

Introduction

On April 9, 2025, at the [Swedish Musical Theatre Symposium](#), we explored the experience of 5 key personas in attendance:

Writers, Creatives, Educators, Producers and Venues.

Participants contributed to a “Pains and Gains Wall” by placing post-it notes that highlighted their challenges and aspirations. The “**pains**” captured obstacles that complicate their work, while the “**gains**” outlined solutions that could enhance their efforts in creating and promoting new musical theatre.

This document compiles the insights from the “Pains and Gains Wall,” offering a clear perspective on the challenges and opportunities within Sweden’s musical theatre community.

Writers



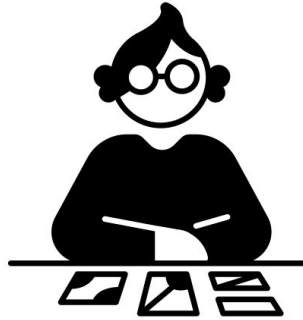
Pains

- Finding the right partner who sees potential and the journey
- Writing distinct in English for international
- To find mentors (with time)

Gains

- Help finding network of talent + partners
- Closer relationship with schools and provide help with development
- Needing someone to talk to and setting new ideas
- To find a group of writers to share and get the work
- I would like to see more open calls from Theaters with specific requests “we wish to make a musical about X, please come and present what your ideas would be on that topic”

Creatives



Pains

- Swedish industry politics
- Swedish scene can feel closed to outsiders
- Funding - it is a small market. Recouping investment can be difficult
- As a subsidized theatre, actors unions can mean talent can be expensive
- Freelance: Limitations to how much you can contribute to develop talent within the boundary of your contract

Gains

- Support from industry people who can open doors
- Blend genres it doesn't have to be just "musical"
- Freelance: The opportunity to be part of an array of wonderful teams and productions
- Musical theatre not being seen as something so separate

Educators



Pains

- Lack of respect/status for musicals as an art form

Gains

- Getting musical theatre more embedded into higher education
- Foster better methodologies e.g. how you write narrative driven
- Take musical direction and coaching into the higher education

Producers



Pains

- Finding suitable venues
- Finding money (donors) funding
- Marketing: getting on mass media is expensive
- Applying for funding!
- Coming from subsidised theatre... need to adapt to forms e.g.: big man stage / nose
- Audiences expect big shows
- Relying on freelancers means you only be able to use those 'at hand' = risk of competence drainage
- The feeling of needing to hire celebrities in order to have stronger marketing
- Being stuck with the infrastructure we have
- Having a network of venues that grows with the production as it matures

Gains

- State theatres taking more responsibility to create new work (avoid stop doing - top 20 titles)
- A platform to find and connect with new MT. I want something to produce and intentionally obscure a revival, not do a revival

Venues

Pains

- Long development processes for musicals
- “Too much or too soon or too little too late”



Gains

- More agile/lean development processes for musicals
- Writers understanding how to better write work fit for development

Feedback

Want to add your thoughts?

email david@serviced.se if you have additional pains, gains or comments.