

THEATER / DANCE WORKGROUP

TABLE 1:

Definition:

Who is involved?

- University, community, independent artists, storytelling, high schools
- All common features
- Choreography, orchestration, music theatre, technical, stage design, vendors, marketing, local community promotion, "sans crew"

Sub segments of theater and dance:

- Directing, producing, writing, business, road and stage mgmt., radio, TV, biographies

Non-profit vs. profit distinctions:

- Universities=non-profit
- Nonprofit=public sector
- Legal tax definition
- Fundraising (nonprofit) vs. commercial (profit)
- Getting people in seats vs. artistic choices- dealing with unions profit
- Needs are nearly identical
- University may allow flexibility
- Where does quality play a role in difference
- Must see volume in both, more common than not

State Status:

- Everything (conference) geared toward south LA
- Dance not as important across the state
- Help should be cross discipline across state
- Need to get word out across state- south region has population center- drives interest
- Getting across state is expensive
- Number of activities is major difference across state
- Need regionally accessible mobile organizations for tours
- NOCCA is stuck in N.O.
- LA Tech is art magnet, Pineville H.S. strong arts
- Get everyone heard on larger scale across state

Businesses that Support:

- Baton Rouge Ballet Theatre, NOCCA/Riverfront, Southern Rep, N.O. Ballet Theater, Saenger Broadway Series, banks, foundations
- The business and funding relationship can be daunting due to expectations

Competitive Strengths of theater and dance:

- Minding calendar and separation of dollars
- Cultural awareness- how do we do it?
- Dance has a built in audience
- Interest starts in schools
- LA Alliance of Arts Education key organization for change
- Music education is covered, not dance and theatre

Workgroup Notes

- Children bring parents to art, get audience when they are young

Barriers to Success

- Local government (financial attention, lack of support)
- Arts oriented economic study conducted in area?
- New ways to build awareness
- Get access to schools, lacking in technical skills and trained workforce

Infrastructure

- Enough venues?
- How to build expertise?
- More connections need to be made – TALKING TO EACH OTHER
- Limited education, more partnerships, clinics and workshops, tech. and business skills to be greater

TABLE 2:

Definition:

- Performance art should be sub segment
- Hard time finding segments not part of theater/dance- comedy cabaret?
- What about tech. aspects?
- Line b/w nonprofit and commercial- is line being blurred?
- Importance across the state- people who think all culture in N.O. what about other regions?

Competitive Strengths- collaborative, develop ideas (industry around industry)

Weaknesses- expenses, current ability to make case for economic viability in each community

- Quality of work is dependent on financial Resources
- Has to be more investment by the state if we expect the industry to grow
- What do we do as industry to reach legislators and government that we can be economically developing?
- Developing program house

Competition:

- Other entertainment that goes on –esp. in N.O.
- Opportunity to have a performing arts network
- Create nonprofit called the League of Nonprofit theaters- model Chicago theaters
- Quality of the product that we turnout is our own worst enemy
- Unnecessary feeling of competition b/c the nature of performing arts. Have to be in a seat on certain night
- Galleries and museums have chosen to work together

Barriers:

- Communication within the segments within state
- Lack of brand statewide lack of time together as industry
- Lack of space and venues most venues are small within tech capabilities
- Financial resources-poor state
- Workforce development training for theater, tech, spec.
- Audience capacity building and financial resources- Shreveport

Infrastructure:

- Size of house and economic savings, shared resources- cut overhead costs
- State able to attract talented individuals? They come and love N.O. but keeping them here is difficult.
- Not enough work to make a living.
- Not consistency in pay across the theaters

TABLE 3:

Sub-segments- technical levels of dance– professional vs. commercial vs. academic

- Facilities lack of need for patrons/spouses, nonprofit grant funding, govt. funding, sponsors
- Govt. cannot support commercial ventures
- Audiences demographic comm. income and marketing resources
- Artists communities, business or corp. structure, orgs., edu.comm.

- Artistic merit, local talent involvement, generate income/econ.devel. academic and educational
- Uniqueness of culture, music, lang., merge cultures, fiscally challenged
- Talent pool superior, competitive in any industry, lack of full time artists
- Too many cos. Competing for same money

Summary:

- There should be division b/w dance and theater
- Need to tour within state
- Develop economy and education...To retain artists
- Lack of access to funds
- Develop education Early
- Lack of marketing resources

TABLE 4:

Definition:

- Amateur, university, non profit community-sub-sectors
- Art or entertainment?
- Outreach to schools
- Stakeholders: UNO, Tulane, Loyola
- Nonprofit- Le Petit, JPAS, Anthony Beau
- Commercial- True Brew, Le Chat Noir, Saenger

Barriers:

- Lack of corp. support, lack of infrastructure
- Theater and dance cannot charge enough to pay for costs
- Tax waiver to every show for kids

Infrastructure:

- State needs to give properties for theater

TABLE 5:

Definition:

Sub segments:

Workgroup Notes

- Community
- Professional/equity
- Educational
- Children's
- Experimental theater & dance
- Theatre on location—site specific—bars, buses, riverboats, casinos, touring companies, schools, malls, parks
- Producers
- Presenters
- Performance

Distinctions:

- mission vs. commerce base (bottom line)
- nonprofit eligible for grants
- nonprofit has no union issues

Importance across state:

- stronger in urban areas than in rural

Stakeholders:

- subscribers
- corporations who want quality workforce
- suppliers
- workforce

Competitive strengths:

- collaborative—we take all arts and put together
- Focus on cultural—Southern/LA themes—ability to interpret Southern writers
- We do not draw talent from outside state
- Loyalty is a strength—family
- State is almost 2 states—north and south

Competition:

- Anyone that competes for disposable income from football to the movies, restaurants, fairs, festivals
- "Sportsman's Paradise"—outdoor culture—wants to be on the side of a winner—"Macho"—perception
- Audience will go see a "name" (Yo Yo Ma) regardless of appreciation
- Accessibility—easier to find a good film than a play

Barriers:

- Convenience, accessibility, understanding is not there
- Expectation of quality
- Training in education.
- Building audience of tomorrow
- We don't hold our own talent
- We don't tap our own talent that does stay
- "Self-esteem" issues
- Title IX applied to sports—not things women are interested in
- Money to advertise, promote

Workgroup Notes

- We don't create the family culture to create theater/dance fans
- Local vs. import
- New Orleans vs. the rest of the state
- New York—L.A.—Chicago
- training & education
- Maybe lean too much on cultural inspiration
- Financial barriers

Infrastructure for Economic Capitalization:

- Not enough venues/studios/facilities in New Orleans; enough in Baton Rouge and possibly other cities
- Rental space is expensive for rehearsal & performance, arts incubator programs, New Orleans
- Need venues/spaces that are appropriate and effective, not necessarily Big
- Workforce is not as strong as it should be- lacking in training, need new programs
- New Orleans has ArtDocs (lawyers who volunteer)
- Linkages exist; may not be fully utilized
- Suggestion: consider guaranteed micro-loans

Infrastructure regarding workforce:

- Not adequate education and training programs in place to train next generation of workers/employees on the vocational school and higher education levels
- Graduates of training programs are not staying in state to live and work
- State is not able to attract talented individuals from outside of LA
- Not really a connection with the public school system
- Are workers getting the kinds of technical or business skills they need to be successful?
 - No, but could get there
 - Not as good as should be
 - We are lacking training in arts management—some masters programs—new undergraduate program

Group Share Key Points:

TABLE 1:

- Access to tech. help- community combine resources
- Non profit and profit no difference – combine resources
- Need children's programs

TABLE 2:

- How do we capitalize on money for us
- Need to continue discussing
- One master prop shop scene shop etc.
- Combining resources
- Work force in tech. sector
- Lack of venues and resources are major concern

TABLE 3:

- Need to state to solidify org. touring within state
- Division of dance and theater, do not lump together
- Technical, level
- Professional, academic, dance

- Funding is essential- competing for same limited dollar

TABLE 4:

- Economic infrastructure needs to be set up- should have person in charge
- Create office to facilitate competitive nature separate
- Economic models- look at other states for this- application

TABLE 5:

- Mission vs. commerce
 - Competitive can be good
 - Cultural inspiration to draw people
 - We do not have family support – everyone wants to be on a winning team
 - Accessibility of movies compared to plays
 - Athletic aspect in academia- hurting women- need theater and dance
 - It is a real job, have New Orleans vs. Louisiana
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- Barriers is ability to market cost efficiently- direct mail and internet
 - Competition-internet can be used to advantage because of the time spent on the computer
 - Definition- who do we include? Communication on what people do in theater and dance
 - LPA have not communicated as well as thought, make conference annual thing
 - Nick Spencer – problems want new things tap into existing networks
 - Isolation is big issue- contact with each other- continuation of dialogue
 - Lt. Gov.- should hire someone, outreach person to continue working together
 - Legislators do not like 10 voices, need pipeline to have 1 voice to communicate thoughts

SUGGESTIONS:

- Start with separate town meeting for actors/dancers, script writers, directors, producers, venues/presenters—then a joint council with representatives
- Need to add to list:
 - Producers' Circle: Roi Smith, Patrick Lee, Ricky Graham
 - All Kinds of Theatre: Carl Walker, Carol Wright
 - Anthony Bean—Anthony Bean Community Theater
 - Dennis Assaf—Jefferson Performing Arts Center
 - John Grimsley—Dog and Pony
 - Charlie Ward—Rivertown Rep Theater
 - Perry Martin—Evangeline Productions
 - Producing groups without a theater
 - Theaters/venues
 - I can find these if needed—Barbara Motley 504-581-6333
- Include:
 - Barbara Hayley—Tulane Theatre/Dance Dept. Chair—bhayley@tulane.edu
 - Beverly Trask—btrask@tulane.edu
 - Suzanne Hirsch—New Orleans Ballet Association, New Orleans Recreation Dept.
- Better publicity—grass roots outreach
- Scholarships for arties
- Have conference Friday/Saturday or Saturday/Sunday—not during week
- Hire a full-time theatre/dance outreach staff member
 - maintain communication
 - build coalitions/partnerships among people with complementary needs/resources

Workgroup Notes

- Consider a program of micro-loans instead of or in addition to grants. Although a loan would be guaranteed, it would also mean a sense of responsibility. It's an idea used in many areas to start small, home-based businesses with great success. Not a handout—a hand up.
- Create programming/projects designed to bring LA artists no longer living in the state back home for a festival or showcase. Give them inspiration/incentive to return home perhaps permanently.
- Get other small theatre groups involved: Baker Little Theatre, Ascension Theatre Company (Gonzales).
- Event Planners:
 - Claire Bateman—(225-769-1397, 225-766-8807)—bus tours with acting component
 - Randy Walsh—(225-545-3887)—re-enactors, cemetery tours with actors
- The Cultural Economy Initiative Conference is a powerful opportunity to merge cultural arts and corporate development. The areas for improvement for subsequent conferences are:
 - Have an equitable representation of African-Americans on the Day 1 conference panel of national, regional, and LA trends in cultural industries. There was not one panelist that could speak on behalf of the African-American culture, which is the core of LA culture that we seek to promote locally, nationally, globally.
- Arts administration programs @ Louisiana colleges and universities—should be key players in connecting cultural & performing arts to the economy
- This abbreviated breakout session (of day 2) would have been significantly more beneficial had it occurred for all of day 1

KEY POINTS:

- Communication, Collaboration, Cooperation
- Retention of Talent Base Leaving the State
- State Assistance with Physical and Human Resources

OPPORTUNITIES AND STRATEGIES FOR GROWING THE SEGMENT:

- Artists' Council in Each Parish of Louisiana / Networking
- Funding /Marketing/ Promoting to celebrate our successes and resources
- Workshops and Training to Build Workforce including Internship Programs