

# Street Drama

## Tom Eggleston

*Street drama, known to some as guerrilla theater, can be an effective tool for communicating the good news of Christ in resort and leisure settings. If your ministry has the talent and skill, the following outline should help you get off to a good start.—Editors*

### A. Two Kinds of Street Drama

1. Improvisational
  - a. Prearranged plot.
  - b. Gag lines memorized.
  - c. Difficult to pull off.
  - d. More audience identification.
2. Scripted
  - a. Lines memorized.
  - b. Need more time to prepare.

### B. Guidelines

1. Must be fast, funny, and loud.
2. Lots of action.
3. If there are no laughs, the audience will not stay.
4. Learn to project voices.
5. You must know what you want to say.
6. Script must be specific.
7. Read (clean) joke books before writing scripts. Use three jokes per page along with sight gags.
8. Use slapstick comedy.
9. Use brightly colored costumes.
10. Use colorful backdrops and a small stage, if possible.

### C. Choosing a Good Venue

1. Where people are at leisure.
2. Reasonable area to perform.
3. Optimum sightlines for audience.
4. Freedom from heavy traffic noise.
5. Choose a place where the crowd can form voluntarily.
6. Public address systems are usually unlawful without permission.

7. Study your area—use imagination and common sense.

#### D. Obtaining permission

1. For public and private property, written permission is best.
2. State times and dates of performances.
3. Inform the local police.

#### E. Staging a performance

1. Gather the crowd with colorful props (painted ladder, free-standing door, or billboard); actors in costumes (top hats, wigs, and umbrellas); or contemporary songs (jazz, reggae, and rhythmic).
2. Start with choreographed music.
3. The first sketch should be fast moving, funny, and short.
4. The next sketch should follow without a break.
5. Length should be 20-30 minutes.
6. Move from a fast beginning to a serious Christian message, and then to a lively ending.
7. Make the performances eye-catching and absorbing.

Adapted from an article by Tom Eggleston in the 1993 National Resort Ministries Conference notebook. Used by permission.