

About the Festival



In February 1944 a Youth Conference was held in WGC, and a local "Youth Committee" was formed to co-ordinate youth activities. The first event sponsored by the Committee was a Youth Drama Festival. The first Festival was held at the Woodhall Community Centre, WGC in May 1944. A local resident adjudicated, but no awards were made, as it was non-competitive.

The success of the first Festival encouraged the Committee to commission a silver cup to be awarded for the best performance in 1945 and subsequent festivals.

The Festival moved to the Barn Theatre in 1947 following the Barn's return from wartime use as an army salvage depot.

In 1949, the Festival was divided into two sections, Senior and Junior, and for the first time a professional Adjudicator was employed.

This became the pattern for all later years, since when, thousands of young actors from Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, London and elsewhere have participated in the annual Festival.

The Junior Section is for casts of School Year 10 and under, at the time of the Festival, and the Senior Section for those under 22. All performers must be amateurs. Entries may consist of a one-act play, or an extract from a longer play, lasting between 20 and 50 minutes. An independent Adjudicator, who comments on the plays at the end of each evening, judges the Festival.

The Festival receives no grants or subsidies, and depends on audience support (through the sale of tickets and programmes) to cover operating costs. The Committee, stage crew and front-of-house staff are all unpaid volunteers, without whose dedication the Festival could not continue.

Further information, rules and entry forms are available from the Hon. Secretary:

Mrs Lorraine Underwood

52 Pirton Road
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG5 2BQ

Tel/Fax: 01462 624678

Email: secretary@wgcydf.org

RULES FOR THE WELWYN GARDEN CITY

YOUTH DRAMA FESTIVAL

1. The Festival is organised annually by the Welwyn Garden City Youth Drama Festival Committee, whose decision in all matters must be accepted as final. The Festival is intended primarily for youth organisations and other societies from Hertfordshire and adjoining counties with members in the 11-21 age range. Teams may be entered in the Junior Section (*all members of the cast being in school year 10, or below, as at 1st May in the year of the Festival*), or in the Senior Section (*all members of the cast being aged under 22 years as at 1st May in the year of the Festival*). All performers must be amateurs.
2. Entries must be made on the prescribed form and sent with a copy of the play and a deposit per play as specified by the Committee. No deposits will be returned after the closing date (unless the Committee find it necessary to refuse an entry or cancel the Festival).
3. Entries must consist of a one-act play, a scripted improvisation, or an extract from a longer play. In the case of extracts, these should be, as regards plot and characterisation, complete in themselves and intelligible to an audience not acquainted with the full play. The play must contain not fewer than two speaking parts, and must occupy at least twenty but not more than fifty minutes in performance.
4. Entrants must obtain permission from the author or author's agent for the performance and pay any royalty fee in advance. If the text of the play has been altered in any way for the performance, proof of the author's permission for such alteration may be called for. (Note: It is an infringement of copyright to cut or amend a play without permission or to make any copy of a play or part thereof). A grant towards the cost of Royalty fees will subsequently be paid by the Committee, provided that the receipt and/or licence is forwarded to the Hon. Secretary before the start of the Festival.
5. A list of the cast (in order of appearance), name of producer, and any other details or information to be published in the programme, stage plan, lighting plot and Fireproofing Certificate must be submitted to the Hon. Secretary by the specified date.
6. The Committee will appoint an Official Timekeeper, Lighting and Sound Technicians, a Stage Manager, and a Stage Director, whose decisions on all backstage matters shall be final and binding on all teams.
7. A curtain set and lighting equipment will be provided by the Committee (see Stage Information for details). Competitors are encouraged to use ingenuity and enterprise in their settings and they are at liberty to adapt the standard curtain set in any manner they desire, provided that the setting can be set and struck within the allotted times.

No team may take more than ten minutes to set and five minutes to strike their setting, including any special effects. Any team not ready to perform after the allotted time will immediately be required to:

- perform competitively with the incomplete setting or
- perform non competitively or

withdraw the entry.

Teams must provide any flats, scenery, furniture, properties, sound effects and sources of music which they may require, and all such items must meet the requirements set out in the "Stage Information" issued to

8. The Lighting Technician will be responsible for the control of the lighting equipment, under the direction of a designated member of each team. The producer or his authorised deputy must be present in the Control Room (which is situated at the rear of the auditorium, remote from the stage) immediately before and throughout the performance by his team.
9. It will be the responsibility of each team to discuss their lighting and staging requirements with the Festival Director and Lighting Technician, during the allotted hour of rehearsal time, and to see that scenery is correctly positioned and is set and struck within the allotted times. Each team must provide a Stage Manager, who should be available back stage at the disposal of the Stage Director from at least twenty minutes before the commencement of the play, throughout its performance, and until the set has been completely cleared from the stage. (Note: the Committee is not responsible for the provision of manual assistance for scene-shifting.)
10. The penalties for not keeping within the allotted time for performance (50 minutes), setting (10 minutes), or striking (5 minutes) shall be as follows:

Up to 1½	minutes over time	Deduction of 1 mark
>1½ to 2	minutes over time	Deduction of 2 marks
>2 to 3	minutes over time	Deduction of 4 marks
>3 to 4	minutes over time	Deduction of 6 marks
>4 to 5	minutes over time	Deduction of 8 marks
More than 5	minutes over time	Disqualification

Plays which are performed in less than the minimum time of 20 minutes shall be penalised by 1 mark for every 30 seconds or part thereof under 20 minutes, and disqualified if under 17 minutes duration.

11. The Festival will be judged by an independent Adjudicator, whose decision shall be final. The Adjudicator will give his or her criticisms in public at the end of each evening, with a final summing up on the last evening. For an additional fee a written report on the team's performance can also be provided by the Adjudicator if requested and paid for in advance.
12. Neither the Committee nor the Theatre Licensee and owners accept any responsibility for any damage, personal injury, loss or claim that might arise from any incident occurring during or in connection with the Festival. It is recommended that teams should have an amateur theatrical insurance policy covering standard risks including, but not restricted to, public liability with an indemnity limit of at least £1m.
13. At the end of the Festival trophies may be awarded for the winning categories. A trophy may, at the discretion of the Committee, be held by a team for the period between

Festivals, in which event the team will be responsible for insuring the trophy against loss and accidental damage during that time. All trophies must be returned to the Hon Secretary at least 2 weeks prior to the next Festival.

14. All persons using the Barn Theatre are asked to observe the following conditions laid down by the Theatre Management:
 - a. Standing or sitting in the gangway is strictly forbidden. Loose chairs or other obstructions must not be placed in the gangways.
 - b. The local fire regulations forbid smoking in the auditorium, and the use of combustible or flammable materials on stage. All scenery, set dressing and properties must be properly fireproofed, and will be inspected and tested by the Fire Officer. Any company not clear about this condition should contact the Stage Director for clarification.

Companies wishing to smoke, use pyrotechnic devices, strobe lighting, naked flame or smoke machines on stage, as an essential part of the action of a play, MUST discuss their requirements with the Stage Director AT LEAST one month prior to the performance date. This condition is to allow sufficient time for a written application to be made to the licensing authority for permission to use the requested effect. The Stage Director will require full details of the make and model of any equipment to be used, together with an assurance that the operator(s) of such equipment are competent to do so.
 - c. No alcoholic liquor shall be consumed in the theatre during a public performance. (**Note:** Drinks are served in the Barn Theatre Club Room to ticket holders only and are not permitted to be taken into any other part of the theatre premises).
15. The use of video or still cameras, recorders, etc. during performances is NOT allowed.

ENTRY FORM

Please complete IN BLOCK CAPITALS and send together with the entry fee plus a copy of the play (please note, if the play is published, photocopying is not permitted) to:

Mrs Lorraine Underwood
52 Pirton Road, Hitchin
Hertfordshire, SG5 2BQ



The entry form must arrive on or before 1st March

NAME OF GROUP: _____

FEES: The entrance fee is £25.00 per play. If you require a written adjudication, then an additional fee must be paid in advance.

PLAY

Junior: (Year 10 or under) **Senior:** (Year 11 but Under 22 at time of Festival)

Title: _____

Author: _____ Producer/Director: _____

Expected running time _____ minutes. Number in Cast: _____ Royalty Fee*: £ _____

Are there any dates on which you could not perform?
(see our web site for performance dates). _____

Do you require a written adjudication? YES NO (£)

Do you wish to place an advertisement in the programme?

Quarter (£15) Half (£25) Full (£50)

On behalf of the aforementioned group, I wish to enter the above play(s) in this year's Welwyn Garden City Youth Drama Festival. I agree that I have read and understand the rules of the festival and I enclose a cheque for £ _____ (made payable to WGC Youth Drama Festival) I also enclose a copy/synopsis of the play.

Signed: _____ Name (Caps): _____

Capacity in which signing _____ Date _____

Address _____

Postcode: _____ Tel (Daytime): _____ (Evening): _____

Email address: _____

NB: Obtaining performing rights permission is solely the responsibility of performing team. No performance will be allowed to take place without such permission having been obtained.

Up to a maximum of £50 of the royalty fee charged by the copyright holder will be refunded by the festival organisers following performance and upon production of an appropriate receipt.

PROGRAMME QUESTIONNAIRE



Name of Group: _____

Title of Play: _____

Author: _____

Director: _____

JUNIOR / SENIOR Entry (*Delete as applicable*)

Members of the cast (*Name / Character*)

Brief description of where the play takes place and when

Back-stage Team

Please give a few brief notes about your team for the Festivals own background information e.g. where you meet, how often, when the group was first formed, if you take part in other Festivals etc.

WELWYN GARDEN CITY YOUTH DRAMA FESTIVAL

Stage, Lighting and Sound Information

Theatre

The Festival is held at the Barn Theatre, Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 6ST Telephone 01707 330672. The seating capacity is 139, and the stage is approximately 6m (20') square, with a curtain opening width of 4.6m (15') reducing upstage to 3.7m (12'), and a working depth of 4.6m (15'). There are three dressing rooms, which are usually allocated one per team. The acting area is defined by black curtains, as shown on the Stage Plan. Smoking, except as an essential part of the action of a play (see Rule 14 (b)), is prohibited in all parts of the theatre.

Rehearsals

One hour per team is allowed during the weekend preceding the Festival for technical rehearsal on stage. Competitors should use this opportunity to try out and agree stage settings, and lighting and sound requirements with the Festival technical team. Teams should therefore ensure they have someone familiar with the lighting and sound cues, and should not expect to have a full rehearsal, since priority must be given to agreeing settings, lights and sound.

Settings

Settings should be kept as simple and light as possible, to facilitate speedy erection and striking. Lighted candles, oil lamps or any highly inflammable substances will not be allowed on the stage, or in any part of the theatre without the permission of the Festival Stage Director, and the written authority of the theatre's licensee. Teams are responsible for setting and striking the stage within the maximum times (10 minutes and 5 minutes respectively). Because of the very limited stage entrance sizes, flats should not exceed 3m (10') high or 1m (3') wide, and must be fitted with screw eyes to receive standard stage braces.

The space backstage is very limited, and any item of furniture or scenery considered too large, heavy, cumbersome or unsafe, may be disallowed by the Festival Stage Director. The Festival Committee cannot accept responsibility for storage of competitors' effects and they must be removed from the theatre as soon as the performance is over.

Lighting

In order for the Festival team to give the best support, it is essential teams submit as detailed a description of their requirements as possible. Please complete the Lighting

and Sound Questionnaire, and the two Stage Plans as fully as possible, showing the main acting areas, position of high and low light concentrations, pin spots, colours, practical properties, etc. If it is essential the stage be discretely lit in specific areas, please mark them on the lighting Stage Plan. The more detail shared with the Festival, the easier it will be to help the team achieve their aims. A numbered cue sheet should also be submitted, giving brief details of each lighting change.

The cyclorama will be lit from overhead battens, which will normally be coloured blue, red and green, thus enabling a variety of colours to be mixed. Please indicate the cyclorama colours required on the Lighting Questionnaire. Alternatively, the cyclorama can be covered with black curtains.

Time must be allowed at the technical rehearsal to set the lighting to the team's requirements, and it is not unusual for plays with complicated and/or numerous cues to spend almost all their one hour technical rehearsal time on lighting cues.

A competent team member must be present at the technical rehearsal to advise the Festival staff of precise requirements, and to agree any compromises that may be necessary. This team member should be present in the Control Room or backstage during the subsequent performance to give the lighting cues. The operation and setting of the lighting equipment will be done by the Festival staff.

Sound

Comprehensive sound facilities are provided for effects and music reproduction, including Compact Disc, Mini Disc and cassette tape decks. Teams should ensure they bring all recorded media to the technical rehearsal, so that volume levels, speaker selection, etc can be agreed. Operation of the sound equipment is from the Control Room at the rear of the auditorium, and is under the supervision of the Festival staff. Responsibility for all cueing rests with the teams.

Fire-Proofing

All scenery and large properties must be adequately fire-proofed, and a certificate to this effect must be signed by the a responsible team official and returned to the Hon Secretary with the Stage Plans and Lighting Questionnaire. Please contact the Festival Stage Director (details below) if you require any help or guidance on this subject.

Special Effects

Please see Rule 13b regarding the use of pyrotechnic devices, naked flames, strobe lighting, smoke machines and smoking. Written permission from the local authority takes at least one month, so please discuss your requirements as early as possible

Please ensure the Questionnaire and Stage Plans are returned promptly, and give adequate contact telephone numbers so that the festival staff can contact the team's lighting or sound expert(s) in the case of any queries. Many thanks

If there are any questions, or if you would like to discuss any aspect of your planned production prior to the Technical Rehearsal, please call the Festival Stage Director, Derek Palmer:

Home: 01992 581375
Mobile: 07860 573896
Email: derek.palmer@wgcydf.org

Revised 2004

Important



Excerpt from Festival Rules - 14 (b)

The local fire regulations forbid smoking in the auditorium, and use of combustible or flammable materials on stage. All scenery, set dressing and properties must be properly fireproofed, and will be inspected and tested by the Fire Officer. Any company not clear about this condition should contact the Stage Director for clarification. (*Derek Palmer Telephone: 01992 581375 Mobile: 07860 573896 Email: derek.palmer@wgcyclf.org*)

Companies wishing to smoke, use pyrotechnic devices, strobe lighting or smoke machines on stage, as an essential part of the action of a play, MUST discuss their requirements with the Stage Director AT LEAST one month prior to the performance date. This condition is to allow sufficient time for a written application to be made to the licensing authority for permission to use the requested effect. The Stage Director will require full details of the make and model of any equipment to be used, together with and assurance that the operator(s) of such equipment are competent to do so.

The Welwyn Garden City Youth Drama Festival Fireproofing Certificate

In order to comply with Theatre Licensing requirements, as stated in Festival Rule 14(b), please sign this certificate and return it with your Stage Plans, Lighting and Sound Questionnaires, to the Hon Secretary:

Mrs Lou Underwood, 52 Pirton Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 2BQ.

Tel: 01462 624678

Email: secretary@wgcyclf.org

This is to certify that all scenery, curtains and stage properties made of combustible materials to be used at the Barn Theatre Welwyn Garden City, in the performance of:

The play (title): _____

by (group name): _____

at the Welwyn Garden City Youth Drama Festival on ____ May ____ have been fireproofed in accordance with the regulations of the licensing authority (Welwyn Hatfield District Council), and that they may be tested before being allowed on the stage. No cotton, wood, polystyrene, paper, cardboard, straw or other materials which cannot be treated satisfactorily with a flame-retardant solution, will be used. No smoking, pyrotechnics or firearms will be used without prior approval by the Licensing Authority.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

WELWYN GARDEN CITY YOUTH DRAMA FESTIVAL

REHEARSAL	
Day	
No.	
PERFORMANCE	
Day	
No.	

LIGHTING & SOUND QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete this form and return it with your lighting and cue sheet no later than _____

Team: _____

Play: _____

LIGHTING

The person to be contacted regarding lighting:

Name: _____ Tel. No. _____

Address: _____

1. Please indicate the approximate number of lighting changes in your production and supply a numbered cue sheet showing details of each change.

Less than 10 10 - 20 20 - 30 More than 30

2. Practical properties used:

Table lamp Window Backing Standard Lamp Door Backing

Fire Effect Other (*Please specify*): _____

3. Will the cyclorama be used lit? Yes No

If YES, please indicate which colours will be required:

4. Please describe any special lighting effects that you wish to use:

SOUND

Note: Teams are expected to provide their own sound operator, who may operate the sound equipment under the guidance of festival staff. The festival will provide Compact Disc, Mini Disc and cassette decks and if you need anything additional to this please contact the stage director prior to your rehearsal to discuss your requirements.

The person to be contacted regarding sound (*if different from the lighting contact*):

Name: _____ Tel. No. _____

Address: _____

Please indicate the type and number of sound cues, if any:

Intro Music/Sound Exit Music/Sound

Other cues: Less than 5 5 - 10 More than 10

Please supply a numbered cue sheet if you have 5 or more sound cues.



WELWYN GARDEN CITY YOUTH DRAMA FESTIVAL

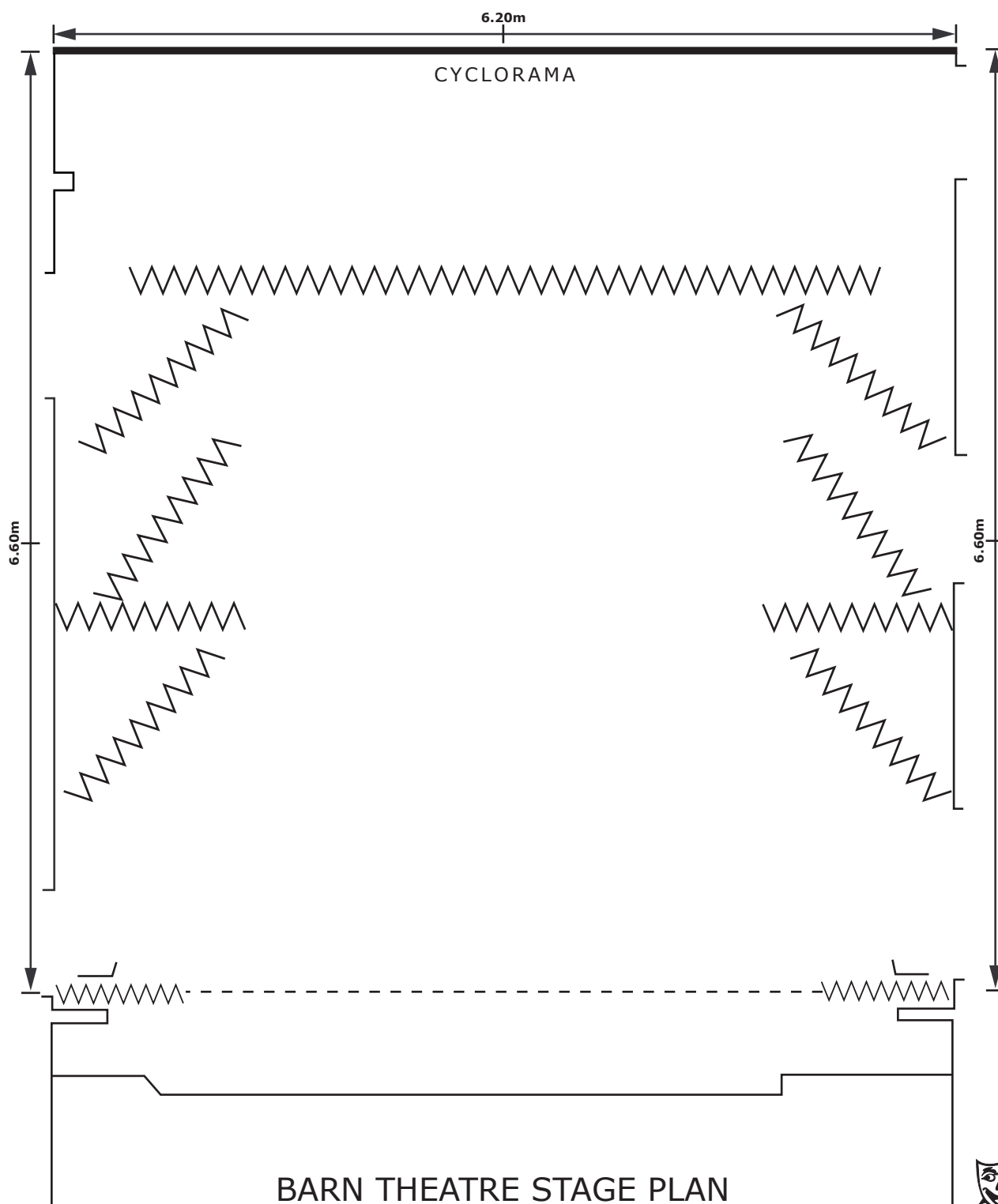
BARN THEATRE STAGE PLAN

REHEARSAL	
Day	
No.	
PERFORMANCE	
Day	
No.	

STAGE COPY

Please return this copy showing the position of any flats, large properties and furniture.

TEAM: _____ PLAY: _____



WELWYN GARDEN CITY YOUTH DRAMA FESTIVAL

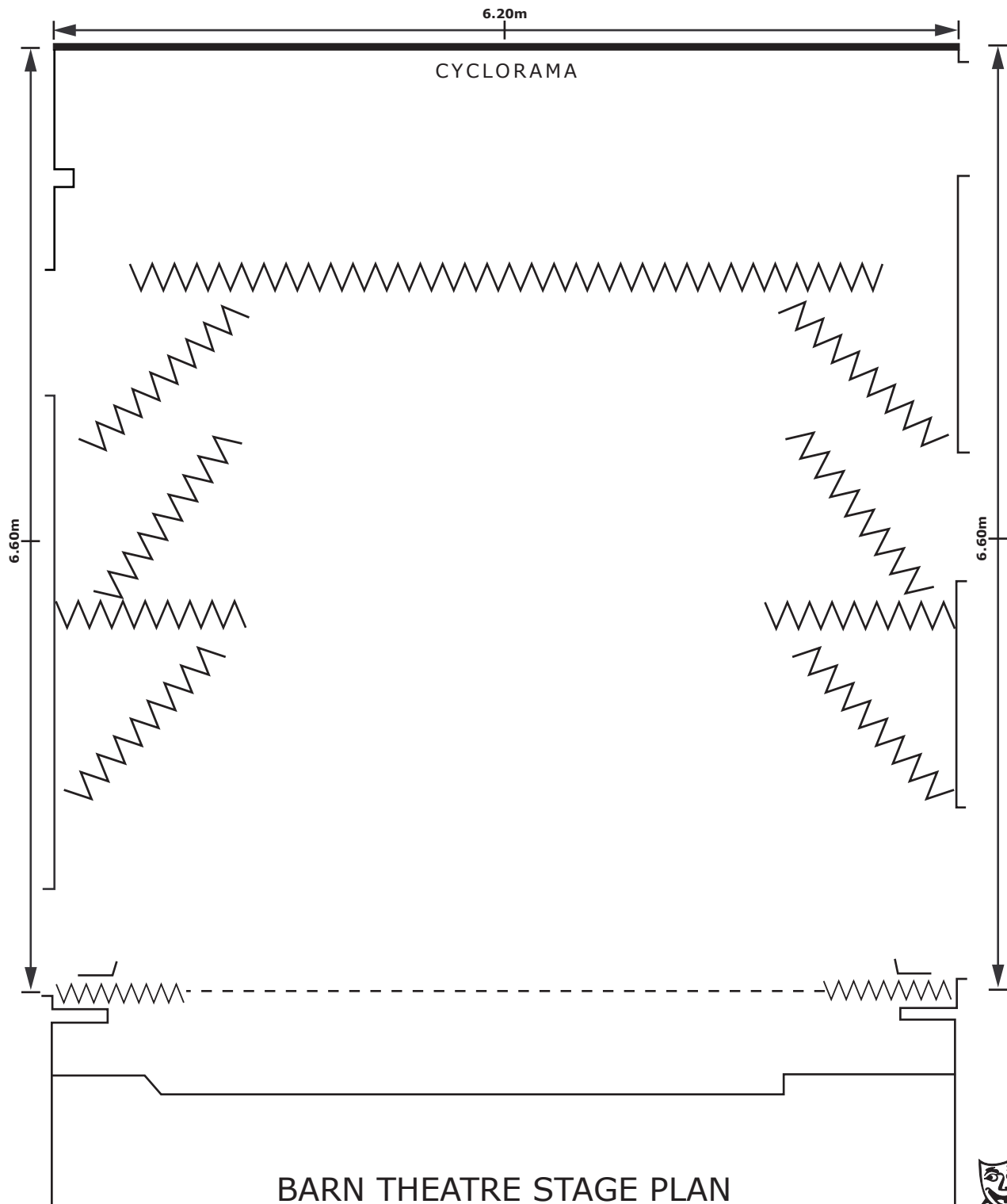
BARN THEATRE STAGE PLAN

REHEARSAL	
Day	
No.	
PERFORMANCE	
Day	
No.	

LIGHTING COPY

Please return this copy showing the position of any practical electrical properties and indicate areas of high and low lighting concentrations, lighting directions and colours.

TEAM: _____ PLAY: _____



BARN THEATRE STAGE PLAN

