

What does a Dramaturg do??

by Roxanne Ray, Ph.D.

Dramaturgs take on many distinct and complementary tasks on behalf of theatres, theatre artists, and audiences. Here are some of the main categories in which we work:

Research and Development

- Help develop the theatre's mission
- Help plan the season
- Help look for scripts
- Organize the Artist-in-Residence program
- Create and support dramaturgy-driven new work

Production Dramaturgy

- Locate drafts and versions
- Collate, cut, track, edit, rewrite, construct, & arrange
- Secure permissions to use copyrighted material
- Find songs, pictures, stories, and videos
- Help the designers do their research
- Help the director cast the show
- Help the marketers and developers
- Seek and present pathways into the world of the play
- Gather and arrange images, sounds, and ideas for rehearsal
- Explore and present: the world of the play, the author of the play, the script's production history, and the relevant criticism
- Conceive the forms of the script as a script
- Conceive the forms of the play as it grows
- Serve as the director's "second pair of eyes" in rehearsal and during performances
- Stay on course when all goes ill (as it will)
- Create the lobby display
- Love the work

New Plays

- Solicit scripts from writers and agents
- Read and evaluate new scripts
- Track and file those scripts
- Write kindly letters to writers whose scripts we won't be producing
- Negotiate with agents
- Prepare adaptations and translations
- Curate and introduce play anthologies
- Commission new work
- Organize the in-house play reading program
- Organize the new play program for subscribers
- Help bring new plays into full production
- Support those writers whose vision captures our minds and hearts

Arts in Education

- Establish relationships with local educators
- Help them use theatre to support their curricula
- Prepare study guides
- Develop production web sites
- Write and edit program materials
- Organize and lead pre- and post-show discussions
- Plan and lead seminars and symposia
- Create and maintain archives

Advocacy

- Affirm the function, Explore the practice, and Promote the profession of dramaturgy & literary management.
- Nourish the arts wherever we find them: in schools, in communities, and around the world.

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