PARTICIPATION THEATRE

FOR CHILD AUDIENCES IN CANADA

THEORY AND PRACTICE

1965 - 1975

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CANADIAN PARTICIPATION THEATRE FOR CHILD AUDIENCES

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ABSTRACT

Participation Theatre allows young audiences to participate actively in the action of a play. Developed in Britain in the 1950s, it took root in Canada in 1965, and expanded rapidly, carrying with it a wave of new companies who now form the basis of a professional theatre for children. A British outgrowth of Participation Theatre, the didactic Theatre-in-Education has only recently appeared in Canada. This study traces the history and background of the two forms of Participation Theatre in Canada, examines the British theories and practices upon which it is based, and illustrates their application by three diverse Canadian companies: Studio Lab Theatre Foundation and Young People's Theatre, of Toronto, and Vancouver's Playhouse Holiday, which introduced Theatre-in-Education to Canada in its 1972-73 season. Participation Theatre is considered to have valid objectives, effective techniques and considerable promise, which can be realized if proper research and training are provided.

RESUME

Le Théâtre de Participation permet au public jeune de participer activement au déroulement de la pièce. Ayant commencé en Grande Bretagne pendant les années cinquante il prit racine au Canada en 1965 et s'est développé rapidement emportant avec lui une vague de nouvelles compagnies qui forment maintenant la base du théâtre profesionnel pour enfants. Le Théâtre-dans-l'Education, qui est une branche didactique du Théâtre de Participation anglais, n'est que récemment apparu au Canada. Cette étude retrace l'histoire des deux formes du Théâtre de Participation canadien et analyse les théories et les pratiques anglaises sur lesquelles cette forme de théâtre est basée et illustre son utilisation dans trois compagnies différents, notamment le Studio Lab Theatre Foundation et le Young People's Theatre, de Toronto, et le Playhouse Holiday de Vancouver, qui ont introduit le Théâtre-dans-l'Education au Canada pendant la saison 1972-1973. Le Théâtre de Participation est considéré comme ayant des objectifs valables, des techniques efficaces et des possibilités d'avenir qui ne peuvent être realisés sans recherches et formations adéquates.

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I wish to express my sincere and deep appreciation to Dr. John Ripley, my advisor, for his faith, patience, advice and guidance.

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INTRODUCTION

Although participation theatre is a comparatively new phenomenon in Canada, several million Anglophone school-children have been entertained by this austere and novel form of theatre over the past decade. Participation theatre differs from the more traditional proscenium form in that the audience is encouraged to become actively involved in the development of the story.

A participation play is usually performed during school hours in a gymnasium, with some 200 children from closely related grade levels, seated around three or four sides of a small playing area. There is rarely more scenery than a few small platforms, and usually no lighting. The four actors tour with only their costumes, and each in his time plays many parts, occasionally assisted by temporary actors from the audience. During the course of the play children are asked advice, invited to help cast a spell, or to warn their hero if danger comes. Some might be asked to volunteer for a search party, or to join in a rain dance. The varieties of participation are limited only by the playwright's imagination. The performance usually lasts fifty minutes and is followed by a question period in which the actors are inevitably requested to explain the mysteries of their craft.

While participation theatre expanded rapidly in Canada from 1965 to 1972 and found wide acceptance within the school systems of many provinces, as yet no comprehensive study has been written. Despite the lack of organized material, and because of the scope of the activity, it was felt that some treatment of the phenomenon, however tentative, would provide a useful perspective on its achievements and point the way for further work.

The study attempts (1) to outline the historical factors leading to the appearance of professional participation theatre in 1965, and to trace its rapid growth during the following decade; (2) to examine the theory and methods of its British inventor, Brian Way, his mentor Peter Slade, and the subsequent English experiments in Theatre-in-Education; and their influence upon Canadian participation theatre; (3) to present a descriptive and critical study of three major Canadian participation companies: the artistically-oriented Studio Lab Theatre Foundation of Toronto, Young People's Theatre, also of Toronto, with its emphasis on efficiency, organization and growth, and Playhouse Holiday of Vancouver, whose Theatre-in-Education experiments may have set a new direction for participation theatre in Canada; and (4) to offer some suggestions for future development.

As yet no book has appeared on theatre for children in Canada, and traditional research sources are almost non-existent. Sister Theresa MacKinnon's 1974 doctoral dissertation, Theatre for Young Audiences in Canada, proved useful for much of the historical material. In order to supplement her data and to reconstruct the evolution of the aims, methods and productions of the participation theatre companies, the researcher had to gather, analyze and reconcile newspaper reviews, reports, articles, speeches, newsletters, promotional material, scripts, interviews and correspondence.

While the occasional newspaper review provided insight into the style and effect of particular productions, many plays were not reviewed and criticism, such as there was, was uninformed as to the nature, objectives and constraints of theatre for children.

Few participation plays are as yet published and producers are understandably reluctant to let manuscripts out of their hands. Much persuasion was required to obtain key examples of the three companies' work. Because of the central importance of the audience's role in this form of theatre, a script can only suggest the participation expected, and may only be analysed fairly if a performance has been seen.

The lack of critical analysis of participation theatre

in Canada posed the major problem faced by the study. Because of the limitations of published material, considerable importance had to be placed on personal interviews. In the course of a year, numerous conversations were held with directors, performers, administrators and educational authorities in order to furnish a broad base for the study. Interviews with those directly involved in companies under study threw much light on current plans and methods, but practice may differ substantially from policy, and recollections of past purposes and productions are subject to the vagaries of memory and personal idiosyncrasy.

A number of in-school and in-theatre productions were observed, including those of Young People's Theatre and Studio Lab Theatre Foundation. Due to a lack of research funds, it was not possible to visit Holiday Playhouse and their theories and practice had to be reconstructed from correspondence, a close examination of published material, and telephone interviews. Because of the originality and importance of their Theatre-in-Education program, it was felt, the company could not reasonably be excluded from any study of participation theatre in Canada.

Traditional theatre productions are mentioned only when they relate to the participation theatre activities of

the major companies. While the names and description of a number of recent or short-lived companies have been omitted, the trends they represent have been discussed. Analysis of plays and Theatre-in-Education scenarios have been included only to the extent that they illustrate the particular participation approaches of the three theatres presented.

This study is in no way intended to be definitive. It simply attempts to make available a tentative history of the participation movement in Canada, some analysis of the origins and present character of its philosophy and methodology, and their realization in practice by three dedicated but essentially different companies. A more comprehensive and authoritative treatment awaits further documentation and the refined perspective only time can bring.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the first half of this century almost every adult Canadian took part or watched his classmates in a school play. If he came from the middle class, he may also have been taken to an occasional production of Peter Pan or Toad of Toad Hall by one of several hundred amateur Little Theatres which sprang up in Canadian cities and towns from the twenties to the fifties. He almost certainly never saw a professionally acted play for children.

The first professional theatre for young audiences in English Canada, Holiday Theatre, was started in 1953 to tour the elementary schools of British Columbia, and remained for over a decade the only professional company in this field. In the mid-sixties, however, a series of Anglophone companies appeared from Vancouver to Montreal, each in some way devoted to bringing theatre to young audiences. A total of at least eighteen groups were performing by 1974.

Five historical factors contributed to this growth.

1. The establishment of a professional adult theatre in Canada.

2. The example of a highly evolved theory and practice of developmental drama and professional theatre for children in England.

3. The formation of a national organization to further the objectives of developmental drama and professional theatre

for children in Canada.

4. A growing recognition by provincial educational authorities of the role of drama and theatre in the development of the child.

5. The creation at the federal and provincial level of a number of funding agencies interested in the growth of theatre.

Prior to the arrival of television in September 1952, adult professional theatre in Canada was confined to brief seasons of summer stock and occasional productions organized for limited urban engagements and short provincial tours. The Stratford Summer Shakespeare Festival, established in central Ontario in 1953, offered Canadian actors their first international recognition, and led to the formation of a permanent winter touring company, the Canadian Players, in 1954.[1] The same year, a fashionable summer stock company successfully attempted a professional winter season; under the name The Crest, it became Toronto's permanent repertory company.

When the Canada Council was established in 1957, sizable grants became available to support professional theatre companies. The Manitoba Theatre Centre, established in 1958 in Winnipeg, was the first of a number of regional theatre centres across Canada to benefit.

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[1]Nathan Cohen, "Professional Theatre in English Canada," Theatre Year Book, 1965-1966, Stage in Canada 3, No. 8A, pp. 6-10.

Graduates of the new National Theatre School (founded in 1960 with Canada Council support) quickly found employment in new regional theatres in Vancouver, Winnipeg and Halifax, at festivals such as Stratford and Niagara-on-the-Lake, and in the flourishing television drama studios in Toronto. By the mid-sixties, one could speak of a professional adult theatre in and across Canada.

Canadian theatregoers were no longer dependent on touring companies from New York and London; and regular pilgrimages to Broadway became less of a cultural necessity. Confidence in Canada's ability to create viable productions and companies led audience, artist and patron to try new formulas. To an emerging professional theatre for children, the adult theatre contributed actors, producers, directors, designers, technicians and playwrights. But most of all, it brought the courage to try.

While the Canadian professional adult theatre was developing a climate of confidence and a pool of talent, a movement was underway in England which was to provide both a theoretical basis and a practical model for a professional theatre for child audiences.

In 1954, Peter Slade's Child Drama appeared with profound influence upon drama in education and theatre for children not only in Britain, but in Canada and throughout the

English speaking world. Although he questioned the value of theatre for elementary school audiences, Slade advocated the use of classroom drama as a process in the education and development of young children, and outlined a practical program for its inclusion in the school system.

At the same time, a younger associate of Slade's, Brian Way, developed a form of participation theatre designed to appeal to young audiences at various age levels. Its effectiveness was quickly demonstrated during extensive tours of British schools. In addition to founding his own Theatre Centre in London in 1954 to experiment with these new participation techniques, Way edited Slade's book and soon proved an eloquent spokesman for drama in education.

In 1955, the Canadian Dominion Drama Festival[1] organized the first of two Children's Theatre Conferences to explore the ideas presented in Slade's Child Drama. The second Conference in 1958 decided to invite Slade to Canada. Although he was unable to make the trip, he recommended that Brian Way be invited; and in 1958 Way made the first of a series of visits which were to influence the course of theatre for children in Canada, and

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[1] In pre-professional days, the DDF had been the dominant force in amateur theatre since its organization in 1932. In the 1950's it began to pursue more specialized roles, among them to encourage children's theatre.

to lay the basis for its rapid professional development.

Way's visit was financed by the Canada Council and began in early May 1958 with demonstrations, lectures and workshops in the framework of the Dominion Drama Festival Theatre Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia.[1]

After meeting with Canada Council officers in Ottawa, Way lectured and ran workshops for amateur children's theatre groups and educational institutions in Winnipeg, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, Vancouver and Victoria during an intensive six week western tour, which included twelve evening rehearsals of Pinocchio for Edmonton Children's Theatre group of the Recreation Department.

Following two weeks of talks in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal,[2] Way spent a further six weeks giving workshops and lectures in the Atlantic provinces, including three concurrent five-week drama courses for primary and secondary school teachers and adult actors. At Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia, Way gave a ten-day summer school course for directors and a course on child and teenage drama.

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[1] Brian Way, "Report to Canada Council" (Ottawa: Canada Council, September 15, 1958), pp. 1-2.

[2] Toronto talks were held with DDF officials; Ottawa talks involved members of Ottawa Little Theatre; Montreal discussions with the City Parks Commissioner included a tour of playgrounds.

As a result of this intensive tour "a great deal of interest and enthusiasm was aroused and several groups and individuals seemed to be stimulated to wish to take some sort of immediate and future action."[1] Among the concrete results were invitations to Way to return to offer intensive training courses in the summer of 1959 at Vancouver, Victoria, and at the subsequent Dominion Drama Festival Theatre Conference held in Toronto in 1959.

Following his 1959 tour, Way became a regular visitor to Canada and a number of his associates came here to teach or to direct theatre companies, while several Canadians went to his Theatre Centre to study and work.[2]

The success of the Dominion Drama Festival theatre conferences in bringing Way to the attention of Canadian children's theatre groups indirectly led to the formation of the Canadian Child Drama Association (CCDA) in 1962. "The association came about," writes John Ross,

> through the efforts of a group of children's drama enthusiasts, all members of the Ottawa Little Theatre, who formed an organization in 1960 to foster children's drama activities in Ottawa. The next year, at a meeting held in Montreal with other interested persons it was

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[1] Way, "Report to Canada Council," p. 3.

[2] Richard Courtney, Presidential Address, presented at CCYDA Conference, Hamilton, 1970, p. 2.

> decided to expand the organization in an attempt to give it national scope. Thus in Winnipeg, in 1962, the Canadian Child Drama Association was formed.
>
> In 1966, the name was changed to the Canadian Child and Youth Drama Association (CCYDA). At this time there were two provincial branches, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland, and six city branches, Halifax, Ottawa, Toronto, London, Edmonton and Vancouver . . . By 1968 there were five hundred sixteen members . . .[1]

The organization publishes Canada's only national newsletter on theatre for children, hosts an annual conference in a different province each year and imports distinguished speakers from England and the United States. It establishes committees to study a variety of subjects, organizes lobbying with educational authorities, and submits briefs to federal agencies and commissions.

As the CCYDA grew more powerful, its dedication to participation theatre became more marked. In 1968, Ross points out, "Mrs. Palo-Heimo, national president of the CCYDA, . . . stated that the association would sanction only those theatre groups which were using the Brian Way production concept."[2] However, scattered proscenium productions in professional

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[1] John Richard Ross, "Preliminary Study of the Historical Background, Educational Philosophy, and Future Development of Drama in Education in Canada," M.A. Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1968, p. 140.

[2] Ibid., p. 143.

theatres and amateur groups continued.

Two international events, instigated or sponsored by the Association, demonstrate vividly its commitment to the participation theatre form.

Polly Hill, one of the original and most active members of the Association, its vice-president and organizer of the first CCYDA conference (Kitchener, Ontario, 1963) drew on the resources of the Association when she conceived the idea of the Children's Creative Centre at Expo '67. It is interesting that the Children's Creative Centre presented a Slade-Way approach as its image.

The Children's Creative Centre was a series of large bright rooms surrounding an imaginative open air playground with one-way mirrors and loudspeakers where adults and educators could observe the model programs in Art, Music, Nursery Activities, and Creative Drama in the various rooms. Its purpose was to act as "a catalyst for education for creativity."[1] In the creative drama studio, a group of Canada's 'drama specialists' took turns at demonstrating their techniques,

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[1]Polly Hill, Children's Creative Centre (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967), p. 48.

> . . . in a setting where doing is the thing, not performing, where the child's whole body responds to sounds, silence, music, lights, words, touch, odours, and objects and where concentration can carry them anywhere in or out of this world.[1]

Expo officials were able to report that over 26,000 children had participated in the Centre, and that the Centre had attracted the attention of a number of educators from Canada and abroad.[2]

Within two years of its foundation, the CCYDA sought membership in the newly formed Association Internationale du Théâtre pour l'Enfance et la Jeunesse (ASSITEJ) with headquarters in Paris. With Canada Council travel agents, CCYDA representatives soon began to play an influential role in the Executive Council of the International organization.[3] By 1969, a Canadian centre of ASSITEJ had been established under the direction of Joyce Doolittle at the Drama Department of the University of Calgary.[4]

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[1]Hill, op. cit., p. 4.

[2]Ross, op. cit., p. 134.

[3]CCYDA, "A Short History of CCYDA 1958-1968," CCYDA National Newsletter (Fall 1970), 5.

[4]CCYDA, National Newsletter (April 1974), p. 34/ ASSITEJ.

The Association became co-host of the 1972 biennial ASSITEJ International Children's Theatre Congress in Montreal and Albany, New York. English Canada showcased one traditional proscenium production and two participation plays at the congress. Delegates who had seen the spectaculars by the Moscow Central Children's Theatre, the Minneapolis Central Children's Theatre, and the highly imaginative proscenium presentation by the Ion Creanga Theatre of Bucharest, puzzled over low budget theatre presentations of Christopher Newton's Where Are You When We Need You, Simon Frazer? by Playhouse Holiday, Eric Nicoll's participation play The Clam Made a Face by Young People's Theatre, and the Globe's production of their collectively written Shakespeare's Women.[1]

Joyce Doolittle notes the international reaction to the Canadian presence: "'Why,' asked one European, 'did English Canada choose to show such slight pieces?' and she concludes, "perhaps because that is what English Canada has to offer at present. One can be pleased that the companies chosen represented three of the longest-lived and most committed theatres for children in the country, and two of the three featured Canadian scripts, while at the same time .

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[1]Doolittle, "The ASSITEJ Assembly and its Implications," The Stage in Canada, 7, No. 2 (1972), pp. 2-3.

wishing that at least one of the three works might have been more compelling."[1]

In order for Canadian professional participation theatre to become viable, the importance of theatre had to be accepted by educational authorities, and sufficient drama had to be done at the classroom level to make the theatre experience meaningful for children.

By 1967, drama and 'theatre arts' were generally accepted as curriculum subjects at the secondary level by Departments of Education across Canada. However, drama was available to elementary school children only on an extra-curricular basis.[2] Apart from teachers' workshops and isolated summer courses, there was no formal training available at the university or college level.

The subsequent three years witnessed a considerable acceleration of developments in several areas and Courtney was able to claim in 1970 that there is "a remarkable development in creative drama and a staggering increase in the levels of training."[3]

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[1] Doolittle, op. cit., p. 3.

[2] CCYDA, "Brief to Canada Council" (Toronto: CCYDA, November 24, 1967), p. 2.

[3] Courtney, "CCYDA Presidential Address 1970," op. cit., pp. 2-3.

In 1970, the Ontario Department of Education appointed a full time drama supervisor, Helen Dunlop, and extended its 1962 Theatre Arts program to include a heavy emphasis on developmental drama in elementary schools both as a separate course, and as a method of teaching.[1] That same year, CCYDA arranged to aid the Nova Scotia Department of Education to draw up curriculum guides in which "drama is seen as an integral part of education."[2] The 1970 curriculum guide for drama in Alberta recommends drama as a teaching method for elementary grades, and as an associate curriculum director notes, "most of the teachers who incorporate drama have taken university courses which stress creative drama."[3] In British Columbia, a number of school boards had appointed school district drama supervisors and Quebec, at the suggestion of the Rioux Commission, began the preparation of a drama curriculum.

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[1]Ontario Department of Education, Dramatic Arts - Kindergarten to Grade 13 (Toronto: Ontario Dept. of Education, 1970), p. 3.

[2]Letter from Janet Carney, Consultant, English Language Arts, Department of Education, Halifax, N.S., June 5, 1975.

[3]M. F. Thorton, Associate Director of Curriculum, Alberta Department of Education, Edmonton, Alta., June 13, 1975.

The stepped up activities between 1967 and 1970 resulted in the opening of teacher training programs at universities in Victoria, Edmonton, Calgary, Halifax (Dalhousie) and Windsor, while courses and programs reached the planning stage at McGill, Ottawa, Queens and McMaster.[1]

The following year, 1971, saw the formation of the Council of Drama in Education (CODE) by a group of 175 Ontario teachers,[2] and Quebec approved Developmental Drama in both Catholic and Protestant School Commissions,[3] leading to the formation, three years later, of the Association of Drama Educators of Quebec (ADEQ). Both associations publish newsletters and run workshops for teachers. Similar organizations sprang up in other provinces, among them the Western Association of Drama Educators (WADE), and the Association of British Columbia Drama Educators (ABCDE).

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[1] Courtney, "An Open Presidential Letter to All Members," CCYDA Newsletter (April 1970), p. 3.

[2] Esmé Crampton, Drama Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 28.

[3] Ministry of Education, Curriculum for Elementary Schools, Arts: Expression Through Drama (Quebec: Ministry of Education, 1971).

[4] ADEQ Newsletter, 1-2 (November 1974).

In general, provincial education departments encourage drama "as a teaching method across the total curriculum"[1] and as yet no statistical surveys have been made to determine the extent of its penetration among the teaching community. Drama in education has the characteristics of a movement with advocates talking in terms of "positive, reinforcing guidance" and "commitment"[2] leading "towards a more humane society and a truly human destiny."[3] The emotional spirit of the day was captured by CCYDA president Richard Courtney in closing his annual address to the Association in 1970. "We have five aims before us," he declared:

> 1. the day when every Canadian child has play and creative drama as part of his school day;
> 2. the day when every Canadian child can see, and participate in, first-rate theatre-for-young audiences;
> 3. the day when every school has a drama trained teacher, every school board has a drama supervisor, and every province has a drama advisor;
> 4. the day when every student has the opportunity to pursue dramatic activity and role-playing in his college or university;
> 5. and the day when all human beings treat others as human beings.[4]

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[1] Letter from Janet Carney, op. cit.

[2] Fabian Lemieux, "President's Report," Council of Drama in Education, Classroom Ideas and Sanity Savers (1975), 1-3.

[3] Courtney, "CCYDA Presidential Address 1970," op. cit., 5-6.

[4] Ibid.

The rapid expansion of drama activities implied the commitment of substantial financial resources to these programs. Money came from:

a. The school boards and Departments of Education;
b. Federal government employment programs and the Canada Council;
c. Provincial arts council grants and private sources.

A. Educational Funding

While some participation theatre companies have experimented with charging individual pupils fifty or seventy-five cents to see an in-school production, in general the companies demand a fixed fee (often $150 to $400) for a visit to a school, and the pupils are admitted free. The school boards allocate funds to the schools for these activities on a per-student basis, which usually means that schools with low enrollments cannot afford these activities:[1]

> The onus is on boards and schools to provide a fair balance of the arts in their programs. However, the current financial realities of provincial spending ceilings may have forestalled significant growth in the arts/education field . . .[2]

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[1] "Report to the Ontario Arts Council from the Arts and Education Study Committee" (Toronto: Ontario Arts Council, 1973), p. 41.

[2] Ibid., p. 31.

The school boards turn to provincial education departments and/or arts councils for subsidies or matching grants for their arts programs. In some provinces, Departments of Education prefer to subsidize touring companies so that their fees may be kept acceptably low.[1]

B. Federal Funding

In principle, the Federal Government does not fund artistic programs destined for schools. However, beginning in 1971, the Local Initiatives Program (LIP) of the Department of Manpower and Immigration made it possible for a number of young theatre-for-children advocates to create small companies, and to survive until more permanent funding became available.

Similarly, the Department of the Secretary of State, through its controversial Opportunities for Youth (OFY) program, directed considerable money to theatre projects. According to Joy Coghill, by 1972 there was more money going to theatre in Canada through these programs than through the formal channels of the Canada Council.[2]

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[1] Interview with Michael Thomas, Senior English Supervisor, Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal, March 7, 1975.

[2] Interview with Joy Coghill (former Artistic Director, Playhouse Holiday, Vancouver, B.C.), Montreal, March 14, 1975.

Aside from a 1959 grant to Holiday Theatre in Vancouver, the Canada Council until most recently, excluded direct funding of theatre for young audiences. However, its rapidly increasing support of regional theatres has permitted them to develop extensive (though often traditional) programs for young people. Since March 1975, however, theatres specializing in programs for young people are eligible to receive Canada Council grants if they meet the eligibility requirements of other professional groups:

> To qualify for a grant, a theatre company must still be professional and of high artistic quality, operate on a full-time basis, enjoy a reasonable degree of support in its community, and be financially stable. It must have offered at least one full season of professional theatre.[1]

C. Provincial and Private Funding

Since education is constitutionally under provincial jurisdiction, it is not surprising that provincial arts councils have played a larger role than their federal counterpart in subsidizing theatre companies for children.

For instance, "over the last seven years (1966-73) the Ontario Arts Council has granted approximately $400,000 to high quality drama, music, dance and puppet groups to assist

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[1]Canada Council News Release, March 4, 1975.

them in their school activities."[1] In 1974 alone, their educational performing arts budget was $250,000, 80% of which was devoted to theatre groups.[2] Levels of annual grants range from about $1,500 for a beginning group to about $10,000 or $12,000 for a well-established one. In many cases the grant can be considered "a hidden subsidy which enables the theatre fee to remain constant as the costs go up so that the schools can still buy it."[3]

Of course, there is never enough money, and enterprising theatre directors are constantly seeking new sources of funds--city councils, park departments, foundations, and private patrons--to meet inflating costs and to attract suitable actors.

THEATRES

The development of professional participation theatre for children follows that of the adult theatre and can be seen

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[1] "Report to the Ontario Arts Council from the Arts and Education Study Committee" (Toronto: Ontario Arts Council, 1973), p. 41.

[2] Interview with Linda Zwicker, Arts/Education Officer, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto, May 6, 1975.

[3] Ibid.

to fall into three distinct phases: the emergence of professional theatre for children (1953-64); the formation of participation theatre companies (1964-71); and the development of Canadian theatre (1971 to the present).

The Emergence of Professional Theatre for Children (1953-64)

In the Fall of 1953, a group of seven theatre professionals in Vancouver, headed by Joy Coghill, founded Canada's first professional theatre for children, the Holiday Theatre. The original objectives of the company were remarkably similar to those of Brian Way's Theatre Centre (which was not founded until the following year):

> 1. To contribute to the cultural and educational growth of the children of British Columbia, by providing a live theatre of the highest calibre; acted, written, and produced by professional adults especially for the five to twelve year age group.
>
> 2. To provide such theatre to children at a price within their financial ability to pay and at locations mutually convenient.
>
> 3. To develop and train a discriminating audience who would, in future years, demand and support live professional theatres in the province.
>
> 4. To help in the training of young Canadian theatre artists.
>
> 5. To provide employment for talented Canadian artists and technicians.

6. To experiment with creative drama classes for children, i.e., drama by children for creative expression.[1]

The artistic director, Joy Coghill, a University of British Columbia graduate, had just returned from the Chicago Art Institute's Goodman Theatre School, where she had worked closely with Charlotte Chorpenning, whose approach to children's theatre was adopted as the basis for the Holiday Theatre style.

Chorpenning was the most prominent American writer of plays for children during the period from 1931 to 1955.[2] Trained in George Pierce Baker's famous Harvard "Workshop 47", which produced a number of famous American dramatists, she made it possible to talk of 'juvenile dramatic literature'.[3] "She believed that the moral or philosophic meaning of a play belonged in the story and not in the dialogue alone."[4] "Show it, don't tell it," she was often quoted as saying. In her

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[1]Theresa MacKinnon, "Theatre for Young Audiences in Canada," Diss. Univ. of New York 1974, pp. 122-123.

[2]Moses Goldberg, Children's Theatre (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1974), p. 29.

[3]Winnifred Ward, Theatre for Children (Anchorage, Ky.: Children's Theatre Press, 1958), p. 52.

[4]Nellie McCaslin, Theatre for Children in the United States (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1971), p. 92.

many adaptations of fairytales and children's classic stories, she combined an excellent sense of theatrical effect with a deep respect for the underlying truth and moral value of the original.[1] In her plays she sought:

> . . . to give
> Ideals to follow, like a flag unfurled.
> Yea, children are the future of the world.[2]

The first season included two of Chorpenning's plays and an original musical by a Canadian writer, Poppy McKenzie. Over the next decade the emphasis shifted strongly to Canadian plays. Ten original scripts were presented in the first decade, seven of which were musicals by Madge Adelberg and based on traditional fairy-tale themes.[3]

From the outset, the company aimed to tour elementary schools of southern British Columbia and to offer weekend performances for Vancouver children at their home base, the small Frederick Wood Theatre on the UBC campus. With a widening circle of grants from foundations and various government

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[1] Ward, p. 53.

[2] Charlotte Chorpenning, Twenty-One Years With Children's Theatre (Anchorage, Ky.: Children's Theatre Press, 1954), cited in Ward, p. 54.

[3] Cinderella, Red Riding Hood, The Three Bears, Pinocchio, Jack and the Beanstalk, Hansel and Gretel, The Pied Piper.

agencies, the company expanded its touring operations to cover the entire province and found educational support for a program of classical works for high schools. By 1963, their annual audience had grown from 18,000 children to 92,000.[1]

One of the company's initial aims was "to experiment with creative drama classes for children." This activity began in 1956, and expanded throughout the decade.

In 1958, Brian Way visited Vancouver and within a year, Holiday Theatre produced the first participation plays in Canada--Brian Way's The Storytellers and The Stranger. As Joy Coghill, the company's founder and for many years its artistic director, describes him, "Brian Way was a rather special person, an inspiring person, and a person of high ideals, a superb actor, a superb director and teacher, and a superb writer for this particular kind of theatre. The impact of him on our thinking in drama and children's theatre was immense."[2]

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[1] Historical data from Holiday Theatre-Holiday Playhouse and details of expansion between 1953-1969, reprinted in MacKinnon, op. cit., pp. 571-584.

[2] Interview with Joy Coghill, Montreal, March 4, 1975.

The following year, however, the company returned to its all-Canadian policy with emphasis on fairy tales and other children's classic stories. No further participation plays by Brian Way or anyone else appeared in the repertoire until 1966.

In 1958, the first Canadian regional theatre, the Manitoba Theatre Centre, was established in Winnipeg by John Hirsh and Tom Hendry. As with Holiday Theatre, one of their main objectives was to train young audiences, and from their second season onwards they presented elaborate holiday spectacles for children. Over the years, they staged original dramas together with a number of adaptations of fairy tales, in the proscenium style. (MTC became a model for subsequent regional theatres.)[1]

From 1960 to 1971,[2] the MTC offered a variety of activities for children: a theatre school, high school festivals, and elementary and secondary school tours. No participation theatre, however, was included in their programs.

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[1] "Neptune Theatre, a professional repertory company for adults, located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, has presented Christmas shows for children each year since its founding in 1963." MacKinnon, op. cit., p. 352.

[2] These activities were stopped as "the directors, 1972-73, felt that the whole area of educational activities should be the responsibility of a specifically educative group and sponsored by the government." MacKinnon, op. cit., p. 209.

In 1962, Barbara Chilcott, sister of Murray and Donald Davis who started the Crest repertory theatre in Toronto eight years before, launched the Crest Theatre Hour Company to tour the high schools of Toronto and later, Ontario.

Originally funded by the Junior League, Theatre Hour won the support of the Ontario Department of Education, thus assuring the group's financial continuity, and a measure of commitment to theatre by the Department. Productions were, and still are, of plays related to the curriculum. Its purpose was and is to "attract the students into becoming adult theatre-goers with developed taste and judgment."[1] The company does not play to elementary school children, nor does it perform participation plays.

The Formation of Participation Theatre Companies (1964-71)

In 1964, Studio Lab Foundation, the first participation theatre in Canada, was started in Toronto by a young American, Ernest J. Schwartz, who had recently obtained an MFA in theatre from Yale. Schwartz wrote his own plays and musicals which, while based on fairy tales, were unusually imaginative in their modernization, and were designed to elicit

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[1] MacKinnon, op. cit., p. 230.

maximum participation from young audiences. Their popularity with children and critics was instantaneous.[1]

The Toronto based company was conceived as an experimental children's theatre aiming to link theatre and education. In late 1966, the company opened a theatre school for children of all ages, and in September 1968, performances for adults were added, fulfilling Schwartz's ambition to reach all strata of the community.

The company tours extensively throughout Ontario, playing to schools during the winter season, and in parks during the summer. On Saturday mornings, classes in drama, dance, and art are offered.

During the 1966-67 season, Holiday Theatre underwent a massive re-organization. The original company was split into two, one of which, Holiday Playhouse, was "to handle all aspects of educational theatre in British Columbia,"[2] while Holiday Theatre concentrated on in-theatre productions in Vancouver, and touring programs for schools in the immediate region. During the first season of the re-organization, Holiday Theatre revived Brian Way's The Storytellers from

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[1]Studio Lab Foundation files.

[2]MacKinnon, op. cit., pp. 573-575.

its 1959-60 season. The following year saw five of Way's participation plays included in the two repertoires, and in 1968-69, four Way plays were offered. The companies were amalgamated under the name Playhouse Holiday in 1969-70, when four Way plays were toured. Two Way revivals were included in the 1970-71 season, the last time his plays were to appear in the repertoire.

By adding a second company in 1966, Holiday was following the pattern established a decade earlier by Brian Way's London Theatre Centre. In 1968 a third company was added. Annual attendance figures, which had levelled off at 90,000 with a single company, climbed to 200,000 by the close of the 1969-70 season with three companies operating.

During the same 1966-67 season that Holiday rediscovered Brian Way, two new theatres for young audiences were launched with productions of Brian Way plays. In Regina, Kenneth and Sue Kramer, who had worked with Way's Theatre Centre in London, founded the Globe Theatre, to tour Brian Way plays throughout Saskatchewan.

From 1966-1971, the Globe devoted its efforts exclusively to the production of Way's plays, as audiences slowly grew from 4,000 to 60,000 over five seasons.

The company tours schools nine months a year with

three productions, each designed for a specific age group. Their productions are done without theatrical lighting in the round, using rostra, but no scenery. Actors, usually three men and two women, are fully costumed. As part of the school program, follow-up booklets are distributed to the teachers, and drama workshops are offered for them.

In Toronto, Susan Rubes started the Young People's Theatre in 1966 to offer a broad spectrum of quality productions. Theatre, for Rubes, would both enrich young audiences and train future playgoers. Although by no means exclusively devoted to participation theatre, Rubes included nine Brian Way productions in her first five seasons' work. Rubes functioned primarily as a producer, engaging established directors, actors and designers. In contrast to Globe and Studio Lab, and like Holiday, Young People's Theatre expanded quickly by adding new companies. Audiences which totalled 40,000 in 1966-67 rose to over 400,000 by the end of the sixth season, when seven companies toured Ontario schools.

In 1968, two years after the founding of Globe and Young People's Theatre, and the move by Holiday into the participation field, two new major companies were formed, Youtheatre in Montreal and Citadel-on-Wheels attached to Edmonton's Citadel regional theatre.

When, in 1970, Land of the Young was created to tour the Ottawa region, there were then seven major professional participation theatre companies based on the Way method and, except for Schwartz's troup, all were specializing in Way's plays. So pervasive was the formula that Joyce Doolittle could warn us in 1972 that "five actors on a flat floor with four hats can be exciting. But for an entire generation of Canadian boys and girls to grow up thinking that live theatre is only a participation play in a school gymnasium would be tragic."[1]

The Development of a Canadian Participation Theatre (1971 to the present)

When the major participation companies announced their new season in the fall of 1971, a new phase was born in Canadian participation theatre. Playhouse Holiday dropped Way's plays from the repertoire and prepared to explore the British "Theatre-in-Education" (TIE) approach to participatory playmaking. Young People's Theatre offered two Canadian participation productions but no Way dramas, while Citadel concentrated exclusively on local scripts. Globe, which had been

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[1] Joyce Doolittle, "The ASSITEJ Assembly and its Implications," Stage in Canada, 7, No. 2 (October 1972), 5.

producing Way's plays exclusively, began to favour Canadian material. Youtheatre was moving toward a majority of productions scripted by its director Wayne Fines, and Studio Lab's Ernie Schwartz.

Although most Canadian participation theatre playwrights appeared in the past five years, three writers emerged in the sixties, each with a distinctive style. Paddy Campbell, a naturalized young Canadian from Lancashire, wrote ten participation plays for the short-lived Arts Centre Company, Calgary, Alta., from 1967-1969.[1] Several of these plays were also produced by Holiday, Globe and Land of the Young. Ernie Schwartz also turned out a number of unusual modernizations of fairy stories in the sixties, including the rock musical, Aladdin, which toured Italy in 1972. When the distinguished Canadian humorist, Eric Nicol, wrote The Clam Made a Face for Holiday Theatre's Centennial production in 1967, he opened the door to the wealth of Canadian legend. In the ensuing years, Indian and Eskimo folklore vied with Canadian history in the thematic content of a majority of the participation plays.

During the seventies, most companies acquired resident participation playwrights. Young People's Theatre worked

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[1] Most were directed by Douglas Riske, who subsequently founded the successful Alberta Theatre Projects in 1972.

closely with broadcaster Len Peterson and former school teacher Larry Zacharko. Globe encouraged Rex Deverall to write several plays. Land of the Young commissioned scripts from Jeremy Gibson and James Brewer (who had spent five seasons with Brian Way). Citadel produced a number of dramas by Irene Watts and Isabel Foord. Wayne Fines wrote four scripts for his Youtheatre in Montreal, and Schwartz ceased his adaptations of fairy tales in favour of a series of children's classic stories for Studio Lab.

A number of these plays were revived by other companies and in a comparatively short time Nicol, Campbell, Schwartz and Fines were established as leading writers in this field. In addition, plays by Campbell, Deverall, Foord, Peterson and Schwartz were published by the Playwright's Co-op in Toronto which, since 1972, has made available mimeographed editions to interested amateur, school and professional groups.

The seventies also saw a number of new participation companies rise (and fall), often under the aegis of LIP and OFY grants. One of the more imaginative of these was the Pompledale Players, which managed two interesting seasons working out of the University of Calgary from 1971 to 1973. This group presented a series of almost completely improvised productions in schools and parks. Each member of the company took his turn as director and all taught creative drama as

they aspired for the ideal of actor-teacher.[1]

In 1970, a Queen's University team of faculty and students has been presenting participation theatre in the Kingston region under the direction of Way-trained David Kemp. The McArthur Theatre Company "performs both professionally scripted and group-written presentations, most of which have toured to schools throughout Eastern Ontario,"[2] and is building up a body of statistical data "on the effects of participational theatre experiences at various age levels."[3]

Since 1972, the first professional company in the Maritimes to explore participation theatre opened in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. Mermaid Theatre, aided by an LIP grant, staged a Brian Way piece and a locally written participation production in its first season, but discovered that "the reticent rural Nova Scotia children did not always participate."[4] The company turned to handsomely mounted puppet and legend plays and has not returned to participation theatre.

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[1] Telephone interview with Allyson Netherton, co-founder of Pompledale, May 25, 1975.

[2] CODE, "The McArthur Experience," Classroom Ideas and Sanity Savers (1975), p. 6.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Information in a letter to the author from Lee Lewis, Co-founder and Administrator, Mermaid Theatre, March 15, 1975.

The most rapid proliferation of theatre companies for young audiences has been in Ontario where the Arts Council, the Department of Education and a non-profit booking agency, "Prologue to the Arts," have urged and assisted the province's 5,000 schools to enjoy the performing arts. The Ontario Arts Council's current Artslist[1] records twenty-nine companies offering theatre productions for schools; and a number of them appear to be experimenting with the participation formula.

It is too soon to say whether this third phase of participation theatre is at its zenith, or if it still has some way to go. Recent statistics indicate that the era of breakneck expansion may be over. Holiday Theatre's annual audiences have dropped from a high of 200,000 in 1969-70 to 84,000 at the end of 1974-75. Young People's Theatre audiences have levelled out at 400,000 per year. Of the seven major companies existing in 1970, only Land of the Young has substantially increased its audience. It currently reaches some 200,000 children per year with four touring companies.

Part of this slowing of growth among the major companies may be attributed to increased competition from the many new groups. Ceilings on expenditure for the arts by

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[1]Ontario Arts Council, The Artslist for Schools (Toronto: Ontario Arts Council, 1974), pp. 3-14.

school boards, and an overall tightening of educational budgets must also have had its effect. Another factor may lie in the frequently expressed reservations among artists toward the extremely rapid expansion of the Young People's Theatre up to 1972. Studio Lab has turned to greater community involvement; and Holiday Playhouse offers fewer but more intense sessions to fewer students following the British TIE group model. These three companies will be examined in greater detail later.

CHAPTER II

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

To outline the Canadian theory of participation theatre is largely to re-iterate the views of Peter Slade and Brian Way, for Canadian educators, producers and playwrights have adopted their philosophy wholesale and without apparent modification. Similarly, the Theatre-in-Education technique recently introduced in British Columbia is directly derived from British experiences over the past decade. It is generally agreed that the theories and techniques of participation theatre, and the TIE group experiments which derive from it "stem from the theatrical work and experimentation of Peter Slade in the pre-war period."[1]

Slade was not a scholar, but a practical observer of the varieties of child's play at different age levels. During the thirties, forties and fifties he evolved classroom methods which he and his many followers throughout the world believe to be effective in developing the child's ability to concentrate on studies and to relate well to other children.

In Slade's theory, which he presents in Child Drama (1954),[2] personality is developed through "Personal Play,"

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[1]Moses Goldberg, Children's Theatre (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974), p. 10.

[2]Peter Slade, Child Drama (London: Univ. of London Press, 1954), pp. 29-36.

which is physical, active and noisy, while concentration or absorption grows through "Projected Play," which is largely a quiet mental activity. In "Personal Play" the child becomes a character (e.g. a dragon-slaying knight) or a thing (e.g. an airplane, diving and struggling through a storm). He is totally and actively involved with his role, and his sincerity is complete. This is drama in the root Greek sense of the word - to do, to struggle. At a later stage in the child's development personal play takes the form of dance and sports. "Projected Play," on the other hand, is intellectual rather than physical, quiet rather than noisy. Sitting still, moving only his hands, the child manipulates favorite toys or objects in the projection of a drama which is taking place in his mind. His absorption is total. "Projected Play" leads not only to the ability to concentrate on studies, but also to art and playing musical instruments, to games like chess, and to qualities such as "observation, patience, concentration and wise government."[1]

Slade passionately believes that the education process must provide guided opportunities for the child to engage in both projected and personal play.

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[1]Slade, An Introduction to Child Drama (London: Univ. of London Press, 1958), p. 5.

> These two early types of play have an important bearing on the building of man, his whole behaviour, and his ability to fit in with society. Play opportunity, therefore, means gain and development. Lack of play may mean a permanent lost part of oneself. It is this unknown, uncreated part of oneself, this missing link, which may be a cause of difficulty in later years.[1]

In order to use classroom play effectively, the teacher must understand the particular nature of play at each stage in the child's development. For instance, the natural shape of play is age-dependent, and must be considered in planning suitable activities. The youngest child plays in a circle; by about eight years old, in a horse-shoe, triangle, star or S-shape; and only with adolescence does he act in the long, tongue-shape set usually at one end of the room or on a stage.[2]

As Slade distinguished the nature of play at different age levels, he conceived specific dramatic activities to capitalize a child's emotional and moral development. The 5-6½ year-old engages in activities associated with speech, movement and perception. Simple noises are used to stimulate ideas, to encourage concentration, and to accompany action. Speech is never discouraged.[3] Movement is stressed, and

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[1] Ibid., p. 5.

[2] Slade, Child Drama, pp. 42-50.

[3] Ibid., pp. 93-100, 37-51.

through dramatic creation their experience is enlarged. Groups aged 7-9 and 9-11 years work at a deeper level. They make up plays and act them. Scripts are never used, but the proscenium stage is employed sometimes. Most work, however, is done in an open area and everything is improvised.

When the child grasps the idea that plays are group creations,[1] a great step forward has been made. Children become aware of the needs of others, and they begin to feel what Slade calls group sensitivity:

> When this group feeling is growing we notice a great development in community efforts. There is the straightforward group creation, where stories and ideas are built up by several children and acted out, but there is also the new feeling, both conscious and unconscious, for the place of others. . . . This is the outward sign of social awareness. It is part of the integration of self with society.[2]

The older groups, 11-12 years and 13 years and upwards, are at a point where improvisation becomes a means to an end for them. Now work is polished by repetition and guidance. Theatre is beginning to grow. Emotional development is still the main concern but several other factors enter. Mastery of the playing space, for example, means acquired techniques;

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[1] Ibid., pp. 52-53.

[2] Ibid.

therefore, some simple teaching about theatre becomes necessary. Speech guidance is often asked for and given. Plays develop almost a conventional form and can be acted, written and re-written, then acted again. Criticism of work done is offered by the young people themselves.[1]

Slade is adamant that stories used for all age groups should be their own as far as possible. Good literature should be available but the child's own creations are more meaningful for self-expression.

Ultimately, Slade sees child drama not merely as a technique for training children but as an art form comparable to 'child art'. As such, he contends, it should take its place in the curriculum alongside Music, Art, Literature, and the like.

Given Slade's intense interest in the use of drama in education, it is hardly surprising that he gave serious attention to the role of professional performances for elementary and secondary school children. His study led him to question the value of professional productions for children, particularly for those under twelve years of age. He was disturbed by the end results of such experiences: "The children copy

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[1]Slade, Child Drama, p. 69.

these productions for long periods after," he maintains, and the copies get worse and worse; they lose confidence in their own ability to dress, make scenes and write plays:

> They copy the actual production form of the adult actor, and, when acting after seeing the play, they act at being the actors acting that play. They tend to stop their own real acting . . . for the truth is that the child, even at twelve and over, often does its work off as well as on the stage, and loses confidence in its own Art Form if it sees "perfect" productions by professionals in another acting shape.[1]

Slade feels that the position is aggravated further when large productions play entirely in the proscenium form, and suggests that professional actors, drama advisors and educationalists get together to discuss what theatre form productions should take for various age groups. "It is sheer nonsense," he says, "for any adult to think that he can show children between the ages of six and eleven how to act by acting at them."[2]

Equally damaging, he feels, is the tradition of young children publicly performing plays, especially in the proscenium form:

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[1] Slade, Child Drama, p. 266.

[2] Ibid., p. 267.

> When young children act before grown-ups, they are often disturbed by the adult laughter, and spend a good deal of time smiling out at their loved ones or grinning cheerfully at their stage companions.
>
> This is sort of a social affair, a dress parade. It has nothing to do with theatre. It is neither acting nor art.[1]

The crucial activity takes place in the classroom. Professional theatre is only effective to the extent that it capitalizes on the nature and function of the child's own dramatic activity and enriches his experience. "We look upon children as being more important than theatre, that is all. Theatre is only valuable, in our context, insofar as it really serves the children, and not just the players and their ambitions."[2]

Slade is deeply suspicious of the sudden appearance of theatre companies on the school circuit. "A lot of people perfectly sincere perhaps are apt to rush into this work without enough knowledge and training, or with granite-set ideas about the loftiness of all theatre art, and destroy other valuable things in education, without facing the facts or really thinking about what happens to the child."[3]

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[1] Slade, Child Drama, p. 266.

[2] Slade, "Children's Theatre," Creative Drama, 2, No. 7 (1959), p. 36.

[3] Ibid., p. 26.

Slade would like to be sure that the actor in theatre for children is properly trained and has a good understanding of children. To bring this about:

> There should be many more Child Drama Centres where children may create in their own way under sympathetic guidance. Adults should attend these and undertake careful observation. One day it is to be hoped that no one will be allowed to join a Children's Theatre Company unless he has had a specified length of such observation.[1]

In the early thirties, Slade began to produce plays for children and introduced changes in the performing area which have since become standard practice. "It was the fact that children play so often in a circular form that made me start to break consciously away from proscenium presentations. And it was because of watching the use of higher and lower levels in pavement play that I first advocated the use of rostrum blocks to the schools my companies visited."[2]

During the war years, Slade developed the concept of teacher-actors, people who are primarily teachers (not necessarily school teachers) and who know how to work with children.

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[1]Slade, "Theatre for Top Infants to Middle Juniors," Creative Drama, 2, No. 11 (1961), p. 20.

[2]Slade, Experience of Spontaneity (London: Longmans, 1968), p. 192.

"They come to the school with the freshness of outsiders and may be dressed up. They come for acting. They are trained actors. Actor-teachers, a new profession."[1] In 1943 he began to train such a group and in 1945 they formed a company called "The Pear Tree Players, the first full time professional company devoted to educational work."[2]

> Serious training started, every Sunday, every available free moment of the day and most evenings. As one of their aims was to break away from the proscenium arch and develop group work, they were drilled in group dance improvisation and every imaginable type of production, including the arena form. . . . We played all over the county, on flat floors, in barns; we improvised, played excerpts and one-act plays.[3]

The company lasted one year and stimulated a great deal of interest, but because Slade was unable to find grants, this first team of teacher-actors was forced to disband. "They are professionals of a new profession," wrote Slade prophetically, "and their work will never stop. Instead of concentrating on one place, the Pear Tree Players are now cultivating little gardens all over England."[4]

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[1] Slade, Child Drama, p. 272.

[2] Ibid., p. 292.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., p. 293.

Since 1948, Slade has been the Director of the Birmingham Educational Drama Association, where he continues to teach, write, train actors and teachers, and to produce plays for children.[1] There, his interest in the participation aspects of theatrical performances developed.

Slade observed that as some children engaged in dramatic play, others, who for some reason remained outside the full action, at some point were drawn in and became an important part of the dramatic activity. Slade nurtured this joining in and called it audience participation. He felt that since

> . . . the healthy child prefers to act rather than to watch (because at this age personal play is so important), the tension may be relieved by encouraging the enforced watchers to join in play with noises of all kinds - even with remarks. Actors may move happily off our mistaken conception of the "stage," and will approach the wrongly termed "audience" as if they were other actors and sell them something, or perhaps bite off their noses. Participation then takes place and builds towards that wonderful atmosphere which is only experienced where the right attitude encourages children's real drama.[2]

Although Slade did not specify what kind of participation he envisaged beyond that, he spoke often of the need for "specially devised theatre performances, which approach as nearly as they can the child's own viewpoint and shape of

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[1] Slade, Experience of Spontaneity, p. 195.

[2] Slade, Child Drama, p. 59.

acting--i.e. theatre which takes child drama into account."[1]

Slade fervently hoped that audience participation would be used a great deal in the future, particularly during adult performances for children. "One should not think," he says, "that audience participation encourages rowdiness--it encourages life, and helps an artificial situation to be less harmful."[2]

His desire to "bridge the gap between actor and audience, to be able to play in any place, any shape," as well as to "let all ages meet when possible, and see each other at work, so as to break down the barrier between youth and age," led to the formation of the first Drama Centre in Birmingham.[3] Here children of all ages could explore dance, art, music and improvised drama, under the watchful eye of Slade-trained teachers. Here, too, observers, students and would-be actors could watch the shape, nature, poetry and intensity of the children's own drama. Started in the early fifties,[4] the Centre provided a model which has been much imitated throughout the world.[5]

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[1]Slade, Child Drama, p. 33.

[2]Ibid., p. 60.

[3]Slade, Experience of Spontaneity, p. 222.

[4]Ibid., p. 221.

[5]Ibid., p. 262.

Slade laid the foundation for Britain's predominant position in theatre for young audiences. First, he formulated a general theory of child development through drama which has become accepted throughout the English speaking world. Secondly, he discouraged the presentation of traditional adult theatre to children, and recommended a more suitable form of open staging specifically designed for each age group. Thirdly, he described the ideal actor-teacher, showed how he was to be trained, and campaigned against those who would exploit child audiences with untrained actors.

It might even be said that Slade first conceived the idea of participation theatre: but it was left to Brian Way to expand these ideas and to evolve the sophisticated techniques which have been so widely imitated internationally.

Like Slade, Brian Way believed that performing scripted plays for adult audiences was likely to have a harmful effect on young children's personal development. However, unlike Slade, he advocated attendance at professional theatre performances for children under twelve, as well as for older students.

Way arrived at his ideas about participation theatre through the theatre itself, rather than through children's playmaking as did Slade. While touring with his first company in 1942 through West of England rural schools, he found

himself obliged to use intimate and simple forms of staging in order to fit performances into a classroom setting. The intimate contact often elicited spontaneous participation from unsophisticated children. Instead of ignoring it or taking steps to prevent it, Way began to incorporate legitimate opportunities for participation into his scripts. He discovered that children respond best in familiar and intimate surroundings, and that they could improvise dialogue and participate in imaginative dramatic experiences without the aid of scenery or other traditional theatrical trappings. "By the time Way met Peter Slade, who had been developing his concepts of child drama, the West of England Company was including participation in their programs for young people of all ages."[1]

"Numerous problems besetting my own work were not answered until I met Peter Slade," says Brian Way in his editor's introduction to Slade's Child Drama (1954). "His wealth of understanding and knowledge of the subject springs from twenty years devoted to painstaking observation, research and experimentation, backed by a capacity to perceive and document the minutest detail or the broadest concept."[2] In the late forties

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[1]Margaret Faulkes, "Audience Participation in Theatre for Children," Children's Theatre Review, 21, 4 (1972), p. 38.

[2]Slade, Child Drama, p. 9.

Way came to work with Slade at his Birmingham Centre.[1] In addition to acting, managing, producing and directing, Way made a detailed study of the place of drama in the development of children. His conclusions found expression in his Development Through Drama in 1967.

Way, like Slade, makes a clear distinction between theatre as a product designed to entertain an audience and classroom drama as a process used to develop the various facets of the child's personality.

In the area of classroom drama, Way was primarily concerned with the development of the whole personality. He sought to tap the individuality of each child and to discover the means by which the unique aspects of each person could be developed. He felt education should be concerned with preparing young people for living, and drama was the art of practising living to build up skill at it.[2]

In general, Way's theories are very close to those of Slade. "The difference between the writers stemmed from the individual emphasis each gave to various aspects of the

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[1]Slade, Experience of Spontaneity, p. 258.

[2]Brian Way, Development Through Drama (London: Longmans, 1967), pp. 3-6.

dramatic act,"[1] says Scott in his comparison of British and American theories of developmental drama. Scott found that, though both Slade and Way were basically humanist and individualist, and saw child's dramatic play as a means of developing "the whole child, rather than as an end in itself," Way's work was distinguished by its organization:

> Way's view of the broadening horizons of human development closely paralleled Slade's approach, but Way's concept of the six facets of human personality made his work far more organized. 'Whole Child Development' was to be accomplished by developing these facets, and by building concentration.[2]

At the core of Way's drama theories is the concept of three "circles" or levels of development. At the centre is the level of personal mastery. The next wider circle brings sensitivity to others and to the immediate environment. Expanding to the next circle involves enrichment of one's resources in a larger environment.[3]

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[1]Graham Richard Scott, "A Survey of Selected Approaches to the Teaching of Creative Drama in the United States and England," unpublished Master's thesis, University of Calgary, Alta., 1972, p. 121.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Way, op. cit., p. 13. (See Fig. 1 on following page.)

CONSIDER A HUMAN BEING[1]

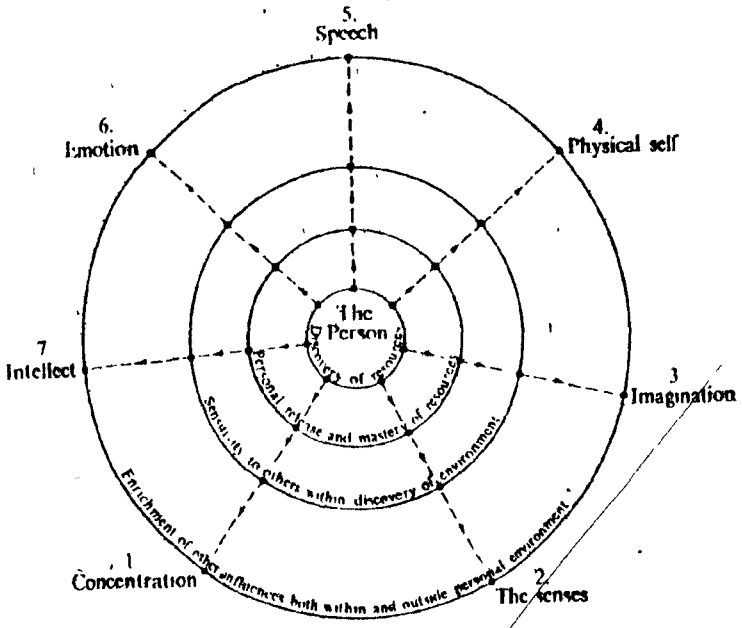

Fig. 1

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[1] Way, op. cit., p. 13.

> To build up confidence at each level, Way established a teaching progression; from individual parallel activity, to pairs sharing and on to progressively larger groups.[1]

This ordered sequence of development is to be based, not on chronological age, but on the teacher's assessment of each child's personal development. Specific exercises were suggested to develop the child's resources. Areas of emphasis are: (1) concentration; (2) the senses; (3) imagination; (4) physical self; (5) speech; (6) emotions; and finally (7) intellect.[2]

Drama teachers who had struggled to pull together Slade's methods from his romantic narrative style of presentation found in Way's work a clearer statement of theory, and precise steps to take in applying it to the individual child.

Way's ordered presentation was further enhanced by his trenchant prose. His underlying child-centered humanism found expression in stirring language. He had a politician's skill at articulating fundamental goals in ringing phrases, and a theatre artist's gift for relating ideas and emotions:

> So far as is humanly possible, this book is concerned with the development of people, not with the development of drama.[3]

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[1] Scott, op. cit., p. 106.

[2] Way, op. cit., p. 14.

[3] Ibid., p. 2.

> Education is concerned with individuals; drama is concerned with the individuality of individuals, with the uniqueness of each human essence.[1]

> If education is concerned with preparing young people for living rather than for a job in life, then it must concern itself with the whole person . . .[2]

> Drama . . . is a way of education in the fullest sense; it is a way of living . . .[3]

The greater part of Way's theories dealt with methodology, the "how" and "what" of drama; teachers were shortchanged on the "why," but uncritically accepted his gospel. Here was something to believe in. To do drama was to belong to a movement.

When Way opened his Theatre Centre in Northwest London in 1954, he had behind him eight seasons of touring provincial schools, a developmental theory, and a philosophical purpose deeply relevant to the educational system. His initial statement of objectives was both comprehensive and precise:

> 1. To provide opportunities for experiment and research into the forms of theatre most suitable for children of all ages.
>
> 2. To assist teachers in all types of schools with method of approach to drama in education.

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[1] Way, op. cit., p. 3.

[2] Ibid., p. 6.

[3] Ibid., p. 7.

> 3. To encourage, among children, an interest in and appreciation of the living theatre by the presentation of plays specially selected and produced for children of each age group.[1]

Because of their involvement in participation theatre performances, young audiences would learn about the process of theatre, Way believed, and teachers who had watched their students participate would learn about the techniques of involvement and control, and could apply them in their drama work back in the classroom.[2]

To find suitable vehicles for his new participation theories, Way was obliged to become his own playwright. For his themes and forms, he turned to his extensive experience of doing drama with children, a practice he recommends to all who would enter the field:

> By doing the play in the way that children do their drama, we hope that we not interfere with the drama - for what the child does in its own drama is much more important than what it sees in children's theatre. If it sees the wrong thing, instead of being stimulated it becomes an ape and merely copies.[3]

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[1] Theatre Centre Ltd., Children-Theatre-Education, brochure, n.d.

[2] Way, CCYDA Annual Conference, Toronto, May 1968, p. 16.

[3] Ibid.

The amount of participation in Way's plays varies and may take up as much as forty per cent of playing time. However, Way continuously experimented not only with the amount of participation allowed, but also with the amount of control exercised. For instance, "the play we are doing at the moment--The Key--" said Way in 1968, "is absolutely berserk with audience participation. We are quite crazy, gone further than we've ever gone and the entire audience gets into its own imaginary wagons and goes on a trek across a desert, cross a ravine with a human bridge, absolutely fantastic - and we are learning an enormous amount about the factors of control by doing it."[1]

Way's productions were based on the notion that young children have a need to express their feelings physically and vocally when attending a play, and that they are able, and indeed prefer, to "play with actors" rather than merely sit through a performance:

> If the play is happening in and around the youngsters . . . the child ceases to be aware of the reality that it is a small person watching a play. The play becomes a reality in itself and part of the response to that is the identification with people inside the play. So that if there is somebody in the play that they like very much and feel

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[1] Way, CCYDA Annual Conference, Toronto, May 1968, p. 16.

> very strongly for, they are not going to sit still and be quiet, they are going to offer help.[1]

Way developed participation theatre as an amalgam of theatre experience and drama. The theatre experience, says Way, "releases the whole intuitive area of the person's growth . . . and thus can stretch the horizons of the child's intellectual, emotional and spiritual experience."[2]

The act of participation resembles drama done in the classroom, in that it involves role playing, intensifies identification, and stimulates imagination and creativity. But at the same time, the uniqueness of the experience of theatre as an art form must not be lost. "We are trying," says Way, "to hold a balance at the Centre of the mixture of the drama experience through participation with the theatre experience," because "participation by the audience can very quickly turn itself into a classroom drama situation which can then eliminate the theatre experience altogether."[3]

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[1] Way, CCYDA Annual Conference, Toronto, May 18, 1968, p. 16.

[2] Helene S. Rosenberg, "An Interview with Brian Way," Children's Theatre Review, 24, No. 2 (1975), 11.

[3] Ibid.

A typical Way play has four characters (two male and two female), runs fifty minutes, is designed to play in the round in close contact with the audience, and uses rostra and costumes but no scenery or lighting. Each play is designed for specific age groups with audiences set at 200 maximum.

The majority of Way's plays include two basic types of participation - whole audience participation and group participation. The former is structured in such a way that the play cannot unfold and progress without help from the audience.[1] If the play can exist without it, then "the participation is suspect as a gimmick and may result in the English pantomime type of fun-hysteria."[2] Plays involving group participation provide specific moments during which a limited number of volunteers or arbitrarily selected groups from the audience are invited to participate through improvisation:

> Although some instructions are given about what to do, the participation is unrehearsed improvisation. This is considered to be a direct link with creative drama in school, and such improvisation is intended to help teachers in schools with a method of approach to drama in education.[3]

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[1]Way, Report to Canada Council, September 15, 1958, p. 18.

[2]Margaret Faulkes, "Audience Participation in Theatre for Children," Children's Theatre Review, 21, No. 4 (1972), 36.

[3]Young Audience Scripts, "Plays for Young Audiences" (mimeographed listing, Edmonton, n.d.), p. 1.

The involvement of the audience is elicited in two ways: by direct request and indirect request.

Direct request requires a character to ask for the support of the audience to achieve an objective in the play, as in this example from The Mirrorman:

> Listen everybody, I've done it, I've done it. I have finished making the most beautiful doll . . . but you must see Beauty walk. All she has to do is to listen carefully until she hears this POM POM POM . . . but will you help me with the POM POM POM, will you? All right then. Let's try it.[1]

The support for a character can be expressed vocally (such as saying magic words, making sounds of wind, rain, machines) or through actions (such as growing into trees, picking berries, becoming puppets, or making things). Sound and movement can be combined and the various dynamics explored (e.g. tempo, quality, intensity). These variations in movement and sound then provide not only a range of experience but also help to build and sustain concentration.

Indirect request obliges a character to ask for help or advice; or he may offer a suggestion or give an instruction for some future action in the play. For example, "If you need my help, everybody moan and groan, and I'll come at once."

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[1]Way, The Mirrorman (London: Theatre Centre Ltd., n.d.), p. 1.

The indirect request technique is more difficult for the actors; the audience may be at times carried away and introduce their help or advice at inappropriate moments. "It is also to a degree contrived," says Margaret Faulkes, "in that the response of children can generally be anticipated."[1]

The small group type of participation is as a rule confined to older children as it demands from them a certain degree of improvised speaking and characterization. While this involvement is unrehearsed, although occasionally some preparation is done prior to the performance, the actors as characters in the play co-ordinate the activities of volunteers to fit their scripted lines.

For example, in the play On Trial, the whole audience is considered as a community from which volunteers are requested by the commanding officer to accompany him on a dangerous expedition. In another play, The Decision, the audience is divided into four groups and is asked to build an air-strip. Later, as one community, they are asked to make an important decision about its future.

The spontaneous nature of the participation play makes tremendous demands on actors. Wisely, Way remarks, "His /the

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[1] Faulkes, op. cit., p. 37.

actor's/ imagination has to be strongly developed, his confidence needs to be strengthened, his body needs to be fully flexible - and it can only be done with constant, constant, constant practice. Not necessarily having to go to England for three years to drama school, but constant practice, half an hour limbering before a rehearsal, lots of improvisation . . . to be ready for the moments of participation when they actually arise."[1]

Thus the actor has to make sure that his resources are developed as fully as possible. Above all, Way stresses concentration as the indispensable requirement. "At the Centre," he says, "we have a three day course in the middle of rehearsals. This is solid concentration - with the whole staff going berserk making the kind of noise that happens in a school and each actor concentrating on a particular task and ignoring it, so that when the actor is in the school his concentration is such that he cannot have this thing interfere with what is happening between him and his audience."[2]

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[1]Way, CCYDA Annual Conference, Toronto, May 18, 1968, p. 17.

[2]Ibid.

The flexibility demanded of actors in participation plays is considerable. Child audiences react in different ways from adult audiences. Moreover, the variations between one child audience and another are more marked than in adult groups. Improvisation and control may be ideal one day and hazardous the next. The situations which stem from the spontaneous reaction of the audience are particularly vulnerable. The temptation is to over-encourage spontaneous suggestions; if the company is inexperienced, the audience can virtually take over, and the rhythmic shape of the script is destroyed, and the climax weakened or missed altogether. It takes the greatest of skills in such a situation to restore some kind of order.

Margaret Faulkes cites some hazards inherent in The Mirrorman. "At her first entrance, the Witch is 'wished away' by the whole audience. On her second entrance it may well be that the wishing is repeated (particularly if it was vocalized the first time); since participation has been well established by this point in the play, the character must react to it although problems can arise if, as in one performance, she exits hurriedly and omits to cast an important spell on another character, because the next twenty minutes of the play are concerned with taking off the spell."[1]

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[1]Faulkes, op. cit., p. 37.

In spite of the demands and hazards contained in the participation theatre format, Way's early efforts prospered. In 1957, he had two companies performing full time, touring schools. By 1968, there were seven companies on the road[1] and the Centre found itself engaged in wide-ranging activities in theatre, drama and the arts:

> Its premises in London are open every evening of the week for young people to practice without being taught, such arts as drama, pottery, painting, film-making, carving and music. On Saturdays, there is an improvised play for younger age-groups performed by the staff of Theatre Centre and people from the Friday Drama evening which is for adults such as teachers, drama students and resting actors.[2]

Throughout, Way stressed the importance of the interrelationship of the various activities, and advised anyone who would produce theatre for children to get out and see what children do. "One of the things to do," suggests Way, "is to find out in your area who has children doing drama and go and watch that. We open our eyes to all kinds of adventures in theatre."[3]

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[1]Ross, op. cit., p. 34.

[2]Theatre Centre Ltd., program for Christopher Columbus and The Discoverers (1966-67).

[3]Way, CCYDA Annual Conference, Toronto, May 18, 1968, p. 15.

When Way came to Canada in 1958, he offered in his report to Canada Council a detailed practical plan for the establishment of a touring professional participation theatre company. The Company should consist of:

> a. A General Manager, to be appointed at least two months before rehearsals commence in order to send out all necessary general information, to fix up details of the tour, and, only where necessary (and it need not be necessary at all), to visit some areas. During the tour this person might need to be sent to each area in advance of the company, but this too need not be necessary with wise planning. Considerable costs can be cut down if the Manager can avoid this travelling about.
>
> b. A Director, who would be responsible for engaging the company, initial training, rehearsals, etc., and who should travel with the company as observer, for rehearsals or rehearsals of new things, and for doing the main lecturing at workshops, etc. It is imperative that this person has no acting responsibilities.
>
> c. Four professional, fully trained actors - two male, two female. They should be young, vital, imaginative and without any of the pompous attitude that some professionals have towards working with amateurs, and with a second interest in the idea of such an experiment. Their work needs to be highly flexible.[1]

Members of the company would all receive the same salary; they would all work in making wardrobe, props and scenery; they would rehearse for three weeks, during which they would be given specific training in performing for

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[1] Way, Report to Canada Council, September 15, 1958, p. 15.

children. At the same time they would be taught some drama-in-education theory and would prepare lecture-demonstration materials.[1]

Given the primitive state of child drama at the time, it is hardly surprising that Way stressed the missionary role of the companies. Workshop sessions at each touring engagement were essential. They would include the following activities:

a. A lecture on the purpose and place of Drama in Education.
b. Methods of beginning Drama with each age group, involving all children not just the few clever ones.
c. Photographs of Child Drama on display.
d. Practical exercises for classroom teachers.
e. Instruction in the use of rostrum blocks, together with display of miniature models.[2]

There is a marked attempt in Canada to codify Brian Way's method. Way, however, sees his own work as basically fluid and is unwilling to give any of his ideas what might be described as a definitive force. As he explained in a recent interview:

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[1]Way, Report to Canada Council, September 15, 1958, pp. 16-18.

[2]Ibid., p. 20.

> . . . I was and, in my own metabolism, always have been a pioneer kind of person. In other words, I really like to dig around into something that appears necessary but hasn't been tried.[1]

Since 1960, Way has contributed little that is new to the theory and practice of participation theatre; rather he has chosen to multiply the number of his touring companies, and to experiment with the amount of participation in his plays. A new approach, which downgraded audience size in favour of intensity of experience, was pioneered from 1962 onwards by Stuart Bennett's Theatre-In-Education (TIE) group at the Belgrade Theatre in Coventry. In response to widespread enthusiasm, other TIE groups sprang up in Liverpool, Nottingham, Sheffield, Watford, Bolton, Leeds, and elsewhere.[2]

Their work has two main objectives--to explore drama and theatre as a teaching method, and to develop kinds of theatre experience relevant to young people today.[3]

Instead of trying to squeeze in more performances at more schools, TIE groups try to spend more time with each group

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[1]Rosenberg, "An Interview with Brian Way," op. cit., p. 4.

[2]Richard Courtney, "Creativity and Theatre for Children," Stage in Canada, 7, No. 2 (1972), 13.

[3]Council of Repertory Theatres - Young People's Theatre Section, Activities Information 1972-73, booklet (London: CORT-YPTS Office, May 1972).

of students. A team of four, two men and two women, with experience both in teaching and acting, take programs to Kindergarten, junior and secondary schools. The usual plan is to visit a school for a whole day or several half days. The company prepares a theme and works with students in the classroom on various relevant exercises. These workshops culminate in a simple, improvised performance in which pupils and actors work together. Any lights, sound effects or properties needed are provided by the company, and the pupils are shown how to use them. Themes explored by the Belgrade company include the Tay Bridge disaster, Shackleton's expedition to the Antarctic, the siege of Kenilworth, and the struggle for civic freedom in medieval Coventry, their home base.[1]

At their best, the Theatre-In-Education companies have brought a dynamism to theatre and education which has captured the imagination of critics in both fields. The liveliest of the companies is considered to be the Leeds TIE team headed by ex-Coventry player Roger Chapman. This 'radical' group is a wing of the 'conservative' Leeds Playhouse, and "not one of /the actors/ would willingly change places with even the most

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[1]Department of Education and Science, Drama, Education Survey 2 (London: HMSO, 1967), 91-92.

successful members of the city's adult theatre company to which they are attached."[1]

The team considers itself obliged to provide a good theatre experience, but does not claim to be responsible for the child's development - except "insofar as it presents views which are carefully and conscientiously worked out, views they believe in and hope the children will find worthy of their attention."[2]

By using mature actors (average age thirty) the Leeds TIE team has been able to tackle complex and often highly controversial themes such as the brutalizing effect of prisons on their inmates, the plight of migrant workers in their city, or the historical exploitation of workers in eighteenth century Yorkshire:

> No school is obliged to take any of the programs. The team wait for invitations from the schools, and is always booked months in advance. Although the programs may well be accused of bias at times, their social criticisms follow the examples of the great masters of didactic theatre in seldom using dogmatic statement, more frequently relying on the searching question. As one watches the Leeds team in action it is very easy to think of Brecht.[3]

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[1] Max Wearing, "The Leeds Playhouse Theatre-In-Education Team," V.D.T.A. Journal, May 1974, p. 39.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., p. 41.

The actors rely strongly on improvisation, and the dialogue is rarely committed to memory. The responsibility of the actor is seen "not in terms of memorizing lines or meticulously repeating a piece of business in a predetermined tempo, but in being able to respond to children and fellow actors in whatever situation emerges."[1]

Chapman manages his team of teacher-actors by involving them in all decisions, artistic or administrative. He seeks total commitment from every person involved in the group, and believes that this arises from total responsibility. Though the group does not live together, the members have established a high degree of consensus in the ideas about education, morals and politics and have built an enviable reputation among the theatre community. As Wearing points out:

> There is never any need to advertise a vacancy in the group. Actor-teachers from all over the country are intensely interested in the group's work and there is a long waiting list of such people whose ideas and aspirations would be compatible with those of the group as it already exists.[2]

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[1] Wearing, op. cit., p. 39.

[2] Ibid., p. 40.

Since there is no written text as such, the fundamental concern of TIE's team is not only to research the topic in depth but also to find the most effective way to communicate their material to the children. The first half day of the school visit is spent with the children in their classroom, where each actor-teacher works with a small section of the class. He brings samples and artifacts, maps and other documents, and leads his small group through sensory exercises which illustrate the social conditions central to his theme. Then, through mime and other exercises, the children are prepared to play group or individual roles in the improvisation which follows. The play itself is but a step in a process, the end-result of which is the increased awareness by the participants, not only of the subject matter but also of effective techniques of co-operation, imagination and concentration.

When compared to the socially-committed themes of the TIE groups, the traditional fairy tales and adventure stories of other theatre for children companies seem thin or condescending. "We seek to transmit our own beliefs and ideas about the quality and nature of living as we know it," says Roger Chapman. "You've got to want to say something, and in that need to say something and to communicate it, lies the real art of the theatre."

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[1]Wearing, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

Because Theatre-In-Education turns its subject matter into a powerful and memorable experience, it may prove dangerous to introduce themes whose social consequences are beyond the children's ability to form mature judgments. In such cases, TIE programs are more likely to create prejudices than to instill social awareness. John Allen, a distinguished observer of theatre for children and an interested admirer of the TIE group approach, is worried about such social militancy in the junior schools. "Bluntly, there is grave danger of this kind of work getting out of hand."[1]

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Canada has contributed little by way of theory or methodology to participation theatre. Brian Way's plays and methods dominated theatre for children from 1966 to 1971. Indeed, most companies formed during this period launched themselves with one or more seasons of Way's plays. Young People's Theatre started in 1966 with three of Way's pieces; Globe opened in 1966 with three; Citadel-on-Wheels in 1968 began with two; and Land of the Young staged five Way works its opening year. Youtheatre started with two, and even the Mermaid Theatre, a puppet and legend company, included a Way piece in its first season.

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[1]Department of Education and Science, Drama, Education Survey 2 (London: HMSO, 1967), p. 92.

The British influence is largely attributable to the backgrounds of the playwrights, directors and founders of many of these companies. Margaret Faulkes[1] was brought to Toronto to direct and co-direct the first two Way productions at the Young People's Theatre in 1967. The Kramers, who founded the Globe Theatre, had worked with Way. James Brewer, who wrote plays for Globe and Land of the Young, was a Way collaborator. David Kemp, a professor of Drama at Queens University and founder of the McArthur Theatre, worked closely with Way. Richard Courtney, a theatre-for-children and drama expert from Britain, was brought by the CCYDA to Canada in 1967 to speak of the future of 'the movement'. He remained to become the organization's president and one of the leading theorists in the field. He was also responsible for establishing the first university Developmental Drama programs in Canada at Victoria and Calgary.[2] The growing number of Way-trained specialists emigrating from England was supplemented by a sizeable group of native drama workers who went to London to observe and participate in the work of Way's Theatre Centre. Anna Palo-Heimo,

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[1]Margaret Faulkes is presently Associate Professor of Drama, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alta.

[2]Esmé Crampton, Drama Canada, op. cit., p. 30.

Polly Hill, Jane Heyman, Myra Benson, Eva Russel and Sister Theresa MacKinnon were among this group. Meanwhile, as mentioned earlier, Way was frequently invited to Canada to lecture, stage demonstration productions, offer workshops in developmental drama, and advise arts councils and universities across the country.

Way's influence was immediately apparent in the approach to the audience adopted by the fledgling companies, in the size and structure of the performing groups, in the workshops offered to teachers and, of course, in the participatory nature of the productions. These factors clearly identified 'the Way method' and were used by all Canadian participation theatre companies to present both Way's plays and, later, their own Canadian creations.

Pre-season prospectuses sent out to school boards continue to insist that elementary school audiences be limited to approximately 200 students. Slade's concept of differing age levels of drama sophistication, which influenced Way in writing his plays, has become a working rule in Canada: thus, audiences today are generally segregated into age groups with productions specially designed for each group. Young People's Theatre, for example, has programs for 5-8 year olds (grades K-3); 9-11 (grades 4-6); 12-13 (grades 7-8); and 14-18

(grades 9-13).[1] Citadel-on-Wheels breaks its triple season offerings into Kindergarten to grade 3, grades 4-7, and grades 8-12.[2] Land of the Young productions are usually addressed to grades K-3 and 4-6.[3]

The Brian Way formula has a sound and appealing economic basis. The company is made up of a manager and four young actors. Production and touring budgets are low enough to be covered by a modest fee from the schools if the actors offer a dozen or more performances a week, often in two schools per day. Production elements are limited to a few rostra and costumes. This light-weight concept has been generally accepted by Canadian touring companies; indeed, Citadel travelled so lightly they found that they could fly, and thus reach otherwise inaccessible corners of their province and the neighbouring territories.

Way's attempt to channel the growing resources of his Centre into a multitude of companies (rather than into elaborate productions) was not lost on his Canadian admirers.

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[1] Ontario Arts Council, "The Artslist for Schools," 1974, p. 14.

[2] Citadel on Wheels/Wings, 1974-75 Program, Pamphlet.

[3] Information in a letter to the author from Deidre Kirby-Hughes, Director, Land of the Young, June 2, 1975.

Playhouse Holiday, having established the minimum functioning economic unit, enlarged its number of touring companies on several occasions. Land of the Young sends out three units; and Susan Rubes' Young People's Theatre fielded up to twelve companies in 1971-72.[1]

Participation theatre is seen by Brian Way as intimately linked with developmental drama. The child, in physically responding to the situations of the play, is acting creatively, and from here it is but a step to persuade the teacher to become involved with drama. Teachers already using drama can learn new techniques of stimulation and control from watching the interaction of their charges with the actors in the production. The Way method includes preparatory material for the teacher, discussion with the students immediately following the play and, whenever possible, workshops with teachers on developmental drama techniques. Thus participation theatre is both an end in itself and a stimulus for greater stress upon drama at the classroom level.

Teacher-training programs are gradually taking over the function served by early participation theatre workshops given by actors, but the underlying methodology is unchanged. Slade's

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[1] MacKinnon, op. cit., p. 709.

Child Drama and Way's Development Through Drama remain basic texts and profoundly influence teachers' guides and manuals throughout the country.

Aside from Way's contribution to the theory and practice of theatre for children in Canada, he seems also to be responsible for a trend toward the creation of 'theatre centres'.

As most Canadian companies operate primarily in a touring mode, 'home' is often little more than a booking office with rented space nearby, and the idea of having their own centre figures heavily in their plans. Wayne Fines has made the establishment of such a centre a major objective in his Youtheatre in Montreal.[1] Way-trained playwright James Brewer, who writes regularly for Land of the Young in Ottawa, publicly dreams of "starting a theatre centre similar to Brian Way's in London, a place where children could go on a Saturday morning and do any kind of creative work they fancied . . . within that framework there would be continual theatre, done by both amateur and professional people."[2]

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[1] Interview with Wayne Fines, Director, Youtheatre, Montreal, March 5, 1975.

[2] Audrey M. Ashley, "Meet the Theatre," Ottawa Citizen, 2 November 1974, p. 65, cols. 1-5.

Susan Rubes, in describing YPT's future plans, speaks of the pressing concern "for a theatre centre specifically designed for those under twenty":

> Young people deserve to have a theatre centre which is theirs alone . . . where they can watch plays, take part in performances, and study theatre all under one roof. . . . this need not be a glamorous expensive building. It could easily be incorporated into an existing building such as a warehouse. Flexible space is the prime requisite.[1]

Studio Lab, while perhaps the furthest from the Way method in its touring operations, has already made considerable progress toward the theatre concept. Sharing a converted church with the Bathurst Street Community Centre, the Community Resources Group of Studio Lab Theatre offers:

> . . . a variety of educational programmes in creative arts throughout its group of specialists in drama, dance, art and music. In addition to its own school, offering courses for persons of all ages, both amateur and professional, the CRG has developed programmes for universities, churches, senior citizens groups, recreation departments and other community groups.[2]

The British enthusiasm for participation through Theatre-in-Education programs was also reflected in the experiments of one Canadian company. Gloria Shapiro-Latham of

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[1] Young People's Theatre, Promotional Pamphlet 1972, p. 13.

[2] Studio Lab Theatre, Community Resources Group of Studio Lab Theatre, Promotional Sheet, n.d.

Playhouse Holiday reports that, although Way's plays some years ago lost their audiences, "there isn't a basic dissatisfaction with the underlying philosophy of participation." She continues:

> In fact if you are aware of our Theatre-in-Education program, you could realize we are using the form to very effective ends. In Theatre-in-Education programs a group of actor-teachers develops material based on a particular area in the curriculum. The program developed is expanded with one class of approximately 35 students. These students play an integral part in the program. They make moral decisions and articulate their thoughts and feelings. . . . We are beginning our fourth season of developing these programs for young people."[1]

Jane Heyman, who worked with Playhouse Holiday during the first TIE season and who had also worked with the Belgrade Coventry team which has served as model for subsequent developments in this approach, describes the Coventry team as "the best company I have ever seen."[2] It is not too early to suggest that the cycle of British influence is on its second turn.

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[1]Information in a letter to the author from Gloria Shapiro-Latham, Artistic Director, Playhouse Holiday, Vancouver, B.C., May 5, 1975.

[2]Interview with Jane Heyman, Instructor, Theatre Department, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., July 25, 1975.

Even the most casual observer of Canadian participation theatre can hardly fail to notice that the fervor and enthusiasm surrounding it in the early seventies eventually produced a counter reaction. Indeed, the last few years have been characterized more by criticisms of participation theatre than by encomiums. While some of the judgments have been directed at the excesses of its less-experienced exponents, the work of Way himself, to say nothing about his most skilled followers, has been questioned.

The most frequent Canadian criticisms of the Way method hinge upon the validity of the participation techniques and on the stereotyped responses they provoke in the young audience. Dr. Gisèle Barret, educational drama specialist and Associate Professor in the University of Montreal's Faculty of Education, describes the shouting, hand clapping, booing and hissing, and other prescribed responses as "demagogy."

> The children are not 'doing' things, they are just responding in a Pavlovian way. The actors even tell the children the way to do it; for instance, "clap your hands on your thighs." The children are just imitating what the adult has decided they must imitate.[1]

Although participation technique is alleged to enhance creativity, Gloria Shapiro-Latham of Playhouse Holiday finds

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[1]Interview with Dr. Gisèle Barret, Montreal, Que., April 23, 1975.

the majority of participation plays too manipulative to achieve this goal:

> Children are asked to participate in a controlled fashion which often does more to inhibit their creative expression than to assist it. . . . There are so many ways to be involved, and yet fifty children required to become a forest with little or no freedom whatsoever, is to me a very limiting way.[1]

Jane Heyman, who acted in one of Way's touring companies in 1969 and 1970, found the experience frustrating and the participation technique fraudulent:

> . . . because you had a script you had to get back to, and if the children came up with responses that were valid from their point of view, but which made it difficult for you to get to the point that you needed to be on the next page to finish the play, you had to reject what the child said.[2]

An exclusive emphasis on the participation approach is questioned by Helen Dunlop, Educational Officer in the Ontario Ministry of Education, and responsible for the ministry's drama program:

> I think that there is a great danger in assuming that if there isn't any vocal participation and response, there isn't any response. This is ridiculous. The response can be internal and just as valid and exciting.[3]

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[1]Letter from Gloria Shapiro-Latham, op. cit.

[2]Interview with Jane Heyman, op. cit.

[3]Interview with Helen Dunlop, Toronto, March 19, 1975.

Marigold Charlesworth, a professional director who has frequently worked with participation theatre, has become highly critical of Way's scripts:

> It seemed to me that the plays themselves were of little value, and that it was simply a means of stringing together a lot of devices which Brian Way had evolved in his work with young people. . . . Somehow you had to make the actors feel something more than was evident on the piece of paper that had a story on it. I heard more than one actor say to me, "I felt I was cheating the children."[1]

Charlesworth is also critical of the Way formula for production touring. She voices a general concern that the heavy schedules demanded of touring teams are too exhausting to assure first-class work, and she would prefer that the actors "not have to rush from school to school and gallop from performance to performance meanwhile getting themselves all hyped up for the next round of going into the classroom to talk to the children."[2]

Richard Courtney has observed that many theatre trained actors lack the sincerity and skills to function in the intimate surroundings of participation theatre. "Participation theatre," he stresses, "hinges on human honesty." Because the

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[1] Interview with Marigold Charlesworth, Artistic Director of Hexagon, National Arts Centre, Ottawa, Ont., June 2, 1975.

[2] Ibid.

lighting, scenery and theatrical effects of traditional theatre are not used in participation productions, "it is essential for a high level of speech and movement skills to be involved - the very techniques of being an actor."[1] All too often the young actors touring in participation productions today have neither the highly developed skills nor the emotional maturity to perform effectively under the demanding circumstances of participation theatre.

Sensitive to the mounting criticisms of the Way method, his early colleague and co-founder of the London Theatre Centre, Margaret Faulkes, observes that the very considerable problems related to participation and control "require understanding and expertise without which some companies and audiences may have unhappy experiences which cause them to question the validity of this approach to theatre for young audiences."[2]

Although Way exercises little direct influence today on Canadian educational drama and participation theatre, his indirect influence through his book, his past visits, and his

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[1] Interview with Professor Richard Courtney, Toronto, May 6, 1975.

[2] Faulkes, "Audience Participation in Theatre for Children," op. cit., p. 38.

courses for Canadian drama specialists have shaped this form of theatre, guided it to a flourishing professional status, and influenced the theatre tastes of millions of tomorrow's Canadian theatre goers.

CHAPTER III

STUDIO LAB THEATRE FOUNDATION

Since its inception in 1964, Studio Lab Theatre Foundation of Toronto has pioneered the production of participation plays for young Canadian audiences.[1] Founded by its current artistic director, Ernest J. Schwartz, an American with an M.F.A. in theatre from Yale, Studio Lab's productions until recently have been exclusively participational.

Schwartz has written all but one of the company's fourteen productions, and his eclectic interests can be seen in all of the company's multifarious activities: workshops, in-service teacher training, province-wide tours, summer parks programs, community-related activities, drama classes, and week-end in-theatre performances for both children and adults.

As its name implies, Studio Lab is essentially experimental and could be described as an art theatre for children. Schwartz has conducted extensive research into the function of participation, the effectiveness of visual design based on child art processes, and the involvement of the community in the theatre process. His plays explore a wide range of variations on the theme of individualism, from impertinence and irreverence to self-searching and independence.

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[1] Although Holiday Theatre produced Brian Way's The Storytellers and The Stranger in 1959, it did not become regularly involved with the participation form until 1966-67.

Schwartz became interested in participation theatre while taking a workshop with a Way-trained teacher; he immediately connected the British approach with North American attempts to involve the public in the artistic process, as with happenings, action painting, and sculpture-in-the-park. "The public's energy isn't being consumed in their jobs as it used to be," Schwartz concluded. He felt "they were now beginning to demand to be let in on the artist's world."[1]

The history of Schwartz's company is really the chronicle of a search for a viable theatre form for children, and his evolution to date falls into distinct phases. In the first, which covers eight seasons from 1964-1972, he experimented with a range of imaginative participation techniques in a series of light-hearted fairy-tale adaptations. Dissatisfied with the limited opportunities for character development in fairy-tales, Schwartz, in a second phase, turned to more serious themes, to traditional dramatic values, and to an exploration of the design component in production. In these more recent plays (1972-1975), participation is no longer the objective, but merely a useful technique in the pursuit of theatrical impact. During this second phase, in 1974, Schwartz

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[1]Jim McPherson, "See, Dr. McLuhan, Ernie has This Idea," Telegram, 3 October 1968.

made a brief auxiliary experiment in which he involved a northern community as participants and observers in the creation of one of his major productions. In his last presentation, however, participation has been temporarily abandoned in favour of traditional dramatic objectives and intense concern with visual design.

Fairy-tale adaptations in Schwartz's first eight seasons included Pinocchio, Jack and the Beanstalk, Cinderella, Hansel and Gretel, Pigtales (based on the Three Little Pigs), Sam and the Tigers (sequel to Little Black Sambo), and perhaps the most typical and successful of all, a rock musical version of Aladdin. The fairy-tale model was chosen "because there's great substance to them, there's a good deal of conflict, a very strong storyline, and strong characters."[1] But Schwartz is no respecter of tradition. In Aladdin, for instance, the tale is told in the language of the street; the action is frequently interrupted with catchy tunes sung to rock music; and the hour is filled with slapstick that would not be out of place in a Marx brothers' film. "In addition to Aladdin, the hero, there's a cape-swinging villain, a wicked magician named

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[1]Interview with Janet Stark, Tour Director, Toronto, March 20, 1975.

Basoora, and a hip, finger-snapping Genie who bursts out of his lamp to a strong rock beat singing 'scooby scooby doo'."[1]

In the story, Aladdin, a poor street urchin, learns he would win the Princess' hand if he could bestow great wealth upon her. Basoora, the magician, engages Aladdin's help in obtaining a magic lamp, which Aladdin keeps for himself. The magician tricks Aladdin's mother into exchanging the old lamp for a new one, and with the Genie's help, carries the Princess off to Africa. Aladdin pursues them, tricks Basoora into drinking his own evil potion, and escapes with the Princess. With his new wealth, he is able to win not only the Sultan's favour, but his daughter as well.

The script is little more than a scenario for Schwartz's imaginative use of participation, and his stunning and surprising visual effects. The whole audience is directly involved from the first scene, as a rather puckish Aladdin introduces himself to his new young friends, and sings them the first of six rather slangy and engaging songs. Early in the play, as the princess passes in procession, everyone, including the audience, is commanded to avert their eyes. Suddenly the conflict moves from the stage to the whole hall, as the youngsters

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[1]Ernest J. Schwartz, Aladdin (Studio Lab Theatre script, unpublished, p. 12.

try not to peek, and are spotted by the Grand Vizier and the Police Chief. Since the procession will not proceed until all cover their eyes, the whole audience is now involved in the proceedings. From here onwards, the children are expected to participate voluntarily, sending out warnings and advice. For instance, when Aladdin is trapped in the cave, the children are expected to cry out "Rub the lamp!"; and most of the time they do:

> ALADDIN: The gates are locked. Help. Someone help! Get me out. How am I ever going to get out of here? (USE LAMP IF KIDS TELL YOU, IF NOT PICK UP LAMP AND SAY) I wonder why Basoora was so interested in this lamp. (TO AUDIENCE) You mean rub it like this? (GENIE APPEARS R.C.)[1]

Schwartz believes that participation helps the child to discover his emotions and, through expression, to become more creative. As Aladdin draws to a close, the children are given an opportunity to participate cathartically in the climax of the play in a most ingenious manner. They have learned that the villainous Basoora cannot stand the sound of laughter, and they are invited to laugh the villain into submission, freeing Aladdin and Princess to return to their palace. As the evil magician squirms under their screaming laughter, the children enjoy their vengeance, release their emotions, and

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[1] Aladdin, op. cit., p. 12.

permit the play to move on to its happy conclusion.

In play after play, Schwartz invented new participation devices and crowded more and more opportunities for involvement and emotional release. For example, in Cinderella:

> The audience participates like mad. Children are invited to be horses to draw Cinderella's coach when the old fairy god-mother goofs on a magic spell. They help turn rats and lizards into coachmen and willingly help Cinderella clean up her house.[1]

"The Studio Children's Theatre," writes Helen Wallace, critic of the Free Press, "encourages its young audience to scream, shout, run upon the stage, direct the action and even warn the players if they're in danger. The result is a wild noisy echo of screams and laughter from kids whose honest, spontaneous reactions leave no doubt that they're totally involved in what's happening on stage."[2]

Not all of Schwartz's critics agreed about his exhuberant use of participation. Bob White, the dramaturge of the Playwright's Co-op and an admirer of Schwartz's work, has reservations about such exaggerations of the Brian Way formula.

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[1]Yvonne Crittenden, "New Zing for Cinders and Co.," Toronto Star, n.d., from Company files.

[2]Helen Wallace, "Children's Theatre Involves City Audiences," Free Press, n.d., from Company files.

"Lesser people are content with getting kids excited," he stated. "I don't know whether that's educational or not. I think people are kidding themselves if they think that to release all that energy is necessarily creative."[1]

Schwartz, too, wondered if participation was a satisfactory end in itself, and if it was the most effective road to emotional involvement and release. In Sambo (later known as Sam and the Tigers),[2] he made his first tentative departure from the fairy-tale mold and wrote a modern sequel to Little Black Sambo. In this play there was character development, a serious theme, and some very skillful dramatic writing. Schwartz writes:

> We explore the problem of a young boy expelled by the village witch doctor for long hair and groovy clothes. In the jungle he meets three tigers, whose ring leader has decided that Tigers have been put down long enough and it's time to take over the jungle again, even if it means Violence.[3]

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[1] Interview with Bob White, Dramaturge, Playwright's Co-op, Toronto, March 18, 1975.

[2] Schwartz often revises his plays and occasionally changes the titles.

[3] Schwartz, in a letter to Ontario Arts Council, dated 1971 only.

Rejected by his own people, Sambo helps the outsiders, the Tigers, form a musical group and triumph through art, not war. He has thus earned his right to be accepted and honoured by his own people.

Schwartz's theme of rejection and redemption was well suited to his young audience. Sambo's problem arose from his long hair and groovy clothes, and he spoke, sang and acted with the independence of a contemporary twelve-year-old.

Schwartz's dramatic technique matures in this work. In less than a dozen words of dialogue, he introduces a group of establishment characters, sets the mood, and prepares for the action to follow:

> ELDERS ENTER INTERMITTENTLY FROM OPPOSITE AREAS AND ASSEMBLE ONSTAGE.
> UDJY: No train yet.
> ODJY: No?
> UDJY: No.
> IDJY: No train yet.
> ELDERS SIT DOWN TO WAIT FOR THE TRAIN AND FALL ASLEEP IN THE PROCESS.[1]

Having disposed of the elders with Brechtian ease, Schwartz introduces Sambo, the hero, who engages the audience immediately in easy complicity. What had taken nine pages to accomplish in Aladdin, is handled in a few lines:

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[1]Schwartz, Sambo (Studio Lab Theatre script, unpublished), p. 1.

SAMBO ENTERS, ALSO LOOKING FOR THE TRAIN. HE SPOTS THE CHILDREN.
SAMBO: Oh hi, you guys. The train hasn't come in yet, has it? (CHILDREN RESPOND) Boy. My name's Sambo. I live here in this village in the jungle. It's called Wong Wingle. I came to see if the train's come in. I tell you, there's nothing to do in this town, nothing at all. (SNORES FROM THE ELDERS) Oh, I see the village elders have arrived. This one is Udjy. This one is Odjy. And this one is Idjy. They come down here every Thursday morning to see if the train's brought anything for them. It never does but they are always here. Hey, do you want to play a trick on them? (CHILDREN RESPOND) Well, you make that sound and they'll think the train's coming into town. Okay? So everyone on this side make the sound "Chug-chug-boom-boom." And everyone on this side make the sound "Clap-clap-shhh-shhh." (SOUND BEGINS) Okay, everyone make the sound of a whistle (CHILDREN MAKE WHISTLE SOUND)

ELDERS: (JUMPING UP IN EXCITEMENT, GREAT FLURRY AND NOISE) Mail train! Mail train! Everyone Hurry, etc.
SAMBO: (TO CHILDREN) Hey, you guys, I guess it worked pretty good. I wonder what they are going to do when they find out it didn't come into town?
ELDERS: (OFFSTAGE) Ooooo! Sambo! Quick! Come quick! Boxes for you!
SAMBO: Hey, what do you know. The mail train did come into town![1]

As the action develops, Sambo maintains an easy contact with his young accomplices in the audience, sharing secrets and feelings, admitting mistakes, and asking for advice and suggestions. The children are now part of the action of

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[1] Sambo, p. 1.

the play, and engage in chants and magic spells to help the action along. Their self-consciousness is gone, and when the witch doctor invites a small group of them to join him on stage for Sambo's sacred initiation dance, a third of the way through the play, he has no trouble enlisting volunteers. With the whole audience chanting and clapping, and the children on stage performing ritual movements, the excitement nears a peak:

> GROOVY MUSIC STARTS AND SAMBO DRAWS CHILDREN AWAY FROM WITCH DOCTOR. DANCE CHANGES TO MODERN ROCK DANCE.
> DOCTOR: Stop! Stop! Don't anybody move! This is not the sacred dance of our village. What is this? Everyone, take your seats. (CHILDREN RETURN TO THEIR SEATS).[1]

Sambo is expelled from the village. The participation has peaked. Although it will be used effectively later in the action, the development of character, theme and conflict now takes precedence and is handled with traditional dramatic methods.

Sambo marks both the end of the fairy-tale phase of Schwartz's work and the beginning of the more serious second phase. Schwartz explains his feeling about the change in emphasis:

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[1] Sambo, p. 7.

> To me, when you end with developmental drama, it all seems too easy. My own predilection was more towards theatrical experience, whereas, I think, Brian Way was more inclined to end with the developmental drama experience. Now I am striving to find the way to include participation and at the same time to have a more refined artifact.[1]

The second phase is marked by increased emphasis on character development and traditional dramatic values, and by greater concern for visual design, accompanied by a gradual reduction of participation. In Magic Mountain (1972), there are several participation sequences. In his mini-version of Midsummer Night's Dream (1973), some vocal participation was used in the early sequences, and volunteers were invited to join in the closing dumb-show. When Huckleberry Finn was first produced in 1974, some minor participation was used but was not integral to the action and was dropped during the tour. Gulliver's Travels, his most recent play, was conceived without participation, but Schwartz plans to experiment with prerehearsed children from each school in the next season's version of the script.

Financial considerations also played a part in Schwartz's decision to reduce participation. If a play is to be fully participational and all children are to have an

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[1]Interview with Schwartz, July 25, 1975.

opportunity to take part, then in Schwartz's view, the audience should be limited to 100 at most. Unfortunately, the economics of touring with Equity actors does not permit such small audiences. If a company reduces or eliminates participation and strives instead for theatrical impact, then the limitation on audience size is reduced. The company then can play to audiences from 400 to 1,000, can afford rehearsal of four weeks rather than two, and can tour more remote areas with a full complement of light scenery.

In the first of his 'serious' second-phase productions, Magic Mountain, Schwartz turned to a Canadian Ojibway legend from Manitoulin Island. In the original story, when an Indian boy comes of age he goes to Dreamer's Rock and has a vision of his future. But since Schwartz's group was working with Dance Instructor Vera Davis on Kabuki Theatre style at the time, Schwartz transposed the tale to Japan.

In the play, young Kyoto and his friends plan to frighten old Meloki the hermit, but end up frightened themselves as the old man surprises them with his magic, and offers to show them their future. Only Kyoto is bold enough to accept the challenge, and is carried on the back of an eagle to the Magic Mountain where he has a series of progressively more sophisticated visions of himself as hunter, warrior, merchant,

salesman and union organizer. Rejecting these roles, he seeks to become a leader and, in a general vote by the audience, is elected Grand Vizier. "As merchant, he learns to make pots (in mime), as salesman to sell them, and as union organizer he prevents exploitation by the master potter. There is audience participation (a Schwartz must) and youngsters get to be part of the whole pottery sequence. Presumably it is because he led them through an effective strike that they all voted for him as Vizier."[1]

The pottery-making sequence involved a structured two-stage participation process. In the first stage, the factory owner's daughter shows Kyoto how to shape a pot, and bake it, and paint it. As she demonstrates each process in mime, Kyoto makes mistakes and has to be shown over and over again. By the time he has learned the different steps, so has every child in the audience. In the second stage, six or eight volunteers are hired by Kyoto as factory workers to use their new skills on the assembly line, and for the rest of the sequence, become a part of the play.

The theme--what one will be when one grows up--is the most serious and universal yet treated by Schwartz, and stands

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[1]Herbert Whittaker, "Magic Mountain Scales Peaks," Toronto Globe and Mail, n.d., Company files.

in striking contrast to the rollicking shenanigans of Aladdin. As Kyoto matures through his learning experiences to become the chosen leader of his people, Schwartz, too, breaks away from the fantasies and fireworks of his earlier work, and finds within his own restless search for purpose, a deeply personal basis for his art.

Magic Mountain impressed the critics by a quality which would characterize all subsequent productions, an integration of theatrical style and visual design. "This is an uncommonly engaging production in which a simplicity of approach provides beautiful clarity and precision,"[1] writes Urjo Kareda in the Toronto Star. Whittaker describes it as "a beautiful piece of theatre, glorified by the contribution of Mary Kerr, the talented designer," in which

> . . . a scarlet octagonal platform is set up in the midst of young faces, backed by an imposing personage who is the orchestra and later doubles as Emperor.
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> From beneath the Emperor-Orchestra's throne emerge the players to assume the various characters in the story of Kyoto's dream. Each is conceived in the Japanese fashion - karate-style garments in red and white, augmented by occasional headdresses.[2]

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[1]Urjo Kareda, "Quality of Children's Shows on Way Up," Toronto Star, n.d., Company files.

[2]Whittaker, op. cit.

Schwartz's productions had always been noted for their visual verve. As early as 1968, Whittaker noticed that "Ernest Schwartz's concoctions for young play-goers are very stylish, rather superior and unusually chic."[1] Schwartz is deeply interested in the visual arts, and frequently draws illustrations from them to explain his work. "I have always tried to base my fundamental design approach on the way children create visually," he states. For example:

> In Huckleberry Finn, the kids like to dress up in old clothes, and that's the way the show is made. All the funny costumes came out of old clothes. In Gulliver, the design follows the process of children's art. The actors wear grey jumpsuits and all of costuming is done by taking black sashes and tying them on in different ways, the way kids would do it. And all of the set is done just with ladders and inner tubes and toilet bowl plungers - things kids play with. The plunger becomes a gun, a sword, a scepter for the king.[2]

In their play, children easily pretend that an old box is a stagecoach, or some overturned chair, a house; and Schwartz seeks simple means to encourage this facility in his productions. "This stirs the young imaginations," writes Herbert Whittaker:

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[1]Whittaker, "Inventiveness with Swift's Gulliver," Toronto Globe and Mail, 30 December 1974.

[2]Interview with Schwartz, July 25, 1975.

> His /Schwartz's/ greatest hurdles, the alternation of Gulliver's comparative heights, he overcomes most cleverly. In Lilliput, Gulliver lies on a plank between two ladders, and the others shout to him from below . . . In Brobdingnag, the ladders serve as underpinnings for the big royal ladies and Gulliver squeaks up to them.[1]

Like Slade, Schwartz believes that child drama is comparable to child art. Like Way, he believes that theatre for children should be based on the way children create. Unlike Slade and Way, however, he sees child art and drama as part of a continuum that includes the whole community, and for a number of years has been experimenting with participation at differing age levels in his Theatre centre. "I thought of it all," explains Schwartz,

> . . . as part of a broad spectrum with the professional actor at one end and the children playing naturally at the other. And in between, were all the variations people use in role playing in their everyday lives. And so I experimented in workshops to apply professional training to adults. We tried games, we tried open houses where we invited adults to come in and played games with them. We tried participation theatre with them.[2]

In the late sixties and early seventies, Schwartz gradually introduced a wide variety of para-theatrical programs into the community. A Classroom Rarticipation Program

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[1] Whittaker, "Inventiveness with Swift's Gulliver," ibid.

[2] Interview with Schwartz, July 25, 1975.

brings six actors for twelve-day drama workshops. There is a children's program offering activities in music, dance and art, as well as drama. A similar program is available for teenagers called Student Activity Group in Total Theatre Arts. Another trains nurses and other professionals in drama and theatre techniques. Schwartz offers demonstrations of leisure activities for the aged and conducts occasional credit courses at the university and college levels.

By 1971, the combined budget for the various programs and theatre tours reached $130,000 and involved thirteen permanent and seventeen temporary employees.[1] While other companies dreamed of establishing a theatre centre, Schwartz had made it a reality, and although it stretched his financial and creative resources seriously, it answered a deep-felt need to relate to the community in which he lived and worked. "It was always an aim of ours to carry theatre close to the core of activity where people lived."[2]

His various community involvement programs permitted Schwartz to research the relationship of adult theatre to children's theatre, and to bring new concepts to his productions. As he de-emphasized participation during his

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[1]Studio Lab Theatre production files.

[2]Interview with Schwartz, July 25, 1975.

performances, Schwartz sought to increase the participation of the community in the creation of his production from start to finish. From this notion was born the concept of an In-Residence program. In the summer of 1973, with funding from the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, and an LIP grant, Schwartz invited communities to take part in the creation of the 1973-74 season's productions:

> Communities may take advantage of a theatre In-Residence. The company will open its rehearsals to the community, offer informal talks and programs, and develop workshops to meet the needs and interests of the community.

He requested the communities:

> . . . to provide a temporary home for the theatre to rehearse and to offer performances, and some contribution toward the cost of programming (the amount depended on the ability to pay). Outside of the Toronto area, accomodation will also be required.[1]

Two communities responded. Cochrane, which had welcomed Studio Lab's tours for seven seasons, found a deserted schoolhouse in nearby Porquis for rehearsals, workshops and community activities, a $1,500 grant, and housing for a staff of twelve over the four-week program. Here the group prepared their relatively elaborate production of Huckleberry Finn,

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[1]Studio Lab Theatre, Press Release, No. 4, October 23, 1974, p. 1.

which then toured schools in the Cochrane district:

> Students visited rehearsals, and spoke with our staff. Neighbourhood children often watched work in progress and even participated in some of our warm-up sessions, at their request. The children later brought their parents to an evening dress rehearsal.[1]

The creation of a Schwartz play is an interesting process to see. He brings his actors an outline, invites them to improvise around it, and from that writes a script. His actors are more mature than most, averaging 27 years of age, and usually stay with him two seasons. They share his interests in community involvement, and are entrusted with carrying out his community programs. Those who took the trouble to visit his In-Residence Studio in Porquis had an opportunity to see a complex artistic process move efficiently from concept to performance.

During their stay, the company also visited a number of classrooms to talk with students, give lessions in make-up, and demonstrate clown routines. Creative drama classes were conducted, as well as a workshop for teachers.

A similar program was instituted in Peterborough, where the company and members of the community developed Radisson, a documentary play based on the life and times of the eighteenth

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[1]Studio Lab Theatre, The Cochrane In-Residence Program, pamphlet, p. 2.

century fur trader and explorer. The four-week program was sponsored co-operatively by Trent University and Sir Sandford Fleming College.

At the end of the pilot experiment, Schwartz wrote briefs in support of an on-going In-Residence program, and was disappointed to find lack of interest and support from the funding bodies. Pleased with his results but frustrated in his efforts to prolong the experiment, Schwartz returned to Toronto where he resumed his playwriting and production career. Whether the program will be revived or not would seem to depend on fund-raising efforts and, as Schwartz admits, "Unfortunately, this does not allow me the time to develop enough as an artist, and so I guess, I have to put it aside for a while and see what other way I can make it happen."[1]

In the details of company structure, promotional material, touring methods, teacher kits and follow-up techniques, Studio Lab differs little from other companies using the Brian Way method. Schwartz's originality lies in the fundamental questions he asks of the participation process, and the daring with which he puts his answers into practice.

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[1]Interview with Schwartz, July 25, 1975.

More of an artist than an educator, Schwartz used participation to enhance the emotional involvement and eventual catharsis of his audience rather than to move them toward developmental or learning goals, as Way set out to do. When he used participation, it was well integrated into the structure of his plays, and served to establish identification and even complicity between the audience with the hero in the opening scenes, to maintain and deepen contact as the play progressed, and finally to give physical expression to the emotions which climax the action.

The common theme of his plays, the almost militant independence of his hero as he searches for fortune or a meaningful career, characterizes Schwartz's own restless pursuit of purpose. Although his stated objectives vary from season to season, there is a continuity of development in his writing that marks him as a playwright of originality and stature.

Schwartz is equally independent and alone in his almost mystical belief in the continuity between child, adult and community. In refusing to grade his plays, in persisting in his attempts to integrate his work into the community and the community into his work, Schwartz seems to be flying against the conventional wisdom of his funding institutions.

Perhaps the recent Canada Council decision to support theatre for children along the same lines as adult theatre indicates that Schwartz's problem is more one of timing than of philosophy. When Ontario officialdom decides to decentralize the arts and enrich the cultural life of rural communities with more than occasional tours, then Schwartz's dream of In-Residence companies may become a reality.

CHAPTER IV

YOUNG PEOPLE'S THEATRE

"The story of Young People's Theatre is a story of growth,"[1] says a 1973 brochure describing the company. Founded in 1966 as a non-profit organization "to put quality theatre into the lives of Ontario school children,"[2] it is "an entirely professional enterprise,"[3] which in its current (ninth) season, has seven touring and in-theatre companies offering fourteen productions, and employing ninety-five actors and staff. In 1,225 performances this year, it reached 420,000 children.[4] Of all the theatre ventures in Canada, only the Stratford Festival has audience figures to rank with these.

Susan Rubes, the founder, "is probably the shrewdest, toughest, most prodigious producer in Toronto,"[5] according to Toronto Star critic Urjo Kareda, who states:

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[1] Young People's Theatre, What's YPT?, brochure 1973, p. 2.

[2] Young People's Theatre, brochure, n.d., p. 3.

[3] Ibid., p. 2.

[4] Interview with Ellen Craver, Administrator, Young People's Theatre, Toronto, Ont., May 5, 1975.

[5] Urjo Kareda, Toronto Star, 26 June 1972, p. 26 (Company files).

> Part of Mrs. Rubes' success certainly lies in her financial incisiveness; she runs an extraordinarily tight budget, winnows out money wherever it is available and has a flair for private fund-raising. The other fact of her style is her exceptional eye for talent, her subtle understanding of what will work.[1]

The late Nathan Cohen was immensely impressed with "the efficiency with which it is run. . . . Young People's Theatre is an organization with a deep sense of obligation about expenditures, whether public or private, and a determination to stretch the use of each dollar as far as possible."[2]

Mrs. Rubes, who trained professionally as an actress in New York, calls herself "executive producer" rather than the more usual "artistic director," and her bias towards production rather than artistic direction is expressed in the wide range of theatre styles offered. Although she has produced as many participation plays as other companies dedicated to this form, her emphasis is on the training of audiences rather than on the development of the individual child, as was stressed in an interview with the company's administrator, Ellen Craver:

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[1]Kareda, Toronto Star, p. 26.

[2]Nathan Cohen, Toronto Star, 13 January 1971, p. 70 (Company files).

> One of the purposes of the plays going into school is to develop a theatre going audience . . . we really want to develop their taste for theatre . . . that's why we are in the schools. We want more theatre goers. That's really a worthy reason.[1]

The company's fundamental purpose is "to bring professional theatre to young people of all ages throughout Ontario."[2] In descriptive literature, comparatively few references are made to didactic purpose, although a number of recent productions are clearly educational in intent. Underlying all statements is the assumption that theatre is a sufficient end in itself. Although the company is non-profit, great stress is laid upon growth and financial success as a measure of achievement.

From the beginning, Mrs. Rubes has engaged or commissioned established professional directors and writers for her productions. Margaret Faulkes was brought to Toronto to direct and co-direct the original Brian Way plays--The Mirror Man and The Dog and the Stone. Other directors in early seasons included Dan Macdonald from Holiday Theatre, Robert Sherrin, and Leon Major. Playwrights included Margaret Faulkes, Marigold Charlesworth, Len Peterson, Ron Singer, Eric Nicol and Carol Bolt.

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[1] Craver, May 5, 1975.

[2] From the first paragraph of most programs and publicity material prepared by YPT.

By engaging Margaret Faulkes to direct the Brian Way productions of the first season, the company was assured of the best of the Way tradition, and also of a very considerable success with young children. Over the next four years, five other Way plays, On Trial, The Clown, The Decision, The Bell, and Balloon Faces, were added to the repertoire and toured Ontario elementary schools. The touring companies, which rapidly grew in number,[1] were all based on the Way pattern.

From 1969, Canadian participation plays, all built on the Way model, began to appear and by the end of 1970-71 season, displaced Way's plays from the repertoire. In addition to The Riddle by Marigold Charlesworth, Len Peterson's Almighty Voice and Let's Make a World, and Eric Nicol's The Clam (originally written for Holiday Theatre), YPT had offered Larry Zacharko's Land of Magic Spell, specially designed to teach spelling and punctuation, and Michel Gelinas' Les Blob and Malouf which aimed to teach French.

The company has also produced sixteen in-theatre plays and musicals for children of all ages, ten plays for high

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[1] "Young People's Theatre in the 1971-72 season presented twelve performing companies. These companies performed for over 400,000 youngsters in 172 Ontario towns, employing 62 artists." Promotional Sheet 1972-73 season.

schools, and five plays for elementary schools, none of which use participation techniques. Most of these were written by Canadian writers Carol Bolt, Ron Singer, and the team of Pat Patterson and Dodi Robb. Themes include Canadian folklore, adventure, history, philosophy, and community life.

In addition, a variety of theatre forms has been introduced through a program of visiting companies which has included The Black Box Company,[1] The Canadian Mime Theatre, The Velleman Puppets, Toronto Dance Theatre, and Victoria's Company One,[2] and co-produced with the Black Box Company an elaborate Christmas production of Jan Rubes' Seven Dreams, adapted from Anderson's fairy tales.

Young People's Theatre is thus characterized by a multiplicity of styles, themes and forms: and although participation theatre represents an important part of their touring activity, and their income, it is only one of several forms of theatre for children for which the company is known.

Because of the diversity of productions, the large number of companies, and the heavy touring schedule,

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[1] A Czechoslovakian development, The Black Box Theatre adds a surrealistic dimension to the stage through the medium of black light, utilizing fluorescent materials.

[2] An improvisational theatre company from Victoria, B.C., founded in 1971 by Carl Hare, to present "events and workshops to groups in the community." Performances are in a constant process of evaluation as a result of audience feedback.

considerable organization is required.[1] The basic control mechanism is the evaluation form, which teachers are asked to fill in and return to the company's administrative office in Toronto after the performance. The evaluation sheet requests comments on "the content of the program; reaction of students; general comments and suggestions; and suggestions for future performances."[2] The forms fill three functions: first, they allow the director and playwright to see how a new production is being received, so that changes can be made; secondly, they provide an indication of the tastes of their audiences; and thirdly, they facilitate an administrative check on the standards of the various touring companies. As Craver explains:

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[1]The staff is composed of administrator, production manager, production secretary, production assistant, fund-raising manager, accountant, and general secretary, in addition to Rubes as executive producer.

[2]Craver, May 5, 1975.

> Daily we process the evaluation sheets which are on the back of the forms which we send to the teachers for their preparation and follow-up. These evaluations enable us to follow the play's progress during its run. We like to hear the both sides. We love to hear the positive that it is working well, but it's very important for us to get from a teacher the difficulties the student is having in his or her class, and whether she feels, the following year, the same level play should be brought to the students, and how we should approach the different classes. Mrs. Rubes has found, in the last several years, the evaluations have been important enough to show her that children's awareness of the world and their education is so much more advanced than it was in years past, that she is able to choose more sophisticated plays for the younger grades.[1]

In choosing a participation play for elementary school tours, Rubes looks for one that is rich in opportunities for creative response. "This means emotional response as well as physical response evoked by music and rhythm. Reaching out with his own imagination is immensely satisfying to a child."[2]

In addition to its developmental value in exercising the child's imagination and emotional responses, participation is "vital for those early ages because they learn that theatre is a viable form, and that it does help them in their education.

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[1]Craver, July 14, 1975.

[2]Young People's Theatre, What's YPT? Pamphlet, n.d., p. 2.

It is a good form of audience development . . . it also keeps them from getting bored and falling asleep, if they lose track of the story."[1]

As with the evaluation forms, and the use of participation, many of the techniques used by the company serve as a business as well as an artistic purpose. Following the first season's in-theatre productions, the cast used to visit the schools and spend a good deal of time working with the children either that afternoon, or on the following day. However, in the interests of efficiency, the follow-up session was shortened to fifteen minutes and conducted immediately after the presentation of the play.[2] Craver points out that during the fifteen minute period:

> The youngsters are given time to discuss the play with the actors, to give their own interpretation of the play, argue their own points of view, stretch their minds, and use their creativity through theatre.[3]

From a business point of view, claims Craver, "it's one way of marketing a product. If you offer the schools a

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[1]Craver, July 14, 1975.

[2]The company also provides suggestions for a second follow-up to be carried out by the teacher in the classroom.

[3]Craver, July 14, 1975.

show without a follow-up, and charge the same price as another company with a follow-up, they'll take the other company because they are getting more for their money."[1]

Some of the actors complain that the fifteen-minute follow-up is too short and would prefer to have more time to work with the children:

> We don't have time, apart from the fifteen minutes after the show, because of our bookings . . . it would be ideal to go in and break up the children into groups before the show, and work with them creatively for ten minutes. But we don't have time to do that either. . . . I think we are cutting ourselves short. I think it could be something more.[2]

Another problem posed by the rapid expansion of the company is the lack of specialized training for actors. Some come fresh from theatre schools; others have professional experience in adult theatre; but few have studied developmental drama theory, and many lack knowledge of the developmental process and the capacities of elementary school children. In a typical example, an actress who had been forced to interrupt her performance and admonish the audience for its noisiness; afterwards complained, "What is apparent in the great number

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[1]Craver, July 14, 1975.

[2]Interview with cast of Land of Magic Spell and Almighty Voice, May 8, 1975.

of children is the lack of respect /for performers/. . . . I have never done children's shows before. I am used to adult audiences and it is appalling to discover what is happening with children and what is considered permissible. Enthusiasm is one thing but bad manners is another. Something has to be done about it."[1]

This surprising insensitivity reflects company policy. "If there are audiences of very rambunctious children, and the actors cannot control them, one of them whom the director chooses, will break character and turn to the children and say 'Will you please be quiet, we cannot continue on with the play', and that usually surprises them so much that they are quiet."[2]

Brian Way maintains that problems of control should be foreseen and dealt with in the writing of the play; or, failing that, in the direction. If participation is indiscriminately encouraged, and the play has been written and directed with insufficient controls, then the actors have little choice but to interrupt the performance (always a brutal act) and discipline the children, which does little to encourage their involvement.

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[1]Interview with cast of Finding Bumble, March 20, 1975.

[2]Craver, July 14, 1975.

In general, the actors seem pleased with their engagements, and despite the rigorous physical demands of the schedules, they enjoy tackling the unexpected problems provided by the young audiences:

> Participation theatre is one of the most difficult and challenging because each day the format is different. You have a basic outline, but that changes too because of the kids, their reactions to you, the way you feel that day, and your interactions with other characters, and because it is in constant change, it is a constant challenge, and it improves through the change. To add to that, since we do the play 200 to 250 times, it makes it much more exciting for an actor that each performance is going to be different.[1]

With seven to twelve companies of actors performing several hundred times per year, a considerable pool of professional experience is building in Toronto, and this must be considered a major accomplishment of Young People's Theatre. The company can also take pride in the number of playwrights it has developed, often with government support:

> The Canada Council and the Ontario Council have encouraged the production of more Canadian plays, and the YPT has followed that pattern. Susan Rubes has been a pioneer that way, because she really feels that Canadians should see works of people who are here.[2]

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[1] Interview with the cast of Land of Magic Spell, May 8, 1975.

[2] Craver, May 5, 1975.

Although many original plays are submitted to the company, most productions arise from commissions to professional writers. Usually a director works with the writer on the assignment. Playwright Carol Bolt and director Timothy Bond, commissioned to develop a multi-media play called Finding Bumble, collaborated for a year and produced three drafts before production could begin. Even then their work was far from over. Revision continued throughout rehearsals:

> We rehearsed for two weeks with the writer and director, with many re-writes and additions to the play. The week that we opened, there was a lot of discussion as to what changes should be made, and then we had another rehearsal for which the writer brought new additions and we changed around the ending.[1]

However, the economics of productions frequently forbids such extensive collaboration between the company and the playwright. Ellen Craver explains: "It is much better for the playwright to finish writing the play by the time they start the rehearsal and only make the very slightest changes necessary, because it is rather difficult for the actors to learn all the lines in two weeks plus making all the changes."[2]

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[1] Interview with the cast of Finding Bumble, March 20, 1975.

[2] Craver, May 5, 1975.

Perhaps the best known of the new plays commissioned by Young People's Theatre is Len Peterson's Almighty Voice. Peterson, once Canada's leading radio dramatist and an occasional writer of stage plays, carefully researched an Indian incident in Saskatchewan in the 1890's, and developed a simple but powerful morality play on the cultural clash of Settlers and Indians, in which an audience of Grades 4-6 students is asked to take sides and take part.

In choosing a prairie theme, Peterson hoped to bring his young audience a richer understanding of this bleak region than he remembered as a Regina schoolboy, "when important events took place in England, men thought great thoughts in Greece, painted beautiful pictures in Italy, invented machines in the States, frolicked in France and made stirring music in Germany. But in Saskatchewan? Men grew wheat, and a few kids got to be good enough hockey players to make it into NHL. That's about all there was to the Prairies."[1] Peterson's objective in writing the play was to communicate an appreciation of prairie history, a respect for Indian values, and a sense of responsibility "for our trickery and injustices."[2]

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[1]Leonard Peterson, Almighty Voice (Agincourt: The Book Society of Canada, 1974), p. viii.

[2]Ibid.

Marigold Charlesworth, the YPT director who worked with Peterson on his commission, believes it to be the finest participation play in her experience:

> He has really understood how to use the things that Brian Way evolved and turned them into a re-play about something very important in history. Somehow in that 50 minutes, he compressed the whole story, the feeling behind it, and the possibilities and the misunderstandings and the problems faced on both sides. . . . Almighty Voice is that kind of children's theatre that, when it's well done, is just as fascinating for discerning adults.[1]

A description of a production of this play, based on the published text of the original 1970 creation and on its recent revival,[2] will provide a basis for evaluation of the company's approach.

Before the actors arrive, the teacher "warms-up" her class with preparatory activities, suggested by the company in a neatly printed kit:[3]

> Using your school library and resource centre, research the following topics:
> (a) The dance of Indian tribal life.
> (b) Indian clothing and cookery.
> (c) The place of religion in Indian life, including myths and legends, birth, marriage, and burial customs.
> (d) The Indian and his environment, including his attitude towards, and his interaction with nature.

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[1] Interview with Marigold Charlesworth, Artistic Director, Hexagon, National Arts Centre, Ottawa, June 2, 1975.

[2] Performance observed at Lyngate Junior School, Toronto, May 8, 1975.

[3] Young People's Theatre, Teacher's kit for Almighty Voice.

(e) The lives and customs of the Plain Indians.
(f) The North West Mounted Police in Saskatchewan.

The children, perhaps 200 of them, are led to the gym, while the three actors, actress and stage manager complete their preparations. The children are seated by teachers in sections, four or five rows deep around the central area where the actors are installing the rostrum, the flag, and the three poles which will be Almighty Voice's tepee. If the company's suggestions have been followed, the school bell, air-conditioner and public address system have all been turned off.

There are no lights to dim, no curtains to go up. Actor A, dressed as a Cree brave, shakes a rattle; Actress C, dressed as Cree woman, plays a drum; Actor B, in North West Mounted Police uniform, sounds a bugle; Actor D, clothed as an 1890's settler, hums through a kazoo:

B: We've something we'd like to try --

C: A play --

A: About things that really happened.

D: To a young Indian --

B: By the name of Almighty Voice!

A: And we want all of you to be actors in the play.

D: First off, who'll make the best settlers?

C: To take over the Saskatchewan prairie --
near the end of the last century --

B: When Almighty Voice got into trouble and frightened the whole Northwest!

C: You're new settlers -- for the moment all of you -- pioneers, from the States, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Britain, Europe -- and a few from Asia and Africa.

C: And to turn you into loyal citizens we have to teach you to say: 'God save Queen Victoria!'

(She and the others work on the CHILDREN, in a variety of accents, till it comes out boisterously --)

SETTLERS: God save Queen Victoria![1]

The whole audience have become Settlers, and are further encouraged to chop trees, saw and hammer their shacks together, and break the ground with a plow and team of horses. Shortly afterwards, they are all invited to become Indians, and learn to dance and chant, and finally are sworn into service as regular constables in the North West Mounted Police and are put through rifle drill. The cultural differences between Indians and Settlers have been established; the Mounties are shown to be there to defend the whiteskins' law; the principal characters have been introduced; and through whole-audience participation, the children have been involved. The stage is now set to develop an incident which will illustrate the insoluble conflict between Settlers and Indians.

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[1] Peterson, Almighty Voice, pp. 4-5.

In a series of rapidly changing scenes, reminiscent of radio drama, Peterson shows a young brave, Almighty Voice, carried off to prison for shooting a Settler's cow to feed his starving tribe. In prison he is jokingly threatened with execution. Taking the threat seriously, he escapes, and is forced to kill a Mountie to preserve his life. An intensive manhunt leads to his death, an ironic illustration of the misunderstanding that separates the two races.

If Schwartz had written this play, the children would have been encouraged to identify with Almighty Voice, and to participate in his cause throughout the play. There would be no confusion as to where they should place their loyalties. Peterson's purpose, however, is not to take sides but to make his young audience forget their stereotypes, and appreciate the high irony or "agony" of the Settler-Indian cultural clash. To accomplish this, he must prevent his audience from identifying too strongly with his peace-loving, playful, victimized hero. In the first scenes (as described earlier), he has the children participate in each group's activities. Then he arbitrarily divides them by sections into Indians, Settlers and Mounties, irrespective of any preferences they may have. To prevent the Indian group from identifying too closely with Almighty Voice, they are subsequently bribed and cajoled into

providing an informer to betray him to the Mounties. Finally, the Settlers and Mounties are asked to provide reinforcements to participate in a deadly but exciting manhunt for Almighty Voice. Peterson succeeds too well in his Brecht-like alienation. The children were so confused about their loyalties that, in at least one performance, some of the Indians volunteered to take part in the slaughter of their fellow tribesman.

There is no question that the play has a powerful appeal for adults, but there is some doubt that nine to eleven year olds, trained by thousands of television shows to identify and triumph with good, are emotionally mature enough to appreciate the fine irony of Peterson's play, and to shoulder the burden of guilt arising from their willful participation in the hero's death.

There is no doubt, however, that the children were strongly affected by the theatricality and immediacy of the experience, as they reveal in the question and answer period with the actors which follows the play. "Is that your real hair?" "How did you jump like that?" "Why did you become an actor?" "Is that a real Indian song we learned?" Their questions brought patient and detailed answers which outlined the process of theatre.

As is usual in follow-up sessions, only an occasional question touches on the dramatic situation or characters. Intellectual consolidation of ideas comes later, in the classroom. If the teacher follows the suggestions of the company in the case of Almighty Voice, she might ask her class to:

1. Imagine that you are an Indian who stood on a small bluff overlooking the battle between Almighty Voice and the Mounties. Compose the entry you would make in your diary that night; OR
2. You are a settler with relatives in Eastern Canada and are living near the One Arrow Reserve at the time of Almighty Voice's stand. Write your relatives describing the last encounter of Almighty Voice with the Mounties.
3. Write a poem about how you felt after you saw or read the play "Almighty Voice"; OR
4. Paint or draw an incident from Almighty Voice which stirred your imagination.[1]

The teacher then completes the evaluation form and returns it to the company, often with drawings or poems from the children in her class.

First presented in 1970-71 and revived for 400 performances in 1974-75, Almighty Voice has been seen by over 100,000 school children and will undoubtedly be seen by many hundreds of thousands more.

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[1]Young People's Theater, Teacher's Kit for Almighty Voice.

Susan Rubes has created an elaborate apparatus devoted to quality professional theatre for children, and Almighty Voice is certainly an example of such theatre. If there is no artistic policy beyond that, the company is a vehicle for the writer. If it has no collective "soul," the writer provides the vital artistic direction. Ultimately, then, Young People's Theatre is a writer's theatre, and its principal value lies in the products it develops.

The company's weaknesses stem from its relentless pursuit of growth, which has forced it at times to rely on actors, writers and directors trained in adult theatre but lacking in experience and understanding of the needs and capacities of the developing child.

CHAPTER V

PLAYHOUSE HOLIDAY

For twenty-two seasons the Playhouse Holiday Company has been producing shows for young audiences and, like Young People's Theatre, the main objective for much of its history has been to build a taste for theatre. "The child audiences of today are our audiences of tomorrow," was the argument in 1968. "The effort that is expended to bring them first class theatre will undoubtedly pay dividends in the future."[1]

From 1953 to 1967, under Joy Coghill's artistic direction, the company set the pattern for Canadian professional children's theatre, proved that Canadian playwrights could provide a regular supply of viable plays, expanded the company to two sections, and delighted over a million British Columbia school children during fourteen seasons. Coghill then took over the direction of the parent Vancouver Playhouse Theatre, as a new generation of theatre-trained youngsters reached theatre-going age.

Over the next four seasons (1967-71), under the successive direction of Jane Heyman, Hutchison Shandro and Don Shipley, Playhouse Holiday moved heavily into participation theatre; it mounted fifteen productions of Brian Way's plays;

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[1]The Playhouse Theatre Company, "Background" (mimeographed paper, November 27, 1968), p. 3.

expanded to three companies, and doubled its annual audience to 200,000 children.

The 1971-72 season, however, marked a turning point for the company. Its activities were reduced, and for the first season in many, no Brian Way plays were included in the repertoire. Don Shipley returned the company to its pre-Brian Way status and prepared a brief, requesting the Vancouver School Board's support for a pilot Theatre-in-Education program. In the summer of 1972, he visited several TIE companies in England, and on his return, funds allocated to Playhouse Holiday's poetry program were transferred by the school board to the pilot project.[1]

For the 1972-73 season, two regular touring companies, each composed of five actors and a stage manager, made their usual rounds of the province's schools, each travelling in a company bus and playing two to three performances per day, not always in the same school. The program consisted of The Popcorn Man, a musical fantasy by Dodi Robb and Pat Patterson, and Androcles and the Lion by Aurand Harris.

In the fall of 1972, Shipley engaged Gloria Shapiro (an American-trained specialist in creative drama and theatre for children, then teaching at the Manitoba Theatre School)

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[1]Interview with Shapiro-Latham, August 1, 1975.

as Education Director of the Holiday Playhouse.[1] He brought back Jane Heyman, who had been working with Brian Way in London, and in February 1973, after two weeks' rehearsal, produced Canada's first Theatre-in-Education program with the following aims:

1. To provide a link between theatre and education.
2. To ally the best in theatre techniques of communication with the most progressive movements in education.
3. To enhance traditional subject matter using drama and theatre skills.
4. To involve the children in every stage of the action using the conventions which operate in children's games.
5. To put full effort into the mainstream of education as opposed to simply recreational drama.
6. To stimulate an interest in the topic by means of direct involvement and experience.
7. To provide a practical aid to both formal and informal education, to both curriculum and extra-curriculum subjects.
8. To provide a meaningful experience for the children and to leave the teacher stimulated to continue the work.[2]

The primary objective was no longer to build audiences for professional theatre, but to stimulate children "to learn traditional subject matter by means of their direct involvement and experience. They are provided conceptual problems

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[1] When Shipley left in 1974, Gloria Shapiro-Latham filled his post as Artistic Director.

[2] MacKinnon, op. cit., pp. 575-576.

which require them to evaluate human experience, make moral decisions, and articulate their thoughts and feelings."[1]

The TIE approach differs from traditional participation theatre in four fundamental ways. First, the theme material comes directly from the curriculum of a particular grade or year, while participation theatre treats topics sufficiently general to interest a range of children from three or four school years. Secondly, the scripted play is replaced with a scenario (containing occasional scripted sequences) to be improvised with the students. Thirdly, audience size is reduced from participation theatre's 200 to a single class, usually about thirty-five children. Finally, the duration of the experience has been extended from one hour to nearly three, including briefing, the improvised happening or performance involving all the children, and a discussion follow-up.

For the pilot program, a team made up of a director (Shipley), a writer (Sharon Pollock), three actor-teachers (including Shapiro-Latham and Heyman), a stage manager and a musician, created two productions--The New Canadians for grade four, and Last Night I Had a Dream for grade seven.

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[1]Playhouse Holiday, "New Directions Through Education" (mimeographed paper, n.d.), p. 1.

The New Canadians dealt with the environmental factors that initiated the emigration of the Icelanders, Mennonites and Doukhabors to Canada. "Student involvement began in the classroom with warm-up activities relating to the school environment, thus introducing the main throughline of the program."[1] A prepared story-theatre scene introduced the students to Viking life. Throughout this first section, students were guided by the actor-teachers through discussion, decision-making, and role-playing. The next sequence took the Vikings to Iceland, and involved the students in occupational tasks--building a communal sod house, singing and the telling of sagas. Each sequence was connected with the present, to allow the students to relate the historical events to the present situation of ethnic groups.

In each section of the program, the team invented new ways to brief the students on the background incidents in which they were to be involved. In the last section, dealing with the Doukhabors, for instance:

> . . . the students were divided as soldiers of the Archbishop of Russia and the Tzar, and the Doukhabors. This time, factual information came through their involvement in secret meetings held by opposing camps. Because of their roles, students

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[1] Playhouse Holiday, "Theatre-in-Education Grade Four Programs" (mimeographed paper, n.d.), p. 1.

> were directly involved in the conflicts existing between the Doukhabors and the Russian government, the war with the Turks, the persecutions, means of protest, and freedom songs. Following the ways of the Icelanders and Mennonites, the Doukhabors made their way to Canada.[1]

After the improvised action in the gym, the students returned to their classroom where they analysed the experience with their teacher and the members of the team.

The companion program, Last Night I Had a Dream, introduced grade seven students to the theme of superstition from Julius Caesar's premonitions to their present-day equivalents.

Each program toured fifteen elementary schools in Vancouver, and played to a total of thirty separate classes over a three-week period. At the year-end, the company could report, "the program, while still at a very experimental stage in its development, has been most successful and has met with approval from both educators and drama personnel."[2]

Jane Heyman, now a University of British Columbia drama and theatre instructor, feels that the children benefited from the initial TIE program in a variety of ways. According to Heyman, the children learned history by re-

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[1] "Theatre-in-Education Grade Four Program," p. 2.

[2] Playhouse Holiday (19th season), 1972-73 fact sheet, p. 3.

enacting it; they were the Doukhabors, the Mennonites, the Icelanders, and they would not quickly forget it; at least some of them learned what it must feel like to be a part of a minority group, and thus their social awareness was raised; since the company provided so few props, and so little scenery, the children were compelled to use their imagination; because they had to work together, they practised co-operation and social skills; a number of children, normally shy, found that they were able to involve themselves effectively in the activities and, in general, enjoyed the beneficial personality development associated with drama; finally, the classroom teacher, whether experienced in drama or not, could learn how to use drama techniques in new and interesting ways. She might even be stimulated to include it as an occasional classroom approach to suitable curriculum material.[1]

The first season revealed two basic problems associated with the initiation of a Theatre-in-Education program. First, since school boards were asked to put up more money to benefit fewer students than in traditional theatre programs, a great deal of patient explanation of the benefits was required. To compound the financial pressure, "Canada Council and other

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[1]Interview with Jane Heyman, July 25, 1975.

arts councils feel, and rightly, the school districts should be responsible for funding."[1] The second major problem confronted by the new team was the lack of time for suitable preparation. "The actors had to get to know each other," says Heyman, "they had to have time to develop the program, and to experiment with it. We only had two weeks to develop it, which is ludicrous."[2]

In their second TIE season (1973-74), several changes were made in the format. First, the rehearsal period was extended from two to three weeks. "The first week was used to fully research the topic, collectively build the script, and discover possible areas for student involvement."[3]

The theatrical event itself was also restructured. In the new (and current) formula, the first part of the program is a briefing session of up to thirty minutes' duration in the classroom, where the actor-teachers, in costume and character, involve the students in curriculum material which relates to the production, and prepare them for the main "game" to be

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[1] Information in a letter to the author from Shapiro-Latham, June 3, 1975.

[2] Heyman, interview, July 25, 1975

[3] "Playhouse Holiday 1973-74 Season," Fact Sheet, n.d.

played in the gym. The gymnasium has been decked with hangings and scenery to represent the scene of the dramatic action: an island, a laboratory, or a town. There, for almost two hours, the students and their actor-teachers act out a series of events or confrontations, take moral decisions, and explore creative solutions to basic social problems. In the third part, back in the classroom, the events and feelings of the experiences are examined and conclusions are confirmed.

While the two 'traditional' companies toured Little Reflections which Shapiro-Latham adapted from St. Exupery's The Little Prince, for primary grades; and Arthur Fauquez' Reynard the Fox for intermediate grades four to seven; the TIE team presented two new programs. WUDJUSAY, a program about the history and future of communications for intermediate grades, was written by Pollock and directed by Shipley. Last Chance, an Atlantis-like fable revolving around politics and collective decisions, written by Sheldon Rosen and directed by Shapiro-Latham, was destined for grade seven. This tour lasted six weeks and played twenty-eight schools.[1]

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[1] "Playhouse Holiday 1973-74 Season," Fact Sheet, n.d.

In 1974-75, when Shipley left Playhouse Holiday, Shapiro-Latham was appointed Artistic Director and continued to develop, not only the Theatre-in-Education program, but also the traditional touring program. "The theatre I seek to provide," she declared, "really does not have the confines of participational or non-participational theatre. Rather, Playhouse Holiday seeks good theatre for children which may fall under any form."[1]

That same season, the two traditional companies presented Larry Fineberg's Waterfall (directed by David Latham) to primary grades, and Ken Campbell's new play Paraphranalia (directed by Shapiro-Latham) to intermediate grades. The TIE team, now in its third season (1974-75), produced Hard Times (written by Carolyn Zapf and directed by Shapiro-Latham), a study of a small Saskatchewan community during the depression, for grade six. The Mighty McDougal, a program about science for grade three, was written collectively by the company and directed by David Latham.

Again, rehearsals for the TIE program lasted three weeks, following which they toured for ten weeks and gave 106 performances to 3,710 students, an average of exactly 35

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[1]Letter from Shapiro-Latham, May 5, 1975, p. 2.

students per performance.[1]

Shapiro-Latham introduced a number of innovations in the TIE team approach. She prepared a kit of 'pre-materials' relevant to the Hard Times theme, which the sixth grade teacher was to give each student before the performance. The kit consisted of a newspaper, the Ambrose Express, an amusing single broadsheet covered with historical trivia from the depression era, a glossary of slang and jargon of the "dirty thirties," and a sheet covered with close-ups of faces of men and women who might have lived in Ambrose, Saskatchewan (pop. 500) at that time. Each of the students was asked to choose a face and become that character for the half-day experience.[2]

Shapiro-Latham also introduced a break in the program, a half-time recess, where the younger children could relax from the strain of the experience. Rather than send the children to the playground, which would break the atmosphere, they were given relaxing tasks--painting murals or making preparations for forthcoming events in the program.

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[1]Playhouse Holiday, "Statistical Report for 1974-75 Season," n.d.

[2]Idem, "Theatre-in-Education Programme Hard Times."

Another modification in the TIE formula reduced the amount of scripted material in the program. In the early productions, the teams had prepared a number of formal theatrical sequences drawn from their repertoire of theatre forms (story theatre, mime, dance, story-telling, vaudeville routines) which were used to introduce subsequent sequences, or to illustrate concepts too difficult for the students to handle themselves. Shapiro-Latham revised the structure to challenge more strongly the student's ability to improvise on given material. "In the last couple of programs," she explains, "the young people were totally involved with the actor-teachers from the very beginning to the very end."[1]

As the scripted formal theatrical sequences were reduced or eliminated in favour of increased student participation, the need for stronger control was felt. The team discovered that the best controls lay in the structure of the improvised experience; in fact, "the controls are the material,"[2] says Shapiro-Latham. In a properly designed scenario, each opportunity for freedom of action should end with a new challenge which would focus the children's attention and

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[1] Interview with Shapiro-Latham, August 1, 1975.

[2] Ibid.

structure the experience. (The team noticed that the program fell apart when some students were not sufficiently involved and lacked a precise function.)

Control begins in the classroom briefing period, when each of the four actor-teachers is assigned eight or nine students for the duration of the experience. Each actor-teacher must ensure that every student in his group has some clear objective or function to fulfill at all times, and that each one understands what is going on. The nature of the briefing and introduction in the classroom varies with the type of material, but the actor-teachers always relate to the children through a role, and never as teacher. They must have teaching experience, however, "so that they would know when to draw out the students, when to hold them back, and when to give them more re-inforcement."[1]

The briefing over, students and actor-teachers move from the classroom to the gymnasium where they find that an environment has been created to replace the feeling of "school" with one of place and period related to the theme. To avoid stock responses evoked by traditional stage settings, Shapiro-Latham uses architects rather than set designers to create the physical background. In Last Chance, for instance:

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[1]Interview with Shapiro-Latham, August 1, 1975.

> With a hundred yards of black plastic and what seemed like endless streams of fishnet, the environmental designer transformed the gymnasium into 'The Island of Oreo'. From the excess of black plastic we molded and contoured the earth and from above we suspended the fishnet sky. Plexiglass trees, rocks, cheesecloth and rope filled the yet uninhabited island.[1]

More recently, however, the trend has been to reduce and simplify the scenery and technical effects. "It's all kept at a minimum, because we want to discourage the teacher feeling this is a production she can't do herself. We have learned," says Shapiro-Latham,

> . . . that the simpler the set and costumes, the more confidence a teacher has to extend the experience. We would like to develop a programme specifically for a classroom utilizing only the things the classroom teacher has available.[2]

The creation of a TIE program differs considerably from the scripting and rehearsing typical of both Way's traditional participational and non-participational theatre. The theme is chosen from the curriculum in discussion with teachers from the classes to be visited. "The questions we always ask initially," explains Shapiro-Latham, "are 'What is it we want

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[1] "Theatre-in-Education's Last Chance," Fact Sheet, p. 1.

[2] Letter from Shapiro-Latham, June 3, 1975.

them to learn?' then 'How and what are the ways to go about it?'."[1] Usually the educational objective is stated as a broad concept and goes beyond the communication of facts and figures to the examination of underlying values and their relevance to the students' everyday lives. Once the theme is chosen and the educational objectives clarified, then, as Shapiro-Latham explains, "the actor-teachers develop the program with the director. We don't start with a script; it's an evolutionary process throughout the rehearsal."[2]

The form the material takes depends on the target age group and what can be learned from the teachers about the particular attitudes of the classes to be visited. "During the rehearsal period, we sometimes bring groups of children in and do certain sections with them, or take a particular idea to a school to try it out."[3] At the end of the rehearsal period, a scenario is produced listing the objectives to be achieved in the classroom briefing, a list of the thirty or more sections to be improvised in the gym, and finally, a detailed presentation of the particular work methods students might

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[1] Interview with Shapiro-Latham, August 1, 1975.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

use to develop and resolve the problems posed by the theme.[1]

Challenging as the program concept is, its future is threatened by lack of actor-teachers. TIE personnel must combine skills in two very specific disciplines, and no suitable training program yet exists. Next season, Shapiro-Latham hopes to extend the program for a full year, so that actor-teachers may be engaged on a full-time basis.

The rewards for the actor-teacher are considerable. Jane Heyman speaks of the great delight she found in developing the subject matter into a viable program. "It's an exciting art form. For me it's the most satisfying way of working with children, and I'd rather develop my own scripts with a group of actors, and then remain flexible to respond to the children."[2] Since the subject matter of each play makes its own particular demands and poses its own artistic problems, Heyman thinks "you can do a lot of exciting work with the forms of theatre as well."[3] When compared to the limitations faced by the participation play actor, who must memorize and rehearse

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[1] A typical scenario for The Mighty McDougal is included in Appendix A.

[2] Interview with Heyman, July 25, 1975.

[3] Ibid.

a script within a two week rehearsal period, who has to work within the confines of the script and keep the participation of the children within a tight time span, the freedom of the TIE actor to create his material and to vary it in every performance to suit his audience, is both challenging and rewarding.

In Heyman's view, the success of the Vancouver experience justifies its extension to a much wider area. "I think," she suggests, "that pockets of teachers should form their own teams, and they should be paid by the educational authorities, and be based in a single area. Then they can get to the kids frequently, and have good resort to the teachers as well."[1] These teams then could concentrate on subjects or themes related to the studies of the particular children in their own areas.

Shapiro-Latham would like to extend the program throughout the province, and hopes that "by continuing to enhance traditional subject matter, Theatre-in-Education will become a total part of every child's learning."[2] In the future, she hopes, TIE methods "will become a regular part of teacher

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[1] Interview with Heyman, July 25, 1975.

[2] Interview with Shapiro-Latham, August 1, 1975.

training, and whether or not they actually use it, teachers should feel comfortable in at least knowing how."[1]

The appearance of TIE in Canada, with its primary emphasis on teaching and development, stands in sharp contrast to the traditional theatre forms employed by Playhouse Holiday and the other Canadian companies, with their emphasis on the quality of the theatre experience. Participation takes on new meaning in the prolonged and intense atmosphere of a TIE experience. If Heyman is correct in her assessment of the benefits which TIE brings to children, both educational and developmental objectives are met in new and effective ways.

Educationally, the TIE approach is holistic, environmental and experiential, rather than analytical, abstract and objective, as in traditional stepped learning. If we apply Dewey's definition of education as the reconstruction of experience, then the TIE program, with its deeply involving techniques, serves to wed cognitive and affective learning in a more meaningful way than traditional pedagogical methods have managed to do.

It is too soon to evaluate the work of the Playhouse Holiday TIE team. As they are quick to admit, the process is

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[1] Interview with Shapiro-Latham, August 1, 1975.

still in an early stage of its evolution. The company brings to the program twenty years of experience with a variety of forms of theatre for children, and a hard-won reputation for quality, innovation and seriousness within the west coast educational community. Whatever its future development may be, Playhouse Holiday's TIE team has already created an ideal model of responsible experimentation in the use of theatre participation as an aid to experiential learning.

CONCLUSION

With the solitary exception of the Playhouse Holiday Theatre-in-Education team, professional participation theatre in Canada is based on the Way method. Way's twin objectives in developing his method were to provide a theatre experience and a developmental drama experience.

Many claims and reservations have been voiced about the two objectives. A number of these have been presented in this study. None has as yet established that the function of participation theatre is in any way different from that of presentational theatre; to arouse and release the emotions of the spectator or, in a word, to entertain. In participation theatre, as in all theatre, emotions are aroused through identification with one or several characters who are struggling with one or several problems. The often unexpected resolution of the problems provides a satisfying emotional release.

Participation theatre's value seems to lie in its ability to enhance this basic theatrical experience for young audiences. First, as Craver points out, for the very young, frequent involvement through active participation aids concentration through a relatively long experience. Then, as Schwartz's experience has shown, it helps children identify

with the hero from the first direct contact; it gives them the satisfaction of helping the hero solve his problems; and it intensifies their catharsis as they participate actively in the resolution of the play. Finally, because the children have influenced the play, however slightly, they feel a deep bond between themselves and this responsive art form.

Those who have witnessed children involved in a successfully mounted production of a well-structured participation play cannot fail to conclude that the experience is intense and satisfying, and might reasonably assume that these children will be predisposed to theatre in later life.

The technique, however, is fraught with difficulties and demands great skill of its practitioners. If participation becomes an end in itself, the theatre experience invariably suffers. If too many children are involved, the experience of each is diminished. If participation experiences are not balanced with appropriate controls, external discipline is required and the value of experience is lost. If the play is not finely tuned to the maturity of the audience, or too wide an age range is invited to attend, then boredom and restlessness spreads.

Critics of participation theatre frequently complain of its austerity and its manipulativeness. If manipulation

is bad in itself, then since all theatre is manipulative, it is all bad. If austerity is bad in itself, then the solitary mime, who holds an audience enthralled throughout an entire evening with just his costumed body, is bad. These arguments may apply to particular instances, but not to participation theatre in general.

Way and his followers maintain that participation theatre also provides a developmental drama experience, and that such qualities as creativity, self-assurance, imagination and intuition are fostered by the act of participation. While there may be little doubt that classroom drama, over a period of time, contributes effectively to the growth of these qualities in the child, there is little reason to believe that a brief participation play is any more effective than a presentational production of equal appeal in promoting the child's personal growth.

Theatre-In-Education has borrowed Slade's actor-teacher concept and Way's classroom drama methods. These elements are combined into a new form of improvised participation theatre whose primary purpose is to provide an intense learning experience of curriculum-related material. In the process, the personal development of the individual child may also be promoted, and his interest in theatre encouraged. Though

these claims have not yet been substantiated, it seems reasonable to assume that all three objectives are attained to some degree in a successful TIE experience.

Because the groups are small, the preparation meticulous, the experience intense, and the collaboration between student and actor-teacher long, it seems inevitable that some measurable degree of learning does in fact take place. Since the students are constantly encouraged by their actor-teacher to become involved imaginatively and co-operatively in the subject's underlying issues and to make and carry out difficult decisions, it may be reasonably assumed that their personal resources are developed. And since the students work intimately with skilled actors, play roles, struggle through conflict to resolution in a dramatically structured activity, some effective understanding of the theatre experience can be expected.

If a TIE program is to succeed in its objectives, the writer must create strong characters, representative of the basic issues inherent in the subject. He must invent challenging expositional or dramatic units which correspond to the educational objectives in intensity and importance, and structure them into a three-hour experience whose emotional line is not unlike that of a full-length play.

Assuming an effective structured scenario, the burden of success falls on the actor-teacher. Actors with teaching experience are as rare as teachers with theatre skills. Before any substantial number of schoolchildren can be reached, a considerable training program must be developed. If TIE's growth is to be solid, it will inevitably be slow.

It must also be recognized that TIE programs are expensive. Any teaching program that emphasizes the individuality of individuals costs money. Extensive research on the cost-effectiveness of Theatre-in-Education will be required before the substantial sums necessary for its general implementation will be forthcoming.

Despite its use of theatre techniques, TIE is fundamentally an education method to enhance awareness of complex issues, and its financing should come from funds allocated for teaching rather than for theatre or the arts. It complements rather than competes with traditional participation theatre. It does, however, share a basic need for training and research.

In a decade, participation theatre has grown to a half-million dollar-per-year undertaking with annual attendance figures close to a million children. Despite its growing importance, it relies upon actors with little training in its specialized techniques and limited understanding of the

audience for which it plays. If participation theatre is to improve, and TIE to develop, it would seem that training programs are a fundamental priority. Even the barest program should offer, in addition to appropriate acting training, history and theory of theatre for children, some developmental psychology and pedagogy, and a study of the now numerous and often interesting plays this new art form has produced.

Many of the claims made on behalf of participation theatre, classroom drama, and Theatre-in-Education should be substantiated by research, not to demonstrate independence from the British models, but to build a base for original growth. Companies and playwrights would benefit from critical evaluation by both scholar and newspaper critic, as would the funding bodies and individual schools, who must now make decisions based more on faith than on the knowledge that arises from established facts and informed opinion.

McGill Drama educator John Ripley, in an address to the Drama in Education Conference at Victoria in 1971, enjoined his colleagues to assume their responsibility in research. Although he referred to drama, his words apply to participation theatre and TIE with equal force:

> We must admit that while we feel our kind of activity is valuable, we cannot yet prove it save by the witness of our own eyes and intuitions. We must then cease a good number of our wild claims . . . and settle down in an ordered and logical way to evolve a coherent body of knowledge, as distinct from opinion, as to how Drama functions in the learning environment.[1]

A promising start has been made. Research and training are the tools to transform that promise into a regular and meaningful part of the life of tomorrow's child.

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[1]Dr. John Ripley, "What Shall We Tell the Caterpillar?" Canadian Studies in Drama, 9 (September 1973), p. 10.

APPENDIX A

SCENARIO FOR THE MIGHTY MCDOUGALL: T-I-E (April/May 75)

A. CLASSROOM

1. Arrival of Professor Kendrell, Doctor Browse and Beth.
2. Introduction of characters.
3. Arrival of Professor Angstrom.
4. Why they are there.
5. The letter.
6. Some information on Professor McDougall .
7. The magic power machine.
8. Actor/teacher's machine (perhaps demonstration).
9. The two halves of map on how to get to workshop.
10. Speculation on what might be going on.
11. Division into groups (at random), handing out of triangles, filling in names.
12. Hats if they have them.

B. JOURNEY FROM CLASSROOM TO GYM

C. GYM

1. Calling for Professor McDougall.
2. Looking around workshop in groups.
3. Re-inforcement of characters (students), what kinds of things have they invented?
4. Helping to build mystery: What has happened to Professor McDougall?
5. Point out (by means of discovery) the things in the workshop: working areas, etc.
6. Collecting everyone together, being seated.
7. Brainstorming: the fate of McDougall .
8. Hang invention designs on clothes line.
9. More information about McDougall from actor/teachers. Would this be the kind of thing he would do?
10. What do we do then?
11. We try and find him.
12. How?
13. Investigation .
14. Discussion of different ways; each person has their own way.
15. Importance of recording data.
16. Revelation of <u>necessary</u> experts.

17. Finding of unfinished inventions.
18. Divide into colour groups.
19. Exploration of unfinished inventions.
20. Main problem areas:
    a) Exploration with actor/teacher of at least two main areas.
    b) Working in minor areas and clues. Record findings: what could have happened to McDougall? Drawing what Machine looks like. Drawing predictions of future.
    c) The idea spot: Data Book.
       Library: McDougall's diary.
       Equipment Centre: Danger area.
21. Sharing times: groups sharing with other actor/teachers. Groups sharing in order to learn more.
22. Possible bases for scenes:
    a) Beth receives a psychic message.
    b) Kendrell thinks he has the answer.
    c) Dr. Browse reads something fantastic in one of McDougall's books.
    d) A group makes a great discovery.
    e) A student comes up with a great idea.
    f) Someone thinks Dr. Browse is a spy.
23. The finding of the dome clue.
24. Finding the plan.
25. Taking apart the pods.
26. Laying the triangles.
27. Taping them.
28. Raising the dome.
29. No McDougall.
30. Inside an exciting sound and light show.
31. Message about Magic power machine.
32. Come out and build machine.
33. Appearance of Professor McDougall.
34. Explanation of and by McDougall.
35. End: what can happen now?
36. After the end discussion or programme and revelation and introduction of real actor/teachers.

SOME THINGS TO BEAR IN MIND:

1. BRAINSTORMING:
    a) Criticism is ruled out.
    b) "Free-wheeling" is welcomed.
    c) Quantity is wanted.
    d) Combination and improvement are sought.

2. CHECKLIST TECHNIQUE:
   a) Put to other uses.
   b) Adapt
   c) Modify
   d) Magnify
   e) Minify
   f) Substitute
   g) Re-arrange
   h) Reverse
   i) Combine

3. CREATIVE THINKING:
   a) Fluency: the ability to come up with a quantity of ideas.
   b) Flexibility: the ability to investigate a problem from many perspectives in the search for possible solutions.
   c) Originality: the ability to come up with new or novel ideas.
   d) Elaboration: the ability to build upon an idea or original stimulus, looking at many implications and ramifications of the problem.

4. MINOR AREAS AND CLUES:
   a) Footprints, fingerprints
   b) Pieces of clothing
   c) Laundry and grocery lists
   d) Secret language
   e) Mr. McDougall's notebook: Pages from it (Mirror Writing?) information about invention.

5. PICTURE EXPLORATION:
   a) Look at picture
   b) What's happening?
   c) What can you tell for sure?
   d) What do you need to know to understand what is happening?
   e) What caused it to happen?
   f) What will be the result?

6. UNUSUAL USES OF ORDINARY OBJECTS

7. JUST SUPPOSE...
   Give an improbable situation and then just suppose it were so.
   EG: Just suppose when it was raining all the raindrops stood still in the air and would not move as they were solid.

8. PICTURE CONSTRUCTION:
   A piece of coloured paper in a curved shape. Think of a picture or object in which this would be an important part. Use shape as a basis of a picture. Try to think of a picture no-one else will think of. (A title?)

9. Ask to produce imaginative images suggested by each of a series of four sound effects ranging from familiar and well organized sound to one consisting of six strange and relatively unrelated.

10. Repeated closed figures: see how many objects or pictures you can make from the triangles. The triangles should be the main part of whatever you make. Tell a story with them.

APPENDIX B

A Tentative Handlist of Professional Participation Theatre Companies for Child Audiences as of September 1974

Alberta Theatre Projects	Calgary, Alberta
Caravan - Theatre Calgary	Calgary, Alberta
Carousel Players	Box 372 St. Catherines, Ontario
The Citadel on Wheels/Wings	10026-102nd Street Edmonton, Alberta
Global Village Theatre	27 St. Nicholas St. Toronto, Ontario
Holiday Theatre	118 Earl Street Kingston, Ontario
Globe Theatre Productions Limited	2125 Eleventh Avenue Regina, Saskatchewan
Land of the Young	Box 1536, Stn. B Ottawa, Ontario
McArthur Theatre Arts	Attached to Queen's University Kingston, Ontario
Playhouse Holiday	The Playhouse Theatre Centre of B.C. 575 Beatty Street Vancouver, B.C.
Stratford Children's Theatre on Wheels	Stratford Children's Theatre Foundation P.O. Box 275 Stratford, Ontario

Studio Lab Theatre Foundation	25 Lennox Street Toronto, Ontario
The Pendulum Theatre Touring Company	379 Roslyn Avenue Montreal, Quebec
Young People's Theatre	525 Adelaide St. East Toronto, Ontario
Youtheatre	1585 St. Lawrence Blvd. Montreal, Quebec

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Brochures; pamphlets; newspaper clippings; promotional material; programs; News from Y.P.T.; production lists: 1971-72, 72-73, 73-74, 74-75; evaluation sheets; teachers' kits.

Youtheatre, Montreal, Quebec.
Brochures; programs; outlines of objectives; schedules of productions from 1968-75; scripts.

5. Participation Plays Studied

Campbell, Paddy. Chinook. Toronto: Playwrights Co-op., 1973. First produced by Arts Centre Company, Calgary, Alta., 1968.

Deverell, Rex. Shortshrift. Toronto: Playwrights Co-op., 1972. First produced by Globe Theatre, Regina, Sask., 1972-73.

_____. The Copetown City Kite Crisis. Toronto: Playwrights Co-op., 1974. First produced by Globe Theatre, Regina, Sask., 1973-74.

Foord, Isabelle. Shaman. Toronto: Playwrights Co-op., 1970. First produced by Edmonton Experimental Theatre, Edmonton, Alta., 1970.

Nicol, Eric. The Clam Made a Face. Vancouver: Eric Nicol. First produced by Holiday Theatre, Vancouver, B.C., 1967-68.

Peterson, Leonard. Almighty Voice. Agincourt: The Book Society of Canada, 1970. First produced by Young People's Theatre, Toronto, Ont., 1970-71.

Schwartz, Ernest J. Aladdin. Toronto: Studio Lab Theatre Foundation, unpublished. First produced by Studio Lab, Toronto, Ont., 1969-70.

_____. Gulliver's Travels. Toronto: Studio Lab Theatre Foundation, unpublished. First produced by Studio Lab, Toronto, Ont., 1974-75.

_____. Huckleberry Finn. Toronto: Studio Lab Theatre Foundation, unpublished. First produced by Studio Lab, Toronto, Ont., 1973-74.

_____. Jack and the Beanstalk. Toronto: Studio Lab Theatre Foundation, unpublished. First produced by Studio Lab, Toronto, Ont., 1969-70.

_____. Magic Mountain. Toronto: Studio Lab Theatre Foundation, unpublished. First produced by Studio Lab, Toronto, Ont., 1972-73.

_____. Sambo. Toronto: Studio Lab Theatre Foundation, unpublished. First produced by Studio Lab, Toronto, Ont., 1971-72.

Watts, Irene N. Listen to the Drum. Edmonton: The Citadel-on-Wheels/Wings, unpublished. First produced by Citadel-on-Wheels/Wings, Edmonton, Alta., 1973-74.

_____. Beast in the Bag. Edmonton: The Citadel-on-Wheels/Wings, unpublished. First produced by Citadel-on-Wheels/Wings, Edmonton, Alta., 1970-71.

Way, Brian. The Decision. Edmonton: Young Audience Scripts, n.d.

_____. The Mirror Man. Edmonton: Young Audience Scripts, n.d.

Way, Brian. The Struggle. Edmonton: Young Audience Scripts, n.d.

_____. On Trial. Edmonton: Young Audience Scripts, n.d.

Zacharko, Larry. The Land of Magic Spell. Toronto: Young People's Theatre. First produced by YPT, Toronto, Ont., 1974-75.