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LMDA Review, volume 11, issue 2

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the lmda review

*The Newsletter of
Literary Managers and
Dramaturgs of the
Americas
Vol. 11, Issue 2
Spring, 2001*

**literary
managers
& dramaturgs
of the americas**

“I believe that the basic requirement for all rehearsal work . . . is primarily a kind of doubting process.”

Peter Stein on dramaturgy and doubt

Section I: In Review

LMDA Conference 2001

June 7-10, 2001, Denver, Colorado:

Dramaturgy and Community: Building and Maintaining a Healthy Theatre Ecology

Venue: Denver Public Library, Downtown

Plus Denver History Museum & Denver Center for the Performing Arts

Full Conference Fee: LMDA member \$160.00, LMDA student member \$80.00

LMDA Banquet: \$35.00 per person

Accommodation Options: Denver Executive Towers, YMCA, Youth Hostel

See the Conference Brochure (grey insert) enclosed in this mailing: a Cover Letter from Conference Chair

Gretchen Haley, a 1-page Conference Contacts & Overview, a 2-page Conference Registration Form, and a 2-page LMDA Membership Form.

Plan on joining us in Denver. Renew your membership, and register NOW!

Please contact Conference Chair Gretchen Haley (masha1738@aol.com) or

LMDA President DD Kugler (ddkugler@sfu.ca) with any questions you have.

A. A LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP FROM THE LMDA BOARD CHAIR MARK BLY

When former LMDA President Geoff Proehl last spring, asked if I would be willing to take over as LMDA's Board

Chair, I sensed that no matter how hectic or layered my life as a teacher, producer and dramaturg might become in the upcoming year I had to accept this new challenge. As we enter the 21st century as an organization, there are a vast array of issues facing us in terms of survival and continued growth. At the four hour Board

Meeting held in New York on December 16th, 2000 LMDA's President DD Kugler, the Executive Committee, the Board and I focused on many critical issues for our organization:

- 1) How can the Board be more active in supporting the organization's goals?

- 2) The need for the Board to help define and promote LMDA's growth and movement to the next level.
- 3) Increased Board recruitment from other artistic mediums.
- 4) Michele Volansky, Vice President for Development, outlined our fundraising goals and new strategies for stabilizing and improving our financial situation.
- 5) Expanding the LMDA membership by focusing on promotion within the existing college dramaturgy programs and recruitment through increased LMDA regional activities.
- 6) The pressing need to re-examine the existing LMDA Bylaws and to bring them in line with current practice and to bring current practice in line with the Bylaws.
- 7) LMDA Annual Conference Planning for the upcoming June, 2001 event at the Denver Public Library with the theme of "The Ecology of a Theatre Community."
- 8) The need to secure a long-term office space for the New York LMDA Office by June, 2002 at the latest (a short term crisis was averted last year when Virginia Coates offered a spare room in her Brooklyn apartment for a temporary LMDA office).
- 9) The search for a permanent site for LMDA archival materials to preserve our history and to make them available for future research projects.
- 10) An update and discussion on the NYSCA Dramaturgy Residency Program which eventually led to the establishment by DD Kugler and Maxine Kern of a relationship with New Dramatists of New York.
- 11) The need to continue and build upon the excellent editorial standards Geoff Proehl has established in developing and enhancing the *LMDA Review* during his tenure.
- 12) The pressing issue of advocacy for the organization and the dramaturgy profession at large.

The last item generated an animated, passionate discussion as we recognized the significance of the work by Lynn Thomson and the Advocacy Caucus in creating the pioneering document Proposed Resolutions: To Improve Working Conditions. We celebrated the near-

unanimous approval by the voting membership quorum, but noted that under the guidance of the Advocacy Caucus we now should collectively turn our attention to the dissemination of the document as proposed in Resolution Two and the creation of sample contracts for dramaturgs as proposed in Resolution Three.

Finally, we acknowledged at the meeting the extraordinary work of Peggy Marks, the former LMDA Board Chair, and Geoff Proehl, our former LMDA President. Their contributions to the organizational and intellectual growth of LMDA and its members has been incalculable: to paraphrase the contemporary philosopher athlete, Yogi Bera, thanks to Peggy and Geoff, dramaturgy's "future ain't what it used to be!"

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B. DIXON TO THE GUTHRIE BY M. LOUISE LYTLE

This April Michael Bigelow Dixon, Literary Manager and Associate Artistic Director of Actors Theatre of Louisville, has left his home of more than 15 years to take on the role of Literary Manager at the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis, Minnesota. While at Actors Theatre, Michael was best known for his work on new play development, including new play commissions, the Humana Festival of New American Plays, supervising the National One-Act and Ten Minute Play Contests, production dramaturgy, and the publication of Actors Theatre plays. He also developed the Classics in Context Festival, the Flying Solo & Friends Festival and the Free Theatre Project. He has also written numerous ten-minute plays with Val Smith and directed ATL's mainstage productions of *Nixon's Nixon*, August Strindberg's *Creditors* (the first Free Theatre production), Margaret Edson's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wit* and the Humana Festival premiere of *Standard Time* by Naomi Wallace. His tenure at Actors Theatre has established Michael as one of the nation's foremost practitioners of new play development.

According to Mr. Dixon, "the chance to work with and learn from Michael Lupu, James Houghton, Joe Dowling, Jo

Holcomb, and Carla Steen" was one of the Guthrie's primary attractions, but plans for a new home that would expand the theatre's mission to include more new plays added to the Guthrie's appeal. As for specific plans for new play development Michael states, "We're beginning with a clean slate and the simple question, 'What will it mean to be a playwright at the Guthrie?' We'll be examining how the theatre wants to fill its new complex in 2004, and how the programming will need to evolve from the Guthrie's 2001 season." Guthrie Artistic Director Joe Dowling seems equally excited about the opportunity: "We are thrilled to welcome Michael at this important juncture in the Guthrie Theater's history."

Michael remained at Actors Theatre to complete the 2001 Humana Festival before taking on his new post at the Guthrie in April, 2001.

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C. OFFICE UPDATE BY GINNY COATES

In case you haven't heard yet, the LMDA office has moved. Unfortunately, due to an increase in rent and a looming threat that the space was going to be sold, we were forced to find new accommodations. Our new address is: **P.O. Box 728, Village Station, New York, NY 10014**. The new phone number is: **718-437-5462**. The office now resides in the home of the administrator, Ginny Coates.

The move itself went smoothly, thanks to the help of LMDA members Michael Aman, Merv Antonio and Julie Hegner. Each gave up a significant amount of weekend time to help pack up the office and move it. All materials, records, and memorabilia have been safely transported and housed. It took a couple of weeks to get everything unpacked and reassembled, but all is now running smoothly.

This solution is short term and we are accepting any suggestions or information in regards to office space in the New York City area.

The job hotline has been disconnected, due in part to the move, but also due to lack of

use. All job/internship information can be found on the web and also look for postings in the *Review*.

Hopefully, this covers all the major changes brought about by the move. If any further information is needed, contact the new address, phone number, or email address: lmda2000@aol.com.

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D. TECHNOLOGY NOTES BY WINSTON NEUTEL

The LMDA Discussion List continues to be the most-prominent aspect of LMDA's Internet activity. There are now over 300 subscribers, who each receive copies of every message sent to the list's e-mail address, and discussions have ranged over a variety of topics. There is equal variety in the type of conversation. The list can be a notice board, research resource, idea tester, audience builder, source of advice, a cafe for casual or theoretical discussion, or a work space where decisions are made.

3,200 messages have been sent to through the discussion list in the past two-and-a-half years. With an estimated average of 200 subscribers over that time, this means that the list has generated 640,000 e-mails. To subscribe, send the message "subscribe discussion" (without the quotation marks) to majordomo@dramaturgy.net.

LMDA's web site at www.lmda.org is growing into new areas. A password-protected area for members only has been established and a growing number of LMDA publications are being posted there, including the regular serials like the *LMDA Review* and the *Script Exchange*, and publications like the *Sourcebook* or "the Guides" (for Internships or Academic Programs).

The Internship Guide will also be the first experiment in the next step for the web site: using simple databases for "content management." One way this could be done would look like this: to your internship program, you enter the details into a web form. The editor has a password for an editing form where they view the new entry, make any adjustments, and push a

button to add it to the site. The content management software updates the pages, adding the new entry in the right spot on the right page, making other changes (e.g., updating links, or splitting a page that's getting too large into two), and grouping the pages by category or geography, for example.

This approach simplifies updating the web site, even if the editor enters the new info, because they only work with the change in information—not building a web site. If others find it helpful as well, then the site becomes a collaborative workspace for managing the information it contains. The site could become the "home" for the information, rather than holding a version, produced at one point in time, of data that is kept elsewhere. Such a system could be set up for just about any type of publication people may want to collaborate on.

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E. NEWS FROM CEAD MONTREAL BY CRYSTAL BÉLIVEAU CO-ORDINATOR OF ENGLISH- LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

Le Centre des auteurs dramatiques (CEAD) is an association dedicated to the development and promotion of Québec and French-Canadian plays and playwrights both at home and abroad. It is perhaps best known outside Québec for its work in establishing partnerships, often in the form of playwrights' exchanges, with a host of theatre organisations throughout Canada, the United States, Latin America, Great Britain and other European countries. What follows is a quick look at some of the English-language activities in which CEAD has been involved over the past twelve months, as well as a preview of what's to come:

Banff playRites Colony 2000: In August, 2000, CEAD member playwrights Serge Boucher and Micheline Parent headed off to Banff with their respective translators Shelley Tepperman and Linda Gaboriau, where they worked on the English translations of *24 Exposures* (Boucher/Tepperman) and *Love's Prey* (Parent/Gaboriau). *24 Exposures* was

subsequently produced by Calgary's Alberta Theatre Projects in January 2001.

Transmissions 2000: For many years now, CEAD and Playwrights' Workshop Montreal have co-produced a translation exchange whereby pieces by some of Québec and Canada's top playwrights make the fascinating transition from their mother tongue to their 'other' tongue, take the stage in the form of a public reading, and often go on to production. The collaboration has been instrumental in creating a growing body of work in translation and in perfecting the art of translation for the stage.

This year, *Transmissions* took on a new twist: in an initiative to reach a larger pool of English-language theatre professionals, Playwrights' Workshop Montreal decided to take two plays which already existed in English translation but which hadn't been read outside of Montreal, and to transport the readings to Toronto's Tarragon Theatre. The two Québécois playwrights to participate in this new venture were Larry Tremblay, with his play *Blue Hands* (translated by Don Druick and directed by PWM Dramaturg-in-Residence Peter Hinton), and Carole Fréchette, with her play *Elisa's Skin* (translated by John Murrell and directed by PWM Artistic Director Paula Danckert).

The evening of readings took place on November 26, 2000. Beyond being a treat in itself, the event quickly bore fruit, as Carole Fréchette's piece was picked up for production by Tarragon for its 2001-2002 season.

On December 6th, 2000, CEAD reciprocated by commissioning the French translation of Don Hannah's *Running Far Back* and giving it a public reading in Montréal during CEAD's 15th annual Semaine de la dramaturgie. The play—translated by René Gingras under the title *La Mémoire au poing* and directed by Richard Fréchette—transported the rapt public to a beach in New Brunswick, where the various truths of a family history surfaced in flashes.

Celebrating Theatre from Quebec: On February 15th and 16th, 2001, The Americas Society in New York hosted playwrights François Archambault, Jean Marc Dalpé,

Carole Fréchette, Marie Laberge and Larry Tremblay, who read extracts from their work in both French and English. Sponsored by Quebec Government House in New York, *Celebrating Theatre from Québec* was one of many events which took place during the *Celebrate Canada* program sponsored by the Canadian Consulate General.

Québec New York 2001: From September 13–October 7, 2001, *Québec New York 2001* will give some of Quebec's most important artists the opportunity to showcase their work in 'The Big Apple.' During this event, CEAD and its New York partner The Public Theater will hold a mini-festival of Québécois theatre, featuring public readings of *For the Pleasure of Seeing her Again* by Michel Tremblay, *Motel Hélène* by Serge Boucher, *Trick or Treat* by Jean Marc Dalpé, *Stone and Ashes* by Daniel Danis, *The Four Lives of Marie* by Carole Fréchette, *Tales of Real Children* by Suzanne Lebeau and *Littoral* by Wajdi Mouawad.

In return, CEAD will host an American playwright suggested by The Public Theater at its Translation Residency from September 3–September 14, 2001. Public readings of the work in translation will take place the following week in Montréal.

Translation Workshop with the Tarragon Theatre: Since 1997, CEAD and The Tarragon Theatre have been co-producing a translation workshop which has introduced the English-speaking public to such plays as *The Four Lives of Marie* by Carole Fréchette, *Motel Hélène* by Serge Boucher and *In the Eyes of Stone Dogs* by Daniel Danis. This year, it was *Le Petit Köchel* by Normand Charette which sparked the interest of Tarragon Artistic Director Urjo Kareda. A public reading of the translation will take place in Toronto in the fall of 2001.

Québec Plays in Translation: The 2001 supplement to the 1998 edition of *Québec Plays in Translation* is now available on our web site at www.cead.qc.ca. If you have any comments or enquiries about this issue, please feel free to contact me at (514) 288-3384 or drop me a line at cead@cead.qc.ca.

More exciting projects are in the works for 2002, not the least of which is an international playwrights exchange with Traverse Theatre of Edinburgh. Details to follow!

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F. LMDA AFFILIATES WITH ATHE BY CINDY SORELLE

LMDA is now an affiliate of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education, joining ten other professional organizations currently associated with ATHE. These organizations include National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST), Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival, University/Resident Theatre Association (URTA), and International Theatre Institute.

ATHE will hold its annual conference at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago, August 2-5, 2001. **LMDA will sponsor two sessions:** "Issues and Innovations in Dramaturgy" (August 4) and "Chicago Dramaturgs Meet the Avante Garde" (August 5). LMDA and the Dramaturgy Focus Group of ATHE will jointly sponsor a reception in the theatre district—details to be announced soon.

ATHE's Dramaturgy Focus Group has scheduled a number of additional sessions: "Theory and Practice of Virtual Dramaturgy" will consider both theoretical and practical implications of using technology as a dramaturgical tool, and how virtual "connectedness" can be used to create a network of regional theatres that collaborate in the area of artistic support.

"Cultural and Ethical Considerations in Translation and Adaptation" will afford dramaturgs who translate and/or adapt works for the stage a chance to participate in workshopping standards regarding these practices. Issues to be addressed include when translation shifts into adaptation and how the process of negotiating cultural boundaries repositions a work. If you translate or adapt for the stage, please consider this an invitation to participate.

"Theatrescapes: Intersections of Dramaturgy and Design" is jointly sponsored by the Dramaturgy and Design/Technology Focus Groups. Joining us for this discussion is Anthony Dean, Head of Production, Art, and Design for the Central School of Speech and Drama in London. Participants in this session will examine current explorations in the fields of social geography and cartography as they relate to the indigenous architecture of the modern stage and contribute to our understanding of how theatre space functions.

Lynn Thomson is organizing the 2001 Dramaturgy Debut Panel. Emerging dramaturgs may submit a project staged within the last several years. Please contact her if you want information about how to submit a prospectus for this adjudicated session. She can be reached at <miriam@attglobal.net>

For more information about the conference, check the ATHE website at www.hawaii.edu/athe/ and join us in Chicago.

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G. ATHE 2001: PRACTICE, THEORY, TECHNOLOGY AND THE NEW STUDENT BY NANCY ERICKSON

ATHE's 2001 Conference welcomes ATHE members and non-members to a celebration of ATHE's fifteen years as the leader in theatre education and practice. . Back to its birthplace, ATHE seeks to relive its beginnings at the Palmer House Hilton Hotel. Famous rooms—the Red Lacquer Room and the Empire Room—bring back memories of the first ATHE Conference, and conventions held there in 1990, 1994, and 1997.

To honor the challenges and opportunities facing the theatre profession in the new millennium, ATHE's 2001 Conference Committee has chosen to focus on familiar questions and how to mesh the answers with "new-new" solutions.

In response to these critical inquiries, ATHE 2001 features over 285 sessions,

presented as workshops, multidisciplinary sessions, panels, seminars, performances and demonstrations. ATHE has sought programming that combines at least two of the title's topics to guide the conference focus. These topics, emanating from ATHE's Strategic Plan, also examine areas of professional development, technology, and advocacy.

Four Seminars, concentrating on "Practice," "Theory," "Technology" and "The New Student," feature senior scholars as respondents to papers presented by experts in the specific disciplines examined. ATHE takes the classic "seminar" approach to probing the issues within the conference title: panelists will create papers about the topic that will be presented in abstract form online. At the Conference, participants will present a summary of their papers, followed by the response of a well-known senior scholar in theatre. The dialogue between the panelists, as well as interaction with the attendees, will make these focused seminars valuable to all.

Seminars:

"Practice"—Chair, J. Robert Wills, Dean, College of Fine Arts, Arizona State University (invited)
Sunday, August 5 — 9:45 am to 11:15 am

"Theory"—Chair, Julian Olf, Professor of Theater, University of Massachusetts
Friday, August 3 — 9:45 am to 11:15 am

"Technology"—Chair, Jon Whitmore, Provost, University of Iowa
Thursday, August 2 — 1:45 PM to 3:15 PM

"The New Student"—Chair, Rhonda Blair, Professor of Theatre, Southern Methodist University
Saturday, August 4 — 5:15 PM to 6:45 PM

Past Presidents' Panel Ponders ATHE's Future The *Past Presidents' Panel*, Friday, from 1:45 PM to 3:15 PM, will review the progress that ATHE has made to reach its adolescence and speculate about the future of the theatre profession and what role ATHE will take in its future development.

Participants include:

Founding President Beverley Byers-

Pevitts, President, Park University, Parkville, MO;
Harold Nichols, Dean, Arts & Sciences, Georgia Southwestern State University;
Jim Symons, Professor, Director of Graduate Studies in Theatre, University of Colorado, Boulder;
Gil Lazier, Dean of Theatre Emeritus, School of Theatre, Florida State University;

Carole Brandt, Dean, Meadows School of the Arts, Southern Methodist University;
Mark Heckler, Dean, College of Arts and Media, University of Colorado at Denver;
Jill Dolan, Z.T. Scott Family Chair in Drama, University of Texas at Austin;
President Donna Aronson, Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, University of the Incarnate Word.

Fifteen Multidisciplinary Sessions offered throughout the three days of educational programming use a new format that marries at least three disciplines from the twenty-three Focus Groups to address the conference theme. Although conference programming still focuses on specialty areas of study, the Multidisciplinary Sessions bring members throughout the theatre department together at one table to discuss and cross-reference their similarities and differences. Sample titles include:

- ◆ "Spanning the Gap Between Playwrights and Directors: A 21st Century Approach"
- ◆ "Performing Politics in the Theater and Classroom"
- ◆ "Technology, Teaching, Performance, Collaboration"
- ◆ "Innovation or Insult: The Non Ethnic Practitioner Guiding Ethnic Centered Work"
- ◆ "Feminist Dramaturgs and Directors in the Liberal Arts: A Roundtable"

Exhibition Hall

The Exhibit Hall is located on the 4th Floor with the ATHE Conference Registration desk, the Red Lacquer Room, the Plenary Session Hall.

The Opening Reception is the place to begin your networking. On Thursday, August 2 — 7:15 PM to 9:00 PM, come to the Exhibit Hall to re-connect with colleagues and make new acquaintances.

During the lunch break from 1:00 PM to 1:45 PM on Friday, August 3, stop at the Exhibit Hall to see the famed "Second City Training Center" troupe perform.

Meet well-known authors at the Author Signing event in the Exhibit Hall on Saturday, August 4, from 1:00 PM to 1:45 PM.

Registered Exhibitors as of February 15, 2001:

Heinemann
Holtzbrinck Publishers
McGraw-Hill
Palgrave (formerly St. Martin's Press)
Playwrights Union of Canada
Routledge
Southern Illinois University Press
The University of Michigan Press

For more information about the Conference, or to receive a conference marketing brochure, contact CCC, Inc., info@cccmeetings.com, or call (630) 416-3030. A complete schedule and conference brochure will be available in April on ATHE's webpage at www.hawaii.edu/athe.

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H. REGIONAL NEWS

Report On Canadian Caucus: by Brian Quirt

LMDA Canada has undertaken three principal initiatives this year. The first is to co-host, after a one-year hiatus, the fourth annual Mini-Conference on Dramaturgy, in association with the Toronto Theatre Centre. The conference will be held on July 9th and 10th at Buddies in Bad Times Theatre. Admission is free, but please RSVP to Brian if you plan to attend. There will be a series of case study presentations, one of which will focus on Vancouver's Electric Company (presented by Rachel Ditor). As well, the afternoon of July 10th will be devoted to a round table discussion of play development models and current issues, in part as preparation for the LMDA's 2002 Annual Conference, to be held in Vancouver. The second effort, spearheaded by Henry Bakker, is a student initiative whose goal is to promote LMDA amongst theatre students and scholars

across the country. Our goal is to increase the membership base and also to begin to bring our theatre schools and academic drama programmes into the lively discussion that already happens within LMDA. The third project is a survey of fees and salaries commonly received by dramaturgs for both freelance and institutional work. I have had a good response so far, and will be distributing my preliminary findings in the spring newsletter. I hope this information will support the work done by the LMDA Advocacy Committee and the Guideline to Employment they have created.

Active membership in the Canadian Caucus now totals 51, which includes quite a few new members. There are a dozen lapsed members whom I hope will renew when membership-time comes up again in June.

The Caucus published two newsletters in the past year, with a third planned for late May. The fall newsletter was sent to the entire LMDA membership, as a means of continuing to promote Canadian dramaturgical process and Canadian plays

to our American colleagues. LMDA members in the Toronto region have been meeting regularly this season to chat about various issues. I'm pleased to report that a number of graduate drama and dramaturgy students have been attending these casual get-togethers and the resulting discussions have been wide-ranging and very useful. If you plan to visit Toronto, contact me to see if your trip coincides with a meeting.

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I. NOTE TO THE EDITOR DAVID COPELIN

Dear Geoff,

I've read the latest *LMDA Review* with interest, and I'm pleased to learn that LMDA's relationship with the NEA is being strengthened. Dramaturgs have sat on the NEA's grant review panels before; for example, I served on the Theatre Companies panel in 1986, and I believe there have been others. Such service is crucial to keeping artistic quality and innovation high on the list of funding criteria. It's also a wonderful experience,

hard work but great fun, and you get to work with colleagues gifted in diverse ways.

I strongly recommend that American dramaturgs touch base with the NEA Theatre Program as often as possible, keeping the agency folk informed of what's going on in the profession and in your particular theatres, dropping in for a chat whenever you're in Washington, and taking advantage of any other opportunities for service that arise. Gigi Bolt and Eleanor Denegre are wise and sensitive people. They can be of immense help in facilitating the transmission of LMDA's perspective to places where it will do the most good for us and for the art of the theatre.

David

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Section II: Essays and Articles

A. THE EXPERIMENT TRADITION BY MICHAEL BIGELOW DIXON

[Note from Editor: This article originally appeared in the *Humana Festival of New American Plays: 25 Years at Actors Theatre of Louisville*, Edited by Michael Bigelow Dixon and Andrew Carter Crocker, 2001. We hope it might lead to future pieces examining new play development programs in North America.]

For playwrights, there's no formula for success — every new play is an experiment. Put some ideas in the cyclotron of human imagination, spin those neurons, and sometimes a new play emerges. And sometimes it doesn't, because the equation of playwriting is full of variables. The playwright's only constant is her or his talent, but otherwise there are no rules or binding conventions. There are traditions, of course, but with tradition

comes the practice of breaking traditions, and that's provided subversive pleasure for playwrights for centuries.

Recognizing that to be the case, Jon Jory has used the Humana Festival of New American Plays not only as a showcase for new plays and playwrights, but as a kind of laboratory. In his quest for new dramatic riches, he has continually encouraged playwrights to break with tradition and explore new possibilities in form, content and collaboration. Sometimes his encouragement came in the form of unusual commissions; other times it was manifested by a willingness to produce unconventional work — Gary Leon Hill's environmental *Food From Trash*, complete with dump truck and dumpster, comes to mind. These choices sent the following message to vigilant American playwrights—the Humana Festival would be a venue for theatricality and talent informed by but unbounded by tradition.

In the early years of the festival, Jon and his staff targeted under-utilized forms for exploration. Their creation of special projects for short plays and solo performances contributed to international interest in the ten-minute play and to the development of new voices for the American stage. Robert Schenkkan, for example, was among the early soloists whose success with *The Survivalist* in 1982 aided his career move from actor to dramatist. Jane Martin's first work, *Talking With*, a collection of eccentric character monologues, premiered that same year before moving off-Broadway and then overseas, where it garnered the Best Play of the Year Award from *Theatre Heute* magazine in Germany.

Jon next whetted his appetite for experimentation with documentary theatre. Beginning with *Execution of Justice* by Emily Mann, Actors Theatre embarked on

a five-year investigation into the possibilities of docudrama. These plays included: *Digging In* by Julie Beckett Crutcher and Vaughn McBride, an encounter with Kentuckians whose lives were sorely tested by 1980s farm policies; *Whereabouts Unknown* by Barbara Damashek, a musical call-to-action for the homeless; Steven Dietz's riveting exposé of bigotry and murder in the white supremacy movement, *God's Country*; and *A Piece of My Heart*, Shirley Lauro's moving account of women who served in the Vietnam War. These playwrights orchestrated personal testimony into compelling socio-theatrical events whose revelatory powers emanated as much from their sense of "authenticity" as from their conventional dramatic elements.

In the 1990s, we broadened our outlook on the ways in which new plays could be "written," and Actors Theatre embarked on a decade-long experiment with ensemble-created work. Paul Walker's satirical deconstruction of Anthony Comstock's crusade against pornography, *A Passenger Train of Sixty-One Coaches*, launched the series. It was followed by Brian Jucha's descent into the chaos of human passion, *Deadly Virtues*, Tina Landau's spirited tale of sexual liberation, *1969*, and Joanne Akalaitis's celebration of Jack Kerouac's literary life force, *Ti Jean Blues*. Anne Bogart and The SITI Company premiered several works, including *War of the Worlds*, SITI's first collaboration with a playwright, Naomi Iizuka. In each of these productions, the ensemble's unconventional wedding of text to choreography and design produced virtuosic offspring in performance.

The Humana Festival's 20th century ended with a series of wild experiments in media, venue and collaboration. The most critically successful of these was Richard Dresser's car play, *What Are You Afraid Of?*, which took place in the front seat of an automobile while audience members watched this wicked comedy from the back seat. *The T(ext) Shirt Project* transformed spectators into performers by outfitting them in t-shirts with entire plays printed on the back. The Phone Plays brought drama into the theatre lobby via pay phones, allowing theatregoers a chance to eavesdrop on "private conversations." And *Back Story*, conceived as a two-character

play for twenty-two actors, began as a short story commission from Joan Ackermann, which was then adapted for the stage by eighteen playwrights.

There have been other experiments in the history of the Humana Festival—commissioning plays from novelists and journalists, for instance, or The Mentor Project, which brought together established and emerging playwrights for thematically unified bills of one-act plays. All these programs had their share of successes and near misses, but focusing on individual plays or projects obscures a larger vision for the Humana Festival.

In the creation of new theatre, experiment is meaningless without tradition, and vice versa. Each has value, each informs the other, and together they create a powerful dialogue that speaks to the history and future of theatre. By promoting that dialogue through play and project selection, Jon ensured the Humana Festival would retain its fascination—for himself, the staff, audiences, critics and artists. Did we leave anyone out?

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B. COMMUNITY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCRIPTS FOR STAGE AND SCREEN
BY MARY BLACKSTONE

Over the past couple of years in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan, several organizations concerned with the development of dramatic scripts for stage and screen have come together to form a partnership. Their objective has been to establish a Centre which can coordinate the developmental support and initiatives already undertaken separately by each organization and provide for cross-media and production-based development not otherwise available to provincial writers.

Centre Partners

The Centre currently involves seven partner organizations, each of whom are looking to the Centre to augment their established developmental activities. The Saskatchewan Playwrights Centre supports the development of theatre scripts and playwrights through one-on-one dramaturgy, readings, workshops and

staged readings at its Spring Festival of New Plays. SPC is not, however, able to support the development of translations, collectively devised scripts or production-based development. It is also looking for ways to foster more professional productions of its writers' new work within and beyond the province and create broader support and demand for such work among the public.

The Saskatchewan Drama Association has 3,500 members representing every school district in a province where Arts Education has been a core element in the K-12 curriculum for several years. They annually host a series of regional festivals which include prizes for new plays, but they have been unable to provide significant support for the development of young playwrights or specific scripts written either by young people or their teachers. There is also no corresponding organization concerned with the development of young writers for screen or new media and even less expertise in this area among teachers in the school system.

The Saskatchewan Writers Guild has been representing the interests of writers of all disciplines for over 30 years and with a membership of more than 700 is regarded as instrumental in making Saskatchewan the province with the largest number of writers per capita in the country. The Guild provides substantial funding to SPC and collaborates with a local theatre to support an annual festival of short plays, but it has had little success developing programs to facilitate cross-over by its members into writing for screen or new media.

The Saskatchewan Motion Picture Association represents nearly 400 organizations and individuals encompassing, most of those engaged in a booming film and video industry. SaskFilm is a non-profit funding agency established and funded by the government in order to support not only film and video, but also new media. Its \$6.3 million budget has had much to do with the industry's rise from contributing \$6 million to the province's economy to more than \$90 million in the past ten years. Both organizations are concerned, however, that few films produced in the province are actually written by Saskatchewan writers or story editors and that the general public in the

province has little interest in and/or opportunity to view the work being produced here.

The final two partners are the University of Regina and an affiliated college, the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College, which is one of few such institutions run wholly by aboriginal people in the Americas. Together the two institutions offer opportunities for students to pursue undergraduate and graduate courses and programs in creative writing; dramaturgy; acting; directing; film, video and new media production. With new state-of-the-art theatre facilities, as well as video and new media production equipment, the University has appropriate facilities to serve as a base for the Centre and more than a dozen faculty spread across English, Arts Education, Theatre, Music and Media Studies with keen research interests and experience in the writing and development of dramatic scripts. As well, SIFC has strong connections with the aboriginal community throughout the province, which despite its sizable presence has so far had comparatively little visibility in programs offered by the other Centre partners.

Developmental Objectives

In establishing The Centre for the Study of Script Development, these partners are attempting to create a less compartmentalized writing and development environment where writers can pursue a dramatic idea more easily across media formats; where professionals, academic researchers, students and other amateurs can collaborate more freely; where interested writers can work from the earliest stages of a dramatic idea either collectively or collaboratively with actors, directors, designers, musicians and/or technicians; where scripts can be developed and promoted through production, either in the form of video demos or co-productions with theatre companies and media producers; and where a variety of communities can explore issues of importance to them and/or be reconnected with and gain input into the telling of their stories.

Research Questions and Results

Apart from providing a venue for the practical development of new work, the Centre has also been conceived as an environment for documenting and

experimenting with developmental process and for exploring specific theoretical issues and practical questions related to that process. For example, to what extent can the quite distinct practices commonly employed in the development of writing for the stage and for the screen be usefully employed in the other discipline? How do either of these approaches apply to the development of dramatic work for new media? To what extent do the different dramatic media necessitate clear distinctions in writing practices and approaches and to what extent are they interchangeable? What developmental practices are best suited to non-text-based, collective and popular work? How closely can or should the development of scripts and writers be connected with the development of audiences for their work? How valid is the special place commonly given to theatre over film or video in the construction of “community?” To what extent do specific dramatic formats and narrative structures lend themselves to the creation of “universal,” “global,” “imagined” or “particular” (e.g.—geographical, ethnic, racial, gender specific or issue based) audiences?

Different dimensions of “community development” are actually a common concern linking the Centre partners with the province as a whole. In the face of globalization and increasing urbanization, an urban/rural split has developed in the province. Many rural, prairie communities regard the deterioration of their social, economic and cultural fabric as a palpable threat. These communities, along with many artists and some urban dwellers, feel alienated and fear the loss of their cultural identity. The Centre’s de-centered mandate to develop community plays, popular theatre and video pieces, as well as the work of individual writers, within the community concerned is intended to contribute to the strengthening and/or reconstruction of cultural identity. If communities are able to tell their own stories—and potentially export some of those stories—then they may feel less alienated by globalizing developments. Some groups such as our aboriginal communities, ethnic and racial minorities and inhabitants in Saskatchewan’s far north have long felt alienated from the provincial “community” and welcome the potential of new technologies to link them with global

or cross-border communities with common cultural concerns.

Funding and Current Projects

The “community” dimension of the Centre makes it eligible for substantial funding (\$200,000/year) through the Community-University Research Alliances program of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. In the most recent competition involving community development projects in areas ranging from health to housing, the Centre was ranked just below the 15 projects for which funding was available. In order to seriously support development within a production environment, funding on this order is necessary, and the partners have been encouraged to apply again in the next round. Given their own substantial commitments to the Centre in kind and cash, however, they have already begun to initiate activities which do not require the full proposed budget of nearly half a million dollars per year.

In 2000-2001 such activities involve readings, workshops and the production of new work by a range of experienced to novice writers. These have included a fringe festival consisting mostly of new work developed by students and alumni, with one especially successful piece by two women of colour. The festival gained national media coverage and exceeded all expectations in achieving its objective to cultivate a young audience interested in new, alternative theatre pieces. A Playwrights Reading Series is featuring a mixture of emerging and internationally established writers with a particular focus this year on writers who work collectively and/or cross-over between stage and screen. A Playwrights Reading Circle meets regularly for the reading of work currently in progress and a similar Circle is being set up for screen writers and actors. Workshops are being planned for students and teachers in the school system, two inner city theatre groups for troubled youth and young aboriginal writers in northern Saskatchewan. Along with a mentorship program for screenwriters in general, a program is planned to specifically target the development of women screen writers and encourage the participation of established women writers in other forms who wish to cross-over into screenwriting.

Connections across Borders

As Director of the Centre and a dramaturg connected with several of these developmental projects, I am writing to LMDA members to solicit advice and feedback from colleagues involved with similar developmental activities or research issues. An important component of the Centre's mandate is to connect writers and their work with a wider community: artists, producers, translators, dramaturgs, researchers, organizations and audiences beyond our provincial boundaries. We are, therefore, anxious to foster exchanges which could take the form of live readings, reciprocal translation projects, electronic co-productions, virtual collectives linking "imagined communities," and/or a collaborative festival cum conference concerned with crossing the borders constructed by geographical, cultural and media boundaries. I would very much welcome responses from individuals or organizations who might be interested in such collaborative or exchange activities.

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C. A COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP BY MICHAEL WRIGHT AND GEOFF PROEHL

Part One: Creating the Workshop by Michael Wright

At the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) 1999 conference in Toronto, two focus groups, Dramaturgy and the Playwrights Program, held a joint meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to explore shared interests, and generate future collaborations. One such collaboration was a workshop I designed, which was accepted for the 2000 ATHE conference in Washington, DC. The workshop was called "Encounters of the First Kind: Playwrights and Dramaturgs Working Together."

A bit of background will help set the stage for a discussion of the workshop itself.

Both focus groups are very active in ATHE. The Playwrights Program, of which I am a member, presents workshops and panels, holds several business meetings, and oversees a growing number of play reading presentations. The play readings include the New Play Development Workshop for ten-minute plays; Playworks, a presentation of longer scripts; the David Mark Cohen Award presentation, a reading of the winning script in a combined ATHE and Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival (KC/ACTF) competition; and Three by Three, the presentation of three selected scripts from the Playwrights Program pre-conference. One of the Playwrights Program's self-appointed missions is to seek out opportunities for conference-wide presentations. The four readings serve this mission by incorporating members from a variety of ATHE focus groups, including Dramaturgy, Directing, and Acting.

The Dramaturgy focus group maintains a high profile as well. At the 2000 ATHE, Dramaturgy sponsored ten panels, which ranged from presentations such as the "Dramaturgy Debut Panel" to highly theoretical sessions such as "Beyond Semantics: The Obstacles of Transculturation" to co-sponsored practical events such as "Menage a Trois Parts 1 and 2: Designers, Directors and Dramaturgs (Rehearsal and Conversation)."

Throughout the conference, Dramaturgy is engaged in the readings programs in conjunction with the Playwrights Program. Each ten-minute play is assigned a dramaturg, and dramaturgs work with the other plays as well.

In its 1998 business meeting, the Playwrights Program discussed the possibility of joint sessions with Dramaturgy. The membership was very interested in pursuing this, and a dual session was arranged for the 1999 Toronto conference. A number of ideas were shared at the meeting in 1999, out of which a general sense emerged as a result: playwrights and dramaturgs sometimes do not know enough about how the other works and thinks, and therefore working together is occasionally tricky. Moreover, while there is a more developed sense in the professional realm, academics do not have a strong enough grasp of the two areas. At the end of the session, possible workshops were discussed, including what

became the kernel for my notion of "encounters of the first kind."

My background is largely in new play development. I worked with a group called the New York Writers' Bloc from 1979 to 1992 in New York City; the Writers' Bloc was a professional play workshop. Following this involvement, I began to focus more on developing new work by students. I founded a program called PlayWorks at the University of Texas-El Paso which ran from 1993 to 1998, and worked with two other programs: WordBRIDGE Playwrights Lab at Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida, and World Interplay in Townsville, Australia.

I am very interested in process, from all angles. My PlayWorks program was unique in that the invited writers began a new play from scratch and developed it for three weeks in daily workshops. There was no requirement to finish the play; PlayWorks was designed to be a catalyst for new work. At WordBRIDGE, which works on principles similar to the Sundance Playwrights Lab, I've functioned as both director and dramaturg, working to explore how both positions can best serve new work. World Interplay, an international festival of young playwrights, has given me an opportunity to explore different practices and aesthetics through working with playwrights from a variety of countries around the globe.

All of these programs have a private and a public element to them. I am interested in the differences in these elements. Even if the work is only presented in-house, the reading of a new play is still a performance and sometimes a very different experience for the playwright in comparison to the private work of developing a new play. Play readings are critical steps between initial development and production, but the reading can often introduce elements which had not previously existed in the work process. When a work is presented, the play is given a certain legitimacy simply by being the thing of the moment: an event on stage. The actors perform to the best of their ability, the audience is attentive, and everyone strives to make the play work--and thus it may *seem* to be solid. Behind the scenes, in private, the playwright and artistic team can function without the pressure of performance, and an entirely

different dynamic is in play. Everyone is still working to make the play a stronger piece, but the context is quite distinctive because it is based on striving to deliver the playwright's vision through discussion, exploration, and experimentation. In the public presentation, the play is seen as the property of the artistic team; in the private environment, the play is seen more as the property of the playwright. In public, a play which doesn't land with the audience is seen as a failure--discussion can often focus on "fixin'" the work; in private, the play is considered to be in-progress, and neither hit nor flop, but part of the playwright's ongoing evolution. The language we use in each context is sometimes quite different, as is the purpose of the language; subjective and objective viewpoints often vie for supremacy as goals shift.

I wanted to present partial elements of both private and public in the ATHE workshop. My basic question was "what do dramaturgs and playwrights say to each other in first meetings?" I decided that there should be two "first" meetings in the course of the program: 1) an encounter between dramaturg and playwright on the text alone, and 2) an encounter between dramaturg and playwright following a reading of the script. I did not have a particular agenda with these first meetings, other than to encourage the parties to treat the situation as they would in a real context. In other words, the conceit of the workshop was that Theatre Z was interested in Play A. Dramaturg and playwright would meet together with a view toward forwarding that interest. I also wanted a variety of perspectives with two short plays that would be as different in tone, style, approach, language, etc., that I could find. At the time of planning the proposal, I was heavily involved in working on a new book, *Playwriting Master Class*. I decided to invite two of the book's contributors to be the playwrights for the workshop. It would be simpler to have playwrights who would attend the ATHE conference anyway, so I selected Gary Garrison and Elena Carrillo, both of whom accepted. I asked them to write a new play--ten minutes or less--for the ATHE project so we would have work none of the dramaturgs had seen before. As time for the conference approached all too rapidly, both playwrights expressed

significant problems with writing a new work. We agreed that they would both use the plays they had written for my book, neither of which had had any exposure. Gary's play, *Cherry Reds*, is an extended monologue for a woman who is leaving a bad relationship. The play moves through several locales and time periods, with other characters who are created by the solo character. Elena's play, *Three Strings*, is a piece for three women who are praying in church over the death of a male relative of less than sterling character. The piece is written as an experiment with language as music, chant and/or prayer, with the voices used in combinations of solos, duets, and trios.

I invited a group of dramaturgs to participate. The population shifted several times during the months between my original invitation and the conference in Washington due to sundry work and personal conflicts. The dramaturgs who participated in Washington were Lenore Inez Brown, at that time with the Crossroads Theatre, Dean Corrin, from The Theatre School at DePaul University, Heather Smith, a graduate student at Villanova University, and Lynn Thomson, from Brooklyn College. This was a very strong mix of backgrounds, points of view, and experience.

Geoff Proehl will provide the second half of the article with reactions to the workshop session. I will conclude with a brief description of how the workshop was organized and implemented.

In mid-summer, I sent copies of the scripts to the dramaturgs so they would have time to prepare for the workshop. The structure of the workshop was very simple: I assigned two of the dramaturgs to discuss Gary's script, and two to discuss Elena's. In order to keep the comments of one dramaturg from impeding the other, I asked one to step out of the room while the other was working with the playwright. After all four dramaturgs had met with their playwrights, we were joined by actors who read the scripts aloud. This reading was followed by further commentary by the dramaturgs. The session ended with questions and comments from the audience.

I came away from this experience feeling extremely satisfied by what we had accomplished. The working methods, language and perspectives of dramaturgs and playwrights in initial encounters were ably demonstrated by the participants, and the playwrights clearly received helpful commentary on their work. The response of the audience was very positive and enthusiastic. Every goal I had in mind was reached--and often exceeded.

Part Two: Reactions to the Workshop by Geoff Proehl

I was first of all struck by the skill of both dramaturgs and writers. It was a pleasure and privilege to watch these couples work. I was actually a bit skeptical about how much we would come to understand in an admittedly artificial set-up. We don't usually have these conversations in front of a room full of people. But Michael had done an excellent job of choosing the participants and structuring the exercise, so that we did feel as if we were listening in on versions of this initial conversation.

I was particularly interested in the various ways dramaturgs initiate first time dialogues with writers prior to a reading. Noting these approaches is probably the most useful contribution I can make to this report. For dramaturgs who have done this work for any amount of time, they may seem obvious but for those of us still learning or just beginning they should prove helpful. Here then are ways of beginning a conversation with a playwright that emerged from the workshop. Some may be more appropriate for a first ever conversation prior to a reading; others might prove useful in any conversation about a script, before or after a first reading, in new collaborations or existing ones.

- ◆ Begin with the history of the text. Has it been produced or workshopped before? Ask the writer if s/he considers it complete? Does it do what s/he wants it to do?
- ◆ Ask the writer if s/he has heard the play read?
- ◆ Ask the writer if s/he has issues or questions that s/he wants to discover in the reading?
- ◆ Ask the writer, what parts of the script s/he is happiest about? Unhappy about?

- ◆ Begin the process as ignorantly as possible, allowing oneself to ask naïve or literal questions (the challenge here is for the dramaturg to distance him/herself enough from his/her own experience to be a naïve audience)
- ◆ Read the piece but not so conceptually as to create in your head an alternative play of your own
- ◆ Begin by asking a general question, then move to more specific questions before making any suggestions
- ◆ Offer thoughts and expressions without telling the writer how to solve problems
- ◆ Ask the writer, "What do you want from me?"
- ◆ Listen with the whole body.
- ◆ Ask the writer, "What inspired you to write this piece or what is your motivating question?"
- ◆ Offer thoughts and impressions instead of prescriptions
- ◆ Tell the story of the play to the writer
- ◆ Ask the writer to describe the story in one sentence

Other points emerged, but the heart of the workshop was this sense of an array of strategies for beginning to work with a writer on a script. Moreover, I was impressed with the skill and experience evident in the interchange between both writers and dramaturgs. It reminded me that new play development work is perhaps the most challenging work that dramaturgs engage in; that dramaturging new plays is not an entry level position in the field; that to do this job well requires an apprenticeship of some sort and then years of experience.

As I listened, a number of question/issues occurred to me for future consideration. They were not necessarily occasioned by specific dialogues so much as by the way in which these conversations opened up thoughts about the process as a whole. Here are a few of these lines of inquiry. Some might provide jumping off points for future conversations.

1. What is like to do this dance again and again? As a dramaturg? As a writer? I was struck by the challenge of creating many times this working relationship from the ground up and the effort that must go into it. It made me think about the benefits of

long term relationships and the structures that make them so difficult, such as the tendency for writers to move from theater to theater while the dramaturg stays at one theater. If both the dramaturg and the playwright are in residence, this becomes less of an issue. Even in this exercise, the second round of conversations (those that occurred after the readings) seemed more relaxed and productive.

2. It is customary for dramaturgs to pay homage to a process built on questioning, but questioning as a category is quite broad. It would be good perhaps to examine this category and its sub-categories more fully in future workshops. What are the different kinds of questions we ask? Can we do a taxonomy of them?

- ◆ clarifying questions
- ◆ implicitly prescriptive questions or questions with an agenda
- ◆ questions that answers themselves
- ◆ questions that open a door for more questions
- ◆ questions that are assertions

3. It is often not the first question but the second question that is most telling: the second question, for example, might reveal the subtext of the first. It might signal actual listening, responding to what the other person gives you, or it might signal a predetermined agenda. The second question often reveals the dramaturg's skill at opening up the conversation, of moving to the next level of interacting, of being alive to the moment.

4. What are the assumptions informing a particular conversation? For example, is it assumed that the dramaturg and, if relevant, the theater for which s/he works likes the piece? Or if not the piece, likes the writer's work in general? Is it assumed that the dramaturg and writer are having this conversation to improve the script? Or is the purpose of the conversation more simply to gather information that will aid in mounting the script?

5. What do playwrights think when they hear over and over, "It's just my response?" or "I don't know, I'm just throwing this out?" or a compliment and then a suggestion. How do playwrights come to identify stages of conversations that tend to repeat themselves regardless of

the specific dramaturg with whom they are working.

6. What does it mean to signal listening? Is it possible to signal it without actually doing it? What does it mean to look for problems as opposed to trying to find out where the script is, what the script is? To fix or to explore? What is the effective role of silence?

The work that the Playwrights Program and the Dramaturgy Focus Group has been doing in recent years to explore how dramaturgs and writers work together is important. This collaboration is still relatively new to many; we have much yet to learn about how to make it more effective. Workshops like these—the strategies they suggest and the questions they raise—move us along a path of mutual discovery.

[Note: For another take on initial conversations between dramaturgs and collaborators, in this instance, directors, see Jane Ann Crum's piece, "Toward a Dramaturgical Sensibility" in *Dramaturgy in American Theater: A Source Book*, edited by Susan Jonas, Michael Lupu, and Geoff Proehl (Harcourt Brace, 1997).]

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D. AN INTERN ON INTERNSHIPS BY WYNN RANKIN, LMDA INTERN

As a LMDA intern graduating in May from the University of Puget Sound, the subject of internships as a practical means through which to gain experience in the theatre has taken on a level of personal importance. For this reason, I have taken a great interest in tracing the ongoing dialogue on the LMDA discussion list concerning internships and advocacy. Fortunately, I recently had an opportunity to talk about internships with Louise Lytle, a current dramaturgy intern at Seattle's A Contemporary Theatre (ACT) and her supervisor, ACT's Literary Manager and Dramaturg, Liz Engelman.

Lytle, who is currently in the last months of her internship, will be taking on a full-time position at ACT as a grant writer in June. In discussing internships, Lytle emphasizes clearly communicating

expectations: "Theatre is such a social profession that to be forthcoming with [the institution] and to ask them to be forthcoming with you is a good place to start."

After establishing this strong foundation, Lytle suggests that a new intern should develop a "yes, and" attitude. This view stems from her understanding that "I'm there to learn . . . and I'm there also to take whatever opportunity arises from the situation, which more often than not translates into a position of saying *yes* to all opportunities that come up *and* creating new ones for yourself."

Engelman reiterates the importance of being open to finding the practical experience inherent in the structure of an internship. However, as a supervisor, she emphasizes "the responsibility to position each job within the context of its greater significance, rather than simply designating tasks." "An internship is often the [former student's] first experience in dramaturgy

within an institution," says Engelman, "and therefore it is important to distinguish between what literary management at your institution is as well as what it *is not*."

In addressing financial concerns, Lytle suggests that perhaps the best advice, if at all possible, is to make a financial plan that includes a year-long internship, as well as an undergraduate degree. She points out that "there's value to [an internship] that's not necessarily monetary, and there are other ways for a literary manager or for an institution to value their interns." Lytle's motivation for taking her internship at ACT was in large part due to what she describes as "the understanding that the organization made a commitment to me, saying 'we want to make this happen for you, and if that means we're going to put you part time in our ticket office, or part time in our house staff . . . we're willing to make that work.'" Compromise and communication allow both the intern and the theatre to benefit.

As someone who will soon be making the transition into a full-time staff position at the institution where she is interning, Lytle suggest both perspective on and trust in the institutional process. She says that "one mistake is thinking that theatre companies are 'out to get you,' because they are also taking time and effort to get something from you, and may hope that such experience will make you a candidate for a future staff position." If an internship is a chance for practical training in literary management and dramaturgy, it is of no benefit to anyone involved if that basic goal is overlooked.

Lytle best sums up an approach to internships by returning to an image from the theatre: "Just as every rehearsal process you enter requires a certain amount of trust and a certain amount of commitment, so too does an internship."

You may trace this ongoing and dynamic dialogue on the LMDA discussion list.

Section III: Resources

A. SPOTLIGHT ON EARLY CAREER DRAMATURGS

Scott Horstein is an early-career dramaturg and translator who will finish his MFA in Dramaturgy at UC San Diego in spring 2001. Scott recently dramaturged the West Coast premiere of Austin Pendleton's *Orson's Shadow* at the Old Globe Theatre. He also served as a dramaturgical/literary intern for the 1999 season at the La Jolla Playhouse with former literary manager Elizabeth Bennett. At UCSD, Scott has dramaturged numerous productions of both established and new plays, and worked extensively with the promotions department to lead post-show discussions and produce program and press release copy. Scott has recently completed an original translation of Marivaux's *The Game of Love and Chance*. Scott is currently seeking a dramaturg or literary management position.

Please contact him by phone at (858)558-9486 or by e-mail at <s_horstein@bigfoot.com>.

Jessica Barkl: Since the conference I've been busy. My production company produced its first show with a structure influenced by the words of Moises Kaufmann at last summer's conference. We called it *The Show* and it was received with very good reviews. The critic for *The Stranger*, our weekly trendy publication, mentioned the production's unique nature, adding that he felt like he had spent an evening with very smart individuals that he wished were his friends. In the project, we played with alienation techniques and changed the show every night based on audience input.

Then, things started to fall apart, as new theater companies are prone to do, so I've heard. We are now smaller and easier to manage. The company project that I'm most excited about right now is a documentary film on theater around the

world. We have come up with questions that we want to ask theater artists that we interview and will accumulate a library of stock footage. In my opinion, the differences between theater and film negate neither one medium nor the other, but point out the beauty and the opportunity for understanding only available in live performances.

I've also been hired as a dramaturg for a number of productions. Currently, I'm working with a group of students at Cornish, helping them create their spring Shakespeare production. I think that's about it from one of your Early-Career dramaturgs. I'm currently enjoying my freelance status, but I hope to secure an internship and then pursue graduate school in a couple of years.

Here's my contact info, if you have any advice or input, Jessica Barkl -- Podunk Productions, 352 N. 80th St., Seattle, WA 98103: orangeprincess@rocketmail.com.

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B. EXCITING NEWS FROM THE WEST COAST

BY NAKISSA ETEMAD

I want to extend a personal invitation to all dramaturgs and literary managers to the fifth annual New America Playwrights Festival at San Jose Repertory Theatre, just forty minutes south of San Francisco. We are very proud to feature the new work of four amazing playwrights: Naomi Iizuka's play *Garuda's Wing* (Geva Theatre commission), Lynn Nottage's *Las Meninas*, Polly Pen and James Milton's musical *Her Lightness*. All the playwrights will be in attendance, plus five adaptor-playwrights for a panel discussion moderated by Len Berkman: Mark Cuddy, Steven Dietz, Polly Pen, Herbert Siguenza and Edit Villarreal. Unfortunately, our dates coincide with this year's LMDA conference, but if anyone can pop over to San Jose at any time Saturday or Sunday, please join us! If you are unable to attend, consider asking your company or university to send another representative. (Look for festival brochures and VIP Package materials in the mail in early April.) For more info, contact Nakissa Etemad, (Festival Director & Literary Manager/Dramaturg of San Jose Rep), at 408-367-7206. Hope to see you there!

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C. COMING THIS WAY

BY MIRIAM YAHIL-WAX, PH.D,
DRAMATURG

After eight years as dramaturg and literary manager of Gesher Theatre, ("One of the more remarkable companies in world drama." *The Times, London*. "The

company now constitutes one of the world's leading ensembles and you would be mad to miss it." *The Observer, London*), I am taking the year off, and would like to spend part of it in America. I have fond memories of my years at Stanford and my teaching and directing sprees there and at UCSC. Multi-cultural theatre is my main field, i.e., theatre which transcends the language barrier. My languages are English and Hebrew, I read French, Italian, Romanian, some German and Russian. I am looking for a limited engagement as dramaturg or project director with a theatre, or as lecturer in a school where my experience could be of use. Here's some additional information:

Publications: *The Shit Path*, a play about Israeli-Palestinian conflict` *The First Stone*, a play about the experience of an Arab woman; *Without Premeditation*, poems.

Translations : Some 40 plays and novels (Stoppard, Dickens, McCullers, Lessing, Le-Carre, Oates, Atwood). Into English: *Village* (Sobol), *City* (Babel).

Academia: Lecturer in drama, Acting and Directing (Stanford University, UCSC, Haifa University, Tel Aviv University).

Artistic Director: National Theatre for the Young, Haifa International Festival

And here's a list of some courses:

- Modern political drama (English, French, German- combined or separately)
- The Irish Renaissance, nationalism and theatre
- Political theatre in Greece: Euripides
- Modern poetic drama
- Introduction to drama
- What is a concept? Play analysis for directors (can be a workshop)
- Play analysis for actors
- Problems of translation and adaptation

- Chekhov's idea of comedy

D. PLAYSRIPTS.COM

BY JONATHAN RAND

Playscripts.com is a full-service theatrical publishing company, optimized for the internet. Brothers Doug and Jonathan Rand established Playscripts.com in order to connect playwrights more effectively with production opportunities, eliminating many of the barriers that often stand between worthy new plays and the stage. Unique internet methods allow Playscripts.com to promote, license, and distribute such plays directly to amateur and professional theaters worldwide, including literary managers and dramaturgs.

Visitors to the Playscripts.com website can peruse its exclusive catalogue online, using a search tool to locate plays by genre, length, and cast size. The full text of each play appears online in an encrypted, read-only format, secured against printing and other unauthorized duplication. This online text allows readers to make decisions based on the merit of the whole play, without incurring a cost until they are ready to order acting editions and/or performance rights. To see how this process works, please visit our website: <http://www.playscripts.com>.

In addition, Playscripts.com recently launched a free service called FINDaPLAY (<http://www.findaplay.com>), which allows visitors to search the catalogues of all major North American play publishers by author and title. The Rands are very interested in receiving feedback from LMDA members on how Playscripts.com can best serve their needs in locating, choosing, and developing new plays.

**Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas:
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Literary Managers And Dramaturgs Of The Americas

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Here is the how to stay in touch. Our new phone number is **718-437-5462**. Our email address is **LMDA2000@aol.com**. Our web address is **www.lmda.org**. Our new address is **PO Box #728, Village Station, New York, NY 10014**.

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