



# **Orientation Manual**

# **Manuel d'orientation**

Revised September 2006

## **Welcome to the Capitol!**

Every production needs performers, technicians, assistants, administrators, and spectators. The show is a hit when the product is good and when the cast and crew work together to ensure a great end result.

Whether you have been hired to sell tickets, do the books, provide technical assistance or keep the Capitol clean, you have a major role to play in our everyday production: making a visit to the Theatre an enriching and enjoyable experience for all. And while many people think the stars make the show, we feel that it takes a team to really bring down the house.

We welcome you to the Capitol team. We hope you will contribute to the positive energy we strive for and we invite any suggestions you may have to make this a better place to work, play and perform.

We encourage you to read this booklet carefully and familiarize yourself with the Capitol, its policies and procedures.

See you at the Theatre!

Marc Chouinard  
General Manager

## **A Bit About the Capitol: Who we are and what we do**

The Capitol Theatre is a not-for-profit performing arts centre whose mandate is to present high quality, affordable entertainment to southeastern New Brunswick and beyond. The staff and Board of Directors aim to bring in a balanced program of events that will appeal to all linguistic communities and to people of all ages. The Capitol is also an important cultural resource for the people of the area.

After several years of falling into disrepair, the Capitol building was purchased by the City of Moncton and, after extensive renovations, the operation of the building was handed over to an independent Board of Directors. The Capitol re-opened to the public in September of 1993.

In 1999, the City of Moncton sold the building to the Capitol Board of Directors. Because of its cultural importance to the region, the Capitol Theatre receives annual operations grants from all three municipalities.

As you will see from the historical brochure included, the Capitol has had a long and distinguished presence in downtown Moncton. Built in 1922, the Capitol was home first to silent films and then to live performers. It was destroyed by fire in 1926. A fireman died in that blaze (Alexander Lindsay) and, rumour has it, his ghost still haunts the Capitol to this day! When the Theatre was rebuilt, the owners expanded the facility to better accommodate the shows of the era. After having served as a movie theatre in the 80's, the Capitol was carefully restored to recapture its original elegance and style. The care and attention to detail is very evident throughout the building.

Since its re-opening in '93, the Capitol has presented an annual season of shows and events. The season is made up of Capitol Presentations which are performances sponsored by the theatre (see our Season Brochure). These include a wide variety of performing arts such as children's theatre, popular music, classical music, dance and comedy. Traditionally, the season starts in September and runs until May.

The Capitol also rents its stage and facilities for just about anything: on any given month, there are meetings, receptions, rock concerts, trade shows and media conferences. The ticket sales from Capitol presentations and the rental revenues, combined with the operational grants from the three municipalities and federal arts funding agencies, are what keep the Capitol going.

The Capitol is more than a stage and seats. It is a living, breathing operation where staff and volunteers pride themselves on offering a quality experience.

## Did you know?

- \*The Capitol Theatre is one of 8 original Vaudeville theatres remaining in Canada.
- \* There are several other "Capitol"s - including theatres in Windsor and Chatham Ontario.
- \*The Capitol Theatre operates on a *not-for-profit* basis.
- \*The Capitol seats 818. The 8 Opera Boxes hold 4 people each.
- \*There are over 300 events at the Capitol per year.
- \*The Capitol employs 13 full time staff and more than 20 part time and seasonal people. Some of the full time staff have been with us since the Theatre opened in 1993.
- \*There are more than 200 volunteer ushers/ticket takers who help out on a rotational basis.
- \*Since its re-opening in 1993, the Capitol has hosted world leaders, teen heartthrobs, popular rock bands, and visual artists.
- \*The Capitol Box Office can be engaged to sell tickets for events at other venues.
- \*The "Capitol Improvement Fund", a service charge we place on tickets, goes towards a fund to maintain the building in good repair and to pay for necessary improvements.

## **Capitol Theatre Full Time Staff**

**Marc Chouinard  
Marshall Button  
Robin Anne Ettles  
Julie Pallot  
Carol Doucet  
Brenda Boyd  
Patrick Murray  
Marie-Louise LeBlanc  
Eric Haché  
Annette Coates  
Christal Sénécal  
Denise Landry**

**General Manager  
Artist-in-residence  
Operations Manager  
Administrative Assistant  
Director of Marketing and Sales  
Accountant  
Building Superintendent  
Housekeeping  
Technical Director  
Box Office Manager  
Lead Box Offices Sales Representative  
Box office Sales Representative**

## Capitol Theatre Board of Directors

The Capitol Theatre is governed by a 14-member volunteer Board of Directors. The Board is made up of appointees from the three municipalities as well as members-at-large. The Board is involved in policy- setting for the Theatre and assists Management with the every day operation of the complex. Board meetings are held monthly at the Capitol and the Annual General Meeting is held in the fall. The fiscal year of the Theatre is from July 1 to June 30. The Capitol follows an operational budget that is drawn up annually by Management and the Finance committee of the Board. A capital budget is done on a five-year basis and is prepared by management and the House Committee of the Board.

Current Board members are:

Kim Rayworth-Landry	-President
Andréa Arsenault	-Vice-President
Mary Taylor	-Treasurer
Win Pearce	-Secretary

Stephen Brooks  
 Councillor Chris Collins  
 Councillor Charles Cormier  
 George L. Cooper  
 John Dallaire  
 Councillor Robert Hyslop  
 Guy Levesque  
 John McMaster  
 Angela Smith  
 Claudette Trewin  
 Marshall Button  
 Marc Chouinard  
 Michelle Rose

The Board is subdivided into several working committees. They include: Personnel and Policy; Volunteer, Finance; House; Outreach and Development; and Fund Raising.

The Capitol Theatre also has a newly established Foundation. While we work closely with the Foundation, it does operate separately from the Capitol and has its own Board of Directors. The mandate of the Foundation is to raise money for endowment funds that will help finance special projects of the Capitol.

# Protocols

## Hours of Work

The Capitol Theatre is not a 9-to-5 operation. Employees' hours of work vary throughout the complex. The Administration Offices and Box Office are generally open during set business hours, depending on the season. In some areas of the Capitol, employees work designated shifts which depend on the level of activity at the Theatre. In order to provide our customers with the best service possible, employees are expected to be at their appointed workplace and be *ready to work* at their scheduled working time.

If you are unable to report for or perform work due to illness or other justifiable cause, you must report your absence in advance of your scheduled shift. The reason for your inability to work and your anticipated date of return must be called in to the general Theatre line 856-4377.

## Medical Fitness

Employees must be medically and physically fit to perform their assigned duties.

## Safety

The Capitol Theatre is a strong proponent of safety in the workplace. It is the responsibility of supervisors and managers, as well as all employees, to ensure that proper security and safety measures are observed on the job. All employees are expected to keep their work areas free of clutter to avoid accidents.

## Smoking

Smoking is strictly prohibited anywhere inside the Capitol complex. This includes the loading dock area, administration offices, Empress, washroom and inside doorways. The NO SMOKING policy applies to all: employees, volunteers, general public, performers, outside crews. Fines will be imposed for a breach of the no smoking policy.

## Misuse of Property and Equipment

All Capitol Theatre property, equipment and materials are for the use of employees in the performance of Capitol Theatre work.

A) Unauthorized use of Theatre property for other than Capitol purposes will result in disciplinary action.

B) Use of the Capitol's internet, telephone system, postage meter and photocopier for unauthorized purposes is a serious offence and will result in disciplinary action.

C) Every employee is held responsible for the exercise of all reasonable care to prevent abuse, excessive wear or loss of Theatre equipment or material that is entrusted in his or her care. Proven loss or damage shall be recovered by the Capitol where applicable. The employee responsible will be subjected to disciplinary action.

D) Capitol Theatre employees are entrusted with information and data used for the administration of the Theatre. Some information is not generally available to the public. Certain employees have access to information of a sensitive or confidential nature. Sensitive or confidential information must be administered on a need-to-know basis only.

## **Dress**

Capitol Theatre employees are expected to be neat and clean in appearance, well groomed and suitably attired for the position they hold or for the areas in which they work.

## **Personnel Files**

Keeping a record of your employment history as well as your personal information is important to you and to the Capitol. Your official record of employment is retained in the office of the General Manager. Since your file contains confidential information, access will be limited to you, your supervisor and management. When your personal information, such as last name, address, phone number or next of kin, becomes outdated or when you upgrade your skills or participate in training programs, please notify your supervisor so your file can be kept current.

## **Personal Business and Personal Phone Calls**

We understand that communication with family and friends is sometimes necessary during working hours. We ask that you make personal phone calls and conduct personal business at an appropriate time such as during your lunch hour or during a coffee break. Long distance telephone calls or faxes that are not work related are not permitted.

## **Computer Use**

Capitol Theatre computers are to be used for Theatre business only.  
(See computer policy)

## **Keys and Security cards**

The Capitol Theatre is protected by an alarm system. If you are issued a key and/or the security code, it is your responsibility to keep both in your possession at all times. The security code is not to be divulged and the key is not to be lent to another employee or to the general public. The key and code are to be used when entering the Capitol for work only. Report any loss of key to the Building Superintendent immediately.

For liability, insurance and safety reasons, we ask that you be on Capitol Theatre premises only when you are reporting for work or when you have tickets to a performance.

## **Conduct**

As employees of the Capitol Theatre, we are required to follow certain rules of conduct.

Employees are expected to carry out Theatre business in a professional and friendly manner. Conduct and behavior should be above reproach at all times. The following conduct is **not** permitted in the workplace and will result in disciplinary action:

1. Insubordination.
2. Swearing or use of abusive language and gestures.
3. Possession or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs.
4. Fighting or horseplay.
5. Ignoring safety rules and practices.

6. Harassing other employees.
7. Displaying suggestive, sexual or distasteful materials.
8. Falsifying any reports or records intended for Theatre use.
9. Misusing or removing Capitol Theatre property, records or any other material from the premises without permission.
10. Unauthorized or unexcused absence or lateness.
11. Disobeying Capitol Theatre policies.

### **Notice of Resignation**

We understand that your circumstances change. If you plan to leave the Capitol, please notify your supervisor in writing at least two weeks in advance of your departure date so the transition can occur as smoothly as possible. If you have reached a separate agreement for employment with the General Manager, please follow the guidelines set out in that agreement.

### **Outside Employment and Other Activities**

How employees perform on the job is our most important concern. Each employee should be aware that some outside activities or outside employment can create, or seem to create conflict with job duties or performance. The employee must follow the Conflict of Interest Guidelines set out in the Capitol's Policies and Procedures manual. When in doubt, please discuss any outside activity or employment with your supervisor.

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination is defined as different or unequal treatment because of a person's race, colour, religion, national origin, age, physical ability, mental disability, marital status, gender or sexual orientation. Discrimination against another employee, prospective employee or member of the public will not be tolerated. If you have a complaint of discrimination, speak to your supervisor or to the General Manager.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is prohibited in the workplace. Harassment is defined as unwelcome advances or behaviours, requests for sexual favours and physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

\*it is made as a term or condition of employment

\*saying yes or no affects your career

\*such conduct is humiliating or interferes with your work performance or creates an uncomfortable work environment.

If you have a legitimate complaint of harassment you must advise the harasser that the behaviour is unacceptable. If the behaviour continues, it should be reported to your immediate supervisor. If this is inappropriate, report the misconduct to a more senior member of the Theatre or to the General Manager.

The Capitol will not penalize any individual for making a legitimate complain of harassment.

## Employment

### Payroll, personal information, definitions of employment

This orientation package contains forms that **MUST** be completed **PROMPTLY** so that you can be set up on the payroll system and paid in a timely manner.

The Capitol Theatre is on a bi-weekly pay period. The pay period ends on the Saturday prior to payday, which is on Thursday. All hours worked up to and including that Saturday will be paid on that pay day. If you find there has been an error in the hours you have been paid for, please contact your department head and he/she will contact management on your behalf.

If you are paid on an hourly basis, you will be issued a time card for every pay period. This time card must be “punched” each time you start and finish your shift. You will be paid according to this card. Any changes must be initiated by your supervisor.

If you are a salaried employee, you will keep a “time tracking” sheet that you will submit to the accounting department on a weekly basis. This form must reach the accounting department by noon on each Monday.

Capitol Theatre employees are paid through a direct deposit system whereby your net pay (gross pay minus deductions) is deposited directly into the bank account of your choice. The deposit takes place electronically between midnight and the start of the business day on payday. To register for direct deposit, you will need to give your supervisor a copy of a voided cheque and fill out a payroll information sheet. **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE INFORMATION BE ACCURATE AS IT COULD CAUSE DELAYS IN RECEIVING PAY.**

Confidentiality is assured.

On pay day, you will receive a payroll statement which will show the number of hours you have worked, your gross salary, vacation pay and necessary deductions such as Canada Pension, Unemployment Insurance and Income Tax deductions, as applicable. At the end of the year, you will receive a T4 slip showing your earnings for income tax return filing purposes.

Every year, Records of Employment and T4 slips are returned to us or lost because employees have forgotten to notify the Theatre of address changes. Please help us in getting the proper documents to you by advising us as soon as your address changes.

## Definitions of Employment

The Capitol Theatre operates with many different types of employees. When you are hired, you will be designated in one of these categories. Here are definitions for the terms of employment within the organization:

***Salaried Staff*** – Full time employees who generally work irregular hours and are paid an annual salary based on the ranges established for their position.

***Hourly Full Time*** – Employees who work at least 37.5 hours a week and are paid on an hourly basis. Employees who are paid an hourly wage must record their hours daily on a time card.

***Hourly Part Time Permanent*** (some Box Office, Housekeeping and Technical staff) – Employees who work fewer than 20 hour per week and are paid on an hourly basis. Part time employees must record their hours daily on a time card.

***Seasonal*** (some Box Office, Housekeeping and Technical staff) –Employees who work either full time or part time during the typical Theatre “season” of September to May. Seasonal employees are paid on an hourly basis. Hours must be recorded on a time card.

***Term*** – People hired for a specific time period or to complete a specified project.

## Performance Evaluation

Although nothing replaces good daily communication between the employer and the employee, all employees will be subject to a probationary period and will be involved in an annual evaluation process.

## **Capitol Theatre Computer Policy**

All computer hardware and software resources are the property of the Capitol Theatre and are to be used for Theatre related purposes only.

Personnel may not purchase, download from the Internet, install or write software for use on Capitol Theatre owned or leased computers without authorization from the General Manager.

Non-licensed or illegal copies of software are not to be installed on Capitol Theatre computers under any circumstances. All installed software must be for business purposes. All software registration will be done by management in the name of the Capitol Theatre.

Passwords are in place for security reasons. Disclosure of passwords without authorization is prohibited.

Unauthorized use of Capitol Theatre computers or software will result in disciplinary action.

## **Staff Pass Policy**

There are many advantages to working at the Capitol Theatre: not only are you working in a lavish environment and exposed to performers from all over the world, you get to go behind the scenes for many of the shows that grace the stage. As an employee of the Capitol, you are encouraged to attend shows and performances. In order to make this easier for you, we have established a staff pass policy.

### **General Policy**

Any person who has been employed at the Capitol for longer than 2 months is entitled to use our Staff Passes for Capitol Theatre Presentations. You may use two passes per show, one for yourself and one for a guest. These passes are non-transferable (ie: you cannot “give” both of your passes to other people and your guest cannot attend a show unaccompanied by you). The passes are kept in the Box Office. They are to be redeemed the day of the show and returned immediately after the performance. Once you redeem your passes, wait until all patrons are seated, at which time the Front of House Manager will place you in the best available seats.

### **Exceptions**

Every season there are Capitol presentations that are very expensive for the Theatre. In order to assure a break-even point, passes to some shows may be limited or unavailable. Check with the Box Office Manager for details.

Staff passes are a privilege we are happy to extend to you. We trust you will respect the policy.

## **Safety Policy**

The Capitol Theatre strives to provide and promote a safe work environment for all its employees. At this time, the House Committee of the Board, on which several staff members sit, is in the process of drafting a security policy for the Theatre.

In the meantime, please speak to the head of the department in which you work for basic safety regulations and accident reporting information.

Remember, it is the responsibility not only of supervisors and managers but of all employees to ensure that their work environment is safe.

## Glossary of Technical and Theatrical Terms

The following is an alphabetical listing of some of the terms and expressions you may hear while working at or attending the Theatre. They are taken from a publication of the University of Exeter in Britain.

You can find a full listing at their website: <http://www.ex.ac.uk/drama/tech/>

### **ACOUSTICS :**

The behaviour of sound and its study. The acoustics of a room depend on its size and shape and the amount and position of sound-absorbing and reflecting material.

### **APRON :**

Section of the stage floor which projects towards or into the auditorium. In proscenium theatres, the part of the stage in front of the house tabs, or in front of the proscenium arch.

### **AUDITORIUM :**

The part of the theatre accommodating the audience during the performance. Sometimes known as the "house".

### **BACKSTAGE :**

The part of the stage and theatre which is out of the sight of the audience.  
The service areas of the theatre.

### **BAR :**

The horizontal metal tube (usually 48mm in external diameter) hung from flying lines (or forming part of a grid) from which lighting equipment and scenery etc. may be suspended. Also known as a **Barrel**. When vertical, known as a **Boom**. Sometimes known as a **Pipe** in the US, although many curse that usage, and demand the use of **Batten** ; "A pipe is what you smoke; a batten is what you hang your instruments from."

### **BLACK HOLE :**

Accidentally unlit portion of the stage.

### **BLACKS :**

- 1) Black clothing worn by stage management during productions.
- 2) Any black drapes or tabs, permanently or temporarily rigged. Used for masking technical areas.

### **BLACKOUT :**

Complete absence of stage lighting. Blue working lights backstage should remain on and are not usually under the control of the board, except during a Dead Blackout (DBO), when there is no onstage light. Exit signs and other emergency lighting must remain on at all times.

### **BLOCKING :**

The process of arranging moves to be made by the actors during the play, recorded by stage management in the prompt script.

### **BLUES :**

Blue lights used backstage in a performance situation (also called working lights).

### **BOARD :**

The main control for the stage lighting. Originally known as the switchboard or dimmerboard, it is now usually remote from the dimmers. The lighting operator for a show is said to be "on the board".

**BRAIL :**

A rope, wire or chain attached at either end of a piece of scenery or lighting bar pulling it upstage or downstage of its naturally hanging position to allow another flying item to pass, or to improve its position.

**BREAK A LEG :**

A superstitious and widely accepted alternative to "Good Luck" (which is considered bad luck).

**CALL :**

- 1) A notification of a working session (eg a Rehearsal Call)
- 2) The period of time to which the above call refers. (eg "Your call for tomorrow nights show is 6.55pm")
- 3) A request for an actor to come to the stage because an entrance is imminent (these are courtesy calls and should not be relied on by actors - eg "This is your call for the finale Mr Smith and Miss Jones")
- 4) An acknowledgement of applause (eg Curtain Call)

**CASTING :**

The process of the director choosing actors to perform the characters in the play.

**CATWALK :**

An access walkway to equipment.

**C.C.T.V. :**

Closed Circuit television. A video relay system, used in the theatre to give a view of the stage to remote technical operators (especially stage managers). Also used to give musical performers a view of the conductor (and vice versa) to help in keeping time. *At the Capitol, CCTV is used at the entrance of the du Maurier auditorium so that Latecomers can see the show while they wait for an appropriate time to enter.*

**CLEARANCE :**

Message passed to Stage Management from the Front of House Manager that the house is ready for the performance to begin. (ie everyone is in their correct seat and there are no parties coming through the doors).

**COMPANY :**

The cast, crew and other staff associated with a show.

**COUNTERWEIGHT SYSTEM :**

Method of flying scenery which uses a cradle containing weights to counterbalance the weight of flown scenery.

**COVE :**

US for front of house catwalk lighting positions

**CROSSOVER :**

- 1) A route leading from one side of the stage to the other, out of the audiences view.
- 2) An electronic filter in a sound system that routes sound of the correct frequency to the correct part of the speaker system. Different speakers handle high frequencies (tweeters)

and low frequencies (woofers). Sometimes known as a crossover network. An active crossover splits the signal from the mixing desk into high, mid and low frequencies which are then sent to three separate amplifiers.

**CUE :**

The command given to technical departments to carry out a particular operation. E.g. Fly Cue or Sound Cue. Normally given by stage management, but may be taken directly from the action (i.e. a Visual Cue).

**DARK :**

A venue that has been closed to the public. Some theatres go dark temporarily during production periods, when the next show is in preparation on stage.

**DOWNSTAGE :**

- 1) The part of the stage nearest to the audience (the lowest part of a raked stage).
- 2) A movement towards the audience (in a proscenium theatre).

**DRESS REHEARSAL :**

A full rehearsal, with all technical elements brought together. The performance as it will be "on the night".

**FLAT :**

A lightweight timber frame covered with scenic canvas. Now usually covered with plywood or hardboard and consequently not so lightweight. Most theatres have a range of stack flattage made to a standard size, and re-used many times. A Rail is a horizontal batten within a flat. A Stile is a side or vertical piece within a flat. A Sill is the bottom rail of a flat.

**FLY BARS :**

The metal bars to which scenery and lanterns are attached for flying above the stage.

**FOLLOW SPOT :**

Usually, a powerful profile lantern fitted with its own dimmer, iris, colour magazine and shutters mounted in or above the auditorium, used with an operator so that the light beam can be moved around the stage to follow an actor. Sometimes a beam light or other lantern may be used in the same way.

**FOOTLIGHTS :**

A compartmentalised batten sometimes recessed into the front edge of the stage, used to neutralise shadows cast by overhead lighting. Modern lighting equipment renders footlights virtually obsolete except for period/special effects.

**FORESTAGE :**

That part of the stage which projects from the proscenium into the auditorium.

**FRONT OF HOUSE (FOH) :**

- 1) Every part of the theatre in front of the pros arch. Includes foyer areas open to the general public.
- 2) All lanterns which are on the audience side of the proscenium and are focussed towards the stage.

**FRONT OF HOUSE CALLS :**

Announcements made by stage management or FOH staff calling the audience into the auditorium, or informing them when the performance begins. Calls are normally made at the Half (35 mins. before curtain up), the Quarter (20 mins before), the Five (10 mins), and calls normally accompanied by bar bells at 3, 2 and 1 minutes before the

performance begins. *At The Capitol, the lobby lights are flicked off and on to signal the beginning of the show.*

**GAFFA TAPE:**

Ubiquitous sticky cloth tape. Most common widths are .5" for marking out areas and 2" (usually black) for everything else. Used for temporarily securing almost anything. Should not be used on coiled cables or equipment. Originally known as **Gaffer's Tape**, from the Gaffer (Master Electrician) on a film set.

**GHOSTLIGHT :**

A light left burning overnight on stage to keep friendly spirits illuminated and unfriendly spirits at bay. Also believed to keep the theatrical muse in a "dark" theatre, and to stop people tripping over bits of scenery when they come into the theatre in the morning. Also refers to the light emitted by a lantern when a dimmer has not been "trimmed" correctly, and is leaking.

**GOBO :**

A thin metal plate etched to produce a design which can then be projected by a profile spotlight (E.g. Foliage, Windows). The image can be used soft focus to add texture, rather than a defined image. A number of composite gobos in different coloured lanterns can, with careful focusing, produce a coloured image (e.g. a stained glass window). Greater detail can be achieved using a glass gobo.

The original use of the word GOBO came from the early days of Hollywood. When the Director of Photography wanted daylight excluded from some area of the set, he'd say "GO BlackOut". Loads of people would run around putting black material between the sun and the set. It eventually evolved into other stuff that goes in front of lights and now most commonly (in the UK at least), refers to patterns in profiles.

In the US TV/Film industry, a Gobo is a piece of material used to mask or block light and a **Cookie** (short for **Cucaloris** (from the Greek kukaloris: the breaking up of light)) is the same as a UK Gobo.

**GREEN ROOM :**

Room close to the stage (i.e. the green) for the actors to meet and relax

**GRID :**

- 1) The support structure close to the top of the fly tower on which the pulleys of the flying system are supported. Constructed from metal or wooden beams.
- 2) Arrangement of scaffolding from which lanterns are hung in a performance space with no flying facilities.

**"HEADS ON STAGE" :**

A shouted warning (often just "Heads !") for staff to be aware of activity above them. Also used when an object is being dropped from above.

**HEADSET :**

- 1) General term for theatre communication equipment.

**HOUSE :**

- 1) The audience (eg "How big is the house tonight ?")
- 2) The auditorium (eg "The house is now open, please do not cross the stage")

**KILL :**

To switch off (a light/sound effect); to strike/remove (a prop).

**LAMPY :**

Theatre / Rock & Roll lighting technician. Distinct from a "Techie" who may also be a carpenter or stage crew member. A lumpy only concerns him/herself with lighting.

**LAVALIER MICROPHONE :**

Originally, a mic worn around the neck on a string. Now applies to a small "tieclip" microphone.

**LEGS :**

Drape set as masking piece at the side of the acting area. Usually set up in pairs across the stage and used in conjunction with borders to frame the audiences view. Apparently, the origin of the phrase "Break a Leg", meaning to take an extra encore from the legs after a successful performance.

**LOADING BAY or LOADING DOCK:**

Access into the theatre for scenery and other equipment. Also called the Get In.

**MARKING OUT :**

Sticking tapes to the floor of the rehearsal space to indicate the groundplan of the scenery. Also for marking position of furniture etc. within a set.

**MIC :**

(pronounced "Mike") Abbreviation for microphone.

**MICROPHONE :**

Device for converting sound into electrical pulses which can then be amplified or recorded onto tape. Signals from a microphone are very low level and are amplified in the mixing desk to line level.

**OFFSTAGE :**

- 1) A movement towards the nearest side of the stage from the centre. (e.g. "Focus that spot offstage a bit please")
- 2) The area out of sight of the audience (e.g. "Get that donkey offstage !")

**OPEN THE HOUSE :**

Clearance given to FOH staff by stage management that the stage is set and the audience can begin to take their seats. When this clearance is given, the backstage call "The House is now open, please do not cross the stage" is made.

**PAPER THE HOUSE :**

Marketing technique. Giving away tickets to a performance (eg Opening Night) to make a show seem to be selling better than it actually is.

**PIPES :**

US term for the bars on which scenery and lanterns are flown.

**PIT :**

The area housing the orchestra. Originally, a lower section between the front of the stage and the audience, although now describes any area around the stage housing the musicians.

**PRODUCTION MANAGER :**

Responsible for technical preparations, including budgeting and scheduling of productions.

**PROPS :**

(Properties) Furnishings, set dressings, and all items large and small which cannot be classified as scenery, electrics or wardrobe. Props handled by actors are known as handprops, props which are kept in an actors costume are known as personal props.

**PROPS TABLE :**

Table in convenient offstage area on which properties are prepared prior to a performance and to which they should be returned after use.

**PROSCENIUM ARCH :**

The opening in the wall which stands between stage and auditorium in some theatres; the picture frame through which the audience sees the play. The "fourth wall".

**QUICK CHANGE ROOM :**

Area adjacent to the stage containing lighting, a mirror and a costume rail in which actors can make costume changes quickly, sometimes with the aid of a dresser.

**RIDER :**

(Technical Rider) Information sent to a venue by a touring group detailing lighting, sound, staging and dressing room requirements. Ideally arrives before the group !

**RISER :**

- 1) Any platform on stage. For instance, the series of platforms for choral presentations are called choral risers, the rostrum on which a drumkit and drummer is positioned is the drum riser.
- 2) The vertical portion of a step which gives a set of treads its height.
- 3) A microphone which can be raised through a small trap in the stage floor to a convenient height for an actor. Usually positioned just upstage of the footlight position, centre stage.

**ROAD MANAGER (ROADIE) :**

A touring technician with one night shows, particularly music groups. Large groups will have a roadie in charge of a particular instrument or set of instruments (eg Guitar Roadie, Drum Roadie, Lager Roadie) who is responsible for the correct unloading and setting up (tuning etc) of the instruments before the artists arrive onstage for the sound check.

**RUNNERS**

- 1) A pair of curtains parting in the centre and running horizontally, particularly those used in a downstage position in variety and revue productions.
- 2) Persons employed as production assistants to do odd jobs and errands during a production period.
- 3) Strips of carpet used backstage to silence actors' shoes during performance.

**SAFETY CURTAIN :**

A fireproof curtain that can be dropped downstage of the tabs to separate the audience from the stage in the event of fire. A Safety Curtain is required by most licensing authorities for theatres over 500 seats. The regulations also require that it is raised and lowered at least once in view of each audience (usually during the interval). Usually made from sheet metal and electrically operated, used to be made from iron faced with asbestos and lowered using a hydraulic damping system. Colloquially known as the "iron". *The beautiful hand-painted fire curtain at the Capitol is the original curtain from the 1920's.*

**SAND BAG :**

Attached to an unused **SCRIM** :

- 1) A coarse gauze
- 2) A fine metal mesh used to reduce the intensity of light from TV lanterns without affecting colour temperature.

**SHOW REPORT :**

A written report by stage management giving problems, running times, show staff and audience numbers for the previous days' performance(s). Copies are circulated to the technical departments and management staff.

**SIGHTLINES :**

A series of lines drawn on plan and section to indicate the limits of the audience vision from extreme seats, including side seats and front and back rows. Often marked in the wings as a guide to the actors and crew.

**SOUND CHECK :**

A thorough test of the sound system before a performance. This will include checking each speaker cabinet individually, and each playback device. In the case of a live concert, this is the session when each instrument is played in turn for the sound engineer to check and fine-tune the sound.

**SPIKE :**

To mark the position of an item of set/furniture on stage. Spike Tape is normally thin gaffa tape, although PVC Electrical tape is used on precious floors. Sometimes, any securing of cable etc to floor is known as "Spiking".

**STAGE LEFT / RIGHT :**

Left/ Right as seen from the Actor's point of view on stage. (ie Stage Left is the right side of the stage when looking from the auditorium.)

**Stage Right** = OP (Opposite Prompt) **French:** Coté Jardin.

**Stage Left** = PS (Prompt Side) **French:** Coté Cour.

**STAGE MANAGER :**

1) The Head of the Stage Management team comprising the deputy stage manager (DSM) and assistant stage manager (ASM). The DSM is normally "on the book" calling the cues from the prompt corner. The ASM supervises props. Depending on the needs of the production, there may be a team of stagehands, usually casual employees.

**SUPERSTITION :**

Theatrical people are notoriously superstitious. There are many rules which some people swear by related to working in the theatre. 1) Backstage **whistles** were originally used to give instructions to the sailors who (because they knew the best knots) had the job of operating the theatre's flying system. Nowadays, whistling is forbidden backstage because it might result in a lost sailor cutting a rope and dropping something on somebody. 2) Mentioning **Macbeth** in a theatre is said to invoke the curse of the Scottish Play. The only way to break the curse is for the offender to spin on the spot and then spit. This is an approximation to a purification ritual. The spin turns back time, and the spit expels the corrupting poison. 3) Saying "Good Luck" is not allowed backstage. The term "**Break a Leg**" is used.

**THROW :**

Distance between a light source (e.g. lantern or projector) and the actor or object being lit.

**TRAVELLERS :**

Curains or scenic pieces moving on horizontal tracks.

**TRUCK :**

Wheeled platform on which a scene or part of a scene is built to facilitate scene changing.

**UPSTAGE :**

- 1) The part of the stage furthest from the audience.
- 2) When an actor moves upstage of another and causes the victim to turn away from the audience he is "upstaging". Also, an actor drawing attention to himself away from the main action is upstaging.

**WINGS :**

- 1) The out of view areas to the sides of the acting area.
- 2) Scenery standing where the acting area joins these technical areas.

**WORKING LIGHTS :**

- 1) High wattage lights used in a venue when the stage / auditorium lighting is not on. Used for rehearsals, fit-up, strike and resetting.
- 2) Low wattage blue lights used to illuminate offstage obstacles and props tables etc. Known as Wing Workers.

Adapted from the **University of Exeter Drama Department.**

## Translation of a Few Common Theatre Terms

Accoustics	=	Acoustique
Arches	=	Arcs
Auditorium	=	Salle
Backdrop	=	Toile de fond
Box Seats	=	Loges
Building and Fire Codes	=	Codes de construction et de feu
Complimentary Tickets	=	Billets de faveur
Dressing Rooms	=	Loges des artistes
Electrical and Mechanical	=	Electrique et mécanique
Easel	=	Chevalet
Fly	=	Cintres
Footlights	=	Rampe
Green Room	=	Foyer des artistes
Latecomers	=	Retardataires
Lighting Technician	=	Éclairiste
Lobby	=	Hall d`entrée
Marquee	=	Marquise
Music Stands	=	Lutrins
Orchestra pit	=	Fosse d`orchestre
Plasterwork (ornamental)	=	Plâtres
Props	=	Accessoires
Proscenium	=	Avant-scène
Rehearsal	=	Répétition
Sound Check	=	Prise de son
Stage	=	Scène
Stage Manager	=	Régisseur
Structural Condition	=	Condition de la structure
Wings	=	Coulisses