



green thumb theatre

the school house project

Project Overview

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Green Thumb Theatre

The Organization



"I see Green Thumb less as a theatre for young people and more as a theatre for formative minds."

~ Morris Panych, Governor General's Award-Winning Playwright



Mission Statement

Green Thumb Theatre creates and produces plays that explore social issues relevant to the lives of children, youth and young adults. We provide theatre that celebrates the language and stories of today's generation and culture to stimulate empathy, debate and critical thinking.

Our Plays

Green Thumb Theatre explores contemporary issues with an emphasis on entertainment, enlightenment and education; dealing with matters such as:

- bullying and cyber bullying
- illiteracy
- racism and immigration
- family relationships
- substance abuse and addiction
- self-esteem
- environment
- AIDS awareness
- mental health
- native culture
- problem gambling
- gender equality
- eating disorders
- violence
- homophobia

How We Operate

Each year Green Thumb tours every school district in British Columbia and performs to more than 125,000 children and teenagers. We regularly tour Canada and the United States and abroad with some productions.

In our 36 seasons, we have performed over 15,000 times to more than 4 million people. Our audience spans every province and 2 territories in Canada, 36 states in the US, Ireland, England, Scotland, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Mexico.

Green Thumb's original productions have been subsequently restaged by 200 theatre companies worldwide and translated into Chinese, French, Spanish, German, Danish, Hebrew and Japanese.

The Heritage Carleton School House

Both photos by Storie Serres.



Sir Guy Carleton Elementary School is situated in the Collingwood neighbourhood of Vancouver, BC. Construction of the original two-room school house which sits on the southwest corner of the property, was completed in 1896. It is the oldest remaining school in Vancouver.

Originally called the Vancouver East School, its name was changed to Collingwood Heights in 1908 and then to Carleton Hall in 1911. It is named after Guy Carleton, Quebec's governor during the 18th century. The school house bears a protective heritage plaque and is listed as a "Category A" heritage building in Vancouver's Heritage Register.

It is a simple wooden structure and a wonderful example of early architectural craftsmanship. Its heritage value is unquestionable. The wood doors still have their original fittings. The exterior treatment features wood siding and modest detailing, six-over-six double-hung wooden sash windows and crowning it all, a cross-gabled roof with protecting eaves and decorative wood finials.

Unfortunately, in March 2008 this historic school house was set ablaze by arson. Kindergarten classes that were taught in the school had to be relocated and the heritage building has remained vacant and in this badly damaged condition since then. The charred and broken roof is still wrapped with plastic tarpaulin to protect the exposed and decaying interior.

The Capital Fundraising Campaign

Green Thumb Theatre has negotiated a 20-year lease with the Vancouver School Board on Carleton School House and we have agreed to take on the burden of all renovation costs. Our hope is to repair the roof immediately, then renovate the interior of the school house into two fully functioning rehearsal halls with a green room, storage space for costumes, set and props and accessible washroom facilities. The nearby outbuilding would become the home of our administrative offices. Green Thumb Theatre has officially launched a capital fundraising campaign in order to finance the renovation.

Currently, the fundraising target is set at \$1.2 million.

With a permanent home and an established creation centre, Green Thumb Theatre would finally have the synergy of a conjoined creative and executive space, enabling us to develop the public outreach component which we have been lacking for years.

Green Thumb Theatre **urgently** needs public and private financial support in order to build this legacy.



The interior of Carleton School House as it stands today.



Who is Green Thumb?

Canada's leading theatre for educating young people for over 35 years.

Green Thumb Theatre was founded in 1975 to develop original Canadian plays for young audiences. Since that time, Green Thumb has emerged as one of Canada's leading theatre companies for young people, producing educational and issues-based plays for audiences and artists, and contributing to the growing body of work evolving in this field.

Green Thumb believes that young Canadians face the same scope of issues, problems, concerns and interests that adults do; however, many young people are disempowered from effectively confronting difficult or complex situations as a result of societal, systemic or cultural beliefs and discriminations. As Canadian society diversifies it is more important than ever that people respect each other and each other's differences.

Green Thumb understands that traditional teaching, mentoring and counseling are only part of the solution. The emotional impact of live performances, targeted to issues and problems faced by young people, are powerful educational tools that Green Thumb has been using to engage young people. We challenge our audience to re-examine their beliefs and prejudices and to define their feelings and aspirations. This is why after more than 35 years, Green Thumb Theatre is still at the forefront of the Theatre in Education movement.

Testimonials

"The students have developed a remarkable sense of school spirit and community support, spearheading recent efforts to bring Green Thumb Theatre to the damaged kindergarten building."

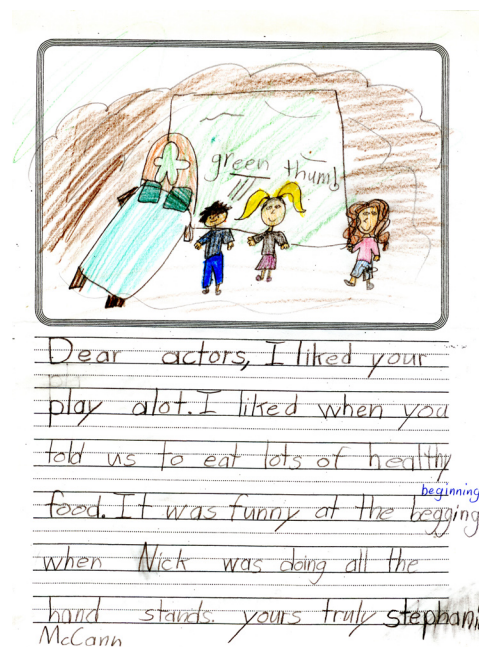
- Adrian Dix: Nine good reasons to save Carleton Elementary School in East Vancouver, Straight.com, Adrian Dix, October 17, 2010

"Our lives, our children's lives, and our cultural experiences have been made richer by the work of this fine company."

- Carole Taylor, Chancellor, Simon Fraser University

"All those who have contributed to the tremendous success of this company at home and abroad are to be commended for their efforts to carry forward a fine tradition of theatrical excellence."

- Jean Chrétien



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