

New Website Gives Every Twin Cities Theater Equal Billing — For Free

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A new website aims to change how Twin Cities audiences find live theater.

79seconds.org is a free performing arts guide that automatically discovers and publishes what's playing across Minneapolis, St. Paul and the surrounding area — without theaters having to lift a finger.

The site now tracks more than 40 theater companies and nearly 70 current and upcoming productions — plus the full 100-show Minnesota Fringe Festival lineup — from the Guthrie to storefront companies staging work in basements, barns, city halls and public parks. Every organization gets the same treatment: same card, same placement, same visibility. No advertising, no featured listings, no pay to play.

“The performing arts don't have a quality problem — they have a discovery problem,” said Ross Phernetton, the site's founder and editor. “A five-person company doing extraordinary work in a church basement shouldn't have to outspend the Guthrie to be found. We just put everything in one place and let the art speak for itself.”

How It Works

The site visits each theater's website every morning, pulling in show titles, dates, venues, descriptions, images and ticket links. The listings are normalized and published to a clean, mobile-friendly interface with no login required. Audiences can filter by what's playing now, what's opening, what's closing this week, and by

college, community and family-friendly productions. Reviews from local critics are linked alongside the shows they cover.

A weekly email newsletter — available for as little as \$1/month — delivers the full lineup every Sunday. Subscribers and contributions are the site's only source of revenue. There are no ads, no sponsorships, and no fees for theaters to be listed.

Why “79 Seconds”?

In the winter of 1963, the Mona Lisa came to America for the first time. Crowds stretched for blocks outside the Met. When organizers realized thousands of people in line wouldn't get in before the painting left, they divided the remaining time by the number of visitors — and gave everyone exactly 79 seconds.

That's the idea here: equal access. Not everyone can afford a billboard or a PR firm, but every company deserves to be found.

Currently Featured Companies

The site tracks productions from Guthrie Theater, Theater Latté Da, History Theatre, Penumbra Theatre, Park Square Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, Yellow Tree Theatre, Open Eye Theatre, Pillsbury House + Theatre, Ten Thousand Things, Theater in the Round, Frank Theatre, Combustible Company, Illusion Theater, Minnesota Shakespeare Theater, Theatre 55, Theatre Pro Rata, Gremlin Theatre, Theater Mu, The Moving Company, New Native Theatre, Pangea World Theater, Stages Theatre Company, Walking Shadow Theatre Company, Red Eye Theater, Theatre Elision, Minneapolis Musical Theatre, Collide Theatrical Dance Company, Chanhassen Dinner Theatres, Sod House Theater, Mixed Precipitation and the Minnesota Fringe Festival; community companies including Lakeshore Players,

Eden Prairie Players, Rosetown Playhouse and Locally Grown Theatre; college programs at the University of Minnesota, Augsburg, Macalester and Hamline; and regional companies within a drive — Commonweal Theatre, Great River Shakespeare Festival and St. Croix Festival Theatre — with more added regularly.

Fast Facts

- Free to browse. Free to be listed. No ads, no sponsored placement.
- 40+ theater companies; nearly 70 current and upcoming productions, plus the full Minnesota Fringe lineup.
- Updated every morning.
- Weekly email every Sunday. \$1/month or \$10/year. Subscribers and contributions are the site's only source of revenue.
- Covers Minneapolis, St. Paul and the surrounding area.
- We survey reviews from local critics and bloggers and provide links to their reviews.

Media Contact

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79 Seconds on Stage is a public service benefit from 79 Seconds LLC, a brand, strategy and product incubator in Minneapolis. More at 79seconds.com.