

A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF THEATRE AUDIENCES

by

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ABSTRACT

This project attempts to establish a base for future work in theatre audience research.

The project was a survey of audience expectations of, and reactions to theatrical productions. Two specific aspects are examined. These are (1) the relationships between audience expectations and reactions and (2) the effect on audience response of a series of productions. In addition, the data was examined to discover general trends in audience attitudes, in so far as this was possible in so small a group.

Three Vancouver productions were chosen for the purpose of the survey. These were the Frederic Wood Theatre production of As You Like It, the Playhouse production of Tango, and the Dorothy Somerset Studio production Inside the Ghost Sonata. Thirty-six participants were divided into three groups of twelve each. Each group was divided by age and sex, half being under twenty-five years of age. This division did not reveal any significant trends.

The participants were examined by a series of questionnaires. The first was the General Questionnaire, which assessed each individual's background, outlook and experience of the theatre. The second was the Pre-Production Questionnaire which they completed before each production. Its purpose was to elicit an indication of their expectations. The third was the Post-Production Questionnaire, which

concentrated on the participants' response to each production.

The relationships between expectations and reactions and the cumulative effect of attendance on response are discussed at length in this paper. After an examination of the data, one important trend appeared. Apparently, the participants assimilate and evaluate theatrical productions according to a rigid and firmly established frame of reference. This does not always coincide with their enjoyment and it seems to inhibit critical and objective response. Future work might discover how prevalent this frame of reference is, its nature and its influence.

There is an indication of a relationship between the fulfilment of expectations about a play's type and intention and the subsequent enjoyment and approval of the production. There is also some suggestion that the participants subconsciously interpret the performance to fit their expectations of the play's type and intention. The main cumulative effect of continuous exposure to productions appears to be the maintenance and reinforcement of the pre-established frame of reference.

Specific points about audiences and audience response which deserve more extensive study are presented in the Conclusion of this paper. These include questions about the composition of audiences, audience expectations, attitudes to acting, costumes and scenery, and participants' frame of reference and general response to productions.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is a discussion and description of a project intended as a pilot study for future work in the field of audience response to a theatrical production. Its basic purpose is to ask relevant questions about audiences and audience research. It is the questions which arise out of the examination of the collected data rather than any tentative "answers" which are important.

In order to give the study a definite direction, two specific aspects were investigated. The first concerned the problem of the relationship between expectations and reactions. The second concerned the cumulative effect of a series of productions on the response of participants to the final production in the series. In addition to these specific points, it was hoped that the participants' responses would reveal general attitudes towards the theatre, some of which could be examined in future, more extensive, studies.

A major purpose of this project is to see how feasible a study of this kind is in practical terms; that is, how co-operative a group of Vancouver theatre-goers are, how responsive they are to this type of survey and how amenable they are to being tested over a period of time. Further, the problem of the efficiency and validity of both questions

and questionnaires has been central to this project.

Although the study itself has been comprehensive in examining the participants' attitudes, experience of the theatre, pre-performance knowledge and expectations, as well as their response to particular productions, the number of participants was small, thirty-six in all. Because of the size of the group the results of the study cannot be regarded as conclusions, but rather as observations and comments. It is these observations and comments which suggest the questions concerning audience response which might be developed and explored in more extensive studies.

Finally, the observations and comments suggest the advantages and disadvantages of the particular type of survey developed during this project.

A note on the text should be included here. When describing and discussing the participants' responses, words and terms which were used in the questionnaires are often repeated in the discussion. Whenever these words and terms are used they are underlined to indicate that the direct source is the questionnaire itself.

CHAPTER I

METHOD

The practical problems of the survey were finding people to participate in the study and distributing and collecting the questionnaires according to a rigid timetable.

A group of people who regularly go to the theatre was required. It was decided that the group should number thirty-six, as this was the largest number one interviewer could handle. Eighteen of the thirty-six were students between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, and the rest were non-students over the age of thirty-five. Half the total group were women, in order to set up a possible comparison of the responses of male and female members of the group. These subdivisions are not examined in the discussion, but the responses to the questions are arranged to make it possible to compare the non-student with the student expectations and reactions.¹

In future work, the group should be larger, but it should be pointed out that one tester can handle forty participants (thirty-six plus four "spares", see p.7), although the task would be simplified if there were two testers. In future work larger groups of several hundred

participants could be divided into groups of forty with two testers assigned to each group. Testing a larger group would produce more conclusive results

Three productions in Vancouver were selected for the study because they were available, accessible and involved three different types of play. These were the Frederic Wood Theatre production of As You Like It, a classic presentation in a traditional style; the Playhouse Theatre production of Tango, a modern play presented in a contemporary style; and the Dorothy Somerset Studio presentation of Inside the Ghost Sonata, which was an experimental, multi-media production. These productions took place over a period of four weeks.

The total group of thirty-six was divided into three groups of twelve each, maintaining the balance of male and female, student and non-student members in each group. The first group of twelve, Group A, went to all three productions. The second group, Group B, attended Tango and Inside the Ghost Sonata, but not As You Like It. The third group, Group C, went only to Inside the Ghost Sonata but not to either of the two previous productions (Refer to Outline of Production Attendance, p.11). The purpose of staggering the three groups in this way was to compare the expectations and reactions of one group with the expectations and reactions of a similar group whose members had also recently seen one or more previous productions. That is, to see if it is possible to determine the extent of the influence of

an immediately previous production. Only two groups attending two productions would be necessary for this purpose, of course. However, the participants were already attending the three available productions for the question on comparison of expectations and reactions, so the question on cumulative effect of attendance on response was extended to include the third production. Thus there was a possible comparison between the response to the third production of those who had seen one previous production and those who had seen two. The entire study could have been done with two groups attending two plays, rather than three groups and three plays. The fact that there were three distinctly different types of production available at the time was a factor in the decision to have three groups. The original idea behind this was the possibility of comparing the responses of three similar groups to three different types of production (traditional, modern, experimental). However, since the groups turned out to be more dissimilar than similar this particular aspect was not pursued.

The problem was to assemble three groups of twelve who met the above requirements of age and sex and for whom attending the theatre was a fairly regular activity, so that their expectations and reactions would be comparable to those of an average audience. Furthermore, since there was no budget for this study, the participants had to be people who were already planning to attend the first two

required plays. (Complimentary tickets for Inside the Ghost Sonata were given to those members of Groups A, B, and C who had not already bought them. See below p. 6).

This problem, and the problem of ensuring that these people attended the theatre on a fairly regular basis, was solved by using the records of season ticket holders of the Frederic Wood and Playhouse Theatres. Group A was selected by checking the Frederic Wood subscribers against the Playhouse subscribers and drawing up a list of people who subscribed to both. By telephoning people on this list and checking their age group and whether or not they were students, the group who would be attending As You Like It and Tango, and who were willing to attend Inside the Ghost Sonata (a non-subscription production) was formed.

The second group was formed in the same way, by telephoning a list of Playhouse subscribers only. The potential members of Group B did not qualify if they had seen or were planning to see As You Like It.

Since there were no season tickets for the Dorothy Somerset Studio, members of Group C, the group which was to attend Inside the Ghost Sonata, but not the two previous productions, was drawn from regular theatre-goers who had either bought tickets to the production or who had expressed an interest in seeing it. Complimentary tickets to Inside the Ghost Sonata were provided for the members of Groups A and B, and for those members of Group C who did not already

have tickets. This provided an extra inducement when recruiting the participants, and possibly contributed to the general attitude of co-operation.

There is a possibility that the distribution of free tickets predisposed those who received them to have a favorable response to the production, and this is a further factor to keep in mind in any future work.

One final note about the selection of the participants is that it is advisable to have some substitutes in each group. That is, if the final group number is twelve participants the tester should begin with sixteen participants at least. Since these participants take part in the study in exactly the same way and at the same time as the other members of the group, their responses to the series of questionnaires can be substituted if a group member drops out or is disqualified. Even with a small group someone is sure to drop out half way through, or it will be discovered that a participant does not really meet the established requirements, or has gone to one of the productions he was not supposed to attend. Unless there is a replacement for the disqualified member, the study will be spoiled. In this study four alternative participants were included, and two of them proved necessary.

Once the groups had been formed, the next problem was the distribution of the questionnaires (See outline of Questionnaire Distribution, p.12). The original telephone

contact was followed by a letter stating the general purpose of the study, and outlining the form the study would take. Included with this letter was the General, or Profile, Questionnaire,² and a stamped addressed envelope. Most returned their completed questionnaires within a few days, and only a few had to be picked up.

The next questionnaire in the series was the Pre-Production Questionnaire.³ Since the participants would be attending the productions on different nights, and so that all would have the Pre-Production Questionnaire no earlier than a day before the performance, they were delivered by hand. This was less complicated than mailing them at different dates without being sure of the date of arrival and everyone then had the same length of time to think about their expectations. In most cases delivering the Pre-Production Questionnaires by hand meant an opportunity to meet the participants. This made it much easier to collect them at the theatres and to distribute the other questionnaires. It is possible that personal contact with the participants was a factor contributing to their general response and co-operation. However, it is also possible that this personal contact might have had some influence on the participants' response. It is important, therefore, for the tester to appear neutral in attitude towards the productions when meeting the participants.

It was obviously necessary to pick up the completed questionnaires before the participants saw the production. This was done by meeting the participants in the lobby of the theatre before the performance. They were then able to discuss any difficulties they had had with the Pre-Production Questionnaire, and this meeting provided an opportunity to remind them of the Post-Production, or reaction, Questionnaire.

It was important to the study that the participants fill out the Post-Production Questionnaires⁴ immediately after the performance, while the details of the experience and their responses to it were fresh in their minds. The members of Group A were asked to remain in their seats after As You Like It, and since a record was kept of the participants' seat numbers, it was a simple matter to distribute the questionnaires. The participants then remained in their seats, completed the questionnaires, and returned them before they left the theatre. As a rule, this system worked very well during the run of As You Like It. It was discovered, however, that unless someone is standing by the participant with a questionnaire held prominently, the moment the house lights come up the participant will think no one is coming and start to leave.

Collecting the Post-Production Questionnaires after the Playhouse production of Tango was a little more complicated, for two reasons. In the first place it was not

possible to use the theatre itself after the performance was over, so the Post-Production Questionnaires had to be filled out in the lobby. Arranging a meeting place in the lobby and finding the participants (who frequently forgot or misunderstood the meeting place) in the after-performance crowd was not a great problem, but is one which should be kept in mind in future studies. The other complication was that after some of the performances of Tango the director and members of the cast came on stage for a discussion with the audience. Although the participants had been warned of this, and had agreed to come into the lobby before the discussion, it is surprising how many of them forgot to do so and had to be fetched. This is another reason for keeping a record of the seat numbers.

Distribution of the Post-Production Questionnaires for Inside the Ghost Sonata, the third and final production, was easier. By this time the majority of the group were familiar with the routine, the total audience was smaller, so that it was easier to find the participants in the crowd, and the fact that there was only one exit door made it easier to collect all the questionnaires. During the study only four people forgot to wait after a production, or misunderstood their instructions, and these people were immediately contacted and the questionnaires completed and collected by the following day at the latest.

There are several reasons for this emphasis on having the questionnaires filled in and collected immediately after the performance. The first is that for the purpose of the study it was important to get the participants' immediate response. The second reason was that in this way the time which elapsed between seeing the production and filling in the questionnaire was as constant as possible for the total group. The third reason was the purely practical and highly important one of this being the most efficient way to collect the completed questionnaires. The other possible methods of dealing with this would be either waiting till the participants sent or returned the completed questionnaire, which could not be relied upon, or going to each participant's house and collecting it, which, combined with the distribution of the Pre-Production Questionnaires, would be impractical.

OUTLINE OF PRODUCTION ATTENDANCE

Production:	<u>As You Like It</u>	<u>Tango</u>	<u>Inside the Ghost Sonata</u>
Attended by :	Group A	Group A Group B	Group A Group B Group C

OUTLINE OF QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTION

GROUP:	Group A	Group B	Group C
QUESTIONNAIRE:	General	General	General
	<p>pre - <u>As You Like It</u></p> <p>post - <u>As You Like It</u></p> <p>pre - <u>Tango</u></p> <p>post - <u>Tango</u></p> <p>pre - <u>Inside the Ghost Sonata</u></p> <p>post - <u>Inside the Ghost Sonata</u></p>	<p>pre - <u>Tango</u></p> <p>post - <u>Tango</u></p> <p>pre - <u>Inside the Ghost Sonata</u></p> <p>post - <u>Inside the Ghost Sonata</u></p>	<p>pre - <u>Inside the Ghost Sonata</u></p> <p>post - <u>Inside the Ghost Sonata</u></p>

The General Questionnaire was distributed and collected before the participants went to any of the productions. Each Pre-Production Questionnaire was distributed and collected before the participants went to the performance in question. Each Post-Production Questionnaire was distributed and collected immediately after the performance in question.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

¹See data filed in Frederic Wood Theatre Library, University of British Columbia.

²See General Questionnaire, p. 147

³See Pre-Production Questionnaire (As You Like It), p. 159.

⁴See Post-Production Questionnaire (As You Like It), p. 165.

CHAPTER II

THE QUESTIONNAIRES

General Questionnaire

The purpose of the General or Profile Questionnaire,⁵ the first questionnaire in the series, was to establish an outline of the social, educational and age level of the participants and to ascertain their general outlook and tastes, attitudes towards plays and aspects of production and the extent of their theatre-going experience.

The questions about the interests of the participants concentrated on general leisure activities and television and film viewing habits. The participants' attitude to their leisure time is important since it has a direct effect on their attitude to the time spent at the theatre. Furthermore, the participants' choice of leisure activities will, to a certain extent, reflect their general outlook and tastes.

It will be seen that the question about leisure activities⁶ concentrated on social areas, while solitary hobbies were not included. Since theatre is a social activity, it was decided that it would be worthwhile to attempt to discover a comparative and possibly related interest between the theatre and other socially oriented

activities. However, in any future survey, in order to get a clearer idea of the tastes and outlook of the participants and of their attitude towards leisure (for example, whether it should be structured, whether they prefer organized pursuits to spontaneous ones, etc.) some attempt should be made to discover their individual and non-group-orientated hobbies.

As well as giving an indication of the areas of the participants' interests and tastes, it was felt that the questions on television⁷ and film-viewing⁸ habits could be used to discover relationships, if any, between the amount and type of television and film watched and the response to theatrical staging, including attitudes towards acting costume, scenery, character, and dramatic plot.

Although the questions about television viewing could be expanded in any future study, the pattern developed for this survey worked well mechanically and the information elicited was useful. However, in the section on film some problems were revealed which should be discussed. The participants were asked to indicate which films on the list they had seen and to rate these films from one to three according to the extent they had enjoyed each one. Unfortunately, there was no rating category provided between one = liked it very much, and two = did not like it very much. A category which would allow the participants to indicate

that they had enjoyed the film moderately should have been included. (However, the participants were told that rating the film with a two indicated that they had enjoyed it moderately.)

The films on the list had all been available locally within three months prior to the survey; some were currently available. They fell into two major categories: those that were intended to be almost entirely entertaining, without much serious content, and those that were intended to communicate a serious statement. The main defect in this question is that the list was composed only of commercially available current films. No provision was made for film societies, film series or vintage films, and there is evidence that some of the participants attended films other than the type on the list. In any further study, a clearer indication of the participants' tastes and attitudes towards entertainment would probably be obtained by asking them to list four or five films they had recently seen and enjoyed, in the same way that they had been asked about their favorite television programs. A further dimension would be added by asking the participants to list the television shows and films they had seen and least enjoyed.

The section which was intended to discover the theatre-going experience⁹ of the participants concentrated on trying to discover the types of plays and productions

with which the group members were familiar and the frequency of their attendance at the various Vancouver theatres. The response to the questions in this section gave an idea not only of the participants' experience of plays, but also of their preferences. One question which was particularly useful was the one which involved a list of twenty plays. Each of the plays belonged to one of the following categories: modern comedy, modern serious drama, classics, or avant garde plays, and it was possible to discover with which type they were most familiar and which they preferred. (The error in the rating system, already mentioned in the discussion of the question on films, also appears in this question.)

This section also included questions about the practical involvement in theatre of the participants, their experience of theatre in other centres and their attitude about the standard of local theatre since it was felt that an audience's expectations of the theatre and their reactions to productions are conditioned by all the aspects of their previous experience of plays and productions.

The final section of the questionnaire¹⁰ was composed of a series of questions about the participants' preferences and attitudes towards theme, intention and style of plays and towards the various aspects of production. The questions about aspects of staging are self-explanatory, but some of the terminology used in the questions about theme, style,

and intention should be discussed. For example, the terms real world, fantasy world, inner world of the mind are used in an attempt to make a distinction between a realistic approach to a production, a purely imaginary approach, and an approach which is based on a subjective point of view. The terms chosen were felt to express these concepts in the most easily understood way, and the participants seemed to have no difficulty with them. (This does not, of course, prove that participants understood the terms as they were intended.) Asking the participants whether they preferred a play to be serious or entertaining was an attempt to make a distinction between a preference for plays which do attempt to make a significant statement about life and those which do not. As some of the participants pointed out, serious and entertaining are not mutually exclusive categories. Attempts to solve the problems of definition arising from the use of somewhat abstract terms were made by asking the same questions in several different ways and this seemed to give a more coherent idea of the group attitude.

The purpose of this section of the questionnaire was to get a detailed outline of the type of play and production generally preferred by the participants. The questions in this section were repeated in some form in the Pre-Production and Post-Production Questionnaires¹¹ in order to discover the change in attitude and preference (if any) when the

questions are applied to a specific production.

Several types of question were used throughout the series of questionnaires. The multiple-choice type of question was used most frequently. Two different forms of this question were used. In the first the participant was asked to choose one (sometimes more than one) answer that was applicable to him or that most closely expressed his opinion. This first type was most useful for questions about background, previous knowledge and experience, and for those questions which asked the participant to decide the theme, style, and intention of a production. In the second type of multiple-choice question the participant was asked to number in order of preference all the choices provided. The responses to this second type of multiple-choice question gave a clearer indication of the participants' subjective, rather than objective, response to the productions. Patterns and groupings of an individual's response began to show up within each question when this method was used, particularly when trying to gauge a participant's enjoyment and personal response.

Another type of question used in the survey was one which involved contrasting pairs of descriptive words.¹² The participants were asked to indicate their response to aspects of the productions on a five-point scale between the opposing terms. Again, this type of question, while not

used extensively, seemed to give a more precise indication of the participants' subjective response. A final type of question, used infrequently in the series, was one which gave the participant the opportunity to write in his own response.

The main advantage of providing the participants with a choice of response, is that it was then possible to standardize the answers when compiling the data, and it also made the questionnaires easier and quicker to complete. The choices provided were very comprehensive and the participants understood that they were free to write in their own answers, so that the method used was less limiting than it might have been. It is perhaps significant that few took advantage of this opportunity to write in their own responses.

One important aspect of the questions in this and in the following questionnaires is that they are direct rather than indirect. The participants were not made to feel that there was a concealed intention behind the questions, nor were they distracted by any implications that there was a right and a wrong answer to the questions.

It must be emphasized that the General Questionnaire, when completed, only gives a bare outline of the participants' background. In future work, if a more comprehensive profile is felt to be necessary, a more intensive inquiry into the participants' educational background, economic

background, and leisure activity would be required to obtain a more complete picture of their outlook and attitude. However, the danger of alienating the participants and putting them on the defensive (and thus affecting their response) by a too detailed investigation into their background is one that must be kept in mind. There is also the additional danger of allowing the questionnaire to become too long and unmanageable, both from the point of view of the participant and of the interviewer.

The Pre-Production Questionnaire

The questionnaire answered by the participants before they saw each of the three productions was brief and had two main purposes. The first was to discover the participants' previous knowledge and experience of the particular play they were about to see; the second, to obtain an outline of their specific expectations about the production. The basic design of all three Pre-Production Questionnaires was the same, but there were some variations since the three productions themselves were so dissimilar.

The first main section of this questionnaire dealt with the participants' previous knowledge of the play.¹³ In the As You Like It Pre-Production Questionnaire it was composed of direct questions about the participants' familiarity with the play itself. It would, however, have

been more useful to have tried to discover the participants' familiarity with Shakespearean comedy or with Shakespeare's works as a whole, since it is possible that any expectations would be based on familiarity with a certain type of production, rather than on one play only.

In the Tango and Inside the Ghost Sonata Pre-Production Questionnaires this section included a list of fifteen plays similar in type to the one the participants' were about to see.¹⁴ The participants were asked to rate those plays they had either read or seen according to how much they had enjoyed them. The plays on each list were included because they were the same general type as the play the participants were about to see, and the purpose of the question was to elicit the participants' response to this general type. In retrospect, however, the plays on the list in the Tango Pre-Production Questionnaire seem to bear little relation to Tango, and the responses, individual and cumulative, indicate little that is relevant to the study. The plays on the list in the Inside the Ghost Sonata Pre-Production Questionnaire are more closely related to Strindberg's Ghost Sonata. Since they bear little relationship to the production, they cannot be related too specifically or usefully to the production itself, although the responses to this question did give a fuller picture of the participants' background. This question, which tries to discover a pre-established response to a general type of play would

have been more useful if it had been worked out in more accurate detail.

In the Tango Pre-Production Questionnaire, a question was added asking if the participants had read or heard anything about the play. In the Inside the Ghost Sonata questionnaire this question was further developed by the addition of a question asking if they had heard or read anything about the particular production. This final form was the more useful one.

It should be mentioned at this point that throughout the time the study was taking place there was a newspaper strike in Vancouver. Consequently, none of usual pre-production information was available, such as discussions about the author, interviews with director, actors and critics' evaluations or photographs.

The participant was also asked what general standard and style¹⁵ he expected from the theatre in question. These particular questions were based on the participant's knowledge of, or familiarity with, the theatre, and they were also intended to discover the participants' general expectations about the production itself.

In the main part of the section on specific expectations, the participants were asked to answer the questions by imagining what their own responses would be.¹⁶ It was suggested that as regular theatre-goers they would probably have some idea of the way they were likely to respond.

This approach seemed to work very well. The questions in this section were very simple, and some had already been included in the General Questionnaire in order to discover any group tendencies. All the questions in this section were included in the Post-Production Questionnaire in order to establish the correlation between expectation and reaction. The questions were designed to discover the participants' expectations about theme, content and intention of the play, as well as a general impression of their expectations about the approach of the staging and the aspects of the play and staging they most expected to enjoy. They were also asked to describe the way they expected to feel both during and after the production.

This type of question has already been discussed in the chapter on the General Questionnaire. The main problem was to express theatrical terms in language that would be accurate and yet easily understood by the participants. A further complication was the fact that the questions in the Pre-Production and Post-Production Questionnaires had to be applicable to all three productions without being so general as to be meaningless. An examination of the questions themselves will show how this problem was solved.

The final two questions in the questionnaire were really an extension of the General Questionnaire, and should perhaps have been included in it. These were intended to discover the participants' reasons for buying season

tickets and for coming to the particular play in question. (The Inside the Ghost Sonata Pre-Production Questionnaire does not, of course, include the question about season tickets.)

Post-Production Questionnaire

The Post-Production Questionnaire had two main functions. The first was to obtain an outline of the participants' response to the production as a whole, and the second was to provide some basis for the direct comparison of the groups' reactions to each production with their expectations. For this second purpose, questions from the Pre-Production Questionnaire were repeated in the Post-Production Questionnaire but instead of inquiring about expectations, these questions now asked about reactions to the specific productions.¹⁷ These same questions also contributed to the outline of the group members' response to theatre as a whole.

The questions in the Post-Production Questionnaire are divided into three main categories: (a) those about the participants' subjective response to the performance¹⁸ (i.e., did they enjoy it?); (b) those about the play¹⁹ (its intention, main concern, whether it was comic or serious, realistic or unrealistic); and (c) those about aspects of the staging.²⁰ Questions about the play itself

precede questions about the production. It was felt that the central idea and intention of the play would be the element foremost in the participants' general response, and it seemed appropriate to deal with this problem first. There was, at the time, no way of knowing if this assumption was correct. Now that the study is over there is some suggestion that this was not the best arrangement. Further investigation would decide this.

The purpose of questioning the participants from three, rather than only one, points of view was to get a coherent idea of the participants' response to the entire experience, rather than merely to isolated aspects of the production.

The main problems of this questionnaire were those which have already been discussed in the chapter on the Pre-Production Questionnaire. These were first, the difficulties of expressing the questions in terms which would be clear to the participants and which would accurately apply to the various aspects of play and production, and second, of devising a set of questions which would be applicable to almost any theatrical production, so that they could be used for the purpose of comparing the responses of a group to different productions. One problem that continually recurred throughout the study and which should be mentioned here was that of describing visual aspects of the performances in verbal terms which had the

same meaning for both participants and interviewer.

In the Inside the Ghost Sonata Post-Production Questionnaire, several questions were added to cover the labyrinth and the film and slides, devices which were not used in the previous productions. The types of question used are those which appeared in the General and Pre-Production Questionnaires, and they have already been discussed. One point that should be mentioned is that the list of terms provided for the description of costumes and scenery might, in future work, be extended.

It will be noticed that some of the questions in the Post-Production Questionnaire are repeated in different forms. This was for the purpose of cross-checking the participants' response and it proved very useful, although it tended to make the questionnaire slightly longer than was desirable. As it is, the questionnaire took between fifteen and twenty-five minutes to complete.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

⁵See p. 147.

⁶See p. 149 question (i).

⁷See pp. 147-148 questions (e) and (f).

⁸See pp. 148-149 questions (g) and (h).

⁹See pp. 150-152 questions (j) to (n) and p. 153 questions (s), p. 155 questions (x) and (z), p. 156 question (aa), p. 157 question (ff), p. 158 question (ii) to (kk).

¹⁰See p. 154 questions (t) to (w), pp. 152-153 questions (o) to (r), p. 155 question (y).

¹¹Compare pp. 152-153 questions (o) to (r) with p. 161 question (k) and pp. 165-166 question (d).

¹²See p. 166 question (d).

¹³See pp. 159-160 questions (c) to (j).

¹⁴See p. 176 question (m), p. 190 question (m).

¹⁵See p. 159 questions (a) and (b).

¹⁶See p. 161.

¹⁷Compare pp. 161-163 questions (k) to (m) with pp. 165-166 questions (a) to (d), p. 167 question (f), p. 169 questions (l) and (n), p. 170 question (p) and p. 171 question (t).

¹⁸See p. 165 questions (a) and (b), p. 166 last part of (d), p. 167 questions (f), (g), and (h), p. 171 questions (r), (s), (t), and (u), p. 172 question (w).

¹⁹pp. 165-166 questions (d) and (e).

²⁰See p. 165 question (c), p. 167 question (i), pp. 168-171 questions (j) to (q).

CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The total group of thirty-six people who participated in this study comprised eighteen students and eighteen non-students. The students' ages were from eighteen to twenty-five, and the non-students' ages from thirty to sixty, although the majority of the latter were between thirty and fifty. Examination of the results disclosed no discernible difference between the attitudes of those between thirty and forty and those between fifty and sixty.

With regard to the general educational and social level of the participants, all but one of the eighteen non-students had graduated from high school; half of these had university degrees and five had post-graduate degrees. Six of these people were housewives, eight had professional careers, one was a graduate student, and the rest had business careers. To conform with the specifications of the study, all the eighteen to twenty-five year olds were university students, and, with the exception of one mathematics major, none was in any of the sciences. (Perhaps further study could investigate the possibility that students in the sciences are not, as a rule, very interested in the theatre.)

According to the responses to the questions on leisure activities these people do not spend a great deal of time watching television. They seem to be highly selective in their viewing and to choose programs which would let them feel that the time they had spent watching television was worthwhile in terms of learning something of value. The types of show that they indicated they preferred were drama, movies and news, and the programs they named as their favorite shows were news, educational and serious drama programs. Among the specific programs named by the participants, even those shows whose intentions were to entertain offered more educational or intellectual content than the average television show.²¹ This apparent desire to learn something and to have a positive experience from television is important as it is related to the apparent need of the participants to make time and effort invested in any activity give a proportionate return. This attitude seems to have a bearing on the group members' attitude to the theatre as well. There is some indication that the students in the group watch less television than the non-students, but this may be because fewer of the students have easy access to television sets.

The majority of the participants go to the movies at least once a month, mainly to popular commercial films which have had some measure of critical acclaim (A Man For All Seasons, for example) and they usually enjoy these

films at least moderately. The participants attend the movies almost as frequently as they attend the theatre. In fact, the majority of the group maintains that going to the theatre, movies, and visiting art galleries are among their main leisure activities. It is interesting that few of the participants attend the opera, particularly since opera is closely related to theatre. Since most of the participants say that they consider the playwright's theme to be the most important aspect of a performance, followed by the acting (that is, the realistic representation of people) it is possible that they feel they won't get satisfaction from the opera. It is also interesting that only two members of the group attend night club performances which are also a form of theatre. Among the possible explanations for this are the availability of night club entertainers on television and the purely entertaining quality of this kind of theatre, which would not make the time invested seem particularly well spent. Further, there is less relationship between this kind of entertainment and the human experience than is found at the conventional theatre. This apparent necessity of linking spectacle, action and immediacy with some kind of social, educational or ethical relevance is further reflected in the fact that few members of the group attend spectator sports.

A further interesting point is the high proportion of participants who indicate that one of their main interests

is visiting art galleries, particularly since the study suggests that they are remarkably unaware of, and uninterested in, the visual aspects of theatrical production.

The majority of the group indicates that going to the theatre is one of their main interests. Fewer than half of the group, however, maintain that it was actually their main interest. Of the seven established places in Vancouver where plays or theatrical performances are consistently available, only the Frederic Wood Theatre and the Playhouse were attended with any frequency by the group members. Although they are interested in theatre, it would appear that they are only interested in certain kinds of theatre. Fewer than half the group had seen theatre in other cities. This means, of course, that their experience of theatre is mainly confined to the type of production presented at the Frederic Wood and Playhouse Theatres. Possibly, by this exclusiveness the group members prevent themselves from developing their critical faculties. Although they restrict themselves to the two theatres above, the majority of the group maintain that they have had some experience of unconventional productions. (In this study "unconventional" means any play that has no scenery, mixed media productions, or those which involve some degree of physical audience participation.) The group members enjoyed these productions at least moderately. Fewer than half the group, however, had been to productions that they would describe as experimental.

The majority of the group rated the standard of theatre at the Playhouse and Frederic Wood Theatres as good to excellent. In spite of their apparent indifference to scenery and costumes it is probably safe to say that the participants are strongly influenced in this evaluation by technical proficiency in these areas of a production. One final point in this discussion of the actual theatre experience of the members of the group is that the majority had at one time been involved in some aspect of either high school, university, amateur, or professional theatre, and a few were still involved at the time of the study. This seems to be a fairly high proportion, and it would be interesting to see how this proportion would be affected by examining a larger sample.

The types of play the group indicated they would most like to see were modern serious drama, followed by modern comedy and avant garde drama, and it is perhaps significant that modern serious drama is the type of play of which the group seems to have had the most experience. This reinforces the suggestion that the participants gravitate towards the type of play with which they are most familiar, rather than taking a more adventurous approach when attending the theatre. More members of the group say they would prefer plays with an ethical or with a social theme, rather than those with a romantic or a political

theme. The majority would prefer to see plays about the inner world of the mind, although quite a few would prefer plays about the real world. Only two people out of thirty-six would prefer plays about a fantasy world. In general, it seems that plays whose action can be related to a recognizable personal experience, or to a world familiar to the audience, are preferred. The elements of recognition and familiarity seem to play an important part in their play-going experience.

More members of the group would prefer a play to be serious rather than merely entertaining, though a considerable number had no preference. More members of the group would prefer a play to provide an emotional experience, rather than make a significant statement about life or be only entertaining. This is probably consistent with the indicated preference for plays with an ethical theme and plays about the inner world of the mind, since these would probably demand a more personal, and therefore emotional, response from the audience. This desire for emotional involvement is supported by the majority of the group's preference for seats in the middle of the theatre. This position is generally considered more conducive to emotional involvement than a position close to the stage, where an awareness of technique and detail might distract, or a position at the back of the house which might tend to create too detached a viewpoint. The most important aspects of a

production for the group are the playwright's theme and the acting. Very few are interested in the plot, and none are interested primarily in scenery or costumes. The majority prefer minimal scenery, which supports the indication that scenery is comparatively unimportant to them. In this study, minimal scenery refers to staging which provides only the bare necessities in sets and costumes, in contrast to staging which is very elaborate and/or complete in every realistic detail. A few of the group indicate that they actually dislike lavish, spectacular scenery.

It has already been pointed out that for the purposes of the study this group was broken into three smaller groups: Group A whose members had season tickets for both the Playhouse and the Frederic Wood Theatres; Group B whose members had season tickets to the Playhouse; and Group C whose members did not have season tickets to either of these two theatres. While the sample is too small to make a positive statement, it is possible that each group represents one of three major types of Vancouver theatre-goer. There are those who are very interested in seeing a lot of plays and who make a point of patronizing University theatre; those who live in the Vancouver area and attend the Playhouse because it requires little effort; and those who only attend particular productions which appeal to them. There are several major differences between the groups which show up in an examination of the data, and these are discussed in the following sections.

Profile of Group A

The members of Group A, the group which had season tickets to both the Playhouse and the Frederic Wood Theatres, seem to be fairly conservative in their taste and outlook and to have a rather serious attitude towards entertainment and the arts. There seems to be a marked tendency on the part of this group to gravitate towards the educational and instructive, rather than towards purely escapist entertainment. They indicate some interest in most of the arts, though few are interested in symphonies or opera.

As a group, the members of Group A are outgoing. They seem to be serious and committed about the way they spend their leisure time; their interests and recreational activities are structured and organized; and they seem to be involved to some extent in community service activities. The fact that all the members of the group have season tickets to two theatres indicates their inclination to commit themselves to an organized program. It also seems to be evidence of a serious attitude towards the theatre and the use of their own leisure time.

Although they are fully committed to these two theatres, the group members are not very adventurous when it comes to attending the other established theatres in the community. A possible explanation for this is that the standard of production at these theatres is likely to be more erratic and the type of play presented is likely to

be less predictable than at the Frederic Wood Theatre and the Playhouse. In other words, in return for their support, the members of the group seem to want some assurance that their evening at the theatre will be worth their while in terms of conforming to a certain standard and fulfilling their expectations.

The members of Group A have had some experience seeing theatre in other cities, and their main experience of plays tends towards modern realistic drama (which they prefer) and classics. They prefer realism in staging, but they are really more interested in the content of a play than in the physical aspects of its production, and they are not very interested in the visual aspects of a production, that is, costumes and scenery.

In spite of the total groups' preference for an emotional experience at the theatre, Group A indicates that they would prefer their experience to be intellectual rather than emotional. Although the members of Group A seem to prefer traditional and realistic productions, it must be pointed out that they are not inflexible about this and have attended a number of non-conventional productions which they enjoyed. They feel the standard of Vancouver theatre is good and usually enjoy the productions they attend.

This group, then, seems to have a fairly serious and conservative attitude towards the theatre. Their interest

seems to arise from a combination of a desire to be entertained and a wish to learn something in terms of human or social values, and it is possible that they evaluate a production mainly in terms of the fulfillment of these wishes.

Profile of Group B

The members of Group B, the group which had season tickets to the Playhouse only, seem somewhat less serious in their attitude towards the theatre than the members of Group A, and do not have the same clearly defined inclination for activities which are instructive, educational and social in intention. On the whole, the leisure activities of Group B are more loosely structured; they do not seem to belong to organized clubs and societies and they seem less serious and committed about the way they spend their leisure time than do the members of Group A.

Group B's more relaxed attitude is reflected in their approach to theatre. Although they have season tickets to the Playhouse they do not seem to go to all the performances, and they do not often go to theatres other than the Playhouse. This seems to indicate that theatre is a rather casual interest to these participants, and this might be one explanation for their less serious attitude towards plays.

Although modern serious drama is the type of play the members of Group B have the most experience of seeing, this is not the type of play they seem to prefer. It is possible that they are not highly selective in their choice of plays but are automatically inclined to attend those plays for which they hold season tickets. It also suggests that they do not make a point of discovering what the play is about before they buy their season tickets. Group B prefers plays that are entertaining, rather than those which are serious. On the other hand, they also state that they prefer plays with an ethical theme, and this possibly expresses a preference for a more personal experience at the theatre, rather than an experience which has relevance to society in general. In this way they seem to feel that a performance is complete in itself and does not have to have social significance. Group B seems to regard the theatre as a place to have a pleasant evening rather than as a place where, in order to have a worthwhile experience, it is necessary to learn something about life or society.

It is interesting to note that the responses of Group B to the questions asking what type of play they would prefer (modern comedy, classics, etc.) and what type of experience they would like to have (entertaining, emotional, educational) were quite scattered. This lack of uniformity possibly indicates that they are responding less according to pre-established ideas about the function

of the theatre than according to individual preferences.

The most important aspect of a production to the members of Group B is the acting, and they indicate that the visual aspects of a play are not important to them. Unlike the members of Group A, they do not indicate any particular interest in realistic staging, and they say they would prefer minimal staging to any other kind. Further study might indicate whether or not this is true, or whether they actually mean that they prefer the scenery to be unobtrusive and supportive of the action rather than distracting from it. This apparent lack of interest in costumes and scenery seems to contradict the conventional assumption that spectacle is an important element of a pleasant and entertaining experience at the theatre. This is deduced from the fact that Group B prefers entertaining rather than exclusively serious theatre, and yet do not feel that costumes and scenery are an important aspect of this experience. They rely, rather, on the acting.

Some of the members of Group B, though not as many as in Group A, have had some experience seeing non-conventional productions; very few have been to productions in which they were asked to participate. The members of Group B have had some experience of theatre in other cities. On the whole, the members of Group B enjoy themselves at the theatre, and, like Group A, felt that the standard of Vancouver theatre was good.

Profile of Group C

Group C is the group whose members, while describing themselves as regular theatre goers, did not have season tickets for either the Frederic Wood or the Playhouse Theatres. On the whole, the members of Group C tend to be less social in their leisure activities than the members of either Groups A or B, and they do not seem to adhere to any structured programs as far as these activities are concerned. Only a few activities were chosen by the members of Group C from the list provided, and as the activities on the list were generally social, it is possible that they spend their leisure time in more solitary and more individualistic pursuits. Although the members of Group C are interested in going to the Art Gallery and to films, they indicate very little interest in symphony or opera. This lack of interest in symphony, which has been mentioned in the discussions of the other two groups is difficult to explain without further research.

Comparing the range of films, on the list provided, seen by the members of this group with the amount of time they spend going to films,²² and taking into account that the list was composed of commercial movies available at the time of the study, it would appear that the members of Group C probably go to a considerable number of film series or attend film society showings. This suggests an interest in films as an art form, rather than merely as an

entertainment medium, and this point of view is reflected in some of the attitudes of this group towards theatre. In the first place, they are possibly more inclined to accept a production as a complete work of art in itself, without demanding that it have some educational or social relevance. Also, the members of Group C are considerably more interested in costumes and scenery than the members of the other two groups. Group C indicated that on the whole they had no preference as to whether a play was serious or entertaining. This suggests that the members of Group C have a less clearly defined preconceived idea of the function of a play, which must be fulfilled in order for them to feel that they have had a satisfying experience.

The members of Group C maintain that during a performance they are most interested in the playwright's theme. They are more interested in the acting than in the scenery and costumes, and they would prefer the scenery to be minimal. A possible explanation for this preference for minimal scenery, which was first noticed in the responses of Group B, is that these participants find elaborate or realistic scenery intrusive and distracting, rather than supportive of the action.

The members of Group C would prefer plays with either a social or an ethical theme, and they would prefer to have an emotional experience rather than an exclusively educational or entertaining one. This seems to indicate

that they expect more from a production than the members of Group B, who would prefer to be entertained, and they don't feel that a production must have some positive social value, as do the members of Group A.

It is interesting that the majority of Group C has been involved in some kind of theatre at one time. With regard to attendance, almost all of Group C had been to the Frederic Wood Theatre several times in the previous year, and more than half had been to the Dorothy Somerset Studio. Very few, however, had been to the Playhouse, and there is not much indication of attendance at other Vancouver theatres. This either indicates a rather casual interest in the theatre, or an interest that is satisfied by the type of production provided by the two U.B.C. theatres. Since the Group members restrict themselves in this way, their attitudes will possibly be determined by the type of theatre available at these two places.

Group C's main experience of plays seems to be of modern serious drama, but more members of this group than of the other two groups have seen productions that could be called experimental. They would prefer to see either modern serious drama or avant garde theatre. They have considerable experience of seeing non-conventional productions and some experience of theatre in other cities. Only half of the group felt that the standard of theatre in Vancouver was good, the rest felt it was from fair to

mediocre. This would seem to indicate that the members of this group have a higher standard with regard to theatre than the members of the other two groups.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III

²¹See p. 148 question (f).

²²See p. 148 question (g) and p. 149 question (h).

CHAPTER IV

GROUP RESPONSE TO AS YOU LIKE IT

As You Like It - Description of Production

The main intention of the Frederic Wood Theatre production of As You Like It was to entertain the audience. For this purpose, apparently, the problems suggested by the play and the serious undertones were largely undeveloped, and the element of parody, which is an essential aspect of the play, was mainly ignored. Because thematic material was played down, there seemed to be little development from beginning to end of the production. Consequently the action depended on the relationships between the characters, which, perhaps because of their superficial treatment, seemed artificial and uninteresting. The result was a production which, while it was attractive to look at, was essentially meaningless and rather boring.

The general style of the production was traditional, in that it conformed to an accepted type of twentieth century Shakespearean tradition. Dr. F.B. St. Clair described the visual effect of the production in his review in Stage Door:²³

The costumes and art nouveau Forest of Arden appeared to be an essay in evoking a turn-of-the-century Shakespeare production. . . .

The Forest of Arden set created a fantasy world. The various elements of the forest: trees, grassy banks, flowers, a brook, were three-dimensional but highly artificial, and although the actors treated the set as though it were a real locale, the audience was not expected to accept it as realistic. The transition from winter to summer was indicated by hanging the trees with blue and green chiffon streamers. The overall effect of this set was pastoral but, perhaps because of the artificiality, there was a sad, arid quality to the scene which seemed to serve no purpose.

The court scenes were played on the forestage in front of a plain drop which had a non-representative design suggesting pillars. This set was simple and austere, the dominant colour was gray, and it provided a considerable contrast to the forest.

The costumes did not strictly belong to any historical period, although there was a definite medieval, or perhaps more accurately, Pre-Raphaelite, motif to the costume scheme, particularly in the court scenes. The costume colours in the court scenes were mainly wine and blue, and in the forest scenes brown and beige, with Jaques in black, Touchstone and Audrey in motley, and some of the others in lighter colours. The general effect was muted and somewhat austere.

The cumulative effect of costumes and scenery was the establishment of a non-existent, though perhaps not ideal, world.

In general, the standard of the acting in this production was rather low. Energy and movement were consistently substituted for thought and motivation. The exceptions were the actors playing Duke Frederick, Celia, and Le Beau. There was some suggestion in these performances that the characters had reasons for their actions and ideas about these actions. The actors playing Rosalind, Orlando, and Touchstone, on the other hand, employed a curious, unnatural, presentational style of acting, which was picked up by a number of those playing minor characters. Although Jaques and Touchstone were often funny, their performances bore little relation to the action of the play. Many of the actors, particularly those playing Touchstone and Rosalind, overacted to a considerable degree, and there was no unity to the overall approach to the acting style. In the same review, Dr. St. Clair describes the acting as:

. . . a galloping exercise in unremittingly broad acting.

Romantic scenes were played in the same hectoring manner as the rustic episodes, and everything approaching nuance in individual characterization was almost entirely absent.

Given the circumstances it would be unfair to criticize individual actors; even the Freddy Wood's usually effective combination of Equity and student players failed to yield any performances that emerged with distinction from the overall mediocrity of the effort. 24

As the above suggests, the cast of this production was composed of a combination of student and professional actors. The program indicated which actors were professional.

Since there was no thematic development, the action of the play depended on the relationships between the characters. However, with the exceptions already mentioned, there was no suggestion that the characters on stage had any connection with real people. Consequently, the relationships seemed artificial and arbitrary and, even within the conventions of the play, the action seemed mechanical and contrived.

The production was intended to provide a happy, enjoyable, escapist evening for its audience. In order to fulfill this intention, any stimulating elements of the play in terms of ideas or problems were de-emphasized by the production.

In spite of the critical comments outlined above, general audience response to this production was good. The majority of people who went to the play seemed to be enjoying themselves and seemed to approve of the production.

The Expectations of Group A About As You Like It

The group that attended As You Like It had very optimistic expectations about the production. Not only did they expect to enjoy themselves, but there are suggestions that they also expected to feel better after having seen the play than they had before they had seen it.²⁵

The members of Group A generally expected staging at the Frederic Wood Theatre to be experimental, and they expected this production to be a romantic, escapist comedy. It is difficult to decide whether they were expecting an experimental treatment of a romantic escapist comedy or not. It is more probable that they did not expect this particular production to be experimental. They did expect the play as well as the production to be unrealistic and without any serious intentions.

Although the members of the group expected the production to be an unrealistic fantasy, which could have suggested infinite possibilities for the staging, their ideas are actually very limited when anticipating the costumes and scenery.²⁶ Few felt that either of these aspects would be historical, which would seem to be at least one logical choice. On the other hand, no one expected costumes and scenery to be modern. This limited response seems to suggest that the participants do not give much advance thought to these aspects. Perhaps they do not feel that costumes and

scenery are an important factor in their enjoyment. It is possible they are not really aware that it is these aspects which significantly establish the mood and define the style of the production. The uniformity of response to these questions suggests that the group is responding according to some pre-established general frame of reference, rather than according to their own ideas.

The aspect of the play and production that Group A members are most interested in are the characters and the actors, and it is possible that they feel that mood and style of a production are dependent on the actors. It is probable, however, that they do not separate mood, atmosphere and style from the total effect of the production. Thus it is the acting and characters, not the costumes and scenery, which create this effect for the members of this group.

Although the members of Group A are fairly experienced at seeing plays, they do not seem very aware of the various aspects of the production as separate components, nor do they seem disposed to take a critical, analytical approach. This suggests that their main interest in the theatre is the effect it has on them emotionally, in spite of the fact that their indicated preference is for an intellectual experience.

The Reactions of Group A to As You Like It

In discussing the participants' reaction to As You Like It it is important to point out again that the primary intention of the production was to entertain the audience and that the action was presented in such a way that the audience was not asked to make decisions about the characters, judge their actions, or question the situations.

The members of this group on the whole enjoyed the production and felt relaxed and refreshed after having seen it. They felt the production did not have much serious intention and they had a very uncritical attitude towards the various aspects of production. They accepted the production as a more than adequate presentation of the play and enjoyed the experience of watching the action unfold without feeling any intellectual obligation.

The group felt that although the play was a fantasy, it was realistic (by which it can probably be assumed they mean believable) and it is interesting that they do not see any inconsistency between these two descriptions. However, it must be pointed out that the play as presented on this occasion was not in fact particularly realistic (or even believable), and it is possible that in an attempt to express their response to the play they automatically chose the complimentary rather than the pejorative term. On the other hand, it is entirely possible that they were able to suspend

their disbelief to the extent that the action did seem believable.

It is interesting that the group does not make any distinction between the characters they enjoyed the most and the actors they felt gave the best performances. In both cases these were the two main comic characters, Touchstone and Jaques, and the female romantic lead, Rosalind. In general, if the character is enjoyable in himself they seem to think that the actor has given a good performance, whether or not that actor has contributed to the development of the theme and the mood of the production or has created a believable character showing evidence of some life beyond the repetition of his lines. Besides having the advantage of being characters which automatically demanded attention, all three characters were presented in such a way as to make a simple version of their every motive and idea immediately apparent to the audience. The actors playing Rosalind and Touchstone definitely overacted (it is perhaps significant that Jaques and Touchstone were played by professional actors.) The audience, then, did not have to exert themselves and this opportunity to relax seems to be an important aspect of their play-going experience, one which they expect and enjoy. Although they felt the standard of acting was very good and professional and although they enjoyed the acting, few of the group could hear all the actors all the time. There is no indication, however, that this bothered

them very much. This seems to corroborate the idea that audiences expect to miss at least some of what is going on on stage. The group seemed to feel a reluctance about saying that any of the actors were not so good as the majority, and this may or may not be a reflection of the tendency to make allowances for student performers. This attitude may have influenced the general response to the production. This in turn suggests that, although they are aware of some shortcomings in the production, their enjoyment is not much affected by this awareness. In general their enjoyment does not seem to be substantially affected by any critical evaluation they might make.

The group's choice of descriptive terms for the costumes and scenery was appropriate to the production.²⁷ The most popular costumes were Frederick's, Rosalind's and Touchstone's. It is significant that two of the most popular costumes were worn by the actors who were chosen as the best and who presented two of the favorite characters. Possibly the group felt that the three costumes chosen most effectively expressed the personalities of the characters wearing them. A further possibility is that the members could only clearly remember the costumes worn by characters who made an impression on them. Perhaps it is significant that two out of the three costumes, Frederick's and Rosalind's were comparatively simple in design. It is interesting that the non-students in the group indicated

that Frederick's costume, which effectively indicated his authoritarian role, appealed to them, while the students indicated that Touchstone's costume which, with its suggestion of ragged motley indicated an anti-authoritarian outlook, appealed to them.

Although they enjoyed the production, quite a few members of the group found the plot tedious to some degree, and as many as half of the group said they were occasionally bored. This acceptance of boredom leads to the rather interesting conclusion that audiences expect to be bored at least part of the time and do not find this boredom particularly detrimental to their overall enjoyment.

The Relationship Between the Expectations of Group A And Their Reactions to As You Like It

The most significant aspect of the comparison of Group A's expectations of As You Like It with their reactions to the production is the way they closely correspond.

Group A said that they expected the standard of production at the Frederic Theatre to be from good to excellent, and they expected the staging at this theatre to be experimental. They expected As You Like It to be an unrealistic, romantic comedy set in a fantasy world, the main purpose of which was to entertain. The aspects of the play that the group members expected to enjoy were either the

relationships between the characters or the individual characters themselves, rather than the plot or the poetic language, and they expected to enjoy the acting, rather than scenery, costumes or music. They expected the acting would be either elegant and stylized or energetic and flamboyant, both of which seem to fit in with the general expectation that the play would be a romantic comedy. They felt the costumes would be fanciful, colorful and functional, and that the scenery would be fanciful and colorful. They expected to feel amused during the performance, and happy, relaxed and refreshed after the performance.

After having seen the production, Group A decided that the general standard was good, and the general style was traditional. They felt the play was a realistic, romantic comedy with some serious elements, set in a fantasy world, the primary function of which was to entertain. With the exception of the use of the word "realistic", this is a fairly accurate description of the play. The aspect of the production they most enjoyed was the acting and the aspect of the play they most enjoyed was the interesting, individual characters. It is interesting that the relationships between these characters, on which the development of the action in this production depended, did not interest them more. They felt that the acting was either natural and lifelike, energetic and flamboyant, or elegant and stylized. Energetic and flamboyant is perhaps the most

appropriate choice, as the acting was neither elegant and stylized nor natural and lifelike. The group members described the costumes as historical, functional and colorful, and the scenery as fanciful, colorful and functional. (Although the costumes were far from monochromatic, colorful does not seem to be an entirely appropriate choice.) During the performance the group maintained that they had felt amused, delighted, and interested. After the performance they had felt happy, relaxed and refreshed.

It seems clear, then, that this production on the whole met the expectations of the group. Except in a few cases there are no great changes in the attitudes revealed in the Pre-Production and in the Post-Production Questionnaires; the main difference is that the responses to the questions in the Post-Production Questionnaire are slightly more fully developed than the responses in the Pre-Production Questionnaire to questions about the same aspects of the performance, which is, of course, to be expected.

The surprisingly uniform response to the Pre-Production and Post-Production Questionnaires suggests that there are some established ideas about the theatre which are common to all the members of the group. These pre-established or preconceived ideas seem to have created a frame of reference which is used by the participants when anticipating and evaluating a production. Further study might reveal how

extensively this frame of reference is established.

There were few changes in attitude after the members had seen the play, in spite of the fact that one or two of the responses are slightly inappropriate, and this further supports the suggestion of a fairly firmly established frame of reference customarily applied by the group to a production. While the group's expectation that the general style at the Theatre, though not necessarily of this production, was that it would be experimental, they decided that the production was actually traditional. They expected that this particular production would be unrealistic but felt after having seen the play, that it was realistic. The first change in attitude can be explained by the fact that in the Pre-Questionnaire the question on style referred to the overall approach to the Theatre, rather than to this particular production. The second change in attitude, from an expectation that the production would be unrealistic to the decision that it was in fact realistic, is possibly a result of the physical immediacy of the production, and sheds some light on the group's understanding of the term "realistic".

One factor which must be taken into account is that the majority of the group had read As You Like It and so were somewhat familiar with the play, and probably both expectations and reactions are related to this familiarity.

Several things emerge. The first is that the uniformity of response seems to indicate a firmly established frame of reference which the group customarily applies to the theatre. There are even some indications that this frame of reference is so firmly established that the facts of the production are interpreted in order to fit it. (Note, for example, the somewhat inappropriate use of the word colorful to describe costumes.) The second point is that the production seemed to meet the expectations of the group. The third is that they maintain they enjoyed the production very much. With reference to these last two points a tentative conclusion is that the fact that the production matched their expectations was in itself a strong factor in their enjoyment.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IV

²³F.B. St Clair, "As You Like It"; Stage Door, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 1970, p. 6.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵See p.162 question (k). The participants expect to feel happy, relaxed, and refreshed after the performance.

²⁶See p. 163 question (m).

²⁷See p. 169 question (n) - scenery and p. 170 question (p)- costumes.

CHAPTER V

GROUP RESPONSE TO TANGO

Tango - Description of the Production

The Playhouse production of Tango, like the Frederic Wood production of As You Like It, seemed based on several assumptions about its audience, the main one being that they would be sympathetic to the kind of jokes which support an extremely conservative social point of view. Stomil and Eleanor, for example, were presented as middle-aged hippies, automatic objects of ridicule, and, in an attempt to be topical, the production tried to develop a kind of reverse generation gap theme. The effect of these two motifs, which are not an inherent aspect of the text, was intrusive and distracting.

The action took place in a box set representing a large, high-ceilinged, angular, sparsely-furnished living room of a decaying old house. There was some suggestion that junk had been accumulating in corners over several decades, although the room was not cluttered. Upstage, at right angles to the audience, in a poorly lighted area, was a catafalque. Because of its position, it was difficult to understand what this object actually was until well into the play. Since considerable action takes place on and

around the catafalque at the beginning of the play, this obscurity was confusing and distracting.

The set was prevented from being realistic by the device of making the walls transparent when it was considered necessary to reveal the action going on behind them. The general effect of the set was to create a feeling of suspension in time and place in that it was difficult to decide in what era and what country the action was taking place.

Various characters in the first act wore costumes which spanned an historical period from the late eighteenth-nineties to the present time. Each costume seemed intended to express the point of view of the character represented. For example, Stomil, Eleanor, and Eddie were dressed in versions of rich hippy costumes, Arthur wore very conventional gray slacks and a blazer, Eugenia was dressed in Edwardian costume, and Eugene wore a jacket, tie, and bermuda shorts. Individually the costumes were effective and amusing. Collectively, however, they merely added to the obscure and confused allegory of the play, underlined the characters' lack of believability, and contributed to the stylistic confusion. The costume colors in the first act were mainly muted grays and blues and dark colours.

The second act costumes were highly effective and attractive, and were based on Edwardian evening dress, with Ala in a period wedding dress. The exception was Arthur, who wore his first act costume. Otherwise, the

costume colors were black and white.

The apparent lack of decision about a definite style was reflected in the acting. Each actor seemed to have his own way of dealing with the questions of historical period and locale and with what seemed to be a slightly stilted script. Some unity was achieved among the actors by the adoption of an indeterminate foreign accent. This, however, had a confusing and distracting effect.

The actor playing Arthur expressed the character by using varying stages of hysteria. Not only was this approach monotonous, but it resulted in a character who was so unreasonable that he was meaningless. Since Arthur was the central pivot of the action, this performance was disastrous in its effect on the total play.

The actor playing Eddie gave an interesting if rather presentational performance, and his metamorphosis was acceptable and believable. The actor playing Eugene, however, was the only one who created a character who had motives and ideas behind his behavior and who seemed to have some life apart from the lines he was reciting. The actor playing Stomil also had some moments of believability, but the rest of the cast seemed to rely on the presentation of caricatures.

The primary criticism of the production is that it seemed to work against the text. While the main intention of the play is the expression of a political allegory, the

production, based on the assumption that this approach would appeal to a Vancouver audience, tried to present a comedy about the generation gap. This confusion about the intention was evident in the different approaches of the pre-play publicity, which emphasized the comic generation gap theme, and the program note which outlined the political background of the play. As Mr. Ben Metcalfe expressed it in his C.B.C. radio review:

Instead of Mrozek's hard and sharply pointed allegory, ruthlessly stabbing at the audience, showing us how a decadent society inexorably falls victim to a brutal and mindless authoritarianism, Mr. Dearing [the director] gives us a flabby and silly melodrama that totally contradicts the program notes. . . .

Instead of giving us a terrible sense of sinister foreboding, we are sent away with a sense of comic failure.

Only a student of the play could possibly sustain its meaning under these circumstances. Anyone coming off the street would be at a loss to know what was going on under the farce. 28

This production of Tango, like the production of As You Like It, seemed to be based on an assumed idea of what the audience wanted to see, rather than on the presentation of a theme or idea inherent in the play. General audience reception of the production seemed good rather than otherwise, but there seemed to be a certain amount of perplexity and a feeling of confusion underlying this response.

The Expectations of Group A About Tango

When examining the results of Group A's pre-Tango questionnaires, it is important to remember that neither the play nor the author are well known to the general public. The group's expectations therefore could not be based on a knowledge of Mrozeck's work. The group had to rely on Playhouse publicity material and on the comments of friends who had seen the production for any pre-performance information.²⁹ Through these two sources the Playhouse, then, had a greater than usual direct influence on the expectations of their audience. Since the expectations of Group A are very consistent with the approach of the production, it is possible that these expectations were created by the very people who produced Tango. A situation in which the standards used by the audience to evaluate the production are created by those who present the play is obviously not a healthy one for the theatre, since it decreases the possibility of a critical attitude on the part of the audience.

The expectations of Group A, that the play would be realistic, have a social theme, make a meaningful statement about life, have some comic elements and be entertaining, are consistent with the approach of the publicity material, which also suggested that the play would be about the "generation gap". The group members did not feel, evidently, that this was going to be an entirely amusing or relaxing

treatment of the topic. They did not expect the play to be escapist, but felt it would have serious intentions, and they expected to have some questions in their minds at the end of the performance.

Group A expected the play to be realistic in terms of representing some familiar situation and, since they expected to feel puzzled and disturbed when it was over, it is possible that to the audience, the more realistic the play, the more potentially unsettling it is.

The group members were fairly optimistic about the standard of the staging, an expectation which is probably based on their previous knowledge of productions at the Playhouse. Their expectations about the staging of this particular production were logical and consistent with the type of play they had indicated they expected to see. That is, they expected the acting to be natural and lifelike and the costumes to be realistic and modern. They felt that the aspect of the production they would enjoy the most would be the acting, followed, it is interesting to note, by the costumes. This sudden interest in costumes on the part of Group A may be a result of having recently seen As You Like It, the costumes of which were fairly striking, although at the time these costumes did not seem to make a great impression on the members of Group A.

One final point is that although the group members seemed fairly definite in their expectations of the type

of play they were going to see and the manner in which it would be staged, they were not as a group able to fit the play into any definite category.³⁰ The choices provided were fairly rigid almost academic ones, and it is possible that they have a general rather than a specific meaning for the participants, who are inhibited when asked to apply these terms to a specific situation. The scattered response to this question supports this suggestion.

The Expectations of Group B About Tango

Like the members of Group A, none of the members of Group B had any first hand familiarity with Tango. However, the majority of Group B, like Group A, had heard something about the play from the same general sources as the members of Group A.

The members of Group B, like those of Group A, felt that Tango would be an entertaining social play which would make a meaningful statement about life. There are, however, some major differences between the expectations of the two groups. The expectations of Group A were uniform and well defined, and their expectations about the staging and the intention of the play were consistent with each other. In comparison, the response of Group B was scattered and undeveloped, and their expectations about the intention of the play did not seem to stimulate any expectations about the staging.

While Group A felt the acting would be natural and lifelike, the members of Group B could not as a group decide what style of acting might be appropriate to the play. Furthermore, Group A felt the scenery might be realistic, modern and functional, and the costumes realistic, colorful and modern. Group B was only able to say that they felt the scenery would be functional (an expectation that is usually likely to be fulfilled) and their expectations about the costumes were too scattered to indicate any trend.

Another area in which group B did not respond so fully as Group A was in the evaluation of their own expected responses. Group A indicated that they felt they would be amused, involved, and interested during the performance, and that they would feel puzzled when the play was over.

The members of Group B on the other hand were unwilling to commit themselves to anything but the possibility that they would feel amused during the performance, and as a group were unable to imagine how they might feel after the play was over.

Although the responses of Group B to the questions about their expectations of the play itself are scattered and undeveloped, they tend to be similar to the more clearly defined expectations of Group A.

An important difference is that Group A expected the play to be realistic and Group B expected it to be unreal-

A possible explanation for this is that the members of Group A had recently seen As You Like It and possibly had a more concrete idea of a production in comparison to Group B, who had not seen a play as recently.

In summary, Group B was not really sure what sort of play they were going to see; they had limited ideas about the possible staging; and they did not know, as a group, how they might respond. Group A, on the other hand, had quite clearly defined expectations.

There are several possible explanations for the differences in the expectations of Groups A and B. One is that the members of Group A were more familiar with the Questionnaire itself, having already answered it before they saw As You Like It. The fact that Group A did not have a similar hesitation when filling out the Pre - As You Like It Questionnaire can be partially explained by the fact that they were more familiar with As You Like It than Tango. Group B did not have a similar hesitation when filling out the next Pre-Production Questionnaire (for Inside the Ghost Sonata) and increased familiarity with the questionnaire form may have something to do with this. (Group C, on the other hand, were not at all hesitant when they later filled out their first Pre-Questionnaire.) Another possible explanation is that the members of Group A, who had recently seen As You Like It, carried their subsequent awareness of

the aspects of live theatre over to their expectations of Tango. Finally, it is possible that Group A, the group with the most experience of theatre and with the most conservative outlook, has more rigidly defined expectations because of this wider experience.

The Reactions of Group A to Tango

The members of Group A felt that Tango was a successful production of a serious, realistic social play which made a meaningful statement about life, and they felt that it had been worth seeing. They felt the standard of production was good to excellent; during the performance they maintain they were involved and interested, while at the end they felt disturbed.

In spite of the positive and apparently enthusiastic nature of this response, there are several contradictions revealed by the Questionnaire which suggest that the group members did not really get as much enlightenment or enjoyment as they maintain out of the production. In the first place, in spite of the group opinion, Tango was not primarily a social play (although pre-performance publicity emphasized this aspect) and it was certainly not realistic. The curious juxtaposition of historical periods as expressed by both costumes and scenery and the bizarre behavior of the characters did not, however, suggest to the participants

that the play was set in any other than the "real world".

One possible explanation for this is that they did not really seem very aware of these visual aspects of the staging. Although their reaction to costumes and scenery was more positive than otherwise, and although they felt that the costumes and scenery were suitable to the play, their choice of descriptive terms for these aspects was not the most appropriate. The participants described the set as realistic, symbolic and functional although fanciful and lavish would have been more accurate, and they described the costumes as symbolic when fanciful, historical, muted and modern would really have been more accurate. The use of the term "symbolic" seems to appear whenever there is any ambiguity about set or costumes throughout the study and, on the whole, the participants in the study seem to have great difficulty in recognizing and describing the visual aspects of a production, even when using what are after all very non-theatrical terms.

The members of Group A felt the acting was more professional than not and more good than poor. However, although they maintain that the acting was the aspect of the staging they most enjoyed, as many as five out of the twelve were irritated by physical and vocal mannerisms of various actors. Furthermore, the response to the acting style was scattered, divided mainly between natural and

lifelike and powerful and passionate. Neither of these terms is appropriate, as the acting was actually quite stylized and mannered. However, natural and lifelike and powerful and passionate could be used to describe the performances of the actor playing Eugene and the actor playing Stomil respectively. Since these were chosen as the best actors, it is possible that the participants felt that these two actors established the acting norm in the production. Although in this question the participants were asked to indicate the three best actors, the response was very scattered, and only two actors emerge. The characters that the group most enjoyed were Eugene and Stomil, which is further evidence that there is not much distinction made between character and actor on the part of the audience.

It is interesting that although the majority of Group A felt that this had been a successful production, only half felt the director had interpreted the author's intention properly, compared to the majority who had felt that the director of As You Like It had interpreted the author's intention properly. This suggests some feelings of dissatisfaction and confusion as to what the play was about. An incidental note is that the majority of Group A were at least occasionally bored during the production. However, as has already been observed, the participants seem to accept this boredom as a normal part of the theatre experience.

The aspects of the play most enjoyed by Group A were the relationships between the characters and the development of the story. They felt that the development of the story was clear, realistic, logical, and believable. None of these terms is really appropriate, but possibly in the attempt to indicate their enjoyment or approval of the way the plot developed the participants automatically chose the positive term. That they did have some reservations is suggested by the way the responses are indicated on the scale.³¹ Another possible explanation for this inappropriate description is that the participants, in spite of their alleged enjoyment of the plot, were not really aware of this element at all.

Given several opportunities, the members of Group A were unable to categorize this production according to general type and style. This is more the fault of the production than the audience, but it is interesting that the participants did not express any objections about the rather incoherent style of the production.

The responses to the Questionnaire indicate that the members of Group A had some reservations about this production. Although their general response is more positive than negative, it is usually only marginally so. For example, in one question about general reactions to the production the qualifying "somewhat" is used more often in conjunction

with the descriptive term than the qualifying "very" - as in somewhat exciting.

In summary, then, a considerable number of the group was irritated by the acting, though the acting was the aspect of the staging they most enjoyed; they were unable to describe costumes and scenery appropriately, although they liked these aspects at least moderately and felt they were appropriate to the play. They were unable to decide on the general style of the production, but did not seem disturbed by its unintentional lack of coherence, and they were unable to describe the development of the plot appropriately. Most were bored at some point and only half felt the play had been interpreted properly. In spite of all this they felt it had been a successful production.

It is possible that because the members of Group A went to the production expecting to enjoy themselves, because on the whole their expectations about the nature of the play had been met (revealed by study) and because going to the theatre is a social event, they felt that it was inappropriate to comment adversely. It is possible that they ignored their own personal reservations and decided it must have been a good and worthwhile production.

The Reactions of Group B to Tango

On the whole, the response of Group B to Tango was very close to that of Group A, but there are some interesting differences. Like the members of Group A, Group B felt that the production was a successful one, and they indicated that they would like to see more productions of this kind. They felt that the standard of the production was good, but not good to excellent (which was the evaluation of Group A).

Group B, like Group A, felt the play was mainly serious and made a meaningful statement about the real world, but unlike Group A, who felt the play was social, they were unable as a group to say what the main concern of the play was. This is in spite of the fact that, like Group A, they had expected the main concern to be social. Unlike Group A, Group B did not think that the development of the plot was realistic, clear, or believable. However, like Group A, they did find it involving, more entertaining than tedious, and more logical than illogical. Group B, like Group A, found the play realistic, though Group B had expected it to be unrealistic.

Group B, like Group A, was unable to describe the acting style, and the majority of Group B, compared to fewer than half of Group A, were irritated by physical and vocal mannerisms of various actors. However, the acting was the

aspect of the production which the members of both groups most enjoyed. The characters most enjoyed by the members of Group A were those which they felt had been most well acted. This is not entirely true of Group B, and there is a definite suggestion that the members of Group B do make some slight distinction between character and actor.³²

Although the members of Group B seemed to have no definite expectations as a group about the staging of the play, their responses to these questions were the same as the responses of Group A, who did have definite expectations about the costumes and scenery. This would seem to suggest that while expectations about costumes and scenery are an index to the overall expectations of the production, the enjoyment or approval of these aspects is not dependent on the fulfillment of expectations. Group B, apparently went to the production with fairly open minds, ready to accept whatever was presented.

It is difficult to tell whether the expectations of Group B were fulfilled or not, since so many responses of this group to both the Pre- and Post-Questionnaires were scattered and divided. Group B indicated that they enjoyed the play, though perhaps not so much as Group A did. It is interesting to note that Group B was on the whole more critical and objective about the production than Group A, and this heightened objectivity may be related to the fact that Group B had fewer rigid expectations. The less uniform

response of Group B to both the Pre-Production and Post-Production Questionnaires might be an indication that the pre-established frame of reference apparently used by Group A to evaluate productions is less firmly established in Group B.

With regard to the staging of the production, more members of the group expected the acting to be natural and lifelike than anything else. They expected the scenery to be functional, realistic, modern, and symbolic and the costumes to be realistic, colorful, and modern. These expectations seem to be consistent with the type of play they were expecting to see. The aspect of the play they most expected to enjoy was the interesting individual characters.

After having seen the production the participants decided that Tango was a realistic social play, set in the real world, which made a meaningful statement about life. They felt it was mainly serious with some comic elements. The response to the question asking Group B to decide the style of the production was scattered, which seems to suggest that it did not conform to the participants' pre-established frame of reference. This did not, however, prevent them from evaluating the standard of production as good.

Although one-third of the group felt the acting could be described as energetic and flamboyant, the participants' reactions to the acting style were on the whole too scattered to indicate any group response. One possible reason for this diffuse response might have been the lack of consistency

in the over-all acting style. While it might have been possible to describe the style of the individual actors, there was no unity in the acting style of the cast as a whole. The participants decided that the scenery was realistic, symbolic, and functional, and that the costumes were symbolic and functional. Modern and historical would have been better descriptions of the costumes; and realistic was not really an appropriate term for the scenery. (It must be remembered that a box set, such as the one in this production, will usually make the scenery seem realistic.) The aspect of the production they most enjoyed was the acting and the aspects of the play they most enjoyed were the relationships between the characters and the development of the story. During the performance the participants felt amused, involved, and interested, and after it was over they felt disturbed. They felt the production was successful and they would like to see more productions of this kind.

As far as the intention of the play itself was concerned the expectations of the group were fulfilled. That is, they were expecting to see a realistic social play, with some comic elements, which made a meaningful statement about life, and this is what they felt they had seen. It is hard to understand why they had felt they had seen a play of this kind since the actual production did not really fit this description. It is possible that the

expectations are so firmly established that the performance itself is subconsciously interpreted to fit their expectations. The abstract nature of the description of the plays' intention would make this adjustment easier than would be possible with a description of the physical aspects of the production. Most of the few expectations that were not fulfilled were indeed those about the staging. The expectations about the experience the members felt they would have during the performance, but not after, were also fulfilled.

Since the participants felt the production was a successful one and since they would like to see more productions of this kind, a tentative conclusion might be drawn: if the expectations about the intention of the play are fulfilled, even if some of the expectations about the staging are not fulfilled, the audience is likely to have a positive response to the production. This positive response may also be related to the fact that the participants' expectations about their own reactions during the performance were fulfilled.

One point that must be emphasized is that although the expectations of the intentions of the play were consistent with the reactions, they were not really appropriate to the play. Tango is not a realistic social play, but a non-realistic political allegory, and the political nature of the play was outlined to a considerable degree in the program. (It is impossible to know how many people read

these notes, of course) There are several possible explanations for this group point of view, and it must be remembered that the production itself emphasized the social aspects of the play to the detriment of the political aspects. However, there is still the question of why the group decided that this was a realistic play. The curious juxtaposition of historical periods expressed by the costumes, the transparent walls of the set, and the bizarre behavior of the characters alone pointed out that this was not a realistic play. Possibly the group members equate the term unrealistic with unbelievable or unacceptable, and use it as a pejorative, rather than a descriptive term. There is the further possibility already suggested, that the audience adjusts its responses to the production to fit its expectations.

Finally, it is possible that the terms provided had limited meaning for the participants within their frame of reference. For example, they may not be accustomed to thinking about plays according to the categories in the questionnaire (modern comedy, avant garde, etc.) If this is indeed the case, further work must be done to find appropriate terms which are meaningful to the participants.

The Relationship Between the Expectations of the Combined
Group A and B and Their Reactions to Tango

None of the members of Groups A and B combined had read Tango, or had seen a production of it, although the majority had heard something about it. However, this lack of familiarity did not prevent the participants from formulating some definite expectations about the production, and it is interesting that in spite of the fact that any information the participants had about Tango was second-hand and came from many different sources the responses to the expectation Questionnaires are again surprisingly uniform and definite. A possible explanation for this uniformity is that the available information about the play triggered off responses that led to the application of their pre-established frame of reference. That is, they all recognized some elements in their pre-production information which signaled the automatic application of the system or framework of which those elements are an integral part. Further study might indicate the nature of this system and its component elements.

Briefly, the participants expected the standard of production at the Playhouse to be good and the staging traditional, although some members felt the staging might also be experimental or realistic. With regard to specific expectations about the play itself, they expected to see a

realistic social play, comic to some degree, set in the real world which would primarily make a meaningful statement about life, but which would also be entertaining. In view of this rather definite outline it is surprising that the group response as to what type of play this would be (modern comedy, avant garde, modern serious drama, etc.) is so scattered, although one quarter of the group felt that it would be a modern comedy.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

²⁸From Transcript of review broadcast on The Bill Terry Show, C.B.C. Radio, March 1970.

²⁹As has been mentioned, the daily newspapers were on strike.

³⁰See p. 175 question (i) last section.

³¹See p. 180 question (g).

³²See p.180 question (f) and p. 181 question (j)

CHAPTER VI

GROUP RESPONSE TO INSIDE THE GHOST SONATA

Inside the Ghost Sonata - Description of Production

The Dorothy Somerset Studio production of Inside the Ghost Sonata was an experimental production based on Strindberg's Ghost Sonata. The text of the original play was reduced to three short scenes, which alternated with phases of what was referred to as a labyrinth. This labyrinth was basically a simple maze around the outside of the central area in which the three main, or key, scenes were played.

The set for the three main scenes was very simple, consisting of two levels with connecting steps. The furniture was chairs, mirrors, and Hummel's wheelchair. The main colour was dark gray. The set was austere and non-realistic and effectively created a believable locale for the bizarre but restrained development of the action. The projection of film and slides on the backdrops, the interaction between live actor and film and the transitions between live actor and actor on film were important aspects of these scenes.

The acting in the main scenes was, on the whole believable; relationships were clear, and although the reasons behind a great deal of the action were obscure, the individual characters seemed motivated. The acting

seemed slightly stylized, partly because of the rather stilted way the speeches were written. This stylization created a unified effect and contributed to the unreal quality of the action. Except for the actor playing Hummel, who is a professional, the cast was composed of student actors.

The main scenes, then, provided a conventional theatre experience in that the audience sat down to watch the essential action of the play unfold on the stage. The labyrinth provided a contrast to this in that the audience was expected to participate by moving around. The labyrinth was a series of small interconnected rooms, areas, corners, and tunnels in which ideas or images from the play and from the process of production were expressed using actors and props. Although during the labyrinth phase there were actors moving among the audience conversing with each other, there was no direct interaction between actors and audience.

During the main scenes there was no activity in the labyrinth, and this area was shut off. There were five labyrinth phases, alternating with the three main scenes, and the evening opened and closed with a phase of the labyrinth. Each labyrinth phase was slightly different; different actors appeared; areas were closed off and new areas were opened. During a labyrinth phase all the units of that phase were concurrent and continuous. This meant that the audience members were free to find their own route

around the labyrinth and to spend as much or as little time as they wished at a particular unit. It should be mentioned that members of the audience did not have to go through the labyrinth at all if they did not want to, but could remain in the main scene area, which at times became a labyrinth unit.

The labyrinth areas, or units, included miniature scenes involving actors, tableaux with or without actors, collections of furniture and props, presentations of films and slides sometimes with actors, sometimes with dancers, all of which were intended to express some particular idea or image arising out of the text of the play. Some of the units were inspired not by direct action in the play, but by references to things which happen outside the action of the play. For example, Hummel's part in the death of the Milkmaid, which in the play takes place long before the action begins, was the basis of one unit; the reference to the visit to the opera was the basis of another unit. Incidents included in the complete text of the play, such as the inaudible conversation between the Dark Lady and the Aristocrat, which were not included in the abbreviated scenes, were also the bases for some of the units.

The units, however, were not all based on the play. Several were intended to give an idea of the process of putting the production together.³³

The purpose of the labyrinth was to explore and express some of the images suggested by the play and outlined in the main scenes, using all available media.

The performance opened with a labyrinth phase before the beginning of the first scene. The audience was encouraged out of the labyrinth and into the central area by dimming the lights in the labyrinth and by actor movement. At the end of each scene the action in the main area ceased, the doors to the labyrinth were opened and the lights were raised in the labyrinth area. Sound and a taped voice were also used to signal the beginning and end of each phase.

The costumes for the production were based on late nineteenth-century dress, several in varying stages of decay. The Mummy's costume was composed of gauze bandaging and in order to show her simultaneously as she had been and as she had become she wore the front and upper part of the statue of herself on her back. The costumes, with the exception of the Mummy and the Young Lady who wore white, were gray and black, which contributed to the sombre atmosphere.

The response of the majority of people who attended this production was very favorable. Most people seemed to enjoy the experience of moving around the labyrinth and had no difficulty making the transition from the labyrinth to the key scenes and back again.

The Expectations of Group A About Inside the Ghost Sonata

Group A expected the standard of production at the Dorothy Somerset Studio to be good, and they expected the type of staging at this theatre to be experimental. This is perhaps interesting, since the type of play usually presented at the Studio is not, in fact, particularly experimental. However, the fact that it is a small university theatre and perhaps the name Studio, which presupposes a workshop, suggest experimental productions.

Few members of the group had any familiarity with the play on which the production Inside the Ghost Sonata was based, but the majority had heard something about this particular production.

Group A had definite and clearly defined ideas about the kind of play they were going to see. They felt it would be a serious psychological play about the inner world of the mind and they felt it would be unrealistic. The title of the play Ghost Sonata probably suggested a great deal to the group, and the title of the production "Inside the Ghost Sonata" most likely suggested an experimental approach to the play.

One interesting point is the way the group members connect the term "unrealistic" with "psychological" and "inner world of the mind". This might be an indication of the feeling that nothing subjective has much validity. How-

ever, since they were expecting the play to be psychological and unrealistic, terms which seem to suggest to them that anything can happen, the members of Group A were probably very receptive to the unusual approach of the production.

Although Group A had no difficulty in describing the type of play they thought they were going to see, they were unable to describe the possible aspects of the staging--acting style, costumes and scenery. All that is revealed is that half the group felt the scenery might be symbolic and half felt the costumes might be symbolic and fanciful. The use of the word "symbolic" (see above p.73) probably indicates that the group have no clear ideas about the staging, although they seem to think it will be experimental.

It is interesting that, although the group expect the general approach to be experimental, acting is still the aspect of the production they were expecting to enjoy most and they were also looking forward to watching the development of the plot and the interesting characters. This seems to suggest that Group A are really expecting the play to run along conventional lines.

Although the group indicate that they expected the production to provide them with an emotional experience, during the performance they expected only to be involved and interested. These two terms by themselves, do not usually express strong emotional involvement. It is possible that the group did not seriously consider the

nature of their possible reaction, but on the other hand the choices provided in the Questionnaire do not really give them much opportunity to express emotional involvement. After the performance they maintained that they expected to feel puzzled and disturbed, which seems to indicate an intellectual rather than an emotional experience, and in this question the list provided did contain some terms which would at least have suggested an emotional experience.

This leads to the tentative conclusion that the members of the group are not really expecting an experience which would actually involve their emotional response.

The Expectations of Group B About Inside the Ghost Sonata

In general, the expectations of Group B about Inside the Ghost Sonata were very similar to those of Group A. Like Group A, Group B expected to see a serious psychological play about the inner world of the mind which primarily provided an emotional experience. The members of Group B expected the standard of production at the Studio to be good and the probable style of production at this theatre to be experimental.

One interesting difference emerges, however, and that is that although only two members of Group B (compared to the majority of Group A) had heard anything about this

particular production, the members of Group B had slightly more definite ideas about the possible staging of the production. Group B's expectation of the acting style was also less scattered--half of this group felt the acting would be powerful and passionate. It is difficult to understand what this expectation is based on, unless there is a connection in the minds of the participants between serious, psychological emotional experience and a powerful and passionate style of acting. Possibly this expectation is related to the feeling that the production will be unrealistic, rather than realistic.

Further examples of Group B's more uniform responses are that the majority of Group B felt the scenery would be symbolic, and half felt it would also be functional. The majority of Group B felt the costumes would be symbolic, and half felt they would also be realistic and functional. These terms are not very descriptive. However, judging from the way the responses of Group A and B to these questions are scattered, there is some suggestion that more members of Group B made an attempt to describe possible costumes and scenery than did the members of Group A.³⁴

It is difficult to say whether or not there is really any significance in the difference in expectations of Groups A and B about the staging. Although this difference is quite slight, the expectations of Group B about acting, costumes and scenery are more uniform than

those of either Group A or Group C. The majority of Groups A and C had heard something about this particular production, while only two members of Group B had any advance information, so it is possible that this greater pre-production information had some effect on the members of Groups A and C.

The only other difference in the expectations of Groups A and B is that while Group A felt they would be puzzled and disturbed when the performance was over, Group B's response was too scattered to indicate any trend. Possibly, the use of the terms puzzled and disturbed indicates the expectation of some kind of mental involvement, and this response may possibly be a reflection of a more consciously intellectual outlook on the part of Group A. This attitude would be in keeping with the profile of Group A (See above pp. 38-40).

The Expectations of Group C About
Inside the Ghost Sonata

The expectations of Group C about Inside the Ghost Sonata were very similar to those of Groups A and B. It has already been mentioned that Group C's expectations about acting, costumes, and scenery are closer to those of Group A than Group B. This has been tentatively attributed to the fact that Group C, like Group A, had greater pre-performance information than Group B.

It is interesting that almost all Group C used the term symbolic to express their expectations about costumes and scenery, while only half of Group A who had seen two previous productions and had used this term frequently in their descriptions of these productions, used symbolic after having seen Inside the Ghost Sonata. Perhaps this term was beginning to seem inadequate to the members of Group A. Group B, however, used symbolic almost as much as Group C.

While both Groups A and B anticipated enjoyment of the development of the plot, as well as enjoyment of the characters, Group C showed very little interest in the former aspect. This greater interest in plot on the part of Groups A and B may be a direct result of having seen one or more previous productions recently.

The expectations of Group C, who had not seen either of the two previous productions were similar to those of Groups A and B. The experience of having seen one or both of the previous productions did not seem to have a discernible influence on the expectations of Groups A and B about Inside the Ghost Sonata. An important point to keep in mind is that since Group C's expectations were the same as those of the other two Groups, Group C was obviously thinking in the same general terms as these groups before they saw the production. This is significant because after the performance Group C's responses are quite different from those of Groups A and B.

The Reactions of Group A to
Inside the Ghost Sonata

The members of Group A indicated that they felt the production Inside the Ghost Sonata had been very worth seeing and that the general standard had been good to excellent. They felt the production had been successful, that it had been original, exciting and artistic, and they indicated that they would like to see more of the same type of production. A further indication that the members of this group probably enjoyed themselves is that only two people were occasionally bored during the performance. This is a considerable drop in the number of people in this group who were bored by the two previous productions. (Six members of Group A were at least occasionally bored by As You Like It and seven were at least occasionally bored by Tango.)

The Group felt the play itself was sad and pessimistic. However, they felt it was only somewhat moving and only two people felt depressed after the performance was over. Furthermore, judging from the enthusiastic way they moved about the labyrinth, and from the fact that they were not really interested in the two most obviously pathetic characters (the Student and the Young Lady) these feelings of sadness and pessimism did not affect the participants deeply. Perhaps the method of production created a more objective

point of view for the audience, so that while they were intellectually aware that the play was sad and pessimistic this knowledge did not affect them emotionally.

The two characters in the main scenes most enjoyed by the participants were Hummel and the Mummy. The grotesque appearance of these two characters may have been a factor in their appeal. It is interesting that only half of the group responded to the Student, and very few responded to the Young Lady. Possibly the various "alienating" effects of both the play and the production prevented the audience from suspending disbelief as far as these characters were concerned.

The aspect of the staging of the main scenes which Group A most enjoyed was the acting, followed by costumes and scenery. Only two members of the group found the use of film and slides more interesting than the other aspects of production, suggesting that the majority of the group were not greatly affected by the film and slides and did not find that they added significantly to the experience. Although the participants seem to accept the general experimental nature of the production, they apparently filter out certain aspects and respond mainly to those they would find in a conventional production.

Group A evaluated the acting as somewhat professional and somewhat good. This suggests that they were not entirely satisfied with the acting. Perhaps the unconventional nature of the production did not give the audience the

experience that the acting in a more conventional production does. However, only two members of this group mentioned vocal or physical mannerisms of the actors that they felt were inappropriate. This is considerably fewer than were irritated by actors' mannerisms during either Tango (6 people) or As You Like It (3 people) so that although the majority of the Group were not entirely satisfied with the acting, they were unable to identify what they felt was wrong with it, which is perhaps significant.

The Group chose the actors playing Hummel and the Mummy as the two best, and it will be recalled that these were also the characters that the Group enjoyed most. Though half of the Group felt the Student was one of the most interesting characters, the majority felt that the actor was not so good as the rest of the performers. This is the first slight indication that Group A makes any distinction between actor and character. It is also possible that continuous exposure to the Questionnaires is a factor in this response.

As far as the acting style was concerned, the members of Group A were divided in thinking that it was elegant and stylized and stilted and unnatural. Those who felt it was stilted and unnatural did not seem to be bothered by this or feel it was inappropriate, since none of the group felt the acting was poor. In the same way they did not feel that the development of the plot was either clear, believable or logical but this did not prevent them from finding it involving, another point which may be significant.

Group A liked the costumes very much and felt they were appropriate to the play. The favorite costumes were those of Hummel and the Mummy, although many of the other costumes were as effective. However, the participants do not seem to be able to dissociate actor, character and costume, and throughout the study seemed to choose the best costume according to how good they felt the actor wearing it was. Since they do not seem to be very aware visually of costumes and scenery it may be that they can only remember the costumes of those actors who made an impression on them. Another possibility is that they chose the best costumes according to how well the costume helped the actor express the character.

The majority of the Group enjoyed both the labyrinth and the main scenes and felt that the labyrinth added very much to their understanding of the play. Only half of the Group, however, felt that the play had been interpreted properly. The other half did not know. They were not bothered by having to move around the labyrinth and seemed in fact to enjoy the experience very much. Probably the facts that it was quickly established that the labyrinth was not threatening and that the aggressive elements which are often present in productions involving audience participation were absent contributed to putting the audience at ease.

The aspect of the labyrinth Group A enjoyed most was the scenery, followed by the costumes. Although they

felt intrigued, shocked, and involved by the experience of meeting the actors, the acting was not the aspect in which they were most interested. This is in contrast to their considerable interest in any acting which has taken place on a stage and it is possible that they did not really feel the actors in the labyrinth were acting, since their activity was often apparently unstructured. A tentative conclusion might be that the participants do not really accept any activities of actors as acting unless they take place in some clearly defined, static stage area. Furthermore there is some suggestion that when the participants concentrate less on the acting they become more visually aware of the other aspects of staging. They were, for example, much more clear about which labyrinth units they liked than they were about the details of the scenery in the main scene area. The central area was essentially quite bare, but the participants seemed to have some difficulty in remembering even this point.

It would appear that as soon as the Group members got away from the conventional stage area they had less uniform and more individualistic responses, an interesting and significant point. The Group response to which actors in the labyrinth they liked best was very scattered, as was their response to which labyrinth unit they liked best. This is possibly because they are not judging the aspects

of the labyrinth according to their own ideas of what a play should be like. It must be remembered that the participants moved freely through the labyrinth taking their own time and not all of them necessarily saw all of the units.

Although the responses to the labyrinth units were very scattered, almost all of Group A liked the Cook's Kitchen. This is perhaps because this unit was among those which were most recognizably like a play in that an activity was going on which the audience could stand back from and watch in a group. Also the unit was set in what was actually a miniature box set with definite boundaries established by the actors and by the walls of the set. This was, in other words, one of the most conventional units and as such was perhaps recognized and appreciated by the audience members.

The slightly shocking effect of the use of real raw liver (with its accompanying smell), real porridge and real vegetables and the grotesque appearance of the Cook were probably even greater factors in the appeal of this unit. Perhaps the use of real food made the Cook's Kitchen seem more immediate and dynamic than the other units, although the action in this unit was not particularly interesting in itself.

In summary, then, Group A, while accepting the general experimental nature of the production, seemed to select and

respond to those aspects of the main scenes which they feel would be found in a conventional production. Furthermore, they seemed to feel that the labyrinth, on the whole, could not be included in the category "play".

Apparently as a result of this feeling they were able to respond to the labyrinth according to their personal preferences rather than according to what is emerging as a fairly rigid set of expectations.

The Reactions of Group B To Inside the Ghost Sonata

The response of Group B to Inside the Ghost Sonata was on the whole very similar to the response of Group A. However, although Group B enjoyed the production and its various aspects, they were slightly less enthusiastic than Group A and it is perhaps significant that more than half of Group B were bored at least occasionally.

Group B seemed less conservative in their responses to the various aspects of play and production of Inside the Ghost Sonata than Group A. That is, there is some indication that Group A evaluated the production in terms of the conventions of traditional productions while Group B seemed slightly more inclined to evaluate the production on its own terms, rather than according to a pre-established set of expectations.

One example is that Group A felt the production primarily provided an emotional experience, while Group B felt it made a meaningful statement about life. It is possible that Group A did not really accept the main scenes and the labyrinth as complementary aspects of the same production. Group B, on the other hand, seemed to have no difficulty making the transition from the main scenes to the labyrinth and back again. Consequently, Group B accepted the labyrinth and the main scenes as interdependent parts of the whole performance. Since the production did have coherence and unity for Group B they were more able to extract and respond to some single theme or line of development which they interpreted as a meaningful statement about life. The experience was, then, for Group B, an intellectual one. However, it is possible that as an intellectual experience, Group B did not find the production an entirely satisfying one and this may account for the slightly less enthusiastic response and the high proportion who were occasionally bored.

It will be recalled that Group A tended to be less responsive to the film and slides in the main scenes than to the acting, costumes and scenery, elements which would be found in a traditional production. Group B, on the other hand, divided their response mainly between the acting and the film and slides, which seems to indicate that they are more inclined to accept a non-conventional approach to production than the members of Group A.

In contrast to Group A, who chose Hummel's and the Mummy's costumes, the response of Group B to which costumes they liked best was very scattered. Hummel's costume got the most concentrated response from the members of Group B, but this was still fewer than half the group. It would appear that Group B doesn't evaluate costumes according to the same standards as Group A. It seems quite clear, however, that Group B does make more of a distinction between actor and costume than Group A.

Although the members of Group A were constantly trying to classify the production according to a pre-established frame of reference they were unable to do so. Consequently they did not try to extract an intellectual statement from the play and allowed themselves to experience it emotionally. As an apparent result of this they enjoyed the production more and were less bored. Group B had less difficulty accepting the physical framework of the play and they tried to base their experience on the intellectual content of the production. Since this was an aspect of the production that was not emphasized, Group B did not find the experience so satisfying as Group A and was more often bored.

The Reactions of Group C to Inside the Ghost Sonata

When examining the response of Group C to the Inside the Ghost Sonata Post-Production Questionnaire, it is important to keep in mind that these participants had not been to the previous two productions in the study and that this is the first time they had answered the Post-Production Questionnaire.

There is some suggestion that since the members of Group C had not had these immediately previous experiences of one or two very traditional productions, they were evaluating Inside the Ghost Sonata less according to the standards of conventional theatre. That is, Group C is less inclined to think of the production as a "play". For one thing, the responses of Group C tend to be more scattered than those of Groups A and B. This seems to indicate that their responses are more a result of individual preference than a result of an established frame of reference applied to theatre.

While the members of Groups A and B felt the production was unrealistic, as many as half of Group C felt that it was realistic. It is possible that Groups A and B regarded this production as unrealistic in comparison with As You Like It and Tango, or as unrealistic in comparison with life. Those members of Group C who felt it was realistic were possibly not making a clear distinction

between the production and life. Since they had not seen the two previous productions which established the conventions of a play, they possibly did not think of this production as a "play", but as an experience which was included in, not separate from, their lives. In this way it was realistic, not unrealistic, to them.

This possible acceptance of the reality of the experience may have something to do with the high proportion (though fewer than half) of Group C who felt uncomfortable about moving about the labyrinth in comparison with very few in Groups A and B. Since, possibly, the experience was more "real" to some of Group C they might have felt that it made more demands on them personally. That is, they did not feel protected by the conventions of the theatre which give the audience anonymity. Groups A and B, on the other hand, regarded the production as a play and themselves as audience. As individuals they felt protected by this identity with the group and by what they saw (by selecting those aspects which would be found in a conventional production and responding accordingly) as the fairly predictable, and therefore safe, framework of the play.

Very few Group C members responded to the Cook's Kitchen labyrinth unit, in comparison with the large majority of Groups A and B. Since Group C seemed to find the entire experience more real than theatrical, the introduction in

this unit of the real food perhaps had less impact for them than for the members of the previous groups, who were possibly responding to the contrast between the real props of this unit and the artificiality of the other units.

Group C described the scenery as austere and symbolic and the costumes as historical and symbolic. These are more appropriate terms than those chosen by Groups A and B.³⁵ There is some suggestion that the members of Groups A and B take costumes and scenery very much for granted within the framework of a play, but since some members of Group C did not seem to regard this production as a "play" they did not automatically ignore the costumes and scenery to the same extent and so were able to describe them a little more accurately.

With regard to the acting in the main scenes, more members of Group C than of Group A or B noticed physical or vocal mannerisms on the part of the actors which irritated them. This suggests that the members of Group C are not making the automatic allowances for the acting made by Groups A and B within the frame of reference of a "play".

With regard to the main scenes, the same number in Group C as in Group A and B said that acting was the aspect in which they were most interested. This was still fewer than half the Group. However, more members of Group C than of either Groups A or B gave film and slides as the aspect

they most enjoyed. An interesting point is that significantly more students than non-students in Group C enjoyed the film and slides and more non-students than students in this group enjoyed the acting more than any other aspect. Apparently the non-students in this group are more inclined than the students to refer to the conventions of the theatre when assimilating a performance. There is no significant corresponding split between non-students and students in either of the other two groups.

It has been mentioned in the discussion of Group A's response to Inside the Ghost Sonata that as soon as these participants were away from the main scene area (or conventional stage area) their response became less uniform and more individualistic. It was suggested that this was because they were not evaluating the labyrinth according to an established frame of reference which they use to deal with the theatre. This apparent tendency to respond in a more personal, less standardized way seems to be more fully developed in the responses of Group C, who do not seem to be evaluating any part of the production according to the standards of conventional theatre.

There seems to be a difference in the response of those who went to Inside the Ghost Sonata without having seen one or both of the previous productions, compared to the response of those who had seen one or both of the previous productions. Groups A and B seemed

to impose a frame of reference on Inside the Ghost Sonata which possibly had been established or reinforced by their immediately previous play experience. Group C, on the other hand, had not perhaps had their frame of reference regarding theatre recently reinforced and therefore did not so constantly try to fit the production into this frame of reference.

The Relationship Between the Expectations of the
Combined Group A, B and C and Their
Reactions to Inside the Ghost Sonata

The Group of thirty-six as a whole expected that Inside the Ghost Sonata would be a serious psychological play about the inner world of the mind which would provide an emotional experience. They expected the standard to be good, the style experimental and the production unrealistic rather than realistic. Since over half of this Group had heard something about this production it is perhaps not surprising that their expectations were so appropriate.

With only one exception these expectations were fulfilled. While the Group expected the production primarily to provide an emotional experience they decided after having seen it that it actually made a meaningful statement about life. It is possible that the participants made a deliberate effort to interpret the development of the action according

to an intellectual scheme. This intellectual approach perhaps justified the production for them and made the experience worthwhile, while a similar type of production which mainly provided an emotional experience might not get a positive response from this Group.

As far as the actual staging of the play was concerned the Group expected both scenery and costumes to be symbolic and fanciful. The terms austere and functional were also chosen by a number of the Group and the terms minimal to describe the scenery and muted to describe costumes were also chosen. The Groups' expectations about the acting were scattered, although twelve of the thirty-six expected it to be powerful and passionate.

These expectations about the staging can be explained in several different ways. The first is that they are a direct result of what the participants had heard about the production. The second possibility, supported by the uniformity of the response which suggests some pre-established frame of reference, is that the participants have described the staging of what is, to them, the ideal or normative experimental production. The third possibility is that their response is a result of the combination of having heard about the production and their own ideas about experimental plays.

The Group's expectations about staging as far as costumes and scenery were concerned were fulfilled to a

considerable extent, although after having seen the costumes historical and realistic were added to the description of the costumes, and there are several other slight variations which can be seen by examining the results themselves. It should be pointed out that neither symbolic nor fanciful were appropriate terms for the scenery in the key scene area, yet these are the terms chosen by most of the Group to describe it. This further supports the suggestion that the participants are not really sensitive to all the visual aspects of a production. The continual use of symbolic to describe things that are not symbolic is possibly further evidence of the apparent inclination on the part of the Group members to find an intellectual explanation for as many aspects of the theatre as possible. On the other hand, it may simply indicate that the participants have no idea how costumes and scenery should be described, but they feel they should make an attempt to describe these aspects anyway. Possibly too, the participants simply cannot remember these aspects of staging clearly enough to describe them.

The Groups' expectations about the acting were scattered, although twelve of the thirty-six expected that it would be powerful and passionate. After having seen the production the participants were divided between thinking the acting was stilted and unnatural and elegant and stylized, though possibly these two factions were responding to the same quality in the acting. The majority of the Group felt

the acting was somewhat good and somewhat professional and while this is a positive rather than a negative response it does not seem to be very enthusiastic and may or may not be connected with the fact that individual expectations about the acting were unfulfilled.

The aspect of the production the Group expected to be most interested in was the acting, followed by the scenery, and the aspect of the play they were most anticipating was the relationships between the characters. After having seen the production they found that in the main scenes the film and slides engaged their interest most, giving the acting secondary importance, and in the labyrinth the scenery was the most interesting aspect. This is a fairly natural response, since these were the most arresting aspects of the production. However, it is possible that if the participants really had been following the development of a meaningful statement about life they might have been more interested in the acting in both main scenes and labyrinth. Only further study could determine whether or not this is a valid suggestion.

An interesting point about the labyrinth is that although the response to the question asking which units the participants most enjoyed was scattered, those units which included actors who had appeared in the main scenes got more response than the purely static units or those

which included actors who did not appear in the main scenes. This suggests again that the element of recognition is an important aspect of audience enjoyment. Apparently the participants respond most to the elements of the production which can be related directly to the plot and characters and which perhaps elucidate them to a certain extent. It also suggests that the participants were trying to fit the labyrinth into a coherent, meaningful, scheme. This is a natural approach, but it is a more intellectual than spontaneous response. The majority response to the Cook's Kitchen has already been discussed.

Although the participants expected to enjoy the relationships between the characters, they actually responded more to the characters as interesting individuals. Since the main aspect of the play is dependent on the relationships between the characters the question arises as to whether the participants really did get a meaningful statement from the play.

During the production the Group expected to feel involved and interested, and at least one quarter of the Group expected to be amused and enlightened. Afterwards they felt they would be puzzled and disturbed, while one quarter expected to feel fatigued and enlightened. It is interesting that there were so few who expected to be enlightened and this supports their expectation that the

production would provide an emotional experience. The Group's expectations of the way they would feel during and after the performance were realized.

On the whole, the participants enjoyed the production very much, felt it was successful, and would like to see more productions of this kind. The majority were not at all bored and not at all uncomfortable when moving about the labyrinth. They enjoyed the labyrinth and the main scenes equally and felt the labyrinth added moderately to their understanding of the play. They did not know, however, whether or not the play had been interpreted properly.

Several points emerge. The first is that although the participants maintain that for them the play made a meaningful statement, there is some question as to whether they would be able to define what this statement was. In an attempt to make the experience manageable, and in this way perhaps less challenging, they have tried to explain the action in terms of an intellectually coherent statement. The main argument against the interpretation of the production in terms of a meaningful statement is that there was no single simple statement inherent in the production. On the other hand, the participants came prepared to accept the production in terms of an emotional experience and were unable to do so. Possibly the interruptions of the action of the main scenes and the almost festive mood created by the audience moving about the labyrinth destroyed

the continuity of the atmosphere in the production, which would perhaps have contributed to an emotional experience. Another possibility is that the participants were prevented from thinking the production provided an emotional experience by their underlying belief that this alone would not justify the production.

A final point is that the participants' main expectations about the play itself, about some of their own responses and about some aspects of the staging, were fully realized. Furthermore, they seemed to enjoy the production. This supports the suggestion that enjoyment and acceptance of a production are directly related to the fulfillment of Pre-Production expectations about the play's type and intention.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VI

³³See p. 201.

³⁴See p. 197 question (1) and p. 198 question (p).

³⁵See p. 197 question (1) and p. 198 question (p).

CONCLUSION

This project was intended to discover and define any questions about theatre audience response which were indicated by general trends in the collected data. These questions might be the basis of future work in audience research. While some definite trends have emerged, the small size of the group involved prohibits definite conclusions. The two specific pilot questions (the relationships between expectations and reactions and the cumulative effect of continual attendance on response) were included to give the study some direction and form, not in the expectation that the results would indicate any final conclusions.

A major purpose of the study was to see if the method used was practical and if the results produced by this method were useful. Using the system described above (see pp. 3-13 to test a group of this size and type seems very practical. Suggestions have been made in the chapter on method (p. 3) for adapting the system developed in the study to a much larger group. This would involve dividing an unlimited number of participants into groups of forty, each group being the responsibility of a team of two workers. The use of the series of questionnaires produces adequate

results, though the possibility of adding personal interviews with the participants might be considered. As has already been suggested, a more detailed version of the questionnaires might be useful.

The term "frame of reference" has been continually used throughout the study. It is important to define what this means in this context, to outline the reasons for believing it exists, and to describe the elements of this frame of reference as revealed by the study.

When the study was set up, it was not realized how deeply entrenched and influential this frame of reference was. However, as the study progressed, a number of attitudes or fixed ideas which seem to have a direct and consistent influence on the participants' reactions to the various aspects of the plays and productions began to emerge. That is, these ideas seem to have coalesced into a system, or frame of reference, to which the participants refer when evaluating a play or production. This frame of reference, which does not always coincide with their personal preferences and spontaneous responses, comes between the production and the audience. They seem to evaluate a production according to the extent to which it conforms to the frame of reference.

Among the points which support the idea of the existence of this widespread frame of reference are the uniformity of response; the similarity between expectation

and reaction questionnaires (which suggests a constant common to the entire group); and the fact that the responses remain uniform even when inaccurate or inappropriate, which suggests that the facts of the production are interpreted to fit the frame of reference. Further support for this idea is the continual reappearance of certain attitudes (outlined below) throughout the study which seemed to indicate a point of view common to all the participants. Finally the comparison of the response of Groups A and B with that of Group C seemed to highlight the frame of reference, in that Group C's more scattered, individualistic response probably indicated a direct reaction to the production rather than a reaction according to the frame of reference.

The frame of reference itself seems to be based on a knowledge of the conventions of a very traditional type of production. The details have not emerged from this study, but those attitudes which seem to be an inherent element of the frame of reference are discussed below.

In the first place, according to the frame of reference, a play should present a clearly defined idea. Furthermore, the production must make these ideas, and any action and motivation, clear, as the participants seem to prefer a production which does not demand that they exert themselves mentally. A production must be a worthwhile experience; If it is not an amusing and entertaining comedy it should

present (fairly clearly) a meaningful intellectual statement about life. Related to this is the attitude that a play needs some justification for its performance; it should fulfill some function. The action is not complete in itself (as it is to a great extent, in some forms of dance, for example). The underlying belief that the production must fulfill a worthwhile function is related to the apparent principle that time spent in a given activity must give a positive proportionate return. This is so important to the participants that, rather than admit their time has been wasted, they will rate a production good or excellent and maintain they enjoyed it in spite of apparent personal reservations.

While a play should be either entertaining and/or make a meaningful statement about life, it should, at the same time, provide the audience with an emotional experience. However, there is some indication that they like to keep the action at a mentally and emotionally comfortable distance.

According to the frame of reference, a production takes place in a clearly defined area with boundaries recognized by the actors, and defined, usually by walls. The trend is to regard the theatre as primarily a showcase for actors. Intellectual content may justify the production, but it is really the actors who make it enjoyable. Conversely, an activity of an actor is considered acting only

when it takes place within the clearly defined boundaries of the stage.

The belief seems to be that individual performances are complete in themselves regardless of whether or not the actor has contributed to the expression of the play's central concept, the establishment of relationships, the development of the plot, or the mood of the production when these things are demanded by the play. An automatic allowance is made by the participants for actors and the tendency is to disregard irritating inappropriate vocal or physical mannerisms when evaluating the standard of the acting. There is a tendency to make little or no distinction between character and actor and a tendency (usually, but not always justified) to believe that the best actors are the ones with the biggest parts. The participants may be assuming that if the character is more interesting or important, the acting is better.

Within the context of the frame of reference, the participants are apparently able to focus only on one aspect of the production at a time, and this aspect is usually the acting. Costumes and scenery are taken very much for granted, and to a great extent ignored. This pattern of reaction can be broken by the introduction of an unconventional technique such as the use of film and slides, but there is some evidence that where the frame of reference is firmly established, the unconventional technique will

have less impact and the participants will be less distracted from the acting than will the members of a group in which the frame of reference is not so firmly established.

Throughout the study, when asked to name the most effective costume, the participants consistently chose those worn by the actors who they felt had given the best performances, although these costumes were often not the most effective or attractive by other criteria. One possible reason for this is that they did not notice the costumes to the extent that they could remember them clearly enough to make a decision. However, it should be kept in mind that it is more difficult for a member of the audience to separate actor from costume than it is to separate actor or costume from scenery.

As soon as the participants moved away from the conventional stage area and into one in which the actors were not the focal point, they seemed to become more visually aware of the staging. The suggestion is that the use of conventional staging may in some way inhibit their visual response.

In spite of this apparent lack of awareness of even the basic outlines of the staging, shown throughout the study by the recurrent inability to describe it appropriately, there is an underlying demand for technical proficiency. Since all these productions were technically proficient it is impossible to imagine with any certainty how the partici-

pants would respond to poorly executed staging. It would be interesting to know if the tendency not to allow poor acting to interfere with their enjoyment would show up in their attitude to staging. This demand that the staging be technically proficient is a further reflection of the attitude that time spent at the theatre is an investment that should give a worthwhile return. The demand for technical proficiency in combination with a tolerance of poor acting may be related to the participants' experience of television and movies which often involve poor acting but have a high degree of technical proficiency.

The apparent disinterest in costumes and scenery suggests that the participants are unaware how much these elements contribute to the mood and atmosphere of the play. It is possible that they believe mood and atmosphere are dependent only on the actors.

One important point is that there is some evidence that the specifications of the frame of reference do not always coincide with the personal preferences of the participants. This suggests that they are registering approval of productions that really have little impact on them in terms of entertainment or enlightenment. A possible implication is that they are supporting the perpetuation of a type of theatre that has no significance for them other than the fact that they recognize in it the repetition of a familiar form.

These, then, are some of the attitudes which seem to constitute the frame of reference apparently used by the participants to evaluate and assimilate a production. The disturbing aspect of this frame of reference is the suggestion that if a production fulfils the requirements outlined above, the audience will approve the production, whether or not as individuals they really enjoyed or responded to it emotionally, intellectually or in any other way. This suggests that they might support, approve and recommend poor, as well as good productions, since they are unable to make a distinction between what is good and what is not. The frame of reference, then, seems to inhibit to some extent critical and objective response. Consequently, the standards of the participants are not very high and it is possible that they will accept only fair theatre as excellent theatre. They are encouraged in this by the tendency of local theatres (and perhaps theatres everywhere) to present productions which try to conform to audience, rather than artistic, standards.

There is some indication that the group which has the most experience of theatre, and which has the apparently most committed and serious attitude to theatre (that is, Group A), is the group which relies most heavily on the frame of reference. This suggests that greater exposure to theatre merely reinforces the pre-established frame of

reference, rather than developing critical awareness. However, as has been mentioned above, there is some indication of increased critical awareness resulting from cumulative exposure to a combination of the productions and the questionnaires.

There is some suggestion that if the production does not fulfil the established requirements of the frame of reference, the participants will not accept it as a "play". This does not mean that they will not enjoy and approve such a non-conventional presentation, but it is possible that the experience would have little effect on their general attitude to theatre.

There are several general trends in attitude which, while they do not seem to fit into the frame of reference, consistently recur and seem to have an influence on the participants' response. First of all, there is a tendency to accept the authority of the production. That is, if the production is actually going on, they feel it must be good. This is related to a tendency of the participants to ignore their own personal reservations while maintaining the belief, which justifies their presence at the theatre, that the production is worthwhile. There is a natural preference for being comfortable, rather than uncomfortable, for which the participants seem prepared to sacrifice meaning. On the other hand, there is an automatic acceptance of some boredom during a performance as an integral part of the

theatre experience. This does not seem to affect their overall enjoyment, nor do the participants seem annoyed when they cannot hear all the actors, but again tend to accept this.

Testing the participants' expectations was not so difficult as had been anticipated. It is perhaps significant that they had few reservations about defining the type of production they were going to see and their own possible responses to it. It seems probable that the presentation of the Pre-Production Questionnaire was a factor in this. It was stated in the Questionnaire "... As a regular theatre-goer you probably have some idea of the way you are likely to respond to (the play). . . . Whether or not you have read or seen the play previously try to answer the questions by imagining what your response is likely to be." The statement acknowledges the validity of the participant's opinion (since he is a regular theatre goer) and deals with the problem of his probable unfamiliarity with the play in question. The use of the terms "probably" "some idea" "likely" were intended to free the participant from the fear that his answers would be wrong if his expectations proved to be unfulfilled. The phrase ". . . try to answer . . . by imagining . . . your response. . . ." gives the participant even more freedom when dealing with what is after all a somewhat abstract problem.

With regard to the relationship between the participants' expectations about a production and their reactions to it,

the main trends can be summarised briefly. In the case of each production within the study, the expectations about the play's type and intention were fulfilled to a considerable extent and the participants maintained that they enjoyed the production. This suggests that there is a possible connection between the fulfilment of these expectations about type and intention of play and the enjoyment and approval of the production itself. However, although the expectations about the staging seem to be an index to the overall expectations of the production (that is, they give some indication of the general type of play the participants are expecting), the enjoyment or approval of the performance does not seem dependent on the fulfilment of these particular expectations. Another factor in the participants' approval of the production seems to be the fulfilment of their expectations about their own personal response during the performance (that is, whether they expect to feel amused, bored, enlightened, etc., while the play is taking place). However, the fact that their expectations about the way they will feel after the performance is over are not fulfilled does not seem to have a detrimental effect on their enjoyment or approval.

There is some suggestion that when the expectations about a play's type and intention are clearly defined and firmly established, the audience will subconsciously interpret the facts of the performance to fit these expectations. The comparatively abstract nature of the description

of the play's type and intention would make this adjustment an easy one. Throughout the study the expectations which were not fulfilled were invariably those about the staging, the concrete facts of which it would be more difficult to distort unconsciously in order to fit the expectations. It must be pointed out that it would also be more difficult for the participants to have precise expectations about the staging. For this reason the questions which asked about expectations of costumes and scenery were phrased in general rather than specific terms.

In cases in which a groups' expectations about a production were less uniform and more individualistic, the reactions to the production were more critical and more objective. This suggests that in these cases the participants were less influenced by the frame of reference, which, in combination with the pre-production information, possibly created the expectations. More important, perhaps, is the indication that the frame of reference may inhibit a critical and objective response.

It is possible that in general the expectations about a particular production are a result of the combination of pre-play information and a knowledge of the conventions of the theatre, the memory of which is triggered by this pre-play information. There is some suggestion that in the case of at least one production (Tango) the expectations about the play's type and intention were created exclusively by

those who produced the play (since they were the only source of pre-play information) and so were, of course, more likely to be fulfilled. This has disturbing implications, among them the suggestion of the possibility of manipulating and controlling audience response in the same way that commercial film advertising attempts to control and direct the response of the film audience.

The next major question which should be discussed is the cumulative effect on expectations and reactions of having seen one or more previous productions.

There is some evidence that seeing one or more productions has an effect on the expectations about a subsequent production, in that there seems to be an increased anticipation about the enjoyment of the plot. A significant number of Group A and B members anticipated enjoyment of the development of the plot of Inside the Ghost Sonata, while none of the members of Group C (who had not seen an immediately previous production) indicated much interest in this element. Further, Group A's anticipated interest in plot increases after each production; Group B's anticipated interest in plot also increases, though to a lesser degree. Apart from this, the participants' expectations do not seem to be noticeably influenced by the experience of seeing an immediately previous production.

The next question is whether the experience of seeing one or more productions seemed to have a direct or indirect

effect on the reactions of the participants to a subsequent production.

There is definitely a difference in the response of Groups A and B to Tango. However, it is difficult to know if this is because Group A had recently seen and enjoyed As You Like It, while Group B had not, or if it is because of differences inherent in each group. The members of Group B were noticeably more critical and objective in their evaluation of Tango than the members of Group A. The suggestion is that Group A's enjoyment and approval of As You Like It may in some way have predisposed them to be less critical in their evaluation of Tango. Factors which must be taken into consideration, however, are Group A's wider range of theatre experience, and the fact that they are the group which most closely adheres to a pre-established frame of reference.

The experience of having seen one or both of the previous productions did seem to have a direct effect on the responses of Groups A and B to Inside the Ghost Sonata. While Group B's response is again more critical and objective than that of Group A, both groups' responses are generally similar and both seem to reflect a fairly conventional attitude towards the theatre. In contrast to the responses of Groups A and B, which were very uniform, the responses of Group C to Inside the Ghost Sonata were considerably more

scattered. The members of Group C seemed more inclined to respond according to their own personal preferences, rather than according to the standards of the pre-established frame of reference, which is apparently the greatest influence in the response of Groups A and B.

It is possible that because the two previous productions adhered to the conventions of traditional theatre and because the frame of reference of Groups A and B was apparently reinforced by exposure to these productions, they tried to evaluate Inside the Ghost Sonata according to the terms of these conventions. Although there is some dissimilarity in the make-up of the three groups, Group C had sufficient knowledge and experience of the theatre to be familiar with these conventions. That this is the case is indicated by the similarity of Group C's expectations to those of the other two groups, expectations which are partly based on a knowledge of the conventions of traditional theatre.

The suggestion is, then, that since Group C did not see a production just previous to Inside the Ghost Sonata, and since the production itself was a departure from the conventional approach to theatre, Group C did not recognize the production as being a play as defined by the terms of the frame of reference and did not evaluate it accordingly. Conversely, the suggestion is that if Group C had recently seen a conventional production, their response might have

been closer to that of Groups A and B.

Apart from the apparent reinforcement of the established frame of reference, the only other evidence of the cumulative effect of continuous exposure to both productions and questionnaires is that by the time they had seen Inside the Ghost Sonata, some members of Groups A and B were beginning to make a distinction between character and actor. Otherwise there were no apparent changes in the basic outlook of either of these groups.

An incidental point is that by the end of the study, Group A is beginning to use the term symbolic less frequently than the members of Groups B and C. It may be that with greater exposure to productions and to the questionnaire this term is beginning to seem inadequate.

When examining the responses to both the expectation and the reaction questionnaires it must be taken into account that the experience of answering the questions probably encouraged the participants to reexamine their use of terminology. There is a further possibility that the questionnaires made the participants more aware of a critically evaluative approach to viewing plays and this is probably a gradually increasing factor in their response.

Briefly then, the effect of seeing one traditional production seems to have an influence on the reactions of the group to a subsequent traditional production, in that the pre-established frame of reference is maintained

and perhaps reinforced by each experience to the extent that the attempt was made to apply the standards of the frame of reference to a third, non-traditional production.

In considering all the points discussed in this chapter, it must always be kept in mind that because the group involved was a very small one the results of the study cannot be considered in any sense as conclusions. Rather they are indications of possible areas which it might be worthwhile to examine in future work.

Before extensive work is done on the relationships between expectations and reactions, or on the cumulative effect on response of seeing a series of productions, the frame of reference must be clearly defined. An attempt should be made to establish whether or not this frame of reference really exists. If it does, as is likely, the details of the frame of reference must be isolated and examined. Further, its origin and the depth and extent of its influence should be examined.

One possible method of dealing with the problem of establishing the existence of the frame of reference might be the comparison of the responses to a production of a group of regular theatre-goers with the responses of a group of people who never go to the theatre. The suggestion is that the responses of those who don't go to the theatre are unlikely to conform so closely to a pre-established

frame of reference. The contrast between the responses of the two groups would throw the regular theatre-goers' frame of reference into relief and emphasize some of its details.

A quick pilot study should be done first to see if this approach seems valid and to make sure it is practical. A suggested outline for this pilot study would involve two groups (one group of regular theatre-goers; one of non-theatre-goers) who attend the same fairly conventional production. They would answer the three questionnaires; a profile questionnaire, an expectation questionnaire and a reaction questionnaire. Examination of the results of their response should indicate whether or not further study in this particular direction would be warranted.

A separate problem for further study is the question of the relationship between audience members' expectations and their reactions to a production. Work in this area might logically follow any study which reveals the existence or non-existence of the frame of reference, since, so far, the expectations and reactions of the participants seem dependent on the frame of reference. A possible study would not necessarily have to take place over a long period of time, nor need it involve many productions. Indeed, the original pattern of three productions (one classic, one modern, one experimental) might well be useful. In order to obtain conclusive results a larger number of participants should be involved.

Finally, there is the question of whether or not the experience of seeing a series of plays has a cumulative effect on expectations and/or reactions. The results of this particular study suggest that immediately previous theatre experience might have some influence on subsequent expectations and reactions, but only more extensive study would show how true this is.

One approach to the problem would be to conduct a study which involved testing a group's expectations of and reactions to a much more extensive series of productions. A suggested outline might involve nine productions over a period of nine months (from September to April, which is when established Vancouver theatre is active).

Two major problems come to mind when considering any further study. The first is the composition of the group or groups. Participants should be pre-tested or screened very carefully before each final group is decided upon so that all the members of each group have an equal experience and knowledge of the theatre and a fairly similar attitude and degree of commitment. At the same time participants should be chosen so that they are fairly representative of an average Vancouver audience.

The second problem is the method of testing. Even in a short term study, such as this one, it is apparent that the repeated use of the same questions and the same questionnaires had some influence on the participants'

responses. After answering the same questions several times it is possible that they begin to know what it is they should be looking for in each production, as well as, perhaps, what the interviewer is looking for. In this way the questionnaires themselves become an additional variable. Over a more extended study this would probably prove to be an even greater factor in their response. The problem, then, is to discover some method of testing which would make it possible for the interviewer to standardize the responses, yet which could be presented in a variety of different forms.

The main purpose of this project was to try to discover and define some of the questions about theatre audiences which deserve further study. The questions which have occurred as a result of the examination of the data are outlined below. These have been divided into general categories, but there is a considerable amount of overlapping.

First of all there are some questions about the type of person who goes to the theatre:

1. The participants in the study are highly selective in their television viewing, choosing mainly news and educational programs and serious drama. Is this generally true of all people who go to the theatre? If it is true, how does it influence their responses to productions?

2. A majority of the participants had at some time been actively involved in high school, amateur or professional theatre. To what extent is this true of audience members in general?
3. Each of the three groups in this study had a different attitude and approach to the theatre. Are these groups representative of the main types of people who make up Vancouver audiences? Does each theatre have a distinctly different type of audience?
4. The group which had the most serious and committed attitude to the theatre and which had as well the widest range of theatre experience had the least critical and objective response to the productions. What is the significance of this apparent correlation?
5. The group with the more limited experience of theatre was more inclined to accept a non-conventional approach to the theatre. Is this true of audiences as a whole, and if so, what is its significance?
6. The group with the widest experience of the theatre had the most rigidly defined expectations. Conversely, the group which had the most objective response was the group with fewer rigid expectations. What are the implications of these points?

Second, there are questions about audience expectations:

1. Apparently it is not necessary for the participants' expectations about staging to be fulfilled in order for them to enjoy the production. If the expectations about the play's type and intention were fulfilled, even if the expectations about staging were unfulfilled, the group has a positive response to the production. Does this suggest an important difference between the two types of expectation?
2. When expectations about a play are clearly defined and firmly established there is considerable suggestion that the participants will subconsciously interpret the facts of the performance to fit these expectations. Is this generally true of the average audience? If it is true, what is the nature, degree and significance of this subconscious adjustment?
3. When an audience member's expectations about intention and general nature of the play are fulfilled does he tend to ignore his own personal reservations about the performance? If this is true of audiences in general, what is its significance?
4. What is the relationship between a positive response to a performance and the participants' expectations about their own personal response (whether they will feel amused, saddened etc.) during a performance?

5. The participants' positive response to each performance was apparently not affected by the fact that their expectations about the way they would feel after the performance was over (happy, annoyed, etc.) were unfulfilled. What is the difference between personal reactions during a performance and personal reactions after the performance is over?
6. There is some evidence that the experience of seeing one or more productions has an effect on the participants' expectations about a subsequent production in that there is increased anticipation about enjoyment of the plot. If this is true, to what can it be attributed?

Next, there are a series of questions about attitudes to some of the physical elements of a production:

1. To what extent are audiences aware of the visual elements of a production (that is, costumes and scenery)?
2. When a theatrical experience takes place in an area that is not a traditional stage the participants become more responsive to costumes and scenery. Does the use of the traditional stage inhibit visual response?
3. The majority of the group maintain they prefer minimal scenery. Does it reflect general audience attitude? What does this actually mean? What is the significance of this?

4. Are audiences really clearly aware only of the costumes worn by the actors whose performances impressed them?
5. The participants maintain that acting is the most important element of the production for them. When they concentrate less on the acting do they become more visually aware of and responsive to costumes and scenery? Are audiences only able to respond to one aspect of a performance at a time?
6. The participants do not regard an actor's activity as acting unless it takes place in some kind of clearly defined stage area. What is general audience attitude towards apparently unstructured acting?
7. Are audiences able to identify specifically what they feel is wrong with the acting when they are not entirely satisfied with it?
8. How much distinction do audiences make between actor and character?
9. To what extent are audiences influenced in their evaluation of a production by its technical proficiency? How would they respond if the production were technically poorly executed?

Questions about the participants' general responses to productions, and questions about the frame of reference are so inter-related that they will be included in the same section:

1. Is there a system of pre-established or pre-conceived ideas which have created a frame of reference for audience members when evaluating and anticipating a production?
2. Although the group members' pre-play information came from different sources their expectations about each production were very uniform. Did the available information contribute to the application of some pre-established system of response? Which particular elements of the pre-play information are important in this respect?
3. There is some indication that the frame of reference exists and is so firmly established that the facts of the production are interpreted to fit it (although this seems to apply only to a traditional style of production). If this is true, what effect does it have on general audience evaluation of performances?
4. On the other hand, if the production does not fulfil the basic requirements of the frame of reference the participants do not seem to accept it or evaluate it as a "play". If this is true, how does it affect audience response to non-conventional productions? Are they able to enjoy and approve of such productions? What effect will this type of production have on audiences' general attitude to the theatre?

5. Do audiences have less uniform and more individual responses when they attend a performance that is not confined to a conventional stage area? If so, does this mean that in this situation they are responding according to their own personal preferences rather than according to the frame of reference?
6. How true is the suggestion that although the participants accept the general nature of an experimental production they separate and respond mainly to those elements which would be found in a conventional production?
7. There is some suggestion that when the participants were not responding according to the frame of reference their reactions to the productions were more critical and objective. Does the frame of reference inhibit a critical and objective response?
8. There is some evidence that the standards of the frame of reference do not coincide with the personal preferences of the participants. Are audiences in fact registering approval of productions that have no real impact on them?
9. The cumulative effect of continuous exposure does not seem to have much influence on response other than to reinforce the frame of reference. A long term study might not support this suggestion.

10. Do audiences respond only to the elements of a production which can be related directly to plot and characters?
11. Although the group members were aware of some of the shortcomings of the productions, their enjoyment and approval of each performance were apparently not affected by this awareness. Is this true of audiences in general?
12. How extensive is the audiences' apparent acceptance of boredom as a normal part of the theatre experience?
13. To what extent will audiences ignore their own personal reservations about a production while maintaining the belief that the production was a worthwhile experience? Why do they do this?

In the contemporary theatre there is an increasing interest in audience participation. Attempts are made to physically involve the audience in the production by inviting them on to the stage, sending actors out into the audience and asking for comments and suggestions from audience members during the performance. Often, these devices only emphasize the gap between audience and actors. Many of these attempts seem to pay insignificant attention to the fact that the audience is participating by being present in the theatre. By responding to some aspects of

the performance and ignoring others the members of the audience create for themselves an experience which is related to, but is not identical with, the experience intended by the director.

The nature and extent of this type of audience participation is largely unknown and is usually a matter of guesswork. It is essential, therefore, that more systematic attempts be made to define the nature and problems of this audience participation, since it is one of the major elements of the theatre experience and is one of the controlling factors in the development of the theatre.

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A P P E N D I C E S

NOTE ON THE APPENDICES

Both the questionnaires and a summary of the participants' responses will be found in the appendices. The summary of responses has been superimposed on to the questionnaires so that each response is with the appropriate question. The responses are presented here only in a brief form. The detailed and complete form of the data is on file in the Frederic Wood Theatre Library and it is recommended that any one interested in studying the data should refer to the complete rather than the abbreviated form.

In the summary of responses presented here, the letters A, B, and C always refer to Groups A, B, and C. The numbers under the letters always refer to the number of participants, unless otherwise indicated.

APPENDIX A

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE

a) Which of the following describes your age ?

(check one)

	A	B	C
18 to 25 years old	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
25 to 30 years old			
30 to 45 years old		2	5 1
45 to 50 years old		1	1
50 to 60 years old		2	1 3
over 60 years old			1

b) which of the following describes your education ?

(check one)

A	B	C	
	<u>I</u>		attended high school but did not graduate
2		2	high school graduate
1	1	1	vocational training
		1	some university
1	2		university graduate
1	2	2	post-graduate degree
6	6	6	currently attending university

c) What is your occupation ?

professional - 7
 housewives - 7
 students - 18
 other - 4

If you are a housewife, what is your husband's occupation ?

d) If you are a student, what year are you in ? scattered

what is your major ? scattered

e) Approximately how many hours do you watch television in an average week ? (check one)

	A	B	C
25 to 30 hours			
15 to 25 hours			2
7 to 15 hours		2	3 1
3 to 7 hours		4	4 1
only occasionally		3	4 2
never watch television			3

- f) If you watch television, what kinds of program do you most enjoy ?
(check any that apply)

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
drama _____	11	9	9
comedy _____	3	6	5
westerns _____		1	1
news _____	7	7	6
variety shows _____	1	3	
movies _____	9	8	7
game shows _____	1	1	
daytime drama _____			
talk shows _____	2	3	2

Name three of your favorite television programs

Three frequently mentioned : C.B.C. Weekend, N.E.T. Playhouse,
The Avengers

- g) Approximately how frequently do you go to the movies ?
(check one)

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
4 to 8 times a month _____			3
2 to 4 times a month _____	3	3	4
once a month _____	4	4	3
once every two months _____	1	2	1
once every four months _____		3	
twice a year _____	2	1	
once a year _____	1		
less than once a year _____			

h) Of the following movies, which have you seen and which have you enjoyed ?
 (rate each movie in the space provided) rating:

	attendance:			A	B	C	A	B	C	
	$\frac{A}{4}$	$\frac{B}{3}$	$\frac{C}{5}$	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{B}{1.5}$	$\frac{C}{1}$				
Funny Girl _____										1 = liked it
Paint Your Wagon _____	2	1	2	2	1	1.5				very much
Putney Swope _____	5	1	6	1	1	1				2 = did not like it
Laughter in The Dark _____		2			2					very much
True Grit _____			2			1				3 = disliked it
Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid _____	3	6	8	1	1	1				
A Man For All Seasons _____	9	9	8	1	1	2.5				
Goodbye Mr. Chips _____	2	1	2	1	1	2				
The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie	4	5	3	1	1	1				
Midnight Cowboy _____	6	5	9	1	1	1				
The Undefeated _____										
Topaz _____		3	1		2	2				
The Graduate _____	10	12	10	1	1	1				
Blow Up _____	9	7	8	1	1	1				
Jenny _____			1			2				
Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice _____	5	5	2	2	1	1				
The Reivers _____		1			1					
Bonnie and Clyde _____	7	7	7	1	1	1				
The Sound of Music _____	8	8	7	3	1	2				
Easy Rider _____	4	7	10	1	1	1				

i) Do you participate in any of the following activities in your leisure time ? (check any that apply)

	A	B	C		A	B	C
spectator sports _____	2	3	2	participation sports _____	8	3	1
movies _____	8	9	11	entertaining _____	6	7	3
social clubs _____	2	1		night clubs _____		2	
symphony concerts _____	3	6	4	theatre _____			
opera _____	2	3	5	art galleries _____	11	11	11
museums _____	5	5	5	planetarium _____	11	7	10
church activities _____	2	1		other (specify) _____	6	5	5

Which of the above activities do you participate in most frequently ?
 scattered response

Within the last year have you been to plays at the Vancouver Art

		<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
Gallery	11 to 15 times	___		
(check one)	8 to 10 times	___	1	
	4 to 5 times	___		1
	2 to 4 times	___		
	1 to 2 times	___	1	1
	not once in the last year but attended			
				previously ___
	never	___	10	11 8

Within the last year have you been to plays at Simon Fraser University

		<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
Theatre ?	7 to 12 times	___		
(check one)	4 to 6 times	___		
	2 to 4 times	___	2	
	1 to 2 times	___		1
	not once in the last year but attended previously			___
			2 2 1	
	never	___	8 9 11	

Within the last year have you seen any theatrical productions by professional touring companies ?

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>		<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
yes	5	1	5		6	10	7
no				___			

If yes, how many? total average: 2

k) Have you in the past participated in any of the following? A B C

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>		<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
university theatre	1	1	5	amateur theatre	___	3	2 5
professional theatre	1			high school theatre	2	2	4

l) Are you currently active in any of the following? A B C

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>		<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
university theatre	___			amateur theatre	___		1
	1		1				
professional theatre	1			high school theatre	1		1
	1		1				

r) In general, do you feel more satisfied after you have seen a play
 that : has been entertaining _____
 has made a significant statement about life _____
 has provided an emotional experience _____

Group A : ENTERTAINING and SIGNIFICANT
 Group B : ENTERTAINING and EMOTIONAL
 Group C : EMOTIONAL

s) Of the following list of plays which have you either seen or read, and which have you enjoyed ?

(put S for seen or R for read in the first column and rate the plays between 1 and 3 in the second column)

1 = liked it very much

2 = did not like it very much

3 = disliked it

	majority rating:			seen;			read:		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Black Comedy _____	1	1	2	8	5	1			
Street Car Named Desire _____	1	1	2	7	8	7		1	1
Hamlet _____	1	1	1	9	9	9	2	2	2
Waiting For Godot _____	2	1	1	7	7	8	1	2	2
Enter Laughing _____			3			1			
The Seagull _____									
The Taming of The Shrew _____	1	1	1	6	4	4	2	1	
The Beard _____	1	1	2	8	8	7		2	1
The Beard _____	2	3.5	1	3	2	1			
Man and Superman _____	1	1	1	2	4	3	2	2	
Two For The See Saw _____	2	1	2	1	4	2	1	2	
America Hurrah _____									
Hay Fever _____	1		1	3		6			
Hay Fever _____			3			1			
A Month in The Country _____	1	2.5	3.5	1	2	2			
The Devils _____	1	1		1	1				
The Crucible _____	1	1	1	10	6	8		1	1
Barefoot in The Park _____	1	2	3.5	1	2	2			
Death of A Salesman _____	1	1	1	7	7	5	2	1	2
Che _____									
Che _____	2.5	1	3.5	2	2	2			
Look Back in Anger _____	1	3.5	1	4	2	7	1		
Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf _____	1	1	1	5	7	8	2	1	1

t) Which of the following aspects of a production is most important to you when you go to a play :

(number in order of preference)

Group A :	PLAYWRIGHT'S THEME and ACTING	the standard of acting	___
		the costumes	___
Group B :	ACTING and PLAYWRIGHT'S THEME	the playwright's theme	___
		the scenery	___
Group C :	PLAYWRIGHT'S THEME and ACTING	the plot	___

u) When you see a play, how important to you is the acting ?

(check one)

	very important	___	
Group A :	VERY IMPORTANT	quite important	___
Group B :	VERY IMPORTANT	not very important	___
Group C :	VERY IMPORTANT	not important at all	___
	undecided	___	

v) When you see a play, how important to you are the scenery and costumes ?

(check one)

	very important	___	
Group A :	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	quite important	___
Group B :	NOT VERY IMPORTANT	not very important	___
Group C :	QUITE IMPORTANT	not important at all	___
	undecided	___	

w) In general, do you prefer plays written in :

(number in order of preference)

Group A :	COLLOQUIAL and NO PREFERENCE	verse	___
Group B :	NO PREFERENCE and COLLOQUIAL	poetic prose	___
Group C :	COLLOQUIAL and NO PREFERENCE	colloquial language	___
		elegant, formal language	___
		dialect	___
		no preference	___

x) Have you ever seen plays which have no scenery but are acted on an empty stage ?

yes $\frac{A}{10}$ $\frac{B}{6}$ $\frac{C}{10}$

no $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{6}$ $\frac{C}{2}$

Group A : 1 saw 4; 2 saw 3

If yes, how many in the last three years?

3 saw 1; 1 saw 8

Group B : ~~4 saw 1; 1 saw 3-4~~

Group C : 2 saw 1; 2 saw 2

If yes, did you enjoy this type of production ?

2 saw 3; 1 saw 4

1 saw 5; 1 saw 12

yes $\frac{A}{9}$ $\frac{B}{3}$ $\frac{C}{10}$

no $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{3}$ $\frac{C}{2}$

undecided $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ $\frac{C}{1}$

9 3 10

2

1

y) Generally speaking do you prefer plays which have:

(number in order of preference)

lavish, spectacular scenery

realistic scenery

a minimal set

no scenery at all

Group A : REALISTIC and MINIMAL

Group B : MINIMAL

Group C : MINIMAL

Are there any of the above that you dislike ?

Group A : 2 LAVISH
1 REALISTIC

Group B : 2 LAVISH
1 NO SCENERY

Group C : 4 LAVISH

z) Have you been to any mixed-media productions ?

yes $\frac{A}{11}$ $\frac{B}{9}$ $\frac{C}{9}$

no $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{3}$ $\frac{C}{3}$

If yes did you enjoy these productions ?

(check one)

very much

Group A : MODERATELY

moderately

Group B : VERY MUCH

slightly

Group C : MODERATELY

not at all

undecided

Would you like to see more mixed-media productions?

yes $\frac{A}{5}$ $\frac{B}{9}$ $\frac{C}{7}$

no $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ $\frac{C}{1}$

undecided $\frac{A}{5}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ $\frac{C}{2}$

If you have never seen any mixed-media productions, do you think you would be interested in seeing this type of production ?

yes $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ $\frac{C}{2}$

no $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ $\frac{C}{2}$

undecided $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ $\frac{C}{1}$

aa) There is a trend in the theatre towards audience participation; that is, members of the audience are encouraged to leave their seats and become involved in the activities initiated by the actors.

Have you ever been to a production in which the audience was asked to participate?

yes	$\frac{A}{9}$	$\frac{B}{3}$	$\frac{C}{7}$		no	$\frac{A}{3}$	$\frac{B}{9}$	$\frac{C}{5}$
-----	---------------	---------------	---------------	--	----	---------------	---------------	---------------

If no, do you think you would enjoy this kind of production?

yes	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$		no	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{3}$	$\frac{C}{3}$		undecided	$\frac{A}{5}$	$\frac{B}{5}$	$\frac{C}{1}$
-----	---------------	---------------	---------------	--	----	---------------	---------------	---------------	--	-----------	---------------	---------------	---------------

If you have been at this type of production, were you one of the audience members who was participating?

yes	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{3}$		no	$\frac{A}{8}$	$\frac{B}{2}$	$\frac{C}{4}$
-----	---------------	---------------	---------------	--	----	---------------	---------------	---------------

If you have ever been to a production in which the audience was asked to participate (whether or not you became actively involved yourself) did you enjoy this experience?

(check one)

	very much	___
Group A :	VERY MUCH	moderately
Group B :	VERY MUCH	___
Group C :	VERY MUCH - MODERATELY	slightly

		not at all

		undecided

Would you like to go to more productions which involve audience participation?

yes	$\frac{A}{6}$	$\frac{B}{3}$	$\frac{C}{6}$		no	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$		undecided	$\frac{A}{6}$	$\frac{B}{2}$	$\frac{C}{3}$
-----	---------------	---------------	---------------	--	----	---------------	---------------	---------------	--	-----------	---------------	---------------	---------------

bb) As a general rule do you feel that the theatre should be subject to censorship if it offends the usual social standards of behavior?

yes	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$		no	$\frac{A}{12}$	$\frac{B}{11}$	$\frac{C}{11}$		undecided	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$
-----	---------------	---------------	---------------	--	----	----------------	----------------	----------------	--	-----------	---------------	---------------	---------------

cc) Do you feel that language and behavior usually considered indecent or offensive in social relationships is acceptable on the stage?

(check one) acceptable under any circumstances ___

Group A :	ACCEPTABLE WHEN APPROPRIATE	acceptable when appropriate to the play	___
Group B :	ACCEPTABLE WHEN APPROPRIATE	never acceptable	___
Group C :	ACCEPTABLE WHEN APPROPRIATE	undecided	___

dd) Do you usually read newspaper reviews of the plays that you see ?

- Group A ; AFTER before you see the play ___
 Group B : AFTER after you have seen the play ___
 Group C : BEFORE AND AFTER never read reviews ___

If you read reviews, which ones do you usually read ?

(check any that apply)

- Group A : SUN and PROVINCE the review in The Province ___
 Group B : SUN and PROVINCE the review in The Sun ___
 Group C : SUN and PROVINCE other (specify) _____

Do you usually agree with the evaluations of the critic in The Province ?

yes $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{3}$ $\frac{C}{1}$ no $\frac{A}{7}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ $\frac{C}{3}$ undecided $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ $\frac{C}{5}$

Do you usually agree with the evaluations of the critic in The Sun ?

yes $\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{}$ $\frac{C}{}$ no $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ $\frac{C}{3}$ undecided $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{6}$ $\frac{C}{7}$

ee) Do you ever find that the reactions of the rest of the audience at a play are noticeably different from yours ?

(check one) yes, almost always ___

- Group A : SOMETIMES yes, often ___
 Group B : SOMETIMES sometimes ___
 Group C : SOMETIMES seldom ___
 never ___
 undecided ___

ff) Have you ever been to any experimental productions ?

yes $\frac{A}{6}$ $\frac{B}{5}$ $\frac{C}{6}$ no $\frac{A}{6}$ $\frac{B}{7}$ $\frac{C}{2}$

If yes, which ones in the last year have you seen, and where did you see them ? mentioned: SAVAGE GOD series at Art Gallery

THE CRIMINALS Arts Club

If yes, do you find that as a rule you enjoy experimental plays ?

(check one) very much ___

- Group A : MODERATELY moderately ___
 Group B : little response slightly ___
 GROUP C : MODERATELY not at all ___
 undecided ___

gg) Generally speaking, where do you like to sit in the theatre ?

(check one)

close to the stage ___
 in the middle ___
 near the back ___
 no preference ___

Group A : IN THE MIDDLE
 Group B : IN THE MIDDLE
 Group C : IN THE MIDDLE

Do you prefer to sit on the aisle ?

yes ___ $\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{5}$ $\frac{C}{3}$ no ___ $\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ $\frac{C}{9}$ no preference ___ $\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{3}$ $\frac{C}{9}$

hh) How often do you enjoy the plays you go to ?

(check one)

I usually enjoy the play ___
 I often enjoy the play ___
 I sometimes enjoy the play ___
 I am often disappointed by the play ___

Group A : OFTEN ENJOY
 Group B : USUALLY
 Group C : USUALLY - OFTEN ENJOY

ii) In which of the following centres have you seen plays ?

(check all that apply) London, England $\frac{A}{5}$ $\frac{B}{4}$ $\frac{C}{7}$ New York ___ $\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ $\frac{C}{2}$
 San Francisco $\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ $\frac{C}{5}$ Stratford, Ontario $\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ $\frac{C}{3}$ Montreal ___ $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ $\frac{C}{2}$
 Minneapolis ___ $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ $\frac{C}{1}$ other (specify) Toronto, Seattle etc.

jj) Give a rating between 1 and 5 for the general standard of the plays you have seen at the following theatres:

		<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>
1 = excellent	Playhouse Theatre ___	2	2	2
2 = good	Frederic Wood Theatre ___	1	2	2
3 = fair	Dorothy Somerset Studio ___	2		1
4 = mediocre	Arts Club Theatre ___	1-2	2	2
5 = poor	Vancouver Art Gallery ___	1-3		2-3
	Simon Fraser University Theatre ___	2-3	3	
	Metro Theatre ___	2-3	3	4
	other (specify) _____			

kk) Do you think the standard of theatre in Vancouver is generally :

(check one)

excellent ___
 good ___
 fair ___
 mediocre ___
 poor ___
 undecided ___

Group A : GOOD
 Group B : GOOD
 Group C : GOOD - Fair

APPENDIX B

PRE-PRODUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE AS YOU LIKE IT

a) In general, what standard of production do you expect when you go to a play at the Frederic Wood Theatre ? (check one)

Group A : GOOD - EXCELLENT

excellent

good

fair

mediocre

poor

b) What type of staging of a play do you expect to see at the Frederic Wood Theatre ?

staging in which the approach is :

traditional

(check any that apply)

experimental

extravagant

Group A : EXPERIMENTAL

austere

realistic

fanciful

c) Have you ever read As You Like It ?

yes $\frac{A}{8}$

no $\frac{A}{1}$

d) If you have read it, did you read it within: A

the last 3 or 4 weeks 4

the last year 1

the last two years 1

the last five years

the last ten years

more than ten years ago 2

e) If you have read the play did you enjoy it ?

(check one)

very much ___

moderately ___

Group A : MODERATELY

not very much ___

f) Have you ever seen a production of As You Like It ?

yes ^A
1

no ^A
11

g) If you have seen a production of As You Like It, did you enjoy it ?

(check one)

very much ___

moderately ___

Group A : VERY MUCH (1 person)

not very much ___

h) If you have seen a production of As You Like It, was it within:

(check one)

within the last year ^A
1

within the last two years ___

within the last five years ___

within the last ten years ___

more than ten years ago 1

i) Have you seen more than one production of As You Like It ?

yes ___

no ^A
11

If yes, approximately how many ? _____

j) Where have you seen the previous productions of As You Like It ?

Vancouver ^A
1 Stratford, Ontario ___ London, England ___

San Francisco ___ Minneapolis ___ Stratford on Avon ___

other ___

Do you expect the play to be:

(check one)

realistic

Group A : UNREALISTIC

unrealistic

During the performance of this play, which do you think you are

likeliest to be ? (check any that apply)

amused $\frac{A}{11}$ saddened $\frac{A}{1}$ enlightened $\frac{A}{2}$ bored $\frac{A}{ }$
 detached $\frac{A}{2}$ delighted $\frac{A}{5}$ involved $\frac{A}{2}$ interested $\frac{A}{5}$
 depressed $\frac{A}{ }$

At the end of the performance of this play, which do you think you are

likeliest to be ? (check any that apply) Do you think that perhaps

you will be:

happy $\frac{A}{9}$ annoyed $\frac{A}{ }$ fatigued $\frac{A}{1}$ depressed $\frac{A}{ }$ relaxed $\frac{A}{8}$
 angry $\frac{A}{ }$ puzzled $\frac{A}{2}$ disturbed $\frac{A}{1}$ enlightened $\frac{A}{3}$
 reassured $\frac{A}{1}$ soothed $\frac{A}{1}$ refreshed $\frac{A}{6}$

l) In a play of this kind, what aspects of the production do you think you are most likely to enjoy ? (number in order of anticipated interest

the costumes

the acting

the scenery

the music

Group A : ACTING

m) Which aspects of the production do you anticipate enjoying most ?

(number in order of anticipated interest)

interesting individual characters Group A : RELATIONSHIPS
 BETWEEN CHARACTERS and
 INTERESTING INDIVIDUAL
 CHARACTERS

development of the story

relationships between the characters

poetic language

Do you expect the acting in As You Like It to be:

(check one)

natural and lifelike $\frac{A}{2}$
 elegant and stylized 4
 energetic and flamboyant 5
 powerful and passionate
 stilted and unnatural

Do you expect the scenery of As You Like It to be:

(check any that apply)

realistic $\frac{A}{1}$
 fanciful 7
 historical 3
 symbolic 3
 lavish
 austere
 minimal 5
 colorful 9
 muted 1
 modern
 stylish 1
 functional 7

Do you expect the costumes of As You Like It to be:

realistic $\frac{A}{4}$
 fanciful 8
 historical 3
 symbolic 2
 lavish 2
 austere

colorful $\frac{A}{12}$
 muted
 modern
 stylish 3
 functional 1
 minimal

n) Why are you going to this play ?

(number 3 reasons in order of importance; if you are a season ticket holder, number 3 other reasons)

Because: Group A : scattered response

I am a season ticket holder ^A~~10~~

I've seen other productions of this play and enjoyed them ____

I've read the play, but have never seen it ____

I've heard about this play, and want to see what it is like ____

I enjoy Shakespeare ____

I've never seen any of Shakespeare's plays and would like to see one ____

other reasons (specify) _____

o) Why did you buy season tickets to the Frederic Wood Theatre ?

(number any that apply in order of importance)

Because : Group A : scattered response

I went to a number of productions at this theatre last year, and enjoyed them ____

I like to support university theatre ____

the selection of plays appealed to me ____

a member of my family, or a friend, likes to go to this theatre and I bought the tickets in order to accompany them ____

buying the tickets in advance means that I am more likely to see the full season of plays at this theatre, rather than just one or two of them ____

APPENDIX C

POST-PRODUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE AS YOU LIKE IT

a) Now that the performance is over, how did this production leave you feeling ?

(check any that apply)

happy <u>9</u> ^A	annoyed <u>I</u> ^A	fatigued <u>A</u>
depressed <u>A</u>	relaxed <u>8</u> ^A	angry <u>A</u>
puzzled <u>A</u>	disturbed <u>A</u>	enlightened <u>A</u>
reassured <u>A</u>	soothed <u>I</u> ^A	refreshed <u>8</u> ^A

b) How would you describe the general standard of the production you have just seen ?

(check one)

excellent ___
 good ___
 fair ___
 mediocre ___
 poor ___

Group A : GOOD

c) Would you describe the general style of the production as:

(check one)

traditional ___
 experimental ___
 extravagant ___
 austere ___
 realistic ___
 fanciful ___

Group A : TRADITIONAL

d) Do you think the main concern of As You Like It is:

(check one)

political ___
 social ___
 ethical ___
 romantic ___
 psychological ___

Group A : ROMANTIC

Do You think As You Like It is:

(check one)

serious ___
 mainly serious out with some comic elements ___
 comedy ___
 mainly comic but with some serious elements ___
 about equally serious and comic ___

Group A : MAINLY COMIC WITH SOME SERIOUS ELEMENTS

Does As You Like It primarily:

(check one)

Group A : ENTERTAIN

make a meaningful statement about life ___
entertain ___
provide an emotional experience ___

Is As You Like It:

(check one)

Group A : FANTASY WORLD

mainly about the inner world of the mind ___
mainly about the real world ___
mainly about a fantasy world ___

Is As You Like It:

(check one)

Group A : REALISTIC

realistic ___
unrealistic ___

Below are ten pairs of contrasting adjectives with a scale between each pair. Put a check on the scale between each pair of adjectives at the point which most closely describes your feelings about As You Like It.

Is As You Like It:

very somewhat in the middle somewhat very

	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{A}{3}$	$\frac{A}{4}$	$\frac{A}{5}$	$\frac{A}{6}$	$\frac{A}{7}$	$\frac{A}{8}$	
senseless	: ___	: 1 ___	$\frac{A}{1}$ ___	___	___	___	: 7 ___	: 3 ___	: meaningful
shallow	: ___	: 4 ___	: 6 ___	___	___	___	: 2 ___	: ___	: profound
sad	: ___	: ___	: 2 ___	___	___	___	: 2 ___	: 8 ___	: happy
interesting	4 ___	: 2 ___	: 1 ___	___	___	___	: 1 ___	: ___	: boring
sentimental	: 3 ___	: 6 ___	: ___	___	___	___	: 2 ___	: ___	: moving
important	: ___	: 4 ___	: 5 ___	___	___	___	: 3 ___	: ___	: trivial
stupid	: ___	: ___	: ___	___	___	___	: 6 ___	: 6 ___	: clever
optimistic	6 ___	: 5 ___	: 1 ___	___	___	___	: ___	: ___	: pessimistic
worth seeing	: 9 ___	: 2 ___	: 1 ___	___	___	___	: ___	: ___	: not worth seeing
simple	: ___	: 2 ___	: 4 ___	___	___	___	: 6 ___	: ___	: complex

e) Is As You Like It:

(check one)

Group A : COMEDY

satire ___
comedy ___
serious drama ___
tragedy ___
none of these ___

f) Which aspects of As You Like It did you enjoy the most ?

(number in order of enjoyment) Group A : INTERESTING INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERS

- the interesting individual characters
- the development of the story
- the relationships between the characters
- the poetic language

Which characters in As You Like It (regardless of how well acted) did you enjoy the most ? (name as many as three)

Group A : TOUCHSTONE, JAQUES, ROSALIND

g) Did you think the development of the story was:

(put a check on the scale between each pair of adjectives at the point which most closely describes your opinion)

	very	somewhat	in the middle	somewhat	very	
entertaining	$\frac{A}{4}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{A}{2}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{A}{3}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{A}{2}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{A}{1}$ <u> </u>	: tedious
logical	$\frac{3}{1}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{6}{6}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{2}{2}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{4}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	: illogical
unrealistic	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{6}{6}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{2}{2}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{4}{4}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	: realistic
clear	$\frac{9}{9}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{2}{2}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	: unclear
unbelievable	$\frac{3}{3}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{3}{3}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{2}{2}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{3}{3}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	: believable
not involving	$\frac{3}{3}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{3}{3}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{4}{4}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	: involving

h) What aspects of the production did you enjoy the most ?

(number in order of enjoyment)

Group A : ACTING the costumes
 the acting
 the scenery
 the music

i) Did you think the standard of acting, on the whole, was:

(put a check on the scale at the point which best describes your opinion)

	very	somewhat	in the middle	somewhat	very	
professional	$\frac{A}{4}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{A}{4}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{A}{2}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{A}{1}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{A}{1}$ <u> </u>	: amateur
poor	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{1}{1}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{4}{4}$ <u> </u>	$\frac{7}{7}$ <u> </u>	: good

Were there any peculiarities of speech of some particular actor(s) or actress(es) that seemed to you to be inappropriate ?

yes $\frac{A}{3}$ no $\frac{A}{6}$

If answer is yes, which actor(s) or actress(es) ? ~~mentioned: PHEBE, CELIA, CHARLES, JACQUES de BOYS~~
(identify by naming characters)

k) Did the actors speak clearly enough for you to hear everything they said ? (check one)

Group A : MOST WERE CLEAR

all were clear ___
most were clear ___
some were clear ___
a few were clear ___
none were clear ___

l) In general, would you describe the acting as:

(check one)

Group A : scattered

natural and lifelike ___
elegant and stylized ___
energetic and flamboyant ___
powerful and passionate ___
stilted and unnatural ___

m) Did you like the scenery ?

(check one)

Group A : VERY MUCH

very much ___
moderately ___
slightly ___
not at all ___

n) Would you describe the scenery as ?

(check any that apply)

realistic	$\frac{A}{1}$ ___	minimal	$\frac{A}{4}$ ___
fanciful	$\frac{6}{6}$ ___	colorful	$\frac{8}{8}$ ___
historical	$\frac{1}{1}$ ___	muted	$\frac{2}{2}$ ___
symbolic	$\frac{2}{2}$ ___	modern	$\frac{1}{1}$ ___
lavish	___	stylish	$\frac{1}{1}$ ___
austere	$\frac{1}{1}$ ___	functional	$\frac{7}{7}$ ___

Did you think the scenery was appropriate to the play ?

yes $\frac{A}{10}$ no $\frac{A}{2}$

If there was any particular feature of the scenery that seemed to you to be particularly inappropriate to the play, what was it ?

mentioned: trees, stream

o) Did you like the costumes ?

(check one) very much ___
 moderately ___
 slightly ___
 not at all ___

Group A : VERY MUCH

p) Would you describe the costumes as:

(check any that apply)

realistic	$\frac{A}{4}$	minimal	$\frac{A}{1}$
fanciful	$\frac{4}{4}$	col	colorful $\frac{11}{11}$
historical	$\frac{9}{9}$	muted	___
symbolic	___	modern	___
stylish	$\frac{2}{2}$	functional	$\frac{6}{6}$
lavish	$\frac{2}{2}$	austere	___

Did you think the costumes were appropriate to the play ?

yes $\frac{A}{11}$ no $\frac{A}{1}$

If there were any particular costumes that seem inappropriate to the play, which were they ? (identify by naming characters who wore them; in the case of character having more than one costume, give some identifying detail)

mentioned ; ROSALIND'S final dress

CHARLES' costume

Which costumes, if any, did you like the best ?
 (identify by naming characters; name three)

Group A : TOUCHSTONE, FREDERICK, ROSALIND

• Did you think the costumes went with the scenery ?

yes $\frac{A}{6}$

no $\frac{A}{2}$

q) Did you like the music ?

very much ___

moderately ___

slightly ___

not at all ___

Group A : VERY MUCH

r) On the whole, did you enjoy this production ?

very much ___

moderately ___

slightly ___

not at all ___

Group A : VERY MUCH

s) Were you ever bored during the performance ?

all the time $\frac{A}{6}$ ___

often ___ 1

occasionally $\frac{5}{6}$ ___

not at all ___

t) In general, how did you feel during the performance of this play ?

(check three of the following adverbs which most closely describe your response)

amused $\frac{A}{8}$ ___

saddened $\frac{A}{6}$ ___

enlightened $\frac{A}{1}$ ___

bored $\frac{A}{3}$ ___

detached $\frac{A}{3}$ ___

delighted $\frac{A}{8}$ ___

involved $\frac{A}{3}$ ___

interested $\frac{A}{6}$ ___

depressed ___

irritated $\frac{A}{2}$ ___

u) Was this production:

(put a check on the scale between each pair of adjectives at the point which most closely describes your opinion)

	very	somewhat	in the middle	somewhat	very	
conventional	: $\frac{A}{4}$ ___	: $\frac{A}{3}$ ___	: $\frac{A}{2}$ ___	: $\frac{A}{2}$ ___	: $\frac{A}{2}$ ___	: original
worthwhile	: 7 ___	: 4 ___	: 1 ___	: ___	: ___	: worthless
dull	: ___	: 1 ___	: 4 ___	: 6 ___	: 3 ___	: exciting
artistic	: 5 ___	: 5 ___	: 2 ___	: ___	: ___	: tasteless
confused	: ___	: 1 ___	: ___	: 5 ___	: 6 ___	: coherent
amateur	: 1 ___	: ___	: 2 ___	: 5 ___	: 4 ___	: professional

v) Do you think the director of this production has interpreted the author's intention properly ?

yes $\frac{A}{9}$ _____

no $\frac{A}{2}$ _____

don'tt know $\frac{A}{1}$ _____

w) Would you describe the production on the whole as, _____

Group A : SUCCESSFUL

successful _____

unsuccessful _____

Would you like to see more productions of this sort ?

Group A : YES

yes _____

no _____

x) Were you comfortable in your seat ?

Group A : YES yes _____

no _____

Would you have preferred sitting

(check any that apply)

closer to the stage $\frac{A}{1}$ _____

closer to the middle $\frac{2}{2}$ _____

farther away from the stage _____

on the aisle _____

y) Was anyone near you coughing, shuffling their feet, or doing anything else that disturbed you during the performance ?

yes $\frac{A}{7}$ _____

no $\frac{B}{5}$ _____

z) Have you read any reviews of this production , or heard any on the radio ?

yes $\frac{A}{1}$ _____

no $\frac{A}{12}$ _____

If yes, which reviews ?

Did you agree with the evaluations of these critics ?

(identify any you comment upon)

APPENDIX D

PRE-PRODUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE TANGO

Do you expect this play to be:

(check one)

mainly about the inner world of the mind

Group A : REAL WORLD

mainly about the real world

Group B : REAL WORLD and
INNER WORLD

mainly about a fantasy world

Do you expect Tango to be:

(check one)

a modern comedy $\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{4}$ an avant-garde play $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{1}$
 a modern serious drama $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ theatre of the absurd $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{2}$
 a political play $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ black comedy $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{1}$

j) Do you expect the acting in Tango to be:

(check one)

natural and lifelike

Group A : NATURAL AND LIFELIKE

elegant and stylized

Group B : scattered

energetic and flamboyant

powerful and passionate

stilted and unnatural

Do you expect the scenery of Tango to be:

(check any that apply)

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
realistic <u> </u>	7	5
fanciful <u> </u>	2	
historical <u> </u>	1	
symbolic <u> </u>	7	5
lavish <u> </u>		1
austere <u> </u>		3
minimal <u> </u>	5	1
colorful <u> </u>	6	1
muted <u> </u>	1	1
modern <u> </u>	7	3
stylish <u> </u>	1	
functional <u> </u>	7	8

Do you expect the costumes of Tango to be:

(check any that apply)

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
realistic <u> </u>	7	$\frac{4}{4}$
fanciful <u> </u>		4
historical <u> </u>	2	
symbolic <u> </u>	3	5
lavish <u> </u>		1
austere <u> </u>	1	1
colorful <u> </u>	7	2
muted <u> </u>		1
modern <u> </u>	9	2
stylish <u> </u>	2	1
functional <u> </u>	4	4
minimal <u> </u>	1	

Do you expect the play to be:

(check one)

realistic

unrealistic

Group A : REALISTIC

Group B : UNREALISTIC

During the performance of this play, which do you think you are likeliest to be ?

(check any that apply) amused $\frac{A}{7}$ $\frac{B}{10}$ saddened $\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{3}$
 enlightened $\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{3}$ bored $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ detached $\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{3}$ delighted $\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{1}$
 involved $\frac{A}{8}$ $\frac{B}{6}$ I interested $\frac{A}{8}$ $\frac{B}{5}$ depressed $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{2}$

At the end of the performance of this play, which do you think you are likeliest to be ?

(check any that apply) Do you think that perhaps you will be:
 happy $\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{3}$ annoyed $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ fatigued $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ depressed $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{1}$
 relaxed $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ angry $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ puzzled $\frac{A}{6}$ $\frac{B}{5}$ disturbed $\frac{A}{5}$ $\frac{B}{2}$
 enlightened $\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{4}$ reassured $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ soothed $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ refreshed $\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{3}$

k) In a play of this kind, what aspects of the production do you think you are most likely to enjoy ?

(number in order of anticipated interest) the costumes ___
 the acting ___
 the scenery ___
 the music ___

Group A : ACTING

Group B : ACTING

l) Which aspects of the play do you anticipate enjoying most ?
 (number in order of anticipated interest)

interesting individual characters ___
 development of the story ___
 relationships between the characters ___
 poetic language ___

Group A : scattered

Group B : RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHARACTERS

m) Of the following list of plays which have you either seen or read, and which have you enjoyed ? (put S for seen or R for read in the first column, and rate the plays between 1 and 4 in the second column)

1 = liked it very much
 2 = liked it moderately
 3 = did not like it very much
 4 = disliked it

	seen; $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$		read: $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	rating: $\frac{A}{1-4}$ $\frac{B}{1-2}$
The Chairs	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	___		$\frac{A}{1-4}$ $\frac{B}{1-2}$
Tiny Alice	6	$\frac{B}{2}$	1	1 1
Fondo and Lis	1	___		1
Happy Days	1	$\frac{B}{1}$		2 2
The Bald Soprano	1	$\frac{B}{2}$	3 2	2 1-2
The Dumb Waiter	3	$\frac{B}{2}$	2	2 2
Red Magic		___		
The Zoo Story	1	$\frac{B}{2}$	1 1	1 2
The Automobile Graveyard		___	1	
Krapp's Last Tape	2	___	2 2	1-4 2
The Rhinoceros	2	$\frac{B}{2}$	2 1	1-2 1
The Dwarfs		___		
The Sandbox	3	$\frac{B}{4}$	1	2 2
Orison		___		
Act Without Words		___		
The Lesson	1	$\frac{B}{1}$	1	2 1

Why are you going to this play ?

(number 3 reasons in order of importance; if you are a season ticket holder, number 3 other reasons)

Because:

I am a season ticket holder ____

I've read the play, but have never seen it ____

Group A : SEASON TICKETS
HEARD ABOUT THIS PLAY

I've heard about the play and am interested in seeing what it is like ____

Group B : SEASON TICKETS

I enjoy this type of play ____

Some of the cast members are actors whose performances I usually enjoy ____

I have no idea what this play is about, but the title intrigues me ____

Why did you buy season tickets to the Playhouse?

(number any that apply in order of importance)

Because: I went to a number of productions at this theatre last year,

Group A : WENT TO PRODUCTIONS LAST YEAR AND ENJOYED THEM and enjoyed them ____

I like to support Vancouver's major professional theatre co. ____

the selection of plays appealed to me ____

Group B : WENT TO PRODUCTIONS LAST YEAR AND ENJOYED THEM

a member of my family or a friend likes to go to this theatre

and I bought the tickets in order to accompany them ____

Buying the tickets in advance means that I am more likely

to see the full season of plays at this theatre, rather than

just one or two of them ____

APPENDIX E

POST-PRODUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE TANGO

a) Now that the performance is over, how did this production leave you feeling ?

(check any that apply)

happy	$\frac{A}{4}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	annoyed	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	fatigued	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{B}{2}$
depressed	$\frac{A}{3}$	$\frac{B}{3}$	relaxed	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	angry	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{B}{1}$
puzzled	$\frac{A}{3}$	$\frac{B}{5}$	disturbed	$\frac{A}{8}$	$\frac{B}{3}$	enlightened	$\frac{A}{4}$	$\frac{B}{5}$
reassured	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	soothed	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	refreshed	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{B}{1}$

b) How would you describe the general standard of the production you have just seen ?

(check one)

excellent ___

good ___

fair ___

mediocre ___

poor ___

Group A : GOOD

Group B : GOOD

c) Would you describe the general style of the production as:

(check one)

traditional ___

experimental ___

extravagant ___

austere ___

realistic ___

fanciful ___

Group A : scattered

Group B : scattered

d) Do you think the main concern of Tango is:

(check one)

political ___

social ___

ethical ___

romantic ___

psychological ___

Group A : SOCIAL

Group B : SOCIAL

Do you think Tango is:

(check one)

serious ___

mainly serious but with some comic elements ___

Group A : SERIOUS and
MAINLY SERIOUS
WITH COMIC ELEMENTS

comedy ___

mainly comic but with some serious elements ___

Group B : MAINLY SERIOUS WITH
COMIC ELEMENTS

about equally serious and comic ___

Does Tango primarily:

(check one) make a meaningful statement about life

Group A : MEANINGFUL STATEMENT entertain

Group B : MEANINGFUL STATEMENT provide an emotional experience

Is Tango:

(check one) mainly about the inner world of the mind

Group A : REAL WORLD mainly about the real world

Group B : REAL WORLD mainly about a fantasy world

Is Tango:

(check one) realistic

Group A : REALISTIC

unrealistic

Group B : REALISTIC

Below are ten pairs of contrasting adjectives with a scale between each pair. Put a check on the scale between each pair of adjectives at the point which most closely describes your feelings about Tango.

Is Tango:

	very		somewhat		in the middle		somewhat		very			
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B		
senseless		_____	_____	_____	2	_____	1	7	9	5	meaningful	
shallow		_____	_____	_____		3		6	6	5	1	profound
sad	5	3	4	5	3	4						happy
interesting	10	6		3		1	2				1	boring
sentimental		1	1	_____	4	5	4	3	3	3		moving
important	8	5	3	6	1	1						trivial
stupid		_____	_____	_____	1	4	7	4	3	3		clever
optimistic		_____	_____	_____	3	1	1	4	8	7		pessimistic
worth seeing	10	5	1	7	1	_____		_____				not worth seeing
simple	1	_____	_____	2	2	2	4	2	5	6		complex

e) Is Tango:

(check one)

Group A : scattered

Group B : SERIOUS DRAMA

- satire
- comedy
- serious drama
- tragedy
- none of these

f) Which aspects of Tango did you enjoy the most ?
 (number in order of enjoyment)

Group A : DEVELOPMENT OF STORY and RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHARACTERS
 the interesting individual characters ___
 the development of the story ___
 the relationships between the characters ___
 the poetic language ___

Group B : RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHARACTERS and DEVELOPMENT OF STORY

Which characters in Tango (regardless of how well acted) did you enjoy the most ? (name as many as three)

Group A : EUGENE and STOMIL _____

Group B : STOMIL and ARTHUR _____

g) Did you think the development of the story was:

(put a check on the scale between each pair of adjectives at the point which most closely describes your opinion)

	very		somewhat		in the middle		somewhat		very		
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	
entertaining	5	4	4	4	2	1	1	3	1	2	tedious
logical	5	7	3	2	3	3	4	1	1	1	illogical
unrealistic	1			3	4	5	4	4	3	3	realistic
clear	6	4	3	2	3	3		3			unclear
unbelievable	1	1	1	1	1	5	4	4	5	2	believable
not involving		2	2	1		2	5	3	5	4	involving

h) What aspects of the production did you enjoy the most ?

(number in order of enjoyment)

Group A : ACTING
 the costumes ___
 the acting ___
 Group B : ACTING
 the scenery ___
 the music ___

i) Did you think the standard of acting, on the whole, was:

(put a check on the scale at the point which best describes your opinion)

	very		somewhat		in the middle		somewhat		very		
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	
professional	4	2	6	8	1	2	1	2	1	2	amateur
poor			2	1		1	5	6	5	3	good

j) Which do you think were the best actors or actresses in the production and which do you think gave performances which seemed lower than the general standard? (number the three best in order of preference in the first column, and three who did not seem very good in the second column)

	best	not as good
Ken Buhay as <u>Eddie</u>	---	---
Robert Clothier as <u>Eugene</u>	---	---
Pat Gage as <u>Eleanor</u>	---	---
Logan Houston as <u>Stomil</u>	---	---
Frank Maraden as <u>Arthur</u>	---	---
Micki Maunsell as <u>Eugenia</u>	---	---
Pia Shandel as <u>Ala</u>	---	---

Group A : best - EUGENE, STOMIL not as good - EDDIE

Group B : best - EUGENE, STOMIL not as good - EDDIE, ALA

Were there any physical or facial mannerisms of some particular actor(s) or actress(es) that seemed to you to be inappropriate?

yes ^A5 ^B9 no ^A6 ^B3

If yes, which actor(s) or actress(es)?
 (identify by naming characters)

Group A mentioned : ARTHUR, EDDIE, ELEANOR

Group B mentioned : ARTHUR, ELEANOR, ALA

Were there any peculiarities of speech of some particular actor(s) or actress(es) that seemed to you to be inappropriate ?

yes $\frac{A}{5}$ $\frac{B}{10}$ no $\frac{A}{6}$ $\frac{B}{2}$

If answer is yes, which actor(s) or actress(es) ? _____
(identify by naming characters) _____

Group A mentioned : ELEANOR
Group B mentioned : ELEANOR, ARTHUR, EDDIE

k) Did the actors speak clearly enough for you to hear everything they said ? (check one)

- all were clear _____
- most were clear _____
- some were clear _____
- a few were clear _____
- none were clear _____

Group A : ALL WERE CLEAR

Group B : ALL WERE CLEAR

l) In general, would you describe the acting as:

(check one)

- natural and lifelike _____
- elegant and stylized _____
- energetic and flamboyant _____
- powerful and passionate _____
- stilted and unnatural _____

Group A : scattered

Group B : scattered

m) Did you like the scenery ?

(check one)

- very much _____
- moderately _____
- slightly _____
- not at all _____

Group A : VERY MUCH - MODERATELY

Group B : VERY MUCH

n) Would you describe the scenery as ?

(check any that apply)

- realistic $\frac{A}{9}$ $\frac{B}{8}$
- fanciful $\frac{2}{2}$
- historical $\frac{1}{1}$
- symbolic $\frac{7}{9}$
- lavish $\frac{3}{3}$
- austere $\frac{2}{2}$

- minimal $\frac{3}{2}$
- colorful _____
- muted $\frac{3}{5}$
- modern $\frac{1}{1}$
- stylish $\frac{1}{1}$
- functional $\frac{7}{7}$

Lid you think the scenery was appropriate to the play ?

yes $\frac{A}{11}$ $\frac{B}{12}$ no $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{-}$

If there was any particular feature of the scenery that seemed to you to be particularly inappropriate to the play , what was it ?

Group A : NOT ENOUGH CLUTTER AND LIGHT IN FIRST ACT
~~CORTRIVED~~

Group B : TRANSLUCENT WALLS
~~THE CATAFALQUE~~
 RECORD PLAYER

o) Did you like the costumes ?

(check one) very much

Group A : VERY MUCH - MODERATELY moderately

Group B : MODERATELY slightly

not at all

p) Would you describe the costumes as:

(check any that apply)

realistic $\frac{A}{5}$ $\frac{B}{4}$

minimal $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{-}$

fanciful 4 1

col

colorful 1 1

historical 2 1

muted 2 1

symbolic 7 10

modern 1

stylish 1 1

functional 4 7

lavish 1 2

austere 1

Did you think the costumes were appropriate to the play ?

yes $\frac{A}{10}$ $\frac{B}{12}$ no $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{-}$

If there were any particular costumes that seemes inappropriate to the play, which were they ? (identify by naming characters who wore them; in the case of characters having more than one costume, give some identifying detail)

Group A : EUGENIA, ARTHUR

Group B : ALA

Which costumes, if any, did you like the best ?
 (identify by naming characters; name three)

Group A : STOMIL, EUGENE

Group B : STOMIL

Did you think the costumes went with the scenery ?

yes $\frac{A}{10}$ $\frac{B}{11}$ no $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{1}$

q) Did you like the music ?

very much ___

Group A : scattered moderately ___

Group B : MODERATELY slightly ___

not at all ___

r) On the whole, did you enjoy this production ?

very much ___

Group A : VERY MUCH moderately ___

Group B : MODERATELY slightly ___

not at all ___

s) Were you ever bored during the performance ?

all the time $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ ___

often ___ 1 2

occasionally $\frac{6}{5}$ 7

not at all ___ 5 3

t) In general, how did you feel during the performance of this play ?

(check three of the following adverbs which most closely describe your response)

amused $\frac{A}{6}$ $\frac{B}{6}$ saddened $\frac{A}{5}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ enlightened $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{4}$ bored $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{1}$

detached $\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ delighted $\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{1}$ involved $\frac{A}{8}$ $\frac{B}{8}$ interested $\frac{A}{8}$ $\frac{B}{6}$

depressed $\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{3}$ irritated $\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{5}$

u) Was this production:

(put a check on the scale between each pair of adjectives at the point which most closely describes your opinion)

	very	somewhat	in the middle	somewhat	very	
	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{3}$	$\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{4}$	$\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{4}$	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	
conventional	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{3}$	$\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{4}$	$\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{4}$	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	original
worthwhile	$\frac{A}{6}$ $\frac{B}{6}$	$\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{5}$	$\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{4}$	$\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	worthless
dull	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{A}{4}$ $\frac{B}{4}$	$\frac{A}{8}$ $\frac{B}{7}$	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	exciting
artistic	$\frac{A}{5}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{A}{6}$ $\frac{B}{5}$	$\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{3}$	$\frac{A}{6}$ $\frac{B}{5}$	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{2}$	tasteless
confused	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{2}$	$\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{2}$	$\frac{A}{6}$ $\frac{B}{5}$	$\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{2}$	coherent
amateur	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{A}{1}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{A}{2}$ $\frac{B}{2}$	$\frac{A}{6}$ $\frac{B}{8}$	$\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{1}$	professional

v) Do you think the director of this production has interpreted the author's intention properly ?

yes $\frac{A}{6} - \frac{B}{6}$

no $\frac{A}{2} - \frac{B}{1}$

don'tt know $\frac{A}{4} - \frac{B}{5}$

w) Would you describe the production on the whole as: _____

Group A : SUCCESSFUL

successful _____

Group B : SUCCESSFUL

unsuccessful _____

Would you like to see more productions of this sort ?

yes $\frac{A}{7} - \frac{B}{11}$

no $\frac{A}{3} - \frac{B}{1}$

x) Were you comfortable in your seat ?

yes $\frac{A}{11} - \frac{B}{10}$

no $\frac{A}{1} - \frac{B}{1}$

Would you have preferred sitting

(check any that apply)

	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>
closer to the stage	_____	1
closer to the middle	_____ 2	2
farther away from the stage	_____	1
on the aisle	_____	

y) Was anyone near you coughing, shuffling their feet, or doing anything else that disturbed you during the performance ?

yes $\frac{A}{2} - \frac{B}{1}$

no $\frac{A}{10} - \frac{B}{10}$

z) Have you read any reviews of this production , or heard any on the radio ?

yes $\frac{A}{4} - \frac{B}{4}$

no $\frac{A}{8} - \frac{B}{8}$

Group A

If yes, which reviews ?

mentioned : Ubysey, Vancouver Express

Group B mentioned: Ubysey, Vancouver

Did you agree with the evaluations of these critics? Playbill, Express

(identify any you comment upon)

Group A: disagreed

Group B: disagreed

APPENDIX F

PRE-PRODUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE INSIDE THE GHOST SONATA

a) In general, what standard of production do you expect when you go to a play at the Dorothy Somerset Studio ?

(check one)

	excellent	___
Group A : GOOD	good	___
Group B : GOOD	fair	___
Group C : GOOD	mediocre	___
	poor	___

b) What type of staging of a play do you expect to see at the Dorothy Somerset Studio ?

staging in which the approach is :

(check any that apply)

	traditional	___
Group A : EXPERIMENTAL	experimental	___
Group B : EXPERIMENTAL	extravagant	___
Group C : EXPERIMENTAL	austere	___
	realistic	___
	fanciful	___

c) Have you ever read Ghost Sonata ?

yes	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{2}$	$\frac{C}{3}$	no	$\frac{A}{11}$	$\frac{B}{10}$	$\frac{C}{9}$
	___	___	___		___	___	___

d) If you have read it, did you read it within:

	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$
the last 3 or 4 weeks	___	___	___
the last year	___	___	1
the last 2 years	___	1	___
the last 5 years	___	___	1
the last 10 years	___	___	1
more than 10 years ago	___	___	1

If you have read the play, did you enjoy it ?

(check one)

very much	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{2}$	$\frac{C}{1}$
moderately	___	___	3
not at all	___	___	___

e) Have you ever seen a production of Ghost Sonata ?

yes ___ no ___

None of the participants had ever seen a production of this play.

If you have seen a production of Ghost Sonata, did you enjoy it ?

(check one)

very much	___
moderately	___
not at all	___

- f) If you have seen a production of Ghost Sonata, was it within:
 (check one) within the last year ___
 within the last 2 years ___
 within the last 5 years ___
 within the last 10 years ___
 more than 10 years ago ___

g) Have you seen more than one production of Ghost Sonata ?

yes ___ no ___

How many productions of Ghost Sonata have you seen, and where did you see them ?

h) If you have not seen Ghost Sonata, have you read about the play, or heard anything about it ?

yes $\frac{A}{3}$ $\frac{B}{5}$ $\frac{C}{6}$ no $\frac{A}{7}$ $\frac{B}{7}$ $\frac{C}{4}$

If you have read, or heard anything about Ghost Sonata (the play not the production) was it:

	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$
in a newspaper	1		
at a lecture	1	1	1
on the radio			1
in a book	1	2	1
other source (specify)	2	3	

Have you heard anything, or read anything about this particular production?

yes $\frac{A}{7}$ $\frac{B}{2}$ $\frac{C}{10}$ no $\frac{A}{5}$ $\frac{B}{10}$ $\frac{C}{2}$

If you have heard anything about this production, was it:

	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{4}$
in a newspaper		1	1
on the radio			2
from someone who has seen it			2
publicity material	3	1	
other source (specify)	1	3	

i) As a regular theatre-goer, you probably have some idea of how you are likely to respond to Ghost Sonata. Whether or not you have read or seen the play previously try to answer the questions by imagining what your response is likely to be.

In general, what sort of things do you expect from Ghost Sonata ?

Do you expect the main concern of the play to be:
 (check one)

- Group A : PSYCHOLOGICAL
- Group B : PSYCHOLOGICAL
- Group C : PSYCHOLOGICAL

political ___
 social ___
 ethical ___
 romantic ___
 psychological ___

Do you expect the costumes of Ghost Sonata to be:

(check any that apply)

	A	B	C
realistic	1	6	5
fanciful	6	2	5
historical			3
symbolic	6	7	10
lavish	1		1
austere	3		1
colorful	3	2	1
muted	3	4	3
modern	1	3	
stylish		1	1
functional	1	6	3
minimal	4	3	

Do you expect this play to be:

(check any)

realistic _____

unrealistic _____

Group A : UNREALISTIC

Group B : UNREALISTIC

Group C : UNREALISTIC

During the performance of this play, which do you think you are likeliest to be ?

(check any that apply)

	A	B	C		A	B	C		A	B	C
amused	5	3	2	saddened	2	1	1				
enlightened	5	4		bored	2	1					
detached				delighted	1	1	1				
involved	8	8	6	interested	11	9	7				
depressed	2	1	1								

At the end of the performance of this play, which do you think you are likeliest to be? (check any that apply)

Do you think perhaps you will be:

	A	B	C		A	B	C		A	B	C
happy	4	1	1	annoyed	7	5	4				
angry				disturbed	7	4	6				
reassured	1			enlightened	4	2	4				
soothed				relaxed							
refreshed	1	1									

k) In a play of this kind, what aspects of the production do you think you are most likely to enjoy ?

(number in order of anticipated interest)

Group A : ACTING	the costumes	_____
Group B : ACTING	the acting	_____
Group C : ACTING	the scenery	_____
	the music	_____

1) Which aspects of the play do you anticipate enjoying most ?
 (number in order of anticipated interest)

- Group A : DEVELOPMENT OF interesting individual characters _____
 STORY and INTERESTING INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERS
 development of the story _____
- Group B : RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN relationships between the characters _____
 CHARACTERS and
 DEVELOPMENT OF poetic language _____
- Group C : RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHARACTERS

m) Of the following list of plays which have you either seen or read, and which have you enjoyed ? (put S for seen and R for read in the first column, and rate the plays between 1 and 4 in the second column)

	rating:			seen:			read:		
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Spring's Awakening			2						1
Ubu Roi	1-2		2	1			1		2
Peer Gynt	1	1	1	7	4	6		2	2
Ghosts	1	1-2	1	1	1	3	1	3	2
Before Dawn			3						1
The Dream Play	1		2				1		2
The Three Sisters	1-2	2	1	1	1	5	1	1	1
Miss Julie	1-2	1	1	1		3	1	1	
The Blue Bird		1-2	2			1		2	
The Cherry Orchard	1	1	1-2	3	1	3	1	2	2
The Wild Duck	1	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	1
The Father	1	1-3	1-3	1	2	1		1	1
To Damascus									
Heartbreak House	1	1	3			1	2	4	2
From Morn to midnight			2						1

1 = liked it very much
 2 = liked it moderately
 3 = did not like it very much
 4 = disliked it

Why are you going to this play ?

(number 3 reasons in order of importance)

Because :

I 've read the play , but have never seen it

I've heard about the play and am interested in seeing what it is like ____

I enjoy this type of play ____

I've heard about this production and am interested in seeing what it is like ____

Some of the cast members are actors whose performances I usually enjoy ____

I have no idea what this play is about, but the title intrigues me ____

I went to a number of productions at this theatre last year, and enjoyed them ____

Because I am participating in an Audience Research project _____

Group A : AUDIENCE RESEARCH PROJECT

Group B : AUDIENCE RESEARCH PROJECT

Group C : scattered

APPENDIX G

POST-PRODUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE INSIDE THE GHOST SONATA

a) Now that the performance is over, how did this production leave you feeling ?

(check any that apply)

happy	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$	annoyed	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{2}$	fatigued	$\frac{A}{6}$	$\frac{B}{5}$	$\frac{C}{4}$	depressed	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{B}{4}$	$\frac{C}{2}$
relaxed	$\frac{A}{2}$	$\frac{B}{2}$	$\frac{C}{4}$	angry	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$	puzzled	$\frac{A}{10}$	$\frac{B}{7}$	$\frac{C}{5}$	disturbed	$\frac{A}{6}$	$\frac{B}{6}$	$\frac{C}{2}$
enlightened	$\frac{A}{4}$	$\frac{B}{3}$	$\frac{C}{2}$	reassured	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$	soothed	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$	refreshed	$\frac{A}{1}$	$\frac{B}{1}$	$\frac{C}{1}$

b) How would you describe the general standard of the production you have just seen ?

(check one)

Group A : GOOD-EXCELLENT
 Group B : GOOD-EXCELLENT
 Group C : GOOD

excellent ___
 good ___
 fair ___
 mediocre ___
 poor ___

c) Would you describe the general style of the production as:

(check one)

Group A : EXPERIMENTAL
 Group B : EXPERIMENTAL
 Group C : EXPERIMENTAL

traditional ___
 experimental ___
 extravagant ___
 austere ___
 realistic ___
 fanciful ___

d) Do you think the main concern of the play Ghost Sonata is:

(check one)

Group A : PSYCHOLOGICAL
 Group B : PSYCHOLOGICAL
 Group C : PSYCHOLOGICAL

political ___
 social ___
 ethical ___
 romantic ___
 psychological ___

Do you think the play Ghost Sonata is:

(check one)

Group A : SERIOUS
 Group B : SERIOUS
 Group C : SERIOUS

serious ___
 mainly serious but with some comic elements ___
 comedy ___
 mainly comic but with some serious elements ___
 about equally serious and comic ___

f) Which aspects of Ghost Sonata did you enjoy the most ?

(number in order of enjoyment)

Group A : INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERS the interesting individual characters ___

Group B : scattered the development of the story ___

Group C : scattered the relationships between the characters ___
 the poetic language ___

Which characters in Ghost Sonata (regardless of how well acted) did you enjoy the most ? (name as many as three)

Group A : HUMMEL, MUMMY, STUDENT

Group B : HUMMEL, MUMMY, STUDENT

Group C : HUMMEL

g) Did you think the development of the story was:

(put a check on the scale between each pair of adjectives at the point which most closely describes your opinion)

	very			somewhat			in the middle			somewhat			very			
	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	
entertaining	4	3	1	3	3	6	3	2	3	1	3	2	1	—	—	tedious
logical	2	—	1	2	3	3	2	4	3	2	2	5	3	3	5	illogical
unrealistic	3	3	—	3	5	5	4	2	2	1	2	3	—	—	1	realistic
clear	2	—	—	1	2	1	2	3	4	3	4	7	3	2	—	unclear
unbelievable	2	3	—	2	2	3	3	5	2	1	2	4	3	—	2	believable
not involving	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	involving
	1	—	—	—	—	2	1	4	2	3	2	4	7	5	4	

h) What aspects of the main scenes did you enjoy the most ?

(number in order of enjoyment)

Group A : ACTING the costumes ___
 the acting ___

Group B : ACTING and FILM and SLIDES the scenery ___

Group C : ACTING and FILM and SLIDES the film and slides ___
 the sound ___

Which aspects of the labyrinth did you enjoy the most ?

(number in order of enjoyment)

Group A : SCENERY	the acting	___
Group B : SCENERY	the costumes	___
Group C : SCENERY	the scenery	___
	the films and slides	___
	the sound	___

i) Did you think the standard of acting in the three main scenes, on the whole, was:

(put a check on the scale at the point which best describes your opinion)

	very	somewhat	in the middle	somewhat	very	
professional	A	B	C	A	B	C
	1	1	1	7	5	5
				A	B	C
				5	4	
					A	B
					3	1
						C
poor				1	2	2
				1	2	
					4	6
						2
						5
						2
						4
						good
amateur						

Which did you prefer:

(check one)

Group A : BOTH	the three main scenes	___
Group B : scattered	the labyrinth	___
Group C : scattered	enjoyed both equally	___
	disliked both equally	___

j) Which do you think were the best actors or actresses in the three main scenes, and which do you think gave performances which seemed lower than the general standard ? (number the three best in order of preference in the first column, and three who did not seem very good in the second column)

Group A : best - HUMMEL, MUMMY	not as good - STUDENT
Group B : best - HUMMEL, MUMMY	not as good - COLONEL
Group C : best - HUMMEL	not as good - scattered

Wayne Robson as <u>Hummel</u>	___	___
Mariko Van Campen as the <u>Young Lady</u>	___	___
Art Ross as <u>Student</u>	___	___
Ann West as the <u>Mummy</u>	___	___
David Dick as <u>Colonel</u>	___	___
Dick Day as <u>Bengston</u>	___	___
Glynis Leysnon as the <u>Fiancee</u>	___	___
Robert Graham as the <u>Aristocrat</u>	___	___
Jeff Goldberg as the <u>Consul</u>	___	___
Jan Waruk as the <u>Cook</u>	___	___

Did you like the scenery in the three main scenes ?

(check one) very much ___

Group A : MODERATELY moderately ___

Group B : MODERATELY slightly ___

Group C : MODERATELY - VERY MUCH not at all ___

Did you like the scenery in the labyrinth?

(check one) very much ___

Group A : VERY MUCH moderately ___

Group B : VERY MUCH slightly ___

Group C : VERY MUCH not at all ___

would you describe the scenery in the key scenes as?

(check any that apply)	A	B	C
realistic	1		
fanciful	6	4	1
historical		2	3
symbolic	5	9	7
lavish	1	2	
austere	5	4	7
minimal	7	8	4
colorful	4	1	
muted	2	4	3
modern	1		
stylish		2	
functional	3	3	3

m) Which particular units in the labyrinth did you enjoy the most ?

Group A : COOK'S KITCHEN

Group B : COOK'S KITCHEN

Group C : scattered

n) did you think the general manner of staging was appropriate to the play ?

yes A B C no A B C
 12 11 12 1

o) if there was any particular feature of the staging that seemed to you to be particularly inappropriate to the play, what was it ?

Group A : STROBE ROOM

Group B : GROWING PLACE, ENTIRE STAGING

Group C : SMELL, STAIRS

APPENDIX H

LIST OF LABYRINTH UNITS

Labyrinth Units

Entrance to maze with strobe light

Trials and Tribulations (room with blue wall-paper)

One minute film

Reading room

Table with food

Valkyrie room (opera)

Student - Milkmaid room (film of Milkmaid and Student)

Flower place

Mummy closet

Growing place (film and slides)

Research project room (with t.v. monitor)

Dark Lady and Aristocrat - inaudible conversation)

Colonel stripping

Funeral room

Film projected on bodies (film and dancers wearing screens)

Insane room

Cook's kitchen

Ice drowning (film and dancers)

Janitress' niche

Telephone booth

Fiancee and her window

Sound room