



Royal Conservatoire
of Scotland

Scenic Art Department



PRODUCTION HANDBOOK

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DEPARTMENT PROCEDURES

Working hours –

The working hours of the department are from

9.00 to 17.00 Tuesday to Thursday.

9:30 to 17:00 Friday.

You are expected to be ready to start work at 9.15am in appropriate clothing.

Lateness –

If you are going to be late, you must text the scenic department staff (lecturer or tutor depending on who you are working with) before 9.00am, with your estimated time of arrival.

Absence –

If you are going to be absent for the scenic department you must call the Drama Office to report your absence. Please as a courtesy and to allow for reallocation of production work text the scenic tutor to let them know you won't be in. You must do this before 9.00am. The Office absence number is 0141 270 8241.

Breaks –

Breaks will be from 11:00 to 11:20 in the morning and 15.30 to 15.50 in the afternoon. You are expected to be ready to start work on returning from your break.

Lunch –

Lunch will be from 13:00 to 14:00. You are expected to be ready to start work at 14:00.

The head scenic artist may choose to alter these times to suit the work in progress on a particular production

Health and Safety –

You are responsible for your own health and safety and for those around you. If you are aware of a health and safety issue, please deal with it and inform a member of staff or scenic manager. Know where department Risk Assessments SSOW, and COSHH sheets are kept.

Production Practice Roles

Head Scenic Artist

Only advanced students are eligible for these roles.

The Head Scenic Artist is responsible for the overall finished look of the production according to the direction from the Designer.

The primary role is to be responsible in relation to any of the painted finishes of the scenic elements in the design, although many other tasks are also your responsibility. You may wish to delegate these depending on your team, personal style and general circumstances.

Head Scenic Artist

- Attends all the production meetings concerning the design, design interpretation and progress of the production.
- Controls and interprets the designers' intention.
- Is in charge of estimating, selecting and ordering materials.
- Liaises with the scenic art staff, designer, production manager, lighting designer, stage manager, prop maker etc. in all matters concerning the production.
- Supervises the making of all samples Controls the quality of the work being produced by their team.
- Schedules the work and supervises the production team under them.
- Attends lighting sessions as necessary.
- Controls budget spending in consultation with staff supervisor.
- Ensures that safe, clean, professional working practices prevails at all times.
- Completes a show report on their experience on the production.

Scenic Artist

Only advanced students are eligible for this role.

The role of the Scenic Artist is to support the Head Scenic Artist in doing their job, as requested. Generally they take on the painting of major set pieces from the production. For example a floor; a truck; a cloth. In addition related production responsibilities can include:

- The preparation of artwork (renderings and models), colour mixing, texturing etc.
- Sourcing and organising materials.

- Checking on paint consumption and budget spending.
- Organising the workshop space for the painting of the set. Organising the maintenance and cleaning of equipment for each day's work.
- Organising the post-production clean up and storage.
- Assisting the Head Scenic Artist in the preparation of the documentation / reporting.
- Standing in for the Head Scenic Artist at any meeting they cannot attend.

Assistant Scenic Artist / Scenic Painter

All students are eligible for this role.

The Assistant Scenic Artist/ Scenic Painter is responsible to the Head and Scenic Artists to assist them as assigned.

- Responsible for basic lay-in and texturing work.
- Assigned preparation and clean up duties.
- Any other duty as required.

Head Scenic Artist Guidelines.

As Head Scenic Artist for a production you will be made responsible for the painting of one or more of the academy productions under staff supervision.

The process involved will be as close as possible to those experienced professionally.

Your role as Scenic artist involves more than just the painting of the set. Certain administrative, costing, staff allocation and control; sample testing and ordering tasks are also involved.

Before meeting with the staff supervisor.

Make sure that you have a clear idea of the production that you are doing. A different approach to painting is taken depending on whether it is a comedy, traditional drama or comical farce. It is a good idea to read the script where available. This will make all your discussions with the designer, director, and lighting designer much easier.

You will be required to attend all of the following meetings:

Meeting with Staff supervisor

At this meeting the supervisor will run through the expectations and role that you are to play as the head Scenic Artist. Discussion will include the scheduling of work to fit in with other productions in the paintshop; student allocations; time tables deadlines; ordering procedures; documentation; professional behaviour on stage; stock recording and documentation.

Prelim Meeting (White Card Model Meeting)

The prelim meeting is where you will see the designers White Card Model and sketches of the set design. This meeting is for you to take measurements and note numbers of painted set pieces with a view to producing an estimate of the costs (both financial and hours) to realise the design. Notes should be made of paints, finishes and materials as well as the numbers of set pieces. It is important that you ask the relevant questions here to allow you to go away and produce the costing. Establish with the designer the number and type of samples required.

Interim Design Meetings

These meetings are called with the help of the Production Manager to facilitate the finalising of the design and paint finishes on the show. The HSA will normally go through the design piece by piece to clarify what the designer's intention is. Do a breakdown of the set pieces involved including size, requirements and finish of each piece. Problems are discussed and resolved between the departments involved prior to the Final Design Meeting

You should submit your costing to the Production Manager in advance of the Final Design Meeting

Final Design Meeting

At this meeting the final painted Model Box is presented along with any colour samples and support references (e.g. photos) that may be needed to realise the design. Few if any changes should take place to the design after this meeting. Potential trouble spots need to be indicated here, for example if you have to paint the floor on stage do you have sufficient time to do so? It is after this meeting that the production manager will green light spending on your budget and that paints and materials can be ordered and work can commence. Occasionally the green light may be delayed while other departments get the build under budget in consultation with the designer and production manager.

Progress Meetings

These are called, as and when required, by the PM to ascertain whether or not the production, as a whole, is on schedule. In addition they help to keep everyone informed of changes and developments. You should inform the PM of any potential problems that you may foresee. Remember the PM is there to help you do your job.

In addition you may have a separate meeting with the lighting designer in order that you have a clear idea of their intentions and vice versa.

Getting Started – things to consider

Costing / Materials / Size of Cloths / Areas to be painted / special paint requirements / Water used on stage or fire-proofing required?

Labor / per person hour / Skill base

Space / Fit with schedule / Paint frame or floor?

In the Paintshop

Make sure that all of your paints are labelled and kept separate from the other productions. Use a trolley for keeping your paints mobile and safe. When colour matching and mixing your colour samples make sure you keep a record of the colours and relative proportions (formulas) used. Workup Sheets are used for this purpose. It is worth keeping a personal record of these. Remember to make the samples on the same surface as that to be painted. Only match colours when they are dry. Put special notes on non-water based paints to stop confusion. In general, any half finished work should be stacked against and facing the wall until the next time you can work on it. A tidy, disciplined and clean environment ensures a more efficient workflow and higher standard of work produced.

In the Venue

Dedicated paint calls are used to tie-in the set and finish any notes that the designer gives during the rehearsal period.

Alternatively you can work around other departments - Here you have less time and space to execute any given task. It is a very different environment to the paintshop. Work quickly and be very aware of other people around you. Tidy up immediately you are finished a task. As the lighting conditions on stage can change with very little notice keep your materials and equipment close to you. NEVER leave paint unattended as it is certain that someone else will kick it over.

After opening and touring.

Most sets require touch ups after opening night. This is especially true if the set is going to be on stage for a long time or is going on tour. Make sure you have paint available for the stage management department for this purpose. Bear in mind it may be a particular area or surface that requires consistent touching up. If the set is touring a paint touch up kit must be included when shipping it. This should consist of a box with quantities of all of the key colours in the set. If the set has many colours then only include the basic ones from which all others can be mixed. Glaze may also be added and instructions of any complex paint finishes. A few brushes, rollers or sponges should also be placed in this kit. It should include everything required to touch up the set.

Light plot sessions / Dress rehearsals

Some of your most valuable knowledge of Scenic Painting will be learned at these sessions. Please make the most of them. Take special note of the following:

The effect of lighting angles on the paintwork, especially texture and reflective surfaces. Also the effects of tone, hue and patina in the context of the lighting.

The effect of coloured light and of lighting levels on your painting.

The effect of your work on the costumes and the faces of the actor.

The unity or otherwise of your painting and the relative effects of refined work and vigorous unrefined work.

Look at the set from all possible seats in the auditorium to see what differences appear

The final image that appears on stage is only partially controlled by you. The set needs illumination before it is visible. In talking to the lighting designer remember that there is a lot that you can do to make their job easier and more dynamic. "Light with paint versus paint with light"

Feedback from the Director / Designer

Notes should always be taken and executed in the spirit of the production as a whole. Avoid saying "no" to any initial request. Exhaust **all** possibilities before feeding back with regret that a request cannot be met.

After the show is over

It is worth keeping a record of procedures as part of the production file. In a professional context having a clear idea of the amount of time, labor, and materials needed helps you plan for the future. Frequently stage floors are painted during the course of a production. It is your responsibility to return the floor to its original state after the production has finished. Remember to cost this factor into your original budget.

Scenic Department Evaluation Meeting

These are the types of questions that can be used to start a post-production discussion.

1. In terms of the whole of the production was it success or not?
2. What quantifies a success?
3. In terms of THE SCENIC DEPARTMENT was the production a success or not?
4. Did the design add or detract to the acting and /or the music?
5. Was the mood/style of the set and the direction the same, did they work well together?
6. In terms of the construction - Could different materials have been used and what would their effect have been? What could have been substituted?
7. What in particular did you learn the most about? And the most from?
8. What was the most difficult problem that you solved? That the team solved collectively?
9. What surprised you in this production/process?
10. Did you do anything on this production that you had done before- Did you do it differently or the same? And if you are asked to do it again?
11. What was the most valuable thing that you learned, that you didn't know before?
12. Did you feel you had enough supervision, from the Scenic Artist? From the Staff Supervisor?
13. If we were repeating this production what changes would you make to any of it?
14. On your next production how will you approach the work differently?

NOW THAT YOU HAVE FINISHED...

- All tools, brushes and equipment borrowed to be cleaned and returned. Including buckets etc. Trolleys should be cleared of all equipment and paints.
- All petty cash to be finalised.
- All estimates to be measured against actual quantities of materials, money and hours.
- All cloths to be photographed, catalogued, folded, labelled and stored in the cloth store.
- Show reports to be handed in. – Deadline to be confirmed with your supervisor.

Production

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Meeting

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Date

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| Act /Scene | Quantity | Description /Size | Finish /Notes |
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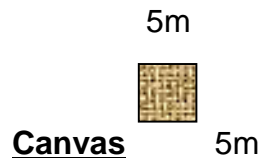
Note any special finishes: textures; metallics; FEV (Stained Glass); glitter; UV; water usage; Fireproofing etc.

Paint Coverage in Litres (Approx.) Remember to use your experience and common sense to verify quantities – *this guide is meant as a starting point only.*

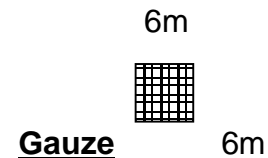
1 litre will cover:



Factor – 4



Factor – 5



Factor – 6

To estimate amount of paint required take the square area of the piece to be painted and divide it by the corresponding factor depending on the surface. The more absorbent the surface the more dilution is required.

I.e. A Canvas Cloth 8 m x 12 m
 —→ $8 \times 12 = 96 \text{ m}^2 \div 5$
 = 19.2 litres required (Approx.)

I.e. A Wooden Flat 4.5 m x 3.75 m
 —→ $4.5 \times 3.75 = 16.8 \text{ m}^2 \div 4$
 = 4.2 litres required (Approx.)

For Rosco the number can be doubled as you dilute them at least 1:1

Glaze coverage 10m² / litre (approx.)

Useful areas:

New Athenaeum Floor– 224m².

Chandler Floor - 94m².

1 sheet of ply - 3m²

COSTING AID

Approximate costs **excluding VAT**

Add 10% contingency to each total as you do costing

All these prices are subject to change by the vendors, and are to be used as a guide only – always contact the supplier to get current price

| Item | Source | Code | Unit cost |
|---|--|--|---|
| Acrylic Varnish (Oil based quick Drying) | Strathclyde Paint Minimum free delivery order £50 01698 371960 | CooVar | £22.99 / 5L |
| ^A White Emulsion / Vinyl | Alexander's Alexis@southwestpaints.co.uk 0141 643 1691 | Macpherson's Eclipse Vinyl matt Vinyl Silk | £16.15 / 10L £22.89 / 10L £12.99 / 5L £ 7.82 / 2.5L £14.35 / 5L £8.69 / 2.5L |
| ^A Black Vinyl | Alexander's Alexis@southwestpaints.co.uk | Matt | £17.21 / 5L £7.82 / 2.5L |

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|---|--|---|---|
| | 0141 643 1691 | Silk | £14.35/ 5L £8.69 / 2.5L |
| Bronzing Powder | Flints flints.co.uk | | £11.50 /250 g |
| Brushes / Masking tape | Clow Group Tel 0141 5546272 | | |
| c Artex | McNairs sales@mcnairs.uk.com 0141 7778080 Fyfe and MacGrowthers 0141 552 4966 | | £ 20 / 25kg £20 delivery [PVA 5L £ 16] |
| Canvas Cloths/ Cotton sheeting etc | JD McDougall's Sheree@mcdougall.co.uk 0208 534 2921 Always ask for carriage cost on top | e.g Bleached, cotton scene canvas, hemmed ties and tape + conduit pocket | 6mx12m = £ 320 |
| Charcoal brushes/masking tape | Millers Art Shop, Stockwell St 0141 553 1660 The Art Store Queen Street 0141 221 1101 Cass Art, Queen Street | | |
| Clow Group Brushes/Ladders | Tel 0141 5546272 | | |

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| | Orders over £150 carriage free, under carriage £12.50 | | |
| Crockets Ironmonger | 0141 332 1041 Expensive but good in an emergency for paints, solvents, tape etc | | |
| Dye | Flints flints.co.uk | | £17.64 / 250g |
| FEV | Flints flints.co.uk | | £29.46 / 1ltr |
| Foil | Flints flints.co.uk | | £23.10/ 15 M |
| Glaze – (Rosco Acrylic) Matt Gloss | Black Light - Rosco inc 20% discount | | £ 24.09/ 3.79 litres |
| Glaze (Flints Acrylic) Matt, Gloss | FLINTS | | £19.65 / 5 litres £25.17 / 5L |
| Glitter | Flints flints.co.uk | | £5.25/250g |
| Gumstrip | Millers, Stockwell Street | | 48mm x 200m roll £5 |
| Hot Dog 4” Foam Roller Sleeves | Flints flints.co.uk | | £5.78 / 10 |
| Idendon 30- 150 (Brushcote) White Black Grey | Flints flints.co.uk <u>Kitsons</u> glasgow@kitsonsthermal.co.uk alanandrews@kitsons.co.uk 0141 643 3600 | | £ 52 / 10ltrs £60 + £10 delivery |

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| | <p>Or <u>Sheffield Insulation</u></p> <p>Plot C Coddington Crescent, Holytown Motherwell, North Lanarkshire ML1 4YF</p> <p>TEL: 01698 833755 eurocentral@sheffins.co.uk</p> | | |
| Latex gloves | <p>Arco online</p> <p>Email: Glasgow.branch@arco.co.uk</p> | <p>Various</p> <p>(4.95 for delivery on orders less than £50)</p> | £ 5.50 - 7.50 |
| Latex Glue | <p>Allscot 0141 429 2424</p> <p>Less than £25 use petty cash over the counter - Over £25 free delivery</p> <p>Flints flints.co.uk</p> | DEX | <p>£ 13.50 / gall</p> <p>£ 55 / 5 gall's</p> <p>£35 / 5 litre</p> |
| Masking tape | Clow Group | | $\frac{3}{4}$" = 50p |
| Metallic Powders | Flints | | £11.50 / 250g |
| Meths | Flints | PAT 500 | £ 11.95 / 5litres |
| Mixed Colours | Alexander's | Matt | £17.21 / 5L |
| Vinyl Matt / Silk | Alexis@southwestpaints.co.uk | | £10.29 / 2.5L |
| "Macpherson's" | Alexis 0141 643 1641 | Silk | £19.23 / 5L |
| | | | £11.54 / 2.5L |
| | | Crown Colours | £23.15/ 5l |
| | | | £13.53 / 2.5l |

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| Muslin 50g/m2 | Flints flints.co.uk | | £1.59 / m |
| Paper Rolls Newsprint 100yds | Irene 0141 302 6901 125 Fullerton Drive, Cambuslang, G32 8FG | | Free of charge - just pick up |
| Polystyrene | Polyscot, Dunfermline 01383 732296 8'x4'x2' Block | High density £120 Low density £80 inc delivery | |
| Polythene sheeting (Roll) | Travis Perkins Tel 0141 423 5461 | 25m x 4m (6kg roll) 100m2 £32 free delivery | |
| PVA | Flints EVO Bond Screw Fix (including VAT) "No Nonsense PVA " Carriage over £50 free under £50 - £5 charge | | £15.00 / 5 L £9 / 2.5 litres |
| Rags (T shirt cloth) | Arco | | £ 11.85 / 10kg |
| Rosco Off Broadway | Black Light | | |
| Rosco Supersaturated Synthetic includes: Raw Sienna Leather Lake | Flints flints.co.uk Inc Black Light 20% discount on Rosco List Price 0131 551 2337 Karen Fairlie Karen@black-light.com Delivery free if you wait for their van to be coming to Glasgow | Synthetic Earth Colours Black + White | £ 18.68 / litre £ 13.12 / litre £ 9.36/ litre |
| Sharkstooth Gauze | McDougall's Or JC Joels | Sharkstooth - made up | 6m x 12m = |


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| | | | Approx. £395.27 |
| Shellac Flakes | Strathclyde 01698 371960 | | £18 / 500g |
| Shellac | Flints flints.co.uk Transparent polish Mylands Button polish – Smith and Rodger 32 Elliot Street, Glasgow 0141 248 6341 | | £36.50 / 5L £36.50 / 5L £45.0 / 5L |
| Size – Animal Glue | Flints | PAT852 | £ 107.50 / 25KG |
| Spray Glue | Independent Upholstery Supplies 0141 4295656 | | |
| Spray Glue (Contact) | LSW Tel : 0141 332 0008 No delivery charge | | £ 3.00 / 500ml can |
| UV Paint /Rosco Vivid FX | Black Light | | £18.64/473ml |
| Varnish (oil based) | Flints flints.co.uk | Gloss Matt | £37.23 5/l £49.96 5/l |
| Wax Soft Mould | Allscott Tel :0141 29 2424 Free delivery over £25 | | £16.50 / 4kg £5.00 / 450g |
| Whiting | Flints flints.co.uk | | £14.50 / 25kg |
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NB Flints offer no discount, carriage £15 first 20kg, and 25p extra per kilo thereafter

EXAMPLE OF A COSTING SHEET

| RCS CPU | | | | | | |  Royal Conservatoire of Scotland | | |
|---|---------------------|----------------|--------|--|--------|-----------|---|--|--------|
| PRODUCTION ESTIMATION & ACTUAL EXPENDITURE / HOURS | | | | SCENIC ART DEPARTMENT PRELIM COSTING V1 | | | | | |
| Name of Production : | | | | Paintshop Period : | | | | | |
| Designer : | | | | Performance Date : | | | | Budget £20.00 | |
| Prelim Design Date : | | | | | | | | | |
| Final Design : | | | | | | | | | |
| Head Scenic Artist: | | | | | | | | | |
| No. | Description of Item | Hours Required | | Quantity Required | | Unit Cost | Actual | Total Amount | |
| | | Estimate | Actual | Estimate / Unit | Actual | | | Estimate | Actual |
| 1 | Item 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 1a | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 1b | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 1c | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 1d | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 2 | Item 2 | | | | | | | | |
| 2a | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 2b | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 2c | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 2d | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 3 | Item 3 | | | | | | | | |
| 3a | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 3b | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 3c | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 4 | Item 4 | | | | | | | | |
| 4a | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 4b | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 4c | | | | | | £ - | | £0.00 | |
| 5 | Sundries | | | | | | | £20.00 | |
| TOTAL | | 0 | | | | | | 20.00 | |
| Comments : | | | | | | | | | |

EXAMPLE OF A WORK UP SHEET

|  Royal Conservatoire of Scotland | Scenic Art Department | WORK-UP RECORD | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| Production : | | Student | |
| Item / piece : | | Date | |
| Step | Process | Material | Swatch |
| 1 | | | |
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Paint Call Equipment List

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| | All paint for the production labelled and with secure lids |
| | Brushes: a selection of small- large |
| | Rollers: Handles and sleeves (various sizes) |
| | Buckets |
| | Trolleys |
| | Drawing Equipment: Charcoal, Bamboo's, Pencils, Scale rule, Metre stick, Flogger, String |
| | Hand tools: Hammer , Screwdriver |
| | Masking tape |
| | Drop cloths / Newspapers |
| | Pump spray (large and small) |
| | Spray gun, Hose, Gauze for straining |
| | Electrical extension cable |
| | Hairdryer / heat gun/ large electric fan |
| | Rags |

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- ABTT** The Association of British Theatre Technicians. A large and well established professional association for theatre technicians in the UK.
- Acting Area** The area of the stage setting within which the actor performs. It may include areas off the normal stage. Usually split into theoretical portions for ease of reference. CS, DS, US, SR, SL etc
- Amphitheatre** An outdoor theatrical setting, usually with a large semi-circular seating area sloping down to the stage. Sometimes a very large indoor venue. The amphitheatre was developed by the Romans to provide convenient accommodation for large numbers of spectators at exhibitions of gladiatorial combats and beast hunts.
- Aniline Dye** A type of deep penetrating dye originally made from coal tar. Water or alcohol-based. This was once the industry standard but was found to be carcinogenic. Safe water based dyes are now used
- Apron** A part of the stage projecting towards or into the auditorium. In proscenium stages, the part of the stage in front of the curtain. See *Forestage*.
- Arena** One of the terms used to describe types of open stage. As it derives from the sand-strewn combat area in a Roman amphitheatre, it should be a term for 360 degree encirclement; but it has been used to describe thrust stages.
- Assistant Stage Manager** Abbreviated to ASM. According the size of the show, there may be one or more ASMs who assist the Stage Manager with properties and other activities on stage.
- Auditorium** The part of the theatre designed to accommodate the audience. The plural can be either auditoriums or auditoria. Also House. From the Latin *Audio* - 'I hear'.
- Baby Spot** (Birdie – One under Par as in Par can)A small spotlight under 500 watts.
- Backing** Scenery used behind, and limiting the view of the audience through, an opening (e.g. doorway or window) in a set. See *also Masking*.
- Back Cloth** Canvas Cloth, usually painted, suspended from a counterweight bar at the rear of the stage. Also Back Drop.
- Backlight** To focus lighting units on the back or shoulders of an artist or act to produce an emphasis of separation from the background.
- Bar** Horizontally flown rod (usually metal) from which scenery, lighting, and other equipment is suspended. Counterweight bar
- Barn door** Adjustable doors attached to the front of stage lanterns to control the area of light covered by a particular beam.

- Bar** Pipe used to attach scenery/cloths to allow them to be raised out of view of the audience into the fly tower. (Counterweight bar)
- Bastard prompt** The prompt side is usually on the actor's left. The other side of the stage is called the OP side (opposite prompt). If the DSM's control desk and therefore the prompt corner happens to be on the OP side it is called a bastard prompt.
- Batten** Piece of wood attached to the paintframe to then attach a canvas cloth prior to priming and painting. 2) A Sandwich batten is used to carry a hanging cloth. It comprises two flat pieces of timber screwed together with the edge of the cloth between them 3) Piece of wood joining two flats. 4) A group of stage lights suspended over the stage.
- Binder** Term used to describe the glue that holds a paint together. As in Animal Glue, Oil, Acrylic, Vinyl etc. Also *Medium, Vehicle*
- Blacklight** Also UV. Light emissions above the spectrum visible to the human eye. Short wavelength source of light at the end of the visible light electromagnetic spectrum which causes specially treated materials to fluoresce on an otherwise blackened stage - used for special effects. Ultraviolet sources designed for stage use are known as Black Light sources (also known as UV-B) and have all harmful radiations filtered out.U.V.
- Bleed** Scene change using a Lighting effect, where a gauze transforms from opaque to transparent by changing the light source from front to back. Also known as a transformation
- Blinders** Lamps arranged around the stage directed into the auditorium, originally to prevent spectators seeing the stage during scene changes when the house tabs were not lowered. Now used for effect in rock concerts etc.
- Beginners** A call given by the stage manager to bring those actors who appear at the beginning of the play or act to the stage. Traditionally given five minutes before curtain time.
- Black Out** A total extinguishing of all light on stage.
- Bleachers (bleacher seating)** Stepped seating blocks, which can be retracted for storage leaving a clear a flat floor.
- Board** Lighting or audio control panel.
- Book Flat** Two flats hinged together on the vertical.
- Boom** 1) A vertical lighting bar. 2) A moveable arm supporting a lantern, microphone or TV camera
- Boom Arm** A clamp used to hang a lantern from a boom.
- Border** Flown scenic piece or curtain designed to conceal the upper part of the stage and its machinery or lighting equipment.

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| Bounce | 1) To bring in the House Curtain fast, then take it out again immediately. 2) Lighting term describing light reflected off the stage or set. |
| Box Set | Setting, which encloses the acting area on three sides. Conventionally in imitation of a room from which the fourth wall has been removed. |
| BP Screen | Back Projection screen- translucent screen used for projecting from behind |
| Brace | See Stage Brace. |
| Brace Cleat | An attachment on a flat into which a stage brace can be hooked. |
| Brail | To pull a flying piece upstage or downstage from its natural free hanging position by means of short rope lines attached to the ends of the fly bar |
| Brailing Line | Stretches from one fly floor to the other. It is used to move other lines to allow lights etc. to be lowered in without fouling. |
| Brake | Lever on a counterweight system that locks the rope, so stopping accidental movement. |
| Breast | To move a flying piece upstage or downstage from its natural free hanging position by means of a rope line passed between fly floors and crossing the fly bar's suspension lines. |
| Bridge | Walkway above the auditorium used to reach stage equipment. |
| Call | 1) Is a warning to be ready for a part of a performance. It is used to call artists to the stage and to stand-by operators for cues. 2) Paint call – time when the painters are to be onstage usually for touch ups to set |
| Cans | Closed circuit communication Headsets used by backstage crew to communicate with LX, Sound, Fly floor, etc. |
| Carpenter | Person responsible for construction and building of stage sets. Get-ins and get-outs |
| Castor | A swivelling wheel fixed to the base of a heavy piece of furniture or truck so that it can be moved easily. Fixed castors do not swivel – they travel in straight lines only |
| Centre Line | An imaginary line running from the front to the back of the stage through the exact centre of the proscenium arch. Marked as CL on stage plans. Normally marked on the stage floor and used as a reference when marking out or assembling a set. See also SETTING LINE. |
| Centre Stage | The middle of the acting area. Abbrev. CS. |
| Chain Motor | A motorised winch that uses metal chain to lift heavy objects. |
| Chains | Sometimes used to weight the bottom of drapes and gauzes. |
| Chain Pocket | Fabric pocket along the width of the bottom of a cloth or tab holding a chain which weighs the bottom of the cloth down. |

- Chase** A repeated sequence of changing lighting states.
- Chiaroscuro** Means the use of contrasts of light and shade, especially in order to enhance the depiction of character and for general dramatic effect. Many painters are said to be masters of Chiaroscuro (especially Rembrandt, Caravaggio etc.) From the Italian words *chiaro* 'clear, bright' and *oscuro* 'dark'
- Choreographer** Designs and directs the dance elements and arrangements for a show.
- Chorus** Set of performers who speak, sing and/or dance as a group rather than individually.
- Cleat** Fitting on flats to which throw lines are secured.
- Cloth** Area of painted scenic canvas hanging vertically, usually battened at top weighted at the bottom with a conduit or chain, hung on a set of lines.
- Colour Mixing** 1) **Additive** : Light - Focusing two differently coloured beams of light onto the same area (eg Cyc Floods). The three primary colours additively mix to form white, as do the complementary colours.
2) **Subtractive**: Paint - Combining the three primary colours form black in theory (a neutral gray/brown in reality)
- Colour Filter** The translucent filter material place in front of lanterns to create a coloured illumination. Colour filters can be made of glass or gelatine, hence Gel, but today are usually made from a synthetic plastic material.
- Colour Wheel** 1) The theoretical wheel showing the colours as a circular sequence; usually showing primary and secondary colours
- Colour Changer** Mechanical device, usually manually operated, and used to insert colour gels in front of a lantern. Often used on follows pots.
- Colour Temperature** A measure of the 'warmth' or 'coolness' of light sources and colours. Measured in degrees Kelvin. A higher colour temperature light source will appear whiter (colder). The human brain automatically compensates for different colour temperatures - a film or video camera cannot, and thus what we see as white may appear to have a blue or green tint when no colour correction is used for video. Daylight is approximately 5600°K, Tungsten Halogen is approx. 3200°K and standard incandescent lamps are 2800°K.
- Company Manager** In charge of the overall welfare of all technical and acting staff, including paying wages, organising accommodation, and liaising with the venue.
- Compressor** A piece of equipment used to power air tools such as spray guns (gravity and suction fed) nail guns etc.
- Control Room** The room where the lighting and sound board operators usually cue the show from. Sometimes they have separate rooms

- Corner Plate** Triangle of plywood used to reinforce the corners of flats.
- Costume Supervisor** The person in charge of the wardrobe, dressers and costume maintenance
- Counterweight House** A theatre that uses counterweights.
- Counterweight System** A system of suspending scenery above a stage, which enables it to be raised or lowered easily. The scenes are attached to a bar, which in turn is suspended by steel cable that runs to the grid, and then down the side wall and to the weight cradle. The cradle runs on tracks bolted to the wall. For every kilo of equipment on the bar, a kilo of weight is placed in the cradle, so balancing the system. Once balanced most items can be flown i.e. moved up or down, without much physical effort.
- Counterweights** Weights, which are placed in the weight cradle of a flying system to counterbalance the weight of the scenery to be flown.
- Cradle** *See Counterweights.*
- Crew** Loose term covering all those who work on a show backstage.
- Crossfade** Lighting change where some of the channels increase in intensity while other channels decrease.
- Crossover** A passageway behind the stage for actors or technicians to cross from one side to the other.
- Cue** The signal for an action by an actor or a technician during a performance. Actor's cues are mostly verbal, but for technicians they may be given verbally over the intercom by the stage manager or visually by a cue light.
- Cue Light** Box with 2 or more lights, usually red and green, to warn an actor or technician to go to stand-by and then do whatever is required on cue. Ensures greater precision when visibility or audibility is limited.
- Cue Sheet** A list showing the cues in correct order as they are to be carried out.
- Cue-to-cue** A technical rehearsal specifically for the technical crew to work fully through the cues, often by skipping parts of the script. Also Top and Tail Rehearsal.
- Curtain** 1) The drapery which hides the stage from the audience. See House Curtain. 2) The action of the House Curtain coming down at the end of an Act or the play. 3) The last piece of action on the stage before the House Curtain comes down.
- Curtain Down** The end of the show.
- Curtain Track** Tracks or rails from which draw tabs are hung and along which the runners or bobbins travel when the curtains are moved; the track may be fixed or flown.
- Curtain Up** The beginning of the show. Also Curtain Time.

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| Cut Cloth | Vertical soft scenic piece cut to reveal more scenery behind it. The void is usually supported by scenic netting glued to the back of the cloth; this is applied after it has been cut and turned face down on the floor. Latex glue is preferable but needs to be talcum powdered prior to folding the cloth to avoid contact gluing. |
| Cut-Out Flat (Profiled) | A shaped flat in plywood or hardboard. |
| Cyclorama | Usually shortened to just 'cyc' . The Cyclorama is a curved plain cloth or plastered wall filling the rear of the stage or TV studio. It can be used for the projection of designs and shadows. Often used as a 'sky' backing to a traditional set, or as the main backing for a dance piece etc. Although strictly a cyc should be curved, most cycs are flat with curved wraparound ends. Greek <i>Cyclos</i> (circle) and <i>Horama</i> (view or vision). |
| Dance Lighting | Lighting design for Dance is reliant on a great deal of sidelight from BOOMS at the side of the stage. There are normally at least three lanterns on each boom, and three heights - SHINS (to light feet and lower legs), MIDS and HEADS. |
| Dark | A theatre, which is temporarily or permanently closed to the public. |
| Dead | 1) The plotted height of a piece of suspended lighting, scenery or masking. |
| Dead Lines | Suspension lines which are fixed and not able to be raised or lowered via the normal pulley system. |
| Deputy Stage Manager | On larger shows a Deputy Stage Manager is employed to lighten the load on the Stage Manager. This includes running some rehearsals, and calling cues from the Prompt Book during the performance. |
| Designer | Responsible for the conception and supervision of the execution of the visual aspects of the production. Separate designers may be employed for scenery, costumes, lighting etc. |
| Dialogue | The lines or words spoken by the cast in a show. |
| Dimmer | Electrical device which controls the amount of electricity passed to a lamp and therefore the intensity of the light. Dimmers are normally numbered sequentially, and the numbers shown on the Lighting Design in next to the relevant lanterns. The dimmer is controlled from the Lighting Desk via a low voltage control signal. |
| Dip Trap | Small flaps in the stage floor giving access to electrical sockets and other connections. |
| Director | Has the ultimate responsibility for the interpretation of the script through his control of the actors and supporting production team. |
| Distress | To make something look worn or old usually with paint |
| Dock | Area at the rear or side of the stage where scenery is stored when not in use or where materials are loaded to and from the trucks or vehicles. |

- Dolly** 1) A small trolley or truck used to move set or props. 2) As for 1) but on which a film camera is mounted to allow action to be filmed while the camera is moving. (TV)
- Double Handling** Moving scenery or equipment more than necessary because it was not correctly positioned in the first place.
- Double Purchase** Counterweight flying system where the cradle travels half the distance of the fly bar's travel and therefore leaves the side wall of the stage under the Fly Floor clear of flying equipment.
- Downstage** Portions of a stage nearest the audience. (To *move downstage* means to move towards the audience; to *move below* a person or object means to move on the side nearest the audience.)
- Draperies (drapes)** Any unspecified fabric hanging in folds as a scene or part of a scene, especially curtaining fabrics such as woollens, velvets, etc. *See also Curtain Set.*
- Drencher** Perforated Iron pipe, which in the event of a fire becomes flooded with water, which drenches the back of the fire curtain.
- Dress Parade** Prior to the first stage dress rehearsal the actors put on each of their costumes in sequence so that the director and designer can check the state of preparedness of the wardrobe.
- Dress Rehearsal** Also known simply as the 'dress', the final rehearsal before the performance opens to the public. The actors are in costume and all technical problems should have been sorted out.
- Dresser** Crew member who assists actors with costume care and costume changing during the performance.
- Drift** The length of the suspension wire between the counterweight bar and the top of the piece to be flown.
- Dry Ice** Frozen blocks or pellets of carbon dioxide - when placed in hot water melt to produce a mist, which, because it is heavier than air, will hang close to the floor.
- DSM** See Deputy Stage Manager.
- Dutchman** Narrow strip of fabric used to cover a join in two flats. The fabric is normally frayed before being glued on to disguise the edges
- Elevation** A working drawing usually drawn accurately and to scale, showing the side view of the set or lighting arrangement.
- End On** Traditional audience seating layout where the audience is looking at the stage from the same direction. This seating layout is that of a Proscenium Arch theatre. See also THRUST, IN THE ROUND, TRAVERSE.
- Exit** 1) The process of leaving the stage. 2) Point in the script at which an actor leaves the stage.

- Exterior** A setting depicting an outdoor scene.
- False Stage** A special stage floor laid a few inches above the real stage, to allow the running of steel cables to pull trucks across the stage.
- False Perspective** A scenic design technique that makes a building or set appear larger than it actually is. The scale of objects that are supposed to be further from the observer is reduced to make them appear further away, even if they're not.
- False Proscenium** An inner frame, which can alter the opening of the proscenium arch. It may help to hide lanterns or may be required by the design of the show.
- Festoon tabs (curtains)** Curtains fixed at the top and raised (opened) by drawing the bottom upward towards the top and/or sides. *See also Contour curtain.*
- Fire Curtain** Screen or shutter comprising a steel and mineral fibre fabric, mounted immediately behind the proscenium opening and fitted with mechanism for raising it clear of the top of the proscenium arch and with a quick-release device to allow it to descent by gravity in the event of fire on the stage. A Safety Curtain is required by most UK licensing authorities for theatres of traditional design. The regulations also require that it is raised and lowered at least once in view of each audience (usually during the interval). Colloquially known as the 'iron'.
- Fit-Up** The setting up of all set elements on stage prior to the light plot and rehearsals.
- Flame Retardant** Chemical applied to fabric to reduce its ignitability when exposed to fire. In some places regular or periodic flame retardant of stage drapes and sets is law. 10 second rule – apply a flame to the substrate for 10 seconds, when the flame is removed the substrate should not continue to burn
- Flash Pot** A small, strong metal cup from which black powder is exploded as a pyrotechnic effect. The black powder is poured on top of a small detonator, which is then fired from a battery. Due to tighter safety regulations proprietary pyrotechnic effects have replaced flash pots
- Flat** A basic unit of scenery, a wooden frame covered with either canvas or plywood, and painted with the required finish.
- Flight Case** *See Road Case.*
- Flipper** Small piece of flat scenery hinged to a larger piece of flat scenery.
- Float** The action of letting a large flat fall from vertical onto its face so that it's cushioned by the air it displaces. Care must be taken when floating flats on dusty stages, as particles can get blown around as the flat lands.
- Flogger** A tool made of canvas strips attached to a handle. A whipping action (flogging) is used to rub out charcoal marks made on scenery, prior to painting.

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| Flood | Simple lantern giving fixed spread of light. |
| Floodlights | Also Floods. Lanterns without lenses which give a general fixed spread of light. |
| Floorcloth | A canvas covering for the floor of the stage. The cloth can be painted to resemble some surface, but be easily removed to reveal another cloth, or the stage floor below. |
| Floor Plan | See Ground Plan. |
| Flown | 'Flown scenery' has been attached to the counterweight system and is able to be hoisted into the flies. |
| Flys | 1) The space above the stage in which scenery, lanterns and so on are hung invisible to the audience. 2) The counterweight system. |
| Fly Floor | Also Fly Gallery. A high platform, which runs along the side of the stage from which the flying lines are operated. |
| Fly Rail | Heavy rail along the onstage side of a fly gallery, equipped with cleats to which the ropes can be made fast. |
| Fly-rail Cleat | Metal fitting secured to a fly rail, to which a rope can be easily made secure. |
| Fly Tower | The part of the theatre building above the stage that contains the flies. |
| Focusing | 1) Adjusting a lantern to give it a well-defined image. 2) The process of adjusting and directing the lanterns prior to the technical rehearsal. Can be 'The Focus'. |
| Fogger | See Smoke Machine. |
| FOH | See Front of House. |
| Foldback | Sound reinforcement from loudspeakers on the side or front of the stage to enable performers to hear their musical accompaniments clearly, and to hear their own voices when the sound is heavily reinforced for the audience. |
| Followspot | `A manually operated spot light with a powerful light beam, which can be directed to follow an actor around the stage. |
| Foot | 1) The action of bracing the bottom of a ladder while a colleague climbs it 2) Holding the bottom edge of a flat with your foot while a colleague raises the top of it to a vertical position. |
| Footlights | Row of lamps on front edge of stage at floor level and in front of main (house) curtain, used principally to neutralise shadows cast by overhead lighting. Seldom installed in new buildings, though still used in opera houses. |
| Forestage | The area of the stage in front of the house curtain in a proscenium arch theatre. <i>See Apron</i> |
| Foul | To entangle lanterns or scenery hung in the flies. |

- Fourth Wall** The imaginary wall, which separates the audience from the stage in a proscenium theatre.
- Framed Cloth** Scenic cloth battened all round.
- French Action** See Tab Track.
- French Brace** A rigid triangular timber brace attached to a flat to hold the flat upright. If hinges are used it can be folded flat for storage or to be moved.
- French Flat** Arrangement of several flats battened together and flown as one unit on a set of lines, usually with French braces. Also known as a *Frenchman*.
- Fresnel** A type of spot light with a Fresnel lens, which due to a set of concentric circular ribbing on its surface, gives an even field of light with soft edges.
- Front of House** Abbreviated to FOH. Any part of the theatre in front of the proscenium arch.
- Front of House Manager** The staff member in a theatre responsible for the audience and Front of House facilities, such as the bars, concessions, programs, and ticket selling.
- Front Cloth** Scenic cloth hung close to the front of the stage so scenes may be changed behind it.
- Frost** A type of Diffusion Filter.
- Fullness** Draperies made up with deep 'gatherings' have fullness - usually requiring not less than 50% additional fabric, measured at head and foot.
- FX** Abbreviation for Effects – special lighting and audio effects.
- Gaffer Tape** Heavy duty cloth adhesive tape with many uses
- Gate Rostrum** See Rostrum.
- Gauze (gauze cloth)** Flat curtain of fine mesh netting or similar fabric, either painter or unpainted, which when lit solely from the front appears to be opaque, but when lit from behind becomes transparent. It is used for a 'transformation' scene or other illusions. A fabric known as "shark's tooth" is also used for this purpose. *US Scrim*
- Get-In/Out** Installing / uninstalling the scenery in the theatre
- Gobo** A metal plate with a pattern cut out of it and placed in the gate of a profile spot to produce a lit image or outline on stage.
- Gods** Colloquial term for the Upper Circle of the auditorium.
- Green Room** Room adjacent to the stage for the actors and crew to meet and relax.
- Grid** The arrangement of wooden or metal slats above which are mounted the pulley blocks of the flying system.
- Gridded** Any flying piece raised as high as possible into the fly.

- Gridding Up** The act of drawing squares (or rectangles) on a reference that correspond to the same grid but at a larger scale on cloth or flat; to aid the transfer of a drawing of scenic elements.
- Ground Plan** A scale drawing, which shows the exact position of the openings, wall and windows, and other details on in a stage set as seen from above.
- Ground row** 1) A row of lanterns on the floor of the stage for lighting the bottom area of a cyclorama or cloth. This is usually masked by a scenic ground row. 2) Shaped pieces of scenery usually less than a metre high.
- Grommet** Grommets are used to reinforce holes in fabrics such as leather and canvas
- Half hour call** Warning to the company given thirty-five minutes before performance (thirty minutes before beginners).
- Hand Prop** Any prop handled by an actor.
- Hanging** Attaching flying pieces to the appropriate bars.
- Hanging Iron (hanger iron)** Metal fitting, formed into a square hook at one end, used in flying flats and other framed pieces.
- Heads On Stage** A shouted warning (often just 'Heads!') for workers to be aware of activity above them. Also used when an object is being dropped from above.
- Head Electrician** The permanent staff member in a theatre who runs the lighting department.
- Hemp House** A theatre where the flying is done by brute force and not counterweighted.
- Hemps** The term is usually employed to signify lines used for flying scenery, which are made from vegetable fibre as distinct from the steel wire ropes used in the counterweight system. Hemp lines are hauled up manually and tied off on a cleat or pin on the fly rain.
- House** 1) The audience. 2) The auditorium.
- House Curtain** The main front curtain in a proscenium theatre.
- House Manager** See Front of House Manager.
- House Lights** The decorative fixtures that light the auditorium whilst the audience is entering or leaving, usually they are dimmed or switched off during the performance.
- House Tabs (curtain)** The main curtains between stage and audience, normally placed immediately behind the proscenium (they may be either draw tabs or festoon tabs, and they may be flown).
- In** Flying term for "bringing down".
- In The Round** Theatre in the Round is a form of audience seating layout where the acting area is enclosed on all sides by seating. There are often a number

of entrances through the seating. Special consideration needs to be given to onstage furniture and scenery as audience sightlines can easily be blocked. See also THRUST, END ON, and TRAVERSE.

- Iris** An adjustable circular diaphragm to alter beam size in a profile spot. Made up of a set of interleaving plates. When rotated the small hole formed by the plates opens or closes. Also Diaphragm.
- Iron** See *Safety Curtain*.
- Kabuki Rod** A long timber or metal rod with small spikes along its edge that fit into the eyelets across the top of a scenic cloth. By rotating the rod the cloth falls off the spikes. This can be used to great dramatic effect.
- Kabuki Drop** Method for dropping a cloth from a flying bar. It consists of a bar which attaches to a standard flying bar, and is able to spin around. The bar has prongs welded to it on which the drop is hung (drop has grommeted holes in the top which hook onto the prongs). Normally these prongs are above horizontal, so the drop stays hung. On cue, the pole is rotated so that the prongs point downwards, and the drop consequently falls.
- Key stoning** When projecting an image not square to the projection surface and the image resembles a wedge shape of an architectural keystone,
- Ladder or Lighting Ladder** A non-climbable frame used to hang lanterns from.
- Lamp** The light source within a lantern, but also used to refer to the complete unit. Also Bulb, Globe, Envelope, Bubble.
- Lantern** One of the many words for a theatre light. Also Luminaire, Instrument, Light, Fitting, Lamp.
- Leak** Light that is unintentionally emitted from holes around the lantern.
- LED** Abbreviation for Light Emitting Diode. A small light often used as an indicator light in electronic equipment.
- Leg** Vertical length of unframed canvas or other fabric used in place of a wing.
- Lift** Section of stage floor that can be raised or lowered or tilted to provide differing levels of acting area, or to enable changes of setting to be made in the stage basement.
- Lighting Design** The drawn plan detailing what lanterns will be used where, in what way, with what colour, and on which dimmer.
- Lighting Designer** The person responsible for deciding in conjunction with other members of the production team, and executing, the lighting design.
- LX** Abbreviation for Lighting.
- Mahl-Stick** A short stick used by scenic painters to steady the hand by resting its padded end against the surface being painted.
- Marking Out** The process of marking the position of scenery and props with coloured tape on the rehearsal room floor.

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| Maroon | A pyrotechnic producing a very loud explosion. |
| Marie Tempest Hinge | Door hinge that has been reinforced by a screw lever to keep the door from opening by itself on a raked stage. Named after the actress Dame Marie Tempest (1864 - 1942). |
| Mask | Verb - To hide or conceal unwanted areas or machinery. |
| Masking | A piece of scenery, not necessarily painted, used to cut off the view of the spectators any part of the stage space which should not be seen. |
| MDF | Medium-density fibreboard is an engineered wood product made by breaking down hardwood or softwood residuals into wood fibres, combining it with wax and a resin binder, and forming panels by applying high temperature and pressure. MDF is generally denser than plywood. Used in set construction. |
| Mirror Ball | A polystyrene ball covered with small mirrors usually rotated by a small motor and used as a lighting effect. |
| Monitor | <i>See Foldback.</i> |
| Musical Director | Abbreviated to MD. The person in charge of the musical content of a show. |
| Notes | A list of 'to-do' items given by the director to actors and stage management and from the designer to all making departments' notes to the cast and crew after a show about the good and bad points of the show. |
| Offstage | Backstage area outside the performance area. |
| Onstage | 1) Inside the acting area. 2) Towards the centre line. |
| OP (Opposite Prompt) | side of the stage opposite the prompt side: traditionally stage right is actors' right. When the prompt corner, occupied by the prompter, is on side of the stage, it is sometimes known as a "bastard prompt". |
| Opposite Prompt | Abbreviated to OP. The right hand side of the stage as viewed by the cast. Also Stage Right, Camera Left. |
| Orchestra | The musicians who provide the musical backing to a show. |
| Orchestra Pit | The sunken area in front of the stage where the orchestras play during a performance. Also the Pit. |
| Out | Flying term for up. In is down - which prevents confusion with Up and Down Stage. |
| Overture | The music which begins a performance. |
| Paint Bridge | A platform or wide cradle the width of the paint frame which can moved up and down, usually mechanically, so that all parts of a cloth can be reached. |
| Paint Frame | The frame to which backcloths, flats etc. are fixed for painting in a vertical position. |

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| Paintshop | The room set aside for the painting of all scenic elements – usually housing the Paintframe. |
| Pass Door | A door connecting the front of house with the backstage area. |
| PA System | The public address or any sound reinforcement system. |
| Pan | Movement of a lantern or camera from side to side. |
| Par Can | Type of lantern which holds a par lamp. The par can is the basic lighting unit in concert lighting. |
| Periaktoi | A triangular-plan-shaped scenic device originating in the classical Greek theatre. Each surface can be painted with a different subject, colour or texture, so that revolving periaktoi can change a scene. |
| Permanent Masking | Show portal, or teaser and tormentors, or similar arrangements of masking pieces which remain in place throughout a performance, regardless of scene changes. |
| Piano Rehearsal | Rehearsal for a musical show where the music is provided only by a pianist, to save calling the orchestra and incurring the additional cost. |
| Piece | Any unit of scenery, but more especially a major item. |
| Pin Hinge | A hinge with removable pin, used so that the two halves may be easily separated. |
| Pit Net | A safety net over the Orchestra Pit to prevent injury to musicians or performers if someone or something should fall from stage. |
| Plotting | To program or determine the levels of each of the lighting dimmers in each scene or cue. Also Lighting Rehearsal. |
| Plum Line | A string fixed at the top with a weight on the bottom, used to determine if a line is plumb (perpendicular to the floor). Invaluable for hanging and gridding cloths on a paint frame. |
| Plywood | A type of strong thin wooden board consisting of two or more layers glued and pressed together with the direction of the grain alternating used extensively in set construction. |
| PM | See Production Manager. |
| Portal | Unit of permanent masking set between the show portal and the backdrop or cyclorama. In America the term is also used to signify the proscenium opening. |
| Pounce | A method of transferring an image (Cartoon) repeatedly. A drawing on tracing paper or similar is pricked with a tracing wheel (as used in the costume dept.) The reverse side is lightly sanded to open the pores. After registration, a small pounce bag (muslin containing powder pigment) or Scenic Charcoal is used to transfer the drawing through the holes. |
| Practical | Any object which must do onstage the same job that it would do in real life e.g. lamp post, telephone, lamp etc. |

- Preset** 1) Used to describe any article placed in its working area before the performance. 2) A basic lighting state that the audience sees before the action starts.
- Preview** A performance given before the official opening night, sometimes it is in fact the final full dress rehearsal. Tickets, if sold, are often cheaper as a way of building audience interest in the show.
- Priming** To prepare a substrate ready for the act of painting. Usually to stop a material being excessively porous. It allows the paint to adhere well and retain its true colour.
- Principals** The actors in a show with the lead or speaking roles.
- Producer** The person responsible for raising the finance to stage a show and then generally running the business side.
- Production Manager** Abbreviated to PM. The senior member of the technical team, in control of staffing, budgets, and liaison with venues whilst on tour.
- Profile** Plywood or other thin material covered with canvas or scrim, used for forming non-straight edges to wings, ground rows etc.
- Profile Spot** A spotlight, which projects a profile or outline of any chosen shape and with any desired degree of hardness or softness of edge.
- Promenade** Performance where the audience roam with the actors to follow the action.
- Prompt** The person who, during the performance, feeds actors lines if they 'dry'. Usually from the down stage left position - hence Prompt Corner.
- Prompt Book** See Prompt Copy.
- Prompt Copy** Fully annotated copy of the play with all of the various production details, used by the Stage Manager during the performance to coordinate all the various technical and staging departments. Also Prompt Book.
- Prompt Corner** The down stage left corner of the stage. Known as Prompt Corner because that is the area where the Prompt, or Stage Manager, usually sits.
- Prompt Side** Abbreviated to PS. The left hand side of the stage as viewed by the cast facing the audience. Also Stage Left, (Camera Right)
- Properties** Abbreviated to Props. Any item or article used by the actors other than scenery and costumes.
- Props Table** Table in convenient offstage area on which all props are left prior to use.
- Proscenium Arch (pros)** The archway, which separates the stage and the auditorium. The theoretical "fourth wall" of a stage comprising the proscenium opening and its surrounding treatments. *See also false proscenium.*
- Proscenium Theatre** Any theatre that has a proscenium arch.

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| PS | See Prompt Side. |
| Pyrotechnics | Any chemical effects used onstage or in the wings to create explosions or special effects. |
| Quarter | Backstage pre-show call given 20 minutes before curtain up (15 minutes before beginners). |
| Rail | Bottom or top batten in a flat. |
| Rake | The incline of a stage floor or seating area away from the horizontal. Originally introduced as a way of improving sightlines to the stage under poor lighting conditions last century. |
| Rehearsal | The learning of the show by the cast and crew before public performance. |
| Repertory | Abbreviated to Rep. A form of theatre production company, usually with a permanent company of actors, where each production has a run of limited length. At any time there is normally one production in performance, one in rehearsal, and several in varying degrees of planning. |
| Return | The narrower edge of a flat; at an angle to the face |
| Reveal | A small return surrounding an arch, window, or doorway to suggest depth and thickness. |
| Revolving Stage | A <i>Revolve</i> . A large turntable which turns the set so that, even though two or more scenes may be on the revolve, only one need be visible to the audience at a time. |
| Rig | 1) Noun - The lighting system as a whole, 'The Rig'. 2) Verb - To hang lanterns on bars and connect with cables. 3) Often used to describe putting together any part of the show e.g. rigging the set. |
| Riser | 1) See Rostrum. 2) The vertical part of a step. |
| Road Case | A strong, rigidly constructed, well-padded case to protect equipment from the vagaries of touring. Also Flight Case. |
| Roller | Where there is no flying space over the stage a backdrop can be rolled and is then called a roller or roll drop. Roller safety curtains are permitted in some circumstances. |
| Rosco | American manufacturer of Supersaturated Scenic Paints, colour filters and a range of other effects equipment including smoke machines and fog juice widely used,. |
| Rostrum | A portable platform usually in the form of a collapsible hinged framework (gate rostrum) with a separate top. Used to raise specific parts of the action or scene. (plural <i>ROSTRA</i>) |
| Run | A sequence of performances of the same show. |
| Runner | Length of stage flooring that can be drawn off sideways leaving a long narrow opening (cut) through which a cloth or flat may be raised. |

- Running Sheets** Stage working plot or plots for crew working at stage level.
- Run Through** A rehearsal at which all the elements of the production are put together in their correct sequence. Sometimes shortened to 'Run'.
- Sacrificial Floor** A temporary floor, usually thin plywood or MDF, which is laid on top of the stage floor and can be painted or textured without damaging the venue
- Safety Chains** Short length of chain or wire rope with a clip on one end and used to secure lanterns to bars. Required by law in many places.
- Safety Curtain (fire curtain; iron)** Screen or shutter comprising a steel and mineral fibre fabric, mounted immediately behind the proscenium opening and fitted with mechanism for raising it clear of the top of the proscenium arch and with a quick-release device to allow it to descent by gravity in the event of fire on the stage. A Safety Curtain is required by most UK licensing authorities for theatres of traditional design. The regulations also require that it is raised and lowered at least once in view of each audience (usually during the interval).. Colloquially known as the 'iron'.
- Scene** 1) A stage setting. 2) The blocks or parts into which a play is divided.
3) A particular setting of stage lighting that can be reproduced on demand.
- Scene Dock** See Dock.
- Scrim** UK term for Gauze, usually Sharkstooth. In the United States scrim is used to describe a canvas cloth.
- Script** The text of the show, also containing information about settings, characters, costumes etc. to aid the cast and crew.
- Set** 1) Verb - To set is to prepare the stage for the coming scene by placing everything in its correct position. 2) Noun - The set is all the scenery, furniture and props used to create a particular scene.
- Set Dressing** 1) The process of putting all sets, props and so on in their correct positions on the stage. 2) Props used to create atmosphere rather than having a function.
- Set Piece** A piece of scenery which stands alone.
- Setting Line** Line normally parallel to the front of the stage and just upstage of the house curtain, from which the positions of the scenery are measured.
- Sizing** 1)*verb* the act of shrinking a cloth to size, traditionally with an animal glue and whiting mixture, now with diluted acrylic paint, by attaching it to a paintframe or floor 2) *noun* the mixture of animal glue and whiting used to shrink a cloth to fit the dimension required on a frame or the floor
- SFX** Abbrev. for Sound Effects, or Special Effects.

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| Sharkstooth | A type of open weave gauze used in transformations (by first front lighting then fading to back light); it goes from being opaque to transparent. Or used to soften an upstage scene |
| Show Portal | <i>See False Proscenium.</i> |
| ShowCloth | Front cloth painted with a design specific to a particular show, sometimes containing the show logo or title. |
| Shutter | A device in a profile spot, which can alter or change the beam of light. |
| Sightlines | Lines indicating the limits of what an audience can see. The sightlines can be drawn on a plan or determined by someone in the auditorium. |
| Sill | A flat metal bar screwed to the bottom of a door flat to secure it to the stage. |
| Sill Iron (saddle iron) | Narrow strip of metal, often half-round, used to brace the bottom of a door flat across the doorway opening. |
| Single Purchase | Counterweight flying system where the cradle travels the same distance as the fly bar's travel. The counterweight frame therefore occupies the full height of the side wall of the stage. |
| Sitzprobe | A first, rough rehearsal of an opera or musical with singers and musicians, but without acting, scenery, or costumes focusing attention on integrating the two groups. |
| Sky Cloth | Piece of scenery used to convey the impression of open sky. <i>See also Cyclorama.</i> |
| Smoke Machine | A device that produces the effect of smoke on stage. It operates by forcing a liquid mixture into a very hot chamber. The mixture, commonly called 'juice' or 'fog juice', becomes a gas and is expelled through a small nozzle. It emerges as a cloud of smoke. Also Fogger. |
| Snap Line | Chalked piece of string which, when stretched tight and 'snapped' is used for marking straight lines on stage or on scenery as a drawing aid. |
| Speaker | <i>Also Loudspeaker.</i> The part of a sound system that produces the actual sound that a person hears. The sound is produced by the vibration of a paper or synthetic cone by an electrical voltage in a wire coil. |
| Special | A lantern performing a particular function, such as a fire 'special' or a window 'special'. |
| Spot Line | Single suspension line specially rigged from the grid to fly a piece of scenery or stage property, which cannot be handled, by the regular lines. |
| Spotlight | A lighting instrument in which the angle and beam size can be controlled. |
| Spot Line | A line rigged from the grid to fly a piece of scenery. |
| Stage | The part of the theatre on which the actor performs. |

- Stage Brace** Portable support for flats - a metal rod, one end of which that hooks into a Brace Cleat on the back of the flat, while the other is affixed to the stage floor.
- Stage Cloth** Large piece of canvas, used to cover the stage floor, often painted to represent paving, stones etc.
- Stage Directions** Directions in the script about how the playwright intends actions or arrangements to be carried out.
- Stage Door** The door to the theatre through which the cast and crew enter and exit the theatre. Not the public entrance to the building.
- Stage Left** Abbreviated to SL. The left side of the stage as viewed by the cast facing the audience. Also Prompt Side,
- Stage Right** Abbreviated to SR. The right hand stage as viewed by the cast facing the audience. Also Opposite Prompt, Camera Left.
- Stage Left** PS (Prompt Side) the directions are seen from the actors perspective, NOT the audience's.
- Stage Manager** The member of the production team responsible for the smooth running of a performance. During the performance the Stage Manager, using a copy of the script annotated during rehearsals, cues the actors and the various technical departments. On larger shows this last function will be performed by the Deputy Stage Manager.
- Stage Screw** A screw for fixing braces to strong stage floors.
- Stage Weight** Used to secure the base of a French or stage brace.
- Star (star trap)** *See Trap.*
- Stile** Vertical batten in the framework of a flat.
- Stock Scenery** Scenery able to be used for a number of different plays.
- Stretcher** Small rope clamped to side edge of a back drop, then pulled outwards to stretch the cloth flat.
- Strike** To clear the stage of scenery and other materials, or to remove a specific article.
- Strobe** Lighting unit giving a fast series of very short light flashes under which action appears frozen.
- Supernumerary** An actor with a non-speaking role, employed, for example, to swell a crowd scene. Also Extra.
- Surround (curtains)** Set of legs (ordinary pleated curtains) hung from a curved or angled bar to form the sides and background to an acting area. *See also Curtain set.*
- Swag** Looped-up curtain, border or leg.

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| Tableau Curtains (Tabs) | Originally 'tableaux curtains' which drew outwards and upwards, but now generally applied to any stage curtains including a vertically flying front curtain (house tabs) and especially a pair of horizontally moving curtains which overlap at the centre and move outwards from that centre to reveal a scene. See <i>Draw tabs</i> , <i>Festoon tabs</i> , also <i>Curtain set</i> . |
| Tab Track | Track with centre overlap for suspending and operating horizontally moving tabs. The curtains operated are often known as 'French action' tabs. May be hand or winch operated |
| Tank trap | A 2' square flat steel plate with a vertical tube – a means to support a 48mm vertical scaffold pole to hang lanterns etc. for side lighting. |
| Tallescope | Aluminium vertical ladder with an adjustable base on wheels, used for erecting and focusing lanterns, reaching the grid etc. |
| T-Bar | A metal bar with a slot down the middle mounted horizontally on a push-up stand, from which a small number of lights can be hung. |
| Teaser | 1) Originally the border of scenery behind the front curtain for masking the flies, now the term refers to any short drop used as masking. |
| Technical | The functions essential to a play other than those of the cast's actual interpretation of the script, in particular the set, lighting etc. |
| Technical Director | See Technical Stage Manager. |
| Technical Rehearsal | Abbreviated to Tech. A rehearsal at which all of the technical elements are rehearsed and integrated into the show. |
| Technical Stage Manager | Sometimes known as Technical Director. In charge of the technical activities and staff on stage, particularly during get-in and get-out. |
| Theatre In The Round | A stage in which the audience sits on all sides of the stage. |
| Throw | The distance between the lantern and the object being lit. Also throw of a projector |
| Thrust Stage | Form of stage which projects into the auditorium so that the audience is seated on at least two sides of the extended piece. See also END ON, IN THE ROUND. |
| Thunder Run | Long channel down which a cannonball is rolled to give a realistic thunder rumble effect. Built into the roof of some older theatres, but mostly now unused (for safety reasons). |
| Tie-off Cleat | Metal fitting around which a throw-line is made fast. |
| Toggle | To secure abutting flats with rope. The rope is known as a toggle line. |
| Tormentor | Substantial wing, not necessarily painted, placed immediately behind the proscenium opening, to mask the offstage edges of the setting etc. Narrow masking flats adjacent and sometimes at right angles to the proscenium |

arch. So named because they stop you being able to peep beyond, into the secrets of the wings. Used in addition to a teaser, the first border behind the pros. *See also Permanent masking.*

Translucent A property possessed by some materials that allows light through without showing the particular shape or form of objects on the other side. Used to good effect on Back Projection Screens

Trap A trap door opening into the area below stage, which can be used for special effects.

Traverse Form of staging where the audience is on either side of the acting area. See also IN THE ROUND, END ON, and THRUST.

Traverse Tabs Tabs set on a track across the stage.

Treads Steps or stairs used on stage.

Trim To adjust flown scenery so the bottom is level with the floor.

Truck A low platform with wheels or castors on which a piece of scenery can be moved.

Truss A metal frame used to hang lanterns from. Comes in three main designs - flat, box, and tri – which describe the shape created by the frame. Most truss is now made of aluminium for weight reasons and sections can be bolted together to produce long pieces. Used extensively in concert production to form the 'roof' over the stage from which to hang everything from lanterns to speakers

Understudy An actor who learns the part of another ready to step into their shoes should they not be able to perform due to illness or other reasons.

Upstage Abbreviated to U.S. The part of the stage furthest away from the audience.

Ultra Violet light Abbrev to UV. Light emissions above the spectrum visible to the human eye. Short wavelength source of light at the end of the visible light electromagnetic spectrum which causes specially treated materials to fluoresce on an otherwise blackened stage. Used for special effect. Ultraviolet sources designed for stage use are known as Black Light sources (also known as UV-B) and have all harmful radiations filtered out.

Vacuum Forming Abbreviated to Vac Form. Is where a sheet of plastic is heated to a forming temperature, stretched onto a single-surface mold, and forced against the mold by a vacuum (suction of air). The vacuum forming process has a wide variety of theatrical uses like lightweight sheets of bricks, stones, textures molding etc. as well as in prop making.

Vomitory An entrance through a block of seating in the auditorium as distinct from through the surrounding wall.

Wagon (truck) Low trolley, either running in tracks or free-moving, on which scenery etc. can be mounted for horizontal linear movements of settings.

- Walk Through** Rehearsals at which the actors go through entrances, moves and exits to make clear any changes or alterations that made be necessary.
- Warm Up** A session usually a short time before a performance in which the actors prepare their bodies through a number of physical, mental, and musical exercises.
- Wash** (1) Wash- painting. To add a diluted paint over an artwork or object, changing the colour while allowing the existing detail to be seen
(2) Wash- lighting. Stage lighting focused on stage not in a specific spot, but more as a general lighting over an area. Several areas may be combine and balanced to effect an even light over the whole acting area.
- Weight Cradle** The metal frame that holds the fly weights in a counterweight flying system.
- Winch** A Mechanism, either hand-operated or motorised, for opening and closing curtains, moving trucks etc.
- Wings** The sides of the stage concealed from the audiences' view.
- Working Lights** Stage lights independent of the main dimming system used while the crew work on stage during get-in etc.