

NYC Theatre Greening Grant 2023

New York Theatre Workshop

New York Theatre Workshop was selected as a recipient of the 2023 NYC Theatre Greening Grant. This opportunity helped NYTW recycle its aerosol cans while capturing the VOCs to prevent the compounds from releasing into the environment.

Q. What was your project and how did you share it with the community?

A. As a theatre company we use a significant amount of aerosol cans for design elements. Unfortunately, these cans cannot simply be thrown away, nor are they recyclable. The process of emptying cans can release Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) into the environment. VOCs are hazardous for both people and the environment as they are carcinogenic and deplete stratospheric ozone. With the help of Broadway Green Alliance, we purchased an aerosol can recycling system that depressurizes aerosol cans by puncturing and draining them safely. The filter on top captures VOCs and the bucket at the bottom collects the paint and other liquid residues. After emptying the cans completely, we recycled them in compliance with the NYC Department of Sanitation regulations.

Q. How did your project go? What did you find most successful? What roadblocks did you face along the way?

A. The recycling tool is regularly used by our set designers and the costumes department. A huge success of the project is that it is a one-time investment that we hope to use over the course of the next decade on a continuous basis. We must purchase filters for it from time to time, however, that cost is negligible compared to the initial setup cost. Another benefit of the project is that it opened the space where we were storing the accumulated aerosol cans.

