

Taube Henry
Such fun! What Joy!

“Muriel was larger than life, a unique figure who was ahead of her time and who brought a magical talent and understanding to working with young people. For those of us who were lucky enough to have studied under her, her influence has lasted a lifetime.”

Taube’s strongest memories of Muriel and of our life together as students are dreamlike impressions:

“ . . . Muriel was a world-class teacher: inspiring, knowledgeable, magical – a true artist who molded the raw turmoil and innocence of youth into theatrical artistry. Her instincts were always right on target with regard to the truthfulness of a performance, and she could unerringly help actors find the core of each line, each scene and each character.”

Taube gave an example of this. She was working on a monologue from *Antigone* by Sophocles in the Tuesday acting class and it was hitting her from a very deep, emotional place. Muriel guided her back to the play, telling her to use that emotion for the art, not for her own emotional release. She told her not to let the emotion overwhelm her, but to stay with the scene and let the playwright speak.

Taube performed in the following plays as part of The Production Workshop:

Turandot by Carlo Gozzi. Year 1965. Played one of the two Priests.

The Play of Innocence and Change, by Jonathan Levy. Year 1967. Played First Lybian Girl

Taube’s artistic work with Muriel helped her overcome her extreme shyness; she became bolder both on stage and off, leading to many capers on the streets of New York where the City became the backdrop for theatrical antics.

A few that she vividly remembers:

1890’s Night in Central Park in June of 1967. Jeffrey Friedman wore a black tux, a white shirt, beige knee-length shorts, black knee-socks and white sneakers. Taube wore a long dress and a frilly cap from the early 1900’s found in an abandoned steam-trunk in her Riverside Drive apartment building. Margie Gruen and Jenny Robinson accompanied them in similar finery.

The night was an unending chain of magical moments: enjoying the 1890’s music and crowds in Central Park, being denied entrance to the Playboy Club on 58th near Fifth Avenue when we needed to use their restrooms, crossing the street to The Plaza Hotel where we watched Jack Lemmon hold court, and after introducing ourselves to him, Jenny taking center stage with her quick wit.

“This girl is good”, Jack Lemmon said to his entourage as we faded into the night air and found ourselves outside a swank restaurant on Central Park South, where we were denied entrance, yet again, this time because Jeffrey wasn’t wearing slacks. He removed his shoes, knelt on top of them and hobbled to the entrance of the restaurant, where the audience, I mean the patrons, sitting in the outdoor area, applauded as they offered us drinks. What a night! And what a performance!

..... Slow fade as an evening of enchantment ended with a horse drawn carriage ride through the wilds of Central Park

The Parade Podium: A bunch of us found ourselves on Fifth Avenue where we performed a public service by liberating a parade podium that was meant to serve as a stage. Huffing and puffing, we carried it through Central Park, across 72nd Street (where a florist offered to buy it to use as a display) and finally left it on Riverside Drive and 79th Street, intending to return the following day to put on a show.

One escapade led to another and ...

50 years later, Margie says to Taube, “Ready for another caper?” “Why not?”, Taube replied. “Such fun! What joy!”