

CALOUNDRA CHORALE & THEATRE COMPANY

STAGE MANAGER GUIDE & HELPFUL HINTS

The Caloundra Chorale & Theatre Company theatre is a small and intimate venue capable of producing quality theatrical presentations for the community.

Due to the nature of the venue, there are limitations, unlike larger theatres which cater for professional companies.

In the theatre world, apart from the overall backstage organization, the Stage Manager would “call the show” giving sound and lighting cues throughout a performance. To date, with the current set-up of technical equipment in the CCTC theatre, this skill is not required. The CCTC Stage Manager is also not required to arrange rehearsal schedules as this is usually done by the Director or another assistant.

However, if there is no assistant to specifically manage the props, the Stage Manager will manage and supervise this area.

Presently, the Stage Manager is in charge of the backstage area and oversees all delegated jobs are being properly carried out. Among the necessary tasks are –

- Checking that all the scenery, furnishings and properties are ready and in a good state of repair.

- Making sure that everyone and everything needed will be in the right place at the right time.

- Liaising with the Director, Sound and Lighting Manager (Bio Box) and the Front of House Supervisor.

- Ready to cope with unforeseen emergencies.

PREPARATION

Foolscap Note Book – For any and every general note from start of rehearsals through to the end of the season.

Pencil, sharpener, rubber, highlighter and sticky notes – Even during performances, there will be reminders, notes and changes.

Obtain a copy of the script. Read thoroughly and familiarize with characters, scene changes, props etc.

Mark the page numbers in the script for quick and easy reference regarding cue lines, music cues and lighting cues for scene changes.

DURING REHEARSAL PERIOD

Make a list of mobile phone contact numbers for all cast and crew.

Take general notes on what is required by the Director for scene changes.

Basically –

Who moves it

What do they move

When do they move it

And where

Make a list of the script page numbers, task description and cues - dialogue, music or lighting.

Determine the best position backstage for placement of furniture etc. as there is limited space for transitions on and off stage.

Limited space also determines the preparation times for placement of items in readiness.

Not too early and not too late.

ALL of the above will potentially change as the show progresses and develops.

Keep a check on rehearsal schedule timings and advise the Director so as not to run over time.

Assist the Director when necessary in assembling cast together on stage.

Time Act 1 run and Act 2 run when scheduled.

Note any concerns such as timings, hazards/safety concerns etc. and advise the Director.

Update notes and prepare a clean copy which is easy to follow throughout the show.

PERFORMANCES

Most matinee performances commence at 2pm.

Most evening performances commence at 7.30pm.

All cast and crew should arrive at least one hour before curtain-up.

Unless otherwise stipulated, Stage Managers and backstage crew are required to wear black clothing and black rubber sole shoes and carry a pocket torch.

PRE-SHOW

1. Turn on 3 TV monitors with separate remote controls.
2. Position pre-set items on stage and check.
3. Bio Box. Obtain headset from Lighting and Sound Manager who will check the equipment with you. Liaison between backstage and Bio Box is primarily used to ensure that things are on track and in readiness as well as providing 15 minute and 5 minute calls before curtain-up.
4. 30 minutes before curtain-up, advise cast and crew personally of half hour call.
5. The House is opened approximately 20 to 30 minutes before curtain-up. Check with the Lighting and Sound Manager and the Director personally for the “all clear” to open the house as there may be an unexpected delay in preparations. If so, advise Front of House Supervisor and cast and crew of any delay.
6. Once the OK is given, advise cast and crew backstage that the house is ready to open.
7. Advise the Front of House Supervisor personally that the house is ready to open.
8. Return to backstage and advise cast and crew that the house is open.
9. Check backstage lights are dimmed.
10. Advise Lighting and Sound Manager via headset comms. of 15 minute call.
11. Advise cast and crew personally of 15 minute call.
12. Check with Front of House ticket sales personally for any latecomers 5 minutes before the show is due to commence. See note *Latecomers
13. Advise Lighting and Sound Manager via headset comms. of 5 minute call.
14. Advise Director, cast and crew personally of 5 minute call.
15. Ensure cast “ beginners” are in position.
16. Curtain-up – Advise Lighting and Sound Manager that cast are in position and to “stand by”.
17. Give Lighting and Sound Manager the “go ahead” to commence the show.

*LATECOMERS

Aim to start the show on time, but a few minutes leeway is acceptable.

Be prepared to hold the show for last minute patrons to take their seats. For example, groups from Retirement Villages. For the sake of a few minutes, it is best to get them in before the show starts. Patrons who arrive later again will be allowed access at a suitable time after commencement, such as the end of a song or scene or preferably during applause.

DURING PERFORMANCE

By this time, you will know the show very well.

Follow your script closely and carry out tasks without distraction.

Performers' entries and tasks will also be familiar. Be aware and only if need, a gentle prompt may be required.

Monitor noise level backstage and ensure it is kept to a minimum.

INTERVAL – 20 MINUTES

1. Note the time at the end of the first act. The interval break calls will then run on time.
2. Prepare stage and backstage areas for Act 2.
3. Check with the Front of House Supervisor after 10 minutes and stand by in the foyer until a 5 minute call is given for patrons to re-enter the theatre.
4. Advise Lighting and Sound Manager via headset comms. of 5 minutes till Raffle.
5. Advise cast and crew personally of 5 minutes till Raffle.
6. Check with the Front of House Supervisor ensuring patrons have vacated the toilets and have re-entered the theatre.
7. Advise Lighting and Sound Manager, raffle assistant is entering the theatre.
8. Check theatre door is closed after raffle assistant has entered and return to backstage.
9. Ensure cast are in position.
10. After raffle assistant has exited the theatre, the Lighting and Sound Manager will check if everything backstage is ready to go.
11. Give the "go ahead" to start Act.

PERFORMANCE END

1. Return headset comms. to Lighting and Sound Manager in the Bio Box when the theatre is clear of patrons.
2. Re-set stage and backstage areas for next performance.
3. Turn off 3 TV monitors with separate remote controls.

GENERAL NOTES

Be prepared at any time for the Lighting and Sound Manager to advise of any concerns or delays.

In the event of an emergency during a performance and if deemed absolutely necessary, the Stage Manager can stop the show to announce any technical issues and safety concerns assuring all that any problems will be resolved as quickly as possible.