

Theatre Etiquette

A live performance is a unique experience shared between performers and audience members. Unlike television or movies, audience distractions can disrupt the performers, production and audience. Before you arrive at the Cobb Energy Centre, please review the following information with your students and chaperones, and help ArtsBridge create a meaningful experience for all. Listen during curtain call, as ArtsBridge staff will quickly review theatre etiquette expectations before start of the show.

- Arrive early. Groups are seated on a first come, first served basis. Seats are not assigned for ArtsBridge events.
- Food, drink, candy, gum, etc. is not permitted in the theatre.
- Silence or turn off all electronic devices. We encourage you to share your ArtsBridge experience at the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre via social media, but please refrain from doing so or texting during performances; the glow from your device is distracting.
- Photography and video/audio recording of any kind is not allowed in the theatre during the performance.
- Respect the theatre. Remember to keep your feet off of the seats and avoid bouncing up and down.
- When the house lights dim, the performance is about to begin. Please stop talking at this time.
- Talk before and after the performance only. Remember, the theatre is designed to amplify sound, so the other audience members and the performers on stage can hear your voice!
- Use the restroom before the performance or wait until the end.
- Appropriate responses such as laughing and applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists on stage – they will let you know what is appropriate.
- If you need assistance during the show, please find your nearest volunteer usher.
- As you enter and exit the theatre, remember to walk and stay with your group.
- Open your eyes, ears, mind and heart to the entire experience. Enjoy yourself!



Theatrical Vocabulary

Review the following theatrical terms with your students before attending the performance! This will help them better understand all of the elements of a production.

Author – the writer of a script; also called the book

Audition – to perform to get a role for the production; usually includes singing, dancing, and reading scenes from the show; usually takes place in front of the Director & Creative Team

Ballad – a slow song for actors to showcase vocal clarity

Blocking – the specific movement of actors on stage; usually given by the Director

Box Office – a booth inside the theater where tickets are sold

“Calling the Show” – the process of calling out the lighting, sound, and scene-change cues during a performance; usually done by the stage manager

Casting – the process through which actors are chosen for roles in the production

Casting Agent – one who chooses actors for roles in the production

Choreographer – one who designs dance sequences and teaches them to the cast of the production

Composer – one who writes the music

Conductor – one who directs the orchestra

Costumes – a set of clothes in a style typical of a particular country or historical period

Curtain Call – the appearance of one or more performers on stage after a performance to acknowledge the audience’s applause

Director – one who supervises the creative aspects and guides the artistic vision of the production

Dress Rehearsal – rehearsal in which performers practice with costumes, props, lights, and microphones

Dresser – one who assists performers with their costumes during dress rehearsals and shows

Electrician – one who works with the lighting designer to adjust and operate lighting instruments

Ensemble / Chorus – typically singers, dancers, or actors who perform in group numbers

Head Carpenter – one who builds the sets for the production

House Left – the left side of the theater, when facing the stage (audience’s point of view)

House Manager – one who oversees all aspects of the audiences; responsible for ushers and audience safety

House Right – the right side of the theater, when facing the stage (audiences point of view)

Lighting Designer – one who decides where the lighting instruments should go, how they should be colored and which ones should be on at any particular time to affect mood, visibility, and to showcase costumes and sets

Lyricist – one who writes the words to a song

Makeup Artist – one who applies cosmetics to a performer’s face and body

Music Director – one who teaches and rehearses the music with the orchestra

Orchestra Pit – the lowered area in front of a stage where the orchestra (musicians) sit and play during the performance

Overture – an orchestral piece at the beginning of an opera, suite, play, oratorio, or other extended composition

Producer – a person responsible for the financial and managerial aspects of staging a play, opera, musical, ballet, etc.

Program – a listing of the order of events, names of the cast and crew, and other relevant information for the production

Property (Props) Manager – one who manages all items used on stage that cannot be classified as scenery, electrics, or wardrobe

Proscenium arch – the arch opening between the stage and auditorium; the frame of the stage

Read-through – the cast reads through the script without movement or music; typically done at the first rehearsal

Set Designer – one who creates the scenery for the stage

Sitzprobe – the first rehearsal with both the performers and the orchestra, with no staging or dancing

Sound Designer – one who plans and executes the layout of all sound playbook and equipment for the show

Sound Operator – one who handles the sound playbook and mixing equipment for the show; works with Sound Designer

Sound Board – a desk comprising a number of input channels where each sound source is provided with its own control channel through which sound signals are routed into two or more outputs; controls all microphones and music

Spotlights – a lamp projecting a narrow, intense beam of light directly onto a place or person, especially a performer on stage

Standby / Understudy – one who studies a role and is prepared to substitute a performer when needed

Stage Left – the left side of the stage, when facing the audience (performer’s point of view)

Stage Manager – one who is responsible for the quality of the show’s production, assists the director, and oversees the show at each performance

Stage Right – the right side of the stage, when facing the audiences (performer’s point of view)

Technical Rehearsal – rehearsal incorporating the technical elements of a show such as the scene and property shirts, lighting, sound, and special effects

Uptempo Song – a fast, upbeat song for actors to showcase dancing and acting ability

Usher – one who guides audience members to their seats

Wig Master / Mistress – one who obtains and customizes wigs for performers to wear