

Middle-earth Studios Job Information

What is Middle-earth Studios?

Since 1976 we have been dedicated to enriching children's imaginations through the art of puppetry and our unique interactive costume-storytelling. During the summer season we perform from two stationary theaters located at Knoebels in Elysburg, Pennsylvania, and at the Land of Make Believe in Hope, New Jersey. Our goal is to entertain, empower young audiences, and create joyful memories for generations of park guests.

Who are we looking for?

Middle-earth Studios is looking for folks with any range of experience in the dramatic arts, both beginners and seasoned performers. Ideal candidates are excited to learn more about the art of storytelling, improvisation, and puppetry. Applicants should be energetic and comfortable interacting with park guests in character. Performances take place outdoors in a variety of weather conditions; the ability to adapt and perform in challenging situations is a must. If you want to share our love of art and entertainment with children and their families, this is the job for you!

How do we make memories?

On a typical day, two to three performers work together in a variety of roles. All performers wear costumes, use sound equipment, dress volunteers, and clean and organize our performance space. Company members are expected to learn how to process merchandise sales, and be willing to learn how to fix costumes and props as well as troubleshoot technical equipment.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **The Storyteller**
 - Engages the audience with sound and story
 - Memorizes a 15 - 20 page script
 - Memorizes timing for music and sound effects
 - Cues sound tracks during storytelling
 - Uses a microphone and operates a sound system
 - Utilizes vocal range to create character voices and evoke emotion
 - Receives notes and uses feedback to improve performance
 - Works with The Blocker to move volunteers through the actions of the story

- **The Puppeteer**
 - Engages the audience with puppetry and sound
 - Learns puppetry technique to perform with Marionettes (puppets on strings), Hand-mouth Puppets (Muppet style puppets), and glove puppets.
 - Memorizes timing for music and sound effects
 - Cues sound tracks during the performance
 - Develops character voices (not always necessary)
 - Directly speaks to audiences through the puppet

- Learns lip-sync and choreography to pre-recorded tracks
- Performs from a 4 ft. marionette bridge
- Performs in small spaces
- Uses body strength to hold up and manipulate puppets during 10 - 30 minute shows

Land of Make Believe performers will not work with marionettes

- **The Blocker**

- Engages the audience with direction and imagination
- Guides participants through story actions by touch and instruction
- Dramatically acts out the story to motivate audiences
- Keeps all participants safe during the performance (ex. catching a falling child or monitoring make believe sword fights)
- Works with The Storyteller to arrange movement and set up scenes
- Puppeteers the Unicorn puppet at the story's climax

What do we provide our performers?

Middle-earth Studios is an opportunity to grow as a paid theatre artist. You will expand your range of vocal expression, improve improvisation skills and become better at public speaking. As a puppeteer you will learn about puppet performance and construction techniques. Additionally, there are chances to learn about stagecraft, costume making, and prop construction. As a company we want to share our experience and knowledge. This is your time to build knowledge, gain new perspectives, and learn more about yourself!

Compensation

Performers are compensated \$70-\$100 per diem based off experience.
Apprentices are compensated \$60 per diem.

Youth Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are for young performers between the ages of 12 – 16 who have a desire to learn more about storytelling, puppetry, improv and stagecraft. Little to no theatre experience required! Apprentices are initially trained as Blockers, and are encouraged to learn new skills in other areas of interest. This is a chance to work with experienced artists, build artistic and interpersonal skills, while making money throughout the summer!

How do I apply/audition?

Link to Application Below

<https://www.jotform.com/middleearthstudios1/middleearthstudiosjobs>

Once you've submitted your application, carefully read the **Audition Side**.
Call or e-mail to schedule an audition.

Contact Information

For further questions and information contact us via phone or e-mail.

E-mail: middleearthstudios1@gmail.com

Phone: 484-903-2072