



World Theatre in the Land of the Midnight Sun

By Frank Peot

Theatre is one common ground that brings people of the world together. It is a powerful medium of expression; one that helps us understand each other, even if we disagree. Through theatre, we can see what we all have in common as it unites us across borders and boundaries.

For ten days Tromsø Dialogue 2011 did just that. Tromsø Dialogue was a biennial gathering of community theatre people from around the world, July 14-23, 2011. Tromsø Dialogue 2011 was hosted by the Norwegian Theatre Council and HATS in the northern city of Tromsø, Norway (approximately 250 miles north of the Arctic Circle), a land of the midnight sun. Some thirty countries of the world sent delegates and companies to share amateur theatre and discuss ways to improve and develop communication between companies and thus the world. The Congress discussed official business of the International Amateur Theatre Association (AITA/IATA asbl) and provided opportunities for people from around the world to share their ideas and concepts of theatre. It opened new doors and promoted understanding, thoughts, friendship, and progress through a cultural exchange of performance, colloquia, regional meetings, the congress, workshops, master classes, and, of course, time for social interaction between friends, old and new, from many different parts of the world. Highlighting the festival were the performances presented by twenty theatre companies from nineteen countries of the world, each performing in its own language.

Festival performances began on Thursday, July 14th, with the production *Chronicle of a Love Date* by the Studio de Monaco. The show presented a unique view of people looking for love in many different places and in many different ways. "In the end, a reality appears. All need love, and want to give it. As we all do!"

KULTA, the Tromsø theatre company and a band of French musicians brought Tromsø to full life with the opening ceremonies on Friday as attendees gathered outside the City Hall for a parade of nations through the streets of Tromsø. The parade began with entertaining figures peeking out the windows of City Hall, waking up the flowers below which were played by children; the flowers came to life and the parade continued with acrobats, jugglers, theatre companies waving their national flags, singers, and much celebration. On the steps of the Cultural Centre Mayor of Tromsø Arild Hausberg and



Lisa & Tim Jebsen and Jaime Sotelo of Midland, TX greet Kathie Maldonado (center) of New Mexico outside the Cultural Centre in Tromsø, Norway.

Chairman of the Norwegian Theatre Council Svein J. Svenson wished a warm welcome to Tromsø Dialogue 2011. The festival was officially launched.

Following the opening ceremonies the Soltis Lajos Theatre from Hungary presented *Dreamers* an exciting look at children putting their feet into the shoes of

continued on page 10

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"One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow;"
Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Act 4, Scene 7

These words of Shakespeare, spoken by Queen Gertrude as she brings the news of Ophelia's drowning, have rattled around in my head these past few months. I'm almost afraid to pick up a newspaper for fear of learning about another catastrophe ravaging our world. Hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, drought, wildfires, earthquakes, tsunamis – natural disasters that consume

Don't fall victim to timidity when asking for support. You are important to the health and well being of your community.

buildings, disrupt lives, cost billions, and bring grief crashing down. Then add the banking and mortgage crises, unemployment, hunger, political stalemate – hopelessness threatens to overwhelm even the most optimistic. What is a theatre to do in the midst of all this strife?

Even if not physically impaired, most theatres are struggling with financial challenges as funding resources dry up or are diverted to help those in need. How do you make a case to funders to support your theatre when children are homeless or hungry? How do you compete with disaster relief? Why should anyone give to you in the face of overwhelming need? With all these questions, we sometimes forget how important theatre is to its community.

Theatre provides a meeting ground for people of all types to encounter ideas, engage in conversation, share experiences and build empathy. Often, theatre is characterized as a family: hours are spent together in

rehearsal and performance; relationships are formed over paint brushes and sewing machines; sorrow and joy are shared over the footlights. In every way, this most inclusive of art forms envelopes and uplifts those who participate. Even while entertaining, theatre challenges us to broaden our horizons and accept differences. And theatre does this at every level – amateur, academic and professional.

Don't fall victim to timidity when asking for support. You are important to the health and well being of your community. You mobilize during times of emergency, and give back in economic, educational and spiritual ways. Without you, your community would be a sadder place.

Yes, continue hosting benefit performances for those in need, collecting canned goods to replenish the stock at the local food bank, disseminating information about controversial subjects, collaborating with other area nonprofits. But don't forget to entertain and enlighten through stellar performances that bolster optimism and make tomorrow something to anticipate rather than dread. Don't apologize when you ask for support. You deserve it!

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Midland (TX) Community Theatre's production of *My Way* travelled to Tromsø, Norway for Tromsø Dialogue 2011. Story on page 13.



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www.aact2.org/event/Madison

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Spotlight

Spotlight is published bimonthly by the American Association of Community Theatre for its members and is annually distributed to an expanded list of known community theatre organizations and interested individuals.
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AACT welcomes *Spotlight* input and requests for advertising rates. Contact Darlene DeLorenzo at darlene@aact.org or at the phone numbers below.

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Underwriting Information - Why Do They Need That?

by Ken Roberts



I have recently been sharing articles with you about the type of information that is requested on an insurance application and why it is being requested. Often when working through an insurance application with a member theatre, I am asked, "Why do they need that?" which is promptly followed with, "We don't even own the building." While it often seems that the information requested is irrelevant for the purpose of the insurance, I can assure you that underwriters have a reason for each question that is asked on an application.

I cannot stress enough the importance of answering every question, regardless of its perceived relevance.

In past articles, we have explored the COPE questions as they pertain to property and general liability insurance (Construction, Occupancy, Protection and Environment), as well as the importance of having the patience to get through the process by starting early. I must reiterate the necessity to answer all of those seemingly extraneous questions in order to give an underwriter a solid picture of the venues we occupy. Even when a theatre doesn't own their performance venue, if they wish to insure the contents that they own that will be stored inside that structure, an underwriter will need the exact same

information as they would if they were insuring the building itself before they can properly rate the relative safety of those contents.

This is especially true with the general liability insurance coverage. What seems like questions that are only relevant to property insurance, are actually questions that are helping the underwriter determine the integrity and safety of the structure, both for the contents and the occupants, including staff, volunteers and patrons. The more safety features are included in the structure, the lower the liability premium will be. As such, member theatres should be willing to provide as much information as possible to keep the overall cost of their insurance down.

Because insurance is not typically very high on a theatre's list of priorities, the person charged with the tedious task of completing applications is usually trying to get through the process as quickly and painlessly as possible, thereby choosing for themselves which questions do and don't pertain to the type of coverage they need. I cannot stress enough the importance of answering every question, regardless of its perceived relevance. Not only will this save the time and hassle of revisiting those questions again to get a quote, but it will also help the underwriter to price the insurance as low as possible. In the theatre world, it's always better to save your precious dollars than a few more minutes of your time. ♦

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S/W Remix from Germany's Cacus Junges Theater

their parents. *Our Daily Bread* by La Compasiva Teatro, Argentina, showed the life of a couple, whose habits and the demands of life mix with their wishes, frustrations, and disagreements. Finishing out the evening was a production of *FaustUS* by Black Bar Pangea from Denmark. The production was a poetic word-battle between playwright Gertrude Stein and the rapper Eminem, based on a reinterpretation of Stein's *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights*.

Saturday's full day of theatre included: Russia's production of *M/W; Play Without Rules* an interactive play with the audience involved in finding the solution to the everlasting problems in the relationships between men and women. A unique twist to traditional theatre was that men and women sat on opposite sides of the stage facing each other for this performance. The Faroe Island's *Oceanised*, the story of four beings existing and surviving in the afterlife with other inhabitants beneath the sea following drowning was presented by the group Roynidin. Latvia presented Tom Stoppard's *After Margritte*, a surreal comedy of improbable domestic juxtapositions. *My Way*, a musical tribute to Frank Sinatra presented by Midland Community Theatre, Midland, TX completed a memorable evening of theatre. Midland's performance was a strong and well-appreciated contribution to this festival.

Sunday and Monday were Congress days with delegates from around the world conducting the business of the International Amateur Theatre Association (AITA/IATA). Highlights of the meeting included reports from the Committee on Children and Youth, and other reports from the various Regional Committees and Service Centers. A special moment of excitement arose when one of the Delegates from the United States, Mr. Roger Ellis,

was elected to the position of Vice President of AITA/IATA. This marks only the third time a person from the US has been elected to an officer position in AITA/IATA's sixty-year history. Christian Have, a leading European communications expert who for over twenty-five years has designed communication strategies for various cultural events and personalities in Europe, presented the keynote address at the Congress. Attending the Congress as delegates from the US were: Frank Peot, Murray Chase, Lori Chase, Tim Jebson, and Roger Ellis. Also in attendance from the United States was Kathie Maldonado, the North American Regional Alliance (NARA) Representative to the AITA/IATA Governing Council.

The evenings were filled with more exciting theatre from Croatia, Germany, Cuba, Sweden, Finland, Lithuania, and Norway. Dance Studio the Crystal Cube of Brightness from Croatia presented *Invisible Cities*, a tale of men of various nations who had an identical dream of a woman running at night through an unknown city. Germany's *S/W Remix* by Cacus Junges Theater was the delightful story of a young scientist who tried to explain life in mathematical terms. Questions of belonging, color of skin, and finding your place in life arose and caused serious arguments in relationships. *Caribe Show SA* by Teatro Cassandra, Cuba, presented a conflict between heirs and their desires to start a restaurant or a school for Cuban music. In the battle for inheritance the contenders turn to Cuban



photos by Frank Peot

Our Daily Bread by La Compasiva Teatro, from Argentina

music and dancing in order to impress the juries. POM from Sweden presented *We Are Here* an intense view of feminist division and fellowship through dance, theatre, cheerleading and song. Described as "fun but not for the fun of it." Teatteri Reipas Irma from Finland performed *Pouring Rain*, a conversation on the themes of death,

relinquishing, and letting go. Lithuania's production of *El Tango De Maria* was a complex dance of the Tango, "when angels dance with devils. Presenting the dance that created itself in the lowest layers of society out of poverty, loneliness, longing for love, and misery in a far away place full of happy people who have created a dance of sadness for the past and lives in the future.

Norway's first presentation by Group: Ill Etage was *Talk to Me Like the Rain and Let Me Listen*. This two person show was a conversation between a man and a women both bearing the marks of living in hopelessness, but at the same time praying to meet where they are now. A second Norwegian production, *The Oceanic Land*, dealt with the lives of Johan Fredrik and his sister Eva who are separated on a journey to Astafjord only to meet again sixty years later finding they have only been a few miles apart during this entire time, but on opposite sides of the mountain.

Tuesday, July 19th was devoted to a very special symposium, *Bread and Circus*. This symposium was devoted to group discussions and sharing of the theme: "Participation in cultural activities is an instrument to help individuals and local communities overcome poverty and social exclusion." The day was concluded with the Friendship Dinner or festival party. Food, music, drinks, dancing, and much socialization surrounded this evening where everyone had a chance to relax and meet with friends from the many corners of the world.

The following days were filled with second performances from the previous days and three new shows from France, the Czech Republic, and Iran. Divadelni soubor Jana Hosy Karolinka from the Czech Republic presented *The Bride*, which was based on the real life diaries of Anna Javorkova. In the border regions of Germany in the aftermath of the war, immigrants from other parts of the country try to make a new life for themselves. The two women in the story have no choice but to offer themselves to the men of the village in order to survive, which splits the village into two camps, one that strives to maintain the secrets of the past and the other that wants to help Olga. *Alpenstock* from Cie Teatre L'emporte-piece was France's contribution to the festival. *Alpenstock* told the story of Grete, a simple poor woman who keeps an impeccable home. Her obsessive cleaning of the house is her way of protecting herself from the polluted world.



Dance Studio the Crystal Cube of Brightness from Croatia presented *Invisible Cities*

The final performance of the festival was *The Flower*, presented by Zendegi Theater Company from Iran. The story was of a woman growing a flower with pure love

Eldridge Plays and Musicals



By Robin Pond

Photo: Midtown International Theatre Festival, New York

Sarah and Teddy, no longer a couple, go to extremes in planning a double date with their nonexistent new partners. A local barista offers the services of his unusual side business, Even Steven. How far would you go to get even, if not to come out ahead?

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Delegates and company members join in a lively discussion at one of the Festival Colloquia.

and what happens when a man and a boy decide to steal it. *The Flower* was a poetic, visual, and humorous performance about love and greed.

Mornings were devoted to Festival Colloquia and theatre workshops. Colloquia were formal gatherings of the companies, audience members, and responders where each theatre company was given an opportunity to exchange information on the working methods of their group. Discussions included information on the history of the company, its goals and aims, the process of creating the work they presented, the cultural context in which the company works and its relations to the National Center of AITA/IATA. Colloquia were lead by Dr. Danunte Vaigauskaite, Head of Directing Dept. at University of Klaipeda (Lithuania); Dr. Pinczés István, stage director and teacher (Hungary); and Aled Rhys-Jones, director/teacher (United Kingdom). Workshops included Norwegian Folk Dancing, Acrobatics and the Circus, Make-up, and Stage

Fighting along with master classes in vocal technique and dialogues. There was plenty to do, much to learn, and loads of sights to see while in Tromsø.

Each participating company in Tromsø Dialogue 2011 received a glass sphere made especially for this festival. The sphere symbolizes the world, while the tiny heart inside symbolizes brotherhood, dialogue, and love. Looking closely at each sphere you could make out the Northern Lights and dots to represent the countries. Norway's northernmost glassblowers Glasshytta Blåst made the spheres.

The closing of the festival was slightly marred by the bombing and shootings in Oslo on July 22nd. The final performance by Iran was closed with words of sympathy and condolences from Festival Chair Svein J. Svenson, Secretary-general Christin Sund, AITA/IATA President Marja Laaksovirta, and a representative of the Iranian company. After which, all members of the audience, the companies, and citizens present were asked to join hands for a moment of silent remembrance.

Tromsø Dialogue did indeed provide theatre enthusiasts with many great, exciting, and touching experiences. It provided a basis of new contacts for organizations, and individuals. Art communicates; it makes contacts, and inspires interaction across continents irrespective of language or cultural backgrounds. ♦

Frank Peot is a member of the AACT International Committee and is AACT's Secretary. He is past North American representative to the AITA/IATA Governing Council.

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Midland (TX) Community Theatre Performs in Tromsø, Norway

By Tim Jebsen, Director

This past July, Midland (TX) Community Theatre was proud to represent the North American Regional Alliance (NARA) and the USA at Tromsø Dialogue 2011, the IATA/AITA International Amateur Theatre festival in Norway. Midland Community Theatre submitted its application to NARA in December 2010, and was chosen by the Norwegian organizers in January 2011. Midland Community Theatre submitted its production of *My Way – a Review of the Music of Frank Sinatra*, since Midland Community Theatre had previously toured this production to the Dundalk Maytime Festival in Ireland during 2004 and could travel to Norway with a small company.

Our company of six arrived in Tromsø on Friday, July 15, 2011, and we immediately were attending productions that night from Hungary, Denmark and Germany. Our first performance took place on Saturday, July 16th at 10 pm, and we spent that day working on technical elements and preparing for our show. During the rest of the week, our group was able to attend productions from Croatia, Cuba, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Monaco, Norway (2), Russia and our favorite, Argentina. When we arrived, we were told that the group from Iran was unable to obtain a Visa to enter Norway, but suddenly on Wednesday the group was able to secure these documents and they arrived and performed on Saturday night to wrap up the festival.

Performing groups lived together in a local school, which was set up with cots in classrooms. Although not ideal, it was a wonderful opportunity to meet people from around the world and interact with them. Our men were on the same floor as the groups from Russia and Lithuania, and our women were located next door to the Hungarians. Several groups held parties with their national music and food and drink. Our group decided to host a special breakfast for everyone in the school. On Thursday morning, we awoke at 6:30 am and started cooking scrambled eggs with cheese, peppers and onions and made breakfast burritos for everyone. Many people told us that they set their alarms in order to not miss our special treat.

One of the wonderful elements of having the festival in Tromsø was the fact that July is the time for the Midnight Sun. During the festival, the sun never went down, and this took some adjustments. However, we brought sleeping masks and darkened the windows in our schoolroom to allow us to sleep at night. It was a magical feeling to walk home late at night with full sunlight, but we were all glad to return home and see the sun go down again.



The Midland Community Theatre Company enjoying the beauty of Norway: (from left) Rob Montgomery, Lisa Jebsen, Tim Jebsen, Ryan Loyd, Kristen Loyd, and Jaime Sotelo.

In addition to our participation in the festival, several members of the group were able to travel early to Oslo and tour the capital in addition to taking a train trip to the Sognefjord in Western Norway to see the beautiful scenery. However, the terrorism event of Friday, July 22, 2011 added a somber note to the end of the festival while reminding us that theatre can bring together people from different societies, and that the arts can be part of the process of education and knowledge. The terrorism event took place two hours before our second performance – and our thoughts and hearts were with our Norwegian friends as they dealt with the national tragedy.

Overall, our group had a wonderful experience in Norway. The people were warm and welcoming, and our new international friends gave us a greater global perspective on the world of theatre. If you or your company has the chance to travel and perform abroad, please consider the sacrifice of time and money – it's well worth it! ♦

Breaking News: AACT Scores Big for NYC Convention!

AACT is excited to announce two exciting happenings at next summer's New York City convention.

First, we have secured a keynote speaker and guest of honor. Famed playwright Ken Ludwig, will be honored at a reception at the Millennium Hotel on Thursday, July 17 at 4:30 PM. Mr. Ludwig is much-produced and much loved in community theatre circles for his plays, including *Lend Me a Tenor*, *Moon Over Buffalo*, *Leading Ladies* and *Crazy for You*. Convention attendees will have the opportunity to meet Mr. Ludwig and honor him at the celebration, which is generously sponsored by Samuel French, Inc.

Second, we have three questions: 1) What is the hottest ticket on Broadway? 2) What show is nearly

impossible to get in to see? 3) Who has tickets to that show? The answer to the first two questions is Trey Parker, Robert Lopez, and Matt Stone's *The Book of Mormon*. The answer to the third question is AACT!



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Don't miss the Event of the Summer: AACT's NYC Convention 2012! To reserve your spot, go to www.aact2.org/event/NYC. ♦

**AACT National Convention
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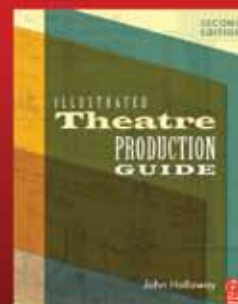
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Bringing English Language Theatre to China

Early this year the Beijing Playhouse in China joined AACT and put AACT Executive Director, Julie Crawford on its mailing list. Although located in Beijing China, the theatre is not a Chinese theatre. Curious about it, Julie contacted Beijing Playhouse Executive Director Chris Verrill to learn more about the theatre and how it is pioneering new territory. This Q&A was created to share with *Spotlight* readers how the love of live theatre sustains us and helps us reach out to others, even when far from our homeland.



Supertitles make Beijing Playhouse performances accessible for Chinese audiences.

AACT Spotlight: What is Beijing Playhouse?

Beijing Playhouse: Beijing Playhouse is the largest English language theatre produced in China, outside of Hong Kong. It's just like any community theatre in the US in that it produces chestnuts such as *Guys and Dolls*, *Oklahoma!*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *I Do! I Do!*, *You Can't Take It With You*, *The Odd Couple* and *A Christmas Carol*. "Beijing Playhouse shows are performed in English with Mandarin supertitles," says Beijing Playhouse executive director Chris Verrill, a 25-year theatre/TV veteran producer and director originally from the San Francisco Bay Area.

AACT Spotlight: Who participates in English theatre in China?

Beijing Playhouse: "Expatriates from all over the world and English speaking Chinese all join together into one melting pot. To date, we've had cast and crew from 25 different countries," says Verrill. "Paid crew and volunteer actors all share a love of doing theatre in English." Expatriates with American theatre expertise serve on Beijing Playhouse's management

board and a local Chinese crew, offsetting expat transience, guarantee continuity from show to show and year to year.

AACT Spotlight: What needs does Beijing Playhouse meet?

Beijing Playhouse: While China has been going gangbusters in the world economy, China's performing arts has not grown at the same pace, partly due to modern history and the country's economic focus. Beijing Playhouse's simple goal is to exist to entertain audiences, both new Chinese audiences and expats who miss theatre from back home. "It's not rocket science," says Verrill. "Our mission is to produce the best English language theatre in China."

AACT Spotlight: What are the challenges of producing English theatre in China?

Beijing Playhouse: In most respects, Beijing Playhouse's challenges are the same challenges faced by theatres throughout the US. Selling tickets, securing sponsorships, and balancing the budget are also our biggest challenges. In China, the usual theatre challenges are all magnified. There is not a history of theatre attendance in developing countries. Not only do we have to sell tickets, we sometimes have to start from square zero and explain the concept of what live theatre is. "Like many arts organizations, we strive to creatively balance our budget as ticket sales are never enough," says Stowe Sprague, Beijing Playhouse management board member and former board member of Youth Theatre Northwest near Seattle. "Another hurdle not faced in the US is that prior to selling any tickets, we often need to educate local audiences on what live theatre can offer, the price-value of this unique type of entertainment, and even how to best enjoy a performance."

AACT Spotlight: What other challenges are unique to China? How do you find actors and directors?



Andrew Tait as Leslie Arther in the Beijing Playhouse production of *Love, Sex and the IRS*.

Beijing Playhouse: *"I am continually impressed with the high caliber actors who land in Beijing for work or study reasons," says Verrill. "But finding talented directors who know how to tell a story that will both entertain audiences and generate ticket sales is the real challenge."* Another recruiting challenge is staffing Beijing Playhouse Academy of Performing Arts which holds drama camps and after school and kindergarten classes for both expat and Chinese kids. *"Finding qualified drama teachers with experience teaching children—impossible to find in China—is difficult enough that we are very open to recruiting from the US and enticing that talent to come to Beijing,"* says Sprague.

AACT Spotlight: How do you solve those problems unique to producing theatre in China?

Beijing Playhouse: *"We're blazing new territory in China. Not only is live theatre relatively new to local audiences but curiously, so is the proposition of small scale professionally staffed theatre. We are literally introducing a new business model to China. Traditionally, theatrical events in China have always been done on a grand scale (remember the 2008 Olympics' opening ceremony?)"* says Verrill. This is in contrast to America where small theatres have a long history. While China has embraced Broadway's big shows, the country is still to be convinced that Off Broadway will have its own successful niche. *"Professional Off Broadway theatre in China is an uphill climb,"* says Verrill. *"Beijing*



photos by Cynthia He

Fran Chen as Mom in the Beijing Playhouse production of Love, Sex and the IRS.

Playhouse is truly Off Off Way Off Broadway theatre. We know we are considered pioneers in China, and we want to make a difference in the world." ♦

Beijing Playhouse can be reached at performance@beijingplayhouse.com. Anyone interested in being a guest director or teacher with Beijing Playhouse Academy of Performing Arts should contact Beijing Playhouse directly.



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The New Senior Theatre Survey: A Reflection Of What's Happening In Community Theatres

By Bonnie L. Vorenberg



Readers Theatre can be performed with music stands like in this show by The Autumn Players from Asheville Community Theatre.

I went to the local community theatre to watch their Senior Theatre in action. It was such fun to see the older actors explore how different ways to use their voice could influence character development. After the rehearsal, the seniors talked about what the experience meant to them just as the Artistic Director walked in to echo the actors' sentiments. It all came together for me. My French intern, Bernard Marro, and I had just completed the first survey of Senior Theatre and as I sat in the darkened theatre, I realized that the survey accurately reflected what I was seeing on stage.

The survey was answered by 142 of the 800+ Senior Theatre companies in our database, many of which are allied with community theatres. During my career in Senior Theatre, I have witnessed companies come and go. It seemed like they had an average life span of about 10 years. Interestingly, the survey reflected that statistic with 72% of the companies having been in existence between 1-12 years. They mainly operate as not-for-profit organizations though in the current economic atmosphere where grant funding is so competitive, many new companies are being formed as for-profits. Several new statistical studies document the value of the arts for elders' brain fitness. That means grant requests in the health and fitness areas might be very attractive to funding sources.

Senior Theatres are largely amateur groups though there are a few professional companies. Like community theatres, the participants usually live in the local area and participate in classes and performances. Most programs

attract 11-20 actors who stay with the group from 1-3 years, only leaving because of illness or other commitments. The short stays mean that groups must market continually to get fresh talent. If they are allied with a community theatre, the parent company can keep the marketing message ongoing and direct interested older people to the senior company. It can also supply space for classes and rehearsals, which, according to the survey, are usually one afternoon a week for two hours.

In classes, the seniors learn basic acting and improvisation, which are the most popular topics. They perfect skills used in performance, usually working with short plays done as readers theatre or script-in-hand productions. Some companies expand to performances of variety shows while others attempt more serious fare, like productions based on issues or memories. They hold auditions for shows which are most frequently performed in the spring (73%) and the fall (68%) to audiences mainly of older adults at retirement communities and senior centers with 25% performing in their community theatre. The survey showed that a majority of Senior Theatres use technical elements like costumes, props, microphones, sound, and lighting, which are taken on tour into the community.

Over 44% of the Senior Theatres responding to the survey pay for their work by selling tickets or with performance fees and donations ranging from \$1-100. Senior Theatres which are aligned with community theatres such as Theatre Winter Haven's Act IV Players ask for low fees because "it meets our mission to serve the community," says Artistic Director Norm Small. The senior group



Community theatres offer classes for seniors to help them bond with the theatre.

all photos by Roger Bargainnier

also provides outreach and marketing for the theatre. According to the survey, fees are used for scripts, royalties, costumes, microphones and other supplies. When companies employ staff, 82% pay their director and 22% pay their music director, both good investments which promote artistic quality.

The most concerning part of the Senior Theatre survey was that 43% of the companies "don't charge." To me, this is a huge mistake. In our culture, which is based on money, we don't value what we don't pay for. Just because the actors and the audiences are older, doesn't necessarily mean that the artistic work isn't of the highest quality. Indeed if you don't charge, it lowers the perceived value of the work.

Senior Theatre companies are fully organized arts organizations. The survey showed most companies have one person, the director, who leads both the artistic and organizational elements of the company. Over 80% of the directors use a written rehearsal schedule.

Knowing that Senior Theatre directors have a theatrical background, it was troublesome to discover they were



Senior Theatre helps older people push their theatrical boundaries while having fun.

re-writing scripts and not paying royalties. They even use music without permission. In essence, the companies are breaking copyright law, not having permission to perform, and cheating playwrights out of their livelihood. These easily corrected situations can become costly situations and huge problems for the community theatre sponsors.

Senior Theatre companies are more visible as the electronic age grows. They mainly rely on traditional forms of marketing, word-of-mouth at 82%, along with the traditional use of flyers, posters, and news releases. However, it was very interesting that Senior Theatres have turned to electronic media to spread their message. Almost 40% of the companies have a website and almost half of the companies, 47%, use e-newsletters. They're also active on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter.

Directors are challenged. There's the struggle with actors who have difficulty moving on stage, memorizing text, and learning blocking. Leaders have to focus on attracting new members and finding men to participate. Some directors are frustrated with actors not attending rehearsals regularly. The directors adapt their techniques by using a slower rehearsal pace, large print scripts, microphones, and by scheduling breaks during rehearsals.

The survey showed that directors have no problem with actors' enthusiasm and they find it's easy to get an audience. When directing older actors, the directors felt that by having plenty of "patience" they were able to create a "very rewarding experience."

In the narrative portion of the survey we discovered many other insights. Foremost, the importance of the fine line between art, fun, and seriousness. Because the participants have spent years being competitive, they don't want the work to be too hard or too easy, not too serious or



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stressful. It should be filled with a sense of fun, being "child-like," not childish. Yet it must aim for the highest possible artistic value. The best Senior Theatre directors are able to strike a balance between art, work, and fun.

I saw the bonding again as I watched the rehearsal at the community theatre. There were laughs, hugs, and a sense of warmth. But I was watching actors, yet a bit older, but actors and their director working to create art that moved and inspired. It reminded me of a recent



Simple staging helps older actors tour shows into the community.

Senior participants bond to their theatre. Though there are many physical, mental, cultural, emotional, and spiritual benefits from theatrical participation, the strongest one is social. Esprit de corps reigns supreme! The theatre and their senior colleagues become their "family."

Senior Theatre actors bond not only to the members within the group but to the sponsor, says Susan Harper, Artistic Director of the Asheville Community Theatre. The company fulfills its mission to have "everyone in theatre, from the youngest to the oldest." Their Senior Theatre company, The Autumn Players, provide skilled actors for main stage shows, buy season tickets, and make consistent and generous donations to the theatre.

conversation with a director. She told me, "I don't know why we loved it so—maybe it was the cast, maybe it was the script or the audience..." I stopped her almost in mid-sentence to say, "It's because the magic of theatre works at any age!" ♦

Bonnie L. Vorenberg is the President of ArtAge Publications, the largest distributor of Senior Theatre plays, books, materials, and information. As an expert in the field, Bonnie is a passionate speaker, author, and educator who inspires older people's theatrical dreams. Check out the ArtAge website at www.seniorthatre.com.



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First AACTEd Units Awarded

By Nancy Eppert, Education Committee Chair

AACTEd Units are off to an eagerly anticipated start for members wanting to receive recognition for participation in lifelong learning experiences. During AACTFest11 and its pre-fest conferences in Rochester, NY, 61 participants collectively received a total of 135 units. Our Rochester hosts, the Workshops Committee and the Festival volunteers were invaluable in making sure that every attendee had the opportunity to learn about and participate in this new program organized through the AACT Education Committee. After two years of planning, committee members were anxious for this program to be implemented. Festival participant, Susan Harrington from Roslindale, MA shared her personal value of the units, "As a teacher of 30 plus years, it has been tricky finding workshops that qualify for recertification in the arts. I was excited to find that AACT was offering AACTEd Units in theatre arts. I believe this will be a draw for other people especially in the teaching arts field. This was a terrific experience!" Future AACT-sponsored continuing education workshops, programs and conferences will automatically offer AACTEd Units to interested participants. There are no separate fees required but included free with registration. Criteria and recognition details are available on line at www.aact2.org/?page=AACTEd. ♦

Those who earned the AACTEd Units the first time ever offered include:

Community Theatre Management Conference

John Chain
Mary Cherry
Lisa Cope
Bev Dochstader
Maurice Enders
Robyn Eure
Martha Funderburk
Victor Funderburk
Kristofer Geddie
William Harper
Linda Iseri
Sal Jones
Glynis Koehler
Allan Kollar
John Lazo
Christa Manning-Dupper
Kristy Meanor
Mary Ortwein
Michael Osowski
Thomas Putnam
Nate Records
Melissa Riley

Anita Sleeman
Mary Spinosa-Wilson
Lou Ursone
Jonathan West

Technical Theatre Conference

Sandra Becker
Adam Bennett
Dawn Bennett
William Dando
Richard Davis
Martin Duffy
Beth Ann Floro
Mike Gerrells
Matthew Grenier
Carol Heier
Lynn Komarek
Kim Pelle
Matt Polowczuk
Mason Riepert
Jonathan Stanley
Michelle Widener
Mike Willis
Patrick Woehrlen

Adjudication Workshop

Karen Bowling
Janet Crenshaw
Matthew Feeney
Arnold Galin
Beth Harvey
joan kole
Pamela Livingstone
Beverley Lord
Garry Mitchell
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Spotlight Awards Go to Rita Ford, Russ's Market

The **AAC**T **Spotlight Award** partners AACT with theatres to recognize individuals and organizations for long or special service that has had a significant impact on the quality of their local theatres. Any AACT member theatre may apply to present the Spotlight Award.

The **Wellesley (MA) Players'** annual meeting on May 22nd turned out to be quite a day! The day began with a group from The Wellesley Players marching in the annual Wellesley Veterans Parade, showing the energy and enthusiasm that its members have for local community theatre! However, the highlight of the day was a surprise presentation of the AACT Spotlight Award to **Rita Ford**, a longtime Wellesley member. Beverley Lord, AACT Region I Representative, was on board to present the award.



Rita Ford (left) receives the Spotlight Award from AACT Region I Representative Beverley Lord

Rita has served The Wellesley Players in countless ways. She is a very talented actress, and has appeared in over 45 of the theatre's productions. In 1969, when The Wellesley Players produced its first musical in the history of the group, Rita played the leading role in *Mame*.

Rita's love for community theatre does not stop with her acting talents.

She has served on the board of directors as Secretary, Play Reading Chair, and Head of Publicity. Rita has produced and directed countless productions. She is a very gifted costume designer and is a key player on the team. Rita always demonstrates her devotion to The Wellesley Players by consistently stepping forward to volunteer for any job, no matter how small.

Celia Couture, a board member for The Wellesley Players, said in Rita's nomination letter, "She always has the group's best interest at heart, she is everyone's friend, and she represents the best of what it is to be a Wellesley Player."

Lincoln (NE) Community Playhouse honored **Russ's Market**, a local grocery store chain, with an AACT Spotlight Award on August 1st. Kristi Quinn, AACT VP Festivals, presented the award at the theatre's Volunteer Celebration. Accepting the award was Pat Raybould, President of B&R Stores, Inc., Russ's Market's parent company.



Kristi Quinn, AACT VP Festivals presents the Spotlight Award to Pat Raybould, President of B&R Stores, Inc.

In 2009, Russ's Market, hosted a one night food and beverage tasting event, and named Lincoln Community Playhouse as the sole beneficiary! Russ's Market, an employee owned grocery, had decided to help a local organization that was improving the community, was volunteer based and had some pizzazz. The Playhouse certainly fit the bill.

The first year the event raised \$20,000, and to date over \$97,000 has been raised for the Playhouse. It is now "The Lincoln Wine and Food Experience hosted by Russ's Market." Morrie Enders, Lincoln Community Playhouse Executive Director, stated "Attaching the Playhouse name to this event was a vote of confidence in what we do and in our ability to bring the theatre back to health. The financial help literally kept the doors open during 2009 and 2010, and offers us a strong foundation into the future." Lincoln Community Playhouse is certainly thankful for such a committed supporter! ♦



Lynn Ruhl Named New Region III Rep

The AACT Board of Directors welcomes Lynn Ruhl, Milwaukee, WI to the Board as Region III Representative, serving Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. Lynn got her start in theatre at an early age, working backstage while her mother acted. "I caught the theatre bug," she says. Since then, she has served on set and light crew, designed lights, directed, produced and stage managed—which she feels is her greatest strength.



Lynn Ruhl

Lynn has served on the Board of Directors of a number of community theatre groups since the early 1980's and recently served on the Board of Directors (Member at Large & Secretary) for the Wisconsin Association of Community Theatre (WACT). During most of that time, she also had a "day job," working in Banking and Trust Accounting through 1994 and then in the Finance Department of the Milwaukee Public Schools, where she is currently a Budget Analyst.

Over the past five years Lynn has been doing sprint triathlons and 5K/10K runs for fun. "I even did a 100 lap swim to celebrate the local recreation department's 100th anniversary," she says. Lynn also attends many local theatrical productions and is a season ticket holder for a number of theatres.

Besides theatre and athletics, Lynn has another passion: visual arts. "I can never pass up a good art show!" she says.

Lynn's two-year term on the AACT Board runs to June, 2013. ♦

New Roles

Richmond Community Theater (RCT), Rockingham, NC announces the hiring of a new Director. **Shelly Walker**, an actor, director and theatre teacher from Greensboro, NC, succeeded **Mark Colbenson** who resigned to pursue a career in acting after four years at RCT. Shelly holds a Masters degree in theatre education and taught theatre in Japan for five years prior to her appointment. She is also trained in mime and stage combat. "I truly believe in the power of theater," said Walker. "Not just to reflect society or entertain it, but also to shape it and change it into the type of [society] that allows all of us, the characters in it, to support each other in fulfilling our goals and dreams." Shelly began her new position on August 15. ♦



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AACT Board Member at Large John Davis helps out with registration at Colorado Community Theatre Coalition's 2011 festival, held at Salida, CO, August 3-6.



AACT Advocacy Committee Chair and Michigan State Contact Joanne Berry discusses the day's events with class participants over breakfast at Community Theatre Association of Michigan's Master Class weekend. The event was held at Higgins Lake, MI, July 22-24.



AACTFest 2013 Co-chairs Larry and Susan Creviston stand in the brand new auditorium of the Carmel, IN Center for the Performing Arts Tarkington Theatre on August 26. The theatre is the site for the national festival in June, 2013.

photos by Ron Ziegler



Immediate past Region III Rep and outgoing OCTA President Ginny Morrison addresses the crowd at the awards dinner of the Ohio Community Theatre Association convention in Independence, OH, September 2-5.

Ohio State Contact Dawna Kornick prepares to throw the house light switch at the start of a session of the Ohio Community Theatre Association convention, held September 2-5 in Independence, OH. Dawna served as stage manager for the event.



Working with Older Actors

Thanks to AACTList contributors for these tips! AACTList is open to any AACT member. Sign up at www.aact2.org. Select "Programs/Resources," "AACTList."

As a senior myself, and hence "retired" from acting to directing, I think the MOST important thing is to allow additional time to learn lines. Our short term memories just don't work as well, but, once learned, the lines are pretty indelible. My last two years' experience with *The Gin Game* has taught me how energetic and enthusiastic seniors can be!

Martha J. Cherbini, director of Broken Arrow (OK) Community Playhouse's production of The Gin Game, performed at the national festival in Rochester, NY, www.bacptheatre.com



1. Most are not performers. It's a social gathering for the most part.

2. Most cannot memorize much any more.

3. Remember, be kind to all, for in a couple of years a few may not be with you any longer.

Norm Small, Producing Director of Theatre Winter Haven (FL) with Senior group Act 4 Players www.theatrewinterhaven.com

We focus more on improvisation with our senior program as it cuts down on "homework."

Norman Ussery, Executive Director of Twin City Stage in Winston Salem, NC, www.twincitystage.org



1. Use larger fonts for scripts to make it easier to read for those with visual problems. Everyone in the cast uses the larger font script so that no one with a sight problem feels singled out.

2. When touring a show, make sure that the cast knows where the nearest bathrooms are located.

3. Have the cast distribute programs to the audience prior to a performance to provide opportunities for interacting with audience members so that the cast and audience feel more connected.

4. Aging performers have tremendous creativity. Encourage it; applaud it; enjoy it; but don't dictate it. Simply provide the environment in which it can evolve.



5. Depict aging on stage with the honor, respect and dignity it deserves.

6. Be prepared to be flexible and adaptable when working with aging performers. Sudden illnesses; forgotten long-standing doctor's appointments; and "just couldn't get there today."

7. Encourage those with mobility and visual challenges to become involved. Nothing is more powerful than seeing someone in a wheelchair or moving with a walker or a cane on stage. There are numerous ways to work with someone who is blind or who has severe visual problems.

Joan Kole, Artistic Director of AgeQuake Theatre in Rockford, IL, agequaketheatres.vpweb.com



Happy Holidays

and

Many Thanks

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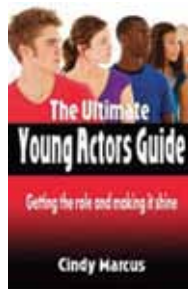
A new website for nonprofit leaders, by Jossey Bass/Wiley, the principal publisher of books on not-for-profit subjects.

The site has free resources, news, ideas and learning opportunities and an open forum where anyone can ask questions, give advice and provide feedback.

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The Ultimate Young Actors Guide

Getting the role and making it shine

By Cindy Marcus

Current producer/director and former Disney film screenwriter Cindy Marcus offers her experience to young actors seeking a career or just wanting to land a role in the school play. The techniques of how to audition, how to

approach a role, how to survive the rehearsal process, and more are all explained in detail. But most important to Cindy is self-exploration: knowing who you are. This is done through insights from many famous actors and directors. To fully integrate what is learned, there are theatre games to play in every chapter relating to each aspect of acting technique.

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Denton Community Theatre Method and Madness Playwriting Competition and Festival

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thedctteam@campustheatre.com

A new one-act playwriting competition focusing on Imagination and the Human Condition. The winning plays will receive cash prizes and a staged reading at the Method and Madness Playwriting Festival, May 28-June 2, 2012, in conjunction with Mental Health Month.

All submissions should run under 70 minutes and should focus on imagination, the human condition, and/or mental health issues.

Prizes range from \$2,000 for first place to \$200 for fifth.

Submission deadline: January 14, 2012

Details: www.dentoncommunitytheatre.com/PlaywritingCompetitionMainPage.htm

Mountain Playhouse International Comedy Playwriting Contest

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Submissions deadline: December 31, 2011

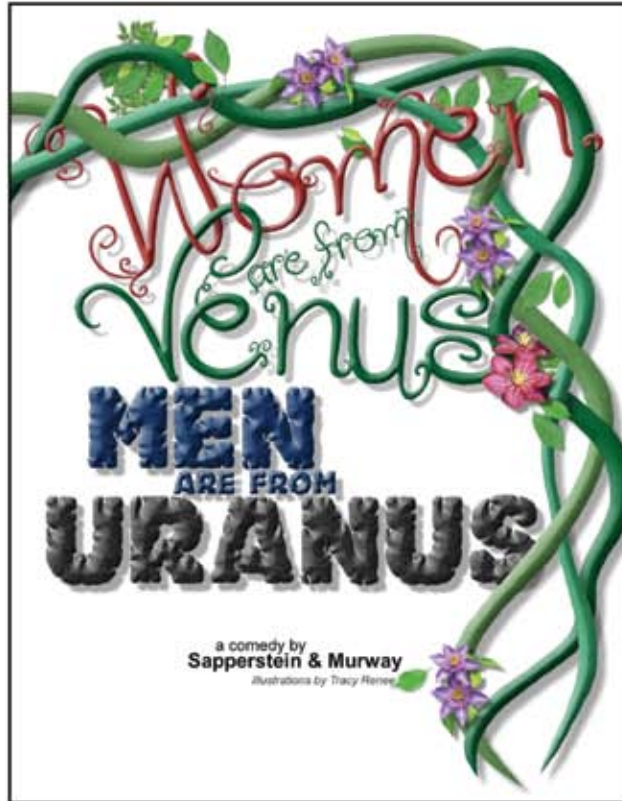
Details: www.mountainplayhouse.org/playhouse/contest.php



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CAST SIZE: 2 On-stage actors,
2 Off-stage voices

FINALLY! We NOW know the truth about the origin of Mankind! It all began in a Petri Dish at the Genome Observation Department!... WHO KNEW?

THAT'S RIGHT! It seems that, per the "Boss's" instructions, an experiment was conducted that yielded a split result. The Subject divided into a positive and negative of itself, requiring careful introduction to each other in order for the experiment to continue. Relabeled "Man" and "Woman", the subject matter was poured into a Petri Dish and the experiment observation was begun.

NEW! Comedy Play by Sapperstein & Murway

We see the differences in the two "Subjects" as we follow them through their introduction, their growth in getting acquainted, their ultimate joining, and, of course, procreation. (The procreation part got a little ugly at the actual moment of birth, but, luckily, they survived it.)

Unfortunately, the whole thing was supervised by two rather unorthodox Lab Technicians who, against explicit instructions, couldn't help tampering. They really should have left well enough alone, but they felt so bad because "Man" seemed to be at a definite disadvantage in several situations.

In the end, the two "Subjects" grew to maturity and had to acknowledge that, even through the rough spots, the whole thing was quite worth it because, in fact, they grew to love each other very much.

This is a touching and funny play that involves only two on-stage Actors. The set is simple and the message is a happy one.

Everyone in the audience will be able to relate to what they watch unfold on the stage before their eyes.

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AACTivity Tidbits

"A" Productions

Searching for shows that have succeeded at other theatres? These shows were produced between 2008-2011 and rated "A" for financial success by the producing theatres. The number before the title is the number of "A" productions reported in AACTivity on the AACT website. To see which theatres produced the shows go to www.aact2.org, select "Programs/Resources," "AACTivity."

Has your theatre reported the shows it produced this year?

Data as of September 19, 2011

- 7 *High School Musical*
- 5 *Always, Patsy Cline*
- 4 *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change!*
- 4 *Rocky Horror Show*
- 3 *All Shook Up*
- 3 *Dearly Departed*
- 3 *Dixie Swim Club*
- 3 *Great American Trailer Park Musical*
- 3 *Les Miserables*
- 3 *The Producers*
- 3 *Seussical*
- 3 *The Sound of Music*
- 3 *Urinetown*
- 3 *Willy Wonka*
- 2 *Beauty and the Beast*
- 2 *A Christmas Carol*
- 2 *Christmas Story*
- 2 *Cinderella*

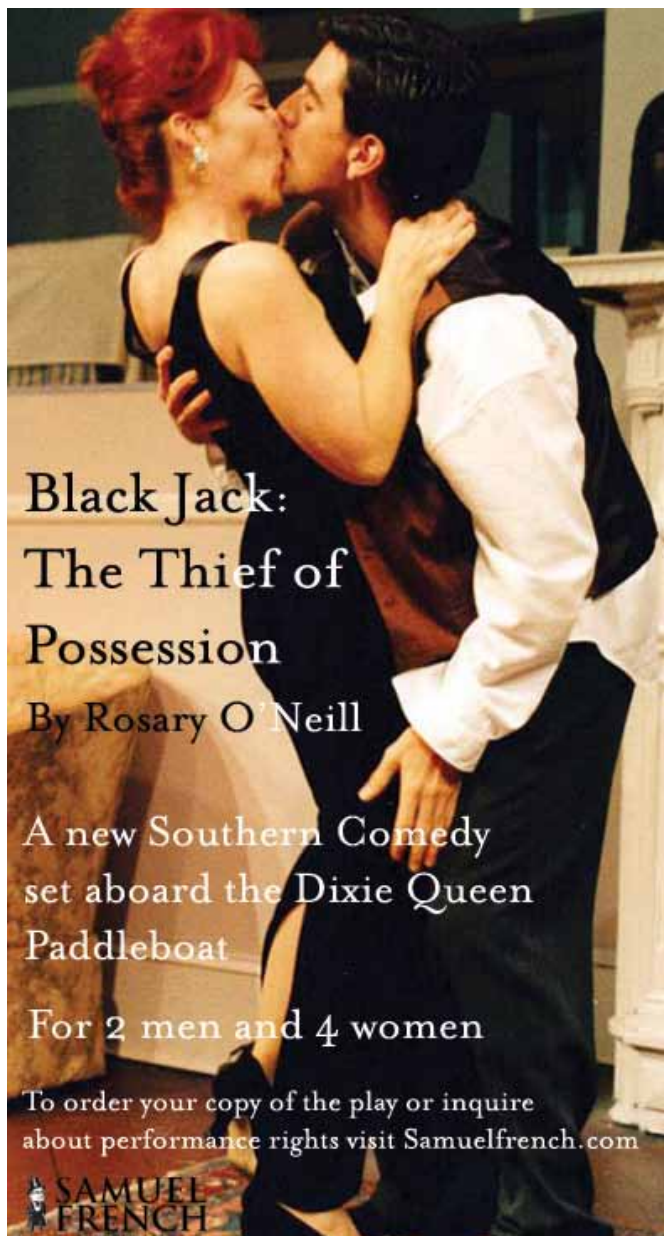
- 2 *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*
- 2 *Fiddler on the Roof*
- 2 *Greater Tuna*
- 2 *Gypsy*
- 2 *Hairspray*
- 2 *Holes*
- 2 *The Mousetrap*
- 2 *My Fair Lady*
- 2 *Rent*
- 2 *Rumors*
- 2 *Smokey Joe's Cafe*
- 2 *Thoroughly Modern Millie*
- 2 *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- 2 *You Can't Take It With You*

Artie's Advocacy Tips



**Get to know the staff
of your elected
officials.**

*If they are for you,
chances are their boss
will be too.*





If at First you Don't Succeed...

by Twink Lynch

Recently, I received a plea for help from the President of a young group struggling for survival. Five years ago he and “a few remnant members of a recently defunct company” decided to start a theatre company in his town (population 90,000, county population 500,000 with lots of other theatre available). He says their productions are basically successful, but they “have no foundation for day to day operations.” They have no annual budget and never manage to stay within individual show budgets. They started with a 5-person board which is now down to three members. They have received their 501(c)(3) status from the IRS. He’s concerned that no one on the Board understands the value of fundraising, and no one has the connections they need to get to the people with the funds anyway. They had to cancel half their dinner theatre season last year because of lack of volunteers.

The President basically runs the place except for directing shows. He’s in charge of “production, marketing, fundraising, advertising, set construction and praying.” At one point they tried to change the format of the operation, to forcibly involve volunteers who just like to act in other aspects of the program. He says “we are seriously confused about what community theatre is and what a board of directors does.” While he has considered giving up and walking away, he loves the theatre - but simply doesn’t know how to go on from here.

We used to say all it takes to do theatre is “two actors, four boards and a passion.” If that’s all there is, developing an ongoing organization is going to be tough. We need passion, yes - but many more volunteers than two actors, and a much larger stage than four boards, if we really want to create a viable theatre company for the benefit of our community.

Our struggling President needs to find additional resources (I’m sure he’s trying). His organization obviously has people to mount productions but no one – except himself - to handle business and administrative functions. His theatre’s long-term success will ultimately rest on his ability to recruit board and committee volunteers with the skills to handle royalty negotiations, develop budgets and budget controls, make deposits, pay the bills, keep accurate records, prepare financial reports,

do publicity, handle reservations and ticket sales, write playbills and newsletters, and even clean the johns, if necessary. Not to mention people able and willing to do fundraising and offer legal and accounting assistance.

And what about their audience? Is this theatre company filling a need in the community? Do they have a core group that will develop into a dependable, loyal following? What is their niche? Is there a marketing plan?

The President has apparently been doing all of the fundraising and will need to continue to find donors like underwriters (co-producers), annual donors (contributing members), and granting organizations (state arts council, foundations). However, we know donors don’t usually just send money out of the blue – they need to be asked – and he needs others to help him ask.

“We are seriously confused about what community theatre is and what a board of directors does.”

A big resource needed is space (borrowed, rented or owned). This group has worked in a banquet room of a restaurant for their dinner theatre season and currently has access to a space in a big entertainment facility. But there’s more to theatre than those four boards we mentioned. Every group needs a space to build and store sets and equipment and an office-type space to answer inquiries, make show reservations, pay the bills, and keep the records and cash in a secure manner. Some groups also need additional space for rehearsals.

Another resource needed is equipment (borrowed, rented or owned) – tools for building and painting sets, lighting equipment, sound equipment and hopefully access to

a computer for generating and storing lists of potential audience members, vendors, and volunteers. The group will need phone service, an answering machine, and perhaps the use of a truck.

Last but definitely not least, upfront cash is needed for those initial expenses like royalties, scripts and/or music scores, rent, set, costume and office materials, printing and postage, etc. It helps if this cash is a gift, not a loan.

How in the world can a fledgling theatre access such resources if there isn't a core group from the very beginning of the enterprise dedicated to doing anything and everything necessary for the good of the whole? If such people aren't available (or only want to act), then I think it will be very hard to establish an ongoing theatre organization. I do not believe founding and operating a community theatre is a one-person job. Even with Mickey and Judy, the kids *"got together"* to put on a play.

They need to organize the work into do-able pieces – that's what committees, task forces, and crews are for.

Once the President has recruited additional volunteers (especially for management tasks), I would strongly suggest the group follow the "Five Functions of Management" model: planning, organizing, "staffing" (with volunteers and/or paid personnel), supervising, and evaluating. Since their theatre already exists, they need to start with an assessment of where they are, what their strengths and weaknesses are, and build a plan to increase those strengths and minimize the weaknesses.

Remember that planning is the keystone of good management. Every theatre group needs to write down their purpose, their mission, their goals and objectives, and their initial program (production, readers' theatre, workshops). They need to write down job descriptions for all jobs needing to be done. They need to organize the work into do-able pieces – that's what committees, task forces, and crews are for. They need a clear "chain of command" (usually done as an organizational chart) so people will know to whom they are accountable. They need to recruit people and match them up with appropriate jobs, including board positions - it's really just like casting a play. They need to orient and train them as needed. Then they need to recognize them for

their good work and encourage them as they develop new skills. They need to give their volunteers additional responsibilities as warranted. At the end of the season, they should evaluate once again and revise their plan accordingly.

This is a huge undertaking and will take significant time. Especially when there's been some negative water under the bridge, it takes boundless enthusiasm and diligent effort to re-group with a new game plan. Some of the volunteers who joined the group initially may find all the meetings and paper work boring and unnecessary, especially if they really just want to do a show. Unfortunately, it may not be possible to meet all their needs – but the founding of a community theatre should transcend individual needs in order to meet the greater good of the community.

While it is true that some "vanity theatres" exist and will continue to pop up from time to time, those theatres tend to die off when the founding group gets older, moves away or passes on to those "four boards" in the sky. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but how much more of a contribution to community life is a true community theatre, which creates quality productions and other programs that nurture volunteers, audience members and staff and that help to develop each individual's creative potential using the skills and imaginative possibilities of theatre and the performing arts (adapted from the mission statement of the Olney Theatre, the State Theatre of Maryland).

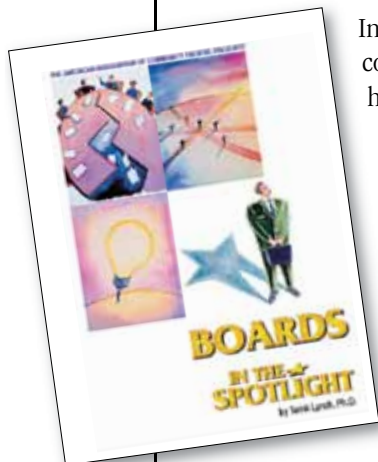
I hope this group will "try, try again." Break a leg!

Reprinted from *Spotlight*, December 2003

Twink Lynch wrote a regular column on boardsmanship for Spotlight for many years. Her early articles are compiled into a still-relevant book for boards: Boards in the Spotlight. See how to order on the next page.



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Nov 11 - 13	Kentucky Theatre Association Annual Conference and Festival	KY Madisonville	270-824-8651 www.theatreky.org
Nov 11 - 13	South Carolina Theatre Association 2011 Community Theatre Festival	SC Rock Hill	803-366-8425 www.southcarolinatheatre.com
Nov 17 -20	New England Theatre Conference 60th Annual Convention	MA Natick	603-382-7348 www.netconline.org
Nov 18 - 20	Theatre Association of New York State 2011 TANYS Festival	NY Batavia	585-654-9447 www.tanys.org
Nov 19	Arkansas Community Theatre Association Annual Meeting 2012	AR North Little Rock	901-581-2355 www.arcta.net
Nov 20 - 21	AACT and University of Wisconsin National Community Theatre Directors Conference	WI Madison	608-263-2790 www.dcs.wisc.edu/lisa/ theatre/directors.htm

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