

COURTENAY LITTLE THEATRE



CHOOSING OUR PLAYS

**Guidelines for
The Selection Committee**

(amended 2018)

Who & what

The Selection Committee consists of five members chosen from the Membership of CLT given responsibility for the process of choosing an annual season of three productions for recommendation to the Board of Directors.

The Selection Committee identifies experienced directors who are available to direct during the coming season and either vets the director's choice of material and/or provides suggestions on suitable scripts.

Throughout the year members of the SC monitor plays being mounted by other community groups throughout the province and in the professional sector, both for inspiration and clues to the availability of performance rights. Interesting scripts are ordered and shared and become the property of the CLT Library.

All CLT members are encouraged to suggest plays to the Selection Committee

When & How: Seasonal Timeline for Selecting Plays

Late Summer

First meeting held to set tasks for coming year. SC discuss non-formal expressions of interest and assign SC member to liaise with potential proposer. Scripts are discussed, ordered and distributed.

By September CLT Board Meeting

Call for Expressions of Interest in Directing a CLT Play during the future season is sent to the membership and posted on the CLT website.

November 1

Directors are asked to submit Expressions of Interest by this date. SC Member is assigned to work with each Director on refining proposal, as appropriate.

October through December

Selection Committee meets regularly to discuss Expressions of Interest and developing season. Proposing directors may be asked to attend a meeting with the SC to answer questions on proposal. Progress is reported regularly to the CLT Board by the SC Board liaison.

January / February / March CLT Board Meetings

Selection Committee will have shaped a season of three plays for presentation to the CLT Board. Discussion at the Board level to attach producers to three proposals to ensure budgets are prepared by producers for Board approval by March meeting

Guidelines for Proposals and Selection

The Selection Committee will ensure that the selected season of three plays:

- Provides learning opportunities for CLT members
- Maintains a balance of genres, casting and technical requirements
- Avoids close repetition of specific genres
- Takes account of the financial viability of staging each choice
- Have popular appeal for a widening base of CLT supporters

Fall Productions (Late Sept to early Oct)

The Fall production opens the CLT season and as such should be chosen to attract a wide audience, to create word-of-mouth enthusiasm for the coming season – from potential audience members to inspiring auditioning actors and recruiting of backstage crew of future shows.

The Fall production auditions in June and starts rehearsals in late July or early August. Ideally it should have a small cast and a simple set, as personnel are limited over the summer holidays.

Typical genres in this time-slot are mysteries, comedies, suspense.

Christmas Productions (late Dec to early Jan)

The Christmas production is chosen for maximum popular appeal, either catering to families, or a feel-good play or musical for all (or most) ages. Auditions are held in the summer and rehearsals begin in the CLT Space immediately following the load-out for the Fall production (Oct). CLT hosts a special New Year's Eve after the 31 December performance.

Spring Productions (early April)

The Spring production is CLT's entry in the North Island Zone Festival (late May) and therefore is chosen with a wider audience than the Comox Valley in mind. The Selection Committee is looking for plays with critical appeal, perhaps more edgy, provocative or experimental than the choices for the rest of the season. The need to move the set to the NIZ Festival (or perhaps Mainstage) calls for careful (and minimalist) stage design.

Seasonal Timeline and Procedures for Choosing Plays.

Ongoing	All CLT members are encouraged to suggest plays to the Selection Committee. Members of the SC read plays throughout the year and bring recommendations to the late summer meeting.
Late Summer	Selection Committee meets to set tasks for coming year: SC members divide up list of experienced CLT directors to approach for expressions of interest before formal call. Scripts are ordered following discussion. Once available, scripts are copied for SC members.
Oct. CLT Meeting	Call for Expressions of Interest in Directing a CLT Play during future season is sent to the membership & posted on CLT website Call for Plays and information on selection process is issued and posted on website
November 15	Directors asked to submit Expressions of Interest by this date. Member of SC assigned to work with Director on refining proposal
October – December	SC meets regularly to discuss Expressions of Interest and plays suggested by directors or members of SC. Progress is reported to the CLT Board by SC Board liaison.

Jan. CLT Meeting	SC will have season of three plays shaped for presentation to the CLT Board.
Feb. CLT Meeting	Board ensures that producers are attached to three proposals, and that budgets are prepared for Board approval.
March CLT Meeting	The Board gives final approval to the chosen plays.
May CLT Meeting	Announcement of the coming season provided by the Board to the CLT membership and the general public.

Shaping the CLT Season

The Selection Committee will ensure that the selected season of 3 plays:

- Provides learning opportunities for CLT members
- Maintains a balance of genres, casting and technical requirements
- Avoids close repetition of specific genres
- Takes account of the financial viability of staging the choices, while acknowledging that some plays are just worth doing

Guidelines for Proposals and Selection of Fall Productions

CLT fall productions are scheduled at the Sid Williams Theatre for two weeks from the end of September. With summer holidays between auditions and the start of rehearsals, there is 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 for ongoing renovations or 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 selection of the Fall Play. This play initiates the CLT season and opening night is a Gala with invited dignitaries to promote CLT and its upcoming season of offerings. The play should be chosen to attract a wide audience, to create word-of-mouth enthusiasm and publicity for future productions in the season.

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

- Canadian [see Blyth Festival programming, www.blythfestival.com]
- Comedy
- Murder mystery
- Spy thriller
- Suspense
-

Guidelines for Proposals and Selection of Christmas Productions

The Christmas Production is scheduled into the Sid Williams Theatre for two weeks over the Christmas period, often running over into the New Year. CLT usually hosts a special New Year's Eve party after the 31 December performance. Auditions are held in the summer, and rehearsals begin in the CLT Space immediately following the load-out for the Fall production.

The Christmas Production is chosen for maximum popular appeal, either catering to families, or a feel-good play or musical for all (or most) ages.

Guidelines for Proposals and Selection of Spring Productions

In preparing for the 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 early to 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, remounting as a fund raiser if the play goes to Mainstage, and for Mainstage itself.
- Costumes can be more elaborate.
- Technical demands can be higher