
Stage Management

The Actual Production



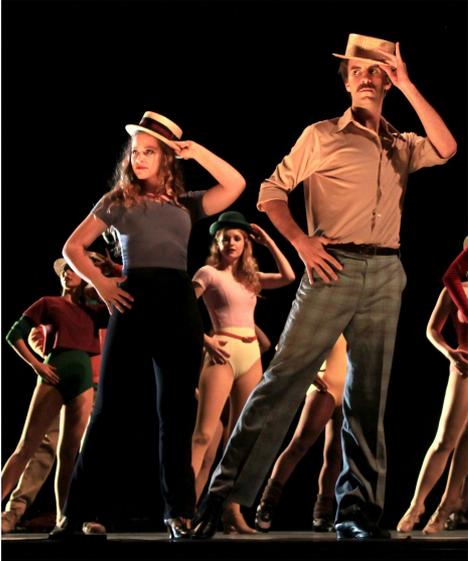
Production

Tech has finished and the show is now open! The hard part is over!

Well, not really. With production comes a whole other set of problems.

Routine

You're tempted to think at this point you can fall into a routine. It's mostly true! The show is going to, more or less, be the same from night to night. Here are a few things you'll want to check on every show..



Routine

1. Props are in their place
 2. Costumes are in their place
 3. Crew has arrived on time
 4. Cast has arrived on time
 5. Actors are getting into hair and makeup
 6. Actors are warming up
 7. Fight call is done
 8. Dimmer check is done with lights
 9. Speaker check is done with sound
 10. The set is reset for top of show
 11. The lobby opens to audience on time
 12. The house opens on time
 13. Actors are given warning until the show starts
 14. Actors are given places
 15. Act one is run
 16. Intermission starts
 17. Intermission ends on time
 18. Actors are in place
 19. Act 2 is run
 20. The show gets reset
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Routine

There are way, way more steps than that and, again, every show is going to be different.

While a routine is nice to have, in theory, in practicality, things are rarely going to go exactly as planned.

Like with tech, the SM needs to be able to adapt to mistake and emergencies.

Mistakes and Emergencies

There's not a lot you can do for the actors when they are on stage. It'd be impossible for this presentation to go over every possible mistake and solution, but the generally you want to:

- **Keep the show running smoothly.** If an actor skips lines, call your cue accordingly and have backstage ready with props, transitions, etc.
 - **Safety above all things.** If something breaks onstage, make sure it's cleared if it's unsafe. Stop the show if you need to.
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Audiences



Dealing with an audience brings a whole new element to the show. Productions will often have a front of house manager, one who is in charge of tickets, getting people sat and taking care of the lobby. Sometimes there is not.

An SM is never in charge of ticket sales or concessions, but making sure an audience is on time and in their seats is very often their responsibility.

Audiences



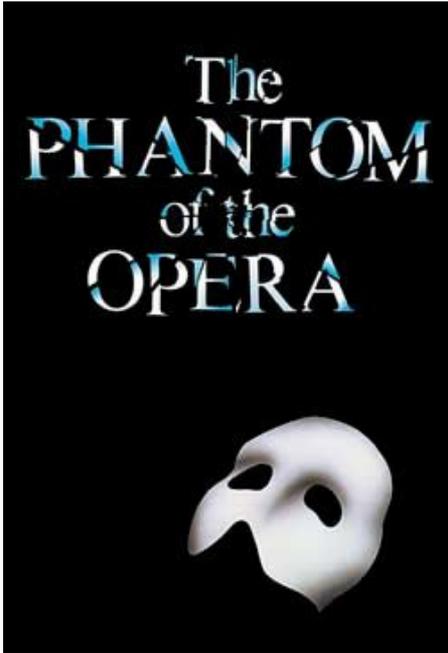
In rehearsal, the only thing that could go wrong is the show itself. Now, there's more that can happen. Audience members will get hurt, they will be upset with their seats, they will arrive late, they will be angry that the show started before they got there, they will arrive for the wrong show, they will sneak in food, they will play on their phones, they will take pictures, they will talk loudly and they must be dealt with.

Dealing with these situations delicately is an art.

Audiences

It is easy to forget that shows are made for audiences. The show is a product being sold to the customer. Ultimately, it is most important that these customers are satisfied with every aspect of their purchase; from the show itself to how clean the bathrooms are.

The audience is a customer. Their money is what is paying you.



The Long Term

There's another element to running a production vs. running rehearsals and that is that a show can potentially be in production for decades.

The primary job of the SM in these situation is to keep the show true to the director's vision. This means correcting blocking, making sure actors aren't completely changing their performance and making sure crew is on top of their fields.



The Long Term

Occasionally in long shows, if the show degrades enough or there's a period of a lot of new cast or crew, the SM may organize a few rehearsals during the run. These can be tech rehearsals just to get transitions that have been lagging up to snuff, or for actors to get used to a new replacement cast member.

Again, the SM will do what needs to be done to keep the show the same as it was at opening night.

Activity time!

A worksheet!

On it are several situations that can arise during a performance. In complete sentences, explain how you would handle it.

Would you stop the show? Would you call someone? How do you warn the stagehands? What notes do you take?
