

**WINTHROP DANCE THEATRE
STAGE MANAGER'S MANUAL**

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Rock Hill, South Carolina**

2006-2007

INTRODUCTION

This manual outlines the duties and responsibilities of the stage manager for Winthrop Dance Theatre productions. For the purposes of this manual, all the stage management duties are described as one person's job. However, some choreographers may choose to appoint an assistant choreographer and/or a production stage manager and assistant stage manager. The director/choreographer of each production will determine these positions and their relevant responsibilities.

The student may receive course credit for stage managing or assistant stage-managing a Winthrop Dance Theatre production by enrolling in a one-hour production practicum (DANT 443 or THRA 370).

Prior to technical rehearsals, the stage manager serves in an advisory capacity. He/she assists the choreographer with rehearsals, recording blocking, and keeping production records. When the production begins technical rehearsals, the stage manager becomes the supervisor of the cast and running crews. He/she is responsible for making everything run smoothly on stage and backstage. The stage manager receives his/her authority from the Winthrop Dance Theatre director, designers and technical director and must report to them directly.

PART I: PRIOR TO REHEARSALS

Auditions

1. Arrive before the audition, as instructed by the choreographer. See that the audition room is readied. Your choreographer will tell you how to arrange the chairs and tables.
2. Obtain any audition materials from the choreographers, including any required music for the audition and the pin-on numbers.
3. See that each person auditioning has been given a copy of the Winthrop Dance Theatre Audition Form.
4. Collect Audition Forms as dancers fill them out and give them to the choreographer. Be sure each dancer has filled out the appropriate paperwork and has been assigned a number to wear during the audition.
5. Be available to help the choreographers and dancers with any questions.
6. See that the audition room is returned to proper order, that pin-on numbers are retrieved, that lights are turned off, and the doors are locked.
7. When everyone has left, call campus police (x3333) and ask them to come to secure the building. You may leave when they arrive.

Keys and Filing Space

1. You will need to check out keys from the Theatre and Dance Administrative Specialist. You will receive a stage manager's key that will give you access to:
 - Johnson Hall
 - Johnson Theatre or Johnson Studio Theatre
 - Johnson Dance Studios
 - Costume studio
 - Dressing rooms

- Make up Room
 - Office where the Stage Manager's mailbox is located. You should keep a supply of rehearsal equipment items here. **It is very important that this office be locked whenever no one is there, even if you only expect to be away for a few minutes.**
2. Obtain from the technical director a key to the property storage box backstage in Johnson Theatre.

Cast

1. See that all cast members have initialed the cast list. Notify any who have not.
2. Keep a list of all cast members, their addresses, home and work phone numbers, hometown, email address, and class/work schedule. Type up a "Contact Sheet" for cast and production staff. [See Appendix B]
3. Make a list of the correct spelling of each dancer's name, as they would like it to appear in the program. Add the crew members' names when they have been selected. This information is needed for the program.
4. Keep a record of all music issued to cast members that they will return at the end of the production. [Appendix C, "script checkout list"]
5. At the first rehearsal, the stage manager should do the following:
 - Make a list of the cast and crewmembers that will qualify for a production practicum credit for working the show. Type up this list and submit the list to the choreographer by the end of the first week of rehearsals. Dancers are eligible for credit in DANA 444, while running crew (and stage managers and assistant stage managers) are eligible for credit in DANA 443 or THRA 370.
 - Familiarize the cast and crew with the location and operation of emergency equipment and procedures (Appendix B).

- Distribute the production contact sheets and the rehearsal schedule.
[Appendix C has sample scheduling calendars]

Prompt Book

1. Working with each choreographer, develop a summary of technical cues of each piece (The cue-to-cue schedule works well for this). This summary will become the core of the prompt book. Make a Xerox copy of each summary, copying one page of text on an 8-1/2 x 11 page.
2. Use the space to the right of the text for noting warnings and technical cues, as they will be called in performance.
3. Use the left-hand page, facing the script, to record detailed written description of all movement. The numbers correspond with the circled numbers in the script at the actual cue for the movement. (See sample script on next page.)
4. Bind the pages in a loose-leaf notebook.
5. Mark the technical cues, in pencil, in order to call them correctly during rehearsals. During technical rehearsals, the choreographer will talk to the light board operator and stage manager during each piece in order to set color cues, etc. The Stage manager must mark as her/his cue a unique movement by a dancer or a music change. This becomes the prompt book..
6. Copy administrative forms, as needed, and include in promptbook. [See Appendix C]

- ① EMILY STANDS, XDR
- ② D2 + NR ENTER UL.
SET TABLE + CHAIRS.
D2 SITS.
- ③ NR XDR TO EMILY
LEADS HER BACK TO
CHAIR C.
- ④ NR XUL + OUT.

A.3.1 PROMPT BOOK SCRIPT

	MARKETING				
STAND-BY LQ 25 LQ 26A LQ 26B	EXIT MUSE, VERY CEBRALLY	SEC. 15	<p>Mrs. STILSON: Yes no question they have got me I've been word was captured is it? No it's - Yes, it's crashed, not usual, still there. I was in my prime and is it very grab. Please rather or too common, neither that's that, juggleball! Anyhow to read, my propetic, well done what? Unnessat? Do the busy here! Get inside this, subdige all around let the ventul do some yes off or it of crashing (high, posoom!) what with noddycabbit nip- into blackish watchit cannot stop it, spinning ring-grab grabbit help woodoooh! what's that? spinning ring-grab where it wants (AND SUDDENLY SHE IS IN ANOTHER REALM, THE TRANSFORMED INTO WEIGHTLESS BLUE. SENSE OF EASE AND SERENITY) /LESS! see it, think, okay, onto back we were and here it is. Slow down easy now. Captured. After crashing, tell for me, we said or see about to, think it so, cannot SLOWER NOW captured / slower it, day here we go...SPEAKING here to this form meannow, as captured. Any? For I would say offhand information. Or what sort through head to tail. For example, questions such as can I raise my fingers such as these. To what use can they be to the enemy? Hand of you here. Nonetheless, I would say must be certain information! Strongly that they want well I won't give it I'll except! Strongly that they want to me that they do! Good thing I'm all right! What be in in that they do! of course. THE SERENE BLUE LIGHTS STARTS TO FINEST Season.</p>	On Emily's Move LQ 25 GO	
	SEC. 16		<p>A MUSE HAS ENTERED. THE MUSE BUZZES AND STILSON TO A DOCTOR. THE BLUE LIGHT IS GONE. THE MUSE LEAVES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">④</p> <p>THE SPACE WAS. STILSON NOW IS IN APPEARS HOCK.</p>	WARNING LQ 27	
				LQ 26A GO	
				LQ 26B GO	

Schedules

1. Obtain the rehearsal schedule from the choreographers, type it, post it on the callboard and give a copy to each cast member at the first rehearsal. [Use the “Scheduling Calendar” form in Appendix C]
2. In consultation with the production director and technical director, obtain the technical rehearsal schedule, type it, and post it on the bulletin board upstairs by the dance studios. [Use the “Scheduling Calendar” form in Appendix C]
3. In consultation with the production director and technical director, obtain the show order for the dance pieces, type it, and post it on the bulletin board upstairs by the dance studios. [Use the “Scheduling Calendar” form in Appendix C]
4. Type, post on the callboard upstairs by the dance studios, and distribute any other schedules, such as production meetings.

Ground Plan

1. Obtain a ground plan for the set from the scene designer and tape it off on the studio floor prior to the first rehearsal.
2. When the positions of the set pieces are established definitely, spike them with tape on the stage.
3. When several pieces are involved, use color-coded tape.

Theatre Facilities

1. Make yourself familiar with the layout of Johnson Theatre and the support areas (shops, dressing and make-up rooms, green room, dance studio etc.) The more the Stage Manager knows about his/her surroundings, the more helpful he/she can be.

2. Locate the light switches, fire extinguisher, and first aid kit.
3. Familiarize yourself with the light and sound boards, so as to correct any unplanned challenges throughout the production.

PART II: DURING THE REHEARSAL PERIOD

1. Attend rehearsals during the last month before opening (unless the director tells you that you need to come to earlier rehearsals.). You will observe and learn the flow of each piece.
2. Maintain order – dancers should be ready to enter and neither dancers nor crew should be allowed to distract anyone from the work.
3. Keep a rehearsal log or a brief diary to be included in the production book. [See Appendix C for a “Scene by Scene” Rehearsal Record.]
4. Send this daily rehearsal log out to the choreographer, WDT director, scenic designer, lighting designer, costume designer, technical director, sound designer, department chair. Email is the most efficient format.

Rehearsal Space Preparation

1. Arrive before the schedule rehearsal time
2. Turn on the work lights.
3. Prepare the stage.
 - Sweep the stage.
 - Set up rehearsal furniture and props.

Property Checklist

This is an example of a checklist of properties preset for a scene:

Preset DSC	Easy chair Table w/lamp(light on), clock, and magazines
Prop table SR	Emily's book 3 coats Blood pressure cuff 2 stethoscopes Medical supplies--tray w/test tubes etc.
Stage Right	Large gray table w/black briefcase (comb, knife, spoon, fork) Tape recorder, testing devices etc.
Downstage left	Bench Snow
Stage Left	Hospital bed w/sheet, chart green chair Card table w/deck of cards, candy dish etc.

Rehearsal Equipment

1. Be prepared; bring several sharpened pencils.
2. Keep a kit with things that might come in handy, such as safety pins, rubber bands, paper clips, stopwatch, band-aids, aspirin, etc.
3. Make lists of rehearsal props, furniture, and costumes needed for each scene.
4. Work with the props master to gather rehearsal items listed.

Callboard

1. Make certain that all notices put on the callboard are neatly typed and initialed by the choreographer.
2. Post a copy of rehearsal schedules.

3. Post any other notices, such as costume fittings or photo calls, at least one week in advance.

Cast

1. See that all cast members called are present.
2. Call all tardy cast members.
3. Assemble the cast as indicated by the choreographer.
4. See that cast members are ready to go on stage as needed.
5. Make certain that all dancers know to report to the Stage Manager before leaving the rehearsal area for costume fittings, etc.
6. Enforce the Winthrop Dance Theatre rehearsal rules.
 - Dancers are allowed only in the Green Room and stage areas during performances.
 - Food and beverages are allowed only in the Green Room.
 - Only water in enclosed bottles is allowed in the theatre (unless food or drink are used in the piece)
 - Dancers must not smoke or eat or drink in costume.
 - Smoking is allowed only outside building in the designated smoking area.

Blocking (Technical Cues)

1. Record all business, movement, technical cues, set changes and line changes in the prompt book as they are worked out during rehearsals.
2. Report any subsequent departure from the prompt book to the choreographer.
3. Keep lists of all properties, costumes, light cues and sound effects as they occur in rehearsal. [See appendix C]. Check the lists with the

choreographer at the conclusion of each rehearsal and, as necessary, arrange for the availability of needed items.

4. Take notes of where the props are discovered, brought on, taken off, or left on stage. This list will help to organize the prop tables.
5. Simulate sound effects, light changes, set changes and special effects.

Dance Notation

1. Each stage manager's method of notation will be different. However, the system should be consistent throughout the prompt book. This notation system will become the technical cues for the show.
2. You should be familiar with the standard "stage map" and terms for parts of the stage and blocking. For example:
 - *Emily stands, XDSR* = Emily stands up and crosses downstage right.
 - *D2 and N2 enter UL. Set table & chairs. D2 sits* = Doctor #2 and Nurse #2 enter up left. They cross to table and chairs and set up for the next scene. Doctor #2 sits down.
3. The technical cues may also be abbreviated.
 - *LQ 25 GO* means for the light crew to begin their cue #25.

Conclusion of Rehearsal

1. Make any announcements that need to be made.
2. Call attention to notices on callboard as well as handout sheets, such as photo call, etc.
3. Hand out copies of weekly rehearsal schedules or other schedules.
4. Ask about any problems that the stage manager needs to address.

5. Take notes given by the choreographer, noting the ones that are the responsibility of the stage manager. [See Appendix C for useful note forms and “Rehearsal Report Sheet.”]
6. Make a list of things that must be done, noting the ones that should be accomplished immediately, before the next rehearsal and what can be delegated. Submit a technical report (within the daily rehearsal log) to the technical director advising of any changes in technical needs (lighting, props, costumes, sound, set notes, etc.)
7. See that the rehearsal area, Green Room, make-up and dressing rooms and the auditorium are cleaned and returned to proper order.
8. Return all rehearsal props and costumes to the property room and lock.
9. Check to see that all lights are turned off.
10. Close and lock all doors to theatre, upstairs and downstairs. Lock up dance studios, make up area, dressing rooms, green room, costume studio, scenic studio.

PART III: DURING TECHNICAL REHEARSALS, DRESS REHEARSALS, AND PERFORMANCES

1. Arrive at the theatre prior to the scheduled starting time.
2. Arrive early enough for the dancers or crewmember that needs more time to prepare due to special problems with makeup, costumes, etc.
3. Allow enough time to check items on the stage manager’s pre-curtain checklist (to be completed at least 30 minutes prior to the opening of the house).
4. The Production Director (Faculty instructor for DANA 443) functions as the immediate faculty supervisor of the Stage Manager. The Production Director is responsible for recruiting and preparing the running crew for the technical rehearsals and performances.

Pre-Curtain Check List

1. Go over the pre-curtain checklist, checking off each item as it is completed. (See form on next page.)

PRE-CURTAIN CHECKLIST

- Check that the prop crew or ASM has swept and mopped the stage.
- Check the backstage areas for cleanliness and orderliness.
- Check the locations of fire extinguishers and functioning of emergency lights.
- Post the sign-in sheet by the large dance studio. [See Appendix B for sign in form]
- See that cast and crewmembers have initialed the sign-in sheet by the pre-arranged time and call any who may be late.
- Check the placement of set pieces.
- Check the placement of props, on stage and on prop tables. Check that prop table lights are functioning.
- Check the functioning of the monitor.
- Check that the light crew has successfully completed dimmer check.
- Check the functioning of the sound system with the sound crew.
- Check to see that all doors in the backstage area are open or closed, locked or unlocked as appropriate.
- Check the positioning of the curtain, if used. Turn off work lights, including those in the catwalks.
- Turn the house over to the House Manager 30 minutes prior to curtain. Only the Stage Manager can authorize the opening of the house.
- Allow no one to enter the stage area after the house is open.
- Give calls thirty minutes, fifteen minutes, and five minutes prior to the scheduled time for curtain. Give calls in person to avoid any communication problems.
- Give the dancers a five-minute call before Green Room.
- Check to see that crewmembers are going to their stations at the five-minute call.
- Check with the House Manager via Booth to see how conditions are in the house, if the lobby is clear or if the audience is still arriving.
- Call places at three minutes.
 - Check to see that each dancer is in place before going to stage Manager's desk.
 - Check to see that all crews are ready and on headsets.
 - Begin the show if everyone and everything is ready and the House Manager gives the all clear sign.
- If the House Manager is having problems with getting the audience seated on time, hold the curtain for a few minutes and notify the dancers of the delay. Wait until the House Manager gives approval but do not wait more than ten minutes.

Notes Prior to Rehearsal/Performance

1. Make any announcements that need to be made.
2. Call attention to notices on callboard as well as handout sheets, such as photo call.
3. Ask about any problems that the stage manager needs to address.
4. Make a list of things that must be done, prioritizing the ones that should be accomplished immediately before the next rehearsal above the ones that can be delegated.
5. Submit a technical report to the technical director of any changes in technical needs (lighting, props, costumes, sound, etc.)

Technical Cues

1. The technical cues will be set during the paper tech and technical rehearsals by the designers in consultation with the choreographer. Through the rehearsal period, the stage manager keeps track of all technical requirements for the production. He/she is expected to attend the Paper Tech and to record the sound, light and special effects in the appropriate place in the prompt script. It would be most practical if the SM met throughout the rehearsal process with the choreographers and lighting designer to discuss lighting and any other cues.
2. During the Paper Tech, mark the cues for lights, sound, scene changes and any other technical cues, in the right-hand column on the script page of the prompt book as they are set during technical rehearsals.
 - Mark “stand-by” for cues one and a half pages/minutes prior to the cue.
 - Mark “warning” for cues at least one-half page/minute before the cues. This warning should allow the technician enough time to check his cue sheet, his equipment and prepare to execute the cue.

- If a series of cues occur simultaneously or closely together, give a standby or warning for the entire series.
 - Mark “go” for cues at the point they are to be executed.
3. Explain to the crew the method used to give cues and stand by warnings. The method is to call the warning and have the technician acknowledge that he has heard the warning.
- The stage manager then calls the cues by saying LIGHT CUE 25, GO.
 - On the word GO the Technician will respond and when the cue is complete, he should tell the stage manager, CUE, COMPLETE.
 - Having the Technician acknowledge the warnings saves a lot of unnecessary mistakes and lets the stage manager feel confident that everyone is listening and ready to do their jobs.

Running Time

1. Time each piece with a stopwatch
2. Record the running time as well as the playing time of the entire show during dress rehearsals and performances. (Some choreographers may want to have you record times for sequences earlier during the rehearsal period.)

Intermissions

1. Give calls ten, five and three minutes prior to the scheduled time for curtain. Give calls in person to avoid any communication problems.
2. Check to see that crewmembers are going to their stations at the five-minute call.
3. Check with the House Manager via Booth to see how conditions are in the house, if the lobby is clear or if the audience is slow returning to their seats.
4. Call places at three minutes.
 - Check to see that each dancer is in his or her place before going to stage Manager’s desk.

- Check to see that all crews are ready and on headsets.
 - Begin the show if everyone and everything is ready and the House Manager gives the all clear sign.
5. If the House Manager is having problems with getting the audience seated on time, hold the curtain for a few minutes and notify the dancers of the delay. Wait until the House Manager gives approval.

Emergency Procedures

Know the emergency procedures outlined in Appendix B and be prepared to take action in the event of an emergency.

Conclusion of Performance

1. See that all equipment is turned off.
2. Make sure that all costumes, props and scenery, etc. have been stored properly.
3. See that the cast and crew have cleaned up the Green Room area.
4. Check to see if the choreographers or dancers have any notes or problems that must be taken care of before the next performance and that the appropriate person is notified.
5. Make certain that house lights and all backstage lights are off.
6. Turn on work lights.
7. Lock all doors, including makeup and dressing rooms. Close and lock all doors to theatre, upstairs and downstairs. Lock up dance studios, make up area, dressing rooms, green room, costume studio, scenic studio.

Production Photographs

1. Inform cast of date and time and procedures for photo call.
2. Notify the crews needed for the photo call one week in advance.

3. Arrange for the availability of lights, props, costumes and makeup necessary for the photo call.
4. Make certain that all dancers are in costume and makeup on time.
5. See that each piece is set and the dancers are on stage ready to be photographed.
6. The choreographer will be present to set up dancers for each photo.
7. Have dancers clean up the makeup and dressing rooms after the photo call.

Special Problems

Each production of a play is different and has its own special problems. No manual can list all the problems that a stage manager will have to face. Here are some typical problems faced by stage managers in the past:

1. Cancellation of performances
 - Notify all cast and crewmembers of the cancellation of any performance or rehearsal, should any occur.
 - Instruct the company members on how to handle any problems due to the cancellation.
2. Problems with cast and crewmembers

- Handle problems with cast or crewmembers, such as tardiness, with tact.
- Try to show the company member why he should be on time in consideration for the rest of the company.
- Do not threaten, punish, or humiliate him in front of other company members.
- Consult with the choreographer or technical director as needed.
- If a dancer is injured, CALL SECURITY at X3333. Discuss with the choreographer and dancer a plan for replacing the dancer.

3. Cue execution

Sometimes a technical cue may not be executed as the stage manager calls it. When this situation occurs, the stage manager must remember not to panic. Calmly find out what the problem is and remember that the audience will often not realize that a mistake has been made if it is handled carefully. The stage manager must remember to stay calm, find out what the problem is and think quickly. If there is something that can be done, do it. If not, just remember that the most important thing is that the audience must be able to see the dancers and hear the music.

- ### 4. Problems during technical rehearsals.
- Technical rehearsals are often long and tedious. A good stage manager must remember that he or she is in charge of keeping order, trying to instill calm, cooling tempers, and keeping a sense of humor. If the stage manager has done his/her job and keeps things running smoothly then problems will be kept to a minimal.

5. Program Errors

Work with the House Manager to arrange for signs to be posted in the lobby that show the correct information.

6. Company Morale

The stage manager should remember that one of his/her most important responsibilities is to keep the company morale high. He/she must be ready to serve in the capacity of “mother-hen” and be impartial when dealing with company problems. Offer positive feedback to dancers and crew whenever possible.

Strike

1. See that all cast and crewmembers are present for the strike following the final performance.
2. Make certain that every cast member has an assignment, as determined by the technical director.

Final Duties

1. Turn in stage manager’s keys to the Theatre and Dance office.
2. Turn in prop cabinet key to technical director.