling season tickets. For the 1971 tour, four Patrons associations existed and any money taken in over a \$600 minimum was turned over to the theatre.

The guarantee in the two other communities that scheduled performances was increased to \$700. TNB also doubled its performance schedule in the two larger New Brunswick communities of St. John and Moncton by adding student matinees. With 32 performances scheduled for 1971, the anticipated audience was set at 16, 236.

The operating figures and attendance reports for TNB make it seem a bit like a miniature railroad when compared to the statistical activity of other theatres. (See page 118.)

TNB's austere plan of production expenses and modest attendance record might be even further out of proportion if it had not been for the generosity of the Beaverbrook Foundation. As mentioned earlier, the Foundation had no interest in supporting live theatre at the time Walter Learning was appointed Artistic Director. However, the financial balance at the conclusion of the 1968 summer season, reawakened the Foundation's interest in live theatre and they began to trust Learning's efficiency. Consequently, the Foundation underwrote the first Provincial tour to the amount of \$15,500, the second tour to \$21,000, and the third to \$20,000. The Canada Council was unable to help TNB with any amount of financial subsidy until the summer of 1970 when it awarded \$13,500 to Walter Learning. At the same time, the Province offered its second grant of \$5,000. With the sparse population of New Brunswick, it appears doubtful that TNB could every hope to

| theatre | 1969-1970 | | | |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| | productions | performances | expenditures | attendance |
| MTC | 4 | 29 | \$379,900 | 58,570 |
| Neptune (1969) | 8 | 122 | 379,803 | 58,368 |
| Playhouse | 6 | 141 | 531,790 | 77,000 |
| Citadel | 7 | 161 | ca. 220,890 | 41,524 |
| TNB | 8 | 68 | 73,000 | 11,904 |
| T. Calgary | 7 | 132 | 159,350 | 43,330 ¹ |

¹Based on attendance records and Briefs to the Canada Council for 1970. Citadel expenditures estimated on the basis of their Financial Statement for 1969.

reach the grant-income or expenditure or attendance level of the other Regional Theatres in Canada. In fact, with the very small population of its home base it is amazing that the TNB has survived at all.

TNB and Mediocrity

Part of the success has been due to TNB's touring activities and Walter Learning's desire to out-distance Neptune's commitments and thereby make TNB the Atlantic Touring Company in the Maritimes. Another factor in Learning's formula for existence is "mediocrity." Learning admits that the most important element in his philosophy and actions is ". . . the capacity to be mediocre."¹ He readily compromises with the wants of the community in the interest of getting them into the theatre:

I don't want to go particularly way out as far as the choice of plays is concerned. Theatre is a language, and a great deal of the material that is significant and relevant right now is significant and relevant because it is knocking down conventions and a language. But before you knock them down, you have to know the language. Many people say: "Why aren't you doing the 'now' theatre?" Well, this is not possible yet. We have a whole educative process going on.²

Whereas other theatres, such as MTC, can sell-out by attracting only 3% of a population like Winnipeg's for a

¹Walter Learning, private interview.

²Walter Learning as quoted in "Walter Learning and TNB," The Stage in Canada/La Scene au Canada, January, 1970, p. 12.

24-performance run, TNB would have to pull in 95% of Fredericton to fill as many seats. Learning believes that the way to draw the greatest percentage is to cater to the unsophisticated taste of Frederictonians with mediocre comedies. The pattern of light material is occasionally broken by a work of substance, e.g., Inadmissible Evidence, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf, A Man For All Seasons, but the object is clearly to create a popular fare theatre. Learning says: "'My kind of thing is starting something and bringing it on to a certain stage, to some kind of security.'"¹ In the summer of 1970 he noted that there were at least three people interested in having his job and that the three men were each ten times more talented than he, but he also believed they would have the theatre closed down in a year.² He believes it relates to his willingness to produce plays like The Little Hut and Springtime for Henry. He feels that artists with more talent would be unwilling to work with the get-them-in-and-get-them-back type of potboilers.

His talents have brought a slow but steady arousal of interest in theatre in Fredericton and in other communities of New Brunswick.

¹Ibid., p. 14.

²Walter Learning, private interview.

Understandably, the main stage and adult touring activities define the current limits of possible theatre activities at TNB. The company has started performing student matinees and giving post-show discussions and Learning lectures on behalf of the theatre; however, the more taxing expansions, in the forms of a children's theatre company, a theatre school, or a studio program can not be considered yet in view of the size of the community.

Learning, like Mulcahy, is committed to a commercial, rather than an artistic policy. Yet, Learning is also convinced that time and local support will eventually permit the highest level of artistic integrity in terms of theatre policy and style. He said:

I do not really have an artistic style to offer. What I am doing at the moment is just putting something there which can be, and I think that is a marvelous function.¹

Walter Learning has demonstrated that cautious, sacrificial spending and commercial hits will keep a theatre alive in a city with less than 20,000. The question that arises now is: once existence is secured for a theatre company in such a small community, how long will it take to build a foundation that can be passed on to an artist whose strength is in his style? It is interesting to conjecture on what might have occurred if TNB were to take the same rapid steps to artistic substance that Christopher Newton has taken in three years at Theatre Calgary.

¹Walter Learning in "Walter Learning and TNB," p. 12.

Theatre Calgary

Christopher Newton was the Artistic Director at Theatre Calgary from 1968 to 1971. He transformed an amateur theatre group into a professional organization and, in the course of his short stay there, he demonstrated, as MTC and the Playhouse had, how determination and talent might quickly lead a company through "token" compromise into a real policy of substantial and relevant plays. He went from Simon to Pinter and from Hamilton to Shakespeare; viz:

1968-1969

The Odd Couple
 The Alchemist (modernized)
 Gaslight
 Irma La Douce
 Private Lives
 The Three Desks
 (original by James Raeney)
 Black Comedy

1969-1970

Star-Spangled Girl
 Loot
 Great Expectations
 You Two Stay Here, The Rest
 Follow Me (original musical
 by Christopher Newton and
 Allen Rae)
 The Importance of Being Ernest
 Long Day's Journey Into Night
 Bell, Book, and Candle

1970-1971

The Entertainer
 The Birthday Party
 Dracula
 Trip
 (original musical by Christopher Newton
 and Allen Rae)
 The Taming of the Shrew
 The Father
 A Day in the Death of Joe Egg

Newton recognizes Canada's pre-occupation with its conception of itself as a middle-power or "second-class" society, but he does not see the malaise as a reason for giving in to common thinking. He thinks in a first class range in terms of theatre. His wide range of talents has enhanced his judgement. In anticipating his 1970-71 season, Newton said:

We're setting a tougher season than we set last year and last year's was tougher than the one before. And the fact that our audiences for Bell, Book, and Candle were less than our audiences for Long Day's Journey might prove that we have in a very short time developed an audience which needs something a bit more gutsy.

This season will prove whether I'm right or wrong; whether one shouldn't just do Citadel-type stuff.¹

The Entertainer which opened the third season surpassed the attendance for the previous season's opener, The Star-Spangled Girl, by 6%.

Newton has an intense commitment to the theatre and he is alert to the needs of theatre-going Calgarians:

When one is deciding a season, you must not disregard people who do enjoy the theatre, but who cannot, because of the energy they spend from 9 to 5, put as much energy as we would like into sitting there. They must be excited to be able to continue to sit--and certainly to continue to pay \$4.50. You don't necessarily have to give them a lot of comedies--but you've got to give them a lot of excitement, something happening! If you don't they might as well go to the movies. This is why it's so important to do plays for "now".²

¹Christopher Newton, private interview at Theatre Calgary, August, 1970.

²Ibid.

The response to the season ticket campaign and the rate of sell-outs of casual tickets for the first four productions of 1970-71 shows that Newton, in spite of protests from his Board of Directors over the selection of plays, does indeed have his theatre tuned to and leading the people of Calgary. Part of his rapid success in a "cow-town" that had no theatre-going habit in its recent history and that previously thought the end-all of life was hollering at the Calgary Stampede, is due to his feeling for, and extensive knowledge of, the region. The research he did for his second season musical, a theatrical documentary of life in the area from 1870 to 1914, provided him with more knowledge than most natives have of where Calgary is and how it got there. At the end of that season he said: "I'm committed to this city, not forever, but for now, in as positive a way as I can make it."¹

Newton's positivism included commercial comedy at first, but in a limited way, and never as an admitted compromise or experiment with mediocrity:

I don't know what Theatre Calgary might become. I would like it, for as long as I'm here, to remain pretty small. Pretty small and creative. I don't want us to do plays which everybody else does, just because they're good box-office. We'll do a lot of these things, we have to, and we must do, good Broadway comedies and things like that which some people sort of turn their noses up at.

¹Christopher Newton as quoted in Alan Connery, "Personality of the Week," Herald Magazine, Calgary, March 26, 1970.

It doesn't mean doing rubbish, because one of the points is stimulation, not just puerile entertainment. And the most entertaining things are stimulating things.

What I don't want the theatre to be is . . . well, if music becomes Muzak, I suppose plays become Playzak. I don't want to do Playzak--that's nonsense time, because you don't listen to music in an elevator.¹

As Newton entered his third season he admitted to having done three potboilers in the two Simon plays and Bell, Book, and Candle. Though he did feel there were some new questions about marijuana, free love, and flower children that were asked in Calgary as a result of his staging of Star-Spangled Girl. Gaslight made much of Bela Manningham's madness and people could have seen an intriguing connection with human relations today. Private Lives was mounted with a kind of Chekhovian subtext for the actors: going back to Paris was equated to going back to Moscow. The pain and loneliness that can arise in human relationships was punctuated in the scenes of looking out over the ocean, particularly at the end of Act One when Sybil and Victor stare out: ". . . the ocean was like the Birch trees" in the Three Sisters.² The image obviously worked. The review praised Newton's acting and Joel Miller's direction:

This production has style, pace and sensitivity. The play's wit and humor sparkle merrily throughout the evening

¹Ibid.

²Christopher Newton, private interview.

To live happily ever after may be the dream but can it become the reality? The conclusion of Mr. Miller's production leaves the question unanswered. The sobering implications remain after the laughter dies down.¹

In addition to presenting good Broadway comedies and introducing substantial contemporary works, Newton has developed a special interest in his theatre by presenting original Canadian works. He has done one per year since the first season. With the first, The Three Desks by James Raeney, he created tremendous excitement for his new playgoers by simply introducing the word "Toronto" to the stage. People could have easily expected to hear "London," "New York," or "Paris," but "Toronto" was a shock and it produced a pleasant feeling of identification and belonging.

The play only drew 63% of capacity, but the second original, a rock-musical-Western called You Two Stay Here, The Rest Follow Me, which is a kind of hip, theatrical history lesson, drew 83%. In fact, it outsold all other productions in 1969-70, and had enough attraction to secure an invitation to play in the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. The only unity to the musical is in the chronology of events, and the only drama lies in the humor or human interest of a series of episodes that dramatize the early days of Calgary's development. Loud and moving rock music helped to knit the scenes together. That anything about Calgary could have been put

¹Jamie Portman, "Private Lives a Winner for Theatre Calgary," The Calgary Herald, February 13, 1969.

on the stage in such a scale with such exciting music and enthusiastic acting proved what many people had thought impossible. As Barry Westgate, the Edmonton critic who traveled south to see the show, put it:

. . . Calgary critics and audiences have received it with unabashed delight. Something Calgary, Something New has turned out to be probably the most adventurous theatre project in Western Canada this season.¹

Newton may be a bit loose as a playwright, but he certainly scored dead on in relating his work to his community, and in getting them excited about theatre. Allen Rae supplied appealing rock that transcends the generation gap and stimulates involvement.

Newton and Rae got together again for the 1970-71 season and wrote Trip, a rock musical in a science-fiction mode that is set in Calgary for a spaceship blast-off. The play reveals the conflicts and explorations of six Calgarians who flee their city in the ship. The theme of the play is not common as it explores relationships with people and the universe that are serious and at times depressing. But it is also new, engrossing and relevant. It is "now" theatre. Newton has pointed out:

That's what the theatre is all about. It's about us. If we don't have plays about us, what's the point. I'm going to do as many originals as possible. People tend to shy away from Canadian works, say that it's too unrewarding a proposition. And why? To get away

¹Barry Westgate, "Calgary's 'U-2' Fails Courageously."

from that nonsense all we have to do--and someone has to start--is stop saying it.¹

Newton has demonstrated professional competence in many areas: he is a playwright; he is a director; he is an Artistic Director; he is an actor. His plays are worthy of attention, identification and reflection. His direction, according to reviews, shows taste, a good sense of tempo, technical proficiency, inventiveness, and an ability to project a meaningful concept of the play's aim. His leadership of the company pulled it through a trying period when administrative incompetence threatened financial regression. His abilities as an actor have landed him parts in New York, Vancouver, MTC, and Stratford. As a man with an inside view of Stratford, Newton disapproves of their unwillingness to "scout" the Regional Theatres for the talents being developed in them.

Newton developed Theatre Calgary in a manner similar to the creation of MTC: he transformed an amateur company into a semi-professional company and then into a full professional group.

The original amateur company was known as MAC-14, which was born through the merging of two smaller amateur troupes. The major group in that union had been incorporated in 1963 as the Musicians and Actors Club of Calgary Limited.

¹Christopher Newton as quoted in Barry Westgate, "Theatre's Busing Out All Over," The Edmonton Journal, March 21, 1969.

The club began offering public performances on a regular basis and in August, 1965 they hired a theatre manager and re-incorporated as the MAC Theatre Society. In November of 1965 the MAC Theatre Society began discussions with the Workshop 14 Associated about a joint corporation. The two groups were seeking the advantages of shared cost and an expanded purpose similar to that which had motivated the union of Theatre 77 and the Winnipeg Little Theatre in 1958. In February, 1966 the MAC-14 Theatre Society became Calgary's amateur theatre. It really brought the energy and drive of the MAC people together with the equipment and audience of the less aggressive Workshop 14.

Then in November of 1966, MAC-14 left its older, smaller quarters and began presenting its productions in the Allied Arts Centre. They paid a modest rental fee for the facilities and proved that the Allied Arts Centre, with its children's theatre touring company, and the MAC-14 could peacefully coexist in the Centre's converted diesel tractor warehouse.

The group then set down seven artistic objectives: the first was to ". . . maintain a theatre organization in which nonprofessionals can work with professionals in creation of the highest quality productions meant to entertain, enlighten and excite; the second was to achieve a financial balance; the third and fourth were to encourage Canadian

writing and talent; the fifth was to establish a community of professional actors who would live in Calgary; the sixth was to develop interest in adult theatre at the elementary and secondary school levels; and the last was to tour.¹

Unfortunately, the group found that the fulfillment of the first objective, mixing professionals and non-professionals, retarded realization of the other six. However, the group recognized, as the Winnipeg Little Theatre had in 1956, that growth could only come by using professional people. At first they jobbed-in professional actors to play the leads in their plays. Then they recognized the need for a professional director, and for the 1967-68 season they hired Kenneth Dyba. They began to advertise their theatre as a professional theatre, but the odd balance of professionals and amateurs and the differences in standards had a negative effect in rehearsals and performances.

One of the professional actors who was brought into this situation was Christopher Newton, who came in to play a lead in Charley's Aunt. Newton recognized the failings of the Theatre Society and made his views known to the Company and the Board. Shortly thereafter, when Kenneth Dyba announced he would be leaving, Newton was contacted about taking over the group. The offer was made in the sense of

¹MAC-14 souvenir program for 1966-67 season.

a challenge: could he do any better? Newton had always wanted to run a theatre company and put into practice all the things he had talked about with other actors in terms of what was needed to make a company effective and successful.

He agreed to become an executive artist if the Board would change the company's name to Stage Calgary or Theatre Calgary (MAC-14 sounded a bit like a Scotland Yard agent) and if they would also agree to phase out amateur participation in favor of professionals in all roles and administrative and technical positions.¹

As a first step toward professionalism, Newton hired Richard Dennison as Administrative Director and Pat Armstrong as Public Relations Director. Theatre Calgary became the first company to place those three positions on an equal level. In other theatres the Public Relations Director is subordinate to the Administrator and is generally excluded from many of the decisions made by the top two executives.

According to Newton:

I am enormously pleased with the evolvement of the executive.

It has seemed very reasonable to consider the theatre as a three-part operation, that is the making of the product, (my responsibility), the financing of the operations (Administrator Richard Dennison's responsibility), and the selling of the product (the

¹Christopher Newton, private interview.

responsibility of the director of Public Relations--¹
Pat Armstrong). The result has been very effective.

Part of the decision to structure the top of the Executive branch as a triumvirate was due to conscious planning, part of it came out of the chemistry of the personalities involved, which naturally blended. Miss Armstrong, unlike most of her colleagues in Public Relations in Canada, has an extensive background in theatre arts and has the enthusiasm, opinions, and taste to make her an asset in the executive decision-making process. Her relation with the Artistic and Administrative Directors at Theatre Calgary, and her own resourcefulness, give her the potential for becoming Canada's leading personality in Audience Development.

For Newton's part of the action, "making the product," he was able to reach the finest people in the talent supply in Canada. Through friendship and begging he managed to draw leading people like Erick Donkin, Neil Munro, James Edmond, Francis Hyland, William Hutt, and Douglas Campbell. Furthermore: "They came for peanuts. Peanuts!"² Only MTC and Stratford were able to employ a steady stream of such distinguished talents prior to Newton's development of Theatre Calgary.

Theatre Calgary did not change to a fully professional company right away, however. The process took the better

¹Christopher Newton, "A History of Theatre Calgary, With Additional Thoughts by Christopher Newton," (typewritten).

²Christopher Newton, private interview.

part of the first year. Newton used a lot of amateurs in the beginning and found that there were about four of them in Calgary who were quite talented and useful.

In addition to using Stratford Actors for many of the lead roles, Newton has created, since the second season, a resident company of professional actors (four in 1969-70, six in 1970-71) who appear steadily in the season's bill. These people are not as well known or as experienced as some of the jobbed-in talents, but they do have a tremendous opportunity to develop as actors, and it is they who Newton feels Stratford should make the effort to see.

The executive made some financial mistakes in the first two seasons by underbudgeting, particularly the first musical. However, as Newton saw the losses coming he did little to abate the problem since he felt it was essential to sustain the newly established production quality. It would have been a greater loss to slip back to MAC-14 standards. Consequently, the red ink registered \$28,000 at the end of the first season. In the following season the debt increased, partly due to incompetence in the "financial operation" corner of the triumvirate. Problems also arose in technical and production positions which also lead to shifts in personnel in the first two years. Newton looked back at the problems in the summer of 1970 and suggested:

"Always hire your friends--just make bloody sure your friends have talent."¹

Theatre Calgary satisfied one of its pressing needs in securing Michael Tabbitt as a new Administrative Director. Tabbitt was able to turn chaos into order and may even be introducing a kind of regimentation, but then it may be needed to provide continuity for the 1971-72 season which will begin with at least ten new staff members, including Artistic and Public Relations Directors, Production Manager, Studio Director. Tabbitt has negotiated a crucial step with the company and the Board in re-working the old MAC-14 constitution and by-laws to fit the needs of a professional company. Among other things it introduced a means of retiring deadwood from the Board of Directors at three-year intervals. Previously they had been appointed for indefinite periods. The Board needs financially-influential and aggressive people who are committed to the idea of growth within the company and who are willing to work for the company instead of having the company work for them.

The Board and staff of Theatre Calgary need to make plans for constructing their own theatre. The Allied Arts Centre declared bankruptcy in 1970 and the premises were purchased by a very wealthy individual who immediately doubled Theatre Calgary's rental fee. They now pay close to \$25,000

¹Ibid.

for a season and the facilities really are not worth it. It is not a real theatre. The compromises that the Allied Arts Centre had to make in converting a diesel warehouse are evident: there is no fly space, there is no wing space, and the floor can not be trapped. The proscenium arch, which measures 40' by 12', is awkward, and the house, which holds 493 seats, has almost half of them arranged in nine rows on a flat floor resulting in an obstructed view from the fourth to the ninth row.

However, the problem of raising money for a new theatre, or for the arts in general, in Calgary or in Edmonton is going to be difficult in spite of the Province's tremendous wealth. Three factors contribute to the unresponsive attitudes of the affluent. They are generally nuoveau riche and have not learned how to part gracefully with their money, i.e.: give back to the land that has provided them with so much; secondly, a lot of the new oil money is controlled by American industrialists who have no interest in the people of Alberta; and, finally, many of the people who have acquired wealth have not developed a taste for the finer artistic expressions of life--they are culturally unsophisticated and seem to prefer the noises and smells of a rodeo.

Off-Stage Activities

Finances and inadequate facilities have also restricted Theatre Calgary's plans for more action apart from the main stage bill. They have managed to develop a limited studio program under the direction of Joel Miller. The program is a kind of school-workshop session that has expanded from one night per week to three. Unfortunately, the staff seems to be limited to Mr. Miller, who, for the most part, seems to be limited in his skills and his sense of purpose. Observations of his instruction in a mime class provided indications of a misunderstanding of the subject. "Creative" exercises at times appeared painful, dangerous, and were often absurd. Whatever relation Mr. Miller's directions had in terms of mime or acting were kept a secret. It is difficult to conceive of leading actors like Jean Gascon, Bill Hutt, or Eric Donkin walking in a circle with their hands clasping their toes, or lying on the floor face down and then "walking" to a pyramid position with the only floor contact being the toes and forehead--in the name of acting! If acting can be thought of, in part, as the development and creative employment of skills, then schools and studios would do well to provide their students with experts in dance, mime, fencing, and structured improvisations that can lead to an ordered and meaningful experience for potential performers and/or

eventual audience members. If nothing else can be done, it would be a service to potential actors to teach them how to speak clearly.¹

Theatre Calgary holds discussion sessions after Sunday performances. The project was originally created for the benefit of high school and university students, but has more recently drawn a popular following of adults.

The company has also initiated an active actors-to-the-schools program in which members of current casts go out to the high schools to talk to students, to give classes and to demonstrate the basic principles of acting. At the end of the 1969-70 season, 83 visits had been made to various high schools, and, as a result, student subscriptions showed a sharp rise.

Finally, since Theatre Calgary's beginning, members of the production staff have, under the direction of Joel Miller, presented one-half hour lunchtime readings at the Central Public Library. The readings are usually related to a current production and are offered free-of-charge. Many people who attend them eat their lunch during the show and the response of the audience has been positive.

¹This point was made painfully clear to the author when he watched a production of Macbeth at the University of Alberta in November, 1970: over half the play was unintelligible due to sloppy speech, and though the production was intended to provide the students with an exposure to the "styles of Shakespeare" any resemblance that production had to the author's own period or intentions were obviously accidental.

Evaluation

Theatre Calgary's progress has been so closely tied to Christopher Newton that it is difficult to imagine what another personality might do with it. The organization is stable enough to survive, but at what prices? Newton feels his Board has already started to show signs of conservative thinking in terms of patterns and sure hits. The theatre is becoming an Establishment and organization charts are beginning to appear. There is talk of order and success. Newton feels that it is becoming difficult to make a thrust. There is also not enough money nor sufficient facilities to provide for the ideas he wants to try.

Christopher Newton once said:

It seems to me that the arts in some ways can perhaps replace a structured religious society. It means a return to the idea of the arts being a religion in themselves; it becomes a Greek thing ultimately, that the art is the religion.

This sounds like one of those people who talk about how they want Cult-chah all over the place, but I don't mean it like that at all. I mean in terms of making some commitment, saying that if you're an actor then in fact you're harming your own art, you're hurt-your own god, by not doing the best you can, by failing to use everything that's in you to get across to the audience.

I think it's often forgotten in theatre that at the heart of it there's a delight and a dedication.¹

¹Christopher Newton as quoted in Allan Connery, "Personality of the Week."

CHAPTER IV

ADMINISTRATION IN THE REGIONAL THEATRES

The structure and operations of theatre administrators have not evolved as clearly and neatly as the artistic activities. The unglamorous work of the people who are married to budget forms, accounting books, and adding machines seems to expand and contract according to the needs of the artistic environment and always without ceremony. Significant management problems occur and are dealt with and recur and are redealt with and their passing goes without newspaper accounts or reviews. The average Administrative Director lasts two years, and when he goes, some of his methods and problems usually go quietly with him. Therefore, the evolutionary process of administration seems to break down into major topics, rather than specific dates (or people) or accomplishment.

Considering administration topically then, it seems, at first glance, that the main administrative positions and operations in the Regional Theatres are similar: all six theatres have Boards of Directors, Artistic Directors, Administrative Directors, and Public Relations Directors;

all theatres require guidelines for management relations, for accounting, for season ticket campaigns--even for cloak-room procedures. Yet, though the top personnel have a number of duties in common with their colleagues across the country, their own methods of achieving their local ends are often quite different. In no two theatres are executive relationships the same; no two accounting methods are identical; and variations in sales procedures are common. The differences arise from demands made on the administrations by frequent personnel turnover, by available revenue, by location, by length of existence, by artistic expansions (e.g.: a second company, a school, a studio program), and most significantly, by the personalities of the people who are employed. The exact nature of the differences and their effects on the operations of the companies are difficult to ascertain due to vast differences in the amount of record-keeping, the lack of standardized records, the absence of market or business analyses, and the frequent changes in methodology that arise through new personnel.

This chapter describes five major aspects of the six Regional administrations: (1) their creation, (2) the nature of major duties of their executive personnel, (3) the variations that have developed in executive relationships, (4) recurrent problems facing all administrations, and (5) the financial status of the theatres as seen through their 1969-70 and 1970-71 budgets.

Creation of the Administrations

The organizational structures for the administration of the Regional Theatres have developed in two basic patterns. One method, used by the Neptune, the Playhouse Theatre Company, the Citadel, and TNB, began quite simply as an idea in the minds of interested local citizens who wanted to form a professional theatre company in their area. The groups of professional people, who usually had not had any previous experience with professional theatre, generally set up a feasibility study. They were encouraged by the results of those studies and so they moved to create a Board of Directors for a non-profit theatre corporation. Once the Board and corporation were established, they hired an Artistic Director who then sought-out and hired production people, and an Administrative Director who took on staff as time and finances permitted.

There were some slight variations on the pattern: In the case of the Citadel, Joseph Shocter was his own feasibility study and the formation of his Board and corporation was influenced by his own experience in producing theatre in New York and his expertise as a lawyer.

At the Playhouse, the Citadel, and TNB, the administrative wing of the theatres were not formed with the beginning of the first season. The Playhouse went a full season without an Administrative Director, the Citadel went half a

season, and TNB still did not have one after three full seasons.

The Neptune, the Playhouse, the Citadel, and TNB were created through felt-needs for live theatre that arose within their respective communities. They were encouraged by the presence of subsidy and the obvious success at Stratford and at MTC. In the development stages of these later theatres, members of the Board or the Artistic-Administrative staffs usually wrote to, or went to, MTC to study their methods of operation. The format that MTC had evolved was emulated by several of them. Of course, they were also able to profit by avoiding some of the mistakes that MTC had experienced.

The creation of MTC and Theatre Calgary differed from the four other Regional Theatres in that they were built upon existing amateur companies. In both cases, the Boards of Directors of these amateur theatres had realized the need to develop higher standards of excellence by employing professional theatre people. In the transition, in Winnipeg and Calgary, the Boards of the amateur organizations became the Boards of the professional corporations. Therefore, all members of the two Boards had had some contact with theatrical needs, problems and standards.

The Boards of Directors

The Boards of Directors in the Regional Theatres are made up of people who are voted in by current members of each Board. They hold their post for one to three years and normally can be re-elected. The duties and dangers of Boards of Directors are common to the six theatres.

Private interviews revealed that all Administrative Directors consider it essential that all Board members sacrifice some of their professional and private interests in order to pursue the needs of the theatre corporations. There is no fixed package of time or specific quota on fund-raising or letter-writing or theatre promotion that can assure stability from one month or season to the next. Generally, all theatres would like to see all members of their Board give more time to the priorities of the theatre corporation. Usually, in each theatre Board, there is a "core" group that does give unselfishly of their time and effort to their responsibilities. The Citadel is the only theatre with an established minimum time requirement for working for the theatre, and that is: all members of the Board are expected to devote one working day per month to pursue theatre matters.¹ Usually this amounts to two afternoons, one of which is spent with correspondence and the other is spent

¹Joseph Shocter, private interview.

with follow-ups and personal contact. It is, according to Shoctor, a sensible minimum, though he points out that few Board members stop there.¹

Duties of the Boards

Private interviews with Administrative and Artistic Directors and Board Presidents indicated that the Boards commonly have four basic functions; these are:

1. to raise funds for the theatre and sell tickets;
2. to exercise budget control;
3. to provide contact with the community; and
4. to provide continuity in determining present and future policy, including hiring and firing of the Artistic and Administrative Directors.

Some Board members and some entire Boards hate the problems and work related to fund-raising. However, money, more than any other factor, determines the rate of development and expansion of all of the theatres. Money buys the artistic environment. The Artistic and Administrative Directors all agree that money must be the first priority of all Boards and of all individual Board members.

The methods used for raising funds vary from one Board to another. It is possible that all theatres might profit if representatives from the different Boards could meet in a national symposium to discuss methods and ideas

¹Ibid.

for local and provincial fund-raising efforts. Such a meeting might also feature consultants from England and the United States.

In terms of raising money through the sale of season tickets, some Boards do not make any effort. MTC requires all Board and theatre staff members to sell three season subscriptions. According to Administrative Director Gerry Eldred, this token gesture exposes the Board to the difficulties in selling tickets and makes them aware of the need to spend money to make (ticket) money.¹

The second priority of the Boards is budget control. It is useful to have a Board that is well-informed about the Revenue and Expenditure picture of the theatre. It advises them of the need to maintain or raise the objectives in their first priority, it forces accurate and current accounting, and it theoretically lends a "third party," balancing view of the artistic versus administration costs. (For more on the need for accurate accounting see Appendix C: Tom Hendry's "Accounting Attitudes in Theatre.")

The third priority is particularly critical in the early stages of a theatre company. The "inside" contacts of the Board members, who are all local residents, can be invaluable in developing media relations, in securing favors and assistance, and in attracting a large part of the audience

¹Gerry Eldred, private interview held at MTC, Winnipeg, Manitoba, July, 1970.

for the theatre. The presence of distinguished members of the community on a Board does a lot to eliminate the "odor" that many people think they detect around theatre artists.

Finally, the Board is useful as an agent for reviewing and assessing the objectives of the theatre and the policy through which they are carried out. Since they are local people, they presumably sense the problems and needs of their own community, and since they are members of a Board of Directors of a theatre company, they should be interested in the highest possible standards of excellence and artistic integrity. Hopefully, their priorities in this area are properly arranged: theatre first, community second; that is, their interest in establishing exciting, relevant, and thought-provoking theatre exceeds their willingness to compromise with the current established tastes of the community--an ideal and a level of reality that are often in conflict. They should seek to lead rather than to follow; they should aspire to artistic merit and not to commercialism.

To insure the realization of their policy goals, the Boards have all been given the power to hire and fire Artistic and Administrative Directors in the interest of policy.

Dangers in the Boards

It was the consensus of the Regional Theatre executives that there are four main possible dangers connected with the existing Boards of Directors. It is commonly felt that they can damage the theatres by:

1. admitting social dilettantes;
2. by not understanding their priorities;
3. by interfering with the Artistic Director; or
4. by becoming too conservative through a sense of tradition or investment.

All current Artistic, Administrative Directors and Board Presidents have complained that Boards are sometimes havens for image polishers, who prefer to be associated with the theatre for private social values. Normally these people are discovered after their election and efforts are made to delete them in the next election.

Occasionally, the Board malfunctions because the members do not all clearly understand what is expected of them and what their priorities are. There is never any formal instruction for new members. A Director's Handbook for Board members could easily list priorities, methods of pursuing them, and the duties of the various specialized committees of the Board.

Research has failed to reveal public accounts of situations in which Board members have admitted to interference with the artistic activities of the theatres, but some Artistic Directors have left their posts with complaints of "restricted freedom;" for example, Michael Johnston left Vancouver in 1965 and Curt Reis left Winnipeg in 1970 with such complaints. The potential for interference clearly exists: some Board members have had amateur theatre experience and wish to assert their knowledge, others have been with the Board for a long time and succumb to insisting on maintaining the tradition or the "formula" that created the initial success of the theatre.

Conservatism is closely related to interference and is often the cause of it. Conservatism generally arises as a reaction to success and a desire to freeze the qualities that led to the success. It also comes from a recognition of the theatre's economic relation to the community. Consider what has happened in Stratford, for example, where the Festival has increased the town's population, attracted new industries, and drawn in millions of tourist dollars that support the motels and restaurants. Conservatism might also set in when a Doctor or Lawyer who belongs to the Board is confronted on the street by a colleague or client who accuses him of supporting a controversial statement made in the

current production and to which he happens to be vehemently opposed.

The Board of Directors oversees the operations of the entire corporation and assumes major responsibility for funding, budget control, community relations and theatre policy. They are also responsible for hiring the corporation's Artistic Director.

The Artistic Director as an Executive

The Artistic Director is a combination of artist and executive, and does more to condition the public's image of the company than any other individual in the company. It is the combination of his thoughts, opinions, and talents that make the greatest impact on the productions. It is his productions that the company exists for, and must work to enhance.

He needs money to pay for the talents that will assist in communicating his ideas. He also needs total power to select the plays for the season. To assure him of the best working conditions, the company has to be totally dedicated and loyal to his aims, and they must strive to provide whatever facilities are necessary and/or obtainable. (For more on the subject of loyalty see Appendix D: Tom Hendry's "Management Attitudes in Theatre - A Personal View.").

On the executive side, the Artistic Director needs to demonstrate leadership, a knowledge of, and an interest in, cost control and revenue and promotion activities. He is the theatre's strongest spokesman and must frequently represent the company at meetings, social events, and fund-raising events outside of the normal activities of the company.

Duties of Administrative Directors

In support of the Artistic Director, as equal, friend, advisor, and occasional devil's advocate is the Administrative Director. It was learned through interviews with the executives in the Regional Theatres that the Administrative Directors' duties generally include the following major items:

1. loyalty to the Artistic Director;
2. budget composition;
3. accounting system and checks;
4. fund-raising efforts with the Board; and
5. representing the theatre.

Understandably the Artistic and Administrative executives can only be equal in theory and in practice when the personalities are compatible and when the latter passionately supports the opinions and desires of the chief artist while keeping a sensible eye on budget control (another form of loyalty). The need for trust is critical. Confidence in the Artistic Director may be severely tested when a

production fails or when a series of productions fail. If, at any time, the Administrator does lose faith and withdraw any part of his total support, a tremendous power struggle could ensue, or the budget control could sag and academic arguments against artistic purchases could arise. Worse yet, the entire administrative staff of the theatre could lose morale and reduce their efforts to create a workable environment for the Artistic Director. (See Appendix D.)

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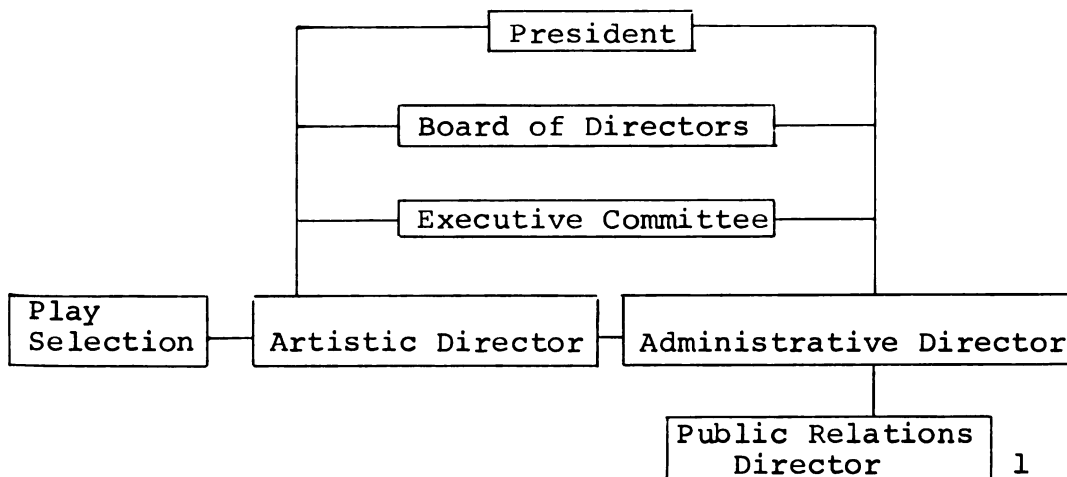
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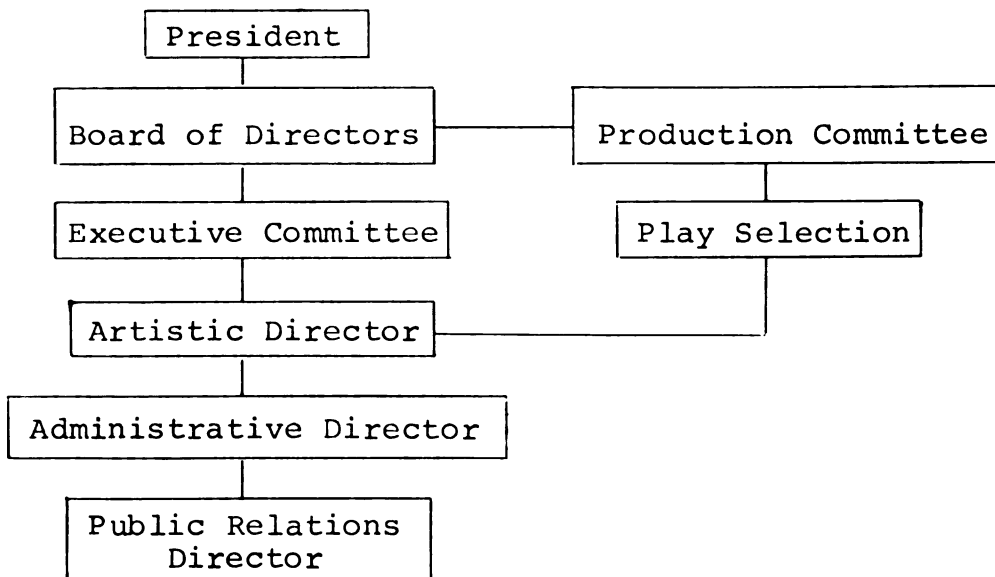
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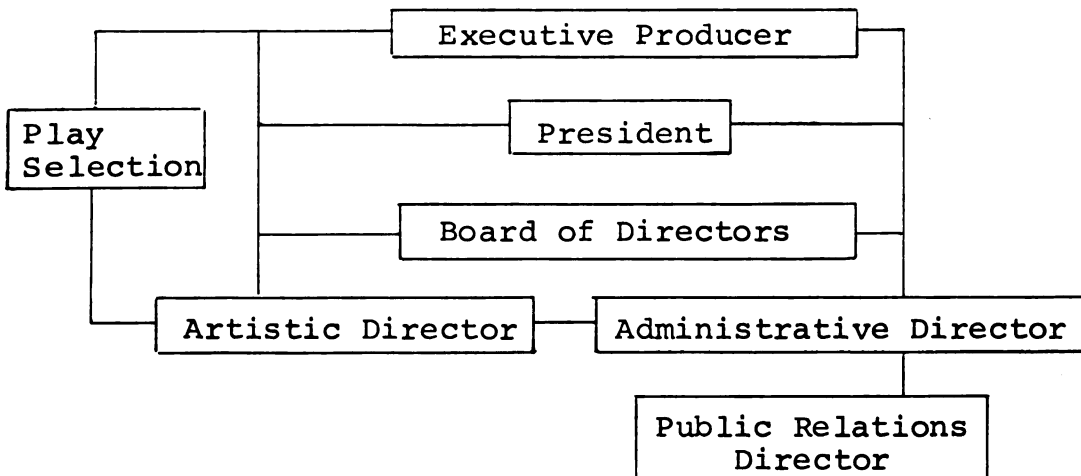
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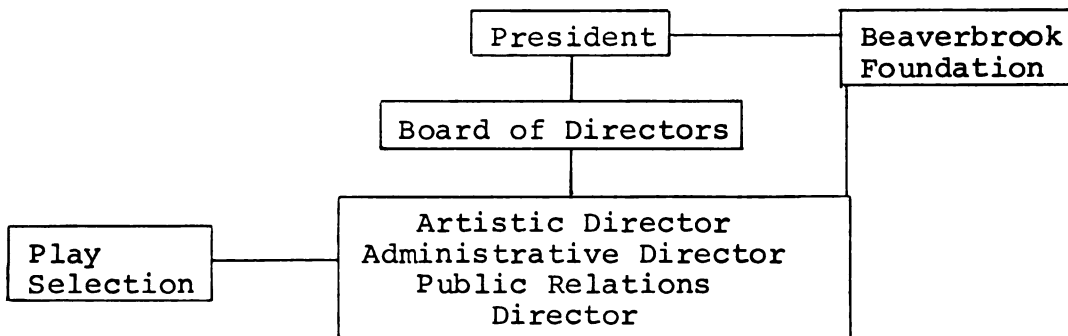
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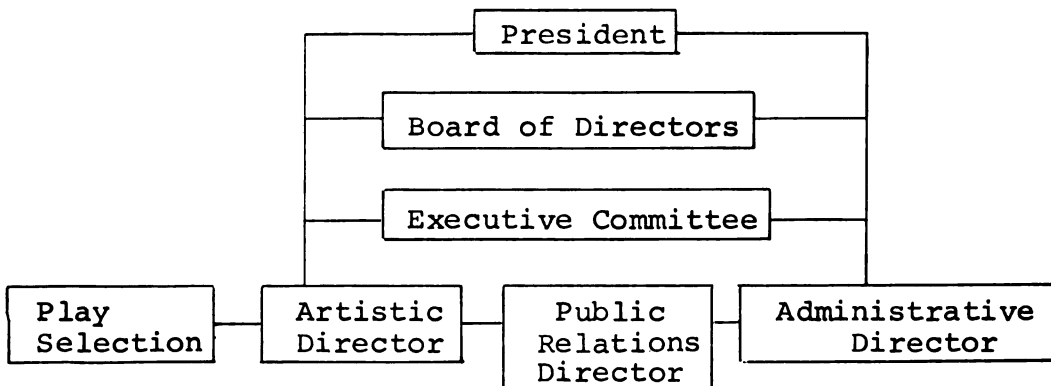
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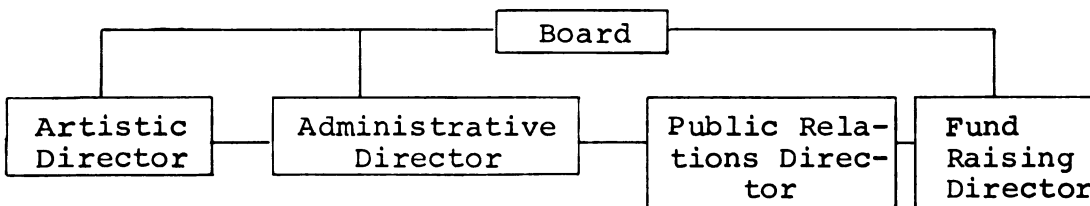


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A strong personality with an Air Canada credit card, could attack the head offices of large, local companies and foundations with a continual barage of requests for money. He could devote full-time and all of his energies to perfecting methods of getting more money out of the theatre membership

for local and provincial fund-raising efforts. Such a meeting might also feature consultants from England and the United States.

In terms of raising money through the sale of season tickets, some Boards do not make any effort. MTC requires all Board and theatre staff members to sell three season subscriptions. According to Administrative Director Gerry Eldred, this token gesture exposes the Board to the difficulties in selling tickets and makes them aware of the need to spend money to make (ticket) money.¹

The second priority of the Boards is budget control. It is useful to have a Board that is well-informed about the Revenue and Expenditure picture of the theatre. It advises them of the need to maintain or raise the objectives in their first priority, it forces accurate and current accounting, and it theoretically lends a "third party," balancing view of the artistic versus administration costs. (For more on the need for accurate accounting see Appendix C: Tom Hendry's "Accounting Attitudes in Theatre.")

The third priority is particularly critical in the early stages of a theatre company. The "inside" contacts of the Board members, who are all local residents, can be invaluable in developing media relations, in securing favors and assistance, and in attracting a large part of the audience

¹Gerry Eldred, private interview held at MTC, Winnipeg, Manitoba, July, 1970.

for the theatre. The presence of distinguished members of the community on a Board does a lot to eliminate the "odor" that many people think they detect around theatre artists.

Finally, the Board is useful as an agent for reviewing and assessing the objectives of the theatre and the policy through which they are carried out. Since they are local people, they presumably sense the problems and needs of their own community, and since they are members of a Board of Directors of a theatre company, they should be interested in the highest possible standards of excellence and artistic integrity. Hopefully, their priorities in this area are properly arranged: theatre first, community second; that is, their interest in establishing exciting, relevant, and thought-provoking theatre exceeds their willingness to compromise with the current established tastes of the community--an ideal and a level of reality that are often in conflict. They should seek to lead rather than to follow; they should aspire to artistic merit and not to commercialism.

To insure the realization of their policy goals, the Boards have all been given the power to hire and fire Artistic and Administrative Directors in the interest of policy.

Dangers in the Boards

It was the consensus of the Regional Theatre executives that there are four main possible dangers connected with the existing Boards of Directors. It is commonly felt that they can damage the theatres by:

1. admitting social dilettantes;
2. by not understanding their priorities;
3. by interfering with the Artistic Director; or
4. by becoming too conservative through a sense of tradition or investment.

All current Artistic, Administrative Directors and Board Presidents have complained that Boards are sometimes havens for image polishers, who prefer to be associated with the theatre for private social values. Normally these people are discovered after their election and efforts are made to delete them in the next election.

Occasionally, the Board malfunctions because the members do not all clearly understand what is expected of them and what their priorities are. There is never any formal instruction for new members. A Director's Handbook for Board members could easily list priorities, methods of pursuing them, and the duties of the various specialized committees of the Board.

Research has failed to reveal public accounts of situations in which Board members have admitted to interference with the artistic activities of the theatres, but some Artistic Directors have left their posts with complaints of "restricted freedom;" for example, Michael Johnston left Vancouver in 1965 and Curt Reis left Winnipeg in 1970 with such complaints. The potential for interference clearly exists: some Board members have had amateur theatre experience and wish to assert their knowledge, others have been with the Board for a long time and succumb to insisting on maintaining the tradition or the "formula" that created the initial success of the theatre.

Conservatism is closely related to interference and is often the cause of it. Conservatism generally arises as a reaction to success and a desire to freeze the qualities that led to the success. It also comes from a recognition of the theatre's economic relation to the community. Consider what has happened in Stratford, for example, where the Festival has increased the town's population, attracted new industries, and drawn in millions of tourist dollars that support the motels and restaurants. Conservatism might also set in when a Doctor or Lawyer who belongs to the Board is confronted on the street by a colleague or client who accuses him of supporting a controversial statement made in the

current production and to which he happens to be vehemently opposed.

The Board of Directors oversees the operations of the entire corporation and assumes major responsibility for funding, budget control, community relations and theatre policy. They are also responsible for hiring the corporation's Artistic Director.

The Artistic Director as an Executive

The Artistic Director is a combination of artist and executive, and does more to condition the public's image of the company than any other individual in the company. It is the combination of his thoughts, opinions, and talents that make the greatest impact on the productions. It is his productions that the company exists for, and must work to enhance.

He needs money to pay for the talents that will assist in communicating his ideas. He also needs total power to select the plays for the season. To assure him of the best working conditions, the company has to be totally dedicated and loyal to his aims, and they must strive to provide whatever facilities are necessary and/or obtainable. (For more on the subject of loyalty see Appendix D: Tom Hendry's "Management Attitudes in Theatre - A Personal View").

On the executive side, the Artistic Director needs to demonstrate leadership, a knowledge of, and an interest in, cost control and revenue and promotion activities. He is the theatre's strongest spokesman and must frequently represent the company at meetings, social events, and fund-raising events outside of the normal activities of the company.

Duties of Administrative Directors

In support of the Artistic Director, as equal, friend, advisor, and occasional devil's advocate is the Administrative Director. It was learned through interviews with the executives in the Regional Theatres that the Administrative Directors' duties generally include the following major items:

1. loyalty to the Artistic Director;
2. budget composition;
3. accounting system and checks;
4. fund-raising efforts with the Board; and
5. representing the theatre.

Understandably the Artistic and Administrative executives can only be equal in theory and in practice when the personalities are compatible and when the latter passionately supports the opinions and desires of the chief artist while keeping a sensible eye on budget control (another form of loyalty). The need for trust is critical. Confidence in the Artistic Director may be severely tested when a

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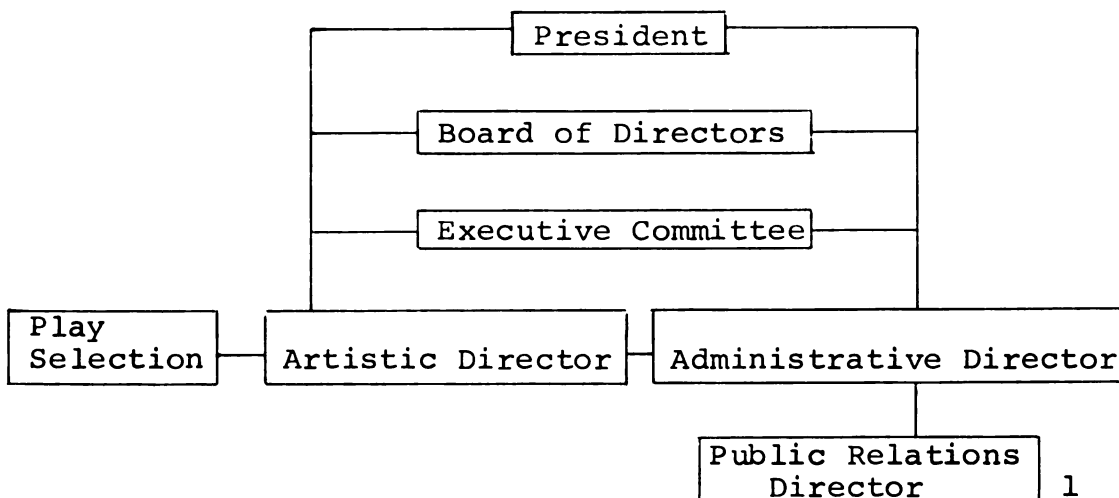
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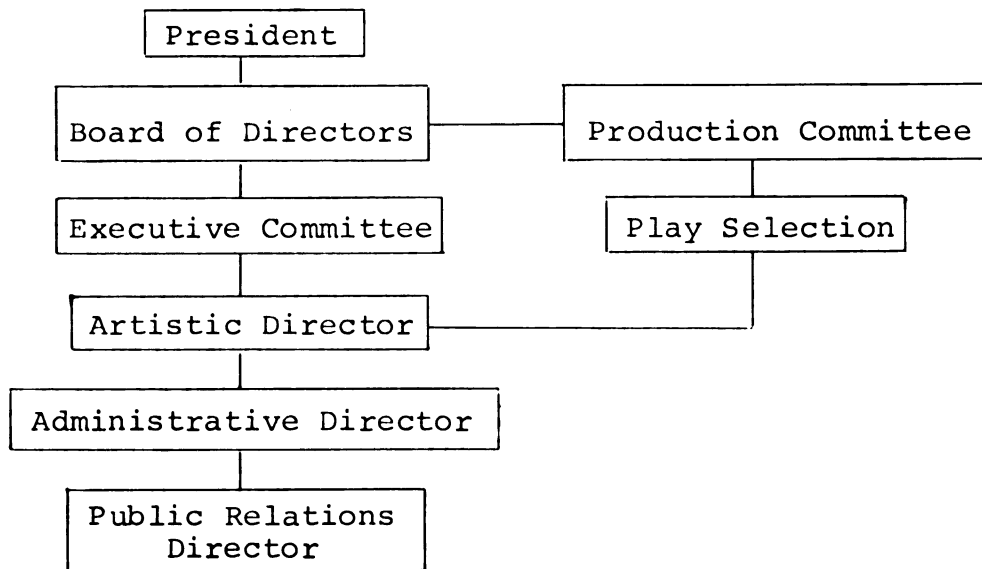
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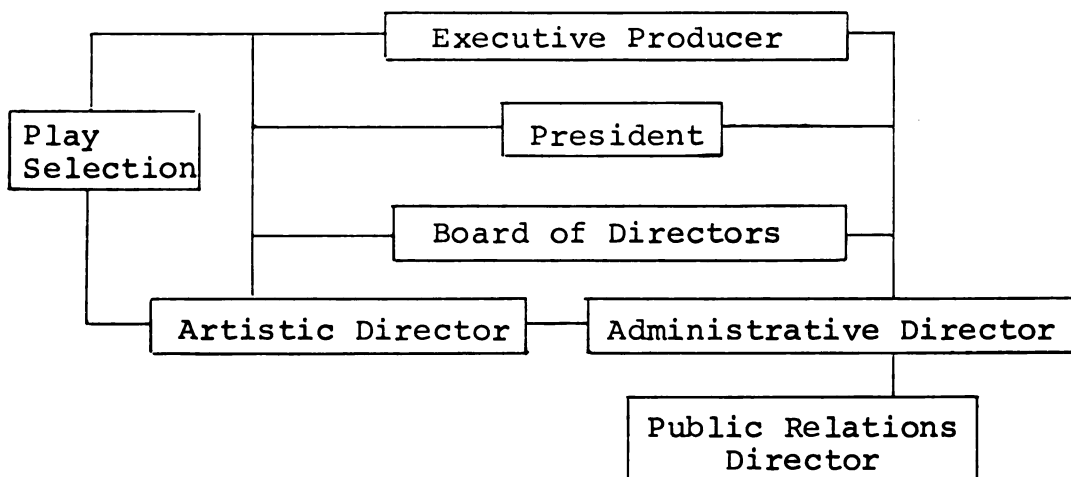
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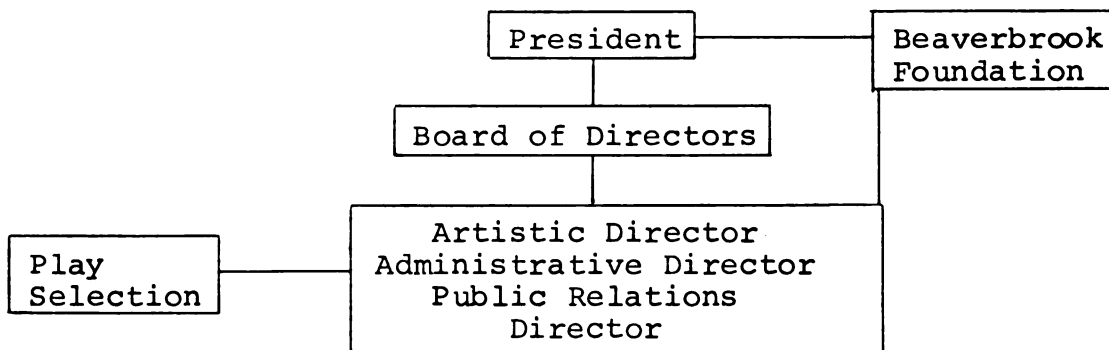
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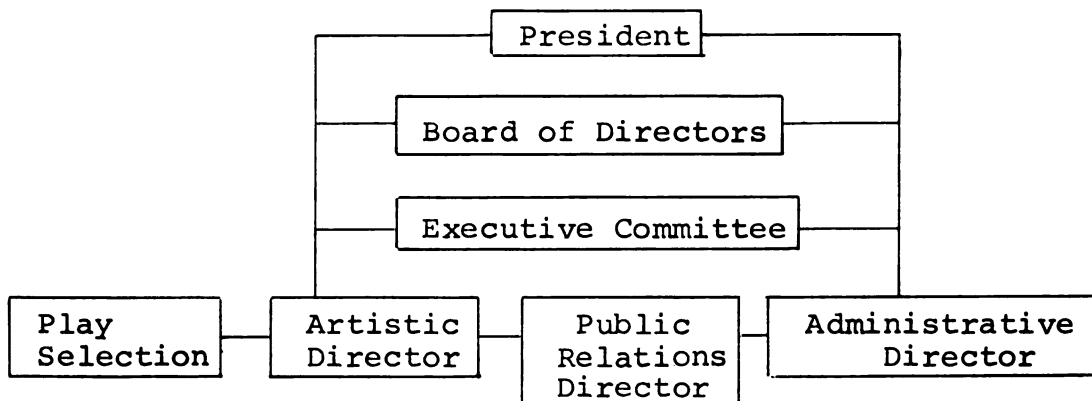
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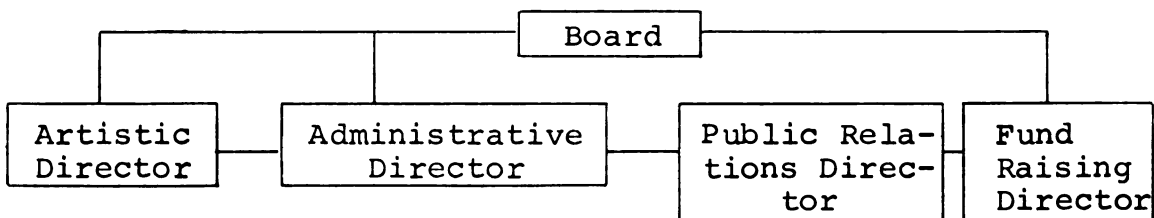


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list, and the civic, provincial and federal subsidizing bodies. If he had colleagues in other theatres, he could help to lobby for larger appropriations for the Canada Council and for Provincial Arts Councils.

Recurring Problems in Administration

Canadian Regional Theatre Management is hampered in varying degrees by the following recurrent areas of trouble:

1. lack of finances;
2. lack of adequate accounting methods;
3. communications;
4. theatre promotion;
5. trained personnel;
6. unions; and
7. proper audience accommodation.¹

The lack of money stunts the growth of the theatres. Sometimes the pinch becomes painful to the administrative side of the theatres where too little often has to be stretched too far.

The methods of accounting for finances must change as the company expands, but on occasion, the expansions render forms of cost control obsolete or confusing.

¹Based on interviews with the Administrative and Artistic Directors of the six Regional Theatres and Tom Hendry.

Communications in the form of regular conversations give subordinates the feeling that someone cares, they improve aspects of cost control, insure the meeting of deadlines, and the proper execution of orders or designs.

Theatre promotion by management is an unending cause that can never be shelved for long in favor of internal business.

Trained personnel for the high number of positions that exist in some of the theatres are difficult to come by. There are few craftsmen who are dedicated to making properties for their livelihood and there appear to be none genuinely interested in learning. There is a critical shortage of cutters in Canada and no one is training any. There is a rapid turnover in production managers and stage managers and few replacements turn up with the expertise to carry on where the last person left off. There is a critical shortage of Executive personnel, as those who leave those positions normally leave the theatre profession as well. There are usually no aspirants for those jobs who have the necessary experience to step up--and almost none of them "know the territory."

Unions, IATSE in particular, are administrative problems and financial blood hounds that plague budgets and cost control. The theatre administrations usually have little recourse but to admit entrance and some of their demands.

It is interesting to note, however, that IATSE, which took control of the backstage activities of the Neptune in 1969, recognized the theatre's economic problems, agreed to an over-time wage which was less than the regular-time wage, and then, prior to the 1971 winter season, left completely.¹

Audience accommodation is also a function of management. Courtesy and cleanliness in those parts of the theatres seen by the audience can have a significant effect on their disposition toward the play. The negative qualities of frowning, curt box-office or house management staff can turn a receptive audience member against the production. (See Appendix D.)

Fortunately, many of the problems in management are being discussed with some profit in a meeting format that will likely be at least an annual event. The first meeting of managers took place in Vancouver on January 18, 1970.

The agenda attracted the following people:

Robert Ellison--Playhouse Theatre Company
 Richard Dennison--Theatre Calgary
 Mrs. Rhena Howard--Globe Theatre
 Mrs. Olive Finland--Citadel Theatre
 Gerry Eldred--MTC
 Mrs. Muriel Sherrin--Shaw Festival
 John Hobday--Neptune Theatre
 Burton Lancaster--Charlottetown Festival

others invited, but unable to attend:

¹John Hobday, private interview.

William T. Wylie--Stratford Festival
 James Domville--Theatre Du Nouveau Monde
 Walter Learning--TNB¹

A second meeting of the managers, and their Artistic Directors, was held in November of 1970 at MTC.

The Theatres' Economic Status as Seen
Through Their Budgets

Since the theatres' activities all rely so heavily on available finances and the allocation of those finances, there is cause to examine the major headings for revenues and expenditures among the theatres. The comparisons that follow are made on the basis of information found in the Canada Council Application Form for the 1970-71 season. These forms are in the confidential files of the Council in Ottawa and they are reproduced in part here with the permission of the theatres. Theatre Calgary is an exception: when Michael Tabbitt arrived in Calgary as the theatre's new Administrative Director, he found the accounts in such poor condition, and the Canada Council form was so inaccurate, that he immediately prepared a revised budget for 1970-71 with new actuals for 1969-70. Since his budget closely follows the Canada Council Form, it has been used in place of that Form. The Citadel Theatre, which refused a review of their files, will not be included.

1

"Minutes of a Meeting of Managers of Producing Theatre Companies," Hotel Vancouver, Vancouver, British Columbia, January 18, 1970, (typewritten).

MANITOBA THEATRE CENTRE

| | 1969-70 | % | 1970-71 | % |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| <u>Revenue</u> | | | | |
| grants | \$232,000 | 39 | \$287,000 | 41 |
| campaign & donations | 58,000 | 10 | 60,000 | 8 |
| tickets | 268,000 | 45 | 318,600 | 45 |
| programmes | 9,700 | 2 | 15,000 | 2 |
| other | <u>23,000</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>29,000</u> | <u>4</u> |
| Total | \$590,800 | 100 | \$710,000 | 100 |
| <u>Expenditures</u> | | | | |
| production expenses | | | | |
| talent | | | 169,800 | 24 |
| sets & props | | | 142,600 | 20 |
| costumes | | | 32,700 | 5 |
| theatre & other | | | 122,400 | 18 |
| publicity & promotion | | | <u>61,400</u> | <u>9</u> |
| | <u>379,900</u> | <u>58</u> | <u>528,900</u> | <u>76</u> |
| administration expenses | 158,500 | 25 | 132,600 | 19 |
| other | <u>114,200</u> | <u>17</u> | <u>36,600</u> | <u>5</u> |
| Total | 652,600 | 100 | 698,100 | 100 |
| <u>Productions</u> | | | | |
| adult | 5 | | 6 | |
| studio | 5 | | 2 | |
| children's | 6 | | 4 | |

PLAYHOUSE THEATRE COMPANY

| | 1969-70 | % | 1970-71 | % |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| <u>Revenue</u> | | | | |
| grants | \$204,419 | 38 | \$274,000 | 46 |
| campaign & donations | 99,000 | 18 | 93,000 | 16 |
| tickets | 239,440 | 44 | 226,600 | 38 |
| programmes | | | | |
| other | | | | |
| Total | <u>\$542,849</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>\$593,600</u> | <u>100</u> |
| <u>Expenditures</u> | | | | |
| production expenses | | | | |
| talent | | | 112,324 | 24 |
| sets & props | | | 92,451 | 20 |
| costumes | | | 17,880 | 3 |
| theatre & other | | | 66,410 | 14 |
| publicity & promotion | | | 64,295 | 14 |
| | <u>531,790</u> | <u>84</u> | <u>353,360</u> | <u>75</u> |
| administration expenses | 91,510 | 14 | 108,140 | 23 |
| other | <u>9,066</u> | <u>2</u> | <u>6,860</u> | <u>2</u> |
| Total | 632,366 | 100 | 468,260 | 100 |
| <u>Productions</u> | | | | |
| adult | 6 | | 6 | |
| studio | 4 | | | |
| children's | 11 | | 8 | |

NEPTUNE THEATRE FOUNDATION

| | 1970 | % | 1971 | % |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|
| <u>Revenue</u> | | | | |
| grants | \$245,000 | 55 | \$316,000 | 62 |
| campaign & donations | 14,821 | 3 | 17,300 | 3 |
| tickets | 181,688 | 41 | 177,013 | 34 |
| programmes | 1,756 | 1 | 1,600 | 1 |
| other | | | | |
| Total | \$443,265 | 100 | \$512,913 | 100 |
| <u>Expenditures</u> | | | | |
| production expenses | | | | |
| talent | | | 131,205 | 26 |
| sets & props | | | 104,011 | 20 |
| costumes | | | 23,430 | 5 |
| theatre & other | | | 96,205 | 19 |
| publicity & promotion | | | 47,850 | 9 |
| | 404,295 | 90 | 402,701 | 79 |
| administration expenses | 45,687 | 9 | 48,315 | 9 |
| other | 645 | 1 | 60,708* | 12 |
| Total | 450,627 | 100 | 512,724 | 100 |
| <u>Productions</u> | | | | |
| adult | 8 | | 7 | |
| studio | | | | |
| children's | | | 1 | |

* includes \$59,958 for 1971 tour

THEATRE CALGARY

| | 1969-70 | % | 1970-71 | % |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| <hr/> | | | | |
| <u>Revenue</u> | | | | |
| grants | \$ 74,250 | 36 | \$ 99,000 | 39 |
| campaign & donations | 32,117 | 16 | 45,649 | 18 |
| tickets | 90,829 | 44 | 102,650 | 40 |
| programmes | 8,433 | 4 | 9,100 | 3 |
| other | | | | |
| Total | <u>\$205,629</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>\$256,399</u> | <u>100</u> |
|
 | | | | |
| <u>Expenditures</u> | | | | |
| production expenses | | | | |
| talent | | | 78,551 | 32 |
| sets & props | | | 14,140 | 6 |
| costumes | | | 7,350 | 3 |
| theatre & other | | | 73,371 | 30 |
| publicity & promotion | | | <u>37,141</u> | <u>15</u> |
| | <u>168,790</u> | <u>82</u> | <u>210,553</u> | <u>86</u> |
|
 | | | | |
| administration expenses | 36,720 | 17 | 34,845 | 13 |
| other | <u>637</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>1,000</u> | <u>1</u> |
| Total | <u>206,147</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>246,399</u> | <u>100</u> |
|
 | | | | |
| <u>Productions</u> | | | | |
| adult | 7 | | 7 | |
| studio | | | | |
| children's | | | | |
| <hr/> | | | | |

THEATRE NEW BRUNSWICK

| | 1970 | % | 1971 (Winter) | % |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----|---------------|-----|
| <u>Revenue</u> | | | | |
| grants | \$ 40,250 | 49 | \$ 51,444 | 61 |
| campaign & donations | 250 | 1 | | |
| tickets | 39,000 | 48 | 32,800 | 39 |
| programmes | 1,850 | 2 | | |
| other | | | | |
| Total | \$ 81,350 | 100 | \$ 84,244 | 100 |
| <u>Expenditures</u> | | | | |
| production expenses | | | | |
| talent | | | 34,718 | 41 |
| sets & props | | | 17,912 | 21 |
| costumes | | | 4,004 | 5 |
| theatre & other | | | 8,700 | 11 |
| publicity & promotion | | | 16,650 | 19 |
| | 82,000 | 100 | 80,694 | 97 |
| administration expenses | | | 2,350 | 3 |
| other | | | | |
| Total | 82,000 | 100 | 83,044 | 100 |
| <u>Productions</u> | | | | |
| adult | 8 | | 4 | |
| studio | | | | |
| children's | 1 | | 1 | |

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Performing Arts are active and expanding in Canada. There are three major ballet companies, several modern dance troupes and a National School of Ballet. There are symphonic orchestras in each of the major metropolitan centres and there are a rising number of chamber and choral groups. Four significant opera companies also have been established. With the exception of the Winnipeg Ballet, all of these Performing Arts Companies have developed since 1950.

However, the greatest artistic development in modern Canada has been in theatre. In the course of that development a number of inherent strengths and weaknesses have evolved, and some practical possibilities for change exist.

The theatre movement began in 1953 with the formation of the Stratford Shakespearean Festival. Five Years later, in Winnipeg, the first Regional Theatre, the Manitoba Theatre Centre, was founded by John Hirsch and Tom Hendry. Both theatres became pace-setters. Stratford developed national standards of excellence in theatre production and MTC rose

to a similar level of quality and went on to become a model for the entire Regional Theatre Movement.

It is unfortunate that Stratford has been somewhat victimized or frozen by its own success. It unquestionably remains the finest repertory theatre in North America, and, perhaps, one of the most conservative. No other company can match Stratford for spectacle, for resources, for potential. Yet, so little of the potential is exploited. The Mightiest seems frightened of its own capacity for dramatic comment and experimentation. Even if the company does open an experimental wing, the question arises: with what will it experiment? Most likely this theatrical industry for middle-class tourists "who collect things" will fail to show courage and boldness in responding to new social pulses. What a magnificent bit of Canadiana Stratford could be if it would scout its own country for native talent before auditioning in England; if it would expand to film work; and if it would give life to new dramatic forms along with the ancient (realizing that even at Stratford the new must be sold)!

Two other distinct Festival Theatres have been established in Canada. One is in Niagara-on-the-Lake where the works of George Bernard Shaw provide the core of work for the Shaw Festival, and the other is in Charlottetown where the Summer Festival allegedly produces "original" Canadian musicals. In spite of an obvious lack of, or a

slow pace in introducing new materials, Charlottetown has developed an identifiable Canadian product that makes a worthy contribution--on a grand scale--to people's need for entertainment.

Extensive work, and the greatest volume of original plays, has been conducted in Quebec Province where French-speaking Canadians lean heavily on their own unique, isolated culture.

There has also been an active program of experimental and underground theatre companies that work with original theatrical formats that vary from happenings to conventional plays, and from occasional brilliance to intellectual insults. These frequent, and usually short-lived efforts tend to focus in Toronto and Montreal.

There have been some attempts to establish theatre centres in Toronto, but one mistake or another or a combination, have led to their demise. The current and questionable existence of the deeply-in-debt St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts--and the Politicians, is the latest "try".

On the amateur level, Canada has been theatrically active for several centuries. The amateur theatre effort was organized in the 1930's with the establishment of the Dominion Drama Festival. For a long time the amateur movement was a viable substitute for the professional theatre. As professional companies began to appear, many participants

in the DDF were used for roles and for backstage jobs. More recently, the "training" function of the amateur organizations has been replaced by the National Theatre School, by professional apprentice programs, and by educational theatre activities. Consequently, the DDF, which no longer sees itself as either substitute or trainer (at least such is the thinking at the national executive level), has begun a re-evaluation process aimed at developing greater meaning and higher production standards. They may have difficulty, however, in convincing their grass-roots constituency of the desirability of a re-definition of purpose--as this author's experience in Kelowna suggests.

Educational theatre programs have appeared lately and are rapidly making their way into many Canadian Universities. However, only a few schools have made significant efforts to develop courses and training programs preparatory to professional careers. Unfortunately, none have yet begun training theatre administrators, and none have yet convinced the majority of professional directors of the skills of their graduates. Students with a BA Degree in Drama are still very suspect and most find it difficult to walk into substantial work in any of the country's professional companies.

In terms of the talent supply, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has helped considerably in keeping good people in Canada by paying them more than the theatres could

hope to or the Boards would dream of, thereby tiding them over the lean or non-production periods. On the other hand, the CBC has often taken good people out of the theatre entirely or it has served as a stepping stone to bigger contracts in the United States. The CBC's assistance however, seems to have outweighed the problems it has created for Canadian theatres. It might do more to help the theatres in the future, and simultaneously contribute to the cultural revolution, by engaging the theatres for featured productions that could be shown nationally. Theatre-television arrangements might also profitably evolve in the coming tv-cassette industry.

Canada's national theatre has been manifest in the six (and, with a start in Regina, seven) decentralized, Regional Theatres. They service a nation in which the bulk of the population is located in a band 150 miles wide and nearly 4,000 miles long. The distribution of cities on that band has required a decentralized theatre.

All professional Performing Arts Companies have become dependent on the subsidies provided by the Canada Council, which has proved that government support without government control is viable. The Council, however, has understandably implemented a requirement for deficit retirement. This could, on the one hand, restrain creative impulses and tend to dictate "formula" theatre, but on the other hand, it may

encourage greater economic stability and realistic cost control. The Council additionally supports limited consultant services and valuable meetings of Arts personnel. Unfortunately, the council is not able to lobby on its own behalf for appropriations and the current austerity program in government spending has retarded the growth of the Council and the effects may soon begin to appear in the thriving arts organizations. There has already been a serious reduction in the Council's capacity to take on new clients. Hopefully, they will soon be able to continue to expand and, at the same time, to support more experimental ventures and contribute directly to studio programs.

In addition to the grants at the federal level, all Regional Theatres, and most other Performing Arts groups have managed to secure money from provincial and municipal governments. The amounts received, however, vary, as some areas of the country prefer to support sports activities or develop sewer systems. Some provincial government lack the necessary sophistication to stand solidly behind the values of arts in general, and theatre specifically (e.g.: Alberta and British Columbia).

The theatres of Canada were and are supposed to be assisted by the Canadian Theatre Centre. But the Centre has fallen to near inaction in seeking a methodology for servicing the theatres and in trying to develop a clearly

defined purpose. The rapid occurrence of events in the theatres demands rapid response from any organization trying to help the whole scene go smoother. Staying current and useful is a challenge that must be met and a number of possible new routes to usefulness exist--from political lobbying to more frequent publications. CTC would probably profit by splitting its executive in two, with an English and French-Canadian leadership. It could help the theatres by keeping current records of actors, technicians, and administrative people and by frequent visits to the theatres. It might also develop a graphics service for poster and other printed matter for the theatres and for international exhibits.

The Canadian Regional Movement began in Winnipeg and later developed segments in Halifax, Vancouver, Edmonton, Fredericton, and Calgary. In all cases, the theatres grew out of a desire on the part of small groups of local people who felt a need for live theatre. Similarly, all theatres were created through the corporation route of becoming non-profit theatre companies with Boards of Directors, Artistic Directors, and Administrative Directors.

In all companies, the Artistic Director is the greatest single influence in the artistic image of the theatre. He selects the plays, hires the casts, guest directors, and the top production personnel. If his vision of the theatre's

purpose is alien to the Board, which controls theatre policy, the Board can fire him.

Artistic Directors have been somewhat nomadic in the Regional scene. The average tour of duty has been slightly under three years. This seems to have resulted from two causes: responses to bigger challenges or "drying-up." At least twice so far, Artistic Directors have left because of incompatibility with the Board of Directors. When the Artistic Director's vision of the theatre's purpose is more progressive than, or alien to the Board's definition of policy, which it controls, resignations occur. A change in Artistic Directors brings in a new philosophy and the effects can be refreshing; but it can also work the other way, since a man without knowledge of a community's problems and their causes may have difficulty selecting plays that are meaningful.

In contrast to the normal desire of Artistic Directors which is to lead their theatres into substantial dramatic terrains with an eye on relevance and a taste for bold experimentation, the Boards of Directors seem to lean toward conservatism. Boards generally have started their theatres with a willingness to try to experiment with different forms and controversial themes: perhaps ignorance, and the small scale of a company's beginning is the key--possibly the

greatest opportunity for creation lies in the process of establishing a theatre; that is, in the first two or three years. Then, somehow, as a sense of local taste develops, as certain types of plays show stronger responses, as finances expand and increase the Board's responsibility, and as tradition sets in, some Boards have leaned toward falling in with popular taste instead of leading it. This could be the greatest weakness in the Regional Movement. The danger exists that the artists may leave or quit the theatres and craftsmen may take over and re-shape artistic integrity into some sort of industrialized, "always-predictable" process.

There is the added danger that Administrative Directors seeking order may push beyond: to regimentation and artistic suppression through pre-occupation with cost-control.

In spite of negative possibilities, however, the Regional Theatres, have, for the most part, developed enviable records of artistic achievement.

The theatres easily lend themselves to comparison as business organizations, from the standpoint of organizational structure, management, and financial patterns. Artistically, however, they tend to be as unique as their Artistic Directors. Some theatres have schools or children's programs, many of them do the same plays--often with the same actors, and yet, the scale and point of the productions are usually very different.

Generally, MTC, the Neptune, the Playhouse, and Theatre Calgary have arranged their priorities as follows:

1. establishment of an artistic policy;
2. development of an audience;
3. expansion.

The Citadel and Theatre New Brunswick have altered the order:

1. development of an audience;
2. expansion;
3. establishment of an artistic policy.

To become "Regional" in the fullest sense of the word the theatres have tended, as time and finances have permitted, to follow MTC's lead in relating to the community and the province through the development of activities in addition to main stage programs. Basically, these other areas of artistic effort have gone into lectures and advice, theatre schools, children's theatre programs and touring companies, and studio theatres.

Two of these activities, theatre schools and studio programs, have evolved with inherent problems. The schools run the risk of costing too much money, or worse, of losing sight of their relationship to main stage productions. The school concept could become a narcissistic playground for indulgent groping by exhibitionist children, which could, in the end, turn them off to the disciplines and skills of

structured theatre. Studio programs can become more exciting than main stage policy, but unfortunately that excitement is usually limited to those in the production and to a tiny public following. Revenues can never hope to offset studio production costs and Boards are rarely sympathetic to "art for art's sake"--even in a theatre corporation. Yet, the studio is the new Canadian playwright's workshop and the hope for developing indigenous theatre. The universities and amateur organizations have not demonstrated any strong interest in new plays. Hopefully, the Canada Council will recognize the value of studio theatres and begin providing for them.

Each of the possibilities for extra contacts with the people of the Regions has added an element of strain to staff and finances, and each has been vulnerable to various possible pitfalls, but where they have been added they have expanded the positive values of theatre in the eyes of their public.

It seems that the next step is up to the people of Canada: to show stronger support, to respond to the current production quality, to open up to the possibility of going to the theatre. Attendance statistics are still the greatest measure of success in the eyes of grant-giving bodies. And ticket revenues and grants are still the essential ingredients for establishing an environment that might encourage artistic

freedom and lead to artistic integrity. Increased public support can encourage increased government subsidies. There is clearly something theatrical in Canada worthy of more public attention. The burden is still with the theatres to make themselves known in their communities--it will help if those who "know" will only go--at least once.

The Canadian Regional Theatre Movement is securely alive and growing. It has strength in its ambition and vitality; in its normal policy of substantial, established drama and a fair mix of original works; and in its many levels of activity. Though it seems threatened in some places by too much stability and a sort of industrial approach, it has achieved, nonetheless, a respectable level of artistic merit and excitement. It is backed by a growing number of enthusiastic and talented artists and playwrights, and its rapid turnover provides continuing opportunities for new people. It has developed a tremendous potential in the support of men like John Hirsch, Tom Hendry, Keith Turnbull, and Christopher Newton. To push on, it needs the Boards' support to offer decent wages and it needs the courage and ability to survive artistic failures while searching for indigenously Canadian and other new and revived forms of meaningful theatre.

There is a need for additional research in several subjects touched on in this study: if a methodology could be developed for studying the effects of differences in administrative systems it would undoubtedly contribute to greater efficiency, and it might reveal useful information for other types of theatres. The time and means were not available for this study, but the methods and effects of Danny Newman's season ticket campaigns deserve analysis with regard to effectiveness and in comparison to the success of other approaches. There is a need for determining the attitudes, wants and make-up of Regional audiences toward the theatres, so that the theatres might serve and reach out to their constituencies more effectively. Finally, to complete the picture of activity in Canada and to derive an understanding of why different types of theatre activities evolve and how they are sustained, it appears there would be a value in a comparative study of the founding and artistic activities of the Festival Theatres, in a study of the indigenous features of the French Theatres and what makes them successful, in an evaluation of the causes for continual failures in Toronto, and in the state and potential of the underground theatre as it relates to the established Regional Theatre Movement.

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Shoctor, Joseph. President of the Board. Citadel Theatre. August, 1970.

Turnbull, Keith. Artistic Director. Manitoba Theatre Centre. July, 1970.

Canada Council Briefs and
Application Forms Used

Manitoba Theatre Centre 1958-70.

Neptune Theatre 1963-70.

Playhouse Theatre Company 1965-70.

Theatre New Brunswick 1968-70.

Theatre Calgary 1968-70.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

PLAYS PRESENTED IN THE REGIONAL THEATRES

APPENDIX A

PLAYS PRESENTED IN THE REGIONAL THEATRES

What follows is a list of the plays that have been presented in the main stage programs of the six Regional Theatres. The lists are taken from the theatres' records which vary a bit in format. Where it is possible the plays are listed and accompanied with the number of performances that were given, the attendance figures that were recorded, and the percentage of capacity that was represented.

MANITOBA THEATRE CENTRE

| Plays | Perf. | Atten. | %
Capac. |
|----------------------|----------|--------------|-------------|
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>1958-59</u> | | | |
| A Hatful of Rain | | | |
| Blithe Spirit | | | |
| Teach Me How to Cry | | | |
| The Glass Menagerie | | | |
| Born Yesterday | | | |
| Ring 'Round the Moon | | | |
| Diary of Anne Frank | | | |
| Of Mice and Men | | | |
| | <hr/> 63 | <hr/> 32,000 | <hr/> |
| <u>1959-60</u> | | | |
| Solid Gold Cadillac | | | |
| Tea and Sympathy | | | |
| On Borrowed Time | | | |
| Reclining Figure | | | |
| Look Back in Anger | | | |
| Volpone | | | |
| Teaho | | | |

MANITOBA THEATRE CENTRE (continued)

| Plays | Perf. | Atten. | ⁸
Capac. |
|------------------------------|------------|---------------|------------------------|
| <u>1959-60</u> | | | |
| Solid Gold Cadillac | | | |
| Tea and Sympathy | | | |
| On Borrowed Time | | | |
| Reclining Figure | | | |
| Look Back in Anger | | | |
| Volpone | | | |
| Teahouse of the August Moon | | | |
| Anastasia | | | |
| | <u>84</u> | <u>44,000</u> | |
| <u>1960-61</u> | | | |
| Mister Roberts | | | |
| Gaslight | | | |
| Streetcar Named Desire | | | |
| Biggest Thief in Town | | | |
| Dark of the Moon | | | |
| Juno and the Paycock | | | |
| Visit to a Small Planet | | | |
| The Fourposter | | | |
| | <u>120</u> | <u>64,000</u> | |
| <u>1961-62</u> | | | |
| The Boyfriend | 26 | 18,515 | |
| Arms and the Man | 16 | 10,686 | |
| Speaking of Murder | 16 | 5,170 | |
| The Lady's Not for Burning | 16 | 6,085 | |
| Playboy of the Western World | 16 | 7,060 | |
| Look Ahead | 16 | 8,666 | |
| Thieves Carnival | 16 | 6,842 | |
| Separate Tables | 16 | 7,808 | |
| | <u>138</u> | <u>70,836</u> | |
| <u>1962-63</u> | | | |
| The Caretaker | 16 | 7,351 | |
| Summer of the 17th Doll | 16 | 7,511 | |
| Pal Joey | 32 | 12,479 | |
| Mrs. Warren's Profession | 16 | 8,589 | |
| Enemy of the People | 16 | 7,210 | |
| Once More with Feeling | 23 | 9,516 | |
| Bonfires of '62 | 16 | 6,987 | |
| A Very Close Family | 16 | 6,748 | |
| | <u>151</u> | <u>66,391</u> | |

MANITOBA THEATRE CENTRE (continued)

| Plays | Perf. | Atten. | %
Capac. |
|---|------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1963-64</u> | | | |
| Pygmalion | 19 | 11,310 | |
| The Hostage | 17 | 8,763 | |
| Midsummer Night's Dream | 26 | 13,269 | |
| Little Mary Sunshine | 27 | 12,628 | |
| Five Finger Exercise | 25 | 8,607 | |
| The Gazebo | 19 | 8,938 | |
| Cat On A Hot Tin Roof | 25 | 10,714 | |
| | <u>158</u> | <u>74,229</u> | |
| <u>1964-65</u> | | | |
| Hay Fever | 21 | 9,452 | |
| All About Us | 21 | 9,144 | |
| Mother Courage | 21 | 13,489 | |
| Taming of the Shrew | 21 | 11,643 | |
| Irma La Douce | 27 | 13,856 | |
| Heartbreak House | 19 | 9,599 | |
| Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf | 16 | 12,800 | |
| The Tiger and the Typist | 21 | 7,475 | |
| | <u>166</u> | <u>86,958</u> | |
| <u>1965-66</u> | | | |
| The Private Ear and The
Public Eye | 21 | 10,892 | 62 |
| The Importance of Being Earnest | 21 | 13,037 | 74.4 |
| Andorra | 21 | 13,064 | 74.5 |
| The Tempest | 21 | 13,524 | 77 |
| The Threepenny Opera | 21 | 13,289 | 76.4 |
| Nicholas Romanov | 17 | 9,846 | 69.9 |
| The Dance of Death | 21 | 9,500 | 55.2 |
| | <u>143</u> | <u>83,152</u> | <u>70</u> |
| <u>1966-67</u> | | | |
| Charley's Aunt | 21 | 15,338 | 88.5 |
| The Rainmaker | 21 | 13,716 | 73.1 |
| Galileo | 21 | 12,036 | 69.2 |
| A Funny Thing Happened on the
Way to the Forum | 21 | 16,237 | 93.3 |
| Romeo and Juliet | 21 | 14,362 | 82.6 |
| Lulu Street | 21 | 13,516 | 77 |
| Luv | 21 | 12,165 | 79.2 |
| | <u>147</u> | <u>96,370</u> | <u>79.2</u> |

MANITOBA THEATRE CENTRE (continued)

| Plays | Perf. | Atten. | %
Capac. |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1967-68</u> | | | |
| Major Barbara | 21 | 14,301 | 82.3 |
| Oh What a Lovely War | 21 | 14,805 | 85.2 |
| Antigone and Sganarelle | 21 | 11,704 | 67.3 |
| The Three Sisters | 21 | 13,231 | 76 |
| The Fantasticks | 21 | 13,741 | 78.1 |
| A Thousand Clowns | 21 | 14,811 | 85.2 |
| A Delicate Balance | 21 | 12,760 | 73.2 |
| | <u>147</u> | <u>96,353</u> | <u>78.2</u> |
| <u>1968-69</u> | | | |
| Fiddler on the Roof | 8 | 17,127 | |
| A Man for All Seasons | 7 | 14,659 | |
| Hotel Paradiso | 7 | 13,354 | |
| Cactus Flower | 7 | 13,430 | |
| | <u>29</u> | <u>58,570</u> | |
| <u>1969-70</u> | | | |
| Man of La Mancha | | | |
| Cabaret | | | |
| Marat-Sade | | | |
| You Can't Take It With You | | | |
| After the Fall | | | |
| <u>1970-71</u> | | | |
| A Man's A Man | | | |
| Long Day's Journey Into Night | | | |
| Salvation | | | |
| Hobson's Choice | | | |
| War and Peace | | | |
| Little Murders | | | |

NEPTUNE THEATRE

| Plays | perf. | atten. | %
capac. |
|---------------------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1963 Summer</u> | | | |
| Major Barbara | 20 | 5,546 | 52 |
| Mary Mary | 21 | 9,211 | 83 |
| Four Poster | 21 | 6,570 | 60 |
| Antigone | 13 | 2,864 | 41 |
| Dial "M" | 17 | 4,609 | 51 |
| | <u>91</u> | <u>28,800</u> | <u>60</u> |
| <u>1963-64 Winter</u> | | | |
| Romanoff and Juliett | 23 | 4,911 | 40 |
| Arms and the Man | 15 | 2,299 | 28 |
| Antigone | 2 | | 43 |
| Fantasticks | 22 | 4,917 | 41 |
| Diary of a Scoundrel | 16 | 3,879 | 45 |
| Desire Under the Elms | 19 | 5,785 | 52 |
| Bus Stop | 17 | 5,123 | 56 |
| Louisbourg | 23 | 4,268 | 39 |
| | <u>137</u> | <u>31,142</u> | <u>43</u> |
| <u>1964 Summer</u> | | | |
| John A. Beats the Devil | 14 | 4,155 | 56 |
| The Glass Menagerie | 18 | 4,749 | 49 |
| Come Blow Your Horn | 31 | 11,890 | 72 |
| Twelfth Night | 23 | 6,603 | 54 |
| Oh Dad, Poor Dad | 20 | 5,887 | 55 |
| Cinderella | 18 | 5,702 | 67 |
| | <u>124</u> | <u>38,986</u> | <u>57</u> |
| <u>1965 Winter</u> | | | |
| Two for the SeeSaw | 19 | 7,424 | 73 |
| The Private Ear and the
Public Eye | 20 | 4,135 | 36 |
| Under the Yum Yum Tree | 25 | 8,277 | 62 |
| School for Wives | 17 | 5,047 | 62 |
| | <u>81</u> | <u>24,883</u> | <u>58</u> |
| <u>1965 Summer</u> | | | |
| As You Like It | | | |
| The Tunnel of Love | | | |
| Mary, Mary | | | |
| Epitaph for George Dillon | | | |
| Uncle Vanya | | | |

NEPTUNE THEATRE (continued)

| Play | perf. | atten. | %
capac. |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1966 Summer</u> | | | |
| The Physicists | 14 | 2,773 | 37 |
| Arsenic and Old Lace | 35 | 8,992 | 49 |
| The Crucible | 22 | 3,698 | 32 |
| A Shot in the Dark | 21 | 3,523 | 32 |
| Henry IV, Part I | 21 | 3,570 | 36 |
| The Sleeping Bag | 23 | 8,348 | 69 |
| | <u>136</u> | <u>30,904</u> | <u>43</u> |
| <u>1967 Summer</u> | | | |
| Barefoot in the Park | | | 78.2 |
| The Taming of the Shrew | | | 70.7 |
| Wait Until Dark | | | 57.1 |
| Private Lives | | | 54.0 |
| Charlie | | | 51.1 |
| Juno and the Paycock | | | 32.2 |
| | <u>105</u> | <u>32,525</u> | <u>59.0</u> |
| <u>1968 Winter</u> | | | |
| The Odd Couple | | 7,446 | 88.6 |
| A Man for All Seasons | | 5,699 | 86.4 |
| My Three Angels | | 4,338 | 82.6 |
| The Subject was Roses | | 5,228 | 71.1 |
| Wooden World | | 3,208 | 70 |
| | <u>62</u> | <u>26,635</u> | <u>81.8</u> |
| <u>1968 Summer</u> | | | |
| Ondine | 14 | 6,043 | 82.2 |
| Black Comedy | 15 | 6,170 | 78.4 |
| The Odd Couple | 6 | 2,417 | 76.7 |
| The Rainmaker | 13 | 4,759 | 69.7 |
| Summer of the Seventeenth Doll | 12 | 4,019 | 63.8 |
| | <u>60</u> | <u>23,402</u> | <u>74</u> |
| <u>1969 Winter</u> | | | |
| Cactus Flower | 15 | 7,666 | 97.3 |
| Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? | 13 | 6,096 | 89.4 |
| Pygmalion | 17 | 8,472 | 94.9 |
| The Boy Friend | 16 | 8,188 | 97.9 |
| The Promise | 12 | 5,741 | 90.0 |
| | <u>73</u> | <u>36,163</u> | <u>94.4</u> |

NEPTUNE THEATRE (continued)

| Play | perf. | atten. | %
capac. |
|---|-----------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1969 Summer</u> | | | |
| Charley's Aunt | 19 | 9,643 | 96.6 |
| Boeing-Boeing | 16 | 7,835 | 93.2 |
| Liliom | 14 | 4,727 | 64.2 |
| | <u>49</u> | <u>22,205</u> | <u>84.3</u> |
| <u>1970 Winter</u> | | | |
| Tiger! Tiger! | 14 | 6,576 | 89.4 |
| You Know I Can't Hear You When
the Water's Running | 18 | 8,267 | 87.5 |
| The Lion in Winter | 16 | 7,264 | 86.5 |
| A Flea in Her Ear | 20 | 9,044 | 86.1 |
| The Killing of Sister George | 16 | 6,640 | 79 |
| | <u>84</u> | <u>37,791</u> | <u>85.6</u> |
| <u>1970 Summer</u> | | | |
| Death of a Salesman | | | |
| Any Wednesday | | | |
| The Egg | | | |
| <u>1971 Winter</u> | | | |
| A Midsummer Night's Dream | | | |
| Long Day's Journey Into Night | | | |
| The Caretaker | | | |
| The Fantasticks | | | |
| <u>1971 Summer</u> | | | |
| Blithe Spirit | | | |
| Star Spangled Girl | | | |
| The Importance of Being Earnest | | | |

PLAYHOUSE THEATRE COMPANY

| Plays | perf. | atten. | %
capac. |
|-----------------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1963-64</u> | | | |
| The Hostage | | | |
| Private Lives | | | |
| The Boy Friend | | | |
| Julius Caesar | | | |
| The Caretaker | | | |
| Charley's Aunt | | | |
| | <u>110</u> | <u>37,218</u> | |
| <u>1964-65</u> | | | |
| Ring Round the Moon | 19 | | 51.6 |
| Desire Under the Elms | 18 | | 51.9 |
| The Taming of the Shrew | 19 | | 65.9 |
| Christmas in the Market Place | 23 | | 29.0 |
| The Seagull | 19 | | 49.1 |
| Oh Dad, Poor Dad . . . | 18 | | 60.2 |
| Stop The World, I Want to Get Off | 19 | | <u>79.7</u> |
| | <u>135</u> | <u>51,945</u> | |
| <u>1965-66</u> | | | |
| Oh What A Lovely War | | | |
| A Month in the Country | | | |
| The Knack | | | |
| Major Barbara | | | |
| The Typists and the Tiger | | | |
| Romeo and Juliet | | | |
| Like Father, Like Fun | | | |
| Lock Up Your Daughters | | | |
| | <u>143</u> | <u>63,839</u> | <u>—</u> |
| <u>1966-67</u> | | | |
| Candida | | | 82 |
| Countdown to Armageddon | | | 47 |
| Peer Gynt | | | 81 |
| She Stoops to Conquer | | | 60 |
| How to Run the Country | | | 73 |
| Anything Goes | | | <u>79</u> |
| | <u>140</u> | <u>60,522</u> | |
| <u>1967-68</u> | | | |
| Androcles and the Lion | | 11,234 | 72.3 |
| The Ecstasy of Rita Joe | | 13,184 | 81.5 |
| The Beaux Stratagem | | 8,477 | 54.5 |
| Philadelphia Here I Come | | 12,925 | 83.2 |
| A Streetcar | | | |

PLAYHOUSE THEATRE COMPANY (continued)

| Plays | perf. atten. | %
capac. |
|--------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| <u>1967-68</u> | | |
| Androcles and the Lion | 11,234 | 72.3 |
| The Ecstasy of Rita Joe | 13,184 | 81.5 |
| The Beaux Stratagem | 8,477 | 54.5 |
| Philadelphia Here I Come | 12,925 | 83.2 |
| A Streetcar Named Desire | 9,729 | 62.6 |
| The Firebugs | 9,516 | 64 |
| Walking Happy | 10,700 | 66.1 |
| | <u>163</u> | <u>75,765</u> |
| | | <u>69.2</u> |
| <u>1968-69</u> | | |
| The Fourth Monkey | 22 | |
| Summer of the Seventeenth Doll | 22 | |
| A Thurber Carnival | 22 | |
| Moby Dick--Rehearsed | 22 | |
| Mrs. Mouse Are You Within? | 22 | |
| The Filthy Piranesi (and) | | |
| Black Comedy | 22 | |
| Grass and Wild Strawberries | 22 | |
| | <u>154</u> | |
| <u>1969-70</u> | | |
| The Royal Hunt of the Sun | | |
| The Show-Off | | |
| Colours in the Dark | | |
| Events While Guarding the | | |
| Bofors Gun | | |
| Village Wooing/Dear Liar | | |
| Tango | | |
| <u>1970-71</u> | | |
| The Secretary Bird | | |
| Rosencrantz and Guildenstern | | |
| are Dead | | |
| Joe Egg | | |
| Othello | | |
| Plaza Suite | | |
| (Canadian Original) | | |

THE CITADEL

| Plays | perf. | atten. | %
capac. |
|---|------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1965-66</u> | | | |
| Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf | 16 | 2,115 | 67.6 |
| Under the Yum-Yum Tree | 18 | 1,275 | 51.2 |
| Bell, Book, and Candle | 19 | 1,216 | 49.3 |
| Come Back Little Sheba | 18 | 1,237 | 52.4 |
| It's Never Too Late | 18 | 2,445 | 76.5 |
| Death of a Salesman | 18 | 2,665 | 77 |
| Come Blow Your Horn | 16 | 2,382 | 85.2 |
| The Glass Menagerie | 16 | 994 | 52 |
| | <u>139</u> | <u>14,329</u> | |
| <u>1966-67</u> | | | |
| The Pleasure of His Company | 26 | 2,499 | 66.9 |
| Three-Penny Opera | 24 | 2,644 | 67.5 |
| Holiday Revue | 13 | 1,284 | 40 |
| The Little Hut | 23 | 3,061 | 75 |
| Candida | 23 | 3,156 | 76.6 |
| The Subject Was Roses | 23 | 1,499 | 49.5 |
| Luv | 23 | 3,127 | 75.5 |
| | <u>155</u> | <u>17,280</u> | |
| <u>1967-68</u> | | | |
| Barefoot in the Park | 23 | 2,641 | 80 |
| Hedda Gabler | 23 | 981 | 60 |
| A Funny Thing Happened on the
Way to the Forum | 29 | 4,226 | 89 |
| Tiny Alice | 23 | 1,659 | 65 |
| The Owl and the Pussycat | 23 | 2,542 | 79 |
| Hamp | 23 | 909 | 54 |
| Private Lives | 22 | 2,028 | 72 |
| | <u>166</u> | <u>14,986</u> | |
| <u>1968-69</u> | | | |
| The Odd Couple | 23 | | 89 |
| Philadelphia Here I Come | 23 | | 85.6 |
| Irma La Douce | 24 | | 86.3 |
| Right Honorable Gentleman | 23 | | 77 |
| Shaw Playbill | 23 | | 75.4 |
| In White America | 23 | | 76.2 |
| Star Spangled Girl | 23 | | 75.3 |
| | <u>162</u> | | |

THE CITADEL (continued)

| Play | perf. | atten. | %
capac. |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1969-70</u> | | | |
| There's A Girl In My Soup | 23 | 6,281 | 98.6 |
| The Rehearsal | 23 | 5,776 | 90.6 |
| The Fantasticks | 24 | 6,496 | 97.4 |
| Shadow of a Gunman | 23 | 5,821 | 91.4 |
| The Price | 23 | 6,115 | 96 |
| Lovers | 22 | 5,332 | 87.5 |
| Seidman and Son | 23 | 5,911 | 93.6 |
| | <u>161</u> | <u>41,524</u> | <u>93.6</u> |
| <u>1970-71</u> | | | |
| The Importance of Being Earnest | | | |
| Staircase | | | |
| The Secretary Bird | | | |
| Plaza Suite | | | |
| Othello | | | |
| Counsellor Extraordinary | | | |
| Norman, Is That You? | | | |

THEATRE NEW BRUNSWICK

| Plays | perf. | atten. | &
capac. |
|---|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| <u>1966 Summer</u> | | | |
| Bell, Book, and Candle | 8 | 1,532 | |
| The Private Ear and The
Public Eye | 8 | 1,239 | |
| The Knack | 8 | 1,321 | |
| | <u>24</u> | <u>4,092</u> | |
| <u>1967 Summer</u> | | | |
| The Owl and the Pussycat | | 1,915 | |
| A Thousand Clowns | | 1,844 | |
| The Tiger and The Typist | | 1,619 | |
| It's Never Too Late | | 2,073 | |
| Billy Liar | | 1,757 | |
| | | <u>9,208</u> | |
| <u>1968 Summer</u> | | | |
| The Little Hut | 6 | 1,408 | |
| Any Wednesday | 6 | 1,322 | |
| Springtime for Henry | 6 | 1,166 | |
| Barefoot in the Park | 6 | 1,987 | |
| | <u>24</u> | <u>5,883</u> | |
| <u>1969 Winter</u> | | | |
| Marriage-Go-Round | | 1,519 | |
| Inadmissible Evidence | | 1,069 | |
| Boeing-Boeing | | 1,107 | |
| The Glass Menagerie | | 1,299 | |
| | | <u>4,994</u> | |
| <u>1969 Summer</u> | | | |
| Gaslight | | 1,463 | |
| Star Spangled Girl | | 1,832 | |
| See How They Run | | 2,101 | |
| The Importance of Being Earnest | | 1,549 | |
| | | <u>6,954</u> | |
| <u>1970 Winter</u> | | | |
| Two for the See-Saw | | 1,920 | |
| There's a Girl in My Soup | | 2,218 | |
| Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? | | 1,447 | |
| Black Comedy (and) Resounding
Tinkle | | 1,527 | |
| | | <u>7,112</u> | |

THEATRE NEW BRUNSWICK (continued)

| Plays | perf. | atten. | &
capac. |
|---------------------|-------|--------|-------------|
| <hr/> | | | |
| <u>1970 Summer</u> | | | |
| Private Lives | | | |
| Mary, Mary | | | |
| Dial "M" for Murder | | | |
| Critic's Choice | | | |

THEATRE CALGARY

| Plays | perf. | atten. | %
capac. |
|--|------------|---------------|-------------|
| <u>1968-69</u> | | | |
| The Odd Couple | 13 | 5,009 | 78.1 |
| The Alchemist | 12 | 3,747 | 63.3 |
| Gaslight | 12 | 3,847 | 65 |
| Irma La Douce | 19 | 6,509 | 69.4 |
| Private Lives | 12 | 4,065 | 68.7 |
| The Three Desks | 12 | 3,772 | 63.7 |
| Black Comedy | 13 | 4,001 | 67.6 |
| | <u>83</u> | <u>30,950</u> | <u>67.9</u> |
| <u>1969-70</u> | | | |
| Star Spangled Girl | 19 | 6,191 | 66.1 |
| Loot | 18 | 5,046 | 56.8 |
| Great Expectations | 21 | 7,714 | 74.0 |
| You Two Stay Here, The Rest
Follow Me | 18 | 7,714 | 74.0 |
| The Importance of Being Earnest | 20 | 6,203 | 62.9 |
| Long Day's Journey Into Night | 18 | 5,313 | 59.8 |
| Bell, Book, and Candle | 18 | 5,281 | 59.5 |
| | <u>132</u> | <u>43,330</u> | |
| <u>1970-71</u> | | | |
| The Entertainer | | | |
| The Birthday Party | | | |
| Dracula | | | |
| Trip | | | |
| The Taming of the Shrew | | | |
| The Father | | | |
| Joe Egg | | | |

APPENDIX B

MANITOBA THEATRE SCHOOL

YEAR END REPORT AS OF

MAY 29, 1970

APPENDIX B

MANITOBA THEATRE SCHOOL YEAR END REPORT AS OF MAY 29, 1970

I. CLASSES

Total enrollment at the end of the season = 289 students

SENIOR SCHOOL: 15-23 year olds

Instructors:

Drama - D. Barnet
D. Latham
I. Maplethorp
Film - R. Rivers
Design - J. Ferguson
Music - B. Spence

The Senior enrollment increased considerably this year from 90 last season to 118 this season. The courses included improvisation, mime, production, creative movement, film, design and music. There was a teaching seminar which was also open to the Intermediate Students. This resulted in students assisting and teaching Theatre School classes.

Students taught at the Central and St. James YMCA both for their fall and spring programs; and at the Tuxedo Recreational Centre and one of the Winnipeg Detention Homes during the winter.

This year the Christmas Vacation Classes were open to Senior and Intermediate students. Courses offered were Dance, make-up, lighting, text and design. Mr. Gerry Eldred and Mr. Tibor Feheregyhazi took the Text and Lighting classes respectively.

Senior productions were: "Creative Movement and Dance"; "A Comedy of Manners", directed by Mr. Barnet; "An Evening of Free Dance"; "Winners", directed by Susan Ferley; "This is the Rill Speaking", directed by Lee Anne Block; "Princess Christina and the King", a children's play written and directed by the students; and "Colours in the Dark", directed by Mr. Barnet which involved students from the Junior, Intermediate and Senior classes, film, slide projections, puppets and set design and construction by the students. "The Lottery", "Oh", "One Blast and Have Done",

"Frederick the Great" and "Flat" were presented in an evening for Indian/Metis students from Rossville School, Norway House, Manitoba who came to Winnipeg as part of their Centennial celebrations.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL: 12-15 year olds | Instructors: |
| | Drama - D. Barnet |
| | D. Latham |
| | C. Jackson |
| | I. Maplethorp |
| | Film - R. Rivers |
| | Music - B. Spence |

The Intermediate School also showed a considerable increase from last year's 85 to this year's 103 students. There were 6 Intermediate classes with the students taking classes not only in drama but also film and music. Productions were: "The Coffee Mate Revolution" and "The Box", which were entered in last year's Playwriting Competition; "One Candle" and "Pea Soup, or the Wrong Impression" written and directed by Michael Tregebov; "Alice", "Dark of the Moon", "Come and Go", and "Secret of the Old Attic". A number of these were also presented in the High School Drama Festival.

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| JUNIOR SCHOOL: 7-12 year olds | Instructors: |
| | Drama - D. Barnet |
| | D. Latham |
| | L. A. Block |
| | Film - R. Rivers |
| | Design - J. Ferguson |
| | Music - B. Spence |

A total of 68 students made up the 5 Junior Classes. Come of the students were introduced to film, music and design and next year hope to expose all of them to these areas. The Junior School presented 5 productions during the year with most of the directing, writing and designing being done by the students themselves.

II. DRAMA EDUCATION PROGRAM

A. Visits to Greater Winnipeg Schools

These visits were conducted by David Barnet, doing the majority of the Senior High School visits, David Latham concentrating on the Elementary and Junior Schools; and others by Roger Gaskell, John Ferguson, Allan Swayze and some assisted by students of the School.

- 15 - Visits to Elementary Schools
- 19 - Junior High Schools
- 45 - Senior High Schools

79 - Total School Visits in Winnipeg

- 19 - Out of Town Visits to: Neepawa Area Collegiate, Arden School, Ste. Anne's Collegiate, Brandon University, Neelin High School, Harrison High School, Brandon Collegiate, 4 schools in Glenboro District, Teulon Collegiate, Somerset Collegiate, Lorette Collegiate, Selkirk Collegiate, Springfield Collegiate, and R. D. Parker Collegiate in Thompson, Manitoba.

98 - Total Visits

B. Other Activities

1. Recitals at the University of Manitoba by David Barnet and David Latham, and a Christmas Program at the Vaughan Street Detention Home with David Barnet, David Latham and Manitoba Theatre School students.
2. Workshops: David Barnet: Thompson Drama Group
Unitarian Church
Dominion Drama Festival
Portage La Prairie Recreation
Department
Lynn Lake

David Latham: Movement classes with M.T.C.
actors
Island Lake Indian Reserve
Red Lake Ontario
Greater Winnipeg Gas Company
3. Consultant: David Barnet acted as a Consultant of Drama on various Art Festival and Centennial Program Committees.
4. Lecture/Discussions given at University Women's Club and St. John's College by David Barnet; and Y Neighbours by David Latham.
5. Conferences: David Barnet and David Latham attended the Brian Way Conference in Regina. David Barnet attended and gave workshops at the CCYDA Hamilton Conference.

6. David Barnet participated in two C.B.C. radio shows and assisted Prof. Robert Irwin in directing the University of Manitoba's School of Music Opera "The Triumph of Virtue".
7. David Barnet and David Latham taught at the University of Manitoba; English 369 Theatre Course.
8. This year, Mr. Barnet started work with the Senior Citizens in Winnipeg. Under the direction of Mr. Barnet, the group, aged 65 and over, performed an original play for the Senior Citizens Annual Meeting. The Day Care Centre's were also visited by a member from a current M.T.C. production preparing the people for the up-coming show.
9. Mr. Barnet and Mr. Latham conducted a Teachers Workshop at the Elementary and Junior High School levels. The workshop consisted of 5 weeks of 2 hours each week. The course included an introduction to Creative Drama, creative movement, techniques of improvisation, improvisation and the script and development of creative dramatics to performance. The fee for the course was \$2.00 per session and 43 teachers enrolled.
10. During the year students from the Theatre School participated in various activities and gave workshops. This year their program included the St. James Art Club; Beausejour Collegiate Hootenany; Junior League Puppet Workshop both at the Neighbourhood Service Centre and a special 4 week workshop they gave at the School for interested students; Phillip Kusie was an A.S.M. for "Hail Scrawdyke"; make-up workshops; C.B.C.; B'Nai B'Rith; teaching at Vaughan Street Detention Home, Central and St. James YMCA and the Tuxedo Recreational Centre; directing a Christmas church play with their Sunday school children; Canadian Police Week; D.D.F. Reception; and the dance group performed at the University of Winnipeg's Exposure II and the University of Manitoba's Festival of Life and Learning.
11. Visitors to the School and Guest Instructors = 43.
12. Field Trips: This year the Manitoba Theatre School started a new program of inviting schools to spend a morning or afternoon in the School. This was a much more efficient use of the staff's time and the School's facilities. By coming to the Theatre School, the students not only took classes in improvisation and mime, but were able to work with costumes, make-up, props and lighting in the Studio Theatre. We charged 25¢ per student and from November to April, 13 field trips were made.

13. Winnipeg Adult Education Centre: This year, Mr. Barnet began a new process at the Centre by teaching a group of students English through creative drama. Mr. Price, Head of English at the Centre, was most impressed with the results and it appears that this is just the beginning.

14. Summer Programs:

Neepawa Holiday Festival of Arts: Mr. Barnet and Mr. Latham will be teaching drama at the Festival to be held from July 2 to the 11th.

Gimli Arts Week: In August Mr. Barnet and Mr. Latham will also be teaching for this activity.

Student Tour: Six students from the Manitoba Theatre School will be touring Winnipeg playgrounds and Manitoba for 6 weeks beginning in July. Mr. Barnet introduced this program to the Department of Tourism and Recreation last year and due to the tour's response asked him to conduct a similar tour for this summer. The tour will consist of the students teaching drama, performing recitals, improvisation and mime. The tour will also be attending the Neepawa Arts Festival before beginning to tour. The program is sponsored by the Department of Tourism and Recreation.

III. STUDIO THEATRE PROGRAM

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Nov. 5, 6, 7 | The Moonlight Travelling Theatre Co.--
"Joker Joe in Transit" |
| Nov. 23 | Students Music Afternoon organized by
Barbara Spence |
| Nov. 30 | Staff Concert--"An Afternoon of What
We Like" |
| Dec. 17, 18, 19 | Creative Movement and Dance--Theatre
School |
| Dec. 20 | Junior School Concert |
| Dec. | Intermediate Productions: "The Coffee
Mate Revolution", "The Box", "One
Candle" |
| Dec. 29-Jan. 4 | Theatre School Christmas Vacation
Classes |
| Jan. 11 | "A Comedy of Manners"--Senior Students |
| Jan. 17 & 18 | "Does the Sun Shine on Everyone?" and
"What is Friendship?" by the St.
Boniface Diocesan High School
"Louis Riel"--Silver Heights Collegiate
and Assiniboine Residential School |
| Jan. 19 | "The Hunt of the Blue Turtle"--Allan
Swayze |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Jan. 21, 22, 23 | The Moonlight Travelling Theatre Co.--
"Mad Jack's Escape" |
| Jan. 28, 29, 30 | "Suddenly Last Summer"--Osborne Players |
| Feb. 5, 12, 26 &
Mar. 5 & 19 | Evening Institute, University of
Manitoba "Modern Dance" course by
Rachel Brown |
| Feb. 8 | "An Invitation to the Baroque"--
presented by staff and students from
the School of Music, Faculty of
Architecture, University College,
Royal Winnipeg Ballet School and
Manitoba Theatre Centre. |
| Feb. 15 | "I Talk About Everything"--University
of Manitoba, English Theatre Course |
| Feb. 22 | "An Evening of Free Dance"--Theatre
School |
| Mar. 2-5 | Elementary/Junior High School Drama
Festival Rehearsals |
| Mar. 6-12 | 1st Manitoba Elementary/Junior High
School Drama Festival |
| Mar. 16 & 17 | "Winners"--Senior students |
| Mar. 23 & 24 | "This is the Rill Speaking"--Senior
students |
| Mar. 30-April 8 | High School Drama Festival Rehearsals |
| April 9-27 | 9th Manitoba High School Drama
Festival |
| April 30-May 1 | "Colours in the Dark"--Theatre School |
| May 2 & 7 | Junior School Parents Day and Pro-
ductions |
| May 22 | National Theatre School Auditions |
| May 25 | Senior III end of term productions |
| May 28 | University of Alberta Auditions |

IV. MANITOBA HIGH SCHOOL PLAYWRITING COMPETITION

This year the Manitoba Theatre School sponsored its 2nd Playwriting Competition. The Curtain Raisers of the Manitoba Theatre Centre donated the \$200.00 prize awards. Judges were David Barnet, Director, and David Latham, Assistant Director of the Theatre School.

Although the Competition was aimed at the student population of Manitoba, the age of the entrants ranged from 10 to 60. Out of town entries came from Lynn Lake, Marchand, Dauphin, East Braintree, Oak Point, Deloraine, and Teulon. Of the 45 entries, 4 were entered in the Elementary/Junior and Senior High School Drama Festivals. As the plays are in the process of being read, the results are not available at this time.

V. FIRST MANITOBA ELEMENTARY/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA FESTIVAL

Dates: March 6-12

Entries: 44

Schools: 20 including 1 from Selkirk

Languages: English and French

Original Selections of Material: 25 entries most of which were written and directed by the students.

Stage Manager: Hugh Manning, Student of the School

Lighting: Peter Van der Leelie, Student of the School

Coffee House: Naomi Levin, Student of the School

Adjudicators: David Barnet, David Latham and Carmelle LeGar

Box Office: Cherry Karpyshin

Income Break-down: Box Office Income \$364.50

Coffee House profit 41.60

Entry Fee (19 x \$10) = 190.00

Attendance = 453

This year the Manitoba Theatre School held its FIRST MANITOBA ELEMENTARY/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA FESTIVAL AND CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL. The Festival was scheduled for March 6, 7 and 8 but due to the overwhelming response it had to be extended another 4 days. March 6, 7 and 8 were devoted to the Elementary entries and the final 4 days to the Junior High Schools. Entries included short skits, improvisations, operettas, stories, poems and plays with the use of mixed media. An entry fee of \$10.00 per school was charged. There was also a Creative Arts Festival with a display of paintings, murals, puppets, pottery and mobiles and a refreshment booth. The Creative Arts Festival was organized by Theatre School students.

On Wednesday, March 25th, C.B.C.'s "Another Dimension" televised a program on the Festival. It showed excerpts of performances and teacher/student discussion periods. The Festival was highly successful and will be repeated next year.

VI. NINTH MANITOBA HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA FESTIVAL

Dates: April 9 to April 27

Entries: 57 (last year 44)

Schools: 31 including the Manitoba Theatre School (last year 24)

Out of Town Schools: 7--Loretta Collegiate, Ste. Ann Collegiate, Beausejour Collegiate, Pinawa Collegiate, Teulon Collegiate, R.D. Parker Collegiate from Thompson, Manitoba and Somerset Collegiate.

Languages: English and French

Original Selections of material: 33 (last year 18)

Lighting and Stage Managers: Clint DuVall and Allan Swayze

Box Office: Cherry Karpyshin, Tacey Lawrence and Colin Jackson

Adjudicators: David Barnett, Gerry Eldred, David Latham and Carmelle LeGar

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|----------------------------|----------|
| Passes: | Adult: | 3-Performance Pass @\$2.00 | Sold = 5 |
| | | 6-Performance Pass @\$3.50 | 2 |
| | Students: | 3-Performance Pass @\$1.00 | 29 |
| | | 6-Performance Pass @\$1.75 | <u>7</u> |
| | | Total | = 43 |

Total Audience = 1,136

Box Office Income = \$738.50

Entry Fee = \$650.00 (\$25.00 x 26)

Creative Arts Festival

The 2nd floor of the Theatre School, designed by 4 students from the Faculty of Architecture, U. of M., became a hive of activity during the run of the Festival. There was a Coffee House with nightly entertainment supplied by students from all over the city. In the Creative Arts display of painting, murals, mobiles and sculptures there was a "doing" corner. A pottery wheel and clay and paints and paper were supplied so that the audience could do pottery or paint during the intermissions. There was a skilled person each evening so that participants could be instructed on how to use the wheel. This was a most successful part of the Festival and will be continued. The students of the Manitoba Theatre School were totally involved in all aspects of the planning and running of the Festival and once again showed their enthusiasm and hard work. Sunday, April 12 was the showing of 9 student made movies for the Film Festival, and Sunday, April 19 Manitoba student poets recited their work for the Poetry Festival.

Submitted by:

Cherry Karpyshin, Administrator, Manitoba Theatre School

Norma F. Drewitt, Vice-President, Education, Manitoba Theatre Centre.

APPENDIX C

ACCOUNTING ATTITUDES IN THEATRE

APPENDIX C

ACCOUNTING ATTITUDES IN THEATRE

By Tom Hendry

As in any business, accounting in theatre serves various useful purposes, among which might be listed the following:

1. Accounting provides an accurate view of the financial condition of the organization at appropriate intervals in time.
2. Accounting provides an accurate historical record of the revenues and expenditures of the organization.
3. Accounting assists in providing management and governing bodies with a yardstick by which actual organizational performance in terms of revenues and expenditures can be compared with budgeted revenues and expenditures.
4. Accounting provides management with a means of controlling the actions of subordinates by means of budget-comparisons and well-established approval routines.
5. Accounting provides subordinates with a working guide towards definition of extent of activities by means of prompt, accurate actual vs. budget comparisons furnished on a regular basis.
6. Accounting assists in providing management with a system of internal check within an organization in order to minimize the possibility of misappropriation of funds, of duplicate payment or over-payment of liabilities, of non-collection or under-collection of non-cash assets, and of the under-recording or over-recording of assets or liabilities.

Text of a lecture given at February 17, 1965 meeting of The New Play Society and reprinted with the permission of the author.

7. Accounting assists in providing management with a guide to future action in the areas of cost limitation, cost expansion and fund-raising.
8. Accounting provides management with sufficient, comparative, historical information to enable grant-giving bodies to form, if at all possible, a favourable opinion of the year-to-year progress of the organization.
9. Accounting assists in providing management with sufficient information to enable governing bodies--such as Boards of Directors--to satisfy themselves that existing financial and other policy is being carried out, and to enable them to form realistic opinions concerning changes--expansions or shrinkages--in policies.
10. Accounting assists management, in the case of a community-based, non-profit theatre, in providing General Membership--who correspond to the Shareholders of a corporation whose stock is widely-held--with accurate periodic reports reflecting the results of the stewardship of governing bodies and management.
11. Accounting assists management in providing sufficient information to enable the organization to discharge its obligations to government in areas such as unemployment insurance, income tax deductions, Workmen's Compensation, amusement tax and so forth.
12. Accounting assists management by providing quick and accurate information necessary to the discharging of responsibilities in areas such as royalty payments, rent where same depends on gross income and so forth.

Most of the points set down above are self-explanatory, and one or two are actually expansions of others, but certain points deserve a bit of amplification and explanation:

3. The Actual vs. Budget Yardstick: In my opinion the year-to-year comparison of performance has a certain historical "gossip" value, but in terms of the Manitoba Theatre Centre's five-year comparison attached, it is easy to see that to compare the organization's 1960-61 costs and revenues with those of 1961-62 is unproductive at

best if what you are looking for is a guide to management action. If 1960-61 is viewed as norm, then obviously 1961-62 was a total failure, managerially. However, in practice 1961-62 was a far better year because the amount of actual work done increased rather more than the increase in costs and revenues would seem to indicate. In fact, the organization during 1961 was a very different organization than it had been during the previous year. There is no point in comparing the operating results of totally different organizations.

For me, the only really meaningful comparison is the Actual vs. Budget and this implies building the budget entirely into management's way of thinking so that with reference to any given cost one asks not "how much did we spend?" but rather "how much did we plan to spend?" And then "how much in fact did we spend?" In many organizations the budget is a somewhat sacred, musty document brought out from time to time to justify or sanctify management action. To me this is wrong and I am prepared to carry my wish for a built-in budget to almost fanatical lengths to make certain that everyone thinks in terms of budgets.

One of the few reasons a management might be willing to pay me more than they might be willing to pay someone else to run their organization is because they possibly have more faith in my ability to make accurate guesses of costs and revenues than in someone else's ability to so perform. Therefore my idea of a perfect year managerially is one in which every single cost and revenue works out in practice exactly to the penny to the amounts budgeted at the beginning of the year.

Therefore, I say, why work with clumsy, historical figures? Why not set up a standard set of costs and revenues, an offsetting set of compensating budget accounts, and instead of building up historical costs, record your costs in such a way as to reduce the offsetting budgets to zero. This method of recording costs and revenues immediately points up variations from budget. It is these data that management is interested in; as a group we are not particularly interested in the things we do correctly, it is the things we do incorrectly that interest us. Therefore, I suggest at the year you consider making the following entry:

Dr All Expense Accounts with Budget Amounts

Cr Offsetting Budget Accounts

Dr Offsetting Budget Accounts

Cr All Income Accounts with Budget Amounts

Then when actual expenses and revenues are experienced record them:

Dr Offsetting Budget Accounts with Actual Expense
 Amounts

Cr Offsetting Budget Accounts with Actual
 Income Amounts

Variation amounts may then be transferred to a Budget Variation account as they are established, analyzed and, one hopes, avoided in the future. Recording costs and revenues in this manner makes immediately available to managements the actual-budget comparison, it draws attention to potential over-budget situations before they arise because of the automatic comparison built into the accounting system. The effective existence of such a built-in comparison pre-supposes the existence of an effective accounts payable system maintained on a day-to-day basis with daily postings to offsetting budget accounts. It further pre-supposes the existence of an effective purchase order system. But more of that later.

4. Control of Actions of Subordinates: Every person works best when he has a clear idea of the extent of his responsibilities. Budgets tend to establish meaningful limitations in this regard, and if they are enforced fairly and sensibly they tend to stimulate a careful, cost-conscious attitude on the part of the department heads which they tend to impart to their subordinates.

Existence of a policy which requires employees to obtain written authority by means of a purchase order from their department head before purchasing anything on behalf of the theatre may seem bureaucratic, but it tends to prevent duplicate buying and inaccurate budget-actual comparisons. Purchase orders are matched up with invoices as same are received; outstanding purchase orders may be themselves used in place of invoices in order that costs at any given time may be absolutely known. This is terribly important since in these days of easy credit coupled with frequently-long-delayed invoicing, considerable debts may be accumulated, unless a purchase order system is used, long before an organization is aware of them. An effective purchase order system and day-by-day posting of expense items avoids this danger.

5. Internal check is something which occurs when the work of employees within an organization is so arranged that the work of employee "A" automatically checks on work of employee "B". Internal check means arranging things so that the work of the ticket-taker who tallies stubs automatically checks the results shown by the box office staff. It occurs when the person who receives and receipts payments different from the person who maintains the accounts receivable records and sends out the monthly statements. It occurs when the office manager checks the monthly accounts payable payments by comparing lists of invoices to be paid with suppliers' statements. Internal check is something about which an organization is well-advised to seek the guidance of a professional auditor when setting up its internal procedural policies.

In reporting to itself, to its governing body and to the General Membership to whom the governing body are responsible, management makes use of certain financial statements which I have listed below in what I feel are descending order of importance:

(1) The Budget: an accurate listing of careful estimates of revenue and expense amounts anticipated. When approved by the governing body, the budget constitutes authority for management to carry out a given program of activities at an approved level of expenditure.

(2) The Revenue and Expenditure Statement: Prepared on a month-to-month basis, in the case of a theatre presenting a different production each month, this statement, when directly related to the budget statement, the revenue and expenditure statement tells management two important sets of facts:

- (a) The financial results of operations to date.
- (b) The financial effects of actual operating results as compared with the results called for by the plans of the organization.

(3) The Cash-Flow Forecast: When related to an actual cash-flow statement prepared on a week-to-week basis, the forecast helps to forewarn management of potential banking needs, of expanded fund-raising action required, of lagging collection action, among other possibilities.

(4) The Balance Sheet: Prepared on a comparative month-to-month basis, the balance sheet provides an overall view of the general health of the organization, particularly when compared with projected balance sheets prepared by reference to the budget and cash-flow statements.

As a supplement to the balance sheet it is important to prepare aged schedules of accounts receivable and payable. Debtors respond favourably to business-like regular collection policies; creditors quickly learn to build unrecorded interest amounts into charges to slow-paying customers. Given any sort of responsibility in matters of working-capital-supply, aging accounts quickly indicates where action needs to be taken.

(5) Subsidiary Statements--Departmental: Of these, one of the most important is the daily and weekly box office and attendance record. To be most effective even these should be compared with budgeted statements and attendance-forecasts. Policy must be very rigid with regard to these statements. Daily balancing and re-reporting must be the inflexible rule backed up by prompt weekly summaries.

Some Components of an Adequate Accounting System

In order to produce accurate data leading to the preparation of comprehensive statements and to the satisfaction of other needs listed at the beginning of this discussion, an accounting system requires certain components:

(1) An accurate set of historical records lending themselves easily to the preparation of monthly or even weekly balance sheets and statements of revenue and expenditure. Artistic organizations in general suffer from severe shortages of working capital and so at all times must be in careful control of such funds as they are fortunate enough to possess.

(2) A careful and detailed budget based wherever possible on past performance (i.e., in terms of suppliers' price levels, salary levels, etc.) viewed in the light of present conditions and carefully related on a continuing basis to the historical record of costs and revenues.

(3) A carefully administered purchase order system under which no staff member can incur any liability on behalf of the organization without the knowledge and written approval of his department head. This system not only prevents "panic" buying, but guarantees that at all times the organization is fully aware of the extent of its liabilities.

(4) A carefully worked-out system of internal check under which, by judicious diversification of responsibility among staff, conditions are set up so that

in practice the work of one person tends to check and control the work of another. Professional auditors are highly competent in devising such systems of internal check or in evaluating the effectiveness of existing systems. The approval of your auditor should in any case be sought because if the system is effective your auditor will be able to do less work in arriving at an opinion as to the accuracy of your records. Less work on his part means lower audit fees for the organization.

(5) A strongly defined set of procedural and policy rules concerning the treatment and handling of assets and liabilities. Billings on accounts receivable ought to go out by a certain deadline each month; cash ought to be deposited by a certain time daily; accounts payable ought to be recorded daily and paid as promptly as working capital supply will allow; receipts ought to go out on the same day that payment are received. Rules like these set up easily attainable goals which instill in staff a sense of pride in their work. They also impress those to whom the theatre sells and from whom the theatre buys. If the theatre encounters financial difficulty, suppliers ought to be informed promptly of the nature of the problem and the steps being taken towards its solution. In the main, they will be sympathetic. Their chief interest is to keep their customers in business and buying from them and they will generally go to almost unreasonable lengths in cooperation to avoid embarrassing a responsible customer with a history of fair dealing.

(6) The existence of an outside observer--an auditor--who can comment objectively on performance and policy in the area of financial administration. Such a person is generally able to tell the forest from the trees, has no axe to grind vis-a-vis the continuation or termination of any given practice or policy, and can, since he views the organization at arm's length, assist management greatly in improving procedural conditions.

Now that we have examined the functions of accounting in a professional theatre like Manitoba Theatre Centre or the Crest or Le Theatre du Nouveau Monde, and have discussed the sort of statements the theatre ought to be regularly producing, and the system-components which will tend to make such regular reporting possible and meaningful, perhaps we can go on to the subject of the discussion:

Accounting Attitudes in Theatre. I list these attitudes under ten major headings:

1. Historical Thinking vs. Projected Thinking.
2. Full Public Disclosure of Results.
3. The Treasurer: Catalyst or Watchdog?
4. Unbudgeted Profits and their Disposition.
5. Unbudgeted Losses and their Disposition.
6. Staff Pride in Accomplishment.
7. Fixed Assets: To Write Off or Not To Write Off?
8. Development Costs: To Write Off or Not To Write Off?
9. The Care and Handling of Trust Funds.
10. Classification of Accounts.

In a discussion such as the present one, a personal view is really the only possible view one can give since accounting treatment in an industry like ours, which is really only about ten or twelve years old, varies widely from organization to organization. Consequently the views you will hear must necessarily be those of the speaker. On almost every point there are managers in Canada who could put up effective arguments exactly to the contrary of what I believe. Unfortunately for you those others are not present and you are stuck with my views:

1. I believe firmly in an accounting attitude which turns its attention where I'm going, not where I've been. On a trip I prefer having a route map of the road ahead, not a collection of snapshots of the places I've visited already. I believe that accounting should at all times present management with the most accurate possible forecast of what seasonal results are likely to be, and should record variations from forecast the moment they become known so that remedial action may be taken promptly enough to avert crises.

2. I believe that as a responsible corporate citizen of a community, a theatre should disclose its financial condition and operating results fully and

accurately to all members of the community in which it resides. I believe that the theatre should view its contributing members as Shareholders and should keep them fully and regularly informed through newsletters and copies of audited financial statements of the uses to which their assistance has been put. Corporations whose stock is widely held go so far as to publish in newspapers their financial condition. In a sense, because our mercantile society views the arts with a certain uneasiness, we must be more business-like than is business. If you insist on keeping your affairs a deep, dark secret, don't be surprised if no one rushes to help in time of need. People help those in whom they have confidence. Full public disclosure builds confidence.

3. I believe that the position of Treasurer in most non-profit resident professional theatres is widely misunderstood. In most cases the Treasurer is asked to be a kind of watchdog in financial matters; he is asked to supervise the manner in which the organization records its financial comings and goings, and in other ways duplicate the work of the Administrator. In general, if the Treasurer has to perform this sort of function then the organization is probably in need of a more competent Administrator. I view the Treasurer's position as something far more exciting, productive and important than that of a glorified snoop. I feel that the Treasurer, more than any other single Board or Executive member, ought to be in a position to carry out the political maneuvering necessary at a Board level, to the organization's smooth functioning.

It is his job to interpret the changes in fortune of the organization and to relate them to the emphasis of effort which in a dynamic organization must change from month to month. It is his job to see that if present results continue resources will be available for certain long-sought but long-delayed projects. It is his job to see that, because of unforeseen difficulties, fund-raising sights will have to be raised 20%, and that therefore the Fund Raising Chairman ought to begin now recruiting additional canvassers. It is his job to supervise the continuing and essentially healthy lobbying which must go on in the case of grant-giving bodies so that these bodies are kept constantly abreast of the organization's aspirations, achievements and needs. Surely this sort of role is more exciting than the other and infinitely more productive. Incompetent administrators ought to be fired--not improved. A theatre has no time for training programs at the top level of management. I include this point because the education of governing bodies is a continuing

responsibility of theatre management. Unless one has a point of view, it becomes difficult to communicate same, let's say, to a new Treasurer.

4. I believe that a dynamic theatre organization ought to have on hand at all times a stock of Projects-We-Would-Like-To-Do-If-Only . . . When an unbudgeted profit of any consequence comes along it ought to be used to finance one of these projects.

5. It may seem irresponsible but I believe that an unbudgeted loss ought to be met out of Fund-Raising, not out of budget-cutting on succeeding activities. The moment a theatre tries to get out of difficulties by cost-cutting, that theatre is in real trouble. The time to spend money, in Tyrone Guthrie's phrase "like water--carefully" is when you are in financial difficulty. People go to the theatre, among other reasons, to have a share in some form of success. They simply will not buy poverty.

6. The tasks assigned to staff, particularly junior staff, must be so arranged that there is a beginning, middle and end to their work each day, week and month, so that they can learn to take pride in doing something more quickly, more accurately, more comprehensively than they did it before. This means that people must be given definite tasks to do, tasks which they can bring to a successful conclusion in a reasonable time. Nothing is more frustrating than a job which is apparently never completed.

7. I believe that management ought to be completely conservative in the recording of non-liquid assets--buildings, equipment and the like. They should be recorded at value of \$1.00 on the balance sheet, because to do otherwise presents an unwarranted picture of health. Current assets are the only assets of interest in managing a theatre. Recording anything else simply obscures the view of the organization's true position. In order to accomplish this I feel a theatre ought to have two separate budgets each year; one covering operational expenditures, the other covering capital expenditures.

8. I believe that development costs on an original play, because they are so much higher than royalties, constitute the costs of acquiring something that is very similar to a capital asset, and that such costs, in order to avoid inhibiting management ought to be charged to the capital expenditures budget.

9. I believe that Trust Funds such as governmental grants, season ticket revenue received in advance and so forth ought to be deposited in Trust Bank Accounts and released for general use as they are earned. To follow this course means to avoid postponing financial crises, to deal in a responsible manner with money which, at time of receipt, is not in fact yours to dispose of as you wish.

Unfortunately, this system of fund administration is all-too-rarely encountered, which is a great pity. Financial irresponsibility at the top level has a way of infecting those at subordinate levels.

10. Last, I believe it is about time we in the theatre sat down and agreed on a standard classification and nomenclature for income and expense accounts. At the present time it is not generally agreed as to what constitutes a running cost, what an overhead costs. To some, deficit means not loss after application of subsidy to others, gross loss before application of subsidies. There is a lot of large talk going on at the moment about stimulation of interchange of productions. Before we begin talking costs on these things, I feel we'd all be well advised to agree (a) to talk the same language and (b) exactly what the language is to be.

I thank you all for your patience and hope you will examine the sample statements attached for your information.

APPENDIX D

MANAGEMENT ATTITUDES IN THEATRE - A PERSONAL VIEW

APPENDIX D

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by Tom B. Hendry

Henry Comor, a few years ago, repeated to me the three golden rules of theatre management. The rules had been given to him years before by a successful, old theatre manager in Britain. According to this gentleman, via Henry Comor, if you want a theatre to succeed you must observe three rules:

1. The Theatre must be clean and tidy.
2. The actors must speak loudly enough to be heard, and there must be enough light so that the audience can see properly.
3. The manager must be present at every performance.

If I could feel confident that you have absorbed these maxims, I could end this discussion right now because in a way all of the considerations with which management has to deal in the theatre eventually boil down to not much more than:

1. The theatre must be clean and tidy.
2. The actors must speak loudly enough to be heard, and there must be enough light so that the audience can see properly.
3. The manager must be present at every performance.

You will note that none of the golden rules concerns itself with artistic matters of great moment, and this brings us immediately to the first of the management attitudes I wish to discuss, the attitude of management towards artistic leadership in the theatre. It is like a poem written on a typewriter so enormous that you must hire one or two people to push each key. But it

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is the artistic director who says which keys to push. It is a strange vehicle for the personal statement of a view of life, a very complex apparatus for what is essentially a simple task. Many weeks in Winnipeg I signed as many as forty pay checks. When things were progressing correctly I felt that all forty persons had one great thing in common: We were all doing our best to do as few things as possible which would prevent our audience from seeing and appreciating the program which, for that particular year, constituted that particular portion of a lifelong and continuing statement by our artistic director.

I deliberately put the above statement in the negative - I said when things went right we were creating the least number of obstructions, because I assumed on the part of those with whom I was fortunate enough to work a basic conscious desire to do those things which would encourage our audience to come and see our work. I always assumed that if people were aware of what was required of them they would naturally do what was required of them. I have from time to time met people who, though they knew they ought to do this, did that. There are rare, and the generally do not create a problem for long, because they generally do not last very long.

No, I worried always about the things which were left undone out of ignorance, out of lack of imagination, out of lack of consideration.

To me, getting an audience to come to a theatre and enjoy themselves is exactly like entering into a love affair with a shy, lovely lady. In both cases, you have to make it as easy as possible for that which you wish to have happen to come about. If the cashier is anything but pleasant to a customer, then that cashier has needlessly complicated the jobs of actor, director and designer because instead of coming to the play in a receptive, open, easy frame of mind, the customer begins his evening's theatre experience in a mood of resentment.

If there are paper cups and cigarette butts scattered about the lobby, if things look slipshod and shoddy, then it would be a very charitable customer indeed who would not assume that perhaps the play might turn out to be slipshod and shoddy too.

If the decorations in the lobby - let's say display of design drawings or posters - are pinned or scotch-taped or thumb tacked in place instead of being properly framed and hung, then the customer has a right to an unconscious assumption that he will see on stage something that has also been put together with pins, scotch tape and thumb tacks.

If a customer is charged an outrageous price for a soft drink in the lobby, he is right to feel that perhaps the play is a swindle too. If he is handed a dull, unimaginative programme, he is not being unreasonable in expecting a dull, unimaginative production. If he goes to the washroom and finds there is no soap in the dispenser, no towels in the towel rack and no toilet paper in the john, why should he assume that the production he will see does not represent something for which someone forgot to obtain the correct cast, forgot to design the right costumes, forgot to rehearse the cast properly.

It is entirely possible to go to the theatres which have tastelessly decorated lobbies filled with inadequate ashtrays slopping over with paper cups which held over-priced allegedly orange or grape slop, theatres whose box office staff snarls at you, whose ticket-takers glower, whose ushers provide the bare minimum in attention, whose programmes resemble badly-done funeral invitations, whose washrooms are untidy and badly-supplied, whose seats are dusty and floors dirty. I have spent evenings in such theatres and, as a matter of fact, I have seen wonderful productions, which overcame the liability of their surroundings. But why should the artists have to begin with all these strikes against them? Cheerful, tasteful paint costs the same as junk, ashtrays and trash containers of good design are relatively cheap, towels, soap and toilet paper do not cost very much. Good manners cost nothing. Bad manners, in any theatre where I am manager, will cost a person, on the second occasion on which he exhibits same, his job.

I don't want to give the impression that I am some sort of martinet or that I am suggesting that a good administrator ought to behave like Captain Bligh. On the contrary, the hardest task which faces any administrator, any management is the assembly of a staff who have the God-given ability to work happily together and without damaging friction. There is a certain kind of friction which is entirely healthy, a creative abrasiveness which results from the careful promotion of a spirit of departmental identity within a staff. But I will talk about this later, because I am leading myself off the topic of Management Attitude Towards Artistic Leadership.

I have said, in a negative statement, that it is the duty of management - from administrator to janitor - to create as few errors and omissions as are reasonably possible in their dealings with the public. They must believe passionately that the theatre must be neat and tidy.

Believe me, a theatre management with this attitude will extend the exercise of its attitude into every area of its operation. It will not allow badly-designed posters, TV slides or newspapers ads to create an incorrect impression of what the theatre's work is like. It will not allow badly-briefed actors to proceed to radio, television and press interviews under their own steam. In brief, the basic respect the management has for the theatre and for the audience it wishes to attract will inform and illuminate all its dealings with the public.

This respect is not a manufactured thing and can only proceed from one source--a basic and passionate belief in the worth of the artistic statement the theatre is making. I am not saying that to succeed management must love the artistic director or his work. But it is a relationship very close to the blissful state because it implies utter trust, endless patience and absolute forgiveness. Artistic directors are not always right in what they do. It takes something very close to love on the part of a staff to remain confident, cheerful and enthusiastic during a period when the artistic director is out of tune with his audience, his actors or his directors and the result is a play which fails or even a series of plays which fail.

I personally will not work with an artistic director unless I can sense in that artistic director the embodiment of an artistic statement with which I can fully agree, and which I personally can feel the world, or Canada, or Ontario, or Toronto ought not to be doing without. I know only too well the fearsome demands that will be made, especially in the formative years, on me and my staff to enter into a professional relationship which does not have at its centre this, for me, necessary ingredient.

I am sure it is a criticism of my own lack of sensitivity and not of any lack on the part of those professional colleagues of mine who, bless them, have been kind and generous enough to invite me to work with them, but for whom and with whom I felt I could not work fully and productively on a long-term basis. I say long-term basis because nothing of any real lasting value gets done in a theatre in less than five years. As I say, it is probably a lack of sensitivity in those artistic directors who have not yet asked me to work with them.

What I am saying in all these cloudy vaporizings is that a theatre whose management attitudes are not founded upon an absolute faith in the theatre's artistic direction is in mortal danger. Conversely, a theatre which believes in its

artistic direction is free to get on with the job of doing the best possible work for the largest possible audience.

Artistic directors are a strange breed. You cannot change them, and you cannot, if they have real integrity as artists, influence them to any great extent.

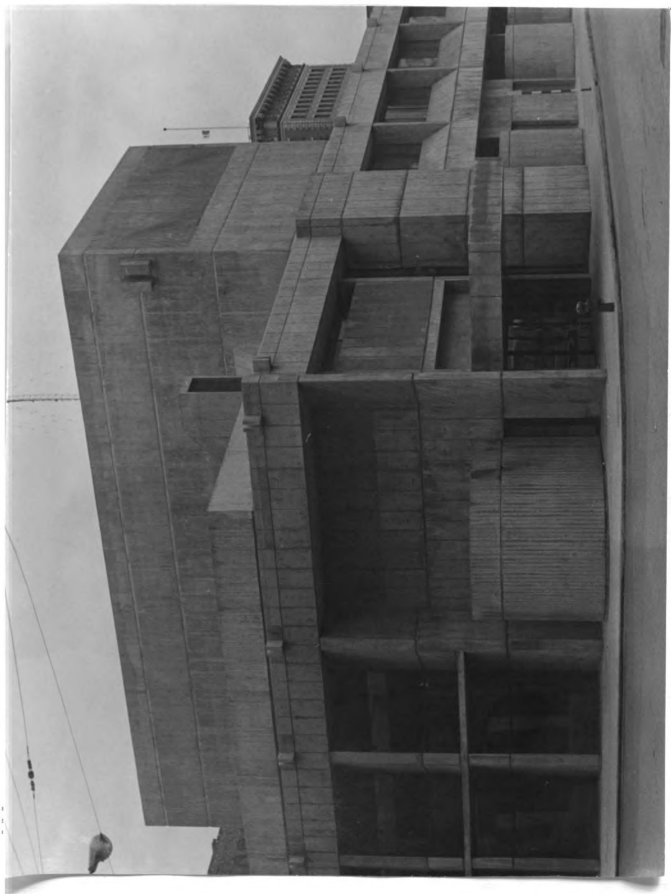
They are artists with the strengths and weaknesses of artists which means that they combine an unshakeable faith in the inner voice which dictates their artistic decisions, with, paradoxically enough in many cases, a deep-seated, very humble, questioning, distrustful attitude towards their own motivations, actions and attitudes. This secure-insecure outlook is nothing new to anyone who has had anything to do with artists, and an artistic director, if he is nothing else, must be an artist first and foremost. You cannot change them, and you cannot really influence them, so I suggest you select the artistic director you plan to work with with great care. Those of you who are only now entering the field of our work will not have to face up to this problem until you have proved yourself in subordinate positions as staff members, but if you do well, and have the right qualities, it will come up some day. When it does, I hope you will remember what I have said and will consider your answer very carefully indeed.

APPENDIX E

PHOTOGRAPHS

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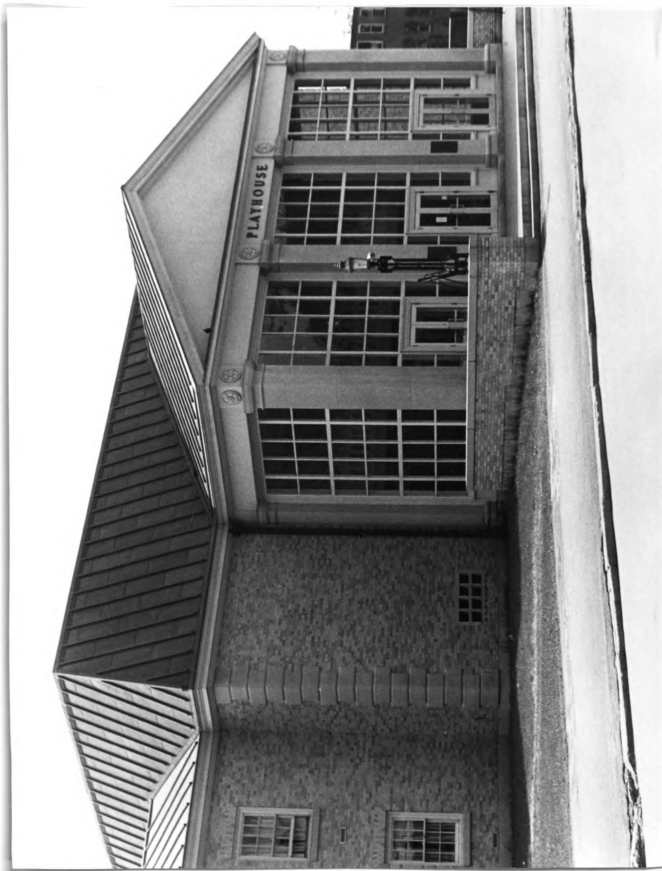




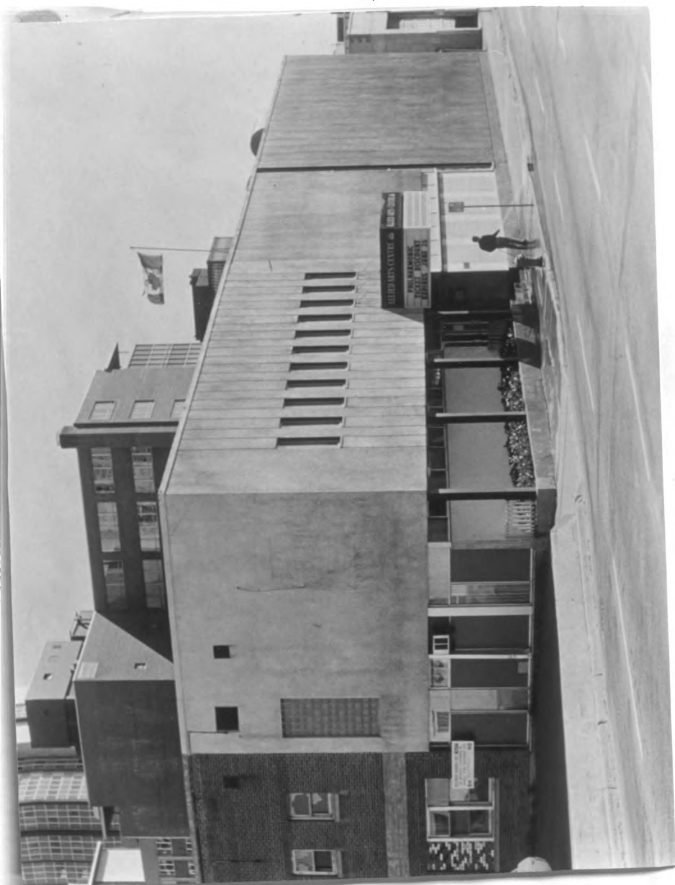


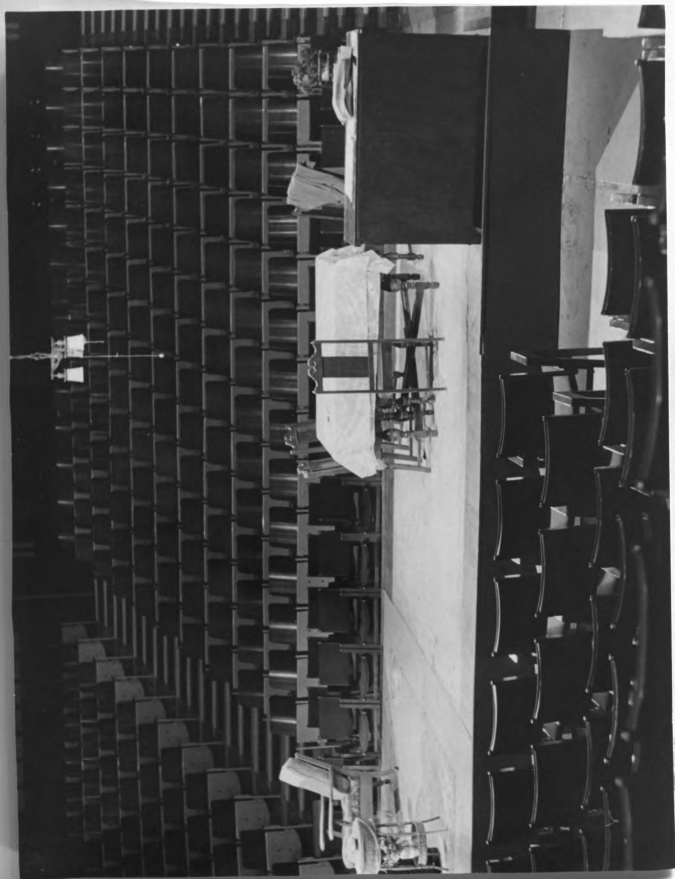












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