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## Achieving Equity in Canadian Theatre: A Report with Best Practice Recommendations

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We contacted arts organizations and councils, theatre companies, and individuals across the country and outside of Canada with requests to share gender and diversity statistics and information about equity initiatives. While they are too numerous to name individually, we are indebted to these people and organizations for their generous contributions and their enthusiasm for the project. We also thank all those who participated in EIT launches and events across Canada—their ideas and energy have also provided support to this research. Though this report reveals that there remains a lot of work to be done to achieve equity in Canadian theatre, it is heartening and hopeful to know that countless individuals and organizations are invested in this goal.

## Executive Summary

Although women form the majority of theatre school graduates, support workers, and audience members, when it comes to key creative roles in Canadian theatre, their numbers diminish substantially, dropping below 35%. For example, women form 50% of Playwrights Guild of Canada’s membership, but they do not account for even one quarter of the nation’s produced playwrights (the numbers for women of colour are lower yet), and rates of representation are regressing rather than improving over time (PGC, “Theatre”). These imbalances have a negative trickledown effect on the industry, making an impact on the variety of work produced, available employment opportunities (for women actors, designers, and directors), and audience experience.

This report responds to the enduring and urgent question of women’s absence from Canadian stages by investigating what Rina Fraticelli, over 30 years ago, termed “the Invisibility Factor”—that is, “the absence of women from significant roles in the work of producing a national culture” (v). Following-up on previous landmark studies, including Fraticelli’s 1982 report and Rebecca Burton’s 2006 study, this report presents an updated picture of (in)equity in Canadian theatre, makes international comparisons, and outlines a series of recommendations to increase the representation of women and other minoritized groups. Its ultimate goal is to support the move from awareness to action to rectify imbalances in the Canadian theatre industry.

This study shows that the rough 70/30 division of men and women in the artistic triumvirate—artistic director, director, and playwright—has generally remained unchanged for the past 30 years. While women saw increased representation between Fraticelli’s and Burton’s studies, the most recent data from the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and Playwrights Guild of Canada show a regression in each category. Data collected in Australia, the UK, and the US reflect similar disparities between men and women to those experienced in Canada, with women comprising on average 30% or less of the artistic directors, directors, and playwrights. Various systemic and ideological barriers prevent women from achieving equity, the most significant being bias and discrimination.

Given the persistent and deep-seated inequities embedded in the Canadian theatre industry, informed, coordinated, and varied responses are required if change is to occur. As this report demonstrates, action must be taken in four key areas: education, mentorship and networking, administration, and advocacy and awareness. These areas represent a wide-ranging and multipronged approach to redressing inequities, from changing how we train and educate future theatre practitioners and audiences, to improving the support systems for women early on and throughout their careers, and from transforming the structures and operations of theatre companies in order to provide more opportunities for women, to raising awareness about equity issues and women’s work among arts administrators, funders, and the general public. The collaboration of multiple stakeholders, including government, arts organizations, theatre companies, individual artists, educators, and audience members is vital to the success of improving equity in Canadian theatre.

## Study Highlights

- It's been over thirty years since Fraticelli's landmark study and women are still under-represented in major artistic roles in Canadian theatre. While there was an increase in representation between Fraticelli's and Burton's reports, recent data shows regression.

**Table N.1: Comparison of Fraticelli, Burton, PACT, and PGC Study Results**

<b>Industry Position (Women)</b>	<b>Fraticelli's Findings (1982)</b>	<b>Burton's Findings (2006)</b>	<b>PACT's Findings (2010/11)</b>	<b>PGC's Findings (2013/14)</b>
Artistic Directors	11%	33%	28%	--
Directors	13%	34%	32%	--
Playwrights	10%	27%	29%	22%

- The greatest disparity in gender equity happens in the playwright category. According to Playwrights Guild of Canada's Theatre Production Survey from 2013/14, out of 812 productions in the 2013/14 season, 63% were written by men, 22% by women, and 15% by mixed gender partnerships.
- There is a significant need for research on how these roles break down in terms of other marginalized groups, including people of colour, Aboriginal people, immigrants, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ, who are likely marginalized further in the above roles (as Burton's study found for women of colour).
- Despite underrepresentation on stage, women constitute the majority of theatre audiences in all demographic categories. Statistics Canada data from 2010 indicates that women are more likely than men to attend theatre performances (49% compared to 40%), and men are 37% less likely than women to attend plays. Canadians who belong to minoritized groups attend theatre less often than other respondents. However, within these groups, women are more likely to attend theatre than men.
- Development and Theatre for Young Audiences theatres tend to be the most equitable, unlike Regional and Summer theatres; thus, women are most often employed at small, lower-budget theatres, rather than larger, higher-paying and more visible companies.
- Data collected in Australia, the UK, and the US reflect similar disparities to those experienced in Canada, with women comprising on average 30% or less of artistic directors, directors, and playwrights.
- Women earn less than men in major artistic roles. According to a 2011 National Household Survey, as actors and comedians, women earned 26% less than men; as authors and writers, women earned 12% less; and as producers, directors, choreographers, and in other related roles, women earned 16% less than men.

- Women constitute over half of all theatre school students, as at the National Theatre School of Canada, where they were 58% of the enrollment in 2014/15. Yet, after graduation, women make up fewer than 30% of the profession's creative leaders.
- There is a link between women artistic directors and women directors, and women playwrights and roles for women actors, meaning that increasing women's representation in one area will have a positive effect on the others.

Best practice recommendations can be drawn from equity initiatives undertaken in Canada and abroad, summarized here, and divided into four key areas:

### **Education**

- Increase the percentage of plays by women and other marginalized groups taught and performed at elementary schools, high schools, and post-secondary institutions
- Develop, document, and disseminate approaches to teaching acting and directing that deconstruct gender
- Generate curriculum at the post-secondary and conservatory level to expose students to the gendered realities of professional theatre and develop their leadership and problem-solving skills to overcome these barriers
- Create a Women's Leadership and Professional Development Institute to prepare women for careers as directors, artistic directors, and executive directors

### **Mentorship, Networking, and Extended Training**

- Increase funding for women's theatre companies and festivals to help them move from developing women's work to producing it
- Offer management development and mentorship programs to train women to become artistic directors and courses to foster leadership and negotiation skills
- Provide "virtual mentorship" by posting detailed profiles of successful women online
- Develop and distribute directories of women artists; use online platforms to connect women artists with each other and with employment opportunities and commissions
- Increase the number of women in leadership positions to act as role models for women in earlier stages of their careers
- Recruit men as mentors for early-career artists, especially in areas where it is difficult to find women mentors due to their underrepresentation
- Orient intensive mentorship programs towards creative outcomes, recruiting participants with diverse skill sets to collaborate on play creation and production
- Host live networking events for artists to meet regularly to connect, discuss gender parity, build community, and brainstorm ideas for advocacy

### **Theatre Administration**

- Conduct internal audits of administrative practices and identify weaknesses
- Set organizational targets to achieve and enforce parity
- Ensure that gender is not subsumed under overarching institutional goals or ambiguous diversity mandates, and clearly articulate goals related to recruiting and retaining more women



- Develop policies and procedures to ensure theatres comply with human rights laws and professional codes of conduct
- Require administration, hiring managers, and creators to take self-assessment tests to uncover their own biases
- Remove all indicators of gender, age, and race from decision making contexts
- Create consistent interview processes that aim to eliminate bias and discrimination
- Use a blind submission process for vetting scripts
- Rectify imbalances by programming more work by women and people of colour
- Take advantage of resources (such as the EIT database) to recruit more women
- Track demographics about women within individual theatre companies to aid in the development and implementation of equity initiatives; collect these statistics annually to identify trends and changes
- Create flexible work environments that accommodate different needs, such as those of parents and elder care providers
- Initiate conversations with commissioned playwrights about roles for women; encourage playwrights to create more meaningful roles for women
- Support the advancement of assistant directors to directors by providing mentorship, training, and fellowships
- Partner with educational institutions to provide training to underrepresented groups, such as women lighting and sound designers
- Ally with colleagues belonging to the same professional organizations to advocate for pay equity between masculinized and feminized jobs
- Create a resource kit for pregnant actors, outlining responsibilities and considerations for both actors and their employers
- Lobby the government to create legislation requiring employers to institute equality plans
- Lobby arts councils to require theatres to institute equality plans and/or meet equity targets as a condition of funding

### **Advocacy and Awareness**

- Form audience advocacy groups to organize outings to plays by women and productions featuring an equitable number of artistic and technical roles for women; arrange discounts to these productions and make theatres aware of the demand for women's work
- Assemble lists of companies that have the best and poorest records of hiring women and minorities and publicly disseminate them
- Rate representations of women using the Bechdel test
- Write theatres in support or condemnation of their gender equity efforts
- Create awards for theatre companies that meet equity targets
- Curate a list of plays by women and other equity-seeking groups and make it publicly available online
- Ally with men to advocate for gender equity; men can refuse to participate in theatres that don't program women in their seasons

## Introduction

### *Where are all the women?*

At the National Theatre School (NTS), where some of Canada’s most talented future actors, playwrights, directors, designers, and technicians go to hone their craft and study in English or French, the classrooms are full of women. Ninety-seven of the 167 students enrolled at the prestigious institution in 2014/15 were women—at 58%, they constituted the majority of the student body (O’Connor). Yet, upon completing their two- or three-year intensive programs at the school and entering the professional theatre world, a peculiar phenomenon occurs: these women disappear. Or, at least that is what is suggested by statistical evidence from theatres big and small across the country, where NTS’s 58% majority dramatically drops to 35% or much lower in the above roles. Where are all the women?

At theatres from British Columbia to Newfoundland, from the Yukon to Quebec, audiences are full of women. An estimated 59% of Canadian theatre audiences were made-up of women in the 2004/05 season (Burton 20), a trend also reflected in Statistics Canada’s 2010 General Social Survey, which reported that women are significantly more likely than men to attend theatre performances (Hill, “Factors” 16). Yet, the stories they see on stage are overwhelmingly not their own: of the total 812 productions staged in Canada during the 2013/14 theatre season, only 22% were written by women (PGC, “PGC Theatre Production” 1). Where are all the women?

This report responds to the enduring and urgent question of women’s disappearance from Canadian stages by investigating what Rina Fraticelli, over thirty years ago, termed “the Invisibility Factor”—“the absence of women from significant roles in the work of producing a national culture” (v). Fraticelli’s groundbreaking 1982 report, “The Status of Women in Canadian Theatre,” gave a name to the phenomenon of disappearance that persists today; it demonstrated that while women form the vast majority of theatre school graduates, amateur and community theatre workers, and ticket-buying audiences, elsewhere they are “statistically, nearly invisible” (9). This invisibility has serious consequences beyond the economic realm. As theatre scholar and critic Jill Dolan argues:

Culture is not an innocent preoccupation. Television, films, theatre productions and performances, and other representational expressive media both shape and reflect who we are to ourselves and to one another. We learn from seeing in performance how gender and race relations are embodied and enacted. [...] Theatre and film show us ourselves in relation to others, or more damagingly, they persuade us of our invisibility by not representing us at all. (*The Feminist Spectator in Action* 1-2)

While the dearth of opportunities available to women theatre workers has a serious impact on their ability to make a living in their field, what Dolan and Fraticelli both point out is that it also has an impact on how they are viewed in the world more broadly.

Indeed, women’s poor representation in the theatre is mirrored in the Canadian social,

political, and economic landscape, which is currently witnessing a significant regression in gender equality. Whereas twenty years ago Canada topped international measures of gender equality, in 2013 it placed twentieth in the Global Gender Gap rankings, and twenty-third in the UN Gender Inequality Index (CCPA 6). A 2014 report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) documents these inequalities, citing evidence from several areas including: government, where only 25% of members of parliament are women; economic security, where the percentage of women living in poverty has increased over the past twenty years to a rate of 13%, with Aboriginal and racialized women and women with disabilities experiencing even higher rates; and violence, where low levels of change in this area are reflected in the fact that over one million women in Canada reported having experienced intimate partner violence or sexual assault between 2009 and 2014 (6). The Invisibility Factor is the self-perpetuating product of a culture that undervalues women and other marginalized groups.

### Equity in Theatre

Equity in Theatre (EIT) was launched in 2014 with the goal of redressing and remedying existent gender inequities in the Canadian theatre industry. Led by Rebecca Burton, Playwrights Guild of Canada's (PGC) Membership and Contracts Manager, and Laine Zisman Newman, Dramaturgical Associate with Pat the Dog Theatre Creation, EIT has three main objectives:

- 1) to foster and facilitate dialogue (locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally);
- 2) to generate greater awareness of and exposure to Canadian women playwrights;
- 3) to develop community-based action plans to help rectify industry imbalances.

EIT is meeting these objectives via a multi-pronged and inclusive response that involves the community as a whole: artists, administrators, stakeholders, and audiences. PGC has partnered with the sector's key professional associations, such as the Associated Designers of Canada (ADC), the Canadian Actors Equity Association (CAEA), the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs Association (LMDA) of Canada, and the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT). They have joined forces with the nation's Play Development Centres, most notably Kitchener's Pat the Dog and Vancouver's Playwrights Theatre Centre, and have allied with associations of the underrepresented, such as Artists Driving Holistic Organizational Change (the Ad Hoc Assembly), Cultural Pluralism in the Arts Movement Ontario (CPAMO), and the Indigenous Performing Arts Alliance (IPAA). A member of each of the above organizations sits on the EIT Steering Committee. EIT is also partnering with individual artists, theatre companies, schools, audiences, and other interested parties. The initiative's success is predicated on the collaboration and commitment of the Canadian theatre community.

Equity in Theatre involves four major components: the research study presented here, a symposium, a website dedicated to Canadian women in theatre, and live events, including play readings and community actions. Funded in part by the Ontario Arts Council, and as the first step in this process, the preparatory research study analyzes past equity initiatives and related follow-up actions at home and abroad, in theatre and elsewhere, providing the means to create a series of recommendations and best practices that will serve as a

foundational framework as EIT moves forward. This will ensure that organizers do not repeat past mistakes or waste time “reinventing the wheel,” but rather capitalize on successful gains, thus maximizing their impact.

The second component of EIT is a one-day Symposium that will be held in Toronto on April 27, 2015, facilitated by Context Consulting, equity and diversity consultants, and supported by the Canada Council and its Leadership for Change program. The event will involve a keynote panel, intimate discussions, open forum brainstorming sessions, and the identification of social actions to help bring about change. The end result of the Symposium will be the development of a first draft strategic plan document for improved equity in the theatre industry as a whole. International theatre practitioners will convene the next day, on April 28, 2015, for a follow-up event to discuss the issues and strategies on a larger scale.

Thanks to funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the third prong of the project is an EIT website (<http://www.eit.playwrightsguild.ca>) that will act as an informational hub. The website will provide details about EIT, offer an open forum for continued discussion and conversation, and feature links to relevant articles, studies, activities, and international organizations. The website will house a Calendar of Events, listing productions of plays by women and social actions taking place across the country, as well as a searchable database of Canadian women artists, providing an accessible resource for the larger community. It will also facilitate Meet-Up Groups to see plays, provide advice on how to create community actions, and coordinate national activities.

The final aspect of the EIT project will be carried-out in the year(s) following the Symposium to maintain the momentum and discussion. This first component is a series of monthly play reading events to be held across the country, partnering with Play Development Centres and other organizations. These will take different forms (playwrights reading their own work, actor readings, collaborative events, open mic nights, etc.), depending on the region, and will be for open and/or invited audiences such as artistic directors. The second component involves community events and grassroots actions, which will be developed as the project matures and is implemented across the nation.

### Past Initiatives

Equity in Theatre builds on a vital body of research on gender equity in Canadian theatre, with the first national study dating back to Fraticelli’s report in 1982. Supported by a socio-political climate energized by the Second Wave of feminism and its demands for equality in all areas of life, “The Status of Women in Canadian Theatre” was part of a series of reports on gender in the arts commissioned by Status of Women Canada, an arms-length agency of the federal government (Lushington 10). The reports, covering disciplines including visual arts, literature, music, film and video in addition to theatre, were assembled for the Federal Cultural Review Policy Committee, or the Applebaum-Hébert review as it came to be named after its co-chairs, which the Liberal government established in 1980 as “the first review of Canada’s cultural institutions and arts policies since the Massey Commission” in 1949 (Burton, “Adding it Up” 2). Drawing data from *Canada On Stage* for the years 1978 to 1981, Fraticelli examined 1,156 productions by

104 Canadian theatre companies (2).

Fraticeili's findings presented an undeniable picture of gender inequity in Canadian theatre. While women comprised 51% of the population and about 60% of theatre audiences in Canada, they constituted just 10% of playwrights, 13% of directors, and 11% of artistic directors (Fraticeili 5, 8). Broken down by theatre category, Fraticelli's findings showed women were best represented in theatre for young audiences (TYA), where they comprised 25% of playwrights and 30% of directors; women were most under-represented in the "Group of 18," theatres that received "the highest level of Canada Council subsidization," where their numbers were less than one third of what they were in the former category (27-28). In short, women were best represented in theatres that, as Burton puts it, "traditionally garnered lower status, smaller budgets and associations with women's conventional roles" ("Adding it Up" 2).

Equally as disappointing as her findings was what happened to Fraticelli's report once it was released. Kate Lushington describes the response in her article "Fear of Feminism":

One might have expected a public outcry, demanding that affirmative action and equal opportunity programmes be immediately implemented to redress the serious imbalance in the cultural life of the nation. No such luck. The silence which greeted the release of the report was (and has remained) deafening. (9)

In addition to the backlash targeted towards the report, including gendered accusations that its data visualization was "emotionally loaded" (9), Fraticelli's report faced logistical problems that prevented its widespread dissemination. It, along with the other arts reports commissioned for the Applebaum-Hébert review, was not published in its entirety, but instead summarized in a "report on the reports" by a writer hired by the government (10).<sup>1</sup> As Lushington notes, this meant that much of the valuable research and recommendations in the report were "effectively suppressed" (10).

Despite its poor reception, "The Status of Women in Canadian Theatre" made an indelible mark on the Canadian theatre community by mobilizing women to create organizations, theatre companies, festivals, events, development and support programs, and additional studies to redress the inequities highlighted by Fraticelli (Burton, "Adding it Up" 3). The report remains valuable today as we continue to examine progress and ask how far women have come in the industry. Rebecca Burton writes, "it provides the one and only national benchmark and point of reference against which to measure subsequent developments in the status of women in Canadian theatre" (3).

Indeed, Fraticelli's report laid the groundwork for Burton's study, a second national benchmark that was initiated nearly twenty-five years later. "Adding it Up: The Status of Women in Canadian Theatre" was commissioned by Equity in Canadian Theatre: The Women's Initiative, co-chaired by Sarasvati Productions' Hope McIntyre, who was the

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<sup>1</sup> Though Fraticelli's report was never published in its entirety, some of its findings were published in articles in periodicals including *Canadian Theatre Review*, *FUSE*, *Jeu*, and *A Room of One's Own* (Burton, "Adding it Up" 3).

Chair of PGC's Women's Caucus at the time, and Nightwood Theatre's Artistic Director, Kelly Thornton. There were several events that catalyzed The Women's Initiative, beginning with a discussion on the Women's Caucus listserv for Playwrights Guild of Canada in 2003. Caucus members identified a discrepancy between the high number of women participating in theatre festivals and playwriting contests on the one hand, and the low number of women whose plays were receiving professional productions on the other (Burton, "Adding it Up" 4). This sparked further discussion at the Guild's AGM in May 2003, where the Women's Caucus unanimously supported the launch of a new study on gender equity in Canadian theatre. McIntyre and Thornton partnered with PACT and obtained funding for a new study. Public discussions followed in Winnipeg, as part of Sarasvati's FemFest, and in Toronto, as part of Buddies in Bad Times' and Nightwood's Hysteria: A Festival of Women (4-5). Individuals and organizations including Pat Bradley of the Ontario Arts Council; Naomi Campbell, then with Nightswimming Theatre; and Yvette Nolan, then with Native Earth Performing Arts, began collecting data which, though reflecting an improvement since Fraticelli's report, still showed "that women were unable to surpass the 33% marker and were thus stalled in their efforts to achieve gender parity in the industry" (5).

Officially launched in 2004, Equity in Canadian Theatre: The Women's Initiative had a two-fold mandate: "1) to formally investigate and assess the current status of women in Canadian theatre, and 2) to develop social action plans to help redress existing barriers" (Burton, "Adding it Up" 6). An underlying third goal involved creating "a network of theatre workers for support, community discussion and dissemination of the study's information" (6). Lead researcher Rebecca Burton's study was envisioned as the first of several phases to fulfill this mandate. Burton's methodology was more expansive than Fraticelli's, drawing on primary and secondary research materials, arts council statistics, and most importantly, a 2005 national survey sent to theatre companies across Canada (xi). The survey tool was created specifically for the study by Hill Strategies Research Incorporated in consultation with Burton and the Equity in Canadian Theatre National Advisory Committee, the project's Survey Methodology Sub-Committee, and PACT's Diversity Committee. Inspired by Fraticelli's report, it widened its focus from the triumvirate of artistic director, director, and playwright at the centre of the 1982 study to collect information on other positions such as actors, designers, stage managers, dramaturgs, general managers, and administrative staff. Additionally, it asked respondents about company characteristics and operational practices, as well as employment of people of colour and Aboriginal people (xi). The survey was sent out to 273 companies of varying sizes, some drawn from PACT's membership and others selected upon the suggestion of the theatre community at large in response to the initiative's public appeal. Of those 273 theatre companies, 128 returned their surveys, making the overall return rate 47%, which was deemed "a fair and reasonable representation of the target population" (xii).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Comparatively speaking, more companies run by women than men returned the survey, which, as Burton suggests, may have positively skewed the statistics for women, creating "an absolute 'best case' scenario for the representation and participation of women in the Canadian theatre industry" ("Adding it Up" xiii).

Released in 2006, “Adding it Up: The Status of Women in Canadian Theatre” showed that not much had improved since Fraticelli’s report two decades earlier. Burton found that women accounted for 33% of artistic directors, 34% of directors, and 27% of produced playwrights (ii). The numbers were much worse for people of colour, who only comprised 11% of artistic director positions (6% women and 5% men) and 9% of produced playwrights (4% women and 5% men) (ii). The other positions in the theatre showed a clear gender divide, with men predominating as actors (57% overall), translators (59%), set designers (66%), lighting designers (69%) and sound designers (85%), and women predominating as costume designers (70% of the positions overall); in behind-the-scenes production support roles, such as assistant directors (59%), dramaturgs and/or literary managers (60%) and stage managers (77%); and in administrative and customer service positions, constituting 69% of the general managers (with less than 2% women of colour), “as well as the majority of office and contract workers, part-time staff and box office employees” (ii). Among her other extensive findings, Burton reported pay discrepancies between men and women, with women playwrights and directors often receiving lower rates of pay than their men counterparts, due in part to the fact that women tended to work in smaller companies with lower budgets and funding (iii). Moreover, she found a positive correlation between women artistic directors and women playwrights, with companies run by women producing women playwrights 38% of the time compared to companies with men artistic directors, who produced them 24% of the time (ii). Table I.1 below compares Burton’s findings to Fraticelli’s.

**Table I.1: Comparison of Fraticelli (1982) and Burton (2006) Study Results**

<b>Industry Position</b>	<b>Fraticelli’s Findings (1982)</b>	<b>Burton’s Findings (2006)</b>	<b>Change Over Time</b>
Artistic Directors	11%	33%	22%
Directors	13%	34%	21%
Playwrights	10%	27%	17%

The release of Burton’s report was preceded and followed by several successful events organized by Equity in Canadian Theatre: The Women’s Initiatives, including roundtable discussions taking place across the country between 2005 and 2006, appearances at conferences for PACT, PGC, and the Canadian Association of Theatre Research (then called the Association of Canadian Theatre Research), and other regional events (Burton, “Adding it Up” 7). Yet, despite the momentum generated by the study, it is clear that most theatre companies did not significantly or consistently implement strategies to redress the imbalances it revealed. This lack of action has been attributed in part to the limited resources available to mobilize theatre workers across the country, and to develop and sustain action plans in response to the study (Burton, “Expanding” 7). Moreover, like Fraticelli’s report, the study itself was not as widely disseminated as initially intended, as it failed to find a publisher, and the electronic version of the report was difficult to access and removed from several key websites that had committed to hosting it, significantly limiting its ability to achieve its purpose of educating and raising awareness surrounding equity issues (6). Challenges in this area were exacerbated by a lack of mainstream media attention, which hindered outreach to the general public, whose consumer power holds a

powerful potential for advocacy and change (7). Burton's report remains a valuable benchmark for measuring developments in the status of women in Canadian theatre, a methodological model for researchers interested in equity, and a resource that challenges pervasive post-feminist sentiments in the theatre community that suggest equity is an issue of the distant past.

### Methodology

Though there has been no comprehensive study of the status of women in Canadian theatre since Rebecca Burton's 2006 "Adding It Up" report, individual organizations have collected statistics that help provide an updated, composite picture of gender (in)equity in the industry. The information reported here was gathered from various organizations that have generously shared data on equity in theatre and in the arts more broadly, including the Canadian Actors' Equity Association, Hill Strategies Research, Playwrights Guild of Canada, and the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres. Additionally, arts councils and theatre organizations in each province and territory were contacted with requests to share equity-related statistics. Supplementary primary research materials including interviews with theatre professionals, and secondary research materials such as newspaper articles, scholarly articles, and editorials also provided information about the status of women in Canadian theatre. International figures were drawn from equity studies conducted abroad, as well as from secondary research materials.

While the Equity in Theatre initiative is mandated to focus on gender, it also aims to take an intersectional approach to research by assessing the representation of other "minoritized" groups including people of colour, Aboriginals, LGBTQ, people with disabilities, and elder adults. Whenever possible these identities are taken into account in the analysis and discussion; however, there is limited research on which to draw in these areas. Rebecca Burton encountered the same challenge in her research for *Equity in Canadian Theatre: The Women's Initiative*. Burton found that survey questions regarding numbers of people of colour garnered significantly fewer responses than those focused on gender ("Adding It Up" xiv). She notes, "Requesting information concerning racialized identities is a practice often viewed as inappropriate and, as a result, many people did not feel comfortable answering such questions" (xiv). In this current initiative, the research team did not administer a comprehensive survey as the 2006 study did, but instead gathered equity data mainly through secondary research materials. Some of the materials employed here, such as those drawing on Statistics Canada data, did include information about multiple categories of identity, while others, like informal straw polls conducted by professional organizations, did not. In terms of the latter, straw poll data was often gathered by examining and counting names on theatre company websites, making it impossible (and problematic) to determine ethnicity. In short, there are limitations marring the intersectional analysis that must be acknowledged at the outset and which underscore the need for further ethical research in this area. While it is clear that minoritized groups are underrepresented in Canadian theatre across the board, more data is needed to quantify these claims and develop strategies to achieve proportional representation.



A final methodological note requires a consideration of the concept of equity itself. As Rebecca Burton points out in “Adding it Up,” gender equality is a difficult concept to define and measure (1). Should gender equality in the theatre be based on the Canadian population, which according to Statistics Canada is comprised of 50.4% women and 49.6% men (Urquijo and Milan)? Or, would a more accurate measure be based on women’s representation in the overall labour force, which sat at 48% according to the 2011 Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey (Hill, “A Statistical Profile” 2). Alternatively, perhaps women’s rates of employment in the arts more specifically provide a benchmark—according to a report prepared by Hill Research Strategies based on the same Labour Force Survey data, women comprise 51% of artists and 50% of cultural workers (2). Burton chose 50% as her benchmark because it provided “the simplest scale possible” (“Adding it Up” 2); given that the above figures hover near 50%, this report employs the same mark. Ideally, the EIT team would like to see representation rates for women in theatre rise to 50%, which would not only provide increased opportunities for women playwrights to showcase their work, but would also produce a healthier industry with a more balanced and inclusive vision of our society for audiences to enjoy.

### Key Terms

In this report, the terms “**man/men**” and “**woman/women**” are used in the form of both nouns and adjectives to describe individuals who self-identify in these categories, regardless of biological sex. This inclusive terminology recognizes the fact that gender is socially and culturally constructed, not biologically based. The terms “male/males” and “female/females” are avoided, except when they are quoted from other sources, because they refer to biological sex.

The term “**minoritized**” is used to refer to individuals or groups who self-identify outside of the dominant paradigm, i.e. male, white, middle class, heterosexual, and able-bodied.

### From Research to Action

The Status of Women in Canadian Theatre initiative in 1982 and the Equity in Canadian Theatre project in 2006 demonstrate the challenge of translating research into action. EIT intends to overcome this challenge by examining these past initiatives and learning from both their successes and failures, and by mobilizing its unprecedented number of partner organizations to disseminate study findings and implement the actions planned for the subsequent three components of the initiative. As noted earlier, through its collaboration with multiple stakeholders in the theatre community—theatre workers, professional associations, scholars, and audiences—the EIT team hopes to foster dialogue on an (inter)national scale, develop social actions that will help affect change, and generate greater awareness of and exposure to Canadian women in theatre.

This research report is divided into three main parts, reflecting EIT’s desire to use research as a catalyst for action. Part I examines the current state of gender equity in Canadian theatre, gathering data from multiple sources to analyze the division of roles within the theatre, regional comparisons, working conditions, and audiences. Part II highlights initiatives that have been employed in Canada and abroad to redress equity in the theatre. In both parts, international comparisons are made in order to provide

additional insights into Canada's situation and, in the case of Part II, to highlight successful models that can be adopted here. Part III briefly looks at other industries to identify successful initiatives that could be explored and potentially adopted within the context of Canadian theatre.

The classrooms of the National Theatre School and other educational and training institutions in Canada show that there is no shortage of talent when it comes to women theatre practitioners. The audiences of theatres across the country demonstrate that there is no shortage of demand for work by, for, and about women. The research in this report serves to answer the question of "Where are all the women in Canadian theatre?" by proving that women do not simply disappear: they are consistently denied opportunities and rendered invisible by systemic discrimination that has permeated the industry for decades.

---Michelle MacArthur, Rebecca Burton, Jennie Egerdie, and Laine Zisman Newman

## Part I: Gender Equity in Canadian Theatre

### Introduction

Part I of this report examines the status of women in Canadian theatre in key roles including artistic director, director, playwright, and actor. It shows that the rough 70/30 division of men versus women in these positions has generally remained relatively unchanged for the past thirty years, and attempts to account for this fact through an examination of the various systemic and ideological barriers to achieving gender equity. The theatrical landscape in Canada is then compared to other parts of the world, including Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, revealing a phenomenon of underrepresentation that is global in scope.

### Gender Equity in Canadian Theatre: Some Recent Trends

#### Gender Division in Key Artistic Positions

The Professional Association of Canadian Theatre's Diversity Committee conducted a gender equity straw poll in 2010 focusing on three key artistic positions: artistic director, playwright, and director.<sup>3</sup> The survey included 138 theatre companies, three of which were non-producing companies and six of which did not produce any full productions that season. The survey's findings were based on a total of 597 shows produced by PACT members in the 2010/11 theatre season, updating statistics collected during the 2008/09 season (1). The following summarizes the key findings.

#### Artistic Directors

- In the 2010/11 season, 72% of the artistic directors were men and 28% were women (2).
- While 191 or 32% of the 597 full productions in the 2010/11 theatre season were directed by artistic directors, only 50 of those productions, or 8% of the total number of productions, were directed by women artistic directors (1).
- The most equitable caucuses in this category were Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) and Developmental theatres: in both cases, 64% of ADs were men, and 36% were women. (5)
- The least equitable caucuses were Regional (86% men ADs and 14% women) and Summer theatres (85% men ADs and 15% women) (5).<sup>4</sup>
- Women ADs were more likely to achieve gender equity in the director category, but were as likely to program men playwrights as men ADs (7).

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to note the informal nature of PACT's straw poll, which was conducted by assessing websites and season announcements, with some consultation with theatre administrations when clarification was needed. The straw poll was administered by a member of PACT's Diversity Committee rather than a third-party researcher. Nonetheless, the information is used here as it provides one of the most comprehensive looks at gender in Canadian theatre since the 2006 "Adding It Up" report.

<sup>4</sup> PACT has reorganized its categories since releasing its 2010/11 straw poll. Definitions and examples of developmental theatre, regional theatre, summer theatre, and TYA, as well as PACT's current caucuses, are included in the glossary at the end of this report.

## Directors

- Of the 68% of director positions filled by freelance, contracted directors (as opposed to 32% ADs directing, described above), 63% were men and 32% were women (6).
- The most equitable caucus in this category was Developmental theatre, where 48% of freelance directors were women. It was followed by TYA (44% women), and then Regional theatres (41%) (6).
- Factoring in ADs, the least equitable caucus was Summer theatre, where 74% of the directors were men (6).

## Playwrights

- Of the overall season statistics for each of PACT’s three main categories, the greatest disparity in gender equity happens in this category (1).
- Only 288 or 29% of the 1,006 playwrights whose work was produced in the 2010/11 season were women (5).
- The numbers in this discipline reflect no change since PACT’s study of the 2008/09 season (3).
- The most equitable caucus in this category was Developmental, where 39% of playwrights were women (5).
- The least equitable caucus was Summer, where 22% of playwrights were women (6).

*For a complete breakdown of PACT’s findings by region and caucus, see the [Equity in Theatre website](#).*

These findings reveal Developmental and TYA theatres to be the most consistently equitable caucuses for women. Theatres in the developmental category “create varied work that draws audiences from a variety of places” (PACT, “PACT Caucuses” 2); their openness to experimental work may be accommodating to women artists, some of whom actively resist traditional text-based work<sup>5</sup>; conversely, their willingness to take risks may also mean that they are more inclined to “gamble” on women in the first place. However, given that developmental theatres typically dedicate a prolonged period of time to creation and privilege process over final product, artists associated with these companies may not be given the same level of public exposure through performance as those in the other categories. As for TYA, women’s near-equitable representation in this category is not surprising given their gendered association with maternity and childrearing. Indeed, women have historically occupied leadership roles in TYA theatres—for example, women are the founders or co-founders of many of Canada’s most prolific TYA companies, including Manitoba Theatre for Young People, Toronto’s Young People’s Theatre, and Vancouver’s Green Thumb Theatre. As a final note, outside of PACT’s research, Michele Decottignies of the Disability Arts Alliance of Canada and Stage Left Productions shared some statistics with EIT, reporting that the Disability Arts domain

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<sup>5</sup> Susan Bennett examines women’s use of alternative approaches to writing and performance creation as an act of resistance against conventional theatre and its history of exclusion. See her article “Diversity and Voice: A Celebration of Canadian Women Writing for Performance”, in particular p. 88.

“has actually inverted the gender imbalance exponentially” as “9 out of 10 professional disability-led Deaf, Mad and/or Disability Arts companies are run by disabled women artists.” These statistics are certainly cause for celebration, and also underline the urgent need, noted earlier in this report, to consistently collect data on other facets of identity beyond gender.

Returning to PACT’s data, women’s consistent and often severe underrepresentation in Regional and Summer theatres can be partially attributed to the theatres’ tendencies to produce musicals or plays from the classical repertoire. While women playwrights are abundantly represented in both of these genres, they are underrepresented in the canon from which many of these companies draw their repertoire. The lack of opportunities for women in Regional and Summer theatres has significant implications, as Regional theatres in particular offer consistent work, higher pay, and better visibility due to their funding structures and broad audience base.

Overall, PACT’s findings show that not much has changed in Canadian theatre in terms of gender equity. The 2010 straw poll results were a repeat of PACT’s findings from 2008, which showed a rough 70/30 split between men and women in major artistic positions. The lack of change—and regression in some areas—in the numbers of women who occupy artistic director, director, and playwright positions is demonstrated in Table 1.1, which compares data for the artistic triumvirate from Fraticelli and Burton’s study with the most recent PACT and PGC straw polls. As discussed in the introduction to this study, despite the awareness generated by initiatives like the 2006 Equity in Canadian Theatre study, limited financial and human resources, poor media attention, and the resulting lack of public awareness have stalled action in redressing what are now well-documented imbalances.

**Table 1.1: Comparison of Fraticelli, Burton, PACT, and PGC Study Results**

<b>Industry Position (Women)</b>	<b>Fraticelli’s Findings (1982)</b>	<b>Burton’s Findings (2006)</b>	<b>PACT’s Findings (2010/11)</b>	<b>PGC’s Findings (2013/14)</b>
Artistic Directors	11%	33%	28%	--
Directors	13%	34%	32%	--
Playwrights	10%	27%	29%	22%

Moreover, gender equity advocates work in a wider post-feminist cultural climate that resists taking their message seriously. Building on Susan Faludi’s discussion of backlash in the 1990s, theorist Angela McRobbie defines post-feminism as “an active process by which feminist gains of the 1970s and 80s come to be undermined” (255). She continues, “post-feminism positively draws on and invokes feminism as that which can be taken into account, to suggest that equality is achieved, in order to install a whole repertoire of new meanings which emphasise that it is no longer needed, it is a spent force” (255). In the theatre world, the perception that equality has been achieved is based on the visibility of those women who are enjoying careers as playwrights, directors, actors, and designers, even though, in reality, they constitute only a small minority—in other words, the

successes of a few hide the disappointments of many. The post-feminism climate makes it difficult to mobilize the theatre community and engage the public when pervasive attitudes suggest that feminism has done its work and is no longer necessary.

### Gender Division Amongst Playwrights

Playwrights Guild of Canada's annual Theatre Production Survey for 2013/14 provides detailed statistics regarding the gender division amongst playwrights whose work was produced that season. The survey includes 183 theatre companies of all shapes, sizes, and geographic regions. Its findings are based on a total of 812 productions in the 2013/14 theatre season ("Theatre Production Survey" 1). The following highlights some its key findings:

- Plays by men continue to dominate, as women did not account for even one-quarter of the productions (although they form 50% of PGC's membership) (1).
- Of the total 812 productions, 63% were written by men, 22% by women, and 15% by mixed gender partnerships (1).
- Of those 812 productions, 470 were by Canadian playwrights, which is 58% of all productions. Women represented 30.5% of Canadian playwrights, while men represented 53% and mixed-gender partnerships represented 16.5% (1).
- Men playwrights accounted for at least 60% of the productions in all provinces, except Manitoba, the only region to come close to a balanced season with a breakdown of 47% productions by men and 44% by women (1).<sup>6</sup>
- In a comparison of theatres grouped by annual operating budget, men dominated as playwrights in each tier with the exception of tier 2 (annual operating budget of \$100,001 to \$250,000). Fifty seven percent of the plays produced by companies in this grouping were by Canadian playwrights, with men and women playwrights each representing 34% (plays by mixed-gender partnerships constituted the other 31%) (PGC, "PGC's Annual Theatre Survey" 1). In general, women's plays were slightly better represented in the Canadian category versus the non-Canadian category.
- Theatres in the highest budget grouping (tier 6, \$2,000,001 and over) "exhibited the greatest gender imbalances in play production" and the lowest rates of Canadian play production (3).
- A comparison of national studies over time reveals that though the numbers of productions by women have increased since Rina Fraticelli's 1982 study, they have actually decreased since Rebecca Burton's 2006 study. As illustrated in Table 1.1 above, PGC's findings regarding women playwrights from the 2013/14 season shows a drop of 5% since Burton's study and 7% since PACT's findings

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<sup>6</sup> Manitoba's 2013/14 season featured premieres of six new works by women (Friesen, Prokosh). It remains to be seen if the province will sustain the near-balance achieved last year but a quick look at the current season suggests that the numbers have shifted back in favour of male playwrights.

from 2010/11. There is still a long way to go before reaching the 50% equality marker.

*See Appendix I for the complete report, and Appendix II for the survey's breakdown by theatre budget size.*

Again, these findings suggest that while gender equity in Canadian theatre has been recognized as a problem for over thirty years, there has been a lack of collective action on this issue. In addition to the barriers discussed in the previous section, there are other reasons for women's continued underrepresentation as playwrights specifically. This issue begins with education, where high school and post-secondary reading lists and theatre school repertoires continue to be dominated by white men playwrights, having a formative effect on graduates as they enter the theatre community as artists and audiences and make choices about which plays to produce and patronize. Feminist theatre scholars have drawn attention to the dramatic canon and its gendered implications for decades, understanding it as a system that reifies and reproduces hegemonic culture and upholds the false notion of universality, thereby discriminating against those whose identities, values, and works do not conform (Dolan, *The Feminist Spectator as Critic* 20).<sup>7</sup> It is for this reason that initiatives such as History Matters/Back to the Future, discussed in the next chapter of the report, have been developed: raising awareness about women's work early on holds the potential to increase its presence on stage.

Moreover, education challenges the common misconception that women are not writing plays. As demonstrated by the PGC survey cited above, women constitute 50% of its membership, but their work represents only 22% of professional productions in the 2013/14 season (when mixed-gender partnerships are included this number rises to 37%). The fact is that women are writing plays, but they are not being professionally produced—rather, women get stuck in the developmental phase, having their plays workshopped or staged on the festival circuit. Rebecca Burton refers to this phenomenon as “the gap between aspiration and legitimation” in her “Adding It Up” report, borrowing the term from Avis Lang Rosenberg (17). This gap persists today, as further demonstrated by the disparity between women's plays produced on professional stages in Canada compared to Fringe Festivals. For example, most recently, women have outnumbered men at the Vancouver Fringe Festival: in 2013, they constituted 52.73% of the playwrights, and in 2014 that number rose to 61.9% (Reis). These numbers are significantly higher than the percentage of women's plays produced professionally in B.C. in 2013/14, where plays by women represented just 18% of the total productions, or 32% when mixed-gender partnerships were taken into account (PGC, “Theatre Production Survey” 1). While statistics for people of colour have not been collected in Canada to the same extent, in her 2006 study, Burton pointed out that the gap between aspiration and legitimation is significantly magnified: “Comprising 6% of the playwrights-in-residence, 15% of all commissioned playwrights, 31% of the staged readings, 20% of the workshop events, 7% of the festival productions, and 36% of all

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<sup>7</sup> Jill Dolan elaborates on the problem with canons in Chapter 2 of her book, *The Feminist Spectator as Critic*. See also the first two chapters of Sue-Ellen Case's *Feminism and Theatre*.

cabaret participants in 2004/05, playwrights of colour make it into the main-stage repertoires only 9% of the time” (17).

A final reason that has been used to explain these disparities is that there is a direct relationship between the gender of artistic directors and the gender of the produced playwrights; that is, men ADs are more likely to hire men playwrights than women playwrights, a trend that has a real impact when the majority of artistic directors are men. This was observed by Burton in her 2006 study, which found that men ADs employed women as 44% of their playwrights in residence and 33% of their commissioned playwrights, whereas women ADs employed women as 71% of their playwrights in residence and 61% of their commissioned playwrights (17). This disparity was not as significant in PACT’s 2010 Gender Equity Straw Poll, which found that women ADs hired 67% men playwrights and 33% women playwrights, while men ADs hired 73% men and 27% women playwrights respectively (10). While men ADs have greater opportunity to hire in this category, as they represent 77% of the artistic directors surveyed (9), these statistics suggest that women are also programming the status quo. One possible reason for this is an internalized gender bias, an issue that US researcher Emily Glassberg Sands found in a 2008/09 study of equity in American theatre. Sands sent identical scripts to literary managers and artistic directors across the country, only she labeled half as woman-authored (“Mary Walker”) and the other half as man-authored (“Michael Walker”). She found that “Mary’s” scripts received significantly worse ratings in terms of quality, economic prospects and audience response than “Michael’s” from both men and women artistic directors, showing that gender-based bias influences both men and women (Cohen). Sands’ findings, which will be discussed further later on, point to the complexity of inequities facing women playwrights: not only do systemic barriers prevent their work from being produced, but deep-seated biases also stand in their way.

### Gender Division Amongst Actors

In a factsheet based on statistics drawn from contracts in 2011, the Canadian Actors’ Equity Association found that women Equity members outnumber men by a small margin (51.4% compared to 48.5%) (6). However, when it comes to work weeks, men slightly surpass women, working 50.8% of weeks versus the 49.16% worked by women (6). The report found that “women tend to work more in the beginning of their careers, but men surpass them in work weeks after 50 years” (6). This can be explained by some of the common barriers women face in the workplace, such as a lack of support for the burden of care they undertake in their personal lives (see the next section), as well as the typical lack of roles for older women actors. Indeed, ageism should not be overlooked as a pressing and persistent issue in the theatre industry: as women age, the volume of roles available to them decreases and they are often relegated to playing stereotypically feminine roles, such as maternal figures, whose presence on stage serves men and/or children characters (Grochala 290). The number of roles available to men versus women should be scrutinized when accounting for gender division amongst actors, as the scales tend to be tipped towards men.

In a recent study for *The Guardian* on equity in theatre in England, researcher Elizabeth Freestone of Pentabus Theatre sought to account for women’s underrepresentation on English stages, where in the top ten subsidized theatres women only constituted 38% of



actors employed in 2011-12 (Sedghi). One of the key culprits? Shakespeare. Of the 981 characters Shakespeare wrote, only 16% are women. In *Hamlet*, one of his most widely performed plays, only 9% of the lines belong to women characters (Sedghi). Given Shakespeare's enduring popularity—in England but also in Canada—there is a clear connection between roles for women actors and women's rates of employment as actors. This finding translates to contemporary theatre in Freestone's study as well, where women were more likely than men to write roles for women. In new plays by women playwrights, 49% of the roles were for women; men playwrights of new plays wrote 37% of their roles for women (Sedghi). This positive correlation between women playwrights and roles for women points to the need to provide women writers with more opportunities to have their work presented on professional stages, as this clearly impacts employment opportunities for women actors (as well as other roles), and provides audiences with more balanced representations.

*See Appendix III for an excerpt of CAEA's factsheet.*

### **Gender Division Amongst Literary Managers and Dramaturgs**

The Canadian chapter of the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas shared its 2013/14 membership statistics with EIT. Of its 43 individual members, 31 members or 72% are women and 12 members or 28% are men (Falk). (There are also 6 institutional memberships covering up to 5 people per institution, for which LMDA does not have statistics.) These findings are important to note due to the influence of literary managers and dramaturgs on theatre companies' programming choices. Indeed, while women's representation as literary managers and dramaturgs are cause for celebration, their impact on the low numbers of women playwrights in Canada requires further scrutiny. Referring back to Emily Glassberg-Sands' research, discussed above, it is important for both women and men to examine their own biases when assessing scripts and making programming decisions.

### **Gender Division Amongst Designers**

Though comprehensive national statistics on designers have not been collected since Rebecca Burton's 2006 study, the Associated Designers of Canada provided EIT with some general information regarding its membership in 2015. Its working membership, meaning members who are filing contracts or who are available to work at all stages of their careers, numbers 194. Of its working members, 85 or about 43.8% are women, and 109 or 56.2% are men (Sky). These statistics do not include members over the age of 71 who may still be working or student members. Sheila Sky, Executive Director of ADC, notes that in addition to herself, currently the President and Head of the Recruiting Committee are also women, which perhaps accounts for the close gender division of ADC's membership. As this report concludes elsewhere, more women in positions of power has a positive effect on gender equity within an organization. Sky also notes that the ADC considers gender, design discipline, region, and career stage in the formation of all committees—this kind of model of attention to diversity is supported by the recommendations discussed in Parts II and III of this report.

### Gender Division on Boards of Directors

The EIT team analyzed the gender division of boards of directors for theatre companies categorized under PGC's Tier 1 category (annual operating budget of \$100,000 or less) and Tier 6 category (annual operating budget of \$2,000,001 or over) by tallying the members listed publicly on theatre websites. (When a gender ambiguous name was listed, the researcher looked into it further by checking with the theatre company.) Of the 55 Tier 1 companies, 60% of board members were women and 40% were men. Of the 429 Tier 6 companies, 43% of board members were women and 57% were men.

The gendered division of power, discussed earlier, is reflected in this data, where women predominate on boards of companies on the lower funding tier (i.e. small-sized, low budget theatres), and comprise a minority on the boards of companies in the highest tier (i.e. large-sized, big budget companies). When compared to the results to PGC's Annual Theatre Production Survey broken down by budget size, these findings suggest a relationship between the presence of women on a company's board and the percentage of plays by women it produces. As shown in Table 1.2, Tier 1 companies produced a higher percentage of plays by women in the 2013/14 season than Tier 6 companies.

**Table 1.2: Comparison of Gender Division of Playwrights and Board Members in Tier 1 and Tier 6 Companies, based on PGC's 2013/14 Theatre Survey and EIT Research**

	<b>Tier 1 – Boards</b>	<b>Tier 1 - Playwrights</b>	<b>Tier 6 – Boards</b>	<b>Tier 6 - Playwrights</b>
<b>Women</b>	60%	29%	43%	19.5%
<b>Men</b>	40%	62%	57%	70%
<b>Mixed Gender Partnerships</b>	n/a	9%	n/a	10.5%

This data reinforces the importance of recruiting men and women board members in equal numbers, as they hold decision-making power over artistic directors, who are in turn responsible for programming their seasons and hiring artists, designers, technicians, and administrative staff. Increasing diversity on boards—not just by including more women, but other minoritized individuals as well—will introduce a wider variety of perspectives to board decision-making processes, and could have a positive trickle-down effect on who theatres choose to hire.

### Working Conditions: Grants

Canada Council researchers responded to a research request from EIT and provided statistics from the Grants to Theatre Artists program over a three-year time span, from 2011 to 2014. This program supports activities in the following components: Individual Creation (playwriting and creation), Playwrights in Residence, Artists in Residence, and Professional Development. These last two components receive applications from a broad range of theatre artists (including directors, performers, producers, administrators); however, the majority of applications in the Grants to Theatre Artists program are from playwrights (Guertin). While the overall picture for grant support of men and women across all disciplines at the Canada Council is balanced, the numbers for Theatre are less balanced (Guertin). As illustrated in Table 1.3, in the Grants to Theatre Artists program over three years, women had more applications, both total and assessed, than men.

However men's success rates were 7.4% higher than women's over the three-year period, meaning that they received a larger share of grants. Table 1.3 shows that men did not apply as often as women, but when they did, they were more successful and received more grants.

**Table 1.3: Applications to Canada Council Theatre Artists Program, 2011-2014, by Gender<sup>8</sup>**

Percentage of Total Applications		Percentage of Assessed Applications		Percentage of Successful Applications		Success Rates	
Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
46.9%	53.1%	46.5%	53.5%	53.7%	46.3%	29.3%	21.9%

As illustrated in Table 1.4, men's success rates meant that they also received more dollars than women. If there is a bright spot, it is that the women's shares of dollars were generally better than their shares of grants, and therefore women's average grants were higher than those for men over the three-year period—women just received fewer of those average grants.

**Table 1.4: Canada Council Theatre Artists Program Grants in Dollars, 2011-2014, by Gender<sup>9</sup>**

Dollars (Total, 2011-2014)			Percentage of Dollars			Average Grants	
Men	Women	Unknown	Men	Women	Unknown	Men	Women
\$1,080,263	\$975,500	\$7,000	46.5%	53.5%	.03%	\$9,233	\$9,755

Inequitable distribution of financial support leads to inequitable conditions for playwrights and artists. With decreased access to grants, women have limited resources to produce their own work. The Canada Council's statistics point to the need to re-examine granting policies and processes to ensure that grants are distributed equitably. Diverse juries of peer assessors are a first step in this process, and it is important to note that this was indeed the case for the above findings. Of the Canada Council's peer assessors for the 2013-2014 year, 51.2% were women and 48.8% were men. Parts II and III of this report make further suggestions about arts councils and their relationships with theatre companies, though more research in this area would be beneficial.

### Working Conditions: Income

Hill Strategies' 2014 report "Statistical Profile of Artists and Cultural Workers" draws upon data from the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) and historical data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) to illuminate working conditions in the arts. The general gender divide in the arts and culture sector is fairly even: women represent 51% of artists and 50% of cultural workers, whereas in the overall labour force, women constitute 48%

<sup>8</sup> The information in Tables 1.3 and 1.4 was provided to EIT by Nancy Guertin, Program Officer, Theatre Section on behalf of the Canada Council for the Arts.

<sup>9</sup> Grants are based on the commitment per fiscal year (totalled to cover the years 2011-2014) and exclude declined or cancelled grants.

of all workers (4). However, serious inequities exist when it comes to compensation. Women artists earn much less than their men counterparts, mirroring the difference in the overall labour force, where women earn on average 31% less than men (\$36,800 as opposed to \$53,300) (5).

In 2011 women artists earned on average \$22,600, 31% less than the average earnings of men artists that year (\$32,900) (5). This pay gap has actually increased since the 2006 Canadian Census, which reported that women artists earned \$19,200, 28% less than the average earnings of men artists (\$26,700) (Hill and Capriotte 29).

The National Household Survey divides the arts and culture sector into 9 arts occupations, 3 of which apply to theatre workers:

1. actors and comedians
2. authors and writers
3. producers, directors, choreographers, and related occupations

The following table reflects the division of each occupation by gender and salary.

**Table 1.5 Gender Breakdown of Arts Occupations and Average Earnings, 2011**  
**Statistics Canada National Household Survey<sup>10</sup>**

	Breakdown by Occupation			Average Earnings		
	Women	Men	Dif. between Women and Men	Women	Men	Dif. between Women and Men
<b>Actors and Comedians<sup>11</sup></b>	46%	54%	-8%	\$18,546	\$25,130	-26%
<b>Authors and Writers</b>	54%	46%	+8%	\$35,219	\$40,104	-12%
<b>Producers, Directors, Choreographers and Related Occupations</b>	33%	67%	-34%	\$45,491	\$54,192	-16%

Rebecca Burton's 2006 study also found discrepancies in wages between men and women. These discrepancies, Burton suggested, were not due to the fact that women were getting paid less than men to do the same job per se, but rather that they were working for smaller, poorer-paying theatres ("Adding it Up" 43). The challenge of advancing to larger, higher-profile, and better-paying theatres might be understood by looking at recent

<sup>10</sup> The analysis in this table is provided by Hill Strategies Research based on a 2011 National Household Survey data request. All earnings figures relate to the 2010 calendar year.

<sup>11</sup> The discrepancy between women actors and comedians should be taken into account when examining these numbers. While, women constitute the majority of CAEA members at 51.4%, as noted earlier, they account for just about 10% of comedians (Driscoll), meaning that the breakdown by occupation is being pulled down by the latter grouping.

research on the gendering of the labour market, which has suggested that women's difficulty in advancing in their careers (and its income-related implications) is caused primarily by discrimination rather than by barriers traditionally believed to hold women back, such as lack of access to affordable childcare and elder care and inflexible work schedules that fail to accommodate the domestic responsibilities with which women are often burdened. A 2014 study published in the *Harvard Business Review* surveyed over 25,000 Harvard Business School graduates from ages 26 to 67 in order to understand the reasons for the gender gap in top management positions. Researchers found that the belief that women "opt-out" of careers or promotions for family-commitments was unfounded, as only 11% of their respondents left the workforce to care for children full-time, a number that was even lower (7%) for women of colour. In fact, the majority of women in the Harvard study shared the same level of career ambition as their men counterparts. However, the pervasiveness of the *belief* that women value their careers less led to gender-based discrimination in hiring and promotion: women were stigmatized for choosing flex options or reducing their schedule, passed over for jobs, assignments, and promotions, and/or put on "the mommy track." While the researchers urge further studies on the impact of family relationships on women's and men's careers, they conclude that the situation is more complex than is commonly understood: "We don't mean to suggest that no relationship exists between individuals' choices regarding work and family and their career outcomes. But what is clear is that the conventional wisdom doesn't tell the full story" (Ely, Stone, and Ammerman). Applied to the theatre world, this research suggests the importance of identifying how bias creates barriers related to advancement, thereby perpetuating the income gap.

The Canadian Actors' Equity Association 2011 factsheet also provides theatre-specific data on gender and income. Like the studies cited above about the arts more broadly, the CAEA's factsheet reports an income disparity between men and women. The average annual Equity income (under negotiated agreements) in 2011 was \$16,612; women Equity members made an average of \$15,849 per year, 8.5% less than their men counterparts, who made an average of \$17,323 (6).

#### **Arts Audiences: Equity-Seeking Groups**

As both Rina Fraticelli's 1982 report and Rebecca Burton's 2006 study point out, though women are under-represented in artistic positions in the theatre, they constitute the majority of audiences (Burton 3, 20). For example, in the 2004/05 season, women constituted an estimated 59% of Canadian theatre audiences (20).

This gender division persists in more recent research findings. Hill Strategies' report, "Factors in Canadians' Arts Attendance in 2010," based on Statistics Canada's 2010 General Social Survey, found that women are more likely than men to attend theatre performances (49% of the population compared to 40%) (16), and that men are 37% less likely than women to attend plays (24). As shown in Table 1.6, this information can be compared against the Canadian population in 2010, which Statistics Canada reported at 34,005,300 ("Population by Year"), to calculate the number of Canadians who attended theatre in 2010: 55.06% women and 44.94% men. This data shows that the gender divide has slightly narrowed since Burton's study, but that overall women still constitute a

majority of theatre audiences.

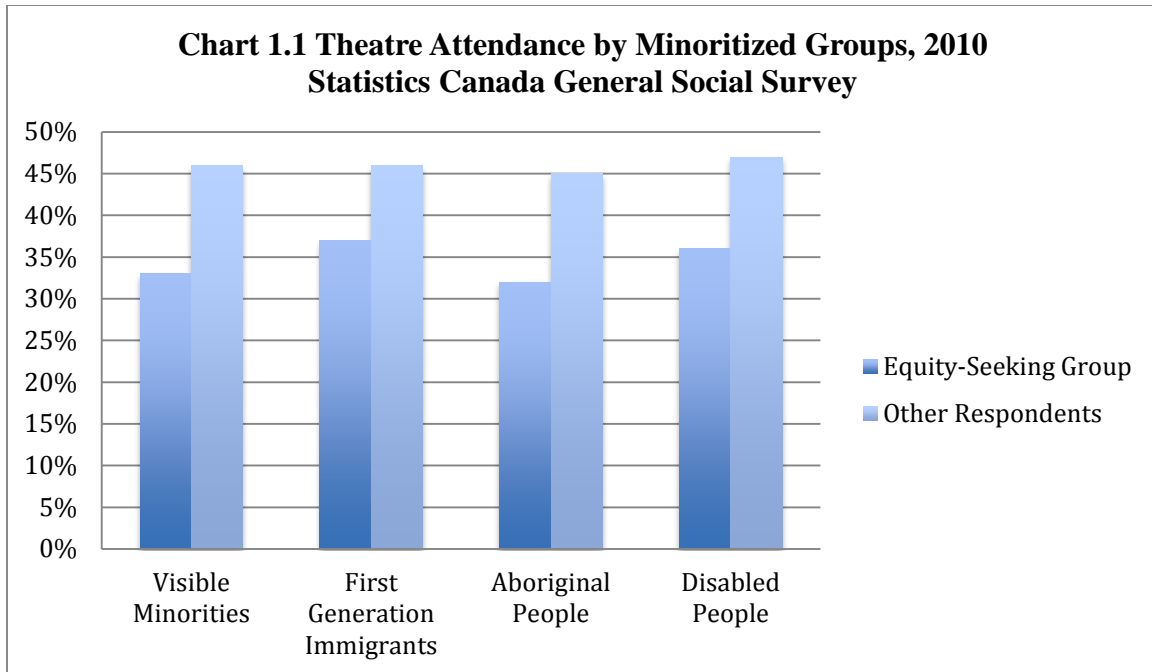
**Table 1.6: Calculations of Theatre Audience Gender Divide, Based on Statistics Canada 2010 General Social Survey**

	Theatre Attendees (Women) of Canadian Population	Theatre Attendees (Men) of Canadian Population	Total Theatre Attendees	Theatre Attendees (Women) of Total Attendees	Theatre Attendees (Men) of Total Attendees
<b>Calculations</b>	49% of 34,005,300	40% of 34,005,300	16,662,597 +13,602,120	16,662,597/30,264,717	13,602,120/30,264,717
<b>TOTALS</b>	16,662,597	13,602,120	30,264,717	55.06%	44.94%

When it comes to other equity-seeking groups, the situation is more complex. Hill Strategies' report found that Canadians who belonged to minoritized groups attended theatre less often than other respondents (see Chart 1.1). For example, those who "self-identify as a member of a visible minority group are less likely than those who are not members of a visible minority group to attend theatre performances (33% vs. 46%). Similarly, first-generation immigrants are less likely than non-immigrants to attend theatre performances (37% vs. 46%)" (Hill, "Factors" 17).<sup>12</sup> Aboriginal people are also less likely to attend theatre: 32% of Aboriginal people attended theatre in 2010 compared to 45% of other respondents. The same applies to Canadians self-identifying as being afflicted by physical, psychological, emotional or mental disabilities: 36% of disabled Canadians attended theatre in 2010, compared with 47% of the rest of the population (17).

While the above report does not explore the reasons for these discrepancies, one possible explanation is that theatres are not producing work that is meaningful to these equity-seeking groups. Canadian theatre artist Jovanni Sy takes up this complex issue in his article "Found in Translation," a review of two Canadian anthologies of plays about the immigrant experience. Sy highlights the fear that many theatres express of alienating their audiences by producing culturally specific work, leaving them with two choices: the "Epcot Centre approach to multiculturalism," which homogenizes the culture represented until it is nearly indistinguishable from the mainstream; or creating a cultural representation that is "too faithful" and risks becoming "a lightning rod for criticism" (13). Sy ultimately challenges this kind of thinking, arguing that representing diverse experiences on stage is a shared responsibility: "The act of pondering the unknowable is what will unite us. [...] We must listen when it is not our turn to speak. And when the voice we hear sounds strange or foreign, we must listen more intently" (13). In addition to the ideological barrier identified by Sy, namely the persistent ideal of universality as a measure of "good art," systemic barriers may also prevent members of these groups from attending theatre—for example, those with physical disabilities may not be able to access all performance venues.

<sup>12</sup> The author of the study notes that "many immigrants are members of visible minority groups, and some respondents would be counted in both of these categories" (17).



It is also important to note that within these groups, women are more likely to attend theatre than men. Hill Strategies' report "Diversity and Arts Attendance by Canadians in 2010" provides further information about theatre-going amongst equity-seeking groups based on the 2010 General Social Survey. Theatre patrons who self-identify as visible minorities and first generation immigrants are more likely to be women than men (55% compared to 48% for the former group, and 55% compared to 47% for the latter) (9, 14). The report does not provide exact figures for theatre for Aboriginal people or Canadians with disabilities, but suggests that they align with the overall portraits of arts attendance within these groups, where people who attended at least one arts activity are more likely to be women than men (57% compared to 49% and 58% compared to 52% respectively) (17, 21).

These figures build on the 2006 "Adding It Up" report, which was not able to solicit theatre attendance data for other equity-seeking groups (Burton 20), by illustrating that women from a diverse cross-section of identities consistently outnumber men in theatre audiences. Again, this reflects an imbalanced relationship, wherein the groups that constitute a majority in theatre audiences are a minority on Canadian stages and behind the scenes. More equitable representation of women in the various artistic and technical positions in the theatre would more accurately reflect the identities of patrons and consumers.

### Arts Audiences: Age

Age also factors into theatre attendance. In an analysis divided into 10-year age ranges, Hill Strategies found that theatre attendance was highest for the youngest age group in their study (50% for those between 15 and 24 years of age), followed by the second eldest age group (48% for those between 65 to 74 years of age) ("Factors" 16). Young people may be presented with increased opportunities to attend theatre through school

outings and youth discounts. The senior population may also gain access through lowered ticket prices, and, being in a later stage of life, may have more time to attend theatre.

The presence of these populations points to the need to create theatre that speaks to both groups and reflects their realities. Since, for example, older women are more likely to attend theatre than men (Hill, “Diversity” 2), perhaps there is a need to see more stories about women of a certain age on stage – a challenge in the current climate, in which the cultural obsession with youth influences casting decisions and, as discussed above, women actors work less often as they age due to a lack of substantial dramatic roles for their demographic.

### **Adding Up the Trends**

Over thirty years since Rina Fraticelli’s landmark 1982 study, “The Status of Women in Canadian Theatre,” women still remain under-represented in major artistic roles in Canadian theatre, including artistic directors, directors, and playwrights. The situation is worse for racialized, immigrant, Aboriginal, and disabled women, who have limited access to artistic opportunities despite Canada’s celebration of diversity as a cornerstone of its identity. While women saw increased representation between Fraticelli’s study and Rebecca Burton’s 2006 study, “Adding it Up: The Status of Women in Canadian Theatre,” the most recent data from the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres (PACT) (2010/11) and Playwrights Guild of Canada (PGC) (2013/14) show a regression in each category. These findings are consistent with the broader context of the status of women in Canada, where, as the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) reports, “the pace of progress towards gender equality slowed over the past decade” (6). The current state of regression is evidence of the urgent need for strategies to redress gender and other identity-based inequities in Canadian theatre. The following section presents a regional analysis of gender inequity in Canadian theatre, which will help to fill-in the composite picture drawn above before moving on to examine strategies and initiatives for change.

### **Regional Snapshots**

As noted in the introduction, a regional breakdown of the status of women in Canadian theatre has not been studied in a systematic or comprehensive way since the 2006 “Adding It Up” report, though several arts organizations identify equity as a goal in their mandates. Information requests sent to arts councils and other theatre organizations in each province and territory as part of the current Equity in Theatre research study were met with a generally positive response, and the organizations that collected statistics shared them. Moreover, multiple representatives contacted expressed support for the EIT study and interest in seeing its results once they are reported. The following information is gathered from various primary and secondary sources to provide snapshots of equity figures across the country. Given Canada’s geographic diversity and the distinct nature of each of its provinces and territories, it is important to understand what equity looks like across the country in order to develop strategies for improvement tailored to each region’s specific needs.

### **Applause Awards**

The 50/50 Applause Awards have been handed out annually since 2012 by the US-based



International Centre for Women Playwrights (ICWP) to theatre companies that present 50% or more plays by women in a season. There are two eligibility requirements: “[a]t least 50% of the plays produced during the year must be the work of female playwrights” and “[a]t least 50% of the total number of performances during the [season] must be the work of female playwrights” (Gartner and Bauske).<sup>13</sup> Moreover, companies specifically dedicated to women’s theatre work are not eligible for the award. Anyone can nominate a theatre company by filling out a simple form online; ICWP volunteers then verify the information, and companies meeting the criteria are honoured with an award (Gartner and Bauske). Table 1.7, on the following page, lists the Canadian winners since the award’s inception. In its inaugural year there were only American winners, suggesting that the scope of the award has grown with increased publicity and involvement over time (not necessarily reflecting a lack of eligible Canadian companies). Also, since the awards are selected through voluntary nominations, the list below is not necessarily comprehensive—there may be other theatre companies meeting ICWP’s criteria that simply did not receive a nomination.

**Table 1.7: Canadian 50/50 Applause Winners<sup>14</sup>**

	2011-12*	2012-13	2013-14
1		Factory Theatre (Toronto)	Factory Theatre (Toronto)
2		Prairie Theatre Exchange (Winnipeg)	Obsidian (Toronto)
3		Shameless Hussy (Vancouver)	Theatre Passe Muraille (Toronto)
4			Great Canadian Theatre Company (Ottawa)
5			Prairie Theatre Exchange (Winnipeg)
6			Sarasvati Productions (Winnipeg)
7			Shameless Hussy (Vancouver)
8			Touchstone Theatre (Vancouver)

<sup>13</sup> These dual requirements ensure that the award is not given to companies that relegate women’s work to shorter runs—it is not enough to present a season with 50% plays by women if they are performed at a lower rate than men’s plays.

<sup>14</sup> Vancouver’s Shameless Hussy Productions and Winnipeg’s Sarasvati Productions, though popularly known as women’s theatre companies, still fit the Applause Awards criteria because they do not exclusively produce women’s work. Shameless Hussy’s mission is “telling provocative stories about women, to inspire the hand that rocks the cradle to rock the world” (Shameless Hussy), but it also produces work by men playwrights and collaborates with men artists. Sarasvati’s mission is “to produce theatre that inspires, challenges and encourages positive social change while demonstrating artistic excellence” (Sarasvati Productions, “Inspire”); its FemFest celebrates women playwrights, but Sarasvati also produces work by men playwrights and collaborates with men artists.

### British Columbia

As noted above, Vancouver’s Shameless Hussy has received an ICWP Applause Award in two consecutive years for staging the work of women playwrights, and Vancouver’s Touchstone Theatre was recognized with an Applause Award for 2013/14. The productions recognized in 2013/14 are listed below. Both companies staged work by Canadian playwrights.

**Table 1.8: British Columbia 50/50 Applause Winners**

	<b>Gender Breakdown</b>	<b>Plays</b>	<b>Playwrights</b>
<b>Shameless Hussy</b>	1/1 plays by women	<i>Dissolve</i>	Megan Gardiner
<b>Touchstone Theatre</b>	2/4 plays by women	<i>The Romeo Initiative</i>	Trina Davies
		<i>The Concessions</i>	Briana Brown

According to a quick study done in February 2014 by Lois Dawson, a Vancouver-based stage manager and blogger, the 2014/15 theatre season for all Jessie Award registered shows breaks down as follows:

- 35% of directors were female
- 24% of playwrights were female
- 22% of the plays produced were new plays, and of those only 25% were written by women (Dawson)

These numbers are in line with the national average discussed earlier in this section of the report, suggesting again that women face significant structural and ideological barriers to achieving equitable representation in theatre.

### Alberta

The 2013 “Survey of Albertans on Culture,” an annual telephone survey conducted on behalf of Alberta Culture and Alberta Municipal Affairs, concluded that participation in arts-based events is higher among women in Alberta (26), corroborating the national data on audiences cited above. Further, the Alberta survey also reported that arts activities are more important to women (27). Turning to theatre more specifically, the Alberta Playwrights Network (APN) responded to an EIT information request and, though stating their ability to comment is limited by their status as a service organization and not a producing company, shared the following information:

- APN’s current membership is 62% women, 34% men, and 4% other (Kneale). While women are the majority of APN members, they are a minority of produced playwrights in Alberta, where, in PGC’s 2012/13 straw poll, only 29% of the plays produced in the province were by women (compared to 55% men and 16% mixed gender partnerships) (1).
- The APN representative stated that, “The vast majority of our programming is open to both genders” – the exceptions are two “female-specific opportunities”

which APN supports in partnership with Urban Curvz and SkirtsAfire by providing dramaturgical assistance. Both Urban Curvz and SkirtsAfire will be discussed in the next part of this report; the former is a theatre company dedicated to producing women's work, while the latter is an arts festival featuring multidisciplinary women artists. The APN representative noted that these initiatives are not full-blown productions, but “only public readings or short pieces” (Kneale)—an important point given the “gap between aspiration and legitimation” discussed earlier. Initiatives like Urban Curvz and SkirtsAfire offer vital opportunities for women artists, but alone they cannot rectify the gendered imbalance in the Alberta theatre community. Indeed, as Rebecca Burton and Reina Green point out, women working in these environments may face significant limitations, including lack of funding, feelings of isolation and marginalization, and challenges effecting change in the mainstream from outside of it (68). Greater changes need to occur in order for women to access the province's main stages.

- The APN-administered Alberta Playwriting Competition jury works double blind. This year all three jury members were men, and both the Discovery and Grand Prize playwrights were men. APN's representative reviewed data dating back about 10 years to see if there was a pattern and found that the jury “had at least one female on it each year, and usually one male and one female [were] awarded” (Kneale). She also noted:
  - In 2005 the jury was made-up exclusively of men, and the winners were both women.
  - The last time APN had an all-women jury was 2008 and one of each gender took home a prize. (Kneale)

In this instance, it seems that there is no correlation between gender of jury member and gender of winner, though, as the representative pointed out after the information request, it is important to make a concerted effort to have a diverse jury each year. The data from Alberta points to the need for further study regarding arts juries, as well as the need to implement diversity policy to ensure that the identities of juries accurately reflect the identities of artists whose work they are evaluating.

### Manitoba

Prairie Theatre Exchange (PTE) in Winnipeg has received an ICWP Applause Award during two consecutive years for staging the work of women playwrights (see Table 1.9 on the following page). This award is at least partially a credit to PTE Artistic Director Bob Metcalfe, who insists on gender equity in the company's playwrights' unit (Rupp 10). Indeed, in 2013 Metcalfe was honoured with Playwrights Guild of Canada's Bra d'Or Award “for his ongoing support and programming of plays by women” (Johnston). At that point, Metcalfe had produced fifteen plays by women in the previous six years, not because they were written by women but because he saw them as quality plays that would be of interest to audiences (Johnston). Winnipeg's Sarasvati Productions received

an ICWP award in 2013/14, which is no surprise given that the company’s Artistic Director, Hope McIntyre, has been an active advocate for gender equity throughout her career, and served as co-chair of the 2006 Equity in Canadian Theatre study. Both PTE and Sarasvati Productions’ successes speak to the power of artistic directors in redressing inequities in the theatre. They also might account for the reason why Manitoba was the only province to come close to an equitable gender division in PGC’s 2013/14 straw poll, which found that 47% of productions in the season were written by men compared to 44% written by women, with the additional 3% by mixed gender partnerships (“Theatre Production Survey” 1).

**Table 1.9: Manitoba 50/50 Applause Winners**

	<b>Gender Breakdown</b>	<b>Plays</b>	<b>Playwrights</b>
<b>PTE</b>	3/5 plays by women	<i>Social Studies</i>	Tricia Cooper
		<i>Portage and Munsch: 50 Below</i>	Robert Munsch, Adapted by Debbie Patterson
		<i>The Valley</i>	Joan McLeod
<b>Sarasvati Productions</b>	2/2 plays by women	<i>Giving Voice</i>	Hope McIntyre
		<i>Fefu and her Friends</i>	Marie Irene Fornes

A producer at the Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre (MTC), a large regional theatre located in Winnipeg, also shared statistics with EIT researchers:

- From June 1<sup>st</sup> 2013-May 31<sup>st</sup> 2014, MTC received 108 play submissions
- 34/108 were submitted by women (31.5%)
- 3/10 of their shows programmed this upcoming season are by women (30%)
- The rate of programming matches the rate of submission

Additionally, MTC runs the Winnipeg Fringe Festival playwriting competition, and the producer observed parity in the number of people who have won this award, though she did not provide specific numbers to support her claims (Lam).

While Manitoba’s 2013/14 season was a progressive one for women playwrights, it remains to be seen whether this trend will continue. PACT’s statistics from the 2008/09 and 2010/11 seasons suggest that the gendered division reported by the MTC is closer to the provincial reality. In the 2008/09 season, women’s plays represented only 30% of those produced in Manitoba and Saskatchewan (PACT categorizes the two provinces together); in 2010/11, this number dropped to 26% (“Gender Equity” 3). In any case, Metcalfe and McIntyre’s leadership shows the positive impact that responsiveness to audience’s interests—the majority of whom are women—and a focus on equity when making programming decisions can have on women’s representation as playwrights in the professional theatre.

## Ontario

Four Ontario theatre companies have been recognized with 50/50 Applause Awards: Toronto's Factory Theatre (2012/13, 2013/14), Obsidian Theatre (2013/14), and Theatre Passe Muraille (2013/14); and Ottawa's Great Canadian Theatre Company (2013/14). Of the four winners, only Factory Theatre has a woman artistic director – Nina Lee Aquino, who shared the position with Nigel Shawn Williams. Table 1.10 contains information for the 2013/14 season for each company.

The relationship between artistic directors and playwrights reflected in this chart lends support to some points discussed earlier. First, as Glassberg-Sands found, the gender of artistic directors does not seem to have a consistent effect on the gender of playwrights—in her study, this meant that both men and women ADs demonstrated bias against women playwrights, but it also works in the reverse, as men artistic directors such as the leaders of the companies listed above and Prairie Theatre Exchange's Bob Metcalfe, noted earlier, have been celebrated for programming women's work. That all but one of the above companies is led by a man, however, also reflects the inequities in the artistic director position in the first place, where women represent roughly 28% of Canada's artistic directors (PACT, "Gender Equity").

The companies included in Table 1.10 also share similar mandates. Factory Theatre, Obsidian Theatre, Theatre Passe Muraille, and the Great Canadian Theatre Company all fall under PACT's categorization of "Supercaucus", which has recently been subdivided into three categories: Speculator, Architect, and Broker (Shannon). Companies in these categorizations tend to invest in the creation and development of original pieces and/or premiere new work (PACT, "PACT Caucuses"), which are key ways to support women and help bridge the gap between aspiration and legitimation. As discussed earlier, while women have written plays for hundreds of years, they have been largely excluded from the canon, a problem perpetuated by artistic directors who do not look beyond it for work to produce.<sup>15</sup> In PGC's 2013/14 straw poll, plays by women accounted for 24% of productions in Ontario during the season, while plays by men accounted for 60% and plays by mixed-gender partnerships accounted for 16% ("Theatre Survey" 1). If women's work is indeed being produced in greater numbers by "Supercaucus" theatres, then theatres belonging to the other categories must focus more attention on gender equity in order to rectify the imbalanced situation in the province. Indeed, as the province that produces by far the most theatre in the country, accounting for 42% of all productions in Canada in 2013/14 (1), Ontario has the potential to significantly increase the national average.

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<sup>15</sup> Some artistic directors of classical theatre companies are making headway in other areas, however. For example, Jackie Maxwell, Artistic Director of the Shaw Festival, prioritizes hiring women in other key artistic positions. In the 2015 season, six out of eleven shows at the Shaw Festival are directed by women (Shaw Festival).

**Table 1.10: Ontario 50/50 Applause Winners**

	<b>Gender Breakdown</b>	<b>Plays</b>	<b>Playwrights</b>
<b>Factory Theatre</b>	3/4 plays by women	<i>The Gravitational Pull of Bernice Trimble</i>	Beth Graham
		<i>6 Essential Questions</i>	Pricilla Uppal
		<i>Beatrice and Virgil by Yann Martel</i>	Adapted by Lindsay Cochrane
<b>Obsidian Theatre</b>	4/4 plays by women	<i>The Gravitational Pull of Bernice Trimble</i>	Beth Graham
		<i>Once on This Island</i>	Lynn Ahrens
		<i>Nightmare Dream</i>	Motion
		<i>Butterfly</i>	Debbie Tucker Green
<b>TPM</b>	5/7 plays by women	<i>On the Rocks</i>	Louise Pitre
		<i>Crash</i>	Pamela Mala Sinha
		<i>Heaven Above, Heaven Below</i>	Linda Griffiths
		<i>Same Same But Different</i>	Anita Majumdar
		<i>Vitals</i>	Rosamund Small
<b>GCTC</b>	4/6 plays by women	<i>You Fancy Yourself</i>	Maja Ardal
		<i>Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)</i>	Ann-Marie MacDonald
		<i>This is War</i>	Hannah Moscovitch
		<i>Dancing with Rage</i>	Mary Walsh

### Quebec

Research on gender equity in Quebec has been conducted on English-language theatre and French-language theatre, often separately. PACT and PGC's data show that the gender divide of the artistic triumvirate in Quebec in English-language theatre is similar to other regions in Canada, with women representing 27% of artistic directors, 27% of playwrights, and 32% of directors in the 2010/11 season (PACT, "Gender Equity" 2-4), and women playwrights dropping even lower, to 20.5% according to PGC's 2013/14 straw poll ("Theatre Production" 1). From the 2007/2008 to the 2010/2011 season, the Conseil québécois du théâtre (CQT) collected yearly statistics on the socio-economic conditions of its members, drawing on data from several professional theatre and artist organizations in the province (CQT 10).<sup>16</sup> While most of the CQT's data concerns French-language theatre, it does consider PACT's findings on English-language theatre in some categories of analysis. The following information is taken from their 2010/2011 report; distinctions between French-language and English-language theatre are noted.

<sup>16</sup> The CQT stopped compiling research in the 2010/11 season as their numbers were remarkably stable from year to year; they plan to do another study in two years (Levesque).

## Playwrights

- Overall, the CQT found that 60% of French-language plays produced during the 2010/2011 season were written by men, while 40% were written by women. This represents a 5% decrease for women since CQT's 2009/2010 report (46). While further research is needed in the Quebec context to understand this drop, the gender divide of playwrights in French-language theatre remains narrower than it is in the rest of Canada. This can be attributed to Quebec's distinct history of feminist activism and feminist theatre. As Louise Forsyth notes, women in Quebec have a rich history of writing for the stage dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the "explosion of feminist playwrights, actors, performers, and companies" that happened in the 1970s allowed women to infiltrate stages across the province, learn "the profession of making theatre (as actors, directors, designers, technicians, and administrators)," and attract receptive publics in increasing numbers ("Introduction: Québec Women Playwrights" vi). Though the energy of this particular period of time has not been sustained, the legacy of Quebec's *theater-femmes* is perhaps felt in the increased opportunities available to women in the mainstream compared to English-speaking Canada.
- The 60/40 division in French-language theatre was reported for most of the theatre categories, with the exceptions of privately operated (for-profit) theatres belonging to the Association des producteurs de théâtre privé (AFTP), where only 18.6% of produced plays were written by women; and Theatre for Young Audiences belonging to the association Théâtres Unis Enfance Jeunesse (TUEJ), where 52.13% of produced plays were written by women (CQT 46). These exceptions reflect a trend observed elsewhere in Canada, where, as discussed earlier, women are under-represented in higher-budget theatres and abundantly—or at least fairly—represented in the TYA category.
- The CQT's findings stand in contrast to those reported by researcher Marie-Ève Gagnon her 2009 report for the Association québécoise des auteurs dramatiques, "Rideau de verre: auteures et scènes québécoises: portrait socio-économique." Gagnon's data, which is taken from French-language theatres in Quebec between the years 2000 and 2007, aligns more closely with the rest of Canada. During this period of time, only 29% of French-language productions staged in Quebec were written by women (Schoenborn). Of the playwrights who had three or more separate productions of their work during this period, 36% were men and 18% were women (Schoenborn). Moreover, compared to their men colleagues, women playwrights had their work performed in smaller and lower budget theatres—a trend reflected in English Canada as well (Schoenborn). While the CQT's research is more recent than Gagnon's, further study is needed to understand whether the situation improved for women playwrights in Quebec in the last 15 years.

## Designers

- Women took on 44% of new design contracts for English- and French-language theatre in Quebec in the 2010/11 season and men took on 56% (33). The CQT's data, taken primarily from the Association des professionnels des arts de la scène du Québec (APASQ), encompasses four design positions: set, costume, lighting,

and sound.

- The division of labour in the design category is gendered, with men predominating as sound (78%) and lighting (90%) designers, and women predominating as costume designers (84%) (34). Though more up-to-date data on design in Canada is needed for a fairer comparison, the same gendered division was identified in Rebecca Burton's findings for Canadian designers in 2006 and in more recent American research, which will be discussed in the following section on international comparisons. In Burton's study, men represented 85% of sound designers ("Adding it Up" 26), a higher number than in Quebec. In the other two categories, however, the gender gaps found in Quebec are significantly wider than the national totals in Burton's study, where men represented 69% of lighting designers, and women represented 70% of costume designers (26). This marks another area of further research.
- Set design is the category closest to achieving gender parity in the CQT's report, with men comprising 57% of set designers and women comprising 43% (CQT 34). The scale here is similar to what Burton found in 2006 (66% men compared to 34% women) ("Adding it Up" 26), and in both instances it is set design that comes closest to gender parity out of all the design categories.

### Actors

- Of the five associations of theatre companies that produce their own work, men constituted 53% of actors employed in 2010/2011 and women constituted 47%. The same proportion was observed in the 2009/2011 season (CQT 21). While these numbers are fairly close, men's predominance in this category can be explained by the higher volume and substance of roles available to men actors, as discussed earlier.
- Women's earnings per contract averaged at \$5,793 in the 2010/2011 season, while men's were slightly higher, at \$6,030 per contract (22). Further research is needed to understand these discrepancies.
- Women's average-per-contract earnings were higher than men's in unaffiliated companies, TYA, and companies belonging to the Théâtres associés inc. (TAI), which consists of eight theatres that own and operate permanent spaces in Quebec. Meanwhile, men's average-per-contract earnings were higher for L'Association des compagnies de théâtre (ACT), which represents a large grouping of 120 non-profit theatre companies, and for the APTP. As discussed earlier, women are more often found in lower-profile and lower-paying companies, so their predominance in unaffiliated (independent) and TYA companies follows this logic. Their predominance in established TAI companies, however, runs counter to the trends in Anglophone Canada discussed above. One possible hypothesis to explain this would be that the TAI companies have a higher percentage of women artistic directors, and that women tend to program more plays with roles for women. This is difficult to prove without an analysis of each of the TAI members' seasons and the gender division of roles therein. A quick count of the current artistic directors for the TAI companies shows that women run three out of the eight companies, or 37.5%. Another explanation is, as noted earlier, Quebec's distinct theatrical and socio-political climate, and the legacy of



feminist women's strong presence on the province's main stages in the 1970s.

### Income

More recent statistics were collected in 2013 by the Union des artistes, which reports the following about members who participated in theatrical productions in various capacities (actors, directors, etc.)<sup>17</sup>:

- In the theatre, women's average annual salary is 67.7% of men's. In the total of all arts sectors, this number is higher, at 78.9%.
- There were 304 women who worked in the theatre in the 2013 season versus 469 men. Women represent 39.3% of workers in the theatre sector.
- The average income per contract in the theatre for women represents 80.6% of men's average income per contract, meaning that there is a wage gap of 19.4%. This translates to women making on average \$781 for a contract versus men who make \$968 (Baillie-Gendron).

These numbers align with the statistics in other parts of Canada. Again, women's underrepresentation in terms of contracts and revenue in Quebec theatre can be understood through an examination of the roles available to women on stage and behind the scenes: limited opportunities in these areas result in the income disparity reported by the UDA. While Quebec's distinct history of feminism and feminist theatre may make its theatre landscape more equitable for women playwrights than the rest of Canada, other areas, such as design, fall behind the national average.<sup>18</sup>

### New Brunswick

The Deputy Director of the New Brunswick Arts Board, an arm's length funding agency of the province's government, shared statistics for this study. The New Brunswick Arts Board has a legislated mandate to fund individual professional artists with the exception of its Artist in Residence program, to which organizations can apply.<sup>19</sup> A 10-year overview for the discipline of theatre in all of the New Brunswick Arts Board programs provides the statistics in Table 1.11.

**Table 1.11: New Brunswick Arts Board Funding by Gender, 2003 to 2013**

	Total	Men		Women		Organizations	
<b>Number of Applicants</b>	290	116	40%	136	47%	38	13%
<b>Number of Recipients</b>	130	46	35%	60	46%	24	18%

<sup>17</sup> These statistics reflect contracts under the UDA's jurisdiction.

<sup>18</sup> Though it is beyond the scope of this study, Canada's status as a country with two official languages brings with it another equity issue that requires further study in the context of theatre. Research into the numbers of French-to-English and English-to-French plays produced on Canadian stages might translate to an examination of the exchange of work between Quebec and English-speaking Canada, and whether plays by Francophones and Anglophones are equitably represented in each part of the country.

<sup>19</sup> All other operational/organizational funding resides with the New Brunswick Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture.

Here women's work is represented equitably, as women constitute 47% of the total applicants and 46% of recipients, meaning that the ratio of applicants to recipients is roughly equal. Women also outnumber men applicants and organizational applicants (Moeller). More information is needed here in order to understand how this funding translates to professional production and the extent to which it helps women bridge the gap between aspiration and legitimation, but matching it against the regional data from the PGC and PACT studies suggests that it does not have a significant influence on the amount of work by women that is produced in the province. For example, according to PGC's Theatre Production Survey for 2013/14, only 19% of productions were by women playwrights, while men authored 61% of productions (1). PACT's Gender Equity Straw Poll from the 2010/2011 season shows that 37% of directors in the Maritimes were women, whereas 63% were men (4). Though data on New Brunswick specifically would provide a more accurate picture, the existing research points to the fact that in this province, much like the others, women still face significant barriers to accessing professional stages.

### International Comparisons

The Canadian academic and artistic communities' interest in gender equity in theatre is paralleled on the international stage, where research into the representation of women and other marginalized groups is also actively occurring. The following includes highlights from studies in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, which show that the inequity experienced by women in theatre in Canada is not an anomaly. Although their artistic and socio-political contexts differ, these countries were selected for comparison because they all boast active, English-language theatre communities that have been recently studied under the frameworks of equity and diversity. These international comparisons help to shed further light on the complex issues underlying gender inequity; they also lay the foundation for the discussion of best practices in Part II of the report, as several recommendations are inspired by international initiatives.

#### Australia

A 2012 report released by the Australian Arts Council called "Women in Theatre" examined gender equity in the country's theatres using both quantitative and qualitative data. It found that in Australia's eight major professional theatres, 21% of productions were written by women playwrights, while 25% were directed by women. The study also found that women were better represented in these roles in medium or small sized theatre companies, where 37% of both playwrights and directors were women. Only one of the eight professional theatres in Australia had a woman as artistic director (O'Conner).

The report suggests some reasons for these inequities, including male-dominated boards making hiring choices, lack of flexibility and support for women's "double shift," gender-based stereotypes and prejudice, and unpredictable career paths. Additionally, the report points to the "sticky floor" phenomenon, meaning that women get caught in certain sectors and are inhibited from advancing. Sarah O'Conner, summarizing the report's findings, explains:

The report finds that there is a distinct separation between '*women's work*' and '*men's work*'. This is the main reason why women are much better represented in

areas such as youth theatre, education or community arts sector [sic]. Typically these are the areas that are poorly-paid, under-resourced and seen as low status. This is exacerbated by stereotypes about women being good communicators, teachers, trainers and nurturers.

As in Canada, the 2012 study shows that there has been little improvement in gender equity in Australia since the 1980s. The Australian research also shows a similar gendered division of labour in terms of the types of jobs women occupy in the theatre: generally, women have a stronger presence in areas that are lower-budget and less visible. This trend persists in the United Kingdom as well, as discussed in the following section.

### United Kingdom

The most recent research on gender equity in UK theatre was conducted by Tonic Theatre through their [Advance program](#). Created in 2011 “as a way of supporting the theatre industry to achieve greater gender equality in its workforces and repertoires” (Tonic Theatre, “Our Mission”), Tonic Theatre partnered with theatre companies around the UK to identify equity barriers and establish specific and individualized action plans to redress them. As a first phase of this work, Tonic conducted research on gender equity in the UK to better understand the context in which they were working. The following summarizes their key findings for each role in the artistic triumvirate.

#### Artistic Directors

Tonic analyzed the gender of artistic directors of the theatres belonging to Arts Council England’s National Portfolio Organisation (NPO), a grouping of 696 arts organizations that, through an open application process, were awarded public funding for a three-year period beginning in 2012.<sup>20</sup> During this period there were a total of 188 artistic directors working at the 179 theatres or theatre companies in the National Portfolio; 63% of the artistic directors were men, while 37% were women. This gendered division varied based on subsidy, which itself varied significantly according to the size of individual organizations. The proportion of women artistic directors was lower in larger theatres with a greater amount of subsidy: in organizations with £500,000 or more in funding, 76% of artistic directors were men and only 24% were women. Conversely, in smaller organizations with less than £500,000 in funding, 59% of artistic directors were men and 41% were women (Advance, “Learning”). Like the research in Canada and Australia, this suggests that as factors like funding and size increase, the number of women in positions of power decreases.

#### Playwrights

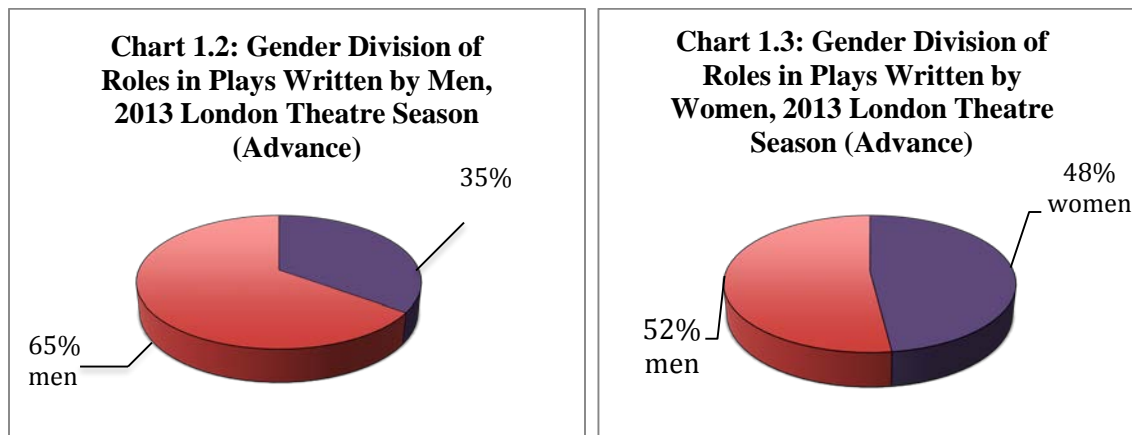
Tonic examined every new play produced in the 2013 season in a sample of twelve London theatres: Almeida, Bush, Donmar, Finborough, Gate, Hampstead Theatre, Lyric Hammersmith, National Theatre, Royal Court, Theatre503, Tricycle, and Young Vic. Of the 72 playwrights whose new plays received full productions that season, 57% were men and 43% were women—a significantly closer balance than what research from Canada

<sup>20</sup> For a list of NPO-funded theatres, see <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/our-investment/national-portfolio-organisations-map/?artform=4>.

and elsewhere in the world has shown. However, when the Advance team broke the data down according to theatre size, the numbers changed. Like the artistic director positions, women were represented in lower numbers in larger theatres. Women constituted only 24% of playwrights whose work was produced in what Advance defined as “larger/primary spaces.” Meanwhile, women constituted 64%—a majority—of playwrights whose work was produced in “smaller secondary spaces” (Advance, “Learning”).

Tonic also looked at playwright gender in another sample, which showed a much greater disparity between women and men. Researchers selected a random evening, Saturday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014, and examined the number of men and women in key creative roles in the top 20 subsidized NPO theatres and in the West End. Of the 24 productions performed in the top 20 subsidized NPO theatres, only 2, or 8%, were written by women. Of the 20 plays being performed in the West End, only 1—Agatha Christie’s *The Mousetrap*—was written by a woman (Advance, “Learning”).

Using the sample of twelve London theatres, Advance researchers examined the gender breakdown of roles in plays by men and women (see Charts 1.2 and 1.3 below). Their results showed that, on average, plays by men offered fewer roles for women, whereas plays by women offered roles in roughly equal numbers for men and women.



### Directors

Advance also examined the trajectory of women’s careers as directors, looking at data from multiple sources to create a composite picture of their progression from theatre school, to their early careers, to directing at the “top level.” Like the trend identified in Canada, where women outnumber men in theatre school but constitute a minority of working artists after graduation, Advance identified a significant drop-off when comparing the rates of women emerging from training programs to those directing in professional theatres.

**Table 1.12: Gender Division in Career Trajectories, UK (Advance)<sup>21</sup>**

Graduating Directing Courses (2013)		Young Vic's Directors Network		Directing in Top 10 Most Subsidized Theatres in England (2011/2012)		Directing with the National Theatre or RSC (2013)	
Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
41%	59%	40%	60%	76%	24%	67%	33%

The UK research mirrors Canada's in terms of women's inability to advance. In both places, women are represented in greater numbers in their early careers and at smaller, lower-budget institutions. Conversely, women are represented in lower numbers later in their careers and at larger theatres receiving more funding. This suggests the presence of the "sticky floor" phenomenon identified in the Australian research: women are prevented from advancing from smaller institutions to larger ones, from beginner roles to prestigious ones.

What distinguishes the UK research is women's numbers in the playwright category, which are higher or lower than Canada's depending on the sample consulted. Advance's findings from its 2013 sample show women as 43% of playwrights whose new plays received productions that season—over 20% higher than the Canadian data collected by Playwrights Guild of Canada in its 2013/14 Annual Theatre Survey, which, as discussed earlier, showed plays by women accounting for 22% of productions that season. There are some differences in the way data was collected that may prevent an even comparison: whereas Advance researchers looked at a sample of twelve London theatres and a total of 72 productions, PGC examined survey results from a much wider sample of 183 companies and 812 productions across Canada. Moreover, Advance focused on new plays while PGC looked at all plays. Data gathered by Elizabeth Freestone in her study for *The Guardian*, discussed earlier in reference to the disparity of roles for women actors in classical and contemporary theatre, reported slightly lower numbers for women playwrights in England. Freestone also used a smaller sample, looking at the top ten subsidized theatres in England in the 2011/12 season; she found that women represented 35% of playwrights of new plays and 41% of live commissions (Sedghi). Even using Freestone's data, there remains an over 10% difference between women playwrights in England and those in Australia and Canada. This opens up questions about why women have more success having their work staged in the UK. Part II of this report will look at some initiatives in the UK supporting women playwrights, including those belonging to Tonic itself, and examine how they may be adapted in Canada.

Tonic's random sample taken from September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014 stands in contrast to its other data and Freestone's study. In its examination of the top 20 NPO subsidized theatres and the plays being performed in the West End on that particular evening, women accounted

<sup>21</sup> Data gathered from Young Vic's Directors Network, a program for directors in the early stages of their careers, is based on a survey conducted by Advance with 1,121 respondents. The data on graduates is taken from a sample of eight postgrad directing courses in England and Scotland in 2013. The subsidized theatre data is taken from Elizabeth Freestone's research for *The Guardian*, which looked at England's ten most subsidized theatres for the 2011/12 year. The National Theatre and Royal Shakespeare Company data can be found from counting names on their websites.

for only 4% and 8% of playwrights. More investigation into these numbers is needed in order to understand the degree to which they are reflective of the state of theatre in England. For example, more single-evening samples can be taken to track trends over time. Similar random samples might be studied in Canada, based on a major theatre centre like Toronto in place of the West End, to generate comparative data.

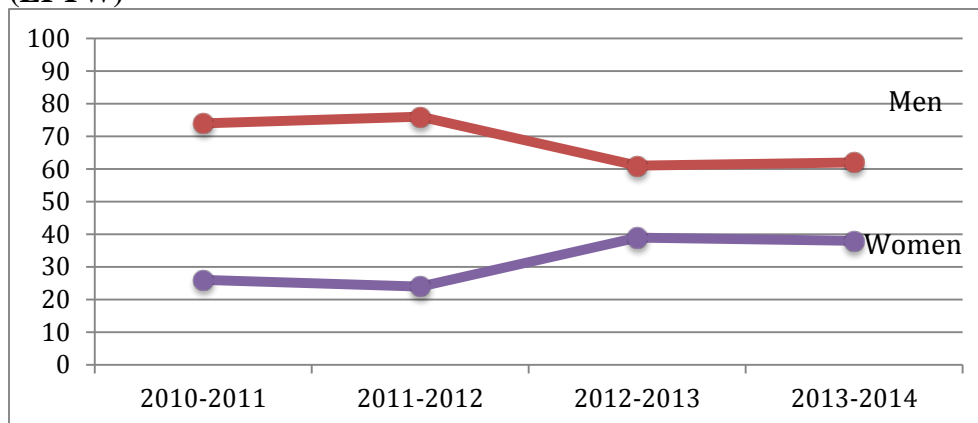
### United States

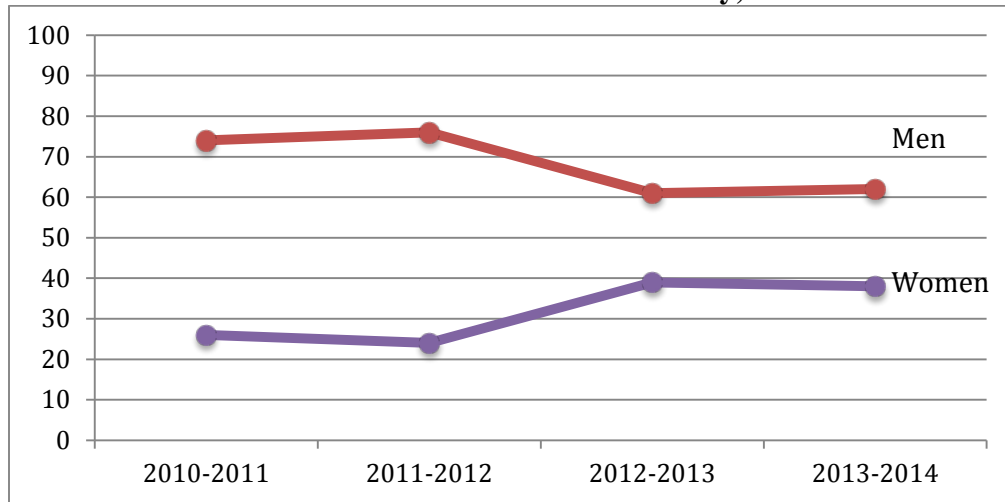
Gender equity in American theatre has been difficult to measure on a national level due to the size of the population and the volume of work produced across the country. Various studies report useful regional data to help provide a composite picture of women's representation in the professional theatre.

One of the most recent studies on equity in American theatre was conducted by the League of Professional Theatre Women (LPTW), which released an analysis of women employed Off-Broadway in 2014 as part of an initiative called Women Count. The LPTW study analyzed women's employment in thirteen professional roles, drawing on data collected over four seasons, from 2010/11 to 2013/14. Researchers (and theatre professionals) Judith Binus and Martha Wade Steketee looked at 355 Off-Broadway productions in 22 theatre companies, analyzing data from a variety of publicly available sources including playbills, theatre websites, season announcements, online databases, and personal communication with theatre staff (Steketee and Binus 3, A-1).

The data collected by LPTW reflect a similar picture of gender divisions as those noted in Canada, Australia, and the UK. While LPTW did not look at the position of artistic director, in the other two roles in the artistic triumvirate, women occupied between 24% and 39% of positions, numbers that varied by season. In the 2013/14 season, women represented 28% of playwrights and 38% of directors. The percentage of playwrights reflects a drop from the previous season, where women wrote 36% of plays. The director numbers, on the other hand, show a dramatic increase since the 2010-11 season, where women directed only 26% of plays (Steketee and Binus 4). Chart 1.4 shows the fluctuation in playwright over four seasons and Chart 1.5 shows the fluctuation of director positions over four seasons.

**Chart 1.4: Men and Women Playwrights Off-Broadway, 2010/11 to 2013/14 (LPTW)**



**Chart 1.5: Men and Women Directors Off-Broadway, 2010/11 to 2013/14 (LPTW)**

The data for the other eleven positions studied shows a gendered division of labour, where women dominated traditionally feminized positions such as costume designers, production managers, and stage managers, but were significantly underrepresented in traditionally masculinized positions such as lighting, sound, and projection designers, and as composers, lyricists, and music directors. Table 1.13 compares the data for men and women occupying these positions.

**Table 1.13: Gender Division of Roles in Off-Broadway Theatre, 2010/11 to 2013/14 (LPTW)**

	2010/2011		2011/2012		2012/2013		2013/2014	
	M %	W %	M %	W %	M %	W %	M %	W %
<b>Set Designers</b>	73	27	67	33	64	36	70	30
<b>Lighting Designers</b>	82	18	92	8	86	14	84	16
<b>Costume Designers</b>	42	58	30	70	20	80	30	70
<b>Sound Designers</b>	79	21	78	22	82	18	86	14
<b>Projection Designers</b>	70	30	77	23	83	17	86	14
<b>Choreographers</b>	25	75	64	36	60	40	59	41
<b>Composers</b>	93	7	93	7	89	11	86	14
<b>Lyricists</b>	50	50	67	33	62	38	91	9
<b>Conductors/Music Directors</b>	67	33	89	11	90	10	93	7
<b>Production SMs</b>	34	66	30	70	30	70	31	69
<b>SMs/ASMs</b>	21	79	28	72	29	71	27	73

Whereas research on gender equity in theatre often focuses on the artistic triumvirate, what distinguishes the LPTW's study is its examination of data across multiple positions, resulting in a more comprehensive picture of women's representation Off-Broadway. In the Canadian context, while statistics have been collected by individual organizations such as the Associated Designers of Canada, Rebecca Burton's 2006 study is the most

recent to look at design, technical, and management roles *alongside* artistic roles, and her findings reflected a similar gendered division of labour. Burton's data, collected between the 2000/01 and 2004/05 theatre seasons, shows women underemployed as set designers (34%), lighting designers (31%), and sound designers (15%), but dominating as costume designers (70%) and stage managers (77%) ("Adding it Up" 26, 29). This important research points to the need to look beyond the roles of artistic director, director, playwright, and actor when developing strategies to redress inequities in theatre. Part II of this report looks at some examples of action plans targeted outside of these areas.

The League of Professional Theatre Women's study follows one of the most recent comprehensive studies on gender equity in American theatre, Emily Glassberg Sands' 2009 study, "Opening the Curtain on Playwright Gender." For her undergraduate economics thesis at Princeton University, Sands sought to investigate the inequities in the 2008/09 New York theatre season, where only 12.6% of plays on Broadway were written by women, and 17.8% of plays in non-profit subscription houses with more than 99 seats were written by women (Sands 1). Sands created an American sample and an international/full sample as a point of comparison by drawing data from the Dramatists Guild of America and Doollee.com, an online play database of English-language playwrights and their plays containing records for over 20,000 playwrights and 80,000 scripts at the time (29). She then divided her study into three parts to examine the reasons for the gender disparity in American theatre.

The first part looked at playwrights themselves and investigated artistic directors' claims that women's scripts are in short supply. Her research confirmed this claim, finding that of the 5,691 playwrights belonging to the Dramatists Guild of America who had been granted membership between 1942, when the Guild was founded, and 2008, when Sands received the dataset, 39% were women and 61% were men (Sands 37-38). Sands also found that overall, men and women's work is produced at the same rate; however, because men's scripts outnumber women's, men's plays dominate American stages: of the 10,471 produced plays in Sands' American sample, 72% of produced plays were written by men and 28% were written by women (50). While women in Sands' American sample were "only slightly less likely to have their scripts reach production" (52), they were distinguished in three notable ways:

1. Scripts written by women were more than twice as likely to have a majority of parts for women (49). This finding is similar to what Elizabeth Freestone found in the context of theatre in England, affirming the positive correlation between women playwrights and parts for women actors. However, scripts with the majority parts for women were less likely to be produced in Sands' full sample (52), suggesting a bias on the part of theatre programmers.
2. Scripts written by women were more likely to have fewer parts, which Sands found to increase the likelihood of production in her full sample (52). This is a factor that could potentially work in women's favour, yet is neutralized by other factors such as those discussed in (1) and (3).
3. Women playwrights are less likely to be represented by literary agents, which was found to hinder the chances of their scripts reaching production (52).



In the second part of her study, Sands sent identical scripts to literary managers and artistic directors across the country, only she labeled half as woman-authored (“Mary Walker”) and the other half as man-authored (“Michael Walker”). As previously noted, she found that “Mary’s” scripts received significantly worse ratings in terms of quality, economic prospects and audience response than “Michael’s” from both men and women artistic directors, showing that gender-based bias influences both men and women (Cohen).

In the final part of her study, Sands compared the profits of plays by men and women playwrights on Broadway, and found that women’s plays were more profitable, selling 16% more tickets per week and being 18% more profitable in general. This is an especially significant finding, as a common excuse for the poor production rates of women’s plays is that they present a greater box-office risk, when in reality they generate more revenue.

Sands’ research provides strong evidence “that female playwrights face more barriers in achieving production than do their male counterparts” (Sands 104) and reveals the complexity of gender equity in theatre. Its findings on women artistic directors point to the need for both men and women in positions of artistic power to re-examine their practices, policies, and biases. It also challenges age-old beliefs that women’s plays are not profitable, reinforcing the fact that theatre audiences are constituted by more women than men, and women want to see more stories by and about women on stage.

### Conclusion: Inequity as an International Phenomenon

The research discussed in this section reveals gender inequity in the theatre to be an international phenomenon. While women’s experiences are shaped by their particular locations in the world, they share comparable levels of (un)employment in the theatre and face similar barriers as they attempt to enter the industry and build successful and sustainable careers. Table 1.14 compares data collected in Canada with Australia, England, and the US.

**Table 1.14: Comparison of Gender Equity Studies in Australia, England, the US, and Canada<sup>22</sup>**

Industry Position (Women)	Australia (2012)	England (2011/12)	United States (2011/12)	Canada (2010/11)
Artistic Directors	12.5%	34%	---	28%
Directors	25%	24%	24%	32%
Playwrights	21%	35%	31%	29%

In addition to their underrepresentation in positions of power in the theatre, women often experience a drop-off after graduating from theatre school, encounter difficulties

<sup>22</sup> In order to even the field of comparison as much as possible, data was selected for either 2010/11 or 2011/12. The Australian data comes from the Australian Arts Council report cited above (O’Conner), the English data comes from Freestone’s study for *The Guardian*, the American data comes from Steketee and Binus’s study for the LPTW, and the Canadian data comes from PACT’s Gender Equity Straw Poll for 2010/11.

advancing beyond lower-budget and smaller theatres, and face a gendered division of labour which allows them to predominate in areas like stage and production management and costume design, but severely restricts their access to areas like lighting and sound design and music composition. Though funding structures and access to resources supporting women's employment such as healthcare and childcare may vary in different regions, the international trends identified here affirm the pervasiveness of identity-based discrimination.

While Canada is often considered a socially progressive country, international comparisons like those presented here suggest that it has a long way to go in areas like employment equity. The underrepresentation of women and minoritized groups in theatres in Canada and around the world also signifies an aesthetic and epistemological loss: when the stories and ideas of these groups remain untold, unperformed, and unknown, societies and cultures lose their richness, diversity, and strength. An understanding of the shared conditions between Canada and other countries, however, also opens up opportunities for advocacy and change. Theatre workers in Canada might mobilize with those in other parts of the world to strategize and address these issues, as Equity in Theatre is doing through its international alliances and an international conference. Moreover, Canadians might examine successful equity initiatives undertaken elsewhere and adapt them to their own context—the research in Part II begins this work.

## Part II: Best Practices for Achieving Equity in Theatre

### Introduction

As outlined in Part I, given the persistent and deep-seated inequities embedded in the (Canadian) theatre industry, it is clear that informed, coordinated, and varied responses are required if change is to occur. Part II of the Equity in Theatre report examines equity initiatives undertaken by theatre companies and arts organizations in Canada and abroad, in countries including the United Kingdom, the United States, and Sweden. These initiatives comprise a diverse range of activities and roles that have been adopted on different scales, from small grassroots advocacy groups to large public institutions mandated by nation-wide legislation. Through an analysis of their successes and failures, these endeavours are utilized here to create a set of best practices in order to support the Equity in Theatre project in moving forward. Given the heterogeneity of theatre in Canada, different practices will apply to different contexts; moreover, multiple practices might be implemented for a single organization in order to achieve gender parity. Women's underrepresentation in Canadian theatre is a systemic problem, and redressing it requires more than one solution.

Part II of the report is organized into four key areas: education, mentorship and networking, administration, and advocacy and awareness. These areas represent wide-ranging opportunities for redressing inequities, from changing how we train and educate future theatre practitioners and audiences, to improving the support systems for women early on (and throughout) their careers, from transforming the structures and operations of theatre companies in order to provide more opportunities for women, to raising awareness about equity issues and women's work among arts administrators, funders, and the general public. In short, these areas cover the cycle of women's careers in the theatre and incorporate multiple stakeholders including practitioners, administrators, advocates, and audiences. These case studies are not meant to be comprehensive, but rather to provide representative examples of the most common, promising, and/or innovative actions undertaken to achieve gender parity. Each of the four sections begins with an identification of the problems addressed by the area in reference to Part I, followed by sample solutions from which best practices can be drawn.

### Methodology

The interest in equity in the arts driven by the feminist movement over the last thirty-five years has led organizations in several countries to collect data and produce studies on gender equity in the theatre, the most recent of which are discussed in Part I of this report. These equity studies yielded varying results: in some cases, they prompted organizations to implement action plans or strategies, which had varying degrees of success; in other cases, the studies simply sparked public discussion leading to the identification of recommendations, many of which have yet to be executed or tested. Part II of this report brings together research on specific initiatives undertaken to achieve gender parity and ideas generated from public discussion and debate surrounding equity issues. The information was gathered through primary and secondary research materials, including organization websites, transcripts and summaries of equity discussions, and newspaper and scholarly articles. Theatre artists and administrators were contacted to

provide supplemental information in some cases. When possible, the outcomes of the initiatives identified here are analyzed in order to assess their successes and failures, so that a set of best practices is put forth that will aid the present EIT initiative in the pursuit of its goals.

### Education

Equity in theatre begins with education—in theatre schools, where the future generation of theatre professionals is trained, and in elementary schools, high schools, and post-secondary institutions, where students study drama and theatre to enrich their understanding of the world, develop their creativity and critical thinking skills, and nurture an appreciation of the arts. While class curricula and the theatrical canon taught in schools have been challenged for decades, the work of dead white men continues to dominate reading lists. This exposes students to a narrow set of worldviews and feeds into attitudes and theatre-going habits that they carry with them after graduation.

Also of significance is the disparity between the gender make-up of educational institutions and the professional theatre world: while women constitute over half of all university and theatre school students, when they enter the professional theatre community after graduation their numbers decrease significantly. For example, 167 students are enrolled at the National Theatre School of Canada for the 2014/15 academic year, which breaks down to 97 women and 70 men, or 58% and 42% respectively (O'Connor).<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile, as discussed in Part I, women make up fewer than 30% of artistic directors, playwrights, and directors in Canada (PACT, “Gender Equity”). Given this discrepancy, theatres and other organizations are beginning to explore equity strategies targeting future generations of artists and audiences.

Education helps to address the problem of bias and identity-based discrimination identified in the research in Part I by training future audiences and practitioners to understand gender as a construct and by raising awareness about plays by women. Education also helps to redress the underrepresentation of women theatre artists, administrators, designers, and technicians, and as a result of this, narrows the income gap between women and men. The following examples suggest possible solutions to some of the problems plaguing the theatre industry still.

### Curriculum Changes

Launched in 2012 by a coalition of theatre professionals, the History Matters/Back to the Future (HM/BF) initiative “promotes the study and production of women’s plays of the past in high schools, colleges, universities and theatres throughout the country and encourages responses to those plays from contemporary women playwrights” (History Matters, “Home”). It does this primarily through its “One Play at a Time” program, which asks educators to commit to teaching one historic play (pre-1960) by a woman playwright per semester. According to Joan Thorne, one of the co-founders of the initiative, the 1960 cut-off date was chosen because women’s plays written before this time are particularly underrepresented on professional stages (Thorne).

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<sup>23</sup> EIT’s request for information from the National Theatre School also inquired about statistics on ethnicity, but the institution does not collect them.

Here's how the initiative works:

- Educators commit to the program by filling out an online form and identifying which play(s) they will teach. Educators have the option of selecting a play from HM/BF's online library, which contains extensive information about each play and playwright.
- HM/BF provides educators with a sample, generic 50-minute lesson plan as well as "lesson plan enrichment ideas."
- Participating instructors and institutions are listed on the HM/BF website along with the plays they taught.

This initiative aims to develop greater awareness of women playwrights and their work by changing curricula and providing the resources to do so for instructors. By focusing on historic plays, HM/BF challenges the common assumption that women didn't write plays in the past. The program's growth is a testament to its success: when "One Play at a Time" began in 2013, there were four participating institutions; in the Fall 2014 term, the number had grown to twenty-one (HM/BF).

In 2014/15, History Matters/Back to the Future introduced an annual playwriting competition for students enrolled in "One Play at a Time" courses. The Judith Barlow Prize invites participants to write a one-act play "inspired by the work of an historic woman playwright" (History Matters, "Judith Barlow Prize"). The winner receives \$2,500 and his/her instructor is awarded \$500; the runner-up receives \$1,000. This prize will be awarded for the first time in 2015, so it is too early to measure its impact, but this kind of initiative encourages a deeper engagement with women's work, fosters new work that draws on women's history, and promotes playwriting amongst young people.

History Matters/Back to the Future receives its primary funding from the Little Family Foundation in the US, though its organizers are currently in search of additional funding through grants and private donations (Thorne). It is run mostly by volunteers with the exception of a part-time producer, who helps with the overall organization as well as running staged readings of women's plays. The Association of Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) and its Women and Theatre Program (WTP) have played essential roles in generating awareness about HM/BF. While there are other efforts to raise awareness about women playwrights' work amongst post-secondary students and instructors, from anthologies to online databases of women's plays (see "Advocacy and Awareness," below), what sets History Matters/Back to the Future apart is the sense of accountability and community it fosters by requiring instructors to pledge their commitment to teach women's plays and sharing this listing online.

This kind of initiative could be adopted in Canada, perhaps by administering it through the Canadian Association for Theatre Research and making use of the association's membership base, website and listserv for publicity. Indeed, while Canadian educators and students are welcome to participate in History Matters/Back to the Future, there are

no Canadian plays included in its virtual library. Though it would require volunteer work (unless funding was secured), a list of Canadian plays by women would be helpful in redressing curriculum and production imbalances if made available to educators as well as practitioners.

### Actor Training

Sweden consistently ranks as one of the world's most gender-equitable countries, so it is no surprise that its arts sector is actively exploring groundbreaking initiatives aimed at redressing gender imbalances, beginning with improvements to education and training. From 2007 to 2009, four of Sweden's higher education programs in theatre partnered on a project called Staging Gender. Focusing on gender perspectives in actor training, the project's focus was twofold:

Students will be educated toward making active and conscious creative choices, in regard to gender perspectives. Students will develop their ability to describe these choices verbally, as well as reflect critically upon their own and others' artistic choices.

Instructors shall develop their ability to make active and conscious teaching choices. These choices shall serve to establish an educational context of equal opportunity and full integrity for male and female students alike. Instructors will also develop their ability to describe these choices verbally, as well as reflect critically upon their own and others' teaching choices, from a perspective of gender and gender equality. (Edemo and Hagström-Ståhl 4-5)

In short, Staging Gender sought to develop a greater awareness of how gender conventions operate on stage and in the classroom. It did this through a collaborative leadership model that involved the heads of each institution, faculty members, and student representatives, as well as an external researcher and journalist who tracked the project and evaluated pedagogical strategies. Staging Gender's cross-curricular initiatives covered topics from the portrayal of gender in musicals to training arts juries to be more equitable; activities were undertaken at the institutional level as well as in collaboration between two or more participating institutions.

While the full report is only available in Swedish, the project's researcher, Anna Lund, has published one of her case studies on actor training in English. Lund's article "Staging Gender: The Articulation of Tacit Gender Dimensions in Drama Classes in a Swedish Context," describes an acting class that aimed to help students develop a critical awareness of how gender is constructed and performed, both in the theatre and outside of it. Lund stresses the importance of this kind of awareness, as it can lead "to creating new meanings and alternative readings, for example, of what an actor could do on stage" (909). Students worked toward the above goal through acting exercises, reflective writing, and class discussion. In one activity, students were forced to repeat the simple act of entering a room until they could eliminate all gestures related to their gender. Lund tells the story of a woman student who changed her posture in her daily life as a result of this exercise, becoming unrecognizable to her peers as she walked down the hall with increased confidence (915). In scene studies that were blind cast, actors developed an

embodied understanding of how masculinity and femininity are constructed, and gained insight into their own unconscious assumptions and habits. A woman playing the role of an aggressive man concluded that her difficulty creating the character was the result of deeply embedded gendered behaviours—“My body, which carries the memories of female experiences, responds without my permission” (915-16).

Lund labels the outcome of this work as the “*I see effect*”: “A way of seeing develops that allows students and teachers to see how cultural and material conditions are gendered, and this enables them to start reading dramatic interpretations in a new, gender-theoretical way” (915). This is consistent with the rest of the study, which received positive feedback from students. Participants reported that, “they didn’t see any conflict between being an actor and ensuring equal opportunities” (Polacek 34). Further, the project “helped them to become better ‘story tellers’, increased their critical thinking and qualitative judgment of programmes and quantitative and qualitative injustices” (34). Culminating in June 2009 with the publication of the report as well as seminar and conference presentations, Staging Gender lives on in the four participating institutions, which continue to share their work with the public and integrate project objectives into their operations (35).

Staging Gender’s size and scope distinguish it as one of the most ambitious and comprehensive recent projects undertaken to redress gender inequity in theatre through education. Though the language barrier has made it difficult to fully assess the project’s success beyond the materials available in English, the evidence reported by both Lund and Polacek points to the importance and impact of re-examining actor training through a gendered perspective. Involving several institutions and stakeholders, Staging Gender required a high level of collaboration and coordination. While initiating a similar program in Canada might be more of a long-term goal, dependent on funding, personnel, and institutional commitment, some of Staging Gender’s practical strategies can be employed easily in the classroom in the short term. This begins with instructors developing “active and conscious teaching choices,” as noted above, and engaging more explicitly with gender and other facets of identity in their work with students.

There are existing resources for this in English, particularly within the field of feminist performance theory. Elin Diamond’s influential 1988 essay “Brechtian Theory/Feminist Theory: Towards a Gestic Feminist Criticism” laid the groundwork for using performance to expose the workings of gender; her concept of gestic feminist criticism aims to “‘alienate’ or foreground those moments in a playtext when social attitudes about gender and sexuality conceal or disrupt patriarchal ideology” (54). Diamond’s theories are illustrated in the work of prominent playwrights such as Caryl Churchill, and by performers such as Quebec’s Pol Pelletier, who, according to scholar Louise Forsyth, “is one of the very few women anywhere to have developed, expressed, and applied an original and coherent theoretical approach to acting and theatre performance” (117). However, while Pelletier, who is nearly seventy years of age, still teaches her approach to performance in small workshops around Montreal, she has never recorded her acting theory, a fact that points to an important area in need of further archiving and study. In order to support educators, more research is needed in the area of theatre practice: more

resources are needed that translate feminist theory into practice and provide practical ways to explore gender in a theatre classroom.

### **Mentorship, Networking, and Extended Training**

Like education, mentorship opportunities can help to provide women with the tools to advance in their careers in theatre, or, as a contributor to a HowlRound debate puts it, “to ‘lean in’ to market ourselves and build our brands” (Tasker). Similarly, networking opportunities support education and advancement while fostering connections between women artists. These tools address several of the problems identified in Part I of the report, including the gap between aspiration and legitimation, which is reflected in the steep decline of women moving from theatre school to the industry; the under-representation of women in artistic and design roles and its negative effect on their income; the “sticky floor” phenomenon, which sees women unable to progress beyond lower-paying and lower-profile jobs at smaller and lower-budget theatres; and the lack of women in leadership positions. The following are different examples of mentorship and networking initiatives administered by theatre companies and arts organizations in order to promote gender equity. While a comprehensive list is beyond the scope of this report, these case studies represent a range of opportunities available to support women in theatre.

#### **Extended Training Opportunities**

##### ***Women’s Project Theater: The Lab***

Women’s Project Theater (WPT) is the oldest theatre company in the US dedicated to developing and promoting women’s work. Its Lab is a two-year residency for women playwrights, directors and producers that aims to “cultivate the work of women theater artists and to give them the tools they need to succeed in the business” (“WP Lab”). Participants access “a vital professional network, entrepreneurial and leadership training, rehearsal space, and most significantly, tangible opportunities for the development and production of bold new work for the stage” (“WP Lab”). Indeed, what distinguishes the program from other developmental opportunities for women is its focus on networking and collaboration between artists, which culminates in a residency production created by the cohort.

In addition to providing development and staging opportunities, the Women’s Project Theater has published Lab playwrights’ work. *Out of Time and Place* is a two-volume anthology of plays (eleven of which were created in the Lab) that has been extremely well received, especially in the academic community (“WP Lab”). Moreover, the relationships formed amongst Lab artists endure after their residencies, as many continue to work together. The Women’s Project also continues to support its alumnae by submitting their work to theatres across the country and hiring Lab artists for its own mainstage productions. The website reports that “over 75% of plays produced at WP during the past five years were written and/or directed by WP’s Lab artists and alumnae” (“WP Lab”).

By creating opportunities for women artists to collaborate with one another and have their work published and produced—at the Women’s Project Theater and elsewhere—the



WPT works to bridge the gap between aspiration and legitimation. Moreover, its ability to disseminate women's work to audiences beyond its own helps to circumvent the challenge faced by many women's initiatives of effecting change in the mainstream from their positions in the margins. The WTP's focus on nurturing women's work from inception to production is a model that might be adopted by other development programs for women.

### *Women's Theatre Companies and Festivals*

In the Canadian context, several organizations of various sizes are currently providing development and production opportunities targeted to women artists. The following is a sampling of these organizations meant to give a sense of the range of initiatives created to support women's work.

- Toronto's **Nightwood Theatre** is the longest running women's theatre in Canada. It has offered several different programs since its founding in 1979 to nurture women theatre artists. Two of its most prolific programs are Write From the Hip, which gives emerging playwrights the opportunity to develop scripts over a year through mentorship, dramaturgy, workshops, and readings (Nightwood, "Write From the Hip"), and the Groundswell Festival, which presents full productions of plays by women as well as masterclasses, panels, and readings ("The New Groundswell").
- **Sarasvati Productions** began operating in Winnipeg in 2000. While it does not self-identify as an exclusive women's theatre company, its focus on promoting social change and supporting emerging artists means that it prioritizes equity and provides opportunities for women to develop their skills and have their work staged (Sarasvati, "Who We Are"). As noted earlier, Sarasvati has been recognized for its work in this area with an Applause Award. Initiated in 2003, Sarasvati's Femfest produces the work of local women playwrights and provides them with mentorship and training; it also presents touring work from elsewhere in Canada and beyond its borders (Sarasvati, "About FemFest").
- **The Women's Work Festival** in St. John's, Newfoundland is an international play development festival that has been running for nearly a decade, founded and still supported by three theatre companies: White Rooster Theatre, RCA Theatre, and She Said Yes! Theatre. It presents readings, music performances, workshops, and discussion panels (Women's Work).
- **Insatiable Sisters** is a one-night-only, curated "evening of new performance works that celebrate the unrelenting strength and beauty of queer womyn and trans\* folks [sic]" presented by Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, a Toronto-based company mandated to produce work for the queer community (Buddies). It features ten-minute, multidisciplinary pieces presented by artists of diverse identities, and emphasizes accessibility for both participants and audiences (Buddies).

- The **SkirtsAfire HerArts Festival** in Edmonton, Alberta showcases women’s work through ten-minute readings in its Peep Show. The festival also stages one full production per year, and it is Artistic Director Annette Loisele’s ultimate goal to feature a Peep Show play in full production at the festival (Loisele). Here, like the situation elsewhere in Canada, further resources and publicity will help to attract more submissions and support the transition between staged readings and workshops to full productions.

Theatre companies and festivals dedicated to developing and producing women’s work are vital in creating opportunities otherwise not available in the Canadian theatre landscape. However, as discussed earlier, their presence is sometimes perceived as a cure-all to broader inequalities in the theatre community and used as an excuse to continue ignoring glaring structural inequities—because women are given a platform in these instances, it is argued that they don’t need one elsewhere. In reality, these attitudes serve to further silo women’s work and make it difficult for marginalized women to affect change in the mainstream. As tools for redressing inequities in the theatre sector, dedicated companies and festivals should be used in conjunction with other initiatives. Increasing funding for women’s theatre companies and festivals like those listed above will also help them to move from developing women’s work to producing it—this is an ongoing issue that requires further examination and advocacy.

#### *Leadership Education for Women in Performing Arts: Sweden and Norway*

To tackle the problem of the lack of women in leadership positions, in 2005 and 2006, the Swedish Actors’ Union joined the employers’ organization Swedish Performing Arts to host a special management development and mentorship program to train women to become artistic directors. In Sweden at the time, only 15% of the country’s artistic directors, the top position in theatre, were women. The program was supported by government grants as well as the presenting organizations themselves, and supplemented by participant fees of 5,000 SEK each (just over \$750 CAD). This program’s success is demonstrated in the recent drastic increase of women artistic directors in Sweden, where in 2010, out of 32 theatres, dance companies, and operas in the country, 14 had women and 18 men (44% and 56%) as ADs. Indeed, nine of the twelve women who participated in the program have jobs as artistic directors today (Polacek 27).

Suffering from comparable inequities, and inspired by the Swedish experiment, Norway instituted a similar program in 2008 and 2009, but broadened its reach to the music, dance, and film and TV sectors. “Art Women” was supported by the Ministry of Culture with additional financing coming from participant registration fees, and it aimed to develop confidence and leadership skills as well as provide networking opportunities. It included ten workshops on various topics from personal leadership, to organizational theory, and to industry-specific management issues. Art Women was somewhat flexible and adjusted according to participant needs and feedback, and concluded with a mentorship program to continue the training it initiated.

The program’s evaluation indicated an initial success. Participants expressed high satisfaction with the program and reported professional development, increased confidence in their own management, and an expanded professional network. After the

inaugural program officially ended in 2009, participating organizations made an official request to the Ministry of Culture to continue funding the program (Polacek 29). Information about the future of “Art Women” in Norway has so far proved difficult to find in English.

What both these Swedish and Norwegian case studies highlight is the positive impact of leadership and administration training on women in theatre. In the Canadian context, where women represent 28% of the country’s artistic directors (PACT, “Gender Equity”), similar kinds of training opportunities hold the potential to redress women’s underrepresentation in this category. Training might take place in the form of professional development sessions offered through arts organizations such as PACT or CAEA; postsecondary institutions that offer arts administration programs like the University of Toronto Scarborough might be approached to provide additional support. As with the Swedish example, multiple sources of funding could be explored, including government grants, support from participating organizations (such as in-kind donations of space and volunteer hours), and participant fees.

### **Negotiation Training: Denmark**

In a 2009 report on gender equality and working conditions for women actors, singers, dancers, and musical performers, the Danish Actors Association identified several “gender specific problems caused by unequal opportunities regarding number of roles, parental leave, age, and the repercussions of unemployment” (Polacek 56). The report’s suggestion that “women are considered to be less good negotiators in terms of employment conditions and salaries” led the association to offer courses (gender mixed, as well as separate courses) for women and men actors, dancers and singers to improve their negotiation skills (55).

The outcomes of these courses have not been reported in English, but this case demonstrates a unique strategy to redress pay equity issues in theatre, which, as discussed in Part I of this report, are also significant in Canada. Though unionized groups in Canada such as actors have set rates for their pay, negotiation training could benefit non-unionized groups such as playwrights. As with the leadership preparation recommended in the Networking and Mentorship section below, training in this area could be offered by professional associations or in collaboration with educational institutions. While addressing one aspect of the problem, negotiation skills should not be the sole strategy for improving employment conditions and salaries: this puts the burden of responsibility on individual women and does not address the larger structural barriers preventing gender parity.

### **Live Events**

Live networking events provide an opportunity for women theatre workers to connect face-to-face, provide and receive formal or informal mentorship, and learn about and pursue new opportunities. In this way they address some of the key problems identified in Part I of the report related to breaking into the industry, advancing within it, and receiving fair compensation. The following examples illustrate the spectrum of possibilities in this area:

- Amongst the events it runs throughout the year, the League of Professional Theatre Women hosts quarterly “Networking Mondays.” These informal gatherings are open to all members and feature guest panels on such topics as directors and designers and career transitions. Similarly, the League’s leadership luncheons create opportunities for members to meet other professionals from across the field.
- “Yeah, I Said Feminist”: A Theater Salon, based in San Francisco, also provides opportunities for artists to meet regularly to discuss gender parity, connect, build community, and brainstorm ideas for advocacy.
- The LA FPI, which stands for the Los Angeles Female Playwrights Initiative, runs most of its operations through its website (see below), but also assembles its members in person at least four times per year.
- A HowlRound discussion about gender parity also generated some ideas for events, including a “speed dating” session wherein women artists meet one another and initiate potential collaborations (Tasker).

These kinds of events require less funding and organization than some of the training opportunities discussed above. They could be hosted by theatre companies of various sizes, either individually or in collaboration with one another, in theatre spaces or at local restaurants or bars. They might also be organized by arts administrators, theatre students and educators, and passionate audience members. In addition to providing a space for women theatre practitioners to gain insight and advice from one another, they also provide a starting point for mobilization and advocacy, wherein women can identify barriers in the industry and develop strategies to overcome them.

### Networking Online

Like the live networking events discussed above, the following web activities allow women to learn from one another, find collaborators, and build audiences as they work towards the greater goal of increasing their representation in the theatre industry. The following are some representative examples of how the web can be used to mobilize and connect women.

The **LA FPI** connects women playwrights and artists and promotes local performances of women’s work, among other things. It uses its website as a hub for these activities in the following ways:

- Women theatre artists can submit their information to be posted on the site and find lists of other artists and potential projects of interest.
- Theatre-goers can find information about where to see women’s work (LAFPI, “Resources”).
- Updated information about artistic opportunities is sent out in bimonthly “e-blasts” (“Works by Women”).
- The site also features guest bloggers writing about gender equity issues (“Works by Women”).

- Playwright Alyson Mead produces a series of podcasts about women playwrights for the site called “What She Said” (Shamas).
- The LA FPI’s Twitter account, run by “writer-director-storyteller” Cindy Marie Jenkins, features women writers, performers, and directors as guest tweeters (Shamas).
- Jenkins and LA FPI co-founder Laura Shamas also initiated the hashtag #ShareAScene as a way for playwrights to connect through Twitter and share their work (Shamas).

What is remarkable about the LA FPI is its ability to provide individual women with a public platform—or multiple public platforms—where they may not have had one before. As an established blog with a following of readers, the LA FPI offers its guest bloggers an opportunity to reach a wide audience when they post on the site. Its use of Twitter operates similarly, allowing individual women to connect through its hashtag and find others who may want to produce and promote their work.

*The Interval* is a New York-based theatre website developed to advocate and create networking opportunities for women in theatre. It describes its goals as:

- i. Changing the conversation around women in theatre by asking smart ladies smart questions for a smart audience.
- ii. Promoting gender parity in theatre.
- iii. Creating a place to explore the diverse nature of creativity, storytelling, and careers in the theatre.
- iv. Bridging the gap between Broadway and Off-Broadway; plays and musicals; and on-stage and behind the scenes. (“About”)

*The Interval*, like the LA FPI, features resources for artists and audiences, articles about equity, statistics about gender parity in the theatre, and opportunities for advocacy. One of its distinguishing features is its interview section, which presents smart and substantial conversations with a diversity of established women artists. These interviews, focused on vital career-oriented issues such as artistic process, equity, and overcoming barriers, can serve a mentorship purpose for many readers who may be unable to directly seek advice and insight from other artists—particularly for those readers beginning their careers or living in remote areas. The Interval’s ability to use the Internet to foster these kinds of informal mentorship opportunities is summed-up by editors and founders Victoria Myers and Michelle Tse on the site:

We wanted to create a place where conversations about women in theatre can happen that aren’t held within the bounds of labels like “writer,” “actress,” “Broadway,” or “Off-Broadway.” A place that included a diverse assortment of women’s voices and that made them accessible to everyone. Because you shouldn’t have to know who they are to *know who they are*, you know what we mean?

The UK organization *17 Percent* was founded in 2009 to support and promote UK-based women playwrights. The figure in its title represents the percentage of UK women playwrights whose work is produced, as well as the wage gap between men and women. The *17 Percent* website features the following:

- video interviews with women artists (linked through its YouTube channel);
- information about playwrights whose work the organization has produced at its She Writes festival;
- extensive information about UK women playwrights from the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries;
- an email subscription newsletter with “news, reviews, interviews and writing opportunities” (“About”).

Like *The Interval*, *17 Percent* serves an informal mentorship purpose by featuring conversations with artists that shed light on the industry and how to navigate the challenges it places in front of women. The site also features a page called “Introducing,” which asks, “Looking for a playwright to write your play?” This page features mini-profiles of playwrights whose work has been produced in *17 Percent*’s She Writes festival, links to their work, and contact information. Through this online networking tool, *17 Percent* aims to redress the severe underrepresentation of women playwrights in British theatre by promoting their work and countering the popular but inaccurate argument that there is a shortage of women playwrights.

While it is not always easy to track the success of web-based initiatives, these three sites offer a space where women can connect with and learn from one another and find resources that will hopefully help them get their work produced. The cost and time of running a website can vary, but compared to live events, websites such as these can make it easier to reach a wide audience and connect women across borders. Like the live events discussed above, online networking is a strategy that could and should be adopted in the Canadian context. Given that blogs administered by multiple contributors are significantly more likely to remain active than single-authored blogs (Chiu), it would be helpful to form coalitions between women and/or organizations to manage sites like those discussed above; this would also ensure that a diversity of voices are represented. The creation of such sites might also be integrated into university curricula, as instructors increasingly experiment with blogging in their classes for students to post theatre criticism.<sup>24</sup>

### Administration

Theatre administration plays a key role in working towards gender parity. Women’s marginal position in the industry is perpetuated by theatre companies’ hiring and promotion decisions, programming choices, and policies and practices regarding equity and diversity. Intervening at the level of theatre administration addresses key problems

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<sup>24</sup> See, for example, Brock University’s #DARTcritics (<http://dartcritics.com>), where undergraduate students in a third-year theatre criticism class regularly publish theatre reviews and behind-the-scenes posts, and similarly St. Thomas University’s *STU Reviews* (<https://stureviews.wordpress.com>), which also features undergraduate writers.

identified in Part I of this report, namely the underrepresentation of women in artistic and design roles and its negative effect on their income; the gendered division of roles within the theatre; the “sticky floor” phenomenon; and the lack of women in leadership positions.

Several of the best practices included in this section emerged from Tonic Theatre’s Advance program, discussed in Part I of this report, which used research on equity in UK theatre to inform the development of action plans tailored to the specific needs of each of their eleven theatre partners. The actions described below are the results of this work. While it is too early to track substantial outcomes—this will occur in the next phase of the initiative—the program’s scope, focus, and methods distinguish it as groundbreaking and offer a model to other theatre communities.

### Playwriting

London’s Almeida Theatre participated in Tonic’s Advance program in order to investigate the following question: “Are living playwrights writing a disproportionately low number of parts for women? If so, what can we do to address this?” (Advance, “Almeida Theatre”). This question arose from Almeida’s difficulty in finding substantial roles for women actors. After a period of self-study and self-reflection guided by the Advance team, Almeida decided to commission equal numbers of plays by men and women and to start a conversation about women’s roles with the commissioned playwrights—while the company did not want to impose constraints on playwrights, they did want to raise awareness about unconscious bias with the hope of ultimately increasing the number of roles available to women.

The West Yorkshire Playhouse in Leeds (WY Playhouse) similarly investigated how to get more women-centered stories on its stages. It learned that,

[...] female-centred stories mean female characters driving narrative, and that narrative, and who’s driving it, is a powerful, political choice. That the kinds of stories you tell can change the gender balance of the teams telling them, let alone the audiences watching them. That, in effect, story can significantly influence the gender-balance of the workforce in our sector (Advance, “WY Playhouse”).

As a result of their work with Advance, the WY Playhouse undertook actions to change the way it commissions and develops works. They also began to focus on their recruitment processes for creative teams to improve the gender imbalances in their own figures and created a three-year action plan to foster new work by women writers and work featuring women protagonists.

Both companies’ participation in Advance point to the importance of self-reflection in developing strategies to increase the numbers of women playwrights as well as roles for women. A gender equity checklist developed in Sweden, detailed later on, provides a tool that can be adapted in the Canadian context for theatre companies to assess the work they are producing. While a program like Advance would tremendously benefit Canadian theatres, even without such a focused and extensive

resource, a theatre company might set aside some time for self-study and the development of strategies to address the equity issues that it identifies as most pressing. Moreover, starting conversations with commissioned playwrights about roles for women increases awareness about unconscious bias and encourages the creation of more substantial roles for women. This approach changes the landscape one theatre company at a time.

### Directing

For its participation in Tonic Theatre's Advance program, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) explored discrepancies between men and women's career progressions as assistant directors. It found several barriers for both genders preventing them from advancing in their careers as directors, but women faced additional challenges related to work-life balance, as well as their ability to network and "sell themselves." The RSC identified the following goals to support directors that work with the company:

- To develop and widen their skills in their art, artistic interests and ambitions.
- To take full advantage of the opportunities the RSC can offer them.
- To understand the industry with its current issues and opportunities to make relevant decisions on their careers.
- To equip them to be able to navigate the industry in an informed and pertinent way.
- To empower them as directors in their own right. (Advance, "RSC")

The RSC has also committed to establishing an assistant director creative alumni fellowship to support advancement within the profession (Advance, "RSC"). While these actions do not at first appear to be gender-focused, given that women often occupy assistant director positions and fail to advance to director positions (see Phase I), ideally the RSC's plan will have a positive impact on women's progression in this important role. Since women in Canadian theatre face similar challenges progressing from assistant director to director (Burton, "Adding It Up" ii, 107), self-studies and strategies along these lines might be undertaken here.

### Acting

Sheffield Theatre partnered with Advance to study its past seasons, identify disparities in hiring practices, and develop strategies to better represent the gender balance of its audience on stage. Their resulting actions focus on redressing inequities between men and women actors, in terms of range and scope of roles.

Sheffield's action plan, which will be implemented starting in 2015, is based on the following pledge: "To employ an equal number of male and female actors throughout each season and ensure that female roles also have prominence and run against current stereotypes" (Advance, "Sheffield"). They also committed to examining the gender balance of their creative teams and the writers with whom they collaborate and commission (Advance, "Sheffield").

Considering the discrepancy between the number of roles for men and women, as discussed in Part I, a pledge to employ equal numbers of men and women actors



will have a real effect on the types of plays selected. This kind of pledge will also likely increase the number of plays by women in general since, as discussed earlier, women tend to write more roles for women. This commitment is a powerful one, and something that could be undertaken easily by Canadian theatre companies after self-study.

Pentabus Theatre, a small company employing only three full-time staff and one part-time staff member, participated in the Advance program to investigate how to accommodate pregnant actors. In the end, they committed to creating a “pregnancy pack,” a document outlining responsibilities and considerations for both actors and their employers. The company writes, “We hope to cover things like: who an actor should tell and when; what processes a company should have in place; issues of health, insurance, contracts, safety etc., as well as looking at creative choices and questions of taste and performance” (Advance, “Pentabus”).

A resource of this nature would be helpful in Canada as well. While the Canadian Actors’ Equity Association’s Canadian Theatre Agreement has a policy on pregnancy, there is somewhat of a grey area in terms of protection and interpretation: “Under no circumstances shall an Artist's pregnancy be considered grounds for termination, unless it impinges on the artistic integrity of the production, to be determined by the Theatre” (CAEA, “Pregnancy”). This kind of interpretive language imbues the theatre with power to fire a pregnant actor under the reasoning that her pregnancy doesn’t “fit the part.” Providing women with information and resources would help them to navigate this situation. A Canadian pregnancy pack could be created by individual theatres or perhaps by an organization such as CAEA or its Diversity Committee; a project like this could be undertaken with relatively low costs and shared online through the CAEA’s website and other channels.

### Design

Tricycle Theatre’s work with Advance focused on addressing gender disparity in tech roles. Research conducted with Tonic indicated that while the company’s woman artistic director has ensured parity in major creative roles (in fact, women currently constitute the majority of Tricycle’s directors and writers), design roles are largely held by men (90% for set and lighting design).

Through Tonic, Tricycle is in conversation with the Gate Theatre, The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Clean Break, and the Association of Lighting Designers in order to redress this imbalance, starting with lighting design. Tricycle has articulated an intention to undertake the following actions:

- We would like to work with other theatres/companies to improve training, mentoring and access from [sic] underrepresented groups, and share resources.
- Annual day of introductory meetings between designers and our artistic team.
- Continue to monitor gender representation across our creative teams/programming.

- Host workshops, including Lighting Design workshop [sic] during our 2015 Tricycle Takeover which will include prominent women role models.
- Continue to be alert to – and introduce – talent from underrepresented groups. (Advance, “Tricycle”)

Tricycle’s track record of commitment to equity and diversity suggests that it will be successful at achieving its goals. It has already increased its percentage of women sound designers from 35% to 70% in the most recent season. Its action plan reflects the importance of partnering with training institutions in equity initiatives—something that Canada, in looking at similar parity issues in technical and design roles, might similarly emphasize. Furthermore, Tricycle’s focus on underrepresented groups more generally also underscores the importance of treating equity as an intersectional issue that affects more than just women. Indeed, the initiatives discussed here and elsewhere can and should be applied to other equity-seeking groups.

In Canada, costume designers belonging to the ADC have recently successfully negotiated for fairer pay. Whereas they (mostly women) were previously underpaid compared to their (mostly men) counterparts in other areas of design, in 2010 ADC committed to “move the minimums for costume designers to parity with set designers within three years (by 2013)” (Viczo 51). This was achieved through the cooperation of lighting and sound designers, who consented to a wage freeze and one reduction in order to support their colleagues. As costume designer April Viczo concludes, “Solidarity is something that cannot be underestimated when we discuss community and the implications of working conditions” (51). The ADC example points to the importance of professional organizations in advocating for change and providing a platform for different groups to mobilize; it also suggests that pay equity is everyone’s responsibility— not a burden that women must undertake on their own to achieve, for the support of men colleagues is paramount to the success of this undertaking.

### Setting Qualitative and Quantitative Targets

In Europe, EU directives on equality have led several countries to implement legislation promoting equality between men and women in the workplace. In Sweden, for example, legislation on equal opportunities requires companies with 25 employees or more to create a plan describing their efforts to implement equality in every aspect of their operations, from hiring practices and working conditions, to policies and practices surrounding harassment. All arts organizations in Sweden with 25 employees or over must follow this regulation. Similarly, in Finland, workplace equality plans must be created by employers of 30 people or more, meaning that larger theatres and arts organizations must have equality plans in place by law. In other European countries, like Belgium, equality plans are only required in the public sector (Polacek 21). This kind of legislation varies across the EU, with some countries simply encouraging employers to institute plans but not obliging them to do so (22).

Legislation of this nature does not exist in Canada, but perhaps it should. Lobbying efforts could be directed towards the government to create legislation requiring

employers to institute equality plans. Lobbying efforts could also be directed towards arts councils, who could require theatres to institute equality plans as a condition of funding. In any event, the idea of creating targets and pledging to meet them can be explored in other contexts. Indeed, as demonstrated by the Advance program, setting targets is a logical next step after self-study that might keep theatre companies accountable.

### Gender Equality Checklist

The Swedish Union for Performing Arts and Film has produced a gender equality checklist for organizations to self-study and uncover the complex issues and barriers that sustain inequity. Running ten pages in length, what sets the checklist apart is its thoroughness: it divides its assessments into three main categories (daily work, artistic process, and marketing and development), providing a comprehensive evaluation of gender equality. As noted earlier, this checklist could be adapted by theatre companies in Canada and used as a first step in identifying gender equity action plans. The checklist can be found at [the Swedish Union for Performing Arts and Film website](#).

### Advocacy and Awareness

This category encompasses perhaps the broadest range of activities undertaken by theatre companies, arts organizations, and audiences. Advocacy and awareness begin with collecting data in order to identify and emphasize gender inequities; Part I of this report features several studies initiated for these purposes. The following highlights further actions that can be taken to raise public awareness about inequities in theatre in order to lobby for change in any of the problem areas discussed in the first part of this report. These are meant to be representative case studies illustrating the range of existing activities rather than a comprehensive list of actions.

### Supporting Women's Work as an Audience

While it may seem simple, one of the top advocacy initiatives uncovered in this research is supporting theatres that produce women's work. In a neo-liberal, capitalist society, money talks: if the demand increases for women's theatre, the supply will increase as well. This is the premise upon which New York City's Works by Women organization was founded. Since 2010, this grassroots group has organized theatre outings to productions in which women represent at least 50% of the artistic team (Works by Women). Its website and regular emails include updated listings of qualifying plays, as well as other, smaller theatrical events, and offer discount codes to audience members. In 2013, Works by Women members attended 19 productions together in the New York City area.

Works by Women has also inspired sister organizations in San Francisco (2012) and London, England (2014). Works by Women San Francisco's structure offers multiple benefits: by organizing its outings through Meet Up, a widely accessed site, it reaches an audience of non-theatre-goers, and by negotiating group sales, it makes its objective—the demand for more work by women—clear to theatre companies (Tasker).

The grassroots organization 50/50 in 2020 runs similar theatre outings. Aiming “to acknowledge the contribution of women to theatre and to achieve employment parity for women theatre artists by the 100th anniversary of American suffrage in 2020” (League of

Professional Theatre Women, “50/50”), 50/50 was founded in 2010 by artists and academics in New York and is allied with The League of Professional Theatre Women. Its webpage encourages readers to organize their own 50/50 theatre nights and to write to local theatres telling them “that [they] will only buy tickets to productions or subscriptions to seasons involving equal representation of female and male playwrights, directors, designers, actors, and administrators” (League of Professional Theatre Women, “50/50”).

Like some of the initiatives discussed in the Mentorship and Networking section, these kinds of audience-mobilization groups can be organized easily through free blogs or social media sites like Facebook. They are low-cost and require a minimal time commitment, especially if an open-source platform like a wiki or listserv is used to collect and disseminate information about upcoming shows by women and organize theatre outings. EIT or a women’s caucus in one of the professional theatre organizations could initiate such a group.

### Women’s Play Databases

Another popular equity initiative involves creating databases of women’s plays as resources for artists, and also as a response to artistic directors who claim that they cannot find good plays by women (The Kilroys).

One of the most popular online databases of women’s work is called “The List.” Compiled in 2013 by The Kilroys, an independent group of LA-based playwrights and producers, “The List” is comprised of 46 plays written by women, selected by 127 theatre professionals. The selection process is explained on The Kilroys’ website:

In order to be eligible, a play must have been 1) unproduced or have had only a single professional production 2) by an author who identifies as female and 3) among the most excellent seen or read by the industry professional within the previous twelve months. The invited responders included Artistic Directors, Literary Managers, Professors, Producers, Directors, and Dramaturgs who had read or seen at least 40 new works in the last year. Each expert recommended three to five plays. To ensure unbiased results, responses were anonymous. All identifying information of recommenders was tracked separately from their recommendations in the survey software. The members of The Kilroys did not vote. (The Kilroys)

The Kilroys invited 250 professionals to participate and the 127 who responded generated over 300 suggestions. The final list of 46 plays was determined based on the most popular responses, and all nominated plays are identified on the Kilroys’ website. The whole project cost under \$200 to run (Meads et al.).

The Kilroys have been criticized for the exclusivity of their list, to which they have responded that the smaller size facilitates action. Next year they intend to diversify the list by approaching a wider variety of theatres for nominations rather than the regional

theatres that constituted the majority of the jury for the first iteration of the project (Meads et al.).

In the meantime, however, their exclusivity has inspired alternative lists, such as The Killjoys list, which capitalizes the “t” at the end of the last word to stand in for the trans women and men featured on it (Cole, “Who’s Missing”). Created by Joshua Bastian Cole, a self-identified trans man and theatre historian, The Killjoys list is,

a reaction to The Kilroys, but also to the system of perpetual sexism, cissexism, heterosexism, transphobia, racism, homophobia, classism, ableism, sizeism and ageism that are all at home on American professional stages. The Killjoys list sheds some light on one of many underrepresented voices for which there is a plethora of plays ready to be produced. (Cole, “Who’s Missing”)

Curated in a similar way to The Kilroys, based on Cole’s expertise and the opinions of other theatre professionals, The Killjoys currently features 46 plays (Cole, “The Killjoys”).

TeatroLuna in Chicago also runs a more inclusive list called “We Exist.” Using an open-sourced approach, the company solicits suggestions of women’s plays through its Facebook page, which links to a Google doc where anyone can enter information. That list currently contains 1,430 women and women-identified playwrights (Teatroluna).

Like some of the other web-based initiatives discussed earlier, a similar list of plays by women could be curated in Canada, with special attention to diversity in all its forms. Indeed, prioritizing diversity in the creation of this list would help to expand our theatre audiences, many of whom do not see representations of themselves on Canadian stages, as discussed in Part I. For The Kilroys, creating a list was a low-cost endeavor, and it could be the same in Canada, though some funding or an affiliation with an educational institution might help to create a more extensive and inclusive list.

### **Awards and Public Recognition**

Awards for women artists raise awareness surrounding the diversity of work produced by women for the theatre; awards for theatre companies producing women’s work create incentives to support gender parity.

The 50/50 Applause Awards were discussed in Part I of this report. Supported by the International Centre for Women Playwrights, these awards recognize theatre companies for featuring equitable numbers of men and women playwrights in their seasons.

Also discussed in Part I is the Playwrights Guild of Canada’s Bra d’Or Award, which is given annually to an individual in recognition of his/her “efforts in supporting and promoting the work of Canadian women playwrights” (PGC, “Tom Hendry”). Previous winners include Robert Metcalfe, Brian Quirt, Hope McIntyre, Katrina Dunn, Eric Coates and Andy McKim (“Tom Hendry”). The presence of both men and women on this list reinforces the importance of working across difference to achieve equity.

The UK Theatre Awards, a national program for regional theatres that cover England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, gives an award for the promotion of diversity at its annual ceremony (UK Theatre). This widens the scope in recognition of the fact that diversity encompasses multiple and intersecting identities.

The LA FPI recognizes equity-supporting companies, artists, and audience members by providing their logo (a mock police badge) to organizations and individuals supporting women's work. Companies can download the FPI logo directly from the company's website and display it in their publicity materials (FPI, "Logo"). While this initiative raises awareness about inequity in theatre, it is not regulated, meaning that companies can freely use the logo without complying with any specific standards. This initiative might be adopted by a theatre organization or arts council, which could award a similar badge to companies or individual artists committed to pre-determined equity regulations. Indeed, EIT has developed a similar "seal of approval" that will be implemented next year.

Founded in 1973, London's Sphinx Theatre Company develops and produces women's work through various initiatives. Brave New Roles is a biennial award launched in 2006 that honours playwrights "creating the best role for a woman in a new play" (Polacek 40). This targeted award aimed to improve the quality of roles available to women in contemporary theatre. Winners were awarded £1,000 each plus a commission of £4,000. This award was unfortunately suspended in 2007 when the Arts Council England ended Sphinx's Revenue Funding, but the company continues to seek alternative sources of support (40). This kind of award could be adapted in the Canadian context. Playwriting contests focused on developing strong roles for women could serve the same function; these contests could be administered by an organization like Playwrights Guild of Canada, or by theatre companies themselves, who could offer a spot in their seasons as a reward.

Awards, like many of the initiatives discussed throughout Part II of this report, are largely dependent on funds and human resources to organize the application and selection process. But, as demonstrated by several of the examples listed here, an award doesn't have to be monetary—simply acknowledging companies and individuals who are promoting women's representation in theatre sets the bar for others to follow suit and raises awareness about underlying inequities.

### **Conclusion: Best Practices for Redressing Inequity**

Equity is a complex issue involving several different factors and stakeholders. It cannot be achieved through one strategy alone. The case studies examined above provide a series of best practices that can be adapted by theatre companies, professional organizations, arts councils, governments, and audiences according to their needs and capacities. It is only through collaboration and a commitment to action that women and other equity-seeking groups will begin to access more opportunities to pursue meaningful and sustainable careers in the theatre.

## Summary of Recommendations

### Education

- Increase the percentage of plays by women and other marginalized groups taught in elementary schools, high schools, and post-secondary institutions
- Increase the percentage of plays by women and other marginalized groups performed at elementary schools, high schools, and post-secondary institutions
- Develop, document, and disseminate approaches to teaching acting and directing that deconstruct gender

### Mentorship, Networking, and Extended Training

- Use women's theatre companies and play festivals to create opportunities for collaboration, learning, production, and publication
- Increase funding for women's theatre companies and festivals to help them move from developing women's work to producing it
- Offer management development and mentorship programs to train women to become artistic directors
- Offer courses to help women improve their leadership and negotiation skills
- Host live networking events for artists to meet regularly to connect, discuss gender parity, build community, and brainstorm ideas for advocacy
- Use online platforms to connect women artists with each other and with employment opportunities and commissions
- Provide "virtual mentorship" by posting detailed profiles of successful women practitioners online

### Theatre Administration

- Engage in self-study to assess gaps in gender equity in policies and operations
- Set organizational targets to achieve and enforce parity
- Initiate conversations with commissioned playwrights about roles for women; encourage playwrights to create more meaningful roles for women
- Support the advancement of assistant directors to directors by providing mentorship, training, and fellowships
- Partner with educational institutions to provide training to underrepresented groups, like women lighting and sound designers
- Ally with colleagues belonging to the same professional organizations to advocate for pay equity between masculinized and feminized jobs
- Create a resource kit for pregnant actors, outlining responsibilities and considerations for both actors and their employers
- Lobby governments to create legislation requiring employers to enact equality plans
- Lobby arts councils to require theatres to enact equality plans as a funding condition

### Advocacy and Awareness

- Form audience advocacy groups to organize outings to plays by women and productions featuring an equitable number of artistic and technical roles for women; arrange discounts to these productions and make theatres aware of the demand for women's work
- Write theatres in support or condemnation of their gender equity efforts
- Curate a list of plays by women and other equity-seeking groups and make it publicly available online
- Create awards for theatre companies that meet equity targets
- Recognize individual playwrights who create strong roles for women

## Part III: Equity Initiatives in Other Industries

### Introduction

As discussed in the introduction to this report, the inequities experienced in the Canadian theatre community are reflective of broader disparities that pervade the Canadian social, political, and economic landscape. Indeed, women's underrepresentation in the theatre is mirrored in several other industries where, for decades, gender equality advocates have been undertaking similar struggles to achieve parity. Part III of the Equity in Theatre report briefly examines some of these industries to identify useful initiatives that could be adapted to the context of Canadian theatre. Engineering and law are selected on the basis of their historic exclusion of women and minoritized groups and their multitude of efforts to turn things around. While change is slow in these fields, the initiatives undertaken in the last 30 years are beginning to have a positive impact. The film and television industry is also examined, as it shares some key similarities with theatre.

As with the initiatives discussed in Part II, the endeavours selected in Part III reflect a diversity of strategies that have been utilized in different contexts, and can be applied to different contexts, depending on a theatre's needs and resources. These endeavours are not meant to be comprehensive, but rather are intended to provide representative examples of the most common, hopeful, and/or original actions undertaken to achieve gender parity in the different fields named above. The categories identified in Part II—education, mentorship and networking, administration, and advocacy and awareness—likewise underlie the recommendations made here, reflecting the importance and necessity of taking a multi-pronged approach to achieve equity. Part III of the report is organized by sector. Each section begins with a brief discussion of the industry's unique equity challenges, followed by the identification of sample initiatives, and then a look at their potential application to the world of theatre.

### Methodology

Feminist commitment to equity in the labour force, dating back to the first wave of the women's movement, has led governments, organizations, and professional associations in several countries to collect data and produce studies on gender equality. These studies have yielded varying results, such as prompting educational institutions to change recruitment practices, and pressuring professional associations to develop policies on diversity and equity. Part III of this report examines these initiatives with information gathered through primary and secondary research materials, including organization websites, newspaper articles, and scholarly writings. When possible, the outcomes of the initiatives identified here are analyzed in order to assess their strengths and weaknesses and provide the basis for a set of best practices that will complement and add to those identified in Part II for the theatre sector.

### Engineering

Engineering is commonly and correctly recognized as a highly male-dominated industry. Despite increased attention drawn to equity issues in the field over the past three decades and successful efforts to diversify enrollment in engineering programs, women continue



to make-up only about 10 to 20% of the labour force (UNESCO 1). In Canada, women make up approximately 13% of professional engineers (Calnan and Valiquette 4), a figure that is on par with the United States, where women made up just 12% of working engineers in 2013 (Corbett and Hill 2). These gender disparities have multiple, damaging effects. As the American Association of University Women (AAUW) notes in a 2015 report on women's success in engineering and computing, engineering-related occupations offer good pay and job prospects, which women miss out on when their access to the field is denied or limited (Corbett and Hill 2). Moreover, there is an increasing need for engineers in the global labour force, which could benefit from the inclusion of more talented and highly qualified women. In Canada, "employment growth in engineering and technology occupations surged by 45% between 1997 and 2008, [...] compared to a growth rate of 24% for all other occupations" (Calnan and Valiquette 11). In the US, 1.7 million more engineers and computer scientists will be needed in less than 10 years (AAUW). Indeed, not only do women fill a labour gap, they also diversify the perspectives available in these fields, leading to greater innovation and productivity (Corbett and Hill 11). Basing design ideas on the perspective of a homogeneous group of engineers—men—can have serious consequences. For example, the first automotive airbags were tailored to men's bodies, resulting in preventable deaths of women and children (10). Women have much to offer the field of engineering, but as in the theatre industry, their increasing representation in educational and training programs is unmatched in the professional world.

Equity initiatives in engineering tend to focus on education, and recruitment and retention. While women's enrollment in post-secondary engineering programs is increasing, contrary to theatre programs, the numbers are still low. In Canada, the average enrollment of women in undergraduate engineering programs has remained under 20% since 2008 (Westwood). After graduation, the women who do attain positions in the field have significantly higher attrition rates than men. Research from the US shows that while the retention rate for men remains at about 40% for the duration of their careers, the retention rate for women goes on a steady decline. Thirty years into their careers, women are half as likely as men to remain working as engineers (Corbett and Hill 26). A similar trend occurs in the theatre industry, where women are represented in greater numbers in post-secondary training programs than they are in the professional theatre community. Recruitment and retention efforts in engineering, then, might provide some models for the theatre industry. The following section highlights some key initiatives in this area and discusses their application to theatre. These initiatives are taken from the 2015 AAUW report. Whereas much of the research in the field focuses on how to generate interest in engineering amongst girls and young women through changing the educational system, the AAUW report makes recommendations related to women's careers once they enter the workforce, making it more applicable to theatre's context, where women are already fairly represented in post-secondary theatre programs.

### **Making Gender Diversity a Goal**

There are at least two different organizational approaches to diversity: a multicultural approach, which celebrates difference; and a colourblind approach, which ignores differences in favour of overarching institutional goals. Corbett and Hill, lead researchers on the AAUW study, argue in favour of the former, presenting evidence suggesting that it

is “more effective at creating environments in which minority groups are likely to be engaged in their work and committed to organizational success” (99). While these approaches are focused on cultural and racial diversity, Corbett and Hill argue that they apply to a gender context as well. A “genderblind” approach is taken by organizations that avoid mentioning issues of gender and/or assume they are covered under wider-ranging diversity procedures. The authors recommend that organizations ensure that gender is not subsumed under larger rubrics, and that they clearly articulate goals related to recruiting and retaining more women (99).

In the context of theatre, this means openly assessing equity within a given company or association, and adopting policies and practices to increase the representation of women—in short, talking about gender rather than ignoring it. The gender equality checklist developed by the Swedish Union for Performing Arts and Film, discussed in Part II of this report, provides a good starting point for this kind of consideration and internal audit. Questions on the checklist bring gender to the fore in several areas, from accommodations for parents (“It is my/our understanding that at our theatre it is possible to combine work and parenthood and that there are clear guidelines for this in our plan for gender equality” [3]), to the representation of gender on stage (“The portrayals in our production have been analyzed from a gender perspective in which we have reflected over gender, power and sexuality. We have thus avoided perpetrating preconceived images of how masculine and feminine should be defined” [8]). Canadian theatre companies could start with that tool to identify specific areas in need of improvement and develop strategies to redress inequities.

### Reducing Bias

As in the theatre industry, gender bias is a significant barrier to women’s success in engineering. The American Association of University Women makes several recommendations to overcome this barrier in its 2015 report, the most transferable being to remove all indicators of gender, age, and race from decision-making contexts. Corbett and Hill point to a classic example from the music world in support of this suggestion. In the 1970s, women constituted only about 10% of musicians in major US symphony orchestras. Due to concerns that selection processes might be biased in favour of students of renowned teachers, several orchestras changed their audition processes by asking applicants to play behind a screen so that the judging panel could hear but not see them. This shift to blind auditions had an unexpected effect: in the 20 years that followed, the number of women playing in major symphony orchestras rose to approximately 40% (95); a first step in working towards gender equality in that field. Given the recent publication of the AAUW’s report, the success of blind hiring processes in the field of engineering has not yet been documented. Follow-up studies in this area will help to support the implementation of this recommendation in engineering and other industries.

Indeed, while it is not always possible to remove identity information from application processes, in theatre this strategy could be adopted in the area of play submissions. As illustrated in Emily Glassberg Sands’ research discussed in Part I, both men and women artistic directors and literary managers exhibit gender bias in script selection. Blind submission processes hold the potential to reduce this bias, thereby increasing the number of women playwrights whose work is produced on Canada’s professional stages.

Bias is also reduced through awareness. In order to ensure that hiring managers and other employees are aware of their biases related to gender, race, and class, Corbett and Hill recommend they take the online [Implicit Association Test](#) (104). Developed by researchers at Harvard University and available at <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>, the test allows users to uncover their social attitudes about race, gender, sexual orientation, and other facets of identity (Project Implicit). In the theatre, this kind of test could be used alongside the self-assessment tool developed in Sweden in order to start conversations about gender and develop equity goals and action plans. Awareness is then fostered on two different levels, with the Implicit Association Test uncovering individual bias, and the gender equality checklist uncovering bias within an institution.

### Working with Men

Because men constitute the majority of engineers, successful equity initiatives require their involvement. Corbett and Hill make two key recommendations about how men can be involved in equity initiatives. First, men can serve as role models for young women considering careers in engineering (105). In the context of theatre, where the problem of gender disparity is rooted in hiring and retention rather than education, this might translate into more men serving as mentors for early career women artists. In Part II, several recommendations were made around the idea of women mentoring women, but it is also important for men to act as mentors—this is especially crucial in areas where there are large gender disparities, such as lighting and sound design, as women mentors will be harder to find given their underrepresentation. Theatres and professional associations might adopt mentorship programs that involve both men and women, and they might also work to match early career women artists with established artists, regardless of gender. There are, of course, risks that come along with men serving as mentors to women, namely that it retains the gendered power dynamics in which men are viewed as the established and successful workers in the field and women remain subordinate and dependent on their “assistance” and guidance. It is therefore important to provide mentors with education and training, so they are aware of the inequities that pervade the theatre industry, as well as their role in redressing them. Exposing experienced mentors to talented early career women might also contribute to a larger ideological shift in the theatre industry by challenging the pervasive myth that there are no qualified or interested women to fill particular roles. A change of attitude on the part of those in positions of power who are serving as mentors can have a positive effect on hiring practices and eliminating discrimination and bias more broadly.

Corbett and Hill also recommend that men engineers refuse to participate in all-male conference panels and instead encourage organizers to recruit more women participants (105). In the context of theatre, men might similarly act as allies by refusing to have their plays performed in seasons without women playwrights, or refusing to direct plays for companies that do not employ women directors. Moreover, they might write plays with several and/or substantial women characters in them, direct plays by women, or hire women to direct plays. These kinds of actions are akin to the strategy undertaken by the lighting and sound designers belonging to the ADC, who, as discussed in Part II, consented to a wage-freeze in order to help their predominantly women colleagues in costume design negotiate for higher pay.

## Law

Though the gender divide in the legal profession is not as wide as that in engineering, men still predominate as working lawyers. In Canada in 2010, 63% of practicing lawyers were men and 37% were women. Racialized women are represented in even smaller numbers. A 2010 study of lawyers in Ontario found that women of colour constituted only 16% of all lawyers under the age of 30 and 5% of lawyers over 30 in 2006 (Catalyst). As in engineering and in theatre, the legal profession sees a significant drop-off rate from education to the professional world: women are enrolled in law school and called to the bar in roughly equal numbers to men, but after graduation their numbers begin to decline (Bouchard 5, LSUC). While women have been entering the legal profession and private practice in record numbers in the last two decades, they have also been leaving in record numbers, making retention a key issue with which the industry currently contends (Bouchard 5). This situation has serious implications—for women, who miss out on rewarding and high-paying careers, and for the industry itself, where the loss of some of its best and brightest comes with a hefty price tag, as the cost of an associate leaving a firm is estimated at \$315,000 (5).

The significant body of research on women in the legal profession conducted over the last decade points to the industry's failure to accommodate work-life balance issues as a key factor in women's attrition. A 2006 report on flexibility in the legal profession prepared by Catalyst, a Canadian non-profit organization mandated to increase women's opportunities in the workplace, surveyed lawyers on work-life balance issues. Fifty percent of all respondents rated their firm as doing "poorly" or "very poorly" at providing flexible work arrangements. Both men and women expressed difficulty managing the demands of work and personal/family life: 75% of women associates compared to 66% of men associates, and 69% of women partners compared to 46% of men partners identified work-life balance as a challenge (Catalyst). As the Law Society of Upper Canada (LSUC) concludes in a 2008 report on the retention of women:

While neither the Law Society nor the profession generally should, nor can, determine the roles women play in their own family relationships, the failure of the profession to adapt to what is not a neutral reality will inevitably affect the quality and competence of the legal services available to the public. (Bouchard 5)

Discrimination is another contributing factor to retention that should not be overlooked. Indeed, as demonstrated by the *Harvard Business Review* study discussed in Part I of this report, though work-life balance issues affect both women and men, the perception of women as maternal and less career-oriented can lead to gender-based discrimination in hiring and promotion.

The following recommendations are focused on the issue of retention, and particularly its root cause of discrimination. Education, mentorship and networking, and advocacy and awareness—important concepts in Part II of this report—provide different strategies to retain women in the field of law that can be adapted and applied to theatre.

### Educating about Gendered Realities

Law schools in Canada and the US have begun to develop curriculum focused on educating students about the gendered realities of the legal profession. These programs and courses target both men and women in order to raise their awareness about barriers to retention and advancement, and engage them in actively promoting women in leadership (Bouchard 117). The University of Maryland School of Law has a Women, Leadership and Equality program that consists of three components:

- course offerings in women and leadership;
- a fellowship program where students in their third year may do intensive field placements in organizations that advance women in society; and,
- a research component that fosters research on women and leadership across substantive areas of the law. (Bouchard 117)

While the Women, Leadership and Equality program's impact has not been studied in a quantitative way, its website notes some important outcomes. Since the program was founded in 2003, it has educated more than 90 students, many of whom attest to its impact on their careers as lawyers ("Women, Leadership & Equality"). For example, program graduate Alexina Jackson, JD '07, credits the program with allowing her to adapt in her first job as a lawyer at a Washington firm: "I quickly diagnosed the dynamics in which I am operating and thought about how to maximize my opportunities in that environment. I was aware of what I wanted and the compromises I was willing to make, so now I spend more of my time executing my goals [...]" (Romer). Moreover, the program has sponsored over 14 symposia and yielded 35 publications on topics related to gender equality and the law, making a vital contribution to research ("Women, Leadership & Equality"). In the context of theatre, post-secondary theatre and conservatory programs could develop similar curricula to help women and minoritized students understand the realities of the professional world and develop innovative tools to change them.

### Tracking Demographics

Researchers have identified the collection of demographic information about women within law firms as integral to the successful development and implementation of equity initiatives (Bouchard 88). The LSUC's report on the retention of women notes:

To be successful, initiatives need to be tailored to the particular firm environment. Therefore, to identify areas where firms have been more or less successful in retaining and advancing women, firms should begin by analyzing demographic information, paying attention to differences among practice groups and determining where the groups stand in relation to their peers. (88)

This not only benefits equity initiatives, but also helps a firm in its efforts to attract both clients and potential employees, as a commitment to diversity has been shown to be an important factor in recruitment (89).

In the theatre community, individual theatre companies could undertake a similar type of demographic collection. By keeping annual statistics of the numbers of women employed in different positions, theatre companies can target hiring and programming to particularly weak areas and produce stronger, more customized action plans to redress inequities. Data collection can be done with a relatively low time commitment and cost, by tabulating numbers of those employed in a season. If a company wishes to collect more detailed information, taking factors such as age, race, and sexuality into account, it might anonymously survey its permanent and contracted workers—this would have to be voluntary and would require more resources, but it would be useful in helping a company assess and address its shortcomings.

### **Developing Anti-Discrimination Policies and Procedures**

The Canadian Bar Association's (CBA) "Equity and Diversity Guide and Resource Manual for Successful Law Firms and Legal Organizations" provides several practical strategies to redress inequity. Key among them is the development of policies and procedures to ensure an organization complies with human rights laws and professional codes of conduct (CBA 13). While professional associations may have similar policies and procedures, it is also important for individual theatre companies to develop and enforce them. These might be created in conjunction with board members who work in the legal profession or with the support of the professional associations. The following best practices are recommended by the CBA's Equity and Diversity Guide:

- Have a clear statement of commitment and definitions consistent with human rights laws to address situations of discrimination and harassment, and to promote equity and diversity.
- Set up a group of advisors from among the most respected members of the organization, and with representatives from diverse communities, to answer questions, clarify the policy, and review options.
- Encourage the reporting of incidents, and keep complainants safe from reprisals.
- Set clear expectations of clients and have clear mechanisms for lawyers and staff to report on policy violations by clients.
- Identify clear procedures to resolve complaints, including alternative dispute resolution, mediation, and investigations.
- Ensure confidentiality where appropriate in handling complaints, particularly concerning the identities of complainant(s), respondent(s), and witnesses.
- Provide disciplinary actions for respondents in substantiated complaints, and for those bringing forward malicious accusations in the form of a complaint.
- Have a tracking mechanism to identify repeat offenders and, once identified,

provide appropriate consequences to respond to them.

- Prepare annual reports, in cooperation with the equity and diversity committee, for senior management on complaints received and how they were resolved.
- Establish proactive policies and procedures to ensure support for equity and diversity initiatives.
- Provide ongoing education and training for all on equity and diversity policies and procedures so that they are clearly communicated and understood. (CBA 13)

While the adaptation and implementation of policies and procedures like these may vary depending on a theatre company's size and available resources, it is important to develop clear and transparent practical strategies as an outcome of the self-assessment activities described earlier in this section of the report. These policies and procedures should be made available to every new hire or contracted worker at an organization. Moreover, delegates from theatre administration and/or for each production should be chosen to ensure that company members are aware of equity policies and procedures; these delegates might also act as first contacts when someone has a concern or complaint about a policy violation. Because many artists work with a theatre company on single productions or one-off events, it is crucial that attention is drawn to the policies and procedures at the beginning of each project, and when new contracts are being offered.

Recent media attention to unreported sexual harassment and abuse in the theatre industry points to the importance of having clear and consistent policies and procedures. In the US, though some theatres and the Actors' Equity union have harassment policies in place, many performers are urging for stronger provisions. Currently, American gender equality advocates, led by playwright Julia Jordan, are lobbying Actors' Equity and other unions on the following three proposals:

to have a statement read on the first day of rehearsals for all Broadway and professional shows that describes how to file complaints about harassment or other unprofessional behavior; to designate union officials to handle these complaints; and to create a confidential mediation process where complainants and the accused can talk through instances of harassment, misconduct and abuse with a mediator and without fear of penalties. (Healy)

While many organizations and unions in Canada have existent policies, the American example draws attention to the importance of critically evaluating the degree to which these policies are being followed and changing practices to ensure that they are. It is only through regular and consistent attention that equity will become embedded in industry operation standards.

### Avoiding Bias in the Hiring Process

The CBA also provides several useful tips for avoiding discrimination and bias in the hiring process. The following recommendations can be applied to a theatre context as well, particularly as boards and artistic directors interview potential workers:

- Having an agreed upon job description, selection criteria, and interview questions related to the job description.
- Basing eligibility on *bona fide* occupational requirements and not on personal characteristics.
- Being clear to all candidates about expectations of new employees.
- Clarifying the decision-making process for candidate selection.
- Using an interview format that probes cognitive and behavioural competencies to assess a broader range of candidates' capacities.
- Offering the interview committee training on how to conduct bias-free interviews.
- Providing reasonable accommodation for those who may require it, for example, people with disabilities.
- Involving [employees] from diverse communities in the interview process.
- Providing enough time for all candidates to bring forward their strengths.
- Ensuring interview panel members arrive at decisions independently, by having each member review candidate interviews separately, before discussing their scoring results. (CBA 21)

Depending on the size and resources of a theatre company, not all of these practices may be able to be implemented. However, they provide some general guidelines and important considerations for the interview process that can be adapted to the realm of theatre. For example, including women and/or theatre workers from minoritized groups in hiring committees ensures that there are more diverse perspectives available in decision-making processes. Moreover, having detailed job descriptions and selection criteria makes the hiring process more transparent for candidates and clearer for those participating. Even in the case of a smaller theatre company, when it is not possible to have a large formal hiring committee, diverse company and board members might collaborate on the job description, hiring criteria, and interview questions beforehand to foster a more inclusive process.



### Increasing Women in Leadership Positions

It may seem obvious, but it bears articulating and repeating: increasing the number of women in leadership positions has a positive impact on recruiting and retaining women in earlier phases of their careers. In the legal profession, research has shown that women partners act as mentors and role models to women associates, helping them succeed on the partnership track (Bouchard 90). They also help to create a cultural shift within a firm towards equity (90). Turning to theatre, Part I of this report noted that women artistic directors tend to hire more women directors and playwrights, and women playwrights tend to write more parts for women actors. This strategy underlines the importance of starting at the top: putting more women in positions of power in the theatre has a positive, trickle-down effect. The hiring process of artistic directors is therefore crucial: in order to put more women in these positions, it is important to get boards and decision-makers to recognize the importance of equity and to include it in their process of hiring and decision-making. Companies that track their demographics should share this information with their boards. The considerations described above to avoid bias in the hiring process should be applied to the board level as well to guide their work in this area.

### Training Women for Leadership

Another action to emerge from the Law Society's 2008 study of retention is the creation of a Women Leadership and Professional Development Institute. This institute is charged with coordinating workshops on leadership and business development and recognizing women's contributions to the legal profession (Bouchard 96). In order to help women advance to artistic director positions, a similar institute could be created by an organization such as PACT. Member companies could nominate and sponsor individual artists, or artists could self-nominate to attend the institute, which would focus on skill building while also providing women with networking and mentorship opportunities. Such an institute would have to also respond to the systemic barriers previously noted that present challenges to women in the arts. In order to be effective it would have to provide alternative scheduling, childcare, or other forms of support that acknowledge the ways in which women are continually disadvantaged in the workplace and arts industries, as opposed to creating another service they are unable to access.

### Film and Television

The film and television industry experiences similar equity struggles as the theatre industry. As in theatre, women are drastically underrepresented as writers and directors in film and television. For example, in 2010 and 2011, only 21% of writers and directors of films released in Canada were women (Kang). Moreover, as in theatre, the division of labour in the film and television industry is highly gendered. A 2013 report released by the Canadian Union for Equality on Screen (CUES), found that women predominate in roles such as hair, make-up, and publicity, while men predominate in technical roles such as camera, lighting, and special effects (Coles 4-5).

As discussed in Part I, the dearth of women in creative roles limits the diversity of representations of women on stage or, in this case, on screen. In a study of the top 100 grossing films of 2012, researchers found that women accounted for only 4.1% of directors and 12.2% of writers; of the 4,475 speaking roles in those films, only 28.4% were women (Hickey). Conversely, the same study found a positive correlation between

the number of women involved in creative roles in a film with the number of women characters featured in it (Hickey). The women characters that are featured onscreen often reflect narrow and problematic representations of women: men characters significantly outnumber women characters as lawyers, professors, and doctors, while women characters are hypersexualized at much higher rates than men (Smith et al.). Given the reach of the entertainment industry, these representations of women have serious implications for how society values women more broadly. As the CUES report concludes,

A gender imbalance behind the screen shapes the stories we see on the screen – such as whether the role of a medical expert is played by a woman, or whether a girl’s bedroom set includes science books and detective novels on the shelves. All these elements are part of the storytelling process that shapes our understanding of the world, and each other. (Coles 9)

The lack of substantial roles for women onscreen has been highlighted for decades by gender advocates and researchers, perhaps most famously by cartoonist Allison Bechdel in 1985. Bechdel created a simple test to determine the quality of women’s roles in film: (1) the film must include two or more women; (2) the women must talk to each other; and, (3) they must talk about something other than a man (“Bechdel Test”). While women’s roles in film have increased since Bechdel first developed her test (Hickey), the damaging myth that films with substantial roles for women do not attract audiences or make money persists. In 2014, researchers used statistical analysis to test these assumptions and found that while the films in their sample that passed the Bechdel test had a median budget that was 16% lower than all films in the set and 35% lower than films that failed the test, they had an equal or greater return on investment, and equal or greater gross profits (Hickey). As in the theatre industry, widespread beliefs about the popularity of women’s work must be challenged before equity can be achieved.

While many of the film and television industry’s equity initiatives overlap with those undertaken in the theatre community, the following highlights some distinct approaches that can be adapted in the latter context.

### **Mentoring Women Artists**

Several mentorship programs have been analyzed in this report. What distinguishes the Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto (LIFT) program Filmmentor, which launched in 2014, is its focus on creative output at the end of the mentorship period. Eight women filmmakers coming from a range of areas in film production were selected from a pool of 75 applicants for a five-month program involving hands-on workshops and training with professional women mentors. At the end of the program, participants collaborated on two short film projects, which were screened in January 2015 at LIFT’s annual members screening in Toronto. The focus on creation facilitated networking opportunities, and also allowed participants to leave the program with a completed project showcasing their skills and adding to their CV.

This mentorship model could be adapted within a theatre context, where participants could be chosen from different areas, including writing, directing, performance, and design, and work under the guidance of their mentors to produce an original one-act play. Filmmmentor was funded by the Canada Council's Initiatives project, which could be explored as a possible source in the theatre context as well.

### **Developing Directories of Women Artists**

The Directors Guild of America (DGA) has conducted extensive research on the ethnicity and gender of directors hired to work in episodic television. In an analysis of more than 3,500 episodes from the 2013-2014 network season, the DGA found that Caucasian men directed 69% of all episodes, while minority men directed 17%, and Caucasian women directed 12% of all episodes, while minority women directed only 2% (DGA). Though the DGA holds no authority over hiring, it employs multiple strategies to advocate for the increased representation of women and minorities as directors. One such initiative is supplying those who hire with a contact list of experienced and diverse directors; this list is available to any production company and is often distributed by the DGA when it meets with studios to present equity statistics (DGA).

A similar directory was created by Nightwood Theatre in conjunction with PACT as an outcome of the Equity in Canadian Theatre initiative, only it included the names and contact information of Canadian women directors. This project could be updated and put online so that it could be easily accessed. Similar directories of women designers and playwrights might also be created. This requires the employment of a researcher or team of researchers, as well as websites to host the directories. This project might be taken on through partnerships between scholarly researchers (including graduate students) and professional associations. Equity in Theatre has undertaken such a project through its website, launched in April 2015, as it features a directory of women theatre artists (including directors, playwrights, actors, and designers) that is searchable by occupational role. This is a valuable resource for the Canadian theatre community that can continue to grow as more names are added. Moving forward, advocacy efforts should be focused on this directory so that those in positions of power are aware of it and use it. While there is a good level of awareness about EIT in the theatre community due to the number of partner organizations involved, a link to the directory could be sent out to artistic directors and boards to reinforce the importance of this resource.

### **Implementing Strict Funding Quotas**

Film production in Sweden has been subsidized by the Swedish Film Institute since 1963. The Institute regularly renews its Film Agreement to reflect its priorities and set its agenda. For the first time, the 2005-2010 agreement set a strict target of dividing support for film production evenly between women and men, with the requirement that both women and men be represented at the level of at least 40% in the key roles of screenwriter, director, and producer (Fröberg 25). In the most recent agreement, covering the period between 2013 and 2015, the target percentage has been increased to 50% (25). While one-third of films produced in Sweden are not supported by the Film Institute, the effect of these targets on the other two-thirds of Swedish films has already created a notable increase in women in key positions (26).

Similar targets might be adopted in Canada by government and non-government granting agencies in cases where they are not already in effect—lobby efforts should be focused in this area. The cooperation of multiple funding bodies in upholding consistent standards will create the broader systemic changes needed for achieving gender equity in theatre.

### **Assembling “Best and Worst” Lists**

The DGA also released a best and worst list as part of its annual reporting. This list notes the shows that have the greatest and poorest records of hiring women and minority directors (DGA). In Part II several initiatives celebrating theatre companies achieving equity were discussed, but perhaps there is also merit in publicly revealing equity offenders. This serves to educate audiences and raise awareness, which in turn can inform their ticket-buying decisions and encourage advocacy through actions such as letter-writing campaigns. It also confronts theatre companies with the imbalances of their hiring practices, and ideally, publicly pressures them to change. Such a list might be compiled and released by third party researchers or diversity committees of professional associations.

### **Rating Representations of Women**

In 2013, four cinemas in Sweden introduced a new rating system based on the Bechdel test. Films that include at least two women characters who talk to each other about something other than a man receive an A under the new system, which draws attention to the lack of substantial roles for women in film (“Swedish cinemas”). As Ellen Tejle, one of the initiators of the project reports, this led other cinemas and festivals in Sweden and beyond to implement the rating system (43). It also increased awareness amongst writers, directors, distributors, and festivals, who publicly stated their commitment to making positive change in how stories are told on film (43-44).

Similar to the LA FPI badge of approval discussed in Part II, the Bechdel test might be applied to theatre and used as a rating system to inform audiences as they decide which plays to see and which theatres to financially support. While theatres, especially ones that frequently fail the Bechdel test due to their programming choices, might be reluctant to rate their own work, critics and bloggers could use this rating system in their theatre reviews. These ratings could also be contributed to by the public on an open-access site modeled after the Bechdel database, which is available at <http://bechdeltest.com>.

### **Conclusion: Best Practices from Other Industries for Redressing Inequity**

Women and minoritized groups’ experiences with employment equity vary across sectors. However, an examination of equity issues across three industries noted for their poor representation of women—engineering, law, and film and television—reveals some shared struggles related to education, recruitment, advancement, and retention. The case studies examined above provide various strategies that can be adapted by theatre companies and professional associations according to their needs and capacities. These strategies constitute an overarching structural approach, beginning with self-assessment and awareness at the individual and institutional levels, followed by goal-setting and policy-making, and moving onto altering hiring and programming practices and implementing mentorship opportunities. This structural approach reaches audiences as

well, through introducing rating systems and publically celebrating or shaming companies' and associations' ability to meet equity goals.

As equity and diversity advocates in the Canadian theatre community work towards the goal of parity, they might continue to look outside to other industries for novel models that can be adapted within their own contexts. In turn, it is to be hoped that the Canadian theatre industry, implementing equity initiatives of its own, might become a progressive inspiration that other industries could follow—a reciprocal relationship that would indicate societal change.

## Summary of Recommendations

### Education

- Develop curriculum at the post-secondary and conservatory level to expose students to the gendered realities of professional theatre and develop their leadership and problem-solving skills to overcome these barriers
- Create a Women's Leadership and Professional Development Institute to prepare women for careers as directors, artistic directors, and executive directors

### Mentorship, Networking, and Extended Training

- Recruit men as mentors for early-career artists
- Increase the number of women in leadership positions to act as role models for women in earlier stages of their careers
- Orient intensive mentorship programs towards creative outcomes, recruiting participants with diverse skill sets to collaborate on play creation and production
- Develop and distribute directories of women artists

### Theatre Administration

- Conduct internal audits of administrative practices and identify weaknesses
- Ensure that gender is not subsumed under overarching institutional goals or ambiguous diversity mandates, and clearly articulate goals related to recruiting and retaining more women
- Develop policies and procedures to ensure theatres comply with human rights laws and professional codes of conduct
- Require administration, hiring managers, and creators to take self-assessment tests to uncover their own biases
- Remove all indicators of gender, age, and race from decision making contexts
- Create consistent interview processes that aim to eliminate bias and discrimination
- Use a blind submission process for vetting scripts
- Rectify imbalances by programming more work by women and people of colour
- Take advantage of resources (such as the EIT database) to recruit more women
- Track demographics about women within individual theatre companies to aid in the development and implementation of equity initiatives; collect these statistics annually to identify trends and changes
- Create flexible work environments that accommodate different needs, such as those of parents and eldercare providers

### Advocacy and Awareness

- Ally with men to advocate for gender equity; men can refuse to participate in theatres that do not program women in their seasons
- Assemble lists of companies that have the best and poorest records of hiring women and minorities and publicly disseminate them
- Rate representations of women using the Bechdel test
- Lobby for strict funding guidelines requiring equal representations of men and women in key positions

## Appendix I

### PGC Theatre Production Survey for 2013/14

**Table 1. Gender Breakdown of Authorship for the 2013/14 Theatre Season**

Number of Productions by Men	Number of Productions by Women	Number of Productions by Mixed Gender Partnerships
512	181	119
(63%)	(22%)	(15%)

- The survey included 183 theatre companies of all shapes, sizes, and geographic regions.
- They produced a total of 812 productions in the 2013/14 theatre season.
- Major Finding: Plays by men continue to dominate, as women did not account for even one-quarter of the productions (although they form 50% of PGC's membership).

**Table 2. Gender Breakdown of Productions by Canadian Playwrights**

Number of Productions By Men	Number of Productions By Women	Number of Productions by Mixed Gender Partnerships
250	143	77
(53%)	(30.5%)	(16.5%)

- Of those 812 productions, 470 were by Canadian playwrights, which is 58% of all the productions; a 4% drop from last year, and a 2% dip from the 2006 study statistics.
- Major Finding: Canadian women fare better than non-Canadian women, but there was a 2% drop from last year (mixed collaborations dropped 5%, while men went up 6%).

**Table 3. Provincial Breakdown of All Productions**

Province or Territory	Number of Productions	Productions by Men	Productions by Women	Productions by Men & Women
Alberta	147 (18%)	96 (65%)	31 (21%)	20 (14%)
Atlantic Canada	74 (9%)	45 (61%)	14 (19%)	15 (20%)
British Columbia	129 (16%)	88 (68%)	23 (18%)	18 (14%)
Manitoba	32 (4%)	15 (47%)	14 (44%)	3 (9%)
Ontario	340 (42%)	205 (60%)	80 (24%)	55 (16%)
Quebec	63 (8%)	44 (70%)	13 (20.5%)	6 (9.5%)
Saskatchewan	22 (3%)	16 (73%)	5 (23%)	1 (4.5%)
Yukon & NWT	5 (1%)	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)

- Findings: Male playwrights accounted for at least 60% of the productions in all provinces, except Manitoba; the only region to come close to a balanced season.
- Some provinces (AB, BC, and especially SK) regressed in terms of balance, while Atlantic Canada, Quebec, and the territories improved their ratios from last year.

**Table 4. Provincial Breakdown of Canadian Authored Productions**

Province or Territory	Number of Productions	Productions by Men	Productions by Women	Productions by Men & Women
Alberta	82 (17%)	42 (51%)	27 (33%)	13 (16%)
Atlantic Canada	53 (11%)	29 (55%)	11 (20.5%)	13 (24.5%)
British Columbia	79 (17%)	47 (59.5%)	23 (29%)	9 (11.5%)
Manitoba	21 (5%)	8 (38%)	11 (52%)	2 (10%)
Ontario	183 (39%)	91 (50%)	57 (31%)	35 (19%)
Quebec	34 (7%)	23 (67.5%)	8 (23.5%)	3 (9%)
Saskatchewan	13 (3%)	7 (54%)	5 (38%)	1 (8%)
Yukon & NWT	5 (1%)	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)

- Findings: There is a better gender balance with Canadian-authored productions.
- Only in Manitoba were more plays produced authored by women rather than men.
- Aside from MB, and also SK, in no other region did women surpass the 35% marker.



**Table 5. Comparison of National Studies over Time**

<b>National Study</b>	<b>Years Covered</b>	<b>Productions by Men</b>	<b>Productions by Women</b>	<b>Productions by Mixed Genders</b>
Fraticeili's Study (1982)	1978 - 1981	77%	10%	13%
Equity Study (2006)	2000/01 – 2004/05	68%	28%	4%
PGC Survey (2013)	2012/ 2013	61%	23%	16%
PGC Survey (2014)	2013/ 2014	63%	22%	15%

- Findings: Plays by men increased by 2%, while plays by women and mixed partnerships sunk 1% from the previous season (and women were down 5% from the 2006 study).
- The figures for Canadian women are better: 32% last season, and 30.5% for this year.
- Yet, thirty plus years after Fraticelli's study, there has been only marginal improvement.
- The statistics indicate regression in recent years for productions by women. Stalled between 30% and 35%, women have not reached the 50% marker denoting equality.

## Appendix II

### PGC's Annual Theatre Survey for 2013/14 – Breakdown by Budget Size

PGC's Theatre Survey for 2013/14 included 183 professional theatre companies of all shapes, sizes, and geographic regions. The companies were assessed according to budget size, but only 147 theatres (80%) were included due to availability of information. Those companies were then categorized into one of six tiers based on the size of their annual operating budgets. The results of the findings are presented below.

**TABLE 1. Companies with an Annual Operating Budget of \$100,000 or Less - Tier 1**

<u>Type of Show</u>	<u># of Productions</u>	<u># By Men</u>	<u># By Women</u>	<u># By Mixed Genders</u>
<i>All Productions</i>	45 (100%)	28 (62%)	13 (29%)	4 (9%)
<i>Canadian Shows</i>	29 (64%)	17 (59%)	9 (31%)	3 (10%)

Findings: A total of 30 companies (almost 20.5% in all) fall under the first tier. They produced 45 shows altogether, 29 (or 64%) of which were authored by Canadians. Plays authored by men dominated this tier, hovering around the 60 percentile, while women made up about 30% of the productions' authors.

**TABLE 2. Companies with an Annual Operating Budget of \$100,001 to \$250,000 - Tier 2**

<u>Type of Show</u>	<u># of Productions</u>	<u># By Men</u>	<u># By Women</u>	<u># By Mixed Genders</u>
<i>All Productions</i>	61 (100%)	30 (49%)	16 (26%)	15 (25%)
<i>Canadian Shows</i>	35 (57%)	12 (34%)	12 (34%)	11 (31%)

Findings: There were a total of 24 companies (about 16% in all) in the second tier, and they produced 61 shows, 35 (or 57%) of which were written by Canadians. Plays by men dominated overall, but in a rare instance of equity, the numbers for men and women were dead even when it came to Canadian plays!

**TABLE 3. Companies with an Annual Operating Budget of \$250,001 to \$500,000 - Tier 3**

<u>Type of Show</u>	<u># of Productions</u>	<u># By Men</u>	<u># By Women</u>	<u># By Mixed Genders</u>
<i>All Productions</i>	122 (100%)	73 (60%)	35 (29%)	14 (11%)
<i>Canadian Shows</i>	91 (75%)	49 (54%)	32 (35%)	10 (11%)

Findings: In all, 31 companies (or 21% of the sample size) were grouped under the third tier. They produced a total of 122 shows, 91 (or 74.5%) of which were created by Canadian playwrights. Men wrote the majority of the work overall (60% of the shows), but the figures were more evenly distributed with Canadian play production (54% authored by men and 35% created by women), though still not equitable.

**TABLE 4. Companies with an Annual Operating Budget of \$500,001 to \$1,000,000 - Tier 4**

<u>Type of Show</u>	<u># of Productions</u>	<u># By Men</u>	<u># By Women</u>	<u># By Mixed Genders</u>
<i>All Productions</i>	138 (100%)	88 (64%)	33 (24%)	17 (12%)
<i>Canadian Shows</i>	94 (68%)	55 (58.5%)	27 (29%)	12 (12.5%)

Findings: There were 28 companies (which is 19% overall) included in this tier, and they produced 138 shows, 94 (or 68%) of which were written by Canadians. As with the other tiers, male authorship was the norm, accounting for 64% of all productions and 58.5% of the Canadian shows. Unlike the tiers that came before, women did not hit the 30% marker in either case with this particular grouping.

**TABLE 5. Companies with an Annual Operating Budget of \$1,000,001 to \$2 million - Tier 5**

<u>Type of Show</u>	<u># of Productions</u>	<u># By Men</u>	<u># By Women</u>	<u># By Mixed Genders</u>
<i>All Productions</i>	48 (100%)	24 (50%)	14 (29%)	10 (21%)
<i>Canadian Shows</i>	38 (79%)	18 (47%)	14 (37%)	6 (16%)

Findings: Only 8 companies (roughly 5% overall) fell under the classification of the 5<sup>th</sup> tier. These theatres produced a total of 48 shows, 38 (or a whopping 79%!) of which were

Canadian authored. Once again, male authorship was the norm, accounting for 50% of the productions in all, which might seem equitable at first glance, except that women wrote only 29% of the shows. The figures improve with Canadian play production, as women were responsible for scripting 37% of the shows, making this the only tier in which women surpassed the 35% marker; a very rare feat in Canadian theatre these days!

**TABLE 6. Companies with an Annual Operating Budget of \$2,000,001 and over - Tier 6**

<u>Type of Show</u>	<u># of Productions</u>	<u># By Men</u>	<u># By Women</u>	<u># By Mixed Genders</u>
<i>All Productions</i>	211 (100%)	148 (70%)	41 (19.5%)	22 (10.5%)
<i>Canadian Shows</i>	91 (43%)	53 (58%)	30 (33%)	8 (9%)

Findings: A total of 26 companies (almost 18% of the sample size overall) can be categorized under the sixth tier. They produced 211 shows in total, 91 (or 43%) of which were Canadian, making this the only tier that didn't produce more Canadian plays than foreign work. This tier also had the greatest gender imbalance with men authoring 70% of the plays and women writing not even 20%. The figures improved with Canadian play productions, as men wrote 58% of the shows, while women crafted 33% of the work.

**TABLE 7. Comparison of All Tiers and All Shows**

	<u>Tier 1</u>	<u>Tier 2</u>	<u>Tier 3</u>	<u>Tier 4</u>	<u>Tier 5</u>	<u>Tier 6</u>
<b># of Shows</b>	45	61	122	138	48	211
<b># By Men</b>	28 (62%)	30 (49%)	73 (60%)	88 (64%)	24 (50%)	148 (70%)
<b># By Women</b>	13 (29%)	16 (26%)	35 (29%)	33 (24%)	14 (29%)	41 (19.5%)
<b># By Mixed Coll.</b>	4 (9%)	15 (25%)	14 (11%)	17 (12%)	10 (21%)	22 (10.5%)

Findings: The sixth tier companies with the largest budgets produced the greatest number of shows, but they had the worst track record for gender imbalances, as men accounted for 70% of the playwrights and women for 20% overall. The first tier with the lowest budgets, and the third tier in the mid-range, had the best representation of female playwrights, although women did not quite account for 30% of the shows.

**TABLE 8. Comparison of All Tiers and Canadian Shows Only**

	<b>Tier 1</b>	<b>Tier 2</b>	<b>Tier 3</b>	<b>Tier 4</b>	<b>Tier 5</b>	<b>Tier 6</b>
<b># of Shows/Cdn %</b>	29 (64%)	35 (57%)	91 (75%)	94 (68%)	38 (79%)	91 (43%)
<b># By Men</b>	17 (59%)	12 (34%)	49 (54%)	55 (58.5%)	18 (47%)	53 (58%)
<b># By Women</b>	9 (31%)	12 (34%)	32 (35%)	27 (29%)	14 (37%)	30 (33%)
<b># By Mixed Coll.</b>	3 (10%)	11 (31%)	10 (11%)	12 (12.5%)	6 (16%)	8 (9%)

**Findings:** When it came to Canadian play production, the companies with the largest budgets in the sixth tier produced more foreign work than Canadian (only 43% of their shows). All of the other tiers produced more Canadian shows than foreign, with the fifth tier producing the most Canadian content, followed by the third tier. Men dominated as playwrights in all tiers, except the second, where the numbers were equally distributed between genders, and mixed gender partnerships were not far behind. The first, fourth, and sixth tiers had the highest representations of male playwrights, while only the fifth tier had women surpassing the 35% marker (a rarity!), although the second and third tiers followed close on their heels.

### **Overall Summary:**

A breakdown of PGC's 2013/14 Theatre Survey findings according to the various companies' annual operating budgets revealed that the theatres with the most money (tier 6) exhibited the greatest gender imbalances in play production. These same companies also had the lowest rates of Canadian play production, though they likely received the lion's share of funding from the arts councils. Representation rates for women playwrights fell between 20% (tier 6) and 29% (tiers 1, 3, and 5) for all shows, and improved somewhat with Canadian content, ranging from 29% (tier 4) up to 37% (tier 5). These statistics indicate regression rather than improvement in production rates for women over the past two years.

## Appendix III



A snapshot of the life of an actor in Canada

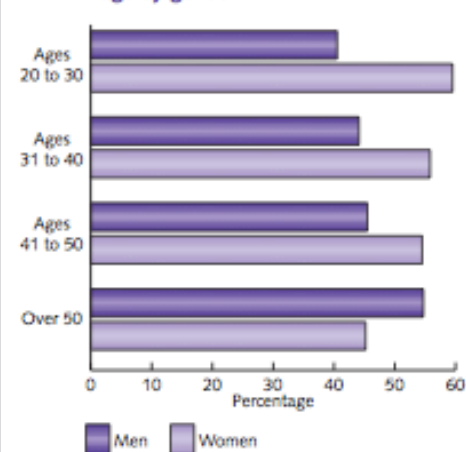


**EQ interviews "The Artist"** – representing a typical Canadian resident Equity member – to find out what the work situation is like these days and what are the issues affecting members.<sup>(1)</sup>

**EQ: Describe an Equity member.**

**Artist:** There are slightly more female Equity members (51.4%) than male (48.5%). It is interesting to note that men overtake women only in the above 50 category. (See graph 1.)

**Graph 1: Equity membership breakdown of age by gender**



**EQ: Where do Equity members work?**

**A:** 88.3% are in theatre, 8.6% in opera, and 3% are in dance.

**EQ: What do members do?**

**A:** Most are performers (81.8%), with 6.6% being directors, 8.5% stage managers, 2.7% choreographers and .3% fight directors. While there are more women in stage management and choreography, there are more male performers, directors and fight directors.

**EQ: How many Equity members are working?**

**A:** Over the course of 2011, 4,083 members worked under contract. The average number of members working per week is 1,192.

**EQ: How many weeks did Equity members work last year?**

**A:** In 2011, Equity members worked a total of 61,974 work weeks with total earnings of \$67,828,712.

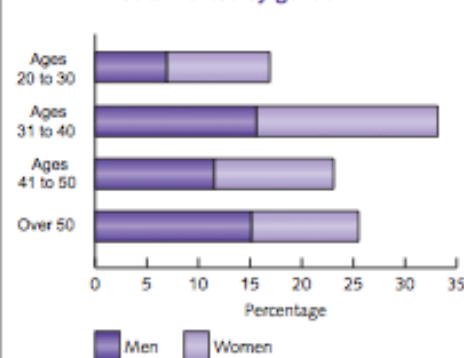
**EQ: What is an Equity member's average income?**

**A:** The average annual Equity income (under negotiated agreements) is \$16,612, but when broken down by gender, men make more money than women (Men – \$17,323, Women – \$15,849). The mean average annual Equity income is \$9,410 (Men – \$ 9,533, Women – \$ 9,139).

**EQ: How do Equity member work weeks break down by gender?**

**A:** About 50.8% of the total work weeks were worked by men, and 49.16% were worked by women. Women tend to work more in the beginning of their career, but men surpass them in work weeks after 50 years. (See graph 2.)

**Graph 2: Equity membership breakdown of weeks worked by gender**



## Glossary

### Organizations and Acronyms

**ACT** – L’Association des compagnies de théâtre

**ADC** – Associated Designers of Canada

**APASQ** – Association des professionnels des arts de la scène du Québec

**APN** – Alberta Playwrights Network

**APTP** – Association des producteurs de théâtre privé

**ATHE** – Association of Theatre in Higher Education

**AAUW** – American Association of University Women

**CAEA** – Canadian Actors’ Equity Association

**CBA** – Canadian Bar Association

**CQT** – Conseil québécois du theater

**DGA** – Directors Guild of America

**EIT** – Equity in Theatre

**HM/BF** – History Matters/Back to the Future

**ICWP** – International Centre for Women Playwrights

**LA FPI** – Los Angeles Female Playwrights Initiative

**LIFT** – Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto

**LMDA** – Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas

**LPTW** – League of Professional Theatre Women

**LSUC** – Law Society of Upper Canada

**NPO** – National Portfolio Organisation, Arts Council England

**PACT** – Professional Association of Canadian Theatres

**PGC** – Playwrights Guild of Canada

**TAI** – Théâtres associés inc

**TUEJ** – Théâtres Unis Enfance Jeunesse

**UDA** – Union des artistes

**UNESCO** – United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

**WPT** – Women’s Project Theater

**WTP** – Women and Theatre Program

### **PACT Theatre Caucuses**

**Architect Creators Caucus** – “Companies in this caucus often begin work with a piece after a first draft has been written. They often invest in the creation of projects and will work with a range of artists in the course of creation. A variety of production partners are often involved to bring a work into production. Architect caucus members program annually but programming tends to vary from year to year. While these companies invest in growing an audience base, it often expands and contracts depending on the programming and make subscription seasons rare” (PACT, “PACT Caucuses” 2).

*E.g. Nightwood Theatre, Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Manitoba Theatre Projects, Workshop West Theatre*

**Category A** – “Companies whose [Canadian Theatre Agreement] company calculation is in category A for at least some of their season or productions” (1).

*E.g. Shaw Festival, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Arts Club Theatre Company, National Arts Centre*

**Broker Creators** – “Companies in this caucus are often the lead partner in premieres or final phases of the development of new work. These companies often work as matchmakers between different artists and audiences and provide different kinds of support for artists (e.g. space, training, resources). These companies are often seen as ‘tastemakers’ for their audiences, introducing them to new artists and companies” (2).

*E.g. Theatre Passe Muraille, Alberta Theatre Projects, Theatre Network, Great Canadian Theatre Company*

**Developmental** – not included in PACT’s most recent caucus categorization; historically combined with the **Established Alternative** caucus to form the Supercaucus, which was



then split into the subgroups **Architect Creators**, **Broker Creators**, and **Speculator Creators Caucus**.

**Established Alternative** – not included in PACT’s most recent caucus categorization; historically combined with the **Developmental** caucus to form Supercaucus, which was then split into the subgroups **Architect Creators**, **Broker Creators**, and **Speculator Creators Caucus**.

**Regional** – “This caucus is comprised of theatres that represent a large region or distinct group within a region and, at times, are one of the only or most established theatre in the area. Companies in this caucus have the dual obligation of bringing work and artists of the highest caliber from the national or world stage to the region while also celebrating high caliber work and artists from their own region. Many regional theatres prioritize programs that nurture emerging work and artists in their region and touring productions throughout their region” (1).

*E.g. Globe Theatre, The Grand Theatre, Theatre New Brunswick, Theatre Newfoundland Labrador*

**Speculator Creators** – “Companies in this caucus are primarily involved in the conception and development of each piece, and the AD is often the core creator. It is also common for these companies to engage in the creation process over a number of years and for the work to stay in the company’s repertoire for multiple seasons once created. Companies in this caucus tend not to have one distinct audience base, but rather create varied work that draws audiences from a variety of places” (2).

*E.g. Playwright’s Workshop Montreal, Nightswimming, Theatre SKAM, Mulgrave Road Theatre*

**Summer** – “Companies in this caucus operate primarily in the summer months. This caucus is currently under review” (2).

*E.g. Blyth Festival, Repercussion Theatre, Shakespeare by the Sea, Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan Festival*

**Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA)** – “Companies in this caucus either have theatre for young audiences as a core mandate or are primarily focused on engaging youth through theatre. However, many companies that have a young company or programs aimed at engaging youth also participate in this caucus” (1).

*E.g. Green Thumb Theatre, Young People’s Theatre, Geordie Productions, Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia*

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