

**FAMILY-ORIENTED PERFORMING
ARTS EVENTS AT PUBLIC GARDENS
IN THE UNITED STATES**

by

Kelly Marye Roderick

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Public Horticulture.

Spring 2002

© 2002 Kelly Roderick
All Rights Reserved

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the Longwood Foundation, Longwood Gardens' Director Fred Roberts, and the remainder of the Longwood Graduate Program Selection Committee for providing me the direction and support essential to complete my research and acquire the Master's degree in Public Horticulture at the University of Delaware.

I am grateful to my thesis committee--Dr. David Frey, Ms. Nora Lasher and Dr. James Swasey--whose valuable advice and guidance have greatly enhanced this thesis. I thank them for much appreciated inspiration, constructive criticism, and wisdom.

A majority of the credit goes to individuals from the case study institutions, listed in Appendix A, who graciously shared their time, and whose thoughts are at the heart of this research. I can only hope that I have captured a portion of the true feeling and spirit with which they were offered. I offer special thanks to my primary contact persons; Brian Barr, Kevin Murser, Jane Offenbach, Miranda Sutton and Kristen Webber.

Finally, heartfelt thanks go to my family and fiancé, John, for their faith, patience, encouragement, and support. It is to them that I dedicate this thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
Chapter 1 – INTRODUCTION.....	1
Chapter 2 – PURPOSE AND RATIONALE.....	4
Chapter 3 – METHODOLOGY.....	6
Chapter 4 – RESULTS.....	9
Chapter 5 - GUIDELINES.....	28
Chapter 6 – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	35
BIBLIOGRAPHY	37
APPENDICES	38
Appendix A – Additional Resources... ..	38
Appendix B - Case Study Interviewees	40
Appendix C – Case Study Mission Statements	41
Appendix D – Case Study Questionnaire	42

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 - Beneficial aspects of holding performing arts events in public gardens	11
Figure 2 - Performing arts events related to community relations.....	13
Figure 3 - Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park, Montgomery Symphony event in the Cultural Park	14
Figure 4 - Family-related aspects of performing arts event's at public gardens.....	15
Figure 5 - Atlanta Botanical Gardens' Amphitheatre, an interactive family program	16
Figure 6 - Performing arts events relationship to mission statements.....	18
Figure 7 - Obstacles to holding performing arts in public gardens.....	20
Figure 8 - Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park, Alabama Shakespeare Festival Theatre.....	24
Figure 9 - Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park, Shakespeare Garden Amphitheatre.....	25
Figure 10 - Chicago Botanical Gardens, McGinley Pavilion.....	25
Figure 11 - Atlanta Botanical Garden, Fuqua Conservatory and Great Lawn.....	26
Figure 12 - Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden, Camp House Terrace.....	26
Figure 13 - Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Main Room of Conservatory	27
Figure 14 - Guidelines for organizing performing arts events in public gardens.....	34

ABSTRACT

Performing arts events in public spaces, specifically public gardens, enhance the community, the visitor's experience, and the audience diversity.

Performing arts programs benefit both the institution and the surrounding community by promoting family leisure time activities. Families today have numerous options for spending their money and, even more precious to many, their time. Performing arts programs provide an avenue for public gardens to compete with other family leisure time attractions in their community. Public gardens, with the addition of performing arts programs, will appease their visitor base by supplying more entertainment for the value of their admission into the gardens.

This research was initiated through a postcard survey to gather generalized data pertaining to performing arts events in public gardens and establish potential case study sites for the primary data collection. Four hundred and forty-one American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta (AABGA) institutional members located in the United States participated in the survey. The case study visits were conducted at five public gardens from Dallas to Pittsburgh. The case study visits examined the actual organizational procedures, benefits, and obstacles of family-oriented performing arts events.

The resultant guidelines from this research provide a framework for developing performing arts programs at public gardens in the United States. Seven areas of the knowledge collected from this research include the benefits, community relations aspects, family-related aspects, mission statement aspects, obstacles, financial aspects and location aspects of performing arts events. This research creates a basis for understanding the benefits and obstacles when organizing a performing arts event in a public garden.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

How do you diversify your garden's audience? How do you enhance the visitor's experience at your public garden? How do you strengthen community relationships? These are typical questions being pondered by public garden administrators across the United States. One solution is the initiation of performing arts events at the gardens.

Performing arts programs “contribute to the artistic enrichment of children and their parents and reach out to new audiences (Mary Pat Matheson, 1992, 26).” “What has become clear is that, with proper advertising, we are able to attract visitors who might not otherwise come because their primary interest is not gardens, but the performing arts (Els Benjamin, 1992, 29).” “Attracting new audiences and building community support for the Garden has been the primary benefit of these programs (Mary Pat Matheson, 1992, 28).” As explained by Matheson and Benjamin, performing arts events in gardens enhance the community, the visitor's experience, and the audience diversity.

Performing arts events serve as family-time activities. Examples of family-oriented performing arts events include interactive performances, story-telling,

family theatre performances, informal concert series and children's choir programs. Family entertainment in public gardens ensures a future audience as a result of the nostalgia factor. Children will return as adults to areas that reminisce their childhood and create fond memories for their own offspring. According to Wynton M. Blount, "in our way we are doing our best to ensure that art remains a public possession and enhances the lives of future generations (David Finn and Judith A. Jedlicka, 1998, 59)."

The numerous benefits of performing arts events in public gardens overshadow the logistical challenges of organizing these performances, as shown by this research. The obstacles encountered when coordinating performing arts events are recognized prior to the event and incorporated into a checklist of guidelines to complete. This safeguard method of approaching problems before they arise eliminates problems and produces a successful event.

Henry T. Segerstrom states "the arts enrich us and help us build our communities. They express the values and creativity of our society, but the arts are also a business in themselves (David Finn and Judith A. Jedlicka, 1998, 64)."

Performing arts events, as described by Henry T. Segerstrom, are necessary community building activities which require expertise to successfully coordinate. Public gardens are expanding the responsibilities of their staff to include the task of organizing performing arts events. With limited expertise in the performing arts sector of public horticulture, the task becomes formidable. This research will provide general knowledge associated with performing arts events at public gardens

in the United States, including the benefits and obstacles as explained in Chapter 4. Coordinators of performing arts events can reference the guidelines for organizing these events that are outlined in Chapter 5. The purpose and rationale for this research are explained further in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2

PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

The purpose of this case study research is to extend the knowledge base for performing arts coordinators at United States' public gardens. Performing arts are defined by this study as those arts, such as drama, theatre, music, dance, literature and performance art, which require a public performance in front of an audience. The terms program and event are used interchangeably in this study to explain both single and multiple performing arts occurrences. This research creates a basis for understanding the benefits and obstacles when organizing a performing arts event in a public garden.

The resultant guidelines from this research, in terms of principles, provide a framework for developing performing arts programs and defining a strategy for developing family-oriented performing arts programs at public gardens in the United States. Guidelines are defined for this case study research as statements of principles intended to provide direction in formulating a course of action.

A subsidiary goal of this research is to rationalize that family-oriented performances are an important avenue for performing arts programs at public gardens in the United States. Performing arts events focusing on family

entertainment are the primary type of programs analyzed for this research. Family, for the purpose of this research, is defined, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, as “a group of two or more people related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together.” Family time activities create fond memories for children to recall at a later age, and this nostalgia helps ensure a future audience for public gardens.

A paucity of literature was discovered when exploring and outlining the why and how of performing arts in public horticulture. A practical guide for creating performing arts events in cultural institutions, specifically public gardens, was non-existent. This research will fill that void by providing guidelines for coordinating a performing arts event at a public garden.

Performing arts events create challenges for public horticultural professionals, because they are from a different field requiring additional expertise. In resolving the dilemma, public gardens often expand the responsibilities of their employees to cover areas such as performing arts events. This research will demonstrate the diversity of positions in public horticulture that are coordinating performing arts events at public gardens.

The steps taken in this research to gather information on performing arts events in public gardens are exemplified in the methodology section located in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

An introductory investigation for this topic was performed to validate the necessity of the data and guidelines. A literature review of current resources was conducted. The paucity of resources recovered established strong evidence and validity for this research. Generalized research had been previously conducted, yet practical instruction was non-existent for inexperienced professionals. An update of the generalized data was considered necessary and would be collected through the survey.

An initial postcard survey of public gardens in the United States supplied information essential to definitively select case study sites and provide preliminary research data. The postcard survey was sent to the institutional members of the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta (AABGA) within the United States. The list provided an overview of public gardens across the United States. The list of members receiving the survey totaled four hundred and forty-one. The questions for the survey originated from the case study selection criteria. Six questions were asked on the postcard survey including: the number of performances held per year on their site, the title of the person primarily responsible for the events,

the organizational budget, whether or not the events are family-oriented, and their willingness to participate further with this research.

The specific data collection for this research required personal interviews with successful coordinators at public gardens. The interviews were conducted during case study visits to five United States' public gardens. Case study visits examined the actual organizational procedures, benefits, and obstacles of family-oriented performing arts events. The case study sites were selected utilizing the postcard survey results and the selection criteria. The selection criteria for the case study sites included: a variation in organizational budgets, a high number of performances held annually, and a willingness to help with further research.

Five case study sites were selected. They were the Atlanta Botanical Garden, the Chicago Botanical Gardens, the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and the Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park in Montgomery, Alabama. Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania was utilized as a pilot case study site for the structured interview questions. The Case Study Questionnaire is in Appendix C (page 41). In Appendix A (page 38), the interviewees of each institution and their positions are listed. Appendix B (page 40) displays the Mission Statements of each case study institution.

The guidelines for performing arts coordinators were developed from the case study responses. The responses were fused and generalized to formulate the nine steps of the guidelines. These guidelines were specifically organized for public

gardens and cultural venues. The resultant guidelines are in Chapter 5. Additional research data from the postcard survey and case studies is in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

The compilation of research data from both the postcard survey and five case studies across the United States are presented in this chapter. The diagrams in this chapter display the responses of the case study interviewees. The lack of an “x” in the diagram is the equivalent of a non-response. In addition to the Guidelines given in Chapter 5, the information presented from this research will broaden the knowledge base for performing arts coordinators in public gardens.

The postcard survey resulted in a response rate of forty-six percent. Two hundred and one returned postcards led to the following conclusions. Performing arts events are held at over one hundred public gardens in the United States. The professional title for the coordinator of these programs varies greatly, from Special Events Coordinator and Director to Volunteer and Board Member. The majority of sites that hold performing arts events consider them to be family-oriented programs. The institutions conducting these events have a wide range of budget ceilings, from several thousand dollars to multi-million dollars. The generosity of possible further participation from more than half the respondents was an encouraging factor.

The five case studies generated information for the successful coordination of performing arts programs at public gardens. Seven areas of the knowledge collected about performing arts programs include their benefits, community relations aspects, family-related aspects, mission statement aspects, obstacles, financial aspects and location aspects.

The Benefits

There are numerous beneficial aspects to holding performing arts events in public gardens. The case study interviewees overwhelmingly determined that increases in garden visitation, memberships, volunteers and audience diversity were four major advantages of these events. As shown in Figure 1, all five gardens have seen improved attendance results from performing arts events. “Garden visitation is greatly affected by our performing arts events. People come just to hear the bands and see the performances (Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens).”

Figure 1 also demonstrates that four gardens agree that memberships, volunteers and audience diversity are beneficial aspects of these events. “Performing arts events increase awareness of the membership program at the botanical garden. Approximately half the visitors attending performances are members of the garden (Atlanta Botanical Garden).” Performing arts events “provide volunteers without a horticulture interest an area of the garden to give their time and participate (Chicago Botanical Gardens).” Performing arts programs “are conducted throughout the year to promote the diversification of cultures and age groups in the garden (Atlanta

Botanical Garden).” For example, interactive performances are held for children and families while symphonies are organized for adult audiences.

Beneficial aspects of holding performing arts events in public gardens	Atlanta Botanic Garden	Chicago Botanic Garden	Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens	Phipps Conservatory	Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park
1. Increase Garden Visitation	X	X	X	X	X
2. Increase Memberships	X	X	X		X
3. Increase Volunteers	X	X	X	X	
4. Increase Audience Diversity	X		X	X	X

FIGURE 1
Beneficial aspects of holding performing arts events in public gardens

Audience diversification is strongly addressed by several of the case study sites as an advantage of performing arts programs. Some methods of diversification utilized by the case study sites include marketing and collaborative efforts. Innovative marketing strategies draw in new audiences including “target families in local parents’ magazines (Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens),” “direct mailers for ethnic events and promotions for cultural events in local restaurants and stores (Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens).” Collaborations with local sources are a key factor for the diversification of the gardens’ audience. The Dallas

Arboretum and Botanical Gardens “utilizes three leaders of differing ethnicities throughout the city. These leaders draw their communities into the gardens for specific festivals and performing arts programs.” The Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens has developed “collaborations with local radio stations which allow for a diverse audience, especially people without horticultural interests.”

Community Relations Aspects

Collaborations are one of the many advantages of performing arts programs related to community relations. Five elements supporting performing arts events in public gardens were found in the case study visits. As shown in Figure 2, they include: (1) destination for families, (2) draw visitors to the garden, (3) positive community perception of the garden, (4) enhances collaborations in the community, and (5) draws a diversified audience to the garden.

Performing arts events related to community relations	Atlanta Botanic Garden	Chicago Botanic Garden	Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens	Phipps Conservatory	Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park
1. Destination for families	X	X			X
2. Draw visitors to the garden	X	X			X
3. Positive community perception of the garden			X	X	X
4. Enhances collaborations in the community		X	X	X	
5. Draws a diversified audience to the garden		X	X	X	

FIGURE 2
Performing arts events related to community relations

Performing arts programs “supply the community with a place to go for family enjoyment and quality time activities (Atlanta Botanic Garden).” The more family activities public gardens provide the public, the larger and more diverse their audience. “Performing arts events provide avenues for family entertainment in the community (Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park).” In Figure 3, the Montgomery Symphony holds a family event at the Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park through collaborative efforts between the two organizations.



FIGURE 3
Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park,
Montgomery Symphony event in the Cultural Park

“Performing arts events are a vehicle for bringing people into the gardens (Atlanta Botanical Garden).” These events draw families into the garden thereby expanding audiences. Performing arts events build and create a new audience. By offering free admission for their summertime “Jazz in the Garden” event, the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens staff have observed a diversification in their audience.

“Community relations are strengthened from the performing arts events” held at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. These events provide a method of exposure for the institution. The result is the creation of positive community relations. The Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens “builds publicity and community support through local radio collaborations.” “Working with community leaders has lead to the successful development and promotion of events at the garden

(Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens).” Collaborations also include employing local talent as performers in public gardens. The Chicago Botanical Gardens allows “children’s choirs, symphonies and local groups to use the garden for their concerts.”

Family-Related Aspects

Performing arts events provide numerous opportunities for family interaction. Four family-related aspects of performing arts events were defined in this research. Figure 4 illustrates these factors as: (1) interactive programming, (2) audience specific programming, (3) provide family time activities and (4) a variety of scenes for captivating the audience.

Family-related aspects of performing arts events at public gardens	Atlanta Botanic Garden	Chicago Botanic Garden	Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens	Phipps Conservatory	Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park
1. Interactive/Audience Involvement Programming	X	X		X	X
2. Audience Specific Programming		X	X		
3. Provide Family Time Activities		X	X		
4. Variety of Scenes for Captivating the Audience		X			

FIGURE 4
Family-related aspects of performing arts events at public gardens

“The key to intergenerational performances is getting the parents involved at the beginning of the performance. Children imitate their parents’ reactions. As the parents’ become involved, the children will follow (Atlanta Botanical Gardens).”

The Chicago Botanical Gardens integrates interactive storytelling in their activities schedule. Audience involvement is the crucial factor for incorporating family programming in public gardens. Figure 5 shows an interactive family program being conducted at the Atlanta Botanical Gardens’ Amphitheatre.

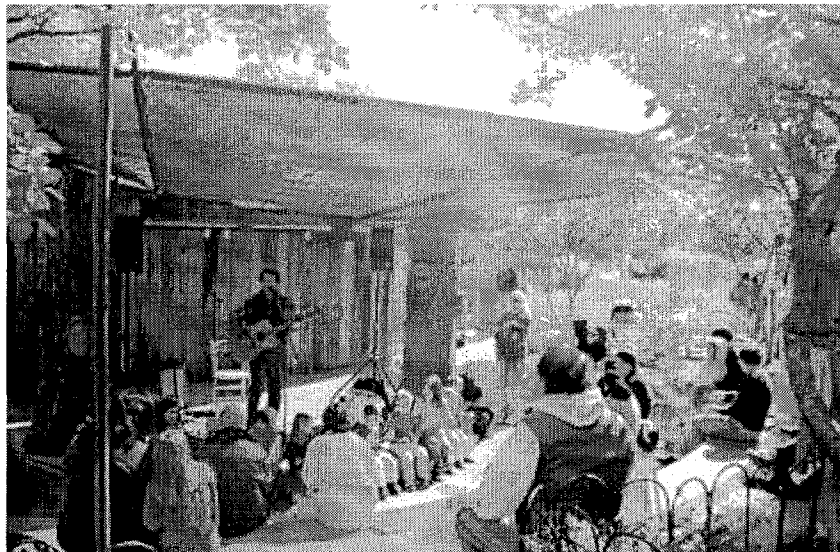


FIGURE 5
Atlanta Botanical Gardens’ Amphitheatre,
an interactive family program

“The audience is the reason for holding performing arts events. The satisfaction of the visitors guarantees the performance’s success (Dallas Arboretum

and Botanical Gardens).” The types of performances held at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens are targeted towards families. An alternative method is demonstrated at the Chicago Botanical Gardens where they “vary the lessons for the present audience.” A variety of venues are used to captivate the audience is another family-related aspect of performing arts events. The garden setting offers an assortment of scenes for programming. Matching the scene or the theme of the program to specific areas of the garden provides diversity for the audience, especially to children with short attention spans.

Bringing the family into public gardens is facilitated when activities for all ages are provided. The Chicago Botanical Gardens encourages family time activities by allowing families “to bring picnics into the gardens for certain events.” Festivals are prime opportunities for public gardens to incorporate performing arts programs for families. The Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens includes “performing arts programs with all of their year-round festivals.”

Mission Statement Aspects

The mission of the institution influences the importance of performing arts events in public gardens. The mission statements for the five case study visits can be found in Appendix B. Performing arts events are supported by the institutional mission statement or historical influences. In Figure 6, performing arts events are included in five aspects of varying mission statements.

Performing arts events relationship to the Mission Statement	Atlanta Botanic Garden	Chicago Botanic Garden	Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens	Phipps Conservatory	Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park
1. Education and enjoyment elements of the Mission Statement	X		X	X	
2. Art element of the Mission Statement					X
3. Providing exposure for the garden in the Mission Statement		X			
4. Enhancing the garden atmosphere of the Mission Statement		X			
5. Plant element of the Mission Statement		X			

FIGURE 6
Performing arts events' relationship
to mission statements

Education and enjoyment at components in institutional mission statements justify performing arts events in public gardens. These events conducted at the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens “compliment and fulfill the mission of the institution by providing enjoyment and education for the visitor.” The enjoyment of horticulture and the pleasures experienced by the visitors in the garden are prime examples that support performing arts events in public gardens.

The Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park incorporates performing arts programs in the mission as “the concept of uniting art and the garden.” The Chicago Botanical Garden visualizes performing arts events as experiences of introducing people to the

garden, enhancing the garden atmosphere, and providing performances that are related to teaching plant knowledge. There are numerous reasons for including performing arts events in public gardens, but the opportunity to provide more for the visitor and bring more visitors into the gardens is tantamount to a successful mission.

Obstacles

Performing arts programs will cause additional hassles and problems for staff but there are many preventative measures that can be utilized. In Figure 7, the nine obstacles discovered in this research include: (1) stress on plant displays, (2) staff time, (3) costs, (4) weather, (5) space issues, (6) audience size, (7) lack of performing arts experience, (8) impact on the surrounding community, and (9) parking.

Damage or stress on the plant collections and displays caused by performing arts events “can be prevented by increasing awareness of people” including performers, volunteers, and the visitors (Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens). “The volunteers and performers are taught the rules and regulations regarding the gardens and their treatment (Chicago Botanical Gardens).” Some institutions use preparation techniques including the expectation that some damage will occur. At the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens “the damage is the wear and tear on the lawns.” Managing the size of the event and ensuring that the event doesn’t get too large for the area is an alternative technique.

Obstacles to holding performing arts events in public gardens	Atlanta Botanic Garden	Chicago Botanic Garden	Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens	Phipps Conservatory	Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park
1. Damage or stress on the plant collections and displays		X	X	X	X
2. Staff time		X	X	X	X
3. Costs		X	X	X	X
4. Weather	X	X	X	X	X
5. Space issues		X	X	X	
6. Audience size	X	X	X	X	X
7. Lack of performing arts experience					X
8. Impact on the surrounding community			X		
9. Parking			X	X	

FIGURE 7
Obstacles to holding performing arts in public gardens

Staff time devoted to performances depended on the institution. Several of the case study sites delegated the responsibility for these events to a specific position. “Performing arts events do not cause much stress on the staff. There is one full-time staff member with the performing arts events as part of their job description (Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens).” Other institutions are stressed with coordinating these events because of the small staff size. “Performing arts events are labor intensive. Time is required for all of the preparation planning. Tasks include

bookings, contracts, performance needs and schedules (Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens).” Another difficulty is the lack of performing arts experience in the public horticulture field. “The staff of a public garden does not have the knowledge to plan, organize and run performing arts events. The way to overcome this challenge is to hire a staff member with expertise and designated responsibilities for these events (Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park).”

Space issues found in this research revolve around the space being conducive to the appropriate performance type. “Conservatories cause problems for some instruments (Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens).” Providing the adequate amount of space for the performers is another hurdle. The Chicago Botanical Gardens does “not have a green room for its’ performers. Logistics of support space for the performers is a challenge and difficult to achieve.” Weather overlaps the space issue because rain facilities are not always feasible for some institutions. Weather is a geographical challenge. Southern institutions are challenged by the heat, yet have year-round outdoor facilities. Northern institutions are challenged by having limited outdoor facilities with colder weather.

Issues related to audience size were found to be inconsequential in this research. All five case study visits determined that the audience size was either self-regulating or never too large for the site. Parking problems were also minimal and temporary due to construction at Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens.

“The decibel level of performances is a concern and issue with the surrounding community of the arboretum (Dallas Arboretum and Botanical

Gardens).” The resolution to this problem is to monitor and control the levels at the boundaries of the property during performances.

Costs are a valid concern when planning a performing arts event. “When costs are a concern and acknowledged as such, then performing arts events are profitable (Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park).” Sponsors for performing arts events in public gardens are a solution, and can eliminate or diminish costs. “Costs are minimized by using local performing groups (Chicago Botanical Gardens).” Concluded from the case studies, innovative collaborative efforts with community groups and sponsors can minimize costs for performing arts events in public gardens.

Financial Aspects

Performing arts events are costly, both in monetary and labor aspects. The key factors to overcoming these costs are “preparation, coordination and organization (Atlanta Botanical Gardens).” A financially profitable performing arts event is feasible by remaining “fiscally responsible for the monies allocated for the events (Chicago Botanical Gardens).” Pricing is a fundamental element of a successful event. The basic business principal applies: “cover your overhead and costs to make a profit (Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park).” “Maintaining your scale and balance, with performance level and audience size, is crucial to producing a profitable performing arts event. Strategic planning is important in planning a successful event (Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park).”

The debate remains: to ticket, or not to ticket performing arts events. This research discovered that successful, financially responsible events were ticketed or part of garden admission fees. The Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park charged an admission fee for the events through a parking charge. The performing arts programs at the Atlanta Botanical Gardens and the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens are free to admission-paying visitors. The Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens and the Chicago Botanical Gardens ticket a few events every year yet the majority are free to visitors. Budgeting and financial responsibility lead to justifiable events.

The majority of the case study sites that do not ticket or charge specifically for performing arts events validate the allotted money through historical ties. The Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens has incorporated “performing arts events at the institution for 18 of its 20 years of existence.” “Performing arts events are budgeted and held at the arboretum because of the strong historical tradition (Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens).” “Performing arts events at the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens serve the institutional mission, preserve their historical tradition, and are a feel-good bonus activity for their visitors.”

Location Aspects

Performing arts events can be held in numerous venues at public gardens. Venues in public gardens range from amphitheatres and pavilions to open lawn areas and terraces. The Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park is privileged to have the

Alabama Shakespeare Festival bringing an advanced performing arts facility to the grounds. This facility is shown in Figure 8 and Figure 9. The McGinley Pavilion shown in Figure 10 is located at the Chicago Botanical Gardens. The Atlanta Botanical Gardens utilizes its Great Lawn in front of the Fuqua Conservatory shown in Figure 11 and its Amphitheatre shown in Figure 5 for performances. Figure 12 shows the Camp House Terrace at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. Many performing arts programs are mobile and can meander through gardens or conservatories, such as at the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens shown in Figure 13.

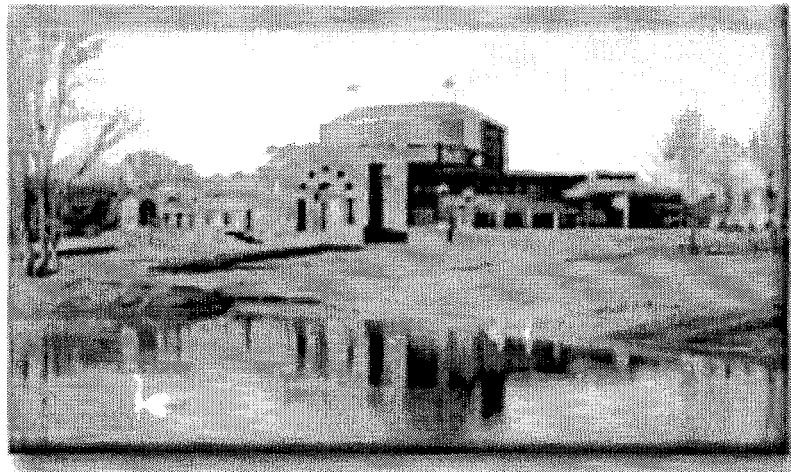


FIGURE 8
Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park,
Alabama Shakespeare Festival Theatre

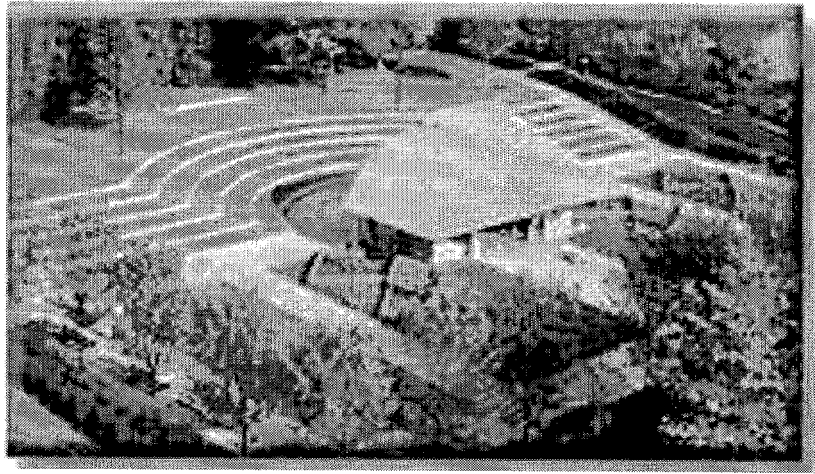


FIGURE 9
Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park,
Shakespeare Garden Amphitheatre

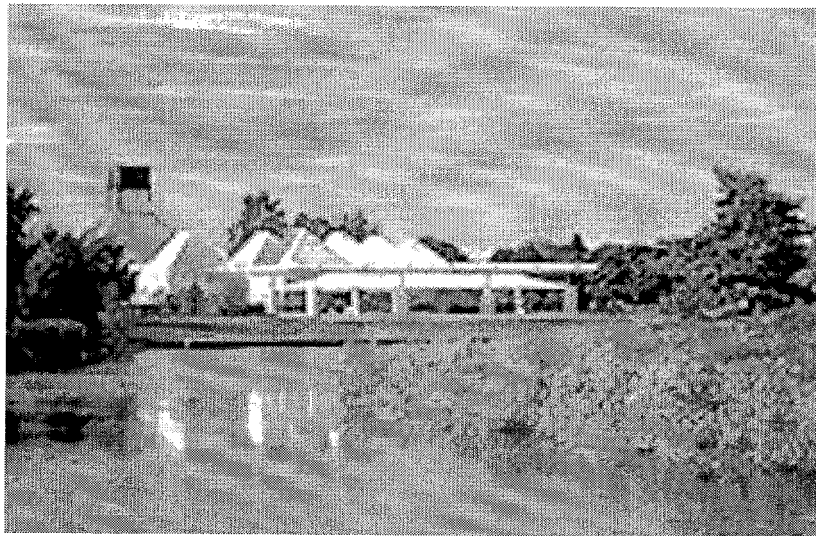


FIGURE 10
Chicago Botanical Gardens,
McGinley Pavilion

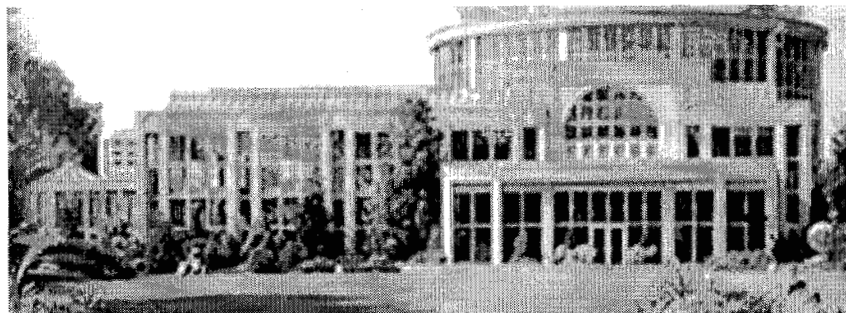


FIGURE 11
Atlanta Botanical Garden,
Fuqua Conservatory and Great Lawn

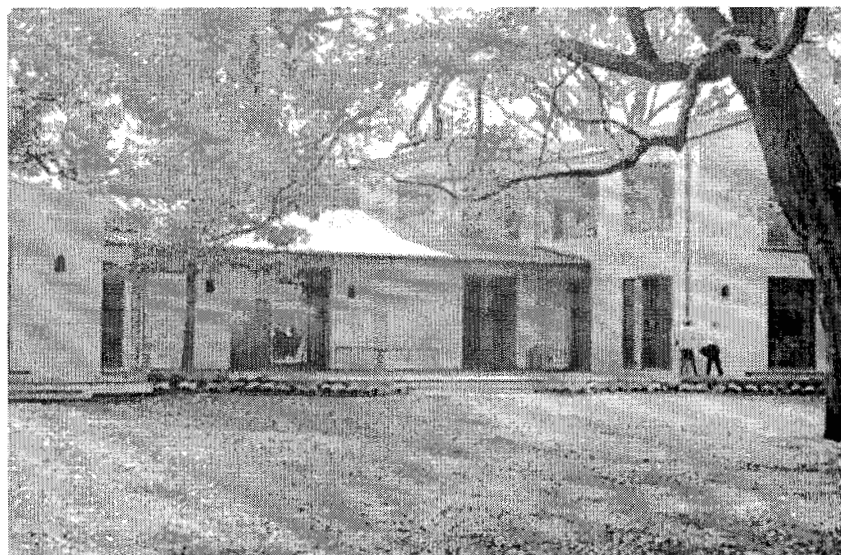


FIGURE 12
Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden,
Camp House Terrace

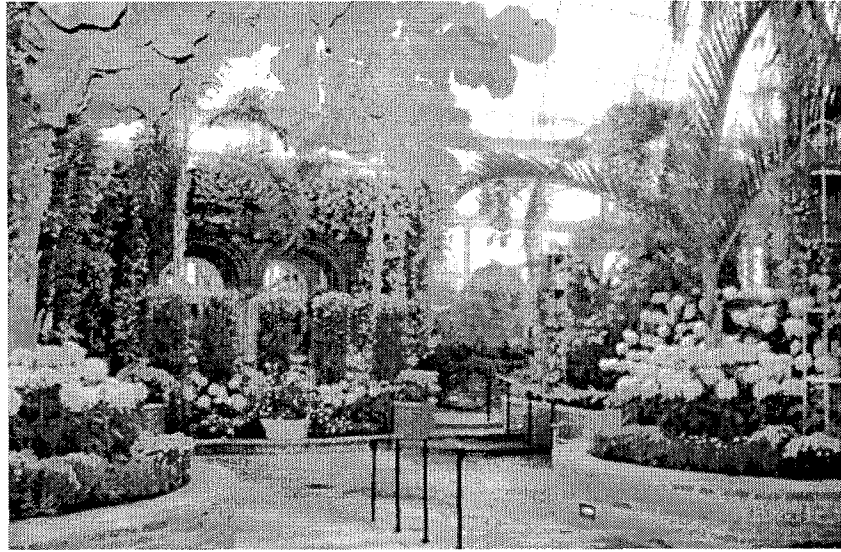


FIGURE 13
Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens,
Main Room of Conservatory

When developing a site for performing arts events, analyze the type of performance and determine the kind and size of space required. The use of the area dictates the acoustics for musical performances, the floor material for dancers, the lighting and more. Consult theatre professionals and performing arts specialists to prevent inadequate facilities.

This research was compiled to broaden the knowledge base for performing arts coordinators in public gardens. The guidelines developed from the case study responses are in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5

GUIDELINES

The following guidelines compiled from the case studies provide a framework for performing arts coordinators at cultural institutions, specifically public gardens, in the United States. Implementation of the guidelines is feasible for a single, multiple or a season of performances. The cyclical format of the guidelines necessitates a time frame to stimulate repetition of the cycle. The general knowledge provided in Chapter 4, supplies both a background and examples for implementation of the Guidelines. A combination of general information and guidelines afford performing arts coordinators in public gardens a thorough planning process. These guidelines provide nine primary objectives to consider when developing performing arts programs in public gardens. The order of the guidelines is a suggested path, and alternative patterns are recognized as feasible.

1. The **INITIAL PLANNING** of a performing arts event is the crucial step providing the momentum for the development process. “The definition of your audience is key factor to the success of the event (Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park).” The Atlanta Botanic Garden

conducted a survey of their members to determine the success of performing arts and the type of performance preferred at the garden. “Analyze the appropriateness of the event for your institution’s audience (Chicago Botanical Gardens).” The desires of your audience dictate the types of performances and the subsequent benefits of performing arts events for your institution.

2. The **DEVELOPMENT OF A THEME** for the event creates both a complete image and a destination for your visitors. This second element of the guidelines “defines and explains the purpose of the event (Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens).” “Looking at the ‘Big Picture’ of the event involves defining the type and scale of the event (Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park).” The theme for the event is interwoven into all aspects including marketing and programming. For example, the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens annually coordinates the “Dallas Blooms in Autumn” Festival. The annual theme for the event is the celebration of various cultures. The marketing image for the event demonstrates the theme by including five varied ethnic arms holding one flower bouquet. The theme is carried throughout the event encompassing programs, food and music.

3. The **BUDGET** for performing arts events fluctuates among institutions, depending on the historical and mission-related links to the events. “Cost management is crucial to the strength of the budget for these events (Chicago Botanical Gardens).” It is important to “ensure that the expenses can be covered, either through strong budget support or performance income (Atlanta Botanic Garden).” “Sponsorship is a creative method of lowering costs and increasing community relations (Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park).” The Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens sets a budget for each performing arts event depending on several factors: the type of performance, the number of visitors expected to have the opportunity to enjoy the performance, and the demand for that type of performer.

4. **INSTITUTIONAL REGULATIONS** are essential to the success, audience enjoyment and organizational acceptance of the event. “The performers must follow the general rules of the garden (Chicago Botanical Gardens).” Performing arts events typically necessitate the involvement of several departments within an organization in order to accomplish the mission. A conclusion drawn from the case studies is that compliance and communication between these departments creates positive internal morale and acceptance.

5. **PROGRAMMING** is the keystone of a successful arch linking together performing arts and the public garden audience, as concluded from this research. Once the previous elements have been reviewed, including the theme, the amount of money to be spent, and any overriding regulations, it is time to develop the event schedule or the programming. The program development at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, exemplifies effective programming by analyzing opportunities for the theme. For example, the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens initiated “Cool Thursdays,” that provides a wide diversity of cool evening programming for families. “The more interactive components encompassed in the programming, the more successful the event (Chicago Botanical Gardens).” “The visitor enjoyment factor is extremely important to the success of the event (Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens).”
6. **LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES** are prevalent with performing arts events in public garden venues. “Tackle logistical challenges creatively. For example, developing schedules for the event creates clear communication channels within your institution and with the performers (Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens).” “Preparation and coordination are key factors to the success of an event (Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park).” Create a checklist of tasks to complete for the event, to ensure thorough planning and implementation. Gain and maintain control

on the factors that you can, such as the contract, sound, lighting, preparation and communication. “Prevent logistical roadblocks by thorough planning of the event, including the location of event, the costs and visitor enjoyment (Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens).”

7. **MARKETING**, as revealed from the case studies, involves timing, strategy and creativity. “Publicizing the event is necessary to make the public aware of the programs being offered at the garden (Chicago Botanical Gardens).” “The appropriate amount of time is needed to promote the event to the community (Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens).” The case studies support the conclusion that analyzing the marketing strategies and applying creative ideas and collaborations creates effective marketing promotions. “Marketing the programs is crucial to a successful event (Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens).”

8. **FEEDBACK** mechanisms from the garden visitors allows for the determination of their wants and desires. “The Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, located in the Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park, utilizes a community review session to generate suggestions for future events (Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park).” The Atlanta Botanical Garden surveys its membership as a feedback mechanism. Feedback is important because

“the visitor enjoyment factor is crucial to the success of your performing arts events (Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens).”

9. **ANALYSIS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT** for performing arts events is an overlapping element of the guidelines leading to the planning for the next event. By analyzing the event and the factors which contributed to its success, changes and enhancements are developed for future events. For example, the formation of a planning committee to analyze problems and create improvements from year to year is utilized at the Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park for the annual “Broadway under the Stars” event. The future development of performing arts events leads to the initial planning for the next event.

Figure 14 demonstrates the guidelines in flow chart format. These guidelines provide nine primary objectives to consider when developing performing arts programs in public gardens. The cycle repeats with the initiation of the planning for the next performance. The order of the guidelines is a suggested path. Customization of the course may be necessary when applying for specific institutions. For example, after the second step, Developing a Theme, some institutions may continue the cycle by jumping ahead to step five, Programming. Following the steps as outlined, one can completely coordinate performing arts events for their public garden audience.

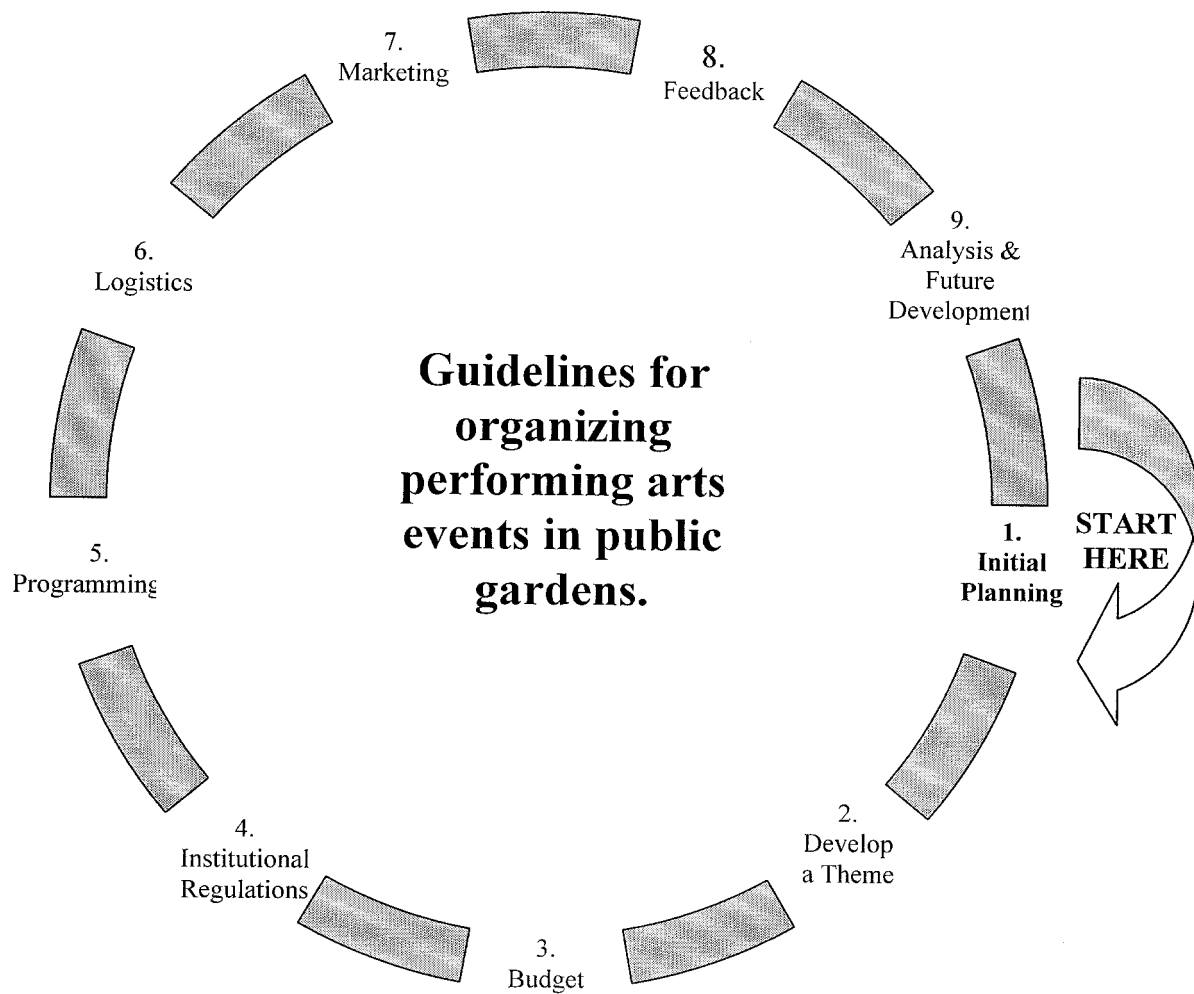


FIGURE 14
**Guidelines for organizing
performing arts events in public gardens**

Chapter 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“Arts institutions and their programs define a community and act as a unifying force that brings together individuals who have diverse interests and might not otherwise come together (Harry M. Reasoner, *The Art of Leadership*, 201).” As explained by Reasoner, performing arts events create a diversified audience, and public gardens can take advantage of this fact to diversify their own audiences. Performing arts programs targeted toward families generate enthusiasm for gardens in the next generation. By developing a future audience, public gardens ensure their long-term financial income and attendance levels. Performing arts events do create challenges for public horticulture staff, but the challenges are offset by the numerous benefits of these events. Performing arts events in public spaces, specifically gardens, enhance the community, the visitor’s experience, and the audience diversity.

The recommendation of this research is to follow the Guidelines and incorporate the general knowledge collected from this research. The seven areas of knowledge collected include the benefits, community relations aspects, family-related aspects, mission statement aspects, obstacles, financial aspects and location

aspects of performing arts events. The Guidelines created from this research provide a structure for developing performing arts events in United States' public gardens. Incorporation of the Guidelines and the general knowledge provided by in this research is a preventative measure against obstacles. The general knowledge supplies both a background and examples for implementation of the Guidelines. The Guidelines and general information provide a practical guide for coordinating performing arts events in cultural institutions, specifically public gardens.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Benjamin, Els. "A Low-Key, Low-Cost Performing Arts Program." The Public Garden. 1992. American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta. p. 29-31.

Finn, David and Judith A. Jedlicka. The Art of Leadership, Building Business-Arts Alliances. 1998. Business Committee for the Arts, Inc. New York, NY. p. 54-59.

Matheson, Mary Pat. "A Natural Setting for a Profitable Program." The Public Garden. 1992. American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta. p.26-28.

APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Andreasen, Alan R. Expanding the Audience for the Performing Arts. Washington D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1992.
- Andreasen, A.R. and RW. Belk. "Predictors of Attendance at the Performing Arts." Journal of Consumer Research. 1980: 119.
- Baumol, William J. and William Bowen. "The 30th Anniversary of the Performing Arts: an economic dilemma by Baumol and Bowen – Ninth International Conference on Cultural Economics." Journal of Cultural Economics. Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996: 181.
- Cowen, Tyler. In Praise of Commercial Culture. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- DiMaggio, Paul J. Nonprofit Enterprise in the Arts: Studies in Mission and Constraint. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986: 378.
- DiMaggio, Paul J. Audience Studies of the Performing Arts and Museums: A Critical Review. Center for the Study of Public Policy, 1977.
- Fitzhugh, Lynn Dennison. Introducing the Audience: A Review and Analysis of Audience Studies for the Performing Arts in America. M.A. Thesis: The American University, 1983.
- Gilbert, David and Martine Lizotte. "Tourism and the Performing Arts." Journal of Travel and Tourism Analyst. United Kingdom: 1998: 82.
- Hartsough, Nora J. Performing Arts at Public Gardens in the United States. M.S. Thesis: University of Delaware, 1994.
- Kracman, Kimberly. The effect of school-based arts instruction on attendance at museums and the performing arts. Princeton, New Jersey: Department of Sociology at Princeton University, 1996: 203.
- Martin, W.H. and S. Mason. Transforming the Future: Rethinking Free Time and Work. Leisure Consultants, 1998.

Rojek, Chris. Leisure for Leisure. New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall Inc., 1989.

Theatergarden Bestarium: The Garden as Theatre as Museum. New York: The Institute of Contemporary Art P.S. 1 Museum, 1990.

Wolf, Thomas. Presenting Performances. New York: ACA Books, 1991.

APPENDIX B: CASE STUDY INTERVIEWEES

Atlanta Botanical Garden

Kevin Murser. Youth Education Coordinator

Chicago Botanical Gardens

Natalie Birk. Director of Visitor Programs.

Elaine Van Dusen. Visitor Programs Coordinator.

Kristen Webber. Manager of Public Programs.

Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens

Jane Offenbach. Director of Marketing and Sales.

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens

Vicki Creider. Visitor Services Coordinator.

Miranda Sutton. Communications Coordinator.

Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park

Brian Barr. Managing Director, Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park.

Melanie Bennett. Assistant Director of Development, Alabama Shakespeare Festival.

Amanda Smith. Director of Marketing and Public Relations, Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts.

Helen Steineker. Manager, Montgomery Symphony.

APPENDIX C: CASE STUDY MISSION STATEMENTS

Atlanta Botanical Garden

The Atlanta Botanical Garden was established in 1976 to develop and maintain plant collections for the purpose of display, education, research, conservation and enjoyment.

Chicago Botanic Garden

To stimulate and develop an appreciation and understanding of gardening and botany and conservation by developing and maintaining gardens, plant collections, and education and research programs of excellence while providing a continuing aesthetic experience for visitors to the Chicago Botanic Garden.

Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens

The mission of the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens is to build and maintain a public botanical garden and arboretum which promotes the art, enjoyment and knowledge of horticulture, while providing opportunities for education and research.

Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens

The mission of the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens is to promote awareness, enjoyment and understanding of plants and the diverse interactions with mankind. Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens collects, maintains and displays living plants for the appreciation and benefit of all persons in Western Pennsylvania and abroad. Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens fosters learning about plants through educational and recreational programs and promotes research on their cultivation and natural history, while conserving the architectural heritage of its historic building. Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens fulfills its role as part of a larger botanical community by advocating responsible stewardship for plants and the habitats they sustain worldwide.

Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park

The mission of the Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park unites art and nature, creating a unique outdoor museum which fosters education and the preservation of open space.

APPENDIX D: CASE STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What types of performances are conducted at your garden?

a) How are they family-related?

Family refers to a group of two or more people related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together: all such people are considered as members of one family by the U.S. Census Bureau.

2. How do performing arts events relate to the mission of your institution?

a) What is the mission of your garden?

3. How do performing arts events affect your community relations?

4. Do you follow specified guidelines when organizing these events at your garden?

a) If so, what are they?

b) If not, what steps do you take when organizing these events?

c) Which steps are the most crucial to the success of an event?

BENEFICIAL ASPECTS OF HOLDING PERFORMING ARTS EVENTS AT PUBLIC GARDENS.

5. Are these events financially profitable?

a) What factors contribute to a financially profitable event?

b) Do you ticket your performing arts events?

c) If so, what is the range of ticket prices for your events?

- d) What steps would you take in developing a profitable, low-cost event?

6. How do the performing arts events at your garden affect:

- a) Garden Visitation?
- b) Memberships?
- c) Volunteers?
- d) Audience Diversity?

Are you aware of any studies conducted to validate these assumptions?

If so, what are they?

7. If performing arts events do affect visitation, then what areas of your garden's audiences are growing? (For Example, age groups, ethnicities, incomes)

- a) Do you target these groups?

If so, how do you target them?

- b) In general, what factors lead to the diversification of a garden's audience?

8. What other aspects of your institution benefit from performing arts events?

9. The term "block booking" means to me...

When a group of sponsors in the same geographic area, within a specific time frame, team up to engage the company to provide the same or various services for the benefit of their individual constituencies.

- a) Would or do you use this method to form a collaborative effort with other regional organizations?
- b) What types of organizations would or do you include in this type of collaborative effort?

ROADBLOCKS TO HOLDING PERFORMING ARTS EVENTS AT PUBLIC GARDENS.

10. Is damage or stress on your collections or displays a concern with holding performing arts events at your garden?
 - a) If so, what type of damage or stress concerns you?
 - b) How do you solve these problems?

11. What logistical challenges are placed on your garden from conducting performing arts events? Specifically:
 - a) Staff time?
 - b) Costs?
 - c) Audience size?
 - d) Weather?
 - e) Space issues?
 - f) How do you overcome these challenges?

12. Does your garden have the appropriate space for a performing arts program?
 - a) What type of space is this?
 - b) What types of technical equipment do you use for your events?
 - c) Do you consider the setting in the garden when selecting the artist to fulfill the space?
 - d) What recommendations would you give in planning a facility to hold performing arts events in a garden?

13. What other challenges has your garden experienced from holding these events?
 - a) How were these challenges overcome?

GENERAL QUESTIONS

14. Do you belong to a state, regional, or national performing arts presenting organization?
15. Do you have any suggestions or additional comments for my research?
16. Would you be interested in a copy of my thesis for your institution?

**YOUR TIME AND EFFORT IN COMPLETING THIS SURVEY
ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED. THANK YOU FOR
FURTHERING MY THESIS RESEARCH.**