

# THE PRODUCER'S PERSPECTIVE

A BROADWAY PRODUCER'S OPINION ON EVERYTHING BROADWAY AND BEYOND

**PRO**


## Happy July, PROs!

This month is when we celebrate Independence Day in this country. And it's also when I like to celebrate the Independent Artist.

This is such an incredible time to be an Independent Producer, Writer, Director or whatever you are. There are so many things that you can do now on your own that you

couldn't do years ago. You can now get your work up and out into the world cheaper and faster than ever...increasing the odds that you'll get it all the way to your goal.

And being Independent means that you can control your own destiny. There is no one out there telling you that you can't do something (other than yourself sometimes, right?). And I want to celebrate each and every one of you in our fast growing community of independent artists and entrepreneurs. You

have also made a decision to invest time, energy, and bucks into your education and into yourselves and I promise you, it will pay off. And hey—if you aren't willing to invest in yourself, how will anyone else?

Here's to your Independence.

Go get 'em!

Ken

### WRITING FOR PROS

#### *You're Not a Writer. You're a Sculptor.*

*Starting a new project is one of the most vulnerable moments we have as writers. Is the idea any good? And if it is a good idea, am I good enough to write it?*

*Read more on page 2.*

### MARKETING FOR PROS

#### *How Much is That Doggie in The Window? Who Cares?*

*When there is an event that the customer wants to see, there are plenty of people that will pay whatever the price is, especially if the quantity of tickets is limited.*

*Read more on page 3.*

### RAISING MONEY FOR PROS

#### *The Most Important Ingredient You Need to Raise Money*

*Numbers are essential. But even the best financial plan or best recoupment schedule means bupkis unless the product is fantastic.*

*Read more on page 4.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Wednesday, July 12, 2017 | 7 pm**

Monthly Webinar: *Websites: Why You Need One and What It Should Look Like*

**Wednesday, August 9, 2017 | 7 pm**

Monthly Webinar: *How to Start and Run a Non-Profit Theatre Company*

*As a member of PRO, you're automatically registered for the Monthly Webinar!  
To sign up for other seminars or events, visit [www.theproducersperspective.com](http://www.theproducersperspective.com).*

THE PRODUCER'S PERSPECTIVE

## SUPER CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 11 & 12, 2017  
NEW YORK CITY

**PRO members save \$300 with code EARLYPRO thru July 14 ONLY!**

[www.theproducersperspective.com/conference](http://www.theproducersperspective.com/conference)

# You're Not a Writer. You're a Sculptor.



After about a year of batting around ideas, one of my writing teams and I finally came up with an idea for a brand new musical. (And that's "write," I said *one* of my teams—writing with a few different partners helps increase your odds of something breaking through.)

It's a good idea. I think.

Actually, I'm not sure. There's something there. But the only way I'll ever know if it's a good idea or not...is if I write.

Now comes the hard part. To begin. As the old Irving Berlin song goes, "Where do we start..."

Starting a new project is one of the most vulnerable moments we have as writers. Is

the idea any good? And if it is a good idea, am I good enough to write it? What will my collaborators think when I show them the first scene? Why didn't I go to law school when I got in twenty years ago?!

All these questions come up (that last one comes up for me all the time) when you're staring at that blank screen, trying to figure out how to begin.

*How do I start?*

I forget that I'm a writer. And I imagine I'm a sculptor.

When a sculptor begins work, they have an idea of what they want their final piece to look like, but they need something to work from first...so they plop a huge blob of clay in the middle of the room.

It's misshapen, bumpy, chunky, the wrong color, and just a plain sorry sight of a piece of art. And that's all that I expect out of the first few pages of my project too.

When I start writing a new show, I throw up a big blob of clay on the page. It's got misspellings, formatting errors, incomplete

lines of dialogue, descriptions of eventual dialogue that I haven't come up with yet, and so on.

It's a sorry sight of a "scene." But it's a start.

And when it's done, I can go back, and smooth it out. Take off a chunk. Mold into the rest. Polish it up. And eventually it'll start looking like something worth showing other people.

And I'd never get to that point, without beginning in the first place.

Don't put so much pressure on yourself when you're starting something new. Check your perfectionism at the door, and channel your inner sculptor. Throw out your lump of clay and then you can make it better.

I'd bet you a thousand dollars that you have an idea for a new play, screenplay, one person show, or something in your head right now that you haven't started for a million reasons. Am I right?

Start today. Take 15 minutes and put a blob on a page. We'll worry about making it perfect tomorrow.

## ..... FEATURED PRO MEMBER .....



**Name:**  
Cherie Carter-Scott

**Where You're From:** New York City

**PROfession:** Writer

*What projects are you currently working on?*

CCS: My early life in theatre, followed by 43 years in personal development and coaching, have enabled me to write (with my sister and business partner, Lynn U. Stewart) *The Workshop!* a musical that touches the core of what it means to be human. We have written

our musical based on a workshop we have been presenting for the last 43 years around the world. We have set the date of October 17 to complete our 29-hour reading.

*Why did you first decide to join PRO as an Associate Producer?*

CCS: I decided to join PRO as an Associate Producer after I was introduced to Ken several months ago. I believe that he graciously opens the door to those of us who are not "insiders" in the NYC theatre community. Ken builds the bridge from

our passion for theatre to the launching our theatre dreams on the New York stage.

*Why did you decide to upgrade to a Lead Producer?*

CCS: I upgraded after I met Ken in person earlier this month. I trust Ken and trust is required to make significant steps in this industry. I trust that if Ken can help, he will.

*What have you found to be the most valuable part of being a PRO member?*

CCS: I LOVE the emails I receive from Ken and I thoroughly enjoyed reading his book!

## OVERHEARD IN SHUBERT ALLEY

### Here are the rumors people are whispering about these days...

Two Tony Award-Winners will appear in this season's *Once On This Island*. (I wonder where I heard that rumor).

...

The Tony Awards are safe at Radio City for another year as a shake up at that org puts their summer spectacular on ice. (Maybe they should do something on actual ice!)

*Got a rumor? Send 'em to me at [ken@theproducersperspective.com](mailto:ken@theproducersperspective.com).*



“Making money is art  
and working is art and  
good business is the best art.”

~Andy Warhol

MARKETING FOR PROS

## How Much is That Doggie in the Window? Who Cares?

Broadway is doing bigger business than ever before. This season, Broadway shows earned a whopping \$1.45 BILLION at the box office, with some shows (*Hamilton*... cough, cough!) earning \$3,000,000 per week several times through the year by themselves!

What's driving these grosses higher?

It's not more shows. Playing weeks were actually down this year 4.1%.

It's not more people. Attendance was actually down this year 0.38%

So what the @#\$\$ is it?

It's higher ticket prices.

Broadway ticket sales have gone up as they usually do, but premium tickets, or variably priced tickets (based on demand, like your airline ticket to see Mom over Christmas), are skyrocketing our figures to new heights.

*Hamilton*, *Hello*, *Dolly!* and other “must see” events are proving once again, that believe it or not, people are NOT price resistant.

They are value resistant.

When there is an event that the customer wants to see, there are plenty of people that will pay whatever the price is, especially if the quantity of tickets is limited (like a star-driven revival for only a few weeks).

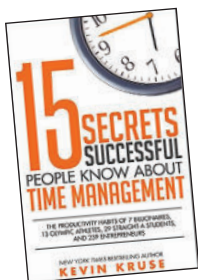
Your job if you're producing a show is to make the value of the experience super high, so your price can get up there as well. Of course that means producing a fantastic show. But it's also about the experience of seeing the show.

And don't feel guilty about increasing your prices. The higher your price your ticket, the more revenue you receive. The more revenue you receive, the more likely you will be able to do another show!

And to keep your show accessible, make sure you have some lower price tickets (lottery, student rush, balcony seats, etc.) for those that can't afford the “Stub-Hub”-like prices.

If only the airlines did that.

WHAT KEN'S READING THIS MONTH



### 15 Secrets Successful People Know About Time Management

by Kevin Kruse

What if a few new habits could dramatically increase your productivity, and even 5X or 10X in key areas? What if you could get an hour a day to read, exercise or spend quality time with your family? Learn how you can from billionaires, Olympic athletes and over 200 entrepreneurs – including Mark Cuban, Pat Flynn, James Altucher and many more.

LAST MONTH AT THE  
BROADWAY BOX OFFICE

### June's Box Office is Bustin' Out All Over!

Although ratings were down for this year's Tony Awards (as expected, since last year's featured the super-hyped *Hamilton*), enough people watched and then, more importantly, bought tickets (!) to surge our overall box office to astronomical highs.

Winners like *Hello Dolly* and *Dear Evan Hansen* saw substantial increases as a result of their wins...which is actually a new phenomenon for sold out hits that then win a Tony. It used to be that if you were sold out, there were no seats available, no matter how well you did on Tony night, and all that you could do was build an advance. Now, with variable pricing, producers can hold back some seats and jack up the price, grossing more in the short term—while still growing the advance for people that don't want to pay the premium prices (almost \$1k for Bette Midler in *Dolly*).

All of this attributed to super-sized increases in our aggregate gross over last year, and a nice jump in our attendance as well.

It's going to be a strong summer on Broadway, especially since none of the big shows have announced closing, which is sometimes common right after the telecast.

JUNE 2016  
BROADWAY GROSS

**\$138,683,473**

...

JUNE 2017  
BROADWAY GROSS

**\$168,667,532**

Increase/Decrease: +21.62%

...

JUNE 2016  
BROADWAY ATTENDANCE

**1,355,099**

...

JUNE 2017  
BROADWAY ATTENDANCE

**1,462,191**

Increase/Decrease: +7.09%

...

Get the weekly grosses  
by subscribing to my blog.



# The Most Important Ingredient You Need to Raise Money

Broadway is a very insulated industry. We tend to do only what other people in our industry have done.

That's why I'm always reading about what other industries do to create and develop product, market that product, and yep, even raise money for that product.

One of my favorite sources for insider tips like these from other industries is *Entrepreneur Magazine*. In the 21st century, everyone is an entrepreneur—especially artists—and there's a lot to learn in this mag. So, next time you're at an airport, pick one up!

*Entrepreneur* had a feature a while back on Jay Palmer, a franchisee of Floyd's 99 barbershop, who talked about his recent financing woes and his inability to get a loan. So, he was forced to do what all of us do every day...appeal to a private investor.

Here's what Jay said about his search:

"We found a personal investor and brought him into the shop. We gave him a shave and a haircut, [showing] him that the concept is great and the experience is

unbelievable—great music, great vibe, great atmosphere. I wasn't even there [when he visited the store]. After all that, he was happy to write a check for \$150,000. He had some financial questions, but [it came down to] seeing a stream of people coming in and out the door, knowing our customers and our employees are happy, and realizing this is a good business."

Jay's story once again proves that the most important P in the 4Ps of Marketing is Product.

Numbers are essential. But even the best financial plan or best recoupment schedule means bupkis unless the product is fantastic (or as I say, you need "fans" to be "fan"-tastic). Think about it... it would be great if you could recoup your show in 3.5 weeks at 35%, and that certainly decreases the risk. But if your show is *Moose Murders* then what good does that killer financial plan get you?

So what's to learn from Jay the entrepreneur?

Create a great show. Then get it up on its feet, in the most fully realized way possible (the money I raised for *The Awesome*

## The Definition of the 4 P's

### PRODUCT

A good or service being offered

### PRICE

The cost consumers pay for a product

### PLACE

Where the product is sold and how it is delivered to the market

### PROMOTION

Includes advertising, public relations and promotional strategy

*80s Prom* was the easiest I ever raised—because the workshop WAS the show.)

Because if you build it, they will write the check.

In case you're wondering... Is it possible to raise money for a show that ain't so good? Yep, after all, they did capitalize *Moose Murders*. You just have to work a lot harder.

And who wants to do that?

## ON THE PODCAST

The Producer's Perspective Podcast has become a veritable who's who of Broadway insiders. As a member of PRO, you're the first to know who's coming up:

- Robert Fried - Theatrical Accountant for both Commercial and Non-Profit Theatre

## ON THE BLOG

Just in case you missed it, here were the top read articles on the blog last month:

- What Happens When Advertisers Fish In The Same Pond
- My Three Predictions On What The Broadway Landscape Will Look Like in 5 Years
- Miss *Daddy Long Legs*? It's Baaaaaack!

Make sure you don't miss a single blog. Subscribe today.

## CONNECT WITH KEN

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## UPDATES FROM PROS

*Dames of Our Lives*  
written and performed by PRO  
**Maggie McDonald Condon**

has been accepted to both NY Summerfest and the United Solo Theatre Festival. Maggie's one-woman show will be performed at NY Summerfest beginning August 21, 2017 and at the United Solo Theatre Festival on October 3, 2017.

*Any Which Way Thou Wouldst Have It*  
written by and starring PRO

**George Rady**

opened at the John Cullum Theatre on June 30th. The production, also produced by Rady, will run until July 23rd. For more info, visit [anywhichwaythouwouldhaveit.com](http://anywhichwaythouwouldhaveit.com).

Got a project update? Email me at [ken@theproducersperspective.com](mailto:ken@theproducersperspective.com)