

# **BRISTOL ONE ACT DRAMA FESTIVAL**

## **TECHNICAL NOTES**

### **THE OLYMPUS THEATRE**

The theatre is within the South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (SGS) Campus, also sometimes referred to as 'The WISE Campus' and which is situated just off the New Road/Brierly Furlong roundabout in Stoke Gifford. The Post Code for Sat Nav purposes is BS34 8LP. There is a large pay and display Car Park in front of the building, however it can be very busy so it is best to allow plenty of time. There are two payment machines one of which is located at the front of the building. Once inside the building the Reception Desk staff will direct you to the theatre.

### **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

The Festival Entry Process includes completing a form detailing your Technical Requirements. It is essential that this form be completed and submitted by the required date, at the latest, in order that the Festival Technical team can try to accommodate your requirements. Whilst we can't guarantee to satisfy everyone's needs the sooner we are aware of them the easier they will be to resolve. Any requirements requested after the form submission date are unlikely to be met.

### **THE STAGE**

The stage is a very large flat space with an acting area measuring approximately 7.8 metres across and 7.65 metres deep with no 'Front of House' tabs. Masking to the sides and rear of the stage is provided by black drapes with provision for entrances through wing curtains on both sides. It is possible to part the curtains in the centre at the back of the stage although this is not a permanent 'entrance' A Floor Plan of the theatre is included with these notes. A rear cyclorama can be pulled down over the back drape if required but this would cover the central back entrance. You may use your own flats or other masking, but these will have to be set and struck within the allotted time.

The Auditorium accommodates up to 250 people and is sharply raked from the front row.

Scenery storage is provided to the rear of the back masking and is large enough to ensure all but the most extensive sets can be stored ready for setting with very easy access to the stage. Each group will have virtually identical distances in which to move scenery during their setting and striking times.

Please arrange for your scenery to arrive at 6pm (or at an agreed time for Matinees) on the day of your performance. Please wait for the Festival Stage Manager to ask you to move it into the storage area so that we can co-ordinate the operation. Your set must remain in the building until the end of the evening or afternoon session as time does not allow you to take it out to your van during the intervals.

You may not mark the stage floor during your technical session.

At the end of your performance, during your allotted striking time, any marks made during your performance, as well as any rubbish, must be removed and the stage left absolutely clear to the satisfaction of the Festival Stage Staff before the clock is stopped. You are advised to bring brushes and other cleaning equipment if you are likely to need it.

## STAGE LIGHTING

The lighting rig covers the entire acting area in six areas, roughly equal in size – three across the back and three across the front. Each area can be lit separately with a reasonable amount of definition through a computerized lighting desk. The theatre is now fully stocked with LED lighting and so can achieve various colour washes but it is essential that any specific requirements should be made known as far in advance as possible. A basic warm and cold wash will be pre-programmed for the technical sessions and will consist of colour temperatures which emulate the standard Warm LEE 013 Straw and Cold LEE 201 CTO.

If you need any really tightly defined areas, gobos or special colour effects, these will have to be provided by 'specials' for your particular show. The theatre has a small number of spare lanterns which may be available for this purpose. However, if a particular 'special' is essential to your production it may be advisable to make your own arrangements which you can agree in advance with the Festival Technical Director. Consequently, you may want to bring your own or hired lanterns. If you are bringing lanterns in or plan to use any other portable electrical equipment, you must bring them to your technical session where they will be PAT tested in order to ensure safety regulations are complied with. Any lantern or equipment which fails their PAT test will not be allowed and you are strongly advised to make absolutely sure that they will pass before you arrive.

Specials will be rigged, tested and plotted into your show at your technical session. Provided there is sufficient space to do so, they can then be left rigged and focused until your performance. If there is insufficient space to do so the Festival Technical Director will make arrangements with you so that the lanterns can be re-rigged and focused for your show at an alternative time. Lanterns may be removed either after the audience has left on the evening or afternoon of your performance, or after the end of the Festival (the latter will only be possible if there is sufficient bar space to leave them up until then). Again, please agree this with the Technical Director during your technical session. Whilst it might be artistically desirable to allow companies to re-rig/re-focus as much as they like to suit their show, it is impracticable to do so and hence not permitted by the Rules.

Lighting cues will be pre-programmed into the lighting desk during your technical session and this must include all the cues you require in the order in which they come in the script. Do not forget black outs or dim lights for set changes! The programming will be done by the Festival staff and they will do what they can to assist you, but they will not be able to design the show for you.

Please bear in mind that you must have a clear idea of what you are trying to achieve before you start.

You must do all your plotting during the time allowed on the technical day, so you will need to be clear and concise in your instructions otherwise you could run out of time. Please note that neither the Festival nor the theatre can supply 'gels' other than those in the Festival permanent rig.

## SOUND

The theatre provides the following sound facilities and requirements:

- Audio playback from Mini Mac running Qlab cuing software
- Audio files should be provided on a USB drive formatted in either MSDOS or Mac OS journaled
- Audio files need to be in MP3 or WAV file format

It is vital that you come fully prepared to your allotted tech rehearsal with the correct sound files and someone who is cognisant of both your and the theatre's requirements.

In exceptional circumstances it may be possible for you to bring further equipment, such as a lap top, to plug into the theatre system. As with lighting, additional equipment will be subject to PAT testing at your technical session and you will need to provide the correct leads as the theatre cannot guarantee to have the right leads available. Please make contact with the Festival Technical Director in advance to arrange this. Contact details are available from the Festival Secretary and are also included with your entry form.

## LIGHTING AND SOUND OPERATION

It is **ESSENTIAL** that you bring your own Lighting and Sound operators to both the Technical Rehearsal and your performance. Although the Lighting Desk and Sound Equipment are close together at the rear of the auditorium it is not likely that one person could perform both functions. You should also ensure that they are familiar with your production and the operation of both Sound and Lighting equipment.

The Festival will provide a Sound and Lighting Technician at the Technical Rehearsal in order to programme the lighting board and assist with setting up your sound plot.

There will be at least one Technician in attendance at each performance session. However, **they will not** under any circumstances activate the cues or indeed set sound or light levels from the script. This is because these things are part of your artistic interpretation and are marked by the Festival Adjudicator accordingly.

Communications from sound and lighting areas to the back stage area and Stage Manager are provided via Headsets.

## SETTING AND STRIKING

In line with AETF rules groups have 10 minutes to set and 5 minutes to strike.

The first group on will be asked to erect their set prior to the auditorium doors being opened.

Groups will be asked by the Festival Staff if they are ready to start setting but should not start until agreed with the Time Keeper. Once you have set you should inform the Time Keeper that you have finished. You should then either return to your dressing room and await your 'Beginners' call, or wait backstage as directed by the Time Keeper. Once the clock for setting has been stopped, you will not be allowed on to the performance area. A 'Beginners' call will be given a few minutes before you are due to start and you must then inform the Time Keeper when your cast and crew are assembled backstage. Once the front of house clearance has been given and you are ready any Festival announcements will be given by a member of the Festival Staff and the procedure described in the next section will be followed to start the performance.

The second, and subsequent groups, will be asked to set up as soon as the previous group has completed the striking of their set. Groups **MUST** wait in the dressing rooms until called by a member of the Festival Staff. The striking company should return to the dressing room or take a seat in the Auditorium.

We would respectfully request cast members remove costumes and stage makeup before taking a seat in the auditorium.

It is essential that you liaise with the Time Keeper before the start and ending of your setting and striking time. Having told the Time Keeper you are ready, you must wait for him/her to tell you when to start, otherwise you will be penalized. Your designated person must tell the Time Keeper when to stop the clock when setting or striking is complete. After striking, the stage will be inspected by a member of the Festival staff to ensure that the stage has been left in a satisfactory condition and the clock will not be stopped until he/she is satisfied that the strike has been properly carried out.

## YOUR PERFORMANCE

At the start of your performance the Festival Staff will take the auditorium to black-out and then hand over to you to run your show. Headsets will be handed to you. Your time will start from the first thing you do (lighting cue, sound cue, spoken word or any movement other than cast coming on stage in the black-out ready to start on stage). You must have a final black-out at the end of your performance and your timing will stop at the black-out. Festival Staff will take over as soon as the timing has stopped.

Please remember that Festival Rules prohibit curtain calls.

Please note that the Festival Staff will check that your backstage crew, cast and technical crew are ready before the interval is concluded and the auditorium taken to black-out. You do not need to do this yourselves.

You are asked to arrange the opening of your performance so that the audience is not left in the dark for longer than a few moments. The Festival Stage Manager reserves the right to ask for the clock to be started if the duration of the black-out appears to be taking more than a reasonable time. The performance should commence once you have told us you are ready.

As there are only two dressing rooms, the first company performing will be asked to vacate their allocated dressing room as quickly as possible after their performance so that the third company can move in. The third company performing can wait in the Green Room until the first dressing room is vacated. Your co-operation in this matter is requested to ensure the smooth running of the Festival.

Please ensure that you can sort out any problems such as negotiating large casts or complex costume changes. We will do our best to accommodate your requirements, but we have to work within the limitations of the building.

## SAFETY

We need to ensure that everything we do is safe for everyone involved, performers, stage crews, audience and front of house staff. If you have any problems with regard to any aspect of your performance please discuss your concerns with the Festival Stage Manager at your technical rehearsal. In particular you should discuss:

1. Use of firearms (whether real or imitation).
2. Use of bladed weapons (knives, swords etc.) for fighting.
3. Pyrotechnics or other real flame effects, including candles.
4. Smoke machines, hazers, dry ice or any other atmospheric effect.
5. Use of strobes.
6. Smoking on stage.
7. Use of any portable electrical equipment including amplifiers.

On the night might be too late to tell us about your concerns and we reserve the right to stop anything that we consider to be unsafe.

## GENERAL

The Olympus Theatre is a smoke free area which also includes the car park.

You are advised not to leave valuables in the dressing rooms and it is suggested that you arrange for a member of your company to collect valuables and hold them until your performances is over. Neither the Festival nor the Theatre can take any responsibility for any theft or other loss.

The adjudication will take place shortly after the end of the final performance each evening. If you are coming into the auditorium to listen to the adjudication, you are requested to do so as quickly as possible and to stay until the end of the adjudicator's summing up.

No one is allowed in the dressing rooms except the actors and crew of the company competing, and the Festival staff when necessary. If you wish to meet up with members of the audience you should do so in the foyer.

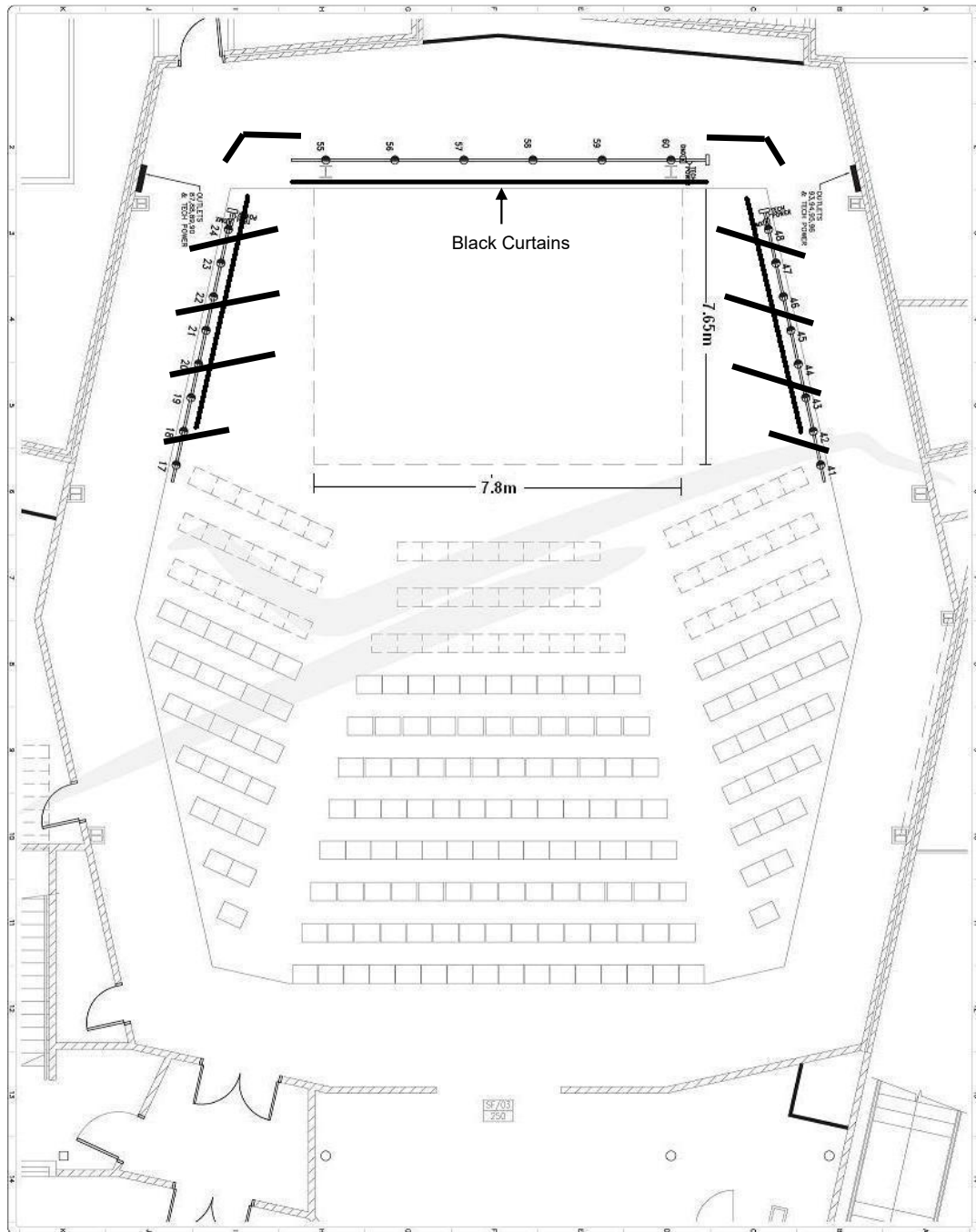
The Festival operates a Child Protection policy. Full details of this policy will be included in the entry pack for all known youth entry groups. However the policy applies to all cast members under the age of 16. Any production including a cast member under the age of 16 must comply with our policy, full details of which are available from the Festival Secretary.

The Festival and Technical Staff are anxious to ensure that you enjoy your visit to the Festival. The Rules and these notes are intended to make a level playing field for all competing groups and not to impose regulations for their own sake. The Festival Organising Committee reserves the right to make a final decision where interpretation of the rules is concerned.

Please remember that we are here to help you and, wherever possible, to assist you should any difficulties arise. Early warning of any concerns, either at your Technical Rehearsal or in advance, is preferable to a panic on the night. Please contact the Festival Secretary if any clarification is needed.

**Festival Organising Committee**

07/2026



- First Floor plan of The Olympus Theatre showing the dimensions of the main acting area directly below the Lighting Rig The full stage area extends each side to the curtain legs and beyond as marked.
- Entrances are upstage in each corner and three on each side masked with black curtain legs. An upstage centre entrance can be created by parting the back curtain but it is not a permanent feature,
- A white cyclorama in place of the back curtain is available on request.