

Theatre Now!

MANUAL OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

This manual outlines the Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for Theatre Now! The sections contained herein collectively comprise the constitution of Theatre Now! If a matter cannot be resolved within the context of the language contained in this manual, the members of the current Executive may exercise their discretion and make a decision on same.

As circumstances and needs arise it may be necessary to revise this document. The Annual General Meeting would be an appropriate time to conduct such a review.

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The above-noted sections comprise the "constitution" of Theatre Now!

MISSION STATEMENT AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Mission Statement: Theatre Now! is a not-for-profit community theatre troupe. We are an all-inclusive group and we encourage participation from everyone, regardless of age, gender, ability or perceived “talent.”

2014-2015 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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An electronic version of the Theatre Now! Policy & Procedure Manual is available online at <http://www.theatrenowpowellriver.ca/>. A print version of this Manual will be supplied upon request.

SECTION A: GENERAL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

1. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

a) **Decision Making**

Theatre Now! philosophy supports decision-making through consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be made by a simple majority vote of the members present at a general meeting.

b) **Productions**

Theatre Now! will generally , but is not committed to, stage two productions each year : a family-friendly, all ages winter production (often a Pantomime) and a more serious, adult-oriented spring production. The spring production may be entered into the North Island Zone Drama Festival.

c) **Participation**

Theatre Now! may also participate in community events and activities such as parades, Arts Show Cases, fundraisers, etc.

d) **Auditions**

Open auditions are held for each production. Auditions are advertised in the local newspaper, on the Theatre Now! website and via social media.

e) **Membership Fee**

The annual membership fee is \$10.00 for individuals and \$20.00 for families. Membership fees are due at the beginning of September (for everyone participating in the winter production) or the beginning of February (for everyone participating in the spring production). One payment will cover the whole year.

All cast and crew of any Theatre Now! production must be paid-up members of Theatre Now! Exemptions will be granted to temporary, short-term volunteers at the discretion of the Stage Manager.

If someone cannot afford to pay the membership fee, s/he can arrange with the President to have the fee waived.

f) **Production Values**

All members of Theatre Now! will read and agree to the Production Values of Theatre Now! (see Appendix A)

g) **Program Planning**

Production pieces are chosen by interested members, under the direction of the Executive. Once a production is chosen, it becomes the responsibility of the Production Team.

h) Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting is held in early June. Two weeks' notice will be given at least two weeks prior to the meeting. This meeting will offer the membership opportunity to evaluate the past year as well as existing policies and procedures. The membership fee will be reviewed and ratified and a new Executive Committee will be elected for the following year. The Treasurer will present a year-end Financial Statement consisting of a Balance Sheet.

i) Affiliations

Theatre Now! will maintain membership in the Powell River Arts Council and the North Island Zone of Theatre BC until directed otherwise by a majority vote of the membership.

j) Internet

The Theatre Now! Website (<http://www.theatrenowpowellriver.ca/>) , Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/theatrenowpowellriver>) and email account (theatre.now.powell.river@gmail.com) will be administered by the Vice President and/or his or her designate.

k) Festival Participation

If the company chooses to enter a play in the NIZ Festival, all cast & crew members must join Theatre BC and must be willing and able to travel to Vancouver Island. Some funding will be provided but individuals can expect to incur some personal expense. See APPENDIX C for travel waiver.

2. EXECUTIVE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

a) President

- Coordinates all business affairs of Theatre Now!
- Communicates with other individuals and organizations on behalf of Theatre Now!
- Plans and chairs meetings as required.
- Where possible, convenes a planning meeting in early December for a possible spring production and a planning meeting in June for a possible winter production.
- The President will assign one member-at-large to represent Theatre Now! on the Powell River Community Arts Council.

b) Vice-President

- Assists the President as required.
- Undertakes special responsibilities as the need arises.
- Chairs meetings in the absence of the President.

c) Secretary¹

- Records minutes of the AGM, Executive and general meetings as required.
- Sends minutes to the Chairperson of the meeting for review.
- Circulates minutes to the membership after review.
- Prepares correspondence as directed by the President and distributes as appropriate.
- Acts as the Membership Secretary who :
- Prepares a spreadsheet for member registration. Information should include name, mailing address, telephone number(s) & email address.
- Collects, records and receipts membership dues with the assistance of the Treasurer and Director.
- In conjunctions with the Treasurer and Director, ensures new members read, understand and sign the Theatre Now! Production values.
- Provides a record of current membership to the President, Treasurer and Director(s) as needed.
- Keeps a record of people who express interest in future Theatre Now! activities.

d) Treasurer

¹ Amended June 14, 2015

- Administers Theatre Now! finances, keeps personal records and submits financial reports as prepared by the Bookkeeper.
- Issues invoices and receipts and collects monies as required.
- Makes all deposits and pays all bills promptly.
- Pays the annual dues to the Arts' Council and Theatre B.C.
- Investigates grant funding opportunities and assists in applications for such as required.
- Administers production finances as requested by production teams.

e) **Bookkeeper**

- Using information provided by the Treasurer, the Bookkeeper maintains records of Theatre Now!'s financial transactions.
- Maintains the accounts and generates reports using the Simply Accounting Program.

f) **Members-at-Large (Six)**²

- The Members-at-Large will be assigned special responsibilities as directed by the President.
- Make presentations to the Executive on behalf of the general membership.

² Amended June 14, 2015

3. ELECTION PROCEDURES

a) Nominations for Executive Positions

Three channels are available for the nomination process:

- Nominations in written form from any member in good standing (with prior approval of the nominee)
- Self-nomination in written form from any member in good standing
- Nominations from the floor at the Annual General Meeting

b) Executive positions will be voted on by those members in attendance at the General Meeting.

c) All Executive positions are one-year terms.

d) In the event an Executive Position is not filled at the AGM, or becomes vacant during the year, the Executive Committee may appoint someone to fill the position until the next AGM.

4. ANNUALLY ASSIGNED JOBS

a) **Theatre BC (North Island Zone) Liaison**

- a. Prepares and submits Theatre Now! reports to NIZ AGM.
- b. Arranges for all members who wish to participate in the NIZ Drama Festival to join Theatre BC.
- c. Reports to the membership on NIZ activities.
- d. Prepares an annual report for the AGM.

b) **Theatre Now! representative to the Powell River Community Arts Council**

- a. Attends regularly scheduled CAC meetings.
- b. Seeks grant funding when required.
- c. Reports to the membership on CAC activities.
- d. Prepares an annual report for the AGM.

5. THEATRE NOW! ROAD TRIP POLICY

Although Theatre Now! is not a registered society and its members carry no legal liability, there is still an expectation on the part of the community that it will carry out its activities in a safe and accountable manner. In addition, those involved in organizing and participating in Theatre Now! road trips need to know what is expected of cast and crew when on road trips. The following represents policy drawn up to reflect those expectations.

- a) Road trips will be planned at meetings of cast, crew and organizers before the trips. Special arrangements will be made at these meetings and all person are expected to attend such meetings.
- b) Participants must sign a liability release (see Appendix C) releasing Theatre Now! from all liability for all accidents or other misadventures during the trip.
- c) Persons under the age of 19 must have the signed consent(s) of their parent(s) or guardian(s) giving Theatre Now! authorization to have the participants receive emergency medical treatment while on the road trip, should the need arise. This authorization must include the under-age traveler's Medical Services I.D. or Care Card Number.
- d) Unless other arrangements have been made prior to the trip, participants must provide their own spending money, including meal costs. Theatre Now! should not be expected to reimburse or cover participants who exhaust their spending monies on non-essentials prior to trip completion.
- e) A complete schedule should be made available to all participants in advance, including the scheduling of free time.
- f) Sleeping arrangements shall be drawn up before the trip, and parents (of under 19's) will be asked to concur with such.
- g) Failure to comply with this policy or other arrangements made for a given trip may result in progressive discipline being applied. This will include, in ascending order of severity, verbal warning, letter of reprimand, suspension from the trip or future Theatre Now! activities. For a serious breach, participants may be barred from future Theatre Now! road trips. A consensus of Theatre Now! adult members will determine the appropriate discipline.

SECTION B : PRODUCTION POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

1. PARTICIPATION & PRODUCTION VALUES

All members participating in a Theatre Now! production will be members in good standing of Theatre Now! (See SECTION A, 1:c) and will be familiar with and in agreement with the core Production Values (See APPENDIX A.)

2. REHEARSALS

Attendance at rehearsals is mandatory unless arrangements are made before hand with the director. The director will publish a rehearsal schedule at the beginning of the production.

3. PRODUCTION JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Depending on the type of production, some of the following jobs may not be required. Jobs may be combined when practical. This is a brief description of each role. More detailed descriptions can be found in Appendix C.

a) Producer

- a. Overall coordination of production
- b. Finances: coordinates setting of budget, authorities, reporting
- c. Facilities: booking spaces and dates for production meetings, rehearsals, production volunteer coordination
- d. Cast & Crew notifications
- e. Tickets/Programs
- f. Convenes, attends and chairs Production Meetings (or appoints a designate)
- g. Appoints someone to keep minutes of decisions made at Production Meetings.

b) Director

- a. Artistic Direction
- b. Interpretations meetings
- c. Coordinates casting, rehearsal scheduling
- d. Rehearsals
- e. Attend Production Meetings
- f. Provides scripts to all members of the production in a timely manner.

c) Stage Manager

- a. Assist in setting up rehearsal schedule and spaces
- b. Maintain Prompt Book
- c. Authorize requisition slips for production expenses (Appendix B)
- d. Liaise with Director regarding discipline at rehearsals
- e. Give actors entrance cues at rehearsals & performances
- f. In conjunction with the Director, ensure all players have scripts (receive payment for same)

- g. Assist in crew and cast notifications of rehearsals and changes
 - h. Coordinate make-up, dressing rooms, costumes, props, prompter
 - i. Overall responsibility for dress rehearsal and performances
 - j. Oversee backstage crew
 - k. Technical Rehearsal
 - l. Attend production meetings
- d) Assistant Stage Manager**
- a. Ensure cast is backstage and ready for entrances
 - b. Ensure crew is ready for scene and set changes
- e) Set Design**
- a. In consultation with Director, coordinate set construction (including painting)
- f) Technical Director**
- a. In consultation with Director, coordinate lighting, special effects and sound design
 - b. Operate lighting, sound and sound effects
 - c. Attend production meetings
- g) Wardrobe Manager [Costumes]**
- a. In consultation with Director, coordinate design
 - b. Make or procure specialized costumes
 - c. Coordinate all costumes
 - d. Provide a place for costume storage
- h) Choreographer**
- a. Design and choreography
 - b. Dance rehearsals
 - c. Attend production meetings and/or meetings with Music Director and Director
- i) Music Director**
- a. Coordinates music selection and applies for licenses to perform as needed.³
 - b. Coordinates musicians
 - c. Music rehearsals
 - d. Attend production meetings and/or meetings with Choreographer and Director
- j) Props Manager**
- a. Work with Producer and Director to plan prop requirements
 - b. Procure props as needed (both set pieces and carry-ons)

³ Amended June 14, 2015

- c. Organize Props Table during production & ensure props are ready when and where needed

k) Publicity/Promotion

- a. Arrange for TV, Newspaper, Radio advertising and news releases
- b. Posters
- c. Program
- d. Attend production meetings

l) Advertising

- a. Coordinate sales of advertising for program

m) Front of House

- a. Organize a roster of volunteers to sell and collect tickets before each performance
- b. Distribute programs
- c. Provide ushering when necessary

4. PROMPT BOOK

The Prompt Book will be kept by the Stage Manager or his/her designate. (See Appendix D)

THEATRE NOW!

PRODUCTION VALUES

These are the values and principles that define our group. They guide us as we conduct our activities, from choosing plays (artistic direction), casting, rehearsals, etc. If we can agree on these principles and values we can and will grow as a team and become more effective and creative.

WE VALUE...

- Cast and crew being present at all scheduled rehearsals and meetings.
- The production is a time commitment – taking on other major activities may make you less available, especially in the crucial last weeks of rehearsals.
- Good communication is key. Notify the Stage Manager or Director(s) when you will be absent and take steps to find out what you missed.
- Promptness. Be on time for rehearsals and performances, ready to participate.
- Supporting the Director(s) and those onstage by being quiet offstage. When cast and/or crew socialize backstage it is disrupting.
- Memorizing lines as per the schedule set. This allows you to spend more time developing your character and allows others to develop their characters. This also encourages interaction & cohesion/chemistry : “ensemble playing.”
- Working between rehearsals to memorize lines and to participate in other production activities such as fund-raising, promotion and set construction.
- Giving actors opportunities to share their interpretation of lines and scenes, while the Director(s) have the final say.
- Inclusive participation by community members, taking pride in and encouraging a diversity of talents, experiences, and abilities
- Providing an open and accountable audition process for all those wishing parts in productions. (i.e. no “pre-casting”)
- All cast and crew being given opportunities to participate in major decisions in productions, for instance by attending Production Meetings
- The efficient and environmentally-friendly use of resources in all our productions
- Good and conscientious financial management

Membership Information Sheet

Date : _____

Name : _____

Phone : _____

Email : _____

Address : _____

Membership Fee : _____

Received by : _____

Date Paid : _____

I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO HONOUR THE PRODUCTION VALUES OF THEATRE NOW!

Signed : _____

Date : _____

N.B. A separate one-page, 14" version of this information sheet is also available.

Appendix B



REQUISITION SLIP

Requisition slips must be authorized by the Stage Manager for productions and by the President and Treasurer for other items.

This authorizes _____
to purchase or to incur the expense of _____
at a cost not to exceed _____

Upon production of a receipt, the purchaser will be reimbursed in full by Theatre Now!

The bearer agrees that if not receipts are produced reimbursement will not be made.

Read and understood : _____

Authorized by : _____

Date : _____

APPENDIX C

Out of Town Travel Waiver & Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment

(Name of production) **(Date of Travel)** **(Location of Travel)**

LIABILITY WAIVER: Everyone traveling to his event must sign the following release from liability:

I, _____, absolve and will not hold Theatre Now!, Powell River, liable for any loss, injury, or other misfortune which should occur to me relating to Theatre Now's travel to and from, and participation in, the production specified above.

Participant: _____

Parent/Guardian (if participant is under 19) _____

Date: _____

AUTHORIZATION FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT

I, _____, hereby authorize Theatre Now! or any other agency to provide emergency medical treatment if I/my child _____ should require it during Theatre Now!'s travel to and from, and participation in, the production specified above.

Participant: _____

Date: _____ **B.C. Medical Number:** _____

Parent/Guardian (if participant is under 19) _____

APPENDIX D

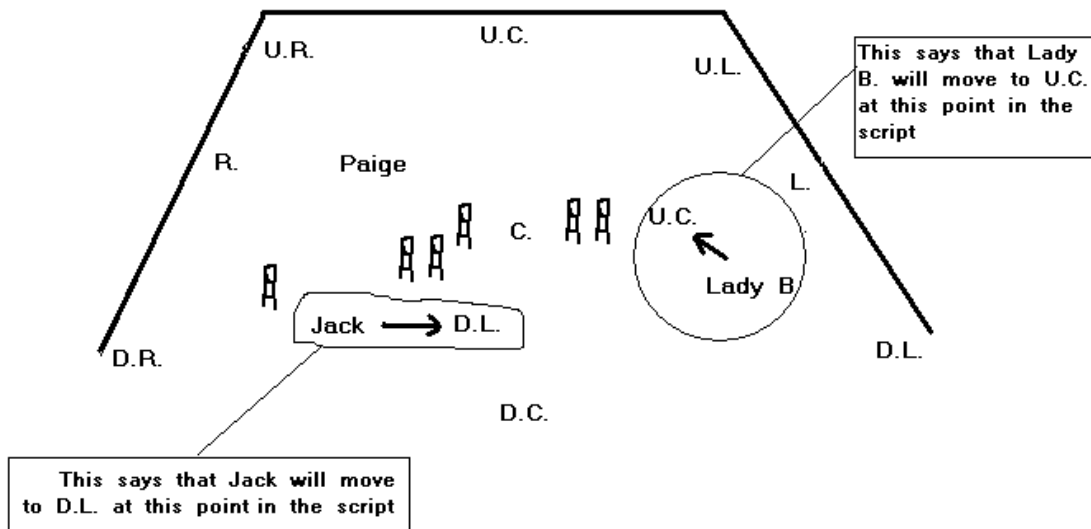
Guidelines for Stage Manager and others making entries into Prompt Book

1. On blank page to the left of each page of script, as needed :

Print clearly as others will be reading these instructions later. Use a pencil as often there are many subsequent changes. Enter position of set pieces on the stage at the beginning of scenes or when there are changes during the scene, and as needed, the positions of the players at any one time, or arrows pointing to the movements of the players.

From the Actor's Point of View, Facing the Audience:

L.	= Stage Left	U.L.	= Upstage Left	U.R.	= Upstage Right
R.	= Stage Right	D.L.	= Downstage Left	D.R.	= Downstage Right
C.	= Centre Stage	D.C.	= Downstage Centre	U.C.	= Upstage Centre



2. On each page of script, as needed: Print clearly as others will be reading these instructions later. Use a pencil as often there are many subsequent changes. Put comments besides each character's lines, as the director directs the actor do to specific things or move to specific places, for example:

Turns down radio
Emphasis on "funny"
J glances at B
Miss P to UC, back to audience
Hands on hips
Nose to nose w Algy
She crosses legs
Sounding like "College Professor"
Etc

Appendix E

DETAILED PRODUCTION JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Adapted from :

<http://www.aact.org/people/>

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY THEATRE
Improving communities one theatre at a time

ACTORS

An actor's performance is enhanced by:

- an ability to put personal skills like imagination, emotional honesty and empathy at the service of a creative process
- an ability to focus and listen
- vocal training for greater power, expressiveness and clarity
- physical training stressing general fitness, flexibility and grace
- insight into the psychology of human behavior
- a ready understanding of and love for language
- high-level reading, research and text-analysis skills

Other performance skills an actor develops can increase the range of roles for which he or she may be considered. These include singing, dancing and playing a musical instrument; fencing/stage combat and physical theatre skills; circus skills like clowning, acrobatics and juggling; *commedia dell' arte* and mask techniques; and training in improvisation.

CHOREOGRAPHER

Choreographers design and direct the dance or stylized movement in musical productions, working closely with the director and musical director.

A choreographer works with dancers to interpret and develop ideas and transform them into the finished performance. This might mean taking overall control of a production, or working under the director of an opera, play or musical.

When working with a director, the choreographer must gain a full understanding of the director's vision of the show, including style and pacing, and must be familiar with the script and music. An effective choreographer is one who supports the director's vision, so that all elements of movement and dance work as part of the larger picture. Some directors will give their choreographers a great deal of freedom for their work, but even so, the result must be part of an organic whole, supporting the story, characters, and the overall artistic intent.

As part of the production's support team, the choreographer must work closely with the musical director, costume designer, set designer and lighting designer, to make sure that all stage movement is compatible with musical cues, costuming , sets and lighting.

Choreographers in community theatre must often work with non-dancers, or dancers with limited experience, as well as those who have had considerable training. This can mean extra rehearsal time, which must be planned for. Many choreographers use team captains or assistants to work with individuals or groups within the ensemble, as a way of maximizing the amount of time available for rehearsal.

COSTUME DESIGNER

Costume designers create the look of each character by designing clothes and accessories the actors will wear in performance. Depending on their style and complexity, costumes may be made, bought, revamped out of existing stock or rented. Their designs need to faithfully reflect the personalities of the characters in the script.

The shapes, colors and textures that a costume designer chooses make an immediate and powerful visual statement to the audience. Creative collaboration among the costume designer, the director and the set and lighting designers ensures that the costumes are smoothly integrated into the production as a whole.

Stage costumes can provide audiences with information about a character's occupation, social status, gender, age, sense of style and tendencies towards conformity or individualism.

Costume designs also need to include any accessories such as canes, hats, gloves, shoes, jewelry or masks. These costume props add a great deal of visual interest to the overall costume design. They are often the items that truly distinguish one character from another.

DIRECTOR

The director has the challenging task of bringing together the many complex pieces of a production—the script, actors, set, costuming, lighting and sound and music—into a unified whole.

To accomplish this task, a director needs to:

- Interpret the script
- Cast the production
- Collaborate with designers
- Plan the rehearsals
- Guide the actors in their work during rehearsals.

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Lighting designers know how to make the best use of the subtle and powerful medium of light, creating effects that can be changed at will to match the mood of the action.

At its most basic, stage lighting functions to make the actors and their environs visible to the audience. But it can also be used to:

- Evoke the appropriate mood
- Indicate time of day and location
- Shift emphasis from one stage area to another
- Reinforce the style of the production
- Make objects on stage appear flat or three dimensional
- Blend the visual elements on stage into a unified whole

The lighting designer begins by reading the script to be produced noting the type of light it calls for in each scene. Designer and [director](#) share their ideas about how light could be used to enhance the production concept at their first meeting. Early meetings with the [set designer](#) are also important because the set and lighting designers must collaborate on how to achieve the desired "look" for the play. The plan for the set may influence the placement and direction of the necessary lighting instruments, so flagging any potential problems in this area as early as possible makes sense.

Lighting designers attend rehearsals to get a feel for the lighting cues and to plan how to light the actors as they move from place to place on stage. When the blocking is set, the lighting designer can start to work out which lighting instruments will be used and where each one will be located.

PLAYWRIGHT

Playwrights create scripts. Like other literary artists, playwrights tell stories through the words and actions of characters. While the work of the playwright can stand on its own as literature, its potential is fully realized only when the skills of all the other theatre artists combine to transform the script into a production of a play.

A playwright's tool kit needs to contain:

- a vivid imagination
- a gripping story to tell
- insight into what makes people tick
- a good ear for capturing the way people really speak

- working knowledge of the elements of dramatic structure
- an understanding of theatre's non-verbal means of expression—sound, movement, setting, costume, lighting, music, pacing and stage picture

While most playwrights, like most writers, work alone, sometimes they share the task of script creation with [actors](#) and [directors](#) in a process known as collective creation. Here everyone takes a hand in researching the story idea and developing the script. But because the skillful ordering and re-creation of events is central to the playwright's art, the final task of shaping the raw material into a coherent and effective script will normally fall to the playwright.

Playwrights may also develop a new script with feedback and guidance. A new script can often be strengthened by the kind of feedback the playwright receives through a workshop process. Usually organized by a dramaturg, this process often involves a reading and/or scene study of the script by professional actors and a director.

It is a good idea for the playwright to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities of the other key players in mounting a production.

PUBLICITY/PROMOTIONS/MARKETING

This work involves managing or assisting in promoting the productions, services and public image of the theatre company. This role is difficult to define, since in many theatre companies the responsibilities listed are given to more than one person.

Publicity/Media Relations

The publicity person is most often tasked with promoting of specific productions, events or services, and normally serves as the contact person for all media inquiries.

Advertising

Advertising means paying someone to bring your productions or services to the attention of potential and current customers through materials you create yourself or pay to have designed--advertisements in newspapers or on television or radio; signs; direct mailings; or e-mail messages.

Depending on how your company divides up the above areas of responsibilities, you may be asked to do one or more of the following:

- Create and determine publicity/press relations plan to generate continued greater awareness for the company and support any overall marketing initiatives.
- Write and implement communication or promotional plans
- Cultivate and maintain media contacts in order to generate relevant stories, interviews and other media coverage for the company.
- Solicit, arrange and organize media interviews (print, radio and TV) for general stories about the company

- Work with other organizations and provide information to them.
- Write news releases, articles, calendar listings, and public service announcements (PSA's), ensuring consistency and accuracy.
- Distribute news releases to media
- Field and respond to media inquiries generated by those releases, or regarding a specific production or event.
- Provide the public with information when it is requested
- Solicit, arrange and organize media interviews (print, radio and TV) for productions
- Coordinate and oversee photo sessions for public relations and marketing purposes.
- Coordinate handling of reviewers, including contacting them, securing comp tickets, and compiling press packets.
- Oversee the archiving of all press clippings, video clips, radio tapes and photo library.
- Responsible for design and/or placement of ads
- Maintain and update the company's website, or work closely with the person who does this.

PRODUCER

The Producer generally is responsible for budgeting, scheduling work, and coordinating the various production departments. The Producer is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the production are completed within budget, according to the designer's and director's wishes, and in time for the first public performance.

The Producer oversees the cost effectiveness and planning of the entire production process. Responsibilities may include any or all of the following:

- Securing the rights to present the play from the royalty house or publisher-agent.
- Budgeting
- Deciding date, time and venue
- Forming a production team
- Production meetings
- Scheduling rehearsals and performances
- Setting the rehearsal venue
- First call
- Rehearsal process and preparation
- Financial accounting of the show's expenses and revenues

Having found the property and bought the rights, the producer starts by putting together a production budget--the cost of finding and rehearsing the creative team, cast and orchestra; designing and making the scenery costumes and props, installing them all in a theatre; and marketing the results.

However, the single most important responsibility (after securing the rights to the production) is the development of a highly motivated and collaborative production team, which includes all

those in charge of the various areas of the production--director, set designer, lighting designer, costume designer, musical director, publicist, choreographer, technical director, stage manager, etc.

SET DESIGNER

All the scenery, furniture and props the audience sees at a production of a play make up the set design. The set designer's job is to design these physical surroundings in which the action will take place. The overall look of the set also gives the audience information about the director's concept of the production.

The set should:

- suggest the style and tone of the whole production
- create mood and atmosphere
- give clues as to the specific time and place of the action
- offer creative possibilities for the movement and grouping of the actors

The set may also need to be designed so the backstage areas used by the actors and stage crew are kept out of sight from the audience. This will depend on the effect the director wants to create with the staging and on the type of stage the production uses.

All the things appearing on the stage other than the scenery are called stage properties, or props. Set props like furniture, draperies and decorations are the types of things that complete the set and they need to be part of the set design.

The set designer will normally read the script many times, both to get a feel for the flavor and spirit of the script and to list its specific requirements for scenery, furnishings and props. The time of day, location, season, historical period and any set changes called for in the script are noted. The set designer's focus here is on figuring out everything that may be needed based on the dialogue in the script.

The set designer will meet with the [director](#) and the design team (set, [costume](#), [lighting](#) and [sound](#) designers), to discuss the details of the set and the director's interpretation of the play. The set, costume and lighting designers also meet and work together to ensure the creation of a unified look and feel for the production. A lively exchange of initial ideas and first impressions helps clarify the steps that each person needs to take in this intensely collaborative process.

Once the show opens, the designer's work is essentially complete. Now it's normally the job of the [stage manager](#) and backstage crew to make sure that every aspect of the production runs just as the designer intended, time after time, until the production closes.

SOUND DESIGNER

The sound designer plans and provides the sound effects in the play. The composer writes any original music the show may require. All the music and/or effects in a play considered as a whole make up the "soundscape."

In addition to the sounds of the words spoken by the actors, a play may also call for sound effects to recreate lifelike noises or use music or abstract and unidentifiable sounds to support the drama.

Sound designers and composers begin their work by studying the script, gathering as much information as they can about any sound or music it calls for. As in all other aspects of design, an early meeting with the director and the design team is essential to get a clear understanding of the production concept.

Sounds and music in the theatre can

- motivate actions onstage and indicate events taking place offstage
- establish the time of day, season and weather
- locate the action in a specific place
- create mood and changes in mood
- stimulate audience expectations of what is to come
- provide information about the characters
- build transitions between scenes
- offer shortcuts that rapidly advance the plot or recall past events

Planning tools of sound designers and composers

- *Plot*: A list of all the music and sound cues for each act/scene. It indicates where the sound or music occurs, the page number of the script where it appears, precisely when it begins and ends, and the equipment that will be used to produce it.
- *System layout*: A system layout shows the type and location of speakers on stage, on the set and in the auditorium. The system layout may also include a layout of how all of the sound equipment will be interconnected.
- *Cue sheet*: A version of the sound plot to be used by the sound technicians who will run the equipment during the performance.

Sound and music cues are often dependent on the precise timing of the onstage action and can only be set after the play's blocking has been determined. Ideally, the director, cast and crew will have several opportunities to fine tune the timing of the completed music/sound design during technical rehearsals.

The sound designer will meet with the [director](#) and the design team ([set](#), [costume](#), [lighting](#) and sound designers), to discuss the details of the set and the director's interpretation of the play. The set, costume and lighting designers also meet and work together to ensure the creation of a unified look and feel for the production. A lively exchange of initial ideas and first impressions helps clarify the steps that each person needs to take in this intensely collaborative process.

Sound Engineer

The sound engineer works under the designer, and must take the sound design and ensure that it can be created in a given space. This involves selecting equipment to reproduce the various sound elements required, installing and testing it, and usually running the actual show.

STAGE MANAGER

Stage managers typically provide practical and organizational support to the director, actors, designers, stage crew and technicians throughout the production process.

The role of the stage manager is especially important to the director in rehearsals. Here the director and the stage manager work side by side, with the stage manager recording the director's decisions about blocking and notes for the actors, keeping track of logistical and scheduling details and communicating what goes on in rehearsals to the rest of the team. This enables the director to concentrate his or her full attention on directing.

Stage managers have several key responsibilities and tasks to perform in each phase of a production, including

- scheduling and running rehearsals
- communicating the director's wishes to designers and crafts people
- coordinating the work of the stage crew
- calling cues and possibly actors' entrances during performance
- overseeing the entire show each time it is performed

In conjunction with the director, the stage manager determines the scheduling of all rehearsals and makes sure everyone involved is notified of rehearsal times, meetings, costume/wig fittings and coaching sessions. During the rehearsal phase, stage managers also

- mark out the dimensions of the set on the floor of the rehearsal hall
- make sure rehearsal props and furnishings are available for the actors
- attend all rehearsals
- notify the designers and crafts people of changes made in rehearsal

In rehearsals the stage manager also records all blocking, plus all the light, sound and set change cues, in a master copy of the script called the prompt book. The information in the prompt book also allows the stage manager to run the technical rehearsals, calling each technical cue in turn to determine precisely how it needs to be timed to coordinate with the onstage action.

The stage manager and the technical director also work out a smooth and efficient plan for the stage crew to follow during set changes. Furniture and prop plans for complicated sets are drawn up by the stage manager and technical designer to show exactly where the furniture and props are to be positioned on stage at the beginning of each scene and sometimes in the wings. Once the show opens, the director's work is essentially complete. Now it's the stage manager's

job to make sure that every aspect of the production runs just as the director intended time after time, until the production closes.

Assistant Stage Manager

Often needed in larger productions, the ASM is often stationed just offstage to facilitate communication between the stage manager (who is out in the house) and actors, as well as ensuring safety. The ASM often helps with complex set changes, quick changes offstage, or preparing the stage for performance.

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

The Technical Director has the daily responsibility for the technical operations of a theatre or performing arts center, including lighting, sound, set design and construction, and coordinating necessary maintenance.

The Technical Director (TD) works with a great deal of independence and exercises independent judgment in performing a wide variety of duties.

In general, a TD may do any or all of the following:

- Operates, maintains and safeguards the technical assets of the theatre, including supervising the use of lighting, sound, communications equipment, and the use and maintenance of stage facilities.
- Determines the necessary technical supports, such as lighting, sound, staging, and special needs, necessary for events and performances presented at the facility in advance of production dates.
- Designs, sets up, maintains, and operates lighting and sound systems for theatre, dance, music, and other productions and projects; assists guest designers and arts with technical matters.
- Advises production managers, lighting and sound designers, on the technical specifications, costs and usage of technical equipment required for the individual show, and supervises the implementations of approved technical designs.
- Supervises and assists with set and stage construction and management.
- Assists in recruiting, training and assignment of volunteer or paid technical staff for individual shows.
- Orients facility users to safety, technical characteristics and other areas of facility operations; facilitates the use of the technical facilities by all users.
- Monitors the condition of equipment including lighting, sound, and rigging equipment; arranges for the repair and replacement within budgetary constraints; performs preventive maintenance on equipment.
- Assists with the preparation and control of production budgets; maintains inventory

Because a TD may be called upon to deal with a wide range of technical issues, he or she benefits from a working knowledge of techniques, methods and procedures of theatre, dance, and music productions and presentations including stage, set, sound and lighting design and implementation; stage management; computerized lighting systems; stage carpentry; appropriate safety precautions and procedures.

OTHER IMPORTANT POSITIONS

Properties Master/Designer

Most productions use a properties master to deal with the large number of small items that a play needs. In larger shows, there may also be a props designer who decides what the props should look like and how they will function, in coordination with the director and set designers.

Carpenters/Electricians

When sets need to be built or lights hung, shows need carpenters and electricians to do the grunt work of sawing, hammering, lifting, hanging. In many companies, no experience is necessary to serve in one of these roles as you will be taught on the job. Often, actors serve in these roles when they aren't needed in rehearsal.

Crew Chief

The crew chief is intended to take the burden of finding a scheduling staff off of the TD and master carpenter's shoulders. The CC will find determine with the master carpenter what the build schedule is, and how many carpenters will be needed on any particular day (and then make sure that they show up).

Hair Dresser

Responsible for the design and execution of hairstyle and color for cast members appearing on stage. Key duties may include: Submitting hair design and color samples for cast members appearing in a production, in consultation with director, costume designer and make-up artist; creating designs as agreed upon while instructing cast members in the proper procedure for execution of the design; monitoring and maintaining hair designs and color throughout the run of the production; maintaining an inventory of design tools, dryers, and related hairdressing materials for use in each production; collecting, maintaining and preserving hairpieces and/or wigs as property of the theatre company; supervising clean up and storage of all hair products; working within prescribed budget; training hairdressing volunteers in method and practice.

Front of House Manager

Responsible for the smooth operation of the house during the run of the show. Key duties may include: Recruiting or supervising recruiting of all Front of House workers (ushers, greeter, refreshment or souvenir seller, etc.); coordinating building opening times on show nights with stage manager; orienting and training all FOH workers; explaining how tickets are to be taken and where they are to be stored; checking rest rooms after intermission and at end of night;

cleaning house area and restocking supplies; along with the stage manager, ensure all lights are turned off after each show and all doors are locked, turning all monies and programs over to the bookkeeper or treasurer.

Make-Up Artist

This person is responsible for preparation and application of make-up to cast members. Key duties may include: consulting with director, costume designer and hairstylist for final approval of characters' appearances; make-up design; maintaining an inventory of make-up products consistent with general makeup requirements for cast members; acquiring any make-up products specific to character cast members' appearance on stage; applying make-up for cast members unfamiliar with basic requirements and techniques, to be done in an instructional manner so as to allow cast members to learn techniques; supervising and maintaining make-up requirements throughout the run of each production; supervising removal of make-up, preserving pre-cast and/or pre-made pieces for use throughout the run of the production; supervising clean-up of make-up room and inventory of products; cleaning and storing make-up to preserve product life and allow maximum use; working within prescribed budget; and training make-up volunteers in methods and practice

Master Carpenter

The master carpenter's job takes the working drawings from the TD, and using them, builds the set. After a quick glance at the working drawings, the MC should be able to schedule the build, order lumber, and then just pass that information on to the crew chief and TD, who make sure that the carpenters are there at the appropriate times. In many theatres, these duties having been absorbed into the TD position. If your show can come up with a master carpenter, use them wisely!

Master Electrician

The ME is responsible for taking the lighting plot and making sure that all lighting units on the plot are hung in the correct locations and actually work. Coordinating the numbers of lights and circuits and allocating cabling, gels, and other accessories are the most important aspects of this role. In many theatres, the light designer often ends up sharing many of the typical ME roles, so the job gets done by both.

Master Painter

A highly sought skill in most theatres, the MP is responsible for painting set elements under the direction of the set designer, but often the Master Painter has the freedom to choose many of the design elements him/herself.

Prop Manager/Master

This person is responsible for designing and securing all stage properties needed for each character in show. (Note: Some companies have two positions--a Prop Manager who is responsible for building, storing and cataloging all props for the company, and a separate Prop

Master for each production.) Key duties may include: Works with director to understand his/her vision and needs related to time period or other limitations; determines needed props for each show considering script, time period of show, and usage of props; works with producer to communicate budgetary needs and work within the assigned budget; collects all receipts for expenses and turns in to stage manager; works with producer as necessary to find alternate sources of props if unable to find what is needed; works with producer and director to ensure props are ready according to schedule; works closely with each actor to develop understanding of usage of any special props; works with stage manager and props crew to explain and develop mechanics of running the show, including setting up prop tables and assigning specific tasks to each crew member; strikes all props at end of show and return to places of origin.

Set Decorator

This person is responsible for securing all items needed to decorate the set that are not considered to be stage properties. Key duties would be similar to Prop Manager/Master above, replacing the word "props" with "set pieces."