

winter
'25/26

the **Diarist** dispatch

PREMIERE
ISSUE!!

note from brad

What does a theatre company do between plays? And also, is that the most important thing for theatre companies to do in 2026? Plays?

I don't think there's a definitive answer to that last one...but at a time when the cost of production has risen so high and it feels just plain wrong to charge the kind of ticket prices it would take to survive (or to ask artists to keep working for below a livable wage)...it definitely means doing fewer plays and longer fundraising periods for The Living Theatre.

It's not only a bad thing though - it inspires new ideas and most importantly requires more community building and networks of partnerships. You'll find some of the trials we are following towards that pursuit in this premiere print version of The Diarist.

As the newest Archivist in our 80 year history, Emma Sue Harris has helped answer my first question with unique creativity. Their profound archival efforts at home & on tour with Tom Walker's B - Side Collection, and online & in print with The Diarist, are a stunning answer to what we do in between plays. Please enjoy :)

Brad Burgess, Artistic Director



about this signet

This image of Orpheus holding his lyre was drawn for The Living Theatre by Jean Cocteau & has been part of our insignia since 1957. It appears in various forms throughout this issue.



Judith often signed her name with her own signet: an upsidedown peace sign drawn inside a heart. In 2024, we updated The Living Theatre's insignia by replacing the lyre in Orpheus' arms with Judith's heart.

about this issue



The Diarist launched on Substack (a blog publishing/newsletter platform) in 2023 as an experimental effort in keeping track of the life of The Living Theatre.

Over the course of 2025, there were 41 posts on The Diarist on Substack. In the first few months of the year the posts were shorter, more frequent, and intensely focused on archive. As the year went on, posts evolved into monthly reviews with photos, journaling the day to day activities of the company.

This premiere print edition of The Diarist is a culmination of the work we did in 2025 as well as a window into what is to come in 2026.



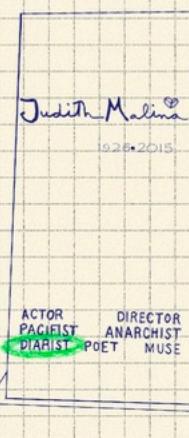
Living Theatre Archive: Tom Walker Collection and The B-Side Exhibit



Rosetta (2025) at the National Theatre in Seoul (S. Korea) and at Busan Cinema Center



Experiments in Civic Hope and Dracut Youth Theatre Circle



Judith Malina's gravestone reads "diarist."

This year marks 100 years since Judith was born in June 1926 and the much anticipated re-release of The Diaries of Judith Malina (1947-1971), edited by Kate Bredeson with a forward by Tom Walker.

Tom Walker

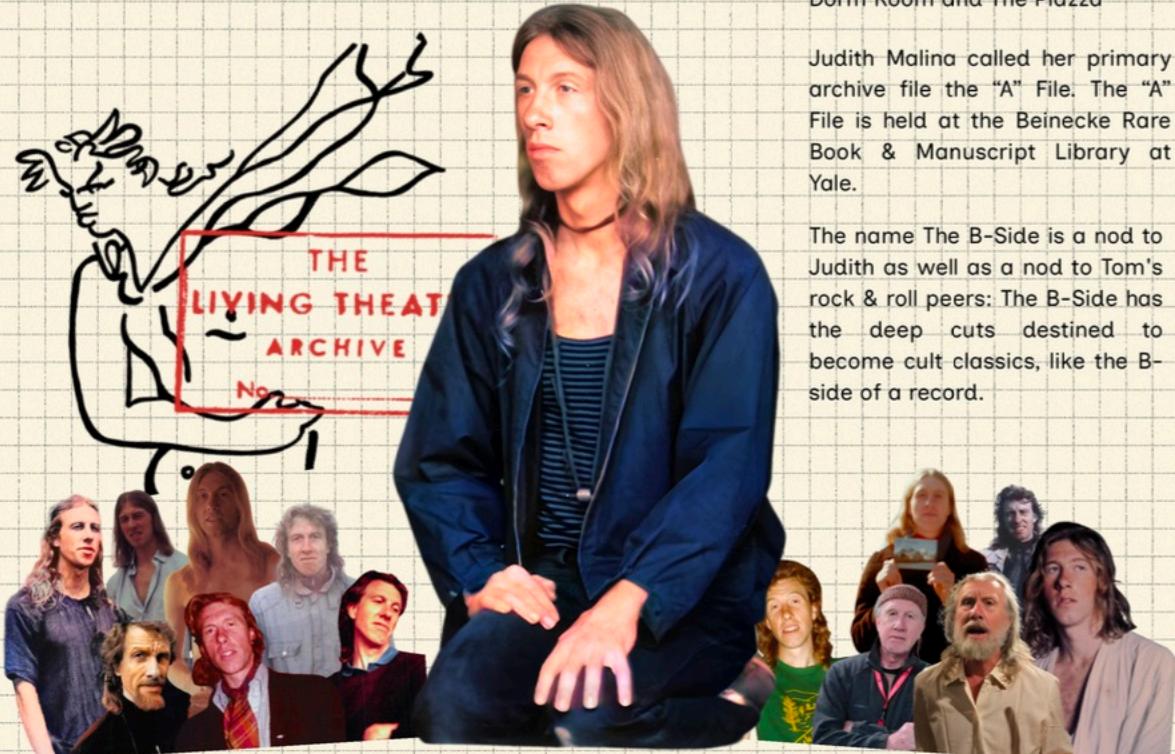
Thomas Scott Walker was born in 1947: the same year The Living Theatre was founded.

In 1968, their paths would cross in New Haven, during the theatre's 3-week residency at Yale, where Tom was a student. And the rest is kind of history.

For over 50 years he devoted his life to The Living. Along the way, he kept track of it all; in journals, in the margins of scripts, in photos he took, in ephemera he kept. He was a Living Archive himself, an encyclopedia of memory.

After a year of collecting and sorting and digitizing - and mourning - in spring 2025 we developed:

The B-Side: Tom Walker Collection.



I produce things for saving. Every moment becomes history. All is recorded. I record a record of my time. I am on Feb. 11, 1979, I am again Tom Walker.

It is a mobile set of installations using the personal materials of Tom Walker (1947-2024).

We debuted two unique "environments" inspired by Tom's archive: We debuted two unique "environments" created with and inspired by Tom's materials: The Dorm Room and The Piazza

Judith Malina called her primary archive file the "A" File. The "A" File is held at the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale.

The name The B-Side is a nod to Judith as well as a nod to Tom's rock & roll peers: The B-Side has the deep cuts destined to become cult classics, like the B-side of a record.



THE DORM ROOM: This is the first environment developed for the Tom Walker B-Side Exhibit. It is an imagined reconstruction of Tom's dorm room at Yale University, where he was a student.

This room spans between 1966-1970, and features materials from Tom's collection including but not limited to posters and pamphlets regarding The Living Theatre's American premiere of *PARADISE NOW* at Yale, the Black Panthers in New Haven, May Day at Yale, and other ephemera from the time.

We premiered the installation at Waterville Creates alongside a public facing workshop as part of the Lunder Institute's Summer Think Tank series at Colby College in Waterville, ME.

Special thanks to Colby College student, April Levy (pictured at right), who helped us set up the space, guided visitors through the exhibit from open till close, & was the first artist to "jam" in the environments (dance in the piazza).

We also had special guests Chakra S. (dancer) and John & Ellen Taner (Emma's cousins!).



The Living Theatre
workshop @
Greene Block + Studios



Chakra
Performs
Silent
Scream





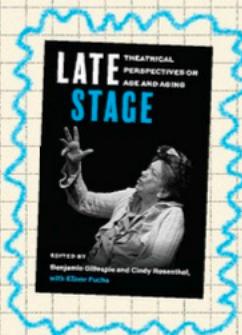
Cindy

At the Bread Loaf School of English at Middlebury College in Vermont, the installations were set up to support Cindy Rosenthal (LT Board Member) on her upcoming book publication featuring Judith on the cover.

The Dorm Room was in the cafeteria and seen by all Bread Loaf students, several of whom sat at Tom's desk and poured through his materials. The Piazza was set up in the Barn, serving as the backdrop for Cindy as she gave the 2025 Drew Memorial Lecture.

P the Piazza

THE PIAZZA: This is the second environment in the Tom Walker B-Side Exhibit. It is meant to showcase the company's extensive touring in Europe, particularly in Italy. (Tom spoke fluent Italian) It mainly features oversized foreign language posters from tours across the European continent that Tom collected along the way - and a five foot tall active replica Italian water fountain!





SEOUL (National Theatre)
myeongdong! August 2025



BUSAN (Busan cinema center) September 2025

Rosetta



The Living Theatre is proud to continue the legacy of Julian Beck and Judith Malina in Asia for the first time, in collaboration with Mabougas and Youssef K. Jughar, who studied with Judith Malina and the Living in 2010. In this reunion, Tom Walker, Brad Burgess, and Emma Sutherland represent the company in seeking once again the beautiful non-violent revolution to do no harm.

Tom Walker

In 1890, at 25 years old, Dr. Rosetta Sherwood Hall went to Korea where she treated women and girls and taught the first women doctors at a time when none of that was permitted. No x-rays, no sterile lab, no toilets.

With her partner Pak Jumdong (Esther Park), the first Korean female doctor that Rosetta trained, she also invented Korean Braille. They served thousands of patients. Over 100 years later their work lives on at places like Ewha Women's University medical school in Seoul, one of the most globally prestigious medical schools.



We have toured the play in Korea for the last four years to more than 10,000 audience members.

In our play about her, all cast members regardless of race or gender, play Rosetta. How will you play Rosetta today?





Bryan Stevenson of the Equal Justice Initiative said,

"There are TWO kinds of people - those with HOPE... and those in the way of people with hope."

These community based experiments find ways for art and creativity to be civically useful.

How does a theatre company work with engineers, scientists, fire and police departments, veterans, youth, the library? How can theatre be useful to those with hope and to those in search of it?

Let's find out together!



About the dracut historical society and museum

The society manages and curates town archive at the historic Coburn House (1780), which is open to the public, and they oversee the operations of Harmony Hall (1912). We appreciate long-running things at The Living Theatre, and these two have been going even longer than we have!



A SPRING 2026 PILOT PROGRAM PRESENTED BY THE LIVING THEATRE AT HARMONY HALL

One of the great things about theatre is that no matter what you are interested in, there is something for you to do!

DYTC is a place for young people to develop their creative skills. There will be:

- costume & set design
- sound, light, & music design
- dance & performance

EXPRESS INTEREST AT INFO@LIVINGTHEATRE.ORG

Judith Malina



Centennial
Celebration

