

Theatre Virtual Learning

Theatre Design & Production & Advanced Theatre Design & Production Stage Management

May 1st



Lesson: Stage Management

Objective/Learning Target: The student will understand what the director and technical directors are looking for (production analysis).



Stage Management

Stage managers have to understand every aspect of theatrical productions in order to do their job effectively. On Broadway when a show runs for months into years, the original director moves on and the stage manager must direct any cast changes in the style the director wanted. They must know directing.

Warm-Up:

What does a director have to know about a play in order to direct it?

Stage Management

T-Chart

Name: Date:

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Lesson Steps:
The following slides will share tasks that go into production analysis. As you are reading through the slides, keep a t-chart listing at least 5 of the tasks and on the second side list any experience you have with that task.



Script analysis for the director

In depth analysis must be done. This includes (but is not limited to)

- Interpreting the style of the production.
- The meaning of the production.
- The nuances and objectives of each individual character (no matter how long they are on stage), as well as what their obstacles are.
- The message the script gives the audience.
- How quickly/slowly a scene should be played.
- What mood should be conveyed in each moment

• Comic hero
• Happy ending
• Ambiguity in language

Comedy



• Tragic Hero
• Sad ending
• Concrete language

Tragedy

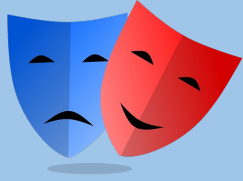




Script analysis: What the director needs the stage manager to understand from their research

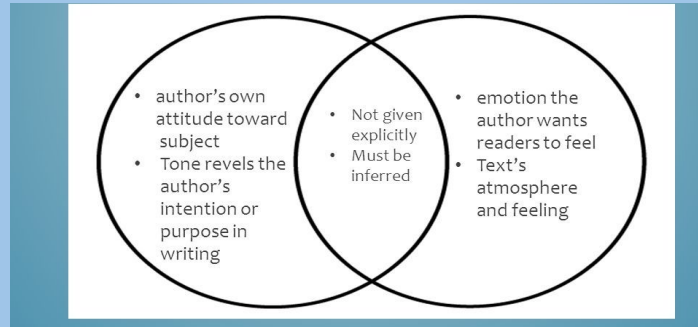
- Read the script & determine the time period and the given circumstances for the production.
- Research the time period and see what could influence the show:
 - Environmental factors
 - Geographic location
 - Date
 - Economic environment
 - Political Environment
 - Social Environment
 - Religious Environment
- Previous action: What has happened to the characters BEFORE the script began that will affect how they act/react to current events.

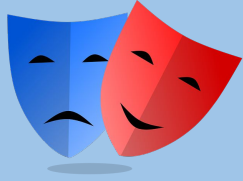




Script analysis: What the director needs the stage manager to understand from their research

- Ideas
 - Meaning of the title.
 - Philosophical Statements in the play.
- Moods for the script as a whole and for each unit.
- Tempos for the script as a whole and for each unit.





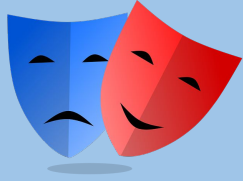
Script analysis: What the director needs the stage manager to understand from their research

- Understand the style of the dialogue
 - Prose/poetry
 - Dialects or accents
 - Profanity
 - Common or “lofty” language

VERSUS DIALECT

Accent is a way of pronouncing words that occurs among the people in a particular region or country

Dialect is a variety of a language spoken in a particular geographical area or by a particular group of people



Script analysis: What the director needs the stage manager to understand from their research

- The characters (each one will be analyzed)
 - Desires (and how they may or may not change during the show)
 - Will
 - Moral stance
 - Decorum
 - Attitudes and changes in attitude
 - obstacles

Objectives, Obstacles, Tactics

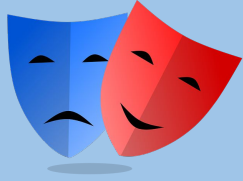
□ What is **objective**?

-The goal intended to be attained. The actor must find out what his or her character wants. Using the following statements help the actor to solidify the objective of the character:

- I want
- I need
- I must have

▪Example: I want to eat dessert before my dinner.

Script analysis



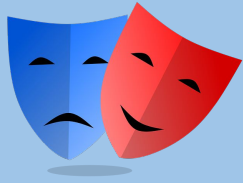
They will go through every moment of the script and break it into units. The unit will have a mood and tempo assigned to it. This is an excerpt from a script broken down by a director with pre-blocking penciled in.

Unit #5: Jo Attacks
Mood Metaphor: Like a racket ball smacking off the wall and hitting an opponent in the head.
Tempo: Quick

Unit #6: Jo Coznettas
Mood Metaphor: Like a tiger sizing up its prey: Slow, Careful, and Calculating.

GEOF: How much longer is this going on?
JO: What?
GEOF: Your present performance.
JO: Nobody asked you to stay here. You moved in on me, remember, remember? If you don't like it you can get out, can't you? But you wouldn't do that, would you, Geoffrey? You've no confidence in yourself, have you? You're afraid the girls might laugh . . .
GEOF: Read that book and shut up. When the baby comes, if it ever does, you won't know one end of it from the other.
JO: Looking After Baby. Isn't that nice? Three months, exercises, constipation. Four months, relaxation. It even tells you how to wash nappies. How lovely. There's a little job for you, Geoffrey.
GEOF: Drink that. [He hands her a glass of milk.]
JO [stirring with him]: Does it tell you how to feed babies, Geoffrey?
GEOF: Even you know that.
JO: I know about that way, breast feeding, but I'm not having a little animal nibbling away at me, it's cannibalistic. Like being eaten alive.
GEOF: Stop trying to be inhuman. It doesn't suit you.
JO: I mean it. I hate motherhood.
GEOF: Well, whether you hate it or not you've got it coming to you so you might as well make a good job of it.
JO: I've got toothache.
GEOF: I've got bloody heartache!
JO: I think you'd like everybody to think this baby's yours, wouldn't you, Geoffrey?
GEOF: Not likely.

Handwritten notes and markings:
- X to G+
- follow him to table
- DC get book
- U to Kitcher
- X to sofa
- behind sofa
- start X C
- X back to J
- X to Table ✓



Quotes from the article, “Theatre Jobs: What Does It Take to Be a Broadway Stage Manager” by Ruthie Fierberg

9/17/18

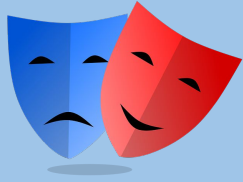
- “For those who think stage management is all technicalities and calling cues, a stage manager must also have an innate sense of artistry.”
- “You have to maintain the show”
- “A show opens and a couple of weeks after it opens, some things may change, and you have to decide: Are these good changes? Does this new laugh in this place help tell the story of the play or does it interfere?”
- “Actors look to the best in the profession as trusted advisors.”
- “If a stage manager doesn’t have an artistic feeling about a play or about the production he’s doing, there’s something wrong”



The stage manager needs to know tech theatre, as well.



- The stage manager must maintain the purpose of each designer. In order to do that , the stage manager must understand design to do this.
- Example: A director says he wants an actress in a blue dress.
 - The stage manager knows the costume designer needs that information, as well as the set designer, because it affects wall color and the light designer because it affects the lighting colors.
 - The stage manager must know these things and not be told to specifically tell each of them.



The stage manager needs to know tech theatre.



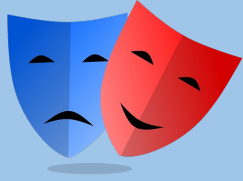
- The stage manager should have a working knowledge of
 - the light board,
 - sound board,
 - sound effect equipment
 - spotlights
- It is important for anyone in theatre, but the stage manager may have to step in, in case of emergency and it will just help the stage manager know what those technicians need when you are working with them.



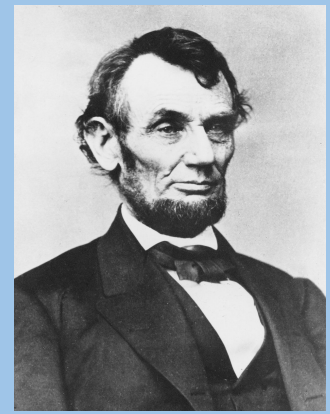
From the article, “Theatre Jobs: What Does It Take to Be a Broadway Stage Manager” by Ruthie Fierberg 9/17/18

“Calling a show means readying and cuing all of the sound effects, lighting, and more that happen throughout a performance. ‘*The Heidi Chronicles*’ had 23 cues in 20 seconds”





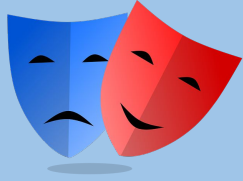
Stage management



Advice for the day: Quotes to live by

- “I find that most people are just as happy as they make up their minds to be” Abraham Lincoln
- “A sense of humor is part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, of getting things done.” Dwight D. Eisenhower



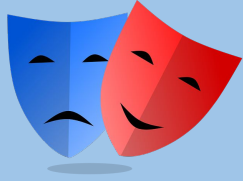


Practice: Applying a Concept

Defend or refute this meme.

What is it about a good stage manager with all of their duties, tasks, and necessary characteristics that causes this to be true--or not?





Bonus Task: Pay it Forward Friday

This week you have learned that it takes MASSIVE amounts of dedication and passion to be a good stage manager. If you have ever been involved in a show, you probably know that the stage manager is the unsung hero. WELL, let's sing their praises. Write a thank you letter to one of your past stage managers and email it to them!