

Director's Notes

This is my third year leading this unique project. During that time I've had the great privilege to watch teenagers create theatre, with all of the excitement, challenge, and vulnerability that comes with that.

Up until this year, The Edge Project was a series of scenes, created in various disciplines (dance, monologue, poetry, movement), and created separately by four different schools. This year, I thought it would be more interesting to write a single narrative. A play. Collectively. With 75 young people.

Collective creation is hard. It involves a lot of planning, coordination, conversation, and compromise. And a lot of time. We didn't have a lot of time, but I've happily learned over the past three years that teenagers can do pretty much anything. They don't necessarily believe that, but I'm quite sure of it at this point.

What this group of young people have done a professional ensemble of theatre artists could not do, that is, write and rehearse and perform a collective creation in the span of four months—and that's only an average about 6 hours a week. You do the math. It's a stunning accomplishment.

I brought the story structure of Joseph Campbell's Hero Journey to the table. The hero feels a call to a bigger life, leaves his home, enters an unknown land, goes through a series of trials, and then returns home with a prize or boon which he shares with his community.

What this ensemble did was fill that basic structure with their ideas. And their hearts. What they made is a story about isolation, family, friendship, and courage. In this unique 'tag-team' performance, three casts from three high schools tell Sam's story and his journey from fear, anger and isolation to connection, self-esteem, and friendship.

Thank you for being here and supporting these inspiring young artists.

Shawn Macdonald