

## Stage Manager Guidelines

*This document was developed by a team of experienced stage managers and hopefully will provide useful guidelines for every stage manager. Short version: Start early if you can, minimize changeover time as much as you can, and always END ON TIME.*

The stage manager is an interface for the audience, musicians, sound crew, and staff. We work to optimize performances and keep the show flowing along smoothly. We are the timekeepers. It's our responsibility to make sure the workshops or sets run as close to time as possible, especially to make sure performances END ON TIME. We work with our own crew and other committees such as programming, performer's hospitality, central control, and security. For example, Performer's Hospitality brings us water and sodas and ice for each stage. Central Control moves equipment and musicians from stage to stage. Security helps with crowd control and to keep an eye on the audience. Between sets, we convey announcements sent to us by Executive Trailer and, importantly, we announce the upcoming CD signings at the merchandise tent. This is the milieu within which the stage manager leads.

### **Guidelines for Stage Management at Philadelphia Folk Festival:**

Greet performers and check stage plots for updates and corrections. Communicate this information to the sound crew. It's a good idea to review your stage plots with Sound at the beginning of the day so you can place major backline and have it ready for all the day's performances, in order to optimize changeovers between performances. Figure the best way to make changeovers speedy and congenial. Physically facilitate getting performers off and on stage.

If a performer/band desires to be introduced, wait until the performers and sound crew are all ready to go (signal with sound guy) and then make a brief welcoming introduction. Ask them how they want to be introduced.

Study stage plots beforehand. Plan how to make your changeovers efficient. Set equipment up on stage as early in the day as you can; especially keyboards, drums, and amps; to make your changeovers quicker.

Keep the sets on time. **Even if a performance should get off to a late start, that performance must end on time.** Please follow the performance times on your production schedule.

Explain to your performers that if they take more than their allotted time, always leaving time for changeovers, another performer will lose that time. If they take too long setting up, that time comes off their set. Side stages, except for Lobby Stage, must be down and silent at either 3:45 or 3:50, depending on instructions from Festival Management. If a workshop starts late, it must still end on time. This is not negotiable.

Talk with your performers before the set to determine the timing for the ending cue; usually 5 minutes. Determine who will be giving the cue to which performer and make sure they know. Make sure to give the signal at the appropriate time.

Make sure everyone on your crew knows the plan and their part in it.