

Merritt Awards Idea Exchange Panel

Monday, December 9, 2019, 7PM

Steppenwolf's 1700 Theatre

Panelists:

Nan Zabriskie, designer, educator and founder of CGTA

Maggie Fullilove-Nugent, designer and Production Manager at TimeLine

Beth Holaday, Energy Efficiency Expert at Verde

Moderator: Josh Grossman, Schuler Shook Theatre Planners

Tips for all Departments

- Create a green policy statement to guide decision-making and communicate values and goals.
- Create a Sustainability Team, Green Team or Green Committee within the theatre. This cross-departmental team is the group that can set out goals, measure outcomes and champion the initiatives at all levels of the organization.
- You can't manage what you don't measure. Use the [energy star benchmarking tool](#) to monitor your energy and water use. For more details on your electric usage check out the [ComEd Business Energy Analyzer](#).
- Gaps around doors or windows can slowly waste energy and money - make sure to check these locations seasonally.
- When purchasing new appliances and equipment, check first if there are rebates through the gas and electric utility programs. Always make sure it's Energy Star and check energystar.gov for additional rebates.
- Take advantage of the free assessments from the gas and electric utilities. [Available](#) (combined heat and electric residential program) and all other facility types. Interior and exterior; gas and electric assessments.
- Take advantage of the program function of the thermostat - no need to heat or cool an unoccupied space.
- Make sure your HVAC and boilers are getting regular tune-ups.
- Create opportunities for recycling: make sure recycling bins are visible and clearly labeled throughout the public areas and all offices. Learn who your recycling hauler is and what they accept/can't accept. Not every hauler is created equal.
- Install energy efficient lighting throughout whole facility when possible. Use occupancy sensors and energy conservation light bulbs where possible. Do an energy audit of your facility. ComEd will offer rebates on certain bulbs.
- Water filters: replace large bottled water dispensers with water filters at the sink;
- replace bottled water in meetings with pitchers of water. Provide show or theatre logo water bottles.
- Phantom power is a real thing! Anytime anything is plugged into an outlet it is drawing power. Standby consumption can be equivalent to that of a 75 or 100-watt bulb running continuously. Plug things into a power strip so you can easily cut the power to multiple things at once. Set all computers to go into sleep mode after 15 minutes of inactivity.
- Company travel: consolidate theatre errands as much as possible; consider an organizational membership to a car share organization; lessen air travel.

- Encourage biking or public transportation to get to work. If possible, offer Ventra cards as an incentive to use public transportation.
- Cleaning products: use certified “Green Seal” products or those that contain environmentally friendly chemicals. Use biodegradable soaps in bathrooms.

Tips for Costume Shop and Costume Designers:

- Consider the use of Amazon ordering, can you cut down on how much you order and have delivered in multiple boxes with plastic packing material.
- During the design process, consider what you can use from stock, what you can buy in a thrift store and what you might borrow from another theatre.
- Don't print every script you read. Consider reading scripts electronically. If you have to print it out, consider printing it two-sided on post-consumer recycled content paper or on scrap paper
- Consider participating in a clothing and accessory exchange among theatres, with an emphasis in passing costume pieces on to smaller theatre companies. CGTA has a very active spring Textile and E-Waste drive. CGTA has a very active Facebook site that promotes exchanges between theatres.
- To the extent possible, minimize the use of fabrics in costumes that must be dry-cleaned. Where feasible, hand wash and air-dry delicate items. Find greener alternatives to dry cleaning when you must use it. Most dry cleaning services use perchloroethylene (PERC), a toxic solvent and likely carcinogen, which can remain on clothing after dry-cleaning and pollute surrounding air.
- Regularly dry cleaning costumes and textiles can affect the indoor air quality of your wardrobe space by bringing traces of toxic PERC residue into dressing rooms, where it can linger in the air, even when the clothes are not being worn. Be aware of this and let costume off gas in a well ventilated space. Recycle or re-use metal hangers and plastic garment bags with your drycleaner. Both of these things are easy to do and reduce a large amount of trash going into landfills.
- Many common laundry care products release potentially harmful substances into our air and water. Find out about available environmentally preferable alternatives.
- Donate costumes to the Theatre Development Fund (TDF) Costume Collection, which houses many end of run costumes that can be used by theatres all over the country. <https://www.tdf.org/nyc/184/Donate-Costumes>

GENERAL REFERENCES

CGTA Facebook site- This group is very active in exchanging lots of theatre set pieces, props, furniture.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ChiGreenTheatre/>

Lauan alternatives-This will give you an overview of how much more sustainable Rev Ply is when compared to Lauan

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7OFz3laNN0JZVYzb2YwRDEwalE/view>

Mo'Olelo best choices quiz- This facilitates the measuring of products your theatre uses

<https://cgta-better-choices.getforge.io/#selections=43,47,48,49,51,52,53,59,70,72,82>

League of Chicago Theatres/CGTA resource links- Look under Green Choices for further green resources.

<https://leagueofchicagotheatres.org/cgta-resources/>

Human Resources

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