



THEATRE USHER

Volunteer Role Date Range: March 13 to March 17, 2019

Hours Required: Minimum 6 hours

Reporting to: Transportation Team Lead

Location: Various Venues

Ushers are the face of the festival. As part of the Front of house (FOH) team you are often the first human contact many patrons have with the festival. You should possess a calm, yet charismatic demeanour and an aptitude for high quality customer service.

This position entails greeting and directing guests and taking tickets in a prompt and professional manner, assisting patrons to and from their seats before and during the show (the latecomers call), during intermission, and after the show. The front of house manager (FOHM) on duty will greet you when you arrive for your shift, inform you of the details of the event, and ensure that you have the tools and resources you need to carry out your volunteer role.

Pre-show duties:

- Check in with the FOHM - this will be your FIRST task.
- Walk through venue with the FOHM to familiarize yourself with the location of the fire exits, alarms, washrooms, priority seating, ATM, etc.
- Review policies and procedures with FOHM to familiarize yourself with safety procedures, latecomers, electronics & recording, and food & beverage policies.
- Review show information with FOHM to familiarize yourself with the name of the show, running time, curtain time, intermission information, what age group the show is suited for, how to check tickets for correct show, bar service details (where the bar is located, rules on drinks in the theatre, etc.) when the doors to the theatre are scheduled to open, when the doors are scheduled to close and the performance is to begin (curtain time), any specific information regarding the show, eg. strobe effects, coarse language, any post show chat or reception.
- Help with event set-up including:
 - o Ensuring all signage is clean and on display
 - o Setting up chairs (as required)
 - o Ensuring all public-facing places are clean and functioning including lobby, washrooms and seating areas
 - o Ensure all fire exits are free from obstructions, etc.
- Greet and take patron tickets, ripping them and keeping the ticket stub.
- Ensure everyone entering the theatre has a ticket.
- Disseminate show / festival programs.
- Communicate show information and policies around photography and use of electronics.
- Direct patrons to the bathrooms, bars, elevators and exits as required.
- Direct patrons to their seats.
- Direct patrons with ticketing issues to the box office.
- Seat patrons in a timely and safe fashion.
- Help patrons with mobility issues to their seats and safely storing scooters, wheel chairs, crutches, and canes out of aisles and other public walkways.
- Assist FOHM with tracking open seating to aid in quick and safe late seating when appropriate.
- May need to request patrons to shift seats to fill single seats and allow groups to sit together.
- Deliver ripped tickets to FOHM before the show starts

During the show:

- Once doors have closed, depending on the venue, at least one member of the FOH team will remain outside the event doors to assist latecomers. The FOHM will handle the latecomers call or instruct you as required.
- The remaining FOH team will remain in the theatre to support patrons and monitor for emergencies.

After the show:

- Once the theatre and lobbies have cleared, assist in cleaning the theatre and lobby areas.
- Pick-up reusable program and return them FOHM.
- Turn in lost and found items to FOHM.
- Help with special event break down as required including:
 - o Putting away all signage
 - o Setting up / removing / moving tables and chairs (as required)

End of shift:

- Return any equipment.
- Ensure all ticket stubs have been delivered to FOHM.
- Check out with FOHM before leaving the venue.

General duties:

- Acting as a point of contact for patrons needing assistance, and calling the appropriate staff to assist in first aid.
- Providing general assistance to FOHM and production teams before, during, and immediately after shows.
- Assisting venue and house managers in the upkeep of the venue before, during, and after performances; alerting appropriate staff of spills, trash, or other necessary cleans up.
- Communicating issues that arise with the FOH team.

What you will require for your shift:

- Volunteer t-shirt
- Volunteer name tag
- DO NOT BRING VALUABLES
- Volunteers are expected to maintain personal hygiene but should not use excessive perfume, cologne, or strong deodorants.

General Etiquette

- Always approach a guest with a friendly greeting (i.e. "Hello, may I assist you?").
- Be proactive and take the initiative to assist patrons.
- Assume a confident and open posture. Stand erect and avoid crossing your arms.
- Be familiar with the event based on the notes provided by the FOHM.
- Be familiar with the venue.
- Treat all patrons with respect, even if difficult – do not escalate a situation. If necessary, find the FOHM to help resolve the situation.
- Avoid being distracted in conversation when patrons are visible and waiting to be served.
- Never speak negatively about a show at the festival while working or wearing your volunteer t-shirt. If you did not enjoy a performance, find something in the show to comment on (perhaps a particular performer did a great job), or you may say that it was "not to your specific taste, but others enjoyed it."

- When a patron asks a question that you cannot answer, refer them to the FOHM.
- If you are assigned to sit in the theatre and a guest gets up to leave the theatre, you MUST guide them and quietly open and close the door for them.
- If you are assigned to sit in the theatre, then do not exit the theatre during the performance except during emergencies or if a situation arises that requires the FOHM's assistance.
- Pay attention to announcements for important information, including when the theatre doors open, when the show begins, when intermission ends, and so on.
- Be familiar with food and beverage policies in your venue and politely remind patrons of these policies as required.
- When patrons are exiting, ALWAYS smile and thank each of them for attending the event.
- Never tell patrons that they must leave the venue so that you can close the doors, the FOHM will take care of this and only if it is required.
- Assist the FOHM by clearing plastic ware and garbage from the lobbies and venue. Programs can be collected and handed back to the FOHM or recycled if it is the final performance.
- No cellular phones, music players, tablets, books, games, etc., are to be carried while on call. All such items should be left with your belongings in the secure area or at home.