



ADMINISTRATION SUPPLEMENT

U. S. INSTITUTE FOR THEATRE TECHNOLOGY, INC. • 245 WEST 52nd STREET • NEW YORK, N. Y. 10019

OCTOBER 1966

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COMMITTEE NOTES

From October 23 to October 27, the Administration Committee will present five, consecutive, hour-long evening meetings under the title, THE EXPERTS SPEAK ON THEATRE ADMINISTRATION.

The program is proposed as an introduction to theatre economics and associated management activities. We have asked our speakers to discuss subjects which bear most directly on the problem of supporting a theatrical enterprise. Instead of developing a "how-to-do-it" seminar, we will attempt to stimulate interest in the administrative field with examples of certain financial conditions, an indication of the solutions to past economic problems, and suggestions for future direction. The Committee hopes that the seminar will be attended by people outside the theatre management area, as well as by those already acting as administrators. The seminar's schedule indicates an exciting series of meetings. On Sunday, October 23, the group will meet for a general introduction to the subject and to the rest of the seminar. The speaker for the first session has not been announced.

Monday's meeting is devoted to SUBSIDY FOR THE THEATRE. The Administration Committee will be the guest of the Federal Bar Association of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut's Committee on the Law of the Theatre. The speakers will include F. O'Neal (Actor's Equity), R. Stevens (National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities), Senator T. Kuferman, Robert Corrigan (New York University), and others. The time and place for this session will be announced at the Sunday USITT meeting.

THE CASE FOR FLEXIBLE PRICING will be Tuesday's subject, and our

guest will be John F. Wharton - Consultant/ Director, Legitimate Theatre Exploratory Commission. Mr. Wharton will be followed, on Wednesday October 26, by T. Bruce Birkenhead. Dr. Birkenhead, Vice Chairman of the USITT Administration Committee and Assistant Professor of Economics at Brooklyn College, will offer A CRITICAL LOOK AT THEATRE INCOME.

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At the last meeting of the seminar, Edward O.Lutz of the theatrical accounting firm Lutz and Carr, will chair a panel discussion on THE COMMERCIAL PROBLEM. Panel members will include Herman E. Krawitz, Assistant Manager of the Metropolitan Opera Association, Inc., and Marvin A. Krauss, General Manager of Music Fair Enterprises, Inc.

With the exception of the October 24 meeting, all sessions will be held on the fifth floor, American National Theatre and Academy building, 245 West 52nd. Street, New York City. The seminar begins promptly at 8:30 p.m., and the formal presentations end at 9:30.

If you wish to attend the seminar, please write to the Chairman, Committee for Theatre Administration, USITT, 245 West 52nd. Street, New York, New York 10019. Attendance may have to be limited, and those who apply will be expected to participate in at least four of the five meetings. There will be a nominal charge to cover Committee expenses (under \$5.00, and depending on the size of attendance). Once again, we stress that the seminar is not limited to active theatre administrators or USITT members. The Committee hopes to encourage attendance by theatre personnel from other fields and interested people outside the theatre profession. If this seminar is successful, we will hope to repeat the idea in other parts of the country.

And speaking of "other parts of the country....." Although the SUPPLEMENT and JOURNAL have been receiving some support from California and Michigan, we hear little from the states between there and New York. The Administration Committee has difficulty responding realistically to the criticism that it is "too New York oriented" when it fails to receive much support from any but New York members. If you doubt us, check the author's credentials in this month's SUPPLEMENT. Please support your Committee with articles and regional news clippings.

> James L. Nuckolls Chairman, Committee for Theatre Administration

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AN INTERVIEW WITH MARCIA THOMPSON OF THE FORD FOUNDATIONS'S ARTS AND HUMANITIES PROGRAM - T. Bruce Birkenhead

On November 6, 1961, The Ford Foundation sent out a press release announcing the start of its administrative internship program for the performing arts. In July of 1962 the first twenty-two grants-in-aid were announced; the program was a reality. Since then, sixty-seven individuals have received awards which enable them to spend a year (often renewed for a second year) with a given theatre, ballet company, orchestra, opera company or museum. Counting renewals for a second year, and in some cases for a third year, ninety-eight awards have actually been made and accepted under the program. These renewels do not usually cover employment with the same company, but instead enable the individual to gain experience with another organization.

The basic grant is for \$5,000., but an allowance of \$1,000. is given in the case of married recipients who have children, plus \$500. for each child. A married recipient who does not have any children receives the basic grant of \$5,000. Individuals may not make direct application for an internship. Rather, they are nominated and then asked by the foundation to supply biographical data, references, and a statement of purpose. This year, 585 nominations were received from universities and colleges, performing arts companies, and interested individuals.*

Mrs. Marcia Thompson, of the Ford Foundation's Arts and Humanities program, emphasized during an interview that the list of nominators is by no means exclusive, and new organizations and individuals are contacted each year. The panel of consultants, (three this year) which selects the recipients is also not fixed, although it is quite confidential.

After a "paper" screening by the panel, the nominees who seem to offer the greatest potential are given personal interviews by the foundation's field representative. The panel, armed with the original data and the results of the field interviews, then makes its final selections. However even at this point money is not granted. A meeting next takes place between the potential recipient and the organization with which he or she may work for the next year. Only if this results in a positive reaction on the part of the interested organization is the strong box unlocked.

Training takes place primarily outside of the New York area. Except for organizations like the New York City Ballet, and the New York Philharmonic, the participating organizations are scattered across the country. Also, there appears to be a desire not to turn the program into a training school for individuals seeking employment in New York City; the program is viewed quite definitely as one which will equip individuals for employment in the regional field soon after completion of their internship. This year, in an apparent effort to insure that interns do not become bogged down in any one aspect of a given assignment, the training organization is required to submit proposed assignments for the intern to the Foundation on a three month basis.

There is, of course, no guarantee of employment after training, but a high degree of success has been attained. Most individuals have found employment not only in the arts, but also in the specific area of their training (e.g. theatre or symphony orchestra). Only seventeen of the sixty-seven past and current interns are in unknown or unrelated fields of employment. Mrs. Thompson noted that most interns desire training

*As in the past, universities and colleges dominated the nominating process, although there is no desire to give the program academic tone.

and employment in the theatre. It may seem odd to highlight this fact, but what is interesting is that financial rewards tend to be higher for administrators of symphonic companies than for theatre administrators. Comparing the two, there is another note of interest. Given the more established nature of synphonic groups and their patrons, there is greater preference for mature administrators in this field. Or to phrase it negatively, it is more difficult to place a young intern in training with an orchestral organization than with a theatre. The professional orientation of the interns themselves is borne out by the fact that only two of the seventeen past "graduates" who are employed in the theatre, are administrators for community theatres; and one of the two is employed by the same community theatre with which he was associated before serving his period of internship.

The program not only fills a need of which we are all aware, but it also appears to be well developed and embraces the sound idea that one learns by doing. Also, the foundation supplies the money, which is its role in life, but it does not select recipients, which it correctly assumes is not its proper role. The program also does not limit the group it wishes to attract into arts administration. Although those in their "twenties" tend to outnumber the rest, individuals in their late "thirties" have enjoyed the benefits of the internship program.

It is certainly a model to be followed, and not merely by foundations and government. Mrs. Thompson correctly pointed out that existing arts organizations will only develop a supply of managers and administrators when they set up a similar program for themselves.

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TCG PERSONNEL RESEARCH PROJECT

In an effort to help swell the pool of administrative and technical personnel for American professional resident theatres, the non-profit Theatre Communications Group is instituting a Personnel Research Project.

The goal of the project is to develop a <u>general file</u> of potential key personnel for a variety of administrative and production jobs in the ever-growing resident theatre field: promotion and public relations directors, business managers, directors of development, and general managers in the administrative category, and designers, technicians, shop foremen, and backstage workers in the production end. An Active search for promising personnel is being waged from TCG's executive offices in New York City, headed by Executive Director Michael Mabry and Associate Director J. Wesley Zeigler.

Mabry and Zeigler seek to enlist the interest and assistance of college and university leaders in identifying potential. For the administrative pool, schools of Business and Public Administration, Communications and Industrial Management are being canvassed. Schools of design and Technology are of prime assistance in combing out potential in the production field.

Asked to comment on the new project, Zeigler said, "We are most

interested in the development of administrative and production talent indigenously by important professional resident theatres in major population centers around the country. Certainly our nation's colleges and universities, and even our vocational and technical high schools, are training talent that is going largely unnoticed by professional theatres in their own vicinities. The primary purpose of this new project is to bring together this developing talent and the theatres needing talent."

Zeigler pointed out that TCG has no intention of turning the project into a formal placement service. "We are not organized to provide a massive and all-inclusive placement service," he said. "The keynote of the project will be 'information -- not interference'. Although the project will broaden the base of personnel possibilities by identifying and referring potential talent, the individual theatre must retain the right and the responsibility to select, cultivate, train, and season its own personnel."

In their frequent travelling across the United States, Mabry and Zeigler will visit campuses and their faculties, pointing out the values of administrative and production work in seasoned, secure professional theatre companies in metropolitan centers outside New York.

"We are counting on the referral of major talent by the faculties and deans of our country's universities," Zeigler explained. TCG welcomes inquiries from teachers and schools interested in cooperating in the program.

In its link with educational institutions the new project will parallel another program of TCG, its annual Chicago auditions. There, graduating students from university drama departments are called to Chicago each spring, to audition for the artistic directors of professional resident theatres. The program allows talented young people to begin their acting careets in constructive resident situations, playing a variety of classical and modern roles, instead of in the often frustrating and unemployment-filled atmosphere of New York City.

Theatre Communications Group is a non-profit organization founded in 1961, "to facilitate communication of theatre personnel and to enable theatres to study each other's methods, with the long-range aim of making the theatre more professional in training and production." The organization received a sustaining, five-year grant of \$795,000 from the Ford Foundation in 1964.

TCG has no formal membership structure. Instead it concentrates its facilities on particular resident theatres seeking assistance. It is concerned with theatres established throughout the country as non-profit organizations devoted to employing resident companies to perform serious drama from the classical and modern repertoires over extended seasons, and which have demonstrated continuing community support in their respective regions. It is not set up to function as a general service organization; nor does it have resources to provide outright funds broadly.

In addition to the new Personnel Research Project and the Chicago

Auditions, TCG administers five other programs designed to help improve theatre standards:

Its <u>Casting Information Service</u> is instrumental in arranging auditions for qualified professional actors being sought by resident theatres, and in improving the visibility, on a national level, of those actors committed to seasonal employment with resident companies outside New York.

Under the Observership Program, TCG assists participating theatres in discovering new directors and designers by enabling such talents to study the outlook and working conditions of a particular theatre over an extended visit.

The <u>Consultant Program</u> provides theatres with visiting specialists in voice, movement, and fencing, and in particular, the development of subscription audiences.

The <u>Script Reading Program</u> enables participating theatres to secure readings and critiques of the scores of new scripts received annually by them. Most theatres involved in this program produce at least one new play in premiere each season. Also, when such a theatre premieres a play, TCG provides the playwright further visibility by distributing copies of the new work to resident theatres committed to the introduction of new plays.

The <u>Visitation Program</u> provides travel funds for theatre personnel to study the work of other theatres as a help in solving their own production and administration problems.

The policies of the Theatre Communications Group are formulated by a Board of Directors drawn from the theatre profession itself.

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ON THEATRE PUBLICITY AN ARGUMENT FOR PACKAGED SERVICES - Bernard Simon

The New Yorker Magazine once printed a cartoon that illustrates the nightmare of everyone concerned with theatrical production. It showed an auditorium with actors performing on a stage to an audience of just three people -- a couple in the middle of the house and a lone man down front. At the railing in back, two men were looking at each other in appalled surmise, one expostulating to the other -- "Good heavens! I thought you were handling the advertising and publicity!"

The cartoon highlighted what is, to be sure, a commonplace: without adequate publicity, there's not going to be much of an audience. Unless they know you are there, how can they come?

The ways and means of telling them the what-where-when of a theatrical attraction -- at just the right time -- form a technique which is all too rarely discussed in periodicals and at conferences where other techniques are given concentrated and repeated attention. What good are brilliant lighting effects, for example, for empty seats? If there is

one single empty seat at a performance, that could have been filled by means of more skilled, more energetic publicity efforts, that's that much of a deplorable waste. As Joseph Pulitzer said, "Without adequate publicity, all else fails."

The leading publicity method I believe, is still the printed word, via newspapers, newsletters and other periodicals. (The broadcast word is evanescent, though momentarily powerful). Material in editorial columns -- short announcements, longer feature stories, photographs, reviews -- generally exert more influence than paid advertising. But both forms are vital. Advertising can be more "blurby" than editors will allow in a story, and it can also be more specific about the details concerning curtain-times and tickets (where and when they are on sale, and their prices), which are as essential as the address and telephone number of the theatre.

Next in importance as a publicity channel -- the spoken word, on radio, television and at meetings.

Then the mailed word -- of special virtue because, presumably, it is addressed to a selected list of highly potential theatregoers. (Newspapers and broadcasts indiscriminately reach audiences of whom only a fraction ever attend a theatre.)

A fourth important channel might be called the displayed word -though it is not words so much as graphic images that work best with displays, such as posters, counter-cards, bulletin-board announcements, billboards, flyers, tablemats, shopping bags and other matter. This form of advertising is often effective because it can be flamboyant, can employ vivid color, and is repetitive.

And a fith Barnum-like channel that should never be overlooked could be called the gossiped word -- the mouth-to-mouth talk stimulated by press-agenty stunts, tricks, and tie-ups.

It cannot be said that these channels are well-used just because they are <u>somehow</u>-used, any more than a woman can be said to be dressed if she's covered with a potato sack. Just <u>any</u> sort of story in a newspaper announcing that play "A" is being presented on date "B" at Theatre "C", is certainly better than no story. But not much better. The good announcement is one that, while never using excessive superlatives, is persuasive, one that arouses a ticket-buying impulse. This persuasiveness must, of course, be subtle, and adhere to true facts. The writing of announcements that will be acceptable to editors, and yet carry a touch of showmanship, is not easy. It requires a practised skill that makes its rather rare possessors worth good pressagent salaries.

The right angle is important. An example is the story of the nearlyempty theatre in a Florida town that greeted a touring company playing "Candida." It turned out that the audience was sparse because a flyer had described the play as being about an extra-marital affair of a parson's wife. It <u>could</u>, of course, be described that way, but it isn't a truly accurate summary of Candida's compassionate relationship with the callow Marchbanks. But it was offensive to the Florida townspeople, largely Baptist and rigorous in their standards, and they stayed away -- from a play that they would have found both moral and moving.

It is obvious, to be sure, that a special skill must be employed to create attractive posters, advertising logotypes, and other graphic promotion materials. It is equally obvious that many smaller theatres will be unable to find or pay an expert to research background of a play and then turn that research into persuasive newspaper releases and into compelling art-work for posters and other materials. Managers, however, may turn to services which supply ready-to-use stories for newspapers and broadcasting stations, and effective two-color posters and other such promotional "accessories." One of the largest producers of such publicity and advertising is Packaged Publicity Services, with offices in Manhattan.

Packaged publicity can either supply an entire advertising campaign for a particular play, or it can be used as the base for an original promotional effort. It is impossible to list all the variety of materials offered by a packaged service. However, it is not unusual to find, for any one of a rather extensive library of plays, a choice of kinds and lengths of stories - news-releases, features, ad slogans, short column items, excerpts from metropolitan reviews, play histories, and the author's biography. Proven art work can also be supplied, either for use by itself or already incorporated into posters, postcards, billboards, program covers, and ad mats.

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EQUITY AGREEMENT WITH RESIDENT THEATRES

The council of Actors' Equity and the League of Resident theatres (LORT) announced in early September that and agreement had been reached between the two parties for a contract covering employment of Equity members in resident theatres.

This contract recognizes the growth of permanent theatre companies throughout the country. LORT presently consists of 26 companies in the U.S. which are basically scheduled to provide at least 26 weeks of employment each year. The new contract is for a three-year period, ending June 30, 1969.

The agreement sets up four categories of companies based on gross box office receipts with differing salary schedules in each category and providing for increases in each year of the contract. Other terms provide for improved sick leave benefits and accrued vacation benefits which have not previously existed in this area. The contract also establishes the payment of a contractual salary from the first day of rehearsals.

A New classification of Journeyman Actor and a contract covering a Journeyman's employment has been created to provide the advanced student further training in the resident theatre and to permit other actors the opportunity to broaden their careers by experience and training in this area

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ETCETERA

Omar K. Lerman, formerly with the New York State Council on the Arts, is now Managing Director of the American Ballet Theatre (New York).

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J. Wesley Zeigler, Associate Director, Theatre Communications Group, New York.

Lambert Zulkie, Actors' Equity Association, New York.

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NEWSLETTERS

"New Management Training Program Set," ARTS MANAGEMENT (August-September, 1966), No. 51.

A list of current management meetings, including the first seminar in State Arts Council Administration (August 24, at New York University). ANTA resident managers program (November 7, New York City), USITT Seminar (October 24), Assn. of American Dance Companies and others (December, New York City), and the Federal Bar Assn. meeting (New York City, October).

"Business Finds New Ways to Aid the Arts," ARTS MANAGEMENT (August-September, 1966), No. 51:1-2.

AM notes an increasing trend by arts groups to form continuing

relationships with business, "where long-range potential supercedes the immediate gain." Examples given of work by the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre (Stratford), Long Warf Theatre (New Haven), City Center of Music and Drama (New York City), and others.

NEWS

Setloew, Rick, "Frisco Actor's Workshop Folds Sat; Town Woos New Troupe," Daily VARIETY (August 2, 1966)

The story of the closing of Actors Workshop. Ball's ACT being considered for SF. (121)

"Lots of Information in Theatrical Guide," LOS ANGELES TIMES (August 4, 1966)

Eddie Hilton (comic) has written a handbook for young performers which lists "about everything from fan mail services to county fairs." It is called THEATRICAL VARIETY GUIDE, \$5.00, Theatrical Variety Publications, 6363 Wilshire, Los Angeles, California.

Seidenbaum, Art, "Government, Art; State of the Union," LOS ANGELES TIMES (August 4, 1966)

Seidenbaum discusses Ustinov and Richard Goldman's view of, "Bureaucracy abed with the arts." (122)

"Directors-Choreographers Claiming Victory With Off-Broadway Showmen," VARIETY (August 10, 1966), Vol. 243, No. 12:59

The Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers (a union) claims near success in its campaign to organize New York's off-Broadway legitimate theatre directors. (115)

"Equity's 5 Day-Scram Rule Populates Off-Broadway With Whirling Dervishes," VARIETY (August 10, 1966), Vol. 243, No. 12:62.

Theodore Mann evaluates the "changing conditions of the off-Broadway economy." He decides that the best way to improve the picture is "not to do long runs." The Equity 5-day rule results in a turnover of actors which inflates long-run costs with rehearsals, medical and Social Security benefits, etc. (112)

"500G Grant Aids Israeli Legits," VARIETY (August 10, 1966), Vol. 243 No. 12:64.

Israeli theatre gets government help. See SUPPLEMENT, September 1966, p. 11. (<u>111</u>)

"Houston Unit Okays Arts Move to Run Jones Hall," VARIETY (August 10, 1966), Vol. 243, No. 12:59.

The Houston city council approves, "in principle," the operation of this public building by a private corporation. Still legal problems. (<u>113</u>)

"Legit Labor, City Groups Study British Theatre; Weigh Promotion Ideas," VARIETY (August 10, 1966), Vol. 243, No. 12:62.

An effort to stimulate interest in the provincial theatre has been

suggested by the London Theatrical Managers Assn. A recent meeting discussed: a national publicity campaign, problems of persuading stars to go no tour, mutual financing of touring shows, and co-operation with TV. (<u>114</u>)

"Melodyland Dark; Last Tunestock in Frisco Area," VARIETY (August 10, 1966), Vol. 243, No. 12:59, 66.

The San Francisco area is now without a suburban strawhat company. Circle Star changes policy to concerts, Hyatt Music Theatre closes in January, Melodyland bankrupt in August (<u>110</u>)

"Gimbels Starting N.Y. Ticket Club," VARIETY (August 24, 1966), Vol.244, No. 1:1.

Gimbels department store forming a theatre club to compete with Macy's famous plan. Theatre Guild-American Theatre Society also expanding its "Bonus Ticket" setup. (118)

Green, Abel, "Underwrite New Playwrights," VARIETY (August 24, 1966), Vol. 244, No. 1:1, 64.

Sam S. Shubert Foundation Fellowships expanded to 49 awards (\$2,500 to \$3,300 each) with the purpose of encouraging new playwrighting talent.

Rees, Bob, "Regional repertory Groups Offer Security, Chance of Artistic Growth, But Salary Limit Seen Debatable," VARIETY (August 24, 1966), Vol. 244, No. 1:63, 69.

This report, based on the Guthrie Theatre, states that long-term contracts and fringe benefits are important for stability. The Managing Director claims that security is necessary for artistic development. (119)

"St. Paul Biz Men Plan Private B. R. For Aud. Revamp," VARIETY (August 24, 1966), Vol. 244, No. 1:63.

"In order to eliminate the necessity of approval by the voters, a group of local businessmen will form a so-called public benefit corporation to finance privately a...expansion of the Municipal Auditorium...". The corporation would borrow money by selling taxexempt bonds to private investors. Debt is to be paid by increased auditorium income created by the expansion and improvements. (117)

"Arts Council Peels Off Nearly \$2-Mil for ETV, Opera, Theatre Groups," VARIETY (August 31, 1966), Vol. 244, No. 2:2, 52.

Funds go to (1) National Repertory Theatre which plans to "adopt a system of no-star billing and a broadened student-educational program," (2) New York Shakespeare Festival so it can keep commitments a lack of funds might have cancelled, (3) Minneapolis Guthrie for a new production and (4) US Center of ITI for its biennial congress in New York City (June '67) (120)

Adler, Nancy J, "\$30,500 Raised by Pasadena Playhouse Fund," THE NEW YORK TIMES (September 3, 1966).

A benefit performance and a telethon were used to raise \$30,500 by

the Playhouse. In financial trouble, the Playhouse has a goal of \$150,000 for the upcoming season.

"National Council on Arts Allots \$10,000 For a Community Theatre Play," THE NEW YORK TIMES (September 5, 1966)

The award goes to the American Playwrights Theatre for the production of a play to be selected by the organization.

Zolotow, Sam, "Managers of Broadway Shows Team Up to Produce Their Own," THE NEW YOUR TIMES (September 7, 1966)

A new trend seems to be developing on Broadway. Young General Managers are assuming the role of producers while remaining at their posts as managers.

"Guthrie Theatre's New Shaw, O'Neill Revivals OK for M'pls Playgoers," VARIETY (September 14, 1966), Vol. 244, No. 4:67.

During the first half of this season, the Guthrie did better than for the same period last year when "the bill had more appeal and the company had more drawing power." See SUPPLEMENT, September 1966, p. 8. (123)

Morrison, Hobe, "Market Slump, Interest Rate Rise Seen Curtailing Legit Production," VARIETY (September 14,1966), Vol. 244, No. 4:67.

Stock market slump and increasing interest rates may have an adverse (but delayed) effect on the availability of investment to new producers. (<u>125</u>)

Morse, Tom, "American Place Theatre Develops Writers, With 3 Hits in 2 Years," VARIETY (September 14, 1966), Vol. 244,No. 467, 72.

A brief history of this theatre's success with new plays - all of which enjoyed a commercial run after their introduction by APT. (126).

"Pitt Playhouse Gets 450G Mellon Grant," VARIETY (September 14, 1966), Vol. 244, No. 4:67.

John Hancock, new artistic director, says, "It's a sizable amount, but it won't cover everything." $(\underline{127})$

"Plan Legit Training Under Ind'pls AMTC." VARIETY (September 14,1966), Vol. 244, No. 4:67.

Martin Tahse, president of the American Musical Theatre, and an Indianapolis women's group plan to make four subscription shows available to high-school and college students in the area. Tahse will contribute to the plan. (128)

Seattle Stock Company Doubling Last Year Biz," VARIETY (September 14, 1966), Vol. 244, No. 4:70.

Contempory Theatre doing double the previous year's business, but finds it can still not exist on box office sales. Extensive support has been available from the community. (129)

Note: $(\underline{00})$ indicates that the article is available on loan from the Institute. Please refer to this number. Address requests to the Chairman, Committee for Theatre Administration.

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