



THE HONEYCOMB TRILOGY

GRANT PANEL COMMENTS AND COMPANY RESPONSES

As part of the granting process, our grant application was reviewed by an anonymous panel of individuals selected by the Houston Arts Alliance (HAA). HAA graciously provided the de-identified comments made by panel members during the grant review, and in the interest of transparency, we have included them below.

While we were not able to respond to comments and concerns during the process, we have taken the opportunity to address several of the concerns raised by the panel as a means of accountability to our community.

We are *incredibly* grateful to the panelists for the time and consideration needed to carefully consider all of the grant applications, along with the HAA staff for facilitating the process and capturing these comments for our continued growth as producing artists here in Houston. Our responses are not in any way argumentative, merely an acknowledgement of the concerns expressed and an attempt to reassure our community that we take this project seriously.

Comments about the Project Proposal

- Great description of the market and community need for this program!
- Proposal is unique and offers a different lens of accessing a traditional style of art. The project is innovative and does a good job of merging various different audience types.
- Proposing the staging of a trilogy series of plays at MATCH with regular schedule as well as "binge" schedule options. Plans to activate local economy through partnerships with businesses.
- The play looks fun, and could appeal to a niche group of sci-fi fans/and/or those "in the know of latest NYC theater trends". As it is a published play, the proposal is more on the interpretive side rather than creative.
- The project is imaginative and likely relevant to Houstonians and visitor - work samples indicate vision and ability - the part about involving local businesses and restaurants around MATCH I found unclear.
- The project is incredibly ambitious which gave me a little pause.
- The proposed project has a clear and ambitious goal that should also generate buzz with its ties to contemporary pop culture as well as an established play that had it good trilogy. The budget process looks clear and anticipates questions as well. The engagement of diversity and community are not too prominent beyond the mentioned paragraph in community impact.



- This is an epic and unique project in the world of theatre, as sci-fi theatre remains a beloved cult niche. This is a well-received trilogy and would provide opportunity to dozens of theatre artists. I am concerned about this being produced and directed by a single individual as it does not provide a lot of oversight/accountability for such a large project.
 - Response: We completely agree regarding accountability! While there was not space to discuss it in the limited word counts of the grant application, the goal from the beginning was to flatten the hierarchy as much as possible. We have brought on three assistant directors and three stage managers, one for each part of the trilogy, specifically to provide additional accountability and leadership through the process. Our hope is also that by remaining as transparent as possible about finances and community engagement, the broader community will help to hold us accountable as well.

Comments About Producer's Artistic History

- The skills, passion, and experience needed for this project are evident.
- Artistic history is strong and supports the skillset needed in the proposed project.
- Applicant notes demonstrated experience in the field and history of receiving grant funding. Gives attention to cultivate relationships and create a safe environments for artists.
- The applicant has a history that is more than capable of taking the project on.
- The applicant seems to have a long history of putting on theatrical events though I don't see anything quite this scale on their webpage or biography.
 - Response: This is absolutely correct! This is definitely the largest project Andrew has taken on, but thankfully they have been able to recruit a team of 50 local artists who have come on board to help make it happen!
- The applicant has strong credentials in theater as a producer and director. There are also clear mentions of the success and exclusivity of this play since it's only been produced and performed in NYC prior to this upcoming production.
- Applicant clearly has the experience needed to execute this ambitious project, including project management skills.

Comments about Marketing & Service

- Wonderful description of the opportunity to bring new audiences to the discipline through this project. Very clear marketing strategies.
- I like the idea of reaching audiences who are not theatre-goers, while still giving them a theatrical experience.
- Artist is clear on the target audience and how to engage and connect the target demographic.
- Applicant has clear idea of audience and how to creatively reach them. Attention to inclusiveness in approach.
- The project will promise to feature a wide variety of artists, although the quantity of



artists needed allows for 300 dollar stipends, while over 2/3 of the proposed grant is going to the space and the performance rights. I'm concerned few artists are receiving the compensation for this.

- Response: Our #1 concern is the people involved in the project. This feedback was helpful in clarifying the budget that was planned from the beginning, with nearly half of the budget going to artist fees. All 50 artists involved will receive a stipend, and 100% of any profits will be divided evenly across all artists involved; this includes the director and producer, who will receive no more or no less than any other artist. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to clarify!
- The outreach and service component is well thought out, including the timing of the event to coincide with a Comicpalooza - reaching beyond typical audiences for this type of event is also thoughtfully done as has the accessibility portion of the proposal.
- The marketing efforts are strong and clear with its ties to previous experience, the exclusivity, the collaboration with the specified venue, and the use of trailers online.
- Applicant is clearly experienced in theatre marketing. Binge day and gift a ticket programs, as well as creating a diverse cast/crew is wise for creating a broad audience base. I appreciate that the applicant is marketing to theatre and "nerd culture" patrons. However, I am not convinced from my experience that this event will draw audience from across the country; perhaps across the state. SciFi theatre fans are still a small, niche group.
 - Response: You may be right, but we're going to give it our best! Sci-fi theatre fans are a small, niche group, but fans of sci-fi and speculative fiction more broadly are not. If we are successful in reaching those communities, our hope is that this will spread quickly across the state and maybe even attract some folks from out of state. We'll shoot for the moon, and if we miss, we'll still hopefully land in the stars!

Comments about Overall Timeline & Budget

- Very clear budget and timeline.
- Brief timeline appears feasible given applicants past experience. Budget details base pay for all artists involved with possibility for shared increase based on ticket sales, however concerned about the base pay for the amount of work of a cast of 44.
 - Response: We completely agree; we wish that we could offer more as a base stipend, but Andrew has learned from past endeavors the importance of being realistic and transparent with the artists involved in a project, especially one that is so ambitious. We would rather be upfront about what we think is a reasonable guarantee rather than setting expectations higher and then being unable to follow through if ticket sales are less than hoped. All artists were made aware of our plans for stipends and profit-sharing before signing on. We are committed to ensuring that all artists involved are treated fairly and kindly and are incredibly grateful to the panel for being concerned about that as well.



- The timeline is set, the collective share is admirable, but the risk is on the artists- more compensation will be based on the outcome of the production's success rather than the risk on the part of the producer.
 - Response: This is a very fair point, and one that we tried to be completely transparent about with the artists involved so that they knew what they were signing up for.
- The portion of the timeline regarding the play makes sense.
- I don't see anything about promotion and outreach or setting up partnerships with local businesses.
 - Response: Unfortunately there was not enough space in the application to discuss that here, but we will have more information about these efforts coming soon!
- The timeline is good as well, though I wonder about the actors and production team being compensated with box office receipts.
- Project budget can be more specific.
- This timeline seems tight for six hours of theatre, particularly six hours of concurrent theatre. Two weeks of technical rehearsals are needed for this scale, at least. I am also gravely concerned about the fee for artists who will be asked to perform for six hours.
 - Response: We have good news: no actors will be asked to perform for 6 hours! While there was not space in the grant application to go into this, most of the casts for the three plays are separate from one another; only 5 actors will be in more than one part, and they are, at most, in two parts. Regarding technical rehearsal, we completely agree that a longer tech would be ideal, but unfortunately the performance venue had limited availability. We plan to tech the elements we can (like costumes, props, and sound cue timings) prior to moving into our venue, and then will focus our limited tech time on the elements we can't otherwise engage with prior to moving it. It's going to be incredibly tight, but we have a dynamite production team to try and make it happen. :-)
- The promise of a box office split is good, but should the production only meet the 25% tickets sold mark proposed here then I would argue that artists are being severely undercompensated. If the applicant were proposing a repertory cast, this structure would be more appropriate.
 - Response: We strongly suspect that we will sell far more than 25% capacity, but as mentioned above, each cast is distinct from one another for the most part, so that limits the work expected of most actors through the process, which we hope makes the compensation model feel a bit more reasonable relative to other smaller-stipended productions in Houston.