Size Matters: A Consideration of the Canadian Musical

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Abstract: Is the Canadian “shoebox musical” best seen as Broadway’s poor country cousin or as Canadian drama’s illegitimate sibling? This paper will consider the place of the “shoebox musical” with its small cast, few musicians and modest production requirements as a Canadian sub-genre in the larger tradition of the musical theatre. Beginning with an overview of the historical economic, artistic and social conditions that have encouraged, or perhaps forced, Canadian musical theatre artists to produce musicals on a scale almost unimaginable to the Broadway sensibility, the paper goes on to examine the ways in which working within that box has shaped the plays created. From *Billy Bishop Goes to War* to *My Mother’s Lesbian Jewish Wiccan Wedding*, a great many Canadian musicals have been made with a simplicity of style and absence of conspicuous consumption that may be merely a result of the material constraints under which they were created, a diminution of the creators’ grand artistic visions, or may in fact be a theatrical reflection of a Canadian ethos or perhaps an uncomfortable balance of the tension between the two forces. Drawing on personal experience as a playwright and artistic director and interviews with other playwrights and producers, along with popular and critical writing, the author makes a case for the “shoebox musical” as a distinctly Canadian contribution to the world of musical theatre as well as a legitimate contribution to Canadian drama.

For me, this is how it all began. Back in the early 1980s, I was a teenaged apprentice assistant stage manager (ASM) with one of Ontario's summer theatres. One day I was tasked to help load in a musical--something called *Billy Bishop Goes to War*. When I arrived at the loading bay I was extremely annoyed to see that the entire load in crew consisted of myself and the other young ASM, one scrawny guy and one bearded guy. I'd worked musical load-ins before. There were trucks full of costumes and scenery. This was really unfair. I muttered about it to my fellow ASM for a few minutes before the van arrived. Inside the van were half a dozen suitcases, a trunk, and one wooden crate which when opened revealed a toy airplane with some cotton wool clouds attached to a bit of wire. I was youthfully unrestrained in my criticism. I knew about musicals--we'd done *Godspell* at my high

school and I was in *Hello Dolly* at the theatre guild, and I'd grown up watching *The Sound of Music* and *South Pacific* on television. Those were musicals. A couple of suitcases and a toy airplane did not a musical make. My tirade was finally interrupted by the riotous laughter of the two men, who decided it was time to introduce themselves as John Gray and Eric Peterson, creators and performers of *Billy Bishop Goes to War*. Needless to say, this is a moment I am unlikely to forget, and perhaps one that explains my interest in size and the Canadian musical. For when it comes to the contemporary Canadian musical, the question of size has been central to the development, production and reception of the art form.

Small-scale musicals, variously known as shoebox, pocket or suitcase musicals, have dominated the Canadian production of book musicals (which I am broadly defining as any theatre piece in which text and music combine to create a narrative) for the last three decades. Lavish productions with large casts are simply not, it seems, the Canadian way. A cursory glance at what was being produced in Canadian theatres in their 2010/2011 seasons reveals that, not only are Canadian musicals few and far between, the vast majority of them (with revivals of the still quite modest *The Drowsy Chaperone* pushing the size barrier) have casts of ten or less, simple production requirements and basic instrumentation - in other words, they fit into the shoebox.

Here is a random sampling of the 2010/2011 seasons from some of Canada's better-known companies:

- In Vancouver, The Arts Club Theatre is doing three musicals this season, the sole Canadian offering being a revival of its perennial two-hander hit, Dean Reagan's *A Closer Walk with Patsy Cline*. The Vancouver Playhouse is doing one musical, and it's *The Fantasticks*. The Gateway Theatre is doing a Canadian musical this year--Marty Chan's martial arts musical for young people, *The Forbidden Phoenix*. The exciting news from Vancouver is Touchstone's season of three Canadian musicals (to be exact one revival, one new musical and one piece of new music theatre--sizes small, smaller and smallest) leading up to their spring conference on musical theatre.
- Meanwhile in Alberta the Citadel's season opens with *Billy Bishop Goes to War* while Theatre Calgary is doing both *Bishop* and *The Drowsy Chaperone*.
- No Canadian musicals this year at Manitoba Theatre Centre, but Prairie Theatre Exchange is reviving Tracey Power's shoebox jukebox musical, *Back to You, the Life and Music of Lucille Starr*.
- Toronto, home to the big theatres and the big musicals, and to the few commercial theatre companies in this country, offers up lots of productions of American shows, but our own work is hard to find. Canadian Stage and Soulpepper, while they do include Canadian content in their high-profile, high-art seasons, don't really do musicals, although Soulpepper did play host to the latest Gray/Peterson revival of *Billy Bishop* last year. No entries from two of the

Toronto companies with strong traditions of bringing us the best and brightest in new Canadian theatre--Tarragon and Theatre Passe Muraille. The commercial theatres are offering a variety of "Broadway" fare, and one assumes doing so at a profit.

- Montreal's Centaur Theatre stands out for producing the premiere of a new Canadian musical in the spring of 2011--Schwartz's: *The Musical* by Rick Blue and George Bowser.
- Theatre New Brunswick makes an appearance with the original suitcase musical *The Bricklin*, while over the way in Nova Scotia Theatre Neptune's musical offerings are *West Side Story* and *The Wizard of Oz*.
- Rather depressingly, considering its historical mandate to produce new Canadian musicals, the home page of the Charlottetown Festival 2010 announces "the best of Broadway graces our stages." *Anne* is there, of course, and a revival of Leslie Arden and Norm Foster's musical mystery *The Last Resort*, but the headliners are *Hairspray* and *The Buddy Holly Story*.

If we look at the Ontario Summer Theatres association website for the summer of 2012, we can see these theatres following a similar pattern, with nearly a dozen different productions of well-known American musicals, from *The Sound of Music* to *Godspell* to *9 to 5*. The few Canadian entries are the ubiquitous *Billy Bishop Goes to War*, Cathy Elliot's one-woman musical *Moving Day* and *The Man from the Capital*, Colin Heath/John Millard shoebox-sized adaptation of *The Government Inspector*.

Since that first encounter with *Billy Bishop*, I've had more personal experiences with size. Some of these have been as the writer of the rather ironically titled *Larger than Life*, a five-person, one-piano musical which has had a handful of productions across the country, but not without inquiries from artistic directors along the lines of, "Couldn't it be rewritten for four actors?" And, "would it really be so bad to have canned music?" Wearing my other hat, as someone trying to put bums in seats and balance budgets in both producing companies and now in a presenting house, I've found myself struggling with the size math from another perspective. Building on those experiences as well as readings and conversations, this paper examines the issues of size and the Canadian musical--the often contradictory pressures that on the one hand encourage (or perhaps force) Canadians to create small musicals and on the other punish them for being small. Finally, the paper touches on the question of the future of the pocket musical and its place in the Canadian theatre. This paper is a very broad overview, and includes only English language musicals for adults in professional productions since 1965, the year in which *Anne of Green Gables: The Musical* first played in Charlottetown, an event which arguably marks the beginning of the current era of musical theatre in Canada.

As Mel Atkey reminds us in *Broadway North: The Dream of a Canadian Musical Theatre*, "For good or ill, the form that a musical takes is influenced by the business circumstances under which it has been incubated."¹ Ask an Artistic Director at one of Canada's subsidized theatres why he doesn't

produce more (or any) Canadian musicals and you'll probably get the answer, "It's too expensive." This is a lie, or perhaps a kindly half-truth. Yes, musicals are indeed more expensive to produce than straight plays. Even a pocket musical has musicians to be paid, plus you need a musical director and maybe even a choreographer, not to mention additional rehearsal time. Then again, those same Artistic Directors (AD) have no trouble programming *The Producers* or *Cabaret* or *Beauty and the Beast* into their seasons. Those have all the aforementioned costs, plus large casts, extensive set and costume requirements, and expensive rights. So why aren't they "too expensive?"

A little basic accounting tells us that if the real financial impediment is not expense, it must be revenue. And here we come to the hard truth - the problem is not that Canadian musicals are too expensive to produce; the problem is that they are too hard to pay for. In the subsidized theatre as well as in the small independent companies and cooperatives that premiere almost all new Canadian musicals, revenue comes from some combination of box office, fundraising and public subsidy. Given that many non-profit theatre companies count on strong ticket sales from their productions of Broadway musicals to support their other programming, and that what commercial theatre activity there is in Canada focuses almost exclusively on big musicals, what are the forces at work in shaping Canadian musicals differently?

If he's thinking about his box office, our AD knows that he's going to have a problem with "Canadian." While we may have made some inroads in "serious" art forms, including dramatic theatre, in the world of popular entertainment there is still the phenomenon that John Gray described back in 1987 as "a kind of nauseous ennui that many Canadians experience when the words 'Canadian' and 'culture' appear in the same sentence."² "Canadian" and "musical" in the same sentence is, for a lot of people, again as Mr. Atkey has pointed out, simply ridiculous. At the same time, our AD may be committed either personally or as part of his company or funding criteria, to a mandate of "expressing our distinctive Canadian-ness," which puts him in the difficult bind of needing a musical he can sell and also needing one that explicitly addresses community and national identity.

On the other hand it may be that, as William Littler wrote, "the truer Canada's musical theatre is to its immediate circumstances, the greater will be its chance to speak not only to a local audience but to the international community."³ If we are to take *Anne of Green Gables* and *Billy Bishop*, both huge successes (if not on Broadway) and both deeply rooted in very specific Canadian places, times and culture, there may be something to this. These forces combine to influence Canadian

musicals towards explicitly Canadian stories, and at the same time create some discomfort in using the musical theatre format, often understood as a uniquely American genre, to tell these stories.

This particular political/artistic issue can drive size in either direction, a point illustrated by the two musicals that have been big news in New Brunswick this season: the Fredericton Playhouse and Theatre New Brunswick co-production of *The Bricklin: An Automotive Fantasy* with book and lyrics by Allen Cole and Paul Ledoux and music by Allen Cole, and the Saint John Theatre Company's *Marco Polo* by librettist Mark Blagrove and composer Richard Kidd. *The Bricklin* is a classic shoebox musical--small band, single set, small cast with much doubling. At the other end of the scale is *Marco Polo*, which played for one day only to thousands of people in the Saint John arena, with more than 200 performers including the New Brunswick Youth Orchestra, a twenty-five ton replica of a nineteenth century sailing vessel, and a budget of \$350,000.⁴ Sometimes size does pay in terms of corporate and government sponsorship--although not the performers or production volunteers--and only enough for two performances. So if our fictional Artistic Director is not up for the production of a huge community pageant, there's every chance he's going to proceed cautiously by looking for a shoebox musical--or at least be receptive if one comes looking for him.

Canadian content, then, presents a mixture of liabilities and opportunities, considered in terms of prospective box office, public and private funding. The next obstacle for a new musical to overcome is the problem of unfamiliarity. Both in this country and elsewhere, audiences in general, and musical theatre audiences in particular, have shown a tendency to prefer the familiar over the new, encouraging companies looking for assured box office to mount revivals over premieres, not to mention the phenomenon of "the musical of the movie." Canadian audiences grew up watching film versions of *The Sound of Music* and *The Lion King* as well as amateur and professional productions of *Grease* and *Hello Dolly*. They are more likely to be familiar with Tony awards than Doras or Jessies. When faced with the prospect of paying hard-earned cash for an evening of entertainment for the family, they have an understandable tendency to go with a product they know, or at least have heard about. So what's a new musical to do? One strategy artists, encouraged by the growth of the Fringe movement, are using to overcome this problem is self-producing. *The Drowsy Chaperone* and *My Mother's Jewish Lesbian Wiccan Wedding* were produced first by the creators and their friends, and only after their Fringe successes were they considered viable for either commercial or subsidized productions--the same path to success trod by John Gray and Eric Peterson thirty years ago. Self-producing puts a very practical limit on size. How many musically talented friends do you have who are willing to risk putting in weeks and possibly months of work on your untried show? If you're

actually hoping to get paid, you may want to consider John Gray's motivation in keeping Billy Bishop to a cast of two—"That way, we got to keep all the money."⁵

If he's willing to take on something Canadian and new, the AD then has to face up to a particular perceptual challenge--Broadway. Not the actual place or even the actual productions, but the mystique conjured up by the word itself. Although there is no statistical proof of this, it seems a reasonable bet that the majority of the Canadian theatre audience has never actually been to Broadway. Yet any producer or presenter knows that calling something "a Broadway musical" will sell more tickets. This can lead to some curious evenings in the theatre. Most of us have seen productions of "Broadway musicals" produced by Canadian companies that, if not quite fit for a shoebox, have been reduced to utterly non-Broadway levels in production values and cast numbers. Perhaps audiences who have never seen the real thing don't realize that the street gangs in *West Side Story* are meant to have more than three members each, or that the revolting masses in *Evita* aren't really meant to be five people doubling and a beleaguered ASM with an "as cast" clause. Touring musicals are billed as "Broadway shows" on tour, even if not a single member of the company has ever set foot on a Broadway stage and the show has not been seen on Broadway for years. Both journalists and theatre publicists seem obsessed with Broadway as the epitome of musical theatre art. Journalists can't seem to resist lines like the one that headed the *Telegraph-Journal's* review of *The Bricklin* as "it's not Broadway, but..." Even Canada's non-profit theatres collude in this mystique. Consider the headline on the Charlottetown Festival's 2010 season website, "The best of Broadway graces our stages," while at my own theatre (the Imperial in Saint John) we call our musical series "Broadway Plus." Among the Canadians who create musicals the mystique is still powerful, not only for a supporter of Broadway-style musicals like Mel Atkey--"We all want to have a show run on Broadway. After all, it's the Mecca for musical theatre, isn't it?"⁶--but even for an ardent nationalist like John Gray who insists that Canadian musicals need to reflect a totally different (and more modest) sensibility but who also admits, "It's very important to go to New York, it really is."⁷ It seems the Canadian musical is destined to struggle with the belief from both inside and outside the profession, that Broadway is where the real musical theatre lives.

Other writers have spent considerable time and text contemplating the reasons that Canadian musicals have "failed" on Broadway. The critical success of *The Drowsy Chaperone*, with its five Tony awards in 2006, may be a sign that this trend can be broken, and by shows that are still far from lavish, although as a commercial venture with a run of only eighteen months it cannot be held up as a particular success. A useful comparison in this regard can be made with *Jersey Boys*, which took the

Best Musical Tony Award in the same year and is still running on Broadway and in the West End as well as having several touring companies. *The Drowsy Chaperone* is certainly not bringing in that kind of box office. It's a good thing it also doesn't have the same kind of expenses.

One theory as to why our shows don't last on Broadway is that Canadian musicals are simply not big enough. As John Gray said, way back in the days before the mega-musical and the Disney empire, "When your American spectator pays upwards of twenty bucks a ticket, he wants to see equally conspicuous consumption on the part of the play."⁸ What does this mean for our suitcase musicals? It puts us in a classic Catch-22. In order to be produced in Canada a musical must be small, but in order to be really successful in Canada, a musical should be successful on Broadway, but in order to be successful on Broadway a musical must be big. A recent trend to smaller (by Broadway standards) shows such as *Avenue Q* and *Next to Normal* may open up the field to more of our Canadian shoebox musicals, as the expectations of Broadway audiences change.

Even putting aside the question of whether Canadian artists should depend on the judgment of foreigners, there is the factor of Canadian audiences using those same standards. Early champion of a distinct Canadian musical style Mavor Moore said, "It's a tricky thing, and people who expect the big American kind of show imagine that you have tried for the big American effect and failed, when in fact I was trying to get away from it."⁹ A certain amount of "razzle-dazzle" is an important expectation for musical theatre audiences, and considered from this perspective, the majority of Canadian musicals cannot but disappoint.

Coming back to that Artistic Director at one of Canada's subsidized theatres who is considering producing a new Canadian musical, he has more threats to face--both to his own professional career and to his company's artistic and financial health. These stem from the long-standing dismissal of musical theatre within the arts community as not "legitimate art." The late Urjo Kareda once rather dismissively said, "Perhaps the musical is a way of going to the theatre without really going to the theatre."¹⁰ Michael Ayoub once called the musical theatre "the bastard child" of Canadian drama¹¹ and Tim Fort, in the *Canadian Theatre Review's* one issue devoted exclusively to musical theatre, said, "Praising the musical form still seems heretical in most intellectual circles."¹² To this day, musicals are excluded from most literary and playwriting competitions and prizes, ironically including our own Carol Bolt Award, named for the woman who gave us the great pocket musical, *Red Emma*. There has been little serious academic study of musical theatre, and within many of our "legitimate" actor training institutions there is still considerable prejudice against musical theatre. As a theatre professional, what attitudes has our fictional artistic director assimilated? How much

training or experience does he have with musical theatre? As a career choice, does he want to be associated with middlebrow popular entertainment or does he want to be taken seriously?

Even if our AD is “musical-friendly,” what about the people who control the purse strings? I imagine his internal monologue:

If my company has very little money available to support new playwriting (which of course it does) can I convince my board of directors that it should be spent on a frivolous musical? If my board of directors is keen to see better box office, how can I convince them that we shouldn't do something low-risk? And how is it going to look on my grant applications? Will the funding agencies start making noises about how I am ‘commercializing’ my product and cut down the trickle of grant money coming my way?

As an example of the challenge of grant-writing for musical theatre, here are the Arts New Brunswick criteria for theatre creation grants: “Eligible genres of theatre include those whose intent and/or content places creativity, self-expression and/or experimentation above the current demands and format expectations of the mainstream industry, and has a significance that extends beyond being solely a form of entertainment?”¹³ Maybe if the artistic director commissions a shoebox musical he can argue that it is not within the “format of the mainstream industry” i.e. Broadway. That will also help calm the fears of the board of directors about investing too much in an untried piece. So it’s not surprising that he answers the playwright who’s pitching a twelve-person musical comedy that he can't take it because it would be “too expensive.”

From a playwright’s perspective, the interplay of all these forces makes the task of getting a new musical produced especially frustrating, with size as a major concern. Richard Ouzounian in an interview with Lesli Arden, describes the twenty- seven years it took to get her *The Princess and the Handmaiden* to the stage of the Lorraine Kimsa Young People's Theatre: “I wrote the first draft for three people, one of whom had to also play the piano,” Arden recalls, sitting on a sofa in the Lorraine Kimsa offices. “That's all that Prologue for the Performing Arts (the touring group that commissioned the show) could afford.” Years later, producer John McKellar took an interest in it. “With his encouragement, I expanded it to 18 people and then to 35. But then we brought it to Allen MacInnis, who said he would like to do it here but he couldn't handle a cast bigger than 10.”¹⁴

While Arden seems to approach the process with equanimity, not surprisingly some chafe under the constraints. Musical theatre veteran Paul Ledoux said in a 2007 CBC interview, “John [Roby] and I have written those small, producible musicals and both of us said, ‘God, I’m tired of doing this! Let’s just write a big one.’ So we’re sending it out, saying ‘Now, if we can just talk

anybody into doing this...’ But you get to the point where you think, I’ve made money for a lot of theatres in this country, and if they can afford to do Shakespeare, why can’t they afford to do a big Canadian musical?”¹⁵ As of 2010, the play he was talking about had not yet been produced. Some artists compromise, creating small versions of musicals that can someday be produced on a larger scale, as Ledoux’s *Fire* has been. Some people just leave the country for greener (and larger) pastures. But some stay and strive to develop our own distinctive form of musical theatre, shaped not only by the material exigencies of Canadian theatre practice but also by the culture they are trying to express, and the impulse towards the pocket musical comes from this direction as well. The Canadian small-scale musical, at its best, is not just a watered-down version of a Broadway musical but a Canadian approach to Canadian stories. It is more modest than its American cousin not only in size but stylistically and thematically, inviting audiences to share an intimate human relationship rather than to be awed by lavish production.

Clearly then, numerous forces combine to pressure Canadian musical theatre creators to create pocket musicals. Is it possible that this format has an effect on the themes treated by our writers? Having struggled with size issues in their creative process, does size become a preoccupation in their product?

Interestingly, metaphorical “size” is an important element in two of the most common narratives in Canadian musicals—larger than life public figures (whether historical or fictional or somewhere in between) and intensely ordinary, “little” people? While by no means all shoebox musicals fall inside these categories, a short list of those that belong to the former includes *Billy Bishop Goes to War*, *McLuhan: The Musical*, *The Bricklin*, *Don Messer’s Jubilee*, *A Closer Walk with Patsy Cline*, *Colours in the Storm*, *Fire*, *Love is Strange*, *Girls in the Gang*, *Dracula*. Musicals about ordinary folk include *Eighteen Wheels*, *Cruel Tears*, *Menopositive*, *Larger than Life*, *Fireweeds*, *My Mother’s Lesbian Jewish Wiccan Wedding*, *Rock ‘n Roll*, *Larry’s Party*, *Two Pianos, Four Hands* (which is a musical of sorts). In both these sets of plays, the “size” of the characters and of their lives plays an important part in their stories—whether explicitly or not.

Putting history into a shoebox has been keeping Canadian playwrights, musical or not, busy pretty much since the first bunch of actors with an LIP grant piled into a van, and this has understandably influenced writers of musical theatre, many of whom also work in “legit” drama. The Canadian dramatic approach to history (*1837: The Farmers’ Revolt* being a classic example) has tended to a style that includes actors playing multiple roles, episodic structures, direct address, simple set designs, and an approach John Gray describes as taking audiences away from the conventions of the

fourth wall and into “the arena of the storyteller.”¹⁶ In the musical theatre, these elements show up in a variety of combinations, and have a profound impact on the ways in which audiences are encouraged to relate to the people and incidents being portrayed. These texts avoid a ‘monumentalist’ approach to their characters, emphasizing instead their human frailties, failures and setbacks as much as, if not more than, their grand achievements. The small scale of production also serves to bring any soaring glorification of the time and the person back down to earth. As much as we may be swept away by Bishop's tales of glorious battle, the fact that he's demonstrating with a toy airplane undercuts his heroic glamour and serves as a reminder of the boyish *naïveté* that spurred many young Canadians to enlist in World War One. The doubling (or more) of roles emphasizes the basic humanity of someone who can be played by any actor. Malcolm Bricklin may be a smooth-talking Yankee businessman with all the right moves, but he is played by the same actor who was the beer-swilling, UIC-collecting ne'er-do-well in the last scene. Once we have shoved these grand figures into a shoebox, they appear a lot more human-sized.

Conversely, putting “little” people on stage invests them with a certain stature, encouraging us to see their lives and concerns as worthy of serious consideration. Unlike their American or British peers, Canadian audiences in general still have little experience of seeing themselves onstage (or on the television or the movie screen). The shoebox musical provides an excellent forum for this, being in itself a (rather uncomfortable) meeting ground for the grand mythology of the American musical and the real world of the Canadian theatre. Many of the characters in our pocket musicals are also uncomfortable with the size of their lives, whether because they dream of bigger things, like the former band members in *Rock 'n Roll* or because their small ordinary lives have been unexpectedly caught up in bigger issues, like the son in *My Mother's Lesbian Jewish Wiccan Wedding* or because they are somehow too big for the lives they inhabit, like the women in *Larger than Life*. A common thread amongst these plays is the search for an acceptance of the smallness of everyday life, an acceptance that we will never be rock stars or concert pianists, and that we will spend our lives in Truro or Scarborough, not in New York or Vienna. Perhaps these little musicals, and their creators, are also struggling to accept that they will just never be “Broadway.” As any writer knows, our characters tend to play out our own stories.

Given that the practical and economic realities surrounding the production of Canadian musicals are not likely to become conducive to large-scale musicals, what does the future hold for the Canadian pocket musical? Taking a cue from our characters and embracing our modest reality might just be the best thing for Canadian musical creators, producers and audiences. What if journalists,

publicists and playwrights stopped using Broadway as the only yardstick to measure a musical? Within the Canadian theatre community, rather than perpetuating the categories inherited from the Americans of “legit” vs. “Broadway” maybe the shoebox musical, already straddling the border between them, can lead the way in letting them go. Canadian theatre is small enough, do we really want to divide off one section of it? Or would it be a better tactic to insist on the place of the musical within it--to claim Carol Bolt's *Red Emma* as a musical and *Colours in the Storm* as a legitimate Canadian drama?

Tim Fort wrote nearly twenty years ago that “The new Canadian musical is poised to move in, ready to take us to a wiser era of musical theatre beyond the ready affirmation of the status quo that characterized the last golden age of America exported all too persuasively now in Oklahoma!”¹⁷ Two decades later, are we finally ready to let go of our attachment to the big American Broadway dream and instead celebrate dreams that come in a different shape, one that fits nicely into a parka pocket?

Notes

- ¹ Mel Atkey, *Broadway North: The Dream of a Canadian Musical Theatre* (Toronto: Natural Heritage Books, 2006), 240.
- ² John Gray, *Local Boy Makes Good* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1987), 159.
- ³ William Littler, "Developing Opera and Musical Theatre" in *Contemporary Canadian Theatre*, ed. Anton Wagner (Toronto: Simon & Pierre, 1985), 281.
- ⁴ April Cunningham, "Marco Polo: Big Production and Big Budget" *New Brunswick Telegraph-Journal* (Thursday September 16, 2010), C4.
- ⁵ John Gray with Eric Peterson, *Billy Bishop Goes to War* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1981), 7.
- ⁶ Atkey, 37.
- ⁷ John Gray in Robert Wallace and Cynthia Zimmerman, *The Work: Conversations with English-Canadian Playwrights* (Toronto: Coach House Press, 1982), 56.
- ⁸ Gray, *Billy Bishop*, 11.
- ⁹ Atkey, 69.
- ¹⁰ Urjo Kareda in Dennis Johnston, "Knowing What They Want: Musical Theatre in Vancouver," *Canadian Theatre Review* 72 (Fall 1992): 12.
- ¹¹ Michael Ayoub, "What More Could You Ask For," *Canadian Theatre Review* 72 (Fall 1992): 9.
- ¹² Tim Fort, "Oklahoma in Inuvik," *Canadian Theatre Review* 72 (Fall 1992): 33.
- ¹³ Arts New Brunswick Website (URL accessed 25 September, 2010) http://www.artsnb.ca/pdf/DESC_CR_E.pdf
- ¹⁴ Richard Ouzounian, *Toronto Star* Saturday November 14, 2009.
- ¹⁵ CBC Arts Website (URL accessed 5 October, 2010) <http://www.cbc.ca/arts/theatre/musicals.html>
- ¹⁶ Gray in *The Work*, 6.
- ¹⁷ Fort, 33.

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