

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:

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Mobile: 07860 573896
Email: derek.palmer@wgcydf.org

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