

Jumblies Theatre
Annual Report
July 2003 to June 2004



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Overview:

This was a very eventful year for Jumblies Theatre in terms of both artistic activity and organizational development. Some key achievements were:

- Production of *Once A Shoreline*: large-scale participatory performance piece at Davenport Perth Neighbourhood Centre
- Initiation of new project in partnership with Montgomery's Inn and Mabelle Toronto Community Housing
- Increased capacity in youth and adult internship opportunities
- Creation of Data-Base and Web-Site
- Increased capacity in marketing and private fundraising through work with expert mentor, Tim Chapman and marketing intern Zsuzsa Kelemen
- Addition of 2 new part-time staff positions
- Inclusion of Jumblies Theatre in Vancouver's "Documenting Engagement" Project
- Opportunities to present and share our work nationally and offer advice and support to other artists, and organizations in Toronto

Arts For All - Davenport Perth Residency:

This was the third year of our project at Davenport Perth Neighbourhood Centre and our main activity for the 03/04 year. Our focus was the large-scale production that took place in May. This involved the following activities:

- Collaborative sessions with creative team
- Script development, Musical Composition and Designs
- Weekly Monday afternoon arts drop-in (Sept. to May)
- Numerous artistic workshops with community groups
- Workshops with *Viva!* Youth Singers
- Outreach to schools and local groups and agencies
- Contracting musicians, production team, performers
- Marketing - planning and implementation
- Building of set, props, puppets and costumes starting in Sept.
- Lighting and 8-track electro-acoustical soundtrack
- Rehearsals starting in March
- Performances May 19 to 30th – 8 public performances

Once A Shoreline:

The production was a tremendous success on levels of artistic achievement and community engagement. The content of the piece emerged out of oral histories; visual art workshops; and issues and themes important to DPNC's community

members: challenges of old age, social isolation and immigrant status, themes of geography, memory, journeys, and safe places. Our central image was the prehistoric lake that used to extend as far as the Davenport bluff. The show incorporated an electro-acoustical and live musical score, dance, puppetry, visual imagery and storytelling. The show took place in DPNC's *Sanctuary*. Most of the audience members were standing in the centre of the space with the action flowing amidst and around them on moving stages and scaffolding. The cast at each performance was about 100, and our audience capacity was 160. Audience attendance was high at all performances and we were sold out for the entire second week. The production phase is now being followed by a phase dedicated to continuity and legacy.

Artists:

The final creative/production team included the following people:

Ruth Howard - artistic director
Wende Bartley – composer
Varrick Grimes – director
Erna Van Daele – musical director
Chris Clifford - technical director/lighting designer
Tanya Williams – choreographer
Antonio Ramirez – choreographer
John Adams – sound consultant
Dorothy Jenkins –stage manager
Mara Shaughnessy – assistant director, performer
Noah Kenneally – assistant designer/director, performer
Kate Van Doorne – singer
Jen Carter – singer
Jonathan Craig – viola
Kevin Barrett – guitar
Erin Donovan – percussion
Marketing and Publicity – Zsuzsa Kelemen



Youth and Educational Projects:

School Residency Project – an OAC Education grant enabled a project to bring together grade 4/5 classes from two local schools, which have a history of inter-fighting. The project concluded with a presentation at both schools and at DPNC, and many of the children taking part in *Once A Shoreline*.

Youth Audio Project – a project teaching audio recording skills, which we have been nurturing for 2 years. This year the program has been taken under the administration of DPNC’s youth program, which is a step towards its longevity.

Youth Theatre Training - Nov. to Feb. - a 14-week youth theatre program, funded by Theatre Ontario, with a different guest artist each week and a final presentation. Ten young people of very diverse cultural and economic backgrounds took part. Six of them went on to perform in *Once A Shoreline*, and several have formed a stiling group that continues to perform with Jumblies.

Outreach to High Schools: Connections with local high schools led to four students being placed with out project for their community hours, and one home Economics teacher bringing two of her students to sew once a week for about 6 weeks.

Professional Affiliations and Memberships:

- *Toronto Theatre Alliance*
- *Theatre Ontario*
- Community Arts Ontario
- Raucaus Caucus
- *Canadian Community Play Exchange*
- Canadian Oral History Association

Documentation:

Door Video –17 minute video of 2003 “Door Project” (ed. David Hermolin)

Documentating Engagement , Vancouver, Jan. 2004 – Ruth Howard was one of 8 artists on a 3-week project, which provided critical forums, taught video skills and facilitated the production of short videos about each artists’ work.

In Print Dialogue – Ruth Howard received a grant from Community Arts Ontario to write an article about artist and participant perspectives on the DPNC project.

Conferences, Presentations:

- May 2003 – conference in Saskatoon for recipients of Bronfman *Urban Issues* funding attended by Ruth Howard and Michaela Otto
- Nov. 2003 – Ruth Howard, Michaela Otto and Varrick Grimes go to Vancouver on a Bronfman travel grant to see the opening of the *Downtown Eastside Community Play* and Ruth Howard gives 2 public presentations
- May 2004 – Michaela Otto to attend *The Grand Gathering*, Community Arts Ontario conference in Waterloo to represent Jumblies Theatre
- May 2004 – hosting the first *Canadian Community Play Exchange* Symposium to coincide with our production
- May 2004 - To coincide with our production, Jumblies Theatre hosted a professional symposium on community plays (thanks to a Canada Council “Off the Radar” grant).

- June 2004 – IFS Conference (international conference of Neighbourhood Centres). Ruth Howard presented the Arts For All project. As a result, our project has been selected for inclusion in a field book for neighbourhood centres about “socially inclusive” projects.

Training and Internships:

We implemented the following for 2003/4:

- Zsuzsa Kelemen - trainee in marketing under a Theatre Ontario PATHS training grant – now a permanent Jumblies staff member
- Marta Slochowski - OCAD intern from community arts course – will join Jumblies Board of Directors in 2005
- Shiva Godarzi – Recent immigrant from Iran and single mother -production asst. on HRDC youth wage subsidy grant – continues to work part time with Jumblies.
- Jonah Lewis - teen volunteer developing production and design skills, on Job Connect Grant – continues to do video and technical contract work for Jumblies
- Richard Smith – theatre tech. trainee funded by SKETCH and Job Connect. Following this placement, Richard was accepted in the Humber College Technical Theatre Program.

Promotion and Support of Community Arts:

We have provided free consultation this year to the following parties:

- Scadding Court
- Art Gallery of Ontario
- South Asian Women’s Centre
- Lawrence Heights Community Health Centre
- Guelph Community Play
- Downtown Eastside Community Play, Vancouver
- Coalition of 4 Downsview social service agencies
- Several individual artists

Evaluation:

In 2003/04 we implemented the following evaluation tools:

- Evaluation forms for all participants in Once A Shoreline
- Audience questionnaires
- Documented verbal feedback from youth troupe
- Recorded audio and video interviews with participants
- Meetings with partner representatives
- Open and ongoing communication with participants, artists and staff of partner organizations
- Audio/visual documentation of project
- Recorded or written testimonials from participants

New Project in Etobicoke (*Bridge of One Hair*):

We identified our next project last August when we visited Montgomery's Inn in Etobicoke and fell in love with this historical site so oddly surviving in the midst of highways and high-rise apartment blocks. The challenge of bringing together the Inn and the diverse local residents is highly appealing and the support being offered by the Inn is terrific. We created a scheme, which brings together this community setting with two other groups with whom we had been discussing collaboration - *Changing Ways Violence Prevention for Youth and Children* and *Viva! Youth Singers*. In 2003/04 we have conducted the following activities to further this new project:

- Meetings with Partners' staff
- Ongoing e-mail and phone communication with all parties
- Writing grants for the project
- Approaching artists to be part of creative team
- Developing artistic conceptual framework
- Starting in Feb. 04 – meeting weekly with Kate Hamblen, Drama coordinator at the Inn to lay the groundwork for outreach and research
- Exploring the neighbourhood
- Sending Jumblies Representatives to community forums and events

Partners:

Jumblies Theatre can only afford to do the work we do through the substantial in-kind donations from our partners. Our 2003/04 partners included:

- The Stop Community Food Centre
- Davenport Perth Community Church
- South Asian Women's Centre
- Pope Paul Catholic School:
- Carleton Village Public School
- VIVA! Youth Singers
- Changing Ways Violence Prevention for Youth
- Montgomery's Inn

Funders:

Government:

Canada Council for the Arts
Ontario Arts Council
Toronto Arts Council
Theatre Ontario
Ontario Trillium Foundation
HRDC
Job Connect

Private:

Samuel and Saidye Bronfman
Family Foundation, Urban Issues
George Cedric Metcalf Charitable
Foundation
Laidlaw Foundation
Harbinger Foundation
Private and Business Donations