Pivot Theatre (formerly Nakai Theatre) created the following *Fireweed Market Playbook* in 2025 as part of its Balancing Act Level UP! Pilot Project. This resource is designed to support contract staff working at Pivot Theatre's Fireweed Market booth by outlining key responsibilities, expectations, and day-of operations. Staff at the booth engage with market visitors, run an interactive puppet-making activity, and lead a puppet parade.

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If you have any questions or would like to discuss these materials, please contact Balancing Act at balancingact@theatredirect.ca.

Pivot Fireweed Market Playbook

Last update: June 18, 2025

Overview | Basic Schedule | Roles | Materials | Process | Prep Needs

Overview

For the past few years, Pivot Theatre (formerly Nakai Theatre) has had a spot at the Fireweed Market for 4 to 5 weeks between late June and early August.

Kids and “the young at heart” have the opportunity to create a puppet that they can paint and take home. We let them dry and glue on googly eyes and add a stick. We go through 70 to 100 puppets a week.

We also parade through the market with one or more puppets, depending on staffing.

Basic Market Day Schedule

- 1:00 pm: Load vehicles
- 1:30 pm: Market Gates open
- 3:00 pm Market opens
- 6:30 pm: New crafts end
- 7:00 pm: Market ends
- 7:15 pm: Return supplies to the office

Roles – 3+

3 people or more is ideal, allowing for breaks and rotation of roles. We've done it with less, but it's not fun.

- Lead Crafter – Focuses on the kids and the craft.
- Support Crafter / Hot Gluer – Supports kids and uses a hot glue gun for eyes and sticks.
- Puppeteer / Attention Gatherer – Animates basic puppets (often "Belly Fish") in front of the spot to engage and let people know that there are crafts available. Also goes on tours through the market to add delight and connect with more people.

Materials

- 2 personal vehicles or a U-Haul for carrying the below supplies and materials
- **Infrastructure:**
    - Pivot Theatre sandwich board
    - "Paint a Puppet" sign
    - 10x10 tent
    - Folding tables (2)
    - Small astroturf
    - Decorations for the tent (plastic flowers, whirly-gigs, etc...)
    - Water jug (fill before leaving Pivot Theatre)
    - 4 camp chairs for crafts
    - 2-3 chairs for team
    - Bluetooth speaker
- **Bins of craft materials**
    - Paints (washable only!)
        - We hide/reserve black paint to save ourselves and the kids.
    - Craft paper rolls to cover the table
    - 5+ tin cans for water
    - Paint brushes
    - Paper plates for paint pallets
    - Paper towel for brushes and cleaning
- **Promo/donation**
    - Donation can
    - Monitor for slideshow
    - iPad for slideshow

    - Promotional posters
- **Holding things together**
    - Hot glue guns
    - Hot glue sticks
    - Glue sticks
    - Masking tape
- **Cutting things box**
    - Utility knives
    - Cardboard cutters
    - Scissors and shears

Process

- Child / parents approach – “Want to paint a puppet?”
- Let the parent know the process
- Child paints a puppet
- Ask “What 3 colours do you want to start with?”
    - Compliment their choices
    - We let it dry in the sun while they enjoy the market
    - When they come back, we let them pick out googly eyes and we hot glue the eyes onto the puppet
    - We hot glue a stick to the puppet and send them off!

Puppet-making values and tips

- Simple designs for prep and ease of painting
- One-sided is very helpful for space and ease
- Googly eyes are magic

Parading values and tips

- Music really helps – Bluetooth speaker with parading music
- Playing with the vendors is fun

Prep Needs

Check supplies

- Paint / puppets
- Cut out puppets (100 / week)

Materials for craft

- Thin cardboard, primed on both sides
- Craft sticks / skewers
- Googly eyes (mix of colours and sizes)