

Teatime Theatre

In Your
Tearoom



Laurie
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TEATIME THEATRE In Your Tearoom

by Laurie Nienhaus



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Teatime Theatre in Your Tearoom

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Adult Reading Material

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[About the Author](#)



Although Laurie Nienhaus began seriously writing and speaking publicly after founding The Ladies' Tea Guild in 2000, this scribbling woman never intended becoming a playwright. Her first play, *A Teatime Travesty*, seemed to literally be waiting for her to put pen to paper when she awoke one Saturday morning.

It was not as easy as it sounds and the learning curve was steep, but the possibilities of *Teatime Theatre* began to unfold. The success of *A Teatime Travesty* led to her second play, *Tea-A-Ria* and then onto a series of shorts.

All this has occurred while Laurie continues her tea and history programs, a third book called **Steeped**, and her blog, **No Cobwebs Here**. The world of tea remains at the center of her universe and it is for lovers of teatime that this ebook was created.

Laurie has spoken across the country from Oregon and Texas to Missouri, Georgia and Florida. She attended the World Tea Expo as a core conference speaker and has contributed to magazines such as Fresh Cup, Tea in Texas, Victorian Romance, Bustle and Green Prints. She hopes to continue speaking, writing, and producing plays that bring both laughter and poignancy for years to come.

Laurie has two grown children, Kenny and Torie Montana and lives with her husband, Kenny, on Fort Myers Beach in Florida.

She also believes the poet ee cummings was right... The most wasted of all days is one without laughter.



Connect with Laurie Nienhaus On-Line

If you'd like to connect with Laurie Nienhaus, you can either:

1. Email her at editor@GLily.com
2. Read her blog, **No Cobwebs Here**, by clicking [here](#).
3. Become her friend on Facebook by clicking [here](#).
4. Follow her on Twitter by clicking [here](#).



Also by Laurie Nienhaus

COMPILER

And Then It Was Teatime

FOR CHILDREN

Nana's Socks

THEATRICAL WORKS

A Teatime Travesty

Tea-A-Ria

The Real Spirit of Men

Where's Santa?

A Nun's Tale: And the Letters Fly

Love and the Letter

When Julie Met Cindy



Why Teatime Theatre?

"Weaving an engaging theatre production into teatime creates a novel and memorable experience for your guests. But, as intriguing as Teatime Theatre is, I knew it might also seem like a monstrous project for busy tearooms. I wanted tearoom owners - as well as fundraising groups, churches, and not for profits - to have all the information they need to make Teatime Theatre simple, fun, timesaving and lucrative."

Laurie Nienhaus of Gilded Lily Publishing

Congratulations on acquiring Gilded Lily Publishing's ebook, *Teatime Theatre*. You're embarking on an adventure promising to create excitement in and about your tearoom. Not only can it be lucrative, Teatime Theatre can potentially expand your client base. You'll likely see theatre goers who may have never before stepped foot in your establishment - or any other tearoom for that matter.

Currently, live theatre during the tea hour remains a novel idea few tea rooms take advantage of - even those accustomed to hosting special events. Tea room owners are among the busiest of people and there's no doubt this is a project stepping beyond most special events. It is also true you need certain information under your belt in order for it to succeed with ease. But again, the potential is worth the effort.

My purpose in creating Teatime Theatre and this ebook is to make hosting live theatre as simple and timesaving as possible. The information presented here is laid out for you in an easy to read question and answer format. The

inserted hyperlinks and bookmarks make it easy to flip back and forth from the table of contents to each section of each chapter.

You now hold in your hands all the information you need to host a successful theatrical production in your tearoom and I very much want you to succeed. That is why I am so excited about this ebook. As a living document, it will be added to as time goes on. If you've a question you feel hasn't been addressed or you're in need of more clarity about anything you read here, by all means contact me at editor@GLily.com.

I'd also love to hear of your success. Post a quote or a picture to the Teatime Theatre Facebook page -

Let the fun begin! I wish you the best of luck.

Sincerely, Laurie Nienhaus



Words You Need to Know

This is only a partial list of theatrically important terms but are ones you, as a tea room owner involved in Teatime Theatre, should be aware of:

Angels: investors of a theater production; either an individual, a business or corporation

Artistic Director: This person carries out the theatre's creative mission and oversees the artistic quality of the productions. It is generally the artistic director who chooses the plays and those involved in bringing them to life. He/she may also direct.

Blocking: the process of determining the placement of actors on stage and planning their movement within a scene

Box Office: directly refers to the kiosk in the theatre-lobby where the public purchases tickets, but can be used to refer to the general ticket retailing system usually controlled by the theatre management; a second usage refers to advance ticket sales; "How big is the box office?" means "How much have you made in advance ticket sales?"

Break a leg: an encouragement offered to performers prior to a show derived from the idea of a performer, having left the stage, being called back from behind the *legs* for an encore

Breaking the Fourth Wall: when a character speaks directly to the audience

Comedy: a humorous play with a light, celebrational view of life or which makes its point through sharp ridicule and satire; actors dominate the action and there is usually has a happy ending

Comped Seat: a free seat in the house usually given by the producer or director; authors of plays are always given at least two seats for a run of their show

Copyright: ownership of and the exclusive right to control all aspects of an artistic work

Curtain Call: the process of actors taking their bows, receiving applause, and/or being introduced to the audience at the end of a play

Denouement: the part of the play, following the climax, where all events and conflicts are resolved

Director: the person who interpretes a dramatic work, conducts rehearsals, blocks the action and assists the actors in developing their characters

Dress rehearsal (or dress): a rehearsal just before actual performances in which lighting, costumes, makeup, costume and set changes, sound effects, and special effects are used, also called a "full dress rehearsal"

Farce: a light humorous play with improbable plot situations and exaggerated characters where action tends to dominate yet insights into the human situation still play out

Fourth Wall: an imaginary surface at the stage's edge through which the audience watches a performance

French Scene: the action taking place between the entrance and exit of any character

Full House or Packed House: when all of the seats are filled

Green Room: the room in a theater where actors and crew relax or prepare; rarely painted green

Half-hour: the usual call for actors to be at the theater thirty minutes before curtain

House: the theatre, the people in the theatre, the audience

Monologue: a long speech by a single actor, made as if speaking to himself for the purpose revealing his/her thoughts or feelings

Off Book: point during rehearsals where actors have memorized their lines and no longer read from their script

Playbill: theatre program or poster announcing a theatrical performance

Producer: someone who finds financing for and supervises the making and presentation of a play or film, or show

Royalty: fee paid for the use of copyrighted material

Run: total number of performances or length of time a play is presented

Shorts: a play or film of less than 50 minutes; some can be as short as three minutes

Stage Left/Right: directions from the actors' perspective as they face the audience



Getting Clear on Copyright and Royalties

When a literary, musical, or artistic work is copyrighted, the creator has legally established his exclusive right to reproduce, publish, sell, or distribute said work. Copyright is a form of intellectual property law applying to both published and unpublished works.

In the United States copyright is accomplished through the [U.S. Copyright Office](#). Technically it exists from the moment a work is created but if you never register the work, it is not possible to bring a lawsuit for infringement.

Copyright is different from a patent or trademark. Copyright protects original works of authorship, while a patent protects inventions or discoveries. Although ideas and discoveries are not protected by copyright law, the way in which they are expressed may be. A trademark protects words, phrases, symbols, or designs identifying the goods or services of one party and distinguishing them from those of others.

Copyright usually involves more than simple permission. In the theatre world, there are often strict guidelines addressing topics such as, for example, the font size of the author's name relative to others in posters and playbills. Theatrical copyright also deals with the kinds of changes to a script an author will or won't allow.

A copyright free work is not protected by copyright. While you might pay a fee to obtain a copy of the work, your use of the work is usually not restricted. Often there is no fee to obtain a copy of the work.

In the theatre world, a royalty is a usage-based payment made by one party (the "licensee") to another (the "licensor") for the right to use a copyrighted script (or song or musical score). This includes even those performances for which the public is not charged. If you are charging admission to the public, you must have an agreement with either the author or the publishing house. This also applies to any excerpts from a play or song, etc.

A royalty can either be a set fee or a percentage of gross or net revenues derived from the use of a copyrighted work. Some royalty fees include the price of the script or scripts while others do not.

Royalty free generally means you pay a one-time fee in exchange for the right to use a copyrighted work (or photograph) according to agreed upon terms, with no ongoing license fees for further use. It does **not** mean the work is copyright free.

Important... Gilded Lily Publishing has set flat royalty fees for our plays rather than requiring a percentage of revenues. This flat fee is based on one run of the play and does not include the cost of receiving the script.

As Teatime Theatre is designed to increase your bottom line, it makes sense to host a performance without interrupting your daily business. This may mean you host the play on a day you're normally closed or in the evening. The reality is you're likely to do this only once a week.

For Teatime Theatre, Gilded Lily Publishing defines a run as an uninterrupted performance engagement of two to five consecutive weeks or a bimonthly run lasting no more than two months. However you choose to proceed, if exceeding five performances and/or two months, you are beginning a second run and will be required to pay the subsequent run royalty fee.



Who Is Doing What?

Unless you're familiar with how the theatre world works, you may be confused over who's doing what. And, as Teatime Theatre is a unique project for which you are contracting with a community theatre company, you will be collaborating with the company and handling some roles usually delegated within the group. It is this collaboration that helps make producing Teatime Theatre manageable.

~~**~~

What is the role of the director?

1. With or without the advice of a board of directors, chooses the plays the company performs based upon social, artistic, and financial considerations as well as upon the audience he/she hopes to attract
2. Decides how the theatre space will be used and what will be needed to make the space work with the chosen play
3. Holds auditions and makes casting decisions
4. Prior to the beginning of rehearsals, learns how the play works and where and how it'll deliver its impact
~~ This process of creating beats or French scenes, allows the director to know where actors will be at any given moment while on stage and their needed props - also key moments for laughter or drama, the turning points, etc.
5. To communicate a vision for the play yet still allow actors to make their own discoveries about character development and interaction, essentially "creating the spark the actors turn into a flame"

~~**~~

What is my role as the owner of the tearoom?

Your decision to present a play in your tearoom makes your tearoom the venue. You are most likely the sponsor, unless you have funding from another organization or a philanthropist. However, Teatime Theatre is a unique project and so it's you who'll handle a number of roles usually delegated in a theatre company.

As a tearoom owner, the tasks especially easy for you are those you deal with on any given workday:

- ~~ Organizing your seating arrangements
- ~~ Making all menu and tea related decisions
- ~~ Having the appropriate number of servers

In some aspects you're serving as producer since you'll be handling most of the marketing and the finances. This means you must:

- ~~ Create your "box office"

- ~~ Create a space in your tearoom to serve as a green room
- ~~ Keep in contact with the director
- ~~ Announce the play once the audience is seated



How Long Do Teatime Theatre Plays Take to Perform?

Shorter plays, without intermission, are likely to work better in a tea room setting rather than full length plays.

With a play lasting 50 to 60 minutes or with a series of shorts, you can host two seatings in one day. If choosing this option, you can allow as little as 2½ hours between the start of performances. Show times of 12 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. or 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. allow for the house to be seated, the play performed, the audience to linger for a short while, the house emptied, and the tables cleared and reset.



Finding and Working with a Theatre Company

Once you've decided Teatime Theatre is a project you want to see happen in your tearoom, your next task is to find and contract with a theatre company.

How Do I Go About Finding an Interested Theatre Company?

1. If you're not already familiar with the theatre world in your community, start with your local paper and specialty entertainment papers.
2. You may want to first attend a production of a theatre company you wish to approach. You'll then be able to get a feel for their level of expertise and whether or not a light-hearted farce would interest them. If your school district or a nearby college is known for their theatre programs, you might also consider using students.

You want to be sure a theatre group you're considering is comfortable with comedy and farce. Teatime Theatre plays are light-hearted farces with a degree of physical comedy. Some theatre companies steer away from these kinds of productions, favoring longer, more serious and/or dramatic shows.

~~**~~

Who do I ask to speak with when contacting a theatre group?

Ask to speak with the director but know that, if the group has a board of directors, the final decision may be a collective one. If you're contacting a high school or college, begin by asking for the head of the theatre department.

~~**~~

What are the important points to convey to the director when first contacting him or her?

Teatime Theatre is inexpensive to produce and the concept behind it makes it an easy sell. The below points are important to convey, but know that no director will commit to a production without first reading the script.

The important points to convey in your initial conversation are:

- ~~ Teatime Theatre is light-hearted farce with a degree of physical comedy and interaction with the audience.
- ~~ Time consuming, and often expensive aspects of a production – the stage and the construction and cost of the set are non-issues since your tearoom is the stage.

~~ No special lighting or sound effects are required.

~~ With a potential audience of 40-75 people, a sound system isn't necessary. Actors should be able to project their voices and be heard by all provided the room acoustics are decent.

~~ You, as the tearoom owner, have already paid the royalties and now have the permission to move forward with one run of your chosen play.

~~ It will be the director's job to make the necessary number of script copies for his cast.

~~ You are handling the box office.

~~**~~

What kind of a date and initial timeline am I looking at?

A complete timeline can be found later in this ebook. But for now, keep in mind theatre groups plan their productions anywhere from six months to a year or more out. Then consider when would be a good time for a play to be performed at your tearoom. So that your normal business is not interrupted, you might consider a day your tearoom is usually closed. Although evening is an option, day performances allow you two in one day, potentially doubling your income.

Ask yourself the following questions in order to get an idea of what might work best for you.

~~ Does your tearoom's location have a season? If so, would it be best to have performances in or out of season?

~~ Do you see this as a one time only performance or do you envision consecutive performances going on once a week or every other week over the course of a month or two?

~~ From your previous experiences with events in your tearoom, does one day of the week promise better attendance over another?

~~ Do you want to tie the performance into a holiday or a larger community event or anniversary?

~~ Could the performance be part of a fund raiser tying into a calendar event such as Breast Cancer Awareness Month or Women's History Month?



Tip: Also check to see if there are any large events scheduled in your community that would hinder attendance because people's attention and time are otherwise occupied.

~~**~~

Do I need to carry extra insurance?

Your own insurance will likely cover you for performances without extra costs as long as you're not seating more people than your tearoom can legally accommodate, if there are no sets, and no electrical changes are made to your tearoom. However, you are still strongly advised to check with your insurance company regarding this.

The theatre company you contract with should carry their own group theatre insurance covering accidents or mishaps. Ask to have a copy of proof of insurance.

~~**~~

Do I have input in the play's production?

It is in your initial conversation and/or meeting with the director – prior to signing a contract – that you offer your own ideas of how the play might unfold in your tearoom.

Anything you feel strongly about, you'll want put into your contract.

You may wish to be involved in casting decisions. You might also want to attend the first or second reading of the play to offer your own insights and to get a feel for how the theatre company will handle the play, the characters, etc. It's not necessary you involve yourself in neither process.

However, your decision to be involved to this degree – and we suggest you don't involve yourself any further – must be made known to the director in your initial conversations. Your level of involvement should also be put into the contract.

Beyond that, you can offer suggestions at the end of a dress rehearsal. It's also appropriate to occasionally check in with the director during the course of rehearsals. Anything more is considered to be intruding upon the director's role.

~~**~~

Is a contract with the theatre company necessary?

Absolutely. You are strongly advised to not begin any marketing or advertising efforts until a signed contract is in place.

A sample contract, easily changed to suit your needs, is provided later in this ebook. Should you decide to create your own or use the contract your theatre group might offer, be sure it includes:

- ~~ All performance dates and times
- ~~ A dress rehearsal schedule, including dates and times
- ~~ The responsibilities of the theatre company and of yourself, including who's in charge of creating the needed marketing and advertising materials and the date when they'll be available
- ~~ The number of comped seats, if any, given to the theatre company
- ~~ The agreed upon financial arrangement, including when and how monies are to be distributed

~~**~~

How can I best support the cast?

Actors and actresses want to please both you and your audience and they are appreciative of your praise.

Any suggestions made during a dress rehearsal should be phrased in a constructive fashion after the dress rehearsal.

Offer a few words of encouragement immediately prior to the first performance. And remember – it's "Break a Leg!"

If you are hosting two performances in one day, your actors and actresses will relax during the lull and would be appreciative of food and drink. Although, not necessary, it's a courtesy to offer the cast something to eat. If there is only one performance in a day, we suggest you do not offer the cast anything beyond a cup of tea.



Tip: Keep your cast offerings simple and inexpensive. It is unnecessary to offer a full blown afternoon tea or to offer what you'll be serving the house on performance days.

~~**~~

What do I need to know about rehearsals?

For a play lasting one hour or less, a theatre company will have anywhere from 12 to 20 rehearsals and will begin anywhere from one and a half to two months before the opening.

The director will certainly want to visit your venue and possibly take measurements. He or she may also wish for the cast to have at least one rehearsal in your space prior to the dress rehearsal.

Dress rehearsals take place the week before the first performance, usually in the evening. The director will allow anywhere from one to three such rehearsals and may run through the play twice. The actors arrive in costume. While they'll have their scripts with them, they shouldn't need to refer to them. The play is run through without interruption and any suggestions are made at the end.

You can offer suggestions at a dress rehearsal. However, any suggestions at this point are fine tuning. The time has passed for major changes.

Your servers should be present for at least one run of a dress rehearsal.



Tip: Dress rehearsals can be quite chaotic and generally do not run as smoothly as a live performance. To those unaccustomed to the workings of the theatre, this can be alarming. Don't worry. All will be well.

~~**~~

What are the financial arrangements?

There are two ways to handle the payment to a theatre company:

~~ A flat fee per performance

~~ A flat fee per head

Which should you choose? We've found the second option to work best since:

~~ There's no financial pressure on you in the event the house is not full.

~~ The theatre company has a stake in helping you fill the house.

Depending upon the economics of your locale, you can count upon paying between \$5 and \$12 a head to the theatre company. Payment is made at the end of the run.

If you've chosen a high school or college theatrical group, the arrangements may be the same but the monies might be gifted to the theatre department.



Tip: You are strongly encouraged to involve the cast members in helping fill the house.



What Do I Need to Know About Playbills?

A well done and professional looking playbill, also called a program, is an essential and potentially powerful element of any theatre production - even a simple 1-act play. It can inform, entertain and promote. While there'll certainly be guests who save your program as a memento, it'll be a throw away for most and so should comprise a minimal portion of your budget.

Keeping your program black and white will keep your costs down. You can use ordinary paper stock, but something slightly heavier is suitable as well. Your programs shouldn't cost you more than 20-28 cents per if they're simple and kept to four pages.

Keeping your program simple should allow you to easily and quickly create it yourself using your favorite word processing program.

What is considered standard for a program?

The standard size is an 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper folded in half for a total of four pages.

~~**~~

What information should be included in the program?

The following is a list of information you can include in a simple program. The cover page is standard and you should not deviate from the listed information. The cast does need to be listed somewhere, but other than that, you can put whatever information you'd like into your program.

1. Cover Page

~~ Play Title

~~ Author

~~ Sponsor

2. Inside Left Page

~~ Title again

~~ Director

~~ Place & time of the play

~~ Cast in order of appearance (triple check spelling) - with or without bios

~~ Special thank you's and acknowledgements

3. Inside Right Page

~~ Your day's menu (including the tea you'll be serving)

~~ House rules

~~ Permission statement

4. Back Page

~~ Information about your tearoom, your building, etc.

~~ Your upcoming events

~~**~~

Should I include advertising in my program?

Advertising can create a second stream of revenue for you but it also means more work.

Consider asking the cast or certain of your clientele if their friends or family members want to support the production with an inexpensive text ad along the lines of "Break a Leg, Darcie Kay! Love Mom and Dad". Businesses may consider such ads as well. Typically you'd charge \$15 to \$25 for such a text ad.

Display advertising will work best for you if:

~~ There's a lot of foot traffic at your location

~~ You accept only camera ready, digital ads with the following dimensions:

1. Upright business card size of 2" x 3.5", 4 to a page

2. 1/2 page ad - 4" wide x 3.5" tall

3. Full page ad - 4.25" wide x 7.25" tall



Tip: Often a local business will be willing to underwrite the program costs if they alone are given ad space or acknowledgement.

~~**~~

What other information can be put into an expanded program?

Unless you've a graphic arts background or are computer savvy, you'll likely need help with the layout of a program more than four pages in length. Also remember, adding one extra sheet of paper to a program means you're adding four more pages.

If you want an expanded program or need material to flesh out extra pages not filled with advertising, consider the following:

- ~~ Author's notes
- ~~ Director's notes: Your director will provide this if asked. The word count is generally 100-200 words and would consist of his concept or why he was interested in this play, etc.
- ~~ Actor profiles and/or photos
- ~~ Notes on a sponsoring organization or business - this might be in lieu of a graphic ad
- ~~ Tea brewing tips
- ~~ Teatime etiquette
- ~~ Other upcoming events in your tearoom

~~**~~

When should I begin working on my program?

If you are keeping to a simple double sided page, you can create your program and get it to your printer three to four weeks before your production.

However, if you plan to seek advertising, you'll want to begin 2-3 months before your opening. Prepare a firm deadline for camera ready ad submissions - six weeks before the opening is ideal.



Are Changes to My Menu Necessary?

For the most part, no. The few changes you'll make relate to serving the food and the choices you won't offer.

In both **A Teatime Travesty** and **Tea-A-Ria** mention is made of champagne being served. Serving champagne transforms the tea into a royal tea and adds to the day's experience.

However, if your licensing doesn't allow this, serve sparkling cider instead and simply make mention in your program of the fact that you cannot serve champagne despite its mention in the play. State you are making a substitution and that you appreciate the understanding of your guests.

Other than what has just been mentioned, we suggest the following:

- ~~ Serve only one tea on performance days
- ~~ Create only one menu to be served to all guests
- ~~ Don't worry if your scones are usually served warm - it won't be noticed on performance days (as long as there's still jam and clotted cream!).



***Tip:** If you choose a play set in another era, such as Gilded Lily Publishing's **Tea-A-Ria** or **A Teatime Travesty**, consider offering something era appropriate.*



How Do I Handle the Advertising?

Letting your clientele and the public know you'll be hosting a teatime theatre production is one of your most important tasks. Once the word is out, you'll find people who don't generally frequent tearooms are calling you for reservations. It's your opportunity to turn theatre lovers into tea lovers!

Word of mouth is often how people learn of a great show. Yet, it is a huge mistake to count upon word of mouth only.

In Your Tearoom...

It is essential you have a well done 8x10 flyer with eye-catching imagery in your window, sitting next to your cash register, and in your gift shop if you have one. These flyers should be in place once your box office is open, four to six weeks out. Also:

- ~~ Make mention of the play to all your clientele as they pay their bill and instruct your servers to do the same
- ~~ Be prepared to take pre-paid, non refundable reservations once the announcement is in place
- ~~ Put table tents announcing the play upon each of your tables

~~**~~

In Your Neighborhood...

If your tearoom is located in a urban and/or walking district, consider asking other businesses in your area if you can put flyers in their windows once your box office opens. Although a standard size for a theatrical poster is 14" x 22", we've found it is perfectly acceptable to use the same 8x10 mentioned above.

~~**~~

In the Newspaper...

There are several ways to get mention of your production into the newspaper - a feature story, an editor's note, a calendar of events mention or a review. The only way to guarantee mention in any newspaper is to purchase an ad. Generally speaking, this may not be financially practical for you unless you're already accustomed to paying for advertising.

However, there are ways to boost your odds of a mention in a newspaper without paying for it:

~~ Send media releases, with an image, to your local papers for publishing in their community listings and entertainment features. An accompanying image increases your chance of being featured rather than given a listing only. Sample media releases are found later in this ebook.

~~ Be sure your media releases includes the menu items you'll be serving.

~~ Keep in mind the media wants a story, not just announcements. Your chances of an interview and a feature greatly improve if you've an angle or hook journalists feel will reel in their readers.

1. Think of what made you decide to host a farce in your venue.
2. Does the play have a connection to something else?
3. Can you offer a special recipe or are you looking for one to serve on performance days?
4. If hosting a play set in another era - such as Gilded Lily Publishing's **A Teatime Travesty** or **Tea-A-Ria** - is there something about the era that would be of interest?
5. Can you play on the novelty of teatime and live theatre?

~~ Invite a member of the press to a performance in the hopes that they'll write a review. Offer to comp their ticket but understand that some newspapers do not allow such an arrangement. Also know their attendance doesn't insure a good review!

~~ After the first performance, send out a second press release announcing the attendance, the success of the day as well as quotes from an attendee or two and a picture of several guests (be sure you ask their permission to take and possibly print their picture).

~~**~~

On Your Website...

You can begin putting teasers on your web site up to two months before your opening. By the time your box office opens, those visiting your site should be able to learn all they need to about the show and, ideally, be able to purchase reservations online. If your site is not set up for purchases, the show information should be especially enticing in order to prompt folks to call and reserve a seat. Again, imagery is important here.

It is also important, if guests are purchasing on-line that ALL needed information is there, including the fact that tickets are non-refundable.

~~**~~

In Social Media...

In this day and age you are truly missing the boat if only using your web site to promote an event. You MUST take advantage of social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Good quality images are a must as statistics show there is a much higher response to posts accompanied by imagery. Our FAQ chapter, at the end of this ebook, goes into greater detail about imagery.

You can handle the mention of the show as above in On Your Website but social media also allows you greater opportunity. We suggest, during the 2-3 weeks prior to your opening that you post something almost everyday. For instance, you could post:

- ~~ a different picture of a cast member each day
- ~~ a picture of the director and author, perhaps with a quote
- ~~ attend a rehearsal for the purpose of taking pictures and then post those pictures as the rehearsal continues
- ~~ a variety of menu ideas and ask for people's thoughts on your choices
- ~~ a few lines from your chosen play
- ~~ something about the era your play is set in
- ~~ the fact that the house has only a few seats left
- ~~ if you've managed to make the news or radio
- ~~ teasers, such as - if you've chosen **Tea-A-Ria** - "What are they going to do about Enza Malandra at Tea-A-Ria!" or " It's only 5 more days til showtime!"

~~**~~

Thinking Out of the Box

While the above are all a must, there are other easy and quite inexpensive ideas you might also consider, especially if the cast is willing to make themselves available:

- ~~ Revamp your media release for contact with your local television station. Your local early morning show will likely be interested, especially if you let them know a cast member can unexpectedly drop by in character. This, of course, you plan ahead with the show's director or host and with your director.
- ~~ Consider the above but with your local radio station. Don't forget NPR!
- ~~ Create "stuffer" handbills. A stuffer should be cheap to produce - 3-4 to a landscape 8'5 x 11 page - and take only seconds to read. Your local library might give them out as bookmarks when patrons check out books but they can also be given out at Chamber of Commerce events and put in select mailboxes.
- ~~ A twist on the stuffer is to create a series of 2-3 teasers that are given out a week apart. Each week says something different. For instance, for Gilded Lily Publishing's **A Teatime Travesty** you might use an image and the tag line:

It's Murder

&

Mayhem at Teatime!

Join us!

_____ (date)

_____ (your tearoom)

_____ (phone number)

_____ (cost)

The second week, use another image and perhaps ask only a question:

Do You

Know Where

BERTRAM

is!?

Join us and find out!

_____ (date)

_____ (your tearoom)

_____ (phone number)

_____ (cost)

This stuffer idea has lots of other possibilities as well. Offer a recipe you'll serve that day or something about the era in which the play is set. Just remember that the idea is to be playful and/or enticing.



Tip: Remember to always send a thank you to any journalist, reviewer, broadcaster or editor who writes about or makes mention of the show.



How Do I Handle My Box Office?

Your box office opens the day you put flyers at your cash register, on your window or door and on your tables. This should be four to six weeks from the opening of the play.

Since you likely take reservations already, this is an easy task, however, we suggest you actually write a short paragraph that includes the pertinent information in case someone other than yourself is taking reservations.

Guests need to be told:

1. Suggested arrival time
2. Play's length
3. The fact an afternoon tea fare is included in their ticket price (amazingly, many people don't understand this)
4. All reservations are prepaid and non-refundable

5. Whether you'll take checks sent in the mail and how long you'll hold reservations before receiving a check

While many productions offer discounts to groups and seating with different pricing, the limited seating of your tearoom likely makes this unpractical. We suggest all seats be the same price.

While tickets are usually printed for theatrical productions, we have found them unnecessary for Teatime Theatre and suggest only a master list and seating chart. The easiest way to seat people is to set a table tent with a number on it at each table. Upon checking in your guests, simply tell them which table they are seated at.



Tip: Your guests will find it charming if, rather than giving each table a number, each table has the name of a tea such as Silver Needle, Big Red Robe, Yellow Mountain and Spring Snail.



What Do I Need to Know About Performance Day?

Put on your Miss Congeniality hat today because it is your day to shine! Along with the cast of course!

How elaborate should my green room be?

For the purposes of Teatime Theatre - and assuming you've little room for a real green room - we suggest your green room be no more than one or two tables set away from the house. Screens are very useful for the bit of privacy the cast will need.

The area you've designated as your green room should be set up early as the actors will arrive anywhere from a half hour to an hour prior to showtime.



Tip: Suggest in your initial conversations with the director that the cast arrive in costume and make up so that only touch ups and last minute preparations are necessary.

~~**~~

Which come first: the tea or the play?

The order in which the day proceeds varies largely upon what you think will work best for your venue. You can either:

~~ Perform the play first. Keep in mind that although in a true theatre setting, people often watch a short play without refreshment, the fact that they're seated in a tea room makes them long for a cup of tea. Consider putting a pot on each table but announcing that additional tea will only be served after the performance.

~~ Perform the play once the afternoon's tea fare has been served and cleared. If you are serving champagne or sparkling cider, it can be served after the performance. If you cannot serve champagne consider serving the sweets or a dessert post performance with the sparkling cider.

~~ Perform the play as the guests are being served. This option works best in larger spaces.

Should you choose this option, your servers should wear rubber soled shoes so as not interfere accoustically with the performance. Your servers would also benefit from seeing the dress rehearsal but know they need only to stay out of the way of the actors. Beyond what you choose to do with the final beverage and dessert, there is no timing of the serving of food with the performance. Your servers and the actors will carry on independently of each other.



Tip: If choosing the second option, see if the cast would be willing to serve the final beverage. Guests very much enjoy the opportunity to speak with them after the performance. This also creates fun photo ops and, in our opinion, is the final piece of a memorable afternoon.

~~**~~

Do I have a special role to play this day?

It is you who will introduce the play and thank your guests for attending _____ (the name of your tearoom) Teatime Theatre. You might also mention:

~~ Unless absolutely necessary, guests are asked to stay seated during the entire performance, especially since the actors will be moving about the room.

~~ For the same reason as above, please keep all purses, etc. tucked well under the seat or in your lap.

~~ All cell phones should be turned off.

~~ For today, the _____ (your tearoom) is being transformed into _____ (the name of the tearoom in your chosen play if using one of Gilded Lily Publishing's plays).

~~ Perhaps end with the tag line of your chosen play, such as, "Let the mayhem begin" (from **A Teatime Travesty**) or "Teatime is about to go Italian, and it may never be the same!" (from **Tea-A-Ria**).

~~ Once the play is over, it is you who will enter the room to thank the guests and the cast. Invite the cast back into the room for a final bow and explain what, if anything, will happen next.

~~ If you've a journalist or theatre reviewer in the house, you will want to extend a special thank you to him/her, either publically or privately. While it won't affect the review of the play much, take extra care of this person or persons.



Is My Tearoom Suitable for a Play?

Your tearoom needs to seat at least 40 people in one large room in order to successfully host teatime theatre.

If your tearoom is smaller, the financial aspects of the performance are not likely to work in your favor. If your tearoom is one broken up into different rooms, your guests will not be able to follow the play's action.



Tip: If your tearoom is not suitable for Teatime Theatre, consider working with a church, community center or art league so that you are still catering and hosting the play.



Final FAQ'S

1. Is it standard to give a certain number of comped tickets and to whom are they given?

The only truly standard practise is that the author of the play is given comped tickets if they choose to attend. Other than that, the decision of whether or not to offer comped tickets is yours alone.

If you do choose to offer comps, it's suggested you give them to people directly helping you promote your business, the production, or to those whom you'd like to extend a special thank you.

It is also appropriate to offer a comped ticket when inviting the press or a theatre reviewer. But again, know that their company may not allow them to accept this and will instead simply pay for the ticket. Also understand that comping any member of the media in no way guarantees a good review.

There are times when a cast is given an agreed upon number of comped tickets in lieu of payment or partial payment. Our feeling is that this is unworkable for Teatime Theatre given the limited seating.

~~**~~

2. You've sent me only one script. May I make copies?

We've learned, for the purposes of Teatime Theatre, that it's more efficient to offer digital scripts than to produce play booklets. If you choose to produce one of Gilded Lily Publishing's plays you'll receive one complete script as a PDF digital file.

We understand it will be necessary for you to possibly print one to two copies although we'd encourage you to email the file to an interested director. It will be the director's job to make the necessary copies for his cast.

~~**~~

4. Is it appropriate to host only one short?

Although, currently, Gilded Lily Publishing's shorts last 10-12 minutes, a short can be as short as three minutes. You certainly could host only one short, but with only one you can hardly charge more money and expect happy guests. If you choose to go with shorts, aim for at least 30 minutes worth of performance time and adjust your pricing accordingly.

~~**~~

5. Where do I find images to help promote the play?

There are numerous web sites, such as Big Stock Photo and iStockphoto, devoted to imagery. Dover Publications also carry a vast array of inexpensive books containing copyright free images for your use.

However, Gilded Lily Publishing has made it exceptionally easy for you if choosing either **A Teatime Travesty** or **Tea-A-Ria**. For both of these plays, we offer the imagery we originally created for our initial production. Both imagery packages contain a variety of high quality jpg images. In addition, we've included an announcement, playbill, table tent and welcome sign. These documents have been created in Word and so can be easily altered to accommodate your details. Included is:

1. Two different web worthy images (72dpi) for use on social media or your web site
2. One high resolution image with changeable text for an 8 x 10 best put at your cash register and in the windows of local businesses
3. One double sided table tent with changeable text already laid out for you 2-up on a page.
4. One 4-page playbill document with changeable text.
5. File for a 24" x 30" artistically created welcome sign turning your tea room into either The Lily Pond Tearoom (**A Teatime Travesty**) or Tea-A-Ria (**Tea-A-Ria**).

The importance of well done imagery cannot be overstated. It's an instrumental piece of the selling ticket puzzle. It would cost you hundreds of dollars and many hours to create imagery and documents comparable to what Gilded Lily Publishing is offering. Our Imagery Package is worth its weight in gold but it is yours for only \$45. To order, go to GLily.com, click on plays and then on the particular play you are interested in.

We hope, in the future, to offer an imagery package for our shorts. Currently, however, we do not have such a package available.



Tip: You might also consider contacting your local high school or college to see if the art department would like to take the creation of a theatrical poster on as a special project or as a contest. If you choose to go this route, keep in mind you must handle this early on - before your box office opens.

~~**~~

6. How long should I accept reservations?

Our first impulse is to say, "Until the house is full!" While seemingly sound advice, in actuality it depends upon the comfort level of the kitchen and when they feel a final head count is needed.

Keep in mind that the entertainment section of many newspapers comes out on Friday. There are also people who simply do not finalize their weekend plans until the last minute. If you or your caterer demands a final head count on Friday for a Sunday performance, you are losing revenue and possibly disappointing folks.

This is among the hardest decisions to make with any special event. Our suggestion is wait as long as possible before cutting off reservations. Our hope, of course, is that the house fills long before this need be an issue!



Your Timeline for a Theatre Production

The timeline below is for you and your tasks. The theatre company's timeline will be different with different tasks to be done.

Six to Twelve Months

- ~~ Choose your play
- ~~ Choose your theatre company
- ~~ Choose your performance dates
- ~~ Schedule any rehearsals to be in your tearoom
- ~~ Pay any necessary royalties
- ~~ Sign all necessary contracts and agreements
- ~~ Begin collecting the imagery you'll wish to use in advertising the show
- ~~ Begin creating your media contact list

~~**~~

Eight to Nine Weeks

- ~~ Begin seeking advertisers for program if going this route
- ~~ Have publicity photos taken
- ~~ Decide upon your menu
- ~~ Begin putting teasers on your web site
- ~~ Begin contacting radio or television via your media release

~~**~~

Four to Six Weeks

- ~~ Open your box office

- ~~ Begin encouraging cast and crew to push ticket sales
- ~~ Have camera ready advertisements in hand
- ~~ Begin sending media releases to newspapers

~~**~~

Three to Four Weeks

- ~~ Begin continually announcing the show on social media
- ~~ Create and print your programs

~~**~~

One Week

- ~~ Host dress rehearsal or rehearsals

~~**~~

During the Show's Run

- ~~ Send a media releases with a picture and audience quotes

~~**~~

Post Production

- ~~ Write any necessary thank yous to media and reviewers



Figuring Your Costs

Teatime Theatre is designed to increase your exposure in the community and to be a fun and memorable tearoom experience for your guests. But, ultimately it must also make money for you in order to justify the energy and time necessary to make it successful. To that end, we must look closer at costs.

First, let us again stress the importance of paying the theatre company a per head figure. This insures the cast is invested in filling the house but, most importantly, it relieves you of financial stress. You are encouraged to walk away from a theatre company who, for whatever reason, feels they cannot work with you in this way.

Next, let's look at your total costs for hosting the show only if you're going to produce one run of Gilded Lily Publishing's **A Teatime Travesty** or **Tea-A-Ria**, both just short of an hour in length. You'll note some costs remain the same regardless of how small or large your venue. Others vary depending on the size of your tearoom or venue.

Adding the appropriate costs below to your normal operating costs and to the figure per head you pay to the theatre company will give you the base line figure to charge. You can then decide, depending upon factors such as the economics of your area, whether additional profit can be worked into the event cost.

For a House Seating 30:

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Script:</i> | <i>\$15.00</i> |
| <i>Royalty:</i> | <i>50.00</i> |
| <i>15 8 x 10 Color Flyers @ .79 plus 6% tax:</i> | <i>13.00</i> |
| <i>12 Black and White Table Tents, 2-up:</i> | <i>.60</i> |
| <i>24" x 30" Welcome Sign plus 6% tax:</i> | <i>38.00</i> |
| <i>Double-Sided Program @ .10 per side:</i> | <i>6.00</i> |

Total: \$123 or \$4.10 per guest

~~**~~

For a House Seating 40:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|---------|
| Script: | \$15.00 |
| Royalty: | 50.00 |
| 15 8 x 10 Color Flyers @ .79 plus 6% tax: | 13.00 |
| 16 Black and White Table Tents, 2-up: | .80 |
| 24" x 30" Welcome Sign plus 6% tax: | 38.00 |
| 40 Double-Sided Program @ .10 per side: | 8.00 |

Total:\$124.80 or \$3.12 per guest

~~**~~

For a House Seating 50:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|---------|
| Script: | \$15.00 |
| Royalty: | 50.00 |
| 15 8 x 10 Color Flyers @ .79 plus 6% tax: | \$13.00 |
| 20 Black and White Table Tents, 2-up: | 1.00 |
| 24" x 30" Welcome Sign plus 6% tax: | 38.00 |
| 50 Double-Sided Program @ .10 per side: | 10.00 |

Total:\$127 or \$2.54 per guest

~~**~~

For a House Seating 60:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|---------|
| Script: | \$15.00 |
| Royalty: | 50.00 |
| 15 8 x 10 Color Flyers @ .79 plus 6% tax: | \$13.00 |
| 24 Black and White Table Tents, 2-up: | 1.20 |
| 24" x 30" Welcome Sign plus 6% tax: | 38.00 |
| 60 Double-SidedProgram @ .10 per side: | 12.00 |

Total:\$129.20 or \$2.15 per guest

Note: Flyer costs are based on 3 in your tearoom - window, cash register and in your gift shop - and 12 for the windows of neighboring businesses. The large welcome sign is specific to both plays as a way of introduction. While we've discovered guests take note of it, it is not absolutely necessary.



Tip: Consider framing the 24" x 30" image once the play run is over so it can continue to serve you.



Contracts and Licenses

Like any theatre production, there are legal matters to be dealt with when hosting Teatime Theatre. However, we've made it as simple as possible.

There are three different legalities you must handle early on once you've purchased a script. The first is the Royalty Performance Request. Secondly you'll sign a Performance License contract. Lastly, you, as producer, will sign a contract with the theatre company you've chosen.

Please note that royalties fees are different than the cost of the script. Scripts for Gilded Lily Publishing's 1-hour plays are \$15. The script cost for all of our shorts are \$10. These payments can be made via Paypal at LaurieNienhaus.com.

Royalty Performance Request Form

Below is Gilded Lily Publishing's Royalty Performance Request Form. This form, also found at LaurieNienhaus.com, is an example of what you can expect to see at websites where royalty performance plays are available.

If you'd like to see one of Gilded Lily Publishing's plays performed in your tearoom, email this form to editor@GLily.com. You'll then be sent the Play License Contract and an invoice. Return the contract with the appropriate fee and you'll be sent the necessary performance license.

You can also print this form and mail it to PO Box 2576, Fort Myers Beach, FL 33932.

Please Note:

1. Royalties are necessary for ALL performances and readings of Gilded Lily Publishing's plays.
2. Royalties must be received at least 10 days prior to the first performance.
3. Gilded Lily Publishing's plays cannot be performed without a license. Royalty fees are below.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Theater Name: _____

Theater Location: _____

Theater Mailing Address: _____

City: State: Zip: _____

of Seats: _____

of Performances: _____

Performance Dates: _____

Comments: _____

Royalty Rates

The royalty rates for our 1-hour plays are:

~~ \$50 for the 1st Run

~~ \$30 for each Subsequent Run

The 1-hour Plays:

____ A Teatime Travesty

____ Tea-A-Ria

The royalty rates for our shorts are:

~~ \$15 for the 1st Run

~~ \$10 for each Subsequent Run

The Shorts:

- ___ A Nun's Tale: And the Letters Fly
- ___ Where's Santa?
- ___ The True Spirit of Men
- ___ When Julie Met Cindy

~~**~~

Gilded Lily Publishing's Play License

The parties, Laurie Nienhaus of _____ (AUTHOR) and _____ of _____ (PRODUCER) enter this Agreement this ____ day of _____.

WHEREAS, AUTHOR has written a play entitled _____ (the "Play"); and WHEREAS, PRODUCER has reviewed the Play and desires to produce it THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises below and other good and valuable consideration, the parties agree as follows:

1. **GRANT OF RIGHTS:** AUTHOR has delivered a complete draft of the Play to PRODUCER. In consideration of the License Fee of \$____, AUTHOR hereby grants to PRODUCER the non-exclusive right and license to produce the Play with live actors before a live and immediate audience at _____ in _____, which venue has a capacity of _____. The Play shall open on or before _____.

If the Play does not open by that date, this License shall be deemed terminated, and AUTHOR shall be entitled to retain the License Fee. Nothing herein shall be deemed to obligate PRODUCER to produce the Play.

2. **RUN:** This License grants PRODUCER the right to put on an uninterrupted performance engagement of two to five consecutive weeks or a bimonthly run lasting no more than two months. If exceeding five performances and/or two months, the PRODUCER will be required to pay the subsequent run royalty fee.

3. **AUTHOR OWNERSHIP & CONTROL:** PRODUCER shall produce the Play in accordance with the script and production guidelines AUTHOR provides. PRODUCER shall neither make nor permit any changes to the style or text of the Play without the prior consent of AUTHOR. Any such permitted changes shall become the property of AUTHOR and shall require any requested written understandings from contributors vesting all rights with AUTHOR. AUTHOR may grant or deny such consent in her sole, unfettered, discretion, and PRODUCER nor anyone under PRODUCER's charge, direction, or employ shall make any claim that would compromise AUTHOR's sole and exclusive rights to the Play and all derivatives thereof.

AUTHOR reserves All rights in and to the Play not expressly granted to PRODUCER hereby for AUTHOR's use and disposition. PRODUCER shall ensure that all participants in the Production understand that no contribution they make shall be deemed a work of joint authorship with AUTHOR, such joint AUTHORSHIP being in direct contravention of AUTHOR's intent. All ideas and expressions with respect to the Play, whether contributed by a director, a PRODUCER, a performer, or a third party, shall inure to the benefit of and otherwise belong to AUTHOR. All copyright and other rights in and to the Play, including any extensions, renewals, and derivatives thereof throughout the world, shall be in the name of the AUTHOR. PRODUCER shall make no claim contrary to AUTHOR's rights hereunder and indemnifies AUTHOR against any such claims by third parties related in any way to the PRODUCER's Production.

4. **SUBSIDIARY RIGHTS:** PRODUCER is acquiring rights solely in connection with the production of the Play and not to any subsidiary, merchandising, or similar rights. PRODUCER shall not sell any merchandising related to the Play without separate written arrangement with the AUTHOR. However, PRODUCER shall have the right to authorize radio and television presentation of excerpts from PRODUCER's production of the Play so long as such presentation is for the sole purpose of exploiting and publicizing the production and provided PRODUCER receives no compensation or profits (other than reimbursement for out of pocket expenses), directly or indirectly, for authorizing such radio or television presentations. Such presentation shall not be a 'mini-version' of the Play. Other than this limited exception, no television, film, video or audio recording may be made of your production without prior written consent of AUTHOR.

5. **CREDITS and REFERENCES:** In all programs, houseboards, painted signs, three-sheets, billboards, and paid advertising under the control of PRODUCER, credit shall be given to AUTHOR in the following form:

Written by Laurie Nienhaus

The name of AUTHOR shall be in type at least sixty percent (60%) of the size, boldness, and prominence of the title of the Play or shall be the size, boldness and prominence of the star(s) whichever shall be larger. No names except the title of the Play and star(s) or a director of prominence shall be more prominent than AUTHOR's name, and no names other than the star(s) or PRODUCER shall appear above that of AUTHOR.

6. **RIGHT OF ASSIGNMENT:** Upon written notice to AUTHOR, PRODUCER shall have the right to assign this Agreement to an entity in which PRODUCER is a principal.

7. **INDEMNITY:** PRODUCER agrees that it is solely liable for all costs, fees, royalties, salaries, and taxes incurred in connection with the Play. PRODUCER shall comply with all laws, regulations, ordinances, union requirements, permits, and any other rules governing the Play, its performance, its execution, and its promotion. PRODUCER shall indemnify and hold AUTHOR harmless from any claims, loss, or damage, including attorney fees, related to the production and presentation of the Play or resulting from any breach of this Agreement or the warranties herein.

8. **ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS:** If either party retains an attorney to enforce or litigate this Agreement, its validity, or any provision hereof, the prevailing party shall be entitled to recover its reasonable attorney's fees and necessary disbursements through appeal. Exclusive jurisdiction and venue of any such action shall vest in Pinellas County, Florida. This Agreement contains the full understanding of the parties, superseding all of prior oral or written understandings or representations. No modification or waiver of this Agreement shall be effective unless it is written and signed by both parties. If any text herein is deemed unenforceable by any competent authority, all remaining text shall remain in full force and effect. Each party warrants it has been advised or had the unrestricted opportunity to be advised by legal counsel of its choice.

Producer: _____ Date: _____

Author: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

~~**~~

Contract Between You and the Theatre Company: An Example

According to this AGREEMENT: _____ (your name) engages
_____ (theatre company) to perform _____ (name of play) at
_____ (venue) with all the following terms and conditions.

1. PLACE OF ENGAGEMENT shall be _____ (venue)

2. DATES OF ENGAGEMENT: _____

3. NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES: _____

4. DRESS REHEARSALS shall be held at _____ (venue) on
_____. Other rehearsals at the venue may be agreed upon by both parties.

5. FULL AGREED UPON PRICE shall be _____, payable to the
_____ (theatre company) on _____.

In addition, _____ (your name) will be solely responsible for

_____.

_____ (*theatre company*) will be solely responsible for

6. HOLD HARMLESS: _____ (*theatre company*) shall hold _____ (*your name*) and/or _____ (*venue*) harmless for all claims for all damages (including reasonable attorney's fee) incurred by _____ (*theatre company*) as a result of a claim or proof that _____'s (*theatre company*) participation shall have been without authorization, defamatory, or otherwise interfering with the rights of, or injuring any individual or entity.

7. VENUE: _____ (*theatre company*) shall comply with all rules and regulations and orders of governmental authorities (*including nondiscrimination agreements*), and including all laws, rules, regulations and contracts regarding labor as are applicable to operations contemplated under this Contract.

8. COMPED TICKETS: _____ (*theatre company*) will be given _____ (*number of tickets*) comped tickets.

9. PROMOTION AND PUBLICITY TASKS AND EXPENSES will be carried out by _____ (*your name*). _____ (*theatre company*) will provide any necessary text and/or photos needed for programs and/or any other additional advertising and promotion by _____ (*date needed*).

10. FORCE MAJEURE: In the event that any performance under this Agreement shall be prevented by force majeure (*including but not limited to acts of God, storm, fire, the acts or regulations of governmental agencies or public authorities or labor unions, labor difficulties, lockout, strike, civil tumult, war, blackout, fuel or power shortage, or epidemic*) the parties shall be relieved of their respective obligations under this Agreement.

11. COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENTS: _____ (*your name*) has acquired all necessary business permits, licences and public performance copyright licences. _____ (*theatre company*) performances of said play will not violate any copyrights held by others.

12. INDEMNITY: In addition to the above stated responsibilities of each party, _____ (*your name*) shall comply with all laws, regulations, ordinances, union requirements, permits, and any other rules governing the role of VENUE. The VENUE shall indemnify and hold _____ (*theatre company*) harmless from any claims, loss, or damage, including attorney fees, related to the role of VENUE or resulting from any breach of this Agreement or the warranties therein.

13. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS: If either party retains an attorney to enforce or litigate this Agreement, its validity, or any provision hereof, the prevailing party shall be entitled to recover its reasonable attorney's fees and necessary disbursements through appeal. Exclusive jurisdiction and venue of such action shall vest in _____ (*your county*). This Agreement contains the full understand of the parties, superseding all of prior oral or written understandings or representations. No modification or waiver of this Agreement shall be effective unless it is written and signed by both parties. If any text herein is deemed unenforceable by any competent authority, all remaining text shall remain in full force and effect. Each party warrants it has been advised or had the unrestricted opportunity to be advised by legal counsel of choice.

This contract cannot be modified except by a written instrument signed by the parties hereto. This contract will ensure to the benefit of and bind the parties hereto and their respective heirs, successors and assigns and is a valid, binding and enforceable agreement between us. This contract will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of _____ (*your state*).

_____ (*agent of the theatre company*) is authorised to sign and execute this contract as agent for and on behalf of _____ (*theatre company*).

ACCEPTED AND AGREED TO:

_____ Your Name

_____ Date

_____ Theatre Company Agent

_____ Date

_____ Witness

_____ Date



Media Release Examples

The most important things to keep in mind about any media release is:

- ~~ It must answer who, what, when, where and why in a succinct fashion
- ~~ Often your release will be printed almost as is. Write it so it could be simply dropped into the paper as is.
- ~~ Quotes from yourself, the director or the author are good to include as it brings the release to life.
- ~~ Refrain from statements mentioning how wonderful the play is. Journalists hate that and often will immediately discard your release.
- ~~ For the purposes of Teatime Theatre, it is always a good idea to mention what you'll be serving.
- ~~ Also for the purposes of Teatime Theatre, give a brief synopsis of the the play and how the day will run.
- ~~ Always add the three xxx's at the end, either center or left justified. It is the standard method of letting the reader know they've reached the end of the release.
- ~~ Now days media releases are best sent on-line
- ~~ You want to send your release two to four weeks before the opening. Know the deadlines of the publication you're sending too.
- ~~ If possible , sent directly to a particular person
- ~~ Don't forget to send your media release to your local theatre reviewer one to two months before your opening. A reviewer might ask to see a copy of the script. They are busy folks and need the extra time to read the script.
- ~~ If you receive a response for more information or for an interview, respond immediately. Journalists are always on deadline and may quickly move on if they don't hear from you in a timely fashion.

Example 1

Mama Mia! It's Tea-A-Ria

Teatime Goes Italian...and it Might Never Be the Same!

Contact: Tony or Kathy Newton at Fred's: 239-431-7928

Naples, Florida, April 26, 2010 – Performed by The Orpheus Players, Laurie Nienhaus' second comedy, *Tea-A-Ria*, begins at Fred's Diner on Sunday, May 16 at 5:00 p.m. Guests will first indulge in a three-course Italian peasant style meal before the play begins.

While Nienhaus' first comedy, *A Teatime Travesty*, featured rivals in tea and love and a reclusive horticulturist fond of poisonous plants, *Tea-A-Ria* is a different kind of romp. It's the opening day of Leonie Palazotto's tearoom and her very Italian family, who doesn't quite grasp the concept of "teatime", is willing to do anything to help her. Two English sisters new to America put in an appearance, as does a most unwanted guest. Friends and family must pull together to overcome the obstacle that is Enza Malandra. As with *A Teatime Travesty*, the action of the play goes on around the guests rather than on a stage.

Says Nienhaus, "Likely few have had occasion to give this much thought, but murdering a guest during the tea hour is fraught with problems. And then, of course, once the deed is done there is a body to dispose of - a somewhat athletic maneuver for women dressed in their finest tea attire. So, while I can't tell you what actually happens to Miss Malandra, I can tell you this. She does finally exit the tearoom of her own free will."

All five performances are on Sunday – May 16th and 23rd and June 6th, 13th and 20th. The doors open each Sunday at 5:00 p.m. except for the May 23rd performance when the doors open at 7:00 p.m.

Laurie Nienhaus can be reached for further comment at 463-1079. Contact Fred's Diner at 431-7928 to purchase tickets. The \$29.95 ticket price includes the show, a glass of champagne and a three course Italian peasant-style meal with a choice of Chicken Florentine with Baby Spinach, Fresh Basil and San Marzano Tomatoes, Spinach Fettuccini with Cracked Black Pepper and Asiago Cream Sauce, or Veal Merango with Saffron Risotto. As *Tea-A-Ria* is set in the late 1940's, a 1940's cocktail will be the drink special.

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Example 2

Mama Mia! Tea-A-Ria is Back!
Teatime Goes Italian Once Again!

Contact: Tony or Kathy Newton at Fred's: 239-431-7928

Naples, Florida, January 11, 2011 - As the patrons of Fred's have asked for more, The Orpheus Players of Fort Myers Beach are returning with the teatime comedy, *Tea-A-Ria*.

The dates of this limited engagement are Sundays: January 23 and 30, February 27, and March 6. As before, the doors open at 5 p.m. and the show begins at 6:30. Guests will again indulge in a three-course Italian peasant style meal before the play begins.

Says Nienhaus, "We're thrilled to have been asked back. Aside from the ambience and awesome food at Fred's, we think *Tea-A-Ria* was so popular because we interact with the audience during the show. People seem to love that. Those who cherish light-hearted fun and silliness are again in for a treat."

The \$29.95 ticket price includes the show and a three course Italian peasant-style meal with a choice of Italian Beef Stew, Pasta Cul Ragu Alla Bolognese or Oven Roasted Salmon. A first course of Caliberan Bell Peppers & Potatoes with Exploded Garlic and Parmesean will be served and the final flight will be Stuffed Crepes with Vanilla Curd & Strawberry Anglaise. As *Tea-A-Ria* is set in the late 1940's, a 1940's cocktail will be the drink special.

Laurie Nienhaus can be reached for further comment at 463-1079. Contact Fred's Diner at 431-7928 to purchase tickets.

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Example 3

A Teatime Travesty
It's Murder and Mayhem at Teatime!

Contact: Brambles Tea Room: 239-262-7894

Naples, Florida, February 28, 2006 - Fort Myers Beach resident Laurie Nienhaus has written a comedy murder mystery play, "A Teatime Travesty," where all events occur around the guests as they indulge in a four-course Royal Tea.

"It's similar to the famous "Tony and Tina's Wedding," but tamer of course since guests will be at an elegant afternoon tea rather than a wedding reception," says Laurie Nienhaus. "Yet, it's no less hilarious."

Naples' own Pelican Players will perform the cast of seven characters, which include a high society tea hostess, an aspiring journalist, a love-sick young woman, and a reclusive horticulturist who is a fashion nightmare. Of course, there's also the unwanted guest.

Directing "Travesty" is John Lanham who says, "The script is funny and it's innovation and humor is in keeping with the kind of productions The Pelican Players like best."

This third performance run will take place on Sunday, January 13 and Sunday, March 9 with two shows, 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. at [Brambles Tea Room](#), located at 340 Fifth Avenue South in Naples, Florida. Brambles Tea Room will, for a day, become The Lily Pond Tearoom.

Guests can expect - among the mayhem - an elegant afternoon tea that won't leave them hungry. Brambles will provide the royal tea fare, which includes a glass of champagne. Travesty promises to satisfy both our appetites and our love of laughter. As the owner of The Lily Pond Tearoom says, "Dreams never die at the Lily Pond!"

Laurie Nienhaus can be reached for further comment at 463-1079. Contact Brambles Tearoom at 262-7894 to purchase tickets. The \$49 ticket price includes the show, an afternoon tea, and a glass of champagne.

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The Plays of Gilded Lily Publishing

Gilded Lily Publishing is currently offering two plays lasting under an hour and five shorts, each lasting under 15 minutes.

Excerpts of our plays can be read at <http://www.LaurieNienhaus.com/plays.html>

A Teatime Travesty...It's Murder and Mayhem at Teatime!

~~ **Genre:** Farce

~~ **Setting:** Somewhere in the south, sometime in the 1920's

~~ **Number in Cast:** 5 women, 2 men

~~ **Length:** 1-hour

~~ **Play Synopsis:** It's opening day at The Lily Pond Tearoom and Miss Margaret has asked the beautiful society hostess, Lydia Sunnybrook, to precede over the day's events. Lydia has engaged the reclusive master gardener, Fern Well, to speak on The Rich & Fragrant World of the Rose.

However, the afternoon begins to unravel once Lydia notices Fern's unusual contribution to the décor. Fern, a fashion nightmare, arrives wanting to speak on another topic. Wendy Ray is a late arriving guest wishing to goad poor Fern. A new employee acting suspiciously and a woman who'd very much like to take Lydia's place adds to the mayhem, making for an afternoon not at all what Miss Margaret or Lydia had planned.

And unfortunately, Willie Heights is an ambitious journalist catching every moment on film. After one guest drinks a glass of poisoned champagne, it is up to Mr. Heights to solve the mystery. The stage is set for comedy, mishap and ...murder.

~~ *The Cast of Characters*

Barnaby was once Fern's fiancé. With only a fake mustache and large glasses as a flimsy disguise, he is working at the tearoom because he wants Fern back.

Miss Margaret is owner of The Lily Pond Tearoom. Etiquette means everything to her but she also longs for romance. She at times appears to be operating with less than a full cup.

Willie Heights is the ambitious photographer with the local paper's society beat who wants to break into investigative journalism. He's small town, but confident and quite the flirt.

Mable Fontaine wishes to be Lydia. She dresses like Lydia and wears a wig similar in style to Lydia's hair - a style that does not quite hit the mark.

Lydia Sunnybrook is the beautiful and confident society hostess as well as a local celebrity. She is the epitome of a southern belle.

Fern Well is the odd and reclusive master gardener engaged as the day's speaker. She is a fashion nightmare who arrives determined to speak on a topic other than that which Lydia arranged.

Wendy Ray is the loud and overbearing guest who stole Fern's fiancé. She wears too much make-up and is rough around the edges.

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Tea-A-Ria...Teatime Goes Italian and It May Never Be the Same!

~~ **Genre:** Farce

~~ **Setting:** New York City, sometime in the late 1940's

~~ **Number in Cast:** 5 women, 2 men

~~ **Length:** 1-hour

~~ **Play Synopsis:** It's the opening day of Leonie Palazotto's tearoom, Tea-A-Ria. Leonie's very Italian family doesn't quite grasp the concept of "teatime" but is willing to do anything to help her. As if a distraught aunt, a formidable grandmother, and a young Italian man mooning over her don't provide enough challenge, an English couple new to America put in an appearance, as does a most unwanted guest. Friends and family must pull together to overcome the obstacle that is Enza Malandra.

~~ *The Cast of Characters:*

Leonie Palazatto is a beautiful, dark haired woman in her early 30's whose dream has been to open a tearoom. She's nervous about her first day. While obedient to the older members of her family, she's easily frustrated by them and their attempts to help her.

Nona Lena is Leonie's traditional, matriarchal Italian grandmother. Her accent is strong and she wears a functional apron with huge pockets and stockings rolled down around her black boots. She's superstitious, believing in gypsy curses. She's also cynical about Tea-A-Ria, worrying that tea fare will not satisfy Leonie's guests.

Aunt Sabina is married to Leonie's Uncle Raffaele. She's a good hearted and very dramatic Italian woman who dresses well. Her accent is much lighter than Nona Lena's. She knows her husband, Raffaele, has a mistress but has never met her – until today. She loves Leonie and is determined to help her. She's also determined to keep her husband.

Tomasso Deluca is a friend of the family who grew up with Leonie's brother, Angelo. He's a tough guy from the Bronx – tough, that is, until he's around Leonie.

Barbara St. James is holidaying in New York with her sister, Fionia. She's fascinated with all things American and is thrilled to discover Tea-A-Ria. She and Fionia tend to bicker back and forth and gesture to one another. She's rather stylish and is prone to becoming involved in the business of others.

Fionia St. James is Barbara's sister and a doctor. She is less pleased to be in America and has no desire to be at Tea-A-Ria. She is dismayed at her sister's constant desire to "participate".

Enza Malandra is the mistress of Leonie's Uncle Raffaele. She's going to school to become a hairdresser. She's curvy, flashy, and trashy. She speaks with a loud Bronx accent and is a trouble maker.

~~**~~

Where's Santa

~~ **Genre:** Comedy

~~ **Setting:** Tropical, beach setting anytime after 1950

~~ **Number in Cast:** 1 woman, 2 men

~~ **Length:** 10 minutes

~~ **Play Synopsis:** Roving reporter Ruth Bluestein is on location looking for a Santa Claus who continually eludes her. Yet, Ruth still has much to say about Santa, the holiday, and good Jewish girls.

~~ **The Cast of Characters:**

Shepherd Germain is the news announcer trying to keep Ruth Bluestein on track.

Ruth Bluestein is WFMB's roving reporter. She is a New Yorker who speaks with a strong Jewish accent. She has a hard time staying focused.

Santa has lost his work clothes and is kicking up his heels in paradise.

~~**~~

A Nun's Tale: And the Letter's Fly

~~ **Genre:** Comedy

~~ **Setting:** Room of a convent

~~ **Number in Cast:** 2 women

~~ **Length:** 10 minutes

~~ **Play Synopsis:** Christmas is fast approaching and Sister Bridget and Sister Mary Francis cannot agree on holiday decor. Will it be the flocked tree left by the hasty departure of Sister's Bridget's Aunt Maeve or will it be Sister Bridget's real tree with its "flood" of garland? And can poor Mrs. Mabrey handle their demands?

~~**~~

The Real Spirit of Men

~~ **Genre:** Drama

~~ **Setting:** Anywhere

~~ **Number in Cast:** 1 woman and 1 man

~~ **Length:** 10 minutes

~~ **Play Synopsis:** A poignant soliloquy where a woman tells the true story of the Christmas Truce of 1914 while a soldier appears singing Silent Night in German.

~~ **The Cast of Characters:**

Woman dressed in either modern attire or that of the late 1940's sits on a stool.

Soldier singing Silent Night in German

~~**~~

Love and the Letter

~~ **Genre:** Poignant Comedy

~~ **Setting:** Edwardian and 1920's

~~ **Number in Cast:** 1 woman

~~ **Length:** 12 minutes

~~ **Play Synopsis:** An Edwardian woman realizes she is in love and that she must write a love letter. The years pass and she becomes unsure of where she stands. Is another love letter the answer? This short is unique in that the character enters and leaves the room four different times.

~~ **The Cast of Characters:**

Woman - a hypochondriac - talks intimately to the house as she wonders if it's love or insanity plaguing her.

~~**~~

When Julie Met Cindy

~~ **Genre:** Farce, Fractured Fairy Tale

~~ **Setting:** A doctor's office

~~ **Number in Cast:** 2 women

~~ **Play Synopsis:** Juliet Capulet's outlook on life and love changes when she meets Cinderella. And, Cinderella, is no longer your unusual story book princess.

~~ **The Cast of Characters:**

Juliet Capulet, dressed in her era, is distraught over Romeo and quite melodramatic.

Cinderella, dressed in classic style, is the redneck princess with a practical view of love.



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