

Mark Twain! On Stage

Production Requirements

TO THEATRE MANAGERS :

Every effort will be made to arrange for Mr. Chappell's arrival at the theatre at least three hours prior to the performance. This is not always possible, and even when it is possible, only a simple check of the arrangements can be made. Up to six hours may be required for a complete set-up. For this reason, it is very, very important that the props be on hand, the lights be set and focused, and the dressing room ready before arrival!

Mr. Chappell prefers three hours in which to make-up before performing a monologue which lasts approximately two hours (including two twelve-to-fifteen minute intermissions). Please have available in the dressing room:

- Large mirror illuminated by regular incandescent lights (two lamps with 100 watt bulbs on each side will do)
- Typist's swivel chair
- Box of Kleenex or similar tissues and two bath towels
- Hot water (if no plumbing, a coffeepot of water & basin)
- Strong, wide table of make-up counter
- Rack or place to hang clothes
- If there is much daylight in the room, please cover the windows
- Waste basket and ashtray

The dressing room need not be luxurious; it should be possible to go from it to the stage without encountering any of the audience. Mr. Twain likes to spring upon them by surprise.

In auditoriums with non-permanent seating, please set the first row of chairs four or five feet from the stage and set up without a center aisle. Use two side aisles instead.

CARPENTER DEPARTMENT

The stage should be dressed in black velvet or velour, the main backing to be a drape hung at least sixteen feet upstage of the apron edge. Legs and borders should match. If black is not available, use some dark color as Mr. Twain in his white suit does not show up against light colors. He likes to show up.

CARPENTER DEPARTMENT, Continued

On stages where we play on an extended apron, Traveler Front Curtain may be used as backing, if far enough up (16') or as tabbed side masking.

Downstage rug line should be one or two feet upstage of the down center point on the apron edge.

SOUND DEPARTMENT

“MARK TWAIN!” is not a lecture-type show. The old man will meander about the stage freely and can be expected to cover all parts of the rug playing area.

Since “Mark Twain!” is performed in keeping with the period, circa 1900, obvious use of microphones would destroy all illusion. Because of the necessity to maintain a warm and realistic contact between Mr. Twain and the audience. If absolutely necessary, we recommend subtle use of the following:

Either: Pressure-zone (PZM) mikes. These are no-fade mikes and available from several sources, including Radio Shack. It will require three to four mikes placed on the front edge of the apron.

Or: Crystal-controlled radio mikes. These are of various types and must be of the kind used as a lavalier rather than hand-held.

PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

All furniture should be of the turn-of-the-century style (or older) and should be genuine or good reproductions rather than “stage furniture.” Much of the authentic feel in the production will depend on the look of these properties! All should be sturdy and strong enough to support weight. Mr. Twain leans heavily on the reading stand and sits on the front edge of the table. He does not stand or jump on any of the furniture, or kick it.

FURNITURE – PROP LIST

NOTE: Try funeral parlors and churches for period items.

- 1 rug, 9 feet by 20 feet (oriental, if possible).
Alternate sizes may be used only when one large rug is not available. We suggest two 9' x 12' or three 7' x 9' rugs.
- 1 Arm Chair, 17 inches from floor to top of seat
- 1 Library Table (31 inches high x 40 inches long x 24 inches wide)
- 1 Reading Stand, which funeral directors call a "Registry Stand,"
(47 inches high x 20 inches long x 14 inches wide)
- 1 Water Pitcher (cut crystal)
- 1 Water Glass (to match Pitcher)
- 1 Candlestick with white or off-white candle
- 4 or 5 books in 19th Century style bindings, varied in size;
PLEASE: no "library" classification numbers on the spines!

The following props are carried by the production:

- 1 Special Ashtray
- 1 dozen wooden Kitchen Matches
- Lecture Notes in leather binding
- 4 cigars

ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT (See attached light plot and cue sheets)

Mr. Twain uses the forestage extensively. Focus lights to the downstage edge of the rug and set the rug one foot upstage of the apron edge, regardless of how far upstage the Proscenium Arch, Front Curtain and First Light Pipe are located.

Since the make-up and costume is keyed to the lighting, every effort should be made to achieve the correct color. The color media should be light bastard amber (abbreviated "B.A." for propriety), and light flesh pink. B.A. is NOT amber; it is a pale scarlet or salmon color about half-way between pink and amber, and is readily available in various brands.

The lighting is shown for ten (10) main dimmer circuits and one auxiliary circuit (for large halls only).

ELECTRICAL DEPARTMENT, Continued

The eight (8) area circuits should contain two (2) lamps each and be focused on their respective areas as indicated on the light plot. Mr. Twain is about six feet tall, hair included, so if you will, please light for someone of that altitude. Each circuit should be independently controlled. If impossible, please gang the downstage circuits independently of the upstage circuits.

Circuits #9 and #10 cover full stage and should work in unison.

Circuit #12 should be a 100-150 watt piano-convex midget, placed on apron edge at center stage in footlight well. Not needed except in very large theatres.

Obviously, lighting equipment varies widely. Ideally, Circuits #1 through #5 use 500 watt Fresnels (only if a First Pipe is used on stage) and Circuits #6 through #10 use 750 watt ellipsoidal spots (Lekos). On large Apron and Open Platform stages, all lighting must come from out front and all instruments should be the 750 watt Lekos. Group lights evenly across front to give a “flat” wash.

Pipes and instruments shown on the light plot are indicated in relative positions only. Proportion is not intended.

Equalize the light intensity in all areas.

Of course, you may not have all this equipment, and may need to modify the lighting plan to fit your hall. As a guide, remember that the idea is to provide even, “flat” light from above and in front. This little pool of 1900’s gaslight evokes the era.

CUE SHEET

Although Mr. Twain refuses to say what he intends to do in advance, the following cue sheet is provided as a sample.

ACT 1.

HOUSE TO ½

Two minutes before TWAIN entrance

HOUSE OUT

When TWAIN is in place, off stage right

Light – 1

FADE UP ALL TO FULL 5 count

Light – 2

Warn: “I’m going to declare a 10 minute rest
Period now. . .”

Cue: “. . .to allow some a chance to escape,
And this is your first opportunity.”

(as TWAIN exits)

FADE OUT ALL 5 count

HOUSE ON

ACT II

HOUSE TO ½

HOUSE OUT

When TWAIN is in place, off stage right

Light – 3

FADE UP ALL TO FULL

Light – 4

Warn: “When you come back, I’m going to tell a
Ghost story . . .”

Cue: “I’ll see you strong hearts in about
ten minutes.”

(As TWAIN exits)

FADE OUT ALL 5 count

HOUSE ON

CUE SHEET, Continued

ACT III	LOCK ALL ON MASTER
HOUSE TO ½	
HOUSE OUT	When TWAIN is in place, off stage right
Light – 5	FADE UP ALL TO FULL 5 count (Hold approximately 2 minutes)
Light – 6	Warn: TWAIN moves chair Cue: TWAIN steps down in front of chair FADE OUT ALL 3 count
Light – 7	Warn: “Then that voice say – right in his ear – Whoo gooot myyy goooolden aaarm?” Cue: TWAIN twists RIGHT foot out <u>BUMP UP ALL TO FULL</u>
Light – 8	Warn: “And now it’s time to go...” Cue: “Goodnight.” As TWAIN exits . . . FADE OUT ALL 5 count
CURTAIN CALLS	ALL UP and DOWN
HOUSE ON	After final curtain call

Technical Questions or Concerns?

Please contact Mr. Twain himself, *John Chappell*
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