



# Making Spaces for Art

## A Case Study: Theatre Passe Muraille

**As a green muppet once said “it is not easy being green.”**

In this day and age however, being green has taken on a whole new meaning and a whole new importance; and while it may not be easy to be green, taking care of the environment by being green is a modern necessity.

The Creative Trust approached Theatre Passe Muraille in July 2011 to be a part of a Green Energy Audit. A grant was made available to share amongst several theatres. Theatre Passe Muraille was immediately onboard, having already given much thought to this process. The desire to go green had previously been expressed and tentatively explored by the theatre; and was now “strengthened by others,” offers Kendra Fry, General Manager.

It began with a consultant touring the theatre. The consultant visited twice and met with Theatre Passe Muraille’s Production Manager. Armed with a year’s summary of bills, the consultant made several recommendations. Delightfully, as a result of the audit, Theatre Passe Muraille learned that of all the theatres involved, they had the smallest environmental footprint.

Having already explored the greening of Theatre Passe Muraille, the consultant reaffirmed many of the initiatives that were already being thought of by the theatre. “It made sure we weren’t missing anything” says Fry. Added to that, were a few more things that were minor in terms of cost.

They discovered that their roof was leaking resulting in a significant heat loss. The HVAC unit was replaced in September 2011. And by September 2013, all exterior lighting will be replaced with high efficiency bulbs.

The water usage of the theatre was already being well managed. The exterior doors at the Ryerson entrance (which are in fact historic) are being replaced with reproductions since they have chipped and cracked over time. The theatre is also changing the rise of a ramp at the entrance, to make the theatre more accessible.

The audit suggested the possibility of glazing the windows, but it proved to not offer a significant cost savings. Another suggestion was looking at adding solar panels, but at this point, it is a consideration for future improvements.

In total, the theatre has spent \$17,000 in renovating their space. Those costs will be recouped within twelve years and will translate into a 21% savings each year in energy costs.

Theater Passe Muraille was pleasantly surprised at “how energy efficient the building already was.” The exterior envelope had some issues but the interior was solid.

The results of the audit reaffirmed many of the improvements that the theatre had already considered. It allowed for a more comprehensive approach to the renovations. With these improvements, Theatre Passe Muraille is not only benefitting their audiences both current and future, but environment as well.