

**COURTENAY LITTLE THEATRE**



# **CHOOSING OUR PLAYS**

**Guidelines  
for the Reading and Selection Committees  
as prepared by the CLT Visioning Group  
January 2009**

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# 1. Seasonal Timeline and Procedures for Choosing Plays.

<b>Ongoing</b>	<p>Reading Committee reviews scripts aided by Guidelines [see following], preparing a total of five plays to be provided to the Selection Committee for each season, <u>ten</u> plays in total.</p> <p>All CLT members are encouraged to suggest plays to be read by the Reading Committee.</p>
<b>September Meeting</b>	<p>Call for Plays and information on selection process is issued and posted on website</p>
<b>1 December</b>	<p>Suggestions from the Reading Committee [five per season, total of ten] <u>plus</u> any plays from individual directors are to be submitted to the Selection Committee.</p>
<b>1 March</b>	<p>Selection Committee posts their choice of three possible plays for the upcoming fall and three for the following spring, a total of six plays. The Committee requests that directors interested in presenting any of these plays submit their concepts.</p> <p>If a play submitted for consideration by an individual director is considered appropriate, it may be included in the selection of the final six, with the information that a director is already associated with this play.</p>
<b>1 April</b>	<p>Potential directors submit concepts to the Selection Committee by this date. Directors may submit for more than one play.</p>
<b>1 May</b>	<p>Selection Committee provides their choice of two plays to the Board, one play for the upcoming fall and one for the following spring. The name of the director for each play is also provided. The Board gives final approval to the chosen plays.</p> <p>Details of the season ahead are provided by the Board to the CLT membership and the general public.</p>

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## 2. Guidelines for Recommendation and Selection of Fall Productions

CLT fall productions are currently, and will be for a considerable time in the future, scheduled at the Sid Williams Theatre for the last two weeks in September. There is therefore a limited time in which plays can be prepared for production.

Two concepts are particularly important for fall productions – **simplicity and popular appeal**.

**Simplicity:** Due to the difficulties associated with factors such as scheduling actors into rehearsal over the summer, use of the space by other groups over the summer, and possible lack of available crew members, the following points should be noted:

- Cast - Small cast size is preferable as it is easier to rehearse
- Set – This needs to be simple and easily created
- Costumes – Period plays are not recommended unless costumes are readily available at CLT
- Technical demands – These can probably be met for most productions, but should not be too complicated at this time
- Rehearsal Schedule – Rehearsals need to start early, with auditions held in June

**Popular Appeal:** This is the underlying factor in fall selection. It is important to build an audience who will be drawn to further productions. Therefore, fall plays need to attract a wide audience.

**Recommended genres of plays** include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Canadian [see Blyth Festival programming, [www.blythfestival.com](http://www.blythfestival.com) ]
- Comedy, but not farce
- Murder mystery
- Spy thriller
- Suspense

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### 3. Guidelines for Recommendation and Selection of Spring Productions

In preparing for spring production, more time and more resources are generally available. This play is usually entered into the Theatre BC Festival. It can be considered more 'edgy', provocative or experimental and not necessarily hold the level of general appeal expected in the fall. The Sid Williams Theatre time slot is mid-April.

The spring production can be **elaborate or simple**. There is more flexibility in selection of plays at this time and rehearsals are easier to schedule.

- Cast size can be flexible
- Set design can be more complex, keeping in mind the reality of demands of moving to and from the theatre for production, festival entry, re-mounting as a fund raiser if the play goes to Mainstage, and for Mainstage itself.
- Costumes can be more elaborate.
- Technical demands can be higher

**Recommended genres of plays** include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Canadian [see Blyth Festival programming, [www.blythfestival.com](http://www.blythfestival.com) ]
- Classics in English [Shakespeare, Shaw, Wilde, Coward]
- Classics in translation [Ibsen, Strindberg]
- Comedy, but not as in the fall
- Mystery, but not as in the fall
- Commonwealth drama [Australia, NZ, South Africa etc.]
- Historical plays [either older plays or plays set in the past]
- One act plays
- Plays published since 2000

### 4. Further General Concepts re Productions

- Try to break even financially
- Try to balance a season's plays with regard to age and gender of cast
- Try to provide a learning opportunity for members
- Try to avoid close repetition of a specific genre of play

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## 5. CLT Plays for the 2010-11 and 2011-12 Seasons

The following genres of play are to be considered by the Reading and Selection Committees for the 2010-11 and 2011-12 seasons. Guidelines for the committees are provided above.

<b>Fall 2010</b>	Murder mystery / suspense / thriller
<b>Spring 2011</b>	Commonwealth theatre [and/or] Play published since 2000
<b>Fall 2011</b>	Canadian play
<b>Spring 2012</b>	Classic theatre [and/or] Play set in historical time [not Shakespeare]

Further seasons to be considered.

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