

Clarkson Music Theatre Inc.

Handbook • 2007

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This is an updated version of our 2002 handbook

CLARKSON MUSIC THEATRE HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Clarkson Music Theatre. This handbook has been provided to offer general information about your Company and what you can expect to experience in the months ahead. We hope you find it useful.

Welcome!

- Welcome to Clarkson Music Theatre. CMT is a community group, established in 1945. We have a tradition of providing quality entertainment to the community. We are pleased to welcome new and returning members aboard for our productions. Our members come from all walks of life. What we have in common is our love of musical theatre.
- Running a theatre company involves more than just mounting shows. An elected Board of Directors is responsible for play selection, director selection, publicity and communications, policy development, fundraising, as well as the day-to-day operations of the group.
- In addition to the on-going expenses (such as insurance and rent), the cost of producing a musical can be in excess of \$50,000. Royalties and auditorium rentals make up a large percentage of this figure which must be covered by ticket sales. Unfortunately, expenses inevitably exceed sales. In order to make up our short falls, we rely on monies made from Bingo. Consequently, your involvement in this year-round fund-raising is essential. We ask you to help out at least twice a year. The financial contribution from Bingo towards any given show is in the neighborhood of \$20,000. This allows us to continue to provide the quality of musical production at which CMT excels.
- Members receive scores when membership dues have been paid. Scores may be collected at the end of the production. If rented, please erase any pencilled-in notations you might have made.
- A reminder that, because we are all amateurs and therefore volunteers, cast members are expected to help out “off-stage” too, in areas such as set building and painting, costume preparation, distribution of publicity flyers, and the moves in and out of our production space (see “Production Week” notes). The Box office relies on the cast to sell tickets to friends and family - thereby helping us fill the theatre. Please assist where you can.
- If this is your first taste of community theatre or your first time out with us, we guarantee you both hard work **AND** fun! Experience has taught us that commitment and dedication translate into a successful production and a wonderful sense of accomplishment for everyone.

Membership

Clarkson Music theatre is an adult group open to people 16 years and over.

- Membership is \$25 per year for single members and \$35 per year for family members (i.e. spouses and children 16 and over still living at home).
- Children cannot be members of the group and, therefore, do not have to pay the fee when children are required in a show. We do, however, ask for a \$10 “performance fee”, payable at the beginning of rehearsals, to help defray operating costs.

Rehearsals

- Always be prompt and prepared! If you are ill or have an important work or school-related conflict, always contact the Producer or Stage Manager as soon as possible. The phone numbers of the entire Production Team are included in Appendix A.
- If you miss three rehearsals without good reason, you may be asked to leave the cast. Your absence puts others at a disadvantage, especially if you are learning movement, dance steps or harmonies.
- Pay close attention to what you learn at rehearsals. You are expected to practice your lines, song lyrics and musical parts, dance steps and movement at home, too. Bring a notebook and pencil to rehearsals so that you can make notes about your blocking, direction, choreography and music. Consider, also, bringing a small cassette recorder (battery powered) to tape your musical parts. This makes it easier to work on them between rehearsals.
- Rehearsals will be held on Monday and Wednesday evenings, with Saturday and/or Sunday rehearsals added when necessary. Please refer to the rehearsal schedule (Appendix B) to see when you are required.
- Rehearsals are usually at Christ Church, 1700 Mazo Court, Mississauga, from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. Saturday and/or Sunday locations and times will be announced as required.
- Leave your valuables (e.g. jewelry, cash) at home.
- We suggest you bring bottled water and perhaps a light snack for full day rehearsals.
- Sobriety is expected at rehearsals (and during the run of the show). Alcohol is NOT allowed to be consumed in any of the stage or greenroom areas.

The Producers

- The Show Producers are responsible to CMT's Board of Directors for the entire production.
- The Show Producers are in charge of the business aspects of the show: establishing Crew Leaders (for props, costumes, set construction, backstage work, publicity, etc.) and seeing that their jobs are done; setting and overseeing the show budget; looking after hall; rental contracts, royalties, scripts and scores.

The Directors

The Directors work as a team, but also have identified roles:

- **The Artistic Director** is responsible for the overall composition of the production, including working very closely with the actors.
- **The Musical Director** is in charge of all music, both choral and instrumental.
- **The Choreographer** designs and manages the dance and movement of the cast.

The Stage Manager

- The Stage Manager is responsible to the Producer and the Directors.
- During rehearsals, he/she ensures that schedules are set and followed, cast is called when required, facilities are set up as needed, and that rehearsals run with as few disruptions as possible. All questions about the operation or scheduling of rehearsals and performances should be referred to him / her.
- During the actual rehearsals, the Stage Manager assists the Directors, takes notes for props, set, lighting and blocking, and ensures that the Producer and appropriate Crew Leaders are kept up to date on any changes, deletions or additions.
- When the Show moves into the Theatre, the Stage Manager coordinates all the technical aspects of the show with the music, dance and acting. He/she assumes responsibility for calling and running the show. Each part of the show (props, lighting, set changes, cast entrances, music cues, etc.) takes its cues from the Stage Manager.
- Once the Show is set, traditionally after the final Dress Rehearsal, the Show is "handed over" to the Stage Manager by the Directors. At that point, the Stage Manager's primary responsibility is to guarantee that the Show which the Directors have set is the Show that the audience sees. In the unlikely event of a problem, the Stage Manager may change entrances and exits, props, or even set changes.
- The Stage Manager is the only person with an overview of the entire show.

Crew

For the show to run smoothly, we must rely on the efforts of several crews. Each has its own area of expertise:

- **The Prop Crew** coordinates the props table, which is located back stage. Cast members pick up and return props to their correct location during the Show's run.
- **Costume Crew** will ensure that appropriate costumes are ready for opening night. They are also available during the run of the Show for last minute repairs, etc.
- Your costume, however, is your responsibility during dress rehearsals and the run of the show. Please be sure it is all accounted for after each performance (before you leave the theatre) and that it is kept pressed and clean. **Dressers** will be available, when necessary, to assist with quick changes.
- It is the responsibility of the **Stage Crew** to ensure smooth set changes. This may involve moving set pieces, furniture, etc. Cast members may be called upon to assist if this is deemed appropriate to the scene being staged.
- **Make-up Crew** is available to assist with the appropriate application of make-up as needed. Cast members usually apply their own make-up. It is important to follow the design approved.
- Cast members may have limited interaction with the **Lighting** and **Sound Crews**. These crew members provide some of the special effects which will enhance the performance.
- Make sure you learn your responsibility vis-a-vis the Crew once they join the rehearsals in the Production Hall. Remember, *any stage production is a team effort involving both cast and crew.*

Backstage Protocol

- Be prepared for your entrances, but don't spend excessive time backstage "watching the show". Cast may wait for their cues in the Green Rooms (their dressing rooms, and the general cast Green Room backstage).
- No talking! Remember, there is audio equipment backstage which can pick up your voice.
- Never question the authority of the Stage Manger, Assistant Stage Managers and Stage Crew.
- Backstage staff are your greatest allies... treat them with respect!

Backstage Protocol (cont)

- Do not touch the curtain, props, scenery or anything else backstage unless you are directed to do so.
- Be aware of sightlines! It is essential that the audience not see cast members backstage. (That's why stage crew and backstage personnel wear black!) The general rule of thumb is that if you can see the audience, they can probably see you.
- Backstage areas are restricted to production personnel only.

Personal Requirements

- Cast members are usually asked to supply their own footwear and hose (tights). Other minimal purchases may be requested of you.
- Specialty stage make-up will be supplied. You should, however, bring your own make-up (lipstick - clear bright red-, eyeliner, mascara, brushes, sponges, etc.). Don't forget soap, a towel and Kleenex!
- With regard to hygiene, remember that you are working in close quarters with many people. Hot lights, heavy costumes, nervous jitters and movement on stage lead to extra perspiration. Showers and deodorant are essential!
- When possible, do your own hair prior to arriving at the theatre. If a wig is required, one may be provided. It is your responsibility to ensure its safe keeping. Do not alter the style provided.
- Please remove your personal jewelry during the run of the show. Most often, it is inappropriate for your role, and you will not be permitted to wear it. Do not carry excessive amounts of cash either, as there is no secure place to leave it in the theatre. The Theatre Parking Lot may not be a safe place to store valuables.

Production Week / "Dark Week"

The week before Opening Night is the "Production Week" -more affectionately called "Dark Week". These rehearsals will fill your evenings from "first call" (about 6 p.m.) to the end of rehearsals (about 11 p.m.). Rehearsals generally run every day of the week. A run down of what to expect follows:

- **Set Up:** The full cast is expected to come out to our storage facilities (in Streetsville) to help move the set, costumes and props to the theatre, so that they can be ready for our first tech run. The cast often returns to rehearse in the rehearsal space while the crew takes over to assemble the set. Meanwhile, the artistic director and stage manager work to determine appropriate light focus and set up of stage. Finally, it's time for the cast.

Production Week / “Dark Week” (cont)

- The **Final Runthrough** may not take place on the Production Stage. The Runthrough runs the show without stops. The cast gets a better feel for the whole production. The show’s “running time” is approximated. Our final technical rehearsals take place on the Production Stage.
- **Q to Q** is the rehearsal which allows the Stage Manager to work with the crew, “cue” to “cue” (Q to Q). Thus cues for lights, special effects, sound and set change are the centre of attention. The Cast learns their “marks”. This rehearsal is predominantly for the crew to practice their jobs. This rehearsal may be slow and painful. ***Be patient.***
- **The First Dress** runs the show with everything but the Orchestra in place (cues, costumes, props, and music - provided by the rehearsal accompanist).
- **The Final Full Dress Rehearsal** is with the Orchestra. The Sound Technician gets to do a final balancing of levels.

Showtime

- The Director will advise you of the Cast Call time. Be punctual.
- The Musical Director will usually have a vocal warm up and stretch.
- Once you are in make-up and costume, please stay in the dressing area. A cast member in make-up / costume must never venture into front-of-house of the auditorium.
- Do not bring family or friends backstage or to the dressing area before or after the show. You may meet them in the theatre lobby after you change into your street clothes.
- Refreshments will be available during the run of the show in the “green room”.

Clean-Up

After the last performance, all cast members are expected to assist with the clean-up. These tasks include:

- Dressing Rooms need to be left spotless. You might bring Windex, Spray Cleaners, Rubber gloves. Generally, mirrors and counters are wiped down, floors are swept, drawers are emptied.
- Costumes need to be transferred to designated vehicles so costumes can be cleaned, then stored.
- Similarly, props need to be cleared and stored.
- The Set needs to be disassembled and transferred to the waiting moving van. The set may need to be stored back in the Streetsville Warehouse this same night.

Cast Parties and other Social Opportunities

- Traditionally CMT holds a cast party after the final performance, although smaller “wind-downs” generally take place at local restaurants after each performance. You will be informed of details (and any costs involved) at show time. By the way, we are always looking for willing hosts / hostesses for our parties.
- The CMT also coordinates other Social Activities. They have included: the Strawberry Social Picnic, the Christmas Party, Theatre day trips, etc. If you are interested in helping us organize these events, please speak to one of the Board of Directors.
- There are other committees you can join. They include: the Silver Jubilee Committee, the Selection Committee, etc.

Additional Costs

- There are other expenses that can be incurred during the rehearsal / run period. These may include: thank you gifts for some production personnel, cast photos, show logo t-shirts/ sweatshirts. Costs vary.

Please refer to:

Appendix A: The names and phone numbers of our Production Team

Appendix B: The Rehearsal Schedule

We hope this Handbook has been a useful source of information

And now, as the Orchestra starts up the Overture, as the lights flicker, as the curtains part and as you take a deep breath, take your first step onto the boards. Let the play begin...

Technicolour The Best of CMT. The Drum Song Brigadoon
1984 Fiddler on the Roof
1979 Sweethearts Rodgers and Hammerstein
Sunshine 1976 The Yeomen of the Guard
to Broadway Engaged 1972 Guys and Dolls Fiddler
Patience 1970 The Mikado 2002 Broadway's Hero's and
Together The Merry Widow 1999 A Tribute to Broadway - II. Hello
The Gondoliers 1996 Guys and Dolls Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour
94 Cole H.M.S. Pinafore 1993 Kiss Me Kate 1992 The Best of CMT. The
Yankees The Pirates of Penzance 1989 Anything Goes Oliver 1988 Flower Drum Song
Hello, Dolly! Bells are Ringing 1985 The Pyjama Game The Merry Widow 1984 Fiddler
Spring Oklahoma 1981 Carousel 1989 A Tribute to Broadway - I Annie Get Your Gun 1979 Sweethearts
Concert 1978 A Gift of Song The Music Man 1974 High Button Shoes 1973 Savoy to Broadway
1975 La Belle Helene The Gypsy Baron 1969 The Merry Widow 1968 Patience 1970
of 1971 Oklahoma The Music Man 1977 Blossom Time Little Mary Sunshine
Villains 2001 Tribute to Broadway - III Me And My Girl 2000 Puttin' It Together The Music
Hello, Dolly! 1998 A Tribute to Broadway - I Annie Get Your Gun 1997 The Gondoliers
Technicolour Dreamcoat 1995 The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas 1994 Cole H
CMT. The Mikado 1991 Cabaret The Music Man 1986 Hello, Dolly! Bells are Ringing
Sun Song Brigadoon 1987 Cabaret The Music Man 1982 Voices of Spring Oklahoma 1981 C
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Sunshine 1976 The Yeomen of the Guard Brigadoon 1975 La Belle Helene The Mu
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Dolly! 1998 A Tribute to Broadway - I Annie Get Your Gun 1997 The Gondoliers 19
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CMT. The Mikado 1991 Cabaret The Music Man 1986 Hello, Dolly! Bells
Sun Song Brigadoon 1987 Cabaret The Music Man 1982 Voices of Spring Oklahoma
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Guys and Dolls Fiddler 1979 Sweethearts Rodgers and Hammer
Broadway's Hero's and Villains 2001 A Tri
tribute to Broadway - II. Hello, Dol
1992 88 Flower Dr
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