

The King #5 Henry **Adapted from Shakespeare by Ken Hudson**

Playwright/ Director's Notes:

This production of Henry the Fifth, was undertaken as part of my ongoing theatrical exploration of alternative spaces. Giving voice, as it were, to a specific location, by staging works which evoke the spirit, the essence, or ground of a particular place.

Without the trappings or dictates of the so-called "professional theatre," I endeavor to create works directly and quickly, piggy backing enthusiasm with artistic inspiration. Would I have hesitated, such a work as this, presented on-ice, in a hockey arena, would have become bloated with expectations, and I felt, in the end would become undoable.

However, seizing the day, pushing forth with verve and determination, and the belief of perhaps two dozen participants, I was able to not only adapt the script to my purposes, but also to mount a production. All of this within six months of inception, with no formal budget or any superstructure whatsoever.

Presented over the Easter weekend, April 2000, my vision of a Henry V on-ice was realized. The speed, the intensity, and the novelty all appealed to our faithful audiences. For myself, this marrying of the national identity of heroism with Shakespeare's work, all in an alternative space, invoked a spirit and vision of truth, which, to my mind, is theatre at its best.

While our run was considered too short for the popular press, our cast too inexperienced to be taken seriously, the production flawed in its attempts to achieve too much, and so on and so forth, on down the list. For those who worked through it, dreamt it and saw it through to the end, and for those who participated as witnesses, as audience, this event stands as a milestone in their aesthetic understanding, of how multi-dimensional magic may be attained by will and hope. In this sense, I consider my efforts a success of the highest order.

Ken Hudson
April 2004