

2019 ANNUAL WOMEN'S CAUCUS MEETING OVERVIEW

WHEN: Sunday, November 17th, 2019.

WHERE: Carousel Theatre, Studio A; 1411 Cartwright Street, Granville Island, Vancouver, BC.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 12:30 – 2:30 pm | Creator Exchange (a closed event for registrants) |
| 2:00 – 3:00 pm | Arrivals and Schmoozing |
| 3:00 – 4:00 pm | Play Readings (four playwrights reading excerpts from their work) |
| 4:00 – 4:30 pm | Women's Caucus Presentation and Q & A – "The Things We Do" |
| 4:30 – 5:30 pm | Interactive and Participatory Women's Caucus Meeting |
| 5:30 – 6:00 pm | Networking Time |

MEETING OVERVIEW

We wrapped up the year with an in-person meeting of Women's Caucus members in Vancouver at Carousel Theatre for Young People.



Participants at the Vancouver Creator Exchange (Photo credit Idil Djaffer)

To provide a quick recap, we kicked-off the event with a Creator Exchange between playwrights and directors, which participants reported was both worthwhile and inspiring. We followed that up with four entertaining and poignant excerpted play readings by Mairy Beam, Alison Kelly, Catherine Lafferty, and Valerie Sing Turner (what a treat!). After that, Rebecca Burton spoke briefly about PGC's Women's Caucus activities and some of the projects we have on the go (such as the Annual Gender-Based Production Surveys, the PLEDGE project, SureFire, the Bra d'Or Award Revamp, the CASA Award, the *Women's Caucus Newsletter*, our AD Interviews, and PGC's Shared Room initiative). As well, time for members to socialize and network was interspersed throughout and around the afternoon's activities.

The final activity of the day drew on [Liberating Structures](#) (inclusive and collaborative exercises to help push past bottlenecks and achieve positive change), specifically adopting an activity called "Min Specs" to determine what the required "minimum specifications" might be for a playwright to obtain a (first) production, as this is a matter of great interest to PGC's Women's Caucus members. This is the list of basic requirements (or min specs) to help solve the problem that came out of the meeting:

Min Specs for Playwrights to Obtain a (First) Production:

1. Recognize, be aware of, and **act on available opportunities** (e.g., check the opportunities section of PGC's website on a regular basis and respond to submission calls).
2. **Research** theatre companies to find a good fit (know their mandates, programming preferences, and so forth), and **target your submissions** accordingly.
3. When pitching your work, **pitch how you pitch best** (align your approach and tactics with your own personality and strong suits).
4. Inspire theatres to **envision your play on their stage** (with a telephone conversation, a reading, in-person dialogue, etcetera).
5. Get yourself out there and **self-promote** (e.g., with Fringe shows, public or informal readings, social media coverage, postcards, AD and producer invites, and more).
6. **Develop relationships** and ongoing communication with theatres, producers, and others.
7. Familiarize yourself with all the **resources** available to you, and **tap into a community** (in other words, find "your people," collaborators, and accomplices).
8. **Educate theatres** and the industry in general about the need to counter marginalization and underrepresentation (e.g., theatres must connect with various facets of Canadian society, and citizens must see themselves reflected in our culture and on our stages).

This "Min Spec" exercise was coupled with another Liberating Structure entitled "The 15% Solution" through which participants would have figured out what they could do more of or better with the resources available to them to obtain a first production (while we cannot control everything and solve the problem 100%, for instance, by getting ADs

to read scripts, often there are actions we can take to improve the situation, and these may have a ripple or butterfly effect, or to draw on my favourite metaphor: the shifting of a few grains of sand can lead to a landslide). However, the discussions throughout were so engaging that we ran out of time and could not complete the last component, and so members were tasked with carrying-out that final activity on their own as an action item.