

E.M. Forster Theatre Tonbridge

Technical Specification

Description

E.M. Forster Theatre has a proscenium arch styled stage with an auditorium seating capacity of 368 – Stalls 255 and Circle 113.

Auditorium Entrances

The three stalls auditorium entrances may be used for entrances or exits if the performance action requires. However it is important to note that nothing is left unattended in these entrances, such as props or costumes, nor may people stand in doorways blocking exits as it is against fire regulations. If props are required from these doors a member of the stage management team must be in attendance until the item returns to on stage or backstage.

Performances Times

The auditorium is normally opened at the half. Any requests to change this to earlier or later, must be made at a reasonably early stage, as agreement has to be obtained from the Theatre Management.

Dressing Rooms

There are 2 main dressing rooms available and a 3rd upon plenty of notice. Please see additional page for further dressing room details.

Wardrobe & Laundry

The E.M. Forster Theatre wardrobe repair space is located on the top floor and equipped with a washing machine & tumble drier. Please contact the Technical Manager if these facilities are required for use.

Backstage Access

There is no designated Stage Door or Stage Door keeper. Main access to the backstage area is via the scene dock doors or dressing room corridor emergency exit door; neither of these doors are permanently manned. If you have a large cast & crew please provide your own production staff member to monitor your company access when in attendance.

Theatre Vehicle Access

The theatre's Scene Dock Doors are at the end of a School buildings access road with very limited turning capacity and a slight uphill incline to the doors.

It is best to reverse all vehicles to the dock doors allowing for easier load ins & get-outs.

Please note:- Full length / width Arctic Lorries are unable to reach the dock doors due to the narrow access road & sharp Zig-Zag style corner at the beginning.

Set Get In Access

The dock door is situated on ground level allowing for large items to be moved directly to the stage via suitable dolly trucks.

The dimensions of the doorway are approx:-

2130mm (7ft) width x 2440mm (8ft) height allowing for a few centimetres clearance either side.



The yellow hashed area indicates the slight incline up to the doors. On the right is the single push bar exit suitable for use as stage door but is not manned. If touring with a large company please allocate a company member to control access via this door.

These open outwards leading to the theatre scene dock, then via a second door to on stage, approx dimensions:-

2440mm (8ft) width by 4570mm (15ft) height allowing for a few centimetres clearance either side.



The gantry across the top half of the door is removable to give full height access.

Stage

The stage structure is 200mm thick reinforced concrete slab.

The floor has no rake and is covered in 6mm MDF, on 25mm ply, on soft-wood battens. This may be screwed into.

Please note:- The nature of past production designs has affected the wooden floor and this cannot be guaranteed to be flat and level but is not noticeably uneven.

The stage has 3 traps:-

A coffin style trap immediately US of the proscenium arch line, above the orchestra pit.

Two large square traps US one either side of Centre Line.

These are all accessible from sub stage. Should you require use of any trap please give as much notice as possible. The removal of these trap sections is laborious, time consuming requiring 4 person for removal. This may lead to an additional fee for their removal or replacement.

The stage area is surrounded on three sides by an access gantry, with a clear height under of 2970 mm.

Above the whole stage area is a Fixed Height Grid at 5580 mm.

Please note:- Due to the fixed height positions of Lighting, Boarder & Tab bars the clearance is lower at 5390 mm.

Main stage and scenery access is from Up Stage Left through the scene dock.

This access is also used as an emergency exit route from the stage and so must be kept clear at all times. This area tends to be the most heavily used during performance and so must be considered carefully for its use during your company's visit.

The best maximum working height for scenery is 5000 mm in order to allow room for the lighting rig. There is limited space in our scene dock and this is used as the main access between stage & dressing rooms. Please contact the Technical Manager for more information or answers to any questions regarding site storage.

Performance Areas

The best performance area is the following size:-

SL to SR – 8800mm between the proscenium pillars

US to DS – 8500mm from proscenium line to US Cyc line

DS to apron edge – 2000mm from proscenium line to very DS apron edge

The performance area can be increased to a maximum of 11000mm by moving soft masking off stage; however this may reduce the off stage masking capabilities and space in the wings.

The US Cyc is a fixed position; **IT IS NOT** possible to do any of the following:-

- i) move in any direction
- ii) be flown in any direction
- iii) bundled on a bar
- iv) moved off stage

Immediately behind / US of the Cyc is the fixed position crossover wall. This is a fixed wooden wall and **NOT** removable for the purpose of backlighting the Cyc.

Storage

The scene dock has limited storage space so props and furniture are rarely removed from the stage wings during a performance. Therefore storage of said items needs to be considered carefully during the planning stage for your visit.

Flying

The E.M. Forster Theatre **DOES NOT** have a fly tower. Due to the very limited grid height it is not possible to fly items. Certain small items maybe dead hung from the grid ie. banners, fixed position picture frames or window frames but nothing can be flown in or out during the performance.

Special thought should be given to the requirement of any flying during the production. If flying is fundamental to your production please discuss any requirements for dead hung items or normally flown items as early as possible with the Technical Manager.

There are 0.50 m deep borders. These dead hung downstage of our FOH Tab Track / Lx Bar 1 & Lx Bar 2.

Drops & Kabuki banners

Again due to the fixed grid height careful thought needs to be given to any type of drops, drop bags & Kabuki banners. Drops from above the grid are not very successful. Drops from below the grid are very time consuming to set up and re set during the production.

Fire Regulations

The proscenium width is 9600mm between on stage building structure supports.

We have no safety curtain therefore all materials used must comply with stringent fire regulations:

i) On an open stage or platform scenery made of the following materials may be used subject to any condition the Council may impose in any particular case:

Non-combustible material

Inherently flame-retardant material

Timber, hardboard or plywood under 18mm thickness rendered flame-resistant by a process of impregnation accepted by the Council.

Timber framing of minimum 22mm nominal thickness.

Durably treated flame retardant fabric.

Block board, Medium Density Fibreboard (MDF), plywood, chipboard not less than 18mm in thickness.

Subject to special consideration some plastics materials are acceptable to the Council.

Fabrics rendered and maintained non-flammable to the Councils satisfaction by nondurable process.

ii) The use of plastics or polystyrene must be avoided whenever possible. Decorative items such as statues made of expanded polystyrene should be enclosed by a non-combustible skin of e.g. plaster and care taken that the skin is maintained undamaged.

iii) Similar considerations apply to the use of properties and furnishings. Where the stage action does not involve the use of naked flame or smoking lesser standards may be acceptable. As a general rule hand-held properties and antique furnishings will be permitted without fire retardant treatment. However the Council will generally apply the same standards as apply to stage scenery to large properties, large quantities of furnishings and to items especially constructed for the stage presentation. New soft furnishings, curtains and drapes must be maintained flame resisting.

Note: Some flame retardant treatments may cause dermatitis or irritation to sensitive skins.

Control Room

The E.M. Forster Theatre has a prompt corner DSL. Lighting & Sound are operated from the double glazed control room at the rear of the auditorium stalls.

Simple shows can be operable by one person but more complicated shows may require two or three operators. Communication is via a Cans Master Station – located in the Control Room, with signal lines to stage, auditorium, sub stage and the Technical Management Office. Show Relay incorporating Front of House and Backstage paging is also housed in the Control Room with controls located DSL prompt corner & FOH. There is space for show prompting in either the stage wings or down stage slips.

Special Effects – General

Generally, special effects will not be allowed to start or enter the auditorium from on or off stage or via the audience access doors. Please restrict effects to be contained on stage. Should your production require an effect that is integral to the performance starting or entering the auditorium please inform the Technical Manager with plenty of notice before the productions arrival. A Risk Assessment will be completed by the Technical Manager & Theatre Operations Manager to assess whether the effect can occur and if any limitations are required.

Special Effects – Smoke

Only smoke machines detailed in the Council's & Technical Manager's approved list may be used. If requiring the use of a non listed machine sufficient technical information must be provided to the Council in time to enable it to determine whether the smoke generator proposed is acceptable.

Smoke machines shall be sited and controlled so that they do not obstruct exit routes nor cause a hazard to surrounding curtains or fabrics.

The volume of smoke shall be limited so that it does not seriously affect means of escape or obscure exit signs. The penetration of smoke into areas where the public are admitted shall be restricted as far as possible.

Smoke machines shall be operated by a responsible person who shall have received appropriate instruction.

Special Effects – Smoking On Stage

Please notify the Technical Manager if smoking is going to be undertaken as part of the performance.

Smoking is allowed only onstage as part of the action, provided that the procedures for lighting and extinguishing are safe. Ashtrays containing water based gel, saucers filled with damp sand, sand buckets and such like are acceptable means of extinguishment. The use of non-self extinguishing lighters eg. Zippos, are not permitted.

Please give plenty of notice if smoking is required as part of the action, allowing theatre management to inform the local licensing authority.

Special Effects - Real Flame

Requests for the use of real flame effects on stage must be given to the Technical Manager at least three weeks before your company's visit. This is in order to notify the Authorities and, if required, to arrange an inspection. This will occur at a set time during the Technical Rehearsal. The inspector will need to watch the action from the moment that the item is lit, until it has been extinguished, in performance conditions including costume, props, and lighting. The authorities will require the following information at least one week before the inspection:

- i) Where and by whom the item is to be lit
- ii) Where it enters, moves, is set and exits where applicable
- iii) Where and by whom it is extinguished

It must be stressed that there is No guarantee that permission will be granted and therefore a suitable backup option should be considered from the outset.

This does not apply to the use of matches to light cigarettes or cigars.

Special Effects - Blank Firing Guns

All firearms with the exception of shot guns are now classified as prohibited weapons. This includes de-activated guns, guns converted to blank firing and certain manufactured types of blank firing guns. The use on stage of any prohibited weapon would require the consent of the Home Secretary representative; the attendance of a registered firearms dealer whilst the firearms are on the premises and the consent of the Council. The use of any shotgun would require a Shotgun Certificate issued by the police as well as the consent of the Council.

Firearms of any description, including replica and imitation, must be stored in a robust locked container in a locked room when not in use. If required as a prop all ammunition, including replica and blanks, must be stored in a 2nd separate container requiring a different key to the gun cabinet for unlocking. There is a police approved gun cabinet in a location only known to the theatre Technical Management.

Lighting & Sound Equipment Information

Lighting

Please see additional document for lantern kit information.

Follow Spot Position

Please note we do not have suitable equipment to use as a Follow spots.

Should your production require one this can be hired in at additional charge or you may provide your own, along with correct and up to date PAT documents.

If required the best position for follow spot(s) is the FOH / auditorium bridge. This allows the coverage from SL to SR & DS to ¼ US.

Additional side spot positions can be achieved at a lower angle from the circle boxes.

Please advise the Technical Manager at the earliest opportunity to decide if and where the best follow spot position would be for your production.

Lighting Control

We have an ETC Ion desk – 5000 channels

1 x 19" Elo Touch Screen

1 x standard flat screen monitor

There is only 1 DMX universe cable run between the Control Room & Stage dimmers – if a second is required please give as much notice as possible allowing theatre staff to facilitate this.

Notes

All Lx bars are permanently fixed to the grid at a height of 5390 mm. There is no facility to change any height of these bars.

Bar Lengths from SL to SR

These lengths are measured from best off stage position for a lantern to opposite side equivalent. The bars are physically longer but further offstage units may not see their intended focus positions.

Lx 1 = 10,000 mm

Lx 2 = 10,000 mm

Lx 3 = 10,000 mm

Lx 3 / Bar 3 Is Not IWB – 15 amp cable must be used to facilitate this bar as a lighting bar

Lx 4 = 10,000 mm

Bar Distance from proscenium line:-

FOH Bridge = – 7200 mm

Lx 1 = + 0990 mm

Lx 2 = + 2960 mm

Bar 3 = + 5140 mm

Lx 4 – Cyc bar = + 6460 mm

There are 0.50 m deep borders. These dead hung downstage of our FOH Tab Track / Lx Bar 1 & Lx Bar 2.

Sound & AV Equipment

The permanent FOH rig consists of Yamaha S115V speakers & Yamaha SW118V base cabinets.

At stalls level are the SW118V base cabinets with one S115V speaker on top, both AL & AR.

At circle level there are a 2nd set of Yamaha S115V speakers.

On stage there are 2 x Mach TX12F speakers suitable for monitor / fold back use.

The amplifier rack is located DSR slip and permanently set in the following fashion:-

1st Yamaha P3500 amp as on stage monitor feed – normal setting

2nd Yamaha P5000 amp empty

3rd Yamaha P5000 amp as stalls & circle speaker feed – Low Cut @ 90 Hz

4th Yamaha P5000 amp as Base bin cabinet feed – Sub Woofer @ 100 Hz

Sound desk =

Allen & Heath GL2200

16 line; 2 stereo; 2 stereo return; 4 groups + L & R

Graphic Equalisers =

Yamahas 1x Q2031A & 1 x Q2031B

The Q2031B is set as insert returns on the main L&R channels.

The Q2031A available for use but not permanently connected to the desk.

The speaker signal multicore starts in the Technical Box and terminates as Female XLRs in the DSR slip position next to the amplifier rack.

Playback equipment =

1 x Numark CDN-22MK4 CD player

1 x Sony MDS-JE480 MD player

Effects units =

1 x Alesis / Akira

1 x Behringer Composer Pro MDX2200

Please note these are not permanently cabled to the desk.

Starting with 6 lines from both SL & SR a 12 way signal multicore terminates at the sound position via male XLR plugs.

An additional multicore is run from DSR and terminates at the sound position in the Control room.

This has 12 send and 4 return lines.

Microphones =

2 x Sennheiser ew100 G2 handheld radio microphones

4 x Sure SM58 microphones

DI Boxes =

2 x Behringer ULTRA-DI DI20

Additional Equipment

1 x Martin Magnum 1800 Smoke Machine
1 x Jem ZR31
1 x Le Maitre Pyroflash 6 – 24 way unit

AV Projectors =

1 x Sanyo PLC-XL50
1 x Sanyo Pro xtraX multiverse PLC-XU32
1 x Sony VPL FE40 for permanent use as our cinema projector

Please discuss anything that could be problematic with the Technical Manager at the earliest possible opportunity. It is normally easy to find a solution if broached at an early stage.

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E.M. Forster Theatre
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