



Community Theatre

1431 South 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
Terre Haute, IN 47803

of Terre Haute

## CT DIRECTOR'S HANDBOOK



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1. Community Theatre of Terre Haute Master Calendar (for current season of productions and events).
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3. Director Guidelines (Including Procedures and Policies)

**GENERAL DIRECTING PROCEDURES**  
(First Draft July 2005; Revised March 2007)

**Director Selection**

Perhaps you have asked yourself the following questions:

"I am interested in learning more about how to become a director at Community Theatre. It looks like fun. What do I need to know? What are the theatrical skills necessary? What are the leadership qualities that I should have? What is the process?"

Community Theatre of Terre Haute welcomes competent and qualified persons to direct plays of varying lengths and types. Like driving, however, directing at CT is to be viewed as a privilege and not a right. Fulfilling requirements as outlined below does not guarantee a spot directing a production at CT. It qualifies a person for *consideration*.

**Requirements:**

Requirements to direct are outlined in three windows; each is based on practical theatrical experience levels. Please select the window which you believe best describes your experience.

**WINDOW 1**

- New volunteer at CT (0-3 years)
- Participated in theatre/music/dance in grad school, high school, college, post college, church, etc. as an interested volunteer in a performance or technical/production role.

**Additional requirements:**

- Assistant Direct at CT under two different directors
- Produce or Assistant Produce, or Stage Manage
- Direct a Summer Oakley One Act or CT Community Outreach equivalent culminating in a successful evaluation/approval of Board of Directors.
- Attend the yearly directing information workshop at CT.

**WINDOW II**

- Seasoned volunteer at CT (3 years of active service of more)
- Participated in theatre/music/dance in grade school, high school, college, post college, church and/or performance or production experience.
- Participated as a volunteer at CT, having leadership roles in various crews.

**Additional requirements:**

- Assistant direct at CT under 2 different directors
- Produce or Assistant Produce, or Stage Manage
- Direct a Summer Oakley One Act or Ct Community Outreach equivalent culminating in a successful evaluation/approval Board of Directors
- Attend yearly directing informational workshop at CT

### WINDOW III

- Certified professional in Theatre/Dance/Music Education
- Professional Director in Theatre/Dance/Music Provide Vita/Resume with letters of reference

### Additional Requirements

- CT veteran producer and Asst. Director to be assigned to the Director
- Approval of Executive Board and Drama Committee
- Attend yearly directing informational workshop at

*Individuals who have directed productions in other venues will also be considered, but not necessarily eligible.*

## Director Selection

Directors\* are contacted during the summer and asked to submit their interest in directing for the next season of plays. They are asked to indicate which slots they are available and to submit a list of plays they would like to see considered by the play selection committee.

*"Directors" are those individuals who have completed the general requirements for directing at CT and have been approved by committees as described in Window I, II or III options.*

- A. Directors for the five Main Stage CT productions, Oakley Stage Productions, CT Holiday Production (when applicable), and one alternate director are selected in August by the CT Drama Committee and the CT President.
- B. Selected directors convene with Drama Chair, Play Selection Chair and Alternate Director to begin Play Selection Process. **(For 2006-2007, play selection committee will include 3 focus group members who will have one vote each. This will also be the case for the 2007-08 committee).** Meetings begin in late August and continue up to the January CT Board of Directors meeting when the Slate of Plays is presented for approval. (Slate is presented for vote at January and February board meetings.)

- C. Directors convene or are contacted by Drama Chair after the February meeting (assuming board approval of slate) to look at calendar at potential production dates, audition dates, etc. These recommendations are presented to CT Calendar Committee to be included in the determination of the Master Calendar.
  
- D. In March, the Play Selection chair will meet with directors to determine script requirements for their respective play. The Directors will provide a short synopsis of the play, character breakdown to the Play Selection Chair, who will present the Marketing Chair and Season Brochure Chairs with the season's information. The Production Chair will discuss budgets for each show with each Director in preparation for the April/May CT Budget Committee.

A Director may NOT significantly alter the text or the intent of any copy-written manuscript without obtaining the written approval of all of the following: Drama Committee in conjunction with the Executive Board and the licensed agent to whom royalties are paid.

## II. General Procedures for CT Production Process

- A. Director determines PRODUCER who will work with director to select production personnel and designers typically including
  1. Assistant Director
  2. Stage Manager
  3. Set Designer
  4. Set Builder
  5. Set Decorator
  6. Costume Designer
  7. Properties Designer
  8. Lighting Designer
  9. Sound Designer
  10. Make-up Designer
  11. Musical Director/Choreographer/Accompanist
  
  12. Additional personnel might include Assistant Stage Manager, Script Holder, Special Effects Designer, Light Board Operators.

- B. Designers/builders generally select their own crews and can work with producer, production chairs, and/or volunteer coordinator for contacts.
- C. Directors are encouraged to select an Assistant Director who has a genuine interest in and talent for directing. Assisting is helpful way to observe and to have some “hands on” experience during the rehearsal period.
- D. The Producer schedules and chairs the initial production meeting that ideally includes all of the *designers, the Production Chairs. It is suggested that this meeting occur no later than 2 month prior to auditions.*

All set designs are to be approved by the Production Chair, Set Chair, and the Building and Grounds Chair to assure that there are no code violations. If seats will be removed from the theatre house, the box office needs to be made aware immediately.

The use of any of the following requires Executive Board approval to assure that safety measures are adhered to and our audiences notified when necessary:

Fire or live flames on stage; any time of firearm or Pseudo-firearm; strobe lights; sudden loud outbursts of sound. . .any activity that breaks the #4<sup>th</sup> wall with the audience. This includes cast using aisle ways, throwing items into the audience, and other audience participation techniques.

The safety of your cast and crews and audience is of the Highest importance.

#### E. Audition process

Directors take responsibility for contacting actors they would like to audition for their production. Personal contacts are the best way to get individuals to come to auditions.

The Casting Chair (with Casting Committee) and Director (along with Assistant Director) will meet at least three weeks prior to Audition dates to send out invitations to auditions from CT’s casting file. Casting Chair and/or Director and

**Producer will be contacts for anyone wishing to read the script or have questions in advance of the auditions.**

**CT auditions are open and advertised to the general public. Auditions are two-fold: the need to cast the show and the need to provide a warm, welcome and *accessible* climate for those in attendance.**

**The Casting committee has the responsibility of being the CT “PR” people, but certainly the Director should be a part of that experience. Anyone who auditions should feel as though they had the opportunity to demonstrate their talent or ability during the process. It is common sense and common courtesy to provide that type of audition experience.**

**The Director is the person who casts the show. Input from the committee is appreciated and useful, but in the end it is the director’s decision. The committee is there to assist.**

#### **B. The Rehearsal Process: Schedules, Building Use, ETC.**

**The Director will announce the first Read-thru of script when when casting is done. (Director should plan to have a form at auditions to be filled out with conflicts dates to assist in the rehearsal schedule process.) It is suggested to invite your production designers, stage manager, producer, etc. to that first read-thru—it is a great time for everyone to experience the play in its entirety.**

**Call backs are on a rare occasion needed, but are to be used only in the occasion of a vacancy and need prior approval by the casting and drama chairs.**

**At read-thru the Director (or Producer) will have a rehearsal schedule to distribute to cast and crew. The Producer distributes rehearsal schedules to appropriate people. Distribute schedule and contact list to: casting, volunteers, box office, marketing, President. If you have a change in your published rehearsal schedule, REMEMBER to notify everyone who might need to know about that change. .  
 .NOT JUST THOSE INVOLVED WITH YOUR SHOW.**

The Director prepares the rehearsal schedule. The producer makes up all the contact information on cast and crew at read through and then submits it to chairs, etc.

The calendar for rehearsal is set a year prior. When developing the rehearsal schedule, the director will consult the Master Calendar for all CT event listings; the cast conflict sheets; design chairs for deadline dates, and Dry/Wet Tech dates and times.

If there are other productions and International Films that will be scheduling during your rehearsal time **COMMUNICATION WITH THE DIRECTOR OR PRODUCER OF THOSE PRODUCTIONS IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.** The following list is an important list of policies regarding such matters.

- 1. No other production may rehearse in the CT facility during the most current production's Tech week or Production Dates.**
- 2. Exceptions: Rehearsals can be scheduled in building outside of the performances times on Fridays or Saturdays in the morning and afternoons up to 5:00 PM, but not on the stage in use.**
- 3. On Sunday evenings other rehearsals may be scheduled after 5:30 PM (but it is necessary to contact the Director or Producer to verify what time performance concludes.)**
- 4. No rehearsals should be scheduled on the second Sunday of performances due to striking and cleanup. This particular policy arose out of a few conflicts and complaints during the 04-05 season and is really just common courtesy.**

Directors are free to create a rehearsal schedule that **WORKS BEST** for everyone involved in that production. There is no set schedule template to follow—just create a timeframe that allows you to achieve a great production. (Hint: It is sometimes helpful to do the schedule backwards—start from Opening Night and work back to Read-thru.) Note that it is important let your cast and crew know up front if you sometimes rehearse late (after 10:00 PM.)

Be respectful of your cast's other life commitments. If you have children in your show, please follow the guidelines listed separately

The Producers and/or Assistant Directors are responsible for contacting the Photography Studio to set up Photo Night during tech week (typically on Tuesday evening but may vary show to show.) Moore Photography is CT's current photographer. Photo Night should be set up early in the production process to assure photographer availability.

Someone on production team is designated to take photo orders and money from cast and crew. (Moore Photography provides a book with photos that includes pricing.) Front House Manager works with Director to set up Photo Display in Lobby prior to opening. Generally photos are available by Final Dress on Thursday.

In addition, someone is designated to take care of Show T-Shirt Design and Orders. There will be a logo already in place from the season brochure if you wish to use it, but a director may choose to have someone design a different logo (which can also be used on program cover.) Shirts are optional—a director may choose another show memento to make available for purchase by cast and crew.

During the rehearsal period, Box Office personnel provides ticket order forms for cast and crew and designate where to place completed forms. This service allows cast and crew "first chance" at the good seats for family and friends! The show program coordinator provides bio sheets for cast members and tech designers to complete for program information purposes.

During performance weekend your Stage Manager is in charge of the production. They manage building security (See CT Security Procedures in this handbook), set times for cast and crew to arrive to the theatre and have a sign-in sheet backstage.

**NOTE: THERE ARE ALWAYS 2 SEATS HELD FOR EACH PERFORMANCE FOR THE DIRECTOR—NOTIFY BOX OFFICE IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO USE THEM (OR PLANNING NOT TO USE THEM.)**

**Dress rehearsals are not open to the public. We do not pay royalties for dress rehearsals.**

Cast Parties are a tradition at CT. Typically there is an Opening Night Reception following the performance in the CT

Lobby for Cast, Crew and Patrons and a cast party is not scheduled. A great way to schedule parties is a sign-up on the chalkboard in the backstage area. If you have a large cast, consider having your parties at CT in the Oakley room if available.

Sets are struck following the closing Sunday matinees. All cast, crew, designers (in general all show personnel) are expected be present to help. The Production Chair will attend strike to ensure proper clean up. This is an important part of the process—leaving the theatre ready for the next production and saying “good-bye” to your production. (And breathing a wonderful sigh of relief!). Leave your facility in better condition than when you found it.

### **III. Awards and other regards**

CT hosts and annual Awards Night in May to celebrate the season, honor all volunteers and hand out “talley’s” to actors and others. Directors are responsible for providing a list of leading and support actors/actresses to be considered for by a panel of anonymous judges who view the productions.

(Main Stage productions only at this time.) They are submitted to the Awards Night Chair prior to the start of the regular season. A form should be provided for you with the following requested information:

Lead Actor	Role(s)	Actor Name(s)
Lead Actress	Role(s)	Actress Name(s)
Supporting Actor	Role(s)	Supporting Actor Name(s)
Supporting Actress	Role(s)	Supporting Actress Name(s)

If you need help determining Leads and Supports, please contact the Drama Chair to discuss.

CT also hosts an annual Corn Awards picnic which is our Volunteer recognition of backstage workers in particular, but several other types of awards are given that evening. It is helpful to discuss this with production chairs and keep an ongoing list of potential awards throughout the rehearsal and performance process. (Presently, July 2005, we are in discussion of developing a form to give to Directors or Producers that will indicate the possible awards categories to consider.

#### **IV. Resolving Production Disputes**

**(While this has been a rare occurrence in CT's long history, it is possible to have disputes (artistic; technical; personnel, etc.) in nature. The following is suggested if this occurs during your production)**

**If there is a dispute that is artistic in nature (i.e. cast/director conflict) that cannot be readily solved, it is recommended that the director contact the Drama Chair to help discuss the matter and plan of action.**

**If there is a dispute that is technical in nature (i.e. problems with designers, crew, etc.) that cannot be readily solved, it is recommended that director and/or producer contact the Production Chair to help discuss the matter and plan of action.**

**In the extremely rare case that the matter cannot be resolved, it is recommended that the CT President be contacted to convene a special Executive Board Meeting.**

#### **V. Director's Report to CT Board**

**Following the closing of a production, the director is asked to submit a written report to the CT Board of Directors. This report is submitted to the Drama Chair to be distributed to the board. Additionally, the Director may attend the board meeting and present the report in person. The director contacts the Drama Chair to arrange to be put on agenda under Drama Standing Committee report.**

**The Director's Report briefly summarizes the production process, noting any problems or weakness of the production and/or strengths identified by director, cast and/or crew members associated with the production. This report is one of the evaluation tools for the board as they look at ways to improve the overall play producing process.**

## **VI. Production Finances.**

**The production's Producer controls the finances of the production. He or she manages all receipts/invoices and make sure they are turned over to CT Treasurer. The producer is also responsible for identifying expenses and collecting crew names and addresses to assure proper reimbursement. This helps to keep each show accountable and financial data for each production in good order.**

**The Director and Producer will meet with the Production Chair at the beginning of the fiscal year to make an analysis of planned expenditures for their show. Any purchases made on behalf of a show become the property of Community Theatre and remain part of the facility inventories.**

**See budget form**

## **VII. Strike**

**The Production Chair also confirms arrangements for strike With the Director and Producer so that plans for efficient and smooth transition is in place from one show to the next.**

**Any changes made to lighting packages are to be restored at The time of strike or a time arranged with the Production and Lighting Chairs.**

## **VIII. When you have children in your show:**

**Do not let children wander the theatre unattended.**

**No children are permitted in the production areas without adult escort.**

**Make certain the parent/guardians come inside the building to drop off children and pick them up. ONLY let those who have permission, do so.**

**Remember that children need to get their sleep and keep up with their homework.**

**Remember that parents have to pick the children up.**