

# Central Alberta Theatre

## Position Description

### Set Decorator

#### The Set Decorator's Role

The Set Decorator for CAT's Studio Theatre productions will be in charge of decorating the set designed by the Set Designer. That means choosing and obtaining the furniture pieces, the window dressings, and the like, to enhance the set design and within the budget allocated by CAT's Production Manager. The set decoration never overpowers the set, the pieces are never superfluous, and the decoration never distracts from the action of the play. A CAT Nickle Studio set compliments the style and tone of the production, indicates the location, and accommodates the required movement of the actors.

#### Reporting

The set decorator works in collaboration with the director and the members of the design team, and takes direction from the Production Manager and Vice President – Productions as appropriate. For example, they have the authority to direct set decoration changes if there are safety issues, and they are in charge of the production's budget.

#### 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 – Production's 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 and follow them
- Share the vision and mission of CAT

#### *Pre-Production:*

- Obtain a copy of the script from the director and read it a few times to get a feel for the flavour of the production and to make notes on specific set decoration requirements
- Find out from the Production Manager the important dates of the play (move-in, tech week, preview)
- Find out from the Production Manager the budget for set decoration and if there are any sponsorship agreements in place with any local furniture retail outlets
- Attend the first production meeting, scheduled by the Production Manager in conjunction with the director and the stage manager, at which the director will share their artistic concept with the production

team: the Stage Manager, the Lighting Designer, the Sound Designer, the Set Designer, the Set Decorator, the construction head, the painting head, head of costumes, head of props. This meeting will take place before or immediately after the auditions for each play. 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

- Work with the rest of the design team (set designer, construction head, head painter, props, costume, sound designer and lighting designer) to ensure a unified look and feel for the production, consistent with the production's budget
- Attend any other production meetings scheduled by the Production Manager
- **NOTE:** should you need to visit the set when it's in the workshop (before it's been moved to the venue), make sure you book that time with the Operations & Technical Manager. Also, follow the policy for working alone (see below).

### *Tech Week:*

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

Load-in of the set, the lights, the sound equipment, the main set pieces and the putting up of the set, lights and sound equipment will be the priority as soon as the production is given access to the performance space as booked. The set decorator will normally be present once the set is up and will supervise the decoration in conjunction with the director.

The schedule for tech week will be largely dictated by the timing of the access to the space.

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
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, sometimes we operate with 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)
Monday:	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 set decoration changes/alterations if there are safety issues.

### *Post Production:*

- Attend a post-production meeting or participate in a post-production process, set up by the VP 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
- After the post-production meeting/process, the routine of subsequent shows will be adjusted if necessary by the Production Manager to incorporate any changes needed to optimize the volunteer experience and the presentation of CAT Studio Theatre shows.

## Working Alone

Everyone at CAT will strive to ensure that a volunteer doesn't work alone. If a volunteer must work alone they will take appropriate steps to ensure assistance is available if needed.

### **When performing a potentially hazardous task**

Volunteers will ensure that when performing a potentially hazardous task (climbing a ladder, using any of the shop equipment, etc.) another staff or a volunteer is present. If it's not possible to have someone else present, the staff member will notify another staff member or volunteer in the facility when they begin the task, they will have a cellphone on their person during the commission of the task, and they will check in with the other staff member or volunteer when they've completed the task.

