

Central Alberta Theatre

Position Description

Head of Costumes

The Head of Costume's Role

The Head of Costumes for CAT productions will be in charge of creating the look of each character by choosing or designing clothes and accessories the actors will wear in performance. Depending on their style and complexity, costumes may be made, bought, borrowed or taken out of existing stock. Costumes can provide information about the character as well as reinforce the mood and style of the production, suggest relationships between characters, etc. Accessories can be hats, shoes, jewelry, canes, and the like.

This position will also be in charge of coordinating the final cleaning of CAT-owned costumes at the end of the run.

Reporting

The costume head takes direction from the director of each production, and from the Production Manager and Vice President – Productions as appropriate and as detailed in this document.

Etiquette

Theatre volunteers commit to behavioral etiquette throughout their time with the production in order to show respect to the Stage Manager, the Production Manager, the play, the actors, the audience, and CAT:

Overall

- I shall look upon the production as a collective effort demanding my utmost cooperation. Hence, I will forgo the gratification of ego for the demands of the play
- I will **always** treat everyone who is a part of the production with respect and dignity (i.e. the actors, Stage Manager, Director, Production Manager, Vice President – Productions, designers, technicians, etc.)
- I will not mistreat, direct or put unnecessary strain on my fellow volunteers because it can lead to miscommunication, hurt feelings, tension, broken trust and anxiety. I do not want this to happen

- I will not arrive for my volunteer work under the influence of any drugs or substances for this will automatically remove me from the production

During Tech Week

- I shall accept the Stage Manager's, the Production Manager's and the Vice President – Productions' direction in the spirit in which it is given for s/he sees the production as a whole and my role as a portion thereof. The Production Manager and the Vice President - Productions have the authority to direct minor set design changes/alterations if there are safety issues.
- I will respect crew members/actors that are focusing on the needs of the production (i.e. avoid interrupting actors if they are rehearsing lines, stay out of the way of working crew members that are setting up furniture and/or props, etc.)

Duties

On-going

- Become familiar with the written board-approved policies and procedures as they relate to CAT productions (especially Costumes, Section 6.9.4) and follow them
- Be available for costume selection and fittings at reasonable times during the theatre season
- Keep in-stock pieces organized and in wearable condition (clean, mended)
- Keep the costume room clean and organized throughout CAT's theatre season

Pre-Production

- In July, obtain a copy of the script from the Production Manager and read it a few times to get a feel for the flavour of the production and to make notes on specific costume requirements

- In July, the Vice President – Productions will ensure you receive from the director a write up that contains the director's vision and message for the production, a rehearsal schedule, and that you receive from the Production Manager a production schedule
- Attend the first production meeting, scheduled by the Production Manager, prior to the first rehearsal of each production. At this meeting the director will share their vision and message with the Production Manager, the VP productions, the VP Marketing & Communications, and the production heads (Stage Manager, Set Designer, Lighting Designer, Sound Designer, Set Decorator, Head of Props, Head of Costumes, Head of Painting). Be prepared to ask questions of the director about their intent for style, tone, etc., or, if you have a lot of detailed questions, work with the director to schedule a follow-up meeting early in the rehearsal process
- At this meeting the director will also discuss design elements, expectations and timelines as outlined in the production schedule circulated in July. The Production Manager will circulate a budget for discussion. The VP Productions will explain CATena and the expectations of presenting a finished piece.
- Coordinate with the other members of the design team to ensure the costume design is consistent in style, mood, etc., with the other design elements
- Ensure costume expenses are in line with the budget prepared by the Production Manager. Whenever possible, utilize CAT's existing costume stock
- Coordinate costume borrowing with the Production Manager or the Vice President – Productions (selecting, transporting, handling)
- Procure necessary supplies based on need and budget
- Schedule a costume parade or individual costuming fittings based on the rehearsal schedule and in conjunction with the director.
- Keep the Production Manager informed of any unexpected issues that will affect readiness, quality, functionality, etc.

- Take direction from Production Manager if there are safety issues that mean the costume design or selection must be altered or redone

Tech Week

To facilitate planning and preparation, there will be a predictable tech week routine, in as much as is possible, for each CAT production. The routine, while flexible, will focus on the importance of keeping the overall volunteer experience as positive and enjoyable as possible.

The schedule for tech week will be largely dictated by the timing of the access to the space (granted by the Black Knight Inn or booked in the Nickle Studio). In the case of the Black Knight Inn, the Board of Directors negotiates the annual contract on CAT's behalf and tries to secure a full five days before the Thursday preview for tech week (Saturday to Wednesday).

A typical schedule for a five-day tech week could be:

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Saturday: | load in and assemble stage, set, all equipment, set lights |
| Sunday: | AM: finalize light design with director (& cast at director's discretion) PM: Cue-to-Cue rehearsal (cast & full production crew) then dry tech if needed/time |
| Mon: | Tech Run, with lights and sound (costumes, makeup optional) |
| Tues: | Dress Run, costumes and makeup, lights and sound |
| Wed: | dark (or second dress, at the discretion of the director) |
| Thurs: | Preview (full show, CAT members as audience) |
| Fri: | Opening Night |

However, often we are given a condensed tech schedule that starts on the Sunday prior to Thursday's preview.

A typical schedule for a condensed tech week could be:

| | |
|---------|--|
| Sunday: | load in and assemble stage, set, remaining equipment (lights will be hung during the days of the week prior), set lights, finalize light design with director (& cast at director's discretion) and run Cue-to-Cue rehearsal (cast & full production crew) |
|---------|--|

Mon: Tech Run, with lights and sound (costumes, makeup optional)
Tues: Dress Run, costumes and makeup, lights and sound
Wed: dark (or second dress, at the discretion of the director)
Thurs: Preview (full show, CAT members as audience)
Fri: Opening Night

Tech week will be supervised by the Production Manager or the Vice President Productions. They have the authority to direct minor set design changes/alterations if there are safety issues.

During Production

- Make any needed repairs to the costumes during the run of the production if requested by the Production Manager, Stage Manager or Vice President – Productions
- Be responsible for the final cleaning of all the costumes at the end of the run: wash or dry clean them, pick them up from the drycleaner, and return them to their stock location or their owners

Post Production

- Advise the Production Manager of depleted supplies, etc.
- Participate in post-production evaluation process, set up by the Vice President of Productions as soon as possible after the show closes, for all production personnel to contribute information/feedback on what production elements went well and what improvements could be made

