



Breaking New Ground

THE EARTH SYMPOSIUM

A Report on the First International Gathering of The EARTH Project

*Edited by Judith Marcuse and Diana Bulley
with the assistance of Richard Marcuse*

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www.dancearts.bc.ca www.earthproject.ca



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From the Delegates...

It wasn't that I wasn't on top of things before, just that I think I was bogged down and insular and had forgotten that there were other people pursuing the same goals as I, with as much passion and commitment. Somehow, knowing that makes it easier, kind of like I can see above the canopy of trees and I can breathe more freely.

Brigid Schutz, South Africa

The conference has provided me with an amazing and varied insight into how arts can provide the creative space to explore and deal with key issues facing young people in their localities. **Skinder Hundal, U.K.**

Whether from starry-eyed conversations on the deck of a cruise-ship, to new bonds of friendship forged across countries and continents, cross-cultural dance lessons, the sharing of schools of thought and practice, a life-long commitment to the arts, a belief in the power and possibility of social change... in truth the promise and unapologetic idealism of so many of the people I came in contact with were fierce and daring. **Koby Rogers Hall, Canada (youth delegate)**

How has my life been changed? I look at my world through a different lens now. I think about what I'm doing, what I'm buying, what I'm eating. I feel empowered – that my small efforts are in tandem with hundreds and thousands of others around the world. That somehow, my small actions will create long-term impacts somewhere way down the line. I am involved in creating the kind of world that I want to live in, that my children will live in. And I can spread these messages to those around me – from my family, friends, to the people I meet on the street.

Shannon Butters, Canada (youth delegate)

I wanted to jump off the plane and swim to Victoria to visit everyone there, or fly to the east coast to eat a fish head and get initiated as a Newfie and eat all of your lobsters, or bike to the UK and learn about forum theatre or go down to the States and vote or canoe from Hudson's Bay to Nunavut or stay in Vancouver and buy a café mocha to go and stand on the picket lines dancing and singing and yelling my ass off. But instead, with tears welling in my eyes, I move away from a place in which I've only spent a brief moment of my life but that has felt more like home than any place ever did. All is not lost, however, because I am returning to Winnipeg with something that I have not been able to feel for a while. Hope. After meeting so many extraordinary people who were so amazingly passionate and focused in healing the world we share, I would be foolish not to have hope for our future.

Loc Lu, Canada (youth delegate)

Because of this symposium, my relationship to art, my views on my place in society, and my long-term life goals have all changed or – perhaps more accurately – been clarified greatly. I had previously toyed with the idea of going back to the Philippines – my country of birth and citizenship – and setting up an art school...or something vague like that, at least. Now I know that I want to and can use performing arts to work with communities in distress to give people tools they can wield to empower themselves. **Diego Maranan, Philippines/Canada (youth delegate)**

This was one of the most provocative and well-planned conferences that I have ever attended.

Nicholas Rowe, West Bank

This is the beginning of a new journey, I know, full of adventure, of sharing, of creation. **Diego Samper, Colombia/Canada**

Introduction

By Judith Marcuse, LL.D.

Artistic Producer, Judith Marcuse Projects

In the spring of 2004, from April 28 to May 2, over 300 artists, activists and youth from across Canada and around the world gathered in Vancouver, B.C., to participate in *The EARTH Symposium: Breaking New Ground*, a conference organized by DanceArts Vancouver, now re-named Judith Marcuse Projects. A UNESCO-designated event, produced in collaboration with Simon Fraser University and part of the longer-term *EARTH Project*, these five days of activities explored the many ways in which the arts are being used in communities around the globe as tools for social change, particularly in work with youth.

A wide range of hands-on dance, theatre, visual and media arts, music and writing workshops, 93 in total, were presented by artists and activists from 21 countries, all designed to share both the vision and methodologies of their work. Social justice and environmental issues were explored in youth-led workshops that attracted both young and older delegates. Dialogues and panels, informal showings of work, three keynote speakers, an "Open Space" afternoon and a mix of social events were all part of the planned program.

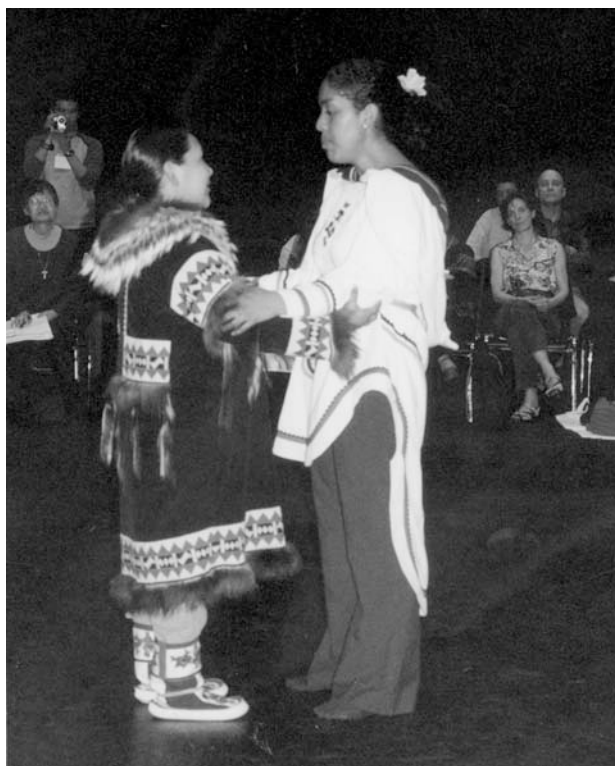
What could not have been planned was the magical synergy and energy that blossomed at the gathering. The diversity of the participants and their expertise and passionate commitment to activism and social change created an explosion of creative thinking and open exchange. As a result, many new international connections have been made, new and renewed energy has been created across generations and borders, and a new community has come into being. Many people have described their experience at the Symposium as life-changing.

The EARTH Project continues. Local *EARTH* projects, originating in communities in Africa, Asia, Australia, Central and South America and Europe and North America will be created over the next two years. In addition, collaborations have begun between delegates and their organizations in Pakistan, India, the U.S., Canada, the U.K., Italy, Austria, Australia, South Africa,

Peru and Mexico. Some of the performance pieces, films and exhibitions arising from all this work will be brought to Canada in 2006 as part of *The EARTH Project Festival*.

Our website, www.earthproject.ca, continues to be an active component of the Project. Using the website's Forum, delegates and new participants are keeping the dialogue alive. In January 2005, a web-streaming event will bring us together to share the work we are doing.

A documentary film about *The EARTH Project* is in development. Over 35 hours of video footage has already captured many of the events of the Symposium. Filmmakers Jessica Fraser and Scott Smith will be travelling to *EARTH Partners'* home bases in six countries to document the extraordinary work that is taking place as part of the project.





A Canadian *EARTH* stage production will première in Vancouver in May 2005. Based on two years of Judith Marcuse Projects-conducted workshops with hundreds of youth aged 15 to 25, this large-scale, multimedia event will incorporate the thoughts and feelings of these young people in an accessible, high-production, professional show. Workshops, films and exhibitions will be part of this two-week event. In 2007, the production will tour Canada. This is the third work in a quartet of major works created by Judith Marcuse Projects and follows on the creation of *ICE: beyond cool* and *FIRE...where there's smoke*.

Also in Vancouver, in the summer of 2006, the international *EARTH Project Festival* will bring people and their work together once again. Ten days of events in theatres, community centres and other public spaces will bring the best of the *EARTH* work to a general public. Building on the success of the format of the Symposium, performances will be enhanced by workshops, exhibitions and youth-led events.

Future plans are tantalizing and energising, but first, we must look back in order to understand the themes, ideas and concerns that emerged at our first gathering in Vancouver in the spring of 2004.

We were a remarkably diverse group, almost equally divided amongst men and women, with half of the entire group under 25 years old. We came from every corner of Canada, from Nunavut to Newfoundland, from the Yukon to Quebec. Some 50 delegates came from abroad, many of them from countries where issues of social justice and environmental depredation are presently and profoundly affecting the lives of their citizens. We welcomed many First Nations participants whose contributions, rooted in traditional wisdom, offered us fertile ground for our work together.

Breaking New Ground was not a typical conference. The 93 sessions took many different forms, all designed to create dialogue, experience of each other's work, and information-sharing. Ten *youth-led workshops* explored central themes of social justice and environmental issues from a wide variety of youth activist perspectives. In 39 *arts disciplines workshops*, artists in theatre, dance, visual

arts, media arts, music and writing worked with delegates to give them direct experience of their work. At nine *show and tell* sessions, artists and activists used a variety of media to share the challenges and successes of current or recently-completed projects. We devoted a full afternoon to the unique process of *Open Space* work. This was a time for delegates to create their own sessions in which to explore ideas and questions that had arisen during their time working together at the Symposium – 26 of these "tailor-made" sessions took place. Three keynote speeches, informal discussion circles, social events, film showings and good food at lunches and dinners helped to round out the program. On registration day, an evening dinner cruise took us around Vancouver's Burrard Inlet in perfect weather after an on-board First Nations welcome. During the conference, the Red Cross held a fundraising event for their travelling medical work in Colombia and Simon Fraser University's dance department presented an evening concert.

We experienced one very trying set of difficulties. Obtaining Canadian visas for some of our delegates from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and six African countries was very problematic. In the end, and despite valiant efforts from many people, only three of these 35 delegates were allowed into Canada to attend the Symposium. This decision was made despite that fact that most of these individuals were senior artists, journalists or academics, with international reputations, and despite the fact that most of them had previously travelled extensively abroad. A sign of the times, all of them were men.

I would like to thank all the wonderful people who helped make *Breaking New Ground* such a success. These include our very dedicated and expert staff; many committed volunteers; Milton Wong, Chancellor of Simon Fraser University, and our Symposium partners in Continuing Studies and the Wosk Centre for Dialogue of the University; all our financial supporters; and the remarkable group of artists, activists and youth who joined us in Vancouver. I urge you read the biographies of the facilitators and the 25 extraordinary young people we call the "Exchanges Youth," who were able to attend *Breaking New Ground*, in part, through the generous financial assistance of the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Vancouver Foundation.

Some 117 volunteers helped us out during the five days of the Symposium. Of these, 29 were student writers who documented many of the sessions. Their reports describing the scheduled sessions, and the other information we are presenting in the following pages, will, I hope, be a useful resource for anyone interested in the potent, diverse and often transformative work of artist/activists and youth who are working for a more just and sustainable world – as well as for the continuing work of *The EARTH Project*.

Judith Marcuse, Vancouver, B.C., 18 July, 2004

The Sessions

The Closing Session

It may seem a bit odd to begin at the end, but this description of the delegates' final hours together will give, we believe, a sense of the nature of the journey we had taken together.

A spirit of hope and a sense of renewed energy filled the room. Over a period of several hours, delegates sang, danced, recited, played games, taught theatre exercises and told stories together. It seemed as though no one wanted to leave.

Some highlights:

- Judith Marcuse thanked all her co-workers (a small team of organisers and more than 100 volunteers) for their hard work and great accomplishments. She then opened the session to participants by inviting them to perform and present work they had done over the course of the Symposium.
- David Diamond offered a summary of the outcomes of his theatre workshop. The participants assembled and animated three of the images that had been created by the group. They were soon joined by most of the people in the room in a further development of this work. The full group then explored another image from the workshop (both of these images were about work for social justice), creating a very powerful moment of recognition for everyone in the room.
- Syed Rahman taught us a delightful "condom dance," used by his organization in Pakistan. He explained that the purpose of the dance was to use the body to identify and recognize the importance of protection and prevention of HIV/AIDS. The dance was created to address the topic in a fun and humorous way...and it worked! We hopped about, singing "yes" and "no" as we touched different parts of our bodies, eventually shouting "yes!" to all when a condom was produced.
- Nonhlanhla Ndima from South Africa lead her group of 30 dancers through a joyous, high-energy movement combination, all based on teaching people to conserve water.
- Joaquin (Jack) Yabut's "fireflies" appeared in costume and led the group in an insect takeover of the room.
- Ch'aska Anqa Ninawaman taught a traditional song and rain dance from the Quechua people of Peru, telling the story that provided the context for the dance.
- Michael Sheely taught the game of Equality Tag, a process that soon created chaos and laughter.
- Mary Elizabeth Manley's group showed some of their work from her workshop and were joined by others to use movement and sound to create poetic reflections about water.
- Tony Le Nguyen taught a traditional Vietnamese youth game called Crack, Crack, BOOM! In a fierce competition, groups of three tried to eliminate each other from the game in a series of vocal attacks that could be repelled only by shouting out the name of the fictional "city" of the attackers and doing a rigorous ducking routine, then doing a physical and vocal "re-loading" routine to prepare to attack others.
- William Cleveland told the story of the brave journey of a young boy he had worked with and sang a powerful song about darkness and light.
- Miali-Elise Coley and Trisha Ogina, from the Northern Canadian territory of Nunavut, dressed in traditional clothing, talked about the sources and forms of traditional and contemporary Inuit throat singing and gave us mesmerizing performances of this remarkable musical form. They then began to dance a traditional drum dance, using a large, hand held-drum that soon was passed on as other people began to join in their dance. The room filled with music as others joined in with more drums, then with a flute, with spoons on glasses and with their voices.
- After thanks were given to her from the delegates, Judith Marcuse expressed her delight, thanking everyone who had been at the gathering. She encouraged participants to reflect and write about their experiences as a way of sustaining and moving *The EARTH Project* forward. She invited everyone to stay in touch with each other on the website and expressed her hope that we would all, once again, come together

with our projects and collaborations at the *EARTH Festival* in 2006.

- In an entirely unplanned moment, *Breaking New Ground* closed with a four-part song about peace, each part coming from a different spiritual tradition.

We now turn to descriptions of the individual sessions that took place, mainly at the Scotiabank Dance Centre, with some activities at Simon Fraser's downtown Harbour Centre campus.

Arts Workshops

Moving Into Dance Mophatong

Nonhlanhla Grethel Ndima, South Africa

How can academic education be enhanced with multi-faceted dance experiences? Nonhlanhla Grethel Ndima, from South Africa's Moving Into Dance Mophatong, gave a high-spirited, hands-on dance experience to 35 participants in a workshop that demonstrated some of the methods used in their unique dance program, called Edudance.

First implemented in 1998, Edudance supports learning in a variety of academic subjects, from science and math to history and geography. Ndima described how Edudance also fosters cultural awareness by exposing children to traditional forms of music and dance. She explained how "historically, dance has been part of our culture of learning; this new system brings culture back into learning."

Workshop participants created a "water conservation dance." Water usage is an important issue in South Africa where there are often serious shortages. The dance was created by incorporating movements associated with water and its use, such as raindrops falling and turning off the tap while teeth-brushing. This fun-to-watch and fun-to-do dance, performed by exuberant workshop participants, later roused delegates at the Sunday closing session. It was easy to see how students would easily engage with material like this and have fun while learning in a new way.

Punjab Lok Raqs Theatre Workshop

Shoaib Iqbal, Pakistan

Punjab Lok Raqs is a theatre organization in Lahore, Pakistan working for social change in areas such as child and women's rights. Recently, they have collaborated with others in the U.K. to "widen the circle." Shoaib Iqbal gave a workshop based on work that draws its inspiration from a long tradition of indigenous theatre in Pakistan and, at the same time, is committed to the development of alternative theatre on a community level. Over the past



eighteen years, the organization has given over 700 performances ranging from street plays to epic productions and has dealt with many important issues including military oppression and child marriage. Their work often defies the government, which tends to be wary of their outspoken performances.

Shoaib Iqbal led the group in an afternoon workshop that focused on a simple circular theatre form used primarily in their street performances. This form has no specific focal point and no beginning or ending; the audience forms a circle around the action while the performers travel between the space inside and outside of the circle. This method creates a dynamic theatre experience and breaks down the barrier between audience and performer. Lively movement exercises familiarized the group with working on a 360-degree plane, experimenting with energy and fluidity of space. The importance of deliberate and constant movements when communicating an action to the audience was emphasized. To complete the workshop, participants divided into groups and were given the opportunity to create their own five-minute circle plays to perform for the rest of the group.

Visual and Performance Art – Nezkayomeh:

Signs from the Heart of the Earth

Judith Baca, U.S.A. and Martha Oropeza, Mexico

Judith Baca from the United States and Martha Ramirez Oropeza from Mexico, two pioneering visual artists, offered a hands-on experience that fused ancient symbols and wisdom from Mexico with contemporary realities.



Standing around an ancient manuscript, we invoked the ancestors. To the East: light, intelligence, wisdom. To the West: the feminine aspect, protection, transformation. To the North: the ancestors, the region of death and to connection to all that has passed. To the South: the place where willpower is born and creativity resides.

By honouring the old traditions we were preparing to create new ones. These traditions brought people's stories to public spaces in visual form, telling stories that were based in collective experience and sensibilities. Images created from personal stories were extrapolated to represent the wider human experience.

Oropeza and Baca say, "Start with what you know and watch it grow." They understand their own traditions and, working in the present, they fuse the ancient and the present to make borders disappear – borders between then and now, between ourselves and others. They guided us through a process to discover common ground and then we illustrated the feelings and experiences that we shared. We imagined a world without fear. Ideas became words, pictures, movement and dance, and we were swept away. We experienced the power of a kind of collaborative art making that can be so strong that rival gangs have put down their guns to pick up paintbrushes. Ultimately, it is about sharing. The next time you create something, consider trying what Judy suggested. "Hand the brush to the person next to you and let them finish the piece." What a lovely gesture of generosity.

The two women also told us about the World Wall, a large mural that is travelling across the globe. Each time it goes to a new location, a panel is added by community artists, each panel telling a new story about the place and the people who live there.

Dance Workshop

Alvaro Restrepo, Colombia

Alvaro Restrepo, director and co-founder of Colegio del Cuerpo [the College of the Body] in Cartagena, Colombia, taught some of his movement techniques and teaching methods. Before the group started to move, he spoke about his programs in Colombia. His work for healing the inner spirit through dance, breath and touch has opened up a whole new world for disadvantaged and displaced youth who attend his school. The Colegio helps these young people to build their self-esteem and, ultimately, to create more positive futures for themselves. It offers a place where youth can confront their problems in a constructive and spiritually-rich way, through an approach that is rooted in the body. "For many children, the Colegio is the only place where it is safe for them to lie on a clean floor, shut their eyes and relax their body."

One program, called "My Body, My Home," has helped young people to understand the connection between their physical selves and the environments they live in, many of them having come from very challenging situations. The body is explored as their sanctuary and source of identity. A company of 18 young dancers, who perform contemporary work, has been created from the work of the Colegio over the last seven years and tours in South America and Europe. Restrepo's pedagogy is influenced by his training at the Graham and Cunningham schools as well as a love of traditional Korean dance. Training at the Colegio includes the study of anatomy as well as sex and health education.

Workshop participants began the session as strangers. We were taught a series of simple contemporary dance and trust exercises that involved breathing, touch and manipulation of the body by another participant, as well as movement exploration rooted in everyday experience. This process was gentle and expansive and we soon worked together with remarkable ease.

Music Workshop: Mitote Music

Daniel Sanchez, Mexico

The Mitote music session, led by Daniel Sanchez, was an amazing experience. Sanchez first shared his philosophy of Mitote with us. He described how all living things are manifestations of vibrations and how we take part in a symphony of vibrations every day, contributing our part to a totality. He also explained that focusing on our vibration enables us to channel it in a positive and useful manner. The Mitote is a traditional Mexican ceremony dating back several generations, in which people gathered together and collectively celebrated their voices and rhythms. Sanchez' work incorporates these traditions with social and environmental activism.

Once the group grasped the philosophy, it was time to create some rhythms of our own. We chanted verses and moved to a beat stomped out on the floor by Mr. Sanchez. Next, we patted out rhythms on our bodies, each group of people tapping a different body part. These sounds combined to produce a connected whole and Sanchez danced jubilantly to this music in the centre of the circle. We were then given what would be considered by many to be garbage: old cans, bottles, tape, rubber bands and tins, and Sanchez showed us how to transform them into musical instruments. A variety of instruments were created, including a soda can with a rubber band taped to it, which was used to twang out a melody and some rice in a cut-off can that was turned into a shaker. A shredded plastic water bottle was used to create a rustler, bottles were blown into, and some old cans with garbage bags taped to the top became drums. After the lengthy process of making these instruments, the whole group took part in a symphony of healthy vibrating, conducted by one of the participants!

Theatre For Living

David Diamond, Canada

Twenty participants began this day-long session by introducing themselves and speaking about their reasons for attending this particular workshop. These reasons included a desire to engage in different creative processes; interest in the creation of theatre "from the inside out"; wanting to learn about techniques of *Theatre of the Oppressed*; interest in the marriage between politics, art and theatre as a tool for community mobilization; and wanting to learn about how people can use image-making in different social contexts.

David Diamond spoke about the history of Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, a form of theatre that is rooted in lived experience in the community, one that tells stories that come out of those collective realities. He described how he has developed this form into *Theatre For Living*. He is no longer using the "oppressor/oppressed" language of the Boal work. This redefines the way games and exercises are approached, how plays are

constructed as well as the nature of the invitation to participate in public Forum Theatre. (These are performances in which audience members replace an actor on stage in order to try to effect more positive resolutions to the conflict in that scene.)

Diamond suggested that the topic of investigation for the workshop be based around the group's struggles with doing social justice work and the group readily agreed.

Through several hours of simple, fun, physically-based games and exercises, the group explored group dynamics, trust in self and others, opposition, balance, harmony, mutuality, tactics and strategies, and restraint of personal power for the good of the group, as well as ways to heighten our physical senses. The language of images was then introduced, their power a consequence of the many ways that any still image can be understood. Each person made a shape that reflected his/her own personal struggle. In a step-by-step process, the group then brought shapes together, creating a collective, still image. At one point, within this image, each person spoke a single sentence, reflecting one major desire, such as "I want someone to help me"; "I want to stop this"; "I want to be able to open up and see other's struggles more clearly." The group then talked about this image, the stories within in it and how its symbolism affected them. Through this process came new understanding about issues as well as ideas about how to move forward.



Near the end of the day, in a final exercise called Magnetic Image, three people each created a shape with their bodies that was the shape of the strongest emotion they had felt in a moment of struggle in their personal lives. The rest of the group then each chose the one image they most related to, splitting off into three smaller groups. In each of these groups, people talked about what drew them toward that particular shape and investigated its emotional core – the emotional truth – of that image. From this discussion, the groups created and showed three new images that told the story of this core emotion. The inner monologue of each "character" was investigated out loud and then a dialogue in single sentences began. Eventually, this dialogue developed into



a full movement and text improvisation. As a result of this process and the conversation that followed, we better understood the complex nature of the practical and emotional struggles we face in our social justice work and came away with new skills to use in that work.

Displacement, Identity and Globalization

Tony Le Nguyen, Australia/Vietnam

Tony Le Nguyen talked about the extensive work he has done in Australia with Vietnamese youth to address realities of the Vietnamese diaspora. (He also works with youth in Vietnam, itself.) His wide-ranging work bridges the worlds of community cultural development, youth theatre and mainstream theatre. Le Nguyen brings theatre to Australian young people who often believe, at first, that it is neither interesting nor relevant to their lives. Le Nguyen listens and learns about the realities and issues of their daily lives, which he then incorporates into theatre work to which they can relate. Le Nguyen has witnessed the myriad ways that participation in theatre and television production can empower young people; instead of expressing their anger and frustration through violence, his students find a new outlet for their emotions. He has seen that, by fostering their creativity, they are less likely to get “stuck” and more likely to turn away from drugs and other destructive behaviours.

Writing Workshop

Marcus Youssef and John Lazarus, Canada and Kimingichi Wabende, Kenya

Kimingichi Wabende was absent because his visa to Canada was denied.

Marcus Youssef launched the session with a warm-up writing exercise in which participants were told to imagine the first time they ever saw a huge expanse of star-lit sky, the first time that they were ever conscious of the enormity of space.

Dialogue continued with an affirmation of something that Liz Lerman had talked about at her lunchtime keynote

address: the need to cross artistic boundaries. As John said, “We should be able to work in ways that suit who we are.” Marcus and John shared some major shifts they have made in their own work:

- Marcus described how he and his *Re-Claiming Project* partner Mercedes Baines moved from giving the kind of anti-racism workshops often done in schools (that routinely feature scenes in which someone says something “bad,” followed by an intervention) to doing workshops that nurture the expression of student voices by sharing family and personal stories, followed by creation in a form of their choice such as books, murals and short plays.
- John shared how he has done a shift in his thinking about his own writing, from believing that the purpose of his plays was to deliver a “message,” to a present focus on engaging his audiences in an entertaining way in order to allow them “in” to the issues he wanted to explore.

A lot of discussion then centred around writing about different forms of conflict, about racism, about finding authentic voice and about different notions of truth. There was an exploration of “bad” characters in storytelling and about the restrictions often placed on students that prevent true expression, such as when teachers “correct” student writing rather than encouraging them to write freely. The group talked about the legal and social dilemmas that can occur when a student reveals “too much” that is personal or traumatic. People described teachers who want to do plays that model how young people should behave rather than allowing space for the truths that really interest them. We finished up with a great exercise in the expression of voice, taking on characters from the First Nations/Quebec police conflict at the Oka/Kahnesatake crisis in Quebec of some years ago.

Dance Workshop – Meanings, Methods and Messages: Global Connections and Personal Perspectives

Liz Lerman and Elizabeth Johnson, U.S.A.

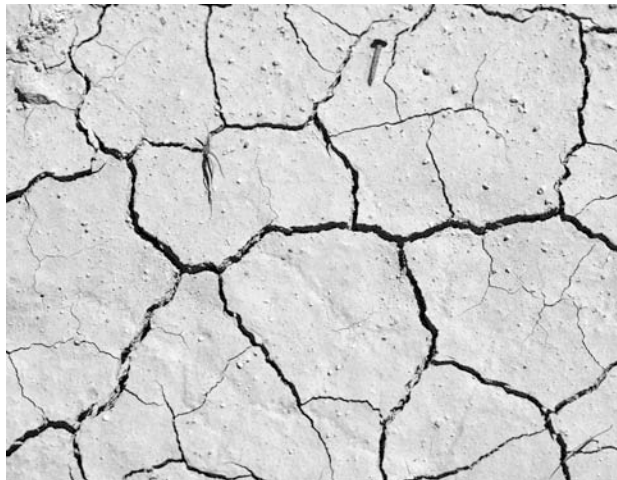
Artists link many worlds and art-making is central to that exchange. Dance is created using text, research and observation, as well as drawing from personal history and larger social and political contexts. In this session, using a collaborative process, including physical partnering, participants explored ways to develop an individual vision while also strengthening their facilitation skills.

Approximately 30 people actively participated in this all-day workshop given by Liz Lerman and Elizabeth Johnson from Liz Lerman Dance Exchange. A series of exercises offered participants various options or tools that they could use in their own working situations. These were processes that the LLDE artists have honed and

developed over many years of work in varied community and professional settings. The workshop was “team-taught” with Liz and Elizabeth alternating in leading the exercises. After short, haiku-like introductions, participants were led through a series of warm-up exercises. In one of these, participants were asked to remain in place, close their eyes and follow movement directions given by Liz. These directions were more like questions, such as “What parts of our bodies can we move in circles?” This form of improvisation is a key element of the company’s work, one that encourages participants to create their own physical vocabularies.

Throughout the day, participants did exercises that involved creating choreography in small groups, demonstrating and sharing the results with the larger group. A great deal of learning occurred through this process, since both Liz and Elizabeth encouraged very specific critical feedback, asking participants to consider what made things meaningful to them and encouraged everyone to look at the work with generous eyes.

A common theme that emerged from the exercises was the notion of how important it is to offer people tools, the space and encouragement to tell their own stories; and to use movement that they, themselves, have created as a personal, expressive way to communicate those stories. Liz explained, “It’s hard for people to learn that they are in charge of their lives. It takes time.” This day of work in her rich and rewarding methodology provided everyone with new tools and perspectives.



Culture Collage **Carly Stasko, Canada**

Carly Stasko’s workshop was a cut ‘n’ paste session about media, play and social change. Topics for discussion included culture jamming, globalization, the history of advertising, strategies for grassroots media literacy education and creative resistance. Stasko created and defines the word “imagitator” as someone who agitates imagination. Culture jamming is all about improvisation,

personal contribution and community. It is a reaction to mainstream media and to the exclusion of our voices from this dominant form of communication. Stasko explained that when living in this overwhelming media environment, we might think about breathing as a metaphor: “You can only take in so much before you have to let it out.”

Culture jamming is about refusing to allow companies to own you or your mind. “We are trained to think of certain images when viewing a product and as a result, the company who makes that product now owns a part of you and your thought process.” Stasko traced this phenomenon back to a time when society went through a “perfectionist period,” when advertisers started to tell us that our bodies were flawed and that the only thing that could save us was the purchase of their products. Companies used fear and insecurity to sell products and, for the most part, society believed them. We have become zombies who eat up the lies that companies and corporations feed us. Through culture jamming, Stasko suggests, you can take your power back. She described many ways to culture jam including writing on ads, creating your own media, such as ‘zines, and learning to be a critical consumer of media. She told us about “subway parties,” travelling dance parties on downtown subways where imagitators board the trains with music, original art and high energy. Before long, you can’t tell who started the party and who joined in along the way. It’s a great way to snap people out of their apathy.

arepp: Theatre For Life **Brigid Schutz, South Africa**

Brigid Schutz shared some of arepp’s puppetry and theatre work used in for social life-skills education in support of disadvantaged Southern African youth. Arepp provides travelling educational theatre performances with facilitated discussion sessions, the distribution of complementary material and training workshops that address issues related to the mental and physical well-being of the communities they visit. Schutz explained that arepp employs actors and presenters who travel to schools primarily throughout South Africa and perform for groups in many native languages. (They also work extensively in Kenya, Tanzania and Namibia and, to a lesser extent, in Botswana, Zimbabwe, Reunion, Scotland and Norway.) Schutz spoke at length about the ways in which the group tackles issues like abuse, sexuality and HIV/AIDS through the use of dramatic presentations and, particularly, the presence of many kinds of puppets like MacMonkey, the large bright blue puppet, who came with her to the Symposium.

Schutz spoke about the wide range of issues confronted by the various age groups with which her organisation works. She described how artists have faced difficulties in working with older youth, who are often resistant to their

work, by creating new material that is more sensitive to their perspectives. She also talked about the pleasure of working with adult audiences when they have been able to enter a world of the imagination. Her workshop opened up a new world for many of us in the session.

Graffiti Workshop

Take5 (Mikeal Frazer), Canada

Graffiti has had a dubious reputation ever since it became a widespread form of art. Although it is often seen merely as destruction of property, Mikeal Frazer, alias Take5, who is an internationally-recognized graffiti artist, argued that graffiti is a form of dialogue in public space, of communication – not an act of defiance, but rather an act of acknowledgement and self-expression. Graffiti uses colour, line and language as a form of social interaction. Graffiti confronts everyone who sees it, but does not discriminate whatever their age, sex or class.

After learning some basic graffiti lingo and painting technique, participants were handed a mask, some paint cans and the freedom to use those tools to express themselves. Our instructions were to make a statement and to have fun doing it. Creative energy grew as ideas were shared between people who had just met and were not able to remember each other's names. A community of fledgling graffiti artists quickly emerged. Despite the negative connotations associated with graffiti, our experience was quite the opposite.

Video Production Education: A Collaborative Model of Teaching and Learning

Pacific Cinémathèque, Canada

During the past nine years, Pacific Cinémathèque has developed a model of video production training for children, youth and adults that is rooted in media literacy, community engagement and inter-generational learning through the inclusion of youth mentors in all aspects of the process. In this workshop, Pacific Cinémathèque staff presented this pedagogical model in a dialogue for educators, artists and community members interested in collaborative models for teaching and learning about video production.

Analee Weinberger, education director of Pacific Cinémathèque, began with a brief overview of the organization's work, followed by a presentation of some of the video work done by previous workshop participants, specifically, disadvantaged youth who would otherwise not have had access to media production programs and facilities. In addition to educational programs about varying aspects of media production, Pacific Cinémathèque also teaches media literacy with an emphasis on deconstructing media products and the messages that they are trying to convey.



The organization favours a democratic approach to learning, promoting collaboration and participation rather than a hierarchical learning environment. This is achieved by peer review and critique as well as involving former students in ongoing relationships where they become mentors to new students. Carmin Carotenuto, a former student of Pacific Cinémathèque's programs, underlined the important role that the mentor-instructor plays in clarifying any "grey areas" that might remain after the more technically-oriented workshops are finished and in working as a guiding hand during the production process, even though the creative process remains entirely in the hands of the students.

The organization also stresses community involvement and works primarily with topics that are close to the creators' hearts, something that became clear from the selection of videos we saw. Issues ranged from concerns that young people might have, such as problems at school, drugs and alcohol, unemployment, homelessness and violence, to road safety, and to the documentation of a community play.

Following the presentation of the videos, some of the participants shared their own experiences that involved the use of video production as a tool for community involvement and social change. Pamela Verma, a member of a Vancouver group called *Redefining Canadian*, described how video production serves as an educational tool that often appeals to young people and how they used it to create awareness about the problems faced by immigrants and refugees.

Cardboard Citizens: A Theatre Workshop

Adrian Jackson, U.K.

This workshop used techniques rooted in Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* (also known as Forum Theatre) to observe and question concepts of social justice and human rights. Adrian Jackson is the director of Cardboard Citizens, a renowned U.K. touring theatre company, whose performers and audiences are predominantly homeless people, ex-homeless people and refugees.



Jackson seeks to create a space for discussion that will provoke social change by raising consciousness on issues both within and outside of marginalized communities. After introducing his company's work to the twenty participants (who were all ages and who came from many different cultures), Adrian taught us exercises that would bring the work home. The first, "Hypnosis," done in pairs, gave each partner in turn the power to direct the other with his or her hand. The range of gestures soon expanded, making us sing, shout, kneel, creep and even throw ourselves into the air. In "Bridges," the next task, we each created a unique call to lead our partners who roamed the room with their eyes closed. Gradually increasing the complexity, Adrian next had us physically portray different times of day on various days of the week. Later this was expanded to explore major events that have had an impact on people around the world. We ended the session with "Machines," in which we acted out situations of consumerism, its antidote, and, eventually, explored states of happiness.

These exercises gave us the chance to confront issues that we might have thought about a great deal but had never had a chance to "act" upon. The group was able to explore what might happen if we actually did what we deeply desired. We explored how it felt to be in someone else's position of power and what happiness could look like.

Adrian is a director, not a therapist. Forum Theatre, he says, must be both good theatre and should help people to confront and deal with real situations. Audience

members are invited to shout, "Stop!" to freeze the action. Then they replace an actor on stage and try to act out a better solution to the issues in that scene. They are confronted with actors trained to react in the most realistic way possible, often making resolution very challenging. While Adrian explicitly states that he is not a therapist, his staff is trained to provide counselling for members of the marginalized communities it serves.

Visual Arts: Earthly Interventions – A Collection of Visually-Poetic Punctuations

M. Simon Levin and Jessica Jang

M. Simon Levin and Jessica Jang held an interactive visual arts workshop to explore strategies that communicate our relationship with the land. Participants discovered the power of repeated simple gestures and then created poetic interventions that "punctuated" public space. Using found and natural materials, they created forms that embodied interconnectivity and both compassion and healing for our environment. Participants also learned about some of the temporal (temporary) environmental work of leading contemporary artists. A comfortable and creative environment was created, allowing each participant to grow into activities at his/her own pace.

To start, each person in the group of about twenty people from all over the world, chose from an array of natural objects and, as a group, placed them in relationship to

each other on the ground, transforming a concrete plane into a collage of patterns, textures and ideas. After a period of more exploration, the group was ready to take their message into the public eye, and placed leaves and rocks in and on the façade of the Dance Centre, creating a “new” front wall of the building. Each participant was then given an empty intravenous bag (IV) that they filled with items symbolizing what the earth might need to heal. The final step was to venture out and hang their “IV bags for the earth” somewhere in the city, leaving behind their creations in public spaces. A few participants brought up the need to recycle these artistic interventions.

Playing with the “rules” of public space and leaving a message for others to discover was a simple and easy process, yet this is so rarely done in such a harmless and effective way.

Spoken Word/Performance Poetry

Sara Kendall, Canada

To get their minds and tongues rolling, Sarah Kendall led participants through a series of simple exercises that played with sounds and words. These exercises built confidence and demonstrated the power of even a simple combination of random sounds. As random words and sounds were connected, participants began to create their own pieces or “pieces of pieces.” They further explored the power of words to break down boundaries, transform energy and change perspectives by sharing ideas and doing creative work together. The workshop emphasized the power of words to resolve problems and sort out differences. Although speaking and expressing personal opinions seemed daunting at first, Kendall created a very comfortable environment and the rhythm and music of poetry quickly spread through the room. Even several Japanese delegates, who were attending the workshop without their translator, were able to join this creative and energizing process.

Children and War:

A Board Game and a Performance

Red Cross and Youth from Sierra Leone

Youth who were scheduled to perform a play about their lives in a refugee camp at this session were refused visas to enter Canada.

A large, hand-painted sheet of canvas lay in the middle of the studio floor. This stylized map of a village in Afghanistan, replete with a marketplace, a hospital and a prison, had been created by twenty high school art students. On one side of the map, high mountains rose up in the countryside, while small wooded areas, farmland and fields dotted with sheep sprawled out on the other side. Close to the mountains, a few tents

marked a refugee camp. Participants took off their shoes and sat around the canvas while George Chandler from the Canadian Red Cross introduced his volunteers. They then explained how different kinds of experiential learning, like this board game, are used by the Red Cross to illustrate the limitations of humanitarian efforts during conflict, at the same time challenging us to imagine daily realities of people who live in regions plagued by war.

One of the dilemmas game-players faced when they took on the roles of Afghan citizens was the risk of stepping on landmines as they went about their daily life. While some people were fortunate enough not to land on a mine, the roll of the dice proved disastrous for others. Chandler explained how access to prosthetic limbs may be crucial for the economic survival of a family. At a cost of \$3,000 each in a country where the average citizen earns the equivalent of \$12 per day, many who need this help must do without.

This workshop showed clearly how playing a game that reflects real social and economic situations can lead to new knowledge and insight...and that this kind of learning can be fun.



PETA Theatre Workshop

Joaquin (Jack) Yabut, Philippines

Jack Yabut’s interactive workshop shared some of the innovative theatre/movement techniques developed by the Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA) over the last 30 years. In addition to acting as coordinator for PETA, Yabut is also the president of the Firefly Brigade, an organization that promotes non-motorized transportation in the Philippines with an annual costumed bicycle ride around Manila that involves many thousands of participants, as well as work in other centres around the country. During this workshop, using part of the process used in the Philippines, participants were asked to imagine themselves as fireflies, to think about the world they lived in and then to create a firefly costume. Colourful fabric, paper, paint, foil and wire were spread out in the studio and for the next hour wings, antennas and glowing tails took shape. Yabut then led the group in an improvised firefly dance set to indigenous music from

northern Japan. By this time, everyone had lost any last vestige of self-consciousness; Jack had created a very informal, creative and relaxed atmosphere in the studio. Silliness was allowed! To complete the workshop, participants viewed video footage of previous Firefly Brigade rides and learned about Yabut's vision to combine cycling, activism and theatre to address environmental and social issues in his country.



Dance in Traumatized Communities

Nicholas Rowe, West Bank Palestine/Israel

It is hard to have the courage to dance in front of others; it is even harder, perhaps, to imagine people dancing in war-ravaged settings. Nicholas Rowe spends his time doing just that with groups of Palestinian children in the refugee camps around the city of Ramallah.

Dance was an important part of Palestinian culture in the 19th century, but since Palestinians have become largely a nation of refugees, most dances have gradually been lost as a consequence of the disintegration of a coherent social fabric. Wedding dances remained popular for a long time, but even this tradition was lost as acts of celebration came to seem irreverent in the face of the very harsh realities people face in their daily lives. At present, much movement and most games involve aggression and hostility – marching, chanting, the shaking of fists. The games children play offer little structure or knowledge of teamwork.

The West Bank arts program Rowe works with has taken dance to about 15,000 children and has trained 800 workshop leaders. Workshops centre around four fundamental principles: creativity, communication, cooperation and continuity. Children in the camps have no space for focused activities. After three generations of living in camps, many young Palestinians have little concept of what life could be like in a place free of shootings, murder, fear and war. Teaching children movement games is an ideal way to engage them, to teach important cooperation skills, to nurture trust and to keep the learning alive after the workshop is over. Everyone can participate. Workshops offer a space where

people can leave behind their daily existence and create new identities; where they can form new relationships in a place where they are able to imagine a world outside the camp; a space in which it becomes possible to envision a different and better way of life.

As we got up on our feet and learned simple techniques like asking people to demonstrate everyday actions such as stirring a pot or turning a key, we became free from the self-consciousness of performing. Cooperation and hilarity warmed the whole room. By the end of the session we were moving freely, visualizing vividly and having fun.

Documenting Your Work on Video

jil p. weaving and Patti Fraser, Canada

The Documenting Engagement Institute recently brought artists together from across Canada to learn how to tell the stories of their community arts projects on video. Participants joined jil p. weaving and Patti Fraser to see some of these videos and to discuss the techniques used to make them. *Documenting Engagement* was designed to teach artists how to use video and digital editing to create a portfolio on videotape. This portfolio serves a number of purposes including the combination of visual and audio stimuli, which, weaving and Fraser contend, is the way most people absorb the greatest amount of material. The videos are also useful for funding and sponsorship proposals, allowing potential backers to see exactly what kind of work they might support.

Furthermore, the videos enable artists such as dancers, mosaic builders and mural painters to “take their work with them.” Finally, the videos ensure that there is little chance for misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the artist's work by an outside source, such as a media outlet.

Artists in this program were taught how to build a narrative about their art and/or community work which, according to weaving and Fraser, is as important as the archival video footage itself. weaving and Fraser, who worked closely with the artists to create personal stories, found that the biggest challenge in documenting their work was to capture all of the perspectives present in both art-making and in community development. They discovered that it can be easier to “find the story in the footage” if the documentary filmmaker seeks advice from storytellers. Often a person who knows how to tell a great anecdote at a party can help focus the documentary from a story-telling perspective that the artist cannot see because she or he is too attached to the subject.

Fraser recommended that artists and community activists clarify the reasons for documenting their work as well as learning how to document them. Clarity and simplicity are key; whether an artist/activist shows his/her work to an arts council or to a meeting at the local library, a straightforward story has the greatest chance of reaching the widest audience.

Video On the Fly: A Youth-Mentored Video Production Workshop Pacific Cinémathèque, Canada

Pacific Cinémathèque instructors and youth mentors taught a fast-paced, hands-on primer of digital video skills for documentation, storytelling and community engagement. Participants learned some basic camera skills and received an introduction to visual storytelling and interviewing techniques in a community context. Guided by youth mentors and equipped with their own cameras, participants put their new skills to work documenting the rest of the Symposium.



Visual Arts Workshop: Designing Your World Dolly Hopkins, Canada

Workshop participants were instantly captivated by Dolly Hopkins' impassioned voice, urgent gesticulations and pants covered in swirling shapes. "Creativity is our life force!" she exclaimed. "I would die, if I could not express myself, if I were not able to create!" She asked the group to "take a risk, to empower yourselves and to see what you can do to overcome the negative done to us," while, at the same time, acknowledging possible barriers to creative expression.

Three long, wide, pieces of white paper filled the space inside the circle of chairs. Along their length rested boxes of oil pastels. Hopkins directed the group to "create an image of the world you want to live in." People were quiet at first, some meditative, some apprehensive. Others were excited and dove quickly into the process. She encouraged participants to allow themselves to free up their individual passions, and to recognize the passions of others around them as well. On the large pages, the edges of people's pictures began to touch each other and quiet dialogues of respect and inquiry emerged between neighbours. We talked about shared visions and possibility.

Hopkins then shared a tale about how opportunities can emerge, and how the gifts that people receive along their journeys may surprise them and offer guidance and inspiration. After performing for a group of children in Vancouver, she was offered a chance to tour South America. She travelled down one coast of the continent and back up the other, until one day she found herself, much to her surprise, in the middle of a Brazilian desert in a concrete compound, giving a performance to 900 orphans. After the show, one boy ran back to his room with bits of wax and paper and twigs, created a tiny lantern, lit it, and ran after her. Putting it into her hands he said, "Thank you for bringing the light." She returned from this journey, vowing that one day she would do something to honour this gift of light from his small hands. *Illuminares*, an annual celebration of light that takes place in Vancouver and draws thousands of people each year, is the fulfillment of this promise.

Media Workshop – noise: Creative Expression on Multiple Platforms

Brandon Saul, Australia

noise is: "created on top of silence"

noise is: "ribbons of a maypole"

noise is: "an opportunity for young people to have their voices heard and art appreciated"

noise is: "only time can tell"

noise is a national youth media arts festival in Australia that exhibits young artists and their work across radio, television, in print, and on-line. In October, 2003, *noise* gave young, creative Australians mass-media exposure, reaching an audience of over 15 million.

Participants joined Brandon Saul in a workshop that explored the significant role that art plays in validating personal, individual experience, a role that is increasingly important as the forces of globalization propagate cultural homogeneity. The diversity of participants at this session was quite marked, as were their contributions to the discussion. Saul was highly interested in taking the underlying idea of *noise* and expanding it to the global community. His aim was to have international representation at *noise 2005*. Saul felt that their biggest challenges for this project were to create incentives for youth engagement and to identify a theme that would appeal to youth on a global scale.

One participant suggested using anti-hegemonic or anti-American sentiments as a building block for the global theme. With the cultural market flooded with American products, he suggested there was a need for national, indigenous artistic production. However, other participants felt that this goal needed to be approached with a more positive and inclusive slant.

Another participant from Kenya highlighted the challenges of bringing technology to nations where accessibility is an issue. Not everyone has access to the Internet, radio, or other means of communication. Saul proceeded to illustrate ways in which the issue of accessibility could be approached. To involve minority

youth in *noise 2000*, the festival commissioned a young Chinese artist to produce a piece that would speak to others like her and encourage others to contribute. They also distributed 250 disposable cameras to youth who otherwise could not acquire them. The cameras were returned, pictures were selected and a book was published that sold 10,000 copies.

At the end of the session, participants went home with issues of the *noise 2003* magazine as well as samples of a press kit that Saul had produced. The kit included information about the artists who participated in *noise 2003*, and helped to attract media attention to the festival. *noise 2003* is an inspiring and creative project that empowers youth and provides them with a forum where they can express themselves at a national level.

First Nations Teachings In Canada

Mary-Elizabeth Manley and John Powell, Canada

This workshop was facilitated by Mary-Elizabeth Manley, a dance educator interested in youth dance and performance, and First Nations philosophies, and by John Powell, a costume, fashion, and interior designer, who also teaches genealogy, contemporary First Nations design and traditional regalia-making. The session focused on the sustainability of the natural environment from a First Nations traditional perspective – giving back to the land, the sea and the sky. Through movement improvisation, spoken word and theatre games – and embracing some of the values of the elders – participants created statements that reflected respect for their environment.

First, they played a short game to learn about their shared interests: youth, indigenous cultures, arts and environmental issues. Next, a series of exercises explored sound, text, and movement. The group repeated and chanted vowels and changed pitches, experimenting with vibrations. People were struck by the positive feelings generated by the sound of their voices working together. Participants next broke into groups to experiment with a series of syllables that they were given, elaborating them using sound and movement, later learning that the syllables when joined together meant: “One with the air, the sea and the land.” They were then asked to incorporate this notion into their work.

In a last exercise, three groups representing land, sea and air, asked, “What do these elements represent for you? What concerns do you have for them? What resolutions or positive outcomes can you find for them?” After discussion, each group used spoken word, movement and sound to create short statements born out of this dialogue.

Sing 4 Life

Michele Schiess, South Africa

Focusing on addiction and rehabilitation, Sing 4 Life, based in Pretoria, works with music to bring meaning, pride and success into the lives of troubled South African youth. Michelle Schiess’ workshop explored the power of music as a tool for both education and empowerment. A passionate speaker and advocate, she told us about the rampant spread of HIV/AIDS in South Africa, due in great part to a lack of awareness and education. The disease is ravaging the country’s population, leaving millions of children orphaned and disillusioned. Poverty is widespread and many children with whom Schiess and her colleagues work, go to school often not having not eaten for days.

Sing 4 Life’s purpose is to “advocate and intervene.” The name Sing 4 Life comes from the idea that singing and music are the “universal language of the soul.” In order for your soul to sing, you must be in tune with your body and the world around you. Sing 4 Life is about education, new horizons and passion; the group stands by the belief that “individual passion makes the difference.” Schiess and her four colleagues also help South African communities to become more self-sufficient by teaching them to plant gardens for food and medicine, and then to recycle the waste from those gardens to make paper which they sell.

Their current project will bring twenty-five disadvantaged and HIV-positive youth to a national park bordering Mozambique to sing, dance and play out their stories for one another for fifteen days. Through sharing their stories and experiences, the children will not feel so alone. Away from their homes, out in the wide-open space with wild animals and freedom, great strides can be made and perspectives changed.

THRoB: Theatre of Becoming/ Freedom for a Change

Alex Mavrocordatos, U.K.

cdcArts is an extensive, university-based, community cultural development program in the U.K. that teaches techniques for the self-development of marginalized groups through cultural engagement. Alex Mavrocordatos, who both teaches at the university where the program is given and works in projects around the world, began his hands-on theatre/animation workshop with the assertion that change begins with the individual; that only when the individual changes, can the community change. Through a series of improvisational techniques, participants spontaneously created structures and methods for interacting with one another. Moods shifted, memories were awakened and a release from rationality, pragmatism and didacticism occurred. A series of dance, vocalization and illustration exercises

encouraged the group to delve into their creative imaginations, a process that is crucial when trying to shift away from a linear approach to problem-solving. Mavrocordatos' technique concentrates on creating an atmosphere where "what needs to be told" can slowly emerge rather than on "homing in" solely on a specific problem. This challenged participants to think about the problem "without thinking about the problem." Shifts could be subtle and, at times, not complete, but each attempt brought participants closer to that place where creativity and innovation can blossom.

Conflict Evolution: Working and Playing with Conflict as a Creative Force Robert Morgan, Canada

Canadian artist, Robert Morgan, held an interactive workshop based on "conflict evolution," the underlying principle of the Children's Peace Theatre. Morgan teaches children to embrace their anger without violence and to explore conflict in a compassionate, courageous and creative way. Although not all conflicts have solutions, they can be explored at a higher level of consciousness, one that turns the conflict, itself, into creative energy. Morgan's program explores ideas about conflict and peace at the individual, family, community and global level in an environment that is safe and open.

Through the use of drama, music, movement and voice work, participants had the opportunity to develop new approaches that helped to reinforce the underlying belief that peace can become possible, no matter what the circumstance.

Visual Arts: Light As Action Fabrizio Crisafulli, Italy

Fabrizio Crisafulli, an acclaimed Italian theatre/visual artist, fuses theatre, dance and visual arts to mix text, movement, space and light. An essential component of his work is an emphasis on the use of light to sculpt theatre space, not just as a way to illuminate performers. In this workshop, he shared a simple, inexpensive and innovative technique that uses overhead projectors to achieve elaborate projected lighting effects.

Crisafulli began by stating, "I make peculiar works," but this technique was very straightforward: we used three overhead projectors, three squares of lighting gel paper (red, blue and green), scissors, tape, construction paper, glass and paint. Wasn't this too simple? In a flashback to elementary school, each person began to cut out paper shapes – then slowly, uncovering itself through layering, an unexpectedly beautiful and diverse backdrop of colour and design began to emerge. We made form by creating negatives.

"The less light you have, the more you can do with it." Uncertain about the meaning behind his paradoxical words, "less is more," we scratched out our ideas on a black-painted glass canvas.

Light is a unique artistic medium that both *is* and *is not*. Shapes can be covered or uncovered slowly or abruptly to create movement through space or to alter perceptions of pre-existing images. Simple abstract images are ideal, for they create a wider range of possible perceptions for the audience. Crisafulli showed us that the use of less light created greater precision.

The meaning of "light as action" and "less is more" became clear. He said, "Let the light go where you want"...and as we played, we made our own surprising and rewarding discoveries using this simple technique.



Dance Workshop – Embodying the EARTH Symposium Elizabeth Johnson, U.S.A.

Workshop participants consolidated their impressions of their experience at *Breaking New Ground* by using movement as their language and learned about new tools to generate movement from personal experience. During this reflective session, the group collaborated on the creation of compositions that delved into the highlights and insights gained during the previous days of the gathering. Throughout the session, Johnson focused the group's attention on becoming more aware of themselves and each other and encouraged them to express their thoughts and feelings through movement. In this open atmosphere, everyone felt comfortable "performing" in front of one another, regardless of whether they were professional dancers or not. The workshop also demonstrated the power of art to transcend language barriers; two participants, for example, who spoke very little English, were still able to fully participate and bask in the wealth of creativity present in the room.



Self-Care Workshop

Josephine Krizovensky, Canada

This workshop focused on learning to RELAX. Participants learned and practiced a variety of simple techniques using movement, breathing, meditation and touch. We learned different breathing exercises designed to calm and focus the racing mind or to energize and recharge when we're tired. Simple movements to stretch the body and release tension were taught; self-massage and pressure points on the hands and head soothed the mind and body. Guided meditation brought awareness and relaxation to the entire body. Coming on the last day of the Symposium, these techniques were immediately useful!

Keynote Presentations

Stephen Lewis

"The premise that I begin with, for what it's worth, is that one is put on this planet for a purpose and the purpose has to be, it just must be, improving the human condition, effecting social change."

Stephen Lewis has undeniably devoted his life's work to fulfilling that purpose. He has served as the Deputy Executive Director for UNICEF and is presently the Special Envoy for Secretary-General Kofi Annan for HIV/AIDS in Africa. He has received fifteen honorary degrees and is a Companion of the Order of Canada. He has recently created a foundation to support work to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

While his address covered a wide range of weighty issues, including questions of war and conflict, the phenomenon of globalization, genocide in Rwanda and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, he began his presentation with a celebration of the many ways that art engages, helps, heals and educates people. Whether it is Canada's Raging Grannies singing songs of political satire, the Guerrilla Girls in New York City using street theatre to fight for gender equality, or the use of drama and theatre to help Rwandan kids understand "the meaning of tolerance, and social equity and affection and love and solidarity..." art has incalculable power. "Art reaches through everyone's defences...messages are received that would otherwise fall on deaf ears. The use of these cultural vehicles are the material of the uprooted and disinherited, the material of the disenfranchised to connect with society and make their point. They have wit to break through; they make a tremendous impact on social change and no one should depreciate it. It unites people.... There is a camaraderie which is stitched together by virtue of the shared artistic experience."

Mr. Lewis then examined some of the effects of economic globalisation on the "Majority World" and on global issues of environmental and social justice, saying that "globalization, if anything, is causing far more turmoil internationally than it is causing reconciliation and social justice." He also spoke fervently and hopefully about the large and diverse international movement that opposes the abuses of globalization.

Mr. Lewis then moved on to describe some of the terrible realities of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa, a continent he has been visiting for 45 years. He told his audience about the devastation caused by HIV/AIDS and recounted



moving stories of his personal encounters with young people whose lives are filled with unimaginable difficulties and challenges. He also spoke about programs he had witnessed where healing art-work with young people was working effectively. He talked about the essential role of play to “knit people together.” He praised the courage and resilience of people living with – and fighting – almost impossible conditions.

He also provided his audience with a focus for action. He said that people must unite, both locally and globally, to combat the pandemic, which continues to spread at a frightening rate in China, India and in Russia and many other parts of the world, as well as in Africa. Mr. Lewis described two especially effective strategies for fighting the virus: one is to continue to creatively promote prevention and another is to petition the Canadian government to manufacture and export generic anti-retroviral “fixed-dose combination” drugs. These drugs combine three drugs in one tablet, need to be taken only twice a day and have fewer side effects. He compared these to brand-name drugs that need to be taken six times a day and produce more marked side effects. Canadians need to encourage the government to make the “fixed-dose” drugs available.

Speaking about Africa, Mr. Lewis also said, “If there is salvation to be found, it will come also through the power of cultural expression because that’s what unites the continent; that is what people rely on when they are attempting to convey messages.”

Mr. Lewis ended his passionate, emotional and compelling talk with a call to action: “We need help from the international community and international movements that bring the international community to its senses. It is a long, long struggle! Those of you who happen to have the added, wondrous capacity of artistic expression to communicate in ways that others can’t, use it to the full! It is a glorious, palliative antidote to the insanity that surrounds us.”

Liz Lerman

Liz Lerman is one of the world’s leading pioneers in the field of dance and community-building, and recipient of the 2002 MacArthur Genius Fellowship. She is a gifted teacher, choreographer and performer whose work has redefined where dance takes place and who can dance. Her commitment is both to the art of dance and to the human element in art-making. In her work, she builds community, encourages personal insight and choreographs dances that have been called visionary, profound and revelatory.

Liz Lerman’s keynote speech at the Symposium’s lunchtime break was a valuable and very inspiring opportunity for delegates to learn more about the underlying philosophy that guides the way she and her organization work. As she says, both have been committed to “exploring the relationship between professional artists and community life, and to the principle that each is made better when informed by the other.”

Liz spoke about the frustration of her own dance education, perhaps still experienced by many contemporary artists. Dance is divided into many categories: ballet, folk, modern, post-modern, etc. She told us that when she was living in New York City, there was even a “downtown” post-modern style, not to be confused with the “uptown” post-modern style. All this division was further compounded by strong opinions about what a dance artist could and could not do. In the U.S., at that time, you couldn’t get a college degree in education and choreography; you had to choose between the two. Institutions were built around definitions that dictated the practices of artists, limiting their potential. Liz’s experiences within these institutions influenced her commitment to build a humane organization where everyone gets to learn and grow, not only the person in charge.

While she doesn’t have a problem with definitions or categories *per se*, they have contributed to a lack of communication between practitioners. This has led to the construction of a hierarchy of values that places the concert work done by a dance artist on a higher level than that of an artist who works in community or in educational settings. Her desire is to see a shift from that strong vertical axis of a value system to a more equitable horizontal plane. As she said, “This way the cutting edge is much wider.” Liz sees her work and that of her company take place on this horizontal plane, one that includes work done in studios, on stage and in community settings. She sees herself moving easily between the permeable membranes of these settings and works along this continuum as it eventually curves to form a circle.

Liz also talked about the “three standards” that she uses to evaluate her work. She asks if the dancers who are doing the dance are 100 per cent *committed*, whether they know *why* they are doing what they’re doing, and whether some form of *revelation* takes place.

Severn Cullis Suzuki

Severn Cullis Suzuki became actively involved in environmental and social justice work at a very young age. When she was nine years old, she founded the Environmental Children’s Organization (ECO), and later spoke at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Since that time, Ms. Cullis Suzuki has established herself as a passionate speaker, presenter, television host and writer. She recently earned a B.Sc. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from Yale University and continues to speak at schools and corporations and at many conferences and international meetings. She is especially passionate about encouraging young people to speak out for their future.

Severn talked about peak moments in her life that have helped to catalyze her interest in environmental and social justice issues. These include early childhood experiences with her family. She described a visit to an

Amazon village where she experienced a society that was deeply connected to, and respectful of, the earth. This visit sparked her and a group of friends to form ECO.

With resounding energy and passion, Severn defined the word, “environment.” She feels that when people think of the environment they think of “something out there...and they think of crazy old David Suzuki.” (Both of her parents were in the audience.) “They don’t think of global economic interactions, about what we breathe, eat, or throw away. The environment is where we exist.” She urged the audience to “dare to walk the talk” and suggested that we should be self-aware of every aspect of our daily lives that has an impact on the sustainability of the earth, from our food to our clothes, from the transportation we use, to the work we do. Severn also talked about the growing networks of activists from around the globe who are working together, often using the Internet, to reverse the process of destruction of our natural world.

She often hears, she said, “Oh, you’re one of those people who wants to change the world,” to which she replies, “We are already changing the world, but we have the choice of how we are changing the world.”

Panels and Discussions

Working In A War Zone

Alvaro Restrepo, Colombia, Nicholas Rowe, West Bank, Palestine/Israel, Osman Benk Sankoh, Sierra Leone, Anja Susa, Serbia, Tom Sandborn, Canada (facilitator)

Osman Benk Sankoh from Sierra Leone was absent because his visa to Canada was denied.

Tom Sandborn facilitated a discussion during which delegates from the West Bank, Colombia and Serbia shared their stories and the group engaged in some very moving dialogue.

Gathering in a large circle, each of the 60 participants stated his/her name and offered a perspective about the relationship between art and war that came from personal experience. Their stories revealed how strategies of living in war zones can be an art form in itself; how art can have healing intent; and how it can guide us through a therapeutic process of rehabilitation. The group spoke about art for the forgotten, art that helps us to remember. People described art that can scream across the divide to communicate the pain and suffering of war and they talked about the art of resistance, art that fights against occupation, persecution and oppression. Others mentioned art as propaganda and art that can change citizens into warriors or pacifists and spoke about art that can deny reality.

Art is used in education for peace-building and dialogue and can become another language of social forums. It can create a positive space for children who cannot understand play without violence. Art can create common cause and it can create empathy. It can serve as the conscience of a society.

Someone in the group talked about the fact that war is all around us, be it war against cuts to social programs in Vancouver, against poverty and disease, wars against the environment, the defence of basic human rights, ethnic conflicts, or battles to change the effects of economic globalization.

Anja Susa from Serbia told the story of her theatre company for children, challenging the idea of what theatre for young people should be, depict and evoke. She spoke about the need to create theatre that comes from the real lives and imaginations of the people in her society, one that has endured war and that continues to be divided. She talked about the unwillingness of many to look at their own society in honest and direct ways and of how theatre often does not challenge this denial. She also talked of the success she has experienced when presenting work for young people that more accurately reflected their lives.

From the West Bank, Nicholas Rowe spoke passionately of a land so overwhelmed by war that art had disappeared. Now, he struggles to convince others in the city of Ramallah that art in this war zone is of real value. He talked about the changes he has seen resulting from dance work that addresses some of the very basic emotional and physical needs of young people who live in the refugee camps. His work, he said, was not about making peace but about helping people live with the reality of war. He spoke about the many challenges faced by the community within which he is working, from freedom of movement to basic health care. He talked about how many youth do not know body language that is not rooted in violent or aggressive gestures. He also mentioned how the fact that 30 delegates (from Africa, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) had been denied visas to Canada clearly demonstrated another aspect of a world at war.

From Colombia, and out of the body of Alvaro Restrepo, in a silent and powerful dance he performed in the centre of the circle, came the question, "What is the War Spirit? What are the seeds of war?" After he danced, Restrepo talked about the "macabre dialogue" emerging between his country, with the highest murder rate in the world, and France, with the highest suicide rate in the world. Colegio del Cuerpo, the school he co-founded and directs, does remarkable work with displaced and disadvantaged youth in Cartagena. As the new director of the Hamburg Festival in Germany, he also talked about the theme for next year's event, to be called *Body Mirror World* and went on to describe a large public ritual that he had created in Colombia. Finally, he talked about the centrality

of the body itself in his approach to the creation of transformative work.

Major discussion then centred around the devaluing of art work in community and the lack of funding support for these important, very diverse, forms of art practice. Restrepo mentioned that his organization rarely uses the word "art" when applying for funding.

After more dialogue, including an interesting conversation about how "the foot is connected to the head" (i.e., the body to the mind), participants thanked each other across the circle for the work they are doing in the world and at the Symposium. They honoured each other's tales of suffering and stories of hope and success. This was a very moving session.

Freedom To Speak

Tony Le Nguyen, Australia and Vietnam, Mark Teh, Malaysia, Mort Winston, U.S.A., Pun Siu-fai, China, Tom Sandborn, Canada (facilitator)

Tom Sandborn facilitated a panel and discussion about censorship, safety and strategies, with delegates from Malaysia, Vietnam/Australia, China, and the U.S.A. "Like most of you, I didn't have much choice about where I was born," said Dr. Mort Winston, preferring to think of himself as a citizen of the Earth before a being a citizen of the United States. He outlined basic principles of human rights and their historical evolution, giving the group an excellent overview of international conventions and the work that is going on worldwide to defend these principles. He discussed the decreased free flow of ideas and people across borders since the events of 9/11 and the increased threats to basic rights that are occurring now in the U.S., as well as in other parts of the world. His presentation illustrated the complexity of international cooperation and the need for vigilance and creativity in defending and promoting human rights.

The other three panellists were somewhat more optimistic, describing issues of censorship as borders to push as they outlined how they've learned to work within severe situations of censorship. Pun Siu-fai said he feels that many youth in China are very submissive to authority and are self-censoring to a disturbing degree. Still, he does not give up hope, believing that the next fifty years will see significant change and the development of stronger resistance to censorship. He feels that art is a necessary tool for change since "artists have that space to move."

Twenty-three-year-old Mark Teh set the stage with an overview of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where university students are not allowed to be active in politics; newspapers are owned by the ruling political party; and citizens can be detained for up to two years without explanation. Mark discussed the challenges of the overwhelming and absurd censorship that has plagued



theatre productions for the last few years. Plays cannot mention race, religion, ethnicity, policies, laws, nudity, royalty or “anyone dead or alive” and theatre scripts have to “pass” three committees of censors. Artists have taken to working with more movement-based, non-verbal techniques to “bypass” the system. He attempts to push limits and is working to have the censorship he is fighting recognized as an infringement on human rights.

Tony Le Nguyen described how Vietnam has freedoms that are not afforded in such places as Australia or Canada. In Vietnam you “can piss anywhere you like, can drive scooter bikes anywhere you like and you can sell your food anywhere you like.” On the other hand, harsh censorship rules over what can be performed on stage. As Vietnam opens up, he sees freedom of expression issues becoming more openly discussed. But in the present, doing theatre work on issues like HIV/AIDS is problematic. “Working in theatre in Vietnam,” Tony explained, “can be a bit like doing Seinfeld in Vietnam – doing theatre about nothing.” He is determined to gently push the limits of what he can do.

HIV/AIDS and the Arts in Africa

Brigid Schutz, South Africa, Michele Schiess, South Africa, Dr. Louise Bourgault, U.S.A., Max Wyman, Canada (facilitator)

Munyaradzi Muzenda from Zimbabwe and Jackson Ndawula from Uganda were absent as they were denied entry visas to Canada.

Facilitated by Max Wyman, this panel of delegates from South Africa and the U.S. explored the many innovative

ways artists in Africa are working to combat the AIDS pandemic. Central to the discussion was the notion of art as an interactive process. Dr. Louise Bourgault spoke about AIDS murals and the educational theatre group called Dramaide, which fights against AIDS using improvisational theatre. She explained how theatre helps people from all levels in the community find a common ground and become comfortable sharing their stories about how HIV/AIDS has affected their lives and their loved ones. She emphasized that art encourages group power and action.

Brigid Schutz and her organization, arrep, use puppetry to reach and educate audiences. Puppetry has the power to address taboo matters, such as sex education, in a non-threatening way. This approach is fun and colourful for young people, and, at the same time, enables the artists to approach sometimes shocking information without alienating audiences. When this form was initially unsuccessful with older youth, Schutz modified and re-focused the content to allow it to become more relevant to them. The use of these puppets can appeal even to adults as it helps them to suspend their beliefs and make room for new ideas.

Michele Schiess discussed the importance of performance and disclosure. She explained that music and drama give people the power to speak openly about some of the unspoken issues in African cultures. She pointed out that in Africa, where HIV is “running riot,” the arts sensitize people to their environment and help to start a dialogue about AIDS, “encouraging people who have been holding in their terror, allowing them to speak.”

This open dialogue was very lively and centred mainly around the ways artists are changing dangerous, uninformed perspectives and behaviours. Knowing how very challenging life is for so many people in Africa, it was energizing to learn of the ways artists are helping to create positive change.

A Dialogue with Liz Lerman

She walked around, introduced herself and shook everyone's hand. She took off her shoes and asked the group members to introduce themselves. And so the dialogue began. Topics ranged from funding issues to working with senior citizens, to issues in education and specialization. It was a diverse group from many backgrounds and places around the globe. Yet Liz managed to connect these subjects with her profound comments, linking ideas with her own work and with more general contexts. Her anecdotes were captivating and inspirational.

A debate began: specialization versus interdisciplinary work in the arts. Salient points came from all corners of the room. The dialogue was connected, friendly and varied. Images of Venn diagrams and shorelines were useful, visceral, metaphors; poetry became another language in comments such as "the body is the bridge" and "the mind occupies the space in between every cell."

Liz led the conversation through many postmodern ideas like a fluid dance. She wove her own ideas and questions in and out of the spaces created by the participants in the dialogue. She was the bridge as she continued to engage people in meaningful dialogue. She listened intently, intently, smiling. Her ability to translate multi-layered thoughts into simple language was astounding; she was reachable, so versatile. Our time was up. We left the session with new questions, provoking us to think about pedagogy and the place, role and importance of art in the community.

Media/New Media

**Carly Stasko and Laura Milliken, Canada,
Brandon Saul, Australia, Max Wyman,
Canada (facilitator)**

In this session, panel members from Canada and Australia talked about new and effective ways in which youth are engaging with conventional and new media forms. Max Wyman, who has spent the last 30 years in Vancouver writing and speaking about contemporary arts and culture, was the facilitator. Laura Milliken, Carly Stasko and Brandon Saul are all active in projects designed to open up the realm of personal expression to a broader and more inclusive range of people.

Milliken is a Toronto producer whose company, *Big Soul*, has recently been working on a television series called

Moccasin Flats, which is created and produced exclusively by First Nations people and is designed, in part, to engage its audiences with First Nations' issues and perspectives. Saul is from Australia and heads an organization that produces projects with and for Australian youth, using new web-based technologies to distribute their creative ideas. His major project, *noise*, is an Australian national media arts festival that showcases writing, animation, e-works, images, moving pictures, DJ sets, 'zines, spoken word and new and re-mixed music, all created by young Australians and experienced by a national audience of over 15 million. Stasko hails from Toronto and coordinates projects designed to take back public space by using cultural expression. She also produces books, 'zines and various forms of culture jamming.

A number of important questions were raised. How can new technologies introduce new ideas to youth? How do we deal with personal expression that enters the public arena and is not considered to be "excellent" or even "good" art? How do we deal with funding bodies that may want to constrict or channel our creative voices? Finally, how do we deal with issues of technological accessibility?

Throughout the discussion, participants often returned to the subject of inclusivity and of the need to push existing boundaries of forms and content of expression and of participation. This expansion was felt to be necessary in order to nurture creative movements around the world, creating effective networks that bring together communities of like-minded people, regardless of their resources, backgrounds or location.

Visual Arts Circle

Diego Samper, Canada and Colombia

The sounds of rain pattering on foliage, rolling thunder and waves crashing on the shore enveloped a small group of strangers gathered together inside a circular dwelling. It was not protection from the elements that brought us together. This shelter was designed for the purpose of communion.

"Shelter" is the name given to the architectonic installation created by artist Diego Samper for the Symposium. The tent-like structure is made of bamboo poles formed in circular patterns to create a dome that is held together by cord, rope and tensile strength. This "skeleton" is covered with translucent fabric that had been naturally weathered by rust and other natural substances. The interior space contained a circle of mats. Bamboo poles hung in a curtain at the entrance and a trio of large stones sat in the centre. Several curious-looking assemblages were made of a length of cord suspended from the ceiling. Stacks of small bamboo rods of different lengths were pierced by the cord, which was anchored to the ground by stones. Inspired by similar looking

aboriginal toys, these assemblages lent an additional tactile and whimsical element to the installation. If one lifted the bamboo sticks up the cord, and let them drop, they clacked together all the way back down, creating unpredictable and delightful musical sounds.

Diego Samper's use of natural materials for *Shelter* is rooted in eight years of living with indigenous people in Colombia. For two of these years, he lived in a remote village in the Amazon rainforest in a similar structure. There he discovered how these shelters are used not only for protection, but also as central gathering places for the whole community, places where daily communal life and ritual take place.

Diego integrated his presentation with an open dialogue. Thoughts and feelings created by sitting inside the *Shelter* were shared. We talked about the need to reclaim public spaces, about culture jamming, about community art and about creating art in today's political climate. We were a diverse assortment of people, connected to one another in the warm and meditative atmosphere that *Shelter* offered us.

Writers' Circle

John Lazarus

The Writers' Circle, led by Professor John Lazarus from Queens University, was an intriguing informal discussion that touched on a variety of issues and challenges facing writers. Drawing on Liz Lerman's speech of the day before, Professor Lazarus began the discussion by asking participants to share their own experiences of trying to balance career and personal obligations while still making contributions to society. He began by discussing his own challenges as a professor and playwright. By teaching future artists the value of creative and critical thinking, he feels he is helping shape a future generation of artists who will produce high-quality work that is potentially meaningful, relevant and satisfying.

Dr. Morton Winston spoke about his writing over many years on human rights issues in national and international contexts. As a professor, he teaches courses that address philosophical and ethical issues that surround "hot" topics such as abortion, animal rights and gender equality. He finds that a great challenge to community activism lies in how little economic value is attached to voluntary work one does for the greater good, as opposed to the financial rewards of traditional employment in our economic system.

Delegates from a variety of backgrounds, among them, actors, journalists and community activists, continued with a lively discussion that centred around writing about environmental and social justice issues and the difficulties of making a living while living a life of activism. The group agreed that it is a major challenge to find creative and workable solutions to the dilemma of keeping food on the table.



An interesting tangent to the conversation, and an example of creative economic thinking, was Professor Winston's description of "mission-based investing." Rather than avoiding investing in companies that do not adopt acceptable ethical standards ("value-based investing"), socially-conscious organizations use their capital to invest in unethical corporations. By forming shareholder coalitions, these organizations gain clout and consequently can influence the policies of major corporations. Professor Winston brought up a recent example in which Amnesty International led a coalition that invested in Exxon Mobil. The coalition wanted the company to make an explicit commitment to recognize labour rights and conventions. Exxon Mobil agreed, adopting the resolution put forward by the coalition.

Environmental and Social Justice Workshops

Native Youth Activism

Clayton Thomas-Muller, Brennan Manoakesick and Miali-Elise Coley, First Nations in Canada

At the time Columbus sailed, "India" was called "Hindustan." A man of traditional European learning, Columbus observed the frequent praying and worship of the gods by the indigenous peoples in the Caribbean island area and joined the words "id" (child) and "Dios" (God) to originate the term "Indian." Thus began the creation of a systematic process of homogenization and the dis-empowerment of indigenous peoples, a process of seeing the world through a "white" lens.

Surveying the history of native activism, the workshop presenters pointed out that environmental destruction is a human-rights issue for societies that are connected to the



land culturally, physically, economically and spiritually. It follows that environmental damage resulting from decisions made by those in political and economic power – usually members of a white elite – become a deep attack on aboriginal cultures. In response to this dynamic, a group of Inuit youth is taking President George Bush to court for the climate changes affecting them in northern settings as a result of decisions made and executed by the American government.

The discussion revealed that there is a great deal of “in-house” work to do. Native youth activists struggle to raise awareness of their history and cultural identity and work to foster a reconnection to the land within their communities. This occurs in urban centres largely through the networks of urban Friendship Centres that provide a family to those who have come from outside the cities. A great deal of internalized oppression must be dealt with as people struggle to contend with very strong individual and collective memory. The last residential school in Canada was closed in 1986. As late as 1969, aboriginal peoples in Canada could neither leave their reserves without written permission nor vote. White people must understand and educate each other about white privilege and must support anti-racism work. This is a responsibility held by people who benefit from privileges that are built on stolen land, resources and labour. It was pointed out that asking a white person to understand white privilege is kind of like asking a fish to explain how it breathes under water – “What do you mean? I just breathe!”

The group agreed that there is still a lot of work ahead and left inspired by the affirmation that there is a solid and growing movement of indigenous activism and resistance – and that these groups are working in solidarity with white people who are taking responsibility for their privilege.

Your Food, Your Water: What You Might Want To Know Check Your Head, Canada

This interactive workshop, presented by two members of Check Your Head, explored issues surrounding genetically-modified food and looked at the present state of our global water supply and its distribution. Participants discussed food security and the control of water.

Genetically modified organisms (GMO's) have had their DNA altered. Myths arise about GMO's, some false and some true, but because our access to information in the popular media is limited, it is often difficult to understand just what is happening, particularly on a global basis. Accurate consumer labelling of food is of concern here in Canada. Except for countries that are part of the European Union, and Japan, there are no laws that require companies to list products that contain GMO's.

The world's water supply, its distribution and the privatization of water by large corporations are critical issues in every corner of the globe. World water consumption doubles every ten years and it is believed that by 2025 two-thirds of the global population will be short of water. Canada has 20% of the world's fresh water. Canadians take their access to clean, drinkable, water for granted in a world where the majority do not enjoy this basic necessity.

This workshop provided us with new information and gave us sources to continue that learning. It also created a sense of urgency about the need for action on these many critical issues.



Globalization 101 Check Your Head, Canada

“My name is... and I am from...Uruguay, South Africa, Vancouver, New England, Toronto, Kenya, Peru, Japan, Nova Scotia, Istanbul, Malaysia, Ottawa, Victoria....”

Around the circle, 60 participants named the places that they had travelled from to join this conversation about globalization. Despite the geographical distances between

us, we soon became aware of connections to one another, partly as a consequence of the flow of goods and information in our tightly-knit global economy. The workshop gave us facts about economic globalization and how it affects youth in particular. We learned a definition of a living wage – what a person needs to earn to pay for shelter, transportation, food, education, medical care and to create some modest savings. The two facilitators revealed that if a mere dollar were added to the cost of a pair of Nike running shoes, or if NIKE were to offer their workers less than 1% of their profits, all of their employees would earn a living wage.

The gathering was divided into smaller groups, each becoming a government of an imaginary country, charged with bidding against the others in an attempt to win a shoe-production contract with a large company. Union rights? Minimum wage? Corporate taxation? Environmental standards? Minimum ages for workers? Battling the other countries for the bid, the groups asked themselves: “What are our priorities?” and “What are we willing to sacrifice to get the bid?”



In the end, this process was revealed to be a “race to the bottom.” A round of applause went up for the one group that decided not to bid – instead, the members of that group created their own alternative economic system and became self-sufficient, inviting the other “countries” to join in trade with them. The session ended with the provocative questions: “What do I believe are the priorities? What values do I believe can be sacrificed in the name of profitable commerce?”

State of the Earth

Suzuki Foundation, Canada

Promising that she would get to a message of hope at the end, Krista Garah, from the Suzuki Foundation, began by painting a grim picture of the planet. She described the “progress” made since the first Earth Day in 1970. Fossil fuel extraction and consumption, population growth, waste production, air traffic, logging, fishing and mining have all increased, some as much as twelve-fold, in the last 34 years.



We named the many consequences of the imbalances we are already experiencing, all created by our over-consumption of the Earth’s natural resources. Quoting from a major study, released in 1990 at the Rio Summit, Garah reminded us that 16,000 scientists from 90 countries around the globe have warned that fundamental changes in patterns of consumption are urgently needed. Within a few decades, without a massive change in these patterns, the Earth will not be able to sustain lives even remotely similar to the ones we have known. It has been estimated that if China and India were to use natural resources at the same level as North America is doing at present, we would need another 34 Earths! Garah shared an interesting fact that Canadians especially need to note: although Statistics Canada reports that 9 out of 10 Canadians rate environmental issues as a top concern, Canada was rated 28th in a list of 29 industrial countries’ environmental practices.

With the group’s consciousness raised and passions ignited, Garah presented a video excerpt from David Suzuki’s series, *The Sacred Balance*. Suzuki talked about the variety of ways that indigenous peoples understand the whole Earth and all life on it as a sacred, single entity. He spoke about how human actions have direct consequences on that whole and urged that we be mindful and responsible in our choices – that we must act with wisdom. Old wisdom has been over-shadowed by “modern” ways of understanding the Earth as a machine or mechanism and not as truly alive.

Finally, one of many positive strategies was offered. The Suzuki Foundation has issued a “Nature Challenge” to people living in the industrialized world. Participants are offered 10 “deceptively simple” steps that we, as citizens and consumers, can take. The group was asked to read the list, choose three of the ten steps, and register their promise to commit to these actions at www.davidsuzuki.org.

Youth Leadership and Global Citizenship: Putting Ideas Into Action

Youth Millennium Project, Canada

The Youth Millennium Project (YMP) hosted a workshop to explore three major facets of becoming a leader in global citizenship: leading awareness, leading assistance and leading activity. Participants learned how to they might become a force for global leadership in their communities and around the world. YMP functions primarily as a global network hub to help youth communicate with each other in order to create projects for change. The projects are both youth-conceived and youth-led and are supported by adults. Whether youth are travelling to Guyana to record the stories of people suffering from malnutrition and diabetes, or asking UNICEF for some scrap wood to build desks for children in the Congo, or making sandwiches for homeless people on the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, they are all learning equally valuable lessons about community development and raising social awareness.



Environment and Social Justice: The Connections

Sierra Youth Coalition, Canada

This youth-led, interactive workshop given by Kerri Klein from the Sierra Youth Coalition explored issues of inequality and power in our society as a basis for discussing environmental and social concerns, both local and global. SYC programs include Sustainable Campus, Youth Action Gatherings and biking trips for youth.

One of the activities of the workshop was a game. Michael Sheely and Kerri Klein used the model of an egg to talk about sustainability. The white of the egg represents the ecosystem, including land, materials, water, air and energy. The yolk represents the “people” system, and includes knowledge, community, governance, economy and health. The yolk cannot be healthy without the white; the belief systems, values and paradigms of the yolk affect the white. This interconnectedness of the ecosystem to the people system was illustrated with a ball of string. The members

of the group was asked to imagine themselves as a component of either of the two systems. The first participant held one end of the ball and announced a component he had chosen, something that could be as simple as a dandelion or as complex as the health of a whole community. Still holding on to the string, this person passed the ball of string to the next participant who announced her choice to the group and explained how it might be connected to the previous element. Eventually, each person in the circle was connected via the string to the others. If one person tugged on the string, everyone felt the effect. This amusing game clearly revealed how one system depends on the other and how placing stress on one component of either system created stress on everything else.

Free Trade – Fair Trade:

The Oxfam Canada Coffee Story

Michael Zelmer, Canada

Fair Trade is a movement that has been around for decades that has become more prominent in the last several years. In this session, participants learned that in conventional trade, the exchange between producers and buyers is rarely fair. In most cases, the person or company buying a product or service is looking for the lowest possible price in order to make the greatest possible profit. This applies whether the buyer owns a small store or is a multinational corporation. For the producer, it often means exploitation, poverty and intolerable working conditions. The workshop group learned that there are fairer alternatives that are economically viable. The example of fairly-traded coffee was described as a system in which coffee is bought directly from farming cooperatives, eliminating the role of the mid-level trader and allowing farmers to earn a fair living for their labour.

Rights, Wants and Needs

UNICEF, Canada

UNICEF hosted a workshop that examined our basic needs as rights and demonstrated the links between rights and responsibilities. Participants developed a basic understanding of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and identified critical physical and emotional needs for their basic health and well-being. A “true or false” game familiarized the participants with UNICEF’s work involving human and children’s rights and the group learned how these rights fall into two categories: survival or developmental. Survival rights include housing, food, water and health. Developmental rights include access to education and freedom of expression. Participants also learned how UNICEF uses the CRC in programs designed to decrease bullying and racism in schools in the Canadian Maritime provinces.



Privilege/ Oppression: Gender, Class and Race
Romi Chandra and Sara Kendall, Canada

Romi Chandra and Sara Kendall, in an interactive process, helped the group to explore how issues of race, sexuality, class and gender can affect and impede our interaction with each other. Chandra and Kendall helped us to investigate privilege and oppression in both local and global contexts. We looked at how media representations, stereotypes and power structures that control them can contribute to systems of racism, sexism, classism, homophobia and other forms of oppression. The creation of an “oppression alphabet” – Appropriation, Bigotry, Civilization, etc. – revealed multiple layers of this complex picture. Chandra and Kendall explained how children are blind to differences and drew a human eye on the board. Then, words like “media,” “church” and “pop culture” were written over top of the eye, words that spoke of forms of socialization that can prevent us from seeing the world clearly. Through group activities, questioning and dialogue, the group looked at how we internalize both oppression and privilege, and explored how these issues extend out beyond us to global contexts.

Youth-Driven/Youth-Friendly:
More Than Just Words

Spencer Herbert and Rachel Marcuse, Canada

Participants joined Spencer Herbert and Rachel Marcuse in this youth-led, interactive session to explore the concepts of “youth-driven” and “youth-friendly.” The session began with the question, “What are the coolest and less cool things about being young?” Participants revealed that having a lot of energy, creativity and taking risks fell into the “cool” category, while not being heard, not having credibility and not knowing yourself very well were some of the disadvantages to being young. Participants were then asked to define what makes something youth-friendly. Youth-friendly ingredients included showing respect in actions and words, like making eye-contact and handshakes, and avoiding pre-conceived ideas about how young people think and behave. Recognizing that a young person’s time is just as valuable as an adult’s time was also considered important, as was the fact that equality is realized when youth are allotted equal time for discussion and are paid for work that they do. Next, participants set out to define what it means for something to be truly youth-driven. A youth-driven organization is run by and for youth; youth are given the tools to do a job and the staff act as facilitators. Finally, the group identified and discussed some of the challenges, such as tokenism, that organizations and individuals alike need to overcome if they truly want to be youth-friendly and/or youth-driven.

Mapping the Issues

Environmental Youth Alliance, Canada and Femi Folorunso, Nigeria

Femi Folorunso, Nigerian head of Roots and Shoots, Jane Goodall's organization, was not present as he was denied a visa to enter Canada.

Canada's Environmental Youth Alliance led a mapping workshop designed to draw out individual and collective voices about environmental and social justice issues. We created maps of issues and actions in our local communities as a way to learn about each other's local situations and perspectives. These local-asset maps were then linked to a global context as a way to understand international action and connection.

We were taught two forms of mapping. The first was the creation of geographical maps that described the place where we live by using layers of text and imagery. Next, we outlined our own bodies on paper and filled the insides of these bodies with the issues and concerns that we have for our communities. We stood back and examined these maps, which decorated the wall like gingerbread cookies holding hands. We then added stickers to the maps of others where concerns were similar to our own. Issues of unhealthy environments and urban gentrification turned out to be recurring themes for this group.

These mapping exercises sparked a discussion about "art for the purpose of engaging others." Tina shared her recent mapping project on the Gulf Islands in British Columbia and Jack described his annual costume bike parade in the Philippines that promotes the use of bicycles. Conversations continued through the lunch break as ideas for new projects began taking shape.



Pathways to Social Change:

Activism and the Youth Community

Spencer Herbert and Nadim Kara, Canada

Each person was presented with a large blank sheet of paper as they entered the room. Participants were asked to draw what a socially, environmentally and

economically just world would look like to them. At the other end of the page they filled in the blank: "When I work towards social change, I work primarily through my role as __," using words or pictures. The group then discussed each person's images. In groups of five, participants reflected on the pathways for work in social change that they have each chosen; the challenges/opportunities they face in their chosen paths; why they have chosen these roles; and whether or not this path is working for them. Still in groups, participants explored different pathways related to their skills and values, shared what they value/fear/wonder about each pathway, and came up with questions to be posed to other people on different paths.

Eventually the groups came together in a circle and shared their discoveries with the larger group. A strong message of the workshop was that both imagination and creativity are required to produce space in which social change can occur.

Show and Tells

Ataf Shaikh from Saathi, India

To understand what the non-governmental organization, Saathi, does, Ataf Shaikh described the following scenario about a youth named Hanif, who lives on the streets of Bombay: When Hanif was twelve, his step-mother tortured him by putting chilli peppers in his eyes. To this day, his eyes have not stopped watering. When he fled his small town to seek a different life and arrived at the train station in Bombay, he was lost and was soon physically, sexually and mentally exploited and abused. He worked as a garbage picker and made only enough money to buy his daily food. If he earned more, he would be robbed while he slept on the street.

Hanif is one of 50,000 youth who live on Bombay's streets on their own. (Another 75,000 live in pavement hutments or shanties with one or both parents, but in extremely poor conditions.) Because Hanif is over the age of 14, there were few organizations around to help him until Saathi was formed. Saathi is unique, because it takes on the challenge of working with youth over 14, an age group that is often seen as too difficult to work with effectively because of the anger and rebellious nature of many of these teenagers. Saathi works on many levels, ranging from directly supporting street youth, to fighting legal and political battles to protect youth from sexual exploitation.

Now in its eighth year, Saathi tries to connect with young people at Bombay railway and bus stations where fleeing youth arrive in the city and become easy targets for recruiters in the sex industry, including producers of pornography. In addition to their work on the street, Saathi also runs a youth centre where street youth can

acquire a non-formal education, learn how to save money for the future and get legal protection.

A staff of 44 works annually with 600 youth, teaching them new skills that enable them to lead healthier lives, to look to the future with hope and to overcome feelings of hate and revenge they may harbour. Saathi encourages them to participate in a wide variety of activities such as training for marathons and participating in non-performing theatre. Theatre is used as an effective tool for healing, offering youth a chance to grow and to gain confidence and independence.

This is very challenging work. Altaf Shaikh and other Saathi staff have often faced situations where their personal safety has been at risk. And they are always facing the challenge of persuading the Bombay government to take more responsibility for the plight of these young citizens.

Ch'aska Anqa Ninawaman, Peru

In an intimate setting, Ch'aska asked the group to move in closer, to create a circle where they could share thoughts, ideas and energy. She took the group on a journey with stories and slides from her community of Chisikata, near Cuzco, in Peru. Ch'aska spoke about how her educational work is based in her Inca ancestry and told us about the indigenous youth movement in Cuzco. Her work is rooted in a desire to teach youth in her community about their ancestry, culture and traditions. To facilitate this, Ch'aska went back to her own community to learn about the traditional philosophies and stories of her culture. She then began teaching children and young people at a school created to rediscover these cultural origins.

As participants looked at slides of Andean mountains, Ch'aska explained their spiritual significance. Many *Quechuan* philosophies are based in nature. Three levels of cosmology are closely tied to nature: the upper world (sun-father and moon-mother); the central world (the present natural environment); and the underworld (ancestors and spiritual world). This became clear to the group as everyone gazed at a beautiful panorama of two holy mountains that contain the eternal energy and strength of the Father and Mother.

The arts and the environment are fused together in the most natural ways. Death is celebrated through dance; the deceased metaphorically re-enter the mountains from whence they came. The group listened intently as Ch'aska continued to talk about climbing mountains, collecting ice and singing, dancing and chanting throughout the one-month-long Festival of Snow.

The session ended in a wonderful way. A young indigenous man from Turtle Island offered a traditional song as a thank you to Ch'aska, who responded with a



tune from her own culture – about a frog! The parallels were amazing and this exchange was a clear and emotional celebration and sharing of our traditions.

Syed Mizanur Rahman, Bangladesh

Syed talked about his work in Bangladesh with TREE (Theatre for Research Education and Empowerment). TREE focuses on education through theatre and other arts in a broad mix of communities. He showed the group three very arresting posters that were created after lengthy workshop/intervention processes in three Bangladeshi communities. The posters sparked a discussion about the important issues these posters spoke to: increasing women's employment as a way to reduce child labour; the challenges facing transgender people; and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

TREE'S theatre workshops and performances are designed to create new ways of learning and to create positive change in many different contexts, from fishing communities to brothels. Through quiet integration into community life, TREE is able to create significant changes in attitudes and foster new insight as it works with others for positive social and economic change. Their tools include theatre, visual arts and weekly radio dramas and discussions that are heard by thousands of people. Social barriers against artistic practices can be challenging in Bangladesh, but TREE's work has been acknowledged and supported by both government and the private sector.

Jack Yabut, Philippines

When was the last time you saw a firefly in the city? They don't fly around anymore in Manila because of pollution – except once a year during the *Tour of the Fireflies*. The Firefly Brigade and the Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA) are trying to make life in the city sustainable by combining the concept of bicycle activism with a modern opera that tours the Philippines on wheels. Jack Yabut, the organizer of this initiative, says that the two-wheel project was built on the belief that "artists can



easily become environmentalists due to their capacity to love.” While the *Tour of the Fireflies* (a yearly street cycling event) is now in its sixth year, this new, moving theatre performance tour will last for six months beginning in November 2004 and will cover 3,000 kilometres.

In the opera, *Cantata Alitaptat*, cycling artists are met by people from the local community who cycle together to the performance space. (Before the troupe arrives, young local artists have been invited to participate in the event and workshops have taken place for several weeks.) As a prelude to the performance – and to advertise the show – a local person pedals a stationary bike in the town square that generates enough energy to light up a tree that is hung with many lights; the tree represents the natural habitat of fireflies. The audience that gathers to watch this spectacle is encouraged to dance along with the performers and to come to the show that follows.

Jack Yabut explained that PETA and the Firefly Brigade are doing the government’s work. In a country where U.S. \$400 million is spent annually on health problems that are a result of pollution, the Philippine government should, itself, be promoting cycling and sustainability. Yabut added that The Firefly Brigade never officially *asks* for permission from the local authorities to occupy the streets for their cycling manifestations, they *invite* the government. As he says, “the Fireflies are a tool for the government. We do the government’s work and the government would be smart to participate with us.” It turns out that government participation is growing.

A grand finale is set to take place in April, 2005, when the many communities that have participated in the *Cantata Alitaptat* will cycle to Manila to advocate for healthier communities. Yabut hopes to develop an international project for “reclaiming the streets” in which community members will cycle together to advocate for safe habitats for all species, whether it be fireflies, butterflies, crickets or human beings.

Fabrizio Crisafulli, Italy

Fabrizio Crisafulli believes in using light not only to light performers on stage, but also as the centre of the visual experience of theatre – the “object” to be seen. Light is the action. In his ongoing work titled *Theatre of Places* and in his previous work, Crisafulli also looks to natural sites and locations for direction and inspiration. He believes that these places are not merely sets, but are “theatre” in themselves, replete with memories, sounds and movement. One of his company’s plays was created for a 19th century theatre in Tuscany where the audience sat on the stage while the theatre’s balconies became the central setting for a piece about theatre life and the habits of theatre goers.

Part of the aesthetic of the *Theatre of Places* is to use *positive*, rather than *functional*, light as set design. Actors on stage interact with the light as part of the central content of the performance, rather than it being an added element, designed at the end of a rehearsal process. Crisafulli’s company, Campagnia Il Pudore Bene, in Vista, creates plays and exhibitions where light itself is an actor.

Crisafulli has also taught set design for many years. He believes that people often study theatre design without exploring the properties of light as principal elements of performance. Several illustrated books about Crisafulli’s work are available in Italian.

Films Presented during Breaking New Ground

Four films were shown at the Symposium, each dealing with social justice issues.

The Flute Player

Jocelyn Glatzer/U.S./2003

At the age of nine, Arn Chorn-Pond was thrust into the darkness of Cambodia’s ghastly Killing Fields. Arn’s musical talent kept him from perishing in the genocide

that took the lives of 2 million Cambodians. *The Flute Player* is a testament to one man's triumph over tragedy.

A Monk's Voice

Natalie Ducharme/Canada/2002

For half a century, Tibet has been under the shadow of Chinese rule and oppression. This is one monk's story as he works to preserve his religion, his people and his culture.

This is What Democracy Looks Like

*Seattle Independent Media Center
and Big Noise Films/U.S./2000*

Set at the World Trade Organization protest in Seattle, Washington, this documentary contains footage from over 100 activists. Narrated by Susan Sarandon and Michael Franti.

Inside Your Threads

Tania Natscheff/U.S./2003

This documentary examines the working conditions of "sweatshop" employees in Mexico and Bangladesh. It features powerful interviews with workers as they struggle to earn a living wage in several clothing factories.

Open Space Afternoon

Facilitated by William Cleveland

Delegates came together for this free-flowing afternoon of inquiry and dialogue on Saturday afternoon. The facilitator, Bill Cleveland, started the session by asking each of us to say a single word that encapsulated what we were feeling at that moment. A rich and moving poetic list emerged as the microphone was handed around the room. "*Joy... Solidarity... Hope... Expectation... Courage... Wonder...*"

Mr. Cleveland then explained how the following four hours would be led by participants themselves, under the umbrella of the thematic question: "*How can we best integrate the practice of art into our work to create a more just and environmentally-sustainable world?*"

A blank timetable on the wall was quickly filled with proposals from individual delegates, each in the form of a question that they wanted to explore with others. Participants were then set free to attend the sessions that sparked their interest, each hosted by the person who had proposed that session. Four simple, yet important, principles guided the process: "*Whoever comes are the right people. Whatever happens is the only thing that could happen. Whenever it starts is always the right time. When it's over it's over.*"

The Proposed Sessions/Dialogues

- How do we build a culture of peace in B.C.?
- How do we use the body and the creative process to see with both lenses and develop a voice for a just and sustainable world? (We will *move!*)
- What will you take away from the *EARTH Symposium?* (A play group)
- How? Where? When? Why? Does healing happen in our work to create a more just and sustainable world?
- Global subway party? Any suggestions for a good date to do a global event? Would you like to see footage of Toronto subway parties? Celebrate public transit, break down barriers and reclaim public spaces!
- How can we improve our drama group and help youth use drama to reach out to the community?
- Who would like to see the work I do? – Manisha Mehta from Vidya in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India.
- Is art the art of asking hard questions?
- How can theatre play a major role in economics?
- How are NGOs and community groups working for social justice in Pakistan?
- How can we move society toward embracing environmental sustainability? (a.k.a. Life)
- How can the performing arts contribute to a wider understanding of a conflict?
- How can we use forum theatre to create just laws and government policy?
- Are there any individuals or organizations interested in working or performing in Pakistan? What are the possibilities?
- How can we create university courses/curricula to promote social justice in North America?
- How can we make the use of arts for intervention more participatory?
- How do we get people who don't want to perform, to perform?
- How do we help youth feel comfortable attending adult-led sessions and adults feel comfortable attending youth-led sessions?
- How can we support youth to create their *own* culture and their *own* art-making processes?
- Who would like to hear First Nation (Peru) stories?
- How can the ethics of "DIY culture" or sustainable arts be implemented in international or global movements?
- Would you like to join me in a bicycle firefly theatre co-production?
- What does dance mean to you? How can dance make you feel good?
- Who would like to join me in a wordless cross-cultural game? (From a Japanese delegate)

- Any interest in hearing about an M.A. Theatre and Media for Development course in the U.K.?
- Would you like to know more about an internship programme in India?

We offer descriptions of three of these sessions and excerpts from the verbal reports that we heard when the whole group re-assembled four hours later at the end of the afternoon.



Three of the Sessions **Who would like to join me for a** **wordless cross-cultural drama workshop?** **(Nobuko Okamoto, Japan)**

Nobuko Okamoto teaches drama to Japanese school children. She finds that, as the children hit the high school years, they become much less willing to express themselves. Tension between girls and boys, and the imperative to look cool, combined with the rigidity of Japanese society, hinder participation in anything that is physically expressive. So Nobuko works on the spaces between people, helping them to bridge those difficult gaps. As she says, "Teenagers don't want to do what others don't do. Nor do they want to do what others do!"

To counter this stiffness, Nobuko has developed a game that uses the simplest of tools – chopsticks! In pairs, people hold the chopsticks cooperatively, using just the tip of the index finger to connect one's chopstick to another's, the partners moving around the room. If you move too far away from your partner, the chopsticks will fall; if you're too close, your arms bend awkwardly and the task becomes harder. The aim is to sense your partner's intention, moving with them wherever they want to go, however fast or slow. If you drop your chopsticks, you become a rock, crouched treacherously on the floor; people walk backwards a lot in this exercise and clumps of rocks quickly lead to more rocks! Nobuko adds many elements, such as speeding up and starting from a position low on the floor. It's more difficult and

strenuous to hold on to these chopsticks than it seems! Once the group has mastered this first stage, Nobuko adds more people to the pairs, until lines of six people are weaving in and out of one another, joined only by utensils more commonly associated with sushi. In this case, laughter often reduced success! By the end of the game, a line of 20 people were precariously tangled and having a great deal of fun. This exercise was simple and easy, yet it promoted sensitivity to the energy of others and broke down barriers in a comfortable way, while creating a vivid awareness of how our actions affect one another.

Nobuko, a funny and warm person who exudes infectious enthusiasm, belongs to a group of artists who promote theatre in Japanese schools, a luxury that Canadian children take for granted, but which is surprisingly rare in Japan. There are few forums for self-expression like today's Symposium or even end-of-term high school plays. Before we left, some participants noted that they had done a similar theatre exercise before, but that materials differed from country to country. Canada substitutes bamboo poles for the chopsticks, while in the U.K., they use shorter sticks or two pieces of paper. Adrian Jackson aptly commented that the Vancouver version should employ coffee cups.

Would you like to know more about an **internship program in India? (Altat Shaikh, India)**

Saathi – "companion" in Hindi – works with street youth aged 14 to 22 on the streets of Mumbai (Bombay). The NGO started its internship program a few years ago when ISIC, the organization that gives out the ubiquitous international student cards, approached them. The first intern is now part of the full-time staff and they have since developed the program into a structured experience.

The internship lasts at least three months, half of which the intern spends getting familiar with the various projects that Saathi coordinates and the other half spent in Kerala on land bought by the organization to develop and re-forest as a means of having a stable source of funding for its outreach activities. The latter include crisis intervention, the operation of group homes, and prevention, as well as newer projects like outdoor education, in which youth are invited to discover themselves through various activities like rock-climbing, rappelling and hiking.

The organization believes strongly in empowerment. Group homes are operated on the basis that youth should learn how to become self-sufficient and they are thus required to pay for their accommodation. Saathi pays the deposits and makes sure, through loans and forced savings programs, that financial need doesn't mean the loss of lodgings. The land Saathi bought is situated in one of the six most biodiverse places on earth and is



being developed with a view to restore and preserve this precious gem of nature. Interns thinking about applying should be aware that the work is hands-on and intense. Interns are responsible for travel and accommodation and will be asked to keep a daily logbook. There is a 10-day training session upon arrival.

For more information, please see their website at www.saathi.org or e-mail Altaf at saathi@bom5.vsnl.net.in

Who would like to see the work I do? (Manisha Mehta, India)

Manisha Mehta talked about and showed video of her work with VIDYA, an organization in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, that she created to address the many difficult social issues faced by women and girls in the region.

Because boy children are traditionally valued more than girls, a dramatic gender imbalance has developed, with many fewer girls than boys, especially in poor and rural communities. Deeply-entrenched social preferences and practices have led to a pattern of boy children receiving superior treatment in terms of nutrition, health care and education.

VIDYA attempts to not only change attitudes, but to change behaviour in concrete ways, including: reducing the abortion of female fetuses; improving girls' access to school (they often are required to leave by the age of twelve); reducing female child abuse; reducing girl child labour; and improving nutrition and medical care, including immunization. In short, VIDYA aims to "promote long-term improvement in the situation of girl children whose improved status will assist in the alleviation of poverty."

VIDYA's staff of 18 works closely with many volunteers. (All of the people who work with Manisha live in the slums of this city of seven million.) Manisha uses theatre as one of the main tools of her educational and community-building work. Large audiences attend the group's performances – 500,000 people recently saw one show!

Manisha spoke about the courage of the women who work with her – how they struggle to improve their rights and to gain economic independence and about how hope is created through a collective process. This was a most impressive session that showed us clearly how amazing and critically-important work can be accomplished in the most difficult of situations.

A Sampling of the Events, Ideas, Questions and "Helpful Hints" that Came out of the Open Space Afternoon Some Ideas about Work with Youth

- The impact of inter-generational work can be far-reaching and productive for everyone.
- Co-facilitation by a youth and an adult together has the potential to close communication gaps between the two groups. "Youth" is a state of mind; curiosity and the ability to play exist in every age group. One can be an "expert and a beginner" at the same time. "Youth-friendly" can be extended to the larger notion of "people-friendly." It can be very useful and illuminating for everyone when youth role-play the parts of adults with power.
- A significant element of good work with youth helps them to discover their own power. The "invitation" to live a creative life should extend past early childhood into adolescence and throughout adulthood.
- Independent artists who work outside of institutions with youth have a major role to play in the field.
- One way to engage and empower youth who are resistant to join group work ("too cool" or too frightened) is to ask them to help the facilitator rather than kicking them out – e.g., give them the stopwatch.
- To increase participation, while recruiting youth or while inside the artistic process, it can be helpful to identify the "leader" of the group, the person that the other youth are really listening to. Try to bring these individuals on-side so that they will lead the others into the work together.
- It is often much more productive to work with the body before any words are used. Physical expression often comes from a more directly-accessed source than the intellect. As an example, one exercise involves asking people to laugh "for no reason" and then to ask them what they were feeling or thinking while they were laughing.
- A great many of the Symposium workshops used the body as the starting point (even if not the central source) for the work. (Examples of this can be found throughout the workshop descriptions in this report.)
- Sometimes a very quick group process, such as having people throw words and sounds out into the room (with movement), and then quickly turning this into a rhythmic chant, can bring a group together in a simple and direct way.



A Sampling of the Information-Sharing that Occurred

- Cha'ska told traditional stories of her people and talked about the powerful roles women are playing in her community.
- David Diamond showed work from a recent theatre project, *Practicing Democracy*, that will help create new municipal social policy in Vancouver, one instance of the many examples of the direct impact that social activist art is making.
- Alex Mavrocordatos talked about the M.A degree Program in Theatre and Media for Development that is housed at the University of Winchester in the U.K.
- Shoab Iqbal told people about the large festival that Punjab Lok Raqs produced last year during which over 500 traditional artists performed – and invited delegates to join the 2005 festival.
- Jack Yabut identified potential new *Firefly Project* partners in Japan and Canada.
- Carly Stasko proposed a day-long global celebration to reclaim public space and suggested that all the events be documented and posted on *The EARTH Project* website.
- Altaf Shaikh talked about three-month internships at Saathi, half of that time spent in Bombay, working with street youth and half in Kerala, working with youth on an environmental regeneration project.
- Louise Bourgault shared some of her conversations with university students who talked about the irrelevance of much of their education, stressing the shortcomings of traditional text-based learning. Non-traditional, experiential, project-based courses were identified as high points for this group. Readings from humanistic perspectives (such as reading poetry about homelessness or learning about racism through literature), had more resonance for them. It was suggested that the innovative Centre for Dialogue at Simon Fraser University host an international gathering for teachers interested in learning about some of these new models.
- Questions were asked in a discussion about art and refugees. These were about how long it takes people to become “un-refugees” – how people want to define themselves and how governments define them and other questions about whether art “ever really changes anything” and how art is used to deal with conflict at many different levels.
- The group of delegates from Yokohama talked about the rigidity of Japanese society and of the reluctance at all official levels to acknowledge the huge problems that youth are experiencing. They showed videotape of a few of the light, large dance/drama productions they have produced that bring together children, youth and older performers, work that indirectly tries to deal with some of the issues, but avoid direct discussion of them. A 16-year-old from the group, the lead performer in a recent production, described how she and her friends are trying to create new work that challenges this silence and talked about the success of their successes and about the barriers that are making them create and produce “on their own.”

Bill Cleveland closed the afternoon by suggesting that “Five years from now, you may well remember this gathering as an event that was the beginning of something important.” He urged all of the delegates to remember, to commemorate and to celebrate their time together.

A Sampling of Letters from Delegates



Because of this symposium, my relationship to art, my views on my place in society, and my long-term life goals have all changed or – perhaps more accurately – been clarified greatly. I had previously toyed with the idea of going back to the Philippines – my country of birth and citizenship – and setting up an art school...or something vague like that, at least. Now I know that I want to and can use performing arts to work with communities in distress to give people tools they can wield to empower themselves.

But *The EARTH Project* goes beyond this Symposium, which I think of only as the cornerstone for more important things to come. I see tremendous value in pushing *The EARTH Project* all along its envisioned path, culminating in the proposed International Festival in 2006. The links that have been established between the participants of the symposium are strong, but tentative, promising, but fragile. The participants have now touched base; now they need to actually start doing work collaboratively. Continuity is crucial if the most substantial outcomes of *The EARTH Project* are to be realized. Thus I am pleading with anyone who is in a capacity to help realize this vision, to contribute what

energy and resources they can toward the project. I truly believe that *The EARTH Project* claims as its undertaking, unselfishly and without hubris, the fate of the planet.

– **Diego Maranan, Canada/Philippines**

The workshops within which I participated and interacted revealed that the best way to bring together young people is without a doubt through a common project. Here, young people have the chance to conceive, create and especially direct how principles are put into action. In brief, *The EARTH Symposium* allowed us to draw a portrait of the world for youth.... We have the means, the tools and the force to charge ahead. What remains is to mobilize more youth to strengthen our efforts. Today's young people have the chance to create their world and not have it made for them. Creativity is our wealth! I hope that there will be other symposiums of such calibre in the future. Let's become the artists of our own world!

– **Felix Joyal-Lacerte, Canada**

As an African, I cannot conceal my delight at having the focus of the conference drawn towards my own continent, its plight, and the work that we as artists are doing in HIV/AIDS awareness, education, prevention and related issues. Everything Mr. Lewis spoke of is the reality that we live, every day in Africa, and the very core of my passion and commitment to my work. Nothing he said was new to me, yet it touched me deeply. It was not the content, however, but the effect that content had on those around me, which moved me. He spoke with such depth of understanding and heartfelt humanity that he managed to turn numbers and statistics and faceless masses into utterly real and tangible life, leading the audience to truly empathise and grapple with the problems that we face in Africa.

Watching how his words affected the other delegates, and experiencing the outpouring of profound emotion and tears allowed me to realise how hardened I, and I believe we as a nation and continent, have become. Our people need to be so strong and resilient and resourceful

just to make it through every day. We need to be so tough to face, and attempt to deal with the problems posed by HIV/AIDS, that I think we sometimes lose sight of how unacceptable it is, how shocking it is to those who do not know, who have not understood, or who have not bothered to find out. I feel that sometimes we are drowning in the problem and our day-to-day attempt to fix it, and in our struggle not to collapse under the enormity of it all, that we forget that the situation shouldn't be this way, and that there is cause for so much heartache and outrage.

I thank Mr. Lewis for reminding me about the reasons for the fight as opposed to the fight itself, for opening up our African reality to his people, and for caring about the individuals. I could not help feeling that I was witnessing the birth of awareness amongst my North American associates and sensed that I was part of a new trend of interest in African affairs and hopefully sustained action from the North.

– **Brigid Schutz, South Africa**

The aching in my chest was not a heart attack, or building stomach gases. It could not be cured with a check-up from my doctor or a bottle of Pepto-Bismol. What I felt was the ache you feel when you are far from your loved ones. You see, I realized right there that in our short time together, I had come to love all of you and that going back to Winnipeg was the last thing that I wanted to do. I wanted to jump off the plane and swim to Victoria to visit everyone there, or fly to the east coast to eat a fish head and get initiated as a Newfie and eat all of your lobsters, or bike to the U.K. and learn about forum theatre or go down to the States and vote or canoe from Hudson's Bay to Nunavut or stay in Vancouver and buy a café mocha to go and stand on the picket lines dancing and singing and yelling my ass off.

But instead, with tears welling in my eyes, I move away from a place in which I've only spent a brief moment of my life, but that has felt more like home than any place ever did. All is not lost, however, because I am returning to Winnipeg with something that I have not been able to feel for a while. Hope. After meeting so many extraordinary people who were so amazingly passionate and focused in healing the world we share, I would be foolish not to have hope for our future. For the first time in a long time I am excited to look ahead. I can't wait to see what everyone will be up to in the days to come and I look forward to future events that will bring us all back together to share our triumphs.

– **Lok Lu, Canada**



I am sorry I have not written before. I was looking for something or someone to help me translating my ideas. But, here we go.

I was honoured and pleased to share wonderful moments with people from all around the world. I really felt like a princess, admired and appreciated. For me, as an indigenous woman, it was a real challenge to reach other people and reveal the knowledge and practices of the Quichua, even though I did not speak English. However, we managed to understand each other through the language of heart and art.

I brought back with me a lot, both in my mind and in my heart about other realities and other ways to understand the world. I also changed some misleading images about the way of life in the first world, according to which people only eat pills and sandwiches, that were robots walking around in the streets. The reality and the images were contradictory. I found really warm people. There in Vancouver, people told me that I am beautiful and intelligent, and, above all, they were eager to hear me, while in my own world – in which indigenous and mestizos are confronted – I have never received these compliments. Those compliments make me stronger back here in order to tell the same to other indigenous women. When I am feeling blue, I always think the song that the Inuit sang to me. I keep in my heart Ms. Judith Marcuse.

I hope that one day I can follow her way with other indigenous women. Thanks a lot for everything. I will always remember you, along with my people.

– **Ch'aska Eugenia Anka Ninawaman, Peru**

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Health Sciences Association of B.C.

Melusine Foundation

Mongrel Media

Music in the Morning

Pro Show Sound

Scotiabank

Scotiabank Dance Centre

Simon Fraser University School for the Contemporary Arts

Simon Fraser University

Undergraduate Semester in

Dialogue and Dialogue Programs

Simon Fraser University Continuing Studies

Theatre at U.B.C.

TING Foundation

Tsleil-Waututh Nation

VanCity

Vancouver Foundation

Vancouver Moving Theatre

Vancouver Park Board

Vancouver Symphony

Wildfire Restaurant

YWCA Residence

The EARTH Symposium Team

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Lynda Clark, Programming

Gillian Turner, Symposium

Coordinator

Rob Poelvoorde, Projects Manager

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Diana Bulley, Documentation

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Studies Program Information

Carole Knight, Director of Program

Promotion, Continuing Studies

Information and Registration

Services, S.F.U.

The organizers of Breaking New Ground would like to offer special thanks to our team of volunteer writers and their contributions:

Katy Amon, Taigita Biln, Katrina Blanch, Sabrina Bonfonti, Hilary Bourdon, Anna Busch, Angela Chui, Lisa Hardin, Brian Geary, Deborah Harford, Janet Hudgins, Diana Leung, Jannie Leung, Balqees Mihirig, Marcelina Piowtrwoski, Heather Pybus, Susan Read, Lisa St. Cyr, Lynn Singh, Zinta Steprans, Deborah So, Andrea Superstein, Lucia Terra, Nicole Wright, Christina van der Kamp, Cory Verbauwhede, Anna Wex and Emily Williamson.

Judith Marcuse Projects staff and members of the Society's Board of Directors also wish to express deep gratitude to each of the 117 volunteers who helped to make Breaking New Ground possible.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Facilitator Biographies

Judith Baca

Judith Baca, prominent muralist and visual artist, has served as the Founder and Artistic Director of the Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC) in Venice, California since 1976. Her work has focused primarily, though not exclusively, on Los Angeles and the Southwest to address social justice issues for ethnic neighbourhoods and the working poor. Ms. Baca is also a Professor of Fine Arts at the University of California, the Vice Chair of UCLA's Cesar Chavez Center and a Professor of Art for World Arts and Cultures at UCLA.
www.judybaca.com
www.sparcmurals.org/home.html

Dr. Louise Bourgault

Dr. Louise Bourgault holds a Ph.D. in Mass Communication from Ohio University and holds the rank of Professor in the Department of Communication and Performance Studies at Northern Michigan University where she has taught for the last 20 years. Concerned with the role of media and development, Dr. Bourgault has conducted research and worked with the African media in 15 African countries. Bourgault's most recent research involves the use of the performing arts in the struggle against HIV/AIDS, especially in Africa, but she is also committed to AIDS activism at her home campus and has organized a number of events designed to raise both funds and awareness in the US of the global HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Ch'aska Anga Ninawaman

Ch'aska Anga Ninawaman is an indigenous Quechua leader from Chisikata Community, in Cuzco, Peru. Ch'aska holds a Master's degree in Social Science with a focus on EthnicShare methodologies that Quechua, Aymara and Amazonian students from the University of Cuzco used to investigate indigenous knowledge in the areas of culture, art, traditional medicine and indigenous science. Her workshop will concentrate on the methodology used to compile myths, stories, songs and phrases. Ch'aska is also an accomplished poet. Her recent book of poems in Quechua and Spanish is the first book written in Quechua by a Quechua individual since the 1960's.

George Chandler

George Chandler has been Global Education Coordinator within International Services of the Lower Mainland Canadian Red Cross since 1996. His current work focuses on building awareness and involvement of people in the Lower Mainland around international situations and issues – in particular, as part of an Even Wars Have Limits campaign that focuses on conflict, humanitarian law and related issues of landmines, war-affected children and refugees, as well as issues related to the poverty-disease cycle and natural disasters. A key element in this public engagement work is training and developing youth leaders who help mobilize and mentor other youth in taking action. He has worked with Canada World Youth and has a Master's degree in International and Intercultural Management from the School for International Training in Vermont.

Romi Chandra

Romi Chandra has been a youth worker in the queer community for nearly five years and has facilitated over five hundred workshops to explore sexism, racism and homophobia. Mr. Chandra started the first Gay/Straight Alliance Group in B.C., and he has sat on the board of YouthQuest!, YouthCO AIDS Society and the Simon Fraser University Public Interest Research Group.

Check Your Head

Check Your Head is a Vancouver-based, youth-driven organization that educates young people on global issues by looking at the connection between global events and issues and local realities. Check Your Head provides education, resources, training and support for youth, who then facilitate workshops, organize events and coordinate projects promoting education and action around issues of globalization and social justice. The organization also provides a forum where youth can learn about ideas and debate issues like sweatshops, international trade and corporate power and responsibility.
www.checkyourhead.org

Civic Youth Strategy

Civic Youth Strategy is the youth branch of the City of Vancouver's Social Planning Department. The organization enables the youth of Vancouver to share their expertise with City staff in the interest of making Vancouver an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable city that cherishes, nurtures, welcomes and celebrates people of from all backgrounds and of all ages.
www.vancouveryouth.ca

William Cleveland

William Cleveland is the founder and director of the Center for the Study of Art and Community in Minneapolis. CSA&C was established in 1991 to build new working relationships between the arts and the broader community. Mr. Cleveland has 25 years of experience in producing arts programs in educational, community and social institutions, and in helping community organizations, public agencies, schools and arts organizations respond assertively and creatively to increasingly-complex community needs. His book, *Art in Other Places*, offers an in-depth exploration of twenty-two innovative institutional and community arts programs in the United States.
www.artandcommunity.com

Miali-Elise Coley

Miali-Elise Coley is half-Jamaican, half-Inuk and was born and raised in Nunavut. In 1996, Miali-Elise became an Assistant Youth Coordinator for Qikiqtani Inuit Association, an organization that represents all Inuit of the Baffin Region. She is currently Chair for the Inuit Circumpolar Youth Council, which was created to fulfill an international and comprehensive youth strategy. She was also one of 22 Inuit students who successfully fundraised enough money to travel to Guyana to meet with other aboriginal youth groups.

Fabrizio Crisafulli

Fabrizio Crisafulli is a dance-theatre director and visual artist, based in Rome. Since 1983, he has explored the relationships between actors, dancers, space and light. He is the leader of Il Pudore Bene in Vista company, one of the most interesting Italian research groups, that focuses its work on body, light and sound to represent feelings and emotions. He has produced plays and installations that have been shown world-wide. He holds chairs at the Academia di Belle Arti in Florence (scenographic techniques) and at the Faculty of Humanistic Sciences at the University "La Sapienza" in Rome (choreography as knowledge of space).

David Diamond

David Diamond, the Artistic and Managing Director of Headlines Theatre in Vancouver, has directed almost 300 community-specific theatre projects, in Canada and abroad, on issues such as racism, gender roles, violence, addiction, self-esteem, First Nations' residential schools and language reclamation. Diamond is an accomplished workshop leader who has also pioneered the development of live, interactive, Forum Television and web-casting.
www.headlinestheatre.com/intro.htm

Environmental Youth Alliance

Environmental Youth Alliance (EYA) is an environmental and social development organization, which focuses on the stewardship of our physical and social environment. The concept of stewardship refers to long-term responsibility and care for our communities, the earth we live with and ultimately ourselves.

EYA is a youth-driven, non-profit agency based in Vancouver and has young people involved in every level of the organization. www.eya.ca

Femi Folorunso

Femi Folorunso is the group coordinator for the Jane Goodall Institute's Roots & Shoots in Nigeria. Roots & Shoots is an environmental and humanitarian network of young people, from the pre-school to university level, who coordinate local projects promoting care and concern for the environment, animals, and the community.

Patti Fraser

Patti Fraser is a story editor for the Education Department at Pacific Cinéma-thèque and has developed and story-edited many award-winning youth videos. Ms. Fraser has also directed and produced videos on a number of community-based projects, and co-authored six radio dramas for CBC Network. In 1990-1992, she worked with Headlines Theatre and received Mosaic's Human Rights Award for popular theatre work on violence and racism with youth.

www.cinematheque.bc.ca

Spencer Herbert

Spencer Herbert recently helped pressure the local transit authority, Translink, to restore night bus service to seven days a week as an organizer for the Bus Riders Union. He has also performed at numerous rallies as the big bad capitalist villain and has recently embarked on an activist street theatre project. In the past, Spencer has served as DanceArts Vancouver's Assistant Artistic Director and Youth Community Liaison and, with DanceArts, won a Jessie Richardson Theatre Award for Community Contribution.

Dolly Hopkins

Dolly Hopkins, is the Artistic Director of the Public Dreams Society, which she co-founded in 1985. A native of Vancouver, she has been a professional performing artist since 1979. Dolly Hopkins is a conceptualist and works with many community and professional artists to bring her ideas to fruition. She is currently focusing on broadening the scope and reach of Public Dreams, bringing more events to more people. Ms. Hopkins is a strong believer in the importance of the role of art in the community and community spirit as both a local and global ideal. www.publicdreams.org

Shoaib Iqbal

Shoaib Iqbal is a leader for Punjab Lok RaHS, an alternative Pakistani theatre organization that uses theatre as the medium to combat military oppression, build cultural awareness and identity and promote gender equity and democratic values. By way of classical epics, improvisation, foreign adaptations and street skits, the group addresses a broad range of issues, such as child marriage and military dictatorship. Lok RaHS also provides theatrical training and support to other organizations working for social change.

www.lokpunjab.org

Adrian Jackson

Adrian Jackson is a theatre director and teacher and a frequent collaborator with Augusto Boal, whose books he translates into English. He has worked with a wide variety of communities in the U.K., using the techniques of The Theatre of the Oppressed. He has also worked and taught in developmental and educational contexts in South Africa, Namibia, Mauritius, Ireland, Finland and Hong Kong. He is the founder-director of Cardboard Citizens, a renowned national touring theatre company, whose performers and audiences are predominantly homeless and ex-homeless people and refugees.

www.cardboardcitizens.org.uk

Elizabeth Johnson

Elizabeth Johnson is a choreographer, dancer and the director of the Dance Exchange's Teen Exchange program. As a company member, Ms. Johnson has collaboratively created dances in communities with Vietnam vets; senior citizens; religious leaders of many faiths; high school teachers; and professional dancers.

Her work with teens has been featured across the country as well as at home in the metro-D.C. area. Her choreographic work is driven by athleticism, physiology and the desire to push boundaries.

www.danceexchange.org

Nadim Kara

Nadim Kara is currently a Child and Youth Social Planner with the City of Vancouver's Social Planning Department. As a graduate of both the Human Geography and International Relations programs at the University of British Columbia, Nadim has an interest in social change at the local, national and international level. At the City, he works to strengthen the social infrastructure supporting youth in Vancouver and to facilitate meaningful youth involvement in municipal decision-making. Mr. Kara has worked with Oxfam Canada, the Sustainable Development Research Institute, the Institute of Asian Research, Canada25 and was the 2002 winner of the Power of Humanity award from the Canadian Red Cross.

Sara Kendall

Sara Kendall is a Vancouver-based learner, artist and activist with a penchant for politically-informed art and a passion for grassroots mobilization. Amid a constant bend and flux of projects and personal adventures, she balances youth issues-based facilitation, international video work, school and performance.

Gan Siong King

Gan Siong King is a visual artist from Malaysia whose work has been showcased in exhibitions such as 3 Young Contemporaries, Exhibit A: A Malaysian Still Life and the J.A.A.L.A. in Korea. Gan is a founding member of the artist-run collective, Spacekraft, which aims to create an alternative avenue for young artists to manage and run their own activities, exhibitions and workshops.

Josephine Krizovensky

Josephine Krizovensky has studied yoga, meditation and energy healing in North America, Europe and India. She currently teaches a variety of classes and leads retreats for yoga students of all levels in the Vancouver area. Her teaching is rooted in the desire to share the joy of these practices with her students. www.yogamama.org

John Lazarus

John Lazarus is a Canadian playwright, screenwriter and teacher. He has spent most of his career in Vancouver, where his work included *ICE: beyond cool* and other collaborations with DanceArts Vancouver and Judith Marcuse. Presently, he teaches at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. His new play, *Rough Magic*, will be presented by the Belfry Theatre, Victoria, this September.

Tony Le Nguyen

Tony Le Nguyen enjoys a successful career as an actor, writer and director in Vietnam and Australia. He is also the founder and Artistic Director of Vietnamese Youth Media, which uses theatre, television, photography and performance art to address cross-cultural tensions and to cultivate a strong cultural identity for Vietnamese youth in Australia. home.vicnet.net.au/~vym/About_main.html

Liz Lerman

Guest speaker Liz Lerman is one of the world's leading pioneers in the field of dance and community-building and recipient of the 2002 MacArthur Fellowship. Ms. Lerman is a gifted teacher, choreographer and performer whose work has redefined where dance takes place and who can dance. Her commitment is both to the art of dance and to the human element in art-making. In her work, she builds community, encourages personal insight, and choreographs dances that have been called visionary, profound and revelatory. For more information about Liz Lerman and the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, visit www.danceexchange.org

M. Simon Levin

M. Simon Levin has a M.F.A. in Interdisciplinary Art and has been teaching, working and collaborating with artists and non-artists alike, for the past fifteen years. He has created several public and environmental art pieces, in Canada, U.S.A., Mexico and Australia, designed to generate a social awareness about the role and use of public space. He recently co-authored a curriculum on Public Art with Susan Rome of Vancouver Art Gallery's Public Programs.

Stephen Lewis

Stephen Lewis acted as Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF from 1995 to 1999 and was also appointed by the Organization of African Unity to an "International Panel of Eminent Personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda and the Surrounding Events." Stephen Lewis was named a Companion of the Order of Canada, Canada's highest honour for lifetime achievement, in January 2003. Currently, Mr. Lewis serves as U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan's Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa and recently created the Stephen Lewis Foundation to help ease the pain of HIV/AIDS in Africa.

www.stephenlewisfoundation.org

Madeleine Lyons

Madeleine Lyons is a 1st year Arts student at UBC, hoping to major in political science. At UBC, Madeleine holds positions on the executive boards of the International Relations Student Association and World University Service of Canada (WUSC), which is sending her to Malawi, Africa, this summer to study HIV/AIDS. In addition to the Canadian Red Cross, Madeleine volunteers with World Vision Canada, the Africa Awareness Group and UNICEF, while also acting as the producer and host of a youth radio show. After graduation, Madeleine hopes to pursue a career in broadcasting or international development work.

Mary-Elizabeth Manley

A York Dance Department faculty member since 1974, Professor Manley has developed expertise in teaching, research, choreography and production. Published research articles reflect her specialization in the areas of pedagogy, dance education in early childhood and creative and modern dance for young people. Most notable are her recent articles published on choreography and dance in *Childhood in Canada: Cultural Images and Contemporary Issues* and in *The Proceedings of the 2003 Dance and the Child International Conference: Breaking Boundaries*.

www.yorku.ca/finearts/faculty/profs/manley.htm

Brennan Manoakesick

Brennan Manoakesick is of Anishanabe and Cree descent. He has spent many years volunteering with numerous First Nations organizations as well as promoting youth empowerment workshops to local First Nations across Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Northwest Territories. Most recently, Brennan has been working with the Indigenous Environmental Network and their youth sector in developing strategies to empower youth by embracing the Environmental Justice movement. He also recently finished working with the Canada Council for the Arts as the coordinator of the Northern Arts Development Project

Judith Marcuse, LL.D., Artistic Director

As one of Canada's honoured, senior artists, Judith Marcuse has had a long and distinguished career. Her wide-ranging credits as a dancer, choreographer, teacher, director and producer include work for dance, theatre, opera, television and film. A current project is a quartet of issue-based, large-scale multi-year initiatives that are rooted in the sensibilities of teenagers, *The ICE Project* exploring issues that lead to suicide and *The Fire Project* looking at how youth are affected by violence in their lives. *The EARTH Project* is the third of this quartet and is to be followed by *The Air Project*, which will explore the stuff of dreams. Her commitment to the marriage of artistic excellence and social relevance and her passion to integrate art into community life are at the core of her work in the theatre, the lecture hall, behind and in front of the camera and in her writing. Among her honours, she has received Canada's two major choreographic awards, the Chalmers (1976) and the Clifford E. Lee (1978) and in 2000, she

was awarded an honorary doctorate by Simon Fraser University.

www.dancearts.bc.ca

www.earthproject.ca

Rachel Marcuse

Rachel Marcuse is a McGill sociology student whose goal in life is to rid the world of apathy! She works as a facilitator for Youth Net Montreal and freelance. Rachel has been involved in many youth/arts/social justice projects including coordinating the 2003 Youth Health Fairs in Vancouver; sitting on the Quebec Public Interest Research Group board; and working for DanceArts Vancouver as a researcher, performer and advisor. She is also an elected Arts representative to the Students' Society of McGill University, where she recently spearheaded a project to implement an ethical purchasing policy for the Society.

Alex Mavrocordatos

Alex Mavrocordatos currently serves as the Creative Director of cdcArts. His interest in the social function of art and its role in development has moved him from his early community theatre and performance work, through installation/performance art, into the participatory process of theatre for development. He has explored these, since the mid-eighties, through extensive projects in West and Southern Africa. As Creative Director, he is responsible for the coordination of the cdcArts/KAC link with the University of Zambia and for the implementation of a variety of international consultancies and trainer-training programmes, including his own work with the Department for International Development and the British Council in the Pacific, Nepal and Zambia.

www.cdcart.org/main/front.htm

Manisha Mehta

Manisha Mehta was trained in part at the PAN Institute in London, England. Ms. Mehta runs an organization called VIDYA in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India that operates primarily in the slum areas of the city. VIDYA works, in part, to improve the lives of female children and women using theatre and other animation techniques. Ms. Mehta was recently named as one of Gujarat's ten "most important" women for her effective and life-changing work.

Laura Milliken

Laura Milliken, from the Chippewas of Kettle and Stoney Point First Nation in Southern Ontario, is an accomplished producer, entrepreneur and writer. Laura co-founded Big Soul Productions in 1999 and since then has produced more than 30 hours of drama, lifestyle, documentary, music, industrial and corporate videos. Most recently, Laura co-created and co-executive produced *Moccasin Flats*, a six-part dramatic series set in the tough Native community of North Central Regina. *Moccasin Flats* is the first-ever series to be entirely Native-created, controlled, written and acted.

www.bigsoul.net

Robert Morgan

Robert Morgan, founding Artistic Director of the Children's Peace Theatre, has helped to establish Canada as one of the world's foremost producers of theatre for young audiences. He has written more than twenty professionally-produced plays, many of which have toured nationally and internationally, and he has acted in and directed over forty productions. The work of the Peace Theatre is part of a global movement reflected in the United Nations declaration that 2001-2010 is the decade for the establishment of a culture of peace for the children of the world.

www.childrenspeacetheatre.org

Moving Into Dance Mophatong

Moving Into Dance Mophatong is a professional organization, which provides interdisciplinary dance training and education to develop creative and skilled dance practitioners, teachers, choreographers and performers within a South African socio-cultural and economic context. The organization founded and developed Edudence, an interactive teaching tool for school subjects like mathematics and science in primary schools, and history and cultural studies in the senior secondary schools.

www.midance.co.za

Munyaradzi Muzenda

Munyaradzi Muzenda acts as the coordinator for Africa Speaks, a project in Zimbabwe that promotes cultural independence, cultural exchange and a future for the African continent and its young people. Through song, dance, art, crafts and writing, Africa Speaks unites youth and celebrates Africanism for the purpose of developing a positive African identity to counteract past and present injustices.

www.dcafrica.net/africa_speaks.html

Nonhlanhla Grethel Ndim

Nonhlanhla Grethel Ndim is a performance artist and member of INSET, a group which trains educators in rural and urban schools around South Africa to teach Edudance, which is a programme developed by Moving Into Dance Mophatong. Ms. Ndim is also involved in training community youth groups by teaching dance and several of the works that she choreographed were featured at the FNB Vita Dance Umbrella Festival. She recently facilitated workshops in Sweden with Sue Hall for dance pedagogues and students who are studying dance.

www.midance.co.za

noise

noise is a national Australian youth media arts festival happening live across the media in October, 2004. In partnership with over eighty media and arts organisations, the festival will profile young artists and exhibit their works on radio and television, in print and online, forging a contemporary link between artists, audiences and new art forms.

www.noise.net.au

Pacific Cinémathèque

Pacific Cinémathèque is a not-for-profit society, based in Vancouver, B.C., that is dedicated to the understanding of film and moving images as art and as a vital means of communication. The Education Department of Pacific Cinémathèque offers a range of media education and video production programs designed for children, youth, educators and community groups.

www.cinematheque.bc.ca/

Ali Paul

Ali Paul graduated from Simon Fraser University in 2002 with a B.A. in English and psychology, and currently works in the psychological services field. She has been actively involved in volunteering with youth for a number of years, most recently for the Global Education program at the Canadian Red Cross. She hopes to continue in the field of psychology, while incorporating international development and rehabilitation programs.

John Powell

John Powell, a Kwakwak'wakw, is an accomplished costume, fashion and interior designer. As a certified costume designer, Mr. Powell has designed for numerous productions in the Vancouver area, such as *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapiscasing* and *The Passion of Dracula* at the Arts Club Theatre. As a fashion designer, John works by commission only on one-of-a-kind, couture-style garments, of applied Native design. He has also hosted and participated in fashion shows throughout the Lower Mainland. John teaches genealogy and traditional regalia-making on Vancouver Island and regularly instructs youth at various regional school boards and friendship centres. John's newest project will be working with a dance and theatre group on a new production at the Banff Centre for the Arts in July 2004.

Pun Siu-fai

Pun Siu-fai serves as an elected member of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council and is the Education and Outreach Director of City Contemporary Dance Company in Hong Kong. The company is devoted to dance education and aims to develop a wider dance audience and nurture young talents in dance through specialized programs and workshops. Over the past two years, the company has also performed more than one hundred free shows in schools, housing estates, parks and shopping malls.

www.ccdc.com.hk

Punjab Lok RaHS

Punjab Lok RaHS is an alternative Pakistani theatre organization that uses theatre as the medium to combat military oppression, build cultural awareness and identity and promote gender equity and democratic values. By way of classical epics, improvisation, foreign adaptations and street skits, the group addresses a broad range of issues, such as child marriage and military dictatorship. The Lok RaHS also provides theatrical training and support to other organizations working for social change.

www.lokpunjab.org

Syed Mizanur Rahman alias Raju Ahmed

Syed Mizanur Rahman alias Raju Ahmed holds a Master's degree in both economics and drama, and serves as the managing director of Theatre for Research Education and Empowerment (TREE) in Bangladesh. TREE Foundation uses theatre and radio to stimulate, educate and encourage audience members to become actively involved in a number of social and health-related issues.

www.treefoundation.net

Martha Ramirez Oropeza

Martha Ramirez Oropeza is a mural painter, performer and creator of indigenous/popular theatre and a researcher into ancient Nahuatl manuscripts called codices. She serves as vice-director of the Mascarones Theatre Group and as co-founder, administrator and designer of the pyramid campus of the Nahuatl University in Mexico. Ms. Oropeza also teaches at Nahuatl University and promotes cultural exchange with faculty and students from American universities.

www.kalpulli.org/unahuatl/unahuatl1.html

Alvaro Restrepo

Alvaro Restrepo is the co-founder and choreographer for Colegio del Cuerpo in Cartagena, Colombia. The Colegio del Cuerpo brings creativity, imagination and education to young people from the war-torn *barrios* of Cartagena. The Colegio also offers youth the opportunity to explore career options in the performing arts and a chance to escape the cycle of poverty and oppression prevalent in Colombia. The Colegio's young dance company has toured in South America and Europe.

Nicholas Rowe

A graduate of the Australian Ballet School, Nicholas Rowe is currently completing his Ph.D. on "The Evolution of Dance in Traumatized Communities" through the London Contemporary Dance School/University of Kent. He resides in Ramallah, Occupied West Bank, where he directs an arts development project in the Palestinian refugee camps. Nicholas Rowe has choreographed for numerous groups across Europe, Asia, Australia and the Middle East, most recently directing Ramallah Dance Theatre's critically acclaimed *Access Denied*. The author of the performing arts manual "Art, During Siege," he regularly contributes articles to international magazines, newspapers and journals.

Diego Samper

Diego Samper is an artist who works in different media: photography, painting, artist books and sculptural installations. With a life-long interest in natural history and tribal cultures, his work pivots around a dialogue with the natural world. With 25 years of experience in nature and ethnographic photography, he has completed projects commissioned by the Smithsonian Institution Press, National Geographic, Planeta Humano and other international publishers.

www.user.dccnet.com/diegosamper

Daniel Sanchez

Daniel Sanchez is a composer, percussionist, teacher, and the founder and Artistic Director of Mitote Orchestra. Mr. Sanchez has earned several grants and distinctions, such as a prize granted by the National Program for Artistic Education 2001 for his Mitote Orchestra Project, in Mexico. His works include acoustic and electronic music, as well as specially-written music for ballet, theatre, installations, television and cinema. As a percussionist, he has made several recordings and toured on both a national and international level.

Tom Sandborn

Tom Sandborn was born in Alaska and has resided in Vancouver since 1967. Mr. Sandborn has worked as a childcare worker, gestalt therapist, bus, truck and cab driver, mill worker, janitor, fundraiser, event organizer, poet and freelance journalist. He has been active in social justice struggles since 1962.

Osman Benh Sankoh

Osmen Benh Sankoh is a peace and human rights activist, the editor of the Concord Times (Freetown), an independent daily newspaper in Sierra Leone, and a regular contributor on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, Radio FM-103. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in history and sociology, as well as a diploma in mass communication, and several certificates including Conflict Reporting and Writing International News. Mr. Sankoh has also worked with Action Aid–Sierra Leone, developing youth programs.

Darko Saracevic

Darko Saracevic is the founder and director of Alter Art in Travnik, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Alter Art's aim is to empower young people in the fields of cultural production and creation, presentation, training and social interaction. In a society still damaged by the social and economic effects of war, their mission is to provide opportunities for young people to fulfil their creative, vocational and social potential; to promote awareness of and responsiveness to the needs and potential of young people among older generations and statutory institutions; and to build, with their partners, a culturally rich and diverse society for present and future generations. In everyday life, this means helping young people to realize their ideas in a safe environment by providing music rehearsal rooms, audio studios, production services, video groups, photo groups, art studios, performing arts groups, an Internet club and "The Days of Adolescents" annual festival.

Brandon Saul

Brandon Saul is the Executive Producer of *noise*, a national youth media arts festival in Australia that exhibits young artists and their work across radio, television, in print and online. He has held this position since the inception of the media-based festival model in 1998 with the LOUD festival. Since then there have been two more festivals *noise 2001* and *noise 2003*. A lawyer and accountant by training, Brandon combines his passion for contemporary culture with a sound understanding of business and legal practices.
www.noise.net.au

Michele Schiess

Michele Schiess is one of three founding members of Sing 4 Life in Pretoria, South Africa, an organization concerned with changing life's circumstances through creative mediums, targeting troubled, addicted youth and those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Their goal is to involve youth in uplifting community programs in order to bring meaning, pride and success into their lives. To that end, Sing 4 Life initiates youth-counselling workshops and coordinates performances across South Africa, showcasing hidden talent before an international audience.

Brigid Schutz

Brigid Schutz graduated from the University of the Witwatersrand, School of Dramatic Art, in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1990, with an honours degree in dramatic art. She worked with various theatrical organisations until she joined arepp: Theatre for Life in 1993. Ms. Schutz serves as the Executive Producer for arepp, focusing on the use of theatre and puppetry to provide alternative, supplementary life-skills education to all the communities in South Africa.

Altaf Shaikh

Altaf Shaikh founded and currently runs Saathi, a non-governmental organization in Mumbai (Bombay), India, that seeks to give citizenship rights to street youth, and to offer young people the opportunity to grow in an environment which is supportive, caring, protective, encouraging and participatory in

nature. Saathi operates on the principle that with the proper support, every youth has the capacity and potential to bring about change within him or herself and within his or her immediate surroundings.

www.ashanet.org/cleveland/projects/saathi/org.htm

Sierra Youth Coalition

Sierra Youth Coalition is a national, youth-driven, and diverse non-profit organization working in Canada. Through grassroots action, SYC aims to address globalization, consumption and climate change through a solutions-based approach of promoting education for sustainability, bioregionalism, sustainable communities and lifestyle simplicity. The Coalition is the youth arm of the Sierra Club of Canada and has been active since 1996.
www.sierrayouthcoalition.org

Carly Stasko

Carly Stasko is a grassroots artist, activist and educator and an accomplished lecturer on topics such as media literacy, culture jamming, 'zines, indymedia and globalization. She was a producer for CBC's counterSpin, a live political debate show, and the founder of her own 'zine *uncool*. Ms. Stasko co-founded and serves as a facilitator for the Toronto Media Collective, a monthly salon for artists and activists to gather and brainstorm projects, as well as share resources. She is inspired by the ecology of imagination and the role of play in developing critical thinking skills.

Anja Susa

Anja Susa is the co-founder and director of the Torpedo Theatre Company in Belgrade, Serbia and also serves as the Executive and Artistic Director of Little Theatre Dusko Radovic. Susa is primarily interested in contemporary drama, particularly the new generation of Serbian playwrights. Susa contributes to, and is a member of, the editing board of two Serbian theatre magazines, *Ludus* and *Teatron*, and also writes a regular column, Dramaturgy Informer, for *Ludus*.

Severn Cullis Suzuki

Severn Cullis Suzuki became actively involved in environmental and social justice work at a very young age. When she was nine years old, she founded the Environmental Children's Organization, some of whose members attended the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Since that time, Ms. Cullis Suzuki has established herself as an avid speaker, presenter, television host and writer and recently earned a B.Sc. in ecology and evolutionary biology from Yale University. She continues to speak to schools and corporations and at many conferences and international meetings. She is especially passionate about encouraging young people to speak out for their future.

The David Suzuki Foundation

The David Suzuki Foundation works to find ways for society to live in balance with the natural world that sustains us. Focusing on four program areas – oceans and sustainable fishing, forests and wild lands, climate change and clean energy and the web of life – the Foundation uses science and education to promote solutions that help conserve nature.
www.davidsuzuki.org

Take5 alias Mikeal Frazer

Take5 alias Mikeal Frazer is a well-known Vancouver graffiti artist who is also recognized for his unique contributions to the local hip-hop scene. After surviving a devastating accident in 1995, Mikeal was left a paraplegic. Unwilling to have his spirits dampened by this accident, he dove into the realm of graffiti art, DJing and Turntablism, and eventually gained recognition both locally and internationally, participating in extensive mural projects, sign painting, and gallery shows. In addition to pursuing his own artistic goals, he also serves as a youth mentor.

Mark Teh

Mark Teh is a theatre worker whose work is particularly concerned with issues of Malaysian history, youth and empowerment. He is a member of Five Arts Centre, a collective of artists and producers formed in 1984, dedicated to generating alternative art forms and images in the Malaysian creative

environment. Mark is also a founding member of youth theatre group, Akshen, whose last show *Stadium* played at the 2002 Contacting The World Festival in Manchester, England. www.emuang.org/FiveArts/

Clayton Thomas-Muller

Clayton Thomas-Muller, of Cree descent, is an Oil/Gas Campaign Organizer with the Indigenous Mining Campaign Project. Mr. Thomas-Muller works with tribal communities impacted by oil, gas and coal bed methane development. He also works on climate justice issues for The Indigenous Environmental Network – Indigenous Oil Campaign Project. IEN was formed by grassroots Indigenous peoples and individuals to address environmental and economic justice issues (EJ). IEN's activities include building the capacity of Indigenous communities and tribal governments to develop mechanisms to protect our sacred sites, land, water, air, natural resources, the health of both our people and all living things, and to build economically sustainable communities.

Kimingichi Wabende

Kimingichi Wabende works with the People's Popular Theatre in East Africa. PPT is a community-based group that uses theatre to raise awareness about discrimination on the basis of gender, religion, or disability. The organisation conducts research on traditional cultural art forms and practices, exploring how they affect gender relations and then working to correct gender imbalances in society through performance art. In addressing these issues, PPT uses African artistic modes to strengthen cultural identity. PPT focuses most of its activities in Kenya.

jil p. weaving

jil p. weaving has been an artist and cultural worker for twenty-five years, during which time she has explored a variety of contemporary, non-traditional and community-engaged practices. In her current position as Community Arts Programmer for the Vancouver Parks Board, she works city-wide on a variety of issues including environmental arts, public art and memorials in parks, and consultation for, communication about, and documentation of, community arts projects. www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/parks

Morton Winston

Dr. Morton Winston is Professor of Philosophy at the College of New Jersey. His areas of specialization include human rights theory and practice, ethics, cognitive science and philosophy of technology. In addition to his academic career, Dr. Winston has pursued a parallel career as a human rights activist with Amnesty International. He served as a member of AIUSA's national Board of Directors from 1991-1997 and as Chair of the Board from 1995-1997. He was also the Founding Chair of AIUSA's Business and Economic Relations Group from 1996-2002. In 2003 he was elected Honorary Chair of AIUSA.

Max Wyman

Max Wyman is a Vancouver writer and one of Canada's leading cultural commentators. He was dance, music and drama critic for *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province* for over 30 years and is the author of a number of books on the arts in Canada, among them *Dance Canada: An Illustrated History* (named as one of the "165 Great Canadian Books of the Century" in 2000) and the biography of ballerina Evelyn Hart. His new book, *The Defiant Imagination*, published in March, 2004, is a passionate manifesto asserting the central importance of the arts and culture to modern Canada. He was for six years a member of the board of the Canada Council for the Arts and is currently President of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. For his services to the arts, he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2001 and received an honorary Doctor of Letters degree from Simon Fraser University in 2003.



Joaquin Yabut

Joaquin (Jack) Yabut serves as the Project Coordinator for The Philippine Educational Theatre Association. Founded in 1967, PETA is an educational theatre organization composed of artist-teachers who are dedicated to the pursuit of artistically-excellent theatre aesthetics and pedagogy toward the empowerment of people and society. Their goal is to promote and guide the growth and development of theatre arts in the Philippines and serve as a coordinating agency for a national association of drama groups. www.petatheater.com

Marcus Youssef

Marcus Youssef is the Chalmer's Award winning co-author of *A Line in the Sand* and *The Adventures of Ali & Ali and the Axes of Evil* and a regular contributor of comedy, commentary and feature journalism to CBC Radio and magazines and journals across the country. Marcus also spends a good portion of his time working with young people in a variety of arts-based capacities. With Mercedes Baines, he is the co-founder of the schools-based family-history storytelling program, The Reclaiming Project.

Youth Millennium Project

The Youth Millennium Project helps youth, ages 10 to 18 years old, understand that they can make a positive change in the world by allowing them to develop humanitarian projects that they then put into action. YMP gets youth in 82 countries to not only participate in, but also lead, major change in their communities, from environmental protection in Taiwan, to educational development in Uganda, to literacy in Guyana. www.ympworld.org

Michael Zelmer

Michael Zelmer is the Co-Chair and Oxfam Canada Representative to the Vancouver Fair Trade Coffee Network. The VFTCN is an alliance of individuals, churches, businesses, NGOs, coffee importers and unions that has been working to increase the demand and awareness of Fair Trade coffee since 1997. Oxfam Canada is a non-profit, international development organization that supports community programmes in food security, health, nutrition and democratic development, with an emphasis on working with women. A founding member of the VFTCN, Oxfam Canada became a strong advocate for the rights of coffee workers with the launch of the "Coffee Wedge" of its "Make Trade Fair" campaign in 2002. www.oxfam.ca

Appendix 2: Exchanges Youth Biographies

Jordan Gold graduated from Politics and Development Studies at Queen's University in Kingston Ontario and recently completed a posting in Geneva working on trade and sustainable development issues. Mr. Gold currently works with a group called Canada 25 on a project that would place Canada as a leader in foreign environmental policy. Mr. Gold also works at Corporate Knights magazine, a corporate responsibility publication of the Globe and Mail.

Nik Basque from Moncton, New Brunswick, is a student at Mount Allison University, and member of the campus Youth Action Group and environmental group "Blue Green." She is an avid organic gardener whose goal is to share and expand her knowledge on how to protect the earth.

Meg Shirley, currently in her final year of studying philosophy at Mount Allison University, tells us she has spent more time converting a bus to run on vegetable oil than reading Plato. In the summer of 2001, Meg cycled across Canada with the Climate Change Caravan, encouraging Canadians to take action on climate change by reducing their personal greenhouse gas emissions. She takes secret pleasure in whistling the Indiana Jones theme song on downhills, but has yet to discover the secret to making uphill equally as pleasurable. Other projects Meg is currently involved in include the Mount Allison University Sustainable Residence Initiative and an environmental education program at the local middle school. When not studying, Meg spends her time practicing on her brand new 3.5 foot stilts.

Gurneesh Bhandal is a second year student at the University of Waterloo (UW) in the Honours Environment and Business Co-op Program. She is currently working as the Project Coordinator for the University of Waterloo Sustainability Project (UWSP), which is a student-run organization that aims to improve the environmental sustainability of the university campus. The mission of UWSP is to increase student biophysical, social, economic and political awareness of the environment while educating and involving the campus community on issues related to the sustainable development of the campus. UWSP aims to do this primarily by strengthening the environmental network of UW students, faculty and administration. She is also an active volunteer for the South Asian Students Association at UW, which promotes awareness and education of the South Asian cultures, as well as a member of the SASA Dance Team. She was also actively involved in The World Issues Group at Notre Dame Secondary School that raised awareness of social justice issues and undertook actions to work for positive change through fundraising and educational campaigns.

Jaime Koebel hails from Lac La Biche, in northern Alberta. She holds a Bachelor of Arts and is currently working on a Master of Arts. She is a Métis writer of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. As well, she is an amateur artist of digitally-enhanced photography. She has had the opportunity to take several art history courses and one of which was given by Dr. Allan Ryan on his book titled *The Trickster Shift* which covered a wide variety of subjects on Aboriginal people and art, but most specifically dealt with the aspect of the Trickster. This course has allowed her to participate in dialogue on Aboriginal artists creating art for the sake of bringing awareness to the inequities between humanity and the environment, but also being intertwined ironically with one another.

Mikah Fox is my Native name in Wallahcea, and I'm from the Northern Tutchone clan. I have spent most of my life in the Yukon and throughout my life I have been involved in many councils and committees from Youth Justice Member Yukon (4 years), Yukon Territorial Youth Council (3 years), R.C.M.P. Advisory Board Member (4years), to name a few. I have worked as an archaeological survey assistant, taking samples of glaciers, counting caribou populations and collecting artifacts of ancient peoples. I have also been a part of restorative justice and circle-sentencing.

Joseph Doré resides in Edmonton, Alberta, and acts as the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association's Youth Executive on the Provincial Board of Directors, which addresses youth issues within the Friendship Centre Movement in Alberta. He is also the National Alberta Youth Representative appointed to the National Association of Friendship Centres Aboriginal Youth Council where he is responsible for the national health portfolio. The Friendship Centre Movement is dedicated to providing services that improve the quality of life of urban aboriginal peoples, particularly youth.

Trisha Ogina is originally from Holman, N.W.T. and has been living in Cambridge Bay since March 1999. She is 21 years old. Since she was about 7 years old, she has been carrying on the traditional Inuvialuit drum dancing culture. She has also learned some traditional throat singing throughout the past year. She has a drum dance group in Cambridge Bay and teaches Inuvialuit drum dancing with the help of her mother.

Sylvia Gibson is 24 years old and lives in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, while she studies environmental science at the University of Saskatchewan. Though she began ballet training as a young girl, improvisational dance has since become her bigger interest. After studying earth sciences for two years in Calgary, Alberta, she decided that she wanted some practical experience, which resulted in about four years of traveling, volunteering and working odd jobs, mainly in South America and Europe. Her goal is to combine education, arts and environmental sustainability into a career.

Laura MacPherson is 25 years old and lives in Stratford, Prince Edward Island. She strongly believes that it is possible for a viable and sustainable growth-oriented community to exist and flourish in Atlantic Canada. During her experience working on organic farms and various innovative recycling projects in Guatemala, she learned a great deal about maintaining commitment to sustainability. While studying for her Bachelor of Environmental Science she exercised her passion for the natural world by organizing and co-ordinating new and exciting events with the Acadia Environmental Society. These projects included Dump 'N' Run and successfully advocating for Fair Trade coffee on campus.

Brennan Manoakesick

Brennan Manoakesick is of Anishanabe and Cree decent. He has spent many years volunteering with numerous First Nations organizations as well as promoting youth empowerment workshops to local First Nations across Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Northwest Territories. Most recently, Brennan has been working with the Indigenous Environmental Network and their youth sector in developing strategies to empower youth by embracing the Environmental Justice movement. He also recently finished working with the Canada Council for the Arts as the coordinator of the Northern Arts Development Project

Odessa Guindon is eighteen years old and comes from Gatineau, Quebec. She has studied music at the Gatineau Music Conservatory for five years. She decided to set music aside for a while to concentrate more on her college social science studies. She would like to pursue university studies in journalism and become an international reporter. Odessa also volunteers for la Commission Jeunesse de la Ville de Gatineau, which is an organization inside the city structure that works to improve the life quality of youth. The Commission recommends guidelines on every aspect of youth needs and situations to Gatineau City Council.

Claire Kelly is an eighteen-year-old student who attends R.B. Russell High School in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She currently works at the Manitoba Theatre for Young People as a teaching assistant for at-risk youth between the ages of 10-12. She is also a member of Community Action, which is a group of students who build plays and workshops for the community. They take the issues that the community faces and do a short play about the topic to get the audience thinking about them. When the play is done, the students of Community Action lead group discussions with the audience.

Candace Wilde comes from the Chippewa's of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation in southwestern Ontario. She 23 years old and currently resides in Toronto, Ontario. She studied theatre arts for three years at The Centre for Indigenous Theatre in Toronto and strongly believes that people should go out in the world and gather as much knowledge and life experience as they can and then return to their home community to share their new-found knowledge. Candace teaches theatre, dance, storytelling and creative writing, giving people the freedom to express themselves in a safe environment, which is key to a growing, healthy community.

Miali-Elise Coley is 22 years old, half-Jamaican, half-Inuk, born and raised in the northern territory of Nunavut. The capital, Iqaluit, once called Frobisher Bay, is her hometown where she lives with her family. Miali-Elise has always been very active in her community. Starting in 1996, she became an Assistant Youth Coordinator for Qikiqtani Inuit Association, the organization that represents all Inuit of the Baffin Region. Throughout this time, she also led her high school student council as the president and became a strong advocate for giving youth the attention they deserve.

Alex Goss currently resides in Halifax, Nova Scotia and is 23 years old. Alex has taught environmental art courses with the Tom Thomson Art Gallery in Ontario. These classes involved children aged 6-13 creating environmentally-friendly art, taking hikes, expressing feelings about nature and examining people's place in the environment. It was through this experience, that Alex realized the power of art in shaping beliefs and expressing concerns. Alex is a member of the Ecology Action Centre in Halifax.

Megan N. Jackman is an 18-year-old resident of Newfoundland and Labrador and is currently a first-year student at Memorial University, Sir Wilfred Grenfell Campus. Megan has been involved with and interested in science, particularly environmental and biomedical science, for some time. She won the NLSLT Biomedical Award for a project that she worked on studying cancer. Megan was also the first youth, along with her friend, to ask for and gain, representation for young people on the Economic Development Committee in her community. Megan was also a junior leader with Beavers of Canada and helped to organize environmental projects such as cleanups and forest restoration.

Adriane Enns is a young woman from the Arctic who is passionate about sharing her love for cultural growth as a tool for developing the community. She has been working with this love for about five years now in a variety of ways within the realms of storytelling, music, community art installations and multimedia. Her current art project is called Catalyst Collective, which exists as a tool that young artists can use to join forces in a spirit of forging new paths toward creatively-nourishing employment in the community.

Felix Joyal Lacerte lives in Gatineau, Quebec and is 18 years old. Felix is interested in youth and mental health. Since high school, he has been involved with the Kids' Help Phone, for which he is a spokesperson. He was also a volunteer in training other youth in peer counselling. About two years ago, Felix joined La Commission Jeunesse of the City of Gatineau, which focuses on five priorities: youth recognition, leisure and culture, transportation, security and employment. Felix is also a member of the Gatineau Regional Youth Table, which seeks to facilitate access to services and information and also to represent youth needs on a provincial level.

Baijayanta Mukhopadhyay is currently co-designing a popular education training programme for youth, to raise awareness of the impact of Canadian mining companies on ecosystems and indigenous populations abroad, particularly with the work of Alcan in eastern India. In addition to her work in community theatre, Baijayanta does a fair amount of writing, usually related to social/political issues.

Isabelle LeVert-Chiasson is 22 years old and lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She is of Acadian descent and her first language is French. Isabelle is currently writing her honours thesis in International Development Studies at Saint Mary's University on the use of art and performance art as a tool of conflict resolution, using case studies in Sri Lanka derived from some of the research she conducted there last year.

Donald Humphrey is a 4th year undergraduate student from Newfoundland and is currently completing his final semester of an environmental science degree with honours at MUN's Corner Brook Campus, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College. Donald has been involved with environmental issues for several years and most of his conservation efforts have been by conducting research. Last summer, he conducted research with a Master's student from Acadia University on dragonfly movement in Gros Morne National Park, a UNESCO world heritage site. Donald has also conducted research with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on maintaining salmon stocks in Newfoundland.

Coralee Johns is a Ta' an Kwach'an Youth of the Yukon. Coralee is 21 years old and currently attends Yukon College. During the summer of 2003, Coralee worked with her band as a Lands and Resources Assistant with the Yukon Heritage Association. They surveyed on band land, worked with G.P.S., re-did the band's filing systems and also patrolled the Thirty Mile River for clean-ups, and provided guidance for tourists. She is now on the Heritage committee and Board of Directors for her band. She plans to start the Renewable Resources Management Program at N.A.I.T. in Edmonton, Alberta, in the fall of 2005.

Photos of delegates have been taken by other delegates with cameras generously provided by the Vancouver Parks Board.

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Judith Marcuse, LL.D., Artistic Producer

Judith Marcuse Projects
(Formerly DanceArts Vancouver Society)
Scotiabank Dance Centre
7th floor - 677 Davie Street
Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6B 2G6
Phone: 604-606-6425 Fax: 604-606-6432
E-mail: info@dancearts.bc.ca
www.dancearts.bc.ca www.earthproject.ca