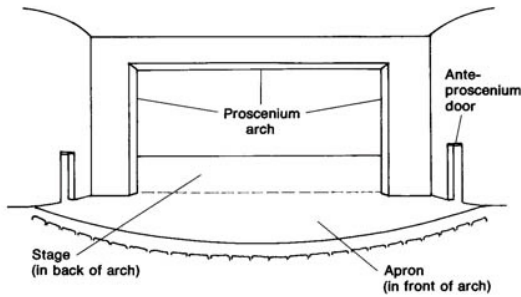
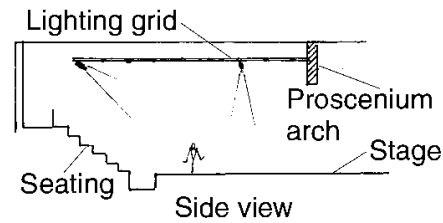
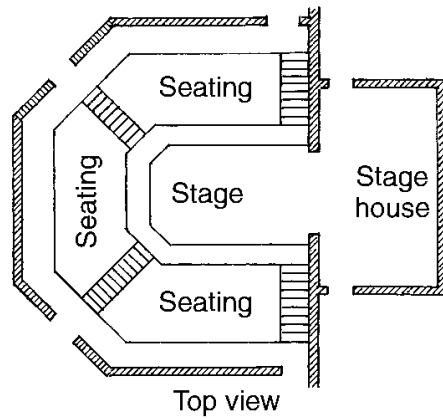


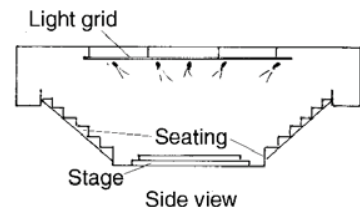
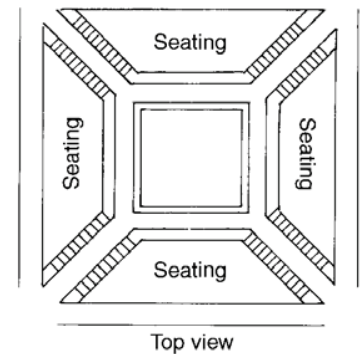
The three primary stage configurations



Proscenium

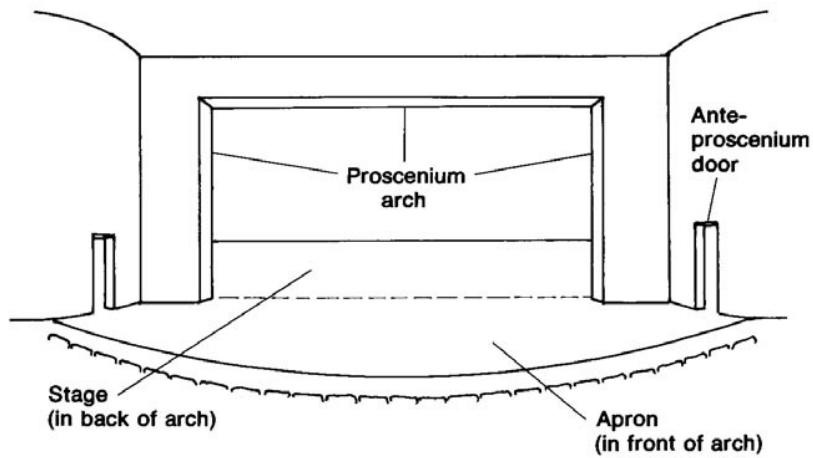


Thrust



Arena

Proscenium stage



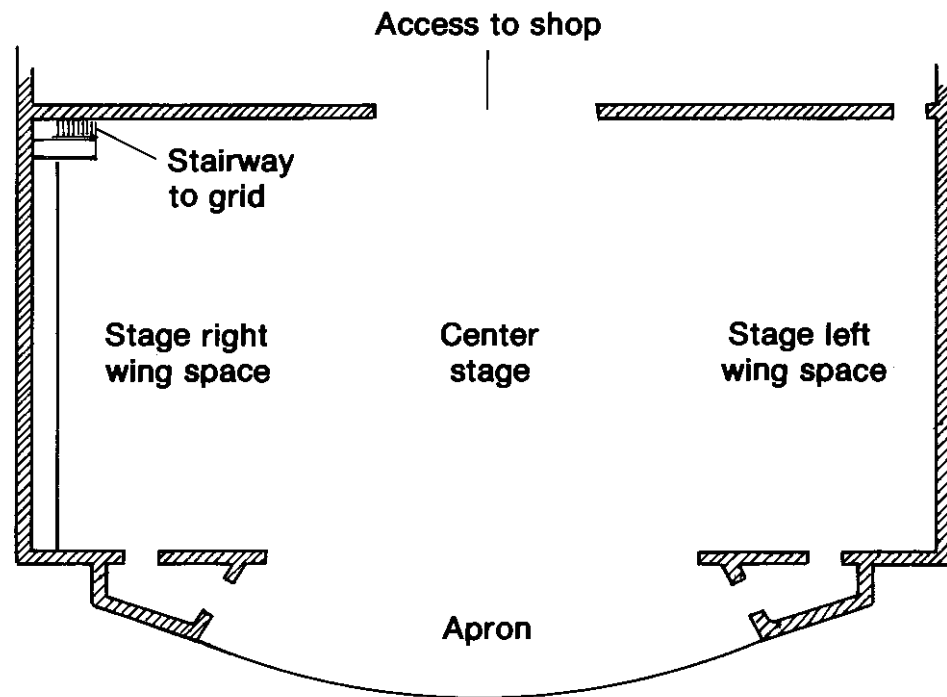
Also known as the “picture frame stage” because the spectators observe the action through the proscenium arch



Proscenium stage

The playing area behind, or upstage, of the arch is referred to as the “stage”

A stage floor needs to be firm, nonskid, paintable, resistant to splintering and gouging, and somewhat soundproof



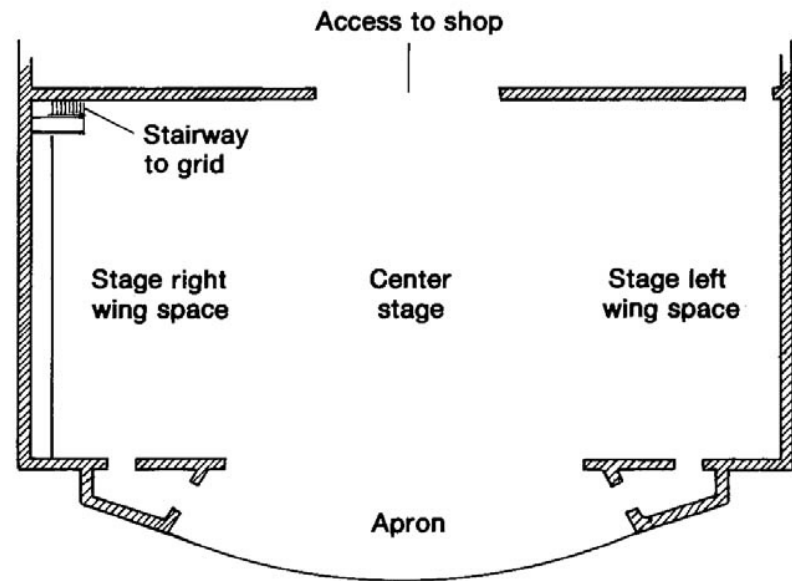
While some productions utilize the space in front of the arch (known as the “apron”, the primary playing space is typically behind the arch

Proscenium stage

The Wings

The spaces on either side of the stage are the wings

Wings are used for storage of scenic elements, props, and other equipment until they are needed onstage



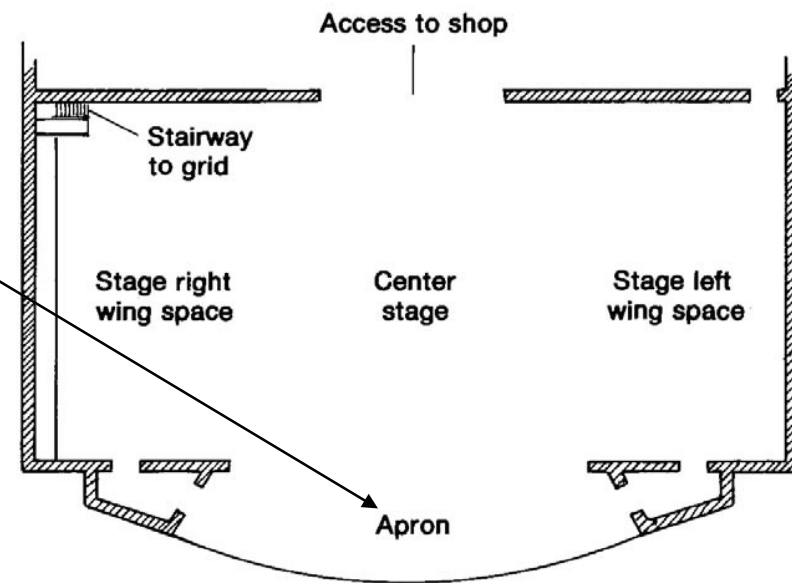
Proscenium stage

The Apron

Also known as the forestage, the apron is an extension of the stage from the arch to the audience

It can vary in depth from a narrow 3 ft. to as much as 15 ft.

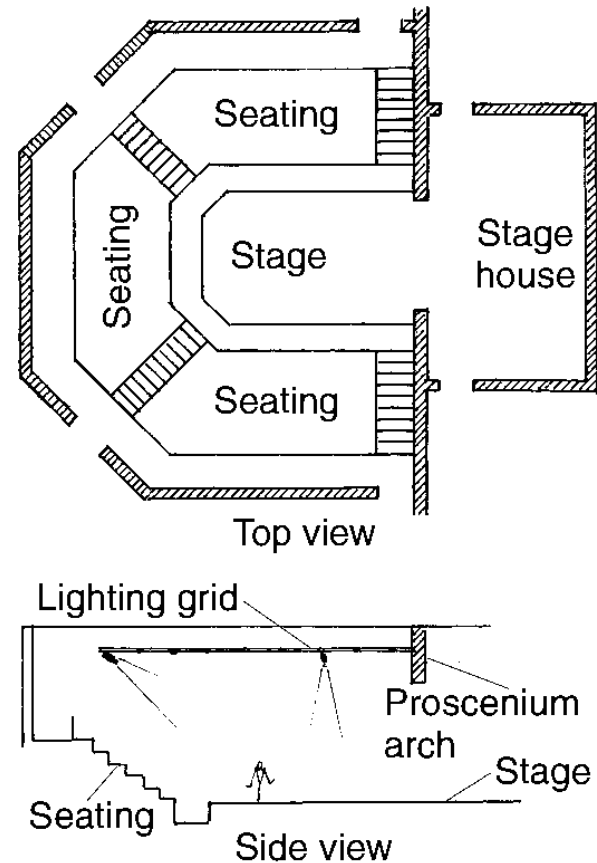
The apron also extends up to 15 ft. beyond either side of the arch



Thrust stage

The thrust stage is not a new development.

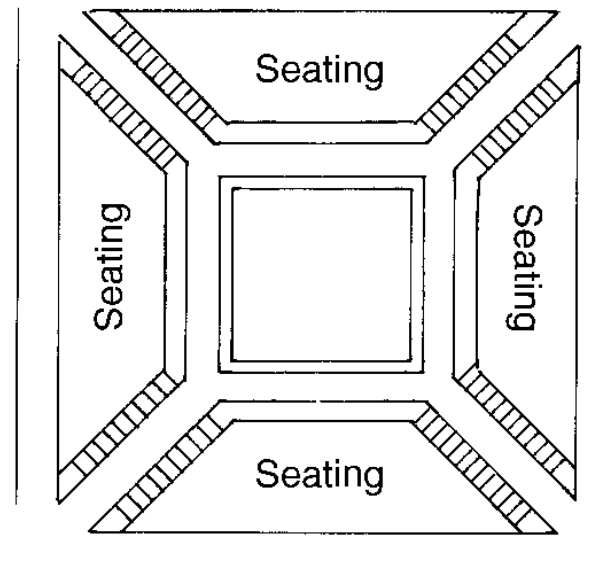
From the Greeks through the Renaissance, audiences gathered on three sides of the playing stage to watch theatrical productions



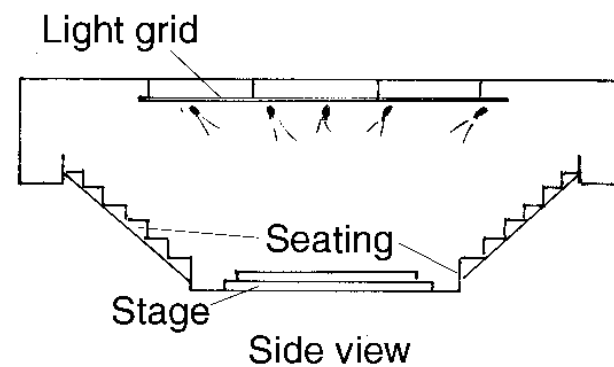
Arena stage

The arena stage is an even more intimate actor-audience theatre than the thrust.

With the audience surrounding all sides of the stage, they are much closer to the action



Top view

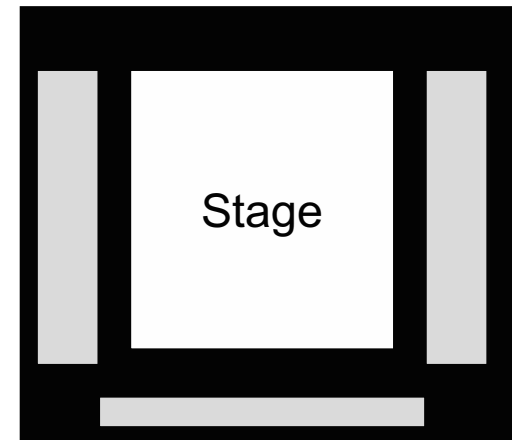
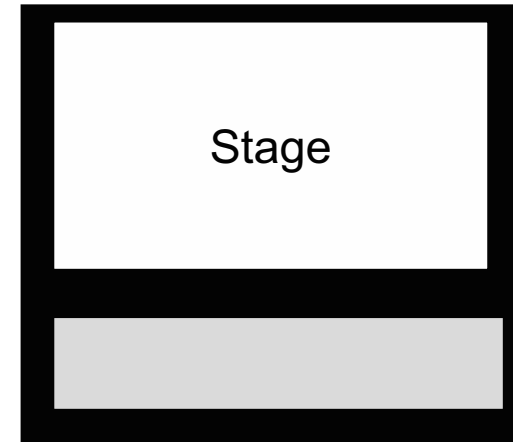
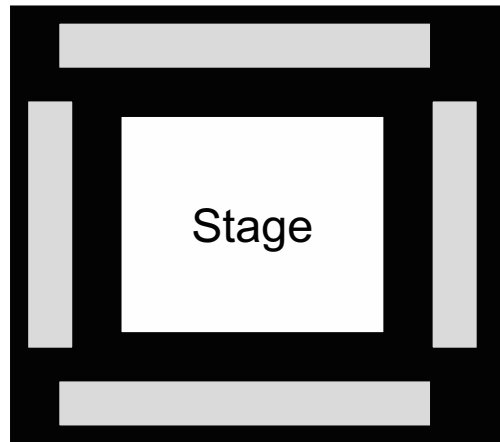


Side view

Black Box Theatres

Black box theatres allow for flexible staging.

Literally a blank, black box, this space can be transformed into a proscenium, thrust, or arena stage



“Found” Spaces

Found theatre spaces are housed in structures that were originally designed for some other purpose.

Almost any and every conceivable space can be and has been converted into a theatre space

Supermarket

Office building

Lumberyard

Library

Restaurant

Just to name a few...

Proscenium stage

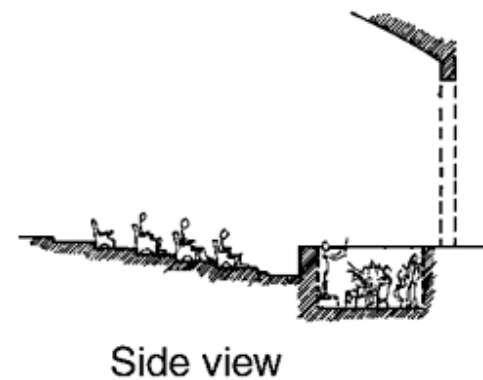
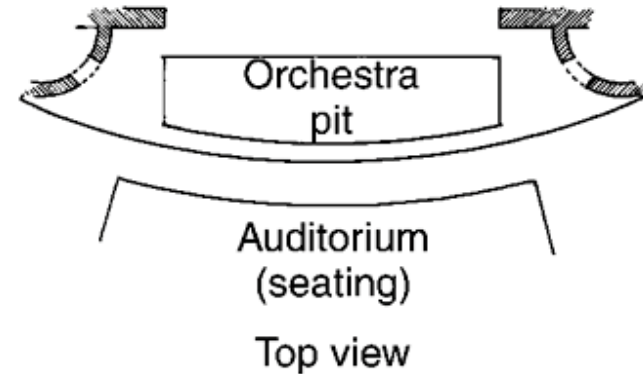
Orchestra Pit

Many proscenium theatres have an orchestra pit, which is almost always between the apron and the audience

It holds the pit band or orchestra during performances that need live music

Pits are generally the full width of the proscenium and can be 12 ft. wide

The pit needs to be deep enough so that the orchestra will not obstruct the audience's view



Proscenium stage equipment

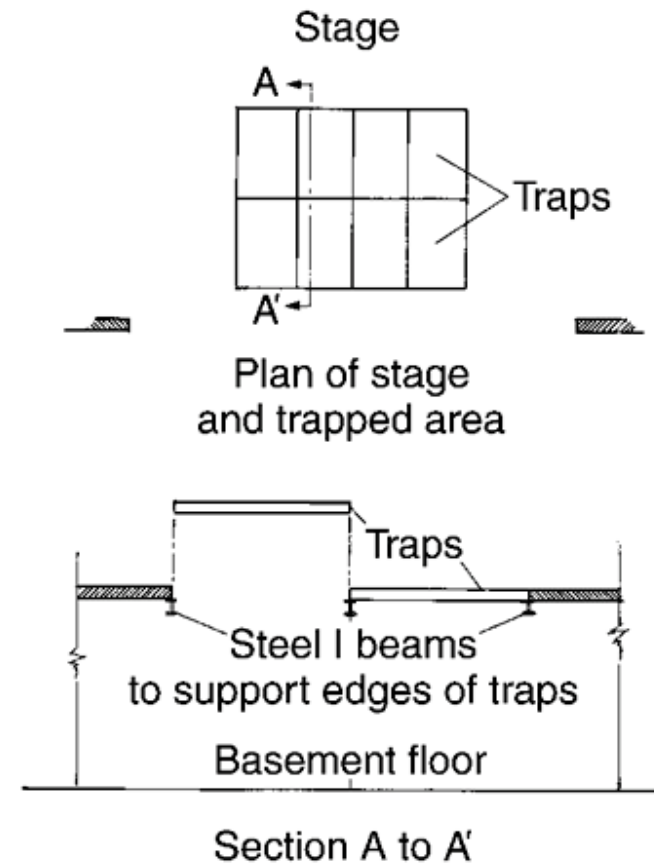
Traps

Many theatres have “traps” cut into the stage floor

Traps are removable sections which provide access to the space beneath the stage

The holes can be filled with stairs, an elevator, a slide, or be left open

While traps are typically a feature of the proscenium stage, they can be found in thrust and arena stages as well



Batten: a thick wooden dowel or metal pipe from which are suspended scenery and lighting instruments

Head block: a multisheave block with two or more pulley wheels, used to change the direction of all the ropes or cables that support the batten

Fly gallery: the elevated walkway where the pin rail is located, usually 15 to 20 ft. above the stage floor

Loft blocks: a grooved pulley, mounted on top of the grid, used to change the direction in which the rope or cable travels

Pin rail: a horizontal pipe or rail studded with belaying pins; the ropes of the rope-set system are wrapped around the belaying pins to hold the batten at a specific height

Stage house: the physical structure enclosing the area above the stage and wings

Proscenium stage

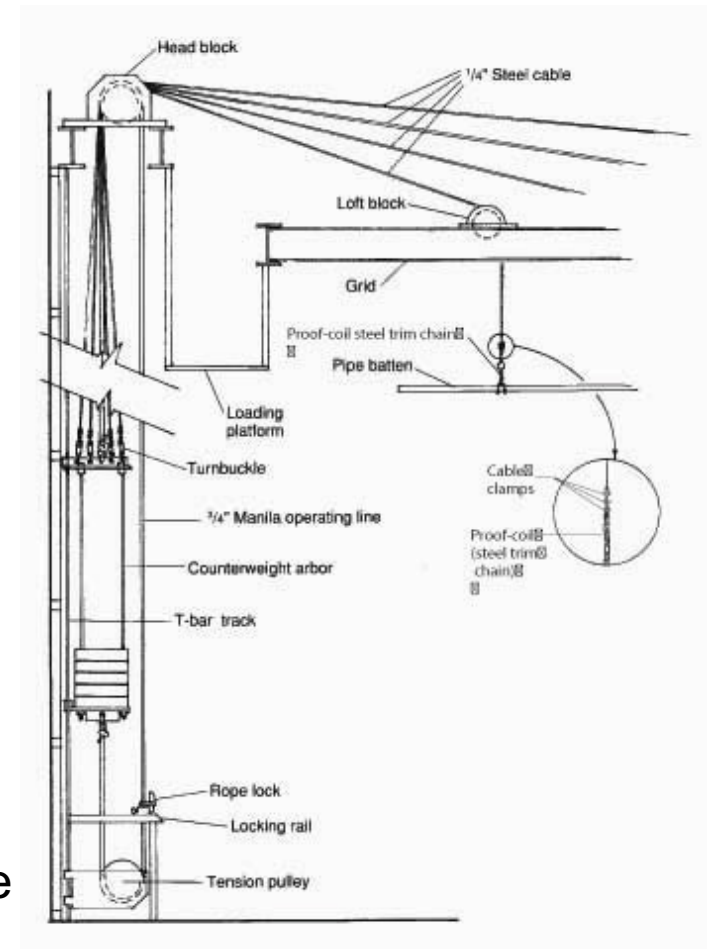
Counterweight System

The counterweight system works on the same principle as the rope-set system and is much safer

The support ropes and battens have been replaced with steel cables

Instead of the cables being tied off at the pin rail, they are secured to the top of a **counterweight arbor**, or carriage

When the batten is lowered to the stage level, the arbor raises to the level of the **loading platform** just below the grid—thus allowing the counterweights to be loaded safely



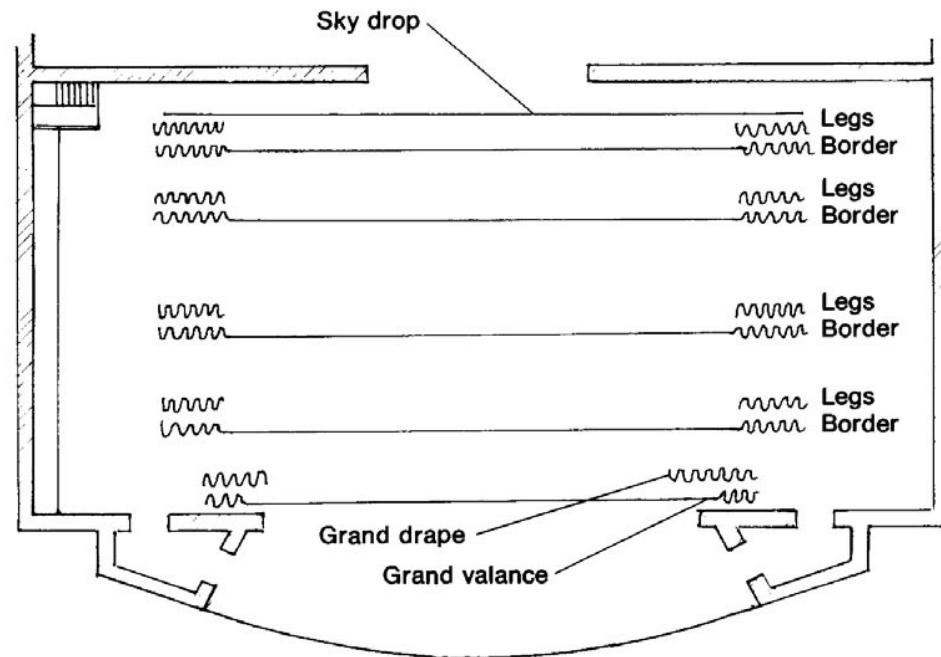
Proscenium stage

Stage Drapes

The proscenium stage uses more drapery than the thrust and arena

Although they have specific functions, all stage drapes are designed to hide or “mask” backstage areas from the spectators

Stage drapes are usually made of black, light-absorbing material such as heavyweight velour



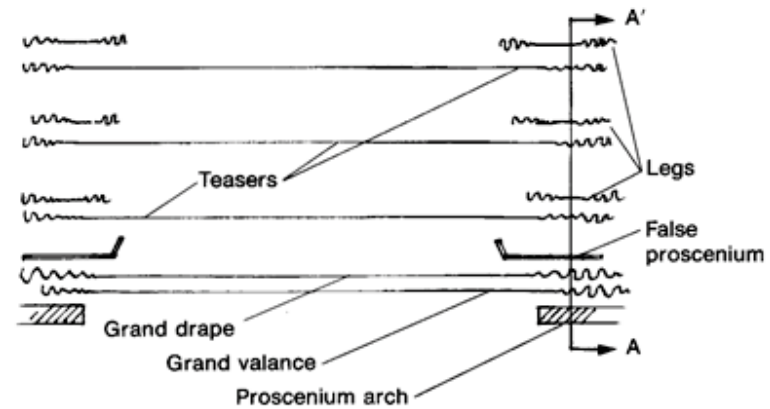
Proscenium stage

Stage Drapes

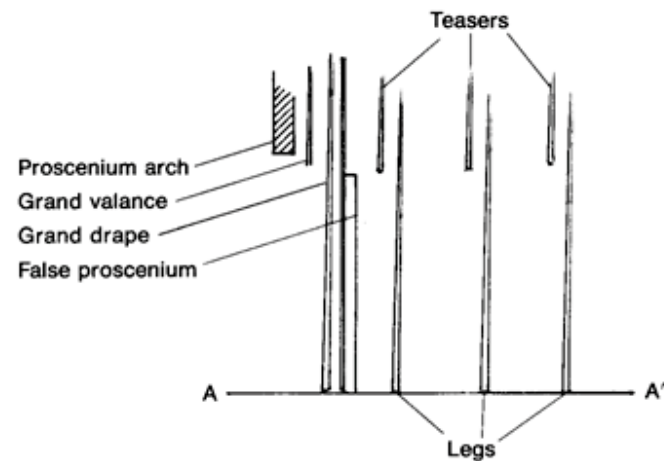
Legs and Borders

Legs are narrow, vertical stage drapes that are used to mask the sides of the stage upstage of the arch. They are made of the same material as the other stage drapes.

Borders, also called teasers, are short, wide, horizontal draperies used to mask flies



Top view



Side view

Proscenium stage

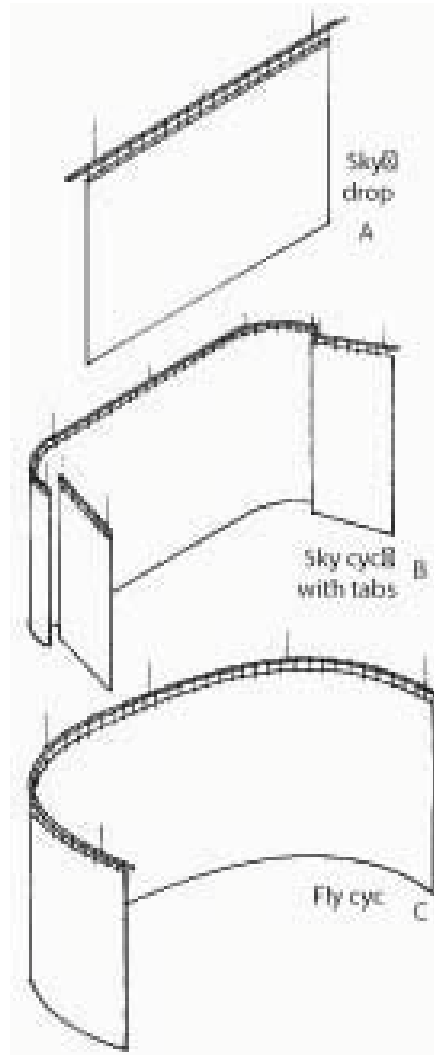
Stage Drapes

Cyclorama

Also known as the “cyc”

The cyclorama is an expansion of the concept of the sky drop. Sky drops cannot surround the set with the illusion of vast expanses of open sky.

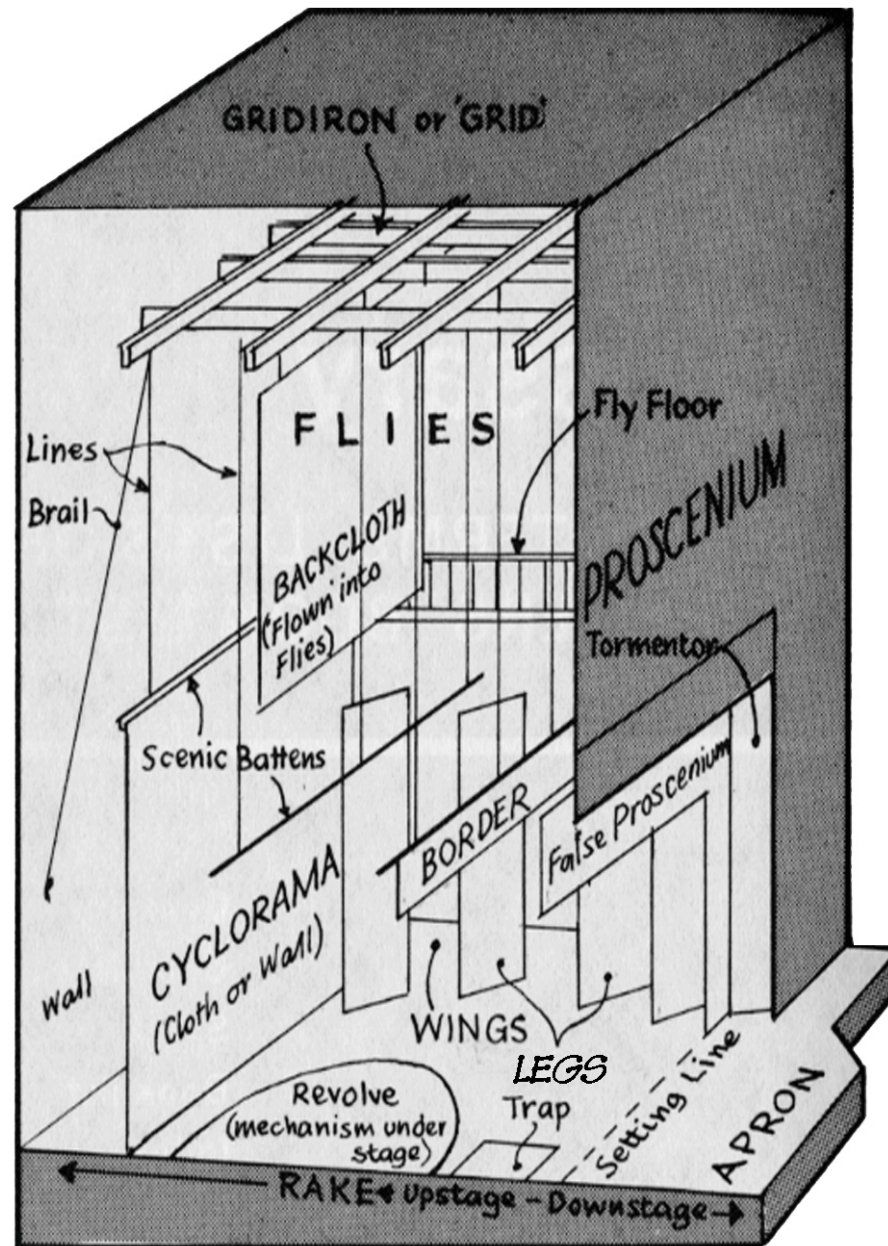
The “fly cyc” is made from one unbroken expanse of cloth. Sometimes **scrim**s are used in conjunction with cycs and skydrops



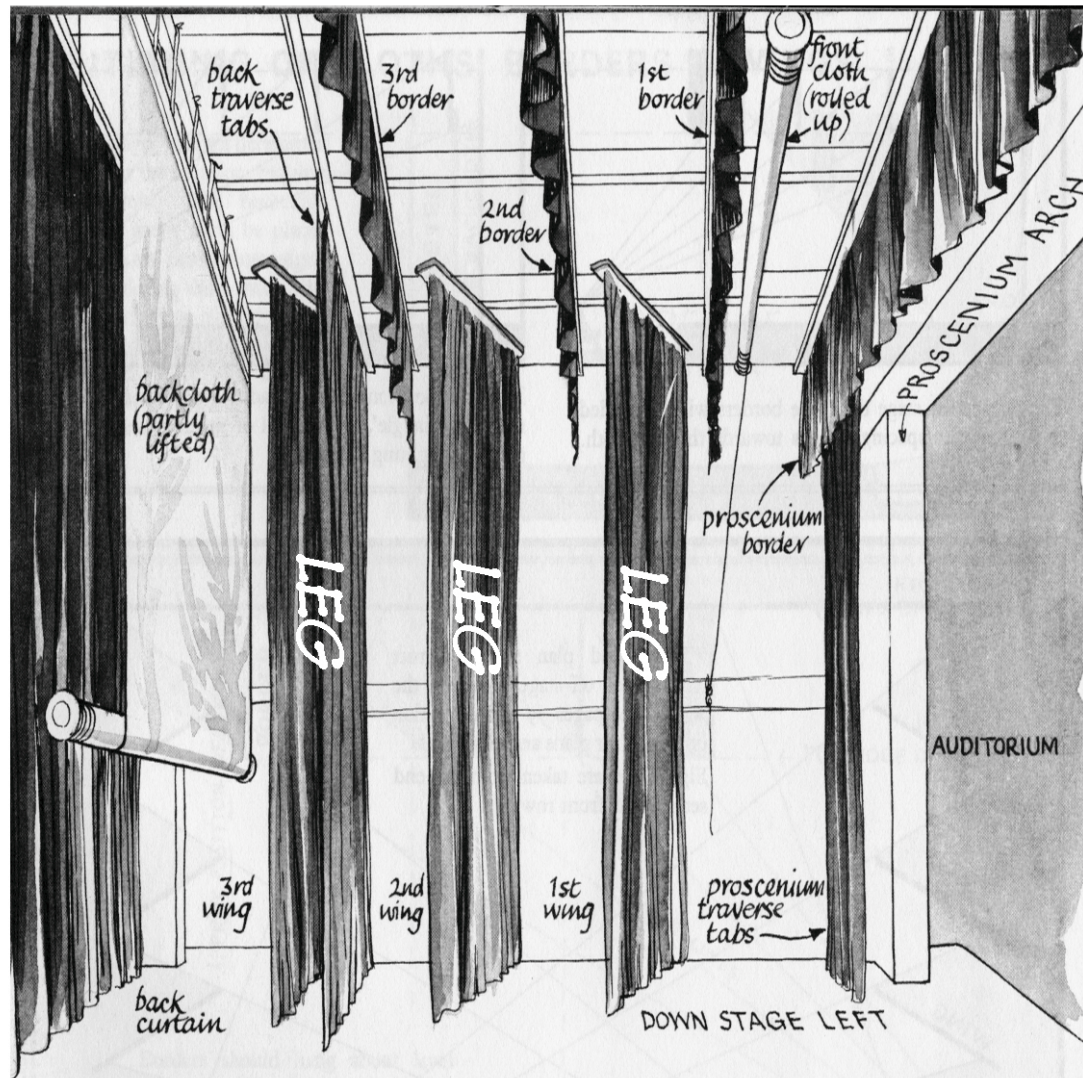
A **scrim** is a drop made from translucent or transparent material.

When light is shone from the back onto the scrim, the scrim becomes transparent.

When light is shone on the front of the scrim, it appears to be opaque



Section cut through centre line showing parts of traditional theatre stage. All terms included on the drawing are explained in the glossary.



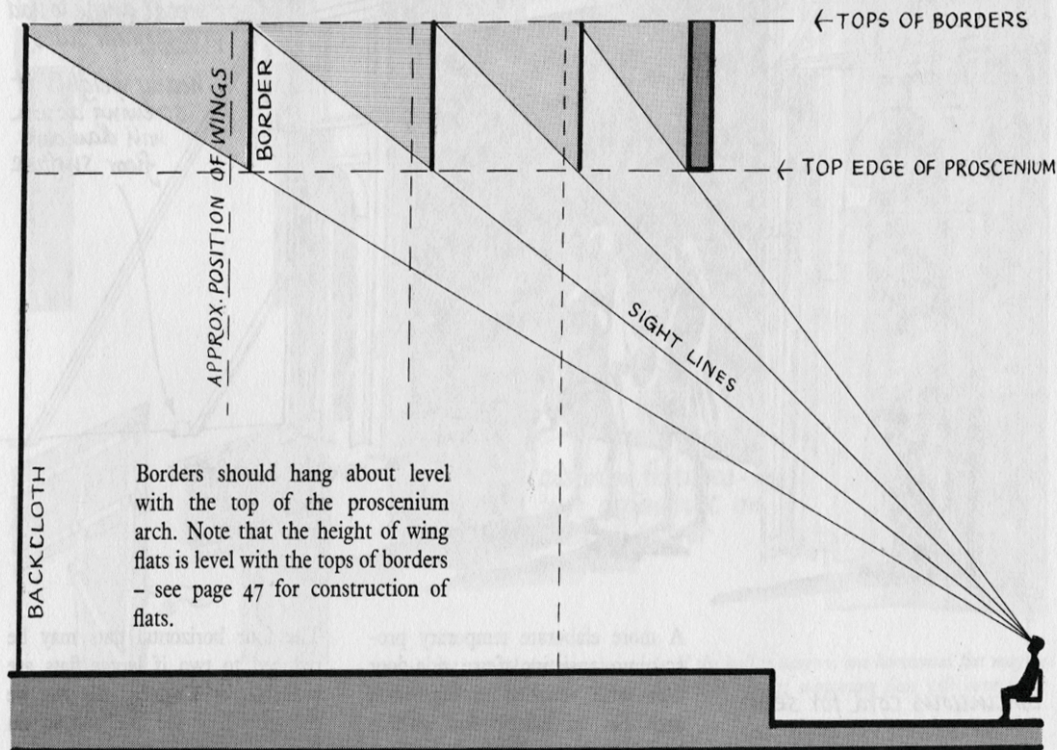
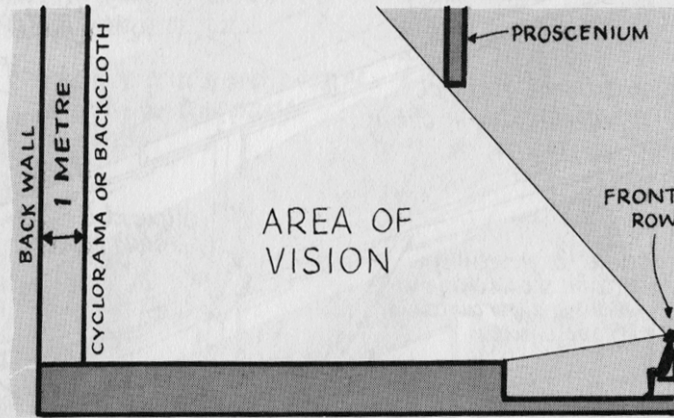
CURTAINS AND CLOTHS

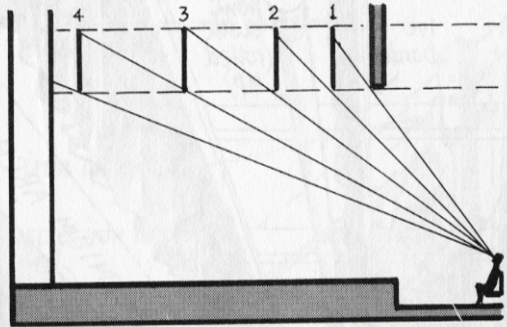
Most schools, halls, church-halls and other similar buildings are fitted out with a 'curtain set', consisting of wings, back-curtain (and/or backcloth) and borders.

Frequently, in the space between a pair of wings and related border hangs a pair of traverse tabs (curtains that can be drawn across the stage to reveal or conceal the scene behind). Sometimes a painted backcloth or cloths will be used in conjunction with the curtain wings: the traverse tabs then come into use for changes of backcloth. The proscenium curtain is usually made of a pair of traverse tabs.

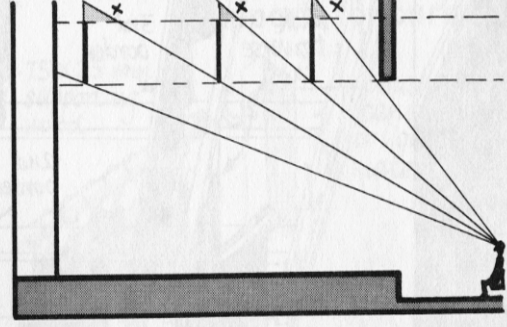
POSITIONING OF CLOTHS, BORDERS & WINGS

Masking a stage, whether permanent or erected for the occasion, requires careful planning. The backcloth, borders and wings must be placed in relation to the proscenium edges. Before considering the borders, the background cloth or curtain should be positioned approximately one metre from the back wall to allow a free passageway behind.





The deeper the stage the more borders will be needed. (Note how the spacing widens towards the backcloth.)



Incorrect positioning: the shaded area, called the 'non-masking triangle', is wasteful of material and may not mask the lighting batten.

