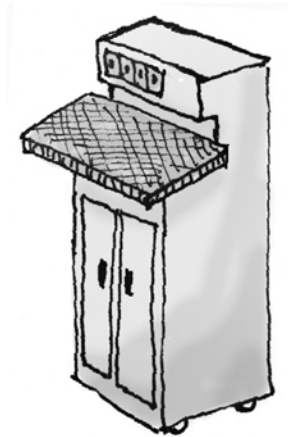


How Do You MAKE ...

STAGE MANAGER'S DESK

On a touring show (and on Broadway), the *stage manager's desk* is most often the personal property of the production stage manager rather than either the production company or a rental house associated with the show. It might be built by that same stage manager, or by some local stagehand, or even a friend. As a result the quality varies greatly, and so does the style. However, they all share some common features.



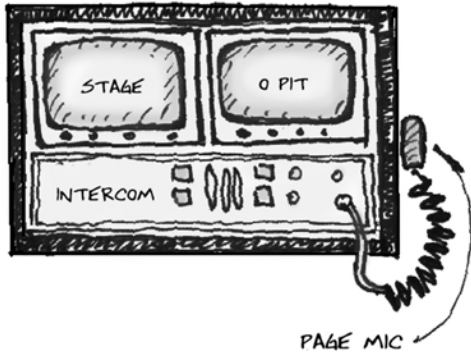
STAGE MANAGER'S
DESK

The desk is quite literally just that—a desk where the stage manager can sit to call cues. As many prefer to stand much of the time, it is common to see the desk as a tallish structure using a stool rather than a chair. The top is almost always slanted, and this gives it the appearance of something old Bob Cratchit might have used. There are doors for storage underneath, and it is helpful if this storage area can be secured with a lock. The desk will get moved around a lot, and a nice cabinet lock will be hard to secure if the case gets racked out of shape. They are also much easier to break into. It is common to use a *resettable padlock* like a Sesame Lock. This way, there are no keys to lose, and the number can be set to an easily recalled combination like your birthday or some historical date. A combination lock can provide access to a larger group of people when necessary. Then you can reset it to a new number when too many people know the old one.

THE COMBINATION ON THIS TYPE OF LOCK CAN BE RE-SET TO ANY CONVENIENT NUMBER.



The stage manager's desk frequently has a number of electronic devices on it. The main station for the *headset intercom system* is often located here so that the stage manager can easily change channels, volume, and so on.



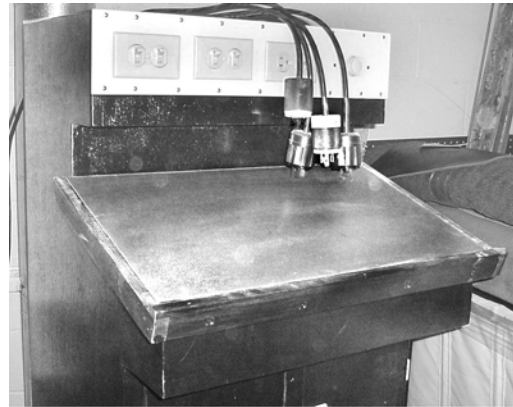
There should be some sort of *paging microphone* to reach the dressing room monitors for actor's calls. Quite often, you will find a *video monitor* on top of the desk that gives the cue caller a view of the stage and sometimes a separate view of the conductor in the pit.

On a tour, these electronics are often supplied by one or more of the rental companies that have been contracted to provide equipment for the show, and they may ride in a separate container, which is then stacked on top of the desk. A desk at a resident company or school is a part of the theatre's equipment, so the electronics are often built in.

Another common feature of the desk is a bank of *cue light switches*. It is advisable to have at least five or six of



them in order not to run short. They are usually located in a strip above the table surface, below any shelves used for the intercom and/or video/audio monitors.



STAGE MANAGER'S DESK WITH CUE LIGHT SWITCHES
THE FEMALE TWIST LOCKS ARE OUTPUTS

If the switches are mounted on a removable plate, installation and servicing will be made easier. They are regular 120-volt, 15-amp wall switches found just about anywhere. Outputs should be located on the rear of the desk and can be either panel-mount or the pigtail type. Putting the entire desk on casters will make it easy to move around when necessary.