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Apron – The portion of the stage or playing space that is downstage of the proscenium arch. In traditional proscenium-style theaters, acting on the apron was a big “no-no” because it violated the stage picture being created by the proscenium arch. Thus many older theaters have very shallow aprons. Nowadays though, Directors can’t get enough of having their actors as close to the audience as possible; despite how uncomfortable it makes some audience members. This is all done under the umbrella of ‘intimacy’ and we all know how much artists love that stuff. Sometimes the apron is referred to as the “Forestage”. (See Figure 1 and 2)

Arbor – Part of a fly system. A device mounted in one of the wings, which is connected to the lift lines at the opposite end from the batten. Stage weights are stacked on the arbor to balance the load suspended from the batten. In the case of a counterweight fly system, a rope hand line is connected to the top of the arbor, passes sequentially through the head block and tension block, and is terminated to the bottom of the arbor, forming a loop. This allows an operator to pull the rope and cause the batten to raise or lower. Arbors are guided either by steel tracks or wire ropes (aircraft cable).

Backdrop – Also known as a “Drop”. A large curtain, which hangs upstage and hides the back wall of the theater from the audience. Backdrops are painted to resemble some sort of scene or abstract image. Backdrops are often used in place of a blackdrop when the blacks are being used.

Relevant Web Site: *Tobins Lake Studios* <<http://www.tobinslake.com>>

(Note: I have not received any money for including this link, however, if anyone wants to send me some cash...)

Batten – Part of a fly system. A horizontal pipe, supported by lift lines, which is easily raised and lowered; even while holding a substantial amount of weight.

Beam – The name for a particular place where lighting units are hung in a theater. A beam is a horizontal pipe hanging downstage of the proscenium. It gets its name from the many theater buildings that hide the beam pipe in a piece of architecture that, while fake, looks like something which is supporting the ceiling. Beams are numbered on a light plot consecutively beginning with the pipe closest to the proscenium arch. (Sample sentence: “Hang this unit on the second beam FOH.”) See also “Boom”, “Box Boom”, and “Electric”.

Black Traveler – See “Traveler”

Blackdrop – See “Blacks”.

Blackout – Removing all light from the stage as quickly and suddenly as possible. See also “Fade to Black”.

Blacks – The blacks are a collection of stage drapery; usually made of black velour. These curtains hang on each side of the stage, above the stage, and upstage of the playing space for the purpose of masking the wings, flies, and upstage wall respectively. Blacks masking the flies are known as “Borders”. Blacks masking the wings are known as “Legs”. “Borders” are also referred to as “Teasers” and “Legs” are then called “Tormentors”. If you don’t want to come across as stupid when talking to anal-retentive techies like myself, never mix these pairs. “Borders” go with “Legs” and “Teasers” go with “Tormentors”. Any other combination is considered very bad and might lead to the undoing of creation as we know it. The upstage curtain is known as a “Blackdrop”. Note that “Blackdrop” is spelled with an “L”. A “Backdrop” (no “L”) is a completely different curtain. When a complete set of blacks is hung, the audience should ideally not be able to see any backstage place. (See Figure 6)

Boards or The Boards – See “Stage”.

- Boom** – The name for a particular place where lighting units are hung in a theater. A boom is a vertical pipe standing anywhere onstage. Booms are numbered on a light plot consecutively in each direction (upstage or downstage) beginning with the pipe closest to the proscenium arch. (Sample sentence: “The dancer bent the shutter on the stage left boom #2 shin-buster.”) See also “Beam”, “Box Boom”, and “Electric”.
- Border** – See “Blacks”.
- Box Boom** – The name for a particular place where lighting units are hung in a theater. A box boom is a vertical pipe standing downstage of the proscenium in any of the side-wall box seats (which is where it gets its name from). Modern theaters that don't have side-wall box seats, but do have vertical pipes mounted on the walls, also use this term. If, however, the pipe and lighting units are hidden behind a notch in the wall, the term “Cove” is more appropriate. Box booms are numbered on a light plot consecutively beginning with the pipe closest to the proscenium arch. (Sample sentence: “Since the units on the box booms are in full view of the audience, we had them plated in brass.”) See also “Beam”, “Boom”, and “Electric”.
- Box Set** – A set with three walls (one upstage and one on each side of the stage) and sometimes a ceiling or any set which fairly closely resembles this description. Box sets are almost always interiors; usually a home. A true box set looks like an oversized shoe-box diorama.
- Center Line** – A special type of line drawn on a Ground Plan, located at the plane which bisects the stage left and stage right sides of the theater. It is a relatively thin line made up of a repeating pattern of: long dash, short space, short dash, short space, long dash, etc. and has the letters “C” and “L” overlapping each other at both ends of the line. For dimensioning purposes, the Center Line is akin to the “Y” axis on a graph. See also “Plaster Line”.
- Center Line Section** – A two-dimensional drawing of the scenery as it relates to the theater's architecture. A Center Line Section is drawn in measured scale and represents the view of the set from either wing. Because the view from the wings would likely be obscured by masking (and a lot of performers standing around), a convention is established where only the objects on the opposite side of the Center Line are drawn. This convention is referred to as the “Cutting Plane”. For most sets, the cutting plane is at the Center Line unless indicated otherwise (and if so, the drawing title simply becomes “Section”). This means that all objects on the same side of the stage as the draftsman – including set pieces – are either not drawn or shown as a dashed line (known as a hidden line). For this reason, sometimes a more than one Center Line Section is drawn from opposing vantage points. A Center Line Section is best for finding out information about the height of set pieces, their relationship to sightlines (especially in the case of a theater with one or more balconies), and the elevated locations of various set pieces and lighting instruments. Ironically, Center Line Sections tell us almost nothing about the relation of any given object to the Center Line. See also “Ground Plan”.
- Color Scroller** – See “Scroller”.
- Counterweight Fly System** – See “Fly System”.
- Cove** – See “Box Boom”.
- Cross Fade** – Using a light board to change the look of the lights onstage from one appearance to another. (E.g. A bright sunny day becomes a clear night.) A well designed and executed cross fade looks almost like the light is dissolving from one look to the next.
- Crossover** – The upstage place behind any stage curtains or scenery, which allows performers to get from one side of the stage to the other without being seen by the audience.
- Cue** – Any moment in the course of a performance, where there is a change in the physical state. In the case of sound, a cue might start music playing, and then a subsequent cue might lower the volume as an actor starts to speak, and yet another might fade the music to silence when the scene comes to an end. Cues are most often associated with lighting and sound (any given show quite often has hundreds of light and sound cues), but cues are also established when scenery needs to change, line sets need to fly, effects need to be triggered, etc.
- Cutting Plane** – An imaginary plane associated with mechanical drawings indicating what an object would look like *if* it were cut in half at that place.
- Cyc** – See “Skydrop”.
- Cyclorama** – See “Skydrop”.
- Deck or The Deck** – See “Stage”.

- DMX or DMX512** – An internationally recognized standard or protocol, primarily intended for universal communication between lighting controllers and dimmers. DMX also allows for light boards and personal computers to send data commands to a virtually limitless bounty of lighting accessories such as color scrollers, moving lights, and gobo rotators. Because of the worldwide acceptance of DMX, many other devices can be controlled via DMX. Again, the possibilities are mind-blowing, and existing implementations include everything from DMX fog machines to my personal favorite, the DMX coffee pot.
- Dressing** – Properties that aren't necessarily handled or referred to by the performers; the minutiae of set decorations that help communicate the locale of a set and complete the stage picture (E.g. posters, knick-knacks, fridge magnets, plants, rugs, etc. – and I do mean etc.!) See also "Props".
- Drop** – See "Backdrop".
- Electric** – The name for a particular place where lighting units are hung in a theater. An electric is a horizontal pipe hanging upstage of the proscenium (usually part of the fly system). Electrics are numbered on a light plot consecutively beginning with the pipe closest to the proscenium arch. (Sample sentence: "Line set #10 is the fifth electric.") See also "Beam", "Boom", and "Box Boom".
- Ellipsoidal Reflector Spotlight** – A type of theatrical lighting unit that casts a relatively narrow, sharp-edged beam of light. E.R.S.'s (as they are also referred to) are usually intended to be used further away from the subject they are illuminating. The two most common types of lighting units in any given production are the Fresnel and the Ellipsoidal Reflector Spotlight.
- E.R.S.** – See "Ellipsoidal Reflector Spotlight".
- Fade to Black** – Removing all light from the stage over a certain period of time. This is usually done subtly to avoid jarring the audience; even in relatively quick Fade to Blacks. However, when the lights are instantaneously put out, this is known as a "Blackout".
- False Perspective** – When scenery is made in unrealistic proportion to other pieces of scenery on the same set. The smaller pieces of scenery are placed upstage of the larger ones. An example might be three telephone poles, each farther away from the audience than the previous (though I'm hard-pressed to think of a single play that calls for such). In a non-false perspective set, the Designer would draw one telephone pole and tell the shop to build three identical ones. However, in a false perspective set, each telephone pole would be a unique size; even if they were identical looking. To further understand this term, go take a course in perspective drawing, or at least look at the paintings of Leonardo DaVinci (among others).
- Fire Curtain** – A permanent feature of proscenium-style theaters; usually mandated by national or local fire and life safety codes. Fire curtains are located immediately upstage of the proscenium arch (downstage of the grand curtain) and are designed to automatically close and seal off the stage area from the rest of the house in the event of a fire. Some cities require that fire curtains be closed at all times except during the performance itself. If you go see theater in London, for instance, they even close the fire curtain during intermission (that's "interval" for all you anglophiles).
- Flat** – A relatively thin piece of scenery which is often joined with others, and can be used to create walls and other vertical scenery. Flats are either soft-covered (meaning fabric stretched around a wooden frame; like a painting) or hard-covered (wood sheet-stock affixed to a wooden frame; and hopefully covered in fabric as well, but an awful lot of short-changed, hard-covered flats exist out there...) Hard-covered flats are sometimes called "Hollywood's". Hard-covered flats are best at recreating realistically solid walls and soft-covered flats are best if you want to keep the crew from complaining when they have to carry the set all over the place.
- Fly System** – A series of pulleys, ropes, wires, and/or other apparatus which collectively allows the hanging and movement of curtains, lighting instruments, scenery, and even people. Most fly systems by themselves have little more movement options than raising and lowering, but can become part of a more complicated system when a person or object is meant to have the appearance of actually floating or flying. There are several types of fly systems. The most common are "Counterweight", "Pin-and-Rail", "Winch", "Hydraulic", and "Motorized". See also "Arbor", "Batten", "Hand Line", "Head Block", "Lift Lines", "Line Set", "Loading Gallery", "Lock Rail", "Loft Block", "Rope Lock", "Stage Weights", and "Tension Block".
- Flys** – Yes, it's spelled "flys" and not the more popular version associated with the plural form of a certain variety of insect that I take great delight in squishing. This is the area above the performance space, upstage of the proscenium arch. Most proscenium-style theaters have a fly system and while it is operated from one of the wings, the most useful part of the fly system appropriately lives in the flys. See also "Wings". (See Figure 1, 2, and 3)
- FOH** – See "House".
- Forestage** – See Apron.
- Front-of-House** – See "House".

- Fresnel** – (pronounced Fruh-NELL) A type of theatrical lighting unit that casts a relatively wide, smooth beam of light. Fresnels are usually intended to be used fairly close to the subject they are illuminating. The two most common types of lighting units in any given production are the Fresnel and the Ellipsoidal Reflector Spotlight.
- Gobo** or **Pattern** or **Template** – A thin piece of metal or glass typically inserted into an ellipsoidal reflector spotlight or certain types of moving lights because of these unit's abilities to project a clean, focused image onto a surface, much the same way a movie projector works. Metal gobos typically only produce a silhouette image, but glass gobos have a full range of color and imaging possibilities.
- Grand Curtain** – The curtain that closes just upstage of the proscenium arch. Grand curtains or the "Grand Drape" is often colorful and frequently ornate (lots of gold fringe, tassels, and so on). They usually look heavy and usually are heavy. Generally speaking, opening the grand curtain signifies the start of the show or act and closing it signifies the end of the act or show. Sometimes also called the "House Curtain".
- Ground Plan** – A two-dimensional drawing of the scenery as it relates to the theater's architecture. A Ground Plan is drawn in measured scale and represents the view of the set from above. Because the view from above (or birds-eye view) would be the roof of the building (and that's pretty darn useless in the shop), a convention is established where the roof and many other items are not drawn. This convention is referred to as the "Cutting Plane". On most ground plans, the cutting plane should be assumed to be 4'-0" above and horizontal to the stage floor, unless indicated otherwise. This means that all objects above this plane – including set pieces – are either not drawn or are shown as a dashed line (known as a hidden line). A ground plan is best for finding the location of any object in relation to the "Center Line" and "Plaster Line". Ground plans tell us very little about the height of many set pieces, though some information is given. See also "Center Line Section".
- Ground Row** – A piece of scenery sitting on the floor upstage, which hides the bottom of a skydrop, cyc, or drop and creates the sense of a horizon with the sky beyond. A ground row can either be a small neutral bit of vertical scenery, perhaps nothing more than a plank of lumber painted the color of the deck, or as elaborate as a miniature cityscape or landscape.
- Relevant Online Images: *As You Like It* production stills
<<http://www.colby.edu/personal/jjdervin/DigitalPortfolio/AYLI/01.htm>>
- Hand Line** – Part of a counterweight fly system. The rope that an operator pulls to cause the raising or lowering of a batten.
- Head Block** – Part of a fly system. A pulley with multiple sheaves or grooves, mounted in the wings, on the grid or some other ceiling structure, through which passes all of the lift lines and (in the case of a counterweight fly system) a rope hand line.
- House** – The place where the audience sits to watch the performance. Also the place where lighting instruments hang when they're hanging over the audience. Front-of-House can also refer to the lobby or other non-performance space where audience members congregate before and after the show and during intermission. This can lead to much confusion, so if you're asked how many lighting fixtures are hanging FOH, ask for clarification. Also referred to as "Front-of-House" or "FOH" (pronounced using the letters and not as the number four in Ebonics).
- Hydraulic Fly System** – See "Fly System".
- Jack** – A device that is usually mounted out of sight of the audience and is always used to keep flats from falling over. Jacks can either be homemade or, if you have a small fortune, purchased from professional manufacturers.
- Legs** – See "Blacks".
- Leko** – Trade name for one particular manufacturer's version of Ellipsoidal Reflector Spotlight. Using the word Leko is almost always a misnomer and kind of like saying Kleenex rather than tissue. The Leko hasn't been manufactured in years, but the nickname still persists in common usage. See also "Ellipsoidal Reflector Spotlight".
- Lift Lines** – Part of a fly system. Wire, manila, or synthetic ropes from which a batten hangs.

- Light Plot** – A two-dimensional drawing showing where all of the lights for any given show need to be hung. Light Plots are drawn in measured scale and somewhat resemble the Ground Plan (with some artistic license taken in regards to the Cutting Plane, so that lighting units are never shown as hidden). The amount of information found on a Light Plot will vary from one drawing to the next, but at the minimum must include what type of instrument is to hang and where exactly it goes. Each instrument will also be given a number (referred to as either an instrument or unit number) that allows for additional information to be cross-referenced with other paperwork or computer programs. This numbering scheme always reads from right to left on any given batten and from top to bottom on any given boom. Some Light Plots also include any combination of the following: where the unit will be aimed (focus area), what color the unit will be, notification of intended accessories (iris, gobo, top hat, barn door, scroller, etc.) the wattage of the lamp, the number of the circuit that the unit is plugged into, and the number of the controlling channel on the light board.
- Line Set** – The collected components of any one line in a fly system. In the case of a counterweight fly system, a line set is composed of a batten, multiple lift lines and loft blocks, a head block, an arbor, a tension block, a hand line, and a rope lock.
- Loading Gallery** – Part of a counterweight fly system. The catwalk or other platform located near the grid in the wings on one side of the stage, for the purpose of allowing easy access to loading and unloading stage weights from arbors when line sets are fully flown in.
- Lock Rail** – Part of a counterweight fly system. The piece of steel, in one of the wings, that holds all of the rope locks in a fly system.
- Loft Block** – Part of a fly system. A pulley, mounted over the playing space, on the grid or some other ceiling structure, through which passes a lift line.
- Masking** – As a noun, anything which hides something from the audience. As a verb, the act of hiding things from the audience. Most proscenium-style theaters own a set of black masking curtains known as the “Blacks”.
- Motorized Fly System** – See “Fly System”.
- Orchestra** – See “Stage” or if you’re referring to musicians, see any English-language dictionary.
- Orchestra Pit** – In a proscenium-style theater, this is the sunken part of the house floor, immediately downstage of the apron (sometimes even extending back underneath the apron), where performers fall to their death when they don’t realize how close they are to the edge of the stage. The orchestra pit is also commonly used to hold people who like to play musical instruments louder than the performers they’re supposedly accompanying. This term should not be confused with the term “Orchestra” as associated with the stage in thrust-style theaters. (See Figure 1 and 2)
- Pattern (lights)** – See “Gobo”.
- Pin-and-Rail Fly System** – See “Fly System”.
- Plaster Line** – A special type of line drawn on a Ground Plan, perpendicular to the Center Line and located along the upstage-most points of the proscenium arch. It is a relatively thin line made up of a repeating pattern of: long dash, short space, long dash, short space, etc. and has the letters “P” and “L” overlapping each other at any convenient point along the line. For dimensioning purposes, the Plaster Line is akin to the “X” axis on a graph. See also “Center Line”.
- Platform** – A piece of scenery (usually strong enough to support people) used to change the height of the stage floor to whatever is necessary for the specific set. Typically, a platform is used for a specific production and then dismantled or put into storage for possible future use. Some theater spaces have permanent height changing facilities built into their stages, but the typical platform is most often thought of as show-specific scenery. Often, platforms are used if the show takes place in a setting which requires two floors (such as a house). A platform does not necessarily have to be horizontal; as is the case if the platforming is used to make a set needing a raked deck.
- Properties** – See “Props”.
- Props** – Items that performers handle (E.g. sword, notebook, or frying pan) or items that actors refer to in some way (E.g. “Is that a painting of Uncle Frank?” or “Those drapes match the divan perfectly.”) Sometimes it is difficult to draw a line between what is and isn’t a prop. For instance, a dining table might be one of the props or it could also be a part of the set. Similarly, a purse could either be a prop or a costume accessory. To add further confusion, see “Dressing”.

Proscenium Arch – The viewing portal or frame through which the audience sees the performance.

Found in all proscenium-style theaters (in fact, this is where the name comes from...duh) and in many thrust-style theaters as well. Traditionally, these were quite ornate; like the frame around renaissance paintings, but with the technological advances in cinderblock affordability, modern proscenium arches often run the gamut from blasé to lackluster. The proscenium arch also serves to provide a hiding place, which affords the grand majority of all stage trickery and sense of imaginary "somewhere else" found in performances today. (See Figure 1, 2, and 3)

Pull – To take something out of storage (known as stock) and use it for the show; with or without any alterations. Pulling from stock most often refers to scenery, props, or costumes.

Rake – A non-level part of the stage which is higher (or uphill) farther away from the audience than the closer section. If you were to place a ball on a raked stage, I would say "get back to work and quit wasting your time." However, if you placed a ball on a raked stage when I wasn't looking, the ball would roll towards the audience until it fell off the stage. The speed of the ball would be directly proportional to the angle of the rake. The actual function of a rake is to improve sightlines or allow audience members to more easily see things that are upstage of other things. In fact, this is where the terms "Up" and "Down" stage come from. Rakes also serve nicely when the Designer is trying to create a false perspective. A rake can be a permanent feature of the theater's architecture or a set piece covering all or a portion of the stage.

Raked Stage – See "Rake".

Rope Lock – Part of a counterweight fly system. A handle mounted on the lock rail in the wings, which when closed, applies friction to the hand line and prevents drifting or movement of a balanced line set.

Scrim – A type of material that when viewed at close range resembles a window screen. However, when used at normal theatrical viewing distance and lit from the front with units hanging in nearly the same plane, scrim becomes apparently opaque (provided no light exists upstage of the curtain). Then if light is removed entirely from the fabric (both front and back) and objects upstage of the scrim are illuminated, it almost completely disappears; even if scenery were painted on it when it appeared opaque. This is, like, everybody's favorite stage trick. I mean, you really can make entire sets appear right before your eyes. Sure most theater people (and many non-theater people) know how you did it, but it's still pretty friggin' magical and you'll feel like you're pulling off a major magic trick. Scrim comes in many colors including sky blue, light grey, white, black, and unbleached (for painting).

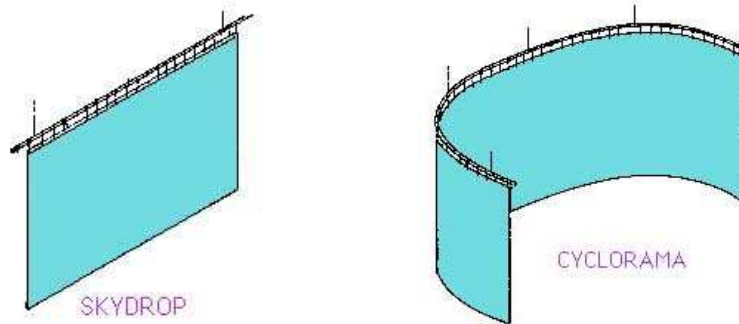
Relevant Online Images: *Marvin's Room* production stills

<http://www.colby.edu/personal/jjdervin/DigitalPortfolio/MarvinsRoom/01.htm>

Scroller – A lighting accessory, which is affixed to the front of a lighting unit, in the direct path of the light. Scrollers contain a series of colored filters (gels) taped together and wrapped around two motor-driven, rotating tubes. As the tubes rotate, the gel string unwraps from one tube and collects onto the other. The motors are extremely precise and can stop at any point in the scrolling process. This process allows for remotely controlled color changing of a lighting fixture.

Sightlines – Imaginary lines indicating the view from the extreme-most seats. If someone or something is said to be in sightlines, it means that they are visible to *all* audience members regardless of seating choice. If someone or something is described as out of sightlines, it means that *no* audience members are able to see them. This, of course, leaves a neutral zone where some audience members can see and some can't, but that doesn't have a name. This is probably due to the fact that Directors don't believe in its existence. (See Figure 5)

Skydrop – A light value curtain, which hangs upstage and hides the back wall of the theater from the audience. Skydrops are usually sky blue, light grey, or white in order to suggest the sky. They are not painted (if so, they would be called a "Backdrop"), but are often used to reflect colored light. A skydrop hangs in a single plane and masks only the upstage wall. When a skydrop is wide enough that it can envelop two or even three sides of the playing space, it is known as a "Cyclorama" or "Cyc". The words "Skydrop" and "Cyclorama" or "Cyc" are often used interchangeably, but this is a sure sign that the user is ill-informed and you should feel free to taunt them for being so obtuse.



Soft Goods – Curtains that are used onstage. This can include the “Blacks”, the “Cyc” or “Skydrop”, and a “Backdrop”, among other things.

Spike – Marking the stage floor with an indicator showing the location of a set piece or where a performer is supposed to stand. Spike marks are usually made with small pieces of tape or sometimes painted.

Stage – This is the word I use for the part of the stage that doesn't have any other name, but is the primary playing space surrounded by the apron, wings, and fly space. Actually, in a thrust-style theater, the primary playing space is known as the “Orchestra”. This comes from its Greek origins and should not be confused with “Orchestra Pit”. The stage is often referred to as “The Deck” or “The Boards”. Although, come to think of it, I can't think of anyone who uses those terms outside of renaissance faires, or in other forms of discussion where people are trying to show off their knowledge of pompous Elizabethan-esque dialogue. (See Figure 1, 2, and 3)

Stage Directions – The information contained throughout a script (other than the dialogue) that describes what the playwright expects the audience to experience at that particular moment in the script; usually written in italics and often offset from the margin of the script. It is important to note that in published scripts, the stage directions also often include notes made by the Stage Manager describing the way the original production was staged. This can make it hard to determine if the direction is truly required in staging the play and can lead to some interesting discussion on the playwright's rights vs. artistic freedom and collaboration – but that would go way beyond the scope of this document.

Stage Weights – Part of a fly system. Iron bricks that are stacked on an arbor for the purpose of balancing the load suspended from the batten.

Strike – There are two uses of this word and confusing them could lead to someone getting very angry with you. In one case, Strike refers to temporarily taking something away (e.g. “During the scene change, you strike the phone.”) and in the other case, Strike refers to dismantling or destroying something that probably took weeks of effort and bundles of money to build (e.g. “Sunday, we're going to strike the set.”)

Teaser – See “Blacks”.

Template (lights) – See “Gobo”.

Tension Block – Part of a fly system. A pulley mounted in the wings, near (or sometimes below) the floor, through which passes a rope hand line. The tension block has a limited range of vertical sliding action to account for changes in rope length as temperature and humidity shift during the year.

Tormentor – See “Blacks”.

Traps – Portions of the stage floor that are removable. While traps don't usually have an associated lever hidden somewhere in the wings, used to rid the world of undesirable performers (e.g. every *James Bond* film ever made), they can be replaced with set-specific components like trap doors, elevators, and stair cases, or even simply left as a big hole in the floor. (See Figure 2 and 3)

Traveler – A curtain that parts in the middle and opens towards the wings rather than being raised into the flies. A “Blackdrop” on a traveler track is known as a “Black Traveler”.

Trim – The height that a batten or other object hangs at.

Unit Set – A type of stage setting where the physical objects onstage barely, or possibly even never, change from scene to scene despite radical shifts in the scripted locale. With more and more contemporary playwrights writing plays that resemble screenplays in their expectations of being able to effortlessly shift from one diverse location to the next – over and over again – the unit set is often considered as a viable solution to this complex challenge. Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, though not contemporary, is a good example of this issue; scenes range from palaces to battlefields and even in different countries. One possible solution might be to have a set with simple platforming, surrounded by cracked stone obelisks suggesting corruption and decay (a possible theme of *Macbeth*) rather than any specific location. In this case, it is up to the actors, their costumes, sound effects, the script, and props to make it clear to an audience *where* the scene is supposed to be taking place.

Vom – An entryway from the lobby or similar space into the audience seating area where the audience must ascend a ramp or flight of stairs. At the end of the ramp or stairs, the audience should be standing in and amongst the seats, not in some enclosed hallway which eventually leads to the seats. Voms are also used for performer entrances and exits which need to go through the audience. Vom is short for "Vomitory". (See Figure 3 and 4)

Vomitory – See "Vom".

Winch Fly System – See "Fly System".

Wings – When someone mentions "backstage", they're probably referring to the wings. This is the part of the stage to the right and left of the performers, upstage of the proscenium arch. It's the place on either side of the stage where performers and scenery hide out when they're not supposed to be seen by the audience. Unfortunately, most performers think that the wings hold some magical powers which make them invisible... which would account for the seemingly infinite number of times that I've sat in the house and seen performers standing around out of character; completely oblivious to the fact that we can all see them picking their noses, pulling wedgies out, etc. See also "Flies". (See Figure 1, 2, and 3)

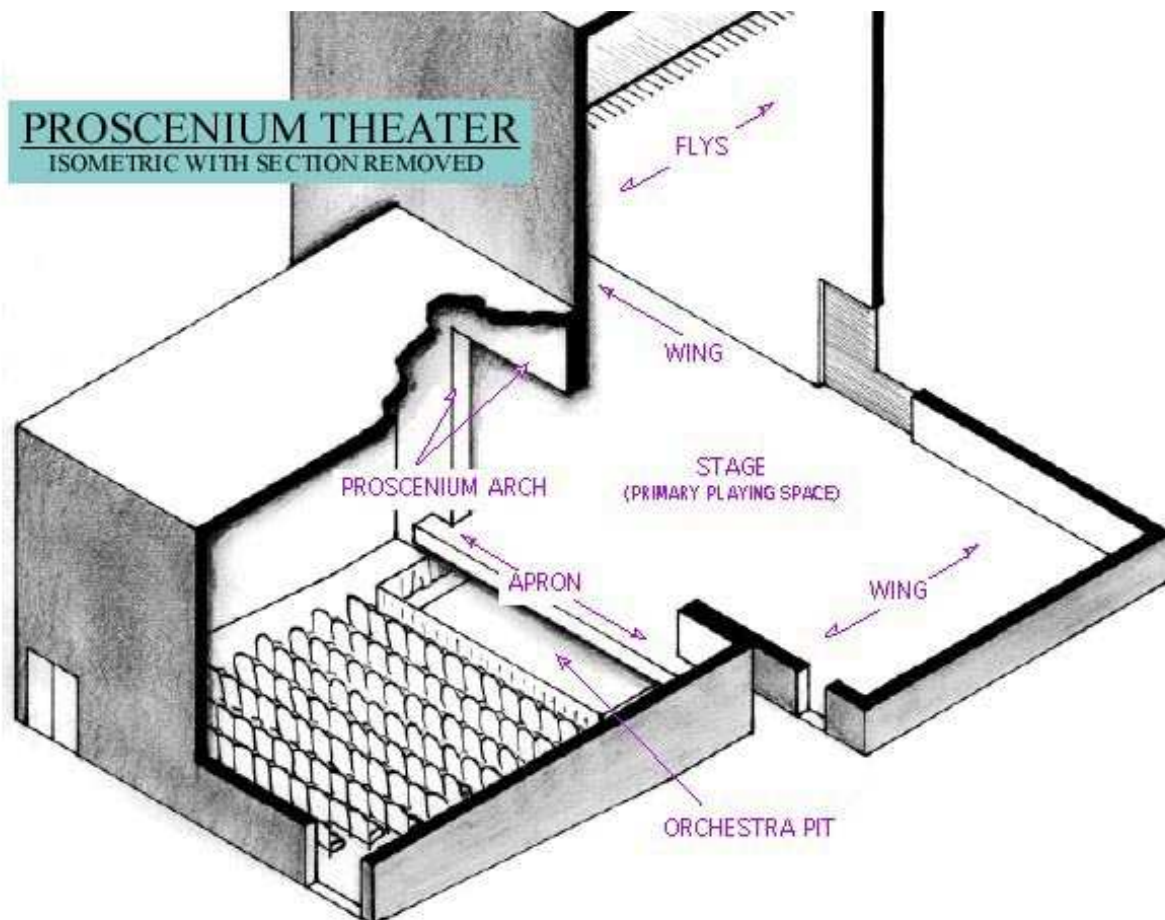


Figure 1

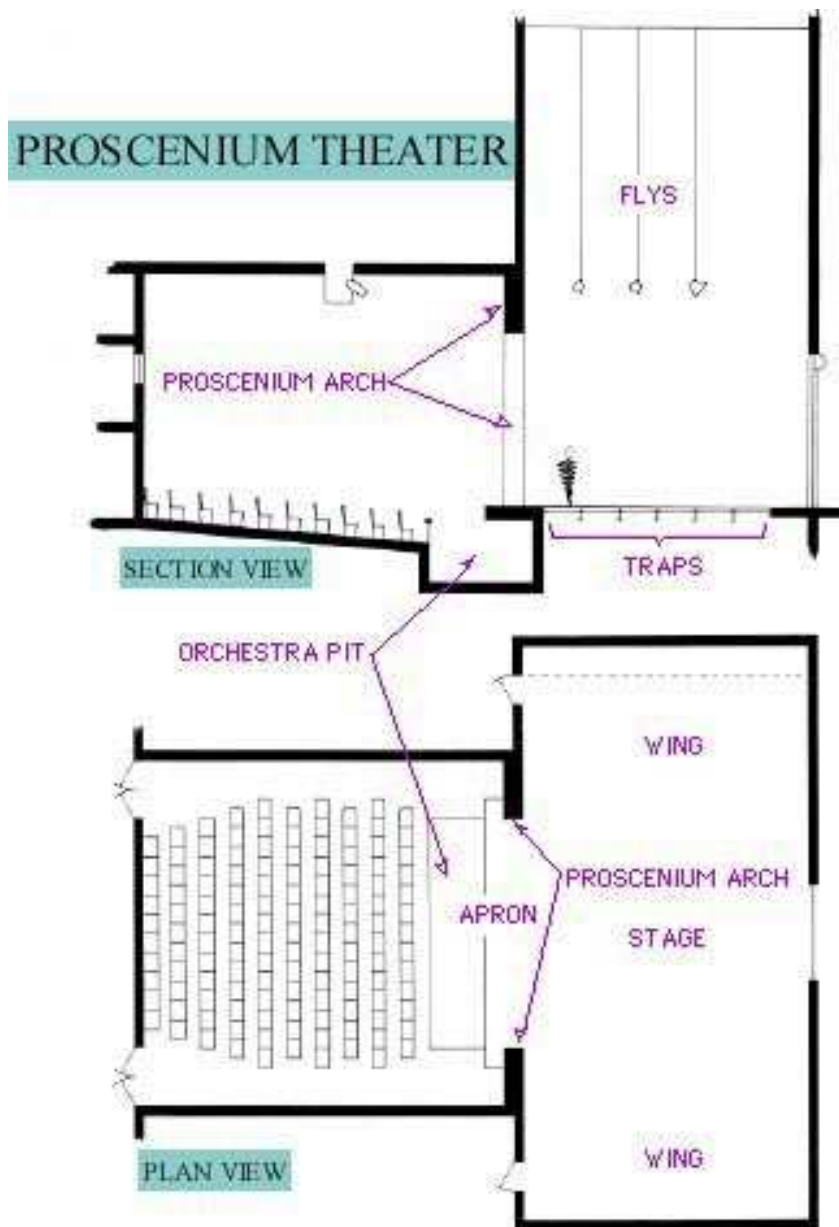


Figure 2

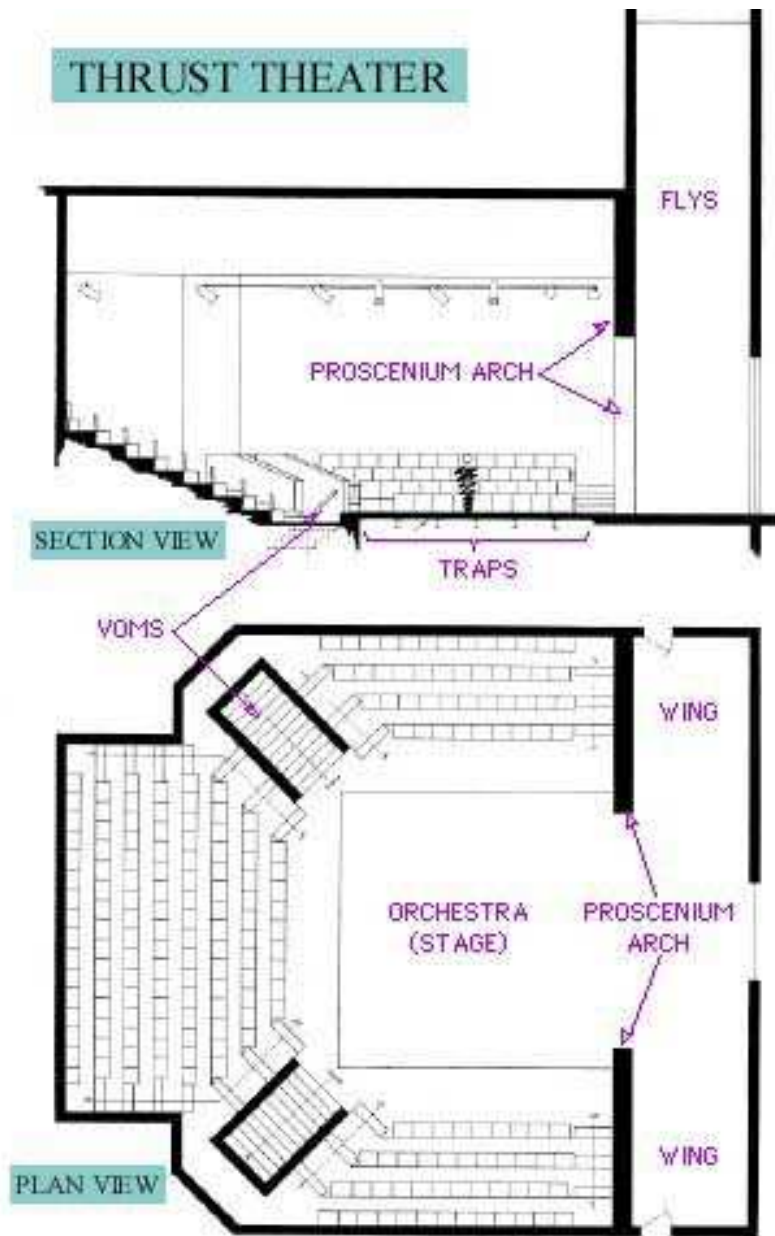


Figure 3

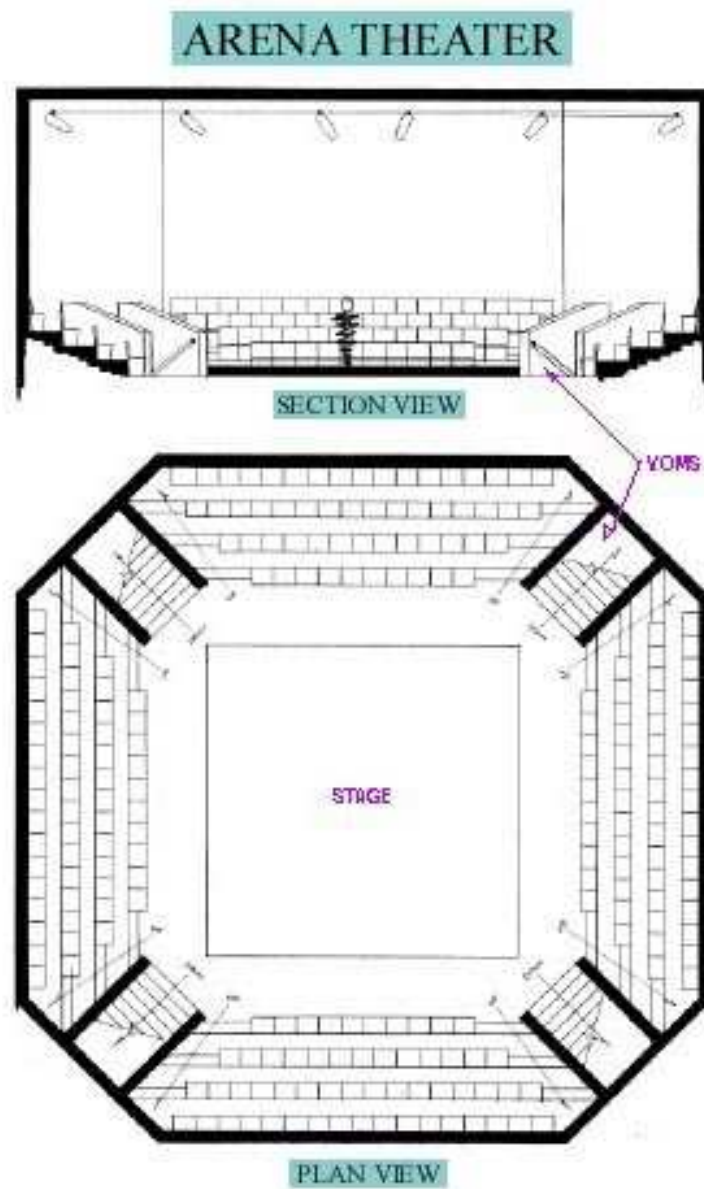


Figure 4

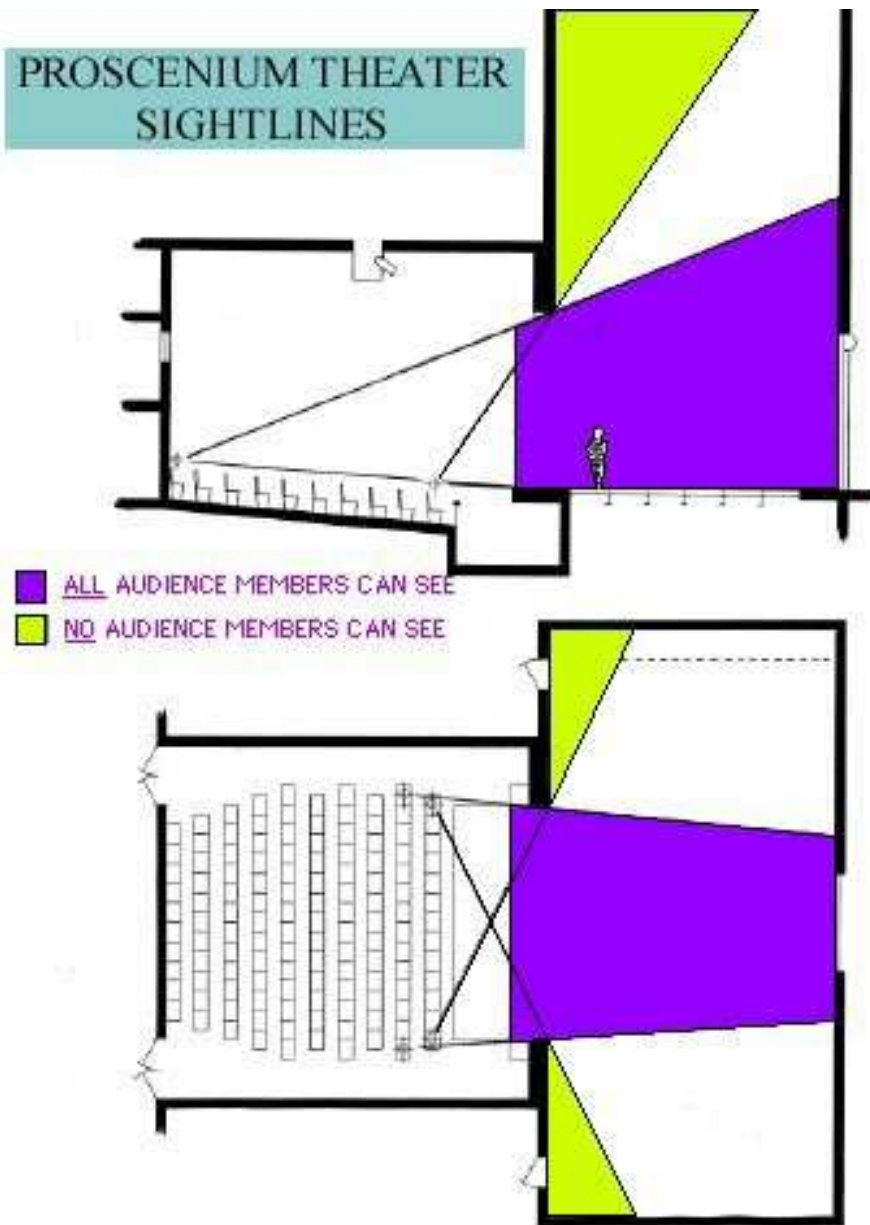


Figure 5

A FULLY MASKED PROSCENIUM THEATER

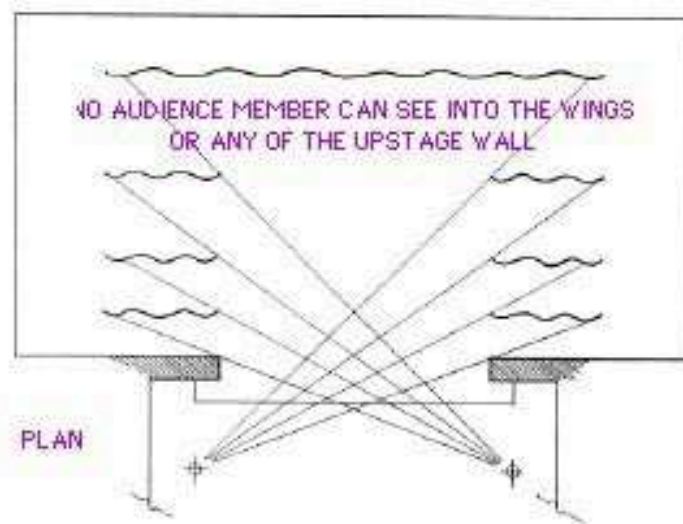
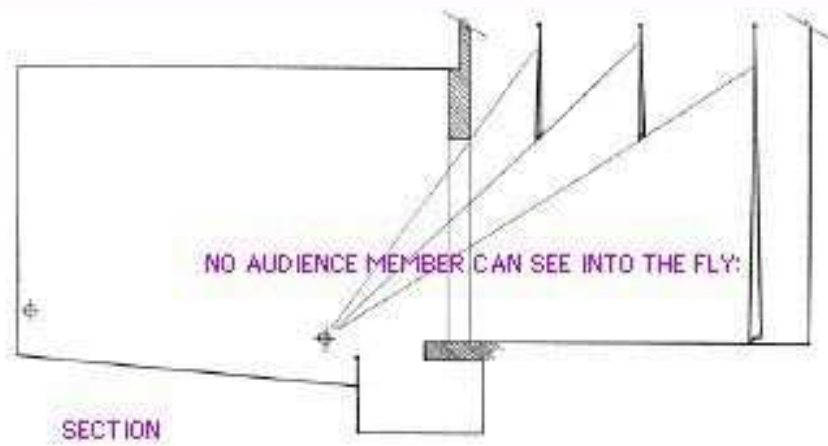


Figure 6