

BUILDING YOUR AUDIENCE: MARKETING TIPS

INFORMATION WE NEED FROM YOU: WHAT, WHEN AND WHY?

The official Festival Guide is our primary marketing tool. It is sent to print in early July and arrives the first week of August. The Guides are mailed to past Festival ticket buyers and distributed throughout the Philadelphia area.

In order to have your information listed accurately in the Guide, it is very important that you send us the following information by the deadlines listed below. Information received after these deadlines will not be included in the Guide.

Members of the press are provided with an overview of the Philly Fringe via the individual show descriptions and promotional photos on the Festival website. Beyond that however, you will need to actively engage them through your own individual press and marketing campaign efforts.

50-WORD GUIDE DESCRIPTION - DUE MAY 14

We need a 50-word description of your work to associate with your listing in the Guide and on the website by **May 14**. Enclosed are tips for making your description stand out. Please send us your description by e-mail. Please be aware that our Guide Editor reserves the right to edit your description to correct misspellings or other inconsistencies.

GUIDE IMAGE + PRESS PHOTOS - DUE JUNE 4

The promotional image for your work is due by **June 4** for the Festival Guide and website. Any image received after this date can be applied to the website but will not appear in the Guide. Photos of your work for the press are also due on this date. Successful press photos are often very different from what will work as an effective promotional Guide image. A helpful illustration of the difference can be seen at <http://www.livearts-fringe.org/artist-resources.cfm>, courtesy of Canary Promotion. For all press photos, please include the necessary photo credit and the names of any individuals pictured from left to right.

IMPORTANT:

Your Guide image and press photos must be at least 300dpi at 6"x4". We suggest selecting a vertical image for the Guide as it will maximize the space allotted to your show (horizontal images will need to be reduced in size to conform to the Guide layout).

PRESS WORKSHEET – DUE JUNE 4

To help our publicity firm respond to potential press inquiries about your work, we will send you a press pitch worksheet with your Artist Agreement (which can also be downloaded on our website). Please return your completed form to our office by **June 4**. Be sure to include any press or promotional “hooks” that might single out your show to the press. You can download the Press Worksheet from the Artists’ Website at <http://www.livearts-fringe.org/artist-resources.cfm>.

PRESS RELEASE - DUE JUNE 4

We encourage all Philly Fringe artists to write press releases for their shows. Included in this manual is a sample press release for you to reference. Send us a copy of your press release, preferably by e-mail to john@livearts-fringe.org. We will use it if any member of the press expresses a particular interest in

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your show, or is writing about a theme that would include your show. We also ask that you include a paragraph about the Festival at the end of your press release. This will be provided to you, and will be available online on our website for you to copy and paste. Please remember to send out a press release yourself around this date as well. We will provide a link to your press release on our website with the description of your show for audience members who want more information about your show. For helpful tips on writing a press release, go to the Press Info and Contact List section of the Artists' Resources Website at <http://www.livearts-fringe.org/artist-resources.cfm>.

WRITE A CATCHY DESCRIPTION

The promotional image and performance description in the Festival Guide is often first introduction Fringe-goers have to your work. It may also be the most lasting. Audiences turn to the Guide again and again during Festival-time, and the "blurbs" are often the main tool they use to make ticket-buying decisions. So your primary goal in writing a blurb is to be clear, informative, and interesting. Following are some pointers and some examples.

TITLES

Make titles evocative and if possible, short. If your show has more than one section, try to find one title that encompasses the feel of the entire show instead of listing separate titles.

DESCRIPTION

You must keep your blurb to 50 words. We will not edit submissions for length and clarity, only spelling and grammar. If you have a website by all means mention that at the end of your, but your website will also be listed in the online version of the guide, so it might be best to save your 50 words for descriptors. Your Guide description is formatted to include title, times, locations, and cost, so don't use up your 50 words covering these basics in your blurbs. Focus instead on the main elements that will accurately represent your work: Are you presenting dance? Video? Site-specific theater? A famous story retold? Some combination of elements? Also, please be sure to credit the author of any established plays in either the title or the description. Here is an example of a complex performance, *Account Me Puppet*, which was neatly described:

John Milton has seen his Paradise Lost conveyed in many media but rarely has the archangel fallen upon the puppet stage. Meant for the adult audience, the performance is more thematic than literal to the text, and the mortal failing is accentuated by the use of a variety of puppetry techniques, film, and video.

STYLE

Be as descriptive as possible and present the most unique or compelling aspects of your show. But remember that you are just trying to give a sense of your performance. The language in your work may be complex and poetic, but writing the actual blurb that way will most likely be confusing. Try not to be so cute with your description that it's too obtuse for people to understand what it is that you're trying to do. Remember, there are generally about 180 shows in the Fringe, so if you confuse the reader they'll most likely skip over your show and read on. Here is an example of a blurb that is informative and that also captures the spirit of the performance.

Max is a dog summoned to Hollywood to make a major motion picture. Will he succeed or become an insufferable show business schmendrick? Equal parts Dr. Seuss and Cecil B. DeMille, Max in

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Hollywood, *Baby!* is a sugar-smackin', rootin-tootin, high-spy, sci-fi, kissy-kissy, madcap musical journey.

USING QUOTES

Rave reviews – either of the performance itself or your group – can be helpful, but only in small bites. If you have a quote from a review or story that you think sums up what you do, paraphrase it and use it as your blurb. If you want to make mention of a good review, include just a bit of the praise – as in this example for *The Undoing*:

A New York Times “Best of the Fringe” in 1999, Manhattan’s Ice Bucket Project brings one of their signature performance parties involving cool people, hot hors d’oeuvres and melting sculpture to the basement of Smoke - for a send-up of local society chic getting their chilly pretensions sorely tested.

BACKGROUND

A bit of background information can give context if you or your performances might be familiar to Live Arts and Fringe-goers, either because of work you’ve done here or in other cities. Here’s an example for the dance piece *Corymb*:

Zen garden meets avant-garde trapeze in this new work by SCRAP artist Eric Schoefer. Creator of past hits Icarus (1997) and Strung (1998), the Philadelphia Fringe Festival co-founder returns to this year’s Festival with an environmental experience that sets blossoming, spinning, and floating dance energies into the industrial landscape of the National Building’s main warehouse.

COLLABORATORS

Include names of people you’re working with or the members of your group if you think that people will recognize them or it’s a significant element of your piece. Here’s a blurb for *Anti-Matter*:

Writer/performer John Lumia and sound wizard Bill Reim (Spin Cycle, Amputation Nation, Cryptome) team up with video artist Mike Brand for a hallucinogenic “channel surfing” expedition through the shadow side of network programming. Anti-Matter dismantles the military-industrial media machine with a cathartic sledge-hammer. Seating is limited. www.cryptome43.com

ON PHOTOGRAPHY

GET A GREAT IMAGE

A great promotional image is probably the single most important investment you can make to promote yourself and your work. This is what will make your work stand out among the 200+ shows in the Philly Fringe. Having eye-catching imagery also greatly increases your chances of being covered in the press.

FINDING A PHOTOGRAPHER

Hire a professional whose work you've seen and like. Some photographers discount their fees for artists. Others, particularly those starting out, will work for little money in order to build a portfolio. Digital images are standard, so ideally your photographer will have access to (and use) a digital camera. (see **RESOURCES** Section)

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SETTING UP THE SHOT

Work with your photographer to come up with eye-catching images. These are easier to recognize than to describe, but the elements may include a dynamic composition and unusual angles. Some publications want photos that relate specifically to the work you will be performing. We realize this may not be possible, but if you can submit images that relate to what you plan to perform, it will put you ahead of the game. Please do not send head shots. Please! Also, it is not helpful to have all of your cast members in the shot. Use a program for your show for that type of acknowledgement. Its best to not include text in you photo as the photo will be printed some what small. You have plenty of room in your description for all necessary text.

COLOR V. BLACK AND WHITE

Color photography is preferred and can be converted to black and white as necessary. This said color photos converted to black and white sometimes lose their impact. Choose photos that work well in both formats.

FORMAT

Digital images are popular with the press and are easy to distribute. There are a few publications that still request prints rather than digital files, but this is increasingly infrequent. We encourage you to send full color high resolution images (300 dpi) scanned at full size and saved in jpeg format. Files can be sent via email to johnlivearts-fringe.org or via regular mail on a disk. We will provide photo editors at major local papers with a CD catalogue of 2010 photos. These photos also will be posted on the press section of our website.

Please do not submit print-outs of digital images or high-quality photo-copies. We will not be able to use them.

LABELING WITH PHOTO CREDIT AND ARTISTS PICTURED

Some publications (for example the *Philadelphia Inquirer*) will not print photos without a photo credit and the names of those pictured in the photo. Please make sure you provide us with this information when you submit your photos. Without this information, there is less of a chance your photos will be run in the press.

Please label all photos that you submit. Information should include the names of all the people pictured (either from left to right, or clockwise, whichever seems sensible), the company name (if applicable), the name of the work (if applicable), and the name of the photographer.

With digital images, please send this information in an email to us when you send your photos, or mark it on the disk or CD you send us.

PHOTO CREDITS

Photographers deserve credit. If you provide a photo credit, we will include it in the Guide and forward it to members of the press. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that all publications will print the photo credit.

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BEYOND THE GUIDE: YOUR MARKETING PLAN

While the Guide and the staff's overall Festival marketing and publicity efforts will reach tens of thousands of potential audiences, we highly recommend that you craft an individual marketing campaign specifically for your show in order to meet your audience goals. The Festival staff will promote the Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe as a whole; you must promote your show within it. Here are some strategies you might consider.

CREATING PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

We strongly suggest that you create a printed promotional piece for your show. When you create posters, postcards, and/or flyers, we require that the official Philly Fringe logo be placed within the design. This will identify your show as being part of the Philly Fringe. An electronic version of the logo will be available online in June. If you have a website for your show, the Philly Fringe logo must also appear with your show information online.

POSTER AND FLYER DISTRIBUTION

Hanging posters and flyers to public property is illegal. You and/or the venue where your show performed may receive a violation notice and you will be fined. In the past, artists were allowed to hang posters in Old City. This is no longer the case. If you hang posters in Old City you and/or your venue will be cited and will have to pay a fine.

The Festival Box Office is an excellent place to feature your poster and flyers. The location of the Festival Box Office will be announced as soon as we can secure it! Space permitting, you may post your poster and flyers on **August 23**. Limit one poster per show. No easels. We cannot guarantee space, and may not be able to accommodate posters larger than 14 x 24.

HAND-TO-HAND FLYERING

One of the best ways to make your show stand out in a crowd is to pass out flyers in person. The Box Office and Festival Bar are both good places to hand out flyers. You might also try Market Street, Love Park (17th & JFK Blvd.) and Rittenhouse Square (between 18th and 20th and Walnut and Locust). We might suggest that you DO NOT flyer the South Street area, as people have been arrested for doing so.

PLEASE NOTE: you are required to obtain a Handbill License from the city's Department of Licenses and Inspections to distribute flyers advertising your show in public areas and door to door (these flyers are considered commercial handbills and are regulated by the city). The fee for the license is \$30. The application is called License Application Miscellaneous. It is form #81-901.

At the end of every flyer distribution, license holders are required to collect all discarded flyers within a 100-foot area of where the flyers were distributed and dispose of them. Even if you have a license, it is unlawful to place commercial flyers on vehicles.

PRESS

You will need to contact members of the press directly. In May, we will provide you with a Press List via an email attachment. This is a list of reporters interested in hearing directly from Philly Fringe artists. Please note that we have not worked with all of these media outlets.

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We suggest you create a press release and mail it to the provided list or to your own refined press list (don't forget to send a copy to our office as well by **June 4**). If there are reporters who you think might be particularly interested in writing about your show, follow up with a specific "pitch" or idea for a story. Be sure to know something about the reporter's interests before you pitch them (you can find this out by reading their columns or listening to past reports).

Please refer to the following pages for a sample press release and press pitch worksheet.

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THE FESTIVAL • SEPTEMBER 3 – SEPTEMBER 18 • <http://www.livearts-fringe.org/how-to-participate.cfm>



SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE:
INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND LOGO AS WELL AS THIS YEAR'S FRINGE LOGO

FRINGE LOGO TBA

Sketch Comedy served the way you like it!

Media Contact:
Nicole DeRosa
demetrio2@aol.com
856-672-9422

June 4, 2009

SUMMARIZE SHOW, DATES, ETC IN FIRST PARAGRAPH

For Immediate Release

Sketch Comedy Troupe Takes Audience Backstage For Philly Fringe Festival

Philadelphia, PA – The Waitstaff, Philadelphia's premiere sketch comedy troupe, announces a show unlike anything they have ever attempted before. The excitingly titled *The Waitstaff: Sketch Comedy*, the troupe's entry in the 2005 Philly Fringe festival, will give the audience a chance to see what really happens backstage during one of their fast paced, anything goes, comedy shows at The Five Spot, 5 S. Bank Street, on Friday September 2nd, Thursday September 8th, Friday September 9th, & Friday September 16th at 9:30PM

The first half will be like a regular Waitstaff show, incorporating comedic songs, raunchy scenes, slapstick dance pieces and the curtain, showing how the same case may be. The second half takes place behind the scenes, showing how the same case may be.

PUT IMPORTANT NAMES AND FACTS IN BOLDFACE TYPE

"We were inspired by the play *Noises Off*," says Waitstaff core member **John DiFelice**. "So many things can go wrong on stage and actors can cover so that the audience never knows. We want to let our fans see just how chaotic backstage can be when we try to fix the unexpected crisis."

The Waitstaff has been performing together for three years, writing brand new material for their monthly comedy shows. They have also performed at The Chicago Sketchfest as well as the Union Basis Theater in New York City. Local newspapers have called them "Philadelphia's hottest sketch comedy troupe" (The Philadelphia Inquirer), "One of the funniest groups of people to hit the Philly Stages" (The Philadelphia Daily News), and "It's the sort of comedy that kids love, parents disapprove of, and adults find irresistibly hilarious even while shaking their heads" (The Main Line Times)

INTERESTING QUOTES ARE HELPFUL

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REFERENCE REVIEWS IF YOU HAVE THEM

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SUMMARIZE IMPORTANT INFORMATION

LISTINGS INFORMATION:

What: The Waitstaff: Sketch Comedy
When: Friday September 2nd, Thursday September 8th, Friday September 9th, & Friday September 16th at 9:30PM, doors open at 9:00PM.
Where: The Five Spot, 5 S. Bank Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106
Tickets: \$15, purchase at the door or through the Live Arts and Philly Fringe Box Office

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FESTIVAL INFORMATION:

The 2010 Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe will take place September 3-September 18. Tickets prices range from free to \$30, and can be purchased online at www.livearts-fringe.org or by calling 215.413.1318. The Festival Guide will be available the first week of August, and can be either downloaded as a PDF or picked up in hard copy at any Festival venue as well as at key "Hot Spots" (to be announced online in July) throughout the city.

The Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe were originally founded in 1997 as the Philadelphia Fringe Festival. Today, the Live Arts Festival serves as a series of selected cutting-edge, boundary-breaking performing arts events, created by some of the most renowned contemporary artists from our region and around the world.

The Fringe serves as a collective home for artists bringing their work to audiences in every conceivable form - in traditional and untraditional venues, using new artistic forms and established ones, breaking rules or refining them.

WE WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE FRINGE AND ASK THAT YOU INCLUDE IT AT THE BOTTOM OF YOUR RELEASE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

...about The Waitstaff, visit www.thewaitstaff.com
...about The Five Spot, visit www.thefivespot.com
...about The Philly Fringe Festival, visit www.liveartsandfringe.com

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PHOTO INFORMATION:

Press Photo: by Colleen Joy, fullcircle-photo.com
Back Row (left to right) Joe Quirk, Jim Boyle, Edgar B. Herwick III, Steve Lippe, Kurt Runco.
Front Row (left to right) Lydia English Morris, Jeremy Chacon, Sara Carano, Nicole DeRosa, Gerre Garrett, John DiFelice, Carolyn West.

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Press Pitch Worksheet

Please return to the Fringe office by June 4

During the festivals, our publicist deals with a wide variety of members of the press on a daily basis. *Although we do not guarantee that we will pitch your show to the press, it is helpful for us to have detailed information about all shows, so we can provide information to reporters on request or if they are pursuing a specific story idea* (an article on South Philly artists, for example).

It is also a good idea to do some brainstorming about press “pitches” or story ideas. It might be about a particularly unique quality of your show, a special interest paper that would be interested in the content of your show, or one of your company members. Save a copy of the ideas you come up with on this worksheet to bring with you on your own campaign.

Please feel free to attach supplemental materials with this form. Also feel free to email any questions or pitches to press@livearts-fringe.org, but please be aware that our publicist does not begin work until mid-June and our emails will not be read until that time.

Show Information

Artist or Group:

Title of Show:

Contact Name:

Email:

Phone:

Promotions and Your Company

What would you like us to know about you, your company and your show? Describe some of the distinguishing features of your work, and tell us about any special promotions you're planning for the Fringe. Continue your answer on an additional sheet if necessary.

Special Focus

Please indicate if because of **content** your show is of special interest to any particular demographic or special interest groups (i.e. Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender community, African-American Community, Jewish Community, suburban families, the disabled etc.). We will use this information to pitch stories to newspapers with a

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particular demographic focus, such as *Philadelphia Gay News*, *The Jewish Post and Opinion* or *MetroKids*

Photo Credits

All photos submitted to the Live Arts Festival should include the name of your company, the title of your show, the names of everyone shown in the photo (listed from left to right), and the photographer's name (photo credit). If you have sent us photos without this information, please list it here:

SAMPLE

Show Details

Is your show a (circle one) World Premiere / North American Premiere / Philadelphia Premiere

Is there nudity in your show? Y N
If yes explain degree (partial, full frontal, constant, etc)

Is there profanity used in your show? Y N
If yes explain degree (a few words, constant, etc)

What age range do you think is most appropriate for your show?

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