

EmilyAnn Theatre Shakespeare Under the Stars Program Summary

Shakespeare Under the Stars offers 50-60 middle school and high school students (and younger students when needed to meet cast requirements) the opportunity to study and perform Shakespearean dramas in a program accredited by the Texas Education Agency. Students spend six weeks in Wimberley learning all aspects of theatre from lighting and set and costume design to performance. Students audition in May and must memorize their lines before they arrive in July. Students from out of town are housed by community members. The experience culminates with the production of two plays performed on alternating evenings in late July and early August. Last summer Last year 2300 visitors attended the students' performances of *Twelfth Night* and *All's Well that Ends Well*. In 2008, Shakespeare Under the Stars will present *The Comedy of Errors* and *King Lear*.

The primary goal of Shakespeare Under the Stars is to provide a top quality and professional program that will allow high school and college students to develop their artistic/creative talents in an instructional setting. The program is under the direction of Dr. Joe Aldridge, Associate Professor of Theatre at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. College interns serve as directors for each play and provide instruction in lighting, costume design, and set design. Shakespeare Under the Stars meets a need for theatre education and development opportunities for youth and also provides cultural opportunities for the residents of Wimberley, a community of about 10,000 people located in the Texas Hill Country.

The total cost of the program is \$28,750. In 2008, we estimate that the program will generate approximately \$18,000 - \$19,000 in ticket and concession sales. A grant from Texas Rural Communities, Inc. for \$10,000 would enable us fully fund the program. A grant of \$5,000 would ensure that we could provide stipends for our college interns, or a grant of \$2,500 would pay for acting workshops provided by nationally-recognized actor Clarence Gilyard of Walker, Texas Ranger.

Contact Information

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Section I—Contact Information

a. Grant Contact

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b. Organization

Name: EmilyAnn Theatre

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Section II--Purpose of Organization

History and Mission

The EmilyAnn Theatre was founded in 1998 to celebrate the life of Emily Ann Rolling, a vivacious 16-year-old with a love for Shakespearean drama. Emily Ann lost her life in a car accident in 1996. The outdoor theatre initially provided a permanent home for Shakespeare Under the Stars, which at that time was a program of the Wimberley Independent School District's drama department. Today, the program, in its 19th season, is fully funded and independently produced by the EmilyAnn Theatre. We have expanded the scope of our work to include a variety of community and cultural events.

Our mission is to reinvest in the dignity of the human spirit.

Located in Wimberley on six acres of land, the site includes a stage with seating for 500, an educational compound with classroom space, and a walking path with gardens featuring native plants. The most recent addition to our grounds is the Veterans Memorial Plaza, which honors service men and women who have served our nation in times of war and peace and serves as an educational tool for all ages.

Major Program Areas

- **Shakespeare Under the Stars**—each summer Shakespeare Under the Stars offers 50-60 middles and high school students (and younger students when needed to meet cast requirements) from throughout Texas the opportunity to study and perform two full length Shakespearean dramas in a program accredited by the Texas Education Agency. For the past two years, we have worked with out Technical Director, Professor Joe Aldridge from the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) to develop and internship program that provides college credit to students for assisting with the technical aspects of the productions. We have had interns from Texas State, Southwestern University, St. Edward's University and UNLV. This past summer 2300 visitor attended the students' performances of *Twelfth Night* and *All's Well that Ends Well*.

- **Outdoor Theater Productions**—recent productions include *Fiddler on the Roof* (2000 attended in 2007) and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. A frequent offering is *Star of the Hills*, a musical drama telling the story of the history of the Wimberley Valley that was written specifically for the EmilyAnn. In 2008, we will offer *The Gospel Accordin' to Texas*.
- **Community Festivals**
 - **Butterfly Day**—each spring local school and businesses raise butterflies, which are released during the festival. School children from Wimberley to Frisco, Texas participate in a butterfly art contest. Close to 5000 visitor attended Butterfly Day in 2007.
 - **Trail of Lights**—more than 100 local businesses, schools, organizations, and individual families decorate holiday displays and many groups sponsor a nightly Yule Log where families visitors gather to roast hot dogs and drink hot chocolate. Musicians perform on many nights. More then 12,000 visitor came through Trail of Lights in 2007.
- **Educational Projects**—we offer classes in art, theatre, and choir for children in 2nd - 8th grades.

Visitors stop by daily to walk through our gardens, enjoy our life-size chess/checker board, and interactive musical garden, spend time bird and butterfly watching, and enjoy the peaceful environment of the grounds. We also make our grounds available for a variety of community events including memorial services, weddings, and benefits.

Section III

a. Description of proposed educational program

Shakespeare Under the Stars offers 50-60 middle school and high school students (and younger students when needed to meet cast requirements) the opportunity to study and perform Shakespearean dramas in a program accredited by the Texas Education Agency. Students spend six weeks in Wimberley learning all aspects of theatre from lighting and set and costume design to performance. Students audition in May and must memorize their lines before they arrive in July. Students from out of town are housed by community members. The experience culminates with the production of two plays performed on alternating evenings in late July and early August.

Program Goals

The primary goal of Shakespeare Under the Stars is to provide a top quality and professional program that will allow high school and college students to develop their artistic/creative talents in an instructional setting.

Program Activities

Shakespeare Under the Stars is a “total immersion” experience in all segments of the production of a Shakespearean play. Artistic Director, Joe Aldridge, and college interns

provide instruction in all aspects of theatre arts. Students fill all acting roles; they design and sew all costumes; they make and manage all props; they design and construct the set; they design and execute the lighting program. Rehearsal sessions run 9am-noon / 6 – 9pm every weekday. Casts alternate morning / evening times, with the off time devoted to costuming, set, prop, etc. Tech crews work everyday, adjusting their schedules to the availability of the stage and other facilities.

Professional Leadership: The program is currently under the artistic direction of Joe Aldridge, Professor of Theatre and Technical Director in the Theatre Department of the University of Nevada - Las Vegas (UNLV). He brings a tremendous level of talent and national credibility to the EmilyAnn. Last year we partnered with UNLV, Texas State University, St. Edward's University and Southwestern University to provide college interns to assist with production. In 2008, we will continue to explore opportunities to partner with universities.

2008 Season: We are currently working with our artistic director to plan for next season. We will offer *King Lear* and *The Comedy of Errors*.

Promotion

SUS is advertised in Central / East Texas with ads in – Houston Chronicle, Austin American Statesman, San Antonio Express, Wimberley View, Wimberley News & Views Magazine, New Braunfels, San Marcos Record, Dripping Springs Record, Austin Chronicle, Texas Highways Magazine, Texas Co-Op Power Magazine, and Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine.

On-line notices are placed with: Texas Highway Dept – TravelTex; KUT.org;Klru.org; Channel8, Austin; NowPlayingAustin.com.

Students make appearances in the Wimberley 4th of July parade and area meetings of Lions International and Rotary International.

b. Proposed program participants

Students-- All acting roles are filled by children no older than their graduated senior summer. There are no actors of college age or older. Also, there is no minimum age. Last summer our youngest actor was 5 years old. It is not uncommon for children to participate for 10+ years. While most participants are from Wimberley and other small communities in the surrounding area, the program draws part of its strength from the active recruitment of students from outside the Wimberley Valley. Last summer we had 54 children from Wimberley, San Marcos, Canyon Lake, Dripping Springs, San Antonio, Austin and Justin.

School Districts Participating in last 5 years – Wimberley ISD; San Marcos ISD; New Braunfels ISD; Blanco ISD; Comal ISD; Smithson Valley ISD; Austin ISD; Frisco ISD; San Antonio Northeast ISD; Splendora ISD; Ft. Worth Northwest ISD; LaVernia ISD; Katherine Ann Porter Charter School

As the list reflects, Shakespeare Under the Stars offers students from many rural communities the opportunity to participate in this unique program.

College Interns

College interns are instrumental in providing instruction in technical aspects of theatre. Two interns serve as directors, one for each play. Interns also serve as the head set designer, costume designer, and lighting designer. We partner with several universities to provide both undergraduate and graduate credit in theatre for our interns.

Universities granting undergraduate/graduate credit :

- Texas State University
- University of Nevada – Las Vegas
- St. Edwards University
- Southwestern University

Artistic Director Joe Aldridge—Since 2006, Shakespeare Under the Stars has been under the artistic direction of UNLV professor Joe Aldridge. Joe Aldridge has been a professor at UNLV since 1984. He holds a B.A. in Technical Theatre from Texas Tech University and a M. A. in Lighting Design from UNLV.

Guest Acting Coach—We are working to arrange for Clarence Gilyard of Walker, Texas Ranger to come to Wimberley to provide on-site acting workshops for Shakespeare Under the Stars participants.

Audience Members—Shakespeare Under the Stars provides a tremendous benefit to residents of the Wimberley Valley.

b. Proposed program budget

This year our Shakespeare Under the Stars budget includes several additions that will add to the quality of the program. A larger budget will enable us to bring in a guest acting coach, pay our artistic director more competitively, offer our college interns stipends, and add much-needed additional facilities staff time.

Shakespeare Under the Stars 2008 Budget

Estimated Income

Tickets	12,000
Goods Sold	2,750
Advertising	1,000
Concessions	3,300
Funds Needed	9,700
Total	28,750

Expenses

Artistic Director	5,000	
College Interns	5,000	(5 @ \$1,000 each)
Guest Acting Coach	2,500	
Additional Facilities Staff Time	2,000	
Advertising	1,250	
Costumes	3,000	
Cost of Goods	1,750	
Set Const.	3,000	
Concessions	1,750	
Travel	500	
Administrative Overhead	3,000	
Total	28,750	

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d. Proposed deliverables

Students perform two full length Shakespearean dramas. This year the plays selected are *The Comedy of Errors* and *King Lear*. There will be six productions of each play according to the following schedule:

The Comedy of Errors July 28,30 and August 1,5,7,9
King Lear July 29,31 and August 2,4,6,8

e. Proposed schedule

January: begin recruitment of student participants and college interns
March: hire interns—directors and designers
May 17th: student auditions
June: costume and scene designs due to artistic director; order supplies
July 1st: students arrive at theatre; rehearsals and set/costume construction begin
July 26th: dress rehearsal—show 1
July 27th: dress rehearsal—show 2
July 28th: performances begin
August 9th: program concludes

Attachments

- a. List of Board of Directors
- b. Current fiscal year budget, balance sheet, profit/loss statement
- c. Letters of Recommendation—Unity Church, Vlasta Silhavy (college intern)