

# **Opening the Curtain to Collaboration**

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Opening the Curtain to Collaboration  
*Allowing for Cross-Border Theatre Partnerships in  
Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA*

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Presented to the Arts and Administration Program in Partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
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## Project Approval Page

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Date

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Pour les voisins -

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Pour la famille

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study approaches the lens of cross-border collaboration and partnership in the Pacific Northwest region through an artistic framework. Drawing upon an existing body of literature in border management, security, trade, and economics that focus on the Pacific Northwest as a region, the study seeks to answer the question “what are the opportunities for the theatre communities of Vancouver, British Columbia and Seattle, WA to collaborate to increase cultural vitality in the transborder Pacific Northwest?” From there, the study investigates current levels of collaboration between the two communities, the barriers to collaboration, and the significance of encouraging artistic collaboration. An in-depth literature review features detailed information about the cities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA, their individual theatre communities, their respective state and province, the Pacific Northwest Region, and the cultural policy of Canada and the United States in order to give a framework for this research. Qualitative research methods are applied to supply a personal perspective from the theatre communities and examples of certain barriers and benefits that can be derived from cross-border collaboration. Through these methods, the study presents and analyzes the views of professional theatre artists and arts administrators towards collaboration between the two cities. Ultimately, these methods and instruments work together to provide a plan for increased theatrical collaboration between the two theatre communities. This plan will detail specific methods that theatre artists and managers can realistically apply in the next 1, 5, and 10 years in order to increase artistic collaboration to further the creative vitality of the Pacific Northwest region.

## **KEYWORDS**

Canada-US Relations

Collaboration

Creative Vitality

Cultural tourism

Lower Mainland

Pacific Northwest

Theatre Community

Transborder

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Chapter One  
Introduction and Research Methodology

BEA

October 16, 1918. P.S. For some time now I've had the awful sense of being spread around the world. My thoughts and feelings stretched across the ocean. It's terribly distracting and not the least bit comfortable. We - I have been waiting for it all to come back home again. To feel whole once more and able to think. Today, on the train, the world started to return.

But not like I thought.

*Unity 1918* by Kevin Kerr

## **Positioning the Study**

Currently, Canada and the United States partner in many aspects that pertain to politics and economics. The leaders of these two countries, and their appropriate delegates, regularly work together to negotiate public policy and to reach shared goals. This is exemplified in instances such as Prime Minister Trudeau's visit to Washington, DC for the State Dinner where he and President Obama met to discuss issues such as climate control and border security (Fitzpatrick, *CBC*, 2016) and through the ongoing commitment that the two countries display to transnationalism and transgovernmentalism (Hale, 2013, p. 494, p. 501).

Despite their collaboration and partnership on issues pertaining to national security, the environment, trade, and border security, and other areas of common interest, an overview of the current and previous artistic climates of these countries

shows that the artistic collaboration in the performing arts is limited to the touring of larger performing arts groups such as Broadway Tours or large dance tours (Dance House, Jessica Lang, 2017; Broadway Across Canada, 2017). Even though the arts do have an effect on the economy, they are not currently considered to be a substantial form of partnership between the two countries. Therefore, there is an opportunity to encourage artistic collaboration to strengthen the ties between the United States and Canada and to explore the relationship between the two countries.

In particular, Vancouver, British Columbia and Seattle, Washington, are two major metropolitan cities that are located in the Pacific Northwest. Their proximity to each other (142 miles, or, 229 kilometers) as well as their demographics, artistic scene, and economic drivers provide the opportunity for collaboration and for the sharing of ideas amongst artists and arts administrators. These factors will be discussed throughout the study. Despite this proximity, the border can often times pose a barrier to the sharing of ideas in the area of arts and cultural policy. Even though the Pacific Northwest is recognized as a transborder region, (transborder here means, “crossing or extending across a border”),<sup>1</sup> when it comes to the importing and exporting of goods and services, the arts are typically not considered to be an element of transborder trade. The characteristics that the two theatre communities share poise them to be able to work together to solve shared issues, to create new works together, and to learn new ways of creating theatre in order to enhance the cultural vitality of the transborder Pacific Northwest and to create a stronger, more united theatre community. Through the study, a survey of the theatre communities in both cities provides us with an

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<sup>1</sup> Transborder, adj. (2017). In *Merriam Webster Online*. Retrieved May 29, 2017, from: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/transborder>

understanding of the issues that each of these communities face, how they are dealing with them, and highlights opportunities for each of the communities to work together.

This study approaches the lens of cross-border collaboration and partnership in the Pacific Northwest region through an artistic framework. Drawing on an existing body of literature in border management, security, trade, and economics that focus on the Pacific Northwest as a region, the study highlights the opportunity for collaboration between the theatre communities of Seattle, Washington, and Vancouver, British Columbia. This opportunity for collaboration is presented in the form of a plan at the end of the study detailing specific methods that theatre artists and managers can realistically apply in the next one, five, and ten years in order to increase artistic collaboration to further the creative vitality of the Pacific Northwest Region.

The central question of this study is: *What are opportunities for the theatre communities in Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA to collaborate to increase the cultural vitality in the transborder Pacific Northwest?* This research question was designed in order to explore what current and previous collaborations have taken place, and to examine how and in what ways the theatre communities can work together in the future. Through this investigation, a specific dimension of the cultural vitality in the Pacific Northwest was analyzed. The sub research questions embedded within this study include:

*What are the current levels of collaboration between the two communities?*

*What barriers are there to collaboration?*

*What can be done to further collaboration?*

*What is the significance of encouraging artistic collaboration?*

These research questions were answered through the research methods of surveys, interviews, and focus groups, and were ultimately used to answer the main research question.

## **Research Methodology and Design**

### Methodological Paradigm

This study was approached from the social-constructivist and interpretivist research paradigms. Through these paradigms, the research methods that are integral to the study were used to gain a deeper understanding of the research concept and questions as brought to life by those in the field. As a result, what was seen and experienced was interpreted through the creation of a proposal for collaboration. The chosen research methods included: case studies, interviews, document analysis, surveys, focus groups, and an extensive literature review.

### Research Approach + Dimensions of Research

Through a qualitative approach, this research utilized a variety of methods to answer the research questions. Grounded in a literature review that provides an analysis of the two cities and examines their cultural policy and the cultural policy of their respective province or state, the study then moved onto a more thorough examination of what cultural vitality is and the role that the arts play in increasing cultural vitality. Lastly, a definition of collaborative partnerships was examined along with a summary of current Canada-US relations. Supporting the literature review are a series of case studies, Actors' Equity interviews, a survey, and focus groups. A thorough analysis of data collected through these research methods provides the foundation for the plan for collaboration that is presented in the final chapter as a proposal for the two theatre communities.

## Conceptual Framework

This research is built upon the concepts of a transborder identity which refers to the idea that those who reside in border regions are more aware of border issues, and open to one another.

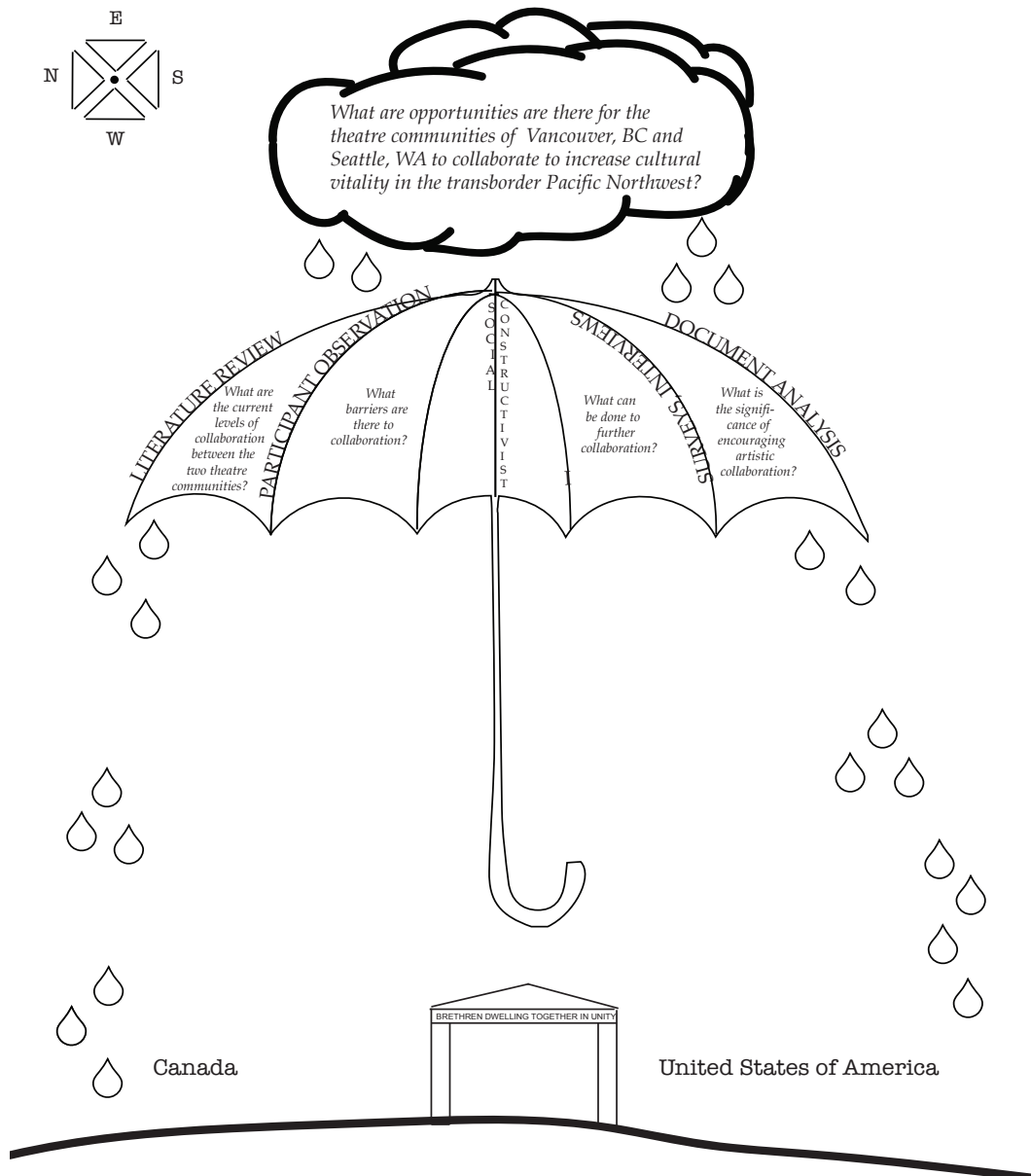


Figure 1 | Conceptual Framework



## Concepts

The conceptual framework for this research is best identified through the image of an umbrella. This image for this concept is displayed on page six in Figure 1 and can also be found in Appendix A. The umbrella, as an image, appropriately symbolizes the Pacific Northwest region. The cloud covering the umbrella is the central research question of this study. The ribs of the umbrella are the research methods and the theoretical frameworks of the research that provide support to sub-research questions in the fabric of the umbrella. The research is a qualitative study and I approached it from the social-constructivist paradigm. This research paradigm allowed me to interpret the data that is collected through the chosen research methods in order to answer the sub-research questions which ultimately seek to answer the main research question. The metaphor of the ribs and fabric conveys that the methods and framework provide a skeleton for the study, while the questions give fullness to it. The rain drops in the conceptual framework symbolize the study having an effect on the Pacific Northwest region and seeping into the soil. The iconic Peace Arch Border crossing symbolizes another framework for this study, “May These Gates Never Be Closed” (Daugherty, Peace Arch Park, 2009).

The framework for this research is informed by theories pertaining to transborder issues – in particular, the exchange of knowledge across borders, specifically, in the Pacific Northwest. It is also informed by personal experience, which provided the inspiration into the inquiry in this line of research. The framework is also informed by theories and researchers who seek to define cultural vitality, such as the National Arts Index (Kushner & Cohen, 2011). These theories work together to create a qualitative study that works to provide an in-depth analysis of collaboration in the

Pacific Northwest and how increased artistic collaboration can increase the region's cultural vitality.

### **Overview of Research Design**

A knowledge of the Pacific Northwest region, the current trends in each of the theatre communities, and previous collaborations amongst the theatre communities forms the basis for this study. Survey participants and focus group participants were recruited with the following criteria: "those who are between the ages of 20-75 and are currently working as theatre artists or administrators at a theatre company in either Vancouver, BC or Seattle, WA, or who have worked in such a position in either of these cities in the previous year." The survey method was employed to gain an understanding of the perceptions that local theatre practitioners have towards their theatre community, what level of awareness they have of the other city's theatre community, and whether or not they have previously participated in a collaborative project. The focus group method was employed to dig deeper into the sub-research questions, and to create a place where theatre practitioners could identify methods that they would like to see that would encourage artistic collaboration between the two communities.

A case study was conducted with Horseshoes & Hand Grenades Theatre which involved an interview with a key informant (the Artistic Director and Co-Founder) and a series of document analysis. Document analysis of private and public documents gave a deeper insight into the collaboration and whether or not it presented an increased burden to an organization.

Lastly, an interview with the Executive Director of Canadian Actors' Equity Association provided a deeper understanding of the visa application process and the

visa representation process. In particular, the interview focused on the reciprocal agreement between Canadian Actors' Equity Association and Actors' Equity Association, the movement of artists across borders and the role that Actors' Equity plays in supporting artists and arts organizations in acquiring visas and performing internationally.

### Researcher Bias

I acknowledge that I do have professional acquaintances with some of the contacts, but I have not had any professional experience with any of these organizations. I have, however, been an audience member at all of the productions of Horseshoes & Hand Grenades' trilogy of plays (*Re:Union*, *Except in the Unlikely Event of War*, and *Daisy*). The quality of these productions provided impetus to my motivation to pursue this study. These experiences may affect the contextualization of some of the responses but did not affect the outcome of the research.

### Definitions

Canada-US Relations:

*The continued effort among all levels of Canadian and American government to work towards and to achieve common goals to the mutual benefit of both countries.*

Collaboration:

*The occurrence of a theatre artist or arts administrator at a theatre company from Vancouver, BC or Seattle, WA working with another theatre artist or theatre arts manager from the opposite city to produce a show, team up on a script, tour a production as part of a festival, or to bring in a specific artist for a project.*

### Creative Vitality:

*Cultural vitality refers to both the economic measurements of the extrinsic values of the arts and the indicators of the intrinsic benefits of the arts. When combined together, these indicators provide a holistic measurement of the cultural health of a community. As Kushner and Cohen state, "Arts and culture capacity has been analyzed by examining cultural industries, their products and markets, community-level demand, and their intended and realized beneficial impact in those communities, as well as from other cultural policy perspectives" (Kushner & Cohen, 2011, p. 22).*

### Creative City:

*The characteristics of a locality that provides a place for a concentration of creativity (Karlsson, 2011, pp. 87-89).*

### Cultural Tourism:

*"The movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs" (Richards & Munsters in Lara, 2012, p. 6).*

### Lower Mainland:

*"The Lower Mainland Region covers the southwest corner of British Columbia, and provides service to over 60% of the provincial population. The area encompasses the Greater Vancouver urban area, as well as coastal and valley rural areas that offer diverse environmental and economic opportunities" (British Columbia, Welcome to the Lower Mainland, 2016).*

### Pacific Northwest:

*"comprises Oregon, Washington, Idaho, western Montana, and British Columbia" (Frykman, 1952, p. 251).*

Theatre:

*The art of producing stories on the stage for a public audience.*

Theatre Community:

*All persons, whether they are theatre artists or not, who identify as members of the larger community that is informed by, and influenced by, the practices of theatre artists, theatre critics, and theatre managers.*

Transborder:

*“Crossing or extending across a border” (Merriam Webster, Transborder, adj.).*

*“While the distribution of most of Canada’s population within 200 km (120 mi) of its long border with the United States effectively makes it a ‘borderlands country’” (Hale, 2011, p. 31).*

### Delimitations

For the purposes of this study, participants for surveys and focus groups were delimited to those who are between the ages of 20-75 and are currently working as theatre artists or administrators at a theatre company in either Vancouver, BC or Seattle, WA or who have worked in such a position in either of these cities in the previous year. Interviews with representatives from Canadian Actors’ Equity Association and Actors’ Equity Association and were delimited to senior staff members and senior council members. Case studies were delimited to theatre organizations, and theatre practitioners who have been involved in a previous collaboration. Collaboration, for the purposes of this study is defined as:

*The occurrence of a theatre artist or arts administrator at a theatre company from Vancouver, BC or Seattle, WA working with another theatre artist or theatre arts manager from the opposite city to produce a show, team up on a script, tour a production as part of a festival, or to bring in a specific artist for a project.*

While case studies were delimited to those that included the collaboration as defined above, the study recognizes that other collaborations outside of those approved for the method of case study may occur, such as advertising. Other research instruments (surveys and focus groups) then provided opportunities to share these collaborative methods.

### Limitations

Some might see the delimitation for the surveys and focus groups as a limitation, since the age group begins with those who are 20. This is a deliberate choice on the part of the principal investigator, since she feels that anyone under the age of 20 would not hold a position of influence that would provide them with enough experience to be able to speak to the questions that the study poses, or, they may still be in university. Those who are 20 and over, are more likely to have completed university and/or have begun a professional career allowing them to bring an interest and awareness to these issues.

The narrowing of the study to the cities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA might also be perceived to be a limitation. This intentional delimitation allows the researcher to focus the study and to create a comparative analysis that will then assist in the creation of a proposal for collaboration between the two cities. The delimitation to the cities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA, therefore, provides a benefit to the study.

## **Data Collection and Analysis Procedures**

### Research Population and Recruitment Methods

Survey participants were recruited online, through postings on arts and culture websites, social media platforms, and through direct email to theatre companies in Vancouver and Seattle.

Case study participants and Actors' Equity interview participants were sent a recruitment letter, and if they agreed to participate, a consent form via email for review.

Focus group participants were primarily recruited through the survey. Upon the completion of the survey, they were re-directed to a separate form, which then allowed them to enter their email address anonymously to express their interest in knowing more about the focus groups. To support focus group recruitment, participants were also recruited through arts and culture websites, social media platforms, and direct email to organizations.

### Informed Consent Procedures

Consent forms were provided at the beginning of each of the research elements. When a potential participant was invited to complete the survey or expressed interest in completing the survey by clicking on the link provided, they were then directed to a consent form and provided informed consent by clicking "NEXT" on the survey. Please refer to Appendix G for the consent form for the survey.

When a potential participant was recruited for an interview for a case study or for an Actors' Equity interview, they were provided with an informed consent form via email for them to look over ahead of time. When they expressed their interest in participating in an interview, the principal investigator then completed the informed consent process in a verbal format (via telephone or Skype) prior to starting the interview.

When a potential participant was recruited for a focus group, they were provided with an informed consent form in-person. The principal investigator began each focus group session by stating that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in the process of the focus group and assuring the potential participants that they are free to leave at any time during the course of the study should they desire to. The principal

investigator then reviewed each section of the consent form and answered any questions. Participants were then encouraged to ask questions when going over the informed consent paperwork in order to ensure that they understand all aspects of their involvement in the research. Signed consent forms were then collected from all focus group participants.

#### Data Collection and Disposition Procedures

Data for the surveys was collected through Qualtrics and was exported to an Excel file at the end of the survey period at which point, the survey was taken down. Interview data for case studies and Actors' Equity Interviews was collected through notes and then coded through a coding schematic (see Appendices C, D, and E). Focus Groups were recorded using an audio recorder and notes from the audio recording were coded using the coding schematic in Appendix F.

Throughout the duration of the study, all files were stored in password-protected folders on a password-protected computer. All files were deleted upon the completion of the research project. This includes: all email correspondence, all notes, all survey data, and audio recordings. In particular, upon the completion of each focus group, the audio recording was uploaded to a password-protected folder on a password-protected computer and the audio recording device was wiped. All consent forms are kept in the possession of the principal investigator for one year after the completion of the study, to be destroyed on June 6, 2018.

#### Coding and Analysis Procedures

The coding schematic created for this project was meant to analyze patterns between the two cities, to gain an understanding of what trends artists and arts administrators are noticing and to triangulate findings. The results from the coding schematic were then compared with each other to analyze the perceived benefits and



obstacles to collaboration. Data will then be reported based on the trends found in the coding schematics. These coding schematics were based on the following list of codes. Individual schematics can be found in Appendices C through F.

## MAIN CODES

<i>OV</i>	<i>Organization Vancouver</i>
<i>OS</i>	<i>Organization Seattle</i>
<i>AV</i>	<i>Artist Vancouver</i>
<i>AS</i>	<i>Artist Seattle</i>
<i>AAV</i>	<i>Arts Administrator Vancouver</i>
<i>AAS</i>	<i>Arts Administrator Seattle</i>
<i>AEC</i>	<i>Actor's Equity Canada</i>
<i>AES</i>	<i>Actor's Equity United States</i>

## SUB CODES

<i>C</i>	<i>Challenges</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>Benefits</i>
<i>S</i>	<i>Similarity</i>
<i>ST</i>	<i>Structure</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>Difference</i>
<i>E</i>	<i>Evaluation</i>
<i>P</i>	<i>Program</i>
<i>O</i>	<i>Opportunity</i>
<i>CP</i>	<i>Cultural Policy</i>
<i>CO</i>	<i>Collaboration</i>

### Strategies for Validating Findings

In order to validate the findings of this study, a coding schematic was utilized. This helped to track patterns between findings and to employ a triangulation of methods. The coding schematic was developed prior to the start of the research project, and was used consistently throughout the research project.

In order to facilitate this process, detailed and organized notes from interviews were kept, as well as audio recordings of each of the focus groups.

## Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher is to be an information gatherer and an interpreter. While the majority of the information was collected from a distance, the informed consent for the interviews, case studies, and surveys, were collected through electronic means including: phone calls and electronic survey platforms. Focus groups were conducted in-person in each city of study. Key staff members of organizations that were utilized for case studies were be contacted via phone and email for documents pertaining to the organization. At times, the principal investigator contacted key informants for further clarification. The principal investigator also collected and analyzed publicly available key documents pertaining to each organization.

## **Benefit and Significance of this Study**

The purpose of the study is to define what collaboration could look like between the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA. The hoped for benefits of this research are an increased awareness of how much of an effect that the international border has on the creative collaboration between Canada and the United States of America, as well as the expectation of an increased awareness of how much of an impact that the border has on these theatre communities. This study also allows participants to engage in a professional dialogue surrounding the unique aspects of each of the theatre communities and how collaboration can benefit both communities. Ultimately, the research poses a benefit by enhancing the creative vitality of these communities, but also the transborder Pacific Northwest as a whole by creating a proposal for increased theatrical collaborations between Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA.

The chapters that follow provide an overview of Canada-US relations, border theory, and the Pacific Northwest as a region. Positioning Washington and British Columbia in the Pacific Northwest, we then look more closely at the similarities and differences between the state and the province, and between the cities of Vancouver and Seattle. From there, an argument for cultural vitality is made in support of the performing arts within communities. An exploration of theatrical collaboration models is illustrated through the lens of a case study with Horseshoes & Hand Grenades Theatre and with data collected from focus groups provide further context pertaining to the benefits of collaboration. The study concludes with a summary of recommendations for further research and a plan for promoting cross-border collaboration based on the findings from focus groups.

Chapter Two  
Canada-US Cultural Relations

LILLIAN

There are other places to go besides out. There's in. There's around. There's under. Over.  
Between.

*7 Stories* by Morris Panych.

It is commonly known that Canada and the United States share the world's longest undefended border at 5,920 miles, or, 9,527 kilometers (Beaver, 2006, p. 1). This fact brings up various implications for the two countries. How the two countries have come to work together towards mutual agreements in terms of trade, economy, border security, and the flow of goods and services; how the inhabitants of each of the countries live with the knowledge of their neighbour (or lack thereof) and the line that both divides and unites them; what it even means to cross the border – from the United States into Canada and from Canada into the United States – all of these are themes found in literature pertaining to borderlands and border identity. This chapter will seek to outline current and previous trends in Canada-US relations, the ever delicate cultural identity relationship that is expressed between the two countries, border identity and

politics, Pacific Northwest identity, the major theatre institutions in both countries and cities, and to provide an overview of current issues pertaining to international touring.

### **Canada-US Relations: A Strong Tie**

The United States and Canada share a bilateral trade agreement that is “one of the closest and most extensive in the world” (Department of State, Relations with Canada, 2017). Daily, \$1.8 billion in goods and services crosses the border, and 380,000 people cross the border, “in fields ranging from security and law enforcement to environmental protection to free trade, the two countries work closely together on multiple levels, from federal to local” (Department of State, Relations with Canada, 2017). Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly also indicates that two-way trade between Canada and the US has more than doubled since the 1990’s. In 1977 trade was worth \$45.6 billion and in 2010 came to be worth \$818 billion (Brunet-Jailly, 2012, p. 964). Because of this increase in the value of trade, “Canadian trade with the US is larger than that of Europe, Japan, or Mexico which suggests that Canada and the US have the highest level of economic integration between two large countries in the world” (Brunet-Jailly, 2012, p. 965).

This level of integration is not only seen at the federal level, but also at the state and provincial level. Thirty-five out of fifty states are directly dependent on Canadian imports to produce the materials that help to make the economy of their state thrive (Castaldo, *Canadian Business*, 2017). For example, Ontario’s trade with the state of Michigan “alone surpasses that of inter-provincial trade” (Brunet-Jailly, 2012, p. 965). Likewise, the province of British Columbia, which is evolving towards a tertiary economy, has the United States as the primary customer of the province’s exports (Brunet-Jailly, 2012, pp. 966-967). The United States also comprised 70% of the total

travel entries into British Columbia in 2010, thereby encompassing a significant portion of the tourism industry in British Columbia (Brunet-Jailly, 2012, p. 967). These statistics point to a strong economic tie between the United States and Canada.

### **Border Identity**

An awareness of the border as a region and as an entity is more prevalent among Canadians compared to Americans. This is due in part to the fact that the majority of Canada's population resides within 193 kilometres (120 miles) of the border. This makes Canada a "borderlands country" (Hale, 2011, p. 31). In contrast, "only 5 percent of Americans live within a two hour drive of the border, reinforcing the 'idea of the border' as 'the end of America'" (Hale, 2011, p. 31). The proximity that the residents of Canada maintain to the border causes the border to be a much stronger object and entity that permeates the lives and the culture of an entire nation. This notion is corroborated in Alm & Bukhart's study "Canada-US Border Communities: What the People Have to Say:"

the region is asymmetrical in a critically important sense: It is shallow and of relative insignificance on the American side of the international boundary, and deep and of great significance on the Canadian side. (Gibbins in Alm & Bukhart, 2013, p. 88)

While the border region symbolizes deep-rooted national significance for Canadians, it is quite overlooked on the American side. For Konrad, the border slipped from the consciousness of Americans during the twentieth century since Canadians and Americans were friends and allies which caused Canadians to imagine "a border that contained Canadian culture, nebulous as it was, and held off at least some negatively

perceived American influences and excesses” (Konrad, 2012, p. 539). The border holds a place of cultural and institutional significance in the lives of Canadians.

These differences in identity that the border experiences run deeper than just the perspectives that the inhabitants of the respective countries hold towards the line; they also represent the cultural identity of the countries and the political differences between them. For Ricou, “the border obliges us to define difference – peace, order, and good government versus life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” (Ricou, 1991, p. 289). Here, Ricou is referencing the Declaration of Independence and to the British North America Act, or the Constitution Act. In the preamble to the Declaration of Independence, it professes: “we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (US, 1776). The Constitution Act of 1867 recognizes that “It shall be lawful for the Queen, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate and House of Commons, to make Laws for the Peace, Order, and good Government of Canada” (Constitution Act, Sec 91, 1867). The above phrases exemplify the founding principles of each country and the ideals that were identified by the Founding Fathers and Fathers of the Constitution. These concepts are highlighted as one crosses the border and experiences the subtle and intrinsic differences between the two countries. In particular, since “Canadians have long defined themselves in contrast to Americans, and ‘peace, order and good government’ provided a convenient vocabulary for explaining perceived differences” (McLellan & Gall, Peace, Order, 2006). Daniel Drache offers the perspective that “for Canadians it is about relations of power and the power differential between the two countries that constitute the Great Divide” (Drache, 2004, p. 39). For Canadians the



border plays a much stronger role in their day-to-day lives; it is a symbol of power and unity.

At present, the political situation in the United States is shifting. The new highly contested travel ban that came into effect on Monday, March 16, 2017, blocks the entry of citizens of Syria, Iran, Lybia, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen from entering the United States for ninety days; even citizens with valid US visas (de Vogue et al., *CNN*, 2017). Both travel bans have been met with resistance across America and the world, including a “decision from the 4th Circuit Court [that] kept in place nationwide orders from two district judges that had blocked the president’s revised decree” (Savage, *LA Times*, 2017). A number of other judges across the country have ruled that the ban is discriminatory (*BBC News*, Trump travel, 2017). Currently, states have asked federal judges to block the current travel ban (Jarrett, *CNN*, 2017).

The events in the United States have created tensions surrounding the border. Many Canadian academics and artists are boycotting travel to the United States in solidarity with those who are affected by the travel ban (Keung, *The Star*, 2017). In February of 2017, *HowlRound*, an online theatrical knowledge commons, posted a series of letters from Canadians to Americans pertaining to the current political climate. The original letter by Yvette Nolan explored the concept of the Canada-US border and the free-flow of thoughts and ideas that occurs across it. As Nolan writes:

But it is porous, this medicine line. We travel back and forth over it, our music and ideas flow freely through it. What happens to you on that side of the line happens to us, which you would know with certainty if you were to hang out with us on this side of the medicine line for a while. We are worried, like you, afraid, even, about what this means, this new world of alternative facts and travel bans and governing by tweets. (Nolan, *HowlRound*, 2017)

This quote not only reflects the sentiment that the border is just that, just a line, but also that fear and ever-increasing sentiment that “it could happen in Canada.” Nolan continues her letter by asserting that “theatre is already more important” (Nolan, *HowlRound*, 2017), meaning that in these turbulent times theatre has become vital. This is a recurring theme throughout the series of letters.

The letters also include sentiments of solidarity, as exemplified in the conclusion to Majdi Bou-Matar’s letter:

My friends, as you continue and intensify your fight for social equity, harmony, and justice, we here stand with you in solidarity. We send you much love and support, while—honestly—feeling terrified ourselves of the very same scenario playing again, but this time on Canadian soil. (Bou-Matar, *HowlRound*, 2017)

What is portrayed here, and throughout these letters is the Canadian theatrical and artistic community standing together with the American community, in solidarity with their neighbours, as a means of declaring that they, too, will fight with their neighbours for social equity, harmony, and justice, and that they will not stand to see this scenario occur on Canadian soil.

Theatre has been utilized as one of many responses to recent events. Thus, the border has become an ever increasing risk and barrier to artistic collaboration, especially for those of religious and racial minorities. This is a risk and a barrier that will be further addressed in Chapter Six.

### **Identity in the Pacific Northwest Region**

The Pacific Northwest as a region upholds a strong sense of identity throughout North America and the world. Strictly speaking, the Pacific Northwest region includes the states of Washington, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho and the provinces and territories

of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories, and Yukon (PNWER, About, 2017). The states and provinces that comprise the Pacific Northwest work together on many shared issues that they face such as the environment, trade, border security and management, and regional collaboration.

The public and private group, Pacific Northwest Economic Region, which was established by the states and provinces listed above in 1991, provides a platform of support and dialogue for the leaders in the Pacific Northwest. Because of the geographic location of the Pacific Northwest which neighbours the Pacific Ocean, there is immense opportunity for the region “to become the funnel for future trade, tourism and services between North America and the burgeoning economies of Europe and Asia” (Bluechel, 1993, p. 27). The leaders of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region also work together to promote and to increase tourism throughout the area (Bluechel, 1993, p. 28).

It is generally agreed upon that the Pacific Northwest is comprised of various regions that are defined by geographical means, political means, or, economic means (Mansfield & Milner, 1999). Literature written by authors of the Pacific Northwest represents a network of motifs and tropes that “implies an intersection of cultures” (Ricou, 1991, p. 288). Ricou pinpoints a series of motifs and tropes that arise out of the literature of the Pacific Northwest and serve to unite the region through a common theme and sense of identity. These motifs and tropes include: edges and border (sea, mountain, river); Islands; Ecotopia; Asian Connections; and The Timescape of the First Peoples (Ricou, 1991, pp. 289-290). While Ricou acknowledges that these are mere generalizations, they serve to provide a thematic cluster that allows the observer to ask further questions about how the themes intersect to create a sense of identity for the region (Ricou, 1991, p. 290).

One sub-region of the Pacific Northwest is the Cascadia region. Included in this region is the province of British Columbia, and the states of Washington and Oregon. Inhabitants of Washington and Oregon exhibit a higher level of regional consciousness than the inhabitants of other states in the Pacific Northwest (Gastil, 1973, p. 148). According to Smith the initial idea of Cascadia emerged in the 1970's and 1980's and was meant to refer to the Northwest part of North America from the Cascade Mountains to the Pacific Ocean, the Cascadia Brand is commonly seen as something that "transcends political – even geographic – definitions; it is more an ideological notion with the environment at its centre" (Smith, 2008, p. 61). In this region, "cross-border activity is being played out at every jurisdictional level, and in both governmental and nongovernmental settings" (Smith, 2008, p. 61). In the Cascadia sub-region, cross-border activity permeates every aspect of life and there is, therefore, the opportunity apply it to the arts and culture sector. Since both Vancouver and Seattle are located in this sub-region of the Pacific Northwest, a relatively unified cultural space, they are identified by this region of ideological notions, and the transcendence of political boundaries. As a result, their respective theatre communities are poised to work together to for the enhancement of the cultural vitality of the Pacific Northwest through cross-border collaboration.

### **Artistic Landscape**

The very landscape of cultural policy in the United States and Canada supports a structural difference in the arts and cultural landscape of the two countries. Canada, with a Department of Canadian Heritage and a Minister of Heritage has a government that is very much focused on promoting the arts and culture in every aspect of Canadian's lives. From the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, to Heritage Minutes, to

the doubling of the Canada's Council's current \$182 million dollar budget over five years, (Abma, *CBC*, 2016) the Canadian government over the years has made a concerted effort to ensure that Canadian Art and Culture is supported and promoted both nationally and internationally. The Canada Council's budget per capita in US dollars was \$5.19 in 2011 compared to the National Endowment for the arts \$0.47 budget per capita in 2012 (NEA, 2012, p. 23). Much of the public funding for arts and culture in Canada is the result of the Royal Commission on the National Development of the Arts, Letters, and Sciences which cautioned against the "'the very present danger of permanent dependence' on American culture" (Stewart & Kallmann, Massey Commission, 2006). Due to this report, which supported the nourishing of Canadian culture through federal patronage, Canadians now enjoy the rich artistic and cultural life that they have today and they have worked throughout the years to protect their culture and identity from "influences across the border" (Stewart & Kallmann, Massey Commission, 2006).

Canadian culture is often portrayed as an invisible culture. This invisible culture is represented through the arts (Crean, 1996, p. 334). Unlike in the United States, where the direction of culture was left up to dominant groups with means, Canada has a steady flow of public funds to support National Arts Centres in order to make culture accessible to the public (Crean, 1996, p. 335). Despite efforts in support of cultural protectionism that arose from Canada's history of cultural dependence – first upon Britain as a colony, then on the United States in the years following World War II, and even now with the dominance of American mass culture (Crean, 1996, pp. 339-340) – there is a cultural disconnect in Canada. Jamie Portman highlights this disconnect by identifying that "the Canadian cultural community fears for its safety in the face of the continuing dominance of the United States in such key areas of Canadian life"

(Portman, 1993, p. 343). Instead of seeking to be culturally sovereign and “to hold the mirror up to nature”<sup>2</sup> in order to evaluate Canadian Art, Canadian Art is continuously deemed ‘good’ by how well it measures to other “official” standards of measuring art in other countries (Crean, 1996, p. 336). While Canada’s identity is found in culture, Canada has not yet found the sovereignty to fully express that identity.

Part of this is due to the fact that ‘popular’ culture in Canada is different from what is popular in the United States. While an off-Broadway show, one example is *Circle Mirror Transformation*, an Obie Award winning play (Thomas, *Georgia Straight*, 2011). According to Colin Thomas, “in the U.S., these shows [*Intimate Apparel* and *Circle Mirror Transformation*] are touted as adventuresome, but they’re boring” (Thomas, *Georgia Straight*, 2012). Colin Thomas had a similar review for the Arts Club’s recent production of *Bakersfield Mist*, which received rave reviews in Los Angeles at the Fountain Theatre (Fountain Theatre, Bakersfield, 2017), but, according to Thomas, “the script isn’t as smart as it pretends to be” (Thomas, Bakersfield, 2016). It is important to note that historically, Canadian plays have also received similar reviews when they have been performed across the border (Richards, *NY Times*, 1994; Rich, *NY Times*, 1983). Thomas identifies that the difference in tastes is due to the differences in funding between the US and Canada. In Canada, “arts funding has helped to create a culture in which audiences relish challenge. You don’t see that so much in the United States’ theatrical scene, which runs on a more free-enterprise, lowest-common-denominator model” (Thomas, *Georgia Straight*, 2012). Canada, in particular Vancouver, thrives on experimental and new works.

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<sup>2</sup> *Hamlet* (3.2.23-24).

In the United States, arts and culture are not necessarily seen as sectors that should receive federal patronage. In 2012, the NEA received \$148 million in appropriated funds. These funds are then disbursed to state arts agencies, and to arts organizations in the form of grants. On average, arts and cultural organizations received 6.7% of their revenue from public sources (local, state, federal funding) between 2006-2010 (NEA, US Funds Arts, 2012); in Canada, most organizations can receive anywhere from 30-70% of their funding from public sources (CRA, Pink Ink, 2016; CRA, Rumble, 2016; CRA, Electric Company, 2016). This difference in how the arts are funded is only a small reflection of the overall structural differences between the two countries.

The Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) serves as the face of the professional theatre industry in Canada. The mission of PACT is as follows:

PACT is a member-driven organization of professional Canadian theatres which serves as the collective voice of its members. For the betterment of Canadian theatre, PACT provides leadership, national representation and a variety of programs and practical assistance to member companies, enabling members to do their own creative work. (PACT, Mission, 2017)

PACT is a non-profit member-led organization that provides members with networking and professional development opportunities. Once a theatre company becomes a full member of PACT, they are expected to adhere by the Canadian Theatre Agreement (CTA). The Canadian Theatre Agreement, in accord with the Canadian Actors' Equity Association, outlines working policies, category classifications, and salary classifications. It also outlines basic procedures such as termination, if an actor's part is cut out, and the responsibility of the artist. Any theatre company that is a PACT member is required to abide by the Canadian Theatre Agreement. The Canadian

Theatre Agreement, therefore, becomes the professional standard of theatre practice in Canada (CAEA, Theatre Agreements, 2017).

In contrast, in the United States the professional not-profit theatre community is represented by the Theatre Communications Group (TCG) and the League of Resident Theatres (LORT). Like PACT, TCG and LORT are both non-profit organizations.

Theatre Communications Group functions much more as a research, networking and advocacy group. The organization serves to:

Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre, exists to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional not-for-profit American theatre. (TCG, Mission, 2017)

Membership provides peer interchange, the opportunity to apply for grants, access to research put out by TCG, the ability to be involved in advocacy, free listings, and access to international programs (TCG, Theatre Membership, 2017). Membership is also open to funders, businesses, and universities who desire to be a part of the conversation.

The League of Resident Theatres, is similar to PACT in that it has established Category classifications (LORT classifications) for theatre companies, administers the collective bargaining agreements, and deals directly with personnel issues. The League of Resident Theatres describes its vision as follows:

LORT is the largest professional theatre association of its kind in the United States, with 72 member Theatres located in every major market in the U.S., including 29 states and the District of Columbia. LORT Theatres collectively issue more Equity contracts to actors than Broadway and commercial tours combined. (LORT, Who We Are, 2017)

The 2012-2017 LORT USA Agreement serves the same purpose as the Canadian Theatre Agreement. It is an agreement between the Alliance of Theatrical Employees



and the League of Resident Theatres that outlines what professional standards member theatres should adhere to. Theatre companies that are seeking to apply for membership with LORT must be a registered non-profit, rehearse productions for a minimum of three weeks, have a season of twelve weeks or more, and recognized that the theatre will operate under LORT-AEA, LORT-SDC, and LORT-USA contracts (LORT, How to Join, 2017). Unlike PACT, which also functions in a capacity similar to TCG where networking and professional development are part of the purpose of the organization, LORT is strictly an organization that administers theatre agreements and whose members are expected to abide by that collective agreement.

### **Local Theatre Resources**

The Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance and Theatre Puget Sound serve as the main information centres and professional resources for their respective theatre communities. The Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance provides an array of events and services to the Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre community. These include: *The Vancouver Theatre Guide*, Unified General Auditions, the Making a Scene Conference, *Casting the Net* e-newsletter (a bi-weekly newsletter with information on events, job and audition postings, etc.), World Theatre Day celebrations, and community wide projects such as the “Theatre Engagement Project” that came out of the 2016 Making a Scene Conference (GVPTA, Our Programs, 2017). Theatre Puget Sound, a leadership and service organization, provides many of the same services as the Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance. Throughout the year, TPS offers professional development workshops, an annual festival at Bumbershoot, the co-ordination of the Unified General Auditions, member resources, and the organization of the Gregory Awards; a series of awards meant to celebrate the achievements of theatre

artists across Washington (TPS, TPS Online, 2017; TPS, Bumbershoot, 2017; TPS, UGA, 2017; TPS, Advertising, 2017; Gregory Awards, Nominations, 2017). The Gregory Awards have existed since 1998, whereas, in Vancouver, the Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards have been awarded since 1983. The Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards are operated by the Jessie Richardson Theatre Society, a non-profit organization, which was formed in 1997 when it took over the awards ceremony from the Greater Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance. The Board of Directors is comprised of professionals from all over the theatre community and the set of criteria that is in place for each award varies from season to season (Jessies, About, 2017).

### **Actors' Equity: A Closer Look**

Both Canada and the United States have Actors' Equity Associations. These are unions that represent actors and stage managers. The American Actors' Equity Association (AEA) was founded in 1913 and currently represents over 50,000 artists (AEA, About, 2017). The Canadian Actors' Equity Association (CAEA), which was formed in 1976 from an amicable separation with AEA, represents not only actors and stage managers, but all types of performers, choreographers, and directors who work in English Canada, because, Québec has its own Union, *Union des Artistes* (Union of Artists) (CAEA, About, 2017; CAEA, History, 2017). There are reciprocal agreements between the CAEA and AEA that help to facilitate the movement of artists and productions across the border. The basic principles of the reciprocal agreements are that each party will recognize members in good standing with their respective union, the reciprocal agreement applies only to Residents of the United States and/or Canada (resident, thereby, meaning a "Landed Immigrant or citizen in Canada, and a Resident Alien or Citizen in the United States" (CAEA, Reciprocal, 2014, p. 5). The reciprocal

agreements also outline practices regarding compensation, retirement funds, and per diem payments (CAEA, 2014, pp. 6-8).

### An Interview with the Executive Director of Canadian Actors' Equity

The following is from an interview with the Executive Director of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Arden Ryshpan. This interview provided further insight into how the agreements between the AEA and the CAEA play out. As referenced earlier, there is a mutual agreement that is in place between the two associations. Included in this agreement is a statement that stipulates that:

Both associations pledge themselves to fraternal cooperation in all matters of common interest and to the continual full and free interchange of their respective members across the international border. This principle of free interchange between the two memberships shall be considered to be an integral part of the agreement between the two Associations. (CAEA, 2014, p. 4)

It is explicitly stated within the reciprocal agreement that the two organizations shall seek to co-operate with each other and to further opportunities for their respective members to work on either side of the border in pursuit of free interchange. Yet, this does not always logistically work out. According to Ryshpan, AEA is "very strict about who they will let in despite what is in the reciprocal agreement" (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017). For instance, "If you were to look at all of the entertainment unions, live performance unions. The door swings open coming north, and the door slams shut coming south" (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017). What is put in place on paper as an agreement between two organizations, in this case AEA and CAEA, does not always work out in actuality because of political or other legal issues (as exemplified in Rothstein, *NY Times*, 1990; Hernandez, *Playbill*, 2003). AEA and CAEA maintain a very close working relationship. They also maintain a opening the curtain to collaboration

relationship with other English speaking unions and the unions that are members of the *Fédération Internationale des Acteurs* (International Federation of Actors) gather once a year to discuss issues of common interest (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017). When asked what matters would be considered to be of common interest between AEA and CAEA, Ryshpan replied that these would include ensuring that members are being paid proper rates when they work across the border, and that the rate that they are being paid is “not less than on the other side of the border” (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017). As indicated, there are often productions that cross the border for a variety of reasons, such as productions from Toronto that go to Broadway, or, small-scale productions that tour in either direction. CAEA also works closely with bureaucrats in Ottawa in order to “craft regulations that work very well for the arts and culture sector” which in turn allows unions to have greater control over who comes in as a worker (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017).

There are many factors that affect touring both nationally and internationally. Ryshpan, who has been with the CAEA since 2007, has seen how the cultural policy in Canada and abroad has changed and how that has affected touring and international projects. Ryshpan noted that there has been a decline “in the amount of touring both in Canada and abroad” (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017). There are many reasons for that, but the primary reason for the decline of Canadian touring was due to when, in 2008, Stephen Harper’s Conservative government<sup>3</sup> cut funding “to two programs [Trade Routes and PromArt] which were specifically designed to assist Canadian artists abroad and open artistic trade routes” (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017).

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<sup>3</sup> Stephen Harper was Prime Minister of Canada from 2006 – 2015 (Parliament of Canada, Prime Ministers, 2015).

Overseen by the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Trade Routes program was created with the intention of “developing international markets and audiences for Canadian cultural goods and services” (CCA, Cultural Spending, 2008). With a \$9 million budget, Trade Routes “contributed to initiatives by Canadian arts and cultural entrepreneurs . . . to develop long-term export strategies” (CDA, End of Trade Routes, 2008). Despite the fact that only a small portion of the funds for the program went towards grants, “arts professionals who use their services have indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the assistance provided” (CCA, Cultural Spending, 2008).

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade was in charge of PromArt, which had a \$4.7 million budget (which was cut from \$11.8 million over two years leading up to its demise) (CCA, Cultural Spending, 2008). It “helped bring international buyers to Canada and helped offset touring costs for Canadian dance companies” (CDA, End of Trade Routes, 2008). Since the programs were officially terminated at the end of their 2009 fiscal year, the export of Canadian art and culture has become increasingly difficult. The cutting of these programs has “had a significant impact on the accessibility of Canadian artists to international artists” (personal communication, March 17, 2017).

In 2016, Justin Trudeau’s Liberal government announced its first budget.<sup>4</sup> In addition to doubling the budget for the Canada Council, the Mandate Letter written to the Honourable Minister of Canadian Heritage identified the following priority: “[to] Restore the PromArt and Trade Routes International cultural promotion programs, update their design, and increase related funding” (CAEA, Culture and the Arts, 2016). According to the Government of Canada’s website, this initiative is being undertaken

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<sup>4</sup> Justin Trudeau is the current Prime Minister of Canada and was sworn in on November 4, 2015 (Parliament of Canada, Prime Ministers, 2015).

through the Cultural Industries Program, “through its planned spending of \$302.5 million, the Department will support Canadian creators and the cultural industries for the production of high quality cultural content, as well as foster access to it in Canada and abroad” (Canadian Heritage, Cultural Industries, 2016-2017). For the 2016-2017 budget year, the key initiatives of the program were to:

- *Conduct outreach and establish closer co-operation with stakeholders and other jurisdictions in Canada and abroad;*
- *Modernize the PromArt and Trade Routes International cultural promotion programs and increase related funding; and*
- *Enhance collaboration with the provincial and territorial jurisdictions on files of common interest.* (Canadian Heritage, Cultural Industries, 2016-2017)

Since the funds for the PromArt and Trade Routes programs are just being re-instated, it is difficult to say how they will change the current lack of awareness of Canadian arts abroad. But, despite the fact that in 2016 Justin Trudeau’s Liberal government promised to re-instate the funds, it has become increasingly difficult for artists to tour both nationally and internationally as the costs have gone way up (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017). There is a distinct need for these types of programs.

In a discussion of current issues that face theatre and touring, Ryshpan noted that, as an art form, theatre is changing, and that its future remains uncertain. The biggest threat facing live performance according to Ryshpan is on-demand services (such as Netflix). Due to the relatively cheap price and instant gratification nature of these services, it is becoming increasingly difficult for higher-cost entertainment services, such as live performance, to find a regular audience. Ryshpan can imagine a time when there are only two types of theatre: large scale “spectacle” and circus type shows, and

smaller more experimental performances, since cheap, convenient, on demand services “could turn out to be most seriously disruptive to those mid-range productions” (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017). This is due to the fact that large scale spectacle shows and experimental performances provide a product that isn’t typically available via on-demand services.

While Ryshpan believes that there is “always a benefit for an artistic exchange” and that the benefit happens at the level of the artist, “there are always talented artists who can benefit from each other and who together can produce outstanding work” (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017). There is a risk, however, to dominating the arts with American culture as much as the film and television industries are since this could undercut Canadian production opportunities through the permeation of Canadian culture with American mass culture (Ryshpan, personal communication, March 17, 2017). Ryshpan admitted that it would be a great thing to see more Canadians going south. This would be beneficial because, as discussed below, Canadian art is not particularly well-known in the United States. Nonetheless, due to the current policies that are in place as a result of the new American administration, Ryshpan believes that “there isn’t going to be too much cross border collaboration” and that “companies and people are going to have issues crossing the border” (personal communication, March 17, 2017).

The sentiment that Canadian art and culture is relatively unknown in the United States has been reflected in artistic discussions since the demise of the two programs. In a *HowlRound* article, “What’s Wrong with Canadian Plays?” Howard Sherman writes about how American theatre practitioners are consistently unable to name Canadian playwrights, and the fact that the summer stock festivals who advertise to the south offer “Canadian theater, but rarely Canadian literature” (Sherman, *HowlRound*, 2012).

Sherman does indicate that he is not “lobbying for Canadian plays because [he finds] something wanting in new American plays, and [he hastily acknowledges] that there are already too few opportunities for new work to be produced here as it is” (Sherman, *HowlRound*, 2012). As mentioned earlier, the funding system in Canada allows for new and experimental work (Thomas, *Georgia Straight*, 2012). Yet, Sherman summarizes that Americans owe it to Canadian artists to see beyond their own borders and beyond London, “to those who say that Canadians have a different sensibility than Americans, I say so do the English, the Irish, the Scots and the French, yet we don’t have any problems there” (Sherman, *HowlRound*, 2012).

Theatre Communications Group’s May/June edition of the *American Theatre Magazine* focuses on International Theatre. In 2012, the focus of the magazine, for the first time, was Canadian Theatre. According to the Managing Editor Nicole Estvanik Taylor, “this issue, we hope, provides the reader with maps for an array of theatrical adventures within reach” (Broadway World, TCG’s *American Theatre Magazine*, 2012). In the Executive Letter for July / August 2015, TCG Executive Director, Teresa Eyring, reflects upon the 2012 magazine and her attendance and presentation at the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres’ annual conference. It was discovered through the conference that both countries are partaking in the same theatrical conversation: “how to build a more equitable and inclusive theatre community” (Eyring, Executive Letter, 2015). Nicole Estvanik Taylor’s analysis from the 2012 *American Theatre* magazine about the proximity of U.S. cities and major Canadian Theatre centres points out:

It’s a similarly short distance from Seattle to Vancouver [compared to Toronto, ON and Buffalo, NY], which boasts more than 100 professional theatre companies. But Seattleites are more likely to hear about a hot new play from



Washington, D.C., than one premiering a 150-mile drive up the Pacific Coast.  
(Taylor, 2012, p. 31)

This points to the need for increased connectivity between Canadian theatre centres and their neighbouring American cities. The fact that Seattlites are more likely to hear about a new play nearly 3,000 miles away (practically 4500 kilometers) and not about one next door to them points to an incredibly untapped market for Vancouver theatre. This points to the need for a cultural shift in how we think about the theatre community, “let’s hope these border crossings and the perspectives they engender become more commonplace. Maybe it’s time we all switch from being outsiders looking in and become full-fledged citizens of a unique and beautiful theatre planet” (Eyring, Executive Letter, 2015). Indeed, it is high time that we challenged our perspectives and sought ways of becoming more of a global theatre community; “this much is clear: U.S. and Canadian devotees of the theatre have much to offer one another in the way of inspiration. We really ought to get together more often” (Taylor, 2012, p. 31). Yes, we should get together more often.

## **Summary**

Canada and the United States maintain strong economic ties and are closely linked on issues of trade. Canadians, compared to Americans, are more likely to be aware of the border that they share with their neighbours and the connotations that arise from it). The cultural policy structures in Canada and the United States differ greatly, and the major difference is that budget per capita of the Canada Council is more than ten times the budget per capita of the NEA. Both countries have professional theatre agreements between their professional theatre associations and respective Actors’ Equity Associations. And, lastly, Canadian Actors’ Equity Association and

Actors' Equity Association collaborate with each other on issues pertaining to the touring of productions and the negotiation of contracts. Despite their close economic link, there is a need for a stronger representation of Canadian arts abroad, in particular in the United States. As mentioned, Canadian theatre provides a unique product as it is oftentimes more experimental than its American counterpart. This next chapter will look more closely at the cities of Vancouver and Seattle and their respective regions.

Chapter Three  
Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA: A Comparison

MAGGIE

Yes. I mean, if it's time for truth games, I might as well tell you, this habit you've got of putting yourself down all the time, and this invidious comparison stuff you're into about me, it really pisses me off.

*Under the Skin* by Betty Lambert

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, nestled in the heart of the west coast of British Columbia is the arts and cultural hub of British Columbia. Located in the Greater Vancouver Metropolitan Region, or the Lower Mainland, it is surrounded by a number of other cities in the area, including Surrey, Delta, Richmond, Burnaby, New Westminister, Port Coquitlam, among others. The city of Vancouver views itself as a creative city, a city that supports arts and cultural development (Creative City Network, About, 2017), and seeks to brand itself in that way. Just two and a half hours south is Seattle, Washington, which is located in King County, Washington and is also surrounded by cities and metropolitan areas, such as Bellevue, Tacoma, and Burien. Seattle, like Vancouver, is a cultural arena and is home to many creative organizations. Because of their proximity, there is the opportunity for the two cities to collaborate with each other and to work together in artistic endeavours. As identified in the conceptual

framework in Appendix A, the ribs of an umbrella provide support and shape to it so that when it opens, it can be prepared for various amounts of wind and rain. This chapter will therefore serve to provide an overview of the framework of cultural policy in each of the cities and their respective states and provinces. Within this framework, I will provide a comparison of the similarities and differences of the two communities in order to prepare a plan for increased collaboration.

## **A Statistical Analysis**

The populations of Vancouver and Seattle are roughly equivalent. An analysis of the 2011 and 2010 Censuses for each of the two cities shows that in 2010 the population of Seattle was 608,659, while in 2011 the population of Vancouver was 603,502<sup>5</sup>; that is a difference of 5,157 people (US Census Bureau, 2010b; Stats Canada, Vancouver, BC, 2012b). The Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) of Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue which includes the cities of Seattle, Tacoma, and Bellevue had a population of 3,439,809 in 2010 (US Census Bureau, 2010a) whereas, the CMA of Vancouver, which includes the Census subdivisions of Vancouver, Surrey, Burnaby, Richmond, Coquitlam, Langley, Delta, North Vancouver, Maple Ridge, New Westminister, Port Coquitlam, West Vancouver, Port Moody, Langley, White Rock, Pit Meadows, Greater Vancouver, Tsawwassen, Greater Vancouver Area and other surrounding cities, had a population of 2,313,328 in 2011 (Stats Canada, Vancouver, BC, 2012a). This presents a greater population difference than that of the individual cities themselves, with the Seattle CMA consisting

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<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada has since released results from the 2016 Census. According to this Census, the current population of the City of Vancouver is 631,486 and the current population of the Vancouver CMA is 2,46,431 (Stats Canada, Vancouver CY, 2017; Statistics Canada, Vancouver CMA, 2017). Since the data from the 2016 Census is currently being released and isn't set to be entirely released until after the completion of this study, and due to the fact that the most recent US Census Data is from 2010, the 2011 Census and National Household Survey will be used to provide a comparison of the populations of the cities of Vancouver and Seattle and their respective Census Metropolitan areas.

of a larger population than the Vancouver CMA by over one million. Vancouver, however, has a higher visible minority population than Seattle. In Seattle, those who identify as “white alone” comprise 69.5% of the population, and in Vancouver, those who identify as a visible minority comprise 50% of the population (US Census Bureau, 2010b; Stats Canada, Vancouver CY, 2013). The largest minority population in both of these cities is the Asian population, where in Seattle the Asian population comprises 13.8% of the population, and in Vancouver, the Asian population comprises 21% of the total population (US Census Bureau, 2010b; Stats Canada, Vancouver CY, 2013). Both cities have about the same percentage of Indigenous population, Seattle 0.8% and Vancouver 1.97% (US Census Bureau, 2010b; Stats Canada, Vancouver CY, 2013). Seattle does have a significantly higher Latino population than Vancouver, at 6.6% to 1.6% (US Census Bureau, 2010b; Stats Canada, Vancouver CY, 2013). These statistics, therefore, convey, that while the population of Vancouver is slightly less than Seattle, as a city, Vancouver is comprised of a higher percentage of the population who identify as a visible minority.

### **British Columbia and Washington: A Cultural Overview**

A 2014 report prepared by Hill Strategies that utilizes findings from the 2011 National Household Survey and Labour Force Survey compares artists and cultural workers amongst Canada’s provinces and territories in order to determine the economic impact of artists and cultural workers through findings from. According to the report, the province of British Columbia, in comparison to other provinces, has the largest percentage of the labour force in arts occupations at 1.08%. In contrast, the average for the country is 0.78%. It is important to note that Statistics Canada utilized nine

occupation codes for the National Household Survey, the data from which was then used to generate this report. These include:

Actors and comedians, artisans and craftspersons, authors and writers, conductors, composers and arrangers, dancers, musicians and singers, other performers (including circus performers, magicians, models, puppeteers, and other performers not elsewhere classified), producers, directors, choreographers, and related occupations, and lastly, visual artists. (Hill, 2014, p. 8)

This compares to a similar report which was published by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2008, which includes many more classifications for artists in the workforce, including architects, designers, and announcers (NEA, 2008, p. 7).

Compared to the rest of Canada, the province of British Columbia does have a high concentration of artists. From 1989-2013 the percentage of artists in the overall workforce has increased by 74% and the percentage of cultural workers has increased by 79% (Hill, 2014, p. 25). Due to this increase, the province has recognized the importance of the arts and culture in its current policy programs. There are several initiatives and arm's length organizations<sup>6</sup> that operate as part of the province to ensure that the development of the arts and culture is supported throughout the province. For instance, the organization Creative BC organization is meant to provide "a strategic and integrated approach to the growth and development of the province's creative industries" (Creative BC, Overview, 2016). The BC Arts Council is the primary

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<sup>6</sup> Arm's length organization definition:

The arm's length principle is a general public policy principle applied in a wide range of constitutional and public affairs in most Western countries. The principle is the basis of a general system of 'checks and balances' deemed necessary in a pluralistic democracy to avoid undue concentration of power and conflict of interest. Its application to arts funding is therefore not exceptional, but rather only an example of its application to a specific public policy issue. (Chartrand & McCaughey, *The Arm's Length Principle*, 1989)

In Canada and the United States, funding agencies operate as arm's length organizations, or crown corporations (The Canada Council specifically). Crown corporations, like arm's length organizations, "are wholly owned by the state but operate at arm's length from government" (Stastna, *CBC*, 2014).

government-based funding agency in the province and allocates \$24 million each year (BC, Funding, 2016b). The province of British Columbia invests over \$60 million in arts and culture annually through a variety of programs and services (BC, Funding, 2016b). Moreover, the total culture GDP in British Columbia for 2014 was approximately \$6.7 billion, higher than the national average (BC, Facts & Stats, 2016a). Through these and similar organizations, the British Columbia government creates an environment where arts and culture can thrive. This is evidenced by the fact that British Columbia consistently has the third highest arts and culture GDP in the country (BC, Facts & Stats, 2016a).

Unlike the province of British Columbia, the state of Washington does not have an arts and culture branch of government. It does, however, have an arm's-length granting organization; the Washington State Arts Commission (Washington State, 2015 org chart, 2015). The Washington State Arts Commission has established a number of programs including: Art in Public Places, Arts in Education, Poetry Out Loud, Grants to Organizations, Poet Laureate, Governor's Arts and Heritage Awards, a Creative Vitality Index, and other special projects (ArtsWA, About Us, 2016). As of 2014, Washington state ranked 46<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states at 0.16 cents in per capita support of arts and culture. Similarly, "state funding for ArtsWA has declined 55 percent since 2009, from \$2.43 million to \$1.09 million in FY 2015" (ArtsWA, 2014, p. 17). ArtsWA currently receives over \$700,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts at the Federal Level (ArtsWA, 2014, p. 17). Although ArtsWA does incredible work throughout the state, they are facing significant challenges in funding and promoting the arts and culture throughout the state.



## **Vancouver, British Columbia**

The current Culture Plan for the City of Vancouver is a ten-year plan spanning from 2008 to 2018. It strategically makes “support of and investment in the creative sector a priority” (Creative City, 2008, p. 4). Some of the initiatives of the plan include: a review of the city’s arts and cultural grants; the creation of a plan for arts and cultural facilities to address the gaps and the needs for facility retention, restoration, and renovation; a review of public art; the development of a cultural tourism strategy; and the building of a partnerships plan and strategy to raise the profile of the arts and culture to the general public in order to better position Vancouver as a creative city (Creative City, 2008, pp. 11-12). The plan recognizes both the extrinsic and the intrinsic value of the arts, and identifies not only that the arts and culture have a positive impact on the economy, but that they are “prerequisites for healthy individuals, neighbourhoods, communities, and society” (Creative City, 2008, p. 4). The Culture Plan begins by presenting the values that underlie the shaping of the plan. Included in the list of values is the value of collaboration; a “creative city is a cultural collaboration by necessity, by design and by desire – a collaboration enhanced by innovative, creative new ideas, resources, planning and partnerships” (Creative City, 2008, p. 8).

The heart of the Culture Plan is:

to promote and enhance the culture and creative diversity of the City of Vancouver to the benefit of our citizens, our creative community, and our visitors. We will build upon Vancouver’s current diverse and plentiful artistic and entertainment offerings to create a new dynamism and pride in our cultural life. (Creative City, 2008, p. 5)

The City of Vancouver is committed to the recognition of its cultural and creative diversity and to helping it thrive. In this plan, the city identifies several goals and

strategies pertaining to: Innovation, Learning, Connection People, Ideas and Communities, Neighbourhoods, and Valuing Culture (Creative City, 2008, pp. 9 - 11). They then provide a series of next steps and actions that will help them to achieve their goals. Included in these is a Grant Review to review the city's operating procedures and minimize administrative burdens (Creative City, 2008, p. 11).

Currently, the city has a robust arts and culture grant program that is able, in partnership with the Vancouver Park Board, to award \$10.1 million to non-profit arts and cultural organizations through programs such as the Theatre Rental Grant Program, Permit Fee Assistance for Cultural Spaces, Grants for Emerging Artists, Cultural Infrastructure Grant Program, Cultural Grants Program, Community Arts Grant Program, Artist Live-Work Studio Awards Program, and the Artists in Communities Program (City of Vancouver, Arts and Culture Grants, 2016). The city also provides support to non-profit arts organizations with marketing. Part of the effort to help to promote arts and cultural events throughout the city includes two grant programs, a Transit Shelter Advertising Program, and a Vancouver Live! Video Screen Advertising Program. To be eligible for these programs, one must be a Vancouver based, non profit arts or cultural organization. The event must also be occurring within the city of Vancouver, and be open to the public (City of Vancouver, Transit Shelter, 2016; City of Vancouver, Vancouver Live, 2016). Therefore, there are initiatives that support the arts and arts organizations at the municipal level.

The City of Vancouver receives the majority of its funding through property taxes. Municipal property taxes and utility fees in 2015 for a single family home were \$3,109, with the highest in the lower mainland being in the City of West Vancouver at \$4,763, and the lowest in the City and Township of Langley at \$2,824 (City of Vancouver, How We Fund, 2016). Property taxes have increased 2.04% in the last five

years (City of Vancouver, *How We Fund*, 2016). Therefore, 77% of the City's budget comes from property taxes and utility fees, and the remainder of the budget comes from fines, rentals, parking fees, licensing fees, and program fees to create an operating revenue of \$1.264 billion in 2016 (City of Vancouver, 2016, p. 7).

## **Seattle, Washington**

Unlike Vancouver, the City of Seattle does not have a current long term arts and culture plan. The city did just release a draft of a twenty-year comprehensive plan called *Seattle 2035: Your City, Your Future*. Included in the twenty-year plan is a plan for arts and culture. Elements of the plan for arts and culture includes: Public Art, Creative Economy, Youth Development, Cultural Space and Placemaking, and Historic Preservation (City of Seattle, 2015, pp. 136-140). Specifically, the plan for a creative economy is centered around the goal of “enhance[ing] support for artists, creative professionals and cultural organizations, allowing them to grow and mature” (City of Seattle, 2015, p. 137). To support this goal, the city has created five policy statements that include: the recognition and expansion of the impact of Arts and Culture (AC2.1) and encouraging “collaboration across the spectrum of traditional and creative economy businesses, especially businesses that rely on innovation and design to be competitive” (City of Seattle, 2015, AC2.2, p. 137). Through the comprehensive plan, the city is striving to place an emphasis on the role of the arts and culture, and to assist in artistic collaborations to further the arts and culture in the city of Seattle.

To further strengthen support for the arts and culture in Seattle and to create a culture of collaboration and creativity, a section on “Cultural Space and Placemaking” is also a part of the twenty-year plan for Seattle. The goal for this is to: “Support affordable cultural spaces in all neighbourhoods, especially urban centres and villages

where they are accessible to a broad range of people and where they can help activate the public realm” (City of Seattle, 2015, p. 139). Therefore, the city seeks to make more spaces available to artists in order to ultimately create a city of creativity in Seattle and to allow the arts to be accessible to the public. Similar to the plan for a Creative Economy, the Cultural Space and Placemaking Plan includes seven goals that focus on creating more public and private creative spaces and finding ways for there to be more affordable spaces for artists. Through this, the city recognizes the need for creative spaces as a way of supporting artists and of revitalizing life in the city and preserving cultural traditions (City of Seattle, 2015, p. 136).

In 2016, the city of Seattle had an operating budget of \$5.41 Billion. From the operating budget, \$285.72 million (5.29%) went towards Arts, Culture, and Recreation (City of Seattle, Operating, 2016; City of Seattle, Arts, 2016b). The services of Arts, Culture, and Recreation include: Parks and Recreation, Libraries, the Seattle Centre, 2012 Library Levy, and Arts and Culture (City of Seattle, Arts, 2016b). From the budget that is allocated towards Arts, Culture, and Recreation, \$38.29 million (13.4%) went towards the Seattle Centre and \$11.3 million (3.95%) went to the Office of Arts and Culture (City of Seattle, Arts, 2016b; City of Seattle Arts, 2016a). For 2017, the Seattle has an operating budget of \$5.71 billion (City of Seattle, Operating, 2017). From this, \$235.55 million (4.09%) is allocated to services pertaining to Arts, Culture, and Recreation; a decrease of \$50 million from 2016 (City of Seattle, Operating, 2017; City of Seattle, Arts, 2017s).<sup>7</sup> The Seattle Centre then received \$42.87 million (18.36%), and the Office of Arts and Culutre received \$12.69 million (5.43%) both modest increases from 2016 (City of

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<sup>7</sup> The overall decrease in funding for the services of Arts, Culture, and Recreation comes from the moving of Library funding out of Arts, Culture, and Recreation and into its own separate service entitle, "Seattle Public Library" (Seattle, Arts, Culture, 2016; Seattle, Operating Budget, 2017).

Seattle, Centre, 2017; City of Seattle, Office, 2017b). From these budget comparisons, it is evident that the City of Seattle modestly increases arts and culture funding annually.

The city asserts that its primary revenue comes from the General Fund. Resources for this fund include: property taxes, sales taxes, utility taxes, grants, traffic fines, business and occupation tax, admission tax, licenses and permits, and fines (City of Seattle, 2015, pp 44-46). In contrast to Vancouver, the General Property tax in Seattle has been steadily declining since 2011; currently set at \$1.63 per \$1000 of assessed value (City of Seattle, 2015, p. 63). Based on the proposed budget for Office of Arts and Culture, 64% of the revenue is from the Admissions Tax, 31% is from 1% for Art Revenues and 5% is from Miscellaneous Revenues (City of Seattle, 2015, p. 77). The Admissions Tax is a 5% tax that is incurred on admission to most entertainment events. For economic reasons, primarily attendance at events and the ability and desire of people to spend money which is “influenced by the general prosperity in the region,” this is a volatile tax (City of Seattle, 2015, p. 55). Yet, the contributions that the Office of Arts and Culture receive from this tax have increased from 20% of the revenue from the admissions tax to 75%. Thus, the tax has been able to become a source of their funding (City of Seattle, 2015, p. 55). As a result, one can see that the City of Seattle is creating policy in an endeavour to support the arts and culture.

### **A Theatrical Comparison**

From 1963-1999, Vancouver experienced a theatrical boom. This expansion of the professional theatre scene in Vancouver included a rise in the number of professional theatre companies, a rise in the number of performance spaces, and a rise in the number of equity actors. For instance, David Gardner (former Artistic Director of the Vancouver Playhouse Company) auditioned 150 Equity and 250 non-Equity Actors in 1969, 30

years later there were 800 members of the local Equity (Page, 2000, p. 16). There was also a rise from “forty-four shows by six companies in 1974 to eighty- six shows by sixteen companies in 1979. Thereafter, the number of companies varies from twelve to twenty, with the number of shows down to sixty-two in 1987/88” (Page, 2000, p. 16). In short, the Vancouver theatre scene has grown dramatically since 1963 in Vancouver due to a variety of factors including, but not limited to, population growth, increased work that draws artists to the city, government funding, and provincial and municipal grants that allow companies to start and to thrive (Page, 2000, p. 18). In addition to the founding of the Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company, another catalyst for the Vancouver theatre scene was the start of the Arts Club Theatre Company in 1958 (Arts Club, History, 2017). While the Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company is now defunct (Thomas, *Georgia Straight*, 2012), the Arts Club Theatre Company currently produces is performances on three stages and has become, he largest theatre company in Western Canada” (Arts Club, History, 2017).

More recently, Vancouver theatre has transitioned from conventional theatre to “a network of *devising* companies that have garnered national and international attention” (Ferguson, 2016, p. 21). The term ‘devising’ here means to “contrive, think out, or invent” something that is “immaterial or abstract, or a product of the mind” (OED, *devise*, verb). These companies have collectively, according to Alex Ferguson, come to define what is best about Vancouver Theatre “in a way that the mainstream theatre hasn’t” (Ferguson, 2016, p. 21). Ferguson recognizes the influence that the visual arts have had on theatre aesthetics over the past 150 years, asserting that the terms “terms interdisciplinarity, collaboration, and co-production are apt descriptions of what is progressive in Vancouver theatre” (Ferguson, 2016, p. 21). If the Vancouver theatre scene experienced a boom from 1963-1999 that allowed it to establish new theatre

companies and attract artists, it has recently seen an aesthetic boom, a shift from mainstream theatre to experimental theatre and theatre that incorporates all the disciplines of the performing arts. For Ferguson, “it’s no longer a matter of theatre borrowing a little from dance or hiring a visual artist to create a set. Interdisciplinarity means a theatre project can be initiated by a sound designer or video artist” (Ferguson, 2016, p. 21). Jack Paterson furthers this sentiment by stating that “the West Coast has a rich tradition of collective creation, site-specific work and experimentation allowing compaines . . . to create faschinating material” (Paterson in Bilodeau, 2012, p. 40). Therefore, the theatre community of Vancouver is a fluid community that embraces other artforms and pushes the boundaries of artistic discipline.

Seattle Repertory Theatre was founded just a few years after the Arts Club Theatre Company in Vancouver. Like Vancouver, the establishment of Seattle Repertory Theatre would bring about the birth of professional theatre in the region. As Longoria states, “Prior to 1962 there was no professional theatre in Seattle, with the exception of occasional visits from national touring productions passing through from Broadway” (Longoria, 1992, p. 30). Local productions were limited to college performances and dinner theatre performances, “beyond a handful of organizations, however, the performing arts scene was almost nonexistent” (Longoria, 1992, p. 31). It wasn’t until 1963, with the establishment of Seattle Repertory Theatre under the direction of founding Artistic Director Richard Vaughan that the course of the arts and culture in Seattle was about to change (Seattle Rep, Timeline, 2017). Vaughan, sought to “create a theatre which was a ‘vital and moving force for the community’” (Longoria, 1992, p.30). It has been just that. Creating and producing quality performances and engaging the community in quality education programs, new works opportunities, and lively discussion. They have also become a driving force for the discussion of diversity

and the arts in the Seattle Region. For instance, in August of 2014 they partnered with the Seattle Office for Arts & Culture with support from the Seattle Office for Civil Rights and 4Culture to discuss “Artistic Freedom and Artistic Responsibility,” a discussion of ways that “arts groups can approach new and historical work in a way that is meaningful, relevant, and equitable” (*HowlRound TV*, Livestreaming, 2014). The event was livestreamed through *HowlRound TV*.

In short, the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA have both risen since the early sixties to become the nationally and internationally recognized communities that they are today.

### **A Survey of Theatre Practitioners in Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA**

Over a six-week period, 138 responses were collected on a two-minute survey that asked theatre artists and arts administrators currently working in Vancouver, BC or Seattle, WA about their general perceptions of their theatre community, their experiences with collaborative projects in their community, where they see their theatre community in the next 5-10 years, and their general knowledge of the opposite theatre community. 83 responses were collected in Seattle, WA and 55 responses were collected in Vancouver, BC.

In Seattle and in Vancouver, the top four occupations that were reported were Actor, Arts Administrator, Director, and Playwright. In Vancouver, 61% of respondents reported occupying three or more positions in the theatre industry whereas 53% of respondents in Seattle reported three or more roles. The fifth highest position reported in Seattle was that of a Stage Manager and that of a Dramaturg in Vancouver. In both cities the majority of respondents reported to have worked in the theatre for over



twenty years at 40.9% and 30.9%, respectively. (This data is visualized in Figures 2 and 3).

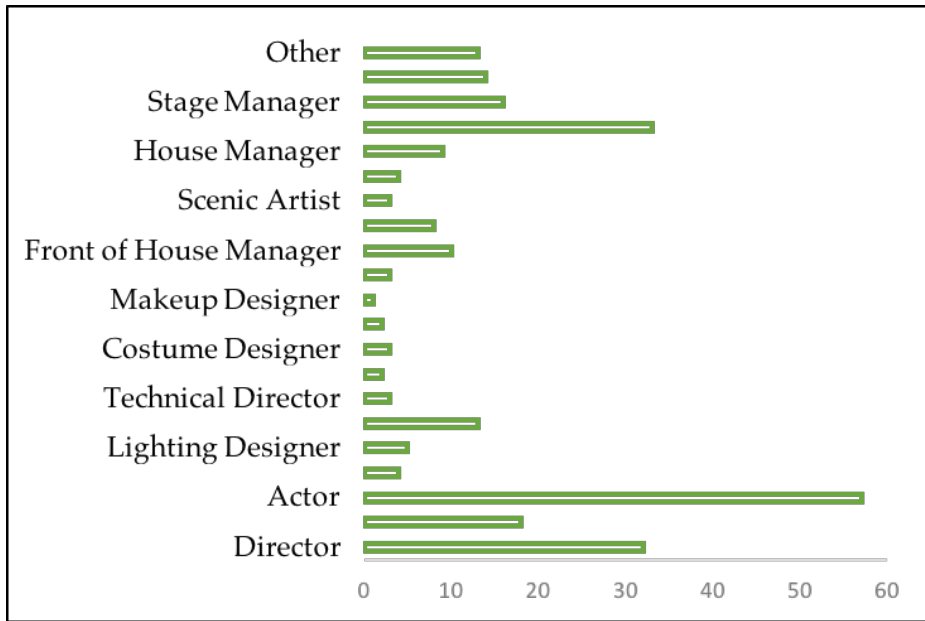


Figure 2 | Theatre Occupations Reported in Seattle

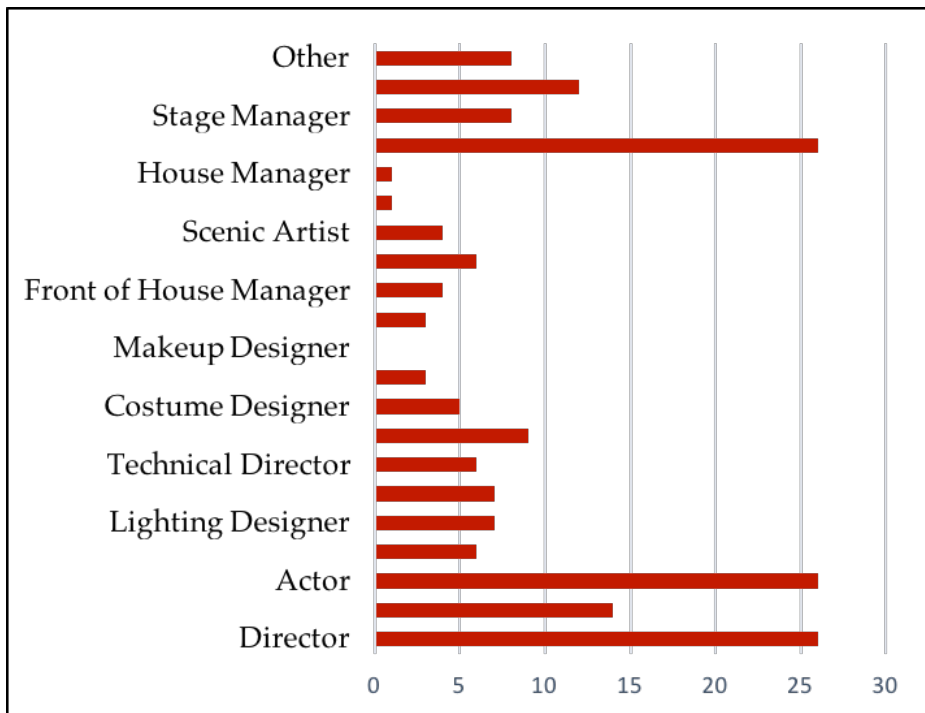


Figure 3 | Theatre Occupations Reported in Vancouver

When asked their impressions of their local theatre community, survey respondents in Vancouver resonated the most with the words: “collaborative, independent, struggling, engaging, and tenacious.” The words “collaborative, engaging, dynamic, independent, and struggling” resonated with survey respondents in Seattle. Unique responses from Seattle identify that there is a perception that the Seattle theatre community is supportive, fragmented, mediocre, and insular. Similarly, unique responses from Vancouver also reported that their theatre community is perceived to be insular, clique-y, hard to crack, vital, and stubborn. (See Figures 4 and 5 for a visualization of the data).

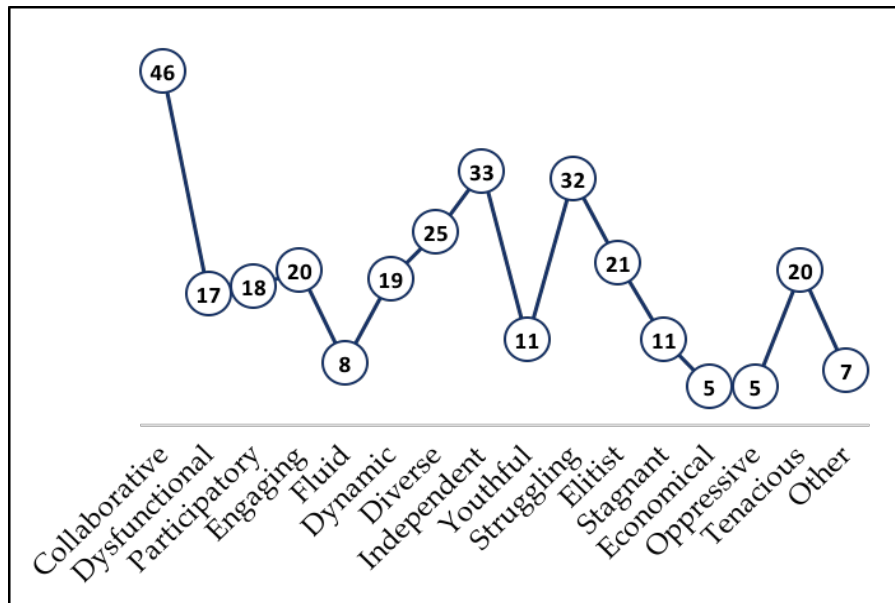


Figure 4 | Perceptions: Seattle

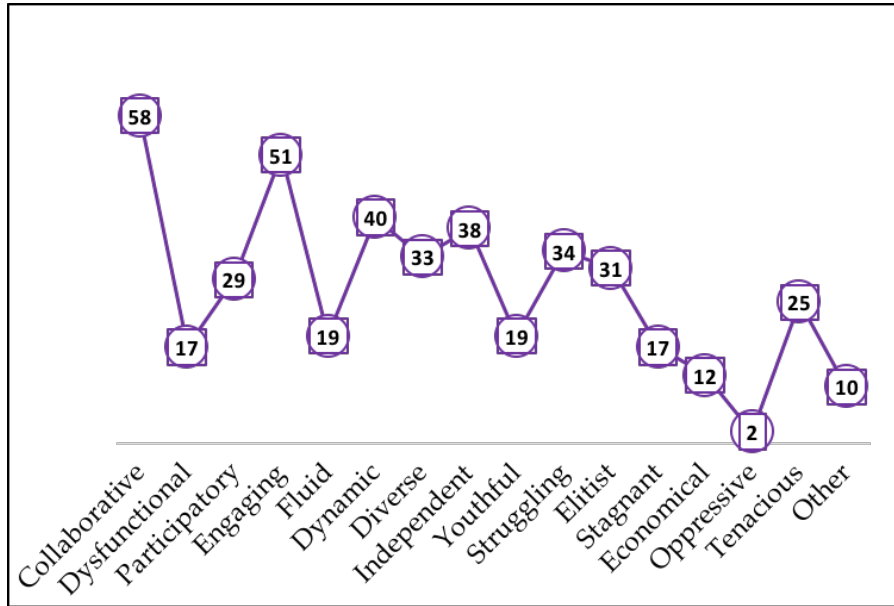


Figure 5 | Perceptions: Vancouver

Vancouverites were 20% more likely to have participated in a collaborative project with another theatre company in their local area than respondents from Seattle (87% vs 68%). In both communities, the greatest benefit to collaboration that was identified was that they were challenged to grow artistically when participating in collaborative projects.

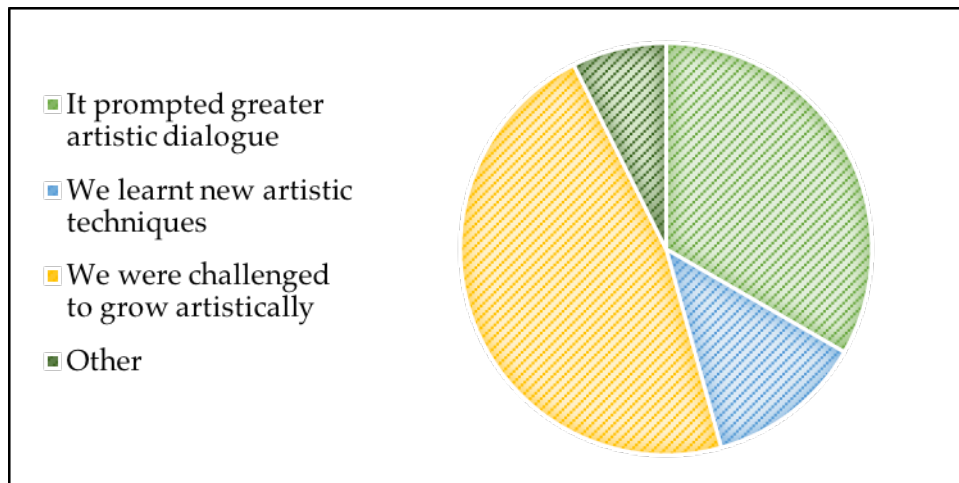
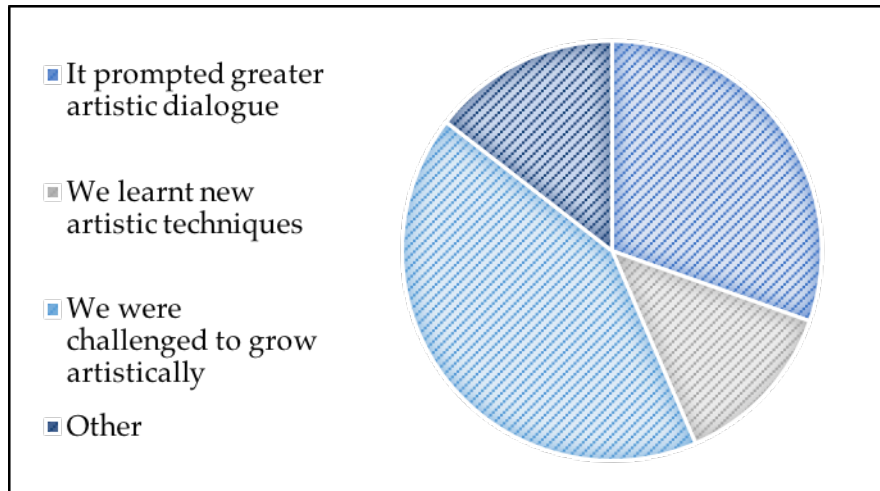


Figure 6 | Benefits: Seattle

Other unique benefits that were identified include: “Being able to learn about an area that I have less experience in (producing). Sharing the load of some of the less fun parts of putting together a show,” “Sharing of resources,” “It strengthened the potential of the project as both companies could pool resources,” “It created a greater sense of



partnership and solidarity within the community,” and that “techniques learned have been carried forward.”

Figure 7 | Benefits: Vancouver

For both communities, there was a correlation between never having participated in a collaborative project and never having had an opportunity to do so (88% in Seattle and 77% in Vancouver).

In both cities, the highest barrier to collaboration that was reported was financial. Other barriers included that there was no perceived benefit to their organization and an inability to come to an agreement with a prospective collaborator. (Please refer to figures 6 and 7 for a visualization of the benefits reported, and figures 8 and 9 for a visualization of the barriers reported).

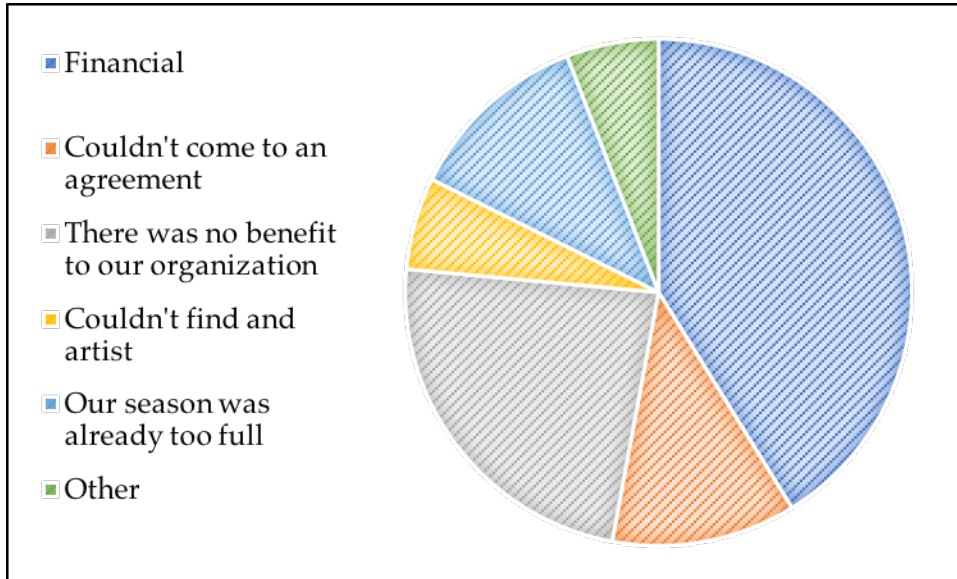


Figure 8 | Barriers: Seattle

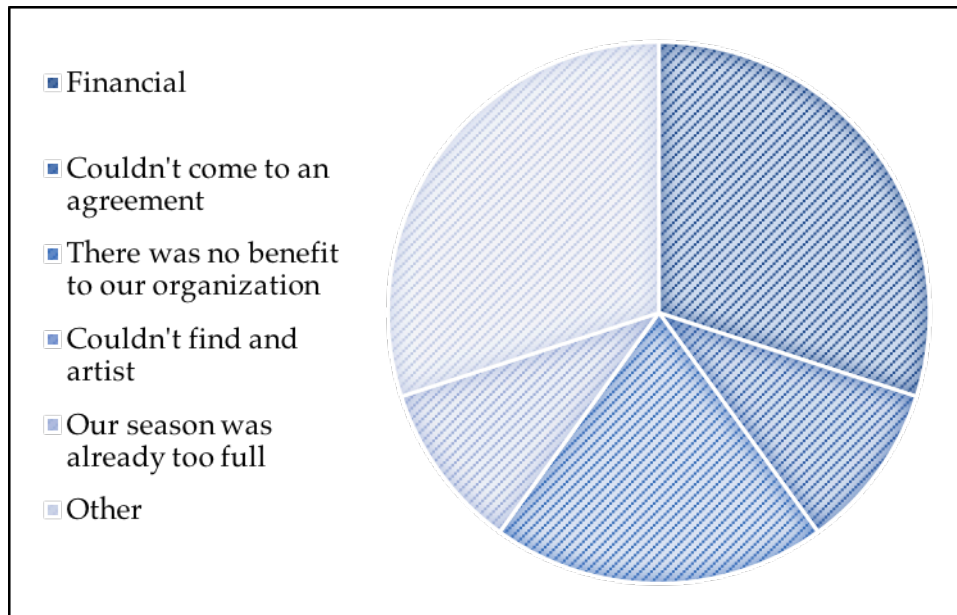


Figure 9 | Barriers: Vancouver

When asked where they see their respective theatre communities growing in the next five to ten years, theatre artists in Seattle identified that they felt that the Seattle community would benefit from increased opportunities for new play development, more support for emerging artists, and greater diversity.

Unique responses conveyed that the theatre community would also merit from “more adventurous, more interdisciplinary creative work,” “mentorship by regional theatres,” and “more rigor.” In Vancouver, it was put forth that the theatre community could in the next five to ten years provide increased public support, increased collaboration, and

increased support for emerging artists. On the other hand, unique responses identified that there is a tension between those who desire support for emerging artists and those who see it as

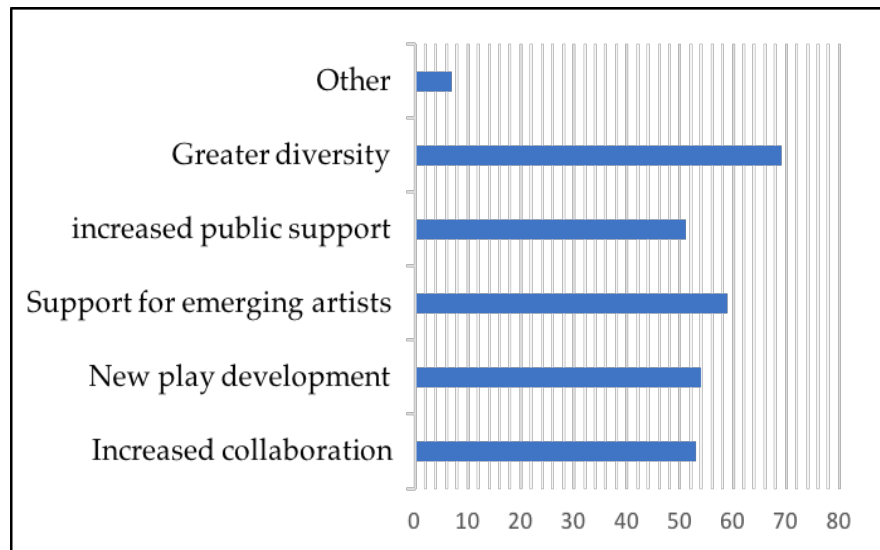


Figure 10 | Seattle: In the Future

creating a bottle neck in the Vancouver theatre community. Responses included: “Support for yesterdays emerging artists who had no support and continue to have little support,” “Please no more support for emerging artists, it’s creating a bottle neck wherein students out of school are fostered until they hit a certain age then replaced by new students,” “More focused on independent work,” and “better access for artists with disabilities, more community engagement, more support for indigenous artists, better support for artists who are asked to advocate for diversity and access.” (Figures 10 and 11 provide a chart of this data).

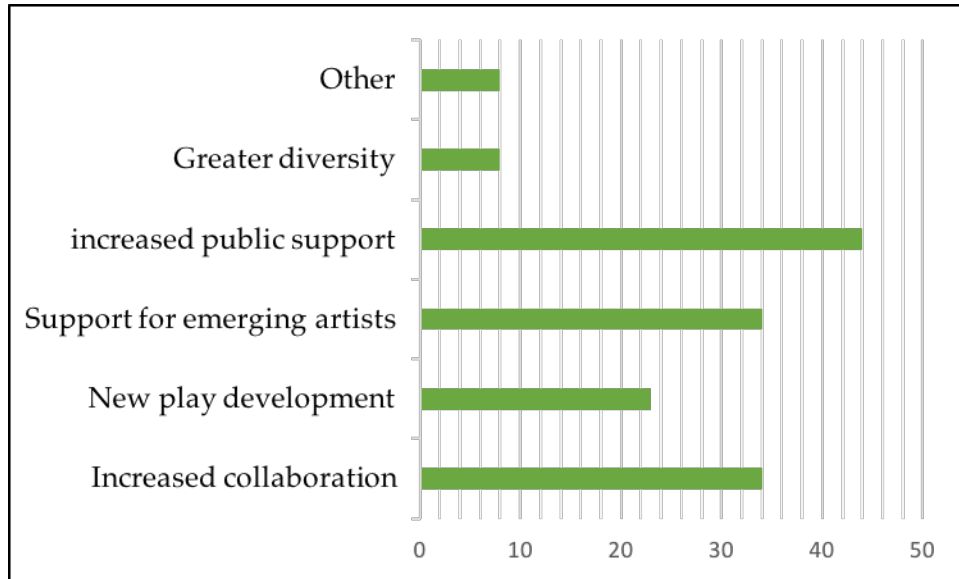


Figure 11 | Vancouver: In the Future

Based on survey responses, Vancouver theatre practitioners were also twice as likely to have seen a production across the border in Seattle than Seattle theatre artists were to have seen one in Vancouver (41% vs 26%). Vancouverites were also more likely to know someone working within the Seattle theatre community compared to Seattleites who reported knowing Vancouver theatre artists (40% vs 32%).

Those who reported working in the theatre for over twenty years, generally saw their theatre communities to be collaborative, independent, and engaging. They also identified that their theatre communities could grow in the next five to ten years with greater diversity, increased public support, and increased new play development, which is exactly how those just entering their theatre communities identified areas for growth. Those who had worked in the theatre for less than a year saw their communities as dynamic, engaging, and collaborative.

Those who perform an artistic role in the theatre generally identified their communities to be: collaborative, engaging, independent, and struggling, which is also how theatre administrators identified their respective theatre communities. Based on

the survey, theatre practitioners also identified that their individual theatre communities could grow in the next five to ten years with greater diversity, more support for emerging artists, and increased public support whereas theatre administrators found that their communities could benefit most from: greater diversity, increased public support, and increased collaboration.

## **Summary**

Vancouver and Seattle are both diverse metropolitan areas that as of the 2010 and 2011 censuses, have a roughly similar population. Both of their respective governments work towards promoting the arts and culture within their respective regions. Seattle, in particular, is seeking to encourage artistic collaboration. The regional theatre industry for both communities started at around the same time in the 1960's. A survey of theatre practitioners in both cities highlights that Vancouverites are more likely to participate in collaborative projects with another theatre company in their area than are theatre artists in Seattle. Theatre practitioners in Seattle identified that they felt that their communities would benefit from new play development, more support for emerging artists, and greater diversity in the next five to ten years while theatre practitioners in Vancouver identified that their community could benefit most from increased public support, increased collaboration, and increased support for emerging artists. The next chapter will serve to look at how cultural vitality is measured and how it emerges in the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA.



Chapter Four  
Theatre and Creative Vitality

ALEX

And we are here. We are alive together. You and you and you and I and all of us are here, are living this life, sharing the same feeling, the same knowing that we don't know exactly what it means to be alive but right now and for the moment we are here.

*Tear the Curtain!* by Jonathon Young and Kevin Kerr

Through an observation of the cities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA one can find that they are cities that are rich with creativity and in creative industries. With plenty of spaces for rent, and efforts to encourage artistic promotion, these cities are often called 'creative cities' (Office of Cultural, Creative City, 2003). As discussed in Chapter Three, each city promotes the arts and culture through public funding, admissions taxes, arts and culture plans, and other means in order to increase access to arts and culture participation opportunities throughout the city. One might ask, what the significance is of encouraging artistic collaboration. Artistic collaboration can break

down barriers, providing new ways of looking at the world, new learning opportunities, and opportunities to work together to solve artistic problems and dilemmas.

Yet, all of the above is quite qualitative. What, then, are a quantitative, measurable benefits that the promotion of artistic collaboration can have on a region? The argument has long been made that the arts have a positive effect on the economy and on those who participate in arts-based activities. For the most part, researchers and cultural policy managers examine levels of cultural vitality through quantitative measurements. These often include contributions to overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and the percentage of contributions to the workforce in a specific area. An examination of the literature that measures the impact of the arts on a specific region reveals that there are a multiplicity of factors involved in measuring cultural vitality.

### **Cultural Vitality: Measurements**

Perhaps, it is best to begin by defining the terms ‘culture’ or ‘cultural’ and ‘vitality.’ The Arts and Culture Indicators Project of the Urban Institute defines ‘cultural vitality’ to be “the evidence of creating, disseminating, validating, and supporting the arts and culture as a dimension of everyday life in communities” (Jackson et. al, 2006, p. 16). Their definition seeks to be inclusive of the wide range of arts participation that the study encompasses and to recognize a much broader body of arts and cultural participation (Jackson et. al, 2006, p. 16). A break down of the terms ‘culture’ and ‘vitality,’ however, the Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘culture’ to be to “refine, improve, or develop (a person, the mind, etc.) by education or training; to cultivate (an art, subject, etc.)” (OED, culture, verb). ‘Cultural,’ refers back to culture as something that is “of or relating to intellectual and artistic pursuits” (OED, cultural, adj. and n.).

Dave O'Brien (2010), in "Measuring the value of culture: a report to the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport" also seeks to provide a series of definitions of the term 'culture' through an examination of how societies and governments, in particular the Canadian government, measure and evaluate 'culture' and how these methods compare to each other. O'Brien mentions that in the Victorian era, culture was associated with moral and spiritual betterment, but by the 1920's had transformed into something more anthropological that is "concerned with the construction and transmission of meaning" (O'Brien, 2010, p. 11). Lastly, O'Brien acknowledges that defining 'culture' is still an issue of debate, that the "complexity of the term is therefore a fundamental part of the reason culture has been such a difficult area to value" (O'Brien, 2010, p.11).

Statistics Canada identifies that there is no standard definition of culture that is used internationally for statistical purposes. Due to this, in 2004, Statistic Canada adopted a Canadian definition for the purposes of a statistical framework. Within that statistical framework, culture is the "Creative artistic activity and the goods and services produced by it, and the preservation of heritage" (Statistics Canada, 2011, p. 21).<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of the study, we will adopt the Canadian definition of culture utilized by Statistics Canada, since this provides a holistic approach to the definition of culture and is a definition that is most applicable to the study.

'Vitality' is defined as a "vital force, power, or principle as possessed or manifested by living things; the principle of life; animation" (OED, Vitality, n.). From these definitions we can infer that 'cultural vitality' is the force, the manifested force, of intellectual and artistic pursuits. These pursuits, when executed, are able to have a powerful effect on a region. The question remains what the best method is for

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<sup>8</sup> In future citations, "Statistics Canada" will be referred to as "Stats Can" for succinctness.

measuring cultural vitality – when we see or experience cultural vitality, how can we be certain that it is having an impact? What sort of impact, positive or negative, does it have? How do we measure what is beneficial or detrimental for a region? All of these issues and questions arise from the topic of cultural vitality. In this chapter, through an analysis of cultural vitality, I will argue that increased levels of cultural vitality equate to increased levels of cultural participation, which in turn lead to increased levels of cultural support, and increased opportunities for cultural participation.

The *National Arts Index* created by Americans for the Arts provides data on the trends in the arts and culture at the national level. According to Kushner and Cohen (2011), “the NAI is based on an overall systemic model of cultural vitality; the model is populated with a wider set of empirical measurements than the previously developed in the United States, . . . and it is sustainable over years” (p. 21); this is meant to focus on the arts system as whole and to measure the impact of the arts throughout time. The Index utilizes seven indicators as a means of creating a common language and sense of understanding of how to measure the trends and changes in the arts and culture environment. These indicators include: communications, evaluation, policy development, a foundation for decision making, community dialogue, planning and forecasting, and building partnerships (Kushner & Cohen, 2016, p. i). On the whole, *The National Arts Index* measures arts and culture capacity through the examination of cultural industries, their “community level demand, and their intended and realized beneficial impact in these communities” (Kushner & Kohen, 2011, p. 22).

Among the many roles that the arts and culture play in the United States’ economy, cultural tourism is one of them. When people come to visit America, they often are attracted to the rich cultural history of America’s cities and come to participate in artistic and cultural experiences. The National Arts Index scales 2003 to a base year of

1. or, 100.00. From 2003, when the total value of cultural tourism was equal to 1, the level of cultural tourism has increased to 1.35 in 2012, and tapered off to 1.33 in 2013 (Kushner & Cohen, 2016 p. 63). Arts and culture activities, as a form of cultural tourism, are forming a role in the American economy. The Index also highlights that 8.3% of private households contributed to the arts and culture in 2013 (Kushner & Cohen, 2016, p. 77) and that of all the employees in the United States, those employed in the arts and culture sector comprise 1.49% of the total workforce (Kushner & Cohen, 2016, p. 81). Overall, the arts and culture have a 3.10% share in the GDP of the United States (Kushner & Cohen, 2016, p. 79). These statistics all work together to provide quantitative data to measure the vitality of the arts and culture in the United States. All of the indicators are given equal value in providing a sampling of the life of the arts and culture sector. This sampling conveys increased opportunities for participation in the cultural sector.

More specifically, in the City of Seattle, arts and culture organizations forge a strong economic impact on the city and its surrounding neighbourhoods. Total industry expenditures amount to nearly half a billion, and the total economic impact is the equivalent of 10,807 Full Time Equivalent Jobs, \$17 million in revenue for the local government and \$21 million in revenue for the state government (Americans for the Arts, 2012, p. 1). It is clear that in Seattle the arts play a driving force in the economy of the city of Seattle and the state of Washington.

Similar to the National Arts Index, in Canada a *Canadian Cultural Satellite Account* was developed by Statistics Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage in order to provide measures of the importance of culture and sport in Canada. Like the cultural satellite accounts found in other countries, the one in Canada was created to “measure the economic impact of culture, the arts, heritage, and sport on the Canadian economy”

(McCaughey et al., 2014, p. 110). This, therefore, becomes a tool for the Government to have readily available data on cultural industries and to understand the impact that funding cultural industries has (McCaughey et al., 2014, p. 110). In particular, for measures of output, Gross Domestic Product and Employment are measured (Stats Can, 2014, p.5). For the purposes of the Cultural Satellite Account, culture is defined as “a creative, artistic activity, the goods produced by it, and the preservation of heritage” (Stats Can, 2014, p. 5). While the Cultural Satellite Account focuses solely on the economic benefit of the arts, Cultural Statistics Program which emerged in 1972 provides more empirical data (McCaughey et al., 2014, p. 111).

In 2010, culture industries contributed to 3.1% of Canada’s GDP and accounted for 4% of jobs in Canada (Stats Can, 2014, p. 7). The industry of culture is the 4<sup>th</sup> highest ranking industry that produces and impact on the GDP of Canada. This is above administrative support, waste management and remediation services, utilities, accommodation and food services, and forestry, fishing and hunting. On the whole, culture industries contributed \$48 billion to the GDP in 2010 (Stats Can, 2014, p. 28). In 2011, Hill Strategies published a report on artists and cultural workers across Canada that reported that the arts and culture sector in Canada is a growing industry and the number of jobs in the sector are increasing. From 1989-2013, the number of artists in Canada increased by 56%, and the number of cultural workers increased by 47%. These numbers are both higher than the overall increase in the labour force during the same period (Hill Strategies, 2011, p. 3). The arts are a valuable part of Canadians’ lives – in 2008 “Canadians’ spending on live performing arts (\$1.4 billion) was more than double their spending on live sports events (\$650 million)” (Petri, 2013, p. 38). Based on this, the arts and culture sector not only plays a valuable role in the Canadian economy, but in the lives of Canadians.

## **British Columbia**

In British Columbia, culture represents 3% of the province's GDP (Stats Can, 2016a, p. 19). In 2014, cultural industries contributed nearly \$7 million to the province's GDP, a 3.6% increase from 2013 to 2014 (Stats Can, 2016a, p. 14; Stats Can, 2016b, p. 1). Also, culture jobs held a 3.5% share of the total provincial economy in 2014 (Stats Can, 2016a, p. 19). It is evident that the arts and culture sector make a significant contribution to the economy and jobs sector in British Columbia. According to Hill Strategies, the artists in British Columbia comprise 18% of the national total, which is higher than "the province's 13% share of Canada's overall labour force" (Hill Strategies, 2011, p. 30). Similarly, 1 in 23 workers in the province of British Columbia is a cultural worker (Hill Strategies, 2011, p. 30). The economic impact of the arts and culture is also recognized by the Provincial Government of British Columbia. In February of 2016, Premier Christy Clark with the Ministry of Community, Sport, and Cultural Development, developed and implemented a Creative Economy Strategy. This three-year strategy focuses on the four areas of: "leveraging talent and creative clusters, accessing new markets, maximizing investment, and enriching communities" (Province of B.C., Creative Economy, 2017b). This initiative seeks to build upon the Creative Futures Program with a focus on artists and arts organizations in British Columbia. The first two steps that are being pursued in the strategy are \$1.5 million over three years in funding to collaborative spaces and a further investment of \$300,000 over two years to artsVest, a program that helps train arts and culture organizations to form healthy and successful partnerships with businesses, that will be matched with federal funding (Province of B.C., Creative Economy, 2017b). It is anticipated that the Creative Economy Strategy will "demonstrate the value of investing in the arts, promote public and private partnership and philanthropy, and target investments to drive economy growth"



(Province of B.C., 2016c, p. 2). This is an excellent example of a government recognizing the economic benefits of the arts and culture, and making the necessary steps to promote those benefits so that they may be demonstrated as a value.

### **Instrumental Benefits**

In *The Value of Presenting: A Study of the Performing Arts in Canada* commissioned by the Canadian Arts Presenting Association, Petri identifies a range of benefits that the performing arts provide, from benefits to individuals, benefits to the community, and overall benefits to society, including the promotion of social cohesion. The study establishes that theatre attendance is associated with:

better health, better mental health and volunteering. It is also associated with having done a favour for a neighbour in the past month, very strong satisfaction with life and feeling less trapped in a daily routine. (Petri, 2013, p. 31)

Not only does theatre help to promote cultural vitality, but it also helps to promote individual health and wellbeing. The Department of Canadian Heritage reports that “92% of Canadians believe that arts and culture make a community a better place to live” (Petri, 2013, p. 32). Also, in *The Value of Presenting* study, a survey that asked Canadians what they found to be the main benefits of performing arts presenting in their community, reported the number one benefit (42%) identified by the participants was that the performing arts “Bring energy and vitality to the community” (Petri, 2013, p. 32). The survey participants also identified that performing arts “improved [the] quality of life and well-being of residents,” 38%; promoted a creative community, 37%; and that the performing arts promote “greater economic development in community,” 32% among other benefits (Petri, 2013, p. 32).

When discussing how to evaluate the impact of the arts, experts oftentimes identify that arts and culture have “extrinsic” and “intrinsic” benefits. The economic benefits mentioned above are what would, and do, fall under the category of extrinsic benefits since they are quantifiable and measurable. David O’Brien asserts that there has, for quite some time, been a sense of division in how the cultural sector is measured. The primary method of measuring the cultural sector rests in the contributions that it can make to social and economic goals (O’Brien, 2010, p. 28). A study commissioned by the Wallace Foundation identifies how the extrinsic, or instrumental benefits often override the intrinsic benefits, and how both types of benefits can work together to create an impact. The study defines that two facets of intrinsic benefits are often being overlooked. These are that individuals participate in an arts or arts related activity solely for the intrinsic benefits that are associated with it, and that intrinsic benefits are not always private, “some of them also contribute to the public welfare” (RAND, 2005, p. 2). It also establishes three different types of intrinsic benefits. These benefits include: pleasure and captivation, growth in individual capacities, and the creation of social bonds (RAND, 2005, p. 2). The public effect of these intrinsic benefits rests in the third benefit, social bonds, when individuals share their artistic experiences “through reflection and discourse” (RAND, 2005, p. 2). The Canadian Framework for Cultural Statistics distinguishes the benefits of the arts and culture as being social and economic and puts forth three basic effects that arise from arts and culture participation: intrinsic, instrumental, and functional effects. Functional effects according to the CFCS, are those effects that “[foster] civic participation, [contribute] to community development, [form] and [retain] identity, [build] social cohesion” among others (Stats Can, Social and Economic Benefits, 2015). Ultimately, it is an artistic experience that brings individuals closer together.

In a similar vein, the article “Accounting for Culture: Thinking through Cultural Citizenship” seeks to understand how we use culture to express our sense of belonging, citizenship, to a particular region or area. Through the consumption of culture, we begin to recognize “a greater critical capacity to read between the lines of any new idea or concept, and to assess it for its relevance in our lives” (Andrew et. al, 2005, p. 28). An active cultural sector in a society, therefore, promotes citizens who are critical thinkers, who are able to confront change (Andrew et. al, 2005, p. 12). The National Endowment for the Arts Report *How Art Works* corroborates this notion through the creation of a four-part system that describes how the impact of the arts can be measured. These four parts include: inputs, art, quality of life outcomes, and broader societal impacts (NEA, 2012, p. 12). According to the NEA, there are two types of inputs: Arts Infrastructure and Education and Training, where, art “especially arts engagement sits at the heart of the system” (NEA, 2012, p. 13 & p. 12). Art includes artistic acts and artistic consumption, thus, creation and participation (NEA, 2012, p. 13). In this system, there are two types of benefits: benefits to individual and benefits to society (NEA, 2012, p. 13). Individual benefits are found in quality of life outcomes which are “individual benefits derived from interacting with the arts” (NEA, 2012, p. 13). The broader societal impacts that the arts offer include new forms of self-expression and the capability to innovate and express ideas (NEA, 2012, p. 13). Each of these benefits provides a multi-level impact, what the NEA calls a “multi-level measurement structure” of the arts across communities and in the lives of individuals. The arts provide various benefits to communities and individuals alike.

Since arts and culture workers know that there are a whole host of benefits that arise from the arts and culture, whether they be instrumental or intrinsic, just merely identifying the economic benefits associated with the arts and culture do not do the

range of potential benefits justice. O'Brien (2010) corroborates this by expressing that "economic value cannot fully capture cultural value as there are specific characteristics of cultural value, particularly the social aspects, which cannot be reduced to a monetary form" (p. 19). When measuring the value and impact of the arts, one must examine the wide range of benefits that the arts and culture provide in order to paint an accurate picture of cultural benefits.

### **Cultural Vitality in the Community**

How, then, does an individual or organization, track levels of cultural vitality within their given community? The Arts and Cultural Indicators Project of the Urban Institute provides a measurement framework that seeks to provide a detailed overview of a community's levels of cultural vitality. In this framework are three domains: presence, participation, and support. Presence is the amount of presence "of opportunities for cultural participation," participation is "cultural participation itself," and support is the level of "support for cultural participation" (Jackson et al., 2006, p. 14). The project highlights that in their field research they found that organizations that provide opportunities for both amateur and professional arts and whom collaborate with a wide range of organizations in their programming, "are especially important for a community's cultural vitality as we define it" (Jackson et al., 2006, p. 15). Arts and culture organizations that provide a vast array of collaborative opportunities can therefore be said to be promoting and increasing the cultural vitality. As a result, increased levels of cultural vitality equated to increased levels of cultural participation, increased levels of cultural support, and increased opportunities for cultural participation. When combined, these three domains allow a community to best realize the instrumental, functional, and intrinsic benefits of the arts.

## Theatre and Cultural Vitality

The very nature of theatre allows a community to experience the intrinsic benefits of the arts. As Konstantin Stanislavsky asserted, “the nature of theatre . . . is based on the inter-communication of the dramatic personae” (Stanislavsky, 1977, p. 185). This intercommunication exists, and is realized, through the elements of theatre: plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle, and melody (Aristotle in Richter, 2007, p. 63). Through the arrangement of these elements, the dramatist is able to imitate an action and, therefore, “achieves, through the representation of pitiable and fearful incidents, the catharsis of such pitiable and fearful incidents (Aristotle in Richter, 2007, p. 63). Therefore, the very structure of a play allows the audience and those who experience it to experience a catharsis, a purgation of the emotions. Theatre achieves this through the arrangement of elements, namely the story:

The ‘story’ is the theatre’s great operation, the complete fitting together of all the gestic incidents, embracing the communications and impulses that must now go to make up the audience’s entertainment. (Brecht, 1986, p. 200)

For Brecht, the story functions as the greatest element in theatre that embraces every other aspect of the theatre for the service of the audience. Through the utilization of the theatrical elements, the theatre seeks to create “an authentic work of art [that] embodies intense energy. It demands response” (Bogart, 2001, pp 62). One example of how theatrical elements work together can be found in Christopher Frizzelle’s review of *The Pajama Game* at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre. In his review of the production, Frizzelle states that during “‘One of these days I’ll paint the kitchen,’ the throwaway piece of small talk is made funny by the lack of walls at all in this particular kitchen” (Frizzelle, *Stranger*, 2017). When the elements of staging, design, and diction are thoughtfully combined they can work together to create a memorable and impactful piece of art.

The work of the theatrical elements serve to unite a community through the experience of a performance. Dorothea E. Hast in the article, "Performance, Transformation, and Community: Contra Dance in New England" examines the creation of community through dance and performance. For Hast, community needs to be flexible since by its nature it means "of belonging to a collective that has such permeable and expandable boundaries" (Hast, 1993, p. 21). This collective finds its identity through performance where "a unique and complete community of its own" is gathered (Hast, 1993, p. 21). The community that comprises the performance is composed of various participants who are sharing in the experience and in the vocabulary of the performance (Hast, 1993, p. 24). This definition of community is furthered in the article, "The Spirit of Shivarree and the Community Play in Canada; or, The Unity in Community" by Edward Little and Richard Paul Knowles. Here, Little and Knowles discuss the construction of community to be

understood as process rather than as stable entity, . . . which [is] defined primarily by geo-political boundaries, and "relational" communities, which are defined by the nature and quality of inter-relationship among a membership with shared interest. (Little & Knowles, 1995, p. 70)

Communities can be defined by physical and relational boundaries. These boundaries are all present in the formation of a performance community, which is a community that is present to share in a unique experience and through that experience are drawn into a deeper system of communication, activity, and association (Hast, 1993, p. 23).

The system of communication, activity, and association is a key element in the performative process. Lorne Dwight Conquergood draws upon these elements by proposing that a performance is a means of knowing and of understanding in his article, "Performance Studies Interventions and Radical Research." Here, Conquergood

discusses how performance presents a means of knowing and of showing, in order to braid together various ways of understanding (Conquergood, 2002, p. 152). He suggests that performance can be thought of as a triangulation of three different processes: a work of imagination, a method of inquiry, and a means of intervention, or, “creativity, critique, citizenship” (Conquergood, 2002, p. 152). Thus, a performance, much like Aristotle’s elements of theatre, relies on these elements in varying degrees based on the nature of the performance.

It is the communication of questions and themes brought about by the performance that bring a sense of community. In the chapter “Performance” found in Richard Bauman’s book, *Folklore, Cultural Performances, and Popular Entertainments*, Bauman discusses the various elements of performance, in particular as a communicative act that builds community. According to Bauman, performance is an act that calls attention and a heightened awareness to the act of communication “and gives license to the audience to regard it and the performer with special intensity” (Bauman, 1992, p. 44). Through this intensified act, a group of people come together to participate in a collective form of communication and discovery. The method of communication and interpretation of that performance varies by community since the various communities use their own distinctive means of communication to “key the performance frame so that communication within that frame will be understood as performance within that community” (Bauman, 1992, p. 45). Not only does the method of communication vary by community but the nature of performance and what constitutes a performance is also unique to a particular community. Bauman furthers this idea by stating that “all performance, like all communication, is situated, enacted, and rendered meaningful within socially defined situational contexts” (Bauman, 1992, p. 46). It is the social situation that bestows meaning upon a performance.

Through the creation of this authentic work, the theatre maker is therefore creating a work of art that asks a question:

Inside every good play lives a question. A great play asks big questions that endure through time. We enact plays in order to remember relevant questions; we remember these questions in our bodies and the perceptions take place in real time and space. (Bogart, 2001, p. 21)

For Bogart, theatre lives in memory and our collected experiences as humans. Inspired by the light of the memory of our collective experience, theatre seeks to pose the questions of how to respond to the world. Brecht corroborates this sentiment when he states that the “‘theatre’ consists in this: in making live representations of reported or invented happenings between human beings” (Brecht, 1986, p. 180).

Through the work of the theatrical elements, and the use of memory, theatre strives for vitality. As stated by Anne Bogart, “Vitality in art is a result of articulation, energy and differentiation. All great art is differentiated art” (Bogart, 2001, p. 87). Therefore, having an awareness of the differences, being able to embrace the uncertainty, creates vitality in theatre. One example of memory in theatre is Tetsuro Shigematsu’s *Empire of the Son* which was directed by Richard Wolfe and produced by Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre. *Empire of the Son* opened at the Vancity Culture Lab in October 2015, and was remounted in the fall of 2016 for performances in Montreal, Toronto, and Ottawa at the National Arts Centre (Pi Theatre, *Empire of the Son*, 2017). The plot of *Empire of the Son* surrounds Shigematsu’s relationship with his father and the generational and cultural differences that he experienced between him and his father. Colin Thomas states that “In a talkback after the performance I attended, Shigematsu summoned the idea that artists are caught in the tension between wanting to hide and wanting to communicate” (Thomas, *Georgia Straight*, 2015). Through the



telling of a personal experience, Shigematsu is creates a work of theatre that expresses memory and vitality.

Theatre can also serve to share memories with a community of people. For instance, Robert Lepage's *887* is a production that draws upon the concept of a memory palace in order to transform Lepage's Québec City apartment where he grew up (Oliver, *Georgia Straight*, 2016). Through the performance, Lepage transforms the stage into an exploration of his personal memory to create a shared memory scape between himself and the audience (Brennan, *The Guardian*, 2015). The piece then becomes a reflection on family, identity, and culture; "These memories started as Lepage's, but now they're ours, too, and I'm deeply, deeply grateful" (Oliver, *Georgia Straight*, 2016). Theatre, by its nature, is a shared experience between the performers and the audience. Each performance is unique and becomes a new work of art with the addition of a new audience each night. Each performance is a uniquely shared collective memory that allows the participants to realize the intrinsic benefits of the arts.

## **Summary**

The very nature of theatre formulates an arena for artistic creativity that allows those who are participating in the creative process to experience the intrinsic benefits of the arts. These benefits, as mentioned earlier, are qualitative benefits that have a deep and broad impact upon a particular community and that allow that particular community to grow and to flourish. The extrinsic benefits of the arts, include significant contributions to the Gross Domestic Product of their local areas. How a government or artistic leader defines culture and cultural vitality is also significant because it is from that lens that they will measure the impact of the arts and creative sector on their local area. As we have seen, where there is cultural vitality there is cultural support,

opportunities for cultural participation, and levels of. Thus, a community becomes able to best realize the holistic benefits of the arts and culture. These holistic benefits are amplified through artistic collaboration as we will see in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five  
Theatre: A Collaborative Act

TONY

If you could take a vessel, if there was a way to contain all the anxiety that's plaguing our world at this particular moment, what would you do with that mass, once you beheld its impossible size? Depending on whether you were an optimist or a cynic, you'd have a very different opinion on the potential that exists within it. (BEAT) After "Daisy" got made, there was as much praise as criticism. How can that be? When the audience participates in what's happening to them, how is that manipulation? (BEAT) A philosopher once said "I think, therefore I am." But someone inside a voting booth is more likely "I feel, therefore I choose." I can't create fear. I can't create love, or hope. I can work with what already exists in us. And I have tremendous belief in what exists in us.

*DAISY* by Sean Devine

Theatre, by its very nature, is a collaborative art form. Collaboration can express itself in a variety of different means as we will see. Having gone through the various elements of the conceptual framework, we will look at what the significance is of encouraging artistic collaboration in this chapter while also addressing some of the perceived barriers to artistic collaboration. Drawing from our previous discussion of cultural vitality, we will later examine how artistic collaboration further enhances the cultural vitality of a region as a means of sharing resources and ideas. This chapter will also include data collected from a case study with Horseshoes & Hand Grenades Theatre and from Focus Groups with the Theatre Artists of Seattle, WA and Vancouver, BC in order to provide a broader view of theatrical collaboration.

## Theatre as a Collaborative Act

Theatre involves the coming together of artists from various disciplines who work to create a production that reflects a shared artistic vision. According to Roznowski and Domer (2009), "Collaboration implies a meshing of ideas to us. A production team is comprised of separate individuals who indeed cooperate with one another, but also inspire and affect each other to produce a cohesive production" (p. 1). There are various definitions of what collaboration is and how it presents itself. Some examples include the "free flowing exchange of ideas without ego or resentment," "the moment when one idea becomes a group's rather than an individual's," or, "it is the moment of epiphany when the production becomes cohesive" (Roznowski & Domer, 2009, p. 12). All of these elements are involved in the act of collaboration, the act of working together to achieve a common goal. Alan Filewood in his article, "Collective Creation: Process, Politics and Poetics" defines collaboration to be:

a form which may be analyzed in three aspects: process, that is, the process of theatrical development; politics, looking at the political and ideological relationships of the subjective experiences of the creators and the objective reality of the subject matter; and poetics, which questions the dual nature of the play in performance as a work of art in itself, and as the culmination of a particular way of working and all that implies. (Filewood, 2008, p. 1)

It involves both a micro and a macro way of working, where one examines the relationship between the collaborative act and the subject, the relationship to those involved, and the relationship to the community as a whole. Filewood continues to assert that the "The concept of collective creation in the modern theatre has an ideological source" (Filewood, 2008, p. 1). In the process of collectively creating an

artistic work, the responsibility is placed upon a combined group of people instead of a single person who is responsible for maintaining the artistic vision of a production. Traditionally, in the theatre, the responsibility of a production falls upon the director, as the director is the one who makes the final artistic decisions for the production. A collective process, on the other hand, implies shared decision making and shared culpability. Through an examination of the economic profile of Canadian theatre, Filewood highlights that those companies which specialize in collective creation “tend to be at the lower end of the funding scale” (Filewood, 2008, p. 8). Filewood continues to explain that the reason for this is due to the fact that the funding systems in the country “developed parallel to the regional theatre network” (Filewood, 2008, p. 8). It is important, however, to note that much has changed in the funding structure within Canada since the time that this article was written. In particular, the New Funding Model released by the Canada Council for the Arts which took effect in 2017. This New Model, eliminates discipline based funding, and created several new funding programs; including an Arts Abroad program that is meant to celebrate “the creativity, innovation and excellence of Canadian artists by helping to bring Canadian works to the world” (Canada Council, Funding, 2017; Canada Council, Arts Abroad, 2017).

In the article, “Collaboration means De-Normalizing Normal,” Sarah Gorton Stanley looks at the politics of organizational collaboration. Based on professional observations, Stanley illustrates the all too common example of when a smaller organization and an artist had been developing, and then, later, a larger organization with the resources to produce the work gets involved, come production time, it is the larger organization that receives the credit, even though it had very little say in the artistic process because. This, according to Stanley is because “money talks” (Stanley, 2017, p. 58). Collaboration, then, according to Stanley, in order to be a true

collaboration, needs to de-normalize what is normal, it requires the recognition of privilege and the changing of the definition of “we” in the collaborative process. Instead of letting the needs of a large company usurp the stories that a smaller company was born to tell, collaboration means working together to find a solution and to transform what is ‘normal’ (Stanley, 2017, pp. 60-62).

Jerry Wasserman (2008) highlights the collective and collaborative nature of Vancouver Theatre through an exploration of Vancouver based theatre collectives that emerged out of theatre training programs (such as the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, and Studio-58). The graduates of these programs have gone onto shape the theatre scene of Vancouver and the west coast. In an illustration of the collaborative nature of Vancouver theatre Wasserman mentions that “all of these views beyond the traditional stage reveal Vancouver’s collective, collaborative, site-specific theatre to be a vital part of the twenty-first century west coast culture” (p. 250).

Wasserman points out that in the 60’s and 70’s collective creation became a part of Canadian theatre creation for a variety of reasons. This mostly had to do with the countercultural and nationalist sentiments of the era (Wasserman, 2008, p. 143). At the time, collective creation became the solution to a need for Canadian Playwrights (Diane Bessai cited in Wasserman, 2008, p. 243). When the 1990’s came, British Columbia found itself to be a recession, and “Vancouver theatre [was] in a rut” (Wasserman, 2008, p. 244). Due to this, collective theatre companies emerged in Vancouver; companies started by recent theatre graduates who were “impatient with the status quo” (Wasserman, 2008, p. 244). One such example is the company Electric Company Theatre which was formed in 1996 with the premiere of their work *Brilliant! The Blinding Enlightenmen of Nikola Tesla* at the Vancouver Fringe Festival. Since then, the company has toured across Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom, and has co-founded Progress Lab

1422, a 6,000 sq ft theatre creation space in Vancouver BC” (ECT, History, 2017). The mission of Electric Company Theatre is as follows:

Electric Company inspires audiences with a renewed sense of possibility: our performances consistently defy and expand the definition of what live theatre can be. We provide a highly collaborative environment for artists, creating the right conditions for experimentation, risk, and the pursuit of excellence. We traverse artistic disciplines, challenge theatrical conventions and explore universal themes. (ECT, Mission, 2017)

Electric Company Theatre strives to create works that challenge the boundaries of live theatre, that go beyond artistic disciplines. For Wasserman, through the process of creating *Brilliant!* the Electrics became aware of their own individual strengths as they each shared all of the duties involved with creating a production (Wasserman, 2008, p. 246). One of their more recent works, *Betroffenheit*, is a co-production with Kidd Pivot that premiered in 2015 in Toronto. *Betroffenheit* combines theatre with dance through an exploration of trauma and recovery. It has since gone to tour all across North America, the UK, and Australia (ECT, *Betroffenheit*, 2017). Collective creation can result in innovative art forms that allow the artistic creators to explore their own individual strengths and weaknesses.

Collaboration, however, requires a good deal of planning and like with any production there are a series of obstacles involved. The obstacle of finances or budgetary concerns is often cited, but, collaboration also involves trusting people with whom you have never worked with before (Roznowski & Domer, 2009, p. 23). For Rebecca Burton, “the pros far outweigh the cons . . . a collaborative and/or collective approach is desirable” (Burton, 2017, p. 42). In order to combat the barriers, it is necessary to stay organized and to be prepared to morph the collaboration as time



progresses (Burton, 2017, p. 42). Ultimately, collaboration has one goal; “to create a unique production” (Roznowski & Domer, 2009, p. 75). There is also the benefit that a previous collaboration will lead to future work (Roznowski & Domer, 2009, p. 75).

### **Collaboration: Examples**

There are a few instances of cross-border collaborative initiatives between American and Canadian Artists. These are occurring on the eastern side of the continent, yet, they provide an example of models that can be implemented in the Pacific Northwest Region.

#### Council for Canadian American Relations

The Council for Canadian American Relations was established in 1972 as the American Friends of Canada by Bluma Appel, David Rockefeller, and Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau (CCAR, Who We Are, 2017). The purpose of the organization is to foster friendship through the arts between the two countries. The programs that they support, however, are primarily visual arts, ballet, or music performances with only two programs (both art galleries) being in British Columbia (CCAR, Beneficiaries, 2017).

#### Southern Rep Theatre: In Translation

Southern Rep Theatre is a regional theatre located in New Orleans, Louisiana. They produce “bold world premieres, the best of Broadway and off-Broadway, and classic plays” (Southern Rep, History, 2017). Part of their programming is New Play Development. During their 2016-2017 season, they completed a month long residency at the Centres des Auteurs Dramatiques (Playwrights Centre) located in Montréal, Québec. As part of this residency, two playwrights and two translators [were] paired to collaboratively translate manuscripts into English and French (Southern Rep, Reading, 2017). Once the residency was completed, the plays were then read in English at

Southern Rep with conversations in English and in French (Southern Rep, Reading, 2017).

### Playwrights Guild of Canada

Lastly, in 2015 and 2016, the Playwrights Guild of Canada (PGC), inspired by the Dramatists Guild of America, hosted a series of exchanges. These included: A Director/Playwright exchange, where ten directors and ten playwrights were able to talk about what sort of work inspires them and to dialogue together (PGC, D/P Exchange, 2017). As well as a Designer/Playwright Exchange in partnership with the Associated Designers of America which followed a similar structure (PGC, Designer/P Exchange, 2017). In 2016, PGC hosted a Dramaturg/Playwright Exchange in partnership with the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas (PGC, Dramaturg/P Exchange, 2017). The only stipulation for each of the events is that playwrights had to be members of the Playwrights Guild of Canada (PGC, D/P Exchange & Designer/P Exchange & Dramaturg/P Exchange, 2017). This provides an excellent example of fostering international artistic dialogue.

### **Cross-Border Collaboration: A Case Study**

An interview with Sean Devine, the Artistic Director and co-founder of Horseshoes & Hand Grenades Theatre Company, on February 17, 2017 focused on two projects: *Re:Union*, which is set thirty six years after Norman Morrison's act against the Vietnam war, "in the wake of 9/11, his daughter returns to confront the aging McNamara, the memory of her father, and the costly legacy of sacrifice" and which was performed at Pacific Theatre in Vancouver from October 21 – November 12 2011 (Pacific Theatre, *Re:Union*, 2017). *Daisy*, "explores the moment in history where the most infamous political commercial ever made was created by a group of ad-men working

for Lyndon B. Johnson and forever changed how we elect our leaders” and premiered at A Contemporary Theatre (ACT) in Seattle July 8 – August 7 2016 (ACT, Daisy, 2017).

Horseshoes & Hand Grenades Theatre (HHG), is located in Vancouver, BC and, recently Ottawa, ON as well is dedicated to the:

[creation] and [production of] original theatre, ranging from new Canadian works to pieces from the international repertoire. We foster the development of our artists through collaborative processes exploring new forms of theatre practice. We educate and engage our audience through our artistic works as well as our community outreach programs. (HHG, About, 2017)

Founded in 2005, Horseshoes & Hand Grenades Theatre has become known for their contemporary political, and remarkably poignant plays. As one critic states of *Re:Union*:

The play and production bombard us with history and ideas, ethical ambiguity and complex theatrical technology to the point where nothing is entirely clear. That may be true to life but it's little comfort in unconscionable times.

(Wasserman, *The Province*, 2011 in *Re:Union Critical Response*)

This penchant for the political and the historical creates plays that portrays known stories that resonate with audiences in a new light.

For Sean Devine, his interest in working with theatre artists in Seattle began after seeing productions in Seattle. On one trip to Seattle, Devine saw a production of *Eurydice* which was produced in 2008 at A Contemporary Theatre (ACT, Production History, 2017). According to Devine, he noticed that in one actor's bio it stated that they were starting a new theatre company and that their first show would be *The Adding Machine* in partnership with the ACT. Upon reading the script, Devine decided that it was a show that he needed to see. Not only was it an amazing production, but Sean also found himself blown away by the fact that it was the third week of a five week run, on a

Wednesday night, and the venue was full (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). It was then that Devine approached New Century Theatre Company (NCTC) about a potential partnership, in particular since at the time Devine was in the process of writing works that dealt with American subject matter. Then, HHG had done a bit of collaboration, but nothing intentional. The two companies then began to discuss the idea of developing *Father Daughter Reunion* (what would later become *Re:Union*) together. John Langs, who is now the Artistic Director of the ACT, was asked to direct by NCTC. From there, a timeline began to develop (Devine, personal communication, Feb. 17, 2017; March 9, 2009).

From his experience attending productions in Seattle and discussions with the Artistic Director of New Century Theatre Company, Devine began to compare the cities of Vancouver and Seattle. From his initial perceptions, Devine noticed that the form and the aesthetic of theatre that the two cities were producing were very different. Compared to Seattle, the average run of a performance in Vancouver is two weeks; this is due to a difference in funding. HHG receives “upwards of 75% in public grants” compared to NCTC which receives 20% of its funding in public grants (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). They, therefore, have to be much more aggressive in their marketing in order to achieve box office revenues and highly active within their communities. Devine noted that Canadian audiences “think that they’re not that essential (only represent 20% of the revenue) [and therefore have] less impetus to participate” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). Overall, there is a larger culture of philanthropy in the United States than in Canada (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). In an initial email to NCTC, Devine highlighted this difference in cultures, and fact that even though at the time NCTC was an emerging company, they were still able to receive various amounts of private donations.

Something that is reserved for regional theatres in Canada. Devine observed that the list also included numerous donors who had contributed in smaller amounts, which isn't always something that you see with theatre companies in Canada, since they rely so much on government funding so a lot of companies utilize grants and foundation support as their primary source of revenue and neglect individual donations (Devine, personal communication, March 6, 2009). Devine ascertained that the model that he saw in the program "was shocking. It demonstrated just what community support can and should be" (Devine, personal communication, March 6, 2009).

What then developed over the next year was the beginning of a script development process and the timeline for the workshopping of *Father Daughter Reunion*. The timeline included a series of script workshops at ACT in Seattle, and at Playwright's Theatre Centre in Vancouver. Travel for these projects was funded by the Canada Council's Theatre International Grant (Devine, personal communication, Jan 14, 2010). Yet, after a year of workshopping on developing the script, NCTC decided to withdraw from the project due to timing, other projects and deadlines that the company was facing, and the development of NCTC as a new company (Devine, personal communication, Jan 15, 2010). Even though NCTC was no longer involved in the project, John Langs remained involved in the project and ended up directing the premiere of *Re:Union* at Pacific Theatre (co-produced with Horseshoes and Handgrenades Theatre) in Vancouver from October 21 – November 12 (Pacific Theatre, Previous Seasons, 2017).

The relationship that was built with John Langs and ACT continued to grow into another production opportunity. This ultimately became a production of *Daisy* which premiered at the ACT theatre in Seattle July 8 – August 7, 2016 (ACT, *Daisy*, 2017). The script process for *Daisy* had started in 2003, but by 2013 there was a storyline that was

ready to go. It was then that Devine went to Seattle to meet with Langs. At that time they knew that Langs would be the Artistic Director of the ACT, and it was decided that *Daisy* would be a project between ACT and HHG. Throughout the two year process of writing and workshopping, there were about 3-4 major meetings between the two parties. For instance, Devine went to Seattle for an initial workshop to see how the ACT community responded to the piece. There were also similar workshops in Ottawa and readings in Chicago and Toronto which “helped to further advance the play” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). As a final workshop opportunity before the script went into rehearsal, *Daisy* was able to be workshopped at the Icicle Creek Arts Centre, a new play festival that ACT partners with and to whom they bring two new plays every year. As part of the workshop for *Daisy* they were able to bring most of the cast for a one week long intensive workshop that was the most thorough process (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017).

When it came to producing *Daisy*, it was considered an American production that HHG came on board with a very small production budget (\$350,000 and \$20,000 in fees and expenses). Despite the small budget, HHG experienced a level of artistic input that greatly exceeded the amount of money that they put in and they were “invited to sit at the table when it came to the major creative decisions” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). There was the opportunity to remount *Daisy* with an off-Broadway company in October 2016, however, it was decided that the financial risks outweighed the benefits. On this, Devine noted that “typically when Canadian theatre companies are developing and producing new work, we’re trying to develop the opportunity for the premiere and where it goes afterwards” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). There is a feeling that because you are investing so much time and money into a project you want to further other opportunities to remount

it (personal communication, February 17, 2017).

When asked if they faced any challenges bringing American artists into Vancouver to work on *Re:Union*, Devine responded “Not really, crossing the border” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). With the extensive visa forms that had to be filled out they had to articulate “a very clear rationale for why this American artist could be given a job that could be filled by a Canadian. It’s harder to make that case when you’re talking about artistic excellence. Once you jumped through the hoops, it was really easy” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). Structurally speaking, because of equity regulations, the first question that an American theatre artist is likely to ask is how long their contract is, not what their salary is. This, according to Devine, is because Actors’ Equity members have to work a certain “number of weeks per year to get their health insurance” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). When *Daisy* was in the planning process, they were “reluctant to [the idea of] bringing Canadian actors to the project because Actor’s Equity would put up a fight” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017).

There were also a number of long term benefits to these two projects. Primarily, the connection with NCTC was a direct link that opened up the doors for *Daisy* to eventually be workshopped and produced. Since *Re:Union* is a story that is based on American history, there was a direct benefit from having American artists working on the project; “they brought their own emotional response to an American story” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). They were also two artists who were incredibly skilled at what they do. Devine also distinguished that “there was also something uniquely different about their style and working method. There’s a different way of going about things. A ‘can do’ attitude” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). Whereas, with Canadian artists, there’s a gentleness, a reluctantness

to be decisive, which in many ways, can be a great thing. This difference in approaches, therefore, brought a really good mixture to the project (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). The lighting technician for *Re:Union*, Jason Thompson was “quick to comment on how different the working culture is and working methodology is” as Vancouver is a new creation theatre community and contains within it so many processes for doing that work (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). Whereas, in Seattle, there isn’t as much new work being done (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017).

When asked if he thought that the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA can work towards increasing artistic collaboration, Devine replied “yes, but it does depend on what a company wants” citing the shift in the partnership with NCTC as an example (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). The way that Canada is laid out geographically, it needs constant connectivity. From Vancouver, the nearest city within the mainland of Canada is Calgary, and from there Edmonton and Winnipeg. But, in America, in particular the Midwest and East Coast, “you can travel in any direction and within a few hours you will hit a city” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). This then creates an environment where in Canada you need to tour. Americans, on the whole, are not as inclined to go north as Canadians are to go south since Canadians see more opportunity south (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017).

The cross-border collaboration doesn’t end with *Re:Union* and *Daisy*, currently another project is in the works that features one playwright from the United States, one from Canada, and one from the United Kingdom; each are writing a play that is a collective response to world events, specifically political events (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017).



Since the conclusion of the case study, Horseshoes and Handgrenades has announced their 2017-2018 season. This season includes: *Building the Wall* by Robert Schenkan that explores what life will be like in 2019 given the current ideologies coming out of the United States. Productions are planned for Canada, the U.S., Europe, and Mexico (HHG, HHG Featured, & 2017/2018 Season, 2017). Their season also features two new plays that are in development: *The Authoritatirans* in partnership with Delaware's Resident Ensemble Players and *Steve Bannon's Titus Andronicus in Space* in partnership with the ACT Theatre in Seattle (HHG, 2017/2018 Season, 2017). Thus, cross border collaboration plays an important response to political events.

### **Focus Groups: Seattle, WA and Vancouver, BC**

The following is a summary from two ninety minute focus groups that were held in Seattle, WA and Vancouver, BC in March, 2017. For the purposes of maintaining confidentiality, all participants and their statements have been identified with a pseudonym.

#### Focus Group: Seattle

Theatre artists in Seattle are extremely keen to engage in cross-border collaboration. In a discussion of the results from the survey and their perceptions of the Seattle theatre community, the following themes arose: the differences between the west coast and east coast theatre communities in the United States, the limited acting pool within Seattle, and the tension between the theatre community identifying itself as independent and collaborative. During this conversation, one participant, Douglas, noted that "there is a fear of losing artistic control, fear of equinimable relationship. It's almost impossible to survive if you don't collaborate" (March 20, 2017). There is a perception within the Seattle theatre community that by collaborating on a production

you will be losing artistic control over your project. Another participant agreed with this sentiment, specifying that in Seattle there are “a lot of companies sharing artists and resources, but not production curation” (March 20, 2017). As discussed in the focus group, this differs than the theatrical culture across Canada, as discussed in the focus group, where in Canada it is highly common for theatre companies to co-produce with each other and to co-produce shows across the country. For instance, a theatre company from Vancouver might co-produce a show with another company in Toronto, and then in Montreal while the show tours through Canada. Whereas, in Seattle the trend is to share actors and resources but not necessarily to collaborate on a production together. In contrast, in the Eastern side of the United States, there is a constant sense of connectivity; “there is a lot of cross-pollination of organizations” (March 20, 2017). Similarly, Douglas mentioned that:

there is a definite difference between coasts. It’s a different scene; it’s easier to forge relationships. In New York, there’s this crusty exterior, you get past that and you’re a part of the family. Out here, there’s a friendly exterior, but it’s very difficult to forge intimacy and relationships over the long term because people either want to be left alone, or they don’t want controversy, or they just are very cautious. (March 20, 2017)

This sharing of resources, in particular actors, is due in part to the fact that there is a limited pool of actors within the Seattle theatre community. As Ashleigh mentioned, “the actors who graduate from the Seattle universities don’t stay in Seattle. They get their equity credit then go to Chicago or LA” (March 20, 2017). Candace (who has worked both in Seattle and in Vancouver) identified that this is a major difference from the Vancouver theatre community where the university graduates are more likely to stay in Vancouver. This is in part due to the smaller population density and that

Vancouver is one of the major cities in Canada, whereas, in the United States, there are more major cities to choose from. Because there is a desire for connectivity and for the sharing of resources amongst the Seattle theatre community, there is a unique opportunity for cross-border collaboration to benefit the Seattle theatre community.

One of the major benefits that was identified is a cross-pollination of organizations and a sharing of resources and ideas which helps to enhance the cultural vitality of the region. While it was agreed that all of the benefits are particularly qualitative, one unique benefit to collaboration is the sharing of administrative skills. Lenore shared from personal experience that:

Cross-pollination also includes cross-pollination of administrative creativity as well. Participant shared how they learnt about fiscal sponsorship through partnering with a company who did fiscal sponsorship and she decided that it would work really well for her company. (March 2017)

One tool that the focus group participants would like to see implemented in order to further facilitate cross-border collaboration was a system for sharing resources and information. Primarily, information pertaining to the Visa application process. Based off of the experiences of one participant, this process is a complicated and confusing one and there are tax benefits in Canada that organizations can apply for that her company was not made aware of when they came into Canada. Therefore, a centralized document that covers both the Canadian and the American visa application process for artists would be of use in furthering cross-border artistic collaboration. As a means of assisting Seattle artists in connecting with Vancouver based artists, and vice versa, a formal Ambassadorship program was thought to be beneficial, where seven to eight people from each theatre community act as representatives and host members of the opposite theatre community as a way of taking them to shows and allowing them to get

a sense of the culture of the other theatre community. The possibility of a joint blog that has a sort of LinkedIn structure was also proposed. This would provide theatre artists and practitioners to publicize their skill set online, to connect with other artists in the same theatrical discipline as themselves, and to acquire assistance with certain production or artistic needs. As a sort of political response to the current climate in the United States and the fact that numerous artists are refusing to enter the United States out of solidarity, and numerous other artists cannot enter the United States, a “Theatre Without Borders” type of project was proposed. Within this project, a play, for instance, would be performed in Seattle and simultaneously live streamed in Vancouver (or vice versa) as a way of responding to the climate of the time and of saying that even though this border does exist, we will still find a way to work together.

#### Focus Group: Vancouver

The conversation with theatre artists and practitioners in Vancouver also focused on themes that pertained to the survey, an overview of ideas for promoting collaboration that arose from the Seattle focus group, and the brainstorming of methods to promote and further cross-border collaboration. Major highlights of the conversation included a discussion of the collaborative nature of Vancouver theatre, the ever constant reliance on grants, and the difference between Canada and the United States in regards to script development. One participant noted that the Vancouver theatre community is extremely collaborative but that this might also be due to a lack of performance space. Compared to Toronto, there are not the same amount of theatre companies with their own venues in Vancouver, therefore, co-producing is almost a necessary evil in the Vancouver theatre community. But, as Susan observed, “sometimes there’s a fear of partnerships in terms of funding bodies. We’re on operating, they’re on project, will we be funded for the project?” (March 20, 2017). Since

the theatre companies in Vancouver are so reliant on grants based funding, and since all of these grants have various timelines throughout the fiscal year, it is, therefore, often difficult to co-ordinate projects based on the various funding agencies and grant timelines. Due to this, biggest barriers that they identified to cross-border collaboration was the grant system. Since theatre companies in Canada, and particularly Vancouver, receive the majority of their funding from grants (whether it be Canada Council or BC Arts Council, Gaming or Vancouver Foundation to name a few) their calendar cycle is incredibly focused on when the next grant cycle is for all of these various granting bodies. The process of engaging in cross-border collaboration would, therefore, take quite a bit of planning as it would also require integrating the project into funding applications and funding cycles.

One participant shared his experience of getting his scripts produced in Canada versus in the United States. For him, both in New York and in Seattle, the process of getting people to support a project and to get donations was so much easier, whereas in Vancouver, there is an attitude of “I don’t know you” (March 20, 2017). This also points to the differences in philanthropic cultures that Sean Devine mentioned. In the states, they have a much greater culture of philanthropy. During this conversation about the differences in cultures and script development process, one participant mentioned a study that was compiled by Playwrights Theatre Centre (Vancouver) and the Saskatchewan Playwrights Centre (Saskatoon). This study highlighted that:

In the states they’re really looking at the script as a property. There’s always the search for the hot property. And this is in the new play market, not so much in ensemble theatres. Whereas, in Canada, people are interested in relationship; especially if you’re looking at a theatre production that’s aiming to be reviewed in the mainstream. Because the production cycles are in some cases longer if

people are trying to get public funding. If you're going to be working with someone for three years, then you want to know who they are, you're looking for the relationship. A lot of Canadian producers look at the script and say 'Oh, I like this writing, can you do one for me?' and they want to have more of a creative impact on the development of the script. So, producers are looking to get in earlier in the development process rather than getting a finished script to produce. Now that's not always the case, there are companies that are looking for good scripts to produce (i.e. Rumble Theatre). But, in terms of the companies that are looking for finished scripts, they are also often looking for scripts that are bringing some sort of a track record with them because that has an impact on their audience development. So, if they're doing something that was premiered somewhere in the states, they're looking [the track record of] 'Oh, this was the Pulitzer winner!' There's other capital that people are looking to have brought with the script. Part of that just has to do with population density, we [Canada] just don't have the audiences to sustain as many independent productions. (March 27, 2017)

It is important to keep in mind the subtle difference in approaches in regards to script development when it comes to considering cross-border collaboration. But, perhaps one thing that Canadians can learn from their American neighbours is how to foster a culture of philanthropy.

The focus group also brought up perspectives pertaining to collaboration and a discussion of previous experiences with cross-border collaboration. A participant shared his experience with his own theatre company, and how they started collaborative groups where they offer their experience to emerging artists. When they began the program, they looked at it as "What are we not getting?" (in the classroom) and as a way of sharing their experience with others. For them, collaboration is a means

of learning and sharing experience (March, 2017). Likewise, Rosaline, (who is originally from the states) mentioned her experience of coming up to Vancouver for a workshop that was provided by a Vancouver-based theatre company. For her, “just being in the room and not trying to make something happen, I learnt a lot from the workshop leaders, but I learnt so much from the people that I was in the room with and I’ve since gone on to do two projects with two people that I met during that workshop. This kind of opportunity, there’s a boundary to it in one way, but it never felt networky” (March 2017).

Rosaline also shared that her company in Portland received a little bit of funding (~\$2000) from the Network of Ensemble Theatres (a service organization for ensemble theatres that has had money to support travel and seed grants receiving funding). The funding helped to bring two Vancouver based theatre artists down.

They used the studio, worked on the show, did a workshop. It [the collaboration] hasn’t gone anywhere yet, but all hope is not lost. This points to the necessity of thinking ‘it doesn’t take that much money, and especially to Seattle’ but it also comes to that question ‘what kind of outcome and what kind of theatre creation process is best supported by these things?’ It’s a very different thing to think about a director or designer who is going to work on a project, say at the Intiman, than it is to be more artist to artist working on making something that, who knows, never comes to anything, but maybe you go back and forth across the border times to see each other’s work a couple times a year. (March 2017)

Collaboration, when done purposefully, can be very meaningful.

As a means of encouraging artistic collaboration, those present at the focus group emphasized using the tools that already exist. For instance, working with festivals and residencies from each city to bring in artists, instead of creating a blog site, using

*HowlRound's* World Theatre Map, and the National New Play Exchange. There is the sense that the theatre market in the United States is much bigger and there is a feeling that American Artists wouldn't instinctively desire to come to Canada to work, unlike Canadian artists who see America as a place of opportunity. Which, to a certain extent is true, but based on the conversation that occurred in the Seattle Focus Group, the Seattle theatre community feels very isolated from other US cities (Portland is 3.5 hours away making Vancouver the closest city) therefore, there is an argument to be made for this type of collaboration being beneficial in the Pacific Northwest where the cities are more isolated from each other geographically compared to the Midwest and the East Coast of America.

## **Summary**

The collaborative process is a process that is indispensable in the act of theatrical creation. This process, however, is not entirely documented. The literature that exists pertaining to collaboration is limited to the communication between various theatre artists in the production and curation of a show; not necessarily to various collaborative models or a discussion of what is necessary to co-produce with another company. A case study with Sean Devine of Horseshoes & Hand Grenades Theatre Company reveals that artistic collaboration was initiated by a single person who was interested in the work of another company. Both companies shared an interest in the same type of work. The benefits to cross-border collaboration included the sharing resources, the sharing of ideas, that it provides a means to learn about different methods of working in the theatre, and the creation of connections that later become professional partnerships. Initial findings from Focus Groups conducted in Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA show that the theatre community in Seattle, WA is very keen to engage in artistic



collaboration; primarily because they feel isolated as a theatre community. The theatre community of Vancouver, while willing to collaborate, sees funding as a major barrier to collaboration. Chapter Six will provide a plan for how to further increase artistic collaboration between these two theatre communities using the findings from the Focus Groups.

Chapter Six  
Conclusion

KARIN

It's... it's just a very important call. He's talking to the  
American consulate.

*The Romeo Initiative* by Trina Davies

## Study Summary

This study approached the lens of cross-border collaboration and partnership in the Pacific Northwest region through an artistic framework. Drawing upon an existing body of literature in border management, security, trade, and economics that focused on the Pacific Northwest as a region, the study highlights the opportunity for collaboration between the theatre communities of Seattle, Washington and Vancouver, British Columbia. This opportunity for collaboration is presented in the form of a plan at the end of this chapter that details specific methods that theatre artists and managers can realistically apply in the next one, five, and ten years in order to increase artistic collaboration to further the creative vitality of the Pacific Northwest Region.

The central question of this study was: *What are opportunities for the theatre communities in Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA to collaborate to increase the cultural vitality in the transborder Pacific Northwest?* This research question was designed in order to explore what current and previous collaborations have taken place, and to examine

how, and in what ways the theatre communities can work together in the future. Through this investigation, a specific dimension of the cultural vitality in the Pacific Northwest was analyzed. The sub research questions that are embedded within this study include:

*What are the current levels of collaboration between the two communities?*

*What barriers are there to collaboration?*

*What can be done to further collaboration?*

*What is the significance of encouraging artistic collaboration?*

These research questions were answered through the research methods of surveys, interviews, and focus groups, and were ultimately used to answer the main research question.

## **Key Findings**

Even though Canada and the United States share the world's longest undefended border, Americans are largely unaware of their northern neighbour. While the border region is of deep-rooted national significance for Canadians, it is quite overlooked on the American side. As discussed in Chapter Two, the border slipped from the consciousness of Americans during the twentieth century since Canadians and Americans were friends and allies. As a result, "Canadians imagined a border that contained Canadian culture, nebulous as it was, and held off at least some negatively perceived American influences and excesses" (Konrad, 2012, p. 539). The Pacific Northwest, as a region, maintains a strong sense of cultural, geographic, and economic identity. This identity informs its transborder politics and character as a transborder region. Furthermore, the arts and cultural policy of Canada and the United States are vastly different. The Massey Commission helped to shape Canada's current cultural

policy landscape, which includes the creation of the Canada Council, while the public funding of arts and culture has been a source of much debate in the United States over time. Both Canada and the United States have Actors' Equity Associations. These artist unions maintain friendly relationships with each other and work together to ensure the fair compensation of their artists when they work across the border.

The province of British Columbia holds a high concentration of artists. From 1989 to 2013 the percentage of artists in the overall workforce has increased by 74% and the percentage of cultural workers has increased by 79% (Hill, 2014, p. 25). There are several initiatives and arms length organizations that operate as part of the province to ensure that the development of the arts and culture is supported throughout the province. For instance, the organization Creative BC is meant to provide "a strategic and integrated approach to the growth and development of the province's creative industries" (Creative BC, Overview, 2016). The current Cultural Plan for the City of Vancouver is a ten year plan that spans from 2008 to 2018. It strategically makes "support of and investment in the creative sector a priority" (Creative City Taskforce, 2008, p. 4). The City of Seattle's twenty-year comprehensive plan called "Seattle 2035: Your City, Your Future" includes plans for: Public Art, Creative Economy, Youth Development, Cultural Space and Placemaking, and Historic Preservation (City of Seattle, 2016, pp. 136-140). The theatre industry in both Vancouver and Seattle was established in the 1960's and has continued to grow since. Both cities are contributing to the cultural vitality of their respective regions.

An interview with Sean Devine of Horseshoes & Hand Grenades Theatre reveals that there are various benefits to cross-border collaboration. Primarily, the connection with New Century Theatre Company was a direct link that opened up the doors for *Daisy* to eventually be workshopped and produced. Since *Re:Union* is a story that is

based on American history, there was a direct benefit from having American artists working on the project; “they brought their own emotional response to an American story” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). Furthermore, “there was also something uniquely different about their style and working method. There’s a different way of going about things. A ‘can do’ attitude” (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017). Whereas, with Canadian artists, there’s a gentleness, a reluctantness to be decisive, which in many ways, can be a great thing. This difference in approaches, therefore, brought a really good mixture to the project (February 17, 2017). The lighting technician for *Re:Union*, Jason Thompson was “quick to comment on how different the working culture is and working methodology is” as Vancouver is a new creation theatre community and contains within it so many processes for doing that work. Whereas, in Seattle, there isn’t as much new work being done (Devine, personal communication, February 17, 2017).

The theatre artists of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA overall are desiring of increased cross-border collaboration between the two theatre communities. Vancouver, as a whole, is a much more collaborative theatre community than Seattle but the theatre artists and practitioners in Vancouver cited more barriers to cross-border collaboration. Primarily, the barriers that are of concern are: the fear of putting diverse artists at risk given the new legislation that has been put into place by the current United States Administration, the visa application process, and finances/grant cycles. Despite this fact, there are also numerous intrinsic and extrinsic benefits that come with cross-border collaboration. Chiefly, it allows theatre practitioners to learn new models of practicing their craft, it creates more opportunities for the collective creation by opening up opportunities for theatre communities that may otherwise feel isolated, it can increase the uniqueness of the cultural product by offering something that is not normally

offered within that community, and, as a result, collaboration can attract new audiences.

### **Recommendations for the Field**

The current literature on collaborative practices within theatre is quite limited to the act of creating and producing a show with actors, designers, directors, stage managers, etc. and the communication channels that occur between these disciplines. It examines best practices for a theatre director to communicate with those involved in their production, drawing from books such as William Ball's *A Sense of Direction* and Frank Hauser and Russell Reich's *Notes on Directing*. The literature, however, hardly covers what it means to collectively create and artistic product and to collaborate with other companies in the process of artistic creation. There is a need in the literature of the field to further examine the impact that collaborative productions have on their communities and and respective regions. Since the theatre community is inherently collaborative, and the collaborative process provides numerous benefits to the theatre industry, the study of how a collaborative process compares to a non-collaborative, co-production, process and a further investigation of what is necessary to curate a collaborative production would be beneficial to the field.

The artistic practices of the Vancouver theatre community have been documented by practitioners in the field and in the community, however, the trends and practices of the theatre community in Seattle have not been documented. As a result, further documentation on specific theatre companies, their history, how their mission and programming has changed over time, and their impact on the theatrical style of their community would be useful. Comparatively, the Vancouver theatre community hosts a variety of articles on specific issues that are unique to it, ranging

from Bard on the Beach, the Arts Club, Asian theatre, and the collective and collaborative nature of the Vancouver theatre industry. Articles such as these would be beneficial in documenting the Seattle theatre scene and in providing outside scholars with a glimpse of theatrical trends in the Pacific Northwest.

Lastly, the extent to which Canadian plays are produced in the United States is an occurrence that is both rare and not well documented. As a result, there are many questions surrounding this subject. Are these plays the result of touring productions? Are they simply popular scripts such as *Mary's Wedding*? Or, are there lesser known Canadian plays that are receiving their initial American debut? These questions all reflect back to the notion of Canadian cultural protectionism and the giant cultural bohemith that is the United States. What does it mean when a Canadian play is produced in the United States? – what sort of recognition does it have to have received before an American theatre considers it? To some extent the presentation of these plays will have been documented by publishing companies, however the level of value that is placed upon a play when it is produced in the United States is also an important question to consider, and one that greatly affects the Canadian theatre industry.

The study focuses on opportunities for the Canadian and American theatre industries to work more closely. In particular, the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA. What follows is a proposal for increasing artistic collaboration between the two cities based on findings from the study.

## **Proposal for Increasing Cross-Border Collaboration**

### Year 1

Throughout the focus groups, the establishment of an ambassadorship program was discussed. While this program will be defined in further detail later, there were



various different ideas that pertained to how best go about creating and implementing this sort of program, ranging from the creation of a new site that incorporates features from LinkedIn and features from a blog site, to utilizing tools that are already available within the theatre community such as *HowlRound's* World Theatre Map and the National New Play Network's New Play Exchange (*HowlRound, World Theatre, 2017; New Play, FAQs, 2017*). In order to better connect theatre artists and administrators from Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA I propose the creation of a website that has the following:

- A link to the World Theatre Mmap
- A link to the New Play Exchange
- An online discussion forum
- Information about how to get involved in the ambassadorship program and who to contact
- Separate pages with detailed information pertaining to the visa application process for artists in both Canada and the United States

*HowlRound's* World Theatre map is a tool that is meant to connect the global theatre community. Individuals and arts organizations can register online and put themselves on the map. They can also register their events which are then displayed on the map and advertised as a way of showing all the theatrical events occurring around the globe on a singular day (*World Theatre Map, What Is, 2017*). Since this tool serves to unite the theatre community across the world and across borders, it serves as the perfect medium for beginning to unite the theatre artists of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA. Currently, the list of profiles is limited primarily to organizations both in Seattle and Vancouver; therefore, individuals are encouraged to register themselves on the map. The map then

allows individuals to state their interests and their specialties, to write a short bio about themselves, and to fill in contact information this information can be useful for the ambassadorship program.

An Ambassadorship Program where a theatre artist from Vancouver is hosted in Seattle by another theatre artist (and vice versa) would also be a beneficial way to allow the theatre communities of Vancouver and Seattle to meet each other and to learn more about their individual communities. To initiate the program, a theatre artist or administrator could register to be an ambassador through the website, and once they have registered, their world theatre map profile will be linked onto the homepage of the Ambassador program for potential participants to see.

The website could also include an online discussion forum so that artists can pose questions to each other, share links to shows that are being produced in their area, ideas or articles of interest. This type of sharing of ideas is a way that the cultural vitality of the Pacific Northwest region can be enhanced since it is through the sharing of thoughts and ideas that we learn from one another.

Lastly, the focus groups provided much discussion on how the visa requirements for artists entering either Canada or the United States are unclear and that there are numerous hidden requirements. Because of this, a page of the website should be devoted to clarifying exactly what the visa requirements are, what type of visa is needed for what purpose, timelines, and any special tax regulations. In the Seattle focus group it was suggested that this be presented in a sort of interactive platform where an organization or individual can check certain boxes and then they are guided through what type of visa is needed, what the requirements are, and any tax regulations or exemptions that apply.

This website would be built in the first year as a means of encouraging cross-border collaboration. While at first it would be necessary for a volunteer to update the visa information, and to monitor the website, hopefully in the future this could be a part of a larger organization promoting the unification of a Cascadia Theatre Region (as discussed in years 5-10).

#### Years 2-5

Once the website is completed, theatre artists and administrators would need to be recruited to join the website and to register with the World Theatre Map. From there, the sharing of ideas can occur online. During this time, the ambassadorship program would take flight. This would involve the implementation of the types of programs that are being seen on the other side of the continent, in particular the exchanges that Playwrights Guild of Canada is initiating. Perhaps, contacting Playwrights Guild of Canada to set up an exchange in Vancouver, BC. The type of playwriting exchange between the *Centre des Auteurs Dramatiques* and Southern Rep Theatre is perfect for Vancouver and Seattle since Vancouver has the Playwright's Theatre Centre (where *Daisy* was workshopped). Calls for individual artists or script editing would be able to occur through the online platform. There would need to be a team of people to moderate the platform and to help to post discussion topics in order to help to ensure that the theatre community is interacting with each other. Perhaps, someone would also need to scout out potential projects or needs for projects to share with the theatre communities and to help to recruit artists and administrators who are needed for potential projects. By the end of five years each theatre community would be able to have a sense of the type of productions that occur in the opposite theatre community, some of the people who work there, and the key theatre companies that are located there.

This type of involvement when cross-border collaboration is in its beginnings will help to ensure that it flourishes for the years to come.

### Years 5 – 10

After five years of encouraging and promoting cross-border artistic collaboration, it is hoped that the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA would have a greater awareness of each other and that they would be able to find ways of fostering and participating in each other's work. At this time, artistic collaboration would be allowed to flourish through the creation of a non-profit regional arts advocacy group. Similar to the work of the BC Alliance for the Arts and Culture that serves as an "arts information aggregator and a resource to the arts, culture and heritage community" (BC Alliance, About, 2017). Or, 4Culture in Seattle which "is committed to making our region stronger by supporting citizens and groups who preserve our shared heritage, and create arts and cultural opportunities for residents and visitors" (4Culture, 3 Million, 2014). Like these organizations, a non-profit group would serve to advance artistic issues of common interest, host annual conferences, host monthly online discussion forums, post job announcements, post community announcements, share casting calls, etc. Similar to the Council for Canadian American Relations, which primarily works in the fields of visual arts and music, this organization could also be a granting body that would provide financial assistance to those engaging in cross-border collaborative projects and perhaps, also, legal advice for those needing to apply for visas to work in either Canada or the United States. It would be at this time that the monitoring of the initial website and the updating of the visa requirements would become a part of the responsibilities of the non-profit organization.

Based on individual conversations with theatre artists in Vancouver, BC there has long been a desire to achieve a Cascadia theatre region. This region would, ideally, opening the curtain to collaboration

extend from Vancouver, BC to Portland, OR and serve to unite the theatre communities within the region. This theatre region would not only be defined by geographic boundaries, but also by the sharing of resources and experimental theatre that defines the theatre communities in the area. This unification would occur through the sharing of ideas, resources, and the sharing of productions through touring. At this time, it is hoped, and anticipated, that cross-border collaboration will extend to the community of Portland, OR as a means of fully enhancing the cultural vitality of the transborder Pacific Northwest.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of the study is to articulate what collaboration could look like between the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA. Through the study, it was found that there is a dire need for increased collaboration and dialogue between Canadian and American Theatre communities. As neighbours, we also have much to offer one another: “this much is clear: U.S. and Canadian devotees of the theatre have much to offer one another in the way of inspiration. We really ought to get together more often.” (Taylor, 2012, p. 31). This study aspires to bring about an increased awareness of the need for collaboration, the benefits that can be derived from collaboration, and the effect that the international border has on the creative collaboration between Canada and the United States of America. Ultimately, it is hoped that this study will spark a continued dialogue surrounding the need for increased partnership and mutual efforts in the theatre communities of Canada and the United States, and in particular, the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA which are particularly close in proximity. Ultimately, the research poses a benefit by enhancing the creative vitality of these communities, but also the transborder Pacific Northwest as a whole by creating a

proposal for increased theatrical collaborations between Vancouver, BC and Seattle,  
WA.

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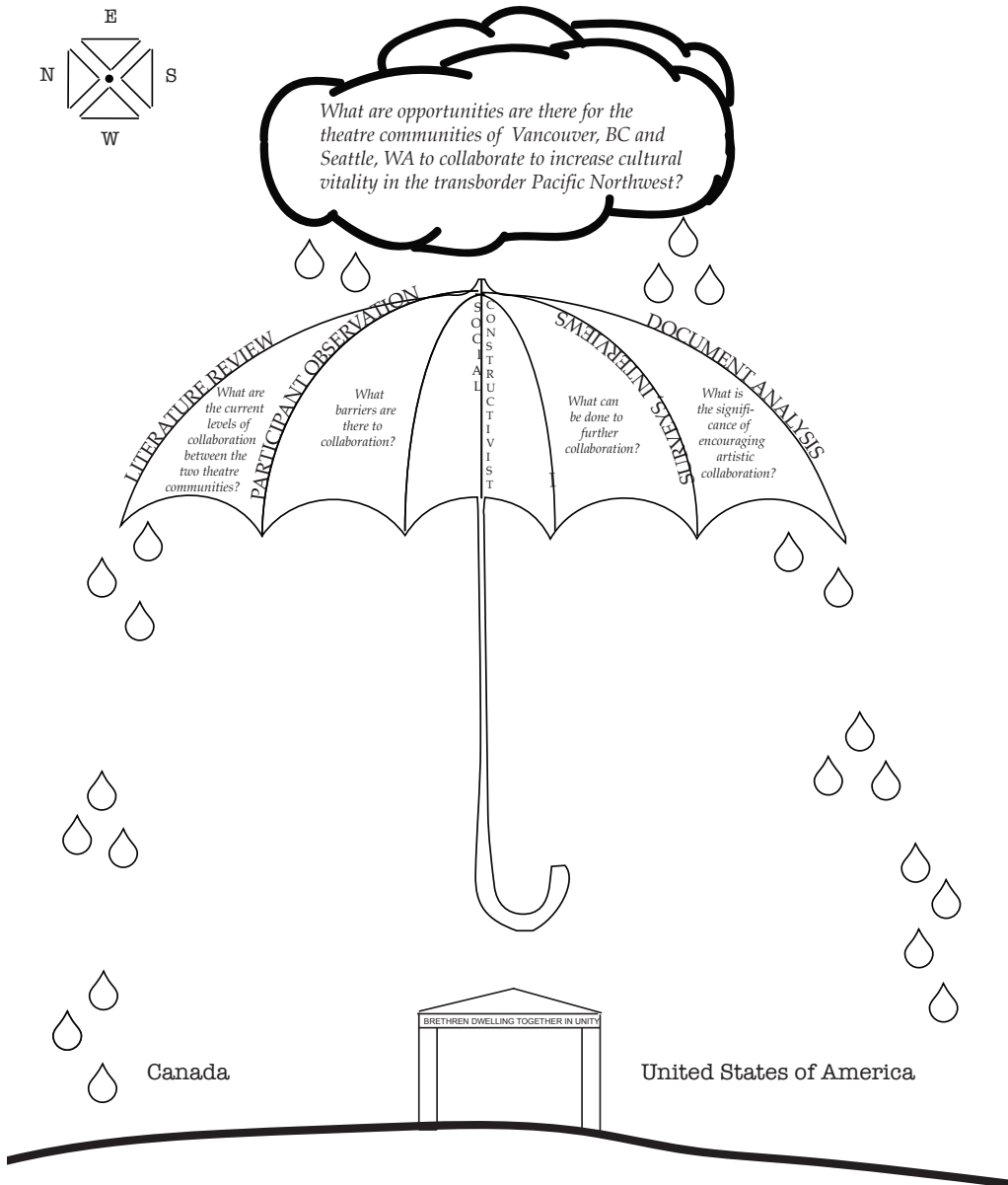
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# APPENDIX A: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



## APPENDIX B: CODING SCHEMATIC

### Codes Master List

#### MAIN CODES

<i>OV</i>	<i>Organization Vancouver</i>
<i>OS</i>	<i>Organization Seattle</i>
<i>AV</i>	<i>Artist Vancouver</i>
<i>AS</i>	<i>Artist Seattle</i>
<i>AAV</i>	<i>Arts Administrator Vancouver</i>
<i>AAS</i>	<i>Arts Administrator Seattle</i>
<i>AEC</i>	<i>Actor's Equity Canada</i>
<i>AES</i>	<i>Actor's Equity United States</i>

#### SUB CODES

C	Challenges
B	Benefits
S	Similarity
ST	Structure
D	Difference
E	Evaluation
P	Program
O	Opportunity
CP	Cultural Policy
CO	Collaboration

#### DATA ID KEY

Interviews for Case Study	Begin with #1
Document Analysis	Begin with #2
Survey	Begin with #3
Focus Group	Begin with #4
Interviews with Actors Equity	Begin with #5

## APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW DATA COLLECTION CASE STUDIES

---

Case Study:

Data ID:

Key Descriptor:

Date:

Interview Location/method:

Interviewee Details:

Consent:  Oral  Written (form)  Audio Recording  OK to Quote

Thank-you sent

Notes on Interview Context:

Final Interview Reflections:

MAIN CODE		NOTES
OV		
OS		
AV		
AS		
AAV		
AAS		
AEC		
AES		
<b>SUB CODES</b>		
C		
B		
S		
ST		
D		
E		
P		
O		
CP		
CO		

## APPENDIX D: DATA COLLECTION SHEET FOR CASE STUDY DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Case Study:

Data ID:

Key Descriptor:

Date:

Document Location:

Document Type:    \_\_\_ Script    \_\_\_ Email    \_\_\_ Budget    \_\_\_ Production Calendar  
                          \_\_\_ Box Office Statistics    \_\_\_ Government Paperwork  
                          \_\_\_ Online Information    \_\_\_ Notes    \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Citation:

Document Location:

Document Summary:

MAIN CODE		NOTES
OV		
OS		
AV		
AS		
AAV		
AAS		
AEC		
AES		
SUB CODES		
C		
B		
S		
ST		
D		
E		
P		
O		
CP		
CO		

## APPENDIX E: ACTORS' EQUITY INTERVIEW DATA COLLECTION

Interview:

Data ID:

Key Descriptor:

Date:

Interview Location/method:

Interviewee Details:

Consent:  Oral  Written (form)  Audio Recording  OK to Quote

Thank-you sent

Notes on Interview Context:

Final Interview Reflections:

MAIN CODE		NOTES
OV		
OS		
AV		
AS		
AAV		
AAS		
AEC		
AES		
<b>SUB CODES</b>		
C		
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O		
CP		
CO		



## APPENDIX F: DATA COLLECTION SHEET FOR FOCUS GROUP

Focus Group:

Data ID:

Key Descriptor:

Date:

Location:

Details:

Thank you sent: \_\_\_\_\_

Final Reflections:

MAIN CODE		NOTES
OV		
OS		
AV		
AS		
AAV		
AAS		
AEC		
AES		
<b>SUB CODES</b>		
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## APPENDIX G: CONSENT FORM SURVEY

### **Opening the Curtain to Collaboration**

Charissa Hurt, Principal Investigator  
University of Oregon Arts and Administration Program

You are invited to take part in a two minute research survey about “what opportunities are there for the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA to collaborate to increase the cultural vitality in the transborder Pacific Northwest?” There are no known risks associated with this survey. Benefits to participation include: an increased dialogue about the artistic climate within and beyond your theatre community, and contributing to a discussion about increased collaboration between two theatre communities to benefit the region as a whole.

Taking part in this survey is completely voluntary. If you choose to be in this study, you can withdraw at any time. Any report of this research that is made available to the public will not include your name or any other individual information by which you could be identified. The survey responses will be downloaded and stored in a password protected folder and will be destroyed upon completion of the study. The final document containing the results of this study will be made accessible through [scholarsbank@uoregon.edu](mailto:scholarsbank@uoregon.edu). If you have any questions or want a copy of this study’s results, you can contact the principal investigator at [churt@uoregon.edu](mailto:churt@uoregon.edu) or at (541) 954-5747. You may also contact the faculty advisor, Patricia Lambert at [pdewey@uoregon.edu](mailto:pdewey@uoregon.edu).

Any questions regarding your rights as a research subject should be directed to: Research Compliance Services, University of Oregon at (541) 346-2510 or [ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu](mailto:ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu).

By clicking <NEXT/CONTINUE> indicates that you are between the ages of 20-75 and are currently working as a theatre artist or administrator at a theatre company in either Vancouver, BC or Seattle, WA, or, have worked in such a position in either of these cities in the previous year.

<EMBED SURVEY QUESTIONS HERE>

## APPENDIX H: VERBAL CONSENT FORM CASE STUDY INTERVIEWS

Research Protocol Number: 11282016.028

### **Opening the Curtain to Collaboration**

Charissa Hurt, Principal Investigator

University of Oregon Arts and Administration Program

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Opening the Curtain to Collaboration* conducted by Charissa Hurt from the University of Oregon's Arts and Administration Program. The purpose of this study is to explore what opportunities there are for the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA to collaborate to increase the cultural vitality of the transborder Pacific Northwest.

You were selected to participate in this study because of your leadership with <NAME OF RELEVANT CASE STUDY>. If you decide to participate in this research project, you will be asked to participate in an hour long interview in February 2017 and to provide relevant organizational materials pertaining to <NAME OF CASE STUDY>. If you wish, interview questions will be provided beforehand for your consideration. Interviews can take place via skype, phone, or email and will be scheduled at your convenience. With your permission, I will take typed notes which will be stored in a password protected folder and deleted upon the completion of this study and may ask you to provide follow up information through phone calls or email.

There are an equal amount of risks and benefits associated with this study. While participating in this interview, you will be asked to share your personal experiences related to the production of a show. The risks associated with the study are minimal, and include potential loss of time from work and, in some cases, the recounting of a story wherein you had a difficult encounter with another person or organization. You need not, however, share any information that makes you feel uncomfortable and the principal investigator will work to schedule an interview during a time that is most convenient for you. Conversely, while the benefits to participation are indirect, they include providing a long term benefit to the two theatre communities and the participation in a larger creative discussion that enhances the creative energy of each of the theatre communities.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will be carefully and securely maintained. All electronic information will be secured using a password protected file and access to the records will be limited to the researchers; however, please note that regulatory agencies, and the Institutional Review Board and internal University of Oregon auditors may review the research records. The final document containing the results of this study will be made accessible through [scholarsbank@uoregon.edu](mailto:scholarsbank@uoregon.edu). Your consent to participate in this interview, as indicated below, demonstrates your willingness to either have your name used in any resulting documents and publications and to relinquish your confidentiality, or, to be identified in any resulting documents and publications through a pseudonym. You may specify your preference at the end of the consent form. It may be advisable to obtain permission to participate in this interview to avoid potential social or economic risks related to

speaking as a representative of your institution. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to not participate, you are free to withdraw your consent at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (541) 954-5747 or at [churt@uoregon.edu](mailto:churt@uoregon.edu). You may also contact the faculty advisor, Patricia Lambert at [pdewey@uoregon.edu](mailto:pdewey@uoregon.edu). Any questions regarding your rights as a research subject should be directed to: Research Compliance Services, University of Oregon at (541) 346-2510 or [ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu](mailto:ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu).

<PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR TO GO OVER EACH OF THE FOLLOWING WITH THE PARTICIPANT>

I consent to the identification of my organization as a participant in this study.

I consent to my identification as a participant in this study.

OR

I consent to the use of a pseudonym to maintain my confidentiality, and to have my statements identified through this study.

I consent to the potential use of quotations from the interview.

I consent to the use of information I provide regarding the organization with which I am associated.

I consent to the principal investigator taken handwritten notes throughout the duration of the interview. These notes will be destroyed upon the completion of the study.

I consent to providing relevant organizational materials (scripts, budgets, etc.) pertaining to the artistic collaboration to the principal investigator. These materials will be stored in a password protected folder and destroyed upon the completion of the study.

I wish to have the opportunity to review / revise my comments and the information that I provide prior to these data appearing in the final version of any publications that may result from this study.

Your signature indicates that you have read the contents of this consent form, that you understand the information provided above, and that you willingly agree to participate. By signing below, you indicate that you understand that your participation is voluntary and that you can withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. You have been given a copy of this letter to keep.

<PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR ASKS PARTICIPANT IF THEY HAVE QUESTIONS  
AND RESPONDS TO QUESTIONS>

Do you consent to participate in this study?

<IF YES, PROCEED WITH THE INTERVIEW>

## APPENDIX I: VERBAL CONSENT FORM ACTORS' EQUITY INTERVIEWS

Research Protocol Number: 11282016.028

### **Opening the Curtain to Collaboration**

Charissa Hurt, Principal Investigator  
University of Oregon Arts and Administration Program

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Opening the Curtain to Collaboration* conducted by Charissa Hurt from the University of Oregon's Arts and Administration Program. The purpose of this study is to explore what opportunities there are for the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA to collaborate to increase the cultural vitality of the transborder Pacific Northwest.

You were selected to participate in this study because of your leadership with <CANADIAN ACTORS EQUITY ASSOCIATION / ACTORS EQUITY>. If you decide to participate in this research project, you will be asked to participate in an hour long interview in February 2017. If you wish, interview questions will be provided beforehand for your consideration. Interviews can take place via skype, phone, or email and will be scheduled at your convenience. With your permission, typed notes which will be stored in a password protected folder and deleted upon the completion of this study and may ask you to provide follow up information through phone calls or email.

There are an equal amount of risks and benefits associated with this study. While participating in this interview, you will be asked to share information pertaining to the visa application process for theatre artists from the United States and Canada who seek to enter Canada or the United States. The risks associated with this are relatively minimal and include a loss of time from work, and the potential for discomfort associated with the recounting of a conversation with an immigration officer. The principle investigator, however, will work to mitigate these potential risks. Conversely, while the benefits to participation are indirect, they include providing a long term benefit to the two theatre communities and the participation in a larger creative discussion that enhances the creative energy of each of the theatre communities.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will be carefully and securely maintained. All electronic information will be secured using a password protected file and access to the records will be limited to the researchers; however, please note that regulatory agencies, and the Institutional Review Board and internal University of Oregon auditors may review the research records. The final document containing the results of this study will be made accessible through [scholarsbank@uoregon.edu](mailto:scholarsbank@uoregon.edu). Your consent to participate in this interview, as indicated below, demonstrates your willingness to have your organization referenced in any resulting documents and publications and to relinquish your confidentiality. It may be advisable to obtain permission to participate in this interview to avoid potential social or economic risks related to speaking as a representative of your institution. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to not participate, you are free to withdraw your consent at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (541) 954-5747 or at [churt@uoregon.edu](mailto:churt@uoregon.edu). Any questions regarding your rights as a research subject should be directed to: Research Compliance Services, University of Oregon at (541) 346-2510 or [ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu](mailto:ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu).

<PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR TO GO OVER EACH OF THE FOLLOWING WITH THE PARTICIPANT>

\_\_\_ I consent to the identification of my organization as a participant in this study.

\_\_\_ I consent to my identification as a participant in this study.

OR

\_\_\_ I consent to the use of a pseudonym to maintain my confidentiality, and to have my statements identified through this study.

\_\_\_ I consent to the potential use of quotations from the interview.

\_\_\_ I consent to the principal investigator taken handwritten notes throughout the duration of the interview. These notes will be destroyed upon the completion of the study.

\_\_\_ I consent to the use of information I provide regarding the organization with which I am associated.

\_\_\_ I wish to have the opportunity to review / revise my comments and the information that I provide prior to these data appearing in the final version of any publications that may result from this study.

Your signature indicates that you have read the contents of this consent form, that you understand the information provided above, and that you willingly agree to participate. By signing below, you indicate that you understand that your participation is voluntary and that you can withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. You have been given a copy of this letter to keep.

<PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR ASKS PARTICIPANT IF THEY HAVE QUESTIONS AND RESPONDS TO QUESTIONS>

Do you consent to participate in this study?

<IF YES, PROCEED WITH THE INTERVIEW>

## APPENDIX J: CONSENT FORM FOCUS GROUP

Research Protocol Number: 11282016.028

### **Opening the Curtain to Collaboration**

Charissa Hurt, Principal Investigator

University of Oregon Arts and Administration Program

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Opening the Curtain to Collaboration* conducted by Charissa Hurt from the University of Oregon's Arts and Administration Program. The purpose of this study is to explore what opportunities there are for the theatre communities of Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA to collaborate to increase the cultural vitality of the transborder Pacific Northwest.

You were selected to participate in this study because you expressed interest in participating in this focus group. By doing so, you indicated that you were between the ages of 20-75 and are currently working as theatre artist or administrator at a theatre company in either Vancouver, BC or Seattle, WA, or, have worked in such a position in either of these cities in the previous year. If you decide to participate in this research project, you will be asked to participate in a 90 minute focus group in March 2017. The focus group will take place in person and will be scheduled at the convenience of the group. With the permission of the group, I will record the focus group using an audio recording device.

The ratio of risks and benefits associated with this study are relatively equal. While participating in this focus group, you will be asked to provide details about your own experiences in your theatre community, and your general opinions towards collaboration with outside theatre communities. You will be asked to help brainstorm potential models of collaboration. The risks associated with these activities are fairly minimal and are limited to: uncomfortable personal experience, the recounting of a story wherein you had a difficult encounter with another person or organization, the sharing of personal stories about another company, and disagreeing with another group member. You need not, however, share any information that makes you feel uncomfortable. The benefits of participation are networking amongst theatre professionals, and engaging in a professional dialogue surrounding the issues that each of the theatre communities face and how collaboration can benefit the communities. Ultimately, engaging in a discussion that enhances the creative energy of each of the communities.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in this study. The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be kept in a locked file. All electronic information will be secured using a password protected file and access to the records will be limited to the researchers; however, please note that regulatory agencies, and the Institutional Review Board and internal University of Oregon auditors may review the research records. The focus group will be recorded using an audio only audio tape, which will be downloaded to a password protected folder on a password protected computer immediately upon the completion of this focus group which only the principal investigator will have access to; the audio recording device then will be wiped of all



data. The audio files will be destroyed from the password protected folder upon the completion of this terminal research project in June 2016. The final document containing the results of this study will be made accessible through [scholarsbank@uoregon.edu](mailto:scholarsbank@uoregon.edu). Your consent to participate in this focus group, as indicated below, demonstrates your willingness to be identified through a pseudonym and to be identified as a participant in <NAME OF FOCUS GROUP> through the given pseudonym. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose to not participate, you are free to withdraw your consent at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (541) 954-5747 or at [churt@uoregon.edu](mailto:churt@uoregon.edu). Any questions regarding your rights as a research subject should be directed to: Research Compliance Services, University of Oregon at (541) 346-2510 or [ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu](mailto:ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu).

Please read and initial each of the following statements to indicate your consent:

\_\_\_\_ I consent to the use of a pseudonym to maintain my confidentiality, and to have my statements identified through this study.

\_\_\_\_ I consent to the potential use of quotations from the interview.

Your signature indicates that you have read the contents of this consent form, that you understand the information provided above, and that you willingly agree to participate. By signing below, you indicate that you understand that your participation is voluntary and that you can withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. You have been given a copy of this letter to keep.

I give my consent to participate in this study.

---

Participant (Print Name)

---

Participant Signature

Date

Thank-you for your interest and participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Charissa Hurt.  
[churt@uoregon.edu](mailto:churt@uoregon.edu)  
(541) 954-5747

## APPENDIX K: SURVEY QUESTIONS

### SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

What city do you work in?

Vancouver, BC

Seattle, WA

Do you identify as (check all that may apply):

Director

Playwright

Actor

Scenic Designer

Lighting Designer

Sound Designer

Production Manager

Technical Director

Props Master

Costume Designer

Technical Director

Choreographer

Makeup designer

Stage Manager

Master Carpenter

Electrician

Front of House Manager

Stage Crew

Scenic Artist

Usher

House Manager

Arts Administrator

Other (please specify)

How long have you been working in the theatre?

<1 year

1-5 years

5-10 years

10-20 years

20 + years

What are your impressions of your local theatre community? (select all that apply)

Collaborative

Engaging

Diverse

Struggling

Dysfunctional

Fluid

Independent

Elitist

Participatory

Dynamic

Youthful

Stagnant

Have you ever worked on a collaborative theatre (the creation/ curation of a production or performance) project with another company in your local area?

Y  
N

If yes

What was the most valuable experience that came out of the collaboration?

Response prompts:

It promoted greater artistic dialogue  
We learned new techniques  
We were challenged to grow artistically  
Other

If no,

Have you ever been provided an opportunity to collaborate with another theatre company in your area?

Yes  
No

If Yes

What barriers were there that didn't allow the collaboration to occur?

Response prompts:

Financial  
Couldn't come to an agreement  
There was no benefit to our organization  
Our season was already to full  
Other, please specify

In what ways do you think your local theatre community could grow in the next 5-10 years?

Prompts: Increased collaboration, new play development, more support for emerging artists, increased public support, greater diversity, other, please specify

Have you ever attended a theatre production in Seattle/Vancouver?

Y  
N

Do you know a theatre artist working in Seattle/Vancouver?

Y  
N

## APPENDIX L: SEMI-STRUCTURED CASE STUDY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### **Organization History and Purpose**

- Describe to me the history of the organization
- What is the main purpose of the organization? Has that changed over time?

### **Artist Contracting/Auditions**

- How do you usually find artists and designers and other backstage artists? (stage manager, director, etc.)

### **Regional Artist Scene**

- How would you describe the theatre community in (Vancouver/Seattle?)
- What is its main strength?
- What is its main weakness?
- Where do you see the community going?

### **Outside the Theatre Community**

- Have you ever seen a play in Vancouver/Seattle?
- What was your impression? – the experience

### **Collaboration**

- Tell me about when you collaborated with x in Vancouver/Seattle?
- Who initiated it?
- What challenges did you face?
- How did you navigate Actors Equity and Visas?
- Was it an artistically enriching experience?
- Do you think these communities could benefit from increased collaboration?

## APPENDIX M: SEMI-STRUCTURED ACTOR'S EQUITY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Does Actors Equity / Canadian Actors Equity Association work with the Canadian Actors Equity Association / Actors Equity often? If so, in what capacity?
- What type of Visas do Canadian / American actors working in Canada / the States typically require?
- In what cases do Canadian / American actors require visas to work in America / Canada?
- What type of Visa classification do you think this type of collaboration would fall under? Does it meet the requirements for a reciprocal exchange program?
- Tell me about the process of applying for and acquiring visas.
- How long does it normally take?
- How does Actor's Equity represent actors and artists in the visa application process?
- How many theatre artists do you typically see working in the States / Canada?
- Do you think that there is a benefit to increased collaboration in the theatrical arts between cities like Seattle and Vancouver?
- What challenges do you see with increased collaboration between theatre artists in Vancouver and Seattle?

## APPENDIX N: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

*What are the current levels of collaboration between the two theatre communities?*

- What do you perceive/ what is your experience in collaborating with the theatre community of <INSERT NAME OF VANCOUVER OR SEATTLE>

*What barriers are there to collaboration?*

- When thinking about collaborating with <SEATTLE OR VANCOUVER> what are some perceived or real (from your own experience) barriers to collaboration?
  - What would inhibit collaboration?
  - Are these barriers insurmountable?
  - How could these barriers be overcome?

*What is the significance of encouraging artistic collaboration?*

- How have you or your organization benefited from an artistic collaboration in the past?
- Do you think theatre communities should work more to engage with each other?

*What can be done to further collaboration?*

- What are some tangible ways that you think these two theatre communities could collaborate with each other?

## **APPENDIX O: PROPOSED RESEARCH TIMELINE**

### **January 9**

Disseminate Survey through all channels (social media, email, arts alliances)

### **January 10-20**

Contact Case Study Sites

Contact Actor's Equity Offices

### **January 20-31**

Schedule Interviews for Case Studies and Actor's Equity

Reminders about survey go out

### **February**

Case Study Interviews

Actor's Equity Interviews

### **February 6**

Reminders about surveys

### **February 17 – SURVEY CLOSES**

### **February 13**

Recruit for focus group

Book space

### **March 6**

Send out poll for times/dates for focus group

### **March/EARLY April**

Focus groups held

### **April-June**

Analyze and finalize research