



501(c)3 A designation by the Internal Revenue Service for not-for-profit businesses, like hospitals, schools, and arts institutions, that provide a public service; a 501(c)3 designation authorizes a business to accept charitable contributions, relieves it of the obligation to pay certain taxes, and prohibits it from distributing profits to investors.

act A lengthy segment of a play, comprising several scenes.

action (1) An event that changes the status quo in the plot of a play; (2) something done by a character; (3) what a character does to overcome an obstacle to achieving his objective; a part of the Stanislavsky System of acting.

actor A person who performs a role in a play or film.

aesthetic distance A description for the condition in which an audience is close enough to the stage to be emotionally involved in a play yet far enough away to be physically separated from it; the proper “aesthetic distance” gives the audience the most rewarding experience of a performance.

agent A person who represents an actor by soliciting employment and negotiating contracts in exchange for 10 percent of the actor’s salary.

agitprop An adjective describing political drama; derived from “agitation” and “propaganda.”

amateur theatre Theatre produced and performed by people who are not paid and who do it for the love of doing it.

American seating Theatre seats that are divided into sections by aisles running perpendicular to the stage.

anchor To secure something, typically by tying it to the floor of the stage; the term derives from nautical use.

angel An investor in a commercial theatre production.

apron The portion of the stage that protrudes closer to the audience than the proscenium arch.

arbor A cage that stageweights are placed into as part of the counterweight system for lowering scenery from the fly loft to the stage.

arena theatre A theatre with seats completely surrounding a stage that is circular, oval, square, or rectangular; sometimes referred to as theatre-in-the-round.

artistic director The administrative head of a not-for-profit theatre company whose responsibilities include selection of the plays to be produced and the directors, designers, and actors.

- aside** Lines spoken by a character directly to the audience that the other characters pretend they don't hear.
- assistant stage manager** A person who assists the stage manager during rehearsals and performances and has a wide range of responsibilities.
- associative logic** A description of how a mind moves from one idea to another through the associations between the two ideas instead of through direct cause and effect.
- audience** One or more persons gathered to participate in a performance.
- audition** A process by which actors are selected for roles; it involves actors performing short portions of a play or song; the word is derived from "audio" meaning "to hear."
- auditorium** The portion of a theatre where the audience sits or stands; derived from "the hearing place" in ancient Roman theatres.
- backdrops** Large, two-dimensional painted scenery hung from battens in the flies.
- backstage** The stage house space of a theatre that the audience does not see, and any support spaces in which scenery and costumes are constructed and stored.
- balcony** Seating on a level above the main-floor orchestra seats.
- ballad opera** An eighteenth-century English form of play with songs inserted into it; *The Beggar's Opera* is the best-known example.
- batten** A pipe or pole hung in the fly loft of a stage house on which scenery and lighting equipment are hung; one part of the counterweight system.
- beat** The smallest segment of an actor's role; a subdivision of a "unit" during which a very simple objective is achieved.
- black box theatre** A theatre space that is an empty space painted black and that may be adapted to whatever play is performed in it; it is usually small and used for experimental theatre.
- blocking** The patterns of movement of the actors on the stage, developed in rehearsal under the director's supervision.
- book musical** A form of musical that tells part of its story through songs and dances; an American contribution to the development of musical theatre.
- book writer** The person who writes the dialogue, nonmusical scenes in a musical.
- box seats** Seats in a specially partitioned section of the auditorium, usually on the side wall and close to the stage and usually more expensive than other seats.
- box set** Three-sided scenery used in a proscenium arch theatre to create the illusion of a real room with the "fourth wall" removed.
- breakdown** A list of the characters in a play that is sent from a casting director to actors' agents as part of the process of casting the roles in a play.
- Broadway** (1) The wide avenue that runs diagonally through Manhattan from southeast to northwest; (2) the section of midtown Manhattan in which most commercial theatres are located; (3) a description of com-

- mercial theatre; (4) a description of high-quality theatre; (5) a description of popular theatre that does not challenge the values of society.
- bus-and-truck tour** The name of a commercial tour in which the actors travel by bus and the scenery travels in a truck.
- call-back** An audition for which actors have been “called back” by the producer and director for a second reading.
- carpenter** A scene shop technician who builds scenery; the name dates from a time when most scenery was constructed from wood.
- casting director** A person hired by a producer or theatre to organize auditions and to select actors from among those submitted by agents.
- causal logic** A deductive way of understanding a sequence of events that discovers the way each event is caused by another; it is the most common way an actor analyzes a role and a critic analyzes a play.
- changing booth** A temporary or permanent place close to the stage where actors change their costumes; sometimes called a “quick change booth.”
- character** (1) The second in Aristotle’s ranking of the six elements of theatre, which he described as “the agent for the action”; (2) a fictional being in a playwright’s script.
- character/scene plot** A chart, usually in the form of a grid, that shows which characters are in each scene of a play; used by directors, costume designers, and stage managers.
- charge artist** The supervisor of the scene-painting crew.
- choregus** (1) Ancient Greek name for the wealthy citizen who financed the production of a play; (2) the leader of the speaking chorus in Greek drama.
- choreographer** The person who creates the dances in a production; a fight choreographer creates the moves for stage violence.
- chorus** (1) The characters in ancient Greek drama who spoke, sang, and danced portions of the drama not spoken by the main characters; (2) the singers and dancers in a musical.
- cinematic structure** The arrangement of the plot of a play that presents flashbacks and subjective scenes in other than chronological order.
- circuit** The path of electricity from an outlet to a computer dimmerboard.
- Classicism** A theatrical style in which the artist strives to imitate an idealized reality based on the power of reason; Classicism commonly is associated with the ancient Greek notion of “the golden mean,” in which excess is considered improper and balance and proportion are considered desirable.
- coaching** The advice, instruction, and encouragement a director gives an actor.
- color media** A thin sheet of colored plastic placed in front of a theatrical lamp; called a “gel” in earlier times because it was made from gelatin.
- comedy** The genre of play that makes you laugh, has plots that end happily, and reaffirms the values you hold to be important.
- comedy of manners** A comic play that derives its humor from the language and behavior of the characters; see also “high comedy.”

- commercial theatre** Theatre produced for the primary purpose of making a profit on the financial investment.
- community theatre** Theatre produced by and for people in a local community who volunteer their time and work.
- complex plot** A plot that interweaves more than one story, that includes “subplots.”
- composer** A musician who creates the score for a production.
- computer dimmerboard** A computer-driven control system used in theatre lighting.
- computer dimmerboard operator** The technician on the lighting crew who operates the dimmerboard based on commands from the stage manager.
- conclusion** The final segment of a play in which all subplots are resolved.
- context (actor’s)** The space, people, and time that influence an actor’s preparation of a role.
- contextual structure** The arrangement and sequence of scenes in a play that is determined by their relationship to a central theme instead of by a chronological or cause-and-effect logic.
- continental seating** An arrangement of seats undivided by aisles, with each row of seats reaching from one side of the auditorium to the other.
- continuous linear plot** A plot with a linear structure that unfolds without any gaps in the chronology of events.
- control booth** A small booth, usually located at the back of the auditorium, where the stage manager and the sound and light board operators work during a performance.
- convention** A rule or procedure in the theatre that is understood by actors and audience alike, in the same way that the rules of a sport are understood; the “convention of the fourth wall” is a good example.
- convention of the fourth wall** The mutual understanding between audience and performers that there is an invisible “fourth wall” at the front of the stage and that the audience pretends the actors do not know it is there and the actors pretend they don’t know the audience is present; this convention developed with the style of Realism and the use of a box set.
- corporations** Profit-making businesses; one of the sources of contributed income for not-for-profit theatres.
- corrales** Open-air theatres in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Spain that were similar to the public theatres used in Shakespeare’s England.
- costume crafts artisans** Specialized craftspersons on the costume crew who do millinery and other specialty work.
- costume list** A list of what each actor will wear from the skin out.
- costume plot** A list showing the order in which costumes are worn.
- costume shop** The area of a theatre where costumes are built.
- costume storage** The area where costumes are stored when not in use; sometimes called the “racks.”

- counterweight system** A system of battens, cables, pulleys, and weights that facilitates raising and lowering scenery.
- crafts shop** A subdivision of the costume and property shops where specialty items are built.
- crew** The backstage workers in any of a theatre's departments; the name is a carryover from the eighteenth century, when backstage workers were recruited among mariners.
- crisis** The moment in the unfolding of the plot when a change happens that leads inevitably to the resolution of the dramatic question; also called the "turning point."
- critic** Someone who analyzes, describes, and offers an evaluation of a play or performance.
- crossover** A passage actors use to get from one side of the stage to the other.
- cross section** A scale line drawing of the scenery seen from the side of the stage showing how each piece of scenery will be installed in the theatre.
- cue** (1) The theatrical term for any change in lighting or sound effects; (2) the moment when any scenery moves; (3) the line of dialogue or physical activity that comes immediately before a character speaks.
- cue sheet** A list of things to be done by a crew member during a performance, referenced to lines in the script or actions on the stage.
- curtain call** A post-performance ritual in which the actors bow and the audience applauds.
- cutter** A specially trained person in the costume crew who makes paper and fabric patterns and cuts the cloth from which the costumes will be built.
- cutting table** A high table in the costume shop on which patterns are made and cloth is cut.
- deck** Another name for the floor of the stage.
- description** The portions of a playwright's script that are not dialogue.
- Determinism** A philosophy that holds that humans are shaped by genetic and environmental forces.
- deus ex machina** A Latin phrase meaning "god from the machine," used to describe the resolution of the plot of a play by external means.
- dialogue** The speeches the characters say; the playwright's primary material.
- dianoia** The Greek word for "the process of thought," used by scholars to name the third-ranked of Aristotle's six elements of theatre.
- diction** The choice and arrangement of words by the playwright that give a play its distinctive tone; not to be confused with "articulation," the preciseness of an actor's speech.
- didaskolos** A specialist in ancient Greek theatre who instructed the chorus in speech and movement (the first part of the word "didaskolos" comes from the same stem as the word "didactic" and suggests our word "teacher"); an antecedent of the modern director.
- direct mail** A form of marketing used by not-for-profit theatres.

- discipline (actor's)** The conscious application of an actor's skill, time, and talent to achieve an optimal performance.
- dissertation** A lengthy scholarly work required of Ph.D. candidates.
- domestic comedy** A comic play with a domestic setting and middle-class characters.
- drama** A category of play that is serious but not tragic.
- dramatic question** The question posed early in a play's plot that keeps the audience interested until it is answered at the plot's resolution.
- dramaturg** The literary consultant to a theatre; the word is borrowed from German.
- draper** A specially trained person in the costume shop who shapes costumes on a dress form.
- dress circle** A name for the first balcony of seating; commonly used in England.
- dresser** A member of the wardrobe crew who helps actors change costumes.
- dress form** A freestanding human shape on which costumes are fitted.
- dressing room** The backstage room where actors change into their costumes.
- dress rehearsal** A rehearsal near the end of the rehearsal period when the actors first wear their costumes; a dress rehearsal normally is scheduled after the technical rehearsals have been completed.
- drop** A large painted cloth hung from a batten as part of the scenery.
- dyer** A member of the costume crew whose specialty is dyeing fabrics.
- dye room** A ventilated room near the costume shop with dye vats and equipment to change the color of fabric.
- dynamics** The changes in tempo and volume that a director uses to shape the emotional impact of a play.
- educational theatre** The name for theatre produced in schools, whose primary function is to train students.
- electrician** A technician on the electrical crew.
- elevators** Machines used to raise and lower scenery.
- emotional recall** A tool of the Stanislavsky System of acting by which an actor remembers how he or she felt in a similar situation in real life and substitutes that feeling for the character's emotional state during the performance of a role.
- empathy** The human capacity for experiencing another's emotion.
- end stage theatre** A theatre with the stage at one end of a large space but without a proscenium arch formally separating the stage from the auditorium; commonly built in rooms not originally intended for performance.
- ensemble musical** A musical that does not have starring roles, such as *Rent* or *A Chorus Line*.
- environmental theatre** A kind of theatrical performance popularized by Richard Schechner, two traits of which are multiple actions happening simultaneously and continual readjustment of the performers' and the audience's spaces.

- episodic linear plot** A plot with a linear structure made up of a sequence of scenes that have time lapses between them.
- exposition** Background information revealed in the dialogue to help the audience understand the unfolding plot.
- Expressionism** A theatrical style in which the artist strives to imitate subjective reality as it is experienced in nightmares and in which the visual world is distorted and abstracted to demonstrate how the central character feels about it; as a literary genre, Expressionism presents the story through the central character's vision and voice.
- falling action** The portion of the plot that follows the crisis.
- farce** A play that makes you laugh a lot and leaves you feeling liberated by the wildly anarchic and improbable things that happen.
- festival theatre** A producing theatre with a particular focus to its repertoire, such as Shakespeare's plays.
- first-class tour** Description of a commercial tour in which the artists receive salaries comparable to those in a Broadway contract.
- first hand** A technician on the costume crew who supervises the cutters, drapers, and stitchers.
- fitting** A session during which an actor tries on a costume and the designer makes any necessary adjustments.
- fitting room** A special room or partitioned area of the costume shop where fittings take place.
- flashback** A scene in a film or play that takes place in an earlier virtual time than its placement in the structure of the plot.
- flat** A standard piece of theatrical scenery with a wood frame, usually covered in canvas.
- flies** See "fly loft."
- fly loft** The space in the stage house above the proscenium arch where scenery is flown.
- focus session** A working period during which the lighting designer supervises the electricians who hang, circuit, and focus all the theatrical lights.
- forced perspective** A drawing technique developed in the Italian Renaissance that makes two-dimensional drawings appear to represent a three-dimensional reality.
- foreshadowing** Information included in the dialogue that the audience needs to know so it can understand later developments of the plot.
- foundations** Charitable financial entities that contribute to not-for-profit theatres.
- found space theatre** The name for a performance space that was not intended for that use; for example, the steps of a government building, the courtyard in a mall, a railroad station.
- front elevation** A working drawing of the set that shows what the scenery looks like from the front.
- front of house** The portion of the theatre used by the audience.

- gallery** A name for the third or highest balcony in some theatres.
- gel** See "color media."
- genre** Categorization of dramas on the basis of their emotional impact on an audience; there are also literary characteristics of each genre; the six most common genres are tragedy, comedy, farce, melodrama, drama, and tragicomedy.
- government grants** Tax revenues distributed through government agencies; a source of support for not-for-profit theatre.
- green room** The actors' backstage waiting room, perhaps named after the green waiting room in London's Drury Lane Theatre.
- grid** A network of steel beams high above the stage floor.
- groundlings** The name for the audience in Elizabethan theatres who stood to watch performances; this audience paid the smallest entrance fee and is thought to have favored broad comedy.
- ground plan** A scale drawing of the floor of the stage showing the placement of the scenery; used by the actors in rehearsals and by the stage crew for the installation of the scenery.
- group tickets** Tickets sold at a reduced rate to groups.
- guerilla theatre** Theatre of a political nature performed in unexpected public places.
- hair, wig, and makeup designer** The designer who collaborates with the costume designer to complete the character's "look."
- hair, wig, and makeup studio** A room or part of the costume shop where the hair, wig, and makeup designer works.
- herd animals** Animals that live in a group; in some ways, humans are "herd animals."
- high comedy** A comic play that derives its humor from the language and behavior of the characters; see also "comedy of manners."
- hubris** The Greek word for excessive pride, which was considered to be a flaw in the character of an otherwise ideal person; the common flaw in the tragic heroes of ancient Greek dramas.
- hybrid scenery** Scenery that merges many kinds of stagecraft.
- idealized reality** An artistic expression of the artist's vision of truth based on either an intellectual or an emotional ideal of how the world ought to be; the reality of the theatrical styles of Classicism and Romanticism.
- imagination (actor's)** The aspect of the actor's craft that exploits an actor's ability to think and feel as the fictional character.
- imagistic design** Scene design that explores visual metaphors and striking images rather than representing observed reality; frequently associated with the theatrical style of Postmodernism.
- inciting event** The moment in the plot when the dramatic question is asked; it marks the end of the introduction and the beginning of what is often called the rising action.
- individual donors** One of the four sources of contributed income for a not-for-profit theatre.

- instrument schedule** A list made by the lighting designer listing each piece of equipment and the color media that will be placed in front of it along with how it will be connected to the computer light board.
- introduction** A term used in play analysis to describe the first scene or scenes of a play in which characters are introduced, exposition is provided, and the status quo is established.
- Kabuki** A highly stylized form of Japanese theatre.
- key collaborators** Descriptive term for the team of director and designers.
- League of Resident Theatres** An organization of not-for-profit theatres across America that form a collective bargaining unit to negotiate with unions and that share common information.
- light plot** A scaled diagram drafted by the lighting designer that displays all the lighting instruments to be used in the design and where they are placed.
- linear structure** Description of the plot of a play that progresses without flashbacks to jumble the chronology; the action progresses "along a line."
- live event** Theatre that happens when the audience is present; opposite of a recorded event.
- load-in** The work period during which the scenery is brought into the theatre.
- loge** An old French word for a booth of seats in the opera house, now used to describe theatre seats located at the very front of the first balcony.
- LORT** Acronym for League of Resident Theatres.
- low comedy** A comedy about characters we laugh at more because of what they do than because of what they say.
- lyricist** The writer of the words in a script's songs.
- mansion stage** A platform stage used in medieval Europe that consisted of a wide rectangular stage with a number of separate houses attached to the back of it, each depicting a unique location; see "simultaneous stage."
- master electrician** The supervisor of the electrical crew.
- meaning** The single dominant idea expressed by the plot of a play.
- mechane** A large crane used to "fly" actors into the air in ancient Greek theatres.
- melodrama** A genre of play that provides entertainment that has the appearance of being serious but ends with the protagonist victorious; melodramas usually have highly emotional scenes alternating with comic scenes.
- mezzanine** The name for the lowest balcony, sometimes suspended from the main or "first" balcony.
- mixer** An electronic audio device used by the sound designer to take in sounds, amplify and adjust them, and send them out to speakers.
- Modern Art** An artistic movement of the first half of the twentieth century that expressed the deeper truth that outward appearances hide the truth of the human condition; Modern Art presents a visually distorted picture of the world.

- multiple plots** Description of a play that tells more than one story.
- music** The fifth-ranked of Aristotle's six elements of theatre; describes everything that is heard, from musical accompaniment to sound effects to the actors' voices.
- musical** Description of the mature form of musical theatre that evolved in the middle of the twentieth century and that integrates song and dance with characters and plot.
- musical comedy** Description of American musical theatre prior to the mid-twentieth century.
- musical director** The person who directs the musicians and singers in a musical.
- National Endowment for the Arts** Federal agency founded in 1965 to disburse tax revenues in support of the arts.
- Naturalism** A theatrical style developed in the nineteenth century that is based on the philosophy of Determinism and that strives to present on stage an exact imitation of everyday life; Naturalism and Realism are closely linked, and sometimes the terms are used interchangeably.
- NEA** Acronym for National Endowment for the Arts.
- not-for-profit** Describes a business that serves the best interests of the public and is not required to pay certain taxes but is prohibited by law from distributing its profits to its investors; a not-for-profit corporation must be awarded a 501(c)3 status by the Internal Revenue Service.
- nut** Slang term for the weekly operating costs of a commercial theatre production.
- objective** A term in the Stanislavsky System of acting that describes what a character wants.
- objective reality** A theatrical style, expressed in Realism and Theatricalism, that imitates the way things appear on the surface.
- obstacle** A term in the Stanislavsky System of acting that describes what the character must overcome to achieve the objective.
- Off Broadway** (1) The name for theatres and theatrical productions that are not presented in the Broadway district in midtown Manhattan; (2) a description of intellectually challenging plays; (3) a category of union contract that permits lower salaries than for Broadway productions and that therefore encourages less expensive productions.
- Off Off Broadway** (1) The name for theatres and theatrical productions that are not presented in the Broadway district in midtown Manhattan or in the Off Broadway theatre districts; (2) a description of intellectually challenging plays; (3) a category of union contract that permits lower salaries than for Broadway or Off Broadway productions and that therefore encourages less expensive productions.
- opera** A form of musical theatre developed in Italy during the Renaissance that is entirely sung, is serious in subject, and is musically complex.
- operetta** A form of musical theatre that developed in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that is Romantic in subject, has scenes of spoken dialogue, and is less musically complex than opera.

- orchestra** (1) The flat circle of earth at the center of an ancient Greek theatre where the chorus sang and danced; the word means “dancing place”; (2) the main-floor audience seating in a proscenium arch theatre; (3) the musicians who play during a musical theatre performance and who usually sit in front of and below the stage in a place called the “orchestra pit.”
- orchestrator** The musician who uses the composer’s melodies to create the musical parts for the members of an orchestra.
- outdoor drama** Theatre performed in outdoor theatres, usually in the summer.
- pageant wagon** A wagon used by traveling actors in medieval Europe.
- painter’s elevation** A scale drawing painted by the scene designer to provide scene painters with clear guidance in painting the scenery.
- paint frame** A wooden frame used in the scene shop to which drops can be fastened so the scene painters can paint them.
- parados** (1) The passage between the audience seating area and the skene in ancient Greek theatre that was used by the chorus for entrances and exits; (2) the descriptive name for the choral ode sung by the chorus when it entered at the beginning of an ancient Greek play.
- particular place** A unique place where theatre is performed live, at a particular time.
- particular time** A unique time when theatre is performed live, at a particular place.
- pass** A kind of ticket sold by not-for-profit theatres that is good for one or more admissions to one or more performances on a space-available basis.
- pass door** A door from the auditorium leading backstage.
- performance** The presentation of a play or musical before an audience.
- photo/resumé** An 8 × 10 picture of an actor with a list of credits on the back, used by the actor when seeking a job.
- playbill** The printed program distributed to the audience at a performance; it contains information about the play and the artists.
- plot** The major action of the story that is told and that takes the audience on a journey from the status quo at the beginning to the changed circumstances at the end of a play; Aristotle described plot as “the life and soul of the drama.”
- Postmodernism** A theatrical style that evolved from Surrealism in the late twentieth century and that combines an imitation of the subjective reality of Surrealism with the objective reality of Theatricalism; Postmodernism is sometimes associated with imagistic theatre.
- presentational performance** A style of performance in which the actors acknowledge the presence of the audience and sometimes speak directly to them; that is, the actors “present” the characters.
- present tense** The time when a live theatre event is experienced by an audience.
- preview** A rehearsal for which tickets are sold at a reduced rate and the actors and director learn how audiences will react to the performance so they can make adjustments before opening night.

- producer** The businessperson (or venture capitalist) who heads the business aspects of a commercial production.
- production concept** The result of the intellectual and creative process through which the director and the key collaborators determine how the script is to be interpreted and how that interpretation is to be realized on the stage.
- production conference** A meeting of the director and designers to develop the production concept.
- production manager** The middle-management supervisor of a theatre's production staff who is responsible for budgets, schedules, and personnel.
- projections** Images projected by lights and used as part of a play's scenery.
- promptbook** The stage manager's copy of the script that has all the cues that must be given to actors and crew members; sometimes called the play's "bible."
- prop crew** The backstage staff responsible for the construction and maintenance of all properties.
- property master** The supervisor of the prop crew.
- prop shop** A special area or a part of the scene shop where properties are constructed.
- prop table** A table in the wings where props are placed during a performance.
- proscenium arch theatre** A theatre building that has a framelike arch around the stage; the most common kind of theatre today, it was developed in the seventeenth century; "proscenium arch" is the name for the architectural separation between the stage and the auditorium, frequently decorated very ornately; the audience looks through the arch at the performance on the stage the way you look through a picture frame at a painting.
- proskene** A platform attached to the front of the skene in ancient Greek theatres on which actors stood.
- public spaces** A term describing all the parts of a theatre building the public uses.
- pulley** A slotted, round wheel that cables or ropes are pulled through; part of the counterweight system.
- racks** A room for the storage of costumes.
- radio drama** Plays performed for radio broadcast only.
- ragtime** Syncopated music with a "ragged" rhythm that developed in the early twentieth century from African roots.
- rake** The tilt of a stage from the lowest level, near the audience, to a higher level upstage; introduced when audiences sat on a flat floor, but still in use today to give a performance an unrealistic and dynamic quality.
- reader** An actor hired to read all the other lines in a scene during an actor's audition.
- Realism** A style of theatrical production and dramatic writing that imitates selected traits of the language and appearance of everyday life; it evolved from Naturalism, and today the terms "Realism" and "Naturalism" are used interchangeably.

- realistic exterior scenery** Scenery that creates the illusion of a real place outdoors.
- regional theatre** Description of a permanent American not-for-profit theatre company; also called "resident theatre."
- rehearsal room** The room in which actors rehearse prior to rehearsing on the stage.
- rendering** A colored drawing by a designer to communicate what a costume or set will look like.
- repertory theatre** Description of a permanent American not-for-profit theatre company; implies that the theatre offers several productions concurrently; see also "resident theatre" and "regional theatre."
- representational performance** A style of performance in which the actors pretend the audience is not there and the audience pretends the actors do not know it is there; the actors "represent" the characters.
- resident theatre** Description of a permanent American not-for-profit theatre company; also called "regional theatre."
- resolution** The moment in a play's plot when the dramatic question is answered.
- reversal** A point in a play's plot when the protagonist suffers a temporary defeat.
- reviewer** A person who writes or speaks an analysis and opinion of a play or performance; usually applied to a newspaper or television journalist who works against a deadline.
- revolving stage** A turntable used to move scenery around in a circle.
- rigging** The cables, ropes, pulleys, and winches used to fly scenery.
- rising action** The segment of the plot between the point of attack and the crisis in which events complicate the plot and heighten suspense.
- road** Slang term for the theatres a play tours to outside New York.
- role** The entirety of a character's part in a play.
- Romanticism** A theatrical style in which the artist strives to imitate an idealized reality based on the importance of emotion; Romanticism evolved in the early nineteenth century as a reaction to Classicism, and it values excess emotion.
- royalty** A percentage of the gross revenue that is distributed to the creators of a production: author, director, composer, and so on.
- salary** A weekly wage paid to theatre artists.
- sampler** A device that electronically records a sound by transforming it into numbers; part of the computer and digitalized sound system used by sound designers.
- scene** A short segment of the plot of a play.
- scene painter** A specialist scenic artist who paints scenery.
- scene shop manager** The supervisor of the carpenters and technicians who build scenery.
- scenographer** A theatrical designer of scenery and costumes (and sometimes lighting) who works collaboratively with the director to create the visual world of the play.

- scholar** In theatre, a researcher and theorist who writes about theatre.
- screen test** An audition for a film or TV role.
- season ticket** A reduced-rate ticket for a specific seat for each production in a season.
- self** The actor's body, voice, and imagination; the actor's instrument.
- sides** Selected pages of a script, used for an audition.
- simple plot** A plot without any subplots.
- simultaneous stage** A platform stage used in medieval Europe that consisted of a wide rectangular stage with a number of separate houses attached to the back of it, each depicting a unique location; see "mansion stage."
- single ticket** A ticket for a specific seat at a specific performance.
- six elements of theatre** The six elements listed by Aristotle in *The Poetics* as the constituents of theatre; in order: plot, character, thought, diction, music, spectacle.
- skene** A freestanding building that was a part of an ancient Greek theatre; located behind the orchestra; actors made entrances from it and changed costumes in it; the word "scenery" is derived from "skene."
- sketch** A drawing by a designer to communicate the basics of a design.
- slapstick** (1) A prop used in the *commedia dell'arte* made from two boards fastened together at one end and loose at the other so they could be slapped together to make a loud noise when an actor was hit by it; (2) term used to describe any broad and physical farce action.
- slip stage** A specially built stage floor that has narrow sections that slide sideways into the wings carrying actors or furniture on or off the stage.
- sound board operator** The technician on the sound crew who operates the computer sound board during performances.
- sound engineer** The technician on the sound crew who assists the sound designer in creating the sound effects, placing the speakers, and preparing for the production.
- sound plot** A diagram showing the placement of all microphones and speakers.
- spectacle** Sixth- and last-ranked of Aristotle's elements of theatre; includes all visual aspects of a production, from scenery to the movement of actors.
- stage directions** The playwright's written instructions.
- stage door** The exterior door used by actors to enter and exit the theatre.
- stage house** The portion of a theatre building that includes the stage and all backstage spaces.
- stage manager** The person in charge of all rehearsals and performances.
- stageweights** Brick-shaped metal weights used in the counterweight system to balance the weight of scenery attached to battens.
- staging** The arrangement and movement of the actors as supervised by the director.
- stalls** English term for the main floor seats in a proscenium arch theatre.
- Stanislavsky System** The organized method that actors use to analyze and create a character; invented by the Russian Constantine Stanislavsky.

- star** An actor whose name will attract ticket buyers.
- status quo** The stable situation at the beginning of a plot, before the dramatic question is asked.
- stitcher** A specialized member of the costume shop staff who sews together costume pieces.
- storyboard** A term borrowed from cinema to describe a sequence of rough drawings that show how scenes will look in performance; used by some lighting designers to communicate the effects they plan for in their design.
- structure** Description of the arrangement of the incidents of a play's plot.
- student rush tickets** Reduced-rate tickets sold immediately before a performance.
- style** (1) A categorization of artistic works by their literary or theatrical characteristics; (2) a categorization of plays by how they imitate reality; the six main theatrical styles are Realism, Theatricalism, Expressionism, Surrealism, Classicism, and Romanticism.
- subjective reality** The truth of human experience as abstracted in the unconscious, the primitive, and the irrational, expressed in the theatrical styles of Surrealism and Expressionism.
- sung-through musical** A form of musical theatre that tells the entire story through the song lyrics and has no spoken dialogue or "book."
- super objective** A term in the Stanislavsky System of acting that describes the main objective of a character in a play.
- support spaces** Nonpublic spaces in a theatre building where productions are built and rehearsed.
- Surrealism** A theatrical style in which the artist strives to imitate subjective reality as it is experienced in whimsical dreams; surrealism uses associative logic instead of cause-and-effect logic to move from one incident to the next.
- swab** Wash and mop (the stage); the term derives from nautical use.
- tailor** A specialist member of the costume shop staff who constructs tailored men's and women's costumes.
- technical director** The supervisor of the scene shop, who supervises budgets, schedules, personnel, and the construction and installation of scenery.
- technical drawing** A scale drawing illustrating how scenery is to be built and installed.
- technical rehearsal** A rehearsal at which the scenery, lighting, and sound are first added to the actors' performances; one or more technical rehearsals are scheduled toward the end of the rehearsal period, just before costumes are added for the dress rehearsal.
- telemarketing** Sale of theatre tickets over the telephone; commonly used by not-for-profit theatres for selling season tickets.
- text** The playwright's script, particularly as a source of the actor's performance.
- theatre of the absurd** A genre and style of European theatre that evolved in the mid-twentieth century and expresses the meaninglessness of the

human condition in laugh-producing tragicomedies; Samuel Beckett and Eugène Ionesco are the best-known Absurdist playwrights.

Theatricalism A theatrical style in which the artist strives to imitate objective reality as it is traditionally presented in the theatre; theatricalism is based on the belief that we are all self-conscious creatures who “act” our lives.

theatrical styles Ways in which theatre productions express reality.

theatron The seating area in ancient Greek theatres; we get our word “theatre” from this word, which means “seeing place.”

theme An intellectual idea examined in a play.

thesis A lengthy research paper of scholarly content written by students seeking a Master’s degree.

thought The third-ranked element of Aristotle’s elements of theatre; see “dianoia.”

three unities Organizing traits of a play as interpreted in the Italian Renaissance from Aristotle’s *The Poetics*; unity of place, time, and action.

thrust theatre A theatre without a proscenium arch in which the stage thrusts forward so the audience is seated on three sides; an excellent example is the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis.

thymele In ancient Greek theatres, the altar to Dionysus, the god of wine, fertility, ecstasy, and theatre, that was erected in the center of the orchestra.

ticket An admission to a performance, usually printed on paper or card stock.

tiring house The room behind the stage where actors dress or “attire” themselves.

touring production A theatre production that moves from one city to another; common in America today for commercial productions of Broadway hits.

tragedy A serious play that makes you feel exhilarated because the hero’s experience teaches you some profound truth about your life; a tragedy guides you toward feeling a sort of calm affirmation that your worst expectations about life are true, and you feel wiser for reaching this certainty.

tragicomedy A genre of play that dominated mid- to late twentieth century drama and that inspires agitation, frustration, and anxiety; tragicomedies deal with serious topics but provoke laughter and express the lack of coherent values in the world.

training (actor’s) Formal instruction in the art and craft of acting that is offered in universities and professional schools.

trap room A room beneath the stage floor from which scenery and actors can rise to the stage through a trap door.

turkey A slang term for a theatrical production that fails commercially or artistically.

turning point The moment in the unfolding of the plot when a change happens that leads inevitably to the resolution of the dramatic question; also called the “crisis.”

- two-dimensional painted scenery** Scenery, particularly cloth backdrops, painted to suggest three dimensions though obviously two-dimensional.
- unit** A term in the Stanislavsky System of acting that describes a short sequence of a character's role in which a single objective is introduced and achieved.
- unit set** A kind of scene design, made up of levels and platforms, that represents no single place and permits the audience to imagine many different locations.
- unity of action** One of the three unities ascribed to Aristotle; an organizing trait of a plot in which a single story is told.
- unity of place** One of the three unities ascribed to Aristotle; an organizing trait of a plot in which the story takes place in one location.
- unity of time** One of the three unities ascribed to Aristotle; an organizing trait of a plot in which the story unfolds continuously.
- virtual place** The fictional place in which the action of a play takes place.
- virtual time** The fictional time in which the action of a play takes place.
- wagons** Rolling platforms used to move scenery onto a stage.
- walk-on** A slang term for a nonspeaking or small role in a play; sometimes called a "spear carrier."
- wardrobe crew** The staff responsible for helping actors dress and for maintaining and cleaning costumes.
- wardrobe supervisor** The head of the wardrobe crew.
- white model** An unpainted, three-dimensional scale model of the set built by the designer; usually made from foam core, cardboard, or some other material.
- willing suspension of disbelief** A phrase coined by the nineteenth-century English poet and critic Samuel Taylor Coleridge to explain the convention by which an audience can enjoy a theatrical performance by knowingly setting aside its objectivity.
- winch** A mechanical device for pulling a rope or cable; part of the counterweight system.
- wing and drop scenery** A kind of two-dimensional painted scenery developed in the eighteenth century and still used in musicals and dance concerts.
- wings** (1) Frames with scenery placed on the side of the stage, parallel with the proscenium arch; (2) the areas on the sides of the stage floor that are unseen by the audience; where the actors stand before an entrance.
- working drawing** See "technical drawing."