

## Glossary of Terms

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**Acoustics** 1) The science of sound. 2) The factors and characteristics of a room or space that determine the sound capabilities and properties of that room.

**Alternating Current** Abbrev. to AC. Electrical current that 'alternates' direction in the cable. The electrical power standard in New Zealand.

**Ambience** The mix of background noise and other reflected sounds that make up a room's acoustic character. More recently, a generic description of new age music.

**Ampere (Abbr: Amp)**The unit of electrical current flow. (From the French physicist Ampere, 1775-1836). Andre Marie Ampere was a French physicist and mathematician, noted for his important discoveries in the field of magnetism and electricity. Ampere was once called the "Newton of electricity".

**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. The amphitheatre was one of the earliest examples of reserved ticketing. Tickets noted which arch to enter through, and the section, row, and seat numbers. They were also big. The amphitheatre at Pompeii, built 80BC sat 20,000, while the Colosseum in Rome, built 29BC by Statilus Tauros, held an estimated 45,000 to 50,000 spectators.

**Amplifier** An electronic device that amplifies sound signals to a point where they are great enough to be heard through the speaker.

**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. (UK) See Forestage.

**Arena** A Large entertainment venue with no specific set layout, often with a movable / customizable stage. Audience can be seated on up to three sides of the stage. Venue would often contain large capacity high steel suitable for temporary entertainment rigging.

**Assistant Stage Manager** Abbrev. 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. Auditorium can also describe the entire theatre, and has been in use as a word since the 18th century, although there were other words with the same meaning before that. Incidentally, the plural can be either auditoriums or auditoria. Also House.

**Auxiliary Send** An output from an audio desk independent of the main outputs. Used to connect equipment like effects units etc. (See also: Send).

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**Baby Spot** 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** Cloth, usually painted, suspended from the flies 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.

**Batten** 1) See Bar. 2) Piece of wood attached to, or metal pipe slipped into a sleeve at the bottom of, a flown cloth to straighten it and keep it taut. (UK) 3) Piece of wood joining two flats. (UK) 4) A group of stage lights suspended over the stage. (UK) Also X-ray-lights. (US)

**Blacklight** U.V. Ultra Violet light fitting used in combination with items painted with special paint to make them glow under the UV light.

**Border:** Hung scenic element with the primary purpose to mask the theatre space and/or other elements in the vertical direction

**Bowline** Common knot used to tie equipment to a hauling line. Popular due to its ease to untie after being loaded however can be unstable under dynamic loads.

**Call** 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.

**Camera Left** The right hand side of the stage as viewed by the cast facing the audience. Also Stage Right, Opposite Prompt.

**Camera Right** The left-hand side of the stage as viewed by the cast facing the audience. Also Stage Left, Prompt Side.

**Canvas flat** -Flat constructed by stretching canvas over a timber or metal frame. Good as it tends to be lighter in weight than other construction techniques and provides a consistent surface finish.

**Centre Line** Line running from the front to the back of the stage through the exact centre of the proscenium arch.

**Centre Stage** The middle of the acting area. Abbrev. CS.

**Chain Motor** A motorised hoist that uses metal chain to lift heavy objects. Widespread usage in the concert production industry to fly speakers and lighting equipment above a stage especially when there is no fly system.

**Channel** A sound or light control circuit. Also Circuit.

**Choreographer** Designs and creates the dance elements and arrangements for a show.

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**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.

**Colour cut** A listing of the colour filters required in each lighting instrument.

**Colour Filter** The translucent filter material placed 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. Also Gel, Medium, Media.

**Concert Pitch** The common tuning standard for musical instruments, agreed in 1960, where the note A = 440 Hz (or vibrations per second).

**Condenser Microphone** A particularly sensitive type of microphone where the audio signal is generated through the change in capacitance between two very small metal plates. Requires a supply voltage to operate.

**Counterweight System** A flying system where the flylines are connected from the batten to a cradle. The weight of the flown element is added to the cradle thus creating a balanced system. The flown element is controlled by a rope attached to the cradle. For a single purchase counterweight system, the cradle travels the same distance as the flown element and with a double purchase counterweight system the cradle travels half the distance as the flown element although twice the weight needs to be added to the cradle to balance the load. The second type of system is used where there is limited height side of stage e.g. in a theatre with a gabled roof.

**Counterweights** Weights, which are placed in the weight cradle of a flying system to counterbalance the weight of the scenery to be flown.

**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.

**Crosstalk** Electrical leaking between audio channels.

**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.

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**Cue Synopsis** A list of proposed lighting cues drawn up prior to plotting, giving a description of what lights should change when in the performance. An excellent tool to speed up the plotting process, instead of trying to start from scratch in the theatre.

**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.

**Cyclorama** A perfectly plain screen with a uniform surface extending around and above the stage to give a feeling of infinite space. It can also be used for the projection of designs and shadows.

**Deputy Stage Manager** Usually shortened to DSM, this is a member of the Stage Management team. The DSM is often "on the book" - that is, they are in charge of calling all of the technical and actor cues during the show, usually using a headset communications system and/or a system of cue lights. The DSM is often also in rehearsal working with the director to prepare the prompt book

**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.

**Diaphragm** See *Iris*.

**Digital (Audio)** The system used to convert a normal analogue sound into digital numbers that can be transmitted, then converted back into sound. The system used in compact audio disks.

**Digital (Lighting)** The system used to convert the many outputs of a lighting desk into a single signal that can be transmitted over a small cable to the dimmer racks, thus saving an enormous weight and amount of lighting control cable.

**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.

**Director** Has the ultimate responsibility for the interpretation of the script through his control of the actors and supporting production team.

**Double Purchase Counterweight flying system** (see counterweight system)

**Double Purchase** A system of mechanical advantage where the force required to move a load is equal to half the load.

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**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.

**Dress Rehearsal** Also known simply as the 'dress', the final rehearsal before the performance. 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.

**Drop** Large sheet of canvas battened at top and bottom, hung on a set of lines. The term is also used sometimes to describe a curtain hung on lines and lowered vertically.

**Dry Technical** A technical rehearsal for only the crew.

**Dynamic Microphone** Type of microphone -and the simplest. Can be likened to a loudspeaker in that dynamic microphones operate principally in reverse. The sound pressure entering the microphone moves a diaphragm, which causes electrical energy to be produced. Very popular for its robustness and reliability under physical extremes.

**Dynamic Range** The range of an audio signal from its lowest to highest level.

**Elevation** A working drawing drawn accurately and to scale, showing the side view of the set and/or lighting arrangement.

**Enclosure** The housing or cabinet, which contains the speakers.

**Equalisation** Series of controls on the sound mixer for adjusting the tonal quality.

**Exit** 1) The process of leaving the stage. 2) Point in the script at which an actor leaves the stage.

**Fade Time** The time taken to execute a lighting , sound., video change.

**Fire Curtain** The heavy fire-proof curtain that, in an emergency, is dropped at the front of the stage, effectively sealing the stage from the auditorium and thus slowing the spread of flames.

**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.

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**Flat** A basic unit of scenery, a wooden frame covered with either canvas or plywood, and painted and / or textured.

**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** A piece of scenery or theatrical element that is suspended

**Flys** 1) The space above the stage in which scenery, lanterns and so on are suspended. 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 and/or counterweights are loaded. In many theatres in New Zealand the counterweight system is controlled from stage level.

**Fly Gallery** See Fly Floor.

**Fly Man** Crew person who operates the flies.

**Fly Rail** Heavy rail along the onstage side of a fly gallery, equipped with cleats to which the ropes can be made fast. *Also called Pin Rail.*

**Followspot** A manually operated spot light with a powerful light beam, which can be directed to follow an actor around the stage. Also Dome, Limes.

**Footlights** Long strip of lighting equipment along the front edge of the stage.

**French Brace** A wooden or steel brace used with a sand bag or weight to hold flats in place

**French Flat** Arrangement of several flats battened together and flown as one unit on a set of lines.

**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** Abbrev. to FOH. Any part of the theatre in front of the proscenium arch.

**Front of House Lighting** Lights placed in front of the proscenium arch. Only generally introduced in the 1870s. Previously -through the candle chandelier and gas ages -all stage lighting came from above or to the side of the stage.

**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.

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**Fuse** Protective device, either cartridge or piece of special wire, which melts when rated electrical current is exceeded.

**FX** Abbrev. for Effects -special lighting and audio effects.

**Gaffer Tape** Heavy duty cloth adhesive tape with many uses in the entertainment world.

**Gain** The difference or increase in audio levels from one point in the circuit to another.

**Gauze (gauze cloth; scrim)** Flat curtain of fine mesh mosquito 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.

**Ghost** 1) Noun -Beam of light, which inadvertently leaks from a lantern and falls where it is not wanted. 2) Verb -To allow a small dim light to emit from a follow spot to allow it to be properly lined up before turning the lantern to full. 3) No theatre would be complete without a resident ghost!

**Gate** The optical centre of a profile spot where the shutters are positioned and where an iris or gobo can be inserted.

**Gate Rostrum** See Rostrum.

**Gobo** A metal plate with a pattern cut out of it and placed in the gate of a profile spot to produce an image or outline on stage.

**Green Room** Room adjacent to the stage (.i.e. the Green) for the actors to meet and relax. One explanation for 'green' is that in medieval days, when strolling players gave performances on the village green (hence 'Green'), a tent would be set-up for them to change costumes in (hence 'Green Room'). Perhaps the best known Green Room is at Drury Lane Theatre in London, and it is possible that it was once draped or painted in green, and this is the origin. Another possible theory is because of the Green Baize as described above. Green, the colour, is also known to be psychologically soothing.

**Grid** 1) The arrangement of wooden or metal slats above which are mounted the pulley blocks of the flying system. 2) The system of trusses and bars from which lanterns are hung.

**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.

**Harmonics** The separate tones that are multiples of the original sound frequency.

**Head Electrician** Person responsible for running the lighting department for a show or venue.

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**Head Mechanist** Person responsible for running the staging department for a show or venue.

**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 rail. A *hemp house* is a stage equipped with these hand-operated “hemp sets” and no counterweights. See *Pin-rail system*.

**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).

**Hum** Background noise caused by mains voltage interference.

**Impedance** The measure of resistance to alternating current in an electrical circuit. Measured in ‘ohms’. An important characteristic in many audio components such as speakers and microphones.

**Intensity** The brightness of a light.

**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.

**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.

**Lantern** One of the many words for a theatre light. Also Luminaire, Instrument, Light, Fitting, Lamp.

**LED** Abbrev. for Light Emitting Diode. A small light often used as an indicator light in electronic equipment.

**Leg** Scenic element with the primary purpose to mask other scenic elements, theatrical equipment, and or the theatre in the horizontal plane.



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**Lighting Plan** 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.

**Luminaire** An illuminating engineer's term for a stage-lighting unit of lantern.

**Mains power** 240 volt AC power standard available in all buildings wired to the power generation grid in New Zealand.

**Masking (masking piece)** Scenic elements whose primary purpose is to obscure from the audience other scenic elements, theatrical equipment, and/or the venue

**Musical Director** Abbrev. to MD. The person in charge of the musical content of a show.

**Mechanist** Crew person responsible for the operation of stage machinery and other related tasks.

**MIDI** Abbrev. for Musical Instrument Digital Interface. A common standard communication protocol that allows different brands of electronic musical instruments and equipment to 'talk' to, and control, each other.

**Mirror Ball** A ball covered with small mirrors usually rotated by a small motor and used as a lighting effect.

**Mixer** 1) Sound control desk, used to mix and adjust levels of sounds from various sources. 2) The operator of the sound control desk.

**Multi-Track** An audio tape, which holds more than one track of audio information. Up to 48 track systems are in common use, with larger models now appearing. Allows the various components in a sound production .i.e. the different instruments, to be recorded separately and mixed together later, and if necessary mixed again and again until the desired result is achieved, all the while not affecting the original recording. This mixing is known as mix down - that is mixing from a large number of tracks to typically two for stereo sound.

**Noise** Any unwanted sound.

**Offstage** Backstage area outside the performance area.

**Ohms** Unit of measure of electrical resistance in a circuit. See Impedance. (Ohm -German physicist 1787-1854).

**Omni-Directional** A microphone equally sensitive to sound source from all directions.

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**Onstage** 1) Inside the acting area. 2) Instruction to move towards the centre line of the stage.

**Orchestra** The musicians who provide the musical backing to a show.

**Orchestra Pit** The sunken area in front of the stage where the orchestra play during a performance. Also The Pit.

**PA System** The public address or any sound reinforcement system.

**Pan** Movement of a lantern or camera from side to side.

**Parcan** Type of lantern which holds a par lamp. The par can is the basic lighting unit in concert lighting.

**Phantom Power** A way of sending a voltage, usually 48v DC, to a device such as a microphone down the same cable that carries the audio signal from the device. Many sound desks have phantom power facilities built in, or a separate unit can be inserted into the microphone circuit as required.

**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.

**Plotting** To program or determine the levels of each of the lighting dimmers in each scene or cue.

**Producer** The person responsible for raising the finance to stage a show and then generally running the business side.

**Production Manager** Abbrev. to PM. The senior member of the technical team, in control of staffing, budgets, and liaison with venues whilst on tour.

**Prompt** The person who, during the performance, feeds actors lines if they 'dry'. Usually from the down stage left position -hence Prompt Corner. In opera it was traditional for the prompt to be positioned with the head projecting through a small slit cut in the stage floor down stage centre, with a wooden hood or cover to mask the prompt person from the audience.

**Props (properties)** Any item or article used by the actors other than scenery and costumes.

**Proscenium Arch** Abbrev. to Pros. The archway, which separates the stage and the auditorium.

**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).

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**Radio Microphones** Microphones that instead of being connected by a cable to the sound equipment, transmit the sound via a radio signal. This allows great flexibility on stage, and has meant performers can wear very small, hidden microphones whilst still retaining complete mobility.

**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.

**Ramp** Inclined rostrum, normally sloping up from the stage floor.

**Reflectors** The shiny surfaces in the back of lanterns, which help to intensify the beam.

**Rehearsal** The learning of the show by the cast and crew before public performance.

**Repertory** Abbrev. 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.

**Reveal** A small return surrounding an arch, window, or doorway to suggest depth and thickness.

**Reverberation Unit** Reverb unit -an audio signal processor that can duplicate the effect of a sound reverberating in a selectable range of room sizes and environments.

**Revolving Stage** A Revolve. A large turntable which turns scenic elements and/or performers 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.

**Road Case** A strong, rigidly constructed, well padded case to protect equipment from the vagaries of touring. Also Flight Case.

**Rostrum** A portable platform sometimes in the form of a collapsible hinged framework (gate rostrum) with a separate top. Used to raise specific parts of the action or scene.

**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.

**Run 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'.

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**Sand Bag** A canvas bag filled with sand used to secure and weight scenery on the stage.

**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. Also State.

**Scrim** Finely woven fabric, which can be translucent or opaque using lighting from different angles. Small pieces of a scrim material are often used in front of lanterns to soften the light beam.

**Script** The text of the show, also containing information about settings, characters, costumes etc. to aid the cast and crew.

**Segue** Originally a musical term for an immediate follow on, now used more generally for any immediate follow on.

**Send** An output from an audio desk independent of the main outputs. Used to connect equipment like effects units etc. Also Auxiliary Send.

**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. 3) When an actor has learnt their lines and stage directions they are 'set'.

**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.

**Line set** Unit group of suspension lines hanging from the grid for the attachment and flying of scenery; there are usually three or four lines in a set. *See also Counterweights and Pin-rail system.*

**Set Piece** An element of scenery

**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.

**Single Purchase** Counterweight flying system *see counterweight system*

**Single Purchase** a mechanical system where the force required to move a load is the same as the load.

**Sky Cloth** Unit of scenery used to convey the impression of open sky. *See also Cyclorama.*

**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.

**Soft Edged** A light beam on stage that has an out of focus or ill-defined edge or side. Also Soft Focus.

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**Soft Focus** See Soft Edged.

**Soft Patch** Analogue lighting control systems still rely on the principal of 'one fader one channel' - sometimes known as parallel control - that is, each fader on the desk controls one dimmer. The only way to change this is to physically alter the wiring arrangements. A digital lighting control system, however, because the lighting control signals are combined all into one digital circuit, can use a 'softpatch' to electronically link different channels to different, or multiple, dimmers.

**Sound Reinforcement** The aim is to present the listener with an amplified yet natural sound.

**Speaker** *Also Loudspeaker.* 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.

**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.

**Stage** The part of the theatre on which the actor performs.

### Stage Calls

**½ hr call** (35 minutes before show start time, known as the half) - "Ladies and Gentlemen of \*\*\* this is your half hour call. 30 minutes please"

**house open** - "Ladies and Gentlemen of \*\*\* - the house is now open. Please do not cross the stage."

**15 minutes call** - "Ladies and Gentlemen of \*\*\* this is your fifteen minute call. 15 minutes please"

**10 minutes call** - "Ladies and Gentlemen of \*\*\* this is your ten minute call. 10 minutes please"

**5 minutes call** - "Ladies and Gentlemenn of \*\*\* this is your five minute call. 5 minutes please"

**Beginners call** - "Ladies and Gentlemen of \*\*\* this is your beginners call for Act One. Beginners to the stage please.

**As the first scene starts** - "Lights up on Act One."

**Stage Cloth** Large piece of canvas, used to cover the stage floor, often painted

**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** Abbrev. to SL. The left side of the stage as viewed by the cast facing the audience. Also Prompt Side, Camera Right.

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**Stage Manager** The member of the production team responsible for the running of a performance. Before a production opens the Stage Manager attends rehearsals and meetings with other members of the production, and in smaller companies is often the coordinator of all of the various aspects of the production. 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 Right** Abbrev. to SR. The right hand stage as viewed by the cast facing the audience. Also Opposite Prompt, Camera Left.

**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.

**Strongback** A length of wood screwed or pinned to a flat to stop it from twisting when moved. Can also be attached just for travelling scenery.

**Strop** A sling used to connect a load to a means of lifting. The material can be constructed of wire/natural or synthetic rope or synthetic webbing. It usually has a stated working load limit.

**Surround Sound** An extra audio track now added to many films often used for atmospheric or special effects sounds. The surround speakers are placed at the side and/or rear of the audience so that the patrons appear 'surrounded' by the film's soundtrack. When first developed was predominantly used for sudden special effects sounds such as explosions, and so was first known as the effects soundtrack.

**T****ableau Curtains (tabs)** Either the house tabs (q.v.) or similar curtains which can be opened to reveal a scene. *See Draw tabs, Festoon tabs, also Curtain set.*

**Tabs** A pair of curtains, which over-lap at centre, and together are the full width and height of the stage. Front tabs are the House Curtain.

**Technical Rehearsal** Abbrev. to Tech. A rehearsal at which all of the technical elements are rehearsed and integrated into the show.

**Theatre In The Round** A stage in which the audience sits on all sides of the stage.

**Translucent** A property possessed by some materials that allows light through without showing the particular shape or form of objects on the other side.

**Trap** A trap door opening into the area between one level and another, which can be used for special effects.

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

**Truss** A triangulated frame used support loads to hanging points. Small aluminium trusses are commonly used to hang lighting fixtures especially in venues without a fly system. The three main types ladder (flat), tri , box represent the profile of the truss when looking down the truss axially.

**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. Also Cover.

**Upstage** Abbrev. to US. The part of the stage furthest away from the audience. The term reflects that when working on a raked stage to move towards the back wall you'd be walking uphill.

**Ultra Violet light** Abbrev to UV. Light emissions above the spectrum visible to the human eye. Used to produce a glowing effect from white fabric or materials treated with special paint.

**U.V.** See Ultra Violet Light.

## V

**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 performers prepare their bodies through a number of physical, mental, and musical exercises.

**Wardrobe** General name for the costume department, its staff, and the accommodation they occupy.

**Wardrobe Supervisor** The person in charge of the wardrobe, dressers and costume maintenance

**Wash** Wash lighting. Stage lighting focussed on stage not in a specific spot, but more as a general lighting over an area. Several areas may be combined and balanced to effect an even light over the whole acting area.

**White Noise** An audio signal that contains noise at the same level at all frequencies.

**Winch** A Mechanism, either hand-operated or motorised, for opening and closing curtains etc.

**Wings** The sides of the stage concealed from the audiences' view usually with legs.



## Glossary of Terms

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**Working Lights** Stage lights independent of the main dimming system used while the crew work on stage during Bump-in etc.

**X**

**Yoke** Either part of a Harness or part of a light onto which the hook clamp is attached.

**Zoom** A variable focus lens.