



In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Sustainability Solutions (MSUS)

Bria Woodyard

Will defend her Master's Capstone Project

A Greener Final Bow: Developing a Tool for More Sustainable Show Closings

Abstract

Currently there are more than 40 Broadway stages (more than 499 seats) in Manhattan, and upwards of 60 Off- and Off-Off Broadway theaters (99-499 seats and less than 99 seats). Each night performance spaces fill to tell stories; eliciting emotional attachment, inspiring the next generation, and motivating advocacy. However once productions end, little consideration is given to the physical components that went into it.

This project addressed the issue of repurposing and reusing sets, costumes, props, and other materials once a theater performance has concluded. In partnership with the Broadway Green Alliance (BGA), I was asked to create a tool that would be presented at an event for their Off-Broadway committee. I assessed existing resources (organizations information listed on the BGA website); and developed a Green Closing Guide theater professionals could utilize from the conceptualization of a production through its conclusion. Before my arrival, the BGA surveyed their members and identified five obstacles preventing more sustainable theater practices: storage, knowledge, time, cost, and transportation. With this, I developed The Guide which directly combatted these obstacles. My research began with attending upwards of twenty productions who had announced their closings. Shows ranged from Tony-award winning musicals, to limited running engagements. The knowledge of exactly what was involved in each performance helped inform the suggestions made in The Guide.

The BGA additionally requested that I identify organizations with whom a stronger in-person relationship might be beneficial. Five were selected because of their commitment to improving environmental measures in the arts. They were also invited to the previously mentioned event to facilitate discussions surrounding the five identified obstacles.

Findings of the project centered on the urgency for the tool and the persisting challenges. Those who could make more sustainable choices often don't because of a lack of prioritization. They are typically concerned with turning over facilities for the next production, and can't afford to consider new alternatives. Additionally, The Guide is a fledgling tool. It was left in a state which the BGA could disseminate, with the understanding that it would need to be updated, molded, and adapted to suit their committees' needs.

Thursday, December 1, 2016
12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Wrigley Hall, 481

Faculty, students, and the general public are invited.