

Voice-over text for *Playback Theatre Forms*

Description—voiceover	On screen
Playback theatre uses a number of different forms to enact audience members' stories.	Playback Theatre Forms Conductor addressing audience
We use short forms in the warm-up phase of a show to build dialogue and to model the playback theatre process.	Actors doing fluid sculpture
If an audience member tells a brief story during this phase, we may use a narrative short form such as this one, called a Narrative V.	Actors doing NV
Short forms, narrative or non-narrative, are used when the teller is sitting in the audience.	Teller in audience watching
After the warm-up phase, the conductor invites a teller to the chair onstage to tell a story more fully. The actors and musician create a short theatre piece called a story or a scene.	Teller comes to chair
By now there are a number of different forms and variations of them. Fluid sculptures, pairs, and long-form stories are the most basic and widely used.	
Fluid sculptures are the "default" form for the warm-up phase of a show. The actors come forward one by one. They do repeated sound-and-movements, always adding to what's already there. They may use words or not. The actors create an organic, moving shape, each one expressing an aspect of the teller's feeling. Music plays. The sculpture ends when the first actor freezes.	Fluid sculpture (non-narrative short form) Conductor's question, teller's response, actors do fluid sculpture while music plays
A pair reflects the experience of having two feelings at the same time. The actors stand two by two, both facing the audience. Each represents one of the teller's contrasting feelings. One pair goes, then the other.	Pairs Moments from two pairs
A brief story from a teller in the audience is retold by conductor in about five short sentences, usually using present tense and "story language." After each sentence the	Tableau (narrative short form)

<p>actors create a still image and hold it, accompanied by music. (There are many variations on this form.)</p>	<p>Audience member tells story, conductor re-tells in phrases, actors do tableau</p>
<p>The conductor invites audience members to tell a story in three sentences (conductor can condense or rephrase if necessary.) Three actors stand facing audience. After hearing all three sentences, the actor on stage right uses voice, body, movement, fabric, space, to convey essence of first sentence, then freezes. The second actor does same for second sentence. She or he may interact with frozen first actor, who doesn't respond. The third actor does same with third sentence. Actors can play any character in the story.</p>	<p>3-sentence story (narrative short form)</p> <p>Audience member tells story in 3 sentences. Actors enact it.</p>
<p>This is like a 3-sentence story, but instead of asking the teller to tell in three sentences, three actors choose three key elements from the story.</p>	<p>3-part story (narrative short form)</p> <p>Excerpts from 3-part story</p>
<p>The actors stand in V-formation. The person in front narrates teller's story in the third person, using gestures but not enacting story. Other actors echo gestures and occasionally sounds without looking at the narrator.</p>	<p>Narrative-V (narrative short form)</p> <p>Excerpts from Narrative-V</p>
<p>A clump of actors (two or more) uses voice and body together as one entity. One person makes an offer immediately accepted and developed by the others, until a new offer is made. A Chorus may depict a whole story (as a short form) or it may be an element in a long-form scene. An actor may step out to become a different character, then melt back into chorus.</p>	<p>Chorus (narrative short form or element in story):</p> <p>Audience member tells story, then chorus enactment</p>
<p>Stories or scenes are when a story is enacted fully with the teller sitting onstage with the conductor, like Judy's, April's, and Rhonda's stories from the show.</p>	<p>Excerpt of Scene (story)-- narrative long form</p>
<p>This form is not widely used so far but HRPT finds it particularly useful for stories with a wide social panorama. It's similar to what some European companies call "free form." The teller chooses the teller's actor but not other characters. Actors stand facing the audience across the back</p>	<p>Excerpts from Collage story (narrative long form)</p>

<p>of the stage. One person at a time steps forward and enacts a moment or image from the story. Others may join in to fulfill that moment. The actors return to the line and another actor steps forward with another moment. The moments are not necessarily chronological.</p>	
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The structure is similar to Hudson River Playback Theatre's "closing collage."