

## **Production Team Position Descriptions - The Arlington Players**

TAP puts on three shows per season – fall, winter, and spring. The typical scenario for each of our shows is as follows: (1) we select the three directors and their proposed shows via the Season Selection Committee and announce the season in the spring/winter of preceding the season; (2) directors typically put together their own team: producer, stage manager, choreographer, music director, etc., but often we do need to fill in some team positions; (3) a show is cast approximately 8 to 10 weeks before opening; (4) six weeks before the opening of each show, we move into the County Scene Shop and start construction of the set, painting, etc.; (5) we load the finished set into Thomas Jefferson Community Theatre about 2 weeks before opening; (6) we run for eight performances over three weekends, currently opening on Saturday nights and closing on a Sunday matinee.

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### **Producer**

One of the biggest jobs on the production team. The best way to describe what a Producer does is that they keep the design elements of a production moving, while the Director, Music Director, and Stage Manager keep the performance elements moving forward. A Producer picks their designers, and conducts meetings with those designers (both with and without the Director). The Producer gives monthly updates to the Board, and will discuss any outstanding issues or needs. The Producer manages the show's design budget set each season by the TAP board. The Producer should be (but is not required to be) in the shop helping with the set build as much as possible. The Producer must be at shop load-in, theater load-in and strike, and will make strike assignments based on designer needs. The Producer has keys to the vault and will arrange to meet designers at the vault to pick up any props or costumes or other design elements. The Producer will coordinate with the Board on any production needs, including: marketing, gathering production bios, memberships, production communications with the board and any other requirements from the Board. The Producer participates in a final post-mortem report to the Board. They also prepare and disseminate key information to the cast pre-opening (dressing room process, makeup and hair procedures, protocols, etc.).

*Time commitment:* major. This position will “take up your life” for over 3 months, not including pre- and post-show duties!

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### **Director**

Selected in the season before. Responsible for pulling together as much of the production team as possible. Responsible for holding auditions, casting the show, and scheduling and directing all rehearsals, coordinating cast schedules so that no actor's time is wasted. This position requires much consultation with the Producer

re: designs and teams to keep the show on track. It goes without saying that this is a major position on any production and requires 100% commitment.

*Time commitment:* most of your life for about 3 months, not including the pre-show prep months before that!

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### **Music Director**

A major factor in our musicals – the musical director helps cast the show, runs all cast music rehearsals, is potentially there for dance rehearsals, and puts together the orchestra. At TAP, music directors typically conduct every show.

In addition, the music director will be expected to run several orchestra rehearsals before the cast sitz-probe, which occurs just before tech week.

*Time commitment:* Major, starting with conceptualizing with the director before the show is cast, finding the members of the orchestra, coordinating payment between the Board and the orchestra, running auditions, then rehearsing the 8 or so weeks with cast before opening, then three weekends of shows.

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### **Choreographer**

Responsible for creating and teaching the audition dance for auditions, and all dances in the show unless duties are split with another choreographer (assistant choreographer) or the director. Will require early conceptual planning with the director before auditions. Having a strong dance background is required.

*Time commitment:* major, both pre-casting and during rehearsals. Best to not have other show commitments at the same time. Requires evening and Saturday rehearsals, and lots of tweaking during tech week before opening.

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### **Master Carpenter**

The Master Carpenter is responsible for executing the set design, including its rigging, hanging, and movement. The Master Carpenter is also responsible for running the load-in of the show, deciding in what order the work will be done so as to move as quickly and logically as possible.

Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- Review the construction plans with the Set Designer for potential problems, and resolve them as quickly as possible.

- Prepare materials and cut lists; determine what materials are available in storage and what needs to be purchased in order to complete set construction.
- Prepare a build and painting schedule, keeping in mind the needs of the Scenic Artist to complete set painting; work weekly with Stewardship team re: finding volunteers to build/paint.
- Recruit additional personnel to assist with set construction.
- Build the set in accordance with the set design.
- At the end of each work session secure the scene shop.
- Enforce all rules and regulations regarding the scene shop as mandated by the County.
- In conjunction with the Set Designer, direct the placement onstage of the completed set.
- Be responsible for any necessary repairs during the run of the show.
- In conjunction with the Executive Producer, and Producer, plan and execute the show strike at the end of the run. If the set needs to be broken down during the run to accommodate other uses of the stage, be present for the break down or have a knowledgeable assistant present in your place.

*Time commitment:* Major – this requires most evenings and Saturdays. Build starts in the shop 5 to 6 weeks before opening.

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### **Stage Manager**

Stage managers typically provide practical and organizational support to the director, actors, designers, stage crew and technicians throughout the production process. They also are the director's representative during performances, making sure that the production runs smoothly. This also includes calling light and sound cues during the performance of the show. Stage managers are also responsible for the safety of all those involved with the show. Their responsibilities also include running rehearsals (take head count, record all blocking, read lines for missing actors, etc.) as well as coordinating the work of the stage crew.

*Time commitment:* Major. The role of the stage manager is especially important to the director in rehearsals. Here the director and stage manager work side by side, with the stage manager recording the director's decisions about blocking and notes for the actors, keeping track of logistical and scheduling details and communicating what goes on in rehearsals to the rest of the team. Thus Stage Managers typically attend all rehearsals. They are the major go-to person for tech week/load-in, and basically oversee all behind-the-scenes work during the run. Approximate investment: 3 months.

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### **Assistant Stage Manager**

An Assistant Stage Manager (ASM) is often stationed just offstage to facilitate communication between the stage manager, crew and actors, as well as ensuring safety. The ASM often helps with complex set changes, quick changes offstage, or preparing the stage for performance. They may fill in for the stage manager on occasion during rehearsals. Often TAP will have two ASMs on a show – stage left and stage right. They are on headsets to monitor/execute all cues.

Time commitment: five-six weeks, mainly during tech week and performances. ASMs will usually attend a few rehearsals before tech week to learn the show for a smooth transition into the theatre space.

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### **Scene/Set Design**

The Set Designer is responsible for collaborating with the director and other members of the production team to create an environment for the production. Set Designers should create scale models of the scenery, renderings, paint elevations, and scale construction drawings. These items should be made available to other members of the production team as needed. The Set Designer may choose to also act as either the Master Carpenter or Scenic Artist for the production, however, The Arlington Players discourages this practice.

Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- Ensure that the set design is in accordance with the Director's vision for the overall production. In collaboration with the Director, Stage Manager, and Choreographer establish playing area, entrances, exits, levels, windows and doors. These meetings should occur as early as possible.
- Prepare sketches of the set design for the Director, Stage Manager and Choreographer before construction drawings are submitted to the Master Carpenter to discuss any needed modifications.
- Prepare scale construction drawings for the Master Carpenter as soon as possible, though after the final design is approved by the Director.
- Prepare scale footprints to the Stage Manager as soon as possible. Also, document when scene changes occur, and which pieces are to be moved.
- Prepare a fly schedule for the use of the Fly Chief, Master Carpenter, Stage Manager, Director and Choreographer.
- Confer with the Costume, Props, and Lighting Designers for color and design coordination.
- Maintain close supervision of the set during its construction/painting and cooperate with the Master Carpenter in resolving any problems that may arise during construction.
- Whenever possible, provide at least one cast orientation visit to the scene shop to view the set for size, etc.

- During tech week, be available to help work out problems with scene changes and any changes that have to be made to the set.
- In the absence of a Technical Director for the show, the Set Designer is responsible for supervising the execution of all elements of the set design that do not fall under the purview of another designer.

*Time commitment:* major but mostly pre-rehearsals and pre-shop load-in. Will require much coordination w/ the Director before the show moves into preparation stages.

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### **Set Decoration/Dressing**

The Set Dresser works closely with the Set Designer to enhance the physical environment of the production. The Set Dresser is responsible for the procurement of all furniture and set related decoration, including but not limited to, rugs, curtains, wall coverings, and upholstery. While the set dressing should comport to the overall set design concept, the Set Dresser is an autonomous designer and need not obtain the approval of the Set Designer on every piece. They should, however, work closely with the Props director.

Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- Ensure the set dressing is in accordance with the Directors overall vision for the show, and the set design concept.
- Prepare a detailed list of all set dressing pieces that are needed. Use this list as the basis of a set dressing inventory to be turned into the Producer after the opening of the show.
- Check TAP inventory, and ask cast and production team members, for available items that can be used in the production. For the remaining items, estimate costs and prepare a budget to use as a guide when making purchases.
- If shop time is needed for the construction of any pieces, coordinate use with the Producer and Master Carpenter.
- Work with the Producer and Master Carpenter to coordinate load-in of set dressing, and any implementation needed in the theater.
- Coordinate with the Stage Manager on any set dressing items that need to be set or struck during the run of the show.
- Ensure that all set dressing items are secured at the end of each performance, and that items that need to be locked in storage are.
- With the Producer, review the set dressing inventory to determine if any items should be disposed of, and to coordinate the return of borrowed pieces.
- Return all items as soon as possible after strike.

*Time commitment:* significant, but not quite as much as Carpenter, Director, etc. Will require pre-show research and coordination with the team.

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### **Props**

This lead position is the go-to person for finding all items that the cast handles during the show, which will include not only scouring other theatre groups for the props, but purchasing as well. Requires extensive reading and knowledge of the script, and collaboration with the director and producer (who controls the budget). The director may want “rehearsal props” which you would also need to find. The show may also require you to be on-site during all performances, or you should at least have a props crew that you put together for assisting on each show, with training on where all props go and who handles. Also may require assisting with special effects.

*Time commitment:* substantial. Will require a lot of research before the show opens, and a lot of collaboration with the producer and director during rehearsals. Also may require being at all shows, so that would be a three-week time period once the show opens.

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### **Costume Designer**

Requires research and work with the director before the show is cast; taking measurements of all performers once the show is cast; sewing costumes and/or pulling from the county costume shop and other local theatres; fitting and re-fitting before the show opens, and having the costumes done by opening night; laundering all costumes requiring cleaning before each of the 3 performance weekends; submitting request for assistance from other costume people to the producer if needed and putting together a group plan.

*Time commitment:* major. Would be good if you had no other show commitments. Requires research months before the show is cast, and then 3 months once rehearsals start rolling.

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### **Makeup Designer**

The makeup lead director will need to work with the director after the show is cast to assess the vision and what tools they’ll need to get there. They’ll need to advise if they need special funds for any special effects (cast usually buys their makeup, but the makeup director needs to guide them re: what to buy, and in plenty of time before the show opens). Starting tech week, the makeup lead will need to be on-site to show the cast what they need to achieve and assist those who need help. It helps to also request other volunteers to help with this.

*Time commitment:* a few weeks. Will require research and collaboration with the director before tech week. Cast may need assistance at each show with makeup, so this position MAY require you to be at every show.

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### **Hair Designer**

Period plays often need special hair design, and oftentimes wigs. The hair designer would be responsible for coming up with the hair style for each cast member (after consulting with the director on their vision) and then figuring out how to get to that goal. TAP has a whole stock of wigs available for usage. The cast is usually asked to assist with bringing in their own bobby pins, hair spray, etc. Sometimes we can borrow falls and wigs from other theatre organizations – and the hair lead would need to coordinate that.

*Time commitment:* same as makeup, a few weeks. Requires consultations ahead of the show, and possibly being there every night, depending on the needs of the cast.

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### **Orchestra**

We are always looking for committed musicians to fill in our orchestra! Playing for one of our musicals requires also playing for some of the final tech rehearsals a week or so before opening, and then we've got 8 performances. TAP does pay a stipend to musicians. Each show will have a different musical director, and all communication will eventually come through that person once you're signed up for a show.

*Time commitment:* we encourage our musicians to commit to all shows, plus rehearsals, so that would be 3 weekends plus a week of rehearsals. We do pay orchestra on a per-performance fee basis, and give a bonus for those playing for the entire run of the show.