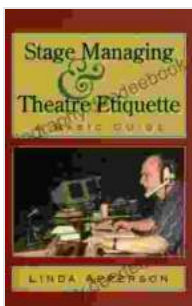


Stage Managing and Theatre Etiquette: A Comprehensive Guide

The world of theatre is a fascinating one, filled with creativity, passion, and precision. Behind the scenes, stage managers play a crucial role in ensuring the smooth operation and artistic success of every production. They are the unsung heroes who keep the show running seamlessly, from rehearsals to performances. This comprehensive guide will provide you with an in-depth understanding of stage management and theatre etiquette, empowering you to navigate the world of theatre like a pro.

What is Stage Management?

Stage management is the art of coordinating and overseeing all aspects of a theatrical production, from planning and rehearsal to performance and strike. Stage managers are responsible for a wide range of tasks, including:



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by Linda Apperson

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- Creating and maintaining the production schedule

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- Communicating with the director, cast, and crew

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- Organizing rehearsals and managing blocking

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- Managing the technical aspects of the production, such as lighting, sound, and scenery

*

- Ensuring the safety of the cast and crew

*

- Coordinating performances and managing the backstage area



Theatre Etiquette

Theatre etiquette refers to the unwritten rules of conduct that govern behavior in a theatre space. These rules are in place to ensure a respectful and enjoyable experience for everyone involved in the production, including the audience, performers, and crew. Here are some essential theatre etiquette guidelines:

1. **Arrive on time:** Punctuality is crucial in theatre. Arrive at the theatre at least 30 minutes before the performance to allow time for finding your seats and settling in.
2. **Turn off electronic devices:** Electronic devices can be a major distraction during a performance. Turn off your phone, tablet, and any other devices before the show begins.

3. **Respect the performers and the production:** Avoid talking, texting, or making noise during the performance. This includes refraining from singing along, clapping out of sync, or using flash photography.
4. **Stay in your seat:** Once the performance begins, remain in your seat unless absolutely necessary. If you need to leave the theatre during the show, do so quietly and minimize disruption.
5. **Applaud appropriately:** Applause is a way to show your appreciation for the performers and the production. Applaud at the end of the performance and during curtain calls.

Essential Skills for a Stage Manager

Effective stage managers possess a unique combination of skills that enable them to excel in their demanding role. Here are some of the key qualities that a successful stage manager should have:

- **Organization and time management:** Stage managers must be highly organized and able to manage multiple tasks simultaneously while adhering to tight deadlines.
- **Communication skills:** Effective communication is essential for stage managers, who need to convey information clearly and concisely to a diverse group of individuals.
- **Problem-solving skills:** Stage managers must be able to think quickly and creatively to solve problems that arise throughout the production process.
- **Technical proficiency:** Stage managers should have a basic understanding of theatre technology, including lighting, sound, and scenery.

- **Patience and resilience:** Stage management can be a stressful job, and stage managers must be able to remain calm and composed under pressure.



Steps to Becoming a Stage Manager

If you aspire to become a stage manager, here are some steps you can take to begin your journey:

1. **Get involved in theatre:** Volunteer or work backstage at local theatres to gain hands-on experience.
2. **Educate yourself:** Take classes or workshops in stage management, theatre production, and technical theatre.
3. **Build a network:** Attend industry events, connect with other stage managers, and seek mentorship opportunities.

4. **Create a portfolio:** Document your experience and skills by creating a portfolio that showcases your work as a stage manager.
5. **Apply for jobs:** Once you have gained some experience and built a portfolio, start applying for stage management positions at theatres and production companies.

Benefits of Stage Management

Stage management offers a wide range of benefits to those who pursue it as a career. Here are a few of the potential advantages:

- **Creative fulfillment:** Stage managers play a vital role in bringing theatrical productions to life, and their work contributes to the overall success of the show.
- **Job security:** The theatre industry is constantly in need of skilled stage managers, and there are often opportunities for employment in professional and community theatres.
- **Travel opportunities:** Stage managers may have the opportunity to travel with touring productions or work on shows in different cities and countries.
- **Networking opportunities:** Stage management is a great way to meet and collaborate with other professionals in the theatre industry, building a network that can be beneficial for your career.



The Importance of Theatre Etiquette

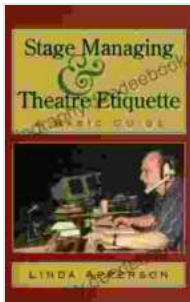
Observing proper theatre etiquette is essential for creating a positive and respectful environment for everyone involved in the theatre experience.

Here are some of the key benefits of adhering to theatre etiquette:

- **Enhanced enjoyment:** By following theatre etiquette, you can enhance your own enjoyment of the performance and ensure that others can enjoy it as well.
- **Respect for performers:** Proper theatre etiquette demonstrates respect for the performers and their craft, allowing them to focus on their performance without distractions.
- **Preservation of the theatre space:** Adhering to theatre etiquette helps preserve the theatre space by preventing damage to seats, floors, and other facilities.

- **Positive reputation:** Theatres with a reputation for having a respectful audience are more likely to attract patrons and build a loyal following.

Stage management is a demanding yet rewarding profession that offers a unique blend of creativity and technical expertise. By understanding the principles of stage management and observing proper theatre etiquette, you can become a valuable asset to any theatrical production and contribute to the enjoyment of the audience. Whether you aspire to become a stage manager or simply wish to enhance your theatre experience, this guide will provide you with the knowledge and tools you need to navigate the world of theatre like a pro.



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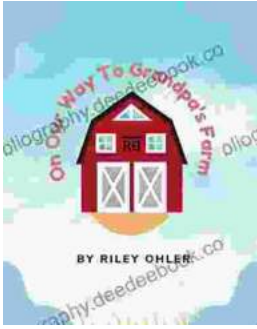
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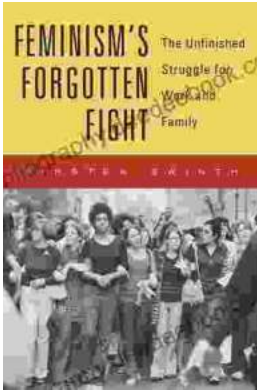
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