

**Advice for Directors of Shows**

***Here are a few tips when you decide to direct a show, these are not set in stone but you may find it useful to have a timeline to work by.***

**Choose your show. There are loads online for you to look at and some will provide a sample for you to look at. If you write your own, make sure that you get someone to proofread it before taking it to committee.**

**Bring your idea to a committee meeting for approval. This is very important! Once it has been approved then you are ready to start.**

**Budget. You will also need to agree with the committee how much you would like. This should include cost of license fees, scenery, costumes. This can be difficult until you have a production meeting but this will be flexible within reason.**

**Once you have the agreed budget, it’s your responsibility, as director, to manage it. It is club policy that no money should be paid out unless a proper receipt is supplied.**

**Roles. Decide whether you are going to direct on your own or with a co-director. You will also need a Producer who you know that you will be able to work well with.**

**There are other roles that need to be filled; costumes, props, publicity, choreography, music, lights, backstage, prompt, refreshments, raffle and front of house. Discuss this with your Producer. Make sure that you arrange this as soon as you can.**

**Read the script several times and familiarize yourself with every character, even those with non-speaking roles. If it has songs, make sure that you can get the backing tracks first and print out lyrics. You need to know, in your mind, what you want it to look and sound like before you start rehearsals.**

**Choose your dates for performances, make sure that the hall is available. Book the dates on the calendar. All rehearsal and scene building dates need to be booked if you want extra to the usual Wednesday evening.**

**Now write a rehearsal schedule, this does not need to be set in stone at this time, but it helps you to plan rehearsals. Also, the cast need to know that they can participate and you need to know if they can’t make a rehearsal. A holiday schedule is a good idea so if cast members can’t make a rehearsal you will know in advance and can alter your planned rehearsal accordingly. Include regular production meetings to discuss what needs to be done and when. Do you need props? Make a list and think who will source these; cast or someone nominated. It’s usually the producer’s job to organise scene building times, but it is important that you are involved.**

**Auditions are next. Give cast plenty of notice, especially if they have to sing. They will need know what audition pieces you want them to use. You may want to have a whole cast read through, if possible, first so that they have an idea of which character they want to audition for. This is highly recommended. Have synopsis sheets available with pages so cast can put their name against the character(s) they want to audition for.**

**Audition evening is usually long and tiring for you and the cast so make sure that you have a clear idea of how you want to run it. Ask at least one other person to sit in on the auditions with you, do not choose someone who wants to audition for a part.**

**If some of the cast can’t make it to auditions then it’s up to you what you do. You can choose to give them an informal one, but beware that you don’t cast someone without auditioning them, this could cause ill feeling with others.**

**Keep auditions casual; cast are going to be nervous so a relaxed atmosphere will help them give their best. If someone wants to be considered for more than one role it is useful to find out what their first choice is and give them the chance to audition for it. They will be disappointed if they don’t at least try.**

**Once everyone has auditioned discuss with your team who you and they think would be best for each part. Some will be obvious but not always, you can be surprised! Please do not take too long on this process as the cast, usually, will stay to find out who has what role. Be prepared for disappointment from some but remember you are the Director and it’s your vision!**

**The first rehearsal should be a "read through" with the chosen characters reading their parts. Make sure that those who do not get speaking parts are included. Perhaps play the songs so that they feel part of it. Don't worry about acting now. Send them on their way by asking them to think about their character; how they would speak, walk etc.**

**For all the rehearsals, make sure you have the scene structure planned e.g. entrances and exits, stage furniture. The worse thing is to for the cast to arrive and you don’t know what they are going to do. Explain before you start how you want the scene to look. This is your responsibility. Be prepared to listen to them and your producer if they think that the scene does not work. They have to be comfortable with what you are asking them to do. Do not tell your actors how to act, this does not work, but you can make suggestions.**

**The Director usually buys the milk, or nominates someone to do this, it is also your responsibility to make sure that there is tea, coffee and sugar for cast, see the treasurer for reimbursement. You are not responsible for any biscuits for rehearsals. Individuals to provide their own.**

**Blocking is more important than actual acting in the beginning stages, if you do not need everyone for the scene you are working on then make sure that those that are not involved have something to do. If there are songs to learn then this could be an option.**

**Solve all problems yourself, your show – your responsibility! Don’t assume that someone else will do it. If you have a good team around you then it will make your job much easier.**

**It’s a good idea to keep everyone updated with what’s happening. This can be done on our Facebook page but remember that some may not have FB so perhaps a text or phone call instead.**

**Discipline is important and this should be made clear at the start. Respect is important for all, so remind them on a regular basis about talking whilst others are rehearsing. If someone ignores this rule then take them to one side and remind them. The same goes for inappropriate behaviour during rehearsals. If they continue then you have to decide whether the show would be better without them.**

**Please read our Anti-bullying and harassment policy.**

**Oversee publicity and ticket sales. Everyone wants the show to be a success and that means getting an audience. Make sure that the people who are responsible are doing their jobs.**

**Note: If you are using photos for publicity please make sure that those people in them have agreed for you to use them.**

**Please see our Social Media Policy.**

**Be firm with your dates, scripts down on a certain date and stick to it. Many will want to keep their scripts on stage like security blanket! This may be a good time to get your prompt in for rehearsals.**

**Design programmes, posters and advertising. This can be done with the help of your publicity team. Don’t leave this to the last minute!**

**Ticket Source & TIC are the usual places to sell tickets. Set a date for them to go live. Perhaps when you begin advertising.**

**Make sure that your seating plan (if you want one) is organised as soon as you can and that the ticket system is up and running as soon as it can be done. This includes making sure that our website is updated to advertise your show.**

**About a week before the show check that everyone who has agreed to help is still willing. A check list may help so that you don’t forget anyone.**

**At show time, you may sit in the audience or backstage to ensure that everything is running smoothly and no emergency occurs.**

**If you would like an after show get together then that is up to you. If, as a Director, you wish to give gifts or a cast photo you can but this cannot be charged to club.**

**Good luck and remember that the whole committee is there to help and you can ask for help and advice at any time.**

**These are guidelines, you may want to organise things differently but always remember THIS IS EVERYONES SHOW! So a happy cast makes for an amazing show.**

***Below is an example of a rehearsal schedule – You can choose any format that suits you but make sure that you show all dates and what you would like to do on those dates.***

**Rehearsal Schedule for The Affairs at Meddler’s Top *(Example)***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Content** | **Notes** |
| Wed 27th May | Debrief and read through Auditions |  |
| Wed 3rd June | Auditions |  |
| Sunday 7th June | Read through with characters  Act 1 and 2 |  |
| Monday 8th June | Production Meeting | 7pm Donna’s House |
| Wed 10th June | Block Act 1 Scenes 1 to 4 |  |
| Sunday 14th June | Block Act 1 Scenes 5 to 8 |  |
| Monday 15th June | Costume Meeting | 7pm Donna’s House |
| Wed 17th June | Act 1 run through |  |
| Wed 24th June | Block Act 2 Scenes 1 to 6 |  |
| Wed 1st July | Act 2 run through |  |
| Wed 8th July | Act 1 run through |  |
| [http://cdn.xl.thumbs.canstockphoto.com/canstock23367728.jpg](https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjGzu2ehevNAhUGLsAKHRBbB0cQjRwIBw&url=http://www.canstockphoto.com/images-photos/setting-example.html&psig=AFQjCNFv1cFCDpV7_2HUnjlKGobSsjH-uQ&ust=1468313765224834)Sunday 12th July | Act 2 run through |  |
| Wed 15th July | Scenes needing work |  |
| Wed 22nd July | Scenes needing work |  |
| Wed 29th July | Full run through |  |
| Sunday 2nd August | Full run through |  |
| Wed 5th August | Full run through |  |
| Wed 12th August | Full run through |  |
| Wed 19th August | Full run through |  |
| Wed 26th August | Full run through |  |
| Saturday 29th August | Set up all day |  |
| Sunday 30th August | Full dress rehearsal |  |
| Wed 2nd Sept | As per show |  |
| Thursday 3rd Sept | Day off |  |
| Friday 4th Sept | SHOW |  |
| Saturday 5th Sept | SHOW |  |
| Wed 9th Sept | Gabble |  |
| Friday 11th Sept | SHOW |  |
| Saturday 12th Sept | SHOW |  |

Scene building dates to be added.

Rehearsal Fees £10 (*or amount agreed by the committee)*

You MUST ring if you can’t make a rehearsal

**Roles and responsibilities**

***Director***

To choose the show, select music, plan rehearsal schedule, cast the show, oversee the set, advertising, publicity, hall bookings.

***Producer***

Liaise with the Director over set layout, organise scene building dates, organise scene builders. Organise stagehands.

***Music***

Liaise with Director, find music tracks, sound effects.

***Publicity***

Liaise with Director, arrange photo shoots, posters and flyers, distribute advertising, programmes.

***Costume team***

Liaise with Director on style of dress, source costumes, accessories, and deal with any problems during performances.

***Props***

From list provided by Director, source props. Collect props and make sure that they are all accounted for before and after shows.

***Lights***

Liaise with Director and erect and position lights. Operate during performances. Remove lights after last performance.

***Backstage Manager***

Responsible for scene changes, backstage discipline.

**Checklist *(example)***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Task/role** | **Who** | **Checked** |
| **Lights** |  |  |
| **Sound** |  |  |
| **Prompt** |  |  |
| **Refreshments** |  |  |
| **Front of House** |  |  |
| **Raffle** |  |  |
| **Back stage** |  |  |
| **Publicity** |  |  |
| **Props** |  |  |
| **Choreography** |  |  |
| **Costumes** |  |  |
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