

TOJ Co-Producer FAQ Guide for Front of House (Updated 4.10.22)

TOJ MISSION

TOJ's mission is to help maintain a vital and diverse arts culture in Seattle. We accomplish this by offering and operating an affordable, sustainable venue dedicated to performance, art and community. We amplify the voices of Seattle's diverse artistic community by supporting new and established artists through the production process, and assisting them in achieving their unique vision on our stages.

TOJ VALUES

- Theatre Off Jackson believes in empowering artists to tell their unique stories and the stories of our community.
- We believe we can help artists develop and flourish by providing an environment where taking risks and trying new things is encouraged.
- We believe that performance shouldn't break the bank – artistic performance should be affordable for artists and patrons.
- We believe that building pathways to opportunity requires broad, systemic change and TOJ wants to be a part of this change in the Seattle arts community.
- We believe that our stages and audiences should reflect the rich diversity of Seattle and surrounding areas.
- And finally, we believe in unicorns.

WORKING FRONT OF HOUSE AT TOJ

Your role at TOJ is to ensure that the house is set up for the production, and to work with the TOJ Staff and production Stage Manager to ensure that patrons are seated and the production starts on time. You are both a representative of the production and an auxiliary representative of the TOJ Staff.

YOUR STAFF

Each production must provide their own Front of House staff. This should consist of a House Manager, provide 1-2 ushers for every night of your show, and box office staff, if needed.

- If a show is 21+, the production must provide someone to check IDs at the door.
- If the show is not 21+, the concessionaire will check IDs at the bar for alcohol service.
- If a show is sold out, consider additional ushers.

WORKING WITH OUR STAFF

As a member of the Front of House team, you will work closely with the production Stage Manager and the TOJ Venue Manager.

- The Venue Manager is a TOJ staff member who will open and close the space for you during the run of the show.
- The Venue Manager will also sell concessions and bartend during the show.
- The Venue Manager will ensure the bathrooms are cleaned and stocked before the show.
- The Venue Manager will unlock the front door when you are ready to open the lobby to the public.
- The Venue Manager is the person who is designated to be "in charge" of the space during shows.
- The Venue Manager is the person you will go to if you need supplies (e.g. paper towels to clean up a spill in the house). It is not appropriate to ask them to solve technical problems.
- The Venue Manager may ask you to assist with restocking paper towels, etc. if the bar is busy during the show.

BEST PRACTICES FOR WORKING WITH TOJ

- Adhere to our "Doorbell Policy." The last person to enter gets the door for the next person. Please

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make sure everyone in your cast, crew, and front of house staff is aware of this policy.

- With the exception of performances, when a TOJ staff member will always be present, the front door must be locked at all times.
- To streamline communication and scheduling, we recommend that you nominate a member of your staff to act as a single point of contact for our staff. This could be the producer, production manager, or stage manager.
- We require having a member of your staff who is capable of completing basic lighting and sound maintenance during the run of your show (e.g. changing lamps/gels, general troubleshooting).
- System checks must be completed as early as possible prior to the start of each show.
- The theatre is cleaned once a week. Please help us keep it clean by tidying up after yourselves during shows and rehearsals. Ask the staff for cleaning supplies if there are bigger-than-usual messes or spills backstage.
- All garbage produced by the public (e.g. from house, bar) will be disposed of by TOJ. Producers must remove all bagged backstage garbage and recycling to the alley at close of show. Any set debris, painting supplies, or other such items must be hauled away by the producer during strike. TOJ participates in the Clear Alley program and does not have a dumpster in which to place debris.
- Don't move anything in the venue without checking with the TL or another member of the TOJ staff. This includes chairs, garbage cans, lights, sound equipment, etc.
- Please respect private TOJ spaces (Offices, Rainier Room, Box office, Lighting closet, etc).

FACILITIES GUIDE

The Theatre (Downstairs):

- Theater capacity is 145. There are 140 seats.
- Persons will not be permitted inside the theatre in excess of the established capacity.
- No additional chairs may be placed in the hall, hallways, or any other portion of the theatre space open to the public.
- Standing room may not be utilized, nor is anyone permitted to sit in the aisles.
- Video and photography equipment cannot be placed in the aisles including the areas behind the seats. Let your technical liaison know ahead of time when you're videotaping or taking photos and they will show you the best places to set up. You may need to reserve a few seats to accommodate this.

TOJ Upstairs (Upstairs):

- The maximum occupancy of TOJ Upstairs is 150. However, the total number of persons allowed will depend on the arrangement of tables and chairs. This must be decided and approved by TOJ prior to tickets for the event going on sale.
- This space must be restored to the rep configuration before you leave.
- If you use additional chairs, they also must be restored before you leave.
- Furniture/set pieces/curtains or any other material cannot obstruct fire exits.

SETTING UP BOX OFFICE

- You provide your own box office staff 90 minutes prior to the start of the show.
- You set up a table in the lobby to serve as your box office station. (Or use the ticket counter if Upstairs.)
- If your show is 21+, we recommend having two box office personnel: 1 for ticketing, 1 to check IDs.
- You provide petty cash and a system for handling credit card sales.
- You track sales records.
- You provide an attendance and sales report, including both online and on site sales, to TOJ at close of show.

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CONCESSIONS

- TOJ will run the concessions bar and keep the proceeds.
- Performers and crew receive discounts on concessions.
- Unless there is an emergency, please allow the bar staff to serve guests uninterrupted prior to the start of the show and during intermission.

OPENING THE HOUSE

In an effort to create consistent expectations for TOJ patrons, we recommend the following timelines for opening the house:

- We encourage the lobby to be opened to the public 45 minutes to 1 hour prior to the show.
- We encourage you to open the house 30 minutes prior to the start of the show.

Please communicate house opening times with both the Stage Manager and the Venue Manager prior to allowing patrons in the space.

ACCOMMODATING PATRONS WITH MOBILITY LIMITATIONS

- Theatre Off Jackson is wheelchair accessible for performers and audience members.
 - The Upstairs space can be accessed through the gallery entrance.
 - The Downstairs space can be accessed through the back entrance in Maynard alley.
- DOWNSTAIRS
 - Patrons who cannot access the Downstairs through the front entrance have been encouraged to call or email in advance so that the theatre staff are prepared to welcome them into the space.
 - Prior to opening house, the removable seats in the back row of the theatre should be removed.
 - If the accommodation is last minute, the House Manager must reseat the patrons in the removable seats and ask the Stage Manager to remove them in order to accommodate the wheelchair-using patron.
 - When the patron arrives, they will either call the bar or send in their companion to alert the Front of House staff of their arrival.
 - House Manager will greet the patron at the Maynard alley entrance and guide them to the appropriate seating place.
 - Free-standing chairs can be added back to this space for companion seating.
 - The Downstairs bathrooms have wheelchair accessible stalls.
- UPSTAIRS
 - Patrons with mobility issues are encouraged to call ahead.
 - Wheelchairs and other mobility devices can be accommodated anywhere in the Upstairs space, although we recommend removing a couch in the front row to provide the best sight lines for wheelchair users and their companions.
 - The Upstairs bathrooms have wheelchair accessible stalls.

ACCOMMODATING PATRONS WHO ARE DEAF/HARD-OR-HEARING

- Patrons who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing are encouraged to email or call ahead.
 - TOJ has 5 assisted listening headsets available to Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing patrons at the bar.
 - TOJ does not have a supertitle captioning system (i.e. Figaro).
 - TOJ does not provide ASL interpreters. If a show is ASL interpreted, or a patron has their own interpreter, TOJ will provide a seat for the interpreter free of charge.
- House Managers should discuss seating arrangements for patrons using ASL interpreters or assisted listening devices with Venue Manager and Stage Manager prior to opening house.
- House Managers should reserve seats for Deaf/HoH patrons prior to opening house.
- House Managers should ensure that Box Office and Concessions have pads of paper and pens

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available to ease communication between Deaf patrons and Hearing staff, unless a staff member with functional knowledge of ASL is present.

- If a show is ASL interpreted, House Manager should place signage designating the section of the house that will provide the best view of the interpreter.

ACCOMMODATING PATRONS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

- Patrons who are visually impaired are encouraged to call or email in advance.
- House Managers should reserve seats for visually impaired patrons prior to opening house.
- When the patron arrives, they will either call the bar or send in their companion to alert the Front of House staff of their arrival.
- House Manager will greet the patron at the Maynard alley entrance and guide them to the appropriate seating place.
- Visually impaired patrons should be seated in the front row.
 - If the patron uses a guide dog, the patron should be seated on the aisle so the dog has room to sit under the patron's feet without blocking the aisle.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Theatre Off Jackson requests that co-Producers include a Land Acknowledgement in their programs. We also encourage the Land Acknowledgement to be delivered verbally during the curtain speech where appropriate, either by recording or live announcement. If a live announcement is required, the House Manager should present the following text:

Theatre Off Jackson acknowledges that we are operating on the ancestral lands of the Duwamish people who are the original stewards of this land and continue to live here today. We honor the work of Indigenous artists in our community and understand how important Indigenous art is to the future of this land. The Duwamish people have an oral history that stretches back to the last Ice Age. Their ancestral lands encompass the Seattle/Greater King County area, and they have given care and Lushshootseed names to the geography that surrounds us today. An acknowledgement like this is nowhere near enough to heal a history of colonization and the unkept promises made in The Treaty of Point Elliot in 1855, but it is a start to better align ourselves with Indigenous communities and grow to become stronger advocates for Indigenous rights. Today, the Duwamish still host events and meet at the Duwamish Longhouse located in what we call West Seattle. The Duwamish are continuously fighting to become a federally recognized tribe and you can stand with them by writing a letter of support to your local, state, and federal representatives using the resources from the Duwamish Tribe website.

CAMERAS

- We have security cameras focused on the doors to monitor the safety of the space.
- TOJ has a camera focused on the Downstairs stage with feeds into the concessions area and the green room. This camera does not record anything and is only active when the tech booth is open to allow both the stage manager and the venue manager to monitor the show.
- If you have any security concerns, please find a TOJ staff member.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, TOJ prefers that all questions are supplied by a single point of contact, preferably a Stage Manager, Production Manager, or Producer. Questions can then be directed to the appropriate party at TOJ, as listed below:

- Technical questions: Frank Phillips, frank@theatreoffjackson.org
- Financial questions: Patti West, patti@theatreoffjackson.org or Karen Shay, books@theatreoffjackson.org

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- Scheduling questions: Patti West, patti@theatreoffjackson.org
- Marketing questions: Minna Lee, minna@theatreoffjackson.org

HOUSE MANAGER CHECKLIST

Your role at TOJ is to ensure that the house is set up for the production, and to work with the TOJ Staff and production Stage Manager to ensure that patrons are seated and the production starts on time.

You oversee both the house and the lobby prior to the start of the show, and the house during the show.

House Tasks

Pre-Show

- ☐ Direct volunteers to reserve seating in the house if needed, including seats for patrons with disabilities
- ☐ Direct volunteers to check for handstamps/wristbands when house opens and seating begins
- ☐ Communicate with TOJ Staff and Stage Manager to ensure show start time

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- ☐ Use critical thinking and problem solving skills to ensure patron needs and production needs are met

During Show

- ☐ Be alert to patron needs in case of emergency
- ☐ Enforce TOJ and production rules regarding patron behavior

Post-Show

- ☐ Direct volunteers to clean up trash from house

Lobby Tasks

Pre-Show

- ☐ Direct volunteers in assigned tasks according to production needs
- ☐ Direct volunteers to set up any special tables (merch, information) in the lobby
- ☐ Direct volunteers to hand out programs pre show (if your production is using them)

Intermission

- ☐ Help separate bathroom line from bar line at intermission

Post-Show

- ☐ Restore lobby to original state after final performance, including returning any tables borrowed from TOJ to their appropriate location.

Box Office

If your production team is managing their own box office:

- ☐ Set up table adjacent to bar
- ☐ Direct volunteers to check in guests (provide hand stamps or wrist bands)
- ☐ Communicate with box office close to show time to assess how many patrons have checked in
- ☐ Communicate status of house to Stage Manager
- ☐ Return any borrowed tables to their appropriate locations

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- ☐ Communicate with box office close to show time to assess how many patrons have checked in
- ☐ Communicate status of house to Stage Manager
