



# Boulder County Facilities Directory Overview

**Introduction:** The Boulder County Performing Arts Facilities Directory was prepared by the Boulder County Arts Alliance in cooperation with the Dance Bridge (funded by the Boulder Arts Commission). The directory contains detailed technical information (where available) for each venue such as stage type, back stage and front of house facilities, audience facilities and seating, and lighting and sound systems.

**Overview:** This directory has three sections:

1. **Choosing and Securing a Facility** – This section contains general recommendations on choosing and working with a facility.
2. **Facilities Directory** – Alphabetical listing of facilities categorized as follows:
  - a) Auditoriums (with seating capacity greater than 500)
  - b) Dance Studios
  - c) Other Performance Spaces Without Stages
  - d) Outdoor Stages
  - e) Small Stages (with seating capacity less than 500)

Each listing in the directory contains: Facility name, address, and contact information, Short description of facility, Seating capacity, Availability, Cost.

3. **Appendix** – The appendix contains technical details (when available) about each facility. If an Appendix entry exists for a particular facility, it is noted in the Facilities Directory. Facilities are listed in the Appendix in alphabetical order.

Information available in the Appendix includes: Stage specifications, Backstage and Seating specifications, Front of house description, Lighting and Sound specifications, AV equipment suitability and availability, Listing of technical director & contact information, and other technical staff, Notes on pros and cons of venue, and other comments from users.

# Choosing and Securing a Facility

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Long-range planning cannot be emphasized enough! If it takes a year of design and/or choreography and rehearsals to develop your performance material, then it takes at least that long to locate and contract a suitable facility, define your technical needs, and ensure that they are implemented in the best way possible. In addition, advance planning with publicity and marketing will help you attract the audiences you deserve.

## Choosing a facility that matches your performance needs and budget:

The right facility for you depends on the technical needs of your performance, the audience size you anticipate, and your budget restrictions. Answering the following questions will help you clarify these things and narrow your search.

- 1. What are your technical needs?** Do you need over dozens of lights in the air including side lights, a multi-channel, programmable ETC light board with memory for 999 cues, with appropriate dimmers and channels, etc.? Realize that all of these will require operators/technicians to program them as well as designers, and a stage manager to call those 999 cues. Or, can you do well with enough lights to give you a stage wide light wash, which could possibly vary on coolness or warmth, and one or two specials? Maybe all you really need is a lights on/lights off set up, perhaps with dimmer switches.
  - a. What are your stage needs?** What size and type of stage is suitable for your production? How much space does your theatre/dance personnel, their movements, and props require? Do you need wings? Do you need an upstage scrim and crossover behind it? Can you think of ways to do with less? Do you need a sprung wooden floor, or is a pine floor laid on a sub-floor, or carpet adequate.
- 2. What size audience do you expect and for how many performances?** A good place to start is with your anticipated audience size. What does your “track record” say to what audience you can expect to attract? Our experience tells us that only established companies and/or artists who have built a local audience over several years can expect a reasonable audience for venues like the Boulder Theater or a weekend at The Dairy Performance Space. Historically, new companies lacking “name brand” artists can expect audiences of 40 to 100. When starting out, some of the smaller, more intimate venues are good options.
- 3. What rental cost will your budget allow?** Consider not only the cost of the venue, but also the cost of technical personnel (designers, sound board operator, light board operator, lighting designer, stage manager, stage hands, etc.). Budget can be the most critical factor in terms of choosing a venue. You may need to hire a skilled director or choreographer to scale down a performance to an affordable venue. Often less is best. 600 people watching a dance in Macky Auditorium can look like an almost empty house, whereas 75 in the Chautauqua Community House can be standing room only. Most productions can be scaled down and/or adapted to smaller, more intimate venues that bring audiences closer to, and more involved in the performance, *and* you can stay within your budget!
- 4. What are your backstage needs?** Do you require separate dressing & rest rooms for male and female personnel? A green room?

5. **Is the venue located in a place your anticipated audience can find and get to easily, and do you have front of house or box office needs?** Is there suitable parking? Is the facility handicap accessible? Are there public restrooms? Do you need a box office, lobby, telephone, website ticket reservations & sales, or can a employee/friend/volunteer sit at a table and sell tickets before your performance?

### **Approaching and securing a venue:**

The contacts for each facility are listed in the directory. Technical personnel are listed in the Appendix.

1. Make a list of the venues in the directory that meet the requirements above.
2. Contact each venue to find out if the space is available for the date(s) of your performance. Note that some facilities suggest securing space as much as a year in advance, so be sure to schedule as earlier as you can.
3. Call the technical contact, if such exists, about specific questions you have concerning technical needs. Note that many venues charge for technical consultation, so ask how “consultation” is defined in time and content before spending an hour talking to the technical personnel.
4. Once you and the venue’s staff have agreed upon your performance at that venue, **SECURE YOUR DATE(S)!** This means executing a contract, so the dates are guaranteed for your performance (outside of any disaster). This contract may require that you pay for all or part of the rental costs up front. Unless the contact, or this directory, indicates such rental costs are negotiable, we advise against trying to bargain a venue down in cost. These venues have their own overhead costs, and their rental costs are carefully determined. If you feel you need a lower cost, you may need to find a different, less expensive venue, or adapt your performance accordingly.

Good luck in your search! We would appreciate any comments you have about this directory and how you were able to use it. Boulder County Arts Alliance, 2590 Walnut, Suite 9, Boulder, CO 80302-5700. (303) 447-2422. [info@bouldercountyarts.org](mailto:info@bouldercountyarts.org).

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