

January 20, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

I had the pleasure of hiring Alan, October 2008, as a director for our production of *Ears on a Beatle*. We had become acquainted when he appeared here as an actor in our production of *Was*, Fall of 2004. He expressed his interest as a director and I was able to follow his successes with other theatres before bringing him here to direct. Alan showed a great deal of interest in our theatre and made suggestions for plays which fit well within our mission and my tastes. Upon selecting *Ears on a Beatle* for production, I approached him about directing for us. Beyond this experience I have no knowledge of his work. Today, I will summarize our experiences with him as a director for that project.

I would strongly encourage you to consider this young man as a director. We have been very pleased with the thoroughness of his preparation, his ability to set artistic goals for this production, and lead his design team to an excellent execution. *Ears on a Beatle* is episodic, changing locations frequently. His team brought a unit set to life as an oversized bank of file drawers, upon which each location change was indicated by a sound and slide montage. These montages reminded the audience constantly of the celebrity of John Lennon and the events of the period in which the action was set. While this technique has been used before, rarely has it been as totally integrated into the action. This two hander really had a third character onstage to reflect upon.

Keeping the physical action between only two actors interesting for a non-stop 90 minute performance is another success of Alan's direction. Particularly considering that some of the scenes were behind desks, Alan never let the action become repetitive. All furniture was designed as part of the wall of file drawers and the two actors never (well hardly ever) left the playing area and performed these changes without the visual assistance of stagehands. The result was a seamless evening of ever evolving actions, punctuated by the vibrancy of sight and sound of the 70s.

I have spoken with both actors about working with Alan in creating this production. Tim, one of our resident actors wrote me, "He came in with a strong vision for the project and offered a lot of actor options for us to consider and choose from. We differed on a couple aspects of my characters viewpoint relative to the relationship with his daughter but, after working both points of view, he was able as a director to let go of his initial choice and allow me to work with my own. I would not hesitate to work with him on another project." Tim is a fine actor, but is usually late to bloom in his character, often getting stuck on the mechanics of a role in the early rehearsals. Alan showed great patience with Tim, never doubting my casting recommendation and never compromising on the quality of the performance.

Ryan responded to my inquiry with, "His humor keeps things alive in the room, and he is well researched and intelligent. Alan is the type of director that has a very artistic view

that is fresh and risky. Although he has an ultimate goal, the play is a work in progress in which he works as an ensemble to flesh it out and create the end result. Alan listens to the actors' for their insight to the piece and their character. He encourages and enjoys when an actor makes bold choices (even when they might not be the strongest). He also notices the actors' strengths and uses them for the characters. He is not one for lengthy table work, but would rather feel it out on it's feet. With a shape of what he wants, he then creates detail. For 'Ears on a Beatle' he worked with us externally to internally."

As a producer, I found Alan very self-sufficient, thorough and pleasurable. He understands compromises may need to be made but not by diminishing the goal or overall affect of the production. He was respectful of my budgets, my audience and my staff.

I believe his experience as a performer on many levels of professional theatre provides Alan with a unique perspective of directing. He has seen and experienced many various approaches to direction and so comes equipped with a director's toolbox full of possibilities to use in a given circumstance. I never, however, experienced him as a "frustrated actor-director" who would rather perform the role himself instead of guiding his actors to their own interpretation of the role.

I think Alan has many gifts to share and will continue to represent well in the professional theatre.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

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