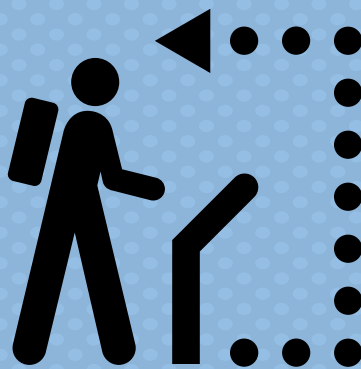


BAM! Complete Guide to APAP Showcasing

by Robert Baird



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A guide to independent showcasing
at the APAP|NYC conference

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Complete Guide to
INDEPENDENT
SHOWCASING
at the
APAP | NYC Conference

Prepared for the Association of Performing Arts Presenters by

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Introduction

Showcasing is one of the top three reasons why so many people attend the APAP Conference in New York City every January. There are more than one thousand showcases presented during the conference and each and every one of them is independently produced. Unlike other conferences in the performing arts, there are no Juried Showcases at APAP.

This guide has been prepared for anyone who wants to take advantage of the many benefits of showcasing at APAP. There is a history of showcasing at the conference and over the years, procedures and policies have developed in order to ensure that showcasing takes place in a professional manner and that artists are presented in the best way possible during the conference.

If you are interested in showcasing as an artist, or as an agent or manager who represents artists, then this guide is for you.

We are here to help you have a positive experience showcasing at APAP.

Robert Baird
Coordinator, APAP Hilton Showcases

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A: The Basics

1. Why Showcase?

You have the potential of reaching an audience of nearly 600 presenting organizations – more than 3,500 presenting professionals – and 250 artist companies and artist management agencies from around the world at APAP|NYC. It is the most comprehensive opportunity in a year to experience a wide array of artists, work, genres, forms and formats.

If you decide to showcase, you need to be confident you have the capacity to create awareness of your showcase in advance of, during and after the conference. Showcases are a top reason for presenting professionals to attend APAP|NYC. Artist showcases and hospitality events produced by our members are what make APAP|NYC an exciting, global, live performance celebration throughout New York City and a good way to build your business.

2. Showcasing as a First-Time Attendee

We suggest that you register as a delegate the first time you plan to attend APAP|NYC to experience all aspects of the conference and gain insight as to the ways the conference will advance your business and to make contact with colleagues in the field. Experience the conference first -- network, visit the EXPO Hall, participate in plenary and professional development sessions and go to showcases -- before you invest the money, time, and effort to showcase. APAP|NYC offers you the opportunity to learn more about the field, the marketplace and who's leading the field. Getting the full conference experience will help you determine the best ways to present and promote your work or your artist's work in subsequent years. Careful planning is essential to a successful showcase and to achieving your business goals.

3. Deciding to Showcase

You should think carefully before deciding to invest the time, energy and significant resources required to produce an outstanding, well-produced, well-promoted and well-attended showcase. Ultimately, you are responsible for making your showcase a success. It takes not only money, but hard work and an ability to successfully promote your work to an audience whose time is stretched to the maximum during the five days of APAP|NYC. In order to maximize the effectiveness and promotion of your showcases, your decision to showcase should be made no later than **August 1** of the year prior to the January conference. You will need to spend time in the summer and early fall preparing/scheduling/designing your showcases – as well as marketing them to the presenting professionals you want to reach. Many presenters determine which showcases they will attend and who they will meet with during APAP|NYC by early November and certainly no later than December.

4. Factors to Consider

- You should have work that has a high degree of artistic integrity.
- A budget and plan to cover your expenses.
- A history of good relationships with prospective presenters who are or are likely to be interested in seeing and presenting your work or your artists.
- An understanding of the types of presenters who might be interested in your work or your artists.
- Managerial and administrative capacity to solicit and follow through on the interests of presenting professionals in you or your work prior to and after your showcase.
- Determine well in advance the type of venue in which your showcase will take place. Select the work you feel best represents your artistry and what you wish to have presented.

Some artists produce work-in-progress pieces during the conference. If you choose to do this, make sure the audience understands they are seeing a work that is not yet finished and has an opportunity to learn about the concept for and full realization of the work.

- Provide conference attendees with program notes, your contact and biographical information as well as an artist statement about the work. This can also be provided in advance of the conference and certainly during your showcase. If you are showcasing a work-in-progress, use program notes and an artist statement to give them a fuller idea of exactly what the piece they are seeing is to be like when it is fully produced.
- If you have a colleague who is well-respected in the field and who knows your work or has experience in your art form, ask him/her to introduce your work to the audience and ask this colleague to provide comments about your work for the program notes.
- You are responsible for the expenses and coordination of the venue, sound, lighting, instrument rental, tech crew, musicians, production manager, rehearsals and artists' contracts. As the producer you will manage sound checks, front of house, maintenance, artist and presenter hospitality, promotion, advertising and printing. Should you contract with a producer, you need to still be responsible for associated costs and follow up with those who attend your showcase.
- Consider requiring a reservation to attend your showcase (in the showcase listing). If you require reservations, you **MUST** list a contact person, phone number, and/or email address in your showcase listing. In lieu of requiring tickets or reservations, purchase a lead retrieval unit from the Arts Presenters' vendor, "Etouch", to capture the names and contact information of showcase attendees at the door or collect business cards of attendees at the door.

5. Expenses to Consider

- Rehearsal salaries and rehearsal space.
- Travel expenses to include roundtrip travel to New York City, housing, per diem and ground transportation in New York City.
- Freight for any costumes, props, sets or instruments.
- Phone bills, postage, overnight shipping, promotional materials, and advertising, APAP fees, which include membership dues, exhibit booth fees (if you are also exhibiting) and showcase listing fees.
- Space rental plus crew plus production costs to include: staging/flooring, lights, sound, backline and soft goods.
- Lead follow-up: telephone and email to presenters, printing and distribution of press kits, CDs, DVDs.
- Liability Insurance coverage required by the Hilton
- Hilton catering costs for presenters and artists in attendance

6. General Showcasing rules and requirements

- a) Any artist can appear in a showcase.
- b) In order to appear in the official showcase listings, an artist must be an APAP member or be formally affiliated with an APAP member or be registered to attend the APAP|NYC Conference.
- c) Showcasers are NOT required to be an exhibitor in the EXPO Hall (but see below re promoting your showcase).
- d) Showcases are generally 15 or 20 minutes in length. It is strongly recommended that you not organize a showcase for more than an hour or for one set. Conference attendees have the opportunity to see an incredibly large amount of work in the space of four or five days. So, the length of time someone can commit to any one showcase will be limited. Should you decide to showcase a full length work, be

clear in all your promotions, and confirm the length of the showcase with all who plan to attend.

B: Showcasing Options

Once you have decided to showcase, you have basically three options:

- a) Purchasing a showcasing slot or slots from an APAP Showcase Producer
- b) Booking a room at the Hilton (if one is available) in which you can showcase or sell showcase slots, in effect, becoming an APAP Showcase producer
- c) Booking a venue outside the Hilton

1. Showcase Slots in Showcase Rooms in the Hilton

Each year experienced APAP Showcase producers book a room at the Hilton and offer showcasing slots to prospective showcasers. A list of showcase Producers is available each year from Robert Baird:

robert@bairdartists.com

Slots can run from a few hundred dollars to well over a thousand dollars depending upon the size of the room and the technical production required for the showcase. Before you book a slot(s) in a room:

- Obtain information or a fact sheet that lists the services the producer will provide to produce and support your showcase.
- Understand and confirm your costs and share of showcase expenses, such as production or equipment costs, rehearsals, sound checks, insurance, etc.
- Understand and confirm the details of your showcase schedule - performance and rehearsal times, green room availability, etc.
- Understand and confirm what, if any, support the producer provides before, during and after the Showcase in terms of cultivating showcase attendee interest.

- Determine in advance and confirm with the showcase producer when and how you will obtain the list of those who attended your showcase (if applicable).
- Make sure you have everything in writing and be sure you understand and formalize everything that has been promised to you by the showcase producer responsible for the showcase.

2. Showcase Rooms at the Hilton

All showcasing space within the Hilton New York is allotted by APAP. Each year the needs of the conference may change and as such, the availability of rooms for showcasing may change. Once the conference room schedule is determined, APAP will begin the showcase space rental negotiation process. The Hilton and APAP work together to define specific showcase locations in the hotel, security needs, codes of conduct for showcasers and showcase management standards that are part of the APAP contract with the Showcase Producer. Showcase Producers who are found in violation of these contract requirements will have their showcases closed down immediately during the conference and will potentially face the loss of the ability to showcase at the hotel in future years.

There are showcasing rooms on the second and third floor of the Hilton and these are usually leased from year to year by seasoned APAP Showcase Producers. These Producers make showcasing slots available to artists interested in showcasing.

Showcase Producers who have leased a room have first right of refusal in subsequent years, but occasionally, one of these rooms becomes available and a waiting list is maintained each year. To get on the list, contact Robert Baird, Coordinator, APAP Hilton Showcases: robert@bairdartists.com

Room rentals run from \$1500 to \$5000 per day. Anyone leasing space at the Hilton is required to abide by the Showcase Producer Regulations and the Hilton NY Production Guidelines.

3. VIP Hospitality Suites at the Hilton

Arts Presenters offers conference sponsorship opportunities that include access to VIP Hospitality Suites on the **4th Floor of the Hilton New York**. Many sponsors choose to use these rooms for showcasing or welcoming clients. For information on APAP|NYC sponsorship and access to a VIP Hospitality Suite, contact Megan Redmond, mredmond@artspresenters.org. Access to a VIP Hospitality Suite is only one of the many benefits of sponsorship at the conference. Once the sponsorship is confirmed and an agreement is signed with APAP, the actual scheduling of how the room is used is the responsibility of the sponsor and not APAP. Sponsors planning to use a VIP Hospitality Suite for showcasing are required to abide by the Showcase Producer Regulations and the Hilton NY Production Guidelines.

4. Showcases Outside the Hilton

While the hotel is a convenient location, space is limited, room sizes are limited and production costs must be considered and tend to be high. Showcases are held throughout the city in a variety of theatre, club and other venues. Presenters travel to many locations throughout the city and outside the hotel to see artists of interest, and many showcases are produced outside the hotel. A list of venues is available from APAP.

5. Scheduling a Showcase

The most popular days for showcasing are Saturday and Sunday evenings during the conference, when the greatest number of attendees are in New

York. These days are almost always the most competitive in terms of numbers of showcases and artists to see. Many showcases are repeated in order to offer presenters and other conference attendees as many opportunities as possible to see an artist's work.

C: Promoting Your Showcase

1. Expo Hall

Showcases and the EXPO Hall are the two most prominent reasons presenters from around the world attend APAP|NYC. Many of the scheduled showcases are advertised in exhibit booths in the EXPO Hall. Most exhibitors and showcase producers try to schedule showcases outside of established EXPO Hall hours. The EXPO Hall is open to all conference attendees during accessible hours, though booths are not required to be staffed at these times. Please plan accordingly.

2. APAP Resources

Arts Presenters helps conference attendees find out about your showcase in the Showcase Listing Book and on the APAP|NYC website in an online showcase directory. The Showcase Listing Book is considered the most authoritative guide to the showcases taking place throughout New York City during the Members Conference. If you decide to showcase without being included in this publication, you risk losing the ability to find the broadest possible audience. Please keep in mind that you must be a current APAP member and a registered conference attendee or affiliated with a registered conference attendee in order to have your showcases included in the official APAP|NYC Conference Showcase listing and in the online showcase directory. APAP provides a kiosk onsite at the conference for registered attendees to find out about any late changes to showcases that are listed.

- **Showcase Listings: \$70 per listing**
 Any registered conference attendee may purchase a showcase listing for \$70 per listing. APAP promotes showcases in our Showcase Listing Book distributed onsite to registered APAP|NYC attendees and in the online showcase directory. You can manage your showcase listing using the online Showcase Management System. You can [log into the system](#), or [visit our Showcase Help Center](#) for tutorial videos, instructions, and more FAQs.
- **On-site Showcase Listing Book Advertising**
 Along with the online directory, this is the bible of showcase information. Attendees use the book onsite to finalize plans, look for opportunities to see new artists, and make their schedules. It is an excellent opportunity to provide the latest information about your organization's activities and showcase plans.
- **Online Advertising**
 Place your ad online on the most-trafficked areas of the APAP|NYC website. Online ads will appear on each page view, providing advertisers with clickable links to their websites. This is a great way to communicate about your artists and their work.
- **Tote Bag Advertising**
 Get your message in the hands of each arriving presenter. Insert a CD, flyer, brochure, water bottle or pen (you cannot advertise a conference showcase).
- ***Inside Arts* Ad Savings for Sponsors**
 Extend your conference sponsorship with a year-round presence in front of the thousands of readers for Arts Presenter's premier magazine, *Inside Arts*.

2. Other Resources

The presenting and touring field places high value on professional relationships that develop over time between presenters, managers, artists, producers, artist agents and other presenting professionals. APAP recommends potential showcasers research the types of artists with whom different presenters have worked previously and begin to develop a relationship with these presenters in advance of the conference.

Complement your research with targeted mailings, telephone and individual personalized email contact. Develop a promotional plan to ensure your showcase is well attended.

- A direct mail or targeted flyer invitation and/or press release to presenters.
- Personalized email announcements (not lots of generic e-blasts).
- Telephone contact with the presenters you feel are your strongest potential venue/programming matches.
- Use of your website and any current online multimedia materials (audio, video, etc.) you have for the artist and artist's work.
- If you are also an exhibitor, promote your booth location with your showcase information and vice versa.

If you are an exhibitor, you should have flyers or some promotional material available in your booth. Exhibitors, showcase producers and artists cannot place promotional and advertising materials of any kind in any common area of the hotel or at conference events, workshops and other showcases. No public announcements at any conference activity or showcase can be made about your showcases.

3. Promoting to Agent and Managers

Agents, managers and producers have a heavy schedule of meetings, showcases and their own roster of artists to represent during APAP|NYC. You should not plan your time to search for or obtain an agent or manager in the EXPO Hall or during the conference. Exhibiting agents, managers, producers and artists spend considerable time and dollars to exhibit and are specifically there to promote the work and artists they are currently representing. They have scheduled their meetings in advance of coming to the conference and will not have the time to talk with you about representation. If you have chosen to showcase and have researched appropriate agencies, managements or producers for your kind of work, be sure to invite them and their entire staff to attend the showcase and plan to follow up after the conference.

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from the BAM! Baird Artists Management
Consulting website: www.bairdartists.com



Robert Baird, President of Baird Artists Management, is now available for consultation and advice regarding Canadian and U.S. regulations and information for performers, agents/managers and performing arts venues. Mr. Baird has been in the performing arts for over fifty years and has had distinguished careers in education, publishing and musical theatre. He served on the Board of Directors (2008-2010) and was President (2011-2013) of the North American Performing Arts Managers and Agents (NAPAMA). He was Treasurer and Vice-President of Festivals and Events Ontario (FEO) and served on that Board on various committees (2010-2013). Mr. Baird received the Arts Northwest Coyote Award and the Performing Arts Exchange Mary Beth Treen Award in 2012. He is Chair of Team Agent Network (TAN) and APAP Showcase Coordinator.

Robert is a regular columnist in *International Musician: The Official Journal of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada* (Circulation 100,000+ Monthly) where he writes a monthly column entitled "Crossing Borders". The column focuses on what artists need to know to get into Canada or the United States. He also writes a monthly column entitled "Artist Manager's Toolkit" for *International Arts Manager*, based in London, England.

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