

# THE PRODUCER'S PERSPECTIVE

GETTING YOU TO THE NEXT STAGE.



Happy 2019, Pros!

Welcome to what is going to be a fantastic year, both in pursuit of your goals, as well as in our Pro community. I've been so inspired by all of your incredible work and dedication over the past year that I've doubled down on how we can help you get to your goals even faster.

We just announced our Pro Reading Series, which will get one of you produced in New York City each and every quarter. We've got a "surprise" bonus every single month (and oooohhh there are some fun ones coming up). And if you remember my announcement at this year's conference, I've committed to investing \$10,000 in TWO shows this year to members of my Inner Circle.

And lots more to come. We have a meeting each and every week where we dedicate time to brainstorming what else we can do to help you with whatever challenges you are facing. So make sure you let us know how we can help!

Thanks for being a part of our community and let's make this your best year yet.

Go get 'em.



Ken

P.S. If you haven't set your New Year's Resolutions or 2019 goals yet, make sure you check out the free webinar I did this month called, "How To Set New Year's Resolutions You Stick With and Actually Accomplish!" It's in the archives!

## IN THIS ISSUE

### RAISING MONEY FOR PROS

*Someone that you don't know may want to give you money for your project.*

Page 2

...

### FEATURED PRO ARTICLE

*Producing Your First Off-Broadway Show - A First Time Producer's Perspective*

Page 3

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Office Hours with Ken**  
January 21 | 7-8 pm ET

**Breakfast with Ken - NYC**  
January 22 | 8 am ET

**PRO Orlando Social/Game Night**  
January 29 | 6:30 pm ET

**Inner Circle Weekend**  
February 2-3

**Producer Pitch Night - NYC**  
February 20 | 7 pm ET



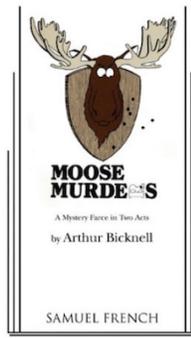
**Mark your calendar for our 3rd Annual Producer's Perspective Super Conference on November 9 & 10, 2019**

## Someone that you don't know may want to give you money for your project.

One of the most FAQ I get is "How do I raise money for my show?"

While raising money seems like one of the greatest challenges you will face, it's not. Creating a great show is a lot harder than raising money for it (and if you do the creation right, the raising part will be easier than passing Obama's Health Care plan if Scott Brown wasn't in office).

Raising money takes creativity. There are people out there that will fund anything. Think about it. Imagine the worst show, the worst art exhibit, the worst book, restaurant, movie, product, etc. that you have ever paid for. Someone invested in it or donated to make it happen. And if those crap-tastic things can find funding, certainly you can, too!



I call this The Moose Murders Factor. And I remind myself of this mantra whenever I start searching for the right people to invest in my shows.

They're out there...you just have to find them.

Here's a website that's trying to help folks like you find funders.

It's called Kickstarter.com and it's a self-proclaimed "funding platform for artists, designers, filmmakers, musicians, journalists, inventors, explorers..."

## KICKSTARTER

Here's how it works:

You post a project with a fundraising goal. People see it (and you push people to it). People fund it, sometimes a dollar at a time. You reach your goal, you get the cash. You don't reach your goal, you get zilch (this more or less guarantees the funders that your project will be completed).

Pretty simple, right?

My only annoyance? Theater isn't a category/tag. While you can post a project about anything (and there are a few theater projects on the site), you can't filter by it. Once again...dude, you live in Brooklyn, there are a zillion theater peeps living seven to a room just a few blocks from you. Help 'em out!

And if we can't get some assistance from KS, maybe one of you entrepreneurial web geniuses out there will start your own version just for the non-profit performing arts.

Moose Murders got money. So can you.



### KEN'S PRO TIP

*If you want to get work, you gotta network!*



### LAST MONTH'S OFFICE HOURS

#### New York:

- Getting your show to New York on any level should be your goal.
- If you want your show to reach the widest audience possible, New York is the place to go.
- NYC is where the BUYERS are.

#### Readings:

- Exude a message of readiness by picking a larger scale space. If it's unpolished and in the works, do it at a casual rehearsal studio.
- Make your speech before to show people who you are. It's small, but important. Keep it short and simple to respect people's time.
- After the reading, thank people for coming and you'll be able to gauge their reactions.

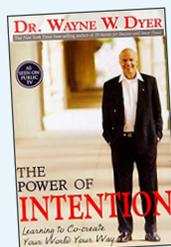
#### What advantages and disadvantages are therefor producing under a nonprofit or LLC?

- Cheaper rates for reading spaces
- Have to be in the right state of mind. Depends on how you work. Are you willing to be a good sales person and willing to talk about the money you may lose?

### WHAT KEN'S READING

#### The Power of Intention

by Wayne Dyer



Dr. Wayne W. Dyer has researched intention as a force in the universe that allows the act of creation to take place. This book explores intention—as something you do—as an energy you're a part of. We're all intended here through the invisible power of intention. This is the first book to look at intention as a field of energy that you can access to begin co-creating your life with the power of intention.

# Producing Your First Off-Broadway Show - A First Time Producer's Perspective

By Lead Pro/Inner Circle Member, Leo Schwartz

My musical, *The Book of Merman*, opened Off-Broadway on October 21, 2018. I've learned a great deal from producing this show. My first suggestion is to surround yourself with good people. They need to be not only competent, but also someone you want to be stuck with in the trenches. I hired and fired based on an individual's ability to keep their calm under fire. If they were hysterics from the start, I didn't want to be stuck with them. If they were imperious, I didn't hire them. If they said, "that's not the way it's done," I began to disentangle myself from them. I have 30+ years of sales, marketing, and training staff. The rules of sales and management have not changed that much. People may come up with new flavors of ice cream, but it's still frozen, sweetened cow juice.

Hire a good General Manager. What constitutes "good" in my book? They must not be hysterics. They must be willing to educate. They must be willing to follow

my direction, even when it is a new way of looking at their business. While on the subject of vendors, don't expect that your advertising agency will sell tickets. Advertising doesn't sell tickets. Word of mouth does. Learn the difference between advertising and promotion. You will probably need a bigger reserve than you originally budgeted to get your show up and running in the black. My suggestion is whatever your reserve is, look to double it. Raise that money. Do as many promotions and events as you can. Get your crack PR team to get your cast interviewed ad nauseum.

I've only got three paragraphs, so this last one is going to be one/two punches: 1) Always ask if there's a cheaper alternative. 2) Distrust people who tell you "that's not the way it's done" when you've been successful doing it that way for 30+ years. Yes...there's a story there. 4) Do NOT go to Off-Broadway without a regional production. Let someone else work your bugs out for you. It's cheaper.

5) Rethink your title. No one knows you or your show. A great title is curb appeal. We had a great advance solely on the catchiness of the title. 6) Do NOT go to Off-Broadway without a regional production. Let someone else work your bugs out for you. It's cheaper. Gosh...I said that twice. It must be important. 7) Hire a director who will help you get that show New York ready. We listened to our director. We disagreed on execution, but we listened. In the end, we got a great product. 8) Money. You just gotta have it. If you don't raise it, then it's gonna be out of your pocket. 9) Don't hesitate to reach out and ask for help. 10) Nothing....NOTHING...is quite like sitting in the audience opening night and letting the laughter and applause wash over you. I purposely did not applaud songs because I wanted to just enjoy the sound of the audience's warm enthusiastic embrace. OMG... it's better than any drug I tried in the 1980's, and I tried many. The experience of being in that audience makes it all worth it.

## FEATURED PRO MEMBER



**Name:**

Michael E. Merritt

**Where You're From:**

Ohio originally. Go Bucks! Now I live between Orlando, FL and New York City.

**Profession:** The last several years have been spent writing. But now, thanks to PRO, I'm soon to be launching 21st and 10th Theatricals and Oddities. It's my new dream to produce. Not only theatre, but people. Basically I want to pay it forward and just help people. In my spare time, I am an ER nurse in one of the craziest ER's in America, Bellevue Hospital in New York City.

**What projects are you working on?**

MM: I have two projects I'm developing: *Passing by Pixie's*, *A New Musical Extravaganza* and *My Brother's Keeper*, *A New American Musical*. *Passing by Pixie's* is my primary project. It's about a woman who moves from Mississippi to New York City with her Aunt Magnolia in 1939. They purchase a run-down theater and transform it into a Burlesque and Variety Theater. It ends during the Great Theater Massacre

of 1982 where Pixie ends up trying to save her theater (and Broadway) from a sleazy real estate developer. It's a very funny and poignant look at old New York City show business and the afterlife.

**Why did you join PRO?**

MM: I purchased one of Ken's programs a few years ago about producing and I started following his blogs. I did script consulting with Ken and received such great information about my script. Then, when I started receiving information about PRO, I knew I needed to at least give it a chance. I've learned more and met more people in a few months than I did for five years. For the first time ever, I really feel like I am part of the industry. I'm a playwright and a producer and I'm here to stay! I can't wait to advance with PRO and get my musicals on stage!

**What do you look for in a collaborator, and how do you seek out creative partners?**

MM: I seek out collaborators by networking and sending out a lot of emails. I see cabarets now. I see small shows. I go to where they are. I watch a lot of videos on Youtube. You'd be surprised how many musical theater writers put stuff on Youtube. I look for like-

minded people. People who are kind. People who want to help others. We are all in this together, so why not help each other? I like to reach out to people who are not well known because I feel they might be where I am and perhaps they can relate to the struggles and disappointments we all feel. My mentor, Frank Evans, passed away a couple years ago. I remember saying to him, "Frank, who am I to think I can do this? I'm a nobody in this industry. No one knows me." In his wisdom, he said, "Well then, make yourself known." And that is exactly what I am doing. Thanks Frank!

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

MM: I love office hours. Where else can we get one-on-one time with someone who's as knowledgeable as Ken? But, then, I love the courses and webinars and all the goodies we have access to. There's just so much info at my fingertips. I love getting invites to industry readings. I love the mixers! I love being part of all PRO has to offer. And mostly, I love the people I have met through PRO. I know, that's a lot of love!

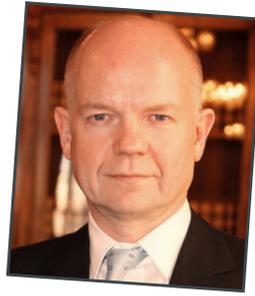
**Want to recommend a Pro for our next feature? Email [summer@davenporttheatrical.com](mailto:summer@davenporttheatrical.com)**

PRO QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“There’s only one growth strategy...  
Hard Work.”

~William Hague

Are you following Ken on Instagram? He posts a new inspirational quote on his whiteboard every morning! Follow him @kendavenportbway.



PRO UPDATES & CLASSIFIEDS

ANNA SIMONE SCOTT is having a reading of her new full length play, *Tough 2 Love*, at Theatre West writers workshop in Los Angeles on January 15.

Also seeking a director for her play, *The Grass Couch*, developed in NY with major Broadway actors.

CHARLOTTE DORE is looking for a arranger or collaborator for her show. Email rosalitasuppets@aol.com for more info.

MARLA MASE’S rock and roll rumination *Miracles~Lost & Found* will be performed at White Eagle Hall on January 24.



ON THE BLOG | Top read articles last month:

- An idea I don’t know how to execute. Maybe you do?
• 3 Reasons Why I’m Thankful for Bruce Springsteen
• Broadway’s Top 5 Moments in 2018

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

CONNECT WITH KEN

- Facebook: www.facebook.com/kendavenport
Instagram: www.instagram.com/kendavenportbway
Twitter: www.twitter.com/kendavenport
Email: ken@theproducersperspective.com
LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/kendavenport

THIS MONTH’S QUICK WIN

Post Show Surveys

It’s easy to send a survey to attendees and gather feedback about your show. If you choose to use SurveyMonkey (like us), you can quickly import attendee email addresses and create a customized survey.

Ask questions like:

- Male/Female
• Age
• How would you rate [NAME OF SHOW]
• Anything in particular you liked/disliked?
• Industry Affiliation (Writer, Producer, Actor, Etc.)

For more info on creating surveys, check out www.surveymonkey.com

PRO ANNIVERSARIES

See Who’s Celebrating!

2 Years:

David Mauk

1 Year:

Maggie Condon, Michael DiGaetano, Gioia De Cari, Sabrina Goodall, Wendy Macdonald

6 Months:

Fred Rohan-Vargas, John Leyva, Sandy Klein, Susan Lambert, Dall Wilson, Dan Murphy, David Wright, Gwen Strong, Ian Hammond Brown, Luisa Lyons, Pamela Chassin, Robert Crawford, Craig Holland, Brandon Bacorn, Fran Miksits, Lawrence Fecho, Jake Mutch, Trey Dalton, Jonathan Galvez

3 Months:

Michele Hampton, Gregor Gibson, Katie Lesesne, Mitchell Reeve, Thom Talbott, Harold Levine, Timothy Ruppert, Andi Lee Carter, Jonathan Hogue, Annette Ferrieri, Brenda Lamb, Yuko Mizohata, Zachary Kuhn, Steve Greenstein, Sarah Luther, Brad Ross, John Tierney, Kevin Martinez