



BEST LOCAL THEATRE GROUP

10 years in a row!
Fairfield County Weekly
Annual Readers' Poll

BEST PERFORMING ARTS GROUP
2008 through 2023
StamfordPlus Magazine

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Producing Artistic Director
Lou@curtaincallinc.com

1349 Newfield Avenue
Stamford CT 06905

203 329-8207

Box Office
203 461-6358

REPORT TO CITY OF STAMFORD – 4/11/24

Like most theatres across the country, we're still rebuilding from the pandemic. Audience numbers are still not back to pre-Covid levels but are getting closer.

Our number of performances scheduled during the 2019-2020 season was 186 with 44 weekends of programming. Unofficial plans for 2024-2025 have us back up to 160 / 42 weekends, up from 142 / 39 this season.

We continue to offer our Sumer Youth Theatre program (summer 2024 – BEAUTY & THE BEAST) for just a \$50 registration fee compared to nearby towns: Fairfield - \$225 / Wilton - \$500 / Westport - \$775 / Greenwich - \$1,350.

Enrollment in our educational programming has actually surpassed our 2019 (last normal period) by about 12%. We continue to offer our classes on par or less than similar area programs. Bridgeport: 24 hours program \$885 / Norwalk: 12 hours -\$350 /Ours 8 weeks – 14 hours - \$280

We will continue bringing free children's programming to the Ferguson Library main branch as part of our outreach to communities that have limited access to traveling to Sterling Farms.

Our budget for FY 2024-2025 is predicted to be similar to this year: \$1.3M. The City support toward Utilities, Security, etc. of \$90,000 will help cover anticipated gas, electric, oil, phone and security costs of \$119,700. (Year-ending June 30, 2023: \$108,700.) With a fly tower over the Kweskin stage completely open to the sky, the installation of solar panels could be a worthwhile venture.

As always, our four, 100+ year-old buildings continue to need work – two separate roof leaks in the Kweskin are current issues – and the silo attached to The Dressing Room Theatre still has a major water problem.

One other concern: We ask our City leaders to reach out to State and Federal legislative colleagues for continued support for the struggling nonprofit theatre industry. Curtain Call and all but two of the 20+ theatres in Fairfield County were shut out of a \$10M state grant program this year. Additionally, a new federal initiative, **Supporting Theater and the Arts to Galvanize the Economy (STAGE) Act of 2024** is in the works, so your support up the line on this would be terrific.

We remain honored to manage the theatre operations for The City of Stamford and are most appreciative of the support from you.

Most sincerely,

Lou Ursone
Executive Director