

A Thesis Presented to
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Stage Management 101:
How to Survive the World of the Stage Manager

By

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Introduction

As a student at Alfred University, I have expanded my skills in the theatrical world over the past four years. During this time, I have found a passion for stage management, as well as the many tasks the job entails. While at Alfred University, I realized that the resources for stage managers, although vast, were not the best fit for a first time stage manager, or someone with limited knowledge of the job. For my thesis project, I have decided to create an easy to follow guide and reference booklet for new stage managers.

You may be asking yourself, “Why stage management? Look at the size of this booklet! There’s way too much to do!” The truth is, you’re right. The stage manager has a LOT to do for a production. I find that the most appealing part of the job. A stage manager almost *never* has two rehearsals that are the same, so the job is ever changing, and keeps you on your toes. I get to be involved in many different aspects of putting a show together. I also have to look closely at everything, and be very detail oriented. These are all things I really like to do! However, this job is not for everyone. It takes a very specific set of skills to do it well! You need to be detail oriented, able to make quick decisions, constantly act with an elevated level of professionalism, and be ready for anything. I’m not perfect at doing all of these things, but the job of stage manager allows me to grow in all of these areas.

In creating this thesis, I wanted to give readers a good description of what it means to be a stage manager. To do so, I thought it important to first look at the history of stage management itself. I will then go into detail of the many responsibilities of the stage manager

when working on a straight play.¹ Lastly, I will explain some extra jobs a stage manager might have when stage managing a musical. In doing this project, I hope to make it easier for students who are interested in stage management to be able to easily understand where the title of stage manager came from, what a stage manager should do, and what added skills a prospective stage manager might want to have, especially at Alfred University.

In my years at Alfred University, I have stage managed, or assistant stage managed, seven productions, some straight plays, and some musicals. These straight plays include *Sure Thing*, *Anna in the Tropics*, *Campfire Tales Are Best Told In Whispers*, and *Alice in Wonderland*. Musicals I have stage managed include *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*², *Seussical the Musical*, and *The Addams Family Musical*. I have fulfilled the equivalent requirements of a stage manager on three film projects. These films are titled *CRUX: Luna*, *CRUX: Neil*, and *CRUX: Mara*. Lastly, I have also been involved in many other productions in different capacities, as an actor, designer, and director. My passion for stage management also led me to take a class on the subject in the fall of 2015, taught by Steve Crosby.

It should be noted that this guide does not directly reference other books previously written about stage management. This has been done on purpose. This thesis is not being created to become a reference to other books, but rather to show what I have learned, and for others to learn from it. This guide is based solely on what it is like to stage manage at Alfred University. While some aspects of stage managing at Alfred reflect that of the professional world, not all things are done the same. In the back of this book, there are four Appendixes.

¹ A straight play is a play performed without songs sung by character, as you would see in a musical.

² I was the assistant stage manager for this production, not the stage manager.

The first describes the many jobs in the theatre world. The second gives definitions of words a stage manager should know. The third includes a list of the jobs described in detail throughout this guide. The fourth and final Appendix gives examples of paperwork that a stage manager might use. It is important to note that this guide can be deviated from, under the guidance of a seasoned director.

Another thing this guide does not do is go into the various types of theatres a professional stage manager might work in. Instead, this guide follows what I have learned from working in CD Smith Theatre and Miller Performing Arts Center (Miller II). CD Smith Theatre is a versatile space, in which seating can be arranged in a variety of ways. Plays can be performed in proscenium, thrust, or in-the-round. Proscenium is when the audience is on one end of the theatre space, and the staging space is on the other end. Thrust is when the audience is on three sides of the stage, or when the audience wraps around more than half of the staging space. Lastly, in-the-round, or arena, is when the entire staging space is surrounded by audience seating. Miller II is a larger proscenium theatre that houses 498 audience members, and the audience seating area is raked (or slopes upward, away from the stage).

I have wanted to create this guide since my first production at Alfred University as an assistant stage manager. I now feel I have completed the research needed for this project, and have the experience in the field to help me completely and accurately depict the many tasks of the stage manager. In this guide you will find that I have outlined the brief history of the stage manager, described the roles of the stage manager in a straight play, reviewed these roles, and given the added traits one might need to fulfill the role of the stage manager in a musical. I concluded this thesis by briefly outlining the importance of stage managers in theatre.

The History

The history of the stage manager formally begins sometime in the Medieval Period with the rise of the theatrical director, which, back then, was the term for a person who directed actors on stage, and sometimes narrated scenes, during the performance of a play.³ Unlike the modern day stage manager, the theatrical director was onstage and in full view of the audience throughout the performance. Unlike the modern day stage manager, he was not involved in the communication between actors and other members of a production. This was mostly because there were fewer members outside of actors within an acting company. By this, I mean, today we have several designers and staging crew members involved in a production, which a theatre company of this time would not have. Theatrical directors were also not involved in the rehearsal process, like a stage manager today would be, but this was mostly due to the shortness in rehearsal time actors might have, or the complete inexistence of rehearsal time to begin with. Before the establishment of the theatrical director, community members in Attic Greece, Hellenistic Greece, and Ancient Rome who were acting as the lead of the chorus, could be seen as a sort of stage manager. While on stage, these people would lead other members of the chorus, much like the theatrical director in the Medieval Period.⁴

This specific title of the theatrical director did not continue outside of the Medieval Period, but the jobs of the theatrical director did. After the Medieval Period, and during the rise of theatrical repertory company, the tasks that would have come with the title of theatrical director were now completed by several members of a theatrical company, rather than one

³ Brockett, O. and Hildy, F. 2007. History of the Theatre, 10th Edition. Pearson; London, England.

⁴ Ibid.

person. In fact, most modern jobs in theatre were completed by multiple people within the acting company, such as financial advisors, directors, designers, managers, etc.⁵

In the times of Shakespeare and Moliere, the duties of the stage manager began to be fulfilled by a single individual within the theatre company. It wasn't, however, until the 18th century in England that the term "stage manager" is first used.⁶ During this time period, acting companies worked on a repertory system. Because of this, the company had several plays that could be performed at any given time. Actors had 24 hours and a single rehearsal to remember all of their lines and blocking ("a process of arranged movement"),⁷ before performing that play in the evening.⁸ New plays would have three rehearsals during the day, with different shows being performed in the evening, and a three day run of the new play following the three rehearsals.⁹ Stage managers of the time were in charge of getting copies of scripts to actors. They also documented actors during rehearsals and performances, keeping record of how many times they missed lines or messed them up severely. These documentations would later turn into fines that the actors would have to pay to the acting company. Although this fining practice is still done today, it is more commonly seen in film and television, where it is done by production assistants and assistant to the directors. It should be noted that during this time period, it was common for roles in the theatre company to be passed down from generation to generation. The role of the stage manager would be no different, and stage manager training could begin at a young age.

⁵ Brockett, O. and Hildy, F. 2007. History of the Theatre, 10th Edition. Pearson; London, England.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ <http://www.theatrecrafts.com/pages/home/topics/stage-management/glossary/>

⁸ Brockett, O. and Hildy, F. 2007. History of the Theatre, 10th Edition. Pearson; London, England.

⁹ Ibid.

It wasn't until 1874 that the world saw the rise of a more modern stage manager under Georg of Saxe-Meiningen, his troupe (Meininger), and their stage manager Ludwig Chronegk. Chronegk was the right hand of Georg, and wielded a whistle which he would blow to call all actors and stagehands to attention. During the rehearsal period, which was now six months long, Chronegk was in charge of making sure actors knew where they needed to be and when, as well as noting changes in movement and scenery. During performances, he was in charge of making sure things ran smoothly, and began the practice of calling shows, which will be discussed later. He also toured with the troupe for the sixteen years they were together, before his death in 1891. While on tour, he would receive information from the director, who was not touring with the troupe, on things to change or problems that may, or did, arise. This is similar to the job of a stage manager in a professional touring company today, as sometimes the director doesn't tour with the company, nor are they allowed backstage after opening night. At Alfred University, this is slightly different. Often the director will be backstage before and after performances, giving last minute notes to actors and crew, well wishes, and congratulations. It is also important to note that the communication between director and stage manager established by Georg and Chronegk is one of the most important jobs of the modern stage manager.

In more modern theatres (from approximately the early twentieth century), the role of the stage manager is even more vast than it was in the 1870's. Now, the stage manager is chosen at the same time as the director by a production company or theatre, and he or she works with the director, designers, and producers in the early stages of production. A stage manager often produces paperwork for auditions, casting, rehearsals, tech, show, and strike.

They are present at meetings between designers, directors, and/or actors, as well as fittings, if needed. They provide a means of communication between the scene shop, costume shop, props department, director, designers, and actors. Lastly, they are ready for, and document emergencies within the theatre, and generally oversee and document production meetings, auditions, casting, rehearsals, tech, dress, performances, photo call, and strike.

The Modern Role of the Stage Manager

Pre-Production

A modern stage manager has many jobs. Sometimes certain jobs may overlap with the jobs of others in the theatre (Appendix A in the back of this guide shows these many jobs, and gives a basic description of each). When the stage manager joins a production, he or she should communicate closely with the director to outline the specific duties of the stage manager (Appendix C shows a list of the jobs of the stage manager, all of which will be discussed in this guidebook. This list can be deviate from, under the guidance of the director). When this discussion is taking place, the stage manager may be asked to assist in finding people to fill these job positions. He or she should not have to fulfill other job titles, but, again, sometimes jobs do overlap.

After all jobs have been filled for a production, the stage manager has several jobs that they must complete before auditions and rehearsals. These roles include communication, reading through the script several times, preliminary list making, running production meetings, rehearsal space organization, and advertisement. The biggest role of the stage manager is being the major form of communication between people involved in a production, and this is the case

for all forms of theatre, from pre- to post-production. Another duty is reading through the script several times in order to become familiar with it and be able to divide it into marked out scenes within a prompt book. The stage manager may also be in charge of creating preliminary documents for costumes, props, lighting and sound. He or she may also be asked to help the director prepare paperwork for auditions. These documents include audition forms, and making copies of preliminary schedules, sign-up sheets, and sides.¹⁰ Examples of some of these forms can be found in Appendix D. Further possible pre-production duties include the scheduling, attendance, and documentation of production meetings (where further communication between production leads would occur, something that happens weekly at Alfred University); finding and booking audition and rehearsal spaces (which would be the job of the stage manager in some professional, and semi-professional companies, but is not the case at Alfred); and possibly helping with the advertisement of auditions (this is popular in some colleges, including Alfred, but rarely practiced in professional or semi-professional companies).¹¹

Let's get into the basics of breaking all of these duties down. First, we will look at communication between production leads, and production meetings themselves. Production leads usually consist of the following people, though some designer roles could be combined and completed by one person: the director, stage management team (the stage manager, and his or her assistant stage manager(s)), costume designer, hair and makeup designer, props master, set designer, sound designer, lighting designer, projection designer (if projection is being used), and technical director. Sometimes, designers could be designing for a production from a different location. Although they may find that the best means of communication might

¹⁰ Side are short scenes or monologues from the play that the actors will use to audition with.

¹¹ Experience working on *Anna in the Tropics* (Alfred University, Fall 2014).

be through email, over the phone, or via Skype, it is the stage manager's job to make sure designers' ideas are being shared between each other, and with the director. Note that's this has had to be done before at Alfred University, when guest designers have been used. One such case was *As You Like It*, which was performed in the spring of 2017. Two guest designers were used on the production and communication was done over the phone and through email. Production meetings are used from the pre-production stage until show week. This allows the continued flow of communication between departments, the allowance for everyone to stay on the same page and moving towards a common goal, and to ensure budgeting is on track. It should be noted that it is the stage managers job to run these meetings, keep time, and take notes, which will need to be sent to all production leads.¹² A copy of what production meeting notes should look like is attached in Appendix D.

Reading over the script numerous times is another essential part of getting ready for a production. It is important to not only get a good handle of the characters within the script itself, but to also become aware of who is in what scene, and what costuming, prop, lighting, and sound needs might arise. While going through the script, it is helpful to start making lists of these needs, as well as writing down descriptions of each scene and character for future reference. All of these list would be fairly preliminary, and are subject to change. These lists will come in handy during the first production meeting (and those that follow), and during auditions, if actors have questions about scenes or characters. An example of a preliminary sound list can be found in Appendix D.

¹² Experience working on *Anna in the Tropics* (Alfred University, Fall 2014).

Auditions

When it comes time for auditions, the stage manager and their team basically run the show. It is common for the head stage manager to help the director prepare paperwork for the auditions. This paperwork may include creating sign-in sheets for actors, making copies of audition forms and sides, writing out and posting preliminary production schedules, and either writing out, copying and/or posting character descriptions. Sometimes, it is helpful to post signs to help actor find where auditions are being held. It is also the stage manager's job to set up inside the audition room in whatever fashion the director wishes, as well as outside the room where actors would fill out audition forms and read through sides.

During the course of auditions, it is common for the head stage manager to be seated within the audition room with the director. One assistant stage manager usually stays outside to help the actors. This allows for an easy flow of movement in and out of the audition room. A second assistant stage manager, if there is one, might run back in forth between the other assistant stage manager and the head stage manager. They might also be stationed in another part of the audition area, helping actors find their way to the audition site.¹³

After auditions, the director might ask for input on how the stage manager thought auditions went, or their opinion on any given actor or actress, but this is not always the case.¹⁴ It is, however, the job of the stage manager to clean outside and inside of the audition space, carefully filing paperwork for later auditions, if there are any, and returning the audition room to its original state. After all that is done, and auditions are completed, casting occurs. Casting is

¹³ Experience working on *Anna in the Tropics* (Alfred University, Fall 2014).

¹⁴ Experience working on *Alice in Wonderland* (Alfred State College, Spring 2016).

done by the director, sometimes with input from the stage manager. Once casting is completed, the stage manager takes the audition forms and creates a contact list of all of the cast and crew members participating in the show. They also create a complex schedule of availability for all of the actors. The contact list will be handed out at the first rehearsal, and should be emailed to those not in attendance. A complex schedule is usually an excel spreadsheet with all actors on it, and empty slots next to dates and times those actors are available. The complex schedule of availability will go to the director, with a copy being kept for the stage manager. Along with the schedule, a list of actor conflicts should be made, with one being kept by the stage manager, and another by the director. An example of a conflict list can be found in Appendix D.

Rehearsals

As the rehearsal process starts, the role of the stage manager grows in importance. The stage manager is usually the first person to arrive to rehearsals and the last person to leave, as they lock and unlock the space. Beyond this, the stage manager is considered to be the right and left hand of the director. In being those appendages, they have a lot to do. While the director is molding the performance of the production through means of movement and stressed words, it is the job of the stage manager to document these things in their stage manager's prompt book. Without these things being written down, the memory of this information could be lost from rehearsal to rehearsal.

To show stressed words in a sentence, it is common to underline that given word on the script. Movement, or blocking, is documented by circling a word to tie the action to, or drawing

a line from the word to the side of the page and writing down a short description of the blocking. There are a few ways to shorthand movement. Here are some of the more common shorthand notations and what they mean: “X” stands for cross, which is when a character walks towards something or in a given direction. The “X” is usually followed by an abbreviation for a character’s name, an object for which the character crossing crosses to, or a stage direction. Stage directions could be SL (stage left, which is to the left of the actor, but right of the audience), SR (stage right, which is to the right of the actor, but left of the audience), CS (center stage), US (up stage, which is towards the back of the stage), DS (down stage, which means towards the front of the stage), or a combination of these. An example of a combination could be USL for upstage left, or DCS for down center stage. A circle or spiral is often used to say a character “circles” something or someone. Writing in entrances and exits are also important, as well as documenting where a character enters from.¹⁵ Actors should have pencils in hand during rehearsals in order to write down their own blocking. Unfortunately, some forget to take notes, don’t take them by choice, or don’t take sufficient notes. This reinforces the importance of taking good blocking notes in the stage manager's prompt book.

It is important to note one more thing when talking about blocking, and that is what happens if an actor cannot make a rehearsal. In the event of an actor missing a rehearsal, or not being able to attend part of one, the stage manager is often asked to step in and walk through the actors blocking onstage while speaking their lines. Other actors can be very useful when this is occurring, as they can help the stage manager with remember movements that might have changed (though the stage manager should have most changes and movements written down).

¹⁵ Experience working on *Anna in the Tropics* (Alfred University, Fall 2014).

The director asks this of stage manager so that the flow of a scene can be retained and so they can see how the placement of people onstage looks. The director will not expect the stage manager to be perfect, nor will he or she expect the stage manager to perform like the rest of the actors on stage.

Besides writing down blocking for the director and actors, as well as filling in for actors when needed, the stage manager has another important job; keeping everything on schedule. Every night, the director creates a schedule he or she wishes to follow. This is done in order to get through as much of the play as possible, and keep the energy of the rehearsal flowing. The stage manager should keep a close eye on the schedule and the time, in order to inform the director when they are nearing the time limit they have set for a section of their rehearsal. If the director decides to go over the amount of time allotted for a certain section, they might ask the stage manager to notify other actors to come in later, or let them know it'll just be a few extra minutes of waiting while something is being run. Without the stage manager keeping track of time, time might run out before the director has a chance to get through everything they wish to get through, and/or actors might be kept waiting much longer than they might wish to be, causing anger or frustration, and low energy.¹⁶

During rehearsals, it is also common for the director to ask questions about certain design elements, or for them to make note of new developments, or things needed. It is important for the stage manager to keep a list of these thoughts made by the director during the rehearsal, so that a report can be made at the end of the night. These reports are known as rehearsal reports, and they contain sections to add notes for all elements of design (costumes,

¹⁶ Experience working on *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Alfred University, Spring 2014)

hair and makeup, scenery, props, sound, and lighting), spots for noting what scenes were rehearsed, if any actor was late or had to leave early because of an emergency, and places for notes the director has for him- or herself, the stage management team, and/or the actors. Scheduling changes for that night, or following nights, are also documented in this report. These reports are later emailed to the full production team, and, depending on the college or company, might also be sent to all the actors as well.¹⁷ A blank copy and a filled out copy of a rehearsal report are in Appendix D.

These rehearsal reports end up coming in handy when making documents to put back stage for the actors or crew to reference.¹⁸ Such documents include a props tracking list, and a costume plot. A props tracking list is created to show when a prop is used, who it is used by, and where it should be found or placed before and after use. A costume plot, also sometimes called a costume tracking list, shows what costume pieces should be worn by who, and when. This is not only useful for actors, but also assistant stage managers who might need to assist with quick changes, and dressers, who tend to be in charge of said quick changes. There are other lists that will help the formulation of these two documents, and they should be kept in the prompt book alongside the script. These lists include an up-to-date props and costumes list, a growing list of sound and lighting needs, and a list of set piece movement. The set piece movement list shows what set pieces move when, where it's moved to and from, and by who. There will probably be a need to keep updating these lists as rehearsals continue towards tech, dress, and shows.

¹⁷ Experience working on *Anna in the Tropics* (Alfred University, Fall 2014).

¹⁸ Experience working on *The Addams Family Musical* (Alfred State College, Fall 2016).

During rehearsals, it is also common for the director to ask the stage manager to “spike the set.” This when the stage manager, or stage management team, use colored tape to mark out where certain set pieces go. After the set is fully constructed, moveable set pieces will also be spiked to show stagehands where set pieces need to be placed. Some spiking may need to be redone during tech if the performance is in a different location than the rehearsal space, or if the floor of the rehearsal and show space needs to be repainted.¹⁹

Before moving on to what tasks the stage manager has during techs, dresses, and performances, it is important to understand another task the stage manager has during rehearsals, and that is what the stage manager must do in the case of an emergency. Emergencies and accidents are sometimes unstoppable, and often unpredictable. Common accidents and emergencies include those that are on a smaller scale, like an actor slipping, falling and bruising something, but they can also be as serious as an actor breaking a bone, or cutting a limb open. In the case of these emergencies, it is important to remain calm and assess the situation, whilst keeping others calm as well. If an easy fix can be made, like a bandage or having the actor rest for a few minutes, it should be done. However, if an ambulance is needed, or an actor has to be dismissed from a rehearsal to seek better care, it is the stage manager's job to work with the director to get assistance to the actor, or crew member, that is in need. A stage manager might need to call 911. If the director has taken that upon themselves to do, the stage manager might be in charge of the remaining actors and/or crew members not injured. After the crew member or actor gets the help they need, it is the stage manager's job to document these events in an accident report, sometimes also referred to as an incident report.

¹⁹ Experience working on *Seussical the Musical* (Alfred State College, Fall 2015).

This report would be filed with the production leads, with a copy kept for the stage manager. In anticipating the worst, a stage manager might create a list of allergies of the actors, and an emergency contact sheet, to help him or her remain calm in the face of an emergency situation.²⁰

Tech: Paper, Dry, and Wet!

After several weeks of rehearsal, and hopefully few or no emergencies, it comes time to put the show together. The process of doing that is called tech, which is, defined as, “the first time the show is rehearsed in the venue, with lighting, scenery and sound.”²¹ There are three different types of tech a stage manager would be a part of. They are paper tech, dry tech, and wet tech. Paper tech is the first of these techs to occur, and it happens with the least amount of people. Paper tech either occurs the morning or day before dry tech, and it is when the director, stage manager, and designers get together and document in the script where changes in lights, sound, and projection will most likely occur. These changes are called cues, and people running the boards that operate these changes will need to be told when to execute said cues. A common way to mark out a cue in a script is to tie it to a word or action, and write “C” (standing for cue) and the cue number next to it. If a production calls for multiple cue types, the “C” formation is used for lighting, while letters are used for sound, and “P” with a number or description is used for projection cues. It is important to note that the letter “Q” is never used in formulating sound cues, to curb confusion. If there are more than twenty five sound cues (meaning you have gone through the whole alphabet, minus the letter “Q”), sound cues would

²⁰ Experience working on *The Addams Family Musical* (Alfred State College, Fall 2016).

²¹ <http://www.theatre crafts.com/pages/home/topics/stage-management/glossary/>

be marked by double letters, going through the alphabet once more. So, instead of just an “A,” which would represent the first sound cue, the twenty sixth sound cue would be marked as “AA.” Special effects besides projection might also be used during a show, and need to be called. Such special effects include, but are not limited to, haze (or fog)/ dry ice, stage lifts, curtain movement, flies (where scenery “flies” onto the stage, usually by being lowered from the ceiling²²), or set changes. The stage manager would simply write these cues into the calling script and call them as a description for the stage hands performing these changes backstage.²³ The stage manager should know when scene changes take place, who does the changing, and how long they take. Most scene changes are done during a blackout in modern theatre, as to keep the changing scenes out of view from the audience, and allow the audience to remain in the world of the play.²⁴

Once the director, designers, and stage manager are all on the same page cue wise, it is time to move to dry tech. Dry tech is where the technical crew and designers work without actors in order to build cues in different systems. Lighting cues are created by the lighting designer using a light plot (a paper showing where lights are hung, what kind of light they are, and what color they are) to create a lit stage.²⁵ As the lighting designer calls for certain lights to be turned on and off, the master electrician (or sometimes the lighting board operator) controls the lights and saves the cues in a lighting program on the light board. Cues are saved into a program with the same corresponding cue number as is in the call book, which was created during paper tech. Sound and projection cues are saved in a similar way, but done by different

²² <http://www.theatre crafts.com/pages/home/topics/stage-management/glossary/>

²³ Experience working on *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Alfred University, Spring 2014)

²⁴ Experience working on *Anna in the Tropics* (Alfred University, Fall 2014).

²⁵ <http://www.theatre crafts.com/pages/home/topics/stage-management/glossary/>

designers and are saved into different operating boards. As dry tech can take several hours, the best thing to do is stay calm and be ready for anything to happen.

While a cue is being built in the computer, it is helpful for the stage manager to write in standby cues in the script. Standby cues are written in approximately half a page before the actual cue would be called, and it is a reminder for the stage manager to tell the operator of either the lighting, sound, or projection board, or tell the stagehands moving sets, to be ready for an upcoming cue.²⁶ A common practice is for the stage manager to say something like, “Standby light cue seven,” and to have the light board operator respond, “Lights standing by.” The stage manager then calls, “Light cue seven, go,” when the cue should be called (when the lights, sound, projection, or set should change). It is important for the stage manager to go over this procedure with the board operators and stagehands before actors come in for wet tech, or dress rehearsals. (Note: Some common cues that will be called during almost every show are “*house to half*,” where the audience lights are dimmed and the pre-show announcements are played; “*house out*,” which will be the first blackout (when all lights are off or dimmed very low onstage and in the audience) of the show; and “*stage out, house up*,” which happens at intermission and at the end of the show, and means the stage lights will be off, but the audience lights will be on at full).

Wet tech usually occurs the day after dry tech. This is the tech with the most people, as it has all the designers, the director, the stage management team, all the crew, and all of the actors (in costume) in attendance. What happens at wet tech is something called a cue to cue where lighting and sound levels are tested with the actors. What a cue to cue means is that

²⁶ Experience working on *Anna in the Tropics* (Alfred University, Fall 2014).

instead of running through the entire show with all dialogue and blocking, small bits of dialogue and blocking are performed just before and/or after a cue change, in order to get a better understanding of how the lights or sounds work with the actors. Changes in lighting or sound levels are common, and patience is the best virtue to have during this process. Again, wet tech can take several hours, and usually occurs in the morning, into the afternoon. After wet tech is done in the afternoon, there is a break, and then everyone comes back in in the evening for the first dress rehearsal. Running crew from tech to tech, and from performance to performance can be different. To allow for less confusion, a running crew schedule can be helpful. An example can be found in Appendix D. Other helpful documents to make for tech, dress, and show are prop and costume check in sheets. These sheets, exemplified of which can be found in Appendix D, are used by actors. Actors will sign the sheet to say they have taken out their costume or prop for use on stage, and sign the sheet again, when said prop or costume is returned. These sheets come in handy before a performance, to make sure all costume and props are accounted for, and after the run of the production, when strike is occurring, and all production pieces are being put away. Examples of these can be found in Appendix D.

Dress Rehearsals

When dress rehearsals begin, the show falls into the hands of the stage manager, and all the rehearsals and prep lists come into play. Dress rehearsals are when actors are in full costume, and they perform the play as they would in front of an audience. The stage manager and crew will also do what they would do during a performance, such as making sure props are being used at the correct time, costume changes have enough time, set changes have enough time, and that the cues are lining up correctly and being called when they should. Because wet

tech is done in a cue to cue format, the first dress rehearsal is the first time the stage manager is calling the cues during dialogue and action, so it is common for scenes or cues to have to be re-run once or twice. The stage manager should not feel bad if the director asks to run something again because of an ill-called cue; this is the first time it's being done, and the director is asking to re-run it for the benefit of not only the stage manager, but also the cast and crew. The first dress rehearsal might also bring up problems with a previously written cue, and some might need to be added, changed, or deleted. Again, this is very common, and staying patient with this process, and making sure the actors also know what's going on, is very important.

After the first dress, it is common to have two or three more, before opening night. The more you run through the show and calling cues, the more confident you will become, which will be very helpful for opening night.²⁷ Another important thing to remember about dress is that the stage manager will most likely be the first and last person in the rehearsal space. Much like during rehearsals, they will be the ones to unlock the space, and lock it up at night. Now, instead of just opening and closing the rehearsal space itself, they will also be in charge of opening dressing rooms. They also open and close the green room (or the place where actors sit when not on stage during the show, or in the dressing room). They will also be the ones to check to make sure all backstage documents are in place, in order to assist the actors and crew (such documents would be props tracking list, costume plots for costume changes, scene change list, and possibly a scene list as well). Another piece of paperwork the stage manager should make is a sign in sheet. This sheet is used by all actors and crew to initial or sign their

²⁷ Experience stage managing all productions at Alfred University and Alfred State College (Spring 2014- Fall 2016).

names, making it easier to check if all the cast and crew are present. This sign in sheet should include all of the tech dates the cast or crew member should be there for, as well as all the dress rehearsal and show dates. An example of this sheet can also be found in Appendix D. One last document that might be asked to be made by the stage manager, although it is commonly made by the head of costumes or the head of the costume shop, is a costume repair sheet. This is a sheet where actors can write down notes if something on their costume rips or breaks and needs to be fixed for the next performance.

Show Time!

When dress rehearsals end, and the show's run begins, the stage manager might fall under a lot of stress. It is the stage manager's job to be prepared for anything that may go wrong at any time during the show, including injury, missed cues, or even issues with the set or costumes. A stage manager communicates with the cast and crew via headset in most theatres, and there are some common protocols that should be followed to ensure that the stage manager can be heard for cues at all times. There shouldn't be any extra chatter over the headsets from actors or crew members, unless it is important to the success of a show, or the safety of others. Proper extra chatter could include the notification of props or pieces of the set breaking, or costume pieces malfunctioning backstage. In these situations, it is the stage manager's job to make in-the-moment decisions, like saying an actor should go on without a certain costume piece, or in an earlier costume, or whether a prop should be used broken, or not at all. These decisions will be easily made, as the stage manager knows the show better than almost anyone else, and can tell if not using something will affect the plot negatively. All cues and decisions are called from the booth within the theatre. The booth is located either in

the very back of the audience seating, or on an upper level of the theatre where the stage manager can see everything happening on stage.

Besides calling cues and making tough decisions, the stage manager is also in charge of telling actors when they need to be places before the show begins, and notifying the house manager²⁸ when house can open. Actors should arrive in different intervals for hair and makeup, but when it is time for warm ups, the stage manager calls them together. He or she also reminds them to check their props before house is to open, in order to allow time for stage crew to find props that may have been left onstage or in a different location. While the actors continue to warm up and get ready backstage, the stage manager continues to inform them when they have thirty, fifteen, and then five minutes before house opens. The stage manager usually has the house manager open house with about half an hour before the beginning of the show. When this occurs, the stage manager tells the actors and crew they are no longer allowed into the performance space, as audience members are filing into it. At around five minutes to show, the stage manager calls actors to places backstage. An assistant stage manager or stagehand will confirm when all actors are in places and ready to go. A hold, or lengthened time before the show starts, may be placed if an actor is not in place when he or she needs to be, or if there is a large amount of audience members still coming into the theatre around the same time the show is set to begin. It is the stage manager's job to judge whether a hold needs to be placed. The house manager is usually helpful in gauging this decision as well.

²⁸ The house manager is the person in charge of ushers, and opening and closing house to audience members.

To help the stage manager remember all they have to do before and after a show, a pre- and post-show checklist should be made. These lists help the stage manager stay calm and remember everything he or she has to do.²⁹ Examples of these can be found in Appendix D.

Once the show starts, it should be smoother sailing, unless emergencies arise. The stage manager calls the show to the best of their ability, just as they have done in dress and tech rehearsals. Just before intermission, the stage manager notifies the house manager that audience members will be exiting the theatre briefly. During intermission, the stage manager might run around and check in with stagehands, operators, and actors, in order to make sure there are no problems that need to be addressed immediately. The stage manager will be in charge of notifying cast and crew when intermission is almost over, as well as when they need to be back in places for the second half of the show. Once the second half of the show has been mostly performed, the stage manager notifies the house manager about the show ending and lets them prepare the lobby in any way they may need to. After the show is completed, they can go in the lobby with other cast and crew members to greet the audience and congratulate one another. After audience members begin to leave, the cast, crew and stage manager get together and make sure everything is back in its proper place. The stage manager will then close up the theatre, dressing rooms, and green room.

On one of the show nights, or possibly before opening, there will be something called photo call. Photo call is when staged pictures of the production are taken for either publicity or safekeeping. The director makes a list of images they wish to capture. The stage manager's job is to communicate with the director to see what order they wish to go in (either from the

²⁹ Experience working on *Anna in the Tropics* (Fall 2014).

beginning of the play to the end, or the end to the beginning), and to communicate with the cast and crew about what they should be in and when. The stage manager should also go through the list prior to photo call to figure out what lighting cues should be on during the photos of certain scenes. During photo call, the stage manager will tell the light board operator which cue to be in. Because photo call can be long and go late, it's important to keep things moving as quickly and efficiently as possible, and keep cast and crew as positive as can be.

Post Show

After the final show, it's time for strike. This is when the set gets taken apart, and costumes and props are put away. Often, the stage manager communicates with the technical director to figure out how many people are needed to help with strike elements, and who is qualified to help. The technical director and/or stage manager will create a duty list in order to split up crew members and actors. This is done in order to get strike done in as little time as possible. Most strikes consist of putting away props and costumes (which are usually overseen by the props master or an assistant stage manager, and the costume coordinator). The set is taken apart and pieces are stored (this part is usually done by the tech crew who assisted in construction, but can also be done by a few actors who also helped in construction). The dressing rooms, booth, and green room are also cleaned. Usually, actors are in charge of cleaning dressing rooms and green rooms, or assist in putting away props and costumes. In some theatres, lighting, sound, and project equipment are not struck, but are left for professionals or the designers to do so at a different time. Not only does the stage manager oversee the strike process, but he or she is also responsible for cleaning up the booth and pulling up spike tape from the floor. Once all spike tape and set pieces have been removed, the

floor is swept, and the performance space is closed, and the cast and crew are able to relax after a successful production. That is, unless, the show is traveling, in which case, everything cleaned and struck is pack up, and everyone moves on to the next performance space on the tour!

Musicals³⁰

How are they different?

Musicals have the most similarities with straight plays when it comes to the role of the stage manager. Everything that has already been said, such as opening and closing rehearsal and performance spaces, opening and closing house, and communicating with production leads, house managers, and actors during rehearsals and performances, are still jobs of the stage manager. Although there are more jobs and roles get added.

A major difference between a straight play and a musical is the addition of choreography. Choreography is the dances performed by actors while they sing. Choreography is learned from the choreographer by the actors. It is important for the stage manager to know the choreography well enough to be able to call any cues based on movement. For example, if during a song someone gestures towards one thing or another, there might be a lighting change to illuminate the space the actor or dancer gestures towards. An actor might jump on a table in the middle of a song, prompting a change in lighting. No matter what the cause of the cue may be, it is important to know the choreography to accurately call the cue.

³⁰ Experience working on *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Spring 2014), *Seussical the Musical* (Fall 2015), and *The Addams Family Musical* (Fall 2016)

Another big difference between a straight play and a musical is the addition of singing and more music. Though music is sometimes used in a straight play, more often than not, it isn't live, nor does it correlate with what is being said onstage, but rather underlies mood, or is used during scenic transitions where there are blackouts.³¹ When you add live music and singing to a performance, it complicates everything. Actors are required to learn the music and memorize the lyrics. The conductor needs to be on the same page as the director and stage manager. Because of this, the conductor becomes another production lead to communicate with. Because of a band being added to the mix, there is often a requirement to open and close another room for band members to rest and leave their cases for their instruments.

Because the stage manager might be asked to assist in helping actors learn songs or music, it makes it helpful for the stage manager to be able to read music, although this is not completely necessary. What is necessary is for the stage manager to be very familiar with the music being sung or played, and to know who is to be singing when. Often, there will be cues during songs that are either tied to sung words or parts in the music that are played by instruments. Such cues include changes in set, lighting, or projection, or even added sound cues that will be played over the music. While the stage manager will need to call these cues in time with the music, he or she might not need to cue the conductor to begin and end their conduction. That being said, the stage manager should keep constant communication going with the conductor to make sure the pit is ready before the show begins (or continues after

³¹ A blackout is when all lights are extinguished and the theatre space is completely dark, except for the emergency lighting.

intermission). They would also make sure nothing is broken that would need immediate fixing before the show begins (or during intermission) that might cause a hold.³²

Besides needing to know the songs well enough to call cues, the stage manager also needs to know them well to assist actors and the director during auditions and rehearsals. During auditions, when the character list is placed, it should include the vocal parts for each role. These parts should be memorized by the stage manager and his or her assistant stage managers in case actors ask questions about them. During rehearsals, it is important for the stage manager to help the director and actors remember which songs come next and who should be singing what. In some community theatres and collegiate theatres, this practice might continue through the performances, in the shape of a list being created and posted backstage for actors to reference.

The last reason stage managers should be so familiar with music and songs is in case something goes wrong during a performance. What this means is a stage manager needs to be ready to skip ahead a little, and/or signal the pit if pieces of a song are skipped, or if a song is skipped altogether. Hopefully, this does not happen, but if it does, it is important to be ready.

It is also important to mention, while talking about songs and music, that it will not be the job of the stage manager to turn off and on microphones that are on stage or on actors, nor is it their job to turn up or down instruments in the pit. All of these jobs are for the sound engineer, who works closely with the sound designer to create a balanced sounding mix of actors and instruments for the audience to listen to. The stage manager might need to remind

³² Experience working on *Seussical the Musical* (Fall 2015)

the sound engineer when mics need to be turned off or up, but most sound related things are done by the sound engineer and sound board operator.

Other than music being added, there will also likely be dance added to the performance. While the stage manager doesn't need to memorize the dances, it is helpful for them to know them well, in order to better assist the actors in learning the moves. This can also assist the director in making sure the dances are being performed correctly if the choreographer isn't at rehearsal (the choreographer is yet another production lead to keep in contact with). It is also possible that the stage manager may be asked to record and send out copies of dances that are being learned, so that actors have a better chance of learning them.

Conclusion

The stage manager's role in theatre is one of the most important in modern theatre. The stage manager is the left and right hand of the director, a person there to make sure all necessary preparations for the production of a play or musical are done, and all pieces are in place. They are the feet and ears of the actor, there to help remind them where to walk and what to say, as well as listen to issues that may arise during the rehearsal process or during a performance. They are the funnel in the line of communication, the ones that hear all and relay information to whom it must be given to. Lastly, they are the ones that make a show run as smoothly as possible, reminding actors when they need to be ready, and what they need to check before a performance starts, as well as telling crew when things need to move, or when lighting or sound needs to change. They are the ones who must know the show better than

anyone else. Without the stage manager, a show can and will fall into chaos, and little can be done to fix it.

It is my hope that this guide has been not only informative for the non-stage manager, but also helpful for the beginning stage manager.

Appendix A: Who Does What?

- Assistant Director: the person, or persons, just under the director who collaborates with the director on the production. Sometimes they are granted some artistic control.
- Assistant Stage Manager(s): work under the stage manager, and does whatever the stage manager does not have time for. They are stationed back stage during performances, and communicate with the head stage manager via headset.
- Box Office Manager: they are in charge of selling tickets, managing the will-call tickets and comp tickets, handling ticket money, and getting a ticket count for the stage manager. One or more people might work under the manager to assist them.
- Choreographer: some productions involve dance. The choreographer creates these dances, and teaches them to the actors.
- Conductor: also known as the orchestra director, is in charge of the members of the orchestra during rehearsals, and during performances. If the band performing is not an orchestra, but is instead a pit band, the conductor is often times referred to as the Pit Director.
- Costume Crew: the costume crew assists the master tailor/seamstress in sewing together the costume pieces, and some of them might be on the running crew, and assist in quick changes backstage during performances.
- Costume Designer: he or she takes the descriptive designs from character from the director, and creates sketches for the master tailor/seamstress and costume crew to sew together.

- Director: the director oversees the mounting of a production over the course of several weeks, or months. He or she unifies the ideas of others into one solid artistic concept that they have created. The function of the director is to ensure the quality and completeness of a production, through means of leading the members of the creative team towards a common goal. Beyond the playwright, the director is the main “visionary” of a production.
- Graphic Designer: this person creates posters and program covers for the performance. They may also create graphics for ticket designs.
- House Manager: the house manager open and closes the house, and makes sure exiting and entering audience members do not enter the theatre at inappropriate times. Before intermission ends, they make sure that audience members re-enter the theatre in time for Act II to start on time. They are also in charge of ushers, who hand out programs and collect ticket stubs.
- Light Board Operator(s): this person creates lighting cues in the board, and operates the board during the show. He or she listens to cues called by the stage manager to change the lights.
- Lighting Crew: they work with the master electrician to install the lighting equipment where it needs to be, with the appropriate colored gels and/or gobos.
- Lighting Designer: develops a lighting design based on the set design, and is responsible for choosing appropriate lighting and lighting equipment.

- Makeup Artist: the makeup artist, or artists, design the hair and makeup for the characters in the production, and often assist in doing hair and makeup during performances.
- Master Carpenter: is in charge of the set crew and building the actual set pieces need for the production, based on the designs and diagrams the set designer has created.
- Master Electrician: works with the lighting designer to create the design in real life. They work with the designer to place lights, colors, and gobos where they should be, with the help of the lighting crew. He or she is also in charge of cabling.
- Master Tailor/Seamstress: they are in charge of the costume crew, they create or find many of the patterns for the costumes, and sew them together. Often, they work with the designer to pick fabrics.
- Music Director: this person is in charge of helping singers learn music and songs. The Music director often works closely with the conductor, to inform them if any music changes are made during rehearsals.
- Projection: some productions involve the use of projections. This would involve a projection designer, who might also be the lighting designer or set designer, and a projection operator, who changes the projections throughout the performances.
- Props Manager: the person in charge of handling props back stage, and ensuring all props needed for a production are accounted for.
- Props Master: the person who finds, buys, and makes props for a production. Works closely with the props manager, and both titles could be fulfilled by one person. Often, the props master is also in charge of designing the props that need to be made.

- Publicity Crew: this crew consists of people who help the publicity manager in posting publicity material.
- Publicity Manager: the publicity manager is in charge of publicizing auditions, and the performance. They also post online information about the event, and send out information to magazines, newspapers, ect.
- Run Crew: this crew is comprised of all the people who work backstage during performances, or up in the booth. These people include the stage manager, the assistant stage manager(s), the board operators, the quick change costume people, the props manager, and the people who change the set.
- Stage Manager: work as the right and left hand of the director (see rest of thesis for complete list of jobs and responsibilities). They have artistic input or control.
- Scenic Painter/ Scenic Artist: sometimes a set designer works with a scenic painter or artist, who focusing on the colors and shading of the set.
- Set Crew: these people work under the master carpenter and help create the set pieces needed for the production.
- Set Designer: takes a description of the set from the director, and creates a detailed design from that. They may be overseen by an assistant who provides extra experience and skill, or learning the job itself.
- Sound Board Operator: The sound board operator listens to the cues of the stage manager and changes sound cues during performances.
- Sound Designer: in modern productions, sound plays a large part. A sound designer finds appropriate sounds and mixes sound levels.

- Technical Director: insure the technical aspects of a production are fulfilled in a timely manner, and are safely created and safe to use.

Appendix B: Words to Know

- **Apron:** the front most part of a stage. In a proscenium theatre, this is the rounded edge of the stage that juts outside of the proscenium arch.
- **Blackout:** when all lights in the performance space, besides isle and emergency lights, are extinguished.
- **Blocking:** the movement of the actors.
- **Calling:** also known as a calling a cue, it is when the stage manager notifies the board operators to execute a cue change. Calling is also done for when scene changes need to happen, and when special effects need to occur. Special effects include curtains rising and falling, the use of fog, the movement of flats, ect.
- **CS:** shorthand for Center Stage
- **Cue:** a change in lighting, sound, or projection. A cue can also refer to a special effect, like a moving flat, fog, or a rising or fall curtain.
- **Cue-to-Cue:** done during wet tech, a cue-to-cue is where the actors perform a few lines before and after a cue. This is done in order to allow the stage manager to figure out when a cue should be called, and to allow the designers to see and hear how lighting, sound, and projection levels are.
- **Dress:** short for Dress Rehearsal.
- **DS:** shorthand for Downstage; the part of the stage that is closer to the audience.
- **Gobos:** round metal discs lighting designers use to create shapes with lighting equipment.

- Hold: a lengthened period of time before the start of a performance, or before the performance resumes after intermission.
- House: the house can refer to the theatre space (as in, "House is open, please do not cross the stage."). It can also refer to the audience as a whole (as in, "The house is huge tonight!").
- Pit: the location where the band or orchestra performs.
- Rake: the upward elevation of an audience or stage, from downstage to upstage, or from closest to the stage towards the back of the audience seating area. Can be either gentle or steep.
- Side: a small piece of dialogue, or a short monologue, from the play. It is used by actors as an audition pieces.
- SL: shorthand for Stage Left; the part of the stage to the left of the actor, and to the right of the audience.
- Spike: the practice of marking out the corners of set pieces with colored tape. This is done so the stage management team or set crew can place them where they need to be during rehearsals or performances.
- SR: shorthand for Stage Right; the part of the stage that is to the right of the actors, and to the left of the audience.
- Strike: this process of dismantling the set, the putting away of props and costumes, and the cleaning of all used spaces.
- Tech: short for Tech Rehearsal. Tech can also refer to a crew member (as in, "I'm the sound tech.>").

- US: shorthand for Up Stage; the part of the stage farthest from the audience.

Appendix C: Lists of What is Done When

Pre-Production

- Communicate with all production leads, and the director.
- Become familiar with the script, and make preliminary lists. The stage manager may need to also deliver copies of the script to other members of the production team.
- Become familiar with the building, and how things work within the building. Be sure to also get keys to rooms you will need access to.
- Go over job descriptions for all members of the production, especially the stage manager.
- Communicate with the set designer about taping out the rehearsal floor.
- Communicate with the props master and costume designer for rehearsal props and costume pieces.
- Be aware of preliminary schedules created by the director.
- Run production meetings with production leads/designers.

Auditions:

- Create audition sign in sheets, and copies of audition forms and sides.
- Assist in running auditions, and answer any questions actors have.
- After casting: create contact list, allergy list, and emergency contact list.

Rehearsals:

- Arrive around 30 min early to each rehearsal to open the space, set it up, turn on lights, ect. Also be the last to leave the space, lock it, and put everything away.
- Note all blocking changes in pencil in the script.
- Call any actors who are late.
- Send out rehearsal reports to production leads.
- Keep track of time during rehearsal to stay on schedule.
- Keep track of lists for set, props, and costume, and update them as needed.
- Glow tape set pieces as needed.
- Spike set pieces, and props tables.
- Create a sign in sheet for cast and crew members for tech, dress, and shows.

Technical Rehearsals (tech):

- Meet with designers to go through paper tech. During this time, mark up the script with potential cue locations.
- Work with cast and crew during tech to make it run smoothly, and edit any cues that have been placed in the script during paper tech. Be sure to also mark out standby cues.
- Become comfortable calling cues.
- Inform running crew what they will need to wear during performances (all black, with quiet shoes).
- Make sure all doors are locked before leaving after a run.
- Create pre-show checklist, to be followed during dress rehearsals and performances.

Dress Rehearsals (dress):

- Unlock dressing and green rooms.
- Become familiar with informing actors of when house will open.
- Become more comfortable calling cues.
- Inform actors where they can and cannot be during performances.
- Make sure all costumes and prop pieces are being used by the appropriate character at the correct time.
- Time each run of the production.
- Make sure all doors are locked before leaving after a run.

Performances:

- Arrive extra early to set up spaces, unlock rooms, and check that everything is prepared for the show.
- Sweep and mop the stage.
- Communicate with actors about checking props. Also inform them when there is thirty minutes, fifteen minutes, and five minutes before house opens, and before they need to be in places.
- Call actors and crew to places.
- Communicate with the house and box office managers when getting ready to open and close house.
- Call all cues during the show.
- Make sure all rooms are locked before leaving after the show.

Strike:

- Be there for strike, and assist the technical director in running it.
- Make sure all department heads are aware of what they need/ what cleaning they are in charge of.
- Inform actors and crew where they should report for strike, and who to report to.
- Spaces that need to be cleaned: the performance space, green room, dressing room, booth, storage areas, and backstage, and the scene shop should be swept.
- Check in with the technical director that all tasks have been completed, before leaving and locking the space.

Appendix D (Documents from Alfred University's *Anna in the Tropics*): Reference Forms

Pre-Production Checklist (before rehearsals begin):

- Script!

- Paperwork:
 - Cast List
 - Contact Sheet
 - Emergency Contact List
 - Rehearsal/Performance Calendar
 - Daily Schedule
 - Tech Schedule
 - Production Meeting Report
 - Scene/Song Breakdown
 - Preliminary Prop List
 - Prop Check in
 - Costume Check in
 - Plot Ground Plan
 - Preliminary Costume Plot
 - Email Distribution List
 - Designers
 - Actors
 - Crew Members

- Supplies:
 - Pencils
 - Highlighters
 - Erasers
 - Post Its
 - Tabs

Production Meeting Minutes:

SM Team:

- Notify cast about make up kits
- Notify cast about flooring and the special care it needs after it is in place
- REMINDER: use rehearsal props as much as possible, and as soon as possible

Props:

- Almost all leaves are made for the cigars
- 30 cigars made, 20 to be made before the show by the cast in workshops
- TBD: date and time for cigar making workshop
- Pizza cutters have been bought; need cutting
- Lights for the party scene to be bought asap
- Cigar press to be made
- 6 small cups from Ade have been acquired
- Poster design/ banner design is in the works. First design looks great!
- 11 chairs instead of 10

Costumes

- Fabric is in! 3 dresses are in the works and a fourth might be made
- Fittings going well
- Hats and wig no in yet
- Shoes: to be ordered?
- Haircuts to be done the weekend before the show. Photo's for Jeanie are need and will be much appreciated.

Set:

- All the wood is in (except for that which was messed up by Lowe's)
- Flooring to go down soon- MUST BE CAREFUL
- Glides might be added to the furniture
- Felts to be put on the chair legs
- Lector stand will be nailed to the stage
- Step in front of the first platform will be modified to a slight curve
- 11 chairs now!
- Painting to be started ASAP

Sound, lighting, and projections:

- Projected images to be done in sepia tone
- Projection op: John Doe or Jane Doe
- Light plot started, too be finished soonish
- Sound plot completed and updated

Audition Form:

***Note that this form does not have a conflict area. These are needed to make a conflict sheet. This is also not the exact form used at Alfred University.

Footlighters Audition Information Form

Please use reverse side if necessary

NAME: _____

AGE RANGE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CHARACTER/ROLE PREFERENCE:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

EMAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: (Home) _____

(Cell) _____

IF YOU DO NOT GET ONE OF YOUR PREFERENCES, ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE ANOTHER ROLE?

(circle one) YES NO

REHEARSAL LIMITATIONS: _____

EXPERIENCE/BACKGROUND: _____

OTHER SPECIAL SKILLS: _____

HEIGHT: _____

APPROX. CLOTHING SIZES: _____

If not cast in a role, I would be interested in working in the following areas of productions (please circle any areas of interest):

Production Secretary

Set Design

Program

Asst. to Director

Prop Crew

Tickets

Lighting

Costumes

House

Sound

Make-up Crew

Set Construction

Stage Crew

Publicity

Other: _____

Audition Sign-in Sheet:

NAME	EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER

Contact List Outline (Characters from *Anna in the Tropics*):

<u>Name</u>	<u>Role</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Email</u>
CAST			
	Palomo		
	Juan Jillian		
	Santiago		
	Conchita		
	Marela		
	Ofelia		
	Eliades		
	Carlos		
	Manola		
	Peppino		
	Pasquala		
	Cheche		
 SM TEAM			
	SM		
	ASM		
	ASM		
 DESIGNERS			
	Director		
	Set, Lights, Cost.		
	Design		
	Projections		
	Costume Coordinator		
	Tech Director		
	Props Master		

Conflict List:

- Jill- August 23rd and 24th
- Jack- September 3rd
- Rhonda- September 8th through 11th
- Charles- September 24th-28th

Potential Sound Plot (List of Needed Sound Cues):

Sound	Act	Scene
Cockfight	1	1
Crowd cheering	1	1
Ship approaching	1	1
Work bell	1	3
Recording of JJ (pg38)	2	1
Work bell	2	1
Recording of JJ (pg47)	2	2
Danzon music	2	3
Celibratory Gunshot	2	3 (pg 54)
Gunshot	2	4
Single gunshot echo	2	4
SCENE CHANGE MUSIC		
PRE-SHOW MUSIC		
INTERMISSION MUSIC		
POST-SHOW MUSIC		
PRE-SHOW ANNOUNCEMENTS		

Blank Rehearsal Report form:

Alfred University Division of Performing Arts

Rehearsal Report

Anna in the Tropics

Reh. Date: September 21, 2014

<u>Sound Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<u>Production Notes:</u> <p>Production: <i>Anna in the Tropics</i> Co-Stage Mgrs: N.Kimball/Samantha P ASM: Abby H. Prod. Date: November 12-15, 2014 Location: C.D. Smith III Theater</p>
<u>Costume / Make-Up Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<u>Scenery/Major Set Props/Furniture:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
<u>Lighting Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<u>Prop Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
<u>Technical Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<u>Actor Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
<u>Scheduling Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<u>Misc.:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
<u>Director Notes/reminders:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•	<u>Stage Manager Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•

Completed Rehearsal Report:

Alfred University Division of Performing Arts

Rehearsal Report

Anna in the Tropics

Reh. Date: October 6th, 2014

<u>Sound Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A sound plot is being created• Chicken fight and ocean sound cues need for Act I, scene i	<u>Production Notes:</u> <p>Production: <i>Anna in the Tropics</i> Co-Stage Mgrs: N.Kimball/Samantha P ASM: Abby H. Prod. Date: November 12-15, 2014 Location: C.D. Smith III Theater</p>
<u>Costume / Make-Up Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All workers need handkerchiefs	<u>Scenery/Major Set Props/Furniture:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A bottle/ flask of rum for Santiago (Act 1, Scene 1)
<u>Lighting Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will need duel lighting for this scene; one set of lighting for the upper platform, and another set for the ground level	<u>Prop Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Another cigar rolling lesson will be needed
<u>Technical Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projection needed for this scene	<u>Actor Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jack missed rehearsal because of illness
<u>Scheduling Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worked out scheduling questions for the next two weeks for the cast	<u>Misc.:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worked on Act I, scene i
<u>Director Notes/reminders:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find time to work with Jack on stuff he missed today	<u>Stage Manager Notes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The three of us need to fill out an availability sheet together.

Tech and Dress Sign-in Sheet (Actors and Crew from *Anna in the Tropics*):

	Sun, Nov 9th	Mon, Nov 10th	Tues, Nov 11th	Wed, Nov 12th	Thurs, Nov 13th	Fri, Nov 14th	Sat, Nov 15th
CAST							
Danny G							
Lucas R							
Naz K							
Jamal W							
Nate Y							
Brian O							
Chloe T							
Sam F							
Rachel R							
Vanessa E							
Juli Y							
CREW							
Niki K							
Samantha P							
Abby H							
Isiah P							
Addison H	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx		xxxxxxx	
Mike							
Sean H							
Ariana O	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx				xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx
Kalene S	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx		
Allison A	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx				xxxxxxx	
Brianna B	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx		xxxxxxx

Running Crew Schedule:

	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>
Lights	<u>Rob and</u> <u>Mike</u>	<u>Mike</u>	<u>Mike</u>	<u>Mike</u>	<u>Addison</u>	<u>Mike</u>	<u>Addison</u>
Sound	<u>Isaiah</u>	<u>Isaiah</u>	<u>Isaiah</u>	<u>Isaiah</u>	<u>Isaiah</u>	<u>Isaiah</u>	<u>Isaiah</u>
Projection	<u>Sean</u>	<u>Sean</u>	<u>Sean</u>	<u>Sean</u>	<u>Sean</u>	<u>Sean</u>	<u>Sean</u>
Make Up	<u>NONE</u>	<u>NONE</u>	<u>Ariana and</u> <u>Allison</u>	<u>Ariana and</u> <u>Allison</u>	<u>Ariana and</u> <u>Allison</u>	<u>Kalene</u> <u>and</u> <u>Breanna</u>	<u>Kalene and</u> <u>Ariana</u>

Prop Check out/Check in

Prop (Prop name or description)	Check out (By who)	Check in (By who)

Costume Check out/Check in

Costume (Costume description)	Check out (By whom)	Check in (By whom)

Pre-Show Checklist

- Arrive 30 minutes before all crews
- Sign in
- Unlock show space, booth, dressing rooms, and green room
- Turn on work lights
- Sweep and mop stage floor
- Charge glow tape
- Be in attendance for mic check, if applicable
- Check in with box office manager and house manager to confirm house opening time
- Tell cast and crew there are 30 minutes to house open and warm ups
- Reminder actors to check props backstage
- Run any fight scenes
- Tell cast and crew there are 15 minutes to house open and warm ups
- Tell cast and crew there are five minutes to house open and warm ups
- Go to light cue 1, turn off work lights, and turn on pre-show music

- Check with house manager and open house
- Tell cast and crew house is open, and warm ups are starting
- Tell cast and crew there are 30 minutes to places
- Tell cast and crew there are 15 minutes to places
- Tell cast and crew there are 5 minutes to places
- Check in with box office manager and house manager to see if house can close on time
- Call actors to places (wait for confirmation from ASMs)
- Hold house, if needed
- Close house
- Start show

Intermission Checklist:

- Inform cast and crew of the start time of intermission
- Tell cast and crew there are ten minutes to places
- Communicate with house manager about closing house again 10 minutes after intermission start time
- Tell cast and crew there are five minutes to places
- Check with house manager to close house on time
- Call actors to places (wait for confirmation from ASMs)
- Close house
- Resume the show

Post-Show Checklist:

- Re-open house (just before show ends)
- Greet audience members (after last cues are called)
- Turn on work lights after audience has left performance space, so show lights and light board can be shut off
- Make sure all actors have put costumes and props away appropriately
- Lock dressing and green rooms
- Turn off work lights
- Lock performance space
- Go home!

Sources:

- Brockett, O. and Hildy, F. 2007. *History of the Theatre, 10th Edition*. Pearson; London, England.
- <http://www.theatre crafts.com/pages/home/topics/stage-management/glossary/>
- Ionazzi, Daniel. 1992. *The Stage Management Handbook*. Writer's Digest Books.
- Apperson, Linda. 1998. *Stage Managing and Theatre Etiquette: A Basic Guide*. Ivan R. Dee, Publisher; Chicago, Illinois.
- http://web.mit.edu/gsp/www/prod_desc.html

Productions (Stage Management):

- *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Spring 2014)
- *Sure Thing* (Fall 2014)
- *Anna in the Tropics* (Fall 2014)
- *Campfire Tales Are Best Told in Whispers* (Spring 2015)
- *Seussical the Musical* (Fall 2015)
- *Alice in Wonderland* (Spring 2016)
- *The Addams Family Musical* (Fall 2016)

Film (Production Assistant):

- *CRUX: Luna* (Fall 2013-Spring 2014)
- *CRUX: Neil* (Fall 2014-Spring 2015)
- *CRUX: Mara* (Fall 2014-Spring 2015)

Directors, Designers, Stage Managers, and Teachers I have learned from:

- J. Stephen Crosby (Director, Teacher)
- Dr. Becky Prophet (Director, Teacher)
- Janna Buckwalter (Director)
- Jamal Welcome (Director)
- Anthony J. Grande (Director)
- Janina “JJ” Davis (Director)
- Tatyana Wilds (Designer, Teacher)
- Zachary Hamm (Technical Director, Teacher)
- Meredith Laubert (Stage Manager)