

SELECTION OF SHOW & DETERMINING A SEASON

Preferably, at the February meeting the members of the group will gather to throw ideas of shows they either like to direct or see the group do. Along with standard plays and musicals specialty shows such as a reader's theater project, one acts for first night, original creations can be included into the discussion. Discussion on each show should include:

The ability to cast the show; do we have the talent to cast it? Does it require specific skills for one actor/actress? Specific ages?

Does the show have 'actor appeal'? Is this a show people would want to audition for?

Does it have audience appeal? Who is the target audience? Will it bring in other audience?

Does it have any technical or set requirements that may be problematic?

The general membership will discuss the pros and cons of each production and determine which shows present the strongest options for us to further review. These shows will then go about having a presentation put together, either by the interested director or member of the group if no director is attached, for the March meeting. In between the February and March meeting the following will be done.

Scripts for potential shows will be given to the members of the executive board for review. Executive board members will assess the have compile questions for the director on their rehearsal process, casting etc.

Pre-liminary pitches will be made to the executive board, including potential budget, rehearsal process, production crew etc.

Revisions made to presentation after feedback is received from executive board.

The shows will then be presented at the March meeting before the general membership. The presenters will have 10 minutes to present the pitch for their proposed show and 5 minutes to field questions from the membership. Presentations should include:

Proposed budget for show:

Scripts and Royalties

Set

Tech

Costumes

Props

Publicity/Advertising (Suggested budget \$300)

*Music Director/Accompanist

*Musicians

Ticket prices (Generally ticket prices are \$10, \$7 for students or seniors. If you are requesting a change in prices, you must specify in the presentation and the membership must approve it.)

*Generally for musicals and revues only.

Proposed production team:

Director

Producer
Stage Manager
Set Designer
Lighting Designer
Prop Master
*Music Director
*Choreographer

*Generally for musicals and revues only.

General rehearsal process*

How many weeks to rehearse (Generally regular shows 6-8 weeks, musicals 10-12 weeks.)

How many days (Generally 3 days per week)

Desired performance dates

*If extending or shortening the rehearsal time from the recommended guidelines the director must provide a valid reason for doing so.

Personal viewpoint on the show

Why are they particularly wanting to direct?

What is their personal view on the show?

Why do they think this will have audience/actor appeal?

Presenters should also be able to address any concerns that were raised by the Executive board.

The membership will vote on selections for the summer, fall and spring slots. Ideally each show selected, should have a 2/3rd majority of member votes to be approved.

GENERAL PRODUCTION GUIDELINES

Venue

Once a show is approved, the director or producer should submit a request for performance dates and preferred rehearsal times to the president of St. Johnsbury Players so they can be approved by our venue coordinators, the St. Johnsbury School. Alternate locations may be used. For example: Catamount Arts, MAC Black Box theater etc. However, the director or producer will be responsible for securing performance and rehearsal times.

If using the St. Johnsbury School location, please note we are allotted 3 rehearsal nights per week. If the production is wanting more than three nights, the director or producer should schedule an alternate rehearsal space.

For spring productions the production team should check with the school to find out when the set for the school's spring musical will be put up. Productions can still use the space if they have been approved to rehearse there. However, they must rehearse with the set as is. If the school's set is problematic for rehearsals, the production may want to seek alternate rehearsal space for the times that the school's set is up. The St. Johnsbury School may be able to provide you with an alternate space.

The St. Johnsbury School may cancel or relocate a rehearsal to another location if a paying event is going into the space. The school is to give the production at least one days notice so the production can alert the cast and crew to the alternate space.

There is no smoking or alcohol on the campus per state laws. Any violation of this law can cause the group to loose their contract with the state.

When entering the space before rehearsals, if you find any problems with the space: stage lights left on, damage to stage or curtain, please document it by photos and send the photo and info to the school's facilities coordinator.

The production is responsible for making sure the space is secure and in good condition when the rehearsal is over. Check all doors (even ones that have not been used by the production) before leaving. Any problems you encounter in shutting down should be directed to the school's facilities coordinator.

All the rules and guidelines for use of the St. Johnsbury School must be communicated to all members of the production.

If using a venue other than the St. Johnsbury School, the production must gather all the rules and guidelines from that facility and communicate that to all members of the production.

Cast Representative

Each production will select a cast representative as a way to communicate and facilitate any problems a cast member (or the cast as a whole) may have with production. A cast representative may also alert the production to potential problems or situations within the cast that the production may not be aware of.

Executive Board Representative

Each production will also have an Executive Board member selected as a representative for the production. The board rep should not be involved with the production in any way so they can maintain an impartial view on the production. The board member will attend at least one rehearsal 2-3 weeks before the performance dates to give the director constructive feedback on the state of the show. They will also distribute the director and production evaluations the

final week of the show. In the event that a situation arises in the production that is not getting resolved easily, the exec board rep will be contacted and brought in to help resolve the situation.

Pre-Production Meetings

The director and producer should set up at least one pre-production meeting prior to auditions. The meeting should include all members of the production team so they may go over the general game plan for the production as a whole. Any special request or needs for members of the production and design team should be addressed. The meeting should include:

- The general rehearsal schedule
- Dates for costume parades, publicity, set items needed before load in
- Special needs of the set designer (location to build before load in)
- Discussion of budgets
- Need for assistants

Auditions

It is recommended that auditions take place two weeks before the desired start of rehearsals.

The director should craft an audition process given the needs of the show. This may be simply reading selected sides from the show's script or monologues for straight shows. In the case of musicals a vocal and dance portion should also be included. The vocal may consist of either the actor singing a choice of their choice, selections from the show or both. It is up to the director to figure out what is going to give them the best process for selecting their cast. It is recommended that directors have two nights of auditions along with a night for call backs, if needed. The director should contact the cast and/or post the cast list within 24 hours of the last audition night. A cast list should also be provided to the publicity team so it can be sent out to papers and posted on social media sites.

If the director is not able to fully cast the show after the final audition, they can post the partial cast list. It is recommended that the producer or director reach out to potential actors to fill the cast. The producer and/or director may also send out a second call notice for a second casting.

Rehearsals

It is recommended that the director provide a rehearsal schedule and with a contact list for all members of the production. The schedule should detail what is to be rehearsed each night and each week to best assist the cast and crew. Deadlines like off-book dates and no-calling-for line dates should be noted in the rehearsal process as well. The rehearsal schedule should serve as a guide but can be altered to fit the needs of the cast and crew. Any changes should be communicated to the cast and crew as quickly as possible.

Purchasing Procedures

Before making any purchases a production must check with our inventory for sets, props, costumes etc. along with reaching out to other theater groups to see what might be borrowed. If these avenues do not provide the production with their needs purchases may be made.

It is preferred that all purchases for a production be made by the treasurer. Please note items that need to be ordered should be presented to the treasurer as quickly as possible, no later than one month before the show to ensure they arrive on time. Tech/Design people (set designer, light designer, costumer, props etc.) needing to purchase items at local stores should set up a date with the treasurer to accompany them.

If the treasurer is unavailable, individuals may make purchases and be reimbursed on the following conditions.

All purchases MUST be approved by the director AND the producer.
Individuals must provide an estimate of what they expect the cost will be.
They must retain their receipt in order to be reimbursed.

Any person who does not get approval to purchase items will not be reimbursed by the production.

If a purchase is made for a production but ends up not being used, it is still considered a show expense.

All receipts must be submitted to the treasurer by the end of production.

A detailed list of any new items purchased or donated to the group will be submitted to the secretary to add to our inventory lists.

Publicity

St. Johnsbury Players has a publicity committee that is set up to ensure that every show gets a general publicity campaign. Publicity committee will:

Send out press releases (provided by the director) for auditions and performances to newspapers, radio, tv and social media.
Post publicity shots on social media
Will craft a poster design, if requested
Assist in hanging posters in the NEK area

At the beginning of rehearsals the director and producer will be given a time line of deadlines for press releases, publicity and production photos. It is the production's responsibility to provide these materials to publicity by the dates given to best ensure a solid publicity campaign.

If asked, publicity can design a poster for the production. However, the production may use an artist of their choice to execute the design. Poster must include basic info such as: time & location, ticket costs, information phone number, advance ticket purchase info, our major sponsors (list will be provided) and all required credit info as detailed by the licensing company of the show. Poster layouts can be either a 8.5 x 11, 11 x 8.5, or 8.5 x 14. Generally number of posters printed is about 50.

Publicity will help with hanging posters, but the members of the production should do so as well.

The production team will be responsible for coordinating news paper ads in the local paper. Production may ask the poster designer to create an altered version of their design to better fit the needs of the paper's layout. Generally the ads are coordinated by the producer.

The production team may explore other promotional ideas for their production. Please let publicity know what other promotional ideas were explored.

Comp Tickets

The following should be issued comp tickets for each production

Members of the cast and crew-1 ticket

Outside individuals who contributed to the production (usually people listed on special thanks)-1 ticket
The St. Johnsbury School-2 tickets
Our major sponsors-2 tickets for each sponsor

Fundraising

Each production should incorporate a fundraising aspect to its production to help defray costs. Generally a sponsor line system is done.

Season Sponsor: \$100 or more*

Supporting Sponsor: \$50-99

Supporting Patron: \$25-49

Patron: \$10-24

*If a Season Sponsor contributes \$250 or more, they get the same benefits as our 'major' sponsors.

It is recommended that every member of the production bring in at least one sponsor from any contribution level. Sponsor donations can either be solicited from area businesses or individuals.

All sponsors must be listed in the program, unless they specifically request not to be listed.

Our major sponsors (see list) should be mentioned in all press materials (press release, posters) and have a 8 x 10 logo posted in the lobby during shows. Special mention should be made before the show thanking our major sponsors.

Additional

It is recommended to have a board in the lobby with headshots and bios of the actors. Actors who have done previous shows should have an existing headshot (though after a number of years it may need to be updated.) The producer should make note of actors in need of headshots and coordinate a photo session with the actors and photographer. The producer should also collect bios from the cast. The bios may be either posted on the headshot board or listed in the program.

A member of the cast or crew should put together the program. The program should include the required credit info as specified by the licensing company, cast and crew information and list of sponsors. Additionally a program may include St. Johnsbury Players history, info on our Theater Arts award, director's notes and any upcoming productions if desired.

Cast and crew are generally asked to provide refreshments for show nights. This can be in the form of providing beverages or baked goods. It should be coordinated beforehand so each night has sufficient refreshments.

Generally one or two ushers are needed for each performance night. This is to help hand out programs and direct the audience to the recommended seating. For example a director may ask that audience sit in the front section and have it filled before allowing seating in the back section. Ushers should also assist the House Manager with refreshment set up and clean up.

PRODUCTION JOBS

Producer-The producer oversees the entire production to ensure that everything is going as planned. They work closely in conjunction with the director to make sure the director's vision is being executed as closely as possible.

Pre-Production

- Initial meeting with the director about what their vision is for the show, including set, costumes, special publicity etc.

- Assists in putting together a budget.

- Helps co-ordinate a production team: Set designer, tech etc.

- Creates a time-line/checklist of what needs to be executed and when.

- Creates a list of potential actors to contact if auditions are thin

Production

- Helps co-ordinate and manage the audition process

- Checks in once a week with director on the status of the show

- Checks in with the needs of the design teams. Sets deadlines for orders, shopping etc.

- Oversees the purchases and keeps track of the budget. Producer may sometimes have to veto certain expenses to keep the production within budget.

- Will coordinate with House Manager and ushers (may have to find ushers) on the protocols of the house.

End of Show

- Does a walk through of the space with the director before releasing the cast/crew.

Director-The director is responsible for the overall artistic vision of the show and the execution of it. Directors should be prepared to work long hours (in and outside of rehearsals). They should have good communication skills, be able to manage a cast and deal with inter-cast issues and have the ability to be flexible in vision, schedules etc.

Pre-production

- Determines shows dates, audition dates, rehearsal schedule

- Meets with Set design articulates needs/desires for show

- Meets with Costumer articulates needs/desires for show

- Meets with Lights, Sound etc articulates needs/desires for show

- Meets with Producers discusses production needs and crew needs

- Meets with Publicity and articulates desires for promotional logo

- Meets with Reading Committee to make sure scripts have been ordered

 - Script order-Actors, Director, Stage Manager and

 - Design Team*(**optional*)

- Creates a rehearsal schedule for the production; schedule should include:

 - Breakdown of each week and what is being rehearsed

 - Important dates-Off book, No longer call for lines etc

 - Include other aspects of process: Load-in, Costume fittings

Production

- Auditions and Casts actors in the show

- Conducts rehearsals and works with actors

Checks in regularly with production on needs or changes for set, costume etc.

Provides publicity committee with press releases for auditions and show

Communicates and enforces venue rules to cast and crew

Gives constructive notes and feedback during the rehearsal process

End of show

Does a walk with the producer of the space after strike before releasing cast/crew

It is traditional that the director does thank-you gifts for their production crew and cast. This is not required, but a small token of thanks (even a card) is appreciated.

Stage Manger-The stage manager assists the director in all aspects of the production. Stage managers should be detail oriented and have good organizational skills. Have good communication skills and an ability command a cast and crew.

Pre-Production

Meets with director to discuss show, rehearsal schedules deadlines etc

Production

Keeps the 'Bible' (IE all notes concerning the show)

Notes on staging/blocking

Notes on tech cues, lighting/sound

Notes on prop use

Goes 'On Book' when cast goes 'Off Book'

Serves as a liason with the cast and director

Takes attendance on the cast. Calls on late actors/crew

Serves as the main contact for the cast/crew members running late

Responsible for all back stage operations

Oversees pre-set and re-set for the show

Calls the show cues for tech

Oversees set changes, quick costume changes

Deals with any emergencies during the run of the show.

End of Show

Works with the set designer to oversee strike

Music Director-The Music Director is in charge of overseeing the pit band for a musical and also rehearsing the cast in terms of learning the music. The Music Director should be open and flexible for individual and/or additional music rehearsals.

Pre-Production

Meets with the director to discuss the show and musician budget

Express what aspects of the score will need the most attention

Coordinate rehearsals with the director

Production

Responsible for assembling the musicians in the pit band, working within the music budget agreed upon

Sets up a rehearsal schedule for the pit band

Rehearses the cast including vocal warm-ups

Provide a rehearsal CD or alternate pianist for instances when they are unable to make a rehearsal.
Conducts the pit band during performances

Set/Tech-Set designer or Head of Tech should have a decent working knowledge of theatrical construction and execution. Should be knowledgeable in basic tools and tool safety. Able to instruct non-carpenters and such in basic tasks.

Set Designer is responsible for

Creating the design of the show

Creates a list of needed materials to be ordered or purchased for show

Overseeing the building and construction

Locating and providing furniture (Set dressing will be done by Props)

Overseeing painting and details of set.

Using approved materials (It is recommended that productions use stage Paint, rather than house paint. However, if house paint is being used the production must provide a proper environment for set painting, to be sure that paint is not spilled on the stage floor or curtains.)

What are set expenses? What are capital expenses?

Capital-, screws/nails, (Lumber and materials to repair or replace flats)

Set specific-Furniture rental, paint, lumber, fabric, anything show specific

Starts work on set design after meeting with director

Two weeks in-meet with director for design approval

Once approved

Assess what is needed to be ordered and order it (paint, wood etc)

Start construction of items if possible

Start locating furniture items

Works with director and producer to help secure proper vehicles needed for load-in

Directs load-in

Gets individuals to help transport items to the theater

Gets individuals to help build, paint the set

Maps out the day and what needs to be done when-lights, build set etc

Assigns tasks to the volunteers of who is doing what

Is present for the first rehearsal on the set to address any potential problems

The set designer should be at performances or on call or have a designated carpenter available in the case that the set needs repairs during the run of the show.

Conducts the strike. Assigns cast and crew specific jobs. Ensures that every thing is done correctly.

Costumes-Should have a good knowledge of fashion history and an eye for design. Basic garment construction is desired, if only to alter or repurpose old costumes.

Costumer is responsible for

- Creating the costume look of the show

- Comes up with a potential budget depending on show needs

- Works closely with the director in coming up costume look

 - Over all look of the cast

 - Specific looks for individual characters

- Locating costumes should be done in this order:

 - Review what Players has already

 - Look into what can be lent from other groups

 - Inquire with cast

 - Thrift store purchases

 - Specialized purchases and/or custom-made costumes

 - (Upon gathering lended costumes, check with group on cleaning instructions, what costumes the group would prefer to clean themselves etc.)

Starts collecting costumes after the show has been cast.

Two weeks in meet with director to preview selections

- Do a preliminary costume run with cast

 - Either have director designate an hour before a rehearsal or

 - have the Stage Manager bring actors to them during rehearsal

- Assess what costumes work and what needs to be changed

 - If needing to purchase a costume, costumer may want to arrange with the actor (s) and director to have them accompany them in locating new garments.

 - If wanting to construct a costume, arrange for purchase of materials and schedule fittings for the actors.

Do a final costume parade for director approval.

At the end of production collect the costumes and have them cleaned.

Return costumes to closet or the individuals who lent them

Property Master-Good organizational skills. Knowledge of prop construction and fabrication of general and specialty props is desired.

Prop Master is responsible for

- Creating a prop list of all needed props for the show

- Meets with Producer and Director about needed props

- Makes early assessment of what we have, can be borrowed, made or purchased

- Starts collecting and gathering props two weeks into rehearsals

- Will either fabricate props that need to be constructed or find an individual who can.

During production

- Sets up prop table, with proper markings

- Checks prop table before and after show to make sure that

all props are in place and accounted for
Replenishes props (ie. food items, items that get torn or destroyed as part of the production)
Repairs any props damaged during the run of the show.
Oversees prop strike at the end of the show

Choreographer-The Choreographer will create choreography and conduct all dance rehearsals for musicals. Choreographers should be flexible in creating more simplified choreography in accordance to the skills of the cast.

Pre-Production

Meets with director to discuss the show and desired dance styles
Works out preliminary choreography before auditions
Creates dance sequences for auditions
Works with the director and music director to flesh out rehearsal times

Production

Leads dance warm-up for cast
Teaches choreography to cast
Creates a blue print or video of choreography for cast reference
May have to rework choreography for needs/skills of cast or production

Cast-The cast is expected to attend rehearsals and learn the material of the production in a timely manner, adhering to off book deadlines and the like. Cast members will be expected to provide the following items for each production unless special exceptions are made by the production and/or costumer: undergarments, stockings, shoes, hair products and make-up. It is traditional that the cast each provides a small amount of money to go towards the director's gift.

House Manager-The House Manager is in charge of overseeing the lobby area, box office and ushers to ensure a comfortable experience for the audience.

House Manager is responsible for

Getting in contact with the director two weeks prior to performances
Notes any special requests the director has for seating (ie-no audience in the back sections, no audience in the first three rows, any special seating preferences for late arrivals etc)
Should arrange time to sit on a few rehearsals to be familiar with show
Be made aware of the Theater Arts award and the 50/50 drawing
Make arrangements with Treasurer to get petty cash for the cash box (\$100-\$40 in \$1, \$30 in \$5, \$30 in \$10)
Will provide their e-mail address to Catamount Arts to get the advance sale tickets numbers for each night
Arrives 1 hour before curtain
Sets up box office table
Informs ushers of special seating requirements (if applicable)
Keeps tally of audience (ie, number of adults, students, comps etc)
Promotes the 50/50 raffle or has someone with them to do that
After show begins, stays out in lobby for at least 15 minutes to help

any late arrivals

10 minutes before intermission, sets up the refreshment table

Oversees lobby during intermission

Does clean-up after intermission is over

Tallies up the count, dividing into box office, refreshments and 50/50

Gives night's receipts to treasurer, producer or director for deposit

CURRENT EXECUTIVE BOARD

President-Gianna Fregosi

Vice President-Laura Wayne

Secretary-Sue Montague

Treasurer-Sarah Bengston

Members at Large-Jane Vinton, Dan Haycook

CURRENT MAJOR SPONSORS

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