

# The Yale Dramat Guidelines

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## I. Introduction to the Dramat

### A Brief History of the Dramat

On February 2, 1900, Henry D. Wescott called the first meeting of the Yale Dramatic Association to order. In the early years of the Dramat, some of its most accomplished alumni premiered their first original works: four each by Cole Porter '13 and Thornton Wilder '20, and others by Stephen Vincent Benet '19. The Dramat also produced the American premieres of Albert Camus' *Caligula*, de Ghellerhode's *The Death of Doctor Faust*, Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, and Bond's *The Woman*, as well as the English language premiere of Eugene Ionesco's *Hunger and Thirst*. For the first several decades of the Dramat's existence, its shows toured around the country.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, an original musical was part of the Dramat's spring season, including Richard Maltby Jr. and David Shire's *Cyrano* (1958) and *Grand Tour* (1959). Nikos Psacharopoulos, a director of the Dramat and founder of the Williamstown Theatre Festival, directed two plays by Arthur Miller: the world premiere of the two act version of *A View From the Bridge*, and *The Crucible*. The 1960s witnessed the extraordinary talents of future celebrities such as Sam Waterston on the Dramat's stage. The Commencement weekend show was the forum for many student writers, lyricists and composers to present their original works for musical theater. Austin Pendleton wrote the Broadway musical *Tom Jones* for Commencement in 1960.

### The Dramat Today

Today the Dramat offers opportunities, resources, and experiences to its members and to the Yale community at large that distinguish it from any other theatrical enterprise on campus or at nearly any college in the country. Over 250 students work on Dramat shows each year, and hundreds more in the Yale and New Haven communities attend our productions. It is one of the oldest undergraduate theater organizations, and one of only a few that are entirely student-run.

Show to show, year to year, experienced students train newcomers in areas ranging from financial management to lighting design and set construction. Because the Theater Studies program provides few or no classes in design or practical technical production, and YSD classes are only partially accessible to undergraduates, the Dramat is the principal source of technical theater training for Yale College students.

Additionally, the Dramat provides undergraduates the opportunity to take on sustained leadership and management responsibilities. All Dramat productions are part of a single, formal organization with unique resources. As such, they require a sophisticated level of management and consequently, provide students experiences that prepare them for future leadership positions.

The Dramat is an independent non-profit theater company, but it works closely with Yale College, the Yale School of Drama, and Undergraduate Production. The Dramat Technical Advisor serves as a resource for students, and provides support and training. For more information on the Technical Advisor's role, see the "Technical Advisor and the Yale Dramatic Association", Appendix 1 to this document.

## **Dramat Productions**

The Dramat, as a function of its funding and relationship with the Yale School of Drama, produces the largest scale undergraduate productions on campus. The Dramat mounts seven productions each academic year on a rotating basis in the University Theatre, the Yale Rep, or the Iseman Theater. Unlike most other undergraduate productions, these are fully produced and mounted shows with full-scale scenic elements, lighting arrays and sound designs.

An average undergraduate production budget is about \$1200. The Dramat budgets range from \$2000 for the smaller experimental shows involving about 40 students, to \$8000 - \$15000 for each of the three larger main-stage productions, which involve 70 – 100+ students. Students involved on the production staff of these shows have a commitment of 6 – 10 weeks depending on the size of the show, with time commitments in the later weeks of 20 –30 hours per week being common. In general, the work Dramat students are involved in is of the type and scale that can be found in any number of college and professional theaters anywhere in the country.

For more information about how to become involved in Dramat productions, please contact the Dramat Secretary or visit our website ([www.dramat.org](http://www.dramat.org)) to contact a show's producer.

## **Dramat Spaces and Resources**

The Dramat Office and Green Room are located on the first floor of the Yale School of Drama building at 222 York St. The Dramat Green Room houses the Lighting Inventory, and below the Dramat Green Room is the Dramat Scenic Shop, which is used by students and supervised by the Technical Advisor. For more information about the Dramat Scenic Shop and safety in the shop, please refer to the "Dramat Shop Safety", Appendix 2 to this document. The Dramat also has a Costume Shop and Stock, as well as a rehearsal space called "Crown Down," at 305 Crown St.

The Dramat's partnership with the Yale School of Drama allows the organization to use some of the largest and best theater spaces on Yale campus, in addition to having access to the technical resources of the Drama School. In most years, the Dramat uses the Yale Repertory Theatre (1120 Chapel St), the University Theatre (222 York St), and the Iseman Theater (1156 Chapel St). In addition, the Dramat has access to the Yale School of Drama props warehouse, costume shop, sound inventory, and lights inventory. This partnership is incredibly important to the Dramat's function, and should be respected and appreciated by all students who work on Dramat productions.

## **Dramat Guidelines**

For over 100 years the Yale Dramatic Association has enriched campus life with a strong tradition of quality theatrical productions while providing a wealth of production experiences for Yale undergrads every year. While recognizing the nature of the Dramat as a fluid student organization with a history of oral tradition, to do our work safely and effectively, a clear set of guidelines should be in place. These guidelines will serve as the basic reference for those involved with production within the Dramat, and will be supplemented by other reference guides, Production Staff Responsibilities, and the mentorship of the Technical Advisor and Production Officer.

## II. PRODUCTION APPROACH

### Production Planning:

The importance of adequate planning cannot be overstated. Weekly, efficient production meetings will help to keep this process on track. These meetings will also serve to more readily identify areas that may be encountering difficulties.

### Schedules and Deadlines:

Establishing schedules and deadlines and distributing them in written form in a timely way is the responsibility of the Producer. While an experienced producer may be able to project a basic schedule on his/her own, it should be done in cooperation with the department heads, Production Officer, and TA.

Below are sample deadlines for the Technical Director (in number of weeks prior to load-in unless otherwise stated). Deadlines, of course, will fluctuate somewhat based on the complexity of the individual production. If these deadlines are not met, the designs may need to be scaled back.

Production	Design Plans	Mat./Labor Est.	Shop Draw/Start Date
Mainstage	6 wks prior	5 wks prior	4 wks to load
“Ex” Show	5 wks	4 wks prior	3 wks to load

### Load-In and Strike

As the load-in date approaches it is critical that a production meeting is held specifically to deal with the logistics of the load-in. The Production Officer will schedule and lead this meeting, having already thought through the logistics of the order in which the various elements should be addressed and how they will all most efficiently flow through the space. The workflow must be planned and prioritized, the required time and labor estimated, and the crews coordinated.

The crew heads must also identify any and all materials required for the load in --paints, hardware, rigging, gaff tape, etc. It must be decided which tools and equipment will be necessary to have on hand for the work planned.

Strike responsibilities are planned for in much the same as in the load-in. The work must be coordinated with the Shop Mgr. to ensure that as tools and materials are brought to the shop they are either returned to storage positions or discarded in an appropriate manner.

Load-in and strike work calls will be organized and set in a meeting of the production team the week prior to load-in/strike. Actors will be assigned to work crews based on the requirements of the individual crew heads. Consideration should be given to the crew's background and experience and placements made accordingly.

No student will work for more than 4 hours before taking a break of at least 30 minutes. No work call will total more than 8 1/2 hours, including breaks. Work calls must be separated by a rest period

of at least 10 hours.

### **Leadership and Instructions**

Prior to the beginning of load in, the entire crew will be assembled in the house for instructions. The Technical Advisor, Production Officer, and the Crew Heads should be identified for the crew. The overall scope and flow of the work should be explained to the crew as well as any special instructions that may be required by the individual project.

All students should be checked for appropriate clothing at this time and the importance of the hardhat requirement explained and stressed. Any student not dressed appropriately must be sent to change before they are allowed to work, without exception.

The Production Officer and crew head will be responsible for insuring that each member of the crew is provided with all safety equipment appropriate to their individual task. The crew head should also point out the location of the nearest first aid station to their work area.

### **Workplace Safety & Special Equipment**

During the load-in/strike situation in any production facility a hardhat must be worn at all times, in any area of the theater where overhead work may take place, regardless of whether any such work is actually taking place. The Technical Advisor is the only person who may declare the area no longer a hardhat area.

Stage Level: A crew on stage should never move an element hung on the fly system without first being sure that any crew working overhead is clear of the line set in question. The crew must also alert any other workers on the stage of the movement and physically insure that the appropriate area is clear. This is also required when moving any sizable scenic element on the stage space. It is the responsibility of the person moving the element to insure that his/her warnings have been heard and the affected area is clear.

Grid Level: No crew member will go to the grid without first emptying his/her pockets. A lanyard must attach any tool to the crew member. Anyone going to work on the grid must alert any crew at stage level. Once on the grid no rigging lines, ropes, or electric cables are to be lowered through the grid without alerting all crew below to the movement. An alert can be considered as given only once a clear response is received. If something is dropped from overhead an immediate alert of "heads" must be given repeatedly until the item hits the floor.

Anyone wishing to be approved for use of any of these systems and equipment must attend the appropriate workshops and satisfy the evaluation requirements. No one is to operate or interact with any of the above without first being approved by the Technical Advisor.

### **Evaluation and Follow-up**

The Dramat holds a "wrap up meeting" as part of its regular Monday night meeting immediately following the closing of a production. The staff, cast, and crew of each show are invited to discuss the process with the full board in an attempt to make improvements for future shows. The Technical Advisor and/or Executive Board may, at their discretion, call for an additional post-production meeting to discuss specifics of the process.

## TICKET POLICY

### Comp Ticket Policy (Production Staff, Crew and Cast)

Each Dramat Member receives one free ticket to each production, which can be used for any one performance. It can be obtained at the door or ordered online by selecting "Dramat Member" from the drop-down menu. This ticket cannot be transferred to anyone else.

Each student working in any capacity on a show (production staff, crew, cast) receives one free ticket to the production he or she is working on, which can be used for any one performance. It can be obtained at the door or online; select "Comp Cast/Crew" from the drop-down menu.

If the student is a member of the cast or run crew of a show and will not be able to use his or her comp ticket, he or she may transfer it to another student (not an adult). The cast or crew member should order the ticket online in his or her name and instruct the other student to give that name at the box office before the show to pick up the ticket.

A student who is both a Dramat member and a cast/crew member does not receive two comps.

## III. Student Proficiency, Production Staff and Technical Training

### A. Student Proficiency

When producing student theatrical events, *safety* of the audience as well as of the students must be given the highest priority. Technical theater, because it involves the use of a wide range of mechanical systems as well as various power and hand tools, is an area where our concern for safety must be constant. Unlike professional theater where trained and qualified professionals do this work, our production teams are drawn from an ever-changing pool of energetic but mostly untrained students whose experience is at best limited. It becomes critical that we maintain a *system of evaluating the proficiency* of each student, providing **workshops, mentorships** and **in-shop training** where necessary, and **tracking** the experiences of each student as they progress.

See separate "Dramat Workshops", Appendix 3 to this document for more information about workshop requirements.

### B. Production staff

While required staff positions may vary from production to production, certain basic positions are standard, and can be found in the following list. More detailed information about each position can be located in Production Staff Responsibilities UP documents, and in Dramat Position Packets.

Positions with an asterisk listed next to them are directly involved in the technical aspects of production, and for these positions especially, it is very important that they have basic training in safety and technical theater. Specific requirements for training of technical staff positions (for both Ex and Mainstage shows) can be found below.

**Producer**  
**Director**  
**Stage Manager**  
**Scenic Designer\***  
**Lighting Designer\***

**Costume Designer**  
**Technical Director \***  
**Master Electrician \***  
**Head Rigger \***  
**Props Master**

## **Positions not described in detail below but which have been held in past Dramat seasons:**

*Master Carpenter\**

*Paint Charge\**

*Costumers*

*Sound Engineer\**

*Light Board Operator*

Note: The current Production Officer and the UP Technical Advisor are considered members of each production team and as such should be kept advised of and fully involved in the process of the team's work.

### **Producer**

The Producer is the overall head of the production team and is ultimately responsible for the smooth and efficient flow of the project. The Producer is responsible for securing rights to the performance piece as well as securing appropriate performance space and adequate rehearsal space. The Producer is responsible for ensuring that all production positions are filled, for establishing a production schedule detailing the requirements of the production and ensuring that the schedule of deadlines is being met, and for establishing and maintaining a budget for each department of production. It is the Producer's responsibility to keep the Technical Advisor, the Production Officer, the Dramat Board, and each member of his/her production staff up to date on the production and how it is progressing.

A written weekly report is required and a regular in-person check in may be instituted upon the Production Officer or Technical Advisor's request.

### **Director**

The Director is responsible for orchestrating the overall artistic impact of a production. A large part of the Director's work entails working with the designers, while the other major facet of the Director's work is obviously the choosing of actors for the production, and the communication to those actors the vision of the show during the rehearsal process, with the help of assistant directors and the stage manager. The Director may also be called on to make financial decisions when he/she has to choose between various needs/wants on a limited budget. The Director, along with the Producer will work with the Technical Advisor and Production Officer to ensure that the production elements are both feasible and safe.

### **Stage Manager**

The Stage Manager is responsible for scheduling the actors for all calls, (rehearsals, costume fittings, performances, etc.) He/she is also responsible for keeping track of decisions made in the rehearsal process through accurate notes and a detailed record of blocking and stage movement in a rehearsal script or promptbook, and by sending daily rehearsal reports to the staff, including the Technical Advisor. Weekly reports detailing overall progress and any difficulties are required. The Stage Manager will take over the rehearsal process from the director during tech and will be responsible for running and calling the show during performances.

### **Scenic Designer**

The Scenic Designer is responsible for developing the overall look of the stage environment after working with the Director to establish an overall aesthetic concept from which to proceed. The Designer is responsible for the following stages: an initial presentation (sketches or a model) to outline the scale of design; subsequent revisions of the design and complete design drawings once the design is accepted; and a final presentation of designs 6 weeks prior to load-in, to be provided to all members of the design team. The Designer must keep the Technical Advisor, Director, Production Officer and Producer involved in each stage of the work to help insure that his/her work stays within the scope and scale appropriate to the project, along with the Technical Director, conveying all the information necessary for him/her to execute the design. In addition the Designer will be required to attend load-in calls and rehearsals (especially tech/dress) as needed to insure that the scenic elements are installed properly and are functioning within the show as intended.

### **Lighting Designer**

The Lighting Designer is responsible for using light in support of the Director's vision while enhancing and completing the environment created by the Set Designer. Once the set design is complete and approved, the Lighting Designer will use those plans to create his/her light design, within a given budget. The Designer is responsible for developing a complete light plot showing instrument type, location (plan & section), color, and dimmer assignment. The complete light plot is due 2 weeks prior to load-in. During the weeks between the submission of the set design and the due date for the light plot, the Lighting Designer should be developing his/her design based on viewing rehearsals, equipment lists, budget, and meetings with the director, keeping the Technical Advisor, Production Officer, and the rest of the design team informed about the development of the design. The Master Electrician should also be involved as early as possible so that he/she will have ample time to plan on the required crew size and work calls required. The Designer accepts that there are limits to the number of lighting instruments that may be used in a Dramat production. These limits vary by facility and production type and are included in the Position packet supplied by the Dramat. The designer agrees to work with the Technical Advisor and Production Officer to ensure these limits are not exceeded.

### **Costume Designer**

The costume designer is responsible for designing and selecting the costumes used in the show. Deadlines for costume designs should be set early and adhered to. Sketches with color and fabric swatches should be provided for every costume to be built. When utilizing pieces from costume stock, photographs should be supplied, unless the Director is able to accompany the Designer to the warehouse. The Designer will work closely with the stage manager to insure that actors are available for costume fittings and that these are held in a timely fashion. A costume parade is generally held early in tech week so that any issues can be identified and resolved prior to dress rehearsals. The Designer will be responsible for working with the Stage Manager and any dressers needed to ensure that changes can be made within required time limits.

The Costume Designer is also in charge of keeping track of and being accountable for all items from the YSD stock.

### **Technical Director**

The Technical Director holds one of the most demanding positions on the student production staff in terms of required skills and time commitment. The TD must be a leader capable of initiating and sustaining the build and installation process as well as organizing a group of other students while

monitoring the safe and steady flow of work through the shop. In consultation with the Technical Advisor and Production Officer, the TD will be required to estimate financial, manpower and material budgets for a production working from the plans provided by the Set Designer, prepare working shop/construction drawings, and break the project down into smaller, easily managed and identifiable units while determining the most appropriate and efficient construction methods for each unit. During this process the TD will be working with the rest of the team to identify the “core scenic requirements” for the show, adding other desired elements only if they are within the crew’s skill set and possible to achieve without overloading anyone. It is important that the TD track progress and keep the Producer, Production Officer and Technical Advisor apprised of the progress of the build through written weekly reports and accurate records of expenditures.

### **Master Electrician**

The Master Electrician is the person who works most closely with the lighting designer and is responsible for executing the hang and focus. As such the ME will need to have a working knowledge of lighting systems equipment and its operation. He/she will be responsible for ensuring that the equipment specified in the design is available, developing the circuit plot that most efficiently serves the design plot, and leading the crew that hangs, cables, circuits, and troubleshoots the plot (as well as striking the lights after the run). The ME will work with the Designer to focus the plot. The ME is also responsible for running a dimmer check on every day of tech and performance. The ME will be responsible for weekly reports, communicating with the Producer, Production Officer, and Technical Advisor to keep them apprised of progress.

### **Head Rigger**

A Head Rigger and an assistant will be required on any production taking place in the UT that requires the hanging of any significant amount of soft goods and/or the rigging of any scenic elements to system pipes, regardless of whether they are moved during the performance. The Head Rigger will be responsible for identifying flown elements and soft goods and determining the correct amount of counterweight that each element will require and reviewing such with TA prior to load-in, for keeping an accurate record of such weights, and for ensuring that such information is added to the Dramat’s soft goods inventory information. He/she, in conjunction with the Production Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the each line set is accurately labeled on the locking rail as it is been rigged and weighted. The Head Rigger and the assistant, under the supervision of the Technical Advisor and Production Officer will be responsible for leading the crew that will rig elements to the system and set the weights during load-in and strike. Under no circumstances shall any element be rigged or modified without the direct supervision of the Technical Advisor.

### **Props Master**

The Props Master will work closely with the Set Designer, Stage Manager, and Director in identifying and collecting the properties needed for a production. Once the Director and Designers have decided on the needed props, the Set Designer will work with the props crew in the process of **choosing props for the production**. It is understood that a props list will quite often change in response to a fluid rehearsal situation, and that while changes are quite often made up to the last minute when feasible, each production will set a date by which it is generally agreed that no more props shall be added by the Director. The Props Master is required to file weekly written reports to the Producer, Production Officer, and Technical Advisor to keep them apprised of progress. The Props Master is further required to supply a comprehensive list of items borrowed from the YSD warehouse, including

additions/subtractions, to the Technical Advisor during tech week, to insure the return of all prop items and avoid a late charge equal to the rental fee normally charged non-Dramat shows.

### **C. Required Training for Technical Staff**

*Note: While the Dramat Guidelines has basic requirements and qualifications for each member of the production staff, this section is intended to provide a more in depth list of the safety training that is ideal for the members of the technical staff.*

The following are *basic goals* as to the skill levels that will be expected in determining tech staff appointments that most effect health and safety. Note: each staff appointment will be evaluated on a show-to-show basis.

\*Freshmen will only be allowed to TD or ME the freshman show, but are encouraged to engage as assistant TDs and MEs on other shows and attend workshops to establish skills needed for future tech staff positions\*

#### *“EX” Shows*

- A TD will have a demonstrated proficiency in the use of stationary and hand power tools as well as flat and platform construction techniques. He/she will have attended workshops in these areas, basic rigging as well as ladder/scaffold safety. He/she will have worked on previous productions as a carpenter.
- Asst. TD's and Show Carpenters will have attended stationary and power hand tool workshops. Assitant TD's will have served as carpenters on other productions while this is not required of a show carpenter.
- A ME will have a demonstrated proficiency and understanding of the principles involved in the hanging, cabling, circuiting, and focusing of lighting equipment and a working knowledge of lighting control and operation. He/she will have a working knowledge of basic rigging and safely working on ladders and scaffolding. He/she will have attended workshops in lighting, light board operation, basic rigging, as well as ladder /scaffold safety. He/she will have worked on light crews and as an assistant ME on at least one production.
- Asst. ME's will have attended workshops in lighting, basic rigging, as well as ladder/scaffold safety. They will have worked as crews on previous shows.
- Light board operators will receive workshop training and will not be required to have performed this task on previous shows.

#### *Main Stage Shows*

- A main stage TD, in addition to the skills listed above for Ex shows, will have a working knowledge of the UT fly system. He/she will have attended workshops in flat and platform construction, rigging and fly system operation, as well as ladder/scaffold safety. He/she will have served as TD on an Ex show and as an assistant to the TD on at least one main stage production. He/she will demonstrate a working knowledge of the operation of the genie man lift and the materials lift in the 40's shop.

- A main stage asst. TD, in addition to the requirements for an “Ex” position, should have attended workshops in basic rigging, flat/platform construction, ladder and scaffold safety, as well as have served in a similar capacity on an “Ex” show, though having served as a TD on an Ex production is preferable.
- A main stage ME, in addition to the skills listed above for EX shows, will have a working knowledge of rigging and the UT fly system. He/she will demonstrate a working knowledge of the operation of the genie man lift and the materials lift in the 40’s shop. He/she will have attended workshops in rigging and the UT fly system. He/she will have served as ME on at least one Ex show and as an assistant to the ME on at least one main stage production.
- A main stage asst. ME, in addition to the requirements for an “Ex” position, should have attended workshops in rigging and the UT fly system, be familiar with the use of a genie man lift, and have served in a similar capacity on an “Ex” show, though experience as an Ex show ME is preferable.
- Fly Captains will be required to have attended Basic Rigging and Fly System Workshops and to have demonstrated a complete working knowledge of the material covered. He/she should have served as assistant to the Fly captain on at least one previous main stage production. He/she will also have a working knowledge of the genie man lift.
- Asst. Fly Captains will be required to have attended Basic Rigging and Fly System Workshops and to have demonstrated a complete working knowledge of the material covered. It is preferred that they will have worked fly crew on at least one previous show.

## **Basic Safety**

*Personal Safety:* All students working in the shop and/or any production space agree that they will abide by all production rules and procedures as detailed in the “Yale University Student Shop Safety Policies and Practices,” and that they will conduct themselves in a work-manly manner. If at any time, the Production Officer or Technical Advisor tells you to stop what you are doing, stop immediately. If at any time, you feel you have been asked to do something you don’t know how to do, or are uncomfortable doing, let the Production Officer or Technical Advisor know, and you will be given another assignment.

*Alcohol/Drug Policy:* The use of alcohol and other drugs is wholly inconsistent with the goals of a safe and effective work environment and will not be tolerated. Any student who, in the assessment of the Technical Advisor, appears to be impaired, will be required to leave the work call/activity for the remainder of that day.

*Clothing:* In all work situations appropriate clothing and footwear shall be worn. Clothes should fit comfortably and not restrict movement in any way. Full length pants are to be worn. Shorts are not allowed. Shirts should be short sleeved. If long sleeve shirts are worn cuffs must be buttoned with no loose or hanging parts. Footwear must be closed toe and of sturdy construction. Flats, slippers, etc do not meet this standard and are not acceptable. No jewelry- bracelets, necklaces, etc. that is loose or dangling. Long hair must always be pulled back and secured.

*Personal Safety Equipment:* Basic safety equipment will be supplied in sufficient numbers for all workers, i.e. safety glasses, dust masks, hearing protection, hard hats, and gloves.

*Basic Work Rules:*

All students shall have a Yale University Shop/Tool Use Safety Agreement and an Emergency Medical Form on file with the shop mgr.

No student shall be allowed use of a power tool without first being approved by the Technical Advisor.

No student shall work without appropriate safety equipment.

No student shall work in the shop without at least one additional qualified person present.

No student shall work in any production space without at least one additional qualified person present.

*First Aid Station:* An adequately sized and stocked first aid kit shall be located in a central and clearly visible location within the Dramat shop. It will be the responsibility of the Shop Manager to ensure the kit is kept fully stocked.

*In Case of Emergency:* All exits from the shop shall be clearly marked and must remain unobstructed. Emergency contact numbers shall be clearly posted in the shop.

Questions about Dramat productions and safety should be directed to the Dramat Production Officer, and questions about the organization should be directed to the Dramat President. For more information, visit the website at [www.dramat.org](http://www.dramat.org) or email at [dramat@yale.edu](mailto:dramat@yale.edu).

## **Appendix 1: Technical Advisor and the Yale Dramatic Association**

### **The Technical Advisor**

It is the role of the Technical Advisor (TA) to serve as a resource to the Association in its production of theatrical events and to provide support and training as necessary to that process. The TA will work with Yale Dramatic Association (Dramat) staff to develop and present a series of workshops to instill basic production skills. In addition workshops may be offered to answer the specific needs of intended productions. The Technical Advisor shall confer with and advise the Association's production staffs concerning the needs and constraints of the structural, budgetary, safety, fire prevention, and personnel requirements of each production, to ensure that these plans are of an appropriate scale and are executed in such a way as to ensure the health and safety of all participants, including audience members. The Technical Advisor shall immediately advise the Association's Production Officer if, in his or her judgment, designs are not feasible.

### **The Yale Dramatic Association**

The success of the TA is dependent upon the Dramat staff adhering to the Guidelines and making an energetic and consistent commitment to their role in the implementation of same with their membership. It is the responsibility of the Dramat to involve the TA early and often in the production planning process and to provide the TA with all production information in a timely manner. Copies of scripts and production proposals being considered by the Dramat must be

provided to the TA allowing adequate time for review and comment prior to selection decisions.

The intent is to allow the TA to advise regarding possible technical/safety issues. No veto power of play choice is implied. In the case of Ex and Commencement proposals this will also allow for early review of proposed production staff assignments.

### **Production Officer**

The Production Officer serves as the Dramat's liaison when interacting with Yale School of Drama and Undergraduate Production. He or she facilitates conversations among individual Dramat productions and helps advise teams with regards to scale, safety, and efficiency. In order to achieve this, the Production Officer is copied on all production communications for each Dramat show, present at every major meeting, and physically in the space when work is proceeding during tech. He or she is also the student in charge at all load-ins and strikes of Dramat productions.

### **Production Planning**

All producers of Dramat productions will meet with the TA prior to the start of the production process to share an overview of their plan and to review and discuss any issues that may be of concern. A production staff list will be submitted as soon as it is available, listing technical positions such as technical director, master electrician, sound engineer and their assistants. It is especially important that qualified individuals fill these positions. The Dramat Guidelines detail required skill levels of students in all technical production positions. The TA must approve these appointments.

It is important that the TA be brought into the production development process with the Director and Designers as early as possible in order to facilitate that process and to ensure that the scope of the production is achievable by the Dramat and, more specifically, the individual members of the production staff, given the available budget and time frame. The TA may require that a production be scaled back to ensure that it can be mounted in a safe and effective manner. To secure the integrity of this process it is important designers be held to design submission deadlines, allowing sufficient time for review, evaluation and modification prior to submission of final design drawings.

Once designs are finalized and approved the production is ready to move forward. The Dramat Production Officer will arrange a meeting of the production staff and the TA with the appropriate members of the YSD staff, to include the YSD technical director, and lighting, sound, and projection/media supervisors. This meeting should take place in the relevant performance space when possible. The Dramat Production Officer and the TA should be sure that the student staff members meet the appropriate YSD staff member and that all plans, production requirements and equipment needs are conveyed to the YSD staff. Once this meeting has occurred it is then appropriate for individual students to contact YSD staff directly, but it is expected they will run their questions by both the TA and Production Officer first. All staff, both student and professional, will keep the TA and Production Officer “in the loop” and will copy both on all Production related correspondence.

### **Build Phase**

During this phase of the production the TA will work closely with all members of the student staff to realize the production goals. The vast majority of the TA's time will be spent with the Technical Director and his/her crew developing/approving all working shop drawings, estimating labor and materials, and supervising the construction of all scenic elements. The lighting and sound crews are also responsible for submitting appropriate drawings/plans to the TA for review and approval. The TA will provide support and training as needed. While the TA will assist students in accessing materials from YSD inventory as needed, the TD, ME, and the Producer should generally arrange

for purchase of build materials from appropriate vendors. The TA is available to the Dramat an average of 20 hours per week. Therefore it is imperative that an efficient and effective work schedule, accurately representing student staff availability, be developed and adhered to. See the ABC rules. The TA will make the final determination as to the suitability of the schedule to the production requirements. Scheduled progress will be reviewed on a weekly basis. If work is falling

behind, the TA may require the Dramat to make reductions to the overall project in order to get back on schedule. The TA and Dramat staff will ensure adherence to accepted Yale University Student Shop Safety Rules and Practices. The TA can and will call a halt to the production process if he deems it necessary while any safety issue is addressed.

### **Load-In Phase**

The TA and Production Officer will schedule a production meeting in the week prior to load-in specifically to plan that process. While the Production Officer and crew heads will actively lead the load-in process, the TA will supervise all activities and ensure that work progresses in a safe manner and that a safe work environment is maintained. Detailed lists of supervised/unsupervised activities are contained in the “ABC list” found within the Yale College Undergraduate Theater Production Regulations. While some work may be accomplished without the direct supervision of the TA, all work plans will be reviewed and approved, and all completed work must be inspected and approved by the TA before being put into service. The TA will be present as needed for technical rehearsals to ensure that all systems are operating, and being operated, properly.

### **Production Run**

The Yale College Dean’s Office and the Dramat have agreed that a qualified performance supervisor be on the premises for all performances. The Dramat has agreed to hire appropriate staff approved by Undergraduate Production for this purpose. The TA will determine on a case by case basis whether he needs to be present at main-stage performances that may involve complicated technical systems.

### **Strike**

As with the load-in process, a meeting will be held during the week prior to strike to plan the process, and for plan to be approved by the TA. The Production Officer and crew heads and will actively lead the strike crews. The TA will be present at all times and supervise all activities, ensuring that proper safety procedures are followed and that a safe work environment is maintained. Only the TA will have the authority to declare that the work has been completed satisfactorily and to call an end to strike.

### **Post-Production**

The TA will conduct a walk-through of the performance facility with the appropriate members of the YDA staff prior to the completion of the strike. The Dramat Production Officer will arrange to do the same with the appropriate YSD staff as soon as possible.

The Production Officer, with the assistance of the TA as needed, will ensure that all borrowed or rented equipment is returned to the appropriate entities in a timely manner.

In addition to the normal production “wrap-up” board meeting held by the Dramat, the TA may, at his discretion, call a post-mortem meeting of the production staff during normal business hours to address any production issues that he deems warrant attention.

## Appendix 2: Dramat Shop Safety

The Dramat shop is a busy student shop, serving as the build space for both props and scenic elements for a minimum of seven Dramat productions per year, where it is not uncommon for multiple shows to be in progress concurrently. Keeping a student shop with this amount of activity running smoothly requires the attention and cooperation of several different people. The Technical Advisor and the Dramat staff will work together to ensure that all activities in this shop abide by the Yale University Student Shop Policies and Practices.

*Technical Advisor (Staff Position):* The TA must approve all work in the shop. He will assist in coordinating and administering workshops. The current TA is Rorie Fitzsimons, Senior Technical Director, Yale College Undergraduate Production, [rorie.fitzsimons@yale.edu](mailto:rorie.fitzsimons@yale.edu) 203.314.8476

*Production Officer (Student Position):* The Production Officer (YDA elected) assists with oversight of all users of the shop space and may help in avoiding scheduling conflicts when multiple productions are in process.

*Shop Manager (Student Position):* The Shop Manager (YDA appointed) is responsible for overseeing the general operation of the shop, including maintaining sufficient levels of basic supplies and safety equipment (including first aid supplies), as well as ensuring that the shop is maintained in a clean, uncluttered, and safe condition.

*Technical Director (Student Position):* The Technical Director is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the technical aspects of his/her specific production. The TD will ensure that the shop/tools are cleaned at the end of each work call, that tools, hardware, and paints are returned to proper storage, debris is gathered and removed, and that the shop is left in safe, clean condition.

### Work Assignments

A student should never be assigned a task for which they feel unprepared or are uncomfortable about executing. If a student feels that they have been asked to do something that they do not know how to, or are not equipped to do, they are encouraged to *always* ask for further instruction from one of the people listed in the positions above before proceeding.

### Electrical Power Lockout

All electrical power in the shop is controlled by keyed lockouts. Power is accessible only through the TA. One outlet is on a separate lockout so that the TA may allow measured access to electrical power without turning on power to all outlets and stationary tools.

### Compressed Air Lockout

The compressed air outlet in the shop is controlled by a keyed lockout. The compressed air supply is generally accessible only by the TA. The TA may, at his discretion, approve limited unsupervised use of air tools.

## **Maintenance**

Shop cleanliness and organization must be maintained, and tool maintenance must be performed to ensure a safe work environment. The TA will prohibit any work from continuing if a safe work environment is not maintained. If any production space is found to be unkempt the TA may suspend work in all production spaces until the situation is remedied to his satisfaction.

## **Student Tool Access**

Basic hand tools are in a locked tool room but are accessible to any student at the discretion of the TA, Production Officer, the Technical Director, and the Shop Manager.

Selected power hand tools such as jigsaws, drills and sanders are in a locked cabinet, accessible to the Technical Adviser, Production Officer, Technical Director, and the Shop Mgr. These hand tools may be used by any student who has attended the appropriate workshop and has been approved by the TA.

All other cutting and/or shaping power tools are in a locked cabinet accessible only to the TA and only students who have been qualified by the TA will be given access to these tools. Cutting/shaping tools shall be used only with the supervision of the Technical Advisor.

## **Paint and Chemicals**

All paints and chemicals will be stored in the paint room only. All cans will be properly cleaned and closed after use. All solvents and flammables will be stored in a properly marked metal storage cabinet. It should be noted that spray paints have been banned from Undergraduate use. A respirator with the appropriate filter cartridges will be maintained in good repair and stored in the paint room. The shop manager will be responsible for maintaining the paint room in a clean and orderly fashion.

## **STUDENT SHOP RULES**

*Never work alone* – and a Supervisor or Monitor must be present at all times for undergraduates.

*Safety glasses* must be worn at all times in the shop. Some operations and equipment may require additional personal protective equipment such as gloves.

*No loose clothing* may be worn in the shop, including ties, scarves, and loose sleeves. Open-toed shoes, short pants, or skirts are also prohibited.

*Remove jewelry* before beginning work, including rings, necklaces, bracelets, and watches.

*Long hair* must be pulled back and secured and contained; long beards must also be contained.

*Aisles, exits, and access to emergency equipment* must be kept clear at all times.

*Cell phones, mp3 players, and other personal electronic devices* must not be used when working at any machine. Loud music is prohibited.

*Food and drinks* are permitted in designated areas only.

*Approval* to operate power equipment must be obtained prior to use. Undergraduates must check in with Monitor/Supervisor upon arrival.

*All guards and shields* must be secured and in place prior to operating equipment.

*Compressed air* must not be used to clean skin or clothing.

*Do not use damaged equipment*, or equipment that does not appear to be operating normally. Tag it as out of service and report the issue to the Supervisor or Monitor.

*Immediately report* all problems or concerns to the Supervisor or Monitor.

*Supervisors and Monitors* have full authority over the shop and its safe use, including the responsibility, authority, and obligation to prohibit shop or tool access for the safety of an individual, others in the shop, or the equipment.

### **EMERGENCY CONTACTS:**

**911**

**203-314-8476**

**203-785-3555**

**203-432-0123**

**1-877-360-YALE**

**MEDICAL, POLICE, FIRE**

**Rorie Fitzsimons, Technical Advisor**

**YALE EHS – HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

**YALE HEALTH – MINOR MEDICAL**

**YALE UNIVERSITY HOTLINE**

## **Appendix 3: Dramat Workshops**

### *General:*

The Technical Advisor (TA) and the Yale Dramatic Association (Dramat) agree to the following;

- A minimum of three workshops will be scheduled with the TA per semester.
- Each semester the Dramat and the TA will determine a schedule of workshop offerings for the following semester and make every reasonable effort to publicize the schedule for the greater Yale community, including but not limited to publication in the Dramat and Yale Dramatic Coalition bulletins and the Undergraduate Production website.
- The Dramat and the TA agree to the production staff skill levels detailed elsewhere in the Dramat Guidelines, will work together to assist staff in attaining such skills, and will require these standards be applied to the assignment of staff positions and production responsibilities.

For every workshop offered a practice period will be scheduled during which a student may come to the shop to practice a given skill, receive additional instruction from the TA, or have the skill evaluated. A student must demonstrate the required level of skill proficiency before being allowed to apply those skills in a production setting or to have them recorded in their record; simply attending the workshop is not proof of proficiency. The TA will determine proficiency.

- The Dramat will ensure that Dramat members are aware of skill level standards, require workshop attendance among Dramat members, and promote workshop awareness and attendance in the greater Yale theater community.

### *Workshop Topics*

A regular series of workshops will be offered each semester. The Technical Advisor will work with the Production Officer and Shop Mgr. to develop a specific schedule, based on an evaluation of the skills of the available student crews for the semester as well as the demands of the production schedule. Workshops in the areas of power tool use, flat and platform construction, fly system operation, rigging, lighting, and sound will be held on a regular schedule with the intent of systematically developing skills. Additional workshops will on occasion need to be offered to meet the specific demands of an upcoming production. .

*Technical Orientations (not a workshop, but a separate required introduction):* Orientations for those students interested in scenic construction, lighting, and sound will be held during each fall semester in a setting appropriate to each subject. Each orientation will expose the student to a general overview of the tasks/tools/equipment that he/she would encounter in their area of interest as well as an evaluation of their skills/background. A written record of skill proficiency will be initiated by the Production Officer and a recommendation for required workshops will be made by the TA. (Fall)

*Key Stationary Shop Tools:* This workshop will give the student the skills necessary to safely execute basic operations on stationary tools available for their use. This session will cover the table saw, panel saw, and power miter box, which are the main workhorses of the Dramat shop. Instruction in the use of the drill press and radial arm saw will be provided on a one to one or small group basis as needed.

*Power Hand Tool Basics:* Session will cover the correct uses and safe operation of the jigsaw, drill, and palm sander. The router and sawzall will be added as needed. (Fall)

*Air Tools:* The basic operation and safety rules for the use of various fastening tools utilizing compressed air will be covered. How to choose the correct tool for the job will also be discussed. (Fall)

*Basic Deck and Flat Construction:* Materials and methods for the construction of both standard and Hollywood style scenic flats will be covered. This session will also look at methods of handling, joining and installation. Construction of standard decks looking at three basic methods: the basic platform, stud wall and plywood construction, as well as a basic triscuit system will be addressed. (Fall)

*Advanced Deck and Flat Construction:* Building on the skills acquired in the basic session, students will learn to layout and build irregular shaped units as well as special purpose units and flying elements. (As Needed)

*Basic Rigging:* An introduction to rigging will include an understanding of various types of rope- its handling and care, relative strengths, common knots and their use and application, as well as the use of wire rope, its strengths and methods of attachment. This session will address the basic principles involved in lifting scenic elements. (Fall)

*Fly System Basics:* This workshop will identify the basic elements of a counter weighted fly system, how they work together, and how that knowledge is applied to the rigging and flying of scenic elements. (As Needed)

Some of these workshops (all tool use, basic construction, rigging and fly systems) are prerequisites for freshman intending to work on the technical side of Dramat productions. These should not be held at the exclusion of more advanced workshops, designed to further existing skills and promote continual staff skill-level development, which will by necessity be geared toward a smaller, more advanced audience