

SOUND IN THEATRE

The Sound Designer

A Sound Designer can have several roles in a Theatre production which can include:

- Designing the speaker layout for a production or touring show
- Working with a Composer or Musical Director to achieve the type of sonic reproduction required. Working with the director using sound to create atmosphere and mood
- Creating new or reproducing sound effects already in the script.

The first job of the Sound Designer is to read the script and mark any sound references: sound effects, musical references and sonic points of interest. The second job is to talk to the Director about their interpretation of the script, the time it is set in and the mood that the Director wants to create. This will help the Sound Designer to decide what kind of sound is needed, any period effects or whether any of the sound is to be performed live. If the Director wants to use a continuous or longer soundtrack a separate composer may need to be commissioned/employed to write an original score for the production or the Sound Designer will create a bespoke soundscape..

Sourcing and Creating sound effects

There are many different ways to source effects, in recent years the internet has become a common way to find sounds and there are many free sounds to be found if you know where to look. However the drawback is a lot of these are low quality mp3 files that may sound fine on headphones but when amplified in a large theatre space can become distorted. As a general rule 'lossless' or CD quality recordings should be used wherever possible.

An alternative to be precorded sound effects is to create your own effects. Using a little imagination you can create most popular sound effects. Using a small recording device (or even a mobile phone) you can record from real life and edit your recordings using open source (free to use) audio editing programmes that can be downloaded from the uinternet.

Remember:

The better the quality of the original recording the better your final result will be.