

To Be Or Not To Be Feminist:
A Herstory of the Women In View Festival

by


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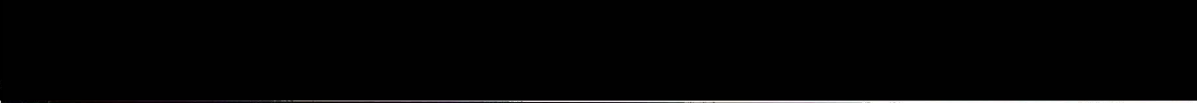
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to present a theatre herstory of Vancouver's Women In View festival, an annual arts event of female-initiated work. This multidisciplinary festival is the chief project of View The Performing Arts Society, an organization dedicated to the promotion of wimin in the arts. As such, the main line of inquiry of this thesis is to question the role and extent of feminist ideology (through an examination of festival format, mandate, marketing, accessibility and programming) in the overall presentation of the Women In View festival. The analysis reveals the emergence of three particular varieties of feminism which I have associated with liberal, cultural and materialist feminisms.

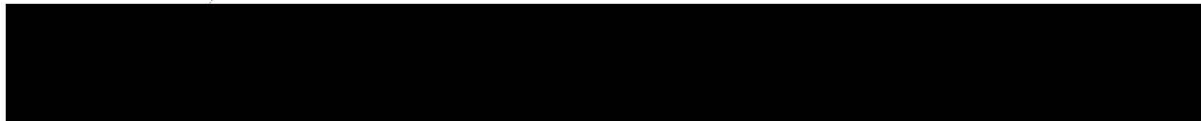
Background and context are provided for VIEW's activities, as well as an historical survey of each year's festival. The thesis then concludes that, yes, Women In View is a feminist festival (although not exclusively) and that VIEW's political positioning on the feminist spectrum is wonderfully inclusive since it embraces a variety of feminist philosophies. This conclusion is then placed in the larger context of the Third Wave wimin's movement, for VIEW has accomplished what many present day feminist organizations are struggling to do - it has united varied and divergent feminist perspectives under a single umbrella organization. Further conclusions are then drawn about the importance of

such a festival and the positive influence it has had on the larger arts community.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

Following in the tradition of many feminist theorists, I attempt to destabilize dominant and patriarchal conceptions of female identity through the medium of language. The spelling of women has been modified to my own formulation, 'wimin'. Instead of the singular woman, I employ the alternative spelling 'womin'.

Etymology tells us that the words woman/women, meaning adult female human being, came from the old English originally meaning "a female servant".¹ The word woman originates from the old English 'wifman', literally meaning "wife man". Man was then a gender neutral term. Wife meant "waif woman"; "woman joined to a man by marriage", and in old English, "mistress of the household".² This means that the very term 'woman' supports oppressive patriarchal ideology because it situates wimin in the private sphere and defines females only in relation to men and patriarchal society.

It is my opinion that, for too many centuries, wimin have been identified only in terms of how they function to serve male interests. By changing the spelling of the word 'woman', I hope to alter the way in which wimin are defined. In the words of Ashcroft et al.,

Language becomes the medium through which a hierarchical

¹ Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p. 1011.

² IBID. p. 1006.

structure of power is perpetuated, and the medium through which conceptions of 'truth', 'order', and 'reality' become established.³

By changing the spelling of woman, awareness of the word is raised. Raising awareness around the word will help to alter established patriarchal conceptions of female identity.⁴

Continuing to follow in the footsteps of some of my sister feminists, I also employ the term 'herstory' instead of history. This alteration does not have an etymological basis but it is, all the same, employed for the purpose of challenging and destabilizing the medium of language. History is most often written by the dominant culture, that is, conventionally speaking, men. As such, the activities of wimin and other marginalized peoples have often been excluded from accounts of the historical past. It is, therefore, *history* -the story of (white) men's past. For this thesis, I am writing specifically about wimin and, therefore, refer to this narrative as *herstory*.

A final note is that, for ease of reading, throughout the body of this thesis I refer to View The Performing Arts Society as 'VIEW', whereas the Women In View festival is referred to as 'View'.

³ Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin. The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 7.

⁴ The spelling of female (originally meaning 'she who suckles') has not been altered, for while this word defines wimin in terms of biology, it does not do so in direct relation to male interests.

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I must also extend a hearty thanks to VIEW's Artistic Director, Kathleen Weiss, for her valuable time spent answering questions, for her unique historical perspective and for her indispensable insights. Further gratitude must be extended to VIEW's Executive Director, Dawn Brennan, for allowing me to wade through the archives and pester her with details and interviews. More generally, I would like to acknowledge the Women In View staff and the female arts practitioners who made this study possible.

I would like to thank all of my friends, especially Jim Scott for keeping my morale high and for helping me with my many computer crises. Last, but not least, I would like to thank my family for its continuing support during my post-secondary education. Without the help of my mother - Lois Ann Maxwell, my sister Faline, and my grandparents - Mr. and Mrs. F.G. Maxwell, this thesis would never have become a reality.

INTRODUCTION

The subject of this thesis is Vancouver's Women In View Festival, an annual performing arts event of female-initiated work, conceived and produced by View The Performing Arts Society. The overriding objective for all of the society's activities is the promotion of women in the performing arts. It is precisely this seemingly feminist agenda (the promotion of women) that interested me most and, in turn, led me to question the *actual* role feminist ideology has played in the overall programming and presentation of the Women In View Festival. My main line of inquiry, therefore, is to examine VIEW's commitment to feminist politics in both theory and practice. Or, to rephrase this idea in the form of a question - can Women In View be considered a feminist festival and if so, what position, or positions, does it occupy on the political spectrum of feminism?

Pursuant to this question, I focus on the overall festival as an entity in and of itself as opposed to presenting an in-depth analysis of the individual performance pieces which are brought to the festival. The employed methodology involves an examination of various festival elements such as mandate, marketing, and programming in the light of feminist theory. My analysis of VIEW's feminist politics reveals an eclectic mix of feminisms, with three strategies in particular, manifesting from the thesis question. I refer to these three particular strains as

liberal, cultural, and materialist feminisms. In so doing, it is not my intention to reduce complex and dynamic theories to over-simplified labels, but rather to establish some broad categorizations, from which to work, for the purpose of analysis.

For instance, an integral component of VIEW's feminist politics privileges the insertion of wimin into the mainstream where, with hard work proving their capabilities, cultural perceptions of wimin's inferior status may be overcome. This is achieved by working within existing social, economic and political structures to secure parity with men. I refer to this position as "liberal" feminism, borrowing my terminology from such feminist theorists as Case, Dolan and Goodman.¹

A central problem with liberal feminism that requires acknowledgment is that it subsumes female gender into the male generic universal category. This means that wimin have to conform to patriarchal structures that cater to men by emulating the masculine model in order to succeed. Until recently, the exceptional wimin who did succeed was often just that - an exception, a remarkable wimin not typical of her sex, often alone and isolated from other wimin. Despite this drawback, the liberal feminist strategy has made some very substantial gains for wimin's equality. There would not

¹ For further reading and more precise definitions of the feminist subcategories, refer to Sue Ellen Case's Feminism and Theater, Jill Dolan's Feminist Spectator as Critic, and/or Lizbeth Goodman's Contemporary Feminist Theatres - To Each Her Own.

be so many female artistic directors or so many successful wimin playwrights working in mainstream Canadian theatres today if it were not for liberal feminism. Wimin such as Judith Thompson, Sharon Pollock, Martha Henry, and Janet Amos (whatever their personal politics) have succeeded in proving that wimin are deserving of centre stage and capable of occupying positions of authority. I believe liberal feminists have played a very crucial role in the increased prominence of female artists on the Canadian cultural scene.

The second feminist strategy that emerges from my analysis involves the development and preservation of a female counter-culture. This stance tends to support a reification of sexual difference based on absolute gender categories - the male universality of liberal feminism being replaced by supposed universal female gender values, for example, pacifism, gentleness and so forth. Implicit in this approach is the notion that femininity is essential (meaning that it is an innate and indispensable conceptual characteristic of being a woman), and even superior to its masculine counterpart. The feminist writers cited refer to this position as "cultural" feminism.²

An obvious problem with cultural feminism is that it merely inverts one discriminatory ideology (patriarchy) with another (matriarchy). Also, cultural feminism does not take into account the fact that wimin are often divided from one another by issues of difference, or that wimin may even

² Ibid.

oppress wimin. Factors such as class, race, sexuality, education, age and so forth can act as barriers or 'markers of difference' that may alienate wimin from one another. These factors often mean that the life experiences (and, therefore, the priorities and concerns) of various wimin are radically different, thus making the idea of universal female values quite problematic. The promotion and preservation of a female counter-culture is also a problematic strategy because, accompanying this position, is the possibility of marginalization and ghettoization.

Despite these shortcomings, cultural feminist strategies are extremely important in that they create and nurture female culture, something heretofore ignored by, and generally absent from, mainstream patriarchal culture. I believe cultural feminism is best viewed as a necessary stepping stone - a much-needed movement that develops and sustains wimin's culture until the day that both male and female experience are integrated into a larger national and cultural identity. In the mean time, cultural feminists have carved a very important and necessary space for wimin's cultural expression and participation - a place for wimin to create, define and perform on their own terms, with their own methods, free of traditional aesthetics, constructions, and restrictions.

VIEW's third strain of emergent feminist politics most appropriately falls under the category of "materialist"

feminism.³ Unlike cultural feminism, this stance dictates that gender is societally constructed, meaning that behavioral role playing is learned through socialization. At the same time, this position acknowledges that women's economic and social status (and, therefore, the level of oppression they encounter) can vary from one woman to the next, depending on her relations to prevailing social structures - relationships affected and determined by factors such as race, class, sexuality, education and so forth.

My own feminist politics, while identifying with some liberal and cultural elements, align most closely with the materialist position. Due to my own biases, the problems inherent to materialist feminism are less obvious to me than with the other two categories previously discussed, but one criticism may be that the materialist perspective is too unrealistic or perhaps idealistic. Many materialist feminists (subscribing to socialist theory) believe that the very nature of capitalism perpetuates, indeed requires, inequality of the sexes.⁴ Critiques from a materialist perspective on gender relations in North America often conclude that only a total restructuring of society, and its institutions, will accomplish the changes necessary to secure true sexual equality. Given the present day stronghold of capitalism, total restructuring of society does seem idealistic or

³ Ibid.

⁴ For instance, Margaret Benston, "Political Economy of Women's Liberation," Monthly Review, 41, December (1989), 31 - 43.

unrealistic because nothing short of a revolution will accomplish the changes materialist feminists deem necessary for true equality between men and wimin in our society.

My own materialist feminist bias is also informed by a "Third Wave" feminist political positioning (and indeed, the two seem to go hand in hand). The wimin's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s (referred to as the Second Wave) was accused, and at least partially guilty, of solely representing the issues and concerns of heterosexual, middle class, white wimin. Due to this past herstory of inequality within the very ranks of wimin striving for equality, present day (or Third Wave) feminist endeavors attempt to include wimin of all races, classes, sexualities, et cetera. This platform of inclusion is one of the major characteristics of Third Wave feminism and can be problematic, practically speaking, since feminists must search for ways to celebrate and represent difference while simultaneously uniting divergent experiences and concerns under a single feminist banner.

This thesis is informed by just such a Third Wave perspective, as well as my own materialist feminist biases. As such, issues of representation, in terms of inclusion and difference, as well as issues of accessibility, figure prominently in my consideration of the festival and its adherence to feminist ideology. I am interested in performing arts that work to inspire change, arts that include a variety of experiences, and arts that offer an alternative to

conventional, mainstream fare. My examination of the Women In View festival is very much foregrounded by these personal interests.

A final area in need of clarification is my use of the term "mainstream". For the purposes of this thesis, mainstream refers to those artistic events which are sanctioned by the establishment/dominant culture. Social sanction is usually bestowed upon those events which realize commercial and financial success and those events that conform to conventional aesthetics and dominant ideological norms. Barbara Drennan's definition of mainstream, taken from Performed Negotiations, best illustrates this relationship:

If there is material reality to the metaphor of the mainstream, it is with reference to the flow of resources that are allowed to circulate relatively unhampered within the institution/establishment economy. The theatre events which fall under the establishment's cultural umbrella will be determined by who has gained access to the most resources. In a society such as ours which measures value in terms of money then it becomes apparent that there is a relationship between following the conventional rules and funding. The rate of flow of resources will be in direct proportion to the perceived similarity between the proposed theatre event and those familiar events which are recognized and which adhere to the establishment's norm. These events satisfy and become part of the establishment's theatre game repertoire. Gaining access to larger portions of the institution's resources, both private and public, is a matter of being sanctioned and recognized in the eyes of the establishment.⁵

⁵ Barbara Drennan, "Performed Negotiations: The Historical Significance of Second Wave Alternate Theatre in English Canada and Its Relationship to the Popular Tradition," Diss. Univ. of Vic. 1995, pp. 32 - 33.

In relation to Canada's arts organizations, such a definition of the mainstream situates the Women In View festival in a problematic position. As will be illustrated in the body of the thesis, there have been times when Women In View has realized financial success and there have been times when government funding agencies have provided official sanction for VIEW's activities. The Women In View festival can still be situated outside of the mainstream, however, because it rejects many of the dominant culture's ideological norms. View privileges the female subject position and, often, a female aesthetic - characteristics that subvert and challenge the establishment's conventions and conceptions. For this reason, I believe the Women In View festival occupies a position outside of the mainstream.

This thesis, organized into ten sections, is primarily a theatre herstory of the Women In View festival, only woven into that narrative is an analysis of VIEW's feminist politics. The first section provides a summation of the position of wimin in Canadian theatrical institutions at the time of VIEW's inception. This is followed by an account of how and why the society came to be, as well as a discussion on the objectives, organizational structure and festival application process. Sections two through nine critique the festival's activities in a chronological order, one section for each year. Section ten draws conclusions about the nature of VIEW's feminist politics and then places those conclusions

within the larger context of the Third Wave wimin's movement. Further conclusions are then drawn about the festival's importance and the possible affects and influences VIEW has had on female artists and the larger arts community.

The research materials that inform this paper are drawn from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary sources fall into two categories: 1) journal articles; and 2) newspaper articles. The journal articles tend to be festival reviews from Theatrum, Vancouver Magazine, and on one occasion, Fuse Magazine. The newspaper articles tend to be critiques of the festival's individual productions and they are drawn primarily from The Vancouver Sun, The Vancouver Province and Georgia Straight. These secondary sources provide some useful background information but they are particularly employed for analyzing the festival's media coverage.

The primary sources I have acquired are numerous and varied but they are all produced by View The Performing Arts Society. This must be kept in mind and the sources judged accordingly. The materials consist of VIEW's Society Act application, government grant applications for 1991, 1992, and 1993, annual reports for 1993/94 and 1994/95 and Viewpoints - the newsletter of View The Performing Arts Society - from 1987 to 1996. Miscellaneous items include project application forms, job descriptions, festival participation statistics and overviews. As well, I conducted

two very informative interviews - one with Kathleen Weiss, founding member and current Artistic Director of VIEW, and the other with Dawn Brennan, Women In View's present Executive Director.

In closing, it should be noted that while I attended the 1996 Women In View Festival, all observations and conclusions about previous festivals are a direct result of research. Unless otherwise indicated, all descriptions of the individual festival productions have been taken from the corresponding Women In View programs/schedule of events.

Part 1: Context and Background

BACKGROUND

The VIEW Society is a Vancouver-based, non-profit organization that was formed and incorporated in 1986 by a core group of seven women - Betty Baxter, Suzie Payne, Jane Heyman, Sue Astley, Patricia Ludwick, Sandra Head, and Kathleen Weiss. The objective of these prominent Vancouver arts practitioners, in forming VIEW, was to address the lack of opportunities for female artists while simultaneously increasing public awareness of women arts practitioners.⁶

Director and founding member Jane Heyman explained her own motivation and subsequent participation with VIEW in a 1989 Vancouver Sun interview:

I just got fed up. I've been working professionally for 24 years, and you know, nothing's really changed much... If women don't give themselves the chance, who's going to?⁷

The body of newspaper articles addressing the formation of View The Performing Arts Society reveal similar sentiments, including three fundamental areas of disgruntlement for the founding members: first, the lack of good plays and roles available to women, especially those 30 to 50 years of age; second, the exclusion of female artists from key artistic and management positions; and third, the fact that audiences were not seeing women's experiences reflected in artistic

⁶ Personal interview with Kathleen Weiss, 23 February 1996.

⁷ Lloyd Dyck, "Festival to showcase women in arts," The Vancouver Sun, 5 January 1989, p. E11.

endeavors. And so, in an effort to effect change and redress the social injustices of sexual discrimination in the performing arts, View The Performing Arts Society was born.

CONTEXT: FEMINIST THEORY & THEATRE

It should be understood that the concerns of VIEW's founding members were not unique to this specific group of wimin. Nor were their concerns geographically specific and unique to Vancouver or even British Columbia. Rather, the exclusion and discrimination of wimin in the performing arts, perceived and experienced by the founding members of VIEW, was (and is) in fact a Canadian, and indeed a Western European, phenomenon with a deep-rooted history. The increasing presence of feminist theatre companies in English-Canada (for example Calgary's Maenad Theatre, Toronto's Company of Sirens and Nightwood Theatre, et cetera) testifies to the fact that female theatre practitioners were and are dissatisfied with Canadian mainstream theatre opportunities. The three areas of concern articulated by VIEW's founding members reflect and represent the concerns of the larger Canadian community of female arts practitioners - some of them feminists. A brief examination of these concerns will illustrate the very real discrimination encountered by wimin in the arts, which in turn explains the often asked question of why female arts practitioners feel it is necessary to create their own artistic spaces.

To help answer this question it is necessary to examine why it is that female theatre practitioners are constantly lamenting the lack of good roles for women. It is my belief and the belief of many feminist critics that, historically speaking, conventional dramatic tradition has distorted and marginalized (and sometimes completely excluded) female experience on the stage and this is reflected in the types of female roles written. It is a useful starting point to identify for whom theatrical images have been produced, for this surely affects how the images and roles are constructed.

Feminist film and theatre critics suggest that performance constructs the anonymous mass of the audience as a single spectator. According to Jill Dolan,

Historically, in North American culture, this spectator has been assumed to be white, middle class, heterosexual, and male. That theatre creates an ideal spectator carved in the likeness of the dominant culture whose ideology he represents, is the motivating assumption behind the discourse of feminist performance criticism.⁸

This means that, until quite recently, the majority of productions were written and directed from a male perspective, for men, expressing dramatic conflict within ideological systems in which male concerns were the norm. Because of this, female characters have tended to be portrayed as passive ciphers of male concern or simply adjuncts to the male protagonist.

⁸ Jill Dolan, The Feminist Spectator as Critic (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988), p. 1.

The traditional audience construction described by Dolan, termed the '(male) gaze'⁹, is partially responsible for the unequal treatment of female characters because it positions a subject and an object in the performance dynamic. He - the male protagonist - is usually the subject, the representative of the dominant culture, and she (usually daughter, mother or lover) is most often the object that is manipulated and controlled by the subject. The effect of this subject/object positioning (besides objectifying women) is the creation and perpetuation of the dichotomous notion that women (and indeed anyone who is not a white heterosexual male) is 'other' - meaning she is not as she should be, she is not a white male and for this reason she is accorded an inferior status. Because women are relegated to the category of 'other' they are deemed unimportant except as they function to serve male interests, that is, the interests of the dominant culture.

A ramification of the 'gaze' is that women have traditionally been represented by images, archetypes or 'signs' that are patriarchal conceptions of how women should and should not behave rather than realistic and active representations of female experience. Sue-Ellen Case has observed that,

As a result of the suppression of real women, the culture invented its own representation of gender, and

⁹ For further reading on the psychoanalytic and film-theory origins of the theory of the gaze, see Laura Mulvey, Visual and Other Pleasures (London: The MacMillan Press Ltd., 1989).

it was this fictional 'Woman' who appeared on stage, in the myths and in the plastic arts, representing the patriarchal values attached to the gender while suppressing the experiences, stories, feelings, and fantasies of actual women.¹⁰

Teresa de Lauretis writes that, with this positioning, a woman becomes symbolic image,

spectacle, object to be looked at, vision of beauty and the concurrent representation of the female body as the locus of sexuality, site of visual pleasure, or lure of the gaze.¹¹

In most plays, men are active heroes who through a battle of strength, will, and acumen, force a change in another, thus bringing their story to a (usually) triumphant closure.¹²

Assigned the place of object and lure of the gaze, women are the recipients of male desire, passively existing rather than acting as the male characters do. In this way, men, always active, utilize and manipulate 'signs' while women passively exist as 'signs'.

That most female characters of conventional male drama exist as stereotypes and/or signs for men's pleasure is further examined by many feminist critics who have grouped existing female roles into very telling categories. For example, Sue-Ellen Case refers to the stereotypical roles as the Bitch, the Witch, the Vamp and the Virgin/Goddess.¹³

¹⁰ Sue-Ellen Case, Feminism and Theater (London: MacMillan Publishers Ltd., 1988), p. 7.

¹¹ Teresa de Lauretis, Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 37.

¹² Ibid., p. 103.

¹³ Case, p. 6.

Lesley Ferris categorizes female roles as the penitent whore, the speechless heroine, the golden girl, and the willful woman.¹⁴ Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, in a critique of Euripides' female characters, identifies the two main categories as the Vengeful Destroyers and the Fetishized Victims.¹⁵ Other feminist critics such as Ann Kaplan simply assess the roles in terms of positive and negative characterization according to criteria describing the fully autonomous woman.¹⁶

Whatever the categories or terminology used, it becomes readily apparent that the available female roles are limited and stereotyped. Taking my cue from Rabinowitz, I think the categories can be simplified into two general areas; the Sacrificial Woman and the Vengeful Destroyer, or the 'good' woman and the 'bad' woman. The 'good' woman is passive, self-effacing, self-sacrificing, and lives to serve her male authorities, thus representing the dominant ideology's concept of how a woman should be. The 'bad' woman tends to be active, aggressive, sexual and willful - an example of how women should not behave, and they are usually punished with death for their transgressions. Given the limited nature of

¹⁴ Lesley Ferris, Acting Women: Images of Women in Theatre (London: MacMillan Education Ltd., 1990). Each of the categories receives a chapter of explanation in her text.

¹⁵ Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, Anxiety Veiled: Euripides and the Traffic in Women (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993). Parts I & II discuss the categories in detail.

¹⁶ Ann Kaplan, Women and Film (New York: Methuen, 1983), p. 23.

the two types of female roles available, it is hardly surprising that female theatre practitioners are looking for more interesting, realistic and challenging representations of womanhood. (It should be noted, however, that many actors find it an exciting challenge to tackle such roles. Simon Callow,¹⁷ Harriet Walter¹⁸ and others have written about the necessity of finding, for instance, the hateful side of the good person [and vice versa] in order to fully realize a character.)

The overall effect of the gaze, its concomitant subject/object positioning, and the resulting role types created for women, is a misrepresentation of female experience. This manifestation of limited and often degrading stereotypes has, by and large, effectively denied women positive reflections of themselves on stage and in our culture. Because women have been accorded the status of 'other' and deemed objects for male desire, the discriminatory ideology that assumes superiority of one sex over the other has been supported, perpetuated and enshrined in the institution of theatre - an integral component of our national culture. This means that what people consider to be Western European or North American theatrical culture is, in fact, white heterosexual male culture which is neither indicative nor representative of our society as a whole.

¹⁷ Simon Callow, Being An Actor (London: Methuen London Ltd., 1984).

¹⁸ Harriet Walter, "The Heroine, the Harpy, and the Human Being," New Theatre Quarterly, 9, May (1993), 110 - 120.

How did this misogynistic tradition become so firmly engrained in the institution of theatre? It is no secret that up until the Restoration women were officially denied active participation in theatrical endeavors in England (although there were female mimes and acrobats). On the European continent, women experienced a similar situation. For instance, Greek and Roman theatre excluded the participation of women although, again, there were female acrobats and mimes. Women were involved in some theatrical presentations during the Renaissance (for example, *commedia dell'arte* in Italy) but in 1588, Pope Sixtus the fifth passed an edict that banned women from appearing on stage. Enforced mainly in the papal states, the edict lasted for nearly two hundred years.

Lesley Ferris has posited that it was this historical absence of women from the institution of theatre that created the notion of women as 'sign', a symbolic object manipulated and controlled by male playwrights and actors.¹⁹ The dramatic literature produced by Greek, Roman, and Renaissance playwrights, free of direct female intervention or participation, became Western European and North American classics. These works were praised for their universal appeal, canonized, and set up as models by which all subsequent works were to be measured. The irony is, of course, that these works are not universal. They present only

¹⁹ Ferris, p. xi.

a white male Euro-centric perspective and they are often outright sexist and racist. It is my opinion that canonization of the so-called classics led to the crystallization and perpetuation of a dramatic standard that represents, and perhaps requires, patriarchal values and aesthetics. Canonization has glorified and enshrined discriminant ideology in our English-Canadian culture, passing the tradition down through the ages so that it is still with us today.

CONTEXT: CANADIAN THEATRE

Given this past history of the institution of theatre, it is hardly surprising that the dominant ideology has also influenced the hierarchical structure and the division of labour common to Western European and English-Canadian theatre companies. The second concern of VIEW's founding members: the exclusion of wimin from key artistic and management positions, can be seen in the organizational structure of English-Canadian theatres which have served to exclude and marginalize wimin. Evidence and support for this statement is best illustrated by Rina Fraticelli's 1982 report "The Status of Canadian Women in Theatre", which established the concept of the 'Invisibility Factor' - that is, the absence of wimin from significant roles in the work of producing a national culture. According to Fraticelli, "although women formed the majority of the theatre-going public and the vast majority of theatre school graduates,

amateur (unpaid), volunteer, and community theatre workers, in professional theatre women were statistically invisible."²⁰

Fraticelli's statistics grimly illustrate the 'Invisibility Factor' of female theatre practitioners. Out of 1,156 productions staged at 104 Canadian theatres between 1978 and 1981, 77% of the playwrights were men, 10% were women and 13% were collectives. Of directors, 83% were men, 13% were women and 4% were collectives. Of artistic directors 81% were men, 11% were women and 8% were collectives. During these same years, 67% of Canada Council Grants were awarded to men and only 33% to women with 70% of the monies going to men and 30% going to women.²¹ As well, theatre boards - governing both artistic and administrative decisions - were 75% male dominated.²² These statistics show that Canadian theatre was dominated and controlled by men at every level.

The inter-dependent and inter-connected nature of the theatre machine exacerbated the situation of unequal opportunity, resulting in systemic discrimination. To quote Fraticelli,

The preponderance of men on the boards of directors of theatres influences the appointment of male artistic directors, which influences the selection of plays by men, and the engagement of male directors to direct them. And plays written by men are far more likely to

²⁰ Kate Lushington, "Fear of Feminism," Canadian Theatre Review, 43, Summer (1985), 7.

²¹ Rina Fraticelli, "Any Black Crippled Woman Can! or A feminist's notes from outside the sheltered workshop," Room Of One's Own, 8, No. 2 (1983), 10, 12.

²² Laura MacMaster, "Women in the Arts: An Endangered Species," The Peak, 8, 1 March 1989, p. 12.

feature roles for male performers. All of this describes an aesthetic which excludes the experience of women...The exclusion of women's contributions... undermines the version of reality which is actually lived by the women who comprise the vast majority of theatre audiences. Thus an internalized, perhaps unconscious, sexism becomes culturally-encoded and institutionalized. That is called systemic discrimination.²³

Though Fraticelli's statistics are now out of date, they are useful for establishing the environment that female theatre practitioners encountered in the early 1980s, an atmosphere that generated the founding of View The Performing Arts Society. Wimin's exclusion from key artistic positions, combined with the stereotypical nature of the roles available to wimin meant that wimin's experiences were not being adequately reflected in theatrical productions - the third area of concern for VIEW's founding members. Given this climate of exclusion it is hardly surprising that a group of enterprising female artists would feel it necessary to strike out on their own in an attempt to redress the imbalances.

THE FORMATION OF VIEW THE PERFORMING ARTS SOCIETY

The core group of wimin who formed View The Performing Arts Society were primarily theatre workers, many of them directors. Jane Heyman, Kathleen Weiss, Susie Payne, Sharon Baker, Patricia Ludwick, and Sue Astley all worked in the theatre. Sandra Head was a musician but she usually worked in that capacity for theatre productions. Betty Baxter was the exception to the rule since she was not an arts practitioner

²³ Fraticelli, pp. 9-10.

but an 'out' lesbian NDP candidate. Most of these founding members were shaped by the influences of 'the Sixties', so they had a great interest in political, social, and feminist concerns. Combine these common concerns with a common interest and love for the arts and the result is a politically motivated group of wimin interested in creating opportunities for wimin in the arts.

The idea of View The Performing Arts Society originally began when the wimin mentioned above met with other wimin to discuss the state of their careers and the state of theatre in general. It quickly became evident to these wimin that there were major discrepancies between their own careers and the careers of their male colleagues. Kathleen Weiss stresses, however, "that it wasn't about personal career", it was about the fact that they couldn't see that wimin were in any positions where decisions got made.²⁴ If these wimin were not primarily concerned with their own careers, but rather with the very nature and structure of the institution of theatre, then their motivation was definitely political. That wimin were not occupying decision-making positions and that work by and about wimin was rarely being produced in theatres (see pages 19 - 21) led these wimin to ask what they could do to change the situation.

As more and more wimin attended these meetings, artists from outside the area of theatre began to take an interest in

²⁴ Weiss interview.

the group's discussions and activities, thus lending a multidisciplinary focus to the group. In terms of what to do and how to do it, the group approached the subject by asking each other "What would be your dream?". On October 9, 1986, the group's dreams resulted in the incorporation, under the B.C. Society Act, of View The Performing Arts Society. An examination of the Society's first constitution (see appendix 1) will reveal that the members of VIEW drafted a mandate full of feminist ideas in an effort to redress the discrimination experienced by its members.

VIEW'S ORIGINAL OBJECTIVES

The constitutional articles 2a, 2b and 2e illustrate VIEW's desire to promote and provide education, training, skills-development and improved opportunities for female performing arts practitioners. These articles reflect a feminist politic because they were specifically designed to help counter the problem of unequal opportunity as experienced by so many of VIEW's members at the hands of mainstream theatrical institutions. On the surface these constitutional articles seem to reflect a cultural feminist position simply because they are exclusively designed for wimin. These articles cannot be considered exclusively cultural, however, since the nature of the theatre machine literally forced these wimin into a cultural feminist position. Because mainstream theatres were not offering many opportunities for wimin, the only option these wimin had was

to create opportunities of their own. And so, while articles 2a, 2b, and 2e may appear to be heavily influenced by cultural feminism, I believe that they were, in fact, motivated by a very liberal feminist desire: to be included in the mainstream. Female arts practitioners require training and improved opportunities (which VIEW planned to offer) in order to occupy positions of authority in mainstream theatrical institutions.

Article 2c also articulates a feminist concern: "to encourage the participation in the performing arts of women artists from a diversity of cultural backgrounds." Politics of representation figure prominently in feminist analysis - most often from a materialist perspective, but not exclusively, for the inclusion and representation of culturally diverse women is also a primary concern of a more general Third Wave feminist platform. This aspect of VIEW's constitution, which is still current, may be considered Third Wave/materialist feminist in nature although, again, not exclusively for VIEW's platform of inclusion and cultural diversity is also appropriate in the Canadian context of a multicultural society.

Article 2d, "to facilitate communication among women artists at all levels of experience...", is more ambiguous in terms of its connection to feminist politics. Networking, idea-sharing and mentor-relations, while not the sole property of feminism by any means, are important tools for feminists, especially during times of socio-political

activity. These tools provide a means for making career connections, for disseminating educational (feminist) information and as a way to come in contact with people of like minds.

The second half of the statement, "at all levels of experience", is very important in terms of VIEW's goals and objectives, for a balance between established and emerging artists is, to this day, an integral component of the Women In View festival. The reasons for this are obvious. VIEW provides a space for both the experienced and the emerging artist to demonstrate her work, thus furthering the policy of inclusion by supporting artists at all levels of experience. Another reason is that beneficial or mentor-type relationships may be created in which both parties may learn from one another.

Article 2f is perhaps one the most interesting and problematic objectives of VIEW - "to promote, produce and present theatrical events which will enhance public awareness of a female aesthetic". The notion of a female aesthetic is problematic because there is still no consensus as to whether or not such a thing even exists. It is true that certain commonalities or characteristics can often be identified in wimin's writing, for instance: a rejection of realism for more imagistic work; a cyclical or spiraling form instead of a climatic conflict and resolution format; a discarding of the linear time structure; a revisioning of history; et

cetera. But do a set of characteristics or commonalities necessarily constitute an aesthetic?

Material and liberal feminists tend to reject the notion of a female aesthetic, albeit for different reasons. A liberal feminist would naturally insist that there are no differences between men and wimin, and therefore no differences in their writing, perhaps only differences in experience. Material feminists, such as myself, reject the concept of a female aesthetic because it is an essentialist, dichotomous notion that is potentially limiting. If there was a single female aesthetic then all works written and produced by wimin would be the same, trapped as it were by an assigned aesthetic, which would leave very little room for experimentation (a cornerstone of feminist performing arts). As well, materialist feminists acknowledge that divisions or differences in wimin's experiences (often due to class, race, sexuality and so forth) may result in different styles of writing and performance, which, to some, would constitute yet another set of aesthetics.

Cultural feminists, on the other hand, tend to support the concept of a female aesthetic. Their essentialist beliefs about the innate differences between men and wimin are seen to logically manifest in two very distinct, gender-specific, writing and performance styles. (And many French feminists support the similar idea of a distinct female writing style that is usually referred to as *l'écriture féminine*) Given the debatable nature of the existence of a female aesthetic it is

interesting that VIEW firmly committed itself to a cultural feminist position on this front. Article 2f is the only constitutional statement that can be specifically identified as a uniquely cultural feminist perspective.

Constitutional article 2g reflects VIEW's founding members' third concern that audiences were not seeing women's experiences reflected in the performing arts. The article states that VIEW will "provide the public of British Columbia with the benefits and advantages of women's artistic contributions to the performing arts." On the feminist spectrum, this stated goal seems to fit into the liberal category. Liberal because VIEW is providing performing arts for "the public of British Columbia", that is, presenting art by women for the general society - the mainstream. The statement suggests an insertion of women into the mainstream of theatrical production/presentation (without challenging the values or even the appropriateness of a system that has so long excluded women), thus mirroring the liberal feminist intent to insert women into the mainstream of society.

The final article articulating VIEW's artistic philosophies, 2h, states that the Society will, "provide opportunities for women in the performing arts to cooperate with artists working in other disciplines." The multidisciplinary emphasis is another feature of VIEW's objectives that is still an integral component of the Society's present day mandate. A multidisciplinary platform was originally established because there were many different

kinds of artists who attended the initial VIEW-forming meetings. For example, according to Kathleen Weiss, dancers were particularly high in attendance since, at that time, it was next to impossible for an independent choreographer in Vancouver to get her work produced.²⁵

Kathleen Weiss, when interviewed, articulated another reason for the multidisciplinary format, "We also felt that there was a real openness in a lot of women artists toward other disciplines and we saw a lot of women wanting to experiment, even women who were not in theatre, who were really opening themselves up to all that."²⁶ Further on in the interview Weiss declared that there was "a real hunger" for interaction (and the influences and experiments that flow out of such interaction) between the disciplines. The hunger for a multidisciplinary format makes sense because a lot of art created by feminists is very experimental in form (since they are purposely rejecting patriarchal conventions) and often crosses or blurs discipline boundaries. So, either the women Weiss refers to were all feminists or female artists in general were becoming more interested in bridging the artistic disciplines.

In terms of feminist politics, this multidisciplinary objective could be viewed in terms of Third Wave feminist ideology. The Third Wave platform of inclusion - of

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

representing wimin from all walks of life, of incorporating many differing and divergent perspectives and voices into a cohesive whole - is further supported by a platform of inclusion in terms of artistic disciplines. VIEW's objective allows for another layer of difference and experience to be represented and incorporated into the larger entity known as View The Performing Arts Society.

A final observation, drawn from the society's constitution, is the fact that VIEW's energies and stated goals were geographically specific and limited to British Columbia. Most of VIEW's members worked in Vancouver and the surrounding area so their activities were understandably directed at their local community.

There is one final priority not found in the constitution but identified by Kathleen Weiss as being of the utmost importance. According to Weiss, from the very beginning there was a great concern that whatever activities VIEW engaged in, payment for artistic services rendered was a requirement.²⁷ As Weiss indicated, because so little money is directed into the arts, as compared to the amount of art being produced, it becomes evident that many arts practitioners must be working for free, especially emerging artists who usually have to first gain experience by volunteering their time. Fraticelli's report (refer back to pages 19 - 20) indicates that the majority of amateur -

²⁷ Ibid.

meaning unpaid - theatre workers were wimin. At the time of the report, wimin constituted the majority of exploited workers (in terms of providing free labour) which makes it very difficult for a womin to support herself, let alone a family, in the capacity of professional artist. VIEW's concept of paying artists reflected the various members' first hand experiences of working without financial compensation.

VIEW'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

View The Performing Arts Society is a non-profit organization that must conform to certain rules and regulations under the B.C. Society Act. To adhere to government regulations, a Society must first formulate and then file a constitution (appendix 1) and/or a set of by-laws with the Registrar of Companies. The executive members of an organization such as VIEW must agree to uphold the principles set down in the constitution and by-laws.

There were originally two types of membership available from VIEW, Active and Associate, both of which required a small annual fee. In 1989 the membership dues were \$10.00 (or \$15.00 for Associate membership) and by 1996 there was only one membership category which charged an annual fee of \$20.00 or pay-what-you-can. Membership currently entitles the members to voting privileges at the annual general meetings, reduced ticket prices for on-going programs, advance notice of VIEW events, and a subscription to the organization's

newsletter. In 1988, View boasted a membership of 116 voting members²⁸ and by 1995 that number had risen to 274 members.²⁹

Also pursuant to the B.C. Society Act, directors (meaning board members) must be elected or appointed to manage the society's affairs in accordance with the constitutional by-laws. VIEW's first directors, at the time of incorporation on 22 September 1986, were Sue Astley, Sharon Baker, Jane Heyman, Patricia Ludwick and Susan Payne. VIEW's subsequent yearly filings with the government of B.C. show that the list of directors became a list of board members, increasing from five in 1986 to thirteen for the 1995/1996 term.³⁰ Every director/board member serves a two year term and more than one consecutive term may be served. These terms are staggered at different intervals so that half of the board members are always experienced and familiar with the organization's affairs.

Also of interest, in terms of the board of directors, is that the member composition maintained by VIEW incorporates a real balance of artists and business wimin. Government criteria tend to push theatre companies toward having business people on their boards but many performance organizations would prefer the board to be composed of

²⁸ Province of B.C., Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations/ Registrar of Companies, "Society Act: Form 11, Section 68," filed 20 September 1988.

²⁹ Province of B. C., Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations/ Registrar of Companies, "Society Act: Form 11, Section 68," filed 2 June 1995.

³⁰ Ibid.

artists since it is an artistic company. VIEW values the presence of business women on their board because they represent part of VIEW's audience base and the presence of such women also ensures that the work created and presented is not just relevant to artists. At the same time, it is very important to VIEW that artists are equally present on the governing board because that community should be represented at every level of decision-making, including the big-business decisions.

It is also the responsibility of a society to hold an annual general meeting in which special business may be discussed, amendments made to the constitution, the year's activities reviewed, financial statements (prepared by an outside auditor) read and the election of a new executive held. VIEW usually attempts to mix in a little creative fun with these business meetings by following the annual general meeting with some sort of entertainment. For example, in 1988 the general meeting was accompanied by an informal cabaret complete with cash bar and snacks.

Beyond government specifications, the organizational structure and division of labour adopted by View The Performing Arts Society was initially quite communal in terms of decision making and power sharing. The society cannot, however, be considered a collective in the truest sense of the word for, while VIEW was very interested in and open to input from all its members, there was still a core group of individuals who met on a monthly basis to make the final

decisions. In 1988 Sue Astley, Carol Chrisjohn, Sandra Head, Jane Heyman and Marietta Kozak volunteered to serve as a shared management team to implement the policies set out by the core group.³¹

To run the company by committee was a practical choice more than a commitment to a feminist politic interested in creating non-patriarchal structures from which to work. Although running the society by committee may seem impractical due to the difficult and unwieldy nature of such an endeavor, at the time it was considered the best way to run the society until VIEW was in a position to afford a full-time general manager.

As View The Performing Arts Society increased its size, finances, and level of professionalism, the organization eventually became much more hierarchically structured. In fact, VIEW's organizational structure mirrors that of any other patriarchal, mainstream organization, with one major exception - VIEW is completely staffed by wimin. This structure is an unusual combination in terms of feminist politics: on the one hand the structure appears to be very liberal, adhering to the universal male model of operating practices; on the other hand, the staffing of wimin only seems to indicate a cultural feminist alliance. Kathleen Weiss attributes the conventional hierarchical structuring to practicality, "It's just that it's hard to write a grant

³¹ "From The Core Group...", Viewpoints- The Newsletter of View The Performing Arts Society, 2, No. 4 (1988), p. 2.

communally.... There's so much decision making that goes on and it happens fairly quickly and with fairly limited resources."³² Trying to run an organization with alternative methods opens the company up to a whole new set of problems, doubling the stress and decision-making time for each activity.

That VIEW is staffed entirely by wimin is a seemingly cultural feminist idea because it creates a counter organization (if not a counter culture) with all the decision-making positions being occupied by wimin instead of men - a reversal of the normal situation. The board members, administrative workers, technical and artistic staff are all wimin. (It should be mentioned, however, that membership is not restricted to wimin only and, for the running of the Women In View festival, male and female volunteers provide the necessary support services.) Nowhere in the constitution does it actually state that only wimin may be hired but, by hiring wimin to fill all the key artistic and management positions, VIEW is fulfilling its mandate to offer improved opportunities for wimin in the arts.

VIEW'S EARLY ACTIVITIES: 1987 & 1988

As an incorporated society with a clear mandate of objectives, VIEW committed itself to two levels of activity: an annual festival of work initiated by wimin and an on-going

³² Weiss interview.

program of special events aimed at providing female arts practitioners with a support system. Accompanying this mixture was a newsletter (originally named Viewpoint but later changed to the much more inclusive title Viewpoints) established as a forum for advertising on-going special events and fund raisers, discussing relevant political issues, and articulating the concerns, problems, needs and appeals of the young organization to its members. For this reason, the Viewpoints newsletter is an excellent source for determining the nature of VIEW's monthly on-going programming.

In keeping with the tone of the constitution, and in an attempt to cater to the professional needs of arts practitioners, much of VIEW's early on-going programming was aimed at supplying female arts practitioners with practical, career-related, skill-enhancing events. One example of this type of programming was the "How To Negotiate A Contract" seminar which was the topic of the 1987 February monthly meeting. The early Viewpoints newsletters also contained advertisements for workshops and classes (means for improving one's artistic skills), some events sponsored by VIEW and others sponsored by outside organizations. Examples of this kind of programming included advanced playwrighting sessions, voice intensive classes, directors' circles, actors' workshops and other short courses.

While VIEW's over-riding objective of promoting women in the arts was pursued through an agenda of practical, skill-

enhancing seminars and workshops, attention was also paid to the more theoretical aspects surrounding women in the arts. For example, on September 14th, 1988, a forum entitled "Assessing the Future: Women in the Arts" was presented by VIEW. This was a two hour discussion moderated by various female artists including a musician/performer/composer, a choreographer, a film director, an actor/writer and a theatrical artist.

Another feature of VIEW's early on-going activities was the performance night event, such as the one held in November 1987, where women could share their work with other artists - whether poetry, dance, or performance art. These gatherings of female artists offered women an opportunity to perform, an opportunity to get feedback on new work, and an opportunity to meet and work with other female artists. Another form of the creative and artistic event in which VIEW engaged was the Performance Sweatshop, such as the one held on August 7, 1988, in which participants were divided into multidisciplinary teams, each with a common theme to develop into a performance idea. This day-long affair included rehearsal and tech/dress time before presenting the finished pieces for the rest of the group.

The Viewpoints newsletter reveals that VIEW's interests could occasionally move into the realm of social politics, especially when the politics coincided with the arts. For example, the November 1987 bulletin urged members to write their M.P.s and voice their opinions on the proposed

pornography legislation. The March/April issue for 1988 advertised The Vancouver Coalition Against Pornography's celebration of wimin's sensuality and its appeal for the involvement of interested artists. VIEW also presented a forum in April 1988 with panelists involved in a discussion of pornography and censorship, followed up by a forum and performance night in the month of May.

Many of VIEW's activities necessarily focused on procuring funds to help make the members' dreams a reality. Attempts were made to combine the fund-raising with interesting and artistic events. Potluck supper/performance night fund-raisers were integral to VIEW's early activities and the potluck held on June 6, 1988 included selling raffle tickets and holding an auction. Fund-raising was naturally a very important and significant aspect of VIEW's early programming and interesting, yet effective, methods for raising money were constantly being sought.

November 1987 witnessed the first "Select Dinner Party" which featured a dessert auction netting \$1,832.89³³, a popular fund-raising technique still employed by VIEW today. VIEW's Financial Statement for December 1988 lists the top two sources for generating income as a very successful casino endeavor and a bingo event. Other avenues of income included membership dues, donations, and grants from such organizations as CEIC Job Development, Canada Council

³³ "Fabulous Fundraiser," Viewpoints- The Newsletter of View, The Performing Arts Society, 2, No. 1 (1988), p. 2.

Explorations, B.C. Cultural Services, the Secretary of State and various foundations.

Throughout the years, VIEW's on-going programming continued to offer female artists practical and theoretical events of direct relevance to their careers. Fund-raising events necessarily occupied a position of greater importance and, as the years progressed, exciting, new methods were sought. For example, the June 1996 fund raising event was "Planting, Growing and Cooking with Herbs". Demonstrations were given, wines were sampled, recipes were taught and the participants got to take their own herb garden home. While VIEW's on-going programming is a very important and integral component of the organization's activities, the scope of this thesis does not allow for a yearly critique. Instead, the main thrust of this thesis will have to concentrate on the Women In View festival.

WHY A FESTIVAL FORMAT?

The original concept of holding an arts festival was influenced by both practical and ideological considerations. Practically speaking, a festival was decided on because "the only money that was around was for festivals."³⁴ A young and struggling organization's first priority is raising funds so that dreams may become reality. As I have already noted, it was (and is) of the highest priority that VIEW be in a

³⁴ Weiss interview.

position to pay artists for their work and the festival format seemed a logical choice since it actually offered an avenue for raising money.

Ideologically speaking, a festival was decided upon, as opposed to a wimin's theatre company, because VIEW wanted to create some kind of structure that would accommodate a large number of wimin, whatever their politics. To quote Kathleen Weiss,

It [the structure] had to be flexible enough that it didn't just serve one pocket of women, so it wasn't just women who were Equity for example, or it wasn't just people who had established careers, or it wasn't just white women, or young women. That was really important, that it be...really inclusive....³⁵

Weiss later pointed out that the problem with establishing a platform of inclusion is that you can never be inclusive enough, but a festival format can certainly facilitate a plethora of perspectives and politics, both in the audience and in the performances.

VIEW's platform of inclusion, built right into the festival format, is representative of Third Wave and materialist feminist politics. It would be a very impressive accomplishment, indeed, to actually have a diverse variety of wimin united together in a common cause. While this Third Wave and materialist feminist objective seems to have dominated the political leanings of VIEW's festival format, there was still another aspect to consider. That VIEW chose to engineer a festival specifically for "female-initiated"

³⁵ Ibid.

work is representative of a cultural feminist perspective. The festival format helps to create and preserve a female counter culture that has had trouble finding representation in patriarchal theatrical institutions.

There was also a liberal feminist element that informed the decision to present a festival of wimin's work. Initially VIEW did consider establishing a wimin's theatre company but opted instead for the festival format because it would more clearly illustrate that there were both audiences and artists interested in wimin's artistic work. As Jane Heyman stated, "We wanted to show that there is an audience for this work, and that work by women artists can be absorbed into the mainstream."³⁶ Again we see that VIEW was very concerned with the liberal feminist agenda of inserting wimin into the mainstream.

A final consideration leading to the decision of a festival format may have been the atmosphere that can be generated around such an event. Potentially, festivals are a great audience-draw because of the celebratory spirit and the diverse choice in programming. If VIEW had established a regular theatre company producing, say, four plays a year, the repertoire would be much more limited and, therefore, the appeal of the individual productions would be more restricted, thus limiting the potential audience draw. A festival incorporating various kinds of artistic performance

³⁶ Liam Lacey, "Women, women everywhere at Vancouver festival," Globe and Mail, 20 January 1989, p. C9.

would, founding members felt, have a much greater chance of success.

THE FESTIVAL

The Women In View festival offers female arts practitioners an opportunity to produce work that might not otherwise be realized. Through the application process, and for a small processing fee, arts practitioners may apply for submission of an entry into the festival - the only artistic criterion being that the work must be initiated by wimin. But how is "female-initiated" work defined? This means that a project submitted solely by a man would be rejected for Women In View's programming (but this has never happened). The proposed projects may deal with any subject matter or point of view and there are absolutely no restrictions on casting, but the work must be initiated by a wimin. In practice, this means that VIEW privileges the position of the writer (but not necessarily the text) for, while men have directed festival productions, they have never served as playwrights (with the exception of one Shakespeare production).

The accepted festival projects are produced completely by the artists themselves and VIEW does not interfere in the creative process in any way. What View does offer is a venue for the project, technicians, stage managers, basic sound and lighting equipment, festival publicity, administrative, box office and front of house support, and a minimal performance honorarium. In other words, VIEW offers the entire support

network that would ordinarily be provided by a theatre company or other festival (except that the pay is not as good). It is unlikely, however, that established production companies would be willing to risk staging new experimental works by relatively unknown female artists.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process for the festival requires detailed information about the proposed project and its participants, accompanied by support material. Dance and music pieces must supply audio and video cassettes of the work in question and scripted projects must include a completed copy of the text. Detailed accounts of the work are necessary because a selection committee or jury of professional artists is charged with the task of preparing a short list of potential candidates.

This application process also requires a firm commitment on the part of the artists chosen. Originally, festival submission applications were due one year in advance of the actual Women In View festival. As it stands now, almost two years' advance notice is required - the deadline for the 1997 festival, for instance, having been August 31, 1995. Not only does this mean that a serious commitment is required, but also that artists must be organized enough to know where they are going to be in two years time.

During VIEW's first couple of years, the selection committee was responsible for choosing the entire festival

program. Once Kathleen Weiss was hired as Artistic Director in 1990 the process became more flexible and varied depending on the year and the nature of the work received. Sometimes the jury prepares a short list and passes it on to the Artistic Director for a final decision, at other times Weiss prepares the short list and then passes it to the jury for its consideration. Either way, it is of the utmost importance that there is a lot of input going into the decision-making process.

There are certain priorities that Kathleen Weiss takes into consideration when choosing from the festival applicants. The policy of inclusion is constantly kept in mind so projects by women of colour, by lesbians, and by women of varying ages are highly encouraged. Innovations in form and staging, as well as a multidisciplinary focus, are also primary considerations although a traditionally constructed project would never be rejected just on the basis of its form.

There is also a preference accorded to Canadian, and more specifically, local British Columbian work. In many ways, this is a practical stance for VIEW does not yet have the funds to bring in performers from across the country, let alone international performance groups. Since VIEW is interested in providing opportunities where none have previously existed, work that has not had an opportunity to be produced occupies a position of higher priority than a project that was already produced on a previous occasion.

Above all, the most important consideration for acceptance into the festival is "artistic excellence". It has always been important to VIEW that the work produced be of the highest quality. The Women In View festival is in the potentially uncomfortable position of serving as a model by which the value of a festival of wimin's work is judged. View is burdened with proving that wimin's artistic endeavors are worthwhile, educational, relevant and entertaining, often in the face of harsh criticism from the patriarchal establishment.

PART II: THE FIRST ANNUAL WOMEN IN VIEW FESTIVAL

The very first Women In View Festival was originally scheduled for August of 1988. It was, however, postponed in order to obtain more financing and preparation time, thus ensuring a higher quality festival. The first Women In View Festival, two years in the preparation, was finally presented on January 16 - 22 of 1989. It was a unique and enjoyable extravaganza of theatre, dance, performance art, comedy, storytelling, music, cabaret, visual art, workshops, symposiums and works-in-progress - all of which were generated by female artists.

The Women In View festival featured 25 performance events, 4 workshops and 4 forums - the workshops and forums being presented during the first 3 days of the festival and the performance events being scheduled for the remaining 3 festival days. This separation of the workshop and forum events from the performance projects became a model for all subsequent Women In View festivals. Ticket prices for the first Women In View festival were quite reasonable with a \$35.00 'Super Tag' pass that provided unlimited access to all performance events. 'Day Tags' or single day passes for all performances were available for \$15.00 and individual tickets were priced at \$5.00. Forum events were also \$5.00 and the workshops ranged from \$5.00 to \$15.00 depending on the event.

REVENUE

The bulk of funding for the first Women In View festival was obtained through government grants. The combined contributions of Canada Council, the Secretary of State, the British Columbia Cultural Fund, and Employment and Immigration Canada meant a substantial total of \$90,211.00. Fund-raising income, amounting to \$27,282.00, was generated from foundations, donations, lottery, bingo and other special events. Membership dues (an annual fee of \$10.00 or \$15.00) contributed another \$1,440.00 and miscellaneous revenue added an additional \$1,429.00 for a total operating fund of \$120,362.00.

VIEW's revenue (happily) outweighed the organization's total expenditures, which amounted to \$114,291.00. Festival operation costs totaled \$76,182.00, of which \$43,313.00 was spent on artists' fees and expenses (thus realizing VIEW's commitment to pay artists honorariums). The Women In View festival generated a total income of \$13,798.00 which helped to offset the additional \$38,109.00 spent on administrative requirements. Overall, VIEW came out of its first festival with a surplus revenue of \$20,505.00 - a very substantial accomplishment for a young organization.³⁷

³⁷ All financial information was taken from "View The Performing Arts Society: Statement of Revenue, Expenditures and Surplus For The Year Ended March 31, 1990 (Unaudited)."

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

The VIEW literature publicizing the first festival was reasonably professional in appearance (see appendix 2). Sandi Walton designed the graphic image "Silhouette Quartet", free of charge, for the glossy posters and fold-out programs. The graphic contained four female silhouettes looking upwards - two faces at the top (one outlined in black and one in white) and two faces (mirror opposites) at the bottom. It was an appropriate design for the Women In View festival. The different directions faced by the outlines suggests the different attitudes and viewpoints found at the Women In View festival. The inter-connectedness of the wimin suggests unity and togetherness, while the upward-looking faces indicate confidence or empowerment or even looking toward a better future. At the risk of reading too much into the graphic design, the chosen picture offered effective representation for the Women In View festival.

When it came to marketing the Women In View festival, the event was publicized as "presenting the human experience from the perspective of the female artist."³⁸ This is an obvious statement and yet the organizers felt that it was necessary to emphasize, over-emphasize even, the festival's universality. Often accompanying the 'human experience' statement was some kind of disclaimer about how the festival was not only relevant to wimin but also to men. Indeed,

³⁸ Dykk, p. E11.

VIEW's publicist, Valerie Hennell, was constantly stressing that the festival was not exclusively for wimin. Clearly VIEW's marketing strategy was to appeal to the mainstream (perhaps somewhat over-zealously), which meant convincing potential audiences that wimin's work was relevant to them. One newspaper article stated:

[View] Planners were anxious to dispel the myth that women playwrights target their material to women artists. Rather, it [was] their intent to bring women's work out of the closet and into the mainstream.³⁹

Since VIEW continually stressed the festival's universal appeal in order to gain access to the mainstream, the marketing tactics can be situated in a liberal feminist context. It is understandable that View would feel it necessary to adopt a liberal stance in order to avoid marginalization and/or ghettoization and to draw as large an audience as possible. However, VIEW's marketing of the Women In View festival suggests an (over) eagerness to be accepted by the mainstream.

It is understandable that VIEW would desire mainstream acceptance, for that would signify a more equal positioning of men and wimin in society. The only problem is that a liberal feminist approach may not be an effective enough strategy for securing true parity with men in a patriarchal society. (Mainstream) visibility in itself is not necessarily

³⁹ MacMaster.

power and does not necessarily constitute true equality.⁴⁰ By seeking the acceptance of the dominant culture and by trying to insert wimin into the mainstream, the patriarchal and hierarchical structures that perpetuate systemic discrimination are not challenged or changed. Rather, wimin are forced to fit themselves into an already existing institution that has purposely excluded them for centuries.

While VIEW's marketing and publicity strategy privileged a liberal feminist platform, it seems quite possible that this stance was adopted specifically for the purpose of creating a favourable impression with the mainstream media and, hence, with mainstream society. The festival format and VIEW's constitutional objectives clearly illustrate that the organization is not strictly a liberal feminist one, there is room for all types of feminist perspective (and non-feminist), but this fact was down-played by VIEW in the media. The reason behind this may be the assumption that feminists will automatically attend a wimin's festival, regardless of mainstream press, whereas men and more traditionally-minded wimin need to be convinced of the value of such an endeavor. VIEW obviously did not want to alienate potential audience members so its marketing strategy targeted the mainstream. There did not seem to be any such concern about the alienation of the potential feminist audience, however, who are likely View's most dedicated participants.

⁴⁰ The concepts and difficulties of visibility politics are fully theorized in Peggy Phelan's Unmarked: the Politics of Performance (London: Routledge, 1993).

The festival's self-created media image definitely reflected liberal feminist thinking, but what of the festival's actual substance? What was the overall tone and flavour of the actual festival? Did the Women In View festival programming uphold VIEW's constitutional articles and what role, if any, did feminism play in the programming? In addressing these questions, the programming will be discussed in very general terms. Specific features will be examined without analyzing the individual festival productions, for the scope of this thesis does not allow such a thorough examination.

THE FESTIVAL

In keeping with VIEW's educational objectives, forums (hosted by the Four Sisters Housing Cooperative) were presented at the 1989 festival that were largely concerned with addressing practical problems and areas of concern that wimin in the arts encounter, regardless of their politics. There were three such forums; "A Bigger Share of the Pie: Lobbying For Better Conditions For Women in the Arts", "Pitching Your Project: Getting Your Show on the Boards" and the sold out festival opener "Survival Skills: Establishing Longevity in the Arts". "Survival Skills" was attended by over 120 wimin, and a few men, who gathered to hear an all-star panel talk about how they survived a career in the arts, both financially and emotionally. Panelists included novelist

Jane Rule, actor/playwright Joy Coghill, painter Susan Hillman, and multidisciplinary artist Evelyn Roth.

The fourth forum scheduled for presentation at the 1989 Women In View Festival was "Feminism and Conceptualism", an exploration of the relationship between concept and feminism in the visual arts. This was the only forum in a nine year time span to actually incorporate the word feminism in its title (and ironically, this event ended up being cancelled). What this suggests is that while feminism is definitely an integral component of the Women In View Festival, the organizers feel it is necessary or desirable to avoid (or hide) a labelling or categorizing of their sexual politics, probably because labels often serve to marginalize. That the words feminism and feminist never again appear in print (with a few explanatory exceptions) in relation to the festival's programming further emphasizes the point that View's marketing techniques target the mainstream. Fear of feminism may act as a barrier for the dominant culture so this vocabulary was removed from the festival's discourse.

The workshops presented at the festival were also of a very practical nature and particularly designed for theatre practitioners. "Making The Right Moves" was a physical movement seminar conducted by Jane Ellison and "Going For The Funny Bone" - a sold out, three hour workshop on comedic rhythm and timing - was engineered by Gina Bastone. The two remaining workshops, "Developing a Play-in-Progress" and "Creating Script Through Improvisation", were probably the

most significant to female artists specifically interested in feminist theatre techniques (although obviously not exclusively). There are relatively few feminist theatre pieces in existence so feminist theatre practitioners often have to create their own plays and these workshops may have provided some insights for approaching such a task.

The range of events offered at the 1989 festival satisfied VIEW's requirements of diversity and artistic inclusion. Musical events included such offerings as Diane Fredrikson's classical guitar recital, the a cappella Elektra Women's Choir, Kathy Hansen's presentation of Northern Indian sitar pieces, Devon Hanley's songs with a folk/blues blend, and a special performance of old and new gospel called "It's Time To Sing". This diverse program of music was presented at St. James Church, a venue located across the street from the Firehall Arts Centre which is where the majority of performance events were stationed.

In the way of performance art there were installations such as Mother Person, an audio piece about the role of motherhood which was situated in the Firehall's washroom, and Neon Shaman, a walk-in book incorporating painting, sculpture, collage, sound, and light which was stationed in the stairway. Also of note was the "View Mask" designed by Evelyn Roth and painted by Linda Neville. The large mask was a female face with eyes (inspired by Pakistan's first female

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto⁴¹) that gazed down from the Firehall rooftop. Part of View's presentation concept was to utilize every available space, nook and cranny at the Firehall venue for a total environmental experience (which is why even the washrooms and stairwells served as places for artistic presentation).

The festival featured "a collage of three dance pieces and a composition for voice", a 90 minute performance under the title of Four by Eight. As well, a "Reading Writers" forum was presented with four of the writers reading from their works on the festival Saturday and five other writers reading on the Sunday. Both sessions were followed by an open discussion between the writers and the audience - no doubt a very practical feedback tool for the writers. The remainder of the productions, 18 in total, were theatrical pieces that spanned a range of issues (motherhood, insanity, female stereotypes and loneliness, to name but a few) and performance styles (clown and mask work, one-woman shows, monologist pieces, improvisation, storytelling, comedy, and serious drama).

The 1989 Women In View Festival was successful in its attempts to present an artistically inclusive festival representative of the various disciplines. Where the festival's efforts fell short was in the area of multicultural representation but, as Kathleen Weiss

⁴¹ Lacey.

acknowledged, the difficulty with a platform of inclusion is that one can never be inclusive enough. The music segment of the festival was culturally diverse but in terms of the theatrical presentations, white female artists seem to have dominated the scene. Only two of the theatre pieces were identifiably 'minority' productions: I Wasn't Born Here, a portrayal of the experiences of Latin American immigrants in Canada by Victoria's Puente Theatre Company and Reflections of the Medicine Wheel, Margo Kane's tribute to First Nations spiritual leaders and healers with drummers, ritual, song and dance.

Two productions out of 18 is not a terribly impressive ratio for a festival promising to re/present female experience from a variety of diverse cultural backgrounds. Nor were there any performance pieces that statedly offered a lesbian perspective, although lesbian artists did initiate festival projects. The multidisciplinary platform was prominent and a balance of emerging and experienced artists was obtained with such artists as 16 year old classical guitarist Diane Fredrikson and 50+ veteran actor/ playwright Joy Coghill.

The forums and workshops served to facilitate communication between artists while simultaneously providing opportunities to improve artistic skills. New performance opportunities were created for wimin arts practitioners and public awareness of female artists was increased. All the

objectives stated in VIEW's constitution were met at some level but some much more than others.

Was the very first Women In View a feminist festival? We have seen that VIEW's constitution/mandate is feminist in nature and that the festival format itself incorporates some feminist principles but how did these principles hold up in practice? All of VIEW's objectives were realized in some fashion but the festival could not truly boast of representing diverse female experiences from a variety of cultural backgrounds or alternative sexualities. It is in this area that the gulf between theory and practice was most noticeable, for white women dominated at the first Women In View festival.

As for the festival's content, many of the performance pieces could be considered feminist in nature while others could not. The diversity of performance styles and subject matters ensured that there was something for everyone - aesthetically and politically. VIEW actually managed to present a festival full of material that could appeal to the most liberal or radical of feminists (although lesbians and 'minorities' would be hard pressed to find representation). Still, in contrast to traditional mainstream fare, the festival offered a diverse program of events.

The 1989 Women In View Festival turned out to be a great success with over 30 events (many of which sold out) presented during a 6-day time span. A total attendance of just over 4,500 people was reached, roughly translating into

70% or 75%, depending on the source, of capacity houses (Saturday and Sunday houses were approximately 90%).⁴² Publicist Valerie Hennell referred to the local interest generated as "phenomenal" and termed Women In View "the little festival that could".⁴³ With a small budget reaching just over \$100,000.00, and with mainly volunteer staff, the 1989 Women In View Festival proved that wimin's artistic endeavours are worthwhile and that there is definitely an audience for wimin's work. VIEW was secure enough in its success that the 1989 festival was established as a model for future annual Women In View festivals.

⁴² Dykk.

⁴³ Elizabeth Aird, "Fest Gives Women's View," Georgia Straight, January 13-20, 1989, p. 26.

PART III: THE SECOND ANNUAL WOMEN IN VIEW FESTIVAL

The second annual Women In View Festival, January 29 - February 4, 1990, was even more successful than the previous year's festival. The number of submissions received for the festival more than doubled from 60 in 1989 to 140 in 1990. The total number of performances was raised from 49 in 1989 to 63 in 1990 (although the number of performance projects, 33, remained the same). The fees paid to artists on a project basis also increased from the first festival to the second (and for both festivals the fees paid to artists were greater than box office receipts).⁴⁴

A new performance space, Pitt International Galleries, was added to the venue line-up in order to accommodate the increase in the number of performances. The festival's increased growth and expansion paid off, for the combined attendance of 70% (or 75% depending on the source) capacity during the 1989 festival rose to 80% capacity during the 1990 festival.⁴⁵ All of the performances at Firehall Studio, as well as the 4 workshops, were sold out. In total, 38% of the 1990 festival's performances sold out compared to 20% from the previous year.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ All of the statistical information about the 1989 and 1990 festival was taken from Denise Golemlaski, Viewpoints- The Newsletter for View The Performing Arts Society, 4, No. 2 (1990), p.1.

⁴⁵ "Women In View: 1990 Festival Facts and Figures." A printed fact sheet produced by View The Performing Arts Society.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Ticket procedures for the 1990 Women In View festival were the same as the previous year except that prices were raised. Super Tags were now \$40.00 for as many performances as a person could possibly manage. Day Tags rose to \$18.00 and individual tickets to \$6.00. The forums were also raised to \$6.00 and the workshop events now ranged from \$6.00 to \$40.00. Overall, the increase in ticket prices was not significant enough to hinder the festival's attendance.

REVENUE

VIEW managed to increase its government funding by \$44,163.00, adding the Department of Communications and the City of Vancouver to the list of government granting agencies contributing to the Women In View festival. The revenue generated through fund-raising efforts surpassed the previous year's total by \$13,163.00 thanks to the addition of a full-time fund-raiser under a Job Development Grant. Most importantly, box office sales increased by \$10,178.00, thus proving that the festival's initial success was not a chance occurrence but rather a legitimate response on the part of artists and audiences alike to the fulfilment of a cultural gap. Unfortunately, expenditures and administrative costs also rose (from \$114,291.00 in 1989 to \$213,308.00 in 1990) but VIEW still managed to end the fiscal year with a surplus of \$9,588.00.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ "View The Performing Arts Society: Statement of Revenue, Expenditures and Surplus For The Year Ended March 31, 1990."

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

Given the success of the 1989 festival and the even greater success of the 1990 festival, it is interesting to note that the overall media coverage for the 1990 festival was almost non-existent. As far as I could tell, Vancouver's major newspapers did not publicize or even review the 1990 Women In View festival. The one article that I did find, published in Georgia Straight, was quite supportive and promised a wonderful festival. Refreshingly, there was no over-emphasis on the 'human experience' angle, nor was there any kind of over-zealous appeal to the mainstream. Most surprising of all was the caption under the publicity photo which read "The second annual Women In View Festival opens next week, with an array of feminist performances". It seems likely that this caption was used by the newspaper in opposition to View's publicist because, as we have seen, VIEW purposely tried to avoid tying the word feminism in with the festival's advertising.

The "Silhouette Quartet" image was again used as the festival's graphic design although some colour was introduced into the picture (see appendix 3). There were now three shades to the facial outlines - orange, black, and white with a black pictograph pattern imposed on top. With the addition of the colour orange, the image seemed to suggest unity of culturally diverse women, an appropriate selection given the fact that the 1990 festival was more inclusive and ethnically diverse than its predecessor. As well, the program/schedule

of events for this festival was more elaborate than its predecessor. Instead of the fold-out format, the programs now came in a 15-page booklet complete with advertisements.

THE FESTIVAL

The total all-out artistic environment created for the 1989 festival was not repeated in 1990. Instead, a less busy and more relaxed festival surrounding was sought. The Lobby Lounge of the Firehall Arts Centre was open for food and drink, relaxation and discussion between performances. On the afternoons of Friday and Saturday, the Lounge featured storyteller Melanie Ray improvising as "The Story Peddler". On Saturday night and Sunday day, the Vancouver Women's Bookstore offered an interesting selection of books to browse and buy. The Pitt International Galleries also offered a congenial meeting place during and after performance events.

Although there were the same number of acts as the previous year, the 1990 festival boasted twice as many performance participants, which would seem to indicate a shift away from one-womin and monologist pieces to larger groups of performers. In an interview with Georgia Straight, Jane Heyman explained a possible reason for this shift:

Last year the focus was largely personal. Women needed that. This year there is a lot more connection with society, more interaction, so there are more performers.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Pamela Swanigan, "Women's Festival Builds on Success," Georgia Straight, 26 January - 2 February 1990, p. 21.

As with many things, it seems possible that evolution of the creative process demanded a looking inwards before attention could be turned outward. Or perhaps, having more control of the medium allowed artists to take the risks involved with larger cast work.

Besides larger casts, the 1990 Women In View festival also witnessed a programming increase in the number of comedic performance pieces. Another indication, perhaps, of the evolving nature of wimin's artistic work when it is given a chance to be experimented with and performed. In the words of Jane Heyman, "comedy is risky stuff".⁴⁹ That female arts practitioners were more willing to go out on a limb following the first successful Women In View festival, suggests that View had managed to establish a supportive and comfortable environment where wimin felt it was possible to take risks. In essence, this means that the Women In View festival fulfilled a very important cultural feminist objective, that is, the provisioning of a place and a space where the seeds of female culture could grow.

The Women In View festival's commitment to presenting multicultural and/or ethnically diverse productions fared much better in 1990 than in 1989. Various productions may have included wimin of colour but, more specifically, there were more performances whose subject matter dealt directly with cultural difference. Margo Kane returned to the festival

⁴⁹ Ibid.

with her new play Moon Lodge, a song, dance and drum performance that shared experiences of contemporary Native wimin. Prairie Winds - Prairie Women - A Herstory Lesson by Delia Dreis recreated hardships and triumphs faced by pioneer and First Nations wimin spanning from 1800 to 1915. There was also Sun and Shadow, a drama about the cross-cultural bonding of a North American white wimin and a visiting Chinese choreographer. A final and unusual example was the return of Victoria's Puente Theatre with an exploration of the problems encountered by Latin American immigrants in Puente II. This play was somewhat of an anomaly in the festival because, although it was directed by a wimin, Lina de Guevara, the cast was comprised solely of men.

The forum aspect of the festival's educational component also featured topics dealing with cultural and ethnic difference. "Breaking Stereotypes", subtitled "Identifying Issues Facing Artists from Visible Minorities", involved common concerns, embracing difference, and finding mutual links between artists from different cultures and disciplines. The second forum, "Finding Common Threads" was an interdisciplinary panel discussion with established female artists from visible 'minorities'.

These increased efforts to represent the concerns of so-called minorities, emphasized VIEW's commitment to Third Wave/materialist feminist politics. Such a platform of inclusion, involving respect and celebration of difference while simultaneously looking for ways to unite divergent

cultural experiences, is a challenging and problematic task. Of course it could be argued that View's efforts were not substantial enough, that the programming should have been even more culturally diverse. This is true but at least an effort was being made, an effort that was enshrined in the constitutional objectives of View The Performing Arts Society.

The 1990 Women In View festival, unlike the 1989 festival, also produced some lesbian programming. Namely Great Explanations -Four Lesbian Stories. View's platform of inclusion necessarily extended itself to include homosexual women although, again, it could be argued that one event was hardly inclusive. Another play worthy of mention, for it expanded the notion of inclusion in another direction, was The GO Factor. This production, produced by the Light and Power Company, integrated physically and mentally challenged performers into the cast in an attempt to "point out human strengths rather than weaknesses."

Very definitely there were performances that could be classified as feminist. One example was Not Just Nine to Five: Surviving the Modern Office, a multidisciplinary project with a "feminist perspective on the culture of the workplace." (Individual program descriptions of performances were, at that time, provided by the performers and not View, which is why the word feminist was used to describe this production.) This piece adapted Augusto Boal's forum theatre technique which invites audience members to share in the

play's problem-solving. Other feminist projects were Calendar Girl, an exploration of wimin's reproductive rights, Confidantes, a look at how wimin's bodies are exploited by our patriarchal society, and Survivors, a staged reading concerning incest and sexual abuse. It is interesting to note that these three play premieres, with overtly feminist issues, were all sold out events.⁵⁰ This suggests that, despite VIEW's anxiety to avoid naming feminism in connection with the festival, View's audiences were ready to support it.

The scheduled workshop events for the 1990 festival continued to offer practical skill-enhancement that would be directly relevant to arts practitioners. Improved skills can often lead to improved opportunities and so it is very important to VIEW that female arts practitioners have the opportunity to make connections and constantly improve upon their talents. This was reflected in the types of workshops View scheduled for the festival.

"Perk Up Your Ears" with Hildegard Westerkamp offered an exploration of soundscaping, useful for writing music and for "composing one's life". "Rhythm Of Creative Process", led by Lee Saunders, worked with open and structured improvisations to discover the body's rhythm and how that influences the creative process. "Re:sound - A Playshop" focused on freeing the natural voice through a variety of games and exercises, an important skill for any performer who utilizes her voice.

⁵⁰ Province of B.C., Ministry of Municipal Affairs, "Grant Application (Final Report) for Project Assistance, 1991," p. 4.

The remaining workshop, "Old Flames: An In..formation Reading", was different in character. This event was a staged reading of Karen Wikberg's play-in-progress with an interactive follow-up discussion between author and audience, a useful activity particularly for the playwright. The remaining festival forum, entitled Lobbying For Legitimacy, dealt with the proposed legislation to create an artist's code for Canada. This event reflected VIEW's active interest in legislative politics as they relate to the arts.

The 1990 festival continued to remain true to its interdisciplinary platform with performances of dance, music, song, clown, performance art, multi-media, storytelling, puppetry, drama, comedy and eclectic pieces that incorporated these various elements into one vehicle. Examples of performances that embraced more than one discipline included The Runner's Tale (a fusion of dance, music and drama), Jojoka (a multimedia piece with poetry, video, live music and choreography), and The Great Push Pull (dance, movement, sound, abstract vocalization and storytelling to convey a universal tale about fear of intimacy).

Continuing to translate VIEW's constitutional objectives into practice, emerging and established artists alike could be found participating in the 1990 festival. The play Confidantes, for example, purposely employed a mix of women from all levels of experience. Although, the Women In View festival was initially crafted to showcase the work of local (B.C.) artists, some out-of-province participation was also

included in the 1990 line-up. There were at least two performance projects from Montreal (The Great Push Pull and Wonder Brass) and two from Toronto (Sun and Shadow and Soundwright: Michele George in Concert).⁵¹

It is readily apparent that the 1990 festival was much more successful than its predecessor in adhering to VIEW's constitutional articles. Whatever a person's individual politics, she could find at least one production of interest and direct relevance. The variety of subject matter, disciplines and performance styles provided a vast array of work from which audience members could choose and is, perhaps, a partial explanation for the success of the second Women In View festival.

A final note of interest is that VIEW compiled a list of male participant statistics for the 1990 festival, perhaps to analyze View's mainstream appeal (for the level of male involvement could possibly serve as such an indicator). Although male involvement continued to be an annual feature of the Women In View festival, this was the only year that VIEW compiled information about the amount of male participation. This suggests that, while the level of male festival participation was important, the more general audience statistics served as the usual marker for judging View's mainstream appeal.

⁵¹ "1990 Women In View Festival: Out-Of-Province Participants". A printed fact sheet produced by View The Performing Arts Society.

The results of View's statistics showed that 16 of the 33 individual productions included male involvement in the capacity of performer, musician, director, facilitator, designer and choreographer. As well, Ken Walker acted as the Box Office Coordinator and over 10% of the volunteer support staff was male. This information is useful for it illustrates the tired old point that a festival of wimin's work does not necessarily mean that men are excluded. The female artists at the 1990 Women In View festival included men in almost half of their productions; however, the number of men willing to volunteer their time to a wimin's art festival was not nearly so high.

PART IV: THE THIRD ANNUAL WOMEN IN VIEW FESTIVAL

Women In View started off its 1991 festival with some minor setbacks. Application submissions, for instance, had dropped slightly from 140 in 1990 to 110 in 1991.⁵² (A possible and partial explanation for this could be that artists who had participated in the 1989 and/or 1990 festivals simply needed some time to regroup, not to mention the lead time required for submitting a proposal, or perhaps some artists were now able to pursue other avenues of opportunity.) There was also some concern regarding diminished participation on the festival's organizing committees. This concern was articulated in Viewpoints with an excerpt from the annual report in which Jane Heyman and Sue Astley stated,

In the first two years, our membership grew rapidly. Lately it has levelled off and participation in committees has diminished. The danger of our rapid growth and success is that the membership may cede its power to board and staff. As personal involvement diminishes, dissatisfaction with staff decisions may increase and a destructive 'us and them' attitude can develop. What's needed is membership that continually questions, puts forward ideas, generates projects, and lobbies our community for greater access and a bigger share of the pie for women in the arts.⁵³

It seems that the 1991 Women In View festival was in danger of losing its grassroots involvement and support.

⁵² Denise Golemlaski, "In the Heat of the Summer...In the Office," Viewpoints- The Newsletter of View The Performing Arts Society, 4, No. 3 (1990), p. 5.

⁵³ Jane Heyman and Sue Astley, "View From Here," Viewpoints, 4, No. 3 (1990), p. 2.

Here we see that a feminist platform of inclusion was not only extended to the area of artistic policy but also to the more general area of VIEW's operations. The organization had always been extremely open to input and actively encouraged members to participate and voice their opinions. It was very important to VIEW that the society's activities were derived from direct interaction with the female artistic community. It was, after all, these women's interests that VIEW represented and served. The waning of grassroots participation and interest was, therefore, a matter not to be taken lightly for, without the direct involvement of the female arts community, there could be no Women In View festival.

REVENUE

The majority of Women In View's funding continued to come from the government sources mentioned on page 46 and page 58. The overall amount of grant money received in 1991 was again increased, amounting to a total of \$159,714.00. Fund-raising and box office revenue, the "runners-up" in financing the festival, also increased with respective totals of \$47,278.00 and \$34,872.00. As well, small business donations increased significantly as did individual donations. Membership dues and miscellaneous revenue brought the total year end revenue up to \$245,847.00.

VIEW continued to prove its whole-hearted commitment to paying artist fees by adding an extra \$13,041.00 to the

previous year's output. Unfortunately, expenditures and administrative costs also increased across the board (with the exception of the promotion and publicity category), resulting in a total of \$256,985.00 paid out. This meant that, after the 1991 festival, VIEW was faced with its first deficit. A very small and manageable debt of \$1,550.00, but a deficit all the same.⁵⁴

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

The initial decline in festival interest may have influenced VIEW's decision to adopt a new approach to its publicity, perhaps fearing a decline in audience attendance as well. The posters and schedules of events, designed by View's art director Debora Brundrett, featured a 1930's comic book-type couple with the man holding both pairs of tickets in his hand (see appendix 4). VIEW's advertising campaign for 1991 was, in my opinion, inappropriate and somewhat schizophrenic for a festival of wimin's work. The chosen image was a throw-back to the days of very specific gendered behaviour when men were the authorities and controlling agents in relationships with wimin. The image, therefore, was inappropriate and schizophrenic because it was precisely this kind of male control that was responsible for the discriminatory practises experienced by wimin in the

⁵⁴ All financial information was gathered from "View The Performing Arts Society: Statement of Revenue, Expenditures and Surplus For The Year Ended March 31, 1991."

performing arts, a situation that Women In View was established to redress.

Here again, it seems that VIEW felt it was necessary or desirable to down-play the political and feminist content of much of the festival's programming in exchange for a more traditional and palatable mainstream appeal - somewhat surprising given the festival's success the year before. As well, the performance venue locations were indicated by life size drawings of mass-media comic figures such as Olive Oyl, Little Lulu and friends. While these characters would have been interesting, eye-catching figures, what they had to do with the Women In View festival is unknown to me.

Women In View's festival program/schedule of events was elaborated on in terms of presentation style and format. The 23 page booklet featured photographs of performers (a festival first) and more extensive advertisements. To emphasize Women In View's mainstream appeal and sanction, the festival's program included three letters from government officials - the Ministers of Communication and Culture and Vancouver's Mayor.

The 1991 Women In View festival attempted to expand its audience base and programming potential by working with other cultural organizations. For instance, the festival co-presented the singer/songwriter Ferron with the Vancouver Folk Music Festival. View also co-ordinated joint publicity with 20 Vancouver art galleries that featured the work of wimin artists during the festival week. Working with outside

cultural organizations in joint programming interests, has its own set of difficulties but it could only help the festival to increase its audience base.

View's attempt to increase its audience base by working with other cultural organizations was an important tactic considering the fact that media coverage for the festival continued to be inadequate. While Vancouver newspaper coverage fared slightly better than the previous year it was still quite meagre. The Provence ran an article on just one of the festival's productions, I Didn't Die in Chapter 6. That this production was part of Women In View was mentioned, although in brackets, and as an after-thought that was easy to miss. Georgia Straight's Shannon Rupp ran a very informative and interesting pre-festival article that discussed many of the up-coming events and the philosophies behind the festival. Other than these two articles, the only other coverage was from Theatrum with a review of the various individual festival productions printed two months after the fact.

THE FESTIVAL

The 1991 Women In View festival witnessed a change in venues. Tamahnous Theatre's intimate studio space and 56 Gallery were added to the line-up and Pitt International Galleries was dropped. Overall attendance at the festival totalled 4,200 people (or 80% capacity - holding steady!) and 247 artists from 6 Canadian provinces participated in 70

performances in a 5 day time span.⁵⁵ Despite initial fears of declining interest, the Women In View festival managed to continue its success.

View presented a diverse multi/interdisciplinary festival with workshops, a forum, theatre, performance art, story-telling, dance, music and even a one-act opera entitled Il Segreto di Susanna. A new component, the popular "Cabaret Stir-Fry", was also added to the programming with performances by Marlene Swidzinski, Mary-Ann Charney, and Shawna Dempsey with Beverley Elliott acting as the Master of Ceremonies. This event was to become a very popular and permanent feature of the Women In View festival.

View continued to follow through on its resolution to offer female artists opportunities to improve upon their artistic skills. Four of the festival's workshops presented such opportunities. For instance, the "So Tell Me" workshop conducted by Rita Deverall dealt with how to give and receive a really good interview. "Body Talking", facilitated by dancer and choreographer Monique Leger, taught techniques to help heighten one's physical presence and awareness. Nancy McMaster led "The Transparent Self", a workshop designed to guide performers past fears that disable or block and introduced new ways of communicating. Gina Bastone, "clown gone wild", returned to the Women In View festival with her workshop "Make Me Laugh - Make Me Really Laugh". That 4 out

⁵⁵ Province of B.C., Ministry of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture, "Grant Application for Project Assistance, 1991," Section 3, p. 1.

of 5 of these workshops sold out in advance, is an indication of the importance and value of this type of programming to female arts practitioners.

VIEW's commitment to producing events directly involving issues of difference continued in 1991. There was only one forum presented for this year and it was "Strategies for Survival". The distinguished panellists included Métis author and activist Maria Campbell, Broadcast journalist Rita Deverell, actor/director Lorena Gale, video artist/actor Ruby Truly and, moderating the event, communications theorist Jasmin Jiwani. This forum was primarily concerned with discrimination and seeking solutions to the problems of racism encountered in working environments and society in general. In the spirit of inclusion, audience discussion and participation was highly encouraged.

One of the 5 workshops, "It's About Time", also dealt with issues of racism. Designed by Gulzar Sanji (Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of B.C.), Carmen Rodriguez (writer and Aquelarre Collective member), and Christine Menzies (actor, director and teacher), this workshop explored such issues as colour casting, limited access to technical know-how, and self-censorship. The workshop was described as "ideal for anyone working in cultural agencies, artists, writers, directors, producers, etc."

In terms of culturally diverse performances, View presented Feathervision, an exploration of personal, social and political issues by Annie Frazier, a woman of Blackfoot,

Sioux and French ancestry. The Storm After The Calm was a play about wimin of colour that dealt with anger, power, resistance, and representation of truth. Maria Campbell returned to the festival a second time to serve as one of the guest speakers in the "Reading Writers" series and Razom Sestre, the Vancouver wimin's choir, performed a variety of music from the Balkan region of Eastern Europe.

There was one other performance event that involved the inclusion and celebration of difference. It was a series of vignettes by and about people with disabilities, entitled Double Take, presented by Theatre Terrific's Direct Access Company. There were not, however, any plays with overtly lesbian subject matter. It is readily apparent that View was still firmly committed to presenting culturally diverse events, only the policy of inclusion was not as comprehensive as it had been at the previous year's festival. In View's defense though, it must be noted that every project application submitted by visible minority wimin was accepted into the 1991 festival.⁵⁶

Part of VIEW's policy of inclusion meant that efforts were made to make the festival as accessible as possible to as many people as possible. The performing arts are often viewed as activities for the rich and upper class so, in an effort to combat elitism, VIEW attempted to make the festival more accessible to the less financially endowed. VIEW tried

⁵⁶ Ibid.

to keep ticket costs at reasonable prices and, for the first time, free events were incorporated into the festival. The music component presented at St. James Church, consisting of the award winning Elektra Women's Choir and Razom Sestre, was absolutely free. The two "Reading Writers" events which brought together emerging and established writers from western Canada (with such notable writers as Sharon Pollock, Susan Musgrave and Phyllis Webb) were also presented free of charge. All of the free events played to full houses.⁵⁷

Festival ticket prices were raised again with Super Tags selling for \$55.00. To increase accessibility, students, seniors, the unemployed, VIEW members, Women in Focus and Vancouver Theatre Alliance card holders were offered the Super Tag deal at the discounted price of only \$25.00. A flat rate of \$7.00 was charged for the individual performance events. Despite the increase in ticket prices, serious attempts were being made to make the festival economically viable for audience members.

Wheelchair accessibility was mentioned for the first time in the 1991 Women In View festival program. As it turned out, the Firehall theatre was accessible but the studio was not. The Four Sister's Co-op was accessible, along with Tamahnous Theatre and 56 Gallery, but the older St. James venue was not. Four out of 6 venues, while not perfect, was a ratio to be proud of. All in all, the 1991 Women In View

⁵⁷ Ibid.

festival made some substantial efforts to extend the policy of inclusion to the area of audience members.

PART V: THE FOURTH ANNUAL WOMEN IN VIEW FESTIVAL

The fourth annual Women In View festival was held January 22 - February 2 of 1992. The festival received over 130 applications and 37 of those were chosen to participate in the largest festival yet.⁵⁸ Women In View continued to expand with the involvement of 280 artists, representing 6 Canadian provinces, presenting more than 75 performances. Additional programming days were added to Women In View for a total of 8 festival days - 4 days for the symposium and workshops followed by 4 days of performances.

The number of performance venues naturally grew in order to accommodate the increase in performances. The usual Firehall Arts Centre (main theatre space and studio) and Tamhnous Theatre were joined by the Station Street Arts Centre. The main symposium was housed by the Native Education Centre and the workshops were split between Green Thumb Theatre and the now-traditional Four Sisters Housing Cooperative. St. James Church continued to host the musical segment of the program and Café Bergman was home to a new festival component - the networking sessions.

Accompanying the expansion was another increase in ticket prices and a change in ticket format. Single tickets were now purchased for \$8.50. There was no longer a single pass for entry into all the performance events, instead

⁵⁸ No author cited. "Festival Promises Excitement," Viewpoints, 4, No. 3 (1991), p. 1.

different combinations of "discount packages" were available. A 5-show pass could be purchased for \$35.00 and a 10-show pass for \$65.00 (as opposed to the previous year's price of \$55.00 for as many performances as one could possibly manage). The new packages were still reasonably priced, but no further savings were offered for less financially able people such as students or the unemployed. With Women In View's expansion and subsequent ticket increases, the festival may have become less economically viable for some people.

The festival also became less accessible for people dependant on wheelchairs. The new additions of Station Street Arts Centre and the Native Education Centre offered wheelchair accessibility (as did the previously mentioned Firehall Theatre and Four Sister's Housing Co-op) but St James Church and Firehall Studio obviously remained inaccessible as were Green Thumb and Café Bergman. That means that only 5 out of 9 venues were wheelchair accessible, a slight decrease from the last festival.

Despite these changes, other attempts were made to increase festival accessibility. For instance, a new feature added to Women In View was free childcare (the only festival in Canada to offer such a service!). Sponsored by Margo Kane and the Children's Local of the Hospital Employees Union, this service was offered for the Saturday and Sunday performance days. Free childcare has tended to be a feminist mainstay, whatever the possible subcategorized politics

(although often for a variety of different reasons). View's provisioning of free childcare allowed mothers, and possibly a few fathers, the opportunity to attend festival performances they would not normally have been able to attend, an arrangement beneficial to both parties.

Increased accessibility was also offered by the occasional provisioning of free festival events. The new networking sessions were free of charge and the St. James musical performances of the Elektra Women's Choir and Aya (a Vancouver based a cappella quartet) continued to offer free admission. As well, through the sponsorship of VanCity, the Women In View festival was able to offer a number of community access tickets which were distributed through local associations in the downtown East Side.

Another new Women In View feature was the attempt to create a safer festival environment. Women In View volunteers, sporting large yellow umbrellas, walked the venue circuit at regular intervals for increased safety of participants. This was a very important addition, for the nightly events may have seemed inaccessible for any woman who feared walking the streets alone at night. Now escorts were provided for greater safety and ease of mind.

REVENUE

The 1992 Women In View festival continued to receive the majority of its funding from government grants. For the fourth festival all the various government agencies increased

the total amount of funds available to View (with the exception of Canada Council who decreased View's previous monies by 34%). Women's Equity and Technical Assistance Fund were added to the list of granting agencies which resulted in a combined total of \$200,326.00, that was more than double the funds View started out with in 1989.

Fund-raising efforts continued to generate greater revenue, donations especially, with an increase to \$40,549.00. With its greater wealth, View continued to increase the total amount of funds available for honorariums to participating artists. While the society would have liked to pay even higher fees to the artists, the greater number of participants meant that that much more money was needed for expenses. As it stands, View has a consistent herstory of paying out to artists more than is made at the festival box office. In 1992, for example, \$53,495.00 was paid in artist fees whereas \$36,315.00 was generated through box office and related activities.

Following the festival, total expenditures for the year ended March 31, 1992 reached the new height of \$309,812.00. This overall increase was not experienced across the board, however, as was the case in the previous year. View managed to cut costs in seven different areas, primarily those concerned with administrative expenses. The total expenditures was off-set by an accumulated revenue of \$317,677.00 which effectively cleared the society of its

small debt and left the organization with a surplus of \$6,315.00.⁵⁹ VIEW was once again in the black.

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

The 1992 festival witnessed a return to more 'wimin-friendly' graphics. Lotus Miyashita created a dancing, stick-like womin, surrounded by various squiggles and musical notations (see appendix 5), who became the 'poster-girl' for the 1992 Women In View festival. The pamphlets and schedules advertising View used different variations on the graphic image, alternating the stick-womin's dancing poses. The image, although simple, was eye catching and probably cost effective.

The festival schedule/program, with dancing stick womin on the front, once again sported messages from the Minister of Culture, Minister of Communications and the Mayor of Vancouver. Prominently featured on page 1 of the program, these messages lent an air of official sanction and mainstream respectability, qualities View aspired to. The importance VIEW placed on mainstream acceptance was re-enforced during the 1992 festival with the appointment of Kathleen Weiss as Program Director of the Women In View.

In a Georgia Straight interview regarding her long term vision for View, Weiss stated,

What I would like to see is that there's more and more

⁵⁹ All financial information was obtained from "View The Performing Arts Society: Statement of Revenue, Expenditures and Surplus For The year Ended March 31, 1992."

work by women in the mainstream, which is an on-going issue, a really big issue and that the festival could become a more and more innovative festival, to do more and more radical kinds of work, both in terms of its content and its form. I think there will always be a need for work that's on the edge.⁶⁰

To be submersed in the mainstream and on the cutting edge of innovation, both at the same time, seems like a difficult and paradoxical task but it does explain the seemingly confusing nature of VIEW's approach to the festival. On the one hand, the innovative and alternative personality of the festival was realized through the actual programming. On the other hand, the desire for mainstream acceptance was very strong and, thus, figured prominently in marketing and publicity strategies. Practically speaking, appealing to the mainstream was an intelligent move for it may have helped broaden View's audience base. Conceptually speaking, this marketing approach was necessary because Women In View was still battling the persistent assumption that the festival only appealed to wimin.

The newspapers once again publicized that the festival was not only relevant to wimin and Jane Heyman discussed the subject in a Vancouver Magazine interview:

Nobody talks about Tennessee Williams or John Lazarus having a 'male point of view'. We're merely presenting evidence that there is as much richness and diversity from women as men.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Naomi Pauls, "A Mom with a View to the Magic of Theatre," Georgia Straight, 24 - 31 January 1992, p. 35.

⁶¹ Jeff Bateman, "Festivals: Women On Stage" in Vancouver Magazine, 25, No. 1 (1992), p.11.

As it was, a statistical review found that approximately 65% of View's audience was female and 35% male (perhaps an indication of mainstream appeal), a ratio quite similar to that of any Vancouver arts event.⁶²

THE FESTIVAL

The participation and contributions of Kathleen Weiss helped to create a 1992 festival that reaffirmed all of VIEW's original objectives as found in the society's constitution. For instance, there was a much greater emphasis in the programming on difference and women of colour. VIEW's commitment to cultural diversity was tied into the symposium, related workshops and some of the performances, thus providing a through-line that interconnected individual festival events into a larger social, political, and cultural whole.

The 1992 festival symposium was entitled "Crosscultural Politics in The Arts: Strategies For Change". This day-long event explored issues confronting 'minority' women struggling as artists. Round table discussions focused on how women from different cultural backgrounds could work together to bring about change. Following the panel discussion participants divided up into one of three workshops designed to work through some of the issues raised during the round table discussion. The workshops, "Breaking Through The Barriers"

⁶² Wendy McLellan, "Seriously, a sense of humor helps," The Vancouver Sun, 25 January 1992, p. D11.

(effects of racism in the workplace), "Diversity in the Arts: How to Program Crossculturally (setting up a crosscultural theatre company) and "Making Your Own Space" (how wimin of colour can produce their own work), attempted to approach the problems from different perspectives, using various kinds of workshop techniques.

There were also a number of performance pieces by and about wimin of colour. These projects featured a 15 minute post-production discussion with the audience (a common feminist theatre technique) because the projects directly related to issues touched on in the symposium. One such play was Blade, (based on actual events) the story of a Native wimin whose murder is trivialized by the media because it is incorrectly assumed that she is a prostitute. The Strength of Indian Women was a theatrical presentation of survival through perseverance for four First Nations girls forced to attend residential schools. Little White Lies dealt with the problems actors of colour face in the business. Sun and Shadow II (this time about the North American wimin's cultural displacement when she travels to China) was also scheduled to perform in relation to the symposium, however, a new play by Margaret Hollingsworth, entitled There's a Few Things I Want To Tell You, ended up replacing Sun and Shadow II.

Victoria's Puente Theatre returned to the festival with Canadian Tango, a play about Latin American immigrant couples adapting to their new lives in Canada. The "Reading Writers I

& II" event, by now a permanent festival favourite, boasted 5 visible 'minority' writers out of a total of 8. One of the networking sessions focused on The Medea Project, a play written by Brava! in conjunction with black wimin in the American prison system. The musical event, Sounds From Three Corners of the World, featured Eulalia de Araujo - a South American aboriginal composer, Qiu Xia He - dancer, singer and player of traditional Chinese music on the pipa, and Kathryn Hansen - composer of original compositions for sitar.

The 1992 Women In View festival also introduced some Quebecois programming, again extending the platform of inclusion to even greater lengths. Objects in Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear was one such production by/with Jane O'Reilly and Nicole Champagne of Quebec City. These wimin also led the "Body, Voice and Image Linking" workshop designed to integrate body, voice and life image. Quebecoise dancer Danielle Beuadet performed in Zenki-zu as part of the "Four On The Floor II" dance event. Bonnie Ste-Croix, a Quebec native, teamed up with Jenica Rayne to perform original acoustic material and Nicole Brossard, a renowned Quebecoise feminist writer, was part of the "Reading Writers I" series.

Lesbian related issues and performances were on the agenda at the 1992 festival. One of the networking sessions, "Heterosexism in the Arts", examined how heterosexism impacts on wimin - lesbians and heterosexuals alike - both as creators and as audience members. The Labrys Rising Dance

Academy, an "instructional lesbian social dance trinity", performed Demonstration #3 and Demonstration #9, fantasy constructions probing issues of lesbian sexual identity. Madame Scotch Tape was a one woman show about the world of Jesse - an impoverished, almost ex-junkie, lesbian. Light On Her Feet was a theatre piece that explored the effects of patriarchy, misogyny and size oppression on three lesbian women. View was finally filling the noticeable programming gap left by the absence of lesbian representation.

A woman's festival, especially a festival with feminist content, is in danger of being perceived as a radical, man-hating, sexually-deviant affair. There was obviously some fear that the presence of lesbian programming could potentially harm the image of mainstream respectability that VIEW worked so hard to foster. Elaine Smookler, View's Communication Director, found it necessary to explain in the media that the festival was not "a bunch of lesbian feminists sitting around slagging men."⁶³

Feminist content could be found in some, although not all, of the performance productions and, overall, there was a stronger, more identifiable, claim to sexual politics this year. The word 'feminist' was even used in one of the workshop titles, "So Who Says Feminists Can't Be Funny?", a title chosen by the workshop leader and not the Women In View festival. Also, the Cabaret Stir-Fry II described itself (in

⁶³ Ibid.

the program but not in the media) as an "evening of wacky feminist humour."⁶⁴ This was definitely a festival where a feminist could find performance events that appealed to her social and political sensibilities.

View's commitment to a platform of inclusion was successfully realized at the 1992 Women In View festival, more so than ever before. Issues of difference in relation to race, culture and sexuality figured prominently in the programming. Free childcare increased the potential attendance of wimin in less financially-able circumstances, thus extending the platform of inclusion to View's audience base. The 1992 festival had a definite aura of feminist practice about it for not only were issues of difference foregrounded as is a Third Wave/materialist practise, but solutions to political problems and ways to unite wimin from divergent backgrounds were actively sought. View's efforts were overtly political and feminist for they were directed at effecting change in the status of wimin.

View's commitment to promoting education, skills development and artistic growth for female arts practitioners was as true as ever. For example, the "Reading Writers I & II" events helped writers hone their skills. Workshop topics ranged from improvisational techniques, comedic acting, movement classes and voice work to overcoming fears that block creativity and integrating the mind, body and spirit in

⁶⁴ "The 1992 Women In View Festival Schedule of Events."

the creative process. Two workshops in particular, not only offered skills development but continued to stretch the boundaries of inclusion. Drama workshops were provided for budding artists, that is children aged 6 - 9 and 10 - 13, a first for the Women In View festival.

The new networking sessions further emphasized VIEW's skills-development commitment, and also satisfied VIEW's objective of facilitating communication among wimin artists. The various sessions included such topics as creating film opportunities, grant writing, an "open house" of the View Playwright's Unit, and the aforementioned "Heterosexism in the Arts" and The Medea Project. The final networking session was "Future Directions For The Women In View Festival" with Kathleen Weiss and Jane Heyman. This open discussion on festival programming and future directions illustrated VIEW's sincere desire to maintain a strong grassroots involvement and support base. In the spirit of feminist inclusion, community input and involvement was of the utmost importance to View The Performing Arts Society.

View managed to extend the platform of inclusion to new lengths and new levels but perhaps the most important objective of all was the realization of improved opportunities for wimin. The Women In View festival provided a structure and a place in which all types of female artists could showcase their work, work that might never have been realized otherwise. Ninety five per cent of the festival's

material was original work⁶⁵, an impressive percentage that testifies to the fact that View was providing greatly needed opportunities for female artists.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 1.

PART VI: THE FIFTH ANNUAL WOMEN IN VIEW FESTIVAL

The 10 day 1993 Women In View festival, January 22 - 31, was even larger and more successful than the previous festival. The number of artists (250) actually decreased but the number of performance projects increased to 93 events and still 95% (or 98% depending on the source) of the material was original.⁶⁶ View's reputation was also beginning to grow beyond the confines of the local Vancouver art scene. Besides the participation of artists from all over B.C., thirteen of the festival events involved the participation of wimin originating from 4 outside provinces and 1 territory, and 5 of the festival projects featured wimin from 3 American states.⁶⁷

There was another shuffling of venues to accommodate the increase in festival size. The Firehall Arts Centre (utilizing theatre and studio) and the Station Street Theatre (theatre and scene shop) continued to host the performance events but the small Tamahnous space was replaced by the 325 seating capacity of the Vancouver East Cultural Centre, a venue closer to the mainstream philosophy. The symposium was held at Simon Fraser University (downtown) in the Joseph and Rosalie Segal Conference Centre and the networking sessions were housed at Josephine's Coffee Bar. A new addition to the

⁶⁶ Province of B.C., Ministry of Tourism and Ministry Responsible for Culture, "Grant Application for Operating Assistance: Arts Festivals, 1993, Section G (supplementary insert), p. 4.

⁶⁷ Ibid., Section F (Supplementary insert), p. 3.

festival programming was a "Talking With" series of which one event was based at Simon Fraser's Harbour Centre, the other at Josephine's. There were 5 different workshop venues at the 1993 festival: Basic Inquiry Studio, Britannia Community Centre, Chan Quang Buddhist Hall, Cinderella Ballroom, and Developmental Arts Society.

While the number of different venues almost seems overwhelming, they were all basically located within a five block radius - a necessity for quick and easy access to festival events. The venues chosen were interesting in themselves for the cultural and social variety represented by those places. Such a blending of communities was thematically appropriate for the festival considering VIEW's objective of inclusion. In a practical vein, View's diversity of venues may have presented opportunities to increase the audience base, reaching communities that otherwise may not have even heard of the festival.

REVENUE

What is remarkable about the 1993 festival is that View managed to expand even though the total amount of revenue generated was less than the previous year. View's largest source of income, government grants, was cut by more than \$52,000.00 - a substantial loss of almost 1/4 of View's operating budget. Revenue received through the payment of membership dues also decreased, an area of concern primarily

because of declining community participation rather than the decrease in funds.

Expenditures increased, as was bound to be the case, even though costs were cut in 5 different areas. The most significant cuts were made in administration and more specifically administrative staff, but total expenditures still reached \$316,168.00. Despite the reduction in budget, View still managed to increase the amount of money paid out for artist fees and expenses by \$21,604.00, thus indicating a firm commitment to paying artists for their work even in the face of financial instability.

The most impressive aspect of the 1993 Women In View festival was that increased audience attendance resulted in the largest box office sales to date with a total of \$78,011.00, that is \$41,696.00 more than the last festival! Despite the phenomenal box office sales View still ended with a deficiency of revenue totalling \$7,811.00 (roughly the difference between the total expenditures of the 1992 and 1993 festivals). Luckily View went into 1993 with a surplus of \$6,315.00 so the overall deficit was only \$1,496.00, an amount that had been successfully recovered in the past.

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

The graphic image chosen for the 1993 festival literature was created by \pik•to•`graf•ik\ and was, again, appropriate and womin-friendly (see appendix 6). Posters and programs sported the filled-in figure of a womin dancing

(perhaps in mid leap), offset by a large star and pinwheel shape. Dark blue was used for the female figure and a lighter shade of blue for the two accompanying shapes resulting in a simple, yet pleasing and cost-effective motif.

Pre-festival publicity was not as extensive as it should have been. The biggest media attraction, and hence the most publicized aspect of the festival, was the new addition of a musical gala and "dance-o-rama" to kick off the 1993 festival. The headliner (and subsequent media attraction) was Jane Siberry, performing a solo acoustic set at the Commodore Ballroom. The All-Star Women's Band also played, comprised of various female members from k.d. lang's band, Spirit of the West, Prairie Oyster and others. This opening concert was financially very important to View. It was also important because of the media attention it drew, for some of that coverage would surely create spin-off for the rest of the festival events.

Kathleen Weiss acknowledged in her Artistic Director's Statement that the festival's tremendous expansion was "administratively draining" and more specifically, that "the effective marketing of the extended festival was beyond [View's] minimal publicity budget."⁶⁸ The lack of publicity and marketing did not seem to interfere with the festival's success, however, since View realized its largest audience to

⁶⁸ Kathleen Weiss, "Importance of Women In View Programming," Artistic Director's Statement, 1993, p. 5.

date with 7,000 spectators.⁶⁹ Apparently mainstream marketing was not as necessary as View had imagined.

Once the festival was in progress, newspaper coverage was adequate, although not impressive. Reviews of individual productions were found in the mainstream Vancouver papers The Vancouver Sun and The Province and a post-festival article was featured in Theatrum Magazine. By far the most consistent, insightful, and supportive coverage continued to come from the Georgia Straight.

THE FESTIVAL

The 1993 festival continued to epitomize the on-going values and commitments of View The Performing Arts Society as originally formulated in 1986. A description of VIEW's aims and objectives, found in a grant proposal submitted to the City of Vancouver for the year of 1992, illustrates that the passing of six years time only served to crystallize these objectives into a concrete platform. VIEW's self description was as follows:

Our purpose is to enhance, support and promote Canadian women artists. We are committed to providing opportunity, visibility, education, employment and support services for women in key creative roles in the performing arts while educating the public about women's roles and issues. We strive to further working relationships between women of different social, cultural and economic experiences through

⁶⁹ "Women In View Annual Report, 1993-94."

variety of art forms.⁷⁰

There were some very minor adjustments made to VIEW's aims (such as the theoretical shift in focus from local B.C. artists to a larger Canadian context although, in practice, the majority of festival work continued to come from B.C. artists) but the core intentions remained the same. VIEW's objectives definitely continued to be feminist in nature and, more and more, VIEW was successfully implementing the theory into festival practise.

In terms of honouring the commitment to provide education and training (and, therefore, the potential for increased opportunities), VIEW continued to offer useful and thoughtful programming for workshops, some designed specifically for professionals and some not. Due to popular demand, Judith Koltai returned to the festival (having conducted a sold out movement workshop in 1992) with another movement workshop entitled "Authentic Movement - Freeing the Secrets of the Text". Other practical skill enhancement workshops included "Creative Movement and Dance Therapy", "Drinking From the Well - Embodying the Natural Voice", and "Creating & Performing your own Work: Tapping the Source".

"Stepping into the Rainbow of Desire" was a workshop based on Augusto Boal's social theatre techniques, conducted by Celeste Insell. Through a series of theatre games and improvisation participants created scenarios that represented

⁷⁰ City Of Vancouver, Office of Cultural Affairs, "Grant Application for Cross-Cultural Initiatives Program, 1992," Section 2, p. 1.

the subtext of people's daily lives. By altering the subtext in a workshop process, "the theatre becomes a rehearsal for change", a very useful and practical device for wimin arts practitioners interested in altering the status quo.

As for furthering working relationships between wimin and offering even greater support services, the Women In View festival once again programmed networking sessions. These included "Let's Cross Disciplines", a consideration of the many facets of interdisciplinary work; "Let's Fly Solo", an examination of the creation and impact of one-womin shows; "Let's Share Approaches to Video and Film Production", an exploration of the uses of video and film media to express personal and political issues; and "Let's Delve into Feminist Cultural Criticism", a presentation and discussion of the varying perspectives that inform the spectrum of feminist cultural criticism. The 1993 Women In View festival did not shy away from overtly feminist programming. Some of the networking sessions were directly representative of feminist interests and concerns.

Combining entertainment, skills-development, communication between female artists, and important support services, the ever popular "Reading Writers" series grew in size from 2 to 4 separate events featuring 9 writers at various levels of experience. The "Cabaret Stir-Fry" component also grew in size due to its great popularity. The 1993 festival offered 4 separate cabaret events with emerging and experienced wimin artists from a variety of disciplines.

The commitment to produce diverse work from women of varied cultural backgrounds was pursued further at the 1993 festival. Canyon Sam, a Chinese American, presented her two solo pieces Taxi Karma and The Dissident, both based on her travels to Tibetan Asia. Shirley Cheechoo's Path With No Moccasins, about a First Nations woman's journey and struggle growing up in a residential school, was presented in collaboration with PAS: Cultural Exchange Arts. Leslie Hamson's Land(e)scapes - a story of 3 Native women and 1 white woman struggling to understand the complexities of their relationships - was presented as a staged reading.

A Woman's Voice in Jewish Storytelling was just that, Helen Mintz's one-woman performance piece about women's personal and collective experience as perceived through Jewish eyes. Fast Life On a Lazy Susan dealt with issues of cultural identity and the role of food as a cultural bonding agent. This piece was presented by Lai See Soo Sang, a group of East Asian women with different cultural backgrounds and varied artistic practices (an epitome of the type of cultural and artistic diversity VIEW wished to integrate into the festival format). "Cabaret Stir-Fry II" also featured a taiko drumming, video, movement, and sound presentation by Lai See Soo Sang and Penny Singh performed traditional African-American gospel songs a capella style.

Cherrie Moraga, a Latina playwright based in San Francisco, was the speaker for the "Reading Writers I" forum and she also conducted a workshop on playwrighting. Canyon

Sam returned to lead a workshop entitled "Creating and Performing Your Own Work: Tapping the Source" and Mercedes Baines led the workshop "Let's Not Talk About Race Issues" which was a discussion for wimin of colour about anger and responsibility as artists. Another one of the workshops representing cultural diversity (combined with skills enhancement) was "Drumdancing", an interdisciplinary approach to movement, voice, improv, and rhythm with taiko drum work.

As part of the new "Talking With..." series, Monique Mojica was scheduled to read from her play Princess Pocahontas and The Blue Spots (a deconstruction of the 'Indian Princess' myth) but, unfortunately, this event was cancelled at the last minute. (The other "Talking With..." event featured Jane Sibbery.) This year's symposium, "Re-Presenting Woman: New Constructions of Female Gender", while not directly related to issues of difference, had a panel that certainly represented wimin of different backgrounds and experiences. The 6 members of the panel were Marusia Bociurkiw, Shari Graydon, Monique Mojica, Haruko Okano, Joy Parr, and River Sui.

Diversity of experience was also represented by the continued presence of lesbian performers and performances. Radical dyke playwright Audrey Butler performed in her own play (along with Steph Kelemen) Hardcore Memories, "a showcase for strong lesbian voices", which explored relationships and resistance. Butler also filled one of the positions of speaker for the "Reading Writers IV" forum.

Betsy Warland, whose work is "conceived through the lens of being a woman and a Lesbian", participated in the "Reading Writers II" event and her play, The Bat Had Blue Eyes, was performed at the festival. As well, the networking session "Let's Talk About Access" was conducted by lesbian activist/producer/ teacher/ and seasonal performer Frances Wasseerlein. The main topic of discussion was how government policies affect wimin's work and how issues of access and/or barriers to access are influenced by race, class, language, education and so forth.

Furthering the inclusive nature of the festival and continuing the practice established the previous year, 2 of the 9 workshops were set aside for young people. "Playmaking with 6- to 8-year-olds" and "Creating a Play with 9- to 12-year-olds" were three hour workshops designed and conducted specifically for children (no parents allowed).

Accessibility continued to be an issue to which Women In View responded by not charging admission to any of the networking sessions, thus advancing the commitment and possibility of inclusion of wimin from varied economic backgrounds. Another free event was "Betty by Betty: Readings from Betty Lambert's Plays", a selection of excerpts read by Joy Coghill, Elizabeth Dancoes, Peter Graham and Jennifer Martin. As well, full and partial subsidies were available on request for the main symposium event. VanCity continued to sponsor the Women In View festival so that a number of community access tickets were distributed to local non-profit

arts and social services organizations. These free offerings were a necessary step to increase the festival's accessibility to the less financially endowed since overall ticket prices continued to rise. Discount Packages now cost \$30.00 for 3 Vancouver East Cultural Centre shows and \$25.00 for 3 plays at other performance venues. Individual ticket prices now varied, depending on the show, at \$6.00, \$8.00, \$10.00 and \$12.00 intervals.

A new and praiseworthy feature that increased Women In View's accessibility to the hearing impaired was American Sign Language interpretation at one performance of Hardcore Memories, Dying To Be Thin, Path With No Moccasins and Grace and Gravity. Oddly enough, wheelchair accessibility was not even mentioned on the 1993 programs. People would have had to telephone the VIEW office to find out which of the many venues did and did not have wheelchair accessibility. View did, however, continue to offer free childcare services for the performance Saturdays and the final Sunday. The festival also repeated the procedure of yellow umbrella patrols who answered questions, sheltered people from the rain, accompanied audience members between venues and/or helped people find rides.

A final note about the 1993 Women In View festival is that it was a great success. The festival's expansion, continuing growth and artistic diversity definitely paid off. Since the festival's inception in 1989, Women In View's

audience attendance grew 125%⁷¹ with 7,000 people attending the 1993 festival (the largest festival attendance yet)!⁷² Despite the festival's artistic success, Kate Weiss, in an artistic director's statement, stated that the festival lacked a general coherence:

Many of the individual events were outstanding and overall quality was high, but there wasn't a consistent artistic vision coalescing the programming.⁷³

I wonder if a consistent artistic vision is necessary to a festival that prides itself on a myriad of viewpoints and diverse experiences. It seems to me that the beauty (and perhaps success) of the 1993 Women In View festival was that there was not any one artistic vision represented. While the through-line provided at the 1992 festival was very effective and politically important, to make a cohesive artistic vision a continual festival requirement seems to indicate patriarchal and linear modes of thought. To try and fit festival programming into a neat, comprehensive package reflects traditional modes of theatrical operation. Why not have a festival with multi-focus programming? For this would surely represent the nature of the Women In View festival and more generally, feminist politics. As it was, there was already a larger artistic vision in place - the promotion of

⁷¹ Weiss, Artistic Director's Statement, p. 2.

⁷² "Women In View Annual Report, 1993-94."

⁷³ Weiss, Artistic Director's Statement, p. 6.

wimin in the arts. Did there need to be any more cohesion than that?

PART VII: THE SIXTH ANNUAL WOMEN IN VIEW FESTIVAL

The sixth annual Women in View festival was held from January 21st to the 30th of 1994. Compared to its predecessor, this Women In View festival was drastically reduced in size (primarily for financial reasons). Over 140 applications were received to fill 24 available positions, although there were 39 different festival events in total. The majority of the projects continued to be original material with 18 new pieces created specifically for this year's festival. There were 60 theatrical performances, 60% of which were originated by local and regional artists. The remaining 40% were initiated by artists from out of province (a higher percentage than any previous festival), indicating a definite increase in View's (inter)national reputation.

The Firehall Arts Centre, Station Street Arts Centre and Vancouver East Cultural Centre continued to host the performance events. A new venue, W.I.S.E Hall, was added to the line-up to house the 3 cabaret events, the new "Formations" series, the "Reading Writers" sessions, a new open stage, and the odd performance and networking event. Western Front housed the new music series, Green Thumb Rehearsal Hall provided a venue for 2 of the workshops and Josephine's Coffee Bar featured one of the networking sessions.

Women In View's 1994 audience attendance figures climbed to the record-breaking height of 8,500 with over 1/3 of all

shows sold out in advance.⁷⁴ And yet box office revenue was actually less this year than in 1993. This is curious considering that audience attendance was greater in 1994 and the average individual ticket price more or less remained the same. One reason for this oddity may have been the more accessible and cheaper ticket packages that were offered. In 1993 discount packages of \$30 for 3 shows at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre (VECC) and \$25 for 3 shows at other venues were available. In 1994 the discount packages offered 5 performances for \$40 or 10 shows for \$75 - a welcome return to more affordable prices. If the majority of people chose ticket packages for the 1994 festival then this could account for the discrepancy in box office sales.

REVENUE

View's greatest source of funding continued to be government grants, although the total amount of money received from government granting agencies declined even further in 1994. Grants from the Secretary of State and Women's Equity were cut altogether. The other granting agencies continued to cut their funding for the Women In View festival with the exception of Canada Council and the Province of B.C. Cultural Services Branch, both of whom increased their previous year's total by relatively small amounts. Total funds received from government bodies amounted

⁷⁴ "Women In View Annual Report, 1993-94".

to \$116,788.00, a decrease of \$31,451.00 from 1993's already diminished total.

As well, fund-raising revenue shrunk from \$78,195.00 in 1993 to \$71,608.00 in 1994, the largest losses being in the areas of donations and foundations. (Luckily, net lottery funds were double that of the previous year, otherwise View would have had a very serious financial problem on its hands.) One good thing was that membership was back up, pulling in \$2,670.00. This was important, again, not so much for financial reasons but as an indication of the increase in community participation.

View actually managed to decrease its overall expenditures from \$316,168.00 in 1993 to \$296,879.00 in 1994. The total amount of money expended on administrative costs, however, increased by approximately \$4,000.00 despite continued cost reduction in half of the administration's areas. The total amount of money spent on festival operations was reduced by \$22,779.00 (production and publicity staff being the hardest hit area).

Once again, View continued to increase the amount of funds available to artists for fees and expenses, paying out \$78,765.00 in 1994 - that is \$3,666.00 more than 1993. This was a very admirable move considering View's state of financial affairs. As it was, after the 1994 festival VIEW was left with a year end deficit of \$36,301.00 - with \$1,496.00 of that being carried over from the previous year.

For the first time, VIEW was saddled with a very serious and substantial debt.⁷⁵

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

The 1994 Women In View literature adopted a new approach to the visual images used to advertise the festival. No longer using simple images, Elaine Littman, graphic designer for the festival programs, incorporated black and white photographs of various performers and performances to sell the festival (see appendix 7). For instance, the glossy festival programs contained front page photos of performers Karen Williams, Karen Hines and Helen Mintz - wimin with African, Asian and Jewish heritages. Inside the program, dispersed throughout, were photographs of other performers from a diversity of cultural backgrounds - white, Asian, black, East Indian and lesbian. Another variation of the festival literature, the advertising supplement featured in the Georgia Straight, presented a collage of performance photos with an even more diverse representation of wimin from varied cultural backgrounds and experiences. For the first time, Women In View's self-promoting literature truly reflected the platform of inclusion and diversity that the festival strove to embody.

The 1994 Women In View festival fared better than any previous festival in terms of newspaper coverage. As well as

⁷⁵ All financial information was obtained from "View The Performing Arts Society: Statement of Revenue, Expenditures and Deficit for the Year Ended March 31, 1994 (Audited)."

advertising the festival, Georgia Straight continued to provide significant coverage and reviews of the individual performances. Mainstream press such as Vancouver Magazine and The Province both made mention of the festival and Theatrum Magazine featured another post-festival article about Women In View. Most significant of all was the increase in attention paid to the festival by the Vancouver Sun's reviewer, Barbara Cook. Not only were individual performance events reviewed, but the festival's schedule of events was advertised and Hollingsworth's play, In Confidence, received pre-festival publicity. Perhaps the increase in newspaper coverage helped to account for the increase in audience attendance since the areas of festival promotion, publicity, and publicity staff encountered cutbacks.

THE FESTIVAL

Out of financial necessity, the 1994 Women In View festival was reduced in size but not in popularity, quality or artistic growth. The Women In View workshops were reduced in number from 9 in 1993 to 4 in 1994 but the programming in this area continued to offer practical skill-enhancing opportunities. The workshop offerings included "Self-Scripting for Performance", a two-day physical theatre session; "Body Movement/Body Image", an exploration of body image using movement techniques and personal stories conducted by Norma Kilpatrick, "a fat woman who loves to dance"; and "Let's Laugh About Sex", a workshop designed to

build confidence and promote self-esteem led by stand-up comic Karen Williams.

One drastic change that occurred in this year's festival programming was the absence of any kind of symposium or forum, thus leaving only the networking sessions to delve into issues of importance as they relate to wimin and the arts. The networking sessions were also reduced in number from 6 in 1993 to 3 in 1994. "Women Who Write Plays" was a networking event about the status of wimin playwrights in Canada hosted by Carol Bolt and Angela Rebeiro. "What's So Funny?" was a discussion about wimin and comedy that asked 'What makes you laugh?'. The subject of "Women, Sex and Writing" was a discussion of passion "from a woman's point of view".

Despite financial difficulties and reduction in festival size, Women In View continued to take the programming in new directions. The popular "Cabaret Stir-Fry" event was renamed "W.I.S.E Women's Cabaret" (after the venue). That this was one of View's most popular events is indicated by the comparatively small reduction in size from 4 events in 1993 to 3 in 1994. In a similar vein, but new to the festival, was an open-stage event. Performers registered on a first come/first serve basis at the actual event for two hours of entertainment open to anyone interested in performing.

New (or reintroduced) to the festival was a three part music series with concerts by Garbo's Hat, a Vancouver jazz trio; The Billy Tipton Memorial Saxophone Quartet, a Seattle

based group with eclectic sounds ranging from jazz to Led Zeppelin; and Shweta Jhaveri, acclaimed vocalist and musician from India. These sold out performances (reflecting a diversity of cultures and experience on a small scale) were presented in collaboration with Western Front.

For the first time since its inception, the Women In View festival produced a full-length play, In Confidence, by Margaret Hollingsworth. The work was first presented as a one-act monologue in a staged reading at the 1992 Women In View festival and response was so overwhelming that Hollingsworth decided to expand the play to a full-length, two character performance piece. In Confidence was co-produced with the New Play Centre and premiered at Women In View before moving on to a run at the New Play Centre.

"Formations" was a new addition to the 1994 festival programming and featured a series of short works, written and performed by 5 young local writers. This on-going project provided the developing writers with professional directorship and "feminist, non-traditional"⁷⁶ dramaturgical support from the festival's artistic director, Kathleen Weiss. This was an important new program for it provided guidance, and perhaps a mentor, to emerging artists who might benefit greatly from such an experience.

The "Formations" project served as an indication of VIEW's new-found commitment to helping foster new works by

⁷⁶ "Women In View Annual Report, 1993-94."

wimin. While this had always been the practise with the festival, VIEW now committed the idea to the society's core philosophical commitments. VIEW's slightly revisioned mandate as of 1994 was as follows:

We have a commitment to these values:

*to increase the level of representation by women creators in the marketplace;

*to ensure that their work is equally valued by the arts community and audience at large;

*to program live performing arts from a multidisciplinary base;

*to include a balance of emerging and experienced women artists in the programming;

*to ensure representation of women from diverse backgrounds;

*to encourage innovation in form and staging;

*to stimulate the development of new work.⁷⁷

The final two values were new additions to VIEW's written objectives, and aspects of both were reflected in the "Formations" project (the final value being self-explanatory). As Weiss subscribes to the cultural feminist notion of a specific female aesthetic, innovations in form and staging would have been encouraged through the feminist dramaturgical process she conducted.

Other VIEW commitments continued to be put into practice at the 1994 Women In View festival. For instance, representation of wimin from diverse varieties of experience continued to be successfully realized. Dance of the Dead,

⁷⁷ This is printed on the "Women In View Annual Report" for 1993-94 and 1994-95.

with Barbara Bourget and Jay Hirabayashi, investigated the common denominators in Japanese butoh and Spanish flamenco dance forms. The music segment of the festival presented a diverse platform of musical styles with performers originating from the United States, India and Canada. Staged readings such as Zara Suleman's Identities (an examination of South Asian cultural identity, gender, and sexual politics in a Canadian context) and Celeste Insell's Searching for a Place Inside My Mind (a call for people of African descent to decolonize their minds) addressed issues of culture and difference. Storytelling theatre was a popular genre for cultural examination this year with Dryland, an exploration of Afro-Canadian identity by Pauline Peters; Sapelo: Time is Winding Up, about a former slave colony where African traditions have been kept alive; and Helen Mintz, returning to the festival with Jewish Women's Voices of Resistance. Another production, Heroines in Black Boots, may not have focused on race and culture specifically, but it was performed by women of colour. This was a literary reading a part of the "Reading Writers" event. The 'Heroines' were three Asian-Canadian writers from Vancouver who explored issues of "sister love and loss, heroines, lingerie, history and family in both prose and poetry."

There were two productions at this year's festival that dealt directly with lesbian experience. A Thin Line was a performance drama that incorporated video to relate a young lesbian's journey through memory as she prepared to leave a

mental institution. The second project, Immediate Family, was a drama about an older lesbian visiting her dying lover in the hospital and all the concomitant problems that accompanied such an ordeal. Besides supplying lesbian programming, these two pieces offered another level of inclusion - the exploration of women at different stages in life.

As was the case at every festival, there were also distinctly feminist projects, but this year certain projects were advertised as such. For instance, the "Breathing Life into the Non-Linear Text" workshop was conducted by Diane Roberts of Toronto's Nightwood Theatre, a known feminist company. This two-day session discussed approaches to material that is "non-traditionally structured and reflects a feminist point of view." Renowned feminist Ann-Marie MacDonald was featured at one of the three "Reading Writers" series in which she read from her work Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet). Another feminist event (not overtly advertised as such) was stand-up comic Karen Williams whose routine addressed issues of classism, racism, sexism, et cetera.

In an attempt to have an all encompassing platform of inclusion, View continued to implement certain strategies to enable ease of access. In terms of festival programming, for example, some events were made accessible to the less financially able. The "Networking Sessions" were all free of charge, as was the open stage. Two of the 3 "Reading Writers"

events were pay-what-you-can and Mom's The Word, a "kitchen table cabaret", was also pay-what-you-can.

A form of free child care was offered for the 1994 festival but the method of delivery had changed. The daycare facilities used in the past had never proven to be popular (possibly due to location) and the costs of maintaining such a facility were high. The structure was altered out of practicality - given VIEW's financial impairment, it could no longer afford to operate in the old way. Instead, a limited number of childcare subsidies, in the form of vouchers, were given out on a first come first serve basis. People could supply their own baby-sitters, at home or nearby, and View would help with the expenses.

The operating procedure for community access tickets changed in a similar fashion. View could no longer afford to send social service agencies tickets that might or might not be used so, instead, a limited number of ticket subsidies were offered to interested parties. Although financially necessary, it was unfortunate that View had to alter the community access program, for the old system had the potential of drawing new audience members. The system implemented in 1994 meant that participants would already have to be aware of and interested in the Women In View festival.

A final note on accessibility is that the new W.I.S.E. Hall venue was partially wheelchair accessible (along with Firehall Theatre and Josephine's Coffee Bar). And, of course,

the Vancouver East Cultural Centre continued to offer full wheelchair access. That left four venues (and the Women In View box office) totally inaccessible to wheelchairs. For the first time, the number of wheelchair inaccessible locations out-numbered those with wheelchair access.

PART VIII: THE SEVENTH ANNUAL WOMEN IN VIEW FESTIVAL

The seventh annual Women In View (January 22 to 29, 1995) was a shorter festival than usual, decreased by three days from the previous festival. This may seem to indicate that Women in View was reducing its size, perhaps to deal with the deficit, but the festival actually grew in comparison to 1994. The number of performers, for instance, increased to 145 - 101 from B.C., 18 from other Canadian regions, and 26 originating from outside of Canada (a slight decline from the 40% statistic of the previous year). The number of projects (36) was also up from last year by an increase of 12, as was the number of performances, burgeoning at 79. Seventy nine performances in 7 days, and over 200 volunteers: it was a jam-packed festival at which it would have been impossible to attend every event.⁷⁸

The venues chosen for the 1995 festival were the same as 1994 except that Josephine's Coffee Bar and Green Thumb Rehearsal Hall were no longer part of the line-up. Every one of View's venues was familiar and proven: Firehall Arts Centre, Station Street Arts Centre, Vancouver East Cultural Centre, W.I.S.E Hall, and Western Front. With the exception of Western Front and the Firehall studio, these venues continued to offer wheelchair accessibility.

⁷⁸ All statistical information regarding the festival was taken from the "Women In View Annual Report, 1994-95."

The 1995 festival witnessed yet another alteration to View's ticket system. The discount package of 5 shows for \$40.00 offered in 1994 was raised to \$45.00 in 1995. A 10 show package was no longer offered and instead View returned to the 1993 approach of 3 shows for \$30.00. This was a better deal in 1995 than it had been in 1993, for View had raised some of the individual ticket prices for the 1995 festival. About 60% of the shows were \$14.50 (the highest price yet) and the other 40% were \$8.50 (still a reasonable price).

Another contributing factor to the festival's overall decrease in financial accessibility was that none of this year's individual performance events offered pay-what-you-can or free admission. Only the 3 networking sessions and the open stage were free of charge. This is understandable considering the financial problems View was facing but it is unfortunate that festival accessibility had to be compromised.

Even though prices were increased overall, other efforts continued to make the festival accessible to the less financially able. VIEW members, Alliance members, students, and seniors (but not the unemployed - which could be difficult to prove) could buy last-minute rush tickets for a discounted price. As well, View started offering special group rates for parties of 12 or more.

Thanks to the continued sponsorship of VanCity, 140 free tickets were distributed to community organizations and individuals. (These community access tickets would have

served as an avenue of access for the unemployed.) There was also a community performance of the festival hit Mom's The Word at the YWCA. This "sold out" event was free of charge and it was made possible by the support of the Bert Wolfe Nitikman Foundation. Childcare subsidies totalling \$600.00 continued to be made available to interested parties under the system devised for the previous year.

Even with some increased accessibility for the less wealthy, inflated ticket prices in a recessionary economy may have discouraged some people from attending the festival. As it was, Women In View experienced a significant drop from their peak audience attendance of 8,500 in 1994 to 5,712 in 1995. Naturally, accompanying this decline in attendance was a decline in box office revenue, something View could not afford to experience.

REVENUE

The combined total of government grants awarded to the 1995 Women In View festival was even less than the previous year. A very definite withdrawal of government funds was slowly being realized, so much so that government funding was no longer View's major source of income. Government grants brought in \$95,206.00, whereas View's increased fund-raising efforts generated the majority of income with \$104,610.00. Total revenue for 1995 amounted to \$270,019.00, with dues from the climbing memberships contributing \$2,901.00 (a slow but steady increase).

View successfully continued to cut back on the total amount of money expended for Women In View. In the area of festival expenditures View managed to cut back in 3 of the 5 categories for an overall savings of \$7,846.00 from 1994. Administrative costs rose in 6 out of 8 departments but the financial reduction made in the area of staff was significant enough to offset the other expenditures, resulting in a savings of \$12,686.00 from 1994.

View was making some serious efforts and sacrifices to try and finance the festival while simultaneously dealing with the debt problem. Part of that effort also included reducing the amount of money paid out for artist's fees by \$3,937.00 - the first time View was forced to resort to this kind of cut. Despite the fact that View managed to reduce expenditures and simultaneously increase revenue, the festival still experienced an overall deficit of \$6,325.00. Carrying forward the debt from 1994, VIEW's overall deficit now reached the looming height of \$42,626.00.

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

The 1995 Women In View festival forsook the black and white photographs utilized for the previous festival's literature, at least in terms of the schedule of events and pre-festival publications. Instead View returned to the basic graphic image, this time featuring Sheila Norgate's illustration of a silhouetted woman apparently flying through the sky, Supergirl style, above a cityscape (see appendix 8).

The colour scheme incorporated the usual black and white and the third colour was purple. The program was also reduced in size from a lengthy and detailed booklet to a three sectioned fold-out paper.

A supplementary festival flyer created for the purposes of acknowledging special thanks and festival donors (the reduced program no longer had room for this) retained the black and white photo montage style of the previous festival. The photographs continued to display a variety of wimin artists from different cultural backgrounds who were performing at Women In View, thus allowing the festival to maintain its image of inclusion in some of its literature. For the 1995 festival, View adopted a combination approach to the festival's advertising literature, perhaps in an attempt to be cost effective and as inclusive as possible even when publicizing.

The 1995 newspaper coverage for Women In View, provided by Vancouver's two mainstream papers, reflected two opposite extremes. The Province carried only one article about the festival, after the fact, which reviewed some of the productions that had gone on to play at other venues. The Vancouver Sun's critic, however, was much more supportive and wrote more extensively. There was an article printed before the festival opened, another article on opening day and yet another article on the performance Saturday. It is precisely this kind of exposure, provided by the Sun, that is so vitally important to a festival such as Women In View which

does not have a lot of money to spend on advertising and publicity.

Mainstream newspaper alternatives, such as Georgia Straight and BC Woman, also continued to deliver informed and reliable festival coverage. As well, the Georgia Straight, along with Kiss-Fm radio station, acted as the festival's media sponsors. Theatrum once again delivered its yearly post-festival article which was written by VIEW member and performer Jennifer Martin.

THE FESTIVAL

In spite of overhanging financial problems, the 1995 Women In View festival was an exciting and innovative event that implemented VIEW's objectives into practice. VIEW's commitment to presenting a diverse variety of cultural experiences, for instance, continued to be an important feature of the Women in View festival. In this year's theatre category, Headless Turtleneck, by Denise Uyehara, told the story of a Japanese-American family and Images of Whole was an ensemble performance by 5 wimin "who address[ed] the diaspora of the African-Canadian woman."

All 3 of the "Reading Writers" forums showcased a diversity of work by wimin writers. Shani Mootoo explored her Indo-Trinidadian roots in one, Thuong Vuong-Riddick shared her experiences of Vietnam in another accompanied by Asian-Canadian writer Evelyn Lau, and Maxine Tynes, African-Canadian performance poet, read from her work at the last

event. Three of the 5 staged readings offered in 1995 were works by 'minority' artists: Angelique, the story of a black slave who was hanged in Montreal during the 1700s; Trickster Visits The Old Folks Home, about the experiences of a First Nations elder forced to live in a retirement home; and Under Cover, an examination of what it means to be a woman, bisexual and South Asian. Even the cabaret events featured performances relating to issues of difference such as Denise Uyehara's examination of Asian-American sexuality and "Hungary's Carol Burnett", Elvira Kurt's stand-up comedy.

Two of the 4 workshops were led by non-white women: "The Writer as Social Activist" conducted by Maxine Tynes and a "North Indian Singing Sweatshop" presented by Shweta Jhaveri. Diversity was also reflected in the festival's music segment. "The Laura Love Band" performed original "Afro-Celtic" sound and vocals, Sawagi Taiko, a group of Japanese women, presented contemporary and traditional Taiko drumming and Zeellia delivered an a cappella performance of Eastern European folk music. In the area of dance, a new festival initiative was the commissioning of Lee Su-Feh (an Asian Canadian choreographer) to produce a new work, entitled Speck, for the "Dance Too" program segment.

Representations of diversity, in terms of lesbian experience, were present, but not in any great number. Two performances, the same number as the previous year, advertised homosexual concerns - Under Cover with its bi-

sexual aspect and the stand-up routine of dyke comedian Elvira Kurt.

In relation to VIEW's commitment to stimulate the development of new work, the "Formations" project, introduced at last year's festival, was taken a step further to "encourage emerging artists to collaborate with artists from other disciplines."⁷⁹ Four works were produced from this program: River Run; Strings Attached; Chicks Up Front; and Molly Brolly and the Folly of Love. The 1995 Women In View festival expanded this programming segment from a single event to a 2 part series which met VIEW's objectives of multidisciplinary programming and facilitation of communication between artists at different levels of experience.

In terms of the actual festival format, the 1995 Women in View festival practically mirrored its predecessor except that the number of performance events was increased. With the continuing absence of a symposium, the workshops and networking sessions continued to function as educational components in both practical and theoretical terms. Skill-enhancing events such as the "Authentic Movement: Being Moved/Being Seen" workshop offered practical tools to help performers improve their body language. The aforementioned "North Indian Singing Workshop" was another event that offered practical skill-enhancing opportunities.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

In direct relation to feminist (although not exclusively) performance techniques, one networking session and one workshop event were dedicated to collective creation. "Collaboration and the Collective Process" was a networking discussion about why so many women choose this format and the accompanying joys and pitfalls of working in this capacity. The "Collectively Devised Theatre" workshop, led by Naomi Cooke, explored process, journey and technique in the collaborative creation of original work. These events provided both a theoretical and a practical approach to a characteristically feminist performance technique and furthered the cultural feminist objective of promoting, what could be termed, a female aesthetic.

Also related to performance was the final offering of the Western Front Music Program. For the first time, the music program included a discussion along with the other musical presentations. Internationally renowned performer, Carolee Schneemann, gave a performative talk on "extending the boundaries of performance as she has done since the 1960s." This program provided female artists with inspiration and examples of ways to push artistic boundaries, thus supporting View's interest in multidisciplinary work.

The remaining workshop and networking events provided more theoretical and socially-minded programming, filling the symposium void. "Interactive Arts in the Community" was a networking session on community and interactive arts led by Suzanne Lacy whose performance art is "dedicated to social

change and deep philosophical inquiry." In a similar vein was the "Writer as Social Activist" workshop that explored the art of writing as it pertains to addressing social issues. Both of these events were about equipping artists with effective and useful tools for stimulating social change - highly relevant techniques for feminist artists and other individuals dissatisfied with the status quo.

The remaining networking session dealt with a practical but rarely-mentioned area of concern. "Prime Time in the Performing Arts" was a discussion about the challenges facing wimin creators as they move into middle age and beyond, with success stories and strategies shared by hosts Patsy Ludwick, Kathleen Weiss, Santa Aloi and Joy Coghill. This was an important and much-needed event for, although it is difficult for wimin in general to succeed in the arts, it is often increasingly difficult for wimin as they advance in years. Only at an inclusive festival such as Women In View might one find an event specifically designed to address the concerns of older female artists.

PART IX: THE EIGHTH ANNUAL WOMEN IN VIEW FESTIVAL

The eighth annual Women In View festival, held January 25 - 28, 1996, was a much smaller festival than the previous year with only 4 days of programming. In fact, the entire 1996 Women In View festival was reduced in size. The reason for this overall reduction is obvious: VIEW needed to focus on its debt problem. A "Three Year Deficit Retirement Plan" was established for precisely this purpose, which included stabilization techniques such as increasing core funding and reducing festival size.

The 1996 Women In View festival received approximately 100 project applications. From the applications submitted, 25 separate events were chosen: 6 theatre pieces (from stand-up theatre and performance art to Shakespearean tragedy), 5 musical events, 3 play readings, 3 literary readings, 3 cabarets, 2 networking sessions, 1 open stage, 1 dance presentation and 1 workshop. The work of female visual artists was also displayed at various festival and non-festival venues about town. While drastically reduced in size, View still managed to include a variety of programming representative of the diversity of forms within the performing arts disciplines.

It is surprising, with such a small festival, that 1996's Women In View festival actually increased the number of performance venues to a total of 9. The Vancouver East Cultural Centre, W.I.S.E Hall, and Western Front (hosting the

music series) were the only multi-performance venues and the only ones that had been utilized by View in past festivals. The remaining venues - Dr. Vigari Gallery, Frederic Wood Theatre, Harry's Off Commercial, The Norman Rothstein Theatre, The Maritime Labour Centre and Vancouver Public Library's multi-purpose room, all housed only one specific performance event. This made accessibility a little more difficult, especially since some venues (such as the Frederic Wood Theatre and The Norman Rothstein Theatre) were not within walking distance from the rest of the festival.

In terms of full wheelchair accessibility, The Norman Rothstein Theatre, The Maritime Labour Centre, and the Vancouver Public Library met all requirements. The Vancouver East Cultural Centre, and W.I.S.E. Hall were partially accessible and The Dr. Vigari Gallery, The Frederic Wood Theatre, Harry's Off Commercial and Western Front offered no such amenities.

Festival accessibility, in terms of ticket prices fared a little better than in 1995. The system was the same as the previous year and discount ticket packages were offered at 5 show for \$45.00 (the same price as last year), 4 shows for \$35.00 (more savings than last year's 3 for \$30.00) and the extra added option of 3 cabaret shows for \$18.00. The majority of individual ticket prices tended to be less than the previous year, perhaps because of the drop in 1995 attendance when ticket prices were higher. The average

performance event was \$12.50, the average play reading \$7.50 and the average literary reading \$5.00.

Discount tickets continued to be offered on a last-minute 'rush' basis for VIEW members, Alliance card holders, senior citizens and students (tickets bought in advance warranted no discount). Special group and school rates also continued to be offered to parties of 12 or more. In terms of free programming events, the networking sessions, the open stage and the literary reading featuring children's writer Sarah Ellis were free of charge. Limited ticket subsidies and childcare subsidies continued to be made available through the continued sponsorship of VanCity. It was a relief to see that the Deficit Retirement Plan did not include further reductions in the festival's accessibility.

REVENUE

As part of the Three Year Deficit Retirement Plan, View's core funding was increased. Fund-raising revenue continued to be View's main source of income with a significant increase of \$15,485.00 from 1995's year end total. This rise in fund-raising revenue was realized through an increase in funds in the areas of donations, foundations, and special events. For the first time in three years, the festival's government grant revenue also increased. Increases in grants were experienced across the board with the following exceptions: Canada Council (Writing and Publishing) with a decrease of \$32.00 from the previous year; B.C.

Cultural Services Branch who maintained the same amount as 1995 and Employment and Immigration Canada who decreased its grant by \$17,226.00.

New avenues of government funding were tapped in order to finance the latest Women In View festival initiative - a full scale production of Lear. Canada Council (Theatre Section) contributed \$15,900.00 and the Department of Canadian Heritage/Multiculturalism provided \$7,000.00. A further \$17,500.00 was generated specifically for Lear through foundations for an overall budget of \$40,400.00 for this one production. Overall, View's total revenue for the year ending March 31, 1996 reached \$296,233.00, an increase of \$26,214.00 from 1995.

Overall expenditures for 1996 were successfully diminished compared to the previous year's total. Festival expenses were impressively reduced by \$26,214.00 since the 1995 festival but unfortunately part of this reduction meant a decrease of \$3,029.00 in the fees paid out to artists (although there were less artists to pay and the fees were still greater than the box office sales). Administrative expenditures also decreased from 1995, by \$4,004.00, with the majority of savings coming from reductions in staff.

All in all, \$256,531.00 was expended and \$296,233.00 was generated. This left VIEW with a year end surplus of \$39,703.00 which effectively reduced VIEW's deficit from \$42,626.00 to a mere \$2,923.00. That was a very impressive reduction! VIEW's implementation of the Three Year Deficit

Reduction Plan was far more successful than had been expected, reducing the deficit by more than 2/3 in only one year. This means that VIEW managed to successfully skirt financial disaster at a time when many arts organizations were being dismantled because of deficit problems and lack of sufficient funding.⁸⁰

PUBLICITY AND MARKETING

The artwork chosen for the program/schedule of events for the 1996 festival was Claire Kujunndzic's voluptuous female figure hanging from the tip of a crescent moon (see appendix 9). The background sky colour was deep purple, with the woman figure in a lighter shade of purple, and the moon in yellow. Inside the tri-coloured fold-out program was the odd black and white performer photo providing glimpses of the events to come. The publicity literature for 1996 retained an appropriate and woman-friendly design.

Supplemental festival booklets acknowledging thanks and other relevant festival information used the same graphic image as the program and posters only done in black on a white background. On page 3 of this literature was a supportive and congratulatory letter from Michel Dupuy, the Minister of Canadian Heritage. The return of the government reference letter in View's festival literature seems to

⁸⁰ All financial information was obtained from "View The Performing Arts Society: Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 1996 (audited)."

indicate a return to a more mainstream marketing approach for Women In View.

The mainstream marketing focus would also explain the 1996 festival's diversity in media sponsors. Vancouver Courier, instead of Georgia Straight, was this year's newspaper sponsor (perhaps in an attempt to reach new audiences) complete with a supplemental festival schedule. In terms of radio publicity, the more mainstream CBC Radio 690 acted as sponsor and the most popular media of all, television, was added to View's list of sponsors with the addition of CHEK 6.

Newspaper coverage for this year's festival was possibly the most impressive yet, at least in terms of volume. Smaller press continued to support the festival with articles appearing in Vancouver Courier, Georgia Straight, The Kitsilano News and The West Ender. In terms of mainstream press, The Vancouver Sun continued to offer the most extensive coverage with three different articles being run on one day. The Provence focused specifically on one particular festival production, Lear, (hardly representative of the festival's diversity) and published two articles about that one show.

THE FESTIVAL

Due to the reduction in festival size and programming, Women In View was not in a position to focus on every aspect of its mandate for this year's festival. Kathleen Weiss elaborated on this predicament in a Viewpoints article:

Clearly, putting together a festival whose primary mandate is inclusion is a bit of a gargantuan balancing act. We are committed to showing work that includes many different points of view. This means a range of performances by a mix of emerging artists and established artists. It means striving to include women of all ages, races, sexual orientations, classes, and physical abilities. Our extremely limited resource base makes it all the more difficult. We cannot serve every aspect of our community in every festival, so we settle for focusing on a few priority areas for each year.⁸¹

The major focus chosen for the 1996 festival was older women and established artists.

This particular focus was chosen because the very nature of the Women In View festival had always tended to favour younger, emerging artists since these are the people most likely to "mount their own shows in exchange for high-profile public exposure."⁸² In the years directly preceding the 1996 festival, aspects of View's programming, such as the "Formations" series, specifically concentrated on supporting emerging artists and stimulating new works. Taking this into account, it seems appropriate that the Women In View festival now directed its resources towards more established and experienced artists.

⁸¹ Kathleen Weiss, "The Programming Balancing Act," Viewpoints, March 1996, p. 4.

⁸² Ibid.

While older wimin have definitely participated in past Women In View festivals, there had been a relative scarcity of fully realized work by mature wimin. To rectify this situation View chose to present their first big, fully realized production with an older wimin in the starring role. The play was Lear, a revisioning of Shakespeare's classic, a 'what if Lear was a wimin?' exploration. Veteran theatre practitioners Joy Coghill (playing Lear), Pat Armstrong (playing Foole), Jane Heyman (as director) and Pam Johnson (as set and costume designer) took part in the production.

That the play chosen for the big-budget production was a traditional Shakespeare classic is interesting for a variety of reasons. For instance, it is the first time Women In View featured a play that was not written by a wimin. This could be interpreted as a move away from the privileged status VIEW accorded the female playwright. It is more likely, however, that Lear was chosen because it was submitted, because it could accommodate the festival's focus on mature artists and because of its potential to draw a more mainstream audience.

Of course, the play embodied certain non-traditional and feminist performance techniques in an "innovative interpretation of a great classical theatrical text from a wimin's point of view."⁸³ Lear was set in the present day, complete with wimin's power suits, cellular telephones, an overhead projector to divide the kingdom and Edgar was

83 Ibid.

disguised as a streetperson pushing a shopping cart. The revisioning and reworking of classical texts such as this is a popular feminist endeavour for it allows a reinterpretation and a reexamination (often manifesting in a subversion) of traditional texts and performance styles.

For some people, View's production of Lear was not nearly feminist enough, and for others, it was a very radical theatrical experience. A case could be argued for both sides but, either way, the production could still be considered feminist in nature if only because Lear was played as a woman (instead of a female actor playing a male Lear). Besides providing a female actor with the opportunity to play one of the greatest roles of all time, View's production allowed insights to be made about aging and loss of power in relation to older women. (With this kind of [feminist] revisioning, classics like King Lear may come closer to the universal quality so often attributed to such canonized works.) View's production of Lear provided a unique performance opportunity for female theatre practitioners and, for audiences, a unique entertainment experience. In this way, View fulfilled an aspect of its mandate by providing artists and audiences alike with performance opportunities that would not normally present themselves in a mainstream theatrical institution.

Lear also fulfilled some of VIEW's other priorities. The platform of inclusion, for example, was furthered by some non-traditional casting decisions such as Asian-Canadian Evan Adams playing Edmund and Afro-Canadian Lorena Gale filling

the part of Gonerill. Other disciplines were also integrated into the Lear production, the most exciting and effective having been the 4 female taiko drummers who contributed powerful soundscapes.

The focus on wimin of maturer years was also present in the only dance piece presented at the 1996 Women In View festival, The Lady Next Door. Dulcinea Langfelder used theatre, song, movement, dance, movie bites and humour (meeting View's multidisciplinary ideal) to tell the story of a reclusive, middle-aged wimin cocooned in front of her television. Very little dialogue was used but when it was, it was a combination of French and English, thus adding another layer of inclusion to the production. The one-womin production of Hindi Brooks' Lily also focused on a middle-aged womin's experiences. Lily recounted the history of her life (and the world) while desperately trying to find her grandson after a bomb attack in Tel Aviv.

One of the 2 networking sessions was also concerned with addressing issues of importance to middle-aged wimin - "Prime Time Meets Again". This was a networking session modeled on its predecessor to discuss further the "challenges, success stories and strategies of wimin creators in middle age and beyond."

The second networking session, Shaking Up Shakespeare, was obviously presented in relation to the festival's production of Lear. This event explored how Shakespearean and other classical texts "change when confronted with new

visions such as feminist interpretations and the deconstructions and refocusing of female characters." This project addressed feminist-related issues of performance, thus incorporating feminist theatrical practice into the Women In View festival.

Although VIEW's platform of inclusion and cultural diversity was not an over-riding priority at the 1996 festival, there was, nonetheless, a diverse representation of peoples and experiences. The music segment of the programming is indicative of this diversity with the likes of the Elecktra Women's Choir's "...polished performances of music from four continents and three centuries", contrasted by the 7 piece band, Mother of Pearl, playing original and cover material honouring female jazz-greats.

The Western Front music program also offered diversity of performance. The first event featured three accomplished female composers - Hildegard Westercamp, Maggi Payne and Laetitia Sonami -presenting a unique evening of "electroacoustic and interactive music and video." The second performances were given by cellist Peggy Lee and pianist Lay Tuan Tan and the final evening boasted Alberta guitarist and songwriter Kathleen Yearwood.

As part of the "Literary Readings" series, Denise Chong read excerpts from her novel, The Concubine's Children, about the lives of Chinese immigrants who came to the West in search of a better life. Gayla Reid's short stories offered a variety of cultural experiences, spanning continents from

1950's Australia to Southeast Asia and Canada in the 1960s. One of the "Playreadings" projects by Michele Wong was Windows, "the reflections of a young woman who has grown up on a pineapple plantation in Malaysia."

The theatrical presentations at the 1996 Women In View festival also accorded some cultural diversity. For instance, Lily, starring Bryna Weiss, was the amazing story of one Jewish woman's life experiences which took her from Poland to America and then to Israel. Tiger's Heart by Kit Brennan was about Dr. James Barry, the 19th century male physician who was really a woman. The play was set in South Africa and involved Dr. Barry's love affairs as a man with her ranking officer and as a woman with her aboriginal servant.

Besides the gender-bending life of Dr. Barry, there was no programming specifically representing homosexual experience. Performance artists Shawna Dempsey and Lori Millan, both lesbians, presented the Dress Series - a socio-political, running commentary on men, women, society, feminism, femininity, fashion and the reconciliation of all those factors. While the odd reference to lesbianism was made through-out the performance, the subject matter did not specifically focus on homosexual experiences.

The two remaining theatrical presentations were Bearded Circus Ladies, a very popular and comical stand-up theatre piece by Jan Derbyshire (creator of the 1995 festival hit Joke You! [Just Kidding]) and The Cave, a recreation of Sheryl Simmons' real-life spiritual journey on the path of

healing after she was diagnosed with cervical dysplasia. The only workshop offered at the 1996 festival was facilitated by her. Simmons' "Enter The Myth" was a workshop about healing as explored through the ancient Greek myth of Psyche and the tasks she had to complete to be whole again.

There were three playreadings - Images in the Clouds, La Boom, and Swollen Tongues. The remaining literary readings featured 5 different writers: Sarah Ellis, Lydia Kwa, Larissa Lai, Jennifer Mitton, and Gayla Reid. The Cabaret component of the festival continued to be one of VIEW's most popular events, as indicated by the fact that this was 1 of only 2 areas of programming not drastically reduced in size from the previous year's festival.

The 1996 festival exhibited a higher ratio of previously produced work and incorporated touring performances. Sheryl Simmons' The Cave started at the Women In View festival and then completed a tour of Victoria, Nanaimo, Nelson, Lethbridge, Canmore and Edmonton. Hindi Brooks' Lily was in the process of being toured across Canada and the United States. Yet another exception to the usual rule was Kit Brennan's Tiger's Heart, a production that played at the Frederic Wood Theatre for two weeks and then finished its run with the Women In View festival.

The 1996 Women In View festival was an artistic and financial success, drawing an even larger audience attendance than had previously been expected (although exact figures are not yet available). General audience response was very

positive and the smaller festival format was appreciated by participants, perhaps because, if planned properly, it was possible to attend almost all of the events.

Plans are currently underway for 1997's Women In View which will still be a comparatively small festival (in order to further reduce the deficit) but it does promise to be somewhat larger than the 1996 Women In View festival.⁸⁴ After eight successful festivals, Women In View is still a vital and important event that continues to prove, not only the artistic worthiness and excellence of wimin's artistic endeavours, but also that there is a legitimate audience for such a project.

⁸⁴ Personal interview with Weiss.

PART X: CONCLUSIONS

Having outlined a history of the Woman In View festival, it is now possible to draw the conclusion that Women In View is indeed a feminist festival. The pieces of the VIEW `pie', embodying feminist consistences and discrepancies, may be assembled to form a cohesive whole. As to the exact nature of VIEW's feminist politics and its position on the feminist spectrum, only a recapitulation of key elements will effectively determine this.

We have seen that the philosophical framework of VIEW's constitution incorporates liberal, cultural, and materialist feminist concepts. The commitment to program a diversity of experiences and cultural backgrounds can be aligned with Third Wave/materialist feminist politics. The commitment to promoting and producing works which embody a female aesthetic is definitely a cultural feminist perspective, whereas the other values tend to represent a liberal feminist stance because the over-riding purpose seems to be the insertion of female artists into the mainstream. Here we have a feminist agenda that has managed to incorporate three different strains of feminism into a working practise, which may account for the organization's success in the area of inclusion.

The organizational structure of View The Performing Arts Society is like that of any other traditionally-run organization. On this front, VIEW's feminist politics

obviously do not reflect a cultural or materialist feminist position because, if they did, VIEW would be experimenting with alternative working methods. Instead, VIEW left the hierarchical structure intact but put a liberal feminist spin on it by staffing the entire organization with wimin. This was not done for exclusionary reasons, but rather in the spirit of inclusion. Since wimin in the arts have had less access to opportunities than men, VIEW feels that any opportunities it may have to offer should be extended to wimin.

That VIEW chose a festival format for the realization of its objectives is, in itself, an indication that feminist politics were involved in the decision-making process. VIEW wanted a structure that would be capable of representing a variety of viewpoints and peoples, a Third Wave/materialist feminist concern. That the festival was designed specifically to showcase female-initiated work is an indication that the cultural feminist platform of creating and nurturing female counter culture was also of the utmost importance. There is also a very strong liberal feminist element to the festival structure because the founding members hoped it would create visibility for female artists and act as a conduit into the mainstream.

VIEW's desire for the mainstream acceptance of wimin artists also heavily influenced the type of public image View wished to present. Attempts were often made to make the festival seem more palatable to the mainstream, for example,

stressing the festival's universal appeal and trying to avoid a connection between the festival and feminism. This is an understandable and practical position to adopt, for backlash and fear of feminism may act as barriers to potential audience members. In the spirit of inclusion (and financial success) a varied and diverse audience is desirable, for visibility and mainstream acceptance of wimin artists will not be achieved if they are only 'preaching to the converted'. The down side of such a mainstream emphasis is that a liberal feminist position is established as the festival's official public image. This de-values and undercuts other feminist viewpoints and detracts, in my opinion, from the festival's overall celebration of diversity.

In terms of festival programming, VIEW consistently implemented its (feminist) theoretical objectives in practice, although not every aspect was always addressed at every festival. One objective in particular, however, seemed to dominate the area of programming - the Third Wave/materialist feminist platform of inclusion. Diversity of experience was, more often than not, realized through representations of various cultures, sexualities, ages, classes, and physicalities. View has also made efforts to facilitate communication between wimin artists of varied backgrounds and they have actively sought strategies for uniting divergent experiences under the feminist cause.

View's feminist attempts at inclusion were not restricted to the festival programming but were also extended to the area of audience accessibility. Financial deprivation can act as a barrier, excluding the less financially-able from attending events such as the Women In View festival. To help off-set this situation, and to further VIEW's policy of inclusion, the festival repeatedly offered avenues of access to the less financially-able. For instance, free childcare, ticket subsidies and the occasional free or pay-what-you-can programming event. The platform of inclusion was also furthered in terms of audience accessibility by the provisioning of wheelchair accessible facilities and, at one festival, by supplying sign language interpretation. VIEW also recognized that artists are often financially unstable so membership accessibility was increased in 1996 by offering a pay-what-you-can option for those unable to afford the flat membership fee.

The Woman In View festival often catered to feminist interests by offering specifically feminist programming. Forums, workshops and networking sessions frequently provided discussions about feminist concerns and issues of relevance to wimin artists (which may not necessarily be feminist) for the purpose of affecting social change. There has also been programming that was specifically linked to alternative theatre practices characteristic of feminist theatre (although not exclusively). Examples of feminist-related, skill-improvement opportunities were collective creation

workshops, how to create through improvisation seminars, and feminist dramaturgical support.

When each of the festival's elements are examined in relation to feminist politics, the overall picture painted is that of a slightly schizophrenic organization lacking in a cohesive focus. However, this is not necessarily the case. It seems to me that the organization assumes an inoffensive liberal feminist position for the purposes of quelling mainstream fears and distrusts. The festival's organizational structure and marketing approach help to create a liberal feminist image that is concerned, first and foremost, with increasing the visibility of wimin artists so that they may be absorbed into the mainstream. In many ways, the tactical and practical advantages to selling the festival in such a liberal feminist vein far outweigh the disadvantages.

The exterior liberal feminist image of View is tolerable due to the discrepancy between the cultivated public image and the actual events of the Women In View festival. Visibility and mainstream acceptance do not take precedence in the festival's programming, but rather non-traditional, innovative, and multidisciplinary productions (more closely aligned with cultural and material feminist beliefs and practices) are strongly encouraged and supported. VIEW's mandate, programming and festival structure allow a myriad of experiences and political viewpoints to be incorporated into a single festival, often resulting in alternative,

experimental and avant garde works of art. In this way, Women In View's substance far exceeds the limited liberal image privileged for the media's sake.

What then does all this mean in the larger context of the Third Wave wimin's movement? At this point, Third Wave feminist politics are searching for effective strategies that celebrate and unite divergent experiences under a single feminist banner - a very difficult and problematic task. VIEW has also been concerned with creating an effective strategy that celebrates and unites difference for the common cause of sexual equality and it seems that VIEW has successfully created just such a strategy with the Women In View festival.

The festival has had to remain flexible and adaptive, but the mix of different feminist philosophies has managed to create a cohesive whole, which in turn, has enabled a plethora of divergent viewpoints to be united under a single umbrella organization. As such, the Women In View festival has successfully realized and implemented a Third Wave strategy of inclusion in the area of the performing arts. Other organizations, seeking similar inclusive platforms, would perhaps benefit from the example of the Women In View festival. All of VIEW's activities, including the Women In View festival, have been pursued for the higher social purpose of redressing past social injustices and affecting social change, a political stance which makes VIEW's activities feminist.

How, exactly, has the Women In View festival helped to improve conditions for female artists and what benefits have been derived from the activities of View The Performing Arts Society? First and foremost, VIEW has provided a previously unavailable space for the voice and visibility of female arts practitioners - a forum for creativity and expression of female experience. Given the past discriminatory practices of mainstream Canadian theatres, this alone is a very important and necessary endeavour. Works such as Margaret Hollingsworth's In Confidence and Betsy Warland's The Bat Had Blue Eyes (to name only two) would never have been produced in a mainstream theatre. In this way, View plays a very crucial role in providing Canadian and, more specifically, British Columbian wimin artists with improved opportunities through financial, environmental, technical and psychological support.

VIEW's very existence means that wimin now have the opportunity to experiment, explore and stage their artistic and cultural creations without the constraints of traditional aesthetics and structures - an opportunity previously unavailable to wimin in mainstream arts institutions. VIEW's encouragement and support of innovative forms and non-traditional aesthetics not only provides wimin with unique creative opportunities but it also provides the theatre-going public with original work often at the forefront of the avant garde. Artistic freedom and experimentation, as incorporated

into the Women In View festival, continue to take the performing arts in new directions, constantly expanding the boundaries and redefining the limits.

Another of VIEW's important contributions is the effort to facilitate and provide wimin artists with a much-needed support network. View has provided very necessary and vital support services for female artists but, just as important, is View's promotion of networking and collaboration between wimin artists. In the interests of inclusion and uniting divergent experiences, View has purposely encouraged communication and working relationships between wimin artists of varied experiences and cultural backgrounds. This may result in new opportunities and working partnerships for female artists and, at the very least, it provides a much-needed sense of community.

For many female artists, the support and encouragement of the Women In View festival has resulted in a different, less tangible, kind of influence: new-found confidence and reaffirmation of artistic worth. Many artists, and wimin especially, have to deal with constant rejection and unrealized artistic dreams in the face of financial instability. This can undermine an artist's confidence (especially if told her work has no relevance) or even force her to withdraw from her chosen artistic discipline. By promoting artists who have difficulty getting their work produced, View provides wimin with a necessary sense of self-

worth, especially since their work is received in a refreshingly friendly and open-minded environment.

Another vitally important area of VIEW's activities is that of job training and practical skill enhancement. If female arts practitioners are properly trained then their chances of access to mainstream employment opportunities are increased. In order to increase opportunities, part of VIEW's on-going programming (not outlined in this thesis due to its scope) provides job training for women; especially in non-traditional areas such as technical support. As well, the Women In View festival, since 1990, has participated in technical work placement programs with students from Nanaimo's Malaspina College, thus providing emerging theatre workers with first-hand, practical experience. The Women In View festival programming also offers workshops and other events to help improve upon the tools, knowledge, and techniques female arts practitioners have at their disposal. All of these VIEW initiatives have helped to increase the employability of female arts practitioners by equipping them with the necessary skills and applications.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the Women In View festival is that it has effectively served as a launching pad for many female artists. For instance, thanks to the 1989 Women In View festival which provided Karen Wikberg's Old Flames with a playreading as part of the "In...Formation" series, the play was eventually developed into a full-scale production and was mounted at the Alberta

Theatre Project's Playwrights festival in February 1992. Six Palm Trees (also presented at the 1989 festival) and Just A Little Fever (performed at the 1990 festival) were two plays written by ex-VIEW staffer Caitlin Hicks. These pieces went on to other productions in Canada and the United States and, as of 1993, they both continued to be performed.

The greatest success of the 1990 Women In View festival, in terms of life after the festival, was Margo Kane's Moonlodge. This play went on to be produced by the Native Earth Theatre Company and played to widespread critical acclaim in venues all across Canada. Moonlodge was also reshaped and reproduced as a radio drama for CBC. Newfoundlander Christine Taylor experienced the West Coast premier of her play, Man on The Moon, Woman On The Pill, at the 1992 Women In View festival, after which the project went on to run at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre. Also presented at the 1992 festival was the workshop of Mercedes Baines and Cory Philley - Peaches and Scream. This workshop production was then mounted at Presentation House Theatre before returning to the 1993 Women In View festival as a full scale production.

The 1993 Women In View festival presented a staged reading of Leslie Hamson's Land(e)scapes which later went on to play at Tamahnous Theatre. All Grown Up, a musical retrospective by Bonnie Panych, Ellen Kennedy, and Laurie Valois, was picked up for a run at the Arts Club Revue Theatre. From the Sixth Annual Women In View festival

Margaret Hollingsworth's In Confidence continued on to the New Play Centre for a March run. The 1995 Women In View festival featured more than a few plays that received spin-off productions thanks to the exposure provided by Women In View. The popular kitchen cabaret Mom's The Word, Jan Derbyshire's Joke You, Kim Falconer's Blood Sisters, Mercedes Baines' I Erotique and the "Formations" project Chicks Up Front all moved on from the 1995 festival to other Vancouver venues. As for the 1996 Women In View season, the full-scale production of Lear had an extended, week-long, post-festival run at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre.

Throughout the eight years of the Women In View festival, VIEW has effectively increased the visibility and prominence of female artists. Many productions have gone on from the Women In View festival to play other venues, some of them mainstream. If it were not for the Women In View festival it is unlikely that the aforementioned productions would have even caught the public eye. The Women In View festival is definitely a vital and important endeavour, for it offers a range of performance opportunities to female artists that are not otherwise available.

For the theatre-going public, the Women In View festival offers programming that fills a much-lamented gap in the performing arts scene. By doing so, View has proven not only that there are audiences for wimin's work but that the audiences are hungry for wimin's artistic endeavours. This is

why View consistently maintains a strong audience base and continues to attract substantial numbers of spectators even though the festival is no longer a new (and, therefore, intriguing) event.

The Women in View festival also offers audience members an opportunity to experience the world from a female perspective. Wimin have traditionally been denied accurate and positive reflections of their experiences in our national culture and View has helped to rectify this situation. By providing a diverse range of experiences and representations that are not traditionally found in mainstream performing arts events, View offers marginalized peoples an opportunity to enjoy reflections and/or aspects of themselves on stage. Such representations may provide greatly needed role models or moments of inspiration where none have previously existed.

These benefits do not only relate to wimin, for men have just as much to gain from a festival like Women In View. If the world is to become a better place with a truly equal society, than everyone's viewpoints and visions need to be embraced. It is VIEW's hope and desire (as well as mine) that widespread exposure to the festival will challenge, and transform, traditional mis/conceptions about sexual relations and sexual status. This altered consciousness would then effect the discriminatory practices of our patriarchal society - one of which would be the unfair hiring practices of many Canadian theatres.

Is this societal transformation possible and is there any evidence of improvement in the status of wimin artists in Canada since VIEW's inception? The answer is yes. Exactly what role (and to what degree) VIEW has played in the overall improved status of female arts practitioners is difficult to determine but progress is being made and some of it is because of VIEW. Returning to Fraticelli's statistics, we know that only 10% of plays were written by wimin and 13% directed by wimin in Canadian theatres between the years of 1978 and 1981. Statistics from the Vancouver Professional Theatre Alliance (VPTA) demonstrate that during 1991-1992, 9% of the members' plays were written by wimin and 20% were directed by females. From 1992-1993 the numbers rose to 14% and 23% respectively. The next season, 1993-1994, witnessed 21% of plays written by wimin and 40% directed by wimin. By 1994-1995, 26% of the plays were written by wimin and 34% were directed by female directors.⁸⁵ The progress is slow to some, impressive to others, but one thing is for sure: progress is being made.

Ideally, in the near future a separate festival for wimin's work will no longer be necessary because the mainstream arts organizations will properly reflect and represent the many different facets of our Canadian society. We are not there yet but the VPTA statistics indicate a promising trend. The ever-increasing presence of wimin arts

⁸⁵ Statistics on the VPTA season were taken from information compiled for the annual Jessie Richardson Theatre Awards, as quoted in "Women In View Annual Report, 1994-95."

practitioners in positions of authority, and as creators of national culture, represents a shift on the scale to a more equable positioning. Until we have achieved total equality, it is up to organizations like View The Performing Arts Society and its Women In View festival to continue to champion the cause of equal rights for wimin in the performing arts.

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Appendix 1

SOCIETY ACT

CONSTITUTION

1. The name of the society is VIEW the Performing Arts Society
2. The purposes of the society are:
 - (a) to promote the education and artistic growth of women involved in the performing arts in the province of British Columbia;
 - (b) to provide improved opportunities for women in the performing arts;
 - (c) to encourage participation in the performing arts of women from a diversity of cultural backgrounds;
 - (d) to facilitate communication among women artists at all levels of experience in the performing arts;
 - (e) to provide opportunities whereby women engaged in the production of the performing arts may, through experience and training, develop their skills;
 - (f) to promote, produce and present theatrical events which will enhance public awareness of a female aesthetic;
 - (g) to provide the public of British Columbia with the benefits and advantages of women's artistic contributions to the performing arts;
 - (h) to provide opportunities for women in the performing arts to cooperate with artists working in other disciplines;
 - (i) to acquire by lease, purchase, or otherwise, and operate a theatre, theatres, studios, workshops, offices, galleries and to acquire equipment, materials, supplies and stores for such theatre, theatres, studios, workshops, offices and galleries;
 - (j) to collect monies by way of subscriptions, contributions from public, donations, grants, gifts, benefits, devices and bequests for the purposes of supporting the aims and objectives of the Society, and in addition, to invest such funds and to use income therefrom for the objects aforesaid.

Appendix 21989 Festival Program Cover & Schedule of Events

*Please note that the schedule of events has been included so that the names, dates and times of projects not directly mentioned in the body of this thesis may receive some recognition. For complete copies of the festival programs, contact the Women In View office or this author.



Women
in View

a festival of performing arts

JANUARY 16-22, 1989
Firehall Arts Centre

SCHEDULE OF PERFORMANCES

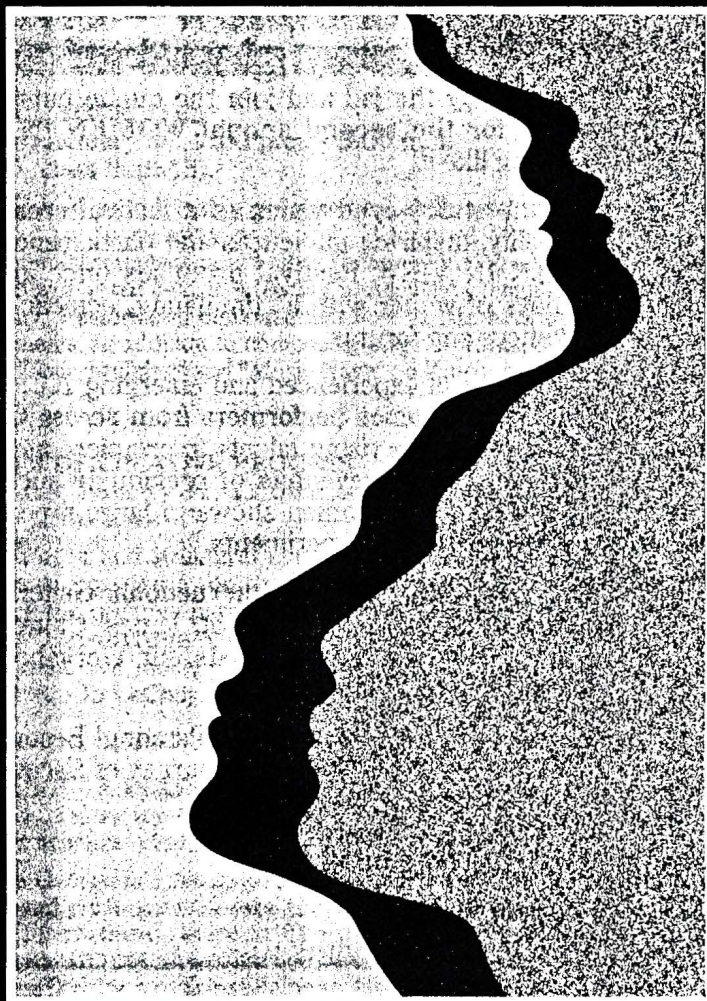
Firehall Arts Centre & St. James' Church, Cordova & Gore

FRIDAY JANUARY 20		SATURDAY JANUARY 21			SUNDAY JANUARY 22	
THEATRE	STUDIO	THEATRE	STUDIO	ST. JAMES'	THEATRE	STUDIO
Four by Eight 12:00 - 1:30	Rock-A-Me-By 12:30 - 1:15	I Wasn't Born Here 12:00 - 1:30	Wondersmith and His Son 12:00 - 1:15	Classical Guitar 12:00 - 12:30	Four by Eight 12:00 - 1:30	Reading Writers 12:00 - 1:30
The Garden 2:15 - 3:00	...Medusa 1:45 - 2:00	Yellow Wallpaper 2:15 - 3:00	Single-Mindedness 1:45 - 2:15	Sitar Recital 1:00 - 2:00	Clowns Hold Up Half the Sky 2:30 - 3:30	...Medusa 2:00 - 2:15
Banana Power 3:45 - 4:30	Mavis Tells... 2:30 - 3:15	Clowns Hold Up Half the Sky 3:45 - 4:45	Spinster 3:00 - 3:30	Elektra 2:30 - 3:30	Six Palm Trees 4:00 - 5:00	Mavis Tells... 2:45 - 3:30
Yellow Wallpaper 5:30 - 6:15	Tell Me Another... 3:45 - 4:15	Six Palm Trees 5:15 - 6:15	Rock-A-Me-By 4:00 - 4:45	It's Time To Sing 4:00 - 5:00	The Garden 5:30 - 6:15	Wondersmith and His Son 4:00 - 5:15
Clowns Hold Up Half the Sky 7:00 - 8:00	Single-Mindedness 4:45 - 5:15	The Garden 6:45 - 7:30	Tell Me Another... 5:15 - 5:45		Banana Power 7:00 - 7:45	Tell Me Another... 5:45 - 6:15
Six Palm Trees 8:45 - 9:45	Spinster 6:00 - 6:30	Banana Power 8:15 - 9:00	...Medusa 7:15 - 7:30		Yellow Wallpaper 8:30 - 9:15	Rock-A-Me-By 6:45 - 7:30
Devon Hanley 10:30 - 11:30	Wondersmith and His Son 7:00 - 8:15	Four by Eight 10:00 - 11:30	Reading Writers 8:00 - 9:30		I Wasn't Born Here 10:00 - 11:30	Oldest Living 8:00 - 9:00
	Cargo of Crinolines 8:45 - 10:15		...Medusa 7:15 - 7:30			Single-Mindedness 9:30 - 10:00
	Reflections... 11:30 - 12:00		Reading Writers 8:00 - 9:30			Spinster 10:30 - 11:00
			Mavis Tells... 10:00 - 10:45			Reflections... 11:30 - 12:00
			Reflections... 11:30 - 12:00			

Appendix 3

1990 Festival Program Cover & Schedule of Events

A FESTIVAL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS



WOMEN IN
V·I·E·W

FIREHALL ARTS CENTRE
JANUARY 29 - FEBRUARY 4, 1990

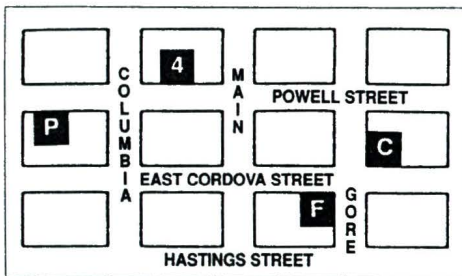
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Pitt Theatre	Firehall Theatre	Firehall Studio	Pitt Theatre	Firehall Theatre	Firehall Studio	St. James' Church	Pitt Theatre	Firehall Theatre	Firehall Studio
	FOUR ON THE FLOOR 12:00-1:45	CONFIDANTES 12:00-1:00	FORBIDDEN FRUITCAKE 12:00-12:35	GQ FACTOR 12:00-1:00	UNDER THE HOUSE 12:00-12:45	PUENTE II 12:00-1:00	WOMAN IN THE BOX 11:30-12:30	FOUR ON THE FLOOR 12:00-1:30	READING WRITERS 12:00-1:30
		PRAIRIE WINDS 1:30-2:15	SUN AND SHADOW 1:00-1:45		BAD DOLLIES 1:15-2:00	RUNNER'S TALE 1:45-2:05	STRINGS 1:00-1:30		
	JOJOKA 3:15-4:00	GREAT EXPLANATIONS 2:45-3:45	PRAIRIE WINDS 2:15-3:00	JOJOKA 3:15-4:00	CONFIDANTES 2:45-3:45	BASSISH VOICES 2:45-3:15	SNAKES IN MIND 2:15-3:00		MODERN NOTES 2:00-2:30
	JUST A LITTLE FEVER 4:45-5:45	MODERN NOTES 4:15-4:45	MODERN NOTES 3:45-4:15	NOT JUST 9 TO 5 3:15-4:45	GREAT EXPLANATIONS 4:15-5:15	EIGHT FACETS OF A WOMAN-SPIRIT 4:00-4:45	PRAIRIE WINDS 3:30-4:15	GQ FACTOR 3:00-4:00	SURVIVORS 3:00-3:45
RUNNER'S TALE/SUN AND SHADOW 6:30-8:15	"elemental secrets" 6:30-7:20	BAD DOLLIES 5:15-6:00	WONDEUR BRASS 5:00-6:00	JUST A LITTLE FEVER 5:30-6:30	CALENDAR GIRLS 5:45-6:45		SUN AND SHADOW 4:45-5:30	JUST A LITTLE FEVER 4:30-5:30	SOUNDWRIGHT 4:15-5:00
	FORBIDDEN FRUITCAKE 8:00-8:35	WOMAN IN THE BOX 6:30-7:30	SNAKES IN MIND 6:30-7:15	"elemental secrets" 7:15-8:05	SOUNDWRIGHT 7:30-8:15		GREAT EXPLANATIONS 6:15-7:15	"elemental secrets" 6:00-6:50	MOON LODGE 6:00-6:45
STRINGS 8:45-9:15	NOT JUST 9 TO 5 9:15-10:45	SOUNDWRIGHT 8:15-9:15	WOMAN IN THE BOX 7:45-8:45		READING WRITERS 9:00-10:30		FORBIDDEN FRUITCAKE 7:40-8:15	JOJOKA 7:45-8:30	BAD DOLLIES 7:15-8:00
WONDEUR BRASS 10:00-11:00		MOON LODGE 10:00-10:45	STRINGS 9:15-9:45	FOUR ON THE FLOOR 9:15-10:45	MOON LODGE 11:15-12:00		SPEND THE NIGHT 9:15-10:00	PUENTE II 9:00-10:00	BASSISH VOICES 8:30-9:00
			SPEND THE NIGHT 10:30-11:10					WONDEUR BRASS 10:30-11:30	RUNNER'S TALE 10:00-10:20

Schedule correct at time of printing - all events subject to change



F = FIREHALL ARTS CENTRE, 280 East Cordova

4 = FOUR SISTERS HOUSING CO-OP, 133 Powell Street

P = PITT INTERNATIONAL GALLERIES, 36 Powell Street

C = ST. JAMES' CHURCH, 303 East Cordova



CKVU

Overwatea
FOOD CENTERS

Appendix 4

1991 Festival Program Cover & Schedule of Events

SEE! 70 GREAT EVENTS!

THE 1991

FESTIVAL
NO. 3
JAN.

Women IN



VIEW

FESTIVAL

FIREHALL THEATRE

LOOK!
Six Amazing days
of Music, Theatre,
Dance, Workshops
and more!



LISTEN!

To Award
Winning Writers
and Musicians

WATCH!

215 Dancers,
Performance Artists,
Actors, Musicians
& Reading Writers

© 11/90
D. BURBETT

The Third Annual Women In View Festival
January 22 - 27

FIREHALL ARTS CENTRE ♦ 56 GALLERY ♦ TAMAHNOUS THEATRE

280 East Cordova

56 Powell Street

101 Powell Street

ST JAMES' CHURCH ♦ FOUR SISTERS HOUSING CO-OP

303 East Cordova

133 Powell Street

FOR TICKETS AND INFORMATION: 875-6210

View. The Performing Arts Society

56 Gallery

Tamahnous Theatre

Thursday, January 24

6:00-7:00 **Too Blonde**
 8:00-9:00 **More Than Words**
 9:45-10:30 **Mermaid In Love**
 11:15-12:00 **Cabaret Stir-Fry**

5:45-6:45 **Coffeebreak Characters**
 7:30-8:15 **Through My Eyes**
 9:15-10:00 **Tales ... Broken Heart**

Friday, January 25

6:00-6:45 **Mermaid In Love**
 7:30-8:30 **Too Blonde**
 9:30-10:30 **More Than Words**
 11:15-12:00 **Cabaret Stir-Fry**

Noon-12:45 **Tales ... Broken Heart**
 1:30-2:15 **Through My Eyes**
 3:15-3:45 **Double Take**
 4:30-5:15 **Emma Storrow**

6:00-6:30 **Giving Voice ... Female Nude**
 7:15-8:15 **The Storm After The Calm**
 9:00-10:00 **Dancing ... Like Momma**

Saturday, January 26

6:00-7:00 **More Than Words**
 8:00-8:45 **Mermaid In Love**
 9:30-10:30 **Too Blonde**
 11:15-12:00 **Cabaret Stir-Fry**

Noon-1:00 **The Storm After the Calm**
 1:45-2:30 **Tales ... Broken Heart**
 3:15-3:45 **Giving Voice ... Female Nude**
 4:30-5:15 **Through My Eyes**

6:15-7:00 **Emma Storrow**
 7:45-8:15 **Double Take**
 9:00-10:00 **Coffeebreak Characters**

Sunday, January 27

1:15-2:15 **Dancing ... Like Momma**
 3:00-4:00 **The Storm After The Calm**
 4:45-5:15 **Giving Voice ... Female Nude**
 6:00-7:00 **Coffeebreak Characters**

Firehall Studio

Firehall Theatre

Thursday, January 24

6:15 7:15 **Le Tailleur**
 8:15-9:00 **Two by Two**

7:15-8:15 **The Stay Fresh Special**
 9:00-10:00 **I Didn't Die In Chapter Six**
 11:00-11:45 **In-Corp-Orated**

Friday, January 25

Noon-1:30 **Reading Writers**
 3:00-4:00 **Woman and House**
 4:45-5:30 **Two by Two**

1:30-3:00 **Four On The Floor**
 4:00-4:45 **Touch A Heart**
 5:30-6:30 **Bassish Voices II**

6:30-7:30 **Le Tailleur**
 8:30-9:30 **Agnes and Jessie**
 10:30-11:00 **Feathervision**

7:30-8:30 **Nenuphar**
 9:30-10:30 **I Didn't Die In Chapter Six**
 11:30-12:15 **In-Corp-Orated**

Saturday, January 26

1:00-2:00 **Le Tailleur**
 3:15-3:45 **Feathervision**
 5:00-6:00 **Agnes and Jessie**

Noon-1:00 **Il Segreto di Susanna**
 2:00-3:00 **I Didn't Die In Chapter Six**
 4:00-5:00 **Nenuphar**

6:45-7:30 **Two by Two**
 9:00-10:30 **Reading Writers**

6:00-6:45 **Touch A Heart**
 7:30-9:00 **Four On The Floor**
 11:00-11:45 **In-Corp-Orated**

Sunday, January 27

1:00-2:15 **Women and Escorts**
 3:15-4:15 **Agnes and Jessie**
 5:15-6:15 **Woman and House**

10:30-1:00 **Forum**
 2:15-3:15 **Women In Music**
 4:15-5:15 **The Stay Fresh Special**
 6:15-7:15 **Il Segreto di Susanna**

The Women in VIEW Festival is sponsored by ...



FREE MUSIC EVENT

Saturday, January 26
RAZOM SESTRE AND ELEKTRA IN CONCERT
 St. James' Church, 2:15-4:00

Appendix 5

1992 Festival Program Cover & Schedule of Events

T H E F O U R T H A N N U A L

Women in View

F E S T I V A L

theatre
 dance
 comedy
 storytelling
 music
 cabaret
 workshops
 symposium
 readings



January 25 - February 2, 1992

Performance Schedule

FIREHALL STUDIO

FIREHALL THEATRE

Thursday, January 30

5:30–6:30 **Sun-And Shadow II**
 7:30–8:30 **Blade**
 9:25–10:10 **Madame Scotch Tape**

Thursday, January 30

6:35–7:25 **Stacked**
 8:35–9:15 **Amorous Discourse In
 The Suburbs Of Hell**
 10:15–11:25 **Canadian Tango**

Friday, January 31

Noon–1:00 **Sun-And Shadow II-**
 2:20–3:35 **The Strength Of Indian Women**
 5:15–6:15 **Blade**
 7:55–8:40 **Madame Scotch Tape**
 9:40–10:40 **Objects In Mirror Are Closer
 Than They Appear**

Friday, January 31

1:05–2:15 **Canadian Tango**
 3:40–5:10 **Four On The Floor I**
 6:20–7:50 **Four On The Floor II**
 8:45–9:35 **Stacked**
 10:45–11:30 **Light On Her Feet**

Saturday, February 1

11:40–12:40 **Blade**
 1:50–2:35 **Madame Scotch Tape**
 3:35–4:35 **Objects In Mirror Are Closer
 Than They Appear**
 5:30–6:45 **The Strength Of Indian Women**
 8:25–9:25 **Sun-And Shadow II**

Saturday, February 1

12:45–1:25 **Amorous Discourse In
 The Suburbs Of Hell**
 2:40–3:30 **Stacked**
 4:40–5:25 **Light On Her Feet**
 6:50–8:20 **Four On The Floor II**
 9:30–11:00 **Four On The Floor I**

Sunday, February 2

12:15–1:15 **Objects In Mirror Are Closer
 Than They Appear**
 2:10–3:25 **The Strength Of Indian Women**
 4:45–6:15 **Reading Writers II**

Sunday, February 2

1:20–2:05 **Light On Her Feet**
 3:30–4:40 **Canadian Tango**
 5:50–6:30 **Amorous Discourse In
 The Suburbs Of Hell**



Women in View 1992

STATION STREET TAMAHNOUS THEATRE

Thursday, January 30		Thursday, January 30	
5:30-6:15	Out Of This World, Please	5:00-6:00	Little White Lies
7:15-8:00	Fringe Benefits	7:00-8:15	Cracked Up
9:00-9:45	Man On The Moon, Woman On The Pill	9:00-9:45	Heart Of The City
11:00-12:15	Cabaret Stir-Fry I		
Friday, January 31		Friday, January 31	
11:00-12:30	Reading Writers I	1:00-2:00	Lisa Koch: Rebel Without A Clue
1:30-2:15	Man On The Moon, Woman On The Pill	3:00-3:45	Peanuts
3:15-4:30	Having Tea With Miss B.	4:45-6:00	Cracked Up
5:15-6:15	Sounds From Three Corners Of The World	6:45-7:45	The Shadow In The Lily Field
7:00-7:45	Out Of This World, Please	8:30-10:00	Playreading Event
8:45-10:15	The Darling Family		Peaches & Scream/Fool Such As I
11:00-12:15	Cabaret Stir-Fry II		
Saturday, February 1		Saturday, February 1	
11:45-12:30	Tell It To Me Again ... Please!	Noon-1:15	Cracked Up
1:15-2:15	From Eggs To Apples	2:00-3:00	The Shadow In The Lily Field
3:00-3:45	Man On The Moon, Woman On The Pill	3:45-4:30	Peanuts
4:40-5:15	Out Of This World, Please	5:15-6:15	Little White Lies
6:00-7:30	The Darling Family	7:00-7:45	Heart Of The City
8:15-9:00	Out Of This World, Please	9:00-10:00	Plutonium In Space
9:45-10:30	Fringe Benefits		
11:15-12:30	Cabaret Stir-Fry III		
Sunday, February 2		Sunday, February 2	
12:50-1:30	The John Diefenbaker Letters	12:45-1:45	The Shadow In The Lily Field
2:30-4:00	The Darling Family	2:45-3:45	Little White Lies
4:45-5:30	Fringe Benefits	4:30-5:15	Heart Of The City
6:15-6:50	Bassish Voices III	6:15-7:00	Peanuts

Appendix 6

1993 Festival Program Cover & Schedule of Events

• THEATRE • WORKSHOPS • CABARET • DANCE • READINGS • COMEDY • MUSIC • STORYTELLING • SYMPOSIUM •

fifth annual

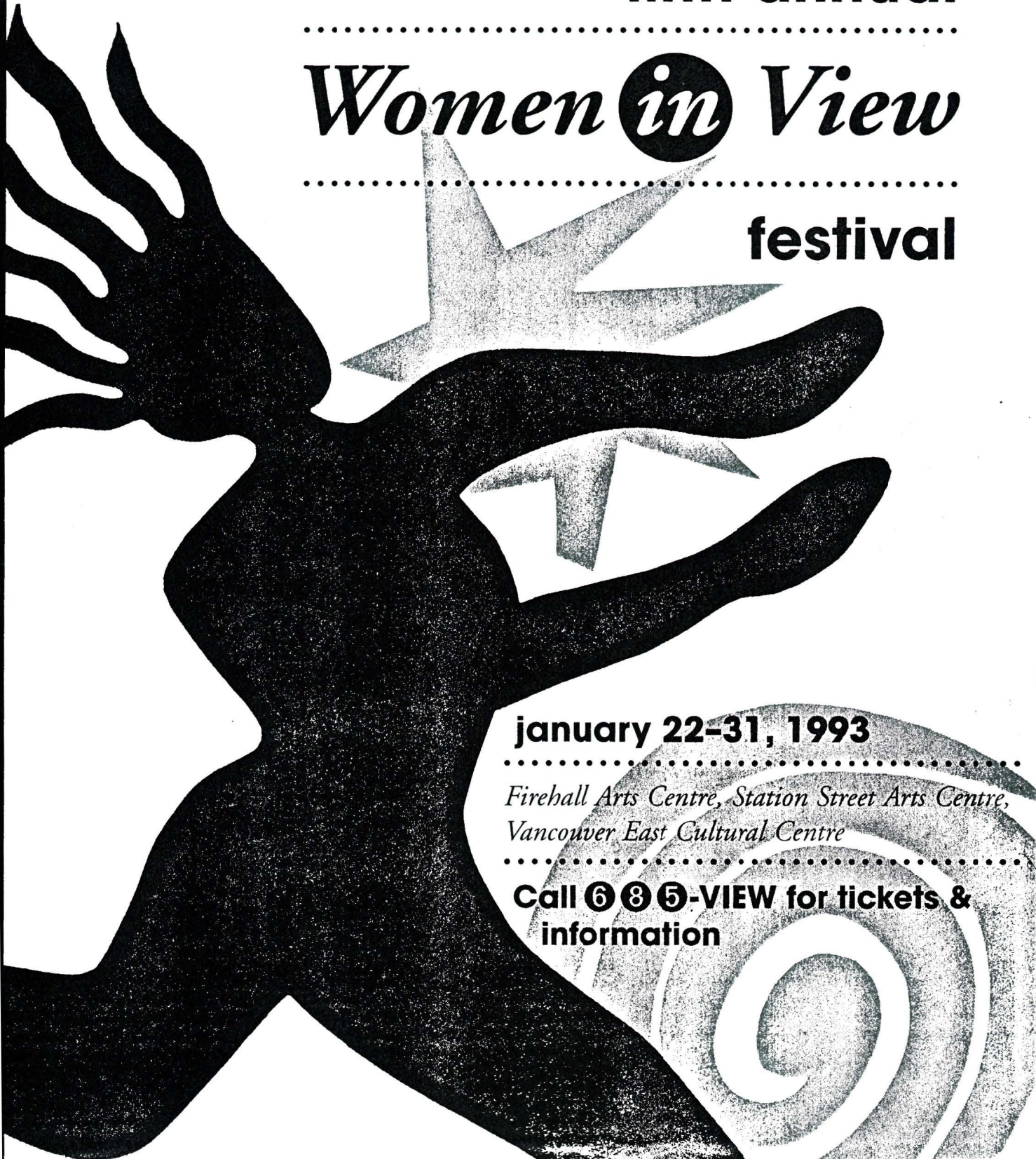
.....
Women in View
.....

festival

january 22-31, 1993

.....
*Firehall Arts Centre, Station Street Arts Centre,
Vancouver East Cultural Centre*
.....

**Call 685-VIEW for tickets &
information**



Festival Sched

Jane Siberry & The All-Star Women's Band

Friday, January 22 Doors open at 8:00 pm
Commodore Ballroom

Women in View Kicks off its 5th anniversary with a concert/dance party featuring a **Jane Siberry** solo and two sets by **The All-Star Women's Band**. (see p. 2)

Talking With . . . (see page 2)

Talking With . . . Monique Mojica

Saturday, January 23 8:30-10:30 pm

Talking With . . . Jane Siberry

Sunday, January 24 8:30-10:30 pm

SYMPOSIUM (see page 2)

Re-Presenting Woman: New Constructions of Female Gender
Saturday, January 23 10:00 am-5:30 pm

FESTIVAL WORKSHOPS (see pages 3-5)

Playmaking with 6- to 8-year-olds

Sunday, January 24 Noon-3:00 pm

Creating a Play with 9- to 12-year-olds

Sunday, January 24 3:00-6:00 pm

Authentic Movement—Freeing the Secrets of the Text

Sunday, January 24 10:00 am-5:00 pm

Stepping into the Rainbow of Desire

Monday, January 25 10:00 am-5:00 pm

Creative
Monday,

Drumdan
Tuesday,

Drink from
Tuesday,
Wednesd

Creating
Source
Wednesd

Playwritir
Thursday,

STATION STREET SCENE SHOP

Monday, January 25

7:00-7:30 **Chien Lunatique** (see p. 22)
8:15-9:15 **A Woman's Voice** (see p. 23)
10:15-11:00 **Land(e)scapes** (see p. 22)

Tuesday, January 26

7:00-8:00 **Betty by Betty** (see p. 22)
8:45-9:30 **Men's Wear** (see p. 23)

Wednesday, January 27

5:30-7:15 **Land(e)scapes** (see p. 22)
3:15-9:15 **A Woman's Voice** (see p. 23)
10:00-10:30 **Chien Lunatique** (see p. 22)

FIREHALL STUDIO

Thursday, January 28

4:55-5:35 **Escape** (see p. 8)
6:55-7:55 **Reading Writers I** (see p. 9)
9:15-10:30 **Speaking the Dark** (see p. 11)

Friday, January 29

12:45-1:45 **Reading Writers II** (see p. 9)
3:10-4:00 **Raw Materials** (see p. 9)
5:20-6:20 **Dying to be Thin** (see p. 8)
7:30-8:10 **Escape** (see p. 8)
10:00-11:15 **Speaking the Dark** (see p. 11)

Saturday, January 30

1:00-2:15 **Speaking the Dark** (see p. 11)
3:35-4:15 **Escape** (see p. 8)
5:35-6:25 **Raw Materials** (see p. 9)
7:45-8:45 **Reading Writers III** (see p. 10)
9:50-10:50 **Dying to be Thin** (see p. 8)

Sunday, January 31

12:45-1:35 **Raw Materials** (see p. 9)
2:40-3:40 **Dying to be Thin** (see p. 8)
5:00-6:00 **Reading Writers IV** (see p. 10)

FIREHALL THEATRE

Thursday, January 28

5:45-6:45 **(one two) buckle my shoe**
8:05-9:05 **Dance Double Feature** (see
10:40-11:15 **Dream Rite/Mouvement** (se

Friday, January 29

Noon-12:35 **Dream Rite/Mouvement** (se
2:00-3:00 **(one two) buckle my shoe**
4:10-5:10 **Dance Double Feature** (see
6:30-7:15 **Prairie Rainbow** (see p. 15)
8:50-9:50 **Amphibious Tales** (see p. 1

Saturday, January 30

Noon-12:45 **Prairie Rainbow** (see p. 15)
2:25-3:25 **Amphibious Tales** (see p. 1
4:25-5:25 **Dance Double Feature** (see
6:35-7:35 **(one two) buckle my shoe**
8:55-9:40 **Fast Life on a Lazy Susan** (s
11:00-11:35 **Dream Rite/Mouvement** (se

Sunday, January 31

11:50-12:35 **Fast Life on a Lazy Susan** (s
1:45-2:30 **Prairie Rainbow** (see p. 15)
3:50-4:50 **(one two) buckle my shoe**
6:10-7:20 **Not Having** (see p. 14)

Women *in* View

festival

.....
dule

NETWORKING SESSIONS (see page 6)

Let's Talk about Access

Monday, January 25 5:00-6:30 pm

Let's Delve into Feminist Cultural Criticism

Tuesday, January 26 5:00-6:30 pm

Let's Share Approaches to Video and Film Production

Wednesday, January 27 5:00-6:30 pm

Let's Cross Disciplines

Friday, January 29 10:00-11:30 am

Let's Fly Solo

Saturday, January 30 10:00-11:30 am

Let's Not Talk About Race Issues

Sunday, January 31 10:00-11:30 am

Five Movement and Dance Therapy

Monday, January 25 7:00-10:00 pm

Idancing

Monday, January 26 9:30 am-4:30 pm

From the Well—Embodying the Natural Voice

Monday, January 26 7:00-10:00 pm AND

Tuesday, January 27 7:00-10:00 pm

Writing and Performing Your Own Work: Tapping the

Tuesday, January 27 1:00-4:00 pm

Writing with Cherríe Moraga

Monday, January 28 10:00 am-4:00 pm

STATION STREET THEATRE

Thursday, January 28

4:15-5:15 **Grace and Gravity** (see p. 20)
 6:15-7:20 **First and Third Person** (see p. 19)
 8:20-9:50 **Peaches and Scream** (see p. 20)
 10:50-11:40 **Hardcore Memories** (see p. 20)

Friday, January 29

1:00-2:30 **Peaches and Scream** (see p. 20)
 3:30-4:25 **Tango** (see p. 21)
 5:30-6:25 **All Grown Up** (see p. 18)
 7:45-8:45 **Grace and Gravity** (see p. 20)
 9:45-10:35 **Hardcore Memories** (see p. 20)
 11:35-12:50 **The Bat Had Blue Eyes** (see p. 18)

Saturday, January 30

1:15-2:30 **The Bat Had Blue Eyes** (see p. 18)
 3:30-5:00 **Peaches and Scream** (see p. 20)
 6:00-6:55 **Tango** (see p. 21)
 7:55-9:00 **First and Third Person** (see p. 19)
 9:50-10:45 **All Grown Up** (see p. 18)
 11:30-12:20 **Hardcore Memories** (see p. 20)

Sunday, January 31

11:00-12:05 **First and Third Person** (see p. 19)
 12:45-1:45 **Grace and Gravity** (see p. 20)
 2:35-3:30 **Tango** (see p. 21)
 4:30-5:25 **All Grown Up** (see p. 18)
 6:15-7:30 **The Bat Had Blue Eyes** (see p. 18)

VAN. EAST CULTURAL CENTRE

Thursday, January 28

6:00-7:30 **Path with No Moccasins** (see p. 25)
 8:30-9:50 **Taxi Karma/The Dissident** (see p. 26)
 11:00-12:15 **Cabaret Stir-Fry I** (see p. 24)

Friday, January 29

6:00-7:30 **Path with No Moccasins** (see p. 25)
 8:30-9:50 **Taxi Karma/The Dissident** (see p. 26)
 11:00-12:15 **Cabaret Stir-Fry II** (see p. 24)

Saturday, January 30

6:00-7:30 **Path with No Moccasins** (see p. 25)
 8:30-9:50 **Taxi Karma/The Dissident** (see p. 26)
 11:00-12:15 **Cabaret Stir-Fry III** (see p. 24)

Sunday, January 31

3:10-4:40 **Path with No Moccasins** (see p. 25)
 5:40-7:00 **Taxi Karma/The Dissident** (see p. 26)
 8:00-9:15 **Cabaret Stir-Fry IV** (see p. 25)

Appendix 7

1994 Festival Program Cover & Schedule of Events



JANUARY 27

THURSDAY

FIREHALL THEATRE

7 PM Immediate Family
 9:50 PM In Confidence
 11 PM -12 AM A Thin Line

FIREHALL STUDIO

8 PM Coming of Age
 10-11 PM Dryland

STATION STREET

7:30-7 PM Erotic Art Show
 8:55 PM Mom's the Word
 10-10:45 PM Mad About Barbie

VECC

6 PM Oh, Baby
 8:30 PM Primadonna II
 10-11 PM Sapelo

W.I.S.E. HALL

15-7:15 PM Formations I
 9:15 PM W.I.S.E. Women's Cabaret

WESTERN FRONT

10 PM Garbo's Hat



PHOTOS FRONT COVER: KAREN WILLIAMS PHOTO BY IRENE YOUNG, OH BY PHOTO BY GARY MULCAHEY, & JEWISH WOMEN'S VOICES OF RESISTANCE PHOTO BY DOROTHY ELIAS. THIS PAGE (L-R): ROAD STORIES, SAPELO, A THIN LINE, EROTIC ART SHOW, HEROTICA, & HEROINES IN BLACK BOOTS. GRAPHIC DESIGN ELAINE LITTMANN

JANUARY 28

FRIDAY

FIREHALL THEATRE

5:30-6:20 PM Career Capers
 7:30-8:30 PM Dance Double Feature
 9:45-11:35 PM In Confidence

FIREHALL STUDIO

6:30-7:25 PM Jewish Women's Voices
 8:40-9:40 PM Dryland

STATION STREET

6-6:50 PM Road Stories
 8-9:30 PM Erotic Art Show
 10:30-11:15 PM Herotica



VICTOR HALL

VECC

7-8:30 PM Primadonna II
 9:50-10:50 PM Oh, Baby

W.I.S.E. HALL

8:40-9:40 PM Formations 2
 11 PM-12:15 AM W.I.S.E. Women's Cabaret

WESTERN FRONT

8-10 PM Billy Tipton Memorial Saxophone Quartet

JANUARY 29

SATURDAY

FIREHALL THEATRE

11:30 AM-12:20 PM Career Capers
 1:40-3:30 PM In Confidence
 4:30-5:30 PM A Thin Line
 6:30-7:30 PM Immediate Family
 8:45-9:35 PM Ann-Marie MacDonald
 10:45-11:45 PM Dance Double Feature

FIREHALL STUDIO

12:30-1:30 PM Coming of Age
 3:30-4:20 PM Criminal
 5:40-6:25 PM Identities
 7:40-8:40 PM Searching for a Place
 9:40-10:40 PM Dryland

STATION STREET

3-4:30 PM Erotic Art Show
 5:30-6:25 PM Mom's the Word
 7:30-8:15 PM Mad About Barbie
 9:15-10 PM Herotica
 11-11:50 PM Road Stories

VECC

4:30-6 PM Sapelo
 7:20-8:20 PM Oh, Baby
 9:40-10:40 PM Karen Williams

W.I.S.E. HALL

12-1:30 PM Networking Session: What's So Funny?
 2:30-3:30 PM Formations 3
 6:10-7:10 PM Formations 4
 8:30-9:30 PM The Chickens Hitchhiked to Reno
 10:45 PM -12 AM W.I.S.E. Women's Cabaret

WESTERN FRONT

8-10 PM Shweta Jhaveri

SHARLA HOLTMAN



FIREHALL THEATRE

12-1:50 PM In Confidence
 3-3:45 PM Nicola Cavendish: A Prairie Story
 5:10-6:10 PM Immediate Family
 7:30-8:30 PM A Thin Line

FIREHALL STUDIO

11 AM-12 PM Coming of Age
 2-2:55 PM Jewish Women's Voices
 4-5 PM Dryland
 6:15-7:15 PM Coming of Age

STATION STREET

12:30-1:25 PM Mom's the Word
 2:30-3:15 PM Mad About Barbie
 4:15-5 PM Herotica
 6-6:50 PM Road Stories

W.I.S.E. HALL

10-11:30 AM Networking Session: Women, Sex, Writing
 12:30-2:30 PM Workshop: Let's Laugh About Sex
 2:30-4:30 PM Open Stage
 5:30-6:30 PM Women of Mystery
 7-8 PM Heroines in Black Boots

SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CALL 685-6800 FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION.

THE SHOWS

Acrobatic Capers CLOWN

What do you do when you've run away to join the circus and discovered it's a lot of work? Sand Northrup's whimsical, interactive exploration of career opportunities for women in the 90s is punctuated by juggling, unicycling, stiltwalking and more surprises for Filetta Fish fans. Ages 10 and up.

FT JAN 28 5:30-6:20 PM • JAN 29 11:30 AM-12:20 PM
\$8.50 ADULT; \$3 CHILD

Chickens Hitchhiked to Reno

ED READING

Norma Kilpatrick's new play tells the story of a woman who brings her "mentally retarded" adult daughter home from the institution where she has spent most of her life. With courage and determination, the two create a new vision of their future.

VH JAN 29 8:30-9:30 PM \$8.50

Coming of Age ALTERNATIVE THEATRE

Patricia Ludwick's* cross-disciplinary, non-linear journey through the straits of menopause toward the country of women with white hair. A kaleidoscope of images, stories, dreams and secrets exploring the changes in the middle of a woman's life.

5 JAN 27 7-8 PM • JAN 29 12:30-1:30 PM
VN 30 11 AM-12 PM • JAN 30 6:15-7:15 PM \$10.50

Final STAGED READING

Elizabeth Dancoes'* new play is the examination of a secret reflected in the eyes of six generations of women spanning the last quarter of this millennium.

1 JAN 29 3:30-4:20 PM \$8.50

Ice Double Feature DANCE

Mascall Dance's **Nijinsky Gibber Jazz Club** a forum for researching dance improvisation, featuring dancers Deborah Dunn, Susan Elliot, Anya Livingstone, Jennifer Mascall and Jaci Letivier, accompanied by musician Veda Hille.

Dance of the Dead, Barbara Bourget and Y Hirabayashi investigate the common denominators in Japanese butoh and Spanish flamenco dance forms.

1 JAN 28 7:30-8:30 PM • JAN 29 10:45-11:45 PM \$10.50

Dryland THEATRE / STORYTELLING

"There is a great woman in the sky, and the world is the word inside of her mouth." From Toronto's Nightwood Theatre, Pauline Peters' one-woman show uses ritual, clown, dance and chant/song to explore African-Canadian identity and experience.

FS JAN 27 10-11 PM • JAN 28 8:40-9:40 PM
JAN 29 9:40-10:40 PM • JAN 30 4-5 PM \$10.50

The Erotic Art Show COMEDY

All the deep and dark questions of female sexuality and its expression bubble to the surface in Touchstone Theatre's production of Kathryn Allison's

hilarious and compelling new play. Directed by Susan Astley,* featuring Suzanne Ristic,* Susinn MacFarlen,* and Wendy Van Riesen.*

SS JAN 27 5:30-7:00 PM
JAN 28 8-9:30 PM
JAN 29 3-4:30 PM \$10.50



DEBORAH DUNN*

Formations SOLO PERFORMANCE

Five young writers make the leap from page to stage in this View project sponsored by Z95.3 FM. Carmen Aguirre, Penny Bradley,* Kathleen Dick, Marie Humber, and Lisa Lowe each perform an original short piece about love.

Three performers per show. FORMATIONS 1: Humber, Lowe, Dick. FORMATIONS 2: Bradley, Aguirre, Lowe. FORMATIONS 3: Humber, Aguirre, Dick. FORMATIONS 4: Humber, Bradley, Dick.

WH (1) JAN 27 6:15-7:15 PM • (2) JAN 28 8:40-9:40 PM
(3) JAN 29 2:30-3:30 PM • (4) JAN 29 6:10-7:10 PM \$8.50

Herotica ALTERNATIVE THEATRE

An evening of theatrical erotica reflecting the diverse sexual tastes of contemporary women. Vancouver's Ruby Slippers probes your passion with local writers and performers including Katherine Schlemmer, Jackie Crossland, Diane Brown* and Melanie Doerr.*

SS JAN 28 10:30-11:15 PM • JAN 29 9:15-10 PM
JAN 30 4:15-5 PM \$10.50

Identities STAGED READING

The question, "what is home?" informs Zara Suleman's play, an examination of South Asian cultural identity, gender and sexuality in a Canadian context.

FS JAN 29 5:40-6:25 PM \$8.50



DIANE WHELAN

Immediate Family DRAMA

Toronto actor Elizabeth Shepherd* provides an exquisitely intimate and moving portrayal of an older lesbian visiting her dying lover in the hospital, coming to terms with both the loss of her loved one and the negation of their relationship by the outside world.

FT JAN 27 6-7 PM • JAN 29 6:30-7:30 PM
JAN 30 5:10-6:10 PM \$10.50

Jewish Women's Voices of Resistance

STORYTELLING

Acclaimed storyteller Helen Mintz returns to the festival with a poignant and provocative selection of stories sharing the voices of Jewish women courageously following their dreams.

Directed by Lynda Goldhar Smith.*

FS JAN 28 6:30-7:25 PM • JAN 30 2-2:55 PM \$10.50

Mad About Barbie COMEDY / DRAMA

Jennifer Martin's alternately hilarious and harrowing story of a newly-divorced stand-up comic's slide into brutal depression. Barbie™ and plenty of her accessories provide fuel for fantasy as the heroine tries to make sense of her life.

SS JAN 27 10-10:45 PM • JAN 29 7:30-8:15 PM
JAN 30 2:30-3:15 PM \$10.50

Mom's the Word CABARET

This "kitchen table cabaret" features performer-moms Linda Carson,* Jill Daum,* Allison Kelly,* Robin Nichol,* Barbara Pollard,* and Deborah Williams* sharing stories, humour, and other coping strategies in a behind-the-scenes peek at their toughest role.

SS JAN 27 8-8:55 PM • JAN 29 5:30-6:25 PM
JAN 30 12:30-1:25 PM \$10.50

PLUS: A SPECIAL PAT-WHAT-YOU-CAN PERFORMANCE SPONSORED BY VAN CITY. WATCH FOR DETAILS.

PHOTO OF JENNIFER MASCALL BY CYLLA VON TIEDEMANN

Nicola Cavendish: * A Prairie Story

LITERARY READING

One of Vancouver's most outstanding and beloved stage actors reads *I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen*, a moving coming-of-age story by prairie writer Lois Simmie.

FT JAN 30 3-3:45 PM \$8.50

Oh, Baby COMEDY / CLOWN

Toronto's Karen Hines* was the hit of the 1992 Fringe circuit with *Pochsy's Lips*. In this new show, Pochsy, that lovable pixie of doom, is out of the hospital and on a dream vacation by the seashore. A darkly funny and thought-provoking delight.

VECC JAN 27 5-6 PM • JAN 28 9:50-10:50 PM
JAN 29 7:20-8:20 PM \$10.50**Primadonna II** COMEDY / MUSIC

A diva returns to her hometown to celebrate the 100th birthday of her beloved singing teacher, and finds herself showered not with adoration, but with problems. Toronto comedienne Mary Lou Fallis treats audiences to a winning combination of humour and high C's. Sponsored by Victory Square Law Office.

VECC JAN 27 7-8:30 PM • JAN 28 7-8:30 PM \$12.50

Reading Writers: Ann-Marie**MacDonald** LITERARY READING

The award-winning author of *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)* reads from her work. Co-presented with the Playwrights Union of Canada.

FT JAN 29 8:45-9:35 PM \$8.50

Reading Writers: Heroines in Black**Boots** LITERARY READING

Vancouver writers Anne Jew, Lydia Kwa, and Larissa Lai explore sister love and loss, heroines and lingerie, and history and family in their prose and poetry.

WH JAN 30 7-8 PM PAY-WHAT-YOU-CAN

Reading Writers: Women of Mystery

LITERARY READING

Join mystery writers Gail Bowen (*Murder at the Mendel*), Ellen Godfrey (*Georgia Disappeared*), and Nora Kelly (*My Sister's Keeper*) for this hair-raising reading.

WH JAN 30 5:30-6:30 PM PAY-WHAT-YOU-CAN

**Road Stories** MUSIC / THEATRE

The unexpected is prime turf for women musicians on the road. Verna Chan, Beverley Elliott,* and Colleen Savage share their stories, joys, heartaches, and some terrific tunes.

SS JAN 28 6-6:50 PM • JAN 29 11-11:50 PM
JAN 30 6-6:50 PM \$10.50**Sapelo: Time Is Winding Up**

THEATRE / STORYTELLING

Sapelo is one of the Georgia Sea Islands, where an original slave colony's African traditions and culture are kept alive through the art of storytelling. Diane Ferlatte's research there culminated in this acclaimed one-woman show. Suitable for ages 10 and up.

VECC JAN 27 9:30-11 PM • JAN 29 4:30-6 PM
\$10.50 ADULT; \$3 CHILD**Searching for a Place Inside My Mind**

STAGED READING

Celeste Insell's* latest play presents an individual and collective journey into the past, which ultimately becomes a call for all people of African descent to decolonize their minds.

FS JAN 29 7:40-8:40 PM \$8.50

A Thin Line DRAMA

A riveting combination of performance and video created by River Light and Shaira Holman. A young lesbian's journey through memory as she packs to leave the mental institution where she has been a patient for the past year.

FT JAN 27 11 PM-12 AM • JAN 29 4:30-5:30 PM
JAN 30 7:30-8:30 PM \$10.50**Karen Williams** STAND-UP COMEDY

Karen's distinctive blend of irreverence and critical savvy have made her a huge hit on the college and women's festival circuits. Her comic tirades touch on classism, misogyny, codependence, racism, and everything in between. Come see why she's being called the funniest woman on the comedy stage today.

VECC JAN 29 9:40-10:40 PM \$15

W.I.S.E. Women's Cabaret • Thursday

Stand-up comedy from Marlene Swidzinski, music from Wendy-Jane Bollard, improv from Veena Sood.* Torch diva Bev Elliott* hosts.

WH JAN 27 8-9:15 PM \$8.50

W.I.S.E. Women's Cabaret • Friday

Songs from Sandy Scofield, storytelling from Random Acts' Jackie Crossland and Nora Randall, more songs from Penny Singh, outrageous stand-up comedy from Christine Taylor, and a sampling of musical life on the road from the women of *Road Stories*. Janice Ungaro hosts.

WH JAN 28 11 PM-12:15 AM \$10.50

W.I.S.E. Women's Cabaret • Saturday

Once again, the fearless Janice Ungaro hosts an evening of diverse delights, featuring folksinging duo Hanky Ann on the Moon (Ruth McIntosh* and Diane Barbarash), poetry from Lesley Ewen,* music from Sandra P. Grant,* and Jennifer Martin with a slice of her show, *Mad About Barbie*.

WH JAN 29 10:45 PM-12 AM \$10.50

PREMIERE**In Confidence**

DRAMA/COMEDY

Two women in two kitchens, two thousand miles apart. Margaret Hollingsworth's new play explores a deep and

complex friendship between

two older women, played

by Sheila Paterson* and

Lee Van Paassen.* A

New Play Centre/

Women in View co-

production directed by

Kate Weiss.*

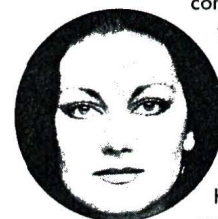
FIREHALL THEATRE

2-FOR-1 PREVIEW TUESDAY JAN 25, 8 PM

OPENING NIGHT WEDNESDAY JAN. 26, 8 PM

JAN 27 8-9:50 PM • JAN 28 9:45-11:35 PM

JAN 29 1:40-3:30 PM • JAN 30 12-1:50 PM \$12.50



* APPEARING COURTESY OF ACTORS' EQUITY

PHOTOS L-R: LEE VAN PAASEN (PHOTO BY VICTOR DESZO); SHEILA PATERSON

WORKSHOPS • NETWORKING • SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

NETWORKING SESSIONS

EVERYONE WELCOME
ALL NETWORKING SESSIONS ARE FREE

Women Who Write Plays

We're hoping every female playwright in BC will join us for this discussion about the status of the female playwright in Canada. Hosted by Carol Bolt and Angela Rebeiro of the Playwrights Union of Canada.

JOSEPHINE'S JAN 23 11 AM-1 PM FREE

What's So Funny?

Tell us what makes *you* laugh. A discussion about women and comedy hosted by festival performers Karen Hines,* Jennifer Martin, and Veena Sood.*

WH JAN 29 12-1:30 PM FREE

Women, Sex, Writing

Join us for this passionate discussion about passion – from a woman's point of view. Hosted by Mercedes Baines, Jackie Crossland, Katrina Dunn, Cory Phillee, and Nora Randall.

WH JAN 30 10-11:30 AM FREE



JACKIE CROSSLAND & NORA RANDALL

WORKSHOPS

Self-Scripting for Performance

Linda Putnam leads this two-day physical theatre workshop focusing on the stimulation of the performer's image life, concentrating on the development of text.

GT JAN 22-23 2-5 PM \$65

Breathing Life into the Non-Linear Text

Nightwood Theatre's Diane Roberts* leads this two-day directing workshop discussing approaches to material that is non-traditionally structured and reflects a feminist point of view.

GT JAN 23-24 7-10 PM \$65

Body Movement / Body Image

Norma Kilpatrick leads this exploration of body image using movement techniques and personal stories. Norma is a fat woman who loves to dance.

GT JAN 25 7-10 PM \$35

Let's Laugh About Sex!

Part of stand-up comic Karen Williams' acclaimed "Humour-at-Large Workshop Series," designed to build confidence and promote self-esteem. The title says it all.

WH JAN 30 12:30-2:30 PM \$15 • OPEN STAGE FOLLOWS



MICHAEL SEXTON

SHWETA JHAVERI

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN...

That's right, it's Women in View's very first Open Stage. Two hours of music, comedy, poetry, drama, clowning...? You decide. Performers will register on a first come/first served basis at the event. Bring your friends!

WH JAN 30 2:30-4:30 PM FREE

WESTERN FRONT MUSIC PROGRAM

Garbo's Hat

A Vancouver jazz trio featuring the exquisite vocals of acclaimed Vancouver singer Kate Hammett-Vaughan.

WF JAN 27 8-10 PM

\$10 GENERAL/\$8 WESTERN FRONT MEMBERS

The Billy Tipton Memorial Saxophone Quartet

A group of women saxophonists from Seattle, whose eclectic sound draws on everything from jazz standards to bus horns to Led Zeppelin.

WF JAN 28 8-10 PM

\$10 GENERAL/\$8 WESTERN FRONT MEMBERS

Shweta Jhaveri

Shweta Jhaveri is an acclaimed vocalist and musician from India.

WF JAN 29 8-10 PM

\$10 GENERAL/\$8 WESTERN FRONT MEMBERS

VENUES

Firehall Arts Centre (FT - THEATRE, FS - STUDIO) 280 East Cordova St. (at Gore)

Station Street Arts Centre (SS) 930 Station St. (near Main and Prior)

Vancouver East Cultural Centre (VECC) 1895 Venables St. (at Victoria)

W.I.S.E. Hall (WH) 1882 Adanac St. (at Victoria)

Western Front (WF) 303 East 8th Ave. (at Scotia)

Green Thumb Rehearsal Hall (GT) 1885 Venables St. (at Victoria)

Josephine's Coffee Bar 1716 Charles St. (at Commercial)



NOTE: The Vancouver East Cultural Centre is fully wheelchair accessible. The Firehall Theatre, W.I.S.E. Hall, and Josephine's are partially accessible. Other venues, and the Women in View Box Office, are not wheelchair accessible.

Appendix 8

1995 Festival Program Cover & Schedule of Events

the seventh annual festival of women in the performing arts

women

in

january 22 to 29, 1995

vancouver, b.c.





EADLESS TURTLENECK PHOTO BY CHUCK STALLARD

the shows

Angelique STAGED READING

Lorena Gale* passionately reconstructs the experiences of Marie Joseph Angelique – a black slave hanged in 1734 after setting fire to the city of Montreal. JAN 29 5:35 PM FS \$8.50

Blood Sisters ALTERNATIVE THEATRE

What exactly goes on in the powder rooms of the world? Playwright **Kim Falconer** shows us that it's not all sugar and spice and everything nice. Warning: explicit language and nudity.

JAN 26 8 PM SS • JAN 28 12:00 NOON SS
JAN 29 5:35 PM SS \$14

W.I.S.E. Women's Cabarets

PURE COMEDY Hosted by the feminist and funny **Janice Ungaro**, and featuring **Elvira Kurt**, "Hungary's Carol Burnett"; **Lesley Quilty**, Olive Oyl-super hero; and **Denny Williams** with "the way the world should be."

JAN 27 10:45 PM WH \$14

ON THE EDGE **Dana Claxton** satirizes cultural equity; **Denise Uyehara** examines Asian-American sexuality; **May Zhu** journeys into the dark wild womb; **Judy Radul** offers a post patriarchal anti-tirade; **Hilary Peach** presents a contemporary western romance about love and guns. JAN 28 10:45 PM WH \$14

MOSTLY MUSIC Hosted by **Leslie Ewen** are **Karen Melady** presenting monologues and meditations; **Judy Atkin** performing songs about survival in the city; Seattle's powerful duo **Rebel Voices** with thought-provoking, zany music; and **Veda Hille** offering quirky heartfelt songs to stir blood and soul. JAN 29 6:45 PM WH \$14

Dancing!

BROCCOLI BRIDES *TODAY'S WOMAN*, how **BAZAARI** **Constance Cooke's** satirical story of one woman's quest and struggle for identity.

MY LIFE IN ART The sardonic memoir, told and tapped, of **Santa Aloï's** Sicilian family in the U.S. melting pot of the 1950s.

JAN 27 10:45 PM FT • JAN 28 2:20 PM FT
JAN 29 7:15 PM FT \$14

Dancing Too!

"**SPECK**" BY **LEE SU-FEH** Speck is meditation. A point of stillness. A moment's quiet, the beating of a heart. *Commissioned for the Women in View Festival*. "**now, in blue**" A physically charged solo, set to music by Chopin. **Yvonne Coutts** challenges convention.

JAN 27 6:50 PM VECC • JAN 28 7:40 PM VECC \$14

Elvira Kurt STAND-UP COMEDY

A zany and hilarious evening! "She's got guts, style, a sense of humour – if Kids in the Hall wasn't just boys, **dyke** comedian **Elvira Kurt** might be part of the cast." (*Globe and Mail*)

JAN 28 9:45 PM VECC • JAN 29 5:40 PM VECC \$14

Formations 1 DANCE/ALTERNATIVE THEATRE

RIVER RUN A young woman's musical story of self-imprisonment and escape through movement, dance and poetic prose.

STRINGS ATTACHED Bizarre characters leap across the stage led by strings out of nowhere. A fusion of dance and performance art.

JAN 27 6 PM FT • JAN 28 12 NOON FT \$8.50

Formations 2 ALTERNATIVE THEATRE

CHICKS UP FRONT A wacky and fun look at a group of chicks who turn into a pack of wolves on their night on the town. **MOLLY BROLLY AND THE FOLLY OF LOVE** Meet Molly Brolly – the loveable polka-dotted clown who in her search for love has grown too attached to her umbrella!

JAN 28 6:30 PM FT \$8.50
FORMATIONS 1 AND 2 SPONSORED BY 295.3 FM

Headless Turtleneck

ALTERNATIVE THEATRE

A story of legacy and a grandmother's farewell by fire. The tale of a Japanese-American family, written, directed and performed by the critically acclaimed **Denise Uyehara**.

JAN 27 8:40 PM FT
JAN 28 4:20 PM FT • JAN 29 2 PM FT \$14

Erotique ALTERNATIVE THEATRE

A sexy, erotic, funny and poetic cabaret from **Mercedes Baines**. A journey into one woman's sexual development. Explicit language.

JAN 26 10:30 PM SS • JAN 27 8 PM SS
JAN 28 10 PM SS \$14

Images of Whole ALTERNATIVE THEATRE

Five women in an ensemble piece, integrating improvisation, song and dance, address the diaspora of the African-Canadian woman. JAN 27 6 PM SS

JAN 28 8 PM SS • JAN 29 11:30 AM SS \$14

It's My Movie MUSIC THEATRE

Lori Valteau* and **Kate Robbins*** in a theatrical *Spinal Tap!* It's a Movie – no – it's a Live-Action-Bio-Documentary-Film-in-Black-and-White-with-Music-on-Stage. The life and career of singer and cult personality, **Benny Jones**.

JAN 26 6 PM FT • JAN 28 8:40 PM FT
JAN 29 11:30 AM FT \$14

Joke You STAND-UP COMEDY

Every Joke Has A Victim. Vancouver comic **Jan Derbyshire** will stand up to humour. Does a comic have the responsibility to enlighten the audience or does the old motto stand true? f*** 'em if they can't take a joke!

JAN 27 7:50 PM WH • JAN 28 8:40 PM WH
JAN 29 4:30 PM WH \$14

The Laura Love Band MUSIC

Laura Love's "Afro-Celtic" sound is enlivened with astonishing vocals. A popular headliner in her own right, and a favourite support act for such major artists as **John Lee Hooker** and **Lyle Lovett**. JAN 26 9:30 PM WH \$14

Lipschtick

IMPROVISATIONAL COMEDY

The new woman's twisted, improvisational comedy group comes with their own bag of feminine hijinks – guaranteed to bring on loads of laughter! Performers include **Christine Lippa**, **Veena Sood**, and **Denalda Williams**.

JAN 28 6:35 PM WH \$14



SLAP

Marking Time STAGED READING

Marking Time speaks about the need to take risks in our lives in order to grow. **Cory Philley** shows us the pressures to conform to the image of the "ideal woman" – who may have never existed in the first place. JAN 28 7:35 PM FS \$8.50

Mom's The Word CABARET

Six moms explore motherhood in this "kitchen table cabaret". Performers **Linda Carson,* Jill Daum,* Alison Kelly,* Robin Nichol,* Barbara Pollard*** and **Deborah Williams*** sing and play their way through the joys, frustrations, love, "terrors" and "thrills." Brief nudity.

JAN 26 6 PM VECC • JAN 27 9 PM VECC
JAN 28 5 PM VECC • JAN 29 8:05 PM VECC \$14

Mother of Pearl PHYSICAL THEATRE

Stiletto Company presents a tart clown comedy. A recipe for mothers and daughters you'll never find in *The Joy of Cooking*. "Every mother ... should pack her [daughter] up and see Mother of Pearl." (H.J. Kirchoff, *Globe and Mail*)

JAN 26 8 PM FT • JAN 28 10:30 PM FT
JAN 29 4:30 PM FT \$14

Nice Girl / Bad Girl VISUAL ART PRESENTATION

A scripted slide show by Vancouver visual artist **Sheila Norgate** tells the shocking yet true story of how a Nice Girl and a Bad Girl took up residence in one woman's body and then jostled for position in her psyche. JAN 26 10 PM FT \$14

WC Readings (PLAYWRIGHTS UNION OF CANADA)

The eccentricity and vividness of women's lives on the prairies comes to life in the work of these three acclaimed playwrights. Featuring **Conni Massing** (*Gravel Run*), **Connie Gault** (*The Snow Dream in Studio One: Stories Made for Radio*), and **Diane Warren** (*Serpent in the Night Sky*). Co-sponsored by the Playwright's Union of Canada and The Betty Lambert Society.

AN 28 5:35 PM FS \$8.50

Young Writers 1 LITERARY READING

Janani Mootoo, author of *Out on Main Street*, explores her Indo-Trinidadian roots. **Kate Braid**, author of *Covering Rough Ground*, reads about her experiences of women carpenters.

AN 26 7 PM FS \$8.50



SAWAGI TAIKO PHOTO BY LINDA CHIFEN

Reading Writers 2 LITERARY READING

Evelyn Lau (*Oedipal Dreams*) with a wild reading of poetry. **Thuong Vuong-Riddick** (*Two Shores*) shares her experiences of rural Vietnam. **Caroline Adderson**, Governor General Literary Award winner, will read from *Bad Imaginings*.

JAN 28 1:25 PM FS \$8.50

Reading Writers 3 LITERARY READING

Maxine Tynes (*Borrowed Beauty*) is an African-Canadian performance poet and a legendary figure in Canadian literature. Her lyrical work is about love, shopping, disability and crows!

JAN 28 6:15 PM SS \$8.50

Sawagi Taiko NEW MUSIC

Discover the "commotion" or "uprising" of **Sawagi Taiko's** contemporary Japanese drumming, which does not merely permeate the air, but surrounds the whole body with visceral strength.

JAN 26 8:30 PM VECC • JAN 29 3:15 PM VECC \$14

Secret Kitchen PERFORMANCE ART

Margaret Dragu (*Momz' Radio*) uses dance, music, monologues and poems to tell tales from the "surreal kitchen, that invisible place where caregivers work."

JAN 26 6 PM SS • JAN 28 2:30 PM SS
JAN 29 1:30 PM SS \$14

Slap ALTERNATIVE THEATRE

Naomi Cooke presents a new perspective on motherhood. Set against the drastic landscape of sectarian violence and the religious phobia of a people at war, *Slap* is a rich tapestry of song, story and image. Explicit language.

JAN 27 10 PM SS • JAN 28 4:30 PM SS
JAN 29 3:25 PM SS • JAN 29 8 PM SS \$14

Talking With ... Susan Cox

Talk with one of Canada's most dynamic and highly respected directors. With over 30 years of experience, she is now Artistic Director of The Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company.

JAN 28 3:25 PM FS \$5

Talking With ... Joan McLeod

Talk with this internationally acclaimed playwright. Her work, published in four languages, includes *Amigo's Blue Guitar*. Winner of a Governor General's Literary Award in 1991.

JAN 26 9 PM FS \$5

Frickster Visits the Old Folks Home

STAGED READING

First Nation (Tlingit) playwright **Sharon Shorty** tells the tale of a story-telling elder who is forced to leave her community and live in an old folks home. A story of perseverance and change.

JAN 27 7:30 PM FS \$8.50

Under Cover STAGED READING

A look at what it means to be South Asian, bisexual, a woman and a chameleon. **Manisha Singh** rhythmically tells the story of a South Asian woman's desire and her search for identity. JAN 29 12:25 PM FS \$8.50

A Woman's Work is Never ...

STORIES AND MUSIC

WORK STORIES Work – look for work? Organize – disorganize? Stories from NAFTA to cleaning those little plastic stove knobs, with **Jackie Crossland** and **Nora Randall**.

WARNING: WOMEN AT WORK With humour, drama and exquisite harmonic arrangements, the Seattle band **Rebel Voices** brings to light the struggles and victories of working women everywhere.

JAN 29 2 PM WH \$14

WHOMP!!! STAGED READING

From the **Full Figured Theatre Company** that brought us *Too Blonde* and *the "f" word!*

Experience the exciting *Cirque du Vie!* In the centre ring is Tesse, the brave heroine. See her contort and jump through fiery hoops.

JAN 29 3:15 PM FS \$8.50

* APPEARING COURTESY OF CANADIAN ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

workshops networking special programming

networking sessions

everyone welcome / networking sessions are free

NETWORKING 1

Interactive Art in the Community

An open session on interactive art and community led by **Suzanne Lacy**, one of the most prominent performance artists working in North America. Her work is dedicated to social change and deep philosophical inquiry.

JAN 27 5-6 PM FS FREE

NETWORKING 2

Collaboration and the Collective Process

A discussion about the collaborative process. Why do so many women choose to work this way? What are the joys? The agonies? HOSTS **Linda Carson***, **Barbara Pollard*** and the *Mom's the Word* collective, **Full Figure Theatre Company**, and **Siobahn Barker** and the *Images of Whole* collective

JAN 28 10:30 AM-12 NOON FS FREE

NETWORKING 3

Prime Time in the Performing Arts

A discussion of the challenges facing women creators as they move into middle age and beyond. Success stories and strategies will be shared. HOSTS **Patsy Ludwick**, **Kathleen Weiss**, **Santa Aloï** and **Joy Coghill**

JAN 29 10:30 AM-12 NOON FS FREE

now it's your turn

That's right, Women in View's Open Stage returns. Two hours of music, comedy, poetry, drama, clowning...? You decide. Performers will register on a first come/first served basis at the event. Bring your friends!

JAN 28 2-5:30 PM WH FREE

workshops

Collectively Devised Theatre

Naomi Cooke leads this workshop which explores process, journey and technique in the creation of original work as a collaboration. Physically and vocally oriented – with an emphasis on finding the creative process through the impulse of the body.

JAN 24 7:00-10 PM FS \$40 MEMBERS \$50 NON-MEMBERS

Authentic Movement:

Being Moved / Being Seen

Judith Koltai works with actors, directors, designers and playwrights. Entering the world of text together: moving/witnessing speaking/listening with the authentic impulses of the body and interacting through a fresh new way of embodied language.

JAN 23, 24, 25 10 AM-5 PM FS
\$150 MEMBERS \$175 NON-MEMBERS

The Writer as Social Activist

Acclaimed poet and writer **Maxine Tynes** teaches a workshop in writing as it pertains to addressing social issues. How can the same poem be used to create beauty and to stimulate social change?

JAN 28 10 AM-1 PM VECC \$25 MEMBERS \$35 NON-MEMBERS

North Indian Singing Workshop

Shweta Jhaveri, who specializes in the Khayal form of Hindustani vocal music, conducts this music workshop. Open to all who are interested in understanding the principles of Indian music in a learn-by-doing approach.

JAN 22 1-4 PM WF \$25 MEMBERS \$35 NON-MEMBERS

western front music program

Zeellia

This Vancouver-based a cappella ensemble specializes in Eastern European folk music delivered in the distinctive traditional vocal style called *Bilij holos* "pure voice."

THURS JAN 26 8 PM \$10 GENERAL / \$8 WESTERN FRONT AND WOMEN IN VIEW MEMBERS

Cliq

An evening of off beat "salon/ performance art" and music merging with dance, featuring **Shannon Peet**, **Holly Smith** and **Katherine Duncanson**.

FRI JAN 27 8 PM \$10 GENERAL / \$8 WESTERN FRONT AND WOMEN IN VIEW MEMBERS

Katby Kennedy

Loose Connections – electro-acoustic and voice from the woman

who produced *Never/Always*, a roving installation for a hundred voice choir and boomboxes, presented outside Montreal's Place des Arts.

SAT JAN 28 8 PM \$10 GENERAL / \$8 WESTERN FRONT AND WOMEN IN VIEW MEMBERS

Carolee Schneemann

Appearing for the first time in Vancouver, internationally renowned **Carolee Schneemann** will give a performative talk on extending the boundaries of performance as she has done since the 1960s.

SUN JAN 29 8 PM \$10 GENERAL / \$8 WESTERN FRONT AND WOMEN IN VIEW MEMBERS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE AND CANADA EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION COMMISSION; THE CANADA COUNCIL THROUGH THE WRITING AND PUBLISHING SECTION; THE GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF SMALL BUSINESS, TOURISM AND CULTURE; THE CITY OF VANCOUVER; THE MELUSINE FOUNDATION; THE PLAYWRIGHTS UNION OF CANADA; THE BETTY LAMBERT SOCIETY; 295.3 FM; THE CROSS-CULTURAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM; ARTSFACT, A CULTURAL INITIATIVE OF 103.5 QM/ FM; JANE HEYMAN; AND ALL OUR MEMBERS, DONORS, VOLUNTEERS, STAFF AND SUPPORTERS.

SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.
CHECK THE GEORGIA STRAIGHT, OR
CALL 685-6684 FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION

Appendix 9

1996 Festival Program Cover & Schedule of Events



the eighth annual
**Women in
VIEW**

performing arts festival

**January
25-28
1996**

Vancouver, BC

No matter what genre **SPARKS YOUR PASSION**, there is a special treat to enrich and challenge you at the 8th Annual Women in View Festival. **THEATRE, DANCE, LITERATURE, MUSIC AND CABARET** are woven into four magical days of performance and exploration. Why not select a show you know you'll enjoy and then **STRETCH YOURSELF** with tickets to a new or less familiar event? There are **MANY VOICES**, many points of view in the Festival, each expressing a fresh vision with enthusiasm and passion. Appreciate the veterans and **DISCOVER THE STARS OF TOMORROW** – all women whose creative talents deserve to be nurtured and applauded. Join us to enjoy this year's wonderful celebration of Women in View.

THEATRE

Bearded Circus Ladies BY JAN DERBYSHIRE
Jan Derbyshire's last solo work, **JOKE YOU!** (JUST KIDDING) was described as "audacious, hilarious, mystifying, provocative – and, above all, original" (Georgia Straight). In her new show, Jan continues to explore an innovative form of performance: Stand-up Theatre. Be sure to see **BEARDED CIRCUS LADIES**, a modern fable without morals, a true story full of lies, a collection of characters so real yet unreal they must be seen to be not believed.

THE JAN. 26 PERFORMANCE IS SPONSORED BY ANGLES MAGAZINE.

JAN 26 10:30 PM VECC
 • JAN 27 7:30 PM VECC \$12.50

The Cave BY SHERYL SIMMONS

Step into the powerful world of *The Cave*, a brilliant and inspirational odyssey into the heart of a woman in today's society. **Sheryl Simmons** invites you to join her as she uses paint, music, movement, slides, shadow-play, masks, scents, fire and water to recreate her journey to spiritual and physical health after discovering she had cervical dysplasia – a precancerous condition. (SEE *Enter The Myth, Workshops*.) SPONSORED BY VICTORY SQUARE LAW OFFICE.

JAN 26 8 PM MLC • JAN 27 8 PM MLC
 • JAN 28 1:30 PM MLC \$12.50

Arboretum Series

Two delicious comedies from performance artists **Shawna Dempsey** and **Lorri Millan**. **ARBORITE HOUSEWIFE** is a brilliant satire about a hapless homemaker who, in a

house dress built of wood, arborite, and cabinet fixtures reveals her fantasies, fears and frustrations.

Remember the *Total Woman*, the book that advised women to greet their husbands dressed only in saran wrap? **THE THIN SKIN OF NORMAL** shakes up this image with biting wit, a kick-ass critique of gender and three inch roofing nails.

Part of an ongoing series of work which reconstructs the dress in unlikely materials. SPONSORED BY ANGLES MAGAZINE.

JAN 28 5:30 PM VECC \$12.50

Lily BY HINDI BROOKS

Bryna Weiss stars in this warm insightful tale of one woman's amazing saga from Hitler's purge of Polish Jews to a fragile peace in Israel a half-century later. A bittersweet story of love and loss, *Lily* embraces the universal search for peace and truth. A co-production with the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver.

JAN 27 8 PM NRT \$12.50 GENERAL/
 \$10 WOMEN IN VIEW MEMBERS

Tiger's Heart BY KIT BRENNAN

In 1816 Dr. James Berry had a secret. He was a woman. In order to study and practise medicine, this real-life character moved from Britain to South Africa achieving both medical and social success. *Tiger's Heart* is "a compelling adventure" (Ottawa Citizen) which explores the possible conflicts hidden beneath this remarkable woman's mask. A co-presentation with the Frederic Wood Theatre, UBC.

JAN 25 8 PM FWT • JAN 26 8 PM FWT
 • JAN 27 2 PM & 8 PM FWT \$6/\$8/\$10/\$14

FEATURE PRESENTATION

Lear

A modern retelling of Shakespeare's great classic, this innovative staging of *Lear* casts a woman in the title role. Don't miss the chance to see **Joy Coghill**,* one of Canada's most



PHOTO ANDRÉE LANTHIER

venerated actresses, as she brings a new perspective to an extraordinary character, the irascible monarch and family head driven to madness by the betrayal of her daughters. Staged by the award-winning team of director **Jane Heyman*** and designer **Pam**

Johnson, *Lear* also stars **Evan Adams**,* **Pat Armstrong**,* **Jennifer Clement**,* **Craig Davidson**,* **Lorena Gale**,* **David Hay**,* **Michael Hogan**,* **Richard Newman*** and **Jane Perry**,* with the added talents of *The Taiko Players*: **Linda Uyehara Hoffman**, **Kathy Shimizu**, **Bonnie Soon*** and **Sachiko Yamaguchi**. A feature presentation of the Festival – not to be missed!

AT VECC JAN 25 7 PM • JAN 26 8 PM
 • JAN 27 3 PM • JAN 28 3 PM \$14
 POST FESTIVAL JAN. 31-FEB. 4 \$16
 CALL 254-9578 FOR SHOW TIMES



The Canada Council
 Conseil des Arts du Canada

* APPEARING COURTESY OF CANADIAN ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

PLAY READINGS

Come and catch the readings of exciting new plays in various stages of development.

Images and Windows

IMAGES IN THE CLOUDS BY LINDA WONG
Should all adults be daydreamers? Find out in this witty and appealing play about Faye, a young woman who is caught up more in her imaginary life than in the real world.

WINDOWS BY MICHELE WONG
This monologue captures the fragile moment of transition between childhood and womanhood. The reflections of a young woman who has grown up on a pineapple plantation in Malaysia.

JAN 27 7 PM HARRY'S \$6.50

La Boom

A new play by the beloved author and performer of *POCHSY'S LIPS*. On an overcrowded planet with an environment in ruins, *Modern Science* and *Big Business* are exposed as both *Great Providers* and *Grim Reapers*. *La Boom* uses parodies of big musicals, Hollywood movies and melodrama, plus dance and clowning to feed the irony in this character-driven dark comedy. Art in a dangerous time.

JAN 27 9:15 PM VECC \$7.50

Swollen Tongues

When a young man's literary endeavours are thwarted by a mysterious plagiarist, old family frustrations and secrets bubble to the surface. A comedy told in verse, *Swollen Tongues* features **Carmen Aguirre, Karen Hines,* Veena Sood* and Suzie Payne.*** Directed by **Kathleen Weiss.***

JAN 25 9:30 PM VECC \$7.50

THIS SERIES HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE VANCOUVER FOUNDATION AND THE CITY OF VANCOUVER'S CROSS CULTURAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM.

LITERARY READINGS

Established and emerging writers read from their recent works.

Denise Chong

Denise Chong's novel *THE CONCUBINE'S CHILDREN* won the 1994 City of Vancouver Book Prize and was short-listed for 1994 Governor General's Award. Called "beautiful, haunting and wise" (N.Y. Times), it is a fascinating historical record of the lives of the many Chinese immigrants who came to the West to search for gold. It also relates the personal coming-to-terms within one family. **Denise Chong** will share with you excerpts from her compassionate and forthright novel.

SPONSORED BY DUTHIE BOOKS LTD.

JAN 27 1:00 PM VECC \$5

Sarah Ellis

Beloved children's writer **Sarah Ellis** is well-known for such works as *OUT OF THE BLUE*, *PICK-UP STICKS*, *PUTTING UP WITH MITCHELL*, *NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOURS* and *THE BABY PROJECT*. She shares some of her favourite stories for 10 to 14 year olds at a special reading at the Main Library.

JAN 27 2 PM VPL FREE

Four Voices

READINGS **Lydia Kwa:** *THE COLOURS OF HEROINES* is "vivid, haunting and sensual" poetry that journeys into landscapes of memory and desire. **Larissa Lai's** recent novel *WHEN FOX IS A THOUSAND* is a spellbinding novel of the heroic lives of women, past and present. **Jennifer Mitton's** *SLEEPING WITH THE INSANE* is a collection of exotic short stories which create a powerful tension between surface detail and danger lurking beneath. **Gayla Reid's** short stories, *TO BE THERE WITH YOU*, span continents from 1950's Australia to Southeast Asia and Canada in the 1960's. SPONSORED BY DUTHIE BOOKS LTD.

JAN 26 6 PM DR. VIGARI \$5

MUSIC

Elektra Women's Choir

"Shimmering, polished performances of music from four continents and three centuries" (The Globe and Mail). We are thrilled to have Elektra Women's Choir back at the Festival to perform from their exhilarating repertoire and to premiere music which they will take on their tour to Australia and New Zealand for the 1996 World Symposium on Choral Music in Sydney.

JAN 28 8 PM VECC \$14

Mother of Pearl

Vancouver's most dynamic and versatile all-woman jazz band presents both original work and music composed and performed by such female greats as Billie Holiday. Join **Star Maris** on violin, **Lauri Lyster** on drums, **Wendy Solloway** on bass, **Kerlie McDowall** on guitar, **Brenda Baird** on keyboard, percussionist **Robin Reid** and vocalist **Jane Leroux** for a very special, toe-tapping evening.

JAN 26 10 PM WISE \$10

Western Front Music Program

THURSDAY Three accomplished composers, **Hildegard Westerkamp, Maggi Payne** and **Laetitia Sonami**, present a unique evening of electroacoustic and interactive music and video.

JAN 26 8 PM WF

FRIDAY Cellist **Peggy Lee** and pianist **Lay Tuan Tan** perform solos, duets and improvised works.

CO-SPONSORED BY VANCOUVER PRO MUSICA SOCIETY.

JAN 26 8 PM WF

SATURDAY Alberta guitarist and song-writer **Kathleen Yearwood**

combines her extensive vocal range with a winsome union of disparate musical genres for a truly hypnotic experience.

JAN 27 8 PM WF

ALL THREE SHOWS ABOVE \$10 GENERAL/
\$8 WESTERN FRONT & WOMEN IN VIEW MEMBERS

PEGGY LEE



Continued on other side

CABARET

Laugh your way out of the January Blues. Bring your best friends and revel in our exuberant comedy cabarets.

Edith & Friends

Popular singer songwriter **Edith Wallace** has delighted Women in View audiences in the past with her powerful, humorous and original songs. She is joined by **Hilary Peach, Jennifer Martin** and **Ellie Harvie*** for an entertaining evening of music, performance poetry and stand-up comedy.
JAN 26 7:30 PM WISE \$12.50

Janice & Friends

A hilarious evening with **Janice Ungaro, Odette Slater, Christine Lippa** and **Beverley Elliot***. They will have you howling in an evening of stand-up comedy, dance and music.
JAN 27 8 PM WISE \$12.50

New Friends

These exciting Festival newcomers, **June Pentyluik, Lovie Sizzle, Debra McCabe & Jennifer Wilson, Franny Sheridan** and **Nadine Chambers** invite us to share their sexual secrets, urban frustrations and an assortment of quirky characters. Relish this evening of comic vignettes, storytelling and stand-up comedy.
JAN 27 10:15 PM WISE \$12.50
THE CABARET SERIES IS SPONSORED BY THE PLUM CLOTHING COMPANY

Open Stage

Music, comedy, poetry, drama and clowning. You can register to perform (first come – first served) or just sit back and enjoy two hours of truly varied entertainment.
JAN 28 2 PM WISE FREE

DANCE

The Lady Next Door BY DULCINEA LANGFELDER

Dulcinea uses theatre, dance, song and humour to tell the passionate story of a reclusive, middle-aged woman cocooned in front of her television. Share her world of Disney, Bogart, cartoons, sitcoms and musicals as she bares her frustrations and dreams. A co-presentation with the Vancouver East Cultural Centre.

JAN 26 6 PM VECC • JAN 27 5:40 PM VECC
• JAN 28 1 PM VECC \$13

NETWORKING SESSIONS

Shaking up Shakespeare

How do women approach classic texts, notably Shakespeare? Join **Jane Heyman, Kathleen Weiss, Linda Quibell** and **Susanne Gillies-Smith** to explore how these texts change when confronted with new visions such as feminist interpretations and the deconstructions and refocusing of female characters.

JAN 27 5 PM WISE FREE

Prime Time Meets Again

Last year a group of women met to discuss the challenges, success stories and strategies of women creators in middle age and beyond. Now we meet again to continue the discussion and add new voices to the exchange.

JAN 28 11 AM WISE FREE

DISCOUNT PACKAGES

Choose a combination of Festival events to suit your taste and save 30% off the single ticket price. Limited Packages are available, so order early!

Five Show Pack \$45

Choose one ticket to each of five different shows.

Four Show Pack \$35

This package includes one ticket to the Lear performance of your choice, and one ticket to each of any other three shows.

Comedy Cabarets \$18

One ticket to each of the Saturday Night Cabarets: Janice & Friends and New Friends

PACKAGES INCLUDE ONE TICKET TO EACH PRODUCTION SELECTED.

ALL PERFORMANCES MUST BE CHOSEN AT TIME OF PURCHASE, AND MUST TAKE PLACE DURING THE JAN. 25-28 PERFORMANCE PERIOD. ALL PRICES INCLUDE GST.

WORKSHOP

Enter The Myth

A workshop for women who want to release, heal, initiate and empower. Based upon the ancient myth of Psyche and the tasks she must complete to become whole, this all-day session offers a journey into sacred time and space using play, ritual and performance. This powerful workshop is given by **Sheryl Simmons**, and is based upon her work which can be seen in THE CAVE. (SEE THE CAVE, THEATRE.)

MONDAY JAN 29 9 AM – 6 PM
VANCOUVER PLAYHOUSE
PRODUCTION CENTRE, 160 WEST
1ST AVE (AT COLUMBIA) \$75
GENERAL/\$60 WOMEN IN VIEW
MEMBERS CALL 685-6684 TO BOOK.

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Department of the Secretary of State and Canada Employment and Immigration Commission • The Canada Council through the Writing and Publishing and Theatre Sections • The Government of British Columbia through the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture • The City of Vancouver • ArtsFACT, a Cultural Initiative of 103.5 QM/FM • Canadian Actors' Equity Association • The Edith Lando Charitable Foundation • The Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation • The Melusine Foundation • The Vancouver Foundation • And all our Members, Donors, Volunteers, Staff and Supporters

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Title of Thesis:

To Be Or Not To Be Feminist:
A Herstory of the Women In View Festival

Author

Rebecca Lyn Burton
September 13, 1996