

spotlight

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY THEATRE

FALL 2024 \$5.00

A photograph of two women in a theatrical embrace. The woman on the left, with dark hair in a braid, wears a light brown sweater and has her hands gently cupping the face of the woman on the right. The woman on the right, with blonde hair and glasses, wears a grey textured sweater. They are positioned in front of a window with sheer curtains, and the lighting is soft and focused on their faces.

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Prince William Little Theatre (Manassas, VA)

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President's Letter

Kristofer Geddie

AACT President

I never dreamed I would be writing this message. At my first AACTFest, the national theatre festival, in Rochester, New York, I never envisioned that I could or would become the president of this incredible organization. I knew I'd meet some fantastic folks, but never expected they would also become my closest friends and resources.

The learning experiences, from that first AACTFest to the most recent summer meetings in Grand Rapids, have stoked my imagination and reignited my passion for community theatre, confirming to me just how vital it is to our nation's culture. (By the way, AACTFest 2025 registration is live. Have you registered?)

And it's true—statistically, more people see community theatre in a year than ever see a professional production. Community theatre also offers more performances and involves more participants than professional theatre. The power of our collective minds and volume can change the landscape of the theatrical community in this country. We must!

AACT and community theatres are redefining who we are and how we are seen in our ever-changing arts environment. I am thrilled to be a part of an organization that looks boldly ahead while honoring our past. We must dare to be vocal advocates for community theatre in this country. We must be better about telling those naysayers how we change lives for the better.

I look forward to getting to know many more of you as we reimagine and build our collective voices and refuse to wait our turn.

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- ✓ **FREE TIME:** Plenty of opportunities to explore the city on your own.

Learn more at aact.org/nyc

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On the cover: Abby Burlingame as Jen and Rebecca Craven as Amanda in the AACT NewPlayFest world premiere production of *I Thought I Knew You*, by Philip J. Kaplan at Stage Left Theater in Spokane, Washington Photo: Ashlyn Wiker



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Upcoming Events

AACT NewPlayFest 2024 Premiere

The China Shop by Richard Manley
Lincoln Community Playhouse, Lincoln, Nebraska
November 8 - 17
lincolnplayhouse.com

AACT Virtual Masterclasses

aact.org/masterclass

Arts for All: Creating Inclusive Theatre Experiences
September 5

Developing New Works and Engaging Your Community
October 3

Making Immersive Theatre
November 7

AACT Member-Only Roundtables

aact.org/roundtables

Production Team Roles and Responsibilities
September 17

Successful Strategies for Season Subscriptions
October 22

Cultivating Community Partnerships
November 19

AACT Industry Connections

aact.org/ic

Fundraising with Kendra Scott Company
September 11

Risk Management with Church Mutual
October 9

AACT Webinar

aact.org/webinars

Holiday Theatre Marketing
September 26

AACT Fall Executive Committee Meeting

Nov 15 - 16, 2024
Des Moines, Iowa

AACT NYC Theatre Adventure

February 20 - 22, 2025
New York City, NY
aact.org/nyc

AACT Executive Committee and Board of Directors Meeting

February 22, 2025
Des Moines, Iowa

AACT Summer Board/Committee Meetings and AACTFest 2025

June 24 - 28, 2025
Des Moines, Iowa

Spotlight

Spotlight is published quarterly 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.

Spotlight Editors: David Cockerell and Stephen Peithman

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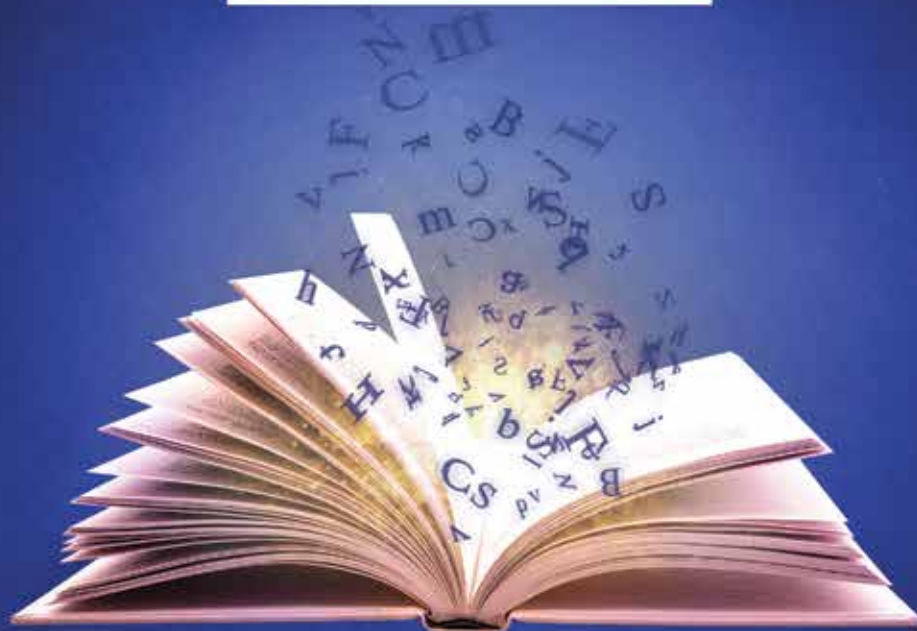
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From Page to Stage: AACT NewPlayFest



David A. VanCleave, AACT Education Director and NewPlayFest Dramaturg

A hilarious criminal investigation filled with family feuds, love triangles, ridiculous mothers, and a whole lot of Dr. Pepper. A romantic comedy thriller exploring the volatile intersection of passion, peril, and psychopathic meet-cutes. A son's act of domestic terror that forces a family to deal with grief, guilt, and Lizard People.

Three wildly different world premieres—one NewPlayFest.

The festival is an exciting two-year program that engages playwrights and theatres in meaningful collaborations for the purpose of creating compelling, enduring stories.

By the end of the year, six new plays will have received world premiere productions at AACT-member theatres across the country. By this time next year, those plays will be published and available for licensing by Dramatic Publishing Company.

Here's a look at the first three, which premiered earlier this year.

***Criminal Mischief* by William Cameron**

William (Bill) Cameron was a theatre and communications professor at Pennsylvania's Washington & Jefferson College for 31 years. After retiring, he switched his focus to playwriting, and has seen his work produced across the country, including Theatre 40 in Los Angeles, the Harold Clurman Theatre in New York, and Denver's Curious Theatre Company.

"One of our favorite things here at The Sauk is an auditorium full of laughter"

"I've done a lot of different things," Bill said, "but in the past few years, I've really focused on getting my work produced and just being the best I can be, because there are a lot of people out there who are writing some very good stuff and finding it difficult to get their work produced and published. So, I'm over the moon with my current situation, having this play produced by this venerable theatre."

He's referring to The Sauk in Jonesville, Michigan, who produced the world premiere of *Criminal Mischief* this February, after presenting a staged reading the previous fall.

"One of our favorite things here at The Sauk is an auditorium full of laughter," executive director Trinity Bird

said. "We chose this play from the NewPlayFest script finalists, because it's a comedy. Especially in our post-Covid world, we wanted to make people laugh."

And they did—at all the right moments on opening night, leaning forward as the tone shifted to more sincere and throwing their heads back in laughter a second later.

The play focuses on Detective Lieutenant Alice Ford as she investigates a shooting at the home of Spencer Bishop. Act One takes place in several interrogation rooms and the hospital room where Spencer's half-brother, Freddie, is recovering from a gunshot wound. As the investigation unfolds, the "whodunit" element becomes less and less clear as Alice uncovers the torrid affair between Freddie and Angie, Spencer's wife. Throw in an overly dramatic mother and you've got a hit comedy that audiences are sure to enjoy, and characters actors will love to bring to life.



Trinity Bird

Savannah Bruton as Angie and Josh Lightner as Freddie in the NewPlayFest world premiere production of Criminal Mischief, by William Cameron, at The Sauk in Jonesville, Michigan

continued on page 10 ▶



Kait Rose

Natalie Coombs as Gabrielle and Scott Wieland as Ric in the NewPlayFest world premiere production of The Red Flags, by Catherine Castellani, at Verona Area Community Theater in Verona, Wisconsin

***The Red Flags* by Catherine Castellani**

Prior to writing *The Red Flags*, New York-based playwright Catherine Castellani had found success writing science fiction comedies, fantasy, historical dramas, farces, theatre for young audiences, and more—pretty much everything except romantic comedy. When a friend challenged her to try, she came up with the title first, which led her to conceive a relationship between two people that really shouldn't work out.

"We've all either had that friend, or have been that friend, who is determined to walk into a relationship when everyone else is saying, 'This doesn't look like a good idea,'" Castellani said.

The Red Flags follows the commitment-shy Gabrielle, who is set up on a very unlikely blind date with Ric, her best friend's husband's brother. Ric is handsome, successful, and debonair; he's also a diagnosed psychopath. Despite seeing the warning signs, a deep mutual fascination takes root and Gabrielle can't seem to stay away. *The Red Flags* is an emotional and psychological rollercoaster that challenges how we look at danger and desire, and the lengths we'll go to for what we perceive is love.

Allen Ebert directed the world premiere at Verona

"The question arises:
does a perfect
relationship—or
love—truly exist?"

Area Community Theater (VACT) in Verona, Wisconsin, in February. In addition to the exhilarating creative process of bringing a new piece to life, Ebert was particularly drawn to Castellani's script.

"Upon reading this piece, I found myself captivated by the intricate relationships depicted," he wrote in a program note. "Love manifests itself in a myriad of ways and unexpected places, sometimes discovering us. The question arises: does a perfect relationship—or love—truly exist?"

"For a playwright working on a new play, nothing beats getting in a room with a director, actors, designers, and the producer, all working together to stand the play on its feet," Castellani said, referring to the three-day dramaturgical workshop that's part of the AACT NewPlayFest experience. "For the adventure of taking a never-been-staged-before new play from page to stage, I was in great company. Producer

continued on page 13 ►

"Superb! *Dream* is so frothy, it floats!"

Los Angeles Times



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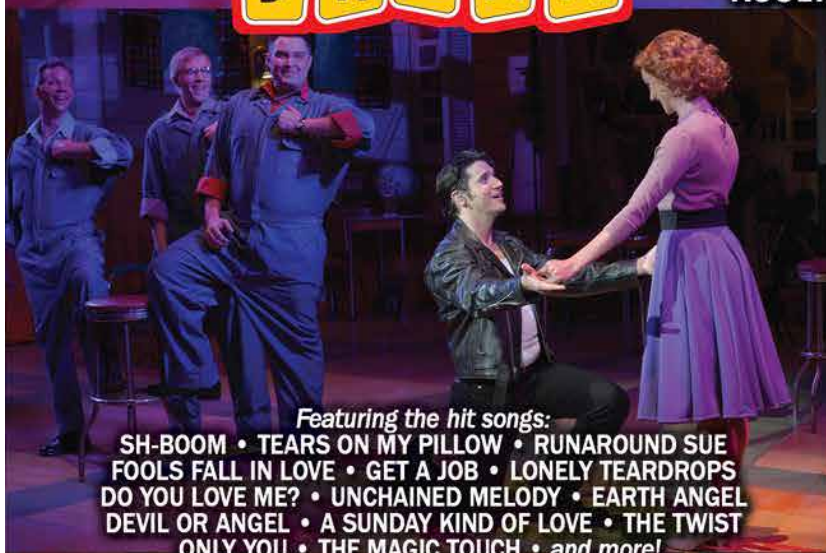


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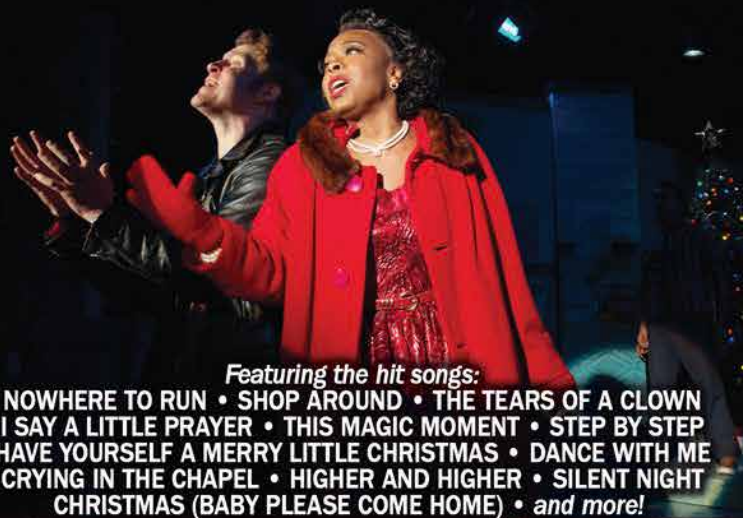
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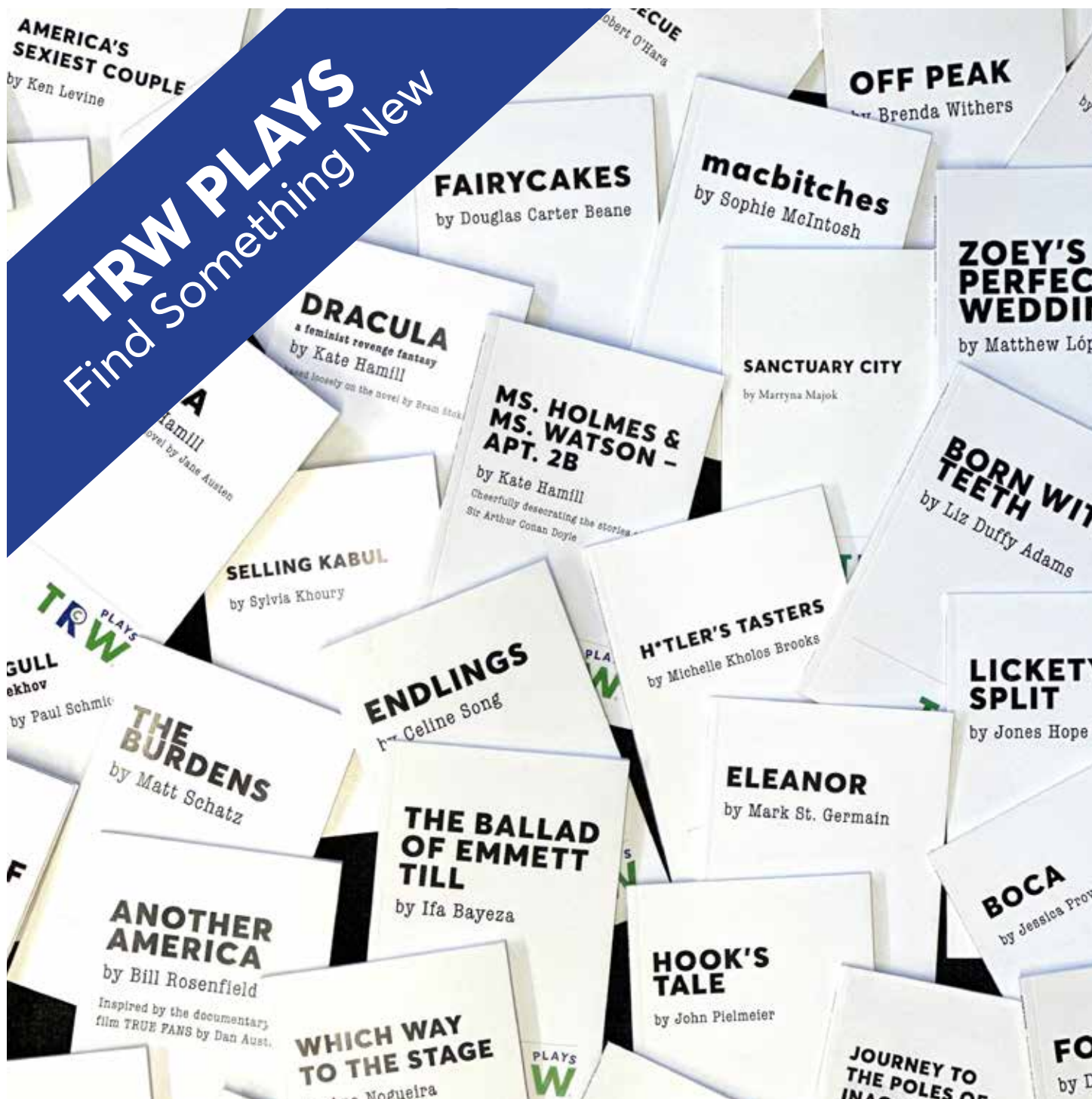
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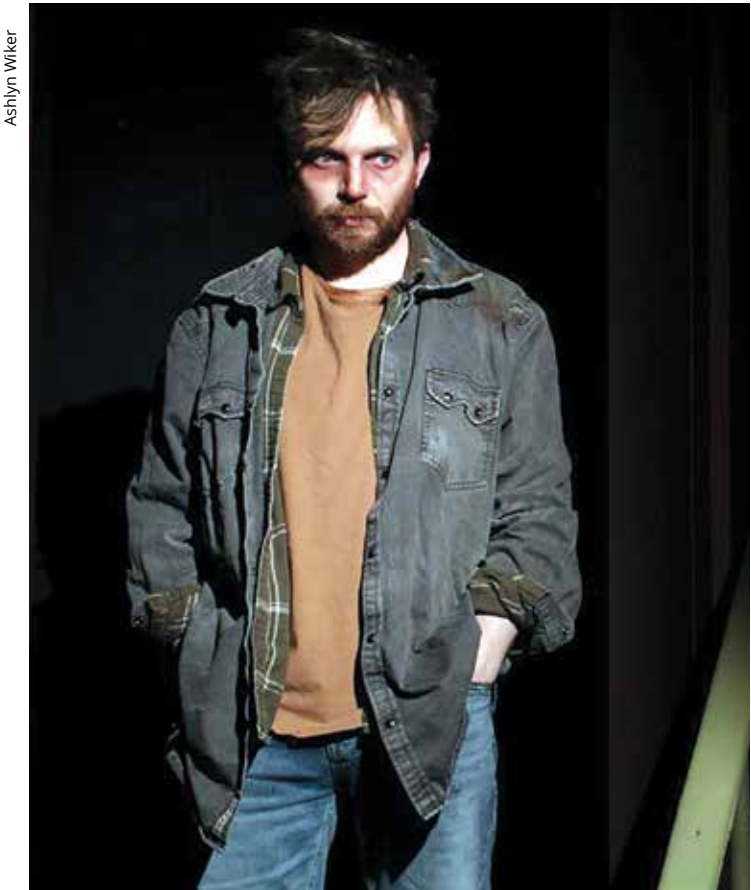


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Sara Ward-Cassady was on top of everything, director Allen Ebert had a clear vision for staging the play, the actors (Natalie Coombs, Scott Wieland, Marsha Heuer, and Steve Fecteau) were game for anything, and stage manager Paul Stiller kept us on the rails and even played the waiter (no lines, but I wrote him an inner monologue). Through it all, AACT dramaturg David A. VanCleave was on hand as a resource. I am so grateful for the experience.”

***I Thought I Knew You* by Philip J. Kaplan**

“How would you react if your son was a mass murderer?” asks playwright Philip J. Kaplan. “That question inspired me to write *I Thought I Knew You*.”



Barin Saxton as Cody in the AACT NewPlayFest world premiere production of I Thought I Knew You, by Philip J. Kaplan, at Stage Left Theater in Spokane, Washington

Kaplan’s play, which had its world premiere in March at Stage Left Theater in Spokane, Washington, tells the story of a family torn apart by their son’s act of terror. The play begins when Jen returns home to comfort her parents after her brother, Cody, has blown up a van, killing himself and five others. Jen’s first night home, Cody appears and speaks

to her. Neither is quite able to explain how they’re able to communicate—is Cody a ghost? Is Jen hallucinating? All the while, Jen and her parents, Amanda and Leo, work to move past the tragedy, reconciling the Cody they knew and loved with the Cody the entire world did not.

“A second question that inspired the play is if one can talk someone out of a conspiracy theory,” Kaplan explained. “In the play, Cody’s ghost (or Jen’s hallucination) reveals that he blew up the van to kill Lizard People, who, in Cody’s mind, control the world. Jen tries to reason with her brother, but it’s not that simple. When there are no facts, just a belief, how can you change someone’s mind?”

The notion of Lizard People might seem laughable, but a survey by Public Policy Polling revealed that 12 million Americans (4% of the US population) believe in these interstellar alien reptiles in human suits. Susan Hardie, who directed the premiere, said that learning of this—and about acts of violence committed as a result of those beliefs—only strengthened her appreciation of Kaplan’s writing. “It’s a real thing, which helped me digest the play a little more.”

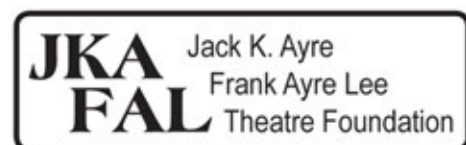
"When there are no facts, just a belief, how can you change someone's mind?"

Actor Tom Sanderson, who played Leo in the Stage Left Theater production, praises Kaplan’s representation of today’s mental health crisis: “I think the brilliance of this script is the reflection of mental health issues throughout every character and almost every line. This doesn’t take place 50 years ago; this doesn’t happen in the future. This happens today.”

Hardie agrees: “I was immediately drawn to this piece’s sharp, believable dialogue, its deep emotional content, and its relevance in today’s world. It was an honor to direct the world premiere.”

What’s Next

AACT NewPlayFest is sponsored in part by the Jack K. Ayre and Frank Ayre Lee Theatre Foundation. The Winter issue of *Spotlight* will highlight the premieres of the three remaining plays in NewPlayFest 2024: *Eating Blackberries*, by Pam Harbaugh; *Tennessee Wet Rub*, by Kim E. Ruyle; and *The China Shop*, by Richard Manley.



Welcome to a New Year of Savings!

The 2024 membership year has been a great one, filled with industry-leading educational events, networking, and lots and lots of theatre. And there's much more to come. With AACT-Fest and YouthFest fast approaching, 2025 is already promising to be an even more exciting year!

For over 35 years, AACT has been dedicated to providing theatres and individuals with the best and most timely resources to help you succeed in your theatre journey.

If you have already renewed, we thank you for your support and participation in the AACT family. We look forward to continuing to be your go-to resource for Helping Your Theatre Thrive.

If you have not yet renewed, we hope that you will soon. If you are new to AACT and not familiar with all our benefits, we think you'll find the information below helpful.

Annual AACT memberships are valid September 1 through August 31. Monthly AACT memberships are also available. For more information see below and visit aact.org/fees.

Below are just a few of the perks of AACT Membership.

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- AACTFest 2025, June 25-28, 2025



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- Peer-to-peer networking with other organizational members, and with theatre professionals nationwide
- Use of AACT membership logo and decal

Individual members receive

- Discounted or free professional development programs, events, and conferences

- Access to members-only online library and resources
- A digital and/or printed copy of *Spotlight* magazine, plus weekly digital communications
- Peer-to-peer networking with theatre professionals nationwide

Learn more about the many benefits of AACT membership: aact.org/benefits

How to Join or Renew

To join or renew your membership, go to aact.org/join or scan the QR code below.



If you or your theatre are having financial difficulties, reach out to Karen, AACT Membership Coordinator, at karen@aact.org to discuss a payment plan that is right for you.

If you require assistance finding details on our website, please let us know by calling 817-732-3177. Paper invoicing is available by request and can be requested by contacting karen@aact.org.

Special Offers for First-Time Members!

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2024-2025 Membership Fees

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First Time Individual: \$50	
Youth: \$15	
Couple: \$135	
Military/Wounded Warrior: Complimentary	

Organization Annual Fees	Organization Monthly Fees
Under \$10,000: \$100	Under \$10,000: \$11
\$10,000-\$24,999: \$140	\$10,000-\$24,999: \$15
\$25,000-\$99,999: \$210	\$25,000-\$99,999: \$25
\$100,000-\$249,999: \$340	\$100,000-\$249,999: \$37
\$250,000-\$499,999: \$455	\$250,000-\$499,999: \$50
\$500,000-\$999,999: \$645	\$500,000-\$999,999: \$70
\$1 Million and Over: \$1,070	\$1 Million and Over: \$120
State Associations: \$100	

ASCAP and BMI Savings with Your AACT Membership

AACT member theatres can save on music licensing through America's two largest licensing organizations, ASCAP and BMI. Available for purchase through the AACT website, our exclusive member licenses cover the playing of pre-recorded music during pre-show, post show, intermission, and scene changes. AACT Members save 30% on the ASCAP license fee and 5% on the BMI license fee. Even better, an additional 5% discount is added if your theatre purchases both licenses. Licenses are available for

purchase until the end of September, so don't delay, and make sure you are covered for the 2025 membership year! Licenses are valid 9/1/24 to 8/31/25.

For more information visit aact.org/ascap and aact.org/bmi or email Membership Coordinator, Karen Matheny at karen@aact.org.

			
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On Stage in 2025

What theatres plan for the coming year—and why

There are some surprises in the results of a new AACT survey of shows that will be playing on community theatre stages in 2025. Michael Cochran, AACT Board Member and Executive Director of Market House Theatre in Paducah, Kentucky, created a survey to examine popular shows.

In last year's survey, the top show titles selected for 2024 included *The Play That Goes Wrong*, *The Lightning Thief*, *Beautiful: The Carol King Musical*, and *The Prom*. This time around, none of these made the top rankings in our new survey.

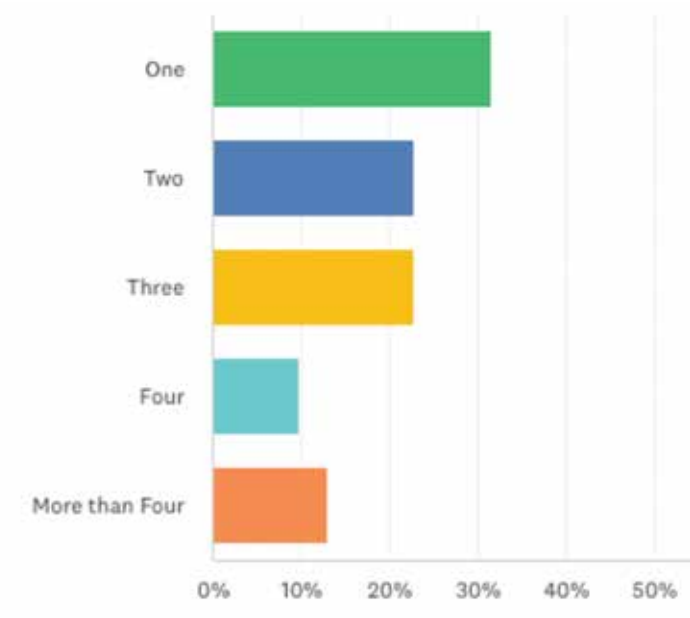
So, what titles did make the list for 2025—and why? Our analysis of survey results provides some answers.

Note that all the titles in our survey results are scheduled to be produced in 2025, no matter what the theatres' season configuration may be. Thus, some productions may come at the end of the 2024-2025 season, while others reflect a 2025 calendar-year season, and still others will be seen in the fall months of a 2025-2026 season.

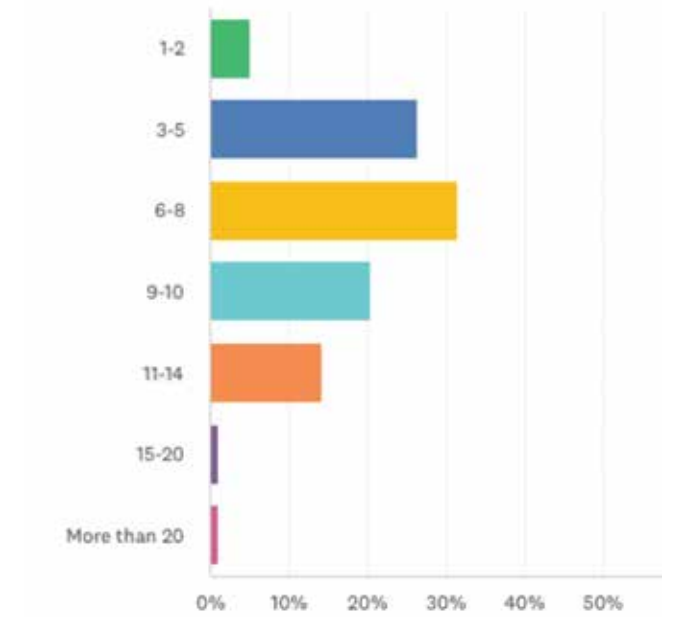
Overall Top Titles for 2025 (both musicals and non-musicals)

- First place: *A Christmas Carol* (non-musical)
- Second place (tie): *Waitress*, *Steel Magnolias* (non-musical)
- Third place: *Anything Goes*
- Fourth place (tie): *The Sound of Music*, *Something Rotten!*, *The Producers*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Murder on the Orient Express* (non-musical)
- Fifth place (tie): *Sister Act*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Jersey Boys*, *Cats*, *9 to 5: The Musical*, *Misery* (non-musical), *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Dial M for Murder* (non-musical)

How many musicals do you produce a season/year for adult audiences?



How many shows a season/year do you produce for adult audiences?



Overview: Musicals

Respondents submitted 208 different musical titles, with 34% not repeated by other theatres in the survey. The top musical slotted for next season is the new release, *Waitress*, followed in second place by the classic Cole Porter musical, *Anything Goes*.

Now that we have two years of survey data, we can begin to see some trends. One is that theatres are quick to select newly released musical titles. However, those titles drop off quickly in following years. On the other hand, the classic shows continue to fill the upper rankings—titles repeating from last year included *9 to 5: The Musical*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *Something Rotten*.

continued on page 18 ▶

The Old Fart Plays is a collection of one-act plays that focus on characters of “a certain age” or beyond. Rather than a lugubrious concentration on theme, the plays deal—in one way or another—with the various challenges of aging but are mindful of plot, character and humor. If there is an overarching theme, it may be found in the words of E. E. Cummings: “love is the every only god.” Together, the pieces could make a fine evening’s showcase for a theatre company’s mature performers.

THE OLD FART PLAYS

By Deborah Ann Percy
and Arnold Johnston

www.dramaticpublishing.com/old-fart-plays

Keep on Laughing

By Paul Elliott

The ladies of *Exit Laughing* are back, but now Connie’s daughter, Rachel, has married her 28-year-old stripper boyfriend, Bobby, and they are expecting twins. Connie, Leona and Millie have been touring the world and having the time of their lives, but one of their adventures has gotten out of hand. Connie has met a man in Paris, and he’s proposed to her. Everyone should be happy, but Rachel and Bobby are not—Connie’s new boyfriend is the same age as Bobby.

www.dramaticpublishing.com/keep-on-laughing



Browse our entire library at: www.dramaticpublishing.com

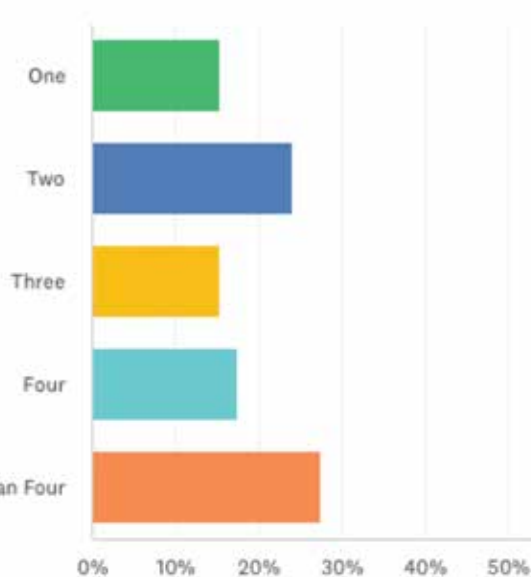
Top Musicals for 2025

- First place: *Waitress*
- Second place *Anything Goes*
- Third place (tie): *The Sound of Music*, *Something Rotten*, *The Producers*, *Fiddler on the Roof*
- Fourth place (tie): *Sister Act*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Jersey Boys*, *Cats*, *9 to 5: The Musical*

Overview: Non-Musicals

Survey respondents submitted 187 different titles. Of those, 81% (153 titles) are being produced by just one of these companies, while 9% (17 titles) are receiving two productions, and 5% (11 titles) are receiving three or more productions.

How many non-musicals a season/year do you produce?



Top Non-Musicals for 2025

- First place: *A Christmas Carol*
- Second place: *Steel Magnolias*
- Third place: *Murder on the Orient Express*
- Fourth place (tie): *Misery*, *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Dial M for Murder*
- Fourth place (tie): *On Golden Pond*, *God of Carnage*, *Fools*, *Doubt*, *The 39 Steps*, and *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*

Overview: Youth Productions

Respondents submitted 89 different titles. Of those, 67 titles (75%) are each receiving just one production among our theatres, while 11 titles (12%) are each receiving two productions, and nine titles (10%) are receiving three or more productions each in 2025. Once again, we saw changes in the top season choices: Last year, *Finding Nemo JR* was the top-rated title, followed by *Disney's Beauty and the Beast JR.* and *Annie JR.*

Top Youth Titles for 2025

- First place: *Seussical JR.*
- Second place: *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*
- Third place (tie): *Shrek the Musical JR.*, *Elf the Musical JR.*, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast JR.*, *Alice in Wonderland*
- Fourth place (tie): *Cinderella*, *Disney's Frozen JR.*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *The Wizard of Oz: Youth Edition*
- Fifth place (tie): *The Lightning Thief*, *Rock of Ages: School Version*, *Matilda The Musical*, *Mary Poppins JR.*, *Madagascar - A Musical Adventure JR.*, *Disney's High School Musical JR.*, *Disney's The Little Mermaid JR.*, *Disney's Descendants: The Musical*, *Charlotte's Web*, *Anastasia*

Overview: Other Productions

There were 30 different titles submitted in the Black Box/ Studio category, with *Rabbit Hole* and *What the Constitution Means to Me* tied for top position. In addition, six theatres listed readings or productions of new plays and festival productions in the survey's "Adult Plays Outside the Main Season" category.

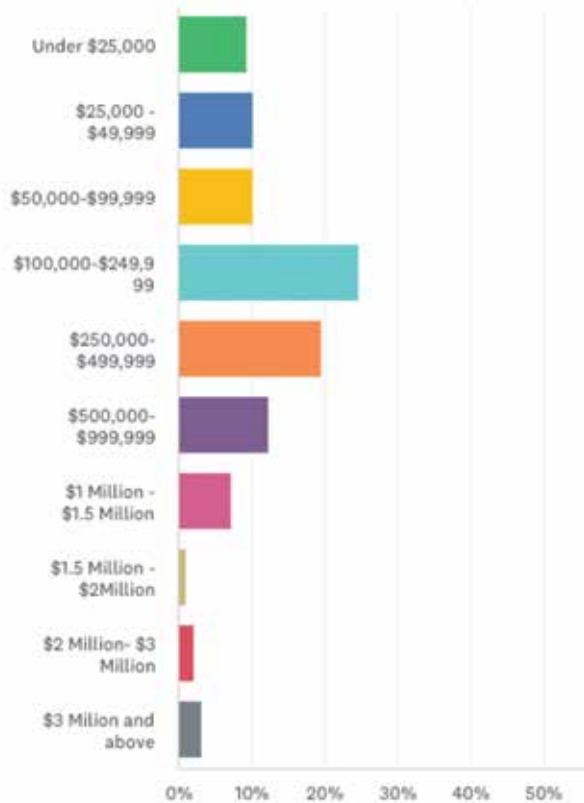
Summary: What the Results Tell Us

As noted earlier, none of last year's top show titles for 2024 (*The Play That Goes Wrong*, *The Lightning Thief*, *Beautiful: The Carol King Musical*, and *The Prom*) made the top rankings in the new season survey. In addition, *Clue: On Stage*, which rounded out the top list of plays last year, didn't make the top list this time around because rights were pulled due to a national tour. However, if *Clue: On Stage* does well on tour, it may signal to licensing companies that (1) community theatres build audiences and demand for professional productions, and (2) restricting amateur rights might not be the best box office practice. (This was the case made at the last AACT National Directors Conference, in San Antonio.)

The survey also shows that community theatres present a broad array of titles, with the bulk of theatres choosing shows that are not being done by others in the survey. This offers a wider range of revenue for publishing companies (and playwrights) than just the hottest shows from Broadway.

Not surprisingly, theatres said that the greatest challenge in selecting shows is the inability to get production rights, followed closely by the cost of royalties and rights.

What is the annual budget size of your theatre?



Putting the survey results in context, the annual budgets provided by responding theatres can be grouped as 29.8% with budgets under \$100,000, 24.7% with budgets of \$100,000-\$249,999, 31% with budgets of \$250,000-999,999, and 13.2% with budgets over \$1 million. Theatres with traditional fall to spring/summer seasons represented 62.2% of the total responses, while 25.5% were calendar-year seasons (January-December), and 12.2% were calendar year seasons other than a January or August start. More than 50% of theatres produce three to eight shows a year.

Respondents said the most important element for selecting a specific show was title recognition in the community, with 40% naming that as most important, and 26% naming that as second most important.

More data about season selection criteria, including number and types of shows produced for various audiences, number of actors and non-acting volunteers, DEI as a factor in season selection, how companies get information about available shows, and much more is in the detailed report is available in PDF format at aact.org/season25.

THE GARDEN CLUB

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**COME FOR COMEDY,
*PREPARE FOR HORROR...***

**The garden club is a funny,
warm chance for older
actresses to shine!**

Celise Kalke - Synchronicity Theatre



TomatoesToDieFor.com

Fall Webinars Bring Fresh Perspectives

There are always exciting educational opportunities at AACT and this fall is no exception! Here are the virtual masterclasses and member-only roundtables we're bringing to you this fall. View all upcoming webinars at aact.org/webinars

All events begin at 2:00 pm Eastern, 1:00 pm Central, 12:00 pm Mountain, and 11:00 am Pacific.

Virtual Masterclasses

AACT Virtual Masterclasses are 75 to 90-minute, in-depth explorations of specific skills or topics. These online presentations are designed to provide new perspectives, powerful strategies, and ways to unleash your creativity. Registration is \$15 for members and \$25 for non-members.

September 5

Arts for All: Creating Inclusive Theatre Experiences

presented by Libby Pedersen, Executive Director, Ignite Theatre Company

Unlock the potential of inclusive programming with our engaging masterclass! Discover how to design theatrical experiences that cater to the neurodiverse, individuals with developmental delays, physical disabilities, and sensory impairments. You'll gain practical skills for creating accessible performances and learn strategies to forge meaningful, lasting relationships with community members, performers, and audiences. This session will equip you with actionable programming plans you can use to implement and share within your theatre communities.



Libby Pedersen holds a bachelor's degree in theatre from Columbia College Chicago, with a specialty in performance and arts education. Her extensive experience in regional theatre is complemented by a profound commitment to nurturing young talent and expanding arts opportunities. As the former Youth Programs Coordinator at Stray Dog Theatre,

Libby launched the Stray Pups Youth Theatre and later founded and led Ignite Theatre Company, a nationally acclaimed youth arts organization recognized with two prestigious awards. Her innovative approach to accessible programming has also garnered accolades, underscoring her dedication to creating inclusive theatre experiences. Currently serving as Ignite's Executive Director, Libby was named one of Focus St. Louis's 2022 Emerging Leaders and participates actively in multiple task forces focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the St. Louis Metro East area.

October 3

Developing New Works and Engaging Your Community

presented by Trinity Bird, Executive Director, The Sauk

Since 2014, The Sauk, in Jonesville, Michigan, has presented an annual Plays-in-Development series, showcasing their dedication to developing new theatrical works. Each year, it presents staged readings of new and in-process plays, with post-performance discussions to further engage audiences and gather valuable feedback for playwrights. In this session, you'll learn how the Plays-in-Development series was born, the impact it's made on the theatre and community, and tips for launching similar initiatives with your organization.



Trinity Bird has been The Sauk's executive director since 2015, but has been involved with the organization since 1997 as an actor, director, and volunteer. His directing credits at The Sauk include an immersive outdoor Charlotte's Web, Living Room Monologues, Les Misérables, Titanic, Doubt, The Full Monty, Pippin (his favorite),

and two AACT NewPlayFest world premieres: On Pine Knoll, by Mark Cornell and Criminal Mischief, by William Cameron.

November 7

Making Immersive Theatre

presented by Chris Hamby, Executive Director, TheaterWorks

Immersive theatre surrounds the audience with the world of the story, and this masterclass will give you a quick introduction to all things immersive. You'll learn how you begin in making immersive work, who is making immersive theatre, and much more. Bring your questions as we share this exciting world-making genre of our craft.



Chris Hamby is an award-winning director and the Executive Director for TheaterWorks in Peoria, Arizona. During his 11 years with the organization, he served as Education Director and Artistic Director. During the pandemic, his leadership led to the creation of three immersive productions: Curiouser & Curiouser, Curiouser Nutcracker and Curiouser & Curiouser Too. The Curiouser productions were mentioned in the Wall Street Journal and were the basis for the documentary film, Down the Rabbit Hole: The Arts, The Pandemic and the Curiouser Immersive Project. Chris spent much of 2023 in the UK researching best practices in immersive theater with a research and development grant from the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

Member-Only Roundtables

AACT Roundtables provide a convenient forum for sharing experiences, ideas, concerns, and solutions. Each roundtable features a group of panelists, which means a diverse range of experiences will be shared. Conversations are driven by audience questions through a pre-session questionnaire and live Q&A.

Interested in serving on an upcoming roundtable? Submit an application at aact.org/panelist

September 17

Production Team Roles and Responsibilities

Who makes up the production team? How often should you hold production meetings? Is a chair considered set or props? What's a dramaturg? Does your show

require a fight or intimacy choreographer? You'll get answers to these questions (and more) by unpacking the various production team positions and their responsibilities.

October 22

Successful Strategies for Season Subscriptions

Season tickets often provide a consistent and reliable stream of income, making them crucial to many community theatres. But how have audiences' commitment and buying patterns shifted in recent years and how do organizations keep up? In this roundtable, you'll learn tips and tricks to increase your subscription base and give audiences what they're looking for.

November 19

Cultivating Community Partnerships

Learn the best ways to identify and connect with community partners to further engage your audiences, increase your theatre's presence within the life and culture of your community, provide greater cultural and/or sociopolitical context to the themes of your season, and build lasting relationships that support and further your mission.

Additional Webinars

In addition to virtual masterclasses and roundtables, AACT also presents monthly Industry Connections, 30-minute presentations from major theatre resource providers, and periodic bonus webinars covering a range of topics and special guests. Upcoming highlights include presentations from Church Mutual, On the Stage, and Kendra Scott Company, plus "Holiday Marketing: Increase Sales by Optimizing Seasonal Campaign Strategies" presented by Keith Tomasek on September 26. For registration and additional information on all currently scheduled AACT Webinars, visit aact.org/webinars



A Pride and Prejudice prequel

Mr Bennet's Bride

by Emma Wood

emmawoodplays.au/plays

"from laugh out loud humour and satire to moments of genuine human frailty and awareness... Jane Austen aficionados and thespians in general will embrace this sophisticated and clever script."
Sydney Arts Guide



"It is a delightfully Austentatious – that is to say rapturously elegant – experience."
Atlanta Theatre Buzz

Step into the Spotlight at AACTFest 2025!



Prepare for an unforgettable experience at AACTFest 2025, June 25-28 in Des Moines, Iowa. Hosted at the historic Hoyt Sherman Place Theater, the festival promises once again to be a showcase of community theatre excellence.



AACTFest is exciting from the opening ceremony through the closing celebrations. Register now and save!

Register Early and SAVE!

Early Bird Rates are good through
March 1, 2025
aact.org/25

Substantial savings isn't the only perk of registering early. Since some festival offerings have limited capacity, early registration also means you won't miss any of the fun, excitement, and great theatre that only AACTFest can offer.

VIP Festival Package: \$550

Limited number available through March 1, 2025.

Experience the National Theatre Festival, AACTFest 2025, at its best. Enhance your AACTFest experience by becoming a VIP! Space is limited, so sign up now at **aact.org/register25**

- Access to all festival shows, workshops, and special events
- AACTFest Welcome Gift Package
- Reserved Seating – Pick and reserve your seat ahead of time for all 12 shows!

- Early hotel reservations at our host hotel (Des Moines Marriott Downtown) *up to October 1, 2024*, at which time reservations open up to everyone
- VIP-only special event

(For VIP Package questions and group seating reservations, contact AACT Conference Coordinator Jill Patchin at **jill@aact.org**)

AACTFest 2025 General Registration

Save up to 50% with the early-bird rate!

Get full access and experience the best of the festival.

- AACTFest registration for all activities
- Discounted hotel rates at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown (more information on page 23)

Event Details

Location: Historic Hoyt Sherman Place Theater, Des Moines, Iowa

Dates: June 25-28, 2025

Official Festival Hotel and Headquarters: Des Moines Marriott Downtown (more information on page 23)

AACTFEST 2025 BENEFITS	FESTIVAL VIP \$550 <i>Members only; Through Mar. 1</i>	EARLY BIRD \$325/400 <i>September 1 - March 1</i>	ADVANCE \$425/510 <i>March 2 - May 31</i>	ON-SITE \$500/595 <i>June 1 - June 28</i>
12 Transformative Performances	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exhilarating Workshops	✓	✓	✓	✓
Post-Show Adjudications	✓	✓	✓	✓
Keynote Address	✓	✓	✓	✓
Exhibitor Hall & Giveaways	✓	✓	✓	✓
Special Events	✓	✓	✓	✓
1 Entry to Design Competition	✓	✓	✓	✓
Saturday Awards Ticket	✓	✓	✓	✓
AACTFest T-Shirt	✓			
AACTFest Welcome Gift	✓			
Reserved Seating for All 12 Shows	✓			
Early Hotel Access	✓			
VIP-Only Special Event	✓			

Festival Hotel

Stay at the heart of the festival by booking your room at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown, beginning October 1. The festival's official hotel offers affordable rates and is ideally located in the city's lively business district, just five miles from the DSM airport and .08 miles from the Hoyt Sherman Place Theater. Enjoy expansive city views, an indoor pool, 24-hour gym, and convenient access to shopping, dining, and nightlife via the downtown skywalk. Book your discounted AACTFest 2025 rate starting October 1, at aact.org/hotel (these special rates are not available via the hotel's website or telephone.)

Your stay at our designated host hotel makes it possible for AACT to provide the great discounts, services, and experiences offered during the festival.

Performance Line-Up

Twelve theatre groups from around the country and from U.S. military bases overseas will perform in the festival. To learn more about how the regions are divided, visit aact.org/regionreps

continued on page 24 ▶



"With good timing and quirky humour...engaging comedy that's sure to make you laugh." - *San Francisco Chronicle*

"Witty dialogue...memorable lines. A wonderful surprise twist at the end." - *Oroville Mercury Register*

The Fun in Funeral

Fun, farce and a mad scheme to market performance art funerals!

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Region 4A	Performance #1
Region 10	Performance #2
Region 3	Performance #3
Region 8	Performance #4
Region 1	Performance #5
Region 4B	Performance #6
Wildcard*	Performance #7
Region 6	Performance #8
Region 5	Performance #9
Region 7	Performance #10
Region 9	Performance #11
Region 2	Performance #12

*Kaleidoscope,
by Ray
Bradbury,
presented
by Region
10's Stuttgart
Theatre Center
at AACTFest
2019 in
Gettysburg,
Pennsylvania*



*The "Wildcard" performance is a special slot for an outstanding production that didn't win its region.

The anticipation is building for the incredible performances at AACTFest 2025. As always, it's a full schedule. Specific times, dates, and show titles for each performance will be announced at a later date.



Enjoy AACTFest 2025 with your AACT family

Experience Des Moines

Des Moines's vibrant downtown and rich arts and culture scene provide ample opportunities for sightseeing and exploration. With four miles of climate-controlled skywalks, you can enjoy the city no matter the weather. Downtown is just minutes away from the Des Moines International Airport, serving the fastest growing metro in the Midwest, and is easily accessible by car from most areas of the region.

Besides the walkable downtown, explore the historic East Village neighborhood, the Farmer's Market, local breweries, and the city's buzzing nightlife. Des Moines offers something for everyone, ensuring your visit will be packed with activities and memories.

AACT is proud to host the national festival in such a culturally vibrant and charming city. We look forward to seeing you in Des Moines for a week of theatre, workshops, networking, and fun. Don't miss out on this extraordinary celebration of community theatre!

For more information and to register, visit aact.org/25.

The Celebration of Aging

No sad songs!
No f-bombs!
No Depends jokes!



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Workshop Proposals and Ideas Sought for AACTFest 2025

One of the highlights of the AACTFest national festival is the array of workshops designed to inspire and engage a diverse community of attendees. AACTFest 2025, next June in Des Moines, Iowa, is no exception, and our dedicated Education Committee is pulling out all the stops to ensure this festival is our most amazing one yet. But it can't do it alone—we need your enthusiasm and support to bring it to life.



AACTFest workshops can feature multiple presenters and points of view, such as engaging panel discussions

- **Fight/Intimacy Choreography:** Safe and effective techniques for stage combat and intimacy coordination
- **Licensing:** Navigating the complexities of licensing plays and musicals
- **Marketing /Outreach:** Effective marketing strategies, audience engagement, and community outreach
- **Musical Theatre:** From vocal techniques to choreography, all aspects of musical theatre production
- **Youth Programming:** Engaging young people in theatre through workshops, camps, and productions.
- ...and more!

continued on page 26 ▶

We're now welcoming proposals and ideas for in-person workshops. Whether you're a seasoned professional or an enthusiastic newcomer, your unique insights and innovative approaches can play a crucial role in shaping the future of community theatre during the festival, June 25-28.

We're looking for workshops that dive into every aspect of theatre, including:

- **Acting:** Explore techniques, character development, improvisation, and more
- **Administration:** Best practices for managing theatre operations, budgeting, financing, and strategic planning
- **Design/Tech:** Dive into the magic of theatre design and discover the latest tech advancements
- **Directing:** Innovative approaches to directing, working with actors, and staging productions
- **Diversity/Equity/Inclusion:** Strategies to create more inclusive and diverse theatre environments
- **Education:** Methods for teaching theatre to various age groups, and in different settings

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HistoricalEmporium.com

Tips for Submitting a Standout Proposal

For your workshop proposal to really stand out, consider these approaches:

- **Think Outside the Box!** Unique and specific topics are encouraged, no matter how “out there” they might sound. We want workshops that push boundaries and explore new ideas.
- **Active and Hands-On!** The most well-received workshops allow attendees to learn by doing. Take full advantage of the in-person format to create interactive and engaging sessions.
- **Titillating Titles!** A clever and creative name plays a significant role in capturing attendees’ attention. Make it sparkle!
- **Think About Time!** While most workshops are 75-minute sessions, we’re open to proposals for both longer and shorter presentations if they better suit the subject matter.

Submit Your Proposal

Ready to share your expertise and passion for theatre? Complete our online form at aact.org/workshop-rfp and submit your proposal by October 21, 2024.



AACTFest attendees love getting on their feet for performance-driven workshops



Have a unique expertise? Demonstrative seminars make great AACTFest workshops!

Have an Idea?

Is there a subject you want to learn more about? We’d love to hear your suggestions! Whether it’s for AACTFest, YouthFest, or our year-round programming, email your ideas to AACT Education Director David A. VanCleave at dvancleave@aact.org

Please help us make AACTFest 2025 the most enriching and unforgettable event yet. We’ll be excited to see you in Des Moines and can’t wait to share this incredible experience with you!



Services Provided

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The AACT Advantage

Lou Ursone, Executive Director of Curtain Call, Inc. (Stamford, Connecticut), AACT Board of Directors, and Spotlight Editorial Team asks theatre makers why they are part of AACT.



JOE GUTTADAURO
Board President, Goshen Players
Goshen, Connecticut

How does a Brooklyn boy end up in a town of just over 3,000 in the north-west hills of Connecticut?

That's life. And for Joe Guttadauro, Board President of The Goshen Players, a 75-year-old, volunteer-run community theatre, it's a great life.

Closing out 2023 with the acapella musical, *All Is Calm*, was a great experience for Guttadauro, who said. "It was our most successful show ever, selling out every performance, requiring us to add two extra performances. [I learned about the show from another member of AACT, and I was among the lucky ones to get a ticket to see that production...it was amazing.]"

Guttadauro has been involved in many community theatres during a lifetime of performances—as director, actor, producer, and more. All involved opportunities made possible through networking with successful AACT theatres.

"Goshen Players is proud to be a member of the AACT community," Guttadauro said. "AACT membership means being part of a great organization that is helping support community theatres, both large and small, offering both networking and knowledge sharing."

Having been involved in all aspects of theatre, Guttadauro said he truly appreciates *Spotlight* magazine. In particular, where he learns something new and/or interesting in each issue.

Managing a fully volunteer organization has challenges that organizations with full-time staff don't face. That's why he praised AACT's website for "lots of useful information, including links ranging from how to start a community theatre to how to manage a production. There are also helpful links for information on grants and copyright laws. I also visit the website to check on the latest discounts being offered to AACT members," he added.



LACEY SCHIRMERS
Executive Director, GREAT Theatre
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Lacey has been part of GREAT Theatre for 10 years, first as Office Manager and for the past two and half years as Executive Director. While her background in theatre was primarily as a dedicated and loyal audience member,

her experience in the nonprofit sector is what brought her to GREAT Theatre.

"The value of live theatre to the community is immeasurable, and that's why AACT's work is so important," the St. Cloud native said. "Organizationally, it has been a huge help to us here," she added. "Without question, the most valuable thing for me personally has been participation in the biennial National Directors Conference. I've gone four times and the relationships I've built through those workshops have been incredible," she added.

Among the other benefits, conference attendees decided that a monthly Zoom check-in would be great to continue that energy—a great way to be in the room where it happens when they can't be there in person. That experience led GREAT Theatre's Artistic Director to hold monthly Zoom meetings with colleagues at other theatres—again, sharing ideas, challenges and solutions to common problems.

Getting to know other theatre leaders nearby (and not so near), opens doors to visiting other operations, as well. Seeing first-hand how other theatres are doing things is part of the knowledge sharing that happens within AACT membership.

Schirmers also relies on other AACT opportunities like the website's Job Listings page. "That helps a lot when we're posting jobs and when just planning to hire. The information there on salary ranges and job descriptions is terrific."

When asked about the value of AACT membership, Schirmers was quick to say that "the return on the investment is amazing—the webinars and other educational offerings, alone, are great," adding that when developing her theatre's annual budget, one thing that is never on the chopping block is the cost of AACT membership—"It's that important to us."



Make the Most of Your Theatre's Anniversary

Katrina Ploof, AACT *Spotlight* Editorial Team

It all started with a dress. A black floral wrap dress with the perfect ruffle at the bottom, flattering sleeves, and the ability to make every actress who wore it look like a million bucks. No wonder there had been so many actresses who had worn that dress—so many that we stood for quite a long while in the costume shop, trying to list those actresses and the shows that this single dress had appeared in.

That led us to a bigger question: how do we as a community theatre celebrate our story? Can theatre objects and costumes provide continuity and meaning to that story? How do we share them, and the lives of the

individuals who used them, as a way to mark time and accomplishment?

I begin with this story because, if your theatre is one of the lucky ones, there will come a time—sooner than you think—when an “anniversary” will arrive. Whether it’s 25, 50, 75, or 100 years or beyond, moments like these in your theatre’s history will warrant public acknowledgement and celebration.

Truth to tell, there are as many ways to celebrate as there are theatres. And that’s as it should be. Many of the suggestions you’ll find here require nothing but a little elbow grease. A few require some cash, but spent wisely it can reap important dividends. So, if you’re looking for some jumping-off points, here are some ideas on how to celebrate with your volunteers, audience, and alumni:

1. *Begin within your community.* Utilizing social media, every old program you can get your hands on, and all the friends of friends of your theatre, initiate an alumni search. Invite your alumni to contribute to an online database that chronicles not only their participation in your theatre, but also the participation of their friends, parents and grandparents, as well. Make it accessible to everyone. Celebrate the astonishing continuity of your organization.
2. *Build video memories.* Ask your alumni to contribute short video memories, 2-3 minutes long, to a cloud-based drive where those memories can be stored, curated, and utilized throughout the anniversary year in your online marketing and social media posts.
3. *Track your history with a timeline.* Have room on your lobby walls? Ask your legions of volunteers for photos, clippings, anything that could be reproduced for a display wall. Find a sponsor—for example, was there a business that started in town the same year as your theatre, or who has been instrumental in supporting your efforts?—and cover your lobby space with your history.
4. *Use the opportunity to kick-start long-term fundraising.* Ask your more affluent donors to consider a long-term donation—\$1000 per year for 10 years, or an easier ask of \$100 dollars a year for 10 years, or even more fun, \$1 for every year the theatre has been in existence. Connect your



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NETWORK IN THE NATION!



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donors with the idea of time—and the power their contributions have in the long term.

5. *Go with a gala.* We all know how to throw these parties: sponsors, VIP options, caterers, entertainment, silent auction, bar. This isn't new but it's hard. I suggest you focus your anniversary gala on three things: the past (a selection from the video memories you've collected), the present (a new mission statement, a state-of-the-theatre speech, the announcement of a new initiative), and the future (now is the time to bring out the kids on stage). Gather all your worker bees and kick off your anniversary season with the event.
6. *The final blast.* And then, at the end of this anniversary season, throw the biggest cast party ever! Find every single volunteer and invite them to the party. Make it a blow-out. Live stream it for those who can't be present.

Oh yes, finally, let's go back to the dress I mentioned at the beginning, because something like that might be the one thing that binds everything all together. Find your dress that has been in a hundred shows, along with that throne, sign, cape, and butter churn, and put them on stage for that party. Light them beautifully—like the true magical relics they are. Because theatre objects have bones made of time. They tell a story—your story. Share that story with your community, as well.

Celebrating anniversaries is hard work. But we do hard things every day. Be brave and smart and open like you always have been. Your theatre has made a difference for years. Remind your own people and your community of that, as well—they will thank you!



Katrina Ploof is a native of the great state of Maine, the daughter of a music teacher and a vocalist. In the past 40 years, she has directed, choreographed, or coached over 250 productions in the U.S. and Canada, including works by Chekov, Shaw, Sondheim, Ibsen, Wilder, Wasserstein, and McNally. She has adjudicated theatre festivals throughout the U.S. and Canada for over 20 years.

Katrina is also a published playwright and has been a member of the Lincoln Center Theatre Directors Laboratory since 2000.

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More AACT 2024 National Awards

AACT is proud to announce two recipients of the 2024 National Awards, in addition to those listed in the Summer 2024 Spotlight.

Robert E. Gard Superior Volunteer Award

Don Langford

Prescott, Arizona



Don Langford stands in front of a memorial stained glass in honor of his wife, Cela Langford, who for 20-plus years served as hair and makeup coordinator at Prescott Center for the Arts

The purpose of life, writes Leo Rosten, is to matter, to count, to stand for something, to make some difference that we lived at all. With those words in mind Don Langford, his wife, and twin sons moved to Prescott, Arizona, in 1977. Two years later, he attended his first live musical theatre production by the Prescott Fine Arts Association. As a singer, he thought, "I can do that."

Some 45 years later, he has performed in more than 50 productions, done lighting for at least 100, and directed 20-plus productions—all as a volunteer. (His wife, Cela, served as hair and makeup coordinator, as well.) In 2013, Don

was awarded a lifetime achievement in the arts for his contributions to the Prescott community, which has grown to some 100,000 people.

"This has all happened because I wanted to make a difference in my community," he said. "Community theatre has given so much more to me and my family than I have given to it. Community theatre is one of the rare places in modern society where all ages, all genders and all cultural backgrounds can come together as equals, to share their talent, and to create magic through performance. I thank you for the acknowledgement. I hope it inspires many others to become part of their local theatre organization, to make a difference in their life, and that of their community."

Art Cole Lifetime of Leadership Award

Jill Patchin

Grand Rapids, Michigan



Jill Patchin accepts the Art Cole Lifetime of Leadership Award from AACT 2024-2025 President Kristofer Geddie and AACT 2023-2024 President Kristi Quinn during the AACT Summer Board of Directors meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 2024

The Art Cole Lifetime Leadership Award honors individuals who have provided exceptional leadership in community theatre at the national, local, and regional levels. Jill Patchin's journey in community theatre began in 1997, when she was hired as the Business Manager for the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. She quickly became an active member of AACT,

as well, serving on multiple committees and in various leadership roles. From 2001 to 2003, she served as AACT President, demonstrating remarkable leadership and dedication. In 2003, she was inducted as an AACT Fellow, in recognition of her long-time contributions and commitment to community theatre.

Those contributions are vast. She has served as AACT Conference Coordinator, organized national events, and set up vendor partnerships. Her business acumen, humor, and dedication have been pivotal in AACT's growth and success—including creating AACT's Corporate Partner Program, which has secured over a quarter of a million dollars in revenue to support AACT's mission and programming. Her efforts have helped the organization navigate many challenges, from the evolution of AACTFest to its response to the pandemic.

Jill Patchin's 25-plus years of passionate service have left an indelible mark on community theatre, showcasing her unwavering commitment and exceptional leadership. Her influence has been instrumental in the growth and resilience of AACT, making her a beloved and respected figure in the theatre community.

AACT National Awards Nominations

AACT National Awards are presented each year to recognize outstanding contributions to community theatre. There are over 10 unique national awards, and nominations are accepted for persons of all ages. Nomination deadline is January 20, 2025.

Anyone may nominate a candidate for a National Award. To submit a nomination uniquely suited to your theatre "hero," visit aact.org/national to find the criteria for each award, a list of previous award recipients, and the online nomination form.

Awards will be presented before a national audience at AACTFest 2025 in Des Moines, Iowa.



So, You're Burned Out... Now What?

Dorinda Toner, AACT Board of Directors and *Spotlight* Editorial Team

The term *burnout* was first used in 1974 by psychologist Herbert Freudenberger, after studying the lasting impact of excessive stress and workplace demands on individuals, such as health-care and social workers, clergy, educators—and those working in nonprofits.

Since then, there have been additional studies attempting to define and determine what burnout is and isn't. That's important, since burnout shares many of the same symptoms with depression, anxiety, and chronic exhaustion. The big difference, however, is that while many of the symptoms are the same, burnout is a syndrome, not a medical diagnosis. Burnout happens because of the burdens of work and the stress caused by the lack of resources needed to meet those burdens.

Note that burnout isn't just feeling stressed or spent at the end of the day—it's ongoing. It's about losing zest for your work. It's feeling unmotivated and uninspired. It's a physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion that results from sustained stress, most often work-related. (And yes, that work can be volunteer, as well as paid.)

Sound familiar? If there's one thing that community theatre leaders understand, it's being overburdened, under-resourced, overworked, and stressed out. In fact, a recent study of nonprofit leaders showed that 95% expressed some level of concern about burnout, and 34% reported that staff burnout has been "very much" a concern to them in the last year.

Yikes, that's grim. So, what can we do about it?

First, consider talking to your doctor to make sure that your symptoms aren't a sign of something larger (like depression) in need of treatment. Next, take steps to make your mental, emotional, and physical health a priority. The internet is rife with suggestions on how to avoid and cope with burnout. These can include but are not limited to:

- Carving out more social/personal time
- Getting more rest
- Setting boundaries around work expectations
- Scheduling and taking time off
- Exercising and eating healthy
- Talking to a professional counselor or therapist, if needed

That may seem too simple of an answer when you may be the only one running things in your theatre, when you feel the weight of others' expectations, and your skill set and knowledge are desperately needed. I get it; I've been there! So, I'm adding a few more suggestions of my own, specifically for community theatre leaders:

- Network with peers and talk to others who are experiencing similar stresses (AACT is a great resource)
- Speak with your board/leadership regarding the fairness of your wage, adequate time off, and benefits
- Ask for help and delegate where you can
- Say "no" more often. "No" is a complete sentence
- Create a resource council so that not everything

continued on page 32 ▶

A New Comedy By
Steve Lyons

Peaches
en Regalia

HORSESHOE
cafe

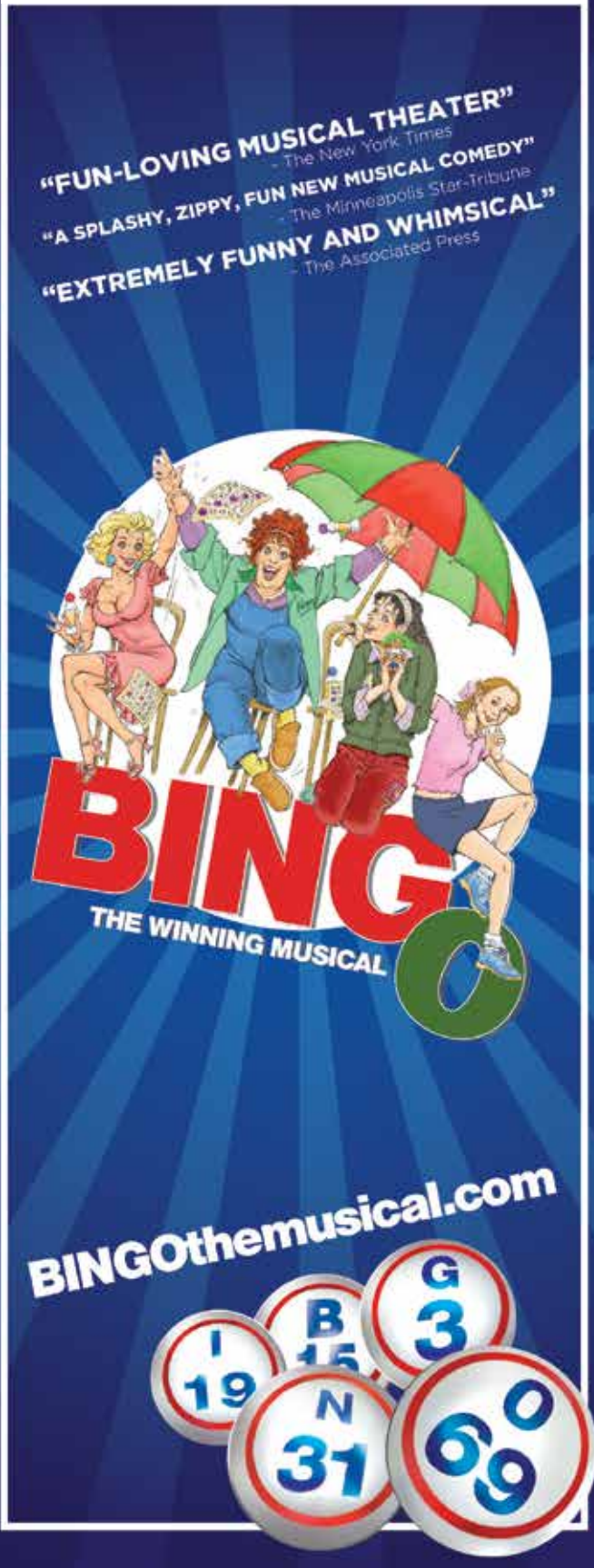
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Burnout *continued from page 31*

falls to you (A resource council can be made of persons who want to be of assistance but don't necessarily have the time/ability to commit to serving on the board. Examples of this might be a lawyer, tax consultant, engineer, banker, etc. that you can rely on for advice.)

- Work to communicate, maintain, and respect your own boundaries.
- Assess the resources at your disposal and take steps to improve them if you can
- Know when it's time to step down and help facilitate a succession plan.

All jobs come with stress and complications, but this is especially true for those of us working in professions that serve others. My best advice is this: take good care of yourself today to avoid a future of chronic burnout. Self-care is not selfish. In order to serve others well, we must first take care of ourselves.

Remember this adage: you cannot pour from an empty cup.

Resources:

cep.org/report-backpacks/state-of-nonprofits-2024-what-funders-need-to-know/

arraybc.com/what-burnout-is-what-it-isnt-and-how-to-address-it

blueavocado.org/leadership-and-management/how-can-non-profit-leaders-avoid-burnout/

blog.candid.org/post/why-nonprofits-are-burned-out-and-ways-to-beat-burnout-today/

lodestar.asu.edu/blog/2023/08/addressing-mental-health-and-burnout-nonprofit-staff-and-volunteers

nonprofitmegaphone.com/why-nonprofit-workers-burn-out-and-how-to-prevent-it/

ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7793987/



Dorinda Toner is the Producing Artistic Director of Twilight Theater Company in Portland, Oregon. She has been performing on stages across North America for over 36 years. She is a certified DEIB Specialist. A member of AACT's Spotlight Editorial Team, she serves on the AACT Board of Directors and is Past Vice President of PATA (Portland Area Theatre Alliance).

AACT Board Welcomes the Class of 2027

Congratulations to AACT's newly elected or re-elected 2024-2027 Board Members at Large! Board Member at Large terms are for three years. These elected individuals were inducted to the AACT Board at the Summer Board of Directors Meeting on Saturday, June 22, 2024, in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



Pattye Archer
Starkville Community Theatre, director, scenic designer, volunteer
Starkville, MS



Michael Cochran
Market House Theatre, Executive Director
Paducah, KY



Ted Miller
Washington State Community Theatre Association, producer, director, actor
Richland, WA



Chad-Alan Carr
Gettysburg Community Theatre, Founding Executive/Artistic Director
Gettysburg, PA



Bob Frame
Retired from Cayuga Community College in Auburn, NY
Skaneateles, NY



Jereme Raickett
Players by the Sea, Artistic Director
Jackson Beach, FL



Martha Cherbini
Attorney
Tulsa, OK



Kelli McLoud-Schingen
World Stage Theatre Company, Co-founder
Tulsa, OK



Lou Ursone
Curtain Call, Inc., Executive Director
Stamford, CT



Angela Wilson
AngelWing Project, Inc., Founder and CEO
Glen Burnie, MD

To view the complete AACT Board, visit aact.org/aact-board-directors

Saluting the Service of Retiring Board Members



AACT would also like to express its heartfelt gratitude to outgoing board members **Jim Walker** and **Sharon Burum**.

Jim served as the VP for Festivals from 2017–2024. He has been an exemplary leader, guiding the organization through numerous successful festival cycles and spearheading major organizational changes.

Sharon served as Board Member at Large from 2015–2024. Her leadership has been instrumental in the development and coordina-



tion of AACTChats. Sharon leaves behind a legacy of growth, creativity, and community spirit, setting a high standard for future board members.

AACT is grateful to have such a dedicated and passionate group of individuals serving on our board and committees. Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones and navigated numerous challenges, always with the shared goal of enriching our communities through the power of theatre.

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Reviews and photos: www.londos.net

Publisher: www.canadianplayoutlet.com



Hosting a Broadway Touring Company: A Golden Opportunity

Michael Cochran

AACT Board of Directors and *Spotlight* Editorial Team

Opportunities sometimes come from unexpected sources. In our theatre's last capital campaign, the consultant we hired to help us said something that I've never forgotten: *"Theatre is a space hog. But if you can learn to be judicious with your space use, there are lots of income opportunities."*

It's true, as we found out last year, when we at Market House Theatre were contacted by the Broadway touring company of a new national tour of *Annie*. They were working with the local performing arts center—just across the street from our theatre—to "tech" their touring show here in Paducah, Kentucky, where the costs would be far less than doing it in New York City.

It clearly would be a money-maker for the performing arts center and for our community, which would host the company of over 50 people.

It also turned into a money-maker for our theatre, because the touring company needed costume construction and fitting space, rehearsal space, dance space, music space, and classroom space for the cast of orphans.

Luckily, all this hit a month before our main season began, so with just a little bit of flexibility on our part, we could accommodate the touring group. We put their costume shop into our event room, and our black box theatre became their rehearsal space. Most of our own theatre classes and dance classes are scheduled in the evening, so the *Annie* company could use our facilities during the day, including our theatre and dance rooms for their music and dance rehearsals. One of our empty office spaces became the school room for the orphans, and a catering/backstage room became home for the two Sandy dogs that toured with the show.

We were fortunate that our last renovation added four guest designer and director apartments that, when not in use by our own productions, are available as Airbnb apartments for rent (another income source we have leveraged, bringing in over \$100,000 a year). We rented out some of those to *Annie* company members, and because we provided those spaces for about 28 days, our theatre took in almost \$35,000 in new rental income alone.

The touring company manager told me that companies like hers were always looking for spaces that could accommodate their support needs for a fraction of what they would pay in New York. Moving the entire company to our

little community saved them quite a bit of money, and it was a nice boost to our local economy—and to our budget.

This was not the only touring company we have helped, by the way. In the past few years we've been able to rent rehearsal stairs for a *My Fair Lady* tour, as well as some props and furniture for use in rehearsals until their show scenery arrived from New York. It can work in the other direction, as well: After the touring production of *The Prom* did its tech here in Paducah, they left some of the restaurant booths from the show, along with several sewing machines and other items they couldn't fit into their trailers—and we were the beneficiary. (Our technical director was thrilled to get the Broadway casters used on the restaurant booths.)

Understanding when the Broadway touring shows do their tech work, and being a little flexible with our own schedule, has allowed us to not only be good neighbors with our performing arts center, but has provided us significant income, as well. We all benefit, since being close to the performing arts center and the heart of our downtown, with its restaurants, coffee shops, apartments and hotel rooms, also makes the process much smoother for touring companies.

I will admit that our theatre has lots of buildings and spaces that we have purchased and renovated over the years. But like most theatre managers, I also have always wanted to see how much programming I could cram into every space we have. But what I hadn't considered was the golden opportunity presented to us by that consultant: "If you can learn to be judicious with your space use, there are lots of income opportunities."

So, next time you look at your rehearsal, classroom, or event spaces, think beyond how much of your equipment and programming can be crammed into them. Maybe you, too, might be able to help a Broadway show that would love to launch its next tour with the help of your community theatre.

It can happen.



Michael Cochran is Executive Director at Market House Theatre (MHT) in Paducah, Kentucky. Now marking his 40th year with MHT, he also serves on the AACT Board of Directors, and is a past board member of Arts KY and the Kentucky Theatre Association.

The Importance of Belonging

Jon Montgomery, AACT Board of Directors and
Spotlight Editorial Team

In my youthful days, I swiftly discovered that nothing rivaled the exhilaration of standing beneath the spotlight. Raised in the embrace of theatre, I was wholly immersed in its world—whether as a spectator, performer, or dreamer. Theatre wasn't merely a passion; it was my destined path. Even now, it remains the sanctuary where I feel most authentically myself, most vibrant and alive. Theatre bestows upon me the gift of profound visibility, a channel for emotional catharsis, an unending challenge, and a portal to escape into.

As a professional director and actor, I count myself fortunate to tread a career path filled with soaring highs. I vividly recall the electrifying opening night of *Mamma Mia!* at the Aurora Arts Theatre in Corpus Christi, Texas. Having directed and choreographed the production, I also found myself on stage, performing alongside an extraordinary cast, dancing before a captivated audience of hundreds. In those moments, I felt weightless, incredulous that this extraordinary life was truly mine to live.

Yet, alongside the heights came the depths: injury, illness, the relentless grind of auditions, and the perpetual search for work across the breadth of America. Through it all, I persisted. Even in my darkest hours, I sought solace within the studio, the theatre, the green room—refocusing on the very essence that had driven my life's devotion to theatre. I tapped into that ineffable sense of aliveness that fills my heart and soul, replenishing my spirit with every performance.

As a director and choreographer, I find that same vitality through my dedicated actors, through the art I craft with others, and through nurturing the next wave of diverse young talents. This expression of aliveness is an extension of my innermost being—an innate desire to share that profound connection with others.

As time marches on and the demands of theatrical art evolve, my motivation remains unwavering. I pursue theatre for the surge of energy that animates my body and spirit like nothing else. It courses through me, electrifying every cell, allowing me to revel in sensation while the world around me fades into insignificance. It's akin to possessing a secret superpower—one that no longer demands acrobatics as it did in my youth. Instead, it manifests in deliberate, purposeful movements, in gentle improvisations, in deep listening. It is an authentic communion with the purest parts of myself, bringing joy and softly whispers, "Jon, you are alive."

Everyone deserves equitable access to invaluable opportunities like these. Everyone should have the opportunity to seize these transformative possibilities.



Jon Montgomery is a Member at Large on the AACT Board of Directors and the Director of Marketing and Development for the Ellen Noël Art Museum in Odessa, Texas. He previously served as Executive Artistic Director for both The Depot Theater and Basin Theatre Works.

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Fire Prevention Tips for Community Theatres

Adam Bell, Risk Control Specialist for Nonprofit + Human Services at Church Mutual Insurance Company, S.I. (a stock insurer)¹

Community theatres are a vibrant hub where local actors, directors, and playwrights can share their talents and passion with the public. But regardless of building age, these spaces—from historic landmarks to more modern facilities—share a common risk of fire, whether due to flammable scenery, electrical equipment, potential use of pyrotechnics in productions, or other issues. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), performing arts centers experience an average of 37 fires per year, resulting in \$7.4 million in property damage.

A fire can be devastating for a community theatre, causing irreparable damage to the building, costumes, and props, as well as disrupting cherished traditions. In the worst-case scenario, a fire can lead to injuries or even loss of life.

The following is a list of key recommendations that can help your organization reduce its fire risk:

- **Develop a comprehensive fire-safety plan.** The plan should outline procedures for fire prevention, evacuation and emergency response. It's vital that it be reviewed and updated annually, and all staff and volunteers should be trained on its contents. Consider consulting your local fire department for additional resources and assistance in setting up a comprehensive fire-safety plan for your venue.
- **Conduct regular fire inspections.** Monthly inspections by qualified personnel can identify potential hazards before they cause a fire. Inspections should focus on electrical systems, heating and cooling equipment, flammable materials storage, sprinkler and fire suppression systems, and fire exits.
- **Implement a preventative maintenance program.** Regularly maintain electrical wiring, appliances, and fire-safety equipment to ensure they are in proper working order. Do not overly rely on extension cords and never overload them, or outlets, beyond their capacity.
- **Minimize the use of flammable materials.** When possible, use fire-resistant materials for scenery, costumes, and props. Flame-retardant sprays can also be used on some materials.
- **Properly store flammable materials.** Flammable materials should be stored in designated areas away from heat sources and ignition points. Flammable liquids such as paints and varnishes should always be stored in a UL-listed flammables cabinet or, preferably, not in the building at all. Limit the use of flammable liquids inside the building, if possible. If they must be used inside, make sure they are used in a well-ventilated area, extinguishers nearby.
- **Educate staff and volunteers on fire-safety.** Everyone involved in your theatre operation should be trained on fire-safety procedures, including how to use a fire extinguisher and how to evacuate the building safely.
- **Rehearse evacuations.** While you will not likely want to rehearse evacuations with actual patrons, consider rehearsing evacuations using employees or volunteers to act as patrons.
- **Post fire-safety signage.** Clearly mark fire exits and keep them unobstructed. Highlight fire extinguisher locations, along with operating instructions.
- **Control access to pyrotechnics.** Only trained professionals should handle pyrotechnics. Any pyrotechnics used for theatrical productions should be stored in a safe and secure location. Check with your local fire department on both usage and storage requirements in your city.
- **Inspect fire extinguishers.** Ensure fire extinguishers are inspected and serviced regularly.
- **Mitigate construction risks.** Consider constructing scenery in fire-resistant locations and make sure any third-party vendors, such as welders, know your fire-safety procedures.
- **Compartmentalize your space.** Consider the addition of fire doors that can slow the spread of fire from one part of your facility to another.
- **Maintain fire curtains.** Test and inspect fire curtains regularly and ensure that no obstructions could potentially reduce the curtain's ability to be deployed completely.
- **Implement a smoking policy.** Enact a no-smoking policy, or allow smoking only in designated areas, following state or local regulations.

continued on page 38 ►



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- **Restrict cooking activities.** Consider prohibiting vendors, cast, and crew from using cooking devices, such as portable stoves, and only allow cooking in designated areas with appropriate fire-suppression equipment.
- **Foster a culture of fire safety.** Establish an understanding that everyone can and should be responsible for fire safety. Encourage everyone to address any concerns they might come across.

By prioritizing these safety measures, community theatres can significantly improve their awareness of and efforts toward fire preparedness and prevention. Remember, a safe environment not only protects participants and patrons but also fosters a positive atmosphere for everyone involved in bringing the magic of live theatre to life.

This information is intended solely to provide general guidance on topics that may be of interest to you. While we have made reasonable efforts to present accurate and reliable information, Church Mutual Insurance Company, S.I. disclaims

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Adam Bell is a Risk Control Specialist in the Nonprofit + Human Services Center of Excellence at Church Mutual Insurance Company, S.I. (a stock insurer)¹. He has nearly 25 years of nonprofit leadership experience, with knowledge in risk management, operations, program development, facility management, board relations, fundraising, customer service, and more.

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Oklahoma!	JAN. 31 & FEB. 1, 2, 7, 8, 9
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Camille PLAYHOUSE

New Roles



Market House Theatre in Paducah, Kentucky, has welcomed **Davin Belt** as its Assistant Costume Director.

Davin's adaptability and critical thinking skills have been honed through various roles, each aimed at supporting community growth and enriching daily life through the transformative power of theater.

He is particularly passionate about creating safe spaces and fostering personal growth, driven by his own experiences within the theatreworld.

Davin has volunteered and worked with several local nonprofits in the western Kentucky region, including the Marshall County Arts Commission and Murray Playhouse in the Park. A 2023 graduate of Murray State University, he holds a bachelor's degree in Nonprofit Leadership Studies/Nonprofit Management.



A. Chris Barton is the new Education Director (and former Scenic Designer) at **Midland Community Theatre** in Midland, Texas. He holds two bachelor's degrees, one in theatre and another in musical theatre, as well as an M.F.A. in theatre from the University of Montana. He says he is thrilled to be leading the Midland Community Theatre's Education

Department into the future and to be working with the team in implementing new strategies and opportunities.



Steven H. Butler is the new **South-eastern Theatre Conference (SETC)** Convention Manager. Steven has served SETC through the Equity Diversity & Inclusion Task Force, the BIPOC Global Committee, and the Steve Bayless Scholarship Committee. He served as Artistic Director for the Sarasota Players in Sarasota, Florida, and prior to that as Executive Director for the Florida Theatre Conference. He

is the Founder of Actors' Warehouse in Gainesville, Florida, which represented the United States at Mondial Du Théâtre International Amateur Theatre Festival in Monte Carlo, Monaco.

On a national level, Steven serves on the Board of Directors for AACT and on several of its committees, including NewPlayFest Play Selection, Awards, Finance, and International Festival.

Make a Legacy Gift

Please consider including the American Association of Community Theatre in your legacy plans through a will, trust, life insurance gift, or other legacy gift. Through these special gifts, friends like you are able to sustain AACT's mission and provide learning experiences for AACT-member companies participating in AACTFest national festivals

To learn more about AACT's Legacy Society, visit aact.org/legacy or contact the AACT office at info@aact.org



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Spotlight Award Honors Jerry Morse

AACT congratulates Jerry Morse of Reston Community Players (RCP) in Herndon, Virginia, for receiving the AACT Spotlight Award, presented for local service to community theatre.

A member of the DC Metro community for over 40 years, Jerry worked with the McLean Theatre Alliance before moving to RCP in 1996. After serving on several committees, he joined the company's board in 2006, continuing that role to the present. He has also served as producer, set dresser, properties manager, and even done time on stage.

He has brought in grants from Arts Fairfax, the State of Virginia, and the National Foundation of the Arts, all of which helped the theatre continue during Covid and thriving since. In 2000, he helped found WATCH (The Washington Area Theatre Community Honors), the DC Metro community theatre's ver-



sion of the Tony Awards, and has been the RCP representative to them since then.

Jerry instituted RCP's end-of-year awards ceremony (the Resties). He was also responsible for creating the Apprentice Program for students who want to go into the arts, helping them get real knowledge and training from local, regional and Broadway professionals. This year, Jerry secured a large grant towards the Apprentice Program, which

will allow RCP to reduce pricing and give scholarships to these classes to students who normally wouldn't have this opportunity.

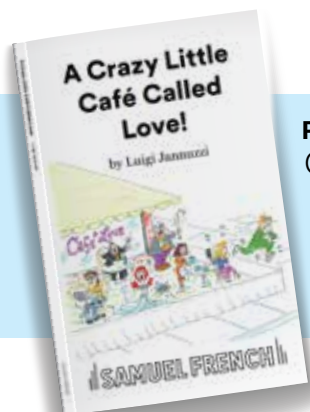
He was also instrumental in creating the theatre's Scholarship Program, funded 100% by concessions sales, awarded to two or more rising college freshman majoring in theatre.

It's no wonder that a theatre spokesperson said, "Jerry has been a Rock at RCP and has helped it become successful in a time where many are folding. Our last musical was nominated for 19 WATCH Awards, which is a record in the area. Jerry's work helped make that happen."

Announced by AACT, and presented locally, AACT's Spotlight Award allows member theatres across the nation to recognize special local achievement. Any individual, organization, or company is eligible. Nominations are accepted for persons of all ages. Awards may be presented any time throughout the year that is appropriate. This is a fitting tribute to the hardworking volunteers, staff, and patrons of local community theatre groups—an AACT tradition and service since 2000. More information at aact.org/spotlight-award

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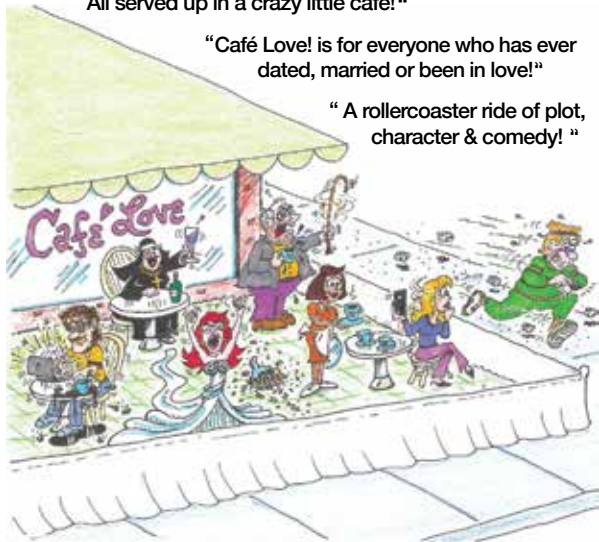
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Advocacy Matters

Lou Ursone, AACT Board of Directors and *Spotlight* Editorial Team

"Do you hear the people sing..."

My guess is that anyone involved in AACT and/or reading this magazine, knows how the rest of that lyric from *Les Misérables* continues. And while we may not be angry, we need to be heard loud and clear.

That's what advocacy is all about.

As Margaret Mead said in 1978, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." In 2021, it was the small group of artists and patrons who joined together to help create the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant that was a lifeline for thousands of arts organizations across the country in the wake of the pandemic.

Based on our recent survey, most theatre companies are back to normal (or very close) to pre-pandemic levels of operations, but that doesn't mean we don't need to keep telling our story. Every one of us as nonprofit leaders need to work constantly at developing new friends and funders, but we also mustn't forget the bigger picture.

Advocating for support at the federal level may seem daunting, but it needn't be. Start small. Here in Connecticut, we have 20+ theatres within 30 minutes of each other—and that doesn't count dozens more just over the border in New York State. If you can get together with a dozen other theatre leaders from nearby companies and brainstorm a bit, you'll be amazed at what ideas you can come up with, and discover who knows someone who is a friend of a friend. Just do it.

I've mentioned this in previous columns, but advocacy can be looked at as the perfect pyramid scheme—in the most positive sense. You get a few friends together and they do the same, until we've built a nationwide network of theatre-makers making our collective voice heard. And when each of these groups reach out to local patrons and sponsors, that network will be incredible.

Start locally. Use your board and staff to write to your city's legislative leaders. (My town of Stamford, Connecticut, has a 40-member board of representatives!) Believe me, when these leaders receive 100 or more email or snail-mail notifications about the needs of the arts, they take notice. Get these local leaders on board and they can help you develop your connections at the state level. Keep the letter writing going, and before you know it, you'll find connections to your federal delegation.

How many patrons do you have annually? Do you talk to them at intermission or post-show in your lobby? Take a moment to say hi and thank them for coming. Tell them how much you appreciate their support and that while you may have had a sold-out house tonight (or something similar), keeping the lights burning costs a lot. However, let them know you're not asking for money—just a few minutes of their time. Provide preprinted sheets with contact information

for local, state and federal legislators, and include a brief template of what you'd like them to ask for in terms of support.

In our last *Spotlight* issue, we talked a bit about the Stage Act. Action on this pending legislation—which would be nearly as significant for theatres as the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant—is quiet right now, but will resume after the November elections. But that doesn't mean that *we* should stay quiet. Let's start or continue building the network now, and we'll be in great shape when the new Congress convenes.

As always, feel free to reach out with any questions:
Lou@curtaincallinc.com.



Lou Ursone is the Executive Director of Curtain Call, Inc. in Stamford, Connecticut, a member of the AACT Board of Directors, and serves on the Spotlight Editorial Team

WOMEN PLAYING HAMLET

BY WILLIAM MISSOURI DOWNS
A Modern Comedy About An Old Tragedy

**"With the colorful script and vivid characters
Women Playing Hamlet is a slam dunk..."**
- Kansas City Examiner



Regionally Speaking

AACT's membership consists of organizations and individuals from 11 Regions. Each Region has a Regional Representative who serves on the AACT Board of Directors. (For more on AACT Regions, including a map, visit aact.org/regions.)

The Representative's role is an important one. It includes bringing regional concerns and achievements to the Board's attention, providing information about AACT programs and services to members in the Region, and furthering communication and networking among those members.



AACT Region 5 Representative is Jamie Ulmer, Executive Director of Theatre Lawrence in Lawrence, Kansas.

Located literally in the middle of the country (the geographic center of the U.S. is located in Kansas, after all) Region 5 covers seven states—North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri. There,

you'll find every variety of community theatre, from all-volunteer groups in rural communities to multi-million-dollar organizations in big cities.

I've been fortunate to have spent my entire career working in community theatre, specifically in Region 5—first in Nebraska for 25 years, and now Kansas. I can still remember former Region 5 Rep, Nancy Eppert, approaching me at a Regional Festival and asking, "What are your plans for the next couple of years?" and asking if I would be interested in becoming Region Rep. Since I love networking and traveling to see shows at new venues, it was an easy yes.

We are seeing positive things throughout the Region. Minnesota and Iowa both have strong and active state organizations. Excitingly, Missouri is the process of reconstituting their state organization. While the Kansas state organization has been inactive for several years, there will be a state festival next year. Challenges remain, though, as the Nebraska association has yet to reactivate since the pandemic, and neither North or South Dakota have active associations.

Challenges aside, Region 5 is filled with examples of the role community theatre can play in economic and community development. In more geographically isolated parts of the region, the local community theatre may be the only, or the most active, arts organization. I've talked to many groups whose service area is not just their city or county limit, but sometimes sixty or even hundreds of miles from their location. Without community theatre there would be little to no arts programming in these areas.

Celebrating that vital impact and encouraging groups to grow are central to my thoughts for my remaining time as Region Rep. We have six-year term limits for reps, and so finding and ensuring my successor is equipped for success is among my major priorities.

You'll get a taste of Region 5—and Iowa hospitality—next summer when you attend AACTFest 2025 in Des Moines. We look forward to seeing you there!

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Resource Center: Marketing and Communications

When it comes to help with arts marketing and communications, online sources are typically the most current and accessible—and much of it is free. The sources below are among the most helpful we've found.

Americans for the Arts

Check out the site's National Arts Publications Database for articles like "The Art & Science of a Successful Modern Marketer," "The Psychology of the Perfect Marketing Video," and "How to Market to Generation X and Baby Boomers on Social Media." ww2.americansforthearts.org/publications

Wallace Foundation

The Foundation, whose purpose is to foster the vitality of the arts, provides hundreds of free reports, videos, tools, and infographics, including *Building Arts Audiences* and *In Search of the Magic Bullet*, which identify and examine the practices of arts organizations that have successfully expanded their audiences. *Stitching Together a Community in the Arts* looks at the successes of Wallace's 18 arts grantees. wallacefoundation.org/resources

Content Marketing Institute

The Content Marketing Institute (CMI) provides blogs, webinars, and research to help arts organizations learn how to enhance storytelling and create stronger branding. Topics include social media and search engine optimization, as well as books and templates on various aspects of content marketing. contentmarketinginstitute.com

Nonprofit Tech for Good


This site offers useful, easy-to-understand news and resources related to digital marketing and fundraising. Some information is available at no cost, including best practices in marketing via website, email, social media, and blogging. Examples: "The Biggest Branding Mistakes Nonprofits Make: 3 Essential Fixes," "2024 Social Media Statistics for Nonprofits," and "101 Digital Marketing & Fundraising Best Practices for Nonprofits." nptechforgood.com

Map&Fire

This for-profit company offers a large number of free branding guides, articles, templates, case studies, and original research. If you sign up for the company's free email newsletter you'll also get immediate access to a 10-page brand strategy workbook. mapandfire.com/field-guide

Freewill

Another for-profit company, Freewill offers a number of free resources, including "Nonprofit marketing 101: How to build a next-level strategy" nonprofits.freewill.com/resources



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OTHER MUSICALS:

- Christmas My Way – A Sinatra Holiday Bash
- I Left My Heart – A Salute to the Music of Tony Bennett
- Simply Simone – The Music of Nina Simone
- Babes in Hollywood – The Music of Garland and Rooney
- One More For My Baby - A Sinatra Songbook
- Town Without Pity – The Love Songs of Gene Pitney
- Bonnie & Clyde
- Club Morocco

PLAYS:

- Dracula - The Case of the Silver Scream (Film Noir)
- The Incredible Jungle Journey of Fenda Maria
- Casa Blue—The Last Moments in the Life of Freda Kahlo
- Vampire Monologues
- War of the Worlds

Scripts, Information, and Licensing at:
summerwindproductions.com

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Calendar of Events

Dates	Event	St	City	Phone	Web Site
Sept 5	AACT Virtual Masterclass: Arts for All: Creating Inclusive Theatre Experiences		virtual	817-732-3177	aact.org/masterclass
Sept 6-8	New Hampshire State Festival	NH	Concord	603-546-5148	communityplayersofconcord.org
Sept 11	AACT Industry Connections: Fundraising with Kendra Scott Company		virtual	817-732-3177	aact.org/ic
Sept 17	Member-Only Roundtable: Production Team Roles and Responsibilities		virtual	817-732-3177	aact.org/roundtables
Sept 26	AACT Webinar: Holiday Theatre Marketing with Keith Tomasek		virtual	817-732-3177	aact.org/webinars
Oct 3	AACT Virtual Masterclass: Developing New Works and Engaging Your Community		virtual	817-732-3177	aact.org/masterclass
Oct 9	AACT Industry Connections: Risk Management with Church Mutual		virtual	817-732-3177	aact.org/ic
Oct 16-19	Georgia State Festival	GA	Gainesville	770-891-1251	georgiatheatreconference.com
Oct 18-20	Alabama State Festival	AL	Decatur	205-317-5057	alabamacenterforthearts.org
Oct 22	Member-Only Roundtable: Successful Strategies for Season Subscriptions		virtual	817-732-3177	aact.org/roundtables
Nov 7	AACT Virtual Masterclass: Making Immersive Theatre		virtual	817-732-3177	aact.org/masterclass
Nov 8-9	South Carolina State Festival	SC	Orangeburg		
Nov 8-17	NewPlayFest Opening: <i>The China Shop</i> by Richard Manley	NE	Lincoln	402-489-7529	lincolnplayhouse.com/item/14747670/title/none
Nov 15-17	New York State Festival	NY	Philadelphia	315-767-1510	
Nov 16	West Virginia State Festival	WV	Buckhannon	304-336-8103	
Nov 19	Member-Only Roundtable: Cultivating Community Partnerships			817-732-3177	aact.org/roundtables

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