

Test Flight

Local Request for Proposals

**Deadline for submissions has been extended to
Monday, May 6th, 2019**

Cleveland Public Theatre's New Play Development

CPT's mission is to raise consciousness and nurture compassion through groundbreaking performances and life-changing education programs. CPT's programming agenda is to produce work that is outside the mainstream, offering a much broader range of work available to the Cleveland public and expanding the impact and originality of theatre across the country. CPT strives to make work that is excellent, extraordinary, and nationally competitive.

Our new play development programs are based on our years of experience, community input, and key principles of: focusing on artists; valuing diversity of approach, aesthetics, and perspective; and balancing impact with investment.

We envision CPT as a nationally recognized hub for the development of new theatre that is extraordinary, edgy, and relevant. We hope to be a model for nurturing local talent in similar sized markets, the most regarded cultivator of new theatre for Cleveland audiences, a laboratory for promising research and investigation, and a launcher of nationally significant new plays.

Test Flight Summary

Based on CPT's success with our Big Box series, Test Flight offers opportunities to artists who are interested in co-producing works with us. Test Flight is a multi-week series where artists are given the keys to the theatre to develop their projects to a workshop level. In addition to serving local artists, Test Flight will also be open to national and international artists who wish to come to Cleveland to develop their pieces. Feedback for this series will be specific to each project, developed by the artist, and vetted/approved by CPT.

Test Flight Detailed Description

Test Flight offers artists or groups the opportunity to produce workshop productions of theatre, dance, performance art, music, or genre-defying performances. We open the doors and support artists experimenting, charting their own course, making their own decisions, and taking their own risks.

This series is for work that is beyond staged reading or rough draft, but not yet ready for full production. This is about core artistry, not fancy finishes and big production values. The artist shouldn't get too caught up in elaborate plans because they don't have much time in the space. However, don't confuse minimalism and resourcefulness with lack of style and quality. Indication of production elements should be made, but fully realized costume, set, and lighting design are not appropriate for this level of workshop production.

For each week of Test Flight, CPT will select one or two projects.

CPT will support the project by providing:

- Complete access to the James Levin Theatre for one week.
 - Load in is on Monday. Public performances of workshops are on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights.
- Organizational guidance through strict deadlines and clear deliverables.
- Repertory light plot, sound system.
- Limited access to CPT equipment and stock.
- Front-of-house and box office.
- Stage manager.
- 4 hours of technical support.
- Direct mail piece advertising the series.
- Each project will receive a percentage of the box office receipts of 50% (30% for groups sharing a double bill). A minimum guarantee of \$750 (\$500 each for double bills) will be paid in advance of the performance.

Total estimated "per project" value from CPT (including all direct costs, occupancy, and cash) is \$7,500.

Lead Artist(s) will provide (or are required to):

- All artistic content.
 - Content will be original and must be in development, **having had no previous full production.**
 - Content must be owned by artist or the artist must have authority to use material (in case of adaptation or inclusion of other content).
- Rehearsals prior to Test Flight. These must be arranged separately by the lead artists and their team. (CPT cannot provide space for these rehearsals.)
- A fully staged, adequately-rehearsed production with all performers off book.
 - CPT understands projects may be in flux and therefore some raw elements in performance are allowed.
- All design and production elements.
- Creative team – including performers, designers, technicians, etc.
 - Test Flight lead artists will separately contract these individuals.
- Marketing for your Test Flight week.
 - Lead artists may choose to print special cards specific to their show using a CPT template. CPT will send out a press release for listings only. CPT is the exclusive manager of all media relations and will work with artists to best utilize their contacts.
- Attend up to four mandatory meetings.
- Attend a majority of the other Test Flight showings. All involved will be given discounts.
- Enter into an agreement with CPT related to subsequent productions that will stipulate crediting CPT.

Selection Criteria

CPT develops work that is outside the mainstream aesthetically, thematically, or in the creative process. For Test Flight we will select artists who fit that directive.

We are seeking projects that have the potential to reach a high degree of quality that could be competitive nationally.

- **Production Quality:** Test Flight can be a great learning experience and we are not looking for highly skilled producers, but we will seek teams that are well positioned to produce the show at this level.
- **Artistic Quality:** We are looking for artistry that is demonstrated or has great potential for accomplishment.
- **Project's Future:** Test Flight is about moving projects forward, so we are interested in projects that have a sense of trajectory, direction, or plan to move to the next step after Test Flight.

CPT is especially interested in projects and artists that are at the right point in the development process so they can most benefit from this experience.

Advice to Applicants

We ask that Test Flight applicants think deeply about their project, understand the format and purpose of Test Flight, and carefully consider the selection criteria. If applicants feel strongly that their projects are truly a good fit for this series, they should write their application to directly demonstrate that the project is competitive in every area of our criteria. We have tried to help artists by aligning our questions to the criteria.

Teams are important, especially from a leadership perspective. If you are a solo-performer or playwright, the director of your project is important – even if they are not the Lead Artist. (Note: CPT rarely selects scripted work for development that is directed by the playwright.)

If you are submitting a project that has an incomplete script or is still early in the process, then please explain how the script or project will be prepared by the time of Test Flight. For example, what are your deadlines for the script and who will you be working with to give you feedback along the way?

If you are devising or are a playwright/creator, please explain the creative process you intend to follow and the structure (hierarchy) of the collaborators. Without a script to judge artistic merit, experience in devising work is critical to demonstrate the potential of the project. CPT rarely accepts proposals in which the main deviser is also an actor in the show.

Test Flight includes work that is not considered “theatre” by the conventional definition. For example, music performance that is beyond a concert, new forms of dance, performance art, and experimental opera are acceptable proposals for Test Flight. It is important for applicants in the non-theatre arena to explain their process and how Test Flight will serve the development of the work.

Answer emails quickly and professionally. We often have follow-up questions for your application. This means we are interested in the proposal or want to make sure we have a complete understanding. Your response to emails can reveal inherent strengths and weaknesses in your team.

Contact for applications: iburton@cptonline.org.

Deadline for submissions is Monday, May 6th, 2019

Test Flight Proposal

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Please complete the application and submit it with additional materials electronically as an attachment to iburton@cptonline.org.

General Information

(Please include the information below in the body of your email and on the first page of your answers to the questions.)

Name/Group:

Primary Artist Contact Name:

Address:

Cell Phone:

E-Mail:

Other Key Artists Involved:

Title of Work:

Length of Piece/Event:

Artistic Discipline (e.g. music, theatre, dance, puppetry, etc.):

Test Flight is currently scheduled for late March and April. Are there any weeks during that time frame that you could not participate in?

Do you have a preferred week(s) in that time?

Sometimes CPT pairs up artists or groups with shorter works to maximize box office and space. Would you be willing to participate if you were on a double bill?

If no, please share why your proposal is best served as a singular evening?

Questions

Please answer each of the following questions individually in a separate document. This document should total at least three pages in length but not exceed five pages. Please attach this document to your email.

1. Describe your project
 - a. Plot summary or appropriate equivalent.
 - b. Please describe the look and feel of the work.
 - c. What makes this project a good fit for CPT?
2. Lead Artist and Team:
 - a. What is your artistic experience?
 - b. What is your background, experience, and skill-set that gives you confidence that you can successfully lead and complete this project? Please include a separate document with bios or resumes of the lead artists and any other key team members.
 - c. Who else will be involved in the project? If you have committed artists, tell us about them (provide resumes if available).
 - d. How do you plan to complete your team (auditions, interviews, etc.)?
3. Impact
 - a. Why do you want to participate in Test Flight?
 - b. How will Test Flight impact you as an artist and the growth of the proposed piece?
 - c. Beyond CPT efforts, how do you plan to get the word out about your show?

4. Process and Timing

- a. If appropriate, tell us about your creative process.
- b. What is the current state of this project?
- c. What is your plan for the project between now and loading in to Test Flight? What is your plan to implement/meet technical and production needs for this piece (set, lights, costumes, etc.)? How will you rehearse? etc.

5. Future

- a. What are your plans to artistically develop the work after Test Flight?
- b. What are your plans or ideas to move your project to “full production” after Test Flight? (Are you planning on submitting the script to other theatres? If so, how and where? Are you planning to tour? If so, how are you booking that tour?)
 - i. If you do not have plans but have clear intentions and thoughts about how Test Flight will help you develop those plans, you could share that.

6. Other Questions

- a. Is there anything beyond the support provided (described above) that you expect from CPT?
- b. Are there any special technical requirements you will need to implement (video, specialized props or furniture, special flooring, etc.)?

Suggested Supplementary Materials:

1. Script or equivalent (as appropriate)
2. Resume of lead artist and bio or resume of key team members
3. Work samples: previous scripts, or web links to video or audio. (CPT will not accept dvd or any other hard form of video or data, so video must be available online, preferably without password-protection.)

Please email additional materials to support your application including script, artistic statement, etc. to us at iburton@cptonline.org.

Materials will not be returned.
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