



About
Festivals...



DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
City of Los Angeles

This booklet was inspired by and written for participants in the Festival Encouragement Project (FEP), a program co-created in 2003 by the Center for Cultural Innovation and supported by a grant from the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (LADCA). The goal of the FEP is to build the strength and capacity of selected outdoor cultural celebrations produced in L.A. that serve residents and tourists.

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Judith Luther Wilder, Senior Program Consultant, Center for Cultural Innovation

At the very least, festivals should be fun. If they're educational, inspirational, good for commerce and the common good but are not fun, sponsors are wasting their sponsorship dollars.

Ideally, a good festival leaves you breathless. It is inspiring enough to make you simultaneously laugh and cry, educational enough to give you insight into yourself and others, and seductive enough to bring you back again and again to meet, greet and enjoy performances you may only see once a year at one of the best parties in town. At least and at most, a good festival always shows its audience a really, really good time.

The experts who have written articles for "About Festivals..." truly know a lot about producing festivals. They know how to celebrate, how to bring people together, how to program performances that not only take your breath away but leave you weak in the knees. Some of them are old timers who learned to produce on a wing and a prayer in the '70s. Most of them are visionaries who willed their events to happen while a Greek Chorus of naysayers chanted "It's Impossible!" All of them, then and now, are smart, savvy organizers who understand the relationship of planning and publicity to positive results.

New and/or young festival producers would be well-advised to take any of the following authors or festival aristocrats out for a dinner seasoned heavily with wisdom. Some of the contributors to "About Festivals..." may be a little out of the loop but in a coma, each could fill a library with How To books on festival production.

Warren Christensen didn't invent the One Man Show but for a brief moment in time, he owned the franchise. His Garden Theatre Festival (GTF) was the best party in town night after summer night for a full month each year between 1971 – 1976. Ask anyone who attended the free performances emceed by Paul Linke and the late Will Geer, or audience members who met Father Guido Sarducci, Jackson Browne or the Mystic Knights of the Oingo Boingo for the very first time. Talk to the hundreds of volunteers who drove to Ventura to pick oranges so that every other audience member could drink free orange juice under the stars. They will all tell you they had the time of their life soaking up the GTF art and ambiance! Ask other audience members about their GTF experiences and you will hear tales about seeing theater and dance companies they had never seen before. Or discovering poets or jazz groups that are now woven into the fabric of the City.

Those summer nights represented the best of times for many of the artists who appeared on Barnsdall Park's outdoor stages. For many audience members, the experience was right up there with falling in love for the very first time. As a matter of fact, many artists and audience members did fall in love for the first time at the Garden Theatre Festival. The number of engagements, affairs and weddings that occurred during the GTF defies logic but according to rumor, good times were had by all.

The late Helen Young, the Founder of the Lotus Festival, knew everything there was to know about community organizing. She brought together the two factions in the Chinese community, in the Vietnamese community, in the Cambodian community, and in the Korean community. She persuaded the Indian community to work with a group representing Pakistan, and ten other Asian and Pacific Island communities to work with everybody. When it came to diplomacy, Henry Kissinger could have taken lessons from Helen. She was everybody's role model and nobody's fool and today's Lotus Festival is still run by people she trained, shaped, and inspired.

Aaron Paley, with his working partner of 23 years Katie Bergin, created Community Arts Resources (CARS) in the late 80s to perpetuate Los Angeles' festival tradition. Since then, CARS has produced stellar events throughout the region. They've created festivals for the Getty, Skirball and Japanese American National Museums. They've produced the Santa Monica Festival, the 1999 Sacred Music Festival, Wordplay, Yiddishkayt and dozens of other celebrations for dozens of communities.

CARS is arguably the best festival organizer in Los Angeles. That was true in 1987 when Aaron produced the Fringe Festival and again in 1990 when CARS produced the Open Festival for the Los Angeles Festival, the event Peter Sellars envisioned and I tried valiantly to manage. It's still true today. There were bigger names to wave before the press in 1990 and Aaron and his partners at Community Arts Resources (Bergin, Jan Ellenstein, Linda Yudin and Aaron Slavin) probably never got the credit they deserved. Still, the folks in the festival trenches all knew who put butts in the seats. Peter Sellars' glorious vision shaped the Festival, Allison Sampson's relentless fund raising paid for it, Judy Mitoma and I put out the fires, but CARS' performances drew the audiences. CARS also saw to it that local artists got a piece of the pie. Hundreds of Los Angeles artists participated in an amazing twice-in-a-lifetime event only because CARS had their backs.

Today CARS is the Last Man Standing from those halcyon days of Festival Abundance. Helen Young passed away in the 80s. Hope Schneider, Allison Sampson, Warren Christensen, Titus Levi and I are long retired from the festival scene. Judy Mitoma still produces The World Festival of Sacred Music and James Burks is still the driving force behind the African Marketplace. But CARS is the only arts festival producer I know still energetic enough and crazy enough to carry the festival banner all over town. One month they produce an event at the Getty, the next they're in Exposition Park, Hollywood or Little Tokyo.

Aaron Paley...a man with taste and standards who never met a Celebration he didn't like. Whether or not they know it, festival audiences and artists from the last two decades owe him a debt of gratitude.

Sumi Haru and Titus Levi definitely represent two sides of the conventional Festival coin. Sumi is a detail person whose



assets include a profound understanding of the communities with whom she's worked. For twelve years she produced festivals for the Cultural Affairs Department but for many years prior to that she honed her considerable talents on events that typically drew over 50,000 attendees. With good reason, Sumi identifies herself and her production company as The Iron Lotus. Anyone who took exception to the ninety pound event organizer's Work Plans or Timelines did so at his own peril. No festival producer in the City has ever had better working relationships with regulatory agencies, the Police Department, the Fire Department or the Health Department. On the other hand, the policeman hasn't been born who would question her planning process. She is, in short, a Force of Nature.

Titus Levi, on the other hand, develops festivals intellectually and with the care and forethought of an economist. Which, by training, he is. He's been creating festivals since he was a teenager and even then, he was given to playing too long with the pieces of the puzzle. Occasionally, in those early days, his excessive analyses caused delays and dysfunction. But when his programming worked, as it did during the Los Angeles Festival, it was something to behold. Even events that appealed to a handful of composers and musicians who considered Phillip Glass hopelessly old-fashioned were distinguished by a hint of genius. Later festivals helped lure large audiences to many of Long Beach's hipper and more upscale restaurants and clubs. During the 1990 Los Angeles Festival, he gave the City an embarrassment of riches. He booked Big Bands, World Music legends, traditional "folk" artists, edgy up-and-comers and giants of innovation like Ornette Coleman and Charlie Haden. Today he coaches and mentors other festival producers through CCI's Festival Encouragement Program and doubtless longs for the days when

an audience of fifty people was considered a huge success.

Curiously, Titus Levi's adult approach to festival production is reminiscent of the clear, practical, and analytical system Hope Tschopik Schneider brought to the Olympic Arts Festival. Hope, first among festival equals, managed a \$20 million event in 1984 when a million dollars could buy more than a two-bedroom fixer upper in a marginal community. Although money of that magnitude can guarantee the participation of the world's best artists, only the talents and intelligence of a producer like Hope can guarantee quality of presentation, the sale of tickets, delighted audiences, and an organization that functions efficiently. As a Festival Producer, Hope was splendid but as a Festival Planner, she has no equal. Her article on Planning should be required reading for every "wannabe" producer in Los Angeles County.

Including Helen Young, all the talented producers I've mentioned have written or inspired articles in many publications, including "About Festivals..." Missing in action are James Burks, Allison Sampson, Peter Sellars, Lindsay Shields, Judy Mitoma and the changing roster of producers who organize events like the Golden Dragon Festival and Parade and Nisei Week. Their views as well as the views and advice of all the writers are worth taking to heart. They may have forgotten more than most people ever knew about community organizing and festival production but on their worst days, each could produce events that make your knees go weak.

Take it from an old festival groupie, not one of them ever created a festival that wasn't knee slappin', laugh-a-minute-fun.

For a really good time, call any one of the Contributing Editors in "About Festivals..."



I FESTIVALS: THEIR MEANING AND IMPACT IN THE CITY OF ANGELS

Titus Levi, Ph.D

Festivals rise up from the fiber of communities to create celebrations of scale, depth, and gravity. Festivals capture the best that communities create and put forward. They provide extraordinary opportunities for artists to interact. They inspire and enrich audiences with volume and variety of work.

The sheer size of a festival can make it magnetic. I doubt that many Angelenos would go to a festival presented by Marshall Islanders, Hawaiians, or Filipinos, but put them in a single festival – and add a gaggle of other Pacific Asian cultures – and you have the Lotus Festival, one of the largest, most successful, and best known festivals in Los Angeles. The sheer size of a festival like this allows it to communicate abundance: an abundance of choices, an abundance of food, an abundance of things to buy, and a great abundance of people to meet, chat with, and bump into.

This experience of abundance stimulates all those involved. The experience engages each sense: dance and costumes for the eye, storytelling and music for the ear, the hands of old acquaintances and new friends and the jostling and friction of bodies for the skin. And no celebration would be complete without food. An abundance of food. The special dishes, looked forward to all year long. The fun dishes. The desserts that wake up the mouth. And the scent of a dozen or two dishes permeating the air like a blessing.

The experience of physicality at a festival gives the ephemeral nature of the celebration substance. The ideas behind the festival – celebration, identity, community – remain free-floating concepts without something to ground them to the physical domain. By giving form to these ideas through art (broadly defined), the ideas of a festival take on a greater force and deeper meaning, while adding the dimension of pleasure.

Physicality and abundance always stand out as two key elements of what makes a festival festive. Each provides energy, and when combined, deepen each other. This sort of connection and the relationship between things provides dimension to a festival as an event. It's not just about the music and the costumes and the dancing and the food; it's about all of them at once. It's about having all of the body's and the mind's "ON" switches flipped at once.

Having so many "ON" people in one place at one time makes for an openness that allows all types of communities to connect to people more deeply within and beyond their core constituencies. This creates the conditions for communities and individuals to connect in new ways. Such connection, while rare, is welcome since such interactions animate this city with a richness not often found in other cities. In this way, festivals breathe life into the heart and soul of Los Angeles and give support to its better angels. (No pun intended, of course.) Through events like the Obon Festival, held at Japanese-American Buddhist temples throughout Southern California, you can see it in the faces of curious onlookers who suddenly get caught up in the dance. You can feel its essence moving through the shy girl who gets on a table at the African

Marketplace to shake, shake, shake to the rhythm. You can hear it in the overheard comments: "I had no idea that I could find something like that in LA..." Festivals can be the bridges through which we connect to each other. Again and again, and in ever-evolving ways.

But sometimes a festival is not about connecting or reaching out, but turning inward in some sense. Go to a Diwali celebration and you'll see only a handful of persons who are not South Asian (but if you know the latest and biggest hits from Bollywood movies – in Hindi – then you're welcome to sing-along). Ditto for Nohrooz and Chol Chhnam Tmei, the New Year celebrations in the Persian and Cambodian communities. These celebrations bring people together, but in ways that reinforce a sense of home, old connections, and reaching back into lands left a lifetime ago. These festivals celebrate culture as family; new acquaintances can come, but will not grasp the full force of the festival's meaning.

Festivals also help communities define themselves. The festival provides a public face for a community as well as a focal point for organizing community resources and energies. This in itself builds community; from the festival an expression of what the community is emerges from the interaction and engagement of persons in the community. And the intensity of investment makes the festival a showcase for those in the community and beyond. It's sort of like looking for the tallest building in a city: it says something about what that city values in its culture. (For the District of Columbia, the Washington Monument stands out; in New York, the tallest buildings house the centers of industrial and financial power; in Las Vegas, the tallest buildings are fantasies of dislocation and indulgence.)

This investment takes on notable aspects in the arts. Festivals concentrate artists, giving them multiple opportunities to interact. Artists can learn about the work of others: an old master, a young firebrand, a representative of a specialized form. Musicians can jam together, weavers can examine refinements in technique, and dancers can vet the work of apprentices in each other's companies. Craftspersons can buy each other's wares; storytellers can swap yarns. Friendships and collaborations grow out of such interactions. Art grows and deepens on the back of such exchanges.

In thinking about festivals in Los Angeles, we see examples of festivals that serve all manner of social and cultural functions. Some we almost take for granted: Cinco de Mayo, July 4th, Chinese New Year. Each of these celebrations marks an affirmation of identity, and at the same time, provides opportunities to share cultural meaning with persons both inside and outside of that culture. The festivals that Angelenos produce each year make manifest the many aspects of LA that we know, love, and become frustrated with as well. Festivals such as the Israeli Fest, Thai Cultural Day, and the Brazilian Carnavale celebrate the city's rich and motley diversity. The Blooming of the Roses Festival, Country Garden Faire, and Arbor Festivities celebrate the seductive beauty of the land and



extraordinary growing conditions that make LA a gardener's dream. The emphasis on neighborhoods and close-knit communities can be seen in celebrations such as the Sunset Junction Street Faire and the Eclectic Eagle Rock Home Tour.

And of course, the thing that LA is most broadly known for: The Movies. (Take a long, deep breath...) We have the Pan-African Film Festival, the 70MM Film Festival, the Festival of Film Noir, the Artist Film Festival, the Polish Film Festival, the VC Filmfest, the Latino Film and Arts Festival, Dance Camera West, the Los Angeles Film Festival, the Giant Monsters Festival, the Mexican Film Festival, the Venice Film Festival, the International Family Film Festival, the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles, OUTFEST, Cinema Italian Style, the Los Angeles International Short Film Festival, the Century City Film Festival (who knew?), Winfemme Film Festival, AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival, Hollywood Black Film Festival, Rad Digital Film Festival, 48 Hour Film Festival, Art in Motion, FirstGlance, the Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival, Screamfest Los Angeles, City of Lights/City of Angels (COL-COA), and Last Remaining Seats. And probably a few others that I don't know about.

The fact that LA teems with so much artistic activity in its annual festival calendar is, well, so LA. LA is a huge creative center: Census estimates give the number of artists living in LA as approximately 80,000 persons, making the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area home to more persons engaged in art as their primary pursuit than any other city in the US. Yet much of this activity happens just below the radar or is taken for granted. And like many of these artists, festivals may be quite unknown outside of a relatively small audience. You have to dig to find the festival that fits you; you have to ask around to find festivals in the next neighborhood over. You have to know where to look to find out what's happening in August or February. You have to be in the know to really enjoy what's out

there. And Festivals are scattered hither and yon; if you want to see what's out there, get ready to drive. (Or bring some good books along for man hours on the Metro.) Which is all so LA.

The festival scene in Los Angeles is notable as well for what it lacks: a single, unifying, citywide or central festival. The city had the Olympic Arts Festival in 1984, and from this, the Los Angeles Festival, which ran every three years from 1987 to 1993, but the idea of comprehensiveness or centrality just never took root here. Again: so LA. So even without meaning to or trying to, the festival, and its absence, has a meaning. It functions as a signifier for what LA is. But we hope for new inventions that fill these voids; if nothing else, LA is a place of possibilities.

The Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs lists well over 350 events in its festival guide. I'm sure if you go online and poke around, you'll find one or two dozen more festivals or mass celebrations of one sort or another. We do excess well. And variety. Once again, the eco-system of festivals mirrors what and who we are.

My work in festivals goes back to 1984 when I produced the first Day of Music for the California Outside Music Association, a small nonprofit music presenter based in Long Beach, which I founded the previous year. By the end of the 80s, I moved up to the big leagues of festival production, landing a job as Music Curator for the 1990 Los Angeles Festival. After a hiatus from the arts world in the 90s, I started consulting to artists and arts organizations in 2003. By 2004 I had begun working as a consultant to the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs Festival Encouragement Program; I currently serve as an arts consultant to both arts organizations and individual artists. Titus Levi, Ph.D. Economist/Arts Consultant.

2

A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF SELECTED FESTIVALS IN LOS ANGELES 1890 – 2005

Aaron Paley

Los Angeles has more than a century's experience as a City of Festivals. The Tournament of Roses is one of the oldest festivals in the area (est. 1890) and the Golden Dragon Parade and Festival is another. The latter, now over 110 years old, still draws between 50,000 – 100,000 people to Chinatown annually and the Tournament of Roses is arguably responsible for more Iowans and residents of other snow-bound states moving to Los Angeles than any other single LA marketing event. The City of Angels, not to be outdone by Pasadena and Chinatown, created Fiesta Los Angeles in 1894.

While the Golden Dragon Parade and Festival was developed to celebrate and remember cultural traditions, the other two events were created as “boosters”. Endeavors launched by Los Angeles power brokers to sell the region as America's Mediterranean or new Eden, the Tournament of Roses is still going strong. The Fiesta continued as an important institution in the life of L.A. only into the beginning of the 20th Century.

Built around a romantic and ultimately fictitious view of Los Angeles, Fiesta Los Angeles featured a multicultural cast (Native Americans, Mexican Americans and African Americans as well as Anglo Americans) in the service of a revisionist retelling of the history of Los Angeles. The Mission Play (est. 1912) and Ramona Pageant (est. 1923) soon followed in this tradition and became prominent events that brought together hundreds of artists to perform for thousands of attendees. The Ramona Pageant is still presented today from its specially crafted stage in Hemet, California.

The Hollywood Bowl has been the site of many special events on a festival scale – pageants, processions, and celebrations. These events used the enormous size of the Bowl and its special acoustic and visual characteristics to full advantage. As the Bowl was the major venue of the time, events held there attracted enormous attention in the press and from the populace.

In the 1970s

The 1932 Olympics also featured an arts festival but it was not until the early 1970s that the modern festival era in Los Angeles was born. Between 1971 – 1976, landmark festivals were created that set the stage for future festivals in Los Angeles. In addition to the jazz-heavy Festival in Black in MacArthur Park, the incomparable Fiesta de Amistad in Lincoln Park, and a half-dozen other weekend celebrations and powwows that grew into festivals celebrating ethnic food, ethnic arts, and ethnic traditions from around the country and around the world, the following five festivals shaped the way Angelenos viewed the phenomena of celebrations:

The Garden Theatre Festival

Under Warren Christensen's inspired direction, the Garden Theatre Festival (GTF) brought together tens of thousands of Angelenos for a magic month of nights under the stars. Watching theater on multiple outdoor stages at Barnsdall Park,

drinking free orange juice (made from tons of donated oranges Festival audiences drove to Ventura to pick), listening to a roster of poets who would subsequently become the voice of their generation, festival audiences still remember the Garden Theatre Festival as the best free party they ever attended. Nurtured with CETA funding and supported by hundreds of artists and crazed volunteers, the GTF was, in many ways, the spiritual (albeit low-cost) forerunner of the 1984 Olympic Arts Festival.

The Lotus Festival

The Lotus Festival was conceived by the late Helen Young and co-founded by a coalition that includes two of the contributors to this handbook (Sumi Haru and Judith Luther Wilder). The purpose of the Festival in 1973 was to unite Asian and Pacific Island communities in a way that would celebrate all their cultural traditions. Originally a product of fourteen separate cultures, today's Lotus Festival includes representatives, artists, religious and community leaders from over thirty-five different cultural groups.

Sponsored by the Department of Recreation and Parks, even before the City's Department of Cultural Affairs was created, today's event features Dragon Boat Races, an acre of ethnic food booths, traditional performances by artists representing the countries of Southeast Asia, South Asia, North and Central Asia, and the Pacific. Most of all, the Lotus Festival celebrates the lotus flowers that Aimee Semple McPherson planted in Echo Park Lake, allegedly after one of her mysterious trips to the Far East.

Mask Festival and Parade

Edith Wyle, Founder of the Crafts and Folk Art Museum, launched the Festival of Masks in 1976 as the City's first effort to encompass the entire spectrum of L.A. multiculturalism. The Mask was presented as an element common to most cultures in Los Angeles. During its hey day, the two-day Festival attracted more than 50,000 people annually. When asked why she created the Festival, Wyle said, “When I heard there were more than 80 languages spoken in the LAUSD schools, I realized there was a need for an event that would bring these many cultures together.” The Mask Festival ultimately became a popular gathering point for many cultures and communities throughout the region.

FILMEX

The City's first major film festival, FILMEX, attracted huge audiences and “buzz” from the moment it began. Created by Barbara Smith, Gary Essert, and Gary Abrahams as the Los Angeles International Film Exposition (FILMEX) in 1971, the event filled two Century City theaters (2200 seats) five times each day. Although enormously popular, FILMEX experienced political and administrative problems and ultimately ceased operations in 1983. The American Film Institute (AFI Fest) grew from its ashes, as did other film festivals such as Outfest,





the Pan-African Festival, LA Freewaves, and the Indian Film Festival.

Street Scene

The Street Scene celebrated a new beginning for Central City or Downtown Los Angeles. With tens of thousands of attendees dancing in the streets, Street Scene briefly proved it was safe to roam downtown Los Angeles streets after dark. Ironically, a gang melee burst the Street Scene bubble in the early '80s and no one attempted another downtown Los Angeles street festival until Fiesta Broadway was launched in 1990.

The Olympic Arts Festival

The final push to create a festival culture in Los Angeles arrived in 1984 with the Olympics' second coming to L.A. The City was already riding a wave of cultural institution building over the prior twenty years that boosted Angelenos self-perception. These capital projects included:

A major performing arts complex, the three-theater Music Center (1964 – 1967).

Los Angeles County Museum of Art – the City's first major art museum (opened in 1965, the County's art collection had previously been housed together with the Natural History Museum at Exposition Park).

The Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art's "Temporary Contemporary", designed by Frank Gehry (1982).

Los Angeles Theater Center (1985).

The local organizing committee hired Robert Fitzpatrick, then President of the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), to create an Olympic Arts Festival that would demonstrate L.A.'s coming of age as a city of culture. With a budget of almost \$20 million dollars, the Olympic Arts Festival featured many avant-garde theater and dance companies from Europe. Angelenos were not expected to pay to see plays in Swedish or Italian, and the press refused to cover the festival's opening event with an unknown German dance troupe under the direction of choreographer Pina Bausch. The Times signaled that Pina Bausch could not be of much interest since no New York presenter had yet chosen to hire her company. The general sense was that out-of-towners coming to Los Angeles for the Olympic Games would buy the lion's share of the tickets for such culturally elite programming.

In a stunning rebuke to stereotyping, Angelenos bought almost all the tickets to the nine-week festival even before it opened. They welcomed the best of Europe and patted themselves on the back because their city had hosted Swedish theater directed by Bergman and French theater by Minouchkine. Pina Bausch's opening was hailed as a triumph even as a third of the audience booed and walked out. It was controversial, it was cutting edge, and it was in Los Angeles before New York! New York audiences had to wait an entire year before they had the opportunity to see the Bausch phenomenon at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival. By that time, the New York Times acknowledged

Bausch's American Premiere in Los Angeles but buried it deep inside the paper.

The Olympic Arts Festival proved to Angelenos that they were a world-class audience and demonstrated to the world that the City was ready to pay for interesting and challenging art. Based upon the success of the Olympics, Mayor Tom Bradley decided to continue the party by initiating the Los Angeles Festival. With Fitzpatrick initially at the helm, the Los Angeles Festival was designed to be held every three years and to serve as a continuous beacon to the world of the City's ascendancy as a cultural capital.

America's City of Festivals

The 1980s saw the birth of many new festivals that showcased specific cultures. These included but were in no way limited to the African Marketplace, the Garifuna Festival, Fiesta Broadway, Cinco de Mayo, Day of the Dead, and the Pacific Islander Festival. The Fringe Festival, the Open Festival, AFI Fest and Dance Kaleidoscope drew attention to the local arts community. The Summer Solstice Folk Music Festival, the Venice Art Walk, and West Hollywood Hallowe'en drew audiences to specific neighborhoods.

In 1988, with new funding and a new Director, the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department adopted a plan to nurture and sponsor even more new festivals in Los Angeles. The Central Avenue Jazz Festival and others were created, produced, and funded by the Department with the hope that local communities would eventually learn to fundraise and produce their festivals on their own.

By the 1990s, festivals had become de rigeur for neighborhoods such as Sherman Oaks and Leimert Park. New, international and hybrid art forms inspired the LA Times Festival of Books, the Louisiana Cajun Festival, the World Festival of Sacred Music and Peter Sellars' stunning 1990 and 1993 "take" on the Los Angeles Festival, all of which drew millions of people to festival stages throughout the County.

By 1988 festivals were so abundant, the Cultural Affairs Department began to publish an annual guide to City festivals, a publication that now highlights more than 300 celebrations throughout the region. Today the concept of festivals is so institutionalized, seminars and workshops are held to help festival producers. Technical assistance and grants are also provided to financially support the best of the best of these events. Just as every U.S. citizen believes in their right to free speech, millions of L.A. residents now believe, with justification, that at some point during the year, a festival that highlights their particular culture, favorite art form, ancestral ceremonies or ethnic food will miraculously appear in a neighborhood accessible to them.

Aaron Paley and his partner, Katie Bergin, created Community Arts Resources (CARS) over twenty years ago to perpetuate the long festival tradition in Los Angeles. Since that time, they have produced festivals throughout the region. Their talents have resulted in the Santa Monica Festival, the 1999 Sacred Music Festival, WordPlay, Yiddishkayt and dozens of other celebrations for dozens of communities in Southern California.

3 WHY? AN INTRODUCTION TO PRODUCING A FESTIVAL

Hope Tschopik Schneider

Over the years, many an intrepid “wanna be” festival producer has beat a path to my door seeking wisdom on how to produce a festival. Zealots, true believers, star gazers and boosters all come in the belief that festivals are “good”, that they create art awareness, build audiences, increase tourism, join hands across cultural divides, serve families and are springboards for emerging artists. In fact, festivals are not only good, they are positively wonderful, modern miracles in the world of arts, entertainment, neighborhood revitalization and economic development.

My first question to the starry-eyed true believer is always one that provokes the most quizzical of expressions in response: Why? Why do it? And all would-be festival producers wrinkle their brows, clear their throats in minor frustration and then begin to extol all the virtues noted above as though these are adequate responses to my very blunt question.

Let me be clear: these are not. The most important question to ask of yourself, your organization, if you want to produce a festival is Why? What do you hope to accomplish? What is the transformation? What is the change that you are seeking to create? Why do another festival? And don't tell me it is because they are “good”, good for the artist, good for the neighborhood, good for building the audience. And don't tell me it is to celebrate anything, particularly not a 100th anniversary.

Festivals are not necessarily “good” things nor are they always very good parties or great communal celebrations. Indeed, most festivals are awful. They present local artists under bad performance conditions, on temporary stages, using rented sound systems. This to a bemused audience unsure of who is performing, who sit in the sun on rented folding chairs with children who are uncomfortable and restless, surrounded by a sea of people who are milling about, looking for food, shopping amidst assembled street fare items, inhaling the delicate smell of fried food mingled with the even more exotic fragrance of porta-potty chemicals.

I am sorry. Yuck.

It is no wonder that my children, raised on festivals from a very early age, began wailing in the car as we drove to Griffith Park for Peter Sellars' grand adventure in the second Los Angeles Festival, and screamed in unison, “Please, Mom, don't take us to another F-E-S-T-I-V-A-L! Can't we do something fun? Can't we go to the pony rides instead?”

“Harsh” is what you are thinking. Not really. I have been credited with producing one of Los Angeles' most important festivals, The Olympic Arts Festival in 1984. During the afterglow of the festival I was often asked what it would take to do another festival like it? I laughed and always answered it the same way: “A lot of money,” and a really, really good reason to do a festival.

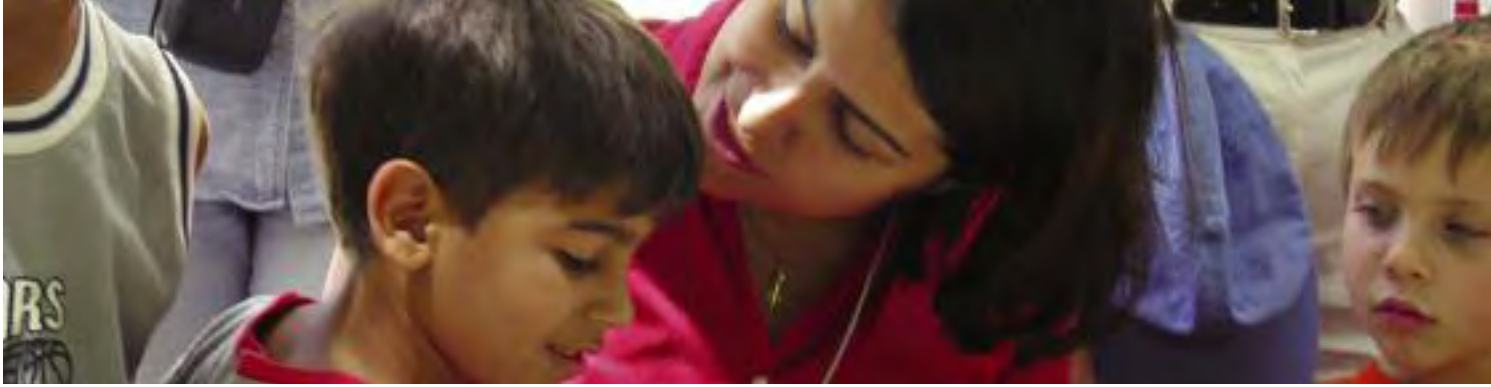
What is a festival? By observation, I would say that the modern “festival” is often nothing more than a marketing term, a “pseudo event”. The Ravinia Festival is the summer

home and summer season of the Chicago Symphony. Think Hollywood Bowl on a lawn instead of in an outdoor amphitheatre. The Mostly Mozart Festival is a summer season produced by Lincoln Center, formal classical music caste in a more informal, “folksy” way. Your average theatre festival is a short season of theatrical presentations around a thematic focus, work of a certain period or by a certain playwright, new work, foreign touring companies, maybe a few world premieres sprinkled in. Or there is the neighborhood “festival”, a smaller, updated, culturally or geographically specific version of what used to be the county fair, a minuscule version of the Los Angeles County Fair without the 4-H club participation or horse races: a little music, a lot of crafts, even more food and drink and maybe some fire works (of some sort).

You get my point. The term “festival” gets bandied about to cover a whole host of performing arts presentations. But, lest you think I am a complete naysayer, I do think it is possible to create a Festival, a festival of value, distinction and purpose. To do so requires real integrity of purpose (WHY?), real definition and intimate understanding of its audience (FOR WHOM?), a real commitment to the uniqueness and quality of the artists to be presented (WHAT?), and a real sense of the magic of place (WHERE?). It also requires enormous hard work in both planning and implementation. In essence, because a festival is a series of one-time, unique events with new combinations of people, there is no room for error and no time for refinement. It takes enormous resources to do a festival well, either in the form of a highly motivated and involved community or in the form of large sponsorship/funding commitments. Festivals, once the definition of who, what and why is set, are exercises in precise technical and production planning. There are endless details to run down and nail to the floor. There are fundraising, accounting and cash flow problems to solve. There are production problems to solve. There are audience amenity problems to solve. There are public assemblage and flow problems to solve. There are political problems to solve. There are huge marketing and public relations problems to solve.

Festivals, no matter how small or community based, require a staff of vision, expertise and commitment, an ace technical crew, brilliant marketing and real dollars, up front.

You will know you are on the right track in planning your festival when it is assessed against critical factors that make a festival a festival. There are a handful of qualities that most remarkable, enduring festivals hold in common. First and foremost, they are “special”; not an every day occurrence. The word, festival, itself conveys the deeper meaning. It is those sets of events that occur on a Saint's Feast Day. It is medieval in derivation. It implies the cross roads, the big cathedral towns, the roaming troubadours, artisans and craftsmen, the market days, the leisure of a day free from work in the fields, the drinking and carousing, the gathering from all walks of life. It implies jostling, revelry, discovery and amazement. It is a day to look forward to in great anticipation and a day to



remember for a long time after the sun has set.

In the same way that a party is about the guests, a festival is truly about the audience. The real tension in producing the Olympic Arts Festival was the schism between what the “arts community” wanted the festival to do for them and what we wanted do for the Los Angeles audience. We actively chose to produce a festival that put the audience at its center. It was our ambition to “knock their socks off” and to bring to Los Angeles some of the best artists working in the world at that time. The vision was given to us by the International Olympic Organizing Committee: “To produce an arts festival of equal stature to the Games themselves.” We interpreted that mandate to mean international, of excellence and very, very special.

Festivals all work because of an aspect of condensation and density. Like a feast, festivals are marked by abundance and excess – too much of a good thing, all of it divine and delicious. It is heaven in making for those wise humans who know how to nibble and graze. It is a nightmare of overindulgence for those with no self-restraint, wanting to consume everything in sight from morning till night. A festival is so packed with activity and choice that no one can see or do it all. The audience, the revelers, must feel like they have experienced amazing things and must be wistful about everything they know they have missed.

Festivals offer audiences new, unusual, rarely seen artists and art work. This is why festivals are so often devoted to new work, premieres, touring productions or artists exploring new artistic ground. Festivals are the home of unique collaborations, large-scaled works and the assemblage of artists and art work from “exotic” places whether that be the world of independent film, animation, puppeteers, shape-note singers, traditional folk artists or youth theatre. In a city as big and diverse as Los Angeles, this can easily mean a festival curated by a trip across town, across cultures or across generations. Festivals often anchor themselves, like the contemporary shopping mall with its “anchor” stores, in the presentation of two or three known, truly remarkable artists as headliners.

Festivals happen in unique and unusual places or in the usual places in distinctly new and different ways. They are designed to specifically shift perspective and behavior in a known place – streets are closed to traffic and opened to performers and audiences; in the quadrangle defined by the distance of a four player game of Frisbee in the park a dance floor is erected and the audience sits in the round, and on the parking lot in front of city hall the temporal art of chalk emerges.

Festivals consecrate through action “place” and make it forever sacred in memory. I have heard from many who went to the Olympic Arts Festival that they will pass by one of our venues and remember in infinite detail what they saw that special night in 1984. Every time I drive a certain block of Cahuenga Boulevard and pass the gates of an anonymous sound stage, I think of Theatre du Soleil and an amazing production of Richard II. Or when I drive by the Pasadena Civic Auditorium I still see in my mind’s eye the people lined up to see Les Ballets Africaines on a summers evening 20+ years ago, with the huge star of Festive Federalism festooning the plaza. And so it is for countless thousands of Angelenos as they travel their known world. For some, their festival memory evokes the echo of the Garden Theatre Festival in Barnsdall Park and Pershing Square. For others, it is a particular memory of the Lotus Festival rippling gently on the surface of the lake in Echo Park, or the laughter from the Family Festivals rocking Sepulveda Pass on the 405 as they sit in traffic below the Getty. Or a jazz rift as it drifts from Lemiert Park as they drive south on Crenshaw.

Even though we live in the 21st Century, we create festivals for the same reason the Greeks, the Romans, the Celts, the Sumerians and the Mayans created festivals. In truth, the reason it is hard for me to give advice about how to produce festivals is because the Olympic Arts Festival was relatively easy to produce and not because the money was there in abundance. The “why” of the Olympic Arts Festival was answered thousands of years ago. It was handed down from Zeus on Mt. Olympus, through Pierre de Coubertin, to Juan Antonio Samaranch to Peter Ueberroth to Bob Fitzpatrick to Hope Tschopik Schneider.

Festivals, above all else, are sacred acts. We do them to make an ordinary day in an ordinary place sacred and to pay homage to the ineffable.

Hope Tschopik Schneider is the President of Coldwater Associates. She was also the Producer of the 1984 Olympic Arts Festival and has served as a consultant to many of L.A.’s major festivals and celebrations. Her clients include the Museum of Natural History, County of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Town Hall, KUSC, Plaza de la Raza, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

4

CHOOSING PLACE: WHAT MAKES A GOOD FESTIVAL SITE?

Maya Gingery

I have to begin with a disclaimer. I am not a festival producer, nor have I ever been part of the planning of a festival. But I work with a few of the best festival producers in Los Angeles, some of whom have articles in this book, and I've done mountains of research on this topic. So I feel comfortable about imparting some of what I've learned in the following pages.

Just as a festival is planned from the ground up, let's start with the basics and proceed from there.

A festival is a kind of Theater. A stage for performance. A place for ritual. A space that is transformed into a sacred circle where a community of people share in a rare and enjoyable experience. A gathering place for adults and children, food and drink, music and dance, and the spectacle and ceremony all of that implies. I've attended quite a few festivals and like most attendees and audiences, I have developed a good sense about sites that work.

The site you eventually choose, no matter how humble or grand, will play a key role in this drama. It is the contingency upon which your audience, and the culture it represents, will come to value its effectiveness as a cultural icon. And it is also going to determine the scale of everything, from the nuts and bolts of financing and budgeting to the human interaction of sharing, planning, problem-solving, and cleaning up. So the first question a festival producer must answer is always "what makes a good festival site?"

A festival is a dramatic, organic, community-building and sometimes unforgettable kind of event that may occur once, or once a year. Our contemporary version of the festival reoccurs in cycles of one, three or five years, usually a measure of the magnitude and complexity of the event. On the extreme end of festival timelines, the Tsembaga of Highlands Papua New Guinea hold a year-long festival that always occurs in the same specially designated arena, but only once every 12 to 15 years. Which actually is not a bad idea, but Western culture operates on a different kind of clock. The festival season usually comes alive in summer, when the air is warm and the food plentiful. When our solitary, often synchronized lives are ready for some meaningful playfulness. And Southern California has an enviable, almost-perfect climate for outdoor celebrations. Part of the magic is in transforming a city park, a neighborhood street or a common tourist attraction into something special. A place where for a few hours, a day, a weekend, or sometimes longer, a community can share in a celebration of our common bonds, our shared values and the human spirit.

Most festivals, with the exception of many film and performance festivals, are held outdoors where the largest number of people can gather. But outdoor venues have many requirements. Before you begin your search, ask yourself these important questions:

- What kind of event is it?
- Would it be better suited to an outdoor or indoor environment?
- Who is the audience?
- Will there be children, seniors, the handicapped?
- If outdoors, how much space does it need?
- If indoors, what kind of building will work?
- What kind of events are planned? Does your festival need a hill for the grand finale? A soccer field for games and sports? A lake for boat races? A street for a parade?
- Will you need an entrance or can you just wander in?
- Is it easy to reach? Close to major streets or freeways?
- Are there parking fees or fees required to enter the park or outdoor/indoor location?

Since a festival is usually designed to attract and serve large audiences, a sizeable, easily accessible and well-located site is essential. You want your festival-goers to get there easily and have a worry-free stay. The new FAB Art Festival in downtown LA is held in the parking lot of the Sci-Arc Institute of Architecture and attracts members of the growing new community of downtown loft-dwellers. It is conveniently located, open and expandable due to the outdoor street location and there is street parking in the surrounding community with a short walk to the site.

Happily, Los Angeles is not at a loss for interesting places to stage a festival. The La Brea Tar Pits, right next to the LA County Museum of Art and across from its parent, the Crafts and Folk Art Museum, is home to the Festival of Masks. The Simon Rodia Watts Towers, another cultural landmark and tourist attraction, is host to the Summer Jazz Festival, now paired with the Day of the Drum Festival. Barnsdall Park, an historic, cultural, educational and recreational landmark, is the site of many summer festivals, both past and present.

A festival can be stitched together from a number of different sites linked by a common theme (The Olympic Arts Festival). Or a university campus can be the site for many types of festival themes. UCLA, LA's sprawling "city within a city", hosts the Annual LA Times Festival of Books where festival-goers gather for two days of immersion in the world of books, book authors, publishing and education.

Returning year after year by popular demand, Echo Park, close to freeways and part of one of LA's oldest downtown communities, comes alive in summer with the Annual Lotus Festival, the man-made lake filled with its trademark lotus blossoms as center stage. Chinatown is the site for Chinese New Year, where every year for the last 108 years, LA's Chinese community celebrates and honors its ancient traditions. It is



one of the oldest festivals in the history of Los Angeles, and draws crowds from all parts of this enormous city. Of course, if you are planning something a little smaller, there are numerous public spaces such as municipal art galleries, community recreation centers and public parks. Typically under-used as festival sites, community parks all over LA are the sites of many small but meaningful festivals celebrating the cultural diversity of Los Angeles. All come with strict regulations, but are widely available for the public to use, when not in use for regularly scheduled events. You can contact your local city Department of Cultural Affairs or Department of Parks and Recreation for venue ideas. (see the chapter on Resources).

Public libraries are ideally suited for storytelling, poetry readings, book festivals or art exhibitions. Many local city libraries host year round events. And if you are interested in something a little different, public swimming pools, train or subway stations, historic sites and even vacant lots can make creative alternatives. A local real estate agent might have information to share on possible sites. Street festivals can be arranged with the cooperation of your local city government or council. If you want to use a city street, be prepared to work with your City Council or other government agency, as well as the Police and Fire Departments. They will be involved in almost every aspect of your festival planning. And then there are always the many Southern California beaches. Bottom line? It's only limited by your imagination (and the law).

Private sites are perhaps more difficult to find, but they can be secured. Museums, private land, schools, movie lots, colleges and university campuses and the numerous churches in Los Angeles, though not primarily designed for festivals, are all potential sites with an underlying cultural significance. There are also the commercial venues which will usually attract a broader audience. Theaters, clubs, dance studios, shopping malls and warehouses are alternative ideas for a grassroots festival event.

Finding the site is the easy part! Now come the details, which can challenge the most driven festival producer. Consider that most sites will be limited by city regulations requiring permits, buildings always have fire regulations, and any event involving more than 500 people requires insurance. You'll need access to toilets, water and waste disposal. The site must be large enough to allow for the flow of human traffic and adequate parking, whether on surrounding city streets or in designated areas, is an essential component of your plan. You'll also have to consider how increased traffic to the area will affect the surrounding communities. Yes, you may need an arbitrator in your festival planning. On the other hand, your site might be perfect for your event in almost every way with no trouble from the neighbors, but with such limited access that you might as well hold it on the Moon.

"Broadcast space" is an intangible space unlike a park or film palace, but can serve to spread the word about your festival. It could also be the medium of the future for "Festivals of the Air". And it would introduce a new set of regulations quite different from what we are describing here. Television is often the presenting platform for large ritual celebrations. Consider New Year's Eve in New York City's Times Square, where you can anticipate the Big Apple drop from your sofa in Santa Monica. Though it's certainly not the same as the live experience, it can in a sense be a "showing of the doing"; the next best thing to being there. The Millenium Celebrations from Paris to Easter Island gave us all a tantalizing taste of how good television coverage can be. Then there is cable television, an under-utilized and easily available venue for the non-professional. Radio is another medium for publicity and broadcast, sound which can potentially be anywhere. And then there is the ubiquitous Internet, which has yet to realize it's full creative potential.

Some other questions you may want to ask:

- **Where is my audience and how do they travel?**
- **Do they travel?**
- **Is there parking for transportation to and from the site?**
- **Is the site easily accessible by car, bus, public transportation or on foot?**
- **If money is involved, how much are the rental fees and other costs? (If it's over your budget, suddenly the scale of your vision will necessitate thinking smaller.)**
- **Will there be vendors and if so, how many?**
- **Will there be food? Alcohol? Animals? Fireworks?**
- **Will the site support the essential needs for electricity, water, shelter and safety?**
- **Is there adequate space for audience seating and performers needs?**
- **Are there public facilities? Are there enough?**

Finding the perfect site for your festival can be daunting, but asking yourself these questions can answer many of the most important challenges in festival planning. It is most often the case that satisfying the most logistical of problems is the first criteria in choosing a site. The magic will always follow. I guarantee it.

Maya Gingery is a Los Angeles-based musician, butoh artist, former university professor and occasional editor. She is also a choreographer and filmmaker whose work is currently represented in Dance Camera West's Summer Film Festival.

5 TIMELINES AND WORKPLANS

Aaron Paley

Festival projects need a plan. Granted, there are some directors who like to improvise as they work, but they are special cases. If you want your festival to be on schedule, on budget and on time, you need to plan carefully for everything down to the smallest detail, and then plan for the unexpected.

A Workplan will keep everyone on the same page. What needs to be done, what can or can't be done, what color are the flags and what size are the kiosks? Who is doing what, where do they have to be, and how will they get the men on stilts into the tent? These are the kind of questions that will come up as you plan, produce, organize and deliver your festival.

The next step is the Timeline. There is much to do, people to manage, phone calls, e-mails, deliveries, etc. A timeline will keep you on track, one step, one day, one week, one month, even one year at a time. To say it is essential is an understatement. You cannot do without one.

The timeline given here is an example of a 5-month plan for a large city festival. It is a reference guide, covering everything from booking the artists to ordering the ice. It doesn't matter how large or how small your budget, the workplan and timeline are your essential maps for the journey of producing a festival.



A SAMPLE TIMELINE AND 5-MONTH PLAN FOR A LARGE CITY FESTIVAL

MONTH 1	
	BUDGETS, CITY BUSINESS & FUNDRAISING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize budget <input type="checkbox"/> Process Purchase Order for payment <input type="checkbox"/> Research Sponsors that want booth presence <input type="checkbox"/> Follow up on letters sent to sponsors <input type="checkbox"/> Contact potential and new sponsor booths
	LOGISTICS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contact park office about other events scheduled at park day of festival <input type="checkbox"/> Research solar power for stages <input type="checkbox"/> Download Event Permit from park office website <input type="checkbox"/> Contact all rental companies with date
	PUBLICITY & MARKETING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Select generic photos <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with publicist to discuss goals & timeline <input type="checkbox"/> Give publicist initial press contact list <input type="checkbox"/> Give publicist names & information on key performers & workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Give names of key performers to publicist by week 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Enter Publicist's press contact list
	PROGRAMMING & ARTIST RELATIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Revise all contracts & correspondence <input type="checkbox"/> Research and contact performers, strolling & workshop artists <input type="checkbox"/> Research MCs
	POSTCARD/BROCHURE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with Designer to discuss postcard and set copy deadlines <input type="checkbox"/> Get copy deadline and schedule accordingly
	VENDORS/BOOTHS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Research environmental, city dept. & non-profit orgs., craft & food vendors <input type="checkbox"/> Determine which vendors should get late invites <input type="checkbox"/> Process craft & food vendor applications <input type="checkbox"/> Call about health dept. permit <input type="checkbox"/> Get Coffee Vendor as sponsor
	WORKSHOPS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Types of workshops and how many decided upon <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops confirmed <input type="checkbox"/> Give information on workshops to publicist <li style="padding-left: 20px;">Workshop budget determined

MONTH 2

LOGISTICS

- Send out requests for donation of food & water for artists
- Contact Red Cross
- Confirm Park service will clean up park & leave bins until end of fest
- Get Event Insurance certificate for the city based on contract
- Set up city-wide meeting of key departments by week 5

PROGRAMMING & ARTIST RELATIONS

- Final artist schedule set
- Get bios & photos from artists and environmental groups & give to publicist
- Contracts with tech to all artists completed and mailed (include w9 & invoice)
- Choose MC's/ send contracts
- Artists for Festival entered into computer and tagged
- Artist contact sheet
- Schedule alternate performances on two stages

PUBLICITY

- Select artist photos and make JPEG and prints to distribute to press
- Approve Media Alert and Press Release
- Speak with television and radio about PSAs

SIGNS

- Create area signage to encourage flow
- Directional signs

STAFFING

- Staff positions determined
- Call & confirm availability of staff

VENDORS/BOOTHS

- Deadline for all invited vendor applications by week 8
- Deadline for all vendors, non-profits, community, environmental & city organizations - week 9

VOLUNTEERS

- Volunteer positions determined
- Contact volunteers and volunteer organizations
- Post Volunteer flyers on web and schools

WORKSHOPS

- Give workshop info to postcard and program editor
- Coordinate with workshop artists what supplies needed and request donations
- Work with staffing coordinator to determine staff & volunterers

LE TIMEL
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MONTH 3
<p>LOGISTICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Radios & megaphone ordered <input type="checkbox"/> Go to park and create map of park set-up with chalked out measurements <input type="checkbox"/> Compile all rental needs/Chairs, tables, tents & sidewalls <input type="checkbox"/> File for event permit <input type="checkbox"/> Send participating parking lots a letter of confirmation and call to confirm <input type="checkbox"/> Hire Parking Company and get final bid <input type="checkbox"/> Does stage need special permit? - if so get it! <input type="checkbox"/> Create loading & unloading permits and maps for participants <input type="checkbox"/> Sound tech needs to Sound Company <input type="checkbox"/> Determine preliminary food order for hospitality and volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate with Donated food sponsor <input type="checkbox"/> Get extinguisher needs <input type="checkbox"/> Event permit sent to city by middle of month
<p>PROGRAM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Write program copy <input type="checkbox"/> Give designer map of park for program
<p>PROGRAMMING & ARTIST RELATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Deadline for artist contracts and tech riders <input type="checkbox"/> All artist contracts and tech riders reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Sound needs determined & given to Sound Company <input type="checkbox"/> Special tech needs, # of people performing and loading determined <input type="checkbox"/> Call performing artists to confirm needs <input type="checkbox"/> List of special needs, # of people performing and loading made
<p>PROGRAM/BROCHURE DESIGN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Final text & photo to designer by mid-month <input type="checkbox"/> Determine designer's deadline for finished artwork <input type="checkbox"/> Brochures to Printer <input type="checkbox"/> Get approval of postcard from sponsors and city <input type="checkbox"/> Postcard to printer deadline - 10th week <input type="checkbox"/> Postcard to mailing house - 11th week <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm dates and quantities with printer and mailing house for postcard <input type="checkbox"/> Residential delivery of postcard begins - 12th week <input type="checkbox"/> Save the date e-mail 6 weeks prior to event <input type="checkbox"/> Create distribution system for postcard and designate driver to drop off
<p>SIGNS</p> <p>Confirm Festival sign needs from everyone and send around approval draft</p>
<p>VENDORS/BOOTHS</p> <p>Approve and send confirmation letters to environmental, city departments, non-profits, vendor and food booths</p> <p>Create a map of each booth area</p> <p>Health permit application</p>

<input type="checkbox"/> Designate booth areas at park and measure	
VOLUNTEERS <input type="checkbox"/> Assign jobs to volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Send out letters to volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Get food donations for volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm volunteer organizations for cleanup	
WORKSHOPS <input type="checkbox"/> Individual artists send in their supplies list or get own supplies <input type="checkbox"/> Call workshop artists to confirm <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm workshop information on all publicity is correct	
MONTH 4: WEEKS 1 & 2	
LOGISTICS <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with City managers at park to review needs & clean up <input type="checkbox"/> Confirm rental needs are correct <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize park set-up with all changes <input type="checkbox"/> Place final rental orders <input type="checkbox"/> Meet City electrician at park to discuss electrical needs and generators for food, vendors & stages <input type="checkbox"/> Compile list for Handyman and set hours <input type="checkbox"/> Letter notifying residents of festival is sent from city <input type="checkbox"/> Create parking roster	
PROGRAM <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule corrections on drafts of Program	
PROGRAMMING & ARTIST RELATIONS <input type="checkbox"/> Send artists & workshops confirmation packets	
POSTCARDS / BROCHURE <input type="checkbox"/> Website deadline <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail blast, second in series <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize distribution list of postcards and deliver once a week	
SIGNS Approve signage list Approve signage spelling	
STAFFING Send staff confirmation letters with directions, map and brochure 3 weeks prior to event	
VENDORS/BOOTHS Send confirmation packets w/ map, directions, permits and regulations Send confirmation to donation organizations Finalize all booth locations Meet with Food vendors & Fire Dept.	

- Electrical needs to city electrician
- Vendor/booth packet materials sent
- Determine hose & washer needs

VOLUNTEERS

- Assign volunteer positions
- Finalize Schedule of Volunteers
- Send volunteers confirmation letters w/ directions, map and brochure

WORKSHOPS

- Assemble art supplies based on the above for workshops to bring to festival
- Organize workshop boxes
- Prepare and approve workshop sign list

MONTH 4: WEEKS 3 & 4

LOGISTICS

- Walk through with stage Rental Company
- Send Rental Company confirmation letters
- Create Dressing Room schedule
- Meet with Parking Company at park
- Write scripts for MC's
- Confirm drop off of megaphone, walkie talkies, headsets
- Final Food Order placed with catering
- Load-in Schedule for Event Finalized
- Deliver script and parking permits to MC's
- Order ice
- Confirm spreadsheet of tables, chairs, tents, sidewalls
- Check master festival book has all documents
- Signage: dressing rooms & directional signs
- Call artists to verbally confirm
- Check staff name badges, create new badges if missing or if new staff
- Put together staff clipboards & book
- Checks signed and distributed to clipboards, include blank checks
- Schedule donation of food and water deliveries
- Copy schedule at a glance for book/clipboards
- Copy artist and staff phone list for book/clipboards
- Copy contracts, tech riders, check-in schedule, radio check-in for master book
- All food, supplies & hospitality shopping done
- Confirm with performers & MC's all details

PROGRAM

Program changes received

STAFFING

Set final staff schedule for day and call to confirm

VENDORS/BOOTHS

Create Check-In & Out sheet for all area coordinators
Confirm have extinguishers and hose nozzles for specific vendors

Coordinate food donation for artists and volunteers on festival day

VOLUNTEERS

Call volunteers to confirm

TWO DAYS BEFORE

- Change office voicemail for event
- Chalk out each structure including all booths for tent Rental Company as per map
- Put up Festival Parking signs and City parking signs 24hrs. before festival
- Pick up/delivery of walkie talkies, megaphone (Test and secure equipment)
- Load truck
- Work with rental companies at park

TO PACK IN TRUCK

- Clipboards
- Mirrors
- Coolers
- Coffee maker and hot drink supply box
- Dollies (two)
- Velon
- Plastic serving bowls, napkins, cups, knives, forks, spoons & big knife
- Programs
- Walkies and megaphones
- Signs, sandwich signs
- Workshop supplies
- Tablecloths
- Signs

MONTH 5

First Day of Event

MELINE
I PLAN
GE CITY
STIVAL



SAMPLE

FESTIVAL APPLICATION Site Plan and Plan of Operation Information

(This information is required for festivals lasting 4 or more days or as required by ordinance and the Development Center)

Site Plans

- Name and Address of the Event
- The scale at which your site plan is drawn. (Ex. 1" = 25 feet)
- An arrow showing which direction is north.
- Show property lines and size (length and width) of the lot.
- Label how all parts of the site will be used (e.g. parking area, stage, beer tent, food prep and serving areas, portable toilets, entrance/exit, fences, seating, etc.). Provide dimensions for each of these labeled areas. Follow criteria for "Outdoor Assembly" Sec. 261-97 if applicable.
- Location and size of all proposed signs that will be erected on the premise.
- Location and size of any existing or proposed outdoor lights on the premise.
- Location, size and use of any buildings on the premise.

Tip: Check with the Property Information staff at the Development Center (call (414) 286-8207) to find out if there is a copy of a survey or a site plan on file for your property. If there is one in our files, it should make creating a site plan for your event much easier.

Plan of Operation

- A detailed description of the event (Describe what activities will occur.)
- Provide a discussion of possible problems that might occur and how they will be addressed. Describe what security measures will be in place.
- Hours of Operation
- Describe where and how delivery, loading, employee and customer vehicles will enter, leave and park.
- Number of toilet and hand washing facilities available for men and women.
- Other...

6 THE BUSINESS SIDE OF FESTIVALS

Sumi Sevilla Haru

Putting on a festival is like running a business, be it nonprofit or for profit. First you start with a budget to determine how much the event will cost. Then money must be raised to pay for all the items in the budget in order to break even, or better yet, to have enough left over to use as start-up monies for next year's event. Following is a sample budget that shows the types of expenditures a modest, first-time festival ordinarily requires:

ADMINISTRATION	
Clerical	500.00
Production Staff	2,000.00
Stage Manager	500.00
Stage Crew	1,000.00
Sub Total	4,000.00
LOGISTICS	
Canopies/Chairs/Tables	5,000.00
Sound	500.00
Piano rental	500.00
Security	200.00
Insurance	200.00
Walkie-Talkies	100.00
Festival supplies	100.00
Bottled Water	100.00
Sub Total	6,700.00
PROGRAM	
Talent	5,000.00
Artistic Director	500.00
MC's	400.00
Sub Total	5,900.00
PUBLICITY	
Printing Program	300.00
Printing Posters	600.00
Sub Total	900.00
TOTAL	17,500.00
10% Contingency	1,750.00
	19,150.00

Hopefully, really dedicated volunteers will provide pro bono services for some of the positions listed above. Not included in the budget is a "thank you" for the volunteers. It could be a certificate from the City Council or a small memento, and volunteers should also be given a free meal that can be arranged through a food vendor for a discounted price.

Producers should never be cheap in order to cut costs because the results will always be obvious. All performers should be paid because they make their living through their art. Superstars often refuse to take an honorarium, but do offer to pay them.

Once the budget is set, funds must be raised to pay for the event. If there is time, apply for grants approximately one year before your festival. The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs Cultural Grant Program has a special program for festivals and parades. The department also has small grants for first time events.

If the event is in a redevelopment area, the Community Redevelopment Agency may be willing to give funds and be a co-sponsor. If possible, get a local television network to be a co-sponsor, as stations frequently run public service announcements for the event. Funds can be raised from local businesses such as restaurants and auto dealers.

No monies should be given without recognition, so be willing to provide an information booth and other amenities to large donors. Classifications of donors may be made such as "Sponsors," "Co-Sponsors," "Patrons," and "Friends." Give each classification a set of entitlements, for instance, Sponsors may be entitled to have their logos displayed in promotional media and materials, signage and banners for the festival. A Sponsor may be entitled to a full-page ad, and a Co-Sponsor can have a half-page ad in the program. Smaller donations may be acknowledged in a special section of the printed program.

Producers often raise a lot of money with a drink booth, although it is labor intensive. For years, Heritage Asian Pacific, Inc., the organizers of the Dragon Boat Races at the Lotus Festival, have funded their entire operations from revenues earned at their drink booth. Food and artisan vendors are customarily charged for booth rental and may also be charged a percentage of profits. Major corporations frequently pay large sums to have a booth to give away samples or to display their products. Be careful not to let your event look over-commercialized.

The producer can sell t-shirts, have a dunking booth, sell raffle tickets or include a carnival to raise funds. Most community festivals do not charge admission, but tickets may be sold for headliner entertainment if it is set away from the main festival area.

A reception before the event for sponsors, co-sponsors, donors and special guests generates good will. This reception should be placed away from the midway, to avoid attendees from feeling left out of an activity they consider elitist. Avoid the use of "V.I.P." on any enclosed canopies.

Always welcome is a tent for volunteers, Explorers who help with crowd control, and Clean and Green personnel to take a break and rest their feet. Make sure free bottled water is available. Volunteers who feel appreciated are more dependable and will most likely return next year.

If enough cash is generated, some extras to consider are free t-shirts for volunteers and fancy laminated name tags for staff, volunteers and entertainers. A very valuable expenditure is a debriefing luncheon for volunteers, staff and representatives of Police, Fire and Department of Transportation representatives. This will ensure very willing cooperation for the next event.

Sumi Haru was the festival producer for the City of Los Angeles for over ten years. During that time, she oversaw the development of the festivals and celebrations in every corner of the City. She also co-founded the Lotus Festival held annually in Echo Park and continues to produce events such as The Mariachi Festival and other festivals that draw audiences of 10,000 – 100,000.

Project Budget

See Sample Budget (Appendix F) as an example of a complete project budget submission

Place double asterisks (**) in front of all items the applicant intends to support with Cultural Affairs monies and a single asterisk (*) in front of expenses cross-referenced as donations

A. Key Personnel

Subtotal Key Personnel

\$ _____

B. Contracted Fees and Services

SAMPLE

Subtotal Contracted Fees and Services

\$ _____

C. Office Costs and Production Materials

Subtotal Office Costs and Production Materials

\$ _____

D. Marketing and Project Documentation

Subtotal Marketing and Project Documentation

\$ _____

E. Equipment Rental

Subtotal Equipment Rental

\$ _____

F. Other Expenses and Miscellaneous/Contingency

Subtotal Other Expenses and Miscellaneous/Contingency

\$ _____

G. TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES

\$ _____

Project Budget

Applicant must show a 1:1 match for the grant request. The match can be all cash or a combination of cash and *in-kind* donations. If a combination of cash and *in-kind* is used, no more than 50% of the match can be *in-kind*. In the space provided, estimate all proposed project income. Do not list your grant request to Department of Cultural Affairs.

ESTIMATED FESTIVAL OR PARADE INCOME

Identify items and sources with a dot (•) by funds already secured for this project.

SAMPLE

Total Estimated Project Income \$ _____

DONATED SERVICES AND MATERIALS

In-kind or donated space, supplies, volunteer services: Items listed must also be included in the Personnel Expenses on the previous page, marked with an asterisk. Confirm or estimate the fair market value of all the service(s) volunteered and material(s) donated for the proposed event.

Total Donated Services and Materials \$ _____

SUMMARY

\$	- Total Event Expenses
minus \$	- Total Event Income
minus \$	- Total Event Donations
\$	- Request of Cultural Affairs

NOTE: In most cases, total event expense minus total cash minus total donations = grant request

You may retype or reformat this and the previous page like the example in Appendix F, however, please show all the budget categories of interest to Cultural Affairs: A) Key Personnel, B) Contracted Fees and Services...and show them in the order listed on the previous page.

Appendix F

Sample Project Budget

Place double asterisks (**) in front of all items the applicant intends to support with Cultural Affairs monies and a single asterisk (*) in front of expenses cross-referenced as donations

ESTIMATED FESTIVAL EXPENSES	Cultural Affairs	Match	TOTAL
A. Key Personnel			
Executive Director (10% of annual work/208 hours x \$36.04/hour)	\$ -	\$ 7,496	\$ 7,496
Project Manager (20% of annual work/416 hours x \$16.23/hour)	-	6,752	6,752
Development Director (52 hours x \$32.76/hour)	-	1,704	1,704
Outreach Coordinator (10% of annual work/208 hours x \$18.82/hour)	-	3,915	3,915
Subtotal Key Personnel		19,867	19,867
B. Contracted Fees and Services			
*Volunteer Festival Committee (240 hours x \$50/hour)		*12,000	*12,000
**Artists Honoraria:			
Band A (8 pieces = \$5500)			
Band B (5 pieces = \$2000)			
Band C (9 pieces = \$3000)			
Disc Jockey (intermission music \$300)			
Videographer (2 cameras/\$1200)	11,000	1,000	12,000
**Youth Outreach Advocates (4 x \$200)	800	-	800
Accountant/Bookkeeper (20 hours x \$50/hour)		1,000	1,000
Subtotal Contracted Fees and Services	11,800	14,000	25,800
C. Office Costs and Production Materials			
Site Rental (two days x \$3000/day)	-	6,000	6,000
**Decorations	3,000	5,000	8,000
Subtotal Office Costs and Production Materials	3,000	11,000	14,000
D. Marketing and Project Documentation			
**Graphic Designer	1,000	-	1,000
**Printing & Postage	1,200	8,845	10,045
Phone, Fax, & Internet	-	1,200	1,200
Subtotal Marketing and Project Documentation	2,200	10,045	12,245
E. Equipment Rental			
Van, toilets, dumpsters, stage, tables/chairs, booths, walkie-talkies	-	7,700	7,700
Insurance and Permits	-	895	895
Subtotal Equipment Rental	-	8,595	8,595
F. Other Expenses and Miscellaneous/Contingency			
*Shuttle Bus Service	-	*2,500	*2,500
*TV Advertisements (cable)	-	*12,000	*12,000
Travel & meals	-	1,800	1,800
Miscellaneous	-	693	693
Subtotal Other Expenses and Miscellaneous/Contingency	-	16,993	16,993
G. Total Project Expenses		\$ 80,500	\$ 97,500

ESTIMATED FESTIVAL INCOME	
Ticket Sales (6000 adults at \$5 each/seniors and youth are free)	30,000
Booth Rentals (20 craft booths x \$200 and 5 food booths at \$1000 each)	9,000
Individual Donor	5,000
Corporate Sponsors (2 @ \$5000)	10,000
Total Estimated Project Income	\$ 54,000

DONATED SERVICES AND MATERIALS	
*Volunteer Festival Committee (240 hours x \$50/hour)	*12,000
*Shuttle bus service	*2,500
*TV advertisements (cable)	*12,000
Total Project Donations	\$ 26,500

SUMMARY	
\$ 97,500	- Total Project Expenses
minus \$ 54,000	- Project Income
minus \$ 26,500	- Total Project Donations (Note: donations + income is greater than 1:1 match) for request
\$ 17,000	- Request of Cultural Affairs



7 PUBLIC RELATIONS ADVICE FOR FESTIVAL PRODUCERS

Judith Luther Wilder and Margo Upham, ALW & Associates

“Advertising is what you pay for. PR is what you pray for.”
— Anonymous

Public Relations for most festivals encompasses promotions, sales, direct marketing, press relations, and in highly unusual cases, advertising. Public Relations for most festivals is, too often, handled by one staff person or volunteer who may also be handling Box Office, Special Events, and Fund Raising.

If this describes your festival and organization chart, read on. If, on the other hand, you have a PR Budget of more than \$100,000, stop reading and call us or one of our many underpaid colleagues in the Public Relations field. Without exception, any one of us will make sure tens of thousands of people hear about your event through newspaper articles, radio promotions, E-blasts, magazine listings, prudent advertising, and limited but effective direct mail campaigns. However, since festivals in Los Angeles with \$100,000 to spend on PR are, in a good year limited to three, we will address ways to get maximum exposure through free press, E-mail, radio giveaways, and collaborations.

Free Press

While most festival producers will swear “free press” is an oxymoron or an artifact from the ‘60s, it is still possible to get free coverage for your event if you have a great “hook”. In layman’s language, this means that covering your festival will result in a story that is interesting, possibly entertaining, and definitely newsworthy. Which will, in turn, translate into lots of new readers who will then morph into subscribers or advertisers or some entity that will benefit the newspaper or magazine or media outlet.

Securing more subscribers for a newspaper may not be uppermost on every festival producer’s list of goals and objectives but hey, no man is an island. Sometimes, often, in fact, we have to think about WITFT (what’s in it for them) when we ask strangers for publicity, funding, free space and equipment or even good will.

So what will persuade the editor or journalist that he or she should run your story? Each publication is different. The objectives of the Los Angeles Times are different from those of the Grunion Gazette or Rafu Shimpō. Nonetheless, whether you’re dealing with a large metropolitan newspaper, a neighborhood or an ethnic paper with a much smaller subscriber base, it’s hard to go wrong with good art. Photographs of an interesting event of people engaged in unusual activities like Dragon Boat Races or a Pow Wow have it all over head shots of Board Members and Speakers.

Over the years, our small PR company has probably sent out a thousand press releases and calendar listings. 98% of the time, those that have earned more than two or three lines in a simple calendar listing have been accompanied by great art. Photographs of Astro Boy shooting through the sky, bare-chested dancers with swords in their hands, and Kabuki actors dressed in exquisite brocades have always ensured favorable

placement even in the Los Angeles Times. In newspapers like Rafu Shimpō, these photographs inevitably end up on the front page. Festivals usually have an advantage over producers of poetry readings, scholastic competitions or business events because their files of interesting photographs are vast. And if they’re not, the producers should make very sure someone is racing around at their next festival photographing the most compelling artists and events in their line-up.

Press Releases, News Releases and Listings are also an important feature of a festival producer’s PR strategy. Typically, you will need to create a one or two page Press Release as well as a one-page Listing you can send to the appropriate Calendar Editors at local newspapers, radio and TV stations. In the unlikely event you can meet their lead time requirements, listings and releases will also need to be sent to the Calendar Editors at regional and national magazines.

Remember that everyone has a deadline. Find out what they are and honor them. Whenever we call a reporter, whether at the Wall Street Journal or Eastside Publications, our first question is always “Are you on deadline?” If the writer is, we ask when we might call her back and hang up so she can get back to work. Most writers we know are grateful for the consideration.

The Los Angeles Times wants to have all listings three weeks in advance and they want the listings to be sent only to www.calendarlive.com. National magazines may have lead times as long as six months and daily publications typically want to receive press releases at least two weeks in advance.

The Press Release

The Press Release should include the following: NEWS RELEASE typed at the top of the page so that the editor or writer will know what it is. Indicate if the information is for immediate release or for release at a later time. Date your releases and type the name of your company or your festival, followed by your address, phone / fax numbers, your e-mail address and the name of a contact person on the top right side of your release.

The body of your release should begin with a catchy or provocative headline that describes the festival in a way that will make a newspaper journalist want to read further.

“Chinatown Parade and Festival Celebrates 107th Anniversary with a Mile-Long Parade Led by Grand Marshal Michele Kwan” is preferable to “Chinatown Festival Parade Scheduled For February 12th”.

The headline should be followed by text that tells the reader Where, When, Who, How and Why the festival is happening. Everything should be double-spaced, typo-free, and as clear and as concise as you can make it. No one is ever turned down for keeping the message too simple.

The same advice applies to Calendar Listings although in the case of Listings, brevity truly is next to godliness.

Direct Mail

Direct Mail has, for the most part, been replaced by E-Blasts. E-Blasts are cheaper, faster and easier to get out than direct mail. Usually E-Blasts go to targeted audiences and are written in an even more concise style than you employ when you compose Listings. No one wants to open their E-mail and find term papers they're expected to read but a good headline and clear pricing and contact information often make it through the screening process. Just be sure to target your E-Blast to the appropriate audience. The Future Farmers of America or the California Real Estate Association may not be interested in the Playboy Jazz Festival but the E-mail list for the Jazz Bakery, most high school and college jazz programs, and the list at the Catalina Bar and Grill will be.

Radio

Radio Promotions are also golden. If you are organizing a World Music Festival and have CDs or tickets you can give away during KPFK's Global Village programs, you will be getting thousands of dollars of advertising for the price of a few CDs and seats at your event. Stations like KPCC love to offer their listeners copies of books that will be read at your festival, CDs from artists they can hear at your event, and especially pairs of tickets their listeners can use to attend your performances. It's a great high-impact, low-cost way to get the word out to thousands of listeners who might otherwise never hear about your festival.

Finally, don't be afraid to collaborate. Look for marketing partners in the corporate sector, at radio stations, at churches and schools, and through other producers. If you can get a church or temple to advertise and promote your festival for a month in exchange for a free food or crafts booth, you will save marketing dollars and reach new audiences simultaneously. If you can give a radio station or soft drink company a tag line on all your brochures and printed materials, you may reach 100,000 people who would not otherwise hear about The August Festival for Spinners, Mimes and Quilters. Collaborate whenever it makes sense in terms of your mission and your budget. There are bound to be at least a few dozen or even a few hundred quilters and mimes in that radio audience of 100,000 and some of them will come to your event if they hear about it on their favorite radio station.

ALW & Associates is a small public relations | project management firm that has, over the past twenty years, represented The Grand Kabuki, the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, UCLA, California Institute of the Arts, the Urasenke Society, the Center Theatre Group, the United Cambodian Community and artists such as Tim Miller, Ravi Shankar, Eric Bogosian and John O'Keefe. Judith Luther Wilder is a co-founder of the Lotus Festival and was the Executive Director of the 1990 Los Angeles Festival. She and her partner, Margo Upham (ALW & Associates) also coordinated Japan Week LA, several projects for The James Irvine Foundation, and the performance art series, Explorations.



ALW ASSOCIATES

NEWS!

For Immediate Release, Please. September 8, 2005
Contact: Jane White 562 777-7777 JaneALW@aol.com
Janine Otis 310 888-8888 Janine4pr@aol.com

CALENDAR LISTING – DANCE

WHAT:

Butoh Master John Kosaka in the Los Angeles Premiere of “Disaster in the Cedars”

WHEN:

Wednesday, October 20, 2005 8 PM.

WHERE:

Torrance Performing Arts Center, 819 S. Hughes Way, Torrance, California 90804, near the 405 Freeway, exit at Hughes Way. Free, convenient parking located adjacent to the Performing Arts Center.

TICKET INFORMATION:

\$30 general admission; \$25 for Torrance Performing Arts Center members, students with ID or groups of ten or more. Charge by phone: 310 675-2347. Box office hours: Noon – 5 p.m. Monday – Saturday. Sundays only on performance days. Additional information on the Center’s website: www.torranceartscenter.org.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

One of Japan’s most celebrated *Butoh* artists, John Kosaka, presents the Southern California premiere of “Disaster in the Cedars”. Taking the audience on an almost surreal journey through time, cultures and tragedy, he begins the performance as a *Kabuki* warrior and interprets traditional Japanese dance simultaneously through improvisation, contemporary dance techniques, the use of fire and poetic narrative.

This performance is funded by the Princess Grace Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Asia Council, the KGB Foundation, the United States Department of Education, and the Cultural Arts Foundation of Kyoto. All Torrance Performing Arts Programs are funded by the Torrance Chamber of Commerce, the Hughes Foundation, Direct TV, and the Los Angeles County Airport Commission.



DON'T LET THE COPS OR FIRE DEPARTMENT CLOSE DOWN YOUR FESTIVAL!

Sumi Sevilla Haru

The rules seem as though they were made to harass event organizers. Why do you have to have chairs ganged (tied together)? What difference does it make if there is no 20-foot emergency lane? Why does there have to be five feet between the curb and a food booth? Why are expensive handicapped porta-potties required when there is access to restrooms in surrounding businesses? Why do Police, Fire and Building and Safety Departments have to see site plans? Why is it that event organizers have to take responsibility for stray dogs? If food vendors own a restaurant with an "A" rating from the County Health Department, how come they need a permit for a festival food booth?

The reason these seemingly absurd requirements exist is to protect the public and to prevent festival producers and venue owners from being sued because somebody tripped and fell, a stage collapsed under a dancer, a patron got hit by a flying chair or ended up in the hospital with food poisoning. The Building and Safety Department makes sure the audio towers don't fall over and kill people. If a fire engine can't get through the event site on the way to put out a fire, lives could be lost.

At the first meeting with authorities, they expect to see a site plan drawn to scale. A plan created by an AutoCad computer program is not expected, but placement of canopies, stages and seating areas should be shown in relation to size of the event area.

If the event being planned is large enough to cover several blocks of a street, a meeting could be called so event planners can show their plans to representatives from the Police, Fire, Transportation, Building and Safety and Health Departments. If the event is smaller, it will be necessary for event staff to visit each department to obtain permits.

The Public Assemblage Unit of the Fire Department is very demanding that ordinances be obeyed. Making friends with the fire inspector assigned to an event can save a lot of grief, because inspectors generally know about every other department's rules and can help event organizers figure out which authorities need to be contacted. The fire inspector will determine where a first aid station should be, if audience space is sufficient and whether there are enough exits in an area in case there is a riot or a fire. Sometimes inspectors will require bicycle racks to be used to keep crowds from stampeding onto a stage if a popular rock star is on the program. Ten-by-ten foot canopies are the size most frequently used at festivals and should be supplied by a legitimate rental company. Participants who have their own canopies are usually not allowed to use them because they might collapse easily or be blown away if there is a sudden wind.

Event organizers will want to work closely with the Health Department and the Fire Department in planning the food booth area. It is important that customers are kept away from cooking areas, especially barbeque equipment. There are regulations that specify food booths not be located under trees, cover the proper washing of utensils, and determine safe temperatures for food. Often a portable toilet with a hand-

washing sink is required for use of food vendors. A Vendor Meeting with producers, Health, Fire and Police Departments held a few weeks before the event will allow vendors to obtain Health Permits and learn all requirements for the safe operation of their booths. If all is in order, the Health Department will issue a permit to the festival organizers for the overall event.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) assists in closing off streets early enough to allow set up of the festival area. DOT posts signs in the area a few days before to warn business owners and residents of restricted parking and street closures. If the event draws large crowds, DOT officers assist with traffic control. Event organizers often need to provide personnel to assist the officers. Boy Scouts are often helpful in this area.

Whether the festival is in a park or on a street, if large generators are being used, a baby-sitter (electrical engineer) for the equipment may be required. This expense should be anticipated because the personnel will probably get overtime pay for work on a weekend. Cables can be run from a large generator to the stage audio system, as well as to all the vendor booths. All cables must be covered to prevent patrons from tripping.

Accommodations must be made for people with disabilities, including ramps to the stage, easily accessible parking to the main event area, regulation handicapped portable toilets and areas for wheelchair seating. If the event is co-sponsored by a City or County, there may be government funds for sign language interpreters on the entertainment stages.

It is important for festival organizers to know all the public safety rules, and an orientation meeting for paid staff and volunteers is useful for giving out general and public safety information and to brief everybody on first aid and emergency procedures, including what to do about lost children.

Sumi Haru was the festival producer for the City of Los Angeles for over ten years. During that time, she oversaw the development of the festivals and celebrations in every corner of the City. She also co-founded The Lotus Festival and regularly produced events that drew audiences of 100,000 or more.

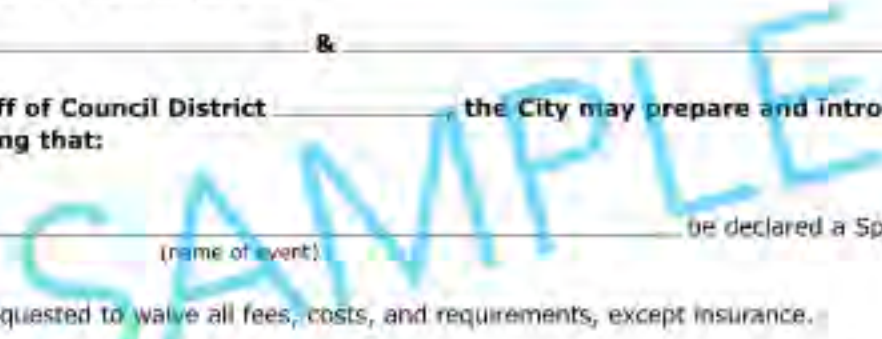
List of Special Permits & Permissions for Festivals & Parades

If you intend to close streets, this form is required with your grant application. Otherwise, please use this form to introduce yourself to the staff of the City Council district where you intend to hold your event and provide the Department of Cultural Affairs with a copy of this form no later than June 1, 2007.

Name of primary and secondary grant applicants:

_____ & _____

At the discretion of the staff of Council District _____, the City may prepare and introduce a Special Event Motion, moving that:



_____ The _____ (name of event) _____ be declared a Special Event.

_____ City departments be requested to waive all fees, costs, and requirements, except insurance.

_____ Pursuant to Ordinance No. 150,567 relating to temporary street closures, the following closures be made subject to the supervision of the Director of the Bureau of Street Maintenance, of the following streets:

_____ The Bureau of Street Maintenance be directed to furnish the necessary traffic control devices.

_____ The Bureau of Street Services be directed to trim all trees on both sides of _____ street.

_____ The Department of Transportation be directed to post "Temporary No Stopping" signs on the affected streets and provide traffic control personnel, as required.

_____ The Department of Transportation be directed to provide DASH shuttle service or equivalent for shuttling event participants to and from the parking site and the event.

_____ The Police Department be requested to provide the necessary officers.

_____ The Fire Department be requested to provide any personnel or equipment deemed necessary for public safety.

_____ The Board of Public Works be requested to issue a no-fee banner permit for installation of street banners announcing the event.

_____ The Bureau of Sanitation be directed to supply trash trucks and/or bins to haul refuse from the event.

_____ The Bureau of Sanitation be directed to clean the catch basin on both sides of _____ street(s).

_____ The Bureau of Sanitation be directed to sweep the streets before and after the event.

_____ The Bureau of Sanitation be directed to steam clean the sidewalks before the event.

_____ The Department of Animal Services be directed to conduct a sweep of the area, the day before the event, to remove any stray dogs, and that an Animal Control Officer be available, or near the vicinity during the event to pick up any stray dogs.

_____ The Noise Ordinance No. 115.02 be suspended for a period from _____ to _____

_____ Special Considerations or Notes: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Councilmember or Chief Deputy)



9

COMMUNITY RELATIONS, GOVERNMENT
RELATIONS, AND COMMON SENSE

Judith Luther Wilder

Unless you're Ted Turner and own all the land around you as far as the eye can see, you, as a festival producer, will have to spend a lot of time making friends. When we produced the Los Angeles Festival in 1990, we used 71 separate production sites. Just one of those sites (at Angel's Gate in San Pedro) required approval and "buy-ins" from seventeen separate organizations, including several homeowner groups, art associations, a business association, multiple City departments, and one biker club. Multiply that experience 71 times and you will have a real sense of how a festival producer spent eighteen months of her life in 1990-91.

In 1990 the Los Angeles Festival also had a secret weapon most festival producers don't have today. At that time, and for many years preceding that period, Mayor Tom Bradley led the parade when it was time to march through Chinatown or El Sereno or Echo Park and every other place a festival was being held. He must have had a profound love for celebrations large and small, because he attended every event in every Los Angeles neighborhood for at least two decades. He also served as a festival advocate, a fund raiser, a cheerleader, and in the case of the Garden Theatre Festival when it was under siege, a protector. Had he been more selective in his support, his advocacy would have drawn great criticism. However, because he was such a regular at the Fiesta de Amistad, the Lotus Festival, the Festival in Black, the Festival of Masks, Nisei Week, and most events held between San Pedro, Watts, Lincoln Heights, and Venice, his enthusiasm garnered approval from those who would, under other circumstances, have been relentless critics.

His role in the world of L.A. Festivals illustrates how sweet life can be when a powerful elected official and festival producers work together. In 1990, Mayor Bradley urged one of his chief lieutenants and former Public Works Chair, Maureen Kindel, to serve as the Chair of the Los Angeles Festival Board of Directors. He also urged his departmental directors, including the Directors of the Transportation, Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Parks, Health, Police, Fire, and Public Works Departments to work with us. During the '70's, he was instrumental in moving the Garden Theatre Festival from GTF Founder Warren Christiansen's backyard to Barnsdall Park. During the Olympic Arts Festival, he was arguably the most influential volunteer on the festival's one thousand person roster of dedicated supporters. He was, in short, a festival junkie. A remarkable, visionary, engaged festival junkie who just happened to be Mayor of one of the largest cities in the United States.

Today's festival producers are hard-pressed to find elected officials quite so eager to be festival activists and advocates. That said, there are still City Council Members who view festivals as mechanisms to build strong communities and who love to see joyous celebrations in their districts. Even in the current environment of budget crises and funding cutbacks, one of a festival producer's first stops should still be City Hall. At the very least, Council Deputies and staff members will advise producers where to go to get permits, who to meet at the

Police, Fire and Health departments, when to apply for festival grants from the Department of Cultural Affairs, and about the many dangers lurking in wait for naïve but well-meaning festival organizers.

They may also advise you on good festival locations in their districts and caution you about community groups you must involve if your life as a festival producer is not going to be a living Hell. To put it in a more positive way, they will tell you which art associations, cultural centers, churches, temples, schools, Neighborhood Council members, businesses and Chamber of Commerce committees can help make your event truly reflective of the community in which you plan to hold your event. It may seem like a lot to absorb but chances are very good you will save time, energy and money if you follow their advice.

Most new festival producers and organizers don't automatically take the time to "turn the root", as they say in Japan, before they jump into festival production. Their enthusiasm for what they perceive as need, their infatuation with the dream of presenting, and the distant (so distant) possibility of financial profits from producing a new festival (one that will be better than any previous festival ever produced in L.A.), is so compelling, they cannot possibly spend time meeting with a homeowner's association. Until, of course, that same homeowner's association, which already has an excellent relationship with the local City Council Member, threatens to shut them down. At that point, of course, an adversarial relationship may have developed and the festival producer will spend five times as much time and effort in securing the support of the homeowner's association than if he had just met with the group at the beginning of the planning process.

As a general rule, festival producers should assume that every neighborhood resident, team or class that normally uses the park or location his festival will occupy has a strong opinion about a new event on their turf. Neighbors will be concerned about noise and parking issues. Businesses will be concerned about the impact on their restaurants if food is served by twenty other vendors for two days over a busy weekend. Churches and schools will be concerned about the profile of festival patrons and performers. Families will be concerned about appropriate activities for children and everyone will be concerned about trash pick up. As every actor knows, to his sorrow, "Everybody's a critic!"

Take the advice of your City Council representative and reassure and involve all the "investors" before the shouting begins.

Judith Luther Wilder is the Co-Founder of the Center for Cultural Innovation. She currently supports the organization as a Senior Program Consultant. She has also co-founded, served as director and / or on the Boards of many Los Angeles festivals, including The Lotus Festival, the Fiesta de Amistad, the Garden Theatre Festival, the 1990 Los Angeles Festival, the Dragon Boat Festival and the Festival of Miracles and Light in Lincoln Park.



CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE MAYOR'S OFFICE AND FOR EVERY COUNCIL OFFICE IN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Office of the Mayor

Antonio R. Villaraigosa
213-978-0600
fax 213-928-0750
e-mail: mayor@lacity.org
200 N. Spring Street, Room 303
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Council District 1

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213-485-0763

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Maya Gingery

I've come to the conclusion that choosing a "Top 40" from among the more than 500 festivals that take place in the Greater Los Angeles area is nearly impossible. There is such an enormous diversity and range of interest among Los Angeles festival producers and audiences, that every festival is bound to be special and wonderful in its own unique way.

Nevertheless, I'd like to give you a small sampling of the hundreds of festivals that can be found in LA year-round. These are festivals that not only reflect the diversity of the greater Los Angeles community, but are popular with audiences and have stood the test of time. Many of these festivals serve a unique community or have a profound cultural significance to a particular culture or ethnic group. Some stress diversity over focus and artistry but still have something wonderful for everyone, young and old. There are some that have endured for decades through audience loyalty, still attracting the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of original audience members. Many, by virtue of their longevity have become cultural icons in their own right.

One of the oldest festivals to be found in LA is the *Chinese New Year Festival and Annual Golden Dragon Parade*. It has been held every year for the last 110 years, which has to be close to a record for festival longevity in the United States. Over 110,000 festival-goers from all walks of life congregate in downtown LA's Chinatown to attend the colorful celebration of the Chinese New Year, complete with dozens of colorful dancing dragons parading down Chinatown's main street. Reflecting another segment of the large Asian population that have made Southern California their home, the *Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival* will celebrate its 67th year in downtown's Little Tokyo district this year and represents still another segment of LA's diverse demographics. And there is the *Lotus Festival*, a younger festival now in its 30th year, that strives to bring together all of LA's Asian communities over a summer weekend in Echo Park.

Multicultural Los Angeles, with a growing population of over 3 million, makes for a fascinating mix of festival themes. The Hispanic/Latino population of Los Angeles now represents 46% of the total population of the city of Los Angeles, and there are festivals to be found every month that celebrate the rich Mexican and/or Latin American heritage. Events such as *Cinco de Mayo*, the *Mariachi Festival* and *Dia de Los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) complement festivals celebrating the traditions of *Ecuador*, *Belize*, *Colombia*, *Brazil* and other Central and South American nations. The African American communities also celebrate their cultural heritage and histories with numerous festivals. One of the most popular is the *Annual Los Angeles African Marketplace and Cultural Faire*, where you can sample the food of Africa, catch a Ghanaian dance ensemble or buy a djembe from one of the many vendors selling African goods. Too numerous to mention here are the many national festivals representing the cultures of the *Ukraine*, *India*, *Thailand*, *Greece*, *Italy*, *Brazil*, *Korea*, *Hawaii*, *Germany*, *Cuba*, *Lithuania*, *Pacific Islanders*, *Israel* and many others.

Some of the more unique but highly popular festivals engage the audience with arts and athletic activities and the most amazing entertainment. *The International Festival of Masks*, sponsored by the Crafts and Folk Art Museum, is a popular festival that engages its audience in mask-making and lively, colorful parades. One festival stands out as an example of how to utilize the vastness of LA County, which stretches in all directions from sea to mountains and from Orange to Santa Barbara counties. *The World Festival of Sacred Music*, held once every three years, takes its audience on a tour of the city, using well-known and lesser-known venues spread throughout Greater Los Angeles. And the *Southern California Renaissance Pleasure Faire*, famous for bringing to life the atmosphere of an authentic Renaissance world, has a huge and loyal following that numbers in the hundreds of thousands.

Los Angeles is a city of the arts. From animators and actors to poets, painters and puppeteers, the arts are recognized with numerous events throughout the year. *The Los Angeles Times Festival of Books* is America's largest literary event and draws 150,000 book-lovers, authors and sellers of books to the UCLA campus each Spring. There are numerous festivals for local visual artists and even more performing arts festivals of dance and theater that have endured. Los Angeles, self-appointed "film capitol of the world", is host to many film and video festivals both large and small. From *The Los Angeles International Film Festival* to *OUTFEST: The Gay and Lesbian Film Festival* and *VC Filmfest: Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival*; there is literally something for every taste.

Finally, this article wouldn't be complete without mentioning the numerous music festivals that appear in summer. *The Annual Playboy Jazz Festival* is probably one of the best-known jazz festivals in the world, but if you missed that you can always look for the *Long Beach Jazz Festival* or the *Simon Rodia Watts Tower Jazz Festival*. Contemporary music lovers gather each summer for the well-known *Ojai Music Festival*, now in its 59th year. And all summer long *Grand Performances* offers world music and dance at the California Plaza. The *Pershing Square Summer Concert Series* and the *California Philharmonic's Festival on the Green* are also worth noting.

If you're a festival junkie, or if you just want to see how someone on the other side of the globe lives, plays, eats, moves and makes music, Los Angeles is your kind of town. For specific information on each of the events I've described as well as many, many more, call the Department of Cultural Affairs at 213-202-5500 and request a copy of their excellent festival guide.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.
Margaret Mead (1901 - 1978)

Festival Planning

Community Arts Resources, Inc. (CARS)
3780 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1020
Los Angeles, CA 90010
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The Center for Cultural Innovation manages the Festival Encouragement Project (FEP), a program funded by the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA).

Grants

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Outdoor Festival & Parade Grant Program - Applications due the first Friday each December. Submissions for DCA's Annual Festival Guide due late August each year. Visit our website www.culturela.org for guidelines and applications.

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fax 213-625-1765
e-mail: jperrin@lacountyarts.org
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310-998-5590
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e-mail: UserCLA@aol.com
cla@calawyersforthearts.org

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*City of Los Angeles Department
of Recreation and Parks*
General Information: 1-888 LA-PARKS
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lbarth@rap.lacity.org

City of Los Angeles Recreation Centers
www.laparks.org/dos/reccenter/council.htm

L.A. County Department of Parks and Recreation
www.parks.co.la.ca.us

Los Angeles Public Library
www.lapl.org

Los Angeles County Public Libraries
www.colapublib.org/lib/

Other Resources

City of LA Public Works
900 S. Fremont Ave
Alhambra, CA 91803
General Information: 626-458-5100
www.ladpw.org

LA County Department of Health Services
313 N. Figueroa Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
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Los Angeles Fire Department
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www.lafd.org

The Los Angeles Police Department
Parker Center
150 N. Los Angeles St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012
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