



CODE OF CONDUCT

GUIDELINES FOR VIOLENT and FIGHT SCENES
FOR EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS and VOLUNTEERS

BLUE COW THEATRE

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GUIDELINES FOR VIOLENT and FIGHT SCENES

Blue Cow Theatre is committed to best practice in auditioning, rehearsal and performance of work involving:

- **Physical violence**
- **Verbal and emotional violence**
- **Fight scenes**

PRE-PRODUCTION

- Identify whether a production may include scenes of physical, verbal or emotional violence.
- Ensure that relevant departments (e.g. Production Management, Stage Management, Marketing) are informed and necessary measures put in place.

INITIAL AUDITIONS

- No initial auditions will involve physical violence scenes.

RECALL AUDITIONS

- If, in a recall audition, an actor is required to participate in a physically violent scene:
 - Double the usual time for the audition will be schedule.
 - The fight will be choreographed by the production Fight Director, and will only be “presented” once the actor feels comfortable and safe with the choreography.

CONTRACTING

- At point of contracting, all scenes involving physical, verbal and emotional violence will be brought to the attention of the actor (or the actor’s agent), so the contract is offered with full disclosure.
- Blue Cow Theatre contracts using the Actors Equity Standard Contract. The section for Special Conditions will acknowledge the violent content of the production and will state that the actor is aware of and agrees to play violent scenes.

WARDROBE

- For scenes involving physical violence, the Costume Designer will discuss the requirements of the scene and any impacts on costuming with the Director, Fight Choreographer and the actor prior to the manufacture/purchase of costumes.

- Elements essential to the safe development, rehearsal and playing of violent scenes – e.g. footwear – will be provided early in the rehearsal process.

REHEARSAL

Directors and, where relevant, Fight Choreographers will:

- Plainly describe and discuss with the relevant actors the dramatic intention of the fight, the level of acted “passion” to be reached, and the actors’ level of comfort with the violence required.
- Establish boundaries around areas of concern, including an agreed strategy to halt the action where necessary, and how to follow-up.
- Frequently check-in with the actors regarding their comfort with the action being developed and rehearsed.

The process of rehearsing scenes of physical violence will involve:

- Identify the blocking of the scene.
- Sculpt the physical actions using plain words.
- Rehearse the fight slowly and in small segments, gradually building-up length and pace.
- Separately identify the emotional content of the scene.
- Integrate the physical actions and emotional content, creating a seamless scene of physical violence.

The process for rehearsing scenes of verbal or emotional violence will involve:

- Identify the blocking of the scene.
- Sculpt the physical actions using plain words.
- Separately identify the emotional content of the scene.
- Integrate the physical actions and emotional content, creating a seamless scene of verbal or emotional violence.

PERFORMANCE

Fight Calls

- A Fight Call will be held prior to every performance, to ensure actors don’t become careless and to ensure everyone feels secure and safe.
- The intimacy call is an opportunity for:
 - The Director/Stage Manager to check that the actors are comfortable with the how the scene is running;
 - The actors to confirm fitness and any injury, allowing for possible changes to be accommodated;
 - The actors to ensure the scene is running exactly as has been agreed and rehearsed, OR to mutually reach a new agreement, also discussed with the Director and/or Stage Manager, and conscious of the effect lighting, sound or design may have on any changes.
- Any proposed changes MUST be thoroughly rehearsed. Talking through is not enough.

IN REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE

- Actors should not override the guidelines or change agreed action independently. Any changes or new proposals must be discussed with other actors, the Fight Director, and the Director and/or Stage Manager.