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THE DEVELOPMENT AND INITIAL PUBLIC RELATIONS
EFFORTS OF THE TYRONE GUTHRIE THEATRE

BY
SANDRA K. CUDMORE

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
degree, Master of Arts
Major in Speech
South Dakota State University
1988
THE DEVELOPMENT AND INITIAL PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORTS OF THE TYRONE GUTHRIE THEATRE

I wish to thank Michael R. Schliessmann, for his patience, guidance and friendship during the course of this study. I will always admire his sense of professionalism and love for his work.

I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to Allen Lathrop, Curator of the Guthrie Theatre Performance Archives at the University of Minnesota, for his assistance and cooperation during my research.

This thesis is approved as a creditable and independent investigation by a candidate for the degree, Master of Arts, and is acceptable for meeting the thesis requirements for this degree. Acceptance of this thesis does not imply that the conclusions reached by the candidate are necessarily the conclusions of the major department.

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I wish to thank my advisor, Dr. Mike Schliessmann, for his patience, guidance and friendship during the course of this study. I will always admire his sense of professionalism and love for his work.

I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to Allan Lathrop, Curator of the Guthrie Theatre Performance Archives at the University of Minnesota for his assistance and cooperation during my research.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Origin and Justification of the Study

When the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre opened its doors on May 7, 1963 it ushered in a new era in American Theatre. Actors located in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area questioned the quality of theatre offered by local producers. Their cry?--to "decentralize." Actors felt a step to New York was what they needed to improve theatre's quality and challenge of the art of theatre but also that such a move would make it difficult for actors to reach the top (Morison 1964, 8).

In New York City theatrical creativity and opportunities were being stifled by economic pressure. Over-crowding, over-cautious producers and over-priced productions were destroying theatre as it had been recognized for the past two decades (Guthrie 1964, 17).

Sir Tyrone Guthrie and his staff began searching for an ideal city for a repertory theatre. They believed a repertory theatre could be an outlet or an expansion of New York theatre which would help the theatrical
situation of the country (Guthrie 1964, 17). They found the location in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota.

The year 1988 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. It is an opportune time to analyze the motivation and reasoning behind Guthrie's actions in establishing the theatre.

The Tyrone Guthrie Theatre has become an integral part of cultural entertainment in the Midwest. The theatre employs some two hundred people, plays to audiences from across the country and attracts directors and designers world-wide (Behl 1988, 2).

When Guthrie finalized the decision to make the Twin Cities home for his repertory theatre he cited the following reasons:

(1) The location of the Twin Cities being in the heartland of America.  
(2) The vitality of the Twin Cities' general cultural activity.  
(3) The presence of a large state university and many small private colleges.  
(4) A spontaneous enthusiasm shown by the Upper Midwest community for such a new theatre project (Behl 1988, 2).

A study of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre provided an opportunity to examine the philosophy of an influential individual in the theatre world. It allowed for the quality and characteristics of theatre at that time to be reviewed and analyzed. In addition, it provided an
opportunity to review the public relations techniques used in establishing the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre.

Finally, my background and interest in theatre steered me toward doing such a study. I believe the steps and procedures taken in establishing the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre must be recognized and understood in order to have a full understanding and appreciation of the importance of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. When theatre overlaps from an educational basis to a commercial basis there are reasons for it and ways in which it happens. This study specifically addressed the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in relationship to these areas. The information gathered is beneficial and applicable to similar processes. Others may be able to use this information when establishing arts organizations in their communities.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify the elements that characterized the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre as a landmark in repertory theatre across the United States.

In order to achieve this purpose answers to the following questions were sought:

(1) What is the distinction between a repertory theatre and other types of theatre?
(2) What was the quality of professional theatre in the Twin Cities prior to the construction of the Guthrie Theatre?

(3) What was the status of professional theatre in the country at this time?

(4) What reasons were determined to justify a regional theatre outside of New York?

(5) What justified the Twin Cities area as the selected location for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre?

(6) Who were the people responsible for the ground work of establishing the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre other than Guthrie himself? What was their impact?

(7) What did the actual process of establishing the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre entail?

(8) What importance did public relations have in the early years of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre's existence? What specific public relations techniques were used to achieve the goals the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre set?

Procedures and Methodology of Study

The following procedures were utilized in an attempt to answer the questions raised in the "Statement of Purpose:"

1. The following literature was surveyed to determine if any previous studies had been conducted
regarding the rationale and process of establishing the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis, Minnesota:

**Educational Resource Information Center.**


A survey of the titles listed in comprehensive indexes of these sources indicated that no duplicate studies in this area had been completed. During the review the following titles indicated works relating to this area:


It was determined that these articles did not focus on the development of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre or its early public relations efforts.
2. To determine the history and background of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, the administrative files of Sir Tyrone Guthrie's administrative head, Oliver Rea, were searched. Information was found in the form of memos, letters, bylaws, press releases, some opening remarks of fundraising events and magazine/newspaper articles.

3. To better determine answers to the questions concerning Tyrone Guthrie's theatre philosophy, the status of the professional theatre at that time, why the Midwest was the ideal location and the process of establishing the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre the following books were reviewed:


4. To further the study of Sir Tyrone Guthrie's techniques and the status of theatre at the time, back issues of the *Minneapolis Star and Tribune* and the New
York Times were searched. As the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary, the theatre's own library provided valuable information. A special television broadcast, "Onstage--25 Years at the Guthrie," was also reviewed.

5. To clarify certain facts and philosophies, a telephone interview was conducted with Oliver Rea, Guthrie's original administrative head and one of the three main figures in the theatre's establishment. Rea provided insight about the development of the theatre and commented on its importance.

6. Finally, the study summarized and answered questions developed in the "Statement of Purpose."

Conclusions were drawn and possibilities for further study were suggested.
CHAPTER II
SIR TYRONE GUTHRIE'S PHILOSOPHY OF THEATRE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE TYRONE GUTHRIE THEATRE OF MINNESOTA

The purpose of this chapter is to identify Sir Tyrone Guthrie's philosophy of theatre and define repertory theatre. This chapter will also establish what impact Sir Tyrone Guthrie's philosophy of theatre had in determining the style of theatre to be offered at the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre of Minnesota.

Specifically, the following questions were addressed: (1) What is the purpose of theatre in Sir Tyrone Guthrie's viewpoint? (2) How does repertory theatre compare to other styles of theatre? (3) What standards must a theatre company possess that will be parallel with Guthrie's philosophy of theatre?

Sir Tyrone Guthrie: His Philosophy of the Theatre

Many theatre writers have made Sir Tyrone Guthrie the subject of their work. In the past some have showered him with generous compliments and praise. Still others have struck him down with stinging criticism.
Developing an understanding of these good and bad opinions is the first step to comprehending Guthrie's style and theory concerning theatre.

Guthrie was noted as possessing qualities few directors ever come by. "He is a genius," noted Canadian drama critic, playwright and novelist, Robertson Davies. "... he possesses extraordinary and exceptional intellectual and imaginative endowment of a creative, inventive, originative kind" (Davies 1956, 29). Davies explained that Guthrie had the ability to rouse actors to enthusiasm for an interpretation of a play which is against their own apparent interest. He said:

He can persuade them to wear masks, and think masks better than their own faces; he can persuade beautiful ladies to hide their beauty, and he can induce handsome gentlemen to poke fun at their own handsomeness; he can lead them to sacrifice every shred of dignity, and he can reveal a dignity within them which was unsuspected by themselves" (Davies 1956, 90).

Guthrie's sharp sense of stage picture was one characteristic Robert Hatch, a contributing theatre writer for Horizon, believed to be noteworthy. According to Hatch, every good director must be conscious of the broad stage picture, but Guthrie seemed to revel in the moments when "the scene bursts out in flashing jewels and swirling capes, with trumpets sounding, armies passing, and fortune on the wing" (Hatch 1963, 36).
Although the praise has been sufficient there are those who disagree with Guthrie's style and interpretation as a director. Critics have mocked the domineering control that he wielded over actors. According to Davies, actors, themselves, were justified in their complaints against Guthrie:

Quite often they have not been allowed to give everything they wish to give to the play, in the precise way in which they wish to give it. Instead they have been allowed to give what is helpful to the director's conception (Davies 1956, 90).

Guthrie's sense of enthusiasm and energetic drive which some theatre writers applaud, is a criticism from others. Seymour Peck, a contributing theatre writer for the New York Times Magazine said:

Being larger than life, Guthrie has little patience with plays that are merely lifesize. The realistic, naturalistic style that has dominated the American stage for many years bores this British director utterly. He constantly seeks out the fanciful, the fantastic, the poetical, the unusual in the theatre. He rushes with furious force from experiment to experiment much like, as Kenneth Tynan puts it, "a mad scientist" (Peck 1956, 16).

Writers have criticized characteristics like these time and time again but such characteristics constituted Guthrie's style. He had the style of a flashy, brilliant stage picture; the energetic, and sometimes chaotic, directing drive and a technique to bring out more in an actor than even the actor himself knew he possessed. To better understand how this style
developed, Guthrie's philosophy of theatre must be examined.

A person is not born with a philosophy about life. It grows and develops as the person grows and develops through experiences and contact with people. A philosophy of theatre is developed in the same manner. A person grows and develops through each theatre job accepted, each role played and each creative endeavor undertaken. As the process continues the philosophy takes shape.

As Guthrie grew and experienced life's trials and offerings his philosophy developed. His characteristics as a director, a producer and an actor aided him in the process but even more important than these was his characteristic of being a man of theatre. (Hatch 1963, 35). This title designated him as someone who was concerned for the standards, creative vigor and public recognition of the art to which he dedicated his life. The man of theatre lays the groundwork for his other titles.

**Guthrie's Early Experiences With Theatre**

Guthrie became involved with theatre just after World War I. Although he was a young man, he recognized in himself unusual resources of creative energy (Hatch 1963, 35). He experimented with singing but soon
realized that though his voice was prominent, it didn't offer pleasing qualities. Next, he turned to acting but his body's physical dimensions limited his role versatility. There are few roles that an amply built six-foot-five-inch man can portray.

After taking a job with the British Broadcasting Company in Belfont he realized he had a knack for making rehearsals run smoothly and set an attitude which induced creative accomplishments (Hatch 1963, 35). He later joined the Scottish National Players and the current that would sweep him into fame began.

During his life Guthrie worked as much for the theatre as in it. This is evident from his early years of choosing to work in the institution atmosphere of theatre rather than the commercial aspect. His involvement in theatre included the National Players in Scotland; the B.B.C. in London; the Festival Theatre in Cambridge; the Canadian Broadcasting Company; the Westminster Theatre; the Old Vic; the Phoenix in New York; the Habimah in Tel Aviv; the Edinburgh International Festival; the Festival Theatre in Stratford, Ontario; and finally the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis (Hatch 1963, 36).

The timetable of events which Guthrie experienced was the basis from which his philosophy originated. He
staged every kind of play available to a modern director but he will be remembered most for his revival of the classics. According to Hatch, Guthrie rejuvenated the classics and offered audiences exciting entertainment. Hatch states, "He will be remembered, I think, as the director who pounded the dust out of the classic spectacles and brought them back to life" (Hatch 1963, 36-37).

Guthrie's philosophy of theatre began with the audience. Audiences became aware of Guthrie because he was very much aware of the audience (Hatch 1963, 36). It is this awareness of the audience that molds the other elements of his philosophy.

The elements crucial to the Guthrie philosophy of theatre are: (1) that the essential magic of the theatre is not illusion but ritual; (2) the classics are the plays in which men have found, not an imitation of life, but an occasion for the ceremonies that give life its shape and isolate its significance; and (3) the theatre in which such plays are to be performed should provide a platform stage with the audience disposed in an encompassing arena (Hatch 1963, 31).
The Nature of Ritual and Its Significance on Religion

According to Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary ritual means the performance of ceremonial acts (Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary 1984, 1013). This can be seen in the history of theatre and in Guthrie's philosophy. A play is written and performed in acts where certain action takes place. The action is the same each time the play is performed even though there may be different interpretations. Guthrie claimed that ritual differs from illusion because the audience becomes involved with the ritual process rather than being fooled by the illusion or what may seem like magic. He stated:

... the whole idea of the thing is not to create illusion--I don't believe that is what theatre is about. I don't believe people go to the theatre to be presented with a palpable fiction and think it's really happening ... from a very early age young children begin to rumble that Peter Pan is an elderly lady, and that she is flying on a wire. And the grown up audience, I don't believe for a moment, is persuaded that this palpable fiction is reality, any more than when one reads a novel one really thinks that the events in it are happening. If it is a good enough novel you are completely carried away, you are lost in a world of imagination (Guthrie 1963, 45).

While Guthrie was growing up, the theatre strived to make a comment on real life with symbolical reenactments of real life, but not create illusion (Guthrie 1963, 45). This was one boundary Guthrie outlined, but
he did not want the extreme to prevail. The extreme was intellectual theatre. Guthrie said:

If you want to be intellectual you don't go to the theatre. You do not go to the theatre to have intellectual ideas presented. I know there is something called intellectual theatre, but to me it is a great big crashing bore. Anybody who has got any sense knows that when human beings get together in large numbers a great performer will fuse their identity; each single person ceases to be himself and becomes a tiny bit of a single collective personality, that of the audience. And the actor's art is to fuse them together, and to play on that great single collective personality (Guthrie 1963, 45).

Rather than illusion, Guthrie viewed the magic of theatre existing through the ritual process (Guthrie, 1955, 30). It is difficult to determine where or when the practice of using ritual proceedings in theatre began. But it is obvious when and where ritual itself originated. About fifth century B.C. the Athenian civilization's official ritual practices were based on the belief in Homeric deities. Gods such as Zeus, the King and Father of all Gods, and Hera, his sister-wife, were worshiped and feared. Their life was a tumult of passion and was imagined to take place on Mount Olympus. The Olympian deities existed in a sophisticated era that stemmed from far more primitive conceptions.
The Extent of Religion and Its Role in Guthrie's Philosophy of Theatre

Myth is defined in Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary as a traditional story originating in a preliterate society, dealing with supernatural beings, ancestors or heroes (Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary 1984, 781-82). Today people continue to worship on this basis. The myth that God created the world in six days states with splendid and majestic simplicity peoples' belief that the present material setting owes its existence to some great power. This setting is part of a plan which mere humans do not understand, but timidly hope and devoutly believe to be benevolent (Guthrie 1955, 24). It is the imagination which humans possess that conceives the image of the begetter of this plan. Guthrie's book, In Various Directions, acknowledges the belief that God the Father created us in his image. In turn people create Him in their individual image through the imagination they possess (Guthrie 1955, 24).

Roman Catholics pray to the Almighty God, to the Blessed Virgin and to the saints. Protestants worship through certain ideas of reverence such as love for mothers, fathers, wives or husbands. Some individuals worship material items such as money, success or conformity, and respectability. They may not actually
kneel down and address petitions to these certain Gods but they do make sacrifices to them. Guthrie said, "Don't you know children who have been sacrificed, literally sacrificed, and by adoring parents with the best intentions, on the altars of respectability and conformity?" (Guthrie 1955, 27)

Guthrie related theatre to God as a religious ritual. Like all the rest of nature, humans are creatures of habit. People like to find what they believe to be a good way of doing something and then continue it. Human thoughts fall into habitual patterns but the ritual nature of habit is more clearly seen in action than thought (Guthrie 1955, 30).

Guthrie viewed the sacrifice as being one of the most influential elements of the religious ritual. Beginning with human sacrifice it evolved to animal sacrifices and eventually took only a symbolic form. It is the story of sacrifice that prompted the first form of theater, the tragedy. Guthrie clarified the relationship of the ritual of sacrifice and drama:

... the first actors of tragedy in Athens were priests. They ritually re-enacted the death and resurrection of Dionysus. Note the analogy with our Christian ritual. Christ was sacrificed for us--a human sacrifice--and in the ritual of Holy Communion the priest recapitulates in words certain facts of the passion, or sacrifice, and these words are precisely accompanied by ritual mime, which symbolically commemorates the breaking of Christ's
body and the shedding of his blood (Guthrie 1955, 32).

Guthrie further explained the relationship of ritual and theatre with the connection between Shakespearean and modern tragedy. In Macbeth the themes of murder and ambition were dominant. Guthrie said

... the murder is of an age to be Macbeth's father. He is also Macbeth's King, and a King is a kind of a father. The regicide is a sort of father-murder. In this respect the tragedy of King Macbeth bears a striking resemblance to that of King Oedipus (Guthrie 1955, 33).

Guthrie concluded that this nature of tragedy has not changed:

Macbeth, Hamlet, Phaedra, Faust, Becket, even Willy Loman in Death of a Salesman, are all like the protagonists of Greek tragedy, victims at a ceremony of sacrifice, where, though the victim is not physically carved up, his passion is ritually commemorated, relived in word and deed (Guthrie 1955, 33).

Guthrie's Relationship With the Classic Forms of Theatre

The second phase of Guthrie's philosophy of theatre applies the ritual of ceremony to the classics. In a press release written by Guthrie he cites the importance of the classics:

Because they are what the best minds in previous generations have united to admire, only through the classics can intelligent standards of criticism be established. You can profitably compare Gielgud's Hamlet, for instance, with that of Maurice Evans. Whereas, if you compare the performance of X in one ephemeral comedy with that of Y in another, you are
comparing chalk with cheese and serious criticism descends into mere gossip (Guthrie 1963, 1).

Guthrie's book, In Various Directions, outlines the history of the classics more clearly. Secular drama developed as a product of the Renaissance. The power of the church declined thus the theatre patronage (which up to this point largely came from the church) became more common among royalty and great noblemen. It wasn't long before writers and players began to see that patrons were not necessary. If what they produced was widely accepted they could break even with their own productions and make a handsome profit (Guthrie 1955, 46). The commercial theater was born. Theatre became just another commodity for sale.

Guthrie believed that the distinction between commercial theatre and artistic theatre was always more clearly defined and preserved in Europe. Countries such as Germany and France have subsidized arts organizations using public money for years. The English-speaking countries have lagged behind in the cultural development. Guthrie said:

Theatre to them [England and the United States] has never been accepted as an Art: it is merely entertainment. And the view has been consistently held that if an entertainment cannot pay its way it cannot be any good. This view is still general in the United States (Guthrie 1955, 46).
This inability to accept theatre as an art develops at an early age. During a *New York Times* Youth Forum televised in 1959 by WRCA-TV, various youths expressed their views on aid for cultural organizations. One youth was reported as saying, "... such subsidies would be just another step in our run towards socialism--socialism is a big evil and I don't want to see it here in the United States" (*New York Times* 1959, 20).

Sol Hurok, a Broadway producer, was the guest speaker for the forum. Hurok believed the United States government should subsidize cultural organizations such as repertory theatre, ballet and opera companies. According to Hurok, "the American people are hungry for the art the repertory theatres could dispense. Such companies are necessary if the United States is to demonstrate properly its cultural potential in foreign lands" (*New York Times* 1959, 20).

In order to feed this hunger, Guthrie believed the classics needed to play a more important role in American theatre. According to Guthrie, American theatre lacked knowledge of what plays should be considered "classics" (Guthrie 1964, 40). The first plays Guthrie ranked as classics were those such as *Oedipus*, *The Bacchae*, *Medea*, and *The Frogs*. He viewed them as classics because the dramatists were products of their
time who lived in Athens, a society that was public, compact, highly sophisticated and articulate (Guthrie 1955, 49). Present day Athens remains highly compact. A person can still easily walk to the Parthenon from any part of the city. This gave the Athenian society a homogeneity that no modern city can possess (Guthrie 1955, 41).

It was the cultivated homogeneous society which enabled the Athenian drama to flourish but it was gradually formed over many generations. The Athenians' exposure to drama enhanced the quality of the classics, thus the quality of drama.

According to Guthrie, the lack of exposure to quality (classic) drama was the reason America lagged behind the theatres of Sophocle, Shakespeare and Moliere (Guthrie 1955, 44). He said:

A taste for art can only be acquired by exposing yourself to art, by looking at pictures, for instance, until you acquire an instinctive, subconscious feeling for line, texture, color, composition and so on . . . only after several generations have spent time and energy on the process, do results begin to be gradually apparent. (Guthrie 1955, 43).

Guthrie believed that after American audiences become more exposed to art over a period of generations they will become more comparable to Athenian audiences (Guthrie 1955, 53). Guthrie reasoned that they will go
to the theater not just as "... an idle pastime, to hear pretty music, to see pretty young things in pretty frocks and laugh at comedians cracking jokes. The theatre will be a place of worship" (Guthrie 1955, 55).

The Relationship of Repertory Style Theatre to Guthrie's Philosophy of Theatre

Fundamentally, repertory theater consists of one cast that performs up to six different plays in successive evenings (Guthrie 1960[?], 5). An actor may portray a soldier one evening, a salesman the next and a judge the third night. The company may open with Three Men on a Horse the first evening, and perform Hamlet the second. Meanwhile a third would be in rehearsal and when it opens a fourth show is just beginning rehearsals. Depending on the season's length, by the eleventh or twelfth week it is possible six plays would be in the repertoire.

As opposed to stock style, which commercial theatre is based on, repertory theatre does not perform plays in long, consecutive runs. A company usually consists of twenty or more members. This ensures that the actors have no chance of becoming stale playing one role (Guthrie 1960[?], 5).

According to Hatch, Guthrie believed repertory provided the richest public experience with the means
available. It also afforded actors the "variety of assignment and familiarity with the basic literature of their art without which they cannot become craftsmen," (Hatch 1963, 37).

Guthrie charged that the commercial theatre offered actors no goal beyond their own success and that it forced them either to jump rapidly from one failure to the next or bury themselves for months, perhaps years, in a single role (Hatch 1963, 37).

In a brochure, from the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre Foundation, Guthrie cited advantages of repertory style:

The cohesiveness of one company of professionals working as a unit for the entire season makes it possible to be flexible in adding performances of particularly successful plays and introducing new plays ... most of the playing company will take leading roles in some productions as well as secondary parts in others. This not only assures theater excellence for the audience, but is vital to the professional actor who joins the playing company to widen his or her acting horizon (Guthrie 1963[?], 2).

Guthrie and his managing directors, Oliver Rea and Peter Zeisler, believed repertory style has three solid advantages, (1) visitors take in two or three quick plays in succession which is an inducement to stay a night or two and make the theater the centerpiece of a visit to the city; (2) the standard of actors' performances are higher; and, (3) unsuccessful
presentations are buried early at dead of night, successes exploited (Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler 1959, 2).

Guthrie's idea of repertory is a company that exists somewhere between the pure hazards of commercial theatre and the utter security or boredom of a resident theatre; a theatre that falls prey to monotony of play selections, style and theory (Hatch 1963, 41). It was this viewpoint of repertory theatre, combined with Guthrie's track record and expertise, that convinced colleagues that his plan was necessary and obtainable.

Summary

Tyrone Guthrie's philosophy and theatre style were influenced by his life experiences and beliefs. As a young man he became involved with theatre. Throughout the years he realized that he was more talented in directing than the acting aspect of theatre (Hatch 1963, 35).

According to Canadian drama critic, Robertson Davies, Guthrie possessed qualities few directors ever have. He said Guthrie had the ability to rouse actors to create interpretations of plays they originally had little interest in (Davies 1956, 90).

In addition to this Guthrie possessed a sharp sense of stage picture. Robert Hatch, a Horizon contributing theatre writer, noted Guthrie for his
brilliance and flair in making a scene dazzle and sparkle with jewels, costumes and energy (Hatch 1963, 36).

Guthrie's directing characteristics developed from his philosophy of theatre. This philosophy began with the audience. According to Hatch, audiences were aware of Guthrie because he was aware of the audience.

Three elements were crucial to Guthrie's philosophy. They were: (1) the essential magic of the theatre is not illusion but ritual (2) the classics are the plays in which men have found, not an imitation of life, but an occasion for the ceremonies that give life its shape and isolate its significance and (3) the theatre in which such plays are to be performed should provide a platform stage with the audience disposed in and encompassing arena (Hatch 1963, 37).

Guthrie's philosophy of theatre was also based on religion. According to Guthrie the element of ritual found in various religious acts is what theatre audiences experience when watching a play. He said they become involved with the ritual process rather than being fooled by the illusion or what may seem like magic (Guthrie 1963, 45).

The ritual process played an important part in establishing the first form of theatre, the tragedy. According to Guthrie, the first actors of tragedy were
the Athenian priests. They ritually re-enacted the death and resurrection of the God, Dionysus (Guthrie 1955, 32).

The classics, which were products of the Athenians and their religious rituals, influenced Guthrie's philosophy. According to Guthrie, the classics were what the best minds of previous generations united to admire. He said that only through the classics could men establish intelligent standards of criticism (Guthrie 1963, 5).

According to Guthrie, the American theatre lacked knowledge and an appreciation for the classics. Thus, the United States—and other English-speaking countries—lagged behind in culture. According to Guthrie, the lack of knowledge and appreciation was due to a lack of exposure to the classes. He said the Athenians flourished in drama (the classics) and art because they gradually formed it through exposure to it over a period of generations (Guthrie 1955, 44).

This philosophy became the basis of Guthrie's conclusion that a repertory theatre, based on the classics, should be established in the United States. He preferred repertory style to stock because repertory theatre does not perform plays in long, consecutive runs. According to Hatch, Guthrie believed repertory theatre provided the richest public experience with the
means available. It also afforded actors a variety of roles which gave them the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the basic literature of their art and become craftsmen (Hatch 1963, 37).

Guthrie's philosophy and style of theatre was influential in his decision to establish a repertory theatre in the United States. Combined with knowledge of the classics and his own beliefs of what they offered, he persuaded his colleagues that a repertory style theatre would enhance American theatre and offer a beginning to building an appreciation for the arts. The development of that theatre is analyzed in succeeding chapters.
CHAPTER III

EXTENT AND NATURE OF THE QUALITY OF THEATRE ON BROADWAY PRIOR TO THE PLANNING OF THE SIR TYRONE GUTHRIE THEATRE PROJECT

Guthrie's book, A New Theatre, acknowledges the fact that at the turn of the twentieth century it was common for every major city in the United States to have its own resident stock theatre company. Guthrie added that by 1964 he did "not know of a single one still in existence" (Guthrie 1964, 13).

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the status of the theatre on Broadway prior to the planning of the Sir Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in Minnesota. An attempt will be made to identify the characteristics present at that time and show how they supported Sir Tyrone Guthrie's theory that a need to build a regional repertory theatre existed.

Specifically, the following questions shall be addressed: (1) To what extent did economics influence theatre on Broadway? (2) To what extent was the quality of acting being effected? And, (3) to what extent did
the impact of the trade unions' influence on theatre on Broadway?

The Economy: Theatre Was Feeling the Pressure

New York City had become the core of the theatre world in the late fifties. According to Guthrie this resulted from the steady decline of theatre shows touring across the country and the influence academic theatre had on regional communities (Guthrie 1964, 14).

First, the introduction of movies, about fifty years prior, reduced the demand for entertainment traveling theatre companies offered. According to Guthrie the movies became a dominant medium of public entertainment. Touring became rarely profitable unless the star's attraction equaled that of movie stars or unless the play had just been a smash hit in New York and had been continuously mentioned in the press for a year or more (Guthrie 1964, 13).

Secondly, Guthrie questioned the academic theatre's aim to fill theatre gaps in small communities. Guthrie stated:

For the last two or three decades, the academic theatre has been attempting to do a job which the professional theatre has failed to do: namely, to offer some kind of live drama in places and to people who would have otherwise had none. I applaud the attempt but I question its wisdom. Shoestring productions, with a drama professor directing student
actors, do not seem quite the right attraction to lure the lost sheep back into the theatrical fold (Guthrie 1964, 15).

Thus, professional theatre was operating almost exclusively from New York City. But, problems were steadily increasing.

While Guthrie was contemplating his plan for a new theatre the economic status in New York City was taking a very materialistic direction. Everything, including theatre and elements associated with theatre, was acquiring a monetary value (Guthrie 1964, 17).

Theatres were being sacrificed to make way for bigger and better hotels and/or office buildings. According to Guthrie these types of buildings brought a better financial return for the real estate business.

The theatres suffered because as the number of them dwindled the few that were saved suffered from an increase in demand (Guthrie 1964, 17).

The rent for theatres became astronomical. Guthrie said it was common for lessors to vacate the building if their income dropped below a certain percentage of the building's potential income. According to Guthrie this meant a manager, however rich and well-known, could not nurture a play. Even though the play was unpopular at the start but had potential for eventually drawing a large public it was not worth the
expense and time of taking the risk (Guthrie 1964, 17).
Management resorted to any method which would enable them to avoid this type of situation. According to Guthrie one of the most common ways was to employ popular and celebrated leading players in the theatre's productions (Guthrie 1964, 18).

Consequently, Guthrie explained, the services of these limited players were in high demand. To compensate, the celebrities demanded and received enormous salaries; salaries that were ten times that of a judge or twenty times that of an archbishop. Guthrie believed these salaries were unreasonable and not proportional to the services the actors offered the community (Guthrie 1964, 18).

Henry Hewes, a writer for Saturday Review, agreed with the general idea of Guthrie's analysis of the situation but reasoned the actors were actually forced to take such action. According to Hewes the principal reason for the lack of quality of Broadway offerings was because established stars would not leave the New York and Hollywood market places for any appreciable length of time. He explained:

Their attitude is understandable. Since national recognition and the big money are to be found only in these two centers, any extended absence from them—no matter how fine the work they do in the interim—becomes a marking of time, or even an assumed "set-back" in their careers (Hewes 1961, 12).
New York was not only suffering from these types of pressures but also from lack of space. The workshops where scenery, costumes and stage properties were manufactured were rented at fantastic rates. Workers who created these items demanded higher wages for their hours and the charges governed the actual price of the end product. In addition to the speculative nature of all theatrical business, the heavy risk of bad debts and constant likelihood of the types of productions, costumes and scene design going suddenly out of style, caused theatre management to require a far higher rate of profit than was expected in ordinary retail trade. The bottom line was that management could no longer afford to make long-term plans or to aim at anything other than a smash hit (Guthrie 1964, 18-19).

The Broadway Situation: An Actor's Point of View

According to statistics issued by Actors Equity, the actors' trade union, only one-quarter to one-third of Equity members were working at any given time during the early 1960s. According to Guthrie these statistics alone were not the real problem because those who were unemployed could "model sweaters, address envelopes or sling hash." The problem grew when the dog-eat-dog
competition for one particular job set in (Guthrie 1964, 19).

In A New Theatre Guthrie describes the usual situation an inspiring new actor faced in the heart of New York City:

Every year dozens, perhaps hundreds, of stagestruck young people reach New York from Denver; Buffalo; Grovers Corners, North Dakota; or Scrunchup, South Carolina; many of them beautiful or talented, every one as eager as all get-out. If they do land a job—and we know that the odds are heavily against their doing so—what happens? Either the play is a flop, in which case they are out of work again at the end of three or four performances, or else the play is a success and runs for two years. This is really the deadlier of the two alternatives, because our young aspirant's part is unlikely to be much more than a spit and a cough. There are limits to the amount of oneself which can be poured into a spit and a cough. After the thirtieth week of eight weekly performances, that limit is apt to have been passed. And nothing new is being learnt [sic] (Guthrie 1964, 20).

Guthrie's managing directors, Oliver Rea and Peter Zeisler, held this similar viewpoint concerning new young talent. According to Rea and Zeisler the level of skill among young American actors in 1959 was already low and steadily declining. Not one in five hundred had any opportunity to learn the theatre trade. Instead they said the case was that when a part was to be cast that made rhetorical or stylistic demands upon the actor, the minds of managers almost instantly turned to Britain or Canada (Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler 1959, 3).
Harry Golden, a columnist for the New York Times and an avid theater-goer, agreed with the opinions of Guthrie and the others. In the article, "Golden's Rule: The Actor's the Thing," published in the August 16, 1959 issue of the New York Times, Golden said:

People go to the theatre to see actors; at least that's why I have always gone. While I am impressed by revolving stages, the exquisite production values, the directorial touches and the message of the playwright, actors and actresses are the real excuse for the theater. . . . the world I see on Broadway is not so flavorsome as Shaw's, as witty as Molnar's, or so strongly motivated as O'Neill's. It's a world filled with worriers, with characters not so nice as the audience they entertain. As a consequence, the actors are more interested in sounding like the man in the street than in sounding like an actor. I tend to ask for big things but it's not too much to ask that the actors be allowed to get back on the stage and win cheers (Golden 1959, 1).

For some the answer to the actors' problem may have been television but it wasn't for Guthrie. Guthrie believed that although television had many advantages it also had two grave drawbacks. The first was the lack of a live audience. He said, "... you are performing to microphone and camera and only indirectly to your fellow-creatures . . . there is no substitute for a live audience; a 'studio audience'" is not the same thing at all" (Guthrie 1964, 21).

The second drawback Guthrie believed television had was that it fell prey to typecasting the smaller parts. Guthrie explained:
If you look just like a clerk in a corner store you will be cast as a clerk in a corner store, and they will only send for you when a clerk in a corner store is called for in the script. Until you have in some way been able to prove your versatility, you will get no variety of parts; and television producers are not going to waste time and money training you to be versatile (Guthrie 1964, 22).

The Extent of the Trade Unions' Influence on Broadway

The trade unions discussed here concern primarily actors, stagehands and musicians. Unions existed so that members could have the collective bargaining power with those who hired them. And, as history has taught, no matter what the type, trade unions came into being to fight gross, cruel and long-endured abuse exercised by employers upon the employees.

At the time Guthrie was observing the trade unions the situation was beginning to turn. The officials of the unions had extensive control; and for years they had been getting in their licks not only at employers but at their own members. According to Guthrie, "the actors, stagehands and musicians had all become so protected by their unions they could hardly sell their soul as their own" (Guthrie 1964, 22).

Guthrie's main complaint with the trade unions was their ability to dictate to an employer whom he could or could not hire and that the employer could not fire someone whose services were unsatisfactory. He said,
"What I cannot regard as anything but inefficient is the mass of doctrinaire regulations which assume that employers are always, and in every circumstance, the deadly enemies of the employed; and the implied tyranny by union officials, which makes the employees afraid to infringe even the pettiest of union rules" (Guthrie 1964, 23). Although Guthrie was not as concerned with actual wage scales himself, they were a monumental source of protest in New York City and effected Broadway directly. On June 1, 1960, Actors Equity forced the cancellation of The Tenth Man, a Broadway play scheduled to perform at the Booth Theatre. The action stemmed from disputes between the Actors Equity Union (which at the time was striking) and the League of New York Theatres while they were trying to negotiate wage and benefit policies. According to an article in the June 2, 1960 New York Times, the actors' union called out the cast of The Tenth Man after an emergency session with Mayor Wagner the day before had failed to produce a formula for a new contract between Equity and the League. The union was demanding a pension plan and a raise in minimum salaries.

Equity had originally sought a raise from $103.50 to $120 per performance (Facts In Theatre Strike 1960, 24). It modified the demand and at the time of the
walkout was asking for $115 for the first year of the agreement and $120 for the second and third years. The League only offered a straight $110 (New York Times, 1960, 24).

These were the types of conflict the trade unions were prompting during this time. As Guthrie stated in A New Theatre these events were destroying all feeling of unanimous effort backstage and the overall result was that theatre on Broadway was steadily pricing itself out of reach from anyone but the rich (Guthrie 1964, 25). According to Guthrie this was alienating certain publics from becoming theatre audiences. He said:

More and more, audiences have ceased to be made up of families or parties of ordinary people, celebrating Jack's engagement or Aunt Lou's birthday. Too expensive. Now, more and more, audiences are composed of very rich, elderly people, of tourists and of business men and women on expense accounts. Few of these people are regular theatre-goers, interested in the art of theatre, who can criticize knowledgeably and distinguish merit from success. The excitement of success is what the new audience desires, above all, and for this it is willing to pay dearly. Hence, the hit almost automatically becomes the super smash-hit; and for the same reason the flop is a total flop (Guthrie 1964, 26).

Another key policy New York theatres practiced, which Guthrie criticized as also being detrimental to attracting quality audiences, was the theatre party. Theatre management sold a large block of seats, at times the entire house (seating area) to a significant,
prominent company. The company, in turn, rallied forces and sold the seats to friends or employees at a profit (Guthrie 1964, 28).

According to Guthrie the action was usually done in the name of charity and at times whole houses were sold out at fifty dollars a head. The original idea should have produced beneficial results but it did not. Guthrie explained:

Theoretically, it should be a splendid idea to sell the entire house to a homogeneous party, so that playgoing becomes, as it always should be, a sociable event; and the audience becomes, as it always should be, a group of friends assembled to enjoy an experience together ... in addition, some charity gets a nice little contribution.

In practice, it goes wrong, partly because the financial side gets out of hand; the whole thing becomes an outrageous, extortionate racket. This is partly due because the sorts of people who are good at organizing, canvassing and accounting are not very good at assessing beforehand either the tastes of their clients or the quality of a production. Theatre party organizations can, and do, ensure that Camelot or The Sound of Music will open to advance bookings of millions of dollars, by which they are assured of a run of several years. This is economically convenient; but it implies that the way to attract theatre parties is not to create a good entertainment, but to create an entertainment which, on paper, (by advertising popular names such as Mary Martin, Richard Burton, Lerner and Lowe, Rogers and Hammerstein, Jerome Robbins, or Oliver Smith) looks as though it has the potential of being good. But, as any housewife knows, luscious ingredients do not of themselves make a good meal; they must be judiciously mixed and lovingly cooked (Guthrie 1964, 29).

And so Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler had the incentive and the arguments that indeed "Broadway was incurably
sick" (Hewes 1961, 12). The only way to revitalize the American theatre was to decentralize and spread it out across the land. But where? As the plan became imbedded in Guthrie's mind he realized finding an appropriate location was the next move (Guthrie 1964, 43).

Summary

In the late fifties New York was the core of American theatre. According to Guthrie, this was due to (1) a steady decline of theatre productions touring throughout the United States and (2) the impact academic theatre had on regional communities.

The economic status in New York City became highly materialistic. According to Guthrie, a monetary value was put on everything, including the quality of theatre. He said theatres were sacrificed in order to build bigger and better hotels and/or office buildings. These types of buildings were said to bring greater financial returns for the real estate business (Guthrie 1964, 17).

As the number of theatres decreased the remaining ones suffered from an increase in demand. Astronomical rents were charged and lessors vacated their buildings if the income dropped below a certain percentage of the building's capacity. It resulted in desperate attempts
by management to only maintain shows that guaranteed box office sell outs and employ the most popular and (because they were in high demand) expensive leading players. These elements governed the ticket prices and eventually turned American theatre into theatre which attracted only the very rich (Guthrie 1964, 17-19).

Actors were also suffering. According to Guthrie, inspiring new actors faced unemployment or being cast in a show with a bit part that ran years, stifling their talent. Actors had no avenue to learn the theatre trade and gain the knowledge and experience they needed to acquire stable, challenging parts (Guthrie 1964, 20).

In addition to these two elements the theatre trade unions' officials created a tyranny which employers could not penetrate. According to Guthrie, actors, stagehands and musicians had all become so protected that they had no control over career decisions. The unions dictated to employers who they could and could not hire. Guthrie said this made it impossible for employers to fire employees whose services were unsatisfactory (Guthrie 1964, 22-23).

Trade unions also influenced wage scales. Equity actors demanded higher wages and if theatres did not abide, strikes and show cancellations resulted.
According to Guthrie, the existence of such events damaged backstage morale and destroyed any type of unanimous efforts by theatre management to produce quality theatre. The theatre had turned into an activity in which only the very wealthy participated. Its success was no longer judged on the basis of talent and artistic brilliance but by popular names, flashy show titles and astronomical dollars and cents figures.
CHAPTER IV
SELECTING AN IDEAL LOCATION; THE JUSTIFICATION FOR MINNEAPOLIS

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the process Sir Tyrone Guthrie used in selecting the location for the Guthrie theatre project. This chapter will also recognize the characteristics of Minneapolis which made it the most appealing location for the Guthrie Theatre.

Specifically, the following questions will be addressed: (1) What specific characteristics did Guthrie's theatre plan entail? (2) What areas of the United States were interested in having a resident repertory theatre? (3) What specific requirements did Guthrie demand of the location for the theatre project? And, (4) how well did Minneapolis meet these requirements compared to other location candidates?

Sir Tyrone Guthrie's Theatre Plan:
The Policy Came First

Before Guthrie, Rea, and Zeisler began looking for the ideal location they felt it was necessary to clearly outline what type of policy the theatre would practice. Guthrie said, "I have seen too many well-intentioned theatrical projects fail. The reefs upon
which they have been wrecked have nearly always been the
same; too unambitious a budget and too vague a policy"
(Guthrie 1964, 37).

Two extreme policies which Guthrie avoided
adopting were (1) the policy of doing "good" plays and
(2) a policy that solely aimed for success (Guthrie 1964,
37-38). A New Theatre acknowledges Guthrie's belief that
both policies contained monumental errors which usually
caused theatres to fold.

First, Guthrie said, the term "good" plays was
never defined. Instead the term was controlled by the
theatre management. He said, ". . . it usually boils
down to meaning plays which the management admires."
Guthrie added that when the management's taste was not
endorsed by the public, ticket sales declined and panic
broke out. The result was plays were chosen chaotically
from a variety of categories. The management
rationalized their actions by declaring the plays were
"good of their kind;" meaning new plays of promise were
mixed with old plays of repute and in the end neither
management, actors nor audience knew what was trying to
be achieved (Guthrie 1964, 37-38).

According to Guthrie theatre management had only
one method of measuring success; count the money at the
box office. The play with the highest dollar amounts is
the biggest success. He summed up the definition of the "success" policy in twelve words. He said, "Aim for a smash hit all the time and at any cost" (Guthrie 1964, 38). Guthrie believed these words were not only concise but universally intelligible because "they applied to an alarmingly high proportion of all human efforts in all spheres, in all parts of the world and at all times" (Guthrie 1964, 39).

Guthrie and his associates devised their theatre plan, eliminating anything to do with the "success" policy but revamped the "good" play definition to meet their policy. The result was a three-year plan that focused on drawing customers who wanted to buy the type of theatre Guthrie was selling (Guthrie 1964, 39).

According to Guthrie the only way to capture the real meaning of a "good" play was to apply the test of time. He said:

All works of art, even the greatest, go through a period when they are out of popular favor. This usually occurs between twenty and fifty years after a work was first created. . . . Gradually the works of art which are destined to become "classical," begin to assert themselves. The cultural grain remains on the threshing floor; the chaff is winnowed away (Guthrie 1964, 41).

Guthrie, Rea, and Zeisler were also concerned with including American plays in the theatre's program. Guthrie reasoned that the American theatre hadn't existed
long enough to have developed its own classics, but, many excellent dramatists had developed since 1920 and their achievements needed the test of time. He said:

Several of these [dramatists since 1920] may be of potential classical status. In planning a theatre which we hoped to establish in an American city, and hoped might have a perceptible cultural influence in a particular region of America, it seemed neither sensible nor tactful to take such a doctrinaire view of classical status that American plays would have—for at least another ten years—to be omitted from the program. . . . It therefore seemed to us essential to include each season one American play of what we considered to be potential classical status; and to let it take its place in a program of established classics (Guthrie 1964, 42-43).

Finally, the theatre's program policy was mapped out. The policy outlined that the company would consist of actors of top professional standards, working in a repertory of plays, which each season would give a conspectus of drama of unquestionable merit. More specifically, the program would include the following:

(1) One play of Shakespeare.
(2) One classical play in translation, e.g. Moliere, Goethe, Schiller, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Euripides.
(3) One recent play in translation of near classical status, e.g. Tchekov [sic], Pirandello, Ibsen, Strindberg.
(4) One recent English, Irish or Scotish play of near classical status, e.g. Wilde, Shaw, Barrie, Bridie, O'Casey.
(5 & 6) Two recent American plays of near classical status, e.g. Eugene O'Neill, Arthur Miller, Lillian Hellman, Tennessee Williams, Thornton Wilder.
(7) One recent (last thirty years) American "success," which still seemed to have merit, e.g., Dinner at Eight, Once in a Lifetime, Three Men on a Horse, Born Yesterday.
(8) One new play (whenever available).
If possible (and the main factors governing such possibility would be [1] simple sceneries and [2] reasonable terms agreed with Trade Unions), the plays would be given in Repertory, i.e. two or three plays always on view in any given week (Guthrie, Rea, Ziesler 1959, 1).

The Process of Selecting a Location Site

Deciding what type of city Guthrie, Rea, and Zeisler believed would accept their theatre plan was relatively simple. According to Guthrie they would consider building in "any city which felt deprived of live theatre and would take us under their wing" (Guthrie 1964, 45). The process of finding this city was not as simple.

Guthrie began by consulting Brooks Atkinson, the drama critic for The New York Times. Atkinson had been a critic for more than twenty years and, according to Guthrie, was still "in a hard-boiled, not at all naive way, stage-struck" with enthusiasm and interest for the theatre (Guthrie 1964, 45).

According to Guthrie, Atkinson promoted the new theatre plan in The New York Times a few days after hearing about it. The promotion paid off. Guthrie received applications from seven different cities showing interest in the project (Guthrie 1964, 46).

The seven cities interested in the Guthrie theatre plan were: Boston, San Francisco, Chicago,
Minneapolis, Cleveland, Milwaukee and Detroit (Guthrie 1964, 46-53). Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler immediately began extensive correspondence and scheduling appearances in the seven cities. Members of Guthrie's team visited each city and time after time community members and city officials wined and dined them (Whiting 1959; Rea 1959). Of visiting Minneapolis, Guthrie said in A New Theatre, "I cannot remember all the calls which we made, nor the order in which they occurred. It has all become a slightly feverish blur" (Guthrie 1964, 51).

Although all seven locations had characteristics unique and interesting which made them potential cites for a new theatre, Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler selected the top three: Detroit, Milwaukee and Minneapolis/St. Paul. Oliver Rea explained in letters sent to Pittsburgh and Cleveland that the reasons varied for not choosing the other four cities. The reasons were primarily (1) a lack of interest, (2) a lack of funding, (3) a lack of administrative organization and (4) competition with existing theatrical organizations. In a letter to Adolph W. Schmidt in Pittsburgh, Rea said, "Quite off the top of my head, and speaking of the specific local Pittsburgh picture, I do not think that such a project as ours can or should be in competition with any other existing theatrical ventures" (Rea 1959).
He also wrote, in a letter to K. Elmo Lowe, director of the Cleveland Play House that, "I would guess nothing could happen out there [Cleveland] until a pretty thorough reorganization [in respect to the makeup of the Board of Directors] takes place" (Rea 1960).

Specific Standards Were Required for the Theatre Location

With the three finalists chosen Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler reexamined what they demanded of the theatre location. First, the city could not be too large a community; a community like Detroit. Guthrie said:

Our scheme, we felt, would not be sufficiently spectacular to make any kind of a splash in a community with already considerable programs of culture and entertainment. Better to be a bigger frog in a smaller pond (Guthrie 1964, 54).

Secondly, the city that would house the new theatre had to be committed to a fundraising campaign for the theatre. According to Guthrie, Milwaukee had already committed itself to a fundraising campaign for an Urban Renewal Project. He said, "... we felt that inevitably our comparatively small project would get swamped in a great number of other schemes and activities" (Guthrie 1964, 55). Thus, Milwaukee was also out of the running.
Minneapolis: The Final Choice

According to Guthrie, the three had always leaned toward choosing the Twin Cities area. He wrote in A New Theatre:

I seem to have found out reasons are nearly always invented after a decision is made to defend it, even excuse it. Inclinations, hunches have far more to do with crucial decisions than has reason. . . . we wanted to work in the Twin Cities. Why? The weather? The people? The river? We have discussed it often and we simply do not know (Guthrie 1964, 60).

Brad Morison and Kay Fliehr, the two individuals who headed the publicity/promotion department of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in the early years, also revealed Guthrie's tactics for choosing the Twin Cities. In their book, In Search of An Audience, Morison and Fliehr wrote:

The plane from Chicago poked its nose through a late afternoon overcast and eased onto the runway at the Twin Cities International Airport. It was November 18, 1959. As the plane rolled to a stop, Tyrone Guthrie unfolded his six-foot-five-inch frame and escorted his wife down the ramp. While greetings were exchanged with the welcoming committee, Dr. Guthrie's ever-searching eyes darted across the crowds and over the landscape, absorbing first impressions. In the car he turned in his seat ceaselessly—watching, listening, observing with the intensity of a man fascinated with life.

Walking into the hotel lobby, he leaned over to Oliver Rea who was accompanying him on their visits. "Oliver," he said, "I rather think I'm going to become quite fond of good old Minn." (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 11)

Rea agreed that the initial idea of choosing the Minneapolis/St. Paul area was based on primarily instinct
and hunches the three had concerning the city. But after they became more familiar with the city and its people more concrete reasons developed to support the decision (Rea 1988). First, although the population of Minneapolis/St. Paul and the surrounding area was less than Milwaukee or Detroit, Guthrie said "we thought it was large enough to enable us to be a big frog" (Guthrie 1964, 56).

Morison and Flihr noted that the immediate Minneapolis/St. Paul region and communities within a hundred-mile radius had a combined population of one and one-half million. In the remaining area which focused on the Twin Cities the population totaled four and one-half million--six million in all.

In addition to population, the geographical location of the Twin Cities enhanced its popularity. Morison and Flihr wrote:

It is the only major metropolitan center within a vast, yet cohesive, area which stretches an awesome fifteen hundred miles from the Rocky Mountains east to Eau Claire, Wisconsin; and nearly five hundred miles from Vermillion, South Dakota, and Waterloo, Iowa, north to the Canadian border. It is an incredible four hundred thousand square miles in size--representing more than 10 percent of the nation's land but less than four percent of the population. Within the area are locatead five million acres of state and national parks, mountain peaks soaring up to 12,799 feet, the nation's second largest seaport by tonnage (Duluth), more than 12 percent of the nation's surface water, the geographic center of the United States (in Butte County, South Dakota), 4,772
miles of rivers, and some of the world's richest farming country (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 12).

The Twin Cities area was also the hub of industry, growth and a variety of people. According to Morison and Fliehr:

Here is the heart of distribution activity and the center for processing and marketing the area's wealth of agriculture. Here is the focus of commerce, finance, entertainment, sports, shopping, publishing, broadcasting and the arts. In Havre, Montana, the Minnesota Twins are "our baseball club." From all over the area people come by busload and trainload to support "their team." In Rapid City, South Dakota, football fans loyally follow the Minnesota Vikings. Families in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, have charge accounts at Dayton's department store as do families in Glendive, Montana, and Cedar Falls, Iowa. The businessman, professional man, or farmer of Minot, North Dakota, may typically travel to the Twin Cities half-a-dozen times a year (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 13).

Rea also credited the geographical location of Minneapolis/St. Paul as being a deciding factor in its selection. According to Rea, Minneapolis/St. Paul was the core of the area. He said, "it was a good example of regional--not just one or two cities were nearby and Minneapolis was the center of the regional metropolis" (Rea 1988). Another strong and influential characteristic was the University of Minnesota, located in Minneapolis/St. Paul. In 1959 the University was already noted as a vast institution. According to Guthrie it would undergo a colossal expansion in the next
ten years. He said, "By 1970 an enrollment is expected of over 42,000 students" (Guthrie 1964, 57).

Guthrie highly credited Frank Whiting, director of University Theatre at the University of Minnesota, for the close relationship between the University and Guthrie's project. He said, "we had been impressed and touched by the generosity and unselfish attitude of Frank Whiting and his staff ... we felt confident that we could--in the bridging of just one gap between a professional and an academic theatre--build something of permanent value" (Guthrie 1964, 57).

Whiting pursued the Guthrie project from the very moment he heard about it. After reading an announcement of the project in The New York Times one October morning in 1959, Whiting took action. According to an article in the Guthrie Theatre program, Whiting immediately dictated a letter to Oliver Rea. The words were simple and direct. He said, "Dear Mr. Rea, I would like to urge you very strongly to consider the Twin Cities as a location for your project" (Morison 1965, 8).

Whiting continued the pursuit by scheduling meetings with important and influential Minnesota businessmen for Guthrie and his associates during their visits. He also continually searched for financial and social support for the project. In an October, 1959
letter addressed to Rea, Whiting noted conferring with James L. Morrill, president of the University of Minnesota; Governor and Mrs. Orville J. Freeman; John Sherman and John Harvey, leading Minneapolis/St. Paul newspaper men; and various other influential leaders and citizens of the community (Whiting 1959).

By December, Whiting was negotiating with Morrill, John Cowles, Jr. and John Cowles, Sr. in attempts to raise two million dollars for the Guthrie project (Whiting 1959). Whiting wrote:

John Sr. is apparently very pessimistic about the idea. He was citing the Ford Foundation's grants to Washington, San Francisco, etc. as evidence of the fact that a repertory theatre could not exist without heavy subsidy. I doubt that he realizes who Tyrone Guthrie is—that a Tyrone Guthrie theatre on the banks of the Mississippi is not just another Actors' Lab in San Francisco. ... whether they give money or not the Cowles family will be indispensable to our operation (Whiting 1959).

Five months later Rea and Whiting were still corresponding but with more optimistic viewpoints. Rea wrote:

... things look very promising out your way. I think your idea for one more visit a good one. I suggest that we wait until the decision of the Walker Board. If they say "yes," the people you suggest I see will be of considerable help in my decision (Rea 1960).
Finally, Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler were strongly influenced by the support from the people of Minnesota and their cultural interest in the project. From Rea's first visit to Minneapolis he was noted as being very impressed with them. Morison and Fliehr wrote:

On a football Saturday some weeks later [following Whiting's letter to Guthrie], a train clickety-clacked eastward across Iowa carrying a band of fans from Des Moines to the Iowa-Minnesota game . . . Iowa won the game, 33-0. But Rea spent more time thinking about how much he liked these Iowa and Minnesota people than he did concentrating on the action (Morison 1965, 8).

According to Rea, they were introduced to "nearly every influential person and business leader in Minneapolis." After making their pitch and seeing the enormous interest for the project, Rea said they were sure Minneapolis/St. Paul was the right location (Rea 1988).

Minnesotans throughout the state showed their concern and enthusiasm for the theatre project. According to Morison and Fliehr "there was an extraordinary open-minded willingness at the grass roots to find out what this kind of theatre was all about (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 8).

One of the first indications of this interest appeared in a letter to Tyrone Guthrie from an architect,
Glanville Smith, of Cold Spring, Minnesota. Smith wrote:

I am a citizen of one of the regions you are investigating in view to the establishment of a repertory theatre, and write to say that I am all for the great enterprise! . . . what a glow it brings to know that it could be here.

The youth of these parts, though it lacks the cash your enterprise requires, nonetheless has the vitality that can carry it forward and consolidate its growth . . . and I want you to know that the enterprise has my support (Smith 1959).

In support of the Guthrie project many individuals from all over the Midwest contributed funds. Businessmen, housewives, professional men and corporations were among those who showed interest. But it wasn't always the actual amounts that kept the Guthrie team working toward their goal. Morison and Fliehr wrote:

Lou Gelfand's job was to coordinate the monumental fund-raising efforts being made by the finance committee. . . . they were little more than half-way to the goal of $2,300,000 and things were getting tougher. . . . the next letter he picked up jingled. He slit the end. Out fell $6.37 with a short note from a Sunday-school class in the town of Mankato, Minnesota. An enormous smile spread across his face. Somehow there didn't really seem to be too much to worry about (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 7-8).

Summary

Guthrie rejected theatre policies that were based on (1) solely doing "good" plays and (2) solely aimed for financial success (Guthrie 1964, 37-38). According to Guthrie these policies usually caused theatres to fold.
He criticized the term "good" plays because it had never been defined. He reasoned that it was controlled by theatre management. When the management's taste was not endorsed by the public, ticket sales declined and panic broke out. Thus, plays were chosen chaotically from a variety of categories and in the end neither management, actors nor audiences knew what the purpose was (Guthrie 1964, 38).

According to Guthrie, management's definition of success was to produce a smash hit all the time at any cost. Count the money at the box office and the one with the greatest total was the biggest success. According to Guthrie, this policy constituted an attitude that was universal (Guthrie 1964, 39).

Guthrie and his associates devised a three-year plan to counteract the present policies. The policy focused on a program of productions drawing customers who wanted to buy the type of theatre Guthrie was selling; quality, classical theatre that would educate and entertain (Guthrie 1964, 39).

Specifically, Guthrie's theatre program included a Shakespeare play; a classical play such as one by Moliere or Sophocles; a recent play by authors such as Chekov, Ibsen or Strindberg and a recent English, Irish or Scottish play by such authors as Wilde, Shaw or
O'Casey. It also included two recent American plays with near classical status, an American play written within the last thirty years and a totally new play whenever possible.

A policy identifying the quality and types of productions was the first step. The second step of the theatre project was finding the ideal location.

Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler visited seven cities that showed interest in providing a home for the new theatre. The seven were Boston, San Francisco, Chicago, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Cleveland, Milwaukee, and Detroit. The seven were narrowed down to the top three: Detroit, Milwaukee and Minneapolis/St. Paul. According to Guthrie the other four cities lacked interest, funding and administrative organization and had existing theatrical organizations that would be strong competition for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre (Guthrie 1964, 55).

After evaluating the three top choices on the basis of community size, theatre opportunity and community commitment, the Minneapolis/St. Paul area was selected. According to Rea, the initial response was instinctive but after becoming more familiar with the city's characteristics and people, reasons for making the choice were more concrete (Rea 1988).
Rea noted the major reasons were (1) depth of community support/interest and (2) geographical location. Other cities didn't have the broad range of citizens supporting the project like Minneapolis/St. Paul. Rea said it was usually the wealthy but in Minneapolis/St. Paul the support and interest came from influential city leaders to Sunday school classes. In addition the location was ideal. Minneapolis/St. Paul was considered the major center of the regional metropolis (Rea 1988).

In addition to these major reasons the population was small enough to allow the Tyrone Guthrie to be a major theatre and not compete with others, yet large enough to attract audiences and add to the city's cultural status. According to Morison and Fliehr the city was also the hub of industry, growth and a variety of people. It attracted people from all over the region (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 13). Finally, the association with the University of Minnesota proved influential. Guthrie highly credited Frank Whiting, director of University Theatre at the University of Minnesota for this association. According to Guthrie, the bridging between the University of Minnesota and the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre was the beginning of "building something of permanent value" (Guthrie 1964, 57).
Selecting the Minneapolis/St. Paul area for the site of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre began on a hunch. As the plans and policies developed, Tyrone Guthrie's project became more than an idea. It was on its way to becoming part of Minnesota culture and American theatre history.
CHAPTER V
GETTING THE GUTHRIE OFF THE GROUND;
THE PLANNING AND PUBLICITY
OF THE EARLY YEARS

Morison and Fliehr's book, In Search of An Audience, acknowledges the theory that "a theatre's image is the total impression a person has of the organization" (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 79). This image is created and influenced by every person and aspect associated with the theatre institution.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the public relations process adopted and practiced by the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre during the first years of its existence. An attempt will be made to identify specific policies, strategies and projects used to develop the Guthrie's theatre image.

Specifically, the following questions shall be addressed: (1) What role did the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre's board of directors have in the early stages of the theatre's existence? (2) What preliminary planning was necessary prior to the public relations activities beginning? (3) What was the philosophy of the Tyrone
Guthrie Theatre's public relations department? (4) To what extent was audience development addressed? (5) What public relations strategies were adopted by the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre? and (6) What specific advertising, marketing and publicity elements were crucial to the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre's public relations campaign from 1962-1967?

The Importance of the Steering Committee

The ground work had been laid. Guthrie, Rea and Ziesler chose the Minneapolis/St. Paul area as the site for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. The theatre began to take shape.

Late in 1959 a steering committee was formed to oversee the theatre project. The committee consisted of John Cowles, Jr. from the Minneapolis Star and Tribune; Otto Silha and Philip Von Blon, also from the Minneapolis Star and Tribune staff; Louis Zelle, president of the Jefferson Bus Company; Frank Whiting, director of the University of Minnesota Theatre; Roger Kennedy, vice-president of the Northwestern National Bank of St. Paul; Pierce Butler III, a St. Paul lawyer; Justin Smith from the T. B. Walker Foundation and Harvard Arnason, curator of the Walker Art Center. According to Guthrie, these men represented a "responsible and influential section of society in the Twin Cities." Although they were
relatively young (most were well under fifty and some were under forty years old) they represented highly diverse aspects of the community. Guthrie credited their diversity in background, wealth, religion, race and attitude as playing a key role in "catching the public's imagination and planting the project firmly in the locality" (Guthrie 1964, 57-58).

The board of directors was responsible for finding a location for the theatre in the Twin Cities. According to Guthrie, they investigated possibilities of remodeling existing theatres or building the theatre on the University of Minnesota campus. Neither option was successful.

Finally, John Cowles, Jr. made a proposal to the board of directors of the T. B. Walker Foundation. The proposal was that the Walker Board should donate land behind the Walker Art Center to the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre project. In return the Walker Art Center would be allowed to share the building with the Theatre. This would allow the Walker to sponsor more concerts, lectures, chamber operas, and dance group performances (Guthrie 1964, 58).

In May, 1960, the Walker Board agreed to donate the site and in addition, donate $400,000 to the project. According to an article in the Minneapolis Star
and Tribune, the $400,000 was allocated on the condition that an additional $900,000 would be raised for the building by public solicitation in the next year. Other conditions included a commitment from Tyrone Guthrie and associates that they would direct and manage the non-profit repertory theatre for three years (see Appendix B). This made the total funds for the theatre project $1,300,000 (Minneapolis Star and Tribune 1960, 5[II]). According to Guthrie the theatre project later demanded $700,000 more, which brought the total cost to $2,000,000 (Guthrie 1964, 62).

During the summer of 1960 the Committee continued organizing the building procedures. Louis Gelfand was appointed administrator; Ralph Rapson, professor of architecture at the University of Minnesota; was appointed to prepare blueprints for the building; and Louis Zelle became chairman of the finance committee and immediately set forth soliciting contributions from individuals, firms, corporations and foundations.

Meanwhile Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler were still planning and scheduling. The site had been confirmed and the fundraising was underway. The next element Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler needed was a season line-up of shows and company members.
Planning the First Season

In January 1962, Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler began choosing the program of plays and company members. Some people thought one of the two processes should precede the other but Guthrie disagreed. In A New Theatre Guthrie said "... I have learned through an experience of many years and many repertory companies the two processes must be achieved simultaneously" (Guthrie 1964, 81).

A number of well-known actors and actresses showed interest in Guthrie's theatre project (see Appendix C). Some of those interested were Robert Preston, Sir Laurence Olivier, Zoe Caldwell and Julie Harris. Guthrie and Rea corresponded with the actors/actresses and returned the same interests. In a letter to Julie Harris Rea wrote:

Tyrone Guthrie, and for that matter everyone else connected with our project, rests convinced that somehow you must be a member of the company in the first season, commencing in May of 1963. If your busy schedule has now slackened to the point where you might like to hear more about our plans in Minneapolis, I should very much like to take you and your husband to lunch some day in the near future and tell you the whole story (Harris 1962).

Rea also expressed his enthusiasm about working with well-known and superb talent in a letter to Robert Preston. Rea wrote:
Your enthusiasm and desire to join us in Minneapolis is a big shot in the arm for yours truly. If this project of ours really can interest and commit actors of vitality like yours, then we are halfway home and I'm excited as hell (Preston 1962).

After weeks of negotiations with actors and actresses such as Preston and Harris Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler agreed on a program. Guthrie wrote in *A New Theatre*:

> We would open with *Hamlet*, practically uncut. *Hamlet* would be succeeded on the following night, by *The Miser* by Moliere. A few weeks after that, as soon in fact as we could prepare it, we would offer *The Three Sisters* by Chekhov and a month later Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. This we hoped, would make a clear, if implicit, statement of policy; three indisputable masterpieces from three widely different epochs; each directed in a markedly different style from the others (Guthrie 1964, 89).

Among the actors and actresses Guthrie chose for the first season were Julie Harris, Hume Cronyn, Jessica Tandy, Ellen Geer, John Cromwell, Ruth Nelson and Zoe Caldwell. Parts were not available or suitable for other interested actors such as Preston. Fortunately, Preston's interest did not die and he appeared at various fundraising and promotional events advocating the Guthrie Theatre (Morison 1965, 10).

An important characteristic of repertory style theatre (as covered in Chapter II) is its demand on actors/actresses to have roles in more than one show. Early in 1962 Guthrie wrote to Zoe Caldwell and informed
her of her responsibilities for the first season. He said:

I was delighted to see from your letter to Oliver Rea that you want to join the Minneapolis company. We therefore propose to count on you to play Frosine in Miles Malleson's translation of The Miser, which will be directed by Douglas Campbell; to play Natasha in The Three Sisters, directed by me. There will also be a Shakespeare play, in which you will almost certainly be asked to play a leading part... The fourth play will probably be Death of A Salesman, in which your part will be a small one, if at all (Caldwell 1962).

The preliminary work was done; the program of four plays was chosen and the company members selected. During the next few months the steering committee was busy fundraising. Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler supervised the building's construction, negotiated with corporations and firms for funds and began organizing and planning for the theatre's debut.

Meanwhile, a very influential and necessary area of the theatre, the public relations department, was also busy researching, organizing and promoting. It was the responsibility of the public relations department to introduce this new theatre idea and project to the people of Minnesota and surrounding areas and create an image of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre.

The Public Relations Philosophy for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre

Morison and Fliehr were the main components in the public relations department during the early years
of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. Morison's background included experience as a newspaperman, an advertising copywriter and copy chief. He taught creative advertising and lectured on audience development at colleges and schools throughout the country.

Fliehr had extensive experience in advertising, editing, reporting, merchandising and volunteer project organizing and fundraising. She received a bachelor of arts degree in journalism from the University of Minnesota (Morison and Fliehr 1968, jacket).

According to Guthrie, Morison and Fliehr's job was "to express a policy which was not always clear, nor always consistent" (Morison and Fliehr 1968, viii). Guthrie explained:

They often had to guess what the policy was to which they were supposed to relate to the public. This, you will rightly say, implies a failure in direction. But with a new enterprise, as this then was, it would not have been wise to have a hard-and-fast, doctrinaire policy. We had to grope our way towards not only what we did, but what we were trying to be. We were fully and clearly agreed upon the theatre's artistic policy and that the reason for the enterprise was to serve the public. But exactly how to relate ourselves to the public most usefully and efficiently we could not be clear; and, I think, seeing how few precedents there were to guide us, that for the first few seasons we were right to play many of our tunes by ear (Morison and Fliehr 1968, viii).
Another factor that increased the difficulty of Morison and Fliehr's job was the complexity of the public relations area. It entails publicity/promotion, advertising, marketing, audience development and other communication aspects that are vital to different organizations in varying degrees. The basis of Morison and Fliehr's philosophy concerning public relations for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre stemmed from the theory that an image of an organization (whether it be corporate or arts oriented) is the total impression the public has of the organization (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 79).

David L. Lendt, an assistant to the vice-president for information and development and an assistant professor of journalism and mass communication at Iowa State University in 1975, stated his philosophy of public relations:

Public relations is everything a government agency, a corporation, a downtown store, or even an individual does to present what is hoped will be an acceptable public image. Public relations may be affected by telephone etiquette or the impression left by a printed letterhead; by the way a person dresses or the kinds of cars the executives drive. Virtually every facet of society--every unit of government, every store and service establishment, every church and civic organization, every university--is doing something deliberately to create or enhance a certain public image. The sum of all these deliberate activities is something we call public relations (Lendt 1975, 3).
Public relations is defined more generally by James E. Grunig, college of journalism, University of Maryland and Todd Hunt, department of communication, the State University of New Jersey. They define public relations as "the management of communication between an organization and its publics (Grunig and Hunt 1984, 8). The key to this definition is that public relations cannot be limited to one aspect of communication or one effect. Grunig and Hunt stated that public relations practitioners do a variety of communication activities such as write press releases, research publics and counsel management. Communication defines all these activities. In addition, the effects public relations professionals strive for vary. Grunig and Hunt wrote "... some strive for persuasion, others for understanding and others simply for communication" (Grunig and Hunt 1984, 8). Successful public relations is then created through managing communication to achieve the vast variety of effects the organizations and publics demand.

Morison and Fliehr, in their book, *In Search of An Audience*, acknowledged the fact that in 1963, in the Midwest, there was an audience "ready and waiting to buy tickets to the Minnesota Theatre Company" Guthrie was establishing. According to Morison and Fliehr:
This audience was sizeable enough so that we did not have to devote every bit of our daily energy to filling seats for the next night. This breathing room allowed us to look ahead and to make small beginnings toward developing larger, more broadly based audiences for the future (Morison and Fliehr 1968, xviii).

It was this knowledge that helped Morison and Fliehr more clearly define their job as "educating an audience to appreciate the artistic policies set by the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre" (Morison and Fliehr 1964, xix).

Morison and Fliehr also wanted arts management policies to change. According to Morison and Fliehr the policy practiced by arts managements at the time was to "create an environment within an organization which was conducive to full growth and free expression of its creative talent" (Morison and Fliehr 1964, xix). Instead, Morison and Fliehr believed the primary function of public relations in arts organizations at that time needed to

... create an environment within the community which would be conducive to the full growth and free expression of the art and of the institution itself. A climate must be established which would encourage public acceptance of artistic policy, long- and short-range audience development, favorable governmental action, and the involved support of every part of the total community (Morison and Fliehr 1968, xix).
These theories and definitions were applied to create working strategy for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. Originally titled "A Plan of Strategy for Promotion, Publicity and Public Relations for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, 1963 Season," the plan became more commonly known as "The Morison Report" (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 14).

"The Morison Report" was the first of continuing attempts by the public relations department to apply basic and accepted techniques of marketing to the problems of promoting a theatre (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 15). To them the practice of managing a theatre strictly as a business was unacceptable. Many people associated with the arts believed that sell was a word that was detrimental to arts organizations, but Morison and Fliehr disagreed. They believed methods, based on business philosophies, were necessary to the arts' economic welfare. They stated in In Search of An Audience:

... it is imperative that businesslike methods be used. It should be done with the understanding of several basic principles. (1) No amount of promotion, no matter how creative, can "sell" a bad product. Such efforts will only hasten failure. Therefore, the primary prerequisite to enthusiastic public acceptance of a product, service, or idea is the creation of something that fills a genuine need.

(2) There is one fundamental difference between selling a product in the commercial market place and selling an artistic institution. If the public does not like a commercial product, there is freedom to change the product to suit public demand. In the
The product is based on an artistic philosophy. The people charged with the responsibility to sell this product have no right to suggest changes in philosophy to please the public; they have only the challenge to educate that public to appreciate the philosophy.

(3) The basic aim of marketing is efficiency of communication through selectivity. There are few products needed by everyone. It is therefore inefficient, wasteful, and almost impossible to try to communicate regularly with all of the people (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 15).

"The Morison Report" was an attempt to define by geographic, demographic, and psychological characteristics those people who would probably be most receptive to the Minnesota Theatre Company/Tyrone Guthrie Theatre story and then to try to determine the most effective ways to reach those people. Morison and Fliehr reported that aside from one audience survey made by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra in 1956, no factual information concerning the cultural habits and attitudes of people in the area existed (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 16).

The market-analysis section of "The Morison Report" was primarily based on a detailed analysis of the Metropolitan Opera in the Twin Cities (See Appendix D). According to Morison and Fliehr, the Opera drew from the same geographical area from which the theatre hoped to draw.

In addition to the Metropolitan Opera information the report was also based on Morison's calculated
guesswork and carefully considered assumptions based on 15 years' experience in advertising and experience (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 16). They stated:

It was a patchwork job which would have been totally unacceptable to a sophisticated advertising client because of its lack of background research. But it was a starting point. It set goals and outlined methods for trying to reach them. Most importantly it helped to reduce wasted effort because it pinpointed tasks to reach a defined objective rather than suggesting approaches always tried in theatre (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 16).

Audience Development

The object of analyzing the Metropolitan Opera ticket-sales figures was to locate the potential audience geographically. According to Morison and Fliehr, the sales per ten thousand population of opera tickets was computed for every town in six states and plotted on a graph against distance from the Twin Cities (See Appendix E, Figure 1). The curve started high, took a drastic nosedive at a distance of about a hundred miles, and then leveled out and became virtually flat after three hundred miles (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 22).

Morison and Fliehr drew two conclusions from this information: (1) When people had to travel more than one hundred miles, they attended with considerably less
frequency. Apparently a hundred miles was as far as they could or would go for entertainment and return home the same night. And (2) there was a certain nucleus of people who would travel to the Twin Cities for the opera no matter how far they had to come (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 22).

From these conclusions Morison and Fliehr made the assumptions that (1) the theatre's area of primary potential lay within a one-hundred-mile radius of the Twin Cities and (2) that the theatre could probably count on some dedicated support from beyond this radius (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 22).

With the statistics gathered from the opera ticket sales Morison and Fliehr arranged the rest of the territory according to potential. The process is explained in their book:

The people within the one-hundred-mile radius were designated Group I. Surrounding the Group I area and extending as far as five hundred miles to the north and west were some three million people who naturally gravitated toward the Twin Cities; these were designated Group IIA. Still further to the north and west were another two million people just as naturally oriented toward the Twin Cities but, because of distance, less frequent visitors; this was labeled Group IIB. To the south and east--in Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Nebraska, and Missouri--was an area from which the Minnesota lake country drew most of its summer visitors (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 23).
According to 1962 statistics from the Minnesota Department of Business Development some six hundred and fifty thousand of this nearly fourteen million population funneled through the Twin Cities. These people were designated Group III in the breakdown of potential audience. Group IV was everybody else in the United States, but specifically the one hundred and thirty thousand people who traveled to the Twin Cities for business or recreational purposes (See Appendix E, Figure 2).

This process had geographically defined the potential audience for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 23). But it meant little without further research.

The public relations team broke down the list of people who would receive publicity information concerning the theatre into geographic groupings. This enabled them to identify certain areas where more press releases and pictures would be most beneficial and tailored to the needs of the people in that specific area (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 23).

The most valuable data gained from the use of the geographical groupings was in estimating the first year's attendance (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 23). Morison and Fliehr compared opera-ticket sales to the minimum theatre-
ticket sales information that was available. They said "... we guessed that four times (it turned out later to be six) as many people would be interested in the type of theatre the company planned to present as were interested in grand opera" (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 24).

The following figures show the estimated total potential audience for 1963:

**Estimated Audience Potential Based On Opera Ticket Sales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Opera tickets per 10M</th>
<th>Potential MTC attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group I (100-mile area)</td>
<td>1,540,000</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>154 X 150 X 4 = 92,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group IIA (500-mile area)</td>
<td>3,336,000</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>333.6 X 25 X 4 = 33,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group IIB (Balance of region)</td>
<td>2,188,796</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>218.8 X 10 X 4 = 8,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group III (Summer visitors)</td>
<td>650,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>65 X 150 X 4 = 39,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group IV (others)</td>
<td>130,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>13 X 150 X 4 = 7,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** 181,220

Reduced to percentages, Morison and Fliehr's estimated audience attendance for the first season was, geographically:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group I</td>
<td>(100-mile area)</td>
<td>51 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group IIA</td>
<td>(500-mile area)</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group IIB</td>
<td>(balance of region)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group III</td>
<td>(summer visitors)</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group IV</td>
<td>(others)</td>
<td>4%</td>
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(Morison and Fliehr 1968, 24)

According to Morison and Fliehr, these were the proportions the public relations department would spend its time, energy and money when focusing on advertising, publicity and marketing. This was the one basis the public relations department had as it began creating an image for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 25).

**Public Relations Elements: The Tyrone Guthrie Theatre Created New Ones**

The public relations department of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre frequently experimented to create a favorable theatre image for its potential audiences. Whenever possible they applied ideas and research projects to gain more information about its audiences and non-audiences.

Although the basic tools which are a part of the public relations process, such as press releases, newspaper and radio advertising, photographs and brochures, were used it was these experimental research projects that proved successful. Often, the projects were the means of gathering valuable information about
audiences not being reached and communicating other facets of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre image to various publics. Morison and Fliehr said "... we continued to use various research and research techniques to substitute knowledge for guesswork whenever possible" (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 34).

There were a variety of ways in which the theatre's public relations department used different techniques to achieve a favorable theatre image. Early in 1964 it launched a limited campaign to capture the sales clerk, clerical, and secretarial job categories. It began with a small focus group of working women.

According to Morison and Fliehr, the women were interviewed and, based on the information gathered, a questionnaire was composed and distributed to a large sampling of girls in the same categories. The result was "special theatre dinners" or "clubs" designed for the business girl in cooperation with area restaurants, hotels and department stores. In Morison and Fliehr's words, "promotion, good business cooperation and a new audience were gained" (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 35).

Another method was to examine what audiences wanted. In the summer of 1966, when it became apparent that the company would be performing a season in St. Paul in addition to the Minneapolis season, a research project
was initiated to determine attitudes of theatre-goers in each city about their habits in traveling city-to-city for entertainment. Morison and Fliehr reported that ten women from the theatre's women's volunteer organization, called the Stagehands, were trained in interviewing techniques by a Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn Advertising Agency staff member (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 14).

Each volunteer was assigned ten indepth interviews carefully chosen to cover areas of known theatre in St. Paul and Minneapolis. According to Morison and Fliehr, the information gathered was analyzed to estimate the size of the potential audience for the proposed St. Paul season and to help structure the most attractive season ticket and promotional plans for the double season (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 35).

According to Morison and Fliehr the most valuable use of continuing research was measuring the ways in which the theatre's audience changed. This was done to assess the results of the promotional efforts. Morison and Fliehr were looking for answers to questions such as: Was the theatre attracting more people form Groups II and III through the public relations department's extra efforts? Was there an increase in attendance from St. Paul in proportion to Minneapolis? Was the audience
getting younger? And what types of people were being reached (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 36)?

The public relations officers, in *In Search of An Audience*, acknowledged the fact that, although the public relations department's budget did not permit a full-scale audience analysis every season, in 1964 and 1966 a questionnaire was distributed. According to Morison and Fliehr a questionnaire was inserted in every tenth program for a period of three weeks in late August and early September. The results were compared with the results from a questionnaire distributed during the same weeks in 1963. Morison and Fliehr said the results proved interesting:

They showed that, almost without exception, the extra efforts had paid off, though not as well in some cases as in others. The most gratifying trend in the figures was the steady and substantial growth in the audience over four years from the Group III area, an increase of two and a half times (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 37).

Although an image of the theatre had formed, there were problems. Morison and Fliehr reported that in twelve months gaps appeared between what the theatre wanted and professed to be and what it appeared to be to the public.

First, the theatre wanted to become a community institution independent of any one individual. Instead, it found itself living on the legend of Sir Tyrone.
According to Morison and Fliehr, the public waited in awe for the great god of classical theatre to chisel the first tablet of stone. The management quaked at the thought of what might happen when he left at the end of his three-year contract (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 69).

The theatre also professed a "no star" policy, saying "the company" was the true star. It opened rehearsals with a barrage of publicity on Hume Cronyn, Jessica Tandy, Rita Gam, George Grizzard and Zoe Caldwell. Morison and Fliehr said "The public lapped it up and bought tickets. The management wondered what they would do next year" (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 69).

Thirdly, the theatre had declared vehemently that it was dedicated to a policy which would prove the great classics can be "splendidly exciting entertainment when well performed." It opened with a well-performed but soporific four-hour Hamlet (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 70).

Another factor was that the theatre claimed it would appeal, and knew it eventually must appeal, to the widest possible cross-section of the community. According to Morison and Fliehr, it opened its doors in a festive flurry of high social activity. The "Yesses" were delighted. The "Maybes" said, "I told you it wasn't for us." The "Noes" paid no attention (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 70).
In addition to this the theatre wanted its company and their work on stage to speak for itself. A dazzling, controversial, and (to some) intimidating piece of architecture took the spotlight in center stage. The public pointed to the building with pride. The management began to view the building with alarm (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 70).

Finally, the theatre was a nonprofit, tax-exempt foundation which knew in its heart that a serious, classical theatre never could be self-supporting. At the end of the first year it proudly and loudly announced a profit of $6,933.14. Morison and Fliehr noted that the public decided the theatre must be an enormous success. The board of directors breathed a sigh of relief. The management wondered if they would be so successful next year (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 69).

Attacking the problem face to face, the public relations department adopted the "selective honesty" policy. Morison and Fliehr explained:

... theatres cannot afford to be greedy and undisciplined in their search for publicity. They must seek out only the honest presentation of what they are. It means that in the search for feature story material, the temptation must be resisted to use "good copy" if its total impression detracts from, or does not contribute to, the narrowing of the image gap (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 75).
The Tyrone Guthrie Theatre became aware of its image gaps and immediately the public relations department addressed them. As to its "high society image" problem, Morison and Fliehr said:

The Guthrie Theatre may have been more "upper crust" than it wanted to be, but it certainly wasn't as upper crust as most people believed it to be. We stopped calling the top society columnist with every social tidbit we encountered. Whenever gracefully possible, we avoided photographs of our more socially prominent women volunteers at teas. Instead, we tried to promote the interesting activities of all the theatre's volunteers. We also tried to deemphasize fancy formal dress. In 1966 we eliminated the opening-night party completely. We vowed to keep off the women's pages of the newspapers as much as possible and to get on the sports pages. Our most spectacular accomplishment resulted from the hiring of a popular, well-known professional wrestler to "direct" the wrestling scene in As You Like It. The resulting hilarious account, with pictures, was spread eight columns wide across the top of the front page of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 76).

Another technique applied to change the image gaps between the Guthrie Theatre and its publics was utilizing radio advertising time. During the first four seasons the theatre company only purchased major radio advertising time in a series of twenty-second spot announcements in the broadcasts of the Minnesota Twins games (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 79). Morison and Fliehr said:
It wasn't necessarily to sell tickets immediately, although the spots could be expected to act as a reminder for "Maybes" who had thought about attending a performance. The real purpose was to help narrow the theatre's image gaps by putting the theatre in the same frame of reference as baseball. We were deliberately associating the theatre (highbrow, cultural) with the beer-and-hotdogs atmosphere of baseball. The folksy approach of the spots was deliberate; the choice of using Ray Scott and other well-known, down-to-earth WCCO personalities was deliberate. Not only was the theatre reaching a large regional audience and associating itself with the "national game" but there was the implication that the theatre was part of the community of hotdogs, WCCO, home runs and the Minnesota Twins (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 79).

Morison and Fliehr discovered that an association with radio (more than just straight advertising) was very beneficial. Early in the 1963 season Morison and Fliehr reported that the theatre's Wednesday matinee was the weakest performance. The public relations department decided to offer special matinee luncheons and have WCCO co-sponsor the event. According to Morison and Fliehr, "the promotion staff of the station, in its tradition of support for civic enterprises, was eager to cooperate" (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 81).

The special matinee luncheons were organized in the following manner:

WCCO personalities would promote the luncheons on the air and also appear as masters of ceremony and hosts for the affairs. The WCCO--Guthrie Matinee Parties were planned in cooperation with a third sponsor, Minneapolis' newest and most glamorous hotel, the Sheraton-Ritz. By happy circumstances we could combine the folksiness of WCCO's good-neighbor
approach with the lure of lunching at the newest, swankiest hotel in the city. Each week for twelve weeks the pattern was the same. WCCO, on hundreds of radio and TV spots, would promote the luncheon, the play, the members of the company who would be present, and the radio or TV personality who would act as host. Charles Carey, manager of the Sheraton-Ritz, would call forth the best efforts of his staff to make guests feel welcome and important. After the luncheon, the WCCO personalities would interview two or three members of the acting company and everybody would happily board chartered buses for the theatre, wearing specially printed name tags announcing the "WCCO-Guthrie-Sheraton-Ritz Matinee Party." The total package price: six dollars and ninety-five cents, including parking at the hotel garage (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 81).

Morison and Fliehr stated in *In Search of An Audience* that the results were rewarding. The Wednesday matinee became an important occasion and the matinee parties came close to running at the full capacity of the Sheraton-Ritz Ballroom—about 300 persons. Morison and Fliehr added that the Wednesday matinee attendance increased and they reached people who might not otherwise have attended the theatre without the convenience and excitement of the parties (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 81).

According to Morison and Fliehr there were other opportunities during the early years to narrow the theatre's image gaps. By adopting the twin tools of association and selective publicity the public relations department began the tradition of making public relations elements work for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 85).
Summary

The basis of the public relations department began with the motivation and drive of a nine-member steering committee organized in 1959. According to Guthrie these men were responsible for finding a location for the theatre in the Twin Cities and negotiating a major portion of the building funds (Guthrie 1964, 58-62).

Under the direction of John Cowles Jr., the Guthrie board of directors negotiated with board members from the T. B. Walker Foundation and an agreement was made. The Walker Foundation donated land for the site of the Guthrie Theatre and in return the Walker would be allowed access to the building for various cultural programs. In addition, the Walker Foundation donated $400,000 to the project. The total cost of the Guthrie Theatre amounted to $2,000,000 (Guthrie 1964, 58).

Following the initial steps of selecting a site, Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler chose the theatre's first season. The productions were: Hamlet, The Miser, The Three Sisters and Death of a Salesman.

In addition to selecting specific shows, Guthrie, Rea and Zeisler negotiated with numerous actors and actresses. Guthrie noted that the actors and actresses showed incredible interest and enthusiasm for the
project. Unfortunately the season's program only demanded a certain number of parts. Those selected to be company members for the first year included Julie Harris, Hume Cronyn, Jessica Tandy, Ellen Geer, John Cromwell, Ruth Nelson, and Zoe Caldwell (Guthrie 1964, 81-95).

Bradley G. Morison and Kay Fliehr became the major components of the Guthrie Theatre's public relations department beginning in 1962. Their job was to create a favorable and appropriate image for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. According to Guthrie, they communicated the characteristics of a theory that wasn't always clear or consistent (Morison and Fliehr 1968, viii).

Morison and Fliehr's public relations philosophy was based on the theory that an image of an organization is the total impression the public has of the organization (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 79). This reasoning was similar to other various public relations specialists. According to David L. Lendt, an assistant to the vice-president for information and development and an assistant professor of journalism and mass communication at Iowa State University in 1975, public relations entails everything the organization does when dealing with the public (Lendt 1975, 3).

According to Morison and Fliehr, in 1963 the Midwest had an audience that was "ready and waiting" to
become part of the Guthrie theatre project. They said "it was large enough so that we did not have to devote every bit of our daily energy to filling seats for the next night. This breathing room allowed us to look ahead and to make small beginnings toward developing larger, more broadly based audiences for the future" (Morison and Fiehr 1968, xviii).

Morison and Fiehr created a working strategy entitled "A Plan of Strategy for Promotion, Publicity and Public Relations for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, 1963 Season." The plan was more commonly referred to as "The Morison Report" and was the first of continuing attempts by the public relations department to apply basic and accepted techniques of marketing to the problems of promoting a theatre (Morison and Fiehr 1968, 15).

"The Morison Report" attempted to define, by geographic, demographic and psychological characteristics, those people who would probably be most receptive to the Tyrone Guthrie theatre. It analyzed surveys taken from 1963-1966 and provided information concerning a market-analysis for ticket sales which was based on the sales data from the Metropolitan Opera of the Twin Cities. According to Morison and Fiehr, "it was a patchwork job which would have been totally unacceptable to a sophisticated advertising client
because of its lack of background research. But it was a starting point" (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 16).

Primarily, Morison and Fliehr focused on the public relations aspect of audience development. The objective of analyzing the Metropolitan Opera ticket-sales figures was to locate the potential audiences geographically. After plotting a map of towns within a six-state region and using the Metropolitan Opera ticket-sales data, Morison and Fliehr concluded that (1) people attended less frequently when they had to travel more than one hundred miles and (2) a certain nucleus of people would attend the Opera no matter how far they had to travel (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 22).

Morison and Fliehr designated the people in this region by certain titles. They had geographically defined the potential audience in terms of attendance probability.

In addition to audience development, Morison and Fliehr created promotion activities and events that were new to the public relations area and to theatre. They said "... we continued to use various research and research techniques to substitute knowledge for guesswork whenever possible" (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 34).

Throughout the early years Morison and Fliehr's attempts to create a favorable image for the Tyrone
Guthrie Theatre existed. In 1964 they launched a limited campaign to capture the sales clerks and clerical/secretarial workers. In 1966, when the theatre decided to expand and perform a season in St. Paul, Morison and Fliehr researched the attitudes of theatre-goers in St. Paul. Women volunteers used interviewing skills to gather information, estimate potential audience sizes and structure a favorable season program (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 35).

The greatest problem Morison and Fliehr faced during this time was a number of gaps which occurred between what the theatre wanted and professed to be and what it appeared to be to the public. The basic gaps were (1) the theatre did not want to depend on the popularity of Sir Tyrone Guthrie for its success; (2) the theatre's opening season cast was star-studded but it professed a "no star" policy; (3) the theatre's policy declared that classical theatre could be exciting and entertaining but the first season's performance of Hamlet lasted four hours; (4) the theatre claimed it would appeal to the widest possible cross-section of the community yet the opening season's flurry of high social activity attracted mainly high society audiences; (5) the theatre wanted the actors and their work to speak for itself but the spectacle and controversy of the theatre's
architecture took the spotlight instead; and, (6) the theatre was a nonprofit, tax-exempt foundation gambling on the basis that classical theatre could support it (Morison and Fliehr 1968, 69-70).

In a number of promotion and publicity events involving the community, radio stations, various individuals audiences related to and special ticket prices, Morison and Fliehr were able to attack the image gaps. They associated the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre with the Minnesota Twins, the Sheraton-Ritz Hotel, WCCO and, overall, the quality of Minnesota living. They had outlined public relations policies and image creating techniques and they also made them successful.
CHAPTER VI
THE TYRONE GUTHRIE THEATRE TODAY:
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary
The year 1988 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. In this study an attempt was made to identify elements that characterized the Guthrie Theatre as a landmark in the history of American theatre at the time it was established.

A comprehensive review of Sir Tyrone Guthrie's books *A New Theatre*, *A Life in the Theatre*, and *In Various Directions* revealed pertinent information concerning the origin, reasoning and history of the establishment of the Sir Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. In addition, partial files of Guthrie's administrative director, Oliver Rea, were searched and a personal interview with Rea supported facts found concerning administrative and artistic policies of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre.

A review of Bradley Morison and Kay Fliehr's book, *In Search of An Audience*, provided extensive information concerning the public relations philosophies
and strategies adopted by the Tyrone Guthrie public
relations department during the early years of the
theatre's existence. Morison and Fliehr acted as a two-
person public relations department and became
instrumental in discovering audience development
techniques for the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre.

In addition numerous press releases, brochures,
magazine articles, Minneapolis Star and Tribune newspaper
clippings, a television broadcast entitled "Onstage--25
Years at the Guthrie" and a film strip, "Miracle in
Minnesota," were studied. These sources provided
supporting facts and opinions which enhanced the study.

It was learned that Guthrie's philosophy of
theatre began when he was a young man. He was involved
in theatre at an early age and experimented with acting
before trying directing. Three elements were crucial to
Guthrie's philosophy. They were (1) that the essential
magic of theatre is not illusion but ritual (2) the
classics are the plays in which men have found an
occasion for ceremonies that give life its shape and
isolate its significance and (3) the theatre where such
plays are to be performed should provide a platform stage
with the audience disposed in an encompassing arena.

Religion also played a role in Guthrie's
philosophy. He related theatre to God as a religious
ritual and compared drama to the ancient acts of sacrifice. According to Guthrie, the sacrifice, beginning with humans and evolving to animals, eventually adopted a symbolic form. The story and symbolic form of the sacrifice prompted the first form of theatre, the tragedy.

The classics were also a very important part of Guthrie's philosophy of theatre. In the second phase of his philosophy he applied the ritual of ceremony to the classics. Guthrie believed the classics were the work of the best minds throughout the world's history and from these classics, intelligent standards of criticism could be established.

Guthrie believed that an appreciation and knowledge of the arts, especially live theatre, was lacking in the United States. The study revealed that in the late 1950s and early 1960s live theatre in the United States was suffering. In Guthrie's book, A New Theatre, he acknowledged the fact that the introduction of movies reduced the demand for live theatre and many traveling theatre companies ceased to exist.

It was also learned that the academic theatre attempted to fill gaps which the professional theatre had overlooked. The attempt was to offer some type of live drama in places and to people who would have otherwise
had none. The result was drama professors directing student actors and, according to Guthrie, was not what the public needed to lure them back to the theatre.

During this time the economic status of theatre in New York was also undergoing changes. Everything in New York was taking a materialistic direction and one of the casualties was the city's theatres. Theatres were being sacrificed to make way for bigger and better hotels or office buildings. These buildings were presumed to bring better financial returns for the real estate business. This economic pressure forced theatres to adopt a "boom-or-bust" psychology which meant theatre managers and producers could not risk producing plays that did not guarantee box office sell outs. In addition to these elements, the actors believed their talents were being stifled by the economic pressure and trade unions began dictating to employers who they could and could not hire. These factors influenced Guthrie to establish a regional, resident repertory theatre.

In May 1960, Guthrie and his associates, Oliver Rea and Peter Zeisler, and a nine-member steering committee agreed that the site for the new Tyrone Guthrie Theatre would be Minneapolis/St. Paul. This ended the search which had included seven major cities throughout the United States.
This study also made an attempt to identify what characteristics Guthrie required of the theatre site and to what extent the Minneapolis/Twin Cities area met these requirements. It was learned through the books reviewed, press releases, personal correspondence and various documents that the major reasons for choosing the Minneapolis/St. Paul area were (1) its geographical location (2) its opportunities for cultural development and the great amount of in-depth community support for such a project.

According to Guthrie and Rea, choosing Minneapolis/St. Paul was at first a "gut instinct" but after being introduced to numerous, influential, Minneapolis/St. Paul citizens, they were positive the choice was a wise one. According to an interview with Rea, the in-depth community support Minneapolis/St. Paul possessed was a major factor other cities lacked (Rea 1988).

Geographically, Minneapolis/St. Paul was also an ideal location to establish a regional theatre. According to Rea, it was the metropolitan center in a region that included Minnesota, Montana, Iowa, Wisconsin, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas and Illinois (Rea 1988).

An attempt was also made to determine the philosophy and general strategy of the Tyrone Guthrie
Theatre's public relations department in the early stages of its development. According to Rea, the two-person public relations team of Bradley Morison and Kay Fliehr established the philosophy of "digging the Guthrie roots into the community" (Rea 1988). At the point in which Morison and Fliehr began researching to develop a more diverse audience the theatre began serving its publics. The book, In Search of An Audience, revealed that 1962-1967 were years when a variety of public relations projects were executed to gain knowledge about the theatre's audience members. Morison and Fliehr addressed questions such as; what did the audience like or dislike about the theatre?, what did they want to gain from the theatre?, culture? entertainment?, or a combination?, With surveys, questionnaires, and other promotion projects the team initiated a public relations program that created an image of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. It was an image acceptable to the variety of publics the theatre served and showed the audiences the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre was "their" theatre.

Finally, an attempt was made to recognize the importance of the development of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in American theatre history. As the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in May 1988, its contributions and impact on theatre in
the United States were evident. In 1963 the season included four major productions: Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Molière's *The Miser*, Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* and Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, in a May-October season. Today the Guthrie performs seven plays during a nine month season running June through February (Behl 1988, 2).

In 1968, the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre became the first regional theatre to go on national tour. It took Guthrie's production of *The House of Atreus* and *The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui*, directed by Edward Payson Call, to New York and Los Angeles (Behl 1988, 3).

Although outreach programs offered by the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre began as early as 1963 with the scheduling of five matinees strictly for high school students (Morison and Fliehr, 1968, 19), eight years later outreach efforts were still increasing. In 1971 the theatre developed new ways to reach out to its audiences in their own communities. Today, twenty-two different touring productions, artist-in-residence programs and a variety of other services are provided by the Outreach Programming Department on a regional and nation-wide basis. Nearly a million people have been touched by these programs since their inception (Behl 1988, 4).
On June 1, 1986, Garland Wright became the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre's sixth artistic director. Wright created a program in his first season to "develop new work and performance techniques with the purpose of enhancing the actor's skills" (Benglis 1988, 2). According to press releases, actors, writers, directors, teachers, and scholars collaborated to explore new ideas, ways of performance and created new works including the Guthrie's 1987-88 season touring production of Frankenstein (Benglis 1988, 5).

In recognition for its outstanding contribution to American theatre, the Guthrie was presented the prestigious Tony Award, by the American Theatre Wing and the League of New York Theatres and Producers on June 6, 1982. According to Henry Hewes, executive secretary of the American Theatre Critics Association, "the Guthrie Theatre has played an important role in the development of America's regional theatre. For twenty years the Guthrie, with its true rotating repertory and many fine actors, has shared its benefits contributing to the development of theatre as a whole—on Broadway and throughout the nation" (Benglis 1988, 5).

According to Rea, the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre has had a "tremendous impact on the theatre world in the United States. He said
The Guthrie Theatre ranks very high in the theatre reputation. Its name is very often first to be mentioned when talking about regional theatres. If it isn't first it is second, only to follow The Arena in Washington D.C. (Rea 1988).

According to Rea it was the establishment of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre that energized fund drives to build regional theatres across the United States. He said:

The Guthrie prompted regional theatres to be built on a large scale and concept. Up to that point regional theatres were very small in size and experimental. They didn't have the ambitions and scope the Guthrie had (Rea 1988).

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. Historically, the characteristics of theatre in the United States, and primarily the theayrical status in New York, prompted Tyrone Guthrie to establish a regional resident repertory theatre.

2. Sir Tyrone Guthrie's philosophy of theatre influenced the type of theatre the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis/St. Paul would be.

3. Tyrone Guthrie demanded that the location for his new theatre project possess certain characteristics. The Minneapolis/St. Paul area was selected according to these characteristics and Guthrie's instinct.
4. The public relations process established in the first few years of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre's existence was successful in identifying target audiences and developing programs to attract various publics. It used public relations techniques that were creative and set a precedent for the image of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre throughout the years.

5. The Tyrone Guthrie Theatre is an influential and vital arts institution that has enhanced the degree of theatre in the United States.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

The intent of this study has been to provide a history of the establishment of the Sir Tyrone Guthrie Theatre/Minnesota Theatre Company, and to acknowledge its importance in American theatre. It also identified the development and impact of public relations techniques applied to theatre.

This study might serve as a basis of comparison of the processes other regional repertory theatre companies have adopted in their development since the establishment of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. Since the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre has attracted directors and actors of considerable quality throughout the years, a study of what impact it had on them and their talents would prove beneficial.
APPENDIX A

CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING TYRONE GUTHRIE

THEATRE LOCATION SELECTION

October 12, 1997

Mr. Wilson

New York, New York

Dear Mr. Wilson,

I am writing to express my support for the idea of bringing a new Guthrie Theatre to Minneapolis.

We have been working on this project for several years and we are confident that it is possible. The project has received the support of many influential people, including:

1. President Powell and other high officials of the university.
2. Governor and Mrs. Jostin, and other state and city officials.
4. Various civic leaders and influential citizens and related organizations.

We are also planning to involve the board of the Ford Foundation, among others, in the planning of this project.

Finally, I have been informed that our plan will also receive federal funding. The project, to be called the Guthrie Theater, will be located in Minneapolis on the corner of 11th and 3rd, and will be a major cultural center.

I believe that the addition of this logarithm-related area will bring to the community the opportunity to create a new cultural center.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Mr. Oliver Rea
665 Fifth Avenue
New York 22, New York

Dear Mr. Rea:

Thanks for giving us a green light in bidding for the honor of bringing your Tyrone Guthrie theatre to Minneapolis. I am, therefore, taking immediate steps to see what kind of concrete support can be marshalled. Within the next two weeks, I intend to discuss the project with leaders in this area including:

1. President Morrill and other high officials of the University.

2. Governor and Mrs. Orville J. Freeman and other state and city officials.

3. John Sherman, John Harvey, and other leading newspaper people in the area.

4. Various social leaders and influential citizens and theater enthusiasts.

I am also writing to Edward D'Arms of the Ford Foundation asking him to set aside time for careful consideration of this project when he arrives at the end of this month. Finally, I have taken tentative steps which will enable me to announce the project to the North Central Theatre Association, which is meeting in Minneapolis on October 30 and 31, if such a move seems desirable.

I believe and hope that citizens of this culture-conscious area will arise to the occasion with the attractive offers of support that your project so richly deserves.
Some preliminary "off-the-cuff" advantages that occurred to me include:

1. The Twin Cities area includes a population of over one million.

2. There is a high degree of social and cultural pride. Our art galleries and the Minneapolis Symphony are evidence of this.

3. There is no strong professional or semi-professional theatre in the area. This means that no one, because of self-interest would be unfriendly to the project.

4. I believe you would find at the University of Minnesota one of the most compatible and capable theater faculties in the country.

5. Our only legitimate Minneapolis theatre for road companies closed last year. There is much talk of building a new theatre. I am sure that the forces behind this project could be rallied to yours.

6. I am reasonably confident that the University of Minnesota could be persuaded to set up an attractive position for Dr. Guthrie which would provide a reliable income plus academic prestige and stability.

I note with great interest that you and Dr. Guthrie may be visiting several cities late in November. I should like to invite you to visit us. Would it be possible for you to include us sometime between November 26 and December 6, at which time we will be performing one of our major season productions, A Light in the Deepening Dark. We would, of course, feel highly honored to have you and Dr. Guthrie in our audience. Moreover, I feel certain that you will want to find out as much as possible about the type of people you would be working with, and the quality of the theatrical work already being done in any area under consideration.

I assume, of course, that if you wish to consider us seriously, you will also want to make a preliminary visit yourself, as you are doing in the cases of Cleveland, Ann Arbor and Milwaukee. Let me assure you that we will be most happy to welcome you at any time.
We are only one hour by air beyond Milwaukee. Perhaps you could extend that trip to include us.

Thanks again for your interest.

Cordially,

Frank M Whiting, Director

UNIVERSITY THEATER
October 22, 1959

Mr. Adolph W. Schmidt

c/o T. Mellon & Sons
525 William Penn Place
Pittsburgh 30, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Schmidt:

I enclose some newspaper comments that will, I think, contribute toward your understanding of the project with which I am at present involved.

I am writing you for advice, because I know of your deep interest in the theatre and of your business and financial connections in Pittsburgh. I might add that I talked with Eddie Specter the other day, and he confirmed my belief that you, above all people, should know of our project first.

From the attached clippings you can gather that I am attempting to form a permanent resident theatre company with the highest professional standards, in a community outside of New York. Leaving aside many fringe and philosophical reasons for engaging in this endeavor, I can reduce my motivations to the following:

(1) I travelled around the country last year to a considerable extent, talking to business and community leaders; these conversations convinced me that the time was perhaps right for such a project as I am contemplating.

(2) Granted that no like theatrical endeavor is even worthy of mention unless an artistic administrator with fierce devotion and personal dynamism would be willing to give his full time for a number of years, I set about the task of acquiring the services of Dr. Tyrone Guthrie for a period of three years. As you undoubtedly
Mr. Adolph W. Schmidt—2

Know, Dr. Guthrie, besides being one of the most prominent theatrical directors of the English-speaking stage, is, in my estimation, the only man today who can organize and operate a permanent company with the standards of which I have spoken.

We are now engaged in a thorough investigation of many communities which have expressed vital interest, in one way or another, in our project. For your information, these communities are Cleveland, Ohio; Ann Arbor, Mich.; Milwaukee, Wis.; Minneapolis, Minn.; and San Francisco, Cal. My very preliminary talks with Pittsburgh people have, so far, led me to believe that this project would not be one which the community of Pittsburgh would desire; however, since I did come from Pittsburgh and since my family has been engaged actively in the business and community life there for a number of generations, I wouldn't rest easy unless I had thoroughly investigated all avenues of community support. Hence, this letter to you.

I don't think that in this letter I can go into all the many details of this project, but if you feel, after reading this letter and the enclosed clippings, that Pittsburgh might be interested, I would be very happy to fly out and discuss the project with you personally.

Before I close, I believe I should add a fact which is not mentioned in the newspaper reports, and that is that we obviously envision this theatrical venture as a non-profit community theatre, existing for support upon individual subscriptions, community fund raising and, what I hope eventually will be, foundation participation.

Quite off the top of my head, and speaking of the specific local Pittsburgh picture, I do not think that such a project as ours can or should be in competition with any other existing theatrical ventures. I would, therefore, assume that in Pittsburgh this would mean some kind of an amalgamation, or an eventual taking-over, of the Pittsburgh Playhouse organization. I hasten to say that this is a very perfunctory opinion, not based on deep research, and that perhaps upon investigation I might very easily contradict myself.
I will be immensely grateful for your valued candid opinion as to whether Pittsburgh is a community which would, first, want and, second, support a theatre company such as Dr. Guthrie and I envision.

With every best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours,
November 3, 1959

Mr. Oliver Rea
665 Fifth Avenue
New York 22, New York

Dear Mr. Rea:

Just a brief report on the progress of plans
for your visit. The very tentative outline of appointments
is shaping up about as follows:

November 17, I plan to meet you at the
airport and hope to have you join five or six
of the permanent members of our theater staff
for dinner at Charlie's. After dinner, we thought
you might like to visit the University. Two plays
will be in rehearsal, giving you a very rough idea
of the type of activity that goes on.

November 18, 9:30 a.m.
I have a tentative appointment for you to meet
Governor Freeman and, perhaps, other state officials
at the State Capitol.

11:00 a.m.
I hope to arrange an appointment with President Morrill
and other officials of the University administration.

12:00 noon
The Minneapolis Star and Tribune hopes to arrange
a luncheon, which will include the business leaders
who would be most vitally concerned with this project.

4:30 p.m.
I hope to arrange a cocktail party which will include
the social and cultural leaders of the community.
Before making any of the above definite, I would appreciate your reaction. Especially, I need answers to two questions:

1. At what hour do you plan to leave on Nov. 19?

2. Do you envision your theater as a profit, or non-profit organization? In other words, do you already have the money to build your theater and produce the shows? Or, are you looking for financial backing?

I am not acquainted with all the technical problems involved, but it seems apparent on the surface that a non-profit organization would have a much greater claim to state, city, or University aid than a commercial organization. At least, some indication of your desires and plans in this regard would be helpful to me.

Most cordially,

Frank M Whiting, Director

UNIVERSITY THEATER
November 6, 1959

Mr. Frank W. Whiting
Director of University Theater
College of Science, Literature & the Arts
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis 14, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Whiting:

Thank you for your letter of November 3. Your outline of appointments certainly seems thorough, and by the time we leave Minneapolis, I am sure we will have had a complete picture of the reaction to our project. The intent of this flying visit is for us to meet as varied a group as possible who will eventually have a hand in and be responsible for the creation of a permanent repertory theatre in Minneapolis. Your schedule of appointments eminently satisfies those requirements.

In answer to your specific questions:

(1) We plan to leave Minneapolis on November 19 at 11:30 a.m. We could delay our departure that day for a few hours if this would make your schedule for us more feasible. Would you please contact me immediately if you desire us to postpone our departure.

(2) The only possible structure for our theatre is a non-profit organization; a civic community theatre, sponsored, financed and organized by a joint effort of a university and the community leaders of a metropolitan area. We do not have any money to build a theatre and produce the shows. Leaving aside possible foundation support at a later date, this project must be completely financed by a university, a metropolitan community, or a combination of both. Our plans for this project, with the important exception of quality production, are not rigid; we can adjust our structure to the desires and needs of a given community. We do remain insistent, however, on three basic premises:
Mr. Frank M. Whiting—2

(a) that the theatre be organized on a non-profit basis;

(b) that the theatre be identified in the first instance as belonging to a specific community; this project must never be construed as being a New York show business idea, imported to Minneapolis;

(c) that the company, under Dr. Guthrie's direction, be a first-class, highly professional group, which could, with time, develop into the No. 1 repertory company in the English-speaking world.

I hope these answers have clarified to a small degree some of your thinking, and both Dr. Guthrie and I look forward to seeing you in Minneapolis on November 17.

We leave New York on the first leg of our tour on November 15, but my secretary in my New York office will know exactly where I will be, so if there are any alterations to your plan, please contact Miss Elaine Jordey at the address and number on this letterhead.

With best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours,
Mr. Oliver Rea  
665 Fifth Avenue  
New York 22, N.Y.  

Dear Oliver:

In co-ordination with Frank Whiting, we are planning to give a luncheon for you and Tyrone Guthrie here at the newspaper on Wednesday, November 18, at which I think we shall be able to explore the subject of a permanent repertory company pretty thoroughly.

Many thanks for your letter. I enjoyed thoroughly meeting you and your wife, and look forward to seeing you here next week.

Regards,

[Signature]

Mr. Frank Whiting
Director of University Theatre
College of the University of the Arts
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
December 1, 1959

Mr. Frank J. Whiting
Director of University Theater
College of Science, Literature & the Arts
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis 14, Minnesota

Dear Frank:

It was a pleasure seeing you in New York, and I am greatly encouraged and excited by the results of our conversation.

I hesitate to put you to any more trouble on my behalf, but could you send me the names and addresses of some of the people who entertained us and were especially kind to us while we were in Minneapolis. Specifically, I am thinking of: the Rudes, the editor of the Star & Tribune who was responsible for the luncheon, the Mayor, and the elderly gentleman who, I believe, was Chairman of the City Planning Commission. In addition to those people, I will leave it to your discretion to give me any other name and address to whom I might write a note of thanks and appreciation.

Many thanks, and best wishes to you and Josinette.

Sincerely,

or/efb

P. S. In case the enclosed article escaped your attention, I feel that this foundation development is most applicable to our project and couldn't be more excited about the future possibilities.
December 3, 1959

Mr. Oliver Rea
665 5th Avenue
New York 22, New York

Dear Oliver:

Thanks for your letter. Enclosed are the addresses you asked for.

Have just come from a one and one-half hour private conference with President Morrill, where we began to face up to the painful realities of trying to raise $2,000,000. I am sure you will not really be surprised to learn that this is not going to be easy. Apparently, most of the boundless optimism I had encountered earlier was largely talk. This does not mean that we are discouraged. It just means that the optimistic honeymoon is over, and the hard work is about to begin.

Incidentally, the President had had a long discussion with John Cowles, Jr. and Sr. just last night. John Sr. is apparently very pessimistic about the idea. He was citing the Ford Foundation's (he is a trustee) grants to Washington, San Francisco, etc. as evidence of the fact that a repertory theater could not exist without heavy subsidy. I doubt that he realizes who Tyrone Guthrie is—that a Tyrone Guthrie theater on the banks of the Mississippi is not just another Actors Lab in San Francisco. Apparently, the younger John defended the idea, but without much success. Wanted to rush this information to you, because the support of the Cowles family—whether they give money or not—will be indispensable to our operation.

Our next step here seems to be a high level meeting with Bill Steven, John Cowles, Jr., Stanley Hawks, President Morrill and two or three others. The President wants greater assurance of success before we launch an all-out effort. He has also given his approval for a visit to Mr. McKnight.
I hope this does not sound too discouraging. Actually, I feel that in spite of the President's pessimism, he was won over. He wields tremendous power. For example, the head of the Ford Foundation is a close personal friend. I hope to somehow slide the ideas into the President's mind that nothing he could do during his last six months at Minnesota would compare with the victory that would be achieved if he could raise $2,000,000 for a Tyrone Guthrie theater.

Cordially,

Frank M Whiting, Director

UNIVERSITY THEATER

FMW: jr
enclosure
Mr. and Mrs. John Rood  
1650 Dupont Avenue South  
Minneapolis 5, Minnesota

William P. Steven  
Vice-President and Executive Director  
Minneapolis Star and Tribune  
Fifth and Portland  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Mr. Arnett Leslie  
1700 West 25th Street  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Mayor P. Kenneth Peterson  
City Hall  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

President James L. Morrill  
Administration 202  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis 14, Minnesota

Dear John,

Dr. Gorden, Dr. Smith, and I are very happy to return from our rather strenuous trip yesterday, and I want to take this opportunity to thank you most sincerely for your kind hospitality towards us during our stay in Minneapolis. We shall always treasure our visit here as one of the most enjoyable and interesting.

Not enough can be said, of course, about the equipment we found in your laboratories, but I am sure you will find your visit to our laboratories equally instructive. We are all interested in the work you and your colleagues are doing, and we find that the simple factors of human ingenuity are often the most important in creating new opportunities for sanitation.

Our stay here was very pleasant, and we are very grateful for the kindness of the staff of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune in arranging our activities. The newspaper offices were particularly helpful, and we found the facilities for research and development to be among the best we have seen.

We are very grateful for the friendship and hospitality we received here, and we shall always cherish our memories of our visit to Minneapolis.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

[Printed Name]
December 2, 1959

Mr. John Cowles, Jr.
STAR & TRIBUNE
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear John:

Dr. Guthrie and I have just returned from our rather strenuous cross-country tour, and I want to take this opportunity of expressing our thanks to you personally and, through you, to the many kind people on the STAR & TRIBUNE who made our stay in Minneapolis so illuminating, productive and cordial.

Not enough time has passed for either Dr. Guthrie or me to satisfactorily digest all the information and impressions that we received on our trip. One impression, however, is most vivid, and that is the simple fact that there are a number of communities which desire our project, and we find this both flattering and exalting. Another impression stands out, and this one I passed on to Frank Whiting when we had lunch here in New York last Saturday. I must add first that this is a very personal and subjective opinion, but one which is equally shared by both Dr. Guthrie and myself, and it is simply that of all the places we visited, the place we would like to locate and the place which we think offers the most for a theatre, such as we propose, is Minneapolis. I don't think this is the time to go into any detailed reasoning on this matter because, quite frankly, we have not yet sorted out all our ideas.

I, personally, was excited by the aliveness and obvious, vigorous unity of your city, and whether or not anything comes of this scheme of ours, I am
Mr. John Cowles — 2

most grateful for having been exposed to so many vital people.

As I mentioned in Minneapolis, my office here in New York and I, personally, rest at your disposal for any future information, consultation or plain hard work.

Many thanks, again, for your efforts and kindnesses on our behalf.

Best wishes,

or/eff
December 3, 1959

Dr. Tyrone Guthrie
Dwohat
Monaghan
Ireland

Dear Dr. Guthrie:

Although fully aware that the production of Hamlet
will absorb your energies during the coming months,
it seems only fair to keep you posted on developments in
Minnesota. Please feel no obligation to answer any of
my letters or even to read them. I will depend on Oliver
Rea for information and opinions. In other words, my
letters are simply to keep you and Mrs. Guthrie informed.
Read them if interested. Should you wish to object or
make comments, feel free to do so, but never feel obligated
to do so.

I have just returned from New York where I enjoyed
a brief visit with Oliver and Peter Ziesler. I was
naturally excited to learn that you had been favorably
impressed with Minnesota, and am, therefore, launching
a determined campaign to build a theater. The enclosed
information sheet has been dashed off as a supplement
to our old 1950 Circle of Vision brochure. Together, they
will provide something immediate and tangible to place
on the doorsteps of millionaires. The prevailing belief
seems to be that the required $2,000,000 can be raised,
although the going will be difficult.

I have encouraged the University to take the initiative,
because I honestly believe that the location on the river,
the quality of the building, and other advantages to you as
well as to us will be greater if the theater is centered
on campus.
I have deliberately avoided any statement to the
effect that your season would last for six months
during each summer while ours would last for six months
during the winter. This may well be an excellent arrange­
ment for both of us, but for your sake, it seems wise
to keep the matter flexible. Having met you, I am no
longer worried about "protecting the rights of our students."
You made it obvious that an outstanding school is of
vital importance to you just as an outstanding professional
theater is of vital importance to us. Your book also
makes it clear that sitting and observing is not enough.
The student learns to act by acting and direct by directing.
Perhaps to fulfill our goal, we should include a 275
seat theater under the same roof as your large one. And,
by the way, although I have been informed that you
detest compliments, I would be dishonest if I failed to
state that your entire book is a masterpiece of wisdom
and uncommon sense in regard to things theatrical.

Incidentally, Dean Ziebarth is including you on our
budget for the 1959-60 fiscal year, which expires on
June 30th. Terms, as I explained, are $1,000.00 for
the week (Monday through Friday) plus travel expenses
from and to anywhere in Canada or U.S.A. for you and
Mrs. Guthrie, and living expenses for both of you while
here.

Best wishes for a great production of Hamlet, for
a Merry Christmas, and for a pleasant vacation at home
in Ireland.

Cordially,

Frank M Whiting, Director

UNIVERSITY THEATER

FMW: jr

c/c Oliver Rea

enclosure
December 4, 1969

Mr. Frank W. Whiting
Director of University Theater
College of Science, Literature & the Arts
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis 14, Minnesota

Dear Frank:

Thanks for your letter. The honeymoon lasted longer than I thought it was going to, but feel assured that this party will pitch in to the fullest, with the coming hard work.

Obviously, John Cowles, Sr. needs a lot of work done on him. I must say that I was greatly encouraged over the Ford Foundation's recent grants. I am on the Board of Trustees of the Phoenix Theatre here in New York and, therefore, have been aware for some time that the two-year survey, which they have been conducting, has resulted in their statement, "that the professional theatre outside New York is scarce and that the hope of theatre in this country cannot be left to Broadway."

I was especially elated in Mr. Lovry's statement, "conviction that the theatre in America is a cultural rather than a commercial resource and one that ranks with music and the visual arts."

Granting that perhaps Mr. Cowles, Sr. is not fully aware of the stature of Tony Guthrie and that this theatre would in no way compare with San Francisco or Washington, I feel he is being realistic in his fear that repertory theatre will need annual subsidy. At this time I sincerely believe that the project, as we have discussed it, could, as Tony says, "wash its face," but I think it would be a mistake to plan for this. And it is for this reason that I am optimistic and greatly encouraged by the Ford Foundation's grant and, more particularly, by the premise behind it. In all modesty, my first reaction was simply that if they would support companies such as San Francisco and Washington, it goes without saying that they should come running down the main street of Minneapolis, with bundles of matching funds in their hands.
I feel it important in these first preliminary explorations in Minneapolis that everybody concerned realize that although this will be essentially a Minnesota theatre, it will have wide national reverberations, and that from a financial point of view, opinions such as those expressed by Mr. Cowles, Sr. should be met face on by thorough exploration of the future participation of national and local foundations.

More than ever, I have the unshakable belief that if a university and a community will commit themselves to Tony Guthrie's plan, the question of operating subsidies will fall into place.

These are some random and premature reactions to your letter received this morning. They are not very concise or helpful, and I will give your letter much more thought over the weekend. If I come up with anything, I will forward it on to you. But I wanted to express my essential reaction to the Ford grant, which was one of rampant optimism.

I couldn't agree with you more that the Cowles family is indispensable to this project in Minneapolis and will exert every measure of influence with my personal contacts with the family. Mrs. Cruidenier of Des Moines, John Cowles, Sr.'s sister, and her family will be in New York next week, and I am planning on bombarding them with this project.

Best to you,
December 5, 1959

Dear Governor and Mrs. Freeman:

A note of thanks for your many kindnesses to Tyrone Guthrie and me when we were in Minneapolis.

My wife and I hope that the Democratic Party will not occupy all of your time while in New York and that we might have the pleasure of having a brief drink with you both. I will call you on Saturday to see if this is at all possible.

Best wishes to you both.

Sincerely yours,
December 7, 1959

Mr. and Mrs. John Rood
1650 Dupont Avenue South
Minneapolis 5, Minnesota

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Rood:

A tardy but sincere note of thanks on behalf of Dr. and Mrs. Guthrie and myself, for you very kind hospitality to us while we were in Minneapolis.

It was a joy to see your beautiful house, and you were most kind to go to the trouble of arranging that elegant party for us.

Again, many thanks, and I look forward to seeing you when next I am in Minneapolis.

Sincerely yours,

or/efb
December 7, 1959

Mr. William P. Steven
Vice-President and Executive Director
MINNEAPOLIS STAR AND TRIBUNE
Fifth and Portland
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Mr. Steven:

I have just returned from our exhausting, yet exhilarating, exploratory trip around the country, and I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of Dr. and Mrs. Guthrie and myself, to thank you most sincerely for your many kindnesses to us while we were in Minneapolis.

Both Dr. Guthrie and I felt that the luncheon you arranged at the STAR AND TRIBUNE accomplished the needed exposure of our project to a wide segment of the Minneapolis community.

As I told Frank Whiting, here in New York the other day, both Dr. Guthrie and I feel that Minneapolis would be the ideal city for the establishment of our theatre. We were impressed by the vitality and unity of your city and feel that our project would find a meaningful place in the community.

It was a great pleasure meeting you, and I hope to see you again in the near future.

With every best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours,

or/efs
December 7, 1959

President James L. Morrill
Administration 202
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis 14, Minnesota

Dear President Morrill:

On behalf of Dr. Guthrie and myself, I would like to express our thanks for the many courtesies, which you and other members of the faculty of the University extended to us in our brief, but most interesting, visit to Minneapolis.

It is perhaps premature to comment on the results of our rather exhausting trip around the country, but in both Dr. Guthrie's mind and mine, one impression stands out, and that is simply the vitality and unity which we found to exist in Minneapolis.

We are grateful to you for granting us the time to hear our proposals, and, as I have repeatedly told Frank Whiting, my personal time and the facilities of my office are at your disposal for any aid that might be needed.

We are deeply impressed by the intellectual climate of Minneapolis and again, thank you and your staff for exposing us to it.

With every best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours,

or/efb
January 27, 1960

Mr. K. Elmo Love
Director
Cleveland Play House
2040 East 86th Street
Cleveland 6, Ohio

Dear K:

Please excuse the long delay in writing you, but I seem to have been traipsing all over the country the last few weeks and have just now gotten back to my desk.

First of all, I would like to thank you most sincerely for your very kind cooperation and frankness in all the discussions and negotiations, which took place between the Play House and the Trimverate. Under the circumstances, it must have been very trying for you, and I, personally, have appreciated your frankness and honesty.

As you probably have heard, I had breakfast with Jack Kerr here in New York, and he enlarged on his letter, which gave the formal reasons for the Play House Board's decision. Your appraisal of the situation in Cleveland, especially with respect to the makeup of the Board, which you gave to me when you were in New York, certainly fits to the teeth. And I would guess that nothing could happen out there until a pretty thorough reorganization takes place.

Despite all this, let's keep in close touch. Our project quite aside, I would be most interested in hearing about your plans for the reorganization and future of the Play House. From what Jack Kerr said, the Board has thrown the whole problem right in your lap.

If you are planning on a New York trip in the near future, do drop me a note in advance, and perhaps we can get together for a meal or drink.

On behalf of Tony, Peter and myself, again our warm appreciation for your many kindnesses and wise counsel.

Best regards,

or/eff
January 28, 1960

Dr. Compton Bell
Chatham Hotel
Montego Bay
Jamaica, B.W.I.

Dear Dr. Bell:

By now you have probably received my letter, addressed to you in Denver. I am very sorry to hear that you have been in ill health and hope that you are well on the way to complete recovery.

By way of coincidence, my wife and I are planning on spending 10 days at Round Hill in Montego Bay, from February 5 through 14. If your health permits, perhaps while I am down there, we could get together for a little chat, during which I could tell you the developments in our project and we could explore the possibilities of a Denver location for our theatre.

With best wishes for a speedy recovery, I remain

Sincerely yours,

cr/efb
Mr. Oliver Rea  
665 Fifth Avenue  
New York 22, New York  

Dear Mr. Rea,  

Just a note regard your letter to Campton Bell. Dr. Bell is in Jamaica until the latter part of March. Because of ill health just before the holidays, he cancelled plans to go to New York. I know he had planned to see you at that time, as he is very interested in your plans. I have forwarded your letter to him at the Chatham Hotel, Montego Bay, Jamaica, B.W.I.  

Sincerely yours,  

Mell McElroy  
Mell McElroy, Secretary  
School of Communication Arts
May 10, 1960

Mr. Frank Whiting
Director
University Theater
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis 14, Minnesota

Dear Frank:

Thanks for your letter. Things look very promising out your way.

I think your idea for one more visit a good one. I suggest that we wait until the decision of the Walker Board. If they say "yes," the people you suggest I see will be of considerable help in my decision. If, however, the Walker people say "no," then the trip would also have to include conferences which would determine whether a theatre is possible out there without Walker help. So all things considered, I do believe it would be best to wait until after the 17th.

Think carefully about the stagehands meeting. Do you have any contacts with these gentlemen. I hesitate talking to them until we are all very concrete in our thinking. I believe with you, however, that a friendly meeting is necessary early in the game.

You are wrong about Peter — he likes Minneapolis very much. He has been concerned over its size, and ability to support a theatre such as we are contemplating. But one can always point up Stratford, and arguments such as these evaporate.

Betty joins in every best wish to you and Josimette.

Sincerely,

or/eff
COLD SPRING GRANITE COMPANY

COLD SPRING, MINNESOTA

December 10, 1959

Dear Mr. Guthrie:

I am a citizen of one of the regions you are investigating in view to the establishment of a repertory theatre, and write to say that I am all for the great enterprise!—if not here, then elsewhere; but what a glow it brings to know that it could be here!

Though studying to be an architect, which is what I am, I was the chief campus playwright at the University of Minnesota in my day, the '20s, and so know something of the fire and labor of theatrical affairs. And then during an apprenticeship in New York, I was on the edge of the theatre at any rate with my fellow collegians, and thus knew something too of the idiotic frustration of eager talent that the Broadway system entails.

For a number of years I have been contributing to the University Theatre Building Fund. It is gratifying indeed to realize that this nest egg—small though my part of it is even now—is in hand, ready to hatch and...
the colorific Guthrie Gerson.

In your canvass of the Minnesota scene you probably have heard all you need to know about our colleges, whose presence I am sure will be a prime aid in building the steady audiences a repertory theatre must have. You are certainly well informed on University affairs; but in St. Paul there are also four colleges, Macalester, Hamline, St. Thomas, St. Catherine's, full of life and spirit; I have great respect for them all. At nearby Northfield and St. Peter are four more, equally wide awake. And in the woods of the region I inhabit is St. John’s, a Benedictine establishment truly alive: I write its new church (by Marcel Breuer) week 6 week as its huge bulk takes form, and last season smiled to read of the first New York staging of Griff’s Carmina Burana, for the Carmina had been staged at St. John’s, as well staged too, two seasons previous.

The youth of these parts (to which I
no longer belong), though it lacks the cash
your enterprise requires, none the less has
the vitality that can carry it forward
and consolidate its growth. And I want
you to feel this if there is anything I can
say that will help you to do so. And I
want you to know that the enterprise has
my support.

When the news of the Guthrie Availability
broke I had just got a copy of your
book, which I read with heightened ges
believe me, and a very much heightened
curiosity to learn your ideas from your
own mouth. With these ideas I heartily
concur.

Yours with best wishes—regardless
of where the Repertory Theatre may come
into existence,
RESOLUTION

Passed May 17, 1960, by the
Trustees of the T. B. Walker Foundation

** * * * *

RESOLVED, That $400,000 be set aside from funds under the control of this Foundation for an addition to Walker Art Center, such addition to be suitable for use as an auditorium by Walker Art Center and suitable also for the performing arts, including repertory theater. This contingent grant is conditioned upon the following terms to be met within one year:

A. That sufficient additional funds of approximately $900,000, in money, pledges or guarantees payable within a period of five years to this Foundation, be raised by a committee of Minnesota residents, from sources other than this Foundation, to build a complete auditorium-theater addition to the Walker Art Center.

B. That said auditorium-theater be of a design agreeable to the Trustees of this Foundation.

C. That title to said auditorium-theater be and remain in this Foundation.

D. That a new non-profit Minnesota Foundation be established to supervise the construction of and to manage said auditorium-theater under a long-term lease from this Foundation, such new foundation to be an organization of a kind described under Section 170 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

E. That a three-year commitment be secured from Tyrone Guthrie and associates to the effect that they will direct and manage a non-profit repertory theater company in said proposed auditorium-theater for at least twenty weeks of
performance each year, said repertory theater company also to be organized as a non-profit Minnesota corporation in close cooperation with the University of Minnesota.

F. That if the conditions of this grant are not met, the Foundation shall not be responsible for architectural fees or other expenses not specifically authorized by it.

G. That the officers of the Foundation are authorized to employ legal counsel and other advisors at Foundation expense to assist in the preparation of all necessary plans and instruments, all of which shall be subject to final approval by the board of trustees or the executive committee.

Minneapolis, Minnesota
May 17, 1960
APPENDIX C

CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING ACTORS INTERESTED

IN THE TYRONE GUTHRIE THEATRE

22 December 1939

Sir Lawrence O'Toole
The Algernon Hotel
66 South 46th Street
New York 36, N.Y.

Dear Larry,

I judge perhaps by now that I have not turned a letter from your office concerning the above project.

This is just a note to say that I received a letter from you in reply to my last and ask if there are any queries which you might have with respect to that letter. I am at your service at the above address.

I will be out of town for the week between Christmas and New Year but will be back in my office on January 3rd.

After the New Year my wife Betty and I would love having you and Mrs. Findlay as in our apartment for a quick Sunday dinner and chaper. At your perusal, I will ring you at 3:00 P.M.

If there are any immediate questions which might arise from Larry's letter I will be in my office all this present week.

With every best Christmas wish, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

G. O'Flaherty
20 December 1960

Sir Laurence Olivier
The Algonquin Hotel
59 West 44th Street
New York 36, N.Y.

Dear Larry Olivier:

I think perhaps by now that you have received a letter from Tony Guthrie postmarked Minneapolis, and referring to our project in that city.

This is just a brief note to state that the "Oliver" referred to in Tony's letter is my good self and that if there are any queries which you might have with respect to that letter, I am at your service at the above address.

I will be out of town for the week between Christmas and New Year but will be back in my office on January 3rd.

After the New Year my wife Betty and I would love having you and Miss Plewright up to our apartment for a quiet Sunday drink and dinner; and with your permission I will ring you on Jan. 3rd.

If there are any immediate questions which might arise from Tony's letter I will be in my office all this present week.

With every best Christmas wish, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

Oliver Rea
Miss Julie Harris
415 East 50th Street
New York 22, New York

Dear Julie Harris:

Doug Campbell has told me that he has spoken to you briefly and casually about the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis. Dougie also mentioned that you did not want to talk specifics at this time, as you were busily engaged in making a film as well as "Shot in the Dark."

Tyrone Guthrie, and for that matter everyone else connected with our project, rests convinced that somehow you must be a member of the company in the first season, commencing in May of 1963. If your busy schedule has now slackened to the point where you might like to hear more about our plans in Minneapolis, I should very much like to take you and your husband to lunch some day in the near future and tell you the whole story.

Toward this end, would it be possible for your secretary to call this office, and perhaps we could set up a date that would be mutually agreeable to both of us.

With every best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Oliver Bea
Administrative Director

or/eff
April 19, 1962

Mr. Robert Preston
370 Grace Church Street
Rye, New York

Dear Bob:

I enjoyed our lunch yesterday. Your enthusiasm and desire to join us in Minneapolis is a big shot in the arm for yours truly. If this project of ours really can interest and commit actors of vitality like yours, then we are half way home, and I'm excited as all hell.

I received a cable from Guthrie this morning, stating that he would definitely be in New York on May 21 for about ten days. So in a little while, I'll be setting up an appointment for you and him to get together.

I hope your wife, Catherine, is smiling benevolently on this scheme, and as I said as we parted yesterday, when I get back from Minneapolis around the 1st of May, my wife and I would very much like you and yours to come in and have a meal with us.

Again, my thanks and very best wishes.

Sincerely,

Oliver Bea

or/eft
May 29, 1962

Miss Zoe Caldwell
11 Yongala Avenue
Balwyn E.S., Victoria

My dear Zoe:

I was delighted to see from your letter to Oliver Rea that you want to join the Minneapolis company. We therefore propose to count on you to play Frosine in Miles Malleson's translation of "The Miser," which will be directed by Douglas Campbell; to play Natasha in "The Three Sisters," directed by me. There will also be a Shakespeare play, in which you will almost certainly be asked to play a leading part, but since I cannot specify which for certain, I think I had better mention no names but hope you will take it on trust. The fourth play will probably be "Death of a Salesman," in which your part will be a small one, if at all.

The company promises to be a distinguished and I think exciting one, and I am hoping that the theatre will have the advantages of Stratford, Ontario, plus considerably more intimacy.

How goes "St. Joan?" Hope you are happy back in Australia but not so happy that you can't tear yourself away.

I've been here for a hectic ten days of conferences and casting and return to Ireland tomorrow. We plan to be at home for the rest of the year except for a short visit to Greece — partly holiday, partly biz — and a short visit to Los Angeles and San Francisco, where the Stratford Gilbert & Sullivan company will, I think, finally finish up its prolonged campaign (though there is new rumor that they may possibly be asked to Russia).

Dougie Campbell, Oliver Rea, and Peter Zeisler all send their love, and so do I.

Yours ever,

Tyron Guthrie

tg/eff
Golden, Harry

Grunig, James E., and Todd Hunt

Guthrie, Tyrone


Guthrie, Tyrone, Oliver Rea and Peter Zeisler
1959  Excerpts from and outline for a resident repertory theatre. An outline describing the initial elements of the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis, MN, Fall.

Guthrie Theatre Program
1963(?)  Why a classical repertory, Minneapolis, MN, 7

Hatch, Robert

Hewes, Henry
1961  A thousand miles from Broadway. Greater Minneapolis, November, 12, 28-29, and 32.

Lendt, David L., ed.

Minneapolis Star and Tribune
1961  Guthrie tells why he's coming to city. 31 March.
Minnesota Theatre Playing Company
1962 Promotion-advertising-public relations outline. Schedule of promotion, advertising, and public relations events for Tyrone Guthrie Theatre. 23 February.

Morison, Bradley G.

Morison, Bradley G.

Morison, Bradley G. and Kay Fliehr

The New York Times
1959 Yours divided on theatre aid. 2 February (X).

1960 Facts on theatre strike. 2 June, I.

Peck, Seymour

Rea, Oliver [Rea's letters contain no signature block. Many are annotated or/efb.]
1959a Letter from Rea to Adolph W. Schmidt, Pittsburgh, PN, 22 October. Oliver Rea's Administrative Files, The Guthrie Theatre Performance Archives, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN.


1959c Letter from Rea to Frank Whiting, Minneapolis, 4 December. Oliver Rea's Administrative Files, The Guthrie Theatre Performance Archives. University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN.


1959f Letter from Rea to Gov. and Mrs. Freeman, Minnesota, 5 December. Oliver Rea's Administrative Files, The Guthrie Theatre Performance Archives. University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN.

1959g Letter from Rea to James L. Morrill, Minneapolis, 7 December. Oliver Rea's Administrative Files, The Guthrie Theatre Performance Archives. University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN.

1959h Letter from Rea to Mr. and Mrs. John Rood, Minneapolis, 7 December. Oliver Rea's Administrative Files, The Guthrie Theatre Performance Archives. University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN.

1959i Letter from Rea to William P. Steven, Minneapolis, 7 December. Oliver Rea's Administrative Files, The Guthrie Theatre Performance Archives. University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN.


1988 Telephone interview by author. 28 June, New York.

Rea, Oliver and Peter Zeisler

Smith, Claneville

The Tyrone Guthrie Theatre of Minnesota
1962(?) Brochure distributed by Tyrone Guthrie theatre, Minneapolis, MN.

Tyrone Guthrie Theatre Project
1962(?) A brochure explaining the basis of the Tyrone Guthrie theatre, Minneapolis, MN.
Walker, T. B. Foundation

1960 Letter or resolution by trustees to Guthrie and associates, 17 May. Oliver Rea's Administrative Files, The Guthrie Theatre Performance Archives. University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN.

Wehrwein, Austin C.


Whiting, Frank M.


