

Mid America Theatre Conference
Executive Committee Meeting, 2 March 2007
Minutes

The Executive Committee and Symposium Co-Chairs met over lunch in the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis, the 2007 Conference hotel.

Bill Jenkins called the meeting to order at 12:50, and thanked everyone for braving the blizzard to attend, and for their flexibility and adaptivity in accommodating the weather. Bill reported that 130-150 Conference attendees were expected, even in light of the snow and winds.

Bill then turned to planning issues related to Conference 2008:
importance of establishing and meeting deadlines
failure to make and stick to schedule makes task much more difficult for
Conference Planners
advisory: Audio/visual expenses are around \$2,500 for Conference 2007

After general discussion, it was agreed that the 2008 MATC Conference Theme and Call For Papers would be announced by 31 March 2007. It also was agreed that a uniform submission deadline for papers and panels would be observed by all Symposia. That deadline will be 15 October 2007. Submissions should indicate A/V needs. In addition, it was agreed that panel presentations should not be scheduled on Thursday or Sunday. Ann and Bill will circulate a set of bullet points related to organizing Conference 2008 within a week.

General agreement that MATC should once again advertise its upcoming Conference in the ATHE Conference Program. Different Symposia should also explore additional outlets; Pedagogy and Playwriting, for instance, might want to conduct a direct-mail appeal to MFA programs.

The Conference's continued growth in terms of the quality of panels and presentations was acknowledged, as were potential problems that might result. In particular, the number of panels was raised, with attention to the financial implications of growth. One key aspect of this concern is facilities cost, especially the number of meeting rooms needed to accommodate Symposia schedules. Currently, Theater History is guaranteed 1 meeting room at Conference, with an expectation of 16 sessions, minimum; the other Symposia share a 2nd meeting room and the 16 session blocs. Scheduling additional sessions by any of the Symposia would probably engaging an additional meeting space. At issue, and for continued discussion, is a question of quantity v. quality, and achieving an appropriate balance. On a similar note, there was general agreement that the ratio of faculty/grad student attendance should strive for at least 60/40. As a final note on the topic, the need for better communication between and among Symposia Co-Chairs and the Conference Planners.

Discussion turned to the location of Conference 2009; 2008 is set for the Hyatt, in Kansas City. Several venues were suggested and discussed, and a final slate of 4 cities was selected for presentation to the membership: Chicago, Cleveland, Louisville and St. Louis.

The status of officers was raised. Although no elections are called for this year, Deanna Toten-Beard expressed in surrendering the Treasurership, or of sharing the duties, on an interim basis, with a likely successor. Jennifer Blackmer expressed interest. The latter option (sharing the position with a colleague who would be elected next year (per the By-Laws) was deemed preferable. The procedure for such action will be investigated.

Symposium Co-Chairs for Conference 2008 were confirmed:

Acting/Directing – Jane Purse-Wiedenhoeft

Pedagogy – Christine Frezza, Scott Irelin

Playwriting – Penny With (?)

Theater History – Henry Bial, John Fletcher

Emerging Scholars – Peter Campbell, ??

Graduate Student Liaison – Elizabeth Cawns

The meeting adjourned at 2:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Mallett
Secretary