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Research, Planning and Management Consultants  
Specializing in Theatre since 1981

# **INTRODUCTION TO PERFORMING ARTS TERMINOLOGY**

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## 1.0 THE PERFORMING ARTS

Music, dance, theatre and/or opera in a relationship between performers and an audience, conceived by an artist and performed in a venue.

### 1.1. Performing Arts Organizations

Performing arts organizations usually operate under one of three categories:

- as professional, not-for-profit organizations
- as professional, commercial organizations
- as amateur or community not-for-profit associations

More often than not, the term “performing arts organization” implies a professional, not-for-profit organization.

### 1.2. Performing Arts Venues

Performing arts venues are distinguished and defined by their mandate, mission, management, programming, type, stage and seating capacity.

**Mandate:** Generally refers to the legal purpose or perimeters within which an organization is entrusted to perform a service.

**Mission:** Usually describes the purpose in more specific terms, for example, **presenting** the arts to an audience; **renting** facilities to user groups; **producing** performing arts; or some **combination** of these three in an order of priority.

While the primary purpose of the not-for-profit performing arts is public service, these activities may also be described in business terms.

Depending upon the size of the facility and the market which it serves, these three programming arrangements are listed in order of their possible risks and potential returns:

- **Renting** - the management licenses or "rents" the use of its facility to a user group for a fixed fee or guaranteed minimum plus a percentage of box office receipts. Management assumes no responsibility for the choice of the event or its promotion.
- **Presenting** - the management buys a show for a fixed fee or cost-profit sharing agreement and promotes it to its audience with the aim of recovering costs and/or achieving a net surplus in ticket sales.
- **Producing** - the management, (usually a resident producing company) creates and finances a show and promotes it with the aim of recovering costs through box office, sponsorships, subsidy and/or future licensing agreements.

**Management:** Professional calibre, not-for-profit facilities are usually owned by governments, government agencies, not-for-profit facility corporations or resident theatre companies. They may be managed by the facility owner, a facility management entity or a resident producing company.

**Programming:** Music, dance, theatre and opera have subsets such as: popular versus classical music (or amplified music versus unamplified music); modern dance versus ballet; straight plays versus musical theatre; and operetta versus grand opera. Each programming subset has different physical, acoustical, visual and technical requirements of a performing arts venue.

**Theatre Types:** Concert hall, dance theatre, playhouse, musical theatre and opera house are all terms that imply a set of facility characteristics suited to a particular performing art. Multi-purpose facilities combine characteristics of two or more venues. Cinemas have a different set of characteristics from performing arts theatres.

**Stage Types:** Proscenium, thrust and arena stages refer to types of stages and seating arrangements applicable to venues primarily designed for dance, theatre and opera. A true concert hall has an end stage configuration with no division between the house and the audience.

**Seating Capacity:** Performing arts venues are financed by earned income from ticket sales or user group rental fees and such things as concessions and merchandising, as well as contributed income from donations and subsidies. In a theatre development process the choice of seating capacity and type of facility should be made on the basis of user group demand, potential audience size (or market share), the types of performances contemplated and a cost/benefit analysis. In general practice, seating capacities ranging from 100 - 599 seats are usually incubator spaces (for renting and producing), while venues with 600 to 2000 seats are often used as presenting spaces.

### 1.3. Performing Arts Centre

A performing arts centre is comprised of one or more performing arts venues and supporting facilities such as rehearsal space that reflects:

1. a vision for a city
2. needs of local user groups and/or
3. the needs of local audience and
4. an appreciation for the role of the arts in human society

A performing arts center usually has:

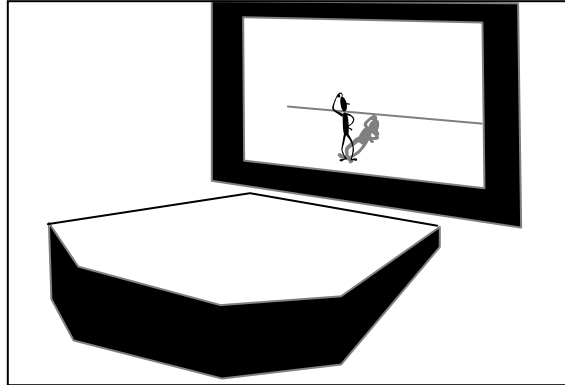
1. Two or more venues under one roof (a critical mass of facilities)
2. Supporting Facilities (Rehearsal, Production, Retail, etc.)
3. Complementary Facilities (Gallery, Studios, Cafe, etc.)

Performing arts centres create a "critical mass" of performing venues with the combination of two or more venues plus supporting facilities under one roof. While the capital cost is higher than it is when building one venue, the benefits are numerous:

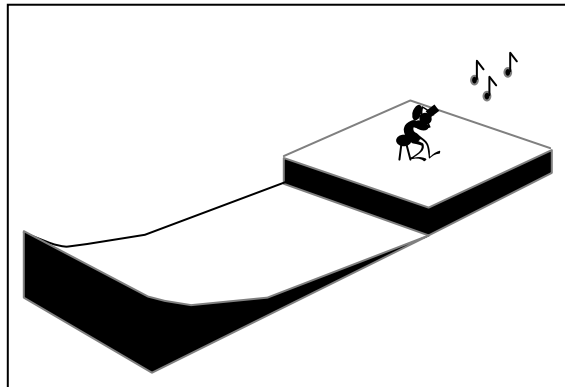
1. Allows for a broad range of programming
2. Provides user groups (clients) and audiences (customers) with **choice**
3. Satisfies community *and* audience demands
4. Allows a combination of incubator and presenting venues
5. Creates synergy between local and visiting artists
6. Improves revenue generating capacity
7. Provides economy of scale (multiple venues, one set of resources)
8. Mitigates operating risks
9. Offers exponential increases in economic impact

## 1.4 Stage Types

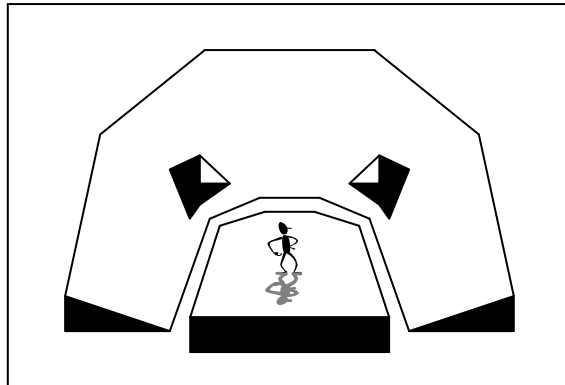
- **Proscenium or Picture Frame**



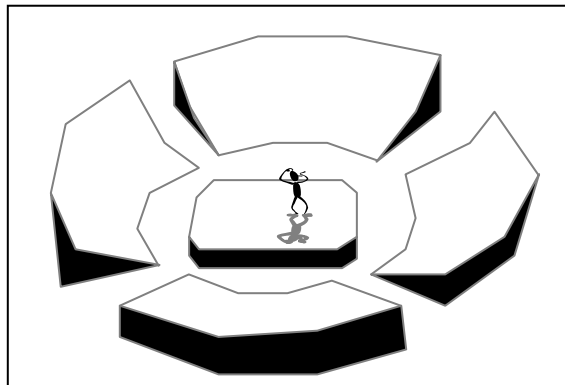
- **End Stage or Concert Hall**



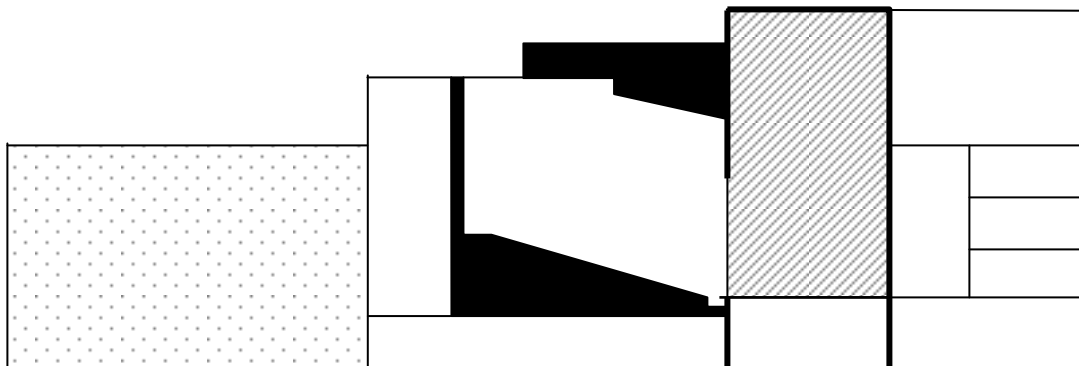
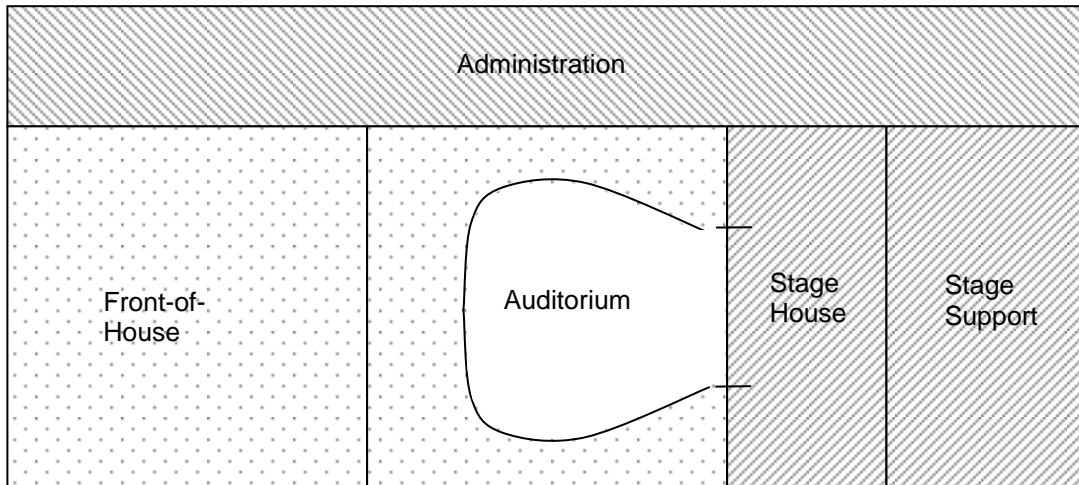
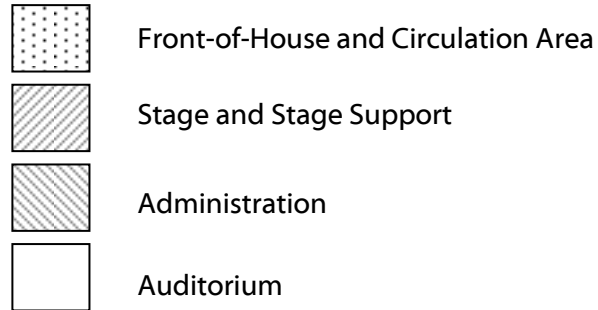
- **Thrust or Elizabethan Stage**



- **Arena or Theatre-in-the-Round**



## 1.5 KEY AREAS IN A PROSCENIUM THEATRE



## **2.0 GLOSSARIES**

### **2.1 Glossary of Theatre Terms**

#### **Acoustics**

The quality of sound in a given space, measured and analyzed by its clarity, loudness, liveliness, reverberance, echoes, dynamic range, envelopment, spaciousness, warmth and silence or noise control rating.

#### **Act Curtain**

The curtain behind the fire curtain and grand drape, if there is one, used to reveal or close a scene or act. Also known as the act drop, front curtain, house curtain. Traditionally, it is a one piece painted drop which is raised and lowered rather than drawn in two pieces like a grand drape.

#### **Apron**

That part of the stage floor which projects forward of the proscenium toward the audience. Also known as the forestage.

#### **Arbour**

That part of the rigging frame which holds the counterweights.

#### **Arena Theatre**

Theatre-in-the-round, where the audience surrounds the stage.

#### **Backdrop**

A suspended canvas or velour panel extending the full width of the performing area and providing the background for a performance.

#### **Backstage**

Usually used as a synonym for offstage but may include any space outside the stagehouse used by performers or crew.

#### **Barre**

A support used for ballet practice.

#### **Batten**

An overhead length of steel pipe to which scenery, drapery or lighting equipment is attached. Part of the rigging system, the battens run across the stage parallel to the proscenium and are suspended from the grid.

#### **Belaying Pin**

Metal pins, often removable, to which rigging roped are lashed at the pin rail.



**Boom**

In stage lighting, a vertical length of pipe on which stage lighting fixtures are mounted one above the other. They are used most often for side lighting from the wings (tormentor booms) or for lighting from positions along the side walls of the auditorium (box boom).

**Border**

Overhead masking (curtains or canvas) that forms the upper edge of the stage picture and that conceals battens and other hanging equipment from the view of the audience. Also called "teaser."

**Border Lights**

Lighting fixtures used to light scenic borders and drops.

**Bridge**

A steel walkway, usually placed parallel to the stage, from which lights may be hung or operators may work.

**Carbon Arc**

Intense light created by an electric arc between two carbon electrodes. Carbon arc lamps are used in followspots where long throws are required and where a strong light is needed to stand out against other stage lighting.

**Changeover**

Preparing a theatre for a new program or show by rearranging or changing scenery, props and lighting equipment.

**Colour Media**

Coloured glass, plastic or gelatin filters, fitted in front of a stage lighting fixture to colour the beam it emits.

**Control Console**

Unit used for remote control of the entire stage lighting system.

**Counterweight Arbor/Carriage**

Device holding steel or lead weights in stacks, used to counterbalance the load suspended from a rigging batten. Moving the carriage up or down along tracks or guide wires causes the batten and its load to move in the opposite direction.

**Counterweight Rigging System**

A mechanical system for flying scenery. In this arrangement, lines from a rigging batten run up to loftblocks (pulleys) above a grid, and then across the top of the stagehouse to a side wall. The lines are then gathered at a headblock and directed down the side wall to the counterweight arbour.

**Crossover**

A corridor for performers and crew, hidden behind a backdrop or cyclorama or running behind the stagehouse, allowing passage from one side of the stage to the other out of view of the audience.

**Cue**

In performance, a signal for action. The term applies to performers as well as the technical crew.

**Cue Lights**

A special lighting system to signal stage personnel to make an entrance or shift a scene.

**Curtain Line**

The line across the stage behind the proscenium which marks the position of the front curtain when it is closed.

**Cyclorama (or Cyc)**

A neutral background, often made of fabric, at the upstage limit of the performing area, generally used to represent sky.

**Cyc Trap**

A trough in the stage floor located immediately downstage of the cyclorama, containing lighting equipment used to light its lower half.

**Deck**

The stage floor.

**Dimmer**

An electrical device that regulates the flow of current to a lighting fixture, thus controlling the intensity of the lamp.

**Dimmer Bank/Dimmer Rack**

An array of stage lighting dimmers and associated wiring and circuit breakers, contained in a cabinet.

**Dimmer-per-Circuit System**

A dimmer system in which each branch circuit in the stage lighting system is permanently wired to its own dimming device and circuit breaker, eliminating the need for a patch panel.

**Downstage**

The front of the performing area; i.e., that part of the stage nearest the audience.

**Dress Circle**

A British term referring to the first balcony, (often referred to in the United States as the mezzanine or grand tier).

**Drop**

A scenic element, usually made of canvas, running the full width of the stage. It is suspended from a rigging batten and stiffened at the bottom by pipe.

**Economic Impact**

Relating to practical significance in consumption of goods and services, direct and indirect.

**Electronic Memory Lighting Control**

Lighting control system that stores in computer memory all cues and presets of a given stage lighting design.

**Fire Curtain** (short for "Fireproof Curtain")

An asbestos, fire-resistant fabric or steel curtain that, in the event of a fire, is automatically lowered to isolate the stagehouse from the audience.

**Flat**

A scenery panel, usually constructed of canvas stretched over a wooden frame and painted. "Two fold" and "book flats" are free-standing and constructed in hinged sections.

**Floor Pockets**

Electrical outlets in the stage floor, with hinged covers.

**Fly Floor (or Fly Gallery)**

An elevated platform along the side wall of the stagehouse, from which stagehands operate the rigging system.

**Fly**

To raise or lower scenery and equipment above the performing area by means of a rigging system.

**Fly Space (or Flies)**

The space above the stage into which scenery and lighting equipment are raised out of sight of the audience.

**Followspot**

Movable spotlight that pivots both horizontally and vertically, allowing a stagehand to aim it at any portion of the performing area or to "follow" a performer.

**Footlights**

A row of lights at the downstage edge of the stage, usually concealed in a trough.

**Four Walls Rental House**

A theatre which is offered for rental without any movable theatrical furnishings, such as stage lighting fixtures, dimming system, draperies, or related production equipment.

**Front-of-House (or F.O.H.)**

Any part of the theatre, such as the auditorium or lobby, which is usually accessible to the public. Front-of-house lighting positions are located in the auditorium rather than in the stagehouse.

**Grand Drape**

A fixed, decorative drapery hung at the top of the proscenium arch.

**Gridiron (or Grid)**

The openwork steel floor and associated structure placed above the stage to support the stage rigging and to provide access to it.

**Grid Height**

The distance between the stage floor and the upper surface of the gridiron.

**Hanging Plan**

A plan or series of drawings specifying the location of all scenery, masking, and stage lighting equipment for a particular production.

**Headblock**

A multigrooved drum, or sandwich of independent pulleys, at which two or more lines of a stage rigging set are gathered; the lines are directed downwards to a counterweight carriage or pin rail where they can be manipulated as a group.

**Headblock Beam**

A structural steel beam directly above the counterweight array, the beam supports the headblocks and carries the vertical load of the counterweights plus the horizontal load of the rigging battens.

**House**

The auditorium or seating area.

**House Curtain**

A decorative curtain between the auditorium and the performing area. It may be drawn open horizontally or flown vertically.

**Hydraulic Stage Lift**

An elevator system using fluid pressure to raise and lower the orchestra pit or sections of the stage.

**Intercom System**

The communications system through which the stage manager maintains voice contact with the production crew during a performance or rehearsal.

**Jumper Cables**

Flexible stage lighting cables; electrical extension cords.

**Legs**

Masking curtains hung vertically and parallel to the sides of the proscenium. Legs define the sides of the performing area and hide offstage areas from the view of the audience.

**Lighting Instrument**

Portable stage lighting fixture, usually mounted in position with clamps.

**Lighting Ladders**

Steel frames on which lighting instruments are mounted. Suspended in the wings, lighting ladders leave the stage floor unobstructed.

**Light Plot**

A diagram showing the location of all lighting fixtures and equipment required for a given stage lighting design.

**Loading Bridge**

A high platform, adjacent to the stagehouse wall, used by stagehands to adjust loads in counterweight arbors.

**Load-In/Load-Out**

Load-in is the process of unloading from trucks, unpacking and setting up all of the scenery, costumes, sound, lighting and other equipment required for a particular production or performance. Load-out is the reverse.

**Loftblock**

Stage rigging device, consisting of a single grooved wheel or multigrooved drum attached to the roof steel or grid floor, which transfers one of the lines supporting a rigging batten to the headblock.

**Masking**

Stage draperies and flats used at the side limits of the performing space to conceal offstage areas and equipment from the audience's view. (See also **Legs** and **Borders**).

**Offstage**

Usually a synonym for backstage, but can include any area beyond the wings and out of sight of the audience.

**On Stage**

Within the performing area; in view of the audience.

**Orchestra Rail**

The railing separating the orchestra pit from the audience.

**Orchestra Shell**

A portable structure used on stage to surround an orchestra or smaller musical group. Curving behind the orchestra, the shell directs sound to the audience.

**Paint Frame**

A vertical frame that holds a backdrop in place for painting. It is often able to be moved up and down so that an artist can reach every part of the backdrop.

**Patch Panel**

Electrical switchboard allowing any branch circuit in the stage lighting system to be assigned to any dimmer.

**Performance Monitoring/Paging System**

A communication system that carries the sound of a performance to performers and crew backstage and permits the stage manager to make announcements to all backstage locations.

**Performing Area**

That portion of the stage seen by the audience.

**Pin Rail**

In a stage rigging system, the tubular steel railing fitted with belaying pins to which the free end of a rigging line is tied off.

**Portal**

A neutral border of wood, canvas or other material within the proscenium opening, which acts like a mat around a painting.

**Presenting Organization**

A local organization that contracts with independent performing arts groups or producers. The "presenter" essentially buys a prepackaged show, promotes it, sells tickets, and guarantees a minimum fee or share of the box office receipts.

**Preset**

In stage lighting, the ability to set all dimmers at the levels required for a particular cue, in advance of executing the actual lighting change.

**Producing Organization**

An organization that creates its own work for performance. Management typically includes an administrative and an artistic staff.

**Props (or Properties)**

Furniture, set decor and small, moveable items used onstage.

**Proscenium**

The wall which divides the stagehouse from the auditorium. The opening through which the audience views the stage is known as the proscenium arch.

**Purchase Line**

Manila line pulled by a stagehand operating a counterweight rigging system. Pulling the line, which is tied to a counterweight arbour, moves the attached rigging batten and its load of scenery or other equipment.

**Rake**

The slope of the stage or auditorium and balcony floors. A raked stage slopes from the stage apron towards the rear wall of the stagehouse (hence the terms "upstage" and "downstage").

**Repertoire**

A company's stock of works available for performance.

**Repertory**

A performance schedule in which different works are presented on an alternating or rotating basis.

**Rigging Set/Line Set**

Rigging batten and all lines and associated equipment required for its operation.

**Risers**

Vertical surfaces between the steps in a stairway, or between stepped platforms.

**Road Box**

Large crates on wheels, used to ship a touring company's scenery, costumes, equipment, etc.

**Roof Steel**

Structural steel framework that supports the stagehouse roof and to which the grid and loftblocks are often attached.

**Running Crew**

Stagehands who work during a performance, rather than in backstage construction shops or during load-in or load-out.

**Scene Dock**

A place on or adjacent to the stage where scenery is kept when not in use.

**Scenery**

Built or painted elements of the stage picture, including backdrops, flats and wagons.

**Scrim**

A loosely woven drop, opaque to the audience when lit from the front, yet nearly transparent when lit from behind.

**Sheave**

Grooved wheel or pulley over which a rigging line passes when changing direction.

**Shift**

To change scenery or props from one setting to another.

**Side Lighting**

Lighting aimed at the performing area from the wings.

**Sightlines**

Theatre geometry that plots an audience's view of the performing area. Analysis of the vertical and horizontal sightlines predicts the views from different seats in the house.

**Smoke Pocket**

The vertical steel track in which the asbestos or fire curtain travels.

**Sound Effects System**

Combined equipment that distributes recorded music and sound effects throughout the auditorium.

**Stage**

The performing area and those areas offstage in its immediate vicinity, all bounded by the stagehouse walls.

**Stagehand**

Any stage crew member who works with scenery, props, sound or stage lighting.

**Stagehouse**

In a proscenium theatre, the structure containing the performing area and offstage space. The term is generally reserved for theatres with full-height, counterweight rigging systems or low-grid rigging systems.

**Stage Left**

To the left of a performer as he faces the audience. To the audience's right.

**Stage Right**

To the right of a performer as he faces the audience. To the audience's left.

**Straight-Lift (or Single Purchase) Counterweight Rigging**

A rigging system in which the vertical run of a counterweight arbour equals the vertical distance traveled by a flying batten.

**Strike**

To dismantle and load out a production following its run or to remove a piece of stage equipment from its playing position.



**T-Bar System**

A counterweight rigging system employing T-shaped steel tracks. The tracks guide the counterweight arbours as they slide up and down the stagehouse wall.

**Tab Curtain**

A curtain which opens to the sides and up, creating a draped effect.

**Thrust Theatre**

A theatre where the performing area projects into the auditorium and is surrounded by seating on three sides.

**Tormentor (or Torm)**

Generally refers to the first adjustable leg or portal downstage.

**Tormentor Boom**

Vertical steel pipe in the wings, to which stage lighting fixtures are attached for side lighting.

**Traps**

Removable sections of stage floor which allow access to the performing area from below.

**Traveler**

A curtain that may be drawn open or closed on horizontal tracks.

**Traveler Track**

The slotted steel tracks on which travelers are hung.

**Trim**

The height at which a piece of scenery, masking or other element is intended to hang above the stage floor. To level off a piece of hung scenery to the correct height for a performance.

**Tripping**

Where the grid height is too low to fly backdrops completely out of view, secondary battens are used to fly the bottoms of the drops.

**Turntable**

A revolving platform used for shifting scenery.

**Upstage**

The rear of the performing area; that part of the stage which is farthest from the audience.

**Valence**

At the top of a proscenium arch, the fixed, decorative element framing the top of the border or grand drape.

**Viewing Room**

An enclosed room at the rear of the auditorium, from which directors, designers, choreographers, etc. can watch a rehearsal or performance.

**Vomitory**

In a thrust or arena theatre, a ramped or stepped tunnel giving performers access to the stage from beneath the seating area.

**Wagon**

A wheeled platform on which scenery is assembled and rolled on and off the stage as a single scenic element.

**Wing**

A piece of scenery, usually freestanding, which is used to mask the view offstage into the wings.

**Wings**

In a proscenium theatre, the offstage spaces located to the immediate left and right of the stage.

## 2.2 Glossary of Heritage Terms

### **Adaptive Reuse**

The recycling of a structure for a new use.

### **Architectural Conservation**

In its most general sense, refers to any physical intervention which aims to prevent the decay or deterioration of a structure or building.

### **Interpretation**

An educational process intended to reveal value of an historic site or other information about it to an observer.

### **Preservation**

A generic term for the broad range of activities associated with the restoration, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures. In its specific sense, preservation refers to the stopping of those processes which are resulting in the deterioration of a building.

### **Reconstitution**

The piece by piece reassembly of structure either in situ or on another site.

### **Reconstruction**

The recreation of a non-existent building (or elements thereof) on the original site.

### **Rehabilitation**

Often used interchangeably with renovation to describe the modification of an existing building in order to return it to a useful state. The Secretary of the Interior defines rehabilitation as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values."

### **Remodeling**

The upgrading or replacing of interior components, most frequently in rooms such as kitchens or bathrooms.

### **Renovation**

A generic term used to describe various levels of intervention including remodeling, recycling and rehabilitation. In general, it refers to the improvement of existing buildings or neighbourhoods.

### **Restoration**

The process of returning a building or site to the way it looked at a particular period in time. This may include the replacement or reproduction of missing elements as well as the removal of changes from intervening periods.

**Retrofitting**

The upgrading of an existing building to meet code requirements.

**Revitalization**

The process of economic, social and cultural redevelopment of an area or street.

**Stabilization**

The process of intervention used ensure the short or long term consolidation of a structure.

## 2.3 Glossary of Architectural Terms

### **Acanthus**

A plant found in the Mediterranean region, the leaves of which are freely imitated on the capitals of the Corinthian and Composite orders and on various decorative mouldings.

### **Adamesque**

After Robert Adam (1728-92), a Scottish architect and designer known for his refined, elegant classicism.

### **Arcade**

A range of arches raised on columns or piers, can be either free-standing or "blind" (applied to a wall).

### **Architrave**

In classical architecture, the lowermost division of the entablature, above which is the frieze and the cornice.

### **Art Deco**

A popular decorative style of the 1920's and 1930's, characterized by bold outlines and streamlined forms. The name derives from the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs, an exhibition of decorative and industrial art held in Paris in 1925.

### **Art Nouveau**

A popular decorative style of the 1890's characterized by elegant curvilinear forms derived from nature.

### **Astragal**

A small moulding of circular profile.

### **Baluster**

One of a series of upright members supporting a railing on a stairway or balcony.

### **Balustrade**

A series of balusters supporting a railing.

### **Bay**

The space between any two of a series of similar architectural members, usually structural supports.

### **Beaux-Arts**

After the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, the French state school of art education. The style had a major effect on architectural design in the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

**Bracket**

A wooden or metal member projecting from a wall to help support an overhanging element.

**Bukrania**

Carved representations of ox skulls, often found in the metopes of Doric friezes.

**Buttress**

Masonry support built against a wall to give added strength.

**Capital**

The head or crowing feature of a column.

**Cartouche**

Bas-relief in the form of an ornamental tablet.

**Chamfered**

Bevelled or canted corner.

**Classicism**

A revival of or return to the principles of Greek or Roman architecture.

**Coade Stone**

An artificial cast stone widely used for ornamentation.

**Coffer**

A recessed panel in a ceiling.

**Colonnade**

A row of columns supporting an entablature, roof or series of arches.

**Column**

An upright support, circular in plan and consisting of base, circular shaft and capital. It is situated below and carrying the entablature.

**Composite**

One of the classical orders, combining elements of the Ionic and Corinthian orders.

**Console**

An ornamental, S-shaped bracket, with one end broader than the other.

**Corbel**

A projecting block, supporting a beam or other horizontal member.

**Corinthian**

One of the classical orders, distinguished from the Ionic by its capital decorated with acanthus leaves.

**Cornice**

In classical architecture, the uppermost division of the entablature, below which is the frieze and the architrave. The term is loosely applied to almost any horizontal decorative moulding, especially at the junction of walls and ceilings.

**Course**

A continuous, horizontal row of masonry units in a wall.

**Cove**

A large, concave moulding.

**Damask**

A rich fabric of silk, linen or wool woven with elaborate patterns against a flat background.

**Dentils**

Small rectangular blocks ranged in a series to form a tooth-like moulding.

**Doric**

One of the classical orders, distinguished by columns with no base, fluted shafts and plain, saucer shaped capitals.

**Egg and Dart (or Egg and Tongue)**

A moulding with a pattern of alternating egg-shaped ovals and pointed arrowheads.

**Elevation**

A two-dimensional drawing of the front, side or back of a building.

**Entablature**

In classical architecture, the horizontal beam consisting of architrave, frieze and cornice, situated above and spanning the columns. Various proportions and ornamented, depending on the order.

**Facade**

The front or principal face of a building; sometimes one of its sides.

**Fascia**

A plain horizontal band.

**Faux Marble**

A surface painted and glazed to give the appearance of marble.  
(See also "Scagliola")

**Fillet**

A narrow, flat, raised band.

**Fluting**

Shallow, concave grooves running vertically on the shaft of a column, pilaster or other surface.

**Fret**

A geometrical pattern of horizontal and vertical lines repeated to form an ornament (also known as a "key pattern").

**Frieze**

In classical architecture, the middle division of the entablature, between the cornice and the architrave, often figurally sculpted in bas relief. Also refers to any decorated band around the top of a wall.

**Gilding**

The overlaying of a surface with a thin coating of metal.

**Hipped Roof**

A roof with four sloping sides.

**Ionic**

One of the classical orders, distinguished by columns with moulded bases, fluted shafts and capitals with volutes.

**Keystone**

Centre voussoir that locks an arch into place, often oversized and decorated.

**Lintel**

A horizontal structural member spanning an opening.

**Lunette**

A semicircular opening or tympanum. The term can also be applied to any flat, semicircular opening.

**Mansard**

In North America, commonly a steep, storey high roof, named for Francois Mansart, the 17th century French architect who developed the form.

**Marquee**

A permanent canopy, often of metal and glass, sheltering the entrance to a building.

**Metope**

The space between two triglyphs in a frieze of the Doric order.

**Modillion**

A small bracket or console, a series of which is often used to support the upper member of a Corinthian or Composite cornice.



**Motif**

A distinctive element which is repeated frequently throughout a design.

**Neoclassicism**

A return to the principles of classical architecture beginning in the 1750s, in response to the excesses of the late Baroque and Rococo styles. In general, Neoclassical buildings are solid and somewhat severe, with restrained ornamentation.

**Newel Post**

A decorative post, usually located at the foot of a staircase or landing.

**Order**

In classical architecture, the structural unit composed of columns and entablature. There are five orders (Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Composite and Tuscan) each with its own established proportions.

**Palladian**

After Andrea Palladio (1518-1580), an influential Italian Renaissance architect. A Palladian window consists of an arched opening flanked by smaller, flat topped openings, after a design associated with Palladio.

**Pavilion**

Unit of a building projecting from the main mass.

**Pediment**

In classical architecture, the triangular area above the entablature of a portico. Any similar triangular section used as decoration above a window or door.

**Pier**

A solid masonry support, as distinct from a column.

**Pilaster**

The representation in relief of a column, flattened and attached to a wall as decoration.

**Pillar**

The general term for an upright support, which need not be cylindrical or conform to any of the orders.

**Plan**

The horizontal arrangement of the parts of a building or a drawing showing such arrangement as a horizontal section.

**Portico**

In classical architecture, a large porch with its roof carried by an entablature and columns and often having a pediment.

**Reinforced Concrete**

Concrete with mesh or steel rods inserted in order to make it strong in tension as well as compression.

**Relieving Arch**

An arch built flush in a wall above the top member of a framed opening in order to relieve it of superincumbent weight.

**Rotunda**

A building or room, circular in plan and usually domed.

**Rustication**

Masonry with deep-set joints to exaggerate the look of weight and scale; the surface of the stone can be smooth or roughly textured.

**Scagliola**

A faux marble technique whereby pigments are mixed with the wet plaster, cast in place and polished to give the appearance of fine marble.

**Section**

An architectural drawing showing a building or object as if were cut open along a plane passing vertically through it.

**Segmental**

Referring to an arch or curved member having a circular profile, though less than a full circle.

**Shaft**

The cylindrical, middle division of a column, between the capital and the base.

**Sill**

Horizontal element at the bottom of a window frame.

**Soffit**

The underside of any architectural member.

**String Course**

A continuous horizontal band set in the surface of an exterior wall and extending slightly from it.

**Swag (or Festoon)**

A carved ornament consisting of a garland of fruit and flowers, tied with ribbons and suspended at both ends to form a loop. Commonly used in friezes.

**Terra Cotta**

Literally "baked earth." Consists of clay moulded and fired to form tiles, paving, decorative panels and other ornamentation. Available in a wide variety of colours and surface textures, it was widely used during the early 20th century as an exterior cladding for buildings.

**Terrazzo**

A flooring material consisting of small pieces of marble or granite set in mortar and given a high polish.

**Transom**

Horizontal bar dividing a window into lights. A horizontal window above a door or another window.

**Triglyphs**

Blocks separating the metopes in a Doric frieze.

**Tuscan**

One of the Roman classical orders, similar to the Roman Doric but the shaft of the column is always unfluted.

**Tympanum**

A wall or other area demarcated by a lintelled opening and an arch above it.

**Vermiculation**

Worm-like squiggles cut into dressed stone as decoration.

**Volute**

A spiral-shaped ornament, prominent in the capitals of the Ionic and Composite orders.

**Vousoir**

One of a series of wedge-shaped blocks forming an arch.