

Tarragon Theatre OutReach Newsletter

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Remembering Urjo Kareda

We are saddened to inform you that Tarragon's artistic director of 20 years passed away on December 26. Widely respected for nurturing new Canadian work, Urjo Kareda helped foster the careers of many Canadian playwrights including Joan MacLeod, Judith Thompson, Jason Sherman, Morris Panych and most recently Kristen Thomson. Within OutReach Urjo's vision and continued support helped bring to fruition many of our initiatives. Urjo's interest in cultivating creative talent was not limited to adult playwrights - he was also deeply committed to developing the writers of tomorrow. High School student Christine Buijs began her relationship with the Tarragon two years ago when she was the 2000 *Under 20 for Under 20's* playwriting contest winner and member of the 2000 *Young Playwrights Unit* (later she was a member of the 2001 *Spring Training Project*). After being approached by Christine in September 2001, Urjo - in addition to running the Tarragon, writing for Toronto Life magazine and being an arts commentator for CBC radio - agreed to act as her mentor while she obtained a school credit as youth playwright in residence at the Tarragon Theatre. Christine writes to us, "*Urjo's interest in providing the best he could as a mentor was obvious. He recognized ability and was always very supportive, but he also gave the utmost ferocity as a critic. It will be impossible for me to forget him.*" Urjo Kareda was Member of the Order of Canada and recipient of the 1999 George Luscombe Award for Mentorship in Canadian Theatre. He will be greatly missed.

Tarragon Educator Workshops

Tarragon wants to thank the participants of our first two workshops for making them such a great success. We are offering one more one-day workshop this season on **Sunday, April 14, 2002** from **10am to 4pm**.

Adapting to your situation (adapting prose and poetry to a dramatic script). Turning prose - for example, a novel, a short story or a fairy tale - into a play is both an interesting exercise in form and a stimulating way to create drama. Dave Carley is an experienced playwright and adapter: his version of Margaret Atwood's *The Edible Woman* is being produced at CanStage this season. He will discuss the many aspects of adaptation and suggest some points of entry. There are some spaces still available. Please contact Mary at 416-536-5018 x243 should you want to register.

Tarragon Teacher Nights

Our teacher nights continue to draw large crowds and great feedback. On January 10, we were privileged to host Governor General Award winner Michael Healey. Associate artistic director Andy McKim led the discussion and traced Healey's journey from high school drama student, to Ryerson theatre graduate, actor and now accomplished playwright. Mr. Healey treated us, reading excerpts from two of his prose pieces; *The Actors' Diary* and *Dear Mr. Newton: Sincerely, Michael Healey*.



Andy McKim (right) introduces Tarragon playwright in residence and author of *Plan B* Michael Healey (left).

Our next teacher night will begin at 7 o'clock *sharp* on Thursday March 21, 2002 for Joan MacLeod's *The Shape of a Girl*. We are delighted to announce our guests, Drama and Education specialist Kathleen Gallagher and author Joan MacLeod, who will explore the "teenage voice". Spaces are almost full so please contact Mary as soon as possible at 416-536-5018 x243 should you want to register and take part in the complimentary evening.

Only a designated amount of complimentary tickets are available. However, should we reach capacity, teachers are welcome to purchase a theatre ticket for \$16 and participate in the pre-show discussion. Please contact Mary should you be interested.

OutReach News exclusive with stage manager Nan Shepherd and student Katharine Mezwak

Katharine Mezwak (Cedarbrae Collegiate) was a production co-op student at Tarragon from September to January of this year. During her time at Tarragon she met Nan Shepherd, veteran stage manager of 15 years. Nan was so impressed by Katharine that she offered her an apprentice stage management position on her next show, *Gynty* with Toronto's well respected Theatre Columbus. I met with both of them after a busy day of rehearsal.

MW: Nan, how did you get to know Katharine and what made you decide that you wanted her to act as



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apprentice stage manager on your next show?

NS: I met Katharine at the Tarragon when I was stage managing *Elisa's Skin*. Katharine helped me do the spike chart for the show. I felt she was really pleasant and attentive. I appreciated her thoroughness and conscientiousness towards her work. Cheerfulness and sensitivity are very important in stage management and I thought it would be a good experience for her to stage manage and be part of the whole process. This way she would be able to meet everyone of consequence such as designers, actors, directors even publicists. In the end, I had a good feeling about Katharine and in theatre instinct is everything.

MW: Katharine, how did you feel when Nan approached you about working with her as an apprentice stage manager?

KM: I was overwhelmed that Nan thought I could do it! I thought that it was an opportunity of a lifetime, going from the Tarragon Theatre to Theatre Columbus.

MW: Nan, as an apprentice stage manager what are Katharine's responsibilities?

NS: Katharine assists me during the show by running the backstage and setting up the props. During rehearsals she keeps a working apprentice stage manager script by constantly updating it and keeping it organized.

MW: How did your term as a production co-op student at the Tarragon help prepare you to become an apprentice stage manager?

KM: Well, I met most of the people that I work with now at Tarragon. So it was nice to see familiar faces like the set and costume designer Tamara Kucheran and lighting designer Andrea Lundy. Through Tarragon I also became familiar with the type of hours worked in theatre and that overwhelming sense that there is always something going on. There's always a show close to opening, a show rehearsing, a show closing or a show being built! It's everyday life in the theatre but at first it was 147 different things for me! Because of my experience at Tarragon I did not feel overwhelmed here. Having the placement at Tarragon and being able to come here [Theatre Columbus] has been ultimately the best thing that could have happened in my education for this part of my life.

MW: How has your experience at the Tarragon and now Theatre Columbus helped prepare you to pursue your aspirations to work in professional theatre.

KM: I'm applying to do theatre production at Sheridan, Humber and Seneca Colleges. As a prerequisite to apply to those programs you need theatre experience outside of a school. You also have to submit a portfolio and I'm going to have a fabulous portfolio that I wouldn't have had otherwise.

Katharine's work with Theatre Columbus, through arrangements made with her guidance counselor and co-op teacher, will count towards her earning additional high school co-op credits.

Tarragon Youth Spring Programs

We are in full swing reading through the scripts of applicants to the *Under 20 for Under 20's* playwriting contest, as well as preparing interview times for the *Spring Training Project* and *Young Playwrights Unit* applicants. We are thrilled that so many students from such a wide variety of schools have applied to these free programs led by theatre professionals. Students have applied from Port Colborne HS (Niagara DSB), Pickering HS (Durham DSB), Canterbury HS (Ottawa-Carleton), Cawthra Park, Gordon Graydon, Lorne Park SS, Meadowvale SS (Peel DSB), Birchmount Park CI, Central Tech, Earl Haig, ESA, Humberside, Jarvis CI, Leaside HS, Marc Garneau CI, Northern SS, Richview CI, Rosedale Heights, Vaughan Rd. Academy, Westmount CI (TDSB), Cardinal Carter, Loretto College School, Madonna CSS, (TCDSB), Middlefield CI, Alexander MacKenzie HS (York DSB), George Brown College and the University of Toronto. There will be professional readings of the *Under 20 for Under 20's* contest winner and performances from the Spring Training Project at the Spring Arts Fair. This year's Spring Arts Fair takes place Saturday May 25 and Sunday May 26.

Youth Theatre Paprika Festival

Special submission to OutReach by Anthony Furey
Spice up your March break boredom with a little dash of Paprika this year. The Paprika Festival will take place on **March 14, 15 & 16** in the **Tarragon Studios at 8pm**. What is Paprika? Paprika is the only theatre festival in Toronto run by youth that showcases the work of young artists. Five short plays - using wit and satire to tell stories of growth and humour - will be presented over the three evenings complete with a special guest host. Best of all the Paprika Festival is 100% free so we hope to see you there!

Anthony Furey is artistic producer of Paprika and a student at Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts.

Check out Tarragon's Website!

We encourage you to keep checking our website at www.tarragontheatre.com and visit our education pages. While navigating through our site register to join our email OutReach News bulletin to get Tarragon updates. We are always adding new information and would appreciate any feedback you can provide for us. *Is the material relevant? What information would you like to see on the site?* You can email us your suggestions at outreach@tarragontheatre.com.

Special Thanks to Katharine Mezwak, Nan Shepherd, Shane Anderson, Ashleigh Corcoran and our OutReach season Foundation and Corporate supporters: *Sunlife Financial, The Richard Ivey Foundation and The George Metcalf Foundation.*



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