

## Transcript for Interview with Bryan Marrion

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00:00:00.000 --> 00:00:26.539

<v James Hoffman> Interviewing Brian Marion on September 14th, 2022. Brian let me begin by asking you when you came to the Slocan Valley back in the I guess said to many of the others, I doubt that you

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00:00:26.539 --> 00:00:32.679

came with the specific idea of starting a theater company and doing lots of

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00:00:32.679 --> 00:00:40.380

shows very specifically. So why did you come here? Why this valley and not

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00:00:40.380 --> 00:00:52.119

<v Bryan Marrion> somewhere else? And what kind of a vision, what do you think you'd be doing here I had been I left theater a couple of years earlier and concentrated on

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00:00:52.119 --> 00:00:58.200

film and video and had created this is after you graduated the theater to create

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00:00:58.200 --> 00:01:02.320

<v James Hoffman> you there yeah that's right yeah and I created with some other people video

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00:01:02.320 --> 00:01:06.959

<v Bryan Marrion> synchrosy in Victoria which was a big video cop and we were all generating

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00:01:07.859 --> 00:01:14.000

different kinds of videos and then I got into film art film I worked at a prison and

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00:01:15.040 --> 00:01:20.120

There I started making serious films with the inmates because I had a captive audience

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00:01:20.359 --> 00:01:24.439

<v James Hoffman> We have had actors we had Brandon Lake outside Nanaimo. It was

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00:01:29.439 --> 00:01:34.680

<v Bryan Marrion> 700 boys from 8 to 18. Yeah. And so I was I was really into animated film that that's what I was

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00:01:34.680 --> 00:01:38.319

<v James Hoffman> doing a lot of and that's what I wanted to do in the Slocan Valley so I came

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00:01:38.319 --> 00:01:42.439

with my cameras and all of my camera stuff. I had no idea of doing film. Can I

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00:01:42.439 --> 00:01:46.079

ask why you picked SI Valley, not some other...

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00:01:46.079 --> 00:01:53.079

<v Bryan Marrion> Friends. Friends that we had done a traveling theater with two years earlier and Catherine

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00:01:53.079 --> 00:01:57.959

<v James Hoffman> and I were now married and these were our friends that we had made in the last two years.

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00:01:57.959 --> 00:01:59.239

And they were here.

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00:01:59.239 --> 00:02:04.840

Six of them had moved up and so we moved up and basically lived with them in an area called

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00:02:04.840 --> 00:02:05.739

Goose Creek.

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00:02:05.739 --> 00:02:08.919

Were any of those future theatre and energy people?

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00:02:08.919 --> 00:02:14.979

No, no, no. None of them were involved in theatre at all. They were musicians. And they

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00:02:14.979 --> 00:02:20.680

wanted a more primitive environment and they moved on to Golden where they bought land.

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00:02:20.680 --> 00:02:27.840

We wanted less and moved to Windlawn where we quickly found people who wanted to do

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00:02:27.840 --> 00:02:33.120

theater and people asked they came to me actually and wanted to do a Kurt

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00:02:33.120 --> 00:02:37.879

Vonnegut play called Happy Birthday Wanted June. Can I ask who was it came to

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00:02:37.879 --> 00:02:42.439

<v Bryan Marrion> you to ask that? Joel Harris, Nancy's husband, estranged. Yep. They weren't

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00:02:42.439 --> 00:02:45.199

together but yeah Joel really loved

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00:02:45.199 --> 00:02:50.139

Vonnegut and found this play and wanted to do it. And he talked to some other

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00:02:50.139 --> 00:02:55.120

<v James Hoffman> people and they came and said, direct us. And it was more fun than I ever had in

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00:02:55.120 --> 00:03:01.280

my life. It was one of the best theater experiences. And everybody was in it.

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00:03:01.280 --> 00:03:06.080

We blew up the cast. It was not a very good play. So I had a...

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00:03:06.080 --> 00:03:13.840

I choreographed dances, you know, and we had a live band on stage and did video inserts all over the place.

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00:03:13.840 --> 00:03:14.719

Pretty zappy.

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00:03:14.719 --> 00:03:24.800

Oh, very zappy. Very, very. It was fun. It was so much fun. And at that time Nancy had done the doll house or was doing it.

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00:03:24.800 --> 00:03:26.879

She had done it before I think.

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00:03:26.879 --> 00:03:28.199

Maybe before I don't know.

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00:03:28.199 --> 00:03:29.199

Yeah probably before.

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00:03:29.199 --> 00:03:30.800

Because I didn't know her.

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00:03:30.800 --> 00:03:32.080

I went to the dollhouse.

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00:03:32.080 --> 00:03:33.080

I didn't know her.

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00:03:33.080 --> 00:03:34.080

You saw it.

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00:03:34.080 --> 00:03:35.080

Oh yeah I did.

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00:03:35.080 --> 00:03:36.680

And I was very excited.

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00:03:36.680 --> 00:03:41.280

Was that group regarded as a women's theater group?

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00:03:41.280 --> 00:03:42.360

<v Bryan Marrion> Not the dollhouse.

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00:03:42.360 --> 00:03:43.360

<v James Hoffman> Because there was a women's theater.

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00:03:43.360 --> 00:03:46.000

There was a women's reader's theater.

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00:03:46.000 --> 00:03:49.000

<v Bryan Marrion> Women's reader's theater. And Nancy, that was Nancy's thing too.

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00:03:49.000 --> 00:03:53.000

And they did Vicky, the play Vicky, and I saw that.

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00:03:53.000 --> 00:03:56.000

And I was tremendously excited by everything I was seeing.

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00:03:56.000 --> 00:04:02.000

<v James Hoffman> And then I directed, again, People Who Wanted Me To,

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00:04:02.000 --> 00:04:05.000

and I directed Hound.

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00:04:05.439 --> 00:04:07.879

I directed Stoppard's play.

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00:04:07.879 --> 00:04:11.159

And I gotta be real honest.

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00:04:11.159 --> 00:04:13.520

I didn't like the experience.

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00:04:13.520 --> 00:04:18.120

I liked the Vonnegut thing because I changed it.

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00:04:18.120 --> 00:04:19.160

<v Bryan Marrion> I basically rewrote the play.

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00:04:19.160 --> 00:04:20.040

<v James Hoffman> Made it your own.

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00:04:20.040 --> 00:04:20.939

I did.

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00:04:20.939 --> 00:04:24.839

And Hound, because Stoppard is a way better playwright

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00:04:24.839 --> 00:04:25.439

than Vonnegut, you don't really easily had, Stoppard is a way better playwright than Vonnegut.

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00:04:25.439 --> 00:04:28.920

You don't really easily mess with Stoppard, you know.

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00:04:28.920 --> 00:04:29.920

Smart guy.

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00:04:29.920 --> 00:04:33.920

I didn't enjoy the process.

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00:04:33.920 --> 00:04:34.920

It was good.

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00:04:34.920 --> 00:04:35.920

I mean it was a good play.

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00:04:35.920 --> 00:04:40.699

There was something wrong with it but I didn't want to do scripts.

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00:04:40.699 --> 00:04:45.500

<v Bryan Marrion> And so when this started to happen, I mean the next thing we got was Calm Down Mother.

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00:04:45.500 --> 00:04:50.300

And again it was Judith and Meredith came to me and said let's do this play, direct us.

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00:04:50.300 --> 00:04:54.500

And that was better because it was more creative.

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00:04:54.500 --> 00:04:59.500

Like again it was going back to the Monica play where it was like a shell that you had to fill.

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00:04:59.500 --> 00:05:07.459

<v James Hoffman> Can I ask you, I think you see the term in my research, Slocan Theatre Workshop.

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00:05:07.459 --> 00:05:08.459

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah.

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00:05:08.459 --> 00:05:12.100

Did you have a theatre company by then or was that just a name?

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00:05:12.100 --> 00:05:15.459

It was a name pretty much.

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00:05:15.459 --> 00:05:18.740

That name was invented to do Wanda June.

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00:05:18.740 --> 00:05:23.819

<v James Hoffman> You never had a kind of a core of people that say, we are a theatre company and we're operating

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00:05:23.819 --> 00:05:26.800

<v Bryan Marrion> certain ways and we're a core group wasn't like that wasn't like that

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00:05:26.800 --> 00:05:32.120

it was you know in a way it was because we never had auditions oh yeah just

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00:05:32.120 --> 00:05:36.720

people knew what they wanted to do and we had the group and it was like well

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00:05:36.720 --> 00:05:42.639

okay last time you were ASM this time you're in the play and it was kind of

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00:05:42.639 --> 00:05:46.240

done that way like you've had it was balanced up let's get everybody

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00:05:46.240 --> 00:05:52.319

a turn. There were a lot of people who wanted to act and that was one of the interesting things

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00:05:52.319 --> 00:05:57.519

that Nancy and Joel, Nancy and Buzz had to do when they wrote that original grant was like who's

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00:05:57.519 --> 00:06:08.079

going to do this because there were really a lot of people that were talented and enthusiastic. Who chose, who got the idea, who chose Calm Down Mother?

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00:06:08.879 --> 00:06:15.279

<v James Hoffman> Where did that idea come from? It came to me from, well it came from Open Theatre and we were all

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00:06:15.279 --> 00:06:21.360

<v Bryan Marrion> reading Open, Vanatale, the whole thing like through Ronny. Very hot through and through.

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00:06:21.360 --> 00:06:27.240

<v James Hoffman> Yeah well Ronny introduced us, she had been with the Open Theatre so I was gonna say did she recommend Calm Down Mother maybe?

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00:06:27.240 --> 00:06:31.759

<v Bryan Marrion> Maybe I honestly don't know. She must have known. My first conversation. She must have known

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00:06:31.759 --> 00:06:35.879

<v James Hoffman> Meg and Terry. No of course she did yeah yeah yeah and Joseph Chaykin yeah well

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00:06:35.879 --> 00:06:40.839

well Joseph came here yeah yeah that was very exciting. When did he come? It was like

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00:06:40.839 --> 00:06:46.079

Jesus Christ coming here. Really. Uh. Third year maybe. Same initials, you know.

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00:06:46.079 --> 00:06:48.199

77, 78.

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00:06:48.199 --> 00:06:49.040

Oh, okay.

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00:06:49.040 --> 00:06:50.959

Pretty early in the theater.

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00:06:50.959 --> 00:06:52.079

<v Bryan Marrion> He was not well.

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00:06:52.079 --> 00:06:53.920

<v James Hoffman> I mean, he had been having a lot of trouble this hard.

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00:06:53.920 --> 00:06:55.560

He was, yes, right.

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00:06:55.560 --> 00:07:00.639

<v Bryan Marrion> So I think part of it was kind of resting at Ronnie's.

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00:07:00.639 --> 00:07:02.560

Ronnie and Joseph were very close.

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00:07:02.560 --> 00:07:03.399

I gather.

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00:07:03.399 --> 00:07:04.220

Very close, yeah.

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00:07:04.220 --> 00:07:07.620

<v James Hoffman> So the idea for Calm Down Mother came from...

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00:07:07.620 --> 00:07:11.579

<v Bryan Marrion> Judith and Meredith came to me and said, we want to do this, will you direct it?

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00:07:11.579 --> 00:07:12.579

<v James Hoffman> Oh they, okay.

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00:07:12.579 --> 00:07:15.100

And they probably got the idea from Ronnie maybe?

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00:07:15.100 --> 00:07:16.100

<v Bryan Marrion> Probably.

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00:07:16.100 --> 00:07:19.420

Or like I say, we were all exploring...

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00:07:19.420 --> 00:07:20.420

<v James Hoffman> Benetelli.

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00:07:20.420 --> 00:07:21.420

<v Bryan Marrion> The open theater.

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00:07:21.420 --> 00:07:22.420

<v James Hoffman> Megatary.

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00:07:22.420 --> 00:07:23.420

Everything they did.

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00:07:23.420 --> 00:07:28.639

So this came out and I guess either Judith or Meredith read it and went, this would be

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00:07:28.639 --> 00:07:29.639

cool.

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00:07:29.639 --> 00:07:30.639

It's true.

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00:07:30.639 --> 00:07:31.639

Remember I was in the theater at the time too.

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00:07:31.639 --> 00:07:36.259

And there were just some people you knew about, big names, you read their books, The Presence

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00:07:36.259 --> 00:07:37.259

of the Actor.

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00:07:37.259 --> 00:07:38.259

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, yeah.

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00:07:38.259 --> 00:07:39.259  
And on it goes.

121  
00:07:39.259 --> 00:07:43.000  
The Empty Space, Peter Brook, you know, da da da.

122  
00:07:43.000 --> 00:07:44.000  
Grotowski.

123  
00:07:44.000 --> 00:07:45.339  
Boy I know. Poor theater. da. Kurtowski, poor theater.

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00:07:46.720 --> 00:07:48.519  
<v James Hoffman> Well, Kurtowski was here too.

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00:07:48.519 --> 00:07:51.000  
He did a workshop at Riverside Hall.

126  
00:07:51.000 --> 00:07:51.839  
Oh!

127  
00:07:51.839 --> 00:07:52.680  
By Rehearsal Space.

128  
00:07:52.680 --> 00:07:53.500  
Holy moly.

129  
00:07:53.500 --> 00:07:54.800  
Meredith was the only one who took it.

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00:07:54.800 --> 00:07:55.639  
Wow.

131  
00:07:55.639 --> 00:07:56.480  
Yeah.

132  
00:07:56.480 --> 00:07:58.639  
Kurtowski was in the Slochan Valley.

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00:07:58.639 --> 00:08:00.079

Didn't know that.

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00:08:00.079 --> 00:08:01.759

Was that before Theater Energy, I guess?

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00:08:01.759 --> 00:08:04.199

<v Bryan Marrion> No, in the middle somewhere.

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00:08:04.199 --> 00:08:07.439

We weren't active, like it was off-season for us.

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00:08:07.439 --> 00:08:08.079

Okay.

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00:08:08.079 --> 00:08:10.160

So I don't know where we were or what we were doing.

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00:08:10.160 --> 00:08:12.399

<v James Hoffman> Who brought him here? Who brought him here?

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00:08:12.399 --> 00:08:13.120

I don't know.

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00:08:13.120 --> 00:08:15.040

Yeah. Wasn't Theater Energy?

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00:08:15.040 --> 00:08:15.519

No.

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00:08:15.519 --> 00:08:16.560

I can't credit Theater Energy.

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00:08:16.560 --> 00:08:18.000

<v Bryan Marrion> Meredith was the only one who took part.

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00:08:18.000 --> 00:08:18.800

Oh wow.

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00:08:18.800 --> 00:08:20.240

And he did brutal things.

147  
00:08:20.240 --> 00:08:20.959  
Yeah. Yeah.

148  
00:08:20.959 --> 00:08:21.759  
It was like, ooh.

149  
00:08:23.759 --> 00:08:26.920  
He went on the clock ten minute days so

150  
00:08:26.920 --> 00:08:29.759  
you're awake for ten minutes and then you go to sleep for ten minutes huh and

151  
00:08:29.759 --> 00:08:35.639  
<v James Hoffman> you do that for 48 hours till you're quite psychotic you sorry you go to sleep

152  
00:08:35.639 --> 00:08:41.039  
<v Bryan Marrion> for ten minutes they do stuff every day is ten minutes long oh I see you know so

153  
00:08:41.039 --> 00:08:44.120  
you're up for ten minutes then you go to bed for ten minutes then you're up for

154  
00:08:44.120 --> 00:08:46.159  
ten minutes then you go to bed for 10 minutes then you're up for 10 minutes then you go to bed for 10 minutes.

155  
00:08:46.159 --> 00:08:52.559  
<v James Hoffman> Gutowski did that? I never heard that. Wouldn't want to try it.

156  
00:08:52.559 --> 00:08:59.940  
<v Bryan Marrion> No! Oh my god no no I thought it was like mind-fucking actually. It was the kind of

157  
00:08:59.940 --> 00:09:04.820  
<v James Hoffman> theater I really repelled me. Closest I came to that was doing the workshop with

158  
00:09:04.820 --> 00:09:05.519  
the performance group. I didn't do Closest I came to that was doing the workshop with the performance

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00:09:05.519 --> 00:09:11.000  
group. I didn't do the workshop. They came to open space. No I saw it. I saw them at

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00:09:11.000 --> 00:09:16.320

<v Bryan Marrion> the Phoenix. I saw it too. I went to the workshop. Yeah. They gave it up. Yeah yeah. I didn't.

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00:09:16.320 --> 00:09:23.279

<v James Hoffman> Day with them. I wish I had. Yeah. Yeah. Crazy. Crazy. What an electric play. Boy oh boy.

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00:09:23.279 --> 00:09:30.559

<v Bryan Marrion> Well the play was great. The workshop was happy. Yeah. Going home on my bike at five o'clock. I know. Well yeah.

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00:09:30.559 --> 00:09:36.399

<v James Hoffman> Where am I? Who am I? That was the big big moment for me at UVic probably. Yeah.

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00:09:36.399 --> 00:09:41.159

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah. As a student when I was there. I walked out the theater going okay.

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00:09:41.159 --> 00:09:46.139

<v James Hoffman> There's more to you know Alphenfeld and I have any ideas.

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00:09:46.139 --> 00:09:51.240

<v Bryan Marrion> So you got this, a group of you got the idea for the summer workshops.

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00:09:51.240 --> 00:09:56.279

<v James Hoffman> So Theatre Energy, when it first appeared as a name, was not a theatre company.

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00:09:56.279 --> 00:10:01.539

It was a series of workshops put on by some people, I guess like kind of a grouping of

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00:10:01.539 --> 00:10:06.159

people putting on workshops for two summers, right? Yeah, part of it was...

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00:10:06.159 --> 00:10:09.039

<v Bryan Marrion> And that was the first version of theatre energy, really.

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00:10:09.039 --> 00:10:10.039

<v James Hoffman> No one in...

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00:10:10.039 --> 00:10:14.759

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, I mean you could look at all kinds of things that came together.

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00:10:14.759 --> 00:10:16.120

One of the big things...

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00:10:16.120 --> 00:10:26.600

You see, I call Nancy the catalyst because she brought together two forces. One was professional theater with Tomonous,

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00:10:26.600 --> 00:10:31.360

who came to Selkirk College and performed the...

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00:10:31.360 --> 00:10:32.279

<v James Hoffman> Yeah, which one did they do?

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00:10:32.279 --> 00:10:33.500

Bacchae.

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00:10:33.500 --> 00:10:34.879

Oh, I heard that.

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00:10:34.879 --> 00:10:36.039

<v Bryan Marrion> And they got...

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00:10:36.039 --> 00:10:37.039

<v James Hoffman> Sathy played it too.

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00:10:37.039 --> 00:10:39.519

Nancy and Linda went, Linda Grabler went,

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00:10:39.519 --> 00:10:41.740

and they saw it and they were like...

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00:10:41.740 --> 00:10:44.320

<v Bryan Marrion> So they invited them to come to the New Family.

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00:10:44.320 --> 00:10:50.120

So that brought them up into the Slocan Valley all together and Buzz

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00:10:50.120 --> 00:10:55.320

They performed at the Hill? No, no they performed at Selkirk College. They just visited they said

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00:10:55.320 --> 00:10:59.320

<v James Hoffman> come and see us so they went to this commune in the Slocan Valley so it was

187  
00:10:59.320 --> 00:11:07.179  
the beginning of a cultural thing and Buzz owned land and blew it. So he had a

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00:11:07.179 --> 00:11:12.539  
reason, right? So he and Nancy made that connection, the two of

189  
00:11:12.539 --> 00:11:19.860  
them. And they wrote the explanations grant, which was the birth of... You got

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00:11:19.860 --> 00:11:28.240  
<v Bryan Marrion> five thousand bucks or something. Yeah, enough money to with clay. The mandate of that grant and getting the

191  
00:11:28.240 --> 00:11:34.940  
<v James Hoffman> grants was to perform an performance ensemble. I see that term. Yep we were the secret energy

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00:11:34.940 --> 00:11:39.159  
<v Bryan Marrion> performing ensemble. And they would do a show they would put together create a

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00:11:39.159 --> 00:11:45.399  
<v James Hoffman> show and perform it right that became renderings that's right yeah that's right yeah and they

194  
00:11:45.399 --> 00:11:54.279  
<v Bryan Marrion> chose the people Buzz and Nancy so in effect Nancy chose the people so that's

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00:11:54.279 --> 00:11:59.240  
<v James Hoffman> why I say that she in a very real sense was the catalyst for all the other

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00:11:59.240 --> 00:12:04.480  
<v Bryan Marrion> forces because somebody had to do that yeah and that was not a collective we

197  
00:12:04.480 --> 00:12:05.299  
<v James Hoffman> were told.

198  
00:12:05.299 --> 00:12:07.779  
<v Bryan Marrion> But when you started as a company,

199  
00:12:07.779 --> 00:12:10.820  
<v James Hoffman> I think the collective became the magic thing.

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00:12:10.820 --> 00:12:11.659

You know, you were.

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00:12:11.659 --> 00:12:14.259

<v Bryan Marrion> Well, she calls herself the first artistic director

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00:12:14.259 --> 00:12:15.259

of theater energy.

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00:12:15.259 --> 00:12:16.100

<v James Hoffman> I see that.

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00:12:16.100 --> 00:12:20.279

And that's beside her name on the explorations grant, right?

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00:12:20.279 --> 00:12:26.799

It had no reality past the decision that she made to choose these eight people.

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00:12:26.799 --> 00:12:28.200

But it helps get a grant.

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00:12:28.200 --> 00:12:29.600

Oh sure, oh sure, sure.

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00:12:29.600 --> 00:12:31.399

Looks like it's a theatre company or something.

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00:12:31.399 --> 00:12:33.860

So Nancy had no special place after that.

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00:12:33.860 --> 00:12:36.940

And I think at that point you were calling yourselves a professional too.

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00:12:36.940 --> 00:12:37.940

That helps get grants.

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00:12:37.940 --> 00:12:45.759

<v Bryan Marrion> We were, calm down mother, we refused to be considered amateur so we we made the deliberate decision and

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00:12:45.759 --> 00:12:51.000

we worked for six hours a day Monday through Friday so we weren't squeezing

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00:12:51.000 --> 00:12:55.600

in rehearsals this was our work we all had the time and the way professionals

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00:12:55.600 --> 00:13:01.720

<v James Hoffman> work and and we did open space we performed it in Penticton, we were all

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00:13:01.720 --> 00:13:08.159

<v Bryan Marrion> over the place in terrace and we got used to being on the road, we got used to each other, so you're right.

217

00:13:08.799 --> 00:13:15.120

<v James Hoffman> In a lot of ways, that, you know, like Nancy was the catalyst, that was us coming

218

00:13:15.120 --> 00:13:19.679

together because it was the five of us. Calm Down Mother. So we were more than half. I've often thought

219

00:13:19.679 --> 00:13:28.000

<v Bryan Marrion> as I researched that really Calm Down Mother was the first to show yeah sure in many ways because it was look at the people in it was a move in that girl yeah

220

00:13:28.000 --> 00:13:34.639

<v James Hoffman> future movers and shakers in that that yeah yeah yeah wow yeah so Nancy just

221

00:13:34.639 --> 00:13:40.279

<v Bryan Marrion> chose us yeah and Hank yeah and Ronnie and that was the company right and by by

222

00:13:40.279 --> 00:13:45.720

left out all kinds of people of course it was a was a hard thing. Yeah, yeah, right.

223

00:13:45.720 --> 00:13:47.240

And I had a hard time with it

224

00:13:47.240 --> 00:13:50.320

because some of my favorite people were not included.

225

00:13:50.320 --> 00:13:53.120

<v James Hoffman> And they kinda go, hmm, right?

226

00:13:53.120 --> 00:13:54.759

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, well, you gotta do this.

227

00:13:54.759 --> 00:13:58.799

I mean, it's a reality of art in so many different ways

228

00:13:58.799 --> 00:14:01.200

<v James Hoffman> is that you gotta make decisions at some point.

229

00:14:01.200 --> 00:14:02.139

Yeah, yeah.

230

00:14:02.139 --> 00:14:04.480

Were you calling yourselves professional

231

00:14:04.480 --> 00:14:05.919

through renderings?

232

00:14:05.919 --> 00:14:06.600

Yes.

233

00:14:06.600 --> 00:14:07.159

I think so.

234

00:14:07.159 --> 00:14:08.000

We were, totally.

235

00:14:08.000 --> 00:14:08.840

I see it in the...

236

00:14:08.840 --> 00:14:10.720

We saw ourselves as a young professional company.

237

00:14:10.720 --> 00:14:13.360

I see it in the paperwork, professional company,

238

00:14:13.360 --> 00:14:14.799

collective.

239

00:14:14.799 --> 00:14:18.480

You never, ever, although I know the company tried,

240

00:14:18.480 --> 00:14:22.759

I see the odd letter to Actors Equity inquiring

241

00:14:22.759 --> 00:14:24.279

<v Bryan Marrion> about becoming an equity house.

242

00:14:24.279 --> 00:14:25.460

And how do we do it?

243

00:14:25.460 --> 00:14:27.340

The finances were not going to lie.

244

00:14:27.340 --> 00:14:31.460

<v James Hoffman> I see several times that happened but I know it never did happen.

245

00:14:31.460 --> 00:14:38.779

<v Bryan Marrion> I think equity moved rules in the years after that to allow for companies like Theatre Energy

246

00:14:38.779 --> 00:14:41.419

<v James Hoffman> to be equity. In those days we couldn't do it.

247

00:14:41.419 --> 00:14:48.200

I know they did. I forget the terminology but they moved. All of us would have had letters of permission. Like there would have been no one.

248

00:14:48.200 --> 00:14:55.639

<v Bryan Marrion> That's right. That was your big ouch. You can get equity people. The letter of permission.

249

00:14:55.639 --> 00:15:00.720

<v James Hoffman> Well we did. Yeah. People were working on us. Yeah. A lot of that. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

250

00:15:00.720 --> 00:15:05.159

<v Bryan Marrion> Exciting times. Oh my god. You know, well Meredith said it on the phone, you know,

251

00:15:05.159 --> 00:15:08.759

like Meredith and I had been in touch, you know, and I said something about it

252

00:15:08.759 --> 00:15:14.159

and she said, you know, the song, those were the days, those were the days. Those

253

00:15:14.159 --> 00:15:19.039

<v James Hoffman> four years in all of our lives stand out. Those were the days, I'm thinking of

254

00:15:19.039 --> 00:15:23.440

your glory years, you know, the years when the collective just hummed along, you

255

00:15:23.440 --> 00:15:29.039

guys all come along well together, together the shows clicked you got great audience response

256

00:15:29.039 --> 00:15:35.559

what you did seem to really resonate you got good local stories about yourselves

257

00:15:35.559 --> 00:15:41.659

about his community positive and that's renderings that's voices that's

258

00:15:41.659 --> 00:15:45.000

muck nilly then after that's Powerhouse I think.

259

00:15:45.500 --> 00:15:46.340

Power Play.

260

00:15:46.340 --> 00:15:48.340

Power Play, yeah Power Play.

261

00:15:49.600 --> 00:15:51.200

<v Bryan Marrion> Which was a copyright infringement

262

00:15:51.200 --> 00:15:55.360

because some company had a big thing all across Canada,

263

00:15:55.360 --> 00:15:57.279

big promotion for Power Play.

264

00:15:57.279 --> 00:15:59.480

Never heard that.

265

00:15:59.480 --> 00:16:01.899

They never sued us, so nobody heard.

266

00:16:03.639 --> 00:16:07.600

<v James Hoffman> I have a question, I mean I know that the renderings was

267

00:16:07.600 --> 00:16:11.899

pretty, the first one, it's pretty autobiographical. Oh yeah. Many of which you were telling

268

00:16:11.899 --> 00:16:16.039

<v Bryan Marrion> you right? Yeah. This is us folks. We're dealing with... This was indigenous theatre.

269

00:16:16.039 --> 00:16:21.519

<v James Hoffman> Yeah. Purely indigenous. Indigenous meaning just us, because we're local. Our story.

270

00:16:21.519 --> 00:16:28.039

<v Bryan Marrion> Not First Nations. You see it's changed because on our Canada Council grants it always referred to us as an Indigenous

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00:16:28.039 --> 00:16:32.000

<v James Hoffman> theatre. Well that term worked then. Yeah it doesn't work now. I know.

272

00:16:32.000 --> 00:16:36.799

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah my daughter gets really pissed off at me when I tell her I worked for an

273

00:16:36.799 --> 00:16:43.659

<v James Hoffman> Indigenous theatre company. No you didn't. Voices. Voices was an early hit and a

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00:16:43.659 --> 00:16:47.779

very well done play and lots of cool stuff in it.

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00:16:47.779 --> 00:16:55.399

But my biggest question when I read it is those mysterious first and last scenes.

276

00:16:55.399 --> 00:17:01.120

When I think Buzz Bents did a played First Nations guy and did some kind of strange movie.

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00:17:01.120 --> 00:17:08.319

We didn't do that very much. When I read the script, the script only has that many lines

278

00:17:09.640 --> 00:17:13.180

and almost no description of what happened.

279

00:17:13.180 --> 00:17:16.799

But clearly it's the First Nations enactment of something.

280  
00:17:16.799 --> 00:17:19.720  
Same at the end, there's another one,

281  
00:17:19.720 --> 00:17:22.000  
and I think, what did they do?

282  
00:17:22.000 --> 00:17:23.680  
I don't remember the one at the end actually.

283  
00:17:23.680 --> 00:17:24.720  
How authentic was it?

284  
00:17:24.720 --> 00:17:26.319  
Did they talk to anybody?

285  
00:17:26.319 --> 00:17:27.960  
Was it really First Nations?

286  
00:17:28.880 --> 00:17:29.720  
Did they?

287  
00:17:29.720 --> 00:17:33.180  
<v Bryan Marrion> Buzz read a book about how the shamans were gay people.

288  
00:17:34.799 --> 00:17:35.640  
That was it.

289  
00:17:36.680 --> 00:17:38.640  
We went, okay Buzz, if that's what you want to do.

290  
00:17:38.640 --> 00:17:40.480  
<v James Hoffman> Are you kidding?

291  
00:17:40.480 --> 00:17:41.480  
No, I'm serious.

292  
00:17:41.480 --> 00:17:42.319  
Okay.

293

00:17:42.319 --> 00:17:43.680

It was embarrassing.

294

00:17:43.680 --> 00:17:46.000

And today it would have been impossible. Oh, unthinkable. But even. It was embarrassing. And today it would have been impossible.

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00:17:46.000 --> 00:17:47.000

Oh, unthinkable.

296

00:17:47.000 --> 00:17:52.000

But even then it was embarrassing. Like, nobody, none of the rest of us were part of the creation.

297

00:17:52.000 --> 00:17:57.000

Like, he did it on his own, did it. And then we stopped doing it.

298

00:17:57.000 --> 00:18:02.000

Well, no, he probably did some very nice movement. He was a dancer, right? Dance background?

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00:18:02.000 --> 00:18:09.119

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, I don't think I ever saw it. I think I heard it it or saw it from the wings but I don't think I saw it you

300

00:18:09.119 --> 00:18:13.359

<v James Hoffman> know from... Never in the audience because you were backstage. It wasn't good. It wasn't.

301

00:18:13.359 --> 00:18:17.839

It was a bad piece of kind of a kind of a token. And a really bad way to start to

302

00:18:17.839 --> 00:18:22.759

play. Yeah yeah and end it. So we got rid of it. I don't remember it being. So

303

00:18:22.759 --> 00:18:26.480

he came on at the end and recreated the character.

304

00:18:27.359 --> 00:18:34.720

<v Bryan Marrion> So it was cut eventually, those two. Oh soon. I don't remember it being there for very long

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00:18:34.720 --> 00:18:41.279

<v James Hoffman> at all. Maybe the first four or five shows. Those first summers. A lot of it changed in the first,

306

00:18:41.279 --> 00:18:45.200

<v Bryan Marrion> like we didn't have a play when we opened. We had a bunch of

307

00:18:45.200 --> 00:18:50.799

<v James Hoffman> stuff, it ran about three and a half, four hours. It was long, it was long and not

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00:18:50.799 --> 00:18:54.920

together and we were learning. I mean we'd done renderings but this was a very

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00:18:54.920 --> 00:18:59.680

different thing. I think that's how collectives work. You all contribute so

310

00:18:59.680 --> 00:19:07.019

much. It gets a little all over the place, somewhat undisciplined, always changing.

311

00:19:07.019 --> 00:19:11.519

<v Bryan Marrion> I know when I look through the archives at UVic, all the drafts, all the files,

312

00:19:11.519 --> 00:19:17.599

see a version of Voices, another version, they're different. We rewrote and

313

00:19:17.599 --> 00:19:21.880

reproduced the play many many times because we ran it as a school touring

314

00:19:21.880 --> 00:19:26.960

<v James Hoffman> company. Yeah, well you cut it down. So we made it an hour, we made it 45 minutes,

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00:19:26.960 --> 00:19:31.319

and we did several versions that included different of the original scenes,

316

00:19:31.319 --> 00:19:33.319

so we kept playing with it that way.

317

00:19:33.319 --> 00:19:34.319

Yeah.

318

00:19:34.319 --> 00:19:37.319

But we did that, I think we did that every year.

319

00:19:37.319 --> 00:19:39.319

I think it was a way to make money,

320  
00:19:39.319 --> 00:19:43.319  
like we could go out and do three weeks, two, three shows a day,

321  
00:19:43.319 --> 00:19:50.319  
and that's more money than we would make with our main stage. Yeah, everybody wanted voices. I mean every school wanted voices.

322  
00:19:50.319 --> 00:19:55.960  
<v Bryan Marrion> Local history, it's us. It was easy to sell. It was really easy to sell.

323  
00:19:55.960 --> 00:19:58.599  
<v James Hoffman> Had some charming scenes, really.

324  
00:19:58.599 --> 00:20:11.940  
<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, well, it was voices scenes. I mean there were originals. We did recreate things that made sense more, you know. And Muck mainly somewhat similar perhaps to renderings?

325  
00:20:11.940 --> 00:20:12.440  
<v James Hoffman> Well, for...

326  
00:20:12.440 --> 00:20:14.440  
<v Bryan Marrion> Is it your own story?

327  
00:20:14.440 --> 00:20:17.940  
<v James Hoffman> Yeah, that was the idea. That was the idea.

328  
00:20:17.940 --> 00:20:20.940  
<v Bryan Marrion> The stories you heard from people you knew.

329  
00:20:20.940 --> 00:20:27.640  
<v James Hoffman> Right. We got a big huge grant to do voices and going into the next

330  
00:20:27.640 --> 00:20:33.720  
year we had problems and I was doing most of... The money had run out? I was the GM of the

331  
00:20:33.720 --> 00:20:37.559  
company at that point, that was really... And the money was running out? Well yeah, we

332  
00:20:37.559 --> 00:20:41.839  
had no way of making more money, so I had to, that summer I was very very busy

333

00:20:41.839 --> 00:20:48.240

trying to figure out how can we keep this company together and I went into the rehearsal period for McNally

334

00:20:48.240 --> 00:20:54.039

<v Bryan Marrion> Virgil on a borderline nervous breakdown and I talked to the company and I said I

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00:20:54.039 --> 00:20:58.960

<v James Hoffman> can't do this I'm gonna have to not do this show stressing out overall well I

336

00:20:58.960 --> 00:21:03.640

couldn't do both I couldn't because once we started rehearsal it's all consuming

337

00:21:03.640 --> 00:21:05.960

and I was way too busy.

338

00:21:05.960 --> 00:21:06.799

I can see it.

339

00:21:06.799 --> 00:21:09.000

I was at Selgar, I was at Kaminko,

340

00:21:09.000 --> 00:21:11.900

I was running all, you know,

341

00:21:13.119 --> 00:21:16.519

<v Bryan Marrion> making the groundings with all the arts councils.

342

00:21:16.519 --> 00:21:18.799

<v James Hoffman> And you know, that's one problem I see

343

00:21:18.799 --> 00:21:20.920

when I look at Theatre Energy's history.

344

00:21:20.920 --> 00:21:23.680

You had a collective, you were all kind of equal

345

00:21:23.680 --> 00:21:25.119

in inputting. You all

346

00:21:25.119 --> 00:21:30.319

acted, performed, but you also had portfolios. Yes we did. So you're doing

347

00:21:30.319 --> 00:21:34.319

<v Bryan Marrion> publicity, somebody's doing finance, somebody's doing something else. So you're

348

00:21:34.319 --> 00:21:39.079

automatically split. Yeah. Okay I'm acting, I'm playing the role, but shit, I've got to do

349

00:21:39.079 --> 00:21:48.000

one publicity, I've got to call so-and-so, I've got a right press release, and then you know. And we, I mean, you're right,

350

00:21:48.000 --> 00:21:52.000

and yet a quirk, a strange wonderful thing

351

00:21:52.000 --> 00:21:56.000

about theatre energy is that with all that to try to manage

352

00:21:56.000 --> 00:22:00.000

we went beyond it. We created theatre workshops in the summertime

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00:22:00.000 --> 00:22:04.000

and promoted that. We did the Synergy Festival. Those were huge

354

00:22:04.000 --> 00:22:10.240

undertakings, you know. Why the hell did we do that? You know, we all loved it and looking back on

355

00:22:10.240 --> 00:22:16.200

<v James Hoffman> it, it was wonderful. Who was behind those summer workshops were big. Yeah. And they

356

00:22:16.200 --> 00:22:21.039

got bigger. The 76 one was pretty big and looked really great and I think it went

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00:22:21.039 --> 00:22:32.160

<v Bryan Marrion> well. The 77 was bigger. Yeah. More people. The Sojourner Seven was the highlight of that. Who was behind the... whose idea? 77, well...

358

00:22:32.160 --> 00:22:39.000

<v James Hoffman> Go back to 76 before the workshops. Who was saying, I think, I think, we got to do workshops.

359

00:22:39.000 --> 00:22:44.440

<v Bryan Marrion> I think, I think that went back to the new family and Tom and Us visiting the new

360  
00:22:44.440 --> 00:22:47.200  
family because Tom and Us were a lot of the teachers, right?

361  
00:22:47.200 --> 00:22:47.700  
Yeah.

362  
00:22:47.700 --> 00:22:54.299  
Our connection with Tomonous was very fortuitous and wonderful and it lasted the whole time, you know.

363  
00:22:54.799 --> 00:22:57.500  
Every time we went to Vancouver, we had a big party.

364  
00:22:57.500 --> 00:22:59.200  
<v James Hoffman> Was it mainly through Buzz?

365  
00:23:00.599 --> 00:23:02.299  
Because he'd come here and bought property.

366  
00:23:02.299 --> 00:23:05.839  
<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, yeah, yeah. So I mean he was a member of our company.

367  
00:23:05.839 --> 00:23:08.039  
<v James Hoffman> I understand he had NDU as well.

368  
00:23:08.039 --> 00:23:10.319  
NDU had their theatre program.

369  
00:23:10.319 --> 00:23:14.160  
He acted in a Moliere play with Lois Walker.

370  
00:23:14.160 --> 00:23:15.160  
<v Bryan Marrion> I had no idea he did that.

371  
00:23:15.160 --> 00:23:16.160  
<v James Hoffman> She was the director of the theatre program.

372  
00:23:16.160 --> 00:23:17.160  
<v Bryan Marrion> Oh yeah, I know Lois and her.

373  
00:23:17.160 --> 00:23:22.160  
Yeah, and I think she did a Moliere play with Buzz playing the lead.

374  
00:23:22.160 --> 00:23:24.960  
I think I read that somewhere.

375  
00:23:24.960 --> 00:23:25.000  
<v James Hoffman> Maybe. And he bought property here. I think I read that somewhere.

376  
00:23:25.000 --> 00:23:30.000  
And he bought property here. But he had that timeless connection.

377  
00:23:30.000 --> 00:23:36.000  
<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, yeah. Like I said, he and Nancy's relationship was really important.

378  
00:23:36.000 --> 00:23:41.000  
Because it drew big masses amounts of energy together.

379  
00:23:41.000 --> 00:23:44.000  
<v James Hoffman> So Nancy was quite key early on anyway.

380  
00:23:44.000 --> 00:23:49.400  
She was the catalyst. I credit her with starting the company, making that move.

381  
00:23:49.400 --> 00:23:54.779  
<v Bryan Marrion> Well she was a theater person from the university. Oh born into it I think. She

382  
00:23:54.779 --> 00:23:59.900  
<v James Hoffman> grew up in community theater and then studied. You interviewed her

383  
00:23:59.900 --> 00:24:05.000  
<v Bryan Marrion> yesterday and yeah I got a lot of this pretty exciting stuff.

384  
00:24:05.000 --> 00:24:11.000  
<v James Hoffman> Yeah Nancy and I these days we're so close and we're having so much fun doing this play

385  
00:24:11.000 --> 00:24:17.000  
<v Bryan Marrion> that we talk about wouldn't it be cool if we had somehow done this 30 years ago.

386  
00:24:17.000 --> 00:24:18.000

<v James Hoffman> Yeah and the resources are...

387

00:24:18.000 --> 00:24:24.000

And our, like I think my energy and Nancy's energy, I think the company could have moved

388

00:24:24.000 --> 00:24:27.000

at that point and Nancy and I were the directors.

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00:24:27.000 --> 00:24:32.000

Like that's what we are, we're both directors. So we were acting, but we're directors.

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00:24:32.000 --> 00:24:36.000

And we see that world that way. We didn't direct with theater energy.

391

00:24:36.000 --> 00:24:41.000

But I think we would have, and I think that would have made a different company.

392

00:24:41.000 --> 00:24:45.920

She was AD, that kind of director. She was AD a few times.

393

00:24:47.519 --> 00:24:52.880

<v Bryan Marrion> I see her referred to... We didn't have AD, I don't think. Pardon me? Assistant director? No, no, artistic director.

394

00:24:53.920 --> 00:25:01.039

As I said, that stopped existing the moment we rehearsed theater for renderings.

395

00:25:01.039 --> 00:25:08.039

<v James Hoffman> But throughout the history of Theater Energy, according to all the paperwork I see that they're always listening every year.

396

00:25:08.039 --> 00:25:13.579

<v Bryan Marrion> Nancy Harris is the... Artistic director is blah blah blah. It changes. A lot of people were

397

00:25:13.579 --> 00:25:17.900

artistic directors but there was... I don't remember. Probably it helped. In fact we had a

398

00:25:17.900 --> 00:25:21.259

philosophy against that because we didn't have an artistic director.

399

00:25:21.259 --> 00:25:26.480

<v James Hoffman> Deliberately didn't have an artistic director. Can you comment on, okay we talked about voices and

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00:25:26.480 --> 00:25:38.119

muck merely a bit, power play, the fourth show, I think was a major shift, good or bad,

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00:25:38.119 --> 00:25:47.240

I'm not sure, maybe not at all, but a major shift in that suddenly, speaking of directors, you gave the director a lot

402

00:25:47.240 --> 00:25:48.240

of power.

403

00:25:48.240 --> 00:25:50.240

Buzz directed, right?

404

00:25:50.240 --> 00:25:58.960

And I understand he was given the opportunity, the mandate, to have a vision for the thing

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00:25:58.960 --> 00:26:01.359

before things even started.

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00:26:01.359 --> 00:26:08.559

And also a lot of choice on content. So at the first rehearsal he was saying

407

00:26:08.559 --> 00:26:15.000

things like, okay here's my vision, we're having a disco flavor and rhythm and

408

00:26:15.000 --> 00:26:22.519

<v Bryan Marrion> energy, you know that kind of thing. Or do the mile arm. And he was in a

409

00:26:22.519 --> 00:26:25.920

<v James Hoffman> way the old-fashioned traditional director who had more of a,

410

00:26:26.480 --> 00:26:32.720

here's what I want, here's what we're doing, as opposed to the previous collective visions.

411

00:26:32.720 --> 00:26:40.000

I know Ronnie and Buzz often co-directed or directed, but it seems to me they were

412

00:26:40.000 --> 00:26:44.079

a little more collective about things, a little more like that.

413  
00:26:45.440 --> 00:26:47.660  
<v Bryan Marrion> Ronnie was a stabilizing factor with Buzz,

414  
00:26:47.660 --> 00:26:49.400  
and Buzz fell apart.

415  
00:26:50.400 --> 00:26:51.240  
He did.

416  
00:26:51.240 --> 00:26:52.079  
I've heard that.

417  
00:26:52.079 --> 00:26:55.920  
He walked away and left us with scrambled eggs, really.

418  
00:26:55.920 --> 00:26:57.799  
<v James Hoffman> Was Ronnie gone?

419  
00:26:57.799 --> 00:27:00.200  
<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, Ronnie was not with us.

420  
00:27:00.200 --> 00:27:01.039  
<v James Hoffman> For part of that.

421  
00:27:01.039 --> 00:27:02.079  
Why, I don't know.

422  
00:27:02.079 --> 00:27:03.920  
I think she was just doing something in New York

423  
00:27:03.920 --> 00:27:05.099  
and headed away. Joe Chaikin kept doing something in New York in an extended way.

424  
00:27:05.099 --> 00:27:08.799  
Joe Chaikin kept doing the Winter Project every year for years.

425  
00:27:08.799 --> 00:27:11.000  
<v Bryan Marrion> And she'd often go, he loved her in that.

426  
00:27:11.000 --> 00:27:12.000

Oh yeah, yeah.

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00:27:12.000 --> 00:27:13.000

She'd go back for that.

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00:27:13.000 --> 00:27:16.799

She did it every year. And then she would come back and we would spend hours and hours and hours

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00:27:16.799 --> 00:27:19.000

and she would tell us all about it, you know.

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00:27:19.000 --> 00:27:21.299

<v James Hoffman> But Buzz, yeah.

431

00:27:21.299 --> 00:27:23.500

You say he fell apart. What happened?

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00:27:23.500 --> 00:27:26.000

<v Bryan Marrion> He lost it. He just totally lost it. We were left without a cr...

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00:27:26.000 --> 00:27:31.000

I mean it was his vision but he was overwhelmed.

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00:27:31.000 --> 00:27:33.000

And it wasn't going like...

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00:27:33.000 --> 00:27:36.000

<v James Hoffman> He wasn't getting what he wanted and people didn't get what he wanted?

436

00:27:36.000 --> 00:27:40.000

<v Bryan Marrion> I don't know. None of us had a good time. It was not a good time.

437

00:27:40.000 --> 00:27:44.000

And it was the end of the company. I mean the company essentially died after...

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00:27:44.000 --> 00:27:46.839

<v James Hoffman> I mean it was reborn, went on it had many different

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00:27:46.839 --> 00:27:51.599

incarnations. You say he left, did he finish directing or did he just? He just kind of

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00:27:51.599 --> 00:27:58.799

disappeared. And you're still rehearsing? Mm-hmm. Wow that's amazing. It was hard. I

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00:27:58.799 --> 00:28:02.599

can't imagine that. I've never been in a show and I've directed a lot too.

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00:28:02.599 --> 00:28:05.160

The most precious moments of those final rehears I directed a lot too, the most precious moments of

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00:28:05.160 --> 00:28:10.799

those final rehearsals, the final notes, the fine-tuning. He wasn't the soul of stability.

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00:28:10.799 --> 00:28:20.359

<v Bryan Marrion> So he broke down and yeah yeah I've heard that from others too.

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00:28:20.359 --> 00:28:26.720

<v James Hoffman> So when Power Play opened, he still got credit as director.

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00:28:26.720 --> 00:28:31.599

<v Bryan Marrion> Oh yeah sure sure sure. Oh he came back, he went away, he came back.

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00:28:31.599 --> 00:28:35.599

<v James Hoffman> Well he went away. Well I mean went away from the rehearsal space.

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00:28:35.599 --> 00:28:42.079

<v Bryan Marrion> He didn't stay away, you know, he'd go away and he just...

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00:28:42.079 --> 00:28:46.599

<v James Hoffman> So the stage manager was essentially running rehearsals. Oh my god

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00:28:46.599 --> 00:28:51.259

<v Bryan Marrion> I don't know that can happen. It's hard to hard to remember. They could run rehearsals sure sure I know

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00:28:51.759 --> 00:28:57.960

<v James Hoffman> We didn't we didn't have stage managers in that sense though. I mean it was also something that we sort of did ourselves

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00:28:58.160 --> 00:29:03.319

<v Bryan Marrion> I don't remember having a stage manager that we eventually got a business manager

453

00:29:03.319 --> 00:29:07.279

<v James Hoffman> Yeah, you know that probably is the beginning of, I see a

454

00:29:07.279 --> 00:29:13.839

lot of, you know, when I studied the company, especially after, during and after Power Play,

455

00:29:13.839 --> 00:29:21.720

of gee, we need to get a stronger artistic vision. We need stronger artistic leadership.

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00:29:21.720 --> 00:29:26.000

<v Bryan Marrion> We're fraying at the sides and we're not together enough artistically, aesthetically. We're fraying at the sides and we're not together enough artistically, aesthetically,

457

00:29:26.000 --> 00:29:32.000

we're too all over the place, we need a good direction.

458

00:29:32.000 --> 00:29:40.000

So I think one solution was you started bringing in good directors like, well, Godot, Jane

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00:29:40.000 --> 00:29:41.000

Heyman.

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00:29:41.000 --> 00:29:42.000

Jane Heyman, yeah.

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00:29:42.000 --> 00:29:45.200

And Nick Hutchinson came and did Three Penny.

462

00:29:45.200 --> 00:29:51.240

<v James Hoffman> And then Larry Little for the food show. And yeah and then

463

00:29:51.240 --> 00:29:55.960

not Jane, the girls would be up in a minute.

464

00:29:55.960 --> 00:30:02.680

<v Bryan Marrion> Oh and Linda Putnam. Linda Putnam. So four people, yeah, really good people.

465

00:30:02.680 --> 00:30:05.240

<v James Hoffman> Right, top. Yeah, yeah, wonderful.

466

00:30:05.240 --> 00:30:06.799

So that was a good move.

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00:30:06.799 --> 00:30:08.279

There's the artistic leadership.

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00:30:08.279 --> 00:30:10.279

<v Bryan Marrion> Yep, yep.

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00:30:10.279 --> 00:30:12.319

<v James Hoffman> These are people that are not gonna run away.

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00:30:12.319 --> 00:30:14.480

<v Bryan Marrion> Oh no, no, and we were ready.

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00:30:14.480 --> 00:30:17.079

The company needed somebody that was stable

472

00:30:17.079 --> 00:30:19.640

and professional and knew what they were doing.

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00:30:20.519 --> 00:30:22.200

<v James Hoffman> There's always, like I've done a fair bit

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00:30:22.200 --> 00:30:23.839

of directing too, all over the place,

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00:30:23.839 --> 00:30:30.000

and I know those last rehearsals. I'm almost aware how vulnerable the cast is.

476

00:30:30.000 --> 00:30:34.000

They've pretty well got it under their belt, they've got their lines, they've done a lot of business,

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00:30:34.000 --> 00:30:38.000

they've had some good run-throughs, but there's still that three or four rehearsals left,

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00:30:38.000 --> 00:30:43.000

and there's still that, they know it could be a little better and more sparky,

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00:30:43.000 --> 00:30:45.279

and more kind of over the top and beautiful.

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00:30:45.279 --> 00:30:48.319

You know, some magical, all those words, you know.

481

00:30:48.319 --> 00:30:50.799

And that's why I think we're a director, it's really important.

482

00:30:50.799 --> 00:30:56.319

Because that's the outside eye, the caring eye, the understanding eye, the loving eye.

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00:30:56.319 --> 00:30:56.819

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah.

484

00:30:56.819 --> 00:31:01.599

That loves you guys so much and wants the best.

485

00:31:01.599 --> 00:31:02.799

And I'll do anything for you.

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00:31:02.799 --> 00:31:04.640

I cry when I'm directing.

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00:31:04.640 --> 00:31:11.400

<v James Hoffman> Yeah. I cry all the time. I just, I'm so emotional. This little thing goes pretty pat. You're with him. You're with him.

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00:31:11.400 --> 00:31:16.680

<v Bryan Marrion> And you're up there too. Yeah. I think it was, you know, I mean I don't want to get too

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00:31:16.680 --> 00:31:20.480

personal but I think it was Buzz's life. I said, you know, I don't think it was

490

00:31:20.480 --> 00:31:24.039

just this play that was being a problem. I think, you know, lots of things were

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00:31:24.039 --> 00:31:25.759

being problems for him. He wasn't strong. a problem. I think, you know, lots of things were being problems for him.

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00:31:25.759 --> 00:31:30.720

He wasn't strong, he just wasn't definite, you know, he went away, he came back, he didn't

493

00:31:30.720 --> 00:31:33.200

seem to have focus or energy.

494

00:31:33.200 --> 00:31:34.200

<v James Hoffman> Sexuality?

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00:31:34.200 --> 00:31:40.740

Directing an original creation play is huge.

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00:31:40.740 --> 00:31:46.720

That's harder than directing a script to me because you're in the process all the time and he and Ronnie

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00:31:47.400 --> 00:31:52.799

Ronnie was fabulous and and and in renderings they they worked beautifully

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00:31:53.319 --> 00:32:00.039

Together to get yeah, and then it didn't buzz unless in the middle. Yeah. Oh, yeah, and and so did Ronnie

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00:32:00.680 --> 00:32:05.000

Okay, they're so you're all all the interviewer were renderings, I think.

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00:32:05.000 --> 00:32:07.000

<v Bryan Marrion> I'm not sure about Ronnie.

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00:32:07.000 --> 00:32:08.000

<v James Hoffman> I'm not sure about Ronnie either.

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00:32:08.000 --> 00:32:09.000

I don't think so.

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00:32:09.000 --> 00:32:11.000

I don't think I've seen pictures of him in renderings.

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00:32:11.000 --> 00:32:19.000

<v Bryan Marrion> Ronnie's directing input was biggest in renderings, but she did wonderful things for voices.

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00:32:19.000 --> 00:32:31.640

<v James Hoffman> And the best parts of voices were Ronnie's three-fingered Frank. Brilliant, brilliant piece that really she created and over how many a hundred hours I just worked

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00:32:31.640 --> 00:32:35.900

on that thing for such a long time. What a strong woman. She's amazing, she's

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00:32:35.900 --> 00:32:41.359

wonderful. I mean she was a weaver, she's a great singer, she was one of Joe

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00:32:41.359 --> 00:32:49.119

Chaikin's prime people, did a lot of work. If you read any book on Joe Chaikin and the open theater, there's several books on it,

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00:32:49.119 --> 00:32:51.000

including impressions of the actor.

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00:32:51.000 --> 00:32:53.440

There's photographs, you see there's Ronnie, there's Ronnie.

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00:32:53.440 --> 00:32:58.319

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, she's also a psychotherapist, went back and got her doctorate.

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00:32:58.319 --> 00:33:04.599

<v James Hoffman> In fact, I believe she came to the Silicon Valley, not to do theater, but to do...

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00:33:04.599 --> 00:33:05.000

She was amazed that there was, but to do therapy.

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00:33:05.000 --> 00:33:06.559

<v Bryan Marrion> She was amazed that there was theater.

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00:33:06.559 --> 00:33:08.380

To do therapy.

516

00:33:08.380 --> 00:33:12.740

She came to a workshop that I was doing in New Denver and I don't remember why I was

517

00:33:12.740 --> 00:33:13.740

<v James Hoffman> doing it.

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00:33:13.740 --> 00:33:14.740

You were giving it?

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00:33:14.740 --> 00:33:15.940

I was, yeah.

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00:33:15.940 --> 00:33:18.619

And so she just joined me and I was like overwhelmed.

521

00:33:18.619 --> 00:33:20.859

Like, who is this person?

522

00:33:20.859 --> 00:33:23.299

She joined you giving the workshop.

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00:33:23.299 --> 00:33:25.160

She joined you giving the workshop? Yeah. Okay, well, so you hadn't heard of her out of here. She enjoyed you giving the workshop?

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00:33:25.160 --> 00:33:26.160

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah.

525

00:33:26.160 --> 00:33:28.759

Okay, well, so you hadn't heard of her before?

526

00:33:28.759 --> 00:33:31.400

No, that was the first time I met her.

527

00:33:31.400 --> 00:33:32.559

<v James Hoffman> And I think we loved each other.

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00:33:32.559 --> 00:33:33.880

<v Bryan Marrion> That was way before...

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00:33:33.880 --> 00:33:35.519

Calm Down Mother.

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00:33:35.519 --> 00:33:38.359

You know, I taught with her.

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00:33:38.359 --> 00:33:40.359

<v James Hoffman> Well, at detox.

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00:33:40.359 --> 00:33:41.359

Right.

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00:33:41.359 --> 00:33:42.359

We had all our...

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00:33:42.359 --> 00:33:44.680

Oh, I remember when she taught.

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00:33:44.680 --> 00:33:46.119

We had theater classes galore.

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00:33:46.119 --> 00:33:51.400

Yeah. And there was a voice class, second year or something, voice class. Right. And she had it.

537

00:33:51.400 --> 00:33:57.759

But she was so busy. She had to go off and do things. She had problems with the department though too.

538

00:33:57.759 --> 00:34:05.799

Yeah, we knew that. So I was appointed to be her co. So when she left I took the class.

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00:34:05.799 --> 00:34:08.519

So I actually worked with my team.

540

00:34:08.519 --> 00:34:10.920

She had trouble with the department eh?

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00:34:10.920 --> 00:34:12.840

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah she didn't want to grade.

542

00:34:12.840 --> 00:34:14.980

She refused to grade.

543

00:34:14.980 --> 00:34:17.480

<v James Hoffman> She said no I don't know enough about them.

544

00:34:17.480 --> 00:34:19.119

She had integrity.

545

00:34:19.119 --> 00:34:22.159

She said no I'm not going to grade these people.

546

00:34:22.159 --> 00:34:23.159

<v Bryan Marrion> I know.

547

00:34:23.159 --> 00:34:28.000

I know and they went well uhhhh. uh, I don't need you guys.

548

00:34:28.000 --> 00:34:31.000

Well, you're a bit of an odd department.

549

00:34:31.000 --> 00:34:33.000

Oh, it was a very interesting department.

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00:34:33.000 --> 00:34:35.000

<v James Hoffman> It was interesting, yeah.

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00:34:35.000 --> 00:34:37.000

People so different.

552

00:34:37.000 --> 00:34:41.000

<v Bryan Marrion> I mean, my two contributions were Jane Hammond and Janet Wright.

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00:34:41.000 --> 00:34:44.000

<v James Hoffman> Your contributions? You brought them in?

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00:34:44.000 --> 00:34:45.559

<v Bryan Marrion> Oh yeah. Yeah, Richard called me into his office. right yeah your contributions you brought them in you know yeah okay yeah

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00:34:45.559 --> 00:34:50.440

<v James Hoffman> Richard called me into both of them talking the department yeah yeah yeah

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00:34:50.440 --> 00:34:55.119

<v Bryan Marrion> Richard called me in and showed me resumes and everything and he said

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00:34:55.119 --> 00:34:59.519

you've done a lot of theater what do you think and I turned all these upside down

558

00:34:59.519 --> 00:35:07.719

<v James Hoffman> I went there it is Jay human she would make this place. Yeah, well she became chair.

559

00:35:07.719 --> 00:35:11.719

I was chair for most of the time and my term was up.

560

00:35:11.719 --> 00:35:16.519

She became chair for only a year or so and then the axe fell.

561

00:35:16.519 --> 00:35:17.519

<v Bryan Marrion> Right.

562

00:35:17.519 --> 00:35:18.519

It shut down.

563

00:35:18.519 --> 00:35:19.519

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

564

00:35:19.519 --> 00:35:20.519

You guys get out of here.

565

00:35:20.519 --> 00:35:24.119

And Janet was sulking up in her big house.

566

00:35:24.119 --> 00:35:26.239

Bruce was teaching in the music faculty.

567

00:35:27.599 --> 00:35:30.880

<v James Hoffman> We've got a former husband and her son in Victoria.

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00:35:30.880 --> 00:35:32.719

Bluebridge Rep Theater.

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00:35:34.039 --> 00:35:35.639

Victoria Professional Company, Bluebridge?

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00:35:35.639 --> 00:35:36.480

No.

571

00:35:36.480 --> 00:35:38.880

Remember the Fox Theater, the Roxy Theater in Quadra?

572

00:35:38.880 --> 00:35:40.059

Oh yeah, that's right.

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00:35:40.059 --> 00:35:41.880

<v Bryan Marrion> Fellini Bergman.

574

00:35:41.880 --> 00:35:45.800

<v James Hoffman> It's now a live theater, like an off-Broadway place,

575

00:35:45.800 --> 00:35:50.059

run by Bluebridge Rep Theater Company,

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00:35:50.059 --> 00:35:53.079

artistic director Brian Richmond.

577

00:35:53.079 --> 00:35:55.960

<v Bryan Marrion> Oh, and he and Janet were married, right?

578

00:35:55.960 --> 00:35:57.559

Yeah, they were, they split.

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00:35:57.559 --> 00:35:58.380

<v James Hoffman> Yeah, yeah, yeah.

580

00:35:58.380 --> 00:36:00.639

And their son Jacob is big in it too.

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00:36:00.639 --> 00:36:01.480

<v Bryan Marrion> Oh, okay.

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00:36:01.480 --> 00:36:03.599

Yeah, he did Retsi acts.

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00:36:03.599 --> 00:36:07.000

That's really cool. Yeah, Janet's life was tragic.

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00:36:08.000 --> 00:36:15.000

It was like, oh, you know, Bruce and her daughter. And I was with that baby. Bruce Davies. Yeah.

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00:36:15.000 --> 00:36:20.000

<v James Hoffman> Davis, I think. Davis, that's right. He taught music. Yeah, played trumpet. Yeah, yeah. He

586

00:36:20.000 --> 00:36:25.000

was my guy. Those days at detox, wow. It was the best, boy.

587

00:36:25.000 --> 00:36:26.000

It was the best.

588

00:36:26.000 --> 00:36:27.000

<v Bryan Marrion> I loved every minute of it.

589

00:36:27.000 --> 00:36:30.000

I loved the creative process seminars on Friday afternoons.

590

00:36:30.000 --> 00:36:33.000

<v James Hoffman> I felt that detox was like a mini-bamp.

591

00:36:33.000 --> 00:36:35.000

I used to pinch myself saying,

592

00:36:35.000 --> 00:36:36.000

I thought, is this a dream?

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00:36:36.000 --> 00:36:37.000

I thought, is this a dream?

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00:36:37.000 --> 00:36:38.000

Is this a dream?

595

00:36:38.000 --> 00:36:40.000

You're a wonderful little theater department,

596

00:36:40.000 --> 00:36:42.000

music department, creative writing,

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00:36:42.000 --> 00:36:44.000

art, visual arts, sculpture,

598

00:36:44.000 --> 00:36:47.340

all these great people, small environment,

599

00:36:47.340 --> 00:36:50.539

we all knew each other, we got together on a project,

600  
00:36:50.539 --> 00:36:54.079  
we did kind of work in our silos, so great.

601  
00:36:55.559 --> 00:36:57.119  
<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, I remember the brass came down,

602  
00:36:57.119 --> 00:36:59.119  
or somebody was in some upper level meeting

603  
00:36:59.119 --> 00:37:01.400  
and they wanted great interdisciplinary

604  
00:37:01.400 --> 00:37:02.639  
because we had all these things,

605  
00:37:02.639 --> 00:37:05.320  
and they were saying, it's there.

606  
00:37:05.320 --> 00:37:07.360  
It's a small community school.

607  
00:37:07.360 --> 00:37:08.199  
We all know each other.

608  
00:37:08.199 --> 00:37:10.079  
We come to our things.

609  
00:37:10.079 --> 00:37:10.920  
<v James Hoffman> We are.

610  
00:37:10.920 --> 00:37:11.760  
We found it.

611  
00:37:11.760 --> 00:37:14.599  
We went to each other's things, you're right.

612  
00:37:14.599 --> 00:37:16.480  
Okay, after power play,

613  
00:37:18.679 --> 00:37:21.820

I forget what's next exactly, but, well, Godot.

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00:37:21.820 --> 00:37:23.000

<v Bryan Marrion> Now, doing that.

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00:37:23.000 --> 00:37:28.780

<v James Hoffman> So after power play, Nancy left, Buzz left, I left. Where did you go?

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00:37:28.780 --> 00:37:37.119

<v Bryan Marrion> Ditti took. Oh, D took. I broke my neck in New Denver. We were setting up for a play

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00:37:37.119 --> 00:37:44.119

<v James Hoffman> and there was a kind of big

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00:37:44.119 --> 00:37:45.000

<v Bryan Marrion> professional trampoline

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00:37:45.380 --> 00:37:46.920

<v James Hoffman> in the middle of the floor.

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00:37:46.920 --> 00:37:48.219

<v Bryan Marrion> And we were all running around,

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00:37:48.219 --> 00:37:50.739

we had that crazy daytime energy, you know.

622

00:37:50.739 --> 00:37:54.500

And Hank went and jumped on the trampoline

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00:37:54.500 --> 00:37:57.239

and did a flip and landed on a mat.

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00:37:58.139 --> 00:37:59.300

And so did I.

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00:38:00.960 --> 00:38:03.880

Only I'd never done it before, and Hank had.

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00:38:03.880 --> 00:38:08.519

And I missed, and I came down down and I pushed my head into my chest

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00:38:08.519 --> 00:38:13.440

and it broke the top vertebrae. Oh no. Cracked it. Wow.

628

00:38:13.440 --> 00:38:20.280

And I finished the run. But I think that poisoned, that was part of the reason I didn't have such a good time.

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00:38:20.280 --> 00:38:28.760

<v James Hoffman> So you were you were in power play with a broken neck. Yeah. I did the whole run in Vancouver with the broken neck and then I went to VGH and they said do

630

00:38:28.760 --> 00:38:33.380

<v Bryan Marrion> not move you know they froze me and put me in a thing and I went well I'm glad

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00:38:33.380 --> 00:38:38.019

that thing. Anyway so Doug Baker do you remember Doug Baker? No. He was the he was

632

00:38:38.019 --> 00:38:42.820

the director of extension services for Seltzer College. Okay. So I'm at a party

633

00:38:42.820 --> 00:38:45.619

<v James Hoffman> in the valley

634

00:38:46.920 --> 00:38:50.059

with my brace on and everything, and he comes and sits with me and he goes,

635

00:38:50.059 --> 00:38:52.980

I met him because I heard Doug Baker

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00:38:52.980 --> 00:38:54.380

had been appointed to this job.

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00:38:54.380 --> 00:38:56.300

So in my role with Theater Energy,

638

00:38:56.300 --> 00:38:58.039

<v Bryan Marrion> I'm on the phone with Doug Baker.

639

00:38:58.039 --> 00:38:59.099

Who are you?

640

00:38:59.099 --> 00:39:00.900

I'm Brian Mary and I work with theater company.

641

00:39:00.900 --> 00:39:03.940

<v James Hoffman> I really wanna have, you got 15 minutes of your time?

642

00:39:03.940 --> 00:39:07.800

Can I have 15 minutes of your time? said okay sure so I went and we spent

643

00:39:07.800 --> 00:39:15.280

like two hours talking and I walked out with 15 grand he bought future workshops

644

00:39:15.280 --> 00:39:20.480

<v Bryan Marrion> yeah one of my better things and and so we liked each other like he admired me

645

00:39:20.480 --> 00:39:24.719

<v James Hoffman> because I got money from yeah and then so he comes to sits with me and he said

646

00:39:24.719 --> 00:39:27.079

I want you to come work for me.

647

00:39:27.079 --> 00:39:28.960

<v Bryan Marrion> We're gonna create a summer school of the arts.

648

00:39:28.960 --> 00:39:29.920

Summer school, yeah.

649

00:39:29.920 --> 00:39:30.739

<v James Hoffman> Good.

650

00:39:30.739 --> 00:39:31.579

So that was it.

651

00:39:31.579 --> 00:39:33.000

Did that for how many summers?

652

00:39:33.000 --> 00:39:33.840

<v Bryan Marrion> Four.

653

00:39:33.840 --> 00:39:34.659

Four.

654  
00:39:34.659 --> 00:39:35.639  
Yeah, the duration.

655  
00:39:35.639 --> 00:39:36.480  
<v James Hoffman> I mean, it closed.

656  
00:39:36.480 --> 00:39:39.559  
Yeah, up to 84 when it closed.

657  
00:39:39.559 --> 00:39:41.159  
<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, so 83.

658  
00:39:41.159 --> 00:39:43.360  
80, 81, 82, 83.

659  
00:39:43.360 --> 00:39:46.840  
Those were the four years.

660  
00:39:46.840 --> 00:39:49.800  
<v James Hoffman> So, after power play, you left.

661  
00:39:49.800 --> 00:39:51.760  
Where did you go? Did you leave the valley?

662  
00:39:51.760 --> 00:39:55.440  
<v Bryan Marrion> No, I went to Detuck. I just went to work at Detuck.

663  
00:39:55.440 --> 00:39:58.239  
<v James Hoffman> How long did you stay? Of course, it closed on 84.

664  
00:39:58.239 --> 00:39:59.920  
Four years.

665  
00:39:59.920 --> 00:40:04.760  
<v Bryan Marrion> Four years with Theater Energy, four years with David Thompson, four years with Harborfront.

666  
00:40:04.760 --> 00:40:05.079  
I was in a four-year cycle. That's where you went, four years with David Thompson, four years with Harper Front.

667

00:40:05.079 --> 00:40:07.199

<v James Hoffman> I was in a four year cycle.

668

00:40:07.199 --> 00:40:09.400

That's where you went, four years at Harper Front.

669

00:40:09.400 --> 00:40:12.079

<v Bryan Marrion> After I left Nelson, yeah, after I left the Kootenays.

670

00:40:12.079 --> 00:40:15.719

Catherine wanted to go to grad school and get a graduate degree in theatre.

671

00:40:15.719 --> 00:40:16.880

<v James Hoffman> We're talking Toronto now.

672

00:40:16.880 --> 00:40:20.039

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah, so she went to York and the family moved to Toronto.

673

00:40:20.039 --> 00:40:21.039

<v James Hoffman> So you guys went to...

674

00:40:21.039 --> 00:40:25.400

<v Bryan Marrion> And after the summer school, I mean I got great reviews personally from the summer school

675

00:40:25.400 --> 00:40:29.900

and befriended Margaret Atwood and all kinds of other heavyweights.

676

00:40:29.900 --> 00:40:34.099

So it was a good time for me to go to Toronto.

677

00:40:34.099 --> 00:40:36.000

<v James Hoffman> So that would have been 80...

678

00:40:36.000 --> 00:40:36.900

84.

679

00:40:36.900 --> 00:40:37.699

84, yeah.

680

00:40:37.699 --> 00:40:38.699

Yeah.

681  
00:40:38.699 --> 00:40:39.699  
Yeah.

682  
00:40:39.699 --> 00:40:41.400  
Big year of change for a lot of us at detail.

683  
00:40:41.400 --> 00:40:41.900  
Well...

684  
00:40:41.900 --> 00:40:42.900  
<v Bryan Marrion> Oh my God!

685  
00:40:42.900 --> 00:40:43.599  
Everybody!

686  
00:40:43.599 --> 00:40:44.599  
We'll have to do something else.

687  
00:40:44.599 --> 00:40:49.360  
<v James Hoffman> Yeah! Yeah, people trying to sell their houses. I left a faculty meeting and I

688  
00:40:49.360 --> 00:40:55.679  
went and peed at the urinal and biology professor, my neighbor actually, lived

689  
00:40:55.679 --> 00:40:59.039  
next door to me in South Slough Camp. And he came, we were both peeing, and he said,

690  
00:40:59.039 --> 00:41:06.159  
so you sold your house? And I went, no. He said, I want to buy it. We closed off and walked out.

691  
00:41:06.159 --> 00:41:07.159  
Shook hands?

692  
00:41:07.159 --> 00:41:08.159  
Yeah.

693  
00:41:08.159 --> 00:41:09.159  
I got to go.

694

00:41:09.159 --> 00:41:10.159  
<v Bryan Marrion> This hand.

695  
00:41:10.159 --> 00:41:11.159  
Yeah.

696  
00:41:11.159 --> 00:41:16.719  
Yeah, so we were lucky in a way because so many people didn't sell their houses.

697  
00:41:16.719 --> 00:41:17.719  
Ranted.

698  
00:41:17.719 --> 00:41:19.719  
<v James Hoffman> So Catherine went to grad school.

699  
00:41:19.719 --> 00:41:20.719  
Went to York.

700  
00:41:20.719 --> 00:41:21.719  
Did her masters.

701  
00:41:21.719 --> 00:41:22.719  
Masters in theater.

702  
00:41:22.719 --> 00:41:23.719  
And you did what?

703  
00:41:23.719 --> 00:41:25.159  
You worked for Harbourfront? Went to York, did our masters. Masters in theater. And you did what?

704  
00:41:25.159 --> 00:41:26.559  
You worked for Harborfront?

705  
00:41:26.559 --> 00:41:29.480  
<v Bryan Marrion> I was in charge of York Key Center

706  
00:41:29.480 --> 00:41:31.079  
and all production at Harborfront.

707  
00:41:31.079 --> 00:41:31.920  
Wow.

708  
00:41:31.920 --> 00:41:33.079  
A huge job.

709  
00:41:33.079 --> 00:41:34.840  
I had the biggest department.

710  
00:41:34.840 --> 00:41:37.800  
I had like 42 people working for me.

711  
00:41:37.800 --> 00:41:42.800  
We did 4,000 events a year, including tectonic plates,

712  
00:41:43.639 --> 00:41:47.960  
including theater, circus, you know,

713  
00:41:47.960 --> 00:41:52.079  
I met the royal family, I

714  
00:41:52.079 --> 00:41:55.360  
spent days with Brian Mulroney, I knew all the premiers,

715  
00:41:55.360 --> 00:41:58.559  
I knew the mayors, it was an amazing job.

716  
00:41:58.559 --> 00:42:03.000  
I was the face, that's what they told me, you're the face of Harper Front, so every big event

717  
00:42:03.000 --> 00:42:05.880  
I was there. I had amazing clothes.

718  
00:42:07.719 --> 00:42:09.840  
I stayed put for a few years.

719  
00:42:09.840 --> 00:42:10.659  
<v James Hoffman> In Nelson.

720  
00:42:10.659 --> 00:42:11.500  
Yeah.

721

00:42:11.500 --> 00:42:12.340

Right.

722

00:42:12.340 --> 00:42:13.159

Well, there were no jobs.

723

00:42:13.159 --> 00:42:14.000

Yeah.

724

00:42:14.000 --> 00:42:14.840

Just nothing.

725

00:42:14.840 --> 00:42:19.840

I had a couple of, kind of an enforced sabbatical.

726

00:42:20.239 --> 00:42:21.719

But you know, I did a lot of writing.

727

00:42:21.719 --> 00:42:22.559

Right.

728

00:42:22.559 --> 00:42:24.679

You know, my CV went like that.

729

00:42:24.679 --> 00:42:27.199

So I said to myself, look you're free.

730

00:42:28.719 --> 00:42:34.000

You're an academic. Publish. And I did. So that really helped. Plus I wrote that play about

731

00:42:34.000 --> 00:42:38.719

<v Bryan Marrion> Nelson. Yeah I think that's great. I would love to have seen that. And I got tons of money for it.

732

00:42:38.719 --> 00:42:47.480

<v James Hoffman> I got 16, 18 thousand. When I split with a composer and we spent a year writing it and

733

00:42:47.480 --> 00:42:51.440

next year we put it on. And a big show.

734

00:42:51.440 --> 00:42:56.800

<v Bryan Marrion> Well one of the great satisfactions of doing theater energy is all the theater

735

00:42:56.800 --> 00:42:59.960

that came after. Which in some way we feel

736

00:42:59.960 --> 00:43:04.119

<v James Hoffman> involved with. And Judas Aroli, bless her heart,

737

00:43:04.119 --> 00:43:06.480

was there at the beginning, one of

738

00:43:06.480 --> 00:43:12.360

the solidist members like oh my god and she had never acted before.

739

00:43:12.360 --> 00:43:21.599

So the solomist? Solidist. As Buzz was flaky, Judas was the ground you know

740

00:43:21.599 --> 00:43:26.840

<v Bryan Marrion> and she would say anything to anybody like she was really hard on people me particularly and

741

00:43:27.500 --> 00:43:29.920

<v James Hoffman> Yeah, we just and she stayed

742

00:43:30.500 --> 00:43:35.260

She she went she was the rock. She was the end like she closed the company

743

00:43:35.260 --> 00:43:38.860

Yeah, and I don't know anything about that because I wasn't here

744

00:43:38.860 --> 00:43:42.699

But I I did get the news and talk but she we talked all the time

745

00:43:42.699 --> 00:43:46.119

I mean and I came out from Toronto and sat down

746

00:43:46.119 --> 00:43:49.820

with her and Susie and planned the future of the,

747

00:43:49.820 --> 00:43:51.280

like I was in those meetings.

748

00:43:51.280 --> 00:43:54.139

So Judith and I maintained that relationship.

749

00:43:54.139 --> 00:43:55.039

So when was that?

750

00:43:55.039 --> 00:43:56.159

You planned the future of the company.

751

00:43:56.159 --> 00:43:57.039

What year was that?

752

00:43:57.039 --> 00:43:59.599

<v Bryan Marrion> After I went to Toronto.

753

00:43:59.599 --> 00:44:02.159

So starting in 1984, I came back.

754

00:44:02.159 --> 00:44:04.400

<v James Hoffman> Whenever I came back, Judith and I would spend

755

00:44:04.400 --> 00:44:05.000

a day together.

756

00:44:05.000 --> 00:44:12.000

We would go all through the finances and then we would look at what the company could do, like realistically.

757

00:44:12.000 --> 00:44:17.000

And those 84-85 were tough times. Money was running out.

758

00:44:17.000 --> 00:44:19.000

Oh, big recession.

759

00:44:19.000 --> 00:44:28.860

<v Bryan Marrion> Corps members had gone the big recession locally, detoxing clothes, etc. But theater energy flourished with three penny, with the girls would be out in a minute, with

760

00:44:28.860 --> 00:44:30.340

a food show.

761

00:44:30.340 --> 00:44:36.099

So really the company was just flying, but it wasn't the same company.

762

00:44:36.099 --> 00:44:37.659

But the makeup was very different.

763

00:44:37.659 --> 00:44:39.059

<v James Hoffman> Did you see Godot?

764

00:44:39.059 --> 00:44:40.059

Yeah.

765

00:44:40.059 --> 00:44:41.059

Yeah.

766

00:44:41.059 --> 00:44:42.059

Yeah.

767

00:44:42.059 --> 00:44:47.519

It got good comments, but lost money. That's what I get from my studies.

768

00:44:47.519 --> 00:44:53.440

<v Bryan Marrion> Yeah. There were some concerns. I have, if I have a talent, you know, I was not the greatest actor

769

00:44:53.440 --> 00:44:58.719

in the world, but I'm really good with money. And that's what I did with the company. And that's why

770

00:44:58.719 --> 00:45:06.380

I wasn't in MacMillan Virtual. It was like somebody had to, somebody had to figure out how this company could survive here.

771

00:45:06.380 --> 00:45:11.679

And I'm good at talking to people, so I was on the phone to Victoria, Ottawa, Toronto,

772

00:45:11.679 --> 00:45:13.619

<v James Hoffman> I'd talk to everybody about everything.

773

00:45:13.619 --> 00:45:14.619

So important, yeah.

774

00:45:14.619 --> 00:45:20.820

Yeah, so I think that was my main contribution to the company, that and the brilliant mill

775  
00:45:20.820 --> 00:45:24.239  
scene.

776  
00:45:24.239 --> 00:45:28.920  
<v Bryan Marrion> Which was great, like it really was. But Nancy

777  
00:45:28.920 --> 00:45:34.800  
<v James Hoffman> and I have talked and I said to her one night, I said you know I blame myself

778  
00:45:34.800 --> 00:45:43.679  
<v Bryan Marrion> because I think if we hadn't gotten that huge grant to do voices and I killed

779  
00:45:43.679 --> 00:45:48.239  
myself to get that grant. If we hadn't got that grant

780  
00:45:48.239 --> 00:45:53.840  
we would have kept doing renderings and we would have been a really interesting

781  
00:45:53.840 --> 00:46:02.199  
theater company. If we kept on our own story. Interesting thought. Yeah yeah yeah

782  
00:46:02.199 --> 00:46:07.480  
<v James Hoffman> I believe Nancy was like yeah you know I can see that too because we moved out of ourselves right away

783  
00:46:07.480 --> 00:46:13.559  
<v Bryan Marrion> We started researching. We were writing on the research and we were writing writing. We didn't write in in in renderings

784  
00:46:14.440 --> 00:46:17.219  
We could somebody else was out there trying to write, you know

785  
00:46:17.599 --> 00:46:22.099  
But we didn't have a script like we never had a piece of paper that had the play on it

786  
00:46:22.099 --> 00:46:29.719  
<v James Hoffman> We were basically improving on a kind of a scenario totally Totally. Understanding the scene goes this way, this way, way I go. Yeah, Buzz and

787  
00:46:29.719 --> 00:46:35.760

<v Bryan Marrion> Catherine and I did the mill scene in one day. Yeah. All of it finished. In renderings. Yeah.

788

00:46:35.760 --> 00:46:46.760

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Wow. Yeah. We were hot. We were flying. We were just so good yeah yeah yeah yeah well that's that might be it

789

00:46:46.760 --> 00:46:56.079

<v James Hoffman> you you we've covered your your arc in theater energy and after why was it

790

00:46:56.079 --> 00:47:07.559

<v Bryan Marrion> called Kootenai Theater Energy Society K-U-T-E-N-A-I yep and well we wanted to we wanted to localize it we were proud to

791

00:47:07.559 --> 00:47:12.239

be Kootenay we thought it was important that the company was in the Kootenays we

792

00:47:12.239 --> 00:47:17.079

you know voices are all about the Kootenays. That spelling of

793

00:47:17.079 --> 00:47:20.440

<v James Hoffman> Kootenay suggests the First Nations. Oh I know.

794

00:47:20.440 --> 00:47:26.840

<v Bryan Marrion> Flavor. Always makes me uneasy because we have no connections at all you know that

795

00:47:26.840 --> 00:47:32.920

would have been a great play and and and we let we let buzz do something he

796

00:47:32.920 --> 00:47:37.800

probably shouldn't have looking back on it yeah I think we probably let lots of

797

00:47:37.800 --> 00:47:41.539

us to do things we probably shouldn't have well I did theater then too and

798

00:47:41.539 --> 00:47:48.760

<v James Hoffman> like 60s and early 70s the whole hipp hippie mentality was to be free wheeling and open and free.

799

00:47:48.760 --> 00:47:49.760

Improv.

800

00:47:49.760 --> 00:47:52.519

Yeah, improv was great.

801  
00:47:52.519 --> 00:47:53.519  
Break the rules.

802  
00:47:53.519 --> 00:47:54.519  
Don't be hierarchical.

803  
00:47:54.519 --> 00:47:58.559  
Don't need big director talents what to do.

804  
00:47:58.559 --> 00:47:59.559  
Be yourself.

805  
00:47:59.559 --> 00:48:01.880  
Work from the ground up.

806  
00:48:01.880 --> 00:48:02.880  
Be open to everything.

807  
00:48:02.880 --> 00:48:05.000  
If it feels good, do it.

808  
00:48:05.000 --> 00:48:07.000  
All that stuff, remember that?

809  
00:48:07.000 --> 00:48:10.000  
Yeah.

810  
00:48:10.000 --> 00:48:16.000  
I went down to San Francisco in that period to see Hair.

811  
00:48:16.000 --> 00:48:17.000  
Okay.

812  
00:48:17.000 --> 00:48:21.000  
Big production of Hair in San Francisco in the late 60s.

813  
00:48:21.000 --> 00:48:22.000  
That was a party.

814  
00:48:22.000 --> 00:48:23.000  
Yeah.

815  
00:48:23.000 --> 00:48:24.000  
That was a production.

816  
00:48:24.000 --> 00:48:25.000  
An event. I had never was a production. An event.

817  
00:48:25.000 --> 00:48:26.000  
I had never seen a play like that before.

818  
00:48:26.000 --> 00:48:30.000  
It was a big production, but they had us all dancing, drinking wine.

819  
00:48:30.000 --> 00:48:31.000  
I know.

820  
00:48:31.000 --> 00:48:32.000  
I know.

821  
00:48:32.000 --> 00:48:33.000  
That was off the balcony.

822  
00:48:33.000 --> 00:48:34.000  
It was like, holy shit.

823  
00:48:34.000 --> 00:48:35.000  
Did you see the mind company?

824  
00:48:35.000 --> 00:48:40.000  
The San Francisco Mind Company?

825  
00:48:40.000 --> 00:48:41.559  
<v Bryan Marrion> No, I'd like to have.

826  
00:48:41.559 --> 00:48:44.320  
<v James Hoffman> They were a huge influence on me because I saw a couple of years.

827  
00:48:44.320 --> 00:48:46.320

They were not when I was there, unfortunately. They were a huge influence on me because I saw a couple of years. They were not when I was there unfortunately.

828

00:48:46.320 --> 00:48:48.480

They were a lot like theater energy to me.

829

00:48:48.480 --> 00:48:49.960

That's what I wanted to do.

830

00:48:49.960 --> 00:48:52.199

I wanted to do that kind of theater.

831

00:48:52.199 --> 00:48:58.920

I would love to do a part play like they did and you know they mimed every word.

832

00:48:58.920 --> 00:49:01.440

It's fantastic to watch.

833

00:49:01.440 --> 00:49:07.599

I've directed, tried to direct that way occasionally. Im-hmm. I played with it. I always thought it was great.

834

00:49:07.599 --> 00:49:13.159

<v Bryan Marrion> Get a little rhythm group going, not an orchestra with traditionalists, sound makers, you know.

835

00:49:13.159 --> 00:49:19.480

Just things that make sound, you know, a little percussion, whatever. And just have them there

836

00:49:19.480 --> 00:49:26.639

<v James Hoffman> at every rehearsal and get people moving a certain way. So when you step over here, you know,

837

00:49:26.639 --> 00:49:30.679

there's a little accompaniment to it. Sometimes it's very subtle, very quiet, other times

838

00:49:30.679 --> 00:49:33.920

a little louder. I did a Shakespeare that way.

839

00:49:33.920 --> 00:49:37.519

Huh. Which one?

840

00:49:37.519 --> 00:49:39.760

That would have been The Tempest.

841  
00:49:39.760 --> 00:49:40.760  
Okay.

842  
00:49:40.760 --> 00:49:46.639  
Yeah. The idea of this magical island, you know. Yeah. I had a kind of an orchestra quote,

843  
00:49:46.639 --> 00:49:52.239  
you know. Where did you do that? Kamloops, Thompson River Studios. Okay. Right. University

844  
00:49:52.239 --> 00:49:58.800  
Theater Department. Yeah. And I had a little orchestra of spirits of the island, you know,

845  
00:49:58.800 --> 00:50:03.360  
with these little noise makers in the background. But you gotta have them there for the first

846  
00:50:03.360 --> 00:50:09.940  
<v Bryan Marrion> rehearsal. Yeah. Yeah. Because it's creative, it's creative, it develops as things go on. Right.

847  
00:50:09.940 --> 00:50:15.800  
The actors have to know what, you know, get used to it. Yeah. And at the end, I really enjoyed it myself.

848  
00:50:15.800 --> 00:50:21.039  
Nancy and I were playing with that and drawing, you know, musicians in and

849  
00:50:21.039 --> 00:50:25.599  
talking about that, developing that along with everything else in the process.

850  
00:50:25.599 --> 00:50:26.599  
<v James Hoffman> Yeah, a big believer in that.

851  
00:50:26.599 --> 00:50:27.440  
Yeah, yeah, I love that.

852  
00:50:27.440 --> 00:50:28.639  
If you're gonna have something like that,

853  
00:50:28.639 --> 00:50:30.920  
just kind of, you can't have them come in at the last minute

854

00:50:30.920 --> 00:50:33.280  
and make noises, have nothing to do with what

855  
00:50:33.280 --> 00:50:36.699  
the actors are doing, it's gotta be totally integrated.

856  
00:50:37.920 --> 00:50:39.159  
Sure.

857  
00:50:39.159 --> 00:50:41.159  
Well, I should probably let you go.

858  
00:50:42.840 --> 00:50:43.880  
Thank you so much, Brian.

859  
00:50:43.880 --> 00:50:44.719  
You're a-

860  
00:50:44.719 --> 00:50:45.559  
<v Bryan Marrion> No, you're welcome.

861  
00:50:45.559 --> 00:50:47.480  
Again, I mean, we're so.