

1967

National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities (1965-1967): Correspondence 02

Bradley G. Morison

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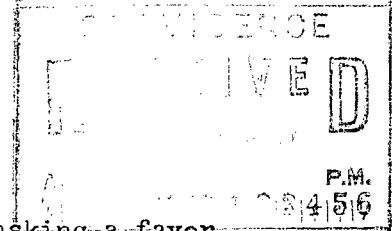
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November 25, 1967

The Honorable Claiborne Pell
418 Federal Building
Providence, Rhode Island



Dear Senator Pell:

This is either a thank you letter, or a letter asking a favor.
We're not sure which it is!

A few weeks ago we sent a questionnaire to the Board of Trustees of Trinity Square Company, seeking their cooperation in helping us to analyze the board's opinions and ideas of the theatre. This questionnaire is an important part of the study of long-range problems and opportunities in the development of funds, facilities and audiences for Trinity Square Repertory Company.

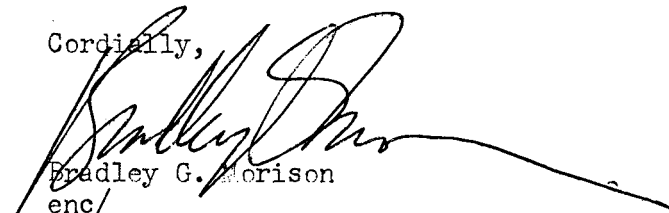
We didn't ask you to sign your name, and consequently we don't know if you've returned the questionnaire to us, or not. If you have, we thank you for your cooperation. If you have not, we're enclosing another copy of the questionnaire for your convenience and hope you will take a few minutes to jot down your opinions and ideas. The response from the board has been excellent, but we'd like to have 100% return to help us with this study, which is being done under a grant from the Rhode Island State Council of the Arts.

Will you please return your completed questionnaire by December 4 to:

Bradley G. Morison
c/o Trinity Square Repertory Company
80 The Arcade
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Your candid, honest opinions will be of immeasurable help. And if you wish to sign your name, it may be of help to us in arranging for further in-depth interviews with the trustees. Thank you for your promptness and cooperation.

Cordially,


Bradley G. Morison
enc/
bgm/vp

IF YOUR OPINION does not fall into the alternatives suggested on the questionnaire, please feel free to write in your own opinion.

THE PAST

1. From what you have observed, check at right how artistically successful you think Trinity Square has been as a theatre.
- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Very successful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Fairly successful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not successful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not sure |
- Please explain your answer.

-
2. How valuable do you think Trinity Square has been to the Rhode Island community area?
- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Very valuable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Modest value |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not valuable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not sure |
- Please explain your answer.

THE FUTURE

Setting aside money problems for the moment, we would like you to look five to ten years ahead and rate programs in which Trinity Square Repertory Company might engage.

3. A -- Check how desirable you think it would be for Trinity Square to tour major New England Cities with a repertory of plays during several months of the season.
- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Very desirable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Possibly desirable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not desirable |
- (Please continue in the same way for these ideas:)
- B -- Operating a major professional school for actors in conjunction with the theatre company.
- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Very desirable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Possibly desirable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not desirable |
- C -- Touring other Rhode Island communities with a repertory of plays during part of each season.
- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Very desirable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Possibly desirable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not desirable |
- D -- Continuing a program of performances for all Rhode Island high school students.
- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Very desirable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Possibly desirable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not desirable |

- | | |
|--|--|
| E -- Operating a children's theatre with professional productions produced for young audiences. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Possibly desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Not desirable |
| F -- Producing a season of six or seven contemporary plays for general, adult audiences only. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Possibly desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Not desirable |
| G -- Operating an exchange program with several other resident professional theatres in the USA whereby Trinity Square might spend four months of each year in Milwaukee, Cincinnati and Seattle, for instance, while those companies played a few weeks in Rhode Island | <input type="checkbox"/> Very desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Possibly desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Not desirable |
| H -- Operating two separate theatres: one for a repertory of established, classical and contemporary plays, the other for experimental production of new plays. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Possibly desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Not desirable |
| I -- Performing several months of each year in New York offering both new plays and new productions of established plays. | <input type="checkbox"/> Very desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Possibly desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Not desirable |
| J -- Operating a theatre school for children | <input type="checkbox"/> Very desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Possibly desirable
<input type="checkbox"/> Not desirable |

4. Having rated the above ideas individually, please check which THREE programs you would consider most important to the future of Trinity Square.

	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE
A. New England Tour	___ A	___ A	___ A
B. Adult actors school	___ B	___ B	___ B
C. Rhode Island tour	___ C	___ C	___ C
D. Continuing high school performances	___ D	___ D	___ D
E. Children's theatre	___ E	___ E	___ E
F. Contemporary plays for adults	___ F	___ F	___ F
G. USA exchange program	___ G	___ G	___ G
H. Operating two separate theatres	___ H	___ H	___ H
I. New York performances	___ I	___ I	___ I
J. Theatre school for children	___ J	___ J	___ J

PROJECT DISCOVERY

Trinity Square is now in its second season of Project Discovery, in which every high school student in Rhode Island sees three plays each year through grants from the National Foundation for the Arts and the U.S. Office of Education.

5. Disregarding the economics of the program and the source of funds, and considering only the educational aspects of it, from what you know of the program and the comments you have heard, do you think the concept of Project Discovery is (check one):

Excellent _____ Good _____ Valuable with changes _____ Not valuable _____

Please give reasons for your opinion.

-
6. How do you think Project Discovery might be changed to make it more valuable, either for the students or for the theatre, if at all?

-
7. A -- The federal subsidy for Project Discovery will probably be reduced or eliminated in a year or less. However, suppose it were possible for federal grants to continue indefinitely for Project Discovery. Do you think such a subsidy would be desirable or not desirable?

Desirable _____ Not desirable _____ Not sure _____

Please explain.

- B -- Check at right how you feel about Federal support of the arts in general.
- _____ Strongly approve
_____ Mildly approve
_____ Mildly disapprove
_____ Strongly disapprove
- C -- How do you feel about state government support of the arts?
- _____ Strongly approve
_____ Mildly approve
_____ Mildly disapprove
_____ Strongly disapprove

-
8. A -- Suppose the only way to continue Project Discovery would be through the appropriation of Rhode Island State funds. Which of the three alternatives listed at the right do you think would be most desirable?
- _____ Appropriate State funds to continue program at the state level.
_____ Reduce program substantially and finance it with State funds.
_____ Abandon Project Discovery
- B -- Do you believe that there is a practical possibility that the State legislature might appropriate some funds for Project Discovery in the next few years?
- Yes _____ No _____ Don't know _____
- C -- What do you think might be other possible sources of funds beside state support for the continuance of Project Discovery if federal funds were withdrawn or substantially reduced?

-
9. If Trinity Square were to operate on box office income alone without federal or state support, what do you think would be the most likely prospect?
- _____ Profit
_____ Break even
_____ Lose money
_____ Bankruptcy

-
10. If it were necessary to raise money to cover an annual deficit, what do you feel is the maximum amount that could be raised each year in Rhode Island for Trinity Square?
- _____ About \$10,000 a year
_____ \$25,000
_____ \$50,000
_____ \$75,000
_____ \$100,000
_____ \$125,000
_____ \$200,000 or more

11. A -- In the past few years, have you been actively associated with any other cultural or artistic institutions in Rhode Island?

Yes _____ No _____

B -- Please check which of the following organizations you have worked with in the past five years:

- _____ Rhode Island Fine Arts Council
- _____ Rhode Island Philharmonic
- _____ The Rhode Island School of Design Museum
- _____ The Rhode Island Arts Festival
- _____ The Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra
- _____ The Providence Art Club
- _____ The American Festival Ballet
- _____ The State Ballet of Rhode Island
- _____ Others (please list)

C -- Have you read "The Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma", a Twentieth Century Fund report by Baumol and Bowen?

Yes _____ No _____

12. Is there anything about Rhode Island or its population which would lead you to think that Trinity Square could NOT double or triple its audience of last season in the next few years?

13. In your opinion, what are the major problems to be faced in developing a bigger audience for the Trinity Square Company?

14. A -- For two seasons, Trinity Square has used the Rhode Island School of Design auditorium, the Trinity Square Playhouse, and other dispersed space. If Project Discovery is continued, how adequate do you think these facilities would be?

B -- How adequate do you think the above facilities would be in terms of developing substantially larger adult audiences?

C -- How necessary do you think it is to build a brand new theatre for Trinity Square?

D -- If a new, modern theatre were constructed, how much do you think it would contribute toward helping Trinity Square attract new and larger audiences?

E -- If an adequate theatre for Rhode Island cost \$2,000,000, how difficult do you believe it would be to raise that amount of money in Rhode Island over the next three years, for building purposes?

_____	Fairly easy to raise
_____	Very difficult to do
_____	Could be done with work
_____	Can't be done

Please explain your answer.

We would very much appreciate your completing this questionnaire and returning it in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope prior to November 20, 1967. It will help us enormously in planning and carrying out our study for Trinity Square Repertory Company. Thank you.

IF YOU WISH:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____