

# Theatre Jargon

Here's some terms you'll hear used frequently at Thalian Association Community Theatre and their meanings. If you're still not sure, please ask someone!

- **Apron:** The part of the stage closest to the audience. The area of the theatre that is located between the curtain and the orchestra pit.
- **Arbor:** The part of the counter-weight system that holds steel weights. The weight of the arbor must match the weight of the batten. See also Fly Rail and Batten.
- **Batten:** the pipes above the main stage that are the part of the counter-weight system on which scenery and lights are hung. (RLT's are "truss battens" meaning that they are made of two pipes connected by flat steel). See also Fly Rail and Arbor.
- **Blocking:** Direction given to actors as to where they should stand or move to during the course of the play. Actors are given these bits of direction during blocking rehearsals and they should, as Haskell would say, "write it down, write it down, write it down".
- **Booth:** Where the stage manager and usually sound and light crews are during the production.
- **Call Board:** The bulletin board where everyone signs in and notices are posted (also known as sign-in board)
- **Call Time:** The time that all actors and crew are expected to be at the theater.
- **Callbacks:** The second round of auditions. Depending on the production, the director uses callbacks to select principal roles (having already selected chorus/ensemble during the first round), or the director uses callbacks to review his/her short list of potential cast members.
- **Cast Party:** The generic term for a party where all cast and crew involved with a production are invited to relax and have a good time after the show.
- **Costume Parade:** When the actors dress up in their brand new costumes and stand in front of the Costume Designer and the Artistic Director to see how they look.
- **Cue to Cue run-through:** A rehearsal of the play, usually done during Dry Tech, where you start at the beginning of the play, miss out long bits of dialogue where essentially nothing technical happens (eg no cues) and then skip forward to where something does happen, be it a lighting cue, sound cue, an actors entrance, a sequence where an actor has to get off to do a quick change and then back on again. It will involve all important happenings such as a song, a battle or a difficult sequence with props.
- **Curtain Call:** When the actors come out at the end of the show to take their bows.
- **Curtain Warmers:** The lights that are focused on the curtain so that the audience has something to look at before the show starts.
- **Curtain:** Either the large drape that obscures the stage from an audience or a time when the show will start.

- **Down stage:** The part of the stage that is closest to the audience. It is called "down" because some theatre stages are sloped ("raked") towards the audience, so it literally is the lowest point of the stage
- **Dry Tech:** The first technical rehearsal, without actors (therefore, without costumes and props) so that lights, sound, and running crew can rehearse their parts.
- **Fade:** A light intensity or sound level change over a set number of seconds. For example, the lights on stage may fade to a blackout over 5 seconds. See also Bump.
- **Fly Rail:** the part of the counter-weight system where the rope locks are located. Also, the area where the Fly operator stands. It can be found stage right on our main stage. See also Batten and Arbor.
- **Glow Tape:** light sensitive tape that will glow when the lights go out, enabling actors not to kill themselves on stairways in the dark.
- **House:** The auditorium where the audience sits when they watch the show
- **Line:** The words that the actors speak during a performance. Also, during rehearsals, the term actors use to let the stage manager know they don't remember what to say next and that they need to be prompted - short for "I don't remember my next line - please prompt me".
- **Off-Book:** When an actor no longer uses his or her script to deliver lines.
- **On-Book:** A role typically done by the ASM, AD or Stage Manager. They follow along in the script as actors say their lines, ready to give a line or correct a mistake. The actors themselves are "off book".
- **Paper Tech:** A meeting of the Director, Stage Manager, designers and, often the crew chiefs. This is where all the light changes, sound changes, props movements, fly movements and other backstage activities that occur at specific points are precisely determined and are documented in the Stage Manager's script and by each designer and crew chief.
- **Photo Call:** On main stage, the day when all crew members and actors are to report to have their pictures made for the program. There is also an Archive Photo Call for all stages after one of the performances. The Archive Photo Call is to take pictures of the production for the scrapbook. It involves actors not technical crews.
- **Pit:** Where the orchestra sits.
- **Places:** When actors and technical crews have been told that the production will start within five minutes and they are to be in place and ready.
- **Preview:** Final dress rehearsal when an audience has been invited (at no charge) to see the show. Each cast and crew member receives two tickets to a Preview for your family. Its one of the perks of working a show!
- **Production Meetings:** The weekly gathering of all departments (lights, costumes, props...) to discuss how preparations are going toward opening night.
- **Props:** Those things that an actor works with during the production that are not costume pieces.
- **Proscenium:** the frame through which the audience views the stage.

- **Running Crew:** The technical crew who move furniture on and off the stage, bring in backdrops and other large set pieces.
- **Set Dressing:** The things that make the set look real but are never touched or moved by an actor (like the 400 record albums on the bookcase behind the actor).
- **Speed-Through:** The final rehearsal without sound, lights, running crew when the cast sits around a table and says their lines as rapidly as possible (but with emotions) in order to check for line accuracy and to bring the tempo of the show up.
- **Spike Marks:** Tape (or sometimes paint) markings on the stage that indicate where props, furniture, and sometimes actors, are to be placed.
- **Stage left:** The left side of the stage as seen by the actors looking out at the audience. From the audience's perspective, stage left is on the right (confusing huh!). See also stage right, up stage, and down stage.
- **Stage right:** The right side of the stage as seen by the actors looking out at the audience. See also stage left, up stage, and down stage.
- **Strike:** When you tear down the set, or you remove something ('strike the ashtray' means to take it off the stage)
- **Tech Dinner:** The potluck dinner held at the end of "Tech Saturday" (Dry and Wet Tech day) to bond the actors and technical crews into a cohesive production. (We like to eat!)
- **Technicians:** All those people who work on technical crews for a show. Our goal is happy Techies and a great show!
- **Up stage:** The part of the stage that is furthest from the audience. It is called "up" because some theatre stages are sloped ("raked") towards the audience, so it literally is the highest point of the stage.

**Wet Tech:** The first technical rehearsal that includes actors and all departments (except costumes). This rehearsal is more for technical crews than it is for actors, so there may be stopping and starting.