

**Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 113**

**Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?**

Yes

**According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?**

Wethersfield

**Where will your project be performed or exhibited?**

Wethersfield

**Will this activity occur after August 1, 2023?**

Yes

**Are you a recent grantee?**

No

**Organization Name**

Times Fool Company

**Organization's IRS Tax ID #**

852788241

**Principal Contact Name**

Wesley Broulik

**Title**

Co-Producing Artistic Director

**Email**

[wesleybroulik@gmail.com](mailto:wesleybroulik@gmail.com)

**Phone**

(908) 489-1820

**Address**

10 Belcher Rd  
Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109  
United States  
[Map It](#)

**Website**

<https://www.timesfool.org/>

**Amount requested this application**

\$5,000.00

## **Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 113**

### **What is the organization's mission/vision statement?**

Our guiding principle is that art is a human right.

The most direct way we can achieve this goal is through access. We don't charge for our events. They are all "pay-what-you-will." Cost should not be a barrier to access live, professional theatre.

The other way we achieve access is through creating productions that take place in shared, public, or found spaces - since most arts spaces are unwelcoming to Black, Indigenous, Asian, South-Asian, Latinx, People of Color, and low-income folks.

### **Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.**

We were founded in September 2020 as a response to deep changes in the theatre industry in response to structural racism in our regional theatres and elitism and amongst our audiences driven by a lack of accessibility to the arts.

Our first event was a Sonnet-a-thon in October where for each day of the month we had video submissions from folks reading sonnets and shared them across our social media. It was a wonderful engagement driven event that allowed us to build our audience.

In December we had a an amazing Giving Tuesday. We had set an engagement goal, but we were surprised and overjoyed that we met our engagement goal and raised more money than we had expected.

Later that month we were going to present a beautiful solo Christmas Carol with one actor and a cellist, but Actor's Equity Association pulled out contract due to COVID numbers being too high. We paid out the artists and then pivoted and recorded the show as an audio play/podcast that we then shared freely. We had over 680 unique visitors and downloads of our show and we bought no advertising, we simply released it and announced it on social media. We are now listed in the podcast section of the Apple store.

Now we are getting ready to hold a June fundraiser and kick off our fundraising drive for our summer Shakespeare production.

### **Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.**

We serve everyone in Wethersfield regardless race, age, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual preference, or socio-economic status. We serve all of Wethersfield as well as East Hartford, South Hartford, Newington, Rock Hill, and Glastonbury.

### **Describe your organization's governance.**

Two Co-Producing Artistic Directors. They answer to the leadership board.

We abolished the racist practice of a minimum donation to serve on the board. We have separated governance from philanthropy.

Board meets six times a year, then side meetings, work sessions, and workgroups.

Finances are examined and reported at every board meeting.

We have one hundred percent attendance at our board meetings

One hundred percent of our board has made a financial contribution of some kind

### **Describe the diversity of your board.**

Thirty percent of our board identifies as Asian, South-Asian, Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and People of Color.

**Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 113**

Sixty percent of our board identifies as female.

Fifty percent of our board is under the age of forty.

**What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?**

One hundred percent of our board has made a financial contribution to the organization.

**Project Name**

Twelfth Night

**Project Description**

We are seeking funding for our mid-August production of Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare. We will be assembling a diverse ensemble of ten professional performers to create the world for this lively, outdoor production. Our aesthetic is firmly rooted in early modern performance practice resembling the practices of Shakespeare's Globe and The American Shakespeare Center. Our performers play acoustic instruments, devise the music as an ensemble, work together with heightened movement work and choreography, gender is relative and fluid, and we work in shared light.

**Project start/opening**

08/18/2021

**Project end/closing**

08/22/2021

**Project venue**

Broad Street Green

**Project town**

Wethersfield

**Admission fees, attendance, and activity details**

We do not charge for our events, all of them are "pay-what-you-will," or donation based. (Similar in model to New York Classical Theatre). Based on early interest and numbers we estimate at least two hundred people a night over five performances. Wednesday, August 18th - Saturday August 21st at 6PM, Sunday August 22nd at 4 PM.

We will have a reservation only area closest to the stage in an effort to accommodate our guests.

**How do you intend to promote/market this project?**

A bike on display for Bicycles on Main in Old Wethersfield this entire month with a QR code to our website.

Information booth at Wethersfield Farmers Market, Thursdays beginning May 20th.

## **Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 113**

June fundraiser event where Shakespeare's Sonnets will be performed.

The Chamber of Commerce, The Heritage & Tourism Commission, and Old Wethersfield Shopkeepers/Explore Old Wethersfield have agreed to market the production through their resources.

Ads on Facebook, social media, and Public Radio.

Posters.

### **How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?**

Roberts funding will be used for artist salaries.

### **How will Roberts support be recognized?**

We will place the Roberts logo on our posters and marketing, have placement on our website, an ad in our program, a thank you in the program as one of our stakeholders, and you will be recognized and given thanks in any curtain speeches.

### **What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?**

Working with and hiring professionals and sharing our work with the general public. (We do not use or have an apprentice or student company).

Presenting a Shakespeare play that is clear, relatable, and understandable to a varied and diverse audience.

An adherence to our early modern performance practice principles of shared light, a diverse ensemble, and company created music.

Audience attendance goals.

High engagement levels with audience feedback forms and surveys

An adherence to our aesthetic principles of curiosity, joy, respect, and wonder in the rehearsal room.

The work we present must have a sense of play. It is often said that there are no bad plays, just theatre that has no sense of play in it.

### **How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?**

We believe this project will meet all of these goals and it advances our mission by allowing us to present a play that will appeal to a wide and diverse audience in a beautiful outdoor setting that is publicly accessible to everyone and is free.

### **How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?**

By us presenting a project that is free and open to everyone we hope to attract audiences that might otherwise disregard going to the theatre due to cost, or allow those folks who are curious the opportunity to engage with professional theatre. We often feel that cost is a barrier to people trying something new or is prohibitive to attendance. Our location allows us to attract audiences from both sides of the river. The community at large is going to benefit because Wethersfield has no professional theatre other than our company. Additionally the business in Wethersfield are going to benefit greatly. Due to a recent study from 2015 by Americans for the Arts, one week of performances in Wethersfield should result in over \$26,000.00 being spent

## **Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 113**

at local businesses and 34% of the audience should be coming from outside Hartford County. Heritage tourism and theatre tourism are not the same audience and it could prove to be a fantastic opportunity for Wethersfield's heritage industry.

### **How will this project be evaluated?**

Audience attendance numbers.

Audience feedback surveys.

Internal evaluation with the board reflecting on whether our aesthetic principles were upheld and met.

### **Does your organization produce an annual report?**

No

### **Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?**

No

### **Grant Report**

- [Times-Fool-Company-Grantee-Reporting-Form.pdf](#)

### **Other materials?**

- [Co-producing-Artistic-Director-Bios.pdf](#)

We have not started the campaign for funds to produce the summer Shakespeare yet. We are looking for one or two key pieces of financial support so we can then feel confident that we can move forward with a public fundraising campaign with small dollar donors, etc.

### **Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?**

Yes

### **Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?**

Yes