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THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MISSOULA  
CHILDREN'S THEATRE, 1971-1977

by

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B.A., St. Mary's College, 1967

M.A., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1969

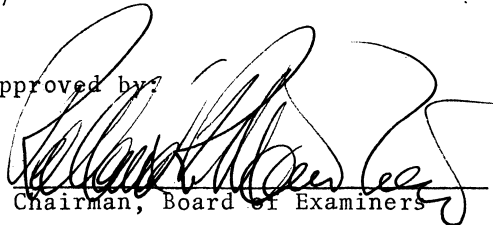
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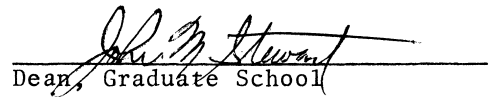
Master of Fine Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1977

Approved by:

  
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ABSTRACT

Caron, James H., M.F.A., Spring 1977

Drama

The History and Development of the Missoula Children's Theatre, 1971-1977

Director: Rolland Meinhold

The purpose of this paper is to relate the history of the Missoula Children's Theatre for the years 1971-1977 and to describe in detail the activities of that organization during the 1976-77 season. All artistic and managerial aspects of the Missoula Children's Theatre are considered, with special emphasis on the organization's touring project. The Missoula Children's Theatre was founded in 1971 by the author, who has served as its artistic director from the beginning through the 1976-1977 season.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT . . . . . ii

Chapter

I CHRONOLOGY OF THE MISSOULA CHILDREN'S  
THEATRE . . . . . 1

II MISSOULA ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN . . . . . 13

III THE TOURING PROJECT . . . . . 43

IV SUPPLEMENTARY PROJECTS . . . . . 60

V FISCAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL STABILITY . . . . . 66

VI CONCLUSIONS . . . . . 76

APPENDIXES

A: EXERCISES MOST COMMONLY USED . . . . . 81

B: IN-SCHOOL WORKSHOPS AVAILABLE WITH TOURING  
PROJECT . . . . . 84

C: DIARY . . . . . 86

D: APPROXIMATE ANNUAL INCOME AND EXPENSES . . . . . 99

E: PLAYS PRODUCED, WITH AUTHORS AND/OR COMPOSERS. 101

F: REPRESENTATIVE PUBLICITY ITEMS . . . . . 104

BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . . 114

## CHAPTER I

### CHRONOLOGY OF THE MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATRE

At the beginning of Winter Quarter, 1971, I was working steadily toward a Master of Fine Arts degree in drama at the University of Montana. I wanted to find a practical application of my chosen specialty: directing. I was also in need of financial assistance to complete my graduate studies, so a money-making scheme was in order. I felt that the local University and high schools kept the community well saturated with adult-oriented productions, so I began to consider a theatre project for children. At this point in planning, I discussed the idea with Donald Collins, a University of Montana senior in music and Missoula native. The concept of a children's theatre in Missoula interested Don. We discussed the possibilities and the seed was planted.

We decided to attempt one production sometime in February and consider the future of the venture after measuring the response. Our first problem was finding a theatre. The University facilities were not available since the project was to be, in theory at least, profit-making. Eventually the Golden Horn Theatre, a local movie house, was acquired.

After expanding its tiny stage and adding make-shift lights and dressing rooms, we had a theatre.

The next major obstacle to overcome was finding a suitable script. Both Collins and I were novices to children's theatre. We had each seen a production or two, but had never participated directly in one. I sent for half a dozen representative scripts from the Anchorage Press, a publishing house which specialized in children's plays. One of the scripts I received was Androcles and the Lion by Aurand Harris. I had seen a production of this play and had been impressed with its potential. None of the other scripts were particularly interesting, so I gave Collins the Androcles music. He was satisfied with the quality of what he found and we decided to do Androcles and the Lion for our first production.

Casting was our next problem. An open audition was held in the Masquer Theatre late in January. From among the seventy high school and University actors and actresses who auditioned, a company of ten was chosen. During the first week in February, the group began rehearsal. A staff was then chosen to round out the company. Pianists, costumers, prop designers, and publicity artists were discovered within the original ten. Lighting technicians, a scene designer, a house manager, users, and others from outside the original group volunteered their help.

As the production schedule began, Collins and I had no



idea what the future of the project might be. A name, The Missoula Children's Theatre Association, was chosen for the group. A few small donations from community merchants gave us some encouragement regarding local support and alleviated some of the initial financial burden. We began to consider the possibility of future productions, perhaps even a full season for the following school year. Time would tell.

The performances attracted larger, more enthusiastic crowds than were expected, and a second production, The Wizard of Oz,\* was scheduled. Increased publicity, particularly a large, front-page photograph in the local newspaper, provided even larger audiences for Wizard, and two more productions, Lancelot and the Dragon\* and Cinderella,\* were planned before the end of the school year. By the closing of the final production in May, the company and its members were somewhat established in the community, fascinated by the artistic possibilities of theatre for children, and not in debt. The initial season had been a period of experiment and adjustment. Various performance schedules, production styles, casting variations, publicity techniques, financial arrangements, and distributions of duties were explored. As the Association's systems began to be developed and refined, plans for its first full season were initiated.

Most of the summer months were spent planning and refin-

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\*See appendix E for authors and composers.

ing the choice of a season. Eight productions were scheduled, running monthly through the school year. The emphasis in the choice of titles was on variety. Biblical, patriotic and classical material was combined with the ever-present fairy tales until a balanced season evolved. The shows were put in a logical order, dates were chosen and the season was announced.

The Golden Horn Theater was again the project's site as the season began with a colorful, energetic production of Pinocchio.<sup>\*</sup> Rock music, the first of several experiments in musical style, highlighted Alice in Wonderland,<sup>\*</sup> the season's second offering. The Association's next project was its first adult-oriented production, The Fantasticks,<sup>\*</sup> a stylized musical presented evenings in the Golden Horn Theater. Simultaneous rehearsals were held for the third children's show of the season, A Christmas Carol,<sup>\*</sup> which featured the group's first use of children as cast members. The experiment was immediately expanded in Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,<sup>\*</sup> which featured fourteen Missoula youngsters. Their presence was at least partially responsible for the production's box office popularity as well as its successful tour to Salmon, Idaho. One More American,<sup>\*</sup> with its semi-patriotic theme and revue format, was the next production. It was followed by Bible Tales,<sup>\*</sup> a story of Noah and the Ark. The latter

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<sup>\*</sup>See appendix E for authors and composers.

show was toured to Helena, Montana, and was presented at the Boulder River School for the mentally retarded.

At this point in the season, the staff of the Children's Theatre taught its first series of Performing Arts Classes for children, a project which eventually culminated in a multi-media production of Peter and the Wolf,\* presented with the permission of the local park district in Missoula's Bonner Park. Two of the graduates of the performing arts class starred in Hansel and Gretel,\* which was followed by a circus-oriented production of The Emperor's New Clothes,\* another attempt at outdoor theatre.

With Emperor, the Association closed its first full season, a year devoted to variety, experiment and the quest for higher quality. Higher budgets and mounting staff experience led to expanded technical efforts, supplementary projects and increased community involvement. More non-student adults became associated with the program, local and statewide business concerns began to value the public relations' potential of the project and even the City of Missoula offered financial support by purchasing the final production of the year through the Festival of the Arts.

But there were problems. The increased production schedule (ten productions in eight months) drained the young organization artistically as well as financially. Research and

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\*See appendix E for authors and composers.

implementation of an eventually aborted attempt to expand to the Midwest exhausted and discouraged the group. These projects, along with the more successful performing arts school and expanded community services, were simply more than the group could handle. Abandonment of the project was seriously considered, but only momentarily. With a sense of reluctant enthusiasm, punctuated by mounting personal debts, the staff of The Missoula Children's Theatre Association began to plan its third season.

Before the season began, the organization had two major crises to resolve: Donald Collins left the staff in order to further his own performing career and the Golden Horn management insisted on some new arrangements which proved inequitable for the Children's Theatre. The staff had already decided that fewer productions was a prerequisite to another season. The plan was to make up the financial deficit with a major touring program. The increased portability demanded by the touring operation led to a decision to play local performances in Missoula grade school gymnasiums, on a rotating basis. Collins was replaced by a more sales-oriented individual in order to emphasize road bookings, and the organization was back on its feet.

Punch and Judy,\* an experiment in comic violence, inaugurated the new season, and was followed by another series of

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\*See appendix E for authors and composers.

Performing Arts Classes. The classes culminated in a full-scale production, A Child Is Born,\* which was presented during the Christmas holidays. This nativity-oriented production featured fifty children, folk-style music and a short, modern ballet. A rather unimaginative Beauty and the Beast\* was followed by a production of Jack and the Beanstalk,\* written and directed by a University of Montana faculty member. The organization's second adult-oriented production, Jacque Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris,\* was purchased entirely by the second Missoula Festival of the Arts, and produced in nightclub fashion. The Wizard of Oz, rehearsing simultaneously, was also aided by Festival of the Arts publicity. Wizard, the season's finale, was also the Children's Theatre's first repeat production.

Certainly the most notable accomplishment of the season was the vastly expanded touring program. Fewer productions resulted in a sense of polish and professionalism not seen before in the organization's offerings. Smaller crowds at Missoula performances and the problems created by the loss of Collins, however, were among the chief contributors to the Association's exhaustion and disenchantment at season's end. No plans were made or even considered for a fourth season. The novelty had worn off.

During the next few months, the Children's Theatre lay

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\*See appendix E for authors and composers.

dormant. Its staff had been disbanded, its equipment stored and its future undecided. After leaving Missoula, I toured the West Coast and was appalled at the low quality of theatre for children which I found there. Well rested and having a much clearer perspective of my own organization's accomplishments and potential, I returned to Missoula in early Spring for one more try. I was pleasantly surprised and encouraged to find that the organization had been missed. Educators, parents and children alike expressed disappointment that we had ceased to function, and they were genuinely excited about the possibility of our return. And so we began again.

One production was planned before the end of the school year, a repeat of the very popular Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. A Performing Arts Class for children was held in a local church basement. This provided renewed interest in the project as well as a group of children from which to cast our seven dwarfs. The remainder of the cast and staff was chosen and sets and costumes were built from scratch, since we had lost all of our supplies and equipment in a fire during our five-month sabbatical. We returned to our original home, the Golden Horn Theatre, and had a most successful production. We also spent a great deal of time and energy providing technical assistance for a small community theatre project during this period. By the end of the spring, we had reestablished our presence in the community, made many new friends and collected some working capital.

But our most important and influential accomplishment of the spring had been the birth of a new touring concept which will be discussed in much detail later in this work. Let it suffice for now to say that as we disbanded in June to go to our various summer theatre jobs, the new touring idea was the final catalyst in the decision to return in the fall.

Autumn brought a renewed enthusiasm and a healthy self-critical attitude. The mistakes of the past were examined and reexamined in an effort to secure a more solidified organization for the future. A Board of Directors was chosen with care. Among them were both artistic and managerial advisors. More attention was paid to sound business practices as well as aesthetic quality. A large grant from the Montana Arts Council, based on their interest in the new touring concept, provided the funds necessary to spend the entire fall season experimenting with a suitable format and script for the projected tour. A musical version of Rip Van Winkle\* was the culmination of those months. After a Christmas season performance in Missoula, we began the task of booking a tour. While waiting for the results of our inquiries, another production was mounted exclusively for Missoula. This was a low-budget but cleverly produced series of favorite children's stories. The cast consisted entirely of children. The pro-

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\*See appendix E for authors and composers.

duction, Shambles and Fables, a Whiz-Bang Revue,\* was a box office success. Immediately after the performance of Shambles and Fables, the Rip Van Winkle tour began.

We sold and produced seven weeks of the tour, spending one week in each community. The response was overwhelmingly positive. Each town visited was amazed by the professionalism of the performance, pleased by our personnel and anxious for us to return the following season.

The spring of 1975 was spent once again in Missoula. A local production of The Pied Piper of Hamelin\* was mounted and a dinner show for adults, The Diary of Adam and Eve,\* concluded our season. Despite personal conflict among staff members, the year had been a new beginning for The Missoula Children's Theatre Association.

We entered the 1975-76 season eagerly. An initial setback, a substantial reduction in our Arts Council grant, dampened our enthusiasm only temporarily. Budgets were cut to accommodate the loss and we began work. The tour show was Johnny Appleseed,\* an ideal choice theoretically since it combined historical subject matter (this was the Bicentennial year) with a nonviolent hero. The project toured to thirteen communities, nearly doubling our previous year's bookings. Once again, the project was a popular success. We were satisfied with our progress, educators and sponsors

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\*See appendix E for authors and composers.



were delighted with the program, and the children of the communities visited clamored for more.<sup>1</sup>

Several Missoula projects and productions were equally encouraging. A dinner show, Star Spangled Girl,\* and two children's shows, A Child is Born, and The Ghosts of Echo Springs,\* all had great community support and played to nearly full houses. Enrollments in the Performing Arts Classes were higher than they had ever been, and we found time to increase our public service work. A historical playlet, featuring the Woman's role in our heritage, was presented in conjunction with the Missoula Symphony Children's Concert and our staff conducted creative dramatics seminars for Missoula School District One teachers. These and other projects were time-consuming but most helpful in improving our community image. Our Board of Directors was altered to emphasize fund-raising. The financial management of the organization, which had always been our weakest area, was assumed by the Board, and our long-sought tax-exempt status was finally attained.

As we began to consider plans for our seventh season, optimism was being replaced by confidence. A sense of security, certainly a novelty for the organization, pervaded

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\*See appendix E for authors and composers.

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Ralph K. Campbell to Missoula Children's Theatre Association, February 17, 1976.

our thinking. We seemed to have discovered a functional format for our local Missoula season and the touring project had seemingly endless potential. Increased fiscal stability, an excited, dynamic Board of Directors, new emphasis on business management, and the promise of higher salaries elated the staff and ushered us into the 1976-77 season.

## CHAPTER II

### MISSOULA ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

Before entering into a discussion of the current activities and programs of the Children's Theatre, a description of the organization's logistics seem in order. At the present time, the paid staff consists of three members: an artistic director, a business manager-secretary, and a technical director. There is also one full-time volunteer who heads the Creative Dramatics, Volunteer Services, and Special Education Programs. This particular distribution of duties and responsibilities has been most successful thus far. It was, however, only through trial and error that this combination was formulated.

Perhaps our greatest staffing mistake in the past has been the lack of emphasis placed on the importance of a business manager. The 1976-77 season is the first season during which anyone has been hired for other than artistic considerations. The many fiscal and organizational responsibilities of a business manager have been delegated to directors, designers, musical directors, and actors. These people, although qualified in their own areas of specialization, have simply not had the time or competence to

maintain a sound business organization. Well-meaning attempts on their part have often led to confusion and frustration. Great financial loss had been incurred through inept bookkeeping, inaccurate record-keeping, and fines due to late tax filing.

The organization's artistic achievements also suffered at the hands of the situation. Instead of preparing rehearsals, the director often had to spend his time attempting to keep books up to date. Publicity and public relations' responsibilities, now maintained to a great extent by the business manager, were so time-consuming that rehearsals were often cut short and scenery and costumes thrown together at the last minute. Eventually, the reputation of the organization suffered and its very existence was threatened. After closely examining our own situation and studying the opinions of published authorities in the area of theatre management, the money spent for a business manager was deemed a bargain.<sup>2</sup>

In choosing someone to fill the position of business manager, the Children's Theatre was most fortunate to acquire a local resident who was highly qualified in both secretarial and managerial skills, as well as appealing and effective as a public relations representative. Her duties included typing, record-keeping, filing, financial management, general

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<sup>2</sup>Elizabeth Sweeting, Theatre Administration (London: Sir Isaac Putnam and Sons, Ltd., 1969), pp. 18-19.

office organization, publicity, road booking, fund raising, general correspondence, box office procedures, and public relations assignments. Although relatively new to full-time theatrical activities, she has been prepared to assume all of the business responsibilities of the organization. A most important aspect of her presence on the staff was the fact that the artistic director could now leave the organization, if he so desired, without sounding its death knell. This was a first for the Missoula Children's Theatre.

The duties and responsibilities of the artistic director on the Children's Theatre staff were finally being confined to the artistic area. Since the artistic director was the one employee who remained constant throughout all the years of the organization's existence, he was most familiar with the organization's past business and publicity practices. Gradually, these practices were learned and improved upon by the business manager from the realm of responsibility of the artistic director. With this shift in responsibilities, the artistic director became just that--an "artistic" director. His duties included the development of the season, the origination of new projects, the hiring of artistically oriented staff members, directing all productions, overseeing all design and graphic work, teaching and overseeing classes, developing original scripts, traveling with and directing all touring projects, and remaining available for occasional public relations assignments.

The third member of the Children's Theatre paid staff was the technical director. This was a position which had existed during several of the Children's Theatre seasons but had been eliminated during several others. Since the production schedule contained some three to five shows per year, a full-time scene designer would have been a luxury which budgets would not allow. The technical director's presence on the staff was justified, however, by the additional responsibilities which he accepted. These responsibilities included graphic art design and implementation for publicity works, liaison work with the volunteer corps, assistance in directorial responsibilities, occasional acting assignments, classroom teaching both on tour and on local projects and, of course, coordinating the design and implementation of scenery, costumes, properties, makeup, and lighting for all productions.

The Children's Theatre was most fortunate to have acquired the services of a highly qualified full-time volunteer. Perhaps in the future, the Children's Theatre budget will allow her to become a full-time paid employee. Her responsibilities included not only those formerly delegated to the artistic director and other staff members but the exploration of several new areas for potential activities and income. Her principal duties and responsibilities included coordination of the volunteer services program, direction of creative dramatics activities, and exploration

and implementation of programs using the performing arts as a media for Special Education students. She also performed occasional acting roles, assisted in the directing of the plays, taught in the Performing Arts Classes, and worked with the business manager in the areas of communication and public relations.

Like most community arts-oriented organizations, the Missoula Children's Theatre depended on the services of volunteers. Extra help was usually needed in fund-raising events, special one-time projects, and regular activities alike. Volunteers were also used in technical areas such as scene painting and construction, costume construction and the acquiring and building of properties. Publicity legwork, crowd control, box office staffing, advance ticket sales, special clerical jobs, and the ever-present fund-raising were among the miscellaneous tasks often performed by volunteers. Not to be forgotten were actual performance duties such as orchestra, backstage crew and even acting roles. To a great extent, the activities of an organization as ambitious as the Missoula Children's Theatre would be greatly stifled by the absence of a volunteer staff.

In order to keep and maintain a functioning volunteer staff, a great deal of organization is necessary. The participation of volunteers is requested only in projects which interest them and when they appear, they must be kept busy. Hence, the full-time staff must always be ready for a volun-

teer work call with lists of jobs to be done, necessary materials handy and specific instructions available. Volunteers are much more prone to continue working and return to work another time if staff members are cheerful and maintain a cooperative, instructive atmosphere. Most important of all, those who participate in the project should be formally thanked at the project's conclusion.

The director of volunteer services should maintain lists of the volunteers, list jobs at which they are accomplished and in which their interests lie, know how often they would like to work, give plenty of advance notice before a project begins, and make sure the necessary "thank yous" are bestowed at a project's end. All volunteers should be listed under one of three categories. The first consists of the parents of the children directly involved in the project. This parents' auxiliary has proven invaluable in the past, particularly in fund-raising events. The second category consists of interested adults and high school students. These people often have special talents and interests and they are used accordingly. The third and perhaps most important category of volunteers is the children themselves. The boys and girls directly involved in the project as actors and students in the Performing Arts Classes often enjoy further involvement, particularly in technical areas. This can be a valid learning experience for them and an invaluable aid in accomplishing long and tedious jobs for the technical



director. The Children's Theatre staff frequently attempted to use boys and girls in this capacity. It was felt that organization such as that directed above helps the Children's Theatre staff maintain a viable volunteer force, both for the present season and for the years to come.

One of the major challenges facing the Children's Theatre staff in attempting to stabilize its base of operations was the quest to secure practical, functional and affordable working space. The economic state of the organization, the size of the staff, and the nature of its projects were determining factors in the choice of facilities. A pleasant and private office proved to be a necessity. The office contained a working space for each of the staff members, a telephone, storage facilities for office and publicity materials, and a project area for the preparation of large mailings, the collating of scripts and other office-oriented tasks. Office equipment included a reliable electric typewriter, a large file cabinet, a drafting table, an index card file system, large calendars and bulletin boards, four desks with chairs, library shelves for script and reference material, a large project table and, of course, efficient lighting throughout the office. The specific needs and desires of individual staff members, financial considerations, and the experiences of past seasons all helped to determine the practical makeup of the office area. This setup was minimal but functional for the projects undertaken. If the

organization continues to grow, expansion of each of the staff areas would be feasible and necessary. The secretarial area would contain copy machines, a larger desk and increased storage for office supplies and materials. The director's office area could include a chair or two for visitors as well as a library of creative dramatics materials, general theatre literature and more scripts. The design area of the office could be expanded to include more drafting areas, a light table, a slide projector and screen, large filing systems and shelves for models and renderings. A separate area could also be established for the volunteer staff and their projects.

In terms of budgetary considerations, approximately \$60 a month was set aside for office rent and utilities. It was possible to rent a small, comfortable office in Missoula for approximately this amount. Attempts to save money by borrowing office space proved most undesirable in the long run. One attempt, an office in the home of the director, removed the element of privacy which is essential for sane working conditions. Donated office space in the basement of a preschool was unbearable due to the atmosphere of the basement room itself, the noise generated by the preschool students and minor conflicts between the two staffs. At one point in the Children's Theatre history, a much larger facility was rented. The building included two separate office rooms, a rehearsal hall and a large shop area. This

facility created extremely pleasant working conditions, but, unfortunately, proved to be financially premature. Approximately \$250 was spent every month on rent and utilities. The financial drain was simply more than the organization could handle. In looking to future development, this kind of facility would be most comfortable and probably necessary should the organization continue to grow at its present rate.

At the present time, the scene shop facilities for the Missoula Children's Theatre are somewhat less than ideal. A large barn has been donated to the Children's Theatre for this purpose but it has its share of problems. Insufficient electricity makes lighting inadequate and the use of power tools dangerous. An inconvenient location creates problems in securing volunteer help. But the major problem with the barn is that it is virtually impossible to heat. For a year-round theatre operation in Montana, this creates obvious problems. Building scenery in the winter is extremely uncomfortable, not to mention hazardous to the health of the staff. Construction of scenery is often rushed and the quality of the product suffers. Painting with water-base paint is virtually impossible. The use of glue is limited and paint storage is out of the question. One great benefit of the barn, however, is the ample space it provides. Large segmented storage areas, a good-sized working area, double loading doors and ceilings high enough to erect complete sets have proven most handy. Looking once again to the

future, the ideal scene shop facility would have these space qualities along with ample heat and electricity and be geographically near or adjacent to the office. A separate costume construction and storage area would also be ideal. At the present time, costumes along with makeup, lighting equipment and properties are stored in the scene shop.

Auditions and rehearsals for adults and children as well as classes of any kind have nearly always been held in space other than full-time Children's Theatre facilities. Although a small scale rehearsal hall was part of the Children's Theatre building a few seasons ago, several considerations now limit rehearsal or classroom space to rented or donated locations. Rehearsals and classes for children should be held where more than one rehearsal room is available. They should be in a reasonably centralized location in the city and, if possible, not be adjacent to busy streets. Both boys' and girls' bathrooms must be available and the reputation of both the building and the neighborhood must be safe and wholesome. Since changing rehearsal locations in the middle of the rehearsal schedule has proven to be extremely confusing and impractical, the hall must be available for an extended period of time and, whenever possible, be free of charge.

Since rehearsals or classes of one kind or another are almost always in progress throughout the season, finding

locations is an ever-present problem for the staff. Perhaps the most obvious places to look for such locations in Missoula are the University of Montana and the local public school district. Unfortunately, set fees as well as a growing demand on their facilities make these locations virtually impossible to use. The basement meeting halls of local churches have proven to be a more accessible choice of locations. Several of the larger local churches have basement facilities which are nearly ideal both in terms of rooms available and location. These are generally available upon request for community arts and education groups and have become the organization's primary source of rehearsal space.

In order to stay in the good graces of these churches, however, a great deal of care is taken in managing the children at rehearsals. Other activities are often taking place simultaneously with the Children's Theatre's activities. The children must be kept as quiet as possible and must not be allowed to leave the vicinity of Children's Theatre's staff members. Since they have other responsibilities in terms of distribution of facilities, requests are made to the churches well in advance and generally not more than once a year. These locations, along with classrooms and gymnasiums in parochial schools and an all-purpose room managed by the University Married Student Housing, have provided sufficient

rehearsal and classroom space for the Missoula Children's Theatre over the past several seasons.

An even larger problem than the development of satisfying rehearsal and classroom space has been the acquiring of practical, financially feasible and aesthetically pleasing performance areas. In the absence of a community auditorium, the Children's Theatre has attempted to solve this problem in many ways. At the beginning of the project, the Golden Horn Movie Theatre was used. Accommodating management, a homemade stage and lighting equipment, and an ideal size made this location the most satisfying to date. After a few seasons, however, the Golden Horn changed management and became the World Theatre. In the eyes of the new management, live theatre for children was not a good investment. The next performance areas used were local grade school gymnasiums but these locations were less than ideal. All scenery had to be extremely portable, concessions were prohibited and acoustics were always bad. But the most critical factor was an attitude problem which was created: the children who composed the audience were not, it seemed, excited about going to a school on Saturday. Even though they were going to see a Children's Theatre production, in their eyes they were still "going to school." Hence, the box office suffered and we were forced to seek another answer to the performance area problem. The Wilma Theatre in downtown Missoula was used once or twice and it did create larger crowds and a more

comfortable atmosphere. The rental fee for this auditorium, however, soon ran as high as \$350 per day. This was beyond our financial reach, so we kept looking. University facilities were researched, but once again excessive rental charges were the determining factor.

Finally, what presently seems to be the best all-around performance facility for the Children's Theatre was found. For the past two seasons most of our performances have been held in the Hellgate High School Auditorium. This is a very traditional proscenium style auditorium with adequate lighting equipment, reasonable acoustics, affordable rental prices, and approximately 700 seats. There are still some scheduling problems, however, which force the Children's Theatre to determine all their performance dates very early in the season. Aesthetically, this auditorium leaves a bit to be desired but, generally speaking, it does provide the Children's Theatre with an affordable, practical and workable performance space in Missoula.

In order to infuse some variety into its season, the Children's Theatre has been using the auditorium at the Eagles Lodge approximately once a year. This is a newly constructed round ballroom facility with a small stage at one end. It lacks lighting facilities but acoustics are excellent. The seating capacity is considerably smaller than Hellgate, approximately 350, but the creation of a warm, friendly atmosphere is possible. Since the annual

Children's Theatre Christmas show is usually a smaller scale production with smaller box office than the fall or spring shows, the Eagles auditorium has proven most adequate for this project. Until such time as Missoula has a community auditorium, the combination of the Hellgate Auditorium and the Eagles Hall seems to provide the best possible answer in terms of performance space. The Children's Theatre's ultimate ideal in terms of both rehearsal and performance, of course, would be its own facility. The immense financial considerations, however, would seem to make this highly improbable until such time as large grants or donations for local projects are available.

At the present time the principal local activities of the Missoula Children's Theatre are the Performing Arts Classes which occur approximately three times per school year, subsequent local productions and advanced performance classes which are offered periodically. The Performing Arts Classes began several years ago as pure creative dramatics sessions with no actual performance prepared. Eventually, an informal recital of classroom exercises was offered to the parents of the children at no charge. This evolved into more formal performances presented in local parks and finally into full-scale productions. As the emphasis grew more and more toward performance, the creative dramatics aspect of the classes was gradually de-emphasized; and now, having completed the evolutionary circle, the classes once again feature



creative dramatics, exercises and games. These are offered not only as a warm-up to rehearsals but as an entity in themselves. Current staff members, along with recognized authorities in the field of children's theatre, feel strongly that these exercises can prove invaluable in developing the student's communicative skills and imaginative powers.<sup>3</sup>

The classes themselves, which begin with a telephonic pre-registration period, normally have enrollments of between 50 and 120 students. The classes are open to all children between the ages of four and fourteen. Although a tuition of \$10 is charged, needy and extremely interested students are often granted scholarships. Occasionally these scholarships are paid by merchants or interested adults but, in most cases, they are presented directly from the Children's Theatre itself.

The usual length of each series of classes is four weeks. During this period of time, two sessions are available. A Monday-Wednesday-Friday class is offered from 4:00 until 5:00 in the afternoon, and a Tuesday-Thursday class meets from 4:00 until 5:30 p.m. Thus, each session is provided with three hours of instruction per week. During the week before the performance, all of the students are asked to come each day from 4:00 until 5:30. Each of the sessions is open to the entire age group. Attempts have been made to segregate according to age but this has proven impractical due to other

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<sup>3</sup>Ruth Lease and Geraldine Brain Siks, Creative Dramatics in Home, School and Community (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), pp. 8-15.

commitments on the part of the students. A vast majority of the children enrolled in the Children's Theatre classes are also involved with ballet lessons, piano lessons, gymnastics, and the like. A Thursday afternoon piano lesson, for example, limits a student of any age to the Monday-Wednesday-Friday class.

Despite the reinstated emphasis on creative dramatics, the principal goal of each series of classes is still the preparation of a finished production. Since the classes have open-ended enrollment and all of those enrolled perform in the production, there are certain limitations on the play itself. Because the students involved are at all stages of creative development, the scripts must contain roles of varying degrees of difficulty. Since the enrollment is open-ended, the cast too must be open-ended; group scenes are always available for younger and beginning students. In cases of larger enrollments, double casting of many and all roles has been utilized. Often the sense of competition developed between the two casts can be used as an effective directing and teaching device. Each cast begins to think of itself as a "team." The cast members work feverishly to better the other "team." Double casting also provides well trained understudies for each of the roles both in rehearsals and performance.

Each individual Performing Arts Class begins with ten to twenty minutes of warm-up exercises. These very simple

warm-ups, such as stretches and running in place, tend to provide a controlled relief for energy pent up in students during the school day. The warm-up sessions also provide a buffer period for latecomers. The warm-ups are followed by fifteen to twenty-five minutes of creative dramatics exercises. Imagination and cooperation are stressed during this period through the use of games and improvisations. Longer sessions during the first few classes also provide the directors with an opportunity to view the students in a relaxed, creative environment. In this way, evaluations can be made without the pressure of formal auditions.<sup>4</sup>

Following the creative dramatics segment, the remainder of each class is generally devoted to the preparation of the production. Specific scenes are rehearsed during the Monday-Wednesday-Friday class, while others are prepared during the Tuesday-Thursday session. All of the specific scenes must be near performance level by the beginning of the final week of production. The last two rehearsals are then devoted to establishing the order of the scenes in students' minds, the gradual addition of technical elements, the establishment of continuity through run-throughs, and general polish. The last two rehearsals are usually in the performance area and several hours of rehearsal are generally required on the performance day itself. Lights and sound are added for the

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<sup>4</sup>See appendix A for annotated list of exercises and games most often used.

first time the morning of the performance and costumes are seldom worn for more than one run-through. Admittedly, these policies are somewhat less than ideal but they are dictated by the complications involved with the handling of many children.

Backstage etiquette is stressed during the final rehearsal: quiet is essential backstage, ropes are not meant to be pulled, properties are not to be played with, bathroom breaks are not to be taken indiscriminately, and a variety of other seemingly obvious rules are taught. Each group of children is given a specific area backstage in which they are to remain throughout the production except, of course, when their entrances are imminent. High school students and other volunteer staff members are assigned to each group of children in order to insure promptness and appropriate behavior. Although many of the students are highly reliable, caution must be used with the younger, less experienced children. In general, nothing can be taken for granted.

Published authorities have occasionally raised questions regarding the viability of the performance oriented class as a learning experience.<sup>5</sup> In stressing the importance of a disciplined, professional attitude while seeking a polished performance, the directors and the teachers of the Children's Theatre hope to develop and refine the communicative and

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<sup>5</sup>Frances Caldwell Durland, Creative Dramatics For Children (Yellow Springs, Ohio: The Antioch Press, 1952), p. 12.

social skills and attitudes in the children. Audibility, diction, eye contact, and body language as well as the dispelling of taboos concerning emotional display are among the attitudes, disciplines and skills stressed which can be directly related to day-to-day communication. Social practices and attitudes are broadened and matured through ensemble work beyond the general peer groups and a gradual increase in self-esteem is developed.<sup>6</sup>

Staff members attempt to challenge students without intimidating them. The roles and responsibilities which the students assume are difficult but always within the realm of their own talents and abilities. Whenever possible, students are handled at their own speed. Advanced students are challenged with larger roles, extra classes, home assignments, and responsibilities within the class. Often the older students are assigned as tutors to the younger children. These challenges are generally accepted eagerly and the results are often extremely positive. Younger students are given small, relatively simple roles. Although the possibility of failure is minimal, the importance of these roles in the scheme of the entire production is always emphasized. Students are constantly reminded that a bad performance in even the smallest role can spoil the effect of the entire production. The object is to create a pride in the entire production so that its eventual success

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<sup>6</sup>Richard Grosscup, Children and Dramatics (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), pp. 12-22.

will be a private success for each individual performer. The praise directed at the entire performance is accepted fully by even those with the smallest walk-on. In summary, it must be stated that the Children's Theatre staff has developed a great faith in this concept of performance preparation as a learning experience. Our experience has indicated that the projects create enormous opportunities for personality development. Introverted children are encouraged to shed inhibitions and communication skills are developed. More extroverted students are given a controlled outlet for their skills and energies. The projects can also provide an initial contact with goal-oriented, non-arbitrary discipline. Students work very hard to achieve a goal, develop great pride in the quality of that goal and, after its achievement, receive an ultimate form of positive reinforcement--applause.

The culmination of each series of Performing Arts Classes is the local production. Decisions such as how many shows to present per season, how many performances in each run, and curtain times have evolved over the years through a trial-and-error process. For example, as many as eight productions a year and as few as one have been attempted. At the present time the Children's Theatre has settled on three productions per school year. This number retains interest without saturating audiences and actors alike, generates sufficient financial resources and allows for ample preparation time.

The first show of each year is produced as quickly as

possible, generally playing in mid-October. This creates financial resources early in the season and allows for several weeks of tour before preparations begin on the second show. A Christmas production has become a Children's Theatre tradition and is generally performed the weekend before Christmas Day. The third production is presented in late April or early May. It has proven most advantageous to produce a spring show just before the warm weather sets in and children spend more time outdoors. The time slot also presents an opportunity for some affiliation with the Missoula Festival of the Arts, a large-scale, city-wide and highly publicized arts fair. Inclusion of Children's Theatre productions into Festival of the Arts publicity has proven to be a boon at the box office and a money-saver in the organization's own publicity budget.

Since theatre rental is most expensive and contracted on a daily basis, each production has only one day of performances locally. During that day, however, the show is presented two or three times. Performances are scheduled for either Saturday or Sunday, depending on the availability of the theatre. Each day has its advantages. Saturday audiences are a bit larger generally but Sunday performances allow for an often-needed extra day of rehearsals. Noon, two o'clock, and four o'clock have become traditional curtain times for Saturdays, while noon performances are eliminated from Sunday's schedules because of morning church services.

These times seem to cause the least conflict with meals and other family activities.

The length of the production generally varies between an hour and five minutes and an hour and twenty minutes. Limited attention spans and bathroom requirements make a ten to fifteen-minute intermission most advantageous. It has been discovered that some stage gimmick is necessary to announce the intermission. When this has not been the case, many of the younger audience members, thinking that the performance is over, have left the theatre frustrated and not knowing the fate of their heroes.

Scripts for the local productions are nearly always original. Aside from the obvious saving of royalty fees, this has become a necessity due to the dire absence of quality children's dramatic literature, the style of production used and the open-ended casting described earlier. When the plays are based on literary classics, dialogue is often borrowed from the original source. Compilations of other scripts are used occasionally but the vast bulk of script material is original. Even the most familiar of stories is often altered to suit the needs of the performers. New roles are added, opportunities for group scenes are created and the most familiar of characters are often given new physical and personality traits. Near-sighted fairy godmothers and finicky prince charmings have become a trademark of the organization's productions. Based on audience response, it is felt by the



Children's Theatre staff that spoofing familiar children's literature, especially fairy tales, delights older audience members and younger children alike.

Each of the three local productions presented annually contain different requirements concerning the size and nature of the cast, script content, performance style and even title. The fall performance, which doubles as a prototype for the touring show, is by far the most difficult of the three to produce. With rehearsals beginning immediately after the conclusion of summer vacation, the fall show features the largest and most difficult cast of the year. A great many preschoolers, fascinated as audience members in the preceding season, register for the fall class. With an average enrollment of about 100 students and a larger-than-usual percentage of very young children, rehearsals for the fall show can be hectic and, if not carefully organized and disciplined, disastrous.

Although specific script requirements dictated by the touring aspect of the production will be discussed in a later section, mention should be made here of some general characteristics of the production required, at least in part, by the tour. For the sake of box office, both locally and on the road, popular recognizable titles are chosen. If the play is based on children's literature, care must be taken to avoid titles which might appeal to only the very young. Timely materials should be considered. In the 1975-76

season, for example, a bicentennial production was offered. In the 1976-77 season, after two years of bicentennial saturation, there seems to be a great general appeal in choosing nonhistorical subject material.

Because of the demands of the tour as well as the necessity to make a local impact early in the season, the fall show is the most technically complex of the year. The scenery is more elaborate than in any of the other shows as well as more sturdily built and, above all, more portable. Likewise, costumes are more expensive and sturdily constructed. Lighting and sound effects are more frequent and even properties are constructed with a full season in mind.

The second show of the season, the Christmas presentation, presents far fewer production problems and a less pressured rehearsal period. A smaller class enrollment means fewer children to deal with and elimination of complications due to double-casting. Since the production generally plays in the smaller and more intimate Eagles Hall, the technical aspects of the show are de-emphasized. Token costumes and scenery not only simplify the work of the Children's Theatre designers and staff but lend the Christmas production an intimate charm. Traditional Christmas themes such as the Nativity and classic Christmas stories are emphasized in the subject matter for the play while more commercial "Santa Claus" oriented stories and themes are avoided. An informal attitude is fostered through the use of stage conventions,

improvisations and even a Christmas sing-along. This looser approach to the Christmas production eliminates many problems for the Children's Theatre staff during a very busy season and seems to create a festive holiday spirit which is enjoyed and appreciated by the audience.

The spring production, produced during a very busy season for local children, generally has the smallest class enrollment of the year. The roles are usually more complex, however, since those children who remained with the program throughout the year are more advanced at the end of the season. A nonconventional structure is often chosen for the spring show with the review format and short playlet medleys having been used successfully in the past. Likewise, the subject matter of the production generally avoids traditional children's literature. For example, a modern Montana ghost story was extremely popular in this time slot during the 1975-76 season. The spring show often returns to the Hellgate Auditorium, but more unusual locations such as school gymnasiums and outdoor surroundings have been utilized in the past. The technical aspects of the season's final production depend to a great extent on the state of the organization's budget at that point in the season. During the six seasons of the Missoula Children's Theatre history, experiments in nearly every possible style of production for children have been performed. The dominant style which has emerged in these attempts has been clearly apparent in all productions for the last few seasons. Stylistically, the directors of the

Children's Theatre have attempted to challenge their audience through the use of stage conventions, symbolism, absurdity, and a generally presentational approach to performance. Scenery, costumes and properties reinforce the presentational style of the production. Sets feature unrealistic painting styles and color choice. Properties are very seldom realistic and costumes depend more on imagination than research.

Humor is an essential element in all the Children's Theatre productions and is often used as a device to lengthen attention spans among younger audience members. Physical comedy such as pratfalls and chases are interspersed regularly among more quiet and serious scenes. Line humor, particularly in the form of outrageous puns, is used and anachronisms have proven to be a most popular humorous convention. After Pinocchio declares that his father has a "whale of a problem," he learns the details of that problem in a telegram from the Blue Fairy. Romantic sentiment is found in many of the Children's Theatre's scripts, but it must be handled sparingly and with great honesty. A short embrace between Cinderella and her handsome Prince is followed immediately by the entrance of Cinderella's comic-evil stepsisters. Romance is much more effective and acceptable when punctuated by humorous elements. Similar rules of thumb hold true for exposition. Expository elements of the plot must be related cleverly, convincingly, and in small doses.

Each of the Children's Theatre productions throughout

its history has been interspersed with music and dance. Musical scores generally feature four or five songs, many of which are original. Classical children's ditties, marching songs, lullabies and the like are also used, as well as borrowed numbers from musical comedies, popular music, children's films, and other media. The songs are usually sung to the accompaniment of piano although other more complex orchestration has been used most effectively. Woodwind quintets, pipe organs, string quartets, acoustical folk instruments, flutes and piccollos, and even rock and roll groups have all been called upon to complement general stylistic statements within individual productions.

Aside from conventional songs, music has been used most effectively to underscore dialogue sections, pantomime sequences and production dances. Although the music is generally performed live, taped selections have been used occasionally to create specific moods for special effect.

Dance has proven to be another popular element of the Children's Theatre productions. Traditional folk dances, stylized character movements, frenzied rock and roll dances, ballroom steps, modern dance, and even classical ballet have all been attempted with varying degrees of success since the Children's Theatre's inception. In general, creative movement has been most beneficial in attaining the stylization usually desired by the directors of the Children's Theatre.

Public reactions to local children's productions have

generally been extremely positive.<sup>7</sup> Parents are generally impressed and delighted with the professionalism and polish of the performances. Great admiration is unfailingly expressed for the imagination, disciplinary powers and patience of the Children's Theatre staff. Cast members, too, are generally delighted with the experience. Despite the rigors of a grueling performance day, the children are nearly always most anxious for the next set of rehearsals and classes to begin. The seemingly endless energy supplies, so visible at times like these, constitute one of the most startling revelations for staff members. If many of the children had their way, they would take a half-hour break for a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and begin rehearsing for the next production.

One of the Children's Theatre's major areas of exploration and experimentation for the 1976-77 season is the advance performance class for children. Although implementation of this concept has been considered for the past several seasons, it has not become a reality because no qualified staff member has been available to teach it. Between Performing Arts Classes, rehearsals for adult productions and weeks spent on tour, insufficient time remained for thorough implementation of such a project by existing staff members. The addition of a qualified full-time volunteer staff person, however, has created the opportunity to attempt an

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<sup>7</sup>Kenneth W. Olson, Superintendent of Schools, Missoula, Montana to The Missoula Children's Theatre Association, September 28, 1976.

advanced performance class.

From the public's point of view, the principal difference between the advanced performance class and the Performing Arts Class is simply that the former is not designed to culminate in production. Initial involvements with the class indicate that this fact has substantially limited the popularity of the project. Fortunately, the Children's Theatre is not financially dependent upon the monetary success of the class and, therefore, experimentation with the concept can continue.

Generally, classes will be scheduled during time slots which contain no performing arts class. These are also the weeks during which the paid members of the artistic staff will be on tour. Hence, a continuity will be created for the Children's Theatre program throughout the year. This is certainly a major step forward in the staff's attempt to create a more thorough, creative and solidified local program.

The classes presented thus far have successfully segregated students according to age, experience, interests, and talent level. Potential enrollments have been expanded to include high school students and interested adults. Advanced creative dramatics, acting, vocal production, mime, creative movement, improvisation, and audition techniques are among the subject matters being considered for the advanced performance classes. It is hoped that the proper combination of

these disciplines, effective teaching methods for each and a dynamic group of serious students will combine to create an educationally viable and artistically pleasing curriculum for a year-long, advanced performance class.



### CHAPTER III

#### THE TOURING PROJECT

Despite an active and growing local program of activities in the Missoula area, the present mainstay for the organization in terms of both time outlay and financial remuneration is the Missoula Children's Theatre Touring Project. This unique concept in touring theatre began as a matter of convenience. In the spring of 1974, when the Children's Theatre was reorganized after a short sabbatical period, one production, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,\* was prepared and presented very successfully in Missoula. A tour of the production was then arranged in the Montana cities of Glendive and Miles City. Due to the distance of these cities from the organization's home base, approximately 500 miles, the thought of one aspect of the tour was not exactly relished. Dwarfs had been cast from among local Missoula children. Transporting and caring for seven third- and fourth-graders could easily be a dangerous and tedious responsibility. With this in mind, a new plan was conceived. Since the week immediately preceding the tour was to be relatively uneventful, the artistic director and the musical

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\*See appendix E for author and composer.

director of the Children's Theatre traveled to Miles City the week before the performance to audition and rehearse a new set of dwarfs. These same children were used in the Glendive performance, since the distance between the two cities was minimal.

The goal of the plan was to simplify travel procedures and eliminate babysitting responsibilities. The staff was amazed to discover, however, a far more critical advantage. The use of local children in the production stirred a great deal of community interest. Local media covered the project generously. The school system was extremely cooperative and box office was stimulated to amazing proportions. Artistically, the production was most satisfying despite the short, intensive rehearsal period for the new children. In fact, the Miles City boys and girls proved to be more effective in performance than the Missoula area children despite the latter's longer rehearsal period. The success of the project caused the Children's Theatre staff to discuss the possibilities of the project in great detail. The current Missoula Children's Theatre Touring Project is the result of that discussion and the ensuing two year trial-and-error period.

At the present time, refinements are still being made in some aspects of the Touring Project. An overall blueprint of the concept, however, has been solidified and been found most functional. The touring team, our artistic director and our technical director, arrive in a community early on Monday

afternoon. Prior to their arrival, several discussions with a local contact have been held. Most details, such as rehearsal locations and times, publicity schedule, suggested staff housing, access to performance area, box office procedures, and performance times have already been solidified. Upon arrival in the community, the staff immediately seeks out the contact and makes any necessary last-minute arrangements. When time permits the staff unloads technical equipment, visits rehearsal and performance areas, evaluates local sound and lighting equipment, settles into housing for the week, and meets local school officials. At the end of the school day, usually approximately 3:30 p.m., an audition is held. Local elementary and high school students, as well as community adults, are cast in the supporting roles of the touring play. Lead roles are played by the two members of the touring team. After a two-hour audition period, the cast list is read to those assembled, rehearsal schedules are distributed to those who have been cast, general announcements are made, and the audition is completed.

Rehearsals begin that same evening and continue throughout the week. Generally, two 2-hour rehearsals are held each day. On Saturday, the usual performance day, the cast arrives early in the morning and rehearses until just before curtain time. After a short rest period, the play is performed. If there is to be a second performance, an option of the local sponsor, it is given later the same afternoon or that same evening.

Immediately after the final performance and a photo session for parents, the Children's Theatre staff loads its equipment and drives to the next town on its schedule.

During its week in the community the Children's Theatre staff members have several duties and responsibilities other than rehearsal. Technical equipment including full-scale scenery, properties, costumes, makeup, and an auxiliary lighting setup must be cared for and, when necessary, repaired. Consumable properties, as well as makeup and lighting supplies, must be purchased occasionally. Equipment must be set up, dressing rooms secured, lights adjusted, and a sound system secured and set up. A local pianist must be found and prepared for the performance. Last-minute publicity decisions and their implementation are often the responsibility of the staff. Box office procedures are suggested and other public relations duties performed. Finally, workshops in a wide variety of theatrical subjects are offered in local school systems as an option to the sponsor. The touring team's week-long stay in the community is most intense and little leisure time is allowed. Aside from driving time from community to community, an attempt is made to keep Sundays free for staff members' personal use.

To most people who have background or experience in theatrical production, the idea of producing a complete play with totally untrained actors in one week's time seems preposterous. It must be kept in mind that the plays are

developed for an audience primarily of children, and seldom last more than one hour in performance. Several key scenes are performed solely by the staff members themselves and take little or no rehearsal until run-throughs. Still, a great deal of material must be learned very quickly by local participants. One of the principal keys to the success of the project is the structure of the scripts themselves. With the obvious exception of the roles carried by staff members, none of the parts is extremely large in terms of script memorization. An eight-page, three-actor scene in Pinocchio, the 1976-77 offering for the tour, is the longest ever attempted for local actors. In some cases, the cast is limited to grade school students. When this is the case, a shorter, simpler version of the same scene is used. Each script contains two or three optional scenes which are plugged in when local talent allows. The scripts are written so that they will flow logically with or without the extra scenes. One or both of the staff actors is included in every scene in the show. With very few exceptions, a Children's Theatre representative is on stage during every moment of the production. When lines are forgotten and other unexpected occurrences take place, the Children's Theatre staff members are in a position to take command of the scene and cover any problem which might arise. This control greatly increases the possibilities for a polished performance.

Each of the touring plays thus far attempted have had

approximately four dozen roles for local participants. Many of the children involved in the project lack any performing experience whatsoever and can gain valuable experience in group scenes which are necessary due to the size of the cast. These scenes generally contain very few lines and primarily unison activity. Older actors in the groups are used as activity leaders and younger children need only follow their example. These activities are easily learned in one rehearsal and can be taught even to preschool children. It has been most gratifying to return to a community for a second year and discover that inclusion in one of these group scenes has stimulated several students to take a more active interest in the performing arts.

Simple mime scenes are another of the devices used in the week-long project. Again, these scenes are easily taught and generally contain no lines. They are performed to a musical accompaniment, either live or taped, or to the accompaniment of a staff member's narration. These scenes can be easily prepared with very little time spent in rehearsal. They have been used effectively to indicate the passing of time or the changing of mood. Exposition has also been made more interesting for the audiences through the use of the narrated mime sequence.

Our use of staff members as actors also adds to the expediency of rehearsals. Staff members not only carry the largest roles in the play but they are responsible for the

effective presentation of transitional material within the scenes. Mood changes, plot reversals and even movement patterns are generally initiated by staff members. Blocking patterns for local participants are kept extremely simple and made visually interesting through the more complex movements of the Children's Theatre actors. Directorially, the principal challenge is to use those shortcuts without totally violating aesthetic effectiveness and integrity.

The expediency of rehearsals is not the only specific consideration in preparing script material for the touring project. The nature of the potential audiences must also be considered. Presently the project is confined to Montana communities. Since the larger cities in Montana have drama activities of their own, an attempt is made to market the project to smaller, more rural communities. Audiences in these areas have very little exposure to cultural activities of any kind. In a few of the smallest communities the Children's Theatre touring project is the high school class play, the grade school cultural outing, the community concert, and the annual local art project, all combined into one event. With this in mind, the Children's Theatre attempts to include material which will be interesting, stimulating and entertaining for all members of the family. Other art forms, specifically music and dance, are incorporated into the plays. Musical numbers are performed to live accompaniment and are often based on traditional folk songs, and even classical music. A

modern narrative dance has been included in each of the scripts used thus far, with an easily enjoyed classical or semi-classical taped accompaniment. Simple dance production numbers are also used. Although each play contains four or five major musical numbers, they are generally carried by staff members. Individual choruses are often sung by groups of local actors or even the entire cast but the burden of musical memorization as well as any complex dance performance is left to the touring team. Musical accompaniment must be found locally for live numbers but pianists are generally plentiful. Music is written out very simply so a student pianist can take part where more experienced musicians are not available. Optional musical parts, such as bass, flute and percussion, are also carried on tour and used whenever musicians are available.

The time devoted in each community to the preparation of the entire production is, of course, incredibly short. From start to finish rehearsals must be extremely intense and highly organized. Generally, a production is allocated ten 2-hour rehearsal periods. When necessary, a few of these rehearsals can be lengthened by as much as one hour. The Monday night rehearsal, beginning only one hour after auditions have concluded, is devoted to the blocking of scenes which contain lengthy memorization passages for local participants. With the two Children's Theatre staff members working separately, scenes involving all local



actors with more than a handful of lines are totally blocked by the end of the first evening. Tuesday rehearsals are devoted to blocking most of the remainder of the show and reviewing Monday night's work. Repetition of scenes in rehearsals at this point has been found to be most beneficial in fast line learning. Wednesday afternoon is devoted to the narrative mime scene which generally contains the younger children in the show. On Wednesday evening, the entire cast, with the exception of the young children, is assembled and individual scenes are given intensive work. All lines are to be memorized by this point and most of the evening is devoted to character business and stage energy. This is the last rehearsal which can be devoted to individual scenes and relatively polished performances are expected by the evening's end. The Thursday afternoon rehearsal begins with music learning and then the entire play is run. Since this is the first attempt at any kind of continuity, many stops are necessary. Actors learn what scene precedes their own and they are expected to make entrances promptly at all following rehearsals. This is also the first rehearsal at which they have witnessed the work of other actors in scenes besides their own and, for the first time, both Children's Theatre staff members work together. Only the most major acting problems are dealt with and establishing continuity is the key to the rehearsal.

Thursday evening is devoted to refining continuity and adding music. The pianist is present for the first time.

No prompting for missed lines is allowed and actors are expected to know the continuity of the play. Full-scale rehearsals of the scenes between Children's Theatre staff members take place at this session and local actors are allowed to view those scenes. During the best of weeks, two complete run-throughs are possible at the Thursday evening rehearsal.

Friday afternoon is generally the first rehearsal in the actual performance area. The session is devoted to blocking adjustments, the logistics of exists and entrances, and familiarity with the scenery, which is introduced at this time. Vocal projection is emphasized as well as concentration and energy. During the Friday afternoon rehearsal one of the staff members devotes his time to the organization, preparation and fitting of costumes. This is done simultaneously with the rehearsal. Friday night is devoted to the technical aspects of the performance. Curtain and sound cues are added. Lights, focused earlier in the day by staff members, are used and cast members are expected to stay backstage. The evening begins with "cue to cue" technical rehearsal, which is followed by a complete and generally nonstop run-through.

Actors arrive early on the morning of performance day and have makeup and costumes applied immediately. A buffer period, generally about 90 minutes, remains to solve any technical or performance problems which may have cropped up during the week. The first and final dress rehearsal then takes place. Complete performance conditions must be in

effect at this rehearsal and, due to the inexperience of the cast members, several considerations, often taken for granted, must be strongly emphasized to the participants. Silence backstage, peeking through curtains, playing with props, and bathroom breaks must be thoroughly discussed. The final dress rehearsal is followed by a much-needed rest, generally about 30 minutes. The curtain then rises on the performance less than six days after the rehearsal period began.

When combined with unique script construction and the proper utilization of rehearsal time, the attitude of the staff is the key factor in the success of the Missoula Children's Theatre Touring Project. A friendly but highly professional approach is maintained with all participants. Confidence in the directors can best be promoted through organized, efficient rehearsals. Discipline is insisted upon from the beginning and a sense of the urgency of the situation is promoted. Local actors are never allowed to forget the very few days and hours which exist between audition and performance. The intensity of the rehearsals, however, must always be controlled and punctuated by periods of relaxation. Staff members are on a first-name basis with even the youngest members of the cast but the stature necessary for the proper implementation of discipline must remain. When the fine line is walked between detached expertise and a genuine emotional involvement in the particular production, the results are highly productive and genuinely satisfying.

Within the tightly constructed rehearsal period, time is allowed to explore the long range potential of local talent and encourage the development of creative instincts. Performances are often altered to allow for ideas suggested by local actors. Valid creative impulses are refined and developed and experimentation is encouraged. In general, actors are allowed as much creative input in character development as the limits of their talents and experience will allow. A smooth, polished performance, however, remains the ultimate goal.

Certain challenges are often presented to the Children's Theatre staff on the road and value decisions are called for. Often students with severe discipline problems and Special Education students are encouraged to audition for the production. Parents, teachers and administrators sometimes feel that there might be some therapeutic value to such an experience for these students. The staff accepts these challenges whenever possible. For the most part, the quality of the performance is not a factor in these decisions. The possibility of failure on the part of the special student, however, must be considered. The trauma of a missed step or a forgotten line in front of hundreds of peers creates a risk which may be unwise since little or no follow-up is possible. When the determination is made to avoid performing responsibilities for the special student, less public backstage duties are created to insure some involvement. Although the respon-

sibility of such positions can be minimal, their importance is highly touted to the individual student and the entire cast as well.

Technical contributions to the touring concept are designed to add a sense of accessible professionalism to the entire project. Sophisticated and highly expensive equipment often financially unavailable in rural areas, is avoided. Although completed scenery is carried by the Children's Theatre staff, it is composed of locally available materials. While complex stage carpentry is avoided in the design and construction of scenery; color, imagination and common sense are emphasized. Similarly, costume construction is simple and basic with the emphasis on a consistent and pleasing design. Basic design concepts in both scenery and costumes are often used as examples and prototypes for future local drama programs. Likewise, lighting equipment is designed around floodlights, household dimmers and 110-watt power sources. The lighting equipment carried on the tour is generally used to supplement local systems. The aesthetic contributions of simple lighting effects and designs are stressed. On the purely practical basis of avoiding unnecessary complexity, properties are minimal. Once again, however, design is colorful and imaginative. Since makeup is easily attainable through the mail, a relatively complete and professional makeup kit is used. Interested local parties are made aware of makeup sources, and catalogs and addresses are made avail-

able. In general, the tour philosophy demands the use of exemplary technical effects which are both aesthetically pleasing and practically possible for the local community visited.

Another major aspect of the non-performance end of the touring project is the use of "assistant directors." Often students and adults alike may show a great interest in the project and yet be reticent to perform. Others may audition and simply not be cast. This group of participants is organized at the beginning of the rehearsal period and has become an invaluable and highly educational part of the program. Assistant directors are immediately established in the eyes of the cast as authority figures. Throughout the rehearsal period they help maintain discipline, read lines for missing actors, perform errands for staff members, serve as a liaison for the schools and help with publicity projects. Their most important function comes, however, with the actual rehearsal procedure. Once a scene is blocked, assistant directors are called upon to run the scene over and over until actors are comfortable with blocking and confident with lines. This frees the staff members to work on other scenes. This assistant director system is a necessary element to the economy of the rehearsals demanded by a one-week touring schedule. It also provides a highly educational experience for students not directly involved on stage.

A bonus attraction of the Missoula Children's Theatre

Touring Project is the availability of free optional workshops for the local school system. A limited number of these workshops is available for distribution among the local schools at the discretion of the sponsoring agency. Workshops in nearly all theatrical subjects are offered, including teacher seminars in play production and creative, dramatics.<sup>8</sup> The workshop system has proven to be an excellent public relations tool on the road and an effective box office stimulant. In the eyes of staff members on long tours, however, the most valuable aspect of the workshop is the break in the routine monotony of the road.<sup>9</sup>

In reviewing the logistics and philosophies of the Missoula Children's Theatre touring plan, questions arise concerning its educational value and artistic viability. One may wonder how a project so concentrated, so elementary and so thoroughly packaged can provide a truly valuable experience. Justification of the program comes with an honest glimpse at the needs and conditions of those reached by the project. In the cultural wasteland of rural Montana, an exciting contact with the arts is offered. This sense of excitement is purposely nurtured by Children's Theatre staff members through emphasis on high energy levels, the brevity of the rehearsal period and the risks involved in facing an

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<sup>8</sup>See appendix B for a representative list of workshop offerings.

<sup>9</sup>See appendix C for a detailed diary of one tour week chosen at random.

audience. The project usually involves as many as sixty children. In some of the communities visited this represents over 50 percent of the school enrollment. The intensity of the week-long project creates an exhausting and memorable experience for all those involved.

Thematic material and production styles easily accepted by completely untrained audiences are presented. Not only does Pinocchio learn the value of honesty and parental respect, he does so in a traditional theatrical style. Geppetto's wind-up dolls may dance to the strains of classical music, but only the most familiar of melodies is chosen. When familiarity with the material and styles is coupled with the added stimulation of local participation, great interest is generated in the project and the satisfaction of viewers, sponsors and participants alike is virtually guaranteed.

The touring project can also serve as a concrete incentive for locally produced programs. A teacher may be amazed at the depth of talent and interest uncovered by the project and seek information concerning the formation of a drama club. Another teacher may use the success of the week as a positive argument for the value of the arts before her school board. Otherwise inaccessible information such as bibliographies and equipment sources are disseminated and a genuine interest in exploring the arts is encouraged.



Educationally, the touring project has many of the same goals as the Missoula Children's Theatre's local projects. Communicative skills are encouraged and enhanced and the value of good-oriented discipline is exemplified. Teachers are urged to explore the possibilities of arts-oriented activities in the development of self-expression and the basic skills.

Perhaps the most encouraging statement of the project's value is witnessed upon returning to communities for a second season. Almost invariably interest at both the participation and audience levels doubles.<sup>10</sup> The positive reinforcement experienced by the participants becomes contagious throughout the community. Educators show more respect for the project, student interest levels are high and parents seem to recognize the value of the production.<sup>11</sup> An honest hope is maintained by the Children's Theatre staff that the Touring Project can aid the rural children of Montana in the creative use of basic skills and foster a healthy attitude concerning participation in and appreciation of the arts.

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<sup>10</sup>"Tour Statistics Record Book, 1970-1976," unpublished manuscript by Missoula Children's Theatre, Missoula, Montana.

<sup>11</sup>Mrs. Blanche Harding to The Missoula Children's Theatre Association, January 26, 1976.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUPPLEMENTARY PROJECTS

In the midst of their principal programs for children, the staff members of the Missoula Children's Theatre have found time to develop several supplementary projects. None of these projects provide direct financial security for the organization but several are most valuable in enhancing public image and expanding artistic horizons. A great percentage of the growth potential of the organization depends on the development of these areas. During the past four seasons the Children's Theatre has included in its calendar an adult-oriented dinner theatre presentation. Relatively commercial small-scale musicals or well known comedies have been chosen for this project. Since the dinner show generally rehearses simultaneously with a children's show, production complexity is avoided. Plays are chosen which have very small casts and minimal technical demands. Valuable rehearsal time is thus economized and budgets are kept within reason.

Because of small casts and simple technical requirements, the dinner theatre presentation is an obvious touring possibility. The Children's Theatre adult presentation has toured

for the past three seasons. In all cases the tour has been well received and sponsors have been satisfied. A dinner show can easily be "packaged" early in the season and made available for tour all year long. The potential of the project as a major financial resource is most encouraging. Due to the limits of time, no great effort has been made in the past to sell the dinner show. During the 1976-77 season, however, a major sales campaign will be attempted. The project is being marketed under the title of The Northwest Touring Theatre. The new name was conceived in order to avoid the connotation of "children's" entertainment in the present name of the producing agency. The new name will be used for the dinner theatre alone. Brochures describing the production as well as the potential of the project as a community money-making event are being distributed through Jaycees, Elks Culbs and other service organizations. A booking agency has been contracted to help develop a sales package and the possibility of a summer touring program has been discussed. Despite the exciting potential of the dinner theatre touring package as a financial resource for the organization, the Children's Theatre staff is most excited about the project because of the welcome relief it could provide from the artistic limits placed on theatre for children. The requirements of a pre-adult audience exclude plot complexity, multi-level character development and a great deal of thematic material. In the interests of artistic

sanity, the Children's Theatre looks forward with great relish to the production of its annual adult-oriented presentation.

In developing its image as a public service organization, the Children's Theatre has performed a great deal of volunteer work. Not only have these endeavors improved statewide and community public relations, but they have provided numerous opportunities for creative and stimulating endeavors in both artistic and educational areas. The Children's Theatre staff has taught classes in community and statewide schools at all educational levels. Preschool and elementary school workshops have been given. Classes have been taught in high school drama and career education courses, and guest lectures have been arranged in university educational classes. Seminars have been given in the use of creative dramatics in the classroom to elementary school teachers in Missoula and many other communities throughout the state.

The Children's Theatre has provided free entertainment for charitable organizations, causes and projects on numerous occasions. Christmas parties for Girl Scouts, Big Brothers and local parochial schools, for example, have been a tradition of the organization. Benefit performances have been donated to various charities and funds and free performances for the public have been given on occasion. Children's Theatre staff members have also provided their expertise to various committees and study groups. The statewide Arts

Task Force and the local Missoula School Board, for example, have involved staff members.

Aside from projects which might obviously be classified as public service, it is hoped by the Children's Theatre staff that its entire scope of activities is, in a sense, a service to the public. In providing creative and educational opportunities relatively unique to the areas which it serves, the Children's Theatre staff hopes to enhance the public's image of the arts and provide effective opportunities for creative communications. The philosophy of the Children's Theatre directors is most concerned with the organization's responsibility as a tax-exempt public service corporation.

Another area of discussion and exploration for the Children's Theatre staff is the role of the organization as a local community theatre. Although the Children's Theatre does not presently fulfill all of the traditional requirements and responsibilities of a community theatre, several aspects of the organization's programs have been tailored to suit these needs. Interested members of the community, adults as well as children, are often invited to serve on the volunteer staff of the Children's Theatre in both backstage and organizational capacities. Public auditions are generally held for dinner theatre productions and major musical comedies, and adults are often used onstage in children's theatre productions as well. Despite its vested

interest in other areas, the Children's Theatre serves Missoula as a community theatre. The organization provides all interested parties with ample opportunity for participation in theatrical activities and has developed the theatrical aspect of cultural exposure for the area. Future plans and ambitions include revitalization of the Missoula Community Theatre on a full-time and on-going basis.

Of the supplementary projects engaged in by the Missoula Children's Theatre, the most fascinating in terms of experimentation and potential exploration is the use of dramatics as a therapeutic media for Special Education students. Since the inception of the organization, staff members have had a continuing and, at times, consuming interest in this area. An original Children's Theatre board member, who was in charge of the Special Education program in the local school district, sparked the organization's interest in Special Education. Extensive research was done by the Children's Theatre staff members in the areas of mental retardation and abnormal psychology. A present staff member maintains a keen interest in Special Education and has extensive training and experience in the area. Missoula Children's Theatre projects in Special Education have included free performances for Missoula area Special Education students, complete production tours to the Boulder River State School and Hospital for the Mentally Retarded, experimental workshops in creative dramatics and performing arts both locally and at Boulder, participation in

statewide Special Education fairs as well as participation in the Montana Special Olympics for Mentally Retarded Children and Adults. The 1976-77 season features creative dramatics and performance skill classes with the Missoula area hearing-impaired students. These classes culminate in full-scale public performance. In a major attempt to expand its work with the Special Education students, the Children's Theatre, in conjunction with the local school district, is attempting to secure funding for the employment of two full-time specialists in a regional project in the use of the performing arts for the mentally retarded.

## CHAPTER V

### FISCAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL STABILITY

Of all the goals and accomplishments of the Missoula Children's Theatre, none has been more ambitious or frustrating than the development of a sound fiscal and legal base. The attainment of official non-profit, tax-exempt status was a complicated six year battle. In legal terms, the organization began as a partnership. When the financial and organizational benefits of tax-exempt, non-profit status were discovered, however, the partnership was dissolved and a corporation formed. Application was then made to the Internal Revenue Service for the attainment of tax-exempt, non-profit status. Easier tax requirements, more potential for grants and private donations and organizational solidity were among the advantages of such a status. The assistance of several lawyers was needed for the Children's Theatre staff to wade through the complex application forms. Book-keeping was revised, essays describing the organization were written, required equipment was purchased, and corporate status was modified to meet the requirements of the IRS. After numerous delays and setbacks, the help of several United States Congressmen was sought. In May, 1976, soon



after the Senators and Representatives became interested in the cause, a non-profit, tax-exempt status was granted to the Missoula Children's Theatre.

The development of a Board of Directors as the official governing body of the Missoula Children's Theatre was a primary requirement for the attainment of corporate status. The composition of the Board of Directors of the Children's Theatre has been altered as the needs and growth patterns of the organization have changed. The duties, responsibilities and projects of the Board of Directors have been limited or expanded to suit the interests and capabilities of the Board members. The original Children's Theatre Board was composed of a variety of community figures. Clergymen, educators, bankers and lawyers served the Children's Theatre in a purely advisory capacity. Board activities consisted of occasional meetings to discuss recent accomplishments and problems. The development of Bylaws and a Corporate Constitution were the major accomplishments of the Board. Beyond that accomplishment, their principal reason for existence was to fulfill corporate requirements. At that time, staff members were high-ranking officers on the Board of Directors. Although calendars, budgets and other logistical plans were submitted to the Board for its approval, staff decisions were rarely questioned. Board members were amiable and positive but they lacked the time, interest, imagination, and expertise to perform as a truly viable governing body. Early

in 1974, during the reorganizational period of the Missoula Children's Theatre, a second Board of Directors was developed. This Board differed from the first in its number and complexion. Growing in membership from six to twelve, the Board consisted primarily of community members with some vested interest or area of expertise in the performing arts. Local theatre managers, community arts council members and University drama faculty members were among those asked to serve. For the first time, regular meetings were held. Staff members were not members of the Board of Directors, and the Board was qualified enough to criticize staff decisions and projected plans. A good balance was found among Board members of artistic expertise and financial management experience. The Board insisted on sound business practices and the development of projects which were realistic in terms of both artistic viability and financial remuneration. In the general development of the Missoula Children's Theatre, this Board was most beneficial in terms of developing a sound structural base. Although the growth of the organization in terms of both artistic accomplishments and financial security was minimal during their tenure, the members of this Board were most successful in paving the way for future development.

The nucleus of the present Board of Directors was formed at the beginning of the 1975-76 season. Once again, a shift in emphasis was made in soliciting membership. Several

civic-minded men and women became the nucleus of a Board devoted to the expansion of the program and fund raising. After a constructive critical analysis of the staff recommendations for projects and budgets, the new Board has devoted itself to raising a substantial percentage of the organization's projected income. Projects not directly related to the staff's activities have been initiated and carried out by Board members. A Barn Dance, a Haunted House for Halloween and several auctions and rummage sales were among these projects. Individual members have researched grant possibilities, solicited funds from private donors, used personal connections to aid with tour bookings and accepted responsibility in the areas of box office management, general correspondence and public relations. In general, the members of the present Board have been the most active in all of the organization's history. Their devotion to the project and their willingness to work on its behalf have been a major factor in the organization's present climb toward prosperity and security.

The successes met by the present Board of Directors in fund raising can be attributed to several factors. Most of the present Board members have a great deal of prominence within the community. Social, professional and financial connections have been made for the organization through the members and their spouses. Board members are also unpaid volunteers and hence are in a far better position than paid

staff members to ask favors of the general public.

In direct conjunction with the activities of the present Board of Directors is an improvement in the public relations of the organization. The image which the Children's Theatre presents to the general public is becoming one of a sound, tested community institution. This image improvement can be attributed to the longevity of the organization, expanded publicity and public awareness, and the improved quality of the productions, classes, and staff members themselves. Increased public service works have also upgraded the image of the organization as have the thematic contents of the productions. Wholesome, educational and nonviolent subject matter has been stressed and creative imaginations have been fostered. All of these factors have been combined with new sound business practices such as the establishment of good credit, prompt thank yous for favors bestowed, solid book-keeping practices and the quick return of borrowed equipment.

Among the areas which are continual sources for exploration for the Children's staff and Board of Directors, the most time-consuming and vital to the organization's existence is the search for financial resources. The most untapped and potentially beneficial of these resources is the grant. Up to the present time, the organization's only source of grant funding has been the Montana Arts Council, a state organization sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts. The Montana Arts Council has partially funded the Missoula

Children's Theatre for five of its seven seasons. Awards between \$1,000 and \$5,000 have been granted. These awards have represented a diminishing percentage of the organization's total budget.

The 1976-77 season is the only time in the organization's history when a great deal of effort has been put forth in the quest for grant funding. The increased number of staff members and qualified Board members interested in funding has allowed the Children's Theatre to begin to spend the enormous blocks of time required in researching and developing grant requests. This season is also the first in which the required tax-exempt status has been a reality. A Children's Theatre grant research team composed of one Board member and one staff member is in the process of exploring the potential of the area and, whenever possible, following through on their exploration. The Children's Theatre Touring Project as well as Special Education experiments are the most prominent areas stressed in grant requests.

The major source of income for the Children's Theatre local projects is the participating sponsorship program. Local merchants enrolled in the program contribute a sum of money to the Children's Theatre. A number of tickets to an upcoming Children's presentation are then forwarded to the merchant. The Children's Theatre then publicizes the production through the media, relying heavily on radio coverage. In all of the publicity it is stressed that free tickets are

available by contacting the participating merchant.

The amount of tickets given to the merchant for his distribution is totally dependent on the size of his contribution. Occasionally, one business will sponsor an entire production. In this case, the fee expected of the merchant is generally between \$600 and \$1,000, depending upon the number of tickets available to him. This number is dependent on the size of the auditorium and the number of performances planned. If more than one sponsor is solicited for a particular production, the contributions are generally between \$25 and \$100. The tickets and media coverage are then divided among the merchants according to whatever percentage of the total sponsorship fees the individual merchant has contributed. If a total of \$1,000 is collected for one production, a merchant contributing \$100 is entitled to 10 percent of the tickets and media coverage.

The participating sponsorship program has obvious benefits to the Children's Theatre. What amounts to a sold-out, pre-sale of all performances guarantees the box office success of the production. The Children's Theatre enjoys more exposure since free tickets induce larger audiences. Many families, normally unable to afford admission prices, attend the production. Likewise, the participating merchant benefits from the program. Because of the free tickets, potential customers are given incentive to enter the place of business. Along with the exposure, the merchant's image as a public

servant is fortified. Because of the mutual benefits, the participating sponsorship program has proven most popular and beneficial for sponsors, the Children's Theatre and audiences alike.

The largest single source of income for the organization is the revenue generated by the Touring Project. Each sponsor of the week-long program provides a guaranteed fee of \$450 for the services of the Children's Theatre. During the 1976-77 season, approximately twenty of these week-long tours will take place. The income generated by the tours represents approximately one-third of the total Children's Theatre projected income for the season. Additional revenue is possible during the tour weeks through the sale of printed souvenir t-shirts. A profit of \$2 is made from each shirt and the average sale during the tour week is thirty shirts.

The dinner Theatre project provides another major source of income for the Children's Theatre. Generally about \$1,500 is raised through local performances of the show and road bookings of the production generate between \$350 and \$500 per performance. Local performances are often self-produced but road bookings are sold on a guaranteed-fee basis only. Further development of the dinner theatre touring package is one of the organization's principal areas of potential expansion.

Another major area of funding for the Children's Theatre is the tuition generated by the local Performing Arts Classes. Tuition for the past several seasons has remained at \$10 per child, although serious discussion is now underway concerning the possibilities of raising the tuition. Approximately 300 children per year are involved in the program. Tuition for the Performing Arts Classes represents about 10 percent of the total Children's Theatre's budget.<sup>12</sup>

During the past two seasons, an appreciable percentage of the Children's Theatre's income has been generated by the Board of Director's fund-raising projects. Events such as those listed earlier, along with the solicitations of private donations, have become a major priority for the Board of Directors. Not only do these projects create cash income for the organization, but they provide another source of major exposure for the Children's Theatre.

Although not a direct source of cash income, the in-kind donation has become a major money saver for the organization. Within the community of Missoula, sources of free building material, costume supplies, office equipment and concessions have been discovered. Local businesses have offered their services for equipment repair and vehicle loan. The local media has provided free publicity and public relations assistance. Lawyers and accountants have contributed their

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<sup>12</sup>See Appendix D for the Missoula Children's Theatre's current working budget.



time and services on behalf of the organization. Without these in-kind donations the Children's Theatre would be unable to sustain both the quantity and quality of its present project load.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

Through the six-year evolutionary process described in this thesis, a basic working structure for the Missoula Children's Theatre and its services has been developed. Services have been refined artistically and educationally in order to suit the cultural needs and desires of Montanans. Hopefully, those needs and desires have been expanded and enriched to some extent through exposure to the Missoula Children's Theatre and participation in its projects.

The most immediate (if less than noble) incentive for this refinement process has been financial. Like most semi-professional arts groups, the Missoula Children's Theatre has walked a fiscal tightrope since its inception. Since people tend to provide financial support more readily for what they consider necessary and desirable, the Children's Theatre has struggled to discover and define those needs and desires, itself an expensive and elusive trial-and-error process, and fulfill them in a manner which assumes some artistic and educational viability. This struggle has been the hub of the organization's activities and efforts. It has also been the most enlightening aspect of my own learning experience.

As the Missoula Children's Theatre continues to exist and grow, new projects and areas of interest will be discovered, explored and, in many cases, discarded. Presently, however, the future of the organization can be described more appropriately in terms of expansion than innovation. During the 1977-78 season, the Touring Project is projected for approximately twenty-five communities. This represents an increase of seven bookings over the 1976-77 season. Long-range goals include tour teams in each of the states which border Montana. The fee for the week's residency will be raised from \$450 to \$500 next season. Once regional status is attained, more intensive efforts will be made to secure major grant funding.

The local Missoula program will also be expanded during the 1977-78 season. An extra children's play is planned for the Spring, bringing the annual total to three. The season will be supplemented with a large-scale musical comedy and a non-musical comedy. Auditions for the former will be open to the entire community while the latter will be open only to junior high and high school performers. A more extensive workshop program, with an emphasis on special education, is also projected for inclusion in the local program. Much of the increased local program is dependent upon the hiring of an extra staff person to replace the artistic director on the spring tour, thus allowing him to remain in Missoula for local projects.

The Missoula Children's Theatre is leaving its formative

years. The beginnings of a solid reputation, financial and managerial solidity and several unique and artistically satisfying programs are now a reality. The future of the organization depends almost entirely upon the ambition of future staffs and Boards of Directors. Hopefully, that ambition will be guided by artistic and educational integrity as well as a strong instinct for the needs and desires of the audience served.

A P P E N D I X E S

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APPENDIX A

EXERCISES MOST COMMONLY USED

## EXERCISES MOST COMMONLY USED

The following exercises have evolved over the past several seasons. Their sources are a combination of published concepts, classroom acquirments, Children's Theatre staff inventions and experiences, traditional yoga exercises and common sense. No claim is made regarding their originality. They are used primarily because of their simplicity and general effectiveness.

### 1. Races

Running in place done with exaggerated arm and leg motions and varying tempos. Releases excess energy and introduces rhythm.

### 2. Shakes

Very fast shaking of isolated body areas. Relaxes the body and introduces sense awareness.

### 3. Stretches

Simple limb extensions done in various directions. Relaxes the body.

### 4. Isolations

Slow, rhythmic movements of one body area at a time. Develops concentration and sense awareness.

### 5. The Cat (simplified)

Extension of facial muscles with follow-through in remainder of body. Relaxes the body, creates awareness of facial muscles and releases inhibitions.

### 6. Consonant Explosions

Exaggerated pronunciation of consonant sounds (in-

dividually and in series). Further explores facial muscles and sharpens diction.

#### 7. Rhythm Passing

Group (five to one hundred members) forms circle and leader begins rhythmic sound and movement pattern which is "passed" around the circle. Develops concentration and body control through rhythm.

#### 8. Mirrors

Group is paired off and leader is assigned in each pair; mirror person follows movement patterns of leader as precisely as possible. Excellent concentration exercise. Also develops group interaction and releases inhibitions.

#### 9. Machines

Group leader begins and maintains simple sound and movement pattern; others add complementary sounds and movements with special attention to rhythm and visual integrity. Adds concept of imagination to concentration, sense of rhythm, group interaction and release of inhibitions.



APPENDIX B

IN-SCHOOL WORKSHOPS AVAILABLE  
WITH TOURING PROJECT

The Missoula Children's Theatre offers, in conjunction with the touring package, a series of in-school workshops. We work in both elementary and high schools and have a variety of programs.

Suggested subject areas are:

- Creative Dramatics
- Sense Awareness Exercises
- Relaxation Exercises
- Concentration Exercises
- Observation Exercises
- Acting Techniques
- Mime
- Improvisation
- Make-up
- Scenery
- Costuming
- Oral Interpretation
- Vocal Production
- Dialects
- Writing for Dramatics
- Theatre History
- Play Reading

These workshops can run from 30 minutes to a couple of hours depending on class schedules. All the above can be altered to suit age groups involved.

Workshops are also offered in the above areas as well as general play production for any teachers who may be interested.

APPENDIX C

DIARY

## DIARY OF ONE WEEK

### Missoula Children's Theatre Touring Project

One week was chosen at random during the 1976-77 season in order to demonstrate the actual workings of the project from a less theoretical viewpoint. The problems of the week spent in Havre, Montana, were typical of the kinds of problems dealt with in nearly every community visited. It is hoped that the following journal, coupled with the more extensive treatment found in chapter 3 of this work, will clearly describe the procedures of the project.

#### Sunday

Today, we drove from Sidney, Montana to Havre, Montana, the site of this week's production. The roads were good, a welcome relief from last week's heavy snow. We arrived in Havre late in the evening and settled into a motel.

#### Monday

We made a telephone contact with the sponsor, the head of the Havre Women's Symposium, and she invited us to breakfast at her home. There we met the members of her publicity committee and described the logistics of the project to them. We discussed our workshop schedule and decided to do one in each of the five local grade schools. We returned to the motel about noon.

The Havre High School Auditorium had been scheduled as the location for performances, auditions and most of the re-

hearsals. David Overturf, my touring partner, and I arrived at the auditorium about one hour before the scheduled 4:00 auditions. During this time I explored the facility. A complete lighting and sound system, an unusual feature in most of our performance locations, was the first of several pleasant surprises to be found. The stage area itself was large and well equipped with adequate wing space, complete curtain system (with no gaping holes), dressing room facilities, a reasonably well-tuned piano, and a good sized playing space in front of the curtain. The auditorium itself was cheerful and clean. I found the administrators most cooperative, the ever-present high school students unusually polite, and even the janitor was pleasant. It looked like the beginning of a good week.

While I was evaluating the facilities, David spent his hour preparing a mimeographed letter to be sent home with all cast members and the assistant directors. The letter included a brief introduction of the staff and a rehearsal schedule for the week. As usual, the schedule for the performance day would be announced later in the week, subject to the condition of the show at that time.

Our pre-audition chores were finished shortly before 4:00 and the task of choosing a cast began. As always, the two central roles, Pinocchio and Geppetto, would be played by David and me respectively. Although the number of roles available to local children and adults varied according to

the turnout at auditions, 48 was the usual number of roles to be cast. The roles varied greatly according to the degree of difficulty and costume size. The largest roles to be cast were the Fox, the Cat, and the Blue Fairy. These were usually played by adults or advanced high school students. Each had several pages of dialogue to be memorized literally overnight and some demands in terms of acting style. Candlewick and Jiminy Cricket were slightly smaller roles and were usually cast from students in the upper grades. The three puppets were fairly large dance roles with no lines involved. These were usually cast from junior high girls. Candlewick's crew and the urchins were two groups which contained a total of 14 roles for children of assorted sizes. Each of these had a handful of lines. The Pleasure Island kids consisted of 14 middle-grade children of assorted sizes. The members of this group had little or no solo work and the group was often used for political casting (the sponsor's untalented daughter). The windup dolls were 12 small simple roles based more on cuteness than complexity. These were played primarily by pre-school and early grade school students.

Approximately 120 boys and girls showed up to audition for Pinocchio in Havre. No adults auditioned but several high school students arrived. We began the audition by having all the children line up according to size. This is always done in absolute silence and with no direct

guidance from us. As usual the more cooperative and responsible students as well as a few disciplinary problems immediately became evident. The windup dolls were cast first. These decisions were made on the basis of elementary coordination tests. Many children were eliminated immediately from this group because they were simply too young. After choosing the windup dolls, we turned our attention to the other end of the line. The Fox, the Cat, and the Blue Fairy were chosen from among the two dozen students eligible in terms of size and age. Due to the time limits in auditions, readings are seldom used even for the largest roles. Simple tests are given to determine facial mobility, vocal projection, energy, and willingness to accept direction. The Fox, the Cat, and the Blue Fairy candidates were easily narrowed to a field of six students. Short improvisational scenes featuring the Fox and Cat characters in elementary emotional situations were then used to make the final judgments.

Those actors not cast returned to the line for further consideration in smaller roles. The puppets were then chosen from girls in the middle-sized group. A simple dance step was quickly taught to the girls and the more coordinated members of the group surfaced immediately. The finalists were taught a slightly more complex step and the puppets were chosen. The steps used in auditions would later be incorporated into the show, one of many time-saving devices

utilized. The remainder of the roles were cast primarily on the basis of several variations of one simple test. All of the remaining students were asked to simply announce their names and ages in a variety of inflections. Diction and projection were emphasized as were elementary emotions such as anger, happiness, sadness, disappointment, and fear. The best middle-sized girl was chosen for Jiminy Cricket. With an emphasis on height variety, the best of the remaining students were chosen for Candlewick's crew and the urchins. Finally, the Pleasure Island kids were chosen on the same basis. Twelve students from among the older, more responsible children were then chosen to be the assistant directors. A general meeting was then held for all present. The cast and crew was announced with special emphasis placed on the importance of assistant directors. Encouragement and gratitude was expressed to those not cast and schedules for the week were distributed. At 5:30, ninety minutes after the audition began, those assembled were dismissed and a seemingly competent crew of 60 people had been chosen. The dinner hour was spent discussing the results of the audition. Observations regarding possible problems were exchanged. The Blue Fairy, for example, seemed to have voacl projection problems and, for some unknown reason, Jiminy Cricket was in tears at the session's end. But, in general, David and I were both satisfied with the potential of the cast. The assistant directors, however,



created some concern. They were far younger than average, the oldest being fourteen. Only two of them were boys, a possible problem during physically strenuous scene changes. We were aware, however, that parents and high school students often materialize during the week and offer their backstage services. And so there was no reason to worry yet.

The first rehearsal began at 7:00 p.m. During this two-hour session, the Fox, Cat and Blue Fairy scenes were completely blocked and their basic characterizations were developed. During the first hour, David worked with the Fox and the Cat while I was with the Blue Fairy. We switched at 8:00, a technique which seemed to re-energize the tired actors. A meeting with the assistant directors was also held during this rehearsal and each was assigned a scene for which he would be responsible. He would know the scene as well as the actors and take charge of the scene when David and I were working in other areas. He would help actors learn lines as well as entrance cues. At the end of the evening we were pleased with the results of our work. The Fox and the Cat would both be very strong and the Blue Fairy, despite continuing vocal problems, seemed bright and energetic. The most encouraging note of the evening was the performances of the assistant directors. Despite their ages, they were obviously intelligent, responsible and organized. Everything was on schedule.

Tuesday

The day began with three morning workshops for middle-grade students in three separate schools. The workshops were based on sense awareness exercises and featured a short scene from Pinocchio. The scene served to demonstrate the principles that were being discussed and helped publicize the performances at week's end. We had lunch with the sponsor and discovered the first crisis of the week: due to a communication gap, she was unaware that we needed a pianist for the performances as well as the last few rehearsals. A local music festival the following weekend, she felt, would create a conflict for most local musicians. She would contact the grade school music departments, however, and let us know the results of her inquiries later in the day. David and I spent the remainder of the early afternoon at the local laundromat washing the costumes for the show as well as our own clothes.

At 4:00 p.m., the day's first two-hour rehearsal began. David spent the entire afternoon session blocking the urchins. Little character work was needed with this group since they were playing children of their own age. Energy and timing, however, were stressed. I spent the afternoon alternating my time between Candlewick and Jiminy Cricket. By the end of the session, they were blocked and had at least a beginning of character

development.

The Fox, Cat, Blue Fairy, and Jiminy Cricket were all scheduled for a Tuesday evening rehearsal. They spent the majority of the session with assistant directors, drilling the previous evening's work. At the end of the evening, each of their scenes was viewed and criticized by David and me, and their lines were expected to be memorized. They had progressed well with the exception of the Blue Fairy. She created some concern by not having her lines and announcing that she would be forced to miss both of the Friday rehearsals.

David spent most of the evening blocking the Candlewick crew while I choreographed the puppet dances. Both progressed well.

#### Wednesday

The day began with workshops, in two more schools, which were quite similar to the previous day's offerings. During another lunch with the sponsor, we discovered that she had indeed found an excellent piano player and so that problem was eliminated. After a short tour of Havre we returned to the motel room for a few hours of relaxation. During this time I made a telephone contact with next week's sponsor in order to make sure that all the necessary arrangements were being made there. During the afternoon rehearsals, David blocked and taught character

movements to the windup dolls while I constructed the Pleasure Island kids' scene. Both groups were competent and energetic.

As usual, the Wednesday evening rehearsal was the most demanding and frustrating of the week. With the exception of the windup dolls, the entire cast was present and an attempt was made to run through the entire play. All of the scenes seemed to be progressing quite well including the Blue Fairy's. She had obviously worked hard to memorize her lines and even began to project. She still had problems but we were much relieved. The emphasis for the evening was principally on continuity and cues. Little actual scene work was accomplished.

While David handled most of the rehearsal, several assistant directors and I sorted, fitted and labeled the costumes. Necessary costume repairs were noted as well as any extra items to be procured. I also met with the pianist, gave her the music, discussed tempos and cues and gave her a schedule for the rest of the week. She was competent indeed and extremely pleasant. By the end of the evening rehearsal our problems seemed to be ironing themselves out and the production remained on schedule.

#### Thursday

Due to a community concert to be held in the Havre High School Auditorium, both the afternoon and evening Pinocchio rehearsals were scheduled to take place in a small class-

room. Apparently, no other space was available for our use. We soon discovered that the room was not designed for 50 physically active people. The size of the room as well as its lack of circulation made both the afternoon and evening rehearsals nearly unbearable.

Both afternoon and evening sessions consisted of run-throughs with a continued emphasis on polish and continuity. All of the actors progressed well, considering the less than ideal accommodations. The size of the room, however, did eliminate the possibility of using scenery and a piano. Since these are both generally worked into the production at Thursday rehearsals, we entered the final day of preparation behind schedule.

#### Friday

Friday morning was spent focusing lights, setting up a public address system, organizing scenery and establishing backstage procedures. Most of the Friday afternoon rehearsal was devoted to the proper use and handling of scenery and props. Scene changes were choreographed and rehearsed and the cast was lectured regarding backstage etiquette. For the first time, songs and other music cues were practiced with the piano.

Friday evening began with a "cue-to-cue" technical rehearsal including lights, follow spot, curtains, and scene changes. Cast members were then assigned permanent places backstage and a complete run-through followed. By the end

of the evening, the technical crew was reasonably sure of their assignments and the actors knew their cues. The energy level of the cast was down due to an entire day of tedious technical rehearsals, but we felt that the excitement of performance day would revitalize the group. Both Friday rehearsals were efficient and the show was back on schedule.

#### Saturday

Since the play was scheduled for a 1:00 p.m. curtain, the day began very early. Staff members and assistant directors arrived at 8:00 a.m. Costumes were ironed, makeup was laid out and last minute technical adjustments were made. The cast arrived at 9:00 a.m. and went immediately to the locker room designated as the makeup area. With staff supervision, the assistant directors applied the makeup to cast members in assembly-line fashion. Costumes were then put on and the group was ready for an 11:00 a.m. final dress rehearsal.

The rehearsal went extremely smoothly with the exception of the lack of energy and vocal projection. We were concerned but hopeful that the presence of an audience as well as our last minute pep talk would solve these problems. The cast rested until 12:45. Makeup was then touched up and a short physical warm-up session was held. At 1:05 the house manager indicated that all was ready and the cast and crew of Pinocchio took their places.

A full house, nearly 800 people, greeted the opening curtain enthusiastically. The show went very well, the only noticeable flaw being the Blue Fairy's vocal level. Cast, parents and sponsors alike were genuinely pleased with the production, amazed at our progress in five days and an invitation to return next year was expressed. Within one hour after the final curtain, the truck was loaded, the cast and crew was thanked and congratulated and David and I were back on the road.

APPENDIX D

APPROXIMATE ANNUAL INCOME AND EXPENSES



INCOME:	Montana Arts Council Grant . . . . .	\$ 2,500
	Three Local Children's Plays . . . . .	5,000
	Dinner Theatre Tour. . . . .	3,000
	Miscellaneous Concessions and Fees . . . . .	3,000
	Touring Project . . . . .	9,000
	Fund Raising . . . . .	<u>7,000</u>
	TOTAL	\$29,500

EXPENSES:

Salaries:	Director (10 months)	\$8,000	
	Business Manager (10 months)	5,000	
	Actor (9 months)	4,500	
	Actor (2 months)	<u>1,000</u>	18,500
Vehicle (15¢ a mile)			1,500
Technical:	Scenery	\$ 800	
	Lights	200	
	Props	100	
	Costumes	<u>400</u>	1,500
Touring Project:	Room (2 people)	\$1,500	
	Gas, consumable pro- duction costs	<u>500</u>	2,000
Royalties and fees (accountant, designers, actors)			1,500
Office:	Rent (\$60 mo., inc. utilities)	\$ 720	
	Supplies and equipment	580	
	Telephone (inc. installation costs & deposit)	<u>600</u>	1,900
Publicity (including brochures for touring project, dinner show, children's shows)			1,000
Theatre Rental			200
Equipment (light and sound)			<u>200</u>
	TOTAL		\$28,300

APPENDIX E  
PLAYS PRODUCED, WITH AUTHORS AND/OR COMPOSERS

PLAYS PRODUCED BY THE MISSOULA CHILDREN'S  
THEATRE SINCE ITS INCEPTION

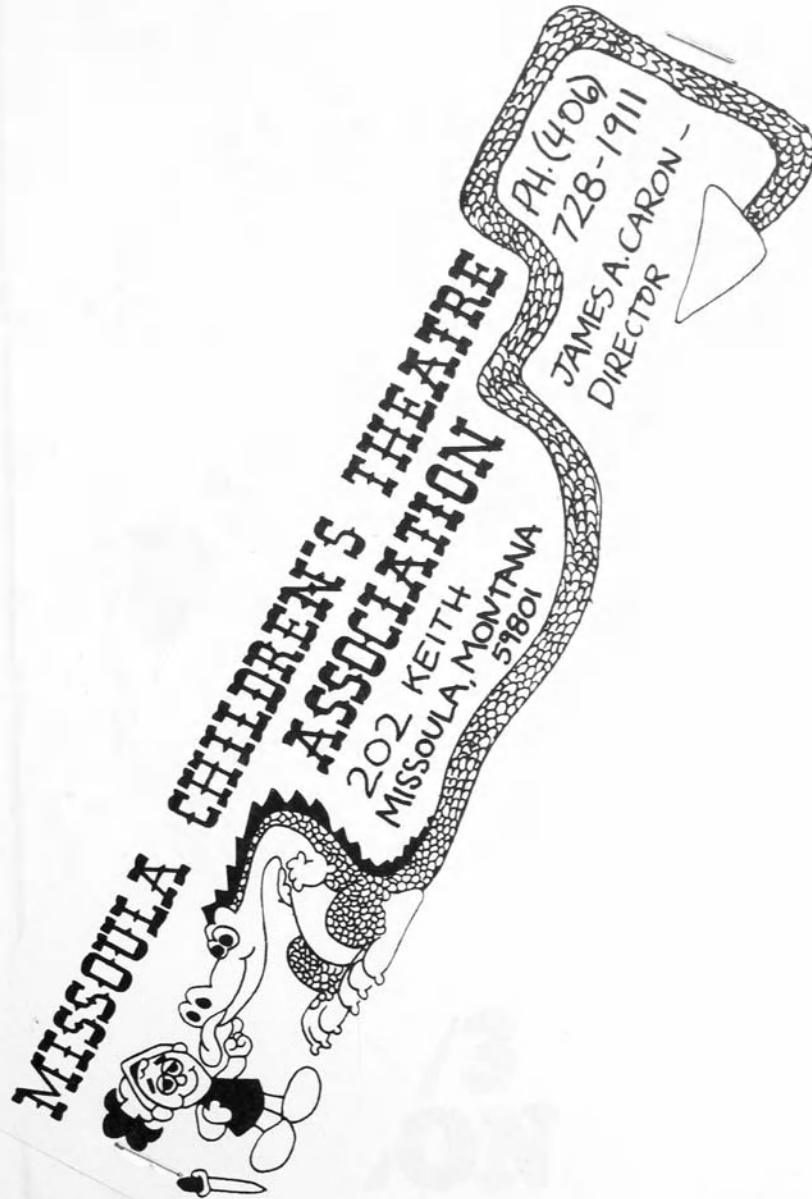
<u>Season</u>	<u>Play</u>	<u>Author/Composer</u>
1970-71	<u>Androcles and the Lion</u>	Aurand Harris
	<u>The Wizard of Oz</u>	James Caron/Donald Collins
	<u>Lancelot and the Dragon</u>	Gerry Giss/Donald Collins
	<u>Cinderella</u>	James Caron/James Russell
1971-72	<u>Pinocchio</u>	James Caron/Donald Collins
	<u>Alice in Wonderland</u>	James Caron/Donald Collins
	<u>A Christmas Carol</u>	Charles Dickens/James Caron
	<u>Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs</u>	James Caron/Donald Collins
	<u>The Fantasticks</u>	Tom Jones/Harvey Schmidt
	<u>One More American</u>	James Caron/Donald Collins
	<u>Bible Tales</u>	Dean Regenos/Donald Collins
	<u>Hansel and Gretel</u>	James Caron
	<u>Peter and the Wolf</u>	Prokofiev
	<u>The Emperors New Clothes</u>	James Caron/Judy Donham
1972-73	<u>Punch and Judy</u>	Aurand Harris
	<u>A Child Is Born</u>	James Caron
	<u>Beauty and the Beast</u>	James Caron
	<u>Jack and the Beanstalk</u>	Rolland Meinholtz
	<u>Jacque Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris</u>	Eric Blau/Mort Shuman
	<u>The Wizard of Oz</u>	James Caron/Donald Collins
1973-74	<u>Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs</u>	James Caron/Donald Collins
1974-75	<u>Rip Van Winkle</u> <u>Shambles and Fables, A</u> <u>Whiz-Band Revue</u>	James Caron/Tom TenEyck James Caron

	<u>The Pied Piper of Hamelin</u> <u>The Diary of Adam and Eve</u>	David Gaskill Bock/Harnick
1975-76	<u>Johnny Appleseed</u> <u>A Child Is Born</u> <u>Star-Spangled Girl</u> <u>The Ghosts of Echo Springs</u>	Jamie Lewis/Tom TenEyck James Caron Neill Simon James Caron/Tom TenEyck
1976-77	<u>Pinocchio</u> <u>'Twas the Night Before</u> <u>Christmas</u> <u>Oliver</u> <u>Luv</u>	James Caron/Donald Collins James Caron  Lionel Bart Murray Schisgal

APPENDIX F

REPRESENTATIVE PUBLICITY ITEMS

LETTERHEAD AND GENERAL LOGO



1972-73 SEASON BROCHURE

**MISSOULA  
CHILDREN'S THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION**

**presents**



**1972-73  
SEASON**

**The Wizard of Oz**

APRIL 28, 29  
MAY 5, 6

**JACK and the BEANSTALK**

MARCH 17, 18-24, 25

**Beverly and the BEAST**

FEBRUARY 10, 11-17, 18

**A Child is Born**

THE STORY OF THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 16, 17-23, 24

**PUNCH & JUDY**

THE MAGICAL TRAGICAL COMEDY OF

OCTOBER 28, 29-NOVEMBER 4, 5





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Through workshops and classes as well as their enchanting productions, the expert directors, performers and teachers of the Missoula Children's Theatre Association provide a complete arena for the development of imagination and cultural awareness in American youth.

The dedicated and professional staff of the Missoula Children's Theatre Association is headed by its co-founder and artistic director, James Caron.

After completing a Master of Arts Degree at the University of California and several years of teaching, Mr. Caron did post-graduate study at the University of Montana. His work there was highlighted by awards for "Best Director 1971", and "Best Actor" for his performance as Teyve in *Fiddler On The Roof*.


Mr. Caron's extensive experience in all facets of theatre and education have culminated in the philosophy and production style of the Missoula Children's Theatre Association.



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JAMES A. CARON  
DIRECTOR





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and  
Living in Paris*

Presented by  
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April 26,  
April 30, May 1, 1973  
Elks Club  
Missoula, Montana



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MISSOULA FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

presents

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Brel is  
Alive and Well  
and  
Living in Paris**

**Joanna Lester Sievers  
Bill Haverland**

**Don Collins  
Linda Lehman**

*Production Conception, English Lyrics, Additional Material*

**ERIC BLAU and MORT SHUMAN**

*Based on Brel's Lyrics and Commentary*

*Music by*

**JACQUES BREL**

*Directed by*

**JAMES A. CARON**

*Musical Direction by*

**JOANNA SIEVERS and DON COLLINS**

*Choreography by*

**JOHN V. HENRY**

*Scenery & Costume Design by*

**JOHN SHAFFNER**

*Lighting Design by*

**JOHN JUNEIMAN and TOM VALACH**

Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris is presented through special arrangement with Music Theater, International, 119 West 57th Street, New York 10019.

#### THE COMPANY

JOANNA LESTER SIEVERS-Hometown-Missoula, Montana. From the time she first stepped onto the stage at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse to play Annie in ANNIE GET YOUR GUN, Joanna has rarely been away from the stage. Equally adept at every major form of theatre, her vocal talent ranges from musical comedy



to opera, recital to nightclubs. Following her selection as Miss Montana in the Miss America Pageant, she went on to study ballet, voice and acting in New York and Berlin. In Berlin she appeared as Prinzessin in DER GEFANGENE VOGEL, (THE CAPTURED BIRD) at the Berlin Kammeroper. Other operatic roles include Zaida in THE TURK IN ITALY at the Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia and Lauretta in GIANNI SCHICCHI at the University of Montana.

As a member of Actor's Equity she has performed Carrie in CAROUSEL, Nellie in SOUTH PACIFIC with Howard Keel, Laurie in OKLAHOMA and the title role in GYPSY with Ann Sothern. At the St. Louis Municipal Opera she appeared with Charles Nelson Reilly as Lois Lane in SUPERMAN. During a six-month run in Las Vegas at the Thunderbird Hotel, she played Hope in Cole Porter's ANYTHING GOES and Fran in HIGH BUTTON SHOES. At the Charles Playhouse in Boston she appeared as Lucianna in THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE and at the Marriott Dinner Theatre in Washington, D.C. she played Marian in THE MUSIC MAN. In Sacramento and Fresno she performed Sarah in GUYS AND DOLLS, opposite Ed Ames' Sky Masterson. Joanne is an ARIES.



DON COLLINS-Hometown-Missoula, Montana. As a singer, he can't be classified in any single category. He has performed in pop vocal groups, light opera, opera and musical comedy throughout the state. While working towards his music degree at the University of Montana, he was a member of the Jubileers which performed for military personnel during a USO tour of the Orient. As a member of The National Bank, a Missoula vocal group, he performed on national television.

With a strong background in musical comedy, he has appeared at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse playing Antipholus in THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE, Lindsey Woolsey in MAME, Curly in OKLAHOMA and various characters in productions of MY FAIR LADY, CAROUSEL and THE KING AND I. At Bigfork he played Murray in Neil Simon's THE ODD COUPLE.

Most memorable was his portrayal of Don Quixote in MAN OF LA MANCHA at the University during the summer of 1970. In 1968 he was double cast in the parts of Tony and Joe in the University's production of MOST HAPPY FELLA, which earned him the school's Best Actor Award, which was the first time the award had been given for a musical role.



In 1970, he co-founded the Missoula Children's Theatre Association, and has composed and directed the musical scores for more than 13 children's shows. In addition to which he has performed roles in several children's theatre productions including THE WIZARD OF OZ, ALICE IN WONDERLAND, SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS, PINNOCCHIO and CINDERELLA. He serves as Vice President on the MCTA's Board of Directors. Don is a PISCES.

## DINNER THEATRE PROGRAM - 1973

## THE COMPANY

LINDA LEHMAN-Hometown-Billings, Montana. As a junior Drama-English major at the University of Montana, JACQUES BREL is her first major role in Missoula. After graduating from Billings Senior High in 1970, she attended Eastern Montana College in Billings, studying voice with Leon Hicks. At Eastern, she was a member of the College Choir, the Madrigals and the Opera Workshop; all of which performed publicly in Billings.

During the summers of 1970 and 1971 she was a member of the Petro Summer Playhouse. While there, she performed Ado Annie in OKLAHOMA and Sally Bowles in CABARET. In the musical version of CHARLEY'S AUNT, she played Amy in WHERE'S CHARLEY? which was selected as the USO show for 1971 to tour the Northeast Command of military bases in Greenland, Iceland and Canada. For her portrayal she received Eastern's Best Actress Award for 1971. While at Eastern, she appeared as Ellen Manville in the non-musical, LUV

Outside of theatre, she has performed at the Red Door Lounge in Billings and has composed and arranged music for the Billings-based pop-vocal group, THE PRODIGAL SONS. She was the featured vocalist at the Montana-Dakota Utilities Northwestern Affiliates Convention in 1972.

A young-lady with many talents, she plays the guitar and piano, designs and sews her own clothes, has worked in a hospital, a pea cannery and as a housekeeper; and unashamedly admits, "I want to be a star." Linda is a GEMINI.



BILL HAVERLAND-Hometown-Billings, Montana. Pleasantly dominating the stage with his six-foot-four-inch height, Bill is a Sophomore Music Major at the University of Montana. A 1971 Graduate of Billings Senior High, he is currently studying voice with Joanna Lester Sievers at the University of Montana. During three years of vocal competition in high school, he received superior ratings at All-State and was a member of the All-Northwest Choir in 1971; a vocal group made up of outstanding voice students from the Rocky Mountain area.



JACQUES BREL marks his first major stage appearance in Missoula, having previously performed the King in THE KING AND I, and Ravenal in SHOWBOAT. In high school he appeared in productions of OKLAHOMA AND OLIVER.

A barbershop Quartet enthusiast, he has performed with groups and as a solo artist at the Yellowstone Country Club in Billings. His other interests include basketball, skiing, tennis and hiking.

With several years of experience already behind him, he is working towards a professional singing career in nightclubs and television. Bill is a PISCES.

# JACQUES BREL IS AND LIVING

MUSICAL

## ACT I

MARATHON	.COMPANY
ALONE	.BILL HAVERLAND
MADELEINE	.COMPANY
I LOVED	JOANNA SIEVERS
MATHILDE	DON COLLINS
BACHELOR'S DANCE	.BILL HAVERLAND
TIMID FRIEDA	DON, BILL & LINDA
MY DEATH	JOANNA SIEVERS
JACKIE	DON COLLINS
DESPARATE ONES	.COMPANY
SONS OF	JOANNA SIEVERS
AMSTERDAM	DON COLLINS

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AND LIVING IN PARIS

Produced by  
Bill Haverland  
Book and Lyrics  
by  
Bill Haverland  
Music by  
Jacques Brel

CAST

ELLA STONE  
BOB SHAW  
STAN ELLIOTT  
MICK WITTEBELL

Directed by  
Bill Haverland  
Produced by  
Bill Haverland  
Book and Lyrics  
by  
Bill Haverland  
Music by  
Jacques Brel





# ALIVE AND WELL G IN PARIS

MEMBERS

## ACT II

THE BULLS	.....	DON COLLINS
OLD FOLKS	.....	JOANNA SIEVERS
MARIEKE	.....	LINDA LEHMAN
BRUSSELS	.....	.COMPANY
FANNETTE	.....	.BILL HAVERLAND
FUNERAL TANGO	.....	DON COLLINS
MIDDLE CLASS	.....	LINDA & DON
YOU'RE NOT ALONE	.....	JOANNA SIEVERS
NEXT	.....	DON COLLINS
CAROUSEL	.....	JOANNA SIEVERS
IF WE ONLY HAVE LOVE	.....	.COMPANY

Note: All Dialogue has been adapted from the works of Jacques Brel.

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### THE COMPANY

**JAMES A. CARON—DIRECTOR.** Hometown-Chicago, Illinois. As co-founder of the Missoula Children's Theatre Association, Mr. Caron has directed more than 14 productions in the past two and a half years. Currently working towards a Master's Degree in Fine Arts at the University of Montana, he holds a B.A. degree in



Communication Arts from St. Mary's College in Winona, Minnesota and an M.A. degree from the University of California at Santa Barbara. As Artistic Director of the Children's Theatre he has directed productions of ANDROCLES AND THE LION, THE WIZARD OF OZ, CINDERELLA, PINOCCHIO, ALICE IN WONDERLAND, SNOW WHITE, PUNCH AND JUDY AND BEAUTY AND THE BEAST. While directing JACQUES BRELL, he was directing the MCTA's upcoming production of THE WIZARD OF OZ. Not limited to children's productions, he has directed such adult shows as OKLAHOMA, THE PRIVATE EAR, INHERIT THE WIND, THE MIRACLE WORKER, SKIN OF OUR TEETH and PHILADELPHIS, HERE I COME for which he received the University of Montana's BEST DIRECTOR AWARD for 1971.

His credits as a director are equalled if not surpassed by his experience as an actor. He has portrayed Tetzl in LUTHER, Hucklebee in THE FANTASTIKS, Marry'n Sam in LI'L ABNER, Caesar in JULIUS CAESAR, and Morocco in THE MERCHANT OF VENICE. He recently appeared as Sir Toby Belch in the Montana Repertory Theatre's production of TWELFTH NIGHT. Missoula audiences will remember his performance as Sancho in MAN OF LA MANCHA and Tevye in FIDDLER ON THE ROOF; the latter role winning him the University's BEST ACTOR AWARD in 1971. Jim is a TAURUS.



**JOHN V. HENRY—CHOREOGRAPHER.** Hometown-Tarzana, California. As choreographer for JACQUES BRELL, it has been Mr. Henry's duty to blend the elements of acting, singing and movement into a "total-theatre" presentation. Fully qualified for this position, he is currently a Graduate Assistant in Dance and Drama at the University of Montana. As a member of the staff of the University's Dance Department he has choreographed more than eight dance concerts in the past three years, as well as several musical productions for the University Dept. of Drama and the Missoula Children's Theatre Association. As choreographer for Man of La Mancha and Fiddler on the Roof he appeared as lead dancer in both productions. Mr. Henry's creative talents were evident in the University's recent production of the Broadway musical, COMPANY. As a member of the Montana Repertory Theatre for two seasons, he choreographed and danced in TWELFTH NIGHT and YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN, playing the part of Snoopy.



With several years of teaching experience already behind him, he received his B.A. degree in Elementary Education from the University of Montana in 1972. As a student he worked with Yuriko and Company, the Repertory Dance Theatre of Utah and was a scholarship student to the San Francisco School of Ballet in 1969. With experience in all the areas of ballet, modern, ethnic and folk dance, he has worked for the Missoula Public Schools in physical education and children's dance for the past three years, receiving the Missoula Education Scholarship in 1971.

### THE ORCHESTRA



Back Row: *Nola Mundt Collins*, conductor and flute. BM degree in Music Education. Nola is a Virgo. *John Schultz* plays bass. His hometown is Missoula and he's a senior at Hellgate High. *Lee Cheatham*, percussion, has also accompanied a number of stage productions as a pianist.

Front Row: *Nicolette Cashmore*, piano. Nicolette is a Sagittarius and has been studying the piano since the age of eight. *Bob Kirby* plays the guitar. He's currently working on his master's degree in Philosophy. Bob is a Taurus. *Marcus Olson*, percussion, has been active in the theater since the young age of 15. Marcus is a Virgo. (Not pictured: Paul Ulmer, Trumpet and Duane Conitz, Oboe.)



### THE TECHNICAL CREW

Back Row: *Carol Sinclair*-Stage Manager, *Gordon Lemon*-Photographer and *John Shaffner*-Scenery and Costume Design. Front Row: *John Juneiman*-Lighting Designer, *Tom Valach*-Lighting Designer and *Rick Stokes*-Publicity.



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#### A NOTE ON JACQUES BREL

Jacques Brel, 43, is a Belgian composer-poet who chooses to reside in Paris. He is also described as the most popular singer-composer in France and "the best song-writer in the world." Though little heralded, his Carnegie Hall appearances in 1965 and 1967 were mysteriously sold out in advance. Of his universally praised debut here, the critic of the Times said: "Jacques Brel burst on the American scene with all the excitement of an electrical storm and left the audience limp and in awe of an extraordinary talent." Mort Shuman, an old friend, acted as his companion and English-speaking liaison during the visits. "Brel's rapport with plain people everywhere is fantastic," said Shuman. "Further, in his apolitical way, rather than romanticize, he prefers to write seriously of the human condition, the human comedy."

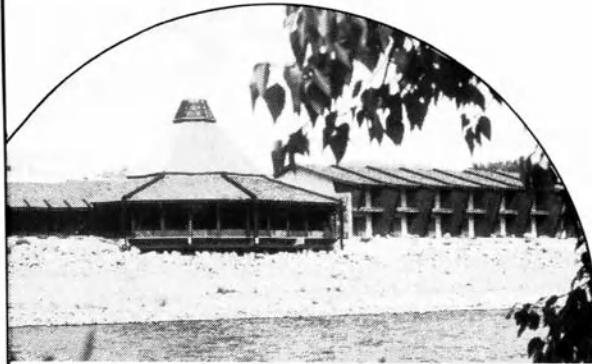


#### SPECIAL THANKS

Kay Turman and the Committee for Performing Arts, Missoula Festival of the Arts. And to Electronic Parts for the sound Equipment, Don McDonald (musical instruments), Western Montana National Bank, University of Montana Drama Department and the Missoula Elks Club. Mary Opland for her assistance in transposing musical parts and Marilyn Sosebee for the collection of properties used in the production, University Instructional Service and Nordbye Advertising.

Join us May 4, as the Festival of the Arts presents Jane Schull (stoneware sculpture), Patty Hirst Canaris (watercolors) and Mildred Wilson (macrame).

The exhibit and artists will be at the Village Motor Inn from 4 until 9, Friday. A special buffet dinner is planned to honor these artists. The public is invited.



**Edgewater**  
RESTAURANT

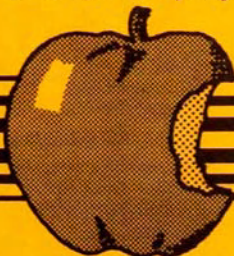
"The only thing we overlook is the Clark Fork!"

Missoula  
Festival of the Arts  
and  
Missoula Children's Theatre  
Association

Present

**"The Diary of  
Adam and Eve"**

a musical play



music by Jerry Bock  
lyrics by Sheldon Harnick  
based on material by  
Mark Twain  
and  
Genesis

**May 9, May 11, 1975**  
**Bitterroot Room**  
**Florence Hotel**

**"The Diary of Adam and Eve"**

**Players**

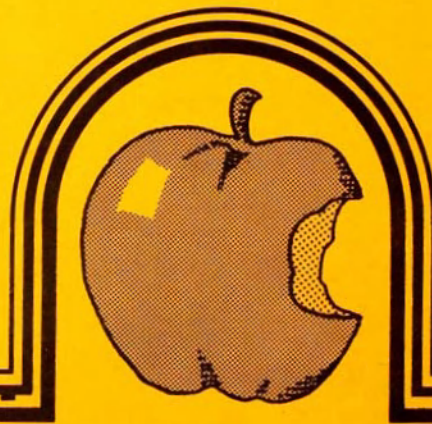
Adam ..... Jeffery A. Steele  
Eve ..... Suzy Hunt  
Snake ..... Bruce Hurlbut  
and the voice of God by  
David Gaskill

**Production Designed  
and Directed by**  
James A. Caron

**Assistant to the Director**  
Barbara Kelsch

**Musical Director**  
Nicolette Cashmore

**Time: Saturday, June first.      Place: Eden**





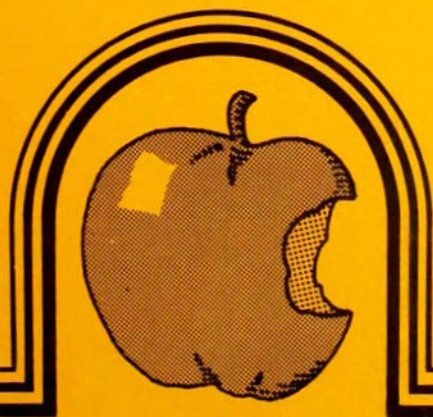
## DINNER THEATRE PROGRAM - 1975

**Musical Numbers**

"Here in Eden" .....	Eve
"Feelings" .....	Eve
"Eve" .....	Adam
"Friends" .....	Eve
"The Apple Tree" .....	Snake
"Beautiful, Beautiful World" .....	Adam
"It's a Fish" .....	Adam
"Go to Sleep Whatever You Are" .....	Eve
"What Makes Me Love Him" .....	Eve

**Special Thanks**

Florence Hotel  
 Hellgate High School  
 Rosemary Kampschor  
 Lambros Realty  
 Susan Olson  
 Christine Shipe  
 Dr. Joseph Mussulman  
 Nordbye/Buls Advertising  
 Toole and Easter Insurance  
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 Western Montana National Bank

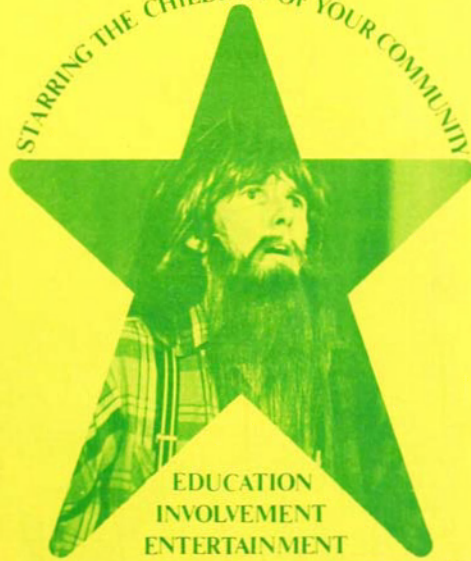


1975-76 TOUR PROJECT BROCHURE

MISSOULA  
CHILDREN'S THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION  
PRESENTS

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INVOLVEMENT  
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1975-76 TOUR PROJECT BROCHURE

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HIGH SCHOOL  
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SESSIONS  
AFTER ALL  
PERFORMANCES



## THE PLAN IS SIMPLE — here's how it works

When you purchase the *Rip Van Winkle* package, you receive a week-long intensive production workshop, culminating in the excitement of full performance. The Children's Theatre provides a professional director and lead actor who will audition and cast the production from among your elementary and secondary school students and/or community actors. Following a week of workshops and rehearsals, your cast will perform *Rip Van Winkle*, complete with professionally designed and built scenery and costumes. You provide the stage and potential actors, we provide the rest.

In addition, you may select three classroom workshops from a list including a wide variety of theatrical subjects. Our directors are also available for faculty and community workshops and seminars. Our program introduces your students to the most effective of workshop experiences — the total preparation of an actual performance.

Of course, any admission you wish to charge is yours to keep in defraying the cost of the program. This package is especially useful in augmenting the agenda of cultural events in your community, and is a most effective fund-raiser for your local groups and programs.

The Total Theatre Package, either *Rip Van Winkle* or *Johnny Appleseed*, including the complete services of three highly qualified professionals for 1 week can become a reality in your community for a total price of \$350.00. Many communities are eligible for financial assistance.

For Further Information Write To:

James Caron, Director  
Missoula Children's Theatre Association  
715 East Beckwith  
Missoula, Montana 59801  
or Call Collect (406) 543-5445

## 'Johnny Appleseed' Plants Fruit in Polson

By DENNIS JONES  
Missoulian Correspondent  
POLSON — "It's one of the best things to happen here in a long time."

"The kids loved them!"  
"Wow! What an experience!"  
And the adulation and excitement continues as the last of the rosy cheek-paint fades beneath mom's soapy washcloth days after the curtain closed on the final performance of Johnny Appleseed last week in Polson.

Coming off an intensive week under the tutelage of Jim Caron and Jamie Lewis of the Missoula Children's Theatre is not an easy task. Any doubts regarding the worthwhile nature of their endeavors are soundly buried beneath invaluable lessons absorbed in the six days of long and consecutive practices.

The two accomplished artists strained a cast of more than three dozen children (kindergarten through the eighth grade) and three adults through the color and came up with a captivating and colorful hour-and-a-half quality performance.

"It was amazing to me to see how quickly, from Monday's auditions to Saturday's performance they taught the movements and lines," remarked elementary teacher Carolyn Heinz who

showed a little interest and ended up putting in a 50-hour stint in addition to her classroom duties. By Saturday night she had become a makeup artist, lighting technician and mother of one of the stars of the show.

Under critical eyes and ears, a host of kids auditioned, squeaking out Yankee Doodle and drawing the Pledge of Allegiance. Younger aspirants hopped, like rabbits, took "two big steps with the left leg" and "one with the right" and aimed fingers at their noses. All the while Caron and Lewis, in their mind's eye, placed roles and a trunk full of costumes on little bodies that they hoped would be durable enough to last through Saturday night.

The selections were made in three hours with attention given to size, voice, hair color, coordination and initial behavior observations.

How do you get a sterling performance from novices? "We try to impress upon them that it's only for one week. When we go in we know we are calling on them for more than they usually expected to do. But we're from without and can do it. It's different than being their teacher," Lewis explained. They could apply pressure and have it accepted, at least for a few days.

"For the kids, it's a cooperative effort in education — perhaps the most intense they've ever had," said Lewis.

And they did learn — fast. The children, the adults, and the parents who got in on a few of the many hours of rehearsals discovered what it's like to develop discipline, timing and cooperation, to portray a character and learn lines.

It was a revelation for Carolyn Heinz's son, nine-year-old Scott. "He found out he had to be ready and responsible...with no 'just a minutes,'" she commented.

"They (Caron and Lewis) expected more out of them than

they really expected and it worked," Heinz observed.

Caron, Grandpa and narrator in the play, is a veteran actor and director who displayed a depth of rapport and a directness that, when mixed with pats on the head and sincere compliments, became a fine balance of authority both with the children and the older actors (ages 19 to 67). With all of this the directors corralled the youngsters' energy and enthusiasm and the results surprised the children as well as their parents.

One mother couldn't believe her boy could learn the lines and another expressed amazement at her daughter's accurate portrayal of a nasty and sarcastic young woman. "She said it was easy. All she had to do was act just like she does at home," the woman laughed.

"They're fine professionals," remarked Blanche Harding, a talented local artist who says she'll never forget her part in the play.

"It was fascinating. Every teacher should sit in on something like this," she recommended.

The 26-year-old Lewis who played Johnny in convincing style lauded the efforts of the little actors and the older students who served as assistant directors. They did everything from pulling the curtain, timing entries and placing props to hustling little ones off to the restrooms.

"We do it because we enjoy it. It's kind of a romantic life style," said Lewis.

"It's stimulating," explained Lewis likening the job to that of running from a hot Swedish sauna out into a cold pool of water.

The Missoula children's theatre is in its sixth season. It is partially subsidized by money from the Montana Arts Council and with the \$350 charge for the week-long program offered to communities. From that



Polson children hopped like rabbits, taking two big steps with the left leg and one with the right, during production of "Johnny Appleseed" in Polson. (Photos by Dennis Jones)

amount comes mileage, meals, props, make-up, costumes and all other expenses.


The theatre produces three children's theatres a year and one family production staged in Missoula. The most successful one goes on four state-wide in about a dozen cities.

Elementary Principal John Tietema considers the program a unique offering with tremendous educational value to children and educators. He said here is already a move in Polson to have the theatre return to present another program in the spring.

1976-77 TOUR PROJECT BROCHURE

MISSOULA  
CHILDREN'S THEATRE  
ASSOCIATION

PINOCCHIO

A stylized illustration of Pinocchio, the wooden puppet character. He is wearing a tall, pointed hat with a wide brim, a white shirt with a dark bow tie, and dark shorts. He has a large, pointed nose and is standing with his arms slightly out to the sides.

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## 1976-77 TOUR PROJECT BROCHURE



## ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

The dedicated and professional staff of the Children's Theatre is headed by its co-founder and artistic director, James Caron.

After completing a Master of Arts degree at the University of California and several years of teaching and professional directing, Mr. Caron did post-graduate study at the University of Montana. His work there was high-lighted by awards for "Best Director" and "Best Actor" for his performance as Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof. Montana audiences will remember his seasons with the Bigfork Summer Playhouse.

Mr. Caron's extensive experience in all facets of theatre and education has culminated in the philosophy and production style of the Missoula Children's Theatre Association.

## ABOUT THE ACTOR

The Missoula Children's Theatre Association is delighted to have David Overturf as its lead actor, scene designer, and graphic artist. Mr. Overturf returns after several years of training and professional work in the Children's Theatre area. Since the completion of his studies at the Goodman School of Drama and the Art Institute of Chicago, David has spent the past few seasons as a professional scenic artist and acting coach in several Midwest theatres. David's various attributes are a most welcome asset to the activities of the MCTA and the entire Montana cultural scene.

## ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Now in its seventh season of professional live drama for children of all ages, the Missoula Children's Theatre Association has developed its own unique production style. Based on audience involvement and a sharing of the creative experience, the productions include rollicking humor, delightful music and dance, colorful scenery and costumes, and wholesome, enriching thematic material.

Through workshops and classes as well as their enchanting productions, the expert directors, performers, and teachers of the Missoula Children's Theatre Association provide a complete cultural arena for the development of communication, imagination, cultural awareness, and self-esteem in American youth.



## THE PLAN IS SIMPLE

here's how it works

When you purchase the Pinocchio package, you receive a week-long intensive production workshop, culminating in the excitement of full performance. The Children's Theatre provides a professional director and lead actor who will audition and cast the production from among your elementary and secondary school students and/or community actors. Following a week of workshops and rehearsals, your cast will perform Pinocchio, complete with professionally designed and built scenery and costumes. You provide the stage and potential actors, we provide the rest.

In addition, you may select three classroom workshops from a list including a wide variety of theatrical subjects. Our directors are also available for faculty and community workshops and seminars. Our program introduces your students to the most effective of workshop experiences - the total preparation of an actual performance.

Of course, any admission you wish to charge is yours to keep in defraying the cost of the program. This package is especially useful in augmenting the agenda of cultural events in your community, and is a most effective fund-raiser for your local groups and programs.

Thanks to local and statewide financial assistance, the Total Theatre Package, including the complete services of two highly qualified professionals for one week, can become a reality in your community for a total price of \$450.00.

For Further Information Write To;

James Caron, Director  
Missoula Children's Theatre Association  
202 Keith  
Missoula, Montana 59801  
or Call Collect (406) 728-1911



★ NORTHWEST TOURING THEATRE ★  
PRESENTS



★ A PLAY BY MURRAY SCHISGAL ★

1976-77 DINNER THEATRE BROCHURE

111

#### ABOUT THE PLAY

A long-running Broadway hit, Luv is a contemporary comedy revolving around Harry Berlin, the man everyone tries to love. His chance encounter with Milt Manville, an old school chum, leads to a hilarious series of events involving the two friends and Milt's wife, Ellen.

Murray Schisgal's humor knows no limit as he weaves subtle satire with broad comedy. This is a play of our times and Mr. Schisgal ranks with Noel Coward, Neil Simon, and other masters of modern comedy.

"A delicious spoof on love, marriage, loneliness, lost identity, housekeeping - you name it and Mr. Schisgal probably has a guffaw at it's expense."

New York Times

IDEAL  
FUND  
RAISER

#### ABOUT THE PRODUCER

The Northwest Touring Theatre is a professionally staffed theatre company designed to provide the Northwestern United States with top-flight popular entertainment. Past productions, including The Fantasticks, Jacque Brel is Alive and Well....., The Diary of Adam and Eve, and Neil Simon's Star Spangled Girl, have delighted audiences for the last five seasons. Along with it's blossoming children's branch, The Missoula Children's Theatre, the Northwest Touring Theatre has developed an excellent reputation for its imaginative, polished, flexible and reasonably priced productions.

HURRY!  
AVAILABLE  
DATES ARE  
LIMITED!

#### ABOUT THE CAST

Neal Lewing plays the multi-faceted role of Harry Berlin with fresh, comic insight and delightful, kooky charm. A favorite of several Northwest regional theatres, Neal's many lead performances include "Oscar" in The Odd Couple, "Frank Butler" in Annie Get Your Gun, and "Jud Frye" in Oklahoma. A 6'7" Renaissance Man, Neal had dabbled in playwrighting, directing, technical theatre and, most successfully, musical composition. He currently divides his time between the Northwest Touring Theatre and "Clearwater Junction" his own musical combo.

No stranger to regional audiences, Denise Pollock brings her own unique mixture of feminine vitality and dry, subtle wit to the role of Ellen Manville. Last season's characterization of "Marian the Librarian" in the Bigfork Summer Playhouse production of Music Man was one of the highlights of a versatile area career which includes such diverse roles as "Polly Peachum" in Three Penny Opera, "Peggy Evans" in Come Blow Your Horn, "Mother Abbess" in The Sound of Music, and Peppermint Patty in You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown. After studying in France on a grant from the International Education Committee, Denise has returned to the area to pursue a professional acting and singing career.

Jim Caron, the co-founder of the Northwest Touring Theatre, plays the role of Milt Manville. A veteran director-performer, Jim's credits include six years as artistic director of the Missoula Children's Theatre and several seasons as actor-director at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse. Audiences there especially remember his performances as "Tevye" in Fiddler on the Roof and "Dr. Moriarty" in Sherlock Holmes. Graduate theatre degrees at the University of California and the University of Montana and a ten year professional career which includes over seventy productions qualify Jim as the "old timer" of the group. Jim also directs Luv.

AVAILABLE FOR  
PRESENTATION  
AFTER  
JAN. 1, 1977

#### ABOUT YOUR PRODUCTION

When you purchase Luv you receive a complete two hour professional production, including scenery, costumes, lighting, and technical personnel. The show is extremely flexible and can perform anywhere from large auditoriums and school gyms to small restaurant lounges and banquet rooms. In addition, the Northwest Touring Theatre will provide you with publicity information including media news releases, program and poster design logos, suggested commercial media copy, and successful fund-raising formats. For instance, we highly recommend some variation of the dinner theatre concept and we will provide tried and tested suggestions, right down to choice of menus.

The total cost of the entire production is \$350. plus 50% of the ticket sales up to a maximum of \$500. Special rates are available for second and third performances. In some cases, prices are negotiable.  
For reservations or further information, write to:

Northwest Touring Theatre  
Rachel Sprunk, Business Manager  
202 Keith  
Missoula, Montana 59801

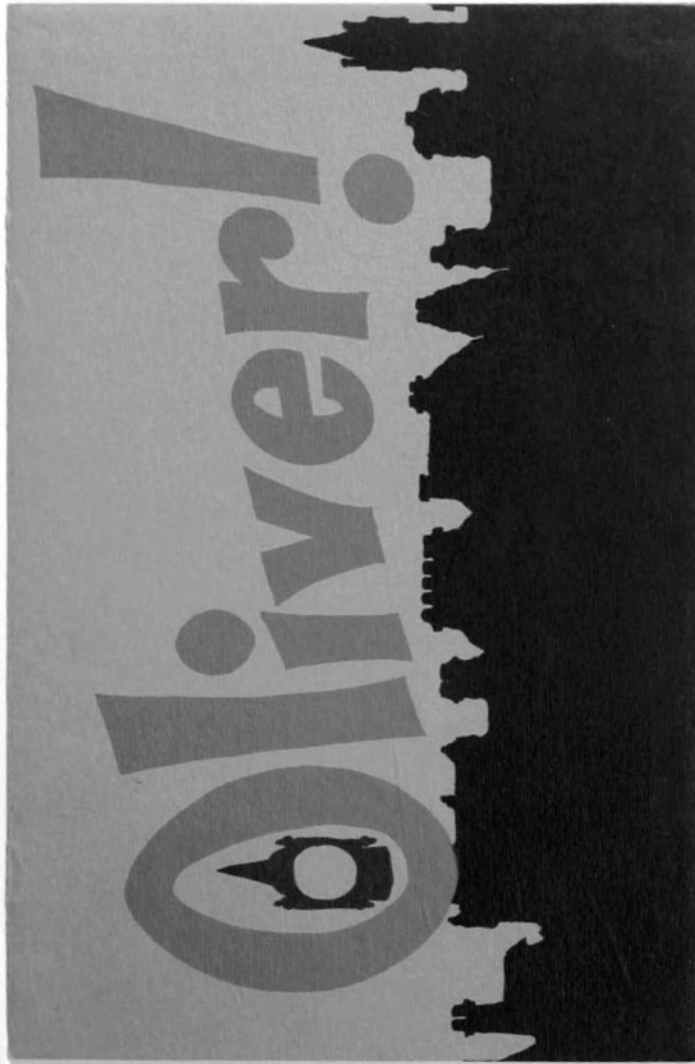
or call collect 406-728-1911.

#### SPECIAL MUSICAL OPTION

As a special optional feature to complete your evening of entertainment, Northwest Touring Theatre is delighted to offer the live musical sounds of "Clearwater Junction" before and/or after the Luv performance. Conceived in the mountains of Montana, their mellow music has been delighting and satisfying area audiences for three years. With an accent on smooth vocal harmony and gentle soothing passages, musical communication is masterfully blended with easy listening. Our own Neal Lewing combines his talents with versatile musician Bryan Olson to create one of the Northwest's finest duos. Two hours of "Clearwater Junction" is available as an option for a separate fee of \$50. Extra hourly rates are available, along with a sample song list, upon request.

NORTHWEST TOURING THEATRE  
RACHEL SPRUNK, BUSINESS MANAGER  
202 KEITH  
MISSOULA, MONTANA 59801





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present

O L I V E R

Book, Music, and Lyrics by Lionel Bart  
Based on Charles Dickens' "Oliver Twist"

DIRECTED BY James Caron

MUSICAL DIRECTION BY James DeJarnette

UNIVERSITY THEATRE  
MISSOULA, MONTANA

Scene Design by  
David Overturf

Business Manager  
Rachel Sprunk

Costume Design by  
Candice Newcomb

Production Stage Manager  
Barbara Kelsch

ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

Ranney Moss  
Mary Springer  
Maeta Kaplan  
Tanya Worrall

Produced by arrangement with, and music and dialogue material furnished by  
TAMS, WITMARK MUSIC LIBRARY





**JAMES CARON** Director — Fagin

After completing a Master of Arts Degree at the University of California and several years of teaching and professional directing, Jim did post-graduate study at the University of Montana. His work there was highlighted by awards for "Best Director" and "Best Actor" for his memorable performance as "Tevye" in *Fiddler on the Roof*, a role he repeated in one of his several seasons at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse. Jim has dozens of directing credits including *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well* and *Living in Paris*, and *The Diary of Adam and Eve* for the Missoula Festival of the Arts dinner productions. As co-founder and artistic director of the Missoula Children's Theatre, Jim Caron has made a unique and lasting contribution to the cultural development of our area.

Jim DeJarnette has found time in his busy schedule as the director of Missoula's Poverello Center to serve as the musical director for *OLIVER*. Jim is well known in the area for his work with several church choirs as well as his appearances on the University of Montana stage. He has soloed with the Montana Chamber Orchestra and recently was named an alternate winner at the Metropolitan Opera Auditions in Spokane. The holder of a degree in music from the University of Montana and a beautiful baritone voice, Jim hopes to make a career in vocal music.



**JAMES DEJARNETTE** Musical Director

L E A D S



**Suzy Hunt – NANCY**

A long-time local favorite, Suzy is especially remembered for her "Eliza" in *My Fair Lady*, "Rose" in *Gypsy*, and *The Diary of Adam and Eve*. Suzy taught at Missoula's Sacred Heart High School and has appeared in theatre throughout the region. She intends to pursue a career in opera and we have no doubt that she will be most successful.

**John Morrison – ARTFUL DODGER**

John's debut on the stage was only a few months ago in the Missoula Children's Theatre Christmas production. His outstanding natural talents are obvious in his portrayal of the Artful Dodger. A temporary transfer from Whitefish, John is a 15 year old sophomore at Hellgate and a star member of the Big Mountain Ski Team.



**David Stephenson – OLIVER**

David has been seen in several Missoula Children's Theatre productions including *Pinochio* and *Twas the Night Before Christmas*. He is nine years old and in the fourth grade at Russell School.



**John Kozeluh – OLIVER**

Alternating in the role of Oliver is John Kozeluh, a fifth grader at Lewis and Clark School. He is new to the stage but, at age 11, lists "Dialects" as his special talent.



**Mary McClain – WIDOW CORNEY**

A recent winner of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions in Spokane, Mary is a veteran of several University Opera Workshop productions and a season at the Great Falls Summer Showcase. She brings her beautiful voice and formidable comic abilities to the role of Widow Corney.

**Tim Campbell – MR. BUMBLE**

After two seasons at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse and numerous appearances on the University and Hellgate stages, Tim Campbell has become a local favorite. His marvelous tenor voice and constantly growing acting abilities suit the demanding role of Mr. Bumble admirably.



**Dave Simmons – MR. SOWERBERRY**

A member of a most talented family, Dave is certainly holding his own. His booming voice and equally booming stage personality are most rare in a young man his age. Dave is 17 and a senior at Hellgate.

**Debbie Norheim – MRS. SOWERBERRY**

One of the oldest and dearest friends of the Missoula Children's Theatre, Debbie was a member of the organization's original company seven seasons ago. She is currently working at a local bank and has been seen in numerous productions in Missoula and at the Bigfork Summer Playhouse.

**Julie Chase – CHARLOTTE**

Julie is 16 and a junior at Sentinel. She has a broad performing background and was also in Sentinel's *Godspell*.

**Randy Schreck – NOAH CLAYPOLE**

Randy is a most accomplished and versatile vocalist at both the University and semi-professional levels. He was last seen locally in the University's production of *The Mikado*.



**Alicia Bullock – BET**

A stage veteran at 16, Alicia is a member of several local music and drama groups. She is a sophomore at Sentinel High School and was last seen in Margaret Johnson's charming production of *Godspell*.



**Mike Morrison – BILL SIKES**

Michael is a veteran of several theatre companies in the region including the Spokane Civic Theatre and the Montana Repertory Theatre. He was seen locally in last season's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* at the University of Montana.



**Kenni Sine – MRS. BEDWIN**

Although she is new to acting, Kenni has sung professionally in the East and directed several plays. A tutor in the Stevensville area, she is a member of the Valley Theatre Guild.

**Burnie Burnham – MR. BROWNLOW**

We are delighted to have Mr. Burnham, a veteran of many community productions as an important part of the *Oliver* Company. Although he is a meteorologist by profession, Burnie refuses to accept the blame for this season's ski conditions.

O L I V E R !

*Time: About 1850*

*Place: London*

ACT ONE

SCENE 1. THE WORKHOUSE, Early evening

*"Food, Glorious Food"*

*"Oliver"*

*The Workhouse Boys  
Oliver, and the Workhouse Boys  
Mr. Bumble, Widow Corney*

SCENE 2: THE WORKHOUSE PARLOR, Later

*"I Shall Scream"*

*"Boy For Sale"*

*Mr. Bumble and Widow Corney  
Mr. Bumble*

SCENE 3: THE UNDERTAKER'S

*"That's Your Funeral"*

*"Where Is Love"*

*Mr. and Mrs. Sowerberry and Mr. Bumble  
Oliver*

SCENE 4: THE UNDERTAKER'S, Next morning

SCENE 5: PADDINGTON GREEN, Morning, a week later

*"Consider Yourself"*

*The Artful Dodger, Fagin's Boys  
Oliver, and Chorus*

SCENE 6: THE THIEVES' KITCHEN, Later

*"Pick a Pocket or Two"*

*"It's a Fine Life"*

*"I'd Do Anything"*

*"Be Back Soon"*

*Fagin and his boys  
Nancy and Bet and Fagin's Boys  
Artful Dodger, Nancy, Oliver, Bet  
Fagin, and Fagin's Boys  
Fagin, Artful Dodger, and Fagin's Boys*

**ACT TWO**

*SCENE 1: THE THREE CRIPPLES, A public house in Clerkenwell*

*"Oom-Pah-Pah"*

*Nancy and Chorus*

*"My Name"*

*Bill Sikes*

*"As Long As He Needs Me"*

*Nancy*

*SCENE 2: THE BROWNLOWS, Two Weeks Later*

*"Where Is Love" reprise*

*Mrs. Bedwin*

*"Who Will Buy"*

*Oliver, Street Criers and Chorus*

*SCENE 3: THE THIEVES' KITCHEN, Later*

*"Reviewing the Situation"*

*Fagin*

*SCENE 4: THE WORKHOUSE, A few days later*

*"Oliver" reprise*

*Widow Corney and Mr. Bumble*

*SCENE 5: THE BROWNLOWS', Later*

*"As Long As He Needs Me" reprise*

*Nancy*

*SCENE 6: LONDON BRIDGE, At midnight*

*"Reviewing the Situation" reprise*

*Fagin*

*OLIVER CAST*

<b>Oliver Twist</b>	David Stephenson, John Kozeluh
<b>Fagin</b>	Jim Caron
<b>The Artful Dodger</b>	John Morrison
<b>Bill Sikes</b>	Michael Morrison
<b>Nancy</b>	Suzy Hunt
<b>Bet</b>	Alicia Bullock
<b>Mr. Bumble</b>	Tim Campbell
<b>Mrs. Corney</b>	Mary McClain
<b>Mr. Brownlow</b>	Burnie Burnham
<b>Mr. Sowerberry</b>	Dave Simmons
<b>Mrs. Sowerberry</b>	Debbie Norheim
<b>Charlotte</b>	Julie Chase
<b>Noah Claypole</b>	Randy Schreck
<b>Dr. Grimwig</b>	Elvin Smith
<b>Mrs. Bedwin</b>	Kenni Sine
<b>Old Sally</b>	Ranney Moss
<b>Old Annie</b>	Dee Atkinson
<b>Workhouse Boys</b>	Jennifer Allen, Chris Arntson, Keith Baer, Christy Bain, Robert Barney, Staci Brant, Crista Cady, Lori Canham, Stephen Carey, Tonia Chapman, Varen Chapman, James Clay, Darwin Ernst, Maura Ganz, Andrea Gary, Lynn Gary, Bobby Goetz, Kathie Horejsi, Chris Horner, Deirdre Hunt, Kati Johnson, Raylene Karr, Barbara Kelley, Scott Kelsey, Stacey Kelsey, Jon Kinney, Kathy Kinsella, Danny Krumvieda, Maureen Lemcke, Peggy Loughran, Laird MacDonald, Lezly Main, Karen Marcoux, Cindy Margrave, Kevin McCollum, Mary Anne McGuire, Dahnes Medora, Michelle Meola, Jean Miller, Jenny Miller, Ben Reed, Ellen Reynolds, Mari Reynolds, Sara Reynolds, Sarah Reynolds, Stacey Reynolds, Donna Richert, Kirstin Scott, Liza Schnelle, Candice Seitz, Denise Sessions, Sannon Solberg, Rochelle Sprunk, David Wheeler, Katie Wilson, Tracy Wilson, Dawn Bodek, Cathy Canham, John Hunt
<b>Fagin's Boys</b>	Toby Berger, Muriel Black, Karen Campbell, Clint Crouse, Dino Datsopoulos, Adam Ganz, Simone Johnson, Beth Kaplan, Georgia Lambros, Patricia Lambros, Peter Lindbergh, Kevin MacQuarrie, Darlene Richert, Amy Stroud, Doree Taylor, Mindy Ward

<b>Pauper's Assistants</b>	Gerald Hatler, Tom Wright
<b>Rose Seller</b>	Sandra Lawler
<b>Milkmaid</b>	Twila Wolfe
<b>Strawberry Seller</b>	Suzette Morales
<b>Knife Grinder</b>	Kim Simmons
<b>Long Song Seller</b>	Mike McGill
<b>Chorus</b>	Christi Balko, Doris Balko, Susan Bates, Tracy Brooks, Joy Chase Natalie Chester, Jim Childress, Kitty Corak, Jacqueline Day, Cynthia Doyle, Ritch Doyle, Sylvia Erickson, Denise Ernst, Leslie Even, Rhonda Furnas, Chris Garcia, Becky Gratton, Cheryl Lynn Gratton, Christy Halvorson, Judy Halvorson, Gerald Hatler, Matt Kinney, Rod Kurtz, Barbara Heisel, Nancy Hellman, Sue Hoffman, Judy Howard, Laurie Jacobson, Carole Jorgenson, Marcia Kelsey, Renee Kloser, Koleen Kozeluh, Kammi Krumvieda, Tad Lamb, Noreen Kozeluh, Pattie Lemcke, Carlin Lohrey, Tom Morris, Monte Norheim, Sharon MacQuarrie, Ellen Manning, Tana March, Patty Matelich, Kay McClung, Janine McKeown, Polly McNeal, Pamela McOmber, Dianne Meier, Tammie Melton, Tina Melton, Allen Pfister, Ben Reed, Tom Reese, George Ryan, Gregg Sprunk, Rachel Sprunk, Ellis Terril, Bruce Rampelberg, Tom Wright, Steve Taylor, Suzette Morales, Twila Wolfe, Michelle Ness, Kitty Noel, Sharon Page, Tammie Page, Joanne Rubie, Kim Rubie, Jeanette Sage, Betty Steyskal, Bobbi Uecker, Teri Van Buskirk, Jennifer Whitehouse, Luella Wilson, Shannon Wilson, Dee Atkinson, Kim Simmons
<b>Dancing Girls</b>	Susan Bates, Joy Chase, Natalie Chester, Kitty Corak, Cynthia Doyle, Jacqueline Day, Rhonda Furnas, Chris Garcia, Judy Howard, Carole Jorgenson, Kammi Krumvieda, Pattie Lemcke, Patty Matelich, Janine McKeown, Polly McNeal, Pamela McOmber, Diane Meir

**"OLIVER" ORCHESTRA**

<b>Violins</b>	Barbara Balko, Demetra Lambros, Maria Lambros, Mary Mader, Ellie Mussulman, Mark Stevens	<b>Oboe &amp; English Horn</b>	Tim Lamange
		<b>Clarinet</b>	Diane Childress
		<b>Trombone</b>	Brad Kuennig, Sandy Derenburger
		<b>Trumpet</b>	Gehres Weed, Steve Bentson
<b>Viola</b>	Jerry Mader, Lisa Perry	<b>French Horn</b>	Carol Colwell, Laura Edgar
<b>Cello</b>	Cindy Herbig, Julia Braun	<b>Bassoon</b>	Dense Reimers
<b>Bass</b>	Hampton Childress	<b>Percussion</b>	Vicki Johnson, Carey Stevens
<b>Flue &amp; Piccolo</b>	Nancy Norton Brug	<b>Piano</b>	Sandy Rampelberg

**TECHNICAL STAFF**

**STAGE CREW & SETS** Nancy Hellman, Judy Halvorson, Cristy Halvorson, Michael Morrison, Tom Morris, Monte Norheim, Debbie Norheim, Rod Kurtz, Burnie Burnham, Alicia Bullock, John Morrison, Jon Rubie Kent Means, Jeanette Sage, Ellis Terrill, Doree Taylor, Jennifer Whitehouse, Dave Simmons, Gregory Sprunk, Rhonda Furness and other cast members.

**PROPS** Helen Peregoy, Sharon Isaly

**COSTUMES** Ellen Manning, Jacqueline Day, Lesly Even, Rhonda Furness, Sylvia Erickson, Sharon Page, Diane Meier, Georgeana Taylor, Pat Schnitzer, Minday Ward, Kim Sandburg, Brenda Carroll, Susan Reed, Lucy Hicks, Debbie Norheim, Joy Kurtz, Marcia Kelsey, Kenni Sine

**PHOTOGRAPHY** Rosenblum Gallery

**MAKEUP** Trina Ambrose, Kyle Cronwell, Terry Lane

**TICKETS** Colleen Collier, Luella Wilson

**HOUSE MANAGEMENT** Dick Nagle

**REHEARSAL PIANISTS** Jan Holmes, Christi Paulsen, Robert Hubley, Sandra Rampelberg, Kathy Hosea

**LIGHTS** Brad Hirning

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

University of Montana Drama Department  
Bigfork Summer Playhouse  
Helena High School Drama Department  
St. Anthony's Church  
Eagles Lodge – George Sherwood  
The Music Center  
Bill & Mary Curran  
Eleanor Wend  
Coast to Coast  
United Building Center  
Boyce Lumber  
Wright Lumber

University of Montana Fine Arts Department  
University of Montana Music Department  
Louis J. Gagermeir  
Sentinel High School Music Department  
Hellgate High School Music Department  
Esther England  
First United Methodist Church  
St. Francis Church  
Reserve Street Home Center, Inc.  
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#### A NOTE ON DICKENS

Charles Dickens wrote *Oliver Twist* in monthly installments for a popular magazine in 1837-38. He was then 25 years old and newly caught up in a tide of unparalleled popular success that rose even higher and scarcely ebbed in the remaining thirty-odd years of his life. The great triumphs of *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*, among many others, were yet to come, but even at the end of a remarkable career [he has been called the most popular novelist of all time], *Oliver Twist* continued to hold a special meaning for its author. While on a public reading tour, the highlight of each evening's performance was Dickens' intensely dramatic reading from his early novel. Indeed, not only were there nightly screams and faintings in the audience, but Dickens himself was often so deeply affected that he lay in a state of utter exhaustion for an hour or more afterwards, while his doctor raged that his illustrious patient was committing suicide by refusing to delete these sections from his readings. The tour was interrupted and Dickens died soon after from a stroke.

Not only is *Oliver Twist* a devastating social criticism of the plight of London's poor in Dickens' time, but it is also an abundant, even profligate explosion of the young author's creative energies. A century and more later, audiences still respond enthusiastically to the intense drama and bursting vitality of Dickens' early work.

Jon Jackson  
Montana Writer and Scholar

#### **A NOTE ON THE MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATRE**

*The Missoula Children's Theatre, in its seventh season of professional live drama for children of all ages, has developed an excellent regional reputation with its unique touring program. Under the partial sponsorship of the Montana Arts Council, twenty Montana communities will receive intensive week-long production workshops during the 1976-77 season. The organization also hopes to bring quality professional dinner theatre to the area on a regular basis through its subsidiary, the Northwest Touring Theatre.*

*The Children's Theatre generally produces three full scale children's plays per season locally and conducts regular classes in creative dramatics, performing arts, advanced performing arts and mime. Exploratory projects in special education are being developed and the organization's public service calendar is constantly expanding. OLIVER, however, represents this season's most challenging and demanding project — the establishment of professionally directed community theatre in Missoula.*

#### **MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATRE**

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##### **Officers**

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