

Welcome to the *Us and Them* interactive web cast.

Some context for people from outside Canada: On June 15, 2011 Vancouver's Hockey Team lost the final game in the Stanley Cup Series, losing the championship. People went into the streets and flipped over cars, including police cars, set them on fire, rampaged through stores, etc. Days after the "Vancouver Hockey Riot" people starting writing messages on the boards that had been put up over broken store windows.

If you know **Forum Theatre**, I think you are going to be surprised by the format of this project. We've been making a big experiment – one that has gone very well in the theatre with live audiences – this is our first attempt with this format on the web.

As you will see, *Us and Them* is a very "image-based" play. It does not tell a story in a straight line, and is 45 or so minutes long; longer than a normal Headlines' main stage project, which is usually under 25 minutes.

This play has not been structured in such a way that we will go back to the beginning and make our way through the story again doing interventions. This is why we have given you, and audiences in the theatre, a Table of Contents. These are the pictures and titles surrounding your viewing area.

After the play is finished, I am going to chat with the audience in the theatre about the nature of **dialogue** and then ask them how they witness and recognize the characters "building walls", both inside themselves and in between each other; walls that divide us internally and externally, and create the fractured sense of "us and them".

We are going to offer you the FINAL SCENE on which to make Forum interventions, but you can choose to go into ANY SCENE in the play, in order to affect the final scene.

The Forum Theatre invitation will be:

If you *understand the struggles that the characters are engaged in*, and you have an idea of how to *build a bridge across a wall*, either inside a character, or in between the characters, (or how to *tear down a wall*, or *not build a wall* in the first place) DOUBLE-CLICK ON A WEB ACTOR IN THE CHAT SPACE. That person will be at a computer just outside the theatre. S/he will ask you some questions, ***including which scene in the play you would like to work on***, and then go into the theatre and try to represent you and your intervention. (Of course we know the web actor is a filter for your idea – we don't have holograms (yet) – in our attempt to reach out across the planet, this is the best we can do for now ;).)

Think of this as a chance at time travel – you can flip around into *any moment in the play you like*, in order to affect the choices characters make and the path they and others take that may or may not lead to the very intense end of the play. This is why we've given you a table of contents.

Use the opportunity of the chat space to reach across geographic boundaries – we are always surprised at who tunes in to the web casts. And please send us email about what you thought of the play, the Forum, the project:

info@headlinetheatre.com

Thanks for connecting!

All the best, David Diamond