

Simon Johnston

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Associations/Unions: WGC, PGC, CAEA, ACTRA

Awards:

2012 Certificate of Recognition, City of Richmond

2011 Cultural Leadership Award, City of Richmond

1994 Governor General's Canada 125 Medal for leadership in arts and tourism

Cultural Leadership

2016 – 2020

I was elected Vice-President of the Playwrights Guild of Canada (PGC) and Chair of the National Forum. From 2013-2016, I was the Chair of the Contracts Committee as well as the Chair of Negotiations. Together with a team we completed the 2016 iteration of a tri-annual PACT*/PGC Agreement. *Professional Association of Canadian Theatres. I continue as a team member.

2014 – 2016

I consulted with Peninsula Production's Artistic Director Wendy Bollard on strategic planning for her new professional theatre company operating in White Rock BC. The most significant outcomes were the company's Reading Series and a newly commissioned production titled "Sea of Stories" to celebrate Canada 150 and the 60th Anniversary of White Rock. These projects required the participation and association with the municipality of White Rock.

2013 – 2019

I consulted with the B.C. Diocese of New Westminster's Archdeacon Douglas Fenton and Bishop Melissa Skelton to prepare themes and agendas for the diocese's bi-annual Synods. The Diocesan Synods function as annual general meetings.

1999 – 2012

Artistic & Executive Director, Gateway Theatre Richmond, BC
(Awarded the first Artistic Director Emeritus) with carry-over to 2013.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, I had overall responsibility for programming, fundraising, marketing and administration of a staff of 24 full and part-time employees and up to 60 contract workers during the programming season. The core programs under my management were

- Main Stage series – 4 productions
- Studio Series – 2 productions
- Scene First play development projects annually
- Academy for the Performing Arts – 14 classes for ages 8-18
- Rentals program – 40 rental groups: music, dance, theatre
- Volunteer program – 150 Volunteers

I worked with the following unions: IATSE, Musicians Union, CAEA, CUPE, Playwrights Guild of Canada, P.A.C.T.

I served on community committees such as:

City of Richmond, Parks, Recreation and Culture's Master Plan

City of Richmond, Parks, Recreation and Culture's Arts Strategy

Tourism Richmond, Marketing Committee

Richmond Chamber of Commerce, Co-Chair of the Business and the Arts Committee

Richmond Arts Coalition for which I was the founding member.

- 1997 – 1999 Producer/Co-Founder Writer's Workshop (London)
- I created a play development program
 - Produced and directed four reading series
 - 14 new plays presented as readings and workshop productions

1987-1994 Artistic Director, Lighthouse Festival, Port Dover, Ontario

Responsibilities:

I was recruited as the senior staff member reporting to a board of directors to revive a subscription-based Equity Company. I managed the Town Hall Theatre and selected year-round professional and community programming. I contracted and supervised all artistic and production personnel. I directed an administration staff of five people and volunteers.

Selected accomplishments:

- Renovated the theatre facility through sponsorship and matching government grants
- Increased attendance by 50% in year one and up to 90% by 1994
- Directed and organized 2 cultural tourism fairs in Haldimand-Norfolk
- Generated 3 provincial tours and eight co-productions
- Created a "Different Stage" for Theatre for Young Audiences
- Created a new play development program, premiered twelve plays
- Originated the Norfolk Series of plays celebrating local history
- Directed 30 plays with casts ranging from 2 - 18 actors
- Succeeded in commissioning, developing, producing and touring new, Canadian works.

1976 - 1987 Freelance Director – selected credits

Western Canada Theatre, Gateway Theatre, National Arts Centre, Theatre Aquarius, Factory Lab, Toronto Free, Young People's Theatre, Quest Theatre (Calgary) Lunchbox Theatre (Calgary), Muskoka Festival (4 Seasons), Gryphon Theatre (3 Seasons), Arbour Theatre and others.

1978-1982 Artistic Director, Press Theatre, St. Catharines, Ontario

Selected accomplishments:

- Directed a coalition of the Symphony, Carousel Players and Press Theatre for the purchase and operation of a downtown arts centre.
- Managed the first year of the facility's operations
- Created the first co-production model for regional theatres with co-productions with Toronto Arts Productions and Theatre Aquarius.
- Directed over 20 productions

1983 & 1984 Assistant Director, Stratford Festival, Stratford, Ontario

Selected accomplishments:

- Assistant director with Michael Langham at the Festival Stage and Tom Patterson

Theatre for Love's Labours Lost and Much Ado About Nothing.

1983-1984 Resident Director, Banff Centre for the Arts, Banff, Alberta

Selected accomplishments:

- Developed programs for Music Theatre, Winter Cycle
- Directed 2 productions of new music theatre plays

1974-1978 Resident Director Toronto Arts Productions, (now known as Canadian Stage)

As a Writer:

Awards:

- 2016 Winner Short Story Contest, White Rock Library, "A Good Morning"
- 1999 McMaster University Alumni Gallery in recognition of excellence in theatre arts
- 1998 W. O. Mitchell Literary Award Nominee for mentorship of writers
- 1997 Jessie Award Nominee - "Running Dog, Paper Tiger" & 2002 for "Wildcat"
- 1995 Winner, Theatre BC's National Playwright's Award "Running Dog, Paper Tiger"

Publications:

- "The House of Wives, a novel, Keter Books, Israel, 2018
- "The House of Wives", a novel, Penguin Random House, 2016
- "The House of Wives", a novel, Penguin India, 2016
- "Running Dog, Paper Tiger" Playwrights Canada Press, 1998
- "A Good Morning," Rice Paper Magazine, March 2016.
- "If A Mutt Barks in the Forest," Rice Paper Magazine, 2016
- "Lion Dance", a novel, Williams Wallace Publishers, Toronto, 1985
- "A Song For Harmonica", Children's graphic novel, Three Trees Press, Toronto, 1986

Playwright/Screenwriter Experience

- 2013 Sisters, premiere, Gateway Theatre, February 2013
- 2012 El Camino, one act, looking for a home!
- 2008 Writer-in-residence, Stratford Festival, working on "Sisters"
- 2008 Sisters, Factory Theatre, Cross Currents Festival, Toronto, Ontario
- 2006 Rice Rockets & Yacht People Gateway Theatre, New Play Series in Studio B
- 2003 Wildcat, Yacht People Workshop readings at Playwright's Theatre Centre
- 2002 Wildcat, Western Canada Theatre, Kamploops and Gateway Theatre; public reading at The Stratford Festival, Ontario 2003
- 2001 Gold Mountain Guest Arts Club Theatre, Vancouver, BC. April 2001; Kaleidoscope Theatre, Belfry
- 2000 The Giveaways. Commissioned by The Theatre School and LDC High School (London) premiere April, 2000
- 1999 Wildcat at the Writers' Workshop (London) workshop production - October 2000
- 1998 A Nightingale Sang, Commissioned & produced by Collective Arts Prod. London, Ont. April 1998, commissioned for The Grand Theatre, London, Ont.
- 1998 The Steamer Atlantic. Commissioned by Lighthouse Festival Theatre.
- 1997 Tales from the Arabian Nights Commissioned by Youtheatre, Montreal. Produced November 1997
- 1995 Running Dog, Paper Tiger Commissioned by The Great Canadian Theatre Company Produced at Gateway Theatre, Richmond, BC. Oct. 1997

Television:

- 1999 "Beat the Street" Kudos & Co/Waking Dragon/ CHUM/CITY TV-MOW screenplay
- 1999 "Yip Sang: Patriot and Adventurer" Kudos & Co/Waking Dragon Production - half hour documentary screenplay
- 1999 "The Pauline Johnson Story" History Television/Smoke Lake Productions, March 1999. One-hour documentary on Mohawk Poetess E. Pauline Johnson-Tekahionwake.
- 1996-1997 "Riverdale" Epitome Pictures/ CBC TV Drama Series first season
- 1997 "Paradise Falls", Breakthrough Films/ CBC TV Series, pilot episode script

Radio Drama:

I wrote six series scripts and numerous feature contributions to CBC Radio Drama and Morningside during those wonderful years under Peter Gzowski's tenure.

Teaching & Theatre School Experience

- 2013 – Present: Guest Lecturer at:
Simon Fraser University, Capilano University, Kwantlen University.
- 1997/1998 University of Western Ontario, three Playwriting Courses
- 1997 University of Toronto, Erindale College, Guest Director
- 1994/1987/1982 Ryerson University Theatre School, Guest Director
- 1990 University of Waterloo, Drama Department, Guest Director
- 1989 Dalhousie University, Drama Department, Guest Director
- 1986 University of Guelph, Drama Department, Artist-in-Residence
- 1983 Theatre Ontario, Young Company, Teacher/Director

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST