

MIDNIGHT SUN THEATRE'S SERIAL BOWL

WHAT IS THE SERIAL BOWL AND WHY?

- We have a lot of “short form” theatre in Anchorage that allows writers the opportunity to see their short works in performance, but longer formats are harder to come by.
- Rehearsal time for these events is usually hurried due to the format of the event.
- Writers, Directors and Actors have limited ability and time to collaborate, make rewrites, etc. in these “short form” events.
- Feedback is limited.
- There is no episodic format event in Anchorage.
- The mission of The Serial Bowl is to produce well rehearsed performances of well written episodic one acts where writers have opportunities for rewrites and edits while collaborating with teams of Directors and Actors, with the possible end result of a much longer piece of work.

HOW DOES THIS WORK?

- Teams of a Writer, Director and Actors rehearse well written pieces of episodic theatre that have a tantalizing “hook” which provides for a continuation of the piece.
- The “one acts” are produced and performed over the course of a Friday night.
- Audience members vote on which 2 pieces will move on to the following episode.
- Writers of episodes selected to return write the next installment of their serial.
- Repeat this process leading up to a final performance which will see the top two winning serials performed in totality with a concluding final scene.

WRITERS

HOW DO I SUBMIT MY SCRIPT?

You will submit a FIRST EPISODE. Subsequent episodes will be requested if your script is voted to continue.

THE BASICS

- **Submission should be 12-15 minutes long.**
- Limit your play to 2-5 actors.
- Scenes should anticipate very simple technical requirements - Props should be simple and few. VERY few. “Costume” should be limited to modern day clothing or other clothing actors might own personally. Staging will allow for a table and chairs and two entrances. Do not expect anything more than a rep light hang (wash and 1-2 center specials) with no color options. Sound effects should be limited. This should be about the writing and acting, not tech.
- Your piece should be formatted for the stage, IE., no screenplays, short stories, etc. It should be printed (not hand written) in standard play format. Pages must be numbered. Gordon State College has a good online reference:
https://ptfaculty.gordonstate.edu/lking/CPF_play_formatting2.pdf
- Submit episodes electronically to dblock@midnightsuntheatre.org. Writers must include a “treatment” of how the work will be expanded in future episodes. Please use Open Office, Microsoft Word or PDF format.

ADDITIONAL

- You may submit plays from any genre. Remember though, this is episodic theatre. Characters should be the primary focus followed by plot. If you are thinking of writing something that is a “statement,” make sure it can carry for a duration.
- Each episode should have a compelling angle to it that will cause audiences to want to see additional episodes.
- Audiences should be able to enjoy any episode as a standalone work, but scenes should also be “open ended” enough that

they may continue to a next Episode.

- The pieces do not have to be “for purpose” scenes. That is, the piece might be something you've written previously. Please make sure you own the rights to produce any previously written works.
- This will be an all ages performance with suggested age of High School age and up. Consider this in your writing. Also consider your wish to be voted to come back. Language and topic material should be chosen appropriately.
- Each scene will be preceded by a selection of Bumper music. If you have a specific music requirement, you must provide an Mp3 version of your music to the Director, otherwise a piece of music will be chosen for you.
- Writers are responsible for meeting at least once with their Director to communicate their concept. Writers should also attend at least one rehearsal for the possibility of rewrites.
- You may send multiple submissions. An Author may have more than one work in production at a time.
- You own your work. However, by submitting your play to this production you agree to allow the producers royalty free production rights for the duration of the Serial Bowl season. If your work goes on to bigger and better things, we hope you mention Midnight Sun Theatre's Serial Bowl as one of your initial performances. Writers are expected to write all episodes of their work. If a writer cannot continue or is unwilling to continue a successful series, Producers retain the right to move forward with creative control of the concept for successive performances during the Serial Bowl season.
- Writers are expected to participate in the promotion of the event.
- Writers will conduct themselves at all times in a manner that positively reflects on the event and the producing company. At no time may any team member be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during a production activity, including but not limited to rehearsals, performances or promotional events. Midnight Sun is a non-smoking company.

DIRECTORS

WHAT ABOUT DIRECTING?

- Producers will select Directors based on resume submission. Keep it short. Send submissions to dblock@midnightsuntheatre.org.
- Directors will meet with production staff for a venue tour and to book rehearsal space.
- Directors are responsible for organizing a rehearsal schedule that will meet a minimum of 3 rehearsals outside of the tech week requirements. It is expected that this will be during the 3 weeks prior to performance. This schedule should be sent to the Producer and Stage Manager. The Schedule is required by the end of the first rehearsal. Directors should find their own rehearsal spaces. Producers are happy to help in this endeavor if needed. A sample rehearsal schedule is below.
- Directors are required to send a rehearsal report to producers within 24 hours of the rehearsal communicating any needs, problems and status so far.
- Directors are required to meet with the writer at least once. Directors should make the rehearsal available to writers. Rewrites are expected, but in a TIMELY manner (IE. Not the night before performance.)
- Directors should anticipate that their Actors will effect all scenery/prop changes for their performance which should be included as part of the Director's blocking.
- Directors should request **very simple** technical requirements - Props should be simple and few. VERY few. “Costume” should be limited to modern day clothing or other clothing actors might own personally. Producers will NOT provide costumes. Staging will allow for a table and chairs and two entrances. Do not expect anything more than a rep light hang (wash and 1-2 center specials) with no color options. This should be about the writing and acting, not tech.
- Directors will supply the Stage Manager with a Call Script and a Tech rider including: a list of sound and light cues, scenery and props requests, and sound effects prior to the scheduled Paper Tech. Directors should be cognizant that technical requests should be simple and minimal.
- Any sound effects needed should be provided by the Director with the Tech rider. Producers can help obtain these with sufficient notice. Directors will schedule with Producers to record all voice overs.
- Directors are responsible for maintaining a professional atmosphere that is conducive to work, but light and enjoyable. These are short one acts; this is not brain surgery. The product should be quality work, without being overly strenuous.
- Directors are responsible for making sure the entirety of their team is present during dress rehearsal.
- Directors are required to attend the Paper Tech rehearsal in person or telephonically.

- All technical questions should be sent to the Producer AND the Stage Manager.
- Communication is the key. Do not wait to ask questions or deal with concerns. Stay in contact and ask for help as soon as you need it.
- Directors are expected to be at all Rehearsal, Tech and Performance events on time.
- Directors are expected to participate in the promotion of the event.
- Directors will conduct themselves at all times in a manner that positively reflects on the event and the producing company. At no time may any team member be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during a production activity, including but not limited to rehearsals, performances or promotional events. Midnight Sun is a non-smoking company.

ACTORS

WHAT IF I WANT TO ACT?

- Producers will select Actors based on resume submission. Keep it short. Send submissions to dblock@midnightsuntheatre.org. Audition tapes or face-to-face meetings may also be requested by producers.
- Actors may perform in multiple pieces on any given night with permission of Producers.
- Actors are responsible for learning lines and blocking in a timely manner. A rehearsal schedule with deadlines will be provided by the Director by the end of the first rehearsal.
- Actors are required to be OFF BOOK by the second rehearsal.
- Actors should be clearly aware that there will be expectations of work OUTSIDE of rehearsal time. Rehearsal hours, for example, are not for learning lines.
- Actors are responsible for being on time to **EVERY** scheduled rehearsal.
- Actors are required to attend all scheduled Tech Week actor activities, including the Dress Rehearsal.
- Actors should anticipate that they will effect all scenery/prop changes for their performance which should be included as part of the Director's blocking.
- Communication is the key. Do not wait to ask questions or deal with concerns. Stay in contact and ask for help as soon as you need it. Questions regarding your schedule and the scene's "vision" should be addressed to your Director and cc'd to the Stage Manager. Questions regarding your Director or Writer should be addressed to the Producer and cc'd to the Stage Manager.
- Actors are expected to be at all Rehearsal, Tech and Performance events on time.
- Actors are expected to participate in the promotion of the event.
- Actors will conduct themselves at all times in a manner that positively reflects on the event and the producing company. At no time may any team member be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during a production activity, including but not limited to rehearsals, performances or promotional events. Midnight Sun is a non-smoking company.

STAGE MANAGER

- Stage Manager will meet with Producer prior to beginning of each Episode to coordinate plans for production.
- Stage Manager will meet with production staff and Directors for a venue tour and to book rehearsal space.
- Stage Manager will create a contact list of all parties involved in production including email and phone numbers.
- Stage Manager will collect rehearsal schedules from each Director no later than 10 days prior to performance
- Stage Manager will collect rehearsal reports from Directors within 24 hours of each of their rehearsals
- Stage Manager will coordinate use of Midnight Sun Studio space and will make keys available to responsible parties. Stage Manager will train Studio users in proper use and closure of Studio. Stage Manager will collect keys in a timely manner.
- Stage Manager will assist Directors in reserving and utilizing venue space.
- Stage Manager will assist in the distribution and collection of contracts and other paperwork associated with the event.

- Stage Manager will collect a Call Script and a Tech Rider including: a list of sound and light cues, scenery and props requests, and sound effects prior to the scheduled Paper tech from each Director. Stage Manager will assess the Tech Rider's complexity and determine if changes need to be made. All changes should be determined with Director and in place prior to Paper Tech rehearsal.
- Stage Manager will work with Producer to procure all scenic and props elements. Stage Manager will coordinate with venue operator for storage of these items.
- Stage Manager will maintain frequent communication with Producer to confirm production status. Communication is the key to avoiding larger problems.
- Stage Manager will attend all scheduled Technical Rehearsals and performances. It is expected that Stage Manager will be “first to show and last to go” for all scheduled events.
- Stage Manager will manage the Paper Tech and Dress Rehearsals making sure they are run smoothly and on time.
- During Paper Tech, Stage Manager will work with venue technicians to implement ALL technical aspects of the production. At the conclusion of this rehearsal, a well organized Call Script with all cues should be completed and left at the venue.
- During Dress Rehearsal, Stage Manager will conduct a run through of the complete show with all technical elements. The run through should be uninterrupted except for safety reasons.
- Stage Manager will also serve as Sound Board Operator.
- Prior to each performance, Stage Manager will complete a tech “cue to cue” of the entire show with venue staff. Stage Manager will also make sure the “House” is in suitable performance condition and House Management staff are in place and provided with programs, etc.
- Stage Manager will run all performances with coordination from Venue Operators. The Stage Manager is the final authority on every aspect of the performance. Barring safety issues, performances should start promptly as scheduled.
- Stage Manager will create a Performance Report at the conclusion of each performance including but not limited to the following items: Attendance information on cast and crew, ticket sales, technical issues. This report will be sent to Producer within 12 hours of the end of the performance.
- At the conclusion of the event, Stage Manager will manage Strike.
- Within 3 days of event's conclusion, Stage Manager will meet with Producer to debrief the successes and failures of the event for future use.
- Stage Manager will conduct his or her self, at all times, in a manner that positively reflects on the event and the producing company. At no time may any team member be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during a production activity, including but not limited to rehearsals, performances or promotional events. Midnight Sun is a non-smoking company.

PRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE PRODUCTION SCHEDULE?

- Serial Bowl producers will set up teams of Actors, Directors and Writers. Input is welcome, but in the interest of time, Producer's word is final on team make up.
- Several days before the performance, production staff will conduct a PAPER TECH of the entire Serial Bowl. Directors are responsible for providing production team with props, costume and scenery lists as well as light and sound cues prior to this rehearsal. See timeline for specific dates. Directors are required to attend this tech rehearsal or be available telephonically.
- One day prior to performance there will be a run-through. The run-through is treated as a regular show - there will be no starting and stopping except for safety issues. This is your Dress Rehearsal.
- Performances begin promptly with Curtain Up at the scheduled time. Teams are called at 45 minutes prior to curtain up. House opens at 30 minutes prior to curtain up. Directors may set earlier calls at their discretion.
- A dedicated Stage Manager will run tech rehearsals and performances. The Stage Manager's word is final in regards to the running of the production.

HOW DOES A SHOW MOVE ON?

- At the conclusion of the full performance, the audience will vote on the two pieces they would like to see continue to the next event.
- Voting will be accomplished through an online application that audiences access via their phones at the end of the performance.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

- Round 1: 5 short (12-15 minute) performances. 2 will be selected to continue to Round 3.
- Round 2: 5 short (12-15 minute) performances. 2 will be selected to continue to Round 3.
- Round 3: 4 previous winners perform. Each is now 20-30 minutes long which includes the previous script with a continuation of the scene. 2 will be selected to continue to Round 4.
- Round 4: 2 previous winners perform. Each is now 40 – 45 minutes long which includes all of the previous performance with a continuation that finalizes the work. The serial with the highest voting record for the season will perform first followed by an intermission. After intermission the second ranked serial will perform. The Audience will vote one last time, selecting the Serial Bowl Champion!

OTHER

- Team members are expected to be at all Tech and Performance events on time.
- Team members will be expected to participate in the promotion of the event.
- It is expected that team members will conduct themselves at all times in a manner that positively reflects on the event and the producing company. At no time may a team member be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during a production activity, including but not limited to rehearsals, performances or promotional events. Midnight Sun is a non-smoking company.
- Contracts will be provided to all members of the event detailing expectations and payment.
- All members of a performance will be paid based on a percentage of that performance.
- Actors and Directors should not expect to continue with successive episodes of a work. Instead, actors and directors may be selected to work on pieces that the Producers deem is a best fit for the good of the entire production.

TYPICAL REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

- Week 1: Team is formed and given script. 1 90 minute rehearsal including an initial read thru. Actors spend week getting Off Book
- Week 2: 2 90 minute rehearsals for blocking.
- Week 3: 1 90 minute rehearsal for fine tuning. Dress Rehearsal. Performance.

Serial Bowl
Tentative Production Schedule

First Week

Teams formed. Scripts distributed. Directors should have a first rehearsal. Actors spend time getting off book. Writer should attend this first rehearsal.

Second Week

Directors should hold 2 rehearsals. Blocking should be the focus. Rehearsals should be off book at this point. Any writing edits should be completed by this time. Prop, scenery and costume requirements managed with stage manager.

Third Week

Tuesday

Final rehearsal for fine tuning.

Wednesday

Call script and tech rider due. All sound effects due.

Thursday

Paper Tech. Directors must be available for questions

Friday

Dress Rehearsal. All teams must attend.

Performance. Call is 7:15 pm. Curtain up at 8:00 pm.

Performance Dates

Serial Bowl II

Round 1	Sept 1
Round 2	Oct 6
Round 3	Nov 3
Finale	Dec 1

Serial Bowl III

Round 1	Feb 2
Round 2	March 2
Round 3	April 6
Finale	May 4

*These are all First Fridays

While this schedule is the expectation, the forces of reality ever come to bear. Teams should be flexible and know that venue issues, weather, etc may affect the schedule above. Producers will make every effort to communicate schedule changes in a timely manner.

The Rounds

Round 1 5 short (12-15 minute) performances. 2 will be selected to continue to Round 3.
Round 2 5 short (12-15 minute) performances. 2 will be selected to continue to Round 3.
Round 3 4 previous winners perform. Each is now 20-30 minutes long which includes the previous script with a continuation of the scene. 2 will be selected to continue to Round 4.
Round 4 2 previous winners perform. Each is now 40 – 45 minutes long which includes all of the previous performance with a continuation that finalizes the work. The serial with the highest voting record for the season will perform first followed by an intermission. After intermission the second ranked serial will perform. The Audience will vote one last time, selecting the Serial Bowl Champion!