

ROSES IN DECEMBER:

JAMES M. BARRIE AND HIS SEARCH FOR THE LOST BOY

By Michael-David Gordon

God gave us memory so that we
might have roses in December.

On April 6, 1960, the *New York Times* proclaimed: BARRIE'S PETER PAN KILLED BY LONDON TRAIN. The spin was that a mere mortal, in this case a mild-mannered book executive named Peter Davies, had decided to end his life. The headlines PETER'S DEATH LEAP and THE END OF THE ETERNAL BOY blared from some of the more imaginative periodicals. One paper opined: "Until he died at the age of 63, Peter Davies was Peter Pan – the boy who would never grow up." Peter Davies grew up to hate the comparison. To him it seemed to lodge itself in his existence in a way that made it extremely difficult to forge his own life, indeed – to grow up. Judging from the various headlines of the day, one could surmise that whatever his accomplishments were as a publisher, they were all but irrelevant when bathed in the glaring light of the little boy from Neverland. There are those who would find no small measure of irony in the fact that the source of the late Mr. Davies' misery was created by the man who literally worshipped him – the Scottish author James M. Barrie.

I have lost trout because when they nibbled, my mind was wandering with her: my early life was embittered by her not arriving regularly.

James Matthew Barrie was born on May 9, 1860, in Kirriemuir, Scotland, a small craft community. His mother, Margaret, regaled him and his



J. M. Barrie as Captain Hook and Michael Davie as Peter.

older brother David with many stories. Some of those stories or *idylls* came out of the *Old Lights* religious sect of which she had long been a member. Barrie's writing communicates how devoted he was to his mother and his taking up of the storytelling tradition was largely a tribute to her – as well as an effort for recognition in her eyes.

At the age of six, tragedy hit the Barrie family. His older brother David perished in a skating accident at Sanford Pool, near Oxford. While the entire family was devastated, it was his mother who was hit the hardest. Barrie spent the rest of his life attempting to fill his brother's shoes and winning her affection by being a successful writer. Unfortunately, her grief over David's death intensified as the years went on. In his mother's "biography" *Margaret Ogilvy*, he wrote: "she lived twenty-nine years after his (David's) death – but I had not made her forget the part of her

that was dead: in those twenty-nine years he was not removed one day farther from her." As a result of his mother's emotional distance from him, he, in turn, grew distant from the world.

At the Dumfries Academy he busied himself with many activities and took to visiting the local theater. It was there that Barrie began to fuse his love of the stage with his penchant for storytelling. He founded the Dumfries Dramatic Club where he produced his first play, *Bandelero the Bandit*. His first success as a writer came as a journalist for the *Nottingham Journal* with a series of short articles called *Auld Licht Idylls*. The stories, inspired by his mother's childhood adventures in her hometown of Kirriemuir, were an instant success. The stories read very much like the modern day *Tales of the City* – the series of articles that appeared in the pages of the *San Francisco Chronicle* written by Armistead Maupin.

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INVENTING WONDERLAND

The Development and Purpose of Children's Literature from the 19th century to the early 20th

By Melissa Jayme

The 19th century marked the emergence of children's literature with color illustrations that helped readers visualize the characters and the stories. Although the history of children's literature dates back to the 600's, few authors wrote books intended specifically for children before the 1800's. Children's books prior to this focused on instruction of behavior and beliefs; ideas which reflected the moral ideals of their time.

Four of the most revered works in children's literature were published between 1865 and 1926 – *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Peter Pan* and *The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh*. These four classics fall into the genre of modern fantasy, which is defined as events, settings or characters that are outside the realm of possibility and which often contain truths to help the reader understand the world in which he or she lives.

Some of the works that are now considered children's classics were not primarily written for children. Instead, they were political satires. For example, in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, many of the events that occur during the course of Alice's adventures are rooted in English culture: tea parties, croquet games and awkward encounters with royalty. Many of Alice's running conversations with herself reflect aspects of Victorian childhood and education: her constant concern about good manners, her study of Latin, her mediocre

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Irondale Ensemble Project

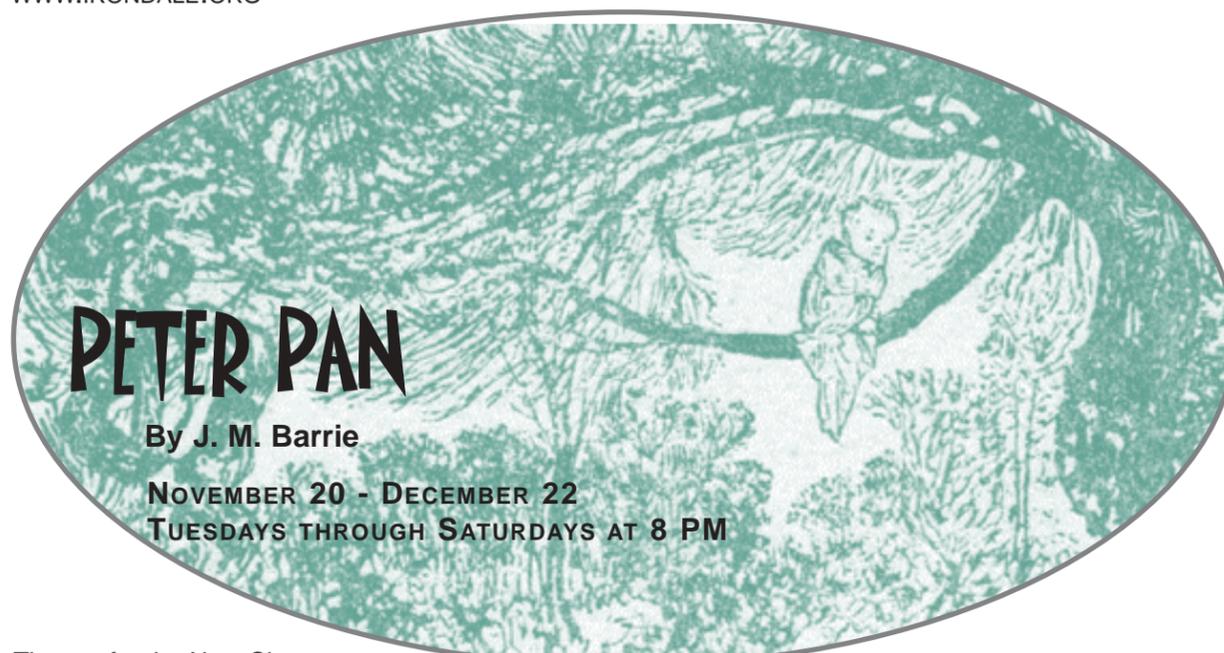
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KEEP THE NIGHT-LIGHTS BURNING

By Terry Greiss

J. M. Barrie wrote: "I don't know whether you have ever seen a map of a person's mind. Doctors sometimes draw maps of other parts of you, but catch them trying to draw a map of a child's mind. There are astonishing splashes of colour here and there, and coral reefs and savages and lonely lairs, and caves through which a river runs... On these shores children are forever beaching their coracles. By day it is not in the least alarming, but in the two minutes before you go to sleep it becomes very real. That is why there are night-lights."

Here in America, it feels like the nursery night-lights are on. We have been told that people are afraid, and perhaps that's true. I certainly see evidence of it, even among friends and family. Some describe themselves as feeling more "vulnerable" than before. Many of us find it more difficult to "focus" or concentrate. When a subway train stalls between stations, a plane

flies low overhead or a siren whizzes past, we notice it more acutely than on September 10th. Let's not even talk about common flu-like symptoms or skin rashes. We are also told that since September 11th, "everything has changed." Of course it hasn't. It's still the same world as it was the day before; the dangers existed then as now, the country was as vulnerable as now. But certainly with the attack on the World Trade Center the clock started ticking the "two minutes before you go to sleep." So our night-lights are turned up as bright as we can make them. We don't want to be afraid.

In our post 9/11 Neverland, as in Barrie's, Lost Boys kill pirates and are killed themselves with real swords. Five thousand people are dead – here. There's "regrettable collateral damage" in Afghanistan. We are looking for solutions which will help us cope. These include offering our K-12 graders the opportunity to pledge allegiance to the American Flag and sing patriotic songs to each other. Our leaders ask us to stay on "high alert, but go about business as usual". It conjures up humorous ways of shopping for groceries, or crossing streets, or opening mail. They have to know how ludicrous they sound – and how frightened they make people feel.

Barrie says that Peter Pan is the boy who guides children half-way to the netherworld when they die, so that they won't be afraid. Who will do that for us? Who will be our "mother's eyes"?

My six-year-old son couldn't sleep a few nights after the disaster – until he completed a picture book for his mom and me accurately depicting the whole event. He pointedly told us, as he gave the gift of his book, "I'm giving this



Illustration by F. D. Bedford in Barrie's 1911 novel *Peter and Wendy*

Irondale Ensemble Project Mission/Vision Statement

Background

The Irondale Ensemble Project is a direct descendent of the ensemble movement in American theater, birthed in the cauldron of the Great Depression and coming of age through the progressive politics of the 1960's. Irondale was founded as a reaction to and as an argument with a theater that has become increasingly wed to the "entertainment industry" and "market culture".

Mission

We create theater that is a strong voice for social change, and is characterized by a deep commitment to artistic excellence. Through the content of our performances, and by using theater as an educational tool in schools, prisons, shelters, and other community settings, we believe that we have a direct, often life-changing affect on our audience. Central to our work is an exploration of collaboration, creativity, pedagogy and the process of theater making, through the long association of professional artists. We conduct this exploration in traditional and non-traditional theater spaces.

Vision

Irondale combines research, education and performance to create socially relevant theater.

We believe that any room or space where people gather can become a theater; any group of participants is an audience.

We serve a community that is defined by a common willingness to confront ideas and engage in inquiry; it transcends class, race and geographic boundary.

Irondale rejects the values of dominant culture forms that want us tranquilized, want us to no longer recognize ourselves, and want to colonize our imaginations.

Finally, we believe in and trust the value of our own idealism. This is ultimately what sustains the company, infuses the work with hope, and allows us to pass on particular working methods to other artists and groups who seek to create healthier, more vital and more beautiful communities however they may define them.

to you so that you will always remember this." After that, he slept the peaceful sleep of a child and has every night since. Other children that I know have rebuilt lower Manhattan in Legos or created similar works of art.

And perhaps that's the key. That's how we should deal with the fear or anger or sorrow or whatever we're feeling now.

The wounds of the 11th need healing and I really think that now is the time to look to artists and art for help. Let's not only congregate around flags and in memorial services; let's come together around plays, art shows, concerts, in theaters, museums and auditoriums, and let's collectively figure out what's going on in this "changed" world. After all, if we're going

to live in a world as unreal as this one, let's beautify it a little bit. Maybe now is our chance to begin making it over again. I'm getting out my Legos and rebuilding it according to my specifications. The towers won't be as high, but the roots will be deeper. I'm reminded of the cave paintings at Lascaux or Font de Gaume that have lasted 15,000 years – now we know that they were created as pre-historic art museums. That's what I want my towers to represent.

I look forward to welcoming you to our theater. I won't say that it is a place devoid of fear. I wouldn't even want it that way, because fear is good. But as you sit in the darkness, just wait – the night-lights will come on.

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J. M. Barrie's

PETER PAN

Directed by Jim Niesen
Original music by Walter Thompson
Performed live by members of
The Walter Thompson Orchestra

November 20 - December 22
Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8 PM

Tickets: \$25, \$15 for Seniors and Students
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Special Benefit

Tuesday, December 11

Performance begins at 7 PM

Followed by a reception with the Ensemble

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Your participation in the *Peter Pan* benefit on December 11 will help Irondale continue its work in the Alternative High Schools, P 106 (a school for emotionally-disabled students at Bellevue Hospital), and its Adolescent HIV Prevention Theater Workshop Program for schools in public housing facilities. After ten years of consistent support from the New York City Board of Education, we now face the possibility that this work will not continue at a time when it is most needed. We expect to lose \$100,000 in funds designated to implement these programs. We have promises to keep to the students – the most innocent of all the WTC victims.

Peter Pan: A Produc –

By Dan Bacher

Since the early 1900's, the character of Peter Pan has withstood the test of time. What began as a London storyteller's thoughts in Kensington Gardens evolved into one of the most produced and revered characters, and plays, of the 20th century.

In 1902, Peter Pan was first mentioned in a book by J. M. Barrie entitled *The Little White Bird*. The character was popular with the author and often became the lead character in the skits and games Barrie played with family friends, the Davies. By 1904, Peter was perfected and became the lead character in a full-length play.

The play was titled *Peter Pan, or the Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up*. Barrie's script was originally rejected on the basis that it was too elaborate to be produced. There were too many large set changes and the technical aspect of flying seemed too complicated to stage. However, with the confidence of Barrie's friend and producer, Charles Frohman, Barrie mounted the first production of *Peter Pan* on December 27, 1904, at the Duke of York's Theatre in London.

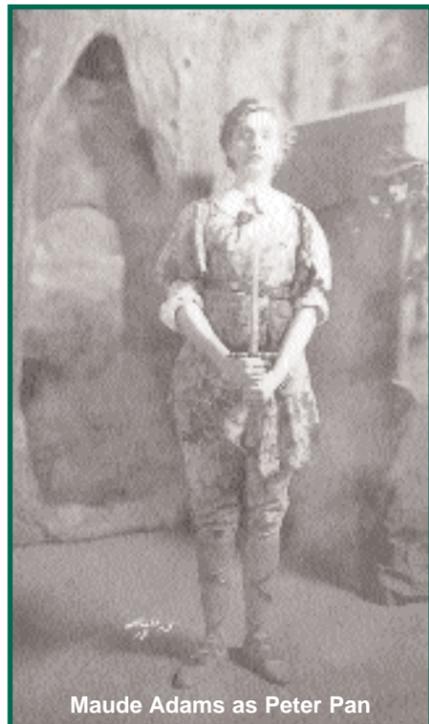
Not knowing how popular *Peter Pan* would become, Barrie was unaware that this first production would set theatrical traditions for the play for generations to come. A few traditions that are associated with *Peter Pan* are Mr. Darling and Captain Hook being played by the same actor, Nana and the Crocodile being played by the same actor and, perhaps the most famous of all, the cross-gender casting of a female as Peter Pan. Women would go on to play the lead role in *Peter Pan* for almost 50 years. The first actress to play Peter was 37 year-old, Nina Boucicault, sister to the play's first director, Don Boucicault. Peter Pan was considered a role for a woman until a 1952 German production cast a male in the role. The English didn't break this tradition until the 1980's.

Peter Pan was an instant

success. Adams for the role of Wendy, who in his mind was the star of the show. Although Adams starred in *Peter Pan* on tours and revivals until 1915, J. M. Barrie was never able to attend any of her performances.

Both in the United States and England, *Peter Pan* ran in either revivals or tours for nearly 50 consecutive years. Actresses who graced the stage as Peter Pan include Gladys Cooper, Haley Mills, Zena Dare, Jean Forbes-Robertson, Eva La Gallienne, Elsa Lanchester and Jean Arthur. An array of fine actors portrayed Pan's nemesis, Hook, including Charles Laughton, Allastair Sim, Ron Moody, Boris Karloff, Danny Kaye and Joss Ackland. Hook and Peter Pan were not the only characters to be portrayed by notable actors. In a 1913 production in London, Noel Coward made his professional acting debut as the lost boy Slightly.

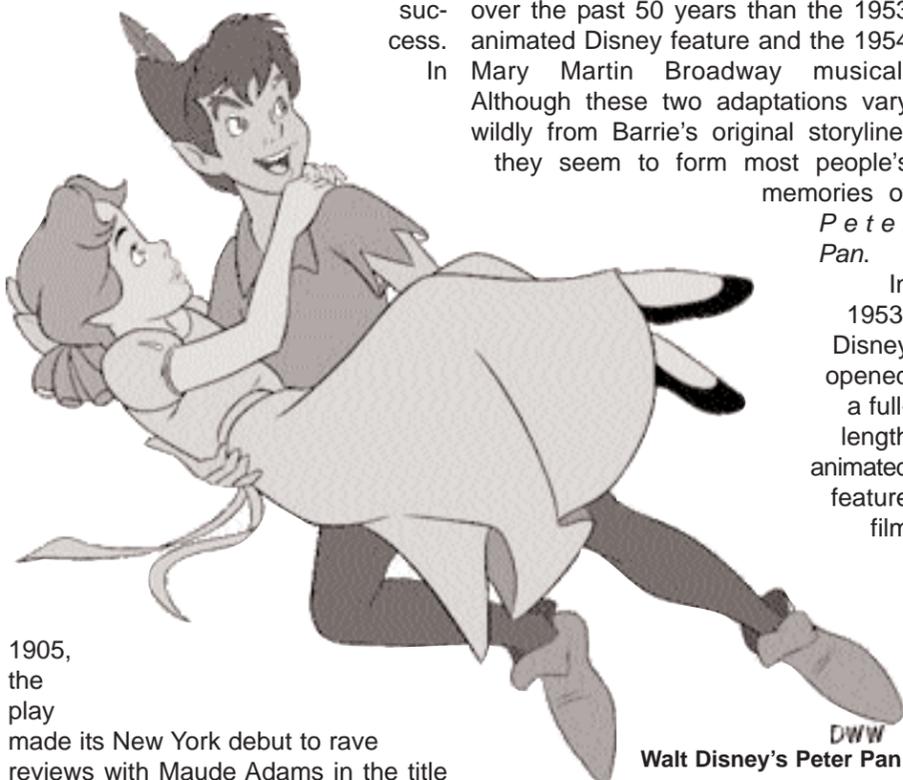
Throughout the 20th century, different productions evolved from the original Barrie play. However, no two productions are more responsible for the endurance of *Peter Pan*'s popularity



Maude Adams as Peter Pan

over the past 50 years than the 1953 animated Disney feature and the 1954 Mary Martin Broadway musical. Although these two adaptations vary wildly from Barrie's original storyline, they seem to form most people's memories of *Peter Pan*.

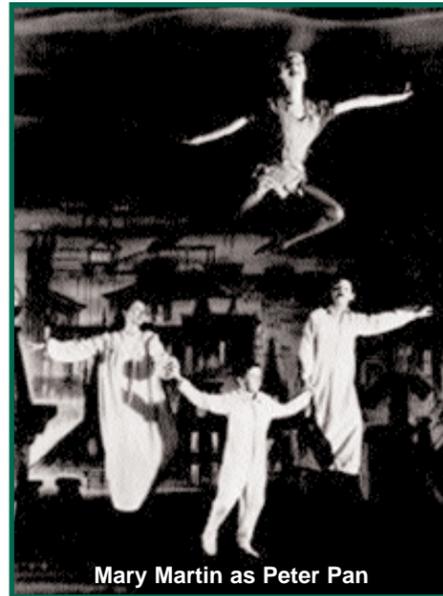
In 1953, Disney opened a full-length animated feature film



1905, the play made its New York debut to rave reviews with Maude Adams in the title role. Adams had enjoyed earlier success in previous Barrie plays like *The Little Minister* (1897) and *Quality Street* (1901). Barrie had originally wanted

of *Peter Pan* which was a major success. This was one of the first attempts to have a young boy play the role of Peter.

Disney cast actor Bobby Driscoll for the voice of Peter. He was a familiar child actor, and was in fact Disney's first contracted child performer (signed in 1945 BC – Before Cubby). Live action



Mary Martin as Peter Pan

references were filmed of Driscoll for animators to achieve the boyish Pan characteristics, while films of dancer Roland Dupree were made to capture the grace of Peter's flight. Among the other voice-over talents were Hans Conried in the role of Capt. Hook. Of course, in keeping with tradition, Conried also supplied the voice of Mr. Darling. Although there were some ideas and traditions that remained true to Barrie's original story, there were many "new" innovations that did not. Of course, it was hard to condense all the elements of the original play into a 77-minute animated feature. One of the most obvious changes was the feeling of light humor (often riddled with slapstick) that ran throughout the entire version of story. While many of the dark elements of the original *Peter Pan* were still there, one could never forget that one was watching a very entertaining cartoon. Smee was a little bit nicer, Tinkerbell was a little bit cuter, and Mr. Darling, although Victorian, was as bungling as Hal Roach Studio actor Billy Gilbert.

While music was always a part of *Peter Pan* productions, a full-blown musical was not attempted until 1954. In the early 1950's, Jean Arthur was the popular Peter, enjoying a successful run as the flying adolescent. But because of Arthur's inability to sing, she was replaced by an actress who's name ultimately became synonymous with the role of Peter Pan ... Mary Martin.

Composer Leonard Bernstein was originally commissioned to write a musical based on the Barrie classic, but after writing five pieces (which were used in the Jean Arthur production), he left the project without it ever quite making it to musical status. Jerome Robbins was supposed to direct the Jean Arthur production, but left the project when the production became more focused on the play rather than the musical aspect. Robbins saw great potential in *Peter Pan* and did not want to give up the idea of a full-length Broadway musical. So songwriting team Moose Charlap and Carolyn Leigh were approached by Robbins (who would also direct and choreo-

graph the Martin production) to write the score for the musical. Realizing the size of the project, Robbins later hired noted lyricists Betty Comden and Adolph Green, and composer Jule Styne to write additional music for the upcoming production. With the new songs, Mary Martin in the role of Peter Pan, and Cyril Ritchard as Hook, the show was a great success. After a full season on Broadway, the production was filmed for television and was broadcast seven times between the years 1955 and 1973. The televised production brought world-wide popularity to the musical and created an American tradition. Despite skepticism in England, the musical kept many of the Barrie traditions. But like the Disney version, the musical kept the story light and campy.

In the 1960's in Wisconsin, innovative director/producer Stuart Gordon put on a very controversial production of *Peter Pan* with his newly-formed Screw Theatre Troupe. This version included a simulated acid trip and nude dancers which landed Gordon in jail on charges of obscenity. Although the charges were dropped, the innovative reputation of the production was not forgotten.

It wasn't until 1982, when Trevor Nunn and John Caird produced their version of *Peter Pan* at the Barbican Theatre in London, that a man was cast in the role of Peter Pan in England. Recently the same team of directors remounted the same production, with a few small changes, at the Royal National Theatre in London. This 1998 production, which starred Ian McKellen as Hook, combined several different adaptations of Barrie's *Peter Pan*, including the novel, the 1950 New York script, and an unproduced screenplay that Barrie wrote for Charlie Chaplin in 1924. Included was a reconstruction of the last chapter of the novel when Wendy and the Boys grow up. Another of the many innovations in this production



Jean Arthur as Peter Pan

was the use a narrator who represented Barrie.

The story of Peter Pan will always be performed and continue to evolve, but no matter what shape or form he takes, The Boy Who Could Not Grow Up will remain a constant in our lives, from the youngest to the oldest of children.





Captain Hook Illustration by Paula Rego

PETER PAN: PUER ET SENEX

By Sven Miller

The 20th century has seen a quantum leap in technological and scientific advancement, as well as all the horrors that come hand in hand with such progress. The inability to control the advancements has been paralleled by a shallow treatment of human development. No particular or intensified attention has been paid to the human being and its psychological development. Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, two Russian mystics, state that the study of psychology is at its lowest point in history. Ironically, this is a time when deep inquiries into the human psyche (Freud, Fromm, Jung, Adler, and V. Frantz to name a few) have started to open doors into an understanding of the individual and collective processes of the human being. A lot of these pioneers' research seems unfinished, blurred by subjective issues or interrupted by history. Much of their findings seem forgotten or distorted by popularization, which has led to a dangerous black and white view of the world, building and cementing ignorance in the disguise of half-knowledge. He who thinks he knows, knows least. In light of *Peter Pan*, Disney has proven to be a master of distortive sanitization. Barrie's original has been bereft of all its darker undertones and turned into an ode to eternal youth (which partly it is, but not exclusively).

The *puer et senex* duality was a central cult in Phoenician society, worshipping the father-son relationship, the procreative masculine spirit and the phallic quality of Libido. The puer (boy) and senex (old man) were polar aspects of the archetype. The young and all its attributes coexists in continuous relation with the old in all its aspects and manifestations. It is an ordering pattern essential to healthy self-identity throughout the stages of life. Jungians sense that a separation leads to pathologizing one or the other. The young becomes self-indulgent, possessed with an immeasurable death wish, challenging the gods (as demonstrated by James Dean and other icons of pop culture); the old in turn is cut off from his "other" and adopts a rigid cynical attitude towards life. Pan is youth; Hook is old age. Both in

this tale share traits that make them different sides of the same coin. A difficulty relating to others (which leads to isolation and self-centeredness), a lust for power and control and a fear of the passage of time (leading Peter to the decision to never grow up and Hook to an ultimately vain attempt to escape the crocodile) are some of the characteristics the two hold in common.

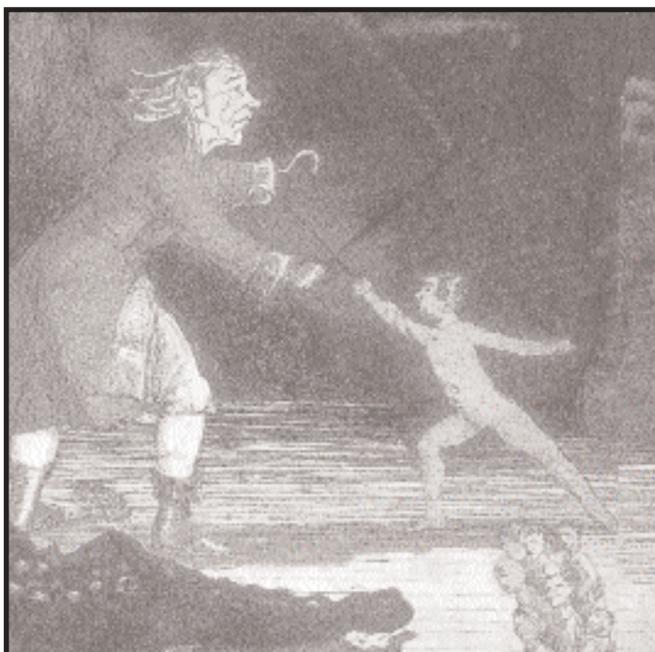
In contrast to the Phoenicians, Western culture during the second part of the 20th century idealized the young (Dean, Monroe, Morrison), wanted to resist change (plastic surgery) and undervalued old age (nursing homes as final destination). *Peter Pan* became almost exclusively identified with eternal youth, childhood innocence and imaginative spontaneity. Less appealing aspects of Pan's youthfulness were conveniently downplayed; Peter's cruelty and merciless forgetfulness, for example, and his absence of a conscience. Early performances of Peter Pan featured him with pipes and a live goat. He was lascivious in addition to being childlike. The two are not mutually exclusive. Simply because children are unaware of their lascivious actions does not mean they are incapable of lewd and lecherous behavior.

Disney, in early obligeance to political correctness (pouring out prim and proper 50's family values), pitched good vs. evil in a post war world that needed just that: sanitization. However, it is not exactly what Barrie wrote. His Edwardian restraints may well have accounted for a certain sentimental, proper use of language, but the images, atmospheres and story he conjures up clearly point to his deep affliction with a very complex issue. In Barrie's novel the island of childhood exists apart from and invisible to the adult world. They are separate. Whereas a child is driven to explore Neverland for its adventures and freedom (having no concept of its dangers), the adult may remember something through the veils of nostalgia: quiet identification might be permissible.

When and why were the boy and old man separated? To what purpose? The initiation of the young in tribes around the world is conducted by same sex elders. Ancient depictions show a young Dionysus with an adult beard, the divine child. Puer aeternus was an ambiguous double figure. There was a ludeness, a sexual adventurousness to Pan, the Greek God with the goat, the one from whom Peter inherited his name.

Jungians claim that the puer-et-senex unity is necessary for a healthy society. Separation leads to repression and denial. The father-son relation faded into the background at

Continued on page 8



Peter Pan and Captain Hook Illustration by Paula Rego



Irondale Ensemble Project's 1984 production of *Jason* (Photo: Gerry Goodstein)

Director's Note

By Jim Niesen

Peter Pan has much to say about the implicit tensions in the relationship between children and adults. "Children are heartless bastards, callous to their friends and family alike. They believe that their mother will always be there for them. But Peter knows better. He knows that mothers have plans that are not in the children's best interests, and he also knows that children who go off on their own may well return to find that their mother has locked them out.

"In its original form this is a dark look at childhood. Neverland is a dark place with drunken elves, and pirates to kill and be killed by. This is a story about growing up, and not growing up, and the desolation of adulthood."

The piece is performed on a unit set whose significant feature is a rope-like structure reminiscent of a huge cargo net or spider web looming over an otherwise barren space. It suggests an atmosphere that would seem to have more in common with the island of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* than Barrie's Neverland. In the air hang an assortment of rusted objects associated with the vagaries of childhood. Perhaps these signify the impure thoughts which Mrs. Darling has removed each night from her children's minds. The performance style is transformation with the company of nine playing over thirty roles and shifting from Lost Boy to pirate and back again and from location to location with the fluidity of the dream-like state suggested by Barrie's narrative.

Barrie came back to the writing of the play many times after its opening and did not issue a final script until the 1920's. He also adapted it into a novel in 1911. It appears to us that so much of Barrie's fascination with the story was his attempt to use it as a vehicle to examine the events of his own life.

With this in mind, we have added the character of Barrie himself. The entire story is told through his eyes and takes place inside his mind. The act of telling the story to the audience becomes in a way Barrie's own attempt at Jungian analysis.

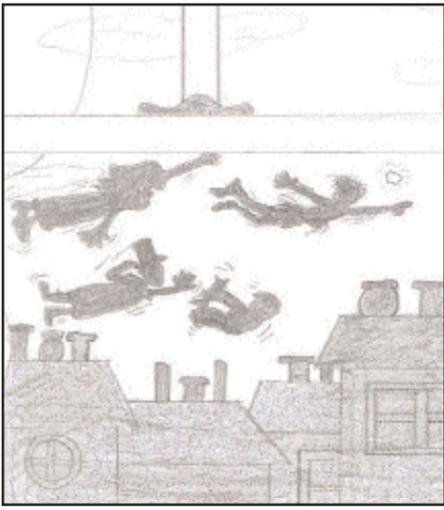
"Things are usually quiet on the island. The fairies take an hour longer in the morning, the beasts attend to their young, the redskins feed heavily for six days and nights, and when pirates and Lost Boys meet they merely bite their thumbs at each other. But with the coming of Peter, who hates lethargy, they are under way again: if you put your ear to the ground now, you would hear the whole island seething with life."

Help Us Count 50,000 Stars

We are pleased to announce the second Irondale Starry Night Challenge! Any new contribution received before June 30, 2002, will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$50,000 by the Starry Night Fund. This money goes to support our productions: J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* and *The Murals of Rockefeller Center*, as well as the programs we run for New York City's public schools, the "crisis education" programs for youth-at-risk and the support of our permanent ensemble of artists, who are employed for 42 weeks each year by Irondale. Our permanent company makes the kind of work you see here possible.

Make your contribution twice as effective by making it now! Please make checks payable to Irondale Productions, Inc. and mail to P. O. Box 150604 Brooklyn, NY 11215. Make sure you indicate "Starry Night Challenge" on your check memo line. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

The skies look bright, thanks to your generous support.



The Call to Adventure



Neverland:
The Region of the Unknown



Wendy is shot.
“Perhaps she is just frightened of being dead.”

Everyone knows...

Text by Jack Lush
Illustrations by Josh Bacher

Everyone knows of Peter Pan’s adventures and heroics. The eternal boy laughs with the stars, lives with the fairies in Neverland, flies on the wind’s back and kills pirates for fun. But is he the hero of our story? In looking for the hero in *Peter Pan* from the perspective of Joseph Cambell’s *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, there is only one answer, and everyone knows it’s Wendy.

Wendy!? The hero? Odds, bobs, hammer and tongs! Preposterous! But before we jump to conclusions, let us follow her odyssey and compare it to Cambell’s structure of the hero’s journey. Granted, it is greatly condensed and abridged, but it does have some lovely illustrations.

First: Departure. Wendy answers the call to adventure. Peter (as the herald. Although it must be said that Peter plays many functions in our myth. According to Cambell the figure of the herald appears “in the psyche that is ripe for transformation.”) lures Wendy to Neverland. He entices her with the promise that she will be a needed mother – one who tells stories and tucks in her children. She also is entranced by his promise of mermaids.

As they take flight, they cross the threshold into the “regions of the unknown.” Neverland is this place, a place of fantastic mystery and untold danger. “The Arcadian god Pan is the best known classical example of this dangerous presence dwelling just beyond the protected zone of the village boundary.” Away from the safety of her home and parental support, Wendy enters Neverland, where Peter Pan is captain.

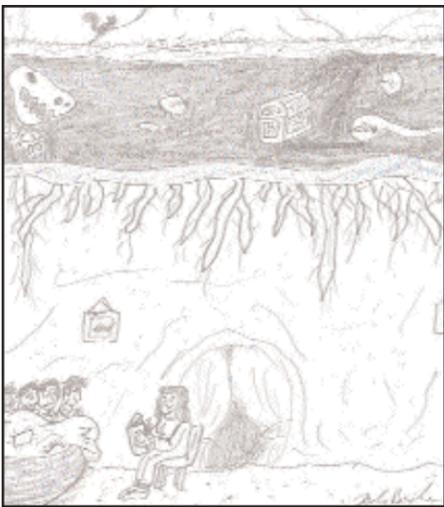
Although Neverland, a land of youthful joy, appears secure and safe, the unknown regions always contain danger. Wendy is shot down with an arrow, by

a friend no less, and lies seemingly dead. She would have died if it hadn’t been for the supernatural aid she received from Peter before she set out on her journey, a kiss in the form of an acorn that saves her life.

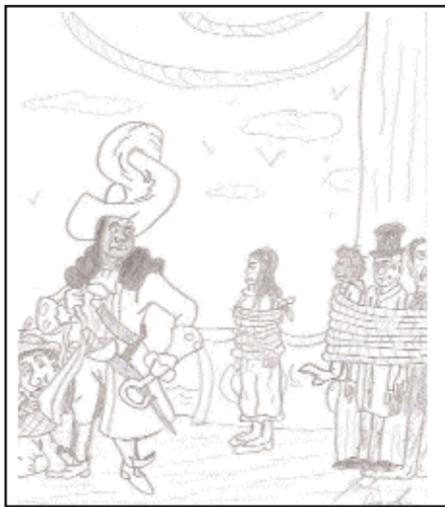
Wendy is then taken to the home underground, symbolically representing the belly of the whale. Our hero, seemingly dead, is reborn here. The whale’s belly has always represented a “sphere of rebirth”, and it is here in the home underground where Wendy begins her transformation into the heroic and ideal Edwardian mother.

Second: Initiation. In most hero myths, after the initiate has crossed the threshold into the unknown region and been reborn in some fashion, there begins a series of trials and tests. “When he arrives at the nadir of the mythological round, he undergoes a supreme ordeal and gains his reward.” For Wendy this supreme ordeal comes when she is asked by Hook if she has any last words for her children (the Lost Boys who are about to die). She commands them “to die like English gentlemen.” In this statement Wendy embodies the heroic qualities of the perfect Edwardian mother. Seen from the perspective of turn-of-the-century British culture, Wendy is now the mother/hero.

Third: Return. When the hero returns from the unknown region, he or she brings back a world-restoring boon, be it fire or knowledge or some other elixir that will help the world. Wendy returns from Neverland with life. She brings the Lost Boys back into the realm of existence. She also brings back a knowledge of Neverland and, therefore, a knowledge of youth (which is both a blessing and curse). As Wendy grows older she is able to tell the stories of Neverland and Peter to her daughter, Jane. Most grown-ups forget Neverland, but not Wendy. Peter calls upon her to come for spring cleaning, but takes Jane instead. Wendy is never allowed to go back, for she doesn’t know how to fly. But she has her stories and her family.



The Belly of the Whale



“Die like English Gentlemen!”



The Return



“If only I could go with you.”
“You can’t fly.”

Inventing Wonderland *continued from page 1*

knowledge of geography, moral poems which she had to memorize, and the fact that she frequently becomes frightened and lonely enough to burst into tears.

Carroll was a mathematician and logician who was obsessed with puzzles and logic games. He created the story on the spur of the moment for a 10-year-old girl named Alice Liddell and later published the book in 1865.

In 1908, Kenneth Grahame published *The Wind in the Willows*. He wrote the book for his only son while working as a secretary at the Bank of England. The major theme of the story is the struggle between the noisy, common way of life and the quiet and genteel. The main tale tells how Toad’s

obsession with motor cars leads him to imprisonment from which he escapes into the Wild Woods and, with the help of his companions, regains Toad Hall from *Untermenschen* Stoats. The book reflects the author’s unhappiness with his own life.

In 1911, J.M. Barrie published *Peter Pan or The Boy Who Wouldn’t Grow Up*. The story is a reflection of Barrie’s life. When Barrie was six, his 13-year-old brother passed away from a head injury. The accident was emotionally paralyzing for Barrie’s mother and she never recovered from it, which deeply affected Barrie. He felt that death would leave his brother a child forever; that he would never grow up. Stories that Barrie’s mother used to

tell him about having to help raise her “motherless” siblings were direct inspiration for Wendy and the Lost Boys. The name Wendy was created by Barrie from his own personal experience. W.E. Henley’s little girl Margaret had called Barrie her “fwendy”. Margaret died at age three, and Barrie, heart broken, re-christened her “Wendy”. Henley was the model for Hook (as well as the model for another classic pirate hero, Robert Louis Stevenson’s Long John Silver).

A. A. Milne wrote the story of Winnie the Pooh in 1926. He based the characters on his young son’s stuffed animals. The stories describe the adventures of a boy named Christopher Robin and his animal

friends in the forest called the Hundred Acre Wood. The boy is the only human being in the adventures and serves as the kindly master of the animals. Milne stated that he did not intend the Pooh stories to be “children’s stories”, but stories for the child in all of us.

Children’s literature serves many purposes: to help young readers to understand and empathize, to develop moral reasoning, to stimulate imagination and to inspire. For the mature reader, it may serve as simple enjoyment. Children’s literature is not merely stories for children but as A. A. Milne stated: “stories for the child in us.”

THE HEARTLESS CHILD

By Rezeile Caravaca

When I first read the ending to the play *Peter Pan*, it surprised me. James Barrie decided to end the play with the following statement about children: "When Margaret grows up she will have a daughter, who is to be Peter's mother in turn; and thus it will go on, as long as children are gay and innocent and heartless." I thought to myself, "Okay, he got the innocent and gay part right ...but heartless?" Further research was necessary.

Why does James Barrie say children are heartless? If we take a closer look at Wendy's reasons for leaving her home, we can find two. First, she wants to see the mermaids. Second, she wants to be with Peter and play the role of Mother. Neither of her reasons, according to the text, have to do with her father's cruel joke

on Nana. John and Michael are concerned with killing pirates. Only once does Wendy think about her mother, but within a few minutes her thoughts are diverted to the mermaids. In a Fireblade Book Review, Jerry Stratton comments on *Peter Pan*: "Children are heartless bastards, callous of their friends and family alike. They believe that their mother will always be there for them."

Yet the heartlessness of children is not found only in the play *Peter Pan*. One need only walk out the front door and watch children playing to discover this phenomenon for oneself. Better yet, travel back into one's own childhood and discover one's own heartlessness. Children may place an object in the middle of the road and watch from behind the bushes while a car swerves in order to avoid the foreign object. Does a child think about

the possibility that the car might swerve out of the road injuring the driver? What of children using a magnifying glass to burn ants? It is all fun and play.

In an essay entitled *Tragedy as Child's Play*, Lance Morrow talks about this "fantasy culture". He states that it is part of childhood to "enter into parallel universes of 'play' that may be sinister and may become more captivating the more they stimulate reality." This brings us back to *Peter Pan*. When Wendy, John, and Michael return, they find their father living in a kennel. The children are disappointed because "he is not so big as the pirate" Michael killed. (Incidentally, this dark scene from the original play is cut from the happier Disney film version.) Mr. Lance Morrow hits the nail right on the head when he states the following:

"First of all, play is not necessarily innocent, nor is childhood. The innocence of children is an adult myth. The reality is children's extreme vulnerability; their storms of anger and irrationality and their dramatically imaginative lives, which conjure monsters and heroes and set them in motion. Those imaginations sometimes indulge crazy fantasies of revenge and annihilating indication. The vulnerability, anger and extreme fantasies of children have been a constant over the centuries."

Sound familiar? Let me take you back to the beginning of James Barrie's novel and his description of a child's mind. He describes it as the following: "Draw a map of a child's mind, which is not only confused, but keeps going round all the time. There are zigzag lines on it, just like your temperature on a card, and these are probably roads in the island, for the Neverland is always more or less an island, with astonishing splashes of colour here and there, and coral reefs and rakish-looking craft in the offing, and savages and lonely lairs, and gnomes who are mostly tailors, and caves through which a river runs, and a princess with six elder brothers, and a hut fast going to decay, and one very small old lady with a hooked nose. It would be an easy map if that were all, but there is also first day at school, religion, fathers, the round pond, needle-work, murders, hangings, verbs that take the dative, chocolate pudding day, getting into braces, say ninety-nine, three-pence



Michael Davie

for pulling out your tooth yourself, and so on, and either these are part of the island (Neverland) or they are another map showing through, and it is all rather confusing, especially as nothing will stand still."

Who is to blame for a child's inability to empathize or feel? In another article entitled *A Chilling Crime and a Question, What's in a Child's Mind?*, Susan Sazchs quotes Dr. Robert Coles, a child psychiatrist: "In the absence of that kind of psychological life – I mean the lack of controls to deal with the impulse of their lives, the lack of an operative consciousness – I can only throw my hands up." The reality has to set in some time. A child is unable to empathize at an early age. Even Sigmund Freud theorized that the superego or conscience does not develop until a child is four or five. Therefore, while James Barrie's statement has validity and truth to it, does he mean it to be harsh? Heartless connotes the lack of feeling. Developing empathy for others is a growth process we all go through as children. The development of a conscience and different levels of empathy change throughout a human's life. Perhaps Barrie is right – children are, in many ways, heartless.



A six-year-old Michael Davie at play as Peter Pan

Thanks to everyone who made last year such a success.

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NETWORK OF ENSEMBLE THEATERS: [Report on the Gathering in Maine](#)

By Gerard Stropnick
Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble
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Network of Ensemble Theaters e-newsletter.

The third national Network of Ensemble Theaters Conference was held at Camp Winnebago in Fayette, Maine, from August 27 through September 2, 2001, graciously hosted by the Irondale Ensemble Project of New York, and funded through a Consortium Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. On the shores of Echo Lake in the quiet woods of Maine, amid loon calls and rumors of meandering moose, games of softball and volleyball, adventures in sunfish sailing and kayaking, warm days, cool evenings and a rising morning mist on the lake, 60 theatre artists representing 18 ensemble theatres met and played, talked and performed, and in the end, determined to officially formalize the Network of Ensemble Theaters (NET). From an idea hatched more than a decade ago, this gathering of artists dedicated to making work through ensemble process has at last come to see itself as a movement.

What emerged was a real organization with a realistic agenda. Those gathered decided to file Articles of Incorporation for NET, to transform it into a membership organization with a to-be-determined dues structure, to enhance the existing listserv and web site (ensembletheaters.net), to publish an electronic newsletter (you are reading it!), to explore touring and festival opportunities, and to gather again, somewhere in the United States sometime in the next 18 months. NET will move toward hiring a part-time administrator to advance this agenda. Already in the works by NET are a Bibliography of Ensemble Studies, and an Ensemble Video Library. Efforts to identify and invite other ensembles, especially ensembles of color, are ongoing. Perhaps most exciting are two upcoming books that focus on American ensembles, both being edited or written by Ferdinand Lewis of Los Angeles. The first, projected to be

published by TCG Publications next summer, is an anthology of ensemble plays called *Ensemble Works*; the as-yet-untitled second book will look into ensemble process.

NET also named the current Steering Committee as its founding Board of Trustees. The "NET Steers" are chair: Terry Greiss (Irondale, New York), and members: Eric Bass (Sandglass Theater, Vermont); Bob Leonard (Community Arts Network and Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA); Katherine Noon (Ghost Road Theatre, Los Angeles); Linda Parris-Bailey (Carpetbag Theater, Knoxville, TN); Helen Stolfus (A Traveling Jewish Theatre, San Francisco); Jerry Stropnick (Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble, Bloomsburg PA); and Sandy Timmerman (Q-Staff, Albuquerque NM).

It was determined that any company that had sent representatives to any past NET conference will be invited to become founding members of this new formal organization. This total list includes more than 70 American ensembles, veteran and new, big and small, in cities and rural towns, creating a wide variety of work. In the rush of the post-conference buzz, no one should expect incorporation to happen immediately: all of these efforts will take time and considered investigation. What NET has now is a mandate and a map that will allow it to go forward.

The week-long "Gathering in Maine" featured workshops in Physical Theatre led by Q-Staff and NaCL, a look inside the work of A Traveling Jewish Theatre, and Theater Grottesco, as well as inspiring performances by Irondale, Irondale Ensemble of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Strike Anywhere, NaCL, and Joan

Schirle of Dell'Arte Theatre Company.

Participants at the gathering included representatives from the Angst Ensemble (San Francisco);



Irondale interns Dan and Josh Bacher in Maine.

A Traveling Jewish Theatre (San Francisco); Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble (Bloomsburg, PA); Carpetbag Theater Co. (Knoxville, TN); Community Arts Network (Blacksburg, VA); Cornerstone Theatre Company (Los Angeles); Dell'Arte Theatre Company (Blue Lake, CA); Hartbeat Ensemble (Hartford, CT); Irondale Ensemble Project (New York); Irondale Ensemble of Halifax, Nova Scotia (Canada); NaCL Theatre (New York); Q-Staff (Albuquerque, NM); Sandglass Theatre (VT); San Francisco Mime Troupe; Strike Anywhere (New York); Theater Grottesco (Sante Fe, NM); Touchstone Theater (Bethlehem, PA); and Woman's Will (San Francisco).

For the past 15 years, Irondale and its Canadian sister company (Irondale Ensemble of Halifax, Nova Scotia) have retired to Camp Winnebago for a two-week creative retreat. In their invitation to ensemble artists nationwide, Irondale expressed a hope that

the place might provide the proper contemplative setting for the difficult decisions that lay ahead. The rural atmosphere of the Maine 2001 conference evoked the summer camp retreats where the Group Theatre of Harold Clurman, Cheryl Crawford, Clifford Odets, Bobby Lewis, Franchot Tone, Lee Strassberg, et al., would spend warm and productive weeks in the 1930s. For students of the distinguished history of ensemble work in the United States, it was the right place to be.

The NET came to its conclusions through the use of Open Space Technology, masterfully facilitated by Jeff Aiken of Berkeley, California. Jeff began his relationship with NET in San Francisco last year, and the Open Space model has proved a perfect fit for ensemble artists accustomed to consensus decision making. Jeff's gentle, resolute, and just slightly goofy demeanor manages to keep the focus on the issues, not the process. Individuals coming to camp included clown Adam Gertsacov, writer Ferdinand Lewis, and Avner Eisenberg, aka "Avner the Eccentric" who led the entire gathering in a creative workshop, and opened an investigation into what it is like to develop the same wonderful piece for thirty years.

The "campers" left Maine fueled by the fun of a traditional Lobster Bake, slightly pungent with campfire memories, and with a deserved sense of accomplishment. By gathering, we grow in strength and knowledge. We begin to understand ourselves a participants in a movement, an ensemble movement that shares a kind of alternative operating system in the world theatre. We have much to offer the rest of the world.

To find out more about the Network of Ensemble Theaters or member theaters visit the website at www.ensembletheaters.net.

Roses in December continued from page 1

Both series feature the lives and daily comings and goings of the colorful characters inhabiting their respective towns. He had found a certain standing in the literary community and with this new standing he turned to his first desire –playwriting.

The printing press is either the greatest blessing or the greatest curse of modern times – sometimes one forgets which it is.

Barrie enjoyed one success after another including works such as *Better Dead, My Lady Nicotine, What Every Woman Knows* and, his first stage success, *Ibsen's Ghost* – a parody of *Hedda Gabler*. He even received favorable reviews from author (and rival) Henry James. In 1894, he married actress Mary Ansell, whom he met while she was performing in his play *Walker, London*. Their marriage was not a happy one. Their inability to have children (it's unclear as to with whom the medical malady lay) placed an unmanageable strain on their relationship. It eventually reached the point where the only thing they could agree on was their mutual love for their Irish setter, Porthos (who would later influence the character of Nana in *Peter Pan*).

Life is a long lesson in humility.

By 1897, Barrie had established himself as a world-renowned playwright with the success of his play *The Little Minister*. The play broke all of the Broadway records of the time. It was during this artistically and commercially rich time in his life that, while attending a party, he was captivated by a woman named Sylvia Llewelyn Davies, the daughter of playwright George Du Maurier, an acquaintance of Barrie's. As they got to know each other that night, it became clear that they had a rather interesting connection: her son George was one of a small group children that Barrie had befriended through his storytelling during his afternoons in Kensington Park. After informing Mrs. Davies that her little Georgie had influenced one of the characters in *The Little Minister*, she invited him to her home. This was the beginning of a long relationship with the Davies family, as well as the beginning of *Peter Pan*.

Barrie became enmeshed with the day-to-day life of the Davies family, spending increasing amounts of time with them – especially "the 5" boys – George, Michael, Peter, Jack and Nico. His ingratiating into the life of the

Davies put an even greater strain on his marriage. His wife was deeply disturbed at Barrie's behavior, especially in light of their own inability to start a family. Barrie spent every afternoon with the boys spinning tales to keep them amused and, just as importantly – to keep them interested and connected to him. They seemed to be the family that he could not have. He went on to immortalize the Davies family in his book *The Little White Bird*.

It was during this time that Barrie started to develop the literary theme of a "lost childhood". The Davies boys took him back to a time when he also had been bold and carefree. This, along with the memory of his mother's idea that her deceased son David would have "an eternal childhood" since he would never grow old, came together in Barrie's artistic consciousness to produce the character of Peter – the boy who would never grow old. As time went on, Barrie developed the world of Neverland (based on a vacation island he shared with the Davies family in the summer of 1901), Mrs. Darling (Sylvia Davies), Mr. Darling (Arthur Davies), and the pirates and lost boys (courtesy of the many Kensington Gardens afternoon adventures of the

Davies boys). Even Nana the maid/dog was a combination of his beloved canine Porthos and the Davies' nurse Mary, who intensely disliked Barrie and mistrusted his ultimate motives in regards to the family as a whole and the boys in particular. Barrie published a book entitled *The Boy Castaways of Blacklake Island* which included actual photos of the Davies boys as they applied their playwriting/fantasy abilities. It was also during this period that Barrie completed his creation of Peter by transforming him to Peter Pan – half boy, half bird, named after Pan – the Greek god of shepherds and the forest. Represented with the head, chest, and arms of a human and the legs, ears and horns of a goat, Pan stands for unharnessed, instinctual sexuality, and lives in the natural, unordered world. Peter Pan was Barrie's attempt to reconnect with the free, spontaneous, uninhibited child that had left him long ago.

Peter Pan came to the stage March 4, 1904 at 8:30pm. Under the direction of well-known Irish director Don Bonicunt, the play spun a magical spell over it's opening-night audience and went on to be a resounding success. Barrie's combination of Neverland and

Continued on page 8

the real world struck a chord in the audience: the desire to stay young, to dream and to fly.

As in other parts of his life, the triumvirate of tragedy, sadness and death again came to drastically affect Barrie's life. In 1907, his wife Mary had finally had enough of his "highly irregular behavior" in regards to the Davies family, and divorced him. That same year, a cancer of the jaw befell Mr. Davies and affected him to the extent that, after many operations to relieve his condition (which consisted of surgically cutting away parts of his face and jaw), his wife found it virtually impossible to stay in the same room with him. To add to the family's misery, Mrs. Davies contracted what we now know to be breast cancer and died later that year as well. Barrie followed through on the promise that he made at Mrs. Davies' deathbed – to care for the Davies boys "as if they were his own." Through his celebrity and influence, he provided the best of everything for the boys: the best schools (Oxford, Eton, Clarendon) summers in Scotland, Paris, etc. Each of the boys reacted to his stewardship in different ways. George, who of the boys was the closest to Barrie, was killed in WWI in 1915. Michael, who arguably was Barrie's favorite, drowned in the Thames in 1921, in what many suspected was a suicide pact with his male lover. Nicos and Jack went on to varying successes as well-respected English businessmen.

This brings us back to 63 year-old Peter. His fall under the wheels of

that London train came after making additional discoveries about the nature of Barrie's involvement with his family; among them that Barrie claimed that the boys late mother Sylvia had promised to marry Barrie. One could conclude that Barrie's love of, and devotion to, the Davies children indeed served as a poison as well as a potion.

As the years passed, despite other literary and theatrical successes, Barrie could never come to terms with the seemingly elusive concept of adulthood. He returned repeatedly to Peter.

In 1936, Barrie wrote the play *David And Saul*, in which he seemed to explose what his relationship with the Davies family had wrought. In the play, David and Saul, the first kings of Israel, haunt each other's dreams. David is what Saul has been and will return to; Saul is what David dreams of becoming. They love each other, but Saul knows he can only bring David harm, and subsequently drives him from his court. The relationship of David and Saul can be seen as that of Peter and Hook. It is said that *David and Saul's* failure ultimately led to Barrie's death in London in the spring of 1937. Despite the world of joy and magic that Barrie created for millions through the years with *Peter Pan*, his desire for acceptance, love, and the need for an acceptable sense of real, adult life, in the end, seemed to elude him.

Dreams do come true, if we only wish hard enough. You can have anything in life if you will sacrifice everything else for it.

*All quotes J. M. Barrie

some point in history and in its place the mother-son as lover dyad took hold (Venus-Adonis etc.). The industrialization of the West solidified this separation of father and son. The father (predominately the breadwinner) now worked away home. The son spent the day at home with the mother. Thus, the son's concept of adult male was based more on the mother's perception of the father as husband and lover, rather than the father directly. The son developed into the mother's ideal of a man.

Jung says: "Too much mother and too much father can be as burdensome an inheritance as too little. Mother becomes...Mother Welfare State, Mother University, the beloved Alma Mater, defended by father who becomes Father Hierarchy, Father Law, Father Status Quo. We unconsciously introject the power inherent in these archetypal figures which, in the absence of the individuation process, remain intact at an infantile level. So long as they remain intact, uninterrupted by the consciousness that can disempower them, the inner dictators enslave more cruelly than the outer." Marie-Louise v. Frantz says the puer is kept out of life by an overpossessive death-mother. He leads a provisional life, the instinctual mother-child bond turns into an emotional tie determining the child's life path into adulthood.

Mr. Darling is a perfect example of the proper mama's boy. He has internalized the good boy behavior to such an extent that he is completely enslaved by it. He does exactly what

he thinks is expected from him. The neighbors have taken on the role of a control-mother, hence his struggle to be like them. In his desperate moments, he turns to Mrs. Darling, his surrogate mother, to help him through the crisis, be it a tie that simply will not tie, or an insight. The service to the archetypal mother is kept up through duty to one's family, profession, participation and fulfillment in and of civic and cultural life. These are the material provinces of the great goddess. Cultural institutions like church, school etc. start representing the archetypal mother. Blind obedience to those institutions can lead to the avoidance of one's own destiny. One does what one is asked to do, not what one needs to do.

Peter and Hook long for a mother, yet keep her out of their domain. Both instinctually sense her power over their struggle to find their destiny. They also avoid recognizing each other as the opposite that is needed to complete the ambivalent puer-senex duality. Therefore they stagger on to their other, pathologized destiny. Hook, a bitter old man is consumed by the crocodile, swallowed by death before his time. Peter is forever excluded from consciousness, never able to gain an awareness of himself, never able to grow up.

Why were puer and senex separated? No simple answer can be given, Barrie struggled with this separation all his life. Every individual, regardless of gender, seems to have to face this void in their lives.

The individual and the collective psyche tend to believe that outside of the order of conformity lies chaos, death and destruction. For the sake of conformity, society has sacrificed the viril, sexual, brash, violent relationship between boy-old man that once enabled a boy to become an adult. Recent history suggests that society needs to reevaluate this position in light of chaos, death and destruction that has happened within this conformity.

SEPTEMBER 11TH HAS NOT STOPPED US. PLEASE DON'T LET IT STOP YOU.

On the 10th of September, Irondale had just returned from hosting a national ensemble theater conference in Maine. We were entering our 19th Season confident about the programs and productions ahead and were smack in the middle of our Annual Gifts Campaign. We all know what happened next. The nation was shocked to a standstill. As the smoke cleared, we mourned, we talked, we tried to heal each other and our friends and neighbors, but our Annual Gifts Campaign ground to a halt.

Understandable? Of course! There were immediate needs, crises and individuals to care for. But Irondale has promises to keep. We promised programs to schools, prisons, housing facilities and other community venues which were supposed to have been funded by state and local sources that are now cut. We promised our audience another season of challenging theater. And we promised a full season of employment to our permanent ensemble of artists. Unlike some major corporations who have requested government assistance and are still laying off thousands of employees, *Irondale will not lay people off.*

The work you will see on stage, the thousands of educators and students we will serve this year and the activist voice that makes Irondale necessary to its community, can only exist by holding on to our company. Help us continue our important mission. Help us continue to create socially-relevant theater that has the power to provoke, to change and to heal! Your gift is fully tax deductible and will stretch a lot farther than your typical corporate bail-out.

A Word About Our Box Office Policy...

This year our ticket price will be \$25 for a general admission seat. To those of you who are used to paying \$35-\$50 for an Off-Broadway ticket, this will seem cheap, and we are pleased to be able to offer you inexpensive quality theater. We also know that there are many (if not most) of you who will bridle at the fact that we've had to raise our price. To you we say: "Have no fear – you can get discounts if you need them." In fact, we have raised our full-price tickets in order to qualify for more of the discount ticket programs available, like TDF (Theatre Development Fund). It is still our firm belief that anyone who wants to attend theater should be able to afford it. Therefore we have settled upon the following ticket prices:

Thursday night – Still and always "PAY WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD" – that means no minimum and no maximum – your choice!

All other performances –
\$25 general admission
\$15 student orsenior citizen

Call TDF to find out about group sales and discount prices for our productions.

With production costs totaling \$100,000 and a potential audience capacity of 2000, we would have to sell out every night at \$50 a seat to break even. That is something we will not do. The "entertainment marketplace" is not a game we choose to play. We are committed to bringing you provocative, challenging and innovative theater. We look forward to the participation of a diverse and exciting audience. We hope our ticket prices make it possible for everyone.

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