



THE MUSICAL THEATER PROJECT 2011-13 PLANNING DOCUMENT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Vision, Value and Mission

VISION AND VALUE

Musical theater—a potent combination of music, lyrics, spoken text, dance and design— is a uniquely American art form. TMTP believes that:

1. Americans deserve the opportunity to understand and feel the joy, power and relevance of what their best musical theater artists have created since the early 20th century.
2. The aesthetic value of art forms that are popular and accessible is often profoundly misunderstood. An exploration of the standards and seriousness of purpose that produce excellence in musical theater is essential, and helps audiences learn about the artistic, historical, cultural and social importance of the art form.
3. Making musical theater accessible and engaging regardless of prior knowledge of or experience with/in the art form is essential to achieving a participatory spirit.

TMTP’s “curatorial approach” highlights the contemporary relevance of over 100 years of musical theater, and uses “interpretive” tools – oral, visual and/or written – to provide audiences with entry points for understanding and personal reflection. This impulse is the same force that drives the selection of art for an exhibit, or the guided exploration of a script or piece of choreography. The goal is always to give the audience the experience of truly engaging in the work, and in so doing to deepen their appreciation of musical theater.

MISSION

TMTP fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of a uniquely American art form by:

- empowering audiences to make personal connections with the songs, characters and themes of the American musical;
- documenting the lives of creators and performers and interpreting their work as important American artists;
- exploring the connections between the musical and American social history, American culture and the rich diversity of the American experience;
- and examining explicitly and implicitly the relevance of this art form in contemporary society.

II. Organizational Goals and Measures of Success

A. ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

To achieve its vision and mission, The Musical Theater Project:

- uses musical theater to inspire and enrich lives by engaging individuals as active participants and learners;
- creates new works that illuminate the history and relevance of musical theater and celebrate the art form and its artists;
- explores the power of musical theater in ways that are personally meaningful to the greater Cleveland community;
- reaches larger audiences through touring, licensing and collaboration;
- facilitates an ongoing discussion about the criteria for excellence in the field;
- protects, preserves and shares historically significant material.

B. MEASURES OF SUCCESS

TMTP measures its success by the extent to which:

- TMTP provides meaningful opportunities for viewers, listeners, artists and other participants to learn more about themselves, their lives, their communities and their country as they experience elements of musical theater within TMTP's construct;
- TMTP provides deeper understanding of the art form—and the art form's artists—both to individuals who already possess significant musical theater knowledge and experience, and to those who wish to be introduced to musical theater or to learn more about it;
- TMTP is recognized as one of Cleveland's cultural assets;
- TMTP is sought out by—and enters into mutually beneficial collaborations with—Cleveland area artists and arts and educational institutions that help to fulfill TMTP's mission/goals;
- experts, leaders and influencers in the field acknowledge and confirm the work's importance;
- program participants acknowledge, confirm and demonstrate the work's success.

III. Principal Programs, Services and Activities

TMTP's programs explore the American musical on multiple levels: our personal connections to the songs and the artists who created or performed the work; their role as a reflection of our nation's cultural heritage; and the art form's continued relevance. Whether the medium is a live performance, the classroom, a recording or a radio broadcast, TMTP programs help participants of all ages understand musical theater, themselves and the world in new ways.

A. NEW WORKS: CONCERT/CABARET PERFORMANCES

TMTP's new works are firmly grounded within the curatorial approach at the center of the organization. While the material for these "exhibits" is culled from over 100 years of American musical theater history, the product is an original presentation that is intended to teach, provoke and—at its core—to change the viewer's perspectives and beliefs.

- *The Song Is You!* multi-media concerts and cabaret performances
- *Irving Berlin: The American Dream in Song*

B. SCHOOL PROGRAMS

While musicals are no longer in the center of American popular culture, they continue to be an important (and evolving) reflection of youth culture on stage and screen. TMTP's school programs strive to help students develop a critical perspective on the work in an age-appropriate fashion, and to encourage them to engage more deeply with all the elements of the art form as both viewers and participants.

- *Kids Love Musicals!*
- The Cleveland Metropolitan School District's *All-City Musical*

C. ARCHIVAL WORKS

Despite musical theater's commercial and popular appeal, its artistic, cultural and historical merits have not received proportionate attention. If part of the curatorial impulse is to "care for" the work, then projects that make previously unheard or rarely heard material available for anyone to appreciate/experience are certainly central to TMTP's core values.

- *Footlight Parade: Sounds of the American Musical*
- *Richard Rodgers: Command Performance*
- *Musicarnival's Audio Archives*

D. NEW WORKS-PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

In all of its programs, TMTP illuminates the art form by re-contextualizing or re-framing pieces from the past and developing new works in the process. The following are currently in development:

- *Let Freedom Ring!*
- Full length musicals in concert
- "The Making of..."

IV. Current Position of Organization

TMTP operates as a **small production company**. A production company conceives an artistic program or product, pulls together the necessary financial and human resources to realize the program and identifies means and opportunities to generate income from audiences or program participants. Production companies are highly entrepreneurial, assume the artistic and financial risk involved in the

work, and make the work available to the public. They expand and contract in a strategic and deliberate manner to yield the best possible programs and experiences.

TMTP has developed a vision, mission and artistic/educational voice that is strong and valuable to the greater Cleveland community; the raw materials for success are in place. However, increased human resource capacity, effective research and planning, and significant resource development are necessary to ensure the organization's future. Specific issues include:

Programming. Now that TMTP has established a range of effective programming, the associated financial and operating needs must be considered against the long-term sustainability of the organization.

Human Resources. TMTP must address its human resource-needs to determine and build an appropriate and sustainable mix of professional leadership, program staffing and volunteer resources, implementing targeted strategies that support TMTP's overarching goals.

Community Awareness and Participation. Increasing community awareness about TMTP and its programs has implications for both earned and contributed revenue development. TMTP must create audience development, marketing and fundraising plans to grow audiences and build relationships that can sustain and, when appropriate, expand program offerings to both organizations and individuals.

V. The View Ahead: Key Goals

The intentions of the strategies that TMTP will implement over the next three years are to:

1. Produce (and expand, when appropriate) a sustainable programming mix

TMTP's primary task is to create a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts; in other words, develop a programming mix that maximizes synergies across the organization and opens further doors for individuals who participate in any one TMTP program. Program Centers include *Concert and Cabaret Performances, School Programs, Archival Programs, New Project Development*.

- TMTP will create new programming partnerships and collaborations to increase or modify programming, thereby reaching more individuals within defined target markets and building upon their TMTP experience.
- Programs will be developed and modified so that content can be easily transferred to new settings, a variety of constituencies, or delivered through diverse distribution vehicles.
- TMTP will explore opportunities to "self-present" programs, increasing direct interaction with/access to program participants, audiences and patrons. This assumes more risk and work, but increases TMTP's ability to increase earned and contributed revenue over the long-term.

2. Increase organizational capacity and sustainability by growing and generating sustainable earned and contributed revenue streams

- TMTP will create a sustainable resource base that supports each of its program centers on an appropriate timetable:
 - In FY11 and FY12, the organization will further develop programs with the greatest potential for immediate income growth, specifically *The Song Is You!* and *Kids Love Musicals!*.
 - Beginning in FY12, TMTP will work to develop long-term balance between these income-generating programs and 1) programs that currently “break even” in earned or restricted contributed support, or are supported by unrestricted operating funds, such as *Footlight Parade* and collaborations with Harbinger Records), as well as 2) programs that require significant investment for development but have the potential to become future revenue streams (*Let Freedom Ring!*, full-length musicals in concert).
- TMTP will implement strategies to 1) broaden and deepen its current audience base, and 2) identify opportunities for new audience relationships in both Northeast Ohio and the national musical theater community.
- TMTP will build on market research gathered in FY10 to assess TMTP’s unique programming capabilities, implement targeted marketing strategies, promote a consistent *organizational* (rather than programmatic) brand, identify trends in musical theater audiences, and explore opportunities in arts education and in the radio and recording industries.
- TMTP will further identify and analyze the number, demographics and behavior of its audiences for opportunities to sustain and/or deepen their involvement with TMTP.
- With the leadership of its new board Chair, TMTP will fully implement the Relational Fundraising Plan created in FY09 to 1) grow the number of donors in the *annual* sphere over the next 2-3 years, 2) expand the number of project resources and opportunities, and 3) identify opportunities for special and capital giving that have not yet been explored.

3. Develop and activate human resources from staff to board to all volunteers

- TMTP will sustain the entrepreneurial approach (production company framework) that drives the collaborative nature of the company and extends TMTP’s ability to produce work at a level of quality and quantity typical of much larger organizations.
- TMTP will address human resource realities at the programmatic and administrative level to allocate more of the directors’ time to program development and donor cultivation/stewardship.
- TMTP will build upon the structure and culture of the Board of Trustees so that it is 1) a natural extension of TMTP’s artistic center, *led and directed by the director and the managing director*, and 2) actively advances TMTP’s mission by collaborating with professional leadership to secure necessary resources for its priorities.

- TMTP will identify areas and activities that increase meaning and connection for individuals who believe in TMTP’s mission, and take advantage of these individuals’ diverse combinations of time, resources, advocacy and financial support.
- TMTP will identify organizations with which it can enter joint ventures to extend its programmatic reach in ways it could not assume alone given limited human and financial resources.

4. Implement systems to monitor and maintain discipline in financial reporting and other areas of operations.

- TMTP will clarify and *document* necessary controls and policies for managing capital, day-to-day financial transactions and reporting, employee performance, gift acceptance and organizational planning.
- Leadership will develop reports that appropriately measure progress against annual and strategic goals for both the organization and individual programs and initiatives.
- TMTP will increase its constituent database from 1,500 households to 2,500 by FY13, and enhance its donor management program to more effectively identify, cultivate and track prospects and donors.
- TMTP will improve technology capacity to manage internal needs and communication, and eliminate barriers to awareness among—and interaction with—TMTP’s constituents.

VI. TMTP Staff, Board and Leadership

<u>STAFF</u>	<u>BOARD OF TRUSTEES</u>	<u>EMERITUS TRUSTEES</u>
Bill Rudman Director	Kathy Coleman, Chair Dean Slejko, President	Alec Pendleton John Schubert
Heather Meeker Managing Director	Danielle Paskowski, Treasurer Steven Schultz, Secretary	Dan Treadwell Sylvia Yankey
<u>PLANNING ENSEMBLE</u>	Robert Conrad Edward Donnelly Thomas Gustafson Lainie Hadden Janet Kramer Kristy Ostrica Danielle Paskowski Janice Robinson Dan Treadwell Paul Vincent	
Dean Slejko, Chair Thomas Gustafson Janet Kramer Heather Meeker Danielle Paskowski Bill Rudman Steve Schultz Paul Vincent		