

Running head: (MTYP) MANITOBA THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

An Inquiry into the History of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People:

Its Role and Impact on Education in Manitoba

Joy Beauchamp

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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Its Role and Impact on Education in Manitoba**

**BY**

**Joy Beauchamp**

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University  
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree  
of**

**MASTER OF EDUCATION**

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## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	vii
Acknowledgments .....	viii
Abstract .....	ix
Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview .....	1
Setting the Context .....	1
Purpose of the Study .....	3
A Historical Inquiry Approach .....	3
Delimitations .....	4
Definitions .....	6
Chapter 2: The Literature Review .....	8
Manitoba's 'Young' Theatre .....	13
The Changing View of the Child and Development in Children's Theatre .....	19
Charles Darwin .....	19
Edmond Holmes .....	21
Jean Piaget .....	22
Richard Courtney .....	22
Theatre in Education .....	27
Peter Slade .....	28
Brian Way .....	30
Collective Creations .....	32
Augusto Boal .....	32

Viola Spolin .....	37
Nellie McCaslin .....	41
Dorothy Heathcote .....	42
Chapter 3: Research Method and Procedures .....	44
Definition of Historical Event Under Study .....	46
Sources of Data .....	46
Sampling Techniques .....	47
Data Collection Methods .....	47
Data Collection and Analysis of Data .....	50
Qualitative Standards in Research Design .....	54
Researcher Bias .....	54
External Validity and Generalization .....	55
Triangulation and Reliability .....	56
Limitations of Methodology .....	57
Chapter 4: Results of the Study .....	59
Newspaper Articles .....	60
Findings from the Newspaper Articles .....	68
Interviews .....	78
Tony Frost .....	80
Early Training and Theatre Experience .....	80
The Role of Winnipeg to the Theatre's Development .....	81
The Role of the Theatre School to Actors' Showcase .....	85

The Philosophy/Goals of the Theatre School and	
Theatre School Classes . . . . .	86
The Role of Touring . . . . .	88
The Scripts/Shows Chosen or Developed and the	
Evaluation of Audience Response . . . . .	88
The Role of the Media . . . . .	91
The Role of Fundraising and Boards . . . . .	92
The Importance of Children’s Theatre to Tony’s Career . . . . .	93
The Importance of Children’s Theatre and Actors’ Showcase’s	
Role in that Broader Sense . . . . .	94
Leslee Silverman . . . . .	94
Early Training and Theatre Experience . . . . .	94
The Role of Winnipeg to the Theatre’s Development . . . . .	97
The Philosophy/Goals of the Theatre School and the	
Theatre School Classes . . . . .	99
The Role of Touring . . . . .	101
The Scripts/Shows Chosen or Developed and the	
Evaluation of Audience Response . . . . .	102
The Role of the Media . . . . .	107
The Role of Fundraising and Board . . . . .	108
The Importance of Children’s Theatre to Leslee’s Career . . . . .	112

The Importance of Children's Theatre and MTYP's Role in Children's Theatre .....	114
Summary .....	114
Chapter 5: The Role of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People .....	121
Summary of Findings .....	121
Conclusions .....	124
Suggestions for Further Research .....	128
References .....	132
Appendix A - List of Website Addresses Checked for Research Studies on Children's Theatre in Canada .....	137
Appendix B - Copy of Consent Form Signed by Interviewees .....	138
Appendix C - Bibliographical and Critique Information Regarding MTYP Productions from 1982 and On .....	141

## List of Tables

Table 1	List of General Interview Questions Given to Interviewees
Table 2	MTYP Productions from 1982 on: Record of Reviews and Reproductions
Table 3	MTYP Shows Produced More than Once
Table 4	Select Publications: A Survey of the History of MTYP from 1985 On
Table 5	Select Artifacts: History of MTYP
Table 6	Emerging Themes from Interviews
Table 7	Timeline of Important Events of Actors Showcase/MTYP

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I believe in the importance of drama education experiences to build insight and empathy in our students and in theatre as an art form. I have spent countless hours working with young people both in the classroom and in the rehearsal hall in my role as drama teacher at St. Mary's Academy. I am a firm believer that the aesthetic education of our young people is of utmost importance to a well-rounded education and that children's theatre is both an introduction to a beautiful art form, as well as an important opportunity to mirror a child's reality to the audience, whether they be children or adults, and invite reflection and reaction to that mirroring, for that is what theatre at its finest, is meant to do.

## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the history of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People (MTYP) and the trends in children's theatre that may have influenced the company. Furthermore, the study investigates the philosophies guiding MTYP and educational impact it has had on Manitoba students through their participation in theatre classes, tours of shows, and attendance at shows. The leadership styles of the founder, former and current artistic directors were also discerned.

A historical inquiry method was employed which involved collecting data from key informants and historical documents and artifacts. Two indepth interviews were conducted, as well as content analyses of documents. Data were analyzed via a qualitative approach.

The researcher hypothesized that there would be a mirroring effect or link between the history of MTYP and its development of child centred theatre experience, and the major historical shifts in the perception, delivery and training in children's theatre in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in England and North America. As well, the researcher theorized that the existence of MTYP has had a positive effect on the education of Manitoba students.

## Chapter I: Introduction and Overview

Over the last sixty years many factors have influenced theatre experiences for children and youth. This study, a historical inquiry, traced the history of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People (MTYP) and its role and impact on education in Manitoba. As the study is a qualitative study, a working hypothesis was used. The working hypotheses of the study is that MTYP's history has many elements that mirror trends in children's theatre in the twentieth century and that MTYP, as a result of its formation, has evolved into a theatre which serves in a role that contributes significantly to education in Manitoba.

### *Setting the Context*

Reconstructing MTYP's history was an interesting task. The lack of previously published studies, while perhaps problematic, yielded an unusual research opportunity. Since MTYP's history had not been studied in this manner before, the student researcher was free to interpret primary source materials without the influence of former bias. In addition, the second and third Artistic Directors were still living in Winnipeg, and were able to contribute to the study through interviews.

Theatre arts training and the use and creation of drama in education experiences for students have been examined and experimented with the world over. During the past sixty years, since World War II, the governing philosophies of children's theatre groups have also experienced great change as the view of the child as a consumer of aesthetic experience has evolved. No longer are children viewed as an audience to dismiss, rather the rights of the child as an arts consumer have led to a more respectful, challenging

theatre experience.

Leslee Silverman took over the artistic direction of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People, formerly known as Actors' Showcase, in 1982. Her vision of children's theatre sharply contrasted with the fairy-tale theatre productions of Actors' Showcase. As a former student of the Manitoba Theatre Centre's Workshop program, Silverman was greatly influenced by Manitoba Theatre Centre (MTC) founder John Hirsch, who shared with her his excitement for children's theatre.

As a teenager with a yen for the stage, she was strongly influenced by the late John Hirsch at Manitoba Theatre Centre's theatre school. Hirsch, she recalls had a real passion for children's theatre. "At the time," she says, "we thought that children's theatre was the most innovative and the adult theatre was dull" (*The Jewish Post and News, May 16, 2001*).

Under Silverman's Artistic Direction, the Manitoba Theatre for Young People has enjoyed many successes. The theatre has increased the size of its theatre school, relocating from a warehouse building to a new structure custom built for the needs of the company. In addition, MTYP has created a professional season for both children and youth audiences, and tours shows extensively throughout Manitoba and beyond. MTYP has enjoyed recognition nationally and internationally for its original play productions. The theatre has been an important contributor to the theatre arts community in Winnipeg, offering work opportunities to many professionals and providing theatre and theatre education experiences to urban and rural schools. Exploring both the successes and challenges of an arts organization who partners with educational systems as often as

MTYP has done, informs educators not only about historical movements in this arts organization, but of the history of education in Manitoba as well. To date, no systemic study of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People has been undertaken.

### *Purpose of the Study*

This study is the first comprehensive study of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People, its role and contribution to education in Manitoba.

The purpose of this study was to address the following research questions:

1. What are the trends in children's theatre and drama education in the past sixty years?
2. What are the guiding philosophy and leadership styles of the company relevant to some of the possible causal effects of decisions made by MTYP?
3. What are MTYP's contributions to student theatre audiences in Winnipeg, MTYP theatre students, and rural student theatre audiences and workshop participants?
4. What are the origin, nature, and purposes of Manitoba Theatre for Young People; and
5. How can MTYP's development to the present be traced?

### *A Historical Inquiry Approach*

Historical inquiries offer educators a unique opportunity to consider why education systems and beliefs are the way they are. Such knowledge informs future decisions and offers insight into how ideas and practices have evolved. According to Gall, Borg and Gall (1996) "historical research helps educators improve education by its insights into the past, present and future" (p. 390). As this is a qualitative study, the

research "...tends to emphasize interpretation over mere reporting" (Cates, 1985).

When the researcher interprets data, he/she has both a unique opportunity to interact with the data, and a responsibility to try to ensure credibility in the research.

Primary source materials are an important part of historical inquiry. Cates (1985) states:

A major concern of researchers who wish to conduct historical research is whether they will be able to obtain information from a sufficient number of reliable and informed sources. There are two types of sources of historical information: primary and secondary.

Primary sources are individuals who were present at an event about which they are reporting. The more informed and competent the primary sources were at the time of the observation, the more reliable and valuable to the historical researcher are their observations. (p.390)

#### *Delimitations*

There has been much written in the fields of children's theatre and drama. This study limited the review of literature to a brief survey of some of the major theoretical contributors of the past sixty years. These contributors are organized under the concept or themes of drama in education and theatre arts education.

As the study had limited financial and time resources, interviewing only the second and third artistic directors occurred. Interviewing other Manitoba educators, theatre directors or former or present students of the MTYP organization would have been advantageous, however, this study focused on depth rather than breadth to achieve its goals.

Gathering other primary data such as newspaper articles about MTYP as an organization, or any available news coverage was considered and confined to those documents and artifacts judged to be most pertinent for providing insight into the organization of MTYP and MTYP decision making. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, many factors have shaped drama education in Manitoba. It was beyond the scope of this study to consider all the political and artistic influences on the Manitoba education system. The statistics available from MTYP regarding company records of the number of shows and workshops offered by MTYP, as well as the attendance numbers of these shows and workshops were considered as indicators of MTYP's influence.

This study is a qualitative study. It is a historical narrative and a historical inquiry on the history of The Manitoba Theatre for Young People. The study is examining The Manitoba Theatre for Young People and its role and impact in education in Manitoba. In keeping with a historical inquiry, the literature review was comprised mostly of secondary sources. Data were gathered through primary sources such as: newspaper articles, taped television reports, and interviews with key informants of the organization. Internal validity was maintained through the following: triangulation; member checks, peer examination, and stating the researcher's biases. The data were analyzed by: looking for themes in the interviews, considering causal effect from the history of the children's theatre movement, and on media coverage on the decisions made by the organization. The limitations of the study are the limitations of qualitative research and of historical research.

In summary, to maintain clarity in this study, it focused on the theoretical

background to the modern children's theatre and the key leaders of the MTYP. The impact of MTYP on education in Manitoba was assessed by documentary evidence of audience sizes, school attendance, school workshop and outreach programs, and the theatre school enrollment and programs offered.

### *Definitions*

For the purposes of this study, the following terms employed are defined and presented in alphabetical order.

*Drama education* is a drama movement and approach that evolved after World War II. This approach employs a variety of drama exercises and games that are used as experiences for the purpose of expanding a student's creative horizons. The experiences are seen as educationally worthwhile in and of themselves, and the exercises are not employed to necessarily prepare a student actor for an audience performance experience.

*Drama in education* is a drama education approach pioneered by Dorothy Heathcote and expanded upon by Brian Way, Cecily O'Neill, Gavin Bolton and others, where educational experiences are created and explored through student participation in a drama exercise. That drama exercise may include reflection exercises, the use of teacher-in-role, teaching-in-role and may explore a variety of topics and issues. These drama experiences are generally not used for performance but rather for exploration of educational themes or curriculum topics.

*Forum theatre or theatre of the oppressed* was invented by Augusto Boal. This anti-theatre performance model is an alternative to western theatre formats. In this performance model, there is no catharsis for the audience unless they participate and

create the catharsis. The audience's role is changed from that of spectator to that of spectator, as the audience members re-work scenes with the actors to explore solutions and gain catharsis. Boal describes this theatre as a rehearsal for real-life.

*Improvisation* refers to unscripted theatre pieces or exercises that may be used for drama education to explore creativity, or for performance skill building for a theatre arts student, or as a vehicle of performance by either student or professional actors.

*Participatory theatre* is a children's theatre format developed by Brian Way that encourages audience participation throughout the performance.

*Purposeful sampling* refers to selecting key informants to be interviewed for a study. (Patton, 1989, p 100-107)

*Theatre arts education* is the study of the theatre as an art and a craft. In theatre education drama exercises are used for the purposes of actor skill-building.

*Theatre art* is training that prepares actors for the purposes of performance for an audience.

*Theatre in education* refers to plays that are used to teach or further explore set curriculum in schools. These plays are performed by professional actors and are often didactic in nature.

## Chapter 2: The Literature Review

A search for other historical research or research in general on The Manitoba Theatre for Young People produced no results. A search for related documents resulted in two pieces of research that informed this study. The research by Lesota (1981) and Spencer (1983) provided further insight into John Hirsch and his respect for and innovations with children's theatre in Manitoba. John Hirsch contributed significantly to the local theatre scene through the Manitoba Theatre Centre (MTC), and was an important figure in theatre history in Canada. He was a pioneer in children's theatre and viewed children's theatre as innovative and important, sharing this with his MTC audience and with his students. One of those former students, Leslee Silverman, has carried on this perspective of children's theatre, and deep respect for young audiences as artistic director of MTYP.

On a national level a search of university libraries resulted in no research on MTYP or local children's theatre companies and their impact on students. A list of the sites checked is listed in Appendix A. Major award winning children's theatres are found in other Canadian cities like Vancouver (Green Thumb) and in Toronto (Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People). Neither of these companies have had research done on their history or impact on their communities.

Children's theatre is an experience for thousands of Manitoba students every year. While Manitoba and Canadian theatre companies have generated research, children's theatre in Canada has not. Why? Perhaps children's theatre is still struggling to be noticed because the audience is made up of children and not adults. Research on MTYP and its

impact on students will hopefully inform and generate new questions for research projects. This study is important then because so little research is available in this province about a company that introduces theatre to so many of its students.

In examining then the influence of MTYP and its role and impact on education in Manitoba, something of the history of children's theatre and the theatrical training of children must be reviewed and explored. This inquiry into the development of children's theatre and of the training of children in theatre and in drama education serves three purposes:

1. provides an overview of the major influences in children's theatre and the training of children for the stage;
2. helps to put into perspective the history of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People and the major historical influences in the field that may have impacted on the company's development; and
3. assists in assessing the impact of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People on the education of children in Manitoba as well as its influences on children's theatre nationally and internationally.

To understand the nature of the development of children's theatre locally, an overview of theatre history in Manitoba must first be considered. In addition, consideration must be given to major ideas and developments in children's theatre in Europe and the United States beginning in the first half of the twentieth century that may have influenced children's theatre in Manitoba.

This time period, from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century on, must be considered because

Manitoba's theatre history is very young, and theatre of any kind in Manitoba began to develop during this time frame. Also, the effects of World War II on the collective psyche of Europe and North America led to a shift in the view of the child. These views, reflected in experimental theatre companies in Europe, were also influenced by the development of child psychology that also developed at this time in history. The variety of forms of children's theatre and drama education have been in part due to a changing view of the child, and of the notion of the child as an aesthetic consumer or an audience member capable of thought, discernment and reflection. Developments in child psychology, specifically the work of Piaget, informed both educators and artists with a variety of new theories about how children process their world.

In response to the emerging child psychology work, Richard Courtney, a noted Canadian drama expert recognized the world over, developed a child development theory regarding children and theatre arts expression. The theory follows children's dramatic play, through to a young adult's approach to the demands of theatre as an art form. Several children's theatre movements in the past sixty years began to challenge the child audience member with participation theatre (Brian Way), theatre in education (Peter Slade), forum theatre (Boal), popular theatre (Boal influence), and collective creations.

Viola Spolin and Nellie McCaslin have been major American influences in the training of children for theatre arts purposes, and their workshop ideas and approaches became standard fare for many children's theatre schools. Included in Spolin's theory is the notion of the development of the aesthetic in the child, and the idea of children being freed from teacher approval/disapproval so that the child's aesthetic may develop

independent of the teacher's opinion of their work. Nellie McCaslin is a prolific author of books for children's theatre and young actor development. Her contribution in 1971 of *Theatre for Children in the United States: A History* provided an important contribution to tracking and describing children's theatre and its developments. In the book she discusses "trends in theme and subject matter from earlier fairy tales to current ethnic dramas" (p. vii). Her book seeks to establish children's theatre "to the status of a nationally recognized branch of the living theatre" (p. ix). Her quest in describing the past of children's theatre is to envision today's theatre "...may the living theatre be for today's children, as it has always been at its best, an exciting adventure with content relevant to their interests and needs and from which offers aesthetic satisfaction" (McCaslin 1971, p. 284).

Others whose writings on children's theatre in Canada have been informative to this study are *The History of Prairie Theatre* by Ross Stuart, (1983) and Joyce Doolittle's (1979) book *A Mirror of our Dreams*. Stuart notes the importance of both John Hirsch's contributions to children's theatre by Hirsch including children's shows in the mainstage season, as well as Hirsch's guidance in the formation of the Manitoba Theatre School. Stuart notes that at its maximum size, the Manitoba Theatre School has 325 students and a strong commitment to providing educational services and theatre outreach through touring. The centre embarked upon its first short provincial tour in 1960 and formed a company to visit schools the following year. As John Hirsch explained: "We have done a great deal of work in high schools, junior high schools, and elementary schools by taking small groups of actors, called our Young Company, to them. In short, we are trying to

educate a public” (Stuart, p. 189). Doolittle records and discusses Canadian children’s theatre offerings to 1972 and makes a case for further research and study of children’s theatre: “How then is the practice to evolve, if those who create theatre for children cannot take the time to research it” (Doolittle p. 172)? Another clearly written source useful to this study for outlining children’s theatre developments and purposes is *Theatre Children and Youth* by Jed H. Davis and Mary Jane Evans (1982). This text book is a survey of several developments in children’s theatre.

In the teaching of children, the drama in education influence of Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton influenced ideas around children’s theatre and theatre training as well. In this use of drama as a teaching tool, the view of the child participant expanded to include children as aesthetic consumers capable of reflection and analysis.

Children’s theatre has also changed in subject matter and style, particularly in the last twenty years. Since the 1980's a societal openness and awareness to discuss previously taboo subjects with children. For example, a prior reluctance to discuss many forms of abuse with young audiences or health and intimacy topics with teens like dating abuse or the dangers of unprotected sex, fell away. Children who had been born between the years of 1945 to 1963 were now parents. The efforts of the ‘baby boomers’ to communicate with fewer taboos with their children were reflected in the theatre topics deemed acceptable for their children to view. This shift was prompted due to the emergence of Herpes and HIV as identifiable illnesses in the 1980's and changed a social sense of denial around topics like safe sex for teens. Children’s theatre playwrights like Dennis Foon and production companies like Green Thumb in Vancouver reflected this

shift in what was deemed to be acceptable topics for children's plays.

*Manitoba's 'Young' Theatre*

There have been many influences on children's theatre and drama education (theatre arts training and drama in education) opportunities for children in the past fifty years. Theatre in Canada, and locally in Manitoba, is itself very young with many varied influences. Theatre in a professional, regional sense is less than one hundred years old in Manitoba.

In Manitoba, the first local semi-professional theatre group was The Community Players founded in 1921 (Brissenden, 1981), a group which focused on staging already written works. Similar local theatre groups, professional and otherwise, did little to develop original works until the founding of MTC in 1958. John Hirsch, Artistic Director of MTC, was a very important influence on theatre in Manitoba, and, through MTC he influenced theatre across Canada. John Hirsch was very interested in children's theatre as well, commissioning, for example, James Reaney to write *Names and Nicknames* as part of the main stage season for the company. Such a move was extremely innovative and daring on Hirsch's part. The MTC theatre company was itself very young, and the view of children's theatre in the first half of the twentieth century was that it was a secondary theatre. To include a children's play in an adult season of shows gave credibility to children's theatre. Credibility at a time when, in Quebec for instance, the influence of the Roman Catholic Church was still so very strong, that plays for children were completely frowned upon.

However, by the 1960's a shift in thought had spread across the country, due to the

exploratory nature of the time and the new ideas around entertainment and the young audience members.

The most important reason for the steady increase in published plays for young people is undoubtedly the phenomenal growth of professional theatre companies performing for the young... In the 1960's the Manitoba Theatre Centre, Theatre Hour Company in Ontario and Les Jeunes Comediens of Theatre du Nouveau Monde in Quebec were founded and each considered performances for young audiences an important part of their mandate. (Brissenden, 1981, p.33)

Sixty years ago children's theatre was primarily dominated by the enacting of fairy tale plays. Then in the 1940's in Britain, influences from France resulted in the development of many new experiments in children's theatre. In Canada these changes were soon felt, and although theatre itself in Canada was still young, the theatre, and the theatre for the Canadian young, underwent a large revitalization. The war resulted in many new theatre and theatre activities.

In the years following World War II, theatrical activity increased enormously in many Canadian centres. Broadly speaking, there were two branches to this growth. One was the revitalization of a Canadian amateur theatre which had declined sharply during the war years. The second was a movement toward the establishment of indigenous professional theatres, such as the Canadian Repertory Theatre in Ottawa and Everyman Theatre in Vancouver. (Doucette & Plant, 1991, p.142)

As J. M. Meiklejohn, a Canadian theatre pioneer in amateur theatre and theatre education

recounts in his memoir writings of theatre in Canada at this time, many developments were occurring in Manitoba “Manitoba laid the foundation stone of drama teaching in the history of Canadian theatre” (Doucette & Plant, 1991, p.154). Meiklejohn credits John Hirsch for establishing theatre training and theatrical opportunities for Manitobans, both young and old.

John Hirsch emigrated to Canada from Hungary, although his friend Meiklejohn had advised him not to immigrate - saying Hirsch would be unable to make a living in theatre in Winnipeg (Doucette & Plant, 1991). Hirsch brought with him the many influences of the European theatre and experimental ideas in children’s theatre and drama education. Ideas that resulted in conflicting views as Meiklejohn reflects in his memoirs:

I remember saying that an under-rehearsed production of *Alice in Wonderland* with children as actors was pretty well valueless as Alice was a very bad children’s script, much too long with contrived situations and full of esoteric adult jokes which children could not be expected to understand. This proved a real foot-in-mouth remark as the Junior League had staged just such a production in the past. My final memory of this event was a little old lady who said, ‘I do not like to take my grandson to children’s theatre because he gets so frightened of the witches and giants.’ I replied, ‘Madam, I suggest to you that the chance of your grandson getting through life without being frightened are very small. I think it better for him to have his first frightening experience in a situation where he has your immediate support.’ The *Winnipeg Tribune* had a headline next morning: ‘National Health and Welfare expert says it’s good for children to be frightened’!

(Doucette & Plant, 1991, p.155)

Meiklejohn's reflections serves to highlight the tension and differences developing in the schools of thought around children and the theatre both with respect to children's participation in the theatre as developing artists, and their participation as audience members.

Hirsch, meanwhile, was experiencing great success with his children's theatre endeavour. The combination of his Theatre 77 Production Company (later MTC) founded in 1957, and the Junior League theatre troupe had a spin off effect in the artist community as well. "Theatre 77 had drawn 24,000 people in its inaugural season. Junior League-sponsored children's theatre had given the local acting community what Tom Hendry described as 'the heady, if irretrievably corrupting experience of being paid for our endeavors' " (Longfield, 2001, p.112).

It would seem that Meiklejohn's advice to Hirsch regarding employment opportunities was wrong; not only could he make a living at theatre, Hirsch created opportunities for many other artists to make a living as well. Hirsch took the Winnipeg Children's Theatre project and, in keeping with Meiklejohn's assessment that they were of like mind with regards to children's theatre, began to introduce new ideas and concepts about children's theatre and the training of young actors.

However, in the United States of America, these new ideas finding their way to Manitoba from Europe were slow to infiltrate the United States and change the traditional theatre of fairytales. These plays were structured to amuse the audience and varied slightly in approach and type. Often, there was little in the plays to challenge either the

audience or the artists presenting the pieces. Children's theatre at this time was viewed as poor theatre, less innovative, exciting and important than adult theatre. The child as an audience member was viewed as incapable of reflection or of contemplating problems. This view of the child resulted in overall theatre standards of poorer quality than adult theatre. Thirty years ago, Betty Jean Lifton lamented the state of children's theatre in America, comparing the American theatre with developing ideas in other countries, including Canada.

And yet in America today it seems as if children's theatre is of no consequence at all. ....It doesn't have to be this way. England has its Young Vic growing up in pride alongside the Old Vic, and Canada has a generously subsidized theatre for its youth. Both countries are commissioning script writers to produce innovative scripts. But here in America, which is supposedly child oriented, we keep patching up our Little Red Riding Hoods, Cinderellas, and Jack and the Beanstalks, like hand-me-downs that will make do for the youngest generation. (Lifton, 1974, p.12)

The Young Vic that Lifton speaks of was a hothouse for new children's plays in the 1950's. The Young Vic tour to New York in the 1950's was a radical introduction to a new way of producing children's theatre and exemplified the highest of professional theatre standards.

Of particular interest to this study, Lifton goes on to give examples, by way of an anthology of plays, of works she saw as innovative and worthy of note. It was not just Canada's willingness to fund children's theatre that garnered Lifton's praise. Specifically,

Lifton cites the work of Manitoba Theatre Centre's John Hirsch who hired James Reaney to develop a play entitled *Names and Nicknames* for the Manitoba Theatre Centre in the early 1970's. She notes the work as important and includes it in her anthology *Contemporary Children's Theatre*.

James Reaney's *Names and Nicknames* has some audience participation, but it is only incidental to what he is about. He has really created a kind of transformation play for school children to perform in. ...Its techniques are reminiscent of those Viola Spolin developed in her improvisation exercises and which her son, Paul Sills, brought to Broadway for both adults and children under the name of Story Theatre. (Lifton, 1974 p.15)

John Hirsch was a man who took risks and had vision. He began MTC and set a standard for regional theatre across Canada. As an advocate of children's theatre, he had the vision to hire Reaney to develop an original piece of theatre for an audience, who to this point, was largely ignored even in much larger cities with much more established theatres.

He was also described as a noteworthy person in theatre, according to a review in *The Cambridge Guide to World Theatre* (Banham, 1989). James Reaney, the playwright whom John Hirsch hired to write *Names and Nicknames* for the MTC main stage season was also listed as an important figure in world theatre. Hirsch's influence on children's theatre continued with the impression he made on one of his MTC Workshop students, Leslee Silverman. Hirsch brought the idea of a child centred theatre production to Manitoba. This idea of a paidocentric theatre, or a theatre speaking to a child's view, was

not original to Hirsch alone. This view grew and evolved out of the ideas introduced by Charles Darwin.

*The Changing View of the Child and Developments in Children's Theatre*

*Charles Darwin*

In Victorian times, children were viewed as mini-adults and little concern or time was spent in trying to determine how a child might process their world or learn. With the work of Charles Darwin, society began to realize its place in history was merely the tip of the time iceberg and saw the nature of history and time in new terms.

To see and to recreate the past, to observe how it has come to mold the present, one must possess the knowledge that all things are new under the sun and that they are flowing in the direction of time's arrow never to return upon their course—that time is noncyclic, unreturning and creative. (Eiseley, 1961, p.331)

This perception of time and of history impacted upon children and children's theatre because this view invited a new look at childhood as a time of evolving and becoming, for children. Darwin's work on the evolution of the species challenged the notion of children as mini adults and changed society's perception and expectations of children:

With Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871), the general application and validity of the idea of evolution showed that the child, too, as Rousseau had perceived, was an evolving organism, and that the period of immaturity had a vital bearing on growth... To apply adult standards and outlooks, especially in art, music, and literature, to a child who was not ready to accept

them, was seen to be one of the surest methods of preventing their full attainment.

This, fundamentally, is the underlying principle of the modern appreciation of Child Art and, more recently, of Child Drama. (Coggin, 1956, p. 225)

Because of Darwin, childhood became viewed as a time of evolution and of growth phases for the young. Each growth phase was seen as important and necessary to pass successfully into the next phase. The Victorian perception of children being seen and not heard, would no longer be the behaviour standard applied to the young. This change in perception about time and about childhood would also impact on the perception of the importance of the arts. In particular, the arts would be viewed as advantageous and necessary to ensure the development of the whole child. As Darwin himself reflects:

If I had to live my life again I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once a week for perhaps the parts in my brain now atrophied would have thus been kept alive through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature. (Coggin, 1956, p.285)

A society is always concerned with its future, its children. With this shift in the view of childhood, the arts were seen to be important to the very formation of children. This notion that exposing children to the arts was necessary and valuable to proper child development led to increased interest in children's theatre and other forms of arts education. As well as development in arts education for children, new education paradigms emerged, such as the Montessori Method. Many of these new developments in

arts and education had a paidocentric tendency, which means they were formed around a child's perception or point of view, rather than an adult's. The impact of Darwin's theories on children's theatre development was very great. No longer could children be viewed as audiences that were mini-adults. Children would have to be seen at a variety of life stages and various intellectual and emotional phases. Therefore, because of the impact of the Theory of Evolution, children's theatre would likewise begin to evolve in its views, and experimentation with a variety of theatre approaches and styles began.

### *Edmond Holmes*

Edmond Holmes was highly impressed with this new perspective in education. Holmes was the first school inspector for elementary education in England to write about this viewpoint. In his book: *What is and What Might Be*, he cites the work of one headmistress in particular and recounts her approach to teaching as being one that followed a child's instincts. He mentions that there appear to be several kinds of instincts leading a child in their learning processes, ranging from number ordering to artistic to dramatic instincts.

Passing to a discussion of the dramatic instinct he says: "Whatever else young children may be, they are all born actors; and in a school which bases its scheme of education on the actualities of child life, it is but natural that the dramatic instinct should be fostered in every possible way" (Coggin, 1956, p.230).

With Holmes' work on instinctive desires, a move to a more child-centred curriculum that incorporated drama as a teaching tool was finding its way into the mainstream of British education.

*Jean Piaget*

In the work of Piaget, one of the first pioneers of child psychology, a new view of the child as learner emerged. Piaget was a child prodigy who was publishing works while still in his early teens. He was interested in many forms of science and was particularly curious about how children learned.

Fascinated with the kinds of errors that young children make in solving problems, Piaget realized that children's thinking was qualitatively as well as quantitatively different from that of adults. Consequently, he developed an ambitious plan for investigating and describing the whole process of the development of thinking in childhood from early infancy to maturity. (Pettijohn, 1992, p.217)

Piaget's cognitive stages track the kinds of cognition children are capable of as they mature. Piaget's work influenced the drama education movement because advocates for drama in education (drama as a tool to teach the curriculum) saw children as developing drama skills in stages.

*Richard Courtney*

Richard Courtney was a professor at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. In his distinguished career he published over one hundred works, including several books. He invented many ideas with regard to the philosophy and learning experience of drama.

A prolific writer, philosopher and lover of the theatre, Courtney's impact on the Canadian and international forum for children and drama is profound. Some of his most famous works centered upon the idea of children moving through play stages in their

cognitive growth, influenced by Piaget's work on the stages of intellectual development. Courtney recognized that Piaget's work was about reasoning, and suggested that Piaget's goals for stages of intellectual reasoning would be discovered by a child acting on his/her environment through play and through imitation. Courtney felt that drama was the perfect vehicle to introduce a child to experiment in this fashion. He states: "It is clear that this relates closely to drama. Drama involves students in social and physical activity in which they are required to play, imitate, think, talk, work with concrete materials, and share viewpoints with others" (Courtney, 1980, p. 40).

Courtney was also very influenced by the Theory of Evolution brought forth by Darwin, in terms of human growth evolution. Courtney believed that, "Of the development schemes put forward, the most important for education have been: (a) the cognitive, (b) the affective, (c) the moral and (d) the empathic" (Courtney, 1980, p. 39). He saw that in dramatic play children evolved through stages as well. Courtney's writing put forth the argument that dramatic stages are experienced by children as they move through childhood into young adulthood, and that these phases could be ordered sequentially.

Other influences on Courtney's development of dramatic play stages were Peter Slade, whose work is mentioned under theatre education, and Otto Weininger, a Canadian educational psychologist.

He (Otto Weininger) has discovered that dramatic play originates at about six months when the baby first attempts to "feed" the mother; that, immediately after "the primal act," the child uses an object for other than the thing it is - which

parallels the “projected play” described by Peter Slade; and that dramatic play demonstrates the growth and changes of symbolism, representational thought, social and emotional growth, linguistic development and so on. (Courtney,1995, p.118)

The dramatic stages, which Courtney developed to further the discussion on children, learning and drama, have provided a framework for discussion and for curriculum planning in children’s theatre schools, drama curriculums within school systems, and in curriculum designs for both. Dramatic action grows with maturation in the following developmental stages:

1. The Identification Stage (0-10 months)
2. The Impersonation Stage - “The Child as Actor” (10 months - 7 years)
  - (a) The Primal Act (10 months)
  - (b) Symbolic Play (1 - 2 years)
  - (c) Sequential Play (2 - 3 years)
  - (d) Exploratory Play (3 - 4 years)
  - (e) Expansive Play (4 - 5 years)
  - (f) Flexible Play (5 - 7 years)
3. The Group Drama Stage - “The Child as Planner” (7 - 12 years)
4. The Role Stage - “The Student as Communicator” (12 - 18 years)
  - (a) Role “appearance” (12 - 15 years)
  - (b) Role “truth” (15 - 18 years)

In each case, a later stage has within it each of the previous stages. That is, the

adolescent as communicator is *at the same time* an actor and a planner, and constantly needs to revert to these earlier roles. (Courtney, 1980, p.44)

Courtney's writings provided a philosophical argument for the advocates of drama education who felt that students under the age of twelve should not be performing in front of an audience. This difference in opinion between those who advocated drama as a learning tool versus those who taught Theatre Arts with performance as a goal, has resulted in dividing teachers whose practices may inform each other. Courtney himself, was an advocate for drama in education, or drama as a teaching tool to teach other subjects in the curriculum, although he describes himself as holistic in approach. Courtney outlined that drama educators have three goals intrinsic, extrinsic and aesthetic. By clarifying drama education goals Courtney further shaped and clarified the drama education movement.

Drama has intrinsic goals - it aims to assist students' lives. It assists personality development and ways of coping with existence it aims, as many have said, more towards developing people than developing drama skills, although these are important. As dramatic activity mediates between our inner and outer worlds and as it is the basis upon which symbolic thought and feeling are based, it develops confidence, self-concept, human capacities and the "whole person." (Courtney, 1980, p. 66)

Courtney (1988) saw drama as a means to "...transfer training to other fields"(p.66). He saw in the aesthetic power of drama, a key not just to the theatre but an opportunity to assist student ability in all of the arts. It is through the "dramatic situation"

that students develop many life skills: "...students face facts and interpret them without prejudice, develop a range of identification with others and a set of consistent principles by which they are going to live. It is in this sense that drama infuses the total curriculum" (Courtney, 1980, p.66).

Courtney was not an advocate of young children performing in formal theatre productions, as is Viola Spolin, who advocates performance if proper training is provided to the child actor. In his 1989 book, *Play, Drama and Thought: The Intellectual Background to Drama in Education*, Courtney also provides historic overviews on the development of theatre and, of particular interest to this study, on the development of children's theatre after world War II.

Beyond the school, three types of theatrical work have developed: the youth theatre, the children's theatre, and the community theatre... Children's theatres are companies performing specifically to audiences of children; the majority are professional players, but some consist of children performing to children.

(Courtney, 1989, p.53)

Courtney credits in his writing John Hirsch and Hirsch's experiments at MTC for establishing Canada as a leader in experimental children's theatre after World War II. Courtney himself, and his many writings on children's theatre provided academic and scholarly rigour to the evolving children's drama education and theatre scene. Courtney was a learned thinker whose ideas were rich and occasionally his theories dense and difficult to discern upon a first read. However, Courtney was a man who loved drama and he never strayed far from the practical nature of the delivery of drama to students and the

wonder that that encounter offered both student and teacher. Richard Courtney's contribution to the field of drama education was immense as he clarified and expounded upon many of the driving ideas of the drama education movement.

### *Theatre in Education*

Post World War II when the companies began to take theatre productions into schools, their desire was to provide professional, high quality shows for children. As these companies began to develop scripts for touring, they also began to experiment in format and style. New ideas in education were also a factor in the shaping of Theatre in Education programs.

As John O'Toole notes in his book *Theatre in Education*, many people are unaware of the early roots of this approach; found in British children's theatre companies in the early twentieth century.

An offshoot of this movement, and a factor in the development of theatre in education, is the number of companies who exist to take theatre into schools at a professional level; usually touring companies, but occasionally attached to repertory theatre, they perform scripted plays, or parts of plays. (O'Toole, 1976, p.11)

Theatre in education may be a term that is applied to many techniques and approaches.

Many aspects are common, however, as John O'Toole (1976) lists in his work entitled *Theatre in Education*. To summarize the work of O'Toole, the following aspects are common in all theatre education programs: all of the programs take place in schools, all of the theatre pieces have actors either professional or amateur who have rehearsed the

piece and have costumes and props, all of the plays have dramatic conflict, the audience either directly participates in the action or the audience is directly addressed at some point in the play, and the subject play is relevant to the school curriculum directly.

Broadly defined then, theatre in education is participatory theatre for students who are engaged in studying some aspect of the curriculum even as they are members of the audience in the show, or program. The experience of theatre in education provides both an aesthetic and a didactic theatre experience for young audiences.

*Peter Slade*

Peter Slade was a huge influence in Brian Way's work among others. In 1943 he began a theatre troupe called "The Pear Tree Players". This troupe was entirely devoted to education. From the success of this troupe, an association called The Educational Drama Training Association developed. Slade was present at the historic conference in Bonnington in 1948 that highlighted some of the differences emerging from this new drama approach and the formal theatre approach. His writings record the rift that was to emerge between these two groups. Theatre advocates felt that children could gain a great deal from performing scripted works. Whereas drama education advocates believed such child acting experiences were frightening and did not significantly contribute to a child's education. They believed children should explore with drama activities who they were and the nature of their world, rather than worry about delivering lines from a play that may not address or touch their young lives. This difference in opinion laid the foundation for years of debate about which approach was right.

Up to this point there had been many different views but no major cleavage of

opinion. This was to occur at the famous conference held at the Bonnington Hotel in January, 1948, when theatre and drama took sides. The point at issue was briefly this: advocates of “theatre” in education tended to view their work as essentially *acting to an audience*, whereas the others felt that for child actors an audience was often harmful and unnecessary until the child recognized it as a need and that drama as a training for the whole personality was far more important.

(Coggin, 1956, p.239)

The debate held at the Bonnington Hotel in January 1948, marks a clear division in the schools of thought around theatre use and theatre education for the young. This historic meeting marks the first time the drama educators clearly identified the conflict within their organizations regarding drama for theatre performance, and drama for education purposes. From this point on, groups of teachers and educators would divide themselves into one of two camps: theatre education advocates who saw performance and training for the stage for the young as a fine educational opportunity, or, drama in education teachers and educators who felt drama should be used to explore other subject areas and that students should not be pressured to perform for others, as such performances, they would argue, were often presented very artificially by the young actors.

In 1954 Peter Slade published his book *Child Drama* establishing this new approach as its own art form. Clearly Slade believed that drama education was in the right. “The main purpose of *Child Drama* is to produce a well-balanced personality, not an actor (Coggin, 1956, p.243). One of Peter Slade’s greatest contributions to children’s theatre and to theatre in education was the penning of *Child Drama*. This book and the

debates that followed help to clarify the similarities and differences of approach of those who advocated a theatre arts education for children, and those who advocated for drama experiences.

Brian Way was one of the educators Peter Slade influenced. Way, working post World War II in Britain, established The West Country Children's Theatre and incorporated a unique opportunity in his plays for the children to be both audience members and participants in the plays they attended. In this manner Way allowed the child to be both actor, as theatre educators desired, and hands on explorers of their own worlds, as drama educators desired.

The West Country Children's Theatre bridged the gap between the two main currents. This was founded in 1944 by Brian Way, who, with four professional players, would descend on a classroom, outline a play, and in a matter of minutes the children were reading and improvising with full dramatic force with the professionals. (Coggin, 1956, p.270)

Peter Slade provided a clear sense of the split developing in the evolving theatre movements for children. His work with Brian Way and his influence upon him as a mentor resulted in a furthering of the experimental style of children's theatre that began after World War II.

### *Brian Way*

Brian Way's work becomes the forerunner of a new movement. This movement was concerned more with the dramatic creative process, and not interested in training children in the demands of the theatre as an art form. Brian Way experimented with both

theatre space used for a play production, and with the form and structure of plays for children especially. His experimental theatre style was created for both adult and children's theatre pieces. However, it was Brian Way's work with children and his concept of children's participation theatre that have arguably been his greatest contributions to theatre.

One of the more interesting developments in children's theatre has been the evolution of the participation play - a form in which the audience not only takes part but may influence the action of the play...Like avant-garde adult theatre, it is also preoccupied with the use of empty space-in placing its young audiences in unorthodox arrangements that will sharpen their awareness and elicit their response. (Lifton,1974, p. 14)

Brian Way would have meticulous notes to his actors included in the scripts that he wrote to assist the actors with this unorthodox style. He also did away with traditional seating and tried to create play environments rather than static theatre experiences with his arrangement of theatre space, and his careful directing and choreographed participation in his scripts. His production invention of shaping the theatre space to suit the play rather than adjusting a play production to suit a formal theatre configuration, laid the groundwork for several experimental children's play productions to follow, both at his theatre and in theatres throughout North America. Way's work became the forerunner of many other styles of audience participation work for young audiences, and reflected the view of a children's audience as being unique and different from an adult theatre audience.

*Collective Creations.*

Collective creations are a style of play, often written or left as rehearsed improv that present a series of vignettes connected around a theme that the playwrights/actors wish to explore. The original approach to scripting theatre pieces involves collaboration and democratic decision making around the content, theme and order of the scenes presented.

*Augusto Boal*

Augusto Boal's influence on children's theatre and theatre arts education is not an influence that he perhaps originally envisioned when he began his work in the 1960's. His influence on children's theatre, while profound and evident, is not yet documented in books or studies. Locally, MTYP, St. Mary's Academy, Glenlawn Collegiate, Sisler, The Summer Institute for Gifted Students and the Legal Education and Action Foundation (LEAF) among others have all used forum theatre with teens in and outside of the school setting. Evidence of Boal's work may be found in many drama classrooms and in many theatre programs for teenage audiences. In addition, Boal's critical education philosophy has influenced children's theatre in its philosophy and plot and content choices.

Augusto Boal is a theatre artist who was incredibly influenced by the work of educational revisionist Paulo Freire. Freire's book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* examined the plight of the people of Brazil and of South America who were illiterate and had little hope of becoming educated. Freire's writing had a powerful impact, not only as an advocate for third world people, but also as an educational critic and advocate for other disadvantaged learners everywhere.

Freire's own awakening to the plight of the uneducated poor occurred when his own middle class family in Brazil was plunged into poverty in 1929.

This had a profound influence on his life as he came to know the gnawing pangs of hunger and fell behind in school because of the listlessness it produced; it also led him to make a vow, at age eleven, to dedicate his life to the struggle against hunger, so that other children would not have to know the agony he was then experiencing. His early sharing in the life of the poor also led him to the discovery of what he describes as the "culture of silence" of the dispossessed. He came to realize that their ignorance and lethargy were the direct product of the whole situation of economic, social, and political domination-and of paternalism- of which they were victims... And it became clear to him that the whole educational system was one of the major instruments for the maintenance of this culture of silence. (Freire 1983, p.12)

For Augusto Boal this critical view of education systems was also transferable to the arts. Boal saw in theatre the transferring of mores and values that preserved rather than challenged the ideas of the middle class and rich who attended. In his work *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1974), Boal examines the notion of the anti-theatre model, a model which denies the audience the traditional climax and resolution in a play and challenges the audience to therefore work for their own catharsis. In his anti-theatre model, influenced by the social philosophy of Freire and the theatre style of Brecht, known as Forum Theatre or Theatre of the Oppressed, the following criteria are followed:

1. The play must be examining an issue, for example self esteem, which is of

- importance to the actors and to the audience for which the show is being prepared.
2. The audience is informed before the show begins that they are to be more than spectators (this information is offered by the jester, or coach of the show). The audience will be spec-actors, and will be called upon to participate directly in the production. Sometimes a Forum show will involve a warm up activity for the audience, a simple drama game to help the audience prepare to participate; however the warm up does not always occur if the audience is large.
  3. Every scene of the show must be examining some aspect of the identified issue: the scenes do not need to be interconnected (as with traditional theatre format) but will more closely resemble the format of a series of scenarios that is commonly found in the collective creation theatre piece.
  4. Every scene must have a character representing a clear protagonist and a clear oppressor.
  5. The dilemma or stakes for the protagonist must be high so as to create the greatest amount of anxiety possible for the audience as they watch the protagonist struggle with the oppressor.
  6. The main protagonist must fail, clearly making a decision which gives the oppressor power over him/her within the context of the scene.
  7. There is usually one or more witnesses to the failure of the protagonist; the witness is in collusion with the oppressor either because they are compliant or because they fail to get involved in the confrontation directly.
  8. The series of scenes, linked by the common theme of oppression, are shown to the

audience.

9. As the main protagonists in each scene fail, the audience is denied catharsis.
10. When all of the scenes are finished, the teacher acting in the role of “jester” encourages discussion and participation to re-act and participate in the scenes.
11. The audience is again reminded that they are spec-actors and will be directly involved in the rest of the play experience.

In the theatre models created by Boal, he is encouraging the audience to become involved in a rehearsal for real life. Boal also encouraged popular theatre, where groups of people with a common interest or concern would create theatre pieces or creative collections (a series of vignettes which examine a topic from many perspectives) and present them to an audience with a workshop or discussion to follow the performance. Boal is very interested in providing the audience for a chance to discuss ideas, become involved and examine their ideas and beliefs. His third form of theatre, invisible theatre, is perhaps the clearest example of this kind of desire to evoke a response. In this theatre format, actors would enact whole scenes out on the streets, with passers by becoming the audience members without being aware of it. These scenes, provocative in nature, would be delivered with the sole purpose of having people discuss sometimes rather heatedly, their opinions about what went on in the scenes.

Similarly to Freire, his mentor and friend, Boal's work was received outside of South America as well. Theatre artists in Europe, and especially in France, began to use his theatre styles to examine a variety of forms of oppression. In North America, forum theatre pieces seem to be especially well received by teen audiences and teen artists. The

topics of oppression are not always the same as Boal may have originally been interested in pursuing, but the power of oppression as a human force knows no political boundaries or age. Boal's work therefore, has been influential in teen theatre productions in the past fifteen years, as well as in the training of the teen artists to participate in such works. Although no studies or articles could be found directly tracking the influence of this theatre form for teens, many drama teachers and drama programs for teens use this theatre format to create a unique opportunity for teen students and audiences.

Teen artists involved in creating such plays are challenged with a very democratic creative process. Ideas are worked and refined in a creative collection format to create the theatrical piece. Just as in the original concept of *Theatre of the Oppressed*, teen artists deny the audience (usually teen peers) of the opportunity of catharsis. The anti-theatre model is then work-shopped so that the views and ideas of the audience may be explored, challenged, and examined. Since teen audiences are often at a point of theatrical development where such examination of topics is welcomed, the pieces are both a challenge artistically as well as a challenge for the audience participating.

The Popular Theatre Alliance of Manitoba (PTAM) introduced Winnipeg to the politicized theatre format of the Popular Theatre show in 1986. PTAM focused on creating shows with adult interest groups and in hosting a main-stage season that consisted of shows that examined social issues that ignited discussion in the Popular Theatre style. PTAM was not interested and did not have the resources to adapt the format to teen audiences. MTYP filled in the gap and brought the Forum theatre format in to Winnipeg in the early 1980's, providing a resource for local teachers and programs

with their “Drinking and Driving” forum theatre show which toured the city. Ellen Peterson, an employee of MTYP and the director of that show, was trained in a Boal workshop on Forum Theatre in Toronto. When she returned to MTYP to create the touring show, she offered advice to interested teachers in how to create similar shows to the “Drinking and Driving” show and she also created a study guide that assisted interested teachers in adopting the format. A format Leslee Silverman had explored in her training several years earlier. Silverman encouraged Peterson to bring the technique to high school educators.

### *Viola Spolin*

When Peter Slade in the 1940's hoped that child drama would result in a “revitalization of the theatre”(Coggin, 1956, p.243), he might have been predicting the arrival of Viola Spolin on the Theatre Arts education scene. Viola Spolin’s work in the theatre arts training of young actors had a huge effect on the training of theatre arts students. Her work *Improvisation for the Theatre and Beyond* was originally written in 1963 and has gone into many reprints. Her ideas of training the child actor were in keeping with developments in children’s theatre in the 1960's that saw children as more discerning audience members capable of challenge and reflection. This book had an incredible impact on the education and use of theatre arts training for children and for student actors in the fields of education, theatre arts and health care or theatre therapy. In the publisher’s note at the book’s beginning the following two quotes clarify the book’s impact:

As a theatre text the book has been ranked with the works of Stanislavsky and

Artaud, and it has inspired the work of actors, directors, and writers in theatre, television and film.

and

In addition to its impact on the theatre, the book has had wide influence in the fields of education, mental health, psychology, and even ecology, as the games bring the players closer to their individual nature, to their fellow players, and to the world they share. Since the operational structure has been said to correspond to Jean Piaget's stage of intellectual development in children, it is perhaps not surprising that they have effectively assisted in many areas of the curriculum.

(Spolin, 1963, p. viii)

Viola Spolin wrote this book in response to the problems that she was encountering with her young actors at her Young Peoples Theatre Company. Spolin saw opportunities for students to learn as problem solvers and created a series of exercises that reflect this idea of learning. She lamented the fact that students were overly concerned about teacher approval and rarely relied on their own sense of a developing theatre aesthetic. Spolin believes that it is through problem solving that students learn and that their personal sense of an aesthetic develops. Many innovative concepts are introduced in this book, for example Spolin's view of the teacher as a facilitator. Howard Gardner, twenty-five years later would echo a similar view as he describes the need for teachers to be effective to be guides on the side and not rule the class from the lectern. Spolin wrote about her belief of the teacher as a facilitator at a time when many teachers considered an authoritarian approach to class management as the ideal. Spolin recognized not only the

importance of the teacher as a guide, but also of the necessity for the child to develop their own inner aesthetic by interacting with problems and solving them. She also encouraged students to consciously focus on the point of concentration of each activity (or the focus or point of the exercise) so that students are encouraged to make discoveries, and mistakes can become learning opportunities.

This unique learning approach for the time invited many of the concepts of differentiated learning for her students. Spolin's students would learn at their own rate by minding their own aesthetic and challenging themselves in each activity. With this directed focus, the group activities would ignite a group energy fuelled by concentration of the group of self-directed learners.

Spolin (1963) saw a need for facilitators to focus on the process over the product in theatre arts training, and her work concentrated on three main ideas:

1. The idea of group response - the notion that players are part of an organic whole and that freedom must be authentic. This is achieved when the group as individuals challenge themselves and offer their individual energy and ideas to create a group energy, a group dynamic.
2. All in the workshop are fellow students, eliminating the roles of teacher/student to foster an inner aesthetic of approval/disapproval within each student. Spolin saw the need for children to please the teacher as an authority figure as inhibiting to that child's aesthetic development in the theatre arts.
3. Lastly, Spolin talks about "getting out of the head and into the space" (Spolin, 1963, p. xvi).

She encourages students to explore problems with their mind and body, exploring movement and experimenting physically rather than just thinking through a theatre problem. Spolin believes that these three key ideas encouraged students and allowed an opportunity where “artistic intuitive freedom can grow” (Spolin, 1963, p. xvi).

Spolin (1963) also created the notion of “Seven Aspects of Spontaneity.” Spolin believed that anyone can act, and that the important thing was to assist the student in developing their own aesthetic, their own sense of what worked and what didn’t work.

Acting can be taught to the “average” as well as to the “talented” if the teaching process is oriented towards making the theatre techniques so intuitive that they become the students’ own. A way is needed to get to intuitive knowledge. It requires an environment in which experiencing can take place, a person free to experience, and an activity that brings about spontaneity. (p. 4)

In the “Seven Aspects of Spontaneity”, this interesting concept breaks down spontaneity into points or aspects in a linear fashion, enabling the reader to distinguish and recognize what makes a class, lesson plan or workshop spontaneous. In a brief summary, the Seven Aspects of Spontaneity are: games: the problem-solving opportunities that games may offer; approval/disapproval: specifically encouraging each individual to develop their own aesthetic; group expression: the energy that evolves from individuals working on a task together; audience: the notion that the audience is a welcome aspect and important to the process; theatre techniques: developing skills for the purpose of communicating from the stage; carrying the process into daily life: becoming an aware and conscious person aware that our lives inform art; and physicalization: using

the body to explore and communicate non-verbally.

Spolin also advises the instructor on how to approach student actors in workshops and rehearsals, echoing perhaps Artaud's idea on theatre, that theatre should be used to develop and examine in physical terms our unexpressed feelings and desires, an experience Spolin expresses as "meeting in the unknown." She explores this area of unknown by encouraging a conscious exploration of the intuitive.

To keep the word "intuitive" from being a catch-all word which we throw around for use for old concepts... Let us rather embrace one another in our basic humanness and strive in the workshops to release this humanness in ourselves and in our students. Here, then, the walls of our cage, prejudices, frames of reference, and predetermined right and wrong dissolve. We look with an "inward eye". In this way there will be no fear that a system becomes a system. (Spolin, 1963, p.20)

Spolin has written several other books regarding children and theatre arts training. Her son, Paul Sills developed aspects of her improvisation exercises professionally at the Second City Improv in Chicago. Her approach to theatre arts and children recognizes the value in challenging children to develop their own aesthetic while developing skills to meet the demands of the stage. Viola Spolin's work in theatre arts education for children encourages performances that are creative, natural, and satisfying for the students.

### *Nellie McCaslin*

Nellie McCaslin is an American drama educator and writer whose approach to drama is highly influenced by the drama in education movement. Nellie McCaslin's work

has significantly added to the academic rigour of children's drama and theatre. Her book on the history of children's theatre discussed earlier in this chapter laid a foundation of memory for the American children's theatre movement. She has become a diplomat and ambassador for children's theatre and although she is not an advocate for young children performing, she sees a place for theatre arts education. Her philosophy is probably what Courtney terms as "holistic". McCaslin's most popular book, *Creative Drama for the Classroom and Beyond*, also provides educators an overview of the many influences on children's theatre since the turn of the century. This book is often used as a text at the university level. McCaslin does not advocate any new theories or inventions, but her clear writing style and practical advice has established her as an important drama educator, and an influence in the design of many drama and theatre arts programs for children.

#### *Dorothy Heathcote*

Perhaps one of the greatest influences in the drama in education movement has been Dorothy Heathcote. Her invention of the "Interpretative Drama Method", brought drama education possibilities to new levels of educational possibilities. In line with other drama in education specialists, Heathcote is strongly opposed to children performing before the age of twelve. Her technique for interpretive drama grew out of her own interest in education and her theatre arts training as a young woman. In summary, Heathcote's interpretative drama method has the following features:

1. **Teacher in Role:** the teacher must assume a role in the drama for two functions: to increase the tension in the drama and stop inertia from occurring, and secondly to stop the drama during high moments of tension and interest to guide the children

through a reflection of the drama.

2. Teacher Registers: Heathcote encourages teachers to consider what their personal registers are before taking on an Interpretative Drama exercise so that the teachers understand their own boundaries.
3. Role of the children: the children all take on roles in the drama in the form of chosen characters. The children also have a role in what will occur in the drama, Heathcote offers the children many choices around the nature of the drama and the plot of the drama.
4. Role of Reflection: Reflection is the key to a Heathcote Drama. In this manner, an Interpretative Drama differs from Dramatic Role Play exercises. It is in the reflection of what has occurred in the drama that the learning takes place for the students. Heathcote sees the importance of Interpretative Drama as a chance for students to consider what it is to be human.

Heathcote's importance in the drama in education movement has been in her many education inventions like "Interpretative Drama" and "Mantle of the Expert" approaches and in her strong stance against children's theatre training for younger children.

Heathcote's work has influenced and resulted in many debates in drama education and in theatre arts education.

### Chapter 3: Research Method and Procedures

Developing the historical narrative of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People incorporated many sources of information. Secondary sources as well as primary sources were explored as theories of possible influence on the company and are put forward. In addition records of the company were investigated through newspaper and magazine articles and artifacts. The interviews of key informants added a greater depth to the study as they told of their own perception of the shaping of the history of the company.

The method for carrying out the study was a qualitative, historical narrative inquiry into MTYP, its role and impact on education in Manitoba. The philosophy of the historical interpretation adopted is the view that history is cyclical, and not linear and that patterns seen in children's theatre earlier in the last century in Europe were repeated in MTYP's development (Wise, Nordberg & Reitz, 1967). The study sought to examine those past influences on MTYP which have contributed to its current reality.

It is not therefore an arbitrary addition to our remarks that we introduce here the notion of a theory or philosophy of history. The science of history cannot do without it; the human intelligence cries out for understanding: the attempt, no matter how spectacular or deficient, to drive from the pages of history fundamental explanations of man and his world. There have been many such attempts to disclose the basic laws of man's historical situation. For convenience's sake, we generally classify historical theorists as either "linear" (when the onward or forward motion of man's progress is stressed) or "cyclical" (when repetitious patterns of historical fact are emphasized). (Wise, Nordberg &

Reitz, 1967, p. 71)

The goal of the research was to provide a historical inquiry and narrative of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People (formerly Actors' Showcase), note trends in children's theatre in general and specific, seek to clarify MTYP events, and measure the gathered documentation. As Gall, Gall and Borg (1999) note:

There are several useful methodologies for doing historical research. Probably the most familiar is the historical narrative, that is simply telling the story using primary source material to document trends or clarify events. This method relies heavily on written documentation, but it may also include oral history (interviewing people to obtain new information or to confirm written sources). (p. 410)

A qualitative approach to this study was employed because qualitative interpretation of historical events invites a view of cyclic and evolving history, a choice that the researcher views as most important in this study. Also, the study is descriptive and analysis of data was an ongoing, as well as a focused endeavour. This approach, as Merriam (1998) notes, led to the development of more questions and new potential areas to research. Although certainly different from quantitative research in which validity and reliability are outlined before the data collection begins, "rigor in a qualitative research derives from the researcher's presence, the nature of the interaction between researcher and participants, the triangulation of data, the interpretation of perceptions, and rich thick description" (p. 151).

The last step in the research process is a summation or report of the findings resulting from data analysis. The summation offers some insight into answering the main questions driving this study: What is the history of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People? What is its role and significance in education in Manitoba? The working hypothesis of the study was that MTYP has had an important, significant role in the education of Manitoba. Defining and determining that significance is addressed in reporting the findings and conclusions in the final chapters of this study.

#### *Definition of Historical Event Under Study*

The Manitoba Theatre for Young People was first founded under the name Actors' Showcase. This study will seek to provide a historical narrative of the company's growth, evolution, and impact on Manitoba students.

#### *Sources of Data*

This study incorporates the use of the "four main types of primary source data studied by historical researchers" (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996, p. 396). The four main types are: text materials (e.g. written or printed text, newspapers), oral history (e.g., interviews), relics (e.g., blueprints of buildings, program information), and quantitative materials (e.g. statistics on the audience numbers, workshop and school enrollment numbers, and so on). The Manitoba Theatre for Young People, formerly Actors' Showcase, originated in 1965, and therefore since the organization is relatively young, primary source materials were available for this study. Secondary source materials are also referred to and are subject to internal and external criticism to ensure greater validity. Confirmation and validation through triangulation is accomplished via these multiple forms of data collection.

### *Sampling Techniques*

The study used purposeful sampling. Specific subjects were chosen to be interviewed. Documents reviewed were included if they were seen to facilitate and assist in constructing the historical narrative. They were collected from local newspapers and reviews, and other primary source materials were accessed through MTYP's archival materials.

The following is a brief description of the key informants finally selected for interviewing. Tony Frost was the second artistic director of Actors' Showcase and changed the company into a children's theatre company. He is now the current director of Fantasy Theatre for Children. Tony was chosen to be interviewed because of his long career in children's theatre and to gain insight into his views on the beginning of MTYP. Leslee Silverman is the current director of MTYP. Leslee was a chosen interview subject because she has been the artistic director for two decades and seen many changes.

### *Data Collection Methods*

The first step taken in the research was to investigate theoretical influences and other similar research studies of children's theatres in the literature review. In examining the historical phenomena, thematic categories were considered to organize materials. Then, interviews of the artistic directors took place. Informed consent was obtained according to the ethics committee guidelines. A copy of the consent document signed by the interviewees, is included in Appendix B. These interviews were a combination of suggested or set questions and open-ended questions that developed as a result of the responses from the interviewees. The format for the interviews were primarily open-

ended, conducted in a conversational style that sought to inform the study of the interviewee's contributions and perspectives on children's theatre in general, and MTYP in particular. The interviews were one to two hours in length. The interviews were videotaped to offer the researcher further clarity on the context of the dialogue by providing a visual record of the expression, mannerisms, as well as the vocal inflections of the interviewee. The interviews were transcribed and offered to the interviewees to peruse so that they could add/or clarify statements, or in case the researcher required further clarification of the dialogue. The interviews were a main source of data for analysis. The data from the interviews were coded according to themes, providing an opportunity for the researcher to focus in on a possible interpretation of the interviews. Archival documents were also collected by reviewing materials at MTYP.

The interviewees had a chance to review the transcripts and offered further clarification. The following steps for the interviewing process were used.

1. The interview process was approved and followed the guidelines of the University of Manitoba Ethics Committee.
2. Interviewees were contacted and invited to participate in the study. Informed consent was secured.
3. Interviews were scheduled at times mutually convenient to the interviewee and researcher.
4. Table 1 presents a sample of the interview questions given in advance to each of the interviewees. The interviews were planned to be one to two hours in duration.
5. Other questions emerged during the interview to further clarify an interviewee's

answer, and so on. Duration times of the interview were recorded.

6. Interviews were transcribed.
7. Interviewees had an opportunity to review the transcript of their interview to add further clarification or comment to their responses if desired.
8. The videotapes of the interviews will be destroyed immediately after the thesis is approved by the thesis committee.

The following questions were used as a guideline for the interviewees to prepare their ideas before the interview. The interviews themselves followed the ideas raised in these questions in Table 1, however an effort was made to interject the questions from the table or similar questions to the table, in as conversational a style as possible. So, for example, if the interviewee offered information that sufficed as an answer to any of these questions the question was not posed. An attempt was made as suggested by sources such as Seidman (1991), to try and keep the interview dialogue natural to encourage a further depth to the answers and assist to put the interviewee at greater ease.

Table 1 *List of General Interview Questions Given to Interviewees*

- 
1. When did you begin working with the theatre company currently known as The Manitoba Theatre for Young People?
  2. Please describe your role and history with MTYP.
  3. What philosophy of children's theatre did you personally bring to the company?
  4. Is that philosophy reflected in the theatre? How is it reflected? Or Why is it not reflected? Please provide an example.
  5. While you were involved with the company, what is/was the influence of drama

in education or the theatre in education movement on play selection or teaching techniques at the MTYP school? Please provide an example.

6. How has MTYP related to schools and how did it do this?
7. How are/were teachers and program ideas for the school selected?
8. What is/was the greatest challenge the company faced during your period of involvement with the company?
9. How are/were plays and play ideas selected/developed for the professional season?
10. What role has the media had in shaping influences or choices for MTYP? Can you cite one or more incidents in particular where the media may have had an influence on a choice made by MTYP?
11. Is there anything the company has not achieved and you wished it had?
12. How do you envision the future of MTYP?

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#### *Data Collection and Analysis of Data*

As stated in this qualitative study the analysis of the material was ongoing, as well as formally focused upon. As stated by Bogdan and Bilken (1992), "data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging interview transcripts, field notes and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others" (p. 153). For the purpose of analysis for this study, coding categories, suggested by Bogdan and Bilken (1992) were developed such as: setting/context; perspectives held by subjects; process codes; activity codes, and strategy codes. The study focused on identifying major themes consistent

between the data sources, identifying different topics emerging from both the interviews and the primary source materials on an ongoing basis, and attempting to provide descriptive analysis that considers what role and impact on education in Manitoba MTYP has had.

As well, David Silverman's book, (2003) *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook* suggests that to begin analysis a researcher should: "Analyse data already in the public sphere. Beg or borrow other people's data. Analyse your own data as you gather them" (p. 119). With regards to this study, data in the public sphere consisted of newspaper articles and transcripts of radio reviews. However, analysis of another's data was not possible as no existing analysis on MTYP exists. The final suggestion, to analyse data as it is gathered, suggests that "In all cases, start reviewing your data in the light of your research questions" (p. 120).

The organization of the data so that the research questions can be addressed will come from the following procedures. These procedures emerged from a study of Silverman's (2003) and Glesne and Peshkin (1992) work entitled *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An Introduction*. These resources were especially helpful in preparing to conduct the interviews and displaying data by coding an interview according to themes or codes that emerge. They suggested that the codes should be organized in a "logical order by asking yourself which clumps, or parts of clumps, belong together in the final code arrangement for your manuscript" (p. 129). These writers also suggested that researchers should describe how the codes emerged. "We code the contents of each major code clump, thereby breaking down the major code into numerous subcodes. Eventually, we

can place the various data clumps in a meaningful sequence that contributes to the chapters or sections of our manuscript” (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 133).

Mishler’s (1986) book, *Research Interviewing Context and Narrative* had many examples of ordering data. Also helpful was Steinar Kvale’s book, (1996) *InterViews An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. In addition, Conrad, Haworth and Lattuca’s (2001) *Qualitative Research in Higher Education Expanding Perspectives* was helpful in identifying the importance of and possibilities for displaying data. *Educational Research: An Introduction*, by Gall, Gall and Borg (2003), was useful in organizing both data collection and analysis, as was Bogdan and Biklen’s (1992) *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*. The chapter dealing with data analysis offered many excellent suggestions with regards to narrowing the scope of a study and how and when to make decisions regarding the type of study. This book also discussed ways to create codes to identify and display emerging themes in interview data. Another excellent source used was Seidman’s (1991) *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, which included practical points on how to conduct an interview, how to transcribe and mark what is important in the text, and especially the steps in crafting a profile that identified how to recognize and organize emerging themes in a transcript. After reviewing method resources, then, a general overview of the data analysis procedure that was followed appears below:

For the newspaper articles:

1. Ordering the newspaper articles into categories and looking for emerging themes in the reviews or other articles considered about MTYP the organization.

2. Structuring the findings of the articles with tables to clarify the emerging themes.

For the interviews:

1. Transcribe the interviews word for word from the tapes marking what is of interest in the text with coded highlighter pens as to the research questions pursued by this study.
2. Number each line of the interviews consecutively to assist with organization according to themes.
3. Number the pages of interviews consecutively.
4. Review the materials and create headings or categories for themes (codes and sub-codes) creating a profile of each interview by cutting and pasting passages of interest and order and arrange them. Seidman (1991) suggests using the interviewer's words as much as possible. The quotes from the interview data will be noted as the name of the speaker, followed by the year of the interview and the page number and the lines of the transcript being quoted.
5. Offer the transcripts to the interviewee so that they may do a member check on the materials.
6. Offer the interpretation of the interviews to the interviewees to do a member check on the materials.
7. Make any necessary changes to the transcripts and/or interviews as dictated by the member checks.
8. Considering Seidman's last step in his process of analysis, conduct the search for connections.

9. Finally, construct a chart of data sources that organizes MTYP's history chronologically by important events.

Media articles were organized under categories such as "Accomplishments of MTYP," "Concerns of the MTYP Organization," and "MTYP Controversies"; to identify major areas of interest in the media with the organization. Other artifacts such as photographs were considered for another perspective of the MTYP story. Finally, the audience, workshop and school enrollment numbers were considered as indicators of possible number fluctuations, and offered either suggestions as to why the numbers may have fluctuated, or posed questions for further study as to the numbers gathered.

### *Qualitative Standards in Research Design*

#### *Researcher Bias*

While the lack of previously published materials or studies is viewed as advantageous because it indicates a need for this study and leaves the study unhindered in viewing primary sources, bias is still a concern of the study. Merriam (1998) suggests that the statement of biases by the researcher at the onset of the study increases the internal validity of a study. "Researcher's biases-clarifying the researcher's assumptions, worldview, and theoretical orientation at the outset of the study" is listed under the heading "six basic strategies to enhance internal validity" ( p.204). In addition Merriam includes the importance of stating bias again in a summative paragraph about internal validity:

The question of internal validity-the extent to which research findings are congruent with reality-is addressed by using triangulation, checking

interpretations with individuals interviewed or observed, staying on-site over a period of time, asking peers to comment on emerging findings, involving participants in all phases of the research, and clarifying researcher biases and assumptions. (p. 218)

To increase the internal validity of the study, triangulation (interviews, relics, and documents and videos) were incorporated into the data collection. In addition, the participants in the interviews had the opportunity to view and comment or further clarify the content of the interview transcripts. Peer examination was also used. The bias in the study reflected the limitations of the methodology used.

#### *External Validity and Generalization*

External validity is concerned with the generalizability of the study. Since the study is qualitative, the study findings are not as easily generalized to other studies or situations. That is not to say that qualitative research cannot inform other research or educators considering topics with similar concerns: it can.

The idea that the general resides in the particular, that we can extract a universal from a particular, is also what renders great literature and other art forms enduring. While we may never live at the South Pole, we can understand loneliness by reading Byrd's account; we can come up with concrete generalizations about power and corruption by listening to the Watergate tapes, although we are not likely to be president. (Merriam, 1998, p. 210)

The study operated on the assumption that external validity can be increased by description, as well as by viewing the particular as important, and worthy of study. That is

to say, qualitative research does not have to answer to all the criteria of quantitative research. If it did so, it would simply be quantitative research. The whole point to qualitative research is to examine areas with the perspective that is lacking in the quantitative approach.

Generalization in developing this historical narrative means generating universal statements about the phenomenon under study, rather than establishing commonality between similar settings. In this study, generalization is based on ideas that consistently appear across the data sources. Eisner (1981) defines reliability as the likelihood that two researchers analyzing the same data would draw conclusions that fall within the same general 'truth space'.

#### *Triangulation and Reliability*

Triangulation is the qualitative method of using more than one data collection method to try to validate results. This study used interviews, information from primary sources and relics to provide data triangulation. Again, these materials were considered most pertinent to this study. In addition, to maintain internal validity this study followed the suggestions outlined by Merriam (1991). Merriam suggests that researchers use peer examination, incorporate member checks (have interviewees read over transcripts and offer further clarity to any of their replies) to increase validity, and that researchers increase reliability by keeping an audit trail.

Reliability is the ability for a study to be replicated by following the procedures outlined under the data collection and analysis methods of a study. In a qualitative study, especially in an historical inquiry, when interpretation of the researcher is included within

the data analysis, reliability becomes problematic. The goal of qualitative research is not replication of results, but rather that the results seem plausible, Merriam (1998) suggests dependability of results is the goal of a qualitative study.

Since the term *reliability* in the traditional sense seems to be something of a misfit when applied to qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba [1985, p.288] suggest thinking about the “dependability” or “consistency” of the results obtained from the data. That is, rather than demanding that outsiders get the same results, a researcher wishes outsiders to concur that, given the data collected, the results make sense—they are consistent and dependable. The question then is not whether findings will be found again but *whether the results are consistent with the data collected*. Investigators can use several techniques to ensure results are dependable. (p. 206)

Merriam suggests three techniques, which were employed in this study to increase reliability. These three techniques are: stating the bias of the researcher and describing why for example, interviewees were selected; triangulation, or using multiple methods of data collection (interviews, documents and relics will be gathered) and finally, leaving an audit trail. The audit trail technique is simply inclusion in the report writing of “how data was collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made through the inquiry” (Merriam , 1998, p. 207).

#### *Limitations of Methodology*

Historical inquiry also has limitations as a research method. According to Gall, Borg and Gall (1996), two of the most critical occur when the researcher selects a

problem to investigate for which historical sources are limited or difficult to access; or uses secondary sources exclusively instead of confirming one's findings by checking primary sources directly. Another limitation of this method is that data analyses were conducted by a single researcher, and therefore a high degree of match on the categorization of data can not be established.

Other pitfalls of this method which the researcher will attempt to keep in mind during data analysis and gathering are:

1. Fails to subject historical sources to external and internal criticism.
2. Does not reveal how personal values and interests influenced the selection and interpretation of historical sources.
3. Inappropriately uses concepts from other disciplines or from present times to explain past events.
4. Makes unwarranted causal inferences, or refers to a particular factor as the only cause rather than one of the causes of a historical phenomenon.
5. Generalizes historical findings to a larger group of people, places, or institutions that is justified by the available historical data.
6. Lists historical facts without synthesizing them into meaningful chronological and thematic patterns (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1996, p.672).

## Chapter 4: Results of the Study

This chapter presents findings in three major sections: newspaper articles, reviews and artifacts, secondly an analysis of the interviews with Tony Frost and Leslee Silverman and lastly a summation of findings in the form of a timeline. For the purposes of reporting results, newspaper articles and transcripts of radio reviews were read and organized into various categories and tables.

First, a listing of all shows produced by MTYP was created with a reporting on whether the show was reviewed or not by Manitoba journalist, followed by a brief analysis of the findings, and a list of shows produced more than once by the company. Then in Table 4 a selection from newspaper articles read was chosen to provide a brief newspaper history of MTYP, under Leslee Silverman's leadership. Table 5 presents an overview of select artifacts that again try to offer another perspective on MTYP history from 1985 and on. Following next, was a reporting on the interviews with Tony Frost and Leslee Silverman, reported on in a profile manner, as mentioned in chapter four.

Key informants Tony Frost and Leslee Silverman were interviewed in two hour in-depth interviewing sessions on August 24, 2004 and August 25, 2004 respectively. Daphne Korol was not interviewed as upon further research it became apparent that Daphne's interest in Actors' Showcase, the company she founded with Tony Frost and others, was solely as an adult theatre company. Daphne had no interest in children's theatre or in the development of Actors' Showcase into a children's theatre company. For those reasons, and in reviewing the questions to be posed regarding children's theatre, Korol no longer seemed like a key informant for this study. Lastly, some artifacts of

MTYP were considered through a tour of the space on August 25, and other artifacts as noted in Table 6. The chapter ends with Table 7 that draws upon the many data sources to provide a timeline of the MTYP history.

#### *Newspaper Articles*

For several hours between August 17 and August 25, MTYP allowed me access to their archival newspaper material. In addition, research was conducted on-line at [winnipegfreepress.ca](http://winnipegfreepress.ca) to consider all newspaper coverage on MTYP by The Winnipeg Free Press. Table 2 displays a year-by-year list of all shows produced by MTYP since 1982 when Leslee Silverman took over as Artistic Director. No list of season offerings were available prior to 1982 as Tony Frost did not have similar records available. He did, however offer commentary on specific shows and seasons during his interview, and made comment on press coverage. Table 2 indicates also if the play itself was ever reviewed or previewed by Manitoba journalists or not; if a show was produced more than once over the years at MTYP; and if the show toured or not. Some of the shows may not have been produced for a Manitoba audience exclusively, but may have toured outside the province as well.

Table 2 *MTYP Productions from 1982 On: Record of Reviews and Reproductions*

Name of Show	Year Produced	Reviewed by MB Journalist	Repeat Production
The Little Beast Plum Pudding You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown School Yard Games Laughing to Cry Magic and the Supernatural in Shakespeare	1982-1983 1982-1983 1982-1983 1982-1983 1982-1983 1982-1983 1982-1983		
Feeling Yes, Feeling No	1982-1983	Yes	*repeated in 1983-84, 1984-85, 1985-86, 1886-87, 1987-88, 1988-89, 1989-1990
The Dream Eater Trummi Kaput New Canadian Kid Je suis Un Ours! How I Wonder What You Are	1983-1984 1983-1984 1983-1984 1983-1984 1983-1984	Yes	*1988-89 and 2000- 2001
Feeling Yes, Feeling No Separate Doors The Little Prince Alligator Pie The Bittersweet Kid L'Umiak Everyday Heroes	1983-1984 1984-1985 1984-1985 1984-1985 1984-1985 1984-1985 1984-1985	Yes Yes Yes	*as above  *1985-86
Feeling Yes, Feeling No Not So Dumb Of Mimes and Clowns Alligator Pie Little Victories Peter and the Wolf Getting Wrecked	1984-1985 1985-1986 1985-1986 1985-1986 1985-1986 1985-1986 1985-1986	Yes  Yes Yes	*as above *1991-92  *as above

Name of Show	Year Produced	Reviewed by MB Journalist	Repeat Production
Feeling Yes, Feeling No Peacemaker The Mystery of the Oak Island Treasure Just So Stories Invisible Kids Pigiami	1985-1986 1986-1987 1986-1987  1986-1987 1986-1987 1986-1987		*as above
Skin Peace Project Feeling Yes, Feeling No I Am A Bear! Jacob Two-two Meets the Hooded Fang The Potato People	1986-1987 1986-1987 1986-1987 1987-1988 1987-1988 1987-1988	Yes  Yes  Yes	*1993-94  *as above *1996-97
Night Light Robinson Crusoe  The Oath Liars Feeling Yes, Feeling No Coconut Clackers Clariere The Last Voyage of the Devil's Wheel New Canadian Kid The Red Ball Thin Ice	1987-1988 1987-1988  1987-1988 1987-1988 1987-1988 1988-1989 1988-1989 1988-1989 1988-1989 1988-1989 1988-1989	Yes Yes  Yes Yes  Yes  Yes Yes	1995-96, 2003-04 *1989-90, 1990-91, 2000-01  *1988-89, 1997-98 *as above  *as above
Liars Identical Islands Feeling yes, Feeling No Crying to Laugh Once Upon a Story Bedtime & Bullies Square Eyes	1988-1989 1988-1989 1988-1989 1989-1990 1989-1990 1989-1990 1989-1990	Yes  Yes  Yes	*as above  *as above

Name of Show	Year Produced	Reviewed by MB Journalist	Repeat Production
Comet in Moominland	1989-1990	Yes	*1992-93, 1994-95, 2000-01
Separate Development	1989-1990	Yes	*as above
Work It Out	1989-1990		
Mirror Game	1989-1990		
Feeling Yes, Feeling No	1989-1990		
There is No Shame	1989-1990		
Robinson Crusoe	1989-1990		
Two Weeks, Twice a Year	1990-1991		
Under One Roof	1990-1991		
No Worries	1990-1991		
Moving Day	1990-1991		
Mirror Game	1990-1991		
Mask Messengers	1990-1991		*as above *as above
Terre Promise	1990-1991		
There is No Shame	1990-1991		
Burt	1990-1991		
Drinking and Driving	1990-1991		
Robinson and Crusoe	1990-1991		
Comet in Moominland	1990-1991		
Serafina and the Big Cat	1991-1992	Yes Yes Yes Yes  Yes  Yes Yes  Yes	*as above      *as above      *1993-94
Mur-Mur	1991-1992		
The Red River Valley	1991-1992		
Not So Dumb	1991-1992		
Wheelie	1991-1992		
Singing in the Rain Forest	1991-1992		
Cost of Living	1991-1992		
Comet in Moominland	1991-1992		
Whispers in the Dark	1992-1993		
Jest in Time	1992-1993		
The Secret Garden	1992-1993		
SeeSaw	1992-1993		
The Servant of Two Masters	1992-1993		

Name of Show	Year Produced	Reviewed by MB Journalist	Repeat Production
The Power of Harriet T! Comet in Moominland Land of Trash The Impossible Balance Pinocchio Suddenly Shakespeare Skin	1992-1993 1992-1993 1993-1994 1993-1994 1993-1994 1993-1994 1993-1994	 Yes Yes  Yes Yes	*2003-04 *as above
Bill's New Frock Desequibre-The Challenge SeeSaw Self-Esteem Peter and the Wolf A Tale of Night and Day Snowflake Naomi's Road Showdown A Day at the Improv Comet in Moominland Little Sister	1993-1994 1993-1994 1993-1994 1993-1994 1994-1995 1994-1995 1994-1995 1994-1995 1994-1995 1994-1995 1994-1995 1994-1995	Yes Yes Yes  Yes Yes  Yes   Yes	   *as above       *as above *as above
Stuart Little Dolphin Talk The Number 14 The Nightingale Night Light Making Friends Influencing People The Book of Miracles	1995-1996 1995-1996 1995-1996 1995-1996 1995-1996 1995-1996 1995-1996	Yes Yes     Yes	    *as above

Name of Show	Year Produced	Reviewed by MB Journalist	Repeat Production
Crusoe and Friday	1995-1996		
Ice Cream Store and More	1996-1997	Yes	
The Mask messengers	1995-1996		
Old Friends	1995-1996	Yes	*1998-99
I Am a Bear!	1995-1996		*as above
Toronto at Dreamer's Rock	1995-1996	Yes	
The Stupendous Adventures of Don Quixote	1995-1996		
Flippin' In	1995-1996		
Acting Sun Smart	1995-1996		
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe	1997-1998		*2001-02
Health Class	1997-1998	Yes	
The Potato People	1997-1998	Yes	
Double Play			
Jacob Two-Two	1997-1998	Yes	*as above
Meets the Hooded Fank			
Baloney!	1997-1998	Yes	
Liars	1997-1998	Yes	*as above
Peacemaker	1998-1999	Yes	
Beauty Machine	1998-1999	Yes	
The Rememberer	1998-1999	Yes	
Square Eyes	1998-1999		
Chasing the Money	1998-1999	Yes	
The Other Side of the Closet	1998-1999	Yes	*2003-04
Borrowed Black	1998-1999	Yes	
Old Friends	1998-1999		*as above
The Story of the Little Gentleman	1999-2000	Yes	*2001-02
Snowflake	1999-2000		
MacHomer-The Simpsons do MacBeth	1999-2000	Yes	
The Hobbit	1999-2000	Yes	

Name of Show	Year Produced	Reviewed by MB Journalist	Repeat Production
SeeSaw	1999-2000	Yes	*as above
The Servant of Two Masters	1999-2000		
Rocks	1999-2000	Yes	*2000-01
The Star keeper	1999-2000	Yes	
The Boy in the Treehouse	1999-2000	Yes	
Comet in Moominland	1999-2000	Yes	*as above
New Canadian Kid	2000-2001	Yes	*as above
Dying to be Thin	2000-2001	Yes	*2004-05
Peter Pan	2000-2001	Yes	
The Number 14	2000-2001	Yes	
The Illustrated History of the Anishnabe	2000-2001	Yes	*2001-02
Rocks	2000-2001	Yes	*as above
Robinson and Crusoe	2000-2001	Yes	*as above
Romeo and Juliet	2000-2001	Yes	
Jake and Pete	2000-2001		
Comet in Moominland	2000-2001	Yes	*as above
The Story of the Little Gentleman	2000-2001	Yes	*as above
Mur Mur (The Wall)	2001-2002	Yes	
Circus	2001-2002	Yes	
The Illustrated History of the Anishnabe	2001-2002	Yes	*as above
The Secret Garden	2001-2002	Yes	*as above
Patty's Cake	2001-2002	Yes	
Mirror Game	2001-2002	Yes	*as above
The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe	2001-2002	Yes	*as above
The Shape of a Girl	2001-2002	Yes	
The Mask Messenger	2001-2002	Yes	
The Odyssey	2001-2002	Yes	
Where the Wild Things Are	2002-2003	Yes	*2003-04
Danny King of the Basement	2002-2003	Yes	
Jest in Time	2002-2003	Yes	
Pippy Longstocking	2002-2003	Yes	
Into the Ring	2002-2003		
Lulie the Iceberg	2002-2003	Yes	

Name of Show	Year Produced	Reviewed by MB Journalist	Repeat Production
IMPROVident	2002-2003	Yes	
The Red Balloon	2002-2003	Yes	
Martha	2002-2003	Yes	
The Flaming Idiots	2002-2003		
Snowflake	2003-2004	Yes	
Mimi and Brumm	2003-2004	Yes	
Fire..Where There's Smoke	2003-2004	Yes	
The Happy Prince	2003-2004	Yes	
The Power of Harriet T!	2003-2004		*as above
Night Light	2003-2004	Yes	*as above
The Dream Catchers	2003-2004	Yes	
Macbeth	2003-2004	Yes	
Cinderella	2003-2004	Yes	
The Other Side of the Closet	2003-2004	Yes	*as above
Baking Time	2003-2004	Yes	
Where the Wild Things Are	2003-2004	Yes	*as above

Appendix C records information regarding newspaper articles kept in MTYP archives, or radio transcripts of show reviews, and considers the content of the article itself. The table shows: title of show, year produced, director of show, name of reviewer, name of paper or radio station, if the review considered the show from a child's perspective at all, from an adult perspective, whether the show was a fairytale or not, whether the show was a tour group production or whether the show was produced originally by MTYP either alone or with another company. Lastly, the chart indicates if there was any specific critique of the show, either positive or negative.

The list in Appendix C indicates that of the 196 shows produced since 1982 by MTYP, 104 shows had archival files, and 102 of the productions were reviewed. Of the 102 shows reviewed, as some shows were reviewed by more than one paper, a total

number of articles written about MTYP plays was tallied to be 156. Of the 156 reviews, 100 wrote about a child's reaction or perspective to the show being discussed. This finding suggests that only 64% of the reviews attempted to consider the entertainment value or the perspective of the child as an aesthetic consumer. The number of articles that discussed the play, or mentioned a view from an adult's perspective was 130, or 83% of the reviews considered an adult's perspective or entertainment in the review of the production. Of the 104 plays that MTYP had files on, and of the 156 review articles overall read, only 99 of the 156 articles (or 63% of the reviews) attempted to critique or evaluate the show either positively or negatively. The reviewer who most often wrote about the MTYP shows was Kevin Prokosh. Kevin Prokosh wrote 65 of 156 articles or 42% of the total articles written.. The reviewer who most consistently discussed the play as it was affecting the child audience was Robert Enright in 12 articles (or transcripts of radio reviews). All 12 mentioned the child's perspective. Enright always considered the child as the aesthetic consumer of the theatre production. By comparison, Kevin Prokosh mentioned the child's perspective and reaction in 37 out of 65 in his review articles, or 46% of the time.

#### *Findings from the Newspaper Articles*

MTYP has produced or co-produced 196 shows since 1982 when Leslee Silverman became Artistic Director. During that time period, 17 plays have been produced more than once, (see Table 3) with "Feeling Yes, Feeling No" produced most often (8) and "Comet in Moominland" ranking second with 7 re-productions. This count includes touring shows for all shows listed in Table 3.

Table 3 *MTYP Shows Produced More Than Once*

Name of Production	Number of Times Produced
Feeling Yes, Feeling No	8
Comet in Moominland	7
Robinson Crusoe	4
SeeSaw	3
Liars	3
Mirror Game	3
New Canadian Kid	3
The Illustrated History of the Anishnabe	2
The Story of the Little Gentleman	2
The Other Side of the Closet	2
The Power of Harriet T!	2
I Am A Bear!	2
Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang	2
Night Light	2
Peter and the Wolf	2
Alligator Pie	2
Rocks	2

The two most often repeated shows “Feeling Yes, Feeling No” and “Comet in Moominland” were original co-productions of MTYP. Leslee Silverman mentioned that shows were repeated by MTYP to accommodate the fact that new audiences of children of an appropriate production age emerge every few years that have never seen a particular show before that speaks well to their particular age, and therefore some shows that were viewed to be particularly successful productions were re-mounted to accommodate new emerging audiences. Sometimes shows were re-mounted by request. Parents of students at the theatre school sometimes request re-mounts for the benefit of younger siblings who may not have seen a show that an older sibling enjoyed a few years earlier. Requests also come from other sources. Teachers of the Winnipeg area asked Leslee to re-mount *Night*

*Light* as they saw this production as being so important for students. Of the total number of 196 productions since 1982, 48 represent shows produced more than once. This finding indicates that only 24% of the shows produced by MTYP have been repeated two or more times.

Discussions with the staff reveal that the archives are viewed to be an accurate reflection of media coverage of their productions since Leslee Silverman became artistic director. Therefore, it seems clear that MTYP had very little consistent newspaper coverage of their season during the early years from 1982 - 1991. Articles produced during the early years were not reviews or critical reviews of the company or the plays. The articles produced during this period were mostly brief interest items about the shows being offered. Silverman herself, mentioned an article by Chris Johnson appearing in *Canadian Theatre Review* in Spring 1985 which discussed the goals of MTYP. Silverman identified this article as the first real critique of the company. From 1991 the coverage began to improve with 84 of 107 (79%) shows reviewed from the season offerings. An online search of the *Winnipeg Free Press* archives indicated that MTYP was the focus of or mentioned within 478 articles between September 13, 2001 and August 21, 2004. It would appear that the national and international success of *Comet in Moominland* encouraged local newspapers to sit up and take further note of the offerings from MTYP. The years after *Comet in Moominland* show an increase in the number of shows reviewed by the local press.

Leslee Silverman, in her interview, stated that she felt well supported by the coverage of the local media. On the other hand, she did comment that she feels there is a

lack of critical review of the MTYP productions. She cited Robert Enright and Reg Skene as being excellent theatre critics whose opinion she valued.

Table 4 below presents bibliographic details and main themes of 26 articles chosen from a variety of newspapers and journals. The analysis serves to further clarify the narrative history of MTYP from 1985 to 2004.

Table 4 *Select Publications: A Survey of the History of MTYP from 1985 and On.*

Article Reference Number	Author, Publication Date, Source	Title of Article	Main Theme of Article
1	Chris Johnson Spring 1985, <i>Canadian Theatre Review</i>	Working from the child's oerspective	The strides made by the theatre company under Leslee's guidance, her philosophies and influences
2	Karen Crossley February 10, 1989 <i>Winnipeg Sun</i>	Actor enjoying second (and third) childhood	Profile of actor Richard Clarkin, discusses process of rehearsals at MTYP
3	Karen Crossley February 10, 1989 <i>Winnipeg Sun</i>	Actors' Showcase Artistic Director not content to rest on laurels	Leslee speaks about the need to have a permanent building for the theatre company
4	Liz Nicholls September 26, 1990 <i>The Edmonton Journal</i>	Controlled insanity gets remarkably funny	Teatro Dell'Angelo Troupe brought to Winnipeg
5	Kevin Prokosh October 15, 1992 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	MTYP buoyed by \$750,000 grant	Money given to refurbish a building, Leslee hoping to perform in a new building the following year

Article Reference Number	Author, Publication Date, Source	Title of Article	Main Theme of Article
6	Kevin Prokosh February 22, 1993 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	On stage	Leslee is awarded a Commemorative medal for the 125 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of Canadian Confederation for her significant contribution to Canada
7	Kevin Prokosh September 1995 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	Kids to get new stage: Theatre at Forks eyed	\$4 million dollar theatre complex to become MTYP at the Forks, will leave Gas Station Theatre, MTYP had a difficult time finding a new home
8	Karen Morrison July 27, 1995 <i>Western People Magazine</i>	Theatre of the absorbed	Discussion about the theatre and Leslee's social drama philosophy
9	Chris Landry February 20, 1997 <i>Uptown Gazette</i>	New digs for MTYP productions	New theatre to be funded by all three levels of government, construction to begin fall of 1997
10	Kevin Prokosh February 21, 1997 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	Act 2, the money hunt begins	MTYP trying to raise 2.5 million dollars, Ruth Asper helping to fundraise with setting the stage for the future launch

Article Reference Number	Author, Publication Date, Source	Title of Article	Main Theme of Article
11	Staff March 13, 1998 <i>Winnipeg Sun</i>	City's young thespians need help	MTYP trying to raise funds, going slow, need to educate givers about who the organization is, does not have 'coherent public image'
12	Staff May 27, 1998 <i>Winnipeg Sun</i>	Gazing	MTYP co-production with puppeteer Ronnie Burkett "Old Friends" wins \$25,000 Chalmers Canadian Play Award
13	Kevin Prokosh May 27, 1998 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	Aspers set new stage for new theatre centre	Can West Global donates \$700,000 to MTYP building, hoping this will make MTYP more high profile as still confusion about MTYP identity in funding world
14	Dale Jack June 16, 1998 <i>Connect!</i>	Take one giant step	MTYP has reached 80% of its fundraising goals
15	Kevin Prokosh September 15, 1998 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	MTYP to raise funds as it builds	MTYP has not yet reached 100% fundraising but set to begin building in two weeks, as MTYP not well known to corporate Winnipeg

Article Reference Number	Author, Publication Date, Source	Title of Article	Main Theme of Article
16	Staff September 30, 1998 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	Donors act fast for new theatre	\$435,000 donated in two week period, \$235,000 from Richardson Family bringing MTYP much closer to goal
17	Dawne Clarke November 11, 1998 <i>The Lance</i>	MTYP coming home to the Forks	Groundbreaking ceremony held at Forks, theatre to be complete by the Pan Am Games Opening Summer 1999
18	Lindsay Stewart February 7, 1999 <i>Winnipeg Sun</i>	Softness meets strength	Mark West architect using spandex to create moulds for concrete, to create a unique design that is tactile
19	Kevin Prokosh August 17, 1999 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	MTYP takes possession of its own new building	Versatile stage, eager to begin season
20	Kevin Prokosh October 3, 1999 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	A theatre is born	Coverage of the official opening of the theatre, first new children's theatre in Canada and only the second in North America
21	Kevin Prokosh February 2, 2000 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	Success heaps welcome, heavy burden on MTYP	Very successful season, <i>The Hobbit</i> breaks ticket sales record

Article Reference Number	Author, Publication Date, Source	Title of Article	Main Theme of Article
22	Kevin Prokosh July 7, 2000 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	MTYP reaps rewards from new building	List of many accomplishments 242% more tickets sold than last year
23	Miriam Toews 2001 <i>Air Canada EnRoute</i>	Child's play	Discussion of the philosophy of MTYP
24	2002 Edition <i>Canadian Who's Who</i>	No Title	List of awards and accomplishments of MTYP
25	Kevin Prokosh October 9, 2001 <i>Winnipeg Free Press</i>	MTYP's rapid growth runs up \$78,170 deficit	MTYP needed more money to deal with expected growth
26	Shamona Harnett Summer 2004 <i>Winnipeg Women Magazine</i>	Drama queen	Discusses many accomplishments and national exposure of MTYP, philosophy of theatre company, MAC prize of \$30,000 awarded to Leslee

Table 5 lists 15 chosen artifacts and documents that tell another aspect of MTYP's history.

Table 5 Select Artifacts: History of MTYP

Artifact Identification	Description of Artifact	Importance
Photo 1 1985	Photo of Leslee Silverman	Photo of Leslee in National Theatre Review indicates her image is tied in with Actors' Showcase and that she is gaining national coverage for the theatre company
Photo 2, 1985	Photo of puppets in the play <i>The Dream Eater</i>	Great photo, puppets look extremely creative, interesting, photo suggests original work is going on
Photo 3, 1992	Photo of laughing Silverman upon hearing she has received a \$750,000 dollar grant	Photo of Leslee and article of MTYP indicates that the organization and the personality of the Artistic Director are being linked together
Photo 4, 1995	Photo of a gathering of MTYP staff, laughing and toasting announcement of decision to build the new building at the Forks	Leslee is surrounded by her staff, as she toasts the new building proposal
Photo 5, 1995	Photo of Derek Aasland in <i>Peter and the Wolf</i> production	Derek looks very young and troubled in expression, the set is detailed and interesting, makes viewer interested in what is happening in the story
Photo 6, 1997	Photo of Ruth Asper and beside her image photo of the model for the MTYP building at the Forks	Close up of the model, suggests a building that looks like it is out of a storybook, has many curves and other-worldly in design, interesting that fundraiser's photo is featured and not Leslee's

Artifact Identification	Description of Artifact	Importance
Photo 7, May, 1998	Photos of Ruth and Gail Asper and Reimer looking at the same model feature in photo 6	Again the fundraisers and the model of building are featured beside articles that discuss how corporate Winnipeg does not know MTYP's work, using people and images that corporate Winnipeg will recognize
Photo 8, June 1998	Photos again of Ruth, Gail Asper and Reimer, with insert picture of Izzy Asper	Beside another fundraising article and talking about donation of Asper family, the photos again feature business people
Photo 9, 1999	Photo of Silverman in front of new MTYP building	As theatre is about to open and fundraising almost finished Silverman is pictured in front of the actual MTYP building
Photo 10, 1999	Photo of kids cheering in front of the new building	Many children waving homemade flags with MTYP on them are smiling in front of new building, shows who the building is intended for, hand made flags suggest creativity
Photo 11, 2000	Photo of Leslee smiling in front of the new MTYP building	After a record breaking season, a smiling Silverman is pictured at front arch of MTYP, shot from a child's angle, the perspective makes Silverman look Giant and the Arch very prominent
Photo 12, 2000	Photo of villainous masked character chasing a masked clown like character on a stage with backdrop of a street scene	This photo is a shot from a rehearsal of <i>A Servant to Two Masters</i> . The article discusses how the incredible theatre expansion has created strains on the company. The photo and the play it is from seem symbolic for MTYP trying to serve two masters, expand to meet demand and keep quality and staff in tact

Artifact Identification	Description of Artifact	Importance
Photo 13, 2001	Large full page photo of Leslee Silverman	This cover photo for EnRoute magazine is nationally linking Silverman's image with MTYP once again
Photo 14, 2004	Large full cover photo of a smiling Leslee Silverman wearing a crown	This show shows Leslee as being happy and in the crown and regalia worn suggest to the viewer that she is in control of her company, also a play on words/images for term Drama Queen, which can be a negative term, suggesting female hysteria
Document 15, 2001	Created in May 2001, this document includes a CV of all of Leslee's and MTYP's accomplishments	Provides an excellent summary of awards and milestone events as MTYP staff views them, as they selected the material

### *Interviews*

The interview with Tony Frost took place on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2004 and Leslee Silverman's interview took place on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Transcripts were analyzed and emerging themes were coded and identified. These themes appear in Table 6 following:

Table 6 *Emerging Themes from Interviews*

- 
- Location of productions and importance of location
  - Early training influences and theatre influences
  - The role of the theatre school to Actors' Showcase/MTYP
  - The role of Winnipeg to the theatre's development
  - The role of touring to rural areas
  - The role of the media and the news
  - The role of fundraising and boards
  - The development of new plays and script selection process
  - The importance of children's theatre to their careers
  - The role of children's theatre in a broader perspective, and the role of Actors' Showcase/MTYP to the community
  - Feedback from parents
  - Thoughts on age groups and performances
  - Future with dreams
  - Philosophy/goals of the theatre school and classes
  - Role of audience and determining audience response
  - Highlights of productions
  - The role it plays that they see
  - The idea of what is appropriate in children's theatre
  - The idea of what makes/what is the criteria for a good children's theatre play
- 

These themes were identified by transcribing both of the interviews and numbering each line of the transcripts. By reading and re-reading the documents in succession, it became apparent that both interviewees identified or spoke to the above listed themes. Each interview will be reported on individually with reference to these themes which will be clustered under subheadings. Furthermore, these themes have been organized to provide a historical narrative of Actors' Showcase/MTYP. Summations of the two interviews profiling the words of the interviewees, as well provide a historical chronological overview of Actors' Showcase/MTYP.

*Interview One - Tony Frost*

*Early training and theatre experiences.* Tony's interest in theatre began in grade school. At the time that he graduated from high school, theatre programs like the ones that now exist in Alberta, his home province, were not available. Tony took on day jobs and was very active in community theatre groups in Medicine Hat, Alberta. In the early sixties he took many acting and voice workshops offered in various locations in Alberta, and worked during the day to pay the bills so that he could pursue acting, his first love, at night "...I was working for a company, driving a truck and it was amateur theatre and it was held at night so I would go from work to rehearsal at ten o'clock and loved every moment of it and ah, was in quite a few plays" (p. 7, Frost 2004, lines 185-197).

Tony's experiences with the community theatre scene expanded from acting to directing when an unexpected dispute in the local community theatre troupe created an opportunity. He recollects:

And then came the following year. Rivalry in the theatre. Egos involved and all I wanted to do was direct a show. And the board said, Tony's directing. So they wouldn't have to worry about that problem anymore. It was solved. Tony's directing. And what play do I pick? *Endgame*. And one of the rules of the drama festival is that it has to be ninety minutes long. Well, if you know his work, he writes "pause." Well. We paused. We made the sucker ninety minutes long. (Laughs) When we presented it in Edmonton for the drama festival, about half way through the ninety minutes people get up and start to leave. It was new theatre and they couldn't get their heads around it. (Laughs and shrugs) (Frost,

2004, p. 7, lines 214-222)

One of his most memorable, earlier workshops was with Tyrone Guthrie on choral speech. This workshop, and many other workshop courses on a variety of topics from acting to radio courses, Tony took at the University of Alberta. The courses themselves were not university courses as the university theatre program had not yet been established. None of the theatre courses Tony took earlier in his career had to do directly with children's theatre or drama education for children.

On a whim, as an aside to his adult theatre endeavours, Tony directed his first children's theatre play at the library in Medicine Hat and the following year he began the Medicine Hat Children's Theatre, 1964-1965. He came to Manitoba to take a job in Brandon with a theatre company, his first professional theatre job. One of his many roles with the theatre was to collect props. After a falling out with the artistic director over the manner in which props were gathered . Tony decided to leave the group. Tony was expected to sign personally for the safe return of all props rather than the company bearing that responsibility. He went on to work on radio ads in Altona, a town he found ultimately isolating because there was no theatre.

*The role of Winnipeg to the theatre's development.* Tony left that job to come to Winnipeg in 1966, and set about to make connections with the Winnipeg theatre scene. It was a theatre scene that in the sixties was both lively and welcoming to Tony. Winnipeg was a city sophisticated enough for conversations about theatre to take place in local restaurants, and 'small town' enough to provide the new arrival with a direct contact to a theatre troupe his first day in Winnipeg.

And I overheard two people talking about theatre. And I thought 'Okay as long as they don't think I am trying to pick them up'. So I'll go over there and say 'I heard theatre. What can you tell me about theatre in Winnipeg?' and he said: 'Well you can get a hold of Daphne Korol, and she's doodley do'...so I literally picked up a quarter off the table and went to the phone booth and phoned Daphne. (with a British accent) She said: God you sound so artistic, I would love to meet you we are doing a show at the theatre across the street. (Frost, 2004, lines 364-372 p. 12)

Not knowing Winnipeg streets at all, Tony got lost and did not have a chance to meet up with Daphne until the next day. She immediately brought him to Caravan, a local community theatre group. It was decided that Tony would direct a play, and when the president's wife was not cast by him, a dispute broke out. Daphne suggested that they form their own theatre group, which they did. They called the new group Actors' Showcase. The group was created as an alternative theatre to MTC. Daphne saw the troupe as an opportunity to produce large productions which, Tony felt, were not financially viable.

Tony began to do children's theatre to help cover the costs of the company, as he remembered how well attended the shows in Medicine Hat had been. Actors' Showcase branched out into children's theatre under Tony's initiative as a utilitarian pursuit. His words reveal that many bills had to be paid and Actors' Showcase could not compete with MTC's large scale productions.

It was trying to find that niche. Where do we fit in? Actors' Showcase as Daphne Korol saw it was in competition with MTC. We're mounting productions that they

can mount ten times better on a paltry little budget, you know, five hundred dollars when they are spending fifteen thousand dollars. (Frost, 2004, p. 14, lines 455-458)

As Tony tried to fill a gap in the Winnipeg Theatre scene, he spoke of another event that occurred that provided an opening for his children's theatre productions:

Well what happened was, MTC had given up - when they moved from the Dominion Theatre – and had given up their theatre across the street that's where they held all their young people stuff. And at that time adults were not allowed in. Only the children. You brought your children in and left them for the hour. Because of the fact that it only had a hundred seats if you were an adult, but more if you were a child – they squeeze them in, y'know? And so, they gave up the business when they moved. And I thought yabba dabba do! (Frost, 2004, p. 3, lines 63-69)

Winnipeggers were attending Tony's children's theatre productions, now the only children's theatre available in Winnipeg, except at Christmas when MTC still offered a show. As the productions were well attended and cheaper than the adult productions to produce, the theatre company began to rely on the children's theatre revenues. Tony recalls:

We ended up doing these...I mounted ah...a production of some silly thing, and ah, using the students...one act play! And uh, we held them actually in the studio. Ah, that was closely, close, close, close, close to the time that the Dominion theatre was being torn apart and we got fifty seats out of there. And we put them into the

studio and we had a fifty seat theatre! And I died every time we held a production on the weekends because of the fire regulations. Y'know? And we were only charging fifteen cents a seat, and it was marvelous because of the fact that we were always sold out on the weekends and these kids were...well they loved it and that was fine. (Frost, 2004, p. 2, lines 46-53)

Actors' Showcase had originally been formed "For adults, to give - as we still believe in - an opportunity to perform, because they weren't being hired by MTC" (Frost, 2004, p. 1, lines 5-6). In the fall of 1971, other members of Actors' Showcase, feeling the company was being pulled in two directions saw a need to decide between continuing to do only adult productions, or continuing to produce children's productions as well. Tony describes the conflict:

...and in the meantime these productions for children were paying off Daphne's bills. And that became a contention from the point of view that there were those on Daphne's side and those who were on my side. And one night we held a meeting and it was fifty people on my side and five people on hers. (Frost, 2004, p. 14, lines 436-439)

It was decided then by the group that the financial pressures of trying to produce theatre that could rival MTC was too stressful. Winnipeggers were generous theatre goers, but producing theatre without the business know-how or government support that MTC had was too much for the struggling company. And in considering the role of Winnipeg to Actors' Showcase's development, Tony concluded much later in the interview: "Here in Winnipeg the audiences have been really, really good to theatre,

whether it be for adult or children” (Frost, 2004, p. 35, line 1145).

*The role of the theatre school to Actors' Showcase.* In addition to the children's theatre productions, Tony began running classes in 1967 to generate more revenue, and to pay for the larger theatre space the troupe had rented at the McIntyre Block. He describes the mounting financial pressures and his attempts to support the company:

And I saw this huge space...it was like this (gestures at the large studio space the interview is taking place in) and I thought I'm going to go down and investigate. Well, they wanted a hundred dollars a month! Well a hundred dollars a month was a lot of money back then. But we figured well, everyone was supposed to chip in. Well, then Daphne (imitating her voice) had her child. 'Well and my husband ya ya ya...' (Gesturing with hands) and she couldn't make those. Well, I was working, so I was paying the bill. And meanwhile she was going off doing productions of *Medea* at the Playhouse theatre that were running us into the ground. And I mean we were two thousand dollars in debt...well that's like a million dollars today...I had a whole, I had, two or three classes and I had them ranging from thirteen to fifteen to adult”. (Frost, 2004, p. 2, lines 38 - 40 page 2)

Again the role of the theatre school played a utilitarian role, allowing Tony and others in the troupe a means to support Actors' Showcase. When Tony became Artistic Director of the theatre troupe in 1971 the troupe still ran some adult projects, though again, these projects were not financially as viable as the children's theatre. In 1972 the troupe moved to the Genser building and rent was five hundred dollars a month. To pay for the rent Tony put on a summer children's theatre production, and expanded the school

to three teachers. He also expanded the school to include younger aged students at the prompting of a mother.

It was at this point, the fall of 1972, that he decided that Actors' Showcase would be strictly a children's theatre. At that time the acting classes took place in the evenings and on Saturdays and the school enrollment swelled at its maximum under Tony to four hundred students.

*The philosophy/goals of the theatre school and theatre school classes.* Tony identifies the underlying philosophy or approach to the teaching in the theatre school at this time as the Stanislavski method. He explains:

And, ah, the whole idea was to be honest to yourself as far as your character is concerned, just don't learn your lines...have something going on behind the lines. And all the teachers that ever worked for me had that whole idea in mind that they wanted them to think...You know you say Stanislavski system to somebody and that means nothing to them, but tell them you would like to have some feeling put behind it - what are you thinking at this time - then of course that changes the whole situation from learning the lines and what are you saying (to) what is the emotion? (Frost, 2004, p. 25, lines 789-796 p. 25)

Viola Spolin's exercises were sometimes used in the classroom, but Tony says he was not a fan of improvisation. He also saw British drama educators as somewhat rigid. "Well, rigid in the way that, well, the children should be able to do this and have the children do this...and they seemed to be, for lack of a better word, old fashioned" (Frost, 2004, p. 27, lines 834-837). Tony did not do formal written evaluations of other teachers

at the theatre school, or hold regular staff meetings, although he did observe classes taught by others and offered them advice as needed.

Only if it, ah, deemed necessary, (would staff meetings occur) if I felt they were going off the path, because, I would sit in on some of their classes, and see what they were doing. And, ah, you know? But it was usually on a one on one basis, from the point of view of, ah, if somebody was really frustrated because if a child wasn't doing what they were supposed to be doing...why aren't they? (Frost, 2004, lines 853-856 p. 27)

He wanted the students prepared for the stage, but also saw the classes as an opportunity for students to bond with their parents. "Well, up to teenage, definitely, the bonding situation because the child has to be dropped off and picked up by the parent. So they have a chance to tell them what happened in class" (Frost, 2004, lines 962-964 p. 30). He also saw the classes as a chance for students to bond and socialize with each other, and an opportunity for each child to contribute through participation. "That is one thing that I insist upon, that if you are going to come up with a story then everyone must contribute something" (Frost 2004, p. 31, lines 981-982 ). In addition, Tony admits, "There are many aspects. And then there is the unknown. What are they getting and absorbing that you don't know about" (Frost, 2004, p. 31 line 988)?

Students from the classes would audition to participate in the shows produced by the company. In auditions, Tony would select his cast members on the following criteria: "(How well they) filled their space, or, how nervous they were, or how prepared they were" (Frost, 2004, p. 28, lines 872-873). Some of the students would then have a chance

to apply their theatre arts training directly to the stage. In this additional way, the school supported the efforts of the theatre being generated by the company.

*The role of touring.* Touring in the early years of Actors' Showcase was viewed as expensive but a great adventure. Tony enjoyed the chance to travel and bring the productions to the rural areas. He recalls that the financial viability of children's theatre made such rural tours possible:

And every time we did adult shows we made some money or we broke even, but when we did a children's show we were (blows a sound through his lips) in the money honey, you know? And we could afford to do this and that and the other...hire a bus and go out on the weekends and whatever. And charge, y'know whatever...it wasn't a lot of money at that time, and ah, because we only charged seventy-five cents a ticket...you know...but it paid the bills! (Frost, 2004, p. 25, lines 464-469)

Later on however, touring became a contentious point between Tony and the Arts Council who expected him to tour a show for six weeks. Tony saw this kind of touring as too expensive to do when he was struggling to pay the bills and continue to mount shows in Winnipeg. Tony did not talk about touring as integral to the mandate of the theatre company, touring was a fun adventure that was costly as meals and lodging for his sometimes large casts was considerable. Occasionally "make work" projects would make it possible for Tony to take a smaller cast of six or so and tour Manitoba.

*The scripts/shows chosen or developed and the evaluation of audience response.*

Tony mentioned that a production highlight was *Cinderella*, a show he had staged many

times over his career. A show he says “just works” (Frost, 2004, p. 32, line 1042)!

When Tony first began to do children’s theatre productions in the early years of Actors’ Showcase, he did several plays that were fairytales. He also did the work of a playwright named Beth McMasters, who had contacted him with a view to sending him a script of hers:

They were formula plays, when I say formula plays I mean that each one of the plays had the same idea in mind, all the way through, but there was a different gimmick in each one. The characters were different but there was audience participation, and ah, there was this little gizimmo or gimmick in the play, and it worked...and they were musicals. (Frost, 2004, p. 27, lines 539-543)

On touring groups, Tony mentioned that the company was able to bring in a puppet group from Toronto to tour. He did not discuss any other touring groups or criteria for bringing touring groups in. On audience response, Tony felt that children who were focused on the show were engaged, and that he could tell from being in the audience if the discussion was about the show or not and if the audience was engaged or not. With regards to the ideal age range of an audience, he said that ultimately he would like to see three to twelve year olds enjoying the same show, but said that at the time that he was producing shows at Actors’ Showcase the average audience range was three to seven year olds. As part of every production experience, Tony always had, and still has, the actors meet the audience after every show, and sign programs.

Tony did not use British scripts as most of the productions he had read from Britain were ninety minutes long and he felt that that was too long for a children’s play.

He felt the optimum length was “anytime from forty-five to sixty minutes”(Frost, 2004, p. 18, line 572). He was also offered, and produced, a musical on Boy Scouts called *Be Prepared* which was a musical written by a visiting cast member of a Rainbow Stage show in the 1970's. He felt that children's plays must be filled with physical action and looked for that in scripts, or for the possibility of that physicality in the scripts that he directed. Action was of great importance to insure the audience was focused. “And that is what has to happen in children's theatre because of the fact that their points of concentration are not developed to the point of where an adult can sit for five minutes and watch somebody sit and deliver a monologue.” Talking about what themes were important in his play selection for his audiences at that time, Tony said: “Good versus evil and good wins. That type of thing but it should be very entertaining as well. And if there is a moral in it, then it is second to the entertainment” (Frost, 2004, p. 20, lines 621-624). Tony saw the primary importance of children's theatre as entertainment and he suggested that social drama plays could not fall under that category.

Because you don't go (as an adult) to MTC to be educated, you don't go to MTC to get morals thrown at you, you go there to be entertained whether it be Shakespeare or whether it be a Broadway musical. Okay? And a child, I feel ah the only thing they should get out of the theatre experience besides the entertainment is the social aspect, to learn how to act with other people around him. (Frost, 2004, p. 30, lines 937-924)

The idea of what is appropriate also plays into the selection process. Tony felt that plays that were produced to entertain were appropriate, and that social drama was not

an appropriate form of children's theatre. He also felt that only certain themes should be presented in the group work of the students. He mentioned a group of students who were working on a class presentation once, had chosen to have Little Red Riding Hood's Grandmother portrayed as drunk. It was an interpretation that Tony felt would upset the visiting parents so he had a discussion with the young cast and they altered the work. He also discussed what was appropriate in terms of what the audience identified as appropriate. He mentioned that some complaints had been made about his casting occasionally:

We had letters from the audience members. You know? Why did you go ahead and cast a ...you know (searching for the word)...what is the word? Somebody from a third world country. Um, a minority? A minority in the role of the servant? Just happened to be black, no Filipino. And ah, why did the fat girl have to be the one that was the overeater, and ah, why is Cinderella...has to be beautiful? and why is she chasing ah, only after the prince? (Frost, 2004, p. 31, lines 1009-1015)

Tony was upset with the criticism and said in his defense of his casting choices: "Pick up the book of any Cinderella story and you will find that that is the way it is"(Frost, 2004, p. 32, line 1031).

*The role of the media.* Tony felt that the media had been supportive of Actors' Showcase in the early years when the troupe first formed in the late sixties. He said occasionally a review would be made of his children's theatre productions, but not always. Over the years, Tony has lost the copies of the reviews of his shows, but singled out two reviewers, Frank Morris from the *Tribune* and Peter Crossley, a reviewer for the

*Free Press* as being particularly supportive. Peter, as it turns out, was also an actor for Actors' Showcase. It appeared that reviews were more frequent when the productions were a blend of adult and student work, when Daphne Korol was still the Artistic Director of the company, and a few years immediately following when Tony became Artistic Director.

*The role of fundraising and boards.* In the later seventies, Tony and Actors' Showcase were given an Arts Council grant to produce a show that would then be adjudicated by a visiting adjudicator. Tony produced a play by Beth MacMasters called *Christmas Cards*. At that time the company was in financial trouble, so Tony used five thousand of the ten thousand granted to pay off old debts. The visiting adjudicator arrived and gave the production a poor review:

What he read into that play...was absolutely phenomenal! 'Oh well, that means that the rich are not giving to the poor and so and so and Christmas was a really bad time...doodidily do.' And I was like "Where are you getting this from? Boy, are you ever digging there! It was just a show! Just a simply written play...that was supposed to...And anyways (sighs) finally we had our meeting with MAC and they looked at us and said: 'We wanted you to spend the whole ten thousand dollars. And we wanted you to pay your actors and pay your directors, pay your set designers and doodly do, doodly do. And I thought Wow. How nice that would have been.'" But we were thinking about the people who were not...the wolves that were at our door...and to show you what we could do with x amount of dollars, and the actors got paid, but they wanted card holders. (Frost, 2004, p. 22, lines

683-693)

This led to a move to St. Vital for the theatre school, where the enrollment numbers dropped off. The board, created in 1975 and made up of parents of theatre students, was not, Tony felt, supportive. They were not fundraising on the company's behalf: "They weren't sitting at tables at things...we were trying to promote the organization" (Frost, 2004, p.25 line 763). To add to the company's financial worries, he was viewed as a rebel by the Arts Council for not following their rules about touring shows, shows for which he had received funding to be produced and then toured. These financial issues came to a head when the board fired Tony in the spring of 1981.

*The importance of children's theatre to Tony's career.* Tony originally had hoped to work in adult theatre. When he finally met his idol John Hirsch, upon arriving in Winnipeg in the mid sixties, Hirsch advised Tony to work in Toronto. At that time, according to the conversation Tony had with Hirsch, actors from Toronto had a greater chance to work on the stage in Winnipeg. This was disappointing to Tony. He tried his hand at directing adult shows and met with some success. But overall, it was difficult to make a living in adult theatre in Winnipeg. As the opportunities to see children's theatre waned when MTC decided to no longer do children's shows as part of their regular season in the early seventies, Tony's shows became even more popular. Upon reflecting about children's theatre and his career, Tony had this to say:

Forty years of doing theatre in the city and loving every moment of it. Yeah it is one of those things that I wonder. I often wonder if I hadn't gotten into children's theatre then one: What would I have done? and two: How long would it have

taken before somebody cottoned on to the idea. You know? I mean I never ever started anything before and I sort of feel like, wow! I am responsible that there are two to three children's theatres in the city, and they are there. (Frost, 2004, p. 35, lines 1138-1143)

*The importance of children's theatre and Actors' Showcase's role in that broader sense.* Tony believes that Actors' Showcase as a children's theatre company "Filled a void" (Frost, 2004, p. 34, line 1096) in the Winnipeg theatre scene. He thought that children's theatre's greatest role, is to provide an opportunity for families to spend time together. "I think that is absolutely wonderful, the bonding time, the quality time that is being spent with the child in a completely different atmosphere. Very, very, important, as far as I am concerned" (Frost, 2004, p.34, lines 1115-1116).

#### *Interview Two - Leslee Silverman*

*Early training and theatre experience.* Leslee identified many theatre experiences that influenced her from a young age. She was a student at the Manitoba Theatre School founded by John Hirsch and received training through her class experiences as a student, a variety of jobs she apprenticed for at MTC, and many wonderful productions she watched from backstage during that time.

We got to learn not only creative drama which was new at that time, you know, I was a child in the sixties, but we got to work backstage, so...if I had known at the time that I was watching Martha Henry in *Three Sisters* and Cedric Smith in the ah, *Galileo*, and *Mother Courage*...the theatre that I was exposed to was phenomenal...phenomenal. (Silverman, 2004, p. 36, lines 1222-1226, p.36)

Leslee also shared that she felt disappointed that today it is not the same experience in Winnipeg for interested students: "...the kids in the theatre school apprenticed easily accessed professional theatre. Now we are divided into university theatre, theatre school" (Silverman, 2004, p. 36, lines 1227-1228). Leslee got her first degree in Vancouver in Women's Studies, offered as an interdisciplinary program. The experience greatly influenced her in her approach to teaching and her art. She then went to Colorado where she got a Masters degree in developmental drama, also an interdisciplinary and community integrated program. She chose Colorado because she was so enthusiastic about the approach taken in her first degree, and the Colorado program seemed the closest. She came away with two strong realizations about what she valued as a theatre approach from the experience of touring the local communities for six months with a show as part of her course work. "So, I suddenly realized that one:...you involve every age group and community and set it up and (two) you have pieces that make sense to the developmental level of the child" (Silverman, 2004, p. 39, lines 1311-1313).

She also worked with many new developing ideas in drama education at that time, including improvisation. With respect to theatre theory, she studied Nellie McCaslin and Brian Way. Viola Spolin's work was her biggest influence when thinking about improvisation. She returned from Colorado and revived the Manitoba Drama Festival, with John Hirsch adjudicating her first festival. When addressing the influence John Hirsch had on her views of theatre and children's theatre, Leslee said the following:

I don't want to aggrandize it. I was a student and I was lucky enough I got to

assistant direct...but I think there are people who come around who are so passionate and so overbearing in their commitment to what they are doing that they do influence you more than others. And probably everybody has three or four in their lives. He said things that stay with me even now, that I can't stick to, and I would like to, about: 'you make up your decision and if this is what you are doing let the others do the administrative, the other stuff...don't let your energy and your focus get drained away'. And you know that that is important to me as an artist and as a person. (Silverman, 2004, p. 40, lines 1348-1355)

John Hirsch valued children's theatre as an art form. He believed children should have the very best productions possible, that they should have the finest theatre available. He also had strong opinions and beliefs about script choice and what was important to consider in theatre, either for adult or children's audiences, the opportunity to reflect on our place and our situations. Leslee recalls his influence further:

But his real influence was, he felt it was a birthright for children to have theatre because he came from Europe, he came from that. And he instilled it in me. Despite his obvious ability in the classics, he encouraged us to look at our own Canadian theatre. Like, if you see adult theatre-he would go to, at the community theatre festival he would say "Why are you doing these Samuel French's?" he would say to Morden Manitoba and the Les Pas "This is stupid this is wrong! There is Canadian theatre...you should be doing *Nine to the Bar* if you want to do a musical!" And he pushed that message! And he also believed that: "Don't let anyone take the right to do children's theatre away and (the chance) to say

something important to them”...and two: that you have to have place. Sense of place was...incredibly important. (Silverman, 2004, p. 40, lines 1362-1374)

Leslee then returned to Vancouver. When her first marriage ended shortly after the move, she dove into many projects. In the space of a year and a half, she began to work for Green Thumb and started a theatre school and worked on the development of *Feeling Yes Feeling No*, the child sexual abuse prevention program. She also worked on experimental theatre as part of a reclaiming street teen program and directed for a community theatre group. She then left Vancouver to go to University of Toronto to work on her doctorate, her thesis solely based on adult theatre and literary studies. “I lasted about half an hour in the department of education at U of T...not even really, I went to one course, and thought: I am not going to be here” (Silverman, 2004, p. 41, line 1141).

Not sure what to do next, Leslee returned to Winnipeg for a brief visit and, while visiting Colin Jackson on a street corner in downtown Winnipeg, she heard about the troubled Actors’ Showcase theatre company. At Colin’s urging she crossed the street and knocked on the door where members of the board of the company were gathering to set in process the dissolution of the company. To her surprise, Leslee began to launch a passionate speech on why she should be given a chance to be the company’s Artistic Director. A speech so convincing that she convinced not only the gathered members of the board, but herself as well.

*The role of Winnipeg to the theatre’s development.* That meeting at the corner of Princess and William, is something that Leslee identifies as being a sense of place and timing. After her pitch to the board members of Actors’ Showcase, Leslee returned to her

studies the next day in Toronto where the class topic - the width of Medieval streets and the connection to Medieval cart sizes for plays staged during Lent - seemed even less stimulating to her. Her struggle within, however was greater than the tedium of any class, it was her desire to be free from Winnipeg, although the call to return was growing stronger. "But it was my determination NOT to be in Winnipeg. I didn't think, you know...everyone who leaves here goes: "I am never coming back"...and here we are twenty-three years later. Boy! Was that Winnipeg! It was that standing on the corner and him saying: "I know that they (the board) are there. I just read in the paper that they are twenty thousand dollars in a black hole... Why don't you go over there and see..." (Silverman, 2004, p. 42, lines 1443-1448).

Leslee also attributes the sense of place, of Winnipeg with a great deal of the many things that have fallen into place to create her shared vision of MTYP. Leslee spoke about the many volunteers who have worked so tirelessly, the support of a community that is so small in population but that can wield so much force, right from the beginning: "And we went in with a group of volunteers, yet again, the Winnipeg story, found a building downtown, painted it, stripped it, and immediately started everything...a touring company, a main stage season...in the course of two months"(Silverman, 2004, p. 43, lines 1459-1461).

Leslee also attributes Winnipeg as the reason she was drawn into theatre, and into shared story telling in the first place: "What brought me to theatre is really summed up in Winnipeg: the word Winnipeg" (Silverman, 2004, p. 36, line 1206). She describes Winnipeg as a place where from her childhood there was a sense of the importance of

storytelling. The stories shared in her home also considered and debated ideas of what is just and of value in a society. These considerations and the freedom of a young Winnipeg, a place where there was no sense of years of doing things a certain way, allowed people to create and generate their own sense of storytelling. This context allowed artists the freedom to create stories that reflect and interpret a collective experience of the paradox of what it means to be a Winnipegger, in the very centre of a large country, geographically, and yet isolated from other Canadians and ideas by its very location. As Leslee reflected:

And I think that is what has always kept me in children's theatre. Because I think it is fundamental to what we do to talk about what is fair and what is just, what is right, in your young life. You know? So those are the roots that it comes from. And that is why I say it is Winnipeg, because it is. And now being familiar with every professional theatre company for young audiences...across this country... and American as well. The way things happen here is so iconoclastic, it is unbelievable! It is why Guy Maddin comes from here, it is why Shawna Dempsey (comes from here)...it is why we have the largest theatre school in the country...go explain that! With none of the population! Explain why Winnipeg has a new theatre facility built purposefully for children and no one else in Canada does? It is because we make our own blueprint here. That is it, really. I don't know about this generation but I do know about mine. It was bred into you. There were no models to copy. (Silverman, 2004, p. 38, lines 1274-1281)

*The philosophy/goals of the theatre school and the theatre school classes.*

Leslee's return to Winnipeg in June of 1981 led her straight into the theatre school classroom. That summer she ran three classes a day for the entire summer. She put into practice all that she had read and studied earlier in her Education studies, and designed a curriculum influenced by the ideas of John Dewey. The goal of the theatre class was to provide the students with an alternate education, an education of experiences. In the first year she had noted theatre artists Anne Barager and Pauline Broderick teaching at the school. She believes that it is important to have the right school principal running the program, and that teachers must be evaluated at least twice a year and she invites feedback from the parents as well. "In some ways the school remains hippy-esque and you know I don't ever have a handle on it. What I have a handle on is that I see every teacher in every class, teach throughout the course of the year, and you know whether they are good or bad" (Silverman, 2004, p. 59, lines 2079-2081).

Teachers who do not receive good evaluations are not invited back. The philosophy of the school is to allow the teachers to teach the curriculum provided in the best way that that teacher knows how, appreciating that each teacher will bring their own delivery style and approach to the curriculum. But a not so hidden curriculum Leslee feels, must run through every program taught at the school as well:

The philosophy (is) that you have to be truthful. But the ultimate idea (is) if we are not teaching the developmental skills of a child in the introductory classes, both in the professional work and both here....how to be a citizen of the place you live, we are doing nothing. So that remains consistent. (Silverman, 2004, p. 58, lines 2046-2151)

Leslee also allows the school programming to grow where the interests of the students lead it. She is introducing a musical theatre program to the school this year, although she admits that she doesn't understand why it has such a large appeal. She believes in relying on the students as the people that they are, especially in classes of the returning students who work at a pre-professional program, and she hasn't "swerved from that" (Silverman, 2004, p. 58, line 2059).

Although students cannot shadow an actor or have direct accessibility to the rehearsal processes that take place during the day, when students are at school, MTYP encourages students to see the work and be apprentices and ushers. She also tries whenever possible to introduce the students to the particular strengths of the touring theatre companies, by inviting visiting theatre artists into the MTYP theatre classes during their stay in the city.

*The role of touring.* Leslee views the accessibility of theatre as an important issue. She sees touring as important with regards to her own company touring to rural Manitoba: "I would kill the main stage before I would kill touring in the van" (Silverman, 2004, p. 44, line 1516). Her strong views on the democratizing effect of providing theatre opportunities to rural communities is a passion with her. She also sees great value in exposing her Winnipeg audience to troupes from other provinces. She has long had a wonderful relationship with many Quebec theatre companies. Quebec is a province that values children's theatre. In Quebec there are over sixty children's theatre companies. Many of the companies specialize in a variety of physical theatre storytelling approaches. She tries as much as possible to include in her season exposure to touring groups for her

young audiences, because she observes: “The fight has been politically who we (children’s theatre) are in Canada” (Silverman, 2004, p. 44, line 1517). Trying to provide reflection on what it means to be Canadian, and considering what role children’s theatre has in Canada, and specifically the variety of ways that children’s theatre is valued and has developed in various parts of Canada, becomes intricately tied into the importance of providing exposure to theatre that considers and reflects those questions in many ways.

*The scripts/shows chosen or developed and the evaluation of audience response.*

First and foremost, Leslee believes in social drama, drama that reflects on the actualities of the audience encountering the work. She tries to incorporate child timing into the pieces she directs, a term that she defines with the following example:

I call it an exuberant reality, because I don’t know any other terms for it. It’s this: I know when you’re hanging around in a room what a kid will really do. If I throw in front of Sherry (an actor in a previous MTYP show) a Velcro ball and a baseball and I tell her “Okay. Do it in French, throw that square pants, that Bob Square Pants up and count to ten in French!” I know the kids will laugh at it. What is funny is what is real to them, and they never get to see other kids alone in their room pissed off or frightened. And if you have got that moment it is a treasure. (Silverman, 2004, p. 51, lines 1776-1782)

She selects topics by instinct that she points out, with many examples, have become a litmus test for what is going on in society:

I say it all the time...I mean can you believe I chose it? And then there it is in the paper! When we did *Rocks*, which was a two-hander about kids who threw rocks

off a bridge and killed a motorist and it was an examination of the justice system...and there were immediately three articles coming out in the next two months on that exact topic. I would have to have the list of plays in front of me, or curiously not even a social issue - I will spend five years of my life attempting to get the rights to do *The Hobbit*, and suddenly it's the biggest thing since sliced bread! Just arbitrarily the trilogy is going to be done! And, by the way, *The Hobbit*, our adaptation, we got the license for all of Canada, and Canadian theatres have made more money off of our adaptation than any other recent play in Canada. It has played absolutely everywhere. (Silverman, 2004, p. 61, lines 2147-2157)

She selects her plays and develops scripts using her uncanny ability to predict what will be of interest by what she believes would be of interest or of importance to her audience. She predicts often when there will be controversy about a play, but controversy in the paper over plays such as *The Other Side of the Closet*, about homophobia among teens is not a concern to her. She believes in starting the discussion. She does have concern over what is deemed appropriate or inappropriate for discussion however. It is the workings of what Leslee terms "the appropriate police" (Silverman, 2004, p. 52, line 1824), that most concerns her. Those who try to stop a conversation before it has even begun. "What I don't expect is things like, um, doing a play about bullying and getting letters about how inappropriate it is to show the actions of the bully - that kids will role model (the bully). I don't expect letters about 'Pinocchio was rude to Gepetto and he is a poor role model' (Silverman, 2004, p. 53, lines 1835-1838). It is the unexpected

undercurrent that has Leslee sometimes second guessing herself about what is appropriate, and she finds that very disconcerting:

We are doing a workshop on *The Frog and the Toad*. The agreement is that we don't want it to look like the Broadway musical, we want to go back to the Victorian, we always do, it is a Canadian thing! And Leanne Foley (Costume Designer) has come up with designs based on corsets, and the profile of the time and they are risqué. And I am sitting there going: Am I going to interfere with this? These are gorgeous, they are absolutely right! I mean okay we are selling it to...three year old kids always saw Music Hall and Vaudeville...but it's the word and I hate the word...and now it is what everybody wants to know: What's appropriate and inappropriate? (Silverman, 2004, p. 53, lines 1847-1854)

There are of course no easy answers for her on this front. When asked if the board tried to interfere with play selections, Leslee did not see board interference about this issue as of concern. She only mentioned one example of board members being concerned about the content of a play about a deeply disturbed boy. But, with any of these very occasional discussions with boards about her season choices, Leslee pointed out "I guess I never lost so I never felt badly" (Silverman, 2004, p. 54, line 1886).

In evaluating the audience response, Leslee mentioned that great effort is put into the details of a play like *Dying to be Thin* that will be produced for the teen audience this year. The play about anorexia, examines many important issues about the pressure of society on young women especially, to look a certain way. Leslee tries to make sure that the connection between the show and the audience does not get off track by overlooking

what the latest 'look' that is valued or deemed to be important at that time by the current teen audience. Research with teens is used for the selection of the correct music, the right hair and the right clothes for the character. She does not want someone in the audience to turn off from the show because the representation of a particular slice of teen life on stage is not authentic.

Secondly, audience response is determined and evaluated by being a part of the audience itself, and observing the response first hand:

The automatic laughter of kids is such a good touchstone, and the automatic silence is such a good touchstone. So in *Red Balloon*, first performance, this balloon...right?...the bully pricks it...it is like a shockable silence. It is the most profound silence. The empathy they are capable of giving is profound with kids, because they experience the teasing and the bullying. And you can certainly tell by the laughter. It is something like by the time you are six you laugh sixty times a day and by the time you are ten you are laughing maybe a half a dozen times a day. (Silverman, 2004, p. 50, lines 1744-1751)

Leslee insists that a talk back occurs with audiences after every show, where the actors engage in a discussion with the audience about the themes in the show. The actors also field any questions about the making of the show, illustrating how certain costumes or props work and describing how they were created for the show. For school performances, a professionally produced teacher's guide is sent to the school a month before the show is to arrive. The very contract that the school signs with MTYP includes an acceptance on the part of the school to prepare the classes before hand that are about to

view the show. All of these efforts are put into the before and after experience of the show to generate dialogue and reflection on the show for the audience and to provide feedback to the organization.

Leslee has her season divided into a variety of suggested audience age groups. Reflecting on that she said: “probably in some other world, when I am resurrected into something else...we wouldn’t cater to each age of children as if they were a separate species” (Silverman, 2004, p. 52, line 1793). Her most recent interests lie in offering a show from an Italian company that specializes in theatre for 18 - 24 month olds. It is an intriguing area of children’s theatre that she has not yet explored. She was unable to include the show in her already busy season this year, where MTYP is showing twelve plays, but hopes to include such an experience in a future season. Leslee is also interested in creating shows for the other age-extreme spectrum of children’s theatre, for 18 - 24 year olds. She is interested in theatre for young adults because “regional theatre for adults are not filling up the gaps...they are young enough to care about their emotional state and their lives, and who addresses it anymore”(Silverman, 2004, p. 39, lines 1322-1324)? She would like the young adult theatre shows to connect with the space and area that MTYP now calls home, The Forks. She would like to see a young adult Aboriginal theatre to perform at the Forks “which is a present and traditional space that belongs to the Aboriginals” (Silverman, 2004, p. 56, line 1974).

Lastly, Leslee said that MTYP strives in play development to create the world of the play. She has many meetings about the creation of that world with the playwrights, designers and so on. Coming from her interdisciplinary approach to theatre and education,

she believes in altering the theatre space to create that world, not in altering the play to fit the theatre space. Her productions are staged therefore in many innovative ways, a process that at the Banff theatre last summer where the first dramaturgy workshop for children's theatre was held, that adult theatre writers impressed with that process to such an extent that at future Banff workshops the idea of the children's model has been posed as another approach to its dramaturgical process.

*The role of the media.* Leslee was very grateful to the media and the coverage that MTYP has received from the media over the years. She cited the article by Chris Johnson as being very important because it signalled the first critical article of MTYP. She also said that Reg Skene's reviews were especially exciting to her. The reviews that Skene wrote about MTYP were critical, and sometimes even uncomplimentary. These were reviews that Leslee says generated self-reflection on her part about the choices in her work.

I would be forced to read and have these ponderous discussions...what is wrong with Mimes and Clowns (a new work at that time). What should I have done with David Gillies to make it better etc? He engaged in dialogue, he cared about the health of the theatre community. (Silverman, 2004, p. 58, lines 2028 - 2030)

She also mentioned that today reviews done by Robert Enright on CBC radio are informative because he understands children's theatre so well.

I, in fact, felt that we have been covered brilliantly, covered more than any other company in English Canada. And that is why guest companies want to perform here. I owe tons to Reg...and I owe a ton to Robert Enright. Because they saw it

and they understood it. (Silverman, 2004, p. 57, lines 2010 - 2013)

Most of the reviews and press that are generated about MTYP come from the pen of Kevin Prokosh, from the *Winnipeg Free Press*. Leslee felt that Kevin has supported MTYP very faithfully over the years, however, she feels critical of the *Free Press* for not having a variety of reviewers to cover the theatre scene in Winnipeg. She also feels that the *Free Press* reviews often contain just a description of the plays. Such press coverage helps to advertise a theatre's work but does not place it in context. "The other thing is, the *Free Press* sends the same person out to preview and review shows. It is not entirely a completely healthy critical relationship" (Silverman, 2004, p. 58, lines 2029 - 2033 p. 58).

Leslee said that the *Winnipeg Sun* rarely covers the work of the theatre, that from the first *The Sun* has viewed MTYP as "...too elitist..."(Silverman, 2004, p. 57, line 2020 ). Leslee was not concerned when shows generated controversy in the press. As mentioned before, she views the controversy about shows as part of the dialogue that must and ought to be generated by theatre.

*The role of fundraising and board.* Leslee especially focused on the fundraising that occurred to provide MTYP with its home at The Forks. It was a move that Leslee felt was a very important step for MTYP in establishing a profile for the company on the national and international theatre scene:

I became very, politically astute, in understanding if you don't have a space that you declare exists, a public face, if you don't have parents and kids coming together...you don't have anything that anyone takes seriously enough to fund, to

review. So in order to have profile you need a space. (Silverman, 2004, p. 45, 1521-1524)

Such profile, Leslee felt was important especially for a children's theatre organization. Children's theatre has to struggle with adultism, or the view that children's theatre is somehow less important or less professional than adult theatre, even though the two theatres draw from the same talent pool of actors, designers and so on. Leslee stated that this perception leads to injustice in funding (even though you are paying the designers, the technicians, the actors all the same fees as in adult theatre people say things like 'Well you are doing children's theatre, so you can pay the actors \$230 a week...so you start with a fight of, we are paying the same designers the same unions...') (Silverman, 2004, p. 46, lines 1570 -1572). This injustice and others, led to Leslee's involvement in creating a national organization to speak to the rights of theatre organizations and children's theatre companies, The National Theatre Alliance of Canada, an organization that held its first conference in Winnipeg two years ago. Leslee pointed out many statistics on the contribution of children's theatre financially to the theatre scene in Canada:

We produce more plays, more Canadian work as a genre than anyone else does. We tour internationally, the French (in Quebec) tour their heads off...We represent Canada internationally more than anyone else...We employ 35% of the sector, people who are working professionally, as actor's equity, 35%! And we did a formula and it is something like 35 to 2. We get 2% of the financial contribution for employing 35% of the sector. The vast majority of people going to see theatre

in Canada are under twenty. It is just the truth, right? I grew up with the political, finally. I mean I grew up as the awareness was happening. (Silverman, 2004, p. 48, lines 1647-1658)

In spite of the political injustices that children's theatre has had to face, Leslee feels that they have had aesthetic advantages in the theatre world. The adult theatre companies lamented at the conferences about the "Industrial Box" (Silverman, 2004, p. 48, line 1657), that they could not take the time to do the kind of organic world of the play workshops and rehearsal time that children's theatre often enjoys. The rules of Equity and IATSE have stifled much of the organic work in adult theatre. Leslee said that another part of the problem for adult theatre is that "they are not doing Canadian work" (Silverman, 2004, p. 48, line 1664).

Aside from the political battles that Leslee has had to struggle with throughout her career, the largest battle that she has ever had to face professionally and personally with children's theatre came with a board that in their fundraising attempts began to attempt to alter the theatre itself:

...they became people who were about money and the raising of money, um and started dictating things like 'we don't want actors coming out of rehearsals on the opening of the building because they aren't dressed appropriately...'they started interfering with the ecology of the theatre itself. (Silverman, 2004, p. 54, lines 1888-1893)

Such unwelcome interference was infuriating for Leslee who found that much energy was being used up in defending the organic way that the theatre had always

worked. "I got told in one year, where I almost quit and had to go into deep therapy and broke out in boils, that if I didn't cooperate with the strategic planning committee that I was going to be put on salary commiserate with my cooperation like a basketball player"... (Silverman, 2004, p. 54, lines 1893-1896).

In the end, an appeal was made to the Canada Council to assist Leslee in her dealing with the boards. They found information that helped to buoy Leslee's approach to the theatre company in no uncertain terms:

The weirdest thing is, when you read and talk to people who understand the business world and the industrial world, they tell you our labor intensive model where people are committed and kill themselves because they believe in what they are doing is a model they would emulate...there are big American guys who the Canada Council called on my behalf who sent a paper (saying) What happens in your rehearsal hall has to happen in your board. The organic, the best run organizations take their lead from what is actually happening and what is the product that you actually have. (Silverman, 2004, p. 54, lines 1902 - 1911)

Such affirmation of her business approach renewed Leslee, giving her the energy to see the project of fundraising 4.5 million to its completion. A great support during that period came from two long term employees Denise and Cathy who "could be earning three times as much for an advertising company because they are that good at knowing how to sell things." (Silverman, 2004, p. 55, line 1916)

Leslee also spoke critically about two possible funding bodies that could be more supportive, one local and one national. Winnipeg school divisions have for many years

made suggestions for topics of shows that they would like to see, and sent their students to many MTYP productions. The Department of Education itself, however, does not offer any funding to MTYP. Leslee feels that this is unfair as the Department of Education relies on MTYP: "We are the cultural institution. Where is the caring? Where is the money" (Silverman, 2004, p. 60, line 2122)? As well, Leslee, would like to see the Government of Canada employ a model used in many European countries. It would see theatre companies like Stratford or Shaw, which specialize in doing plays that have no royalty fees, pay a 2% instead of a 10% royalty fee to generate new Canadian works at other theatres.

*The importance of children's theatre to Leslee's career.* Children's theatre met a need in Leslee to marry story telling and justice. This desire has been with her from childhood. While growing up, she came to understand both the importance of story telling and need for social justice from her Jewish roots:

If I had to define my life, I wouldn't by theatre I would by justice, hopefully, the sense of justice, and in theatre, the righting of wrongs. You know? When you grow up a child, when you are Jewish and you are of the generation, and you are born three years after the end of a war in which there was a holocaust, the burden falls on you, if you are going to survive...you grow up with a sense of working...that your end has to serve the common good, and has to be about righting wrongs and then you get social issue theatre. (Silverman, 2004, p. 37, lines 1258 - 1268)

Theatre fills a spiritual need of sorts as well in Leslee's life:

Find me a church that rivals what goes on here when a Grandparent sits with their kid watching *The Little Prince* or Comet in *Moominland* or *Where the Wild Things Are*. We don't have any more sacred, sharing, quiet anchoring experiences...and this is the only thing left, I think. So I never wanted to work with anything other than (that) I wanted to work with the best designers, and the best musicians, and the best actors in the city. (Silverman, 2004, p. 45, lines 1527 - 1532)

Her batteries are recharged in children's theatre by the children themselves, and their sense of "ease to their being-ness...and you cling to that because it takes you to a place where your adult anxieties, which the Dali Lama calls the fluctuations of your mind, go away" (Silverman, 2004, p. 61, lines 2167 - 2170). Responding from this pure sensory level helps her to live her life in the moment.

And I totally believe that that is what theatre is about. Because theatre is about living in the moment and hopefully if you are doing it right, living in the dynamic of your society. And there is nothing more we can do. Like a woman's work is done if you can do that. And how could we not work for children? (Silverman, 2004, p. 61, lines 2173 - 2176)

While searching in her early training for a chance to work in an interdisciplinary way to create something, to better something, Leslee found her niche. "I can't work in an office, I am too noisy... I can't even work in Academia, no one would have me! So this is the place that I have got" (Silverman, 2004, p. 62, line 2187). And, as she herself said about the community that gathers to also find their individual niche in the Forks home

away from home, “that is good” (Silverman, 2004, p. 62, line 2125).

*The importance of children’s theatre and MTYP’s role in children’s theatre.*

Leslee sees children’s theatre as the most important theatre because children are our future, our country’s most valuable resource. She wants children to experience the best theatre for that same reason. MTYP has played a huge role in providing children’s theatre in Winnipeg where many students attend the theatre every year and provincially through its many tours. Nationally, the theatre plays an important role for many other theatre troupes like Carousel Players, who work collaboratively often with MTYP, and who unlike MTYP have no home base or building. The site at the Forks has raised the theatre’s profile to the point where: “We have at least three international invitations sitting in front of us...good globalization” (Silverman, 2004, p. 62, lines 2090 - 2095). On a local, national, and international scale then, MTYP continues to be a Winnipeg success story, a story that has made it possible to tell and share so many other stories through so many MTYP productions over the years.

*Summary*

The last table of this chapter, Table 7, draws together work from all of the data sources of the study to provide a timeline of important events in the history of Actors’ Showcase/MTYP, and illustrates triangulation of the results as many sources are drawn upon. This chapter presents many historical reflections of Actors’ Showcase/MTYP. A historical inquiry or a historical narrative seeks to offer insights into a historical phenomena, in this case a theatre troupe that began viewing itself as an adult alternative to MTC offerings, to a children’s theatre company with amateur performers, to a

professional children's theatre company. Each step of the history of Actors' Showcase/MTYP is rich with stories mirrored in the findings and, of course, stories left untold. The Actors' Showcase of Daphne Korol and Tony Frost was heavily documented in this chapter from the historical narrative that emerged in the Tony Frost interview, as Table 7 indicates. His show programs and the occasional newspaper article written about the troupe and other artifacts were unavailable, lost over the years of moving locations with his latest children's company. His Actors' Showcase is one that is utilitarian, a means of finding a niche in the theatre and surviving in that niche. The plays of his children's theatre are formula plays and fairy tales. The theatre school is also utilitarian, a means of supporting plays produced and paying the bills.

Under Leslee Silverman, the company turns professional and the theatre pieces are chosen for examination of particular themes that may be part of a child's experience, the plays performed then, are often political in nature. As the Table reflects from 1981, and on, in addition to the oral history provided by the Leslee Silverman interview, articles and artifacts emerge as MTYP increases its public profile during the years that it is a professional theatre company. The table provides an overview of Actors' Showcase/MTYP that also reflects what Nellie McCaslin (1971) summed up in her book *Theatre for Children in the United States: A History*: "...trends in theme and subject matter from earlier fairy tales to current ethic dramas" (p. vii). In this sense, then, the history of Actors' Showcase/MTYP mirrors the major trends found in the history of children's theatre in North America over the past sixty years.

Table 7 *Timeline of Important Events of Actors' Showcase/MTYP*

Year	Highlight	Data Source/Reference	Comment
1966	Actors' Showcase is formed, Daphne Korol is Artistic Director	Tony Frost Interview	Actors' Showcase was formed as an amateur theatre troupe to produce adult theatre
1967	Children's classes introduced as well as occasional children's show is produced	Tony Frost Interview	The children's theatre productions and drama classes were added to provide income as adult theatre productions expensive and not making money
1967	Parents are invited to stay and watch the shows with their children, not previously the common practice - before at Dominion theatre. Previously, parents would bring their children to children's plays and then leave and return to pick them up after the show	Tony Frost Interview	This decision was made by Tony as he saw the importance of children's theatre as a time for adults and children to bond
1971	A rift develops in the theatre troupe, Tony is elected Artistic Director	Tony Frost Interview	Tony intends at this time, to continue both children's theatre and adult theatre
1972	After expensive adult production, Tony decides to do children's theatre only. Tony using Beth McMaster scripts	Tony Frost Interview	The beginning of children's theatre as the company's only focus, use of formula scripts

Year	Highlight	Data Source/Reference	Comment
1974-1975	Around this time total audience is 10,000 including touring and school enrollment and workshops at 500	Tony Frost Interview	Statistics to indicate Actors' Showcase growth and impact on Manitoba students
1979	Actors' Showcase receives grant	Tony Frost Interview	\$10,000 used to pay debts and to produce a show
1979-1980	Arts Council adjudicates <i>Christmas Cards</i> by Beth McMasters	Tony Frost Interview	Arts Council not pleased that some of the grant money has been used to clear some of the company's outstanding debt, adjudication does not go well
1981	Actors' Showcase board fires Tony	Tony Frost Interview	
1981	On Colin Jackson's urging Leslee goes into talk to the Actors' Showcase board as the board is preparing to dissolve the company	Leslee Silverman Interview	Surprising herself, and still enrolled in a doctorate program in Toronto, Leslee makes a pitch to the board to have them hire her as artistic director
1981-summer	Leslee opens summer theatre school	Leslee Silverman Interview	Teaching three levels of class a day, Leslee is the only teacher, she begins to make plans for her first season
1982	Leslee stages <i>The Little Beast</i> at the Winnipeg Art Gallery	Leslee Silverman Interview	Leslee opens the first professional theatre season of Actors' Showcase

Year	Highlight	Data Source/Reference	Comment
1982	Leslee stages <i>Feeling Yes, Feeling No</i> a collaborative production with Green Thumb	Table 2 Table of shows and review of MTYP  Theatre on sexual abuse	This show tours extensively and is repeated for several seasons to 1990, signifies beginnings of MTYP's commitment to social theatre and creating original works
1982	Budget for this year of \$70,000, four play season, all plays at Winnipeg Art Gallery, total audience of 12,000, total school size of 330, touring to 19,000 students	Table 5 Article #25	Statistics to indicate size of Actors' Showcase, growth and impact on Manitoba students
1983	MTYP begins to do shows in the Gas Station Theatre	Leslee Interview	Gas Station provided a much more user friendly theatre space than Art Gallery
1989	MTYP produces <i>Comet in Moominland</i>	Table 3	This production garners praise and is reviewed nationally. Local reviews of MTYP productions steadily increase in consistency after <i>Comet in Moominland</i>
1989	Leslee begins to speak of need for building for company	Table 5 Article #3	This indicates the first time publicly that a need for a permanent building for MTYP to house the theatre and the school is mentioned
1992	Leslee receives grant	Table 5 Article #5	Leslee hopes to perform in a new refurbished downtown building by the following season

Year	Highlight	Data Source/Reference	Comment
1993	Leslee receives medal	Table 5 Article #6	National praise for Leslee's work, creates higher profile for MTYP
1995	Photo of Leslee and staff, toasting the announcement that a new 4 million dollar building at the Forks will be built for MTYP	Table 6 Artifact #4	Indicates the beginning of the fundraising efforts to build the new building at the Forks
1997-1998	Photos of fundraisers for MTYP	Table 6 Artifacts #6,#7 and # 8	Indicates the efforts to address fundraising concerns by raising profile of MTYP to corporate Winnipeg by using images of important business players
1997-1998	Leslee struggles with the board	Leslee Interview	Indicates time period when the fundraising approach with the board is felt by Leslee to be interfering with the nature of MTYP
1999	Article about the opening of the new 28,000 square foot building with 325 seat convertible theatre space	Table 5 Article #19	Coverage of the official opening of the theatre, Leslee featured prominently in the article. Indicates the successful completion of the building

Year	Highlight	Data Source/Reference	Comment
2000	Total attendance at theatre:103,000 (43,000 at home and 60,000 on tour) Theatre school enrollment up to 1418 students	Table 5 Article #22	Article listing accomplishments, statistics indicate continued growth of MTYP and impact of Manitoba students, mentions that building cost more than predicted and MTYP still trying to fundraise \$1 million more dollars
2001	Article about Leslee Silverman in Air Canada's EnRoute magazine	Table 5 Article #23	Indicates national coverage and increased profile of Leslee Silverman and MTYP
2002	Article about deficit	Table 5 Article #25	Indicates that company lost \$78,170 because of more programming demands, this amount added to the already outstanding debt for the construction of the building
2004	Photo of Leslee dressed as a Queen	Table 6 Artifact #14	Photo from local Women's magazine indicates Leslee achievements with MTYP

## Chapter 5: The Role of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People

*Summary of Findings*

The trend in children's theatre in the past sixty years has been marked by an evolution from plays for children that are formula plays with predictable structures and gimmicks, to plays that seek to entertain and perhaps to also educate children, or invite reflection about the child's own life. This new view of the child as an aesthetic consumer, resulted in the replacement of amateur writers, directors, and amateur or semi-professional actors performing for children, to full scale professional productions staged for children. This trend of evolution and change in American children's theatre was noted in the United States by Nellie McCaslin and also evident earlier in the twentieth century in post-Darwin Europe. The European tradition of providing professional theatre for children, emerged much sooner than in North America. In Canada, Quebec's close European ties are perhaps evidenced in the fact that over sixty theatre companies for children exist in Quebec alone, while only thirteen professional companies exist in the rest of Canada.

Permanent buildings are sought by theatre companies to help establish higher profiles, secure more funding from private and government bodies, and allow more artistic freedom. Very few children's theatres enjoy permanent theatre buildings. Many children's theatre companies, such as Green Thumb of Vancouver, must rent theatre space or tour to other centres with theatres. MTYP's CanWest Global Performing Arts Centre building is the only new building built especially for children's theatre in Canada, and is only the second in North America. In Winnipeg, both Prairie Theatre Exchange and

The Manitoba Theatre Centre, adult theatre companies, have had new theatre buildings constructed for them. The lack of construction of theatre space may perhaps be an indicator that children's theatre does not enjoy as high a cultural regard with funding bodies in Canadian society, as adult theatre companies do.

The acting company known as Actors' Showcase, established in 1966, began to produce children's theatre for practical, and not aesthetic, reasons. Tony Frost began to produce children's theatre as a utilitarian endeavor to pay the bills for the adult productions of the amateur theatre troupe he belonged to. At that time the children's theatre productions of the company were cheaper to produce and well attended. In 1972, Tony who was now the Artistic Director of the company, began to do only children's theatre, often using students from his class in productions with semi-professional actors.

Financial troubles began to mount for the company in the late 1970's. The school enrollment shrank from 500 students to 130 students when financial troubles resulted in the company's move to St. Vital. One of the sources of tension for the company was Tony's decision to use government grant money to pay for some outstanding debt the theatre was carrying. This was frowned upon by the Arts Council who refused to extend any further funding after Tony reported his use of the funds granted. In addition, the Arts Council adjudication of the show that they had provided funding for, *Christmas Cards* by Beth McMasters, was uncomplimentary. *Christmas Cards* was a play that Tony said was a simple formula play that the adjudicator hired by the Arts Council read far too much into. The poor adjudication and other concerns also created tensions between the board and Tony. As a result of these and other conflicts, Tony was fired in 1981 by the board.

Leslee Silverman, upon the urging of her friend Colin Jackson, convinced the board not to dissolve and took over the troubled children's theatre company. She used the company as an opportunity to practice her interdisciplinary approach to both education and art. The company became a professional company from the time Leslee took over, and she solicited many government departments to try and secure short term grants so that she could begin to revitalize the group. Leslee's commitment to both storytelling and political and social activism led to script choices that followed much different guidelines than the early plays chosen by Tony. "Anything that goes below the surface is religious. Anything that flies by theatre and gimmickry alone is banal. The majority of children's theatres doing fairytales ad infinitum, until 12 years ago...did plays that were banal and stupid and trivial" (Johnson 1985, p.70).

While attempting to fundraise four million dollars for the construction of a new theatre space and school, her philosophies and strong political beliefs led to conflict with fundraising boards who she felt were out of step with arts organizations in other major centres. When the fundraising was finally over, Leslee and MTYP settled into a brand new building at the Forks. The incredible expansion of all theatre programs and the theatre season, led to a shortfall of funds and fundraising again became somewhat of a concern. The theatre is still carrying a debt of a million dollars.

Over the years MTYP has performed shows to hundreds of thousands of both urban and rural Manitoba students. Connection with the audience after the shows has always been part of the Actors' Showcase and MTYP theatre experience, although the approach has evolved from a meet the actor session to a discussion of themes in the play.

### *Conclusions*

There are many trends that have emerged in children's theatre and drama education in the past sixty years. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the influence of Darwin's Theory of Evolution gave way to a new view of the child as an unevolving being, as opposed to a mini adult. To view a child as evolving led to the realization that the dramas of the time, wordy formula plays that often revolved around the re-telling of a fairytale, may be missing entertainment elements important to the audience of children. Led by Brian Way, experimentation in the structure of plays for children began, as well as alternative methods of presentation. During the same post WWII period, an evolution and a split occurred in the purposes of the uses of drama for children. The Bonnington Hotel meeting of January 1948 marked the first time the split in philosophy was clearly indicated by educators and theatre advocates of each side of the debate. On one side, the child drama advocates suggested that drama activities be done for child development and education rather than for performance purposes. Advocates for theatre education felt that children should be encouraged to act in plays for audiences and encouraged their students to do so. Because of child drama advocates, encouragement for professional theatre companies where professional adults were the actors began to grow in popularity.

In the theatre programs, drama activities and drama programs began to emerge to encourage social skills in students and so on, sometimes without the expectation of performance. Viola Spolin and her work with child actors in the 1960's offered an alternative to the formal rehearsal style previously used with children that mimicked the rehearsal style then used with adults. Spolin's inventions regarding improvisation games

and techniques breathed new life into the argument for those advocating for children to perform in plays. Her techniques were meant to encourage a more natural performance from children. Her work modeled the work of Piaget, who was influenced by Darwin, in that her work recognized specific stages of a child where different approaches to rehearsal ought to be used to suit the stage and age of the child performing. Richard Courtney's academic writing on the play stages of children offered further insight into the evolving child as either an actor for the stage, or participant in a child drama activity. The trend away from play structures for the young that followed a predictable plot formula, indicates a shift in the view of a child as a unique audience member and aesthetic consumer.

The guiding philosophy and leadership style of MTYP has changed with its Artistic Directors over the years. Daphne Korol began Actor's Showcase as an amateur adult theatre company and when the company began to run into financial trouble because the adult productions were not generating enough funds, Tony Frost, also a founding member of the company, began to do children's drama classes and theatre productions. For Tony, producing children's theatre was a means of finding a viable place in the theatre community, a practical way to generate funds and still do theatre. Tony took over the Artistic Director position of Actor's Showcase from Daphne and soon after the company was only doing children's theatre productions. Tony decided to continue to use students from the theatre school and the occasional semi-professional adult actor in his casts. His casts were mostly comprised of volunteers. Tony's decision to do children's theatre was not based on a particular desire to perform in that theatre paradigm. His

decision was inspired by his desire to find a niche in the theatre community.

Money problems continued to plague the company. With concerns about mounting debts at Actor's Showcase, Tony's decision to spend a \$10,000 Arts Council grant partly on outstanding debts contributed to a poor arts council adjudication report. The board reacted to this and other issues by terminating Tony's job.

Leslee Silverman was working on a doctorate in Toronto when she decided, at the urging of her friend Colin Jackson, to convince the Actor's Showcase board members not to dissolve, but rather to give her a chance to lead the troubled company. The board decided to give Leslee a chance and as a result, Leslee decided to quit her doctoral program and begin her work at Actor's Showcase.

Leslee ran the company with professional actors and chose scripts based on her philosophy of leaving the world a better place. Her convictions, instilled in her in childhood, led her to favour social dramas. Her belief is that important theatre is theatre that encourages reflection and discussion as well as the highest of entertainment standards. She saw the politics of being a child and tried to advocate for the child's experiences through her play selections. Often choosing plays that spoke to experiences that were real for certain stages of childhood, Leslee chose to survey her audiences often for feedback and topic suggestions. She fostered a close relationship with Winnipeg school divisions and shows were designed often to tour to gyms in Winnipeg and in rural Manitoba. She decided very early that the company would always tour to rural areas. Leslee viewed tours to rural Manitoba as important in democratizing cultural experiences for all students in Manitoba. Her decision to provide the very best theatre possible for

young audiences led to calculated financial risks. Through the volunteer efforts of fundraising boards and her vision to provide a theatre home for her company, MTYP at The Forks was constructed. The company still has a debt to pay off as a result of the move although the theatre and the theatre school have enjoyed increased subscriptions and students.

From its earliest beginnings Actor's Showcase/MTYP has found a willing audience of Winnipeggers eager to provide their children with a theatre experience. During the time of Tony Frost's leadership, tours to rural Manitoba occurred, but without regularity. Always viewed as a fun adventure by Actor's Showcase, the proposition of touring shows was still viewed as expensive. MTYP has made contributions to student theatre audiences in Winnipeg evidenced by the ever-increasing subscriptions to the shows and the increased enrollment in the theatre school. It is now the largest theatre school in Canada. Rural students enjoy several tours to their home towns, as Leslee is very determined to share with rural audiences.

The contribution of Actor's Showcase/MTYP to its audiences is evidenced by referring to the statistics listed in Table 7 of the 103,000 Manitoba students who experienced a MTYP theatre show in the 2000-2001 season, and the 1418 students enrolled in workshops or classes at the theatre school. These statistics indicate an important availability of theatre as an event to Manitoba students. Of the 103,000 students, 43,000 students were audience members in Winnipeg and 60,000 were rural Manitoba students.

Another important contribution may be measured by the quality of the theatre

provided. By referring to Appendix B, it is clear that many shows invited favorable reviews and interest from other theatres, indicated by the number of joint ventures MTYP has engaged in over the years. In the manner outlined above, MTYP's contribution to Manitoba students has been very significant.

The origin of MTYP was to provide an alternate for adult audiences to the Manitoba Theatre Centre. What finally emerged was not an alternative to MTC but an experimental children's theatre. MTYP grew into an alternative children's theatre now offering social drama presentations, very different to the formula style of children's plays that had been offered in its earliest years. MTYP's development to the present can be traced by media coverage, but the coverage of the early years is very sporadic. Oral history, gathered by interviewing the two Artistic Directors of the company, as it evolved into a children's theatre company, provides vital primary data for this research study. To summarize, all data, as well as other artifacts have been considered to help formulate the timeline presented in Table 7.

#### *Suggestions for Further Research*

This study has presented a narrative history of MTYP that has generated many new questions and research opportunities about MTYP in specific and children's theatre in general.

Many questions emerged from the study of Actor's Showcase/MTYP that bear further investigation. For example: How does the MTYP school reflect the professional company's values? How does MTYP ensure that the education of students with a social theatre concept occurs? What bridges are evident in the hiring of staff, in-servicing of

staff, and the school curriculum and programming to indicate this? As the largest theatre school for children in Canada, it seems natural to investigate this aspect of the theatre company in greater detail. Also, emerging from the research were questions about Manitoba teacher's perspectives: What do Manitoba school teachers see as the role of children's theatre in general and MTYP in particular for the education of their students? What role do they see children's theatre playing in their curricula, and how? What are the benefits and concerns that teachers have around children's theatre experiences for their students? With many children being exposed to children's theatre every year by the MTYP theatre company, what and how do the educators access the experience for their programs and for their students?

As a natural extension of how teachers view children's theatre in Manitoba, and with Leslee's comments of adultism in the theatre, questions began to form around how various arts organizations view children's theatre. What are the effects of adultism on the development of children's theatre in Canada? What is the government's commitment to children's theatre? Does the Canadian government encourage the development of children's theatre in Canada and how does our country's government commitment compare against other countries and their governments? What is the role of the National Alliance of Theatres? What influence on Canadian theatre and culture does it have? On the other side of the learning equation: What do students of varying ages have to say about their experiences with MTYP theatre production, or their children's theatre experiences in general? About their experiences with MTYP's theatre school or another theatre school experience?

When considering information from the Silverman interview, questions about Quebec began to surface. On a national level, why does the province of Quebec seemingly have such a varied history of children's theatre from the rest of Canada? What is Quebec's history of children's theatre? Why do sixty children's theatres exist in Quebec? What do they specialize in? How does the French Canadian society create the infrastructure to support children's theatre? What role has French Canadian Children's theatre played on Canadian children's theatre?

As this study drew upon a large pool of primary sources including newspaper articles, reviews and artifacts, further questions about the role of media and the arts began to emerge throughout the investigation of the history of Actor's Showcase/MTYP. What role does the media play in children's theatre in Canada? Is the role it plays in Quebec different from the other provinces, and if so, how? How are children's theatre reviewers in Canada trained? How do children's theatre reviews influence audience attendance? Do the reviews influence the theatre company choices of productions, and if so, how?

Lastly, throughout the Silverman interview references were made to social theatre from which such questions emerged: What is the history and role of social theatre in Canada? How has social theatre influenced adult and children's theatre? And how has children's theatre and children's theatre practices influenced adult theatre in Canada?

All questions for further investigation and study emerged from various aspects of researching Actor's Showcase/MTYP. Questions were recorded in a notebook as they surfaced throughout the process of compiling information and organizing ideas around this particular study of Actor's Showcase/MTYP.

The evidence presented and summarized in this study suggests that the history of the company called Actor's Showcase that became known as MTYP in 1991 reflects trends and developments in the evolution of children's theatre in North America in the last sixty years. This study suggests as well that, led by the philosophical views and choices of the artistic directors, the company has used different types of production programming that has resulted in varied and different experiences of children's theatre. It can be concluded that the impact on Manitoba students has been considerable. The large impact on education by MTYP was determined by the increasing numbers of students who have been exposed to children's theatre as a result of MTYP. Further studies are required to measure the cultural and/or education impact of these theatre experiences on Manitoba students. Financial concerns for the company are vexing, as the company is still trying to clear a debt from the cost of building, but certainly the concerns are not as formidable as they were a few years ago when the company was trying to establish their new theatre space. Now at home at the Forks, a historical meeting place found at the juncture of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, MTYP is enjoying new stability as a company, and recognition locally, nationally, and internationally.

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## Appendix A

*List of Website Addresses Checked for Research Studies on Children's Theatre in**Canada*

Key words used: Children's Theatre Drama in Education; History of Children's Theatre

No results

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[www.ubc.ca/](http://www.ubc.ca/) - 2<sup>nd</sup> largest research library in Canada

<http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/tributes/hibole.html>

[www.uwinnipeg.ca/](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/)

<http://www.library.ualberta.ca/>

[www.artslynx.org/theatre/world/htm](http://www.artslynx.org/theatre/world/htm)

[www.2.lib.uoguelph.ca/subject-guides/index.cfm?code=drama](http://www.2.lib.uoguelph.ca/subject-guides/index.cfm?code=drama)

[www.finearts.uvic.ca/theatre/faculty/](http://www.finearts.uvic.ca/theatre/faculty/)

[www.win.net/~kudzu/theatre.html](http://www.win.net/~kudzu/theatre.html)

[www.library.ubc.ca/hss/canstd/canslit.html](http://www.library.ubc.ca/hss/canstd/canslit.html)

[www.canadiantheatre.com/dict.pl?term+Alberta](http://www.canadiantheatre.com/dict.pl?term+Alberta)

[www.jcoston.bizland.com/theatrefr.htm](http://www.jcoston.bizland.com/theatrefr.htm)

[www.splatcomic.com/links/art/dir/theatre/Theatre-physical.asp](http://www.splatcomic.com/links/art/dir/theatre/Theatre-physical.asp)

[www.dramasource.com/theatre/links.html](http://www.dramasource.com/theatre/links.html)

Note: A Google search was also conducted.

## Appendix B

*Consent Form*

Research Project Title: An Inquiry into the History of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People: Its Role and Impact on Education in Manitoba  
Researcher: Joy Beauchamp

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of the study is to consider the history of the Manitoba Theatre for Young People (MTYP) and its role and impact on education in Manitoba. The study is a historical narrative and is qualitative in nature. I am planning to use archival artifacts and to interview key informants. You are being asked to consider being interviewed for this study, to provide important information on the topic. You have been chosen to be an interviewee because of your public role and history with MTYP. To strengthen the research and because your public historical role in the history of MTYP adds to the trustworthiness of the study, I am requesting that you consider having your real name used in the study. Should you choose to have your real name used in the study anonymity will not be maintained.

The interview will take no longer than two hours and take place at a location of your convenience, at a mutually agreed upon time. The interview will be recorded with a video camera and the interview will be transcribed. The benefit of a video taped interview is that this form of recording adds visual cues that may assist in putting your answers in context. To further clarify the process, I would like to offer examples of how the interviews may be used. I may, for example quote you directly from the interview in the representation of the results of the study or to confirm or deny information from archival sources. I want you to know that I will be researching and reviewing documentary data before and after the interviews. Some of the documentary data will be discussing your role in the history of MTYP and so you will appear in this study as a secondary source. If you choose to be interviewed, you will also be a primary source of information for the study and offer an opportunity to add greater depth to the study.

Further to participating in the two hour interview, you will be invited to review the transcript of the interview to ensure the accuracy of our conversation. You will also be invited to review the interpretation of the interview and offer any feedback which I will respond to before the findings are finally written up. It is of great importance to me that you are comfortable with the use of your real name in the study. It is a goal of methodology of this study that you be included in ongoing consultation with me to ensure



- 3. I agree to be audio taped and I understand by whom and under what conditions the interview would be listened to. \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no
  
- 4. I understand that I will have the opportunity to see the transcript of the interview and of any interpretation of the data before the summary of results is finalized. I understand that I may offer feedback and that feedback will be responded to and
  
- 5. that necessary changes will be made. \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

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Participant's Signature

Date

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Researcher's Signature

Date

Return this form to: Joy Beauchamp,  
by: \_\_\_\_\_

R.

Please indicate a telephone number where I can reach you during the day to schedule a convenient time and location for the interview. \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C

*Bibliographical and Critique Information Regarding MTYP Productions from 1982 and On*

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
1	<i>A Day at the Improv</i> Feb.17- May 19, 1995	Rick Skene Advisor	N/R						
2	<i>A Tale of Day and Night</i> Nov. 7-14, 1994	Suzanne LeBeau	<i>Winnipeg Free Press</i> Nov. 10, 1994 Not Reviewed	4-8 year olds		Yes Fable	Le Carrousel Quebec	Not MTYP	
3	<i>Alligator Pie</i> Dec. 18-31, 1985	Michel LeFebrue	Reg Skene WFP, Dec. 19, 1985 p. 40	Yes	The multi level approach allows 4 yr olds, school kids & adults to share enjoyment of the same material			Yes not MTYP	Theatrically the show is amazingly sophisticated

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
4	<i>Baking Time</i> 2004 by Tim Webb	Kim Selody	Robert Enright CBC Radio  Brenda Suderman WFP "child's play" not theatre Not a review just an article	Yes	Yes/No  It was an absolutely charming afternoon watching these kids react to this play		Carrousel Players		Co production very positive review
5	<i>Baloney</i> Ian Koso Feb. 6 - May 22 1999	Leslee Silverman	Morley Walker  A&E columnist WFP  <i>Winnipeg Sun</i> Riva Harrison Theatre Critic	Yes   Yes	   Yes "It brought tears to these eyes"	No   No		MTYP	Critical of script "and the slender plot line takes too long to step into gear"  4 out of 5 stars

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
6	<i>The Beauty Machine</i> by Robert Bellefeuille Nov. 6-15, 1998	Patrick McDonald	Winnipeg Sun no name  Kevin Prokosh WFP	No  No mention of reaction	Yes discusses ideas of beauty adult perspective  Again discusses ideas	No	Yes	Green Thumb, Vancouver	4 out of 5 stars
7	<i>Bill's New Frock</i> Apr. 15-24, 1994 by Anne Fine		Linda Rosborough	Yes	Yes	No	Tour	Yes	Some criticism with plot of script
8	<i>The Book of Miracles</i> by Robert Morgan, David S. Craig, Mar. 15-16, 1996	Katherine Kaszas with Robert Craig	Kevin Prokosh WFP Mar. 15, 1996	No	Yes		Tour Rosenberg Theatre Co of Toronto	Critical of casting too many characters only 2 actors	
9	<i>Borrowed Black</i> by Ellen Bryan Obed April 25-May 2, 1999	Jim Morron	Kevin Prokosh WFP April 26, 1999	Yes	Yes		Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia		

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
10	<i>The Boy in the Treehouse</i> by Drew Hayden Taylor May 11- June 4, 2000	Herbie Barnes	Kevin Prokosh WFP May 14, 2000	No	Yes		No	MTYP Original Yes	
11	<i>Chasing the Money</i> by Dennis Foon Mar. 2 - May 28, 1999	Robb Paterson	Kevin Prokosh WFP  Riva Harrison	(Teen viewers) No	Yes  Yes	No	MTYP toured	4 out of 5 stars	
12	<i>Cinderella</i> by Shona Reppe Mar 25 - Apr. 4, 2004	Gill Robertson and Shona Reppe	Kevin Prokosh WFP Mar. 26, 2004  Robert Enright Mar. 29 2004 CBC Radio	Yes  Yes	  Yes	Yes	Edinburgh Yes		Very positive critique
13	<i>Circus Theo Terra and Dick Feld</i> Nov. 2 - 10 2001	not listed	Kevin Prokosh	Yes	Yes		Amsterdam	.	Very positive critique

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
14	<i>L'uniak</i> Apr.7-14, 1985 by Michel O. Noer	Monique Rioux	No			Legends of Inuit	Yes Le Théâtre de la Marmaille		

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
15	<i>Comet in Moominland</i> by Tuve Jansson adapted by Graham Whitehead and cocreated by William Chesney, Leslee Silverman and Graham Whitehead	Kim Selody	Kevin Prokosh WFP Apr. 25, 1995		Yes				5 out of 5 stars
			Andrea Zeary Apr. 27, 1995	Yes	Yes			Winner Canadian Institute of Arts for young audience award	
			The Manitoba Co-operator Val Rosa Globe & Mail Mar. 27, 1995	Yes				Very positive critique	
	2000								
	1995								
	1990								3 stars

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
	<i>Comet in Moominland</i> cont		WP Randal McIlroy Apr. 21, 1990	Yes	Yes				Positive critique
16	<i>Coconut Clackers</i> Oct. 1988-1989 season No info		Kevin Prokosh WFP Oct. 7, 1988 preview only						
17	<i>Cost of Living</i> by Morris Panych Mar. 13 - 14, 1992	Not listed	Kevn Prokosh Mar. 13, 1992	Yes	Yes		Green Thumb		Very positive critique.
18	<i>Danny, King of the Basement</i> by David S. Craig Nov. 14 - 24, 2002	David S. Craig	Kevin Prokosh WFP Nov. 16, 2002	No	Yes	No		MTYP Original with Roseneath Theatre	Prokosh Pick positive critique Non Dora Award 2001

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
19	<i>Desequibre-The Challenge</i> Mar. 25, 1994 by Gilbert Dupuis	Alain Fournier	Not listed		Yes			Dynamo Theatre Quebec	3 out of 5
20	<i>Deb and Dob and The Journey Home</i> by David S. Craig and Robert Morgan Mar. 28 - Apr. 2, 2000	Jim Warren	Anna Lazowski Winnipeg Sun Apr. 1, 2000	Yes	Yes		Roseneath Theatre		3.5 out of 5 stars  Play dialogue criticized
21	<i>Dolphin Talk</i> by Graham Gavin Kahren Hampton Ingle Knight Bruce Leyland Damien O'Doherty and Craig Williams Oct.13-22, 1995	Leslee Silverman Consult. Theatrical Director	Kevin Prokosh WFP no date				Barking Gecko Theatre Company W. Australia		Negative review title

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
22	<i>The Dream Catchers</i> by Henriette Major	Andre Viens	Kevin Prokosh WFP Feb. 20, 2004  Robert Enright CBC	Yes generally  Yes	Yes  Yes		Theatre Sans Fil Montreal		Positive  Very positive critique
23	<i>Dying to be Thin</i> by Linda A. Carson Nov. 10 - 18, 2000	Margo Charlton	Kevin Prokosh WFP Nov. 8 2000	Yes	Yes			MTYP script	"Essentially a static 50 minute play..."
24	<i>Everyday Heroes</i>								
25	<i>Feeling Yes, Feeling No</i>	Leslee Silverman	Not reviewed					Originally designed by Green Thumb and piloted at MTYP	

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
26	<i>Fire...Where There's Smoke</i> by Kathleen Oliver Kevin Kerr	Judith Marcuse	Kevin Prokosh WFP Nov. 1, 2003  Robert Enright CBC Radio		Yes  Yes		from Dance Arts Vancouver		Positive but general  Very positive critique
27	<i>The Flaming Idiots</i> Apr. 11 - 17, 2003	Not listed	preview only Kevin Prokosh WFP Apr. 10, 2003				Austin, Texas	No	
28	<i>Flippin' In</i> by Anne Chislett Mar. 25-29, 1997	Patrick McDonald	Not reviewed				Green Thumb		

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
29	<i>The Happy Prince</i> Dec. 5-28, 2003 North American premiere by Richard Tulloch and Kim Carpenter	Kim Carpenter	Kevin Prokosh WFP Dec. 5, 2003  CBC Review Robert Enright Dec. 8, 2003	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes		In association with Theatre of Image Australia		
30	<i>Health Class</i> by David S. Craig and Robert Morgan Oct.30 - Nov 5, 1997	Leah Chermak	Linda Rosboroug WFP Oct. 31, 1997	Yes	Yes		Roseneath Theatre of Toronto		Oct. 17, 1997 K. Prokosh says the most exciting line up of plays this year belongs to the MTYP.
31	<i>The Hobbit</i> based on book by JRR Tolkien adapted by Kim Selody Dec. 10 - 26, 1999	Kevin McKendrick	Kevin Prokosh WFP Dec. 11, 1999	Yes	Yes			Yes	

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
32	<i>How I Wonder What You are</i> 1983 - 1984	No info							
33	<i>I Am a Bear</i> by Gilles Gauthier translated by Linda Gaborian Feb. 24 - May 23, 1997  Apr.14-15, 1984  Oct. 7-18, 1987	Leslee Silverman    Serge Marois	Kevin Prokosh WFP Feb. 8, 1997    Randal McIlroy Oct. 10, 1987	(some what)    Yes	Yes    Yes		Quebec play originally		3.5 out of 5          Very positive critique (autistic boy responds Dec. 4/87)

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
34	<i>The Ice Cream Store and More</i> based on poetry of Dennis Lee adapted by Kim Selody Oct. 11 - 20, 1996	Kim Selody and Cathy Nosaty	Kevin Prokosh WFP Oct. 12, 1996	Yes	Yes				3 out of 5 stars "one dimensional quality"
35	<i>Identical Islands</i>	N/A							
36	<i>An Illustrated History of the Anishnabe</i> by Ian Ross Nov. 16 - 23, 2001	Herbie Barnes	Kevin Prokosh Nov. 16, 2001		Yes			Yes	Positive critique
37	<i>The Impossible Balance</i> by Jim Jackson Nov. 12 - 16, 1993		No Review				Yes		
38	<i>IMPROVident</i> Feb. 14-23, 2003	Herbie Barnes	Not reviewed					Yes	

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
39	<i>Into the Ring</i> by Rick Miller and Dawson Nichols Jan. 10-19, 2003	Miller and Nichols	Robert Enright Globe & Mail Jan. 15, 2003  Bartley Kives WFP Jan. 10, 2003	Yes	Yes  Yes			Yes with Wyrld Production	3 out of 5 Dialogue critiqued
40	<i>Invisible Kids</i>	No Info							
41	<i>Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang</i> by Mordecai Richler Dec. 4 - 14, 1997	Robb Paterson	Morley Walker WFP Dec. 7, 1997  Riva Harrison Winnipeg Sun Dec. 11, 1997	Yes	Yes  Yes				Very positive critique length a bit long  Critical of script 2.5 out of 5
42	<i>Jake and Pete...A Road Story for Cats</i> Mar. 23 - Apr.1, 2003 by Gillian Rubenstein	Kim Carpenter	Kevin Prokosh Mar. 24, 2001	Yes	Yes		Sydney's Theatre of Image		Very positive critique

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
43	<i>Je Suis un Ours!</i> No INFO								
44	<i>Jest Try Not to Laugh</i> Oct. 30 - Nov. 10, 2002 by Sherry Lee Hunter Mary Ellen Maclean Christian Murray Chelley Wallace  and in 1992	Tony Montanaro Linda Moore Mary-Colin Chisholm Ed Macdonald Bryden MacDonal d Andy Jones	Kevin Prokosh Nov. 2, 2002          Kevin Prokosh WFP Nov. 21, 1992	Yes          Yes	Yes          Yes		Jest in Time Theatre Nova Scotia		4 out of 5 stars

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
45	<i>Land of Trash</i> Oct. 1993		Kevin Prokosh WFP Oct. 8, 1993 preview only						
46	<i>The Last Voyage of the Devil's Wheel</i> Dec. 1988		Preview only no review						
47	<i>Liars</i> by Dennis Foon	not listed	Randal McIlroy Mar. 12, 1988  Riva Harrison Winnipeg Sun Feb. 20, 1998	Yes	Yes  Yes		Green Thumb Theatre		Positive critique  4 out of 5

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
48	<i>The Lion The Witch and The Wardrobe</i> by C.S. Lewis based on the adaptation by Clanche du Rand Feb. 22 - Mar. 3, 2002	Kim Seldony	Brenda Suderman WFP Feb. 24, 2002		Yes			Yes	Disliked script
49	<i>Little Sister</i> by Joan Macleod Mar. 17-18, 1995	Patrick McDonald	Kevin Prokosh WFP	Yes	Yes		Green Thumb and Theatre Direct		4 out of 5
50	<i>Little Victories</i> 1986 by Suzanne LeBeau	Leslee Silverman	Not reviewed						

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
51	<i>Lulie The Iceberg</i> by Her Imperial Highness Princess Hisako Takamado of Japan Feb. 4 - 9 2003 adapted for stage by Raymond Storey	Topological Theatre	Kevin Prokosh WFP Feb. 7, 2003		Yes		Co-produced by Topological Theatre, Toronto and Kage Boushi Theatre, Tokyo		Critical - "style over substance"
52	<i>Macbeth</i> Mar. 5-12, 2004	Arne MacPherson	Tayva Pannell Teen Scene Winnipeg Sun, Mar. 9, 2004  Robert Enright CBC Mar. 8, 2004	Yes  Yes	  Yes			Shakespeare in the Ruins with MTYP	Positive critique  Mixed review
53	<i>MacHomer The Simpsons do Macbeth</i> by Rick Miller Nov. 19 - 20, 1999	Rick Miller	Kevin Prokosh Nov. 19, 1999	Yes	yes				Very positive review

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
54	<i>Martha</i> Gill Robertson Annie Wood Jay Manley Mar. 28 - Apr 6, 2003	Roy Surette	Kevin Prokosh WFP Mar. 29, 2003	Yes	yes		Catherine Wheels Theatre Company Scotland		
55	<i>The Mask Messenger</i> by Robert Faust Mar. 22 - Apr.5, 2002	Robert Faust	Brenda Suderman WFP Mar. 24, 2002  Riva Harrison Winnipeg Sun Nov. 8, 1996	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes		Faustwork Mask Theatre Toronto		3.5 out of 5 Couldn't hold audience attention
56	<i>Mimi and Brumm</i> by Margrit Gysin Oct. 25-26, 2003	Enrico Beeler	No review only preview				Produced by Figurer Theatre Switzerlan d		

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
57	<i>Mirror Game</i> by Dennis Foon Feb. 7-14, 2002  Mar. 9-10, 1990	Phillip Duncan	Kevin Prokosh WFP Feb. 9, 2002  Randal McIlroy WFP Mar. 10, 1990  Karen Crossley Mar. 9, 1990	Yes	Yes  Yes		Green Thumb-MTYP production		

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
58	<i>Mur Mur (The Wall)</i> Oct. 12-26, 2001 Jacques Less and (script collaborator)  Nov. 9-17, 1991	Robert Dion	Kevin Prokosh WFP Oct. 12, 2001  Robert Enright CBC Review  Mary Jane Maclellan Nov. 10, 1991		Yes		Dynamo Theatre Montreal, Quebec		Generally positive criticism: script/show too long  Very positive
59	<i>Naiomi's Road</i> by Joy Kogawa adapted by Paula Wing	Leslee Silverman	Garth Bucholz WFP Dec. 9, 1994	Yes	Yes				Criticism - weakness in Wing's script 4 out of 5 stars - great direction

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
60	<i>New Canadian Kid</i> by Dennis Foon Feb. 18-19, 1984	Leslee Silverman	R. McIlroy WFP		Yes discussion of children's theatre paradigm			MTYP production	Play toured B.C. in 80's One of our country's most produced/high est attended plays - since 1981 - 18 million spectators
	Feb. 9-19, 1989	Gary Schellenberg	Kevin Prokosh WFP Feb. 11, 1989	Yes	Yes				
	Oct. 27-Nov 5, 2000	Leslee Silverman	Randall Craig Oct. 28, 2000		Yes Only				
			Kevin Prokosh WFP Oct. 27, 2000	Yes	Yes				

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
61	<i>Night Light</i> by John Lazarus Jan. 30-Feb. 8, 2004	Leslee Silverman Assoc. Dir James Durham	Kevin Prokosh WFP Feb. 01, 2004  Robert Enright Jan. 30, 2004  Randal McIlroy WFP Feb. 5, 1988  John Kendle Feb. 14, 1998 Winnipeg Sun  Feb. 12, 1988 WFP Not a review		Yes				Remounted because "urging of local teachers"  Very positive  Very positive

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
62	<i>No Worries</i> Dec.6 - 16 by David Holman	Charles McFarland	No reviews				play from Australia produced at MTYP		
63	<i>Not So Dumb</i> by John Lazarus Feb. 7 - 16, 1992	Leslee Silverman	Randal McIlroy WFP Feb. 8, 1992	Yes	Yes				Positive critique
64	<i>The Number 14</i> by Axis Theatre Company Production Canada Feb.9-18, 2001  Nov. 3 - 5 1995	Roy Surette	Kevin Prokosh WFP Feb. 9, 2001  Kevin Prokosh WFP Nov. 3, 1995	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes		Yes Axis Theatre Company		Funny - positive review     3 out of 5 - slow scenes

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
65	<i>The Other Side of the Closet</i> by Edward Roy		Riva Harrison Winnipeg Sun Mar. 13, 1999  Kevin Prokosh WFP Mar. 12, 1999	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes			MTYP play existed Montreal's Youth theatre production	Controversy R.E. would not allow students to attend - homosexual phobia addressed
66	<i>The Oath</i> by David Gillies Feb. 11 & 13, 1988	Leslee Silverman & James Durham Associate Director	John Danakas Winnipeg Sun Feb. 11, 1988  Randal McIlroy WFP Feb. 5, 1988	Yes	Yes			MTYP original script	

	Title of Show & Year Produced	Director	Reviewer	Child Perspective	Adult Perspective	Fairytale	Touring Group	Original Piece	Critique
67	<i>The Odyssey</i> by John Murrell based on epic poem by Homer May 30 - June 9, 2002	Kim Selody	Robert Enright The Globe and Mail June 4, 2002  Kevin Prokosh WFP May 31, 2002	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes			MTYP original script	3.5 out of 5  "Likably flawed production"
68	<i>Old Friends</i> by Ronnie Burkett Dec. 6 - 15, 1996	Artistic collaboration Leslee Silverman	Riva Harrison Winnipeg Sun  Kevin Prokosh WFP Dec. 9, 1996  Kate Taylor Globe & Mail Feb. 24, 1998	Yes  Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes  Yes		Co-production Burkett & MTYP		4 out of 5 stars  4 out of 5 stars  4 out of 5 stars Nominated Chalmers Canadian Play award finalist

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69	<i>Patty's Cake</i> by Tim Webb Claire de Loon and Max Reinhardt Jan. 11-13, 2002	Brenda Suderman WFP Jan. 10, 2002		Yes	Yes		Carousel Players		
70	<i>Peacemaker</i> by David Holman Oct.15 - 25, 1998	Kim Selody	Kevin Prokosh WFP Oct. 18, 1998	Yes	Yes			produced by MTYP	
71	<i>Peter Pan</i> by Gail Bowen	Roy Surette	Randall King Winnipeg Sun Dec. 1, 2001  Kevin Prokosh WFP Dec. 2, 2000	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes				3.5 out of 5  Overall positive critique  Some production flaws - overall positive critique

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72	<i>Peter and the Wolf</i> by Prokofieff adapted and directed by Graham Whitehead	Kevin Prokosh WFP Oct. 15, 1994  Reg Skene WFP Apr.21, 1986	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes			Mermaid Theatre Company	MTYP production not original	3 out of 5 stars - well acted script criticized - too politically correct  Very positive
73	<i>Pinocchio</i> adapted by David Gillies Dec.10-19, 1993	Leslee Silverman	Kevin Prokosh WFP Dec. 16, 1998	Yes	Yes			MTYP original	3.5 out of 5
74	<i>Pippi Longstocking</i> by Astrid Lindgren Dec. 6 - 19, 2002	Robb Paterson	Kevin Prokosh WFP Dec. 7, 2002  Pat St. Germain Winnipeg Sun Dec. 9, 2002	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes			MTYP production - not original	Positive critique  4 out of 5 stars

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75	<i>The Power of Harriet T.</i> by Michael Miller co prod. Jan. 8 - 14, 2004	Andrew Moodie	preview only				Co-produced with Carousel Players St. Catharines		
76	<i>The Potato People</i> Dec. 1987  Nov. 7, 1997	Harro Maskow	John Kendle Dec. 11, 1987 Preview  Morley Walker WFP Nov. 9, 1997				Theatre Beyond Words		Positive overall
77	<i>The Red Ball</i> by Mermaid Theatre Company Apr. 1989		Karen Crossley WFP Apr. 7, 1989 Preview only				Mermaid Theatre Troupe		

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78	<i>The Red Balloon</i> adapted by Visible Fictions Theatre Company, Scotland	Annie Wood	Brenda Suderman WFP Mar. 1, 2003	Yes	Yes		Visible Fictions Theatre Company Scotland		Very positive
79	<i>Red River Valley</i> by Alf Silver Dec. 13-22, 1998		Kevin Prokosh WFP Dec. 13, 1991	Yes	Yes			MTYP Original first performed at Children's Festival 1988	

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80	<i>The Rememberer</i> by Steven Dietz	Leslee Silverman and Herbie Barnes	Kevin Prokosh WFP Dec. 11, 1998	Yes Only					Positive but criticizes that it is American story
			Robert Enright CBC Radio Dec. 14, 1998	Yes	Yes				Very positive
			Riva Harrison Winnipeg Sun Dec. 12, 1998		Yes				4 out of 5 stars
			Uptown Randal McIlroy Dec. 17, 1998		Yes				

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81	<i>Robinson Crusoe</i> by Nino D'Introna and Giacomo Ravicchio collaborated with Luca Valentino Apr. 7-17, 1988  Apr. 20-29, 2001	Leslee Silverman  Leslee Silverman	Randal McIlroy WFP Apr. 9, 1988  John Danakas Apr. 15, 1988  Kevin Prokosh WFP Apr. 20, 2001	Yes  Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes  Yes		Play made by Teatro Dell'Ango lo Torino Italy MTYP sent actors to Italy to train		
82	<i>Rocks</i> by Stefo Nantsou and Tom Lycos Mar. 10 - 14, 2000	Kim Selody	Kevin Prokosh WFP Mar. 10, 2000	Yes	Yes		Carousel Players and MTYP production		
83	<i>Romeo &amp; Juliet</i> by William Shakespeare produced by Hawk Meadow Mar. 2 - 9, 2001	Anne Mac-Pherson	Kevin Prokosh WFP Mar. 3, 2001		Yes		MTYP production		Critical of dialogue delivery and editing of the script

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84	<i>Saigon Water Puppet Theatre</i> of Vietnam Apr. 23 - May 1, 1998	Nguyen Duc The	Kevin Prokosh WFP Apr. 25, 1998  Riva Harrison Winnipeg Sun Apr. 25, 1998  Connect Apr. 29 - May 5 Randal McIlroy	Yes   Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes  Yes				Kids loved show no storyline for adults  4 out of 5 stars very adult  Very positive
85	<i>The Secret Garden</i> by Frances Hodgson Burnett adapted by Paul Ledoux Nov. 30 - Dec. 23, 2001	Leslee Silverman	Robert Enright Dec. 3, 2001 CBC Radio  Kevin Prokosh WFP Dec. 2, 2001	Yes   Yes	Yes   Yes				Very positive   Generally positive

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	<i>The Secret Garden</i> continued 1992 Dec. 11 - 20		Kevin Prokosh Dec. 12, 1992		Yes				4 out of 5 stars
86	<i>Seesaw</i> by Dennis Foon Feb. 5 - 14 1993  Feb. 11-26, 2000	Richard Greenblatt  Jan Skene	Kevin Prokosh WFP Feb. 6, 1993  H. J. Kirchoff Globe & Mail May 6, 1994  Kevin Prokosh WFP Feb. 16, 2000	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes			MTYP Green Thumb production	4 out of 5 stars  4 out of 5 stars
87	<i>Serafina and the Big Cat</i> by David Holman Oct. 10-20, 1991	Kim Selody	Randal McIlroy WFP, Oct. 12, 1991	Yes	Yes				"Occasionally the play is a little stiff and didactic"

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88	<i>The Servant of Two Masters</i> by Carlo Goldoni adapted by Rick Skene Feb. 4 - 5, 2000 Staged first in Feb. 1993 no review for 2000 show		Randal McIlroy WFP Feb. 27, 1993	Yes	Yes			Original	
89	<i>The Shape of a Girl</i> by Joan Macleod Mar. 8 - 14, 2002	Patrick McDonald	Kevin Prokosh WFP, Mar. 9, 2002		Yes		Produced by Green Thumb Theatre		"Although play may be too static for some teen audiences, <i>Shape of a Girl</i> delivers a punch"
90	<i>Showdown</i> by Jamie Norris Feb. 3 - 12, 1995	Robb Paterson	Kevin Prokosh WFP, Feb. 3, 1995		Yes				4 out of 5 stars
	<i>Rainforest</i> Apr. 8 - 19, 1992		Kevin Prokosh WFP Apr. 10, 1992	Yes	Yes		Tie Break Theatre U.K.		Positive

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91	<i>Snowflake</i> by Gale Lajoyce Oct. 3 - 12, 2003	Gale Lajoyce	Kevin Prokosh WFP Oct. 3, 2003  Robert Enright CBC Radio Oct. 3, 2003	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes				Very positive  "I;m going to see it at least one more time" "Great piece of theatre..."
92	<i>Skin</i> by Dennis Foon Feb. 18-19, 1994  and Feb. 5 - 14, 1987	Leslee Silverman  Michael Lefbrue	No review 1994  Reg Skene WFP Feb. 6, 1987	  Yes	  Yes				  Very positive
93	<i>Soul Party Cabaret</i>								

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94	<i>Square Eyes</i> by Joanne James Feb. 19 - 28, 1990  and Feb. 20 - 28 1999	Leslee Silverman  Robb Paterson	Karen Crossley Winnipeg Sun Feb. 10, 1990  Kevin Prokosh WFP, Feb. 21, 1999	Yes	Yes  Yes				“Whether or not this gentle drama makes for compelling theatre is another story. Though there is nothing particularly wrong with <i>Square Eyes</i> , there is nothing particularly right about it either. Crossley
95	<i>The Star Keeper</i> by Richard Lacroix, Andre Laliberte, Richard Morin Mar. 16 - 26, 2000	Andre Laliberte	Kevin Prokosh Mar. 17, 2000  Randall King Winnipeg Sun	Yes  Yes	Yes  Yes		Theatre de l’Ceil		3.5 stars out of 5 critical of story/script twist

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96	<i>The Story of the Little Gentleman</i> adapted from Barbo Lindgren's book dramatized by Tomoo von Brom-ssen and Lars-Eric Brossner Oct.15 - 24, 1999	Claes Hartelius	Kevin Prokosh WFP Oct. 17, 1999	Yes	Yes				Very positive
97	<i>Stuart Little</i> by E.B. White presented by Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia Oct. 6 & 8, 1995	Robert More	Kevn Prokosh WFP Oct. 6, 1995	Yes	Yes		Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia		4 out of 5 stars
98	<i>The Stupendous Adventures of Don Quixote</i> by Andre Lachance adapted from Cervantes translated by Maurice Roy Apr.17 - 23, 1997	Jack Robitaille	Kevin Prokosh WFP, Apr.19, 1997	Yes	Yes		Le Theatre du Gros Mecano Quebec City		3.5 out of 5

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99	<i>Suddenly Shakespeare</i> Feb. 6 - 13 by Kim Selody	Kim Selody	Morley Walker, WFP, Feb. 7, 1994	Yes	Yes		Co-commissioned with Carousel Players		3.5 out of 5
100	<i>A Tale of Day and Night</i> Nov. 9 - 13, 1994 by Suzanne LeBeau		No review or program				Le Carrousel		
101	<i>Toronto at Dreamer's Rock</i> by Drew Hayden Taylor Feb. 21 - 23, 1997	Herbie Barnes	Kevin Prokosh WFP Feb. 21, 1997  Riva Harrison Winnipeg Sun, Feb. 22, 1997	Yes	Yes  Yes				4.5 out of 5 Very positive  4 out of 5 stars
102	<i>Wheelie</i> Feb. 21 - 22, 1992 Lyle Victor Albert	Robb Paterson	Randall McIlroy WFP Feb. 21, 1992	Yes	Yes				Very positive

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103	<i>Where the Wild Things Are</i> by Maurice Senduk adapted by TAG Theatre Scotland Oct.11 - 27, 2002	Kim Selody	Kevin Prokosh WFP Oct. 20, 2002				Co-produced by Carousel Players and MTYP		4 out of 5 stars
104	<i>Whispers in the Dark</i> by Noel Greig Oct.16 - 25, 1992	Libby Mason	Randal McIlroy WFP, Oct. 16, 1992	Yes	Yes				4 out of 5 stars