

Guide for Tech Auditions

These are guidelines to help you develop your portfolio for college auditions.

If you plan on going into Lighting Design for technical theatre, then your portfolio should concentrate on any light design projects you have participated with at your school or in the community. The more examples (specific to your desired field) you show in your portfolio, the more strength you will have as a designer. Photos and renderings are highly encouraged!

Technical rules (excluding short film and theatre marketing)

1. The entrant must prepare a design or construction for one published play written for the theatre. Designs for performances of poetry, fiction, screenplays, or any other medium are **not** permitted.
2. The entrant must give a ten-minute, oral presentation justifying the design or construction and guiding the adjudicator through the entrant's creative process. Notecards are permitted. The introduction to the presentation must include only the entrant's name, troupe number, title of play, and playwright. A 30-second oral play synopsis should be prepared in the event an adjudicator is unfamiliar with the play. If a synopsis is required, it is part of the ten minute presentation. After the ten minute presentation, adjudicators will have up to five minutes to ask questions. The overall session, including the introduction and follow-up questions, cannot exceed fifteen minutes. The entrant's presentation should address each of the following:
 - a) **The World of the Play**: An entrant should provide a brief statement of the time, place, and culture of the play as written.
 - b) **Design statement** (directorial approach/concept statement/central image): An entrant should include a statement detailing their unique approach to a play, what they want their designs to convey to an audience, and the response they hope to receive. Entrants should relate their design statement to The World of the Play. (Does not apply to stage management.)
 - c) **Given circumstances** (requirements of the play): An entrant should include a statement of what is needed to accommodate the action of the play. Entrants may also include any special constraints imposed on the production such as space, budget, other resources, need to tour, etc. and how those things affect the design.
 - d) **Research**: An entrant should provide a descriptive context, illustrating how their research is incorporated in their design. This research should be a blend of practical and conceptual information and be based on an entrant's understanding of The World of the Play as framed by their specific approach to their production.

e) **The design** (choices and communication): An entrant should include rough sketches, swatched final renderings, a costume plot (as needed) to clearly convey the choices they made in their design, and their rationale. Entrants should consider how they would present ideas and solutions to a director. (Does not apply to stage management.)

f) **Reflection**: An entrant should provide a self-assessment, including reflections on what worked, what didn't, what was learned, and what would they do differently in the future.

Costume Construction

1. Only one entrant may be involved in the construction. No collaborations are permitted.
2. The entrant must prepare and present:
 - a. Create a costume that reflects capabilities and strengths. Must produce a fully constructed item. The costume must be an entirely original construction created by the entrant.
 - b. An itemized expense sheet and receipts. All materials used to construct the costume such as fabric, thread, buttons, zippers, and trim may NOT exceed \$100. If millinery, budget limit is \$50, exclusive of the cost of *From the Neck Up* (book on hat making). The expense sheet must be mounted on the display board as proof that the entrant did not exceed their budget.
 - c. A costume research collage that focuses on the process of building the costume item. Process photos should depict the garment at various stages of construction—not the participant at a sewing machine. The collage must be presented on a 20" x 30" presentation board that is labeled in the lower right hand corner with the entrant's name and troupe number.
3. *Note*: The entrant should bring the garment on a hanger or, if the item is an accessory, in a box. The entrant should NOT wear the costume to the audition.
4. After the ten minute presentation, adjudicators will have up to five minutes to ask questions. The overall session, including the introduction and follow-up questions, cannot exceed fifteen minutes.

Costume Design

1. Only one entrant may be involved in the design. No collaborations are permitted.
2. The entrant must prepare and present:
 - a. Five character renderings. These may represent five different characters or follow a single character through several changes. No more than five renderings are permitted. No finished costumes are permitted.
 - b. Full color designs on paper of the designer's choice and mounted on a 10" x 15" or 11" x 17" board such as illustration board, heavy poster board, or foam core. Board color is at the discretion of the designer. Figures should be 8" to 10" tall. Template or trace characters may be used. Entrant is encouraged to include fabric swatches that may be attached to the lower left corner renderings. The board should be labeled in the following manner: (a) upper left-hand corner: play title and playwright; (b) upper right-hand

corner: character's name, act, and scene; (c) lower right-hand corner: entrant's name and troupe number. No other information may be written on the board.

- c. A 1/2" binder containing the following materials: (a) a brief statement of the design choices inspired by the script, (b) research materials, (c) preliminary sketches, (d) a costume plot of who wears what when, and (e) other sources of inspiration for design and color palette, if any were used.
3. After the ten minute presentation, adjudicators will have up to five minutes to ask questions. The overall session, including the introduction and follow-up questions, cannot exceed fifteen minutes.

Lighting Design

1. Only one entrant may be involved in the design. No collaborations are permitted.
2. The entrant must prepare and present:
 - a. A light plot, 1/4" or 1/2" = 1'0" and no larger than 24" x 36", indicating focus, channel (dimmer) color, type of instrument, any special equipment and an indication of the set and masking. This single page (plate) should include a unit key for clarification of all stage fixtures and a title block including the show name, producer, facility, date of production, drawn by, and scale data.
 - b. One 1/2" binder containing three complete sets of the following materials for the adjudicators. A. A one page design statement summarizing:
 - i. The director's vision of the play and his/her wishes;
 - ii. The entrant's goals and visions for the design;
 - iii. Major messages or themes in the play to be emphasized, if any;
 - iv. How the entrant achieved these technically.
 - c. Copies of the entrant's research.
 - d. Additional sources of inspiration, if any.
 - e. A description of light cues organized by scene, including the purpose (outcome) of the cue and the timing of the cue.
 - f. A one page document, 8.5" x 11" (also called a 'magic sheet') depicting the acting space (set) and indicating the colors used in the design and the angles (down light, front light, side light, etc.) Entrant is not required to include specials.
 - g. A dimmer or channel hookup—not an instrument schedule.
3. After the ten minute presentation, adjudicators will have up to five minutes to ask questions. The overall session, including the introduction and follow-up questions, cannot exceed fifteen minutes.

Scenic Design

1. Only one entrant may be involved in the design. No collaborations are permitted.
2. The entrant must prepare and present:
 - a. An original, three-dimensional scale model OR a perspective rendering, not to exceed 11" x 17", showing the set and its relationship to the theatrical space. All forms of staging are permitted. Either model or rendering will be permitted, but not both. Recommended

scales for theatre are 1/4" or 1/2" to 1'0". At least one figure must be included in the rendering or model to show proportion and scale.

- b. A floor plan drawn to the same scale. The floor plan should clearly indicate the performance space, backstage space, audience areas, and sightlines. The floor plan should contain a title block including show name, producer, facility, date of production, drawn by, and scale.
 - c. One 1/2" binder containing three complete sets of the following materials for the adjudicators.
 - i. A one page design statement summarizing:
 1. The director's vision of the play and his/her wishes;
 2. The entrant's goals and visions for the design;
 3. Major messages or themes in the play to be emphasized, if any;
 4. How the entrant achieved these technically.
 - ii. Copies of the entrant's research.
 - iii. Additional sources of inspiration, if any.
3. After the ten minute presentation, adjudicators will have up to five minutes to ask questions. The overall session, including the introduction and follow-up questions, cannot exceed fifteen minutes.

Sound Design

1. Only one entrant may be involved in the design. No collaborations are permitted.
2. The entrant must prepare and present:
 - a. One 1/2" binder containing three complete sets of the following materials for the adjudicators.
 - i. The entrant must present a sound system plot on two pages.
 - ii. Speaker plot indicating where on the set and in the performance space loudspeakers will be placed. The relationship of speakers on the plot to speakers on the block diagram must be clear.
 - iii. Block diagram indicating signal flow through the sound system following the USITT Sound Graphics Standards available at:
www.usitt.org/content.asp?pl=81&sl=70&contentid=208
 - b. A one page design statement summarizing:
 - i. The director's vision of the play and his/her wishes;
 - ii. The entrant's goals and visions for the design
 - iii. Major messages or themes in the play to be emphasized, if any; iv. How the entrant achieved these technically.
3. Representative examples of the sound design on CD to be played on a provided sound system.
4. After the ten minute presentation, adjudicators will have up to five minutes to ask questions. The overall session, including the introduction and follow-up questions, cannot exceed fifteen minutes.

Stage Management

1. The entrant's presentation must be from a realized production either in their middle or high school program or a community or professional theatre.
2. It is important for an entrant to demonstrate a strong understanding of the stage manager's job and the process. This particular position isn't textbook. Personality and style can show. Adjudicators will look for consistency, clarity, and organization. If someone picked up an entrant's prompt book, would it make sense to them?
3. Entrants should bring a three-ring binder for the adjudicators that contains the components of their stage management promptbook and paperwork they used to perform their responsibilities. This should include but is not limited to:
 - a. Prompt script including blocking and all technical cues such as lights, sound, deck, etc. This may be broken into two scripts.
 - b. Examples of contact sheet, cast list, rehearsal schedule, props list, sound and lighting cue sheets.
 - c. A written statement of the director's artistic concept of the production that includes a discussion of the theme and how the theme was executed.
4. The entrant will be adjudicated on the clarity and organization of their prompt book and the effective communication of their understanding of their role as a stage manager as it related to their production.
5. After the ten minute presentation, adjudicators will have up to five minutes to ask questions. The overall session, including the introduction and follow-up questions, cannot exceed fifteen minutes.

Theatre Marketing

The entrant must prepare and present:

1. A case study that methodically works through the marketing process. Entrants will have a total of ten minutes to set up and make their presentation. Adjudicators will have up to five minutes for questions following the entrant's presentation.
2. The marketing campaign they developed and executed for a published play written for the theatre and presented by the school. Designs for performances of poetry, fiction, screenplays, or any other medium are prohibited. It is strongly recommended that the entrant was responsible for actual publicity.
3. Entrants should bring three portfolio binders for adjudicators that contain the components of their marketing campaign, including:
 - a. a finished poster
 - b. a finished program
 - c. two press releases consisting of an informational article and a feature article
 - d. a copy of the marketing budget for the publicity campaign and justification of expenses
 - e. any work that shows the progression of the creative process, including a brief statement of the design choices inspired by the script, research materials, and other sources of inspiration, if any.
4. Work will be adjudicated on creativity and results, not necessarily how much the entrant had in the budget and how well the entrant spent the money.

Presentation Format

1. Background

- a. Entrant should introduce him/herself and their Thespian troupe number.
- b. Quick description of the play they are marketing.
- c. Dates of performance/number of shows.
- d. Were they the only person responsible for executing the marketing campaign or did they have a team assisting?

2. Creative development

- a. Entrant should describe their target market outside of school. Who, specifically, are they trying to get to attend? Are there groups of people who would naturally enjoy the production they are trying to reach through marketing?
- b. Entrant should describe any research they did to develop the design concept. Did they consult the scene designer or research past productions of this play? Where did they draw inspiration?
- c. How does their marketing design concept match with the production design? Will the audience have an idea of what they are going to be seeing before they see it?
- d. Was the entrant the only person responsible for developing the marketing campaign's design concept? Did they develop the design concept and have someone else polish the final design? Or were they responsible for the development and creation?

3. Execution

- a. The entrant should describe and demonstrate the components of their marketing campaign. Examples of marketing components are posters, tickets, promotional handouts, social media, etc.
- b. The entrant should explain how and where this marketing was distributed.
- c. Is there consistency in their marketing, making it clear all of their marketing pieces are from the same campaign? What elements (images, colors, fonts, etc.) did they have to change to fit the media of their marketing components?

4. Outcomes

- a. Budget versus money spent. Note: if the entrant's school offers some services for free (i.e. making copies, printing) or a vendor donates a product or service, please determine what the actual or comparable service would cost—there is a value in this!
- b. Number of tickets sold per performance versus house capacity. Entrant should try to compare their outcome to a similar show previously produced.
- c. As part of their presentation, an entrant should include reflections on what they might have done differently had they had more time, money, etc.