

## **About Blue Hill Troupe, Ltd.**

Each year the Blue Hill Troupe (“the Troupe” or “BHT”) brings quality theatrical performances to New York City while donating the proceeds to local charities. Through a combination of program advertising and ticket sales, the Blue Hill Troupe has raised several million dollars for various charities since its founding in 1924, including more than \$1million donated to our charities since 2000. Generally, revenues from program advertisements and tickets sold by Troupe members themselves more than cover our expenses, so that the beneficiary usually receives at least the total proceeds from ads and tickets sold through its own efforts. Over the past five years, the charities that have been selected as beneficiaries of the Troupe’s productions have received resulting donations ranging from \$100,000 to \$140,000, with an average of approximately \$122,000.

Hailing from all walks of life and spanning several generations, Troupe members donate their time and energy throughout the year to produce a modest Fall Show, organize an annual Winter Ball and produce the Spring Show which is a full theatrical production of one of the 13 Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. Troupers sing and act, design and build sets, create costumes and props, wire lighting and sound systems, edit and layout the program—in short, perform the myriad jobs required to put on first-rate shows. Only the musical and dramatic directors, choreographer, rehearsal accompanist and orchestra members are paid for their services. The results are high quality musical productions that provide significant financial contributions for worthwhile causes.

The majority of the fund-raising efforts are centered around the eight benefit performances of a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta given each spring. Three activities serve as the main income streams: program advertisements; ticket sales; and, a premium event before a Spring Show performance.

The more active the collaboration with the beneficiary in the various fund-raising aspects of our season, the more money is raised. To this end, we ask that you assign a Board member and a staff member as liaisons to the Troupe.

Here’s how it works:

### **The Spring Show**

#### Tickets

We ask the charity to collaborate on selling tickets, with an expectation of the charity selling at least one house, or 599 seats, either one night or over the course of the run. Ticket prices range from \$25 to \$65 and the Troupe handles all aspects of invitation design and mailing, as well as processing orders received by mail, phone and online. While the 2009 show schedule has not yet been set, it will be close to the timeframe of this year’s run, which is as follows:

Friday, April 4 at 8pm  
Saturday, April 5 at 3pm  
Sunday, April 6 at 3pm  
Wednesday, April 9 at 8pm  
Thursday, April 10 at 8pm  
Friday, April 11 at 8pm  
Saturday, April 12 at 2pm and 8pm

The beneficiary’s mailing list is specially coded and then merged/purged with BHT’s to eliminate duplicates. We will use your list only one time; however, be advised that any ticket buyers

resulting from your mailing list will be subsequently classified as a subscriber and a part of the BHT database, and all subscribers are sent ticket solicitations for future shows.

#### Gala/Pre-Performance Event

In recent years, our beneficiaries have generally opted to hold a special Gala for their major donors, an activity that we strongly encourage, as it has enhanced fundraising dramatically in comparison with seasons in which such an event was not held. Specifically, they have placed a surcharge on tickets for the evening (as much as \$250 or more), which included either a pre-show dinner or cocktail reception in conjunction with the performance. If this option is selected, the beneficiary's Board Chairperson, Executive Director and/or another representative may join the BHT President on stage to welcome its supporters. The BHT Tickets and Subscriptions Committee will collaborate to create an appropriate insert for your invitation to major donors and all tickets, including those to a Gala event, will be sold by the BHT box office.

#### Ad Sales

The other big money maker is advertising sales for the show program. Typically, the Troupe-to-Beneficiary ad sales ratio is approximately 60:40. In 2004, for example, the Beneficiary sold approximately \$50,000 in ads and underwritten pages. The show program serves as a virtually unlimited opportunity for the charity to raise funds from supporters, vendors, local businesses, etc.

The spring ad rates for 2008 were as follows: Full page-Benefactor with gold background – \$5,000; Full page-Sponsor with silver background – \$2,500; Full page – \$700; Half page – \$400; Quarter page – \$250; Outside back cover – \$6,000; Two-page spread – \$1,250; Inside front or back cover – \$1,100; Underwritten editorial pages, two-page spread – \$700; Underwritten editorial pages, full page – \$400. The deadline for program ads is usually around the end of February so we strongly recommend that you mobilize your entire Board and any other teams starting in the fall. Experience has taught us that Board members generally have the connections to secure these kinds of contributions on behalf of your organization. Ads are also sold for the Fall Show, at lower rates than spring, and discounts are offered to those who advertise in both programs. The importance of selling advertising and tickets cannot be emphasized enough.

#### **The Fall Show**

In the fall – late October or early November – we mount a small Broadway-style musical production in a 200 seat theater. While our charities have only recently begun to join us in selling ads in the fall show program, it serves as another fundraising opportunity, especially for soliciting supporting companies early in the season to advertise in the programs of both shows. There are eight performances and, in some recent years, the beneficiary has sold tickets for a full house on one night. This is a great way to introduce the Troupe to the charity's top supporters and may serve as an opportunity for an event for your younger supporters, such as a Young Professionals group.

#### **Winter Dance**

Lastly, we have a formal Winter Ball each year in late-February. It features a big band in the main floor ballroom and a DJ/disco in a second floor dance space. Recent ticket prices have been \$95 per person for the evening of music, dancing, drinks and dessert. While the dance tickets are sold at break-even prices, funds for the charity are raised through donations, raffles and silent auctions, and further funds could be raised by corporate sponsorship of the event.

### **Prospective Charities Reception**

If you are interested in being considered to be BHT's beneficiary for the 2008-2009 season, we hope that you and some of your board members will come to the reception we are having for prospective charities on Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. It will be held from 6:30pm to 7:30pm at the Teatro Heckscher in the Museo del Barrio at Fifth Avenue and 104<sup>th</sup> Street. You will have a chance to meet the members of the BHT Charities Committee in an informal setting and at 7:00pm we go into the balcony of the theater, where you can see the First Act set, get an impression of the theater and see the scope of our production. We will also answer questions you may have about the selection process and aspects of the season-long partnership with the Blue Hill Troupe.

Please feel free to call or email Peyton Sise, our Charities Committee Chair, if you have any questions. Peyton can be reached at (212) 312-3821 or [psise@rcn.com](mailto:psise@rcn.com).

Visit our website, [www.bht.org](http://www.bht.org), to learn more about us and see pictures of the Troupe at work and on stage! You can also find a copy of this year's advertising contract, as well as information on tickets, our 84 year history, and the current year's show and charity. If you need copies of a previous season's show programs for presentation to or discussion with your Board or staff, please contact us.