



Important dates:

- Deadline to be on the postcard/marketing campaign: **August 20, 2007**
- Final deadline to participate: **September 2, 2007**
- Tickets go live to patrons: **October 2, 2007**
- Free Night of Theater: **October 18, 2007**
- Eligible performance dates: **October 13 – November 11, 2007**
- Follow-up online survey date: **around November 15, 2007**

If you have questions that aren't answered here, please email Clay Lord, marketing manager for Free Night 2007, at clay-at-theatrebayarea-dot-org.

What is Free Night of Theater?

In the words of Theatre Bay Area executive director Brad Erickson, "Free Night of Theater 2007 is both an invitation and a call to arms. Come experience and enjoy the live arts, and then make it a part of your daily life. With over 1,000 new productions of all sizes and prices opening each year in the Bay Area, there are plenty of opportunities to do just that." Now in its third year, the program, administered nationally by Theatre Communications Group and locally by Theatre Bay Area, is a way of attracting new audiences to the theatre through a stunningly audacious and captivatingly simple plan: Open the doors of our theatres to new audience members for free...on about the same day...all across the country.

All told, over **8,300 free tickets** were given out in just a matter of days through TixBayArea.com and at the TIX Booth in Union Square. And the event did what it was designed to do: 86 percent of the attendees were taking part in Free Night for the first time, 36 percent at a theatre they had never been to before! Over 50 percent of the attendees were not regular theatregoers, meaning new audiences were being attracted to Bay Area theatre. Better yet, Free Night of Theater reflected the diversity of the Bay Area: 45 percent of the audience were people of color, and over 70 percent of the audience was under 50 years old, and the average age was 29 years old. Best of all, more than a third of the attendees said that, following this free event, they'd be back for more as paying customers!

Results from a survey generated by the nationally recognized research firm Mark Shugoll & Associates show that a 81 percent of respondents have gone back to the theatre since Free Night, including 32 percent who have gone to see more shows at the theatre where they saw their free performance. A third of the people who participated in 2006 said that going to Free Night 2006 has made them more active theater consumers.

Who is participating?

Last year, Free Night of Theater featured 151 performances from 110 Bay Area companies, including many of the region's leading theatre producers, such as American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, TheatreWorks, Magic Theatre and California Shakespeare Theater, along with a host of smaller companies.

What do I have to do?

We are asking participating companies to make available for free **the unsubscribed portion of their house or at least 25% of their total seats**. In past years, some companies committed up to 50 or 100% of their house for their Free Night performance. We also ask participating companies to help promote the event and to track and report to Theatre Bay Area how many Free Theatre Day participants return to your company over the next year.

What if we have no performance on October 18?

While ideally your Free Night performance will be scheduled on October 18, 2007, if you don't have a performance that night, you're not out of luck! We request that your performances for Free Night fall between October 13 and November 11, 2007 – and that if at all possible, they fall on or after October 18th. Performances on closely following October 18 will benefit the most from the full-scale Free Night of Theater advertising campaign.

How will Theatre Bay Area help fill our seats?

Theatre Bay Area is launching a major regional marketing campaign to promote this event. Elements of the campaign include print, radio, and TV advertising throughout the region, banners in BART stations, bus shelters, and Union Square, and promotion through Theatre Bay Area Magazine, theatrebayarea.org and tixbayarea.com.

What will I be asked to do to promote the event?

We are asking participating companies to assist in the following ways:

- Display a poster (provided by Theatre Bay Area) in your lobby (if you have a venue) for the month prior to the event
- Display postcards for the event at your box office (or in the TBA Postcard Distribution rack if your theatre has one)
- Advertise the event in the program of preceding shows (if space allows). Theatre Bay Area will provide a downloadable image
- Forward an e-postcard created by Theatre Bay Area to your email mailing list in October.
- Participate in a follow-up survey of your experience with Free Night of Theater, on or around November 15, 2007.

How will reservations work?

Patrons will make reservations through Theatre Bay Area's ticketing website, tixbayarea.com or at the TIX Booth in Union Square. Before the event, we will provide each theatre with a list of those patrons attending. Patrons will be instructed to collect their ticket by half an hour before curtain, at which time theatres may release tickets to a waiting list of other Free Night patrons.

Will I get the names of people who come to my theatre?

Theatre Bay Area will provide your theatre with the names and contact information (name, address, phone, e-mail) of everyone who reserves a ticket at your theatre.

What information will I need to track?

To help determine the success of the event and to plan for future years, Theatre Bay Area is asking participating companies to track how many participants return to your theatre in the coming year.

Are there any events leading up to Free Night of Theater?

This year, we are not having an event in Union Square leading up to Free Night of Theater.