CENTER FOR PUPPETRY Arts



As of 10/06/2026

Xperimental Puppetry Theatre 2027

PROJECT INFORMATION/APPLICATION
Application Deadline: Midnight, December 20, 2026

What's that?
Puppetry is an art form that combines literature, music, mime, dance and drama with the visual arts. Xperimental Puppetry Theater (XPT) is a program at the Center for Puppetry Arts (Center) that offers artists 18 and up the opportunity to explore the creative potential of the puppet theater and create original puppetry works intended for adult audiences. Proposed pieces must be between 7-10 minutes, and can be in any of the myriad styles of puppetry: shadows, masks, automata, object theater, toy theater, hand puppets, rod puppets, body puppets, stop-motion and live puppet film, marionettes, etc. We also accept puppetry themed installation art for display in the bar area during the production.

How can I get involved?
You may participate as an XPT Individual Member, or as an XPT Project Director. If you wish to be an Individual Member (that is, participate in someone else's project as a performer, musician, designer, etc), please fill out and return the Individual Membership Application. If you choose to apply as a Project Director, please fill out and return the Project Director Application. All applications will be treated equally.

I am a director, and I need money to build a new show!
We are pleased to offer funding for new works. Project grants up to $450 may be awarded. In addition, performance space, production space and limited technical assistance will be provided as available.

Mmmm… sounds intriguing! When does it start?
The deadline for project proposals is **December 20, 2026**. As part of the selection process, Project Directors will also interview with the XPT Program Director. Applicants will be notified of project application status by **January 19, 2027**. Design, construction and rehearsal periods follow, culminating in public performances **April 28 – May 2, 2027** in the Center for Puppetry Arts' Vince Anthony Founder's Theater.

Tell me more, please.
As a member of XPT, you have the opportunity to be involved in a unique experience that allows you to interact and collaborate with all types of artists. It is a chance to fine-tune skills you may already have, to develop or try new ones, or simply to develop a greater appreciation for the art of puppetry and its many facets. We invite you to examine the enclosed information and submit an application for XPT membership and/or a project proposal. Emphasis is on the development of new material and the unique adaptation of existing material. All projects selected will be considered works-in-progress. We're looking to break boundaries here.

What else do I need to know?

- Any use of copyrighted material, music inclusive, should not be submitted without prior written consent.

- XPT is a forum for the *development* of *creative ideas*, and not merely a showcase for future production.

- As a Project Director, it is to your benefit to assemble your own team of collaborators prior to applying for XPT. You will be able to meet the Individual Members at the first XPT meeting and discuss with them the possibility of working on your piece, but the essential roles of director, writer, and designer should be in place when you apply.

- Puppetry is a visual art form. Therefore, visuals are very helpful to us in understanding your proposed piece. Please include visuals in your application – from simple puppet or project designs, to completed storyboards.

- Remounts of pre-existing pieces will not be considered.

- AI is not permitted to be used in any aspect of the creation of your piece, including but not limited to, puppets, story, or scenery.

XPT PROJECT GRANTS

XPT Project Directors will receive their project grant monies in 3 payments as follows:

1. One-third (1/3) of the total grant amount will be paid on **January 26, 2027** at the initial meeting.
2. One-third (1/3) of the total grant amount will be paid on **March 13, 2027** at the "show and tell" meeting.
3. The remainder will be paid on **May 2, 2027** after the Project Director has removed all sets and puppets from the Center and has been checked out by the XPT Program Director.

It is the XPT Project Director's responsibility to keep records of their expenses for their personal income tax purposes. If for any reason a project is not completed, or is cancelled by the Center, and performances do not occur, any and all monies given to the Project Director must be refunded in full to the Center within two weeks of the termination.

XPT: THE PROCESS

Development

Consider the following methods and suggestions for developing new material:

- Choose material that is of an innovative and expansive nature geared to adult audiences and sensibilities.

- Collect resource materials and brainstorm ideas. (Use scripts, stories, dreams and pictures as a springboard for ideas.)

- Explore the materials by working and reworking ideas through scripting, visualizing, rewriting, storyboarding and experimenting with various puppetry styles. Be realistic. Keep it simple. Be aware of time, budget, resources, co-creators and volunteers' availability, and facility and Center staff limitations. *SMALL CASTS AND MANAGEABLE SETS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED*.

- It may be to your benefit to familiarize yourself with the Center's Vince Anthony Founder's Theater. Remember that your set must be set up and broken down in under four minutes! Set realistic and achievable goals for your piece.

Resources

- The Center shops offer a wide range of tools and workspaces that are unique and may not be available to artists under other circumstances. However, the Center facilities are not intended for long term use by any XPT artists. XPT artists are expected to use their own facilities and tools for the majority of the work done on their project. Center facilities, including shops and rehearsal space, are intended only as auxiliary resources for specific needs including the use of specialty tools, space for paint, completing repairs and occasionally for storage. Before being granted access to any of the Center spaces, XPT artists must request permission through the XPT Director and be approved by the Center Technical Director.

- Rehearsal space at the Center may be available to you and must be scheduled through the XPT Program Director. Since, an XPT Program Director **MUST BE IN THE BUILDING WHENEVER XPT PROJECTS UTILIZE A CENTER SPACE FOR BUILDING AND/OR REHEARSING,** any use of the Center ***MUST BE*** scheduled through the XPT Program Director, regardless of any other CPA affiliation a Project Director may have.

- Approval for shop usage may also include scheduling a shop tutorial or specialty training before being granted access to specific facilities or tools. XPT artists are expected to provide all of their own materials when using the Center Shops. Under no circumstances should XPT artists use Center hardware, lumber, fabric, metal, adhesives or any other consumable items. XPT artists are expected to remove all of their materials and tools when finished using Center shops.

- Center video and book library (by appointment only, call 404.881.5128), public or school libraries, classes and workshops offered at the Center; view puppetry performances; speak with others involved in the art of puppetry.

Feedback

- Feedback during the development process is essential. All members should be willing to have their work monitored during the development process and should be open to comments and suggestions. Members are also encouraged to ask questions and elicit feedback from the others throughout the process.

- Project Directors, as well as members, should remain open to suggestions given by other members. Project Directors will be responsible for final decisions and direction of piece.

- Feedback opportunities include monitored rehearsal by the XPT Program Director as well as scheduled open rehearsals for other members to make comments and suggestions. Also included are scheduled show-and-tell sessions of materials, props and set with other XPT participants.

- Project Directors will be responsible for offering visual show-and-tell sessions to the XPT Program Director to ensure the work is moving forward.

- Project Directors (and any other members who wish to participate) must be willing to participate in a feedback session with the audience at the end of each performance evening.

- Proper development of your work is critical to the XPT process. If the project does not progress in a timely manner, according to the schedule outlined herein, the Center reserves the right to cancel the project.

REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

- Proposals submitted should not be longer than 10 minutes in performance length.
- The time period for development begins as soon as you are notified and continues through the final performance.
- A general rule regarding rehearsals: expect 1 hour of rehearsal time for every 1 minute of expected performance. This applies to shows in which the performers are already familiar with dialogue (if any), actions/blocking of the characters involved, and the style of puppetry that will be used.
- It is customary to use the 10 days prior to Dress Rehearsal to finesse the performance and work out any difficulties that may occur.
- Flame or fire onstage is not allowed. Haze and other special effects must be approved prior to use.
- The XPT Program Director acts as the intermediary and point of reference between Project Directors and Center staff. Production, technical and budget questions and concerns should be directed to the XPT Program Director. A reasonable amount of time should be allotted for a response.

XPT PRODUCTION CALENDAR

- Please note the schedule below. Other meetings may be scheduled (in addition to or in place of those below) as the process continues. Members should take every effort to attend all scheduled events.
- **All meetings are scheduled for 7:00pm unless otherwise indicated.**
- All members must be willing to be involved in the setting up and striking of all productions to ensure smooth transitions during performance evenings.

CALENDAR

December 20, 2026:	Deadline for proposals.
January 11-12, 2027:	Interviews between potential Project Directors and XPT Program Director.
January 19:	Notification of project application status. Background checks for Directors must begin.
January 19-26:	Applicants organize the piece and build a gameplan for completion.
January 26:	Initial meeting. During this orientation, the project directors describe their projects to the XPT company and solicit assistance from individual XPT members. First payment available if background checks have been completed.
February 8:	Background checks begin.
February 19:	All background checks must be completed.
February 27-28:	First Build & Rehearse Weekend

March 13-14:	Second Build and Rehearse. **1st Viewed Rehearsals**. Show-and-tell for all projects. Project Directors and builders give a progress report. Project Directors will bring something they are working on to show progress and discuss with other Project Directors the problems they are running into. Films must have at least 2 minutes of footage complete for critique. Second payment available.
March 23-26:	Zoom Dry tech rehearsal. After the viewed rehearsal, the Project Director meets with the lighting designer, stage manager and XPT Program Director and goes through the piece, cue by cue, and discusses specific technical needs. Final technical requirements due by end of dry tech.
March 29:	Schedule photographer for Dress Rehearsal
April 3-4:	**2nd Viewed Rehearsal -**XPT Program Director views rehearsal of all projects at the CPA. Program Director must view a FULL run-thru of each piece. Projects must be near completion in terms of puppets, set and script, or project will be cancelled.
April 17-18:	**3rd Viewed Rehearsal**. FILMS ARE DUE**.**
April 19-22:	Wet Tech
April 21:	Program Information due date.
April 23:	Full Tech, 7pm Call
April 24-26	Dress Rehearsals, 6:30pm call, 7:30pm performances
April 27 (Tues)	Staff Preview, 6:30pm call, 7:30pm performance
April 28-29 (Wed-Thurs):	Performance run. 6:30 pm call, 7:30pm curtain
April 30-May 1 (Fri & Sat):	Performance Run 7pm call, 8pm curtain.
May 2 (Sun):	Final performance. 4pm call, 5pm curtain. All set pieces and puppets removed from Center following show. Final payment available.

COVID safety guidelines for in-person meetings, rehearsals and performances:
The Center bases its guidelines on data analysis of current conditions; federal, state and local government restrictions and guidelines; and CDC guidelines. While the Center does not require masks, we do strongly encourage them to be worn by anyone visiting the Center. If you are planning to visit the Center and are not feeling well, we ask that you contact the XPT Program Director to determine alternate plans. The most up-to-date guidelines can be found on the Center's website: https://puppet.org/covid-protocols/ or please contact Executive Producer Tim Sweeney timsweeney@puppet.org if you have questions.

PROJECT DIRECTOR APPLICATION

XPERIMENTAL PUPPETRY THEATER (XPT)

Center for Puppetry Arts
Application Deadline:
December 20, 2026



Submit this form: XPT 2027 Director Application

(Note: you must send pages 6-9 with any other supporting materials)
Upload all documents using the naming convention:
LastName_FirstName_ProjectName_XPT2027_FileDescription

{Please write clearly}

Name: _____

Name of Project: _____

Address: _____

_____

Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

E-mail: _____ Signature: _____

Proposed length of performance (not longer than 10 minutes): _____

Anticipated number of puppeteers/performers: _____

Describe style of puppets: _____

_____

Describe style of music/sound: _____

Set, scenery and lighting requirements: _____

Please summarize the proposed performance. You may wish to use the reverse side of this page for the summary, or attach it to the application as a separate document. Include script or storyboard as necessary and attach any supplemental information (drawings, photographs, etc.) that may further clarify the project proposal (this will not be returned). Of course, the more information you supply, the better we will understand your proposal.

Please note: All XPT participants must pass a criminal background check. If you are selected to be in XPT, you will receive an email link from the Center's HR processing company Paycom; you must respond with your information so the background check can be processed.

OWNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY OF XPT PROJECTS

1. Any piece produced in XPT time and space and performed under the auspices of XPT will be considered an XPT piece. No other company name will be used in conjunction with an XPT performance (except by special arrangement).
2. The Center will use your name and the title of your piece to promote Xperimental Puppetry Theater 2027. The Center may use your name, likeness and photo, as well as photos of your piece in process, on the Center's Web site (www.puppet.org) on the "In The Works" page and/or the Xperimental Puppetry Theater 2027 performance page, and/or on a Center-sanctioned blog. If you wish to use a pseudonym, you must inform the Center during this application process.
3. The Center may use your name, likeness and photo, as well as the name, title of your piece and photo from the piece to promote future productions of Xperimental Puppetry Theater.
4. Ownership of the piece belongs to the project director and whomever the group designates.
5. The Center has the option to pick up exclusive production rights of a piece for one year after its XPT debut. This will involve a separate contract between the Center and the artist(s) involved.
6. The artist has the right to veto the Center's production option, but then the piece may not be produced anywhere for a period of one year (except by special arrangement).
7. The Center may waive its rights to production option.
8. If the Center contracts to produce a piece with new sets, puppets, props, etc., then the ownership of these physical aspects of the piece belongs to the Center. The project director retains ownership of the aspects of the intellectual properties of the piece (i.e., concept, script, etc.).
9. Copyrighting a piece is the responsibility of the project director. The Center and XPT Program Director will help provide information necessary to complete that process, upon request. If you would like to investigate copyright issues, please visit www.copyright.gov.
10. Project ownership includes storage responsibility. Pieces not being retained for further development by the Center or by XPT must be removed from the Center by the end of strike following the final performance. Materials left at the Center after that will be considered property of the Center and may be discarded.
11. Any future production or presentation of the work must carry the credit line **"Originally Produced for XPT (Xperimental Puppetry Theater), Center for Puppetry Arts, Atlanta GA, 2027"** in the immediate title area of all programs, posters and printed materials concerning the work, and/or be included in the announcement of the title of the work, should the title be presented to the public in an audible fashion. All films must include this credit line in the credit portion of the film.
12. The Center for Puppetry Arts is a drug-free workplace. The consumption of alcohol or any other drug prior to or during your activities at the Center will result in the immediate termination of the project; any and all monies given to the Project Director must be refunded in full to the Center.

I have read both the packet and the above information and agree to the concepts and terms, and consider this an agreement with the Center for Puppetry Arts, Inc., for all work I shall produce in Xperimental Puppetry Theater. As a Project Director participating in XPT, I will subscribe to the policies set forth by the Center for Puppetry Arts regarding the use and limitations of the facility and staff.

Signature _____ Date _____

XPT BUDGET SHEET

Please complete budget page with <u>entire project cost</u>, estimating and specifying details as best you can. Understand that the maximum that the Center for Puppetry Arts can offer is $450 toward that total project cost.

Name of Project: _____

Name of Project Director: _____

Day Phone: _____

Evening Phone: _____

ITEMIZE BUDGET ALLOCATIONS:

MATERIALS:

Puppet Materials		
	1.	$
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
	5.	
Set Materials		
	1.	$
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
	5.	
Miscellaneous		
	1.	$
	2.	
	3.	
SUB-TOTAL		$
TOTAL		$



--- WAIVER OF LIABILITY ---

The undersigned assumes all responsibility for injury and/or damage to their person and property when using the facilities of **Center for Puppetry Arts**, known as **CPA**. Facilities include but are not limited to: scene shop, puppet shop, rehearsal space, and performance spaces. The undersigned releases **CPA** from all liability for injury and/or damages to person and property while using **CPA** facilities. The undersigned assumes any and all risk and/or liability for any injury and/or damage to their person or property incurred while using ANY tool or equipment while using **CPA** facilities. The undersigned agrees to repair or replace any **CPA** tool and/or equipment and/or facilities damaged by the undersigned's use.

The undersigned further agrees to be drug and alcohol free while using any **CPA** facilities, tool and/or equipment.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____