

ren & the wake:



a case study in pre-performance information

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in collaboration with

Catch the Keys Productions and Common Ground Arts Society

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Introduction

In 2020, the Edmonton Performing Arts Accessibility Ad Hoc Group released a report intended to map the access needs of Edmontonian audiences against performing arts companies' access provisions to identify gaps. The report revealed a striking finding - there was very little consensus among the companies that filled out the survey or who were interviewed in what pre-performance information they shared with audiences. The report did not ask how companies shared pre-performance information.

Good information is vital to access. There is very little more disappointing than making plans, purchasing tickets, getting yourself to a performance and discovering that you cannot access it, or accessing it will be painful or harmful to yourself. More than that, good information about a performance addresses a wide range of needs that go beyond disability - everyone from parents who need to know what time an event ends to relieve the babysitter, to people calculating the time their journey will take, to more recently, people with immunocompromised loved ones weighing the risks of COVID exposure - need information about performances before they purchase a ticket.

Immersive and site responsive performance companies are, by necessity, experts in providing audiences with information before they arrive. They may ask audiences to venture to a new or unusual part of town, hike through the woods, or explore a historic building, all while adjusting the conventions of audience-performer interactions. They cannot rely on familiar structure to help audiences understand where they need to go or what they need to do. Two site responsive performance companies partnered with Dr. Kelsie Acton on this research, Catch the Keys Production and Common Ground Arts Society. This project had two objectives:

1. To better understand audiences' experiences of the pre-performance information for *ren & the wake*, a musical exploring grief, memory and materiality. In particular, the producers were interested in understanding audiences' experiences of content information, sensory information (about lights, sound, smells, temperature, etc.) and COVID safety protocols.
2. To map current practices across a number of performing arts companies in Edmonton to better understand what kind of information they communicate with their audiences before audiences arrive, how they communicate it and why.

Catch The Keys

Catch the Keys run by Megan and Beth Dart and creates theatre that “that continually challenges and redefines the audience experience” (‘Who we are’). Each year (when not interrupted by COVID), they produce Dead Centre of Town, Edmonton’s site-specific, immersive performance that examines Edmonton’s history. Over the course of fifteen years of producing site-specific and immersive work, particularly immersive horror, they have developed strong processes for bringing audiences into the worlds they create and establishing collective understandings of how audiences and performers will interact. As producers who have a longstanding interest in audience care, enacted in part through pre-performance communications with the audience, they were ideal to conduct this research with.

Methods

This research took a case study approach. Several performances were explored as potential case studies, but the challenges of COVID meant that we finally landed on *ren & the wake*. Case studies are research that focus intensively on one particular person, place or situation. As a qualitative case study, the results of this research are not generalisable, but they offer valuable information that might inform Catch the Keys and other Edmonton producers’ future decisions around pre-performance information.

The research method primarily consisted of semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are interviews that have pre-determined questions to guide conversation but the guide can be departed from in order to follow up on a point, clarify, or to respond to the interviewee’s interests and desires.

The following data was collected:

- Multiple semi-structured interviews with Beth Dart and Megan Dart, who produced *ren and the wake*, exploring both *ren & the wake*, and their other immersive and site specific producing work
- Semi-structured interviews conducted with audience members of *ren & the wake* by research assistant Simone Medina Polo
- A short survey directed at audience members of *ren & the wake*. Too few responses were received to use the data in this research. In retrospect, while surveys are a standard tool in audience research, trying to use one for a shortened run of a performance with a small audience capacity was unlikely to work
- Semi-structured interviews with Edmonton producers to better understand current practices of pre-performance information, especially with the changes that COVID has created for producers in the past two years

Study Focus

Pre-performance information can cover a huge range of information, disseminated through a wide variety of means. Content can include how to get to the theatre, parking, sensory information (including sudden loud noises and strobe lights, but also a wide array of other information) and content information. In discussion with Catch the Keys producers, this study focused on three types of information:

- **Content:** Content was a particular area of interest for Catch the Keys productions. As such, audiences were asked about if and how they preferred to receive content information. Producers were asked if and how they provided content information to their audiences.
- **Sensory:** The Edmonton Performing Arts Accessibility Ad Hoc Group report identified sensory information as an area of pre-performance information that needed further examination. Participants identified strobe lights, bright flashing lights, loud volumes, haze, or fog as key elements that they needed information on. This study asked audiences about the kind of sensory information they need and when they needed it provided to them, and documents how producers are addressing providing sensory information to their audiences.
- **Covid safety:** Keeping audiences safe and reducing the likelihood of COVID transmission at performances was a major concern. This depends on audiences understanding and following COVID protocols such as showing proof of vaccination, masking and social distancing. This study asked audiences about the kind of information they needed about COVID protocols and documented how Edmonton producers had responded to COVID through pre-performance information.



ren & the wake

ren & the wake is an immersive performance that deals with loss and the material memories of someone. It's also a musical. Reimagined and post-poned because of COVID, it finally had a workshop production as part of Fringe Theatre's 2022 season. It was advertised as:

Ren's mother has passed away. Ren doesn't know what to do or what to say. But Ren has boxes and boxes of their mother's things: a life stuffed between the cracked pages of cookbooks, trapped in empty bottles, hidden amid dusty photos, scribbled inside a dog-eared journal.

With the help of a chorus of unlikely characters, Ren discovers the stories that make us, connect us, and help us heal.

ren & the wake is a sort of funeral if a funeral was a sort of musical.

The production was initially supposed to open April 22nd, 2022. The opening was postponed and *ren & the wake* ran from April 28th to May 7th, 2022.

ren & the wake's Audience

Simone Medina Polo conducted interviews with ten audience members at three performances of *ren & the wake*. The interview guide asked about if and how audiences wanted to receive content information, sensory information and information about COVID protocols. It also asked about if there was anything surprising in the performance and if this was a good or bad surprise in order to determine if Catch the Key's practices of providing content information were serving audiences.

Content Information

Providing content information to audiences has been the subject of controversy. Opponents of content notes argue that they have the potential to spoil the pleasures of surprise (Saville, 2019) or that they imply audiences are incapable of handling challenging content (Mayer, 2019). Yergeau (2014), however, points out that content notes should not be dismissed as they are tools that have been invented and reinvented by multiple marginalized communities, particularly in online spaces. Indeed, a new website has just been started collecting content warnings for London theatre, suggesting that even if producers ignore this particular element of access, audiences will create it for themselves. Research into content information in academic contexts suggests that telling audiences about content that will be challenging to them will not necessarily stop audiences from engaging. Rather, content information can help audiences understand how they need to prepare for and engage with the performance (Taylor, 2017).

What was striking about the feedback from the audiences of *ren & the wake* was how uncontroversial content notes or warnings were. Universally, the audiences wanted them to exist, they just wanted to be able to choose if they accessed them or not. In addition, all audience members either indicated that there was nothing surprising to them in the performances of *ren & the wake*, or that the surprises, including the space, the music and the smoke used, were good surprises. This strongly validated Catch the Keys Productions' approach of providing content information, what they provide as content information and providing content information in a format that audiences have to choose to access.

Sensory Information

Fewer audience members wanted information on the sensory environment of the performance. One sound sensitive audience member noted that it's very difficult for producers to provide information about sound in a way that was helpful to them, given the subjective nature of sensory experiences. Two other audience members felt similarly sensory information, specifically information about loud noises or music, should be handled similarly to content information. They wanted to have access to the sensory information before they bought a ticket to the performance, but they wanted to have the choice about whether they accessed it or not. One of them noted that knowing a sudden loud noise was coming would give them anticipatory anxiety and spoil the experience of the performance for them.

COVID Protocols Information

Several audience members mentioned wanting to know about the theatre's vaccination and masking policy before they attended the performance. In contrast to some of the producers' experiences of audiences, who had strong feelings about vaccination and masking policies (discussed below), these audience members wanted to make sure they were complying with the theatre's policy. The changing requirements for gathering in public, and then the absence of government guidance had created a situation where they were worried that they might not be able to comply with a theatre's policy out of ignorance. This highlights the importance of clear information around COVID policies for Catch the Keys as the pandemic continues to evolve.

Other Information

When asked if there was any other information the audience members wanted they highlighted several key pieces of very pragmatic information. Multiple audience members wanted to know how long the performance would be and if there was a bar. Multiple audience members wanted to know about parking and the area around the venue. One of these audience members described themselves as a "non-artsy, non-

Whyte Ave person”, pointing to the ways that producers, who would be familiar with the arts and the Whyte Ave area, might miss the kinds of information an audience member unfamiliar with the area might need. Another audience member said they would have appreciated knowing that there would not be access to a washroom before the performance started. Finally, another audience member said that for site specific or immersive performances they really wanted to know about seating - if they would have it and what kind it would be. They also wanted producers to clearly state if audience members would be required to stand before they bought a ticket. Many of these pieces of information, specifically the kind of seating, the presence of a bar and when it would be open, were clearly available on the facebook page for ren & the wake. It’s not clear if the audience members highlighted the need for this information because they had missed it, or because they appreciated that it had been so clearly provided.

Repetition of Information

All the audience members who discussed content information wanted access to them at point of sale. Two audience members wanted information about the sensory environment of the performance, specifically loud noises or music provided at point of sale. There were two audience members who said they wanted content information available at multiple points in their audience journey from buying a ticket to arriving at the performance. One pointed out that they would likely forget the content notes between buying the ticket and the performance. The other audience member said, “Some days I do feel a bit more tender and do need content warnings”. This suggests that these audience members are not just use content information to decide what performances to attend, but to also to enable them to attend performances with content they might find difficult.



Edmonton Producers Practices of Pre-Performance Information

Interviews with 10 Edmonton producers mapped the many ways producers connect with audiences before they arrive at the performance. To provide a fuller understanding of how pre-performance information is practiced these producers were drawn from a wide range of performance disciplines and approaches. This included dance companies, such as Good Women Dance Collective and Mile Zero Dance, theatre companies with their own venues like Fringe Theatre and The Citadel, Edmonton's improvisation company Rapid Fire Theatre and Edmonton's Deaf theatre festival SOUND OFF. The wide variety of producing practices provided rich information about the different ways producers approached pre-performance information and the reasons for those choices.

Multiple points of contact:

All the producers who were interviewed engaged with audiences at multiple points before audiences attended the performance. In chronological order of audience journey these points were:

Advertising and point of sale: Every producer used their websites as a way to provide the initial information that audiences might want or need to know before they bought a ticket. Most producers, but not all, were sharing information like dates, location, COVID protocols, and content notes on their websites. Some producers made use of videos on their website. For example, Rapid Fire Theatre, before they had to move venues, used to have a video on their website showing the audience journey into the theatre and allowing the audience to see what that would look like.

Pre-performance emails: Almost all producers also used emails to remind audiences about vital information before the performance. How much control over these pre-performance emails, however, depended on the relationship of the producer to the venue. Smaller producers like Catch the Keys and Sound Off, who were using the Fringe Theatre ticketing system did not have, nor did they want, much input into the pre-performance emails. The Fringe Theatre sent out information in their standard format, which usually recapped the information on the Fringe Theatre website. Catalyst also had a similar experience since they are a touring company and the venue would send out any reminder emails that needed to be sent. There was also a sense from multiple producers that these emails has become more important during COVID. Kim from the Citadel explained that they had gone from sending one reminder email to sending two.

Box office, ushers and signage: Finally, when audiences arrived, the box office staff ushers and signage were final points of audience contact before the audience entered the space. Kim Stadelmann from The Citadel noted that signage, in particular, was the original form of pre-performance information that she had encountered. Since then, layers of pre-performance information had built up, but signs saying 'Mature content' or 'Gunshots' were her first encounter with ways to inform audiences about performances. Some producers carefully chose which information was given to audience members through box office, ushers and signage, in order to not overwhelm audiences. Ainsley Hillyard of the Good Women Dance Collective described their approach:

- At Box Office, audiences are informed about the QR code program, that there is a content information document online and printed, that there are inclusion kits (packages of ear defenders, sunglasses, stim toys and other tools to support audiences to engage with the performance); and where the gender inclusive washrooms are (there is a lot of signage for gendered washrooms in their venue, but less for gender inclusive); COVID protocols including masking and social distancing
- An usher will let the audience know again about COVID protocols, about the different seating areas options, that audiences can come and go as they need to and how long the performance is

The Good Women's Dance Collective's approach to audience information in the performance space is complex and multi-layered with information divided up, but also repeated at key stages, in order to inform as many audience members as possible but not to overwhelm them.

Curtain speech: Finally, producers share information about their performance through the curtain speech. This moment included essentials like a land acknowledgement and might include thank yous to funders. It might include reminders about masking and maintaining social distancing. Gerry Morita of Mile Zero Dance described the curtain speech as the place to tell audiences anything essential, because it was the only point in the audience journey that she could ensure that audiences would receive the information. In *Dead Centre of Town*, *Catch the Keys* also used the final address to the audience before the performance as a way of figuring out audience comfort and offering audiences the chance to ask about any last information they might need. *Rapid Fire Theatre* had perhaps the most developed approach to the curtain speech. In addition to their land acknowledgement, their curtain speech also served the purpose of explaining what improv is, what would happen in the show, warming up the audience and teaching the audience how to provide prompts to the improvisers. While *Rapid Fire Theatre* was the most explicit about this, for

all the producers, curtain speeches were the point in the audience journey where producers could speak most directly to audiences and establish the norms of attending a performance together.

Different Approaches

The results of interviews with producers in Edmonton revealed that approaches to providing audiences with information before the performance are still as diverse as when the Edmonton Performance Arts Accessibility Ad Hoc Group research was initially conducted. Then, performing arts companies were not consistent about what information they provided, even across their own performances.

This research provided context and nuance for these results. It became clear that what information was provided and how was often the result of the theatre companies' relationship to their audiences and in particular to the venues they performed in. A company such as Catalyst Theatre, which tours extensively, relies on the venues they perform in to know the venue's audience and to manage communications with them. So if the venue asks for particular types of information they will provide it, but if they aren't asked for it, they won't, unless it was considered by Catalyst to be a "must share.". Other smaller companies may work in collaboration with a venue like Fringe Theatre to produce work, so will provide information, but how that information is shared is often shaped by existing practices around pre-performance information. These practices were not always a perfect fit. For example, Rapid Fire Theatre produces multiple performances at the Edmonton International Fringe Festival. The scale of the Edmonton International Fringe Festival and the volume of information that must be conveyed to audiences means that the nuance of what improvisation performances are and what audiences can expect (for example, improvisation shows are not necessarily all humorous), gets lost in the effort to condense the information into the format required by the festival.

COVID

As noted above, COVID had a massive impact on how producers approached pre-performance information. Since the situation was rapidly changing, it was important to keep audiences informed about what they could expect from attending a performance. There were two ways producers thought about pre-performance information around COVID.

First, they noted the volume of the information. There was information that needed to be shared about vaccine passports, social distancing, pathways and about masking. In the early part of the pandemic, the producers who opted to take their work outdoors, for additional safety, had to also communicate about location. Additional touch points with audiences were necessary to remind audiences of information they might already know, or to bring audiences who might

have missed crucial information earlier up to speed. Producers managed the volume of information for their audiences first by providing more communication, and second by strategically providing particular types of information at particular times. For example, Lana Hughes at Catalyst Theatre spoke about producing *until the next breath* as part of the National Arts Centre Grand Acts of Theatre. The production took place outdoors. Information about where the production took place and physical access of the site was kept secret until the day before. Similarly, but more pragmatically, information about how audiences would move through the space and where they would sit to maintain social distancing was only communicated when the audience was at the site to avoid overwhelming them. Not overwhelming the audience felt especially important to Lana because for many of the audience this was the first performance that they had seen since the start of the pandemic.

Second, producers had to make decisions that they knew would not be popular with all audiences. Multiple producers alluded to how heightened audience feelings around masks and vaccine checks were. Ainsley Hillyard of Good Women Dance Collective framed it as being a question of consent. If audience members had strong feelings about not providing proof of vaccination and not wearing masks the Good Women Dance Collective needed to let them know so they could choose not to attend. There was a lot of compassion from producers for audiences' intense feelings about COVID safety protocols. Megan Dart from Fringe Theatre described it as an, "Ernest trauma-response to what we are living through". At the same time, many of the producers articulated that they had a responsibility to the members of their community most vulnerable to COVID. The risks of upsetting someone by reminding them of the pandemic were outweighed by the risks of someone, either audience or staff, contracting COVID and experiencing serious consequences from that as a result of attending a performance.

This need to be clear about what choices and why producers were making those choices also extended, in the case of *ren & the wake*, to being honest about the challenges of creating live performance in an ongoing pandemic. In the case of *ren & the wake* Catch the Keys did not share publicly that the postponement was because of COVID cases among the cast (despite thorough and well thought out precautions). Beth Dart of Catch the Keys said:

In hindsight, I wouldn't have minded including that because it's a reality of the situation and, I...in the current environment I think that honestly is important for patrons. We are working in a reality that is working against us and that is the reality for everyone trying to create live art, or doing anything really, right now.

The risks of attending live performance now include the risk of having it canceled because of COVID. While this information may not be as urgent as sharing about requirements to performance proof of vaccination and stay masked, it is still an potentially important thing for audiences to understand when they purchase tickets to a performance.

Finally, COVID necessitated relying on digital means of communication. Gerry Morita of Mile Zero Dance spoke about the challenges of shifting to primarily digital communication. Mile Zero Dance had previously had a relationship with their audiences where audiences would often phone their space in order to speak to a member of staff, or drop by to ask a question. COVID prompted Mile Zero Dance to revise their website so it had all the information audiences might need. Many other producers also spoke about relying more on pre-performance emails to communicate with their audiences.

Content Information

There were similarities and differences between how producers approached content information. Producers' approaches to what was included in content information were far more varied than their approaches to communicating COVID protocols. Their ways of communicating about content to their audiences was also varied, but more consistent than their approach to the content itself.

Producers had radically different approaches to how they decided what to include and what they included in their content notes. On one end of the spectrum was Catalyst Theatre, which in the past did not share content notes for their performances. Lana Hughes noted, however, that for their latest tour of *The Invisible - Agents of Ungentlemanly Warfare*, in response to current events, they had asked venues to note that the performance included images and discussions of war. Lana Hughes felt that the style of Catalyst's work, its heightened theatrical nature, and the fact that violence was generally spoken of, but not enacted meant that there was less need for content information. In contrast, Catch the Keys was very careful to try to document any part of *ren & the wake* that might be potentially upsetting, including asking cast to help them add to the content notes. Beth Dart of Catch the Keys said, "Even if it's not presented in an impactful way there was content that might have a negative impact on audience member". Mile Zero Dance had another radically different approach where their audiences knew they could call and ask for details of the performance, and often did.

SOUND OFF Festival found it helpful to take a different approach. Since they present work for all ages, including family audiences, they found it helpful to use the movie and tv rating system to communicate to audiences what age range the performance is aimed at. Still, Chris Dodd from SOUND OFF noted that this was not a perfect system. In past SOUND OFF has had to adjust the rating of a particular piece of digital

theatre based on audience feedback and had conversations with audience members who felt that depicting queer relationships, even without sexual content, was inappropriate for children. Like with COVID, communicating with audiences around content information became an opportunity to communicate the values of the organization. Rapid Fire Theatre faces a unique challenge in that they have to communicate to audiences that anything could happen, but also that there are boundaries. Similar to Sound Off, they talk about improvisation as being “PGish”. There are many things that can happen in an improvised performance, but there are also many things, to quote Matt Schuurman the artistic director, “that are so untowards” that will not happen.

The Citadel Theatre will sometimes provide content information at the point of sale. Generally, they work with directors to decide on what should be shared with audiences closer to the performance. This means that sometimes there are very different approaches to sharing content information depending on how the director approaches content notes. Kim Stadelman was also able to contextualize the changes to how The Citadel had approached sharing content information with audiences over the years. She noted that when she began working at The Citadel, the only content information was signage on the theatre doors that might alert audiences to “mature language” or “mature themes”. As content information has become a point of discussion for the theatre industry as a whole their approach has evolved.

Consistently, all of the producers I spoke to ensured that audiences had to opt into detailed content information. They were cognizant of both artist and audience concerns about ‘giving away the show’ or audiences receiving information they don’t want to receive. All producers who made content information available made it available in a way that their audiences needed to make a conscious decision to access it. As Ainsley Hillyard described it, producers are, “Loud about the fact it exists, not loud about what it is”

Sensory Information

Providing detailed sensory information aside from information about strobe lights and sudden loud noises was not something that most producers did. In addition, this information was often provided late in the audience journey, either in pre-performance emails or in theatre signage. Several producers, however, were interested in developing their capacity to share this information with audiences. In particular, three of the producers noted that sharing information about temperature had the potential to become an important part of their future practice either because of the climate crisis or because the venues they worked in had extremely variable temperatures.

The exception to this was The Good Women Dance Collective. The Good Women Dance Collective have a sophisticated approach to

providing performances with different sensory intensities and communicating to their audiences about those differences. Drawing on relaxed performance practices, the Good Women change the sensory environment of their performances each night. On the nights they provide ASL interpretation the music is much louder and the house lights are down. One nights where they do not have ASL interpretations they turn up the house lights slightly and lower the sound levels. The Good Women Dance Collective also provide audiences with sensory kits, including ear plugs and sunglasses. This approach is noted on their website so audience know at point of sale which kind of sensory environment they want to experience.

Capacity

The final theme that emerged from interviews with producers was the limits of their time and attention. Most of the pre-performance communications with audiences happen in the last, intense push towards opening a performance. This meant that producers were often communicating complex information at a time when they were working a lot. Multiple producers noted instances where they had missed communicating potentially important information or made it available later than they thought was ideal.



Conclusions

This research has revealed that audiences want a wide range of information at different points in their journey before they see a performance. Producers have a wide variety of approaches to providing audience members with pre-performance information. These approaches are immensely complex and dependent on producers' relationships with their audience and with the venues or sites they produce work at. As such, this report can offer producers, particularly Catch the Keys, ways they might consider shifting their practices of pre-performance information but no clear best practices.

Overall, audience members who attended *ren & the wake* wanted to have the option to access content information, suggesting that Catch the Key's robust practices around content information match the needs of their audience. Several audience members did want information about the sensory environment of the performance, particularly loud sounds and music, before they bought tickets. Catch the Keys, and other producers, could explore commitments to audiences around sound levels as a creative constraint in the development of new work. They could also explore offering differing sensory environments over the course of a run like the Good Women Dance Collective. The comments from the audience member with sound sensitivity, however, suggests that further research will be needed to better understand how to communicate to audience members about the sensory environment of the performance. Finally, audience members who attended *ren & the wake* wanted access to very pragmatic information about washrooms, the availability of the bar and running times.

COVID has resulted in producers having to share more information and changing information before audiences arrive for a performance. The audience members at *ren & the wake* wanted this information because they wanted to ensure that they were complying with COVID requirements. Multiple producers alluded to the heightened feelings in Edmonton around showing proof of vaccination and masking. Producers managed this by providing audience members with information so that they make informed decisions about what they wanted to participate in.

In many ways, this approach - allowing audiences to make informed decisions - lies at the heart of pre-performance information. Rather than assuming that producers can fully predict audience needs and preferences, pre-performance information, at it's best, enables audience to make choices about how they want to experience art together.

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Thank you

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Gerry Morita - Mile Zero Dance

Matt Schurrmann - Rapid Fire Theatre

Sara Huffman - Rapid Fire Theatre

Chris Dodd - SOUND OFF

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Appendixes:

Interview Guide - Audience

Hello, thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this interview. This interview will help us understand what I'm calling pre-performance information, or any information provided to audiences before they see a performance. We're trying to understand what information you need and how you want to receive it. This should take about 20 minutes.

If you're okay with this I would like to audio record. You can ask me to skip any of the questions and if you want to stop the interview at any point, please just say so. I'm also going to ask you how you'd like to be identified in the report. While I can give you a pseudonym, given the size of Edmonton's performing arts scene I can't necessarily promise you anonymity.

How would you like to be identified in the report?

What was the most surprising thing about the show tonight?
Was it a good surprise or a bad surprise? Why?

What kind of information do you like to know before you decide to buy a ticket?
Why?

Do you want to have content notes (also called content warnings or trigger warnings) before you buy a ticket?

If yes, how do you like to get that information? For example, should it be on the website, or do you want to email the company with a specific question?

Do you want information about lights, sounds, temperature or smells in the performance before you buy a ticket?

If yes, how do you like to get that information? For example, should it be on the website, or do you want to email the company with a specific question?

What kind of information do you like to know before you come to the performance venue?
Why?

Has COVID changed the kind of information you need or want before a performance?

Is there anything else you want me to know about pre-performance information and how we should be providing it?

Interview Guide - Producers

Hello, thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this interview. This interview will help us understand what I'm calling pre-performance information, or any information provided to audiences before they see a performance. We're trying to understand what information producers are providing, why and how that has shifted due to COVID in the hopes of serving audiences better in the future. This should take about 45 to 60 minutes.

If you're okay with this I would like to audio record. You can ask me to skip any of the questions and if you want to stop the interview at any point, please just say so. If you say anything that after the fact you want to change you're welcome to get in touch with me and let me know. I'm also happy to provide you with a draft of the report so you can make changes to any quotes if you'd like. I'm also going to ask you how you'd like to be identified in the report. While I can give you a pseudonym, given the size of Edmonton's performing arts scene I can't promise you anonymity.

How would you like to be identified in the report?

How long have you been producing?

What kind of performance do you produce?

How would you describe your audience demographics?

Right now, what kind of information do you give your audiences before they come to a performance?

What kind of information do you give your audiences at point of sale?

What kind of information do you give your audiences after they're bought a ticket?

If there's a difference, why do you do that?

Has this changed over the time you've been producing?

Follow-up: Why?

How has COVID changed the kind of information you're giving audiences before they come to a performance?

Has COVID changed how you're thinking about pre-performance information more generally?

What kind of access for D/deaf and disabled audiences do you provide?

How do you share information about your access?

Has your thinking about providing audiences with access changed over the time you've been producing?

Follow-up: If yes, how?

Do you share trigger warnings or content notes with your audiences?

Follow-up: When did you start doing this?

Follow-up: Why did you start doing this?

Do you share information about lights, sounds, temperature or smells in the performance with your audience?

Follow-up: Why do you share that specific information?

Is there anything else you want me to know about pre-performance information and how you do it?