

Part 2

Read the article on 'Theatre in Prison' in the Insert Booklet, Part 2, Pages 4-5 and answer Questions 11 - 25.

It's Play Time in Prison

People would frown whenever I tell them that I have been designing lights for theatre in prison for many years. Obviously, the two words -- prison and theatre are totally different in terms of experiences they provide. So when I mention a prison theatre, the term seems rather alienated. However, a theatre in prison is quite a common case in many places including here in Canada.

I have been teaching lighting for plays and stages in Thailand as well as pursuing more experiences in Canada for years. When you work for plays, it is very common that you form some connections with people in the same field. So when one of my colleagues heard about this theatre-in-prison project seven years ago, it also intrigued me to join.

The project is annually run by William Head on Stage which is the only prison-run theatre company in Canada. Although the project is run by volunteers, it is very well managed and is a paid job. Theatre in prison is among therapeutic activities that aim to heal prisoners. The project involves many parties which include prisoners, wardens and volunteers who are professional in their field. Only the prisoners who are classified as minimum level of custody are allowed to participate in the play.

The play normally takes place in autumn and is in full performance. I found that working for this voluntary project is very systematic. It usually starts from having a workshop with the prisoners. They are assigned to read some books and look for inspiration to share. Later, the production team will brainstorm with the prisoners and agree on the plot, the script and the overall picture of the play.

As a light designer, I plan with the team how the light work would look like to reinforce the atmosphere and mood in the play. The workshop is very helpful because it makes everyone get the same picture of what is going to happen on and at the back of the stage. Most importantly, it is also a chance for the prisoners to learn how to listen to other people, share their opinions and choose the right tasks for themselves. Some might be good at acting while some might go for the backstage roles.

My responsibilities are to design the lights for the play and train the interested prisoners basic technician's skills. They will learn how to read a lighting plot which is simply a blueprint of where and when the lights would go on the stage. Frankly speaking, I hardly feel that I am working with those who have committed crimes. It just like working with any technicians but our office is behind maximal security. What I have to be careful of is communication. Prisoners can be sensitive to words and how people act to them. This is understandable because they are still very fragile mentally. Sometimes I have to think twice before giving comments so that they would not feel offended or intimidated.

Working in a prison needs some security checks too. There is an instruction of Dos and Don'ts before and while in the prison. Mobile phones and laptops are prohibited and all the

stationery to be brought inside needs to be declared. It is quite inconvenient being unable to use a laptop at work. This means I have to draw everything by hand so it consumes more time.

When it is the play season, the neighbourhood is also excited about the show. Tickets are usually sold out and people are eager to come to the play. I think it is out of their curiosity to know what it is like in the prison area and also some thrill to get through all the process of high security check before getting in. Of course, It is quite an experience to see a play in an unusual place like a prison.

The project is rather successful and the audience are impressed by the production. However, the most important thing that this project has achieved is a positive attitude towards and among prisoners. The community has an alternative to support those in need and their presence at the performance also uplifts the spirit of the prisoners. As for the prisoners themselves, months of working help them to gain trust in people and in themselves again. Indeed, I believe that this project helps to prepare them to go back to the world with both more confidence and some new vocational skills.

Part 2

Read the article on 'Theatre in Prison' in the Insert Booklet, Part 2, Pages 4-5 and answer Questions 11 - 25.

Questions 11 - 20

Answer the following questions. For each question write no more than **THREE** words that must be taken from one point in the text. **DO NOT** write full sentences.

11 What is formed among people who work in the theatrical field?

.....(1)

12 What is the objective of the theatre-in-prison project?

.....(1)

13 Which level of custody is offered to prisoners who can take part in the play ?

.....(1)

14 What is normally the first activity with the prisoners in the project ?

.....(1)

15 What would those who prefer not to act on the stage do?

.....(1)

16 What do technicians have to look at if they want to know where on the stage that needs lights?

.....(1)

17 According to the writer, what is it like to work without a laptop?

.....(1)

18 How do people feel about the play by prisoners?

.....(1)

19 What is the most important accomplishment this project has earned for the prisoners?

.....(1)

20 Apart from the confidence, what are the prisoners likely to have when they get out of the prison ?

.....(1)

(Total for Questions 11 - 20 = 10 marks)

Questions 21 -25

Indicate your answers to the questions below by marking a cross for the correct answer ☒. If you change your mind about an answer, put a line through the box ~~☒~~ and then indicate your new answer with a cross ☒.

21 People would normally... (1)

- A** relate the word 'theatre' to the word 'prison'.
- B** get confused when seeing a play in prison.
- C** feel perplexed when the writer mentions about her work.
- D** like to offer an experience with a theatre in prison.

22 What is true about the project by William Head on Stage ? (1)

- A** It depends on donations from public.
- B** Volunteers who work with the project earn some money in return.
- C** Only prisoners are allowed to get involved.
- D** There are therapists to initiate activities.

23 How does the writer see her work as a light designer? (1)

- A** It helps her to plan the atmosphere in the play better.
- B** It brings people in the play together.
- C** It provides a great opportunity to work by herself.
- D** It helps to emphasize the needed mood and atmosphere.

24 What is true about working with prisoners? (1)

- A.** The writer feels quite uncomfortable working with them.
- B** It is very easy since they are familiar with light work.
- C** The security checks are relaxed to facilitate the volunteers.
- D** Words have to be well selected when communicating with them.

25 People who come to the play are... (1)

- A** thrilled to experience the security checks in the prison.
- B** willing to pay more for the tickets.
- C** not very happy with the production.
- D** those who want to talk to prisoners in person.

(Total for Questions 21 - 25 = 5 marks)

TOTAL FOR PART 2 = 15 MARKS