

Katharine Cornell Theatre
University at Buffalo

STUDENT THEATRE HANDBOOK

Welcome to the KCT. As you know, the department is growing and we are aware that there are many more students seeking performance opportunities than can be accommodated by departmental productions. We are excited by the student energy and enthusiasm, and we support and encourage the development of student theater productions. It is our hope that you will be able to use the KCT as a permanent resource for student theater at the University at Buffalo. The purpose of this handbook is to help you get the most out of your production experience and to help student theater grow in its new home.

As you will encounter in theaters everywhere, the KCT has certain guidelines and regulations for use. Many of these are dictated by the university. All of the rules are for your safety and to preserve the space for continued student use. Although the language is a bit formal, the rules are a necessary element in keeping the space and the student productions running smoothly for your production and the student productions to follow.

To help you understand and navigate the handbook, we recommend that you work with a faculty mentor for your production. All members of the faculty are familiar with the rules of the KCT and can help you realize your vision artistically while adhering to the guidelines. Your mentor is available to answer questions regarding the use of the space and any other aspect of the process that you encounter difficulties with along the way to the performances.

Before you meet with your mentor, read the attached handbook. Then, arrange to meet with your mentor to go over the handbook. If you have not worked in the KCT before, you should plan to have this meeting as soon as possible after your performance dates are approved, so that you do not encounter unnecessary difficulties later on. The purpose of this meeting is to clear the way for your creative work, so that you can best realize your vision for your production.

We look forward to working with you and wish you the best of luck in all your endeavors.

INTRODUCTION: These rules regulate the use of the Katharine Cornell Theatre at the University at Buffalo (“KCT”) for all student-directed and produced workshop projects. All KCT projects must be done within the production limits outlined below.

Should any student violate any of these rules, the Department of Theatre & Dance may cancel any and all performances of the production. The Season Selection Committee will decide upon the appropriate action in such cases.

OVERSIGHT: All KCT projects must be overseen by a student “House Manager” who will be responsible for opening and closing the space for each performance, and restoring the space to its original condition at the end of each performance. Each project must also arrange for a Faculty mentor, who will advise the director and be on call for any emergencies during rehearsal or performance. The producer must hire a KCT “Student Technician,” trained by the CFA, to supervise all technical rehearsals at a cost of \$12/hour, with a four-hour minimum. The producer must arrange for a KCT Student Technician at least four weeks before the first technical rehearsal. For each performance, a Faculty/Staff Monitor must be present for the production and must sign the “Ticket Sales Total Sheet” after reconciling the receipts for the performance with the producer.

PRODUCTION TEAM: KCT projects may use only the rep lighting plot in place, and the light and sound boards in the booth. Each project may have only the following production staff: stage manager, board operators, house/box office manager, and a director, choreographer, and music director as required by the project. Each project should have its board operators, house manager, and stage manager in place before beginning rehearsal, preferably listed in the project proposal.

CASTING POLICY: As the use of the KCT is a limited resource within the department, all KCT projects must hold open audition calls and cast from the pool of actors who audition. No parts may be pre-cast; no actors may be cast without auditioning. The director may not cast any student who has already been cast or assigned to a run crew in a departmental production without the prior approval of the director or technical director.

PROPOSALS: Proposals (form attached) for KCT projects must be submitted to the Season Selection Committee by the last meeting of the committee in the semester before the proposed production to receive full consideration. A copy of the script should accompany the proposal. Revues and one-act festivals must not exceed 90 minutes in length; single-play projects should not exceed 45 minutes, except with the permission of the committee. As a guideline, one page of text equals approximately one minute of stage time. For the academic year 2005-2006, the Season Selection Committee will approve up to 2 projects per semester.

RELATIONSHIP TO DEPARTMENTAL SEASON: KCT projects must not interfere with departmental productions in any way. Casting for KCT projects must always take place after the departmental productions have been cast, and no actor may turn down a departmental role to accept a KCT role. No other production team member may drop a departmental design or crew assignment to accept a KCT assignment without prior approval of the Director of

Design/Technology. The director of a KCT project must always defer to the departmental rehearsal and performance schedule when there are any conflicts with a departmental production. Any student already committed to work on a departmental production who wishes to audition for a KCT project for an overlapping time period must get prior approval from the director of the departmental production.

KATHARINE CORNELL THEATRE CONTACTS:

Robert Knopf, Chair	716-645 x1334	rknopf@buffalo.edu
Mike Formato, Production Manager	645-6898 x1417	formato@buffalo.edu
Brian Sidorowicz, CFA Production Supervisor	716-645-6927	bds@buffalo.edu

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Section I: Basic Provisions

1. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND LICENSING

- A. **COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS:** No activities in violation of Federal, State, or Local laws, ordinances, rules, or regulations or the opinion of the Board of Health shall be permitted on KCT premises, and it shall be the responsibility of the USER, while under the terms and duration of this Rental Agreement, to enforce this provisions.
- B. **RIGHTS:** The USER shall apply for the rights to produce a workshop project in the KCT within two weeks of receiving approval for the production, and shall pay the rights and fees within four weeks of the production.

2. USER REPRESENTATIVE

At the time of the Rental Agreement, USER will furnish to the DEPARTMENT the name, address, phone numbers, and e-mail address of the USER's representative. This representative will be the sole person authorized to make decisions, resolve problems and conflicts, and negotiate any alterations in event procedure with the DEPARTMENT. If USER must change representative, the DEPARTMENT shall receive written notification of the change not later than eight (8) hours prior to such change.

3. DAMAGE PAYMENTS

The USER is responsible for all damage caused by any person association with the production under their supervision. The USER will be held responsible for the costs of such damage, and the additional charges will be withheld from the receipts from the production. Any additional costs will be included in a separate invoice for payment. USER further agrees to leave the KCT premises in the same condition as existed prior to the USER's event. Any additional charges incurred because of post-event clean-up will be borne by the USER. The DEPARTMENT will not be responsible for any damage of loss to USER's property, or that of the USER's agents, employees, or other staff, regardless of the cause of such damage or loss.

4. SAFETY

- A. USER shall not obstruct the entrance to the premises, halls, stairs, lobby, and audience chamber, nor allow the same to be obstructed in any manner. USER further agrees not to bring onto the premises any material, substances, equipment, or object that is likely to endanger any person on the premises or constitute a hazard to property thereon. The DEPARTMENT shall have the right to refuse to allow any such material, substances, equipment, or object to be brought onto the premises and the further right to require its immediate removal.
- B. Patrons or other non-stage personnel are prohibited from being on stage or in the wings at all times unless approved in advance by the DEPARTMENT.
- C. USER must adhere to all University at Buffalo and State of New York safety policies and generally accepted standards applying to health, life, and fire safety. Questions may be directed to the University at Buffalo's Office of Environmental Safety and/or the Department of University Police.

5. PARKING

Parking is not permitted in the “Service Area,” “Loading Dock,” or service roads. All vehicles parked on campus before 3:00 PM weekdays must display a registered University hang tag or guest tag, or park in one of the “paid lots” or at a meter.

Section II: Technical Rules

1. STAGE PERSONNEL

A KCT TECHNICAL SUPERVISOR is required for all technical rehearsals, provided for by the CFA. A FACULTY/STAFF member must be present and any and all performances in the KCT.

2. REPRODUCTION

USER agrees that no recording of any kind, either visual or audio, will be made of the event covered by this Agreement except for archival purposes and with the express written consent of all ARTISTS involved in the event.

3. SOUND/LIGHTING CONTROL

The DEPARTMENT Production Manager must approve the sound and lighting board operator(s) and may require that trained CFA Technical Supervisors be assigned to these positions. The DEPARTMENT reserves the right to control the final equalization and sound level for any event.

4. SET-UP, TECHNICAL REHEARSALS AND STRIKE

All set-up, technical rehearsal, and strike times must be scheduled and made part of this agreement. USERS of sets, props, pedestals, theatrical equipment, and related materials in the KCT are expected to remove these items immediately following the conclusion of their event and return the spaces to their pre-event condition. All soft goods, equipment, and tools must be returned to their proper location and be in working order. The stage floor must be cleared of tape and swept clean. The control booth must be restored to pre-event condition. In the event that a USER fails to remove the materials above immediately following the conclusion of their event, the USER shall be liable for the cost and removal and storage by the DEPARTMENT. The DEPARTMENT shall not be liable for any damage to property so removed. The DEPARTMENT Production Manager is solely authorized to determine whether a strike meets the requirements as stated above.

5. STAGE PREPARATION

All tape used on the stage surface must be of light adhesive, approved for use by the DEPARTMENT Production Manager. The USER shall not allow the use of nails, tacks, stage screws, or similar items to be driven in or placed in any part of the premises without prior approval of the DEPARTMENT Production Manager.

6. SUPERVISION/RESTRICTIONS

No rigging or stage equipment shall be used or changed without the prior knowledge and approval of the DEPARTMENT Production Manager. No painting is allowed in the KCT at any time. No one associated with the production shall be allowed on the lighting grid.

7. TIME

Time shall be of the essence in this Agreement and the time herein granted shall not be extended for the use of the premises or for the installation or removal of equipment without the written permission of the CHAIR and PRODUCTION MANAGER.

ALL TIME/DATE ADJUSTMENTS (e.g. curtain times and performances dates) must be made in writing by USER and approved by the DEPARTMENT a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the first day of use under this agreement.

8. KEYBOARD USAGE AND TUNING SERVICE

Use of piano must be requested a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance. USER must provide any other instruments. USER is responsible for any damage to the piano.

9. SMOKING

Smoking is prohibited in the KCT. Smoking on stage is only allowed when specified in the script. If the script calls for smoking or the use of any fire, prior approval must be requested in the proposal and obtained in the USER's contract.

Section III: Publicity & Promotion

1. PROGRAMS

Each project may produce a program at the producing group's own expense. The programs must be single-page, black-and-white flyers on letter-sized paper.

2. POSTERS

Each project may produce a poster at the producing group's own expense. The posters must be posted only on the property of the University at Buffalo.

3. PUBLICITY

Publicity shall be limited to posters and two postings to the departmental student listserv. No newspaper reviews of KCT projects shall be allowed.

Section IV: Rehearsals & Performances

Rehearsals without technical support

Lighting and Sound

- Lighting is limited to the single preset of work lights operated from the wall switch.
- Sound is limited to a portable player provided by the user.
- Only small amounts of spike tape may be used.

Technical Rehearsals and Performances

Lighting and Sound

- KCT Student Technician. At least four weeks prior to production, producer must arrange for a KCT Student Technician, trained by the CFA, to be present during technical rehearsals. Please contact Brian Sidorowicz to set this up. The cost is \$12/hour, with a four-hour minimum.

- The Student Technician will help instruct your light and sound board operators on the equipment. S/he will not run the equipment for the production unless the producer has arranged for this at the going rate.
- Burnouts and other technical challenges must be communicated to the student technician via e-mail.
- Rep Light Plot. The light plot is fixed. It may not be changed in any way, nor may anyone but the KCT Student Technician go up on the grid for any reason.
 - The Rep Light Plot may be cued and saved on media provided by the users.
 - The Rep Light Plot will have 5 specials, which may not be refocused.
 - Changes of color media to the Rep Light Plot are not permitted.
 - One follow spot is available. Producer must provide a follow-spot operator if this is to be used.
- Sound Equipment. The sound equipment may not be moved. The producer and director may run sound for the project from a portable sound source. The department takes no responsibility for the security of such devices in the space. We recommend that all equipment provided by the producer or director be taken home after each use.
- Limitations on other Technical Support.
 - The use of fog or smoke is not permitted.
 - Stapling, screwing, or nailing into the stage floor is not permitted.
 - Painting inside or outside the KCT is not permitted.
 - Small amounts of spike tape may be used, but must be removed at strike.
 - Scenery and prop construction will not be provided by the shop. All scenery and props must be provided by the producer or director and must be transported to and from the KCT by them.
- Maintenance of the KCT.
 - The general maintenance of the KCT is the responsibility of any group that uses it and a condition of its use. The director and producer are responsible for ensuring that the space is returned to its original condition after each use. Any problems encountered or damage must be reported to Mike Formato the following morning. The space must be returned to its original condition at the end of the production. Should the space be seriously damaged or not returned to its original condition as stipulated above, the Season Selection committee will consider suspending the director, producer, or producing organization from using the space for a period of time to be determined based on the nature and extent of the damage or problem.

Section V: House Management & Box Office

House Management Procedures

All KCT events that are open to the public must have a designated House Manager and at least two ushers, provided by the producer. The name of the House Manager should be included in the initial proposal.

The House Manager is responsible for seeing to the good order and safe conduct of the audience. S/he will supervise and coordinate the ushering staff, ticket sales, and ticket-taking; oversee seating, house order, and cleanliness; enforce house rules; and handle any issues that arise

regarding accessibility, and fire and safety issues. The House Manager must make the audience aware of any special effects or content issues in the project that might offend or have negative health or safety impact for some patrons, such as strobe lights or loud noises.

The House Manager coordinates the start of the presentation with the Stage Manager. The House Manager must arrive at least one hour prior to opening the house to prepare the house and set up either the KCT box office or a table in the KCT foyer for box office functions. Generally one usher is placed at the foot of the staircase leading to the audience seating to collect tickets, another usher is placed at the top of that staircase to hand out programs and assist patrons in finding a seat, and the balance of ushers, if any, should be strategically placed around the house to assist patrons. Patrons with ambulatory restrictions may enter the house through the double doors leading to the deck.

The House Manager and Ushers will restore the house to its original condition following every presentation, including but not limited to: picking up discarded programs, replacing seats in their original positions, and collecting any belongings left behind by patrons.

Box Office Procedures

If there is no admission fee charged for a KCT project, you are not required to maintain box office or attendance figures. If you charge an admission fee, the following procedures apply. All monies collected at any KCT project event must be accounted for, and therefore contribution, donations, or “passing the hat” are not permitted.

The “House Manager” is responsible for following these procedures and accounting for money and tickets collected. Each producer/director should provide the name of the project’s House Manager in the project proposal.

All events charging admission must sell general admission, single-price tickets with a maximum price of \$5.

The producer or producing organization should provide the House Manager with adequate start-up funds in appropriate denominations to accommodate making change for patrons. For example, if your admission is \$5, you should consider beginning with 8 five-dollar bills, 2 ten-dollar bills, and 1 twenty-dollar bill.

Ticketing is done with numbered carnival-style ticket rolls. The producer is required to supply the ticket roll. Accounting is recorded on the “Ticket Sales Reporting Sheet for Single-Price Ticketing Event” form attached. The ticketing and accounting procedure is as follows:

- The House Manager and Faculty/Staff Monitor agree on the starting ticket number.
- Tickets are sold in numeric order.
- As patrons enter the theatre, their tickets are torn and stubs retained by the ushers.
- After all tickets are sold for the event, the House Manager and Faculty/Staff Monitor agree on the ending ticket number.

- If there is any discrepancy between the number of tickets sold (minus complimentary tickets) and the box office receipts, the House Manager and Faculty/Staff Member will count the torn ticket stubs to resolve the issue.

The House Manager tracks complimentary tickets on the “Complimentary Ticket Sign-In Sheet.” When complimentary tickets are given, the word “comp” must be written on the ticket stub. All persons receiving complimentary tickets print and sign their name and indicate their ticket number on the Complimentary Ticket Sign-In Sheet.

All tickets must be sold at the door. No presale tickets are allowed.

Once all accounting is completed, the House Manager and Faculty/Staff Monitor enclose the box office receipts, ticket stubs, and Complimentary Ticket Sign-In Sheet in a sealed envelope and sign their names across the seal. The House Manager brings the sealed envelope to Richard Harding, Assistant to the Chair, Department of Theatre & Dance, the following business day to be deposited in the proper account. If the department advanced the project \$100 for royalties, props, and such, the first \$100 of receipts will go toward paying back that amount. After that, the department will retain \$1 per ticket to go toward the maintenance of the space and equipment.

For tickets with more than one performance, please fill out a “Ticket Sales Totals Sheet for Single-Price Ticketing Events,” which captures the daily and overall totals. One copy of this form should go to Richard Harding and the other is for the producing organization’s records.

PLEASE REQUEST the “Ticket Sales Reporting Sheet,” “Complimentary Ticket Sign-in Sheet,” and “Ticket Sales Reporting Sheet (Totals)” from Mike Formato at least one before your production dates.

KCT PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM
University at Buffalo
Return to Chair, Department of Theatre & Dance

Director _____ E-mail _____

Play and playwright _____

Producer or producing organization _____

Faculty mentor (signature required) _____

Cast: ___ male and ___ female roles

Proposed performance space _____

Proposed rehearsal schedule _____

Proposed performance dates _____

Minimal technical requirements _____

Running time of performance _____

Technical support (list name, email, and phone)

Stage manager _____

Light board operator _____

Sound board operator _____

House manager _____

Budget needs (including cost of rights, scripts, photocopies, technical elements, etc.):

Previous directing experience (list play/playwright/venue and courses taken):

What do you see as the **core action** of the play? How do you intend to achieve this with minimal technical support? Please attach a typed answer to these questions.

KCT SPACE AGREEMENT

Please remove and sign this page and return it to the Season Selection Committee to reserve the dates for your project. Please **RETAIN** all attached rules and forms for your reference.]

**USER ACKNOWLEDGES RECEIPT AND REVIEW OF THE KCT RULES FOR STUDENT
USE OF SPACE**

USER: _____
(producing organization)

BY: _____
(user's representative)

SIGNATURE: _____

TITLE: _____ DATE: _____

USER'S REPRESENTATIVE:

This representative will be the sole person authorized to make decisions, resolve problems and conflicts, or negotiate any alterations in project procedures with the Season Selection Committee.

NAME: _____

PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

RETURN TO: Department Chair
285 Alumni Arena
University at Buffalo
Buffalo, NY 14260-6000