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00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:08.519

<v Richard Rowberry> and and we're no longer able to get any kind of funding from Canada Council. I went

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00:00:08.519 --> 00:00:20.420

to EDAM and here was this modern dance company with a core audience of about

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00:00:20.420 --> 00:00:25.679

seven or eight hundred people, lo and behold.

<v James Hoffman> The same thing. And yeah,

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00:00:25.679 --> 00:00:32.060

<v Richard Rowberry> absolutely the same thing with funding of a hundred and twenty five thousand a

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00:00:32.060 --> 00:00:40.840

year core operating.

<v James Hoffman> Oh gosh, lovely. Yeah, yeah.

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah, and I went in there and I got a

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00:00:40.840 --> 00:00:45.079

<v Richard Rowberry> couple of other grants

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00:00:48.079 --> 00:00:55.079

almost immediately too. I was really good at grant writing. Okay. It's my talent for fiction. It helps.

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00:00:55.079 --> 00:01:01.079

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah. And I could I could bullshit dance.

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00:01:01.079 --> 00:01:07.040

I mean what do you write about modern dance, or the point of modern dance?

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00:01:07.040 --> 00:01:13.719

What is the dance choreographer trying to convey? I was

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00:01:13.719 --> 00:01:19.599

really good at bullshitting that.

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00:01:19.599 --> 00:01:25.000

<v James Hoffman> Yeah yeah yeah. Anyway, could we move on to the food show? Just a few words. Yes, yes. Now after

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00:01:25.000 --> 00:01:29.439

three penny and under milkwood we're

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00:01:29.439 --> 00:01:32.480

<v James Hoffman> back to an original creative effort by

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00:01:32.480 --> 00:01:36.400

the so-called collective.

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00:01:36.400 --> 00:01:39.239

<v Richard Rowberry> Yes, yeah and the reason of course for that was that

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00:01:39.239 --> 00:01:41.319

Canada Council cracked the whip.

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00:01:41.319 --> 00:01:43.200

<v James Hoffman> Yeah, they wanted that kind of thing that's

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00:01:43.200 --> 00:01:48.319

<v Richard Rowberry> what you're all about. They said if we're going to fund you, this is your mandate,

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00:01:48.319 --> 00:01:53.920

we're going to fund you for this. To hell with the fact that that's not what

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00:01:53.920 --> 00:02:01.120

people wanted. To hell with the people.

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00:02:01.120 --> 00:02:07.420

<v James Hoffman> Once again Blake Parker contributed I think. Remember that? Did he? Yeah well we were all

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00:02:07.420 --> 00:02:11.900

<v Richard Rowberry> supposed to yeah he probably did we were all supposed to come up with sketches.

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00:02:11.900 --> 00:02:18.300

<v James Hoffman> And you had you had in Larry Lillo you had pretty strong director I mean he he

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00:02:18.300 --> 00:02:31.520

<v James Hoffman> became eventually Playhouse Theatre director artistic, but he had, of course, he was a Tamilnuse. He hated, he what? Yeah, he hated, I think he must have hated what he was doing.

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00:02:31.520 --> 00:02:36.939

<v Richard Rowberry> We were terrible. It was the worst piece of shit ever produced by any

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00:02:36.939 --> 00:02:52.000

theater company in the Kootenays. You're talking about the food show. Yeah, it was terrible. It was really, really bad. No less a person than my wife's best friend Eleanor Wachtel,

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00:02:52.000 --> 00:03:00.000

was sitting in the audience one night and looked at my wife and said, it's a piece of shit.

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00:03:00.000 --> 00:03:10.000

<v James Hoffman> So there you have it from the horse's mouth. Now did Larry Lillow contribute strongly to the show?

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00:03:10.000 --> 00:03:15.000

<v Richard Rowberry> No, I think mostly he tore his hair.

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00:03:15.000 --> 00:03:21.000

<v James Hoffman> Nobody was on task in this.

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00:03:21.000 --> 00:03:26.240

<v Richard Rowberry> There was nothing good to be said about it. It was just a

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00:03:26.240 --> 00:03:32.900

<v James Hoffman> bunch of meaningless skits. Yeah, yeah. And it had no point. Yeah, yeah. It didn't have an

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00:03:32.900 --> 00:03:38.199

<v Richard Rowberry> issue. Yeah, yeah. It was, we were just looking for, looking for comedy sketches.

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00:03:38.199 --> 00:03:48.599

It might have passed, you know, a collection of the 20 worth skits. That's about where it was. And here's a

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00:03:48.599 --> 00:03:55.360

<v James Hoffman> here's a well-known Vancouver director. Yeah. Part of the part of the great

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00:03:55.360 --> 00:03:59.879

collective of Tamanous theater you know it sounds like he would have been great.

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00:03:59.879 --> 00:04:06.199

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah. But I guess he had good material to work with. He had no material to work with.

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00:04:06.199 --> 00:04:07.199

Yeah, yeah.

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00:04:07.199 --> 00:04:10.199

Nobody would...

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00:04:10.199 --> 00:04:17.199

<v James Hoffman> I don't know if anybody else has thought that it was good, but it was.

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00:04:17.199 --> 00:04:20.199

Don't let him tell you why, because it wasn't.

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00:04:20.199 --> 00:04:23.199

<v Richard Rowberry> Now the next project seemed to work well.

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00:04:23.199 --> 00:04:29.000

That's Project Immigration, which I think you were involved in that too.

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00:04:29.000 --> 00:04:41.000

Who got the idea of doing that? Because after all, it's an interesting choice because it wasn't a collective creation of theater energy,

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00:04:41.000 --> 00:04:46.220

it was a borrowed collective creation from Catalyst in Edmonton.

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00:04:46.220 --> 00:04:49.319

And in fact, Jan Selman, the director of Catalyst,

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00:04:49.319 --> 00:04:51.360

came out and directed the first version, right,

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00:04:51.360 --> 00:04:52.759

for Theater Energy.

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00:04:52.759 --> 00:04:53.600

Who, who?

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00:04:53.600 --> 00:04:54.439

That's right, and she was,

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00:04:54.439 --> 00:04:56.680

you know, sometime in there, by the way.

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00:04:59.319 --> 00:05:01.639

Well, maybe it was later, maybe it was later.

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00:05:01.639 --> 00:05:05.600

Keith, theater sports guy from Johnson

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00:05:05.600 --> 00:05:11.920

<v James Hoffman> Johnston Keith Johnson yeah do you do have him in the mix there

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00:05:11.920 --> 00:05:17.360

<v Richard Rowberry> no not really uh he did he came out and worked with us at some point and we did

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00:05:17.360 --> 00:05:21.439

<v James Hoffman> oh i think i think that yes actually maybe that was later yeah i knew that

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00:05:21.439 --> 00:05:24.319

<v Richard Rowberry> that's later yeah when the company was really desperate

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00:05:24.319 --> 00:05:26.480

<v James Hoffman> they're into serious fundraising, like

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00:05:26.600 --> 00:05:29.519

<v Richard Rowberry> desperate for it, one of their answers

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00:05:29.639 --> 00:05:31.879

to raise funds was have theater sports

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00:05:31.879 --> 00:05:33.839

nights and of course that's Keith

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00:05:33.839 --> 00:05:34.680

Keith Johnston.

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00:05:35.759 --> 00:05:36.079

Yeah.

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00:05:36.920 --> 00:05:38.920
<v James Hoffman> I've spent, I spent a week, I spent a

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00:05:38.920 --> 00:05:43.040
week, day, day long week with, um, days

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00:05:43.040 --> 00:05:46.000
long week working with him in Vancouver once.

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00:05:46.000 --> 00:05:53.000
Really really good guy at improv my goodness great Mr. Improv. Yeah I

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00:05:53.000 --> 00:06:01.480
<v Richard Rowberry> semi-seriously injured myself being a being a fish. You would do that yeah? Yeah

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00:06:01.480 --> 00:06:06.839
<v James Hoffman> you throw yourself up in the air and start slipping and then land on the stage, bam,

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00:06:06.839 --> 00:06:08.399
<v Richard Rowberry> you know, on your head.

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00:06:08.399 --> 00:06:09.240
<v James Hoffman> I wouldn't do that.

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00:06:09.240 --> 00:06:10.879
<v Richard Rowberry> No, I did.

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00:06:10.879 --> 00:06:12.680
Without a mat anyway.

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00:06:12.680 --> 00:06:15.680
I got a good laugh, that's all that counts.

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00:06:15.680 --> 00:06:16.920
Yeah, yeah.

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00:06:16.920 --> 00:06:20.720
Well, project immaturation seemed to work well

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00:06:20.720 --> 00:06:23.699
with only two of the original theater energy people

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00:06:23.699 --> 00:06:27.519
remaining, many having burnout.

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00:06:27.519 --> 00:06:29.519
BC Cultural Pharmacy.

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00:06:29.519 --> 00:06:31.519
Well, Judith was in it.

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00:06:31.519 --> 00:06:35.519
I think Kathy was there.

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00:06:35.519 --> 00:06:39.519
<v James Hoffman> It must have been Judy and Kathy.

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00:06:39.519 --> 00:06:43.519
<v Richard Rowberry> Or maybe Hank? Was Hank in it?

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00:06:43.519 --> 00:06:49.439
<v James Hoffman> I don't have it on this list, but I've got other lists that tell me who was in the show.

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00:06:49.439 --> 00:06:57.680
<v Richard Rowberry> Ruby was. We had to have Ruby because we had to have someone of diverse ethnic...

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00:06:58.800 --> 00:07:01.279
I played a Rhodesian racist.

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00:07:01.279 --> 00:07:02.240
<v James Hoffman> Yes, I gather.

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00:07:09.060 --> 00:07:13.220
<v Richard Rowberry> Anyway, it worked well. I know for three years it got revived and revived and I think it did very very well because in a

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00:07:13.220 --> 00:07:16.500
way you had a captive audience because you went to schools, right? Schools

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00:07:16.500 --> 00:07:26.079

contracted to pay you. Yeah, they paid us and we got funding to develop it. We got a good chunk of funding to develop it.

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00:07:26.079 --> 00:07:28.639

<v James Hoffman> And yeah, yeah.

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00:07:28.639 --> 00:07:34.079

And, and out of that, we also did another, uh, school show.

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00:07:35.279 --> 00:07:40.480

<v Richard Rowberry> Um, I think you were lucky to have Jan Selman come and direct you too and her show.

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00:07:41.040 --> 00:07:41.680

<v James Hoffman> Yeah.

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00:07:41.680 --> 00:07:42.959

<v Richard Rowberry> Did that work out well with her?

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00:07:42.959 --> 00:07:43.519

Yeah.

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00:07:43.519 --> 00:07:44.019

Yeah.

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00:07:47.040 --> 00:07:54.959

Yes. Yeah, that was good. Yeah, she was, she was good and, and we were all behind it and we had fun doing it and yeah, yeah,

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00:07:54.959 --> 00:08:00.000

<v James Hoffman> it was a good show. We must have done, yeah, I don't know how many, but we went as far afield as

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00:08:02.160 --> 00:08:05.000

<v Richard Rowberry> Midway. Oh yeah, yeah.

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00:08:05.000 --> 00:08:06.000

<v James Hoffman> That's getting away.

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00:08:06.000 --> 00:08:07.000

<v Richard Rowberry> And Grand Forks,

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00:08:07.000 --> 00:08:09.000

<v James Hoffman> into the East Kootenay,

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00:08:09.000 --> 00:08:12.000

and probably Golden,

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00:08:12.000 --> 00:08:14.000

<v Richard Rowberry> all over the place.

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00:08:14.000 --> 00:08:15.000

<v James Hoffman> Well, at that time,

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00:08:15.000 --> 00:08:17.000

Theatre Energy was doing well

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00:08:17.000 --> 00:08:18.000

with that one play,

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00:08:18.000 --> 00:08:20.000

but also in a state of panic

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00:08:20.000 --> 00:08:21.000

and rebuilding,

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00:08:21.000 --> 00:08:24.000

as they often were.

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00:08:24.000 --> 00:08:27.779

In fact, they appointed Meredith as AD,

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00:08:28.000 --> 00:08:30.240

artistic director in 83.

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00:08:31.740 --> 00:08:35.679

To what extent was that a new thing for Theater Energy

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00:08:35.679 --> 00:08:39.200

to have an artistic director, an official, you're AD?

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00:08:40.039 --> 00:08:41.080

Was it helpful?

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00:08:41.080 --> 00:08:42.559

<v Richard Rowberry> I think that was the first.

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00:08:42.559 --> 00:08:43.600

That was the first.

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00:08:43.600 --> 00:08:47.279

I don't know that it was particularly helpful. I don't know. Yeah.

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00:08:47.840 --> 00:08:55.600

<v James Hoffman> She was on, she was halfway out the door by then anyway. Yeah, yeah she was getting gigs.

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00:08:55.600 --> 00:09:02.320

<v Richard Rowberry> She and Brian were heading to Vancouver where she had a pretty good career for a number of years.

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00:09:02.320 --> 00:09:06.000

<v James Hoffman> Bryan Marrion, Bryan Marrion was leaving too?

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00:09:06.000 --> 00:09:14.000

<v Richard Rowberry> You said she and Brian? No, no, no, she and Brian. She and her husband.

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00:09:14.000 --> 00:09:19.679

<v James Hoffman> Ron, I think. Ron Woodward. Yeah, that's right, yeah, yeah, that's right. They went to

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00:09:19.679 --> 00:09:25.039

<v Richard Rowberry> Vancouver and she did, she became an equity actor down there and did pretty well yeah yeah

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00:09:25.039 --> 00:09:31.159

<v James Hoffman> yeah work for the Arts Club yeah do you think Jan Selman was good in

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00:09:31.159 --> 00:09:37.080

contributing to theater energies methods of working and rehearsing do you think

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00:09:37.080 --> 00:09:48.559

she changed theater energy for the good in terms of how they worked Yeah I think that's probably a fair, that's probably a fair assessment.

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00:09:48.559 --> 00:09:59.360

<v Richard Rowberry> She, I think she added structure to improv. Okay. Where you know you you

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00:09:59.360 --> 00:10:32.679

<v James Hoffman> would improv something and it wouldn't just sort of and a path forward to do what, yeah, shaping and to get at what we wanted our character to get at.

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00:10:32.679 --> 00:10:42.919

<v Richard Rowberry> Right. Speaking of shaping theater, you, Judith, and Ruby got involved pretty soon in something

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00:10:42.919 --> 00:10:52.379

<v James Hoffman> called Creating Your Own Theater, a lecture demonstration for high school kids I think. Creating your

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00:10:52.379 --> 00:10:58.899

<v Richard Rowberry> own theater. You went to high school, the three of you, and gave demo lectures.

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00:10:58.899 --> 00:11:07.200

<v James Hoffman> A combination of lecture, demo, and getting the kids to participate, obviously. Now, can you tell me, you remember that, do you?

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00:11:07.200 --> 00:11:14.639

<v Richard Rowberry> Now that you mention it.

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00:11:14.639 --> 00:11:16.720

I guess we did it a few times.

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00:11:16.720 --> 00:11:23.039

I think the piece de resistance of it was always when we did Three Fingers Frank.

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00:11:23.039 --> 00:11:24.759

<v James Hoffman> Oh yeah, yeah.

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00:11:24.759 --> 00:11:27.919

But I guess really really going to schools again

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00:11:27.919 --> 00:11:31.240

was almost a guaranteed moneymaker

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00:11:31.240 --> 00:11:33.559

because it was like a contract, you know,

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00:11:33.559 --> 00:11:36.799

schools had to buy in and agree to pay you so much.

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00:11:36.799 --> 00:11:37.759

And there you go, you know.

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00:11:37.759 --> 00:11:38.580

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah.

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00:11:38.580 --> 00:11:39.419

What was the goal?

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00:11:39.419 --> 00:11:41.799

Yeah, and in those days there was some funding,

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00:11:41.799 --> 00:11:43.519

schools had funding in those days.

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00:11:43.519 --> 00:11:44.799

<v James Hoffman> That's right, yeah.

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00:11:44.799 --> 00:11:45.600

<v Richard Rowberry> That dried up.

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00:11:45.600 --> 00:11:49.519

<v James Hoffman> When you guys did the workshop, I just have one

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00:11:49.519 --> 00:11:56.720

question, what was the goal of the workshop? I mean, far from us getting some money.

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00:11:56.720 --> 00:12:01.879

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah, well I mean did you give the workshop with the idea that the students,

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00:12:01.879 --> 00:12:06.639

<v James Hoffman> just a one, what, two hour session or something, right? Was the workshop with the idea that the students just a one what two-hour session or something

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00:12:06.639 --> 00:12:12.559

right uh was the goal that the students would then be equipped to go out and create their own work

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00:12:13.120 --> 00:12:25.519

<v Richard Rowberry> some sort or or just generally learn uh i don't i i think it was just giving them a taste of what

theater could be and yeah yeah and you know

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00:12:25.519 --> 00:12:32.600

<v James Hoffman> encouraging the ones who had an interest in it and some talent that you know to

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00:12:32.600 --> 00:12:40.279

present them with some role models and the show that there was such a thing as

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00:12:40.279 --> 00:12:49.559

<v Richard Rowberry> live theater and how powerful live theater could be. That good. I think that was the goal as much as anything to show them the validity of live

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00:12:49.679 --> 00:12:50.519

<v James Hoffman> theater. Yeah.

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00:12:50.840 --> 00:12:54.919

<v Richard Rowberry> So you could actually just with three people standing up on the stage,

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00:12:55.279 --> 00:13:00.279

you could actually be drawn into a world.

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00:13:02.039 --> 00:13:03.480

Yup. Of course.

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00:13:03.519 --> 00:13:09.120

<v James Hoffman> Which is, yeah, which is pretty, pretty amazing and it's,

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00:13:09.120 --> 00:13:15.000

<v Richard Rowberry> it's what obviously... Did you receive, did you receive good feedback on

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00:13:15.000 --> 00:13:18.720

<v James Hoffman> the workshops, you know, when they were finished? Did you get... Yeah, I think so.

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00:13:18.720 --> 00:13:25.120

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah, I think so. I have, my memory of it is, we didn't do a lot of that. Oh, no.

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00:13:25.120 --> 00:13:25.960

<v James Hoffman> Okay.

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00:13:25.960 --> 00:13:30.960

<v Richard Rowberry> There must have been not a huge number of shows, but.

170
00:13:32.600 --> 00:13:33.600
<v James Hoffman> Right.

171
00:13:33.600 --> 00:13:35.759
I could move on now to the tomorrow box

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00:13:35.759 --> 00:13:37.000
that you were involved in.

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00:13:38.440 --> 00:13:39.279
<v Richard Rowberry> The tomorrow box.

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00:13:39.279 --> 00:13:40.320
<v James Hoffman> What year was that?

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00:13:40.320 --> 00:13:42.600
I've got March 83.

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00:13:43.759 --> 00:13:45.000
That sounds about right, yeah.

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00:13:45.000 --> 00:13:47.000
<v Richard Rowberry> Meredith is A.D.

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00:13:47.000 --> 00:13:50.000
<v James Hoffman> John Cooper from Vancouver comes up and directs.

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00:13:50.000 --> 00:13:53.000
And again...

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00:13:53.000 --> 00:13:56.000
<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah, the guy who referred to the audience as the fans.

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00:13:56.000 --> 00:13:58.000
I love him.

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00:13:58.000 --> 00:14:01.000
<v James Hoffman> And you're seeing now...

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00:14:01.000 --> 00:14:04.000
How is John? Is he still around?

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00:14:04.000 --> 00:14:05.759
I think he is, as far as I know. I

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00:14:05.759 --> 00:14:12.679
haven't heard anything for a long time but I assume. Yeah he had a

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00:14:12.679 --> 00:14:17.879
<v Richard Rowberry> pretty good career as a director. Yeah that's right he did. Yeah now you're

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00:14:17.879 --> 00:14:23.379
<v James Hoffman> getting more again getting more focused on available scripts like Immigration

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00:14:23.379 --> 00:14:26.879
under Milkwits, Three Penny Opera, now the Tomorrow Box,

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00:14:26.879 --> 00:14:30.759
another known published script, and Chislett in Victoria.

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00:14:30.759 --> 00:14:34.399
<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah, but we, you know, I mean, we sort of tried

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00:14:34.399 --> 00:14:39.399
to present it as a regional piece,

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00:14:40.159 --> 00:14:42.919
because it was written in Alberta, I think.

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00:14:42.919 --> 00:14:53.000
<v James Hoffman> And we set it in Creston. That's right, Yeah so a bit of a change there yeah. Yeah yeah and we had a

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00:14:53.000 --> 00:14:58.220
<v Richard Rowberry> good a good tour we had a kind of an interesting set. Howard Barham did the

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00:14:58.220 --> 00:15:07.799
<v James Hoffman> set and the lighting for that. Yeah good good. And it was a trailer kind of set on stage and I have a note

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00:15:07.799 --> 00:15:17.100

<v Richard Rowberry> that around this time you were paid \$210 a week really you were paid at least the

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00:15:17.100 --> 00:15:25.279

<v James Hoffman> others were the others were don't know What? No one told you, eh? Oh dear.

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00:15:25.279 --> 00:15:27.779

<v Richard Rowberry> No, no, that sounds right.

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00:15:27.779 --> 00:15:30.000

<v James Hoffman> Two ten a week sounds about right.

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00:15:30.000 --> 00:15:31.000

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah, yeah.

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00:15:31.000 --> 00:15:39.039

Which, you know, I mean that was kind of the least of it in a way because then you could

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00:15:39.039 --> 00:15:43.519

parlay that into EI for the rest of the year.

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00:15:43.519 --> 00:15:45.460

Yeah, yeah. So certainly the

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00:15:45.460 --> 00:15:54.120

<v James Hoffman> collective now is not working at creating a play. No. And you know

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00:15:54.120 --> 00:15:58.139

<v Richard Rowberry> you're doing scripts you know like a more old-fashioned or conventional

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00:15:58.139 --> 00:16:03.100

<v James Hoffman> theatre group but I think, I think. Yeah and that's what we had become. Yeah I

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00:16:03.100 --> 00:16:06.480

<v Richard Rowberry> think Tomorrow Box did well.

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00:16:06.480 --> 00:16:11.919

<v James Hoffman> As far as I can see it had a good reception, good reviews, and do you feel it was a good production?

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00:16:11.919 --> 00:16:26.000

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah, it was. My abiding memory of that was we were driving to do a show in Salmon Arm and

we'd gotten off the Galena Ferry

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00:16:27.759 --> 00:16:36.960

and we're zooming along the highway up towards Revelstoke when the van hit a patch of ice and

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00:16:37.919 --> 00:16:45.559

flipped and ended up in the ditch on its side.

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00:16:47.320 --> 00:16:49.200

And guess who was the only idiot not wearing a seatbelt at the time?

213

00:16:50.240 --> 00:16:51.080

Richard.

214

00:16:51.080 --> 00:16:51.919

<v James Hoffman> That was me.

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00:16:51.919 --> 00:16:52.740

<v Richard Rowberry> Richard, somebody.

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00:16:52.740 --> 00:16:53.580

Richard the idiot.

217

00:16:53.580 --> 00:16:54.419

Yeah.

218

00:16:54.419 --> 00:16:55.240

Yeah.

219

00:16:55.240 --> 00:16:59.360

And I ended up with my forehead being ground

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00:16:59.360 --> 00:17:08.000

into shattered glass at the bottom of the van.

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00:17:08.000 --> 00:17:12.000

<v James Hoffman> So I had a, it was superficial but it was definitely,

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00:17:12.000 --> 00:17:19.000

<v Richard Rowberry> we had to go to the hospital and be bandaged up.

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00:17:19.000 --> 00:17:27.839

And the show went on that night, we had to write a line in saying Joe what happened

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00:17:27.839 --> 00:17:34.279

and I would explain how I oh yeah I had this accident didn't try to didn't try

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00:17:34.279 --> 00:17:39.119

<v James Hoffman> to hide it yeah oh you couldn't hide it it's huge bandage on my forehead yeah

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00:17:39.119 --> 00:17:45.000

<v Richard Rowberry> yeah and the the funny part was act Two is one year later.

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00:17:49.079 --> 00:17:52.700

<v James Hoffman> And Joe, did you do it again?

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00:17:52.700 --> 00:17:57.700

<v Richard Rowberry> The audience of course got the joke,

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00:17:57.759 --> 00:18:01.240

because there was no way relevant

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00:18:01.240 --> 00:18:02.559

to the action of the play.

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00:18:02.559 --> 00:18:03.400

<v James Hoffman> Right, right.

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00:18:04.279 --> 00:18:12.779

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah, it was of the play. Right, right. Now, I have to note here that the 82-83 season, which

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00:18:12.779 --> 00:18:29.200

<v James Hoffman> included Tomorrow Box, ended with a deficit of \$6,000 and a feeling that the collective approach to the administration and decision making had outlived its usefulness.

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00:18:29.200 --> 00:18:32.119

<v Richard Rowberry> I'm quoting here a season report from Theater Energy.

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00:18:33.119 --> 00:18:36.819

<v James Hoffman> The deficit of \$6,000 and the feeling

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00:18:36.819 --> 00:18:38.819

<v Richard Rowberry> that the collective approach to administration

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00:18:38.819 --> 00:18:43.200

and decision making had outlived its usefulness, unquote.

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00:18:49.000 --> 00:18:51.500

I'm not even sure, what is the deficit of \$6,000 mean? I mean, we owed \$6,000?

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00:18:51.500 --> 00:18:53.000

Is that what it means?

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00:18:53.000 --> 00:18:55.000

<v James Hoffman> Yeah, it means you're in debt.

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00:18:55.000 --> 00:18:58.000

<v Richard Rowberry> Well who did we owe it to?

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00:18:58.000 --> 00:19:02.000

<v James Hoffman> Oh God, well various places I guess, I don't know.

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00:19:02.000 --> 00:19:04.000

I don't either.

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00:19:04.000 --> 00:19:07.440

I'm not sure who we owed it to. Yeah, I'm not

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00:19:07.440 --> 00:19:12.640

sure either. That detail I don't get from the reports, you know, the year-end

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00:19:12.640 --> 00:19:19.160

<v Richard Rowberry> reports from Theatre Energy. Or is it that we were supposed to pay ourselves so much money

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00:19:19.160 --> 00:19:24.119

<v James Hoffman> and we didn't at the end of the day pay ourselves all that much money because

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00:19:24.119 --> 00:19:25.339

we didn't have it.

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00:19:25.339 --> 00:19:31.220

I think that was what it was. I don't think we actually owed anybody

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00:19:31.220 --> 00:19:35.420
anything except of course the actors. Well that was a really good question and

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00:19:35.420 --> 00:19:48.559
<v Richard Rowberry> you may be totally right I'll have to look into that. Yeah, I ended up becoming artistic director for a better word.

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00:19:48.559 --> 00:19:53.480
<v James Hoffman> That's my next comment, my next note. Yeah, 1984 maybe?

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00:19:53.480 --> 00:19:58.960
<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah and I have no memory of actually owing anybody anything.

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00:19:58.960 --> 00:20:00.960
<v James Hoffman> No, no. Well...

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00:20:00.960 --> 00:20:02.960
<v Richard Rowberry> So I think that's what it was.

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00:20:02.960 --> 00:20:08.960
<v James Hoffman> Yep. And the first show, well, 84, so 84 you

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00:20:08.960 --> 00:20:15.180
<v Richard Rowberry> became AD. I've got a note here, the first show of the 83-84 season was

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00:20:15.180 --> 00:20:20.119
<v James Hoffman> Mind Tailings, which is not really a theatre energy show, but I have seen it

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00:20:20.119 --> 00:20:26.440
called a Co-Pro, and I'm not sure about that with it with the summer the summer

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00:20:26.440 --> 00:20:32.000
<v Richard Rowberry> company players yeah we did it hey yeah summer company well but there was a Hank

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00:20:32.000 --> 00:20:38.559
rubber Hank Ruby and Celeste or Celeste Gina yeah they did it up in they did it

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00:20:38.559 --> 00:20:47.440
<v James Hoffman> up in yeah up in Denver that's right. The art gallery there is a so-called summer company

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00:20:47.440 --> 00:20:52.400

<v Richard Rowberry> players. And yeah, I don't think it was a co-pro though with Theater Energy.

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00:20:52.400 --> 00:20:58.400

I don't even think it was real. That was just, that was just words. Yeah. I mean,

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00:20:58.400 --> 00:21:07.140

<v James Hoffman> they were doing their, their own thing. Yeah. Well, they just, it when is boiler room suite oh it's it's

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00:21:07.140 --> 00:21:15.299

<v Richard Rowberry> yeah it's 83 yeah 1983 yeah it comes in a falling I think yeah yeah anyway the

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00:21:15.299 --> 00:21:22.500

<v James Hoffman> summer the summer company thing that was something that they did and I guess they

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00:21:22.500 --> 00:21:28.140

<v Richard Rowberry> called or they it was put put down as theater energy because

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00:21:28.140 --> 00:21:33.799

<v James Hoffman> that was useful for purposes of fundraising to say that we had done that.

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00:21:33.799 --> 00:21:41.779

But you know those three guys wrote it, did it, and it had really nothing to do with anything.

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00:21:41.779 --> 00:21:44.839

<v Richard Rowberry> That's Mind Tailings, right? Yeah, Mind Tailings, yeah.

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00:21:44.839 --> 00:21:49.619

Whereas Boiler Room Suite was a theatre energy show directed by Meredith. It had

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00:21:49.619 --> 00:21:57.480

you, Judith and Duncan Fraser in it. Yeah. A pretty well-known actor in

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00:21:57.480 --> 00:22:02.079

Vancouver. They seemed to get really good reviews and comments. How was your

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00:22:02.079 --> 00:22:09.900

experience working with someone like Duncan, a highly experienced award winning actor or yada yada? How did you?

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00:22:09.900 --> 00:22:16.039

<v James Hoffman> I enjoyed working with him and learning from him and he told me at the end that he thought

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00:22:16.039 --> 00:22:22.759

<v Richard Rowberry> I was a really good actor and I should come to Vancouver. That was nice.

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00:22:22.759 --> 00:22:34.940

<v James Hoffman> So you dropped everything? Yeah right. Actually I did end up going to Vancouver not that long after but not to act.

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00:22:34.940 --> 00:22:40.539

<v Richard Rowberry> Another story yeah. Okay yeah yeah. Well Boiler Room Suite worked well that's good.

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00:22:40.539 --> 00:22:46.160

<v James Hoffman> I wonder... Yeah we played to a big house in Trail at the

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00:22:46.160 --> 00:22:53.519

<v Richard Rowberry> big theater in Trail and other than that I guess we just played it at

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00:22:53.519 --> 00:22:58.119

<v James Hoffman> the Civic. That was our venue in those days. Yeah the Civic

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00:22:58.119 --> 00:23:05.039

<v Richard Rowberry> Theater and that's a big venue you get a lot of people in there. Yeah. Yeah, you could.

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00:23:05.039 --> 00:23:07.119

<v James Hoffman> Yeah.

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00:23:07.119 --> 00:23:09.960

<v Richard Rowberry> I wonder, I had some, just a thought,

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00:23:09.960 --> 00:23:12.359

but I just said, when I think about Weller and Mesuite,

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00:23:12.359 --> 00:23:15.119

what I know of it, and what was going on with Theater Energy

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00:23:15.119 --> 00:23:16.160

at the time, when they were really

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00:23:16.160 --> 00:23:18.920

questioning their existence, and who are we,

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00:23:18.920 --> 00:23:20.119

what are we doing.

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00:23:20.119 --> 00:23:22.799

I wonder, Weller and Mesquite features, what,

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00:23:22.799 --> 00:23:28.000

a fading actor, actress, and kind of a

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00:23:28.000 --> 00:23:31.440

<v James Hoffman> fading poet? And I wonder, you know, what

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00:23:31.440 --> 00:23:34.240

did, I wonder if that was kind of somewhat

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00:23:34.240 --> 00:23:36.559

autobiographical for theater energy, you

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00:23:36.559 --> 00:23:38.720

know, that kind of...

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00:23:38.720 --> 00:23:40.160

It might just might have appealed to

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00:23:40.160 --> 00:23:41.680

them. It might just read something into

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00:23:41.680 --> 00:23:43.599

<v Richard Rowberry> them. On the other hand, it,

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00:23:43.599 --> 00:23:59.400

<v James Hoffman> on the other hand hand it might have been who we had available. I don't even know how Duncan got brought into it.

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00:23:59.400 --> 00:24:07.680

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah, yeah, yeah there he was. I don't even know how that happened. Yep, yep.

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00:24:07.680 --> 00:24:12.839

<v James Hoffman> But yeah, he was a fine fellow. Yep. We had a good time.

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00:24:12.839 --> 00:24:19.720

<v Richard Rowberry> No, no, back to 1983, we're still there. Yeah. I'm interested in this. There was a

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00:24:19.720 --> 00:24:26.880

<v James Hoffman> gala reception at the Lord Nelson Hotel for local people interested in culture in

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00:24:26.880 --> 00:24:31.680

<v Richard Rowberry> Nelson where it was announced it was announced that Theatre Energy along with

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00:24:31.680 --> 00:24:36.359

<v James Hoffman> the Film Society and the Nelson Little Theatre will become resident companies

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00:24:36.359 --> 00:24:41.759

<v Richard Rowberry> at the Capitol Theatre when opened. Of course that never happened but I'd like

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00:24:41.759 --> 00:24:45.400

<v James Hoffman> to know the background to this. Who, did Theatre Energy promote this?

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00:24:45.519 --> 00:24:50.599

Was Theatre Energy invited to this event at the Lord Nelson?

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00:24:50.680 --> 00:24:57.759

<v Richard Rowberry> Yeah, we were invited and that was one of the grand plans that,

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00:24:58.000 --> 00:25:05.000

because at that time the big thing was to try to get heritage funding to revive

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00:25:08.079 --> 00:25:11.079

the Capitol theater and make it into a theater.

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00:25:13.720 --> 00:25:18.720

<v James Hoffman> Of course the problem with that was that it was a movie theater and the funding

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00:25:20.480 --> 00:25:21.920

<v Richard Rowberry> was heritage funding.

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00:25:23.519 --> 00:25:29.240

<v James Hoffman> So you had to reproduce it. Yeah, but you must have...

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00:25:29.240 --> 00:25:34.519

<v Richard Rowberry> Capital theater, instead of being a decent theater, a venue for live theater,

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00:25:34.519 --> 00:25:39.539

<v James Hoffman> has always been just a hallway with a platform at the end. Yeah, now you, but

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00:25:39.539 --> 00:25:44.359

<v Richard Rowberry> however, having said that, you must have thought, and Theater Energy too, you must

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00:25:44.359 --> 00:25:49.160

<v James Hoffman> have thought at one time it was a good idea because I gather you spoke up at that

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00:25:49.160 --> 00:25:53.680

meeting for theater energy and promoted the idea of being a resident company

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00:25:53.680 --> 00:26:00.599

<v Richard Rowberry> there. Yeah actually absolutely and I worked on that I worked on that idea of

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00:26:00.599 --> 00:26:09.559

trying to do you know summer theater or resident company for a number of

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00:26:09.559 --> 00:26:15.880

years there. Nobody ever listened to me or any of us who were knowledgeable

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00:26:15.880 --> 00:26:22.319

about theater about redesigning the space. Yeah. So we were always stuck with

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00:26:22.319 --> 00:26:26.240

<v James Hoffman> those golden arches. Yeah, yeah. And this

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00:26:26.240 --> 00:26:34.539

<v Richard Rowberry> flat proscenium stage with no truss. However, I have done innumerable plays on

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00:26:34.539 --> 00:26:51.640

that stage and, you know, it works. But that, when I was in

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00:26:51.640 --> 00:27:09.960

<v James Hoffman> Vancouver, so it was 86, 87, 88 was when they, yeah, they put out a call for someone to be the manager, it wasn't artistic director,

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00:27:09.960 --> 00:27:18.920

<v Richard Rowberry> but sort of the head person of the Capitol Theatre when it was up and running.

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00:27:18.920 --> 00:27:25.440

<v James Hoffman> And there were, I went and applied for the job and that was my vision.

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00:27:26.480 --> 00:27:28.640

<v Richard Rowberry> Let's, you know, let's

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00:27:30.559 --> 00:27:31.859

make

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00:27:31.859 --> 00:27:40.019

Nelson a theater town. Let's have this theater be the crown jewel of it and let's do summer theater.

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00:27:43.440 --> 00:27:49.680

But the alternate version or vision was

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00:27:50.480 --> 00:28:14.400

<v James Hoffman> what won out and that was just to every year since, for the last seven or eight centuries, they've done summer musicals

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00:28:14.400 --> 00:28:15.960

<v Richard Rowberry> there.

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00:28:15.960 --> 00:28:23.880

And not only do they do summer musicals there, they rehearse in the space for the first three

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00:28:23.880 --> 00:28:28.220

weeks of July, then they put on the

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00:28:28.220 --> 00:28:34.519

play for the next week of July, then they clean up after it, and then they shut it

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00:28:34.519 --> 00:28:41.160

down. Oh so just... And that's what the crown jewel of theatre in this little

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00:28:41.160 --> 00:28:53.000

<v James Hoffman> arts town, the best little arts town in Canada, Done. So that tells you everything you need to know about theater savviness in Melton.

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00:28:53.000 --> 00:29:07.119

<v Richard Rowberry> Right, too bad. Now, when, after you gave your talk at the hotel about theater, and she being a

resident theater company, now it didn't work clearly and it died, you know, it didn't happen.

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00:29:08.079 --> 00:29:13.519

<v James Hoffman> Did it die? Did the idea die because of theater energy losing interest or saying no we can't work

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00:29:13.519 --> 00:29:35.720

<v Richard Rowberry> there? Or did or what? No, no it died because the people, the funding, that it was all about recreating this movie theater and doing community shows and renting it out.

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00:29:35.720 --> 00:29:38.000

<v James Hoffman> Well that wasn't your job.

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00:29:38.000 --> 00:29:39.759

<v Richard Rowberry> And there was no funding.

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00:29:39.759 --> 00:29:45.000

<v James Hoffman> This was in the dark days of the liberals, right?

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00:29:45.599 --> 00:29:50.279

<v Richard Rowberry> So you're saying that the theater just wasn't gonna work.

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00:29:50.279 --> 00:29:53.859

<v James Hoffman> It was too slow getting on its legs, getting funding,

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00:29:53.859 --> 00:29:58.859

<v Richard Rowberry> completing, finishing up, and who would wanna work there?

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00:29:59.920 --> 00:30:00.759

You couldn't work there.

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00:30:00.759 --> 00:30:07.200

Well, you needed a buy-in, a huge buy-in from, well how did

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00:30:07.200 --> 00:30:13.759

<v James Hoffman> Stratford get going? They had a huge buy-in from the province and from the

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00:30:13.759 --> 00:30:20.839

<v Richard Rowberry> local community and there was no buy-in from Nelson. Yeah, yeah, okay, okay so...

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00:30:20.839 --> 00:30:25.519

<v James Hoffman> None at all. Yeah, well, I mean it did get finished eventually and

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00:30:25.519 --> 00:30:30.000

<v Richard Rowberry> they did put shows in there but it took a long time didn't it? Oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

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00:30:30.000 --> 00:30:38.599

<v James Hoffman> It got finished because it got huge heritage money.

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00:30:38.599 --> 00:30:45.720

<v Richard Rowberry> It was some centennial, wasn't it? 85 was the centennial or something? Yeah huge amounts of money

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00:30:45.720 --> 00:30:52.039

from the federal government, from it was a sweetheart project, but it was all

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00:30:52.039 --> 00:30:57.920

<v Richard Rowberry> about the building. Yeah did you know why? There was no money for actual, for

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00:30:57.920 --> 00:31:03.279

actually doing anything. Did you know? It was constantly focused on fundraising

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00:31:03.279 --> 00:31:05.680

<v Richard Rowberry> which is why it got into the community

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00:31:05.680 --> 00:31:10.559

show. They make tons of money out of it. They charge those kids to come and be in the show and then they also charged people