

# NOTES FOR DIRECTORS AT HDS

The following notes are for new and existing Directors to assist them with planning and running readings, auditions, rehearsals and play week.

If you have any problems or wish to discuss anything, please contact a member of the committee (see our Website for the current committee members) or any of the people mentioned in this document.

## Section 1 – Readings, Auditions, Casting and Rehearsals

### READINGS

- Select dates for **first and second readings** (usually Wednesday evening).
- Collaborate with committee on this to ensure Regent Parade is available and avoid clashes.
- If RP is not available, liaise with committee for alternative dates or venue.
- Ask a committee member or website manager to add the **dates to the calendar**.
- **Inform the chairman** (currently rockerraws@gmail.com) so dates can be sent to the membership.
- Inform the **website manager** (rawson55@gmail.com, skipperg1@sky.com and arwoodha@gmail.com) so reading dates can be added to the website.
- **Purchase scripts** for the reading and reclaim the expenses from the treasurer (hdstreasurer1@gmail.com).
  - Scripts will be required for:
    - All cast members
    - Director
    - Stage manager (will require a large version of the script to annotate)
    - Prompt
    - Props
- Advise people attending on the **type of audition taking place** (rehearsed piece/workshop/open/closed).
- Advise people attending on the **rehearsal days, times and dates**.
- Print the two documents in **Appendix 6**:
  - Acquire email addresses for future contact re auditions
  - Acquire dates they are unavailable for rehearsal

### AUDITIONS

- Organise an **audition panel**. Usually, 3 or 4 people **including the director** and one person from committee (unless the director is on the committee).
- Select dates for **first and second set of auditions** with committee collaboration.
- **Casting dates are at the discretion of the director** but allow plenty of time in case there are any casting difficulties.
- Collaborate with committee on this to ensure Regent Parade is available and avoid clashes.
- If RP is not available, liaise with committee for alternative dates or venue.
- Ask a committee member or website manager to add the **dates to the calendar**.
- Inform a member of committee so dates can be sent to the membership.
- Inform the **website manager** so audition dates can be added to the website.
- Decide upon a **style of audition** (rehearsed audition piece/workshop/open/closed).
- Prepare the necessary **audition pieces**. These can be sent via email or printed and handed out at the readings.

- Advise people how you will communicate **once casting is completed**.
  - This is usually done by emailing the cast list to the Chairman.
  - He will then send out an comms to the membership.

## CASTING

- Together with the casting committee **select a cast** based on auditions/workshops.
- **Inform the chairman** so cast information can be sent to the membership.
- Inform the website manager so cast information can be added to the website.
- **If children are in the cast:**
  - the Society's Child Protection Policy needs to be applied (currently Lesley Wheal is our CP officer)
  - a nominated CP officer be selected and notified to the committee
  - a First Aider be selected and notified to the committee
- Advise **publicity officer** once casting has taken place (currently Mel James)
- **If unable to cast**, contact the chairman (currently Chris Rawson) for advice.

## REHEARSALS

- Issue a **rehearsal schedule** to all cast and crew **as soon as possible** before rehearsals are due to start.
- Ask a Committee member to add the dates to the HDS calendar.
- **Scripts cannot be cut or amended** without agreement with the licensee. Check with Angela Ponsford if required.
- The responsibility for keeping the rehearsal rooms (including the kitchen) clean and tidy lies with the director.
- The responsibility for turning off all lights and heaters at the end of a rehearsal lies with the director.
- The rehearsal room should be as clear as possible prior to **coffee mornings** or when another group is due to use the room.
  - Furniture and props can be moved to one end of the room.
- A **key for Regent Parade** can be obtained from the committee for use during the rehearsal period.
- Adhere to the **Health & Safety requirements** relating to the building and our activities (on the notice board at Regent Parade).

## Section 2 – Productions

### SET DESIGN

- The set building team can be contacted to discuss set building and furniture for all plays at all venues.
  - Contact [gra3ram@gmail.com](mailto:gra3ram@gmail.com) to arrange a meeting.
- The set design is usually created by the Director.
- **Set design should be done well in advance of the production.**
  - Bear in mind how long the set will take to install once in the studio or main house; this affects the amount of time you have to plot and test lighting and sound prior to a technical and/or dress rehearsal.

### HARROGATE STUDIO THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

- **Sight lines** can be an issue in the Studio Theatre.
- The set building team has access to plans which show the best way to arrange seating so that these issues can be minimised.
- Numbers in the studio are generally limited to **50 seats** to assist with this.
- Audience members attending a dress rehearsal are not allowed except under exceptional circumstances. Committee agreement is required for anyone attending.
  - **Costume department**, a **photographer**, the **chairman** and/or the **president** are allowed to attend a dress rehearsal.
  - **Only HDS members** are allowed to attend a dress rehearsal if exceptional circumstances are identified.
  - **A maximum of 12 people**, including director, costume, photographer, chairman and president are allowed to attend a dress rehearsal if exceptional circumstances are identified.
- Directors need to liaise with **Angela Ponsford** ([angelaponsford@hotmail.com](mailto:angelaponsford@hotmail.com)) and/or **Dylan Powell** ([dylan.spud.powell@gmail.com](mailto:dylan.spud.powell@gmail.com)) to request “after show” bar/party facilities (see Appendix 5 for Front of House information).
- **Post Production User Feedback** Forms (sent by Harrogate Theatre) to be completed by Director.

### Backstage Team

- You will need:
  - Prompt
  - Stage manager (see duties below)
  - Costume supervisor
  - Front of House liaison
- For a description of each role and their responsibilities, **see Appendices at the end.**

### Theatre Production Meeting

- A production meeting should be requested with (currently) Maurice Stewart to discuss the production and what will be required from the theatre staff ([maurice.stewart@harrogatetheatre.co.uk](mailto:maurice.stewart@harrogatetheatre.co.uk))
  - View the Studio theatre if the director is not familiar with the space.
  - The stage manager and director are usually at this meeting.
  - Staging the play should be discussed including any special requirements (special lighting effects, seating arrangements etc)

- If **seating is re-arranged** from the standard (to say, in the round) there will be cost implications and these need to be accounted for in the budget.

## HARROGATE MAIN HOUSE PRODUCTIONS

- Audience members attending a dress rehearsal are not allowed except under exceptional circumstances. Committee agreement is required for anyone attending.
  - **Costume department, a photographer, the chairman and/or the president** are allowed to attend a dress rehearsal.
  - **Only HDS members** are allowed to attend a dress rehearsal if exceptional circumstances are identified.
  - **A maximum of 12 people**, including director, costume and photographer are allowed to attend a dress rehearsal if exceptional circumstances are identified.

### Backstage team

- You will need:
  - Prompt
  - Stage manager (see duties below)
  - Lighting engineer (may be provided by theatre)
  - Sound engineer (may be provided by theatre)
  - Costume supervisor
  - Front of House liaison
- For a description of each HDS role and their responsibilities, see **Appendices at the end**.

### Theatre Production Meeting

- A production meeting should be requested with (currently) Maurice Stewart to discuss the production and what will be required from the theatre staff ([maurice.stewart@harrogatetheatre.co.uk](mailto:maurice.stewart@harrogatetheatre.co.uk))
  - View the main stage if the director is not familiar with the space, wings, access etc.
  - The stage manager and director are usually at this meeting
  - Staging the play should be discussed including any special requirements (Gobo, Syce, smoke machine, etc)
  - Discussion should take place about who will be running the sound and lighting desk

## COMMUNICATIONS

- Communication with both **cast, crew and publicity** is **vital**.
- **Directors are responsible** for keeping timely, open and accurate communication with all of the above
- The easiest and quickest way to communicate is by setting up a **WhatsApp group** (include crew, set design and publicity in this).
- Directors are responsible for reading posts and responding regularly.
- If communicating in a different way (email, text, phone messages etc) Directors are responsible for responding regularly.
- **Production meetings** should be set up to include all backstage crew and set builders.

## BUDGET

- You will receive a **draft budget** for each production from the treasurer.
- Factors such as **theatre hire** and **licence fees** are non-negotiable. These will be included in the draft budget.
- The number of seats to be sold is part of the licence agreement and non-negotiable.

- **Expenses** such as costume, wigs, furniture, wallpaper etc. will form part of the draft budget.
- **Receipts must be kept** for all expenditure and passed to the treasurer for re-imbursment.
- Close liaison should continue with the Treasurer for approval of any exceptional expenditure.

## **PUBLICITY**

- Liaise with the **publicity officer** (melaniejames@hotmail.co.uk) regarding all publicity.
- Communication with **publicity should take place prior to readings** and continue until the show is completed.
- A **cast list should be sent to the publicity officer** as soon casting is completed and all actors have accepted their assigned roles.
- Publicity will deal with cast photographs, posters, flyers, theatre advertising, social media etc.

## **COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS**

- These can only be issued in line with the policy approved by the Executive Committee. See details attached at Appendix 7.

# Appendix 1

## Stage Manager

There are various interpretations of a Stage Manager's role, depending on the type of theatre production being put on.

The following is what is required of an **HDS stage manager** and may differ from other theatrical company's expectations.

- Stage Managers will be expected to attend **Production meetings** with the theatre staff and the director.
- Stage Managers should acquaint themselves with the Studio and Main House spaces if these are not already known to them.

## Rehearsals

- Attend all rehearsals when the Director advises they require you.
- Liaise with the Director to create a lighting and sound plot.
  - Sound is usually created using **Audacity app**.
  - Sound is run on the **HDS iPad**. The location will be advised by a committee member.
  - **Lighting plots** are created prior to going into the theatre but can be subject to change depending on the Directors choices and lighting availability once in the space.
- Be at rehearsals to **run sound** as soon as Director needs it.
- Support the Director in all aspects of getting the show into the theatre.

## Show week

- Ensure that the cast and backstage team are aware of information relating to the theatre on the **week of performance**:
  - Gaining entry to the theatre
  - Location of the signing in sheet
  - Performance times
  - Latest time for cast and crew check in at the theatre
  - Arrangements for transfer of costumes
- Liaise with the theatre regarding a **signing in sheet**.
- Liaise with the theatre regarding appropriate **H&S information**.
- Arrange suitable **transport** for taking scenery and props to the theatre.
  - This is usually **Arthur Timmins** but he is not always available.
  - If necessary, contact a Committee member for a list of suitable alternatives.
- Organise the **'get in'** and **'get out'** supervising the loading of furniture, flats, props and costume as required.
- Organise volunteers to help with actors 'quick changes' if required.

## For Studio Productions

- View the **sound and lighting booth** and be shown how to use the various decks.
- Check with the Theatre what is being performed in the Main House as this may affect the speed of the 'get out'.
- Ensure the **Green Room** is clear at the end of the run.

## Main House Productions

- Liaise with theatre technicians in advance if any specialist equipment is required such as **microphone headsets, smoke machines, specialised lighting** etc.
- Be available on 'get in' day to **supervise stage building team** (usually the team from HDS)
- Agree a **PIN number** for the dressing room corridor with the Theatre staff
- Advise cast and backstage crew of the PIN number for the dressing room corridor
- Work with the engineers in the theatre and director to create the **lighting and sound plots**
- **Allocate dressing rooms** to cast – print dressing room allocation sheets for each door
- Ensure the **cast are all present** before each performance
- Run the **technical** and **dress** rehearsals
- **Run the show** from 'the corner' calling all lighting and sound cues to the sound and lighting engineers at the back of the auditorium
- Ensure that all **dressing rooms** and the **stage areas** are clear at the end of the run.

## Appendix 2

### Prompt

An experienced prompt is vital for all productions.

The responsibilities of a prompt are:

- Attend all rehearsals as required by the Director
- Assist cast with learning lines (if required)
- Be prepared to advise cast if they are mis-quoting lines
- Mark script with relevant pauses and any changes
- Be available during show week if the Director requires a prompt for performances

# Appendix 3

## Costume

The current costume department consists of rawson55@gmail.com, christophcowling@tiscali.co.uk, lesleywheal@gmail.com and Carole Thompson

- The costume department is locked and a key is available on request
- The costume department is available to source and costume all characters for all plays if required
- It is requested that if costume is required, directors and/or cast do not go into the department without a member of the costume team
- There is a small sewing group who are available to make and alter costume as required
- Cast are responsible for their own costume once it has been provided, including returning it washed and ironed where appropriate
- The costume department are responsible for receiving clothing back into store after a play and putting it in the correct place in the costume department.
- The costume department is not responsible for any props unless it falls under their remit (umbrella, scarf, handbag, hat etc)
- If wigs are required, costume can source these
- The costume department can contact hair and makeup people if these are required prior to the performance

## Appendix 4

### Props

- There is an extensive props store at Regent Parade which can be accessed using a code (obtained from committee)
- The props store is maintained by volunteers from within the society and should be kept tidy at all times
- It is advisable to have someone to do props as it can be an onerous task for some plays
- Michael and Carole Thompson are available to make and source props for any production – contact a committee member for their details
- Props people will be responsible for packing props to go to the theatre and packing them to return to Regent Parade
- Props people will be responsible for putting the props back in the correct places in the props store.

# Appendix 5

## Front of House

There is a Front of House team who deal with all matters relating to FOH for both the Studio and Main House Productions

- Liaise with Dylan Powell (dylan.spud.powell@gmail.com) or Becky Albro (rebecca.mccluskey@hotmail.com) to discuss your FOH needs
- FOH will organise collection and sale of programmes, collection of money and banking of cash
- The front of house team can organise the after-show party for any production
- The front of house team needs to be included in the signing in sheet at the theatre.



## Appendix 7

### HDS Policy On Complimentary Tickets

- Complimentary tickets agreed by the committee for each main house production at Harrogate Theatre are listed below.
- Tickets acquired from the theatre box office by the Publicity officer or his/her representative and a record kept.
- Additional complimentary tickets, not covered by the list below, must be approved by the committee.
- All complimentary tickets are for the first night performance only (unless there are exceptional circumstances – committee will approve any change of night before tickets are offered and issued) with the exceptions listed below.
- Complimentary tickets should not be issued in prime seats except for Guest Night tickets.
- Front of House are expected to purchase a ticket if they wish to see the show.

<b>GROUP/NAME</b>	<b>NUMBER OF TICKETS</b>
Blind or partially sighted people (currently organised by Stuart Kellett and Russell Sargeant Centre)	Front two rows of the Main House stalls on the Saturday matinee
Companies and individuals who have taken adverts in the programme	Two tickets per sponsor; performance date being at the discretion of the Chairman
Premises for Publicity Photos	At the discretion of the Chairman
Reviewer	Two tickets
Director	One ticket per performance
HDS Front of House Manager	Five tickets per performance for discretionary use
President's Guest Night invitees	Approx. 30 seats (number will vary but to be at the discretion of President and Chairman)