

Staging: Choosing the Venue

Choosing the right or best venue for a production might seem an obvious task; however, if the wrong location is chosen, it can lead to a less than perfect environment or a failed attempt at successfully staging the play production.

Especially for a town that might have multiple choices: for example – community center, performance arts center, out-door theater, church, school gymnasium, or school auditorium. Especially if the town only has one venue that is used for productions a thorough research should be done to make sure that the amenities available are what is needed.



A venue should be chosen and secured before taking any steps with the actual play – the checklist should include questions and inquiries needing answers.

Venue Check List:

- Availability of the facility for Show dates needed? Rehearsal Dates? Teardown dates?
- What is available for use for the production? Piano? Common Set pieces – platforms, wall units, door units, other furnishings?
- Does the facility provide technicians – sound and lighting?
- Rules/regulations for setting up the sets on the stage?
- What must be brought in to accomplish ALL that is needed to the plan for the production?
- Does the crew need to bring in tables, chairs for seating or for backstage?

Project Production Check List:

- Check accommodation within the facility for the cast size
- Special considerations for flow of the production within the facility
 - Aisles or runways for cast movement amongst the audience
- Sound and lighting equipment needs
- Is the venue equipped for the decorations and scenery for the play?
- Are there any restrictions for this particular production?
- Another consideration is if the production will travel to other cities or venues.
 - It has been our experience that other communities sometimes want a show for their patrons. So, investigate that possibility if the option is available.
 - Any alterations to the stationary production setup vs. travelling production setup
- A production requires homework on behalf of those producing it.
 - Thinking about seating capacity
 - Sound and lighting
 - Back-stage type rooms for changing
 - Costumes storage
 - Makeup prep areas
 - Sets – construction and teardown
 - Stage crew functionality
 - Volunteers should all be on the checklist plus so much more.

Take time to research, investigate, and evaluate the right venue. As stated, it is crucial to the success of your productions. Again, if there are choices, consider:

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1. **Location Access:** Dependent on the size of the town and its amenities for transportation. If the venue is a choice, choose one that is **easily accessible** for your attendees.
 - Study the venue map and see if it meets all of the requirements for the production.
 - Consider proximity to public transportation, parking availability, and convenience.
 - Provide good directions to the venue for those patrons coming from out of town.
2. **Capacity Space:** Evaluate the available space in the venue. Ensure it can comfortably accommodate the anticipated number of attendees.
 - Adequate seating capacity
 - Networking areas
 - Restrooms
 - Parking are essential.
 - Check to see if there is handicapped seating and/or auditory assistance with headsets for the impaired.
3. **Technical Amenities:** Depending on your play's requirements, consider technical capabilities such as
 - Audiovisual equipment
 - High-speed internet
 - Stage lighting.
 - Ensure the venue can support these needs seamlessly.
 - If additional equipment is required to be brought in, make sure that the existing system at the venue can handle it.
 - Lighting is a big issue at some venues pertaining to your production.
4. **Ambiance and Style:** The venue should align with the theme and purpose of your play. Whether it's a formal production or an experimental piece, the ambiance and style matter.
5. **Flexibility and Customization:** Look for a venue that allows customization.
 - Can you arrange seating layouts, stage setups, and decorations according to your vision?
 - Can the seating amenities be adjusted or are they permanent?
 - What does the front of the house look like?
 - Back Stage area?
 - Green Room?
 - Dressing Rooms?
 - Can they handle the cast?
 - Are there alternative rooms that can be used to take care of additional cast needs?



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6. **Budget:** While finding a suitable venue is crucial, also consider the cost associated with it. Choosing a venue that fits within your budget is essential. While it's important to find a venue that meets your requirements, it's equally crucial to consider the cost and logistics associated with the venue,
 - Rental fees – Facility, Rehearsal, Teardown
 - Janitorial Cleaning
 - Catering options
 - Additional services should fit within your budget.
 - Consider reviewing the '[Typical Annual Budget](#)' for some insights.

If there are any questions as a result of reviewing this information, please do not hesitate to contact New Artists Productions at: Email - naprod@yahoo.com