



Tower Theatre

NOTES FOR SET DESIGNERS

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TOWER THEATRE SET DESIGNER'S NOTES

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Introduction

These notes have been compiled to support new and experienced Set Designers. Please let anyone on the Technical Team know about new suppliers, stock, builders, or problems with these notes, etc. so they can be improved to help make the technical side of putting on a production more efficient for the next person.

Production Timescale for Set Design

- ***Design and Production Meetings***

As soon as possible (probably before the play is cast) you should discuss design ideas with the Director to allow time for the design process; from producing a basic white box model for the first meeting (Read-through) of cast/production team, attending early rehearsals to clarify ideas as blocking is put in place, to a final detailed model.

A Production meeting, to go through the show's Production Risk Assessment and budget/likely expenditure, is held about 6 weeks before the get-in. (The Director or Stage Manager should organise this meeting). It should include the Director, Assistant Director (if one is assigned to the Production), Stage Manager, Set, Costume, Lighting and Sound Designers and someone from Company Committee (normally the Artistic Director or the Finance Director).

The design process should be well underway by this point so that you can present your final detailed model, floor plan, budget estimates and any fire/safety issues, etc.

The Safety Officer also attends this meeting to receive up-to-date information regarding aspects of the show with regard to safety issues. Early involvement of the Safety Officer can avoid the possibility of having to make (possibly major) last minute changes.

At this meeting, the production budget will be agreed based on the requirements of the various Departments. This covers the set construction, furniture, costumes, props, lighting, sound and misc. The budget must be signed off by the committee member who attends the Production meeting.

- ***Produce a design***

Try to be realistic, taking into account cost, the time needed to build the set, and the limitations of the theatre. If the seating plan is to be altered, this must be cleared with the Artistic Director well in advance of the show. The Office must also be informed so the correct number of tickets can be sold. An initial design and white box model is useful to identify difficulties, safety issues or unusual expenses involved with your production. Get a floor plan to the Director and Assistant Director as early as possible to aid in the blocking process.

- ***Liase with the Lighting Designer***

Discuss the proposed set as early as possible, before the design is finalised, with the Lighting Designer. Issues that will concern the Lighting Designer include windows, practicals, masking flats, drapes, use of gauzes, other curtains that may be rigged, lighting bars that will be used for the set (e.g. curtains or set pieces), anything that may affect or interfere with positioning light. If you intend to have two back walls (i.e. a back wall of the set with windows and a masking back wall behind this), try to leave a minimum 3'/90cm gap between them (more is better). This allows enough space for the Lighting Designer to get lights rigged at the right angles to produce the quality of light needed. As soon as the floor plan is finished, give the Lighting Designer a copy.

- ***Go on a reconnaissance to the Arches/Leytonstone***

Look for furniture as early as possible to determine if you will need to buy, hire or borrow from elsewhere. Try to arrange this at a time when the Director can go with you. If necessary, go to furniture hire places together (see *section on Hire Companies*). Please hire only if absolutely necessary. There is a key to Arch 221 in the Tower office. Contact a member of the Technical Team about access to the Arches.

- ***Talk to the Stage Manager***

By convention, props are anything *handled by actors*. These are primarily the responsibility of Stage Management in consultation with the Director, though you may want to provide input on the choice of props as they impact on the overall design.

Set dressing is anything on the set for decoration but *not handled by actors*. These are primarily the responsibility of the Set Designer in conjunction with the Director.

- **Placing Orders**

Make sure you keep your receipts if you want to be reimbursed. Submit a Claims Form (available from the office) with all your receipts once the show has opened. That said, if this would cause financial difficulties for you, you can submit receipts earlier provided they come in tranches, not individually, as that would cause excessive work for the office team. Some companies may invoice the office directly, e.g. for hires and companies we have accounts with. If so, reference your order with the name of the production so the office can attribute the expenditure to your show. Remember to include this figure in your budget breakdown and inform the office that company X will be submitting an invoice for £?? on such and such a date.

Planning your build time

- Before planning your pre-build schedule, check whether any other Set Designers will be using the Arches to build their set at the same time as you. It can help to be there at the same time but it can also slow things down due to the limited space available to build/store set pieces. Always allow more time than you think you need; very little can be done outside if it is raining.
- There is very little time to build and dress the set so every minute of the get-in period must be carefully planned in liaison with the Director, Assistant Director, Stage Manager, Lighting and Sound Designers. Aim for minimal construction/touch-up painting on stage, with as much pre-building as possible completed at the Arches. It may be a good idea to ask the Director to include a Saturday pre-build session into the rehearsal schedule – with actors' help appreciated.

Organising a Build Crew

- It is your responsibility to organise a crew to build your set; the show's Technical Co-ordinator will have a list of contacts you can approach. If you cannot supervise the building of the set yourself (e.g. not enough building experience), you should ask your Technical Co-ordinator for help to find a construction manager.
- A Production Contact list of technical people is held by the Technical Team.
- Please welcome and encourage new members so we can expand our list of reliable and competent technical crew. If anyone expresses an interest in design, please let them shadow you so they gain a realistic view of what is entailed. If you feel someone is ready to design on his/her own, please let the Technical Team know.
- Currently we do not have a formal progression path in place, or a teaching/mentoring programme for set designers. We are hoping to address this in the future, but currently the time and input that an experienced designer can give to the less experienced is invaluable.

Organising Transport

Van hire, to transport all pre-built items and flats etc. from the Arches to the theatre, and back afterwards, is through

The Yellow Van Company. Enquiries@theyellowvancompany.com Melanie B. 020 7870 1041

- Vans for each season are pre-booked on a provisional basis; Sundays – 9.00am pick-up at the Arches, 10.00am collection at the theatre. The set designer must confirm/cancel the booking at least a week before their get-in.
- If you require large pieces of borrowed furniture, set, etc. to be collected, The Yellow Van Company can do this, given the address/details, either in advance of the get-in (Min. £78.00 for first 2 hours + £30 per hour thereafter) or if possible, on the Sunday get-in (allowing extra time over the pre-booked 2 hours)

- If you are having hired furniture delivered on a weekday, you must inform the office and it must be between 10.00 – 6.00. Outside of these times, you must be available at the theatre to take delivery of the furniture when it arrives. Hire company deliveries can be expensive; other options include hiring a Zipvan which you, or a member of the cast/crew, drives. Remember to arrange for return of hired or borrowed items.

Getting Into the Theatre

- The Stage Manager is responsible for the theatre, dressing room, and everybody working on the production. The Set Designer is in charge of getting the set in/up and the people helping to do that. It is essential to work out in advance, with your Stage Manager, Director, Lighting and Sound Designers, a schedule for the get-in and tech rehearsals. (E.g. you need to arrange a time - before the Tech cue-to-cue, when the theatre is dark, so the lighting designer can start focussing the lights).
- The Lighting Designer often starts rigging the onstage lights before the set is brought into the theatre and the stage area is free.
- Once the hire van arrives at the theatre between 10.00-10.30, you are in charge of the stage. The cast, crew and assorted helpers should be available now to help unload.
- The cast and crew are ALL expected to help at the get-in unless the Set Designer, in liaison with the Stage Manager, Director and Assistant Director, agrees they are not needed. (Operators should also be there but will generally be helping with lights and sound as needed). Do not let anyone over-rule you on this. If necessary, gently remind the Director that it is Tower policy that the cast must help with their get-in, and the timing of any rehearsal during the get-in should be with the approval of both Set Designer and Stage Manager. If you have enough additional builders, the cast can have a line-run/rehearsal.
- Remember that even if the cast are all present, they may not be DIY experts, so make sure you know people's strengths and any issues such as bad backs or fear of heights. This is important both to use people efficiently and to be aware of any gaps in the skill set that will need to be filled by other builders. The Stage Manager will have sent out a H&S information sheet, which everyone should reply to saying they have read and understood the contents. (See Appendix 1)
- Before starting the build, druggets (protective sheets) should be put over the first 2 rows of seats to protect them. There are 6 of these, kept in a box in the Lower Mezz. There are hard hats available (stored in the Lower Mezzanine). Please remind people that these are available and encourage use of them. All ladders should be footed.
- No alcohol or food is allowed in the auditorium or Dressing Room.
- Check when the photographer will be in and make sure that the set is complete by then (usually at the dress rehearsal).

Getting the set finished

- The theatre can be accessed from 10.00am on weekdays; the office can give you a key, which must be returned. If people will be coming in at times when you are not there, make sure you leave detailed notes about work they can do.
- Painting the floor; remember to allow time for paint to dry if you intend to paint the floor. Last thing at night, or 10.00am, is obviously the best time for this.
- Once finished, it is useful to walk through the set with the Stage Manager – and cast if necessary, to ensure everything is in place.
- Before the dress rehearsal, all unused materials, paint, wood etc. must be put in the Lower Mezz. Under no circumstances must materials be dumped in the Tower Office, Stage Manager's room, top of the fire escape, or in the area outside, behind the theatre.

The Strike

- In advance of the strike talk with the Set Designer of the next show to find out what they want left on stage etc. Leaving set pieces, like stage flats, windows can save moving them to and from the Arches.
- Liaise with the Stage Manager; they will compile a strike to-do list and will need to know if any actors are needed to help get the set down.
- The strike usually happens after the last performance. When another show does not have its get-in the next morning, you may be able to strike on the Sunday morning, with a later collection/run to the Arches. This must be cleared with the office and Artistic Director as there could be a Hire in the theatre.
- Liaise with the Stage Manager to ensure enough people come in to help on Sunday morning.
- The cast, crew and Director should all be present to help with the strike. The cast usually go to the bar for 20-30 minutes, then the Director or Stage Manager should make sure they come back to help.
- The strike should be under the joint supervision of the Stage Manager and Set Designer –
- The overall clearing of the stage, backstage areas, and dressing room is the responsibility of the Stage Manager. Tasks will be delegated by him/her accordingly.
- Striking the set should be under the control of the Set Designer (or construction manager if there is one) for the purposes of safety.
- The Lighting Designer is responsible for de-rigging the lights. The operators are responsible for leaving the lighting/sound area tidy.
- Do not allow friends of the cast who have no experience at strikes to help. They mean well, but can be more of a hazard than help.
- Take apart everything you built unless another show has definitely asked for it. In general any furniture constructed should be taken apart. (No exceptions without approval of Technical Team).
- When dismantling scenery, strip everything possible and remove all nails, screws and staples - timber with nails etc. left in is potentially dangerous, both to Tower members and those who collect the rubbish. We do not re-use screws because after a second use, the heads are damaged and are then difficult to remove. Nails usually come out too bent to reuse so we don't save those either.
- Take things back to where they belong -
- Only flats covered with black fabric should be left in the Lower Mezz; these are masking flats.
- Blacks belong on the Upper Mezz.
- All other set items are returned to the Arches, broken up and disposed of, or passed on to the next show
- Black rubbish bags should be taken to the bin at the front of the building. The key for this is hanging on the right-hand side of the main entrance door. Recycling bags should go in front of the door on Northwold Road that does not open (i.e. not the fire exit).
- Sweep the stage. The floor will need to be repainted back to black if it has been painted another colour for your show.
- You may have to return some items (e.g. hires) during week day office hours. Make sure you have plans in place to do this.
- The Technical Team will be happy to advise you about anything you are uncertain of.

Health and Safety Regulations

The Council checks on the safety of the building and its equipment, not individual productions - the responsibility for Risk Assessment and complying with regulations is solely down to us.

• Production Risk Assessment

At the Production meeting, the Stage Manager in liaison with the Director, Assistant Director, Set, Costume, Lighting and Sound Designers and Health and Safety Officer will fill out a PRA. This will include issues relating to fire and safety.

• Fire

There is a set of Fire and Safety notes on the Tower website. Please address any questions regarding safety issues directly to the Health and Safety Officer, in plenty of time for the resolution of problems or obtaining licenses for particular aspects of the set that may need it. *Please make sure you understand all the safety issues before making decisions regarding your set construction.*

All theatre equipment must be used in a way that does not endanger the health and safety of any person. It is the duty of anybody using the theatre to take appropriate action if there is a safety hazard. If this is not possible to make safe, it must be reported to the Stage Manager or, if electrical equipment is involved, to the lighting designer.

Never block fire exits or access to fire extinguishers. A minimum emergency exit clearance of 110cms must be maintained between the back of the front row of seats (i.e. tipped up) and any fixed set piece, for evacuating the auditorium.

There should be clear corridors for cast/crew to make a rapid escape from backstage. Any potential obstructions should be painted white or white reflective tape should be used. Litter should be kept to a minimum, and in metal bins.

• **Fireproofing**

Materials used in the theatre must be fire-retardant ("fireproof") to Class I. To be considered Class I, the materials must not continue to burn on their own if the source flame is removed after 10 seconds.

Not all items have to be fireproofed; if you are not sure, hold a flame to it for 10 seconds. If it continues to burn once you take the source flame away, it must be fire-proofed. Hardboard that will only be used on the floor does not have to be Class I, so use the cheaper version. Timber that is 19mm (~3/4") or thicker does not need to be treated. If you use something unusual, you will need to check it.

Flambar solutions are used to treat wood, plastics, fabric, etc. to make things that are not inherently fire-retardant sufficiently so to pass the fire retardant test. We use solutions (stored in the black cabinet in the Lower Mezz) rather than the crystalline form because they are less irritating to the skin. They can be bought in 1L and 5Ls from Flints. If you make up a solution and decant it into another container, please label the container with an indelible marker (N5, S3, etc). There are technical notes regarding Flambar on Flints' website: <http://www.flints.co.uk/pdf/files/flamebar.pdf> if you need more details than are provided here. If you have any other questions, please address them to the Fire and Safety Officer.

Flambar solution	Used on
N5	Hardboard, softwoods and plywood, acrylic fabrics
S3	Fabrics. These solutions can be caustic to sensitive skin, so certain items, such as clothing and bed linen that that people will lie in are exempt from this treatment. Fabrics can be dipped then allowed to dry, or they can be sprayed (till soaked). Check the fabric with the match test first, and if it must be treated, check it again afterwards.
PE6	Polyester, nylon, polyurethane foam
S1WA2	Gauze, muslin, paper, cardboard

Polystyrene can be purchased already fireproofed but is expensive. Otherwise the exposed surfaces must be covered e.g. with mod-roc (plaster bandage available from Tiranti and other crafts suppliers).

Fireproof Paint may be required for set pieces made of delicate woods. Anything less than 1 1/2.5cms x 1 1/2.5cms, for instance trellis, should be treated with Flambar or painted with fireproof paint; vinyl matt Class I. Various brands are available from Brewer's decorators and online. It is considerably more expensive than ordinary paint. Check for any that we may already have. The tins have red diamonds on them.

• **Strobe Lights and Pyrotechnics**

If strobe lights are being used, a notice must be posted in the foyer informing the audience. The Stage Manager should liaise with the FoH Manager to ensure this happens.

If pyrotechnics, explosives, weapons, or live flame are used on stage, the Stage Manager is responsible for including this on the PRA. Any naked flame onstage (even lighting cigarettes)

requires approval from the council, so the safety officer must be informed early enough to obtain permission.

Pyrotechnics are kept in a yellow COSSH approved cabinet in the Lower Mezz.

Tower Inventory - The Arches

• **Tools**

Evolution chop saw Bosch jigsaw 2 DeWalt cordless drills (with chargers)	1 claw hammer 1 tenon saw 1 hand saw (22") 1 hack/bow saw Braces/mending plates 2 quick clamps (4" & 6") 2 blue C clamps 1 rubber mallet 1 adjustable spanner 3 chisels (12/19/25mm) 1 needle nose pliers 1 wire cutter 2 standard pliers 1 Surform planer 1 wrecking bar	Diall black tape/Masking tape Cable ties (2 lengths) 3 retractable blades 1 staple gun (with staples) Scissors (heavy duty) 2 tape measures (5m) 2 spirit levels Flathead/Philips screwdrivers 1 T square Woodscrews - various sizes Paint brushes (various sizes) Rollers/trays Mini-rollers/trays Spare roller handles Spare paint trays
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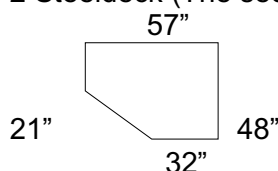
• **Flats**

There are a sets of 8 of each of these sizes; 4', 3', 2,' 1' wide by 8' high.

Please do not put any adhesive texturing on them.

• **Rostra**

2 Steeldeck (The second is the mirror image of the first) -



• **All other items**

Timber, Hardboard and MDF. Architrave and moulding

Vac-form plastic sheeting

Doors, window pieces, columns etc.

Longer lengths of scaffolding and wheels (various sizes) for making trucks

Furniture

Tower Inventory - The Theatre

Set building tools, flats, rostra, scaff and paint are stored in the lower mezzanine behind the stage.

• **Tools**

Tools are stored in the black cabinet in the lower mezz. There is a key in the office and another on the Stage Manager's set of keys.

Please be aware that any tools (e.g. electric screwdrivers) you and/or the cast take to the Arches or the Theatre are not covered by the Tower Theatre Insurance Policy if stolen, lost or damaged.

Evolution chop saw 1 De Walt jigsaw (with spare blades) 2 DeWalt cordless drills (with chargers)	1 claw hammer 1 tenon saw 1 hand saw (22") 1 hack/bow saw Braces/mending plates	Diall black tape/Masking tape Cable ties (2 lengths) 3 retractable blades 3 staples guns (with staples) 2 glue guns/glue sticks
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	2 quick clamps (4" & 6") 1 ratchet set 1 rubber mallet 1 adjustable spanner 3 chisels (12/19/25mm) 1 needle nose pliers 1 wire cutter 2 standard pliers 1 Surform planer Philips screwdrivers (various) Flathead screwdrivers (various)	Scissors (heavy duty) 2 tape measures 2 spirit levels Woodscrews - various sizes Paint brushes (various sizes) Rollers/trays Mini-rollers/trays Spare roller handles Spare paint trays
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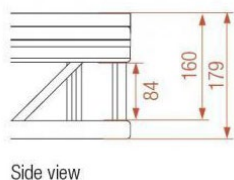
- **Flats**

There are 4 x 4'x8' (covered in black fabric) 2 x 2', 2 x 1' – for masking

- **Rostra**

We have the following PROLYTE rostra (other sizes can be hired):	There is a selection of wood rostra stored in the lower mezzanine beside/above the PROLYTE rostra
6 6X4FT 2 4X4FT 4 QUAD UNITS 4X4FT	1 4'x3' 5 4'x1' 8 4'x2' 1 2'x2'

Misc. - wood	Triangles - wood	Stairs - wood
1 6'x1' 2 4'x7" 1 3'x6" 1 3'x1' 1 3'x?? 1 2' 9"x1' 1 2' 6"x15" 1 2' 6"x1' 1 2' 4"x1' 2 2'x 6"	2 8'x2' 4 4'x1' 4 4'x2' 1 3'x3' 2 3'x2' 3 2'x2' 2 2'x1' 2 2'x2' ¼ segments 2 4'x3' ¼ segments	1 x 4'x46x37 2 3'x83x46 2 2'x2'x45 1 2'x47x33 1 2'x46x36



The PROLYTE rostra is 179.00 mm (7") high including 19mm (3/4") black coated ply on top (which should be covered with thin ply if painting). When placed on legs the height of the rostra is 19mm (3/4") higher than the length of the legs.

If the fire line goes underneath the rostra, the minimum head clearance under the platform must be 2m (6' 6").

- **All other items**

We have selection of different short lengths of scaffolding (for legs and lighting), stage weights and scaffold clamps.

Several extending single ladders, used to reach the lighting bars, and smaller folding step ladders.

Short lengths of scaffolding

Hardware: Door handles and plates, hinges, curtain rings/hooks etc. are stored in picking boxes on shelves next to the sink.

Materials

- **Wood**

The Tower uses imperial measurements (feet and inches) because our flats are built to that. Suppliers may cut to the closest metric equivalent. Be aware that this may occasionally cause problems. If you need an exact length, specify it as a minimum length so it doesn't come in short,

i.e. minimum 12' length, so you don't end up with a slightly shorter metric approximation. 19 mm ~ 3/4", 12 mm ~ 1/2", 6 mm ~ 1/4".

Check whether we have material in stock before placing an order for wood.

The timber we get is class 5 carcassing timber, which is cheap but lower quality. If you have a good reason for needing a higher quality, this is quite a bit more expensive. If you are concerned about the quality of the wood (e.g. non-warped wood) go to the supplier and pick out the exact pieces you want.

- *Mouldings*

Some complex mouldings (architrave, picture rails) come in hardwood only, and therefore will come in 8' lengths. Other less complex architraves, etc. may come in softwoods and may not be limited to the 8' lengths.

- *Hardboard*

Hardboard is not generally used for building/construction but can be used to form wide curves, such as arches over doorways. Unless it is to be used on the floor, it must be Class I vesta-seal. It comes in the metric equivalent of 4' x 8'.

- *Plywood*

Use ply for building/construction. Thin plywood (4mm) is used for curved surfaces such as pillars, where a tight curve is needed and hardboard would break. Plywood will probably need to be fireproofed.

- *Medium density fibreboard.*

Very heavy and rigid. Comes in thicknesses of 1/4" and greater. If is 19mm, it is Class I; thinner sizes will need to be proofed. Thick sheets are extremely heavy and should be avoided. Use for furniture, as it cuts well into shapes with good quality edges, unlike blockboard. Working with MDF generates potentially harmful dust. It should therefore never be cut on stage, but only out-of-doors. Always wear a face mask with a dust filter when sawing MDF.

- *Shuttering Board*

Very rough, cheap 1" thick, heavy. If available, can be used for truck bases.

- *Particle and Block Board*

We generally don't use these as they are expensive and very heavy.

- *Paint*

Check supplies at the Arches and the Theatre (Lower Mezz) before ordering; paint is very expensive. There is usually black and white paint available. We use pre-mixed paints such as McPherson's or Leyland, which come in a wide range of colours. For painting the stage floor back-to-black use Smooth Masonry paint as this gives a better finish.

- *Glaze and Varnish*

Water based:

Emulsion Glaze (also PVA based).

Emulsion glaze + pigment = paint)). This is what we use as standard glaze, but it is not waterproof. If a large amount of water is thrown about the stage, the glaze will soften (as will any PVA based paint) Brushes wash up with water. (Obtainable from Flints)

Acrylic Varnish: Expensive. Waterproof. Use if the floor will get wet often. Can add pigment, but cannot mix PVA paints with Acrylic varnish. You can put acrylic varnish on top of *dry* emulsion paint.

Meths based:

Shellac/ FEV (French Enamel Varnish) Water-resistant, but stains if wet (as does French Polish) Comes in a variety of colours. Paint brushes must be cleaned in meths.

- *Plastics for Windows*

If possible, try to find an option for windows that does not involve clear plastic as Class I options are very expensive. (E.g. leave it open, cover it with a layer of scenic gauze, use clear/lightly frosted lighting gel, disguise with curtains, etc.) If you must use clear plastic these are the options:

Coralux: Class I. Comes in flat or corrugated varieties. HomeBase do a range of sizes. Good for Stained-glass, it takes brightly coloured FEV well. There is a similar product at Wickes but it is not Class I. If you use it, seal the trailing edges in to the set.

Perspex: This is not Class I so will not pass a fire inspection. (Again, if you use it, seal the trailing edges in)

Darvik: Class I, very expensive. Avoid if possible for financial reasons.

- *Vac-form*

Vacuum form plastics are Class I plastic made into various shapes and textures: sheets of bricks, walls, whole fireplaces, radiators etc. (Available from Peter Evans - see suppliers). This is not cheap, but you must not put texture straight onto the flats. This sort of plastic is preferable to polystyrene, unless it is not fireproof. We have some vac-form in store at the Arches.

- *Gauzes*

We have a number of gauzes available, including a very large offcut. (If you wish to use this, please discuss this with a member of the Technical Team so we can get it properly cut so that it will be available for future use). Gauzes are stored in bags on the Upper Mezza; on the bottom shelf under the drapes rack. Please check stock before purchasing new gauze.

If you wish to use a gauze, please discuss this early on with the lighting designer. If your lighting designer has no experience in lighting gauzes, please ask your Technical Co-ordinator for advice.

Scenic Gauze: Open weave, good for windows or in front of a CYC to soften the harsh light that will reflect off the CYC.

Sharks-tooth Gauze: Denser weave, used for reveals. They can either be opaque, when lit from the front and the upstage is dark, in which case anything or anyone behind the gauze curtain becomes invisible; or, when the scene behind the gauze is lit and front lights on the gauze are dimmed, the gauze itself becomes invisible, revealing the upstage scene.

Gauzes come in a range of colours. They can be painted, stained, varnished - using thinned paint. Check the gauzes for fireproofing as gauzes do not hold their fireproofing indefinitely. They are classified as NDF (Non-Durably Fireproof) and may need to be periodically reproofed.

- *CYC*

We have a canvas cyclorama (about 15' x 30'). It is slightly off-white, has ties at the top, a pocket at the bottom for a chain or a scaff pole (a scaff pole is preferable as it allows the CYC to be pulled more rigid). There are eyelets down the side to pull it taught.

- *Roller Drops*

These can be rigged on lighting bars and the curtain can be 'dropped' or rolled back up with a rope.

- *Blacks*

Blacks are kept on the Upper Mezz (Lighting/Sound). There is a matching set of 6 that fit around the edge of the stage, creating a 75cms walkway round for actors/ASMs to use. These can be vecro-ed together or used singly. To prevent movement, fix a cable tie around the top rail, in-between the rollers (please remove afterwards!). There is also a black stapled to a piece of wood that fits onto the beam SL to prevent the audience seeing actors entering from the dressing room. Please do not get paint on the blacks.

Consumables

- *Nails and screws*

These are stored in boxes at the Arches and the Theatre. Buy what you need if we do not have stock.

- *Paint Brushes and Rollers*

Check the stock at the Arches/Theatre and, if necessary, order 2 or 3 new ones. Please do not leave brushes uncleaned; they must be washed up after use, as should rollers that are new or nearly new. (Rollers that are passed their useful life can be binned, as can trays of crusted paint). Leave a bucket of water in the Lower Mezz for people to put brushes/rollers in so they do not dry out. One person can be allocated to clean brushes and rollers at the end of the day. Paint trays/rollers that are still being used can be put in a sealed plastic bag overnight for use the next day.

- *Miscellaneous*

Masking tape (1" and 2" rolls), gaffer tape, brackets, screw-eyes.

Set Dressing

Set dressing is anything on the set for decoration but *not* handled by actors. These are primarily the responsibility of the *Set Designer* in conjunction with the Director.

Practical electrics are any lamps, fire effects, stage lanterns, etc. that must work. They are stored in Props on the Lower Ground Floor (LGF), along with those that will be just dressing. These are chosen by the Set Designer and made to work by the Lighting Designer.

Rope, sash cord, chain

Floor coverings: Carpets and rugs are kept under the floor of the Penny Tuerk Room (LGF).

Curtains, Cushions and Bedspreads are kept in a room at the back of RR3 (LGF).

Please check with Jean Carr, Props Manager, about what you need before you buy, hire or borrow any of these items. Exercise caution when borrowing and handling borrowed goods; they may not go back in the same state that they arrived in. Do not borrow anything valuable.

Suppliers

If you need to hire or buy anything, there is a list of suppliers that the Tower has used here

<https://www.towertheatre.org.uk/notes/suppliers.pdf>

(but that doesn't stop you going elsewhere if you wish)



HEALTH & SAFETY GET-IN ~ RUN ~ STRIKE

Whenever you are in the building

If the fire alarm sounds please move toward your nearest exit. These are –

- SL. The door which leads to the dressing room and a staircase down to the rear of the building.
 - SR. The main door to the auditorium and down the staircase, which will lead to an exit to Northwold Road.
- All exits are clearly marked and the assembly point is the paved space (with the brick tower) on the one-way system.

During the Get-in and Strike

- Call time for the get-in is **xxxxx** (Build starts at **xxxx**)
- Hard hats are available in the Lower Mezzanine.
- Flats and other set items can be very heavy. If you are asked to lift something please be aware of what you can comfortably carry; it is your responsibility to manage your own expectations. Do not attempt to hold too much weight on your own - seek help.
- Do not attempt to lift by bending forward. Keep your back straight, bend your hips/knees to squat down to pick up the object. Keep it close to your body, and straighten your legs to lift. Avoid turning/twisting your body while lifting/holding a heavy object and never lift it above shoulder level.
- Please wear sensible footwear and clothes that you don't mind getting paint on.
- When working at height, ensure the ladder is fit for purpose (in a good state of repair and correctly assembled), use the correct method to ascend/descend and have someone footing it, if it is a single ladder.
- Items may be dropped to the floor from height, which could cause injury. Please listen out for a "heads" call and check you are not underneath someone working above.
- Please be aware of potential risks. There will be items on the floor which can be trip hazards, be sensible and vigilant about where you are walking and where you leave stuff.
- If you are asked to use a power tool please make sure you are aware of any potential risk to yourself or others. Only use tools that are fit for purpose and unplug them after use. If you are uncomfortable handling such equipment, please say so. If you are asked to handle chemicals (paint, flambar, etc.) treat them with respect. Do not use them for anything other than what they are designed for.
- There may be times during the day when the lights go out and the theatre will be in darkness. You will always be warned beforehand but please act sensibly and do not continue to work until a safe environment is restored.
- If you have any medical conditions that could be adversely affected by e.g. lifting or working at heights, please let the Stage Manager and Set Designer know.
- Please DO NOT eat in the auditorium or have hot drinks on the carpeted areas. Any spillages should be promptly wiped up - wherever you are, and rubbish must be put in bins provided.

During the Run

- Depending on the time, the Office or Bar Manager will buzz you in to the building. Enter (and leave) through the bar. If the front door is locked when you arrive please **INSERT OWN ARRANGEMENTS E.G. use WhatsApp to contact us and we'll let you in. All cast should have the mobile number for ****; (SM)** Let them know immediately if you are delayed. If anyone is only in the second half and plans to arrive later each evening, enter the dressing rooms through back stairs.
- For fire regulation purposes, the cast, stage management, Lighting/Sound Ops, wardrobe and make-up artists (If applicable) must sign in when they arrive; from the Tech onwards, and twice on matinee days. The sheet will be **xxxxx**. This is mainly to allow the Stage Manager to know that the full company have arrived in time for the call but also form part of fire evacuation protocol as the Sign In sheet doubles as an evacuation roll call list in the event of a fire.
- Call time for the Dress Rehearsal is **6.00pm**
- Call time for performances is **one hour** before curtain-up; **6.30** for evening shows, and **2.00** for the matinee.
- Cast warm-up will be **45** minutes before curtain-up, and final props and lighting/sound checks etc. **30** minutes before curtain-up. Doors will open **15** minutes before curtain-up.
- If you have any medical condition that could need urgent treatment, please tell the SM in confidence so that they know what to do.
- There is a kettle and microwave in the Dressing room tea room.

- Don't leave food lying around in the Dressing Room; put all rubbish in bins provided.

The Strike

The crew will begin to clear the auditorium whilst the cast have a 20 minute break - to have a drink and meet friends in the bar. After this, everyone helps take down the set, pack up costumes, props etc. Finally, the set should be taken downstairs to the Smith Studio ready to be loaded onto the van for the Arches on Sunday morning.

(No partying until the theatre is clear). Thanks!

Please ask if anything's unclear and/or contact ***** H&S Officer