

Production Guidelines

Preamble

This information is intended to be of assistance to you as a Producer and/or Director of a DSS production. It is intended to provide you with useful information and guidance on logistical points in bringing a production to performance.

These notes are subject to ongoing updating and revision and we would welcome your feedback on their usefulness and any suggested improvements.

Members of the Committee and the Artistic Committee are available to provide support, help and information if required. Contact details are provided throughout this document.

Liaison with the Committee

The Committee will appoint a liaison officer for each production and you should keep this person informed of progress or any issues arising with your production. He/she can advise and put you in touch with other members of the Committee or the Society who may be able to assist.

Pre-Audition

Once the Artistic Committee and the Committee have approved the proposal for the production, there are a number of tasks to be carried out prior to auditions and finalising a cast.

Budget

The attached template sets out some of the key budget items arising and you should complete this and discuss with the Treasurer (treasurer@dublinshakespearesociety.ie), who will keep the Committee updated on budgetary matters.

Rights

If performance rights apply to the production, you should take early steps to secure the rights. If royalty fees apply, then this should be included in the budget for the show. The Treasurer will reimburse expenses on production of a receipt.

Rehearsal Schedule

The Teachers' Club will make rehearsal rooms available for DSS shows. This is subject to availability and you should discuss with Tadhg Mac Pháidín and/or Stephen Morrissey the availability of rooms and agree a schedule. Most productions find it best for cast and production team to select the same night(s) every week for rehearsal and stick to the schedule.

Performance Date and Venue

Performance dates should be part of your proposal and we would recommend that you confirm the performance dates with the Committee and the Teachers' Club at an early stage. Publicity material etc. will be developed based on these dates. Most DSS productions take place from Tues-Saturday in the week of performance. The DSS uses the spaces in the Teachers' Club for performances. Your proposal should indicate which space is most suitable for your production i.e. the Halla, the basement theatre or one of the other rooms. Prices for use of the rooms vary. If you would like to use another venue for your performance, this should be discussed with the Committee at an early stage.

Guest Speaker and post-show discussion

Some productions have included a post-show discussion with the director and cast. If you plan to do this, please notify the Committee and the Artistic Committee and this can be factored into planning for the production.

If you wish to invite an outside speaker e.g. an academic expert on the play or its playwright, this should be discussed with the Committee and Artistic Committee as early as possible and factored into plans for the production.

Production Manager

It is strongly recommended that you appoint a production manager to look after the logistical matters associated with the production and to support you in bringing the production to performance.

Consider sound and lighting requirements

The DSS and the Teachers' Club have sound and lighting equipment which will be available for DSS productions. The DSS has a rig of 4 lights with two stands and a controller.

The DSS also has a laptop with speakers that has audio cueing software installed. Further details on these can be found at

<http://www.dublinshakespearesociety.ie/booking-portable-lighting/>

Password DSS2019

There are also society members who can work with you on sound and lighting for productions.

Any requirement for other specialist expertise, e.g. fight coordinator should also be raised at an early stage.

Auditions

Agree dates, times and venue for auditions

Draft an audition notice for all members. This should outline the number of roles, a brief description of each (gender, age range¹, and any other useful information). If you require those auditioning to have rehearsed a particular script, this should be specified and a link to it should also be included in the email.

The same information will also need to be posted on the DSS website. The following link can be used <http://www.dublinshakespearesociety.ie/event-inclusion-on-website/>

This notice is also a useful opportunity to seek members available to help backstage or to provide technical assistance (light, sound, set design etc.).

A member of the DSS Committee can attend auditions.

Generally, preference in casting should be given to members of the DSS. Only where it is not possible to fill a role from among the DSS membership should consideration be given to casting a non-member. All non-members will then have to join the DSS (see below) in order to be covered by insurance for DSS activities.

Post-Audition

After auditions, all those who have auditioned should be contacted, preferably by telephone, with the outcome of the audition.

While auditions are open to members and non-members, for insurance purposes, all those in the cast and involved in the production must join the DSS. Non-members are not covered by our insurance policy for DSS activities. Details on how to join the DSS are available on the website and membership subscriptions can be paid online or to any member of the Committee. The membership officer can be contacted on membership@dublinshakespearesociety.ie

All cast members should also be asked to sign a copy of the attached release form, consenting to the DSS owning the intellectual property rights to the production, allowing the DSS to publicise the show and confirming that they consent to this.

Once a cast has been finalised, it is suggested that you organise a full cast meeting and read through of the script. Thereafter, the format and schedule of rehearsals is a matter for you as Director and depends on the nature of the production. However, it is suggested that, if possible, you should agree an indicative rehearsal schedule and circulate a copy to all cast members and those working backstage. The production manager should get contact details for all cast members and keep them informed of changes to the schedule or other relevant information by text/email/WhatsApp, as appropriate.

¹ For insurance and child protection reasons, the DSS does not allow children to perform in its productions. Therefore, all those auditioning and cast must be over 18 years of age.

The DSS Committee should also be kept informed of the rehearsal schedule by way of the liaison officer.

Intimacy Guidelines

The DSS has intimacy guidelines which are available here (link required). You should read these in advance of any rehearsals or auditions and we would ask that these be respected. All cast members and those involved in the production should also be made aware of the guidelines.

Offensive/Non-PC language? Does this get raised now or should this be raised with the Artistic Committee at pre-production stage e.g. scripts written a long time ago which may include language that in today's world would not be considered suitable/acceptable.

Poster Design

In the first week of rehearsals, you should meet the liaison officer to discuss the design and format of the publicity poster. The poster content should include:

1. The DSS logo and the words "Dublin Shakespeare Society presents..."
2. Production Date, Time and Venue
3. Ticket Price
4. Director's Name (under the production title)
5. Rights Details (where applicable)

There are members with design skills, so it is suggested that you ask for assistance in design matters from among the DSS members.

Once a draft design is ready, it should go to the Committee and Artistic Committee for feedback. Once finalised, the design should then be sent for publication. The final poster should be available in A1 (2 copies), A2, A3 (6 copies), A4 flyer (300 copies) and web format (jpg).

The website will also require a Slider image with measurements in pixels as 1080x420 px and a Featured Image with measurements 450 x 270 px. These should preferably be 300 dpi and in .tiff or .png format.

The jpg file should then be sent to the Committee, who will organise for advance publicity to be posted on social media, on the website and sent by email to all DSS members.

Programme Design

The Programme for the production should have the same overall look as the poster and publicity material. The usual format is A5 two sided single sheet.

The Programme should include information on:

1. Cast Members
2. Crew Members
3. Director's Note
4. Acknowledgements (including thanks to the Teachers' Club)

The number of programmes required will depend on the size of the venue being used and the expected audience size over the run.

The programme design, layout and content should be finalised at least two weeks before the production opens.

Photos

The DSS has its own digital camera, which also has a microphone and stand. This can be used to capture images, video and sounds of rehearsal. These can be used for publicity to promote the show. Please ensure that all cast members have consented to their image being used to promote the show using the attached consent form.

The Committee can be contacted regarding details of getting the camera. A member of the production team is probably best for taking photos/videos during rehearsals. However, the Committee can organise another member of the DSS to take photos/videos if required.

If you require photos or a video of the production itself, please discuss this at an early stage with the Committee liaison. Arrangements can be made to video the production and any such recording will be the property of the Dublin Shakespeare Society with the Society making decisions regarding its storage and dissemination.

Other Marketing Material

Images from the DSS camera, from phones or videos can also be used for social media content. Please ensure that these are of high quality and suitable for use. The Director and Producer should agree on the best images/videos to be used and passed on to the website manager.

A Press release should also be drafted three weeks before performance. This should include the DSS name and logo, details of the show, performance time, dates and venue as well as booking details.

Press Release is issued to:

- Media (see attached list)
- Education Institutions (Drama Departments)
- Gaiety Theatre
- Lir
- Bow Street
- Dublin Youth Theatre
- Ballally
- Bradán Players (Leixlip)
- Drama League of Ireland

Appoint a Front of House team.

The Committee can organise someone to take ticket bookings.

This person will hold the DSS mobile phone and take bookings for the show. The Society also has an online booking form at

<http://www.dublinshakespearesociety.ie/book-tickets/>

This form sends the information to a designated email address

bookings@dublinshakespearesociety.ie which can be set up so that whoever is managing the bookings can access the emails received at

<https://webmail.register365.com> where a folder will be set up there for the production.

He/She will update the production manager on a weekly basis on the number of bookings per show.

Encourage cast members to “sell” the show. Friends and family of cast members are a key target audience for DSS productions.

Box Office on the Night

The Committee will organise for society members to staff the box office on the night of a performance. Two people will be on duty and will liaise with the production manager regarding numbers, admission times etc.

Access to the Venue

Times and dates for getting access to the venue in advance of production in order to prepare it for performance, sort out set construction, dress and technical rehearsals should be discussed with the Teachers’ Club well in advance and then clarified and confirmed two weeks before performance.

Set construction

Elaborate sets should be avoided where possible. If you need assistance with set construction, please let the Committee know in advance and every effort will be made to find members willing and able to help with set construction.

Striking the Set

The Teachers' Club will require access to the venue as soon as possible on the day after the final performance. You should confirm with the Teachers' Club when access to the venue will be possible and have arrangements in place to have cast and crew available to strike the set and remove it off site, tidy up the performance space, dressing rooms etc. and remove all personal property, DSS props and equipment and ensure that they are given to the appropriate people for safekeeping.

Post Show debrief

In the week after the production, a meeting should be organised with the Committee liaison and/or another member of the Committee to review the production including

- Budget;
- audience feedback;
- your experience as a Director;
- any suggestions you might have in relation to future productions; and
- amendments to these guidelines.

Committee

Dublin Shakespeare Society

October 2022