

THEATRE UNDER THE STARS:
THE HILKER YEARS

by

RICHARD SUTHERLAND

B.A., The University of Western Ontario, 1968

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
Department of Theatre and Film

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

July 1993

© Richard Sutherland, 1993

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

(Signature)

Department of Theatre and Film

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date 29 July 1993

ABSTRACT

For nearly a quarter-century, from 1940 through 1963, Vancouver's Theatre Under the Stars (TUTS) mounted annual summer seasons of musical theatre in Malkin Bowl, a converted bandshell in Stanley Park. By the early 1950s, TUTS, now a fully-professional company, had become an enormous popular and financial success, attracting crowds of up to 25,000 per week. For various reasons, the company closed down in 1963, yet so ingrained in Vancouver's cultural fabric had TUTS become, that in 1980 an amateur organization re-appropriated the name for its own summer musical productions in Malkin Bowl. Despite its acknowledged importance in Canadian theatre history, very little research has been devoted to this remarkable company. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to document the early history of TUTS, in particular the years 1940 through 1949 when TUTS was directly funded by the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation and dominated by the colourful, if somewhat erratic, personality of its general manager, Gordon Hilker.

Material for the thesis was obtained primarily through sources located at the City of Vancouver Archives,

supplemented by newspaper clippings and by personal interviews. Archival matter included programs, handbills, photographs, and Park Board records, especially minute books and correspondence files. This study will examine the circumstances leading to the creation and subsequent development of TUTS as a civic enterprise. Although the work is designed to be comprehensive, certain topics receive special attention: the nature of the programming; the evolution and training of Canadian talent; the development of a professional company; political factionalism in the elected Park Board; and the relationship between Hilker and the Park Board which varied from mutual admiration to mutual loathing. Particularly analyzed are the pivotal events of 1949 that resulted in a complete change of ownership and management.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
CHAPTER ONE: SETTING THE STAGE: 1936-40	1
CHAPTER TWO: THE WAR YEARS: 1940-45	25
CHAPTER THREE: POST-WAR: 1945-50	62
CHAPTER FOUR: EPILOGUE	111
LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED	121
APPENDIX A: PRODUCTIONS: 1936-1949	126
APPENDIX B: ANNUAL PROFIT (LOSS), 1940-1949	128
APPENDIX C: PHOTOGRAPHS	129

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although the people who assisted in my research are far too numerous to mention by name, I am deeply grateful to them all. It would be an injustice, however, to ignore the courteous and attentive staff of the City of Vancouver Archives for their unflagging patience and assistance. Above all I owe a special debt to Professor Denis Johnston of the University of British Columbia: his support, encouragement, and guidance were vital to the completion of this manuscript.

CHAPTER 1

SETTING THE STAGE: 1936-40

For twenty-three years, from 1940 to 1963, Vancouver's Theatre Under the Stars, commonly known as "TUTS," was the primary summer attraction in British Columbia's lower mainland. Its annual seasons of outdoor musical theatre were so successful that by 1950 TUTS was a Canadian rarity--a fully professional theatre company whose entire cast and crew were represented by professional associations. Financial difficulties forced the dissolution of TUTS in 1963, yet for much of its history the company not only thrived but served as a training ground for Canadian performers, many of whom forged world-class careers. Although TUTS began life at Malkin Bowl in 1940, it had a long period of gestation that began during Vancouver's Golden Jubilee festivities of 1936.

Vancouverites flocked to Stanley Park during the 1930s. Especially popular were free outdoor music concerts, sponsored by civic-minded corporations such as the British Columbia

Electric Railway Company.¹ The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, for example, was a regular attraction at the new Malkin Memorial Bowl, constructed in 1934 through the generosity of former Vancouver Mayor W. H. Malkin. Situated just south of a previous bandstand, it could lure enormous crowds: a concert featuring noted baritone John Charles Thomas in 1939 drew an audience estimated at 15,000.² That Vancouverites patronized Stanley Park in such numbers should come as no surprise. These were the "dirty thirties," a time of high unemployment, low wages and limited prospects; a first-class caretaker working for the Vancouver Park Board made twelve dollars less a month in 1938 than he did in 1931.³ Stanley Park no doubt was a soothing balm for those troubled times, particularly when most events were free--and even special attractions rarely cost more than twenty-five cents.

And the times were troubled. In the spring of 1935, Vancouver was in turmoil. Unemployed workers who had been assigned to various relief camps in British Columbia rebelled against their conditions and, urged on by labour and left-wing elements, surged into Vancouver looking for relief. Mayor G.

¹ "'Bohemian Girl' Sunday Symphony," The Vancouver Sun 21 Aug. 1937: 7.

² Stanley Bligh, "Noted Vocalists Charm 15,000 in Stanley Park," Sun 3 Aug. 1939: 5.

³ City of Vancouver Archives [hereinafter CVA], Board of Parks and Recreation [hereinafter Park Board], Section A, Series 64, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, 1912-54, Loc. 48-B-2, file 1, "Pay Scale, 1938."

G. ("Jerry") McGeer, however, refused to commit even a penny from the city's coffers. On April 23, after disturbances in downtown Vancouver, McGeer read the Riot Act to a mass gathering of the unemployed milling about Victory Square.⁴ To defuse tension in the city, McGeer eventually shipped the men out to the East on boxcars, thereby initiating the "On to Ottawa" trek.⁵

Partially to offset the negative effects of the Depression, Vancouver was preparing to celebrate its Golden Jubilee in 1936. In less than fifty years Vancouver had sprung from a scattering of tents to a centre of commerce and shipping with a population of a quarter-million,⁶ yet it suffered an inferiority complex. Vancouverites felt they were regarded by other Canadians as either roughhouse lumberjacks or idle tenants of a pristine wilderness. The members of the Vancouver Golden Jubilee Society, established and backed by the Vancouver City Council, launched a crusade to change that image. They wanted to establish Vancouver as a tourist mecca in order to attract much-needed dollars, especially from south of the border. The Special Committee that had been established in the summer of 1934 to consider the details of the program

⁴ Pierre Berton, The Great Depression: 1929-1939 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990) 306-309.

⁵ Ibid. 312-313.

⁶ Telephone interview, Vancouver Public Library [hereinafter VPL], Sociology Department, 6 Dec. 1991.

was able to recommend a few months later that a month-long festivity be held, to begin on Dominion Day, 1 July 1936. Its agenda, centred in Stanley Park, would include symphonic music, Shakespeare (and other plays), public speakers and related activities.⁷ Partly because Mayor McGeer, who was also a local member of Parliament, hinted that some financial aid could be expected from Ottawa, the committee's plans quickly escalated. By September 1935 preparations were being made for a three-month festival with the object of attracting one million tourists.⁸

In September 1935, E. V. Young was appointed chairman of the subcommittee in charge of dramatic entertainment.⁹ By this time he had already submitted a proposal to stage an outdoor production of A Midsummer Night's Dream;¹⁰ he was, in addition, contemplating other outdoor spectacles, such as an operatic rendition of Hiawatha, and a Gilbert and Sullivan musical.

⁷ CVA, Vancouver Golden Jubilee Society, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 2, Vancouver Golden Jubilee Committee Minutes, 1934-1936, 16 Nov. 1934.

⁸ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 1, Minutes, 1934-36, 14 Sep. 1935 and 15 Nov. 1935.

⁹ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 3, Secretary-Manager's Report, 6 Sep. 1935.

¹⁰ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 3, Report of the Secretary-Manager to the Executive Council, 13 Sep. 1935.

Ernest Vanderpoel Young (1878-1955), or "EeVee" as his friends and associates referred to him, was no stranger to Vancouver theatre, though his roots lay in Great Britain. He developed an abiding interest in drama during his childhood, and by the time Young graduated from King's College, London, with a degree in engineering,¹¹ he was already making a name for himself as a promising West End actor. A protégé of the famous actor-manager George Alexander, Young worked with some of England's leading theatre figures.¹² Following his marriage in 1909, however, he abandoned the stage in favour of engineering, and in 1911 left England for Vancouver where he accepted a post as manager of a north shore iron foundry.¹³ Though Vancouver must have seemed far-removed from the glamour and excitement of the West End, opportunities abounded for a person of Young's training and skill. He gradually asserted himself in Vancouver's nascent theatre scene, and in 1921 helped form the Vancouver Little Theatre Association; for the next ten years he worked with this group as a producer and actor. His plummy British accent also guaranteed him a place in radio. By the 1940s his "wonderfully kind and expressive

¹¹ "E. V. Young Dies; Stage, Radio Actor," Sun 2 April 1955: 2.

¹² "The Geisha," Newsclipping, 6 Sep. 1940, CVA, MS 15,662, (Theatre Under the Stars).

¹³ CVA, E. V. Young, Add.MSS 1064, Biography.

voice" embraced a national audience as host and narrator of "Eventide" and "Vesper Hour".¹⁴

Shortly after his appointment, Young expressed confidence that Vancouver's outdoor productions "will write something new in dramatic history."¹⁵ A Drama Subcommittee report to the Executive Committee elaborated:

He [Young] outlined a suggestion to rehearse two casts, one to be chosen for its dramatic voice qualities, the other to be chosen for its histrionic ability; the speaking cast to handle all vocal parts, the other cast to act the pantomime, the lines of which would be amplified by a hidden microphone.¹⁶

His proposed innovation was, to say the least, unique. Although other outdoor productions, such as those in London's Regent's Park, had used electronic amplification, the technology was so primitive that a battery of microphones had to be erected on stage, severely restricting the actor's movements, and (one must suppose) obstructing the view from the audience. Young's technique not only allowed performers

¹⁴ C. Swanson, "A Canadian Institution," letter, The Daily Province [Vancouver] 16 May 1955: 6.

¹⁵ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 1, Minutes, 14 Sep. 1935.

¹⁶ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 3, Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Committee, 18 Sep. 1935.

freedom of movement; it gave the audience an unimpaired view of the stage while the text was broadcast over loudspeakers. Of course it meant that the speaking cast had to be rigorously synchronized with the actors, and a technique devised for cuing the speakers. Young's radio experience no doubt came in handy: with the actors grouped about a microphone, Young would act as a conductor, peeping at the stage action through a curtain, and cuing the vocalists with his hands.¹⁷

Young managed to convince the Golden Jubilee executive of his plan's merit, and early in October 1935, final approval was given for a production of Hiawatha and A Midsummer Night's Dream. The next task was to assemble the local talent. Area dancing schools were canvassed, as was the Shakespearean Society, formed in 1916 to spread the appreciation of Shakespeare through lecture and performance.¹⁸ No doubt the unstinting willingness of this latter group to participate in the Dream contributed mightily to its success. Both productions were cast with amateurs only, in keeping with the volunteer philosophy of the Jubilee Committee. Even had it wanted to, the Committee would have been hard-pressed to hire professional stage actors in Vancouver. This was the heyday of amateur theatre in Canada; to be amateur, in fact, was probably more respectable than to be professional.

¹⁷ "Unseen Voices," Province 14 Aug. 1940: 8.

¹⁸ CVA, Vancouver Shakespeare Society, Add.MSS 343, Constitution [undated].

Although each outdoor production comprised two complete casts as well as a corps de ballet and a full orchestra, conductor Allard DeRidder and Young both agreed that local amateur talent could carry the shows, supplemented by a scattering of professional musicians.¹⁹ In the participatory spirit of the project (and no doubt to drum up interest and enthusiasm), Young prepared excerpts for province-wide auditions to be conducted early in 1936. By late November 1935, he reported that he was "receiving applications from tryouts from all over the province."²⁰ This effort by Young reflected the overall desire of the Jubilee Committee to involve the public in its celebrations. One full-page newspaper advertisement caricatured Lord Kitchener's famous enlistment poster: under his stern face and accusing finger was a bold logo reading "TO ARMS! TO ARMS!," but the message was peaceful enough--it merely encouraged Vancouverites to take part in the Jubilee, and to send their suggestions to the committee.²¹ Young's own importance to the success of the festival was soon acknowledged by the Jubilee Committee: as of 1 January 1936 he

¹⁹ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol 1, File 3, Minutes of General Committee, 13 Nov. 1935.

²⁰ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 3, Meeting of General Committee, 27 Nov. 1935.

²¹ "To Arms, To Arms," advertisement, Province 14 Dec. 1935: 5.

was retained to supervise drama operations at a salary of \$150.00 per month.²²

The fare had been selected and the search for talent was under way, but still to be settled was the location. At a meeting in November 1934, it was assumed that the open-air productions would take place at the "Stanley Park Bowl".²³ As the scope of the celebration grew, however, and plans for a huge outdoor spectacle called the "Pageant of Vancouver" began to unfold (in addition to Young's productions), the Malkin Bowl stage must have been considered inadequate. By January 1936, designs materialized for a grandstand and stage at the Brockton Point Oval. At a cost of \$35,000 (out of a total Jubilee budget of \$250,000), a 4,000-seat grandstand was erected, with portable bleachers for 2,000 more.²⁴ The Oval at Brockton Point had traditionally been used for sporting events, but now, inside the circular track, the "largest outdoor revolving stage in the world"²⁵ was constructed. Designed to rival the cinema in its capacity for spectacle, the stage wheel had a diameter of eighty feet, and contained four different settings. The

²² CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 4, Finance Committee Minutes, 10 Jan. 1936.

²³ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 2, General Committee, Minutes, 16 Nov. 1934.

²⁴ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 4, Letter from Golden Jubilee Committee to Mr. J. K. Matheson, 5 Jan. 1935 [sic-the date should read 1936].

²⁵ "Largest Revolving Stage in World for Jubilee Pageant," Province 2 June 1936: 5.

Pageant itself contained fifteen different scenes; while one quadrant was facing the grandstand, stage crews could change the set in the rear.²⁶ In the evening, with the sun setting behind the stage, the ambience must have been charming. A photograph of the opening-day ceremony taken from the grandstand shows the circular stage, and beyond it, a view of Burrard Inlet with the north shore mountains in the background.²⁷ Unlike Malkin Bowl, however, the location lacks a natural funnel to contain or focus the sound, so that even with amplification, the acoustics were probably terrible.

Significantly, on 3 Aug. 1936, a newspaper advertisement promoting A Midsummer Night's Dream for the first time referred to theatre being staged "Under the Stars".²⁸ The following evening the Dream opened a four-night run at the Brockton Oval to great critical acclaim. One review gushed: "it is difficult to refer to the production without resort to superlatives."²⁹ Disregarding the boosterism that seemed to envelop newspaper reviews of the time, Dream was undoubtedly the "hit" of the Stanley Park festivities--to the extent that

²⁶ "Start Being Made on Huge Jubilee Stage," Newsclipping, 16 June 1936, CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 6.

²⁷ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 11, "Vancouver: Fifty Years a City."

²⁸ "Tomorrow Night the Greatest Show Ever Staged Under the Stars in Canada," advertisement, The Vancouver News-Herald 3 Aug. 1936: 8.

²⁹ "Shakesperean [sic] Pastoral Play Great Success," News-Herald 5 Aug. 1936: 1.

two additional performances were added.³⁰ Attending Dream had a telling effect on crusty Major Matthews, the archivist for the city of Vancouver. In a note handwritten more than a year after the production he wrote, "Midsummer Night's Dream was the most perfect event of our Golden Jubilee. It was a beautiful dream; its memory lingers."³¹

Less than a week after A Midsummer Night's Dream closed its initial run, Taylor Coleridge's sentimental opera Hiawatha opened for three performances. Really more a pageant than an opera, it is based on Longfellow's epic poem and consists of three scenes: "Hiawatha's Wedding-Feast", "The Death of Minnehaha", and "Hiawatha's Departure". Nevertheless, the spectacle must have been impressive; a full orchestra, a 100-voice choir, and 200 dancers augmented the soloists.³² Like Dream, Hiawatha seems to have been an ideal vehicle for the open-air splendour of the Oval. Sitting in the present-day bleachers that have replaced the original grandstand, the Stanley Park Totem Poles are clearly visible to the right of where the stage would have been. Reviews, however, were rather lukewarm, and although the grandstand was filled for opening

³⁰ "More Midsummer Nights Arranged in Stanley Park," Province 15 Aug. 1936: 23.

³¹ "Vancouver's Pastoral Plays", CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 6, Aug. 1937.

³² "The Beautiful Production Hiawatha," advertisement, News-Herald 12 Aug. 1936: 8.

night,³³ the run seems to have been less successful than Dream.³⁴ Like the Shakespeare play, Hiawatha had a double cast, but with a difference. In Dream the speakers were hidden, but in Hiawatha the singers were likely in open view of the audience in order to follow the conductor and the orchestra. Unfortunately, because documentation for these productions is scanty, their staging can only be conjectured.

Through a combination of circumstances, Young's productions were nearly cancelled entirely. Revenues for the first few weeks of the festival had fallen far below expectations, and the Golden Jubilee was facing a substantial deficit. While Young entered the final phase of rehearsals, the Society executive seriously debated cutting some of the costlier items from the Jubilee program. Not until July 28, less than a week before Dream was scheduled to open, did the Board decide to proceed with events as planned.³⁵ The Vancouver Golden Jubilee Society, a group of enthusiastic amateurs, lacked not only the expertise to run a major festival, but proved the futility of rule by committee. sorely missing was someone with the authority and experience to guide the Jubilee through uncharted waters. Financial accountability, budgetary

³³ "Hiawatha Lives Again At Stanley Park Oval," Province 12 Aug. 1936: 6.

³⁴ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 3, File 7, Financial Statement, 10 Nov. 1936.

³⁵ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 3, File 3, Board of Directors Minutes, 28 July 1936.

controls, and estimates of expected revenue were wildly haphazard. For example, the pageant "Romance of Vancouver," which cost \$15,000 to produce (a figure that in current terms seems astronomical given the amateur cast), had been expected to provide \$10,000 in revenue.³⁶ Incredibly, the final audit showed box-office receipts generated less than \$1,400.³⁷ As for Young's creations, Hiawatha cost \$2,800 to produce³⁸ and grossed only \$250,³⁹ while Dream cost nearly \$4,000 and returned only \$800.⁴⁰ To reconcile the incongruity of these figures is almost impossible. How could the production of Dream, so popular that two additional performances were scheduled, generate only \$800 in box-office? Ticket prices ranged from ten cents (for children) to fifty cents (for a covered grandstand seat);⁴¹ if we assume for argument that the average ticket sold for twenty-five cents, only 3,245 customers could have attended all six shows--an average of fewer than 550 bodies for each performance in a grandstand

³⁶ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 2, File 2, Budget of Estimated Revenues and Expenditures, 11 April 1936.

³⁷ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 3, File 7, Memorandum from Mr. W. J. Barrett-Lennard, 5 Dec. 1936.

³⁸ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 3, File 7, Fifth Preliminary Budget Of Estimated Revenues and Expenditures, 1 July to 7 Sep. 1936.

³⁹ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 3, File 7, Financial Statement, 10 Nov. 1936.

⁴⁰ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 3, File 7, Memorandum from Mr. W. J. Barrett-Lennard, 5 Dec. 1936.

⁴¹ "Tonight, Brockton Point, 8:15 p.m.," advertisement, Province 4 Aug. 1936: 7.

that seated 6,000. Not calculated in the final audit, however, were the Golden Jubilee "Membership Tickets" that sold for one dollar each, and that entitled the holder to "one performance at Stanley Park".⁴² Unfortunately, no one could agree on how many were sold. License to peddle these tickets had been granted to a concessionaire whose methods of accounting appeared to be as suspect as the Society's. Indeed, the whole matter ended up in litigation when the city decided to sue the concessionaires for fraud.⁴³

Contributing to the confusion was the local press. Both preceding and during the Jubilee, area newspapers acted largely as unpaid publicity agents for the committee; glowing reports of all Jubilee functions would have led anyone to guess it was an overwhelming success. Only after the festival did the press revert to its function, gleefully reporting the accusations and counter-accusations that flew between the principals involved in the débâcle.

Despite the blood-letting after the event, Young emerged with an enhanced reputation. Indeed, the business community was quite pleased with the increased commerce that the Jubilee

⁴² CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 1, File 4, Finance Committee Minutes, 13 Jan. 1936.

⁴³ "Mayor gives Jubilee Data in Criticism," Newsclipping, 9 Dec. 1936, CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 6.

created,⁴⁴ and by October 1936 there seemed to be a consensus for securing a company that would "specialize in producing spectacles such as the Midsummer Night's Dream" as an annual summer event in Stanley Park.⁴⁵ Encouraged by this support, Young in the same month proposed to the Park Board to produce a season of "pastoral drama" for the following summer.⁴⁶ By February of 1937 he had the backing of the Mayor and Council;⁴⁷ by March the Vancouver Tourist Association (VTA) and the Park Board were also on side.⁴⁸

With financial backing now assured, and with the implicit support of the Board of Park Commissioners, Young prepared for the upcoming season using the techniques he had pioneered for the Golden Jubilee (and assisted by much of the same personnel). Preceded by a month-long promotional campaign in the Vancouver dailies, the "Civic Season of Outdoor Music and Drama" opened at the Brockton Oval on 27 July 1937, with a remount of A Midsummer Night's Dream. To celebrate the coronation year (for the once and never Edward VIII), Edward

⁴⁴ "Value of Jubilee to City Stressed," News-Herald 11 Sep. 1936: 8.

⁴⁵ CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 3, File 7, Report of Managing Board, 13 Oct. 1936.

⁴⁶ CVA, Park Board, Section A, Series 76, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-A-4, file 1, Item 2724, 8 Oct. 1936.

⁴⁷ CVA, Parks Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-A-4, file 1, Item 2881, 25 Feb. 1937.

⁴⁸ "To Restage Jubilee," Newsclipping, 13 Mar. 1937, CVA, Add.MSS 177, Vol. 6.

German's light comic opera Merrie England played from August 3 to 7. Filling out the season was a rare (for Vancouver) production of The Tempest.⁴⁹ Although complaints were voiced about the loudspeaker system,⁵⁰ reviews for all three shows were quite enthusiastic, with repeated references to the excellent blending of voice and pantomime: "many people received the impression that one person is doing each role".⁵¹ Of The Tempest, another reviewer wrote: "The beautiful poetry of Shakespeare's English was splendidly realized, and given with a naturalness seldom achieved by professional companies".⁵²

These productions, although doubtless in tune with the temper of the times, would likely seem quaint nowadays. The emphasis was on spectacle: even the Shakespeare plays were accompanied by a full symphony orchestra and a company of dancers. For Dream, the orchestra naturally played Mendelssohn's incidental

⁴⁹ Although a news release of the time ["Spectacular Presentation of Shakespeare's The Tempest," Sun 7 Aug. 1937: 7.] indicates that this was the first production of that play to be mounted in Vancouver, Sheila Roberts in her book Shakespeare in Vancouver refers to an earlier production in 1909 staged by the English actor-manager Ben Greet. See Sheila Roberts, Shakespeare in Vancouver: 1889-1918 (Vancouver: Vancouver Historical Society, 1971) 26.

⁵⁰ "Merrie England is Well Rendered," Province 8 Aug. 1937: 8.

⁵¹ "Opera Company's Fine Performance," Sun 7 Aug. 1937: 7.

⁵² Stanley Bligh, "Players Score Triumph in Open-Air Production," Sun 12 Aug. 1937: 5.

music,⁵³ and dances were arranged for the "nymphs, elves and fairies" that were performed "with rhythmic grace and artistic taste."⁵⁴ Rounding out the pageantry was a Ladies' Choral Ensemble that sang "Fairy Music".⁵⁵ A similar format was followed for The Tempest, accompanied by Arthur Sullivan's incidental music. One wonders how the cast had time for the text, and can only assume there was much cutting and rearranging; unfortunately, prompt-books or other production records are thus far unavailable. The productions must have been logistical nightmares, with about two hundred performers for each show (although many of the Dream cast were also in The Tempest). Included in the vocal casts for the Shakespeare plays was young John ("Jack") Drainie, the great Canadian radio actor of the forties and fifties; as his daughter Bronwyn points out, even in 1937 "he was showing a marked preference for voice acting over the flamboyant physicality of stage performance."⁵⁶

Not only were all three productions conceived, produced and directed by E. V. Young, but he had speaking parts in two shows, including that of Prospero in The Tempest. A news

⁵³ CVA, Pamphlets, 1937-90, Young, E. V., p. 11.

⁵⁴ R. J., "Shakespearean Fantasy Delights Brockton Audience," Province 28 July 1937: 3.

⁵⁵ CVA, Pamphlets, 1937-90, Young, E. V., p. 9.

⁵⁶ Bronwyn Drainie, Living the Part: John Drainie and the Dilemma of Canadian Stardom (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1988) 29.

report following the final performance of The Tempest indicates the measure of his esteem:

Round after round of applause greeted the director and his numerous cast after they "dropped the curtain" on the final scene to be enacted this year Speaking on behalf of the cast, one of its members declared: "Mr. Young is the true Prospero. It is he that has called us by his art from our confines to enact his present fancies." As this tribute was delivered over the public address system, the audience joined in the compliments paid with round after round of applause.⁵⁷

Although the local press delivered glowing tributes, audience numbers were disappointing, and the 1937 season suffered a financial loss.⁵⁸ The venture's main sponsor, the Vancouver Tourist Association, was more interested in the bottom line than Bottom the weaver and withdrew further support. Until the spring of 1939, plans for outdoor theatre in Stanley Park lay dormant. Young then asked the Park Board to sponsor twelve summer performances of light opera, not in the Brockton Oval, but in the Music Bowl. The Board, however, regarded the price tag (approximately \$650 per performance) with something less

⁵⁷ "The Tempest Well Received," Sun 16 Aug. 1937: 9.

⁵⁸ Stanley Bligh, "Music, Drama Presentation Pleases Crowd at Brockton," Sun 4 Aug. 1937: 11.

than enthusiasm;⁵⁹ it was willing to lend the project moral support, but not cash.⁶⁰ By June of 1939, however, after intense lobbying by the Vancouver Council of Women,⁶¹ the Board's resistance was weakening. It agreed to subsidize a season of light opera in the music bowl for 1940 if Young could also find other backers. The Council of Women, although having no actual authority, nevertheless exercised a great deal of influence in Vancouver's cultural life. The Park Board had felt their clout in the past, most recently during the Golden Jubilee.⁶² Young, who seemed masterful at making useful alliances, had finally tapped a "motherlode" that was to tip the balance in his favour.

In his campaign, Young managed to enlist the support of the Junior Board of Trade, once again by dangling the bait of tourism. The business group offered their backing to the Park

⁵⁹ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-A-4, file 2, Item 4601, "Music Bowl- Light Opera Season," 24 Mar. 1939.

⁶⁰ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Music and Recreation Committee, 14 April 1939, "Light Opera-Music Bowl."

⁶¹ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-A-4, file 2, 9 June 1939, Item 4617, "Light Opera Season-Music Bowl."

⁶² The Jubilee Committee had planned to charge a general admission of twenty-five cents to Stanley Park which the Park Board endorsed until persistent lobbying by The Vancouver Council of Women caused them to reverse their stand. The Jubilee Committee claimed that this action caused them to lose \$20,000. See CVA, Add.Mss. 177, Vol. 1, File 2, Letter from A. S. Wootton to Matheson, July 20, 1936.

Board "in anything the Board might be able to do in the matter of entertaining tourists in the city."⁶³ By the Spring of 1940, A. S. Wootton, the authoritative Superintendent of the Park Board, also backed the project. In April, Wootton drafted letters to the City Council and the Tourist Association requesting support for a three-week season of music and drama to be staged that summer.⁶⁴ Wootton's influence obviously carried the day: in May it was confirmed that City Council and the Tourist Association would donate grants of \$1,000 each to help underwrite production costs. With their commitment assured, the Park Board now gave the project its unreserved backing.⁶⁵ A "Select Committee" hurriedly began to organize production and promotional details. It consisted of musical director Basil Horsfall, business administrator L. C. Thomas, and of course Young himself as Stage Director. Horsfall, founder, president, and musical director of the Victoria, B.C., Grand Opera Association, had just recently moved to Vancouver; Thomas was the current president of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. Following the agreement, the Park Board

⁶³ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-A-4, file 2, 9 Feb. 1940, Item 7533, "Tourist Entertainment."

⁶⁴ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-A-4, file 2, 12 April 1940, Item 6603, "Music and Drama Season."

⁶⁵ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, 16 May 1940, Music Committee, "Music and Drama In Music Bowl Area."

promptly notified the Council of Women that the project the group had lobbied for so ardently would soon be realized.⁶⁶

Theatre Under the Stars inaugurated its first season on 6 August 1940, with a Sidney Jones musical warhorse called The Geisha, a rather Kiplingesque view of English sailors on a spree in Japan. Although it betrays a charming innocence despite its fin de siècle chauvinism, The Geisha exploits racist stereotypes to a degree that makes a modern production unthinkable. It contains the famous song "Chin, Chin, Chinaman," sung by a Chinese tea house proprietor called Wun-Hi. A sample of the lyrics: "Chin-chin chinaman muchee muchee sad" ⁶⁷ When first produced in 1896, its British audience loved The Geisha, which enjoyed a run of 760 performances.⁶⁸ A half-century later, Vancouver too loved The Geisha, although in more modest proportions--two additional performances were added to its run.

The Geisha departed significantly from previous park productions. It represented the first use of the Malkin Bowl bandshell as a theatre stage, and though the structure was much smaller than the one still in existence to-day, and

⁶⁶ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-A-4, file 2, 23 May 1940, Item 6663, "Music and Drama Season-Music Bowl."

⁶⁷ Sydney Jones, music, and Owen Hall, libretto, The Geisha, vocal score (London: Hopwood & Crew, 1896) 149-152.

⁶⁸ R. J., "Random Jottings," Province 3 Aug. 1940: 13.

lacked practically all the amenities normally associated with a theatre, the production of The Geisha established the model that TUTS was to follow for a quarter-century. It was also the first of Young's outdoor productions to use a single cast. No doubt the acoustically friendly confines of the bowl eliminated the need for double-casting, which seems an unwieldy concept at best.

In addition to The Geisha, the first season of TUTS included two Shakespeare plays, and a musical program called "A Night of Opera and Ballet." The latter, consisting of excerpts from Verdi's Il Trovatore and Gounod's Faust, was also staged in the bandshell. By hiring a minor American celebrity, Lee Sherman, to sing the tenor lead, TUTS established a precedent it would follow through the years.⁶⁹ With the two Shakespeare plays (a remount of A Midsummer Night's Dream and a new production of As You Like It), Young was confronted with a different problem. Both were conceived in the style of the Jubilee productions--large spectacles with double casts. Because the Malkin bandshell was too small to suit the scope of these shows, an alfresco stage was set up in the shrubbery on the western side of the Bowl.⁷⁰ Included in the vocal casts for these shows were the young Sam Payne, later one of

⁶⁹ "Plays and Performers in the Theatre Under the Stars," Sun 1 Aug. 1940: 6.

⁷⁰ R. Rowe Holland, "TUTS in Infancy, Childhood and Adolescence," The TUTS Messenger 3 (Dec. 1953): np., CVA, Newsclippings, Pacific Press II (hereinafter PP), #3.

Vancouver's favourite actors, and Alan Young, the future star of the American television sitcom Mr. Ed. As usual the press reviews for the whole season were extremely generous.

The first season of TUTS was a mixed success. Though critically well-received, the operation suffered a loss of \$6,000, part of which was covered by the grants from the City and the Tourist Association; the rest was made up by the Park Board. Tickets, priced at twenty-five and fifty cents, were purchased by nearly 15,000 spectators for the twelve performances. Because the area surrounding the stage was not cordoned off, however, many people chose to sit on the grass rather than pay for a seat; as a result, it was estimated that as many as 30,000 watched the performances without paying.⁷¹

Three years earlier, when the summer park productions lost money, they also lost the backing of the Tourist Association; in contrast the Park Board decided in 1940 to continue supporting TUTS, though its reasons may have been less than altruistic. Assuring the fledgling company of a second season represented the Board's only chance to recoup the money it lost.⁷² In his annual report for 1940, Superintendent Wootton praised producers Young and Horsfall; he further claimed that the experience gained that first season would eventually make

⁷¹ "Open Air Theatre to Feature Light Opera Next Year, Park Board States," Province 14 Sep. 1940: 12.

⁷² Holland.

the program self-sustaining and form "an irresistible lure to summer tourists."⁷³ The report not only affirmed the Park Board's commitment to TUTS for the long term; because the Board had jurisdiction over the theatre and its precincts, TUTS was guaranteed a stable medium in which to plan for growth.

Circumstance and timing played a part in the creation of a successful outdoor theatre in Vancouver. The Park Board, historically entrusted with parks and recreation, appeared eager to assume a more proactive role in cultural activity within its jurisdiction. And although a number of individuals and organizations helped to launch TUTS, E. V. Young supplied the vision and provided the energy that kept it from foundering when the waters got choppy. Pragmatic, yet innovative, he walked in the footsteps of his mentor, George Alexander, one of the last great actor-managers of the British stage. As instrumental as Young was in the creation of TUTS, he was content to leave the management to others and concentrate on what he enjoyed most. For the next few seasons he not only directed every production, but acted in a number as well. Though his output diminished after the war, Young continued to be associated with TUTS until his death in 1955.

⁷³ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-A-4, file 2, Superintendent's Report, 1940 [undated], Theatre Under the Stars: 2-3.

CHAPTER 2

THE WAR YEARS: 1940-45

Despite the threat of blackouts, gasoline rationing, and all-out mobilization, the years 1940 to 1945 saw TUTS flourish under the inspiring leadership of J. G. (Gordon) Hilker. By war's end, TUTS was not only a success in Vancouver, but had toured across the border to Washington and Oregon. Originally relying on unpaid amateurs, by 1945 TUTS considered itself a fully professional company. During this period TUTS also engaged in vertical expansion: to train performers for its productions, the company created a controversial offshoot, the British Columbia Institute of Music and Drama. As Vancouver prepared for peacetime, a five-year diet of conventional and often dated operetta gave TUTS a fixed identity as a purveyor of solid family entertainment.

Notwithstanding Superintendent Wootton's rosy endorsement of TUTS in his annual report for 1940, the Park Board must have felt considerable unease over the first season's deficit; ticket sales garnered only \$5,400 against expenses of

\$11,400.¹ Portions of this debt could be written off to capital expenses and city grants, but the Board was still left with a shortfall of \$2,500 which it covered by raiding other departments. Although TUTS expenses for 1941 promised to be somewhat less than those of 1940, the Park Board could expect no further money from the City or the Tourist Association. Cultural grants in 1940 were given grudgingly, if at all, and clearly the subsidy for the inaugural season was not meant to be repeated.

If the Board had any misgivings over the management team of Horsfall, Young and Thomas they were soon addressed. In February of 1941, in addition to approving a three-week summer season of musical comedy and light opera, the Recreation Committee of the Park Board also recommended "that a manager for the plays should be appointed to handle the business and publicity."² Whether L. C. Thomas, the original business administrator of TUTS, left willingly or was nudged out is uncertain; as of late February 1941, while the Board was actively negotiating with Gordon Hilker for the job of business manager, Thomas was still involved in planning the

¹ "Open Air Theatre to Feature Light Opera Next Year, Park Board States," Province 14 Sep. 1940: 12.

² CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Recreation Committee, 20 Feb. 1941, "Theatre Under the Stars."

1941 season.³ Once Hilker accepted the position, however, on or about 1 April 1941, Thomas disappears from the records.

Gordon Hilker is often cited as the founder of Theatre Under the Stars.⁴ None of the voluminous Park Board records or newspaper accounts of the day, however, connect Hilker with TUTS until 1941. The Park Board appointed him Manager in the spring of that year; he and the entire services of his company, Hilker Attractions, were put at the disposal of the Park Board for the fee of \$350 plus 30% of the first \$1,000 profit and 20% of profits "over and above this sum."⁵ As an obvious incentive to realize a surplus, the Board offered similar terms to Young as Stage Director, and Horsfall as Music Conductor.⁶

Though Young and Horsfall started TUTS and remained with the organization for years to come, Gordon Hilker quickly asserted

³ Ibid., 27 Feb. 1941, p. 2, "Manager."

⁴ Most printed references assume that Gordon Hilker founded TUTS, a view reinforced by the opinions of people such as the well-respected Hugh Pickett, who became Hilker's press agent after the war. However, the Encyclopedia of Music in Canada suggests that only Hilker's advice was enlisted. How much help or advice Hilker actually gave is questionable since nothing in the records indicates that Hilker played any part whatsoever in the formation of TUTS.

⁵ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Recreation Committee, 26 Mar. 1941, "Hilker Attractions Limited."

⁶ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-A-4, file 2, 28 Mar. 1941, Item 6964, "Recreation Committee."

himself as boss. A native Vancouverite (b. 1913) with musical roots,⁷ by his mid-twenties Hilker had become a local impresario who introduced Vancouver to the leading performing artists of the day. When he agreed to manage TUTS at the tender age of twenty-eight, Hilker already had a proven track record. His umbrella company, Hilker Attractions, not only provided Vancouver with world-class artists, but also served as an agency for local talent. In succeeding years, the relationship between Hilker Attractions and TUTS was not unlike a vine to a trellis; in 1946, for example, out of 138 local TUTS employees registered for income tax, more than half gave their address as Hilker Attractions, suggesting they may have been Hilker's clients.⁸ Whether Hilker engaged in a conflict of interest in which he received an agent's commission from his performers in addition to his management fee from TUTS is unknown: Gerald Britland, a dancer and singer who worked extensively for TUTS in the 1940s, thinks not.⁹ Holly Maxwell, Hilker's long-time secretary supports Britland: "I didn't know about it. It could have been quite true--Gordon did a lot of things that I didn't know about--but I'm sure one of the performers would have said something."¹⁰

⁷ His mother taught music; he studied piano for twelve years.

⁸ CVA, Park Board, Section B, Series 81, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-4, #1, Employees Income Tax, 1946.

⁹ Gerald Britland, telephone interview, 26 Oct. 1992.

¹⁰ Holly Maxwell, telephone interview, 14 Oct. 1992.

Whatever else may be thought of him--and Hilker aroused strong opinions--his former associates regarded Hilker as a man ahead of his time;¹¹ some even compared him to legendary Broadway producer Billy Rose.¹² Despite his strong and decisive image, Hilker seemed to crave the security of an extended family. For years the TUTS payroll included direct kin, in-laws, and cronies. Hilker even used the christening of his daughter Judith in 1947 to strengthen these ties: he invited TUTS associates Doris Buckingham and Hugh Pickett to be Judith's godparents.¹³ Beverly Fyfe, the former conductor of the Vancouver Opera Chorus who had a long and distinguished career with TUTS, confirms the family-like social structure of TUTS in those early days--with Gordon Hilker as the undisputed paterfamilias.¹⁴

As in most families, spats could flare up with little provocation. On one occasion Fyfe demanded of Hilker: "Why don't you fire me?" To which Hilker replied, "If I didn't need you I would."¹⁵ These squalls usually (though not always)

¹¹ Hugh Pickett, Beverly Fyfe, Holly Maxwell and Gerald Britland all shared this opinion without reservation.

¹² Holly Maxwell interview: "I would say he was like the Billy Rose of Vancouver."; and E. I Midmore, "Vancouver's own Billy Rose stages Jubilee," Sat Night 61 (6 July 1946): 5.

¹³ "Double Christening Performed," Newsclipping, 1 Dec. 1947, CVA, JSM 4168, Hilker Attractions.

¹⁴ Beverly Fyfe, personal interview, 11 Sep. 1992.

¹⁵ Ibid.

disappeared as quickly as they arose, and despite Hilker's arbitrary manner, he commanded a fierce loyalty from most workers. According to Fyfe, TUTS costume designer Stuart MacKay once told him: "Wherever I would be--if he [Hilker] rang me up to come and do something, I would do it."¹⁶ Indeed, the stability of TUTS personnel during the Hilker era is quite impressive. Secretary Holly Maxwell, press agent Hugh Pickett, costume designer Stuart MacKay, conductor Bev Fyfe, choreographer Aida Broadbent, stage manager G. T. Lea, in addition to Young and Horsfall, all managed to forge a successful and long-term working relationship with Hilker. Whether they had much choice is a moot point, as TUTS was, so to speak, the only game in town. Nevertheless, Hilker's charisma seemed to captivate not only his subordinates, but the Park Board as well: his contract was extended from year to year with some grumbling, but with little overall dissatisfaction, until 1949.

Some, however, were less enamoured of Hilker and his style. Yvonne Firkins, later to found the Arts Club, had been active in Vancouver theatre circles for some time before Hilker invited her to direct two shows for the 1944 season (Hit the Deck and Naughty Marietta). Although she directed two more productions in 1945, according to one eyewitness she and Hilker clashed from the beginning:

¹⁶ Ibid.

Oh Yvonne Firkins hated him. He didn't like Yvonne's direction, and he would tell her so...right in front of everybody--and Yvonne was a very straight person--she didn't take any nonsense from anybody.¹⁷

Insulted when asked to direct a single show for the 1946 season, she was discomposed enough to fire off a letter of complaint to the Park Board in which she loftily disdained the offer.¹⁸ She never worked for Hilker again.

Like Young and Horsfall, Hilker worked under contract to the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation who operated TUTS through the office of the Board Superintendent. The Board as a whole acted on resolutions of a committee of four park commissioners who oversaw TUTS operations. Though ostensibly Hilker's superiors, commissioners lacked the detailed knowledge and expertise of theatre production; because of this they mostly rubber-stamped his recommendations. In 1941 the entire management of TUTS was handled by Hilker Attractions, with the assistance of Young and Horsfall; the only other salaried employees were a part-time dance director and a rehearsal pianist.¹⁹ By 1943 Hilker had a paid staff of

¹⁷ Holly Maxwell.

¹⁸ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 19 Feb. 1946, "Yvonne Firkins."

¹⁹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Recreation Committee, 1 May 1941, "Theatre Under the Stars, Budget," p. 2.

fourteen. Engaged on a seasonal basis, the size of this staff remained relatively constant throughout the Hilker era.

As production manager, Hilker was expected to recommend the playbill. The 1941 season, however, had already been determined before Hilker was hired--dictated by the success of The Geisha the previous year. When the Recreation Committee gathered in February 1941 to consider the upcoming season, it wanted musical comedy and light opera "only of the most attractive type."²⁰ Mindful of its losses the previous year the committee also wanted the shows to be as inexpensive as possible. At the next meeting it accepted Young's recommendations: a reprise of 1937's Merrie England because of its timeliness; The Mikado because the scenery was already available; and The Chocolate Soldier, possibly because of its topicality (it is based on Shaw's Arms and the Man). Because of a dispute over royalties, however, the latter choice was eventually replaced by The Belle of New York.²¹ The shows ran on alternate nights for three weeks, opening on July 22 with The Belle of New York, followed the next night by The Mikado. This format must have presented a logistical nightmare to the staff and especially to E. V. Young, stage director for all

²⁰ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Recreation Committee, 20 Feb. 1941, "Theatre Under the Stars."

²¹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Recreation Committee, 27 Feb. 1941, p. 2, "Theatre Under the Stars."

three productions. Press and public took the fledgling company to its heart, however, and the popularity of the shows persuaded the Park Board to extend the 1941 season an extra week.²²

The Park Board could now take a collective sigh of relief. The popularity of the second season, combined with a slight profit, not only mitigated fears of a financial débâcle, but confirmed the Board's wisdom in choosing Hilker as manager. In its promotional material, the Board began comparing TUTS favourably to similar, but more well-established outdoor companies in America,²³ such as the "Muny": the Saint Louis Municipal Theatre Association which was the oldest and largest (12,000 seats) of the American outdoor theatres.²⁴ In recommending to the Committee the lineup for the 1944 season, for example, Hilker stressed the fact that all the shows had been presented at Saint Louis within the previous two years.²⁵ The Board's compulsive rating of TUTS against comparable organizations may have epitomised Canada's historic national inferiority complex; alternatively, it may also have manifested the tremendous civic pride taken in TUTS as an

²² "Park Board Will Continue Comedies for Another Week," Province 9 Aug. 1941: 12.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Lawrence S. Epstein, ed., A Guide to Theatre in America (New York: MacMillan, 1985) 276.

²⁵ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 28 Jan. 1944.

enterprise that, according to some, was rated among the top two or three in North America.²⁶

After 1941 TUTS wisely abandoned the practice of running shows in alternation; in succeeding years the productions ran successively, usually on a weekly changeover from Monday through Saturday, leaving only one night free for technical and dress rehearsals. From 1941 to 1945 the season was extended from three productions over three weeks to six productions over six weeks. Of the twenty-two shows mounted during this period, sixteen were well-established operettas--"old chestnuts" typified by composers Sigmund Romberg and Victor Herbert. Although popular with Vancouver audiences, operetta may have been chosen over other forms of musical theatre as much for financial reasons. Before selecting the 1942 season Hilker returned from a New York trip convinced that on a modest budget operetta could be presented much more successfully than musical comedy.²⁷ Why he thought so is unclear; he may have felt that the major requirement of operetta is a good, classically-trained voice, whereas musical comedy demands more in dancing and acting ability. Perhaps the dated TUTS operettas allowed for cheaper royalties--or in some cases no royalties at all. In 1944 he hired James Westerfield, an American actor and director, to adapt a version of Die

²⁶ Fyfe.

²⁷ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Music & Recreation, 13 Feb. 1942.

Fledermaus for TUTS. Called Waltz in Old Vienna, it retained the music, the plot, and the characters of the original, with one glaring exception. As originally composed, the part of the host, Count Orlovsky, is a pants role sung by a mezzo-soprano; in the TUTS production the part was played by a male as a male.²⁸ Hilker perhaps felt that his audience could accept the novelty of cross-dressing in a farcical Christmas pantomime, but not in a romantic operetta.

The cast for the 1941 season consisted almost entirely of local unpaid amateurs.²⁹ The lone exception was Fraser Lister, an actor from Victoria, B.C., who had become an instant hit for his portrayal of Wun-Hi in 1940's The Geisha. A highly-regarded character actor who graced the TUTS stage for many years to come, Lister appeared in all three productions for \$450.³⁰ At the time, this wage was outstanding; it was greater than the base salary of Hilker and his associates, and represents the Park Board's single concession to celebrity status (however limited it might have been) in 1941.

²⁸ "Park Theatre's Musical Farce Proves Pleasing," Province 1 Aug. 1944: 6.

²⁹ CVA, Park Board, Committee meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Recreation Committee, 1 May 1941, Theatre Under the Stars, "Budget."

³⁰ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-A-4, file 2, 9 May 1941, Item 7012: "Recreation Committee".

A man destined to play a vital role, not just with TUTS, but with the future development of music in Vancouver, made his début in 1941. For his first three seasons Beverly Fyfe played lead tenor in a number of TUTS productions to consistently glowing reviews. Although a teacher by trade, Fyfe had a strong musical background; after the close of the 1943 season he was contemplating a career in New York when he was advised by Horsfall to "stay here and be useful."³¹ He took leave from the 1944 season for additional musical training, and returned in 1945 for another début with TUTS, this time as musical conductor of Maytime and The Fortune Teller. In his new role as Associate Musical Director, Fyfe conducted shows for TUTS throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Then, in 1961, he accepted a temporary position as Chorusmaster with the newly-formed Vancouver Opera--a role he was to retain until his retirement in 1991. Although he continued to sing on occasion, he never again performed for TUTS following the 1943 season. When asked if he regretted his absence from the TUTS stage, Fyfe replied that there were only two roles he ever dreamed of playing as a youth--Nanki-Poo in The Mikado and Karl Franz in The Student Prince--and that fantasy was fulfilled in his first two years with TUTS.³²

³¹ Fyfe.

³² Ibid.

To avoid being typecast as just another well-meaning amateur organization, TUTS in 1942 embarked, however tentatively, on a professional course. Although some of the amounts were trifling, the entire cast was paid: from \$100 per show for the male leads to between \$15 and \$25 for female leads and the supporting cast.³³ Chorus members received one to two dollars a performance, half in cash, half in tickets.³⁴ As in 1941, TUTS relied on local talent rather than imported stars; although Paul Elmer, who played a supporting role in The Gondoliers, was from Seattle, he was paid the less-than-princely sum of \$20.³⁵ In an era when \$1,500 represented an above-average annual wage, these payments are less ludicrous than they seem.³⁶ However lowly the wage, Vancouver theatre performers must have regarded it with some novelty; professional resident theatre had been absent from Vancouver since the 1920s.³⁷ Hilker and the Park Board, nevertheless, may have been more concerned by appearances than by a sincere desire to reward their performers. A note from the 1942

³³ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, 9 April 1942, Music & Recreation, "Budget": 3,4.

³⁴ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, File 2, Music & Recreation, 13 Feb. 1942.

³⁵ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Music & Recreation, 9 April 1942: 4.

³⁶ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-3, file 12, Employee's statistics: 1945.

³⁷ Peter Frederick Guildford, "The Development of Professional Theatre in Vancouver," MA thesis, U. of British Columbia, 1981, 13.

program not only compares TUTS favourably to the Saint Louis Municipal Theatre but boldly adds: "The management, the directors and the acting company (of TUTS) are all paid on a salary basis."³⁸

In 1943 the talent payroll, \$4,700, doubled that of the previous year.³⁹ Paul Elmer, who made only \$20 in 1942, earned a respectable \$250 for appearing in all four productions.⁴⁰ More significantly, for the first time since 1940 American talent headlined two of the shows, Rose-Marie and The Desert Song. Although the fame that surrounded the husband-and-wife team of George Houston and Virginia Card has vanished into obscurity (a contemporary newsclipping refers to Houston as a "noted American baritone"⁴¹), their engagement signified a trend that was followed religiously through the years. As a rule, Americans were hired to play the leads while local talent provided support, a custom depressingly familiar to Canadians everywhere. How the Canadian performers judged this practice during this early phase is difficult to gauge. Fyfe

³⁸ CVA, Public Documents, PDS 16.1, Theatre Under the Stars Programs: 1940-1963; 1942: The Gondoliers.

³⁹ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Annual Reports and Financial Statements, Loc. 49-D-2; File 11 (1942), p. 5, and file 16 (1943), p. 75.

⁴⁰ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-3, File 1, Income Tax Returns, 1943.

⁴¹ "'Desert Song' Thrills in Park," Province 20 July 1943: 9.

felt that most regarded it as "an opportunity to learn from the pros."⁴²

Not all the star talent was American, however. In 1944 Hilker engaged Ruby Mercer, a budding young Canadian soprano who had already made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera, to sing in Bitter Sweet and Waltz in Old Vienna. After a successful international career, Mercer became the highly-regarded editor of Opera Canada. Although relative anonymity awaited most of the local talent hired during the war period, performers such as Sam Payne, Derek Ralston and Peter Mannering eventually enjoyed long and successful careers as Canadian actors. Others, such as Hilker's in-laws, Thora Anders and Barney Potts, evolved into local Vancouver institutions.

While the TUTS publicity machine endlessly praised the superior calibre of its personnel, internal evidence from Park Board meetings indicates that Hilker and his staff, on the contrary, were distressed by the low quality of the performances, especially of the supporting roles.⁴³ Although the country was devoting a huge effort to fighting the war, the cause of Hilker's concern resulted not so much from a shortage of bodies as from a deficiency of experience and

⁴² Fyfe.

⁴³ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Music & Recreation, 7 Nov. 1941, "Copy of a report submitted by Mr. Gordon Hilker."

skill. To upgrade the talent, Hilker began paying the cast in 1942. In the following year he not only introduced lesser-magnitude American stars, but managed to enlist Paul Elmer from the drama department of the University of Washington.⁴⁴ Recruiting local male performers for leading roles proved especially difficult: in 1944, for example, Hilker cast all but one of the female leads from local talent, whereas the male leads all came from the United States.⁴⁵

Hilker recognized that insufficient training and a lack of opportunity undermined the efforts of most TUTS hopefuls. To remedy this situation, he created in 1944 a controversial offshoot of TUTS that ironically contributed to his later downfall. The basic precept of the British Columbia Institute of Music and Drama (BCIMD), was simple: "to provide free training to promising young talent throughout British Columbia in all branches of the theatrical arts."⁴⁶ Funding came entirely from TUTS, which regarded the Institute as a production expense.⁴⁷ Although ostensibly a simple training program, Hilker had a grander vision. One of the Institute's

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ CVA, Park Board, Committee meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 26 May 1944, "Casting."

⁴⁶ Stanley Bligh, "Institute Aids Talented Artists," Sun 19 Aug. 1944: 6.

⁴⁷ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Theatre Under the Stars, 29 Dec. 1943, "B.C. Musical & Dramatic Education Society."

stated objectives was to become the focus for music and dramatic instruction for the whole of Western Canada.⁴⁸

Hilker's ultimate goal was to organize the Institute along the lines of the Toronto Conservatory of Music, and eventually to affiliate with the University of British Columbia.⁴⁹ During the first year of operation, from space leased in downtown Vancouver, paid instructors gave free lessons to over eighty students in dancing, stage movement, speech, make-up, singing and related arts.⁵⁰

A \$200 scholarship from radio station CKWX to any young Canadian artist who needed assistance to study at the Institute stirred Hilker to conceive a plan that would embrace talent, not just in the lower mainland, but throughout the entire province.⁵¹ In 1945, after appealing to interests both corporate and individual, Hilker managed to create nine scholarships for nine separate jurisdictions in British Columbia. To create maximum publicity for TUTS, Hilker conducted competitive star searches in which local committees winnowed the available talent before granting the awards.

⁴⁸ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, TUTS, 4 Dec. 1945, "BCIMD."

⁴⁹ Stanley Bligh, "Laying Groundwork For a Conservatory," Sun 17 Nov. 1945: 6.

⁵⁰ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-3, File 6, Annual Report & Financial Statement, 1944, p. 5, "B. C. Institute of Music & Drama".

⁵¹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, BCIMD, 24 Mar. 1944, "CKWX Scholarship."

Although travel costs to Vancouver were partially met by the Park Board, scholarship recipients were expected to pay their own living expenses through a part-time job which the Institute helped obtain. The balance of the award was to be used for private vocal and dramatic instruction plus free nightly training at the Institute. Winners also participated in TUTS productions for which they received payment based on their abilities.⁵² Although not an award winner himself, Gerald Britland (who began his career with TUTS in 1945 as a chorus "gentleman" in Maytime) recreates the atmosphere of his apprenticeship:

We used to [sing] in a place called the Green Parrot café [upstairs at Robson & Granville Streets], which had a place for dancing and a small stage You'd have to sing a solo one Tuesday or one Thursday, and get up in front of everybody--which was scary in those days . . . and then we'd rehearse and do theatre arts for an hour after the break, which was just great--fencing, movement--everything related to the theatre. So it really was like a great time--Everybody liked singing and learning about the theatre.⁵³

⁵² CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 4 Feb. 1945, "BCIMD Scholarships."

⁵³ Gerald Britland, personal recorded interview, 28 Oct. 1992.

So lively and vibrant were the Institute quarters at 828 Granville Street that in July of 1945 the owner of the building, after repeated complaints that noise from rehearsals and dancing was affecting his business, applied to the Rentals Board for eviction.⁵⁴ Bowing to pressure, Hilker soon found a new home for Institute in the old Knights of Columbus Hostel at 635 Richards Street, where, presumably, the tenants could be as boisterous as they pleased.⁵⁵

Activities of the Institute were not restricted to the training of stage performers: within a year of incorporation, BCIMD formed a 56-member youth symphony orchestra to give students practical experience in orchestral work. As a testament to its popularity, the successor of that ensemble is still in operation to-day.⁵⁶ To showcase the diversity of its talent, the Institute initiated a series of concerts on 7 January 1945 in its Club Room.⁵⁷ These concerts and recitals proved to be popular, and by the summer of 1945 BCIMD had sponsored a complete opera-in-concert at Malkin Bowl. With

⁵⁴ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, TUTS, 31 July 1945, "Institute Rehearsal Room."

⁵⁵ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-F-1, file 2, 5 Mar. 1946, Item 216: "Rehearsal Rooms for the Institute."

⁵⁶ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-3, file 6, Annual Report & Financial Statement, 1944, p. 5, "B. C. Institute of Music & Drama."

⁵⁷ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, BCIMD, 15 Dec. 1944, "Private Performances."

TUTS personnel singing the leads, the concert was somehow squeezed in between the closing of The Vagabond King and the opening of Maytime.⁵⁸ Nor did the Institute ignore the popularity of radio: during the spring of 1944, station CKWX inaugurated a 13-week schedule of broadcasts each Wednesday evening featuring TUTS artists. Called "Operetta Time," it was resumed in the fall over CJOR and its full Western Network each Friday evening. An internal Park Board memo indicates its success: "This series of broadcasts has proven exceedingly popular with the listening audience and is of great value in keeping the Theatre Under the Stars before the public."⁵⁹

The British Columbia Music Teacher's Association (MTA), already unhappy with the free lessons that the Institute provided, became further enraged when Hilker decided to allow the BCIMD faculty to conduct private lessons using Institute space. The MTA felt that instructors at the Institute were being subsidized by public funds "which might work to the detriment of other members of the teaching profession."⁶⁰ The Park Board attempted to be conciliatory, but despite its efforts the MTA continued to regard the BCIMD as an implacable

⁵⁸ "Tenor makes hit in Cavalleria Rusticana," Sun 9 July 1945: 7.

⁵⁹ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-3, File 6, Annual Report & Financial Statement, 1944.

⁶⁰ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 4 Dec. 1945, "B.C. Music Teacher's Association."

foe. For the next five years an uneasy truce prevailed, marked by occasional skirmishes. Although the Park Board had intended in the spring of 1945 to incorporate the BCIMD as an independent, non-profit society,⁶¹ the necessary paperwork was never completed; perhaps Hilker feared losing control of his creation. Ironically, the failure to separate the Institute from TUTS helped to bring about the ultimate demise of both Hilker and the BCIMD.

The Park Board's creation and support of TUTS and the BCIMD was not just incidental, but was part of an ongoing evolution in recreational philosophy. As a note in the 1944 program pointed out, the function of the Board was changing from the provider of "attractive natural beauty spots" to a more utopian concept of leisure activities which would help all citizens enjoy a fuller life.⁶² Surprisingly, the Board's promotion of these efforts seemed barely affected by the massive mobilization caused by the war. Blackout regulations, free tickets for service personnel, and the loss of Fraser Lister to the Air Force, hardly qualify as major inconveniences. Indeed, the insularity of TUTS during these years is quite striking; almost nothing in the available records indicates that the Board or management of TUTS allowed

⁶¹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 6 Mar. 1945, "BCIMD."

⁶² CVA, Public Documents, PDS 16.1, Theatre Under the Stars Programs: 1940-1963; 1944, Naughty Marietta.

the war to dominate their thinking or their activity in any significant way. Like depression-era movies, TUTS provided escapist entertainment that doubtless struck a responsive chord in an audience wearied by years of hardship. Hilker, in justifying his choices for the 1943 season to the Board, seemed aware of these sentiments: he suggested Rose-Marie because of its Canadian background; The Student Prince because of its setting in romantic old Europe; and The Desert Song because of the Arabs in Algeria. The selections were, he concluded, "most appropriate to the times."⁶³ Earlier that same year the Board had received a suggestion for plays that were more relevant to the global conflict, such as a production of Journey's End, but it was dismissed as being "unsuitable."⁶⁴ The Board had found a winning formula and wasn't about to tamper with it.

One wartime threat, however, did imperil the operation of TUTS. After Canada declared war on Japan in December, 1941, there followed, on the West Coast in particular, a period of unparalleled hysteria generated by the fear of Japanese air raids. Because a rigid enforcement of the dim-out regulations that were passed early in 1942 could have ended the summer

⁶³ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Music & Recreation Committee, 20 Jan. 1943, "Theatre Under the Stars."

⁶⁴ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Music & Recreation Committee, 20 Jan. 1943, "Mr. G. Magee."

program, the Board appealed to the authorities, beginning with the mayor, "to see what could be done."⁶⁵ The mayor feared panic would occur among a large TUTS audience in event of an enemy attack, and pointed out that only certain vital industries, such as shipbuilding, were exempt from the regulations.⁶⁶ The Park Board suspended all TUTS preparations for the 1942 season from February through April while urgent appeals flowed between the Board and Ottawa, which in turn passed the buck to the Provincial Air Raid Patrol.⁶⁷ An exemption for TUTS was not forthcoming until April 10, and then only under the condition that an Air Raid Patrol official be hired on stand-by to turn out the lights if necessary.⁶⁸

Evidently the threat of a Japanese bombing attack soon faded for the issue was not raised again. Despite its two months in limbo, TUTS mounted a successful 1942 season; it posted a reasonable profit of \$1,500 on a total budget of just under

⁶⁵ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-F-1, file 1, 13 Feb. 1942, Minutes of Special Conference Prior to Board Meeting, Item 228, "Dim-Out Regulations."

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-F-1, file 1, 23 Feb. 1942, Item 243, "Special Conference Re: Black-Out Problem."

⁶⁸ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-F-1, file 1, 10 April 1942, Item 289, "Music & Recreation Committee."

\$16,000.⁶⁹ Although hardly a windfall, the 1942 surplus, combined with a modest profit of \$300 in 1941,⁷⁰ indicated that the enterprise was embarked on a satisfactory course. If content with these figures, the Park Board must have been exhilarated when in the following year profits jumped almost tenfold, to \$12,400.⁷¹ The Board generously credited this gross profit (approaching one-half of total expenditures) to Gordon Hilker, whose drive and practical knowledge of the entertainment business "guided the project into orderly, rational channels."⁷² The confident park commissioners felt a course had been established that would reap untold dividends in the future. Their disappointment in 1944 when TUTS recorded a net loss of \$900 was made palpable in a draft resolution; it demanded Hilker provide a plan as to how TUTS could "be so operated as to show a profit of \$10,000 to \$15,000 for next year."⁷³

⁶⁹ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-2, File 11, Superintendent's Annual Report, 1942; Financial Report, 1942, p. 5, #75, "Theatre Under the Stars."

⁷⁰ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Music & Recreation Committee, 5 Sep. 1941.

⁷¹ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-2, file 16, Annual Report & Financial Statement, 1943, p. 69.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars Committee, 19 Sep. 1944.

Unfortunately for the Board, guaranteed profits were easier to anticipate than to realize. Nevertheless, the commissioners had little reason to feel anything but optimistic: not only had TUTS established a large and growing audience base at Malkin Bowl, but by 1943 the renown of TUTS had spread far beyond the bounds of the lower mainland. In May of that year the Park Board received an enquiry from the Seattle Symphony Orchestra who wished to sponsor a tour of TUTS to their city.⁷⁴ Hilker quickly worked out a deal whereby Seattle guaranteed TUTS a minimum of \$12,000 (plus a share of the profits after expenses) for a two-week engagement at the Metropolitan Theatre in late summer.⁷⁵ On August 7, over one hundred cast members of three different shows (The Firefly, The Desert Song, and Rose-Marie) entrained for Seattle where they played to houses sold out in advance for the complete series.⁷⁶ Although TUTS had to underwrite the production costs, they were able to add a tidy profit of \$2,500 to their already sizable surplus.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Theatre Under the Stars Committee, 28 May, 1943, "Seattle."

⁷⁵ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Theatre Under the Stars Committee, 18 June, 1943, p. 2, "Seattle Symphony Society."

⁷⁶ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, loc. 48-F-1, file 1, 16 Aug. 1943, Item 738, "Theatre Under the Stars."

⁷⁷ CVA, Park Board, Annual Report & Financial Statement 1943, p. 70.

No doubt encouraged by their reception (and their profits), TUTS embarked on an even more ambitious tour in 1944. For over a month the TUTS cast shuffled between Portland, Oregon, and Seattle, where by all accounts they received an even warmer welcome than the previous year.⁷⁸ Adding to the usual hazards of touring was a train delay on a return engagement from Portland to Seattle. The train, scheduled to arrive in Seattle at 3:00 p.m., was hours late, but the Seattle audience waited patiently until the curtains finally rose on the first act of Waltz in Old Vienna at 10:30.⁷⁹ Once again the tour played to large and enthusiastic audiences. Costs had escalated significantly from the previous year, however, and despite a guarantee of \$32,000, TUTS could barely manage to break even.⁸⁰

Notwithstanding some doubts, the ever-cautious Park Board accepted Hilker's advice and approved a three-week American tour for 1945. On this occasion, however, the tour lacked an American sponsor and the consequent guarantee; instead TUTS entered into a share arrangement with an American promoter. With TUTS receiving 60% of the gate, Hilker, who negotiated

⁷⁸ Barbara Tremaine, "City Players Please Seattle," News-Herald 15 Aug. 1944: 7.

⁷⁹ "Seattle Crowd Waits Patiently," Province 12 Sep. 1944: 20.

⁸⁰ CVA, Park Board, Annual Report & Financial Statement, 1944: 72.

the terms, forecast a profit from the tour of \$10,000.⁸¹ Despite Hilker's vaunted promotional skills, the 1945 tour to Seattle, Portland, and Tacoma was a financial disaster. TUTS collected only \$17,000 in gross receipts against a projection of \$47,000; with expenses of \$32,000, the company lost \$15,000 on the tour.⁸² Poor advertising on the part of the American promoter, and the lack of first-class theatres in Seattle and Tacoma were among the reasons given for this débâcle, but the venture may have also been a victim of historical accident. The tour coincided with American celebrations of their victory over Japan; no doubt people were distracted--perhaps they were more interested in dancing in the streets than in sitting in a stuffy theatre.⁸³ This sorry enterprise concluded with a performance in Nanaimo which was intended as a benefit for the BCIMD but instead did little more than break even. TUTS closed the 1945 season with an overall loss in operations of \$8,000,⁸⁴ and a severe darkening of Gordon Hilker's halo.

The politicians on the Park Board, ever dependent on the good will of the voters, were horrified: some, of course, claimed

⁸¹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 18 July 1945, "Road Tour."

⁸² CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-3, file 15, Annual Report & Financial Statement, 1945, p. 83.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 5.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 84.

they were against the American tour from the start.⁸⁵ The local Council of Women, who seemed to regard themselves as the guardian angels of TUTS, fired off a letter to the Board deploring the American losses; the group suggested that any profits from the Vancouver operation be spent on upgrading the quality of performance rather than indulging in foreign adventures.⁸⁶ The Board hardly needed encouragement to curtail future American touring. It could, however distastefully, accept a deficit on a project meant for the local populace, but to lose money while amusing foreigners was positively taboo. Although Song of the Flame, a 1946 production, toured extensively after closing at Malkin Bowl, it was financed entirely by private capital. Despite a score by George Gershwin, the show evidently lost enormous amounts of money; and although the Park Board scrupulously avoided any financial involvement in the venture, this was not always apparent to independent observers. When rumours of the money-losing tour surfaced, the Council of Women responded with a press release deploring the losses. The Board scrambled to reassure the public that it had no financial interest in the enterprise.⁸⁷ A furious Hilker, stung by past barbs from the Council, and

⁸⁵ "American Tour Costly to Stars Theatre," Province 26 Sep. 1945: 22.

⁸⁶ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 20 Nov. 1945, "Local Council of Women."

⁸⁷ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-F-1, file 2, 22 Oct. 1946, Item 654: "Song of the Flame."

suffering personal losses from the ill-fated tour, fired off a letter of his own to the group demanding a retraction.⁸⁸

Whether he ever received one is not clear.

Although the productions staged at Malkin Bowl continued to be profitable, by the completion of the 1945 season some worrisome clouds were forming on the TUTS horizon. Average attendance, which had increased sharply for the first few years, began to level off after 1943 to approximately 3,200 a night. The budget of the BCIMD, which was financed almost entirely by TUTS, had jumped nearly 30% in the second year of operation. In 1944 and 1945, the Board spent nearly \$12,000 to purchase needed equipment.⁸⁹ Perhaps most disturbing to the Park Commissioners was the increasing tendency for costs to outstrip forecasts by substantial margins.⁹⁰ Although these expenses were more than met by gate receipts from Malkin Bowl, the Board attempted to place a financial halter on Hilker following the 1944 season. Despite being warned that costs

⁸⁸ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars Committee, 15 Oct. 1946, "Press Reports Song of the Flame."

⁸⁹ CVA, Park Board, Annual Report and Financial Statement 1944: 77; Annual Report and Financial Statement 1945: 84.

⁹⁰ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 6 Mar. 1945, "Control of Budget."

must not exceed the figures agreed upon, however, Hilker overspent the 1945 budget by \$10,000.⁹¹

TUTS still managed an overall profit on operations during the war years of almost \$8,000. The upgrading of Malkin Bowl, however, and the purchase of needed equipment resulted in a net deficit of \$2,600. Because gate receipts covered expenditures only for the current year, each new season began with a more-or-less empty ledger. Since seasonal subscriptions, corporate endowments, or government grants were virtually nonexistent, the Board was forced to impose a system of deficit financing in which money for mounting the upcoming season was borrowed from other departments of the Park Board and paid back from ticket sales later in the year. As expenses began to mount from year to year, financing TUTS became so worrisome to the Board members that by 1949 the Board was eager to transfer the entire operation to a non-profit society.

Hilker attempted to address the inadequate financing of TUTS as early as 1941 by appealing to Vancouver's corporate sector. He proposed to raise an additional \$5,000 by establishing sponsors; companies could buy blocks of tickets at reduced prices well in advance of the season, to be disposed of "in

⁹¹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Minutes, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 3 July 1945, "Budget."

any way they see fit."⁹² Modeled after a program used by the Los Angeles Civic Light Opera, Hilker unveiled the plan to the Vancouver Tourist Association to mixed reviews. Although he stressed that better-quality shows with imported stars would serve to attract tourists, to the hard-nosed members of the Tourist Association the theme had a familiar smell. Some members felt that the plan would create unfair competition to the movie theatre owners and operators. Another member belittled the ability of TUTS to attract tourists, claiming that there had never been as much as "a 'corporal's guard' of tourist cars at the park when a play was in progress."⁹³ Although Hilker pushed the idea of corporate sponsorship for another year or so, he was unable to attract a single client, possibly because the Park Board refused to relinquish any control of TUTS.⁹⁴

Paradoxically, what helped to kill Hilker's corporate sponsorship scheme was the apparent success of TUTS and the privilege it seemed to enjoy as a civic-backed institution. Some private companies felt they were victims of unfair competition: commercial movie houses, for example, resented

⁹² CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Music & Recreation, 7 Nov. 1941, "Copy of report submitted by Mr. Gordon Hilker."

⁹³ "City Tourist Group Splits On Open Air Theatre Plan," Province 14 Nov. 1941: 9.

⁹⁴ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Music & Recreation, 28 Aug. 1942, Theatre Under the Stars, "Sponsorship."

the fact that TUTS was granted an exemption from the 20% Federal Excise Tax that applied to amusements. The movie owners and operators no doubt felt, as did the Music Teacher's Association, that the politicians who managed TUTS were in a preferred position to gain favours and exemptions from other governing bodies. With the federal excise tax that may have been true; Ottawa granted the exemption on the understanding that the income from the paid admissions was to be used solely for educational purposes and that "no profit or gain accrues to anyone connected with the staging of these plays."⁹⁵ The educational value of shows like The Belle of New York is debatable; and the fact that Hilker, Young, Horsfall and others profited from their involvement with TUTS seems indisputable; nevertheless, in 1944 the federal authorities indicated that the exemption would henceforth be automatic. Though Ottawa proved accommodating, Victoria was another matter. Despite intensive lobbying by the Park Board and its allies, such as the Tourist Association, the Junior Board of Trade and Vancouver City Council, the provincial government insisted on collecting its own amusement tax.⁹⁶ That the Board was able to marshall such a campaign, however, must have been greatly resented by the private interests.

⁹⁵ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-F-1, file 1, 22 Aug. 1941, Item 68, "Amusement Tax."

⁹⁶ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Special Committee, 16 Mar. 1944, "Amusement Tax, Theatre Under the Stars."

Whatever privilege TUTS enjoyed as a publicly-funded body was betrayed by its facility, Malkin Bowl, and may explain Hilker's urgent campaign for additional capital. The Bowl, excellent as a music shell, left something to be desired as a theatre. Built in 1934 in exactly the same proportions as the Hollywood Bowl (but only three-quarters its size), the cone-like interior was shaped by seven concentric rings lined with sound-refracting material. Mounted on a wedge-shaped platform, these rings graduated in size: the smallest ring (at the rear) was only 11 feet high and 22 feet wide; the downstage ring measured 28 feet by 56 feet at the corners. Extending downward from the smallest ring was the rear partition which contained a doorway--the only access to the shell interior. Only 30 feet separated the rear partition from the downstage lip of the platform.⁹⁷ In order to create a proscenium opening, the top and sides of the foremost ring were masked by a fixed partition. Judging from newspaper photographs from 1942-43, the opening must have measured about 16 feet high by 22 feet wide,⁹⁸ allowing for barely-adequate wings on either side of the stage. With only one doorway to the performing area, the backstage traffic, in which chorus, dancers, and principals competed with the scenery, must have been hectic. A draw curtain suspended behind and above the false proscenium permitted traditional scene changes. Although Malkin Bowl

⁹⁷ "Stanley Park Bowl," Sun 7 May 1934 (illus.)

⁹⁸ "They'll Be Filled To-night," Newsclipping, 7 July 1942, CVA, MS 15662, Theatre Under the Stars, 1943.

would undergo at least two major renovations, the basic pattern described above remained unchanged. A gimcrack solution created out of necessity? Perhaps, but a variation of it exists to this day.

To improve stage facilities, Hilker launched a two-pronged attack, the first aimed at improving Malkin Bowl, the other directed toward the construction of a new theatre. He began work on the existing site in 1942 by convincing the Board to add a narrow apron to the front of the stage.⁹⁹ This not only created more performance space, but allowed actors an additional access to the playing area. By 1943 Hilker was pushing for an entirely new structure. Correctly gauging the fiscal conservatism of the Board, he suggested a long-range piecemeal approach based on the logic that "even a partially completed installation would be a paradise compared to the existing conditions."¹⁰⁰ Although he considered other locations, Hilker preferred the Bowl area, even at the cost of demolishing the cherished bandshell.¹⁰¹

While the Board commissioned a study to examine possible locations for the new theatre, it also debated the amount of

⁹⁹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Music, 11 Aug. 1942.

¹⁰⁰ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Theatre Under the Stars, 26 Aug. 1943.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

upgrading to give the existing facility. The Board faced a predicament. How much should it spend on a structure it planned to replace? The problem was resolved in typical Park Board fashion: "It would be wise to spend as little money as possible on the present site, limiting expenditures to the minimum required to put on creditable performances."¹⁰² The parsimonious Board managed to find enough money to regrade the seating area (which improved sight-lines), and to purchase some new chairs. After some discreet arm-twisting, W. H. Malkin, who donated the Bowl originally, agreed to another contribution which would add two additional rings to the front of the existing structure--thereby greatly increasing the size of the proscenium and the stage area.¹⁰³ One final improvement was made for the 1944 season: openings were cut between ribs on either side of the Bowl; to these were attached makeshift shacks suitable for the storage of scenery and the creation of new entrances to the stage area for the cast.¹⁰⁴

Not until the autumn of 1945 did the Park Board finally resolve that "plans should be laid for the construction of a suitable outdoor theatre for the annual summer opera season of

¹⁰² CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Theatre Under the Stars, 10 Sep. 1943, "Recommendations for Improvements in Setting for 1944."

¹⁰³ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 2, Theatre Under the Stars, 8 Oct. 1943, "Malkin Bowl."

¹⁰⁴ Minutes, Theatre Under the Stars Committee, 10 Sep. 1943.

the Theatre Under the Stars."¹⁰⁵ Five different locations were recommended, one in the newly-acquired quarry by Queen Elizabeth Park, the other four in Stanley Park.¹⁰⁶ Hilker's preferred location, Malkin Bowl, was not even considered. Although the Board was now officially obligated to build a new theatre, it still had no plan for raising the estimated cost of \$200,000.¹⁰⁷ To test for support in the community at large, the Park Commissioners sent out a brochure outlining their recommendations to "service clubs and other organizations."¹⁰⁸ The response appears to have been less than overwhelming. For the next four years TUTS coped with Malkin Bowl while the question of a new home lay dormant.

Was the Park Board entirely sincere in its stated resolve to build a new theatre, or was it merely trying to mollify a determined Hilker? The Board's habit of referring the question for further study was hardly a dynamic response to a pressing problem. The Park Board, however, a conservative elected body, was responsible for spending public money; and although it wholeheartedly supported TUTS (and Hilker for that matter), it

¹⁰⁵ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 16 Oct. 1945, "New Home for TUTS."

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-3, File #15, Annual Report & Financial Statement, 1945, p. 5.

¹⁰⁸ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, loc. 48-F-1, file 2, 23 Oct. 1945, Item 353: Theatre Under the Stars & British Columbia Institute of Music & Drama.

refused to be stampeded into risky enterprises. Not unnaturally, the entire period of Hilker's stewardship reads like a tug-of-war between himself and the Board. The result was something of a stalemate. Hilker's ability to influence the Board, especially evident in the early years of the war, began to wane by 1945. As in many relationships, the bloom had begun to fade from the rose, helped in no small part by Hilker's distressing tendency to overspend, and by his promotion of the disastrous 1945 tour.

Despite its caution, however, by 1945 the Board supported Hilker's vision of TUTS as a dominating force in western Canadian theatre. In August of that year the Board sent a representative to the Western Canada Theatre Conference held in Banff in order to stress the aims and objectives of TUTS, and no doubt to trade information with the other delegates. The establishment of the BCIMD as the educational arm of TUTS gave the company a year-round presence in the community. By 1945 TUTS had consolidated its programming; and if the theatre building was less than satisfactory, the Board could claim that new facilities were being planned. In the meantime the total audience for the 1945 season was approaching 100,000--an impressive number by any standards. And at seat prices that ranged between fifty cents and \$1.50, the Board could crow that it was fulfilling its mandate to provide low-cost, high-quality entertainment to the mass of its citizenry--and at no cost to the taxpayers.

CHAPTER 3

POST-WAR: 1945-50

The victory of the allied forces triggered a wave of confidence throughout the country. After more than fifteen years of hardship caused by depression and war, Canadians, and especially the much-beleaguered arts community, were anticipating the prosperity of the "New Social Order" that the freshly-reelected Liberals were promising.¹ Heralding these changes was the Junior League of Vancouver, a group of volunteer society women: during the summer of 1945 they sponsored a community cultural survey, likely the first of its kind in Vancouver. The study clearly expected cultural activity to mushroom, funded by generous grants from government and corporations. Because, the report added, undreamed of leisure would soon be available to everyone, the privileged class must ensure that this leisure be spent in "creative" activity.² A plan of the Civic Centre intended for downtown Vancouver suggests that the study's conclusions were

¹ Desmond Morton, "Strains of Affluence: 1945-1987," The Illustrated History of Canada 469.

² Junior League of Vancouver, spon., The Arts and our Town (Vancouver: Keystone Press, 1946) 4.

little more than a middle-class vision of highbrow tastes. The Centre, a massive, six square-block complex of cultural and arts buildings anchored by a truly monumental opera house, included a new library, art gallery and museum.³ The only structure to survive this scheme, however, was a scaled-down version of the opera house, the present Queen Elizabeth Theatre; nevertheless, the concept of the Civic Centre reflected the prevalent optimism in those heady days following the war.

To help satisfy the needs of this anticipated leisure class, the report further urged the establishment of a central instructional body for the teaching of music--a University Department or Conservatory similar to institutions in Toronto or Montreal.⁴ If the proposal appears suspiciously similar to the aims of the BCIMD, it might be explained by the presence of Gordon Hilker on the committee that framed the recommendations of the study. As for TUTS itself, the report noted that future plans included the construction of a new theatre, and the development of a national tour.⁵

Few of the survey's rosy predictions were realized, at least in the form envisioned by its authors. Though the subject was

³ Ibid. 143.

⁴ Ibid. 8.

⁵ Ibid. 198.

periodically raised during its lifetime, TUTS never did acquire a new home; for three seasons the ferry to Victoria had to satisfy the dream of a national tour; and despite early promise, the BCIMD withered away in the early 1950s. Yet TUTS itself somehow managed to survive, if not prosper, until 1963. Born at the beginning of the war, TUTS had flourished despite, or perhaps because of, the hard times. For one thing, people could afford it; in 1945, ticket prices of fifty cents to a dollar were at least one third less than those charged by professional touring companies.⁶ Whether because of the price or the setting, the fare or the lack of competition, TUTS remained a popular summer attraction. With a seating capacity of 4,750, by war's end TUTS was attracting an average of 23,500 spectators per production,⁷ or roughly eight per cent of the city's population. Although losses incurred by the 1945 tour and the cost of the BCIMD drained its overall coffers, TUTS continued to earn a handsome profit from its Malkin Bowl attractions. With prosperity supposedly emerging from the dark cloud of depression and war, the Park Board and Hilker must have regarded the future with confidence at the conclusion of the 1945 season.

Though the Park Board shelved the question of a new theatre, in other ways it acted decisively. From 1941 through 1945,

⁶ Ibid. 201.

⁷ Ibid. 197.

costumes for TUTS productions had been designed and built exclusively by the Winnipeg branch of Malabar's, Canada's legendary costume-maker.⁸ Then, in 1945, the TUTS costume studio was created, jammed into two tiny rooms of the BCIMD offices.⁹ From these cramped quarters, designer Stuart MacKay and his staff now shared the responsibility for costuming TUTS productions with the Winnipeg company. To make the venture self-supporting, Hilker organized the costume studio as a year-round business that created and rented costumes on demand.

In November of 1946, after negotiating for over a year, the Board concluded a deal with the Department of Naval Affairs to acquire the "Old Discovery" building. A short drive from Malkin Bowl, the future scene shop was located on Deadman's Island, a sandy spit of land south and east of Brockton Point in Stanley Park. As if to flaunt the advantage of one government agency dealing with another, the Board secured an annual lease at the rock-bottom price of \$450.¹⁰ The spacious (14,000 square feet), two-storey structure so satisfied the

⁸ Legendary or not, TUTS program credits from 1941 to 1963 continuously and perversely misspelled the name as "Mallabar."

⁹ "Theatre Under the Stars Promoting Local Talent," House program, Song of the Flame (1946), Page 30, CVA, Public Documents, PDS 16.1, Theatre Under the Stars, Programs, 1940-63.

¹⁰ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 5 Nov. 1946, "Old Discovery Building."

Board, that in 1949 it purchased the building for \$9,000.¹¹ Because by 1945 Hollywood studios were designing most TUTS productions,¹² the site was first used largely for storage and set-construction. Hilker, however, soon established a design studio at Discovery under the supervision of Gail McCance: from 1947 until 1963, settings for TUTS productions were designed and built under this roof. Hilker added full-time staff, and, as he had done with the costume studio, operated the scene shop as an independent, year-round business. Soon "Old Discovery" was designing and building sets, not just for TUTS, but for theatre companies across western Canada;¹³ in 1947, for example, the shop built sets for musical productions in Regina and Saskatoon.¹⁴ For local amateur groups, however, such as the Vancouver Little Theatre, the Board adopted a more generous policy: it issued a rebate of the rental charge for existing scenery and props, provided they were returned in

¹¹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Theatre Under the Stars, 20 June, 1949, "Old Discovery Building."

¹² CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Theatre Under the Stars, 3 May 1948, "Progress Report of Hilker."

¹³ "Theatre Under the Stars Now 'Big Business' in Vancouver," Sun 18 Oct. 1948: 16.

¹⁴ Stanley Beck, "There Shall be Music Wherever He Goes," Sun 11 Oct. 1947: 3.

satisfactory condition.¹⁵ By 1949 the evident success of the TUTS scene shop can be gauged by its net profit of \$2,675.¹⁶

With the creation of the two studios, directors no longer had to abide by decisions made in Los Angeles or Winnipeg; they could now work with local designers to produce a more distinctive, "made in Vancouver" style that was tailored to the peculiarities of Malkin Bowl. To keep abreast of the latest Broadway trends and production techniques, Hilker dispatched both MacKay and McCance to New York for six-week training sessions early in 1946. For the twenty-one year old McCance in particular, the trip likely offered a rare opportunity to see Broadway plays and musicals firsthand, and to work backstage with experienced theatre artists and technicians.¹⁷

Hilker himself regularly visited New York and Los Angeles to secure talent both for TUTS and his own business. These excursions by Hilker and his staff, and the hiring of American talent to headline TUTS productions, no doubt raised standards through a process of cross-pollination. The hiring of Aida Broadbent as choreographer in 1946, however, probably produced

¹⁵ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Theatre Under the Stars, 17 Feb. 1947, "Rental Policy (Scenery and Costumes)."

¹⁶ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-4, file 10, "Annual Report and Financial Statement, 1949" 48.

¹⁷ "Will Study New York Stage Shows," Sun 23 Feb. 1946: 6.

the greatest single effect on the TUTS performance style in the post-war years. Born in England, she began her dance training as a child in Vancouver. In 1933 she moved to Los Angeles where she achieved modest fame as a choreographer for the Edwin Lester musical revivals staged by the Los Angeles Civic Light Opera.¹⁸ Many of his shows ended up on Broadway, although to generally cool notices: an icy review of The Desert Song noted that "the ballets by Aida Broadbent are in a few rudimentary steps."¹⁹ In fairness, both Lewis Nichols of the Times and his successor, Brooks Atkinson, seemed to have a New Yorker's urbanite disdain for anything originating west of Broadway. Notwithstanding their disapproval, the number of Lester revivals that played Broadway in the mid-1940s surely indicates some level of success. TUTS eventually adapted a few of these shows (The Desert Song, The Red Mill, and Song of Norway) for Malkin Bowl, with Broadbent's choreography and with some of the original leads.

More than anyone, Aida Broadbent transformed TUTS into a top-rank, professional company.²⁰ Her impact was immediate and lasting; on her co-workers, on her audiences, and on the Vancouver press, which treated her far more kindly than did

¹⁸ "Creates Dances for Theatre Under Stars," Sun 11 May 1946: 6.

¹⁹ Lewis Nichols, review of The Desert Song, N.Y. Times 9 Jan. 1946: 20.

²⁰ Hugh Pickett, personal interview, 23 Sep. 1992.

its New York counterpart. A 1947 Vancouver Sun review of Anything Goes panned the production, but called her choreography "outstanding", and elaborated on her innovation: "Particularly effective was a dance to the music of 'Blow, Gabriel, Blow,' in which 'strobolite' lighting effects were used."²¹ Broadbent's continuing association with Los Angeles and other American cities worked to the advantage of TUTS. When a Lester show had finished its run, TUTS frequently was offered costumes, settings, and sometimes even headline performers (such as Richard Charles or Doreen Wilson), often at a fraction of the original cost.²² But more beneficial than her connections were her inspirational presence and her show business savvy. As Hugh Pickett recalls:

She would put on a ballet and get kids dancing who'd never done point work before. She could give relatively untrained kids stuff to do that wasn't all that difficult, but looked spectacular. I would have been happy to have worked with her forever.²³

Pickett claims that before the arrival of Broadbent, the TUTS production style suffered from an excess of blandness, the result of stock costumes, standard sets and the old-fashioned directing of E. V. Young. In Pickett's opinion, "TUTS would

²¹ Stanley Bligh, "Cole Porter Show Musical Burlesque," Sun 5 Aug. 1947: 13.

²² Pickett, 23 Sep. 1992.

²³ Ibid.

have gone down the drain if he [Hilker] hadn't got Aida here."²⁴ Though she shared the first two seasons with other choreographers, by 1948 Broadbent had assumed a dominant position in the company hierarchy. According to veteran TUTS performer Peter Mannering, her energy affected every department, and if a particular detail didn't suit her vision of the production, she made sure it was changed.²⁵ In effect, she acted as a "super-director," with Hilker's full support. The symbiosis between Broadbent and TUTS endured until the company went bankrupt in 1963.

Broadbent was the keystone of a revitalized TUTS production staff. In 1944, to assist an aging E. V. Young, Hilker engaged directors Yvonne Firkins and Paul Bethune. Then, in 1946, to direct The Count of Luxembourg and Robin Hood, Hilker added William "Bill" Buckingham. A practising lawyer, Buckingham had begun his theatrical career in 1924 as a member of the University of British Columbia Players' Club.²⁶ Although he subsequently established a reputation as one of Vancouver's finest actors, both on the stage and in radio, his only previous association with TUTS had been in 1945 when he appeared in two productions. In the next few years, Buckingham played an increasingly important role with TUTS, directing

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Peter Mannering, unpublished manuscript (1979 [?]) 51.

²⁶ "'Bill' Buckingham to Produce Tuts," Sun 1 Dec. 1949: 13.

nearly one-third of the productions, and performing in several others. His dedication, loyalty, and ability were rewarded in 1949 when the newly-formed Vancouver Civic Theatre Society picked him to succeed Hilker as General Manager of TUTS.

In 1947 Hilker engaged another figure pivotal to the future of TUTS. Hugh Pickett may have begun his career in his father's steamship company,²⁷ but his real interest lay in show business. A friend of Hilker for some years, Pickett was already familiar with the operation of TUTS when he joined the organization. Although referred to in the programs from 1947 through 1949 as "Company Manager," Pickett in reality served as the Press Agent for TUTS--a job he claims he knew nothing about when he was first hired; he simply learned as he went along.²⁸ Despite Pickett's inexperience, Hilker's demonstrated preference for hiring cronies once again proved sound. Pickett exhibited not only a flair for publicity but a devotion to TUTS that lasted until the company's eventual demise. In addition to working for TUTS, Pickett also joined the staff of Hilker Attractions where he became absorbed in the business of booking and promoting celebrity artists. He learned the trade well; when Hilker Attractions folded in 1950, Pickett, along with Hilker's longtime assistant Holly Maxwell, stepped in to pick up the pieces. The resulting company, Famous Artists,

²⁷ "Theatre Man-Talk," Province 27 Mar. 1965: 28.

²⁸ Pickett, interview, 23 Sep. 1992.

remained Vancouver's premier booking agency well into the 1980s.

Though changes and additions were transforming other departments, Basil Horsfall, called by his protégé Bev Fyfe "the most bohemian person I have ever known,"²⁹ continued to dominate the conductor's stand. Credited with the invention of "opera-film," a combination of silent film and live talent, this energetic and innovative British musician was well-travelled when he arrived in Vancouver in 1940.³⁰ In addition to conducting most TUTS productions, Horsfall served as the Institute's opera director, and headed a company of young singers that toured western Canada. He died, fittingly enough, on the podium, after suffering a heart attack during an orchestra rehearsal of Bizet's Carmen in preparation for an upcoming 1950 tour.³¹

Hilker occasionally hired guest conductors to augment the work of Horsfall and his assistant, Beverly Fyfe. One, Lucio Agostini, conducted two shows in 1949. A gifted musician who had composed music for the original Toronto revue Spring Thaw

²⁹ Fyfe, interview.

³⁰ "Musician Drops Dead On Stage," Province 21 July 1950: 17.

³¹ Ibid.

the previous year,³² Agostini subsequently entered into an enduring relationship with the CBC as a composer and conductor.³³ Another was Stanley Bligh, the music and drama critic for the Vancouver Sun, who apparently saw no conflict in working for the same company that he otherwise reviewed in print.

For the professional pit musicians, however, the period between 1946 and 1950 was characterized by a struggle for control of the orchestra. Hilker and the musician's union fought annually over the size of the orchestra and its rate of pay; for a time, Hilker was able to restrict the number of professional players to seventeen, but by 1947 he was forced to raise the number to twenty.³⁴ Confronted by longstanding practices of the powerful union, Hilker and his musical conductors had little real authority over the hiring and disciplining of the instrumentalists. The actual composition of the orchestra was arranged by a contractor; he hired leaders who in turn selected the musicians to fill their sections. The resulting arrangement could be quite casual.

³² Herbert Whittaker, "Spring Thaw," The Oxford Companion to Canadian Theatre, ed. Eugene Benson & L. W. Conolly (Toronto: Oxford UP, 1989) 500.

³³ Particularly notable was his innovative scoring of musical themes and bridges for Andrew Allan's "Stage" series of live drama on CBC, from 1944 to 1956. See Drainie 99 and 108-109.

³⁴ CVA, Park Board, Board Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-F-1, file 2, 24 Feb. 1947, Item 815: "Musician's Union re: TUTS Orchestra."

Replacements at short notice by musicians unfamiliar with the score were not uncommon; nor were complaints of drunkenness among certain musicians.³⁵ The conflict peaked in 1948 when Hilker lodged a formal complaint with the musician's union against a particular member for being inebriated during a performance. The press, naturally, was overjoyed. In a page one story, the Vancouver Sun chortled that during a beer garden scene in The Merry Widow, in which a small onstage orchestra was playing, "It was difficult to know if the musician was acting the part or not."³⁶ This showdown, probably manipulated by Hilker, resulted not only in a rebate from the musician's union, but in a tightening of the rules governing the composition of the orchestra. No longer could section leaders engage musicians--the contractor was now liable for all players, and any breach of his agreement with the Park Board would result in a penalty of one hundred dollars.³⁷ Though publicly apologetic, the musician's union was seething: at the next meeting of the Park Board, union secretary E. A. Jamieson railed against the unfavourable publicity given his association because of inflammatory statements leaked to the press from the previous Board meeting. As a sop to Jamieson, the Board passed a motion that

³⁵ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Theatre Under the Stars, 7 Sep. 1948, "TUTS Orchestra Personnel."

³⁶ "Musicians Drunk at Theatre Under Stars, Board Hears," Sun 14 Sep. 1948: 1.

³⁷ CVA, 7 Sep. 1948, "TUTS Orchestra Personnel."

regretted the "unfortunate" reports of the previous meeting and officially expunged them from the minutes.³⁸ By then of course the damage had been done; and Hilker, characteristically, allowed himself to be generous once his goal had been achieved.

Notwithstanding Hilker's efforts to upgrade production standards, he persisted in the tried and true revivals that had prevailed during the first five years. Of the twenty-five productions staged from 1946 through 1949, only one, Bloomer Girl (1949), represented the new wave of American musicals that was initiated by Oklahoma in 1943.³⁹ Only two, Bloomer Girl and Song of Norway, were mounted by TUTS in the same decade they were originally composed. (Both had their Broadway debut in 1944 and were staged by TUTS in 1949.) Old-fashioned, dated, but extremely popular, classic operetta continued to dominate the TUTS program. These escapist fantasies of romantic intrigue relied mainly on exotic European locales for their setting and their plot. Perhaps they captured the yearning of the depression-weary, war-drained populace that was just beginning to enjoy the fruits of prosperity.

³⁸ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Theatre Under the Stars, 4 Oct. 1948, "TUTS Orchestra Personnel."

³⁹ Gerald Bordman, ed., The Oxford Companion to American Theatre, 2nd ed. (N.Y.: Oxford UP, 1992) 87.

Three of these productions were based on the music of Johann Strauss II, the "waltz king." He was much in vogue in the mid-1940s, possibly as a result of films like The Emperor Waltz (1947) in which the Viennese composer was played by the popular crooner Bing Crosby. That same year TUTS mounted two musicals built around Strauss compositions, both adapted by James Westerfield: Waltz in Old Vienna (née Die Fledermaus), a remount from 1944; and (by all accounts) a fiasco titled Masquerade. Set in the mythical land of "Moronika" (whose inhabitants were, naturally, all morons), Masquerade was a pastiche of dances and Strauss songs bound together by a decidedly lame libretto. Typical of the production numbers was the "Stomach-Ache" ballet, in which dancers dressed as crab newburg, lobster supreme, and champagne, haunt the dreams of the old glutton king.⁴⁰ Perhaps chorus "boy" Gerald Britland, who was featured in a dance with future National Ballet of Canada star, Lois Smith, best captures the flavour of the project:

That [Masquerade] was a terrible thing. That's the one we realized that after we had our dress rehearsal on Sunday night that it was a complete mess. We had to assemble at ten o'clock in the morning [Monday], and in six hours re-do this thing. Aida Broadbent stepped in and re-hashed everything, and Monday night we didn't know what the hell we

⁴⁰ CVA, Add. MSS 1064, Series 5, Newspaper Clippings 1942-1955, Box 2, File 13, Masquerade, 1947.

were doing. It was a disaster [laughs]. You wouldn't believe the dialogue. James Westerfield was the boyfriend of the leading dancer, so that it was more ballet than anything. He made up this awful opening number--I always remember; it was embarrassing--"We are all morons, we're proud to be/ True native sons of the State of Insanity"--Isn't that awful?⁴¹

Song of the Flame, another noteworthy production, closed the 1946 season with a nine-day run. One of George Gershwin's less distinguished compositions, it centred around a woman known as "The Flame", a spiritual leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution. In addition to the imported leads, Hilker and his new partner Leslie Allen included in the cast the entire forty-odd members of the Don Cossacks. An extremely popular Russian men's chorus, they had toured North America extensively before and during the war. As the revolutionary mob, and singing traditional Russian songs⁴² (none of which were in the original Gershwin score), the Cossacks no doubt supplied a great deal of authenticity and local colour to the production. Although one press review called the show

⁴¹ Britland, interview.

⁴² "Don Cossacks Return to Vancouver," House Program, Song of the Flame, 1946: 23, CVA, Public Documents, PDS 16.1.

"spectacular and thrilling,"⁴³ the cost must have been outrageous. Never one to shy away from a challenge, Hilker and some private backers undertook an ambitious nine-week American tour of the show after it closed in Vancouver. Possibly as a result of the emerging cold war with the concomitant hostility to anything Russian, the production failed dismally; according to Hugh Pickett, Hilker was unable to meet the payroll of the Cossacks, and the losses he suffered as a result of the tour initiated a decline in the fortunes of Hilker Attractions from which it never recovered.⁴⁴

Shows like Song of the Flame, although financially disastrous, nevertheless created additional opportunities for local talent. Other performers benefitted from Aida Broadbent's American connections: two-thirds of the dancers employed by TUTS in 1947 were working elsewhere the following year, in locations that varied from Radio City Music Hall to Covent Garden.⁴⁵ Lois Smith, for example, was touring the United States in Song of Norway, another Edwin Lester production. TUTS also acted as a showcase for visiting personalities and impresarios. Jimmy Durante secured engagements for the entire

⁴³ Stanley Bligh, "Song of the Flame Music Delights Park Audience," Sun 7 Aug. 1946: 7.

⁴⁴ Pickett, interview, 23 Sep. 1992.

⁴⁵ "Theatre Under the Stars One of City's Great Assets," Province 25 March 1948: 10.

female chorus to appear with him at the Texas State Fair, following the conclusion of TUTS' 1948 season.⁴⁶

Nor were opportunities limited to the chorus. Paul Elmer, the Seattle baritone who honed his talent with TUTS beginning with a 1942 production of The Gondoliers, returned for the 1947 season immediately after appearing in Lester's Broadway run of Song of Norway.⁴⁷ Fraser Lister, the perennial TUTS favourite noted for his broad comic characterizations,⁴⁸ toured with an American Gilbert and Sullivan troupe between the 1946 and 1947 seasons.⁴⁹ Most local performers, however, once the season was over, either returned to their regular jobs or supported themselves as best they could in their chosen profession. Although little existed in the way of professional theatre in Vancouver, many of the more versatile and talented of the TUTS regulars were able to support themselves year-round through work in night clubs and radio.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Theatre Under the Stars, 7 Sep. 1948, page 2, "Report of Hilker."

⁴⁷ "Mirth, Music, and Silver Moon as Theatre Under Stars Opens," Province 2 July 1947: 7.

⁴⁸ Mannering 38.

⁴⁹ Cast notes, "Fraser Lister", House program, Anything Goes (1947), page 19, CVA, Public Documents, PDS 16.1.

⁵⁰ "Theatre Under Stars One of City's Great Assets."

While some of the original TUTS performers were enjoying qualified success, fresh talent was surfacing, encouraged by such post-war talent competitions as C.B.C.'s "Singing Stars of Tomorrow." A future stalwart of the Canadian Opera Company, Ernest Adams launched his career by playing romantic leads for TUTS in 1946.⁵¹ Don Garrard started as a "singing boy" for TUTS in 1948.⁵² Soon playing leading roles, Garrard eventually enjoyed a distinguished international operatic career; by 1961 he was considered the principal bass at Sadler's Wells.⁵³ Paul Kligman continued to refine his comic talents with TUTS during the 1940s before eventually heading to Toronto and Spring Thaw.⁵⁴ From her first appearance in Robin Hood in 1946, Betty Phillips, "the most popular person we ever had locally,"⁵⁵ quickly became an audience favourite. The 1948 season heralded the first appearance of the young architecture student and Players' Club alumnus Robert Clothier.⁵⁶ Also joining the

⁵¹ Bryan S. Gooch, "Adams, (Douglas) Ernest," Encyclopedia of Music in Canada, 2nd ed., ed. Helmut Kallman, Gilles Potvin, Kenneth Winters (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1992) 5.

⁵² House program, The Student Prince, TUTS, 1948, CVA, Public Documents, PDS 16.1, "Theatre Under the Stars Programs, 1940-63."

⁵³ "Garrard, Don (Donald), Encyclopedia of Music in Canada, 515.

⁵⁴ "Spring Thaw," The Oxford Companion to Canadian Theatre 500.

⁵⁵ Pickett. interview, 23 Sep. 1992.

⁵⁶ "Donegal," House program, Floradora [sic] (1948), CVA, Public Documents, Loc. PDS 16.1, Theatre Under the Stars Programs.

company in 1948 were Lillian Carlson and Ed McNamara, two members of the dormant Everyman Theatre, the professional company formed by Sidney Risk in 1946.⁵⁷ McNamara, an extremely gifted actor with an impressive legacy of work in Canadian stage and film, starred in a number of TUTS productions during the 1950s.⁵⁸

Despite the abundance of highly-qualified and well-trained talent that was emerging after the war, most lead roles continued to be dominated by Americans, much to the chagrin of local performers. Hostility to the practice peaked during the 1947 season when at least a half-dozen Americans were hired. The grumbling must have had an effect, for in 1948 TUTS brought in just two outside stars, Doreen Wilson (originally from Victoria), and John Garris.⁵⁹ An operatic tenor with an apparently flawless technique, Garris began his career in pre-war Germany. Fleeing from his homeland just prior to the outbreak of hostilities, he quickly resumed a successful career with the Metropolitan Opera in 1941; soon he was also appearing on radio and in film.⁶⁰ From 1946 through 1948 he summered in Vancouver, appearing in a total of nine

⁵⁷ Guildford 19.

⁵⁸ Harry Lane, "Ed McNamara," The Oxford Companion to Canadian Theatre 319.

⁵⁹ Fred Edge, "Theatre Under Stars Strictly City Enterprise," Province 26 June 1948: 8.

⁶⁰ Cast Notes, House Program, Anything Goes 15.

productions--usually old-fashioned operettas in European settings that suited his superb voice and manner.⁶¹ A handsome man, Garris was popular with his audience and the press. Also warmly-regarded by some of his associates,⁶² other co-workers openly resented him, possibly because he was an outsider, but more likely because his extravagant affectations and the constant presence of his companion, Lutz Peter,⁶³ branded him as homosexual in an age that was less tolerant of "deviant" behaviour than our own. Garris made his final 1946 appearance as the Count in Lehár's The Count of Luxembourg and according to Pickett, many of the cast deliberately defaced posters surrounding Malkin Bowl, blacking out the "o" in "Count."⁶⁴ In a rather bizarre twist to this anecdote, whether through a Freudian slip or a deliberate act of sabotage, the house program title page for that show refers to it as "The Countess of Luxembourg."⁶⁵ Due to return for the 1949 season, Garris was shot to death outside the Atlanta, Georgia, railroad station in April of that year, while on tour with the Metropolitan Opera. Although rumoured that Garris was murdered

⁶¹ Stanley Bligh, "'Student Prince' Park Theatre Hit," Sun 29 June 1948: 3.

⁶² Mannering 53.

⁶³ Mannering 58.

⁶⁴ Pickett, Interview, 23 Sep. 1992.

⁶⁵ House Program, The Countess of Luxembourg [sic], CVA, Public Documents, Loc. PDS 16.1.

by the family of a boy that he purportedly seduced,⁶⁶ a press report in May of 1949 claimed that Garris was shot during a scuffle between himself and friends of a nineteen-year-old girl who was suing him for child support.⁶⁷ Whatever the truth of the matter, Garris not only enhanced the prestige of TUTS, but his colourful life, and even more bizarre death, bears an eerie resemblance to an operatic plot. Even from his grave, Garris exerted an influence on TUTS: unwilling to replace him in the scheduled Waltz in Paris, Hilker substituted Countess Maritza in its stead.⁶⁸

The treatment afforded Garris and other imported talent, a mixture of adulation and resentment, has characterized much of Canada's cultural history. By 1946, Vancouver actors and singers probably felt that most roles given to so-called "stars" from the United States could have been handled just as well by themselves. Paradoxically, however, hiring imported talent may have actually worked to the advantage of local performers. Doubtless the latter soon became aware of the disparity between themselves and their professional American counterparts, all members of Actors' Equity. Guaranteed contracts, minimum wage scales, and firmly-established working conditions in rehearsal and performance were just some of the

⁶⁶ Pickett, interview, 23 Sep 1992.

⁶⁷ "Garris Death Witness Found," Province, 19 May 1949: 1.

⁶⁸ House Program, Countess Maritza, CVA, Public Documents, Loc. PDS 16.1.

ribs of a union umbrella. Given the bizarre rehearsal schedule--each production had only one night in Malkin Bowl to run technical and dress rehearsals, for example--Equity regulations were likely violated more often than not. Still, local theatre talent must have envied the status conveyed by membership in a professional association. The drive to organize gained momentum during the late 1940s, and by 1950, Vancouver performers had managed to form local affiliates of Actors' Equity and Chorus Equity.⁶⁹ Henceforth TUTS was obliged to negotiate contracts with the New York headquarters of both Associations.⁷⁰ The Park Board had crowed for years about the professionalism of TUTS; for the performers it had finally become a reality.

Despite the lack of a professional association, by 1949 virtually all Canadian talent earned a reasonable, if unspectacular, salary. Gerry Britland, who as a chorus "boy" sang and danced his way through five shows, earned slightly less than \$400. Betty Phillips, in her fourth season and playing her first leading roles (in Countess Maritza and Roberta), made slightly more than \$400; by contrast, Karl Norman, in his third season, earned nearly \$900 for playing one lead and two supporting roles. A wage disparity based on gender? Perhaps, but it may have simply reflected the law of

⁶⁹ Jimmy Johnston, telephone interview, 13 March 1993.

⁷⁰ Hubert S. Banner, "TUTS is going places," Newsclipping, 31 May 1952, CVA, TUTS, MS 15,662-2.

supply and demand: good soubrettes tend to be far more plentiful than good leading tenors. The going rate for supporting roles, male or female, seems to have been around \$100 per show, although the more established male actors who specialized in character parts, such as Fraser Lister, Paul Kligman, and Barney Potts, earned at least twice that much. The highest-paid local performer in 1949, however, was Rita Georg, a former Viennese operetta star then living in Vancouver. She received \$550 for playing the lead in The Merry Widow.⁷¹ In spite of her diminished lustre, she too, it seems, benefitted from a reputation built abroad. The absence of records makes any direct comparison between domestic and American salaries difficult, but in 1948 the two imported stars (Doreen Wilson and John Garris) earned a combined income of \$4,462, or roughly twenty per cent of the total paid for talent that year.⁷²

In 1948 TUTS performers gained access to an additional source of income. A group of businessmen in the provincial capital of Victoria formed a summer theatre in affiliation with TUTS.⁷³ On the evening of 19 July 1948, on the baseball diamond of

⁷¹ CVA, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-4, File #13, Employee's Income Tax, 1949.

⁷² "Theatre Earned \$10,000," Newsclipping, 19 May 1949, CVA, Pacific Press I, Theatre Under the Stars, "S," #1.

⁷³ "Foreword," House Program, The Student Prince, Starlight Theatre, Special Collections, University of British Columbia, University Archives Division, Concert Programs (Operas & Musicals), Loc. SP, Victoria, 1948.

Royal Athletic Park, Starlight Theatre inaugurated its first season with a three-day run of The Student Prince. Other than the chorus and orchestra, who were from the Victoria area, the production was essentially the one that had closed in Malkin Bowl on July 3. Only the principals, orchestra conductor and production crew travelled with the set from Vancouver. With a makeshift stage perched in the vicinity of second base, a scattering of tables in the infield area gave the impression of a none-too-cosy cabaret. The rest of the audience (estimated at 2,000 on opening night) sat in the grandstand.⁷⁴ Unlike Vancouver, the baseball diamond made no allowance for an orchestra pit; consequently the musicians were forced to play in an open area before the stage. Unfortunately, the Park was much more exposed than Malkin Bowl, and during a production of Florodora, a terrific wind arose and blew the sheet music off the stands. With musicians scurrying about chasing leaves of music, Bev Fyfe, the conductor, struggled through the show as best he could.⁷⁵ From July 19 through August 7, Starlight mounted four productions: two (The Student Prince, Naughty Marietta) had already played in Vancouver; the other two (Floradora, The Great Waltz) opened first in Victoria before appearing at Malkin Bowl. The tight schedule, with often only one day's grace between a closing in one city

⁷⁴ Humphry Davy, "Operetta Backstage Scenes Colourful" [photograph], Victoria Daily Times 20 July 1948: 11.

⁷⁵ Betty Phillips, interviewed by Mannering, unpublished manuscript 58.

and an opening in another, apparently resulted in a great deal of scrambling aboard the midnight ferries.⁷⁶

To avoid the capricious weather, and perhaps to secure a more intimate atmosphere, Starlight moved inside in 1949--to the newly-built Memorial Arena. Yet even here TUTS could not escape the vagaries of the elements. Hugh Pickett relates how a leaky roof affected a performance of Chu Chin Chow in 1950:

We're doing the show, and the orchestra is in the pit, and it's pouring rain, and the roof is leaking, and it's hitting the musicians, and the musicians won't work. So the orchestra stops in the middle--we had to announce the night was cancelled.⁷⁷

Despite gallant efforts to involve the Victoria citizenry through parades and appeals to civic pride,⁷⁸ Starlight Theatre lasted for only three seasons. The foreword to the inaugural program promised a modern, functioning, outdoor theatre for the 1949 season,⁷⁹ but first-year losses of

⁷⁶ Hugh Pickett, telephone interview, 15 March 1993.

⁷⁷ Pickett, 23 Sep 1992.

⁷⁸ "Starlight Theatre on Parade Through Downtown Area," newsclipping, The Victoria Colonist, CVA, Add.MSS 1064, File 20, Merry Widow, 1949.

⁷⁹ "Foreword," house program, The Student Prince, Starlight Theatre, 1948.

\$13,000⁸⁰ apparently squelched any such initiative. The exact financial ties between Starlight and TUTS remain unclear. TUTS received a royalty for the use of its production, but the cast and crew were paid by Starlight. By the final season, however, because of its shaky financial position, Starlight was unable to meet its payroll obligations; as a result, few received anything more than promises for payment.⁸¹

Starlight Theatre's struggle to stay afloat to some degree mirrored that of TUTS. The tendency for Hilker to overspend his allotted budget obviously worried the Vancouver Park Board; early in 1946 it attempted to limit seasonal spending to \$63,000,⁸² a figure quickly upgraded to \$71,000. With an estimated gate of \$89,000, the Board could anticipate a profit of \$18,000 for the year.⁸³ True to form, Hilker concentrated on what he knew best, and let the budget chips fall where they may. Described by Pickett as a great producer who seemed oblivious to the bottom line,⁸⁴ Hilker's contempt of his own budget could be awesome. When the dust settled, expenses for

⁸⁰ "TUTS closes tonight After Banner Season," Province 23 Aug. 1949: 13.

⁸¹ Pickett, 15 March 1993.

⁸² CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 2 April 1946, "1946 Budget."

⁸³ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 16 April 1946, "1946 Budget."

⁸⁴ Pickett, 23 Sep. 1992.

the 1946 season climbed to \$98,000, a whopping \$27,000 over the original budget. The payroll alone claimed \$53,000, approximately double that of the previous year.⁸⁵ Neither last-minute decisions to add capital equipment, nor the relatively modest rate of inflation (about three per cent nationally in 1946), account for the abnormal increase in spending. Fortunately, a silver lining appeared in the form of unexpectedly high gate receipts; as a result TUTS managed to escape the 1946 season with a loss of less than \$2,000. In fact, despite seven rain-outs, TUTS grossed over \$96,000, the largest amount in its seven-year history.⁸⁶

The cost overruns for 1946 finally stirred the Park Board into effective action. Although no evidence suggests a movement to depose Hilker, in October the Board appointed its chief accountant, Montague Howard, to scrutinize expenses. Besides matching invoices with expense statements, he ordered a complete inventory on all capital assets, including costumes and materials.⁸⁷ As an incentive to keep Hilker's spending within prescribed limits, a Board motion was introduced to

⁸⁵ "Gross Receipts Up, But Theatre Staged at Loss," Province 23 Oct. 1946: 17.

⁸⁶ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 15 Oct. 1946, "Progress Report."

⁸⁷ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 24 Oct. 1946, "Re: Audit Control of TUTS."

make his salary dependant on the net profit, but the resolution was eventually shelved.⁸⁸

No doubt stirred by the Board's resolve, Hilker recommended a number of cost-cutting procedures. He convinced the Board to invest \$15,000 in sorely-needed equipment, mostly sound and lighting gear that in the past had been rented from local suppliers. The outlay, approved in November 1946, was financed by an interest-free loan from the Park Board's Utilities Department, to be repaid over five years.⁸⁹ At the same time, the Board set a preliminary ceiling on spending for the 1947 season of \$80,000.⁹⁰ By late February, however, after much haggling between Hilker and the Board, they agreed on a final figure of \$92,000.⁹¹ This close collaboration, overshadowed by the presence of Comptroller Howard, had a salutary effect, as evidenced in the final accounting for 1947: for the first time in the history of TUTS, actual expenses matched projected expenses.⁹²

⁸⁸ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 12 Nov. 1946.

⁸⁹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-2, file 3, Theatre Under the Stars, 28 Nov. 1946, "Capital Expenditures."

⁹⁰ "Park Theatre Budget Fixed at \$80,000," Province 11 Dec. 1946: 6.

⁹¹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Theatre Under the Stars, 17 Feb 1947, "1947 Budget."

⁹² Newsclipping, CVA, JSM Collection, Theatre Under the Stars, MS 15,662-1, 26 Aug. 1947.

While rationalizing expenses, the Board also pondered ways to improve revenue. For 1947, TUTS mounted a record seven productions over a seven-week season. Though ticket prices remained unchanged, (topping at one dollar and fifty cents), entire sections of the seating were upgraded. For the first time, a food and beverage concession was installed inside the TUTS enclosure. Finally, the longstanding practice of doling out free passes to the city's welfare organizations was eliminated. With these changes and gate receipts from as many as forty-two performances, TUTS expected to gross \$97,000, allowing for a modest profit of \$5,000.⁹³

To everyone's undoubted surprise and delight, the leaner and meaner TUTS showed a healthy overall profit (nearly \$17,000) for the first time in four years.⁹⁴ Contributing to the net earnings was the weather, with only four rain-outs over the seven-week season. Though the 1947 program ranged from Gilbert and Sullivan to Cole Porter, the overall winner in gate receipts was Strauss; in one week Waltz in Old Vienna grossed nearly \$22,000.⁹⁵ With figures like these, the TUTS Board might be forgiven for believing the public's taste for old-fashioned operetta was insatiable.

⁹³ Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, 17 Feb. 1947, "1947 Budget."

⁹⁴ Newsclipping, CVA, JSM Collection, MS 15662-1, 26 Aug. 1947.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Although the Board must have been pleased with the revenue provided by a longer season, organizing and running seven shows in as many weeks proved to be counter-productive. Other than the stress placed on production personnel, the cost of mounting an additional production partly negated the advantage of a greater box-office. What would seem to be an obvious solution--longer runs of fewer shows--was adopted by TUTS the following year. With six productions over seven weeks, and another season of fair weather, TUTS recorded an income of \$146,000 in 1948, the highest during the Hilker era; against expenses of \$136,000, the Board realized another sizable profit.⁹⁶ Despite the success of the two previous seasons, however, the Board was obviously concerned over escalating costs. After Hilker projected expenses of up to \$150,000 for the coming year,⁹⁷ the Board passed an ominous resolution: "unless outside monies can be obtained, it will be impossible to finance the 1949 season."⁹⁸ Put simply, the Board faced a cash-flow quandary. Unlike most modern cultural organizations, subscription lists were nonexistent; advance ticket sales were minimal; nor was there any sort of corporate endowment--the money had to be paid out before it came in. What seemed an

⁹⁶ "\$10,000 Profit for Stars Theatre," Sun 18 May 1949: 30.

⁹⁷ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Theatre Under the Stars, 7 Sep. 1948, "Hilker Report."

⁹⁸ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Theatre Under the Stars, 28 Sep. 1948, "Financing of TUTS."

innocent-enough resolution in the aftermath of the 1948 season eventually escalated into a battle for control of TUTS that persisted through the following year. In the sound and fury that followed, sides were taken, lines drawn, and reputations trashed. At times the various parties disported themselves like characters in a comic opera. Among the casualties were the BCIMD, and Gordon Hilker. Among the survivors was TUTS itself--at least for the time being.

Although the commissioners of the Park Board, like other elected civic officials, had been divided into political factions since the mid-1930s, they had overwhelmingly represented the interests of the so-called Non-Partisan Association (NPA). This group, a loose coalition of right-wing interests, had been formed in 1937 to combat the entrance of the CCF (the forerunner of the NDP) into municipal politics.⁹⁹ Until the mid-1940s the CCF achieved only token representation on the Board, and so represented no real threat to the NPA majority. By 1948, however, the CCF had managed to elect three of the Board's seven members,¹⁰⁰ and the fate of TUTS became enmeshed in the ensuing struggle for power. The CCF commissioners, true to their concept of public ownership, opposed surrendering the control and assets of TUTS to what they regarded as a cabal of businessmen out to make a profit.

⁹⁹ Newsclipping, "New City Election Group," CVA, PPI, Non-Partisan Association, "P," #1, 13 Nov. 1937.

¹⁰⁰ "Charlie Jones Elected Mayor," Sun 11 Dec. 1947: 1.

The motives of the majority NPA commissioners were more complex. They had initially and continually championed TUTS as an example of enlightened and progressive Park Board policy; by the autumn of 1948, however, they seemed to regard TUTS as an albatross weighing down the entire Board. In their haste to off-load the company, the commissioners often resorted to questionable pretexts. For example, one commissioner claimed that TUTS outlays tied up too much Park Board money each spring,¹⁰¹ yet an examination of the financial records for the first six months of 1947 shows that disbursements for TUTS amounted to fewer than six per cent of all Park Board expenditures.¹⁰² As one of the opposition commissioners pointed out, "other civic bodies cope--why can't the Board?"¹⁰³

The events that followed defy simple analysis; like some exotic but poisonous fungus, the sudden resolution of the Board to jettison TUTS seemed to spring up overnight and mushroom day by day. The actions of the NPA commissioners show little evidence of forethought or planning; on the contrary, their piecemeal tactics resulted in a welter of confusing and

¹⁰¹ "New Group May Manage Theatre Under Stars," Province 23 Nov. 1948: 20.

¹⁰² CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Finance Committee, "Expenditures" [January-June, 1947].

¹⁰³ "Star Theatre Society Plan Meets Opposition," News-Herald 25 Jan. 1949: 3.

often contradictory decisions. For example, they wanted to hand over fiscal responsibility to another organization but still maintain a hand in decision-making. And once the NPA majority engaged the CCF members in ideological combat, retreat was unthinkable. Unquestionably, the complexity of TUTS was making increasing and unprecedented demands on the time and energy of the commissioners. Park Board Chairman Bert Emery complained at one point: "TUTS represents 10% of the Park Board budget, but takes up 75% of the Board meetings."¹⁰⁴ Finally, the continuing struggle between the Board and Hilker over control of TUTS itself appeared to exhaust the commissioners. As Peter Mannering suggests, friction between board and staff is not unusual in the history of Canadian arts organizations. On one hand, the Park Board considered itself in charge of operations; at the same time, "the professional staff and performing company of the theatre looked on Gordon Hilker as the boss, and it would be strange if he didn't feel the same way."¹⁰⁵ The Board probably recognized that Hilker, more than anyone, was seen as the man responsible for the phenomenal success of TUTS over the first ten years. Whatever may have been whispered in private, the Board publicly continued to back Hilker. Besides, replacing Hilker would have treated only the symptoms, not the cause, of the Board's financial and administrative headache.

¹⁰⁴ Bert Emery, "New Plan Assures Efficiency," letter, Sun 22 Feb. 1949: 4.

¹⁰⁵ Mannering 64.

Following the initial resolution in September 1948 to find alternative means of funding for TUTS, the NPA-dominated Board held a series of meetings to attempt a satisfactory transfer of assets and authority in time for the 1949 season. The park commissioners hoped to convince between forty and fifty business persons to contribute \$1,000 apiece to a new, legally-incorporated, non-profit society. The money raised would carry TUTS until cash began flowing from the sale of tickets--probably by June of 1949. As compensation, the Park Board planned to turn over the assets of TUTS, including the scene shop and costume studio. Because the Park commissioners could not accept surrendering complete control, they established certain conditions for a transfer: membership on the board of the new society; the right to control the choice of shows and the pricing of seats; and the option to reacquire TUTS if they felt it was not being operated to their satisfaction.¹⁰⁶ While the Board waited in vain for the business community to respond, the CCF mobilised opposition to the plan in the community at large. Its campaign stressed the absurdity of giving away public assets valued at between forty and fifty thousand dollars to an elite body of wealthy people not responsible to the average citizen.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ "Protests by C.C.F. Termed Political," Province 31 Jan. 1949: 15.

¹⁰⁷ T. Alsbury & A. Webster, "Park Board Shouldn't Surrender Control," letter, Sun 4 Feb. 1949: 4.

While the left fumed, Chairman Emery pressed on, only to trip over legal snags. When in February of 1949 he petitioned City Hall for permission to turn over the assets of TUTS to the proposed society, the Corporation Counsel informed him that the City Charter contained no clause that allowed the Park Board to operate TUTS; for the changeover to proceed, City Council must petition the Provincial government for an amendment to the Charter. Furthermore, the Counsel suggested that the Park Board, in its operation of TUTS, had been acting illegally for years. Finally, the Counsel doubted whether the Board, under the legislation then in place, even had the authority to run the BCIMD or to rent buildings.¹⁰⁸ While the necessary laws were being drafted, the opposing forces blustered: Emery threatened to close down TUTS unless new money was found; and the CCF opposition organized "Save TUTS" rallies, including a mass public meeting at the Hotel Vancouver.¹⁰⁹ During this brouhaha, Hilker and his plans for the 1949 season waited on the sidelines.¹¹⁰ With time now forcing the issue, Emery and the NPA capitulated, and in late February agreed to run TUTS for one more season. Emery bitterly attacked the CCF, claiming that its opposition to his

¹⁰⁸ "City Must Rule on Park Board Theatre Move," News-Herald, 8 Feb 1949: 2.

¹⁰⁹ "Board to Run Theatre," Province 23 Feb. 1949: 17.

¹¹⁰ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Theatre Under the Stars, 14 Feb. 1949, "1949 Budget."

plan had driven away support from interested businessmen.¹¹¹

Of thirty-two invitations to the business community to attend a meeting with the Board in February, only fifteen bothered to reply, and of those, thirteen sent regrets.

The legal opinions of the Vancouver Corporation Counsel galvanized the B. C. Music Teachers' Association, which had opposed the BCIMD since its inception. The MTA had consistently argued that the Institute represented unfair competition because it was subsidized by the public. The Park Board argued in return that the Institute operated as a subsidiary of TUTS, which received nothing whatsoever from the public purse. Unconvinced by the Park Board's position, the MTA continued to snipe at the Institute during the late 1940s, but to little avail. Despite the controversy, the activities and the range of instruction of the BCIMD continued to grow. The 1948 syllabus offered eight pages of instruction, from music to set design to a "Radio School," with the stated purpose of guiding its students into building "the cultural life of the community of the future."¹¹² By 1949 the BCIMD was offering a wide range of year-round recitals and concerts by its faculty and students, in locations that varied from its own headquarters on Richards Street to the Vancouver Art

¹¹¹ "Park Board Keeps Show Under Stars," Sun 23 Feb. 1949: 17.

¹¹² Syllabus, British Columbia Institute of Music and Drama, 1948-49, VPL, Northwest Room, "Pamphlets."

Gallery. The MTA took the not unreasonable view that the BCIMD had strayed far afield from its original mandate of training performers for TUTS, and questioned how instruction in radio or the teaching of piano and theory was essential to developing talent for musicals.¹¹³ Above all, the independent teachers of the MTA feared that students of the Institute were favoured above their own pupils during TUTS auditions. Although the Park Board denied these charges, the MTA remained sceptical.

While the MTA mapped out its strategy, the Institute continued to expand. By 1948, the cramped quarters at 635 Richards Street were no longer suitable for housing the costume studio and the exploding BCIMD. Casting about for something larger, Hilker discovered the recently-vacated Quadra Club at 1021 West Hastings Street. Built in 1929, this elegant, delicately-detailed, four-storey brick building was (and still is) an architectural gem, modeled after fifteenth-century Florentine palazzi.¹¹⁴ Not only was there room aplenty for instruction, rehearsals, and the costume studio, but with two large auditoriums and third-floor offices that could be rented out, Hilker calculated that the Institute would be practically

¹¹³ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, Music Committee, 15 Dec. 1947, "B. C. Music Teacher's Association."

¹¹⁴ Robin Ward, "Robin Ward's Vancouver" [illus.], Sun 25 Feb. 1989: D-2.

self-supporting.¹¹⁵ Even though the building required extensive renovations, Hilker persuaded the Board to negotiate a five-year lease with an option to purchase for \$140,000.¹¹⁶

Paradoxically, while the Board dickered with the building's owners over lease arrangements, it simultaneously pressed ahead with plans to transfer ownership of TUTS. Although on the surface these actions seem irreconcilable, by the autumn of 1948, as noted above, the Richards Street headquarters were considered inadequate; in addition, the owners of the building were demanding a considerable hike in rent.¹¹⁷ Yet even so, during times of uncertainty and transition, conventional wisdom would seem to urge restraint rather than expansion. Possibly the commissioners genuinely believed that the new headquarters would indeed be self-supporting, and thus attractive to the business people they were trying to interest. In fact, the evidence bears this out: from the beginning of January 1949 to the end of August 1949, rental income from groups and individuals using the building amounted to \$9,300 against expenses of \$10,900, leaving a modest net

¹¹⁵ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, BCIMD, 15 Nov. 1948, "New Quarters for Institute."

¹¹⁶ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, BCIMD, 13 Dec, 1948, "New Quarters."

¹¹⁷ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, BCIMD, 26 July 1948, "Rental of Institute."

loss of only \$1,600.¹¹⁸ Certainly the building itself, with its gracious entrance and sweeping stairways, projected an air of cosmopolitan glamour that Hilker and the Commissioners no doubt found enticing. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, it appears that the Board, having created the BCIMD and raised it to an unprecedented level of prestige, had a vested interest in its prosperity. During the ensuing months of often bitter wrangling within and without the Board over the future of TUTS, the Commissioners as a whole fought long and hard to save the BCIMD; to them it was considered as integral to TUTS as the scene shop.

On 22 Jan. 1949, a large advertisement in the Vancouver Sun announced the opening of the new Theatre Under the Stars Building, in which the BCIMD would occupy "substantially enlarged quarters."¹¹⁹ The hoopla surrounding the opening of the TUTS Building must have incensed the MTA. In February, when the City ruled that the Institute had no legal base, the MTA hired lawyer J. Edward Sears to launch a concerted drive aimed at discrediting the BCIMD. From appearances at the legislative committee drafting the permissive legislation to statements in the media, Sears systematically attacked the Park Board's operation of the Institute. Despite his lobbying,

¹¹⁸ CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-4, file 10, Annual Report and Financial Statement, 1949: 134.

¹¹⁹ "Board of Park Commissioners," advertisement, Sun 22 Jan. 1949: 15.

in April the provincial government passed the legislation that legitimized TUTS. Sears, however, charged that the new law failed to clarify the status of the BCIMD, and threatened to sue the Board for misappropriation of public funds.¹²⁰ The NPA Park Commissioners, while pursuing their plans to transfer TUTS to the Vancouver Civic Theatre Society (VCTS), were clearly disturbed; a successful legal challenge by the MTA could result in damage awards against individual Commissioners. Nevertheless, they ferociously defended the BCIMD; without the financial underpinning and the moral support that the Board had supplied in the past, however, the future of the Institute under the VCTS looked bleak.

In desperation the Board turned to the respected doyen of Canadian musicians, Sir Ernest MacMillan, to conduct a study and make recommendations concerning the Institute's future. His report at the end of June praised the BCIMD as a valuable part of the community life of Vancouver, and proposed that it become affiliated with an educational body such as the University of British Columbia.¹²¹ The University acknowledged the benefits of such an association, but declined to participate on the grounds that it had no money available for

¹²⁰ "'Curtain' for Theatre if Institute Closes," Province, 3 May, 1949: 45.

¹²¹ "UBC Urged to Take Over Music Institute," Sun, 22 June 1949: 1.

such a venture.¹²² The Park Board finally washed its hands of the whole affair, and with vociferous dissension from the CCF members, voted in July to transfer control of both TUTS and the BCIMD to the new Society.¹²³ Once in control, the VCTS pursued its own agenda; the lease on the TUTS Building, which expired on 1 Jan. 1950, was not renewed.¹²⁴ The BCIMD moved to temporary quarters on Dunsmuir Street, where in July, 1950, the final ties with TUTS were severed. Incorporated under the Societies Act as the British Columbia Conservatory of Music,¹²⁵ this new version of the BCIMD was far removed from Hilker's original vision. Although it continued to offer a wide range of courses in music and theatrical arts, without a solid financial basis and cut adrift from the organization that spawned it, the Conservatory eventually disbanded.¹²⁶

The upheavals of 1949 affected people as well as institutions. By the late 1940s, John Goss had become a respected member of Vancouver's arts community. Born in London in 1894, Goss achieved a modest degree of fame as a singer of lieder and art songs. After touring Canada during the 1930s, he eventually

¹²² "UBC Lacks Music Funds," Sun 28 June 1949: 8.

¹²³ "Board Votes to Put TUTS Institute Under Society," Sun 26 July 1949: 2.

¹²⁴ "Tuts Building Sold to Dominion Government," Sun 27 Mar. 1950: 1.

¹²⁵ "Conservatory of Music Now Official," Province 19 Aug. 1950: 38.

¹²⁶ Harold Brown, telephone interview, 30 Sep. 1992.

settled in Vancouver at the beginning of the war, where he opened the John Goss Studio at 641 Granville Street. During the succeeding years he became highly regarded both for his teaching and his frequent recitals. In 1942, he received rave reviews for his portrayal of the composer Schubert in the TUTS production of Blossom Time. A dedicated communist, he created a theatre in his studio that was sponsored by the Labour Arts Guild. Although "progressive," the studio was noted for the quality and scope of its productions, which included Hamlet and Saint Joan. Looking back on an evening of plays and songs in which he had been involved, Peter Mannering recalls: "It was a remarkable program--varied, experimental, and a tribute to the energy and talent of John Goss."¹²⁷ Early in 1949, shortly after the TUTS building opened, Goss accepted a verbal invitation from the acting principal of the BCIMD to become a member of the faculty, and by March, Goss had disposed of his studio and moved into his new quarters in the TUTS Building. Near the end of March he travelled to a communist-backed World Peace Conference in New York. While attending a banquet at the Waldorf-Astoria, he was arrested and detained by United States federal agents who questioned him on his communist ties. Subsequently, he was allowed to "voluntarily" leave the country.¹²⁸ Although Goss was well-known in Vancouver as a leftist sympathizer (he ran for the federal parliament as a

¹²⁷ Mannering, 15.

¹²⁸ "John Goss Grilled on 'Red Activities'," Sun 26 March 1949: 1.

Labour-Progressive candidate in 1945), his arrest and deportation at the height of the cold-war hysteria made for screaming headlines in the daily papers. The fact that he had not yet signed a contract with the BCIMD soon came to the attention of the NPA, and they seized on the Goss affair as a way to embarrass their CCF opponents. On April 11, a majority of the Board passed an ominous resolution: "This Board does not desire that Mr. Goss should be a member of the Institute."¹²⁹ The decision sparked a wave of protest in which petitions and letters of support for Goss flowed into the Park Board Office, but to no avail. The Board even reversed a decision to allow Goss to appear before the Commissioners in his own behalf. Like other cold-warriors before and since, at least two of the NPA Commissioners implied that they had information about Goss that implicated him in treasonous activity.¹³⁰ Although Goss threatened legal action, the affair gradually receded from the public eye. The discredited Goss left Vancouver for England in the following year where he died in 1953 while on a lecture tour.¹³¹

While the Commissioners wrangled in their summer of discontent, Hilker and his staff organized the final season of

¹²⁹ CVA, Park Board, Committee Meetings, Minute Books, Loc. 48-B-3, BCIMD, 11 April 1949, "Faculty Appointments."

¹³⁰ "John Goss Case Ended by Board," Province 26 April 1949: 9.

¹³¹ "John Goss, Noted City Singer, Dies," Province 20 Feb. 1953: 7.

TUTS to be supervised by the Park Board. Costs, as usual, continued to escalate, soaring to a record \$145,000. Although top seat prices had been raised to two dollars, for the first time in the history of TUTS gate receipts dropped from the previous year, resulting in a net loss of \$5,000.¹³² Whether this decline resulted from negative publicity over the public battle for TUTS or from other causes, such as the weather, is hard to say. The rainfall that summer, reportedly the worst in years,¹³³ forced the Board to extend the season for five extra performances. Undoubtedly Hilker, by now the Board's favourite scapegoat, was held at least partially responsible for the 1949 deficit. Earlier in the year, attempting to justify the decision to offload TUTS, Chairman Emery had claimed that expenses for 1949 would reach \$173,000,¹³⁴ but as other statements have shown, he was prone to more than a little hyperbole: Hilker's actual expenses for 1949 exceeded those of 1948 by less than seven per cent, a not unreasonable rise.

Adding spice to an already pungent stew, the Board announced in August, 1949, that it was once again considering proposals for a new theatre to replace the one at Malkin Bowl. Of four suggested sites, the most exotic called for an artificial

¹³² CVA, Park Board, Correspondence, Loc. 49-D-4, File 10, Annual Report and Financial Statement, 1949: 134.

¹³³ "TUTS Receipts Up Despite Record Rain," Sun, 23 Aug. 1949: 12.

¹³⁴ "Stars Theatre Will Cost \$173,000," Sun 24 Feb. 1949: 7.

island to be built in Lost Lagoon. Based on an existing outdoor theatre in Scarborough, England, the plan called for a huge stage, underwater dressing rooms, an orchestra playing from a floating barge, and seating for 7,000. The Board estimated the cost at \$600,000; needless to say, it had no concrete strategy for raising the money. Instead, the proposals were submitted to the newly-formed VCTS for their consideration.¹³⁵

Whether this plan originated with Hilker is unknown; it certainly bears his imprint. As of 3 September 1949, however, Hilker had to sway, not the Park Board, but the new directors of the Vancouver Civic Theatre Society. The election of the VCTS board was an event carefully stage-managed by the Park commissioners. Anyone who had purchased a one-dollar membership in the Society was free to vote for the new board; to keep out undesirables (such as known members or friends of the CCF), applicants for membership had to be approved by a committee of Park commissioners.¹³⁶ The new VCTS board consisted of twenty-eight directors: sixteen from the general public, three from the Vancouver City Council; and nine from the Park Board and its staff. The VCTS now ostensibly governed TUTS; because certain aldermen objected to the transfer of TUTS assets for the nominal sum of one dollar, however, City

¹³⁵ "New TUTS Theatre Proposed," Province, 11 Aug. 1949: 8.

¹³⁶ "TUTS Solution," editorial, Sun 27 July 1949: 4.

Council refused to ratify the terms of the changeover until late October.¹³⁷ Under the new agreement, the VCTS acquired outright the title, interest, and assets of TUTS; Malkin Bowl and the "Old Discovery" building were retained by the Park Board but made available for use by TUTS. To sustain the upkeep of the TUTS Building and the BCIMD until 1 January 1950, the Park commissioners donated \$10,000 to the new society.¹³⁸ In return, the VCTS agreed to produce an annual operetta season and to provide yearly fully-audited financial statements.¹³⁹

While the new board of the VCTS coped with the difficulties of the changeover, plans for the following season were suspended. Hilker, impatient as always, fired off a letter to the new directors in late October 1949, stressing the urgency of appointing a production manager as soon as possible. He must have assumed he was the only logical choice, for he made a point of dictating his terms and chided the directors for wasting valuable time.¹⁴⁰ Taking him at his word, the VCTS quickly responded: it launched an immediate search for both a

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ "Theatre Society Takes Over TUTS," Sun 3 Sep. 1949: 17.

¹³⁹ "Civic Theatre to Draft Agreement," Province 22 Oct. 1949: 30.

¹⁴⁰ "TUTS Seeks Producer, Manager," Sun 27 Oct. 1949: 21.

business manager and a production manager.¹⁴¹ Slightly over a week later H. S. Bonner was named business manager, and a search committee that included Dorothy Somerset, the pioneering Vancouver theatre instructor, was established to select a new production manager.¹⁴² Hilker must have realized his tactics had backfired; in a subsequent letter to the VCTS he asked that his name be withdrawn from the list of candidates and wished the Society the best of luck.¹⁴³ On 1 December the VCTS appointed Hilker's longtime friend and associate, Bill Buckingham, to the general manager's post.¹⁴⁴ Ironically, Hilker himself had hired Buckingham four years earlier.

Hilker's abrupt fall from grace was only one of a series of setbacks that was affecting his business and personal life. In 1948 Hilker Attractions was charged with failing to pay amusement tax; in 1949 there were rumours that Hilker, in charge of the "Gayway" concession at the Pacific National Exhibition, was making unauthorized cash withdrawals. According to Holly Maxwell, Hilker's long-serving executive

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² "'Glare of Limelight' Upsets Civic Theatre," Newsclipping, 4 Nov. 1949, CVA, JSM, Theatre Under the Stars, MS 15662-1.

¹⁴³ "Hilker Says He's Through With TUTS," Province 21 Nov. 1949: 1.

¹⁴⁴ "Bill Buckingham Picked to Manage Park Shows," Province 1 Dec. 1949: 5.

assistant, by late 1949 Hilker was not only writing bad cheques, but had retreated to his office where he spent most days in an alcoholic fog.¹⁴⁵ Less than a year after he lost his position with TUTS, Hilker Attractions filed for bankruptcy, with over \$68,000 in liabilities.¹⁴⁶ Though down, Hilker was far from out. He left Vancouver, and through the 1950s re-established himself in eastern Canada as an organizer of community festivals and centennial celebrations. In 1957 he returned to Vancouver as Publicity Director and then General Manager of the Vancouver International Festival. His renown as a producer and impresario culminated in his appointment as Artistic Director of the World Festival at Expo 67 in Montreal.¹⁴⁷ He eventually retired to his hometown of Vancouver, where he died in 1989.

¹⁴⁵ Maxwell, interview.

¹⁴⁶ "Hilker Shows \$68,000 Liabilities," Sun 4 Nov. 1950: 6.

¹⁴⁷ "Hilker, (John) Gordon," Encyclopedia of Music in Canada 431.

CHAPTER 4

EPILOGUE

The history of TUTS following the takeover of the Vancouver Civic Theatre Society resembles a ride in an old-fashioned roller coaster. Blessed by fair weather and buoyed by a new administrative and production staff that included Hilker's old foe Yvonne Firkins, the first four years of the Buckingham administration manifested popular and financial success. Early in 1952, partly because of another grant from W. H. Malkin, the stage of the Bowl received another alteration, adding nearly 750 square feet to the floor area.¹ Later that year the newly-renovated stage hosted the début of the home-grown musical Timber!!, a story of B.C. loggers on a spree in Vancouver. Although critically well-received, a brief spurt of nasty weather restricted attendance, and the show suffered a heavy loss. Regrettably, Timber!! represents TUTS' only attempt to mount a work both original and indigenous.

¹ "\$20,000 Alteration For TUTS Stage," Sun 16 Nov. 1951: 36.

Notwithstanding the experience of Timber!!, the popularity of TUTS in the first years of the new decade soared: attendance for the nine-week season rose from 142,000 in 1950 to 185,000 in 1953--an average of over 20,000 per week.² Though annual expenses ballooned from \$170,000 to \$250,000 during this period, corresponding profits left TUTS with an unprecedented surplus of nearly \$100,000 following the 1953 season.³ Little could the VCTS directors know that TUTS had reached its financial crest; the downhill ride would be rough indeed.

During the next seven years, from 1954 through 1960, TUTS managed only one financially successful season (1956). By 1960, despite reducing the number of productions from six to four, and cutting the season from nine weeks to eight, TUTS' annual production expenses were nudging \$350,000.⁴ In the autumn of 1960, facing nearly \$170,000 in accumulated losses, a major financial crisis confronted the directors of the VCTS. Although the City and the Province had responded to the plight of TUTS with some financial concessions and outright grants, the company was \$25,000 in debt. In January of 1961, after City Council turned down a request for a \$58,000 grant,⁵ the

² "185,000 Attended TUTS this year," Sun 19 Nov. 1953: 12.

³ Ibid.

⁴ "TUTS Rings Down Curtain, Rings up \$25,000 profit," Sun 31 July 1961: 7.

⁵ Frank Walden, "City Council Turns Down TUTS Plea for \$58,000," Sun 17 Jan. 1961: 17.

board of the VCTS voted to liquidate operations. If this action was a ruse to focus attention on TUTS' desperate status, it succeeded: the Park Board promptly waived TUTS' debt of \$8,500; the City purchased assets of the company worth \$15,000; and Carling Breweries gave TUTS an outright grant of \$25,000.⁶

In return for this new lease on life, TUTS radically altered its operating procedure. Hugh Pickett, now the General Manager, worked for free, while Aida Broadbent and Jimmy Johnston, the other senior members of the management team had their salaries drastically reduced.⁷ In addition, the 1961 season was cut to two productions over a four-week period in July. Using only local talent, and trimming costs wherever possible, TUTS not only produced the season for a relatively meagre \$90,000, but, helped by clear skies, it managed a \$25,000 profit.⁸ No doubt encouraged by this success, TUTS mounted a season of three productions in 1962; despite continued efforts to curtail spending, however, costs nearly doubled from the previous year. Rain was again blamed for poor attendance, resulting in a loss of \$20,000.⁹ With its back to

⁶ "Three Angels Keep TUTS Show Alive," Sun 1 Feb. 1961: 23.

⁷ Jack Richards, "TUTS Back in Business With Brand New Spirit," Sun 7 Apr. 1961: 33., and Pickett interview, 23 Sep. 1992.

⁸ Sun, 31 July 1961.

⁹ "TUTS uses up all its 1961 profit," Province 21 Aug. 1962: 2.

the wall, TUTS attempted one more season, but the results were depressingly familiar: another loss blamed on another spell of rainy weather. Once again TUTS pondered its options. Fed up with city and Park Board waffling over a roof for the Bowl, the VCTS board vowed to abandon Stanley Park for an indoor site, probably at the Pacific National Exhibition.¹⁰ TUTS also considered a merger with the Vancouver International Festival whose general manager, ironically, was now Gordon Hilker.¹¹ Despite his eagerness to accommodate TUTS, the talks came to naught; in November of 1963 the directors of the VCTS voted to suspend the operation of TUTS and to auction off its assets.¹²

Although TUTS endured a string of financial losses in its final decade, to blame them essentially on foul weather, as many have claimed, may be misleading. An examination of Vancouver's meteorological records certainly offers evidence to the contrary. In 1960, for example, TUTS not only suffered a seasonal loss of \$62,000, one of the worst in its history, but for the first time since 1941 average attendance dropped below 2,000 per performance; yet for the first six weeks of that eight-week season, Vancouver enjoyed unusually fine weather, with above-normal temperatures and no measurable

¹⁰ "TUTS Gives Up, Races for Cover," Sun 29 Oct. 1963: 2.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Kathy Hassard, "After Quarter Century Lovely Tradition Dies," Sun 3 Dec. 1963: 30.

precipitation.¹³ Could two final weeks of inclement weather create such momentous losses? A comparable season in 1947 still managed to net a \$17,000 profit. Nature surely played a role in determining the fate of TUTS, but she had accomplices.

For most of its existence, TUTS as a major summer attraction in the lower mainland had no competition. Then, in 1958, the Vancouver International Festival, with backing from all three levels of government, launched an annual summer season of world-class opera, theatre, dance and music. The month-long event ran from mid-July to mid-August--the heart of TUTS' season. Whether the board of the VCTS initially regarded the Festival as a competitor or an ally is not clear, but by 1961 TUTS felt compelled to reduce its season to four weeks in July in order to reduce direct competition with the rival event.¹⁴

Perhaps the times were simply passing TUTS by. The Liberal promise of the "New Social Order" appeared to be coming true: the average industrial income in Canada increased more than twofold in the decade following the war;¹⁵ between 1945 and 1952, passenger-car registrations doubled, and doubled again

¹³ Annual Meteorological Summary for Vancouver City, B.C.: 1960 (Canada Dept. of Transport, Meteorological Branch) 8.

¹⁴ Jack Richards, "TUTS Back in Business With Brand New Spirit," 33.

¹⁵ Morton 476.

by 1962.¹⁶ People were taking to the burgeoning system of roads and highways in ever-increasing numbers; summer vacations, a luxury before the war, became a standard annual expectation.¹⁷ During the 1940s, TUTS promoted its accessibility to public transit, and even arranged for additional service during shows; by the late 1950s TUTS management was complaining about insufficient parking space for automobiles. With a larger disposable income, and the freedom created by the automobile, people no longer relied for their pleasure on the inexpensive entertainment that TUTS provided.

The restless spirit of the 1950s was reflected in the music. By mid-decade, rock and roll was supplanting ballads and show tunes as the music of choice for the younger generation. Even TUTS, in its dogged manner, became infected by change. Old-fashioned operetta still dominated the 1950-51 seasons (and was still immensely popular), but by 1957 operetta was being replaced by the newer wave of Broadway musicals, such as Carousel and The Pajama Game. The year 1958 was pivotal: for the first time TUTS mounted a season without a single operetta in its repertoire. Two years later TUTS bid farewell to operetta with its third remount of the perennially popular Waltz in Old Vienna. By 1963, not only had operetta vanished

¹⁶ Ibid. 478.

¹⁷ Ibid.

from the TUTS playbill, the once-popular form was now a subject of satire. Ironically, Little Mary Sunshine, a modern (1959) spoof of the kind of old-fashioned operetta that TUTS had championed over the years, inaugurated the final season at Malkin Bowl for a professional company.

As TUTS struggled through its final season, many must have realized that, notwithstanding the weather, the TUTS audience had dwindled and could no longer support lavish productions with large professional casts. An evening that drew an audience of four thousand plus, common in the past, was now proving the exception to the rule. Perhaps the sense of community that drew people of all ages to park events in an earlier period was fragmenting. John Charles Thomas, the operatic baritone, attracted 15,000 to Malkin Bowl in 1939; the possibility of a similar event drawing an equivalent crowd to the Bowl in 1963 seems remote. The scene had now shifted to locales such as Empire Stadium, where in the following year thirty thousand mostly frenzied teenagers rendered the music of the Beatles inaudible.

Lack of renewal among the management may also have contributed to the undoing of TUTS. The first four years of the Buckingham administration, for example, saw TUTS enjoy unprecedented popular and financial success. By 1963, although Buckingham had since resigned, the production staff of Hugh Pickett, Aida Broadbent, and Jimmy Johnston had been associated with TUTS

for nearly twenty years. Tremendously gifted and creative, they no doubt supplied continuity and stability to TUTS, but cultural organizations often stagnate unless infused with new blood. Finally, for all his faults, the company may have sorely missed the kind of inspired and dynamic leadership that Gordon Hilker was able to provide in TUTS' first decade. His vision and drive provided TUTS with a raison d'être: to be the best outdoor musical theatre company in North America.

For the ensuing five years Malkin Bowl sat virtually idle. Then, during the summer of 1969, a small group of area businessmen sponsored an amateur production of Carousel. Encouraged by the response, the group formed a non-profit society called Theatre in the Park, and once again Malkin Bowl hosted summertime musical theatre. Because of the horrendous costs associated with large-scale musicals, Theatre in the Park chose to remain an amateur organization that came to rely largely on the good will and hard work of a dedicated corps of volunteers. Paid professional expertise was restricted largely to certain directors, designers, conductors, and actors playing leading roles. Despite the uneven quality of many productions, Theatre in the Park managed to secure an audience in sufficient numbers to guarantee annual seasons of musical theatre, usually consisting of two productions that ran on alternate nights from mid-July to mid-August. In 1980, perhaps to capitalize on nostalgia, the Theatre in the Park Society appropriated the name of the original company: henceforth its

summer program of musicals would again be known as Theatre Under the Stars. The newly-resurrected TUTS nearly met its end less than two years later when Malkin Bowl suffered extensive damage as a result of arson. Following a successful fund-raising program, however, Malkin Bowl was restored and TUTS resumed operations in 1984.

The post-1969 repertoire has consisted mostly of recent Broadway musicals, with an occasional foray into Gilbert and Sullivan or one of the classic operettas, such as The Student Prince. In 1970, the E. V. Young Memorial Fund Scholarship was inaugurated to encourage and assist outstanding amateur performers to further their careers. Despite its amateur status, TUTS has continued to function as a training ground for talent such as Jeff Hyslop and Brent Carver. Although the quality of most shows could best be described as wanting when compared to professional productions, occasional gems have emerged. The outstanding 1988 production of Little Shop of Horrors was eventually remounted at Vancouver's Arts Club Theatre with much of the same cast. Most productions, however, rely more on the energy and enthusiasm of the company to carry the shows. With the ambience of the open-air setting, the audience, which can still exceed 2,000 on a good evening, often seems willing to tolerate, if not forgive, minor gaffes or deficiencies in performances. Because night does not fall until well after "curtain," the spectators have an awareness of each other resulting in a shared experience that a darkened

theatre does not allow. One cannot hide at Malkin Bowl; the result is a subliminal pressure to conform to prevailing sentiments and to suspend, if not disbelief, then at least critical judgement. Perhaps this sense of community, if only for a few hours, has always been the greatest attraction of Theatre Under the Stars.

LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED

ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

CITY OF VANCOUVER ARCHIVES (CVA)

Firkins, Yvonne. Add.MSS 93. Vol. 1. Personal Correspondence: 1937-1962.

Newspaper Clippings. "Hilker Attractions." JSM Collection. M4168.

---. "Hilker, Gordon." Pacific Press I.

---. "Marion Malkin Memorial Bowl." JSM Collection. M6055.

---. "Non-Partisan Association." Pacific Press I. 1937.

---. "Theatre Under the Stars." JSM Collection. MS15,662, 1-3, MS15,663.

---. "Theatre Under the Stars." Pacific Press I and II.

---. "Wootton, A. S." JSM Collection. M10581.

Pamphlets. The Parade of Stars Apr. 1947 Loc. 1947-36.

---. Young, E. V. 1937. "Official Souvenir Program, Civic Season of Outdoor Music and Drama," 27 July-14 Aug. 1937.

Photographs. Vancouver-Stanley Park. CVA 392-34. Aerial view of Malkin Bowl, 1953.

---. CVA 392, 37-49. Musical events staged at Malkin Bowl, 1962-64.

---. CVA 392-1062. View of Scenic Studio by Coal Harbour, 1966.

Public Documents. "Theatre Under the Stars." PDS16. 2 vol. Programs and publicity leaflets, 1940-1963.

Vancouver. City of Vancouver. "Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation." City of Vancouver: Guide to City Departments and Boards. 1988. 47-51.

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation. Section A, Series 64. Committee Meetings, Minute Books. 1938-1954.

---. Section A, Series 76. Board Meetings, Minute Books. 1936-1949.

---. Section B, Series 81. Correspondence. 1942-1950.

Vancouver Golden Jubilee Society. Add.MSS 177. Vol. 1-5. Minutes, Letters, Financial Statements, 1934-36.

---. Vol. 6. Newsclippings.

---. Vol. 11. "Vancouver: Fifty Years a City."

Vancouver Shakespeare Society. Add.MSS 343.

Young, E. V. Add.MSS 1064. "Biography."

---. Add.MSS 1064. Box 1. Prompt Books and Programs.

---. Add.MSS 1064. Box 2. Newspaper Clippings 1942-1955.

PACIFIC PRESS LIBRARY (PHOTOGRAPHS)

Malkin Bowl

Theatre Under the Stars

VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY (VPL)

Canada. Department of Transport, Meteorological Service of Canada. Monthly Meteorological Summary, Vancouver Airport, B.C. 1950-1963. Science and Technology Division, VPL.

Historical Photographs. Quadra Club. 24911. Exterior, 1939.

---. Quadra Club. 24914-6. Interior, 1939.

Syllabus. British Columbia Institute of Music and Drama. 1948-1949. Northwest History Room, VPL. "Pamphlets."

Vertical Files, Fine Arts and Music Division. Biography: "Hilker, Gordon."

---. "Music, Vancouver, 1949."

---. "Theatre Under the Stars."

---. "Theatre, Vancouver."

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

House program. The Student Prince. Starlight Theatre, Victoria, B.C. 1948. Special Collections, University Archives Division. Concert Programs (Operas and Musicals). Loc. SP, Victoria, 1948.

INTERVIEWS AND UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL

Britland, Gerald. Telephone interview. 26 Oct. 1992.

Brown, Harold. Telephone interview. 30 Sep. 1992.

Cox, Clifford. Personal interview. 6 Apr. 1993.

Fyfe, Beverly. Personal recorded interview. 11 Sep. 1992.

Johnston, Jimmy. Telephone interview. 13 Mar. 1993.

Lyons, Stephen. Canadian Pacific Archives. Letter to author. 3 Sep. 1992.

Mannering (Mainwaring), Peter. Telephone interview. 13 Mar. 1993.

---. Unpublished manuscript. [c.1979?].

Maxwell, Holly. Telephone interview. 14 Oct. 1992.

Pickett, Hugh. Personal recorded interview. 23 Sep. 1992.

---. Telephone interview. 15 Mar. 1993.

NEWSPAPERS

Daily Colonist [Victoria, B.C.]. July 1948-Aug. 1950.

Daily Province [Vancouver]. May 1934-Mar. 1965.

New York Times. Oct. 1945-Sep. 1946.

Vancouver News-Herald. Aug. 1936-July 1951.

Vancouver Sun. May 1934-Feb. 1989.

Victoria Daily Times. July 1948-Aug. 1950.

PUBLISHED MATERIAL

- Berton, Pierre. The Great Depression: 1929-1939. Toronto: McClelland and Stuart, 1990.
- Bligh, Stanley. "Vancouver." The Curtain Call Oct. 1940: 14.
- Cook, Ramsey. "The Triumph and Trials of Materialism: 1900-1945." The Illustrated History of Canada. Ed. Craig Brown. Toronto: Lester, 1987. 375-466.
- "Cross Country." Maclean's Magazine 15 Feb. 1944: 15.
- Drainie, Bronwyn. Living the Part: John Drainie and the Dilemma of Canadian Stardom. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1988.
- German, Edward, music, and Basil Hood, libretto. Merrie England. Piano-vocal score. London: Chappel, 1902.
- Guildford, Peter Frederick. "The Development of Professional Theatre in Vancouver." MA thesis, U.B.C., 1981.
- "John Goss in Recital." The Curtain Call Mar. 1941: 9-10.
- Jones, Sydney, music, and Owen Hall, libretto. The Geisha. Piano-vocal score. London: Hopgood and Crew, 1896.
- Junior League of Vancouver. The Arts and our Town. Vancouver: Keystone Press, 1946.
- Midmore, E. I. "Vancouver's own Billy Rose stages Jubilee." Sat Night 6 July 1946: 5.
- Morley, Alan. Vancouver: From Milltown to Metropolis. Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1974.
- Morton, Desmond. "Strains of Affluence: 1945-1987." The Illustrated History of Canada. 467-555.
- Parker, J. Delisle. "The Little Theatre Movement in British Columbia." Canadian Review of Music and Art 5.1 (1946): 34.
- Rees, Paddy. "Entertainment--1900 to World War I." The Vancouver Book. Ed. Chuck Davis. Vancouver: J. J. Douglas, 1976. 414-416.
- Roberts, Sheila. Shakespeare in Vancouver: 1889-1918. Vancouver Historical Society Occasional Paper Number 3. Vancouver, 1971.

Tippett, Maria. Making Culture: English-Canadian Institutions and the Arts before the Massey Commission. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1990.

Ward, Mariellen. "The House of Malabar: from Drawing Board to Opera Stage in One Step." Opera Canada 28.3 (1987): 13-17.

REFERENCE WORKS

Encyclopedia of Music in Canada. Ed. Helmut Kallman, Gilles Potvin, and Kenneth Winters. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1992.

Green, Stanley. Encyclopaedia of the Musical Theatre. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1976.

McSpadden, J. Walter. Operas and Musical Comedies. Enlarged ed. New York: Crowell, 1951.

The New Grove Dictionary of Opera. Ed. Stanley Sadie. 3 vols. London: Macmillan, 1992.

The Oxford Companion to American Theatre. Ed. Gerald Bordman. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford UP, 1992.

The Oxford Companion to Canadian Theatre. Ed. Eugene Benson and L. W. Conolly. Toronto: Oxford UP, 1989.

The Oxford Companion to the Theatre. Ed. Phyllis Hartnoll. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1967.

"Saint Louis: Municipal Theatre Association." A Guide to Theatre in America. Ed. Lawrence J. Epstein. New York: Macmillan, 1985. 276.

APPENDIX A

PRODUCTIONS: 1936-1949

Year	Date of Opening	Author/Composer	Title
GOLDEN JUBILEE			
1936	Aug. 4	Shakespeare	A Midsummer Night's Dream
	Aug. 13	T. Coleridge	Hiawatha
CIVIC SEASON OF OUTDOOR MUSIC AND DRAMA			
1937	July 27	Shakespeare	A Midsummer Night's Dream
	Aug. 3	E. German	Merrie England
	Aug. 10	Shakespeare	The Tempest
THEATRE UNDER THE STARS			
1940	Aug. 6	S. Jones	The Geisha
	Aug. 8	Shakespeare	As You Like It
	Aug. 9	Shakespeare	A Midsummer Night's Dream
	Aug. 10	various	Selections from Grand Opera
1941	July 22	Kerker & Morton	The Belle of New York
	July 23	Gilbert & Sullivan	The Mikado
	July 25	E. German	Merrie England
1942	July 7	S. Romberg	Blossom Time
	July 14	Gilbert & Sullivan	The Gondoliers
	July 21	O. Straus	The Chocolate Soldier
1943	July 5	S. Romberg	The Student Prince
	July 12	R. Friml	The Firefly
	July 19	S. Romberg	The Desert Song
	July 26	O. Harbach	Rose-Marie
1944	July 3	S. Romberg	New Moon
	July 10	V. Youmans	Hit the Deck
	July 17	N. Coward	Bitter Sweet
	July 24	V. Herbert	Naughty Marietta
	July 31	J. Westerfield	Waltz in Old Vienna
1945	July 2	R. Friml	The Vagabond King
	July 9	S. Romberg	Maytime
	July 16	V. Herbert	The Red Mill
	July 23	H. Tierney	Rio Rita
	July 30	V. Herbert	The Fortune Teller
	Aug. 6	O. Straus	The Chocolate Soldier

Year	Date of Opening	Author/ Composer	Title
1946	June 27	F. Lehár	The Merry Widow
	July 9	J. Kern	Roberta
	July 15	Gilbert & Sullivan	The Mikado
	July 22	F. Lehár	The Count of Luxembourg
	July 29	R. DeKoven	Robin Hood
	Aug. 5	G. Gershwin	Song of the Flame
1947	June 30	S. Romberg	The Desert Song
	July 7	G. Luders	The Prince of Pilsen
	July 14	J. Kern	Music in the Air
	July 21	J. Westerfield	Waltz in Old Vienna
	July 28	Gilbert & Sullivan	The Pirates of Penzance
	Aug. 4	C. Porter	Anything Goes
	Aug 11	J. Westerfield	Masquerade
1948	June 28	S. Romberg	The Student Prince
	July 5	G. Gershwin	Girl Crazy
	July 12	N. Coward	Bitter Sweet
	July 19	V. Herbert	Naughty Marietta
	July 26	L. Stuart	Florodora
	Aug. 5	M. Hart	The Great Waltz
1949	June 27	R. Friml	The Firefly
	July 4	J. Kern	Roberta
	July 11	F. Lehár	The Merry Widow
	July 18	E. Kalmans	Countess Maritza
	July 25	H. Arlen	Bloomer Girl
	Aug. 4	M. Lazarus	Song of Norway

APPENDIX B

THEATRE UNDER THE STARS:

ANNUAL PROFIT (LOSS), 1940-1949

Year	Revenue	Expenses	Profit (Loss)
1940	\$5,400.00	\$11,400.00	(\$6,000.00)
1941	Not available	Not available	\$300.00
1942	\$17,270.00	\$15,760.00	\$1,510.00
1943	\$57,100.00	\$42,240.00	\$14,860.00
1944	\$93,850.00	\$94,760.00	(910.00)
1945	\$93,270.00	\$97,150.00	(3,880.00)
1946	\$96,310.00	\$98,180.00	(1,870.00)
1947	\$108,870.00	\$92,000.00	\$16,870.00
1948	\$145,770.00	\$135,630.00	\$10,140.00
1949	140,150.00	\$145,120.00	(\$4,970.00)

APPENDIX C

PHOTOGRAPHS

Fig. 1. Malkin Bowl, c. 1940. Artray photo, Pacific Press Library, "Malkin Bowl."

Fig. 2. Malkin Bowl, July 4, 1945. Sun photo, Pacific Press Library, "Theatre Under the Stars."

Fig. 3. Malkin Bowl, 1963. Ralph Bower photo, Sun, Pacific Press Library, "Theatre Under the Stars."

Fig. 4. Aerial View of Malkin Bowl, 1953. Charles S. Jones photo, Province, City of Vancouver Archives, CVA 392-34.

Fig. 5. Quadra Club (subsequently the TUTS Building), 1939. Vancouver Public Library, Historical Photographs Department, 24911.



MALKIN BOWL, c. 1940

FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2



MALKIN BOWL, 1945



MALKIN BOWL, 1963

FIGURE 3

FIGURE 4



AERIAL VIEW OF MALKIN BOWL, 1953

FIGURE 5



QUADRA CLUB (Subsequently TUTS Building), 1939