### About Theatre Oxford

Since 1997, the passionate volunteer led Theatre Oxford has been creating and delivering theatrical works for the community of Lafayette County in North Mississippi and beyond. At Theatre Oxford we are committed to producing small-town performances that rival big-city quality. We strongly believe in the emotional power of storytelling and in the special ability of the theater to bring diverse people together for enrichment and fun.

**Location**

Theatre Oxford is based out of the Yoknapatawpha Arts Council, 413 S 14th St, Oxford, MS 38655. This role involves a mix of remote volunteering (i.e. in your own home or various other venues, depending on the needs of the production) and at the Theatre Oxford headquarters, see above.

A**s a volunteer with Theatre Oxford, you will:**

* Be a part of a creative team of volunteers
* Get hands on experience in theatre production
* Get to see how all aspects of theatrical production work come together
* Learn about community theatre

### Theatre Oxford Committees

Finance Committee: 2 members

This committee, chaired by the TO Treasurer, oversees budgeting of the entire Theatre Oxford organization, including dues notification and collections, budget approvals and monitoring for productions, and a joint annual audit at the end of each fiscal year.

Front of House Committee: 4 members

This committee is our hospitality force. They manage admissions, on-site ticket sales, and concessions while welcoming our audience.

Marketing Committee: 4 members

This committee handles marketing for specific productions and Theatre Oxford events, managing our social media accounts, seeking out relationships with the press, designing marketing materials, and updating the website. They disseminate information to our membership base.

Membership Development and Nominations Committees: 2 members

This committee maintains membership rolls and mailing lists for services; they also present nominees for initial or replacement board positions.

Planning & Production Committee (sub-committee: play selection): 6 members

This committee, chaired by the Board's Managing Producer, assesses community needs, interests, and scheduling issues. These people recommend a season of 3 stand-alone plays, 1 ten-minute play festival, and any other special events to the Board. This committee also creates budgets for productions in advance.

Resource Development Committee: 4 members

This committee oversees fundraising efforts, including grant development, ad sales, and community partnerships.

Asset Management Committee: 4 members

This committee organizes, catalogues, and keeps track of Theatre Oxford's physical assets, such as props, costumes, and set elements.

### Director: Overview of the role

The work of the director is central to the production of a play, since it is the director who *sets the vision* for the production for everyone involved. The director’s work is most often based on a detailed study and analysis of the script to be produced. Many careful readings of the script help the director develop an individual vision of the playwright’s intentions, which will form the core of his or her interpretation. This sense of “what the play is really about” will shape a director’s thinking about every other aspect of the production.

Directors also *study the characters* in the script, gathering as much information as they can about their physical and psychological traits. This is vital preparation for casting, when the actors who are best able to bring the characters to life in performance need to be chosen.

The director’s initial meetings with the [production manager](https://aact.org/production-manager), [costume designer](https://aact.org/costume-designer), [set designer](https://aact.org/set-designer) and [lighting designer](https://aact.org/lighting-designer) typify the creative collaboration vital to theatre. Any notes the director has made on the technical needs in the script are shared with the designers. The free flow of ideas that takes place here will further refine the director’s vision of the production as a whole.

Details in the script about the *specific locale(s)* in which the action takes place need to be attended to early in the production process, because they will determine both the basic requirements of the set and the possible movement of the actors on stage. Acting areas, entrances and exits, and furniture and props called for in the script or desired by the director will need to be a part of the set design.

The *floor plan* can then be sketched out. The floor plan is a basic outline drawing of the stage setting as it would look from above. It is an essential rehearsal planning tool because it allows a director to work out the blocking of the play. Blocking (or staging) is the precise moment-by-moment movement and grouping of actors on stage.

The director’s creative collaboration continues during his or her work with the actors in *rehearsals*. The actors will bring their own interpretations to the project and perhaps inspire the director to rethink his or her interpretation. They will work closely together to breathe life into the lines and develop a deeper understanding of the characters’ motivations and relationships, fleshing out the subtext of the play. Later the focus of the director’s work in rehearsals will broaden to the overall look and feel of the whole production as transitions between scenes are smoothed out, effective pacing is achieved and all the design and technical aspects of the production are integrated.

Once the show opens, the director's work is essentially complete. Now it's the [stage manager'](https://aact.org/stage-manager)s job to make sure that every aspect of the production runs just as the director intended time after time, until the production closes.

**Tasks**

The director has the challenging task of bringing together the many complex pieces of a production—the script, actors, set, costuming, lighting and sound and music—into a unified whole. To accomplish this task, a director needs to:

* Interpret the script
* Cast the production
* Collaborate with designers
* Plan the rehearsals
* Guide the actors in their work during rehearsals.

**Time commitment**

* Hours per week: 10-20
* Weeks per show: 4-5

### Producer: Overview of the role

### The work of the producer is central to the organization of a play. They’re essentially the organizer and manager of all of the logistics associated with a theatrical production. The producer is responsible for making sure that everyone on the team is doing what they’re supposed to be doing, circling back around and asking them what they’ve achieved/holding them accountable.

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### Tasks

### The producer works closely with the director throughout the entire process of making a play happen.  To accomplish this, the producer:

### Works with Director to create Budget for Board approval

### After approval administers budget with Treasurer

### Seeks and Secures Venue for production with Board’s help

### Works with Director to create audition schedule and rehearsal schedule

### Including load in, tech and dress rehearsal dates

### Secures rehearsal space

### With Director secures a staff with department heads, paid and volunteer, making sure that all positions are filled

### Oversees creative departments and makes sure they are meeting deadlines

### Oversees outside vendors with scheduling, payment, delivery and pick up

### Coordinates with marketing, resource development and Board to get everyone on deadline

### Makes sure things are done on time and on budget

### Presents choices to Board where applicable

### Liaison between board and production. Passes along production requests and Board notes

### Is, in general the “point person” and “contact” for the production. This person should either know the answer to your question or be able to find it quickly

### Calls production meetings with creative staff

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### Time commitment

### Hours per week: 10-15

### Weeks per show: 4-5

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### Stage Manager: Overview of the role

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.

The role of the stage manager is especially important to the director in rehearsals. Here the director and the 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. This enables the director to concentrate their full attention on directing.

**Tasks**

Stage managers have several key responsibilities and tasks to perform in each phase of a production, including:

* Schedule and run rehearsals
* Mark out the dimensions of the set on the floor of the rehearsal hall
* Make sure rehearsal props and furnishings are available for the actors
* Attend all rehearsals
* Records blocking and lighting, sound, and set change cues in the prompt book
* Notify the designers and crafts people of changes made in rehearsal
* Coordinate the work of the stage crew
* Call cues and possibly actors' entrances during performance
* Oversee the entire show each time it is performed

**Time commitment**

* Hours per week: 10-20
* Weeks per show: 3-4 (Stage Manager may not be needed at the very beginning of rehearsal period)

### Costumer Designer: Overview of the role

Costume designers create the look of each character by designing clothes and accessories the actors will wear in performance. Depending on their style and complexity, costumes may be made, bought, revamped out of existing stock or rented.

Costume designers begin their work by reading the script to be produced. If the production is set in a specific historical era, the fashions of this period will need to be researched. To stimulate the flow of ideas at the first meeting with the director and the design team (set, costume, lighting and sound designers), the costume designer may want to present a few rough costume sketches. This is also an appropriate time to check with the director on the exact number of characters needing costumes, as any non-speaking characters the director plans to include may not have been listed in the script.

It is the costume designer's responsibility to draw up the costume plot. The costume plot is a list or chart that shows which characters appear in each scene, what they are wearing and their overall movement throughout the play. This helps track the specific costume needs of every character. It can also identify any potential costume challenges, such as very quick changes between scenes.

When the director and production team have approved the costume designer's preliminary sketches, she or he can draw up the final costume designs. The final designs are done in full color. They show the style, silhouette, textures, accessories and unique features of each costume.

**Tasks**

* Detailed reading of the script for costume and style requirements
* Research designs, look and style for the play (especially important for a historical/period piece of theatre)
* Participate in meetings with the director, design team and other members
* Create the look for each character
* Draw up the costume plot
* Draw up the final costume designs
* Collaborate with theatre crew throughout production

**Time commitment**

* TBD by Theatre Oxford in advance

### Technical Director: Overview of the role

The Technical Director (TD) has the daily responsibility for the technical operations of a theatre or performing arts center, including lighting, sound, set design and construction, and coordinating necessary maintenance.

They work with a great deal of independence and exercise independent judgment in performing a wide variety of duties. Because of the operating hours of most facilities, close supervision is not normally required nor expected.

**Tasks**

In general, a TD may do any or all of the following:

* Operates, maintains and safeguards the technical assets of the theatre, including supervising the use of lighting, sound, communications equipment, and the use and maintenance of stage facilities
* Determines the necessary technical supports, such as lighting, sound, staging, and special needs, necessary for events and performances presented at the facility in advance of production dates
* Designs, sets up, maintains, and operates lighting and sound systems for theatre, dance, music, and other productions and projects; assists guest designers and arts with technical matters
* Advises production managers, lighting and sound designers, on the technical specifications, costs and usage of technical equipment required for the individual show, and supervises the implementations of approved technical designs
* Supervises and assists with set and stage construction and management.
* Assists in recruiting, training and assignment of volunteer or paid technical staff for individual shows
* Orients facility renters and visiting productions to safety, technical characteristics and other areas of facility operations; facilitates the use of the technical facilities by the resident company and others engaged by or renting the facility
* Monitors the condition of equipment including lighting, sound, and rigging equipment; arranges for the repair and replacement within budgetary constraints; performs preventive maintenance on equipment
* Assists with the preparation and control of production budgets; maintains inventory and orders specialized supplies
* Attends technical Week rehearsals, in order to supervise and assist in the technical aspects of the mounting the show
* Makes recommendations to the Board of Directors or theatre leadership regarding capital purchases of technical equipment

Because a TD may be called upon to deal with a wide range of technical issues, they benefit from a working knowledge of techniques, methods and procedures of theatre, dance, and music productions and presentations including stage, set, sound and lighting design and implementation; stage management; computerized lighting systems; stage carpentry; appropriate safety precautions and procedures.

**Time commitment**

* TBD by Theatre Oxford in advance

### Scenic Director: Overview of the role

The scenic director / set designer is in charge of designing and creating the sets for theatrical productions. The role involves collaborating and communicating with the director, producer, costume designer and other members of the creative team.

All the scenery, furniture and props the audience sees at a production of a play make up the set design. The set designer is responsible for designing these physical surroundings in which the action will take place.

A theatre set should: (1) suggest the style and tone of the whole production; (2) create mood and atmosphere; (3) give clues as to the specific time and place of the action; and (4) offer creative possibilities for the movement and grouping of the actors.

The set may also need to be designed so the backstage areas used by the actors and stage crew are kept out of sight from the audience. This will depend on the effect the director wants to create with the staging and on the type of stage the production uses.

All the things appearing on the stage other than the scenery are called stage properties, or props. Set props like furniture, draperies and decorations are the types of things that complete the set and they need to be part of the set design.

The set designer will normally read the script many times, both to get a feel for the flavor and spirit of the script and to list its specific requirements for scenery, furnishings and props. The time of day, location, season, historical period and any set changes called for in the script are noted. The set designer's focus here is on figuring out everything that may be needed based on the dialogue in the script. Stage directions tend to be ignored at this point in the process.

Set designers use several tools to communicate their ideas to the director and the other designers. These include:

* A rough sketch of the set in the preliminary phase
* Floor plans drawn to scale showing from above the general layout of each set and the placement of the furniture and large props
* Front elevations giving a view of the elements of the set from the front and showing details like windows or platforms
* Miniature three-dimensional models showing how each set will look when finished.

These visual aids help to ensure that all the theatre artists involved in the production understand each other.

**Tasks**

In general, the scenic director / set designer may do any of all of the following:

* Read scripts
* Produce plans, drawings and model of sets
* Prepare estimate of set costs
* Assists with the preparation of production budgets and manages budgets as necessary
* Attend rehearsals
* Collaborate with theatre crew throughout production

**Time commitment**

* TBD by Theatre Oxford in advance

### Props Manager: Overview of the role

The Props Manager is responsible for designing and securing all stage properties needed for each character in show.

**Tasks**

In general, key duties for the Props Manager include:

* Works with director to understand their vision and needs related to time period or other limitations
* Determines needed props for each show considering script, time period of show, and usage of props
* Works with producer to communicate budgetary needs and work within the assigned budget; collects all receipts for expenses and turns these in to the producer
* Works with producer as necessary to find alternate sources of props if unable to find what is needed
* Works with producer and director to ensure props are ready according to schedule
* Works closely with each actor to develop understanding of usage of any special props
* Works with stage manager and props crew to explain and develop mechanics of running the show, including setting up prop tables and assigning specific tasks to each crew member
* Strikes all props at end of show and return to the prop shop or place of origin

**Time commitment**

* TBD by Theatre Oxford in advance

### House Manager: Overview of the role

The house manager is responsible for the smooth operation of the house (typically both the lobby and audience seating area) during the run of the show. House managers welcome the public to the theatre and oversee their safety and well-being before, during, and immediately after the show. They answer questions, listen to patrons' compliments and concerns, and make audience members feel welcome.

The front-of-house staff may be the only members of the company who the audience interact with on a regular basis, so their interactions are of prime importance.

**Tasks and duties**

Key duties of the house manager may include: recruiting or supervise recruiting of all house workers (ushers, greeter, refreshment or souvenir seller, etc.); coordinating building opening times on show nights with stage manager; orienting and training all house workers; explaining how tickets are to be taken and where they are to be stored; checking rest rooms after intermission and at end of night; cleaning house area and restocking supplies; along with the stage manager, ensure all lights are turned off after each show and all doors are locked, and that no water is left running.

* Responsible for ensuring excellent customer service from front-of-house staff
* Staffs and organizes all public and preview performances
* Provides an excellent patron experience at all performances
* Manages printed program distribution, and secures programs and other patron materials
* Maintains the appearance of the lobby and all public areas; communicates with maintenance as necessary to ensure a clean environment
* Resolves conflicts with any patron that may arise
* Hires, trains, schedules and/or supervises Assistant House Managers and Backup House Managers
* Recruits and coordinates volunteer ushers
* Coordinates performance timelines with stage management, including preshow chat, curtain speeches, and intermission
* Maintains ticket-scanning equipment, hearing impaired devices, and walkie-talkies for communicating with stage manager
* Completes and distributes house report for each performance, if required
* Provides leadership in emergency situations, including fire alarm and inclement weather warnings
* Works closely with management to ensure proper staff is in place for all performances
* Works to ensure all house management needs are met

**Time commitment**

* TBD by Theatre Oxford in advance