



LOCAL ONE STAGEHANDS ON STRIKE - MYTH vs. FACT

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MYTH	FACT
The Stagehands are striking because they want to preserve "featherbedding."	If you follow the League's logic about "featherbedding," they could say swings and understudies fall into that category. They're at the theatre but not working on stage. ("Featherbedding" is an epithet or charge employers always make against Union workers when they want to cut jobs. The term itself refers to workers who supposedly get paid and don't work). Why are these negotiated, accepted business practices suddenly "featherbedding?"
MYTH	FACT
The Stagehands on strike are making \$150,000 to \$200,000 a year.	A Local One member who works 52 weeks a year will average \$67,500 plus benefits. Most extra money comes from working beyond their regular work week.
MYTH	FACT
The union requires producers to pay for a full hour of work to cover a ten-minute mopping call.	The mopping usually take 40 minutes. The Stagehand who mops cannot work while Stagehands pre-set shows and dancers warm up. For safety, the floor is mopped and tracks for automated scenery are vacuumed during what would otherwise be the Stagehands' meal hour.
MYTH	FACT
Local One requires flymen on all shows, even when the show has no fly cues.	In 1995, Local One agreed to give up flymen on dramatic shows. In the last six years, only two Broadway musicals have employed flymen with no cues. The flyman also serves as a lifeguard when many tons of scenery are hung within six inches of each other. 200-300 intensely hot lighting instruments hang in aging and often poorly maintained theatres. All the firefighting equipment are in the fly space. Should a fire occur, the flyman is responsible for protecting the flies and the workers below. If there is no flyman, how long will it take for someone to get up to the equipment?
MYTH	FACT
House head electricians only work ten minutes a performance.	Years ago the Stagehands gave the League a concession so they would not have to hire another stagehand for less than 10 minutes of cue. The head electricians are responsible for the electrics of the entire building, ensuring cast and audience safety. They cannot run cues and fix house issues at the same time. They may run cues for ten minutes, but they have plenty of other work to do.
MYTH	FACT
The League prepared a strike fund knowing that the Stagehands would give them problems.	Since 2003 the League has been taking money out of every ticket sold in order to build a \$20 million defense fund. Given that Local One has never struck Broadway in over a century, what were they preparing for?
MYTH	FACT
Only one in five Broadway shows recoups today.	This is not new information. Like Actors, Producers understand the risk of being in show business. But the Stagehands have shown they are willing to give, <u>despite</u> the fact that the Producers are enjoying a very lucrative time on Broadway.

STAGEHANDS KEEP BROADWAY SAFE



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MYTH	FACT
Local One requires ridiculous and unnecessary staffing minimums.	Staffing minimums have been agreed to in negotiation after negotiation. The Stagehands have demonstrated they're willing to change staffing requirements but the League wants more. Sweeping changes to a contract can't be done in one Negotiation.
MYTH	FACT
Pre-show checks can be done the night before.	Pre-show checks must be done immediately prior to the performance for safety issues to confirm that no damage has occurred overnight. For Actors, this is a safety issue.
MYTH	FACT
Stagehands are not acknowledging the needs for the League on piano moves and load-in staffing.	The Stagehands have, in fact, addressed both of these issues at the table. The League wants more.
MYTH	FACT
The League came to the Stagehands with honor, respect, and good faith, and the greedy Stagehands have walked out on them.	The employers continually attack the Stagehands in the media. They don't treat the Stagehands with honor and respect. Instead of continuing negotiations in October, the League walked out and unilaterally imposed non-negotiated work rules. That's usually seen as a declaration of war on a Union. The stagehands went to work under these rules and kept pressing to re-open negotiations which began again on November 7th. See Next Fact.
MYTH	FACT
The Stagehands walked away from the table.	Local One stayed to negotiate until 2 a.m. in the morning on Thursday, November 8, only to be told that the League was "too tired" to start at 9:30 in the morning. Thursday night, the League negotiators felt that preparing for the opening night party of "Young Frankenstein" was a bigger priority than negotiating. The League also reneged on compromises that had already been agreed upon, undermining the entire negotiating process. The producers knew that their final offer would result in a strike.
MYTH	FACT
The producers and theatre owners have tried to negotiate with the stagehands in good faith.	The producers imposed their work rules on the Stagehands without a negotiated agreement. The Stagehands worked under these rules for 19 days before finally resorting to a strike.
MYTH	FACT
Stagehands have successfully worked under the new work rules.	Not so! Most shows tried and could not implement many of the League's new rules due to safety issues.
MYTH	FACT
Union members are expected to fall into step with the Stagehands without good reason.	The new business paradigm sought by the League will hit the actors next. During this time of incredible success in our industry, we cannot support the massive cuts the producers have sought from the Stagehands. If the League succeeds in the wholesale dismantling of the stagehand contract, our contract will be next.

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