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LMDA Review, volume 9, issue 2

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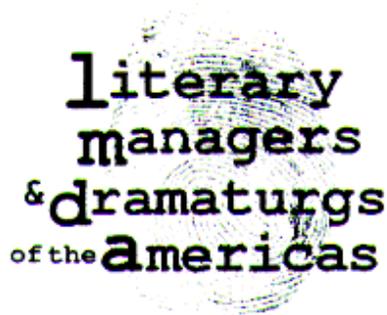
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the lmda review

*The Newsletter of
Literary Managers and
Dramaturgs of the Americas
9.2 (spring 1999)*



"Human speech is like a cracked kettle on which we tap crude rhythms for bears to dance to, while we long to make music that will melt the stars" Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary, 1857
Translation, Paul Schmidt

In February this year, a cherished theatre artist and scholar passed away. Paul Schmidt, the internationally revered translator, poet, teacher, and actor died from complications of AIDS. He was a youthful 65.

As a translator, Paul always searched for what he called the playwright's "voiceprint" and insisted that "Whatever language I speak as the translator must either be the language of the audience or if it isn't their current language, be recognizable to them as an echo of what they already know."

At the Yale School of Drama in the 1990's, Schmidt taught a Translation/Adaptation class required for the Dramaturgy and Playwriting students. He was a master of 6 languages with a doctorate in Slavic Languages from Harvard University. Schmidt's literate and rigorous approach to translation and his legendary, comprehensive knowledge of drama, novels, poetry, and the theater world made him a popular lecturer and artistic mentor for the students. Many a Yale student when queried about their potential career choices would brush aside the question and reply optimistically "I'd like to be like Paul Schmidt."

Paul Schmidt cut a graceful cubist figure among us. He was uniquely multifaceted as anyone who was privileged to meet him soon discovered: a gifted translator of Chekov, Moliere, Racine, Mayakovsky, Marivaux, Brecht, Gogol, and Genet (Schmidt translated a landmark 5-1/2 hour version of Genet's The Screens for the Guthrie Theater in 1989); an inspiring teacher/scholar at Yale and other prominent colleges; an Army intelligence Officer in the late 1950's; a playwright; a poet/translator of Rimbaud and the Russian Futurist Khlebnikov; a librettist for Robert Wilson and Tom Waits on Schmidt's internationally acclaimed adaptation Alice; and a collaborator with many other major avant-garde theater artists such as Peter Sellars, Liz LeCompte, JoAnne Akalaitis, and Liz Diamond. If there were not enough, Schmidt also worked as an actor playing Dr. Chebutykin with the Wooster Group on the ground-breaking experimental theatre production "Brace Up!" which featured his extraordinary translation of Chekov's play Three Sisters.

But Paul Schmidt did not view himself as belonging to any elite literary circle or select coterie of theater artists. Schmidt was not given to such puffery or snobbery. He employed his nose and wits in a more dignified manner and for far more urgent matters. Anyone who encountered Schmidt witnessed his uncommon curiosity and innate hunger for knowledge, for he sought constantly the hidden spark in students, fellow artists, and yes, audience members that betrayed them as kindred spirits. We, on both sides of the footlights, will miss Paul Schmidt for as Yale Rep's Resident Director Liz Diamond recently noted in a Village Voice tribute, "Paul taught me so much about how to be an artist and about how to live."

Mark Bly
April 1999

SECTION I: IN REVIEW

Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas Annual Conference, 1999 Setting the Table: A Working Retreat Thursday, June 17 to Sunday, June 20 University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington Geoff Proehl

With this mailing of the *Review*, we have enclosed information and registration forms for this year's conference. **If you're coming** to the conference, we hope that you'll immediately fill out and send in the registration forms at the back of the enclosed brochure. Knowing who and how many are coming will help us in our planning and allow us to run the conference more economically. **(Registrations postmarked and paid by June 1st are discounted \$10.)**

As conference planners, we've tried to create a conference that reflects the interests and concerns we heard members express in person, over the phone, and online in the past year. We heard a desire to sit down with colleagues and talk about the work we do as dramaturgs and literary managers.

Increasingly we come from different parts of Canada and the United States, different areas of dramaturgical work (freelance, institutional, university), different stages in our lives (there are at least three generations of working dramaturgs and literary managers in North America). But **one of the beliefs we most seem to share is that we profit from face-to-face conversations about what we do, how we do it, and why.** Friday, the first full day of the conference will begin with meetings in small groups to discuss our work, as well as the issues and concerns that we encounter in trying to make a life in and around the theater and this discipline. From these conversations, we hope not only to learn how to improve our practice, but also to discover collaborators to work with in the months and years ahead.

We heard a desire for focused **sessions on specific topics.** Saturday morning members will have a choice of participating in two rounds of seminars/workshops on these topics: ways of running a literary office, the ethics of new play development, processes for adapting non-theatrical texts for the stage, the relationship between the dramaturg and her community, obtaining permissions for using texts and images in productions or

publications. Early Career Dramaturgs will sponsor a session for new dramaturgs on production dramaturgy lead by dramaturgs with long-term experience in the field.

We noticed an intense interest in **collaborative processes** and their implications. This topic will be the primary focus of the UCaucus afternoon on Thursday, June 17, including the introduction of a new project under the direction of Liz Engelman and Gretchen Haley devoted to exploring collaborative processes, along with an extended session on the ways in which we teach collaboration. Mark Bly of the Yale School of Drama will moderate the opening evening session of the conference: an in depth look at the work of a collaborative team currently developing *The First Picture Show* opening at the American Conservatory Theater (spring 1999) and the Mark Taper Forum (summer 1999) with book and lyrics by Ain Gordon and David Gordon; music by Jeanine Tesori; Corey Madden (Assoc. Art. Dir., Mark Taper Forum), dramaturg.

Members expressed a strong desire to be able to see one or more performances during the conference in order to give us a common theatrical event to discuss. On

the second night of the conference, Seattle's newest professional theaters, the **Art Theater of Puget Sound**, will perform *Uncle Vanya* in an intimate setting on campus. **Vanya's** director is Leonid Anisimov (Honored Artist of Russia; Artistic Director of the Vladivostok Chamber Drama Theater).

We heard a desire for more **time to discuss the future of the organization**, about how we can clarify its mission, and then work more effectively to fulfill that mission. With funding from the New York State Council of the Arts, we have invited **George Thorn of Arts Action Research** to talk with us about the state of the arts in North America and its implications for dramaturgy, literary management, and LMDA. We've set aside time for **open forums** to examine projects on which members are working and explore initiatives that LMDA might undertake in the months ahead. In the most practical ways, how the organization can best create a space that will enable members to undertake specific projects aimed at improving the environment for this field in the months and years ahead.

Unlike many other LMDA conferences, we will spend almost no time on theater in the Northwest. We will have fewer panel presentations and almost no special guests (or "stars") from outside the field. Instead of meeting exclusively in plenary sessions we will be moving back and forth between small and full group meetings. Many of these meetings will be conversation-based and interactive. **In general, this conference will feel more like rehearsal than performance, more like working in the kitchen to prepare a banquet than the banquet itself.** We know in turn that these changes may disappoint some members and that our overall attendance may be lower. We are not, however, proposing this conference as a model for future conferences, or as a way to introduce the world to dramaturgy (we may do more of this at Conference 2000).

Compared to New York or Chicago or Montreal or San Francisco, there's not

a lot to do in Tacoma. This was a conscious choice. At this conference, we want to **set the table** for a year of work, a year that begins with this **working retreat**, so we've chosen a relatively quiet place with few distractions other than the Cascades, the Olympics, and Puget Sound.

The chance to come together with people who share our love for theater and theater making, who share a passion for something other than what our culture most wants to give us, who want to make a work of art that will transform our lives, is a rare and beautiful thing. **LMDA is an idealist's dream, the dream of a gathering that in the midst of its drunkenness (and perhaps because of it) hopes for a conversation of seriousness and passion,** a conversation that will be worthy of the words and gestures that come from the plays and authors we love.

* * *

Conference chairs: **Jane Ann Crum**, The Drama League; **Lee Devin**, Swarthmore College and The People's Light and Theater Co., **Liz Engelman**, A Contemporary Theater; **DD Kugler**, School for Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University.

Conference Committee: **Lenora Inez Brown**, Crossroads Theater; **Celise Kalke**, LMDA Administrator; **Tony Kelly**, Thick Description; **Allen Kennedy**, The Dalton School; **Maxine Kern**, George Street Playhouse; **Brian Quirt**, Director, Nightswimming; Dramaturg, Factory Theater, Toronto; **Tricia Roche**, Associate Producer, The People's Court, **Lynn Thomson**, Brooklyn College; and **Paul Walsh**, American Conservatory Theater.

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**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS:
LMDA PRESIDENT-ELECT**

Please send your nomination or nominations for president-elect to the

LMDA office. To be considered, they must arrive by May 12. Any member receiving 5 or more nominations will, if he or she agrees, be placed on a ballot that will go to all LMDA members on May 15. We will announce the results of this election at the conference in June.

The president-elect will serve alongside the current president, Geoff Proehl, until the end of his term (July 1, 2000), and then begin a two year term as acting president. He or she will also present a slate of officers to the membership for approval in January of 2000.

Send or fax your nominations as soon as possible to LMDA, CASTA, Box 355, CUNY Graduate Center, 33 West 42nd St., New York, NY 10036; fax: 212-642-1977. You may also e-mail your nominations to Geoff Proehl at <gproehl@ups.edu>.

* * * * *

**THE STATE OF THE PROFESSION:
ROUND ONE
Geoff Proehl**

Recently I posed these two questions to LMDA members online:

Where are we now with respect to the field of dramaturgy and literary management? And, where do we need to go from here?

"The field" can be interpreted in almost any way you want. It might touch on practice and advocacy issues, as well as organizational questions specific to LMDA itself.

Your responses will table items for us to work on in the months ahead. **What is puzzling or difficult or amazing or invisible or terrifying or joyous or (fill in the useful predicate adjective) in our lives and work at this moment?** This is not an invitation to complain (although if you need to, you may). It is an invitation to reflect. You might focus on a breakthrough you've just made, or a question that still confounds you. I

encourage you to write informally (conversationally) and with as much specificity as possible. Responses can be any length from a sentence or two, to a maximum of 500 words. A single long paragraph would be fine.

Here is the first round of these responses. To those of you not online, we now invite you to respond to the above as well. We will publish your writing in the next issue of the *Review*, and if it arrives before June 5 in the collection of these responses that will be part of the conference folder. You may send your words by fax (253-756-3500; attn. Proehl, Theater), by e-mail (<gproehl@ups.edu>, or by regular mail, either on disk or on hard copy. Do send a disk or use e-mail if possible, so that we will not have to re-key your writing.

* * *

Julie Bleha

I'm answering this question from an awkward place: in a way, I feel a bit disconnected to these issues right now. I've really only worked on one (ongoing) project this year, yet I have also been working with the Advocacy Committee, discussing how we can upgrade our professional profile, earning power, and legal rights. Thus, a lot of my consideration tends towards the theoretical. I have to question why exactly I've come to feel a slight alienation. An obvious reason would be that I don't have an institutional home anymore, and that the life of the freelancer is one of constant self-(re)invention -- perhaps I got a little weary of having to pitch myself again and again, or to describe my talents and skills repeatedly, in the effort to get work in a world in which dramaturgs are frequently the last ones brought on (I hesitate to say hired for obvious reasons) to a project.

I know that the distancing comes from internal factors as well as external ones. I've started directing more. Originally, I thought that I could easily segue into that role, whilst maintaining my identity as a

dramaturg. However, I've had to learn how to balance working as a dramaturg and director simultaneously. It's confusing, because while they're related and complementary roles, they're so distinct; finding my directorial voice means I have to mute my dramaturgical one for a while.

When I do work as a dramaturg, I'd like to do so with the knowledge that we, with the support of organizations such as LMDA, don't have to make excuses for who we are or what we do. That is, I don't want to have to plan alternate careers as a dramaturg ("Let's see -- how could I use my skills in corporate America?"). If I want a job as a script editor for a film company, I will go look for one, but if I want to call myself a dramaturg, I want to look for jobs as such and not make any excuses for it. I think this line of thinking is what keeps me working with the Advocacy Committee: if this is our profession, we have as much right as anyone else to a.) stand by our name, and b.) get fairly compensated for our work.

This brings me to what I see LMDA's purpose as: based on the organization's past work and achievements, I think its most important function is to serve as a clearinghouse for information, acquaintanceship, and advocacy for those working in the profession. I don't think I want to see the organization grow as big--and potentially impersonal--as other national arts advocacy organizations. Freelancers especially have a hard time participating in such groups; conferences, for instance, frequently only invite institutional participants, and even if freelancers are made welcome, the costs are usually prohibitive. LMDA, to my mind, is open and accessible to all the membership. On the other hand, the administration's move to regulating and improving the efficacy of organizational capabilities is a good one. I don't want to see us become too dependent on structure and regulation, but there is definite room for improvement (which has been taking place suddenly over the past few years, I think). Individually and collectively, we should organize, educate, advocate, make

art--and fight for the compensation, fiscal and otherwise, that's our due.

* * *

James Breckenridge

I believe the answer as to "where we are now with respect to the field," very much depends upon the respect we've shown the writers we serve. It seems to me that much of our time has been spent arguing over "tribal" issues and have lost sight of the larger picture. To this end, I call upon the membership to consider the work of civilizing our profession through a philosophy of common belief. The core of this belief, must first root itself with those of a common creative purpose and the very first of these individuals must include the writers we serve.

Many writers I've worked with, unfortunately, view us and the whole sausage making process as taking from the author that which is theirs. Collaboration to them has come to mean "Let's do it my way!" The proof of such injury is clearly evidenced by what writers have experienced in Hollywood and are increasingly experiencing in the Theater. Much of the so-called "collaborative process" has become for them a slow, tortuous, artistic bleeding; a kind of trickle-down, soul-stealing economics.

When Arts institutions decided years ago to mortgage their souls, the resulting corporate mentality put all of our souls at risk. It is no secret to anyone that men in green visors have been running art, dance, film, symphonic and theater institutions for years. There is nothing new or "Disney" about this circumstance. It is a battle that many of us have fought against for years and some others even helped to create. Whatever the reasons though, I believe it is now time to reconsider our alliances, to ask ourselves not only what we stand for, but who we stand for.

I recall with some comfort that even Odysseus, upon his return from Troy, chose to spare the poet. I believe that we too should choose to defend and stand beside the poet. By taking such a

position, far from diminishing our contributions, we will only enhance them, gaining integrity and the increased respect long overdue us. I believe it is in our own self-interest to do so. In considering the issue of where we are and what our organization is to become, I can see no other choice but to first align ourselves with the legitimate concerns of the writers we serve.

I've enjoyed the continuing discussions and appreciate the opportunity to offer my comments.

* * *

David Copelin

W(H)ITHER DRAMATURGY?

Because dramaturgy is a function rather than a title, as Mark Bly pointed out some years ago, it's here to stay because it's always been here. Its emergence as a separate and rather mysterious discipline is continuing pretty much as it should, and the parallel with the emergence of the stage director a century ago is hard to miss. "What does a dramaturg do?" is still being asked, but we're getting wise enough not to get bogged down in trying to provide an answer. People don't exactly know what a director does, either, but generally speaking they've stopped asking—because everyone knows that plays need directors. So take a lesson, folks: we are free to invent answers, questions, theories, working methods, even the occasional apology, if we choose to. The perennial issues of dramaturgy remain, but by now we have 30 years of practical experience on which to draw for answers. Back then (for you young whippersnappers), there was no LMDA, there was no budget line-item for a dramaturg's salary or fee, there was insufficient communication among the few practitioners, there was fear and ridicule from insecure members of the theater community, and the word *dramaturg* conjured up the image of (to quote Zelda Fichandler) "Someone with a big book in one hand and a big stick in the other." We're mostly beyond that now, I think, though some struggles recur repeatedly. Where do we need to go from

here? We need to discard our own insecurity and fear, we need to keep building a history of useful work with playwrights, directors, producers, actors, designers, trustees, critics, and audiences, we need to keep talking with each other (thank God for the internet!), we need to confront our own limitations honestly, we need to discuss painful things like the ethics of dramaturgy, what "cultural appropriation" means for artists, working conditions and practices, and so on. We need to pontificate less and laugh more. We need to use language more clearly, eschewing both the fashionable obfuscation of the post-postmodern academy and the sentimental blather of capitalist kitsch. We need to appreciate imperfection without surrendering to its enshrinement, and above all, we need to act with courage and imagination. "We ain't where we're gonna be, but we sure by God ain't where we was!"

* * *

Lee Devin

Where are we?

Historically? Easy. We're in the midst of defining ourselves as a part of the directing function sufficiently interesting and coherent to become a job, in much the same way that the job of Director appeared a hundred years ago.

Metaphysically, not so easy.

We have two main artistic tasks: to create given circumstances and to conceive the play's developing form. Some directors say that's their job. Well, their job used to be the actor manager's job.

We have lots of other work around the place, mostly to do with reading and writing and talking.

I believe that the heart of dramaturgy is the dramaturg's love of form. This love celebrates repetition (form's beginning), rhythm (form's coherence), and unity (form's final sign, the condition of beauty). I believe that our love of form exhibits in two activities, analysis and synthesis: we break big ones into little

ones; we put them together again. As a larger function we perceive form when it's there, we conceive it when it's not. Any thing or process is our work space.

Whither should we tend?

As form lovers, we naturally tend toward making; we place value on the beauty of well made things. Right, then: Let's work for the well made, wherever we are. Let's conceive our institutions as made things and strive to make them beautiful.

* * *

Michael Bigelow Dixon

It's time for LMDA (via its members) to identify problems and challenges for theater of the 21st century, to become a voice of activism and advocacy in that regard, and to pursue funding for projects/programs that address issues of most concern to its members. As an organization of theater professionals skilled in analysis and contextualization, LMDA (via its members) is well positioned to make significant contributions to the evolution of theater and audience as both are influenced by shifting economics, aesthetics, politics and technologies. Problems facing the theater at large present themselves in microcosm in the daily work of each dramaturg and literary manager, and the opportunity to utilize our insights and experience for the benefit of a larger vision—beyond our own circumstance—now beckons. The foot's in the door, the dramaturg's in the room, now what do we have to say to our peers about the future well-being of our art?

* * *

Norman Frisch

After ten years of wandering, I have arrived this season back in New York. A research grant and a rent-stabilized apartment on the Lower East Side—Life is beautiful, no?

During my first week in the city comes the news of Grotowski's death. He was the second of the many masters in my life (back when I still allowed myself

masters.) At 18, my freshman acting class is assigned his book. At 19, I encounter the Polish Lab on tour in the U.S.. At 20, I am introduced to Grotowski at a dinner; two years of letters and conversations follow. And at 22, I drop out of Yale to follow him back to Poland. He pointed out a way forward.

A child of Artaud, Grotowski himself fathered an astonishing number of offspring. For a quiet little man, he spread around a lot of seed. As recently as a few years ago, I felt the presence of the old guy's theatrical DNA illuminating the spectacular performances of Reza Abdoh and his troupe *dar a luz*, first in L.A. and then here in New York. Since Abdoh's death, I have lost sight of the fire (although I suppose it burns somewhere still.)

But while it is winter in that chamber of my heart, springtime arrives in another. A formerly more obscure branch of the Artaud family tree in America is throwing off new growth like nobody's business these days. Roots, shoots and buds are appearing throughout the realm of object-theater, and New York is a fragrant garden. (Who knew!?)

When I first arrived here 20 years ago, a handful of fabulous weirdos had already established themselves as pioneers in this field: Peter Schumann, Ralph Lee, Theodora Skipitares, Stuart Sherman, and the late Robbie Anton, among others. Now, a hundred flowers are a-blooming, and a week does not pass without a performance of astonishingly creative puppet-theater.

Most of those working in the 1970s continue to explore new territory today. Just behind them emerged a "second generation"—my contemporaries, now in their forties and fifties—who have achieved tremendous artistic accomplishments during the past decade. Julie Taymor, Paul Zaloom and Jim Henson & Family, all boldly and wittily infiltrated the worlds of film, television, Broadway, and Disneyland. The New York arm of the Bread and Puppet troupe—about a dozen utterly un-Disney-

fied artists known collectively by various names, most recently Great Small Works and Los Kabayitos—are teaching in virtually every major university in town and are continuing to generate monthly and annual festivals of fiercely political hand-, shadow- and table-top puppetry, sparking a renaissance of the heart-rending art of Toy Theater. Lee Breuer and his colleagues at Mabou Mines are maintaining a commitment to marrying the object and the actor that has spanned almost three decades now, as evidenced by their recent treatment of Barrie's "Peter Pan." And visual geniuses like Hanne Tierney, Janie Geiser and Roman Paska, who arrived at theater through earlier work in painting, sculpture and film, are still revolutionizing the field with every season's new work. Hanne Tierney stages great plays (Chekhov, Eliot, Wilde) in empty rooms with bits of string, strips of fabric and sheets of plastic in the leading roles. Her "Cocktail Party" reduced me (and many others) to tears, and I cannot tell you why. The fact that Geiser and Paska are now formulating a new program in puppetry at CalArts (in parallel with Mona Heinze's initiations in dramaturgy there) is cause for great hope.

And behind these folks, just in the last few years, has appeared an enormous number of dazzling youngsters. Everywhere one looks in New York, the most fascinating little puppet shows are being performed by tattooed, hennaed and pierced twenty-something artists.

In the basement of HERE, a performance gallery in SoHo, a very queer young man named Basil Twist has been playing his visual-theater rendition of Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* to sold-out houses for over a year now, and together HERE and Twist have initiated an ongoing presenting series for experiments in new puppetry. In an East Village storefront studio, Jonathan Cross both lives and operates his miniature *Cosmic Bicycle Theater*, in which the wisdom of the ages is systematically staged. PS122, a downtown community arts center, has become a home to the work of several young companies,

including the breathtaking Impossible Theater from England (which creates subtle spiritual spectacles out of family gossip and scotch tape), the very rude street dramas of *The Elementals*, and the monthly Spaghetti Dinners hosted by Great Small Works (which are redefining "dinner theater" for a new generation.)

Much of this theatrical activity has passed, at one stage or another in its development, through the O'Neill Center's annual National Puppetry Conference, nurtured by (formerly Cleveland-based, now New York) dramaturgs Lenny Pinna and Richard Termine; and through the bi-annual Henson Festivals of International Puppet Theater (in which directors Cheryl Henson and Leslee Asch take an active dramaturgical role in the development of new works.) It's a happening scene.

Fellow dramaturgs, where have we been? The U.S. has become the center of an astonishingly vital arena of activity in which great deal of extraordinarily sophisticated and creative dramaturgy is going on, but in which only a handful of professional dramaturgs are thus far involved.

So, young dramaturg, one word of advice: puppets.

Check it out.

* * *

Celise Kalke

Re: *where do we go from here?*

1. Create firm guidelines for professional work regarding contracts, contract negotiation, work conditions (library memberships etc.) and representation. Does the organization have an advocacy representative?

2. As far as literary management, I think we have yet to exploit the resources of the discussion group and e-mail, but I think we have found the wave of the future.

3. I think that in the last few years, recognition of the profession has grown, but it still has a ways to go in terms of job description familiarity and respect within the field.

What is puzzling or difficult or amazing or invisible or terrifying or joyous or (fill in the useful predicate adjective) in our lives and work at this moment?

I have been very fortunate this year to have worked on a string of research driven performance projects, and after eight months of library work, web work, and steep learning curves I am feeling quite joyous about the research element of production dramaturgy. I am continually amazed at my own ability to learn, and the kind of discussion that arises from an entertaining examination of the artifacts of the past. Uncovering what is unique about an event, uncovering the issues of our own time through the accumulation of facts this is my passion of the 1998-1999 theater season.

* * *

Michael Lupu

Once upon the time the Humana Festival of New American Plays of Louisville was a very special occasion, annually anticipated with great excitement. Initially it stood alone, outside New York, in an otherwise virtually semi-deserted generic dramascap. Over more than two decades it has steadily established its track record of discovering new and distinct voices of dramatists and launching important American plays. Now things have changed considerably. A whole breed of similar undertakings can be encountered from coast to coast across the nation. Now "developing new plays" has become the buzzword; everywhere festivals, staged readings, workshops are dedicated to developing new scripts. Theaters can claim that they implement their mission by developing new plays rather than producing and performing them (which is a more costly, hence riskier, undertaking). Some questionable ingenuity is at work in naming such mushrooming events:

"Playlabs," "Isolated Acts," "Playrites," "Genesis," "Raw Play—A Script-in-Hand Series," "Hot house," "Fresh Ink," etc., etc. And an increased number of dramaturgs find employment after getting their training and degrees in various drama schools.

With all this feverish dramaturgical activity (tending to be deemed as necessary in an increasing number of theater institutions, professionals, academic and community alike) do we have better plays now? Plays that are indeed vital, important, memorable, truly making a difference in our life and insightfully shaping the perception of the world we live in? As we come closer to the end of this century can we claim that American drama is now richer in major plays that capture our changing times? Is there a noticeably meaningful connection between the proliferation of play-development outlets and workshops of new plays and the quality of the overall output? Who is ready to respond with a firm, loud and unequivocal "Yes" to this question?

Perhaps we need to seriously address how dramaturgs see and fulfill their responsibilities toward playwrights and their new works. Perhaps we need to ask who benefits most from the much too praised process of "developing" ad-infinitum scripts. We see many of these scripts turn up in theater after theater, they keep getting additional support (i.e. notes and suggestions from dramaturgical or artistic staff), become part of another series of readings, and ultimately never succeed in being fully staged and performed.

I remember Eric Overmyer, some ten years ago, sharply questioning the assumption that plays need "fixing" and its corollary that we need literary managers and dramaturgs to do the job. I think he was right on the mark. But where is the playwright Eric Overmyer now? He appears listed as one of the producers of the TV series "Homicide" and most likely he is busy "fixing" scripts, besides writing his own that others fix for him. His case (and I offer it

just as an example among many) speaks about the institutionalization of dramaturgy. Too many people end up having paid jobs to give notes and guide the creativity of playwrights (who cannot have jobs as playwrights!). Too often do we institutionalize and give administrative structure to a function that really matters only if great plays emerge from the dark corners of a writer's imagination and find their theatrical life on stage.

In essence "dramaturgy" is the playwright's exclusive domain. Those of us who have jobs as dramaturgs should better acknowledge this, be humble about our role, and do our utmost to champion new plays if we believe they should be produced, rather than enjoy our status as employees paid to perpetuate a dubious industry of developing scripts in endless workshops.

* * *

Asima Mahdi

I think that the field is growing and thriving in bigger cities while it is still in the beginning stages in smaller cities and where it may even be nonexistent in some rural areas. These areas need people who are willing to forge a new path and have the skills to do so. Although Columbia SC, my small city, has a thriving arts community, dramaturgs are nearly nonexistent to my knowledge. Charlotte NC is the closest place. Literary management is better known than dramaturgy though job responsibilities tend to cross over. I think LMDA is doing a good job in defining (as best as we can) what a dramaturg is and does. The variety of responsibilities that a dramaturg or literary manager can handle makes defining the occupation difficult. At the same time, it gives us the chance to create our own positions and what we want to make of them. It's broad and specific at the same time. We have a broad range of things we can do yet we can apply them to a specific setting or situation. It would be nice to see dramaturgy as a common field of study at every university and hopefully one day it will be that.

* * *

Brian Quirt

I want to establish a clearer approach to bringing dramaturgical practice into the annual conference by examining in detail specific productions and programs.

I want to deal thoroughly with LMDA's organizational matters, sometimes with the entire conference and also in Executive working sessions. I believe that we can accommodate practical and institutional issues in the conference, and that we must use the presence at the conference of a substantial number of members to inform them of LMDA affairs, canvas their opinions and build upon this year's work.

I want to examine Advocacy issues, if only to determine how the LMDA should deal with them in the future. I am not much interested in transforming the LMDA into a guild or union, but by the simple fact that there are some 400 of us in the LMDA, we must take advantage of the conference to explore what role the LMDA can serve in promoting the work of dramaturgs. Part of the confusion, it seems to me, is that Advocacy appears to be such an enormous issue (or rather a range of enormous issues) that taking it on runs the risk of smothering the conference. We must neither avoid it nor cater only to it. The issues must be refined and clearly presented so that we may all order our thoughts and move on.

* * *

Judith Rudakoff

Dramaturgs are the midwives of the theatrical process. Egoless but clear on who they are (and where they stand); dedicated to realizing the birth of someone else's child or brain child or creative product, but completely in the here and now and totally willing to become part of something, to invest parts of themselves in something which they're immediately going to be asked to let go. We need to celebrate our role instead of constantly being at the point of having to explain, apologize, rationalize or defend

our presence, our function, our significance. And we need to stop clarifying our role "in terms of someone else's role." We are not the assistant or associate to someone, but rather are in and of ourselves professionals, often artists. End of diatribe.

* * *

Robert Schneider

"Turg on, Ye Foredoomed Challengers of Oblivion, 'Turg on!"

For sheer bloody-mindedness, no contribution to the 'wither-the-dramaturg' debate can match Alex Gross's disquisition on the butchering of meat. He points out that English terms like 'sirloin' and 'T-bone' aren't easily translatable in countries where carcasses are cut up in ways fundamentally different from our own. In France, for example, you look in vain for a familiar American cut; all the steer's muscles seem to have been extracted longways. In fact, the animal seems to have been blown apart with dynamite. Alex claims that 'Applied Structurology'—the quintessence of dramaturgy—is the only way to understand what 'porterhouse' might mean in such a culture. But Alex has only played the top card in a lengthy round of 'let's-use-dramaturgy-for-other-things' played out in the usegroup last winter. Nichole Gantshar mentioned sports, but I believe film, television, publishing and teaching were also cited as fields in dire need of dramaturgs—even if the need remains unevenly expressed and the word 'dramaturgy' is never used. Dennis Barnett called on us to 'concentrate on investigating and demonstrating the ways in which all professionals (i.e., lawyers, doctors, candlestick makers) can benefit from the skills that are learned by studying dramaturgy.'

I confess to qualms on this point. I'd prefer to reserve 'dramaturgy' to describe a particular discipline in developing and producing plays. That educated, sensitive, articulate people who are good dramaturgs are also employable in other fields goes—I would hope—without

saying. To claim that our dramaturgical skills are applicable everywhere is to call their uniqueness and even their pertinence into question. If we continue to make such claims, it won't be long before some clever candlestick maker retorts that the converse is also true: that his trade nurtures skills and insights from which our trade can benefit. Will we be able to gracefully deny it? Won't we then see a parade of lawyers, figure skaters, sex therapists and meat cutters all trying their hand at theater? Do we really want that?

Aren't there enough butchers in the field already?

Rather than muck up other professions with our unasked-for advice, I have another suggestion. Alex pointed the way with his brilliant recommendation that people dramaturg their orgasms, but my proposal goes further: we should find ways of dramaturging every aspect of our daily lives and the lives of those around us. From coast to coast, existence is being drained of its potential for comedy, tragedy and even farce. The very experience of being alive is devolving into a normative sameness: a lengthy exposition relieved only by childhood diseases; a stuttering peripeteia spent nurturing a 401(k); no real climax; a Florida denouement prolonged interminably by geriatric medicine. American lives are turning into the most deadly sort of cup-and-saucer drama. Although they don't know it yet, people are crying out for dramaturgy! Yet dramaturgy is only doled out to them drop by drop, strained through the fickle sieve of theater! Why can't we give it to them straight and unadulterated?

In fact, there's no longer any alternative to the direct dramaturging of reality: the number of dramaturgs and dramaturgs-in-training has increased to the point where the only stage big enough to hold them is the great stage of life itself. For a substantial number of us, moreover, the craving for dramaturgy seems to have outstripped the craving for theater. I've put together a twelve-step program:

1) Master obscure branches of knowledge: heraldry, stylistics, wine tasting, taxonomy and the identification of mushrooms. Bring your erudition to bear on real-world situations at every opportunity. If no opportunities exist, create them.

2) When you call directory assistance, give information.

3) When traveling, never use a map; ask directions, preferably of several people at once.

4) At school board meetings, ask searching questions; cite precedents; quote authorities; make a nuisance of yourself. People will hate you, but the cause of dramaturgy will advance.

5) When people ask you for advice, don't think of their happiness; think of the 'arc' of their lives. Face it, most people are more interesting dramatically when they're miserable. This is especially important when counseling the lovelorn. Remember these lines from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

For aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run
smooth --
to which I add, "see that it doesn't."

6) If your confidant is in such distress that suicide seems inevitable, discourage it. Otherwise, recommend it.

7) Write letters to the editor on controversial subjects containing egregious errors of logic and fact. All those who write in furiously to correct you will find their lives enriched.

8) Encourage face-to-face confrontation, not arbitration. Violence is acceptable as long as it is artistically motivated.

9) Change your religion often. Urge your friends and family to follow suit when you do.

10) Never send greeting cards. Send a bloody shirt, a severed ear or a shrunken head as best fits the occasion.

11) If you marry, commit adultery. It will make your home life more poignant and equivocal.

12) If you choose to have children, love them unequally. Their lives will be fraught with un-merited debasement on one hand and a sense of undeserved preferment on the other. In both cases, the 'arc' will be more interesting.

The path of the real-world dramaturg is clear. Not just other professions, but reality itself has need of us. It would be inexcusably selfish to confine our talents to fiction when there's so much we can do for the drama of life.

* * *

Michele Volansky

I suppose the most puzzling, challenging and joyous (oh, how I love Geoff's adjectives!) question I find myself asking these days as a dramaturg is in two parts: first, what is the story? And the second: what needs to be done to get that story across? Loudly. Whether it is in development of a new play, or in rehearsal for an old one, the question of what tools in the toolbox need to be used is perennially at the forefront of my brain. "What is the story? Where is the heat? Will anyone die if this isn't told?" I continuously ask playwriting students, directors, actors. And, as we move into the next millennium, what are the best ways to get that story out: out of a playwright, out of actors, out to the audience, out into the world at large? I often wonder if we don't skip the story question too frequently. But isn't it really what it's all about?

**ON ELLIOTT HAYES AND THE
LMDA PRIZE
David Prosser**

The dramaturg's job is a notoriously difficult one to define, being perhaps more easily exemplified than explained. And few better examples come to mind than the work of the writer, director and

educator after whom the LMDA Prize in Dramaturgy is named: the late Elliott Hayes, former Literary Manager of the Stratford Festival in Ontario, Canada.

The theater was in Elliott Hayes's blood from the start. His father, John Sullivan Hayes, was the Stratford Festival's original stage manager and later its Executive Producer, and Elliott—who was born, auspiciously enough, during a Festival performance of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* on June 22, 1956—became a child actor with the company at the age of 10. He later went to England, where he studied at the Bristol Old Vic Theater School; then, upon graduating in 1976, moved to Los Angeles (he was a citizen of both Canada and the U.S.) to explore the possibilities of Hollywood.

Returning to Canada in 1981, he devoted himself to projects for the theater, including editing and writing additional material for *A Variable Passion*, a one-man show performed in 1982 by Nicholas Pennell at the Festival's Third Stage (now the Tom Patterson Theater), and acting as assistant director to Michael Langham on a production of *Arms and the Man* at the Festival Theater. After holding positions as assistant and associate dramaturg, he was appointed Literary Manager to the Festival in 1985.

His work in that capacity involved a wide range of artistic and educational activities. Not only did he prepare the Festival's Shakespearean and other classical texts for performance by deciding on cuts and substitutions, conducting dramaturgical research and acting as an assistant director, he was also editor and writer of *From Page to Stage*, an extensive multi-media teaching kit (incorporating printed editions of eight Shakespearean plays, teachers' guides and audio cassettes) that was published by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

In addition to acting as coordinator, director and dramaturg on an extensive series of readings and workshops of new scripts by such Canadian dramatists as

Sally Clark, Sky Gilbert, Margaret Hollingsworth and Erika Ritter, and conducting drama workshops for students from the primary-school to the graduate levels, he coordinated and co-presented the Festival's phenomenally popular Talking Theater series of lectures and discussions on themes of the season, as well as giving public lectures, participating in teachers' seminars and writing for the Festival's house programs and educational publications.

But perhaps his most lasting dramaturgical contributions to Stratford, and to theater in Canada, were his adaptations of literary works for the stage. These included a one-man performance piece based on Nikolai Gogol's *Diary of a Madman*, as well as full-length adaptations of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and of *World of Wonders*, part of the "Deptford trilogy" of novels by internationally renowned Canadian author Robertson Davies. Through this work, Mr. Hayes not only gave literary classics a new and exciting life on the stage, he extended the range and possibility of dramatic writing in a country where the craft is still in its relative youth—and where a true affinity for the medium is all too rare among its practitioners. As Marti Maraden, Artistic Director of English Theater at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, puts it: "So many of our new playwrights have seen more of film and television than of live performance, and that is evident in their writing. Elliott, however, was born and bred of the theater. He knew how to write for the stage—not only technically, but spiritually."

Throughout his career at Stratford, Mr. Hayes continued to work on his own original writing, which included the one-man shows *Strip and Blake*, the one-act play *Legless* and the full-length comedy *Hard Hearts*, as well as poetry and short fiction published in such prestigious journals as *Descant*, *The Canadian Forum* and *The Antigone Review* and an unpublished novel, *Hollywood Mile*, based in part on his experiences in L.A. But it was the play *Homeward Bound*, his darkly witty comedy about death, that

made his name. Receiving its Canadian premier at Stratford in 1991 and its American one at Theater Three in Dallas the following year, it earned universal critical acclaim and was subsequently produced by more than a dozen theaters across Canada and the United States.

Ironically, it was just as Mr. Hayes's career as a playwright was taking off, and as he was beginning to relinquish his role as dramaturg at the Stratford Festival to pursue his own writing full-time, that his life was cut tragically short. He had just returned from L.A., where he had been working with the film director John Schlesinger on a screenplay based on another Robertson Davies novel, *A Mixture of Frailties*, when, on the night of February 28, 1994, he died as the result of an automobile accident. When the news broke, the Canadian theater community was united in its grief at the loss of a man who, in the words of John Neville, internationally renowned actor and a former Artistic Director of the Stratford Festival, "served the theater and writing magnificently."

EARLY CAREER DRAMATURG PROGRAM Bronwyn Eisenberg

The Early Career Dramaturg Group is now up and running. We're currently in the midst of launching several new services for new dramaturgs and literary managers. Here's a sampling of what we're currently offering and what we're in the process of setting up.

Our newest program is the "mentor bank," which matches up early-career dramaturgs and literary managers with an established dramaturg/literary manager for a one-time chat. If you're an "early-career'er" interested in talking with someone in your field, send an e-mail request to Bronwyn at: <imogen@alumni.princeton.edu>. Be sure to include information about yourself, so that we can try to find a good match for you. Please note that you have

to be an LMDA member to use this service.

We've just started a national e-mail list called "earlycareer." To sign up for this list, send e-mail to <majordomo@dramaturgy.net> with the following information on the first line (not in the subject header but in the body of the message): subscribe earlycareer [your e-mail address]. The list will be a place to discuss ideas, get answers to questions, network, hear about internships, and get information get answers on special seminars for early-career'ers. Again, you need to be a member to subscribe.

This June's national LMDA conference will mark the debut of panels that focus on issues of concern to Early Career Dramaturgs and Literary Managers. This year's panel will focus on Production Dramaturgy for already-produced plays. Dramaturgs currently working in the field will discuss all aspects of their work, from preproduction to pitfalls.

The comp ticket program is going strong. It gives you the chance to see shows for free in New York City. Recently, we've seen shows at BAM, Playwrights' Horizons, Lincoln Center Theater, Signature Theater, and WPA, among others. All you need is an e-mail address and an LMDA membership. Info on ticket availability and how to get tickets for a particular show is sent via e-mail as soon as possible after an offer is made. Sometimes we only get one day's advance notice, so checking your e-mail every day is the best way to insure that you can take advantage of this program. To get on the e-mail list, send e-mail to lmda-nycmetro-request@netcom.com. By the way, to the extent that there are enough tickets, comp tickets are available to all members of LMDA, not just early-career dramaturgs. Right now, we're in the process of putting out a new, updated edition of LMDA's Guide to Internships in Dramaturgy and Literary Management. This guide will cover internships across North America. We've completed the first round of getting information from theaters. We'll

be posting the internship information online, but you'll only be able to access it if you're a member. (The webpage will require a password.) The second round of soliciting information from theaters will start soon—the internship questionnaire is being included in an LMDA letter going out to all theaters in the TCG database. If you know of a theater with an internship program that would like to be included in the guide, please call Bronwyn Eisenberg at (212) 560-4883 (voice-mail), or send e-mail to imogen@alumni.princeton.edu. Canadian theaters—we also want to hear from you! Would you like to volunteer to help out on putting this publication together? Please contact Bronwyn.

Next winter, we're hoping to put the resumes of early-career dramaturgs online. This resume page will be linked to the new LMDA homepage (also in the works).

Next year we're also hoping to have a few seminars or panels in New York City that will focus on areas of interest to early-career dramaturgs/literary managers. If you have an idea for a panel, please send e-mail to Bronwyn at imogen@alumni.princeton.edu. We'd love to see panels in cities outside NYC too. Any volunteers?

We're also brainstorming for the future. Have an idea? Or have you thought of something that would help you as a new dramaturg or that you'd like to know more about? Please share it. We're very open to input.

All of these programs require membership in LMDA. So please join if you haven't already. Call Celise Kalke at the office, at (212) 642-2657. Stay tuned for more new programs.

**REPORT ON CANADIAN CAUCUS
MEETING, FEB. 26, 1999,
CALGARY
Brian Quirt**

The Canadian Caucus meeting had three principal agenda items. The first was to hear from everyone about a current or upcoming project. Twenty members and prospective members attended the meeting and in the course of ninety minutes we received a wonderful survey of theatrical activity across Canada, from Playwrights Theater Centre's new facilities and play development festival in Vancouver to the new facilities and festival at the Eastern Front Theater in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The second item was my report on the activities of the Canadian Caucus in the past year. I have been working to create a semi-autonomous Caucus which maintains its own membership records and charges its own fee. I have set up the appropriate bank accounts to do so and have just completed a very successful membership renewal campaign. There are now 38 members of the Canadian Caucus and I'm happy to report that more are joining every month. I will be launching a drive for new members in April and hope to lift our membership to 50 by the Tacoma conference.

As well, the Canadian Caucus publishes four newsletters a year: a report on the Calgary meeting; a report on the LMDA Conference in June; and two newsletters each fall which document exciting member news and innovative projects nationwide.

The Canadian Caucus operates with a minimum of structure and administration. For that reason our meetings always piggy-back on existing events. In Calgary we are hosted by Bob White and Alberta Theater Projects' playRites Festival. In July our meeting is part of the Theater Centre's Mini-Conference on Dramaturgy. We hope to have similar meetings in Vancouver courtesy of Playwrights Theater Centre and as part of the Professional Association of Canadian Theater's annual meeting in June. This year, ATHE meets in Toronto, so a LMDA meeting as part of its activities is also likely, time and place tba.

The third issue was the overall renewal process LMDA is engaged in, and the role of June's conference in that process. Geoff Proehl outlined LMDA's recent history and the current work in revitalizing the organization. We had a heated discussion of Advocacy (is there any other kind?) and were able to get something of a consensus from Canadian members as to their preferences for the June conference. In a word, our members want to talk about dramaturgical practice. A number of issues and productions were mentioned as possible topics for the June Conference. There is little interest in parsing the inner workings of LMDA, nor is there much enthusiasm for a lengthy discussion of Advocacy. In the discussion, however, there were concerns similar to those in America regarding contractual and financial issues. We decided to conduct a mini-survey of Canadian members regarding fees, contacts and work-related issues. I hope to report on that in the next issue of the Review.

In a related meeting, I chaired the playRites Festival Forum, in which the directors of the four mainstage productions (all of them new plays developed at Alberta Theater Projects over six months prior to the Festival) and their dramaturgs outlined in detail the development of each play and the principal dramaturgical issues arising out of each process. It was a very informative and fruitful session which strove to find constructive analysis and promote frank disclosure.

Dates to note:

Theater Centre Mini-Conference on Dramaturgy: June 28 and 29, 1999, in Toronto. Contact Brian Quirt at 416-538-0630 or bquirt@interlog.com.

Canadian Caucus Meeting: Feb. 25, 2000, in Calgary during the playRites Festival at Alberta Theater Projects. Contact Bob White at whiterf@ATPlive.com.

**INTRODUCING CELISE KALKE,
NEW LMDA ADMINISTRATOR**

Celise Kalke, the new LMDA Administrator, has worked as a dramaturg in both the Czech Republic and New York, and with bilingual theater, new play development, musical theater, dance theater, movement theater, classical theater and puppet theater. Currently, she holds the position of Dramaturg for the Juilliard drama division where she has worked on productions directed by Michael Kahn, Garland Wright, Eve Shapiro, Liviu Ciulei, Ken Washington and Richard Feldman. She is also the Literary Associate at the Classic Stage Company. With the Opera Project working at HERE she dramaturged the premieres of the *Elektra Fugues: an 8-track opera based in punk and classic strings*, and *The Cry Pitch Carrolls*, libretto by Ruth Margraff, score by Matthew Pierce, directed by Tim Maner, designed by Alan Hahn, costumes by Nancy Brouse. Also at HERE, she was the dramaturg, co-adaptor and musical director for Kristin Marting's *Women of Orleans* and Music Director for *Mad Shadows* (scores by Mathew Pierce). She developed two new works from historical material: *American Rose* about the Rosies who worked in U.S. defense plants during WWII and *Investigation of an Image* based on the last year in the life of Pulitzer prize winning photojournalist Kevin Carter. She maintains a relationship with the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Education and Humanities Department, including serving as the visuals dramaturg for Don Byron's upcoming *Jazz for Kids*. At the Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival she worked as a dramaturg for the 1996 and 1997 New Work Now festival with playwrights Ruth Margraff (*Centaur Battle of San Jacinto*), Eve Ensler and Alice Tuan and with director Liz Diamond. She also worked as assistant dramaturg for the Public Theater's *Antony and Cleopatra*, directed by Vanessa Redgrave as well as *Henry VI* and the Central Park production of *Timon of Athens*. Other work includes *One Flea Spare* by Naomi Wallace for Sightlines Theater Company directed by Eileen

Phelan, Centipede Woman, and *The Adding Machine* directed by Renee Philippi, Chuck Mee Jr's *The Bachae*, and a residency with Teatre de la Jeune Lune in Minneapolis.

In Prague, the Czech Republic, Ms. Kalke worked at the Czech National Theater on a Czech translation of Eugene O'Neill's *Moon for the Misbegotten* (a translation she helped to prepare), a Czech puppet production of Karl Capek's *War With the Newts* and a bilingual production of Carlo Gozzi's *The King Stag*. Ms. Kalke also performs as a professional violist. Education: Brooklyn College, The Prague Theater School, Oberlin College and Conservatory of Music (Viola Performance).

NOTE FROM CELISE KALKE

I am writing to introduce myself as the new LMDA administrator. I began in January, and am excited about helping the organization meet the challenges and opportunities of the next year. My office hours are Tuesday and Thursday, 12 - 4 pm. Our computer facilities are in another room from the office, so you may get an answering machine during those hours. I can also be available by appointment, if someone in the membership needs something outside of these office hours.

Please also note that I am updating the job line every Tuesday between 12 and 1 pm. Please fax any postings to the LMDA office, or e-mail via Geoff Proehl.

I look forward to working with you.

SCRIPT EXCHANGE

The first edition of the *Script Exchange* under the editorship of Sonya Sobieski of Playwrights Horizons went to LMDA members in late February. We have included the next edition in this mailing.

Thanks to Sonya and the literary managers and dramaturgs who made

these first two issues possible: Elizabeth Bennett, La Jolla Playhouse; John Glore, South Coast Repertory; Tony Kelly, Thick Description; Kent Nicholson, Magic Theater; Lisa McNulty, Women's Project and Productions; Charlotte Stoudt, Center Stage; Pier Carlo Talenti, Mark Taper Forum; Michele Volansky, Steppenwolf Theater Company.

Future editions are underway. If you have submissions, contact Sonya Sobieski, Playwrights Horizons, 416 42nd St., New York, NY 10036; <smsobieski@aol.com>; Work: 212-564-1235.

**RESEARCH AT THE THEATER
CENTRE - TORONTO, ONTARIO
THE THEATER CENTRE SEEKS
SUBMISSIONS TO ITS RESEARCH
PROGRAM
Brian Quirt**

(Editor's Note: Although the deadline for this round of projects is past, we still wanted to print this piece to inform members about this project for future reference.)

The Theater Centre is dedicated to expanding the boundaries of performance. We focus on multi-disciplinary work which includes text. Each year many new shows are developed through our programs. In 1998, we established a new program devoted entirely to Research.

Research is a theatrical experiment which is not linked to a particular project. In the spirit of inquiry, we want to assist artists to discover what they need to further their work, without the pressures of development or production.

There are few places in Canada where in-depth theatrical research can be explored without the pressures of developing and/or performing a new work. The Theater Centre provides space, money and resources to up to five artists who are

pursuing pure research into a provocative theatrical question.

What does that mean? It means that if you want to explore the theatrical implications of silence, or how the techniques of shiatsu could be applied to a rehearsal process, or the application of live DJ-ed music, or how to stage 19th century marxist texts (to give examples from our 1998 Research projects), and can articulate why that exploration is important to you, we might give you our space and some money to conduct your research.

If you have a theatrical question, and can pose it in terms of a theatrical experiment, then we're interested. We will supply the use of the Theater Centre space, sound and lighting equipment for up to three days, plus a small budget.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
contact Brian Quirt (dramaturg) at the Theater Centre at
<crayon@interlog.com>.

What we are interested in:

- exploring poetic or stylized use of text in any form or genre.
- integration of sound, music, movement and text.
- artists who can clearly articulate their needs, who can gather their own creative team, who are conducting a specific exploration.
- artists who view research and development as a long-term process, rather than simply as a short cut to production.
- in every application, we are looking for a sense of the artistic spirit of inquiry. We want you to tell us what you don't know and how you might be able to answer your questions through working at the Theater Centre.

Please send queries to
THE THEATER CENTRE
<crayon@interlog.com>
1032 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON, M6J 1H7
416-538-0630

LMDA ONLINE
Winston Neutel (New Technologies)

LMDA runs several e-mail lists for its members. Three of these are discussion lists: the longstanding Discussion List, sponsored by the UCaucus (subscription instructions below) and two regional distributions lists: one for New York members; (to subscribe, send e-mail to lmda-nycmetro-request@netcom.com); the other for Canada, (to subscribe, send e-mail to bquirt@interlog.com).

LMDA also has an e-mail Announcement List (a newsletter-type list, not a discussion). This list distributes announcements from the LMDA executive or office to LMDA members, these are primarily messages of interest to the entire membership. Mailings are limited to one a week or so, but there are often only one or two a month.

If, as a member, you don't want to receive any e-mail at all from LMDA, send a message that says, "Please remove my name from the Announcement List" to gproehl@ups.edu. Within a week, your name will be taken off the list by Louise Lytle, a LMDA intern at the University of Puget Sound. You will not be added to the discussion lists unless you request a subscription.

If you'd like to get more e-mail from LMDA and take part in a discussion of issues related to dramaturgy and literary

management in general (including queries from members about projects on which they are working), add your name to the Discussion List, if you are not already a subscriber (many of you are).

Here are some of the basics of belonging to a list server mailing list.

There are two addresses to remember: Mail to be distributed to the mailing list should be addressed to the list address: discussion@dramaturgy.net; while commands (e.g. joining or leaving the list) should be sent to the list server at majordomo@dramaturgy.net

Commands sent to the majordomo address should be in the body of a message with no subject. To join a list, you would send the command "subscribe [list name goes here] [your e-mail address goes here]" e.g. "subscribe discussion winston@dramaturgy.net". This should be alone on one line (without the quotation marks). Additional commands should be on separate lines. To leave a list, you would use the word "unsubscribe" instead of subscribe.

To get a list of the various commands, send the word "help" alone in a message to majordomo@dramaturgy.net [they're not really instructions] There is a digest version of the discussion list, for those who wish to receive all the list discussion in one message per day, rather than receiving each message when the author sends it. To subscribe to the digest, follow the directions above, but use "discussion-digest" for the list name, instead of "discussion." For a response from a human regarding either the Discussion list or the digest, send e-mail to discussion-owner@dramaturgy.net.

Dramaturgy and the University

This issue of the *Review* features three pieces on dramaturgy in a university context. The next issue (late summer) invites essays, articles, anecdotes, case studies, and interviews on rehearsal. If you are interested in submitting an essay, article or interview, please contact Geoff Proehl (see contact info at the end of the *Review*). Submissions are welcome from directors, actors, designers, and writers, as well as dramaturgs and literary managers.

EDUCATION IN THE ARTS

Robert Brustein

The following remarks were made by Robert Brustein at the UCaucus session at the last annual conference in June of 1998 at Columbia University; special thanks to Allen Kennedy who arranged for Mr. Brustein to appear and to Mr. Brustein for allowing us to reprint his comments here.

Education in the arts is a broad topic with a wide spectrum of possibilities so I apologize in advance for any rash generalizations. I will try to narrow some of the options by restricting my comments primarily to the university with which I am most familiar. Harvard is hardly typical of arts education in the American university these days—indeed it may be extremely atypical. But Harvard's very idiosyncrasies might help to illuminate the complicated issue of university education in the arts.

The word "arts" is traditionally invoked at Harvard to describe the characteristics of its curriculum (e.g. "liberal arts") and the nature of its professorate (e.g. "the faculty of arts and sciences"). Yet, while most colleges and universities have created degree-granting departments in arts training or arts appreciation, and many have added professional schools, Harvard, almost alone among the elite institutions, has largely limited its arts education to history and theory. This may be changing, though all change at Harvard is slow. Whatever its storied fame as an educational legend, Harvard as an educational institution has never thought of itself as a breeding ground or home for practicing artists. The last two Presidents, Derek Bok and Neil Rudenstine, have each expressed strong personal feelings for the arts. Bok's family established the Curtis Institute for music in Philadelphia, and Rudenstine, himself a Shakespeare scholar, is married to a distinguished art historian. The faculty of the university as a body, however, seems to be less sympathetic to the arts. Harvard professors may look on benignly as their students participate in Arts First (a long weekend celebrating extracurricular undergraduate performance), but many of them regard the professional artist as a figure marginal to university life.

Poets are an exception, probably because Cambridge and Boston, both civic seats of New England *logos*, are cities historically associated with poets—Longfellow, James Russell Lowell, and T.S. Eliot among them. On the other hand, while resident composers, instrumentalists, novelists, dancers, painters, and sculptors may abound in arts-conscious colleges like Bennington, Bard, and Oberlin, they are pretty rare around the Harvard campus, unless they can be imported for a day or two by the "Learning From Performers." Series to hold a seminar and eat some lunch with undergraduates. Practitioners are admitted into the exclusive ranks of permanent Harvard faculty only if they have advanced degrees or if they can put their creative endeavors at the service of academic duties. This may even be true of poets. Before Seamus Heaney received his Nobel Prize, for example, his faculty title was Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory, a title Harvard took quite seriously. Among Heaney's duties, aside from teaching Yeats and the occasional verse workshop, was chairing a committee to select the best public speaker in the graduating class. Only after Heaney received the Nobel Prize in Literature did Harvard officially acknowledge that he was a creative artist by naming him Ralph Waldo Emerson Poet in Residence (for the two years that he's held this chair, ironically, he's been in "residence" in Ireland).

Similarly, for decades, the poet-playwright William Alfred caught both medieval literature and a playwriting course in the Harvard English department. When he retired five or six years ago, he was replaced not by a poet or a playwright but by a medievalist. A permanent course in playwriting, irregularly taught by visiting lecturers, has been suspended for the past five years, although for two of those years the English Department cosponsored a course in screenwriting taught by Spike Lee. (When I asked why playwriting, with its obvious roots in English literature—most obviously Shakespeare—had been replaced by the myth and magic of the movies, I was told that Spike Lee would attract a lot of new students to the department).

Harvard now offers a concentration in Creative Writing and awards Briggs-Copeland Lectureships to those who teach it. Slowly, glacially, thanks to the openness of the last two Administrations, arts education is creeping into the Yard, past the cadres of Switzers guarding the gates. Nevertheless, those gates are still pretty heavily manned. It is true the University can boast a Department of Music which offers a few courses in composition and orchestration. But an undergraduate music major does most of his or her work in theory and history courses such as 18th Century Performance Practice and Ethnomusicology. Harvard also provides an excellent curriculum in drawing, painting, and photography at the Carpenter Center. It is offered not by a Department of Art but by a species

called Visual and Environmental Studies. How do you paint landscapes under the umbrella of something called Visual and Environmental Studies? One suspects Harvard would like the outside world to believe that its students are dedicated not to such frivolities as studio practice but rather to truly purposeful subjects like exploring the optic nerve and preserving the ecology.

There are, of course, a variety of other educational institutions in the Cambridge area, Boston University, Tufts, and Emerson College among them, which offer professional arts training on the undergraduate level, sometimes leading to a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree. This degree is rarely offered by the elite universities. At Yale and other such institutions, undergraduates in the arts usually matriculate in special departments or concentrations leading to a B.A. degree; but they must supplement courses in their major with a variety of other disciplines, including the sciences, social sciences, history, and literature, on the premise that anyone planning a career in the arts would benefit from general knowledge in a broad range of subjects. This premise is sensible enough, even inarguable, as long as students are allowed to study legitimate disciplines (some of the arcane theories now in vogue pull them so far afield that they can graduate from college virtually uneducated in major disciplines). At Harvard, the options for anyone interested in the arts are even narrower. Harvard can boast of some very talented artists in music and theater among its alumni—including Yo Yo Ma and John Lithgow, and, more recently, Matt Damon and Elizabeth Shue. But none of these was given much chance to practice his or her profession during school hours.

Although it is possible to major in some academic version of music and visual arts at Harvard, the university has never offered a major in theater or dance. There have been some rumbles lately about creating a theater concentration. It may very well run into faculty opposition. At Harvard, where the cult of the amateur is virtually enshrined, the word "professionalism" and the verb "professionalize" are more often used as pejoratives than honorifics. I have sometimes heard faculty members talk in hushed tones about a student production of Shakespeare or Sophocles in one of the resident houses as if it were far superior to anything produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company or the Greek National Theater. Following the lead of Cambridge and Oxford, Harvard prefers its scholars to be gentlemen and gentlewomen, and its arts to be recreational. The actual practice of music, dance, and painting—aside from a scattering of studio courses—is largely left to clubs, orchestras, and choruses.

For decades, undergraduate interest in theater had been accommodated by a self-generating extracurricular association known as the HDC, later the HRDC, or Harvard-Radcliffe Drama Club, along with a host of other student producing organizations, such as the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, Black C.A.S.T., independent productions at the Agassiz under the supervision of Radcliffe's Office of the Arts, and shows at Harvard's resident houses. When the financier John Loeb contributed money to Harvard to build a new performance space, it was dedicated largely to undergraduate theater, even though the Main auditorium turned out to be too vast to accommodate the relatively untrained skills of undergraduates. As a result, a typical HRDC production plays to about seventy five people in a hall seating 556 (shows in the smaller Experimental theater are more heavily attended).

One of the reasons for the coming of the American Repertory Theater to Harvard, and my appointment as Director of the Loeb, was to help improve the quality of HRDC shows on the main stage, partly through practical courses in the craft of acting and directing, partly through professional guidance of HRDC production. But there has always been a structural fault in the position of the Director of Loeb, namely that the title has no real meaning. From the first, we were working with an undergraduate club that wanted to retain its traditional independence and autonomy, and that sometimes regarded the ART company as usurpers. The HRDC is one of the very few extracurricular organization that has no professional or faculty supervision. It is said that undergraduates fear the "professionalization" of undergraduate drama. But improving the quality of production on the Main stage through ART supervision is no more to "professionalize" this extracurricular activity than a coach "professionalizes" the Harvard football team or a faculty conductor "professionalizes" the Harvard Chorus. It is, indeed, the very essence of an educational institution to have trained professionals (i.e. faculty and others) function in a tutorial and teaching relationship to unusually talented students.

There is certainly a good argument to be made against overly-specialized arts training on the undergraduate level in a liberal arts university, if such training is either excessive or superficial. It's a question of degree. A theater-obsessed student is not going to be very well-educated if every university hour is dedicated to theatrical activities. On the other hand, how effective can a course in acting be if it follows the pattern of academic courses, meeting only three hours a week? Professional acting training requires at least 40 weekly contact hours. Still, even three hours properly used can help to correct bad habits. And they are also enough to introduce the aspiring theater student to the materials of the field. Those planning a theater career after graduation would certainly be better prepared as professionals were they more familiar with theater history and dramatic literature. I have often been struck by the ignorance of certain professional actors, who when offered the part, say, of Shylock or Iago, tell me they first have to read the play. What were they reading as undergraduates?

So it is possible to argue against too little as well as too much attention to skills and practice on the undergraduate level. But we must also reckon with the almost total absence at Harvard of graduate professional schools in the arts. It's true that Harvard has a Graduate School of Design. Despite its misleading title, however, the Design School is essentially devoted to architecture and city planning.

Almost alone among America's leading educational institutions, Harvard has no schools in the arts. The reason usually offered is that professional schools are too "vocational." True enough. So are the Law School, the Medical School, and the Business School. The real argument, I suspect, is not over vocationalism so much as over the nature of the vocation. Artists are notoriously bad citizens and worse breadwinners, and arts schools are traditionally far behind in their annual contributions to the Alumni Fund.

Harvard's indifference to the practical arts has had a long history. In the 1920s, George Pierce Baker gave his celebrated 47 Workshop Playwriting course at Harvard as an elective in the English department. Although one faculty member compared it to a course in "butchering meat," Baker's dramatic instruction was effective enough to attract the likes of Eugene O'Neill, Philip Barry, and S.N. Behrman to Cambridge. But when Baker requested a space in which to stage scenes from the plays of his students, the administration balked. A wealthy donor from the Harkness family thereupon offered Harvard what was then the munificent sum of a million dollars to build a theater and a drama department for Baker. Harvard turned down the bequest. Baker took the money to Yale where he founded what was later to be called the Yale School of Drama.

The Yale School of Drama, like the Yale School of Music and the Yale School of Art and Architecture, is a graduate-professional school designed to offer opportunities for training in the practice of the arts, as the Medical School offers training in the practice of medicine and the Law School in the practice of jurisprudence. This is accomplished through course work and laboratory practice, which is to say through training in the classroom and work on the stage, sometimes in association with the professional Yale Repertory Theater. After three years, this culminates in a master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree—for dramaturgs and critics a DFA degree. While all of these Yale schools offer some opportunities for undergraduate participation, their curriculum is primarily designed for would-be professionals.

Lacking a department of drama or even a drama concentration, Harvard was understandably reluctant to accept a graduate-professional school of drama on the Yale model. When the American Repertory Theater came to Harvard from Yale in 1979, we originally proposed such a model for actors, directors, and dramaturgs connected to the theater. We were quickly advised that the idea would never fly. It wasn't until 1987, after noting the incidence at Harvard of Institutes (the Nieman Institute, the Bunting Institute, et al), that we submitted the proposal again, under the name of the A.R.T. Institute for Advanced Theater Training. Partly because we had stumbled on the proper nomenclature, we were then permitted to develop a training program in acting, directing, and dramaturgy, provided we asked for no money from the administration and offered no advanced degree (Institute students now receive a Certificate from Harvard and an MFA from the Moscow Art Theater School, an institution with which the A.R.T. is currently affiliated).

The appearance of the American Repertory Theater at Harvard in 1979 was a groundbreaking event, and an unusual act of faith by the administration. It represented the establishment of the only permanent professional arts organization on campus. The ART was also responsible for the first undergraduate credit courses in theater in Harvard history—in acting, directing, and dramaturgy, given by professional members of the company with teaching experience. These were offered and accepted on the assumption that the best teachers in any artistic field were its practitioners. The courses were approved in what was considered to be record time, thanks to the enthusiasm of President Bok and Dean Henry Rosovsky, and thanks to the momentum of the occasion.

There is no question that the presence of the ART was a chink in the wall of the faculty's, traditional resistance to studio courses in theater. There were, however, plenty of plaster provisos to prevent the chink from growing larger. For example, the courses were accepted with a restriction applied to all other practical studio courses on campus—namely that they be related in some way to texts. This proviso—popularly known as the Bakanovsky Guide lines after the genial Professor of Architecture who invented them—reaffirmed Harvard's commitment to academic study as opposed to mere practice, by making certain that the practice was in some way allied to texts.

The ART instructors found no difficulty assigning texts to students in their acting, directing, and dramaturgy courses. We already believed that these theatrical disciplines were a valuable alternative way to understand dramatic literature. It goes without saying that the plays of Shakespeare and Chekhov are as important to theater professionals as Mozart and Beethoven scores are to professionals in music. Nevertheless, complaints began to rumble that we were not following the rules, that the Bakanovsky guide lines were referred not only to primary sources such as plays, but also to secondary sources such as critical commentaries. Some members of the faculty wanted courses in practical skills to be supplemented not only with readings in literature but with reading lists in literary theory.

It would seem that artists who teach make certain academics very nervous, unless they also have credentials as theorists. As one Committee report recently put it, "Many specialists in drama and performances today would strenuously resist the idea that there is significant merit in the notion of a split between theorists and practitioners, between analysis and art." The same academic report goes on to question whether acting training, for example, can be properly taught by people solely interested in what it calls "aesthetics and

creativity." Theater should be considered not only a practical skill but an academic discipline influenced by "cultural context, politics, cultural differences, and global technology." The attention of the student should be drawn not only to offerings in dramatic literature—which appear in the catalogue in ever-decreasing numbers—but also to such agenda driven courses as "The Homosexual in Drama," "Performance and Performativity," "Gender and Gender Studies," and the like. In the modern university, art is not so much banished from the campus as forced to conform to prevailing academic fashions.

It would be interesting to learn what Meryl Streep or Kevin Kline or Cherry Jones or any of the many gifted professionals whose early careers were shaped in graduate or undergraduate training programs might say were they to be told that their acting owed a debt to global technology or cultural differences. At any rate, such assertions reflect the continuing tension between the humanist and the artist, between a liberal arts education and a liberal education in the arts. For a long while I used to attribute this tension, at least in my own field, to what the movie critic David Denby once identified as "theaterphobia," and what the late Jonas Barish in his book of the same name called "The Anti-Theatrical Prejudice." Barish traced this affliction back to Plato. But he found its defining event in the closing of the English theaters during the Puritan interregnum. Harvard, like the state of Massachusetts, was founded by those very same Puritans, fleeing England after the restoration of Charles II. That fact accounts for much of the existing tension between those who practice and those who theorize.

Perhaps the *locus classicus* of this particular conflict is Moliere's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, where the eponymous hero, the social-climber Monsieur Jordain, is taught the theoretical rudiments of the arts—how to dance, sing, fence, philosophize, and write love letters—by a group of specialists in those fields. He discovers that he can perform each skill much more effectively than the experts, simply by doing it. Jordain not only learns that he has been speaking prose all his life. He also proves that he can write it with more directness and simplicity than the most learned pedagogue. In short, Moliere, like his twentieth-century cousin, Eugene Ionesco, had the artist's scorn for the over-schematized beliefs of his age.

I have always found it paradoxical that humanists stand in such an ambiguous relationship to artists, considering that it is the work of poets, novelists, and dramatists that constitutes the grist of their endeavors. Obviously, there would be no analysis or criticism—no deconstruction, semiotics, or gender theory--without the existence of artworks to spin theories about.

What we need to teach students most, in my opinion, is how to directly experience an artwork, not how to invent theories about it. To me, the greatest obligation of education in regard to the arts--and I'm speaking now of education from the secondary school level through the college years--is to create some appreciation for and understanding of the arts rather than competition with them. Whitman believed that great artists required great audiences. The education system has signally failed to create the great audiences that might understand, support, and maintain great works of art in this country.

And the failure is on every level. Whereas arts appreciation used to be a staple of the grammar school education, funding for such arts programs is now very erratic. For who is the first to get fired when money is short? The music teacher. The only way to stimulate appreciation for artistic quality is through arts education in the schools, an area that has been unconscionably neglected, though some of Walter Annenberg's recent grants have been helpful. Effective projects like the Teachers and Writers Collaborative of New York City, in which poor kids are introduced to language and poetry by practicing poets, are rare, and privately subsidized. No wonder the infrequent visit of a dance company on a grant leaves children baffled and sullen when the system employs so few full-time arts teachers to stimulate their imaginations. This is not only a cultural but a social problem. Lacking early grounding in music, drama, and painting, kids will inevitably spend their time watching action movies or playing computer games, and, when they grow up, will be likely to appease their instinctive hunger for art, music, and poetry with the easily-digested fast food of graffiti, rock, and rap.

Undergraduates can be stretched in the arts not just through practice in extracurricular activities, but also through being exposed to professional practice, including the literature of the field and the practical skills associated with it. After such a continuum of artistic exposure, whether as a member of the audience or as practitioner or both, the serious student of the arts would then be prepared to enter an appropriate graduate-professional school for more advanced training in his or her chosen field. It is an ideal vertical arrangement that could potentially train the ideal spectator and the ideal artist. The system in operation today produces neither--only arrogant amateurs and ignorant professionals.

When McNeil Lowry was vice President in charge of the Arts Program at the Ford Foundation, he refused to fund any cultural initiatives associated with a university, in the belief that they were bound to be of low quality and informed by amateur standards. Neither I nor anyone else could ever persuade him otherwise, even through demonstrated artistic achievement over a period of years. We could never convince him that a society that had so little opportunity to find satisfying artistic experiences in the popular media might be exposed to those cultural resources in institutions of higher learning. I'm not quite ready to concede that Lowry was correct in his belief that the university would always exalt the amateur over the professional, that the cultural (as opposed to the educational)

standards of academia would always be as closed to excellence as those in the world at large. That is, not quite yet. But I'm coming awfully close.

A TEAM APPROACH TO DRAMATURGY AT CORNISH COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

John Wilson

John K. Wilson has been working at Cornish College of the Arts since 1986 and is currently an Associate Professor on the faculties of Performance Production, Theater, and the Division of Humanities and Sciences. He instructs in theater history, the history and theory of performance art, and co-instructs with David Taft in the ensemble studio performance course: auto cours. He is the resident dramaturg at Cornish and holds an MFA in playwriting.

Cornish faculty come together across lines of discipline to form a dramaturgy team which creates a new presence for the scholar/artist in the production process at Cornish College of the Arts.

The Team:

- Dr. Shawn Bachtler: Psychology.
- John Hagman: History.
- Tracy Maxwell: History.
- John K. Wilson: Theater history/performance theory; resident dramaturg.
- Eric des O'del: Playwriting/directing; director/adapted the play.
- Jessica Barkl: Third year theater student, also played, "Lilli," in the Cornish production.

The Play: *Children in Uniform*, by Christa Winsloe (earliest version, 1930).

The Production:

Cornish College of the Arts, Presented by Performance Production and Theater Departments
Skinner Theater; Nov. 9, 10, 12-15, 1998. Directed by Eric Des O'del, and adapted by him from the English translations of the play, *The Child Manuela*, 1933; and the novel, *Gestern und Heute* (Yesterday and Today), 1932.

Early production record:

1. Premiered in Berlin as, *Gestern und Heute* (Yesterday and Today), 1930.
2. Films: *Madchen in Uniform* (Maidens in Uniform), 1931 and 1950.
3. Translation and production in London, *Madchen in Uniform*, September, 1932.
4. Performed as, *Girls in Uniform*, New York, November, 1932.
5. English productions critically acclaimed. The German version was banned.
6. The novel, *Gestern und Heute*, by Winsloe (1932), was translated into English as, *The Child Manuela*, in 1933.

The Story of the Play:

The story of the play centers around the experience of young Manuela who comes to a private boarding school for girls in Germany of 1932. The school has had the long mission of educating the daughters of the military class associated with the old royal order of the empire which was in power just previous to the Weimar Republic. The school's oppressive, anti-republican attitude is reflected in the brutal, tyrannical authority of the school head, who is supported by an absolutely obedient school staff.

Manuela is able to resist the worst effects of the school's oppression through her deep emotional attachment to Fraulein von Bernberg, a popular teacher with the girls. Close relationships among the girls and between teachers and students are common; however, a love as deep and obsessive as Manuela's would be regarded as "morbid," as it is described in the English translation. Manuela publicly confesses her love after drinking too much of an alcoholic punch at a school party. Manuela is not expelled from the school, but she is internally banished from the community of students and teachers. The most devastating result of her exile is her separation from Fraulein von Bernberg. In desperation Manuela throws herself from the roof of a school building. The play ends with the news that Manuela is dead.

The Story of the Dramaturgy:

During the late spring of 1998, several members of the Cornish faculty and a student came together across lines of discipline and departments to form a dramaturgy team in connection with the coming fall production of, *Children in Uniform*, by Christa Winsloe. After several months of work, the team presented the material over the first four days of rehearsal. The fifth day of rehearsal was scheduled as the first full reading of the play by the company.

The team's first mission was to inform the play and serve the production. The team's strategy was to connect the company with the core issues of the play and create a historical context within which the company could work. For the team, "historical context," referred to the important ideas and conditions during the time of the original production and to those same concerns of relevant aesthetic, social, political, economic, religious, and scientific ideas and conditions during the times of the play's revival. That context also included all that had gone into the selection of the play and the commitment of resources to the current production.

It was the identification of the core values of the play and how that might obligate the current production which generated some of the most compelling discussion among the team members. In this regard it was to great advantage to be able to approach such questions as a team with a broad range of interests and training. Two members of the team were historians with several areas of specialty. One member of the team was a psychologist who not only instructed in psychology at the college, but maintained a private practice and a clinical position at a large regional hospital. Furthermore, she had an undergraduate degree in history. The supervising dramaturg instructed in theater history and performance theory at the college, and had training in playwriting and directing. The student was a junior in the original works program of the theater department, and she also played a role in the production. The director's primary charge in relation to the team was to help focus the work toward the vision of the production. In addition, he fully collaborated in the process of crafting the method of presenting the dramaturgical material.

Each member of the team accepted an area of research which he or she pursued individually; however, the entire team remained available to each other for assistance and collaboration. The call to joint work was frequent. The assignment to a specific area of research resulted from a combination of interests: curiosity and professional specialty.

John Hagman chose to concentrate on German history from 1918-1945 and relevant general history of Europe and America during the same years. In addition to preparing a detailed chronology and a survey of the important social and political ideas of the time, his abiding interest was to determine what the characters would have actually known about their own political and social history, and in what terms. He wanted to speculate on what would have been their sense of their origins and destiny. John created a view of the network of relationships at work in the play from several social and political perspectives. This proved to be one of the most valuable character building tools for the company.

Tracy Maxwell was most engaged with the history of ideas. He prepared an essay which defined and delineated fascism, communism, democracy, totalitarianism, and faith. He related these general ideas to the action of the play. Tracy was concerned with the play as a political act during the time of its original production and the relevance of that act to our own times.

Dr. Shawn Bachtler identified the important psychological aspects of the play. She was concerned with issues of adolescent sexuality and psychological transference as it may occur between students and teachers. Dr. Bachtler also prepared reports on the social history of women during the time of the world of the play and the biography of Christa Winsloe, especially as that might inform the relationships among the women of play. Dr. Bachtler's work was significantly important because the cast of the Cornish production was entirely female and included both students and faculty from the theater program. The faculty from Cornish played the faculty of the German academy. The students primarily played students. Dr. Bachtler was there to observe and guide the intensified feeling of the real relationships that might be acted out in the fiction of the play.

Jessica Barkl concentrated on the place of Winsloe's play in German theater history and the place of that history in the overall story of European art between the wars. In addition she prepared reports on the past record of the plays, the novel, and the films. She was most engaged, however, in the role of team dramaturgy itself as an integral part of the production process. To that end she also prepared reports on what she observed as a similar kind team dramaturgy in German theater history. She kept meticulous records and she was responsible for filing and maintaining the research as it was placed on reserve in the college library. She was also responsible for the public display of written materials and images during the run of the show.

John K. Wilson was the supervising dramaturg who did the organizational work of the team. The most important responsibility was to position the team in its best relationship to the production process. His research was to answer the questions, "Why this play at this time?" and "What are the current moral issues which are active in the play?" The issues of totalitarianism and sexual politics were

identified very early on by the entire team as central to the moral life of the play. However, John's analysis and research discovered that the action of the play could be expressed in different and more specific terms. The play is an account of an interpersonal and institutional crime known as soul murder. As an allegory the play is a statement about cultural politics and in the time of its original production, it was a call to awareness. In our own time with a history that Christa Winsloe could not have known the play resonates with an additional irony about the same political call to awareness. However, it resonates most intensively at its center, which is not a suicide as it appears, but a murder. John's reports described how this act is realized in the fictional world of the play and in the real world of our families and institutions.

Over a period of three to four months, the team met for progress reports and discussion. During these meetings the team tested the impact of the presentation of the information on each other. In the two weeks before the first rehearsal, the team focused its attention on the crafting of the presentation. It was agreed that the first four days of rehearsal would be scheduled for the presentation and harvest of material. The fifth day would be reserved for the first company read through of the play. The plan was to begin with material that was general, universal, and more abstract. Then, the team would proceed through the material, coming ever closer to the point where the company could more personally connect with the core issues of the play. The team referred to this point as a place of optimal vulnerability, which was really a place of being open to connection.

On the first day the team oriented the company to their work and their commitment to the production. General historical context was reported, as well as the early production history of the play and its place in German theater history. On the second day, Christa Winsloe's biography was reported and the team began to report more specifically on the cultural environment of the fictional world of the play. It was on this day that John Hagman reported on what the characters would have known about their own history and in what terms. On the third day, Dr. Bachtler reported on the cultural history of women during the time of the play, relationships between teachers and students, and female adolescent sexuality. It was during this day that Dr. Bachtler guided the company through a memory recall of adolescence and an open discussion of what was termed, "the secret society of girls." This guided process was highly effective in establishing trust and openness in the company, and in speculating on the experiential world of the girls in the academy. On the fourth day, the team reported on what they had identified as the central act of the play, the crime of soul murder.

The four days of presentation and interaction moved through material which began with a context, which may be better expressed as an understanding in general terms. It closed in a context which invited personal connection. The result was both a powerful new model for the presence of the dramaturg in the college production process and a new collaboration between the theater department and the liberal arts faculty of the Humanities and Sciences Division. It was a discovery of resources and integration which has implications for the presence of the dramaturg in various capacities throughout the college. The team wondered further if the experience informed the possibilities of dramaturgy for the professional production process.

The success of this team was due to some very specific conditions. The team had already done collaborative work in uniting across course lines. For the past two years, this group had been finding ways to unite diverse courses with common material discovered in the courses themselves. These courses were as diverse as psychology, the survey of Western history, advanced courses in writing, and the history and theory of performance art. The team already had a working method, a high affinity for each other, and they were easily inspired by the challenge of dramaturgy. Furthermore, the team's commitment to the students as educators must be factored in to the formula for success. The dramaturgy had the additional effect of raising the students commitment to the liberal arts studies as they saw their instructors put that information to the use of making a play. In this case, the inspiration and commitment superseded considerations of financial compensation. If the team had been limited to the hours of salary compensation, the event would not have happened. What was probably most important in terms of the actual success of the team's effectiveness in the production process, was the relationship with the director. Given all the above, if the relationship with the director had not been what it was, the effort would not have even begun. This kind of experience must be based on the full collaborative partnership with the director. The director as partner potentiates the team. Even now, at the college and elsewhere, the director's first right of acceptance or refusal of dramaturgical scholarship and presentation is a powerful shaping force of the work.

Comments from Eric Des O'del, Director:

What became immediately clear to me upon attending my first meeting with the dramaturgs was the issue of parallel but not identical agendas, an issue made more complex by the fact that the production was being created in an educational context. The dramaturgs had the agendas of supporting the director and cast with specific historical information pertinent to staging and performing the piece, and providing the audience with the background information about the playwright and the world of the play. These are all customary tasks for dramaturgs in the professional world.

In addition, the dramaturgs had a wider agenda of educating the student cast members about a broad range of subjects: general Prussian History, the history of theater in Germany, the changing status of women in Weimar Germany, adolescent female sexuality and development, Nazi philosophy, and so on. Lead faculty member John Wilson was also passionate about the integration of dramaturgy into the rehearsal process, and fortunately, the seven week rehearsal period made me more comfortable giving rehearsal time over to the dramaturgs for presentations and discussions with the cast on specific topics pertinent to the playworld and the issues it addresses, not only at the beginning of the rehearsals, but at later points as well. These were so successful I came to rely upon them to infuse the cast with renewed passion for the production overall at points when our focus had necessarily become technical and fragmentary.

As a director in an educational setting, I felt required to complete three different agendas: to provide an educational opportunity for the student actors, to provide an educational opportunity for my student assistant director, and to create a powerful show for the audiences. Given that there is always a limit of time and resources, I felt a pressure to guide the dramaturgical research and presentations toward material that would serve the students as *actors first*, whereas the dramaturgs might naturally see the actors as *students first*. Finding the balance between these two points of view was essential, and I believe in this case, well maintained.

Having such a large group of dramaturgs with many areas of expertise was an unusual luxury, and my experience of working with them as a director was one of snapping my fingers and finding whatever I needed at my fingertips. Whether it was locating an English translation for the playwright's later novelization of the script, copies of sheet music for tunes referred to in the play, or an explanation of obscure references in the dialogue, the answer was always provided in a timely fashion. I found the director/dramaturg relationship partnership in this production uniquely successful.

Comments from Bonnie Cohen (Cornish faculty, Acting; played Fraulein von Kesten):

The dramaturgy helped me formulate and experience my character. Taking the time on my own to create such a context would have created a hardship for me, and so my creative endeavor was more profitable. I was unable to take that time and even if I did, I may not have come up with what the same stuff. The dramaturgy supplied me with exactly what I needed in order to visualize and conceptualize my character. I could not have transformed without that work.

Comments from Ellen Boyle (Cornish Faculty, Voice/Speech; played Fraulein von Bernberg):

In all my 25 years working in theater I have never experienced the real contribution that the dramaturg can make to a production until "Children in Uniform." Our brilliant team literally created the world of the play for us by their presentations of:

- A. A thorough history of Germany's politics, culture, current events, and sociology.
- B. A complete portrait of the playwright's life, beliefs, and politics.
- C. And probably most valuable for the actor were the interactive exercises where we were asked to confront and share our own life experiences concerning some of the main themes of the play: suppression, child/teacher relationships, sexual attraction, and the environment stifling our creative impulses.

Anytime an actor can draw from their own personal experience it brings authenticity to their work/character. Our dramaturgy team grounded us in so much of the truth and world of this play. Because we experienced these truths and created this world as an ensemble we were able to bring that to our rehearsal process and production. They provided a very powerful, very real, and authentic context for us.

PROCESS TRANSLATION: TRANSLATOR/DRAMATURG MEETS ACTOR/TRANSLATOR

Anne-Charlotte Harvey

Born in Sweden, educated in Sweden and the US, Anne-Charlotte Harvey is Professor of Theater at San Diego State University with a special interest in the interface of theory and practice, translation for the stage, and dramaturgy. She has done extensive work with plays by Ibsen, Strindberg, and Sweden's experimental Unga Klara theater.

Working on a production of *Hedda Gabler* at San Diego State University in the fall of 1998 I had the opportunity to combine translation and dramaturgy in a new way. I would like to tell you something about the process and the questions it raised and suggest areas for future exploration.

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The work was new, the impulse over a decade old. It all began in the mid-80s in Stockholm when I saw a production of Strindberg's *The Pelican* in an English-language translation done by the actors themselves, i.e., each actor had shaped his/her own lines. I was intrigued by this approach to translation, especially its dramaturgical potential.

The San Diego process was inspired by but not identical to that in Stockholm: the *Pelican* translation may have been prompted by copyright problems, expediency, and a lingering 1970s communal spirit; the *Hedda* translation was prompted by curiosity and a search for a dramaturgical and educational edge. (If there was a directorial or dramaturgical "will" at work in *The Pelican*, it was not reflected in either the program, the publicity, or the performance.) The *Pelican* actors all spoke the source language, Swedish; the *Hedda* process involved American student actors who spoke no Norwegian and initially had no interest in or philosophical commitment to the group process.

Watching *The Pelican* I had been intrigued by the actor-empowering aspect and -- to use a really off-putting term -- pedagogical potential of the group translation process, especially used with student actors. But how try something like the *Pelican* approach with a group of actors who are not bilingual? In order to help shape the translation, they would have to have a platform of understanding of the original, a way of 'reading' or accessing the original via their own language.

When the opportunity to try 'group translation' with student actors presented itself more than a decade later, it was ironically through a different kind of translation work that I had done in the 90s with two professional Ibsen directors. Both had contacted me because they wanted to 'go back to the Norwegian original,' one in order to understand the chosen translation fully, the other in order to create his own new translation -- neither approach particularly novel. But my detailed exploration of the original, consisting of an open script with alternatives and notes, amplified by mini-lectures and discussions in rehearsals, turned out to look like the 'platform' I had been looking for. If my 'platform script' could be used by one director to create a new translation of the play, why could it not serve a group of actors doing the same? What would be the ramifications? What the gains, the drawbacks?

My colleague Randy Reinholz at SDSU, slated to direct *Hedda Gabler* in fall 1998, was willing to try this group process. MA candidate and dramaturgy student Brian Flanagan took on the responsibility of guardian of the developing text. I served as translator/dramaturg and 'resource.' The production period was a time of making up the 'rules' of the process -- and the new terminology to go with it -- as we went along. We ended up calling the kind of translation we were doing a 'process translation,' the first working script a 'base script' or 'platform script,' and the successive scripts 'draft 1,' 'draft 2,' etc. Based on the 'platform' alternatives and other resources -- including dramaturgs and director -- the actors would write and rewrite their own character's lines, with the director having final say.

The objective unique to process translation is, as I see it, threefold: 1) to invite the actors to enter fully into the world of the play through their own work with the text, 2) to empower the actors to make informed speech and acting choices, and 3) to individualize the voices of the play's characters.

As is so often the case, I had one model in my mind -- nicely underpinned by Patrice Pavis -- when we set out; another one emerged during the process. We had to compromise and revise/lower our expectations, but we also found unexpected enrichment and bonuses.

We had known from the very beginning that there are limitations to the usefulness of process translation: it should be used only with playwrights whose characters are individualized through speech. In verse drama, or whenever a uniform voice speaks through all the characters, the single voice of the creator needs to be carried by the voice of a single translator. We also knew that the access to the original text and world, the 'platform,' must be full, accurate, ongoing -- in other words, the richness of the 'platform' text and its ongoing amplification in rehearsal is absolutely crucial. (This reservation alone argues against process translation as a standard approach.)

What we did not realize until later was that you must allow enough time to spend on the 'platform' at the table -- the more inexperienced the actors, the more time is needed -- and the director must allow the actors time for experimentation and discovery also on their feet so that the text does not get locked in, all choices made, too soon, without gestural input. There were other frustrations: Some actors resisted the process, not going the work required outside of rehearsals, 'going to the library' to copy down some existing translation instead of grappling with the language. Some actors were too set in their ways and claimed they could not work if they were not given a finished script at the first rehearsal. Some lacked the linguistic imagination and resources to shape their own lines, even if they understood the subtext and could play it. And so on . . .

I would really like to take some time -- at another time, in another forum -- to describe and discuss more fully not only the pitfalls and negative findings, but especially the positive contributions of the process to our production: what the actors gained individually and

what the overall impact was on the production and, ultimately, on the audience. I would be very interested to hear from anyone who has worked on similar projects: both I and the director were happy enough with the process (and the resulting production) that we want to modify it and try it again. Though not necessarily democratic, process translation is a communal immersion experience with a dynamic radically different from that of the usual director/actor or dramaturg/actor relationship and, as I see it, one with great potential.

SECTION III: RESOURCES

JOBS:

Assistant Professor American Theater, Acting, Directing Theater Department, Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa

Grinnell College's Theater Department invites applications for a full-time, tenure-track appointment beginning August, 1999. Assistant Professor (Ph.D.) preferred, Instructor (ABD) possible. The candidate must be able to teach introductory through advanced undergraduate courses in acting and directing as well as courses in American theater, to mentor acting, to direct students in workshop and project performances in the major, and to direct at least one mainstage production a year. Candidates should address their interest in teaching in an undergraduate, liberal arts environment that emphasizes close faculty-student interaction. Teaching experience and/or professional work in some aspect of theater practice an asset. Salary and benefits competitive depending on qualifications and experience. To be assured of full consideration, please send letter of application, curriculum vitae and three letters of reference by April 15 to Ellen Mease, Chair, Theater Department, Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa 50112. (Phone 515-269-3129, fax 515-269-4953, mease@ac.grin.edu). The search will continue until the position is filled.

Grinnell College is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer committed to employing a highly qualified staff which reflects the diversity of the nation. No applicant shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, age, gender,

sexual orientation, marital status, religion, creed, or disability.

Grinnell is a highly selective, residential, private liberal arts undergraduate institution located in rural Iowa between Des Moines and Iowa City, with approximately 1300 students from across the country and around the world. A \$22 million Fine Arts complex is currently nearing completion, attracting increasing numbers of students to already vibrant fine arts programs. The Theater Department has about 20 majors and many seriously involved non-majors with a faculty of five and a staff TD. The Department produces five mainstage productions per year, including four directed by faculty and a modern dance concert choreographed by faculty and students. In addition we sponsor student-directed one-acts, Black Box workshops, Dance Troupe, advanced directing and acting performance projects and a required Senior Performance Seminar. An active program of performances is presented in Roberts Theater (400-seat apron stage) and Flanagan Studio Theater (state-of-the-art experimental black box seating up to 130).

Assistant Professor, Playwriting Univ. of Texas at Austin

MFA or PhD or equivalent training. Professional experience as produced playwright or in new play development. Teaching experience at the University level. Teach courses in graduate and undergraduate Playwriting and new play dramaturgy. Assist in development of Playwriting program through curriculum development, recruiting, advising, supervising (under)graduate writing

projects/production. Collaboration with faculty and staff on production of new work. Possible (team) teaching in MFA program in Creative Writing through the Michener Center for Writers. Continued professional activity in Playwriting/Dramaturgy is expected. Salary competitive. Starting date: September 1, 1999. Review of materials will begin February 1, 1999; search to continue until position filled. Send curriculum vita, letter of application, and names and addresses of at least 3 persons who can be contacted for confidential letters of reference to: Suzan L. Zeder, Search Committee Chair, Department of Theater and Dance, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78712-1168. AA/EOE. (Ed. note: Even though the initial deadline has passed, Texas asked us to post this. If you are interested, contact the department for the status of the search.)

Full-time Lecturer Position University of Pennsylvania

Full-time lecturer position (one year appointment) available in a small interdepartmental undergraduate Theater Arts program, starting Fall 1999, for a practitioner-scholar to teach introductory and intermediate acting with a strong liberal-arts orientation, advise majors, and oversee student production work. Opportunities to teach additional areas of performance specialization, e.g. voice, movement, non-traditional actor training. MFA or equivalent, professional experience, teaching experience, and strong commitment to liberal-arts teaching required; PhD or equivalent, scholarship and publications in academic

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areas related to issues of acting and performance highly desirable.

Send c.v. and references by APRIL 30 to Cary M. Mazer, Chair, Theater Arts Program, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6273.

The University of Pennsylvania is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

If you have any questions about the position, please feel free to contact Prof. Mazer by e-mail at cmazer@english.upenn.edu

Crossroads Intern Opening

Lenora Inez Brown at Crossroads Theatre is looking for an intern for the 1999-2000 season. Literary department: assisting in dramaturgical research, script management, study guide writing, education programs. Must be independent worker. 45 minutes from NYC. For more information, write Lenora at Crossroad Theatre Company, 7 Linington Ave., New Brunswick, NJ 08901.

National Criticism Program Announcement

April 30, 1999
Theater Communication Group
The National Org. for the American Theater
355 Lexington Ave.
New York, NY 10017-0217
212-697-5230
212-557-5817
at@tcg.org

For more information about the below, please contact TCG.

ELIGIBILITY: The National Theater Criticism/ Affiliated Writers Program is open to writers based in Minnesota and New York City. It is designed for promising journalists/critics who have demonstrated writing abilities and a desire to expand their perspective on and knowledge of the field, and who would profit significantly from an affiliation

with *American Theater*. Writers must be available to complete three to four assigned articles during the one-year period of the program; these may include critical essays, in-depth features, interviews, book reviews and/or columns of commentary.

BENEFITS TO AFFILIATED WRITERS: The National Theater Criticism/Affiliated Writers Program will select two to four writers a year (with writers eligible to repeat the program). Each writer will receive an annual stipend of \$3,000 in exchange for three to four articles, as assigned. TCG will provide a print forum for selected pieces in *American Theater* magazine, as well as in other appropriate TCG publications. In order to allow these writers to familiarize themselves with theaters and artists working outside the immediate purview of their residence, the program will also offer them travel funds to visit theaters, meet with artists and see productions, according to the requirements of the writing assignments.

Affiliated writers may also be assigned to attend and cover meetings, roundtables and symposia, which TCG sponsors on a variety of topics of interest and concern to the theater. In addition to providing an overview of the field, these opportunities will afford new insights into a variety of behind-the-scenes issues, questions and decisions which all have an impact on individual productions, as well as on the art form in general.

In addition to these tangible benefits, TCG will work to attract widespread media attention to the program, its participants and their work; encourage increased visibility; and generate further writing opportunities, thereby helping writers overcome the problems of limited resources, publication opportunities and exposure.

SELECTION CRITERIA: Applicants will be reviewed by a committee comprised by members of the theater profession, critical/journalistic community and/or contributing editors of

American Theater. Selection will be based upon the following:

1. Quality of writing and critical thought as demonstrated in writing samples;
2. Potential for fruitful exchange with the staff of *American Theater* magazine and the theater field;
3. Two professional recommendations;
4. A brief statement (no more than 250 words) of purpose, describing how you feel you can contribute to *American Theater* and how this program will further your professional goals.

DEADLINES: Completed applications are due post-marked no later than April 30, 1999 for affiliation beginning July 1, 1999. Notification will take place on or around June 15, 1999.

Literary Manager

City Theater Company in Pittsburgh, PA seeks an experienced literary manager who will oversee the development of a New Play Commissioning Program and a Young Playwrights' Program. Beginning Spring 1999. Submit a letter, resume, and two references to: Marc Masterson, c/o City Theater, 57 South 13th Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203.

DISRUPTION IN JOB LINE

**SERVICE
Celise Kalke**

Please note that from February 1 to February 22, AT&T, LMDA's toll free carrier, disconnected the job-line 888 number (without disconnecting the line itself) due to an administrative error on the part of AT&T. Since there was no disconnection notice issued, the line operated perfectly from the office, and our bill was paid in full, the error went unnoticed until today. The job-line number 888-550-7747 is now fully operational and a complaint lodged with AT&T. Thanks to Andrew Mellon for bringing this to my attention. I apologize

on behalf of LMDA for the disruption in jobline service.

**DRAMATURGY FOCUS GROUP
ASSOCIATION FOR THEATER IN
HIGHER EDUCATION (ATHE)
TORONTO CONFERENCE, JULY
28-31, 1999
Cynthia SoRelle**

The Dramaturgy Focus Group expresses its appreciation to John Lutterbie and Geoff Proehl, outgoing and incoming Focus Group Representatives, for their leadership over the past several years.

The Dramaturgy and Playwriting Focus Groups invite you to attend a two-part session during the Toronto conference focusing on the dramaturg-playwright relationship. Panelists include members of both the academic and professional communities who work in one or both of these capacities. For further information contact Judith Royer or Cindy SoRelle.

For the third year the Dramaturgy Focus Group is sponsoring a competitive debut panel for new graduate student or professional dramaturgs. For entry information contact Klaus VanDenBerg at the University of Tennessee.

Session topics at this year's conference include exploration of the rehearsal process; contemporary approaches to classical texts in Chuck Mee's work; the dramaturg's transition from academia to the professional arena; materializing and theatricalizing non-dramatic works, including Native American work; working with colleagues to facilitate an open, non-prescriptive process that engenders creative response; approaching audiences; and crossing international and cultural borders in staging Asian, Indian and European works. New plays explored in this year's conference sessions include *Opium*, a collage text based on *Macbeth*, the opium diaries of Jean Cocteau, the prison diaries of Kanno Sugako, and *Rasa*, a music-theater piece inspired by Mukhjerjee's novel.

Below, I've listed all of the Dramaturgy Focus Group panels for ATHE 1999:

See you in Toronto!

Session Title: The Dramaturg-Playwright Relationship: A Dialogue (Parts I and II)
July 29, 1:30-3:00 p.m.
July 30, 1:30-3:00 p.m.
Session Coordinator: Cindy SoRelle
Session Chairs: Judith Royer & Cindy SoRelle

Session Participants:
Michele Volansky, Steppenwolf Theater; Lue Morgan Douthit, Oregon Shakespeare Festival; Paul Castagno, University of Alabama; David Copelin, playwright; Lynn Thomson, Brooklyn College; Judith Rudakoff, York University; Bruce Sevy, Denver Center Theater; Mark Bly, Yale School of Drama; Mead Hunter, ASK Theater Projects; Paul Slee, New Dramatists; John Orlock, Case Western Reserve; Ken Robbins, Louisiana Tech University.

Abstract: Playwrights and dramaturgs who work with new plays discuss their experiences and offer suggestions regarding working relationships in new play development. Panel participants represent both professional and academic venues. This is a two-session dialogue jointly sponsored by the Dramaturgy and Playwriting Focus Groups.

Session Title: Rehearsal: A Conversation (Parts I & II)
July 30, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
July 31, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Session Coordinator: Geoff Proehl
Session Chair: Sue Tjardes, University of Puget Sound

Session Participants:
Mark Bly, Yale School of Drama; Lee Devin, Swarthmore College; Lue Morgan Douthit, Oregon Shakespeare Festival; Oliver Gerland, University of Colorado, Boulder; Liz Engelman, A Contemporary Theater, LMDA; DD Kugler, Simon Fraser University, Canada; Mark Lord, Bryn Mawr College; Harriet Power,

Villanova University; Geoff Proehl, University of Puget Sound.

Abstract: Dramaturgs, directors, and scholars from university and professional theaters discuss their experiences with rehearsal processes for both new and old plays. Potential topics include collaboration; working methods; the dynamics of time, language, and space.

Session Title: Dramaturgy Debut Panel
Session Coordinator & Chair: Klaus VanDenBerg, University of Tennessee
July 29, 3:15-4:45 p.m.

Session Participants:
selected dramaturgs TBA after May 1

Abstract: This session spotlights outstanding and innovative work by new dramaturgs in educational and professional theater. The 1999 conference marks the third year for this successful competitive event.

Session Title: Contemporary Approaches to Classic Texts
Session Coordinator & Chair: Shelley Orr
July 29, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Session Participants:
D. J. Hopkins and Shelley Orr, UC San Diego, Chuck Mee's BIG LOVE; Michele Volansky, Steppenwolf Theater, Chuck Mee's Time to Burn; Gregory Gunter, Chuck Mee's Trojan Women a Love Story

Abstract: Approaching a classic text can require a dramaturg to represent the dead author to a greater or lesser degree in the rehearsal room. How does this function change when the classic text has been adapted, rewritten, reconceived by a living playwright? What dramaturgical strategies are useful in focusing the examination of a classic text through the lens of contemporary culture?

Session Title: Dramaturgy In and Out of Academia
Session Coordinator: Mary Resing
Session Chair: Robyn Quick
July 28, 3:15-4:45 p.m.

Session Participants:

Lisa Wild, Howard City Comm. College,
"Theater and Education: Dramaturgy as a
Collaborative Process"

Mary Resing, Woolly Mammoth Theater
Co., "From Academia to Arena: a
Dramaturg's Education in the Real
World"

Julia Listengarten, Purdue University,
"From the Translation to the Workshop,
from the Workshop to the Production:
Dramaturging on Experimental Stages"

Abstract: Scholars are often asked to
dramaturg professional productions but
how well do the worlds of academia and
theater mesh? What are the points of
contact between education and
dramaturgy, scholarship and the creative
process? The papers in this panel
explore issues scholars face in the
professional theater.

Session Title: Devising, Improvising,
Materializing: Non-Dramatic
Source/Theatrical Product

Session Coordinator: Sharon L. Sullivan
Session Chair: Angelika Czekay,
University of Wisconsin, Madison
July 28, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Session Participants:

Joylynn Wing, Colby College, "Radical
Absence: Framing Devices and Audience
Seduction"

Ann Gilles Linden, University of
Wisconsin - Madison, "Room for
Resistance: Devising for Audience
Interaction"

James Frieze, Liverpool John Moores
University, "From Rage to Stage:
Developing the Sopranos"

Sharon L. Sullivan, University of
Kansas, "Word of Mouth: Oral Tradition
and the New Native American Drama"

Abstract: This session explores through
presentation and discussion the
dramaturgical process of developing a
production from alternative source

material. Each panelist will consider
difficult but productive attempts to
theatricalise non-dramatic sources. They
will focus on two axes of interaction:
between the source material and the
producers of the stage text, and between
the performer and the audience.

Session Title: The Dramaturg as Re-
visioner: How We Guide Students and
Colleagues in their Work

Session Coordinator & Chair: Harriet
Power, Villanova University
July 31, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Session Participants:

Geoff Proehl, University of Puget Sound;
DD Kugler, Simon Fraser University,
Canada

Abstract: Dramaturgs, directors, and
teachers discuss methods they've
developed to enable students and
colleagues to revise and refine their work
in theater. How do we, as dramaturgs,
directors, and teachers, articulate our
responses to theater work in ways that
open up possibilities rather than
prescribe? This panel aims to explore in
depth both theoretical and practical
aspects of how we work with students
and colleagues to facilitate creative
development.

Session Title: Building Bridges: The
Audience and the Dramaturg

Session Coordinator & Chair: Kevin
Trudeau
July 28, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Session Participants:

Kevin Trudeau, Western State College;
"Bring the Audience within the Concept"

Maria Beach, The University of Texas at
Austin; "The Feminist Dramaturg and her
Audience(s)"

Ben Gunter, Florida State University;
"Dramaturgy for Productive,
Emancipated Spectators: Susan Bennett's
Theory and the Southern Shakespeare
Festival's Audience"

Abstract: A panel of short papers aimed
at stimulating discussion regarding
various approaches to audience by
student and faculty dramaturgs. This
session will explore issues of theory,
approach, definition, and gender.

Session Title: Crossing Borders:

Dramaturgical Projects

Session Coordinator & Chair: Stephen
Weeks

July 29, 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Session Participants:

Stephen Weeks, Lewis & Clark College,
"Traveling with Opium: A Dramaturg's
Account of an Intercultural Performance
in Seattle and Tokyo" [Opium is a
collage text based on Macbeth/the opium
diaries of Jean Cocteau/the prison diaries
of Kanno Sugako.]

Lynn Kremer, Holy Cross, "An
Intersection of East and West: Creating
Rasa, a Music-Theater Piece Inspired by
Mukherjee's Novel" [Rasa, created by
Lynn Kremer and composer Shirish
Korde, follows a young Indian woman
from the Punjab village of Hasnapur to
New York to Iowa.]

Stephen DiBenedetto, Goldsmiths
College, University of London, "The
Playwright as Visual Artist: Spatial
Dynamics and the Dramaturgy of Maria
Irene Fornes"

[This paper explores Fornes' use of
principles from painting, sculpture and
installation to create three-dimensional,
spatio-temporal images that work within
a text to form a visual rhetoric.]

Randy Reinholz and Brian Flanagan, San
Diego State University, "The Use of
Process Translation in Hedda Gabler"

[This presentation describes the use of a
specialist in Dano-Norwegian culture and
language, Anne-Charlotte Harvey, to
guide actors through the co-creation of an
English "process translation" of Ibsen's
play.]

Abstract: These four presentations offer
perspectives on crossing cultural and
aesthetic borders in production
dramaturgy.

Dramaturgy Focus Group Business Meeting
July 30, 8:00-9:30 a.m.
Dramaturgy Focus Group Representative: Geoff Proehl, University of Puget Sound
Dramaturgy Conference Planner: Cindy SoRelle, McLennan College, Texas
Nominations: John Lutterbie, SUNY Stony Brook
Member-at-large: Scott Cummings, Boston College
Member-at-large: DD Kugler, Simon Fraser University, Canada
Member-at-large: Steve Hart
Debut Panel Coordinator: Klaus VanDenBerg, University of Tennessee
Graduate Student Representative: Heidi Coleman, Columbia University

All ATHE members interested in dramaturgy are invited to attend.

See you in Toronto!

REPORT ON THE DRAMATURGY FOCUS GROUP ATHE, 1999
John Lutterbie, Focus Group Rep.

Dramaturgy in this country is at a crossroads. While interest in the profession and subject seems to be increasing exponentially in academia, the funds to support dramaturgs in theaters across the spectrum are becoming increasingly rare. Those theaters that have a strong subscription base and relatively stable funding continue to appreciate the value of dramaturgs and support one or more on a continuing basis. This may, in part, reflect the number of dramaturgs and literary managers that have moved in to the role of Artistic Director and who maintain an appreciation for the field that got them to where they are. Regardless, the number of positions available to graduates entering the field is diminishing making it difficult for them to support themselves in the field since most opportunities for beginning dramaturgs are internships that pay little or nothing.

These issues are overriding concerns of the Focus Group. They are central to discussions in LMDA, and they constitute a large number of the panels we are presenting in the conference this year. We recommend that this issue be placed on the agenda of the Advocacy Committee and that parties from other forums, most specifically Playwriting, be invited to participate in discussions. I have a sense that feelings run very high in this area.

Contingent on these areas of concern are two other issues that Dramaturgy is addressing. One is the issue of promotion and tenure guidelines, the other is the responsibility of programs in Dramaturgy to graduates in a profession with a very small market. A draft of the guidelines, developed by Oscar Brockett last year, is being reviewed for this year. The Dramaturgy Debut panel is being offered for the second year as a means of introducing students working in dramaturgy to members of the profession and academia. One other concern being raised is the value of dramaturgical training in professions outside of the theater. The use of dramaturgs in other media is already occurring, and there appear to be opportunities for people trained in dramaturgy in a number of different fields including technology and business.

Thanks in large part to Geoff Proehl, communication among members of the forum and profession occurs regularly over the Internet. Dramaturgy Northwest has become a clearinghouse for information about issues, jobs, conferences and pedagogy, with links to related areas of interest.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS

If you have a book or article that has been recently published, please send us the information so we can tell members about it here in this space or in the bibliography.

Copelin, David. *Practical Playwriting*. Boston: The Writer, 1998.

LITERARY MANAGERS AND DRAMATURGS OF THE AMERICAS: BIBLIOGRAPHY, 1999

Since 1993, the University Caucus of LMDA has published a bibliography of materials on dramaturgy. That bibliography is now available in **Dramaturgy in American Theater: A Source Book** (Harcourt Brace, 1997) and on-line at "dramaturgy northwest." The UCaucus publishes maintains a supplement to this bibliography. It includes new resources from 1997 on and older materials not previously noted. If you have additions or corrections, please send them to Geoff Proehl. Thanks to members of LMDA who have suggested titles for inclusion here; also to Sarah Esch and Louise Lytle, LMDA interns for compiling these citations.

I. Dramaturgy in General and Production Dramaturgy

Bly, Mark. "JoAnne Akalaitis's Leon and Lena (and lenz): A Log from the Dramaturg." Theater 21.1-2 (Winter 1989/Spring 1990): 81-95. (Not listed in earlier bibliographies.)

Grimes, William. "A Power Behind the Play Emerges Into the Light." The New York Times 2 Feb. 1997: Arts and Leisure.

Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism. Special Supplement: "Contemporary Issues in Dramaturgy." 13.1 (1998). Sharon L. Sullivan, special ed.:

- "Rehearsing Dramaturgy: 'Time is Passing'" (Geoff Proehl)
- "The Politics of Dramaturgy: (John Lutterbie)
- "Feminism and Dramaturgy: Musings on Multiple Meanings" (Gayle Austin)

"Dramaturgy in Community-Based Theater" (Susan Chandler Haedicke)
"Chicanas/Latinas in Performance on the American Stage: Current Trends & Practices" (Elizabeth Ramirez)
"Playing with the Borders: Dramaturging Ethnicity in Bosnia" (Sonja Kuflinec)

Kindelan, Nancy. Shadows of Realism: Dramaturgy and the Theories of Practices of Modernism. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996.

"The LMDA Source Book: Resources on the Teaching of Dramaturgy," Lee Devin and Susan Jonas, eds. (in-house publication): 1992, the Green Source Book; 1997 the Red Source Book.

II. New Play Development

Parabasis: Special Focus Dramaturgy. 5.2 (1998). Mead Hunter, ed.:

"Double Duty" (Walter Bilderback)
"Resource Guide: Twelve Tall Dramaturgs" (Bryan Davidson, ed.)
"Slouching Toward Rapprochement" (Roger Arturo Durling)
"Q & A: As a Dramaturg, at what stages in a script's life are you most useful to the playwright?"
"Q & A: As a Playwright, when do you find it useful to work with a dramaturg?"

III. Dramaturgy Web Pages

Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas Home Page (under construction): <http://www.lmda.org/>
"dramaturgy northwest" (organizational home page while "lmda.org" is under construction):
<http://www.ups.edu/professionalorgs/dramaturgy/>
"The Dramaturgy Pages":
<http://www.dramaturgy.net/dramaturgy/>
Yahoo! Top:Arts:Performing Arts:Theater:Dramaturgy:
http://www.yahoo.com/Arts/Performing_Arts/Theater/Dramaturgy/

IV. Dramaturgy E-Mail Lists

(see article by Winston Neutel, *New Technologies in this issue of the Review*)

V. Lynn Thomson and *Rent*, Some Citations

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