

◆◆◆ The Theatrician's Code of Ethics ◆◆◆

Part of the great tradition of the theatre is a code of ethics which belongs to every worker on the legitimate stage. This code, while tacit, has been observed throughout the centuries and will continue long after us. It is neither superstition nor dogma, nor a statute enforced by law. It is an attitude toward craftsmanship, a respect for associates, and a dedication toward the audience. This code outlines a self-discipline which, far from robbing one of individuality, increases personal esteem and dignity through cooperation and common purpose. The result is perfection which encompasses all that is meant by "Good Theatre."

- ◆ The show must go on! I will never miss a performance.
- ◆ I will play every performance and meet all backstage responsibilities to the best of my ability, regardless of how small my role or assignment, or how large my personal problems.
- ◆ I will respect my audience regardless of size or station.
- ◆ I will never miss an entrance or cue, or cause a curtain to be late by failing to be ready.
- ◆ I will forego all social activities which interfere with rehearsals and will always be on time.
- ◆ I will never leave the theatre building or stage area until I have completed my performance or other responsibilities.
- ◆ I will remember that my aim is to create illusion; therefore, I will never break character during a performance. Nor will I appear in costume and makeup off stage or outside the theatre. Nor will I alter lines, business, lights, properties, settings, costumes, makeup, sound, or any phase of the production without consultation with, and permission from, the director.
- ◆ I will not allow the comments of friends, relatives, or critics to change any phase of my work without proper authorization. I will accept the director's advice in the spirit in which it is given, for the director sees the production as a whole and my role or other responsibilities as a portion thereof.
- ◆ I will never blame my coworkers for my own failure.
- ◆ I will look upon the production as a collective effort demanding my utmost cooperation; hence, I will forego the gratification of ego for the demands of the play.
- ◆ I will be patient and avoid temperamental outbursts, for they create tension and serve no useful purpose.
- ◆ I will respect the play and the playwright, remembering that "a work of art is not a work of art until it is finished."
- ◆ I will never engage in caustic criticism of another artist's work from jealousy or an urge to increase my own prestige.
- ◆ I will inspire the public to respect me and my craft through graciousness in accepting both praise and constructive criticism.
- ◆ I will construct, handle, and use stage properties and costumes with care, knowing that they are the actors' tools and a vital part of the production.
- ◆ I will honor the theatre plant as the temple for my art that it truly is by carefully maintaining all theatrical equipment and facilities with the utmost pride, care, and respect. Recognizing that resources for repairs, replacement, and refurbishment are becoming increasingly scarce, I will do my best to ensure that wear and tear on equipment and facilities results from legitimate use rather than unjustifiable misuse or abuse.
- ◆ I will observe backstage courtesy and will comport myself in strict compliance with the rules of the theatre in which I work.
- ◆ I will never lose my enthusiasm for the theatre because of disappointment or failure, for they are the lessons by which I learn.
- ◆ I will direct my efforts in such a manner that when I leave the theatre, it will stand as a greater institution for my having labored there.