

Questions to Help Prepare a Vision for a Play

The following questions are intended to help someone interested in directing a play develop a vision of their project to prepare for a proposal. These questions can be used as a whole or addressed in sections. There may be sections or areas of production that are less familiar, and these questions are intended to help bring awareness of what needs to be addressed by the director.

Theme:

1. What are the themes you have identified in the play?
2. Which themes do you believe will speak most clearly to the audience at this time in our history?

Setting:

1. Is the setting as suggested in the script, realistic, abstract, fantasy or environmental?
2. Does the script suggest a single set/location or multiple set/location?
3. What is the time period in which the play takes place as suggested in the script?
4. What are the socio-economic circumstances of the play's location?
5. Do the socio-economic circumstances change in the course of the play?
6. Are you planning on following the suggested setting and changes reflected in the script?
7. If you are not, how are you thinking of departing from the suggested setting(s) reflected in the script? *Example:* Not all changes in location need to be reflected in a complete change of setting, they can be reflected in location on the stage with minimal furnishing, or with light. *Jennie Bertels, 1984, Robert Salberg Spellingbee,*
8. Are you altering the period/setting from the way it is suggested in the script? If so, to when and how? *Example: Jeff Sanders MacBeth, Katie Lindbeck Into the Woods,*
9. If you are altering the period/setting – why? How does this change or highlight your theme? *Example: Jeff Sanders MacBeth, Katie Lindbeck Into the Woods,*

Projections

1. Do you plan to use projections to demonstrate changes in the setting?
Example: Karen McCarty Cinderella, Debbie Neel Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime, Scott Ramp Terra Nova
2. Do you have an idea of the number of images you will need?
3. Are you planning on projecting images that are not part of the setting?
Example: Lucas Hill & Isaac Joyce-Shaw Distracted, Katie Lindbeck She Kills Monsters

Do you have images you know you want to use?

Note: Most images are protected by some level of copy-wright protection. If there a specific image by a specific artist, you want to use expect to have to pay for the use of that artwork. **Example: Logos,**

4. Have you talked to an artist who could create the images you need?
5. Are you aware of resources to locate images? Check below:

Example: Liz Rogers, www.rocketstock.com video, www.dreamstime.com graphics and videos, www.pond5.com sound, music, 3dmodels, www.stock.adobe.com

graphics, video images, www.envaro.com video, audio, graphics , www.shutterstock.com graphics and video, www.motionarray.com video, graphics

Costumes:

1. Do you have someone interested in working on costumes with you for this project?
2. Are the costumes suggested in the script realistic, abstract or fantasy?
3. Does the script suggest a time period for the costumes?
4. What are the socio-economic/health circumstances of the characters?
5. Is there a change/shift in a character's health or economic circumstances?
6. Does the script suggest a single costume per character or multiple costumes?
Note: Are there quick changes? Are there quick changes by more than one character? Will you need to have a dresser?
7. Are you following the costume plot the script suggests?
8. Are you altering the number of changes in costume the script suggests?
9. Are you altering the style or time period from the way it is suggested in the script? If so, to what and how?
10. If you are altering the period/setting – why? How does this change highlight your theme?
11. Are you familiar with the Pentacle costume loft?
12. Are these costumes things that might be borrowed? Have you identified an organization or production from where you might borrow?
13. Are there costumes that would need to be designed and made? Have you identified people who may be able to design/build these costumes for you?

Props:

1. Do you have someone interested in working on props with you?
2. Are the props realistic, fantasy, or abstract? If they are realistic, what period?
3. How are the socio-economic/health circumstances of the characters reflected in the props you need?
4. How is a change/shift in a character's health or economic circumstances reflected in the props you need?
5. Does the theatre own these props?
6. Have you seen the kinds of props you need in other shows?
7. Have you visited the Glogau-warehouse?
8. Are these props things that might be borrowed? Have you identified from where you might borrow?
9. Are there props that would need to be designed and made? Have you identified people who may be able to design/build these props for you?
10. Does your show require a weapon?
NOTE: We have an illustrated catalogue of all weapons the theatre owns. Contact the Executive Director for access to the catalogue.

Lighting:

1. If the play is realistic, do you see using light fixtures on stage (practical)?
2. Does your play require a fireplace, porch light, fire-pit, or candle?
3. How do you imagine the play moving between scenes?

4. Have you identified any moments in the play that you imagine a specific lighting effect?
5. Is there environmental lighting required? (moon, stars, lighting, trees, jungle)
6. Is there a specific tone or mood to establish?
7. Is this mood changed or contrasted in the course of the play?

Sound:

1. Do you have someone interested in working on sound with you?
2. What environment does your play takes place in? (city, field, apartment, forest)
3. Are there sounds from that environment that should run in the background?
4. Are there practical sound effects (phone, doorbell, door knocks)?
5. Are there sound effects? What are they?
6. Do you require a voice over?
7. Are there voice effects?
8. Do you need to pre-record something for the show?
9. Do you need to review resources for locating sound and stock music?
www.audiojungle.com sound effects, music stock files, www.soundstripe.com sound effects, music, , www.pond5.com sound, music, 3dmodels

Music – Straight show

1. Does your play require specific song or music in the show?
2. Do you plan on using music underscore scenes, set changes or curtain call?
3. If the answer to #1 or 2 is yes, you need to identify specific song titles ASAP and apply for **Grand Rights**.
 - a. For any music used in your show you will need apply for the rights there is a \$180.- fee to apply.

To get an estimate:

1. # of Songs multiplied by \$73 (Publisher/Master Fees) = A
 2. A multiplied by the # of performances = B
 3. B + \$170 = Your final estimate for your Grant Rights budget.
- b. **Consider** using a cover artist to address your song needs. The costs of using cover artists are SO MUCH lower, \$____ for Publisher/Master if they can work.
 - c. **What you need to know:** 1. The music costs you have this point are an ESTIMATE once you get the show you will need to submit additional information. EXAMPLE below:

Artist	Title	Licensing Co.	Planned Use
Ace of Base	Signs	(Merlin) Playground Music Scandinavia (on behalf of Playground Music)	30-40 sec under prologue
Beck's	Looser	UMG (on behalf of Universal Music Enterprises; UBEM, ASCAP)	10-30 sec under entrance to game shop in Chuck's headphones as he sings.

Note: Where do you find Licensing information? You Tube is a great source, click on the "see more" link.

Music – Musical

1. Have you identified a Musical Director you are going to work with?
2. Are you using musicians or “tracks”?
3. If using “tracks” do you have someone to run the “tracks” for rehearsal? For performance?
4. Do you know what musical interments are required?
5. Have you reviewed the required musical instruments with your Musical Director?
6. Are you using the instrumentation suggested?
7. If you are not using the instrumentation suggested, what changes are you making?
8. NOTE: MTI has a Market Place which can connect you with resources

Choreographer – Dance - Fight

1. Have you identified a Choreographer you plan to work with?
2. How many dances or fights (acts of violence like slap, hair pull, choke, etc) are you asking them to choreograph?
3. What style of dancing/fighting does your project require?
4. Will your fight require weapons?
If yes what kind of weapons? **NOTE:** Pentacle has an illustrated catalogue of all weapons the theatre owns. Contact the Technical Director for access to the catalogue.

Stage Manager

1. Have you identified a Stage Manager for your project?
2. Have you talked about the staffing your project together?
3. Have you talked about rehearsal preparation? Space preparation?
4. Have you talked about the notes that will be taken?
5. Have you addressed the chain of communication with cast? with tech?
6. Who is communicating technical updates? How?
7. Have you reviewed your production calendar together?

Actors

1. How big is the cast as reflected in the script?
2. What is the composition of the cast as noted in the script? (men, women, children, teens)
3. Is there doubling of cast members noted in the script?
4. Do you plan to cast as reflected in the script?
5. If not casting as reflected in the script, how do you plan to cast differently?
 - a. NOTE: Casting race or gender not as reflected in the script, in leading and supporting roles MAY require written permission from the author or their representatives.
6. How does this difference in casting serve the play?
7. How does this difference in casting serve Pentacle Theatre?

8. Does the play require special skill from actor(s)? (accents, dance, stage combat, puppetry, gymnastics, singing, other)
9. Does your play require an animal? What kind of animal?
10. How will the animal be cared for in the course of rehearsal and performances of the play?

Special effects:

1. Are there any special effects in the show as suggested in the script?
2. What do they involve?
3. Are you planning on doing what the script suggests?
4. Lights?
5. Sound?
6. Fog?
7. Costume?
8. Fire?
9. Projections?
10. Other?
11. If you are planning something different, how is it different from what the script suggests?
12. How do you think that the difference serves the play?

Take away

1. What is the moral of this story, as you see it?
2. What is the message you would like the audience to take away?
3. What is the experience you would like audiences to have?
4. Why is this story important to tell now at this moment in time?