



MOUSETRAP THEATRE COMPANY INC

Directors & Stage Managers notes

These notes are intended as guidelines for directors and stage managers

Note: For all Blue Card Requirements refer to the Mousetrap Theatre Co Inc. By-Laws

The producer of the production is Mousetrap Theatre Co, and the director of every production is accountable to the Company.

Budget:

- The director should produce a suggested budget for the production including:
 1. Scripts
 2. Royalties/performing rights
 3. Set
 4. Props
 5. Costumes
 6. Payments for musicians
 7. Advertising
 8. Printing
- The Company provides an amount of \$---.--- for items that have to be purchased. Further funds can be made available by request.
- All receipts must be presented for re-imbusement.
- The number of performances should be determined in consultation with the Company.

Scripts:

- A director should submit a suggested production to the Company for approval by the Production Committee.
- The secretary will send for the performing rights and the scripts.
- Scripts given to the cast must be collected up at the end of the production and returned to the Theatre Librarian.
- Scripts may be highlighted, **but rented scripts may only be marked in pencil** which must be erased before return.

Casting:

- All productions will have an open audition.
- The director will consult the production committee re time and date of auditions.
- Auditions will be advertised in the newsletter, on the website and in the local newspaper.
- A member of the production committee will attend all auditions to act as consultant.
- The audition may be conducted as required by the director, whether it is a cold reading, a prepared piece, an individual audition, or a group audition.
- For musicals and cabarets, the audition should include singing and dancing, and may be at the direction of the choreographer and musical director.
- The results of the audition may be announced immediately, or within a few days.
- All auditioned persons must be contacted re the result of the audition.

Rehearsals:

- A full rehearsal schedule should be prepared and approved by the secretary to ensure the dates do not clash with other rehearsals and meetings.
- Keys to the theatre should be obtained from the secretary.
- The director is responsible for opening up and locking the theatre before and after the rehearsal.
- All lights and fans and A/C must be turned off before locking up.
- The toilet doors must be locked and the power plugs in the kitchen pulled out of the sockets.
- The security code should be obtained from the secretary and the alarm must be set before locking up.
- All cast and crew must sign in and out at the box-office.

Sets:

- The director should prepare a set design, either him/herself, or with the assistance of a set designer.
- The director should liaise with the backstage coordinator (stage manager) to construct and paint the set.
- A working bee should be held to construct and paint the set as soon as possible after the close of the previous production.
- Furniture and furnishings may be found in the storage containers or borrowed. The director should liaise with the backstage coordinator about requirements that cannot be found.

Props:

- The director should consult the backstage coordinator (stage manager) to appoint a props person who will organise the props required for the production.
- Props may be found in the props container, may be purchased or borrowed.
- All props should be returned to the props container or owners at the close of the production.

Costumes:

- The director should consult with the wardrobe mistress about costume requirements.
- In modern productions, the cast should be able to provide most of their own costumes. Many items can be purchased from charity shops.
- If costumes need to be made or hired, the director should consult the production committee.
- The cast is responsible for the maintenance of their costumes and should return all costumes that are not their own to the theatre at the end of the production.

Lighting and Sound:

The director should consult the Technical Officer about the appointment of the lighting and sound designers and operators.

Stage Manager:

The director should consult the backstage coordinator (Resident Stage Manager) about the appointment of the stage manager.

Backstage Crew:

The director should consult the backstage coordinator and the stage manager about the appointment of a backstage crew.

Publicity:

Advertising is the responsibility of the Company and the publicity officer.

The publicity officer should consult the director about the wording of all advertising.

The posters and flyers are the responsibility of the Company and the publicity officer.

The director may be required to organise a photo shoot for publicity and the local newspaper.

Programmes:

The programmes are prepared by the Company and the publicity officer.

The director should provide details of cast, production team, backstage personnel, synopsis of the production and director's notes for the programme.

The director should proof-read the programme.

Bump-out:

- At the end of the production, the stage **must be returned to its original state**: The set must be dismantled and stored
- The props must be returned to the storage container or to the owners
- The furniture and furnishings must be returned to the storage container or to the owners
- Costumes must be returned to the storage container or to the owners
- The stage, dressing rooms and green room must be swept and cleaned.
- The kitchen in the green room must be cleaned.
- The curtains and legs must be returned to original position.
- Scripts must be collected and returned to the librarian.
- Keys to the theatre must be returned to the secretary.

Stage Manager (SM) Duties

From Dress Rehearsal onwards the SM takes over the running of the show from the Director

Set-up/strike rehearsal space.

This can include setting the stage before every rehearsal (set-up) and putting it back afterwards (striking).

- * Set out a props table with rehearsal props so the actors get used to getting (and putting back) their props. This will get you accustomed to any necessary pre-sets, plus you can make a list of props that are needed, also noting any props that need to be repaired or replaced on a regular basis.

** This normally is covered by the Property Officer*

Maintain the schedule

The schedule is laid out by the Director but the SM may need to notify the cast of any changes in rehearsal times.

Create Cue Lists.

You should create Master Cue Sheets as well as Cue Sheets for the individual departments, i.e., Lights, Sound, Scene Changes etc.

Oversee the Tech Crew.

The SM may oversee Bump-In and Bump -Out at the theatre

Run Tech rehearsals on stage

This process can be slow but is vital for managing the technical aspects of the show.

Pre-warn the cast and crew and expect the cast to complain that it's taking too long, or wanting to leave the stage to rehearse in another area.

Do not be afraid to stop the rehearsal if you need to check, re-do or re-run something a few times to get it right.

Ensure the safety of all persons, cast and crew

Make sure there are no hazardous obstacles (cables, chairs etc.).

Sweep the stage if needed.

Maintain a Bible

The "Bible" includes script, cue sheets, props lists, doors open/closed list and a sign on sheet for cast and crew.

Before the start of a performance:-

Ensure that fire doors and gates are unlocked and unobstructed.

There are no dangerous obstacles on side and back stage.

All stage work lights are off.

All stage monitors and head sets are on and in working order.

After rehearsals and performances ensure that all doors and gates are locked, and lights, monitors etc. are turned off.

Call the show

This is when it all comes together.

Liaise with the front of house crew, back stage crew and lighting/sound crew.

Give "half hour" "15 min" and "places" calls. *This may be done by the Assistant Stage Manager especially if you need to focus on any last minute details.*

Resolve problems and Handling complaints.

Easier said than done sometimes, the problem may not even really be your "department," yet you may be the person to resolve it.

As required, discuss with the people involved and the director to work out a

Solution

Tips

Know your duties

Be organized quiet and calm.

Take copious notes.

Try to enjoy the process. **Calling the show is the easy part**

Check list

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Thing to check:-

Back Gate

Back Roller door

Back security light

Both Fire doors (Bolts top & Bottom on side door)

All monitors and cameras SM, Kitchen & backstage

All dressing room windows and fans

Backstage, dressing room, stage (rehearsal) lights and side stage lights & AC

Auditorium lights and fans and AC

Kitchen fans and lights

Toilet lights and bolts

The last person out to:- check outside light, set alarm & lock up