

2003

LMDA Canada Newsletter, 2002/2003

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LMDA CANADA NEWSLETTER

2002 / 2003

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Dear Colleague –

LMDA Canada is growing fast and it's a great pleasure to welcome the following new members:

Sarah Polkinghorne
Elyne Quan
Robin Patterson
Heather Doerksen
Eury Chang
Norah Holtby
Diane Roberts

Linda Burnett
Byron Laviolette
Rahul Varma
Jovanni Sy
Becky Todor
Maureen Labonté
Lisa Voth

Catherine McNally
Angela Rebeiro
Jenny Munday
Kristian Ayre
Miranda Huba
Kevan Ellis
Simone Salazar

With 100 members in Canada, we are a powerful network reaching across the country and I urge you all to take advantage of the vast range of knowledge this represents. A full list of LMDA Canada members is enclosed with this package, including email addresses. As we develop, perhaps we should consider a Canadian discussion list....let me know if this would be of interest.

As usual, I will remind you of our upcoming conferences:

- LMDA Annual International Conference: Chicago, IL, June 26 - 29, 2003
- Mini-Conference on Dramaturgy: Toronto, ON, July 7 & 8, 2003
- presented in association with the Theatre Centre

At LMDA Canada's annual meeting in Calgary in February, there was a great turn-out for a spirited discussion. Please mark next year's meeting on your calendar: Friday March 5, 2004, at Alberta Theatre Projects. Thank you to Vanessa Porteous, Vicki Stroich and Lisa O'Brien for hosting us so well again this year.

I'm also pleased to mention that the LMDA's Employment Guidelines will be included, in condensed form, in the upcoming revision of PACT's Human Resources Handbook. My thanks to Gie Roberts and Kathy MacKenzie and their committee for considering this material. This is a great achievement for LMDA and I hope a great boon for everyone – dramaturgs and managers alike – negotiating dramaturgy contracts.

A related development is the growth of the Playwrights Development Centre Network. Ken Cameron of the Alberta Playwrights Network has taken on the task of serving as Convenor and is working on numerous playwright exchanges as well as a variety of collaborative efforts among members of the network.

All the best for a happy and restful summer.


Brian Quirt
Chair, LMDA Canada

Toward New Developmental Structures – DD Kugler

The 2002 Annual Conference of LMDA is being held in Vancouver, noon Thursday June 13th through noon Sunday June 16th. Although there will be reports and discussions about the on-going work of LMDA – including the vital activities of the Advocacy Caucus – the primary focus will be upon play development.

As one of the Conference Planners, I'm less interested in panels that describe institutional development models, and their successes. I'm more interested in asking:

- Why are so many interesting shows developed in processes that are in conflict with existing developmental programs?
- Why are theatres producing work that could never have been developed inside their own development structures?
- What's not getting developed/produced inside the current development models?
- What plays/performances are current structures not serving?
- What developmental structures might encourage a broader range of theatrical production?

It is my feeling that we are developing and producing a relatively narrow band work within the broad theatrical spectrum. I don't want to disparage the work currently being produced. But I would like to think about how we, as literary managers and dramaturgs, might help expand the development/production spectrum.

I am almost always engaged and excited by productions developed by ensembles largely outside the common institutional models. Perhaps the fact of "company" plays a critical role. A panel on Ensemble Theatre at the ATHE Conference (Association for Theatre in Higher Education, Chicago, August 02-05/01) was represented by what the moderator defined as four distinct ensemble theatre models: narrative (Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble), non-narrative (Saratoga International Theatre Institute), grass-roots (Cornerstone), and performance art (Goat Island).

Each panelist described a distinctive development process. Some companies developed and produced work completely outside of institutions. Others (SITI) evolved a distinctive development process, but relied on institutions (Actors Theatre of Louisville) for portions of development, and finally, for production. But the development processes of all four companies had evolved from specific circumstances; and even now, their structures are not fixed, but continue to evolve in response to locale, company members, the material at hand, etc.

During the panel discussion SITI's Leon Pauli reported that in response to Anne Bogart's question: "Why a company?", JoAnne Akalaitis responded: "No piece has profoundly affected me not created by a company". Could the simple fact of a fluid and responsive developmental process contribute a company's elemental power?

In Canada, the "radical" activity of the '70s – largely collective creation, and eventually development of Canadian playwrights – has now become institutionalized. The PACT category is, in fact, "established alternative." Developmental organizations (largely non-producing) are also now established across the country. The broadly defined, but narrowly understood, Canadian Creation criteria for Canada Council funding has resulted in such a proliferation of development programs that virtually every theatre receiving operating funding has now incorporated a structure for new play development – even Stratford.

I hardly object to time and money committed to the development of Canadian work, but I wonder why all these developmental programs look so much the same – the playwrights unit, the pre-scheduled reading or workshop festival, etc. If theatres have distinct mandates, why wouldn't their developmental process evolve from that mandate, and be equally distinct? If a theatre commits to the development of a play/playwright, wouldn't they build a developmental process that reflects the distinct needs of that play/playwright?

Sometimes I feel like, after two plus decades of evolution in Canadian play development, we've arrived at a one-size-fits-all process. The process clearly works, please don't misunderstand me, and I'm not discounting the considerable work that particular process has produced. But have we stopped thinking – really thinking – about the developmental process itself? Do we merely imitate, or adopt, existing structures? Are we doing new play development by rote? “Hey, that's how you develop new work.” Well, is it? Always?

I feel it's necessary in theatre – and elsewhere – to expose and examine our underlying assumptions. If the examination re-affirms those assumptions, so be it. But if not, perhaps there's the possibility of re-thinking and re-shaping a process so that it more appropriately mirrors the mandate of the company, the aspirations of the playwright, whatever... but something.

During the Chicago panel someone stated that “ensemble theatre is antithetical to institutions.” And perhaps it is. Maybe I'm calling for a kind of theatre that can only be developed by companies, and largely outside the institution. But I don't think so.

Let me give you an example.

When Brian Quirt was dramaturg with the Theatre Centre in Toronto, he inherited a venerable series called R&D (research and development). He discovered that the while Theatre Centre did lots of "D," they had done virtually no "R." So he solicited applications for funding/space to support a Research Workshops – “up to three days in the Theatre Centre's black box space, with actors as required, with full technical support as required, to explore a specific theatrical question.” Pure theatre research, unrelated to production. The projects included:

- exploration of live dj-ed music with theatrical text;
- shiatsu as a tool to generate emotional exploration which could then be utilized in rehearsal;
- theatrical silence – scenes worked on with the text, and then without, to explore the limits of communication between actors, and between actors and audience;
- how to manipulate and score bird songs and, from them, generate a vocal text.

Let me reiterate: Brian's goal “was to offer completely unfettered time in the space to experiment.”

A willingness to invest in pure theatrical research may be the first step in evolving a new process of development. Maybe it's possible to broaden the spectrum of theatrical production – even inside the institution – if we really think about the developmental structures we so often put into place automatically.

Over the months leading to the LMDA Conference in Vancouver, please re-consider your process of development, and contemplate alternatives. What might you have been done differently in your greatest development failures? Who has an unusual development process that you'd like to hear more about? What needs to happen at the LMDA Conference to invigorate Canadian theatre with myriad thoughtful and distinctive developmental structures? If you have suggestions, Brian <bquirt@interlog.com> and I <ddkugler@sfu.ca> would like to hear from you.

– *DD Kugler, President, LMDA*

Challenging Assumptions – Vancouver 2002

by Heidi Taylor

It's 8:30 p.m. on July 15th, and I have clearly missed my agreed-upon deadline for this article about the LMDA conference. After 12 scrawled pages, a statistical analysis of participant allegiances (freelance/institutional, American/Canadian) and endless review of the List of Lists, I am stymied. Did we challenge assumptions about New Play Development? Did all of Rachel Ditor and Megan Monaghan and DD Kugler's hard work pay off?

Starting with the assumptions: my biggest assumption was that somehow we LMDA members are all on the same page. However, I found as many differences as commonalities amongst the folks I met. We compared processes, day jobs, and community responses. With the large American contingent, the Canadian community seemed like family. There were moments, too, when we seemed like visitors. A few American cousins spoke passionately about "theatre in this country" as though an American consulate had magically appeared beneath their feet.

During the Friday morning breakout sessions, there was rich discussion from institutional, academic and freelance dramaturgs about radical propositions for new play development. These ten concurrent conversations generated the List of Lists. Inspired by Erik Ehn's keynote address, we talked about shifts in timelines, collaborative relationships and production space. One of Erik's comments – *A mainstream development process develops the mainstream, not the play* – echoed through the self-dramaturgy of the lists. The link between a full-time dramaturgy position and the intransigence of institutional structures – not wanting to innovate ourselves out of a job – was clearly recognized. There were also many examples offered which escaped the perceived constraints of the institutional development processes. When we do the work out of need, the radical arises.

The crux of the conference for me came in the second workshop I attended: *Responding to Current Events*. The participants in that session were mostly young, mostly unaffiliated, and mostly angry at the lack of power brokers in the room. Those folks were, I think, next door talking about *Issues in Artistic Leadership*.

That session, for me, revealed the underbelly of our community. It wasn't easy to look at, though it shouldn't have been a surprise. The hierarchies that exist in society don't evaporate as soon as the LMDA meets. We so-called radicals sat in our corner and ranted, instead of knocking at the door and saying, hey let's talk. Power is a relationship, after all. We played our role, and therefore didn't cause a change in responses to current hierarchies at all.

The feeling of distress, doubt and distrust spilled into the business meeting that afternoon. A board proposal to host the meeting in New York on alternating years to ease the burden of annual conference organization was strongly resisted by the membership. It was unclear whether the

membership discussion would have an impact on the final board decision, but primarily, there was a perception of hidden agendas.

After some positive reports from Development and Regional VP's, the new business section of the meeting was long and rambling, with many participants reiterating each others' comments. The continuing challenge of diversifying the membership of the LMDA provided fodder for a discussion that seems to have taken place before. Yet we still neglected issues of access when planning this conference, and had limited representation from dramaturgs of colour and those with disabilities.

The Saturday banquet was a cathartic release to the tensions and debates of the day. Arthur Ballet entertained, reminding us not be so serious. His Lessing Award address stood in stark contrast to the September 11th reading that preceded the speeches. The terrorist attack clearly weighed heavily on many (American) participants' minds, but the ongoing engagement with the tragedy made the continental divide palpable. The Elliott Hayes Award recipients, Megan Monaghan and Freddie Ashley, were recognized for the Alliance Theatre's response to the event. The project, *night into morning*, was an offering to a community in mourning. It was also an offering to the dramaturgical community, as the ideas and content were generously shared through the list serve. *Celebration* ended the evening – literally. Mark Bly requested a group dance to celebrate the changing of the guard. Kugler and Michele Volansky (LMDA Presidents – past and future) dutifully shook their respective presidential booties to Kool and the Gang. It was an historical moment for dramaturgy.

The regional meetings and post-mortem on Sunday felt like awaking from a dream. People jumped to volunteer to address our institutional challenges. We recognized some omissions and failures from the current conference, and put forward ideas to rejuvenate the next one. It felt like an unfinished conversation. And one worth continuing.

Heidi Taylor is a performer, writer, director, dramaturg and receptionist. She is currently developing a site-specific piece with Radix Theatre in Vancouver, while taking advantage of free chiropractic at the office where she works. She often creates solo performance installations with multiple audio tracks, thus combining interdisciplinary collaboration with a solo practice. A recent graduate of the MFA program in Interdisciplinary Studies at Simon Fraser University, Heidi was a member of the Vancouver Conference organizing committee.

Inside / Outside at the Mini-Conference: Toronto 2002

by Marge Betley

Attending the Canadian LMDA so-called “mini-conference” (I think Brian Quirt does himself a disservice; there was nothing mini about it) was for me one of those rare opportunities to be both an insider and an outsider simultaneously. As an LM & D, I’m an insider to the work, but as a U.S. citizen, I am definitely an outsider to the Canadian field.

The most immediate effect of this was that the filters I unconsciously use at such gatherings were not valid. Inevitably and without volition, I think of my colleagues within certain parameters. (“Oh, yes, she’s a lit manager at a mainstream regional theatre,” or “He’s a dramaturg for a seat-of-the-pants company that produces only new work,” or “She’s a freelance director mostly working off-and off-off B’way.” You get the idea.) Inevitably, as well, there is a certain hierarchy of status that comes with such parameters. I am aware of those filters, too.

In this case, at the start of the first day, I know only two people in the room, and these are nodding acquaintances, at that. We begin with introductions, each person saying a bit about a current, exciting project, and offering a “hot topic” (pet peeve, bete noire, major beef, or simply an area of interest and challenge). The group is large (a total of 85 participants); the room is sweltering and the process is messy and unwieldy and wonderful.

I jot down the names of at least a dozen people that I want to connect with. In almost every case, I know nothing about the companies or artists they work with. I’m sure that there is a hierarchy of status among Canadian companies (just as there is among U.S. regional theatres), but I do not know what it is or who the “major players” are. I find myself listening with an openness that is not based on any reputation because I am unaware of such things. I begin to wonder when bringing prior knowledge to the table is a liability rather than an asset.

We stay together as a group throughout the entirety of the conference. At no time do I need to decide which breakout session to attend: whether to stay with the colleagues I know (in the hopes of deep discussion), whether to opt for a group of similar institutional colleagues (feeling a need to represent my company), or whether I can afford to opt for something far afield from my own work, to stretch my sensibilities a bit. It makes me think of the great number of companies and artists in the U.S. with whom I rarely get to associate, because we’re either not attending the same conferences, or when we are, we end up in different break-out sessions. Conferences are structured this way, I suppose, in the name of efficiency and variety, but are these the things we most need when we attend a conference?

As I ride the Greyhound bus back to Rochester, I am left wondering how we can structure our gatherings in a way that can make happy outsiders of us all, and I hope that I’ll soon have more

opportunities for finding my filters absolutely useless

Along with that rather large and heady topic, the following are just a few utterly random thoughts and questions that I have pondered in the weeks since the conference:

- Many people in the room voiced their dismay/distress/outrage at the lack of governmental funding support. It occurs to me that in the U.S. we stopped doing that (for the most part) about 10 years ago, not because the situation got better – quite the opposite – but because we have largely given up on the National Endowment for the Arts as a reliable and significant force in the field. I do wonder, though, if there are things that Canadian cultural organizations might learn from the mistakes that we made when the NEA was most newsworthy in the late 1980s
- Are there funders in the U.S. or Canada who would support an exchange of institutional dramaturgs and literary managers? I hear that there were some interesting discussions at the Vancouver conference concerning our assumptions of shared vocabulary and working processes; an opportunity to really sit in one another's theatres for a period longer than the duration of a performance could be fascinating and mutually beneficial.
- It was great to hear so many artists and companies express an interest in cultivating young artists and young audiences. At Geva, we just completed our second season of a TYA production series, and I would love to see us put together a "script exchange" for companies/artists doing TYA work. This is a world of playwriting that I've had very little experience with and I'd love to find a way to share info on TYA plays and production.
- I loved the presence of the Playwrights Union of Canada at the conference, not just in the person of Amela Simic and Vern Thiessen from PUC and Angela Rebeiro from Playwrights Canada Press, but a larger presence that I sensed in a variety of conversations that I had during those two days. There is an organization in the U.S. called the Dramatists Guild, but (to an outsider's eye at least), PUC seems to occupy a position of central focus and respect and utility in the Canadian theatre that does not have a counterpart in the U.S. And I wonder what that says about the position of the playwright in each country

I extend my thanks for Brian Quirt for letting me attend the Toronto conference, especially when there were a number of Canadian artists on the waiting list, and I eagerly anticipate the next opportunity to visit and collaborate with some newfound Canadian colleagues.

Marge Betley is the *Literary Manager and Resident Dramaturg at Geva Theatre in Rochester, New York: www.gevatheatre.org.*

True Confessions: I was a Process Junkie!

by Vicki Stroich

Toronto Mini-Conference on Dramaturgy, July 8 & 9, 2002

It was a hot, steamy day in the Big Smoke as I joined a ragtag group of theatre artists at Toronto's Theatre Centre for two days of sizzling expose and discussion at the annual Mini-Conference on Dramaturgy. Our host, a tall, seemingly soft-spoken, bespectacled man, welcomed the crowd of anxious and dewy faces before him promising two days of exploration into the practice of theatre from electrifying artists of various disciplines who would talk about their work in shocking detail and answer our prying questions about their private processes. I knew from that moment on I would be glued to my seat by a combination of sweat and rapture because *I was a Process Junkie!*

But, let's be honest, we all are, aren't we? As a society we love to take the skin off of things and see how they tick. Movies with special effects are now accompanied with websites and hour-long televised *Making Of...* specials. We no longer accept a figure in pop culture as a "star;" we need to know how they decorate their home and the details surrounding their brief fall from grace with an ounce of cocaine in 1983. And the outlets for this information from television, magazines and the internet are steadily increasing because we demand only the freshest dirt and grittiest details.

We, as dramaturgs and theatre artists, are obsessed with process – we love to talk about it and we love to hear about it. And why shouldn't we be obsessed? It is our work and, for some of us, it often feels like our lives. We spend most of our time engaged in process and the process must be re-invented with each new project. The trials and small triumphs of the process of creation generally outlast the momentary thrill of performance. As a new dramaturg, I am in the process of developing my own process and learning how to adjust to and sometimes mediate between the processes of the directors and writers that I work with. I've been told the search for personal process is a life-long process. The justifications for our fixation are endless. So are the outlets: if we weren't all obsessed with process there would be no need for our many fine periodicals and magazines and Mr. Quirt would not have an extensive waiting list for his fantastic mini-conference.

I've discovered recently that I have certain preferences (fetishes, if you will) regarding the form and content of the process discussions that I like to hear. I'm not interested in hearing someone's advertisement for their company's process. I don't get excited by theoretical discussions about what has happened, what is happening and what should be happening. I like my discussions detailed, honest and well, pulpy. I want to hear how creators and dramaturgs really feel about what happens in their rehearsal halls, their companies and in the theatre in general. I've heard it said that the best and most enlightening discussions about our discipline occur in the bars. The Mini-Conference on Dramaturgy brought those true confessions and honest discussions back into the theatre where it benefits us all.

What sort of thrills do I get from this sort of warts and all case study approach to discussing process?

The most obvious thrill is learning. I get ideas and gentle reminders that help shape my own work. Djanet Sears was very open about sharing her experiences and preferences as a writer. For instance, she prefers that dramaturgs write down notes because it encourages clarity and specificity. This reminded me of how vague I can sound when I am discussing my notes with writers. By writing out and editing the notes dashed off in a notebook or the margins of a script I can give my ideas more impact and create a written record of the work. Ms. Sears also spoke about her relationship with dramaturgs and her use of two dramaturgs during the writing of *Harlem Duet*. In this case she chose two dramaturgs that she felt comfortable speaking freely with that were able to offer different perspectives about the structure and politics of the piece. She also likes to know her dramaturg so that she can gauge why they are reacting to something the way they are. As someone who is used to being “assigned” to a project, hearing Ms. Sears talk about her dramaturgical relationships gave me several important clues about how to create a comfortable and beneficial exchange with the writers I am working with.

Often, in addition to the thrill of learning, I get a rush from the adventure of exploring the exotic worlds of other cultures and disciplines as a diverse group of artists share their stories. Hearing tales of Dr. Habib Tanvir’s company of tribal actors and the socio-political importance and impact of theatre in India was a glimpse into a different world. India has an ancient culture; our Canadian culture is still in its early childhood and some days I wonder if it will ever grow up. There is something alternately inspiring and disheartening when you have an opportunity to take a look at another process. On one hand, as I’ve stated above, it offers you ideas and inspiration about how to improve your work and affect the culture you live in. On the other hand it makes the flaws in your own process and culture more obvious. The grass is always greener

Exploring Indian theatre through Dr. Tanvir’s tales and insights is the most obvious example of the rush of exotica. However, as an Albertan dramaturg working primarily with text I also appreciated hearing the insights and exploits of multi-disciplinary dynamos Ross Manson and Kate Alton, Tapestry A. D. and Composer-Librettist lab rat Wayne Strongman as well as our Lois Lane from the wilds of Vancouver, Rachel Ditor. As much as I love my job, my discipline and my hometown, tales that take me out of my range of daily experiences are instructive and, well, just plain exciting!

The most private and personal thrill I get from hearing these stories is the thrill of recognition. I would compare this feeling to sitting in a support group, hearing stories I can relate to, celebrating a triumph as if it was my own and nodding with the full weight of empathy at a tale of woe. When I hear Ross Manson talk about one of his favorite moments in *Mortality* occurring as a result of accident and instinct it reminds me of all of the fantastic moments in my work that I wish I could’ve

planned. When I hear Wayne Strongman allude to creative teams that didn't mesh I can think of a few that I've witnessed (although I must admit that I wanted NAMES!) When Celia McBride compares working with the Stratford Festival to "trying to work with the bank" I relate to the looming presence of a large theatre company. When Michael Miller reveals the criteria and challenges of selecting material for Factory Theatre's *CrossCurrents Festival of Cultural Ideas* I can remember several years of difficult discussions and decisions I have been a party to in regards to festival planning. As thrilling as it is to hear about the exotic and take away ideas from these case studies it is these little admissions and true confessions that I find the most interesting and, ultimately, the most valuable. It's comforting to know that although everyone's process and level of experience may be a little different (or a lot different) we all share the same basic struggles and concerns.

I'd like to thank Brian Quirt for organizing this exchange of ideas, his panel members for being so open and honest in sharing their stories and the great group of delegates who asked some probing questions. The mini-conference was the perfect fix for a process junkie like myself.

Now it is time for me to reveal a true confession of my own: I may be a rabid process junkie but, in a strange twist of fate, my favorite moments in the theatre are the moments when I forget that there was a process involved at all.

Vicki Stroich is Assistant Dramaturg at Alberta Theatre Projects in Calgary, Alberta where she is intimately involved with the new play development process for ATP's National playRites Festival of New Canadian Plays. Vicki had an exciting spring that took her on brief trips to The Banff playRites Colony at The Banff Centre, her first freelance gig with Theatre Network's neXtFest in Edmonton, LMDA's Vancouver Conference and finally to Toronto for the Mini-Conference on Dramaturgy. She looks forward to being chained to her desk at ATP until next spring.

Announcing:

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW NATIONAL NETWORK OF PLAYWRIGHTS' DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

At the Canadian Theatre Conference in Ottawa, May 30th to June 2nd, 2002, there were two meetings of ten non-producing, independent Playwrights' Development Centres from across the country. Represented at these meetings were:

- Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre (PARC): Jenny Monday, Catherine Banks
- Playwrights Workshop Montreal (PWM): Shannon Webb
- Nightswimming: Brian Quirt
- Scriptlab: David Copelin
- Manitoba Association of Playwrights (MAP): Rory Runnels
- Saskatchewan Playwrights Centre: Ben Henderson, Pam Bustin, Mansel Robinson
- Alberta Playwrights Network: Ken Cameron
- The Banff Playwrights Colony: Bob White
- Playwrights Theatre Centre (PTC): Sara Graefe

Not present at these particular meetings was Centre des Auteurs Dramatiques (CEAD), Montreal.

These Playwrights' Development Centres from across Canada have come together over the past two years to examine ways in which they might work together cooperatively, undertaking shared initiatives to strengthen their organizations and to assist in fulfilling their mandates – to support and assist the development of Canadian plays and playwrights.

The impetus for this investigation, initiated by Rory Runnels of MAP and Jenny Munday of PARC, came from the realization that although the Playwrights' Development Centres play a unique and important role in Canadian theatre, this role is not always fully understood or recognized. The Playwrights' Development Centres are the first line of discovery of new voices; they are essential to the development of plays, playwrights and dramaturgs; they have a unique focus on the text and the writer; and they are an important resource, partner and ally to producing companies. Their value to the theatrical scene in Canada is significant.

In Ottawa, it was unanimously agreed to create a National Network of Playwrights' Development Centres in Canada to allow them to:

- communicate and meet regularly
- speak with a united voice on their own behalf, and on behalf of the playwrights they serve
- undertake cooperative activities that contribute to the development of a more powerful and dynamic Canadian theatrical voice

It was agreed that the goal of this network is to strengthen the Playwrights' Development Centres and extend, enhance and coordinate their play development activities. The Playwrights' Development Centres will begin with a simple structure, using existing and newly available resources to do a few important things well – thereby increasing the Centres' profile and stature, and making it easier to move on to larger projects. The Centres agreed to select a Convenor from among its membership. The Convenor's first activity will be to apply for funding to develop the network, establish communications links, and to undertake a number of initial activities.

With the network in place, the Centres will begin to plan new initiatives and build the funding and human resources to make them possible in the long term. Beginning in September, the Convenor for the new Network will be Ken Cameron of the Alberta Playwrights Network.

On the final day of the Conference, the new Network hosted FROM PAGE TO STAGE, a roundtable discussion facilitated by Ben Henderson, discussing:

- *moving plays from development to production:*
- *collaborations and partnerships*
- *making connections*
- *breaking regional barriers*
- *sharing information*

This was a wide-ranging and lively discussion, well attended by representatives of the Playwrights' Development Centres, PUC, the Canada Council, artistic directors, individual playwrights, and others.

Some of the points made include:

The Playwrights' Development Centres should use its network to:

- Share knowledge of producing theatres
- Share plays they're doing
- Develop the profile of the Centres
- Share information such as remuneration of playwrights
- Use our own festivals to showcase work from across the country

At the end of the discussion, the Playwrights Union of Canada offered its help and cooperation to the Playwrights' Development Centres. The development of the Network was greatly facilitated by Jini Stolk via a Canada Council Flying Squad grant. Thanks to both Jini and the Council for making this possible.

For more information about the Network, contact Ken Cameron at the Alberta Playwrights Network (execapn@nucleus.com).