

Behind the Stage

Stage Manager's Checklist

By Nicole Walters of Atlanta Ballet

REHEARSAL



COMMUNICATION

- Act as a conduit for information across all creative and technical departments
 - » Relay all messages, changes, adaptations, etc. to the choreographer, designers, artistic, and appropriate staff/crew



CALLBOARD

 Maintain a neat and efficient callboard as the hub of communication for artists with posting of the daily schedule, casting, and other relevant information



DAILY STUDIO SETUP

- Make sure studio is clean, moderate temperature, and has enough barres (if applicable) for class
- Tape out floor
- Ensure any requested reference videos and specified setups are in each studio
- Set out all props for the day's rehearsals
- Make sure all first aid kits are fully stocked in each studio
- Refill hand sanitizer, alcohol solution, and cleaning product for each studio



UNION CONTRACT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

• Know the contracts for all dancers, crew, and musicians to ensure various aspects for rehearsals, techs, and performances are executed



MAINTAIN SPACES

Keep office, studio, archival storage, and props storage in a neat and orderly manner



FILM REHEARSAL

- Set up GoPro
 - » Film run-through
 - » Film anything specifically requested by artistic
 - Digitally distribute footage to choreographers, designers, artistic, and dancers for reference







PRODUCTION MEETINGS

- Set up production meeting and confirm attendance for the meeting with a calendar invite
- Prepare and proofread agenda
- Prepare and proofread other documents pertinent to meeting (schedules, casting, workspecific breakdowns or elements)
- Prepare copies of paperwork
- Take detailed minutes at the meeting
- Type up and distribute minutes to the appropriate parties



SUPPLY INVENTORY AND ORDERS

- Keep inventory of office, first aid, and hospitality supplies fully stocked
- Frequently ordered supplies:
 - » Office supplies DVDs, CDs, pens, pencils, binders, dividers, sheet protectors, highlighters, sharpies, post-it notes
 - » First aid supplies ice packs, cough drops, band-aids, Neosporin, Aleve, Tylenol, hand sanitizer, elastikon tape, etc.
 - » Hospitality (for performances at venues) coffee, tea, hot chocolate, creamer, sugar, cups, stirrer sticks, napkins, etc.



CUE SHEETS

- Type and/or reformat old cue sheets from outdated digital formats
- Keep track of changes, additions, or special adaptations necessary for various venues, special events, or artistic decisions



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PERFORMANCE PREP



VENUE/THEATER

• Reach out to venue/theater contact and get as much information on the space as possible, including number of dressing rooms, laundry, studio space, etc.



CUE SHEET

- If you are calling a work that has been performed, get the cue sheet from the last theater company that previously performed the work
- If this is a new work, coordinate with the lighting designer to get the lighting cues as soon as possible-- you should (ideally) have it a week before tech
 - » Cue sheet should include standbys, lights, follow spots, curtain, rail, sound, deck, and automation cues



PAPERWORK

- Prepare the following paperwork for performances and special events:
 - » Production schedule (master schedule) with performance run times
 - » Casting
 - » Contact sheet
 - » Dressing room assignments
 - » Hair/makeup call sheet
 - » Photo/video notices
 - » Deck and automation cues
 - » Rail cue sheet
 - » Prop run sheet
 - » Sound cue sheet (if using pre-recorded music)
 - » Spike chart
 - » Backstage access list
 - » Lighting run sheet (created by lighting designer)



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THEATER PERFORMANCES



LOAD IN

- Explore the theater to become familiar with the space
- Check all dressing rooms for:
 - » Cleanliness, working overhead lights and makeup mirror lights, trash cans, soap, and paper towels in the restroom area
 - » Enough chairs for people assigned to the dressing room and ensure that the temperature falls within union guidelines
 - » For any missing light bulbs, soap, paper towels, or any other necessary items/issues
 - » Inform house contact to have these issues resolved
- Set up callboard
- Hang directional signs
- Prep rehearsal studio:
 - » Check that floor is suitable for class and rehearsal, tape out floor space
 - » Make sure there are enough barres/required materials for class
 - » Ensure there is suitable lighting
 - » Ensure thermostat is set at an appropriate level
 - » Check to see if paging is available in that space



STAGE

- Set up Stage Manager console
- Safety check walk the stage, wings, and crossover area to make sure there are no safety hazards
 - » Add spike, gaff, or glow tape to areas that could potentially cause an issue
- Set up first aid kit stage left and stage right
- Double check that props have rosin, tissue, and chairs/stools set up for dancers off stage
- Check all light, curtain, and rail cues
- Sound check onstage monitors, wireless microphone, and headsets



CAST CHANGES AND PROGRAM PROOF

- Acquire venue program and proofread to make sure all casting is listed correctly without any omissions, misprints, or spelling mistakes
- For any errors or changes, type up a "casting change notice" to be posted on the cast change board in the lobby by half hour. Also, post a copy on the callboard so dancers are aware.







NETWORK WITH LOCAL CREW

- Introduce yourself to the local crew and department heads
- Pass out the most up-to-date paperwork needed for the performances, i.e., tech schedule, rail cue sheet, sound cue sheet, etc.
- Work closely with the house crew member to ensure a smooth and productive environment in the theater



PERFORMANCE VIDEOS

- Get all recordings from the Video Content Producer
- Back up all recordings onto computer server
- Maintain archive by logging all recorded performances



SIGN-IN

- Post sign-in sheet an hour before the hour call
- At the half hour call, collect the sign-in sheet from the callboard



CALLING PERFORMANCES

- Supervise and facilitate all technical elements of the performance in conjunction with the crew
- Maintain time keeping for intermissions, pauses, etc.
- Document any notes, concerns, or mishaps during the performance in the performance report
- Handle any crises, concerns, or issues in relation to the performance



LOAD OUT

- Take down all directional signs
- Take down callboard
- Collect any dancer items from stage/dressing rooms and place at callboard to be claimed by dancers
- Take down dressing room signs
- General packing of office and road
- Liaise with prop and technical director to facilitate boxes being moved to truck
- Double check the stage and backstage area to make sure no items are left behind