2010

Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas Conference
Session Notes, June 28 - July 1, 2010

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LMDA 25th Anniversary Conference in Banff, AB, Canada
Session Notes Compiled

These session notes have been typed up from your minutes by members of the 2010 Conference Planning Team. We tried our best to decipher the notes and handwriting but some pieces may remain a bit of a mystery. These are point forms notes from discussions on a broad range of topics proposed by delegates at the conference. The topic proposer/session convener, the people involved in the discussion and the note taker are often noted.

Looking for a particular session?
See the table of contents below for the page. They are not placed in any particular order.
At the end of this document there is also a list of sessions that appeared with a sign up sheet but no notes attached. If you have notes for these sessions, please Vicki Stroich know.

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Session Topic: Dramaturg – the next big craze.

Convener: Josh Wickard
In attendance: Danielle Mages Amato, Liana Thompson, Lue Morgan Douthit, Ken Ceregnaia, Carlyn Aquiline, Beth Blickers, Nakissa Etemad
Notes taken by: Vicki Stroich

- There may be a glut of trained dramaturges out there and not enough positions in theatre so how do we think about applying the function (and ourselves) in other disciplines? Get the word out about what we can offer?
- Do we make connections with other organizations?
- NET Initiative – places dramaturges in a process through LMDA and expands the function to ensemble theatres.
- American Theatre Wing – should LMDA try to make a connection there?
- Expand our exposure through LMDA – podcasts & video blogs. Josh Wickard is producing podcasts on dramaturgy.
- LMDA could create a clog and podcast directory to disseminate information and perspectives on dramaturgy. Many companies have blogs written by their dramaturges.
- Lue suggested be blow up the word dramaturg, stop using it. Tired of defining it. In film and tv the word is Producer. Dramaturgy is a function anyway and the title is “unfortunate” sounding. We shepherded the work. Could steel the term Line Producer from Hollywood. The word has history but who really cares about the history? Let’s get some balls. Too polite. Let’s reinvent ourselves.
- LMDA has put its eggs in the new play basket. Does that limit us?
- Narrative is important again – LMDA could be a leader and grab onto the next big craze as experts in narrative.
- Some folks say the could “use” a dramaturg. Let’s get rid of the word “use.”
- Ken works as a “literary producer” even though his title is dramaturg. He agreed we could nix the word. Stop waiting for permission. The positions are more active and assertive than the word implies.
- How do we change things? Infiltrate.
- A reality: revenue generating positions get more respect. Dramaturg/Producers have more oomph. How can dramaturges go out and find some funding for projects.
- Less division between business thinking and creative thinking. They can go hand in hand and make us a part of that conversation.
- The system of reading/play selection is increasingly a waste of time. If we are redirecting our energies as scouts and producers we are more active and powerful.
- A question: old vs. new – what are the proportions in our theatres between new work and “old” work? Are we correct in our assumptions about that proportion?
- What does LMDA need to do? Meet ADs? Be a source for helping our members scout?
- Blowing up the submission policy on one hand could lead to the Barnes and Nobelization of theatre because voices would be routed through tastemakers but the educated network is important.
- What LMDA has been putting out there about what dramaturges do is the large list of possibilities the function can offer. Is there a more potent, active and assertive
description of what the function offers that we want to put out there? What story do we want to tell? After we know that we can think about how we can get the message out.
- Having a more active and accessible word/description could help young people coming out of schools find work and express themselves.
- Should LMDA offer fundraising courses? Looks like there is a demand. Puts the power in our hands and helps us diversify what we offer to facilitating the work.
- Self promotion is also a function and we can do more of it.
- This session is tied to the advocacy session also happening here, it seems.
- Every Drama 101 should have the word dramaturg mentioned in it. That isn’t the case now but it should be. Can we advocate for that?
- We have skills that are valuable in film and tv but we need to really train young dramaturges in story development to take advantage of that connection.
- This is the moment! While we are exploding the word, let’s explode all the buildings, that is how we will create some space for something new to grow. We should be leaders and take advantage of the moment.

Session Topic: Changing the institution to support new play development
Moderator: Bob White

Attendees: Janine Sobeck, Michaela Jeffrey, Amy Lynn Strilchuk, Shari Wattling, Brian Dooley, Ken Cameron, Andrea Romaldi, Bob White, Pamela Halstead, Joanna Falck, Paul Meshejian, Syndey Cheek-O’Donnell, Brian Quirt, Harriet Power, Mark Bly, Meg Braem, Constance Perin, Natasha Mytnowich, Stephen Colella, Daniel Burson, DD Kugler, Del Surjik, Vanessa Porteous

Notes taken by: Vanessa Porteous

Bob White intro of topic: This is important to me because at ATP (where I was recently for many years) we went a long way to ward making the case for new play development. Now I’m at Stratford Shakespeare Festival, which is currently reassessing new work commitment. The challenge is: the culture of the org gives lip service but institutional barriers exist. The history of Stratford is as a town that wanted a tourist attraction – driven by civic and commercial imperatives at its origins. Within institution (marketing, and thru-out) there’s a resistance to trying things out, failure, risk, failing better, dealing with nitty gritty of change.

How do we, as champions of npd, create methods of getting npd moving forward? If we can’t, maybe we’re doomed.

Q about failure at Stratford. A: approach to npd has been inconsistent, changing people, AD’s interest waxes and wanes dep on who it is
Q: are there natural allies at other companies, or in depts. (ed & outreach dept)? Where can you build ties to grow npd?
Someone said: there are surprising allies within fundraising dept and many nooded. NPD is sexy to fundraising: parcel off each npd ‘property’ and get $$ for it. It’s a great ‘story’ for fundraising to tell potential donors.

Q: Who’s the least supportive w/in orgs? Marketing, says one person.

Mark Bly: fundraising/dvt dept was keen on npd. Individual donors who are not interested in funding old rep: who cares. He set up lunches b/n playwright and 4 or 5 key potential donors.

Q: is ‘riskier’ and ‘unknown’ a barrier for corps? A: not always, there’s a cachet to a living playwright – put them in contact

Q: does that depend on culture & geography?

Shari at Theatre Calgary: timing and scheduling has an impact. Used to lump npd into a month at the end of the season. Her new idea: do it year round. Will help connect staff and audience to it. Won’t feel segmented. Won’t be ‘Shari’s ballpark’. So: be conscious of timing.

Q: Stephen Collella of LKYP: how do you involve staff? (worth thinking about – no one answered)

Joanna Falk at Shaw Festival: Audience is not used to unfinished work. The work of introducing them to a workshop: is it effective? Is it good for the organization? For the audience? For the development of the play?

A gradual familiarization is helpful. New is a scary concept. A chamber reading, positioned as a privilege for the audience, is a way to approach it.

Joanna: the vast complexity of the institution’s schedule is a huge barrier. There is no such thing as ‘quick and dirty’.

Paul re donors: venture capitalists get ‘new and risky’. He has great allegiances with venture capitalists on his board

Harriet: You can be committed to new plays but not nec world premieres. Her company spends the summer devoted to looking for a new play. Everyone understands that slot.

Q: what have you (each) done to change your institution?
A: People didn’t understand the ‘why’. Why we picked the shows, why we developed shows we may not do. So we started a play club. Theme every month. Pull people from every dpt. Brown bag lunch. 90 minutes to talk about the ‘long list’ of plays that serve our mission. Has created huge buzz. People had to apply. 6 month rotation of staff. They read the scripts ahead of time. Also, a ‘Page one’ program based on production development. Feedback and discussion with creative teams when they’re in town as they prepare the production. Come and listen to artists talk about why.
A: “Play Club” at ATP. One day before season starts where teams of staff each present one play in the season to the other staff. Q & A. Like a live book report
Also ‘Table Work’ 15 minutes after the first read staff gather and discuss what they heard, what their questions are.

Q: When you’re in workshops how do you communicate what they are and why you’re doing them to the staff?

Mark Bly: We have very different groups here today. Stratford and theatres like that are now finding themselves interested in npd. The point they need to understand about world premieres, ‘why’, we do them, is to leave a legacy behind. ‘We are the pioneers of the 21 Century’.

Brian Quirt: At large cos like National Arts Centre, the top and bottom of a huge org aren’t the problem. It’s the middle ranks. At NAC, the goal is to establish a creation lab that crosses the disciplines of theatre/dance/orch. There’s no room in the building. It’ll have to be outside. Will separation of creation activities and new work environment bring scale, profile, importance (can’t be ignored)? Or will it ghettoize it?

‘The structures of these orgs have nothing to do with npd.’ (But what does that really mean?)

Pam: why are some of these theatres doing npd in the first place?
A: muscles reqd by npd are good muscles
- Audience must be renewed
- if you call yourself a classical theatre that has to include new work (the legacy)
There seems to be the phenomenon of saying you’re doing new work to appeal to funders, but never actually producing all that npd.

Joanna: you do it for the future. The doing of it is difficult though. Am I just impatient? Maybe it’s a 10 year thing, not a 3 year quest.

A playwright responds: Thrilled and terrified to hear this conversation. How do the writers get in the door at these places? ‘Why’ do it - can be answered from playwright’s perspective.
Be clear about what you’re hoping to build. Is it nurturing a group. Starting new writers. Producing work? It’s a good idea for theatres to put out a statement about what they want to accomplish: ‘we invest in playwrights.’ So it’s clear.

Del has just changed an institution and here’s what helped him:
- an understanding of the creative process is inherent at a theatre company. Draw the parallel with that process (of putting on a play) to npd process
- keep momentum of change going. Change is good, and will be constant should be your message. “When you get a new AD, change has just started. Get used to it.”

Be clear about your argument for npd. ‘Why is this a good investment?’ In order to cultivate an audience? In order to leave a legacy? What?

An academic speaks: They are re-designing a BA program to focus on new work. Q: what is the ideal npd process in a student setting? Also, how to sell this idea to the institution of the university? Thanks for the ideas so far. Come tell me more.

Shari: I spend a lot of time getting audience invested. Getting them behind the scenes. Then they begin to demand it and they become advocates to the institution.

Anthropologist comments: don’t say ‘I’ too much – say ‘we’, and look for your natural allies within institution and beyond.

Canadian Stage: 2 years ago they revived their annual festival of ideas & creation. What makes it unique is creation and new audience are pulled together. Combined. There are specific workshops for artist practitioners, but also that same evening, talkbacks with audience. Lots of growing organizational buy-in because their place within the festival is defined. They have ownership. Last year the them was ‘translation.’ This year it’ll be ‘cross disciplinary performance creation.”

THE END.

Session Topic: Furthering productions of Canadian plays

11 am June 30, 2010
Convener: Rachel Ditor
Notes taken & typed up by: Vanessa Porteous
Attendees: Andrea Romaldi, Trevor Rueger, Heather Inglis, Brian Dooley, Joanna Falck, David Copelin, Eric Rose, Ken Cameron, Stephen Colella, Bob White, Maureen Labonte, Eury Chang, Kim McCaw, Pamela Halstead, Del Surjik, Rachel Ditor, Vanessa Porteous, Robert Blacker

Rachel intro: This conversation began at a session yesterday. In the US, they have a ‘National New Play Network’: companies form an association and discuss who among them will host the premiere and schedule 2nd and 3rd productions immediately. It’s not necessarily a tour, but rather distinct prod’s of the same new play.
We are always asking ourselves: how can we serve playwrights? The short answer is: by securing second productions. Let’s discuss.

Q: How does the network work? A: Not simultaneous prods, necessarily, better if they are staggered or sequential in fact. A sequence of prods would benefit play; eliminate ‘feeding frenzy’ phenom; sustain interest in the work for a whole season.

Q: Is a play chosen first and then several co’s commit before opening? A: Yes.

Bob White identifies a challenge: ‘Premiere-it is’. This will need to be addressed in this plan. ATP’s Festival, En playRites, is an instance of the high value given to ‘the premiere’ (and Festivals like that are to some extent part of the ‘problem’ here.)

Del: At Pi, he did a lot of second prod’s. You can’t get attention from media in the same way. How do we address that in this campaign?

Discussion about the ‘Canadian canon’ – it’s large enough now, we should be able to gather programming from it.

Rachel: this is a model that attempts to get more out of the initial investment (of $, energy, media attention) in premieres. So they aren’t one-offs. If we want those writers to keep writing for theatre we need to get better at securing 2nd and 3rd prods (which is where they have a chance of recouping). It’s a regional and a national responsibility.

Advocacy at the funding level: we need to make the case for second prods as being of value to Canada Council and other funding bodies. Vanessa P: there may be an opportunity as CC is currently reexamining its assessment criteria, which give shape to its emphasis on Canadian work for example.
Playwrights Guild will be on side, acc to David Copelin

What’s strong about the model is the commitment prior to opening, so it alleviates ‘2nd production-it is’. The model is meant to make it ‘almost as if’ we’re all presenting the premiere.
Q: In this model, is there/does there have to be initial $ investment up front from participating co’s? A: there are different ways of going about it. Putting money down ahead of time has pros and cons.

Another example, slightly different: CanDance: several co’s investing in new choreography. We should look at that model too. That model does include an initial $ investment from all players.

We might need to think carefully about language, semantics, as part of this project: replace ‘second production’ with ‘subsequent production’ etc.

Tarragon provides a cautionary example: reviewers at Globe and Mail won’t cover the second leg of the co-pro if they have seen it first elsewhere. EX: Another Home Invasion, world premiere ATP/Tarragon, first leg in Calgary. In TO the Globe wouldn’t review it or reprint the Calgary review. Tarragon paid to reprint the review (a rave) in the Globe as an ‘ad.’ Now Tarragon won’t use that same model: this premiere-focused media response devastated attendance.

Having chats with media about this may or may not prove fruitful. We need to identify their interests (selling papers, being newsworthy), not just wish they cared about ours (supporting Canadian playwrights, getting an audience). The difficulty is the uncertainty. We should plan for a trial run.

This project involves us changing the game.

Different companies have very different situations with regard to media – there won’t be a one size fits all solution. How do we bring the critics (and the editors) into the conversation?

Another barrier is perceptions within theatre community: you often hear complaints about ‘generic’ seasons – ‘everyone is doing the same shows’ is the complaint. People see this as popularity being the determining factor for selecting plays. In the US this is known as ‘the LORT hit of the season.’

Is not this project a deliberate example of that phenom? Yes, in fact, though for a good reason. This project favours several prods of (and more resources towards) the same new play, over many (smaller? Less resourced? Less attention-grabbing?) prods of a greater number of plays. Philosophy behind this project, and how to articulate it to our communities, needs further discussion.
An artistic advantage: seeing the same play across many theatres and communities reveals different values within the play.

If it is a co-pro of some description of course actors get seen in several cities - which can be good.

Another potential obstacle: do AD’s like to feel a sense of ownership and ‘we discovered this one’ at their theatres when they do new work? Yes, frankly, they do. There’s a pattern of ‘I have to have found it myself for it to have legitimacy.’ Which we’ll need to grapple with.

Next step: getting a champion for this and building a working group.

We do this type of thing informally in many ways already. One way we could improve things immediately, is to not just put a play in an envelope and send it along to someone else but phone, try to form allegiances around plays. The key to all this is up-front buy-in on material.

This project is an attempt to formalize these impulses and make us more effective at getting several prods of a new play happening. Though not necessarily all in the same season.

One advantage of this model is the increased opportunity for development. There are implications for new play development. Who does it? How? Where? How many cooks? How is the development shared yet individualized? What are the assumptions?

Is there an opportunity at Banff Playwrights Colony to support a shared development process that might lead to prod’s in this new model?

This is a chance to educate media, audience, deepen the conversation about new work, show them that opening night is not a disposable ‘product’ – new work is the result of in-depth long-term investment, and it lasts. There is an impression amongst our audience (thanks to movies and TV) that shows are carbon copies of themselves – there’s only one way to do it and it is frozen in time. We must advocate against that.

We must build in an assumption of growth and development, beyond opening, from the start, rather than ‘premiere-it-is’. A change in perception. Deeper.

This experiment will require several iterations, trial runs, depending on the play. Several go-rounds to work out the kinks, to find a way to ensure continuity of development, to figure out how to handle a gang of producers. Should there be one conduit, a buddy for the playwright?

Brian Dooley: TV has been doing this for years.
Bob points out: often writers orgs will suggest that dissemination of potential projects needs to be improved. In fact, dissemination is not the issue. Dissemination is fine. The thing is, the individual tastes of Ads must be included and acknowledged as a factor.

A maturing Canadian culture seems to want us to take this next step.

**We need to articulate a list of reasons why this is a good idea:**
- To see artistic growth in the material thru repeated productions
- To support Canadian playwrights, as we claim we are doing
- To ensure the voice of Canadian playwrights gets a national airing
- To create a way of sending Canadian theatre around the country more fluidly and easily (nowadays, you actually have to tour it yourself, eg Daniel McIvor)
- To see how different communities respond to and interpret the work
- To alleviate some of the burden of each little company having to do its own NPD
- The play gets the benefit of being tested over and over again – it will end up sturdy and lasting
- To build a legacy, a national culture
- To create work with universal impact, work that can have a life beyond original cast
  - from playwrights’ perspective, the more productions the better. You learn so much.
- To foster relationships between writers and companies from across country, and amongst ourselves
- To raise the national profile of our work, and gain international credibility

**NEXT STEPS (determined at a later meeting in Props Pub):**

- **Rachel will find more info about US version of this project**
- **VP will type up notes from this meeting and distribute.**
- **This group will meet in March at Blitz Weekend for 2 hours to take the project further.**
- **Please bring to that meeting:**
  - **knowledge: having read info on US and done whatever research you’re inspired to do**
  - **your planning timelines at your theatre**
  - **your questions about this project**

We will sketch out the goals and principles, and brainstorm the hows and whats, in Calgary in March.

At this point let’s not alert folks outside this group officially to the start of this project. We need to get our heads around it first rather than adding new members or distributing info to others quite yet. However, feel free to start scouting a project you might want to propose, and to mention this initiative unofficially to individual colleagues who might be simpatico.
Session Topic: Problems of Translation in Theatre

Session Date: 29 June 2010

*I invite anyone who was at the session to elaborate or correct any of the points. There were lots of great ideas. []

2:50 1. Finding that there are American plays being done in Europe but America is resistant to do translations from Europe. There is a new Norwegian Beckett named Fosse but American theatres aren’t producing his shows; the regional theatres recognize that the plays are well done, but they think they are “too foreign.” This insular mindset of American theatres is troubling. Finds that there was a change somewhere around 1965 – notes that PhD programs and universities used to require numerous languages, but now programs only require competence in one language; fear that it is ‘dumbing’ down international influence at the highest levels, how will this affect lower levels of learning.

3:00 2. Finds that it is difficult to get Latin American translations into regional theatres even though there are some great translations. Why not? Perhaps because there are preconceived notions about what a Latin play should be (magic realism, politics, torture)

3. Also will be seeing a rise in the availability of plays from the Middle East – will these same expectations apply

4. Finding there is a lot of “Yankee Patriotism” – even John Carrie was defined as ‘too French’.

5. There is a scarcity of spots in a season for plays and many producers feel an obligation to put on new Native plays

6. There is a Toronto theatre company that has 4 plays from translations in their upcoming season (including Tremblay, etc). The theatre recognizes that Toronto has a diverse population so it is making efforts to represent that on stage.

7. Different culture in Europe that playwright also translate, 2 different crafts but both are important. In N. America there are translators but not necessarily playwrights, don’t approach in the same way.

8. Adam mentioned a recent Festival that paired playwrights with translators to bridge that separation.

3:15 9. Translators need to understand both the languages they are working with, and they need to understand theatre. Do you need to be a playwright? Not necessarily; if you can still unearth the same ideas of structure as a playwright can, and if you have a theatrical sensibility then it will still work. Suggest putting it in the mouths of actors to see if it
works. There is a distinction between “translator” and a “professional play translator” (who would understand theatricality).

10. Do you want a single individual to work on a script or include many members (like director, lit manager, etc)? Need to have a solid starting point, and that might be with just one brain taking it on, but if you can’t get to that point then you need to bring in more brains so that you can see all the angles: literal, theatrical, etc. Encouraged the idea of using scholars whenever you can to help you understand the original text and then you can use your theatrical sensibility after that point.

11. Why aren’t more translations being performed? It is lucrative, because when these plays are put on it attracts a new audience. Will they necessarily come back for the next show? New cultures, even filtered through translation, are interesting!! Dramaturgs can push that idea. Moliere wasn’t American!

12. Robyn’s research with young Russian playwrights speaks to that a bit. The hook is the stories that are relatable for American audiences (coming to age stories, etc) but there is a background of Russia. The hook is the Tarantino style of theatre, but the audience is also learning, and the story takes the audience to a new place.

13. You can’t lose the original culture, so how far can you push the idea of similarities between the two cultures to make the cultures relate to each other?

14. Comparison to the vast interest in international film festivals; why are there interest in those and not in theatres?? Perhaps a problem of ethnic actors being scarce? If the play is about racial issues, then you can’t cast cross-culturally, but if it isn’t then you should be able to without compromising the text. The audiences will figure it out if the actors and directors understand and make strong choices. Richard finds that it is important to have at least one agent from the culture in the project – the ethnic actors were able to find/convey subtleties that would otherwise go undiscovered. Can be an actor, dramaturg, etc. but that voice needs to be present.

15. Need to know what the relation was to the original audience – did they understand it? Is there a way you can translate it to make it clearer? Is it best to just cut it? Michael gave example from the Glass Menagerie, the character makes an assumption between religion and dinner (Fridays = fish); does that translate to your audience? Or can you cut it?

16. Translation is a 2 way street – the audience needs to do a bit of work. Demand work from them by watching the actors – the audience experiences their own emotional reactions and then reacts cognitively later. Sensing the agitation or passion of the characters will communicate more than the word selection will. Helps to think about the rhythm or pulse of what you’re translating.
17. A Doll’s House vs. A Dolls House – very different to the production team, but is it important to the audience? Streetcar Named Desire has a very different meaning in New Orleans compared to everywhere else.

18. Translating means that we’re taking a journey to the other, to understand a different point of view, but we also bring in the us. Where do we draw the line? Need to guard against exotic-izing! Too many Spanish plays have been subjected to an exotic interpretation.

19. No one way to translate. Ideally would need a new translation for each production, and a new translation at least every 10 years.

20. Still need to go through the journey of the particular to get to the universal or else it will be mush.

21. Interesting examples of performances where the translation and the original language are presented simultaneously or in tandem; the audience is then viewing a “performance in translation.”

22. There is a Toronto company who’s mandate is doing only translations by Canadians and they are struggling. There is no context if you can’t see other works from around the world. Can’t isolate yourself to only doing what your country is making available.

23. Requires government funding – how do you spin this? No longer teaching languages so translators are necessary. The idea of Globalization! Need to know more pieces of the puzzle. “Globish” – International English. Government funding bodies get criticism when they try to fund outside of the country. It's even harder when you're trying to get multiple translations (which is why it would be hard to get a new translation done every 10 years). Need to look for new funders who have a strong global interest in their mandate.

24. Language – look at William Archer – sounds exotic but the actors can teach themselves to speak it. The newer Ibsen translations are smoother but they don’t improve on Archer’s language. Need to trust your actors to be able to handle the language you give them because they are guided by the text. There’s a need to keep the strangeness. Rick commented on the use of Nora’s ‘miracle’ in Doll’s House – not ‘miracle’ but ‘wonderful’ – changes the meaning. The idea of the ‘wonderful’ is traced through the acts from material to phenomenal, but using the vernacular of ‘miracle’ instead of ‘wonderful’ alters the meaning, and it’s significance in the play. Need to keep the strangeness.

25. Adam is part of a journal publishing articles that are related to any languages being translated into English plays, process of translation, etc. Through the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, called The Mercurian: A Theatrical Translation Review, available at <http://drama.unc.edu/academic/mercurian/>.

3:45 Adjourn session.
SESSION TOPIC: Feminist Dramaturgy

Being a feminist and a dramaturg
Even when working on a non-feminist text or with a non-feminist director
Can one be both?

Dracula
Not a particularly feminist text. Research indicates a sense of feminism “in nature”
Director/adaptor — Transcends feminism? What attracts us to vampires?
How does one support the director’s wishes while respecting the text and the implications?
Is Mina stripped of all her agency? Why is Mina punished? Because she’s intellectually promiscuous. Lucy punished for sexual promiscuity. Historical research informs the characters, rather than modern sensibilities. It becomes a commentary on the way women were treated.
Would it be more interesting if she were more active? Want the audience to want to “save her”. Staying true to the original.

Medea
Using feminist values as a factor, without making it the primary theme
Materialist feminism vs. stealth feminism
Women kill because they have no political recourse. Traps and how women get out of them.
Medea as underground goddess of medicine. Euripedes writes the play to discredit her. Blood sacrifice as part of her ritual, reinterpreted as child murder.

Historical women playwrights
Obviously feminist dramaturgy
Subtextual subversion
Awareness of women’s dramatic history

Do women write differently than men?
Can. Different structures. Multiple climaxes vs. one “big bang”
Working in traditional structures while subverting themes
Feminine/non-traditional structure
Stories about women don’t follow the hero myth structure, women have different life experience structure. People say “not a good play, no tension”
Process of telling stories within stories, folded into many layers, everything unpeeled, then reconstructed.
Mary Zimmerman
Very different but controversial due to being non-traditional.

Feminist dramaturg
Plays by women vs. classics
Subversive feminism
How do you communicate something that could be feminist to people who think it’s a bad word?
Better to show than tell

Using the Bechdel Test
Are there 2 female characters? Do they have names? Do they talk to each other? Do they talk to each other about things other than men?
Do female characters have to be strong in order to be feminist? Do women writers feel pressure to only write “strong” characters or can there be authenticity?

Urban Curves – small feminist company
First woman in Canada on death row. Murdered her husband because he was having a flagrant affair. Women had no right to divorce, no recourse.

Theme of women who kill because they have no social options

Adaptation as feminist dramaturgical strategy
Someone out of dominant culture takes a classical piece.

Espousing feminist values. Easier as a director. As a dramaturg, working with male directors, talking about feminist issues is difficult if feminism isn’t shared. Easier without anger. “only the dramaturg” not my project.

ATR, Marsha Norman – Why women playwrights don’t get produced.
83% of American plays by men. 80% of women buy tickets. “Can you put a gun in this play?”

In the UK, only 20% of commissioned women actually submit plays. Is that true cross-culturally?

Dramaturg on production referred to as “Misogyny watch” in the rehearsal room of Beggar’s Opera.
Feeling somehow like you’re politically correct quality control

Trying to find a vocabulary to talk to people about these issues.

Are you being the better feminist by not calling it feminism?

Strategies to balance feminism with the work
  Stealth feminism, smoke and mirrors, disguising feminism
  Is it about how we ask the questions, the questions you ask, if you ask the questions.
  Having a sense of humour.
  Wanting the play to succeed, does that conflict?
  Utilising program notes, installation dramaturgy to bring out feminism inherent in piece.
  Helping everyone see themselves in the minority/marginalized.

Does it matter where you are if you can be feminist?
  Rampantly conservative audiences. Patriarchal culture. Do we need to “push back”
  against patriarchal values that are inculcated into society?
  Switch genders, is it really “universal”?

Shakespeare texts
  “Adjusting” male characters to be played by women.
  Minor characters can be gender swapped, major characters must be “played male”
  What does it change about what the play is saying? Do we need to be authentic to the play?
  How does it affect relationships to swap genders? i.e. Prospero/Prospera, relationship with Miranda changes.

Trouser roles in opera. It’s a convention. Do we address it as a historical convention or do we contextualize it for our modern culture? It will be received as commentary by audience members, whether we intend it so or not.

What happens when we don’t address a gender swap?

What is the relationship between the play and the audience, how does a “feminist dramaturg” facilitate that?

Dealing with cultural contexts with repressed women versus feminist sensibilities.

Homophobia that is inherent in gender switch and with plays with homosexual characters.
Cross-dressing: What happens among women in ensembles and how it changes gender identity?

Changing titles to adapt to cross-casting?

See theatre companies do a season of all women writers, both historical and modern. Women playwrights are not doing the theatrical equivalent of chick lit.

Does it hurt us to create a divide between women playwrights and men?

Commission 50/50, half men, half women.

Think outside the box

Teaching survey, stealth split the work 50/50. Expose audiences to the work. “Brainwash the next generation”

LMDA Notes

**NET/LMDA Micro Fest**

Convener & Note Taker: Mark Valdez
Pamela Turner
Megan Monahan
Liz ?
Jackie Goldfinger
Amy Freeman
Scott Horstein
LaRonika Thomas
Danielle Mages Amato

- Language is failing = can we create a new lexicon?
- NET partnering with ? Roots on conversation on race, culture, and arts ?
- Example: SITI Co.= all dramaturges but they need someone from outside – thought they were often less interested at the beginning, now hungry for the input.
- Performance Response: twins and opposites to respond to work.
- In Canadian Festivals – they indentify an observer who makes connections to the pieces – They articulate the response.
- Maybe they blog their insights??
- Text through the performance; get immediate responses.
- Is there an opportunity to check in on method w/ Arena Stage?
- The ? blog – new method for small theatres
- A coining of phrases, coming from an outside person – one way to go; another is for NET folks to formulate the language themselves.
- The move would be for the dramaturges to come in and tell people what they are/do.
- - maybe just a first step in building relationships.
- 5 bulletin boards:
  - piece of paer with a key word that needs to be corralled into a definition ask folks what it does or doesn’t mean, eg. Ensembles, workshops, devising
- Read The Madman and The Professor
- Did a conference
- Maybe do it as jeopardy = give definition and get the word.
- Tension between ensembles wanting it and resisting it.
- It’s awful to be invited in a room to give feedback and have it resisted.
- Relationship Building:
  - Find ways to talk about it.
  - Show dramaturges are invested in the work and talking about it.
- A need to have conversation with dramaturges to define their roles (eg. Supporter, “imbedded reporter” etc.
- The first time we work with a group is the hardest - maybe this is a lab to what…
- What do we need to get out of working with an dramaturg/ensemble? – ask both and see if there is an organic match.
- Maybe make an ensemble of dramaturges? What do they make?
- Find people who are local. Maybe one is completely outside narrative and get feedback from them.
- Tiers of dramaturgy: the whole ensemble, part ensemble, ensemble project.
- Talk to Arena – what are good distribution systems/methods of sharing info. Local visual artists
- Bay Area Playwrights Foundation used to invite local visual artists to contribute a visual response.
- Maybe different ways = performance, visual art
- Liz willing to be a jam person on this.

**Cultural Inclusion in the University**

Convener: Scott Horstein  
Note Taker: Eury Chang  
Geoff Proehl  
And 2 others

- Scott Horstein:  
  - Cal State System  
    - Sonoma State (8,000) – 70 % female, 75% white  
    - Diversifying  
- Example: Native Earth Performing Arts (Toronto)  
  - Teaching people about cultural customs (ie. smudging in theatre before rehearsal.)  
  - 5 year plan, conversation, numbers, plays.
- a student who started as an actor not seen as “asian. “drama teacher saw me as an artist.: San Francisco.
- The Odd Couple done by Vancouver’s Asian Canadian Theatre
- Question: A few people/minorities looks good for a quota?
- Serving a community.
- Minority casting – do you want to limit yourself to “US” plays or “Canadian” plays?
- Geoff Proehl: Susan Lori Parks (Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World”) – how can her plays work with the humanities?
- Racial choies.
- Linguistic “white face:
- Commercialization.
- David Henry Hwang.
- Naomi Iizuka.
- Cultural inclusion. What would it look like? Students and faculty could feel at home in their own university and visit other places and ideas; understanding.
- Lauren: If I want to make theatre, its more for women? Or men?
- Responsibility. Conflating cultural heritage and cultural identity and cultural content, not the same.
- Positive conversations are necessary.
- Scot: put things in place now and map 5 year plan. University works on a tight schedule.
- Work with your strengths.
- Language to describe groups/diverse changes. Change “sauvages” to “autochthonous.” (letter from the typist: I interpreted the best I could.)
- When/where did the conversion happen n Quebec?

iCulture and Narrative

Convener: Josh Wickard
Note Taker: Lauren Krestoway
Sarah Lunnie
Meghan Sharer
Eric Rose

- ways to surprise people with little pieces of narrative or art.
- Opting in vs. not opting in.
- More than a flash mob. Ex. Call the number and hear a story.
- Use of twitter/facebook/text message to alert people to theatre events, “surprise events.”
- RSC – “Such Sweet Sorrow” – Romeo and Juliet on Twitter – an event that allows a wider audience to access a company’s or playwrights work.
- Soap opera serials by text message in Africa.
- Hamlet in Facebook updates.
- Theatre in public spaces (audience notified through text) – its difficult to know which people are part of the event you are watching.
- Audience keeping cells in audience – texts showing up on screen in show – participation with anonymity.
- Conflict between focus on ONLY the play and the actors vs. split attention between play and your own technological participation.
- Starting narratives through short “statu-esque” messages
- Community building through audience commentary through tech focus – technology in the rehearsal hall – what is vitally important about being connected?
- Paying to take part in tech/iPerformance adds a filter to what the audience will contribute.
- Is the audience the event or the show itself?
- Facebook/Twitter language in the theatre – what is it about this expression that gives it content rather than just form?
- Ex. Cross stitch samplers of Missed Connections on Craig’ List, paintings of Missed Connections.
- Permanence of fleeting messages.
- Ex. Facebook status updates on the body – making a daily act extraordinary.
- How to make technology VITAL, not a backdrop, so important you can’t imagine the show functioning without it.
- Investigations in stripping down technology – the contrast of media barrage and silence.
- Our technology has frames – still old concepts and architecture in new boxes.
- Skyping.
- Audience sharing with audience – starting a thread that can build – response to art published- can we take the narrative that exists after the show and put it in the theatre while it is still theatre.
- Social media is SHARING – it can be affirming, let you know who listening – theatre is also an example – how can we satisfy the need to share through theatre and allow those who like to share through social media to participate.? 
- Ex. Holding candles in audiences hands to light “apparition” felt heroic but not plugged in
- Can a theatre use both analog and digital forms? The communal power of both is important to harness if you want to use them.
- The intention of the form is important ex. Facebook group to keep a suicidal man in San Francisco from jumping. This is its own event – how is theatre a part of this? Why should theatre put its hand in?
- Facebook or Twitter as the actual stage – these platforms contain the event without being in a theatre building.
- The ‘I’ of iCulture – we get to design our technological applications what, as theatre artists, can we do to make certain performances the iMoment? Do we WANT to?
- Keep the dialogue going, experiment with getting the audience to break open the form and see what’s inside.
How does age affect dramaturgical style?

Convener: Amy Lynn Strilchuk
Note Taker: Michaela Jeffery
Michelle Kneale
Lee Devin
Meg Braem
Gavin Witt
Paul Walsh
Vicki Stroich
Liana Thompson

- Introductions.
- Does your style/process change with age?
- Creating a rapport. Depends on the experience level of the playwright? Depends on the personality of the playwright?
- New relationships are new relationships, regardless of age.
- The older you get, the more people expect you to know the answer.
- Becoming okay with being invisible, being okay with not shaping everything – entering into more conversations.
- Change of philosophy vs. change of method
- It’s hard to resist someone who is relentlessly helpful.
- Develop a personal philosophy – embracing not knowing the answer is not a reflection of your intelligence. The creative state of unknowing.
- Not everyone ages well as a dramaturg – get out of it if you’re getting bitter. Sometimes you grow out of something vs. growing into it.
- Relationships: you can’t always control them. You can only really control you and your own approach to your work.
- Is ego necessarily age related?
- Attitudes that grow out of vanity are unhelpful
- “intelligent want management”
- becoming simultaneously more and less patient.
- Instinct is instinct, regardless of age. You cannot be taught to give a good note.
- Fighting the sense of having something to prove.
- You can prove your worth through listening.
- Two parts of career; carving out a place for yourself and doing your work.
- Acting entitled – is our sense of entitlement growing over generations?
- If you’re going to work as a dramaturg, you’ve got to go out and find the work.
- Think of dramaturgy as “seeking an education”
- How do you age well as a dramaturg?
  - Take care of yourself first.
  - Constantly re-learning how to listen.
  - Surrounding yourself with a range of ages.
  - Administration obligation – be aware of how much energy it requires.
  - The better you can be at communicating, the less anxiety a process will cause you.
When people feel you want to collaborate vs. dictate.

Creative Spaces

Convener: Brian Quirt
Note Taker: Sarah Lunnie
Caroline Sniatynski
Lauren Krestoway
Scott Horstein
Michael Phillips
Eury Chang
Liz Engelman
John Lutterbie
Maureen Labonte
Andrea Romaldi
Brian Dooley
Amy Jensen
Paul Meshejian
Pamela Turner
Janice Poon
Harriet Power
DJ Hopkins
LaRonika Thomas

- Brian Quirt: research for National Arts Council – a creation lab
- What sort of spaces are conducive to creative activity? What should such space have?
- If you are designing the dream theatrical environment what would that look like?
- The Theatre Centre in Toronto – unbelievable productive. What set of qualities did it have that make it so fertile for creation?
- Something difficult to define.
  Queen Mary College at University of London their new seminar room: half the room is tables and chairs and the other half open with a spring wooden dance floor.
- “A little theatre with a seminar table and a grid.”
- The ability to accommodate theatrical lighting equipment.
- Andrea: being able to easily control the about of natural light that comes into the room.
- Ban fluorescent light!
- The Banff Playwrights Colony – the lounge that is primarily a workspace – a long rectangular room with windows all along one side – and a deck – in evening it becomes a lounge with drinks, a piano.
- A public workspace.
- A flexible space that supports community under one roof.
- The ethos of a room as well as its architecture. How to make people treat it with respect – the room is part of the process.
- The energy of the space. Calm and exhilarating all at the same time.
- Can that energy be conjured or cultivated in any space?
- Do you have to strip away an existing space in order to understand/see its real potential?
- Simon Fraser University – people would congregate in a particular part of the theatre lobby – something about sunlight?
- A sense of empowerment – owning the space.
- Flexibility – chairs that you can spread out – but also make disappear.
- Kings College in London – old operating theatre – took over as a theatre space.
- Transparency about rules for a space.
- Having something to push against? Would that be useful? Create obstacles for yourself?
- The ballpark analogy. If you intentionally create idiosyncrasy, is that superficial, canned?
- Adapted spaces vs. new spaces
- A church hall.
- Natural materials vs. synthetic materials.
- Dream: some sort of study nook, with books in an adjacent room.
- For dramaturges – proximity of office to rehearsal space.
- A permanent place for table work and to store drafts – that you don’t have to break down to rehearse.
- The Guthrie – internal windows.
- The Playwrights Centre used to be in an old church – now a more thoughtful, intentioned building – trade off?
- The dance space and expectations
- Playground – jungle gym
- Space with dimensional possibilities.
- A pantry – multiple storage spaces.
- Decay of building can lend character.
- An immediately adjacent social space. A bar or kitchen/
- Robert Lepage’s space in Quebec – an old fire hall, gutted and rebuilt. A huge room with offices on three sides. You are never more than a few feet away from the creation room.
- Windows.
- Can you work in truly public spaces?
- How do you engender community?
- Spark from an unconventional room.
- Natural air – unsealed rooms.
- Liz Engelman: knocking the walls off a shack at Fish Camp.

**Hot Topics UCaucus**

**Convener:** Geoff Proehl

**In Attendance:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Liana Thompson</th>
<th>Lia Munro</th>
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<td>Karen Craig</td>
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<td>Tina Lambert</td>
<td>Meghan Sharer</td>
<td>Rick Davis</td>
<td>Roxanne Ray</td>
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• Bryan Moore is preparing the next volume of the Sourcebook. Roxanne Ray an Kathleent Jets are his co-editors. It will provide practical information for use in classrooms, workshops, and production settings. Dramaturgy knows few boundaries. So too the sourcebook. Presently collecting materials and will later organize. There is good early interest in dramaturgy incorporated into non-dramaturgy specific courses.
  o Other topics of interest include: Installation dramaturgy, dramaturgy for children, dramaturgy in community-based work.
  o The previous 3 volumes are under UCaucus on the LMDA site.

• Diane Brewer’s research involves “waiting for the click.” Seeking ways for research truly to benefit the creative process. Recent experience: rolling in and out on blackboard worked especially well when coordinated with rehearsal schedule.
  o When her research deferred from what her director had done, but the actors had used her research, new challenges became apparent.

• Robyn Quick is using 4 teaching strategies to engage students in thinking beyond USborders. A specific Russian Project.
  o Tap into students’ interests to take there somewhere unfamiliar.
  o Approach the project as applied student-faculty research
  o Work with guest artists
  o Provide a variety of ways students can connect to the project over three years.
  o Contemporary Russian Drama by writers who were born after the fall of the Soviet Union. Students did original research. Guest artists were from Russia and many of the playwrights came. The three-year arc was designed and had room for a student initiative.

• Katalin Trencsenyi is working on a three year project interviewing dramaturgs. The project will be a book presenting strategies, techniques and methods of the practice of dramaturgy.
  o Successful production dramaturgy requires establishing the right paring of a director and dramaturg, like torah study pairs in the Jewish tradition.
  o Production dramaturgy is less present in the UK than new play development and devising. UK directors are under-experienced and under-informed about dramaturgy and badly equipped to reap the full benefits of production dramaturgy.
  o How could the LMDA improve the situation? Dramaturgs and dramaturgy need PR, new educational opportunities for directors, union support, and more.

• Sydney Cheek-O’Donnell Took on two outside projepts this year and created opportunities for her dramaturgy students.
  o 42nd st and Charm by Kathleen Cahill. Groups of students were assigned to each project. Applying the tools they were learning, to an actual project with real consequences: an authentic learning experience.
  o Different analytical techniques: Backwards and Forwards for 42nd St and Elinor Fuchs for Charm.
Students posted on a wiki for each project, wrote actor packets and carried out the dramaturgy.

Harriet Power worked on a production in which the playwright took over the leading role. But rather than discuss that, she brought up a recent university leadership change and attendant change in season planning. Is it the place of universities to program with a sense of adventure? What university season selection models are people really excited about?

- Boston University has a passion driven model: any faculty member’s proposal is likely to see the light of day, no rules or regulations.
- Maria Beach advocates for a model that is not exclusively director-driven. Tech Faculty has to approve it, whatever the season is.
- Jane Barnette noted two models. 1) Subcommittee whose work is resisted/resented. 2) Committee of the whole.
- UMASS dramaturgy students read all the work proposed by faculty and students. The dramaturgs create balanced season proposals. The dramaturgs could add material if needed to achieve balance.

Q&A and Further Discussion

- Lee Devin: People’s Light is known for doing work in the community, but has recently been challenged that they don’t connect with their community or even know who they are. There is a fast growing, high tech corridor nearby, but no People’s Light staff has any idea how to reach them. Some brainstorming included local gyms, day care centers, attending training to the companies in public speaking and other para-theatrical skills.
- John Lutterbie asked about strategies for fostering inter-disciplinary collaboration. Shelly Orr noted that faculty modeling it makes students ready to practice it. Harriet Power offered the model of students as a company in a class creating a serial drama. Jane Barnette offered selecting and assigning groups yourself to keep them from gravitating to work with people they already know.

**Philosophy of Teaching Dramaturgy**

**Convener:** Michael Philips

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<td>Emily Denison</td>
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**Notes:**

- Methods and tools in the classroom.
- Concerns re: academic skills, social skills of 20-somethings.
- Making assumptions about generation pertaining to behaviour
- Get students to take ownership, be assertive but not aggressive.
- Students are used to teachers telling them what to do and students are trying to please.
- The job requires the dramaturgy to be self-directed
- Possible Approach:
  - Jonas/Proehl text
  - Incorporate scripts from community’s theatre
  - New dramaturgy
• Classic dramaturgy
• Adaptation and translation
• Reminder to share syllabi in LMDA sourcebook.
• Different adaptations of same source text: failure is that it was not attached to actual production.
• How do students fit into the culture of the department.
  • Is there a unity of voice regarding dramaturgy? Perhaps the dissonance can motivate the students to fight for the right to be there and prove the legitimacy of the dramaturgy.
• Discussion of how directing classes addresses the subject of collaboration with dramaturgs.
  • Impress on students the function
  • All theatre artists have to engage in some dramaturgy
  • First course in a small program: understanding directing and dramaturgy
  • Initially not discussing dramaturgy as a separate entity.
  • Directors who don’t want dramaturgs: the school could use professional influence to advocate for graduate students.
• Finding ways to help determine collaboration issues versus inexperience of student of a lack of understanding regarding the role of the dramaturgy by the faculty director.
• Idea of having students assist a faculty dramaturg prior to their first project.
• Having the student thrown in and letting them figure it out. It forces them to find their place in each individual situation. Often, one learns more by making early mistakes.
• Issue raised that by having students work with faculty, students feel that they are doing faculty’s work.
• In courses where there are no dramaturgy majors: emphasizing how other artists use dramaturgy.
• Dramaturgy Work calls: student assistants—TEAM DRAMATURGY
• Showing Students the different kinds of dramaturgy and letting them decide how much and what parts to use.

What can LMDA do for us as a Profession?

Convener: Danielle Amato

In Attendance:
Liz Engelma    Roxanne Ray    Janine Shoeck    Ken Cerniglia
Diane Brewer   Bryan Moore    Nakissa Etemad    Carlyn Aquiline

Notes:
Reiteration:
• At a 25 year mark, is it time to blow up the box?
• Is the word dramaturg even useful?
• We need to stop waiting for permission to do our work.
• Is there another, more accessible word we could use? Is there a more efficient term?
• Our title forces us to claim responsibility.
• Or: should we just make the word mean something through the work we do? Ultimately it is probably suicide to drop the word dramaturg.
• What about putting testimonials on the site?
• What about an advice column?
• Put identifier on emails.
• What does the profession need right now? Are there specific things LMDA could be doing?
• How can we promote it as a function? Could the website publish random acts of dramaturgy?
• Why do we need LMDA?
  o Support Network. LMDA needs to be a two-way street.
  o What do unions provide to their members? LMDA guidebook helps with salary negotiations. Letters from the organization to protest against professional violations.
• Other Idea: Develop a list for self-advocacy in addition to a list of things LMDA can do for its members.
• Establish goals at each year’s AGM. Next year: Assess.
• Are there ways for LMDA to send updates independent of the listerv?
• Reactivate dramaturgy in the news.
• Workshops: Fundraising, Grant Writing- Conference based, on-line.
• Website needs to be more sexy- graduate levels of complexity.
• Little goofy spoofs about dramaturgy (video)
• What do university students need to see?
• How do we position ourselves as money generators?
• Audiences appreciate the way dramaturgs deepen the conversation about the play.
• What can the organization do to make the invisible visible?
• Who’s asking the dramaturg about her process?
• When you’re interviewing the playwright, have them ask you questions at the end?
• We need a marketing plan developed by a marketing team.
• We need to direct people to the places where the work is being done.
• Does the future hold a dramaturgy agent? Could the website function as a matchmaking site for jobs?
• Theatre Puget Sound is already doing it.
• Danielle: looking forward to making LMDA more visible in the eyes of the membership.
• Also there’s a great desire to have someone responsible for publicising events in appropriate places.
• LMDA ambassadors to attend festivals.
• Innovation watch- local dramaturgs do reports to LMDA
• Could the board send a message to members after general meetings with notes?

Advocacy
Convener: Nakissa Etemad
In Attendance:
Maggie Bell       Mark Bly       Melinda Finberg
Paul Walsh        Liana Thompson
Danielle Amato    Corianna Moffatt

Notes
• Dramaturgs are still fighting for artistic credit in projects.
• Can we as individuals be more effective as self-promoters, and where can LMDA help.
• Mark Bly: his name was not listed in a theatre company press release and he had to prove his artistic influence on the production while being told that “we don’t print dramaturg’s names.” Why should a fight choreographer get credit for 1 week of work where a dramaturg does not?
• Trends at the dramaturgy review panel: students needing recognition for work.
• Pecking order comes into play and resident dramaturg receives credit for all productions.
• Dramaturgs fighting to receive credit on the title page—dramaturgs being considered as administrative.
• Director’s saying “I don’t use a dramaturg in my process.” We don’t want to be used or misused, we want to work with and collaborate.
• “I don’t use a dramaturg” means I won’t take your notes, or at least I won’t publicly acknowledge your help.
• Let’s change this.
• “I don’t take projects brought by dramaturgs.”—can’t convince them to take the play
• Write a letter and make yourself known is a good first step.
• The “of course” factor: make expectations known. We need to get to the point where we have artistic directors advocating for us. Until this is the trend, it won’t change.
• But how can we wait? We should be on the map, we are a part of the fabric of North American theatre.
• Write letters: keep sending letters through theatre companies.
• Can LMDA send letters advocating dramaturgs?
• Research shows Americans don’t like anything new, but you have to repeat it until it becomes old.
• Could LMDA do a member spotlight? Let’s get a reality dramaturgy show!
• We need to market who we are. It is a function that has existed un-named for years. So you think you can dramaturg? Viral internet show.
• We need to invent the future.
• Denver Theatre Center did a show interviewing people involved in a project in mockumentary style. Creating drama around drama.
• Literary Managers and Dramaturgs left behind in theatre conferences. Send representatives to these conferences from LMDA?
• We have members all over the country, if there is a place our presence should be, let LMDA know.
• American Theatre needs to do dramaturgy profiles. Could we have a profile twice a year?
• Advocate at an individual and organizational level. We have to advocate for the profession and the people.
• Can we post bios on the web?
• LMDA is revamping the website. 90% of the members are on facebook. There is a section to post bios on the LMDA site, more members need to take advantage of this.
• We have to generate interest in our own members to then start a viral internet LMDA info.
• LMDA is 50/50 over/under 35. There is need for technologically savvy people full of ideas.
• Can we create our LMDA tag underneath signature in emails with a link to your LMDA member profiles.
• Bay Area needs award that recognizes dramaturgical work—advocate for dramaturgical award in all theatre awards.
• Link articles about your work to the LMDA facebook.
• Should there be an advocacy committee in LMDA? It is a board function, but we can have a group.
• Can we take important plays/productions from the past 25 years and link to a dramaturg?
• NEA booklet of their history in timeline format.
• Start dramaturgy clubs on campuses?
• How are you practicing your dramaturgy? Keep LMDA informed.
• Get our profile in magazines and journals all over.

Ensembles of Dramaturgs?
Convener: Ilana Brownstein
In Attendance:
Constance Perron
Karen Craig
Roxanne Ray
Michaela Jeffery
Maria Beach
Megan Monaghan
Diane Brewer
Steve Marsh
Mark Lord
Georgia Young
Jane Barnette
Bryan Moore
Aminda Thomas
Notes:

• What would it be like to have an ensemble of dramaturgs??
• 13P (in New York) is a company of all playwrights, actors’ theatres and playwrights’ theatres.
• The idea of a dramaturgy central—theatre without actors.
• The product takes shape in relation to what’s in the room.
• Is it simply a question of terminology?
• 13P has a simple, singular trajectory—advocating for each other, working together in a
  conventional sense.
• Devising new work versus acting as curators demonstrating dramaturgy publically?
• Sustainability—getting people to subscribe, to take on the risk, before the project comes to
  fruition.
• Installation dramaturgy? Is this possible? Is this counter-intuitive to the process?
• Ensemble- what do you have? What can you make with that?
• What would be the benefit of having dramaturgs at the centre of the ensemble?
• Learning about your own way off working as a dramaturg in relation to other peoples.
• Flexibility of process
• Multiple impetus.
• The best idea in the room wins. Dramaturgy is conducive to this model. What would be an
  interesting model?
• Sharing of knowledge
• Physical space would have to look different.
• We’d have to re-imagine what design, directing, and performance are.
• Dramaturgs as theatre practitioners versus exclusively academics.
• Commitment to a way of working.
• The product of dramaturgy is invisible where the product of playwriting is visible. How do we
  make the product visible?
• Would you wind up defining yourself (within the company of dramaturgs) by the other things
  you can do?
• How do you keep the balance between a way of working and challenging ourselves?
• Instead of trying to share a way of working, share a set of values.
• Same challenges as any other ensemble? Do the work first, then figure out how you need to
  move forward.
• Variety- How would you go about diversifying the work?
• Development model versus production model.
• Would this be more functional in a development context.
• Playwrights/dramaturg relationship is unique to the artists involved.
• Every director or playwright has some director/actor/dramaturg they won’t work with. Does this
  pose a challenge for a dramaturg collective?
• A working dramaturgical collective might be able to better articulate their work to the
  community—creating a reciprocal model.
• How would you define a valuable work product? production/audience, anthology, fundraising,
  marketing, and publication, service learning element (community engagement)—the product of
  this being conversation.
• Development of process that might be useful to others- multimedia/archiving
• A recruitment model for young dramaturg.
- How much is too much? How much could you accomplish successfully? Playwrights have plays, what’s our product? How successful is it? Dependant on many factors.
- Dramaturgs take a back seat in terms of credit in the final production—would we be okay with being in the spotlight?
- How do you make the work you want to do? Without waiting for someone to hand it to you.
- What is dramaturgy? The advancement of a form through selfless acts.

SESSION: Failure and What We Can Learn From It
CONVENER: Vanessa Porteous
NOTE-TAKER: Kathleen Wiess

PARTICIPANTS:
Ken Cameron
Johnna Wright
Michelle Kneale
Michael Evens
Johanne Deleeuw
Susand Bond
Stephen Colella
Joanna Falck
Rachel Ditor
Robert Bladde

NOTES:

Failure?
What if it feels like a failure. Why?

RULES:
1. Not naming names (but you can)
2. Specific – Why it’s a failure
3. Why did it fail?
4. No answers, that it cool –

Exchange specific cases:

Vanessa - Failed to suggest a cut, but it was too late, too radical. Build relationship with director. Work through director and dramaturge. Float idea, what do you think? Instinct!

Johnna – Prodution better that the script. How do you get a writer over a hump? Failure – Did not know director.
Know the director. Celebrate what exists. If the production was better that the play, every playwright wants that.

3\textsuperscript{rd} party intervention.

\textbf{Assumption} of people on your wave-length.

Dig deeper!

Find right rhythm for playwright.


Relationship between writer and director.

Giving false encouragement to a playwright I didn’t believe in at all.

Serial encourager.

Power imbalance is huge.

More generous to say no.

If I am not interested, you do not want my feedback.

If you make a commitment, acquire authority to give notes.

Writer in residence not writing. Feeling of contract failure. Talk to person who is in control of the failure. It’s okay to be blocked. Play with an actor as a trigger?

Connect payment to drafts.

\textbf{SESSION:} \hspace{2cm} \textbf{Dramaturg as Archivist}

\textbf{CONVENER:} Ken Cerniglia

\textbf{NOTE-TAKER:} 

\textbf{PARTICIPANTS:}
Mark Bly
Adam Versenyi
Cynthia SoRelle
Geoff Proehl
NOTES:

“Dramaturgy and Audiences”
- Discussion of resource pockets, program notes
- Importance of theorizing how we engage audiences
- When do we have “mental space”
- Show-specific outreach
- How do we get beyond the idea that theatre is expensive and elitist?
- How do we cultivate “true fans”?
- Discussion of backstage access.
- Examples of successful dramaturgy:
  - Actor’s Theatre – The Associates – host people, show them Louisville, etc.
  - “The Book Club” – discussions
  - Ambassadors – See the show for free
  - About process, talks, blogging
  - Blogging about new play
- Insight dramaturgy
- Displays that highlight process
“Gin and Topic” before the show in a bar
- How to warm up talk-back audiences before the artists arrive

- Overlap between dramaturgy and marketing
- Educational initiatives
- Dayton Playhouse – Every year they have a reading committee from the community to select
  new plays - staged readings / workshops
- The “access show” – Christmas Carol, etc
- What do we do to attract the 30 year olds?

SESSION: Early Career Dramaturgs – Speed Dating
CONVENER:
NOTE-TAKER: Michaele Jeffreys

PARTICIPANTS:
Susan Bond
Lia Munro
Corianna Moffatt
Georgie Young
Josh Wickard
Morgan Jenness
Caroline Sniatynski
Lauren Kresowaty
Lee Cookson
Emily Denison
David Copelin
Walter Chon
Gavin Witt
Janine Sobeck
Nicole Gotshin
Lee Devin
Vanessa Porteous
Pamela Halstead
Kaitlin Stilwell
Tina Lambert
Paul Walsh
Michelle Kneale
Michaela Jeffrey
Lue Douthit
M Bell
Vicki Stroich
Joanne Falck

NOTES:

Introductions (Established Dramaturgs)

What were the first jobs you had?
  – Internships?
  – Working in related departments?
  – Differences between US and Canada?
  – Don’t say no to opportunities
  – Make connections / breakdown barriers

What kind of backgrounds do established dramaturges come from?
  – Post secondary programs
  – Practical experiences
  – A lot of dramaturges have no formal education in dramaturgy

  – Find people who’s approach you admire (and apply for funding)
  – Learn to ask for what you want and don’t take no as an answer
  – Find organizations to network through (such as APN).
Session Dramaturges as Villain
Convener Shari Wattling
Note taker Michaela Jeffery

Introductions
Is this a new idea? Has it been around for a while? Is the dramaturg and adversary in the creative process? The in-house critic?
Does dramaturgy “wreak” new plays?
Too much re-shaping?
Are these issues specific to institutions? Institutional dramaturgs vs. freelance dramaturgs: should artistic directors be dramaturgs of works produced by their own companies? “The voice of the playwright” is perhaps too sacred? Too much fear of the voice becoming “muddled”.
There are some villainous dramaturgs – so we condemn the profession as a whole?
There are a lot of playwrights who would rather have their works produced that stand up to a dramaturg with an agenda.

It’s always about the relationship. Is the feeling amongst playwrights that being “nice” is not pushing the work hard enough – not making it the best it can be.

*What is bad/good dramaturgy? “Don’t fix my play for me” Maybe we need to generate more conversation – playwrights setting the agenda.. Playwrights might not always know what they need. Addressing the personal

Recognizing the amount of time required to get the job done correctly. Relationship between the director and the dramaturg. Being assigned to projects where the director doesn’t necessarily want you in the room – Designing more ideal workshopping environments. Who is the dramaturgs closest contact (within the institution)

Artistic Directors, managing directors. Trying to find your way in – if we’re not clear about our roles we run the risk of being seen as villains. Communication is all important. Dramaturgs in Canada are seen as “someone who will tell you how to write your play”

*dramaturge as advocate for the playwright?

Directors often end up driving the workshops. Directors want to protect their turf? Is the role of the dramaturg to close every hole in the script?

Problems with “one-size-fits-all” dramaturgy. Is it the actors who pushes to close the loopholes?

New plays vs. classics – even Heda Gabler has unanswered questions. We shouldn’t go into the process expecting that the playwright can just rewrite away all problems.

Who owns the workshop? Differentiating between good “workshop actors” and good “production actors”. What are we asking of actors in terms of contribution and input in the workshop process. Are actors and playwrights doing the same thing but in reverse (line to impulse, impulse to line) Communication and specificity. Scottish society of playwrights website guideline for dramaturgs.
Session **Playwrights Clubhouse**, playwrights as dramaturgs, opportunities/ career paths for new playwrights to 2nd commission etc.
Convener Nicola McCartney / Glenda Stirling / Meg Braem
Note-Taker Micheala Jeffery

As a playwright/dramaturg are you ever fully working on someone else’s work?
How do playwrights fell about being dramaturged by another playwright? About the right chemistry.
Is it stressful for the playwright being asked to dramaturge?
From the playwright’s perspective, what’s good dramaturgy? What’s bad dramaturgy? Asking questions, being ok with not knowing playwright dramaturgs and non text based work: When you come to work with the tag of “playwright” people get freaked out They assume you’re a stickler for structure.
Care in the pairing: don’t put the dramaturg who’s a structure hound with a playwright who’s more interested in voice and character (unless they want to challenge themselves)
How does a dramaturg (as an artist) not end up resenting the art they are helping create (rather than helping themselves)?
Inspiration, community, support.
Dramaturging pieces you wouldn’t elect to write yourself.
Transition between being and “emerging” and “established” playwright.
Self production? Nobody ever really thinks they’re successful. What does it mean to be “successful?” Getting a second production in a culture that thrives on “new” voices.
Creating community stating a wave where we’re not just competing for grants all the time.
Funding conditions makes the work which is ultimately produced very homogenous.

Session **State of Canadian Playwriting**
Convener Robert Blacker
Note-Taker unknown

More Canadians work at Stratford, retreats, residencies
Real answer is more productions
Playwright retreats. Need permission to do their own thing. Have time and space to write.
Difficult to write a play for a specific place.
Are we feeling optimistic?
Financial rewards are so slim – how do you sustain a body of work? Survival. 2nd Productions of plays and how important that is.
How do we make a case for funding the second production?
Even getting the first production is hard.
Disconnect between Regional theatre and small theatre. How do we get the work into bigger stages?
How can we set people up and get out of the way? Director- Artistic Director.
Relationship artistic director match resources and strength of company to the play.
Regionalism? The play may not work for different regional differences.
There is also a need to keep your own community healthy and engaged. Work not happening at designated regional companies.

“End of the day a good play is a good play, is a good play” Bob White
Drawer Boy, Mary’s Wedding these have travelled.
Small cast plays this is why they are successful.
Small working group to talk about plays. Travel across the county. Disseminate in person rather than script in the mail.
Every play needs the second production to compete itself.
Discussion to move opportunity forward as well as craft.
Not a lot of exposure in the US for Canadian playwrights. Market for plays university community. How do we get playwrights to be more regular attendees to the theatre?
Session Classical / Shakespeare Dramaturgy.
Convener Robert Blacker, Haviva Avirom
Note-Taker unknown

Textual work with Shakespeare – how does the dramaturg fit into the process?
An experience with Marlow’s Edward II – a 40% cut that streamlined the work - finding a
balance between reverence for the text and making it work for the audience.
Text discussions Hartly’s (?) The Shakespearean Dramaturg, includes and examination of
process. The idea that one doesn’t have to “police” the text. The Rehearsal Process from
Shakespeare to Sheridan. Recognizing tow the texts were treated in their own time. Often very
fluid.
Where’s the line in changes to the text?
Run time, converging meaning of classical language by understanding the text/delivering with
conviction making it meaning for the audience.
Dramaturgs being aware of the actor’s need for understanding moment to moment.
A contrary opinion – sometimes a changes in language facilitates meaning.
Do we understand our audience?
Knowing the history of the a text that has multiple versions?
Cutting scenes? Does the odd or problem scene hold a key to the meaning of the work? An
understanding of the scene allows an informal decision regarding cuts.
Multiple levels of meaning in poetic work – understanding how the cuts can affect that meaning.
Discussion of the introduction scenes in Taming of the Shrew.
Consider the meaning of “subversive” or seemingly secondary elements or scenes in a classical
work.
Learning the rhythm of a piece, reading various editions – reading aloud in a pre- rehearsal
process.
Contemporary (political) ? of a classical piece
“auteur” direction of classical works – applying meaning and emphasis that clearly wasn’t the
author’s intention – misleading the audience?
Are theatres still using dramaturgs for a classical script?
Production dramaturgy + early career Dramaturging with classical work – mentoring with more
experienced directors
Volunteer yourself?
Educational programs pairing student dramaturgs and directors – an experience from Hungary
Is it a symbiosis that has to start early?
? People as Lit. Managers and assistants – building relationships, if theatre is always apprentice
driven. How do we build these relationships in classical theatre? The effectiveness of long term
collaborative relationships
Session Making a Living while Freelancing
Convener Melinda Finberg
Note-Taker Eury Chang

Thinking outside the box – using dramaturgy in another fashion – i.e. dramaturg a company.
Suggestion – contact HR or Corporate coaching companies
Forming relationships with playwrights
Production dramaturgs – when you’re not affiliated with a company How do you get the gig?
Finding holes and how you can find them.
Adjunct teaching positions in the US but these positions are going away – bad economy
Academic administration?
How did we get a gig?
Make your won. Put everything you do, who you know, what you want on paper. Exploit your skills. Build a program, Define yourself as a “specialist” Set a framework for yourself. Self producing. Mandate at the top of your resume. Mission statement, allow yourself to be surprised what the mandate can include. Exploit your skill set. Tell people how you wan them to see you.
Mew play dramaturgy contain sills that translate well into other areas. Deep listening. Working with story, structure.
Helping communities tell their stories, often disenfranchised communities. There are non-traditional funding sources.
You have to make the structure yourself.
Film making + script consulting for independent film makers.
GOAL “to have a full-time job that has benefits etc. that wouldn’t want to me want to slit my throat but would let me do my gigs”.
Helping people tell their stories. Non judgmental listening is required.
Designing scenarios to illustrate points
Age – ism is an issue. How do we combat that?
We can’t presume to know why someone does or doesn’t hire you.
Film editors and makers – especially documentaries they often need dramaturgy skills.
Documentary – ALL dramaturgy “script consultant”
Interpretive theatre – environmental stories.
Somewhat to do with luck and how to get into certain networks.
Volunteering- don’t be afraid to show a company that they need you.
Look at Artist in Residence programs – through schools? Grant programs.
Look at the relationships that you have them can you exploit them?
Career coaching. Does it help? Focus on how your skills might be perceived outside of theatre.
Expand your network.
Figure out things like fee structure / contracts etc. Figure out boundaries.
There are opportunities that you can use if you’re willing to check your ego at the door.
Agit Prop That Doesn’t Suck
Convener – Jacob Zimmer

Participants: Ian Leung, Jordan Hall, Joshua Wickard, Joanna Garfinkel, Laurel Green, Steve Marsh, DD Kugler, Morgan Jenness, Gerry Potter, Ken Cameron, Eric Rose

Notes:
- Jacob is making an agit-prop show.
  - Wants to know what has worked for others in the past, etc.
  - What sucks? Preachy
  - Who’s it for?
- 1930’s - Living Newspapers – journalists lived under Federal Theatre Project
- Daniel Kharms – Soviet Playwright – transgressive acts
  - Maryville – short piece post Katrina – New Orleans & connection with corporate irresponsibility
  - short, personal, based on interviews
- Waiting for Lefty
- Calgary group that wants to get community involved
- We must recognize that something is broken
- Wants slow change
- How do you know you’ve won?
- Maybe we need to be brave and put ourselves out there
- Living Newspaper – based on a real news story of someone who drowned child because it was slowly starving
  - Shocking, but the audiences knew what happened when they came into the theatre
- Do we need to define the cause before we create the show?
- Emotion is key; forum theatre depends on the emotional state of the audience when it comes in.
- Pop-culture references can add recognition to a piece, but can also date it.
- Ghost River show – Eye for an Eye – about Wiebo Ludwig, accused saboteur
  - That show garnered a huge amount of attention because it was timely
- History – stories people know
  - Is there some power in using history to tell these stories?
- Murray Horowitz play – history of activism and how it is different from terrorism
- Needs to not be alienating to an audience.
  - I’m comfortable and wealthy and so this means nothing to me.
- Honesty vs. Earnestness
- Perhaps we want no catharsis so that people want to change something
- We need to be empathy engineers
  - Put people in a different space
  - Scare them, leave them lost
- What is required in a proposal?
- Do we give them paths to deal with the problem we pose?
- Brian Dory’s play with readings from classic plays about soldiers who have been traumatized was funded by the Army and played on bases. The performances were followed by speeches by experts and an open mic concept where anyone could speak.
  - The distance of classic characters made things safe for traumatized soldiers who then felt free to speak out.
- Rwanda Memorial play – Hutus and Tutsis watched the play together
- The Monument – a Canadian play
- Codery is key – “earnest” meant gay to Wildean audiences
  - Should we say things directly but coded?
- “I’m tired of being ambiguous.”
- How is codery done efficiently?
  - Must know the audience language
  - Can it be visual language – as people share so much visual imagery?
- Get Your War On – made two dimensional
- How do you find story metaphors?
- San Francisco Mime Troupe uses the Commedia form – we care about and follow a character and along the way political, polemical information is seeded in
- Galileo production – annotated with Twitter feed so that the context was given to the audience in that fashion
- James Cameron’s movie Avatar – catharsis discourages people from wanting change.
- Dutch Puppet company that moves people profoundly with their shows about concentration camps.
  - The problem was, “What do I do with these feelings?”
Another person was not moved by the show, but enjoyed it.
- You can only climb a wall as far as you can reach, but if we all climb together we can climb the whole wall
- Production of “Shooting the Hippo” – using newspapers on the wall.
- Discussion of Catharsis – the production of “The Monument” turned the theatre’s board president off, then 3 weeks later the president phoned the director and said they saw everything through the lens of the play and were very changed by it
- “Making the strange familiar and the familiar strange.”
- Polemical shows need people to have dialogue opportunities
- Discussion of the “Wrecking Ball” performances
- Problems of protests and mass arrests in Toronto were discussed – we need time to find out what happened and what it means.

The LM of LMDA
Session Notes
Convener - Janine Sobeck

Note Taker: Ken Cerniglia
Participants: Ken Cerniglia, Joanna Falck, Dan Burson, Bruce Sevy, Carrie J. Cole, Carlyn Aquiline, Kae Koger, Johna Wright

Notes:
- the literary manager is dramaturging the institution
- challenge of undergraduates doing production or new play dramaturgy
- teaching kids how to do readers’ reports
- critical generosity – what’s the difference between opinion & evaluation/feedback & criticism
- What is the difference between a Literary Manager and a Dramaturg? Is there a prestige difference?
- What does Literary Management mean? Does Outrageous Fortune put all the blame on Literary Managers?
- Denver Centre and Portland have good positions for Literary Managers.
- Are LM’s supposed to have relationships with all writers?
- Are people being trained to be dramaturges or literary managers?
- Literary Manager as the expert play reader – training in reading and evaluation of a script
- Where does the anxiety come from?
- Maybe the Literary Manager is the know it all and the Dramaturge comes out of the fog…
- No training in literary management and dramaturgy in CA
- Literary manager as writer and editor
  - Context of plays falls into the hands of the Literary Manager along with before and after experience, lobby displays, etc.

Sessions with no notes submitted or sessions with notes submitted that were difficult to transcribe:

Preserving Legacy
Real Time Response From Audience Via Internet
LMDA & ACTF: Strengthening Collaboration
Stage Combat and Dramaturgy
Rethinking Pre-Production
Dramaturgs & Audiences
How to Talk to Colleagues about Dramaturgy
Ensemble Based Dramaturgy
Joy
Top Chef Challenge: Pro-Am-Edu Collaborations
Adaptation for the Stage
Finding and Funding Spaces

TOPIC: What Inspires you?

CONVENER: Rachel Ditor
NOTE TAKER: Johnna Wright
PARTICIPANTS: Pam Haig Bartley, Meg Braem, Michelle Knewale, Nichole Ganter, Beth Blickers, Sarah Lunnie, Jordan Hall, David Copelin, Joshua Wickard, Johnna Wright, Andrea Romaldi (andrea@tarragontheatre.com), Vanessa Porteous (Vporteous@atplive.com), Bob White (bwhite@stratfordshakespearefestival.com), Joanna Garfinkel, Michelle Ualiquette, Joanna Falck (jfalck@shawfest.com), Danielle Amato, Corianna Moffat, Vicki Stroich, Glenda Stirling, Susan Bond, Richard Wolfe, Gerry Potter, Dianne Goodman

NOTES: What are you reading, listening to, etc.?
  - A book about the food Olympics. The precision and attention to detail that goes into that work.
  - Knives at Dawn
• Our Inner Ape – The origins of Human Behavior in our nearest evolutionary relatives
• The Great Ape Trust - an organization that works with apes
• Radio Lab – WNYC radio program following fields of scientific inquiry
• The American Life – thislife.org (radio program)
• Planet Money – economic imitative explained through narrative
• Everything is Illuminated – book on tape, a rest from reading
• 9-11 Commission can also be downloaded in audio
• Outrageous Fortune – study of relationship between writer and dramaturge
• NAMI Program shedding info on industries in the US
• Doctor Who
• The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lax (lacks?) – Science, ethics, biography, race, class, gender
• Tattoos On The Heart - Compilation of stories about kids involved in gangs
• Community Art Program in New Orleans – site-specific stories in blighted neighborhoods accessed by cellphone.
• Sweetland – independent film based on a novel by ???
• Let’s Talk about Love: A Burney to The End of Taste – by music writer Karl Wilson, an examination of why he hates the Celine Dion album that so many people love.
• The Mystery of Harris Burdick – picture book.
• The Principles of Uncertainty – on what it is to be alive and know you’ll die one day (book)
• Stonewall Uprising – film about a gay bar run by the mafia in the ‘60’s that became the scene of a protest
• Man on Wire – documentary about walk on tightrope between twin towers
• Bomb Magazine – cultural magazine, their online stuff includes playwrights being interview by other playwrights
• So You Think You can Dance – The fact that the show has become skewed to contestants personal stories, sentimentalism, Evolution of reality TV to becoming increasingly fictitious
• On Chesil Beach – Ian McEwan Novel. Very powerful story about fears, repression, missed opportunities.
• Being Wrong: Adventures in The Margin of Error – recently published, also found on salon.com
• Lady Gaga – showstudio.com, 2 interviews
• www.jonathoncarroll.com - posts brief poems
• How Proust Can Change Your Life – Talks about what Proust wants for his readers
• Surfing Docs – extremely calming
• Reading Cookbooks – to go to sleep at night
• Ludwig Bemelman – stories about cooking – early 20th century at the Ritz in NY. Read it with an Austrian accent!
• Post Secret Blog – people send anonymous postcards about secrets they have.
• Theatre is More Beautiful Than War – about German Theatre culture
• Understanding Comics
• Gardening – working on creating sustainable, edible forest in your yard…
• Ted Talks
• Making Light of Tragedy – Book by Jennifer Grant

TOPIC:        How to talk to Colleagues about Dramaturgy
CONVENER:     Carrie Cole
NOTE TAKER:
PARTICIPANTS: Sydney Cheek O’Donnell, Michelle Ualiquette, Jane Barnette

NOTES:
1. Narrating What We do for Tenure Process
   • Michelle Volanski is willing to share info and ideas about her tenure process.
   • Are programs peer – reviewed?

2. What do we do when our tenure process requires dramaturgy in remote locations for “national recognition”?
   • Remote dramaturgy
   • Grants to support on site dramaturgy?
   • Script development – script reading
   • Generating content for theatre’s publications for audiences
   • Serving as respondents at festivals
   • Post mortem dramaturgy
   • Moderating panels and discussions at festivals
• Translation/adaptation
• DJ—Make sure to talk to your colleagues more so they know about your work.

• Imagining America – Grants to fund community engagement, which include dramaturgy.
• Perhaps networking with academic colleagues who have relations with theatres nearby.
• Make contact with literary managers to serve as dramaturges for theatres nationally.

TOPIC: Exchanging Devising Methodologies
CONVENER: Eric Rose
NOTE TAKER: Laurel Green
PARTICIPANTS: Michelle Vahquette, Carolyn Russell-King, Joanna Garfinkel, Richard Wolfe, Laurel Green, Ian Leung, Brian Dooley

NOTES:

Practical Exchanges: Tools for a process

Eric Rose:
• Short time frame, devising work.
• Fueling begins moment group forms, and can include administrators

Project: Reverie (Devised Process), sent out doc/with research questions
• IE: Favorite songs, bands, music videos, look into current protest revolutions, phrases, imagery
• Form of Sharing material – Google Wave, platform to embed video, pics, notes, topics
• Ask Questions – Is this something we should do?
• Conversation threads, posts
• By the time the collaborators enter the process everyone has begun a shared critical engagement with the material.
• Also asked people to write an introduction, not a bio, for themselves. What do they want to share about themselves—influences, curiosities?
• People can quickly make connections, camaraderie begins on the first day of rehearsal;
• Ensemble building before everyone hits the hall.
• Great way to generate ideas/influences to combat shore development period
• Can also ask people to bring in small performances to present ideas on their feet.
Contracting Actors who are constricted as devisers – How much can you legally ask them to do outside the room?

Solution –

- Hire them as creative partners at the equity rate? Rose clearly states his expectations about ownership and involvement in the developing project.
- This is about changing the relationship between artists, and “flattening the hierarchy”.
- Not about NOT having a leader, but defining roles and responsibilities.
- At any moment someone in the room can stop the process – everyone has permission to address issues as they arise.
- Communication – greatest challenge of devised work. – How do people feel engaged and heard in the process? Work with a system of acceptance.

Joanna Garfinkel: How to push past fear during the process? IE – people checking to see if they are doing it “right”?

Solution

- Create a time during the day to stop – keep going until then. Or, giving lots of parameters to assignments – an ingredients list?
- What do you as a creator not know?
- What does the piece need?

Categories of 3 Ingredients

1. What do you know?
2. Old-fashioned theatre things – reveals, stayed accidents, fun things that make plays good, etc.
3. Things out don’t know about the piece – challenges, roles that invite transgression
- Balance which people to put together while creating – balancing personalities to encourage involvement and force people out of their comfort zones.
- Director has the SM write down which relationships she saw emerge that interested her – an outside eye.
- Steal – learn from colleagues success
- Rearrange and redistribute imagery/text
- Visual Map of Relationship, of their process
- Play: A Journal and Visual representation of roles, issue 4, 4 plays
Roles

- Leaky Heaven Co from Vancouver – introducing structures that can be messed with
- Strategies – writing on the wall
- Example – Antigone – reduced to 10 movements, actions, a physical score
- Begin with a theoretical discussion
- Ex: Streetcar – Full of entrances and exits, marked them out on big sheets of paper, reducing text before getting on their feet.
- Coming up with the best possible game for the group that comes in.
- When actors come in – Sat around and talked about it, figured out where the piece would take place
- Move around actions
- Casting roles – who can we imagine working together?
- “Unhooking” characters and people difficult.
- Tasks – use score as a beginning point
- Issue – Sometimes hard to articulate process of devising as you take for granted the shared vocabulary / mentality of your collaborators
- Leaky Heaven – We need people who aren’t too “attached” – it’s helpful to have a dissenter or new member, so you have to clarify and explain.
- TOOL – No Casting – play roles with intension and truth, about ideas and moments.
- Jamming about a character outside of ownership, as they develop.
- Perilous perhaps, to not be attached to a character, but maybe freeing in the process?

Questions – What kind of length is your process?

- Leaky Heaven – 3 weeks, longer with grants and planning.
- Eric Fbse – 3 years, Planning- Fuelling – Workshop – Assemblage – 3 weeks of generating and document assembly – rehearsal – NOT about generating anymore, and is based on funding cycles.
- Brian Dooley – Citadel Theatre – Have collaborators leave rehearsal hall to go on treasure hunts, orient themselves to a new environment. IE – Go to a convent and pretend you want to join them.
Testing actors interview roles – outside of comfort zone, party tricks etc.
Reverse roles of actors, techs, etc. – form different kinds of camaraderie in creation.
Lee – Banff – Double Edge Theatre
Farm - members of ensemble live there – a unique and intense model
Personal story / question of each individual – finding character through these IE. You are asking the same questions as your characters.
Circus Training, beginnings in Grotowsky, circus presence comes through work.
Performers generating material that dramaturges would watch – wait until they began to see what was repeated.
Led by actors during creation then dedicated rehearsal time.

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN TO STOP GENERATING AND BEGIN REHEARSING
Everything has a time limit – limits can liberate, fear can motivate!
- Erase – Always have a witness who doesn’t know how things have evolved, or the code.
- ACTIVELY RESPOND – Everyone takes notes: I saw This, I felt this: I thought about…
- Multiple entry points into tasks.

TOPIC: Cross Disciplinary Creation
CONVENER: Natasha Mythowych
NOTE TAKER: Beth Blickers
PARTICIPANTS Tina Lambert, LeeCookson, Rick Davis, Maggie Bell, Peter Cochran, Laurel Green, Harriet Power

NOTES:

Work People Have Done:
1. Rick Davis – Theatre of the 1st Amendment, has produced 4 shows, among the most successful was I can stop on a Dime and Get 10 Cents Change
   - Diane McIntyre (choreographer) / Oyam (writer), did a piece based on stories of Diane’s father.
   - Took 8 hours of oral history and a 2-week workshop to create an idea of piece, which led to a dance/theatre/6 actor monologue piece.
   - His motto – Always say YES! When a cross disp piece comes into your world.
   - New Piece happening now with playwright Heather MacDonald and dancer Susan Sheilds about the myth of performance.
   - Did workshop 3 weeks ago.
   - Greg Grande did video, used dancers and actors.
   - Started with an outline and ended with 50 minutes of material.
   - Audiences have been very receptive and have asked for more.
It was noted that dramaturges are more aware of issues of funding, marketing, audience expectations than perhaps they were in decades past.

2. Lee Cookson of the Banff Centre:
   - The programs are artist led. If they want it to happen, it will. It’s a post secondary education, so attendees are students, even though it’s not degree granting. It offers “freedom of space and time”.
   - There can be unusual pressure on these kinds of works because designers especially have to do so many projects they aren’t available for longer stretches.
   - On the flip side there is a more vast funding resource network.
   - How to do this and not alienate your subscriber base?
   - Why do dance people want to see only dance? Music people only music?
   - How to describe/position it?
   - Artists can resist the labels, making it even more difficult.
   - Everyone feels a key to this is Don’t Throw Out the Narrative! If you experiment with form you need to keep content traditional.

3. Conflicts between the disciplines must arise – How do you resolve this?
   - Rick: 1st day of rehearsal and actors on chairs and dancers at the barre and on the floor. Sbt the next day the dramaturge led 90 minutes of theatre games so the actors had to move end the dancers had to enter the world of the theatre.
   - This starts with educational programs, which must be cross-disciplinary.
   - But at least all of these people know “theatre”. Lee talked about working with a cartoonist, a visual artists and a carpenter on a puppet show. They ultimately took it out of a theatre space and everyone instantly relaxed.

Harriet Power: There is a bank in Philly that will fund the money lost on student tickets.

Ultimately it’s about audience training. The Introducing of artists from other forms, the addressing that young people think and process differently - Is this a benefit from this kind of work? Finding new funding sources, and when approached with the new – SAY YES!

**TOPIC:** Alternative Dramaturgy -

**Movement, Non-narrative, Ensemble based companies**

**CONVENER:** Scott Yuri
NOTE TAKER: Glenda Stirling

PARTICIPANTS Amy Freeman, Carianne Moffat, Jane Barnette, Joanna Garfinkel, John Gentile, Gerry Potter, Jordan Hall, Meghan Sharer, Pam Ahig Bartley, Melanie Preston, Michelle Uliquette, Lauren Kresowaty, Emily Denison, Eric rose, Laurel Green, Caroline Sniatynski, Meron Langsner, Kathleen Weiss, Kim McCaw, John Lutterbie, Kristin Leahey, Michael Phillips, Shelley Orr, Peter Cochran, Katalin Trenseni, Arminda Thomas, Nicola McCartney, Sarah Lunnie, Mark Valdez, Amy Jensen, Karen Craig

This group was so big with so many different focus, they split into 3 more focused groups.

- Scott – Ensemble based theatre dramaturgy.
- Janice – Hong Kong/ Ensemble theatre with a director and acting ensemble.
- Yuri – What is the role of the dramaturge in a physical / non-text based development?
- Meron – Teaching a physical skill to ensemble by each member, creates shared physical vocab.

Director put out call, each participant must commit to 1 session of teaching their area of physical skill, which created hybrid movement systems.

1. How do you develop a cohesive aesthetic?
2. Is there one leader?
3. Director to focus group, and use consensus?

How you work and whom you work with determines the whole course of the work.

Yuri:

- Vancouver has both ensemble based works and non-text based work coming out of SFU, which is studio based, rather than text based dramaturgy.
- Physical Theatre artist work through the body.
- New Work needs longer incubation time, so studio time is only available when they are really ready to get on their feet.

Question – Ensemble exists and the work will be devised – is there a place for dramaturgy?

Is every person a dramaturge?

- Use a short story as a base – then start to physical and vocabulary respond to narrative and relationships.
Amy

- interested in devising from images and physical ensembles, choreographic theatre – layers of choreography, movement as memorized text
- Enrique Pardo, Roy Hart – vocal training
- Laurie – wants to create image based work and ensemble – working with a visual artist who is creating and projecting onto actor’s bodies

- The binary of Showing and telling
- The importance of the outside eye in ensemble creation
- Ensembles take long time – hierarchy of traditional structure is great for clarity and decision making in short time frames – how to answer that in ensemble creation?
- Creating the Space of Unknowing, where there can be exploration and discomfort.
- Create trust – physical, literal, creative, to facilitate the work.

- Do you start the process and take all the time you need, and then look for a venue? Or commit to a venue or time frame and build that schedule to that?

- The challenge of finding collaborators, esp. early in your career… How do we create spaces and relationships for successful ensemble?

- How do you facilitate ensemble in learning groups?
- Audience as Dramaturges – Studio showings of Works in Progress, only invited audience, who contributes to the development in dramaturge, led post show discussions…

Sessions without notes (or with note too tricky to transcribe):
Finding and Funding Spaces
Top Chef Challenge
Joy
Dramaturgs and Audiences
Rethinking Pre-Production
Stage Combat and Dramaturgy
LMDA & ACTF: Strengthening Collaboration
Real Time Response from audience via Internet
Preserving our Legacy
Ensemble Based Dramaturgy