

The Last Frontier Theatre Conference 2016 Evaluations Report



UAA Department of Theatre graduates Jaron Carlson, Nathan Huey, and Eric Holzschuh seemed to have approved.

Introduction

Every year, participant feedback is solicited after the Conference is over. There is a primary questionnaire, plus additional ones for Play Lab authors and readers. The results are tabulated here; in many cases, numerical data is given for multiple years by way of comparison. This document is used in planning for the subsequent year, and recommended as a resource to new participants in getting a feel for what the event is like.

Usually 30-40% of attendees respond. In addition to chronicling the feedback, some initial responses and plans for next year are blended into the document.

The report formatting is changing a little this year, both to make it a more useful tool for the staff and to make it easier to follow for other readers. Text written by the Conference staff is in bold; photo captions in italics; feedback quotes are in plain text; and some of their quotes are highlighted, either just to accentuate it or to note that it is something to be addressed in next year's planning. Also, feedback on specific topics is being moved to one heading, as opposed to being left in the order it was received on feedback sheets.

Happy reading.

Dawson Moore

Theatre Conference Coordinator

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What is one thing you wish you'd had, or known about, prior to coming to Valdez?

Our goal is to maintain ongoing communication with everyone planning to attend. Particularly for new participants, the size of the event and remoteness of its location can be daunting. All participants correspond directly with the Coordinator, and are repeatedly encouraged to contact him with any questions.

Previous years, participants were asked for a general assessment of "the information received prior to the event." It has never received higher ratings than in 2016.

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Excellent	66%	61.5%	45%	75%	58%	63.8%	55.1%	69.2%	72.6%	77.3%
Good	24%	29%	39%	20%	28%	27.6%	39.1%	23.1%	21%	19.7%
Satisfactory	8%	4.5%	12%	3%	6%	6.9%	4.3%	6.2%	6.4%	3%
Unsatisfactory	0%	2%	2%	0%	4%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0%	0%
N/A	0%	3%	2%	2%	2%	0%	0%	1.5%	0%	0%

In 2016, respondents were given a list to say which items they wished they had known more about. They could check multiple boxes.

Map of the Town	7.5%
Free housing	10.6%
How to sign in	3%
The Play Lab	4.5%
Outdoor activities	10.6%
Classes	9%
Provided food	9%
Monologue Workshop	9%
Gala Dinner	6%
Nothing (past participant)	45.5%
Nothing (new participant)	28.8%



Featured Artists Lia Romeo & Barclay Kopchak.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- I wasn't sure if improv was stand alone or built into each other. Wasn't sure what creature meet and greet meant.
- If there were bike rentals available in town.
- I wish I had been on the cruise that saw Puffins. Four years, and I've never seen a puffin, but Arlene says she saw them!
- In general, I felt very well prepared. Thank you.
- **Noting gluten free food would be good.** I realize gluten free food isn't always available, but when it works out that way it would be nice to know and able to participate.
- As someone coming in with a presenting group, it would have been helpful to have a 1-page sheet about what the conference is all about. I've done it before so I knew, but it was hard to get fellow folks in my group excited to participate in more than just our show.

Below are responses from Play Lab actors (only) to the question “How useful was the information you received before the Conference regarding the process, advice, and rehearsal schedule? Is there other information you wish you had prior to arriving in Valdez?”

ALL GOOD

- Everything sent to me was exactly what I needed.
- Awesome.
- If you read all the email you should be fine. I had no problems.
- Info & scheduling was all very clear - it is always great receiving scripts ahead of time!
- Nothing to write. The information was really useful.
- It was incredibly useful. The information the Conference provides the actor is thorough, yet easy to process and follow.
- Nope - all very clear!
- I had no problems.
- Worked for me.
- I felt I received great information about the Conference, the Monologue Workshop, the Play Lab, and the Play Slam.
- Excellent prep!
- 100% useful. Then again, I've been to 20 conferences.
- No, it was all very clear.
- I felt well informed.
- Very useful! I felt prepared.
- Extremely thorough.

- It was fine.
- The info was very useful. I felt prepared.
- 3x “Very useful.”
- No.
- Everything was good.
- You guys communicated really well and were always very responsive to e-mails.
- Good, though I've done it before so it's hard for me to know if there was info that would have been helpful that wasn't present.
- It was AWESOME.
- I found all the information that was presented at the conference regarding the Play Lab to be very useful and informative. I can't think of anything that was left out or that I was confused about.

CONTACT INFORMATION

- E mail addresses of all attendees (or at least those willing to share their addresses) Or at least contact info on the playwrights I will be working with.
- Very useful. I would love to be able to contact the playwright if possible, beforehand, just in case any questions arise that only they can answer.

MORE INFO ABOUT PRACTICALITIES

- Helpful. I'd include more about what to expect from a day to day lifestyle in Valdez... especially if you're a first timer.
- I think it is all very helpful. I'd like more information about where to get food that is vegan/gluten free. Seriously. It's difficult to eat in Valdez when you have food allergies.

ONCE AT THE CONFERENCE...

- I would rather have the online info sheets available in hard copy at the beginning of the conference, and a chance to go over them. (I'm not sure what this is referring to. Everything that was distributed to participants prior to the event was also available at it.)

MAKE ACTORS PREP MORE

- Good info. Maybe encourage actors to read all their scripts well in advance, and encourage pre-conference dialogue with playwrights.

IT WASN'T ALL CORRECT

- It was pretty comprehensive though there were some conflicting times (typos I think) on the rehearsals that I wish had been corrected earlier. But it's a solid pack of info so anyone who says they're unprepared isn't paying attention.
- The rehearsal schedule was slightly tricky to navigate, I'm not sure if there is a quick fix or if it would cause more confusion to have a cover sheet on each script listing the

performance and rehearsal times? Really this is a minor detail, I was just often worried I had misread the schedule.

Below are responses from Play Lab playwrights (only) to the question “How useful was the information you received prior to the Conference regarding the process, rehearsals, selection of readers, etc? Is there other information you wish you had prior to arriving in Valdez?”

NONE

- All the information I received prior to the conference was really helpful! This was my first time, and I had a very firm grasp on how the process was going to work.
- 2x “Very helpful.”
- Two thumbs up
- It was great!
- I had no problems.
- Quite useful and entirely adequate.
- Very useful! Thanks!
- Thorough, friendly, and organized.
- Very. Everything was provided.
- It was very useful. I had everything I needed.
- Very useful. Just what the script doctor ordered.
- It was fine, organized, and informative.
- Information was very clear and arrived in a timely manner.
- I found it helpful and I can't think of what else I'd need to know.
- I think it was all pretty comprehensive. And all sent in a timely manner.
- Very useful and Dawson was so available to answer questions about logistics. I particularly appreciated getting a Conference program from the year before mailed to me with my information; it was helpful to go through it and get an idea of what the week would look like.
- Dawson did a great job emailing everything we needed to know ahead of time.
- I thought everything was very clear. I liked getting the suggestions on how to handle the directing of my piece. It was very helpful.



Valerie Hager in “Naked in Alaska.”

SOME PEOPLE HAVE DONE THIS BEFORE

- As a longtime participant, I knew pretty much what to expect.

- I thought it was all fairly thorough, although I have been there many times and already understand the process fairly well at this point.
- This wasn't my first year, so everything was fine for me.
- Very comprehensive advance info this year (right down to lunches) - more so than in previous years (which was already very good).

GOOD, BUT ABOUT CASTING AND DIRECTING AND REHEARSALS...

- Good Info! Would've liked to be a little more privy to casting options before official ... I had a gender switch for my play that I might've nixed if I had known, but the reading DID confirm the gender of the character for me, so it was useful in the end ...
- I suppose more information about the rehearsal process. And I think this was more my fault, but I think reminding people a few more times that they will direct their own work or the LFTC can find them director would be really helpful (but again, maybe I just missed that info).
- All was helpful. The little directing guide was a good intro as well. Having list of actors might be nice but could also be pretty intrusive I suppose.
- I think I would've liked an e-introduction message to say hello, introduce the cast, etc. But that's nit-picking.
- Extremely useful in general, though I did not read the program carefully enough to know that the rehearsals for play labs had already been scheduled for us. Could have saved an hour or two of anxiety about that, but I figured it out in time.
- A little more about the responders, maybe, and more stressing that rehearsal time is VERY VERY short, though premarking scripts was a big hint.

Play Lab actors-only responses to "Did you receive adequate notice prior to the Conference about [acting] programs?"

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Yes	86.5%	57.7%	39.5%
Yes but would have liked more	N/A	N/A	42.1%
No	13.5%	42.3%	18.4%

In general, our communication schedule is in place and people feel well communicated with. The challenge is to get out all needed information, but not to over-communicate, which can have the opposite of the intended effect. 15-paragraph e-mails are infamous for never getting read. Pretty much every aspect listed as people not knowing about it in advance was communicated to participants, but there's a lot of information.

It's possible that a specific schedule of which correspondence goes out when might help with making sure that everything gets out in a timely fashion. Right now, e-mail is simply modeled on previous year's correspondence.

Other specific areas to address people's concerns:

1. Directing their own readings. This is currently told to them twice, in the initial invite and later when the directing how-to guide is shared. The latter e-mail could go out earlier, and also include a caveat that they don't have to do this if they don't want to.
2. People who are interested in outdoor and other non-Conference activities should be pointed more clearly to the Valdez Convention and Visitors Bureau website. Again, it's in the initial correspondence to playwrights. It is nowhere conveyed to actors, however, and many now come from out of state to participate.
3. Food will be discussed in its own section.
4. Clearly more information about the rehearsal schedule is needed. The process is presented to the authors, but possibly they're thinking they'll have a full day, as opposed to the much shorter reality.
5. There is also more to be done with having people prepared for the classes, beyond the Monologue Workshop. Actors were sent a full list of classes with descriptions in advance, which could also be done with playwrights. The descriptions could also be posted on the website in advance.



*The Artistic Directors of
Perseverance Theatre and
Cyrano's Theatre Company,
Art Rotch and Teresa K.
Pond.*

Conference Schedule

The Last Frontier Theatre Conference is one of the more ambitious events of its type in the world. With activities going from nine in the morning and ending close to midnight, a common topic of debate is “should we do less?”

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Excellent	73%	67%	55%	59%	50%	50%	62%	58.5%	61.3%	72.7%
Good	23%	29%	38%	39%	46%	36.7%	32%	32.3%	24.2%	24.3%
Satisfactory	4%	3%	7%	1%	2%	13.3%	6%	6.2%	12.9%	3%
Unsatisfactory	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1.5%	1.6%	0%
N/A	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1.5%	0%	0%

There are more comments about the schedule throughout this document. With 97% Good to Excellent ratings, major changes would be unwise.

We will eliminate having a Friday evening performance to facilitate the donated evening on Stan Stephens Cruises. This will also make the theatre available during the day on Friday for the Ten-Minute Play Slam to use for tech rehearsals, etc, eliminating the challenges that they have faced in trying to tech the Slam during lunch on the final Saturday.

We eliminated the Fringe Festival’s Wednesday night performance so it wouldn’t conflict with the City of Valdez reception, but this turned out to be a needless change, and we will go back to having them run Sunday through Thursday. The Saturday kick-off will not be a strictly-



Fringe experience in 2017, as a production has been identified that will work for that day in the theatre.

Anchorage’s TossPot Productions’ “Good Men Wanted” by Kevin Armento.

In response to the questions “What did you enjoy most about the Conference:”

- The way that you could choose activities based on whether you are a morning or night person :) I learned a lot. I'm very happy.
- 2X “Well organized!”

In response to the question “What did you enjoy least about the Conference:”

MAKE IT LONGER

- Too short!
- Having to leave.
- Only a week long.

SO MANY THINGS TO DO!

- The fact that I wanted to be in multiple places at the same time because there were so many great choices.
- I was sorry I couldn't get to see everything - it would've been nice if some workshops could've been offered more than once although I understand that time & space are limited. Having to miss some readings because they clashed with others.
- The time to rehearse ... the amount of readings I missed ...
- I just wished I had had more energy to participate in more things!
- I was exhausted by the end of the week. (But I loved it.)
- No being able to fully immerse due to the presenting schedule (nothing to be done about that really).
- The schedule was pretty intensive and I was exhausted by the end - but again, not something I would actually change, because I wanted to do all the things I was doing!

In response to the question “Are there any other types of activities you would like to see added to future conferences:”

IT WAS ALL GOOD

- Loved everything.
- Can't think of anything right now.
- The schedule felt really packed - there are other activities that would be great, but I don't think there would be room to fit them in, and I don't think any of the current activities should be cut.
- No
- Hard to say. Very full days, and valuable.
- I think there is enough!

CLASSES IN GENERAL

- More workshops!

- As many workshops on writing as possible!
- More workshop! More fruit!
- More is better.
- More classes would be great, but I'm not sure the schedule would allow for it.
- The Sound design class was cool. Would love to see more Tech classes in the future!
- More classes and discussions about the BUSINESS of show business. How do I publish, do I need an agent, etc.
- Classes in how to market your work.

PLAYWRITING CLASSES

- I'd like more variety in classes, panels offered. It would be great to have more choices... but that's a bit selfish because it's already an embarrassment of riches...
- Some ideas: 1) a panel or workshop about self-producing, 2) any writing workshop with the emphasis of writing new material in the workshop and 3) hearing from professional playwrights about development fellowships/processes, and how/where to apply!
- Really liked the one workshop on writing offered, wouldn't mind more of those. Also, some opportunities to workshop or discuss other aspects of theater making with designers, directors, producers, actors, etc.
- I'd like to see more workshops for playwrights. I especially enjoyed Arlene's rewrite workshop.

ACTING CLASSES

- Scene study workshop alongside monologue workshop.
- Alexander Technique, Scene Study, or any other acting technique workshops.
- Something for singers.
- More classes for actors.
- Would love to see more directing panels/workshops.
- More on your feet acting classes (less talking more doing). A directing class.
- More improv.

TECHNOLOGY

- Use of technology to help connect during Conference. Hashtags on twitter, or I know there are apps that you can use to build event with push notifications etc.
<https://guidebook.com/event-apps/> (pricer) <http://eventsxd.com> (mostly free)

SMALLER PLAY LAB

- Fewer plays so we can attend more and directors attached not to impose their idea but to make sure the play is clearly heard with the writer's intentions.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

- More organized dinner get-together? Maybe some kind of emphasis on group posting? Sorry this is vague ...

- An introductory "meet and greet" of all Play Lab members. (Maybe along the lines of a speed date.) Many people I didn't have the chance to even say hello to during the week.
- An "icebreaker" event right at the beginning for first-timers to meet & mingle.
- It would be great to have a meet and greet with just the playwrights. There are a ton of people at the Conference, and it would be great to be able to build a community of writers right off the bat. **We rely on people to create their own social connections, and have a strong track record of friendships forming here. An organized activity for 200 people to meet each other seems impractical, but there is possibly some work to be done here with Conference vets to get them to actively engage new participants.**
- **Some sort of physical activity in the middle of the day or during the dinner break to counterbalance all the sitting we do - I know there was yoga but it was way too early in the morning.**

PARTICULAR KINDS OF PRODUCTIONS

- More produced one-act plays.
- Outdoor performances... it's so beautiful out there and we are too cooped up!
- I would love varied styles of theatre and genres. This Conference was massively depressing and I only found one play that didn't mention rape in some form. It was a hard week to get through.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

- Perhaps group kayaking or hiking outing opportunities? I wanted to take advantage of some of the outdoors but had to make friends with a person with a car to go hike, and was hesitant to try kayaking with strangers. This would be totally extraneous to the rest of the conference, incidentally.
- It would be fun to organize smaller group hikes or activities to get to know people outside the lab space. I feel like this is where I develop relationships that last beyond the Conference. **People need to feel empowered to do this themselves, as we are not throwing an 'outdoor activities conference,' and many past participants have. Direct involvement also makes PWSC liable for injuries, etc.**

MATERIAL/PERFORMANCE CREATED AT THE CONFERENCE

- A bake-off play competition.
- More structured writing time! I really liked the session with Cassandra where she gave us prompts to write a monologue. I'd love if there was an optional time each day where writers could gather and write in response to prompts.
- Maybe more writing workshops/activities, opportunities to create something brand new during the Conference.
- I'd love to see the Overnighters return as a mainstage feature... maybe replace the featured artist readings with it. It would provide another writing opportunity for

conference playwrights and an acting credit to some of the thespians. Plus they're really fun.

All of these comments will be in the back of the Coordinator's mind as planning for 2017 takes place. Because a huge percentage of the participants are repeat attendees, we try to vary the programming. This means that some of the suggestions are just on off-years.

Probably every year should include a business of playwriting class, as any year there isn't one lots of people ask for it. It's a tricky subject, and often not the most useful class of the year, but appetite for the topic is always strong.

Also common are calls for work created at the Conference. There were a couple of years where morning writing sessions were provided, but they tended to be under-attended. It is hard to see where they would work in the afternoon schedule. They shouldn't compete with the other playwriting classes offered in the 1:30 to 3:00 slot, and the final readings of the day end at various times, making it hard to put anything after that. Also, people tend to be ready for a break at that point, as opposed to wanting to have another reason to sit.

The Overnights, a 24-hour theatre process, were a Conference performance staple from 2006-09. They were satisfying for most of the participants, but couldn't accommodate more than 5% of our writers and 15% of our actors. They were also extremely draining on staff resources.

Perhaps something will be added in the latter half of the week, or as time slots open. People are correct in thinking this could be a great part of the week. Of course, writers are always free to go off and write on their own...



Alaskan actor Zachary Desmond and Chicago-based Reagan James perform in the Fringe Festival.

Website

Other than direct contact with the Coordinator, the website is our primary way of conveying information to participants prior to the Conference, and of publicizing the event. We also use it to facilitate programs such as the Monologue Workshop by making material available to participants there prior to their arrival in Valdez. It is the historical record of the event, including programs, photos, and summaries of past conferences.

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
Excellent	52%	51.5%	52%	45%	46%	48.3%	49.3%	44.6%	44.3%
Good	27%	22%	21%	35%	30%	41.7%	46.4%	38.5%	37.7%
Satisfactory	4%	4.5%	10%	12%	11%	6.7%	0%	9.2%	14.7%
Unsatisfactory	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	17%	22%	15%	8%	11%	3.3%	4.3%	7.7%	3.3%

In response to the question “How useful was the Conference website? Do you have any suggestions for improvements?”:

NO SUGGESTIONS

- Website is useful.
- Excellent.
- It was OK.
- It was very good.
- Very useful and easy to navigate.
- Very helpful.
- I found it helpful. I also appreciated Dawson's availability via email for specific questions.
- Very useful and easy to navigate, big help.
- 4x “Very useful.”
- Very helpful, especially after the pdf of the conference program was posted.
- It was really helpful once the book and schedule went up.
- I ended up losing my print copy of the play lab schedule and was able to find everything I needed on the website - so it was very useful.
- Actually thought it was pretty comprehensive.
- It was very useful. Having the program put up before arriving was also great.
- Its functional. Not great, not bad. It's fine.
- It's great

- Honestly, I've been to 20 out of 24. I cannot provide any input regarding the website.

MAKE IT MORE MODERN

- Yeah, I know it'd be really costly, but I'd suggest an overhaul on the website. It needs to be even more interactive and updates need to be happening in real time. Dare I even suggest it: you need an app.
- See above comment about event organization apps and ways to engage digitally even further. **Adding an app is a part of planning for the 2017 Conference.**

FASTER UPDATES

- It is very useful -- as soon as any Play Lab, panel, workshop, evening performance scheduling can be posted, is very useful!
- Get it up and completed earlier.
- Info sooner.
- Schedule "Updated as of [DATE]" notice would be useful to know if something has changed in the advance schedule on the website in the run up to the conference.

FUNCTIONALITY

- It's fine but it is very easy to navigate off of.
- Difficult to figure out if you've never been.
- A more robust and clear way to interact with those coming to the festival in order to coordinate housing, rides and such easier.
- Worked great, other than a technical glitch with the riderboard.
- Kind of hard to navigate.
- Sometimes it didn't work for me. Probably my internet.

ARRANGEMENT

- I had a hard time figuring out where to find what I was looking for a couple times, but now I can't remember what those things were. I eventually figured it out.

MORE INFORMATION

- It helped me a lot. I would like to see the bios of the artists on line, too.
- Would love it if we could learn about workshops and classes outside of Play Lab on the website. Seems like we just got to know the featured guests.
- Maybe having a participant-specific page/e-forum to ask questions and receive answers from past participants. **This is an excellent idea. How to execute it is a little unclear.**
- It's only mildly useful for me. I already know what's going on at the Conference. I think I would like the daily schedule on the website as a downloadable PDF so I could put each day's schedule in my iPad and look at it as needed.
- The website was very useful. For newcomers **it would have been helpful to know "walking distance" from different lodging options...because I had no idea that everything was so very close.** I might have picked different, less expensive lodging.

- I would like to be able to view photos from the shows and past years and everything. But otherwise it's great.

OUTDATED INFORMATION

- The prices for lodging were WAY off. If it's not feasible to keep them updated, then they shouldn't be listed. Other than that, the website was very helpful.
- I didn't use it a lot (and not at all during the Conference) but it seemed to have last year's info up there for a long time.
- Sometimes I found it useful, other times not. I would love to have seen the schedule posted much sooner than it was and to have bios up.

THERE WAS A WEBSITE?

- I sadly didn't know to use it until I got there, my own fault but maybe a nudge to folks to check the website for info?
- Never used the website.
- Didn't use it much.
- I didn't use it much.
- Never looked at it.

MAKE IT PRETTIER

- It's a rather drab site graphically. Add color photos and videos...
- While it might be sexier, it included all necessary information and was easily manageable



The current director of the William Inge Festival, Karen Carpenter, was a part of the Featured Artist staff this year. To her right is second year Play Lab playwright Ali Viterbi.

Play Lab

The Play Lab is the central program of the Conference. Having a play presented in the Lab is the primary reason that playwrights attend the event. It provides 300-400 roles for actors. And its feedback sessions are the primary educational component of the entire week. Its continued improvement is a top priority throughout the year.

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Excellent	81%	76%	71%	77%	87%	75%	80%	73.4%	71%	80.3%
Good	15%	20%	25%	23%	5%	20%	16%	17.2%	19.3%	15.2%
Satisfactory	4%	2%	2%	0%	2%	2%	3%	4.7%	6.5%	1.5%
Unsatisfactory	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	1.6%	3%
N/A	0%	2%	2%	0%	4%	0%	1%	4.7%	1.6%	0%

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

In response to the question “What did you enjoy most about the Conference?”:

- 2x “The Play Lab.”
- Working with Play Lab playwrights, meeting new playwrights.
- Really excellent respondents this year - particularly enjoyed seeing some of the writers from prior years returning.
- Everything about the Play Lab concept is awesome. I love reading and listening.
- Hearing my play read and critiqued.
- Being involved in Lab readings.
- Readings.
- The feedback and workshops done by the guest artists.
- Loved being a panelist and getting to think and talk about all of the plays.
- Acting in the plays.
- Participating in Play Labs.
- Seeing all the new plays while they are in development.
- The Play Lab responses were a master class in writing and playmaking. It was great to get so many different professional and experienced viewpoints.
- Seeing some awesome readings.
- The selection of plays helped give the sense this is a workshop.
- Acting in the Play Lab.
- The Play Labs that I got to see had great respondents.
- Working on readings/rehearsal & performance.

- Love the Play Lab... it's the heart of the Conference.
- Everything! The Play Lab and the featured artists, in particular.
- The Play Lab readings and the thoughtful and respectful feedback sessions that followed them.

In response to the question “What did you enjoy least about the Conference,” one person responded “the Play Lab.”

There is more feedback contained in the sections with responses specifically from the playwrights and actors in the latter half of this report. A few thoughts...

1. There are no plans to change the size of the Lab. While there are intelligent arguments to be made about how we could better serve attending playwrights and their scripts more by having fewer Lab plays, this is not what we do. Perhaps our greatest strength is the large community of theatre people, ranging from amateurs to professionals, that is created each year; this would be damaged by any reduction in size.
2. The City of Valdez is a huge supporter of the event, primarily because it brings so many people to town.
3. We have already shrunk drastically from our largest year, where we presented over 100 plays and had over 300 people in attendance.
4. There are plenty of other more exclusive events; people who need that experience for a conference to be worthwhile should apply to them.
5. Actors already complain about a lack of roles, and reducing the size of the Lab would reduce this even further.

Everything is a possibility. We *could* reduce in size. It might be amazing, but there are no current plans in that direction. Generally, the plan is just to continue to tighten up the process.



Australian actors Gabrielle Savrone and Marcus Molyneaux in the Play Lab reading of Ali Viterbi's "Deadheads," already scheduled for full production down under in 2017.

Panels and Classes

The Conference offers many classes and panel discussions. The slate of classes grows organically from the featured artists who plan on attending. They are solicited for what they would be comfortable teaching. The Coordinator oversees the overall curriculum.

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Excellent	73%	58.5%	52%	62%	68%	59%	44%	54.7%	58.1%	55.4%
Good	22%	29%	37%	17%	24%	31%	34%	34.4%	32.3%	32.3%
Satisfactory	0%	4.5%	7%	7%	2%	7%	9%	3.1%	4.8%	4.6%
Unsatisfactory	0%	1.5%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	5%	6.5%	4%	13%	4%	3%	13%	7.8%	4.8%	7.7%

In response to the question “What did you enjoy most about the Conference?”:

- The workshops.
- Bostin's workshops!
- I loved the option of morning yoga.
- I loved and appreciated the morning yoga. It really helped me ease into the experience and be more present.
- The writing workshops.

The classes always provide an interesting challenge. The primary educational program of the Conference is the Lab. Through the ongoing discussions of dramatic principles based on presented work, a vast array of theories and principles are presented. It creates an immersion in dramatic thinking that is our most unique trait.

The classes and panel discussions provide the opportunity for focus on particular subjects decided in advance, as opposed to being the immediate response to presented work. They also provide the opportunity for more active participation, usually through acting or playwriting exercises.

Every year, the response to the question “what else would you like to see added” is filled with various forms of the answer “more classes.” While I respect this desire, the Play Lab will remain our primary educational program, and it does not allow for the addition for more classes, at least that are presented in the Civic Center in our regular schedule.

This year, the Monologue Workshop expanded to using an outside space for its individual appointments with actors, and this might be a method to increase class offerings.

Evening Performances

The Conference presented six evenings of live theatre on the mainstage over the week. We began with an evening with the panelists from the Play Lab presenting either their own writing or work that is close to them, and then continued with full productions. The shows provide a communal gathering place for the participants, as it is one of the few events that run with no concurrent competition. It is also the main time that the community of Valdez is involved in the Conference.

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Excellent	65%	56%	23%	61%	57%	18%	51%	45.3%	35.5%	71.2%
Good	23%	30%	44%	34%	35%	39%	38%	42.2%	38.7%	16.7%
Satisfactory	6%	12.5%	29%	5%	2%	25%	7%	9.4%	19.4%	7.6%
Unsatisfactory	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%	15%	1%	1.6%	6.4%	1.5%
N/A	6%	1.5%	2%	0%	2%	3%	3%	12.7%	0%	3%

The main area of focus moving forward is making sure that there aren't odd overlaps of material in the line-up. This year, every show covered dark topics (alcoholism, death, civil war, the sex-trade); in 2015, there were multiple romantic comedies; in 2014, there were back-to-back plays about women who'd lost children. The line-up this year was one of the best in the history of the event (71.2% Excellent is a record), but it would have been nice to have a comedy in the mix.

This year, admittance was free for residents, and we saw our local attendance drastically increase, somewhere from 200-500% for each evening show. While this took away a few hundred dollars in ticket sales, the good will it engendered with the community and the better-filled auditorium were absolutely worth it.

In response to the question "What did you enjoy most about the Conference?":

- The evening performances – every one was phenomenal
- *Good Men Wanted*.
- The productions were all great this year.
- *Naked in Alaska*.
- The evening performances
- Great mainstage shows this year. Especially *Good Men Wanted*.
- Loved the evening shows and having more time to connect with people socially.
- Valerie's one-person show and the production from Australia.

- Some excellent evening shows this year.
- The evening performances of the guest artists.
- The evening performances were great.

In response to the question “What did you enjoy least about the Conference?”:

- Night shows weren't that appealing...a lot of heavy shows in one week it seemed. I didn't see all performances and did hear good things.
- The evening shows.
- On the flip side, would have appreciated a mainstage comedy or two. Pretty heavy stuff this year.
- The evening productions were great but I would've liked to have seen a comedy as they were all pretty draining.
- Content. I want hope in my art. I get that's not everyone's jam, but catering to everyone's sensibilities and needs is nice. My personal need is uplifting material.
- By the end of the week the slate of evening plays left me feeling emotionally drained. They were all well performed but I found them to be very thematically similar and pretty dark. A variety in the types of theater would have suited me a little better.



The evening of Featured Artists reading their own work this year featured imagery of remote Alaskan wilderness by local adventure hiker Sarah Hestand.

Fringe Festival

The Fringe Festival, like the evening performances, is a place at the Conference that does not have directly competing events, thereby creating a place for a more communal experience. It takes place after the evening show at a local bar, presenting readings of short plays and sometimes other forms of performance (music, open mic).

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Excellent	35%	27%	38%	38%	28%	33.9%	33.3%	46%	32.3%	41.5%
Good	12%	28.5%	26%	29%	22%	25.4%	31.9%	33.3%	32.3%	24.6%
Satisfactory	8%	11%	6%	3%	13%	11.9%	11.6%	6.3%	11.3%	10.8%
Unsatisfactory	2%	5%	0%	3%	2%	3.4%	2.9%	1.6%	6.4%	4.6%
N/A	43%	28.5%	30%	27%	35%	25.4%	20.3%	12.7%	17.7%	18.5%

	Very important	Important	Sure, why not	Don't really care	Would rather this wasn't a priority
Hearing only great scripts	17%	29.8%	34%	12.8%	6.4%
Using only the best actors	8.3%	12.5%	33.3%	25%	20.9%
Hearing work by many different writers	50%	39.6%	10.4%	0%	0%
Inclusivity in casting, giving everyone a chance	50%	27.1%	16.7%	6.2%	0%
Seating availability	31.3%	37.5%	22.9%	8.3%	0%
Bar service	25%	29.2%	16.7%	22.9%	6.2%
Knowing in advance what will be performed	2.1%	10.6%	17%	59.6%	10.6%

Probably we will stop asking for this feedback, as it consistently provides the same message: the amenities (seating, drinks, food) are nice, but inclusivity is what most people are looking for.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

POSITIVE

- Don't be afraid to present edgy and outrageous material! Fringe is also fun, keep up the silliness! Jan and Rob did a great job.
- It was great.

- Great year for the Fringe! :)
- The Fringe is amazing.
- It was fun. I didn't know what to expect so was pleasantly geared for giggles.
- Enjoyable, relaxing, end of the day event. No pressure.
- It was great fun, a wonderful way to unwind after a long day. The emcee was great!
- It was fun and although I didn't join every evening, I really enjoyed the ones I saw.
- It seems to be just enough now and not suck the life out of the morning sessions like it did six or seven years ago.
- It was a lot of fun :)
- The Fringe was an enjoyable way to finish the day. Fun and frisky.
- Janna is amazing
- I enjoyed people's enthusiasm.
- Great work Janna and Rob - rabble effectively roused!
- Janna is AMAZING!!!
- Loved the Fringe. And I love that it's a place to fail spectacularly.



Some of the largest (and laughingest) audiences at the Conference attend the Fringe.

ABOUT THE SPACE

- It was too hot at the Best Western, but much better than the Fat Mermaid.
- Wish we could find a large, cool, insect free room in which we could hear everything. With good food and drink.
- Liked the new space, but it felt less fringey...if that makes any sense.
- This was my first year watching Fringe but I was told that it used to be at the Fat Mermaid and the consensus is that that was a better venue. So maybe move it back to the Fat Mermaid?
- Like the new space - I don't know if they have any way to make the room less hot without letting in hoards of gnats.
- I miss the bar atmosphere. That really gave the Fringe an after-hours feel.
- Hate to say it, but I preferred the Fat Mermaid - it had more character. Also, the no-win situation of overheating vs. being eaten alive didn't help, but not much to be done about that.
- A/C or fans if you can get 'em.
- Bigger venue.
- It got a little warm in there...

IT'S COMING ALONG

- I still think there's an opportunity to tighten up this event from a production standpoint but with that said I'll add that it has improved annually in a major way. They're getting there!!

INCLUSIVITY

- I thought the Fringe was more inclusive this year than the previous year. The Fringe made a concerted effort to include as many different actors and writers as available and willing. This year's Fringe felt like it was for everybody, the entire conference community. The artistic direction of the Fringe should continue in this direction.
- Like the Play Slam, I think these events would be more inclusive if the directors changed - perhaps 1 person from a previous year teamed with someone new and then rotate. Though this year was better, I know a couple people who've expressed interest and signed up but were never selected.

BAR SERVICE

- They need more bartenders for the Fringe performances.
- Wasn't sure if I needed to go to bar or room had service.
- Wish bar service was easier/faster.
- More bartenders would be super.

SUBJECT MATTER

- I'd like more info on what you all are looking for in writing for the fringe. Comedy only? Drama? Skits? Subject matter? Just a bit more guidance. **This can be improved.**
- I was relieved that the plays tended to be a lot less crude and misogynistic than in previous years but retained their basic goofiness.
- The fringe tends to be more crass and unrefined work in my opinion, so it's not as appealing to me as some of the other things offered.

SCHEDULE

- Wish there were another night of Fringe.
- Knowing the time limit is helpful. I don't want to commit to attendance if it's going to drag on too long.
- Start a little later.



Featured Artist Ben Corbett and Chicago actor Dave Belden... proclaim their love of darts?

SCRIPT SUBMISSION PROCESS

- I was confused about how to submit plays for the fringe. I didn't know if they had all been written pre-conference, or whether we could submit even after getting to Valdez. I would've liked to have submitted something.
- Advance notice of how early scripts need to be in to be considered might be good - since depending on the fringe schedule (regular nights, one-minute night, overnights, off night) the window for regular fringe subs can close quite early in the week and some may not realize this.

FROM THE GRUMPY PRETENTIOUS CONTINGENT

- The Fringe thing was useless. I went the first night, left after ten minutes the second and never returned. It really wasn't fringe so much as leftovers. Seemed somewhat of a lost

opportunity since so many of the PlayLab plays are pretty staid and mainstream. **I'm sorry we failed this obviously sad person. Well, not really.**

In response to the question "What did you enjoy most about the Conference?":

- Fringe festival by far!
- Fringe

In response to the question "What did you enjoy least about the Conference?":

- Venue for Fringe Festival.
- Tried about ten minutes of the Fringe and did not care for it. Also, a playwright friend of mine had her play pulled out of it at the last minute. It felt pretty informal so that was a little unreasonable of the organizer. At any rate, just wasn't for me, so no major complaints.

Additional responses about the Fringe:

- Rob Lecrone was a great host!
- I'm in love with Janna



Well, who wouldn't be in love with Janna?

Featured Artists

The Featured Artist staff is primarily made up of panelists in the Play Lab. There are also numerous acting teachers, and sometimes featured performers. They are in charge of providing overall guidance to the event, and essentially speak for the Conference. When one of them helps a participant, the Conference gets credit for that. The reverse is also true.

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Excellent	76%	81%	69%	77%	70%	67.2%	57.4%	64.6%	66.6%	68.3%
Good	20%	17%	27%	23%	26%	26%	33.8%	26.2%	21.3%	21.2%
Satisfactory	4%	2%	2%	0%	2%	5.1%	5.9%	4.6%	6.6%	6%
Unsatisfactory	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1.7%	0%	1.5%	0%	1.5%
N/A	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2.9%	3.1%	6.6%	3%

These ratings are very consistent, which reflects the talented Alaskan, national, and international pools of artists we pull from. This year was notable for two things. One, it was almost entirely different than the previous year. This was mostly an accident, but it speaks (again) to the pool of people available. Second, four of the panelists this year were previous Play Lab participants. Involving such artists has been a part of the plan practically since the Conference's beginning, and this year it was very successful.

The acting teaching staff has settled into place, but it may be important to seek out new instructors to keep having something new for returning participants.



Featured Artists Bostin Christopher and Kevin Armento know how to make an entrance.

Conference Staff

The staff is the backbone of any quality organization. PWSC strives to have the highest quality staff possible year-round, and the Theatre Conference is no exception. Through staff meetings and written orientation guides, we make sure that our staff is qualified and capable of handling anything that comes their way (or finding someone who can).

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Excellent	100%	98.5%	94%	100%	94%	93.4%	94.2%	86.2%	96.8%	90.9%
Good	0%	1.5%	6%	0%	6%	3.3%	4.3%	10.8%	1.6%	6.1%
Satisfactory	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Unsatisfactory	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1.6%	0%
N/A	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3.3%	1.4%	3.1%	0%	0%

It is possible that this has become a question we don't need to ask anymore. While there is a perceptible dip this year, it still has 97% Excellent to Good ratings, and I am not sure what I'm expecting to learn here. I can say, from the Coordinator's chair, this was easily the best staff that I have had for the event. It was mostly comprised of past participants, with PWSC's Office of Administrative Affairs providing cashiering service.



In a rare down moment, staff members Jay Stevens and Ted Hooker, PWSC Director Dan O'Connor, and Coordinator Dawson Moore.

Food

We provide coffee, tea, and cookies all day at the Conference, in addition to a daily hot lunch, an opening day fish fry, and a sit-down dinner at the end of the week. This is provided to participants as a part of their \$50 registration.

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Excellent	33%	50%	26.5%	37.7%	12.7%	6.5%	16.7%
Good	20%	28%	47%	47.8%	42.9%	48.4%	39.4%
Satisfactory	39%	30%	23.5%	8.7%	30.2%	30.6%	31.8%
Unsatisfactory	8%	0%	1.5%	1.4%	11.1%	9.7%	7.6%
N/A	0%	2%	1.5%	4.3%	3.2%	4.8%	4.5%

In response to the question “What did you enjoy least about the Conference?”:

- Sorry, but the lunches left much to be desired. I was happy that we had salads this year on 3 days. The lunch with pizza, fries and brownies was a carb nightmare, but I also found it funny.
- The food...
- While I was grateful for and appreciative of the lunch, a starchy vegetable with a starchy entree was kind of silly.
- The food at lunch.
- The combination of pizza and french-fries for lunch.
- More/better variety of lunch food options would be great, though I appreciate the budget concerns.
- I would've liked lemonade offered along with ice tea for lunch, hot chocolate along with coffee during the day & fruit along with cookies for snacks.
- The lunches were pretty greasy.
- Not a huge fan of all the food - but I get that it's tough to feed all those people.
- The food. Please, more variety for people with food allergies. More fish and lean meat, more vegetables, salad without croutons and dressing, without dairy and gluten. Please give us some options. I ended up having to buy lunch often, and on the day of my reading, when I had no time to go somewhere else the meal was pizza and french fries. Vegetables please!!! I appreciate the free meal, but boy would I love more veggies.

Additional comments about the food:

- I'm not sure how I felt about the ultra-thin Oreos.
- Downside -- lunches. Better than before, but something green every day would be nice. The Asian salad was great, for instance. Oh! and smaller pieces of fish for the fish fry, so that one can try both the halibut and the salmon. I was handed a plate of halibut, more than I could eat, so some was thrown away, but was not allowed to taste the salmon, too. (picky, picky, I know!)

Sending out the lunch menu in advance helped some with people being prepared for the week, but it held on to its hold as our most consistent source of complaints. About half the complaints were about the food not being healthy enough. While the statistics are essentially equivalent to last year, the complaints are actually much less vociferous than in years past. So... yay for that.

Financially there's not much to be done about the food. Fruits, vegetables, salad... in Valdez, these are expensive and usually of a lower quality than people are expecting. If the same caterer is selected (which is likely, there are few groups eligible to bid for the job), we will just continue to be clear in communication about what is coming, and to make the healthiest choices possible from their menu (we have heard your cries, haters of the pizza-and-french-fries day).



There is an argument for eliminating the free lunch, but this creates scheduling problems, as lunchtime would need to be at least doubled, and would create more financial hardship on the poorest participants.

Local fish master Pat Olsen helps out each year with the fish fry.

Additional responses to the question "What did you enjoy most about the Conference?"

EVERYTHING

- I loved all of it.
- EVERYTHING! Because the conference ROCKS!
- Cruise Creativity Gala Community Workshops Conference Meeting Old Friends Artists Organized Play Lab Playwrights Loved Shows this Year Seeing Acting Evening Performances Writing Amazing Fringe
- This was my fifth year going and I think the best yet!
- Listening to a wide range of play readings, meeting new people, attending the evening performances, the morning yoga sessions, the cruise, walking around the town, the closing "Speakeasy" gala - and the lunches!
- In no particular order: Networking, getting to know people. People! My fellow playlet panelists Featured Artists readings The great gala!
- It was very well organized. the price was amazingly low for all we got. The panelists & featured artists were amazing. there was a wide variety of workshops offered. The staff were all very helpful. Valdez is beautiful.

THE PEOPLE

- It's the one opportunity to come together as an arts community. It's inspiring.
- As always, seeing old friends performing solid work. That's truly the best part.
- Best ever! It's all about the people and this year was an amazing group!
- Sense of community, the very positive attitude. The large number of participants juxtaposed with the close proximity of all venues.
- The people, always. It is so inspiring to see artists work hard and play harder.
- seeing friends again, meeting new people, being in Valdez, getting feedback on my script and the "summer camp" aspect that the Fringe always conjures up for me.
- Working with highly-dedicated artists.
- Meeting new people and hanging out with old conference friends.
- Catching up with old friends and making new ones.
- And meeting great people from all over the place.
- The new friendships.
- I love meeting new artists and growing.
- The lovely people we met, the creativity, and the beauty of Valdez. The Play Lab is wonderful.
- Meeting people and networking, being exposed to lots of unique plays
- The constant positive energy everyone provided.
- The people and the location!

- Meeting playwrights and other artists.
- The camaraderie and creativity of the actors and playwrights.
- Networking with colleagues.
- The people! I would've loved if we could've all gathered on the first morning for ice-breaker games where we had to meet each other. I've done this at other conferences and it's a wonderful way to get started on conversations. Seeing familiar faces.
- The people. Definitely the people.
- Amazing collection of people and the positive energy everywhere.
- I enjoyed the people the most. The cruise is always fun.
- Meeting so many talented and open minded artists.
- How kind everyone was.



Regulars Joe Barnes, Eoin Carney, and Rand Higbee.

MONOLOGUE WORKSHOP

- Also love the Monologue Workshop. So painfully good!

TEN-MINUTE PLAY SLAM

- Play Slam keeps getting better and better.

GALA

- The dance at the gala!
- Also the gala dinner was the best I've ever seen in terms of entertainment.
- The gala was a blast.

Additional responses to the question "What did you enjoy least about the Conference?"

NOTHING

- No complaints.
- Can't say...
- Nothing. I loved everything
- Nothing. See above. Love love love.
- Nothing.
- That it ended.
- I can't think of anything to put here.
- There wasn't anything about the regular conference I didn't enjoy. Maybe the gnats?
- Nothing! If anything, it's too short!

- N/A

MONOLOGUE WORKSHOP

- The Monologue Workshop.
- Having the monologue workshop final be so early in the morning.

HOUSING

- Can you find a little bit of darkness for the sleeping? If not, I understand.

NETWORKING

- Networking in the off hours. But that's not really part of the conference itself.

MORE TO DO

- I was cast in stage directions and one tiny role. Would have liked a chance to act in a larger role but I understand there were a lot of actors. Just always seems like the same actors get the best roles.
- So much focus on playwrights. Classes for actors needed top folks outside of Monologue workshop. Limit monologue workshop participants via a lottery.

ACTING

- Bad acting.

TEN-MINUTE PLAY SLAM

- 10-Minute Play Slam - same faces as always. Use more people. Don't repeat directors and this shouldn't happen.

LOCATION

- The distance I must travel

Other Additional comments

PURELY POSITIVE

- Best week of my life, had an absolute ball and loved every second. Thank you!
- The conference was, easily, one of the best experiences of my life.
- As a past participant, I was greatly inspired by the unique quality of talent and artists of this year's conference. Dawson does great work of bringing people together--I always feel like I make a new friend. I felt greatly supported by many different artists; everyone was warm, friendly, and approachable. There really wasn't anything lackluster or forgettable in both the evening productions and the Play Lab. I had the good problem of being torn of which reading to see, because they all spoke to me on some level. I imagine some people will complain about the darkness of the evening performances, but at the end of the day, you probably won't forget them: they were some of the best, most thoughtful, and incredibly powerful productions I have ever seen, and THAT is what theatre should be.
- I love you guys!
- Thank you, Dawson!

- Thank you for all the work you and your staff do at the Conference and fringe. Any complaints here are purely to continue to make the Conference better each year. You do an AMAZING job. Keep up the great work!
- Great Conference this year!
- I had a really wonderful time at the Conference and I'm excited to come back next year!
- Amazing job, Dawson, Ryan, Ted, Jay, and Keriann!
- It was a great Conference. Thanks!
- Well done! What a feat it is to put this together and you all did an AMAZING job. Thank you!
- I loved, loved, loved the LFTC this year.
- I love this Conference!! It is one of my favorite weeks of the year. Wish there were more roles for actors, but it seems more actors are discovering it. Excellent job by Dawson and entire staff.
- What a fantastic Conference - focused on local theatre talent, such a gem to have.
- Again, congratulations on a great Conference and for giving artists this wonderful opportunity to network. I'm excited for next year!
- Great Conference! I had not been in a few years, so could tell a difference. It's always been really good, but the level of acting and plays chosen are higher than I remember. Staff is great. Really loved the gala. **Don't mess with it too much; you've got a winning formula.**
- Recommending this experience to everyone. Have read about the financial situation ... moments like these are good ones to make bold steps regarding fund raising and re-engineering aspects of the event which could be financially helpful. A kickback from local businesses when participants present a conference ID, for example. I am thinking of when the Minnesota Fringe was in dire straits, and they pulled out of it successfully. Just a suggestion.
- Such a great Conference. Don't be afraid to talk about funding during the conference. Or did you and I missed it? Either way...I think people can handle it and they will give. (Maybe recognize Conference people who give in some way to encourage giving by attendees who can afford it? Just a thought.)

PUBLICATIONS

- It looked like this year's brochure seemed to have been printed by a different printer. Some of the black and white photos were not clear (see page 19 as an example).

NAME BADGES

- Would suggest that the name tags for the conference be clearer...hard to read when names were printed over the conference logo.

- It would be helpful if different people had different colored name tags - ie different colors for playwrights, actors, featured artists. Would love more improv workshops! Bt all these little picky things would just be icing on the cake - i felt the whole Conference was wonderful!

HOUSING

- Although I appreciated the cheap housing, I wouldn't stay there again. The single bathroom for 9 men was a problem. As well some residents had drinking problems which made for unpleasant late nights.

MONOLOGUE WORKSHOP

- Having Rob in the monologue workshop was really great. I loved having his coaching in addition to Frank and Laura's.



First-time Conference playwrights Holly Hepp-Galvan and Lisa Kimball.

Responses from Participating Playwrights in the 2016 Play Lab

Were the responses of the panel useful to you?

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Very Helpful	53.1%	85.7%	71%	64.5%
Reasonably Helpful	28.1%	9.5%	9.7%	22.6%
Somewhat Helpful	15.6%	4.8%	12.9%	9.7%
Not Helpful	0%	0%	0%	0%
The Opposite of Helpful	3.1%	0%	6.45%	3.2%

PURELY POSITIVE

- More than very, EXTREMELY helpful!!!!
- My panel was very thorough and even though we ran a little late, they gave me a lengthy and detailed talk back.
- It was really nice to get three different perspectives. I also really appreciated that the respondents didn't try to reconcile but gave their own opinions on the subject.
- Quite frankly, I wasn't motivated to pursue doing anything with my play beyond the Conference. I was just excited for it to be accepted into the Play Lab, that I didn't think that far ahead. After the panel and audience members weighed in with comments, I became motivated to revise it and see if anyone wants to stage it.
- Like any feedback session I got comments that helped and comments that were more informative as to how audiences felt over anything that I might want to change.
- The panelists were varied in their opinions, and even one who appeared not to appreciate the work had very clear, helpful, instructive guidance and comments. It was very useful to have such focused attention from such respectable professional writers.
- I got a couple of new ideas that I thought were significant. I think they will make my play much stronger and I came back with an excitement to continue to improve it.
- I was worried that the bleak, dark, violent nature of my script was going to be off-putting, but it was quite the opposite actually!
- As time goes on and I'm ready to look at my notes of panelist comments I could better answer that question, but I did feel I had a very good conversation with specific questions from my lead panelist later that day. Food for thought.
- The panelists have gotten better over the years, in my opinion.

MIXED

- I had one panelist that I could rely on, but felt that through the luck of the draw I ended up with some feedback that was not useful. It's definitely a maelstrom for the respondents and they did admirably, but it would be nice to be able to request respondents even if in the end you don't get everyone you ask for ...
- My lead panelist led the discussion well, but afterwards we only spoke for a few minutes! I really would've loved to have had more time with her to go over the play.
- The vast majority of the comments and discussion after the reading were extremely helpful and I have already started incorporating them in re-writes. My time for comments was less than 15 minutes however, and I felt the discussion could have continued had it been given more time. The two panelists who were NOT my lead didn't have time to get me all of their notes. I'm hoping that I can still get some of those notes via email.
- My panel was terrific and really helped me with my play. I do, however, feel the need to express that [a particular panelist's response during someone else's reading] was terrible, condescending, and rude. I know I would have felt very upset if I had my work treated that way.
- My reading was at the end of the week when everyone, the panel included, was exhausted. One panelist clearly didn't "get" the play and his comments sounded like an attempt to rewrite it to his vision.
- I wish there had been more time for my full-length reading. After the cast finished, we didn't have enough time to talk with panelists & audience. I didn't get a chance to hear much from one of my panelists & b/c she had to leave the next morning, I didn't get to take advantage of her experience.
- I received a lot of positive feedback which was actually helpful since this script is experimental and I did a major re-write before the Conference. I really wanted to see how it would read/play and if people like it and follow what I'm doing. I feel like they did. But beyond that I felt the feedback didn't go too much beyond the kudos. I felt like maybe they needed more time with the material to know how to be helpful...maybe? B/c I know it needs work.

NOT FROM THEIR OWN READING...

- I had an interesting experience with my panel feedback. I felt, for the most part, my panelists did not know what to do with my play and as a result, the feedback was less constructive (i.e. how can I move this play forward - what needs to happen next in this story arc etc.) and more about them wanting to talk, in length about what they didn't get within the play. I always find it more helpful to talk about the structure of playwriting, regardless of a playwright's chosen topic - because, regardless of the topic, we can still talk about the structure of the story and the development of the characters.

I did get TONS of helpful information sitting in on other reading feedback sessions because I did think so much of what was discussed was applicable to the art of playwriting overall. I also got some wonderful constructive feedback one-on-one from other lab playwrights, which was incredibly helpful as well.

NOT THEIR PROCESS...

- The way the panel was structured was very unhelpful, and in many ways, hurtful to my process. The fact that the playwright doesn't have any control over the process, even to the point of being able to pose questions, was a huge drawback for me. Not all playwrights are the same, and not all playwrights get something out of talkbacks, especially public ones. The panelists in my case focused a lot on how they would write the play, and not at all on the play itself. A dramaturg to help moderate the feedback would probably help or allowing the playwright to exercise some control over the discussion, if he/she wants to. Basically, anyway that can tailor the feedback to the needs of each specific playwright, would be a marked improvement. I know other conferences give the playwrights opportunities to pick how they want to receive feedback (public, private, written, spoken, etc.) and that might be something that Last Frontier should try. Feedback isn't a one-size-fits-all process, and so effort to tailor it to each playwright's needs would benefit the conference and its playwrights. **(I'm not really sure what they thought they were applying for... all solicitations of scripts clearly spell out that a public reading with feedback sessions is what selected writers will receive in Valdez.)**

Was the audience feedback session helpful to you?

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Very Helpful	34.4%	33.3%	61.3%	32.3%
Reasonably Helpful	40.6%	33.3%	19.3%	45.2%
Somewhat Helpful	15.6%	33.3%	12.9%	16.1%
Not Helpful	3.1%	0%	6.5%	6.5%
The Opposite of Helpful	6.2%	0%	0%	0%

GOOD

- I think panel and audience comments were well balanced.
- I agreed with much of what the audience said. I realized after the feedback talk with the panel and audience that we talked about my play for 45 minutes, but it didn't feel that long at all - I am so grateful for this incredible gift.

- One of the most helpful comments came from another panelist who happened to sit in on my reading. Someone actually came to me a few days later and asked if I would be receptive to a note. I was so glad she did.
- Stated an observation clearly and succinctly.
- Super opinionated, but it's a playwright's conference, so ...
- I really appreciated the audience feedback. My only complaint was that it was a very small audience!
- I know it's hard to respond to something you just heard, so it was as good as you could expect. Most people did a good job of staying away from rewriting.
- I don't blow off critique of any kind when it comes to my writing. I learned a while ago to listen to my critiques. When you hear the same thing multiple times, maybe you should make those changes! I have learned to "weigh" the feedback, according to who is giving it to me. Some carry more weight than others and I was able to evaluate the comments that way.



Heading out on the Friday evening Stan Stephens Cruise.

- The audience - primarily other writers - were very respectful, but also extremely thoughtful and insightful. And thorough. I was very impressed by the comments, and thankful.

- I didn't get much more from the audience than the above. But it was a positive experience to hear the questions people had.
- The biggest take I got from the audience was that the script was worth continuing, and that means a lot. Sometimes it's easy to want to scrap something completely, and hearing from audience members that they loved it or were touched by it or wanted more can be enough to keep you going on the project. Also, audience members actually spoke to some local theatre people and recommend it to them, so that two local theatre companies approached me about possible future readings of the script. When your audience starts talking positively about your piece and gives it continued life that is awesome!

PROCESS SUGGESTIONS

- Again, because we were not asked to provide the audience with questions, the feedback I received was not helpful. Since the conversation was not moderated, there were a lot of tangents. In addition to getting someone to moderate the discussion (preferably a dramaturg), it would be wonderful to include paper feedback forms, that way people who are shy can write their thoughts, and playwrights can read them if they want to when they're ready.
- I do think it might be helpful in the future for the head panelist to remind the audience to offer feedback that is constructive and helpful with the process, as opposed to opinions based on someone's likes or dislikes. One of the most cringe-worthy audience feedback moments occurred when I was in the audience for a play and an audience member gave feedback that she doesn't know any young people with names like the characters in the play and she doesn't have any friends that struggle with the idea of marriage and so it was clear to her it was written by an older playwright. I thought this feedback was so off track and not at all serving the story being told. Sometimes people do need to be kindly reminded to steer their feedback toward serving the story and the playwright's process.

TIMING PROBLEM

- Because we ran out of time, i didn't get to hear any audience feedback - this was very disappointing.

Was the private meeting a panelist helpful to you?

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Very Helpful	46.9%	71.4%	48.4%	58.1%
Reasonably Helpful	18.8%	19%	12.9%	25.8%
Somewhat Helpful	12.5%	0%	12.9%	9.7%
Not Helpful	3.1%	4.8%	6.5%	6.4%
The Opposite of Helpful	0%	0%	0%	0%
Didn't have one	12.5%	4.8%	19.3%	0%
Didn't have it yet, but have plans to do it via distance	6.2%	0%	0%	0%

- Again, EXTREMELY helpful.
- My lead panelist was not only incredibly knowledgeable and offered great suggestions, but I feel like I made a new friend. That goes for my other panelists as well.
- I ended up meeting with two of my panelist for feedback, which was helpful because I felt a bit thrown off from the feedback during my actual reading. I have to say, I thought all the panelists were AMAZING, dedicated and had our best interest at heart; they genuinely wanted me (and I feel all of us) to feel we got the most out of our reading and experience and that is very much appreciated.
- This has been the most helpful part of the response process to me.
- My panelist was very encouraging and sat with me a for a long time - could also tell that I was feeling a little rattled by the whole process so offered to resume at a different time if I wanted. (Decided to stick it out!)
- Yes, I felt as though I had been paired with that writer who best "got" what I write. No idea how you did that. His insight took the reading to another level, and I am very excited about continuing with this work.
- I met with [my panelist] and she spent a good deal of time with me. I appreciated her suggestions and, as I mentioned above, will certainly use them in a rewrite.
- [My panelist] had a lot of useful things to say.
- In my case most of what was said in the private meeting, was said during the talk back. But I was able to ask a few specific questions.
- I was able to have meetings with two of my three panelists & both were amazingly helpful. One was not even my lead panelist but agreed to meet me privately b/c we ran out of time at my reading. I wasn't able to meet with the third panelist b/c she had to leave the next day.

IT WAS NOT ENOUGH...

- I guess since we had had such an extensive talkback in the room, she didn't feel the need for more afterward. She was VERY nice, but I also felt that she was pulled in a million directions and didn't have a lot of time for a lengthy discussion.
- My panelist talked about their own plays a lot ... and it was brief, partly because I wanted it that way, but also it was lunchtime ...
- The respondent was a little scattered but I had my meeting on Friday so everyone was tired by then. I wish I'd had a chance to talk to a different respondent in more detail as he seemed to "get" my play more fully. I did get a chance to talk to him for a few minutes.
- I didn't get the full thirty minutes, because we started 5 minutes late and she had to dash off to something else. I had more questions I wanted to ask, and needed that 10 minutes. So I was a bit frustrated about that.
- The meeting was directly after the reading, so not too much time to digest the previous comments and not too much new to offer. However, i did feel the lead panelist was "rooting" for the play, and that helped.

DIFFERENT THAN EXPECTED

- I felt like we were connecting more as colleagues. We didn't talk much about my script.

VERY SPECIFIC

- Honestly I didn't personally jive with my lead panelist this year. I felt better about the comments that the three panelists made in public. Last year I had a panelist as a lead panelist and my meeting after was AMAZING. I learned so much and I left with my head and my heart full of ideas and creativity. This year I left feeling a bit resentful and patronized. Thankfully I got some great additional feedback from the other panelists and from audience members.

Were you satisfied with the performance of your readers?

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Very Satisfied	40.6%	33.3%	55.7%	64.5%
Satisfied	37.5%	47.6%	26.7%	25.8%
Somewhat Satisfied	18.8%	9.5%	6.6%	6.4%
Dissatisfied	6.3%	9.5%	10%	3.3%

GOOD

- They were wonderful! Terrific casting and strong performances.
- My script asked a lot of my actors. They were honest and open about the challenges (which I greatly appreciated), but their hard work really showed in the staged reading.

How amazing is it to hear the actors read a line exactly how you heard in your head without direction?

- Somewhat of a mix of abilities, but clear commitment and focus, intelligence and sensitivity, which made it a very useful process.
- Everyone rocked!
- I loved my performers. It was not an easy acting piece with one rehearsal. They met the night before the rehearsal and came completely prepared and ready to give it their all.
- I appreciate how much Ryan and Dawson listened to my suggestions but also brought in knowledge of outside actors who were fantastic in the readings. I felt that overall the acting this year was very strong.
- Excellent casting.
- With a cast of 7, I thought all did a reasonable job and several did a great job.
- I lost 2 assigned actors before the reading but the replacements were great!



The reading of Californian playwright Tony Pasqualini's "Foreign Accent Syndrome," featuring Frank Collison, Sarah Brooke, Jaron Carlson, Desiree Abbs, and Lisa-Marie Castro.

- They all worked very hard for me, even the one I felt was a bit miscast (it's hard to get actors from that specific region out to Alaska, I imagine).

- They were stellar. Casting was ideal. What more can I add? You read the script and knew what the play needed. So grateful for good casting! Rehearsal was virtually effortless.
- I thought the actors did an amazing job. And I thought all the actors in other readings that I saw did a great job.
- Had a last minute dropout but recovered.

MIXED

- My lead actor read in a very flat voice, but everyone else filled in around him to get the pace up.
- Well I chose two actors, so very happy with them. Of the other three: one was very inexperienced, one wasn't really right for the part, and the other was excellent. It's a hit or miss process, I certainly understand, but maybe you need to watch actors slipping through who haven't, for instance, ever done a staged reading.
- One of my male actors told me that he had a large reading the day before mine and was dedicating himself to that and it was clear he hadn't spent much time on my script. This was disappointing to me because we ended up using rehearsal time answering questions of his that were clearly in the script. I also feel that he just read the lines without any actual point of view or want/need. I understand that actors are reading for many parts and are juggling a lot during the week, but I always prefer the attempt, even if it is off point or different from what I had in my head, as long as an actual choice is made, I appreciate the effort. With that said, I was impressed with the overall talent and dedication the actors brought to the majority of readings and the overall experience was wonderful.
- I was extremely satisfied with two out of three of my readers. The younger male actor read the whole thing low-energy, in a monotone. I was pretty shocked and disappointed in his delivery, since we had discussed the energy needed for his emotion that this particular play had in it. But, people seemed to like it anyway. I couldn't help but wonder, had I used a more mature actor, if it would have improved the feedback. I may raise the age of that character as a result of that experience.
- My actors worked very hard, but the limited rehearsal time was a huge disservice to the reading.

NOT SATISFIED

- While the actors made a considerable "leap" from the disappointing rehearsal, they were not actors I would have cast in these roles. A bit like writing parts for soprano's and hearing baritones sing the tune.
- For me, the performers at the conference are the weak link. Some are good, but most are not. I don't think bad actors serve the plays or the playwrights.

What worked best for you in this process?

GENERAL

- I appreciated the questions the panelists asked of me before the reading, about where I was in the process, and what I needed to hear from them and from the audience. Also, I want to thank you all for how you treat the playwright here at this conference. I have been to others and no one - at least in my limited experience - comes close to the effort that you make here to create an environment of support and guidance for the playwrights. I always feel a part of things, I always feel respected and appreciated, and that is no small thing.
- The whole thing really. It's just good to have something of mine read with good actors, good respondents and a knowledgeable audience.
- Everything, really. Specifically, getting to talk/chat with actors ahead of the rehearsal and staged reading, and answer any questions was great.
- Honestly, it all went very smoothly.

PANELISTS

- The talk with my lead panelist and hearing response to the play which I kept getting comments through the week.
- The way that the panelists asked where you were in the process and then the panelists gave feedback accordingly.
- The panelist feedback.
- The reading and the meeting with my panelist.
- I think the thing that worked best was the feedback from the panelists.
- The three panelists make for an excellent system. And especially when they are all as prepared as they were this year.
- The one on one meeting with my respondent.
- The feedback session was handled so well and I felt like it helped to make the comments manageable and actionable for me.
- It was very helpful to hear the play and to get responses from the panelists and audience. I truly felt like my play was heard and responded to.
- private meetings with panelists.

REHEARSAL

- My rehearsal didn't feel rushed at all which was nice. In past years I've felt rushed sometimes.
- Rehearsal, oddly enough. But I love rehearsals.
- Working with the actors.

- Getting a decent amount of time to rehearse my own actors. Worked really well for me. Probably important for playwrights to direct their own work once in a while (I do it more often than not).
- Advance preparation on the part of the Conference and then the readers. We were able to touch base briefly before just so we were on the same page, and it all worked out very well. As a result, the reading itself was all about the writing -- I couldn't pass any criticism onto the actors!

PEOPLE

- I mostly enjoyed the camaraderie ...

PROCESS

- The way things worked on schedule. Being on time and getting problems fixed quickly made for a very smooth experience.
- Having the pictures of all the actors in the program and having the opportunity to introduce myself to them before the rehearsal helped ease us all into the process.
- That the audience was welcome to comment as well as the panel members. I liked having the chance for the readers to read through it at least twice during our rehearsal time. That worked well.

BEING AN AUDIENCE MEMBER

- To be honest with you, I think I got the MOST out of being an audience member in other readings and hearing all the feedback. As far as the process for my play - I do think the one on one feedback was incredibly helpful and generous.
- Although my own feedback was only moderately helpful, the overall feedback on the number of readings I attended was quite constructive and insightful.
- Hearing the other panels discuss other plays was often as helpful or more than hearing my own.

What would you like to see improve or change in the Play Lab?

NOTHING

- I wish I could be more helpful, but honestly, I can't imagine it being any better. Dawson and his staff do a fantastic job.
- Can't think of anything!
- Was impressed overall with the setup and wish I had suggestions, but I don't!
- Hard to say. Glad I didn't go last thing Friday. I thought it was a very helpful and useful process.

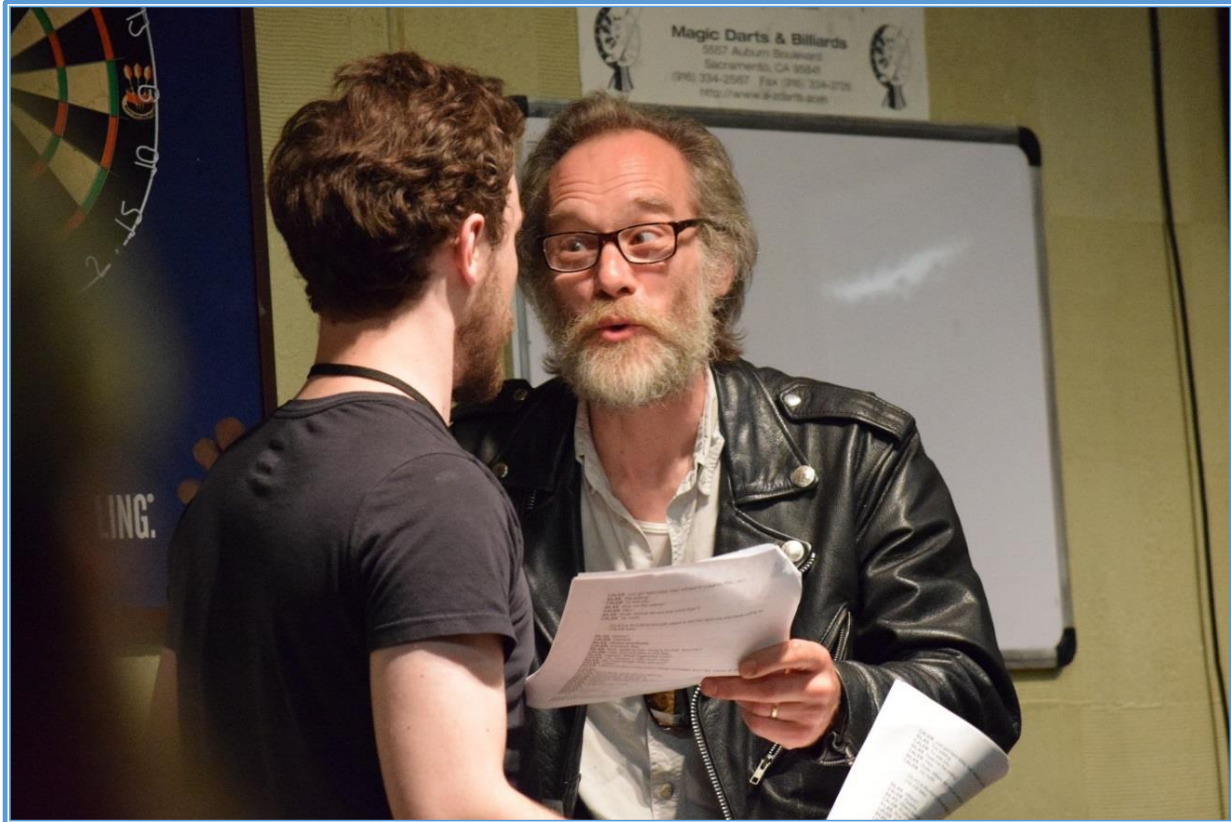
BETTER PREPARED ACTORS

- I got the sense that some actors hadn't read the play before coming into rehearsal, and I'm wondering if there's a way to ensure they do so beforehand... **Maybe if they're asked to come into the rehearsal room with prepared questions...?**
- That the all actors have read the script prior to the rehearsal, although I know that's not really possible to control.
- I would consider reducing the number of actors -- particularly weeding out the less experienced. I actually think that is an important balance to strike. My reading came off quite well and I got a tremendous amount out of it, but one more poor performance and the whole thing might have been much less satisfying.
- I'd like a better caliber of actors, generally speaking.

MORE REHEARSAL

- 2 X "More rehearsal time."
- I could have use a little longer rehearsal time - an hour wasn't quite long enough for two run-throughs, which would have helped.
- I'd also like a little more rehearsal time before the readings.
- Oh gosh. So much was wonderful about this experience that there isn't much I would change. I would love to have had more rehearsal time or been able to figure out a way to communicate with the actor I felt wasn't going for it in my script in a better way - but considering the sheer amount of theatre being packed into the week - these are more minor details when one looks at the whole picture. This was an inspiring, magical week for me and I came away from it knowing how to approach my next draft and I didn't know that going in, so that alone was a HUGE gift and take-away for me as a writer and I am very grateful for that. I loved the support, the generosity, the sense of community. So many things are going right. Thank you thank you thank you.
- Needed more time for my full-length reading.
- My desires aren't reasonable for the amount of plays going up--more rehearsal time--so I think all runs terrific considering the quantity of plays.
- I think rehearsal time should be parsed out based on length of play. I could be wrong, but it seemed like 10 minute plays got the same time as full length? I could've used a bit more time ... Also, maybe a writer's room? A quiet place to go and make rewrites if necessary ... or perhaps a suggestion of where in town to go ... there is a lack of networky style coffee shops ... **(rehearsal time is based on the length of the play)**

- More rehearsal time, and more time for feedback. I think in general you all are pretty good about this, and this year my play was just a bit too long to fit into an hour and a half time slot. But when I asked for more rehearsal time Dawson was fantastic and very quickly added an additional 15 minutes. This was the longest show I'd ever submitted to the conference and it was far and away the least amount of question and discussion time after, and the rehearsal was very rushed. But that is a minor thing in the grand scale and overall my experience was fantastic. I love coming here to Valdez as a playwright. It is a true honor and joy.



Alaskan acting icon Kevin T. Bennett was featured in many places, including the Fringe Festival and Perseverance Theatre's Thursday night presentation of "Annapurna."

- I would like to have extra hours for rehearsals. I would like some more feedback from the actors as well.
- This is probably impossible, but I would've liked a longer rehearsal time. We only got to get through a single read through and then we were out of time. I had such intelligent actors and I would've loved to have addressed their questions about character and motivation more fully. This is really helpful for my writing and I felt like we didn't have time to do it.

PANELISTS

- Higher level panelists...more working playwrights (who aren't a-holes, of course).

LONGER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- I realize the brevity of the rehearsal process (which is good!), and that this is not a developmental conference, but it would be great to have a tiny bit of a developmental process as well -- perhaps a glimpse of how a development process works in a workshop or panel for us writers who haven't received that opportunity? But otherwise, the play lab went great!

SCHEDULE

- I wish I could attend more of the readings.
- Longer conference (I know that's not practical but you guys asked, so that's what I'd love)
- Perhaps you could indicate in the program which plays are one acts, which are full length, some indication of how long we'll be in the readings; mainly for bathroom planning purposes.
- Would be very helpful to have an opening "meet and greet" of all Play lab members, where everyone got a very brief period to introduce themselves. There were so many people I never had the opportunity to meet!
- Hard one to fix, but there were a few plays that didn't have a lot of time after the reading for responses.
- Some kind of follow up for those of us who are new to the playwriting process, what comes after revision of the play? Where do we send it? Do we copyright it? Try to publish it? I'd like to see a seminar or session dedicated to that. I did have several people that asked to read my play after I revise it, but then what? An informative session on this would be wonderful :)

PROCESS

- I may request a Play Lab director in future as I think that would be an improvement.
- -Dramaturgs to moderate discussion -Playwrights get to have control over how they receive feedback -Playwrights get to ask questions of the audience and/or panelists members -Audience/Panelists should be further educated on how to give feedback, and more importantly, stopped when they start rewriting the play. -More rehearsal time
- A short written form, maybe like a survey sheet, would be nice. It's a lot to take in at once and writing everything down clearly is somewhat hard to do. As someone who attended a lot of readings, there were some times when it was obvious that the play respondents had very little understanding of the style or tradition of the play being read. This was unfortunate for the playwright and the discussion. It would be cool to see some respondents who come from other theatrical traditions.

Responses from 2016 Play Lab Readers

Some questions are specific to being an actor in the Play Lab. Some of them have been blended into the appropriate place earlier in the document, but others felt more organic to leave here as “actor issues.”

Answers to the question “Once in Valdez, was there any part of the Play Lab process that confused you?”

NO PROBLEMS

- 7x “Nope”
- 9x “No.”
- 2x “None.”
- Naw.
- No, not at all
- Not at all... very clear and creative
- Nope. I've been before.
- No, I've done this before.
- No. It's all pretty organized and straightforward.
- No, there were tons of helpful people to direct me where to go and tell me what to expect.
- No, not at all.
- No, it seemed pretty clear.
- Not really.
- Nope. Have participated before. Completely makes sense.

SCHEDULING

- One of our reads had the rehearsal time that was emailed out and a different one in the program, but it wasn't a problem. We all just met for the second time slot which was the one sent in the email.

PROCESS

- The feedback sessions...I know different panelists have different styles but I wish there was a standard. Maybe there is and they just don't follow it. It was just confusing at times when the general audience was invited to comment depending on the panel.

PLACE

- It wasn't clear until the day of my first rehearsal that we needed to meet in the lobby before going to our rehearsal room. I assumed that we would just meet in the rehearsal room.

- Where exactly to meet for rehearsal. This was fine after the first time, but caused some confusion.

GETTING THE CURRENT SCRIPT

- Our playwright had a new draft once we hit Valdez - some actors had already printed out drafts at home, some picked up scripts in Valdez, so it was a bit confusing for everyone.

Did you feel like you were given enough rehearsal time for Play Lab readings?

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Yes	65.6%	73.1%	69.2%	71%
Mostly	21.9%	13.5%	23.1%	15.8%
Somewhat	6.3%	13.5%	0%	5.3%
Not at all	6.3%	0%	7.7%	7.9%

How worthwhile are the following additional activities and opportunities for actors?

	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>DN Participate</u>
Fringe Festival 2013	0%	18.8%	18.8%	46.9%	15.6%
Fringe Festival 2014	3.9%	9.8%	23.5%	45.1%	17.6%
Fringe Festival 2015	8%	28%	28%	20%	16%
Fringe Festival 2016	2.7%	15.8%	26.3%	42.1%	13.1%

	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>DN Participate</u>
Monologue Workshop 2013	0%	3.1%	6.3%	43.8%	46.8%
Monologue Workshop 2014	0%	7.8%	7.8%	62.7%	21.7%
Monologue Workshop 2015	3.9%	3.9%	11.5%	61.5%	19.2%
Monologue Workshop 2016	5.3%	7.9%	13.2%	60.6%	13.2%

	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>DN Participate</u>
Joy of Phonetics 2015	0%	7.7%	15.3%	27%	50%
Warm-ups and Beat Down 2015	3.8%	3.8%	15.4%	15.4%	61.6%
Creature Meet'n'Greet 2015	2.7%	2.7%	0%	29.7%	64.9%
Bustin' with Bostin 2015	0%	8%	20%	8%	64%
How the \$!#% do I network? 2016	5.3%	7.9%	5.3%	26.3%	55.2%
Improv for the Actor 2016	2.6%	7.9%	2.6%	23.7%	63%
Unraveling the I Don't Know's of Acting 2016	2.6%	7.9%	2.6%	26.3%	60.5%
SOLOfire: Personal History Writing / Movement 2016	2.7%	5.4%	0%	16.2%	75.7%

Did you feel like there were enough additional opportunities available to you to either perform or participate in performance classes during the Conference?

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Yes	86.5%	57.7%	89.5%
No	13.5%	42.3%	10.5%

POSITIVE

- I think opening the casting of the Fringe to include more actors was a great step towards adding performance opportunities for the acting community.
- Loved that there was a tech element in a class this year!!!

YES, AND/BUT...

- Yes, but I would have taken on even more!
- But also, no...
- I think everyone would say they'd like more opportunities to perform. :)
- Yes, because I was already busy and could not have done more than 2 readings. I understand some actors felt slighted and didn't get enough readings.
- Always tough to find roles for women over 50. And the performance classes took place during my rehearsals and/or readings, so it made it tough to be able to participate.

OTHER DESIRED PROGRAMS

- Alexander Technique or any acting technique classes.
- More acting classes by high caliber people

Did you experience any problems with playwrights during the Lab process?

ALL GOOD

- 12x "No."
- 5x "Nope."
- None.
- Not a single one.
- Not really...
- My playwrights where amazing.
- Playwright was easy to work with and appreciated feedback after the reading.
- No. I loved the playwrights and how they interacted with the panel. Every reading I was in or witnessed was handled respectfully.
- No. Smooth and interesting feedback.
- None - they were all very open and friendly.
- No, none. The playwrights I worked with understood the time constraints of the rehearsal process. I felt that I was able to do my job.
- None... you can't really call Joe Barnes a problem. ;)

IT'S SO HARD GETTING TO KNOW PEOPLE

- The ones I worked with were new and anxious, they should always introduce themselves and have all the actors introduce themselves before getting started. I had to ask we do that... That is the best way to begin :)

JUST LITTLE STUFF

- no-my playwright went over our rehearsal time "directing", but it turned out fine

PROCESS

- Only that stage directions could have been more consistently indicated. Each writer did this differently and it caused some rehearsal time to be wasted figuring that out.
- Had a playwright (experienced too, so very surprising) giving so many notes and making script changes as cast read that if we hadn't have stayed late one actor would've been giving a cold read as he only spoke for last 10 pages.

Other Comments

PURELY POSITIVE

- GREAT JOB!!!
- I love you guys! LFTC forever!



Anchorage actors Taran Haynes and Jill Sowerwine in the Fringe Festival.

- The Conference gave me great training and inspiration to take back home.
- Another excellent Conference. Thank you LFTC team.
- I had fun!
- I had a wonderful time and hope to participate again!
- Thank you for a great first time experience. I personally, as an actor, would happily pay more to continue participating in the Conference. Multiple levels of participation and varying levels of registration fees might not be a bad idea. Either way, I cannot wait until next year. LFTC in Valdez will be my annual must go to destination.
- I was a part of one of the presenter groups this time around, and sadly did not get to participate nearly as much as I would have liked, but thoroughly enjoyed being able to participate as an actor in one of the readings. One other comment - I was in a short piece so the rehearsal time was fine for that. It might not have been enough time if the script were longer. And finally, thanks to the amazing team that makes all this run so smoothly!
- I was glad to make stronger ties to the Conference this year. I enjoyed being part of the artistic community as a teacher, coach, and actor. I'm thankful for this Conference, and will be back next year.

- Love the constant upkeep on your planning of the Conference through these surveys! Keep up the good work!
- I was a playwright and read in one play. Everything worked out fine.
- I was really impressed by the workshops I attended, and was surprised at how much I got out of each one. Especially Ben's Linklater classes (I avoided them at first due to the "Creature" title... maybe just call them Voice and Movement... great practitioner). Also loved SOLOfire and I Don't Knows, but wish they'd been longer somehow!

WANT MORE TO DO

- Only wish i could've done more!
- Everyone had light reading schedule - good opportunity to see other readings, but it's certainly more fun when you're busy during the week.
- I only participated in two readings as an actor. They were both at the beginning of the week. I would have liked one more later in the week or the two I had more spread out. I was really impressed by the casting. Everything I was in and saw was done was well acted.

MONOLOGUE WORKSHOP

- Edit the monologues beforehand so as little editing as possible has to happen at the conference. A lot of writers don't understand that 60 seconds of material is actually quite short.
- I also thought the monologue workshop got too much unnecessary attention.

HELL IS OTHER PEOPLE

- I found one or two of the playwrights who managed the readings/talk-backs to be a little too self-oriented and not enough selfless... but that could be a personal preference.

PROCESS

- I think because some of the writers/actors are young, it would be to their advantage to have a director to collaborate with them. This will enable the writer gets a strong reading of their play. I also felt that our time was very divided. I think a play needs an audience and because there was so many readings I could not sit in on many of the readings. Both of my readings had very little audience. I suggest choosing fewer plays or spread it out differently so the plays and writers get the most out of the Conference.

SOUND

- I love the Civic Center, but the large conference rooms can be tricky for sound (you guys know this, I know). Don't know of a solution other than more acoustic panels or curtains to soak up the reverb.

REHEARSAL TIME

- Some of the rehearsal times were not long enough. We only had time to do one read-through and, in one other instance, didn't have time to read the entire play.

FAVORITISM

- It seems like the same actors always get cast in the best roles (yes they're really good but I'd be nice to see others given chances). Would like to see the casting people be more diverse with their available actors.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

- Somehow, I was only aware of the panels/workshops when I got to the Conference. It would have been nice to know about them in advance so I could plan accordingly.

THE LAB RESPONSES

- Several of the panel groups would get so chatty with each other in feedback that they seemed to ignore the playwright or the room. So it got a little daytime talk show and made me uncomfortable...and as a female I hate to seem a traitor to my sex but it was always a panel of all women. Don't get me wrong they were smart and responding to the play it's just that they would physically turn in and chat and it seemed like we weren't invited to their party.

TOO MUCH GLOOMY MATERIAL

- I miss happy content at the Conference. Maybe it's just me, but all the readings I was in or attended were very dark. I missed the laughter of the year before.



Donna Warfield, Barclay Kopchak, Lisa Konoplisky, Laura Gardner, Debrianna Mansini, and Jacqueline Hoffman would (evidently) like to thank you for reading the 2016 Evaluation Summary!