

1996

The Western States Theatre Review, Volume 6, 1998

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(1996) "The Western States Theatre Review, Volume 6, 1998," *The Western States Theatre Review*: Vol. 6 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://cedar.wvu.edu/wstr/vol6/iss1/1>

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Northwest **THEATRE** REVIEW

Volume 6

1998

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NORTHWEST THEATRE REVIEW

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Full page (4.5" wide x 7.25" high)—\$75 per issue
Half page (4.5" wide x 3.5" high)—\$50 per issue

Submit material and inquiries to George Caldwell, School of Music and Theatre Arts, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington 99164-2432.

NORTHWEST DRAMA CONFERENCE

(Founded 1948)

The *Northwest Theatre Review* is published annually in February by the Northwest Drama Conference in cooperation with the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, Region VII. Membership in the Northwest Drama Conference includes a subscription to the *Review*. Individual copies of the *Northwest Theatre Review* without conference membership may be purchased throughout the year. Past volumes may also be obtained. The subscription fee for institutions is \$20.00 per issue.

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Marat/Sade and The Caucasian Chalk Circle: An Experiment in Arena Staging at the Royal National Theatre

FORREST SEARS and SARAH WILSON HANSEN

Summer 1997 was another banner year for the London theatre in general and for its flagship repertory company, The Royal National Theatre, in particular. Artistic director Richard Eyre stepped down last autumn, turning the theatre over to the new chief, Treavor Nunn, after a highly creative decade at its helm.

Eyre's last hurrah, however, was quite extraordinary. Highlights had to be two American musicals, *Lady in the Dark*, and a revival of *Guys and Dolls* (his landmark success which was instrumental in his appointment to the National). He also gave theatre goers three new plays, all of exceptional quality. Veteran dramatist David Hare offered *Amy's View* which starred National favorite, Dame Judi Dench. The other two equally sure to land on American shores are *Closer*, by Patrick Marber, his second consecutive hit for the company, and *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, by Martin McDonagh, a young Irish writer with a devastating penchant for black comedy.

The jewels in the crown of the summer season, however, were Eyre's bold revivals of two 20th century classics, both shown in the Olivier Theatre. The largest of the National's three theatres, it boasts an impressive open stage with 1100 seats, and it has frequently proved itself to be a near impossible space to fill. To provide it with a new image and a remarkable intimacy, Eyre temporarily converted it to a 360 degree arena theatre. Certainly a remarkable technical *coup de theatre*, but perhaps most impressive are the productions of two great German plays. Our first response is to Peter Weiss' *Marat/Sade*.

Written in 1964 and produced that same year in London by Peter Brook, this play brings Jean-Paul Marat and the Marquis de Sade together in the

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asylum of Charenton, where de Sade actually worked until his death in 1814. He did, indeed, write plays which he produced with and for the inmates there. It is here that Weiss places his imaginary story, bringing Sade and Marat, opposites in political beliefs, together; however, the majority of the story is factual and based on the historical French Revolution. For instance, Marat actually did suffer from a psychosomatic skin disease during the last years of his life forced him to spend hours bathing. Weiss bends the characterizations of other "real" people, though, including Charlotte Corday, to make a bold and audacious play. He furthers this boldness by combining numerous contradictory theatrical techniques: comedy and crudity; intellect and physical prowess; abstraction and vivid reality; violence and cool reason. These contradictions set up the audience for a roller coaster ride where one relaxes just in time to be hit by another volley of punches.

This year's National Theatre offering of *Marat/Sade* is a much anticipated revival of Weiss' play, and the first major one in London since Brook's landmark theatre of Cruelty production for the Royal Shakespeare Company. This 1997 version sparks lively controversy. While it falls far short of major stature, it surpasses the original Brook version in some aspects and falls woefully below it in others.

To come into the familiar Olivier Theatre space and see it transformed into a theatre in the round is thrilling. The staging aesthetic works especially well for this text as it is reimaged by director Jeremy Sams and his actors.

How does this version triumph over the original? Purely in storytelling. Sams has chosen to subordinate characterization to plot and theme. Consequently, the basic premise that a play about the French Revolution is being acted out in a mental asylum some twenty years after the event in the highly repressive Napoleonic regime of 1808 seems clearer here than in the original.

Director of the asylum Goulmier (well played by Clifford Rose who created the role in the original Brook production) and his guards are determined at all costs to keep order and have the inmates play the censored version of the play that palatably demonstrates the errors of Marat's "Revolution Now" theory as opposed to the conservative dictates of the present order. Anarchy has lost, but the play that celebrates it will not now be still. It is as if Sade, an inmate of Charenton, has become the house playwright of Napoleonic order and tonight's performance performed by the patients of the institution will showcase the follies of the French Revolution as it is played before top officials of the empire. The problem is Sade is hardly the voice of conservatism. There's too much ambiguity in his retrospective of the revolution. It is, in fact, an invitation for chaos. The Royal National's production, then, seems to define its historical context more strongly than the original. The image of a play about revolt—performed by the judged insane of Charenton Asylum, one of the most disenfranchised populations in human history—has an overpowering irony.

Director Sams, who has written the music for over fifty productions, is relatively new to directing and is a master creator of images. He wisely does not replicate any of the legendary Brook *mis-en-scene*. One thinks immediately of Charlotte Corday in the earlier production "whipping" Sade with her shoulder length hair. Here he is beaten with a strip of Marat's head bandage, punctuated with the sharp cracking of the Harold's whip. Other key moments in this production are picturized even more boldly. In the first rioting frenzy of the crowd, a tumbril is wheeled in containing a pig who is summarily guillotined. His entrails are then ripped out by the enraged mob. While this is an appropriate Artaudian image, the rather too neat strips of "bacon" they pull out adds a wry comic comment to the moment.

The end of act one, which in the '64 production presented the audience with the then sensational image of Marat's backside as he exited his bath, is here a more 90's Theatre of Cruelty touch. A nude mother in labor is strapped, spread eagle, on a movable bed. At a final outcry, a patient-actor pulls a bloodied baby from her womb. To build to the curtain, a blood drenched nude actor, Marat's father, emerges from the bed/tomb and harangues the crowd. Excessive, yes, but strangely appropriate to this violent piece.

The final visual image of Sams' production is perhaps his most powerful. The mob/patients riot again at the end of de Sade's play, only this time more violently. The guards bully and beat them. Volleys of gunshots are discharged. None of this can quell the stampeding crowd. The keepers and the distinguished audience are in mortal danger. Asylum director Goulmier gives a signal and a gigantic steel cage descends, entrapping all the inmate/actors. It is a stunning image. The revolution has been fought once again, and again the most cruelly underprivileged sector of the society has lost.

Wonderful visual storytelling, wonderful emotional impact. If this were the total equation, this might be the play's finest hour. Unfortunately, director Sams has not adequately factored in acting and characterization to complete his process. To be sure, he has two excellent veteran actors in the title roles. Corrin Redgrave brings deep impassioned despair to Marat and David Calder's de Sade has just the right balance of playful irony mixed with a passionate search for truth.

The problem lies with the ensemble, which means the director. The acting company needs to explore the symbiotic status of patient and character in the play (Sade cast the fictional play brilliantly, as did Brook); that is, for example, the patient/actor portraying Marat should be coming out of his own pathology of paranoia at the same time that his symptoms are a mirror image of his character in the play. In the current production, this important symbolic correspondence is ignored; thus, a crucial level of meaning is lost. Worse yet, most of the acting ensemble, rather than working to discover three dimensional characters, settle for choices that are nonspecific, acting in general with results that are frequently clichéd. This is most unfortunate. It is perhaps symptomatic of a school of directors who often are masters of the theatres of images but are woefully lacking in initiating, much less nurturing, an organic actor process.

Jeremy Sams' Royal National Theatre production of this modern classic is exciting visually and elicits thought at an initial level, but without truthful, personally explored acting from the ensemble, the result is ultimately superficial and incomplete.

Interestingly enough, the other Olivier area production is Bertolt Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Weiss was considered to be the "next Brecht," both being German and both indulging in experimental theatre, relying on images, imagination, and daring companies to carry their plots forward.

The Royal National Theatre's production of Brecht's *Chalk Circle*, in a new version by Frank McGuinness, and in collaboration with the much lauded Theatre de Complicite, is near perfection.

Brecht's complex script always presents a challenge for directors, actors, and technicians. In this play, Brecht adapts an ancient Chinese fable of the test of the Chalk Circle. He uses two civilizations as illustrations: one post World War II (c. 1945) and one about 1000 years earlier, both set in Russian Georgia. The first part of the story is written in Prologue form and may or may not always be performed; however, director Simon McBurney and McGuinness felt strongly about its inclusion. This Prologue provides a hint of what it would mean to begin to create a world of Reason, but then Brecht moves us into the heart of the play where life in its customary mode of cruelty and injustice abounds. The conflict between the shepherds and the farmers brought to light in the Prologue turns to "Unreason," which is the reality of the world, in the ensuing story.

The main plot revolves around a servant girl named Grusha and a royal baby, Michael, whom she steals from a non-loving mother. Her story is contrasted by that of the rapsallion judge, Azdak. Both reflect the themes and contradictions of the Chalk Circle test (the story of a judge deciding whether a natural or "adopted" mother should be able to keep a child), and the idea that one must always watch one's back. Grusha is a permanent refugee, always being pursued and always in danger of losing Michael. Even when the play ends; even after Azdak, in Solomon-like form, has granted her custody of the young boy, the audience knows she will forever be fleeing. (Here, Brecht has altered the ending of the original Chalk Circle test by allowing the adoptive mother to have custody.) She, as well as Azdak, are symbols of society's continual instability. With the latter, there is always a question of what he will do. He vacillates between good and evil; right and wrong...instability.

Complicite director McBurney directs with imagination and high expertise in bringing Brecht's ideas to the stage. A large multi-racial company plays with verve, each actor portraying three to six characters. McBurney himself plays the judge, Azdak, with consummate low comedy skill. His long experience as a comedic street performer stands him in good stead for the role. McGuinness, of *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* fame, brings a fresh specificity to the test. From the first moments of the Prologue, it's clear this is going to be a detailed and exacting production. As with *Marat Sade*, the circular space of the reconfigured Olivier Theatre is perfect for the play.

McBurney told artistic director Richard Eyre he would direct for The National only if the play could be done in the round. Eyre made his vision a reality with a grant from The Royal National Theatre Foundation.

Brecht, with his revolutionary approach to theatre, would have loved the circus spectacle: the flamboyant theatrical devices, many of them borrowed from classical Chinese Theatre that the Complicite troupe bring to the stage; for instance, the evil emperor 12 feet tall (on stilts) imperiously looking down on his subjects. It is a thrilling moment when his tyranny leads to his overthrow by his people who string him up on a large steel pole. He then dangles in death, spinning totally around the gigantic arena. Another stunning visual icon is the heroine-peasant Grusha precariously crossing a rickety bridge to carry her adopted infant son to safety. It is a demanding physical task, as company members balance two thin log slabs for the actress, Juliet Stevenson, to negotiate across the space.

Perhaps the most startling visual image in the production is the creation of the figure of Michael, Grusha's son. The baby begins as a pillow and progresses to a puppet in succeeding scenes. Resembling a Claymation figure, the sculptured puppet has a startling life of its own. It is, of course, greatly enhanced by an actor in black garb (the traditional invisible Chinese stage manager.) The child grows through several puppet incarnations. Finally, a large sleeping "puppet" is carried on and set on his feet. He walks by himself. Michael is a live actor!

Music in the production is startlingly effective. It is a live accompaniment played and sung on what seem to be authentic Georgian instruments by the entire acting ensemble. Music director, Gerald McBurney, excels with plaintive melodies on a Caucasian flute. The brothers McBurney did research on Georgian music, traveling to the Caucasus, listening to traditional folk and sacred music. The score, some of it obviously improvised at each performance, provides a stunning ambience to the production, alienating and unifying dramatic moods at the same time.

Costumes, props, and lighting are simplistic, reflecting the rustic lifestyle of the Georgian peasants. As for costumes, only the emperor and royalty contrast this rustic "feel" by wearing elaborate colors and shimmering fabrics. Otherwise, the grays and browns serve the story well. Most of the slight costume changes (this is necessary owing to the multiple roles the actors play) are accomplished unobtrusively on the outer boundaries of the stage where wooden benches are available for the actors/musicians to sit on when not part of the story. However, the players remain active by joining in the music, chanting, or creating the atmospheric sounds of the show as they await entrances. Props, too, are simple and sit behind the benches. Actors use them and replace them as necessary and this technique is quite effective. Likewise, the lighting is only used to enhance the story. No special effects are used; just muted lights that brighten or dim according to the time of day, year, or mood.

The company's multi-cultural actors are remarkable. They are obviously of varying talent levels. What they all bring to their various roles under Simon McBurney's remarkable direction is Brechtian character archetypes. The acting is "real" while remaining in all the supporting roles essentially two dimensional. The social-cultural stratas of the characters are exceedingly well drawn. Their Brechtian "Gestus" have been probed. Nothing so academic, however, permeates the production. What we see is the vitality and immediacy of authentic human behavior.

Exciting as the visualization of the production is, it could not sustain the production without a high powered Grusha. In Juliet Stevenson, the Royal National has the perfect actress. Arguably, the finest English actress of her generation, Ms. Stevenson combines the best of American and English acting skills. She brings to all her work, as in the film, *Truly Madly Deeply*, or her stage performances, *Hedda*, *Nora*, or the Maiden (*Death and the Maiden*), vulnerability and moment to moment reality merged with English classical know-how. Stevenson, the McBurneys and the Complicite Ensemble make this *Caucasian Chalk Circle* a towering triumph.

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Whistler's Mom

BRYAN WILLIS

(The sound of someone whistling the theme song of *MAYBERRY RED*.)

Enter **Whistler's Mom** with a chair and footstool. She sits facing the audience. Continues whistling....)

Whistler's Mom: Jimmy! As soon as Mr. Sleepy-Head gets up, he'll find his mother is ready and waiting! Rise and Shine! Let's go!

(Continues whistling.)

Whistler's Mom: ...Well, it's about time. Oh, look, the flap on your pocket's come unstitched. I don't know why you trust anyone but me with your shirts. Set it aside, I'll take care of it.

(Whistles theme song from *THE BRADY BUNCH*.)

Whistler's Mom: ...You seem a little pale, darling. Are you tired? You've got circles under your eyes. Are you sure you're not running a little fever? When you were sick as a little boy, I used to make you waffles. You loved them.

(Whistles theme song from *GILLIGAN'S ISLAND*. Stops. Looks around. Looks troubled.)

Bryan Willis is Playwright in Residence at the Seattle Public Theater.

All inquiries concerning production or other rights to "Whistler's Mom" should be addressed in writing to the author's agent, Helen Merrill, Ltd., 435 West 23rd Street, Suite 1A, New York, N.Y. 10011. No amateur performance or reading of the play may be given without obtaining in advance the written permission of Helen Merrill, Ltd.

Whistler's Mom: Jimmy, you're not going to paint me from that angle? If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times, purity and integrity **MUST** be conveyed by means of a tightly constructed composition. But go ahead. Do it your way. Just don't come crying to me when the critics don't see the even-toned background vivified by the presence of rectangular shapes of picture frames. Did you ever stop to think a cameo-like treatment of my head would echo the sort of approach found in Holbein and might even pick up a hint of the composition from the figure of Agrippina in the Capitoline in Rome or from Canova's statue of Napoleon's mother at Chatsworth? Hmmm? Did you? And for once in your life, listen to your mother and relieve the austerity with soft strokes on the background curtain à la Velasquez. And for goodness sakes, will you try to command your strict linear control? Enough with this Nocturne shit. Let's see some tonal exactitude.

(She stands—moves the chair sideways and sits with her profile to the audience.)

Whistler's Mom: There. That's better.

(A little smile.
Now she points an accusing finger.)

Whistler's Mom: No, now this is where I'm sitting, and that's how it's going to be. No more Mr. Sassy-Cat. Hop to it. Paint.

(Profile tableau.
Lights up. Lights down. The End.)

Northwest Theatre Review, Volume 6 (1998), 9-17

“Women Are Good At This Job”: Lynne Parker, Director

CHARLOTTE J. HEADRICK

According to George Black, author of a popular directing text, “Directing is a subtle and complex art.”¹ Trying to analyze, to evaluate directing is an equally subtle and complex process. In the contemporary play, *Ladies of the Camellias*, there is a running joke between the historic characters of Eleanora Duse and Sarah Bernhardt who are being held captive on a Parisian stage by a Russian revolutionary. At one point the revolutionary says something that lets the actresses know he is a man of the theatre. They interrogate him and discover he is a “director.” The actresses look at each other, musing about what a director is. Questioning the revolutionary about what a director does, he says that he moves people around the stage. The two actresses look at each other, questioning why they need a director; they know where to go on stage. This exchange becomes a running joke throughout the play. In a production, it is sometimes very difficult to discern the director's hand. Nevertheless, scholars and historians continue to attempt the seemingly impossible.

Since 1991, I have been tracking the work of Irish director, Lynne Parker. Lynne Parker is a co-founder of Dublin's Rough Magic Theatre, and she is now the Artistic Director of the company. Formed in 1984 by a group of young Trinity students, Rough Magic has established itself as one of both Ireland's and Europe's finest companies. They are noted for their innovative productions of classics such as Farquhar's *Love in a Bottle*, reworked by resident playwright Declan Hughes, and Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan* to new scripts like Hughes 1992's *Digging for Fire* and Gina Moxley's 1995 *Danti-Dan*. All four of these productions were directed by Lynne Parker. Parker has also directed for Charabanc Theatre of Belfast, for whom she was an associate artist.² Other companies who have been blessed by Parker's genius and innovative directorial choices include the Irish companies Druid, Tin-

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Lynne Parker

derbox, the Opera Theatre Company, and Scotland's 7:84. She has directed at Dublin's the Peacock, the Abbey, the Gaiety, and the Project Arts Theatre. In London, she has directed at the Bush and the Almeida; her excellent productions for Rough Magic have travelled from Dublin to the Bush as well as to the Tricycle in London. In the summer of 1995, she told me that she had directed at the Abbey, directed at the Peacock, and all those other Dublin theatres, but she had yet to direct at that bastion of Dublin artistic excellence, The Gate.³

In 1991, on the recommendation of my friend and Irish theatre scholar, Dr. Eileen Kearney, I made contact with Ms. Parker. We sat in Bewley's Cafe, one of James Joyce's favorite haunts, and I interviewed Parker about her directing. At that time she told me how much her uncle, Stewart Parker, had

*Danti-Dan* by Gina Moxley, 1995

influenced her, of how she used to go to rehearsals with him and watch him work. Since that first meeting in Dublin, we have had an uncanny ability to connect. Time and again, we have ended up in the same place at the same time, in London and in Belfast, not once, but multiple times, allowing me to make contact with her again. More importantly, I have been able to track her work which continues to grow more assured and more ambitious. She continues to challenge herself with a mix of classics of Irish theatre and new scripts. This is true whether she is directing for Rough Magic or the Almeida.

Unfortunately, I have never seen Peter Brook's work live, only on film; I have never seen the work of Joanne Akailaitis live, nor that of Mnouchkin or Peter Sellars. With selected British, Irish and Scottish directors, I have been more fortunate, following the work of Declan Donnellan, Phyllida Lloyd, Gerry Mulgrew, the remarkable directors of the Citizens Theatre in Glasgow and Canadian wonder Robert LePage and his incredible work. But more

than anyone else, I have, through blind luck or cosmic design, been able to experience Lynne Parker's productions.

In the spring of 1992, I saw *Digging for Fire* at the Bush Theatre and *Love in a Bottle* at the Tricycle. In 1995, I saw her productions of O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie*, staged at the Almeida for the first time in twenty-five years and of a new script, *Dani-Dan*, by Gina Moxley presented at the Hampstead Theatre in London, summer, 1995.

The history of Rough Magic Theatre Company reads,

Although the policy of the company was very broad at first it developed significantly in three areas: premiere productions of contemporary British and American plays, reinterpretation of world classics and most importantly, new Irish writing.

The last development occurred around 1990. By that stage we had a clear idea of the theatre language we wanted to speak and the method of putting it across. We felt that we had learned our craft through working on good writing from other traditions and cultures and that the time had come to produce original work.⁴

In 1993, the company initiated the Women's Playwriting Awards. They continue to work with winners of that award: Pom Boyd, Ivy Bannister, Sylvia Cullen, Paula Meehan and Roisin Sheerin. They have awarded commissions to writers such as Pom Boyd and Martin Murphy as well as founding member of Rough Magic Arthur Riordan, Declan Hughes, a co-founder of Rough Magic, and Gina Moxley, whose first appearance with Rough Magic was in 1991's *Digging for Fire*.

This background is important because as a co-founder of Rough Magic, Parker's influence has been a strong one on the nature and direction of the company. *Digging for Fire* was a hit of the 1991 Dublin Theatre Festival, later touring to Belfast, Cork, and London. *Love and a Bottle* won a Time Out Award in London in 1992. "For these shows and for her production of Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan* she won a Bank of Ireland/RTE Arts Show Award."⁵

Parker is young, in her thirties, and she has been directing professionally for over a dozen years. What makes her work so outstanding? Imagination, hiring wonderful and inventive designers, her attention to detail, her risk taking, and her ability to create ensemble casts which elicit strong performances from her actors.

I remember how impressed I was with *Digging for Fire*; she had created a tight ensemble with clearly drawn characters; they never fell into mere stereotypes; her attention to detail, to even the titles of the books on the shelves was meticulous. Now, some could argue that this is a designer's preview, but my sense is that Lynne surrounds herself with excellent collaborators. The way the scenery was changed from an interior living room into a noisy pub in the tiny Bush theatre was pure magic. The actors did the changes while in a very clever way continuing to stay in character; Peter Hanley's gay solicitor refused to move anything; keeping a drink in his hand, he more or less supervised the events.

In every production which I have seen under Parker's direction, all the pieces seem to fit. Professional actress Carol Scanlan, one of the founders of Charabanc has worked with Parker on Charabanc projects and most recently was directed by her in the 1995 production of *Pentecost* by Stewart Parker, Lynne Parker's uncle. Scanlan confirms that working with Parker is very positive and that Parker's method of work is remarkably "hands off."⁶

Parker says about directing,

You sort of mix together all of the elements, but what you get is greater than the sum of its parts. . . . Generally, the important thing is to make a start—give them something that makes sense, but yet, some things change. And, it's quite amazing though, I think, to get it all wrong—at first—you know. But only by getting it wrong do you begin to see where you are in relation to the right of it. And so, you pitch in, you lunge, and get stuck in there, and . . . you have to keep a sense of humor about it and keep a sense of proportion about it. And, that's terribly important.⁷

The critics largely support the view of Parker's excellence as a director. Rough Magic made its London premiere with *Digging for Fire*. The play revolves around a group of old college friends who have gathered for a party which ends up in a night of drinking. By the next morning, relationships are crumbling and painful truths have been revealed. Some critics saw it as a kind of Irish *Big Chill* only with a slightly younger set. Charles Spencer of the *Daily Telegraph* says, "despite all the wild laughter in Lynne Parker's fine production, you leave the theatre gagging on the taste of dust and ashes."⁸ Paul Taylor of the *Independent* refers to it as "Lynne Parker's beautifully acted production...."⁹ The *Guardian* critic, Claire Armitstead, says "Parker creates an atmosphere of controlled chaos among a talented cast. . . ."¹⁰ Other critics proclaim

The playing, however, is tart and evocative under Lynne Parker's direction, most especially in the tequila drinking session, where bonhomie goes berserk and the friends get wildly legless. It takes a particularly insensitive person to walk out through the pub after the show without stopping for a sympathetic beverage.¹¹

The mayhem that ensues is beautifully played by the whole cast under Lynne Parker's sensitive direction—their mastery can be seen in the hilarious scene where they indicate their hangovers without saying a word.¹²

The critics who disliked this production were in the minority. A scant three months later, Parker and Rough Magic were back in London with Declan Hughes' reworking of Farquhar's *Love and a Bottle*. If the critics liked her work on Hughes' first piece, they raved about the second: "Lynne Parker directs an at times hilarious production."¹³ "Few young companies set the stage ablaze quite like Rough Magic."¹⁴

Purist scholars of Farquhar may feel dismay at such treatment, but I doubt such pedants exist. The achievement is all, and what has been created by Hughes and his director, Lynne Parker . . . is a zestful and shamelessly saucy evening of amoral fun.¹⁵

"Lynne Parker's production is astonishingly assured. . . ."¹⁶ Lynne Parker's earthy, vivid production for Rough Magic is both very sexy and very funny.¹⁷ It "confirms Rough Magic as a vigorously talented bunch of iconoclasts who have chosen the right name."¹⁸ "The homo-erotic potential of cross-dressed



Love and a Bottle by Farquhar, 1992

comedy is mined for every last double-entendre in a production which is held by Lynne Parker at a high pitch of lusty frenzy.¹⁹ "With inspired direction by Lynne Parker, *Love and a Bottle* is a randy restoration comedy . . ."²⁰ Although there were one or two naysayers among the critics, mostly, the fun of the version was appreciated, "The production is directed by Lynne Parker with great flair, playing up to near parody Restoration acting styles."²¹ One of her highest moments of praise came from Paul Taylor of *The Independent*: "You can take the piece as a model of how to stage the unstageable. . . ."²²

In 1994 Parker continued to take risks and to experiment. Her gender-bending reinterpretation of Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windemere's Fan* provoked praise and damnation from the critics. Paul Driver praises the production saying that it was not simply a

drag interpretation but a brusque and clever ensemble piece in which four of the seven actors happen to have multiple roles, male and female; a production certainly thereby risking a roughness of despatch, but securing its moments of magic.²³

Most critics liked the production but a few had serious doubts such as Nick Curtis of the *Evening Standard*: "Parker's production is an uneasy hybrid of two styles, never fully reconciled."²⁴ In September of 1994, Parker, without Rough Magic, opened her new production of Synge's classic, *The Playboy of the Western World*, at the Almeida Theatre in London. Nightingale

of *The Times* writes that "Parker's production touches depths" and "explains better than any revival I have seen, why the Irish found the play so objectionable when it had its premiere in 1907."²⁵ Other critics have similar viewpoints: "Her staging is wonderfully authentic,"²⁶ "a bold production that has great social bite. . . ."²⁷ "It is hard to imagine a more authentic or involving production of J.M. Synge's sardonic masterpiece *The Playboy of the Western World* than Lynne Parker's at the Almeida Theatre in Islington."²⁸ "Lynne Parker's production goes straight to the heart of Synge's dark, cruel comedy. Perhaps it needed a woman director to sense the crucial point about Pegeen, which is that she is a prisoner."²⁹

In 1995, Parker tackled an even more difficult play. She directed the first production of O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie* to be produced in London in over twenty-five years. As *The Silver Tassie*, a text about war and its aftermath, was playing at the Almeida, across town at the tiny Hampstead Theatre, Parker was opening Gina Moxley's debut script, *Danti-Dan*, about adolescent sexuality and cruelty. O'Casey's play used seventeen actors; Moxley's calls for five. The dean of British critics, Michael Billington of *The Guardian*, refers to "Lynne Parker's excellent revival" of the O'Casey play and how she solves some of the problems in it by "treating the whole play as a piece of twenties expressionism."³⁰ The choices that Parker makes ensure "the result is spell-binding."³¹ Benedict Nightingale of the London *Times* is equally complimentary of Parker's direction of *Danti-Dan*: "Lynne Parker's production always suggests a danger on the play's edges, and in the second half moves it to the centre."³² He ends his review saying that the "play's first hand energy is unmissable."³³

Parker hit a Triple Crown plus one. Not only did Billington of the *Guardian* and Nightingale of *The Times* praise her work in Moxley's play, but also Wardle of the *Independent* and Michael Coveney of *The Observer*. Coveney says the play is "beautifully directed by Lynne Parker"³⁴ and Wardle calls it a "chilling comedy of sexual awakening" which involves "A truthful text, a fine company, and a production (Lynne Parker) that never hits a false note."³⁵ Gina Moxley, the playwright, was one of the actresses in Parker's 1991 Rough Magic London debut of *Digging for Fire*.

During the 1991 interview, in response to a question about the kind of work she wanted to do as a director, Parker responded,

I want to keep working on a very wide range of shows, and I don't want to have a year where I only work on new writing, or I only work on women's theatre, or whatever. You know, I think it's really important to keep your options open and keep your work diverse And, I mean, . . . one's aims are coloured by the need to make a living, and this (is) not easy. And, it's only now, seven years after we started, that the company's beginning to keep its head financially above water. And, we've started to get a reasonable sort of wage out of it.³⁶

On that day in Dublin, Parker attempted to describe herself as a director:

I'm not sure how to define myself, but I would say that I'm (a) non-authoritarian director, and I'm absolutely determined to work in tandem with the actors in determining the writer's work. . . . I think that the writer is the most important person. I suppose my uncle influenced that tremendously. But I'm not particularly interested in applying my concepts and my vision. As far

as I'm concerned my role is more interpretive than visionary. And I think it's a practical job. I mean, it's just about solving problems and identifying the problems that you're having, and solving them I mean, I want to communicate every inch of the drama to the audience. And if it's not communicating, it's not working If it's not communicating, it's boring. And, I suppose, that must seem quite blunt and obvious, but I think it's important to start there.⁵⁷

When asked about influences on her work, she concluded,

I don't know how to define things that have influenced me; and honestly I think that Stewart is the biggest influence in my liking work, and actually working with him when he was directing *Pentecost*, . . . the director of *Pentecost*, Christina Day, was away for a few days and Stewart took over rehearsals, and I think I learned more about the directing process in those four days than I have in anything else. Because he was just so sensible. You know, what he used—he used common sense. And I think that's why women are good at this job, you know, because that's the first thing you learn. I think the only good working atmosphere is a relaxed friendly atmosphere. You don't get good work out of terrified people—and I know directors who base their whole approach on terror. I couldn't work in those circumstances. I need to feel there is cooperation. And I would not be able to take myself seriously if I started, you know, throwing my weight around and reading the riot act.⁵⁸

There is generation of young directors out there, shaping a bold and exciting theatre. Lynne Parker is one of the best. If you are in a city where a Lynne Parker-directed production is playing, make a beeline. Commenting on Parker's production of *Lady Windemere's Fan*, critic Keith Stanfield captures the prevalent sentiment: "This production is fast, filthy, and fabulous—if you can't buy a ticket, sleep with someone who can!"⁵⁹

Notes

1. George Black, *Contemporary Stage Directing* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.: Fort Worth, 1991), p. v.
2. Charabanc disbanded in July of 1996.
3. Conversation with Lynne Parker, July, 1995, Queens University, Belfast, Northern Ireland.
4. Theatre Program, *Hidden Charges* by Arthur Riordan, 1994.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Conversations with Carol Scanlan, Corvallis, Oregon, February 22-24, 1996. The production of *Pentecost* toured spring of 1996.
7. Interview with Lynne Parker, Bewley's, Dublin, Republic of Ireland, March 28, 1996.
8. Charles Spencer, *Daily Telegraph*, 8 April 1992.
9. Paul Taylor, *Independent*, 27 March 1992.
10. Claire Armistead, *Guardian*, 27 March 1992.
11. Graham Hassell, *What's On*, 25 March 1992.
12. Michael Arditti, *Evening Standard*, 25 March 1992.
13. Rick Jones, *Evening Standard*, 4 June 1992.
14. Jane Edwards, *Time Out*, 10 June 1992.
15. Jeremy Kingston, *The Times*, 8 June 1992.
16. Edwards, *op.cit.*
17. Paul Taylor, *Independent*, 5 June 1992.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Claire Armistead, *Guardian*, 11 June 1992.
20. Keith Stanfield, *What's On*, 10 June 1992.
21. Louise Stafford-Charles, *City Limits*, 11 June 1992.
22. Taylor, *op.cit.*
23. Paul Driver, *Financial Times*, 19 April 1994.
24. Nick Curtis, *Evening Standard*, 19 April 1994.

25. Benedict Nightingale, *The Times*, 7 September 1994.
26. Paul Taylor, *Independent*, 7 September 1994.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Clive Hirschhorn, *Sunday Express*, 11 September 1994.
29. John Peter, *Sunday Times*, 11 September 1994.
30. Michael Billington, *Guardian*, 12 May 1995.
31. *Ibid.*
32. Benedict Nightingale, *The Times*, 15 June 1995.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Michael Coveney, *Observer*, 18 June 1995.
35. Irving Wardle, *Independent on Sunday*, 18 June 1995.
36. Parker interview.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*
39. Stanfield, *op.cit.*

Northwest Theatre Review, Volume 6 (1998), 18-30

The State of the Fine Artist: A Regional Report

DEAN PANTTAJA

This article is a report on a regional study done in the spring of 1995. It is an attempt to disseminate the information back to the respondents in the study. Unfortunately, several disturbing cultural trends have appeared in the Fine Arts. None, I assure you, are catastrophic, yet they cause you to think. Perhaps this will serve as one of the many keys to resolving our current problems. I would sincerely hope you will view this data as informative and with an open mind.

The Dilemma

In a historical spectrum, the notion of the Fine Arts (Theatre, Dance, Art, and Music) in higher education is a relatively new arrangement and at best, a tenuous one. The Fine Arts has been an intermittent part of American higher education since 1702 as clubs, at Harvard, and has been considered part of a full education since the 1850's. However, it is not until most recently that the Fine Arts have been developed into accredited programs with tenure track specialists and standardized curriculums. The integrated concept of the Fine Arts is unique to the 20th century and is documented as beginning in the 1920's (Morrison, 1985).

Prior to this century, Fine Artists and their wages were determined by their ability, talent, and luck at obtaining patronage. An elitist tradition, patronage kept art for the rich and away from the masses, ultimately keeping the successful Fine Artist comfortable. The transition at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th saw the emergence of art for the masses, which removed the necessity of patronage for the survival of the Fine Artist and ushered in the age of self-marketing. To regulate the product of art, society and the Fine Artist have developed professional organizations. In the United States these organizations are the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the National Association of Scholastic Theaters, Dance,

Art and Design, and Music (NAST, NASD, NASAD, and NASM, respectively). It is through these organizations that the Fine Artist's express a common set of values and a united voice of culture.

A relatively recent nationwide study in *Academe*, as developed and documented by the National Association of Land Grant Universities and Colleges (NASLGUC), presented faculty salaries in higher education for 1991-1992. In the study, which addressed institutional characteristics, was a listing by discipline of faculty salaries. The combined professorial ranks of Business faculty recorded the top average salary of \$61,061.00, and Engineering faculty was second at \$56,275.00. The faculty of the Fine Arts however, was absolutely last at \$39,539.00. This study and its results are corroborated by the additional independent studies of the Department of Education's integrated post secondary educational data system (IPEDS), and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) regional salary reports for 1994. This national wage difference of \$17,000.00 to \$20,000.00 between Fine Artists and select faculty of other disciplines seems to be more than "normal market competition" for "like work" that requires all employees to have advanced credentials and training. It would seem that Fine Artists and the relationship of their culture to organizations are problematic in the current market. What is the basis for this wage differential?

This differential could stem from three possible interactions. The first possible interaction may be that of external effects. There may be a set of variables that may cause the wage differential to exist from factors outside the Fine Artist's control: the three variables of the market and the economic value of art, society and the social value of art, and the administration and the academic value of art in higher education. The second possible interaction could be the mixed effect of organization that impacts Fine Artists. This mixed effect is both within and outside of the Fine Artist's control and include: job descriptions, administrative mandates, regulations, policies, accreditation, etc. that take on the roles of either self imposed or imposed organization on Fine Artists. The final possible interaction may be that of internal effects or factors within the Fine Artist's control. These are the variables of the Fine Artists culture and its values, the Fine Artist's training and knowledge, and finally the Fine Artist's self image of worth (See Exhibit A).

Is the cause of the wage differential of Fine Artists in higher education an external force? In light of the continued growth of the Fine Arts, in both consumer demand and national supply, there is a solid market value and appreciation of the Fine Arts (Leftwich, 1964). Furthermore, markets are relatively efficient and do not discriminate against the singular product (Alchain & Allen, 1969). In addition, both society and the institutions of higher education see the role of Fine Arts necessary to the "rounded" education of the person and receive both verbal and monetary support (Morrison/Carnegie Commission, 1973 & Morrison, 1985). Finally, there is no research that substantiates any "collusion theories" that the three variables of the market, society, and higher education have joined together to devalue the Fine Arts.

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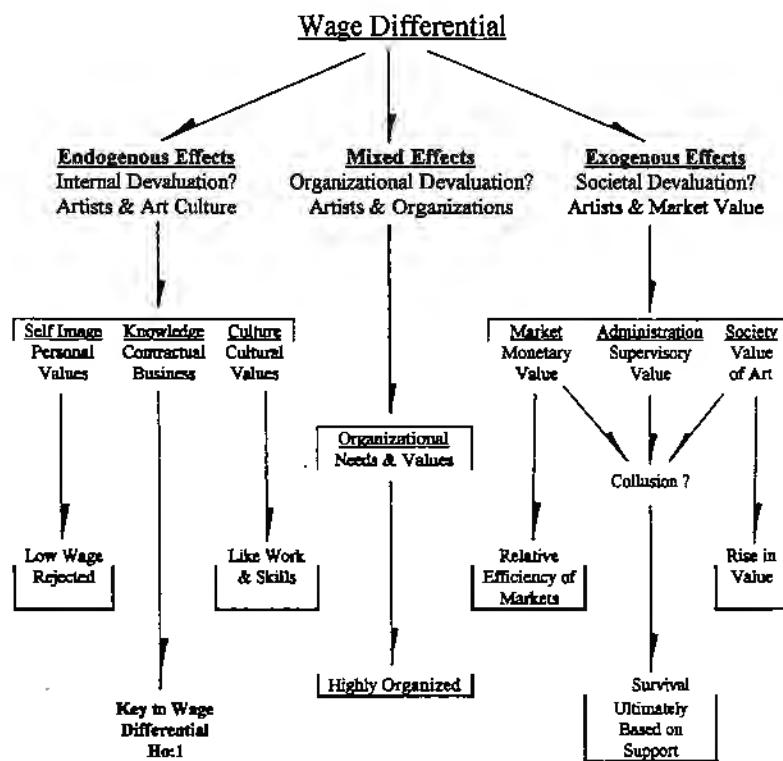


Exhibit A

The role of the external effects on the wage differential of Fine Artists in higher education is not central to this dilemma.

Is the cause (of the wage differential of Fine Artists in higher education) a mixed effect of organization that is imposed upon Fine Artists by employment and by their profession? The sheer number and nature of the professional accrediting organizations, and the acceptance of those organization's standards and values indicates a willingness to belong to an organizational format. Additionally, each division of the Fine Arts has an average of four professional organizations with journals to document research and set proper professional codes of behavior. For example, Fine Artists in Theatre have the American Theatre in Higher Education organization (ATHE), the United States Institute of Theatre Technology (USITT), the American College Theatre Festival (ACTF), and the University Residence Theatre Association (URTA),

and there are more. In this light, it is obvious that Fine Artists want, and accept, the nature of organization in higher education.

Is the wage differential of the Fine Artist in higher education due then to an internal force? The Fine Artist's and their professional organizations have lobbied extensively to set equitable expectations and wages of the faculty of the Fine Arts (ATHE, 1989, Morrison, 1985, & USITT, 1990). Additionally, the accrediting bodies that serve as the benchmarks for the culture of Fine Artists (NAST, NASD, NASAD, & NASM) recognize the need for wage equity and equitable research expectations. The Fine Artists sense of self worth and the value that their culture place upon them is not at question either, and is documented to be healthy and active (Ackerman, 1978 & Dennis, 1968). What remains is the matter of the wage differential and the Fine Artist's knowledge. Is this wage differential based on a lack of training, knowledge, and understanding of the Fine Artist in business affairs and contract negotiation? Does this lack of knowledge affect the Fine Artist's ability to compete during negotiations and hinder the development of an equitable contract? Furthermore, within the culture of the Fine Artist, does the lack of this training, experience, understanding, and knowledge, hinder the ability of the Fine Artist to compete in the marketplace, and over time, has it caused this gap in wages?

Methodology

This study examines and analyzes the perceptions, in training, experience, and the understanding of the Fine Artist towards self-marketing and business affairs in land grant Universities and Colleges. Additionally, the study focuses on the aspects of self-marketing and business knowledge in contract negotiation and wage setting in the research environment. The research questions and hypothesis stem from, and address, the three possible interactions of the dilemma.

There were four operational Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The current wage differential of Fine Artists is related to the poor training, knowledge, experience, and understanding of the Fine Artist in business affairs.

Hypothesis 2: The poor training of the Fine Artist in business affairs is related to his/her ability to compete efficiently and effectively in contract negotiations.

Hypothesis 3: The inability of the Fine Artist to compete efficiently and effectively in contract negotiations may impact the Fine Artists cultural perceptions of respect and empowerment.

Hypothesis 4: Although Fine Artists see the need to implement business classes into the curricula of their students, current implementation is not in evidence.

This study was descriptive, and it was an examination of the relationship between the independent variables of Fine Arts faculty perceptions and the dependent variable of their wage differential from the other disciplines in higher education. The independent variables are measures of perception in compensation, empowerment, respect, contract accuracy, business knowledge, business experience, contract negotiation skills and the acceptance of business curriculum as necessary to the training of the Fine Artist.

The populations and samples included the current faculties of Theatre, Dance, Art, and Music in the peer institutions of the University of Idaho, a land grant research institution. The peer institutions served as the populations for the research, and the individual departments were the samples within those populations. The peer institutions of the University of Idaho are: Arizona State University, Colorado State University, Montana State University, New Mexico State University, Oregon State University, Washington State University, University of Montana, University of Oregon, University of Utah, and the University of Wyoming. Additionally, the University of Washington was used as a comparator school. Although similar by research classification and commitment to the arts, it is not affected by the land grant mission and is considered the top regional arts institution. The questionnaire addressed the research topic in four parts, (1) perceptions of the Fine Arts faculty towards autonomy and empowerment, (2) perceptions of the Fine Arts faculty towards contract accuracy and compensation, (3) perceptions of the Fine Arts faculty towards business knowledge and contract negotiation skills, and (4) perceptions of the Fine Arts faculty towards business education and curricula in the Fine Arts. The demographic information included gender, salary, years of service, and rank.

The Findings

The organization of the findings are formed around the demographic data, the research questions, and the four main attributes of evaluation in the study upon which the hypotheses are based.

Demographic Data:

The demographic data presented a population composed of 65% male and 35% female. Of this population 41% are full professors, 31% are associate professors, 22% are assistant professors, and 6% are adjunct faculty.

Of those professorial ranks, 71% are tenured faculty. One half of the study's respondents are tenured male full or associate professors. Of the 29% untenured faculty, 69% are not on tenure track (approximately half).

The median year of service to the current institution of employment is 11 years with a range of 42 years (1 to 43). The median of career employment in education is 18 years, also with a range of 42 years (1 to 43). The mean salary is \$38,015.68 and the median salary is \$39,000.00.

Half of the respondents have been in education less than 20 years. Additionally, they have worked 12 years at their current institution of employment and are earning an average of \$39,000. Women at all ranks are paid comparatively less than their male counterparts by \$4,000 to \$6,000. Longevity, or service to the current institution of employment, showed 79% of the respondents had less than 20 years of longevity while 21% had longevity at that institution over 20 years. As career educators, 52% have been involved in education less than 20 years, while 48% have been employed in education over 20 years.

The demographic data supports the basis for the problem, which stems from the literature, regarding salary compression and wages. Most importantly, the salary rate is comparable to the national studies of the AAUP's annual survey, the Department of Education's IPEDS Survey, and the NASULGUC salary survey.

Research Questions:

The hypotheses were based on the research questions both reordered and combined. What follows is a brief recap of the findings for the research questions.

1. 74% of Fine Artists did not feel adequately compensated, although 78% felt empowered within their department.
2. 77% of Fine Artists did not feel empowered outside their department.
3. 70% of Fine Artist felt respected by students, colleagues, administrators and the community.
4. 60% of Fine Artist did not feel their salaries reflected their skills.
5. Individually, the discipline of Art is significantly low in its perceptions of empowerment and respect. Theatre as a discipline, also showed a significant negative response in appreciation and student respect.
6. As institutions, three universities had significant negative responses to their perceptions of autonomy and empowerment (See Tables 1 & 2).

Specifically, subjects at Montana State University felt a significant sense of low respect except at the community level; Washington State University faculty members felt a significant sense of low respect from students and faculty coupled with a lack of empowerment, and the University of Idaho felt a significant sense of low respect from faculty and administration. These perceptions of low respect were also related to a perceptual lack of empowerment. However, the University of Oregon was consistently high in its feelings towards empowerment and respect.

In the perceptions of contract accuracy and compensation, four universities had significant negative responses (See Tables 3 & 4).

Specifically, faculty members at Montana State University and the University of Montana were consistently low in their feelings of rewarded effort

Table 1: Significant Variations in the Perceptions of Respect by University

	(n)	Student Respect	Faculty Respect	Administrative Respect	Department Standards
ASU	(86)				
CSU	(35)				
MSU	(29)	low	low	low	low
NMSU	(22)				
WSU	(19)	low	low		low
UI	(28)		low	low	
UM	(36)				
UO	(51)		high	high	
UU	(65)				
UW	(46)				
UWY	(23)				
χ^2 Statistic		37.27	33.76	31.01	18.91

Table 2: Significant Variations in the Perceptions of Empowerment by University

	(n)	Department Decision Making	University Decision Making	University Curriculum Changes	University Policy Changes	Union Negotiating Activities	Involved, Educator Unions
ASU	(86)	low		low			
CSU	(35)		high			low	low
MSU	(29)						
NMSU	(22)				high	low	low
WSU	(19)		low	low	low	low	
UI	(28)		low		low		
UM	(36)			high		high	
UO	(51)	high	high				
UU	(65)			low			
UW	(46)						
UWY	(23)						high
χ^2 Statistic		20.96	22.89	34.34	20.20	35.82	65.65

and compensation. Subjects at the University of Idaho and the University of Utah felt that their rewards did not match their efforts, and that their contracts were poorly designed. However, Colorado State University perceived themselves as high in both contracts and salaries.

Table 3: Significant Variations in the Perceptions of Job Descriptions by University

	(n)	Contract Reflects Work	Contract Reflects Talents
ASU	(86)		
CSU	(35)	high	high
MSU	(29)		
NMSU	(22)		low
WSU	(19)		low
UI	(28)		
UM	(36)	low	
UO	(51)		
UU	(65)	low	
UW	(46)		
UWY	(23)	low	
χ^2 Statistic		23.00	18.70

Table 4: Significant Variations in the Perceptions of Compensation by University

	(n)	Efforts Rewarded	Salary Comparable Locally	Salary Comparable Nationally	Salary Adequate	Salary Reflects Skills
ASU	(86)					
CSU	(35)			high	high	high
MSU	(29)	low	low	low	low	
NMSU	(22)	high				
WSU	(19)					low
UI	(28)	low	low		low	low
UM	(36)		low	low	low	low
UO	(51)					
UU	(65)	low				
UW	(46)			high		
UWY	(23)			high		
χ^2 Statistic		22.87	18.32	99.38	52.34	23.59

7. 69% of Fine Artists did not feel that they are comfortable in contract negotiation.

8. 22% of Fine Artists had some form of business training.

9. 86% of Fine Artists did not feel that business and negotiation skills are important to the fine artist as a cultural necessity, but 79% felt it is a personal prerogative.

10. 14% of Fine Artists would consider adding curricula in business and negotiation skills to the formal education of the Fine Artist.

11. As disciplines both Art and Music do not significantly feel positive about the necessity to change curricula, or adopt business knowledge as part of their formal education

12. As an institution, Washington State University has significant negative responses to their perceptions of business knowledge and contract negotiation skills. The data also revealed no experience, perceptions of poor salaries, limited competency, and no contract negotiating. However, Colorado State University responded positively towards their salaries and competency even without a feeling of contract negotiation.

The hypotheses were addressed and answered by their statistical significance and by their relationship to the research questions.

Hypothesis 1: "The current wage differential of Fine Artists is related to the poor training, knowledge, experience, and understanding of the Fine Artist in business affairs." The data shows Fine Artists are not effective in designing a contract that balances their salary with their skills, talents, and efforts. Fine Artists are also not efficient at having their contracts reflect their skills and knowledge. Their poor business training has resulted in perceptions of poor compensation and contract design. The data also points to a lack of knowledge, and lack of negotiating experience. The data failed to reject the hypothesis. The wage differential is related to the poor training of the Fine Artist in business affairs

Hypothesis 2: "The poor training of the Fine Artist in business affairs is related to his/her ability to compete efficiently and effectively in contract negotiations." Fine Arts faculty have very little experience in business affairs, course-work, or training. In addition, few use negotiation and business techniques or feel competent about their abilities to use business skills they may have. The data failed to reject the hypothesis. The poor training of the Fine Artist is related to poor contract negotiation.

Hypothesis 3: "The inability of the Fine Artist to compete efficiently and effectively in contract negotiations may impact the Fine Artists cultural perceptions of respect and empowerment". There is no significant perceptual lack of empowerment and external respect. The data points to a significantly secure culture. The data rejected the hypothesis. Poor contract negotiation skills did not result in significantly low levels of respect.

Hypothesis 4: "Although Fine Artists see the need to implement business classes into the curricula of their students, current implementation is not in evidence." Fine Arts faculty see little need to add business curriculum as a requirement or as an integral part of the Fine Artists formal training. It is not deemed culturally important. However, business curricula is significantly important as a personal necessity of the Fine Artist. Fine Artists personally felt that students in the Fine Arts should have these skills and knowledge. In addition, the surveyed current catalogs of the universities studied found no

business classes for the Fine Artist. The data failed to reject the hypothesis. Although Fine Artists see the need to implement business training into the curricula of their students, current implementation is not evident.

The data points to a culture of Fine Artists that has a significant sense of internal self worth and respect. It is also a culture that is uneasy about how the external world of its profession views it. The lack of empowerment in the study is related to the cultural dissatisfaction with wages and with poorly descriptive contracts. It is further apparent that the Fine Artist does not realize the importance of negotiation and the nature of contract law in resolving these dissatisfactions. The additional lack of effort on the part of Fine Arts faculty to train young Fine Artist in business skills and to add the appropriate business curricula to their Fine Arts programs, has established a degenerative cycle. There are strong connections to the literature from these results. This lack of knowledge is the main "learning disability" of the Fine Artist and their culture (Senge, 1994). The inability of Fine Artists to envision change, or even want to change, is cultural "paradigm paralysis" (Barker, 1992). As a culture, Fine Arts faculty members have a congruent set of beliefs and values that is driving their perceptions on business knowledge as defined by this study (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, & Hall & Norburn, 1987). As a culture, Fine Artists have a firmly developed sense of identity and autonomy internally. However, Fine Artists do not feel a sense of identity and autonomy externally to their culture. This is an indicator of a disparity and will become problem in integrating Fine Arts into the organization of higher education (Cancro, 1992, Chickering & Reisser, 1993, Lee, 1992, & Schiller, 1993). The significant lack of business training and negotiating skills is related to the current wage differential of the Fine Artist.

Summary

There is a relationship between compensation, contract negotiation, business skills, empowerment, and autonomy. The key to the wage differential is the lack of training in business skills of the Fine Artist. Knowledge matters.

There is a relationship between the effectiveness and efficiency in contract negotiation and the ability to compete for better compensation in the market place. Competitive ability is related to knowledge.

There is a cultural perception in the Fine Arts that business skills are not necessary to the Fine Arts. Knowledge is *not* perceived as the key to improvement. In this case, the Fine Arts is suffering from "paradigm paralysis" (Barker, 1992).

There is a systemic cycle of amplifying perceptual factors at play: poor compensation leading to dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction leading to a lack of external empowerment, low external empowerment leading to poor negotiation abilities, and poor negotiating abilities leading back to poor com-

pensation. There is a cultural "learning disability" in the Fine Arts (Senge, 1990).

Recommendations

The culture of the Fine Arts, and Fine Artists themselves, needs to institute the training of business skills to its students both within and outside the culture of higher education. The current Fine Artists also need to educate themselves in business skills. The inclusion of business in the curriculum will add to cultural growth, development, and presumably to the eventual reduction of the wage differential.

Fine Artists should be helped to understand the relationship of business affairs to competition through classes and seminars so that they can better represent themselves and their abilities in the marketplace. Business affairs will also help Fine Artists to present better their needs and programs, to better their understanding of the changing face of higher education, and to prepare better their students. The Fine Artist needs to be less insular and become part of the body politic in education.

The culture of the Fine Arts, and Fine Artists themselves, need to institute a cultural awareness of how business skills are related to their perceptual problems with compensation and respect. The paradigm that, "Fine Artists have to starve to become good artists" must be overcome through cultural and personal retraining and seminars.

A fulcrum needs to be found to break the systemic cycle of organizational learning disabilities. Research will help find this fulcrum. Researchers need to expand upon this study to four year and private institutions across the country to develop a broader and wider understanding of the Fine Artist and their population base. A limited field of study, additional research in this area is essential in expanding the database on the Fine Artist. This better understanding of the Fine Artist should help us to define further his/her role in a complex society and help us break the systemic cycle of learning disabilities currently in operation.

Finally, the administrators of Fine Artists need to implement these training programs based on current organizational culture theory. If the perceptions of the collective shape the cultural norms (Schein, 1992), changing the cultural perceptions of the Fine Artist must be attempted through the following five main areas aimed at cultural acceptance and integration. First, administrators must identify the "learning disabilities" of Fine Artists that prevent them as a culture to embrace these business skills and concepts. Fine Arts curricula needs to be less insular. Second, administrators need to identify the weak links in the organizational structure of higher education and the Fine Arts to alleviate the problems and mysteries inherent to developing contracts and compensation. Job descriptions must be more exacting and the process needs to be open to negotiation and change. Third, administrators need to develop strong leaders in the Fine Arts competent as artisans

and educational visionaries to help the administrator resolve these problems. Artist/Managers need to help move the culture forward. Fourth, administrators need to improve the methods by which Fine Artists are evaluated and made accountable to the institution, so that Fine Artists feel both empowered and respected. Standards of worth and merit need to be universal across higher education. Finally, administrators need to monitor continually the internal and external environmental factors that influence not only the Fine Artist but the culture of higher education. Continual analysis is necessary in maintaining the delicate balance of the professional bureaucracy and the sub-cultures of higher education.

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Northwest Theatre Review, Volume 6 (1998), 31-36

Community Approaches to Funding the Arts

FAYE SLICE

The non-profit arts community has become increasingly dependent upon private sources of funding as government programs are cut in the budget process requiring more diverse services and offerings by performing and visual arts facilities and the ways in which those facilities are financed. While that limits the scope of available funding, it allows and requires non-profit arts facilities and groups to work more closely with the community that they serve. Thus, the presentation of art works are in keeping with the needs, concerns and desires of that community. Regional benefactors are similarly motivated to provide financial support for presentations which mirror those community concerns. Thus, a alliance of community and donor concerns results in arts which reflect regional flavors and interests rather than a sanitized national art subject to the influences of political correctness and election pandering. However, the arts community must become more attune and responsive to the needs of the community it serves in order to survive and prosper. We in the arts must be ever-mindful of our tendency toward esoterica in what we present, and how we present it to the community. This is often as simple as involving the community in the function and form of the arts on a daily basis. Our ideal is to present art for arts sake. However, the attention of arts patrons has become more globally divided—between TV, sports, school and countless other activities commanding time and attention, theatre or museum presentations are often lost in the priorities of a busy schedule. The challenge becomes to make the arts community a part of everyday life so that it becomes as routine as soccer practice or a T-ball game. It means involving those it serves in the every day activities of the arts as a means to increasing audiences, funding and advancing the spirit of the arts.

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Local sources are possibly the most frequently overlooked source of financial support in the development of ongoing programs. These local businesses and corporations have a vested interest in the communities in which they do business. Major corporate branch locations are particularly sensitive to the needs of the community, because those needs translate to their own corporate marketability among executives, public relations image and employee satisfaction in quality of life concerns, both on the job and during leisure hours. Just as a diverse community is a selling point enticing many corporations to relocate or consider branch offices, the same qualities are sought by individuals in considering transfers or promotions to a new community. Those in the arts management are similarly challenged to respond to the concerns of the business community as well as the general public. Often grants seekers focus on soliciting direct contributions when approaching local businesses or corporate benefactors for funding assistance in the arts. However, that approach is frequently too short-sighted or narrow in scope not fully benefitting either donor or recipient beyond the immediate need. Exploring creative options for marketing and development of arts facilities necessarily includes involvement in the activities and concerns of the community in order to increase community and business interest in the arts.

Involve and Be Involved in Business and Community

Annual events or programs provide name recognition, encourage employee participation and loyalty and contribute to program continuity, maximizing visibility for both the giver and receiver. For instance, a fictional *ACME Widgets Company* employs 300 people of whom 65% are married and have 1.5 children; the immediate extended company demographic is 742.5 persons, not including extended family and friends. The general employee concerns for this company tend to be family oriented in nature which encompasses everything from child care to retirement planning. Arts organizations that become partners in these concerns are more likely to generate patron loyalty and support than those perceived as simply selling yet another product or competing for time in an already busy schedule. Thus, these types of businesses tend to be more financially supportive of family oriented performing and visual arts. Therefore, approaches for annual sponsorships of children's series, holiday events and talent show challenges among organizations have the widest appeal to both companies and employees. The company benefits from community recognition and goodwill from, say, annual sponsorship of the *Nutcracker Ballet* or a children's production involving local youth. This corporate loyalty to the community in long range support contributes to higher employee satisfaction and security. While statistics vary slightly, the dedicated arts patron base averages approximately 6% of the national population, leaving enormous opportunities to reach out to 94% of the population by diversifying arts offerings. The arts benefit in generating patron loyalty and in the assistance toward long-term funding for increasingly costly productions. However, the performance need not be a world-class production. Often audiences are more supportive of regional repertory

companies, college groups or small community troupes, because they not only reflect community interests but because they are seemingly more accessible to a wider audience.

The focus of long-range funding should not be limited to corporate or large business donors to fund all productions. Many small businesses or sole proprietorships would be more than willing to sponsor a performance but most cannot afford the cost of advertising or talent fees alone. As a group, small businesses can do what they could not afford to do individually. Rather than give important sponsorship from small businesses 'honorable mention' billing—minimizing their contribution—after major corporate donors, organize events in which a number of entrepreneurs can contribute for equal billing and participation. Remember, small businesses contribute a greater percent of their revenues to community interests than do large corporations. Additionally, small businesses are more willing to support local or regional talent and can do so more often than sponsoring large touring productions. While these essential advertising dollars should not be overlooked in developing annual performance programs, they offer more opportunities to contribute to the overall performance schedule than simply advertising revenues.

An essential function of key administrators of arts facilities is involvement in professional business and civic organizations. This not only allows for networking opportunities in promoting upcoming presentations but shows an active interest in participating in concerns important to the business community. Prepare packets of concise information about upcoming events and goals of your organization to distribute to members. These groups often meet for lunch or dinner at businesses owned or managed by members, and is beneficial to your organization to host a meeting on a rotating basis to keep fellow members acquainted with your facility. A concise presentation and informal meeting offers members the opportunity to become more familiar with the goals and needs of the facility. Time the hosting of such events to coincide with the opening of a new production or exhibition.

Do Your Homework

Before even beginning to write a grant proposal to an endowment, foundation or business, the writer must become familiar with the mission of the donor. Study corporate annual reports and mission statements of prospective donors. This information reveals the public relations view point and indicates what kind of image is important to that corporation. Additional employee and economic demographic information is available through the chamber of commerce where the company has locations. Compile information about the business relevant to the needs of your organization. Ask to be on the recipient list for company press releases, preferably by fax. Pay heed to other community events the prospective donor sponsors. Close attention to these details and adjusting your organization's request to accommodate the needs and image of the company will gain the respect of philanthropic

administrators who appreciate time and concern for their goals. These professionals do not want to be bothered by extraneous information or proposals that reflect little thought or consideration for the company needs and disregard the importance of the administrators's time. This research is as pertinent to small businesses as to larger organizations. Proposals that benefit the donor company in some way will always be viewed more favorably than straight-forward funding requests for which there is no reciprocal benefit.

In approaching endowments and foundations for funding, a formal grant proposal is required. There are a few essentials in the process of preparing a grant request which will determine how the request is viewed by the grants administrator(s). A basic grant format which includes your organization's mission statement, artistic achievements, financial history and projections, becomes the backbone of every grant proposal and should be prepared with utmost care to details pertinent to your organization and the community it serves. Show accomplishments in your organization's role in enhancing the quality of life in the community, contributing to the community economy and responding to community needs. Give a history of your organization including local and regional significance. General information, submitted as part of every proposal, saves time of preparation for those applying for numerous grants and is applicable to all grants proposals. Write *specific* portions of your grant to address the mission of the donor—maximizing the qualities and concerns that you share—extraneous information is an annoying waste of the administrators time. They simply want to know how your organization meshes with their needs. A clear, concise report of your mission and resources needed to fulfill that mission are the only issues of concern to grants administrators.

Prospective donors want to see how the facility operates and functions as a business regardless of non-profit status. Concerns cited by grants administrators are that all avenues for revenue are vigorously pursued by non-profit organizations. Don't be shy about mentioning successful fund raising campaigns and marketing strategies—the business community relates to these successes and respects the effort and risks involved. Question all facets of business operations—are opportunities for concessions, professional workshops and demonstrations, instruction and other applicable revenue generating activities fully developed within the facility? If these issues are not fully addressed in a grant proposal, the acceptability and credibility of that proposal is jeopardized. A proven ability to business acumen will engender the respect of grants makers and the business community. If all opportunities to generate revenue for the facility are utilized prior to requests for funding, the proposal will garner more respect and attention from donors.

If the grant request is prepared by a professional grants writer, that person(s) should be recognized or noted in the proposal if the services are volunteered. It is not always beneficial for a non-profit facility to hire a professional grants writer. Grants makers know that these fees are often based on a percentage of the successful proposal and does not readily translate into

fiscal responsibility. A more advantageous approach is to recruit college students as interns to research grants availability, compile business information and prepare the basic grant format. Additionally, many colleges offer grants writing courses as weekend workshops conducted by professional grants writers through continuing education programs. Incorporating this responsibility into the job description of an existing employee or hiring a half-time person creates an added impression of budgetary responsibility and maximizing intended use of requested funding.

Honor Your Sponsors

Host artist receptions for sponsors of individual events, particularly high profile performances by renown entertainers. These need not be elaborate functions, but should be classy, well-planned pre-show cocktail parties or post-performance gatherings and should be a routine addition to contract riders. A conscientious artist will recognize the goodwill and sponsor satisfaction in such a small gesture that does not unduly interfere with schedules and gives the artist an opportunity to visit with the financial supporters of his or her performance. Regardless of artist availability, facility managers should host such events in gratitude to sponsors funding exceptional productions. This is an inexpensive but genuine means to thank your sponsors for their contributions without which the arts could not exist. Receptions also provide an excellent opportunity to address potential sponsors, to socialize with donors and express appreciation for business support.

Additionally, donor appreciation should be an annual event for program advertisers, arts and entertainment reviewers, individual donors and volunteers. Hosting a small reception on stage or in the lobby to express appreciation goes a long way toward establishing a continuing relationship with advertisers and donors. Sponsors and advertisers who are appreciated are much more likely to increase future contributions than those approached every year with an open hand for funding.

Responsibility to Community

The elimination of education budgets specific to the performing, literary and visual arts requires greater vigilance by non-profit arts organizations in providing alternatives to public education to fill these voids. Again, the benefits to the organization which addresses this challenging community need will gain patron loyalty, increased volunteerism, community goodwill and a source of specific sponsorship by organizations which will support only those organizations addressing the needs of youth. Non-profit arts organizations have not only an interest but a responsibility to address these needs of communities which allot precious tax exempt bonds, community and economic development monies to arts organizations. Establishing programs and events that address concerns of the wider community are essential to the perception of the arts as an integral part of that community. Creating a partnership with other civic groups enhances public image and community

participation. Some examples include the establishment of a children's theatre program which allows young people to participate in all areas of a presentation from conception to design to production; a *Spaghetti Night* for a local homeless shelter—in addition to admission price include donation of pasta, canned/bottled spaghetti sauce or other non-perishable spaghetti dinner items or a toy or book drive for children's centers or low income day care centers. Civic organizations that cater to these community needs are excellent sources for event sponsorship, because they come with their own set of loyal patrons and sponsors who would support activities that address the needs of the organizations and increase public awareness of their mission.

Consider establishing an annual challenge between competing retailers for food or clothing drives. These challenges could include a talent show or a fashion show as the campaign finale to announce the winner and provide an opportunity for businesses to cooperate in an effort to assist community service organizations. Extending a food, clothing, book or toy challenge outside the arts facility creates additional name recognition and association, provides additional advertising opportunities and involves the community in good natured competition. Talent or fashion shows involve employees and their families on a more personal level and can facilitate participation in other events offered by arts facilities. Furthermore, combining such events heightens interest and community awareness and creates a partnership rather than a competition for donor dollars.

We in the arts are always in danger of developing an attitude of esoterica in advertising, marketing and programming, forgetting patron and community desires, an attitude that intimidates many prospective patrons. The arts depend upon the impression of the wider community to *feel* a part of the arts and thus a desire to participate and assist in their advancement. People want to participate in more general ways in the arts rather than be simply sold yet another product. The arts community must constantly question its mission, its attitude and its commitment to serve its community. How is what you present relevant to the wider community? Relevant to individual patrons? Relevant to the mission of the sponsoring company and their employees and the wider community? The ability to round out the schedule of performances or presentations with those of community interest of regional import will provide a significant amount of funding to enable the continuation of art for its own sake. Concessions to appropriate community interests by arts facilities will do much toward involving a greater number of people in the arts thus generating the additional revenues necessary to fund pure art. The sometimes unfortunate aspect of the arts community is the necessity toward commercialism. The challenge becomes maintaining artistic integrity while developing the business acumen essential to compete for funding and audience loyalty. In a partnership with the community, new interest is generated in the arts by involving more people not usually motivated to attend cultural activities on a regular basis, thereby increasing the patron base and funding opportunities.

Northwest Theatre Review, Volume 6 (1998), 37-42

Linguistic Barriers and Cultural Gulfs: *Translations*, Brian Friel, and the Creation of Field Day Theatre Company

SUSAN S. BRENNAN

There appears to be no correlation...between linguistic wealth and other resources of a community. Idioms of fantastic elaboration and refinement coexist with utterly primitive, economically harsh modes of subsistence. Often, cultures seem to expend on their their vocabulary and syntax acquisitive energies and ostentations entirely lacking in their material lives. Linguistic riches seem to act as a compensatory mechanism. (Smith, 394)

This statement, derived from George Steiner's *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, and indeed Steiner's entire work, comprises what becomes the guiding light of Brian Friel's 1980 play, *Translations*. These theories of Steiner's are what shapes *Translations* into a dramatic investigation of the implications of a culture losing its language. These ideas transform the play from a political statement into an exploration of what comprises a culture orally and what happens when that linguistic definition is removed. Friel himself is anxious that the play be read on this second level: the play is not "about Irish peasants being suppressed by English sappers," nor is it "a thredony on the death of the Irish language." (Coogan, 58-59) Friel asserts in his diary that "the play has to do with language and only language. And if it becomes overwhelmed by that political element, it is lost."

That Steiner's themes become Friel's themes is undeniable. One need merely turn to one of many pieces of criticism written about the play to see the parallel. Robert S. Smith in particular has clarified this by juxtaposing passages from both texts to show how Friel has dramatized Steiner's hypothesis on language and translation. Some characters speak in paraphrases of Steiner's work, and Owen, one of the central characters, even

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quotes Steiner directly: "'Uncertainty in meaning is incipient poetry'—who said that?" (Friel, 32)

Translations is set in a remote town in Donegal in 1833, and the action is centered around the hedge-school where Hugh O'Donnell and his son, Manus, make a meager living teaching the local farmers and fisherman how to read, write, speak in other tongues, and dream. In the first act of the play, Hugh's other son, Owen, returns from his affluent life in Dublin to act as a translator between the Irish-speaking natives and the English soldiers who are remapping the country and renaming, or Anglicizing, all of the place-names of the area. This, and the impending arrival of the English-sponsored national school system, which would replace the hedge school and be taught entirely in English, constitute the issues which challenge the community of Ballybeg in a verbal manner.

Friel provides in his characters a rich tapestry which explicates Steiner's work. At the core of both the play and the Steiner text is the issue of translation between language, which Steiner states is, "properly understood,...a special case of the arc of communication which every successful speech-act closes within a given language... in short: *inside or between languages, human communication equals translation.*" (McGrath, 33) According to McGrath, Steiner makes light of the idea that there exists implicit problems with translation between cultures simply because these epistemological and linguistic problems are implicit within cultures. Each of Friel's characters illustrate a different aspect of this problem of translation. Hugh, the ebullient schoolmaster, is perhaps the easiest character to explore, as he seems to be the character most like Friel in his vision. He is certainly the character most like Steiner, for much of his speech can be attributed directly to Steiner. The opening quote of Steiner's becomes the following speech of Hugh's:

Indeed, Lieutenant. A rich language. A rich literature. You'll find, sir, that certain cultures expend on their vocabularies and syntax acquisitive energies and ostentations entirely lacking in their material lives. I suppose you could call us a spiritual people. (Friel, 42)

Although certainly not an omniscient character, Hugh seems to be the one who clearly understands the complexities which linguistics and culture impose on each other. His understanding at times takes the voice of arrogance, as the rest of his conversation with the young British orthographer, George Yolland, conveys, and yet somehow he manages to voice the complex theory that syntax and vocabulary can separate people verbally whether or not the language is the same.

Yes, it is a rich language, Lieutenant, full of the mythologies of fantasy and self-deception—a syntax opulent with tomorrows. It is our response to mud cabins and a diet of potatoes; our only method of replying to...inevitabilities. I understand your sense of exclusion, of being cut off from a life here; and I trust you will find access to us with my son's help. But remember that words are signals, counters. They are not immortal. And it can happen—to use an image you'll understand—it can happen that a civilization can be imprisoned in a linguistic contour which no longer matches the landscape of...fact. (Friel, 42)

If Hugh, in some convoluted sense, represents the voice of objectivity, (or perhaps better stated, the voice of academia), Owen and Yolland, friends

of different tongues, best embody the immediate problems inherent in translating across cultures. Although they are both open to communication between the British and the Irish, and even find themselves employed in opening such a line of communication, each experiences his own trials in undertaking such an expedition.

Owen is in the unique position of sitting on both sides of the fence, something he would justify as "adjusting for survival." When the audience meets him, he is employed by the English military as a translator. This could make him, in some sense, a decoder, a discoverer of the private core of the Irish culture, via its language. Owen serves as the mediator between what Steiner calls "otherness." He refuses to see, throughout most of the play, a threat to either culture in this renaming process. He places little importance on the value of a word in Act One, and, indeed, shrugs off the fact that the English soldiers do not know his real name with the comment,

"Owen—Roland—what the hell. It's only a name. It's the same me, isn't it? Well, isn't it?" (Friel, 33)

He also expresses his belief that the Irish can perhaps over sentimentalize, when he explains to Yolland that he is the only one who remembers the meaning behind the name of a certain crossroads. Yolland convinces him that remembered or not, the story behind the name is a unique aspect of Irish culture and that the name should be preserved.

For Yolland, the dilemma is an overwhelming feeling throughout the play that replacing all existing Irish placenames with a newer Anglican version or an English translation is robbing Ireland of something so inherently Irish, perhaps that something which Hugh refers to Yolland as the intricacies of language (in particular, the Irish language.) "I'm concerned with my part in [the renaming]," he confides to Owen. "It's an eviction of sorts." (Friel, 43) Described by multiple critics as naive, Yolland seems to understand inherently the difference between the Irish and English ways of expression, not simply in language, but in linguistics. Driven by a desire to decode the Irish language, he expresses his frustration at the discovery that translation is more than simply a matter of expressing the words of one language into the words of another language.

Even if I did speak Irish I'd always be an outsider here, wouldn't I? I may learn the password but the language would always elude me, won't it? The private core will always be... hermetic, won't it? (Friel, 40)

Yolland's intoxication with this new culture, and in particular, with its language, culminates in his short-lived love affair with Maire, a local young woman who longs to leave Ballybeg in search of better opportunity, in spite of Manus' affection for her, and who is duly enchanted with the foreign Yolland. Neither speaks more than the odd word of the other's language, and the love scene between the two, which precedes Yolland's mysterious disappearance, beautifully exemplifies the gulf between language and understanding. This is perhaps the one scene which almost transcends the linguistic barrier dominant throughout the play, and even here words become

signals, and the familiarity of certain words are as important as the foreignness of others.

Maire: Lieutenant George.

Yolland: Don't call me that. I never think of myself as a lieutenant.

Maire: What-what?

Yolland: Sorry-sorry? *(He points to himself again.)* George.

(Maire nods: Yes-yes. Then points to herself.)

Maire: Maire.

Yolland: Yes, I know you're Maire. Of course I know you're Maire. I mean I've been watching you night and day for the past...

Maire: *(Eagerly)* What-what?

Yolland: *(Points)* Maire. *(Points)* George. *(Points both)* Maire and George. *(Maire nods: Yes-yes-yes.)* I-I-I...

Maire: . Say anything at all. I love the sound of your speech.

Yolland: *(Eagerly)* Sorry-sorry?...

...(YOLLAND *extends his hand to MAIRE. She turns away from him and moves slowly across the stage.*)

Yolland: Maire.

(She still moves away.)

Yolland: Maire Chatach.

(She still moves away.)

Yolland: Bun na hAbhann? *(He says the name softly, almost privately, very tentatively, as if he were searching for a sound she might respond to. He tries again.)* Druim Dubh? *(MAIRE stops. She is listening. YOLLAND is encouraged.)* Poll na gCaorach. Lis Maol. *(MAIRE turns toward him.)* Lis na nGall.

Maire: Lis na nGradh.

(They are now facing each other and begin moving-almost imperceptibly towards one another.) *(Friel, 49-52)*

The scene continues with each of them reciting and feeling out the sound of words in the other's language, and with each pouring out his or her soul to the other. Both somehow pick out the word "always" in the other's speech and it is this word that brings them together and simultaneously widens the gap between them as it reminds us of the linguistic barrier that will "always" lie between them. This is one of the scenes in the play that makes most apparent the irony of having to present a play in which characters speak in Irish and English entirely in English.

Friel is well aware of the irony and, in fact, has created the play for this very purpose: Field Day Theatre Company, of which he is one of the founding members (Stephen Rea, Seamus Heaney and Seamus Deane being among the others) and this play, its first production, were established for the very purpose of finding a middle ground for the Irish actor. Building upon Steiner's theory that translation is difficult even among cultures whose language is the same, and refusing to be broken by the fact that Ireland may have lost, to a certain extent, its language, Friel has sought to claim for actors and audiences of Ireland a tongue which belongs specifically to Ireland, a tongue which he calls Irish-English.

Field Day operates as a political-cultural examination of issues that confront the Irish people living in both Northern Ireland and the Republic. Without being political in the traditional Republican/Unionist manner, Field Day has set itself this task: to "examine and analyze the established opinions, slogans, myths and war-cries which have gone to the creation of the present troubles in Ireland." (Binnie, 365) Rather than focusing blame on external forces (i.e., British colonization), Field Day seems more about breaking down and examining internal issues.

Field Day should be viewed as more than just a simple examination of these issues. Friel sees his Ireland, which he views holistically despite political borders, as a nation riddled with confusion. He believes that the playwrights of Field Day have a duty to "clarify, elucidate, and establish agreed codes, for purpose of communication and discussion." (Binnie, 366) The aim of Field Day is neither to ignore the division between north and south or accept it as divisive, but rather to create an arena of awareness.

Steiner believes that all communication "interprets" between privacies. Friel has held a mirror to Steiner's theories and shown his audience in dramatic form exactly what types of problems exist in trying to decode these privacies. We see through Hugh that each language, and consequently, each country's linguistic pattern, expresses so much of that country's cultural intimacies. Owen and Yolland illuminate the problems inherent in trying to translate across cultures, in trying to unmask these intimacies. In creating a play which is specifically written for the Irish (actors and audience alike), Friel makes a statement about the idea that while a language has the potential to be universally understood, interpretation (or translation) is not, cannot be, and should not be expected to be universal. *Translations* and the Field Day Theater Company have done much to shape the voice of contemporary Irish theater. Linguistically as well as thematically, both have demonstrated the futility of words like canon and universality. Ireland is not England is not the United States, although theoretically all speak the same language. Friel, like John Millington Synge and others before him, has examined what makes Ireland Ireland and is using his power as a playwright to make these ideas accessible to the Irish people.

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Northwest Theatre Review, Volume 6 (1998), 43-49

Actor Training in Russia: Tradition and Change

DAVID EDGECOMBE

My experience with Russian Theatre began shortly after accepting an appointment to the faculty of the University of Alaska-Anchorage. Within six months of my arrival, the Department of Theatre and Dance received an intriguing, if puzzling, proposal from a theatre in the then Soviet Far East. The Komsomol Theatre of Vladivostok was searching for a university theatre in the United States which would be interested in collaborating on an ongoing artistic and educational exchange. Partially owing to my eagerness for new experiences and partially my naivete to the ways of the North, I volunteered to pursue the matter on behalf of my department.

After countless blurry faxes, garbled telephone calls, and an eventful week-long planning conference in Vladivostok a month after the collapse of the Soviet government, I found myself officially invited to participate in the first annual Pacific Theatre Festival as the "American Delegation." I accepted the honor, and it was decided that I would direct a Russian translation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the resident professional company at the Komsomol Theatre, renamed the Chamber Drama Theatre after the events of the summer of 1991. My wife, Elizabeth Ware, a professional actress, was invited as well to perform the role of Titania (in English) in this production.

During our three-month residency in the summer of 1992, I gained a unique perspective on the theatre traditions and practices of the Russians; how they differed with our own, and more surprisingly, how they were similar. The similarities are particularly apparent in the production phase. Russian actors are often insecure, egocentric, prone to hamming it up when they're nervous, passionate about their art, and dedicated to the show; characteristics which parallel their American counterparts. The differences occur in their training and employment. They don't bide their time waiting

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tables or word processing until the big break comes. Rather, they enter an art institute at a relatively young age and are rigorously trained for their *vocation* through a carefully proscribed and rigidly enforced curriculum. Upon completion, assignment to a resident company is virtually guaranteed.

My production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was the professional debut of two actors from the Far Eastern Institute of the Arts in Vladivostok. They were cast in the roles of Puck and Lysander. The other cast members, ranging in age from 24 to 75, had also graduated from the local institute or from the Institute of the Arts in neighboring Vladivostok from Moscow, St. Petersburg, the Russian Far East, Japan, and South Korea. Professionals, educators, and students participated in this week-long festival of plays, workshops, and panel discussions. It provided me with the rare opportunity to interview educators and practitioners from many different institutes from throughout Russia at a time when the Russian theatre was still enjoying generous state support.

During the past two years, I have conducted a written survey of Russian theatre educators drawing on the invaluable personal contacts I made during the summer of 1992. This four page survey questioned educators about the context and methodology of Russian performance training. Focus was on actor training, but inevitably information about allied performance arts also came to light. The survey addressed three specific areas: the application and audition process; the methods and course of study unique to and common among Russian arts institutes; and post-graduate employment and career opportunities in the performing arts for Russian actors. The surveys were translated into Russian and back into English by the interpreters of the Chamber Drama Theatre, Laura and Julia Polshina. Without their help and uncanny insight into the theatre, this project would never have been possible. I have been able to follow up on developments through contacts with Russian artists who regularly visit our university.

The Russian theatre system at first glance is markedly different from our own. Up until about five years ago generous state support guaranteed a fully staffed year 'round professional theatre in every large and mid-sized city throughout Russia. Noticeably absent have been community and amateur theatres. Those who aspire to the theatre are assessed for aptitude and, if found worthy, trained for the profession. Since there are few opportunities for amateur performance, there tends to be very little formal training in theatre on the primary or secondary levels. There are no theatre camps, summer educational programs or college extension courses as are common here. This does not mean that Russian children are not exposed to theatre. The great Russian playwrights are required reading and regular theatre visits are part of the curriculum. Theatre productions remain inexpensive and ample. After Perestroika theatre stayed affordable. It was reported to me on several occasions that live theatre was students' primary source of entertainment because movies had become too expensive. Although state funding is rapidly disappearing, theatres have found other ways to raise needed capital without resorting to exclusionary ticket prices.

Students interested in performance training must apply, audition, and be accepted to one of the institutes devoted to the arts which are usually located in the larger metropolitan centers throughout Russia. Competition for the limited spaces is fierce. Although institutes in the Far East have more spaces available and fewer applicants than those in Moscow or St. Petersburg, many applicants are rejected. One actor I interviewed failed to gain admittance to the institute near his Far East hometown but succeeded when he auditioned for a place in Moscow.

The Far Eastern Institute of the Arts in Vladivostok opened in 1962, and it received hundreds of applications that first year. These relatively young institutes encourage local talent and take pride in placing their graduates in regional theatres all over the country. Naturally, many of the graduates prefer to take positions in the familiar surroundings of the Far East.

Usually students audition for professional schools soon after their completion of the Russian equivalent of our high school, in the case of young women, and after completion of mandatory military service for young men. Some delay their applications until after unrelated employment experience.

Institutes in Moscow can receive as many as 7,000 applications for the 20 to 30 positions available. Eastern institutes report significantly fewer applications usually about 200 for the 30 positions. A few schools accept an additional five or six students to be trained as stage directors. There are five female students to every one male. There seems to be some evidence that this is slowly changing, but parity seems to be a long time away.

Applicant screening is elaborate, and students describe the process as arduous and nerve-racking. The numbers are culled, and the applicants who make each cut are auditioned several times. Rigorous physical and improvisational tests are required. Applicants are required to prepare a three-minute selection which is viewed by a committee of teachers and artists. Usually the recitation is taken from classics of Russian poetry and prose; rarely are cuttings from dramatic works used. Some institutes even forbid the use of dramatic monologues or original pieces.

Students are required to do their own preparation, and coaching is discouraged. It is felt that the audition should reflect the creativity of the performer, not his/her ability to employ the experience of a professional to polish their work.

Although the criteria for selection varies from institute to institute, most report that they watch for applicants who exhibit the following: an ability to transfer emotion into the material; physical agility and plastic (i.e., movement) expressiveness; clarity of speech and precision of articulation; imagination and originality in interpretation; audience appeal or charisma; an innate sense of physical rhythm; and finally, whether or not the applicant conveys a love for the theatre and an eagerness to learn.

Sometimes musical skills are evaluated, but only when a student is applying for a course of study which would involve musical theatre performance.

Frequently, applicants are given improvisations to test their ability to think on their feet.

The courses of study, philosophies, and approaches vary from master to master, but like American MFA programs, Russian institutes focus on performance. Courses in the history of theatre and art, philosophy and aesthetics, and Russian literature with an emphasis on the great dramatic writers make up the academic curriculum. Performance courses include voice and diction, stage combat, movement and dance, acting, scene study, and improvisation. Some institutes require students to specialize in some musical skill as well, either singing or playing an instrument. Since a career in musical theatre is a separate discipline, the emphasis on music is highly variable.

The program for actors takes four years to complete. Directing candidates must study for an additional year before qualifying for professional placement. The complete program entails 400 to 500 hours of classroom work over the eight semesters. The curriculum changes weekly. Classes begin at 9:30 AM and continue until 6:30 PM with a one hour lunch break at 12:30. Length of classes is variable and can be negotiated by the instructors depending on the needs of the individuals and projects.

In order to teach, an instructor must have the equivalent of a graduate degree in performance studies. Doctorates are required for the academic courses, and a minimum of two to five years of professional experience is requisite for the performance arts. Many of the instructors in the Far East institutes come from professional theatres in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Each institute has its own guru who promotes the approach of a selected theorist such as Stanislavsky, Vakhtangov, or Meyerholdt. I asked the Artistic Director of the Chamber Drama Theatre why performance training was so specialized in his country. He responded, "A school with many systems is not a school." He rolled his eyes when I explained that our training approach exposed students to many different theories in order for them to choose what works for them. Russian actor training falls into two focus areas, the emotional and the physical. Inspired by Stanislavsky, the emotional area of study requires that the students learn through the grid of their own experience. Self-knowledge is imperative to the study of acting, and the emotional demands of the Russian stage are exhaustive. Voice and diction, often taught with an instructor specifically trained in anatomy and physiology, is given about four hours per week.

Physical training is approached in a variety of ways. Some schools have extensive training in classical ballet or circus skills. The objective of studying dance is not to turn out competent dancers, but to teach discipline, grace, and what is referred to as "spiritual refinement." Some institutes offer classes in yoga and eastern movement. I was reminded by at least one educator that Stanislavsky himself studied yoga. Classes in ballet and Russian folk dancing are introduced during the first year. The average weekly study of dance occupies four hours.

The highest percentage of time, about ten hours per week, is devoted to improvisation and creative performance exercises. Scene study takes only about six hours of weekly study, and is not introduced until the second or third semester. There seems to be a feeling among the Russian instructors I interviewed that scene study is not as valuable as other training exercises. It is usually limited to Russian masterpieces, frequently Chekhov, and students repeat the same scenes for several months.

The study of literature is required of all acting students. Recitation of poetry and prose as well as dramatic literature is emphasized. They not only read great Russian writers such as Chekhov, Pushkin, Gogol, and Ostrovsky, but also selected western classics including the ancient Greeks, Shakespeare, Ibsen, and such American playwrights as William Saroyan and Tennessee Williams. These Americans have been Russian favorites since the Fifties, some of the few representatives allowed by the state, and consequently contemporary Russians revere them. Two artistic directors boasted that Saroyan has visited their theatres, and his plays are part of their repertory. It is interesting to note that these artistic directors had little knowledge of more contemporary writers such as Albee, Shephard, and Mamet, and they barely recognized the names of blockbuster American and British musicals. Musical theatre in the Far East is staged in specific theatres and is much more akin to vaudeville or musical variety shows.

Since textbooks are still rare, students and actors often copy their assignments by hand. Full productions are never undertaken to augment training until the final year. Students work on this "senior project" for a full year with an intensive rehearsal period during the last few months. Educators have different opinions of these final projects. Some dismiss them by explaining that they are "obligatory and symbolic." Understandably, students think they are extremely worthwhile. These showcase productions are often free and are attended by friends and relatives of the students as well as regional theatre directors who frequently draft actors for their companies based on these performances.

In the past all institute students have been paid a stipend by the state. There have been no charges for educational materials or tuition. This practice, of course, is rapidly changing. In 1993, students were paid about 25,000 rubles per month. This income puts them very close to the poverty level. Rent for most students is prohibitive, and many continue to live with relatives. Part-time jobs are few. The onerous class schedule makes holding a job exceedingly difficult. Financial difficulties are one reason given for the relatively low attrition rate.

Eighty-five percent of the students who start the programs graduate. Of the fifteen percent who drop out, five percent are asked to leave because they are deemed "professionally unfit," five percent are 'too lazy' to be successful in the strenuous course of study, and five percent give health reasons or they wish to seek jobs in the business sector. The directors of the institutes credit their rigorous screening process for the high rate of success.

Increasingly, however, students express concern about the lack of viable employment opportunities upon graduation. Nearly sixty acting graduates enter the work force from the three major Far East institutes each year. In the past all were guaranteed positions at one of the country's regional theatres. This guaranteed employment, which makes the Russian system so different from our own, has always been a strong incentive to continue. As with so many other state-sponsored programs, changes are occurring rapidly which will profoundly affect the theatres and training institutes in the future. It is the hope of artistic directors and institute administrators that they will be able to continue to offer professional employment, but recent statistics indicate that 35% of the students fail to secure employment immediately after graduation.

Once an actor is hired by a company, it is difficult to lose the position. Some actors spend their entire life working with the same theatre. The American system of itinerant performers is unheard of at this time. Russian actors can lose their job only if they are prosecuted for a crime, convicted on a charge of immorality, or are chronically drunk during rehearsals or performances. As company members they are under contract with a theatre and can be called to act in a play at any time. Often they are not involved in either rehearsals or productions for months at a time under the Russian repertory system. This practice too will change with the reductions in state sponsorship. Some actors work second jobs in order to support their families. Frequently, they are artisans. Flexible hours are requisite for them to be available for rehearsals and performances.

Since actors are part of a permanent resident company and the artistic director is familiar with their abilities, company members rarely, if ever, audition. Roles are assigned, and casting is posted the day before rehearsals begin. It is not unusual for roles to change during the rehearsal process, which can extend for several months. Actors can be replaced or rearranged as the director's concept evolves.

There exists a graduated payscale for actors in the resident companies. Of course, newly hired interns are at the bottom, but they can move up in a matter of years. No actor makes a great deal of money, even by Russian standards: an artist's life is one of sacrifice. My Russian acquaintances report the difficulties of working in professional theatre. Many of those who appeared in my production have left the Russian Far East for positions in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Several have changed vocations. Their annual holiday cards reflect a longing for the time of state supported theatres. It is my hope that the Russians will hold onto to the best of the old system as the theatre inevitably is transformed by market pressures. Lengthy rehearsal periods may seem indulgent to many Western artists, but these are now also shortening as ticket sales become increasingly important in operating budgets.

For the present all of the surveyed theatres continue to produce, and the arts institutes continue to educate actors and directors. As the positions in professional theatre have become more limited by budget restriction, small

"experimental" theatres have been founded in the large cities. These are a hybrid cross similar to a combination of our community and semi-professional theatres. The future of theatre in Russia may lie in this new egalitarian theatre movement. As long as the conservatories turn out a stream of educated performers, venues for their talents will be necessary. If the state will not finance these theatres, artists will be forced to create their own.

I want to thank all the Russian theatre artists who aided in the completion of the surveys, and especially the following directors who submitted to more extensive interviews:

Olga Koroleva, The Theatrical School of Moscow
Sergey Zhenovich, Khabarovsk Institute of the Arts
Alexander Vilkin, The Schukin Academy, Moscow
J.W. Loebov, The Far Eastern Institute of the Arts, Vladivostok
Sergei Z. Crishkov, The Far Eastern Institute of the Arts
Anatoly Polyankin, Satiricon Theatre, Moscow
Galina Kopulova, Vladivostok
Pavel Tsepenyuk, Sakalin International Theatrical Chekhov Center
Leonid Anisimov and the acting company at The Chamber Drama Theatre, Vladivostok

Special thanks to Russian translators Julia Polshina and Galina Ilinykh and, of course, Elizabeth Ware.