



YOUNG SPACE MAKERS

WEEK THREE: TECHNICAL THEATRE

What is Technical Theatre?

When you watch a performance, you'll notice the people on stage performing. You might also notice things like the lighting or sound effects, people helping move the scenery in between scenes or that an actor has a microphone on; all of these things fall under the category of Technical Theatre. People who work in technical theatre usually work backstage, doing things like Lighting, Sound, Stage Management or are part of the Stage Crew. Everyone will work together to make sure the production is as the Director wishes, making sure they establish the place, time period, and mood of the production. This week, we're going to have a look at some of these roles and discover what they do and have a go ourselves.

Technical Roles in Theatre

Can you guess these technical roles from the picture and clue? (Answers are on the next page)



I make sure the actors can be seen on stage. I create different moods and atmospheres. I work with the directors and designers to create the 'world' of the play. I decide what time of day it is. I can make things disappear. I can create special effects. Who am I?

LI_HT_N_D_SI_N_R



I sit at the back of the audience for every show. I make sure actor's microphones are turned on when they need to be. I press 'Go' on any sound cues in the show. I operate 'The Board'. I normally work on my own. Normally I wear a headset. Who am I?

S_U_D_P_RA_OR



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I schedule all of the actor's rehearsal times. I will make notes in the script in rehearsals and note down any script changes. I source props for the rehearsal room and for the show. I help run technical rehearsals, making sure everyone is where they need to be. I will read the script during a performance and make sure all the lighting and sound cues happen at the right time, and that actors come on stage when they need to. Who am I?

ST_G_M_N_G_R



I plan and source all of the noises you hear during the show. Sometimes I might work with musicians. I decide when the audience will hear certain things. I can create effects with sounds. I decide where the sound comes from on stage. I work with the rest of the creative team to create the 'world' of the play. Who am I?

_O_ND D_S_G_E_



I am responsible for moving scenery or props during the show and make sure everything is in its right place. I have to build pieces of the set. I sometimes have to wear a costume to blend in. I help set the stage up when we first get into a theatre. I sometimes have to clean the stage. Who am I?

S_A_E_C_EW



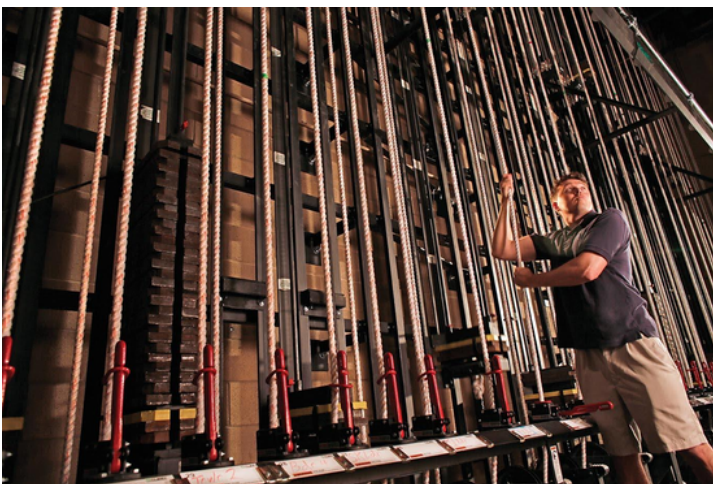
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I sit at the very top of the auditorium and sometimes high in the air during performances. I shine a bright beam of light, usually onto one actor at a time. I have to keep track of the actors as they move across the stage. The light I operate is really big and can get really hot too. Who am I?

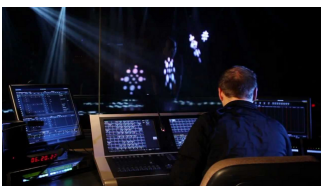
**FO_L_W SP_T
O_E_A_OR**



I work with ropes, booms, lifts and hoists at the side and above the stage. By pulling on the ropes, I can make a piece of set fly onto or off the stage. In newer theatres, I might operate machines that do this for me. Sometimes I will be positioned in the 'grid', which is a metal frame suspended above the stage. I can also be responsible for making actors fly! Who am I?

RI_G_R

Answers



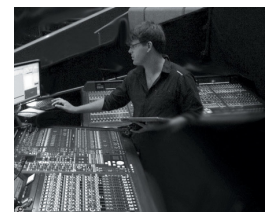
Lighting Designer



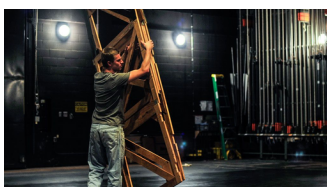
Sound Operator



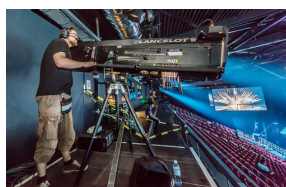
Stage Manager



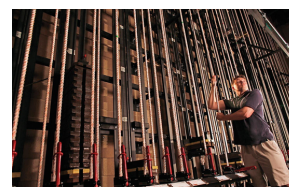
Sound Designer



Stage Crew



Follow Spot Operator



Rigger



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Lighting and Sound Design

A lighting designer is responsible for designing the lighting within a production, working closely with the director and the design team to create lighting states for atmosphere and mood on stage. The lighting designer will often have an initial idea about how the lighting will look for a show and will then make adjustments during the rehearsal process. Once their design work is complete, technicians will rig and programme the lights. Similarly, the sound designer is responsible for designing the use of sound within a production, e.g. sound effects or music, working with the director to create and develop sound that enhances a production. They will also advise the director on whether the production requires microphones and other technical equipment.

Have a look at some pictures of productions below. What kind of mood or atmosphere do you think the Lighting Designer is trying to create?





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Lighting and Sound Design

Have a listen to some of these sound clips. How do they make you feel? How do you think a Sound Designer might use these to help tell a story? (Listen to the first few minutes of each track)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHc5SJlrjig

www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqG8u0jsk1A

www.youtube.com/watch?v=0GYvLyfa0Lg

<https://youtu.be/CwFlwlCIVl4>

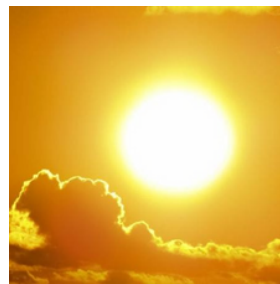
www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJ-Su4utvm8

Light sources

One of the most important functions of lighting design is illuminating the action on stage. Lighting is needed so that the audience can see clearly what is happening. Lighting can be used to help show the audience where the production is set. For example, a play set in a hot country may use warm, orange lighting to demonstrate that the climate is hot. Lighting can also show different times of the day. For example, bright lights can create the effect of a hot summer's day, while lower light levels may indicate night. In some productions, lighting can be used to communicate themes or symbols in a performance. For example, the colour red might be used to represent love or romance. With this in mind, a Lighting designer will consider which light source will be best to achieve the effect they want to show.

TRY IT YOURSELF

Have a look round your house: how many light sources can you find? Here are some examples of things you might see.



Now, how could you use any of these light sources to create a mood or atmosphere? Can you use the light to show a certain time of day or place? Can you create any shadows? Can the lights be dimmed at all? See how many different options you can make with just one light source.

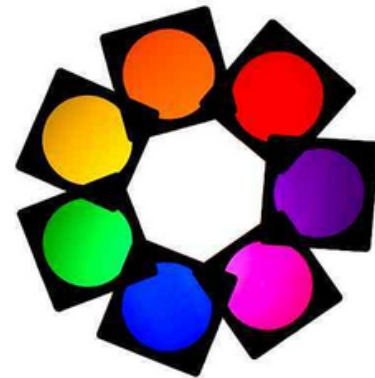
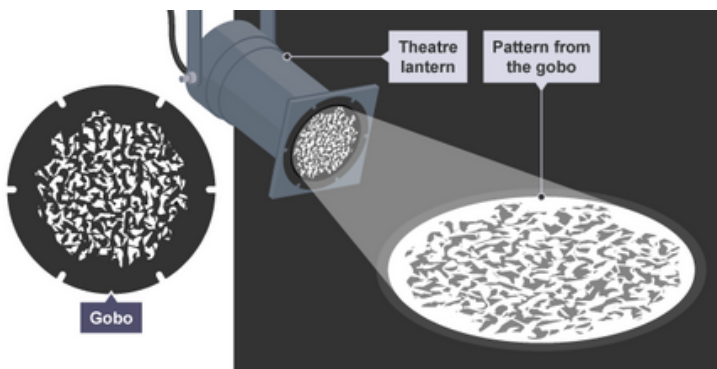


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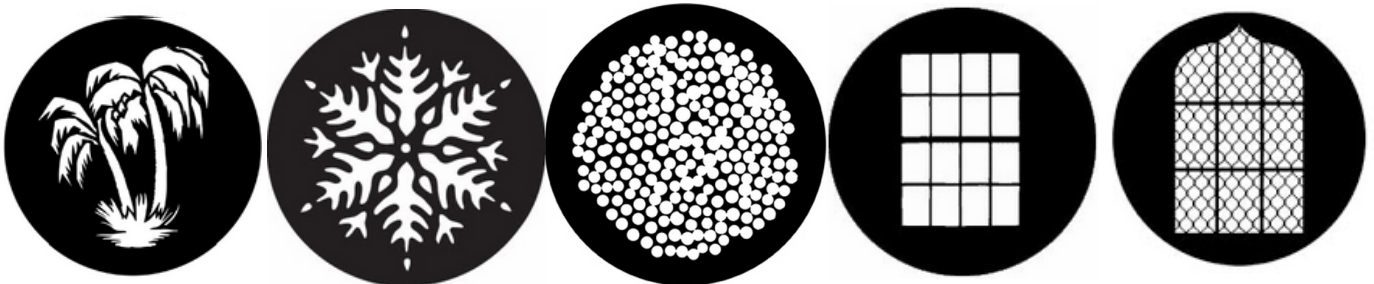
Gels and Gobos

One way that Lighting Designers can help convey a mood or atmosphere on stage is by changing the light's colour or texture. They do this by using *Gels* and *Gobos*. A *Gel* is a coloured piece of plastic that is placed over a light which will change the colour. A *Gobo* is a piece of metal that has a pattern cut out of it, which is placed in front of the light to create shadows in a particular shape, giving the light texture.



TRY IT YOURSELF

Using a light source that you have found (could be a torch) try and change the colour or texture of the light. You can make your own *Gels* out of sweet wrappers, coloured plastic folders or cling film or coloured plastic bags. Just be careful if you are using a light that gets very hot! You can make your own *Gobos* by cutting out a pattern from card and placing it over a light. Here are some example patterns you can copy:



Technical Challenge

Pick one mood from the list below and try and recreate it using lighting and sound effects. You can do this in a room, on a piece of paper or in a model box if you have one made from last week! Think about WHICH Light sources and Sounds you want to use, WHERE the lights will be positioned, WHEN the sounds will play and when the Lights will go on/off and HOW you will help create the mood (using gels or gobos).

MOODS

Mysterious, Scary, Cheerful, Romantic, Gloomy, Calm, Lonely, Chaotic, Dreamy, Silly