Notes for Sound Designers

The role of the Sound Designer is to:

- Work with the Director to determine the sound requirements of the show.
- Source effects and music as required and create backgrounds and/or specific effects as required. (Music sourcing is often, but not always, done by the Director.)
- Compile the 'show tape'. This is usually recorded as computer audio files controlled by QLab, but other sources such as CD or minidisc can be used if appropriate. If the show is reliant on a laptop or computer for playback, it is strongly recommended that a back-up version is available, ideally on a second computer, but at least on a memory stick.
- Deliver the content and confirm the means to play this at the theatre.
- Attend technical/dress rehearsals to set levels, amend cues and make any other changes that are required in consultation with the director.

Depending on the show's requirements, the Sound Designer should determine if the 'house' sound system is sufficient (which it is for the vast majority of shows). If additional speakers are needed (e.g. practical radios, noises off, etc.), these, along with any ancillary equipment (amps, cables, etc.), will need to be sourced and set up. It should also be confirmed that the desk has the capability to route signals as required. Additional equipment should be arranged by the Sound Designer, initially from the Tower's stock or, exceptionally, by hiring in.

The Tower owns an Apple MacMini/QLab-based system running the latest software (version 4) with a 'Basic Audio' licence (8 channels in/out). Known as the 'Jim Spall' (in memory of a long-standing member), it is available to run sound in the theatre. There is a set of separate notes on using this system on the web site at https://www.towertheatre.co/notes/qlab.pdf.

You should inform the Tower Office if any music is being used during the action of the show (i.e. performed or heard by the characters in the play). You do not need to let the office know if only recorded music is used between scenes and during audience entrances and exits, as the Tower already holds a licence for that. However, if you are working on a non-Tower show, then you need to make arrangements to get the appropriate PRS/PPL licences to use music during the performance.

Rehearsals

The Sound Designer should:
- Attend rehearsals where it is useful to understand and develop the use of sound in the show.
- Where useful to the director, cast and/or the operator, the 'show tape' should be available to play at a rehearsal (including the means to play the effects). This gives the opportunity to make changes and save time at the technical rehearsal.
- Ensure that a hard copy of the script, marked up with sound cues, is available to the sound operator at a run through or, at the latest, the get-in.

Get-in/technical rehearsals

The Sound Designer:
- Is responsible for delivering the final content (and any back-ups) to the theatre on the get-in day.

- Should check that the equipment is fully working and oversee the installation and testing of any extra equipment which is not part of the standard in-house system.
- Should work with the director and sound operator during the technical and dress rehearsals to set levels and amend cues as necessary.

Strike

The Sound Designer should:

- Ensure that arrangements for the de-rigging and return of any additional equipment are made.

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