

March 4, 2024

I am delighted to be writing in support of Rachel Rock's research project for the 2024 CCA Mentored Research Awards "Accessibility in Stage Management Prompt Books and Strategies for Implementation". I have been working with Rachel on a variety of stage management-related skills over the last four years. Rachel was in my first Stage Management Principles class at West Virginia University, and from day one, she exhibited a natural ability to put together all the pieces needed to be a Stage Manager. From day one, I addressed stage management through accessibility, and she took that concept to heart fully. She is fearless in her pursuit of growth and learning with a strong desire for new and varied information through inquiry and research.

Rachel is dedicated to learning new technologies and finding the best ways to organize information for herself and others. She has taken to converting her scripts to a digital format, primarily through Microsoft Word to make clear, detailed prompt books that even a novice could replicate due to her specificity. She recently started using Excel and Sheets at a high level to create interactive paperwork that seamlessly communicates information to a full production team. In her most recent production experience, *Ride the Cyclone*, she had over 700 lighting, sound, projections, and automation cues in a 95-minute show and successfully organized all the information and called everything correctly. She changed her calling script a handful of times to make it as clear as possible for both herself and others.

Her research is an extension of this project, focusing on accessibility in scripts and paperwork, making each document usable for as many people as possible and addressing a variety of accessibility needs. I taught her the basic skills necessary to start her first project attempts, and she independently researched different accessibility challenges and how those were best supported through technology. She and I have been working together to prepare for her presentation at the USITT conference in Seattle in March 2024 along with a graduate student and faculty member from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music Stage Management program. In this presentation, she addresses both why advancements in technology are needed within the stage management discipline and how to achieve those advancements within different budget options to purchasing iPads for all Stage Management personnel. The presentation will also discuss the different types of applications for digital blocking and cueing such as Word/Google Document, Cuelist, Goodnotes, Adobe PDF, and Stage Right, different tips and tricks for a digital format, as well as successful examples over the past three years.

Presenting at USITT is an honor and to be asked to lead a session as an undergraduate is a rare opportunity. Her research is vital to theatre and the arts as a whole because she is speaking to the future of the industry and how all organizations can progress efficiently and inexpensively. I believe she is an excellent candidate for the CCA Mentored Research Award. Please contact me if you have any additional questions.

Thanks,

Aubrey Sirtautas

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