

Non-Indigenous Involvement in Indigenous Performance Arts:
A Starting Point for Reconciliation?

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Abstract

This thesis investigates whether non-Indigenous individuals can be participants in the Indigenous performance arts field in order for the work to contribute to the reconciliation process in Canada. A questionnaire and an interview was administered to the Indigenous and non-Indigenous production, performance and audience members of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's 2014 production *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation* i) to determine whether there are appropriate roles for non-Indigenous performers in any aspect of Indigenous performance ii) to ascertain if the Indigenous performance arts can be used as a space for cross-cultural collaboration and iii) to establish ethical best practices for non-Indigenous individuals to be participants in this field. The interviews determined that non-Indigenous individuals can be participants in Indigenous performance arts. However, it is recommended that first, an effort should be made to recruit and offer roles to qualified Indigenous artists, in addition to verifying that the performance is a productive space for cross-cultural collaboration in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation. In regard to ethical best practices, the participants' responses resulted in the creation of four protocols: Indigenous Community and Elder Involvement, Education, Indigenous Culture and Ceremony, and Personal Reflection which should be enacted in every cross-cultural collaboration in order to ensure its success. The thesis concludes that cross-cultural collaboration in the Indigenous performance arts is a productive space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians to contribute to the conversations of reconciliation.

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Introduction

Background on the Research:

It is Friday February 26th, 2016, and I am mentally, spiritually and physically preparing to walk onto the stage for the most important solo performance of my life. The performers are informed that the auditorium has gone over capacity and therefore audience members are sitting on the floor, just inches away from where I will be dancing. The lights turn down, and as the opening act, I enter the stage from the top left corner, dressed completely in black, holding a red, yellow and black shawl over my right arm. Through my movements I tell the story of the first dancer, as choreographed and dictated by Daystar/Rosalie Jones, who is Pembina Chippewa born and raised on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana, and the founding individual of the Indigenous¹ dance drama genre in the United States. The dance begins with contemporary movements and then progresses into a hoop and shawl dance, concluding with a prayer from the first dancer to the creator, expressed through sign language, and spoken by Jones. The lights dim, and then rise; I reach out my hand to bring Jones onto the stage with me and we take a bow together, exiting the stage in the upper right corner.

The day following the performance, at Trent University's Elders' and Traditional People's Gathering, I was on a panel entitled, *Creativity is Our Tradition*, with Indigenous performers, including Jones, Michelle Thrush and Brandon Oakes. During the question portion of the panel, an individual from the audience inquired about my appropriateness in the performance, due to my ethnicity, as I am non-Indigenous, of settler heritage, originating from Scotland, Ireland, England, Wales, Germany and France. It had not occurred to me prior to that moment that my involvement was inappropriate as Jones had chosen me for her choreography

¹ In this thesis the term Indigenous will refer to First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples in Canada and the United States. The terms Aboriginal and Indian are also employed depending on the context, to refer to the same peoples.

and concluded that how I performed the piece was how she envisioned it. This inquiry led me to thinking critically about non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts, and therefore, this thesis questions if cross-cultural collaboration in Indigenous performance arts, between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, can contribute to an improved relationship, and work towards the goal of reconciliation in Canada.

Introduction to the Research:

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was enacted in 2008, in order to document Indigenous people's experiences in the residential school system, a system of boarding schools that ran between 1870 and 1996 in Canada.² The system was set up by the government of Canada, and run by Christian churches, in order to assimilate Indigenous children into settler society.³ From the findings of its investigation, the TRC published ninety-four calls to action in 2015, in order for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians to come together to repair the damage of residential schools and move forward in creating a reconciled Canada.⁴ Despite these calls to action, a distinctive plan of implementation for each of the different areas of concern has yet to be formed, and while many Indigenous peoples across the country are taking proactive steps, the majority of non-Indigenous peoples remain unaware or uninterested in engaging in the process. While making adjustments to health care, law, education and museums will have an impact on the reconciliation process, I argue that one of the most accessible venues

² "Our Mandate," Home, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, accessed February 16, 2019, <http://trc.ca/aboutus/our-mandate.html>.

³ "Residential School Locations," About us, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, accessed February 16, 2019, <http://trc.ca/about-us/residential-school.html>.

⁴ Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*, (Winnipeg: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015).

to promote dialogue between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada concerning reconciliation is in Indigenous performance arts.

Indigenous performance arts cover a large range of work that can be broken down into two main contexts. To begin, the performance arts field is defined as any form where an individual uses their voice, body or objects to express themselves, including but not limited to “dance, music, theatre, musical theatre, magic, illusion, mime, spoken word, puppetry, and circus acts.”⁵ For Indigenous performance arts, the first context is when Indigenous individuals, whether First Nation, Métis or Inuit, perform in any of the media stated above regardless of the topic or subject matter of their work. The second context includes any performance media that deals with Indigenous content, whether stories or subject matter, that is developed and performed by a collaboration of Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals. The second context of Indigenous performance arts is the focus of the work in this thesis as it investigates if the relationships formed in performance between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples can contribute to reconciliation in Canada.

There is an abundance of benefits to Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaboration in Indigenous performance in regard to reconciliation that cannot be achieved by any other means. Non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance, whether as a performer, production member, or spectator, provides the starting point for dialogue regarding reconciliation. This occurs through the experiences the collaborators gain in their respective roles. As a part of the theatrical process, performers must take on the emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental state of their character. When a non-Indigenous person has an Indigenous or non-Indigenous role in an

⁵ Sophie Anne Oliver, “Trauma, Bodies and Performance Art: Towards an Embodied Ethics of Seeing,” *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 24, no. 1 (2010): 120 <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304310903362775>

Indigenous story, it may provide them with greater insight into Indigenous people's experiences in Canada. In addition, when non-Indigenous peoples are a part of other aspects of these productions, such as writing, producing, or directing, they too gain insight which enables them to begin to understand and empathize with the treatment of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Indigenous performances also convey information to the spectators, resulting in more knowledgeable audience members who also have an improved ability to understand the experience of Indigenous peoples, as well as an enhanced capacity for empathy. The content of the stories in the Indigenous performance field covers historical, current and future Indigenous issues, as well as the overall treatment of Indigenous peoples, therefore significantly increasing non-Indigenous peoples understanding of the need for reconciliation.

In many cases, however, historically and in the present, non-Indigenous peoples have negatively impacted, influenced and created tension within the Indigenous performance arts. The Canadian government's interference started in 1884 when they drafted legislation outlawing the Potlatch of the Northwest Coast Indigenous peoples, and the Sundance of the Plains nations.⁶ It was after this legislation was drafted that non-Indigenous business owners and the Canadian government began hiring Indigenous peoples to perform their traditional dances and ceremonies in their Wild West shows, World's Fairs and Royal Tours, for their own social or capital gain. When these performances stopped in the early twentieth century, non-Indigenous performers started to appropriate Indigenous themes and dances into their work, in order to advance their own careers in performance. The modern Indigenous theatre movement in Canada, which began in the late twentieth century, created a new set of controversies between Indigenous and non-

⁶ "An Act Further to Amend the Indian Act, 1884, Chapter 27, Section 3," Indian Act, Consolidated Acts, Justice Laws Website, Government of Canada, accessed on February 17, 2019, <http://lawslois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-5/>

Indigenous artists, as the work produced by Indigenous writers was mainly performed in non-Indigenous venues by non-Indigenous performers.

These issues have continued into the twenty-first century, where a large portion of Indigenous theatre produced in Canada has a non-Indigenous influence, whether in venue, direction, or artists. This has resulted in tension between the two groups, as many Indigenous people argue that non-Indigenous people cannot accurately articulate an Indigenous experience, and that there are more than enough Indigenous actors to fill all of the available Indigenous roles. In practice, that is rarely the case. While there are a number of Indigenous owned theatre companies across Canada that only cast Indigenous actors, the works produced in major urban centers, regardless of the Indigenous population and proximity to reserves, have trouble casting Indigenous actors. This is attributed to a lack of trained Indigenous artists, a lack of Indigenous interest, funding issues and casting calls not being widespread enough. Therefore, for writers, like Tomson Highway and Drew Hayden Taylor, in order for a play to be produced some of the roles must be filled by non-Indigenous actors. Social relations in a theatrical production when both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are involved can turn hostile based on the performance and production crews' experiences, personalities, and understanding. There is an increasing need to determine a point of engagement for work in this area. The three main objectives of this research will determine whether there are appropriate roles for non-Indigenous performers in any aspect of Indigenous performance, if the Indigenous performance arts can be used as a space for cross-cultural collaboration, as well it will establish and discuss ethical best practices for non-Indigenous individuals to be participants in this field, in order to ensure that performance contributes to the reconciliation process in Canada.

The research aims of determining appropriate roles for non-Indigenous peoples in Indigenous performance, if any, as well as whether performance can be used as a space for cross-cultural collaboration, is completed through the theses' two scopes, an historical background and

a contemporary perspective completed through original research. The historical aspect of the research will focus on the evolution of Indigenous performance in Canada, starting in the late nineteenth century and progressing into the beginning of the twenty-first century. The historical component will also reference performance work in the northern United States, as there are many fundamental aspects of the development of the field that only occurred south of the Canadian border. The historical aspect will be brief, but will provide the foundational information for the field, in order to fully engage with the contemporary section. The contemporary section will introduce, outline and conclude the results from the original research, with the main focus on the experiences of collaboration between the non-Indigenous performance and production members and the Indigenous production crew of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's, *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation*. The ballet was developed and performed in 2014 in Winnipeg, Canada, and also briefly toured across Canada in 2016. For the production, the dancers were all non-Indigenous from a range of ethnic backgrounds, whereas the production team consisted of four Indigenous individuals in major roles in addition to thirteen Indigenous consultants. The major production roles of choreographer, composer, costume, and projection designer were assigned to non-Indigenous men. *Going Home Star* was chosen as the focus for the research as it not only is an illustration of cross-cultural collaboration in performance, but also its main objective was to introduce the concept of reconciliation to Canada. The contemporary section will thoroughly document the *Going Home Star* ballet, in combination with detailing the results from the research study, in order to provide a response to the research inquiry.

The foundation for the work completed in this thesis on non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance can be viewed as related to issues of white fragility. In order to thoroughly explain how this work is not based on the defensive moves created by racial discomfort, white fragility is defined and then analyzed in regard to the research. According to

Robin DiAngelo, white fragility is “a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation.”⁷ This reaction and display of emotions functions in a manner that prevents any meaningful cross-cultural dialogue. While experiencing racial stress is what prompted the development of the research, it did not evolve into the defensive moves outlined above. Instead, the racial stress activated critical thinking surrounding Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaboration in performance spaces with the aim of determining if and how this work can be beneficial to those directly involved in it, and to Canada as a whole in regard to reconciliation. Although non-Indigenous people who are participants in Indigenous performance may face racial stress, the research aims to combat this, by developing points of engagement, as well as ethical standards for this engagement, in order to ensure that non-Indigenous peoples are equipped to deal with stress without becoming defensive, and therefore can engage in meaningful cross-racial dialogue. This research aims to ensure performance spaces are productive in collaboration for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants, in order to move forward together in Canada.

Research Theory:

The research theory is the structure that is used during the collection and interpretation of the data. Margaret Kovach’s story as theory as defined in *Indigenous Methodologies: Characters Conversations and Contexts* is implemented in this aspect of the study. This theory was chosen as it ensures that both Indigenous and non-Indigenous interests, knowledge and experiences are

⁷ Robin DiAngelo, “White Fragility,” *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy* 3, no. 3 (2011): 54.

respected throughout the data collection, interpretation and the writing of the thesis and, therefore ensuring that the information will be useful for reconciliation in Canada.

The storytelling tradition is an essential aspect of being Indigenous, as stories remind Indigenous people of who they are and of their belonging, while also being inseparable from cultural and tribal knowledge.⁸ Story as a research theory emerged from this storytelling tradition, and in regards to research, it gives a voice to the marginalized and helps in creating outcomes that are in line with the needs of Indigenous peoples and their communities.⁹ This new theoretical iteration of giving a voice to the marginalized allows for Indigenous peoples to be in complete control of what they share as their opinions on the research problem are expressed through their own words. According to Kovach, there are two forms of qualitative inquiry when using story as theory, a life history approach or an oral history approach.¹⁰ This study employs the oral history approach, as it focuses on a particular aspect of the participants' experience working on the production *Going Home Star*.¹¹ In addition to an oral history approach, the study used an in-depth interview method while listening to the participants' narratives, as described by Métis scholar Jeannine Carrier. In this method the interviewer asks the participants the prescribed questions, but is not strict in how they respond, including applicability and length or declining a question altogether.¹² The more structured an interview, the less flexibility and therefore the less power the research participant has in sharing their story; therefore, the in-depth interview was determined as the appropriate method.¹³ The in depth interview method is in-line with the

⁸ Margaret Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characters, Conversations and Contexts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 94.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 100.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 96.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 99.

¹³ *Ibid.*

objectives of story as theory as it ensures that the participants are in complete control of their responses to the questions.

Using story as a research theory also comes with challenges, including issues surrounding the writing down and editing of stories presented in oral format,¹⁴ as well as concerns of exploitation and appropriation.¹⁵ Once the individuals have shared their stories in the interview, it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the voice and representation of the participant and their story is not altered in the interpretation and dissemination of the data.¹⁶ A part of presenting story in research is condensing it; therefore, it is crucial to ensure participants have the opportunity to review and approve these versions of their stories.¹⁷ This ensures that the research is authentic, ethical and is a true representation of the participant's knowledge and/or experiences.¹⁸ When translating the participants' stories into the narrative of the thesis, this project follows a similar format to Cree scholar Winona Stevenson, by using a shifting writing style from analytical commentary to a narrative style.¹⁹ When writing in this manner, the context of the research and the commentary is woven with the participants' stories, creating a holistic presentation of the results. The use of story as theory in research requires the researcher to accept the responsibility for bringing stories into academia during this particular historical moment in Canada, and to be prepared for fallout from the results, even in years to come.

Literature Review:

The literature review explores different works regarding Indigenous performance in

¹⁴ Robina Anne Thomas, "Honouring the Oral Traditions of my Ancestors through Storytelling," in *Research as Resistance: Critical, Indigenous & Anti-Oppressive Approaches*, ed. Leslie Brown and Susan Strega (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2005), 249.

¹⁵ Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies*, 103.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 100.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 101.

Canada with a focus on theatre. It has been organized to demonstrate the progression of Indigenous performance in Canada leading up to the pre-Truth and Reconciliation Commission context and is followed by a critical examination of the field. The review will begin by defining the Indigenous concept of stories and storytelling and then discussing the transition of the oral tradition to the stage and screen. It will examine the difficulties of having traditional stories, practices and ceremonies on stage as well as the benefits, including Indigenous people using performance for resistance and resurgence practices and creating a space for individuals and communities to heal from the effects of colonization. The limited number of works that discuss Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaboration in Indigenous performances are then detailed, including the positive and negative aspects of these situations. It will conclude with an examination, from an Indigenous perspective, concerning the benefits of non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts.

Dr. Thomas King and Dr. Neal McLeod are both well regarded for their fundamental work on the integral aspect of stories and storytelling to Indigenous peoples and their culture. King's *The Truth about Stories: A Native Narrative* is a transcription of his 2003 Massey Lecture that explores how stories are the central aspect of Indigenous people's lives, as they are used to interpret, understand, and connect with humans, animals, and the earth. King examines issues of racism, capitalism, Indigenous identity, and the relationship between Indigenous people and colonial governments through a mixture of sources and storytelling methods, including memoir, quotations from historians, Indigenous and settler literature, and traditional Indigenous stories.

Although these complex issues are presented as the central arguments, King ultimately uses them to emphasize the importance and necessity of the storytelling tradition for Indigenous peoples, stating six different times, “the truth about stories is that that’s all that we are.”²⁰

McLeod’s *Cree Narrative Memory: From Treaties to Contemporary Times*, (2007) concurs with King’s argument but contextualizes stories within his own Cree identity. McLeod states that stories are what inform him of who he is as a Cree man, as they detail the components of his existence.²¹ In contrast to how King sets up his argument, McLeod explores the significance of stories through a number of different concepts, including, Cree narrative memory and coming home through stories. McLeod states that Cree narrative memory is ultimately what situates an Indigenous individual’s life into the context of their people because it connects them to their ancestors.²² As stories transmit memory and history, they allow the individual to examine their experiences and ultimately function in the world around them.²³ Coming home through stories is achieved through the passing down of stories from one generation to the next as they share culture, language, histories, ceremonies and traditions, and this transmission of cultural knowledge allows for an ideological coming home.²⁴ Although this coming home may not necessarily be physical, it allows Cree people, despite their geographic location, the ability to connect with their culture, language and ultimately with their ancestors.

King and McLeod both examine how Indigenous stories were influenced and altered with colonization, most notably developing Christian attributes. However, both authors argue, King through his storytelling exemplars, that Indigenous people counter this influence through the

²⁰ Thomas King, *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2003), 2.

²¹ Neal McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory: From Treaties to Contemporary Times* (Saskatoon: Purich Publishing, 2007), 7.

²² McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory*, 11.

²³ *Ibid.*, 11.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 68.

extensive use of humour in modern storytelling. Also, King and McLeod describe the evolutionary aspect of Indigenous stories, as a storyteller may leave out or exaggerate certain aspects of a story depending on who is listening and the time and occasion in which it is told in order to ensure its continued applicability to the next generation. Both King and McLeod outline and argue how integral stories are to Indigenous peoples and their identities, and these stories are what become the basis for modern Indigenous performance.

As an extension of the work completed by King and McLeod, Tomson Highway and Drew Hayden Taylor discuss how traditional Indigenous stories and storytelling provide the basis for Indigenous performance. Highway pioneered work on Indigenous theatre with his article, “On Native Mythology,” (1987) which discusses how Indigenous mythology is the basis for modern Indigenous literature, visual art and theatre, and that this mythology encompasses thousands of years of knowledge, including events, beings, creatures and language.²⁵ Drew Hayden Taylor builds on Highway’s arguments in his article, “Alive and Well: Native Theatre in Canada,” (1996) by focusing on the development of Indigenous theatre in Canada, particularly in relation to the storytelling tradition, as well as the growth and increasing acceptance of the field.

Highway and Taylor both agree on why theatre is the expressive medium of choice for Indigenous people, with both stating that it seems to be a natural progression from the story telling tradition. Highway further explains his argument by stating that stories translate easily and the most effectively to the stage because it is a “three dimensional medium” and therefore “it is like taking the “stage” that lives inside the mind... using words, actors, lights, sound” and putting it onto a formal stage.²⁶ Taylor expands on his argument, stating that storytelling is the process of taking an “audience on a journey, using your voice, your body, and the spoken word,” and

²⁵ Tomson Highway, “On Native Mythology,” in *Aboriginal Drama and Theatre*, ed. Rob Appleford (Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press, 2005), 1-2.

²⁶ Highway, “On Native Mythology,” 1.

therefore moving that onto the stage is the logical next step.²⁷ In addition to identifying storytelling as the foundation of Indigenous theatre, Highway also defines Indigenous theatre as a medium that must be written, performed and produced by Indigenous people while being based on Indigenous world view, culture, and the issues currently facing Indigenous people in Canada.²⁸ Highway believes Indigenous theatre based in Indigenous mythology will ensure that Indigenous theatre is universally relevant and has a sense of permanence for Indigenous peoples.²⁹

Creating Indigenous theatre that is both culturally specific and universally relevant will also generate the opportunity for non-Indigenous people to be exposed to the content, allowing them to learn about Indigenous peoples.³⁰ As a part of Taylor's discussion on the development of the Indigenous theatre genre, he argues that its main difference from European drama is that it does not follow the Western dramatic structure of conflict, as it is based on the stories that were told within families, that contain teachings, life lessons or ceremony.³¹ In addition, Taylor states that a good portion of contemporary Indigenous theatre is angry in nature, as it deals with the reality of being a colonized people, noting that this type of work needs to first be expressed and shared in order for healing to take place.³² Taylor concludes his article by emphasizing that Indigenous theatre has given Indigenous people two main opportunities, to tell their stories and to share the humour of their community, and this is particularly important given that their stories

²⁷ Drew Hayden Taylor, "Alive and Well: Native Theatre in Canada," in *Aboriginal Drama and Theatre*, ed. Rob Appleford (Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press, 2005), 61.

²⁸ Highway, "On Native Mythology," 1.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

³¹ Taylor, "Alive and Well," 64-65.

³² *Ibid.*, 67.

and humour give them a sense of who they are coming into the twenty-first century.³³ Highway and Taylor both argue for the importance of the medium of theatre for Indigenous peoples. However, representing the sacred knowledge that is held in some stories can be problematic in a theatrical setting.

Floyd Favel Starr and Hanay Geiogamah build on Highway and Taylor's discussion on the development of Indigenous theatre through pointing out that bringing stories and ceremony to the stage can have both a negative and a positive impact on Indigenous communities. Starr's 1997 article, "The Artificial Tree: Native Performance Culture Research, 1991-1996," begins by defining Indigenous performance culture as the development of Indigenous ancestors' practices for the stage, with the remainder of the article outlining this development within the context of song and dance.³⁴ Similarly, Geiogamah's 2000 article, "Old Circles, New Circles," describes how traditional powwow dancing has been developing and changing, with the inclusion of modern European styles of dance, in order for it to become a part of modern theatrical performances. Starr and Geiogamah both describe the importance of Indigenous songs and dances and the traditions associated with them for Indigenous peoples, with powwow dancing in particular providing a sense of identity, and therefore a foundation for a "strong reverence and respect for their cultural heritage."³⁵ Starr explains his concerns with bringing traditional songs and dances to the stage, where in most cases the songs and dances are stripped down to their bare essentials and as a result are stripped of their connection to their origins, and the ancestors.³⁶

³³ Ibid., 68.

³⁴ Floyd Favel Starr, "The Artificial Tree: Native Performance Culture Research 1991-1996," in *Aboriginal Drama and Theatre*, ed. Rob Appleford (Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press, 2005), 69.

³⁵ Haney Geiogamah, "Old Circles, New Circles," in *American Indian Theatre in Performance: A Reader*, ed. Haney Geiogamah and Jaye T. Darby (Los Angeles: UCLA American Indian Studies Center, 2000), 284.

³⁶ Starr, "The Artificial Tree," 69

Starr argues that putting these bare essentials or generic physical activity on stage in combination with some sort of ritual object or practice trivializes traditional Indigenous practices and results in mysticism and exoticism.³⁷ Also in regard to the evolution of Indigenous dances for the stage, Geiogamah argues that as traditional powwow dancing starts to be integrated with other types movements and music including rock and jazz, it requires caution and careful planning to ensure that it does not become appropriative in nature.³⁸

While both authors discuss their concerns with the adaptation of traditional practices for the stage, they also discuss the benefits of putting this type of content on stage. Starr states that by taking cautionary steps when working with traditional Indigenous ceremonies in a theatrical setting, it can allow for a revitalization of the practices, therefore allowing both the actors and the audience to connect with their ancestors in new ways.³⁹ On the other hand, Geiogamah emphasizes that being innovative and experimental with dance practices for the stage, when done cautiously, can express spirituality, create positive Indigenous identity and allow for opportunities for collaboration.⁴⁰ While both Starr and Geiogamah discuss their concerns with the modern Indigenous theatre movement, in large part due to its connection to traditional stories and ceremonial practices, they both conclude that this sort of work creates a new space for Indigenous people to connect with their culture, and therefore develop a sense of pride in it.

The previous four authors focused on the development of modern Indigenous theatre from a pre-twenty-first century perspective. In contrast, Candace Brandy Brunette and Carla Jane Taunton explore contemporary Indigenous theatre as a method for resistance, resurgence and decolonization for Indigenous peoples in the twenty-first century. Brunette's Master's thesis,

³⁷ Ibid., 71.

³⁸ Geiogamah, "Old Circles, New Circles," 284.

³⁹ Starr, "The Artificial Tree," 71.

⁴⁰ Geiogamah, "Old Circles, New Circles," 286-287.

Returning Home Through Stories: A Decolonizing Approach to Omushkego Cree Theatre Through the Methodological Practices of Native Performance Culture (NPC), written in 2010, examines NPC, defined as a practice in Indigenous theatre that returns Indigenous people to their cultural knowledge and interrupts the colonial process, which is explored through both her own and her community's performance journey.⁴¹ Taunton's 2011 Ph.D. dissertation, *Performing Resistance/Negotiating Sovereignty: Indigenous Women's Performance Art in Canada*, "investigates the contemporary production of Indigenous performance and video art in Canada in terms of cultural continuance, survivance, and resistance."⁴²

Although both Brunette and Taunton similarly conclude in their graduate work that Indigenous performance is a healing practice for Indigenous individuals and communities, they approach their research differently. Brunette examines her own personal experience, as a Cree woman, returning to her community and engaging with family, Elders and community members, in order to produce Indigenous theatre, by using NPC, including, personal, collaborative and community centered practices that now, in the 21st century, are used to decolonize.⁴³ In contrast, Taunton, who is a non-Indigenous woman, explores the performative work of five Indigenous women "through the lenses of storytelling, decolonization, activism and agency," in order to determine how the women have "used performance to stage political interventions and cultural resistance."⁴⁴ The foundation of both Brunette and Taunton's research is exploring how Indigenous theatre is a space for approaching the large-scale issues that affect Indigenous peoples in Canada presently, primarily from colonization, including loss of culture, ceremony,

⁴¹ Candace Brandy Brunette, "Returning Home Through Stories: A Decolonizing Approach to Omushkego Cree Theatre Through the Methodological Practices of Native Performance Theatre (NPC)" (Master's Thesis, University of Toronto, 2010), ii.

⁴² Carla Taunton, "Performing Resistance/Negotiating Sovereignty: Indigenous Women's Performance Art in Canada" (Ph.D. diss., Queen's University, 2011), ii.

⁴³ Brunette, "Returning Home Through Stories," 1.

⁴⁴ Taunton, "Performing Resistance/Negotiating Sovereignty," 1.

language and overall identity as Indigenous peoples. Where Brunette's research focuses on decolonization, and how NPC is in itself the first step in the decolonizing process, as it reconnects Indigenous people to their traditional knowledge,⁴⁵ Taunton's research argues that "Indigenous performance should be understood in terms of i) its enduring relationship to activism and resistance ii) its ongoing use as a tool for interventions in colonially entrenched spaces, and iii) its longstanding role in maintaining self-determination and cultural sovereignty."⁴⁶ Brunette and Taunton ultimately conclude that performance, regardless of the context in which it is presented, is a healing practice for individuals and communities. In their contemporary perspective, Brunette and Taunton view performance beyond its ability to tell stories, but rather, how it can transform Indigenous peoples and communities and bring back culture, tradition and language to the nations.

Qwo-Li Driskill and Shelley Scott, in agreement with Brunette and Taunton on the beneficial aspects of Indigenous performance for Indigenous peoples, expand upon the discussion by arguing how this kind of theatre helps Indigenous people heal from the effects of colonization. Driskill's 2008 article, "Theatre as Suture: Grassroots Performance, Decolonization and Healing," argues that grassroots theatre, which is defined as non-professional theatre that emerges from the needs and concerns of communities, is a place where Indigenous people can come together in order to understand colonization, resistance, decolonization and healing.⁴⁷ In comparison, Scott's 2009 article, "Embodiment as a Healing Process: Native American Women and Performance," argues that the autobiographical nature of performance, which allows writers

⁴⁵ Brunette, "Returning Home Through Stories," 3.

⁴⁶ Taunton. "Performing Resistance/Negotiating Sovereignty," 1.

⁴⁷ Qwo-Li Driskill, "Theatre as Suture: Grassroots Performance, Decolonization and Healing," in *Aboriginal Oral Traditions: Theatre, Practice Ethics*, ed. R. Hulan and R. Eigenbrod (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2008), 156.

the ability to define themselves and keep their definition within their own control, allows for it to be a healing practice, regardless of the piece and its complexity.⁴⁸

Driskill and Scott are in agreement that the healing aspect of Indigenous theatre manifests in the ability for Indigenous peoples to tell their own stories. However, they differ in opinion on what component of the storytelling contributes to this healing process. Driskill states that this healing comes from the stories that rise from specific, localized traditions and histories,⁴⁹ whereas Scott argues that the telling of one's story allows Indigenous peoples to address the historical trauma associated with colonization resulting in a "reunion and release."⁵⁰ In addition to the writing and performing of Indigenous people's own stories, Driskill also argues that the kinesthetic nature of theatre allows Indigenous people to examine their wounds, participate in acts of resistance and imagine decolonial ways of living.⁵¹ Ensuring that Indigenous theatre informs and entertains, while offering a space to create relationships and being an outlet to tell Indigenous stories, allows theatre to engage in decolonization, and therefore develop a hope for continuance.⁵² Scott extends her argument on the healing aspect of Indigenous theatre to include the aesthetic nature of performance, as she argues that the artificiality of performance, including the use of paradox and metaphor, speaks the truth.⁵³ This not only allows the performer to be healed, but also the audience through witnessing the performance, and therefore healing can be shared with the community as a whole.⁵⁴ In addition, the use of Indigenous languages, songs and oral traditions in performance can not only contribute to the healing process, but can also support

⁴⁸ Shelley Scott, "Embodiment as a Healing Process: Native American Women and Performance," in *Native American Performance and Representation*, ed. S.E. Wilmer (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press), 123.

⁴⁹ Driskill, "Theatre as Suture," 156-157.

⁵⁰ Scott, "Embodiment as a Healing Process," 123.

⁵¹ Driskill, "Theatre as Suture," 163.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 163-164.

⁵³ Scott, "Embodiment as a Healing Process," 125.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 135.

the continuation of Indigenous cultures.⁵⁵ Driskill and Scott extensively discuss the healing nature of Indigenous theatre for Indigenous peoples, as it creates an outlet to tell their own stories from their perspective, allows them to physically participate in resistance and grants a continuance of cultural traditions.

While the previous six authors discuss the benefits of Indigenous performance for Indigenous people, Maria Campbell, with Linda Griffiths as well as Julie Pearson Little-Thunder, examine the challenges and successes of working in a performance collaboration with non-Indigenous people. Campbell, who is Métis, and Griffiths, who is non-Indigenous, documented their experience developing and creating the production *Jessica*, based on Campbell's 1973 autobiography, *Halfbreed*, in *The Book of Jessica: A Theatrical Experience* (1989). Pearson Little-Thunder's 2007 article, "Dancers from Beginning to End: Native-based Modern Dance and the Storytelling Dance-Drama of Daystar/Rosalie Jones," outlines Jones' life work, her collaborations with non-Indigenous performers, as well as her development of the storytelling dance-drama genre, which is defined as simultaneously having a storyteller narrate while the performers dance.⁵⁶

For the production *Jessica*, Griffiths was hired by Campbell and artistic director Paul Thompson to develop and play the main character which was Maria Campbell herself. In the development of the character, which was completed through field research and improvisations, Griffiths and Campbell faced numerous challenges, including racism, ownership and the nature of the portrayal. Griffiths expressed her frustration in this process, because if she underplayed the part, she was viewed as a bad actress, and if she accurately played the part, she was transgressing

⁵⁵ Driskill, "Theatre as Suture," 165.

⁵⁶ Julie Pearson-Little Thunder, "Dancers from Beginning to End: Native-Based Modern Dance and the Storytelling Dance-Drama of Daystar/Rosalie Jones," *Baylor Journal of Theatre and Performance* 4, no.1 (2009): 42.

into Indigenous domain,⁵⁷ ultimately resulting in her feeling that because she was white, she was unable to take on the role because she could not get a handle on it.⁵⁸ On the other hand Campbell, who provided context and critique for the role, was always deeply concerned and hurt when she saw Griffiths' improvisation of First Nation and Métis people. Often Griffiths would play back Campbell's own "self-deprecation and self-hatred," which resulted in Campbell feeling angry, or Griffiths would take a private aspect of Indigenous culture and put it onto the stage, without thinking of or understanding the consequences of doing so.⁵⁹

Similarly to Campbell and Griffiths' experience, at the beginning of Jones' career as a choreographer in the 1960s, she worked almost exclusively with white and Hispanic dancers, as there were not any Indigenous dancers in universities.⁶⁰ This resulted in productions that, according to Jones, were extremely problematic largely due to the quality of non-Indigenous performers' movement, including their "natural habitus and locomotion."⁶¹ Jones describes non-Indigenous performers' movement as too lyrical, with their feet leaving the ground often, whereas with Indigenous dancers, they came to rehearsal with an Indigenous natural sense of rhythm, and therefore she did not have to style their steps or gestures.⁶² Both Campbell and Jones faced difficulties working in collaborations with non-Indigenous peoples in performance, which in Campbell's case resulted in a destroyed relationship with Griffiths, and Jones has since focused her career with primarily Indigenous students. The collaborations demonstrated in these two works emphasize the demand for protocols going forward to ensure that collaborations are positive and useful experiences that support reconciliation in Canada.

⁵⁷ Linda Griffiths and Maria Campbell, *The Book of Jessica: A Theatrical Transformation*, (Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press, 1989), 40.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁶⁰ Pearson-Little Thunder, "Dancer's from Beginning to End," 44.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁶² *Ibid.*

In contrast to the experiences of Campbell, Griffiths and Jones, Tomson Highway, who was integral to the development and continuation of Canadian Indigenous theatre, has written and been featured in numerous articles on the benefits of having Indigenous theatre be cross-cultural work. In his 2001 article, “Should Only Native Actors Have the Right to Play Native Roles?” Highway outlines how he never would have had a career as a playwright if it were not for non-Indigenous actors and directors, stating that without them his “career would’ve been destroyed by political correctness.”⁶³ Highway continues his argument on the benefits of cross-cultural collaboration in Indigenous theatre in his 2013 interview with Brigit Dawes, which was documented in her article, “‘I don’t write Native stories, I write universal stories’ An Interview with Tomson Highway” which outlines his development and work within the field.

In Highway’s 2001 article, he begins by documenting the issues he had in the 1980s trying to cast Indigenous actors for his plays; however, they were always unavailable, resulting in him casting white actors, ultimately praising them, as otherwise his plays never would have been produced.⁶⁴ Whereas in Dawes’ article, Highway concentrates his discussion on how his work is both culturally and regionally specific, yet so universal, and has been published and produced and relevant to audiences around the world.⁶⁵ When Dawes questioned Highway if depending on the location of where his play was produced, the audiences’ reactions varied, Highway explained that, in art, after the first few minutes an actor’s ethnicity does not matter, and that everyone is simply “just human beings, human hearts, human desires, and human frailties.”⁶⁶ Highway expands upon his argument, by stating that if Indigenous people can only

⁶³ Tomson Highway, “Should only Native Actors have the Right to Play Native Roles?” *Prairie Fire: A Canadian Magazine of New Writing* 22, no.3 (2001): 20.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁶⁵ Brigit Dawes, “‘I don’t write Native Stories, I write Universal Stories’ An Interview with Tomson Highway,” in *Indigenous North American Drama: A Multivocal History*, ed. Brigit Dawes, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 148.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

play Indigenous roles, then this rule must also be applied outside of an Indigenous context, including in Shakespeare, where only Italians can play in *Romeo and Juliet*, therefore creating a much larger issue, where works would rarely get produced.⁶⁷ In addition, in his 2001 article, Highway describes the benefits of non-Indigenous people acting in an Indigenous performance, as there is a transferring of knowledge through the work and therefore, a development of respect for Indigenous culture, people and language.⁶⁸ Highway concludes his 2001 article by stating that by having Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals work on an Indigenous production together “there is no better healing agent for bringing two only-too-frequently disparate, disharmonious communities together” which will in turn make “our country an even better, richer, [and] healthier country.”⁶⁹

While Highway and many other Indigenous writers encourage cross-cultural work in theatre, these opinions differ greatly from actors, who argue that there are more than enough Indigenous people to fill all of the Indigenous roles available in Canada, and that ultimately non-Indigenous people lack the depth that an Indigenous person can provide to a role.⁷⁰ While Highway states his opinion on non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous theatre, and how beneficial it can be for both communities, protocols need to be developed to ensure that these interactions are always positive, and therefore, truly contribute to reconciliation in Canada.

In the literature review the development of Indigenous performance in Canada was outlined, followed by a critical examination of Indigenous theatre, concluding with an

⁶⁷ Ibid., 149.

⁶⁸ Highway, “Should only Native Actors have the Right to Play Native roles,” 23.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 26.

⁷⁰ Kim Wheeler, “The Unplugging Sparks Debate by Casting Non-Aboriginal Actors in Indigenous Roles,” *CBC News (Winnipeg)*, March 26, 2017, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/the-unplugging-sparks-debate-by-casting-non-aboriginal-actors-in-indigenous-roles-1.3007705>

exploration into Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaborations, and the positive aspects of cross-cultural collaboration in Indigenous performances. Overall, the literature reviewed provides the foundation for the work completed for the thesis. The work by King, McLeod, Highway, and Taylor establishes the integral aspect of stories and storytelling to Indigenous cultures, as well as how these stories, and the manner in which they are told have formed the basis for modern Indigenous theatre in Canada. Starr and Geiogamah instruct on the positive and negative impacts of bringing cultural and ceremonial components to the stage, including trivializing them. Brunette, Taunton, Driskill and Scott's discussion, from a twenty-first century perspective of Indigenous performance, informs how it is extremely beneficial for Indigenous peoples in terms of their healing from the effects of colonization. Through an examination of the work by Campbell, Griffiths, Thunder, and Highway, both the negative and positive aspects of working in cross-cultural collaborations were presented. These included issues of racism, the nature of the portrayal, and racial specific movement, as well as the benefits being knowledge and respect gained for Indigenous people and therefore collective healing. This research will add to the conversations on cross-cultural collaboration, using Campbell, Griffiths and Thunder as examples for the need to establish protocols for this type of engagement. The work is in agreement with Highway, and is an extension of his argument, as it provides a thorough investigation into the appropriateness of cross-cultural collaboration as well as ethical guidelines. On the whole, it goes beyond the literature, in order to thoroughly investigate cross-cultural collaboration, and to determine the usefulness of performance in the reconciliation process in Canada.

Research Methodology:

The research methodology is the process in which the data is collected for the research, and in this study, the methods employed are a questionnaire and an interview with a variety of

participants who were a part of some aspect of the production *Going Home Star*. The questionnaire gathered quantitative data regarding the participants' demographic information, including age, gender, ethnic origin, a description of themselves, education, employment status and geographic location both during the performance and currently [**Appendix C**]. For the questions on age, ethnic origin, education, employment status and geographic location during the performance, the participants selected the option that applied to them from a list, with the option of preferring not to disclose for each question. There were four fill-in-the-blank questions, including gender, the description of themselves, their employment status and current residence, in order to allow them to adequately express their responses. The information gathered was recorded; however only the responses to age, gender and ethnic origin were used to demonstrate a demographic overview of the participants, as the remaining three questions were deemed not applicable.

The interviews consisted of open-ended questions that resulted in qualitative data regarding the participants' involvement in the production *Going Home Star*. The interview questions developed and administered to the participants varied depending on whether they were an Indigenous member of production, a non-Indigenous performer or production member or an Indigenous production observer [**Appendix D**]. For the Indigenous production members, the questions were broken down into four main sections, background on involvement, personal experience being involved in *Going Home Star*, opinion on *Going Home Star*, and reflection.

The first section, background on involvement, asked:

1. How did you come to be a part of the production *Going Home Star*?
2. Can you describe your involvement / role in the production *Going Home Star*?

The second section, on personal experience, asked:

1. Can you describe your experience working on the production including the physical, emotional and mental process / difficulties / challenges positives that you went through being a part of *Going Home Star*?

2. What was your experience, if any, working with the non-Indigenous members of production?
3. What sort of support, if any, did you offer the non-Indigenous members of production?

The third section, on their opinion, asked:

1. What is your opinion on the non-Indigenous cast, should there have been space made available to Indigenous dancers / performers?
2. Can an Indigenous story and experience be told effectively, if non-Indigenous people tell it, do you think this affects, if at all, its portrayal and understanding by the audience?
3. Do you think that *Going Home Star* achieved its goal of starting the conversation of reconciliation in Canada? Please explain.

The fourth section, titled reflection, asked:

1. Overall, what is your opinion on non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous based performance arts, for example, should non-Indigenous peoples be involved, or should the roles be reserved for Indigenous peoples?
2. Based on your experience in *Going Home Star*, do you think that performance can be used as a space for Indigenous / non-Indigenous collaboration in order to work towards the goal of reconciliation in Canada? Please explain.
3. If you could set some guidelines for future non-Indigenous artists' involvement in Indigenous performance, based on your experience in *Going Home Star*, what would they be?
4. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

The non-Indigenous performance members' interviews were similarly organized to the Indigenous production members. They were broken down into three main sections, background on involvement, personal experience being involved in *Going Home Star*, and reflection. The first section, background on involvement, administered the same two questions as the Indigenous production participants. In the second section, on their personal experience, the first question was the same as above, and the remaining questions were as follows:

1. Can you describe your experience performing the piece, how did it affect you mentally / emotionally, what sort of challenges / positives did you go through?
2. What was your experience as a non-Indigenous person telling the story of an Indigenous individual?
3. What sort of barriers / repercussions, if any, did you face, both personal and social, as the result of being in this role?
4. What sort of support did you receive, if any, to assure you of your role in the performance?

The third section on reflection, asked the same questions as the production members, with the addition of question one:

1. What did you learn, if anything, from being a part of this production, for example, about Indigenous peoples and their experiences / histories / realities?

The non-Indigenous production members' interview was formatted by combining the questions for the Indigenous production members and the non-Indigenous performance members. The questions were divided into the same three sections as the non-Indigenous participants, background on involvement, personal experience being involved in *Going Home Star*, and reflection. The questions regarding background on involvement were the same as above and the reflection section asked the same questions as to the non-Indigenous performance members. The personal experience section, however, differed, as it only asked two questions, the first being the same as for the other two groups of participants, and the second asking:

1. What was your experience, if any, working with the Indigenous members of production? Please do not make specific comments about individuals, but rather comment on the experience overall.

The Indigenous production observer's interview was designed similarly to the Indigenous production members' interviews. The questions were divided into three sections, background on involvement, opinion on *Going Home Star*, and reflection. The section on personal experience being involved in *Going Home Star* that was administered to the previous three groups of participants was omitted as it was not applicable. The section on background on involvement asked:

1. How did you hear of the production *Going Home Star*?
2. Can you describe when and why you saw the production *Going Home Star*?

The sections on opinion and reflection asked the same questions that were posed to the Indigenous production members. By using these two methods of data collection, this ensured a comprehensive overview of both the participant pool, their experiences in *Going Home Star*, as

well as how to use this performance as an exemplar for cross-cultural collaboration in performance, and as a way to work towards reconciliation.

Research Design:

The manner in which the research was conducted, including the adaptations from the original design, are described below. In order to move forward with conducting original research, the study first required ethics approval from the University of Manitoba's research ethics board, which was officially granted on December 6, 2018. After the thesis proposal was approved by the committee on February 6, 2019, individuals were selected for potential participation based on their role in the *Going Home Star* production, as stated in the ballet's 2014 Winnipeg house program. The first set of invitations to participate was sent out via email to four Indigenous members of the production team, and via LinkedIn to twelve of the dancers, all of whom were non-Indigenous. From these original invitations, two Indigenous members of production and two dancers immediately responded and agreed to participate; as well, two Indigenous members of production and one dancer declined. After receiving an initial agreement to participate, one of the Indigenous members of production did not reply to any additional emails, and no response was received from nine of the dancers.

Three interviews were conducted as a result of the original invitations to participate and as the research aimed at completing a total of ten, five with the Indigenous production members and five with non-Indigenous dancers, it was determined that a second round of invitations was required. In this second round, the invitations were expanded to individuals who were not initially considered for participation, including non-Indigenous production members and an Indigenous production observer, in order to ensure a number of and diversity of opinions. The second round of invitations was sent out via email to seven members of the production team both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, of which four individuals agreed to participate. It was also at

this time that an invitation to participate was sent to three Indigenous production observers,⁷¹ of whom one agreed to participate. In the end, the research study had a total of eight participants, four Indigenous production members, two non-Indigenous performers, one non-Indigenous production member and one Indigenous production observer.

The interview meetings occurred in February and March of 2019, and either happened in person in Winnipeg, Manitoba, or by Skype or email for those who were located outside of Winnipeg. The questionnaire and interview meetings ranged from thirty minutes to seventy minutes. Each meeting consisted of five different steps in order to ensure that they were in line with ethics protocols. This consisted of a review and approval of the consent form [**Appendix A and B**], administering the questionnaire, asking the interview questions, giving the participants the option to sign the consent to be identified form [**Appendix E**] and handing out the debriefing form [**Appendix F**]. The information gathered from the questionnaires was uploaded into three different charts to demonstrate the range of the participants' demographic information. The responses gathered in the interviews were transcribed and returned to the participants within one week of the meeting for their approval. Seven of the participants granted approval for their entire transcript, whereas one participant requested that only a few quotes be included in the final written version. After receiving their approvals, the interviews were coded in order to determine common themes, and subsequent conclusions. They were then formally put together into written format in order to demonstrate the results from the study.

Overview of Chapters:

Chapter one outlines the historical to present day context of Indigenous dance theatre in Canada, with reference to the United States. The chapter begins with the Potlatch and Sundance

⁷¹ The production observers did not have a formal viewing role of the *Going Home Star* production. They simply attended one of the production's viewings.

ban of 1884 and how it affected Indigenous people's ability to practice their culture and ceremonies. The implementation of the Indian Act in combination with the 1884 ban resulted in Indigenous peoples' participation in the Wild West Shows, World's Fairs, and Royal Tours. It then investigates non-Indigenous and Indigenous individual performers and their use of Indigenous performance art. The second half of the chapter details the modern Indigenous theatre movement in Canada starting just prior to the end of the Potlatch and Sundance ban in 1951 and leading up until 2013, the year prior to *Going Home Star's* opening in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This chapter is designed to provide insight into the development of the Indigenous theatre field in Canada, in order to allow for a full engagement with the subsequent chapters on *Going Home Star*.

The second chapter thoroughly introduces and outlines the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's production *Going Home Star*. To begin, it details the historical background of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet including a discussion of the company's first Indigenous based ballet production, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*. The chapter then progresses into the development of *Going Home Star*, beginning by outlining the main Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals involved in its creation, as well as introducing the dancers for the 2014 Winnipeg, Manitoba performances. The section on the ballet's development concludes by critically examining Joseph Boyden's involvement as the author of the story, and how this affects the Indigenous component of the ballet after the breakdown of his Indigenous identity. The following section introduces the ballet itself, which includes a brief synopsis of the storyline in addition to a description of the choreography, music, costumes, and set designs. The chapter concludes with a description of the reviews that the ballet received from the media, including both positive and negative comments as well as opinions as to how it contributed to the reconciliation process in Canada.

In the third chapter, the results from the eight interviews with the Indigenous production members and observer and the non-Indigenous performance and production members are thoroughly outlined. The results from the demographic questionnaire in regard to age, gender and ethnicity are first presented and discussed. Then, the participants' responses to all of the questions, regardless of the interview that was administered, are outlined using direct quotations, concluding each section of questions with a brief overview of the findings. In order to confirm the conclusions from the previous chapter on Boyden, the participants' discussion of his involvement and whether it affects the Indigenous component of the ballet is briefly outlined. The chapter is brought to a close with a thorough discussion of the results from each section of interview questions, including a statement of the overall results in regard to the research objectives, including a list of four main protocols recommended for implementation in future productions.

The conclusion for the thesis re-states the results from the three chapters with an emphasis on the findings from the original research as determined in chapter three. It also includes a discussion of the limitations that were encountered throughout the research and how they affected the results from the study. A description of suggestions for future research within the field of Indigenous performance arts is also outlined. As well, there is a brief account of the work that The Atlantic Canada Ballet completed in regard to reconciliation through the development of the production *Celebrating Courage: Ghosts of Violence*, which brings awareness to the missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada. The thesis concludes with a statement of hope for achieving the goal of reconciliation in Canada.

Chapter One:

Historical Context of Indigenous Performance

Introduction:

Prior to the late nineteenth century in Canada, Indigenous people's culture, ceremonies and traditions were reflected in song, dance, festival, ceremony and story. The establishment of the Dominion of Canada in 1867, and the subsequent creation of the Indian Act, an amalgamation of laws regarding Indigenous peoples in Canada in 1876, meant the beginning of more intrusive forms of interference by non-Indigenous peoples in Indigenous people's way of life. In this chapter, the Canadian government's policy, as presented in the Indian Act, regarding Indigenous people's Potlatch and Sundance ceremonies is outlined, as well as how Indigenous peoples adapted their cultural practices as a result of this law.

After establishing the details of the Potlatch and Sundance ban in Canada, including how they came into effect, the details of the law and the punishment for practicing, the chapter will then outline how Indigenous people started to use different performance venues, including Wild West Shows, Royal Tours and World's Fairs in order to continue their cultural practices. Following the success of these performances, the work of non-Indigenous performers Ted Shawn and Lester Horton who engaged in Indigenous style performances is discussed demonstrating that because Indigenous dances and ceremonies had achieved wide distribution through the largescale venues nationally, non-Indigenous performers began to appropriate aspects of Indigenous dance in order to enhance their own careers. In addition to Shawn and Horton, the work of Indigenous performers E. Pauline Johnson and Molly Spotted Elk is examined, as they both toured across North America and Europe accurately detailing the experience of Indigenous peoples through spoken word, song and dance, as a method of cultural continuance as well as to pose a resistance to the Canadian and American colonial governments.

The legalization of the Potlatch and Sundance in Canada in 1951 in combination with the increase in movement of Indigenous peoples from reserves to major urban centres, resulted in Indigenous theatre emerging and starting to gain momentum. This began with the first productions written about Indigenous experiences and blossoming into a field with numerous artists, writers, schools and companies. Although theatre is a European concept, storytelling has always been an aspect of Indigenous oral tradition, as Floyd Favel Starr states: “the contemporary stage was one of the few places that Indigenous peoples could once again live in freedom and this led to a tradition of performing among many Native peoples, and the stage became the vehicle and refuge where ancient songs and dances would be kept alive and shared with the world.”⁷² The chapter has been divided in order to reflect the four different stages of the modern Indigenous theatre movement in Canada, with the first section taking place from time immemorial until 1974.

The Modern Indigenous Theatre Movement: Time Immemorial until 1974:

The Canadian Dance Bans:

The prosecution of Indigenous cultural practices began with the Potlatch ceremony, practiced by the Northwest Coast Indigenous peoples. The Potlatch is a gift-giving feast held during the winter months on occasions of “births, deaths, adoptions, weddings and other rite of passage events.”⁷³ When British Columbia joined confederation in 1871, the control of Indian Affairs passed from the British crown to the federal government and the gift giving aspect of the ceremony became a target, as it was seen as a barrier to Indigenous peoples’ incorporation into a

⁷² Floyd Favel Starr, “Theatre: Younger Brother of Tradition,” in *Indigenous American Drama: A Multivocal History*, ed. Brigit Dawes (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), 116-177.

⁷³ Michael E. Harkin, “Potlatch in Anthropology,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 17 (2001): 11886.

capitalist society.⁷⁴ Israel Wood Powell, who was appointed the first Indian Superintendent in Victoria, brought the Potlatch to the attention of the Indian branch in January of 1873.⁷⁵ In his report dated September of 1874, George Blenkinsop, a former Hudson's Bay trader, stated that, "until they are cured of their propensity for gambling and accumulating property, solely for the purpose of giving away to other Indians, there can be but little hope of elevating them from their present state of degradation and bettering the condition and appearance of their wives and families."⁷⁶ Based on the reports from Powell as well as it being at the beginning of the government of Canada's assimilation policies, in 1884 through an amendment to the Indian Act, the Potlatch Law was enacted.⁷⁷ It was formally put into action on January 1, 1885 and made it a criminal offence to participate in the Potlatch or Sundance ceremonies, and if caught, Indigenous peoples could be fined or arrested.⁷⁸ The law as it appeared in chapter twenty-seven, section three states that:

Every Indian or other person who engages in or assists in celebrating the Indian festival known as the "Potlatch" or in the Indian dance known as the "Tamanawas" is guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be liable to imprisonment for a term of not more than six nor less than two months in any gaol or other place of confinement; and any Indian or other person who encourages, either directly or indirectly, an Indian or Indians to get up such a festival or dance, or to celebrate the same, or who shall assist in the celebration of the same is guilty of a like offence, and shall be liable to the same punishment.⁷⁹

Although the Potlatch and Sundance were outlawed, Indigenous peoples continued to practice them both underground as well as through exhibitions hosted by non-Indigenous

⁷⁴ Christopher Bracken, *The Potlatch Papers: A Colonial Case Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 35.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 37.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 1.

⁷⁸ Government of Canada, "An Act Further to Amend the Indian Act, 1884, Chapter 27, Section 3"

⁷⁹ Ibid.

peoples.⁸⁰ It was through these avenues that Indigenous peoples were able to continue practicing their culture and ceremonies, thereby resisting their government's policies. The following section is going to introduce and outline Indigenous involvement in the Wild West Shows, Royal Tours and World's Fairs, while also arguing how these performance venues were beneficial to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, in regard to their position in the colonization process in Canada and the United States.

Large Scale use of Indigenous Peoples in Performance 1880 - 1920:

In the late nineteenth century, during the same period as the enactment of the Potlatch and Sundance bans, Indigenous performative entertainment for settler consumption began to develop, starting with the Wild West Shows. Although there are twenty-six documented shows that developed and toured between the years of 1880 and 1920, Colonel William Cody's *Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World* was the most famous and successful during the period.⁸¹ William Cody, a retired Indian Scout of the U.S. Cavalry, and the founder of the concept of the shows, began promoting Indigenous performance for paying non-Indigenous audiences in 1883.⁸² Cody's work in the military allowed him to employ Indigenous peoples whom the Bureau of Indian Affairs would have cautioned against, including Pawnees from the Indian Territory and Lakotas from Pine Ridge Reservation.⁸³ All of Cody's Indigenous employees were from Plains tribes, and they toured with the show, across both North American and Europe.⁸⁴ The storyline of Buffalo Bill's shows consisted of historical scenes and characters

⁸⁰ Jacqueline Shea Murphy, *The People Have Never Stopped Dancing* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 43.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁸² L.G. Moses, *Wild; West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 22.

⁸³ Murphy, *The People Have Never Stopped Dancing*, 60.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

from the American frontier and included “Indian races, dances, peace councils, and warfare, as well as a real buffalo hunt,” and Indigenous villages.⁸⁵ The representation of Indigenous peoples in the shows created a stage where settler audiences “could experience the narratives, myths and histories of settlement,”⁸⁶ with a focus on the trope of the death of Indigenous peoples, while also being exposed to Indigenous dances and cultural practices.

Indigenous participation in the Wild West Shows was beneficial to both Indigenous peoples and their non-Indigenous owners and governments. Programs that included the Indigenous employees performing their historical and cultural knowledge, allowed for the transfer of stories, histories, knowledge and cultural practices to the younger generation. These shows also provided an opportunity for Indigenous peoples to leave their reserves to earn a living, and they therefore viewed their work as a place where they could maintain cultural and religious teachings.⁸⁷ In Paige Raibmon’s book, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast*, she argues that Indigenous peoples participated in the commodification of their culture because their performances at the Wild West Shows were sites where they could interact, resist and intervene in dominant and colonial society.⁸⁸ For their non-Indigenous owners, the Wild West Shows provided economic gain, as settler audiences were fascinated with Indigenous peoples and the concept of the Wild West.⁸⁹ For the United States government, the shows demonstrated colonial expansion, including the forced movement of Indigenous peoples onto reserves, the killing of the bison, and the building of the railroads.⁹⁰ While Indigenous peoples’ presence in the Wild West Shows exemplified their survival,

⁸⁵ Taunton, “Performing Resistance/Negotiating Sovereignty,” 434.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Murphy, *The People Have Never Stopped Dancing*, 69.

⁸⁸ Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 10.

⁸⁹ Taunton, “Performing Resistance / Negotiating Sovereignty,” 433.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 431.

resilience, and persistence as Indigenous peoples, it also affirmed an understanding of Indigenous people as savage barriers to progress for settler audiences, affirming opinions that were in line with colonial assumptions and assimilation policies.

In addition to the Wild West Shows, the Royal Tours of Canada, that took place during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, also incorporated Indigenous dance and ceremonies into their program. Over the course of the 1901 Royal Tour, the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall visited from coast to coast, stopping in several major cities including Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa and Halifax.⁹¹ The Great Powwow of 1901 that took place at Shagannapi Point, Alberta, was the biggest incorporation of Indigenous peoples in the tour.⁹² There were over two thousand settler spectators at the powwow, witnessing the dancing and ceremonies of the Indigenous peoples in addition to numerous Indigenous Chiefs and families.⁹³ In addition, there was an obvious juxtaposition, as the Indigenous dancers were dressed in their regalia, and the Indigenous children, brought in from residential schools, where dressed in settler clothing.⁹⁴ Throughout the tour, other forms of Indigenous involvement included canoe races and welcoming ceremonies by the Indigenous peoples of both the North West Coast and in Ottawa, Ontario.⁹⁵ Both Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples saw Indigenous participation in the Royal Tours as crucial in order for each to demonstrate themselves and their goals within a colonized society to the British monarchy.

⁹¹ E. F. Knight, *With the Royal Tour: A Narrative of the Recent Tour of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York through Greater Britain* (Toronto: Longmans, 1902) 334–35.

⁹² Wade A. Henry, “Imagining the Great White Mother and the Great King: Aboriginal Tradition and Royal Representation at the ‘Great Pow-wow’ of 1901,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 11, no. 1 (2000): 89.

⁹³ Taunton, “Performing Resistance / Negotiating Sovereignty,” 403

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 407.

The incorporation of Indigenous peoples into the Royal Tours, although giving Indigenous people the opportunity to practice their dances and ceremonies, took place under the direction and intervention of non-Indigenous colonial governments. The 1901 tour exemplifies the contradictions in Canadian policy, as it was decided to include Indigenous peoples and their dances into the program at the same time as the height of assimilation policies, including the Potlatch and Sundance ban and the residential school system. From a colonial perspective, however, Indigenous culture was essential to include as part of the celebrations in order to prove maintenance of colonial domination of Canada.⁹⁶ This was completed, as Indigenous people's cultural practices were viewed as alien, exotic and primitive; therefore, their inclusion in the tours reinforced Britain's cultural superiority. Specifically, in regard to the Great Powwow, Indigenous involvement was used to maintain the dominance of settler Canada, by demonstrating how Indigenous culture was subordinate and opposite to their culture.⁹⁷ Indigenous peoples, at the same time, were using their participation as an assertion of Indigenous cultural identities and Indigenous agency.⁹⁸ Indigenous peoples used their involvement to speak with the Duke and Duchess, to re-affirm their treaty rights and allegiance to the crown, while also explaining their lack of and need for more resources on the reservations.⁹⁹ Therefore, the Royal Tours, like the Wild West Shows, were beneficial to non-Indigenous agendas, while also creating a space for Indigenous peoples to present themselves as an ever-living part of the Canadian narrative.

The World's Fairs' inclusion of Indigenous peoples for settler consumption started with the Paris Exposition of 1889, which included the first humans on display for other humans'

⁹⁶ Ibid., 380.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 400.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 380.

⁹⁹ Henry, "Imagining the Great Mother," 99.

viewing purposes.¹⁰⁰ By 1890, there were two usages of human displays, “for anthropological reasons, to show scientific and ethnographic specimens or to present human oddities;” both of these usages appeared in the Indigenous section at the World’s Fairs.¹⁰¹ Most notably, Indigenous peoples and their material culture were included in Chicago World’s Fair in 1893 and the St Louis World’s Fair of 1904. At the Chicago World’s Fair, Indigenous peoples were on display in a succession of primitive to sophisticated societies, in order to demonstrate the supposed evolution of human development along the midway, leading up to the white city, which presented the achievements of western civilization.¹⁰² In their display, Indigenous peoples would perform their dances and ceremonies for audiences. Non-Indigenous attendees generally viewed Indigenous involvement negatively. At the World’s Fair of 1893 that took place in Chicago, the Indigenous peoples who participated were victims of abuse and ridicule.¹⁰³ The World’s Fairs’ inclusion of Indigenous peoples, their culture, ceremonies and dances, was an attempt, by colonial governments, to illustrate the accomplishments of settler society over Indigenous nations.

Similar to the Wild West Shows and Royal Tours, the non-Indigenous organizers of the Columbia Exhibition thought that having Indigenous peoples on display would assert the primacy of white civilization, whereas Indigenous peoples were using them as a site to assert their agency and sovereignty. From a colonial perspective, the World’s Fairs promoted and

¹⁰⁰ Robert W. Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876–1916* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 5.

¹⁰¹ Curtis M. Hinsley, “The World as Marketplace: Commodification of the Exotic at the World’s Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893,” in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Display*, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 345.

¹⁰² Mona Domosh, “A ‘Civilized’ Commerce: Gender, ‘Race’, and Empire at the 1893 Chicago Exhibition,” *Cultural Geographies* no. 9 (2002): 184.

¹⁰³ Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*, 63.

“legitimized the ideas and values of the host nation’s political” leaders.¹⁰⁴ Having Indigenous peoples on display in the villages for non-Indigenous viewing purposes positioned them as a deteriorating people who were submissive to settler culture. At the same, Indigenous activism and resistance were negotiated through Indigenous people’s bodies. At the Chicago World’s Fair the inclusion of the Kwakwaka’wakw performance troupe “was used as an opportunity to show agency, leadership, autonomy, and resistance” as well as to undermine “colonial oppression” and perform “Indigenous self-determination.”¹⁰⁵ Indigenous participation in the World’s Fairs, although more forceful than the Wild West Shows and Royal Tours, allowed for Indigenous peoples to resist or utilize colonial spectating of performance in order to assert their agency as a people.

Indigenous involvement in the Wild West Shows, Royal Tours and World’s Fairs was designed by non-Indigenous peoples in order to demonstrate their dominance over Indigenous peoples, while also profiting from their culture. These large-scale performance venues were a major aspect in the beginning of interventions by non-Indigenous people in Indigenous performance since the enactment of the Potlatch and Sundance ban in 1885. Indigenous people, however, were able to use these sites to pursue cultural continuance, asserting their agency, and pose resistance to colonial governments. At the same time, the venues had a detrimental effect on the use of Indigenous dances and ceremonies moving into the twenty-first century. Inspired by Indigenous culture as demonstrated through these performance venues and their extension, two non-Indigenous performers, Ted Shawn and Lester Horton, incorporated Indigenous cultural aspects into their work in order to enhance their careers as is discussed below.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰⁵ Paige Raibmon, “Theatres of Contact: The Kwakwaka’wakw Meet Colonialism in British Columbia and at the Chicago World’s Fair,” *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no.2 (June 2000): 157–8.

Non-Indigenous Artists use of Indigenous Dance 1910-1940:

Ted Shawn was born on October 21, 1891 and died on January 9, 1972 and was considered “one of the first notable male pioneers of American modern dance.”¹⁰⁶ Shawn’s fascination with Indigenous dance and ceremonies began when he first came into contact with Indigenous peoples on a dance tour along the Santa Fe Railroad in 1914.¹⁰⁷ Later that year, Shawn took what he learned on the tour and staged himself as an Aztec youth for an audition for Ruth St. Denis’s Dance Company.¹⁰⁸ In 1915, Shawn and St. Denis formed their own company Denishawn, where he premiered *Invocation to the Thunderbird* in 1917 and *Feather of the Dawn* in 1923, which were based on versions of eight Hopi rituals.¹⁰⁹ In 1930, Shawn split with Ruth St. Denis, and created his own company, Men Dancers; their first program included *Zuni Ghost Dance* and the piece *Osage-Pawnee Dance of Greeting*, which were based on material Shawn had developed while observing Indigenous peoples in the Southwest.¹¹⁰ Throughout the seven-year tenure of the Men Dancers, many Indigenous dance pieces were repertory staples and were performed in locations from London to Boston to Vancouver and San Antonio.¹¹¹ Although Shawn was non-Indigenous, his work has been cited by many Indigenous performers as positively contributing to the development of the Indigenous performance field.

Shawn appropriated Indigenous dance in order to enhance his own career, as well as to, under the cover of another culture, explore his personal struggles with gender and sexuality. As scholar Jane Sherman outlined in “The American Indian Imagery of Ted Shawn,” Shawn’s

¹⁰⁶ Ann Hutchinson Guest, ed., *Shawn’s Fundamentals of Dance* (London: Routledge, 1998), 10.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 54.

¹¹⁰ Murphy, *The People Have Never Stopped Dancing*, 120.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 122.

interest in Indigenous cultural aspects infused his entire performance career.¹¹² Shawn protested federal restrictions on Indigenous dance, not because he thought it was a crime for Indigenous peoples, but he saw it as an atrocity for non-Indigenous artists, as it was an art form that they could draw from and utilize.¹¹³ Shawn also turned to Indigenous dance to fulfill his ideals of masculinity and sexuality, as he believed that there was a need for male dominance in the dance world.¹¹⁴ Part of this masculine ideal for Shawn included displaying the nude male body during performances using the cover of Indigenous culture to justify the nudity.¹¹⁵ Shawn was charged under homosexual allegations, for the nudity as well as for dressing exotic, and defended himself under the claim that it was part of Indigenous dance cultural practices.¹¹⁶ Shawn's interest in and appropriation of Indigenous dance and culture was used to express his gender identity and to enhance his own performance career as he capitalized on his non-Indigenous audiences' fascination with Indigenous peoples during the time.

A lifelong fascination with Indigenous dance and culture also infused Lester Horton's career from an early stage. Horton, who claimed to have a full-blooded Algonquin grandmother, lived from January 23rd 1906 until November 2nd 1953.¹¹⁷ Horton began working with Indigenous culture by staging pageants and presenting both himself and his dancers as Indigenous.¹¹⁸ Horton's major theatrical debut, in 1926, was *The Song of Hiawatha*, which was a performance based on Henry W. Longfellow's 1855 fantasy of Indigenous assimilation and disappearance; Horton performed in and directed this piece in California in 1928 and 1929.¹¹⁹ In

¹¹² Jane Sherman, "The American Indian Imagery of Ted Shawn," *Dance Chronicle* 12 (1989): 369

¹¹³ Murphy, *The People Have Never Stopped Dancing*, 117.

¹¹⁴ Ted Shawn, *The American Ballet*, (New York: H. Holt and Company, 1926), 89.

¹¹⁵ Murphy, *The People Have Never Stopped Dancing*, 123.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 131.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 113.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 139.

1931, he presented *Kootenai War Dance* at the Argus Bowl and in 1932 *Takwish, the Star Maker*, which was based on California Indigenous folklore, while also presenting versions of Pueblo Indigenous dances.¹²⁰ Horton's career as both a performer and a choreographer was heavily influenced by the Indigenous peoples who directly surrounded him.

Lester Horton used a claim to Indigenous ancestry in order to validate his fascination with Indigenous culture for the purposes of enhancing his own career. From the beginning of his work within dance and theatre, Horton infused exotification into his performances, where in Chicago, he "earned his living by dancing in nightclubs, mostly just in a little loincloth and a very elaborate headdress."¹²¹ Horton's work shared a lot of the same issues as Shawn's in the dramatic representation of Indigenous people as he took artistic liberties that resulted in his pieces not being historically or culturally accurate.¹²² His pieces would tell narratives of Indigenous death or disappearance as well as cover themes of non-Indigenous peoples being better Indigenous peoples than those who were actually Indigenous.¹²³ In his performance, Horton also included physical Indigenous artifacts, resulting in the items being divorced from the contexts that were traditionally utilized in.¹²⁴ Horton would employ his claim to Indigenous ancestry to validate the artifacts' presence in his performances.¹²⁵ Again, similar to Shawn, Horton explored his sexual orientation through dance, using the images of exotic cultures to find a community where a colourful, talented, theatrically driven homosexual man would be welcome.¹²⁶ Although the use of Indigenous performance to enhance Horton's career is not as troubling as Shawn's, his

¹²⁰ Ibid., 113.

¹²¹ Christopher Innes, *Edward Gordon Craig: A Vision of Total Theatre* (London: Routledge, 1998), 76.

¹²² Murphy, *The People Have Never Stopped Dancing*, 143.

¹²³ Ibid., 141.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 142.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 143.

appropriation of Indigenous dance and artifacts from multiple different cultures resulted in a misrepresentation of Indigenous peoples.

Shawn and Horton incorporated Indigenous culture and ceremonies into their dances in order to make their work appealing to settler audiences, while also using it to explore their sexualities. The work by Shawn and Horton has been argued by some Indigenous and non-Indigenous performers to have been an important aspect in the development of Indigenous performance; however, their work was a misrepresentation and appropriation of Indigenous culture. In 1885 the Canadian government implemented legislation to control the Potlatch and Sundance ceremonies; however, Indigenous people resisted these policies, and continued to practice their dances and ceremonies in any manner they could until they were re-legalized. This is demonstrated through the work of E. Pauline Johnson and Molly Spotted Elk.

Indigenous Artists use of Performance 1880-1940:

Emily Pauline Johnson, also known as Tekahionwake, was born on March 10, 1861 on the Six Nations reserve to a Mohawk Chief and British mother, and died on March 7, 1913 in Vancouver, British Columbia.¹²⁷ Johnson began writing poetry during her teenage years and was best known for her portrayals of Indigenous culture. At the beginning of her professional career, she published in newspapers and magazines as well as started to “recite her poetry and stories for groups and audiences mixing representations of Indigeneity and Anglo-Canadians.”¹²⁸ In 1884, “Johnson embarked on a series of speaking tours in Canada, the United States and England until 1909.”¹²⁹ Once she was a successful performing artist, she “adapted Indigenous items” into her shows, performing in a traditional Mohawk dress for part of her performance and Victorian

¹²⁷ Betty Keller, *Pauline: A Biography of Pauline Johnson* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1981), 12.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 65.

clothing for the other.¹³⁰ In 1895, she released a collection of poetry, *The White Wampum*, which was followed by *Canadian Born* in 1903 and *Flint and Feather* in 1912.¹³¹ After her death in 1913, two books of short stories were published, *The Shagganappi* and *The Moccasin Maker*. Johnson was considered one of North America's most notable entertainers in the late 19th century and is arguably one of the first modern Indigenous storytellers, activists and performance artists.

Pauline Johnson's writing and performances were an act of activism for Indigenous peoples that was unprecedented for the time period. Johnson used performance "to address to her settler audiences' colonial experiences of violence, Eurocentric misunderstanding of Indigenous culture and political histories," as well as Indigenous perspectives that at the time were being omitted and silenced.¹³² During her first large scale performance, in 1892, at the Gallery of Art at Toronto's Academy of Music, she performed, "A Cry From an Indian Wife" which is the story of an Indigenous "woman whose husband was going to fight on the side of the Métis in the 1885 Northwest Rebellion."¹³³ The poem recognized "issues of Indigenous sovereignty over lands" that were "recently claimed as part of the Canadian nation."¹³⁴ Through her performances she was able to "make a space to share her provocative stories," and voiced Indigenous reality from an Indigenous point of view.¹³⁵ Johnson's literary work, which was performed for settler audiences, participated "in the larger context of Indigenous resistance and self-determined political activism" which established the use of stories in Indigenous "literature, theatre, music and art" as an avenue to "resist and re-voice" Indigenous experiences.¹³⁶ Performative storytelling can therefore be used to "interrupt and intervene in colonial histories," in order to

¹³⁰ Ibid., 102.

¹³¹ Ibid., i.

¹³² Taunton, "Performing Resistance / Negotiating Sovereignty," 456.

¹³³ Taunton, "Performing Resistance / Negotiating Sovereignty," 118.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 122.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 126.

“establish self-determined representations, and to provoke political resistance.”¹³⁷ Johnson’s performances captivated her “audiences with Eurocentric representations” of Indigenous peoples in order to present “resistance to colonial stereotypes and assimilation” that were unprecedented during the time.¹³⁸

Mary Alice Nelson later Archambaud, otherwise known by her performance name Molly Spotted Elk, was born on Penobscot Indian Island in Maine on November 19th 1903, to her Penobscot parents, and died on February 21st 1977.¹³⁹ Spotted Elk began learning traditional dances at the age of thirteen and after running out of money while attending the University of Pennsylvania, she turned to dancing to make a living.¹⁴⁰ She crossed the country with a vaudeville troupe, which resulted in jobs at the Schubert Theatre and Provincetown Players, where she would write her own music, make her own costumes and create her own dance pieces.¹⁴¹ In 1928, she won the lead in the Paramount movie, *The Silent Enemy*, which was inspired by New York’s Museum of Natural History’s expedition into Northern Canada.¹⁴² In 1931, Spotted Elk sailed to France as an Indigenous representative in the Ballet Corps of the International Colonial Exposition, which included dancing before the European Royal families.¹⁴³ While back in America, after fleeing France at the outbreak of World War II, Spotted Elk appeared as an extra in several Hollywood films, including *Last of the Mohicans* in 1936, *The Charge of the Light Brigade* in 1936 and *The Good Earth* in 1937, and later in life, settling on the Penobscot reserve, she created Indigenous dolls and wrote children’s stories based on

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Bunny McBride, *Molly Spotted Elk: A Penobscot in Paris* (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 7.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 34.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 36.

¹⁴² Ibid., 54.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 62.

Penobscot legends.¹⁴⁴ Spotted Elk's work in the preservation of her culture was at the forefront of both her career and her retirement.

Molly Spotted Elk's work within Indigenous performance was an act of cultural continuance as well as activism for the Penobscot peoples. Spotted Elk used non-Indigenous people's fascination with the exotic other to create performances that gained leadership and respect for Indigenous peoples during their religious outlaw in the United States.¹⁴⁵ Spotted Elk introduced the French public to Indigenous representation, which was, at the time, more accepted in Europe, therefore providing a space for her to practice her culture and traditions.¹⁴⁶ In sharing her dances in both the United States and France, Spotted Elk staged an act of resistance in an era that focused on silencing and eradicating Indigenous peoples.

The origin of Indigenous theatre in North America is directly linked to the Wild West Shows, Royal Tours and World's Fairs, with E. Pauline Johnson and Molly Spotted Elk serving as the first practitioners of modern Indigenous theatre. Prior to 1960, there were three main Indigenous theatre groups that operated in Canada. The first, was the Can-Oos-Sez Skay-Loo Youth Theatre Group, based in Inkameep, British Columbia, that was directed by their non-Indigenous teacher, and ran from 1939 until 1942.¹⁴⁷ In 1949, Cayuga teacher Emily General created an annual performance festival on the Six Nations Reserve, in Ontario, which continues to this day, with each of the plays performed being written by members of the band council.¹⁴⁸ Additionally, in British Columbia in 1950, an opera, *Tzinquaw: The Thunderbird and the Killer*

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 130.

¹⁴⁵ Ruth B. Phillips, "Performing the Native Woman: Primitivism and Mimicry in Early Twentieth-Century Visual Culture," in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, ed. Lynda Jessup (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 43.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Henning Schafer, "A Short History of Native Canadian Theatre," in *Indigenous North American Drama: A Multivocal History*, ed. Brigit Dawes (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), 20.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

Whale, was created and developed by two non-Indigenous teachers in collaboration with the Cowichan Indian Band and was performed exclusively by Indigenous people.¹⁴⁹ It was also during this time period that Indigenous dancers, Maria and Marjorie Tallchief (Osage), Yvonne Chouteau (Shawnee), Rosella Hightower (Choctaw) and Moscelyne Larkin (Peoria-Eastern Shawnee-Russian) became the first American Indian prima ballerinas.¹⁵⁰ Together they were called the Five Moons, performing collective pieces that honoured their Indigenous heritages, and would each go on to have long and successful careers in ballet in both the United States and Europe.¹⁵¹ In 1951, the government of Canada lifted the Potlatch and Sundance ban, and it was once again legal for Indigenous peoples to practice these dances and ceremonies both on and off reserves.¹⁵² This legalization in addition to the increase in movement of Indigenous peoples from reserves to major urban centres, resulted in the modern Indigenous theatre movement starting to take form in Canada.

The Modern Indigenous Theatre Movement in Canada 1967-1974:

As theatre is an extension of traditional Indigenous practices, it was a natural transition for Indigenous peoples in the mid-nineteen hundreds, when they started to re-gain control of their cultural activities. Bruce King argues that “while the word theatre is European, the art form, being universal, is quite at home in Indian country.”¹⁵³ The centennial year in Canada, 1967, is considered by many, as the official starting point of both Canadian theatre and Indigenous

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 21.

¹⁵⁰ Stacy Pratt, “Five Indigenous Ballet Happenings you should know about,” *First American Art*, February 12, 2018, <http://firstamericanartmagazine.com/ballet/>

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Michael John Simpson and Michelle Filice, “History of Powwows” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, last modified March 31 2016, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/history-of-powwows>

¹⁵³ Bruce King, “Emergence and Discovery: Native American Theatre Comes of Age,” in *American Indian Theatre in Performance: A Reader*, ed. Haney Geiogamah and Jaye T. Darby (Los Angeles: UCLA American Indian Studies Centre, 2000), 165.

theatre in Canada, with the publication of non-Indigenous Canadian playwright George Ryga's *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*. The play details a young Indigenous woman's experience living in a city, while discussing broader subjects of Indigenous people's social conditions and modern encounters living within urban centres, including marginalization, colonization, infantilization and dehumanization. The play, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, is considered the beginning of this movement as it was the first play published of significance that details an "accurate representation of Indigenous people's experiences in the city."¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, it is also disputed, as Ryga was Ukrainian Canadian, and therefore many argue that it cannot be considered an aspect of Indigenous theatre. Yvette Nolan, who is Algonquin from Saskatchewan, and the director of the 2009 production of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, in Kamloops, British Columbia, states that, "one should always be transformed by theatre. I would hope that the young viewer would develop some understanding of the privilege of the dominant culture, and where he or she stands in that culture. I would hope that seeing Rita Joe, the young person would empathize with her, and maybe see Aboriginal people in a new light."¹⁵⁵ While *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* cannot be established as the starting point due to its origin, it is crucial to mark it as an important contributing element to the field, especially in regard to Nolan's hope of its contribution to the understanding of and empathy toward Indigenous peoples in Canada.

The Modern Indigenous Theatre Movement in Canada 1974–2013:

Stage Two: 1974 until 1984:

The second stage of the modern Indigenous theatre movement in Canada took place from

¹⁵⁴ Taylor, *Alive and Well: Native Theatre in Canada*, 63.

¹⁵⁵ Yvette Nolan (Director of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*), in discussion with Deborah James (National Arts Centre), February 2009, Western Canada Theatre Company.

1974 until 1984, where the ultimate creation of the Indigenous theatre field materialized. One of the predominant figures in this stage of the movement, was James H. Buller, a Cree boxer and opera singer. Buller's main objective in the furtherance of the field was ensuring the training of theatre artists, and therefore in 1974 he established the Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts (ANDPVA) as well as the Native Theatre School (NTS).¹⁵⁶ In 1977 Buller recruited Cree poet, George Kenny, to turn his book *Indians Don't Cry*, published earlier that year, into a play, to represent Canada at a theatre festival in Monaco.¹⁵⁷ This resulted in the first Indigenous play, in 1978, that was written by an Indigenous individual about a contemporary Indigenous experience, titled *October Stranger*,¹⁵⁸ which was later made into a film in 1985. In addition to developing and promoting Indigenous theatre in Canada, Buller was also interested in international Indigenous drama and theatre. In order to fulfil this interest, before his death in 1982, Buller developed the international Indigenous People's Theatre Celebration, which was a theatre conference that took place in Toronto in 1980 and then again posthumously at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario in 1982.¹⁵⁹ Buller contributed to the field in numerous additional capacities, including recruiting and developing many Indigenous writers and actors; ultimately, he was fundamental in ensuring that Indigenous theatre would continue for generations to come.

At the same time as the creation and implementation of ANDPVA, five other Indigenous theatre companies emerged with mandates to take on Buller's outlook for the field. To begin, Canadians James Reaney and Keith Turnbull founded the company NDWT, which in 1978 produced the first play in Canada to incorporate the Cree language in its dialogue, titled

¹⁵⁶ Taylor, "Alive and Well: Native Theatre in Canada," 63.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Schafer, "A Short History of Native Canadian Theatre," 22.

*Wacousta!*¹⁶⁰ Also, in 1978, the company toured a collective creation titled *Northern Delights* that depicted contemporary Indigenous peoples' lives in both southern and northern Canada.¹⁶¹ The company was in operation until 1983.¹⁶² In 1982, Denis Lacroix and Bunny Sicard formed Native Earth Performing Arts (NEPA), which was "a loose group of theatre artists producing collective creations."¹⁶³ The Cree dancer, Rene Highway, Tomson Highway's brother, was the choreographer for the company, and in 1983, Monique Mojica, Kuna/Rappahannock, an actress, writer and director with New York City's Spiderwoman Theatre Company became their artistic director.¹⁶⁴ Shirley Cheechoo and Blake Debassige, both Ojibway, formed the third company De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig Theatre Group, on the Westbay reserve on Manitoulin Island, Ontario, in 1984, which continues to be operational to this day.¹⁶⁵ In addition to the companies formed in Ontario, smaller theatre groups developed in provinces across Canada; in British Columbia, the company Spirit Song ran from 1982 until 1992 and in Newfoundland, the Inuit company, Nanuksuamiut (People of the Land) was operational from 1983 until 1986.¹⁶⁶ The advancement of the Indigenous theatre field prior to 1985 went mostly unnoticed; however, the majority of the actors, writers and directors during this time continued to advance the field in the following decades.

Stage Three: 1985 until 1995:

The third stage of the modern Indigenous theatre movement took place from 1985 until 1995, which is when the breakthrough for Indigenous drama occurred. The emergence of the

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 22.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 22-23.

¹⁶² Ibid., 23.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Taylor, "Alive and Well: Native Theatre in Canada," 63.

¹⁶⁶ Schafer, "A Short History of Native Canadian Theatre, 24.

field is argued to have come with Tomson Highway's engagement, and the production of his first play, *The Rez Sisters*. Highway began his work in the Indigenous theatre field in 1978 when James Reaney contracted him as a language consultant for his play *Wacousta!*¹⁶⁷ Highway did not officially enter the field on a full time basis until 1983 as the musical director and performer for Native Earth Performing Arts.¹⁶⁸ In 1985, De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig theatre requested Highway to be their artistic director, allowing him the opportunity to develop his first major play, *The Rez Sisters* in 1986, and when a number of non-Indigenous theatre groups refused to produce the play, Highway took over as artistic director of Native Earth Performing Arts in order to do it himself.¹⁶⁹ After the first production of *The Rez Sisters*, which received extremely positive reviews and was nominated for three awards, winning one, Indigenous theatre started to receive serious critical acclaim from Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians alike.

Over the following years, Highway continued to write as well as produce several plays; however, his next play to receive widespread attention was the sequel to *The Rez Sisters*, *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing*, premiering in 1989. The untimely death of Highway's brother in 1990 deeply affected him, and he was incapable of writing another play for a decade, eventually producing the third play in the series, *Rose*, in 2000.¹⁷⁰ The time that Highway spent as the artistic director of both De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig and Native Earth Performing Arts had a direct correlation with the expansion of the Indigenous theatre field in Canada. These two companies served as central generators of the Indigenous theatre movement in Canada, establishing numerous actors, writers, directors and spinning off additional theatre companies.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 24.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Taylor, "Alive and Well: Native Theatre in Canada," 66.

¹⁷⁰ Schafer, "A Short History of Native Theatre in Canada," 25.

The work that Highway did, mainly in Ontario, with Native Earth Performing Arts and De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig did not encompass the entire development of the Indigenous theatre movement across Canada. In British Columbia, the members of the theatre group Spirit Song commanded the scene, including Margo Kane, who eventually founded Full Circle: First Nations Performance in 1992.¹⁷¹ In addition to Margo Kane, playwright Marie Clements, Dene-Métis, and director, Dennis Maracle, Mohawk, also developed their careers during the same time period in British Columbia.¹⁷² After 1986, in Winnipeg, Manitoba two major companies emerge, the Awasikan Theatre Puppeteer Company and the Native Youth Theatre R-Street Vision, as well as fundamental playwrights Duncan Mercredi and Yvette Nolan.¹⁷³ In Regina, Saskatchewan, Floyd Favel Starr established the company Takwakin in 1990, with its main concentration on the advancement of theatre methodologies in relation to Indigenous culture.¹⁷⁴ In Edmonton, Alberta Darrel and Lori Wildcat as well as Rosa and Melvin John created Four Winds Theatre Group in 1987.¹⁷⁵ In 1985, Yves Sioui Durand, Huron-Wendat, the most generative francophone Indigenous playwright, as well as Catherina Joncas, founded the first and only company in Montreal, Quebec, Ondinnok Mythological Theatre.¹⁷⁶ During the same time period, theatre in the territories was also being established. Ellen Hamilton and Pakkak Innuksuk, Inuit, created Tunooniq Theatre on Baffin Island in 1986 and John Blondin, Dene, formed the Yellowknife Native Theatre group in 1987, which were the two of the most prominent theatre groups in the North.¹⁷⁷ Throughout the time period of the third stage of the movement, 1985-1995, Indigenous

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 27-28.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 30.

theatre, performing primarily plays, made great strides in both its development as well as its recognition and appreciation within the Canadian theatre field.

Stage Four: 1995 until 2013:

The fourth and most recent stage in the modern Indigenous theatre movement is where the strengthening of the field occurred, taking place from 1995 until 2013, the year prior to the opening of *Going Home Star* in Winnipeg, Manitoba. After 1995 it became evident to Indigenous artists that maintaining an Indigenous theatre company was problematic, as funding was independent from commercial success, and was insufficient from the Canadian government.¹⁷⁸ Further, as the newness of the emergence of Indigenous theatre wore off, interest waned as did financial support, resulting in increased stress on major artists, stagnant themes and underdeveloped performances.¹⁷⁹ Although many companies starting in 1995 deteriorated and eventually closed, new companies continued to emerge across the nation, including in 1999 the Saskatchewan Native Theatre Company and in 2000, Red Sky Performance in Toronto.¹⁸⁰ Regardless of the slight downfall of the field from 1995 until 2000, Indigenous theatre continues to become part of the fabric of Canada as works by Highway, Taylor and Clements and others joined the Canadian cannon taught in university course work across the country. In addition, Indigenous writers have had their work developed and performed internationally, and numerous works have been nominated for the Governor General's Award. In regard to theatre schools, the independently owned and operated Centre for Indigenous Theatre, developed and administers a full-time two-year Indigenous acting program, that is strongly connected to Indigenous culture.

¹⁷⁸ Marie Clements, *The Developmental Support to Aboriginal Theatre Organizations* (Ottawa: The Canada Council for the Arts, 2005), 23.

¹⁷⁹ Schafer, "A Brief History of Native Theatre in Canada," 31-32.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

While the field has gone through numerous stages of development, with both positive and negative impacts, it continues to be an active theatrical field, informing the next generation of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples about Indigenous history, culture and traditions.

Conclusion:

Indigenous theatre is still considered a recent development in Canada; however, presently, it is a fundamental aspect of the Canadian theatre scene. The development of Indigenous theatre originated in Indigenous cultural practices, including stories, dances, and ceremonies. At the beginning of the twentieth century, these practices were transformed from an Indigenous cultural context to the Wild West Shows, Royal Tours and World's Fairs. These performance venues allowed Indigenous peoples the opportunity to practice their culture, as well as, in some cases, state their resistance to the Canadian and American colonial governments. However, at the same time, the non-Indigenous owners and governments used these types of performance venues to demonstrate their dominance over Indigenous peoples, and their success in the colonization process.

These performance venues in Canada and the United States led the way for individual non-Indigenous dancers Ted Shawn and Lester Horton to appropriate Indigenous dance in order to enhance their own careers as performers. In comparison, Indigenous performers E. Pauline Johnson and Molly Spotted Elk toured across North America and Europe accurately portraying Indigenous peoples and their experiences. After the legalization of the Potlatch and Sundance in Canada in 1951 and the increase in movement of Indigenous peoples from reserves to urban centres, the modern Indigenous theatre movement started to develop exponentially in Canada. Although the exact breaking point of the movement is contested due to George Ryga's ethnicity, both *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* as well as Tomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters* are concluded by the author as the most notable plays in the development of the field. Presently, Indigenous

performance takes on numerous different forms and attributes, including European theatre and dance, Indigenous dance, ceremonies and stories as well as numerous different aspects of multimedia, including video, audio and animations. It is through the incorporation of one of these newly created forms of performance, the ballet, into Indigenous performance, that *Going Home Star* was developed and produced, telling the story of residential schools to Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians across the country.

Chapter Two:

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet and *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation*

Introduction:

The creation of the production *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation* would not have been possible if it were not for the success of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, both in Winnipeg, Manitoba as well as around the world. The development of the dance form of ballet materialized in the fifteen hundreds in the royal courts of France, where the monarchs continually sought to create more elaborate court entertainment.¹⁸¹ This in combination with dance becoming more theatrical in nature, resulted in the Queen of France commissioning the first known ballet, *Le Ballet Comique de le Reine*, for her sister's wedding in 1581.¹⁸² Over eighty years later, ballet moved beyond the royal courts when King Louis XIV opened the first opera house in Paris in 1669, culminating in the first public viewing of ballet outside of the palace.¹⁸³ Since the sixteen hundreds, the dance form has continued to be developed with the first ballet company forming in Paris in 1713, and the creation of the pointe shoe, used for ballerinas to balance on their toes, in 1830.¹⁸⁴

The development of ballet as a dance form eventually led to the creation of what is now known as the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in 1938, “the second oldest ballet company in North America and the oldest surviving dance company in Canada.”¹⁸⁵ After the Truth and

¹⁸¹ Royal Winnipeg Ballet, *Concert Hour Ballet Study Guide* (Winnipeg: Royal Winnipeg Ballet).

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Katherine Cornell and Max Wyman, “Royal Winnipeg Ballet,” *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, last modified March 4, 2015, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/royal-winnipeg-ballet>

Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada released its results and published the ninety-four calls to action for Canada, the TRC wanted to fund different projects that would “transform the harrowing material shared by survivors into forms that were lasting, cohesive, powerful and collective.”¹⁸⁶ The commission essentially wanted to fund the creation of different art pieces, which led to the development of the ballet *Going Home Star*.

This chapter is organized to provide background knowledge on both the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and *Going Home Star*, in order to allow a full engagement with the results from the interviews with the non-Indigenous performance and production members as well as the Indigenous production members and performance observer in chapter three. In this chapter, the development of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet is detailed, as well as a description of the company’s first ballet on an Indigenous story, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, based on the play by George Ryga. Next, the development of the production *Going Home Star* is outlined, starting with a summary of the main individuals involved in its development, as well as an introduction to the dancers and members of the production crew. The ballet *Going Home Star* is then thoroughly outlined starting with a synopsis of the story, in addition to a description of the costumes, set designs, choreography and music. The final section of the chapter details the positive and negative reviews that *Going Home Star* received, for both the overall performance, as well as the key individuals in its creation.

The Development of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet:

In 1938, Gweneth Lloyd and Betty Farrally, two dance teachers who had recently immigrated to Canada from England, created a ballet club in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The ballet

¹⁸⁶ Martha Schabas, “Winnipeg Ballet Going Home Star puts Truth and Reconciliation in Motion,” *The Globe and Mail*, January 29, 2016, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/theatre-and-performance/winnipeg-ballets-goinghome-star-puts-truth-and-reconciliation-in-motion/article28458551/>

group premiered its work in 1939 for the Canadian Royal Tour of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth with two short dances. In 1941, the ballet club changed its name to the Winnipeg Ballet, and at this point it started to administer a semi-professional dance program. Over the course of the next eight years, the Winnipeg Ballet performed predominantly in Winnipeg, but also toured periodically across Canada, developing a reputation for having both accessible and entertaining short ballet programs. At the same time, the company faced constant financial struggles leading to the implementation of a board of directors in 1949. This resulted in Lloyd departing the company in 1950, leaving Farrally as the sole choreographer and director. In 1953, the British Crown gave the Winnipeg Ballet authorization to include the word royal in its title, signifying the high caliber of the company as determined by Queen Elizabeth II, therefore officially becoming the Royal Winnipeg Ballet.¹⁸⁷

Throughout the following five years the company went through numerous choreographers due to conflicts with the board and their lack of ability to support new and different visions for the company. After Farrally left the company in 1957, they hired Arnold Spohr, their former lead dancer, in March of 1958, as the company's choreographer. Spohr was so successful in his first few years in his role as lead choreographer that he was promoted to artistic director for the company in 1960. While he too was in constant negotiations with the board of directors over programming, he successfully demanded the creation of the ballet's independent school of dance in 1962 and then added a professional training program in 1970.¹⁸⁸

In regard to the style of Spohr's productions, he continued the focus of Lloyd and Farrally, staging numerous short programs that were comprised of different styles and themes to encompass a whole performance rather than performing famous ballet pieces, such as *Swan*

¹⁸⁷ Cornell and Wyman, "Royal Winnipeg Ballet."

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

Lake. At the same time Spohr also mandated new work, including the creation of the first full-length Canadian ballet in 1966, *Rose Latulippe*, composed by Harry Freedman. Over the course of the first seven years of Spohr's career as the choreographer and director of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, he developed a company of twenty-five dancers, which has remained the size of the company to the present day. Due to the company's small audience in Winnipeg, under Spohr's direction, they constantly travelled across Canada and the United States and became the first Canadian ballet company to dance in major cities across the world. The first few cohorts of dancers to graduate from the ballet's professional training division in combination with the board's request for the company to transition toward full-length ballets, resulted in the company's first productions of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1981, *Giselle* in 1982 and *Swan Lake* in 1986. Arnold Spohr officially retired from the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in June of 1988 after thirty years working as the main choreographer and artistic director, with the ballet's early successes being directly attributed to his work.¹⁸⁹

After Spohr's retirement, the next two artistic directors tragically died before they could implement one season for the company. Then in 1990 Australian John Meehan who had trained at the American Ballet Theatre in New York City, became artistic director; however, he resigned after only three years. During his tenure, Meehan most notably appointed Mark Godden, then lead dancer, as the resident choreographer. Godden served in this role for many years providing stability to the company and eventually choreographing the production *Going Home Star* in 2014. Following Meehan as artistic director was William Whitener; however, he was let go in favour of the ballet's principal dancer André Lewis, who was chosen for the position in 1996 and has remained the company's artistic director to the present day. In the 1990s all Canadian ballet companies suffered financially, and therefore as a result, Lewis took steps to change the direction

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet to include more popular full-length productions including *Dracula*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *The Nutcracker*. In addition, in order to ensure the longevity of the company, Lewis also limited the touring aspect of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and instead focused on creating productions that would draw more audience members from within Manitoba. In keeping with this local focus, it was in 2014 that Lewis commissioned the creation of a production that discussed the residential school experience, titled *Going Home Star*.¹⁹⁰

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet's *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*:

The production *Going Home Star* was not the first ballet that the Royal Winnipeg Ballet commissioned that was based on Indigenous peoples and their experiences in Canada. In 1971, the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood approached the Royal Winnipeg Ballet proposing the creation of a ballet to mark the centenary of the signing of treaties one and two between the Indigenous peoples in Manitoba and the crown.¹⁹¹ At first, the production team wanted to create a ballet that included Indigenous powwow dancing; however, Spohr, artistic director at the time, refused.¹⁹² Norbert Vesak, their resident choreographer, suggested that they create a ballet out of the play written four years prior by George Ryga, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*.¹⁹³

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet's version of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* premiered at the National Arts Centre on July 27, 1971 in Ottawa, Ontario.¹⁹⁴ Although the ballet was based on Ryga's play, it took on a different style in the dance; as Vesak states, "the concept of the ballet and the play are totally different. The play was about Rita Joe in relation to her surroundings.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Max Wyman, *The Royal Winnipeg Ballet: The First Forty Years*, (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1978), 148.

¹⁹² Ibid., 149.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 151.

The ballet is a little bit more about Rita Joe herself, a woman who cannot live in either a white or Indian society.”¹⁹⁵ For the original production of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* in 1971, the lyrics and dialogue were written by George Ryga, and Vesak, in addition to the choreography, also designed the costumes and lighting.¹⁹⁶ As well, Philip Keatley directed the audio for the ballet in combination with the orchestrator Carlos Rausch.¹⁹⁷ The company also commissioned Don S. Williams from the *CBC* to create the video backdrop for the ballet, which included shots of Winnipeg’s Main Street as well as the Roseau River Reserve, 60 miles south of Winnipeg.¹⁹⁸ In addition, they hired Chief Dan George, a Canadian Indigenous actor who played Rita Joe’s father in the original theatrical production, to be the voice of Rita Joe’s father for the ballet.¹⁹⁹ The creation of the ballet version of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* was the Royal Winnipeg Ballet’s first experience in combining the European dance form of ballet with Indigenous stories and experiences.

The production *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* was so well received over the years, that it would sell the Royal Winnipeg Ballet more tickets than any other production, described as the “most successful ticket seller in the RWB history.”²⁰⁰ When the ballet was originally presented in 1971, it received a mix of positive and negative reviews in newspapers from across Canada. Barbara Rowes in *The Globe and Mail* wrote positively on July 29, 1971 that “Vesak’s choreography is original and appropriate. It yields itself to the music and the theme.”²⁰¹ At the end of its first presentation on July 27, 1971 *The Toronto Telegram* stated that “the capacity audience sat in a

¹⁹⁵ Royal Winnipeg Ballet, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, (Winnipeg: House Program, October 7-11, 1987).

¹⁹⁶ Royal Winnipeg Ballet, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, (Ottawa: House Program, July 1971).

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Casimir Carter, “Rita Joe Sparks Dancers,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, July 28, 1971, 1 and 7.

¹⁹⁹ Royal Winnipeg Ballet, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, (Ottawa: House Program, July 1971).

²⁰⁰ Wyman, *The Royal Winnipeg Ballet*, 241.

²⁰¹ Barbara Gail Rowes, “Ecstasy of Rita Joe Dancing Masterpiece,” *The Globe and Mail*, July 29, 1971.

stunned silence that erupted into cheers moments after the impact wore off.”²⁰² The ballet was hailed as an “unqualified success,” where “Rita Joe [was] carved into the audience’s soul with sensitive choreography, uncompromising music and excellent dancing.”²⁰³ In addition to the positive reviews, the ballet also received a few negative evaluations, including from Jacob Siskind of *The Gazette*, who stated on July 28, 1971 that:

the ballet has its flaws – it is too long for the incentive powers of the choreographer, Norbert Vesak; it is filled with so many distracting visual and aural effects that you often find yourself attending to the wrong thing; the presence of Chief Dan George, both on the screen and in the background soundtrack, is so magnetic that when he is involved the rest of the production is completely swamped.²⁰⁴

Although Siskind wrote negatively about the multi-media aspect of the ballet, he did write positively about the duet between the characters Rita Joe and Jamie Paul, stating this was “most beautifully danced by Ana Maria de Gorriz and Salvatore Aiello, that is filled with genuine emotion.”²⁰⁵ More than fifteen years later, in the house program for the 1987 production of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, Chief Dan George expresses his opinion on the ballet stating, “the play carries a message all Canada should hear. It is a message Canada needs to hear,” continuing “Rita Joe helps [people] to listen with their hearts – and when their hearts are open, their ears can hear,”²⁰⁶ therefore resulting in a better understanding of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The ballet version of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, in 1971, was concluded as a huge success for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and has been revived numerous times over the past 48 years.

²⁰² Dave Billington, “Emotions of Rita Joe Carve into the Soul,” *The Toronto Telegram*, July 28, 1971.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ Jacob Siskind, “Winnipeg Ballet Storms Ottawa with Varied Program,” *The Gazette*, July 28, 1971.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ Royal Winnipeg Ballet, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, (Winnipeg: House Program, October 7-11, 1987).

Over the following four decades, multiple renewals of the ballet *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* occurred at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's home in Winnipeg in addition to both national and international tours. After the original premiere in Ottawa in July of 1971, the following month, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, went on tour to Wolfville, Nova Scotia.²⁰⁷ In 1972, the production went on tour at two different times, the first to Vancouver in January and the second to Minneapolis, Minnesota in November.²⁰⁸ In 1973, it toured extensively throughout Canada, which included a number of cities in the provinces of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and Alberta, in addition to also visiting the states of Washington and Oregon.²⁰⁹ In 1974, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet toured internationally and included the presentation of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* in the United States, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Mexico.²¹⁰ Over the course of the next fifteen years, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* continued to tour with the company, with the most notable destinations being Tel Aviv, Caesarea, and Jerusalem, Israel, and London, England.²¹¹ Lewis' limitation on the company's tours due to budget restrictions resulted in *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*'s last tour date being in February of 1989 in Prince George and Kelowna, British Columbia.²¹² In addition to the numerous tours, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* has also been presented a number of times in Winnipeg with its most recent viewing from May 4 until the 8 of 2011.²¹³ Tara Birtwhistle, who had been a dancer with the company for twenty years, requested the role of Rita

²⁰⁷ Royal Winnipeg Ballet Archives, *Tour Program Finding Aid* (Winnipeg: Royal Winnipeg Ballet, 2019), 22-73.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ CBC News, "Royal Winnipeg Ballet's Birtwhistle takes Final Bow," *CBC News*, May 4, 2011, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/entertainment/royal-winnipeg-ballet-s-birtwhistle-takes-final-bow-1.1078666>

Joe for her departing performance as a dancer, before moving into the role of a ballet mistress, training and coaching the dancers in the company.²¹⁴ Although it has been thirty years since the last time *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* toured, and eight years since it was last performed in Winnipeg, the ballet continues to be a well-known production in the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's repertoire to the present day.

The Development of *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation*:

The production *Going Home Star* was developed over the course of ten years, with many individuals from Winnipeg involved in its creation. The idea to have a ballet based on an Indigenous story came from the late Elder Mary Richard, who was the former Chair and CEO of Circle of Life Thunderbird House. Richard held the belief that art is an effective tool for social change as well as a way to bring people together, which in combination with her extensive subscription to the ballet, prompted her to approach artistic director, André Lewis, about creating a production in collaboration with the Indigenous community in Winnipeg.²¹⁵ In their early 2000s conversation, Lewis recalls that Richard's "ultimate hope was for a work that would bring the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community closer together. She believed ballet could achieve this powerfully and that the Royal Winnipeg Ballet was a natural vehicle to attain this aim."²¹⁶ Many years after Richard's and Lewis' initial conversation, in 2012, Tina Keeper, Cree, a Winnipeg based actress and a Royal Winnipeg Ballet board member, further discussed the idea of developing a ballet with respect to Indigenous peoples with Lewis. The focus, however, for

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Royal Winnipeg Ballet, *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation*, (Winnipeg: House Program, October 1-5, 2014), 29.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

Keeper and Lewis' conversation was on the mandate and the results from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.²¹⁷ At the time the Royal Winnipeg Ballet was deciding on their next full-length production, and it was determined that both the told and untold stories of the residential school system in Canada would be represented in *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation*.²¹⁸ The ballet opened the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's 75th season in October of 2014.

A number of individuals involved in the development of the ballet, who were fundamental to its creation, came from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous ancestry. All of the crew members, whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous, were hired by the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, on direction from Mark Godden, the choreographer. The Indigenous members of the production included Tina Keeper, who was a “driving force behind the creation of the ballet” and served as its associate producer.²¹⁹ Keeper is originally from Norway House Cree Nation, and “studied acting at the Centre for Indigenous Theatre, the Banff Centre, and the Sundance Film Institute,” in addition to completing her “Bachelor of Arts in Theatre at the University of Winnipeg.”²²⁰ Over the course of her career as an actress, she worked most notably on the Canadian series *North of 60*, while using her position to raise awareness for Indigenous issues.²²¹ In addition to Keeper, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet hired KC Adams, an Oji-Cree multi-media artist based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, as the set designer. Adams received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Concordia University in 1998 and has since both created and been included in numerous art exhibitions both in Winnipeg and across Canada.²²²

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 44.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid., 43.

For the musical component of the ballet, two Indigenous artists were hired: Tanya Tagaq, an Inuk throat singer from Cambridge Bay, Nunavut as well as Steve Wood and the Northern Cree singers, a drumming and singing group from treaty six territory in Alberta. Tagaq started developing her form of Inuit throat singing, in the format of a solo performance, while she was attending the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.²²³ Tagaq is known for her “fearsome, elemental performances that are visceral and physical, heaving and breathing and alive,”²²⁴ drawing responses from audiences across the world. Steve Wood and the Northern Cree singers were founded in 1982 and have been nominated for multiple Grammy and Juno awards, in addition to winning multiple Native American Music Awards, Canadian Music Awards, and powwow singing competitions.²²⁵ The Royal Winnipeg Ballet also drew on members from within the Indigenous community to act as consultants and support for the ballet; this included, Elder Thelma Meade, Phil Fontaine, Jean Giguère, Sandra DeLaronde, Elders Clarence and Barbara Nepinak, Mel and Shirley Chartrand, Doris Young, Ted and Morgan Fontaine, Laurie Messer and Tom McMahon.²²⁶ Essentially, where they could, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet drew from the Indigenous community in Canada, in order to ensure that their knowledge and perspectives were a foundational part of the production.

In addition to the Indigenous members of the production team, the creative roles regarding choreography, music composition, as well as costume and lighting design all went to non-Indigenous men. André Lewis hired American-born Canadian resident Mark Godden as the choreographer and leader for the production. Godden has danced and choreographed award winning performances for a plethora of ballet companies across North America leading to top

²²³ Ibid., 40.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid., 18.

honours at the international ballet competitions in both Bulgaria and Finland.²²⁷ The Greek-born composer Christos Hatzis, who has lived in Canada since 1985, wrote the score for the ballet.²²⁸ Hatzis is a professor in the Faculty of Music at the University of Toronto, and has won many awards for his work, so that he is considered “one of the most important composers in Canada.”²²⁹ Additionally, Polish born Tadeusz Biernacki, the music director and conductor for the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, conducted the score Hatzis created for the ballet soundtrack.²³⁰ Biernacki was born in Poland and settled in Canada in 1978 and is an award winning pianist who also works as the musical director and conductor at the Saskatoon and Manitoba Operas.²³¹ Paul Daigle was hired by Godden as the costume designer, who was, himself, a graduate of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet’s School, who switched his career to design in 1988.²³² Daigle has worked on many productions with Godden at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, in addition to his work with other ballet companies across North America.²³³ Pierre Lavoie served as the lightening designer, and has worked on dance productions since 1982 when he started working as a stage manager for the majority of Toronto’s modern dance companies.²³⁴ Lavoie switched to designing lights in 1990s, gaining positive reviews for his work at the Alberta Ballet where he holds the position of resident lighting designer.²³⁵ Sean Nieuwenhuis designed the projection aspect of the ballet, and is based out of New York City where he has worked regularly on Broadway productions as well as working across Canada including at the Stratford Festival.²³⁶

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid., 26.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Ibid., 27.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid., 43.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid., 44.

Additional non-Indigenous individuals who were essential in the development of the ballet included the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's stage manager, Ingrid Kottke; production manager, Isabelle Ly; carpenters, Marc Gagnon, Robert Schultz, Bob Smith and Matthew Bates; scenic artists, Carla Schroeder, Farrah Okolita, and Andrea von Wishert; and the ballet masters, Johnny W. Chang, Tara Birtwhistle, Vanessa Lawson and Jaime Vargas.

Going Home Star had three different castings for each of the seven main characters in its two-season duration at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. The world-class nature of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in addition to the company's union restrictions, resulted in it not being possible to hire Indigenous dancers for the production; therefore, all the dancers were sourced from the company's repertoire. In order to ensure that the dancers were not over worked and were not in a position to injure themselves, they had a predominant dancer for each role, in addition to two back-up dancers who would perform when needed. The predominant dancers for the two main characters were Sophia Lee from Vancouver, British Columbia, as Annie, and Liang Xing from Beijing, China as Gordon.²³⁷ As well, the dancers for the additional five main characters were Dimitri Dovgoselets from Kiev, Ukraine, as the clergyman; Alanna McAdie from Edmonton, Alberta, as Niska; Yosuke Mino from Kanazawa, Japan, as Charlie; Yayoi Ban from Chiba, Japan as the mother; and Thiago Dos Santos from San Paulo, Brazil as the father.²³⁸ There were seventeen other dancers who were cast to fill the roles of the random lover, urban women, urban men, clergymen, Divine Louis and the star children. The company dancers cast for these roles came from a variety of backgrounds including nine other dancers from various parts of Canada, three from the United States, two from Japan, one from Brazil, one from China, and one from the Republic of Moldova.²³⁹ While the majority of dancers did come from various parts of Canada,

²³⁷ Ibid., 18, 46-47.

²³⁸ Ibid., 18, 47, 49, 50.

²³⁹ Ibid., 48-51.

they did not all come with a knowledge of Indigenous peoples, and therefore this ballet became a learning experience for all the dancers involved, about the Indigenous peoples in Canada both historically and in the present.

After Keeper was hired on as the associate producer, she immediately reached out to Joseph Boyden, an award-winning Canadian author, who self-identified as Irish, Scottish and Anishinaabe, to write the story for the ballet.²⁴⁰ Boyden was initially apprehensive about writing the story, first because it was in a context that he had never written in before, second, because he did not know anything about ballet, and third because he was unsure whether using a traditionally western art form, such a ballet, in order to tell an Indigenous story was appropriate.²⁴¹ After embarking on an extensive learning experience in ballet, including historical research and viewing recorded performances, Boyden changed his mind and determined that combining western dance with an Indigenous story could be a compelling and a successful way to bring the two cultures together.²⁴² At this time, Boyden determined that he wanted the ballet to be based on the teachings of the four directions, which would allow him to easily develop the four main characters, Annie, Gordon, Niska and Charlie.²⁴³ After the completion of the first draft, Boyden sent it to Godden and Keeper who both immediately approved, and therefore he continued his work perfecting the script, which would eventually develop into the story of *Going Home Star*.

Keeper selected Boyden to write the script for *Going Home Star*, both due to his skill as a writer as well as to his assumed Indigenous heritage. However, many people within the

²⁴⁰ Joseph Boyden, "Joseph Boyden Creates a Ballet Inspired by a Dark Past: Joseph Boyden on the Harrowing yet Wondrous Journey of Creating a Ballet," *Maclean's*, September 27, 2014, <https://www.macleans.ca/culture/arts/joseph-boyden-creates-a-ballet/>

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

Indigenous community for years prior had cast doubt on Boyden's claims to Indigenous ancestry. These concerns were voiced in December of 2016, after the conclusion of the acclaimed two-season run of *Going Home Star*, when Jorge Barrera, a journalist for the *Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN)*, investigated Boyden's heritage. Through Barrera's investigation which included interviews with Boyden's family members, in which Boyden declined to participate, Barrera found that there was no evidence of Indigenous ancestry.²⁴⁴ In August of 2017, Boyden published an article in *Maclean's* magazine stating that he had taken a DNA test, the results of which indicated that he had Native American DNA.²⁴⁵ These tests, however, are highly criticized in both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous community. Within the Indigenous community DNA tests are denounced as Indigenous identity is more complex than simply an individual's DNA and includes relationships to land and people. For the non-Indigenous community, although there is widespread belief that the tests are accurate, they are only statistical estimates based on the information in the company's database and the majority of them are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).²⁴⁶ Therefore, the results from the tests should not be employed as the authority on an individual's ethnicity.

When Barrera proved Boyden's claim to Indigenous ancestry is unfounded, this brought into question *Going Home Star's* credibility as Indigenous performance art. Although Boyden is not Indigenous, he did draw upon many different aspects of Anishinaabe culture to develop the story for the ballet, such as basing the four main characters on the four directions of the medicine

²⁴⁴ Jorge Barrera, "Author Joseph Boyden's Shape-Shifting Indigenous Identity," *APTN National News*, December 23, 2016, <https://aptnnews.ca/2016/12/23/author-joseph-boydens-shape-shifting-indigenous-identity/>

²⁴⁵ Joseph Boyden, "My name is Joseph Boyden: Being Indigenous isn't all about DNA. It's about who you claim, and who claims you," *Maclean's*, August 2, 2017, <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/my-name-is-josephboyden/>

²⁴⁶ Charlsie Agro, "DNA Ancestry Tests: Can you trust the results?" *Marketplace, CBC News*, January 18, 2019, <https://www.cbc.ca/marketplace/episodes/2018-2019/dna-ancestry-tests-can-you-trust-the-results>

wheel, framing Charlie's story to mimic that of Chanie Wenjack,²⁴⁷ as well as steeping the story in the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's findings.²⁴⁸ Forming the story around these three Indigenizing principles, in addition to other aspects of Indigenous culture, inclusive of the significance of ceremony to healing, resulted in a story largely about Anishnaabe culture, as opposed to being created from Boyden's imagination. This focus, in combination with Keeper's approval of the script, results in the author's conclusion, that the production, although written by a non-Indigenous individual, remains associated with Indigenous culture, and is an aspect of Indigenous performance art. After the release of Barrera's article, the artistic director of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, André Lewis stated about *Going Home Star* that "the work reflects the spirit of reconciliation and is integral to the work of the TRC, and Joseph Boyden was an important member of this artistic team...we are proud of the work, and of our association with this gifted Canadian writer."²⁴⁹ While it is important to acknowledge the work that Boyden did as an aspect of the ballet, as well as the controversy surrounding his ancestry and identity, Boyden's contribution only caused a slight impact on the intended result of the ballet, which was to introduce the stories of residential schools to non-Indigenous Canadians.

As stated above, the production *Going Home Star* was incorporated into two seasons of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's repertoire, the 2014-2015 season as well as the 2015-2016 season. In the 2014-2015 season, *Going Home Star* launched the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's 75th season, and was presented from October 1 until October 5 of 2014 at the Centennial Concert Hall in

²⁴⁷ Chanie Wenjack was an Ojibwe boy who ran away from the Cecilia Jeffery Residential School located in Kenora, Ontario in 1966. Wenjack froze to death on a train track on his way home, he was 12 years old.

²⁴⁸ Boyden, "My Name is Joseph Boyden."

²⁴⁹ Marsha Lederman, "Amid Heritage Controversy, Publishing Heavyweights Stand by Joseph Boyden," *The Globe and Mail*, January 6, 2017, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/books-and-media/amid-heritage-controversypublishing-heavyweights-stand-by-joseph-boyden/article33526706/>

Winnipeg, Manitoba.²⁵⁰ The production was not presented during the calendar year of 2015; however, it was brought back for a cross Canada tour beginning in January of 2016. This tour launched in Ottawa, Ontario, where it was available for viewing from January 28 until the 30 before continuing on to Kingston on February 2, Burlington on February 4 and Toronto on February 5 and 6.²⁵¹ The tour then continued into western Canada, and was in Brandon, Manitoba on March 21, Regina, Saskatchewan on March 22, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on March 23 as well as in Banff, Alberta on March 26 2016.²⁵² It then made numerous stops throughout British Columbia, including in Kelowna on March 29 and 30, Victoria on April 1 and 2, Nanaimo on April 4 and 5 and concluding in Vancouver from April 7 until the 9 of 2016.²⁵³ Throughout the two-year time period that *Going Home Star* was presented in both Winnipeg and across Canada, numerous Canadians were able to see the performance across the country.

***Going Home Star* - The Production:**

Synopsis of *Going Home Star*:

Going Home Star was broken down into two acts, for a total run time of one hour and fifty-three minutes including the intermission.²⁵⁴ The first act of the ballet begins with Annie, a young, Indigenous woman living in the city, who works as a hair stylist, and spends the majority of her nights in clubs, doing drugs and sleeping with different men, and ultimately feeling disconnected. The character Gordon is introduced as a homeless Indigenous man, due to his experiences as a child in residential schools; however, he remains connected to his Indigenous

²⁵⁰ Royal Winnipeg Ballet, *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation* (Winnipeg: House Program, October 1-5, 2014).

²⁵¹ Royal Winnipeg Ballet Archives, *The Company Touring Dates* (Winnipeg: Royal Winnipeg Ballet, March 14, 2019), 106-108.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Royal Winnipeg Ballet, *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation* (Winnipeg: House Program, October 1-5, 2014), 18.

teachings, especially that of the Anishnaabe trickster. Annie and Gordon first meet one another in a subway station, and a few days later, Annie dreams of an Indigenous woman and wakes feeling strangely connected to Gordon. The following day Annie feels different, and when she runs into Gordon, a trickster figure enters, and in the middle of the stage, a reliquary model of a residential school sits, which is when Annie first feels Gordon's burden. Unable to handle the feeling of the burden and being afraid of Gordon and the trickster, Annie returns to the club and a random lover. That night she has another dream, this time of city people, and wakes realizing that her connection to Gordon is a part of "something bigger than herself."²⁵⁵

The next scene begins with Annie and Gordon who are no longer in the real world, with the reliquary placed in the middle of the stage. After gaining Annie's attention by lifting the reliquary and having it crush him, Gordon begins to tell his story of the residential school system. Annie and Gordon then move back through time, to an active residential school, where he introduces two Indigenous children, Niska and Charlie, who were forced to attend. After seeing the corporal punishment used on the children, Annie is extremely devastated; however, Gordon continues his story, in order to ensure she fully understands the truth of the schools. Returning to Charlie and Niska, one evening they both sneak out of bed, and Niska takes the tobacco pouch her mother gave her and sprinkles some of it onto the flame of a candle. The smell and the practicing of the ritual reminds them of home and their parents; however, it is not long before they are caught by the clergyman, who severely punishes both Charlie and Niska.²⁵⁶

Gordon takes a break in the story as Annie reflects on her work as a hair dresser in relation to Indigenous children who had their hair sheared. Gordon then gifts a tobacco pouch to Annie. Gordon continues his story by showing flashes of Niska and Charlie's residential school

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 14-15.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 15.

experience, including when they said goodbye to their parents, when the Clergyman beats Charlie and when Niska is raped. Annie is extremely upset with all of these stories, and when Gordon moves to console her, she pushes him away and leaves the stage.²⁵⁷

Gordon is now alone on stage, remembering the story of Charlie, who ran away from the residential school, in order to return home. Charlie used the railroad track and the North Star, which was known to him and his people as “the Going Home Star” to help him find his way; however, Charlie never makes it home. Annie returns to the stage to console Gordon, who is upset about Charlie’s story, knowing how it could have easily been his fate as well. At this point, Annie realizes that she also carries the burden of the past and determines that it is her job to act as healer for both Gordon and her people. Act one concludes with the “Going Home Star” clearly visible in the sky and Annie using it as a direction for her future.²⁵⁸

Act two begins with Annie creating a sweat lodge, embracing her role as Gordon’s healer. Gordon, however, is focused on the torture that children endured attending the residential schools. In order to begin the healing process, Gordon returns to Canada prior to contact, and remembers that Canada was not discovered by Europeans, but rather shown to them by Indigenous peoples. Gordon then tries to remember a time when Niska and Charlie were happy with their parents; however, he is constantly reminded of the Clergyman’s abuse, leaving him angry and weak. Annie continues to try to make a home for Gordon and herself to heal; however, Gordon continues to be pre-occupied, especially with the story of Charlie. Gordon finally determines that he needs to find reconciliation, where he pictures both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples coming together in prayer for all survivors and the damage that has been done through residential schools.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 15-16.

Gordon is still in need of healing, and therefore, Annie focuses on the power of the medicine wheel and enters the stage with ribbons that represent each of the wheel's four colours, tying them to the birch trees. Annie then takes Gordon to the reliquary, and while envisioning a better world for Niska and Charlie, she hands Gordon a flame. Gordon, following Annie's lead of hope for the future, sets the reliquary on fire. For a few minutes Annie and Gordon sit with Niska and Charlie and their Elders, and although Gordon is extremely weak, he only feels love around him. Annie then begins to braid Gordon's hair as an effort to re-build his strength. They then both take a few minutes to validate each other's truth and acknowledge that Annie's spirit unites with Gordon's dark past. The ballet concludes with the playing of the Morning Song, a song sung in Cree communities across Canada to start their day.²⁶⁰

Production Description:

While there are not many descriptions of the choreography that Godden developed for *Going Home Star*, there are a few statements that provide some insight into the dance movement. The choreography that Godden generally develops for his productions sticks to basic ballet movements and he has been assessed by Paula Citron from *The Globe and Mail* as "not an innovative choreographer."²⁶¹ The choreography that he created for *Going Home Star* included a combination of moves that he had drawn from his repertoire as a choreographer for many decades. This included having the clergyman's movement be represented in a way that expressed an overpowering and evil energy, whereas the star children are "serene and in their harmonious pattern."²⁶² It was also stated that Godden's choreography had a raw and primal edge, and that he

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 17.

²⁶¹ Paula Citron, "Royal Winnipeg's Residential-School Ballet Turns Darkness into Beauty," *The Globe and Mail*, October 3, 2014, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/theatre-and-performance/royal-winnipegs-residentialschool-ballet-turns-darkness-into-beauty/article20910952/>

²⁶² Ibid.

developed the characters on the stage through his movement.²⁶³ Although the choreography that Godden created for *Going Home Star* was European-based and from his non-Indigenous perspective, he was widely praised for his ability to tell the story of residential schools through movement.

As mentioned above, the composer for the music for the ballet was Christos Hatzis, who insisted on the incorporation of Tanya Tagaq and Steve Wood and the Northern Cree Singers in combination with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. After Hatzis read the script for the ballet, he determined that the music would describe Annie's outward behaviour as opposed to her inner world.²⁶⁴ Throughout the production, as Annie becomes increasingly overwhelmed with the information that Gordon is telling her, the music also gradually becomes more intense, with a growling sound representing the Indigenous ancestors.²⁶⁵ As emphasized in the music in act two, Annie starts to realize that she has a connection to Indigenous peoples that she needs to embrace and explore.²⁶⁶ At the conclusion of the ballet, the morning song is played by Steve Wood and the Northern Cree Singers.²⁶⁷ The first song in the duo is the rising sun song, which gives thanks to the sun for rising as well as for the life that it has given to the people.²⁶⁸ The second song is the water song, stating that everyone needs to learn from mother earth, in order to cure and clean the water.²⁶⁹ Hatzis has been highly acknowledged for his work in regard to the music for *Going*

²⁶³ Michael Crabb, "Hope and Shame on the Ballet Stage in *Going Home Star*," *The Star*, February 4, 2016, <https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/stage/2016/02/04/hope-and-shame-on-the-ballet-stage-in-going-homestar.html>

²⁶⁴ Royal Winnipeg Ballet, *Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation* (Winnipeg: House Program, October 1-5, 2014), 36.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 39.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

Home Star, including the combination of different components from Indigenous and non-Indigenous music, in order to make a truly cross-cultural composition.

The costume designer Paul Daigle, as introduced above, had extensive experience working within a ballet, prior to *Going Home Star*, both as a retired dancer and as a set and costume designer. In Daigle's costume designs, he always ensures that they have a dual purpose, the first is the outward beauty of the costume, and the second is the deeper and symbolic meaning of the clothing that is reflected through the designs and colours.²⁷⁰ In combination with Boyden's creation of the four main characters representing the four directions on the medicine wheel, Daigle designed the costumes to match each character's corresponding directions. As well, since the ballet was based on residential school experiences, Daigle associated his designs to the themes of sadness and heartbreak, with the inclusion of the colours black, purple and blue, meant to symbolize the colour of bruising on the skin.²⁷¹ Beginning with Annie, who represents the south and red section of the medicine wheel, her costume was made up of different aspects, including a bralette, with a crop-top long sleeve sweater overtop and a red crepe circle skirt.²⁷² Gordon, who represents the north and white section on the medicine wheel, required a costume that would include aspects of his homelessness as well as being portrayed as spiritual, strong and wise.²⁷³ Daigle, therefore, designed white pants for Gordon, where at the beginning of the ballet, they are covered in dirt and grime from the street and at the end of the ballet, they are clean to represent his wisdom and spirituality coming through.²⁷⁴ The third main character, Niska, represents the west and black section of the medicine wheel, therefore Daigle designed a plain

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 32.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Ibid., 33.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

school uniform, including a white blouse, grey sweater and a black pleated skirt.²⁷⁵ The final main character, Charlie, represented the yellow and east direction, and when Daigle was designing his costume he imagined the last thing that his mother would have dressed him in before he was taken away to the residential school.²⁷⁶ Daigle's design for Charlie was a pair of yellow corduroy pants and a yellow hand knit sweater.²⁷⁷ The costumes that were designed by Daigle for the four main characters were used to represent both their direction on the medicine wheel, as well as the characters story and experience throughout the ballet.

The set designer for *Going Home Star* was Winnipeg-based Indigenous multi-media artist, KC Adams, who incorporated vivid colours, glowing clay pods and birch trees into her set designs. Her perspective as an Indigenous woman contributed greatly to the story and the production as a whole. As outlined in the house program for the October 2014 production, the set design was broken down into six different elements, with the first three being wall designs, and the second three being theatrical property designs, in order to reflect the different sections of the story throughout the ballet. The background wall that Adams designed was made out of bricks in order to reflect the designs of the first residential schools, with her intention of creating an institutional feeling.²⁷⁸ The colour of the bricks was red in order to symbolize the Indigenous children who were torn away from their families, and in combination with the white paint, symbolizes the schools attempting to erase the languages and cultures from the children.²⁷⁹ The white paint on the brick walls, however, was peeling off, which was symbolic of the failure of the assimilation process while also acknowledging the continued affect the schools have on

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 34.

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

Indigenous peoples in Canada through intergenerational trauma.²⁸⁰ The second wall that Adams designed was for the hairdressing salon, which acted as a backdrop for Annie's place of work. According to the Winnipeg house program, the hairdressing wall was in a contemporary design; however, Adams included white horizontal stripes on the wall, meant to symbolize pioneer cabins, making reference to the beginning of settling in Canada, and the colonization of Indigenous peoples.²⁸¹ The final wall design was for the subway station, which Adams used red brick for, drawing on inspiration from her time living in Montreal, Québec, using the subway to get around the city.²⁸² These three wall designs provided the background for all of the scenes throughout the ballet.

In addition to the three walls, Adams also designed three additional pieces to be incorporated into the different aspects of the ballet. The first was the reliquary which is a miniature, stand-alone design of a residential school. Both Godden and Adams wanted to ensure that the school gave off the fear that the children would have felt seeing the residential schools for the first time, and therefore, they blackened the windows and had the paint peeling in order to create the feeling of heaviness, fear and loathing.²⁸³ Adams also designed a series of birch trees that were meant to reflect the relationship between Indigenous peoples and nature, using birch trees in particular as they are a source of shelter, medicine, storage and canoe construction for Indigenous peoples in Canada.²⁸⁴ The final element that Adams designed was the turtle shell, which was a part of the hairdressing mirror in the first act and in the second act, Annie hangs a large turtle shell in the place of the mirror.²⁸⁵ The turtle shell was chosen for the design in these

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Ibid., 35.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 16.

two different aspects of the performance in order to represent its importance to many Indigenous tribes in Canada.²⁸⁶ The addition of Adams as the set designer ensured that the different aspects of the set included Indigenous elements from an Indigenous perspective, in order to more effectively tell the story of residential schools through the ballet.

The Reception of *Going Home Star*:

Throughout the two seasons that *Going Home Star* was an aspect of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's repertoire the ballet received numerous reviews about the production itself, the dancers, as well as what it accomplished in regard to truth and reconciliation. At the beginning of the development of the ballet, there were a number of individuals who were hesitant about *Going Home Star's* creation, due to ballet's European roots as well as the lack of any Indigenous dancers in the company. This was expressed by André Lewis and Jeff Herd, the executive director, both of whom are non-Indigenous, stating that they knew of the contradiction of having a ballet company that did not have any Indigenous ballet dancers produce a ballet on the subject of residential schools.²⁸⁷ Herd further stated in the interview with Michael Crabb from *The Star* that "we knew it would be controversial and wanted to dispel the idea we were co-opting or appropriating."²⁸⁸ Tina Keeper also commented on the topic of appropriation in regard to *Going Home Star*, stating the importance of over-coming the anxieties of appropriation when it comes to working within the arts.²⁸⁹ Keeper argued that using ballet was an excellent way to incorporate an Indigenous story and culture with a non-Indigenous art form, stating that "using ballet seems ideal for this kind of commemoration project – the form is so dramatic. Ballet has the ability to

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 35.

²⁸⁷ Crabb, "Hope and Shame on the Ballet Stage in *Going Home Star*."

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Schabas, "Winnipeg Ballet *Going Home Star* puts Truth and Reconciliation in Motion."

carry weight and emotional burdens while, quite literally, lifting things up.”²⁹⁰ While Keeper did initially encourage the inclusion of Indigenous dancers, she ultimately concluded that a fusion was not what they had envisioned for the production.²⁹¹

In addition, a major aspect of their goal for the ballet was to expose the non-Indigenous dancers to new ideas and perspectives which included introducing them to Indigenous communities, cultures, and traditions, in addition to meeting and talking with survivors from residential schools.²⁹² The Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, voiced his misgivings about the lack of Indigenous dancers; however, there were not any at the caliber required for a Royal Winnipeg Ballet production; therefore Sinclair encouraged the inclusion of Indigenous collaborators wherever possible.²⁹³ The Royal Winnipeg Ballet did recruit Indigenous people from across Canada to be incorporated in various aspects of the production, as well as Keeper, stating that the ballet itself was “committed to the project in the true sense of reconciliation.”²⁹⁴ Despite the initial misgivings about the Royal Winnipeg Ballet’s lack of Indigenous dancers and the concern of appropriation, the production was widely praised for its accomplishment in terms introducing the residential school system to non-Indigenous Canadians and therefore the need for reconciliation.

The work that the Royal Winnipeg Ballet completed in the creation of *Going Home Star* was widely praised as truly contributing to the reconciliation process in Canada. Mark Godden stated in an interview with Martha Schabas from *The Globe and Mail*, “what is reconciliation beyond the process of listening? ... I think that letting people make art is part of that process –

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Crabb, “Hope and Shame on Ballet Stage in *Going Home Star*.”

²⁹⁴ Schabas, “Winnipeg Ballet *Going Home Star* puts Truth and Reconciliation in Motion.”

art that's not bound by worries of what belongs to whom."²⁹⁵ Sinclair, in agreement with Godden, states that the topics that were dealt with in the ballet were not just for Indigenous peoples to view but were for all Canadians to learn from and understand as that is how non-Indigenous peoples contribute to reconciliation.²⁹⁶ Introducing the concept of reconciliation was possible because ballet provides a bridge in understanding, which Michael Crabb argues is evident in the dancers throughout the performance.²⁹⁷ Crabb continues to state that the story of Annie and Gordon had "a powerful impact" with *CBC* host and TRC honorary witness Shelagh Rogers stating that "this story was so difficult to fully convey in words...I believe this ballet is a wonderful way to tell it."²⁹⁸ The Royal Winnipeg Ballet presentation of *Going Home Star*, which is presumed by Holly Harris from the *Winnipeg Free Press* as the world's first full length ballet of an Indigenous story, leaves a message of hope to its viewer, with Harris stating that it is "a testament to healing."²⁹⁹ Robert Enright from the *CBC* also praises *Going Home Star* in regard to its work in reconciliation, stating that it "promises a legacy of light, understanding and hope," and was ultimately "an unqualified success."³⁰⁰ Although *Going Home Star* was highly praised across Canada, Mark Godden and Christos Hatzis put an immense amount of pressure on themselves, in order to ensure that the production was a true representation of the need for reconciliation in Canada, of which the reviews conclude that it was.

²⁹⁵ Ibid.

²⁹⁶ Crabb, "Hope and Shame on Ballet Stage in Going Home Star."

²⁹⁷ Michael Crabb, "Going Home Star tells Residential School Story in Visceral Form: Review," *The Star*, February 9, 2016, <https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/stage/2016/02/09/going-home-star-tells-residential-school-story-invisceral-form-review.html>

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Holly Harris, "Going Home Star a Turning Point in RWB Repertoire," *Winnipeg Free Press*, October 2, 2014, <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/entertainment/arts/Going-Home-Star-a-turning-point-in-RWBrepertoire-277923622.html>

³⁰⁰ Robert Enright, "RWB's Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation is Inspired and Inspiring," *CBC*, October 2, 2014, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/rwb-s-going-home-star-truth-and-reconciliation-is-inspired-andinspiring-1.2785096>

In addition to the reviews written by non-Indigenous individuals, Indigenous writers from Indigenous news broadcasting outlets also reviewed *Going Home Star*. Indigenous writer, Kelly O'Connor endorsed the ballet in *First Nations Drum*, Canada's largest First Nation newspaper, after viewing the ballet herself during its tour to the west coast of Canada. O'Connor stated that she is "personally grateful to have attended" as it was a "humbling, yet comforting, experience of shared emotion."³⁰¹ In addition to her own commentary on the piece, including that the dance contained "expressive moments that communicate powerfully raw emotion as well as tender vulnerability," O'Connor also included statements from Sinclair as well as residential school survivor Theodore Fontaine.³⁰² They both spoke in favour of the ballet, with Sinclair stating, "I knew something magical could happen, and it did" whereas Fontaine discusses how the piece affected him personally, assisting him in his own healing journey.³⁰³

Erica Commanda, Algonquin / Ojibway, wrote a review of *Going Home Star* in *Muskrat Magazine* stating that the ballet's strong point was "that it doesn't shy away from the residential schools' dark history."³⁰⁴ Commanda continued her review by discussing how "the performers were eloquent and passionate as they conveyed the stories of physical and sexual abuse."³⁰⁵ Despite her overall positive review, Commanda did outline her reservations about the production, in regard to the lack of Indigenous dancers and hopes that in the future money will be "allocated towards reconciliation and the arts that will also create opportunities to showcase Indigenous forms of dance, Indigenous survivors and artists with stories that speak to all kinds of

³⁰¹ Kelly O'Connor, "Going Home Star: A Heartrending Tribute to Residential School Survivors," *First Nations Drum*, April 20, 2016, <http://www.firstnationsdrum.com/2016/04/going-home-star-a-heartrending-tribute-toresidential-school-survivors/>

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Erica Commanda, "Going Home Star: Ballet and Reconciliation," *Muskrat Magazine*, March 4, 2016, <http://muskratmagazine.com/going-home-star-ballet-and-reconciliation/>

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

audiences.”³⁰⁶ Both writers emphasized the contribution *Going Home Star* made to the reconciliation process in Canada with O’Connor stating that the ballet “is part of reconciliation,”³⁰⁷ whereas Commanda stated “the significance of the ballet’s role for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians is to move forward together in reconciliation.”³⁰⁸ As evidenced through O’Connor’s and Commanda’s reviews, Indigenous peoples are in agreement with non-Indigenous peoples in respect to the positive effect that *Going Home Star* had on the conversations on the need for reconciliation in Canada.

The dancers and their portrayal of the story also received numerous positive reviews for their contribution to *Going Home Star*. Robert Enright from the *CBC* states in his article “RWB’s *Going Home Star* – Truth and Reconciliation is Inspired and Inspiring,” that “the dancers move with grace, precision and clarity, holding in a delicate balance a narrative that could easily have become abstract or overly dramatic,” concluding that he “had never seen the RWB dance better.”³⁰⁹ In addition to Enright’s overall comments about the dancers, he also individually credited the main dancers, stating that “Sophia Lee is flawless in the main role as Annie,” and Liang Xing as Gordon contained a “rare combination of power and vulnerability.”³¹⁰ While there was criticism that the clergyman was too overpowering, Enright states that “all the priests in the ballet, with their flowing skirted cassocks, are excellent; their dark threatening presences are countered by the delicacy and lyricism of the star children.”³¹¹ Holly Harris, from the *Winnipeg Free Press*, also commented on the individual dancers stating that Lee and Xing “proved their keen acting skills, with their razor-sharp and wholly believable performances as the

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ O’Connor, “*Going Home Star: A Heartrending Tribute to Residential School Survivors.*”

³⁰⁸ Commanda, “*Going Home Star: Ballet and Reconciliation.*”

³⁰⁹ Enright, “*RWB’s Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation is Inspired and Inspiring.*”

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ Ibid.

ballet's two truth-seekers."³¹² Harris extends her review to Yayoi Ban and Thiago Dos Santos, dancing the roles of the mother and father, stating that they "serve as a moral presence, with their tearful parting scene with daughter Niska."³¹³ Harris concludes her assessment of the dancing by ultimately agreeing with the overall evaluation by Enright and declares that the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, "never looked better."³¹⁴ The dancers for *Going Home Star* had the difficult task of telling the story of residential schools, which was positively praised by the non-Indigenous critics.

The production team, including Godden as the choreographer, Hatzis as the composer, Adams as the set designer and Daigle as the costume designer, also received positive reviews for their work as a part of the ballet. Enright continues his review of the ballet with the choreography stating that "Godden is at the top of his form. He doesn't let the arc of history overpower the art of dance; as a result, both are given equivalent importance."³¹⁵ Enright further states that Godden's "exceptional choreography asks the dancers to move through a range of emotional conditions that includes anger, violence, sensuality and tenderness."³¹⁶ Harris also commented on the choreography for the production stating that "Godden's unmistakable choreographic melting pot of contemporary-infused flexed feet and cocked wrists juxtaposed with traditionally balletic pirouettes and battements."³¹⁷ As Godden took the lead on the production, Enright also credits him with putting together a "remarkable creative team."³¹⁸ This included "the music by Christos Hatzis [which] is richly layered, borrowing from Aboriginal sources as well as European ones," as well as "KC Adams's set design [being] instrumental in the story's development and Paul

³¹² Harris, "Going Home Star a Turning Point in RWB Repertoire."

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Enright, "RWB's Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation is Inspired and Inspiring."

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Harris, "Going Home Star a Turning Point in RWB Repertoire."

³¹⁸ Enright, "RWB's Going Home Star – Truth and Reconciliation is Inspired and Inspiring."

Daigle's costume design [being] wonderful."³¹⁹ In addition, there were copious positive reviews for the work that Hatzis did as the composer for the ballet. Paula Citron from *The Globe and Mail* noted Hatzis' work as "the best ballet composition ever created in Canada."³²⁰ Throughout Canada, critics widely praised the work that the production team completed in order to create the ballet *Going Home Star*, noting the ballet numerous times as the best ever seen.

Although the vast majority of reviews for *Going Home Star* were positive in nature there was one critic who in combination with their positive review, also spoke negatively about the production. Holly Harris from the *Winnipeg Free Press* made the comment that the plot for the ballet was overwhelming and too complex and that without reading the four page synopsis in the house program, a number of important elements get lost or are not evident in the ballet.³²¹ As well, Harris also commented on the inclusion of survivors telling their stories in combination with the music, which she stated "upstaged and distracted from the choreography."³²² Based on the reviews from a number of articles and different sources, it can be concluded that the ballet was a success within both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous community in Canada.

Conclusion:

In this chapter a thorough examination of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet as well as the production *Going Home Star* was carried out. What is now known as the Royal Winnipeg Ballet became a dance company in 1938. Although the company has gone through many setbacks over the decades, frequently attributed to financial issues, since the millennium it has been a successful company that is well known and held in high esteem around the world. In 1971, after

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ Citron, "Royal Winnipeg's Residential-School Ballet turns Darkness into Beauty."

³²¹ Harris, "Going Home Star a Turning Point in RWB Repertoire."

³²² Ibid.

the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood approached the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, they developed and presented the first ever ballet on an Indigenous subject, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, based on George Ryga's play by the same name. The ballet, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, was highly praised by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians and has remained a part of the company's repertoire, with its most recent presentation taking place in 2011. The proposal for another Indigenous based ballet materialized with Elder Mary Richard, a Royal Winnipeg Ballet season ticket holder, who approached André Lewis with the idea in the early 2000s. Richard's request, in combination with Tina Keeper's addition to the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's board, resulted in Lewis commissioning a ballet based on the truth revealed from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Lewis' authorization then developed into the story of Annie and Gordon, as written by Joseph Boyden, learning the truth of the residential school system, in order for them both to move forward in reconciliation.

In order to create the ballet, there was an extensive number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists involved, including Mark Godden, Christos Hatzis, Paul Dangle, Tina Keeper, KC Adams, Tanya Tagaq and Steve Wood and the Northern Cree Singers. The cross-cultural collaboration that the Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the cast and crew completed as a part of developing *Going Home Star*, resulted in a ballet that was highly praised by both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous community across Canada. The ballet, *Going Home Star*, was stated by a number of news outlets as the most important work that the Royal Winnipeg Ballet completed at the time, in their 75-year history. This chapter was designed to provide the background information on *Going Home Star*, in order to implement a point of engagement for the third chapter which will present the results from the interviews with Indigenous production members, the production observer, and the non-Indigenous performance and production members of *Going Home Star*.

Chapter Three:

Indigenous Performance Arts as a Space for Cross-Cultural Collaboration in order to work toward Reconciliation

Introduction:

Through interviewing the Indigenous and non-Indigenous production and performance members of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's *Going Home Star*, the thesis discusses the issue of whether Indigenous performance arts can be used as a space for cross-cultural collaboration in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation. After sending out invitations to participate in the research study to the production and performance members, a total of eight individuals agreed to be involved. Of the eight participants, five³²³ identify as Indigenous of which four were involved in staging the production aspect of the ballet and the fifth was a production observer. The remaining three participants identify as European or Caucasian, two of whom were performers and the third individual also served on the production crew. The interviews took place in February and March of 2019. Six of the interviews occurred at an in-person meeting in Winnipeg, Manitoba and the remaining two took place online for participants located outside of Winnipeg. All eight of the participants were given the option to consent to be identified in the research, of which all but one individual agreed. Seven of the participants will be connected to their responses by their last name and the eighth will be identified as the anonymous participant.

The Indigenous participants included KC Adams, a multi-media artist, Mel Chartrand, an Elder and ceremonial leader, Sandra DeLaronde, the founder of the Indigenous Women's

³²³ In the ethnic origin breakdown on page 100, it indicates that 4.5 participants identify First Nation and 3.5 identify as European or Caucasian. Although one participant identified as both, which is represented by the half increment in each column, the participant more so identifies with their First Nation ancestry. Therefore, elsewhere, the thesis states that there were 5 First Nation participants and 3 European or Caucasian participants.

Leadership and Research Institute, and an anonymous individual from the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR), all of whom are located in Winnipeg. In addition, Binesi Boulanger, an Indigenous production observer who is a law student at the University of Manitoba, was interviewed. The non-Indigenous participants included Tristan Dobrowney, a professional ballet dancer with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet from 2008 until 2016, Stephan Possin, also a professional ballet dancer with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet from 2012 until 2018 and Christos Hatzis, an associate professor of music at the University of Toronto and a freelance composer.

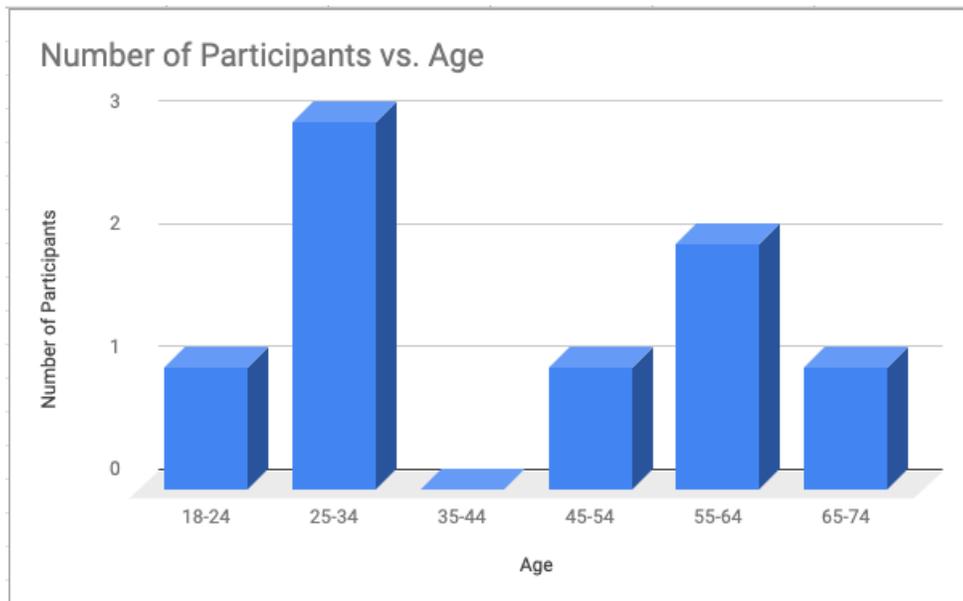
The chapter is organized in the same manner that the interviews were administered, meaning all of the participants' responses to one question are outlined before moving on to their responses to the following question. Organizing the chapter in this way allows the research participants to thoroughly outline their experiences while working on the production and to give their overall opinions on non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts. The chapter begins by outlining the results from the questionnaire administered at the beginning of each meeting, in order to provide a demographic overview of the individuals who participated in the study. Then, this study explores the participants' responses to the different sections of interview questions, including the background on their involvement, their personal experience and involvement in the production, the Indigenous participants' opinions on the production, and concluding with overall participant reflections on their involvement. The participants' responses to the questions will be arranged together depending on if they are Indigenous or non-Indigenous, with a few exceptions for Hatzis as he was both non-Indigenous and a production member. After presenting the results from the questions, there will be a brief examination of the participants' discussion of Joseph Boyden's narrative in order to determine if the ballet can still be classified as an Indigenous performance despite questions raised concerning his ethnicity.

Following the detailing of the participants' responses to the questions, there is a discussion of the results in order to determine final conclusions from the study.

Demographic Information:

All eight of the participants in the study completed a demographic questionnaire prior to answering the primary interview questions. Participants either engaged in the demographic questionnaire on paper for the meetings that took place in-person or electronically for those that took place online. After uploading the information onto a secure word document on a computer not connected to the internet, the original copies were destroyed. The three graphs below demonstrate an overview of the participants in the research study with regard to age, gender and ethnic origin.

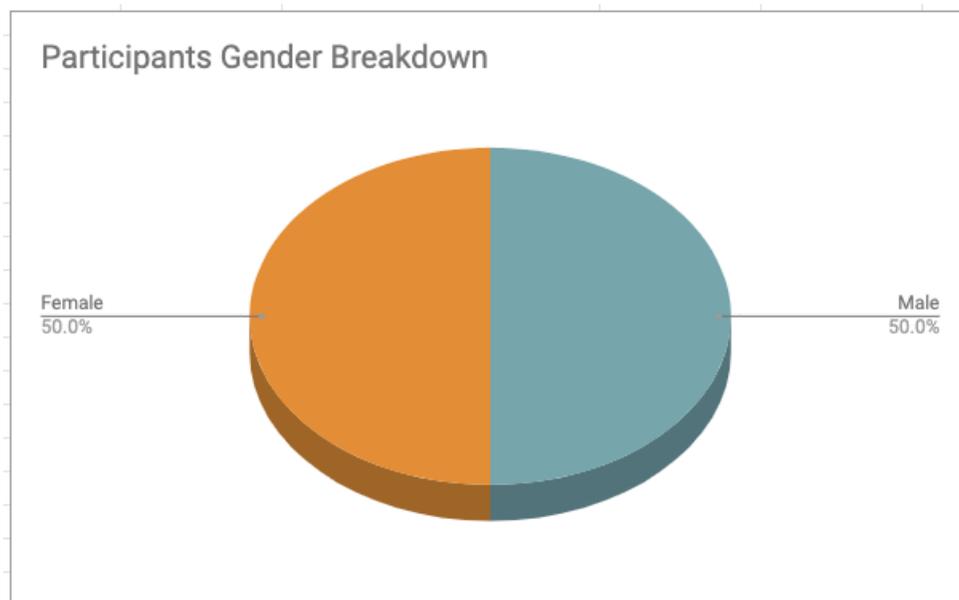
Figure 1: Research Participants' Age Breakdown



The first graph, *figure one*, demonstrates the age breakdown for the eight participants in the research study. The participants had the option of not disclosing their age or of choosing one of six different age ranges that spread over a ten-year time frame, except for the first range of 18-24 which only spreads over seven years. The first age range was set up in this manner, as

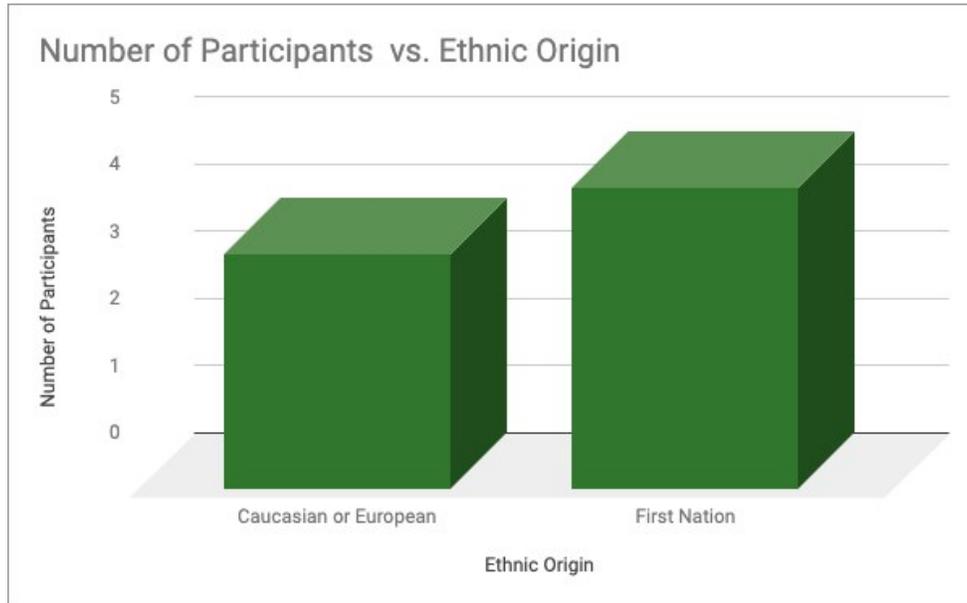
individuals could not participate unless they had reached the legal age of 18, and the rest of the ranges were clearly indicated in ten-year increments. The results from the age section of the questionnaire, as demonstrated in *figure one*, were one participant aged 18 to 24, three between the ages of 25-34, no participants aged 35-44, one participant aged 45-54, two aged 55-64 and one aged 65-74. This broad range in age of the participants allowed for a diversity of experiences and therefore a variety of opinions on the issues discussed in the interviews.

Figure 2: Research Participants' Gender Breakdown



The second graph, *figure two*, exhibits the gender breakdown for the eight participants in the research study. For the question regarding the participants' gender identity on the demographics' questionnaire, there was a blank line for participants to fill in as opposed to a listing of different options. It was set up in this manner to ensure that individuals could fully express how they identify themselves. Four participants identified as female and four participants identified as male, resulting in an equal representation from both of these gender identities.

Figure 3: Research Participants' Ethnic Origin Breakdown



The third graph, *figure three*, illustrates the ethnic background of the eight participants in the research study. Participants selected between five options which included Caucasian or European, Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian or Pacific Islander, and First Nation, Metis or Inuit. In addition to these options, participants could state their own or choose not to disclose. Three of the participants identified as European or Caucasian, four as First Nation, and one participant, identified as both, which is represented by the half increment in both the European or Caucasian and First Nation columns. Although the age of the participants and their gender identity do bring a diverse participant pool to the research, they were not an inclusion factor for participant selection. The only inclusion factor in regard to demographics was the participants' ethnic origin as the research aimed to have equal representation from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. While there are more Indigenous than non-Indigenous participants, their insights and perspectives on collaboration in the production *Going Home Star* are extremely valuable; for example, when discussing cross-cultural collaboration in an Indigenous context, it is crucial that Indigenous individuals are setting the standard for the work.

Background on Involvement:

Both the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous production and performance members were asked the same two questions in the interview regarding the background of their involvement in the production. This included how they came to be a part of the production as well as their involvement or role. The following will outline the responses to both of these questions from each of the eight participants.

All of the Indigenous participants, Adams, Chartrand, DeLaronde and the anonymous individual, worked on some aspect of the production crew for the ballet, with the exception of Boulanger, who was the production observer. Adams got involved in *Going Home Star* on the recommendation of Robert Enright, a Canadian journalist, who was aware that Mark Godden, the choreographer, was looking for an Indigenous artist for the role of set designer.³²⁴ After Godden viewed Adams work, “[Godden] knew right away that I would be perfect for it, mostly because I grew up without my culture,”³²⁵ which aligned with the storyline of the main character Annie. In addition, Godden informed Adams that he liked her “aesthetic” and “previous work.”³²⁶ Godden therefore commissioned Adams as the set designer, where it was her “responsibility to work with [Godden]” and adapt some of her previous designs as well as create new work based on Godden’s direction.³²⁷ In addition, Chartrand and his wife Shirley became a part of the production through their twenty-year friendship with the associate producer, Tina Keeper.³²⁸ Keeper asked Chartrand “if [they] could do the blessing and feast to prepare for *Going Home Star*” to which he responded, “we’ll do that, we will help, because [the ballet was]

³²⁴ KC Adams (Set Designer for *Going Home Star*), in discussion with the author, February 25, 2019, Promenade Cafe and Wine, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

³²⁵ Ibid.

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Ibid.

³²⁸ Mel Chartrand (Production Elder for *Going Home Star*), in discussion with the author, March 20, 2019, Starbucks, South Winnipeg, Manitoba.

working on reconciliation.”³²⁹ Chartrand as a result became the Elder for the production which included the responsibility of leading “the ceremonial piece of it, educating [the cast and crew], and getting them [culturally] grounded in preparation to do their work.”³³⁰ Keeper also recruited DeLaronde to assist with the production aspect of the ballet, where it was DeLaronde’s responsibility to “provide consultation and support services to [Keeper] as well as to be able to incorporate Indigenous spirituality to the pre-production process.”³³¹ The anonymous participant was recruited by the NCTR director Ryan Moran, who informed them that “the Winnipeg Ballet wanted to have some sort of engagement with the centre, and they thought having some connection to the data base or to the records, or to some sort of the archival components would be a good idea.”³³² It was therefore this individual’s responsibility to “create six kiosks that would go on tour across Canada” that would be available in the lobby of each location providing “a direct link into [the NCTR] database” for audience members to search through before, during and after the ballet.³³³ All of the Indigenous participants worked on various aspects of the production, including designing, educating, assisting and supporting the ballet.

Indigenous production observer, Boulanger, was asked a different set of questions from those created for the production members as they would not be applicable to her experience as an observer. The questions developed for the audience members included how they heard of the production as well as why and when they viewed the ballet. In response to these questions Boulanger stated that she “had seen a poster and [she] saw...an article in the newspaper, before it came out” in addition to the ballet being “kind of like everywhere, all the time,” as it was being

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Sandra DeLaronde (Indigenous content assistant for *Going Home Star*), in discussion with the author, March 27, 2019, Starbucks, downtown Winnipeg, Manitoba.

³³² Anonymous Participant (Kiosk Designer for *Going Home Star*), in discussion with the author, February 11, 2019, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

³³³ Ibid.

“heavily induced.”³³⁴ Boulanger decided to go and see the production as “it seemed like on the surface that it was something that [Indigenous people] had contributed to” and “it just seemed like an interesting...kind of two worlds colliding.”³³⁵ She went to see the production during the week that it premiered in Winnipeg, October 1 to the 4 of 2014.³³⁶ Although Boulanger did not work on any aspect of the production, she provided insight, through her response to the interview questions, into cross-cultural collaboration in Indigenous performance arts from the perspective of an Indigenous production observer.

Of the three non-Indigenous participants, Dobrowney and Possin were performers in the ballet and Hatzis was on the production team. The two performers became a part of *Going Home Star* through their employment with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Dobrowney was cast in “the lead role, [as] Gordon,” in addition to a second casting where he “was one of these priests in the residential schools.”³³⁷ Possin, however, “had a few roles, [he] was just one the...street people that kind of observed everything that was happening...then [he] was also one of the Indigenous children...and then [he] was also an understudy for one of the lead Indigenous roles.”³³⁸ In contrast, Hatzis became involved in the production after he “received a phone call from choreographer Mark Godden out of the blue asking [him] to be the composer.”³³⁹ After meeting with Godden and determining a vision for the music for the ballet, Hatzis “workshopped with the Indigenous artists [Tanya Tagaq and Steve Wood] in a recording studio in Winnipeg” before

³³⁴ Binesi Boulanger (*Going Home Star* production observer), in discussion with the author, February 19, 2019, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Tristan Dobrowney (Professional Ballet Dancer), in discussion with the author, February 20, 2019, Skype.

³³⁸ Stephan Possin (Professional Ballet Dancer), in discussion with the author, February 12, 2019, Starbucks, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

³³⁹ Christos Hatzis (Music Composer for *Going Home Star*), in discussion with the author, February 12, 2019, Email.

“[composing] the orchestral and electronic soundtrack for the production.” Hatzis also “[produced] and [co-edited] the orchestral recording.”³⁴⁰ Because the non-Indigenous participants came from the two different aspects of the production, they provide a unique understanding of their experiences working on an Indigenous performance piece.

Personal Experience being involved in *Going Home Star*:

The Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants were both asked similar questions about their personal experiences from being involved in *Going Home Star*. The Indigenous participants’ questions focused on their experience working on the production, in addition to their involvement and experience working with the non-Indigenous members of the ballet. While the non-Indigenous participants were also asked about their experience working on the production, their questions instead focused on their learning of the choreography and performing the piece. Hatzis, as he is a non-Indigenous production member, was asked similar questions as the Indigenous production participants; however, they focused on his experience working with the Indigenous individuals as opposed to the non-Indigenous members of the performance.

The three Indigenous participants who responded to the question regarding their experience working as a part of the production team for the ballet all spoke highly of their involvement. Adams attributes her positive experience as the set designer to Keeper’s involvement, as “[Keeper] wanted the ballet to be done in a good way, she wanted to set the tone for it, she wanted all the creative people to come together.”³⁴¹ This resulted in Adams feeling “like a part of the family.”³⁴² However there was one aspect that Adams did feel negatively about

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ Adams, discussion.

³⁴² Ibid.

as she “was disappointed that [she] wasn’t invited with the dancers to the sweat³⁴³” that was held at Sagkeeng Ojibway First Nation an hour and a half north of Winnipeg.³⁴⁴ Adams, however, overall felt as though “it was a pretty amazing” experience and she did not have any “issues with communication” with any of the other members of the production crew.³⁴⁵ The anonymous participant also commented on how “communication was really good” and that “everything seemed to run smoothly.”³⁴⁶ In contrast, at the beginning of the production process, Chartrand “was skeptical...and wanted to know if there was a hidden agenda.”³⁴⁷ After both he and his wife Shirley met, talked, and did ceremony with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Chartrand “was really shocked at their sincerity...and their willingness and openness to honour the sacred.”³⁴⁸ Despite Adams’ assertion that there was one negative aspect of being a part of the production, overall, the Indigenous participants spoke very highly of their experiences, emphasizing the professionalism, respect for Indigenous peoples and their cultures, and indicated that their opinions and contributions were highly valued.

Of the three non-Indigenous members of production, Hatzis, the composer, answered the same questions as the Indigenous production members, whereas the dancers’ questions focused on their experience learning and performing the choreography for the ballet. At first, Hatzis was hesitant about working on the project as “the time-frame for the ballet was quite tight and [he]

³⁴³ A sweat is a ceremony that occurs in a lodge that is practiced by many different nations of Indigenous people across Canada. A sweat lodge is a dome-shaped structure that is constructed out of tree branches with animal hide wrapped over top. The ceremony is conducted by an Elder or community ceremonial knowledge keeper. In the ceremony, the participants enter the lodge, meant to symbolize a women’s womb, which is then heated from pouring water onto heated rocks. The ceremony causes the sweating out of toxins and negative energy, in order to cleanse the body, mind and soul.

³⁴⁴ Adams, discussion.

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Anonymous Participant, discussion.

³⁴⁷ Chartrand, discussion.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

was nervous, knowing how much and how meticulous [he] wanted the music to be.”³⁴⁹ The process for determining the appropriate music for each scene proved difficult, and Hatzis determined that “if [he] had to be the one to tell this story musically, the music had to be raw and overwhelming.”³⁵⁰ One way in which he bridged both Indigenous and non-Indigenous culture was through the nightclub scene at the beginning of the ballet, where he turned it into a “timeless place, by including music from the big band era all the way to the techno present, the music acts as a magnet that connects Indigenous and non-Indigenous, young and old,” with Hatzis concluding that the scene “acts as a centripetal force connecting audiences from different demographics.”³⁵¹ Hatzis put so much pressure on himself to ensure that the music was of the utmost quality and was reflective of Indigenous peoples and their experiences, that he ended up being hospitalized for an anxiety attack, something he had never experienced prior to working on *Going Home Star*.

Dobrowney and Possin responded to three questions about their experience learning and performing the piece while working on the production. Dobrowney talked at length about his work in the ballet, stating, “overall I would say it was positive. I am Canadian, I am from Saskatoon.”³⁵² Having grown up in Saskatoon and then living in Winnipeg for eight years, Dobrowney was “around [the Indigenous] community [his] whole life, so [he had] sort of been...involved in it...and also just the things [he] learn in school, [he] learned about Canadian history and the residential schools...so [he] had some sort of context coming into the ballet already.”³⁵³ In contrast to Dobrowney, Possin was raised in the United States and consequently “had the least knowledge about residential schools,” and therefore valued that the Indigenous

³⁴⁹ Hatzis, discussion.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Dobrowney, discussion.

³⁵³ Ibid.

members of production were committed to “educating the whole company on everything that had happened.”³⁵⁴ In his discussion on learning and performing the choreography, Dobrowney indicated the Indigenous consultants informed him that “it was also important for us, specifically people that were playing Indigenous characters...[to be] just yourself...playing a character still, so it wasn’t trying to over-do anything, and it was more just about a feeling...which is also a universal thing for us in dance.”³⁵⁵ Further, Dobrowney and Possin both agreed how emotional the entire process of learning and performing the choreography for the ballet was for each of them. Possin expanded upon this statement by expressing that the experience made him “very empathetic,” as well as helped him develop a “different respect and empathy for everything that happened [in residential schools].”³⁵⁶ Dobrowney’s and Possin’s responses to the questions concerning their experience both learning and performing *Going Home Star* reference the impact that this production had both on their dancing careers as well as their overall lives.

In addition, Dobrowney and Possin discussed their experience as non-Indigenous dancers telling the stories of Indigenous characters. They were both cast as Indigenous characters, Dobrowney as the lead Gordon and Possin as one of the star children as well as an understudy for Gordon. In response to the question on their experience playing an Indigenous character Dobrowney stated, “I don’t know if it matters personally...the non-Indigenous versus Indigenous...for me it was just kind of telling a story...a really intense emotional story.”³⁵⁷ The information that Dobrowney learned throughout the production about residential schools in combination with talking to survivors culminated in a perception that “all of these parts...work with and act with and draw some kind of inspiration from, to make this a real feeling for [us] too,

³⁵⁴ Possin, discussion.

³⁵⁵ Dobrowney, discussion.

³⁵⁶ Possin, discussion.

³⁵⁷ Dobrowney, discussion.

sort of to, sympathize with the situation in a way, as best as [we] can.”³⁵⁸ Possin took a different approach to answering the question about his experience playing an Indigenous character stating that having non-Indigenous people cast as Indigenous characters is “good to do, but it’s a hard story to tell.”³⁵⁹ Although neither Possin nor anyone in his family are Indigenous, he does not think “that’s necessarily a bad thing” as “that’s further awareness, further education, further bringing to light what happened, and just making people more aware, I think that’s really important as well.”³⁶⁰ In their responses Dobrowney and Possin explained that the protocols that the production team put in place to ensure that all of the dancers were educated about Indigenous peoples and their histories in Canada and therefore made them comfortable telling the story.

The Indigenous participants in the research study, with the exception of Boulanger, were questioned about their experiences working with the non-Indigenous members of production as well as if they offered any support to these individuals. Adams mentioned two different instances of working with non-Indigenous individuals. The first was with Godden, to which she stated, “when I worked with Mark...he was very clear and so it was pretty easy to work with him, I felt like he respected my artistry so much.”³⁶¹ This experience was compared to some of Adams’ work in previous collaborations where she was clearly brought onto projects as a ‘token Indian’ with the result that her input and opinions were not wanted or respected.³⁶² Although overall Adams had a positive experience working as the set designer on *Going Home Star*, she did have some difficulty working with a non-Indigenous technology member but attributed it to “a personality thing” as opposed to a racial issue due to the nature of their interactions.³⁶³ Adams

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ Possin, discussion.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Adams, discussion.

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ Ibid.

concluded her response by stating, “we all felt connected...we were all on the same page.”³⁶⁴ Throughout the cross-Canada tour of the ballet, the anonymous participant was in constant communication with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet’s touring team, stating that “it went just fine...there was no...troubles.”³⁶⁵ Chartrand spoke very highly of his interactions with the non-Indigenous performers and production team and how they were all “really sincere” and that they were “authentic...in trying to learn, trying to portray the authenticity of everything, there was no attempt to take over, it was to lead but with direction and guidance.”³⁶⁶ In his production role as an Elder, Chartrand offered support to the dancers in the form of meetings and ceremony during the pre-production and Winnipeg performances of *Going Home Star* to ensure that the dancers felt comfortable in the work that they were doing as a part of the production.³⁶⁷ Working on any cross-cultural production piece and especially one that deals with Indigenous experiences in Canada, there is the potential for serious conflict between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous members; however, these did not manifest during this production.

As Hatzis was a non-Indigenous production member, he was asked about his experience working with the Indigenous members of production. Hatzis spoke in depth about his experiences with musicians Tanya Tagaq and Steve Wood as he worked exclusively with them. Regarding Tagaq, Hatzis commented that their “interaction was wonderful...with no adverse surprises.”³⁶⁸ His experience with Wood, however, was quite different and resulted in a welcomed, steep learning curve about Indigenous peoples, their cultures and protocols. During the process of working together, Hatzis and Wood formed a friendship, which was solidified in the spring of 2017 when they presented at a conference together on *Going Home Star*. When

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Anonymous Participant, discussion.

³⁶⁶ Chartrand, discussion.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Hatzis, discussion.

attendees criticized Hatzis' involvement as a non-Indigenous person, Wood "passionately argued [in his] defense. While [Wood] was talking, [Hatzis] could not hold back [his] tears."³⁶⁹ Overall Hatzis' experience working as the composer for the production caused him to have a new understanding and respect for Indigenous peoples, in addition to a life-long friendship with Wood, that Hatzis compares to the relationship of brothers.

The section of interview questions with respect to the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants' experiences working on the production concluded by asking Dobrowney and Possin if they received any negative repercussions or support for their role in the ballet. Both Dobrowney and Possin answered in the exact same manner stating that they only received positive reception. For the question on support, in addition to that which they received from Godden, Dobrowney and Possin also spoke thoroughly about the support from the Indigenous community. Dobrowney explained that this included being taken to "one of their sacred communities...with the Elders and we did this peace pipe ceremony and we went into the sweat lodge...they made us a dinner" of Indigenous food.³⁷⁰ This support also included a smudging³⁷¹ of "the stage...the dancers, [and their] feet."³⁷² The dancers additionally had access to support staff and Elders if any of them felt uncomfortable, needed help dealing with their emotions or if they encountered any sort of problems. Possin concluded that the experience of going to Sagkeeng First Nation and participating in a ceremony "supported everyone through the process" of learning and performing the dance piece.³⁷³ As the Indigenous community was involved

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ Dobrowney, discussion.

³⁷¹ A smudging is a ceremony that is practiced by many different nations of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The ceremony involves the burning of sacred medicines, including sweetgrass, cedar, sage and tobacco. The smoke produced from the medicines is brushed, with a feather, over a person, object or in a space, in order to cleanse, bring positive energy, and a renewed sense of self.

³⁷² Dobrowney, discussion.

³⁷³ Possin, discussion.

throughout the entire process, both in leading and educating the performance and production team in Indigenous ceremony and history, as well as regularly attending and giving feedback on rehearsals, Dobrowney stated that it was “comforting to know that, because they are [involved], you can see that they approve of what we are doing.”³⁷⁴ Dobrowney and Possin had an extremely positive experience working on the ballet, and this can be directly attributed to the learning experience they went through and the support they received from the Indigenous community throughout the entire production.

The Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the production both spoke highly of their experience working on the ballet. For the Indigenous participants this was attributed to the sincerity and respectful nature of the non-Indigenous members, from those in the leadership roles all the way through to the dancers. Whereas the non-Indigenous participants attributed their positive experience of learning and performing the ballet to the involvement of the Indigenous community throughout the process. As both sets of participants spoke very positively of their experience working on the ballet, it can be stated that *Going Home Star* was a successful cross-cultural collaboration between the performance and production crew, in the Indigenous performance arts.

Opinion on *Going Home Star*:

The third section of interview questions was administered only to the Indigenous participants in the research study and explored their opinions on different aspects of the production. This included their opinion on the non-Indigenous cast, the effectiveness of non-Indigenous individuals telling an Indigenous story as well as whether *Going Home Star* achieved

³⁷⁴ Dobrowney, discussion.

its goal in moving forward the conversation of reconciliation in Canada. The responses to these questions are outlined below, including Boulanger's, the Indigenous production observer.

As stated in chapter three, there were no Indigenous dancers cast in *Going Home Star*. As the Royal Winnipeg Ballet is unionized, it is difficult to hire dancers who are not already a member of the company for any particular show. Since the medium that was chosen to tell this story was ballet, Adams stated that it was “a non-issue” as “unless you have an Indigenous artist who is...a ballet dancer, you're not going to have the vision that you wanted, because if you just brought on a bunch of powwow dancers onto the stage, you're going to have a revolt from the...very people that you want to target.”³⁷⁵ As Adams explained, the target group of individuals that they were trying to reach with the ballet, was the “almost all white...older audience” so “by using ballet, you're getting to the heart of the people that need to learn about” truth and reconciliation.³⁷⁶ The anonymous participant, in concurrence with Adams, commented that when they went to view the ballet “everything looked just fine.”³⁷⁷ Adams and the anonymous participant did however both discuss that if there was a classically trained Indigenous ballet dancer at the caliber required for this production, then they should have been brought in. In contrast, DeLaronde and Boulanger both stated that “there should have been” Indigenous dancers included in the production.³⁷⁸ Boulanger extended upon her comment to state that “there was something very strange about sitting and watching a ballet [with] people with fake pony-tails on.”³⁷⁹ Although there was a difference in opinion between the four Indigenous individuals who responded to this question, they all did discuss to some extent, if possible, Indigenous ballet dancers should have been a part of the performance.

³⁷⁵ Adams, discussion.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Anonymous Participant, discussion.

³⁷⁸ DeLaronde, discussion, and Boulanger, discussion.

³⁷⁹ Boulanger, discussion.

Leading off the question regarding their opinion on the non-Indigenous cast, the Indigenous participants were questioned as to whether non-Indigenous artists can effectively tell an Indigenous story and experience, whether in ballet or other performance media. The majority of the participants were to some degree in agreement that ultimately having a non-Indigenous person cast as an Indigenous character should come down to the medium of the performance as well as the availability of Indigenous artists. Whichever the case may be, however, DeLaronde concluded that “the first person you should think of is an Indigenous creative person.”³⁸⁰ The anonymous participant did differ slightly in opinion from the other participants, stating that “non-Indigenous people can tell Indigenous stories, but then you just have to be aware...that it’s not their story they’re telling...although...we would like to see more Indigenous writers and storytellers really be the ones telling their own stories.”³⁸¹ Chartrand, on the other hand, stated that overall when it comes to non-Indigenous people telling an Indigenous story in the performance arts it is “not really [effective] because they have to have the spirit as well, and so that’s why collaboration is essential.”³⁸² Additionally, Boulanger stated that the story can be told effectively “to an extent, but...in reality...I don’t think if you want to go a level deeper, like no.”³⁸³ The responses from the Indigenous participants conclude that while an Indigenous story can be told by a non-Indigenous creative person in the arts, it is not as effective as if an Indigenous person were to tell it and all Indigenous roles should first be offered to Indigenous artists whenever possible.

The final question that the Indigenous participants were asked in the opinion section of the interview was whether they thought that *Going Home Star* achieved its goal to expand the

³⁸⁰ DeLaronde, discussion.

³⁸¹ Anonymous Participant, discussion.

³⁸² Chartrand, discussion.

³⁸³ Boulanger, discussion.

conversations concerning reconciliation in Canada. Adams in her response concluded, “I think it did” as “it reached out to the people that we wanted it to reach out to³⁸⁴...the next time a story of a child or a story of the residential schools come up, that’s when they can draw that knowledge from... it’s really about knowledge.”³⁸⁵ The anonymous participant was in agreement with Adams, both concerning that the production achieved its goal and the particular audience that it reached, stating, “yes, as I think it introduced the subject to an audience who would not normally be...engaged in [truth and reconciliation].”³⁸⁶ The anonymous individual extended upon their argument to the arts in general commenting, “I always think that art and the performances are more accessible in general for telling stories.”³⁸⁷ Chartrand agreed with Adams and the anonymous participant responding, “yes, oh yes, big time... it reached a population of individuals that were stuck in their class so to speak, in their world, and so this brought it into their world which shook them, but it also created an understanding and curiosity.”³⁸⁸ DeLaronde was also in agreement that the ballet achieved its goal. However, she discussed how the medium of ballet allowed for the subject to be introduced in a manner that would not result in the unproductive feelings of guilt and shame, but rather, knowledge and understanding.³⁸⁹ While the conversations surrounding reconciliation have been taking place in Indigenous communities in Canada for many years, the participants responses conclude that *Going Home Star* expanded the discussions of the need for both truth and reconciliation to non-Indigenous peoples, therefore promoting their involvement in the process.

³⁸⁴ The target audience for the production *Going Home Star* that Adams, the anonymous participant and Chartrand refer to, is composed of the category of individuals that usually attend the ballet, which mainly consists of Caucasian, middle- to upper-class individuals, from the baby boomer (1946-1964) generation.

³⁸⁵ Adams, discussion.

³⁸⁶ Anonymous Participant, discussion.

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Chartrand, discussion.

³⁸⁹ DeLaronde, discussion.

The section of questions on the Indigenous participants' opinion of *Going Home Star* was designed to determine if, despite having an all non-Indigenous cast, the story was told effectively, and achieved its mandate of expanding the conversations of reconciliation in Canada. While it was concluded that in the context of this ballet, a non-Indigenous cast was acceptable as there was no way of hiring Indigenous dancers if they were available, but, in other media, all roles should first be offered to Indigenous people. In addition, non-Indigenous people can tell Indigenous stories; however, not as effectively as an Indigenous individual could, therefore also confirming that whenever possible the roles should go to an Indigenous individual. All of the Indigenous participants agreed that *Going Home Star* achieved its goal in expanding the conversation of reconciliation in Canada, and because the medium was ballet, it introduced the subject to a group of individuals, both dancers and society members, who might not otherwise have the opportunity to learn about it. Overall, the responses to this set of questions provide insight into appropriate points of engagement for non-Indigenous people in the Indigenous performance arts.

Reflection on *Going Home Star*:

The final section of interview questions that was asked of both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants was in regard to how the production process used to make *Going Home Star* a success can be applied to future performance arts productions involving cross-cultural collaboration. Both sets of participants were asked the same questions, with the exception of additionally asking the non-Indigenous participants about the knowledge they gained about Indigenous peoples through their experience. The three questions asked about their overall opinion on non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts, if performance can be used as a space for cross-cultural collaboration in order to work towards reconciliation and if they could outline some guidelines for future non-Indigenous involvement in these productions.

The responses from both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants are outlined below, followed by a conclusion of the results.

The first question that was posed to the non-Indigenous participants asked what they learned about Indigenous peoples in Canada from being a part of the production. Although Dobrowney and Possin came to the ballet with vastly different levels of knowledge about Indigenous peoples, and as a result of their experience going to the reserve, participating in ceremony, and learning the historical context of residential schools, their knowledge grew significantly.³⁹⁰ Earlier in the interview Possin discussed how this experience “shred a light on a lot of things that [he] wasn’t so aware of...[he] reads the news every day...and now [he] can actually understand what’s happening and see different perspectives on the matter.”³⁹¹ This experience was extremely beneficial for both Dobrowney and Possin as they both gained a considerable amount of knowledge about Indigenous peoples, and it is presumed that all of the non-Indigenous performance and production members had a similar learning experience.

The Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants were asked the same question about non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts, which was whether non-Indigenous peoples should be involved or if Indigenous roles should be exclusively reserved for Indigenous people. The anonymous participant does not think that “they should limit” roles just to Indigenous people as they “don’t see why we should exclude them just because they’re not Indigenous. It’s again, just being aware that they are not Indigenous, this is not their Indigenous story, they’re stepping into a part...I don’t see any harm in coming from it.”³⁹² Boulanger, the production observer, had a differing opinion on the issue, stating, “I think you should really make a conscious effort first and foremost to include Indigenous people” and if there are not any

³⁹⁰ Dobrowney, discussion, and Possin, discussion.

³⁹¹ Possin, discussion.

³⁹² Anonymous Participant, discussion.

qualified Indigenous people for the role, then they should give Indigenous people “the training and incorporate them.”³⁹³ DeLaronde also responded to the question differently, in that “at this point, and in the process of reconciliation...it really needs to be Indigenous people telling the story, because, so much has been taken away...when there’s an opportunity to tell the truth from our perspective, then it needs to be told.”³⁹⁴ In the future however, DeLaronde did state, “there will be a time when those stories can be told by others regardless of ethnicity, but for now, it’s just...creating or maintaining an open space for Indigenous people.”³⁹⁵ When non-Indigenous people step into Indigenous roles Chartrand commented the piece requires collaboration with Indigenous people which needs to be handled in the same manner as a marriage.³⁹⁶ This means that both parties must respect one another and equally contribute to the creation of the production.³⁹⁷ Similarly to one of the conclusions from the previous section, the Indigenous participants did all acknowledge that non-Indigenous people can take on Indigenous roles. However, they all differed in opinion on when this is appropriate, from in every production to never in the present era of reconciliation.

The two non-Indigenous dancers were asked the same question as the Indigenous participants regarding non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts. Both Dobrowney and Possin responded to the question in an identical manner, in that they do not think that there is a problem with non-Indigenous people playing an Indigenous character.³⁹⁸ They both expanded upon their argument, by commenting that involving individuals from different ethnicities will allow for the work to reach larger audiences, with Possin stating, “I think it’s

³⁹³ Boulanger, discussion.

³⁹⁴ DeLaronde, discussion.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ Chartrand, discussion.

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Dobrowney, discussion, and Possin, discussion.

almost prohibitive to do a show, that is based on Indigenous issues with purely Indigenous people, I don't think that's going to bring enough awareness."³⁹⁹ Possin did however outline some requirements for this engagement, "I think you have to be educated about it, you have to know your audience, you have to get buy in, like you can't just throw a show, and make it about something such as residential schools and not tell anybody about it and then have it be inappropriate or irrelevant or misleading or inaccurate."⁴⁰⁰ While the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants' opinions on non-Indigenous involvement did differ, there was an agreement that non-Indigenous people can take on Indigenous roles. In these cases, however, there needs to be collaboration with Indigenous peoples in order to ensure that the productions avoid misrepresentation.

The Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants were then asked if the performance arts can be used as a space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaboration in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation in Canada. Adams does not believe that collaboration is necessary in every production, but rather, "given the context of the story, if it's all Indigenous storytelling, I can't really see that relationship being important to be part of it, like having Indigenous and non-Indigenous," however, "I think if you're doing a piece that talks about Indigenous and settler relationships, I think for sure, absolutely, even a contemporary piece as well, where...there are two sides to the story, for sure."⁴⁰¹ For Adams the requirement for cross-cultural collaboration comes down to the "story and...the medium."⁴⁰² For this question, the anonymous participant concluded, "I think it's a very appropriate way of really expanding knowledge on these subjects to inform people who would not necessarily...be exposed to it. So, yes, I think it's a really great

³⁹⁹ Possin, discussion.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ Adams, discussion.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

opportunity, and...I would like to see more of it as we are entering that new age of reconciliation people talk about.”⁴⁰³ Chartrand was in agreement, especially after working on *Going Home Star* as well as witnessing similar work completed by the Winnipeg Symphony, “and seeing the impacts, the ripple effects of that.”⁴⁰⁴ Earlier in the interview Chartrand also commented that the cross-cultural collaboration that was completed in *Going Home Star* “set a precedence...a threshold of what’s expected, what can be done in collaboration.”⁴⁰⁵ DeLaronde stated that the performance arts can “absolutely” be used as a space for cross-cultural collaboration in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation.⁴⁰⁶ *Going Home Star* was one of the first large scale cross-cultural collaboration productions that, as concluded by the Indigenous participants, set a standard for future collaborative work.

The non-Indigenous participants were in agreement that the performance arts can be used as a space for cross-cultural collaboration in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation in Canada. Dobrowney believes that “performance is kind of the best place to do that” as “it’s hard...to do it anywhere else.”⁴⁰⁷ Dobrowney expanded upon his comment by outlining how in other situations, such as conferences, participants generally enter with one opinion and leave feeling the exact same way, whereas “when you perform something, it’s...more of an experience...then sometimes after you just have a feeling...I think it’s definitely a great space for...collaboration.”⁴⁰⁸ Possin briefly responded to the question stating, “Yeah, I mean, I don’t see why not.”⁴⁰⁹ Whereas Hatzis responded to this question in various capacities throughout the entire interview, beginning with that he has “always been an advocate of cross-cultural

⁴⁰³ Anonymous Participant, discussion.

⁴⁰⁴ Chartrand, discussion.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ DeLaronde, discussion.

⁴⁰⁷ Dobrowney, discussion.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁹ Possin, discussion.

collaboration.”⁴¹⁰ Hatzis does “not believe in insular culture of any kind... [he doesn’t] believe in compartmentalized culture or in the insipid political correctness that keeps it in place. [He] believes that, particularly in the ongoing truth and reconciliation effort, political correctness is tantamount to adding insult to damage.”⁴¹¹ He concluded the entire interview with the statement, “to me true human relationships are not mediated by sociopolitical templates, such as “Indigenous” versus “non-Indigenous” and “artists” versus “non-artists.” Definitions divide. Art, real spiritual art, unites.”⁴¹² From the non-Indigenous participants’ responses, it is concluded that the performance arts provide a productive space for cross-cultural collaboration to take place in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation in Canada.

The final question that both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants were asked about was establishing guidelines in order to ensure the success of future cross-cultural collaborations in the performance arts. While there were a number of different protocols established and enacted for the creation and performance of the production *Going Home Star*, they were never formally recorded or disseminated to other performance companies in Canada. This thesis provides the first comprehensive list of protocols that when enacted should contribute to a successful cross-cultural collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Indigenous performance arts.

Adams discussed different protocols throughout the entire interview that should be enacted to contribute to successful collaborations, beginning with having a strong “Indigenous leader setting the protocols” for the production development. Having Keeper as the producer for *Going Home Star* allowed her to set the standard for the work, which included having “the dancers go to a sweat and get education” from Indigenous peoples about their histories, cultures

⁴¹⁰ Hatzis, discussion.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Ibid.

and ceremonies, as well as the production team “having the opportunity to share during the sharing circle.” In addition to an Indigenous leader, Adams also suggested “gifting...[as] that galvanizes a relationship that creates a strong group bond.” In this exercise Adams recommends that everyone involved in the production “thinks about something that...[they] feel represents [them] and then...gift it” to another individual as that “strengthens the collaboration.” Adams endorses this exercise as when you gift “you are saying, this is who I am, this is how I see myself, and now I am giving it to you, now you need to respect it and love and cherish it and when you receive you do the same.” Adams also recommends “just letting go of time” and the strict time constraints that non-Indigenous people generally work within. Adams concluded her list by discussing the importance of the circle and ensuring everyone involved in an Indigenous based production is educated on “what it means about the circle...doing smudge in the sharing circle...[and] having an Elder talk about...what the circle represents.”⁴¹³

The anonymous participant also listed numerous protocols, including having Indigenous consultation from the very beginning of the process as well as including ceremony, which ensures that “the production is starting off in a good way.”⁴¹⁴ Also, when working on a production that contains triggering content there needs to be “cultural support or health support available” that can “get a smudge or a brushing down” which will ensure “the safety or...protecting all those involved.”⁴¹⁵ Chartrand took a different approach to the question and instead focused on having the non-Indigenous individuals involved in a production question their intentions, “am I willing to learn? So, if there’s no willingness to learn then that stops there, so if there is a willingness to learn then the next question is, well why do I want to learn? What is my purpose? And so that will focus either to strengthen and embrace...the Indigenous ways or its

⁴¹³ Adams, discussion.

⁴¹⁴ Anonymous Participant, discussion.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

going to go into commercialization and that sort of stuff.”⁴¹⁶ If the individuals involved are willing to focus on embracing Indigenous protocols then from there the work “will just flow, there are all kinds of avenues, and things that can happen.”⁴¹⁷ This list of guidelines developed by the Indigenous participants ranges from individual to production-wide protocols that are crucial in ensuring that, like *Going Home Star*, future productions are successful in collaboration and therefore the work completed in the development and performance of the piece can contribute to the reconciliation process in Canada.

Neither Dobrowney nor Possin had a great deal to add to this question as the protocols for *Going Home Star* were put in place prior to the dancers becoming involved in the production. Dobrowney would recommend similar protocols for future productions, as with the protocols for *Going Home Star* “they tried to do everything the proper way and ethically, and to involve all of the communities.”⁴¹⁸ Possin added that the most important aspects required for cross-cultural collaboration include “awareness and knowledge...[as] it wouldn’t have worked had [they] not had all the information that [they] did.”⁴¹⁹ Additionally, Possin “thinks the Royal Winnipeg Ballet did the right thing by involving so much Indigenous culture...and Indigenous people into the process as well, so we had that expert’s opinion...we had a credible source.”⁴²⁰ In agreement with Adams and the anonymous participant, throughout the interview Dobrowney and Possin mentioned the impact that engaging in ceremony had on both their ability to perform the story as well as their lives outside of ballet.⁴²¹ Although they were not involved in the creation of the protocols, the dancers were in agreement with how the protocols had been put in place for *Going*

⁴¹⁶ Chartrand, discussion.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ Dobrowney, discussion.

⁴¹⁹ Possin, discussion.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ Dobrowney, discussion, and Possin, discussion.

Home Star and recommended future productions be handled in the same manner.

The interviews with both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants were concluded by asking if there was anything else that they would like to add to the conversation about their work in the production. Although not all of the answers to this question were applicable to the research, a few of the participants' relevant responses are detailed below. Possin responded that he was "very grateful to have done the work...it's provided [him] information that [he] would not have had otherwise...[he] really enjoyed being a part of a piece that was as educational and relevant and important as this was."⁴²² Hatzis also discussed how life-changing *Going Home Star* was for him, as "for the longest time [he] was a skeptic about the possibility of reconciliation and forgiveness, but [he] thought that, even if truth alone was acknowledged, that would be enough for now. Steve [Wood from the Northern Cree Singers] has made [him] believe that reconciliation too, is within reach, if people like him can call people like [Hatzis] their brothers."⁴²³ The Indigenous participants also spoke very highly of *Going Home Star*. DeLaronde stated that it was "a very moving and deep performance... [that was] respectful to Indigenous people."⁴²⁴ On the opening night of the ballet in Winnipeg, Chartrand was seated "close enough to feel the energy of it" to which he commented, "wow, this is unbelievable" both in regard to the performance and the impact that it had on the conversations of truth and reconciliation.⁴²⁵ The anonymous participant views *Going Home Star* as the "first level or the first stepping stone of what collaboration between...Indigenous and non-Indigenous...working together to tell a story can be...people can always improve and change upon it... there's so much that can be done...this is really just the beginning."⁴²⁶ All of the participants, both Indigenous and non-

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ Hatzis, discussion.

⁴²⁴ DeLaronde, discussion.

⁴²⁵ Chartrand, discussion.

⁴²⁶ Anonymous Participant, discussion.

Indigenous, spoke exceptionally of their experience working on the production, as well as what it accomplished in regard to cross-cultural collaboration in the performance arts.

In the reflection section of the interview, both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants were more broadly asked about non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts, reconciliation, and guidelines for cross-cultural collaboration. The majority of the participants determined that non-Indigenous people can be cast in Indigenous roles; however, they cannot as effectively tell an Indigenous story. As well, when looking to fill an Indigenous role, production teams should make a serious effort to recruit an Indigenous artist before casting a non-Indigenous individual. In regard to the second question, it was concluded that cross-cultural collaboration in the performance arts is an optimal way to work toward reconciliation in Canada, as it allows the non-Indigenous artists the opportunity to learn and therefore develop empathy, while also educating audiences. The conclusions from the question on setting protocols and developing guidelines for future non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance were threefold. Every non-Indigenous person must be educated on the topic of the performance and participate in Indigenous ceremonies and the Indigenous community must be involved throughout the process. The conclusions from these three questions will inform the overall conclusions about non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts.

The Story by Joseph Boyden:

The previous chapter outlined Joseph Boyden's⁴²⁷ involvement in *Going Home Star*, as the author of the story, including the breakdown of his identity and how this affects the Indigenous component of the ballet. Although the research participants were not asked to directly

⁴²⁷ Joseph Boyden was contacted via phone to participate in the research study. Boyden did initially agree to participate; however, he did not follow through in any capacity with participation.

comment on Boyden and his involvement, throughout the interviews some of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of production did include their opinions on the story and its origin. In response to the question on her experience working on the ballet, Adams stated that “the story comes from an Indigenous perspective” and that it was developed out of “real stories, real situations...so the story, is Indigenous driven...[and] beautifully written.”⁴²⁸ In addition, when DeLaronde was outlining her advice for guidelines for future cross-cultural collaboration, she instructed that “the story, needs to be told from, the writing, instead of appropriation, if we’re talking about an Indigenous person, so it would be like *Through Black Spruce* coming out, or *Going Home Star*, from that perspective.”⁴²⁹ The motion picture *Through Black Spruce* is based on Boyden’s 2008 novel by the same name. Although neither Adams nor DeLaronde explicitly state Boyden’s name in either of their comments, they do both comment that the story written for *Going Home Star* comes from an Indigenous perspective and therefore the ballet is Indigenous-based. This, however, could be associated with the fact that Boyden drew on multiple different sources and aspects of Indigenous culture in the development of the story.

In contrast to Adams and DeLaronde, the anonymous participant and Hatzis had differing opinions on Boyden’s involvement and the origin of the story for *Going Home Star*, after the fallout from his identity misrepresentation in 2016. The anonymous participant stated that they are “disappointed in him, not to say that the work that he did do wasn’t good, but the fact that he himself has lied has just tarnished the stuff, unfortunately.”⁴³⁰ When questioned further about whether the story for the ballet is Indigenous-based regardless of Boyden’s identity, they responded, “it’s so hard to say... [as Mary Richard] helped, and it’s Chanie Wenjack’s story as

⁴²⁸ Adams, discussion.

⁴²⁹ DeLaronde, discussion.

⁴³⁰ Anonymous Participant, discussion.

well, so it's all a mixture of things."⁴³¹ Although Hatzis did not comment on Boyden's identity and how this affected the ballet, he did state, "after reading his novels, [he] recognized him to be an important and powerful writer (an opinion that [he] still strongly holds, despite the subsequent controversy)."⁴³² Even though Boyden's claims to Indigenous ancestry have been unfounded, this does not, according to the majority of the participants, discredit his abilities as a writer or the contribution that he made as the author of the story for *Going Home Star*. While it is unfortunate that Boyden was recruited to write the story, as his involvement now brings into question the impact of the ballet, his inclusion of Indigenous culture and stories allows the production to remain associated with Indigenous performance art. Despite Boyden and the subsequent fallout over his identity, *Going Home Star* remains a successful cross-cultural collaboration in the Indigenous performance arts.

Discussion of Research Results:

The aim of the interviews with the Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of *Going Home Star* was to determine the results for the three main research objectives. This included whether there are appropriate roles for non-Indigenous peoples in Indigenous performance arts, if the performance arts can be used as a space for Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaboration in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation, as well as to determine ethical best practices for this type of engagement. In this discussion, the participants' responses to the interview questions are interpreted and explained in order to establish overall conclusions.

The second section of the interview asked both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants about their experience being a part of *Going Home Star*. With the exception of one instance, all of the Indigenous participants spoke very positively of their involvement in the

⁴³¹ Ibid.

⁴³² Hatzis, discussion.

production. This was attributed to having an Indigenous individual, Keeper, as the producer setting the standard for work and its protocols as well as to Godden, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and the dancers who were respectful, sincere and willing to learn. As discussed throughout the interviews, there are still instances where Indigenous individuals are brought into productions as a token or to sign off on something without their opinions being wanted or heard. Based on the Indigenous participants' responses, a positive collaborative experience is possible with a strong Indigenous presence in a leadership role and sincere and humble non-Indigenous production crew. Although it is not entirely possible to ensure the non-Indigenous individuals involved are sincere and humble, throughout the hiring and audition process, the director can take note of each individual's approach and demeanour regarding the content of the performance piece. This conclusion provided new insight into the research, as although this production was a successful collaboration, it was contingent on those two aspects, and therefore they should be required in all future collaborations in order to ensure positive experiences for the Indigenous individuals involved.

The questions for the non-Indigenous participants in the same section focused on their experience learning and performing the ballet. The two dancers who participated in the study came from very different backgrounds, one with and the other without knowledge of Indigenous peoples. Despite the differences in their levels of knowledge, both participants discussed how valuable the experience was in terms of what they learned about Indigenous peoples, mainly through participating in ceremony. It can therefore be concluded that regardless of an individual's level of knowledge, participating in an Indigenous production allows for an opportunity to learn more deeply about Indigenous peoples, and as a result, to develop the fundamental feelings of empathy, sympathy and respect. The results from this section confirm the objective of the research as non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts

provides a unique space that develops more knowledgeable, empathetic individuals, who more thoroughly understand the need for reconciliation in Canada.

The third section of interview questions was only administered to the Indigenous participants and aimed at determining if the non-Indigenous cast affected the ballet's goal of moving forward the conversation of reconciliation in Canada. It was concluded, through their responses, that non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts should be dependent on the context, the medium and the availability of Indigenous artists to fill the roles, as non-Indigenous people cannot as effectively articulate an Indigenous experience. That being said, the four Indigenous production members were all in agreement that *Going Home Star* achieved its goal in moving forward the conversation of reconciliation in Canada, despite the all non-Indigenous cast. The conclusions drawn from this section provided an interesting perspective on non-Indigenous involvement, as although they all spoke positively about the non-Indigenous dancers in *Going Home Star*, the suitability of their involvement was contingent on the fact that there was no possibility of hiring professional Indigenous ballet dancers, if there were any at the level required for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. In other cases, such as theatre, it was concluded that Indigenous roles should only go to an Indigenous person, as there is an abundance of Indigenous actors across Canada. This argument, however, does not concur with the results from the literature review, where many prominent Indigenous writers and directors consistently struggle to find Indigenous individuals to fill the roles in their productions. Based on these two differing conclusions, it is recommended that first an effort should be made to recruit and offer roles to qualified Indigenous artists and if this is not possible, then the parts should go to non-Indigenous performers as they are able to contribute to the education and understanding of Indigenous peoples in Canada and therefore, the reconciliation process, according to the results of the question regarding reconciliation and ethnicity of the performers.

The final section of questions that was asked of both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants was designed to inform on the research objectives regarding cross-cultural collaboration in performance as well as to outline ethical best practices. The majority of the participants, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, were in agreement that performance is a productive space for cross-cultural collaboration in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation. Incorporating both Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals into an Indigenous-based performance allows it to be accessible to non-Indigenous artists, which in turn attracts larger and more diverse audiences, resulting in more knowledgeable Canadians concerning Indigenous peoples and the need for reconciliation. In order for cross-cultural collaboration to be successful, it requires a set of guidelines and protocols. As it was concluded that *Going Home Star* was a successful collaboration, the guidelines and protocols set a precedent for future work. The table below outlines four different protocols that need to be implemented into every cross-cultural collaboration production in order to ensure its success both as a collaborative production as well as for it to contribute to reconciliation in Canada.

Table 1: List of Four Protocols

Protocol	Time of Implementation
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<p>Indigenous Community and Elder Involvement</p> <p>The production needs to be approved by the local Indigenous community before moving forward with casting and production.</p> <p>The Indigenous community members or Elders need to lead the production in education, and Indigenous culture and ceremony as outlined below.</p> <p>The Indigenous community members or Elders need to be involved in every step of the production, including consulting with the actors and production team, in addition to viewing and giving feedback on rehearsals.</p>	<p>This protocol is implemented at the very beginning of the production process.</p> <p>The majority of this work takes place pre-production and is also on-going as needed.</p> <p>This protocol is on-going throughout the entire production process until the piece is officially brought to a close.</p>
<p>Education</p> <p>The Indigenous community members or Elders need to lead or direct the non-Indigenous members of production to a credible source of education about Indigenous peoples in Canada. This education needs to include both historical and present-day contexts.</p>	<p>This majority of the education process takes place pre-production. There should also be a community member available throughout the production to answer any questions that may arise concerning Indigenous peoples.</p>
<p>Indigenous Culture and Ceremony</p> <p>The Indigenous community members or Elders need to educate the performance and production crew about Indigenous culture and ceremony.</p> <p>The Indigenous community members or Elders also need to lead and implement different culture and ceremonies based on local protocols. This can include having a sweat lodge ceremony, administering a smudging, having a peace pipe ceremony, hosting a sharing circle, issuing a gifting, and learning to let go of Western constructs of time.</p>	<p>This work takes place pre-production; however, it should also be on-going when needed.</p> <p>This is an on-going process throughout the entire production. The community member will deem when it is appropriate for culture or ceremony to take place.</p> <p>*These are examples of ceremonies that can be implemented. Each production needs to follow local Indigenous protocols and ceremony.*</p>

<p>Personal Reflection</p> <p>All of the non-Indigenous individuals who are a part of an Indigenous based production need to participate in a personal reflection process. This process can take on many different forms including reflection journaling, meeting with an Indigenous community member, prayer or ceremony. It is intended to ensure that the participants are willing to learn, understand their purpose of being a part of an Indigenous production, checking their motives for the work and ensuring they are approaching it with a good mind and heart.</p>	<p>This is an on-going process through the entire production. The non-Indigenous members need to be introduced to the purpose of the reflection at the beginning of the production process. The director or producer needs to set aside time on a daily or weekly basis for the team to complete their reflections.</p>
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The conclusions drawn from this section concur with the aims of the research; however, a non-Indigenous individual does not need to play an Indigenous role in order to gain significant insight about Indigenous peoples, rather just their involvement in an Indigenous production will allow for this to happen. These protocols will ensure that future work is as successful as *Going Home Star* and therefore will create an understanding of the truth of Indigenous people's experiences in Canada, and therefore contribute to reconciliation.

Conclusion:

The opportunity to speak with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the *Going Home Star* production who had a range of personal backgrounds, ages, and different roles in the ballet allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the requirements for a successful cross-cultural collaboration in the Indigenous performance arts. Although there were important conclusions that were drawn from each section of the interview, the conclusion will focus on those that were in regard to the three research objectives. While not all of the results from the interviews were expected, they did provide new insight into cross-cultural collaboration in Indigenous performance arts. The first research objective, of whether there are appropriate roles for non-Indigenous individuals in Indigenous performance, determined that non-Indigenous

peoples can be involved in an Indigenous performance; however, there should first be an effort made to include Indigenous individuals. As well, the knowledge that non-Indigenous individuals gain about Indigenous peoples through being a part of an Indigenous production is not contingent on them being cast in an Indigenous role, rather their overall involvement will result in knowledge gained. For the second research objective, of whether Indigenous performance can be used as a space for cross-cultural collaboration in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation, it was determined that the performance arts is a productive space for this collaboration to occur, as it will result in more informed, empathic production and audience members who are more prepared to work toward reconciliation. The third research objective of determining ethical best practices for non-Indigenous engagement in Indigenous performance arts resulted in a list of four protocols that a production should follow in order to ensure it is a successful cross-cultural collaboration. These four protocols are Indigenous Community and Elder Involvement, Education, Indigenous Culture and Ceremony, and Personal Reflection. The results for the three main research objectives can be used to inform future cross-cultural Indigenous productions are informed on how to collaborate in order for their work to contribute to reconciliation in Canada.

While all of the Indigenous participants had an extremely positive experience working on *Going Home Star*, this was also reliant upon the fact that the non-Indigenous individuals were sincere, open to learning, and respectful. Even if all of the ethical best practice protocols are enacted in a collaboration, including personal reflection, the performance will not be successful unless everyone involved has good intentions for the work. This is essential as the value of cross-cultural collaboration in Indigenous performance is paramount in the reconciliation process because of the knowledge that is gained and the relationships that are formed between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. This knowledge and the relationships are what form the foundation of reconciliation, therefore allowing both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians to move forward to a reconciled Canada.

Conclusion

Introduction:

The thesis, *Non-Indigenous Involvement in Indigenous Performance Arts: A Starting Point for Reconciliation*, investigated the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's *Going Home Star- Truth and Reconciliation* to determine if it was a successful cross-cultural collaboration in the Indigenous performance arts in order to move forward the conversations of reconciliation in Canada.

Conclusions for the three research objectives derive from interviews with the eight participants that were either an aspect of the performance, production or audience. These objectives include whether or not Indigenous performance can be used as a space for cross-cultural collaboration, determining a point of engagement for non-Indigenous individuals in Indigenous performance arts and finally establishing ethical best practices for non-Indigenous involvement. The results for the three objectives provide significant insight into cross-cultural collaboration in the Indigenous performance arts with the ultimate goal to locate a respectful path for performance to contribute to a reconciled Canada.

In the conclusion following a summation of the chapters, the limitations of the research study are identified, including a discussion of how each limitation affected the results of the study. The suggestions for future work regarding non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts will then be outlined. In the spirit of looking forward to the next steps in the field, another Indigenous-based ballet production, *Celebrating Courage: Ghosts of Violence*, by the Atlantic Canada Ballet, is introduced in addition to a discussion of its contribution to the reconciliation process in Canada. The thesis will close with a statement of final considerations for the field of Indigenous performance as well as a declaration of hope for a reconciled Canada.

Summary of Chapters:

The three chapters following the introduction each had a distinctively different intention.

The first chapter outlined the historical overview of Indigenous performance in Canada and the United States, starting from time immemorial and leading up to the present day, discussing non-Indigenous involvement and intervention throughout its development as a field. The second chapter introduced the production *Going Home Star*, including a history of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, a description of the production and performance team, as well as the set, costume and plot, concluding with a summary of the production's reviews. The third chapter thoroughly outlined the results from the interviews, inclusive of a presentation of the demographic information for the eight participants, as well as the responses to all of the questions administered, followed by a discussion of the results. In this section, the major findings from the three chapters are re-stated followed by a statement of the overall conclusions for the thesis.

The first chapter outlines the four time periods that form the different stages of the modern Indigenous theatre movement in Canada. The first section, from time immemorial until the year 1974, describes the Potlatch and Sundance ban that was implemented in 1885 and the subsequent involvement of Indigenous peoples in the Wild West Shows, Royal Tours and World's Fairs. Following the section on the large-scale performance venues, individual performers were investigated including non-Indigenous dancers Ted Shawn and Lester Horton who were compared to Indigenous performers E. Pauline Johnson and Molly Spotted Elk. These two different types of performances held benefits for the Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals involved, including providing the Indigenous performers a platform from which to state their resistance to the Canadian and American governments. In contrast, the benefits for the non-Indigenous performers included providing them with economic gains as well as the opportunity to reaffirm their colonial domination. In 1951 Canada lifted the Potlatch and Sundance ban and sixteen years later, in 1967, the modern Indigenous theatre field started to develop exponentially with the contribution of Ukrainian Canadian, George Ryga's production of *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*. The second stage of the movement occurred from 1974 until 1984, when

the field emerged, as over the course of ten years, two Indigenous theatre schools were opened resulting in five companies opening their doors across the country. Additionally, this period sees the creation of the first Indigenous authored play, *October Stranger*. The third stage happened from 1985 until 1995, and is when the field significantly expanded, largely in part to Tomson Highway's involvement as both a writer and a director of several plays, in addition to the development of numerous Indigenous theatre companies across the nation. During the fourth stage from 1995 until 2013, the field strengthened as it overcame issues with funding and audience interest. Presently, Indigenous performance arts remain a prominent aspect of the theatre scene in Canada.

Following the first chapter which provided an historical overview of Indigenous performance in Canada, the second chapter introduced the Royal Winnipeg Ballet as well as their 2014 production *Going Home Star*. The first section of the chapter detailed a brief history of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet from its official opening in 1938 until the commissioning of *Going Home Star* in 2014. The ballet *Going Home Star*, however, was not the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's first Indigenous production. In 1971 after the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood approached the ballet, they developed *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, based on George Ryga's play by the same name, remaining a part of the company's repertoire to the present day. The production *Going Home Star* was developed when Winnipeg Elder Mary Richard approached artistic director André Lewis with a proposal for another Indigenous ballet. After Lewis consulted with Tina Keeper, Richard's proposition resulted in a ballet based on the mandate and the results from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Staging the ballet required an extensive number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals including Tina Keeper, KC Adams, Tanya Tagaq, Steve Wood and the Northern Cree singers, in addition to consultation with numerous Indigenous community members as well as Mark Godden, Christos Hatzis, Paul Daigle, Pierre Lavoie, and Sean

Nieuwenhuis. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet company itself was composed of employees from a diverse range of backgrounds from across North and South America, Asia and Europe. Joseph Boyden wrote the story for the ballet of Annie and Gordon and their exploration of truth and reconciliation. Regardless of Boyden's non-Indigenous identity, the story and the ballet remain an Indigenous-based performance, due to the story's extensive inclusion of Anishinaabe culture as well as its approval from community Elders. The chapter concluded by detailing the reception of *Going Home Star*, which received extremely high praise from both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous community across Canada. The history of the development of the ballet *Going Home Star*, and discussions of its reception provides important context for the third chapter, which focused on the results from the interviews with Indigenous production and audience members as well as the non-Indigenous dancers and production member.

The third chapter detailed the results from the questionnaire and interviews with the Indigenous and non-Indigenous research participants involved in various aspects of the performance or production of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet's *Going Home Star*. The demographic questionnaire determined the age range and gender breakdown of the participants, in addition to their ethnic background, which consisted of three and a half identifying as European or Caucasian and four and half identifying as First Nation. The participants who consented to be identified included dancers Dobrowney and Possin, composer Hatzis, set designer Adams, consultants Chartrand and DeLaronde, and production observer Boulanger, in addition to the anonymous participant who did not consent. The second section of interview questions concerned both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants' experience working on the production, from which all participants indicated that it was an extremely positive experience for everyone involved, due to Keeper's role as a producer and the sincerity of the non-Indigenous members. For the non-Indigenous participants, being a part of the production resulted in a steep educational journey where they developed feelings of respect, empathy and sympathy for

Indigenous peoples. The third set of interview questions that was administered exclusively to the Indigenous participants concluded that, when casting an Indigenous role, there should first be an effort made to find a qualified Indigenous artist, and if this is not possible, then the role should go to a non-Indigenous performer. Regardless of the ethnicity of the individuals performing the piece, responses suggested that the performance contributed to the education and understanding concerning Indigenous peoples in Canada. The results from the two sections of questions regarding the participants' experiences working on the production concluded that the production was a successful cross-cultural collaboration and therefore can be used as a precedent for future work.

As stated in the introduction, the thesis, *Non-Indigenous Involvement in Indigenous Performance Arts: A Starting Point for Reconciliation*, had three main objectives with respect to cross-cultural collaboration in the Indigenous performance arts. For the first research objective, concerning whether there are appropriate roles for non-Indigenous individuals in Indigenous performance, interview results demonstrated that non-Indigenous peoples can be involved in both the production and performance aspects of an Indigenous performance; however, there should first be an effort made to include Indigenous individuals. Further, the knowledge that non-Indigenous individuals gain about the history and cultures of Indigenous peoples through being a part of an Indigenous production is not contingent on them being cast in an Indigenous role, but rather their overall involvement will result in some knowledge gained. For the second research objective, concerning whether Indigenous performance can be used as a space for cross-cultural collaboration in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation, it was determined that the performance arts is a productive space for this collaboration to occur, as it will result in more informed, empathic production and audience members who are more prepared to work toward reconciliation. The third research objective which sought to determine ethical best practices for non-Indigenous engagement in Indigenous performance arts resulted in a list of four protocols

that centre around Indigenous knowledge, ceremony and cultural practices. The first protocol mandates the inclusion of the local Indigenous community and Elders in every step of the production, starting by gaining their approval for the piece, having them provide consultation to the actors and production team as well as give feedback on rehearsals. The second protocol centres around educating the performance and production team on Indigenous peoples in Canada in both a historical and present-day context. The third protocol instructs the Indigenous community members and Elders involved to educate and lead the performance members in Indigenous culture and ceremony practices that follow local Indigenous protocols. The fourth protocol involves a personal reflection process and requires the production company to set aside time for those involved to reflect on their purpose being a part of the production. The results from the three research objectives will inform future Indigenous productions that present Indigenous stories how to best to collaborate in order for their work to contribute to reconciliation in Canada.

Research Limitations:

Due to the timeline and size of a master's thesis, it was determined that the best course of action for investigating non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts was to focus on one cross-cultural collaboration performance as opposed to numerous performances or individual artists. Investigating only one performance, therefore, is not a limitation for this particular study. There is, however, still a tremendous amount of research required regarding Indigenous performance arts and non-Indigenous involvement within this space, which will be outlined in the following section. Despite focusing on one production, the study experienced a number of limitations, which if they had not been encountered, would have resulted in a more comprehensive overview of cross-cultural collaboration in the production *Going Home Star*, and therefore the guidelines for future cross-cultural productions as well.

The first major limitation that was encountered in the research study was the short time period that I had in which to receive ethics approval and complete all of the interviews. After receiving approval for the research from my committee, I had less than two months to complete the interviews, in order to ensure I graduated within the two-year designated time frame. This is an extremely short time period, even more so when taking into consideration that I did not have any prior connections with the potential research participants. When working in Indigenous studies, developing relationships with participants is paramount to ensure that they feel respected and comfortable, and therefore are willing to fully participate in your study. I did not have the time to develop relationships, and this resulted in two individuals immediately declining to participate and one withdrawing full participation after reviewing their transcript. If I had at least two additional months to complete the interviews, I would have spent time building connections with all of the potential participants. This would have encompassed more communication, either through email or on the phone prior to setting a meeting date, in addition to offering to meet multiple times before administering the questionnaire and interview. Taking the time to develop relationships with all of the potential participants would have resulted in more individuals agreeing to participate, and the trust built through the process would have enabled the participants to be open to discussing more controversial issues therefore culminating in increased diversity of opinions on the issues discussed.

The second major limitation for the research study was the lack of publicly available contact information for the potential performance participants. The majority of the production members of *Going Home Star* work freelance or are prominent individuals in the Winnipeg community and therefore their contact information is easily accessible online. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet dancers, however, did not have any contact information, either phone number or email, on the ballet's website or their social media pages, and were only reachable through the messaging applications on Facebook or LinkedIn. The Royal Winnipeg Ballet was contacted in

November of 2018 regarding the research study in addition to asking for their assistance in connecting with the dancers; however, they declined any involvement. It was therefore determined that the dancers who had a LinkedIn profile would be contacted via their messaging system. This system does, however, have numerous limitations within itself, including requiring a paid premium membership to use, the increased chance of invitations appearing as scam, no ability to send follow-up messages, in addition to being reliant on the fact that individuals check their profile frequently enough to respond. Out of the nine invitations that were sent via LinkedIn to potential participants, I only received two responses. As the intended participant pool for the study included five dancers, and I only had two, having direct contact information would have potentially resulted in more participants and therefore more information about their experience in addition to their opinions in regard to the research objectives.

If these two major limitations had not been encountered in this study, the research would have potentially gathered more information from different perspectives that ultimately would have provided a more comprehensive overview of the collaboration in *Going Home Star*. While the thesis concluded that Indigenous performance is a productive space for cross-cultural collaboration in order to work toward the goal of reconciliation, the inclusion of more participants has the potential to solidify or collapse this conclusion. For the next study that is undertaken in regard to non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts, it is advised to set aside as much time as possible for the interviewing process in order to develop relationships with the participants, as well as if possible, spend time inquiring about direct contact information, as additional participants will provide a more thorough understanding of the issue being researched.

Suggestions for Future Work:

Modern Indigenous theatre is still a relatively new field, having only started to develop in the 1970s and therefore it is under researched in academia. Within that field, the topic of non-Indigenous involvement is even further under researched as it is currently only being discussed in a few works in Canada and the United States. The field overall requires more research, and as an extension of the work completed in this study, particularly regarding cross-cultural collaboration in order to more fully determine a point of engagement for non-Indigenous artists, in addition to ethical best practices.

The research in this study focused exclusively on the ballet *Going Home Star*, which provided an interesting context as it was a European art form used to tell an Indigenous story that was performed by non-Indigenous dancers. While the results from this study are applicable to other Indigenous performance media, the next step is to complete similar studies in different contexts, including theatre, dance, opera and musical performances. The conclusions drawn from studies that focus on the different media would be more applicable to that particular genre in addition to adding to the overall argument regarding non-Indigenous involvement in the performance arts. Additionally, conducting research in the different performance media allows for a more diverse range of approaches and perspectives that can be investigated. Such projects could take the same approach as this study where the research can focus on one particular performance run in one of the different media stated above. Another method the research could pursue would be to investigate all of the Indigenous performance work that has been produced in a particular Canadian city over a certain time period. The lifetime work of a particular Indigenous writer or artist would also provide an interesting perspective, as the writer's experience working in cross-cultural collaboration on their own productions could be examined. Finally, a comparison study between different Indigenous performances from across Canada that engaged in cross-cultural collaboration could be completed in order to collect a range of perspectives and experiences. Within each approach it is crucial to incorporate numerous

perspectives gained through interviews into the research, including both Indigenous and non-Indigenous performance and production members in addition to Indigenous and non-Indigenous audience members. The greater the diversity of the performance media investigated, inclusive of the different approaches and perspectives outlined above, the more insight and therefore knowledge will be gained on the issue of non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts will be.

After the research outlined above is completed, there are additional perspectives that would also provide a more thorough understanding of non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous performance arts. The first is to work with an Indigenous writer or a director on a particular production in order to gain insight into the production process. The second is to spend time with an Indigenous based performance group such as De-ba-jeh-mu-jig Theatre Group based on Manitoulin Island in Ontario or the Red Sky Dance Group located in Toronto, Ontario to determine their approaches and perspectives on non-Indigenous involvement in their respective companies. As the field is so under researched, the prescribed next step is to gather data from the different performance media as this will provide a truly comprehensive overview of a point of engagement for non-Indigenous artists in the Indigenous performance arts as a whole, in addition to establishing more ethical best practices.

Celebrating Courage: Ghosts of Violence:

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet was the first company to create an Indigenous-based production with the goal of contributing to the reconciliation process in Canada. Since *Going Home Star's* opening in 2014, however, the Atlantic Canada Ballet located in Moncton, New Brunswick created the production *Celebrating Courage: Ghosts of Violence*. The ballet, which is a collaboration with the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre at the University of New Brunswick, was developed in 2015 to raise awareness concerning the annual Red Shawl Campaign. This

campaign has occurred every October for the past four years and has the mandate of creating a space for action and healing for the over 1200 Indigenous woman and girls who have been reported missing or murdered in the last 30 years in Canada. The goal of the ballet is to provide a platform for understanding, to open up a space for dialogue about domestic abuse, to bring the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities together and to understand how they can work together to move forward. The ballet's overall objective is to contribute to the reconciliation process by highlighting the lack of government intervention in the over-represented unsolved cases of Indigenous women who have gone missing or been murdered.⁴³³

The Atlantic Canada Ballet's *Celebrating Courage* program consists of a more integral collaboration between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous performance and production members than that of *Going Home Star*. The performance does not exclusively consist of the ballet, but also includes an extensive pre-program that involves members of the local and national Indigenous community. The production begins with a welcome from the Elder-in-residence of the Mi'Kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre, who in 2018 was Imelda Perley, in addition to one from the Atlantic Canada Ballet's Founder and CEO Susan Chalmers Gauvin. The welcoming address was followed by a presentation by Lisa Meeches, Anishnaabe, an Indigenous advocate and award-winning filmmaker, which included a showing of her short film, "The Silent Witness Journey: Two Women's Stories," which narrates the stories of two Indigenous women who were murdered at the hands of their partners. An honouring song was then sung by Cole Hatty as well as by children from the Kingsclear Elementary School, both of which are part of the Wolastoqey Nation in New Brunswick. The ballet then tells the story of a woman in an abusive relationship, and how she was manipulated to stay, ultimately resulting in her death. At the conclusion of the

⁴³³ Atlantic Canada Ballet, *Celebrating Courage: Ghosts of Violence*, (Moncton: House Program, October 17, 2018).

ballet, both Indigenous Jingle Dress Dancers as well as the ballet dancers are on stage together, resulting in a true cross-cultural collaboration in the performance arts. *Celebrating Courage: Ghosts of Violence* is another example of how Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaboration in the performance arts brings to light important Canadian issues, therefore equipping non-Indigenous Canadians to better understand the need for reconciliation.⁴³⁴

Final Considerations:

Throughout the completion of the interviews and the writing of the chapters, the value of cross-cultural collaboration in the Indigenous performance arts in the reconciliation process in Canada became evident. Non-Indigenous participation in the Indigenous performance arts, whether as a production, performance or audience member allows for insight and knowledge about Indigenous peoples. Although the Truth and Reconciliation Commission mandates ninety-four calls to action in their final report, the addition of a ninety-fifth call that requires non-Indigenous Canadians to be involved in or to attend Indigenous performance arts productions is strongly advised. If Canadian citizens were mandated to partake in performances that deal with topics such as residential schools, the missing, murdered Indigenous women, or any other Indigenous issue that society either willingly or unwillingly ignores, this would create Canadian citizens who know the truth about the Indigenous experience in Canada. If Canadians can understand this truth, then reconciliation can be achieved. As Tina Keeper concluded in the documentary *Truth, Dance and Reconciliation*, “reconciliation is real, and it can be real, and it can be true.”⁴³⁵

⁴³⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁵ *Truth, Dance and Reconciliation*, Television, directed by Barbara Hager, (Winnipeg: CBC, 2016).

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Research Participants

Adams, KC (Set Designer for *Going Home Star*). In discussion with the author. February 25, 2019. Promenade Cafe and Wine, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Anonymous Participant (Kiosk Designer for *Going Home Star*). In discussion with the author. February 11, 2019. National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Boulanger, Binesi (*Going Home Star* audience observer). In discussion with the author. February 19, 2019. University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Chartrand, Mel (Production Elder for *Going Home Star*). In discussion with the author. March 20, 2019. Starbucks, South Winnipeg, Manitoba.

DeLaronde, Sandra (Indigenous content assistant for *Going Home Star*). In discussion with the author. March 27, 2019. Starbucks, downtown Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Dobrowney, Tristan (Professional Ballet Dancer). In discussion with the author. February 20, 2019. Skype.

Hatzis, Christos (Music Composer for *Going Home Star*). In discussion with the author. February 12, 2019. Email.

Possin, Stephan (Professional Ballet Dancer). In discussion with the author. February 12, 2019. Starbucks, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Appendix A: Consent Form - Performance and Production Participants

Informed Consent Form

Research Project Title: Non-Indigenous Involvement in Indigenous Performance Arts: A Starting Point for Reconciliation?

Principle Investigator: Emily Henderson Master's Student, Department of Native Studies, University of Manitoba 204 Isbister Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB Phone: [REDACTED] Email: henderse@myumanitoba.ca	Supervisor: Cary Miller, Ph.D. Department Head, Native Studies 213 Isbister Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB Phone: 204.474.6720 Email: Cary.Miller@umanitoba.ca
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This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Purpose of the Research:

The purpose of this research study is to determine if and where a point of engagement lies for non-Indigenous peoples to be participants in Indigenous performance arts.

Study Details:

The study will be completed using a one-time questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire will take approximately five minutes to complete and the interview will take approximately fifty-five minutes, resulting in a total of sixty minutes of involvement time. The questionnaire will be completed on a printed piece of paper, and it will not contain any directly identifying information. After the completion of the meeting, the questionnaire information will immediately be imputed into a protected file on Emily's secure computer, and then the paper copies will be destroyed. During the interview, the Voice Memos application on Emily's phone will be used to record the conversation, which will then be immediately moved from the phone to a password protected file on Emily's computer, and subsequently deleted from Emily's phone. If you would prefer to not be recorded during the interview, then having notes taken on your responses is an acceptable alternative. There is a check-box at the end of the consent form for you to indicate your recording preference. The data collected from the questionnaires and the interviews will be confidential, unless you choose to waive your confidentiality and sign the consent to be identified form. The information gathered will be dealt with in one of two ways, depending on your confidentiality preferences. If you choose to maintain confidentiality, then your responses to the questionnaire will not be coded for later identification and your interview will be coded for transcript revision purposes only. Your questionnaire and interview will not be linked to each other or to yourself in the thesis. If you choose to waive confidentiality, then both the questionnaire and interview will be coded in order to later link them to yourself explicitly in the

thesis. In the thesis, you will be referred to either by your involvement in the ballet, as either a performance or production member, if you choose to keep your confidentiality or by your full name, if you waived your confidentiality. In order to ensure the continued confidentiality of the information collected, only Emily, Dr. Miller, and the potential research team will have access to the information.

Benefits and Risks:

The benefit of participating in the research is that it will allow you to reflect and potentially grow from your experiences working in a cross-cultural collaboration in performance. However, your involvement in the study may result in risks, including backlash from members of society, if you chose to waive your confidentiality, as well as you feeling negatively, based on some of the questions being asked regarding your involvement in the performance and regarding Indigenous peoples. If you experience any of these feelings, please call the Klinik Crisis Line at 204-786-8686, or the First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line at 1-855-242-3310 for 24-hour support.

Details of Consent:

As a thank you for your involvement in the study, you will be given a small gift after signing the consent form at the beginning of the questionnaire and interview meeting. If, after signing the form, you choose to withdraw from the study, you will not, regardless of the point in time, be required to return the gift. If, at any point in time, you would like to withdraw from the study, you may do so up until the beginning of the data analysis process (April of 2019), without prejudice or consequence by contacting Emily or Dr. Miller at their above stated phone number or email address. If you decide to consent, you are not required to answer any or all of the questions, and can refuse any question(s) without prejudice or consequence. A debriefing form will be distributed to you in person at the conclusion of the questionnaire and interview meeting for you to go over at your leisure. It will provide you with more detailed information regarding the study, as well as further resources and contacts, in case any questions arise. The research results from the study will be disseminated to the University of Manitoba community, as well as publicly, by formal publication. The results may also be published in academic journals as well as presented at conferences throughout the world. A summary of the results from the research study will be provided to you by way of your choice, either by mail, email, etc. by May of 2019. All confidential information that was gathered throughout the study, including questionnaires and interview recordings will be destroyed by September of 2019.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB). If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator at 204-474-7122 or humanethics@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

____ I, _____ consent to being audio-recorded during the interview portion of the meeting.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix B: Consent Form – Production Observer

Informed Consent Form

Research Project Title: Non-Indigenous Involvement in Indigenous Performance Arts: A Starting Point for Reconciliation?

Principle Investigator: Emily Henderson Master's Student, Department of Native Studies, University of Manitoba 204 Isbister Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB Phone: [REDACTED] Email: henderse@myumanitoba.ca	Supervisor: Cary Miller, Ph.D. Department Head, Native Studies 213 Isbister Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB Phone: 204.474.6720 Email: Cary.Miller@umanitoba.ca
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This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Purpose of the Research:

The purpose of this research study is to determine if and where a point of engagement lies for non-Indigenous peoples to be participants in Indigenous performance arts.

Study Details:

The study will be completed using a one-time questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire will take approximately five minutes to complete and the interview will take approximately fifty-five minutes, resulting in a total of sixty minutes of involvement time. The questionnaire will be completed on a printed piece of paper, and it will not contain any directly identifying information. After the completion of the meeting, the questionnaire information will immediately be imputed into a protected file on Emily's secure computer, and then the paper copies will be destroyed. During the interview, the Voice Memos application on Emily's phone will be used to record the conversation, which will then be immediately moved from the phone to a password protected file on Emily's computer, and subsequently deleted from Emily's phone. If you would prefer to not to be recorded during the interview, then having notes taken on your responses is an acceptable alternative. There is a check-box at the end of the consent form for you to indicate your recording preference. The data collected from the questionnaires and the interviews will be confidential, unless you choose to waive your confidentiality and sign

the consent to be identified form. The information gathered will be dealt with in one of two ways, depending on your confidentiality preferences. If you choose to maintain confidentiality,

then your responses to the questionnaire will not be coded for later identification and your interview will be coded for transcript revision purposes only. Your questionnaire and interview will not be linked to each other or to yourself in the thesis. If you choose to waive confidentiality, then both the questionnaire and interview will be coded in order to later link them to yourself explicitly in the thesis. In the thesis, you will be referred to as an Indigenous community member, if you choose to keep your confidentiality or by your full name, if you waived your confidentiality. In order to ensure the continued confidentiality of the information collected, only Emily, Dr. Miller, and the potential research team will have access to the information.

Benefits and Risks:

The benefit of participating in the research is that it will allow you to reflect and potentially grow from your experiences working in a cross-cultural collaboration in performance. However, your involvement in the study may result in risks, including backlash from members of society, if you chose to waive your confidentiality, as well as you feeling negatively, based on some of the questions being asked regarding your involvement in the performance and regarding Indigenous peoples. If you experience any of these feelings, please call the Klinik Crisis Line at 204-786-8686, or the First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line at 1-855-242-3310 for 24-hour support.

Details of Consent:

As a thank you for your involvement in the study, you will be given a small gift after signing the consent form at the beginning of the questionnaire and interview meeting. If, after signing the form, you choose to withdraw from the study, you will not, regardless of the point in time, be required to return the gift. If, at any point in time, you would like to withdraw from the study, you may do so up until the beginning of the data analysis process (April of 2019), without prejudice or consequence by contacting Emily or Dr. Miller at their above stated phone number or email address. If you decide to consent, you are not required to answer any or all of the questions, and can refuse any question(s) without prejudice or consequence. A debriefing form will be distributed to you in person at the conclusion of the questionnaire and interview meeting for you to go over at your leisure. It will provide you with more detailed information regarding the study, as well as further resources and contacts, in case any questions arise. The research results from the study will be disseminated to the University of Manitoba community, as well as publicly, by formal publication. The results may also be published in academic journals as well as presented at conferences throughout the world. A summary of the results from the research study will be provided to you by way of your choice, either by mail, email, etc. by May of 2019. All confidential information that was gathered throughout the study, including questionnaires and interview recordings will be destroyed by September of 2019.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be

as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board (JFREB). If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator at 204-474-7122 or humanethics@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

____ I, _____ consent to being audio-recorded during the interview portion of the meeting.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix C: Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Interviewer: Emily Henderson

Interviewee: _____

Date and Time of Meeting: _____

1. **Age:** What is your age?

- 18-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55-64 years old
- Prefer not to disclose

2. **Gender:** What is your gender identity?

3. **Ethnic Origin:** Please specify your ethnicity.

- Caucasian or European
- Hispanic or Latino
- Black or African American
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- First Nation, Metis or Inuit (Please Specify) _____
- Other (Please Specify) _____
- Prefer not to disclose

How would you describe yourself?

4. **Education:** What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed? *If currently enrolled, highest degree received.*

- Less than a high school diploma
- High school graduate or equivalent
- Some post-secondary, no certificate/diploma/degree
- Post-secondary graduate
- Graduate degree (Please Specify) _____
- Trade/technical/vocational training (Please Specify) _____
- Prefer not to disclose

5. **Employment:** What is your current employment status?

- Employed full time (40 or more hours per week)
- Employed part time (up to 39 hours per week)
- Self-employed
- Unemployed
- Student
- Homemaker
- Retired
- Prefer not to disclose

How would you describe your current employment status?

6. **Location:** Where did you reside during the production, *Going Home Star*?

- Within Winnipeg
- Outside Winnipeg, within Manitoba (Please Specify) _____
- Outside Manitoba, within Canada (Please Specify) _____
- North / South America (Please Specify) _____
- Europe (Please Specify) _____
- Asia (Please Specify) _____
- Africa (Please Specify) _____
- Australia (Please Specify) _____
- Prefer not to disclose

Where do you currently reside?

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

Appendix D: Interview Questions for all Participants

Interview Questions

(Non-Indigenous Performers)

Background on Involvement:

1. How did you come to be a part of the production *Going Home Star*?
2. Can you describe your involvement / role in the production *Going Home Star*?

Personal Experience being involved in *Going Home Star*:

1. Can you describe your experience learning the piece including the physical, emotional and mental processes/difficulties/challenges/positives that you went through?
2. Can you describe your experience performing the piece? How did it affect you mentally/emotionally? What sort of challenges/positives did you go through?
3. What was your experience as a non-Indigenous person telling the story of an Indigenous individual?
4. What sort of barriers/repercussions, if any, did you face, both personal and social, as the result of being in this role?
5. What sort of support did you receive, if any, to assure you of your role in the performance?

Reflection:

1. What did you learn, if anything, from being a part of this production, for example, about Indigenous peoples and their experiences / histories / realities?
2. Overall, what is your opinion on non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous based performance arts? For example, should non-Indigenous peoples be involved or should the roles be reserved for Indigenous peoples? Please do not make specific comments about individuals but rather make general comments regarding this issue.
3. Based on your experience in *Going Home Star*, do you think that performance can be used as a space for Indigenous / non-Indigenous collaboration in order to work towards the goal of reconciliation in Canada? Please explain.
4. If you could set some guidelines for future non-Indigenous artists' involvement in Indigenous performance, based on your experience in *Going Home Star*, what would they be?
5. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Interview Questions

(Indigenous - Production)

Background on Involvement:

1. How did you come to be a part of the production *Going Home Star*?
2. Can you describe your involvement / role in the production *Going Home Star*?

Personal Experience being involved in *Going Home Star*:

1. Can you describe your experience working on the production including the physical, emotional and mental process/difficulties/challenges/positives that you went through being a part of *Going Home Star*?
2. What was your experience, if any, working with the non-Indigenous members of production? Please do not make specific comments about individuals in the performance, but rather comment on the experience overall.
3. What sort of support, if any, did you offer the non-Indigenous members of production? Again, please do not make any specific comments about individuals.

Opinion on *Going Home Star*:

1. What is your opinion on the non-Indigenous cast? Should there have been space made available to Indigenous dancers/performers? Please do not discuss specific individuals, but rather make general comments regarding casting.
2. Can an Indigenous story and experience be told effectively, if non-Indigenous people tell it? Do you think this affects, if at all, its portrayal and understanding by the audience? Please explain.
3. Do you think that *Going Home Star* achieved its goal of starting the conversation of reconciliation in Canada? Please explain.

Reflection:

1. Overall, what is your opinion on non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous based performance arts? Should non-Indigenous peoples be involved or should all roles be reserved for Indigenous peoples? Please do not mention specific individuals, but rather make general comments regarding non-Indigenous involvement.
2. Based on your experience in *Going Home Star*, do you think that performance can be used as a space for Indigenous / non-Indigenous collaboration in order to work towards the goal of reconciliation in Canada? Please explain.
3. If you could set some guidelines for future non-Indigenous artists' involvement in Indigenous performance, based on your experience in *Going Home Star*, what would they be?
4. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Interview Questions

(Non-Indigenous Production)

Background on Involvement:

1. How did you come to be a part of the production *Going Home Star*?
2. Can you describe your involvement / role in the production *Going Home Star*?

Personal Experience being involved in Going Home Star:

1. Can you describe your experience working on the production including the physical, emotional and mental process/difficulties/challenges/positives that you went through being a part of *Going Home Star*?
2. What was your experience, if any, working with the Indigenous members of production? Please do not make specific comments about individuals in the performance, but rather comment on the experience overall.

Reflection:

1. What did you learn, if anything, from being a part of this production, for example, about Indigenous peoples and their experiences / histories / realities?
2. Overall, what is your opinion on non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous based performance arts? For example, should non-Indigenous peoples be involved or should the roles be reserved for Indigenous peoples? Please do not make specific comments about individuals but rather make general comments regarding this issue.
3. Based on your experience in *Going Home Star*, do you think that performance can be used as a space for Indigenous / non-Indigenous collaboration in order to work towards the goal of reconciliation in Canada? Please explain.
4. If you could set some guidelines for future non-Indigenous artists' involvement in Indigenous performance, based on your experience in *Going Home Star*, what would they be?
5. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Interview Questions

(Indigenous – Production Observer)

Background on Involvement:

1. How did you hear of the production *Going Home Star*?
2. Can you describe when and why you saw the production *Going Home Star*?

Opinion on *Going Home Star*:

1. What is your opinion on the non-Indigenous cast? Should there have been space made available to Indigenous dancers/performers? Please do not discuss specific individuals, but rather make general comments regarding casting.
2. Can an Indigenous story and experience be told effectively, if non-Indigenous people tell it? Do you think this affects, if at all, its portrayal and understanding by the audience? Please explain.
3. Do you think that *Going Home Star* achieved its goal of starting the conversation of reconciliation in Canada? Please explain.

Reflection:

1. Overall, what is your opinion on non-Indigenous involvement in Indigenous based performance arts? Should non-Indigenous peoples be involved or should all roles be reserved for Indigenous peoples? Please do not mention specific individuals, but rather make general comments regarding non-Indigenous involvement.
2. Based on your experience in *Going Home Star*, do you think that performance can be used as a space for Indigenous / non-Indigenous collaboration in order to work towards the goal of reconciliation in Canada? Please explain.
3. If you could set some guidelines for future non-Indigenous artists' involvement in Indigenous performance, based on your experience in *Going Home Star*, what would they be?
4. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Appendix E: Consent to be Identified Form

Consent to be Identified

Principle Investigator: Emily Henderson Master's Student, Department of Native Studies, University of Manitoba 204 Isbister Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB Phone: [REDACTED] Email: henderse@myumanitoba.ca	Supervisor: Cary Miller, Ph.D. Department Head, Native Studies 204C Isbister Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB Phone: 204.474.6720 Email: Cary.Miller@umanitoba.ca
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The questionnaire and interview has been completed and your signature below indicates that you wish to be identified by name in the sharing of results from the study.

If you wish to be identified as a participant and have your responses attributed to you, please sign here. If this section is left blank then it will be understood that you wish your contributions to remain confidential.

Please know that waiving your confidentiality may result in negative responses from the community regarding your responses to the questions. If these issues should arise there are resources on the debriefing form for you to contact to help with any of these problems.

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix F: Debriefing Form

Debriefing Form

Principle Investigator: Emily Henderson Master's Student, Department of Native Studies, University of Manitoba 204 Isbister Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB Phone: [REDACTED] Email: henderse@myumanitoba.ca	Supervisor: Cary Miller, PhD Department Head, Native Studies 213 Isbister Building, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB Phone: 204.474.6720 Email: Cary.Miller@umanitoba.ca
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Thank you for participating in this study! As mentioned earlier, the goal of this study is to determine if and where a point of engagement lies for non-Indigenous peoples to be participants in Indigenous performance arts. It also aims at determining ethical best practices for this engagement with the ultimate goal of working towards reconciliation in Canada.

I will have the transcript ready for your review within two weeks of our meeting, and I anticipate that I will have the preliminary findings for this research by May of 2019. You will be contacted once they are ready for review, through a method of your choosing (phone, email etc.). At this time, please respond to Emily, with your preferred method of contact. This contact information will be kept in a locked safe, separate from your responses to this study.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Emily or Dr. Miller by one of the methods listed above. You may also contact the Human Ethics Secretariat at (204) 474-7122 or by email at humanethics@umanitoba.ca. As well, if you do feel negatively about anything discussed in our interview, please do not hesitate to contact the Klinik Crisis Line at 204-786-8686, or the First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line at 1-855-242-3310 for 24-hour support.

Should you be interested, you may find out more about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and reconciliation through the two websites below:

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada:
<http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=3>

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation:
<http://nctr.ca/about-new.php>

Emily Henderson