



# THE RIVERSIDE THEATER

## Operations Manual

# THEATRE OPERATIONS MANUAL

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The Riverside Theatre is pleased to offer its space for the use of our valued rental clients. This manual outlines The Riverside Theatre's rules for the operation and management of the Theater's rental clients. The Theater's Technical and Operational staff will ensure that the following guidelines are adhered to during each client's residency. While it is our fervent hope that no such measure is necessary, in the event that house rules are not followed penalties or fees may be assessed and invoiced at the end of the client's rental. Thank you for your cooperation in maintaining The Theatre while we make your event a success!

## I. General.

A. **Definitions.** For the purpose of this document, the following definitions shall apply:

- i. "The Theatre" is The Riverside Theater and its staff.
- ii. "The Client" is our space user and valued partner for the length of their tenure.
- iii. "The Church" is the Riverside Church, the facility within which The Riverside Theatre operates.
- iv. "The Technical Director" is the Theater's Technical Director. In the absence of the Technical Director, the Assistant Technical Director will have the same authority over technical decisions.
- v. The "Production Manager" should be informed of all decisions affecting changes to contract, and front of house.
- vi. The "Theatre Technical and Operations Staff" includes the Production Manager, Technical Director(s), the Theatre Coordinator, and any staff contracted for tech, backstage, or front of house work during the client's time in the space.

## B. Administration.

- i. All correspondence regarding the use of the Theater must be in writing. **Verbal communications will not be considered factual amendments to the operations manual or agreements regarding the use of the space unless confirmed through written communication.** Email is the preferred method for written correspondence.
- ii. Concerns regarding the Theater or its personnel must be addressed to the Production Manager in writing.
- iii. The Theatre does not tolerate harassment of any type in its facility. Concerns over harassment must be directed to the Production Manager. Inadmissible behavior by any person within the Church will result in their removal by security.
- iv. For rentals exceeding one week or including more than one production, the Theater's Technical Director(s) and/or Production Manager will begin by conducting a walk-through and inspection of the facility and equipment with a rental client representative **BEFORE** the Load In. At the **END** of the rental period, depending on the type of rental, the Technical Director(s) and rental client representative will conduct a second walk-through and inspection of the space and equipment. Any missing equipment or facility damage will result in fines for the rental client. These fines will be equivalent to the cost of replacing the missing equipment or the labor and materials to repair facility damage. These inspections will continue at the strike of every production until the rental client's rental period is complete.

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## C. Safety.

- i. The Theatre prides itself on creating a safe work environment. All employees and clients are cautioned to proceed with care while conducting work activities on the premises.
- ii. The Technical Director(s) will provide the Client with the locations of the first aid kits, as well as any additional medical or site-specific safety information, as requested.
- iii. In the event of an accident, an incident report must be filled out and filed with the Theatre's staff at the Security Desk.
- iv. Alcoholic beverages may not be consumed on the premises except for functions approved by the Production Manager.
- v. The Theatre is not responsible for providing safety training to the Client's staff. The Client must comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws regarding appropriate safety training for the tasks to be completed.
- vi. **At no time, either during work calls or in performance, may the rental client block fire exits with any obstacles, including prop tables, stage manager desks, on or offstage scenery, etc.** There are no exceptions to this rule, even if the item blocking the exit is on wheels. Any time an egress path is blocked, The Theatre Staff is required by law to move the obstacle.
- vii. No individual may work alone in any Theater facility. On any **WORK CALL**, at least two individuals must be scheduled or no work is permitted. Any time there is less than two people in The Theatre at any time, no work is allowed. If client is bringing their own staff to work in Theater, at least one House Technician must be present at ALL TIMES while client is working.

## D. The Environment.

- i. The Riverside Theatre is an earth-friendly performance venue! Please keep this in mind at all times while working.
- ii. Recycling isn't just the law—it's a valuable way to protect the Earth and enable sustainable growth for the future. Please use the appropriate waste receptacle for all refuse. If you are uncertain about the location of the proper waste receptacle, please ask the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff for help.
- iii. Chemicals must be discarded as per the applicable local, state, or federal statutes. Please consult with the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff if you are uncertain about the best way to dispose of your waste chemicals (paints, oils, etc.)
- iv. All advertising for the client's show must conform to the applicable local, state and federal law. Our clients are specifically encouraged to read the New York City Environmental Control Board's regulations for posting handbills. All fines or fees that the Theater incurs as a result of the client's advertising will be billed to the client.

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## II. Facility.

### A. Security.

- i. **For insurance reasons, no guests are permitted backstage at any times.** Backstage access is limited to staff and performers.
- ii. **The Theatre is not responsible for lost or stolen belongings.** Rental clients are encouraged to lock-up their personal possessions and are allowed to bring in their own lockable prop boxes.

### B. Protection of the Space.

- i. **FOOD, DRINKS, AND GUM CHEWING ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED ON THE STAGE, IN THE HOUSE AND TECH BOOTH.**
- ii. **No spray painting is permitted anywhere in the Theatre facility.**
- iii. Rental clients may not store any scenery, costumes, props, lighting equipment, etc. in The Theater Lobby or house, including on the chairs in the auditorium. Any and all materials brought in by the rental client must be stored in the shop or backstage. The only exception is that hampers may be stored in the back of the house as long as they are not blocking fire extinguishers, doors, or the fire aisle. Nothing may be stored outside of the hampers. Any hampers stored in the house must be removed prior to a public audience. Assembled scaffolding may remain in the house with the approval of the Technical Director(s).
- iv. Sand, glitter, confetti, feathers, dirt or any other fine particulate are **forbidden** from the space. If the production can design an effective containment area for sand or dirt, the Production Manager may review the proposal and may possibly allow the sand or dirt if it will not cause damage to the space. Theatrical snow is not included in this restriction and can be used onstage.
- v. The use of duct tape is not permitted anywhere in the space. **Only gaff, spike, masking and glow tape are allowed, as is appropriate for the task at hand.**
- vi. **Any change to the physical facility without the approval of the Production Manager and Technical Director(s) is strictly forbidden and will result in penalties assessed to the client.** The penalty will equal the cost of repairs and labor to return the physical facility to its previous condition.
- vii. The Theater has 70 free standing chairs that may be removed if requested by the client the **minimum of 48 hours before the first day of the** Event.

### C. Custodial Services.

- i. All clients must use the designated waste receptacles. The Theatre's staff can answer any questions about the location or appropriateness of a waste receptacle.
- ii. The rental client is responsible to clean up any substances or litter left on the premises. Failure to do so may result in an additional cleaning fee if the cleaning required is outside the scope of traditional janitorial services.
- iii. The building's operations personnel will remove garbage and recycling from the designated waste receptacles. Clients are required to notify the Riverside Theatre's staff if the available waste receptacles are full.

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- iv. Recycling is the law! To avoid Department of Sanitation fines, please use the appropriate recycling bins for your recyclable refuse.
- v. To guarantee that the Riverside staff can clean the bathrooms and dressing rooms for our clients, clients are required to leave the dressing rooms in a clean, organized state every day.
- vi. **The rental client is responsible for any necessary dumpster rental for the strike of a production.** Throwing scenic pieces in regular trash will result in fines to the rental client. The fine will be equivalent to the New York City Environmental Control Board fine for the infraction plus labor costs for trash removal.

## D. Locations in the Space.

- i. **The Lobby.** The Client may use the lobby only when such use has been approved by the Production Manager.
- ii. **Dressing Rooms.** The Client will have unfettered access to their dressing room areas during their rental period.
- iii. **Backstage Hallway.** The Client will have access to the backstage hallway as needed, but is cautioned that the hallway is a path of egress and appropriate fire lanes must be maintained at all times.
- iv. **Tool Shop.** Beyond the back hallway is the Theater's Tool Shop. The Client may not use this area without the express permission of the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff. Note: this tool storage area has inadequate ventilation for use as a scene shop. This area may be used only for incidental building activities by permission of the Technical Director(s).
- v. **The Stage.** The client may have unlimited access to the stage as needed during the rental period, except when directed otherwise by the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff during work operations.
- vi. **S-9.** The storage area labeled "S-9", adjoining the stage right wing, is for the Theater use only. Rental clients may not enter this area without authorization by the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff. There is an alcove outside of S-9 with prop shelving and costume hooks for client use.
- vii. **The House.** The client may use the house as needed during its rental period so long as the Theater's seating and general facilities are treated with respect. The House is the Theatre's public face; it must be treated with care during the client's time in the theater. Any changes must be approved by the Production Manager.
- viii. **The Booth.** The client may access the light and sound booth only during work calls, technical rehearsals and performances. A member of the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff must be present for the client to gain access to the Booth. **No equipment may be removed from the booth without the express permission of the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff.**

## E. Lobby.

- i. The rental client is prohibited from selling or distributing any information or thing of value in or around The Theatre without prior notice and consent of the Production Manager.
- ii. Champagne, wine, and beer are permitted to be served with prior notice to and consent of the Production Manager. No sale of alcoholic beverages is permitted. Contact Production Manager for preferred caterers.

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- iii. Posting materials of any kind in the Church is strictly prohibited. Rental clients are permitted to leave fliers or postcards with the Theatre Coordinator. The rental client will be provided with two light boxes where company information/ posters may be displayed. Due to the small size of the Theater lobby and New York City fire code, only one additional 6' long table can be provided to the rental client. Any additional lobby displays must fit within the footprint of the 6' table and must be set-up and struck on a daily basis. The Theatre reserves the right to refuse lobby displays which create a fire hazard in the lobby or affect the flow of patrons in the lobby.
- iv. All Clients doing their own ticketing will be responsible for their own advertising. The Theatre will not place any rental client information on their website, on The Riverside Church website, or in any church bulletin. The Theatre Coordinator can post on the Theatre page or social media pages with notice to and permission of the Production Manager.

## F. Tool Shop.

- i. **Cutting of any material onstage or in the backstage hallways is strictly prohibited.** Incidental (i.e. unplanned) cutting is permitted only in the Theatre's backstage tool storage area with the approval of the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff.
- ii. Excess paint may not be poured down the shop sink. It must be correctly discarded as per local, state, and federal environmental laws or the rental client will incur additional charges and penalties.
- iii. Any use of liquids on the stage must be detailed to the Production Manager and Technical Director(s) at the start of the production's rehearsal process. No liquids may be thrown or dumped onstage, and no excessive use of liquids is allowed onstage. Any pools containing water will need to be properly sealed and are subject to approval and inspection from The Theatre Technical and Operations Staff.

## G. The Stage.

- i. **Any Scenery used during client's rental MUST BE DRAFTED, SENT AND APPROVED BY TECHNICAL DIRECTOR(S) 3 WEEKS BEFORE LOAD IN.**
- ii. **Securing scenery to the deck with nails is prohibited.** The Theatre suggests that all scenery be secured via stage weights. No lagging, stapling, nailing, bolting, etc. into the stage floor or walls is permitted. Clients will be fined if any methods other than stage weights are used.
- iii. **Any Scenery used must be assembled and broken down by client's staff.** If Client needs additional staff from the Theatre, carpenters can be hired for an additional cost to the client.
- iv. Rental clients are allowed to repaint the stage deck as long as they accept the following rules:
  - 1. The Client must supply the paint for restore. Brand: 2 Gallons of BEHR Premium Plus Interior Semi-Gloss Enamel Black Base 3300.
  - 2. The deck must be repainted black by the end of the client's rental period
  - 3. In addition to the necessary coats of black paint (no less than two coats)
  - 4. A full layer of polyurethane sealant must also be used. Tinted sealers cannot be used to save on time.
  - 5. No textured paint is permitted.

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- v. For rentals longer than one month, the stage floor must be repainted due to the wear and tear, regardless of whether or not the original color was changed.
- vi. **No spike tape may remain on the floor and be painted over.** The rental client will accrue additional charges for not removing all tape from the floor. The penalty will equal the cost of repairs and labor to remove the tape and repaint the floor.

## III. Equipment

- A. **General.** The Riverside Theatre prides itself on providing its clients with functional, well-maintained equipment. All decisions and activities with respect to the Theater's equipment must be approved by the Production Manager and Technical Director(s). **Clients are asked to please respect the decisions of the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff regarding the use of the Theater's equipment.**
- B. **Maintenance.** Our Technical Director(s) is in charge of a comprehensive maintenance plan for the servicing of equipment. All requests for maintenance must be addressed to the Technical Director(s), who will prioritize and execute them as appropriate.
- C. **Supervision and Jurisdiction.** **Rental clients are required to use The Theatre's technicians to handle the Theater's gear. The Production Manager and/or Technical Director(s) will be responsible for supervising all work activities that involve the Theater's equipment.**
- D. **Theater Seating.**
  - i. No freestanding theater seats may be used onstage as a part of the action.
  - ii. Only masking tape may be used to hold seats or post other signs on theater seating.
- E. **Lighting.**
  - i. No lighting equipment may be removed from the Booth without the express approval of the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff.
  - ii. The Riverside Theatre will provide its clients with the following:
    1. A Repertory Light Plot (vwx. and pdf file)
    2. LW File of Instrument Data
    3. Magic Sheet
    4. Tech Rider
    5. ETC Show file
  - iii. Rental Clients are allowed to have their own technician run Riverside's Lighting Console with permission from the Production Manager.

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- iv. Rental Clients are allowed to change the plot as long as client accept the following rules:
  - 1. A Plot from the client must be sent to the Production Manager **THREE WEEKS BEFORE LOAD IN** for approval. **NOTE: The Rep Plot will indicate which items cannot be moved.**
  - 2. Approval will be determined by the following:
    - If we have **TWO DAYS BEFORE AND AFTER** to hang and restore.
    - If we have the equipment to execute design.
    - If the plot exceeds the room's electrical capabilities.
  - 3. If Approved, Riverside Staff will hang the plot **TWO DAYS** before Load In; will focus and restore Plot after Load Out.
  - 4. Clients are free to use any Gel or Templates we have in stock.
  - 5. Any Outside Rental equipment must be discussed with the Production Manager and paid by the client. Arrangements on delivery must be made with the Production Manager.
  - 6. If the client decides to handle rental on their own, the client will be responsible for the equipment.
  - 7. Delivery can be sent to:

The Riverside Church  
**ATTN: The Riverside Theater**  
91 Claremont Ave  
New York, NY 10027

## F. Sound.

- i. Only the House Staff is allowed to run the Audio Console. Rental Clients are allowed to have their own technician run Riverside's Audio Console with permission from our Production Manager and the Head Audio Engineer and client accepts the following rules:
  - 1. All changes and additions, including A/V recording, must be approved or sent to Head Audio Engineer **ONE WEEK PRIOR TO LOAD IN.**
  - 2. Major A/V changes and additions, must be approved or sent to Head Audio Engineer **THREE WEEKS PRIOR TO LOAD IN.**
  - 3. A House Engineer Must assist with Load in and restore.
  - 4. Client's Audio Engineer must assist House engineer with restoring Audio to rep.
- ii. The sound configuration may not be changed in any way during the client's rental without the express approval of Riverside's Head Audio Engineer and Production Manager
- iii. Additional equipment may be brought in to supplement the existing sound configuration as the client requires after approval by Head Audio Engineer.
- iv. The Theater's piano may be used onstage only.
- v. No sound equipment may be removed from the Booth without the express approval of the Technical Director(s) or Head Audio Engineer.



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## G. Soft Goods.

- i. The Riverside Theatre will provide its clients with a repertory configuration for the deployment of soft goods (legs, borders, travelers and other masking).
- ii. Nothing may be attached to The Theater's inventory of soft goods. No Velcro, tape, pins, sewing, etc. will be permitted. If any types of markings are needed to notify actors and crew, Riverside will provide them.
- iii. Clients are allowed to move or strike soft goods as long as they accept the following rules:
  1. Must be discussed and Approved in Writing by Production Manager 3 Weeks before load in.
  2. Riverside Technical Staff will be responsible for moving, striking and restoring soft goods.

## H. Rigging.

- i. Riverside Theatre employs a system of single-purchase counterweight linesets over the stage as well as a fixed grid of dead-hung battens over the apron and Front of House. All decisions regarding the appropriateness of any rigged element will be made by the Production Manager or Technical Director(s).
- ii. The Theatre's Production Manager will review all of the rental client's lighting, sound plots and projection ground plans to guarantee that maximum weight capacity is not exceeded on any of the Theater's overhead rigging.
- iii. The Technical Director(s) decision regarding the weight capacity of the Theater's overhead positions shall be final. These decisions will be guided by the general working load limit of the overhead position as well as aggravating factors (distribution of the load, recommended safety factors, details of the rigged connections, fragility of the hung elements, etc.).

## I. Miscellaneous.

- i. The Theatre allows rental clients to use backstage furniture onstage in productions, so long as that property is not stood on, thrown, tossed, kicked, or used in any aggressive manner. No other furnishings from the Church may be used in the Theater unless given permission from the Production Manager.
- ii. The Theatre's cleaning supplies (brooms, mops, etc.) may be used for routine cleaning uses. Liquid spills that are not water-soluble must be wiped up of all excess liquid before mopping.

## IV. Technical Staff

- A. **Overview.** The Theatre's technical staff, including but not limited to the Technical Director(s) and any Overhires technical personnel, are responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the space and its clients' activities. The Technical staff will perform on-site labor as needed with respect to the Theater's own equipment, but will not serve as at-will labor for the client.

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## B. Supervisory Responsibilities.

- i. The Production Manager and/ or Technical Director(s) will be responsible for the supervision of all labor in the space.
- ii. The Production Manager and/ or Technical Director(s) will enforce all applicable safety standards, including but not limited to local, state and federal laws as well as common industry practices.
- iii. The Production Manager and/or Technical Director(s) supervisory responsibilities supersede any and all production-related priorities.
- iv. **The Theatre Technical and Operations Staff's decisions are final.** Concerns or complaints regarding these decisions may be addressed in writing to the Production Manager.
- v. Riverside Theater will provide you with the following Staff:
  1. Crew Chief: Staff Leader for Call
  2. Audio Engineer
  3. Light Board Operator: Upon Request
  4. Stagehand(s): Upon Request
  5. Electrician(s): Upon Request
  6. Carpenter (s): Upon Request

## C. Restrictions on the Technical Staff.

- i. The Theatre's technical staff is restricted, for insurance reasons, from handling any external equipment. The Theatre's technical staff may only work with equipment owned or rented by the Theater.
- ii. The Theatre's technical staff may not conduct any carpentry, painting, costuming or material handling tasks (except as it may relate to the Theatre's own equipment).
- iii. The Theatre's Staff is strictly prohibited from making any purchases on behalf of any rental client.
- iv. Due to the nature of a technical strike, the Theatre's Technical Director(s) will not operate as labor. He/She will function in a supervisory role in an effort to protect The Theater's gear, facility, and the safety of those participating.
- v. Any requests for changes in Riverside Staff hours must be submitted to the Technical Director a **minimum** of 48 hours in advance. Sometimes time changes cannot be accommodated.

D. **Substitutions.** In the event that a Theater technician is unavailable for work, either through PTO (Paid Time Off) or otherwise, the Theatre will replace this person with another qualified employee who will be vested with the same authority as the original technician.

## E. Design Services.

- i. The Theatre's staff is available to provide design services for an additional fee. Please contact the Production Manager if you require this service.
- ii. The Theatre's technical staff is **NOT** responsible for design services if client has already expressed that they will bring their own designers prior to completion of contract.
- iii. The Theatre will not be responsible for executing designs based on incomplete information. The Production Manager will attempt to resolve any communication errors prior to load-in, but will not make any design decision on behalf of the rental client.
- iv. The Theatre will not be responsible for any delays caused by inadequate design specifications.

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## V. Production Activities

### A. Performance Restrictions.

- i. Smoking of any kind onstage is strictly prohibited. As the production dictates, only smokeless and vaporless prop cigarettes can be used on stage with permission from the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff.
- ii. No open flame or flammable liquids of any kind is permitted. Such activity is not permitted even with an applicable FDNY permit.
- iii. The Theatre does not condone nudity of any kind onstage.

### B. External Production Inventory.

- i. The client must submit a preliminary list of all inventory to be brought into the space **3 weeks prior to load-in** of the specified production. A final list is required 1 week before load-in.
- ii. **One week prior to first performance, the rental client must submit all appropriate fire proofing documentation for scenery, props, costumes, etc.** The Theatre's Production Manager will review all documents to ensure that the rental client is complying with New York fire code. If the inspection paperwork is not handed in one week prior, the rental client's first performance may be delayed as a result.

### C. Client's Technical Staff.

- i. At the request of the client, and after reviewing the client's design paperwork, the Production Manager and/or Technical Director(s) are able to offer guidance as to the size and makeup of the client's crew requirements. **The Theatre will not be responsible for any difficulties that result from inadequate staffing.**
- ii. The rental client is required to have one representative physically present at all work calls and technical/dress rehearsals who is available to handle technical concerns in a supervisory manner for the client's personnel.
- iii. The Theatre's staff will determine if an individual is competent to function in their given role. If the Technical Director(s) determine that an individual is improperly assigned, they will require the client to substitute qualified personnel instead.

### D. Design Paperwork.

- i. Design paperwork for any rental production must be submitted to The Theatre's Production Manager **THREE WEEKS** prior to **load-in**. These plans must be complete and include all prop tables, changing areas, etc. as well as provide a complete plan of any additional design areas (i.e. projections, video, etc.).
- ii. The Theatre's Production Manager will review the plans for technical and safety reasons (including maximum load capacity on the rigging system) and will review for house and fire safety concerns. **Once approved, no additions or changes can be made without written notice and The Production Manager's approval.**
- iii. Required design paperwork includes, but is not limited to:
  - a) Light design – Light Plot and Instrument Data

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- b) Scenic design – Ground Plan and Section
- c) Video/Projection design – Projector Plot and Cable Plot (including inputs, outputs, and cable conversions)
- d) Sound design – Speaker Plot, Cable Plot, and Input/Output List
- iv. **All paperwork must be in PDF, VWX. 2012 AND LW 5 format.**

## E. Load-In.

- i. The Client must designate their point of load-in to the Production Manager at least one week prior to load-in activities.
- ii. The two available load-in locations are:
  - a) 91 Claremont Ave Entrance
  - b) The loading dock on 120<sup>th</sup> Street. (Additional fees apply for Security on weekends, and weekdays after 8pm. Door cannot be blocked.)

## F. Scheduling.

- i. **The Client must submit to the Production Manager their schedule for the use of the space at least FOUR WEEKS in advance of their scheduled time in the space. This schedule must include requests for Riverside staffing levels.**
- ii. The Production Manager will schedule Riverside Staff as necessary per the contractual requirements and standard Theatre employment policies and will make the final decision regarding appropriate Riverside Staffing levels for a Client's scheduled time in the space.

G. **Post-Show.** The Theatre must be notified of any post-show discussions at least **ONE WEEK** prior to accommodate.

## H. Load-Out.

- i. **Client and Riverside Staff Must Be Out of the Room by Client's Contracted End Time.**
- ii. The two available load-Out locations are:
  - a) 91 Claremont Ave Entrance
  - b) The loading dock on 120<sup>th</sup> Street. (Additional fees apply for Security on weekends, and weekdays after 8pm. Door cannot be blocked.)
- iii. At the end of a client's rental, no matter the length of the rental, the theater must be restored according to specifications laid out by the Theatre Technical and Operations Staff. This may include (but is not limited to):
  - 1. Restoring the 70 freestanding seats to the house floor
  - 2. Restoring the rep lighting (including focus)
  - 3. Repainting the stage deck
  - 4. Restoring rep audio plot
- iv. In the case of a rental lasting longer than a month, the Production Manager and Technical Director(s) Coordinator will give the rental client the necessary specifications one month prior to the end of the client's rental period.