

Everything you need to know about booking **BREAD+PUPPET**



Puppet show! Puppet show! The one and only Bread & Puppet Theater tours 2-3 times a year and we would love to play for your community! If you are unfamiliar with B&P, we are one of the oldest political puppet troupes in the country, having started in 1963 in NYC. We are now based out of Vermont and tour the country and world regularly with up-to-the-minute shows, puppets big and small, and spectacles you won't forget.

This document will give you an overview of what goes into hosting B&P.

To learn more about Bread & Puppet, see page 10 or our website <https://breadandpuppet.org/>



The Booking Process

Step 1: Make sure you know what kind of show you're booking.

We tour our circus (many short acts on different topics, often performed outdoors) in the fall. We tour "indoor shows" (usually one theme throughout the show, performed indoors) in the spring.

Step 2: Find a date.

We begin booking each tour about a year out, but there are always holes we are looking to fill. Please see <https://breadandpuppet.org/tour> to see available dates. Please be mindful of our route. Our bus does not go as fast as a regular car, and we generally cannot travel farther than a 4-hour drive each day. If you are looking at Google maps, please add 50% to any drive time.

Step 3: Contact Paul.

Our tour booker, Paul Bedard, is reachable at breadandpuppettour@gmail.com or 802-318-4604. Please forgive the delay and thank you for your patience and your persistence!

Step 4: Work out the details.

Paul will draft a "memorandum of understanding" (MOU) with all the details. Paul will put highlights in the MOU for things that are still being worked/figured out.

Step 5: Sign the MOU.

Once all the highlights are gone and everyone feels good about the MOU, both parties sign it. At this point, we are confirmed. While tickets may not be able to go on sale quite yet, this is the point at which you can tell your community that Bread & Puppet is coming to town.

Step 6: Pre-Showday Prep.

When ready, tickets go on sale, marketing gets rolled out, the show gets made, sometimes there are press interviews. Shortly before the tour begins, Paul will connect you with a housing coordinator and food coordinator who is traveling with the company. If there is a deposit to be made, this generally happens before the tour starts (which may be before your tour stop).

Step 7: Showday!

Upon arrival, it usually goes like this: Lunch, setup, dinner, show, serve bread and sell art, pack up, depart for housing. Hopefully we knock your socks off!

Step 8: Follow up.

Balance payments and ticket settlements generally happen within a couple weeks of the tour ending. If there are photos, video, or press reviews to share, we greatly appreciate it for our archive. If you loved the experience, ask Paul right away about the next year!

Some Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Bread & Puppet show like?

A lot! We can be rowdy, contemplative, slapstick, and sublime. Our puppets are large (20 feet!) and small (2 inches!). Our content pulls from politics of the day, but also philosophers and artists from hundreds or thousands of years ago. Consider searching for us on YouTube. There's a lot there.



Is B&P's work ok for kids?

While we do not make shows specifically geared towards kids, there are always kids at our shows. We address heavy topics and tell parents that if they would allow their kids to read a newspaper, our shows will be fine for them. Please note that we do not book shows at schools or camps for kids younger than college-age.

Can I request a specific show?

Generally no. We create an indoor show each winter, which tours in the Spring. We create a circus each summer, which tours in the fall. On rare occasions, we do revivals for residencies (see page 4). Videos of previous shows are linked on page 6.



Do you do workshops?

Yes! If there's time. We work with folks college-age and up. Our Cantastoria workshop is almost always available while on tour. Depending on the show, we sometimes are also able to offer Puppetry & Performance, which works local workshop participants into the show. Please see page 7.

What about Talkbacks?

Sure! If there's time. We just ask that someone from your team moderates.

Can I book a show outside of a tour? What about a Residency?

We are busy doing performances all year, but on rare occasions, we can make a “residency” happen. Residencies are generally multiple days, with puppeteers flying and puppets shipping (rather than using our bus). The budget for residencies vary wildly (How long is it? How many puppeteers? Etc.) but are generally not less than \$25,000. If you are an arts festival or large organization who would like to explore a residency, please contact Paul as soon as possible so we can explore dates, scope, and budget.

Do you go to the West Coast? Or Canada? Or places geographically far from Vermont?

Yes, sometimes. We last went to the West Coast in Fall 2022. To make the drive work, it required the Fall Circus tour being four months long. That’s a big lift for us, and we don’t do it often. With Canada and other countries, please know that we are a very international company, and crossing borders can be tricky right now. It’s not impossible. If you are outside the US or geographically far from Vermont, please contact Paul as soon as possible. If it makes sense, a future tour can be pointed in your direction, or we can explore a residency.



How much does it cost to book Bread & Puppet?

Our goal is to walk away with at least \$5,000 for an indoor show, at least \$6,000 for a circus, and at least \$3,000 for a workshop that takes a day away from performance (\$2,000 if it can happen on a show day). We work with many financial models. Sometimes people will write us a check for the full amount and then the show can be free for the audience. Often, hosts will write us a check for a partial performance fee, and then we sell tickets. If the venue is big enough, we can rely entirely on ticket sales. On rare occasions, B&P will rent a venue. In all of these models, we’re just trying to walk away with the numbers at the beginning of this paragraph.

Here are some examples of how a circus’s financial arrangement might go:

- \$6,000 performance fee + free tickets for audience = \$6,000
- \$5,000 performance fee + 125 people, suggested donation (average \$8/per) = \$6,000
- \$3,000 performance fee from venue + 150 audience paying \$20/ticket = \$6,000
- \$1,000 performance fee + 250 audience paying \$20/ticket = \$6,000
- \$0 performance fee + 300 audience paying \$20/ticket = \$6,000
- (-\$1,000 rental to venue) + 350 audience paying \$20/ticket = \$6,000

Keep in mind that when ticketing is part of the equation, we need to actually sell those tickets. If you are an outdoor venue with no rain backup, that makes a very risky booking.

What about weather for outdoor shows?

We perform in light rain, pause in heavy rain, and end a show early if the rain is both heavy and sustained. If the forecast is terrible, we sometimes cancel in advance (or move indoors!).

Everything you Need to Know About Booking B&P

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Can I see a script or video in advance?

Generally no. We create our shows very quickly before tours begin, and the shows do evolve throughout the tour. Paul will send show-specific material as soon as it exists, but this is never possible before the booking happens. If you are interested in booking B&P, this should be for either a circus or indoor show, knowing that we will bring up-to-the-minute, likely-inflammatory, and always-needed political puppetry. What we do have, are past videos:

Videos of Past Circuses:

- 2025's *Our Domestic Resurrection Revolution in Progress*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leS5Jt6lHCg>
- 2024's *The Beginning After the End of Humanity Circus*: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GL3wwc1GerU4pN4J_iCOiVw7uKCWtrMI/view
- 2024, Highlights of the circus at the Lotus Festival: <https://vimeo.com/1036146622>
- 2023's *The Heart of the Matter Circus*: <https://youtu.be/05sP0ZtcJno>
- 2022's *The Apocalypse Defiance Circus*: https://youtu.be/XX_9T1_Pug8
- 2021's *Our Domestic Resurrection Circus*: <https://youtu.be/gnT62z8Bgil>
- 2020's *The Insurrection & Resurrection Circus*: <https://youtu.be/OW561BOGV60>

Videos of Past Indoor Shows:

- 2025's *The Obligation to Live*: https://www.youtube.com/live/4yFBzx7XXw8?si=keDflnzZ5hn_SwDW&t=1453
- 2024's *The Hope Principle Show*: <https://youtu.be/R1PNuNcb6HU?si=1aATSKQBWgGtdJgg>
- 2023's *Inflammatory Earthling Rants*: <https://www.youtube.com/live/R8MS5vJSS4o>
- 2022's *Finished Waiting*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7cPXt0eoRc>
- 2017-2018's *The Basic Bye Bye Show*: <https://youtu.be/Vn0AaFCEC84>

Is there really bread?

Yes, after each show. And garlic aioli. All vegan. All designed for domestic resurrection.

Does Peter tour?

Not so much anymore. But you better believe that if he has an idea, he'll phonecall and give the puppeteers a change to implement 1 minute before curtain.

Can you leave out a particular political issue?

No.

Can I just book the band for my event or wedding? Or can you just bring some tall puppets or happy extravagance to my event?

No.

What we look for in a tour stop

	Circus Tours	Indoor Show Tours
Dates	Fall, generally September-October.	Spring, generally March-April.
Puppeteers	12-15	10-12
Audiences	At least 200 people, usually 500-600. We have played to audiences as large as 1,500.	At least 150, usually 300-400 people.
Performance Space	Outdoors and/or indoors. At least 40'x40' for the performance PLUS room for the audience. Generally the size of a baseball field. Indoors can be a large auditorium or gymnasium, with at least 20' height. See pages 9 for examples.	Indoors. At least 25'x25' with at least 20' height for the performance PLUS room for the audience. Our crowds generally do a mix of floor seating, chairs, and then standing. See page 8 for examples.
Press & Cheap Art Space	Space to sell art after the show. Generally a row of tables and a few laundry lines with banners. Sometimes this is behind the audience, sometimes it's in a lobby or adjacent hallway. See page 10.	Space to sell art after the show. Generally a row of tables and a few laundry lines with banners. Sometimes this is behind the audience, sometimes it's in a lobby or adjacent hallway. See page 10.
Housing	We don't all need beds, but do need at least a few. Generally it's a mix of beds, couches, and floor space. Sometimes we tent. Our preference is to be crowded in fewer spaces, than to be very dispersed (requiring bus drop offs and pickups/).	We don't all need beds, but do need at least a few. Generally it's a mix of beds, couches, and floor space. Our preference is to be crowded in fewer spaces, than to be very dispersed (requiring bus drop offs and pickups/).
Food	Lunch and dinner. Sometimes people organize potlucks or get community volunteers to cook. We just ask that the food comes to us, as there may be puppeteers working during meals. So, for example, vouchers for a dining hall across campus are not ideal. We humbly ask: please no pizza. Performing is vigorous!	Lunch and dinner. Sometimes people organize potlucks or get community volunteers to cook. We just ask that the food comes to us, as there may be puppeteers working during meals. So, for example, vouchers for a dining hall across campus are not ideal. We humbly ask: please no pizza. Performing is vigorous!
Marketing Support	Any help getting the word out is great. Eblasts, posters, social media.	Any help getting the word out is great. Eblasts, posters, social media.
Funding	Our goal for circuses is to walk away with at least \$6,000.	Our goal for indoor shows is to walk away with at least \$5,000.

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Workshops

When schedules allow, we love doing workshops for 10-30 people. Workshops are designed for adults, college-aged and up. Cantastoria Workshops are almost always available while on tour, and Puppetry in Performance Workshops are available depending on the show. Generally workshops happen the day before or the day after a show. Workshops are only possible the same day as a show if we are able to wake up in the show location.

Puppetry in Performance Workshop (3 hours + 2 hours + show)

Leads to a participatory performance!



Bread & Puppet's work features diverse puppetry and street theater performance styles to tell vital stories of the moment. Through the lens of a rehearsal process, participants in the Puppetry in Performance Workshop will be introduced to these performance styles and methods. The workshop culminates with participants performing alongside Bread & Puppet company members in a performance.

Time commitment: 3-hour workshop + 2-hour dress rehearsal + 2 hours for show

Participants are usually able to watch the parts of the circus they are not in.

If possible, workshop participants should bring an all-white, long sleeve outfit to perform in.

Watch a video about this workshop in Houston, TX in 2022: <https://youtu.be/7mJ06335wT4>

Cantastoria Workshop (3 hours)



"Cantastoria" is a street theater form championed by Bread & Puppet that involves the narration of pictures using song, movement, text and puppetry. The word "canta-storia" comes from Italian ("sung story"), though the form has its roots in India circa 600 AD and has flourished in various guises all over Europe and Asia (from Japan (etoki & kamishibai) to Germany (bankelsang)) for the last 1,500 years. Bread & Puppet finds Cantastoria to be an effective

tool for activist street performance and loves to share it widely and encourage people to experiment with its possibilities. In this three hour workshop Bread & Puppet's company will perform a B&P Cantastoria for the group, teach a few Bread & Puppet Cantastorias to the group, and then put these experiences to work making new Cantastorias in small groups. The workshop will end with performances of the newly created Cantastorias.

Watch an example of a B&P Cantastoria, "The Foot," in NYC in 2016:

https://youtu.be/qirkGVqPY-E?si=Qs-t9NT8BE_78iDU

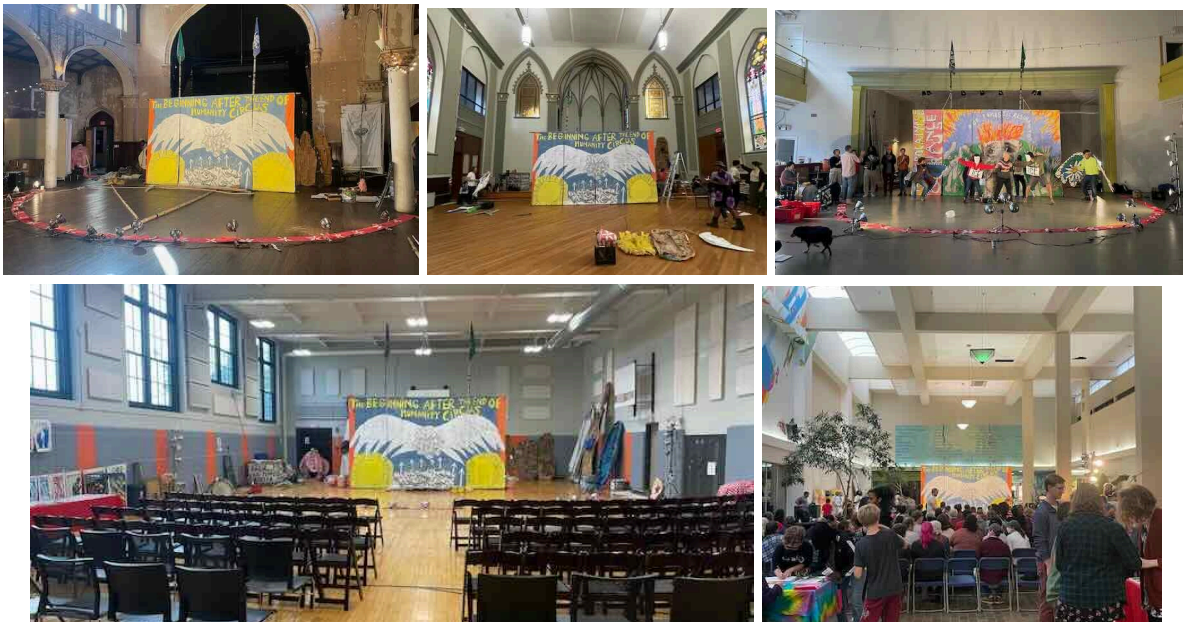
Indoor Show Setup Examples



Circus Outdoor Setup Examples



Circus Indoor Setup Examples



Press & Cheap Art Store Setup Examples

After each show, we sell books, banners, posters, and crafts made by the puppeteers. When possible we try to borrow at least 8 tables from our venue hosts.



More about Bread & Puppet

Founded in 1963 by Peter Schumann on New York City's Lower East Side, Bread & Puppet has been based in the North East Kingdom of Vermont since the early 1970s and is one of the oldest, nonprofit, self-supporting theatrical companies in the country. Well known for its visually rich, street-theater brand of performance art, Bread & Puppet revels in music, dance, and slapstick-filled celebratory protest. Believing that theater is a basic necessity like bread, the company frequently brings its work to the streets for those who may not otherwise go to the theater. Its shows are political and spectacular, frequently featuring puppets on stilts, huge masks with expressive faces, singing, dancing, and a richly elaborated repertoire of iconic characters.



Bread & Puppet is recognized throughout the world and has won distinction at international theater festivals in Italy, Poland, Colombia, and Yugoslavia, beginning with their break-out performances at the 1968 Nancy Festival in France. Notable awards include the Erasmus Prize of Amsterdam, 4 Obies, the Puppeteers of America's President Award, and the Vermont Governor's Award. Bread & Puppet is constantly active, performing at its farm in Glover, VT, and in local churches, schools and parades. It regularly tours Europe, Canada, and the United States and has recently visited El Salvador, Haiti, Russia, Greece and Korea.

