

Standards of Practice

for Costume Designers and their team at Langham Court Theatre

Our Volunteer Designers are Treated as Professionals

Thank you for your interest in designing costumes for Langham Court Theatre; we appreciate your commitment to sharing your creativity.

The staff and volunteers in the Costume Loft have put together what we think are the most important foundations of what Langham has to offer volunteer designers.

Please read these points thoroughly to best understand how to utilize our resources and inventory.

Most of this is common sense, but they all contribute to creating the best experience for all members of the Langham Costume Team.

Stitch on!

August 2018, Costume Loft Management

How to Utilize The Costume Loft

- Costume Designers have access to The Loft as needed, but be aware if you need assistance from staff it is prudent to come in during open Loft hours
- Obtain access codes from the Producer (or visit during business hours)
- The Loft is a busy public work space. We must balance the needs of designers and clients during open Loft hours
- When removing items from racks or boxes, please return to the front return rack unless you are sure where it came from
- Fittings may be scheduled in The Loft during or outside of open hours
- Each designer of each show has 1 garment rack in The Loft during their pre-production period, and can traditionally move into the dressing rooms and construction room immediately after the **STRIKE** of the previous production (this is now stated as production time)
- If we don't have an item, source from VOS/other rental companies or make/purchase as needed within budget. Ask Loft staff for suggestions
- The Costume Loft volunteers are highly knowledgeable and happy to answer questions when they are available during open Loft hours.

How to Utilize the Costume Construction Workshop

- Lead volunteer contact for the Costume Workshop is Erica Thomas
- Sergers, sewing machines, cutting mats, dress forms, fabric, all notions and equipment are available for production use. Ask Erica or the Costume Loft Manager for assistance
- Please treat all equipment respectfully
- Large pattern library is indexed in white binders separated by categories, and the patterns are stored in boxes on the fabric wall
- All patterns are trace only, do not cut
- Please sign out any items borrowed from the Costume Workshop in the Borrow Binder, and return to the return box under the cutting table
- There are 2 racks for design use in the workshop during production time
- There is a small fitting area behind a curtain with a full length mirror
- Please leave the room as you would like to find it; this should be a neutral community space

How to Utilize the Laundry Space

- Near the stage door entrance is our laundry station with a washer, dryer, wash basin, and garment racks for hang drying
- All laundry soap, stain removers, and other cleaners used are scent-free and provided by the theatre
- If stock is running low, please advise the Costume Loft Manager
- Read the posted rules carefully before using the laundry space
- This is a shared laundry with Front of House. Please do not leave loads of laundry in overnight when it can be helped, and only in the dryer if unavoidable
- Do not leave wet clothes in washer overnight
- Empty lint trap before use of the dryer every time
- Please do your best to keep this area tidy!

Responsibilities to the Costumes

- Organization of costume inventory; ie outside rentals, what was bought, and what came from The Loft. We recommend spreadsheets for ease of use
- Alterations are acceptable, but must be approved by Costume Loft Management
- Do not use tape, marker, or glue on garments
- Use what fits. If an item does not fit, usually there is an option that does
- Upkeep of costume care during the run is your job to assign or over see which could include laundry as needed, and frequent vodka spraying of dry clean only items
- Follow all care instructions included in garments, and if you are unsure ask management
- Under-dress actors in tank tops or t-shirts to avoid B.O. stains
- Panty-liners make cheap and cheerful dress shields for sweaty actors. There are some available in the dressing room, but each production will need to purchase their own
- **NO SMOKING IN COSTUMES.** This is your responsibility with the Stage Manager to ensure actors understand that this is a strict rule. Smoke stays on clothes for far longer than a run of a show, and can negatively impact other actors on stage
- Work with Stage Management to ensure actors are not eating in costume. Use of a cover such as a large blanket or coat can be used for non-messy foods, and water is always permitted. Exceptions are made for health reasons only
- Work with your Producer to source volunteer help throughout the run as needed

Production Duties

- Work with Stage Management and the Producer to schedule:
 1. Director design meeting
 2. Fittings with actors (as needed, on going)
 3. Production shot fittings and approval
 4. Costume Parade (at least 2 weeks before dress rehearsal)
 5. Dress rehearsal(s)
- Attend production meetings and coordinate with the design team
- Keep track of all expenses and submit receipts to your Producer

Post production duties

- Strike of dressing rooms and the Costume Construction Workshop the Sunday after closing night
- Wash all launderable items that were used
- Organize dry cleaning of dry clean only items at Leonard's Dry Cleaning where we have a 30% discount. 2575 Cadboro Bay Road.
- Ensure all items are laundered within a reasonable time period, and this must be discussed with the Costume Loft Manager if it is taking longer than expected
- Remove all items from laundry space, dressing room, costume workshop, backstage, and throughout the rest of the theatre as soon as possible to clear for the next production or rental
- Return all items used from The Costume Loft to the return rack once clean; Loft staff will ensure the proper return of all costumes coming back into our collection
- All costume items bought for the production belong to the theatre and should be returned to The Costume Loft for processing
- Return all items rented from outside sources and settle outstanding invoices
- Submit all receipts to your producer for reimbursement
- Submit dry cleaning slip/invoice to General Manager for payment
- Give yourself a pat on the back for a job well done

We all design costumes for different reasons

While some of us are fashion gurus, others seamstresses, and others still the “hunter gatherer types”, all of us have one thing in common: an ambition to tell a story through clothing. The director couldn't accomplish this without us, the actors are just thankful they aren't naked, and the audience will gain a greater understanding of the play because of our efforts. Let's work together to make the design process a breeze here at Langham Court Theatre.