PRIMETIME DIRECTOR'S GUIDE:
HOW TO SURVIVE YOUR LAB THEATRE PROJECT AT KENNEDY THEATRE

This guide was written to outline the basic policies that will pertain to productions scheduled in the Kennedy Ernst Lab Theatre during "Prime Time" slots. Projects that are done at locations outside of Kennedy Theatre may not have the same type of front-of-house support; arrangements will be made on an individual basis. However, this guide should still serve as a good reference tool for working on any production.

The Theatre Management staff at Kennedy Theatre consists of a team of people working in Publicity, Box Office, and House Management. This team provides a critical link between you and your audience. We are glad to answer any questions that you may have and hope that this guide will give you a good basis from which to start. Ultimately, you are responsible for every aspect of your production, so make sure that you or your stage manager are in constant contact with our staff so that you will be assured that all elements are done when you need them!

Kennedy Theatre Staff

Front of House
Jessica Jacob, Theatre Manager
John Wells, Operations Coordinator/Box Office
Nick Brown, Publicity Director
Julian Cepeda, Kennedy House Manager
TBA - Box Office Supervisor

Scene Shop:
Gerry Kawaoka, Technical Director
Rick Greaver, Production/Facility Manager

Costume Shop:
Maile Speetjens, Costume Designer
Hannah Schauer Galli, Costume Shop Manager

Department Secretary:
Lori Chun

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ROYALTIES
Royalties for your production need to be secured as soon as possible and you should certainly know that rights are available and within your budget before publicity begins. You are responsible for requesting royalty information using the Department's "Request for Permission to Perform" letter. Once you have obtained permission you should turn materials over to Rick Greaver to make sure royalties get processed appropriately.

PUBLICITY

ADVANCE PUBLICITY
The key words in publicity are continuity, consistency, and repetition. Consequently, we will try to begin getting the word out about your project as soon as possible.

This means providing us with the following information as you wish to see it put into print:

- TITLE OF YOUR PLAY
- AUTHOR (CORRECT SPELLING)
- YOUR NAME AS YOU WISH IT LISTED IN PROMOTION PRODUCTION DATES
- BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAY
- ANYTHING ELSE UNUSUAL THAT NEEDS TO BE MENTIONED EARLY ON (CONTENT ADVISORIES, SPECIAL TRANSLATION, SPECIAL LOCATION, SPECIAL COLLABORATOR, SPECIAL DEMANDS ON THE AUDIENCE, ETC)

You will be asked for this information at the end of the school year preceding your thesis project. This information may be used in the Season Brochure, advance promotion, etc. Titles of Ernst Lab Theatre projects must be submitted by April 15.

AUDITION PUBLICITY
You are responsible for providing your own publicity flyer for your auditions. The Publicity Staff can aid in getting audition notices up around campus if you provide them with enough copies of your flyer. With 2 - 3 weeks lead time, the Publicity Staff can put audition notices in web calendars, however, since auditions are usually limited to UH students, outlets may veto the submissions.

SHOW PUBLICITY

PRESS RELEASE
EIGHT WEEKS PRIOR TO OPENING

A press release is the proper method to provide the media with information about your project. The press release will be written and disseminated by the KT PR Director. However, he/she will need more specific information from you at this point about your project. Always keep in mind that the Publicity Director is the link between you and the general public; keeping him/her as informed as possible will improve the communication.

Information that will be needed is:

- NAMES OF YOUR CAST WITH ACCURATE SPELLINGS OF CHARACTER NAMES AND THE NAMES OF YOUR ACTORS
- BRIEF CAST BIOS (for release purposes, not for program)
• COMPLETE INSIGHT INTO PRODUCTION CONCEPT (Please provide a copy of the proposal that you submit to your thesis committee as well as a copy of your script.)
• ANYTHING ABOUT THE PRODUCTION THAT MAY MAKE SPECIAL DEMANDS ON THE AUDIENCE, e.g. Smoking, mature themes, production length, nudity, etc.

After you provide the PR Director with this information, he/she will draft the release and pass it by you for accuracy.

PUBLICITY PHOTO CALL
SIX - EIGHT WEEKS PRIOR TO OPENING

Photographs may be the single most important publicity tool that we have. A few minutes of careful planning on a PR shoot will help sell your show and help prepare the audience for your particular approach. Kennedy Theatre will provide a photographer to shoot publicity photos. The photo call falls under the jurisdiction of the PR Director. The costume shop has limited the number of characters to 5, maximum, for most shows 3 is plenty to serve the purpose. You will be asked to do the following:

• PROVIDE FROM 3 - 5 PHOTO POSSIBILITIES/TABLEAUS (Several shots can be made of each setup)
• COORDINATE WITH YOUR CAST AND THE PR DIRECTOR
• SUGGEST POSSIBLE LOCATION OR APPROPRIATE AMBIENCE FOR PHOTO PROVIDE COSTUMING, PROPS, AND MAKEUP

A few suggestions on what makes a good publicity photograph:

Keep the composition simple -- 2 or 3 people in a shot is plenty; crowd scenes never work well in newspapers -- remember you are fighting for the reader’s attention;

Try to think of something that will reflect the story and/or tone of your production; you don't have to be strictly literal with the play in a photo shoot -- at this point you are dealing with ideas and concepts and a little artistic license is acceptable;

Bear in mind that publicity photographs are released to major newspapers and that your photo needs to be acceptable in their publications, e.g. nudity and suggestive poses, although in your production, may not be acceptable for newspaper publication.

Try to think of something a little unusual -- theatre photographs are tricky, they tend to all look very similar; if your photograph isn't interesting, it may not get used;

Be aware of technical problems -- the photographer will need proper lighting -- he/she can provide flash equipment, but will need to know this;

Give thought to the background of your shot -- make sure it's not too busy so that it takes away from the focus; usually a neutral, black, or white background, to contrast with actors and costumes; your actors are the focus of publicity photos, not the setting;

ASAP after the photo shoot (within a few days), meet with the Publicity Director to state your preferences on photos. At this point, please provide the Publicity Director with suggestions of photo captions. The Publicity Director will make the final decision on photographs sent to the media.
INTERVIEWS AND OTHER MEDIA COVERAGE
The facts of life regarding feature coverage of your production are that Ernst Lab Theatre shows will usually not tickle the fancies of the editors of the major dailies or the assignment editors of the television stations. Remember, we are trying to entice them to do features for our mainstage shows and that already is a lot of coverage for one theatre to receive from a major media outlet. There may, however, be good feature material amongst your cast or the production team. Please keep the PR Director informed about, again, the unique, the unusual, the far out, the famous.

POSTER, FLYERS, AND GRAPHICS

IMAGE

Title of Space: Earle Ernst Lab Theatre (please use Lab and not laboratory; please spell Earle Ernst correctly—he is one of our former faculty members!)

GRAPHICS

The graphic image that is used on printed materials to promote your production will help entice the audience and prepare them for your concept. You will need to secure a graphic concept for your production. If Kennedy Theatre has a student designer on staff you may wish to use that person; otherwise, you will need to find your own artist or graphic idea. We will provide as much assistance as possible with contacts, mechanical problems, etc.
You should think about the following things in preparing your graphic idea:
- Eye-catching image
- Image that says something about your play to an unknowledgeable audience
- Strong image that will provide a quick impression (remember the average viewing time of a poster is 3 seconds!)
- Image that is easily reproduced onto program and other formats
- Ability of graphic to adequately reproduce in desired formats
- Copyright problems - we do not have the right to reproduce other people's graphic images without their permission. Best bet is to use original art or photos from your photo call.

POSTER

Final poster needed at least three weeks prior to opening
Allow 2 - 3 weeks for preparation

A standard poster format has been adopted for Prime Time Theatre productions. The format is 8 1/2 x 11" and must include any appropriate logos. You will need to provide a graphic or work with the Kennedy Theatre graphic artist and provide the information to be placed on the poster.

Information that needs to be included on every poster:
- The UHM Department of Theatre and Dance presents
- TITLE
• PERFORMANCE DAYS, DATES, AND TIMES
• LOCATION (EARLE ERNST LAB THEATRE)
• TICKET PRICES (REGULAR, DISCOUNT, UHM STUDENTS)
• HOW TO BUY TICKETS
• LATECOMER SEATING POLICY
• KENNEDY THEATRE BOX OFFICE PHONE NUMBER: 956-7655 (less so recently)

Allow a week for printing after final draft is approved.

BOX OFFICE

SEATING CAPACITY

Once your seating plan has been set up, you must provide the Box Office Manager with an accurate capacity. Changes to capacity have consequences; it is critical that you keep the box office informed about your capacity.

PERFORMANCE VITAL STATISTICS

Box office will need to know the running time of show (you'd never believe how often we get asked this) and how many intermissions.

TICKET SALES

All ticket sales will be handled by the Theatre Box Office.

COMP TICKETS

Your cast and crew will receive an offer for two (2) complimentary tickets to any performance of the run via online form. The Director or Stage Manager must provide the Box Office with a complete and accurate list of cast and crew members - with their email addresses - eligible for comps 2 weeks prior to opening. Online comp ticket requests submitted prior to final dress rehearsal will be processed. Last minute requests, verbal, or emailed requests will not be processed. Walk-up requests will be handled if time and ticket line allows.

As the Director, you may have special comps that need to be given for people who have loaned you props, done special favors, etc. You, as the Director, are allowed to complete a Box Office complimentary ticket form (yellow) for these comps. You are trusted to use your utmost discretion in the issuing of complimentary tickets; ticket revenue is a critical part of financing your show. Our department will need to justify your comp request to the University and auditors; a valid justification is required. Please be aware that your VIP request will need to get Theatre Manager approval.

Comp tickets will be held at the door to be signed for by the party using the tickets. This is better for box office security and also gives us the flexibility of reissuing these tickets if the party does not show up (you'd be surprised at how many people given comp tickets do not actually come to the shows). Unclaimed
complimentary tickets will be released at 10 minutes prior to curtain, so let your comped parties know this. With the small capacity of the Ernst Lab Theatre, we want every empty seat to be available.

**HOUSE MANAGEMENT**

You will be provided with a House Manager for each of your public performances held in the Ernst Lab Theatre. Preview performances may not be held for Ernst Lab Theatre shows because of limited Departmental resources and concurrent rehearsal schedules in the mainstage. You may privately invite a few friends to your final dress rehearsal for whom you are liable, but any more than about 15 people constitutes a public audience which cannot be in the theatre without adequate staffing for liability reasons. No exceptions.

Since the Ernst Lab Theatre space is versatile, it is critical that you have Jessica Jacob and Rick Greaver approve your proposed seating arrangement prior to any set construction. There are many technicalities about arranging the space with which you must conform. A seating plan that does not meet safety guidelines could result in your show not opening! Some things to keep in mind when making decisions about seating arrangements:

- **SIGHTLINES OF AUDIENCE**
- **ACCESSIBLE SEATING** - Is there a space for at least two wheelchairs?
- **EASY AND SAFE ACCESS TO ALL SEATS** - 36” aisles and walkways
- **NO TRIP HAZARDS** (no objects, pillows, furniture in pathways)
- **MINIMUM OF 100 SEATS ARE REQUIRED** (In our standard proscenium seating the capacity is 147)
- **AUDIENCE MUST BE SEATED**. A standing audience might sound fun, however it reduces your legal audience capacity below KT limits.

Other things to think about in terms of space:

Use of foyer as actor entrance: The house management staff does set up in this area and needs to be able to complete their work as well as deal with any audience members arriving late, etc. Please keep this in mind when considering use of this area. Props/costumes should never be left in this area as it is a major impediment to audience and fire safety. Any violations to this may result in your show not opening.

Other things to think of in terms of your audience:

**Intermissions** - This is not a great space for intermissions, especially in bad weather, since the audience has nowhere to go. Your audience will want to stretch and socialize if your performance is full length. Remember that audiences are used to and are expecting intermissions at about 1:10 into your performance. Keep this in mind even though your production may call for something else.

**Waiting for admission to theatre** - the Ernst Lab Theatre does not have an adequate foyer, so it is imperative that the house opens on time (30 minutes prior to your performance), especially when it is raining. An audience that has been kept waiting in uncomfortable conditions will be harder to win over.

**Latecomers** - Your late seating policy must be shared with FOH before tickets go on sale in August. Given notice, we can advertise that latecomers will not be admitted to the theatre. We will do our best to uphold this policy. During dance concerts we will seat in between pieces.
**Disability access** - We must try to accommodate any reasonable request for accommodation under the Americans with Disability Act since we are a public space. This might involve sign language interpreters, pre-show orientations, large print programs, programs on audio cassette, large print programs, or access to the script. The arrangements for any special requests will be handled by the front of house staff, but we will need your assistance in making any special accommodation possible.

**Post Show Raps** - In 1997-98 we started a program where we invited the audience to join us after the Friday evening performance to ask questions and share with the cast, and/or directors, artistic staff, etc. Plan for you and/or your cast members to stay after the Friday evening performance to connect with your audience!

**PROGRAM**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**
Final program needed for opening night.
Allow 1 week for duplicating; minimum 2 weeks for program editing and design.

The program format for Ernst Lab Theatre productions is an 8 1/2 X 11" paper folded to a 5 1/2 X 8 1/2" finished size. Programs are printed on a special light-colored stock on a slightly heavier paper stock. You must provide the House Manager with carefully thought out and checked program copy. **Copy for your program must be submitted via the Google Doc supplied by FOH.** Provide a mock-up if special stylistic elements are desired. Do not expect us to fill in missing information or include poorly written copy. It is required that you get program copy and notes approved by your advisor first. Poorly submitted copy may result in you not having a program in time for your production!

The following style guide should help you gather your information:

**COVER:**
Ernst Lab Theatre Logo
Name of Production
Dates of Production

**INSIDE:**

**Artistic and Acting Credits:**
The UHM Department of Theatre and Dance presents.... TITLE OF YOUR PRODUCTION
By (author)
Translated by (if required) Directed by
Scenic Design by Costume Design by Lighting Design by
Music by
Choreography by
(You may have other credits that go here, but these should be limited to major artistic credits)
If your production is your MFA Thesis production, an asterisk should go after your name with this somewhere on credits page: "In partial fulfillment of the Master of Fine Arts Degree requirements in ___." 

**CAST**
(If your cast is being listed in order of appearance, please say so) CHARACTER NAME.......................Cast Member Name
(It is your responsibility to make sure that the cast listing is spelled according to the wishes of your cast. The Program Editor will not double check spellings for you.)

**SYNOPSIS OF SCENES AND PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT**
(Put this in your program if it is needed to help your audience figure out what is going on. This should also include intermission information, e.g. "There will be one 15 minute intermission between Acts.") Somewhere here you also may need to credit the publisher.... "Performed by Agreement with Samuel French." Check this carefully with your royalty agreement.

**DISCLAIMER**

Smoking is not allowed in the theatre, nor may photographs or recordings be made during the performance.

(This needs to appear somewhere on your program, generally right under synopsis information.)

**DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

Director's Notes should provide the audience with an insight into your production that they might not normally get. Director's Notes might provide the audience with some background on the play -- they most probably will not know anywhere near as much about the play as you do. Notes might grow out of your research, notes might elaborate on something that is unique about your production -- e.g. "Why I am doing Richard III Kabuki style." Director's Notes are not the place to do your thank yous -- they should come under acknowledgements. Please make sure they are carefully written and are literate; it doesn't hurt to get some editorial assistance on notes -- often an uninvolved editor will greatly improve notes. For editing purposes we use the Chicago Manual of Style.

**PRODUCTION STAFF**

This listing should include everyone else who has worked on the staff of your show. A sample listing is as follows:

Assistant Director
Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager
Technical Director
Stage Crew
Lighting Board Operator Sound Operator Properties
Costume Crew
Makeup
Wigs
House Manager
Publicity Director
Publicity Assistant
Box Office Staff
Photographer
Graphic Designer

Because Ernst Lab Theatre programs are small, you do not need to list regular Theatre faculty or staff under production staff.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Here is your chance to thank everyone and anyone who gave you special help. You normally don't need to list what they are being acknowledged for, but just list names and businesses if they are associated with one. Don't get too maudlin here; personal acknowledgements should be made personally!

**COMING EVENTS**
If at all possible, please allow some room on the back page of the program for the promotion of coming events. Audience members do like to know what the next event at KT is!

**KCCTF**

If your theatre production is entered in the American College Theatre Festival, you MUST leave much of the back cover for their required credits. This means being very judicious with the other elements.

**DANCE PROGRAMS**

Dance Production Programs can be quite different since they need to credit collaborators and performances with each piece. A suggested format for Dance Credits:

**NAME OF PIECE**

Date Piece First Performed  
Choreography by  
Music by  
Scenic Design by  
Costume Design by (if not for the entire production)  
Lighting Design (unless one designer did the entire production)  
Dancers: (alpha by last name)

With Dance, it is very important to let your audience know what is going on. Will there be a pause between pieces? Is there an intermission?

**ARCHIVING YOUR PRODUCTION**

**PRODUCTION PHOTO CALL**

If you wish to have a production photo call, you must pay for this yourself since you will want the photos for your own purposes. We simply don't have space or much demand for archival photographs for Ernst Lab Theatre productions, so do not arrange to take them as a general rule.

The Publicity Director can provide you with the names of photographers, but you must make your own arrangements with the photographer, supervise the photo call, provide film if needed, and pay the invoice.

Here are some hints to having a smooth production photo call:

- Since photo calls are normally held after Friday night performances, start taking photos from the back of the show working to the front.
- You and your stage manager should be prepared with 8 - 10 set-ups that provide a capsule record of your production. A still photograph will not replace video -- you can't get everything, so be selective.
- Your photo call should last from one hour to one and one-half hours maximum, so plan ahead!
- In order to get good contrast on the photos, the photographer may ask for light boost if the cue is particularly dark. So be prepared to boost light levels where needed.

**AUDIO/VISUAL RECORDING**

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Unless specifically licensed, or written permission is garnered from the playwright and any other creators of the work, audio/visual recording of the production is not authorized and may result in legal action against yourself personally, the Department, or the University. If written permission is granted, recording a production MUST be arranged in advance with the Box Office so that house management is alerted and so that seats are removed from inventory for the camera and camera operator.

**BUDGET**

MFA Directing Thesis projections will have a fixed budget for sets, costumes, props, etc. specific to the production and a budget for royalties. Special Ernst Lab Theatre projects are on a fixed budget based on production needs as detailed in the production proposal. The budget needs to cover the following items: sets, costumes, costume cleaning, lights, royalties, and miscellaneous expenses. The actual breakdown will be decided by the faculty/staff on the project based on your design discussions. This production budget does not need to cover any front-of-house costs (publicity, publicity photography, staffing, etc.).

**PURCHASING APPROVAL**

Only Theatre & Dance PCARD (corporate card) holders can make production purchases on behalf of your show: **Gerry, Brian, Michelle, Maile, Rick.** If you make any purchases for your show, plan to own that item, because you will not be reimbursed. Purchasing for the State of Hawai'i is tricky; this is for your own protection.

Enjoy your production process.

**BREAK LEGS, HEARTS, AND BOX OFFICE RECORDS!**