

Accessibility Spotlight:

Eastern Front Theatre

www.EasternFrontTheatre.com

Neptune Theatre

www.NeptuneTheatre.com

This Accessibility Spotlight features Nova Scotia theatres that have made significant efforts to ensure accessibility and inclusion for all audiences.

Eastern Front Theatre offers touch tours in advance to allow visually impaired guests to familiarize themselves with the stage, setup, costumes and props. Heightened narration is also available to guests, involving real-time auditory descriptions of the performance.

Eastern Front offers American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation for shows and has run a 'shadow scene' performance, where an ASL



Shadow scene performance
© Eastern Front Theatre



People acting on stage
© Eastern Front Theatre

interpreter accompanies every actor.

Additionally, Eastern Front offers accessible ticket pricing, volunteer programs, calm rooms, staff assistance with seating, all-gender washrooms, subsidies for childcare, ramps and automated doors for wheelchairs.

"We invited people with lived experience to come and give us feedback on how we can improve. We also had support from Autism Nova Scotia."

— Neptune Theatre

Neptune Theatre is also committed to making shows accessible to all, including those with autism and sensory processing disorders. They have created a sensory guide for each show, which outlines what to expect and provides accommodations such as fidget toys and quiet areas.

At Neptune Theatre, instead of clapping (which can be overstimulating), the audience members shake their hands.

Accessibility Spotlight:

Zuppa Theatre

www.Zuppa.Works



People talking in lobby at a theatre
© Zuppa Theatre

Zuppa Theatre has made significant strides in accessibility since they began looking into it in 2018. They hired an accessibility consultant who helped them consider the built environment and ensured that the most accessible venues were used. They included American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters and began integrating actors with disabilities.



People performing 'At This Hour'
© Zuppa Theatre

Zuppa had put on a show at an accessible art gallery, allowing guests to explore the films and live performances. They had ASL interpreters ensuring the event was accessible to deaf visitors. Feedback from guests sparked the conversation about their next show, 'At This Hour.'

"At This Hour" is a play that revolves around the tragic Halifax explosion of 1917, which resulted in the largest mass blinding (due to flying shards of glass) in Canadian history. Inspired, Zuppa Theatre integrated blind actors and ASL interpreters into the show, ensuring it was accessible to diverse audiences.

The show was designed to be audio-centric for a blind audience, with subwoofers under seats and surround sound to immerse the audience in the performance. Touch tours and audio descriptions were offered, as well as a relaxed performance with the sound down and lights up for those who needed it.

Attendees would look under their seats to find a plastic version of a glass eye. On it, in braille, was the date of the Halifax explosion.

Zuppa Theatre collaborated with consultants and interpreters along the way. Their commitment to accessibility has been evident throughout their productions, and they will continue to involve artists with disabilities directly in their performances.