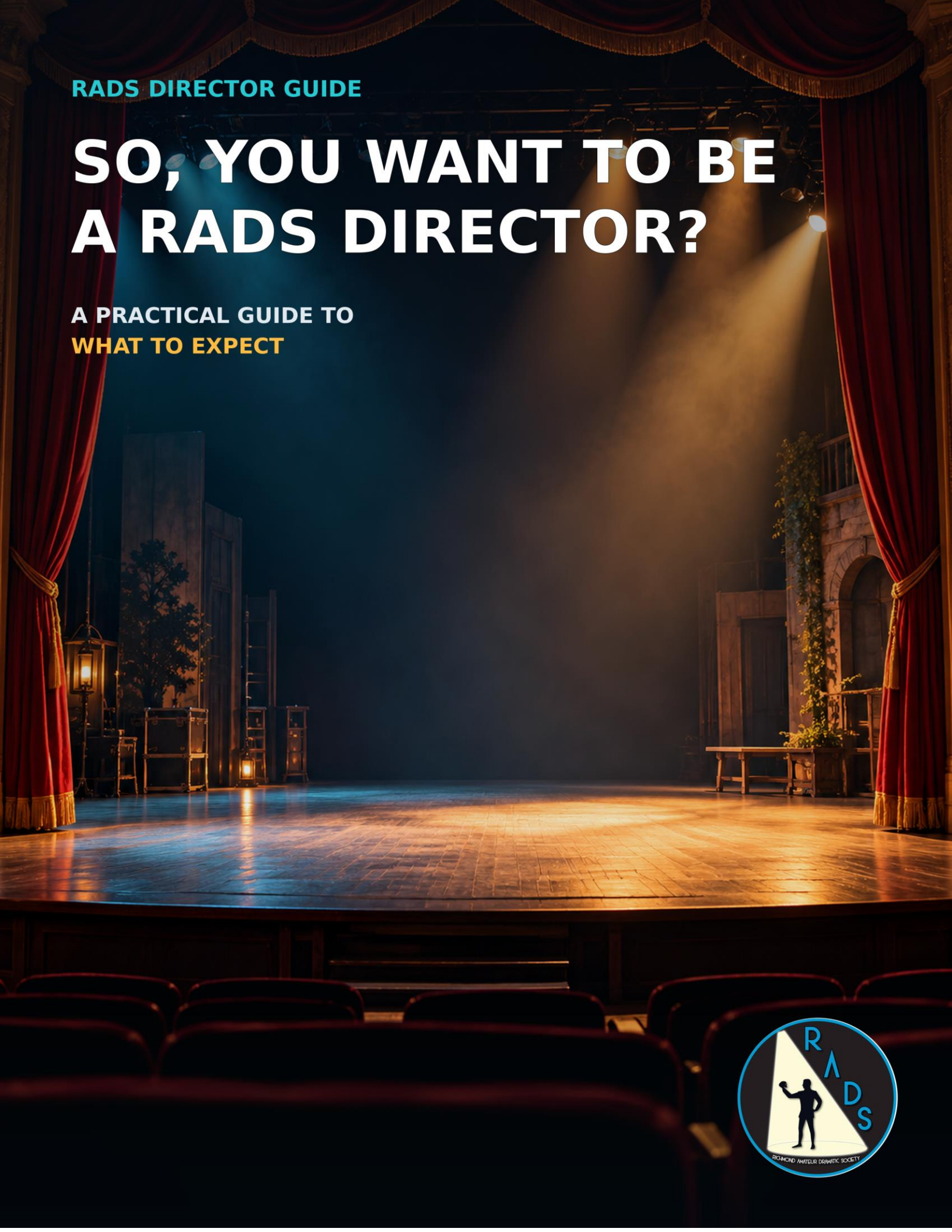


RADS DIRECTOR GUIDE

SO, YOU WANT TO BE A RADS DIRECTOR?

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO WHAT TO EXPECT

RICHMOND AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY

So, You Want to Be a RADS Director?

A Practical Guide to What to Expect

We are always on the lookout for new directors in the society and so if you have ever thought about wanting to do so, but were unsure of where to start, then this guide should help you along the way. Directing a RADS production means taking responsibility for getting the show from its first casting decisions to a fully rehearsed, technically prepared public performance. You will lead the creative work while staying closely connected with the RADS Committee, your Stage Manager, backstage crew and the Set Builder.

Is this role for you?

- You should be comfortable using the internet and email, and can produce and share documents in common formats such as Word, Excel and PDF.
- You should be able to plan rehearsals, coordinate people and confirm the practical resources a production needs.
- You will need to be prepared to manage spending carefully, keep receipts and seek approval before exceeding the agreed budget.
- You will be required to help create an inclusive production where cast and backstage helpers feel welcome, happy and comfortable.

The people around you

Who	How you will work together
RADS Committee	The Committee produces the show. Liaise closely on the Stage Manager appointment, recruitment guidelines, the budget limit and any spending that needs approval.
Stage Manager	Your key delivery partner. Together you will plan the set, building schedule, resources and technical needs. The Stage Manager also develops the Risk Management Plan.
Set Builder	Liaise closely on the agreed set plan and the practical building schedule.
Designer if needed	You may appoint a Designer when the production needs one. Keep the design aligned with the set plan, schedule and available resources.

IMPORTANT! Before you can direct a play at The Georgian Theatre Royal, you must first have shown your capability in directing a one-act play. We often submit our one-acts into the annual Sedgefield One-Act Festival, but there are other options for other festivals also. This guide provides the same guidelines for producing a One-Act in terms of expectations.

Your production roadmap

The first thing to do is to **find a play that you wish to put on**; ideally this should be something that you have enjoyed and can envisage how it may look and have considered any practical considerations. This needs to be read by the committee and, if passed for approval, you should be prepared to present your ideas to the committee – essentially, have a plan!

Once signed off, take the time to review the script and **get as prepared as possible** with your ideas, in order to start. This will cover how you want the characters to be, how speech should be delivered, character entrances and exits, lighting thoughts, sound ideas, the general staging layout etc. The expectation is that you will be ready and understand your plans **before** you hold the read through.

The following responsibilities overlap, but this order gives you a practical route through the production.

01 Hold a read-through, auditions and cast the production!

Use RADS members wherever possible. If there are not enough members, you may recruit new members within the Committee's guidelines. You may hold open auditions or cast selectively, but aim to give as many RADS members as possible the chance to contribute on stage and backstage.

02 Build your team!

Appoint a Stage Manager (Liaise with the RADS Committee if needed) – this should be an experienced member; this is the person who will be your best friend throughout this! If necessary, appoint a Set Designer/Builder and look to fill a backstage team, and make sure each person understands how their work connects with the production plan.

03 Agree the set and how the staging/build will be

Work with the Stage Manager to determine the set plan. Agree a realistic set building schedule and liaise closely with the Set Builder.

04 Plan the rehearsals – prepare to be there for each rehearsal!

Draw up a rehearsal schedule that gives the cast enough time to prepare and includes time for the play to be rehearsed technically; identify when people need to be there and when they don't; sometimes you will not need everyone! For a full play you should aim for a total of approximately 30 rehearsals and a one-act a total of 16.

05 Confirm every resource!

In conjunction with the Stage Manager, identify the set, props, costume, lighting, sound effects, music choices, make-up and technical resources required. Confirm these needs as early as possible during the rehearsal schedule in order to allow sufficient time to factor them into your rehearsals.

06 Control the budget

Work within the limit set by the Committee. Retain receipts for the Treasurer. Ask the Committee to authorise any planned or unexpected expense that would take the production beyond its budget prior to undertaking those expenses.

07 **Prepare safely**

Ensure the Stage Manager has developed a Risk Management Plan and build the required actions into rehearsals. Apply the RADS Child Performance Policy whenever actors under 16 are involved.

Be ready for performance - what this means

By the public performance, the production should be fully cast, rehearsed and technically prepared. The people, set, props, costumes, lighting, sound, music, make-up, safety actions and backstage arrangements should work together as one production.

Remember – this is **your** directing. It should be your vision, and you will be the one controlling what happens on the stage by giving clear advice to your cast and crew. Be confident in what you want to achieve and be resolute in your wishes for how you see it coming together! You will have a team of people around you and have access to as much help and resources as you need. It is likely that you will be provided with a mentor, an experienced director or stage manager, to guide you through the process and help where you are unsure. The Committee is also there to encourage, support and guide you.

Budget, safety and safeguarding

Budget rules

1. The Committee sets the budget limit and agrees the amount of the initial cash float.
2. Keep all expenditure within the agreed limit and retain receipts for the Treasurer.
3. Submit any request for spending beyond the limit to the Committee for authorisation, whether the cost is planned or unexpected.

Risk management and under 16s

The Stage Manager develops the Risk Management Plan. You must ensure that it exists and that any required actions are incorporated into rehearsals. If the cast includes anyone under 16, the RADS Child Performance Policy must be applied.

Safeguarding everyone involved

RADS aims to be inclusive and welcoming to all parts of society. Cast members and backstage helpers should feel happy and comfortable during rehearsals and social events. Encourage anyone whose enjoyment is being affected by a person or situation to speak in confidence to you or to any Committee member.

Your director readiness checklist

- ☐ Audition and cast the play - The production uses RADS members wherever possible, and any external recruitment follows Committee guidelines. BE PREPARED!
- ☐ Casting gives members opportunities to contribute on stage and backstage.
- ☐ A Stage Manager has been appointed, and the Stage Manager Briefing Notes have been read. Backstage roles are also considered and filled as soon as possible.
- ☐ The set plan and building schedule are agreed with the Stage Manager and Set Builder.
- ☐ Prepare a rehearsal schedule - the rehearsal schedule prepares the cast and includes technical rehearsal time.
- ☐ All set, prop, costume, lighting, sound, music, make-up and technical needs are identified and confirmed early.
- ☐ Spending is within budget, receipts are retained and any extra expenditure has Committee approval.
- ☐ Risk Management Plan actions are built into rehearsals.
- ☐ The Child Performance Policy is applied if anyone under 16 is involved.
- ☐ Everyone knows they can raise a safeguarding concern in confidence with the Director or any Committee member.