

Healing the Wounds of History: An Exploration of Volkas' Dramatherapeutic Social
Change Model.

Ali Kirstein

A Research Paper
in
The Department
of
Creative Arts Therapies

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

July 2004

Alison Kirstein, 2004



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

ISBN: 0-612-96972-X

Our file Notre référence

ISBN: 0-612-96972-X

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing the Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

Acknowledgements

Many friends and colleagues have helped me in the preparation and realization of this research project. I would like to thank Stephen Snow for his substantive guidance throughout this process as well as Trish Amundson, Chloe Westelmajer, Brian Chaikelson and Heidi Bodanis for their valuable time, continuing patience, editing skills and enduring friendship. A heartfelt thanks to the students and collaborators in San Francisco and at CIIS, the workshops, brainstorming sessions and discussions were not only thought provoking, but also extremely humbling and motivating.

To mom and dad and dad and *the family*, your encouragement throughout my lifetime and especially over the last two years has been an integral part of my process. Thanks for the continued support (in every sense of the word) as well as your unconditional love.

To Steve, my sweetheart, thanks for your love, kindness, patience and understanding.

Your compassion and tenderness are what pulled me through this tumultuous year.

Most of all I am indebted to Armand Volkas, whose life's work has significantly and meaningfully inspired and driven me for the past two years. I look forward to a lifetime of learning from and collaborating with you. Your capacity for holding and for empathy, are treasured gifts. I am grateful to have been blessed by your guidance, encouragement wisdom and support.

This project is dedicated to my Grandparents Eta and Steve Garai, true survivors, without whom I would never be here. Your strength, tenacity and respective journeys are the legacy I hold with me always. I will carry your stories with me throughout my own journey and dedicate myself to a lifetime of activism, and involvement. Thank you.

Table of contents

Introduction	p. 1
Chapter 1 – Genesis	p. 8
Chapter 2- Summary of Current Literature	p. 15
Chapter 3- Key Concepts and Phases of the Model	p. 48
Chapter 4- Exercises and Examples	p. 55
Chapter 5- Future Applications and Conclusion	p. 73
Bibliography	p. 78

Introduction

This research project is a testament to the immense influence of Sherry Diamond, who upon meeting with me at the onset of my dramatherapy training to discuss thesis topics, (I tend towards eagerness -some call it compulsivity,) encouraged me to keep an open mind. Throughout our conversation, which took place at Concordia University in early November 2002, I was cautioned to exercise flexibility rather than affixing to my initial impulse which proved a valuable lesson (in every aspect of life). This discussion occurred immediately prior to the National Association for Dramatherapy Conference in Albuquerque New Mexico, which I was set to attend. This NADT gathering whose theme was 'Celebrating Diversity' was to be my first foray into the world of dramatherapy. Upon reading the prospectus detailing the workshops and presenters, I was drawn to a picture of the conferences' keynote speaker, Armand Volkas, whose work was unfamiliar to me but who seemed to be a prominent figure in my newly chosen field of study. As I was in the process of taking my 'Methods' class and was supposedly familiar with the canon of dramatherapists, I was intrigued by this image. Wondering why I had never studied or heard of this seemingly sage man's model when most of the other listed presenters monikers were familiar to my developing dramatherapeutic awareness, I set off to Albuquerque with my 'open mind' and my life was forever changed as a result.

I decided to check out Armand Volkas by attending his very full workshop and almost immediately became a devotee. If I wasn't fully convinced that I had found that elusive topic which Sherry Diamond had previously alerted me to openly receive, I then attended the conference lunch and hung on Volkas' every word while he delivered his

keynote address and was instantaneously won over. Armand's speech was different than any other I had witnessed in my lifetime. Speaking from the heart, Volkas conveyed his deeply personal family history in a sincere and delicate manner, drawing me into his world and rousing my interest in his work. As I listened to Armand articulate:

My work with historical trauma is about a search for meaning. It is about memory and remembering. It is about sharing and being witnessed. It is about how trauma is passed from Generation to Generation. It is about working through and integrating the complex emotions that arise when we face history in a personal way. It is about exploring what happens when the personal and collective come together----when one person's story becomes the story of an entire people. It is about grief and mourning. It is about remembering and honoring the dead. It is about building bridges between cultures. It is about cultural and national identity and self-esteem, for we all have a need to feel positive about the "tribe" to which we belong. (2002)

I knew that I had found my future mentor as well as my research project topic!

Throughout Armand's speech, I noticed myself shaking my head in agreement as tears rolled down my cheek. I understood Volkas' experiences, which eventually lead to the inception of his model from a very personal vantagepoint, as I too was a descendent of a Holocaust survivor as well as my family's legacy bearer. I too longed to make meaning out of the suffering of my family members' experiences and I felt a profound kinship for Armand at once. During the Albuquerque conference, Volkas and I shared our very similar personal histories at various moments between workshops and presentations, over Karaoke and Gin and Tonics. A new relationship was budding which would eventually lead to the realization of this research project as well as a lasting friendship.

Upon returning to Montreal, I began looking into researching Volkas' model which proved difficult as it had yet to be documented: Could this be the purpose of our initial encounter and affinity for one another?

Confident that Volkas' work was the socially relevant, intriguing and inspiring topic that would drive me throughout the duration of my graduate training, I dedicated my research class assignments to delve into his work. Ready to embark on the documentation process, I began corresponding with the unexpectedly available Volkas as early as January 2003, at which point he guided me towards the literature that had deeply affected him and served as the basis for his dramatherapeutic model. I steeped myself in the relevant Holocaust literature prescribed by Volkas himself and we continued to correspond until the following NADT conference. After attending yet another Armand Volkas workshop, I became convinced that a project outlining and detailing his social change model would be as valuable a tool for dramatherapists as any other required dramatherapy text studied at the graduate level. In August 2003 in San Francisco, Stephen Snow, the Coordinator of the Dramatherapy Graduate Program at Concordia University began planning for Volkas to conduct one of his workshops in Montreal as an adjunct professor and Armand and I began discussing the logistics surrounding my documenting his model.

In October of 2003, Volkas gave a week's intensive to Concordia's second year dramatherapy students, culminating in a public outreach performance aimed at opening up a dialogue between Canadian Israelis and Palestinians based on Volkas' 'Acts of Reconciliation project'. Part of the Peace and Conflict Resolution Academic Series conducted by the University, this project became the backdrop for my research and Volkas' visit to Montreal solidified my dedication to documenting his life's work. After Armand returned to the Bay area, we remained in touch discussing the details with regards to my research and agreed that if I were to truly and precisely document his

process, it would be beneficial for me to take part in further workshops. As our planning progressed, we discussed the possibility that I would assist him in teaching a summer class in dramatherapy and social change and I began looking into relocating to San Francisco for a few months to steep myself in Healing the Wounds of History.

During my time in San Francisco and the Bay area (May and June 2004), I took advantage of the CIIS library as well as the valuable and cherished time allotted with my very diligent mentor. Throughout our many meetings, I asked Volkas extensive questions and we discussed the history and background of his model as well as future advances and possible additions to his work. All the while acting as an assistant in his summer class, I began to understand Volkas' framework, although grounded in its foundation, is dictated predominantly by the specific group. This proved to be a valuable component in detailing the process without becoming rigid in the documentation itself. Keeping this important detail constantly in mind, I set out to conduct my research using an assortment of mediums to ensure an unbiased and comprehensive account of Healing the Wounds of History. Data was collected through a variety of channels consisting of:

- ♦ Participating in and auditing workshops in Albuquerque New Mexico (2002), the San Francisco Bay area (2003, 2004), Montreal Quebec (2003) and Newport Rhode Island (2004).
- ♦ Assisting in CIIS's dramatherapy and social change class, summer 2004.
- ♦ Observing the Living Arts Playback Theatre Ensemble rehearsals and performances,
- ♦ Reading influential texts suggested by Armand Volkas.

- ♦ Countless long-distance and local telephone calls and interviews as well as personal discussions and interviews with Armand dating from November 2002 to August 2004.

Ruminating over the most effective way to communicate Volkas' work to a broader audience, I couldn't help but consider my astute academic supervisors' main and subsidiary objectives: Is Volkas' way of working a legitimate model within the field of dramatherapy? And if so, how can it be disseminated?

Setting out to achieve these objectives, I chose to organize my research in the following manner. I began by documenting the Genesis to Volkas' model by listening to his in-class lectures, conducting interviews and reading accessible texts (articles and chapters) about his work. From there, I went on to read existing texts in the diverse fields of Psychology, Experimental Theatre, Dramatherapy and Inter-Cultural Communication in the hopes pointing out the linkages in these varied disciplines and firmly grounding Volkas' work from a theoretical vantage-point. The next step entailed documenting Volkas' key concepts as well as the phases analogous to his process, which was done through extensive dialogue with Armand as well as taking part in his summer class (inspired and driven by his CIIS students and San Francisco colleagues). I then focused on detailing the exercises employed by Armand to facilitate his process, adding examples to highlight and illustrate some of his key exercises and their purpose. This was achieved by taking part in his workshops over two years, first as a participant, then as a student and eventually as an assistant. Using examples from all of my HTWH encounters as well as including discussions with Armand about moments that he felt were relevant in delineating his method, I set out to describe as concretely as possible,

the techniques employed in each phase of the work. I chose to end with a brief chapter about implications for further research and future directions for HTWH which was inspired by a workshop that had taken place upon my arrival in San Francisco, comprised of Armands' colleagues, past and present students, participants and actors.

As this paper is a research project, limited in scope as per University requirements, I was unable to add one last chapter which both Armand and I perceive to be relevant in understanding his model from a personal perspective. What is lacking from this documentation is a section devoted to specific case examples wherein past participants and facilitators are interviewed and describe their personal HTWH experiences with emphasis placed on their reasons for enrolling in the workshop, specific transformative moments throughout the process as well as integration post closure. I hope to be able to expand on this project and include this highly significant material in future publication.

This summer at the 25th annual NADT conference in beautiful Newport, Rhode Island, I was honored to have been invited by Armand to take part in his presentation, this time not as a student, but as a panelist and fellow dramatherapist. Coming full circle, I reminisced with my friend Armand about our initial conference encounter and all that had transpired since that fateful November in Albuquerque. Reconnecting after a month's sojourn, we discussed our next less professional visit when I hope to see Armand and his family as guests at my wedding.

Looking back on all that has transpired since embarking on my MA, I am filled with fond and cherished recollections of conference meetings, long distance phone calls, cross-country visits, inspiring conversations and lovely meals shared by myself and Armand. He epitomizes grace and wisdom and has so meaningfully inspired me to strive

to be the best dramatherapist and human being I can possibly be. As I sit in my home in Montreal, typing the introduction to my research project, outlining my journey from hungry first year student to present, I am filled with admiration and amazement as to the integral role played by my mentor and friend Armand Volkas. Not only has he embraced my curiosity and nurtured my interest in the field, he has encouraged my many endeavors and supported my project, subsequently launching my career and opening me up to countless opportunities. For all this and more, I am extremely humbled and exceptionally thankful.

Chapter I - Genesis

Healing the Wounds of History evolved as a consequence of various diverse influences throughout Armand Volkas' life. His family history and parent's legacy, passion for theatre, enthusiasm for humanity, coupled with his immense capacity for compassion and empathy are the primary factors that brought into existence the emergence of this new application in the field of dramatherapy.

Family History and Legacy

"My story begins with my parent's story"

Armand Volkas' father Bernard Volkas was born in 1916 in Lithuania, where he was exposed to anti-Semitism at a young age. He became an idealistic communist as a response to his early childhood experiences and as a *way to change the world*. He passionately believed in equalizing property and capital as a means of putting an end to racism and anti-Semitism. Bernard Volkas went to Palestine to take part in the Maccabiah games, playing soccer in 1934 and stayed there until 1936, working whilst simultaneously avoiding the anti-Semitic Lithuanian army. In 1936, when the Spanish civil war broke out, Mr. Volkas Sr. journeyed by boat to fight in Spain. Filled with volunteers motivated to fight fascism, Volkas' boat was torpedoed by an Italian submarine and hundreds died, while he survived. After floating for a day and a half he was rescued and then paraded through the streets as a hero. Bernard Volkas fought for 2 years in Spain, after which, he became employed as an interpreter as a result of his competence in speaking multiple languages. At the end of the war, Volkas Sr. left Spain and again survived Franco's bombings after which, he ended up a prisoner at Gurs concentration camp in the south of France. Volkas was held captive for a while, without

a country and finally went back to the Soviet Union to see his family for the last time: they were eventually massacred, shot after digging their own graves. Bernard Volkas then joined the Red Army (based on his history fighting in Spain), where he volunteered to organize the resistance's plan to parachute beyond enemy lines in White Russia. Twelve people jumped from the plane and ten died, with Volkas again surviving overwhelming odds. He then became a partisan for the succeeding few years, again organizing resistance. Bernard Volkas continued to fight, until his eventual arrest, not for his involvement in the resistance, but as a consequence of his identity as a Jew. Volkas was deported to Auschwitz where he became part of the underground there based on his capabilities with reference to his previous experiences in organizing resistance. He devised the plans for two of the three successful escapees of Auschwitz and almost escaped himself: however, he was unsuccessful in this endeavor. Bernard Volkas met his future bride in Auschwitz.

Armand Volkas' mother, Celine Perla was born during an exceptionally anti-Semitic period in Poland where she suffered greatly as a consequence and too became radicalized. Thinking that communism may eventually give rise to the eradication of anti-Semitism, Mrs. Perla became fundamentally active against the Polish government. Her first husband went to Paris and she eventually joined him via the Swiss Alps. At this point in History (during the mid 1930's), Paris was teaming with European refugees. In 1940, Celine Perla became pregnant while, concomitantly, the Nazis marched into Paris. She escaped to the south of France and gave birth to her first son George Perla in Toulouse. After delivering George, Mrs. Perla returned to Paris where she registered as a Jew. Celine Perla joined the French resistance where she helped

Jewish children escape to Switzerland, and smuggled guns and leaflets into France. Her husband ended up in a Prisoner of War camp and she was arrested by police for her active involvement in the French resistance. Upon her arrest, Perla jumped out of a window in order to escape, and changed her hair color in an attempt to disguise herself, all the while worried about her son. She went to Normandy to secure safety for George and almost immediately returned to work in Paris. Someone in the resistance, after being beaten and tortured provided names of other resistance fighters. The women who were named (Celine Perla being amongst one of them) were taken to Drancy, a French concentration camp outside of Paris, where in turn, they too were beaten and tortured. Mrs. Perla refused to identify the names of other fighters and was consequently deported to Auschwitz. Dr. Mengele chose her and others to be sent to block 10 where they were to be subjected to sterilization experiments. In the intervening time, George Perla was kept safe with his surrogate family where he was raised as a French catholic boy. Meanwhile, in block 10, Celine was rescued by a Czech Dr., who, instead of performing sterilization procedures, duped her superiors and simply performed blood tests, Volkas' mother was eventually sent to work as a slave laborer in and around Auschwitz.

Bernard Volkas heard that Celine Perla was in need of boots (which signified survival in the camps) and smuggled them to her, which is how they first encountered one another.

At the end of the war, after a prolonged march towards liberation, Volkas Sr. ended up in Buchenwald, Germany, half-dead. Recognized by a German political prisoner from his involvement in the Spanish Civil War, Bernard Volkas was nursed back to health, leading to his recognition of the distinction between a German and a

Nazi, which he upheld and disseminated throughout his lifetime. Bernard Volkas was eventually liberated on April 11th, 1945 and has since considered this date his birthday.

Mrs. Perla was consistently transferred from camp to camp and eventually escaped into the forest with a friend where they found the French and American Armies on April 15th, 1945, the date she too adopted as the day of her re-birth.

Celine Perla went back to Paris and found her son alive. There, she divorced from her first husband, as they had grown apart after their long separation and respective tumultuous experiences. Bernard Volkas went looking for Celine in Paris, where they ultimately found each other, fell in love and married. Celine became pregnant with Armand who was born in 1951 in Paris. The Volkas-Perla family (Celine, Bernard, George and Armand) immigrated to the USA where they settled in Southern California in 1953.

Post-war, Bernard and Celine Volkas became anti-religious, and instead adopted a traditional value system based on their respective cultural and historical backgrounds. During the MaCarthy Era, the Volkas' renounced communism, feeling betrayed by it, however, they were bound by secrecy, hiding their communistic roots, consistently fearing deportation due to the dominant anti-Communist mentality of the time.

Armand Volkas grew up in a working class neighborhood and *came to consciousness* in Southern California trying to make sense of his families' legacy and his own cultural identity. This story is at the root of his work and forms the basis for his creating the Healing the Wounds of History project.

Involvement in experimental theatre

"Theatre saved my life."

Armand Volkas obtained his MFA at UCLA, where he was professionally trained as an actor. During this time, he became increasingly interested in the concept of cultural identity as it relates to self-esteem, consistently questioning “what is culture?”

In 1975, Armand Volkas joined an experimental theatre company where he was asked to direct a theatre piece. Most of the company members were Jewish and several were children of Holocaust survivors. Volkas and the company worked for four months together, creating a theatre piece exploring the legacy of the Holocaust. A therapist was among one of the companies’ members and the whole idea of dramatherapy and theatre to explore personal and collective histories and legacies originated from there. The collective theatre piece called “Survivors” became a huge sensation and ran for many months, reaching numerous audiences.

After the success of “Survivors”, Volkas decided that “*the greatest Fuck-You to Hitler was to create a new Jewish culture*” and from 1976-1982, his company mounted theatre pieces based on this theme. As the director of this company, Volkas found himself increasingly caught up with and focused on fundraising and closed his company. He and his wife briefly went travelling, ultimately settling in the San Francisco Bay area to be close to his family. There, he embarked on *legitimizing* the seeds that were planted from his experiences in socially relevant theatre, exploring alternative options, eventually turning towards dramatherapy.

Humanizing the “other” and Acts of Reconciliation.

Armand Volkas developed a friendship with a German foreign exchange student named Emeran Mayer during high school. Emeran was the first person of German descent that Armand Volkas had encountered and he was warmly welcomed into the

Volkas family home. In an interview with Laura Davis, Volkas states “My friendship with Emeran was my first act of reconciliation” (2002, p. 226).

They met up twelve years after graduation on a hiking trail in the Santa Monica Mountains and resumed their friendship.

My mother began to develop Alzheimer’s disease. At the time of her diagnosis, Emeran became our family doctor and advisor. It was as if a strange circle had been drawn. German doctors at Auschwitz had operated on my mother and here was a young German doctor from the next generation who was now in a nurturing and healing role. An act of reconciliation took place in my family around my mother’s illness and I felt the need to take that sense of healing out into the bigger world. (Davis, 2002, p.228)

Which is exactly what Volkas eventually did by means of creating his dramatherapeutic social change model.

Recognizing the perpetrator within.

“There is a perpetrator and victim in all of us.”

In 1986, Volkas worked with a 21 year-old man who murdered two adults and an eighteen-month-old child. Volkas was employed for a year throughout his client’s pre-death penalty trial using dramatherapy, working closely, submerging himself in the “mind of a perpetrator”. Ultimately, the process motivated Volkas’ need to comprehend the mechanism that could enable this type of dehumanization, urging him to question:

“What was happening when he took the knife and stuck it into these 3 human beings. I was interested in how people can de-humanize others enough to rape and kill.”

Volkas testified at his clients’ trial and humanized this man enough to get him off death row, leading to his entrenched interest in the perpetrator in all of us, which is an imperative theme explored in his dramatherapeutic process.

Creation and expansion of “Healing the Wounds of History (HTWH)”

Volkas continued to work with sons and daughters of Jewish Holocaust survivors, this time with inherently therapeutic intent. After some time, Volkas began to identify that victims coming together tended to perpetuate their own victimization. This propelled Volkas’ curiosity as to the legacies of German children of Nazi’s, tapping into his fascination to comprehend the malevolence behind the Holocaust in the hopes of *transforming* trauma. Volkas brought together his first group of 7 children of Holocaust survivors and 7 children of Nazis in the San Francisco Bay area in 1989 and Healing the Wounds of History was born.

Moving towards consciously employing therapeutic theatrical and family systems models, Volkas now *legitimately* juxtaposes the eclectic and diverse fields of experimental theatrical, dramatherapy, sociodrama, psychodrama, group therapy, transactional analysis, marriage and family therapy, intercultural communication and education (via public outreach playback theatre performances).

Volkas’ model can be construed as a response to the “external pressure put on us to maintain the clear-cut division between the evil and the good” (Bar-On, 1995), enabling participants to “look at people beyond our tribal ego perspective” (1995, p. 265), creating *empathic cultures* one workshop at a time.

Chapter II - Summary of current literature

The work of Armand Volkas is informed by an assortment of sources. As this project is among one of the early and initial documentation's of Volkas' method from a dramatherapeutic perspective, the links in the literature are not automatically apparent; I believe that this is due to the lacuna in the area of dramatherapeutic applications on a sociopolitical level. Therefore, it is my aim to tease out the common ground that exists in the literature published in the respective fields of psychology, dramatherapy, psychodrama, experimental theatre, and inter-cultural communication culminating in the beginnings of a working bibliography in addressing the relevant literature vis-à-vis Volkas' model.

Psychology

Logotherapy

Much of Volkas' approach can be attributed to Frankl's (1959) Logotherapy; a field within psychotherapy developed as a consequence of Frankl's personal experiences and memories of World War II. Logotherapy is based on the tenet that meaning can be created out of suffering. Allport (1984) best illustrates Frankl's vision in the preface to *Man's Search for Meaning: An introduction to Logotherapy*, by writing:

Frankl distinguishes several forms of neurosis, and traces some of them to the failure of the sufferer to find meaning and a sense of responsibility in his existence. Freud stresses a frustration in the sexual life; Frankl, frustration in the 'will-to-meaning'. (Allport, 1984, p.8)

Frankl found that the means to his survival during three years imprisonment in Auschwitz and other concentration camps was rooted in exploring and understanding the essence of existence as well as the meaning of love and of suffering. The author powerfully states:

We must never forget that we may also find meaning in life even when confronted with a hopeless situation, when facing a fate that cannot be changed. For what then matters is to bear witness to the uniquely human potential at its best, which is to transform a personal tragedy into a triumph, to turn one's predicament into a human achievement. When we are no longer able to change a situation-just think of an incurable disease such as inoperable cancer-we are challenged to change ourselves. (Frankl, 1959, p.116)

This is the key to Volkas' inter-cultural communication and dramatherapeutic model. Most of the ghosts confronted throughout (HTWH) workshops reside in the past and haunt participants in the present. Meaning making allows these ghosts to be put to rest and for significance to emerge from torment, challenging predetermined perceptions of victim and perpetrator roles, resulting in an integration of past experience with future aspirations and purpose.

Volkas consciously explores participant's historical traumata, allowing it to transform and become perceived as a legacy, re-framing anguish and pain, attributing a new and more constructive meaning to suffering. Volkas challenges participants to activate change within themselves, their own family systems as well as social spheres, spreading the intoxicating and empowering effect of his work beyond the personal, to the collective "tribal ego" (Bar-On, 1995).

Group Psychotherapy

Due to the occasionally distorted boundaries between personal growth gatherings and therapy groups, Irving Yalom (1970) attempts to delineate the discrepancy by separating the "front" traits (techniques, form, aura and language) from the "core" characteristics of group psychotherapy. Yalom describes *core* as consisting of "those aspects of the experience which are intrinsic to the therapeutic process...the bare-boned mechanisms of change" (1970 p. viii).

Yalom distinguishes ten factors as contributing to the efficacy of group

psychotherapy and lists them as:

- 1) Imparting of information
- 2) Instillation of hope
- 3) Universality
- 4) Altruism
- 5) The corrective recapitulation of the primary family group
- 6) Development of socializing techniques
- 7) Imitative behavior
- 8) Interpersonal learning
- 9) Group cohesiveness
- 10) Catharsis (Yalom, 1970, p.5)

Although listed as separate dynamics, the author advises that they are “intricately interdependent” (p.60). Teasing apart its multifaceted composition, Yalom came to the conclusion that the dynamic process of group psychotherapy cannot be reduced to a formulaic and systemic intervention, however, points out the universal traits of belonging to a therapeutic community.

Volkas’ workshops, although brief, follow the principles outlined by Yalom above, however, due to the potent nature motivating the gathering of (HTWH) participants, many of the aforementioned curative factors occur almost instantaneously once the group has convened.

While comparing therapists’ and participants’ views of the restorative dynamics underlying group treatment, Yalom affirms that “there is a common conceptual thread running through the patients’ views about therapy. They consistently emphasize the importance of the relationship and the personal, human qualities of their therapist” (1970 p.63).

Armand Volkas epitomizes this humanity so integral to the group process by inviting participants to share at their leisure, using his own story as an antecedent to initiating the workshops and continuously checking in and attending to individual as well as group needs. This almost immediately creates comfort within the group allowing for a deep yet brief exploration of the dynamics underlying the multiple traumatic legacies in the room.

Bowen Family Systems Theory

Volkas' MA in dramatherapy was accompanied by a Marriage and Family Therapy License, as is the requirement in the state of California. The study of family systems theory further inspired Volkas to develop his model and he cites Bowen theory (1975) as guiding and adding towards his therapeutic interventions. Bowen Family Systems Theory emerged as a product of Bowen's attempt to develop a scientific approach to studying human behavior with a concentration on man's relatedness to all life. The term family system was coined to represent the interconnections and impact that family has on the individual. Papero (1990) states that Bowen employed the word *system* because "a change in one part produces compensatory change in other parts...Bowen theory rests on factual knowledge gained from direct observation of the human family" (1990, p.4). Guided by the assumption that emotional illness is a biological construct, Bowen (1975) writes that emotional functioning:

...includes the force that biology defines as instinct, reproduction, the automatic activity controlled by the autonomic nervous system, subjective emotional and feeling states, and the forces that govern relationship systems. In broad terms, the emotional system governs the 'dance of life' in all living things. (1975, p.380)

Bowen theory is guided by eight beliefs. Developed after studying affect attunement between schizophrenic children and their mothers, the initial six concepts

are: differentiation of self, the triangle, nuclear family emotional process, family projection process, multigenerational transmission process, and sibling position. "In 1974 Bowen added his name to the theory along with two additional concepts, emotional cutoff and emotional process in society" (Papero, 1990, p. 40).

Paying utmost attention to the subtlety and intensity of non-verbal cues, Bowen's theory rests on the principle that relationships are pathways, allowing feeling states to be transmitted by and to human organisms.

Differentiation of self constitutes as the core of Bowen theory, placing an emphasis on degree of autonomy in relation to the *togetherness* of the family unit, as well as upholding the division between cognitive and affective reactivity.

Bowen's triangle is used to depict the habitual and conventional behavior of a dyad experiencing anxiety or distress, usually involving or inviting a third party to mediate or absorb the anxiety, subsequently altering the initial dynamic. Papero posits that the triangle "addresses the mechanism involved in anxiety transfer and arousal of the broader family group" (1990 p.51).

The nuclear family emotional process is perceived as the fusing of two partners of similar differentiation, forming a mutual self, otherwise described as a "we-ness". The nuclear family emotional process is then divided into four patterns and is broken down into: marital conflict, emotional distance, dysfunction in a spouse and transmission of a problem to the child, usually resulting in a triggering of the previously illustrated triangle.

The family projection process is based on the observation that parent's dysfunction naturally leads to the insertion of the child. Papero states: "The intensity of the parent-

child involvement is characteristic of past generations as well. Its appearance and intensity in one generation is the cumulative effect of what has happened in preceding generations” (1990, p.59). This suggestion constitutes as the basis for the concept of multigenerational transmission. In a family comprised of several siblings, one is more susceptible to involvement in this process; usually it is the child who is least differentiated from the parent(s). Sibling position is another factor contributing to family systems theory and indicates “trends and patterns of behavior that generally characterize persons occupying a given sibling position” (1990, p.61).

Bowen’s concept of emotional cutoff pertains to the approach taken by individuals to handle emotional connections to their parents and other important individuals in their lives, usually indicated by physical and emotional proximity or distance.

Bowen’s last concept expands his philosophy to the emotional processes functioning in society, citing it as similar to the family system and reflective of the intensity of anxiety at a given point in time. Papero best illustrates this by commenting:

The emotional climate and processes of society represent yet another element in the emotional climate of the family. The anxious society, like the anxious family, has difficulty resolving its problems without polarization around an issue, cutoff, reciprocal over- and underfunctioning, and so forth. The result is a series of crises, generally resolved on the basis of restoring comfort rather than a thoughtful approach based upon principles and a degree of respect for differing viewpoints. (1990, p.64).

Volkas’ model directly addresses this final process while concomitantly taking all of Bowen’s components into consideration. Much of the model is based on the family dynamic and most participants in Volkas’ workshops are direct survivors of trauma or the carriers of their family’s historical legacy. Bowen’s theory emphasizes the connections between the autonomous adult, the multigenerational transmission of trauma

and the effect that anxiety can have on society as a whole and Volkas consciously enlists this model when conducting HTWH workshops.

PTSD and the Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma

The consequences of surviving an intense life-threatening situation may be long term and strenuous and may be passed down from generation to generation. Danieli states that “although multigenerational consequences (Albeck, 1994) of trauma clearly exist, their phenomenology, etiology, and the precipitating conditions for their emergence are highly complex” (p.670). While distinctions undoubtedly subsist across historical, political and sociocultural elements, Danieli universally found that “massive trauma shapes the internal representation of reality of several generations, becoming an unconscious organizing principle passed on by parents and internalized by their children, and constituting the matrix within which normal developmental conflict takes place” (1998, p. 670).

Armand Volkas’ work is founded on this principle of cultural trauma as a legacy or birthright, and at the crux of this legacy is the personal narrative. By inventing, modifying and employing existing exercises whose aim is to deconstruct identity, participants are encouraged to acknowledge, begin to understand and to make peace with their *wounded child* within.

In investigating the degree to which culture impacts on the transmission of trauma, Rousseau and Drapeau proposition that

An understanding of intergenerational transmission of trauma in light of the strategies devised by various cultures may not only enhance our prevention and intervention efforts for those suffering the consequences of direct or indirect trauma but may also open up avenues for understanding how the hate and hostility that underlie many modern conflicts as much as, if not more than, immediate economic interests, have been passed on from time immemorial. (1998, p. 484)

Volkas' model honors this cultural specificity and particularity of traumatic legacy while aspiring to encourage individuals of various backgrounds to associate and identify with their counterparts, bridging otherwise insuperable gaps through dramatic therapeutic and verbal processes.

Rousseau and Drapeau advocate the importance of specificity of culture time place and trauma as they relate to and dictate the intricacy of an individual's experience. The authors equally attribute four areas as principally relevant to the significance of the influence and impact of culture on multigenerational traumata... "posttraumatic signs and symptoms, changes in family dynamics, individual and collective meanings associated with trauma, and reparative processes" (1998, p. 466). Volkas' model addresses all of these elements simultaneously without simplifying individuals' personal, cultural and familial experiences, creating a *culture of empathy*, one workshop at a time. By enlisting one member of the group as the protagonist and employing various dramatherapeutic and psychodramatic exercises, group members are encouraged to witness, participate and share experiences or memories incited by others stories or dynamics thus encouraging understanding and compassion. This is imperative to the healing process and is precisely what sets Volkas' work apart from psychotherapists working solely on the diagnosis of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The group climate fosters an air of reassurance and encouragement allowing individuals of different and oftentimes opposing backgrounds to connect and begin the critical reparative process earlier described by Rousseau and Drapeau in order to negotiate and begin to heal the traumatic legacy being transmitted.

In investigating the scarcely documented and taboo-laden legacies of children of Collaborators, Lindt (1998) advocates social support as the single most important factor in coping with traumatic stress. Lindt emphasizes that “modern individualism notwithstanding, the tendency to judge children by their parents operates in all of us” (1998 p.169). The author describes the lack of social support for children of collaborators as stemming from family secrets, thus impeding developmental processes and resulting in descendants’ exhibiting symptoms associated with social anxiety and poor self-esteem. Although self-help groups were initiated in the Netherlands in the early 1980’s, the group cohesion so greatly required for healing was nearly impossible to realize as each group member, having been silenced for so long was a remote individual. Lindt asserts that “being silent about such an essential topic as one’s own background, which can be a daily topic, ends all spontaneity” (1998, p. 169). Volkas’ use of the group modality as well as psychodramatic tools concomitantly encourages and fosters a sense social support as well as spontaneity, addressing the need for children of collaborators or perpetrators to come to terms with “the handicap of their family backgrounds” (1998, p. 170) by developing distinct individual identities.

Additionally, Lindt describes several research studies wherein children of collaborators (recently included in the category *children of war*) have also reported positive experiences associated with the helping professions. The features of responsibility and dependability of helpers, unconditional acceptance as well as impartial and objective listening and witnessing were among some of the affirmative outcomes of help.

Essential in experiencing the liberation so many years after 1945 is to be allowed to be there with one’s story. Telling this story engenders insight and the capacity to

come to terms and cope with a hindering past, a toilsome present, and an insecure future.

Insights that contribute to self-acceptance are important. Among these, identifying unfounded guilt feelings and weakening them by reinforcing self-esteem and laying the foundation for the conviction that one has the right to be there are paramount. (Lindt, 1998, p.171).

Volkas' workshops encourage this sharing of personal narrative as well as family history, enlisting the inherently powerful capacity of story as a conduit for connection amongst otherwise alienated or reticent participants. Healing the wounds of History takes into account the links between cultural identity, family history or legacy and self-esteem. These workshops seek to begin the reparative process by directly addressing individual and collective cultural wounds as well as ingrained victim and perpetrator roles; serving as the groundwork to establishing positive self-esteem without discounting the importance of honoring familial legacies of historical trauma.

While studying the aftereffects and legacy of the narrowly documented Turkish genocide of the Armenians, Kupelian et al. (1998) found that much healing is attributed to the acknowledgement process. As cited by Kupelian (1998, p.206) "According to Sullivan (1953), validation of a traumatic experience is an essential step toward resolution and closure. In addition, a perpetrator's explicit expression of acknowledgement and remorse has enormous value in healing the victim" (Montville, 1987). Volkas' method not only addresses the importance of recognizing and validating the victimized, but also emphasizes victim's acknowledgement of the perpetrator residing within. It is this important discrepancy which sets Volkas' work apart from other approaches to cultural reconciliation.

Jewish Identity and self esteem

Volkas personally cites the work of Judith Weinstein Klein as contributing significantly to his dramatherapeutic social change model. Klein worked in the San Francisco Bay Area from the early 1970's until her untimely death in 1996 and developed a therapeutic model geared towards exploring negative cultural stereotypes. Drawing from Ethnotherapy, Klein sought to scrutinize and divest the pessimistic typecast of Jewish "princes and princesses". Unfortunately, Klein's model is scarcely documented, limited to her Doctoral dissertation at Berkeley in 1977: although she taught at Berkeley, disseminating her philosophy, empowering clients and students correspondingly to embrace their respective cultural identities. Weinstein-Klein became aware of Volkas' work and the two exchanged ideas and became friends. According to Volkas himself, he continues to employ powerful exercises generated from her paradigm as a warm-up geared at easing participants into his HTWH workshops.

Transactional analysis

Volkas was trained in transactional analysis and cites the model as extensively contributing to his HTWH model as well as his style as a therapist. As conveyed by Steiner (1974), transactional analysis is based on three fundamental concepts:

- 1) All individuals are born O.K,
- 2) People experiencing emotional difficulties are nevertheless intelligent and must be actively involved in their own healing process,
- 3) All emotional obstacles are curable given sufficient knowledge combined with an appropriate approach.

Steiner argues that the essence of emotional trouble, depression, and psychosis are passed on from parents to infants. The author maintains that the "I'm O.K., You're O.K. life position is the position people need to have in order to achieve their fullest potential" (1974, p.3).

Placing an emphasis on external social pressures and interactions as destructive and repressive, transactional analysis views what transpires between people as contributing to emotional disturbance, depression and psychosis, in lieu of adopting a medically based diagnostic position to mental health.

Eric Berne, founder of transactional analysis, implemented an innovative approach to therapy by treating his clients as equals, assuming one simple form of communication with Doctors and clients alike. Berne displaced the myth that therapists must employ jargon to be effective and instead developed a working language, which spoke to his clientele, inviting them to take an active role in their personal therapeutic process. Berne instituted therapeutic contracts (wherein clients are informed of the commitments and guidelines involved in participating in therapy), inviting clients to take responsibility for assisting in realizing their therapeutic goals and staying within the limitations of the contract itself. This approach implies that “psychiatric knowledge can and should be made available and comprehensible to all parties involved” (Steiner, 1974, p.6).

In Transactional Analysis, every interaction and ego state can be reduced to 3 roles, characterized by affect, dealings, gestures and decisions. Reduced to parent (modeled from childhood by one or both parents- the “must” or “should” pattern), adult (present in the here and now, cognitively processing and calculating consequences) and child (affective drives and needs reflecting client’s child self) roles, transactional analysis views the life as a script. In the *lifescript*, these 3 roles epitomize the messages of:

Do’s (which are also referred to as strokes, akin to behaviorism’s reinforcement) and don’ts (injunctions), decisions (stemming from the child ego state buying into the

injunctions imposed by the parent), and redecisions (which are made by the adult ego state in reference to current scripts).

Transactional Analysis suggests revising lifescritps. Steiner quotes Berne who writes:

Games appear to be segments of larger, more complex sets of transactions called scripts...a script is a complex set of transactions, by nature recurrent, but not necessarily recurring since a complete performance may require a whole lifetime...The object of script analysis is to 'close the show and put a better one on the road. (1974, p.16)

Volkas continues Bernes' traditions of displacing the power differential inherent in traditional psychotherapy, intuiting into clients and participants, trusting his instinct to guide his interventions, and revising participants' lifescritps as they relate to embedded roles and messages surrounding familial historical trauma, cultural identity and self-esteem. Using theatrical and embodied mediums, Volkas' literally undertakes Berne's metaphorical analogy and, after alerting participants to their lifescritps and guiding them through the redecision process, directs a revised and improved performance.

Breaking the taboo... creating cultures of empathy

Israeli psychologist Dan Bar-On began bringing groups of children of survivors and children of perpetrators as well as German and Israeli students together to express and explore the "collective memory" (Friedlander, 1992) of the Holocaust. This was done in the hopes of "relating it to the present social perspective in both groups" (Bar-On et al, 1995, p.98).

Prior to undertaking this challenging and pioneering enterprise, Bar-On found that "only the descendants of the victims and the victimizers who have worked through the silence and acknowledged the traumatic or atrocious part of their family biography could test the possibility of a *secondary reconciliation*." (1995, p. 258) The author

quotes Dorff (1992) who posits that reconciliation and forgiveness may not be possible in first generation communities of victims and perpetrators. Dorff hypothesizes that this desired reconciliation will not be attainable collectively, but “will rather be achieved little by little, through joint word and action, just as personal forgiveness usually is...” (p. 214). Bar-On sought to uncover whether bringing these divergent groups of descendents together could serve a fundamentally reconciliatory purpose, offering personal support while working through participants’ respective familial traumata. The author considered this goal vital and necessary however secondary to his primary research question...

Can such encounters also affect people on both sides who were not personally involved in the encounters? If such a generalizing effect could be shown, these encounters might become relevant for a variety of other social contexts in which a totalitarian regime has broken the fragile social contact. One group imposed its control by using extreme violence and humiliation against another group... Only by bringing together descendents of the perpetrators and victims, addressing how atrocities had taken place between their parents, working mutually through the betrayed trust, may a new social contract be established, if at all. (Baron et al, 1995, p.259).

Volkas model attempts to address the same questions by means of bridging traditional group psychotherapy with the aforementioned ‘self-help’ group model as well as dramatherapy, sociodrama and psychodrama, reaching multiple divergent populations. The aim of these groups is not solely steeped in exploring traumatic legacies, but additionally aspires to create an empathic culture, culminating in the offer of hope in the form of acts of service and acts of creation.

Volkas’ work seeks to accomplish similar objectives as the efforts of Bar-On, encouraging the group to act as an antecedent to opening up a larger, broader, dialogue with the world. Both innovative pioneers’ models allow for and encourage aggression,

conflict, and despair as well as the positive elements of sharing stories, reactions, poems and social contact. Both models seek to leave their participants empowered to generalize their therapeutic gains and give back to the community at large by discussing and sharing their experiences of the work and educating the public, at times employing social outreach endeavors of their own. Volkas expands on the theme by enlisting the intrinsically healing value of the creative arts to disseminate a feeling state, moving the work beyond the cognitive to the personal and less distanced: from remoteness and segregation towards incorporation and integration.

Bar-On's method was group-centered, honoring the communal as well as the personal, allowing the group process and energy to challenge boundaries and create a safe space for working through and expressing feelings related to the work. As Bar-On (1998) clearly states "within the more secure group context, members of the group can test, construct, and reconstruct various undiscussable aspects of their identity and memory in relation to themselves and their relevant others" (Bion, 1961, p.98).

Although the latter stages of Bar-On's process employs the use of art making, it is not the focal point of his work wherein the emphasis is placed on cognitive elements rather than embodied ones. Volkas' model, conceived of circa the same period as Bar-On's adds a dramatic perspective to this theme, employing the power of the creative arts as well as the group to contain emotions, drive the material further, witness the sharing of personal stories and emphatically reflect the perspective of the "other".

Inter-cultural communication

The field of inter-cultural communication additionally influences Volkas' work. Given that his wife Anna Mindess works as an interculturalist focusing primarily on Deaf

as well as American cultures, an innate appreciation for her work has propelled Volkas to incorporate influences and dynamics stemming from this comparatively new field.

Mindess describes culture as it pertains to society as: “not a haphazard arbitrary collection of behaviors but rather [consists of] parts which together make up an *integrated system*” (1999, p. 18). As this incorporated structure, Mindess (1999) describes each culture as an appropriate set of modifications, aiding members in confronting and dealing with environmental challenges. Comparing culture to an iceberg, immersed in water and revealing only the tip, Mindess warns against constructing understanding via observation of the visible and urges readers to consider the base of the iceberg, taking into account the fact that the surface is only a part contributing towards the whole: “Ignorance of the unrecognized differences between cultures, like the unseen part of an iceberg can have equally destructive consequences. The study of cultural variations, however, may provide us with maps to navigate these treacherous yet fascinating seas” (Mindess, 1999, p.20).

In order to communicate effectively across cultures, many factors must be taken into account in avoidance of ethnocentricity: primarily, proxemics (relational space), paralinguistics (speech rate, intonation, silence, volume), kinesics (gestures, body language, eye gaze, facial expression) and cultural values among countless supplementary considerations. Accentuating the differences between collectivist and individualist societies, polychronic and monochronic cultures as well as individual customs’ emphasis on past, present and future, the author delineates the complexity surrounding this topic in the hopes of illuminating insight and awareness.

Mindess (1999) warns that although members of two different cultures attempting to communicate may speak a similar language, there may be an invisible cultural difference in meaning and cites four elements as contributing to this: shared values, learned values, cultural systems and subconscious awareness. The author alerts readers attempting intercultural communication that it has the potential to become problematic when employing ones own assumptions in a different cultural context.

Volkas' model allows for these variations in culture to be acknowledged and honored by encouraging participants to develop empathic listening and reflecting skills, paying respect to the influence that culture has on the individual as well as the collective.

Dramatherapeutic Influences

Mr. Volkas consciously enlists a variety of dramatherapeutic techniques and exercises, customarily drawing from Moreno's (1934) sociodrama and (1959) psychodrama, as well as Fox's (1994) playback theatre. Although these three theatrically based therapeutic models differ greatly, what makes them similar is that they consciously allow for and encourage individual as well as group identification while engaging in creative and imaginative processes.

Moreno

Jacob Levy Moreno, the father of psychodrama and sociodrama, is also credited with co-founding group psychotherapy in 1932. The evolution of these forms came about naturally based on his early socially relevant work concerning the rights of Viennese prostitutes. After the war, Moreno began to submerge himself in the Viennese theatre scene, eventually creating his own theatre of spontaneity followed by the inception of therapeutic theatre. Moreno's experiences in the theatre allowed him to "glimpse the

potentiality that man can be an actor in the theatre of his own life and thereby recognize and resolve some of his conflicts” (Marineau, 1989, p. ix).

Marineau (1989) describes Moreno’s fundamental vision and philosophy as emphasizing the importance for each individual to express themselves spontaneously and creatively

...in a world where everyone is part of a group or social entity. From this perspective, everyone has to learn to carry on a meaningful dialogue with themselves and the world, the I and Thou dialogue, giving rise to the concept of ‘self and encounter’ with its implication of social responsibility. (Marineau, 1989 p. 108)

Taking personal responsibility for the self both in and through the group gave rise to Moreno’s creation of sociometry and psychodrama, embracing group psychotherapy as a powerful mechanism for activating wellness and change (both personal and social).

From spontaneous and therapeutic theatre to sociodrama and psychodrama

In the foreword to the second edition of The Theatre of Spontaneity, Moreno (1983) compares the apparent relationship between psychodrama and Stanislavski’s method of representational acting by stating:

“...Whereas Stanislavski used improvisation partially in order to perfect the performance, I permitted, even encouraged imperfection in order to attain total spontaneity” (1983, p. c).

Spontaneity, as described by Moreno is “(1) deviation from the “laws” of nature and (2) the matrix of creativity” (p.8) and is desirable in affecting positive change, allowing and encouraging the self “a cluster of roles (private plus collective)” (p.8) to expand and respond to long-standing situations in novel ways.

Moreno elaborates on the concept of the spontaneous actor by stating “The spontaneity player is centrifugal. The spirit of the role is not in a book, as it is with the

actor. It is not outside of him in space, as with the painter or the sculptor, but a part of himself" (1983, p.42).

This serves as the eventual basis for the creation of psychodrama, however, Moreno's vision changes yet again, expanding from spontaneous theatre and moving towards the creation of therapeutic theatre, when Moreno revised his philosophy and deduced that

"...*The true symbol of the therapeutic theatre is the private home...* The proscenium is the front door, the window sill and the balcony. The auditorium is in the garden and the street." (p. 89).

Therapeutic theatre was liberated from restriction, from a programmed artistic product and gave rise to the spontaneity so greatly desired by Moreno during his early days of social and theatrical activism. By enabling realism enacted by authentic people and inviting the community to witness performances, Moreno came closer to his dream of therapeutic theatre and articulates "...In the therapeutic theatre reality and illusion are one" (p.89)

While refining his thoughts on spontaneous and therapeutic theatre, Moreno began consolidating his ideas and developed the concept of sociodrama, which Sternberg and Garcia describe as:

...A group action method in which participants act out agreed-upon social situations spontaneously...sociodrama gets people out of their chairs and exploring *in action* topics of interest to them...it taps into the truth about humanity that we are each more like than we are different. (p.4)

Sociodrama enables group leaders to measure the interpersonal relationships and spontaneity within the group context. Sociometry is described by Marineau as "the mathematical study of the psychological properties of a population by quantitative and

qualitative analysis” (1989, p.114). The author describes the sociodramatic subject as the “groups values and prejudices” (1989, p.71) contrary to psychodrama’s concentration on individual growth within the context of the group.

Sociodrama eventually gave rise to the birth of Psychodrama, an active method of group psychotherapy, in which an individual protagonist chosen by the group, plays out a dynamic stemming from a personal life event or relationship. The protagonist chooses members of the group to act as auxiliaries (people in their life) as well as an auxiliary ego (a participant to act as the protagonists’ double), enacting, supporting and witnessing the protagonists’ grapple for spontaneity and catharsis with regards to the struggle being dramatized. The therapist assumes the role of director, guiding the action towards the eventual realization of catharsis or a newfound sense of spontaneity by the protagonist. This is then moved into a forum for discussion of witnesses and auxiliaries personal feelings stimulated by the psychodrama itself. The aim of the dialogue is to allow for and encourage identification among group members with the protagonist, and is not to be conducted as a critique of the enactment or the protagonists’ choices. The desired result is one of unification and mutual empathy.

Volkas employs among other devices, the psychodramatic framework of guiding a warm-up that reveals the protagonist, which leads towards a psychodrama and then follows this by encouraging participants’ personal sharing which acts as a conduit for discussion immediately following the dramatization. His model also enlists several sociodramatic and psychodramatic exercises in order to stimulate the group energy, encourage playfulness and comfort, as well as identifying the *Tele* within the group.

Tele is the term that Moreno coined to illustrate the fundamental magnetism and repugnance that exists among group members. Leveton (2001) describes *Tele* as “the invisible string that binds some members although they may never have laid eyes on each other before, and the invisible rays that seem to keep others from even beginning an encounter” (p.3). In high functioning groups, members may exhibit *Tele* by unconsciously choosing an auxiliary who identifies with the assigned role, acting as a realistic double and furthering the action of the psychodrama along as well as reaping personal benefits from their experience in role.

Moreno believed that the participants should actively demonstrate autonomy in reference to their self-actualization and therapeutic process and states:

One can measure the educational or therapeutic value of an instrument by the degree to which it stimulates the autonomy of individuals or groups. The degree of autonomy, for instance, which psychoanalysis permits a subject to attain is limited to the verbal dimension....A large number of not yet existent instruments can be envisioned which would mobilize and sustain in a controlled fashion larger and larger areas of personality until a level of warming up is reached by which the actor *in situ* is completely taken in and released. Such instruments enabling high degrees of autonomy are psychodrama and sociodrama. (p. 205)

Volkas' Healing the wounds of History model is related to the abovementioned instruments described by Moreno as enabling and encouraging autonomy among its' participants using affective and active methods combined with the analysis and sharing so greatly advocated by Moreno. Focusing on the roles, reactions, ingrained processes and feelings surrounding historical traumata, Volkas expanded Moreno's vision, enabling short-term dramatherapeutic explorations of a specific theme which allow the *cluster of roles* associated with familial and historical traumatic legacies to expand and eventually become released. Volkas relies on the autonomy of the learner to move the

effect beyond the workshop experience by advocating the foundation of acts of creativity and service, reaching outwards towards participants' respective communities.

Volkas employs various tools of psychodrama and sociodrama in his workshops, encouraging the exploration of individual as well as group dynamics revolving around personal and collective traumatic legacies. Paying utmost attention to individualism and personal narrative, Volkas' gift of sensitivity and capacity for holding allow him to relate the personal to the collective without diminishing the integrity of the protagonist's experience. Drawing from psychodrama's customary invitation for auxiliaries and witnesses to share their own personal feelings stimulated by the enactment, Volkas encourages the sharing to develop into a medium for discussion about the pertinent and universal themes elicited by the enactment.

Role theory

Role dictates most dramatherapeutic interactions. Role theory, conceived by Moreno and then elaborated on by dramatherapist and author Robert J. Landy (1993), perceives role as serving many functions and breaks it down into six distinct components:

- ♦ A unit of personality.
- ♦ A container of thoughts and feelings.
- ♦ A personality concept
- ♦ A performed character in theatre
- ♦ A metaphor for social life
- ♦ A method of treatment in drama therapy. (p. 8)

Role theory encourages clients to expand their role repertoire from solely comfortable and protective roles to new, challenging and previously unexplored roles, thus including and incorporating many different aspects of themselves into their daily lives.

In Who Shall Survive?, Moreno states that

...The individual craves to embody far more roles than those he is allowed to act out in life and even one or more varieties within the same role. Every individual is filled with different roles which he wants to become active in and that are present in him in different stages of development. It is from the active pressure which these multiple individual units exert upon the manifest official role that a feeling of anxiety is often produced. (1993, p. 195)

Volkas' workshops encourage the exploration of the various forms of victim and perpetrator as well as familial and societal roles, challenging participants' preconceived perceptions and awareness of their role systems, alerting each individual to the multiple roles residing within.

Playback Theatre

In addition to employing tools stemming from the respective fields of psychodrama, sociodrama and role theory, Volkas' pension for socially relevant theatre led to his implementation of the techniques of Playback. Playback theatre is an interactive theatrical forum combining storytelling with improvisation, eliciting material from its' spectators and bridging the gap between artist and witness. A member of the audience is invited to share a description of their present affective state or to tell a story which is then enacted by the company members. After each attempt at encapsulating the teller's experience, the performance is offered back to the teller for feedback and is periodically replayed based on the teller's need for additional or missing elements or desire for re-authoring.

Fox describes the impetus of the performance as to "take the verbal rendition of experience and translate it into not-so-verbal drama" (1994, p.38) enabling the meaning of the story to transcend the occasionally limiting capacity of words.

Fox, trained in psychodrama had similar intentions as those of Moreno when devising the model; the desired outcome being the realization of socially significant and relevant *authentic* improvisatory theatre. Fox elaborates on Victor Turner's concept of social drama, which Turner divided into four parts, beginning with a *breach of social order* moving towards a *shared sense of crisis*, followed by some sort of *redressive mechanism* and lastly culminating in a *new integration* or the *acceptance of permanent rupture* (1994, p.97). In playback, Turner's *redressive mechanism* is of paramount significance. According to Fox, "the social drama is resolved through dramatic ritual" (1994, p. 97).

Fox expands on Moreno's concepts of spontaneity and service and confidently states:

Our lives consist of a mammoth improvisation, in which each moment is a spontaneity test...Improvisational theatre is both a practicing ground for life and an arena for exploring further dimensions of mind...Spontaneity means mind and heart and body surpassing the boundaries of each. Spontaneity means unifying opposition. Spontaneity is play, is striving, is leaping beyond. (1994, p. 211).

Fox advocates the fundamentally therapeutic and socially relevant nature of the theatre by further developing Moreno's concept of service and applies it not only to the theatrical and therapeutic elements of playback but also to the practitioner, making reference to "...the courage of the true healer...to voluntarily absorb the pain and problems of others, face the challenge of their dilemmas, seek to guide them toward new visions-this takes a particular kind of commitment. " (Fox, 1994, p.214)

Volkas is indeed a healer of the nature described above by Fox, committed to absorbing and releasing feelings associated with the stories participants carry stemming from their respective traumatic birthrights. Using components from story theatre, these

oppressive histories are transformed into legacies, amended and reframed then integrated into participants' existing schemas.

Ritual Aspects of Theatre

Volkas' model is correspondingly influenced by the work of his colleague and friend Susana Pendzik. A recognized dramatherapist, Pendzik has written extensively on the comparison between the theatre stage and sacred space (1994), comparing the work of the dramatherapist to that of the Shaman. Tracing theatre back to its early roots, the author explores the transpersonal element inherent in creative ritual, citing the forum wherein ritual is practiced as consecrated

One of the first dramatherapists to make this comparison, Pendzik cites theatre and performance scholars as giving due weight to the importance and sacredness of the stage: an ancient quality equally affecting the dramatherapeutic process.

Pendzik states:

...a sacred space is a special place whose constitution is effected by breaking the infinite expanse into significant and nonsignificant territories. But to become significant, this spot cannot be established arbitrarily at any point in space; it must be located where the sacred has manifested itself. (p.25)

As dramatherapy is contracted and involves commitment, it is immediately imbued with the quality of significance described by the author above. The dramatherapeutic space is qualitatively different from traditional therapeutic space as the element of stage, a gateway to liminality is evoked and used as a forum to contain material, enabling participants to embody and eventually de-role, imbuing the process with a sense of ritual.

Pendzik goes on to explain that the theatre has been linked to the religious and spiritual from its inception and that dramatherapy's link to shamanism extends back to

the time of the ancient Greeks, when the theatre experience was laden with ceremony, generating catharsis among its spectators. The author also cites the Elizabethan influence of three cosmic regions (upper, lower and middle worlds) as reflecting shamanistic conceptions. Pendzik makes mention to the post modernist theatre's elimination of partition between spectator and performer as following yet amending this ritualistic sacred tradition by allowing for a direct communication: engulfing and physically affecting its audience due to its adoption of ground-breaking intimate proximal relationships. Pendzik elaborates:

The absence or presence of a formal stage does not affect its analogy to the sacred space. If anything, it reflects a change in the approach to the sacred. A symbolical examination of the stage reveals that the theatrical space contains in its essence most of the characteristics of the archetype. (1994, p. 28).

Physical environment is additionally considered to influence therapist/client interactions and Pendzik likens the therapeutic space to the stage as well as the realm of the Shaman, where space holds meaning and impacts upon wellness and healing: naming Shamans as living ancestors to the dramatherapeutic field. In both of these instances, liminality protects against unwarranted evil visitors.

Pendzik also cites the therapeutic community as considerably adding to the sacred nature of the dramatherapeutic experience as typified in the circle formation adopted by therapeutic groups which is infused with a great deal of meaning and symbolism. The author states: "... every therapy group builds a symbolical sacred space, the internal, secure zone, and this enclosure accentuates the connection among its members and creates a greater sense of intimacy" (1994, p.30).

Volkas' attentiveness to the significance of ritual, space and group heighten his practice and penetrates the Acts of Reconciliation project throughout each phase of the

model, allowing the sacred, ritualistic and spiritual to permeate his therapeutic interventions as well as unconsciously contribute to the dynamic of the group.

Theatrical Influences

Living Theatre

Julian Beck and Judith Malina co-founded the Living Theatre, post WWII, as a pacifist-anarchist response to the atrocious state of the world. Continuously emphasizing necessary political awareness, social action and art evoking change, these pioneers overcame abundant obstacles, moving to Europe in the early 1960's after most of their New York theatre venues had been shut down. Taking theatre to the streets, prisons and asylums among other venues, Living theatre impacted many with its consistently challenging and provoking subjects, making theatre accessible to the masses. Joseph Chaikin started his theatre career in the Living theatre in New York City and eventually went on to create the Open Theatre, continuing the tradition of imbuing art with socially and politically relevant themes, reaching out to communities to effect affirmative international revolution one audience at a time.

Living Theatre continues to impact Volkas' work, which is substantiated by his public outreach performances based on humanizing political and historical struggles. It continues to be a motivating force, permitting Volkas' work to influence audiences, evoking transformations one workshop and performance at a time.

Open Theatre

Volkas articulated during interviews in May and June 2004, that Joseph Chaikin's Open Theatre had an immense impact on him during his early years as a thespian and theatre director, and its influence continues to stimulate and inspire Volkas' therapeutic

endeavors. Dubbed the Open Theatre due to its liberating connotation and implying a receptiveness to change, Chaikin developed his socially relevant theatrical concepts following his involvement in the Living Theatre. The Open Theatre placed emphasis on the group modality, encouraging its members to connect authentically and organically through sound and motion, moving away from the realm of cognitive realism into affective reality. Making distinctions between inside and outside (private and public) expression and thought, Chaikin devised exercises whose aim was to allow actors to transform vision into social action. Pasolli (1970) describes Chaikin's innovative sound and movement techniques as significantly changing the face of modern theatre, likening his form to those of abstract artists of the time, moving "away from extant classical forms" (p. 4). The author goes on to elaborate on Chaikin's contribution of authentic sound and movement by stating:

The action, in short, engages the emotion rather than the other way around. Thus the actor must open himself to the emotional experience to which his action leads him; otherwise as in all schools of acting, his work will be lifeless even if technically correct. (1970, p.6)

Infused with anti-war themes, this theatrical movement was cultivated as a response to the stereotypes being embodied on film and the stage, prompting consumers of these mediums to pigeonhole themselves according to clichéd and formulaic representations. Chaikin (1972) writes: "The notion of characterization as understood in our American theatre is archaic and belongs with the whole hung-up attitude about the "other." Characterization formerly has been simply a set of mannerisms which disguise the actor and lend atmosphere" (1972, p.17).

The Open Theatre rejected this conventional and banal system and, instead focused on developing character through a study of *open questions*. Chaikin comments

on the presence of the Open Theatre actor by declaring “Each role, each work, each performance changes us as persons. The actor doesn’t start out with answers about living-but with wordless questions about experience” (1972, p.6).

Volkas’ model is founded on connecting authentically and organically through sound and movement, while simultaneously challenging cultural stereotypes and looking inwards towards the self in order to humanize and identify with the “other”. HTWH is based on exploring the *wordless questions about experience* described by Chaikin above, discovering and revealing previously unacknowledged aspects of the self while reaching out to the community, stirring, provoking and educating, reminiscent of Open Theatre’s commitment to inducing and inspiring change.

“When the theatre is limited to the socially possible, it is confined by the same forces which limit society” (Chaikin, 1972, p.23). Chaikin’s philosophical influences enabled him and his company to perceive the stage as a realm, as a gateway to another level of consciousness and the company of actors as a community, constructing, breaking down and reconstructing cooperative communal pieces based on collective themes, with continuity as the focal point. The group began meeting regularly as a study group and eventually began performing socially relevant theatre with political and social action motivating play selection. Chaikin introduced the concept of *jamming* as ‘the study of an emblem’ (1972, p.116). With its roots stemming from jazz music’s jam sessions, Chaikin’s jamming moves from storytelling to embodied rhythms, gestures or sounds related to the emblem, inciting other members of the company to join. Often the symbols and themes jammed on evolved into free and structured associations, imbued with significance and purpose.

Theatre can operate to alter perception in ways other than direct political action. It can create a way of seeing that in turn can aid human transformation. In addition to being aware of economic factors, political theater can be in touch with the subjective and mythological dimension of the people for which it is a voice. ...continually aiming at a collective situation within the group can promote a living response to the oppressive system under which we live. (Chaikin, 1972, p.118).

Chaikin's inspiration can be palpably sensed in Volkas' work, beginning with Volkas' Phase 1 introductory sound and movement explorations and permeating almost every aspect of his model. Volkas has stated in interviews with the author that he employs the concept of jamming throughout his workshops with participants as well as with his company of performers and students as a method of consolidating ideas and collaborating on themes. Volkas continuously challenges the perceptions and categorizations of workshop participants, company actors, students, clients and witnesses in the hopes of stirring and inciting social awareness and transformation.

Theatre of the Oppressed

Tearing down the walls between spectator and audience, protagonist and the masses, Augusto Boal, a Brazilian thespian, director, author and activist used his theatre to encourage the people to "reassume their protagonistic function in the theater and in society" (Boal, 1995, p. 119).

Initially created to incite change, a personal encounter with a peasant post-performance, caused Boal to revise his philosophy, adding more depth and dimension to his existing framework of motivating oppressed peoples to take charge and activate transformation. His former model of Agit-prop (agitation and propaganda) theater, although powerful and provocative, permitted the company to comment on struggle from the outside. In this new incarnation, Boal's theatre did not simply demonstrate activism from an artistic perspective, but instead *embodied* it. No longer taking an advice-giving

stance, Boal embraced Che Guevara's aphorism "solidarity means running the same risks" (1995, p.3). After several incarnations, Boal refined his philosophy, giving way to Forum Theater, which Boal describes as a desecration of the stage:

...that alter over which usually the artist presides alone. We destroy the work offered by the artists in order to construct a new work out of it, together. A theatre which is not didactic, in the old sense of the word and style, but pedagogic, in the sense of a collective learning. (Boal, 1995, p.7)

This was again refined when Boal encountered different aspects of oppression while exiled in Europe. Acknowledging that oppression takes the shape of diverse forms, the author decided to include individual problems, loneliness, fear of emptiness, and the impossibility of communicating with others to his lexicon of social injustices.

Boal sees theatre as "the first human invention and also the invention which paves the way for all other inventions and discoveries...*The human being not only 'makes' theatre: it 'is' theatre*" (1995, p.13).

Serving educational, social and oftentimes cathartic and therapeutic purposes, Boal describes his model by affirming:

The theatre of the oppressed is a system of physical exercises, aesthetic games, image techniques and special improvisations whose goal is to safeguard, develop and reshape this human vocation, by turning the practice of theatre into an effective tool for the comprehension of social and personal problems and the search for their solutions. (1995, p.15).

Whereas dramatherapy takes an empathic and neutral stance regardless of facilitators' personal beliefs or values, Theatre of the Oppressed takes an active revolutionary political position. Volkas draws inspiration from this model which can be distinguished by attending his workshops and playback performances. Giving a space for audience participation as well as feedback, his company has incorporated themes and

exercises derived from Boal's model, and offers their work to the community allowing them to resume their protagonistic function in the theatre.

Volkas' theatrical training led him to envision an amalgamation of Moreno's spontaneous actor with the collaborative energy of experimental and Open theatre, resulting in the establishment of the Living Arts Playback Theatre Ensemble who often enact and perform stories related to or stemming from Volkas' HTWH workshops. These performances strive to reach out to the community at large, combining an aesthetic and artistic form with theatre's fundamentally educational and communicative components. Volkas' playback company combines rehearsed fluid movement with spontaneous storytelling and re-enactment, resulting in an aesthetically sound and professional improvisatory experience tapping into the *humanity* of its' performers and audiences, inviting spectators to take on the role of protagonist, offering distance in the hopes of illuminating witnesses and evoking transformation.

Moreno posits that the spontaneity of man is limited due to an increase of population and interaction among individuals and groups, which inhibits freedom and, subsequently hinders openness. Moreno hypothesizes:

If we should decide to develop a spontaneous-creative universe to replace the one in which we live-and in which spontaneity is arbitrary and incidental-the spontaneity of one individual will stimulate the spontaneity of the other and the quantitative result will be the opposite of what we have at present. The spontaneity of mankind in such a future world order will multiply in direct proportion to the number of its groups and the number of interactions between them...It will be so enormous that the power of man, the exercise of his collective energy will surpass everything we have ever dreamed. (p.207)

Volkas stimulates spontaneity among his HTWH participants, accordingly inspiring the ripple effect described by Moreno above. Zerka T. Moreno (2000)

comments on the applications of her late husband's work in addressing political and social factors by stating

While Moreno's work has not yet become an instrument for universal peace as he, the utopian had hoped, we must not overlook the possibility of helping peaceful interaction on a small scale, hoping that this effort will become a cornerstone in a much larger edifice. Moreno thought we might learn more from small group interaction than from monolithic forms, as medical science began to throw light upon disease by dealing with its microscopic elements. (2000, p. xiv)

Volkas has taken Moreno's dream of utopia one step further by developing *Healing the Wounds of History*. Armand Volkas himself is a pioneer in transforming historical legacies of trauma by devising and implementing a dramatherapeutic model, which accommodates individual, group, as well as cultural, social and political needs. Volkas manages to concomitantly promote a safe, sensitive and strong *container* for the variety of issues that surface throughout his poignant workshops.

"Theatre and therapy are closely interwoven... There will be a theatre which is purely therapeutic, there will be a theatre which is free from therapeutic objective and there will be also many intermediary forms" (Moreno, 1983, p. f). Volkas' theatrical model answers Moreno's appeal and attempts to combine the aesthetic with the therapeutic, consciously allowing and encouraging personal and collective exploration and growth, while paying homage to the art form itself.

Chapter III - Concepts & Purposes

This chapter will attempt to address Volkas' key concepts, their origins and purpose.

Cultural identity and self esteem

Volkas' model seeks to question and uncover the degree to which individuals' self-esteem relates to their cultures and family history or legacy.

This concept was inspired by the work of Judith Weinstein Klein as well as Volkas' heuristic struggle for making peace with his own family's traumatic heritage. The connection between cultural identity and self-esteem is at the crux of "Healing the Wounds of History." This concept is palpable throughout each phase of the work and is the motivating force behind its inception. Volkas utilizes discussion coupled with experiential exercises to illustrate the powerful effect that culture has on identity, at times triggering participants awareness, allowing for a positive integration of cultural or national identity supplanting the previously perceived legacy of victimization or persecution.

Creating a culture of empathy

With peace being the utopic and ultimate goal of HTWH, the model is focused on intentionally creating bonds between previously perceived victims and perpetrators. This is done with the assistance of exercises whose aim is to humanize the 'other' and understand them from within. Volkas' fundamental encounter with this concept occurred in high school when he befriended Emeran Mayer, and evolved, as did their relationship.

As Miller and Volkas illustrate:

While initially representatives of one conflicting culture may seek to outdo the other culture in suffering and victimization, ultimately the work seeks to teach compassion for the pain of others which transcends the tendency to embrace one's own suffering

as superior. Instead of 'dueling dramas', one finds empathic acceptance of the uniqueness of another's historical pain. (Miller and Volkas, in press).

Using sociodramatic and psychodramatic exercises, Volkas encourages participants to role reverse, with the end result being the achievement of empathy for the formerly alleged *other*. As the workshop concludes, when (or if) empathy has been attained by participants, a new culture has been reborn which Volkas appropriately designates a *culture of empathy*.

Mapping the emotional terrain of Peace

Employing a double entendre, this expression originated by Volkas refers to the steps taken by Palestinian and Israeli participants and workshop facilitators in their quest to make peace with the *enemy*. The workshop phases are analogous to a map with the desired destination being peace, which in the workshop setting is akin to friendship developing amongst participants.

Emotional pioneers

Volkas refers to his workshop participants as well as anyone undertaking facilitating these workshops as *emotional pioneers*. Breaking new ground and paving the way for social change to penetrate society at large, many of the HTWH participants as well as Volkas himself have been subject of disapproval from their respective communities for forging alliances with their professed or supposed enemy. It is for this reason that Volkas cites these individuals as brave leaders, initiating personal contact, demystifying, personalizing, humanizing and befriending the *adversary*.

Phases of the Model

Although the length of workshops varies dependent on multiple factors, what remains consistent throughout is the flow with which HTWH is conducted. Multi-day

workshops differ from single day workshops in many ways: primarily, they allow for a deeper and more complete exploration of each of the six phases of the model. In some instances certain phases may not be fully achieved while other workshops flow with comparative ease. Much is contingent upon the time frame devoted to HTWH, the flexibility, comfort and goodwill of the participants, as well as their willingness to move into subsequent stages of the work. The phases, as described by Miller and Volkas are “*affective*, corresponding to shifts in feeling and understanding that occur within the participants” (in press, p.2). It is therefore imperative that the facilitator pays paramount attention to the energy of each participant in the group and allows them to dictate the tempo and depth of each exploration.

Phase 1 - Breaking the taboo against speaking to one another

How does Volkas manage to bring together cultural groups in conflict when taboo surrounds and permeates the controversy? Promoting workshops and Playback events as well as recruiting participants are at the heart of this process. Are the workshop participants the “already convinced” or emotional pioneers? The response to this question alters depending on the personalities of the various individuals comprising each group, however, what remains intact is the fact that by enrolling in HTWH, participants are agreeing to take part in and contribute to the unmentionable and inviolable. The intangible wall precluding communication is breached, proceeded by a seeming disloyalty, and it is for this reason that participants are deemed emotional pioneers regardless of the workshops’ outcome: simply by breaking this taboo and being present.

Phase 2 - Humanizing one another through the sharing of personal stories

Is it possible to see the “other” as a human being, separate from their culture and its oppressive history? The goal throughout this phase is geared towards empathizing with the *adversary* while acknowledging and validating the uniqueness of individual experience. Is the *enemy* simply a product of their respective culture or are they individual human beings with identities autonomous of their oppressive or victimized pasts? This phase is geared towards recognizing and acknowledging the individuality and uniqueness of each personality in the group, with the ultimate goal being to humanize or demystify the perceived other and cultivate healthy relationships. Only after a *culture of empathy* has been established, can the group ultimately foresee moving into collectively grieving and mourning.

Phase II of the process involves sharing and listening to one another’s stories. The key to this stage is to evoke empathy from the group members, allowing participants to see and be seen, heard, understood and reflected as well as to continue to build the communal bond so that trust may be established. This is evidently done when sacred stories are shared and reflected. By employing variations of psychodramatic, sociodramatic and playback processes, participants are encouraged to connect through story and role, at times intensely associating with their counterparts: this aids in the realization of empathy and permits the work to move into more profound areas.

Phase 3 - Recognizing and owning the potential perpetrator within

Every person has the ability to be both victim and perpetrator. By role reversing, is attaining a state of empathy a possibility?

A delicate segment moving into looking at *shadow* aspects of the self, (a Jungian therapeutic term implying negative, difficult, complex or unacknowledged facets of an

individual), Volkas refers to this phase as the great equalizer. In this phase, each participant is moved towards evoking oppressor or perpetrator roles. Employing exercises in which a power differential fervently exists, participants encounter the potential perpetrator inside and are alerted to the effortlessness in conjuring up these roles. After this has been shared, an even deeper connection is established among participants, allowing the group to move towards collectively acknowledging and letting go of the ghosts in the room.

Phase 4 - Moving deeply into grief

The transgenerational effect of historical trauma resides in this phase. Periodically, the layers of grief exist underneath or alongside complex combinations of rage and sadness attached to the rediscovery of cultural heritage, shifting with the transmission from and to generations. This manifests in a need for integration coupled with further explorations concerning connections to roots. The rage that allowed participants to survive rather than thrive, that drives yet simultaneously halts the life force needs to be expressed so that it can be disengaged. Since rage is perceived as the flip side of helplessness and powerlessness, it must first be acknowledged and articulated. The expressive arts give these multifaceted feelings *aesthetic shape, containing* and channeling them. After experiencing the previous phases together, participants are asked to collectively mourn, strengthening their established relations. Due to the delicate nature of grieving and mourning, by allowing and encouraging participants to share their respective anguish and losses, an even deeper and more powerful healing takes place. Giving a space for people to grieve, for “enemies” to grieve together, allows the

unspoken, the ghosts to be put to rest and opens up a space for new associations, interactions and perspectives.

Phase 5 - Creating performances and rituals of remembrance

To close the intensive experience, participants are asked to break into groups and create theatrical pieces based on the workshop themes. In this phase, the affective states associated with the work are channeled into an artistic framework. The groups then perform these creative acts for one another in a ritualistic fashion, offering their performances to the other participants, giving credence to the workshop experience and broadening HTWH's effects: attempting to reach others who haven't participated in the workshops directly. This form of outreach aims to translate the experience to the community at large, rippling outward through diverse creative acts of participants.

Phase 6 - Acts of creation and acts of service

What happens after the workshops? Do the art and friendships created by opposing groups live beyond the workshop experience?

Miller and Volkas write:

One of the ways to master a legacy of historical trauma is to focus the emotional energy into acts of creation: through telling stories or creating poetry, art, theatre or dance, thereby transforming the history of pain into beauty. Another pathway of commitment is that of service: working with political refugees or survivors of violence, for example, or political action to end injustice. (Miller and Volkas, in press).

In this phase, Volkas exemplifies the role of a true pioneer. Not only does he encourage participants to pass along their experiences and continue to map the emotional terrain of peace: he too takes action in the form of public outreach.

As per Volkas during an interview in 2004, *"Where there is an entrenched view-that perception, that paradigm shift is often what we are trying to do here. To take a taboo*

and say it is possible and here are the steps, you create ripples. The bigger the splash, the bigger the ripple. A theatre piece, a video, a documentary film effects many."

This ripple effect can be seen via Volkas' playback performances, his generosity in allowing students and peers to expand on and utilize his model, and his gracious accepting of invitations to conduct HTWH workshops abroad and for documentary films and articles to be written about his model. It can also be seen in the acts of creation and acts of service of past and present workshop participants, students and peers who continue to translate their experiences into theatrical and educational processes.

Chapter IV - Exercises & Examples

Although there is no absolute and accurate formula to conducting HTWH workshops, Volkas consistently acknowledges the stages in his model, paying respect to the particular group dynamic, carefully choosing the appropriate intervention or exercise to match the energy and pace of the collective. These exercises have been organized by phases.

Phase I-Breaking the Taboo.

The beginning exercises serve as warm-up activities to encourage and eventually enable group cohesion. Most workshop participants have not previously met and these exercises serve as icebreakers, easing participants into the modality as well as the workshop's subject matter. Breaking the taboo begins with the implementation of exercises whose objectives are to allow group members to get to know each other.

Name games

A participant states their name with an accompanying action, denoting rhythm and cadence. This is then mirrored back by the group in acknowledgement and then repeated one by one until each participant has been introduced and reflected.

Passing the sound and motion or imaginary object

A sound and motion or imaginary object) is passed like a ball around a circle. Each time it reaches a new person, it is slightly modified and then passed on until it has reached each participant (at least once).

Another variation of this is **soundball**. Similar to the previously described exercise however, slightly more complex in nature, the facilitator passes various imaginary (or sometimes real) balls of varying size around a circle while making a sound, making eye

contact with another participant, who catches the ball while mirroring back the same sound. Once caught, the sound is changed and passed again, until many soundballs are being simultaneously passed. Playful and engaging, this encourages individuals to focus their awareness to the group and be ready to catch, modify and throw at any given point in time.

These exercises although simple, have the power to open up powerful sentiments. In one workshop of Palestinians and Israelis conducted in February 2004 in Berkeley California, after a twenty-minute warm-up, the group began to engage in passing the object. What ensued, however, was far from simple. After passing an imaginary ladybug and lit match around the circle, the group began passing a “mimed symbolic concretization” (Miller & Volkas, in press) of hope which, when delivered by an Israeli to a Palestinian woman, resulted in a playful physical struggle on the floor over the “tiny and elusive thread of hope that kept escaping both of them” (Miller & Volkas, in press). From group laughter to heartrending bawling, the Israeli woman calmed her Palestinian counterpart, establishing the tone for the duration of the workshop. As Miller and Volkas (2004) propose: “Even though there is often a taboo and resistance to encountering the “enemy”, there is also a strong drive and spiritual need and desire to transform the pain. The facilitator must capitalize on this need and draw it out” (Miller and Volkas, in press).

2 circles with conflicting roles

The group is divided into an outer and an inner circle. Participants in the outer circle are asked to align with someone in the inner circle. Respective partners are then given relationships and encounters to play out using improvisation, using the A+B

partner dialogue format: one partner chooses the A role, the other plays B and roles are distributed (ego and id, fish and fisherman, dieter and dessert, child and parent, tourist + helpful natives). After each encounter, the participants on the outer circle move one space over and begin another encounter with a new partner. This is done until the members in each circle have encountered the members from the other circle, and can sometimes evoke very powerful responses.

Gibberish arguments and encounters in dyads

Gibberish (a made up language consisting of individual participants' sounds and vocalizations) is employed, replacing identifiable language. Similar to the previously described exercise, this engages partners allowing for connection beyond words while keying into affective states, permitting the release of cognitive reasoning.

Collectively create a mode of transportation

The group is divided into two and each subgroup collectively creates a moving sculpture with all participants enacting different parts of a whole. This is then performed for the other group who guesses the nature of the vehicle.

Once the participants have met dramatherapeutically, sociometric exercises are employed, serving to identify commonalities, connections, divisions and establishing the *Tele* in the group. These exercises consist of: locograms, spectograms and step-in sociometry based on workshop themes

Sociometric exercises

Using both ends of the room to represent polarities, the facilitator asks the group to arrange themselves according to rank, while answering questions pertaining to different aspects of identity. As Miller and Volkas (2004) describe:

Locograms can be created geographically, around places of residence or birth, positions in the sibling birth order, or birth sign. *Spectograms* can measure feelings of apprehension or readiness to engage in the process...*Step-in sociometry* can measure more personal experiences which also transcend culture, around relationships, commitments, family deaths, divorces and other experiences, both joyful and painful, which are universal. (Miller and Volkas, in press)

Once the warm-up phase has been honored and *Tele* has been established, the concept of cultural identity is introduced in an exercise taken from Judith Weinstein Klein's ethnotherapeutic model.

My name is _____ and I am a _____.

Inserting first the participant's name followed by a declaration of their cultural identity [ies]. The facilitator then asks the participant "*What comes up for you when you say this?*" and then teases apart the often multiple roles that emerge from this exercise, encouraging the participant to connect to their affect as it relates to their cultural identity, linking it to self-esteem and self-concept. This exercise allows participants to instantaneously tap into their individual cultural identity and directly co-relate or connect cultural or national identity to self-esteem. It also brings up the similarities regardless of different and often opposing cultures. This powerful exercise almost directly brings participants to an affective state, "*stimulating feeling for the cause*". Volkas refers to this exercise as "*Surgery in front of an audience, for some it is deep, personal and troubling.*" (personal communication, June 2004)

A warm up to action, contextual and ever changing, this exercise encourages participants to respond to immediate stimulus. Different buttons are pushed in certain encounters, and a significant portion of this process surrounds participants' selecting which aspect of their respective cultures to explore. There is energy in each aspect of identity. Volkas is asking participants to look beyond the immediate and the known,

revealing the fields that impact us beyond our consciousness. *"It has to do with the ghosts of our ancestors and the larger context of historical trauma that all of us were born out of."* Interestingly, what often comes up in groups exploring various cultural identities, is sadness, anger and guilt manifested by individuals of the 'dominant white privileged' culture. In both a dramatherapy and social change class in San Francisco as well as a HTWH class in Montreal, a 'white' participant was deeply stirred by this exercise. What ensued was an expression of guilt at the evocation of covetousness attached to the longing of belonging to an ethnic minority. This exercise has the potential to immediately transport participants to an affective state attached to cultural identity; often acting as the initiator of awareness, alerting participants to the layers of grief underlying belonging.

Another exercise in this series entails sharing a personal object that evokes participants' familial or cultural legacy.

Personal Object for the altar

Each participant makes a brief statement about their object and then places it on an altar. A stone is taken in its' place and the participants reveal a name of the relative whose story they are presently carrying. They then return to their respective space in the room with stone in tow.

Something that holds meaning for you becomes a conduit to telling your story. As a warm-up and a way into engaging in the process, this powerful exercise elicits energy and is used in a ritualistic way of imparting participants' respective legacies, allowing for connection to the other participants as well as the workshop theme. This models how a simple ritual can prepare participants for the exercises that follow and graciously paves

the way for the subsequent phase which follows. The mood that follows seems sacred as this exercise conjures up memories of loved ones, ghosts and legacies.

Phase II-Humanizing the other through sharing stories

This phase can only be breached once the modality and the concept of cultural identity have been introduced. Moving further into the group process, Volkas begins by asking participants to look at their individual family dynamics, in the hopes of connecting participants to the relevance that their family system has had in shaping their personalities and belief systems.

One person Fluid sculptures

Participants are asked to take the 'stage' 2 at a time. 1 person speaks their name and divulges a small story or expresses their present emotional state. The offering is then reflected by the other participant in sound and motion, after which, the two switch roles. This exercise allows participants to connect to the present, re-introduce themselves and become reacquainted with the subject matter, while aesthetically adopting a formal playback approach.

Rant

Warming up to the theme, participants are asked to stand in a line, backs turned to the "audience". The rant begins when 1 participant turns around and begins speaking until interrupted by another participant: participants are urged to interject often and to sustain their respective inner monologues. This exercise is powerful when used to recapture feelings triggered from previous days' work or exercises and is effective as a second (or third or fourth) day check-in or warm up to action.

Family Constellation Exploration

This exercise aspires at deconstructing the role that culture and family have played in participants' identity, teasing out the multiple roles and messages disseminated throughout the protagonist's lifetime by various family members, friends, peers and acquaintances. *A protagonist is chosen or reveals him/herself and chooses a member of the group to act as an auxiliary. Then the protagonist chooses other group members to play various characters from their life and models messages (or lines) for them to speak to the protagonist. This is done initially by the protagonist, and then given to the auxiliaries to play out one at a time, after which, Volkas conducts the choir of messages directed towards the protagonist him/herself, to an eventual flourish. The protagonist may then dialogue with these messages and/or roles and may also use this opportunity to role reverse to achieve a deeper sense of understanding.* The effect is powerful and poignant, bringing to the forefront the impact that familial relationships and messages have on the differentiated individual. This is then verbally processed by the group following psychodramatic protocol and often leads towards a psychodrama further exploring the dynamics arising from the exercise.

Fluid sculptures

Feelings associated to, triggered by or stemming from the work are distilled and then mirrored back to the teller by groups or pairs of auxiliaries using repetitive sound and motion. This culminates in a moving tableau depicting the emotional states associated with the expression, which can move into doubled and contrasting feelings that are also mirrored back to the teller.

This has the potential to evoke powerful responses and can also serve in identifying a protagonist for another psychodramatic exploration. Capturing the essence

of these states of being taps into affective domains, drawing participants further into the work and allowing them to dispel with cognitive reflection which often proves distancing. The first goal of this exercise is to capture and honor the tellers' experience. The subtle secondary goal is: that although this is not an educational lesson but an exercise in empathy (regardless of auxiliaries' personal feelings towards the teller or the story) if some insight is evoked, then this could be an opportunity for a teaching moment. This exercise is predominantly about embodying the tellers' experience to the degree that it is possible. "*You can only do the best you can with empathy*" says Volkas. The act of attempting to empathize and understand in and of itself can have a healing effect.

This paves the way for participants to begin uncovering and sharing the stories that they are presently carrying.

Formative or transformative stories are then told and shared by the participants as they arise. Volkas assumes the role of conductor and elicits the major underlying dynamics based on the tellers' rendition. He then asks the teller to choose participants to enact a psychodramatic exploration or elicits participants who wish to enact this story via playback coupled with psychodramatic means.

Giving a voice to the occasionally unacknowledged mechanisms at the core of these stories, at times auxiliaries are wrong in their interpretations, but nonetheless, attempt at identifying with the protagonist. Cathartic to the teller, witnesses and auxiliaries alike, this allows other participants to connect their personal triggers evoked by the tellers' story, and has the potential to lead to the revelation of other protagonists'

stories. Volkas has described the evocation elicited by this exercise as permitting participants to “*come together and share human-ess, transcending stereotypes*”.

Playback conducted in this framework allows participants who are carrying their peoples’ stories to be witnessed, reflected and in essence ‘purged’ of the isolation accompanying historical trauma. After taking part in HTWH workshops and a drama therapy and social change class, a Japanese participant commented that the telling of her grandmothers’ survival and experience of Hiroshima has lead to a deeper personal exploration. After seeing her story played back by students, she spent her weekend steeped in thinking about how her families’ and cultures trauma had shaped her existence and began wondering how it will shape her unborn children’s lives. Will it become the “unconscious organizing principle” introduced by Danieli (1998), or have her awareness and deep personal work alerted her to the need to consciously incorporate her story, allowing and encouraging her to focus on other aspects of her being?

Volkas has commented that the impulse to want to go to these deep and dark places and find resolution is impossible. Historical trauma cannot be erased or removed however his process helps people to make peace with the fact that this *thing* is here forever. Moving deeply into exploring cultural wounds in a contained way and ritualistically exiting, aided by the gathering of people who assist in creating a container, facilitates the transformation of these legacies, allowing them to become integrated as a component contributing to individuals’ whole.

Reacting to words through sound and movement

Participants are asked to write or call out words on a blackboard (or piece of paper) in response to the stories told and enacted. Volkas then elicits participants to

respond to certain words in small groups using sound and movement, creating a sculpture in response to the expression. Without negating the artistic quality that theatre evokes, participants are encouraged to make use of levels, creating an aesthetically powerful and evocative tableau.

Trust exercises- often evolve from convening people and seeing what happens. These can evolve into multiple forms one of which is:

-Physically pushing (mock-wrestling) against a member of the "other" group while dialoguing, allowing the movement to open up the voice and connect to the various affective states associated with the work from a place of integrity and honesty. (Film, 1989)

Choose a word indicative of your present state of being and connect with a partner and process what is coming up for you...Switch partners and repeat.

Phase III-Recognizing the Perpetrator within

Bar-On (1995) suggests that "both groups could more easily talk with the victim inside, identifying that role also in the other. But the identification with the victim would "drain" the discourse. Once the victimizer could be recognized, in oneself, in others, the quality of the discourse changed drastically and became "richer in the variety of emotional meanings" (p. 265).

A participant of the first Bar-On initiative commented on the "too simplistic division" of victim and perpetrator roles, resulting in the need to reconstruct biographies "on a new common ground, beyond the prevalent 'tribal ego' of each side" (p.265).

As a response to this quandary, Volkas developed exercises, in which the objective is to elicit the effortlessness associated with taking on the role of perpetrator: "

Minimizing other people, their suffering and their experiences.” HTWH is based on the belief that everybody has a need to see the uniqueness of their individual pain and suffering.

If empathy is to be truly achieved, participants must confront the potential perpetrator residing within and release the *archetypal shadow* association attached to this role. In this very profound phase, the links to Volkas’ previous work with his client on death row becomes evident. Understanding the mind of a perpetrator has the potential to allow for forgiveness and empathy to ensue. Granted, this is not possible in every single workshop: in the case of a single day process, this stage may never be achieved. Trust must first be established before participants can undertake such a daunting task. In addition, for this to be truly effective, the historical and cultural trauma being explored must have a clear-cut division between the victim and perpetrator roles. In instances where the roles are less clearly defined, this stage may not only be unsuccessful: it has the potential to deepen the trauma, becoming provocative due to the inflammatory nature of the argument at hand. Volkas chooses whether or not to explore this stage on a case by case basis. To date, he has mostly delved into this work with children of Holocaust survivors and Nazis, as well as Japanese, Chinese and Korean participants on their respective legacies of WWII.

Master/Slave exercises

In this exercise, the group is broken up into pairs, each partner a representative of differing groups. Pairing a German and a Jew, or a Chinese and Japanese participant, Volkas asks each dyad to assume the roles of master and slave, role reversing by taking turns at playing both parts. The time allotted for this enactment varies depending on the

length of the workshop and may vary anywhere from 10 minutes to an hour. The underlying rule is that violence is not permitted, but the master must order the slave around in a degrading fashion. It has often been described as burdensome for the master to come up with ideas however, Volkas expresses that it is “intriguing how creative people can get into how to degrade and humiliate”. (personal communication, June 2004)

Once the allotted time for this has elapsed, participants are encouraged to verbally process this experience or to move into artistic projects such as mask making to channel the feelings being stimulated. The art ensuing from this undertaking can take the expression of poetry, enactment, mask making or another form of plastic arts, which aids in processing while simultaneously allowing participants to de-role. The art created can also serve as a tangible reminder of the experience and can be used as a communicative tool, alerting people who have not partaken in these workshops as to the nature of the experience.

Bringing to life historical photographs

Volkas brings photos to the workshops, which evoke memories of the trauma being explored. When working with children of Holocaust survivors and Nazis, he uses Holocaust books, choosing participants and asking them to sculpt themselves into replicas of the photographs. Choosing a Jew to play a Nazi and a German to play a Jew, he has his clients either enact the moment of the photograph, bringing it to life or to recite monologues as these people.

Participants are immediately immersed in this world and for many, it becomes very terrifying to play the oppressor role. Oftentimes, the response to these exercises is

that German participants feel shame, as though they are the carriers of evil due to their bloodlines, whereas Jews point the finger, citing their counterparts as personally responsible. Stepping into the perpetrator role is an *equalizer* in that it brings to light the fact that: I too, under extreme circumstances am capable of violence. Volkas has expressed that this 'equalizing' is "a scary place to go: some Germans have refused to do it as it is too terrifying". In groups of Chinese and Japanese participants, Volkas brings in photos of the rape of Nan King, asking the Chinese participants to double the Japanese characters and vice versa. Asking participants to question what is transpiring in the minds of these characters, Volkas encourages clients to state the assumptions in role that "my race is superior". Questioning where the humanity of these perpetrators resides and whether they see their victims as human or human-less, this role reversing exercise is conducted in the hopes of highlighting empathy and understanding for the perpetrator.

Working with cultural inhibitions, Volkas expresses that this phase is so laden with tension that any intervention becomes an opportunity for role reversal and subsequently, *empathy*.

Phase IV-Collective Grief and mourning

Although listed here and in other articles as a separate phase in HTWH, Volkas considers this stage to permeate every aspect of his workshops. Implied in each phase, participants come to Volkas' gatherings looking for a release of the grief that has been haunting them since their familial or cultural legacy had been transmitted. The grief doesn't have to stem from an historical wound and can present itself after a psychodramatic or playback enactment, where loss and pain have been uncovered and released. In multi-day workshops, Volkas has participants create a commemoration to

give their grief shape as well as to contain it. A culminating enactment allows people to integrate trauma: giving closure and enabling participants to move on.

One exercise specific to this phase is called:

The stations of the Holocaust

The space is divided and different areas are designated on the floor, each imbued with a different affective state: rage, despair, hope etc... Participants are then asked to place themselves in a station, which allows the facilitator to ascertain where each individual is working from. As there are no models for how to integrate a legacy of perpetration, this allows for an equalizing to ensue as participants of differing backgrounds may occupy the same affective state and subsequently space. Sociodramatic in nature, this allows for descendents of perpetrators to grieve and own their pain alongside descendents of victims.

Closing rituals:

Returning the stone

Volkas urges participants to state: "I place this stone in honor of ____". While picking up the object which was previously placed on the altar, participants are urged to intentionally recognize themes raised throughout the workshop. Making a vow to take the work one step further and process the experience, each participant makes a statement about the acts of creation and of service they intend to employ.

Thumb well

A tight circle is formed and each member makes a fist with thumb extended. Participants join thumbs making a well of grief into which Volkas asks participants to offer up a name of a relative, old friend or meaningful person. This well serves as a

container as well as a promise to ensure confidentiality, and Volkas employs it throughout the workshop process prior to breaks as a closing ritual, holding and honoring the energy and personality of the group and the moment.

Phase V-Creative performances and rituals of remembrance

Acts of creation occur both within and outside of the workshop setting. A creative performance stemming from the work can be construed in this phase as a form of modeling future interactions and perspectives. Throughout the workshop, participants are stirred and provoked, deep feeling is stimulated and creative rituals and enactments give these sentiments shape. Volkas cites the playback frame as expedient in this regard as it takes little to no rehearsal, however, he recalls instances where participants have created music as a response to the workshops.

Reminiscing, Volkas describes a particular workshop wherein an Opera singer of German descent sang a Yiddish lullaby, a poignant contribution. In another workshop, a German participant did a performance piece, dancing with a potato, giving aesthetic shape to the experience with a fluid and compelling offering. Other examples include but are not limited to monologues, theatre pieces comprised of non-actors and poetry. In one workshop, a daughter of a survivor and a daughter of a Nazi simultaneously delivered monologue messages to their fathers, resulting in a powerfully effective piece of theatre.

Volkas cites these creative offerings as containers, framing historical and cultural trauma, and allowing participants to become comfortable moving beyond, living life and transforming grief, rage, anger and suffering into integrative art.

Volkas has also devised more formal methods of eliciting creative acts such as:

Enact your people's stereotypes and/or enact your people's history from ancient times to present.

Participants are then given an allotment of fifteen minutes to brainstorm and come up with a five- minute enactment.

Another example in the culminating/commemorative creation phase occurs when Volkas asks participants to:

Project 500 years into the future, commemorating what has happened.

In this future projection, clients are encouraged to go out into nature (weather permitting) and find objects, incorporating the telling of the story of the respective war in the form of a ritualistic tale, remembering and honoring the past, while uncovering and highlighting the lessons learned. Without taking the 'never again stance', which Volkas considers too pat, this provides an excellent container for the grief during a closed workshop setting. In an interview with the author, Volkas described the most powerful place for this exercise as occurring at a conference circa 1994, on German soil, in nature, not far from the Wansee conference where Nazi officials got together to organize the 'final solution.' The enactments evoked at this site were beautiful yet primal, tapping into a primordial ritualistic element where the "depth of grief was induced so strongly that the ritual was endowed with tremendous feeling".

Another variation of this exercise is:

Allegory or story theatre (in a transformational way)

The whole group collectively creates a story set up by the facilitator, based on a journey structure. In this exercise, the facilitator acts as a narrator while participants add roles, co-creating a story, which develops and enhances the emerging themes

elicited by the workshop. This exercise is usually brought in after deep exploratory work, when participants want to continue to stay with the material yet require slight emotional distance.

These sociodramatic exercises not only encourage group cohesion, but also allow for a distanced reflection after deep personal work. The material elicited throughout the workshop often emotionally drains participants and these exercises allow for a playful approach to deconstructing projections and assumptions. Often very deep, these exercises occur three quarters of the way through the workshop and set up an incredible process where the people in each group tap into a collective agreement and together decide what is important to impart. After much personal work, these explorations offer participants to take a step back while covering many phases of the work: trusting the 'other' culture enough to reveal perceptions and stereotypes. These very humanizing exercises hold the potential to tap into collective grief depending on what is triggered in and through the enactment. Clarifying perceptions and highlighting the embarrassing and humiliating this sociodramatic way of knowing one another allows for further integration of the HTWH workshop experience. These compelling exercises encapsulate many phases ranging from the deep and personal to the playful and collective.

Phase VI-Acts of creation and acts of service

Although HTWH workshops include a limited number of participants, Volkas urges his students and collaborators to keep the social change element alive throughout the process. His philosophy motivating the model is to: "*Think globally, act locally: Society is your client.*"

Rather than powerlessness and helplessness surrounding the familial legacy, service allows for mastery over adversity: doing something rather than passively allowing trauma to dictate, shape and drive participants' lives.

Volkas' uses playback performances and self-revelatory performances, as public outreach events where the healing of the workshop gets broadcast to the larger community. He encourages the documentation of this work, citing film and video as great tools in reaching wider audiences and supports projects of this nature arising from his work.

This is the arena that truly sets Volkas apart from his peers. Aside from eliciting his workshop participants to carry on their transformative processes by reaching out to their communities, Volkas, like Augusto Boal, devotes time, energy and resources to the practice which he so compellingly advocates. Volkas continues to accept invitations to conduct his HTWH workshops, reaching diverse and broad audiences worldwide, while encouraging his proteges to expand and add onto his theoretical model in the hopes of developing further applications and reaching the masses.

After conducting HTWH in Montreal, Quebec with a group of Israeli and Palestinian Canadians, several members of the workshop proceeded to relate their experiences to a larger contingency by joining the Women in Black movement. By generating dialogue groups, holding meetings in one another's homes, breaking bread and sharing stories, these former HTWH participants are continuing Volkas' tradition of bridging disparity in diverse living rooms throughout their city.

"At the core of this is friendship...if you are friends with someone it becomes difficult to dehumanize them" (Volkas, 1989, Video)

Chapter V-Future Applications and Conclusion

What are the potential applications of Healing the Wounds of History?

In light of recent political events, the work of Armand Volkas is both timely and pertinent. As the field of dramatherapy is continuously evolving, the potential for various applications is tremendous. Volkas has been fine-tuning his model since the late eighties and his theories and concepts should be taught alongside the other forerunners in the field. Since conceiving of HTWH, Volkas has invited colleagues as well as proteges to elaborate on his model, uncovering other applications and directions, allowing the scope of his work to expand. Among these future directions are:

Working with Native Americans and European Americans- exploring the genocide of the Native American people.

International House Institute at Berkeley- Volkas has expressed interest in developing an institute in conjunction with the International House in Berkeley California. As a contribution to the existing inter-cultural communication and mediation models, Volkas hopes to become certified in Mediation and engage in a future project whose aim is to delve into cultural and ethnic identity and explore oppression via his HTWH dramatherapeutic social change model.

HTWH and feminism-One of Volkas' apprentices is currently investigating the possibility of bringing this model to gender, focusing on societies' views surrounding female gender roles. Exploring the perversion of integrity, the aim of this new emergence is to transform perceived gender roles and deconstruct the imposition of dichotomous thinking permeating this subject.

HTWH and individual transcultural dramatherapy- I would like to explore the use of Volkas' conflict resolution model and its' other potential applications in the field of transcultural psychology. Based on my experiences as an intern on the transcultural psychiatry team on the MUHC Montreal Children's hospital, I have observed how certain refugee or immigrant children as well as a number of first generation Canadian children of refugees or immigrants epitomize both victim and perpetrator roles. I am interested in studying whether Volkas' group centered method can be adaptable in support of the individual client negotiating divergent cultural identities.

Looking back to the initial question posed to me by my supervisor at the onset of my research process, I am compelled to maintain the relevance of Volkas' method as a solid model within our evolving field.

In answering Stephen Snow's seemingly simple (yet frustratingly difficult) question: What makes HTWH a *model* within the field of dramatherapy? I have come up with several arguments, which I believe to solidify theoretically what I intuitively believe to be true.

- ♦ Transferable- Outcomes differ among participants but what remains present in all HTWH encounters and what makes Volkas' process a method within the field of dramatherapy is its ability to be reproduced. Indeed, the energy exuded by Volkas himself is impossible to duplicate, however, facilitators expressing interest in conducting HTWH are generally *Ambassadors of Goodwill* based on their interest and commitment to the process. Although replicable by other dramatherapists, what remains imperative is that the facilitators conducting HTWH workshops appear

exceptionally empathic and unbiased with regards to the cultural conflict being explored. Movement throughout the phases varies due to a variety of variables, however, the concepts, phases and exercises are theoretically grounded and sound, and a facilitator sufficiently trained in the method can confidently conduct an effective workshop.

- ♦ Generalizability- A key concept in HTWH is the final phase entitled 'Acts of Service' wherein the facilitator encourages participants to take their personal therapeutic gains made throughout the workshop and ripple the experience outwards. As in traditional group psychotherapy, the group acts as a microcosm of society, allowing participants to *rehearse* for their everyday encounters. In HTWH especially, this group, contained by the therapeutic contract as well each member's personal investment of time and energy can serve as the basis for their personal integration of historical familial trauma. Volkas' vision trusts that the experiences accumulated throughout each workshop will allow past participants to continue to work on reconstructing their own cultural identities whilst acknowledging the individualism afforded every human being regardless of their culture of origin.
- ♦ Movement from one phase to another- Similar to certain other models in dramatherapy, although the concepts and purposes are evidently clear, there is no definite way to conduct the workshop. Attention must instead be placed on the particular group dynamic and the specific legacy being explored. Although Volkas conceptualized a comprehensible and clear six-phase model, each workshop is guided by the facilitator's ability to gauge the pulse of the particular group. That being said, any movement from one phase to another signifies growth. In a two-day

workshop, participants have the advantage of time and may delve deeper into the process than a one-day HTWH exploration may allow. If participants register for the workshop, they are already breaking the taboo against speaking to one another. Once the group moves towards sharing their stories, they immediately become drawn into the process and the therapeutic endeavor has commenced. Some groups may even begin at a latter stage of the model (based again on a variety of factors). Similarly, once movement from one phase to another has begun, the therapeutic intention becomes markedly manifest and clearly identifiable.

- ♦ Contained- An integral feature within the field of dramatherapy is the importance placed on the concept of *container*, which is laden with significance. The notion of containment permeates most aspects of our discipline, beginning with the therapeutic contract (which Volkas sets out verbally at the onset of his workshops) and group modality, extending all the way to the physical container of the group members convening in a circle. Shared stories and playback enactments are contained and framed by psychodrama-inspired sharing sessions, group dynamic is contained by the facilitators' interventions, and the workshop is contained by the employment of ritualistic exercises framing each phase and break: with considerable containment transpiring in the employment of the theatrical and creative.
- ♦ Ritualized- One of the things that particularly sets dramatherapy apart from other disciplines and modalities within the realm of psychotherapy is its emphasis on ritual. Volkas' model is founded on this principle, with ritual constituting as the core to each phase. Volkas additionally ritualizes each break from the process by employing exercises such as the thumb well, imbuing every aspect of HTWH with a

strong sense of *ceremony*. By the end of the process, a rite of passage has been attained, again acknowledging the deep process paved by each individual workshop's emotional pioneers.

Like all therapeutic groups, there are no hard and fast rules, however, there are guidelines. Emphasis is placed on the individuality of each group member, the group as a whole and the particular conflict being explored. Outcomes differ among participants but what remains present in all HTWH encounters and what particularly makes Volkas' process a method within the field of dramatherapy is its' ability to be reproduced. While conducting my research, I began to understand that notwithstanding the clear-cut delineation of phases, every HTWH workshop is an entity that stands alone. To pen the model and simply rely on the phases is to ignore the individuality of each group, as the importance of using theory as a guideline is secondary to establishing both comfort and confidence in the client-therapist- modality relationship. As with other models within the field of dramatherapy, primary emphasis must always be placed on the group, trusting the model as a reliable guide.

References:

- Bar-On, D. (1995). Personal and historical catastrophe. Four encounters between descendants of survivors and descendants of perpetrators of the Holocaust: Building bonds out of silence. *Psychiatry*, 58, 225-243.
- Bar-On, D., Ostrovsky, T., & Fromer, D. (1998). "Who Am I in Relation to My Past, in Relation to the Other?" German and Israeli Students Confront the Holocaust and Each Other. In Y. Danieli. (Ed.), *Intergenerational handbook of multigenerational legacies of trauma*. (pp.97-116). New York: Plenum Press
- Blatner, A. (2000). *Foundations of Psychodrama; History, theory and practice*, (4th ed.). New York: Springer Publishing.
- Boal, A. (1985). *Theatre of the Oppressed*. New York: Theatre Communications Group.
- Boal, A. (1995). *The Rainbow of Desire: The Boal method of theatre and therapy*. London: Routledge.
- Bowen, M. (1975). Family Therapy after twenty years. In S. Arieti (Ed.), *American handbook of psychiatry: Volume 5. Treatment* (pp.367-392). New York: Basic Books.
- Chaikin, J. (1972). *The Presence of the actor*. New York: Theatre Communications Group
- Danieli, Y.(Ed.) (1998). *Intergenerational handbook of multigenerational legacies of trauma*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Davis, L. (2002). *I thought we 'd never speak again*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Dorff, E.N.(1992). Individual and communal forgiveness. In D. Frank, (Ed.), *Autonomy and Judaism* (pp.193-217.) New York: State University of New York press.
- Fox, J. (1994). *Acts of service: spontaneity, commitment, tradition in the nonscripted theatre*. New Paltz: Tusitala Publishing.
- Frankl, V. (1992). *Man's search for meaning: An introduction to Logotherapy* (4th ed.). Boston: Beacon Press.
- Garcia, A., & Buchanan, D.R. (2000). Psychodrama. In P. Lewis, & D. Johnson, (Eds.) *Current approaches in drama therapy* (pp.162-195). Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas Publisher Ltd.
- Grotowski, J. (1968). *Towards a poor theatre*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

- Keyes, M.F. (1974). *The inward journey: Art as psychotherapy for you*. Millbrae, California: Celestial Arts.
- Kupelian, D., Sanentz Kalayjian, A., & Kassabian, A. (1998). The Turkish Genocide of the Armenians. In Y. Danieli. (Ed.), *Intergenerational handbook of multigenerational legacies of trauma* (pp.191-210) New York: Plenum Press.
- Landy, R.J. (1993). *Persona and performance: The meaning of role in drama, therapy, and everyday life*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Leveton, E. (2000). *A Clinician's guide to Psychodrama*. New York: Springer Publishing Company.
- Lindt, M.W. J. (1998). Children of Collaborators: From isolation toward integration. In Y. Danieli. (Ed.), *Intergenerational handbook of multigenerational legacies of trauma* (pp.163-174). New York: Plenum Press.
- Marineau, R.F. (1989). *Jacob Levy Moreno 1889-1975: Father of psychodrama, sociometry, and group psychotherapy*. London: Tavistock/Routledge.
- Miller, R., & Volkas, A. (In press). Healing the wounds of history: Interactive drama for intercultural communication, compassion and conflict resolution. In A. Blatner. (Ed).
- Mindess, A. (1999). *Reading between the signs: Intercultural communication for sign language interpreters*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- Moreno, J.L. (1993). *Who shall survive? : Foundations of sociometry, group psychotherapy and sociodrama. student edition*. Roanoke, Virginia: Royal Publishing Company.
- Moreno, J.L. (1983). *The Theatre of Spontaneity*. Pennsylvania: Beacon House Inc.
- Moreno, J.L. (1977). *Psychodrama (Vol. 1)* (Rev. ed.), New York: Beacon House Inc.
- Papero, D.V. (1990). *Bowen Family Systems Theory*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Pasolli, R. (1970). *A book on the open theatre: The growth and techniques of today's most exciting theatre company*. New York: Discus Books (Avon).
- Pendzik, S. (1994). The theatre and the sacred space: A comparison. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 21, 25-35.
- Rousseau, C., & Drapeau, A. (1998). The Impact of culture on the transmission of trauma: Refugees' stories and silence embodied in their children's lives. In Y. Danieli. (Ed.), *Intergenerational handbook of multigenerational legacies of trauma* (pp.465-486). New York: Plenum Press.

Steiner, C. M. (1974). *Scripts people live; Transactional analysis of life scripts*. New York: Grove Press Inc.

Sternberg, P., & Garcia, A. (2000). Sociodrama. In P.Lewis., & D. Johnson. (Eds.) *Current approaches in drama therapy* (pp.196-217). Springfield, Illinois: Charles C Thomas Publisher Ltd.

Sternberg, P., & Garcia, A. (2000). *Sociadrama Who's in your shoes?* Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

Yalom, I. (1970). *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.