

From Scarcity to Abundance: Capturing the Moment in the New Works Sector

Next Steps

❖ Other Field Gatherings

- Convening on deep local community engagement
 - Commitment to accountability to ones' community within institutions
 - Audience and artists feeding each other, being human together
- Expand our conversation to include any and all interested parties from within and outside the theatre and art worlds
 - Convening of theater practitioners, funders and community leaders/members with and without a connection to the arts
 - Engaging Film and TV professionals in convo on how to create a healthy ecology that includes theatre
 - Include people from other fields both leaders in those fields and non-leaders. Include students. Include teenagers.
 - ◆ This then begs the question- who decides who to invite
 - Gathering of arts leaders and leaders of federal non-arts agencies to brainstorm creativity and civic imagination
 - Gather a summit of arts administrators of color under 35 to discuss/address the challenges/paths to artistic leadership
 - Talk in the future in terms of who we are talking with and *why* they should want to participate in conversation thru theater
 - Focus on those who aren't being heard as well as those who predominantly are being heard. Bring those on the margins to the conversation
- Make the next convening more participatory
 - More breakouts, less listening, more movement
 - At these convenings we should have a "+1" in order to expand "our circle".
 - Next time no one gets to pontificate about their own organizations—only thoughts that progress the conversation. (saves time)
- Design video/tele-conferences with convening participants small groups
 - Accountability for follow up actions. We need to track the results of this gathering.
- Include critics in a conversation and convenings
- Gather artists and let them speak in the language of their work
 - Opportunities for playwrights to talk to each other
- A meaningful conversation about the work itself-
 - How are we doing?
 - How do we evaluate?
 - How do we ensure rigor, craft, resonance, etc.?
 - How are audiences connecting?

❖ Artistic Support

- More support of local artists, developing your community and sharing their work and art, not just their “supposed stories”
- Remember that it is my responsibility to be true to my artistry, passion and creativity
 - How do we all think of ourselves as creative (administration too) theatre makers?
- Examine relationships w/ the retreat centers
- Combine Shishir’s idea of Fri/Sat night music, spoken word, etc. events with Rude Mech’s model of community festival responding to their mainstage play to deeply engage new community/audience with every play there.
- More immediacy in work, i.e. more speed in development
 - More shorter work produced simply to allow more access
 - ◆ Cheaper tickets
 - ◆ More speed in development
- More writer units
 - Have the big, mid-sized institutions invite groups of writers to form a creative incubator where they’re brought into the family seal of approval.
- On behalf of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, we need more directors in these conversations to understand their concerns, ideas and their intersection into these topics- also to understand what we are doing to support new artists and new work in this moment. We were lacking us in this forum.

❖ Community Interaction

- Change language from diversity to cross-cultural
 - Call diversity the crossroads (creating a new work to describe the act)
- Find 3 new, non-theater organizations on each show to partner with that might share your audience
- Get every town over 3000 pop. To name a “storyteller laureate”
- All Theater practitioners make a pledge to speak to one audience member each week who’s not been there.
- A non-market based conversation from the bottom up, from artists to network.
 - Let us help you without wronging about being presented.
- Obsessive discussion of new audience recruitment
- More informal inclusivity
 - Reaching out casually to convene socially as a pathway to the work
- Preserve the dialogue
 - Skype conversations
 - New Play Map collaboration
 - How do we work the Institute into our personal communities?
- Explore potential connections between religious/community theater and professionals
- Connect production networks to new play development ones
- Leverage local expertise (e.g. PW Center) with national distribution (NNPN)
- Organization’s boards reflect the communities they are part of.

- Where does the education come from and how do you connect with the citizens/members of that community who do not have the tradition of serving on boards?

❖ **Alignment**

- To engage in creative partnerships, without regard for “titles”, and develop those relationships, because it will make the work better.
- Connection further theater producing and presenting models
- Prioritize/underscore importance of intercultural work/relationships
- Identify methods of illuminating intersections between artist, work and civic engagement.
 - Theater as a civic responsibility.
- Changing the theaters relationships with critics.
 - Disengagement
 - Finding other ways of legitimizing theatre

❖ **Technology**

- Make the new play map more accessible to diverse skill levels
- Getting the map to playwrights
- Develop a way to share best practices using new technology and media
- Teaching playwrights how to be “glocal”, local and global, through the internet, i.e. twitter, blogs, personal websites
- Using technology more (twitter, Facebook, email newsletters, personal artists’ websites) to develop an audience that usually doesn’t go to the theater.
- Track (after in-depth survey) diversity stats—artists, staff, audiences—on new play map

❖ **Financial Support**

- Find a way to recognize and include (fund) development outside of confines of market pressure in the new play eco-system
- Find more funding/grants money to give to process
- Genius grants for projects
- Funding support for marketing
- New Play Funder Convening
 - How do we fund best practices and convince more to fund? Mellon can’t do it all alone!

❖ **In The Field**

- More and better mentoring
- Bringing managing directors and boards into this discussion
- Help theaters be more open to failure
- Discussion with board leaders about artistic leadership, identification and selection of leaders with an eye toward:
 - Purpose
 - Mission
 - Inspiration
 - Inclusion
 - Vision

- How do we truly create and support the next wave of leadership?
- Transmit the values, concerns, and visions present here to those who are training the next generation so they are prepared to both enter and change the conversation.
- Creative collaborations that deal with each production on its own terms
 - Bring artists more into the fold of producing
- Link artists, audiences, and managers in conversation with marketing, communications professionals
- Focus on artistic leadership who will implement changes in this sector.
 - Specifically, developing/investing in new artistic leaders who will understand their role with artists, communities, audiences, peers.
- Break boundaries and connect the worlds of:
 - Presenters
 - Regional theaters
 - Artists companies
 - Individual artists
- Mentoring on an institutional level
- Expand within institutions who reads plays
- Targeted conversation about submission processes across the fields-
 - What do we imagine is the best way for writers to move through the field?
 - How do we not lie to writers about reading their plays?
- Commit to taking risks with each other by being:
 - Personal
 - Truthful
 - Uncertain
- How can our field continue this dialogue outside of institutional walls?
- Producing the conversation to smaller regions around the country to encourage/strengthen local arts creation/development with smaller convenings that would be livestreamed
- Investigate further (more honestly) the role of independent play development organizations within the context of the American Theater
- Lose the value in “who’s most victimized/powerful” move beyond labels
- Systematic study of new work development techniques in order to improve conversation about needs of institutional structures.
- Provide info to demystify decision-making paths
- Finding ways to put the work above brand

❖ **Mechanisms To-Do**

- Define the role of non-producing development organizations within the field. Develop (internal development) work for wide acknowledgement, acceptance, and use. Work towards distinction (definition, usefulness) of path designations—role of development labs to significant value
- How do we change the mechanisms of institutional theaters—make them nimble?
- Explore and create mechanisms to diversify small and mid-sized theater staffs.

- Rearticulate the relevance of new works for theatre, a mission for all of us.
- What are the paths for accessibility for:
 - Playwrights coming out of school
 - Playwrights mid-career
- Playwrights with maturity all have challenges.
- Stop operating our institutions from a perspective of ethos.
- Commit to one year with no buzz words, including:
 - Model
 - Diversity
 - Connectivity
 - Sector
 - Community
 - ◆ Make our language more specific
 - Get better language about what we value and why we're valuable
- Transparency of data institution. Who "still" is not being heard? Why is it that these large white institutions receive funding to work with ethnically diverse communities and "not" the diversity arts institutions in the same communities?
- Transparency of data, some non-jackbooted way to concretely measure in the field diversity on all levels (So that the authenticity of delivering on mission can be measured)
- Rather than focus on a model, gather success stories and document them
- Create a mechanism to facilitate the sharing of resources (space, material, etc)
- Explore, highlight, share and support successful models for genuine and deep community engagement
- A mechanism for discovering what theaters/organizations are excited about and have successfully produced and presented work of a similar aesthetic (Hip-Hop Theater) And places that have an interest in doing so.
- Collect stories about why each of us do this, started this, stay with it, love theater.
- Highlight the examples of work that is happening really well
- Select and move forward national and or international productions of the same work that resonates that has potential in resonating in specific communities
- Expand who's sitting at the table (1st rehearsals and all rehearsals)

❖ Living

- Canvas/provide for mommy and daddy playwrights childcare
- How do we look at how families are embraced by our community? Is there room for them?
- Money and benefits in the hands of artists
- Enacting radical hospitality
- Multi-generational perspective on needs (different needs at different stages of life/career)
- Providing a home for "elders" and encourage connections to younger
- Figuring out a solution to the health insurance issue