



THE COLONIAL THEATRE

Student Matinee Important Information



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The Colonial Education and Outreach Overview

The Colonial is passionately invested in the cultural health of our community through our commitment to providing outreach for the underserved and educational opportunities for all ages. Our educational programs are designed to engage children, teens, and adults in the artistic process, cultivate appreciation of the performing arts, and make the performing arts a vital and fundamental part of school and community life.

The Colonial Student Matinee Series

The Colonial Student Matinee Series offers high-quality performances that complement school curriculum and illustrate the dynamic relationship between the performing arts and literature, history, science and world cultures. The series also includes events that introduce art forms outside the curriculum. An important resource for area educators, the Student Matinee Series brings quality performing arts experiences to an average of 8,000 school children from 120-plus schools each year. (over 1000+ teachers and parents who home school children) The Colonial also creates comprehensive study guides that teachers, students, and parents can use to help prepare and reflect upon the performances.

The Colonial Educational Workshops

The Colonial's workshop programs for students and educators inspire participants in variety of ways. Students deepen their understanding of and engagement in literature, history, world cultures and performing arts through artist led workshops and lecture demonstrations. Post performance and after school teacher workshops add to teaching strategies by exploring new techniques for using the performing arts to enrich curriculum.



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Introduction to Theater

Theater did not develop overnight; it evolved slowly out of the practice of ritual. Primitive man cultivated certain rituals to appease the elements or to make things happen that he didn't understand (for example, to make crops grow or to have success in hunting). In Ancient Greece, similar rituals began in honor of Dionysus, the God of fertility, and would include choral singing and dancing.

These rituals were so popular, that people began to choreograph, or plan out, the dances more carefully. The songs grew more sophisticated, and eventually included actors speaking in dialogue with one another and with the chorus.

Soon, writers wrote full scripts to be performed; entire festivals were organized in honor of Dionysus, and theater, as we know it was born.

What makes a theatrical experience? Actors on a "stage," (which might be anything from a huge amphitheater to the front of a classroom) portray characters and tell stories through their movement and speech. But even though there are actors playing characters and telling stories, it is still not a theatrical experience until one more very important element is added. It is the presence of an audience -- watching, participating, imagining -- that makes it a true theatrical experience. Theater enables us to collectively experience that which we may know and feel within, but which may be unspoken and unacknowledged in our outward lives. Theater is the coming together of people -- the audience and the actors -- to think about, speak of, and experience the big ideas that connect us to our inner and outer worlds.

What does the audience bring to the theater? They bring attention, intelligence, energy and, above all, they bring imagination.



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Policies & Information you should share!

The live theatre performance has not be pre-recorded with the mistakes edited out.

This makes it more exciting for an audience. Your thoughtful attention and response has a real effect, which contributes to the overall quality of the performance! The audience gives energy to the performers who use that energy to give life to the performance! Remember to 'play you part' and **watch and listen!**

Buses should plan to unload from Commercial Street alongside of the theatre or in the parking lot behind the theatre and arrive 30 minutes prior to the performance. Please avoid blocking roadways, including unloading the bus in front of the theatre on Main Street. The performance needs to begin on time and run approximately 1 hour. Your help is greatly appreciated!

When you enter the Colonial Theatre, an usher guides you to your seat. Please understand that **wheelchair and baby stroller space is very limited** and the house manager needs to be aware of this prior to the performance day. Schools will be assigned sections in the theatre based on accessibility requirements, the date your registration was received, and the size of your group.

Photographs or recordings of the performance are **not allowed**, so please be prepared for this. This **includes the use of cell phones** in any way. Lit screens are highly visible and distracting in a dark theatre! Ushers are authorized to confiscate these items in use. Please be considerate of the actors and the audience around you to avoid any interruption during the performance.

Teachers, chaperones and parents should wear nametags identifying your school. **Chaperones should distribute** evenly throughout your group so they can play an active role in encouraging appropriate theatre behavior. This is the perfect time to escort small groups of students to bathrooms. Audience members in the balcony need to behave safely; **chaperones carefully monitor** students in the balcony.

After the performance an usher will lead you from the theater to a Colonial exit. Have fun sharing the experience of the performance, but **show consideration** for all those sharing this building by remaining orderly in common areas and following the directions of your teachers, parents and the Colonial staff.

Remember to thank all those who made your theatre experience possible!



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Experiencing live Theater

Preparing Your Students to be Audience Members

A theater is an energetically charged space. When the “house lights” (the lights that illuminate the audience seating) go down, everyone feels a thrill of anticipation. By discussing appropriate audience behavior as a class ahead of time, the students will be much better equipped to handle their feelings and express their enthusiasm in acceptable ways during the performance.

Here Are Some Key Words to Keep in Mind:

Concentration: Performers use concentration to focus their energy on stage. If the audience watches in a concentrated way, this supports the performers and they can do their best work. They can *feel* that you are with them.

Quiet: The theater is a very “live” space. This means that sound carries very well, usually all over the auditorium. Theaters are designed in this way so that the voices of the actors can be heard. It also means that any sounds in the audience - whispering, rustling papers, or speaking - can be heard by other audience members *and* by the performers. This can destroy everyone’s concentration and spoil a performance. Do not make any unnecessary noise that would distract the people sitting around you. Be respectful! But please feel free to laugh if something on stage is funny, applaud to show your appreciation, or participate if the actors ask you!

Respect: The audience shows respect for the performers by being attentive. The performers show respect for their art form and for the audience by doing their best possible work. As a good audience member, you have a responsibility to bring your best behavior to the Theater as well. Doing so shows respect for the actors—who have rehearsed long hours to prepare for this day—and the audience around you.

Common Sense: The same rules of behavior that are appropriate in any formal public place apply to the theater. If audience members conduct themselves in orderly ways, with each person respecting the space of those around him or her, everyone will be able to fully enjoy the performance experience.

- Please turn off cell phones.
- You may not take photos or make any recordings during the performance unless otherwise notified. This includes use of cell phones.
- Please remember to use the restrooms before the performance so you will not need to get up during the performance.



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You were a part of an audience of many different people: people from different schools, different neighborhoods, of different ages. You all saw the same play, but you may not all have the same ideas about it.

The greatest thing about theatre is that we all experience it in different ways. What is silly to you may be powerful to someone else.

Find out what your classmates thought about the show. Find a partner and ask him or her the following question. Record their answers. You may be surprised by what you learn!

Name _____ Age _____

Partner's Name _____ Age _____

1. What was your favorite part of the performance? Why did you like it?

2. What was your least favorite part of the performance? What didn't you like about it?

3. Did you learn something by watching this performance you did not know before? If so, what did you learn? I could be about science or theatre, or this particular performance.

Please send your students comments to:

The Colonial Theatre, attention Vicky Pittman, 95 Main Street, Keene, NH 03431

I will try to include comments from as many as possible up onto our website and in our future PR!
Thank you!



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EVALUATION FORM for Teachers

The Colonial Theatre values your opinion of both our production and our service to you. By completing and returning this Evaluation Form, you can help us to work more successfully with you.

School Name:

Grade level or ages of students who attended performance:

1) **Overall rating of performance.**

Excellent Good Fair Poor

Please give reasons for the rating and describe the production's impact on your students. Include students comments and reactions.

2) **How were you able to integrate the performance into your curriculum?**

3) **Did you explore the themes of the performance before or after the show with your students?**

4) **What do you consider the most valuable lesson imparted to students based on the themes of the production?**

5) **If you utilized our study guide, please give comments on its impact and suggest changes you would make.**



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6) If you conducted any follow-up discussion or activities, please describe any results you thought significant or interesting.

7) How many times per year do you think students in your program attend the theatre or other arts performances OUTSIDE of their school or summer program? (circle or bold one)

0-2 times a year

3-5 times a year

6 or more times a year

8) How many times per year do you take your students to a performance as part of a school/program field trip? (circle or bold one)

0-2 times a year

3-5 times a year

6 or more times a year

9) How would you rate your school/s program's arts efforts? (circle or bold one)

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Comments:

10) Designate the means by which your school trip was funded:

School Funds

PTO

Ticket Sales/Parent-funded

Teacher/Group Leader funded

Colonial Scholarship

State Arts Council Grant

Grant

Other service organization(s) (please specify)

Other