

CREEDE REPERTORY THEATRE

WARDROBE INFORMATION PACKET

CREEDE REPERTORY THEATRE 2024

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WELCOME

Welcome to the wardrobe team. Being a dresser is a great deal of work, but it can be a very rewarding experience. As a dresser you will aim to create a calm and respectful dressing environment, facilitate smooth and comfortable quick changes, and maintain the costume designers' visions while ensuring everyone can look their best onstage.

RESPECT AND ETIQUETTE

Performing in costume is a very vulnerable experience. Performers put a great deal of trust in the designers and technicians who work on their hair, makeup, and costumes, and in you, their dresser. It is our primary duty to help ease this discomfort by treating performers with the utmost respect and professionalism.

It is important for the success of a show and the comfort of the performer that you establish a sense of trust between the dresser and performer.

Here are some "Dos and Don'ts" to keep in mind when interacting with your performers.

Do

- ✓ Introduce yourself to your dresser as soon as you can. Even if you already know them, let them know they can ask you questions, and come to you with issues or concerns about their costume.
- ✓ Talk with your performer about any costume changes that concern you. Ask them how much help they will want. It may be less than you think.
- ✓ Make sure to always knock before entering a dressing space and announce yourself and wait a few seconds for a response. A simple "[knock knock] Wardrobe!" will do.
 - Many actors do not care about you entering. You don't have to wait for a "come in," but you should allow someone enough time for someone to tell you to wait if they need privacy.

Don't

- ✗ Assume your performers know that you are their assigned dresser. They probably do not.
- ✗ Enter your performers' dressing room unannounced.
- ✗ Enter the dressing room of performers who are not assigned to you, if performers may be present.
- ✗ Give your opinion on the design/construction/application of a performer's costumes, hair, or makeup, besides general niceties.
 - This is extremely rude to designers and technicians and can make performers self-conscious.
- ✗ Make comments, even neutral or positive ones, about a performer's body, regardless of who is present.

In general, if you witness distressing, inappropriate, or harmful behavior or language immediately report it to the Wardrobe Supervisor or a Stage Manager.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WHERE TO START

Check out

It is your responsibility to ensure that every item is present at the top of show.

A check-in sheet is used to keep track of every item. Each performer has a sheet with a row for every item they wear in the show and a column for each night it is needed. One diagonal mark indicates an item is checked in. A second diagonal mark indicate forming an “X”

indicates that an item was returned to its place at the end of the night. Drawing a circle indicates that an item is missing and needs to be found.

	6/24	6/25	6/26
White Tee-Shirt	/		
Blue Jeans	X		
Black leather jacket	○		

Steam & Press

After checking-in each item, steam/press any item that looks wrinkled. Some items will need to be de-wrinkled before every show, while others will need less attention. To save time, set aside wrinkled items as you check them in and then steam/press them all at once.

To avoid the risk of burns, steam garments running top-to-bottom, not bottom-to-top.

Presets

It is your responsibility to have every quick change preset at the top of show.

“Preset-o’clock”

It is standard for dressers to begin pre-setting their pieces half an hour before the start of a show. At the time “half hour” is called, you should stop your current task, if possible, and preset your pieces. Some of us like to start earlier. If you choose to do this, just make sure you are not getting in the way of a fight/intimacy call or other technicians. In repertory theatre things move around a lot backstage, so know that the space might look slightly different each night.

Last Sweep

After the show, sweep the backstage space for any costume pieces that may have been left behind.

Check-in

As before, make sure every costume piece is present or accounted for.

Laundry

Equity standards require that all “skin items” (that is items that are worn directly on the skin) are washed and dried between each performance, and that all other items are cleaned as needed.

Instruct performers to put skin items in their mesh laundry bags. Remind them to leave their socks unrolled so they can dry and to make sure they zip the bag before dropping it in the laundry basket each night. They can leave any machine-washable items in the laundry **basket** but they should never be shoved into the mesh laundry **bags**.

When you check things back in for the night, check each garment briefly, and anything that is excessively damp from perspiration should be added to the laundry provided they are machine washable. Check necklines for makeup stains, these can be hand washed in cool water.

Hygiene Tasks

After everything is checked-in and laundry is set aside, all other garments should be sprayed with vodka spray (sometimes called “wardrobe spray”). Which is a solution of about one part (clear) vodka and one part water. Vodka works best for deodorizing and sanitizing sweaty garments that cannot be washed. If it is clear, diluted, and unflavored it will not leave a smell of liquor. If vodka is scarce, we can use a solution of one part isopropyl alcohol (90% or higher) and three parts water.

Shirts, blouses, and dresses should be sprayed in the armpits, down the center front center front, and down the center back.

Pants and shorts should be sprayed on the outside and inside of the crotch and seat.

Shoes and Hats should be sprayed with Lysol as needed (usually once every 7-14 days).

Change over

You will be responsible for changing over costumes when necessary. This is simple, just make sure all the garments for the show you just ran are neatly placed in the changeover holding space, and the next show is brought into the dressing space(s).

QUICK CHANGES

It is our responsibility to facilitate neat and comfortable costume changes for performers during performances as needed to accommodate the needs of the show. Some changes will be stressful and can be challenging, but changes should never be chaotic, sloppy, or a cause of distress to the performer. A dresser's strongest tool in a quick change is a calm and professional demeanor. Performers **will often** be stressed, flustered, and disoriented during fast quick changes; ***It is our job not to be.*** Your performers will learn to trust you if you remain calm. The following information is provided to help facilitate smoother changes.

COATS

The easiest way to put a coat on a performer is to use both hands to hold open the armholes with the inside facing the performer, ask the performer to face away from you with their arms thrown back, and guide the armholes to the performer's hands. Your performer might start to move their arms around searching for the armholes, just gently remind them to remain still.

SKIRTS AND DRESSES

Sometimes it is easiest to "puddle" garments like skirts and dresses on the ground in such a way that the performer can step into them before the dresser or performer raises the garment around the performer's body. Other times it is easiest to hold your arms through the garment (top facing you; bottom facing

away) and gently drop the garment over the performer's head, allowing it to fall to its proper place.

TEE SHIRTS

There is no quick way to help someone into a tee shirt. The fastest way is to hold the tee shirt by the hem (upside down) with the back facing yourself and the front facing the performer. Doing it this way every time lets the performer not have search and make sure the shirt is oriented correctly. Other than this, the performer will do everything themselves.

TANK TOPS

Tank tops go on quickest if you use both hands to hold open the arm holes and create a tunnel for the performer to "dive" into. Make sure the armholes are very visible and the back of the garment faces upwards.

IN ALL CASES

Each change is a choreography that is created through a conversation between dresser(s) and performer. The autonomy of the performer must remain the most important factor in all decisions. While we may know how to make a change quicker the final decision belongs to the performer.

TOOLS AND ATTIRE

Wearing long black pants (or skirt if necessary) and a solid black top (long sleeved if you can be seen by the audience) is the expected attire of dressers. This helps performers identify you as someone who can help them if they need it and hides you from the view of the audience.

Dresser Apron

Dressers' aprons are full of tools they will need throughout the run of a show. Aprons can be stocked with...

- Safety Pins
- Bobby Pins
- Wig Pins
- Mic Tape if needed
- Snips
- Seam Ripper (with cap)
- Flashlight or head lamp
- Tagging Gun (if you'd like)
- Swing Cards or Run Sheet
- Pencil or Pen to take notes
- Chapstick (for stuck zippers)