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Welcome to the Bellingham Theatre Guild, and thank you for taking on the direction of a production in one of the oldest continually running community theaters in the United States.

Everyone who works at the Guild is a volunteer, from the Board of Directors, to production teams, to the volunteers who sell tickets and work as ushers during performances. Together we make the magic of theater available—affordably—to the greater Whatcom County community.

In this packet you will find answers to many of the questions you might have about directing a production at the Guild. For any answers you don't find, please contact your Production Supervisor or the Vice President of Production.

Thanks again, and we're looking forward to seeing your artistic vision come to life.

Samantha Creed
Vice President of Production

Overview of Director's Responsibilities

Directors take on a large responsibility at the Guild, and the role is more broadly defined here than it usually is in professional circles. Directors at the Guild really play numerous roles: director, producer, designer, consultant, cheerleader, communicator.

Here's a brief outline of the general responsibilities of a director at the Guild. Points 3-5 will be discussed later in this packet.

1) Get Key Technical Staff

You will need to find enough people to fill the necessary roles for your particular production. This will vary with the play you're directing, of course, and often your staff will take on multiple roles. The Guild has many active volunteers who are eager to help out, and you can often find staff from among those people and by working with the Volunteer Coordinator. It is also beneficial to bring in new volunteers who will continue to work at the Guild after your production, so we encourage you to actively seek out new volunteers.

2) Articulate and Oversee the Artistic Vision

The director

a) must communicate to their cast, crew, and designers the aesthetic mission of the show

b) must execute the above aesthetic mission

c) has final say on all creative decisions.

The Board of Directors does not seek to influence or otherwise impose standards on directors at the Guild. Any "non-traditional" choices you've made for your production will have come to light during the play selection process, and those will already have been accepted as part of your artistic vision.

3) Adhere to the budget

4) Cast the Play

5) Schedule Rehearsals and Set-Building/Work Parties

Staff and Crew Positions

Whether you actually have a person for each position listed below, you will need someone responsible for the following functions. Check **Job Descriptions** (below) to see in detail what each title means or is expected to do (BTG doesn't always match the rest of the world). These are only general guidelines: job descriptions will vary per director, but you are responsible for ensuring that your cast and crew understand your expectations.

Designers

Set Designer

Costume Designer

Lighting Designer
Sound Designer
Properties Master/Mistress
Make-Up and/or Hair Design

Administration and Management

Producer
Production Coordinator
Assistant Director (AD)
Stage Manager (SM)
Assistant Stage Manager(s) (ASM)

Musical Staff

Musical Director
Vocal Coach
Rehearsal Pianist or Accompanist
Choreographer
Orchestra

Technical Staff

Light Board Operator (LBO)
Sound Board Operator (SBO)
Technical Director (TD)
Master Electrician
Building Crew
Running Crew
Make-Up & Hair Helpers
Wardrobe Master/Mistress
Seamstresses
Dressers

Job Descriptions for Staff and Crew Positions

Assistant Director (AD) — An Assistant Director for Guild productions will wear many hats, and will assist where needed; hopefully, a person in this position would like to direct in the future and is using this as a learning experience. The AD can assist actors in learning lines, can assist with note taking during rehearsals, and can assist any other staff position as needed.

Assistant Stage Manager (ASM) — Assistant to the Stage Manager; often, crew for the run.

Building Crew — Help to build the sets and perform other tasks necessary to get the production ready for opening. The Production Supervisor will coordinate crew's activities.

Your cast should participate in set building; please include a minimum number (e.g., three) of set-building parties in your list of expectations for cast.

Choreographer — Arranges and rehearses the dance sequences in a musical. Fight choreographers arrange and rehearse fight sequences.

Costume Designer — Designs the costumes. Whether through building, pulling from storage or renting, the costumer chooses and supplies all clothes the actors wear that are seen by the audience. Costume props, accessories, hats, shoes, hair (especially wigs), and sometimes Make-Up also are included under costumes. May supply rehearsal costumes and/or publicity costumes. Costume Designer often doubles in the role of WARDROBE MASTER/MISTRESS. See that role for further responsibilities of these two positions.

Dressers — People assigned to help actors with quick costume changes.

Light Board Operator (LBO) — Runs the lighting board during the tech rehearsals and performances.

Light Designer — Designs the lights and oversees light hang. Responsible for the illumination of the show, any major effects, gels, and practical lights (onstage fixtures that actors can turn off and on rather than operated through the light board). Will act as their own master electrician (patching, hang gels, create effects, etc.) and will train the light board operator.

Make-Up and Hair Crew — Volunteers who help with make-up and hair during the run.

Make-Up and Hair Designer — Designs hair and make-up effects. Make-Up: Oversees and trains others in application, gathers supplies, arranges crews. Hair: Styles, or oversees styling, of hair and wigs.

Master Electrician (ME) — BTG doesn't traditionally use this position, included here in case you were trained with one. The Lighting Designer and Crew are expected to do everything an ME would.

Musical Director (MD) — Gathers and rehearses the orchestra, oversees the arrangements and musical staff.

Orchestra — Musicians who play the music during rehearsals and performances.

Props Master — Gathers and designs all props. Pulls, borrows, builds, or purchases all required performance props. Also supplies rehearsal props. Trains props running crew and sets up prop tables. Responsible for ensuring that all props checked out of Guild inventory and that all new props built or bought are checked back in to Guild inventory following the final performance. Responsible for returning all borrowed properties.

Rehearsal Accompanist — Usually a piano player, this person plays the music during rehearsals.

Running Crew — The backstage crew who operate effects, change scenery or set dressing, cue actors, etc., under direction of the Stage Manager

Seamstresses — People who build or mend costumes.

Set Designer — Designs the set. "Set" here is defined as everything on stage an actor does not carry, such as set dressings, furniture, walls, doors, windows, curtains, plants, etc.

Sound Board Operator (SBO) — Runs the sound during tech rehearsals and performances.

Sound Designer — Designs all recorded and live sound effects. Responsible for finding sound or music, recording, patching to speakers, microphones, levels, and training all sound operators.

Stage Manager (SM) — A stage manager facilitates rehearsals, oversees the running crew, records blocking, keeps everybody informed as to what's going on, runs the technical rehearsal, oversees safety for actors and crew, calls the show, and maintains the director's vision during the run.

Note these two responsibilities of the SM that are peculiar to the Guild: (1) SM is responsible for open and lock up of the entire facility during performance run, and (2) SM is responsible to flicker the reception room lights to indicate that intermission is over.

Vocal Coach - Works with vocalists to get the right song, tempo, pitch and "magic."

Volunteer Coordinator — The Guild Volunteer Coordinator can help you to match your open positions with Guild volunteers who may fit your need.

Wardrobe Master/Mistress — The Wardrobe Mistress is responsible for keeping track of costumes, arranging and training dressers, washing clothes, and any onsite or emergency repair. Responsible for ensuring that all costumes checked out of Guild inventory and that all new costumes built or bought are checked back in to Guild inventory after they have been laundered following the final performance, as well as laundering and returning any borrowed or rented outfits in a timely fashion.

Please note that the Guild has an agreement with Corry's Fine Dry Cleaning on Halleck and Cornwall for 50% off dry cleaning and laundry costs. Please use Corry's for this service.

Show Budgets and Reimbursements

You will work with the budget committee to set budgets for your show; this typically happens in August of each year. The Board of Directors will approve all budgets before the season begins, and the director and production team are beholden to those budgets. The Budget Committee meets during the summers, before a season opens. The first show of the year may be in rehearsal before budgets are finalized—consult with the Guild Treasurer on any specific items you would like clarified before your production begins.

The Director is responsible to keep track of the budget as the production is moving along, and to communicate that progress to the Production Supervisor. A weekly five-minute meeting, typically during set building parties, will keep everyone apprised of where the production stands against its budget. Items that need particularly close attention: set, costumes, and props.

It may be acceptable to realign your Board-approved budget, to move capacity from one line item to another. However, this can only happen with the approval of the Production Supervisor, who is responsible to the Board for ensuring that budgets are being met. Please do not promise, e.g., your costumer that he or she may have more budget unless you have confirmed with the Production Supervisor that such money will be available for transfer.

The Guild has many standards in place that will let us make good estimates of your needs in most of the following categories. You may have special budget needs for a particular line item; most of those will have come to light during the play selection process. For others, communicate those needs with the Guild Treasurer, who is the chair of the Budget Committee, after the initial production team meeting which happens during the summer prior to the season.

Please remember that the Guild is a nonprofit organization, and that money is always an issue with us, as it is with every arts organization. We strive to put on the best-looking shows that we can, and support your artistic vision, but we appreciate you in turn seeking less-expensive (and, often, more creative) ways of achieving those means.

These are the basic budget line items you will work with.

Costumes — Consult the Guild’s Wardrobe Manager about your costume needs BEFORE you purchase or rent anything—the Guild may already have the appropriate materials on hand. Remember that laundry and dry-cleaning costs belong on this line. (The Guild has an agreement with Corry’s Fine Dry Cleaning on the corner of Halleck and Cornwall streets for 50% off dry cleaning costs. Please use them for this service.)

Make-Up/Hair — The Guild has a supply of makeup and wigs, but it is best to review these early on in your preparations. Actors are responsible for supplying their own makeup—this is a health issue; they should not be sharing makeup or application tools. Consult with Guild Makeup Chair for any special effects or training needs you have.

Printing — This line item is for production needs, not publicity needs. Include items such as photocopies of schedules, rules, special items, props, forms, etc.

Production Photography — Amount is allotted by the Budget Committee in consultation with the Publicity Committee, and that allotment covers production shots, rehearsal shots, cast/crew photos for programs, etc. If extra photography budget is needed for your production, such as for set dressing—that belongs under your Set or Props budget.

Props — Consult with the Guild Props Manager or Vice-President of Production before buying/renting props. Please consult with the Production Committee before buying or renting expensive props—often there is another resource for these items, or there may be other solutions. Also, there is a large theater community that trades props regularly—just FYI that purchasing should be your last step.

Rentals — any special equipment or needs BTG can't supply. Consult with the Production Supervisor prior to making any rental agreement.

Royalties — consult Guild Librarian, who is responsible for ensuring that rights are secured and royalties paid.

Scripts/Scores — Consult the Guild Librarian. Traditionally, we order one script each for the actors plus seven others for crew (director, SM, set designer, costumer, props master, sound designer/tech, lighting designer/tech). If you have needs beyond that, ensure that the Librarian knows in time to order. If you require *fewer* scripts, please indicate that, too.

Set — Consult with the Production Supervisor on any special needs; he or she can help you to estimate costs and discuss alternate solutions.

Sound/Video — The Guild has some capabilities already in place. This line item is for rentals. Consult with the Production Supervisor, as sometimes a purchase makes more sense for the Guild, in which case the cost may be shared across budgets.

Stage Lights — Same as for Sound and Video. This line is for rentals of appliances and effects the Guild doesn't currently own. Again, sometimes a purchase makes more sense than a rental, so please discuss your needs with the Production Supervisor for the best solution.

Orchestra — Line item for orchestra support.

Volunteer Support — The Guild encourages you to reward your volunteers at work parties or your cast and crew during Tech Weekend with snacks. This line item amount is set by the Guild Board as part of the overall Guild Volunteer Appreciation initiative.

When You Make Any Purchases for a Production

Tax-Free Status. Most purchases you will make for your show should be tax exempt, since the Guild is a non-profit corporation and your purchases are to support your show—such purchases are tax exempt by state law. In this packet you will find a letter certifying our tax status—please make copies as necessary and charge those copies to the appropriate budget. You may be asked to use certain vendors for certain types of purchases, because the Guild has an established account with those vendors. Please ask the Treasurer or Production Supervisor before making purchases, and please ensure that your crew making major purchases—especially costumes and props—understand this. It is always a good idea to discuss major purchases—set, costume, props especially—with the Production Supervisor.

Reimbursements

Reimbursement Envelopes are found in the office in the Treasurer's mailbox on the wall. Place receipts in an envelope; on the outside of the envelope, identify who gets reimbursed and what line item the receipts are for. Put sealed envelope back in Treasurer's mailbox. Prompt and accurate receipts get dispatched quickly.

Ask your crew making purchases to give you lists and amounts of what's been purchased as they hand in receipts for reimbursement; by doing so, you can keep account of where you are against the budget.

Rights, Royalties and Scripts

The Librarian orders scripts and files the royalties with the Treasurer. The Library also tries to have two copies of each script on hand—these copies may aid you in early planning, before your production scripts are ordered. Please contact the Librarian about any script/score/royalty matters.

The Librarian will need three weeks or more to order scripts and scores. Plan accordingly and communicate early with the Librarian to ensure that you have scripts on hand for your auditions or any early planning sessions you may hold.

Notes on scripts and scores:

Plays: The Librarian needs to know how many scripts you need. Traditionally, one each for the cast, plus enough for director, stage managers, designers and key technical staff.

Musicals: Most musical scripts and scores are rentals, which we have to return. Your cast, crew, and musicians must mark these rentals in PENCIL ONLY, and all marks need to be erased before the scripts and scores are returned. Please ensure that all scripts and scores are cleaned and collected by strike—the librarian has a quick return deadline and must ship those immediately. Any penalties or late fees are charged against your production.

A list of the following things we are **not** allowed to do, according to **every** contract we sign:

- 1) photocopy the script, without written authorization.
- 2) alter or delete the text or cast against the text's instructions.
- 3) film or videotape the production.

The Guild is liable if you or your cast and crew break these rules, and getting future rights could be impaired if the above rules are broken.

Please note that just about every production team asks whether they can make a videotape of the production—the answer is always no. An excited cast and crew won't believe this, but such videos are always underwhelming and never capture the magic of live theatre. To come close would cost a lot of money, and by then it has become a video project and not live theatre any more. Please encourage your team to live in the moment and focus on the audience—that's the true payoff. —Board of Directors

Production

The Guild has a Production Committee that will be your primary contact for most matters, especially those that pertain to the production of your show. This committee will meet a minimum of two times during your production, and you are encouraged to get as many of your key staff to attend these meetings as possible. At a minimum, the director, the SM, your set designer, and lighting designer should be at these meetings so that essential communication about the following items happens:

- 1) your production needs
- 2) Guild needs from your staff
- 3) timelines, schedules, and calendars
- 4) procedures and policies
- 5) your volunteer needs
- 6) budget review and updates

Production Committee Meetings with Your Technical Staff

The Production Committee will meet with your staff about two or three weeks before auditions to ensure that any preproduction items have been handled and to iron out any set, lighting, costume, etc., issues before your rehearsal period begins.

The Production Committee will meet with your staff again about two or so weeks before the show opens. The purpose of this second meeting will be to ensure that your production is on track for opening and to address any immediate needs in that area. Also, this second group meeting will focus on the performance run and the integration of your show staff with the Guild volunteers who manage the front of house activities during the run. You will discuss any special concerns your production might have, such as using the aisles or any special effects that will require audience notification, etc.

The following Guild staff will attend one or both of these meetings

- 1) Production Supervisor
- 2) Publicity Manager
- 3) Volunteer Coordinator
- 4) Wardrobe Manager
- 5) House Manager
- 6) Social Coordinator
- 7) Librarian
- 8) Ticket Manager
- 9) Buildings and Grounds Manager
- 10) Usher Coordinator
- 11) Make-up Manager

Dates and Activities Set by the Guild

Auditions — Traditionally, auditions are held between the 1st and 2nd performance weeks of the previous show, and are held on Sunday and Monday evenings at 7:00 pm. Callbacks, while flexible to the director's needs, are traditionally the Tuesday after auditions at 7:00 pm. Additional or supplemental auditions are at director's discretion. Audition dates are set at play selection time. *NOTE for 2009-2010 Season: Audition dates do not follow the traditional schedule due to the mid-Season special and other timing considerations.*

Photography — The Publicity committee will work with you to schedule cast/crew headshots as early as possible. Also, there will be publicity stills taken which are distributed to the local media to promote the show. Once costumes and lighting are in place, production photos will also be taken, typically during one of your final dress rehearsals. The Publicity committee will work with you to make these necessary promotional efforts as unobtrusive as possible, but please be prepared for these events to be scheduled.

Performances — The performance schedule is set at play selection time.

VIP Night — The night before the first public performance (or before Week Two for the Holiday slot show) is offered to local charities for fundraising purposes. Note that intermissions on VIP nights are often longer than normal to accommodate silent auctions and other fundraising activities. Your SM should work with the VIP liaison to communicate these needs back and forth. The schedule of performances will indicate whether there is a VIP night.

Preview — A preview performance is scheduled by the publicity committee in consultation with the director and with reviewers from local media. The preview usually happens on the Monday or Tuesday before opening, but other nights will work depending on the Director's schedule. Directors have the discretionary authority of allowing cast and crew to invite friends, families, or school classes to the preview, and it should be noted that reviewers prefer seeing the show with an audience. Starting with the 2009 Season, the Guild will ask for donations at all preview nights. If you have a special charity you would like donations to go to, bring this up at the production meeting prior to opening.

Strike — Strike happens directly after the final performance. All cast, crew, and staff are expected to attend and remain until the stage is cleared and all materials put away, and the dressing rooms and actors lounges are cleaned satisfactorily. All props must be checked in during strike. Costumes will need to be cleaned before being checked in. Coordinate costume check-in with Costume Chair.

Annual Banquet — The Guild hosts an annual banquet every year, typically just before the new season opens, at which we look back on the past season and make note of outstanding achievements by Guild Cast, Crew, and Volunteers. All Cast, Crew, and other Volunteers from your production are invited to the banquet—it is VERY helpful if the Guild gets mailing addresses, phone numbers, and emails for all your cast and crew. Please help the Guild to honor everyone who participates by ensuring that all contact information from

everyone involved in your show is assembled and available for the Guild Volunteer Coordinator. Shows often have phone lists, email lists, mailing lists, audition forms, etc., used by the team to communicate with cast and crew. Those are great to share with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Dates and Activities Set by the Director

Rehearsal Schedule — Typically a play will have five or six weeks for rehearsals; a musical, up to eight weeks. During the rehearsal period, the Guild stage and auditorium are reserved primarily for your use—you may schedule your rehearsals to fit your needs and the availability of your cast. Any prescheduled Guild activities that needs to take place on the stage will be communicated to you prior to auditions. (These are rare.) If any potential Guild activities arise after that time, you will be asked for permission to use the space. If you need the space, say no, or otherwise bargain to share the space. Your production takes priority over all other onstage activities once you have begun rehearsals.

Set-Building Schedule — You will need to coordinate set-building sessions with your rehearsal schedule. The standing schedule is Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings for set build sessions; typically there need to be two build sessions per week to ensure that your set is completed for tech and other run-throughs. Please coordinate with the Production Supervisor BEFORE you set your rehearsal schedule. Directors usually set a minimum expectation for participation by their cast members.

Dance Rehearsals, Orchestra Rehearsals and/or Auditions, Vocal Rehearsals, Fight Choreography Rehearsals, other special rehearsals as needed.

Dress Parade — Where the costumer and director review the costumes on the actors. Usually happens one to two weeks before Dress Rehearsal to allow time for changes. This will chew up a rehearsal day (don't plan anything the same night). If you are a director who only wants to see costumes under the actual lights and against the fully painted set of the show, don't schedule this until those will be ready, and communicate with your designers.

Light Hang — Sometime after the set is up and before the dry tech, the light crew hangs and focuses the lights. This works best if the set is already painted, and if it's a time when nothing else is going on. Unfortunately, this usually gets scheduled "whenever we're not rehearsing," which makes it harder for light crews to get it done by dry tech.

Tech with Actors — The Tech with Actors rehearsal should precede a dress rehearsal, unless quick set changes or costume changes need to be incorporated. Your technical staff needs the opportunity to work their timing with the actors; ideally, the set is finished, the lights are hung, you have all the props, and the costumes are ready in time for this event.

The following (though optional) things you can schedule to make Tech with Actors easier:

Paper Tech — Designers, operators, stage manager and director sit down and set when the cues happen, set each cue's levels, and label each cue.

Dry Tech — Stage manager, designers, operators and crew run the cues and set levels without actors.

Q to Q — Either before (or instead of) a Tech with Actors, this tech-with-actors without costumes goes from cue to cue, skipping over the text that has no cues.

Dress Rehearsal — Should be scheduled between tech rehearsals and Preview Performance.

Auditions and Casting

Auditions for Guild shows traditionally happen on the second weekend of the show running before yours. Standard times are Sunday and Monday evenings at 7:00 pm, with Tuesday callbacks at the discretion of the director. If different audition dates are needed, those are usually set when plays are selected. If you need to change your audition dates, contact the Publicity Manager and the V.P. of Production immediately so that all the details can be agreed upon before you get the go-ahead.

There are very few rules about casting at the Guild. Here are most of them:

- 1) Auditions are open to everyone
- 2) There is no pre-casting of any roles
- 3) There is no payment of any type for acting in a Guild production. No Equity actors can participate in Guild productions without an exemption from their union.

Re: pre-casting. You are certainly free to invite and entice anyone you want to audition, and you, as director, are the only person who chooses the cast. The Board has no official capacity in your casting and you are under no obligation to cast anybody on the board or anyone affiliated with the Guild.

There are no official audition forms, but please capture complete contact information from everyone who auditions for you: we seek to promote auditions directly along with our general announcements, and complete contact information allows us more avenues for contact. Please have your SM ensure that audition forms are copied and given to the Volunteer Coordinator. Sample audition forms are included in this packet.

If you make any changes in the cast of the shows (e.g., add more actors, cross-gender/racial casting, etc.), contact the publicity manager so they can do the right PR work. Also, you may need to get permission from the people who hold the copyright of the work—contact the Librarian to help with this permission. (Obviously, public domain works, like Shakespeare, Gilbert & Sullivan, etc., are fair game for such choices.)

Traditionally, we advertise that auditioners will be asked to do cold readings from the script for straight plays, and for auditioners to bring marked-up sheet music and to wear clothes they can move in for musicals. If you have any other or different requirements for your play, please consult with the publicity manager two months before the auditions. It is a good idea to contact the Publicity manager two months prior to auditions anyway, to confirm that the information any audition publicity is accurate. Often the director will give

out a phone number or email so potential auditioners or crew volunteers can call/contact them with questions.

Directors usually post their callback and cast lists on the H Street and main parking lot doors. However you handle this is fine, but please don't assume that the auditioners will know your plans—communicate those at auditions.

Strike

All cast, crew, staff and the director are expected to participate in show strike.

Strike occurs directly after the final performance. The stage is to be cleared, the costume and make-up areas cleaned, props checked in and put away, lights taken down if directed by Guild Lighting Director, all garbage taken out, etc. Your whole team is responsible to get the place back to zero for the next show to come in.

Taking the costumes to the cleaners and then checking them back in to the Costume Room is a part of strike. (The Guild has an account at Corry's Fine Dry Cleaning on Halleck and Cornwall—PLEASE use Corry's, as they give us 50% off of cleaning costs, a huge savings against your budget.) This activity often requires extra effort to coordinate someone from the Guild to check costumes in. The Guild's wardrobe manager will help, or if unavailable, please contact the Vice President of Production to arrange the return and check-in.

Publicity

The Guild Publicity Committee handles all the publicity, advertising, PR, photography, and general printing needs for Guild shows. This committee will be your first point of contact for all matters in this area.

It is important to note that the Guild budgets substantially for show promotions and advertising. A standard campaign consists of the following.

- Season brochure mailed to ~7,000 community members

- Season calendars distributed to all local media

- Season ads placed in local media

- Active website promoting auditions, shows and ticket sales

- E-Newsletters promoting both auditions and shows

- Online events calendars in Whatcom and Skagit Valley

- Audition notices to all local media

- Show postcards mailed to ~3,500

- Show postcards for cast/crew to distribute

- Advertising in local newspapers and monthly arts magazines. Typically, 12 to 15 ads placed for per show

- PR. The Guild works with local media to get coverage of shows. We supply publicity stills, story ideas, cast lists, etc. If you have a compelling story idea, please share it.

- Reviews. The Guild schedules—in coordination with directors—to have shows reviewed by local newspapers. But, this should not be counted on—only one or two local sources continue to do reviews of performing arts in town.

Over the past few seasons the Guild has had great success with this approach, and the Board is committed to continuing investing in publicity. If you have any ideas for your show, please talk them over with the Publicity Manager. If you know anyone in the media, please coordinate your efforts with the Marketing committee—things usually work better with a single point of contact.

There are a number of ways you can help to promote your show.

Audition Notices—Start early in talking up your show. Print notices and post them where your potential actors might see them. Auditions turnout benefits from grassroots efforts.

Show Postcards—Your cast and crew will receive a supply of these cards to distribute to friends, family, at workplaces, etc., and to hang around town wherever entertainment posters get hung. Word of mouth is perhaps the strongest campaign tool we have—you will do your show a world of good by strongly encouraging cast and crew to make good efforts at distributing these cards. These postcards are not intended to be mailed, as they

have a Bulk Rate indicia imprinted on them. If cast and crew wish to mail some they MUST put a live first-class stamp over the bulk rate indicia.

Comps—Comps are valid for opening weekend and Thursdays on the last two weekends of the run. Encourage your cast to use their comps on opening weekend—word of mouth from those early attendees drives up sales in the last two weeks. Typically, we offer two comps per actor, and two for major technical crew. Depending on the size of cast and crew, that might be extended to other crew, but it should not be counted on or set as an expectation.

Programs

The Guild produces printed programs for each show. The program has a full cast and crew list with bios of cast and some crew members, along with other pertinent show and Guild information, an introduction from the director, and advertising from sponsors.

Programs start into production three or four weeks before opening, and go to press about 10 days before opening. The Publicity committee will be driving this timeline and will prompt you if certain actions are required. You can help by ensuring that cast bios and other notes are completed by cast and crew as soon as possible.

Here are the elements of a program, and who is responsible for supplying each. Please turn copy in electronically (bios are an exception; work out details with Publicity Committee).

Cover Art — Publicity Committee

Guild and Paid Ads — Publicity Committee

Intro/Contents Page — Publicity Committee

Director's Notes — Director. Please keep to about 200-300 words maximum. This is a nice chance to talk about your vision for the play, how it relates to the audience, history of the play, today's climate, etc.

Legal Notices from Publisher — Librarian

Play Synopsis, Scene/Time and Place/Intermission information — Director. Please try to keep it succinct yet informative.

Cast List —Stage Manager. Please list as follows: Character Name...Actor Name (e.g., Mr. Bumble.....Joe Johnson)

Crew List — Stage Manager. Please list as follows: Position/Job...Name(s) of Volunteers (e.g., Set Construction.....Joe Jackson, Bill Brown, Helen Jones).

Company Bios — Stage Manager. All cast members and major production crew members get bios and headshots in the program. Bios should be in the format: Actor's Name, Character Name, and then a very brief (35 words) bio written in the third person (e.g., "Ms. Johnson has appeared in three previous Guild performances, most recently as Hedda in *Hedda Gabler*"). It is OK for cast/crew to give brief personal thanks at the end of the bio. The Guild reserves the right to edit all bios for content and length.

Headshots — Publicity Committee. To be scheduled for early in the rehearsal process.

It is OK to trade ad space in the program in lieu of payment for, e.g., props or costumes or other services, as long as the value of the trade exceeds \$100. Please alert the Publicity Committee as soon as you have made such a commitment so they can get contact info from the ad placers, and please confirm that ads you have agreed to are present in the program when you proof it.

Program Proofing

A proof of the program will circulate to the Director and Stage Manager. It is their responsibility to ensure that cast and crew have a chance to review name spellings, etc. Typically a day or so is allotted for proofing; due to the quick turnaround necessary for printing, more time cannot be allowed.

Production Photography

The Guild will provide a photographer to take publicity stills, rehearsal photos, and cast and crew headshots for the program and website. You will be contacted by the Publicity Coordinator to arrange for times to take these photos. Please allow for this to happen early in your rehearsal cycle—the earlier we can get photos out to local media, the better the publicity for your show. Typically we would like **some** costuming for the publicity stills—no need for full dress, and only a limited number of cast will be called for publicity stills. This will be coordinated by Publicity, and efforts by your costume team to meet the publicity stills due date, typically about two and a half weeks before opening, are appreciated.

Cast and Crew Complimentary Tickets (Comps)

Each show is given comps by the Publicity Committee. Note that comps are not tickets—they are a voucher that must be redeemed for a ticket. Comps may be redeemed at the Guild Ticket Office, 1600 H Street, phone 360-733-1811, 1:00 to 6:00 pm Tuesday through Saturday, starting 10 days before the show opens. Note that you do not need to go to the Ticket Office to redeem comps, but that you **DO** need to make a seat reservation—that can be done by phone. The comps will then need to be traded in at the Will Call window the night of performance to get your reserved tickets. If you or your guest does not bring the comps to Will Call, no tickets will be handed out. Please follow this procedure to avoid problems.

To repeat—comps are not tickets. They must be redeemed for a ticket at the ticket office, or you must make a reservation and then redeem them at the Will Call window on the night of show.

Comps will go to cast and major crew positions. Comps are valid opening weekend and then Thursdays for the last two weeks. Please encourage cast to use comps during the first weekend, to help with word-of-mouth.

Facility

Keys

Production Teams will receive three (3) sets of keys prior to your audition dates. If you need the keys earlier to begin planning your production, contact the Production Supervisor. Each set will have the following keys:

- 1) a master key that opens the H Street door, the actor's entrance off the gravel parking lot, and the east side (main parking lot) lower door by the overhead garage door.
- 2) a costume room key that gets you into the costume mezzanine and the shoe and hat room downstairs.
- 3) a key that opens the control booth and the upper light booth door (including the light fixture storage area).
- 4) a prop room key or keys that will get your prop master into the prop room and prop storage closets.

Keys are to be returned to the Production Supervisor at strike. Sometimes a costumer or prop master will need to retain a set to complete their tasks. Please coordinate with the Production Supervisor.

Building Maintenance and Safety

The Bellingham Theatre Guild resides in a 1902 building that was originally used as a church. The building was acquired by the Guild in 1944 and has been in constant use since then as a theater. As an older building, there are some features that make it a little less safe than a newer building would be. Please have your cast and crew take respectful care of the building and grounds.

Please try to keep the various areas of use as clean as possible.

It is the responsibility of the cast and crew to keep any space they use clean during the rehearsal and performance period. Please have your Stage Manager and other key personnel ensure that our shared space is being kept clean. There are no cleaning crews at the Guild—we are all responsible to make this happen.

If there are issues with bathrooms during the rehearsal period, including not having paper products loaded into dispensers, please have your SM contact the Vice President of Production so the issue can be addressed. Please do not substitute paper towels for hand towels, etc.—we have the proper paper.

During performance period, if there are any issues with paper or soap products by the actors bathrooms, the SM should contact the House Manager to have stocks reloaded.

There are trash bags in the lower office; please empty full bins once a week into the dumpster in the gravel lot and replace the bags during both rehearsal and performance periods.

There are vacuums in the office, too.

Please try to keep food to a minimum in the auditorium; while we encourage snacks at build sessions, etc., to keep spirits up, please try to keep those to the stage area. The goal is to keep the seating and carpets as clean as possible.

No open food can be left anywhere—there is an ongoing rodent problem in our neighborhood, and open food encourages them. Remove any open packages nightly or put them in the refrigerator. No open food is to be left in the auditorium or actors lounge overnight. All such food will be discarded.

Safety

No running in the facility unless it is part of your production.

No horseplay.

No smoking in the building—including on stage during performance. New state laws prohibit it.

No non-cast or -crew are allowed into the building during rehearsal period except for pick-up/drop-off. No family or friends are allowed at rehearsals. Exceptions will be made for parents or guardians of young actors.

Only cast and crew are allowed in actors lounge, makeup areas, or anywhere else backstage during performances. Friends and family are not allowed into these areas. Exceptions will be made for parents or guardians of young actors.

Please use proper lifting techniques, or ask the Production Supervisor to demonstrate.

Please wear safety glasses when working in the shop.

Do not touch anything in the shop unless approved by Production Supervisor.

If anyone in your cast or crew ever feels threatened by a person(s) hanging around the outside of the Guild, please call 9-1-1 and ask the police to come by. They have asked us call 9-1-1 in these situations—please do not consider this an imposition on the police.

Opening and Closing Procedures

Please do a walkthrough with a member of the Production Committee to get an overview of the doors and other systems in the building.

Opening the Building. When opening the building for rehearsals or performances, please follow these procedures.

Entrances during Rehearsals New for 2009-2010

The H Street door may not be unlocked by the production team. This door may not be propped open by the production team. Entrance doors for cast and crew are being changed to the two parking lot stage doors and the exit doors at the top of the fire escape steps.

During warmer weather: your Stage Manager or other keyholder should enter the building through any door, ensure that the door is locked behind them, and then open the auditorium exit door at the top of the main parking lot steps so that your cast and crew may enter that way.

During colder weather: your Stage Manager or other keyholder should enter the building through any door. They may then unlock either the actor parking lot stage door or the main parking lot stage door so that cast and crew can enter through those. Once all cast and crew have arrived, re-lock the open door. Latecomers may knock on the auditorium exit door at the top of the main parking lot steps.

Doors Unlocked During Performances

When arriving at the Guild on a performance night, please unlock the H Street door to allow the House Manager and other volunteers to get in. Note that most House Managers do NOT have keys to the building, so this is an important step. The House Manager will lock the H Street door after the intermission using the House Manager keys in the office.

Heat in the house. Heat in the house is set by a thermostat located at the back of the house. This thermostat should already be pre-programmed to coincide with your rehearsal and build schedules. Please note that during rehearsals, the space may be a little colder than normal, to cut down on heating costs. Please have your cast dress accordingly. If the space is too cold, please contact the Production Committee to get it reset to a better temperature. However, please note that it will be kept colder than you might have it at home, so the “dress accordingly” advice is important. Do not adjust any settings on the thermostat—please consult with the VP of Production with any concerns—we are aware that it is an old building and will help you to address discomfort issues.

Closing the Building. Last person out of the building each night or day must ensure that the building is properly closed down and secured.

HOW TO CLOSE THE BUILDING

1. Go down to the prop storage area in the back of the building.
2. Go to the West (main parking lot side) door and check to see that the roll down door is locked (Slide Bar on the right side of the door).
3. Lock the door at the bottom of the west side stage stairs and turn off the lights in the stairwell.
4. Check the bathrooms and sinks for running water and shut off the lights in the bathrooms.
5. Go to the door on the actors (gravel) parking lot and lock the door and shut off the stairwell lights.
6. Exit the storage area to the actors lounge and turn off the prop room and storage room lights. Check for anything plugged in or left on (space heaters, curlers, irons, etc.).

7. Shut off the lights in the actors make up and dressing rooms.
8. Exit the actors lounge to the kitchen and shut off the light.
9. Check the kitchen for coffee pots off, stove off, cabinets locked, etc.
10. Shut off the kitchen lights and go to the Reception Room.
11. Check the Reception Room thermostat (in the corner by the upright piano) and be sure it is set to 55 degrees by moving the side temperature slider on the right side all the way down. During cold seasons, the thermostat should be set to Heat and fan to Auto.
12. Exit the reception room, turning off the lights as you go.
13. Check the bathrooms, turn the lights off inside and, if the temp is going to be below freezing that night, set the wall thermostats (white dials) to 50. If not, turn them off.
14. Go upstairs, into the house and back to the shop.
15. Check the shop for anything left on (coffee pots, etc) and any thing else that might need putting away.
16. Turn off the shop lights and go to the stage.
17. Turn off the stage work lights.
18. Check the two exit doors on either side of the stage to be sure they are closed.
19. Go to the back of the house and check to see that the door to the upstairs light booth is locked. Check to see that the thermostat is set to PROG, not MAN. (Hit the Prog/Man bottom to get it to the right setting.) Do not change the temp settings. During cold months, thermostat should be set to Heat and fan should be set to Auto. Shut off the interior lights on the back wall of the house—switch is near the thermostat.
20. Go to the light booth, shut down the sound system board and amps and players. Put the cover on the sound board. (Ask for a tour of the Light/Sound booth to learn where all the switches are.)
21. Hit “Blackout” on the light board (lower right corner), shut it off and cover it. Turn off the lights in the room and lock the door with the padlock.
22. Turn off the main stair lights using the switch right outside the light booth door.
23. Go to the front door. Check to see that all four latches (two top and two bottom) are secure and the panic bars are open.
24. Go up the ramp and check the electric thermostat on the outside wall of the ticket booth (controls the heat in the entry way) to off. Turn off both switches on the wall (the outside and entry way lights).
25. Go down the stairs and cut off the stair lights at the bottom (switch is high on the wall on your left as you go down). Turn off the lower entry hall lights using the chain hanging from the three lamp fixture on the ceiling.
26. Check the office for everything off and ensure that the closet is locked.
27. Go the H street door, check the lighted wall switch near the door is off, let yourself out and be sure that the door latch is set to lock and locks behind you. Pull it to check.
28. Thanks and good night! It should take less than three minutes to do all of this.

Bellingham Theatre Guild Cast and Crew Guidelines

Welcome to the Bellingham Theatre Guild, and thank you for participating as a volunteer in this production. Community theatre is a very rewarding experience—and to help make that experience better, here are a few rules and guidelines we ask you to follow while you're involved in this production.

Thanks again for helping to create the magic of theatre. Have a fun and safe experience.

—Bellingham Theatre Guild Board of Directors

Alcohol — Alcohol is allowed on BTG premises only by specific permission of the Board and the issuance of a liquor license. Cast and crew are not to have alcohol backstage or in the dressing rooms at any time.

Actor Protocol — Actors should not be seen in costume or make-up before the play; should stay in the actors lounge and backstage area from one hour before curtain to final curtain unless part of the production; should meet the audience after the show in the Reception Room; and should use the Actors Entrance (the West Side door facing the gravel lot) on show dates.

Actors Lounge — The actors lounge is closed to everyone but cast and crew. Please do not allow non-production people (friends, family) into the lounge. Keep this area clean, and do not leave food out overnight.

Cell Phones — Cell phones are to be turned off during rehearsals and performances, even downstairs in the actors lounge.

Clean-up — Everyone involved in production shares clean-up responsibilities and is expected to clean up after themselves. There is a dumpster on the west side of the building and extra trash bags are in the office downstairs. Workshop and auditorium trash must be emptied weekly during rehearsal period, and actors lounge and bathroom area trash must be emptied on Sundays during performance period. Please keep the Guild clean during rehearsals and the run. Note that there is no paid staff at the Guild; everyone is a volunteer, and everyone is responsible for keeping the premises clean and presentable.

Harassment — The Guild prohibits any form of harassment. Any complaints of harassment will be investigated immediately, and anyone found to be involved in harassment will be dismissed permanently from participation at the Guild.

Kitchen — There's a kitchen by the actors lounge that you may use while in rehearsals and during the run. Keep it clean, bring your own stuff, label your own stuff and remember to throw away or cart off your old stuff. Social volunteers have priority use of kitchen and fridge during the show. Don't take any Guild Social food or drink. ABSOLUTELY no food or beverages are to remain out—these attract rodents. Clean up every night!

Lockup — While usually the last person out of the building is the director or stage manager, it could be anyone, so make sure all the lights are off, coffee pots and other appliances are unplugged, and all outside doors are locked. Ideally, the building should be cleared by 30 minutes after final curtain.

Parking — Park in the main parking lot during rehearsals. During performances, however, cast and crew need to park in the gravel lot on the east side of the building, so audience can use the paved parking lot and the crowded side streets. Overflow parking for the cast and crew is at the Sean Humphrey House next door to the Guild and at the North Coast Credit Union across Dupont Street.

Preview — The Preview Performance is scheduled for the week prior to opening. Family, friends, and volunteers may attend the Preview. Admission on these nights is by donation.

Rehearsals — Rehearsals are closed to **everyone** but cast and crew so that everyone can remain focused on the rehearsal. Do not bring friends, spouses, children, pets, etc. Exceptions are made for guardians of younger actors.

Personal Items — BTG is not responsible for your valuables. Do not bring valuables into the Guild—please leave them at home or locked in your car. The Guild is not responsible for car theft or damage.

Smoking — The Guild is a smoke-free building by state law. Per state law, you may smoke only if you are 25 feet away from any entrance to the building.

Strike — All cast and crew are required to help strike the set and clean the dressing rooms and actors lounge, which takes place directly after the final performance. Please dress for a work party!