

Agreements for devising

Handout CTP3

Read through the excerpts below from “Devised Theatre: No Guts, No Glory” by Joan Schirle (2005). What problems or challenges are these agreements trying to address? What is the value of drawing up agreements?

When collaborations are attempted, there is a greater chance of success if the group establishes and adheres to basic guidelines for working together. Collaborative principles encourage artists to develop trust and respect, come to a common understanding of the challenge, and to be clear about intention, roles, and agendas. By creating a shared space, generating and manipulating models, and using outside resources and strategies, the capacity for making decisions is expanded. ...

- We agree that we respect each other as artists and as people. We agree to show that respect in word and action.
- We agree that our intention is to help each other to do the best work possible.
- We agree that our intention is to support each other’s creativity.
- We agree to respect each other’s scheduled rehearsal time. We agree not to disturb each other’s rehearsals.
- We agree to send messages and requests through appropriate channels.
- We agree not to re-write or re-do another’s work. If there is a problem, we agree to discuss it with the originating collaborator.
- We agree to criticize each other by asking questions whenever possible, rather than making conclusions or delivering orders. In any case, we agree to criticize and discuss changes in a way that is respectful and encourages creative thinking.
- We agree not to say “no” for five minutes. Or, to put it another way, we agree to consider anything for five minutes.
- We agree to present a unified, supportive leadership to cast and crew. We agree to discuss our differences with each other in private.
- We agree that we cannot do it alone. We agree that we need each other.

Though not all collaborations are devising projects, employing principles of collaboration can make for more productive devising...in the crucible of devising, each group must strike its own balance between the productive engagement of artistic egos and the generosity of the collaborative spirit.

The full article can be viewed at <http://www.dellarte.com/dellarte.aspx?id=285>.