



Think **Creatively!**

AN ARTS EDUCATION FORUM

A Forum on Integrating The Arts into our Children's Lives

Thursday, April 12, 2007

**The King Street Theatre Centre and
The Registry Theatre, Kitchener**

A Summary Report



Funded by The Ontario Trillium Foundation. The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, receives annually \$100 million of government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative.



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien

Canada

Introduction

Artists, educators and presenters from across the province gathered at The King Street Theatre Centre and The Registry Theatre in Kitchener on Thursday, April 12, 2007.

The day was designed to bring together and coordinate the efforts of educators, performing artists and community presenters so that children can benefit from the best performing arts experiences possible.

We enjoyed a performance of *Petrouchka* by **Motus O dance theatre**, along with students from local schools. We participated in an interactive movement workshop with members of the dance company. We were inspired by a performance of students from the Integrated Arts Package at Eastwood Collegiate School, along with members of Motus O dance theatre. We participated in a panel discussion, workshops and discussion groups.

We truly did **Think Creatively...Participate Actively...Imagine Artistically and Experience Passionately!**

An important component of the day was to gather participants' comments and ideas in the form of a survey conducted by Cheryl Ewing of eyeGo to the Arts. A total of 27 completed surveys, representing a return of 54%, were submitted to form the basis of this report.

General Results

Attendees:

- 36% identified themselves as teachers
- 18% were involved in presenting the performing arts and
- 21% were artists or connected to an arts organization
- The remainder self-identified as involved in two or more sectors.

Arts involvement:

- 44% of those attending are currently involved in the arts.
- 22% had no arts training at any time.
- The education sector had their experiences with music while the arts sector was fairly evenly distributed through instrumental and vocal music, theatre and dance.

The arts and teaching:

- The educators indicated that they were most familiar with theatre (60%) with slightly less (50%) familiar with choral and instrumental music and a familiarity with contemporary dance (40%).
- The artists and presenters were most familiar with instrumental music and theatre.

Specific Results

We asked a series of questions about attending performances; seeing arts education as a valuable part of children's learning; and whether each child has the ability to express him/herself creatively but needs help. The arts and presenting sectors strongly agreed with the first two statements, but were less adamant about children needing help to discover their artistic talents. Educators strongly agreed with all three statements.

Who do you think should take a leadership role in exposing children to performing arts?

The Ministry of Education was identified across the sectors, with the Ministry of Culture and municipal and community venues close behind. Arts educators also added artists to the list and educators felt that the education system should take a leadership role. The presenting community was evenly split.

What barriers do you think limit exposing more children to the performing arts?

All sectors believe that teachers' unfamiliarity with performing arts and cost are the biggest barriers. Educators identified teachers' lack of interest, along with unfamiliarity with arts and artists and presenters identified teachers' and parents' unfamiliarity. Comments included:

- The arts are not a Ministry of Education priority;
- Performances do not always reflect our diverse community;
- Lack of time in day; competition with sports, standardized testing;
- Math/Literacy focus in schools;
- It is difficult for teachers to take on the extra work needed to organize performances;
- Not too expensive, just not enough money.

In discussing whether attending performing arts is frightening for someone unfamiliar with the performing arts or that the act of going to the theatre can be frightening; the only strong reaction came from artists who do not agree that going to the theatre is a frightening experience.

Overall (56%) attendees felt that children should experience more performing arts in the Waterloo school district. This was followed by concern about the future (48%) and wanting to learn more about educators' needs regarding introducing children to the performing arts (48%). Artists and presenters were intrigued by the opportunity to participate in workshops based on performing arts (67%) and concern about the future of the performing arts (67%). They both placed more performing experiences for children at 50%. Educators were most concerned about children experiencing more performing arts (80%).

The Performances

Motus O dance theatre presented two performances. The first, *Petrouchka*, was directed to elementary school students and the second was a collective creation that included a number of secondary school students that the company had been working with for a day. Delegates were asked a series of questions about engagement, reflection and whether they were challenged.

Generally, it was agreed that the children watching the performance of *Petrouchka* were engaged. The adults were far more engaged in the performance that included students. The delegates rated *Petrouchka* as somewhat engaging, provoking and inspiring.

Educators were more involved and inspired to introduce elements of the performing arts to their students. Following the second performance, there was a question and answer period that included the students who spoke quite eloquently about the impact of having the opportunity to perform with professionals. They were clearly inspired to reach the expected standard of excellence required by the choreography.

The Workshop

The morning included a participatory workshop with the dancers from **Motus O dance theatre**. Although the delegates were split about whether the workshop was personally challenging, they all enjoyed it. One commented *"I realized that I hadn't risked like that with adults in a long time."*

Participation in the workshop affected an appreciation for the value of arts education by

- giving an appreciation of the skills learned in a short period of time;
- participation in performing arts activities requires a team approach; and
- it would be a good experience for all children.

The Panel Discussion

A panel consisting of individuals active in developing arts education opportunities in the community followed the workshop. 52% of delegates found the discussion to be stimulating.

The Discussion Groups

Following lunch, the delegates gathered in one of three discussion groups – education, presenters and artists. Each group was given the task of identifying five key questions to take back to the larger group at the end of the day. Delegates found the discussion groups to be stimulating and supportive, providing knowledge and additional resources that are available.

Overall Results

Following are the five key questions that each group posed for the larger group to address at the end of the day:

Artists' Group

1. How can artists most effectively support a cry for designated long-term arts consultants?
2. How can artists/arts educators support artists and audiences from multi-cultural communities and reflect diversity?
3. How can artists get their message (values of arts education) to teachers?
4. How do we build community together through arts education to create lobbying power?
5. How do artists sell shows to educators?

Educators' Group

1. Can artists and presenters together provide a forum for educators to preview the upcoming season, along with supporting resources?
2. Would artists and presenters like assistance from educators in marketing in 'teacher-speak'?
3. What information do educators need about an artist and their performance in order to maximize the experience?
4. How can educators/artists/presenters work together to advocate for the value of the arts in education?
5. Can artists present study guides in an online format?

Presenters' Group

1. How do presenters ensure the highest quality artistic experience while meeting curriculum needs?
2. Who should decide programming?
3. How should presenters communicate with educators?
4. How important is the venue?
5. Is there a better way to share the preparation process?

Next Steps and Recommendations – Identifying the Legacy

The following is the summary of the final session. Jamie Grant, General Manager of the Centre in the Square, Kitchener received the Top 5 Questions from each break out group (educators, artists, presenters) and asked the entire delegation to work collaboratively to answer the questions and identify solutions. Due to time constraints, not all questions were dealt with and in some cases the organizing partners have added information in the Action column after the forum was completed to provide additional information and resources.

Artists Questions	Answers	Actions
1. How can artists/arts educators support artists and audiences from multi-cultural communities and reflect diversity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need to understand where the students are coming from and provide programming relative and reflective of their cultural experiences/background ▪ Alternatively, providing programming from multi-cultural communities to a non-diverse school is equally as important as a vehicle to show the level of diversity within their larger community ▪ Investigate how other communities and presenters integrate multicultural programming into their activities ▪ Investigate CPAN – Cultural Pluralism in the Arts ▪ There's enriching your people and there's expanding horizons through diversity – needs to be carefully done. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ See Kitchener –Waterloo Multicultural Centre www.kwmc.on.ca ▪ See Harbourfront Centre, Toronto website at www.harbourfrontcentre.com and www.harbourfrontcentre.com/schoolvisits ▪ CPAN – Cultural Pluralism in the Arts www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~humdiv/CPA – Charles Smith
2. How can artists get their message (values of arts education) to teachers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the “value of arts education” is dependent on experience. Teachers need to receive continued opportunities to experience the arts. • There needs to be a tangible connection that the arts help us to achieve academically, socially etc... and that these skills can be applied to every day life, literacy, numeracy etc... • With supportive data, we can apply for funding and take findings back to school and school boards for advocacy purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prologue continues to partner with Faculties of Education (York University, Brock University and OISE) to deliver performing arts experiences to teacher candidates ▪ See Creative City website at www.creativecity.ca/resources/making-the-case ▪ See Canada Council website at www.unesco.ca/en/interdisciplinary/artslearning • See Ontario Arts Council website at www.arts.on.ca for <i>Making the Case for Arts Education</i> by Steven Campbell and Kathryn Townshend.
3. How do we build community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an advisory subcommittee on arts education – lines of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matt White, Cheryl Ewing, Laurel Brown and Kevin Fell will be spokespeople for advocacy • Arts Vote provides a list of questions to

<p>together through arts education to create lobbying power?</p>	<p>communication are now opened up between Ministries of Culture and Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vote strategically and understand your member of parliament's cultural policy. • Prologue and CCI to work together • Teachers to appeal to local schools and school boards on the value of the arts • Teachers to appeal to local schools and school boards to designate Professional Development Days to be focused on arts education 	<p>challenge provincial election candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think Creatively! organizers to distribute an advocacy template letter with accompanying data that supports the intrinsic value of the arts in education • Teachers to send advocacy letter to their board, Municipal Government and Members of Provincial Parliament
<p>4. How do artists sell shows to educators?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artists can approach individual schools and/or school boards directly to perform in local schools • Artists can be part of the following arts education organizations that represent artists and facilitate their performances in the schools: Inner City Angels, Mariposa in the Schools, MASC and Prologue to the Performing Arts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the Ministry of Education website for a listing of schools in your community/region www.edu.gov.on.ca • Contact your local Arts Consultant at the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, Shannon Smith at shannon.smith@wcdsb.edu.on.ca • Contact your local Arts Consultant at the Waterloo Region District School Board, Wanda West-Gerber at wanda_west-gerber@wrdsb.on.ca • See the websites of the following arts education organizations www.innercityangels.ca, www.mits.on.ca, www.masconline.ca, www.prologue.org

Educators Questions	Answers	Actions
1. Can artists and presenters together provide a forum for educators to preview the upcoming season along with supporting resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill Nuhn – Centre in the Square will be happy to host
2. Would artists and presenters like assistance from educators in marketing in “teacher-speak?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yes, but there is a fear that the curriculum might drive the performance creation and selection. ▪ Must always start with the “art” first and ensure that the performance experience is top quality. ▪ One part is missing – the youth – enrichment programs ▪ Artists and presenters to work in partnership with educators (educators invited to sit on committees or boards) to help create and/or advise appropriate language relative to the education community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Next year, workshop to be established to exemplify how a performance can fit into the curriculum. John will host.
3. What information do educators need about an artist and their performance in order to maximize the experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educators need to understand the curriculum connections and themes inherent in the performance, age appropriateness ▪ Educators need to receive and participate in the suggested pre and post activities provided by the performance Study Guide ▪ Link the performance to pre-existing issues/activities currently conducted by school community ▪ Provide educators and their champions with the ‘How To’ document ▪ Start a Professional Development Day for teachers that deals with preparing for a performance in the schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contact Prologue to the Performing Arts to receive a free “How To: Arts in the Schools” document

<p>4. How can educators/artists / presenters work together to advocate for the value of the arts in education?</p>	<p>(Same as Artist Answer #3 & #4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the “value of arts education” is dependent on experience. • There needs to be a tangible connection that the arts help us to achieve academically, socially etc... and that these skills can be applied to every day life, literacy, numeracy etc... • Need to collect data. With supportive data, we can properly advocate for continued arts education funding. • There is an advisory subcommittee on arts education – lines of communication are now opened up between Ministries of Culture and Education • Vote strategically and understand your member of parliament’s cultural policy. • Ask Prologue and CCI to work together • Teachers to appeal to local schools and school boards on the value of the arts • Presenters to continue to offer educational outreach programs to schools during the school week and additional programming on the weekend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Creative City website at www.creativecity.ca/resources/making-the-case • See Canada Council website at www.unesco.ca/en/interdisciplinary/artslearning • See Ontario Arts Council website at www.arts.on.ca for <i>Making the Case for Arts Education</i> by Steven Campbell and Kathryn Townshend. • Arts Vote provides a list of questions to challenge provincial election candidates • Think Creatively! organizers to distribute an advocacy template letter with accompanying data that supports the intrinsic value of the arts in education • Teachers to send copies of this advocacy letter to their board, Municipal Government and Members of Provincial Parliament
<p>5. Can artists present study guides in an online format?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, although issues around copyright must be understood and acknowledged. • Study Guides can be interactive for both teacher and student when delivered electronically/internet • Hard copy still of use and can be photocopied and distributed to participating teachers and classrooms • Without control of internet, the preparation 	

	<p>of Study Guide material needs to be voluntary for artists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study guides can and will be used in varying degrees, dependent on the comfort levels of teachers in dealing with material that they are not fully versed in • Education is moving in way of technology, but asking artists to participate is not inappropriate nor is it financially accessible for many artists 	
--	---	--

Presenter Questions	Answers	Actions
<p>1. How do presenters ensure the highest quality artistic experience while meeting the curriculum needs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenters need to work in partnership with board consultants for the visual arts, media arts, performing arts prior to making programming choices for their season • Review the Ontario Curriculum to understand the expectations of the educators • Set up performance review / comments web site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Ministry of Education website at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary

<p>2. Who should decide programming?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person who decides programming should be the most informed person, who has the most background & experience • The real issue is trust between the three groups; the presenters are more privy to wider exposure to the artists, the educators understand what is required in the education system, and the artists will need to trust that the presenter is trusted by the educator. • Linamar program has built trust and is a good model. • Who's the point person in each school and board level? Should programming be a local or global planning issue? • Its important for the venue to take on responsibility • Most presenters have mission/mandate to present the best performing arts for their community. Yet educators don't like decisions being made for them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glenn Hodgins the Touring and Compass Program Officer at the Ontario Arts Council offers professional development see website at www.arts.on.ca
<p>3. How should presenters communicate with educators?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenters need to make lasting partnerships with Arts Consultants or the person at the Board office responsible for arts curriculum • Arts Consultants role is to provide PD experiences for teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenters can invite educators or administrators to sit on programming committees and/or boards • See the Ministry of Education website for a listing of schools/school boards in your community/region www.edu.gov.on.ca • Contact your local Arts Consultant at the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, Shannon Smith at shannon.smith@wcdsb.edu.on.ca • Contact your local Arts Consultant at the Waterloo Region District School Board, Wanda West-Gerber at wanda_west-gerber@wrdsb.on.ca

For more information

Susan Habkirk

Executive Director

Prologue to the Performing Arts

P | 416-591-9092 x 223

F | 416-591-2023

E | susan@prologue.org

Filename: Forum Report#2 .doc
Directory: C:\Documents and Settings\stephanie\Local
Settings\Temporary Internet Files\OLK197
Template: C:\Documents and Settings\stephanie\Application
Data\Microsoft\Templates\Normal.dot
Title:
Subject:
Author: Joanne Churchill
Keywords:
Comments:
Creation Date: 10/23/2007 12:33:00 PM
Change Number: 11
Last Saved On: 11/22/2007 1:17:00 PM
Last Saved By: Susan Habkirk
Total Editing Time: 223 Minutes
Last Printed On: 3/23/2009 1:05:00 PM
As of Last Complete Printing
Number of Pages: 10
Number of Words: 3,008 (approx.)
Number of Characters: 17,152 (approx.)