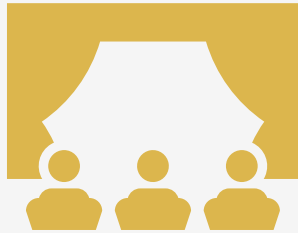


THEATRE DESIGN AND PRODUCTION IN THE AGE OF COVID

Michael Benson, Presenter



Presentation Overview



Effects of the pandemic on designers and technicians.



Response of artists and the industry, including emerging technology and practices.



Potential outcomes moving forward.

Common Production Positions

- Production Managers (and Assistants/Associates)
- Technical Directors (and Assistants/Associates)
- Costume Shop Managers (and Assistants/Associates)
- Lighting Supervisors (and Assistants/Associates)
- Props Coordinators (and Assistants/Associates)
- Audio Supervisor (and Assistants/Associates)
- Shop Forepersons
- Master Carpenters
- Carpenters*
- Welders
- Scenic Charge Artists
- Painters*
- First Hands
- Stitchers*
- Patterners & Drapers
- Wig Masters
- Make-up Artists*
- Electricians*
- Audio Technicians*
- Props Coordinators
- Props Artisans*
- Riggers*
- Automation Engineers
- Projection Technicians
- Milliners
- Wardrobe Supervisors
- Spot Operators
- Deck Chief
- Run Crew*
- Fly Chief
- Dressers*
- Stage Manager (and Assistant/Associate)

Common Design Positions

- Scenic Designer (and Assistants/Associates)
- Costume Designer (and Assistants/Associates)
- Lighting Designer (and Assistants/Associates)
- Sound Designer (and Assistants/Associates)
- Make-up Designer (and Assistants/Associates)
- Projections Designer (and Assistants/Associates)

*Estimated
national
cumulative
losses for the
creative
industries,
April to July
2020*

Month	Job Losses (millions)	Sales Losses (billions)
April	1.76	\$27.70
May	2.79	\$71.20
June	2.96	\$118.30
July	2.76	\$157.10

Florida, Richard, and Michael Seman. *Measuring COVID-19's Devastating Impact on America's Creative Economy*. p. 32.

*Estimated Cumulative losses for the
creative industries by cluster, April to July
2020*

Cluster	Jobs	% of Total Jobs Lost	Sales (billions)	% of Total Sales Lost
Fine and Performing Arts	1,383,224	50.00%	\$42.50	27.00%
Motion Picture, TV, Radio	193,550	7.00%	\$33.10	21.10%
Creative Technology	164,108	5.90%	\$22.00	13.90%

Florida, Richard, and Michael Seman. *Measuring COVID-19's
Devastating Impact on America's Creative Economy*. p. 7.

*Estimated Cumulative losses for the
creative industries by cluster, April to July
2020*







Cluster	Jobs	% of Total Jobs Lost	Sales (billions)	% of Total Sales Lost
Fine and Performing Arts	1,383,224	50.00%	\$42.50	27.00%
Design and Advertising	365,334	13.20	\$18.70	11.90%
Publishing	252,820	9.1%	\$16.3	10.4%

Florida, Richard, and Michael Seman. *Measuring COVID-19's
Devastating Impact on America's Creative Economy*. p. 7.

Estimated cumulative losses for creative industries for our region, April to July 2020

State	Jobs	Sales (millions)
Virginia	63,132	\$2,583
Maryland	49,424	\$2,202
Washington DC	62,147	\$3,877

Florida, Richard, and Michael Seman. *Measuring COVID-19's Devastating Impact on America's Creative Economy*. p. 7.

Data series	Back data	May 2020	Jun. 2020	Jul. 2020	Aug. 2020
Employment (in thousands)					
Employment, all employees (seasonally adjusted)		1,196.8	1,486.1	(P) 1,577.6	(P) 1,602.7
Employment, production and nonsupervisory employees		951.3	1,362.2	(P) 1,506.3	
Unemployment					
Unemployment rate		43.9%	37.3%	29.2%	23.6%
Job openings, hires, and separations (in thousands)					
Job openings		119	104	(P) 83	
Hires		224	270	(P) 183	
Separations		51	104	(P) 99	
Footnotes					
(P) Preliminary					

*WORKFORCE STATISTICS: ARTS,
ENTERTAINMENT AND
RECREATION, U.S. BUREAU OF
LABOR STATISTICS*

- Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries: NAICS 711
- Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions: NAICS 712
- Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries: NAICS 713



*International Alliance of
Theatrical Stage Employees*

- Estimated 150,00 members.
- Membership does not include Stage Managers.

IATSE Estimates Up to 95% of Its Members Are Out of Work Due to Coronavirus

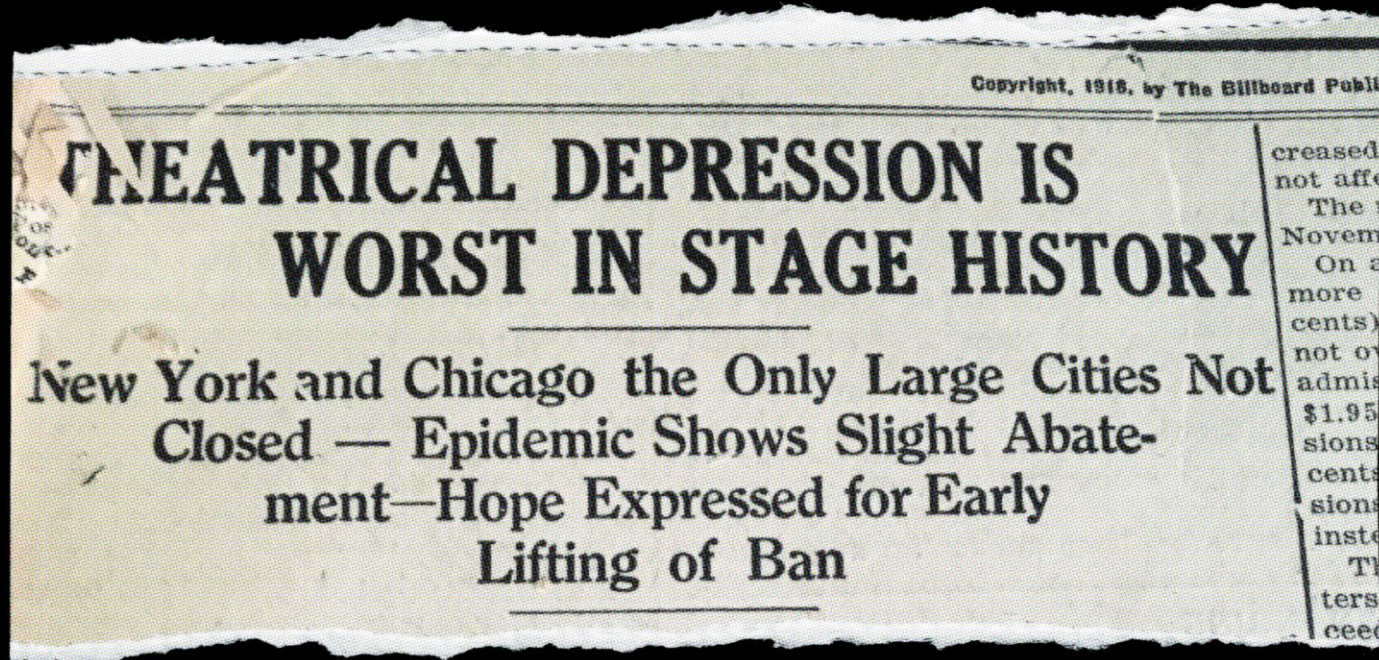
By Jazz Tangcay ▼



Tangcay, Jazz, and Jazz Tangcay. "IATSE Estimates Up to 95% of Its Members Are Out of Work Due to Coronavirus." *Variety*, 30 Mar. 2020.

Past Pandemics and Theatre

1918 Pandemic

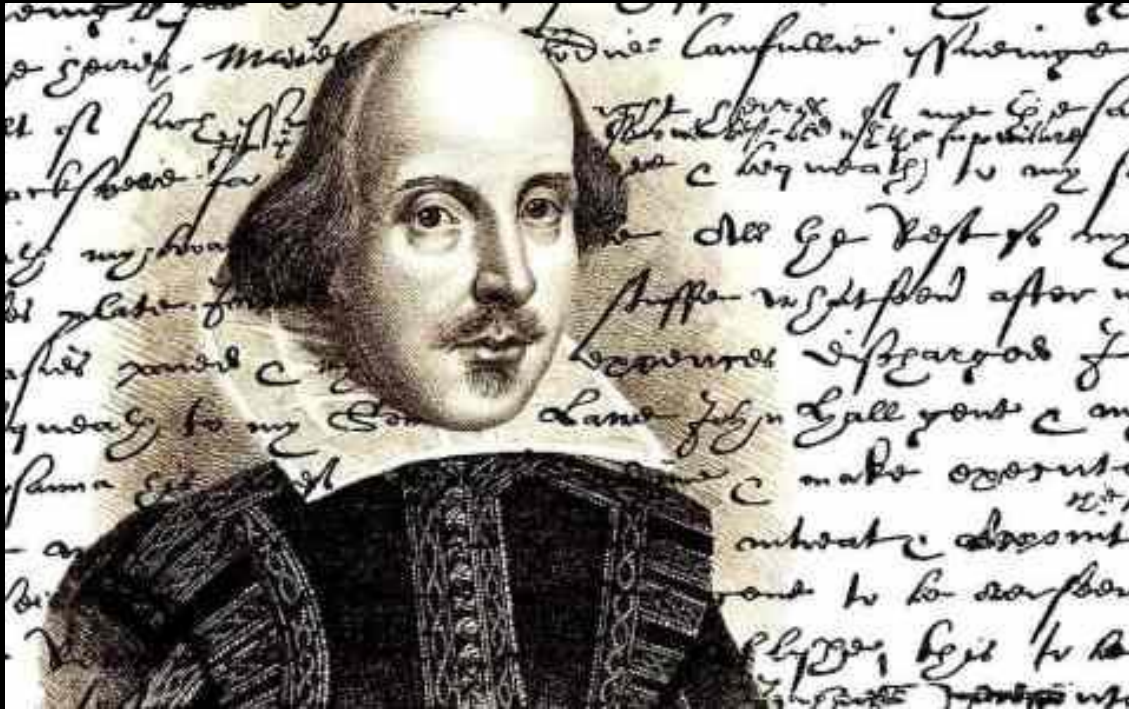


- Theatre Managers in Terra Haute ignored closing orders and were arrested.
- Many actors went to work in munitions factories.
- Venues often opened only to close again after regional outbreaks.

"Billboard's 1918 Pandemic Coverage Reveals Eerie Similarities." *Billboard*, 24 Apr. 2020,

Past Pandemics and Theatre

Shakespeare and the Plague



Greenblatt, Stephen. "What Shakespeare Actually Wrote About the Plague."
The New Yorker, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/what-shakespeare-actually-wrote-about-the-plague>.

- Shakespeare was born during a plague outbreak in 1564.
- Between 1606 and 1610, theatres in London were only open for a total of nine months due to plague outbreaks.
- During this time, Shakespeare wrote many of his works including "Macbeth", "Anthony and Cleopatra", "The Winter's Tale", and "The Tempest".

Theatre Industry's Response



Technicians and Designers have applied skills to provide services to the general population.



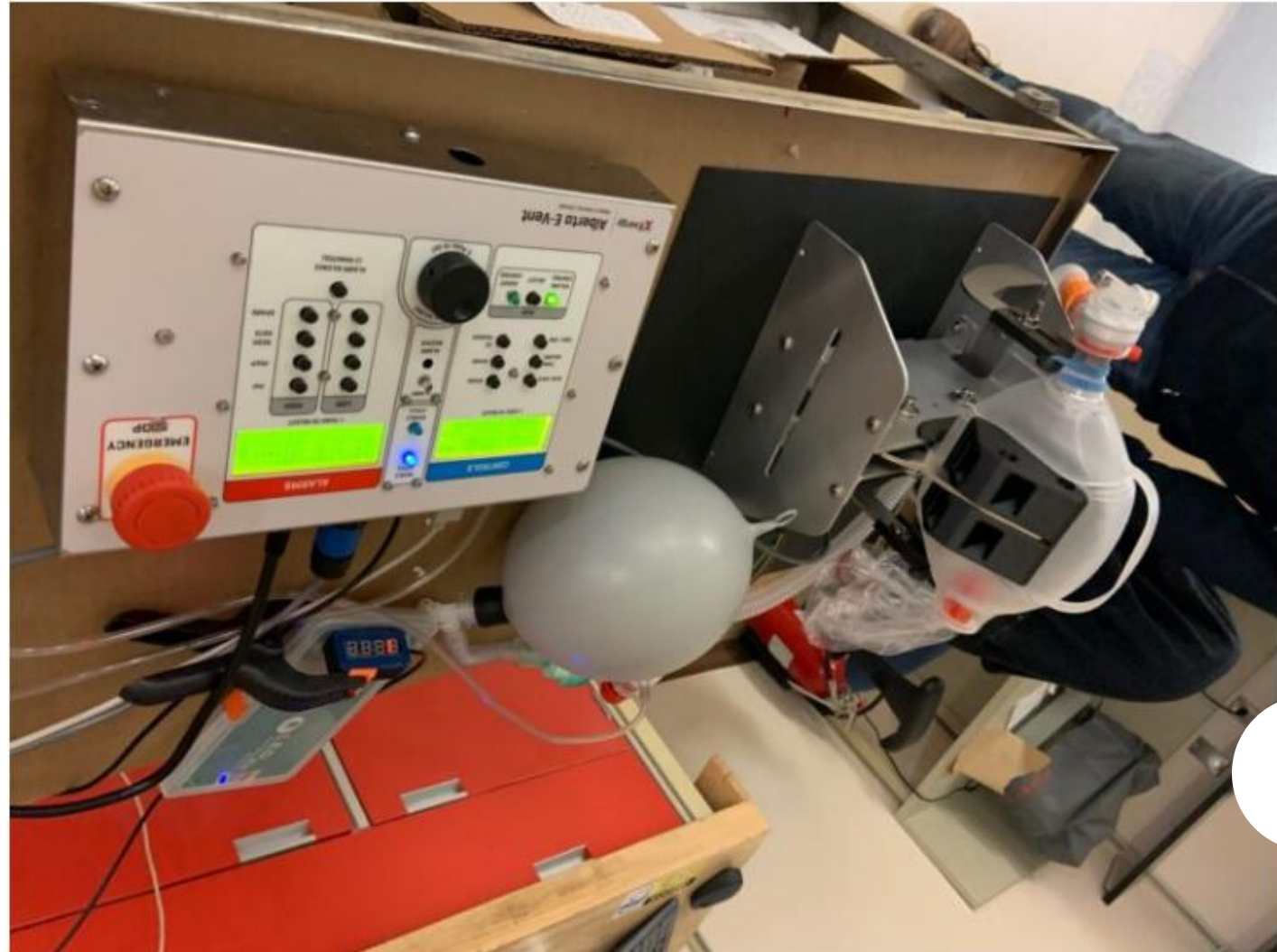
Through the use of technology, designers and technicians are continuing to create theatrical performances in various modalities.



Designers and Technicians are helping reshape the definition of theatre.

- Cinemaphotographer assisted in the creation of a control board for ventilators.
- Ventilators were built by Alberta Health Systems.
- As of July 21, 2020, upwards of 5000 ventilators have been requested.
- "International Cinematographers Guild Local 669 Member Mike Johnson Builds Ventilator Prototype for COVID-19 Patients." *IATSE Cares*, 13 Aug. 2020

International Cinematographers Guild Local 669 Member Mike Johnson Builds Ventilator Prototype for COVID-19 Patients



- Wardrobe shops across the nations were closed in March.
- Workers pivoted to answering the call for masks in late March and early April.
- 700 New York costumers constructed PPE for public hospitals during the height of the health crisis.
- *AMERICAN THEATRE | Got Masks? Theatre Costume Shops Join Fight Against COVID-19.*
- *Broadway Costume Designers Are Making PPE for Healthcare Workers | Vogue.*



A costumer from Syracuse Stage's mask-making station at home.

FEATURE MARCH 26, 2020 0 COMMENTS

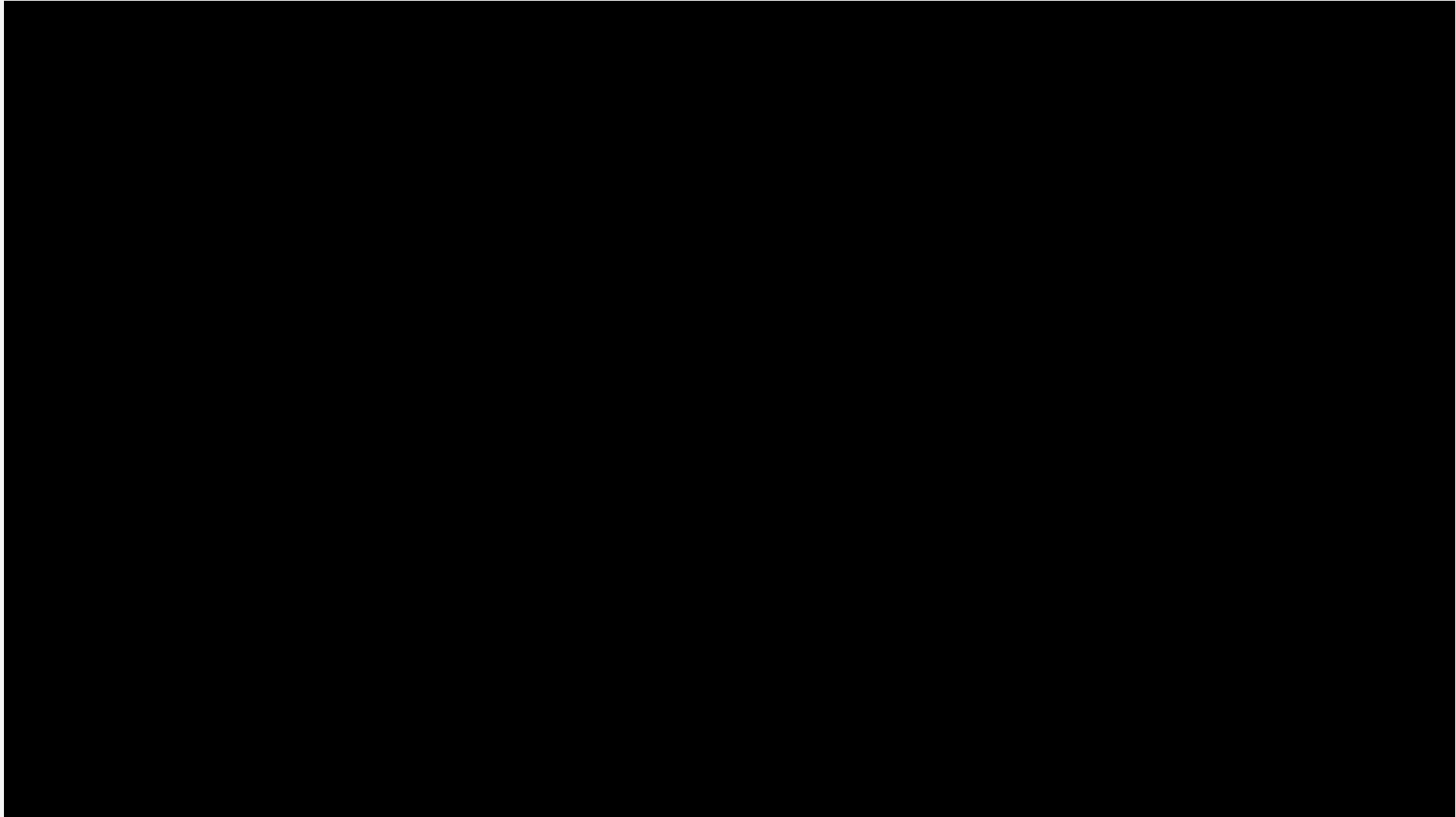
Got Masks? Theatre Costume Shops Join Fight Against COVID-19

FASHION

Broadway Costume Designers Are Making PPE for Healthcare Workers

BY CHRISTIAN ALLAIRE

May 13, 2020



IATSE Members work with Army Corps of Engineers to utilize entertainment rigging in creating temporary hospitals.



Open Broadcaster Software



Adobe® Creative Cloud™

ADAPTATIONS IN DESIGN.

With the prohibition on in-person collaborations, designers are embracing digital technology.

Technology used for telecommunication is combined with digital rendering technology to create theatrical environments.

Much of the software is widely available, but a shortage of hardware has created some challenges.



IMMEDIATE PIVOT: ZOOM

*UMW Theatre Department's
online performance of Much Ado
About Nothing, April 16, 2020*



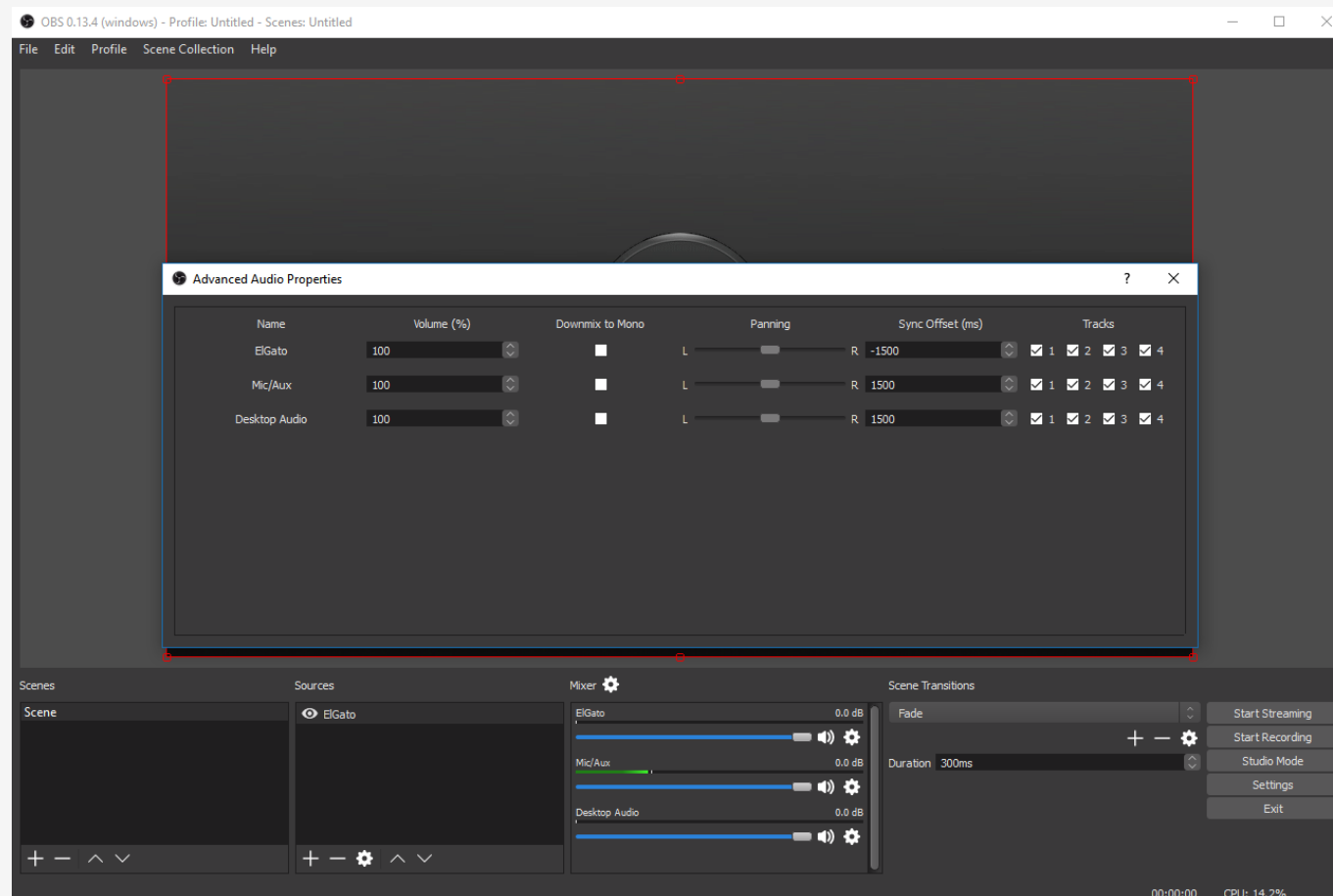
ZOOM, YOUTUBE, OBS

*Singing On Stage's online
performance of Into The Woods,
June 15, 2020*

ZOOM, YOUTUBE, OBS

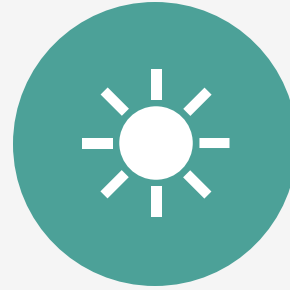
Irish Rep's production of The Weir.





OBS DEMO

Equipment Needs for OBS/Zoom Performance



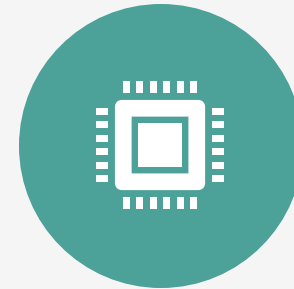
SUFFICIENT LIGHTING.



QUALITY
MICROPHONE.

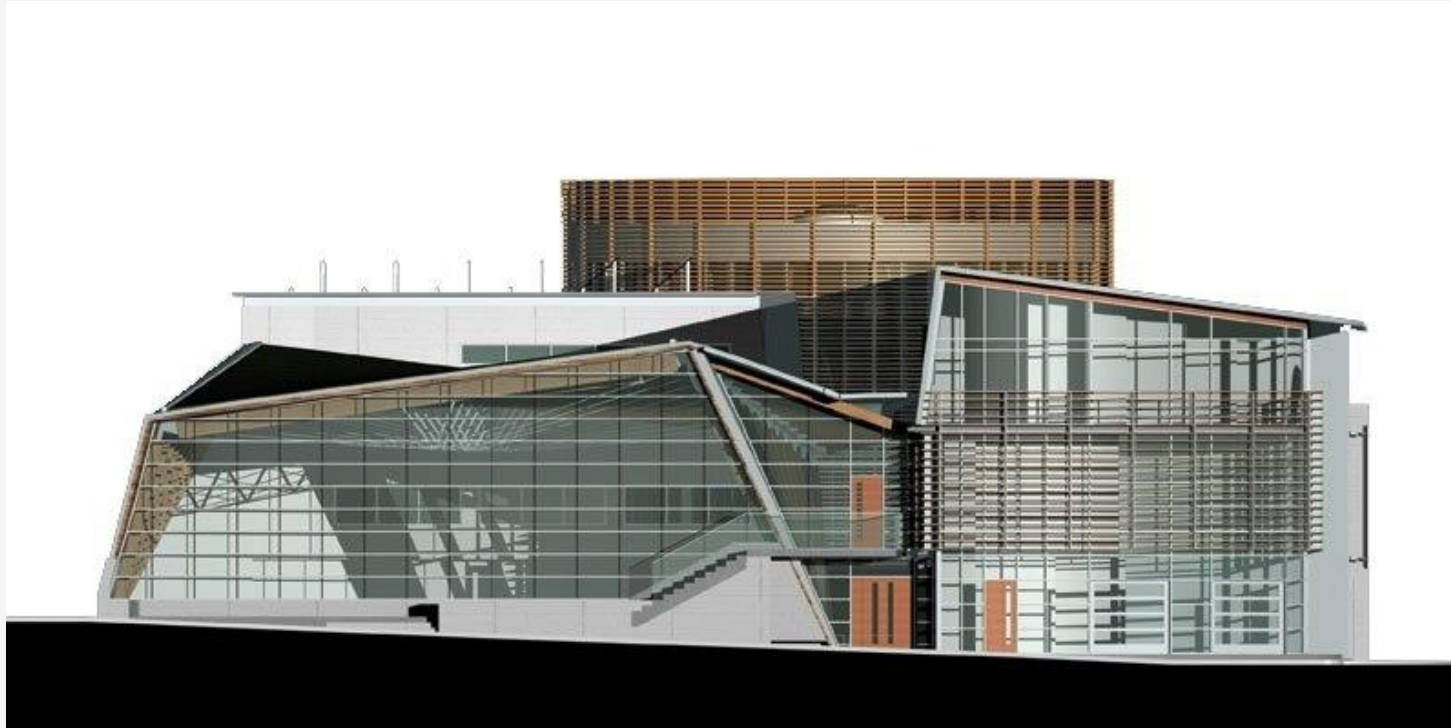


QUALITY CAMERA AND
INTERFACE.



COMPUTER WITH
SUFFICIENT
PROCESSING POWER.

*VECTORWORKS
(COMPUTER
AIDED DESIGN)
DEMO*

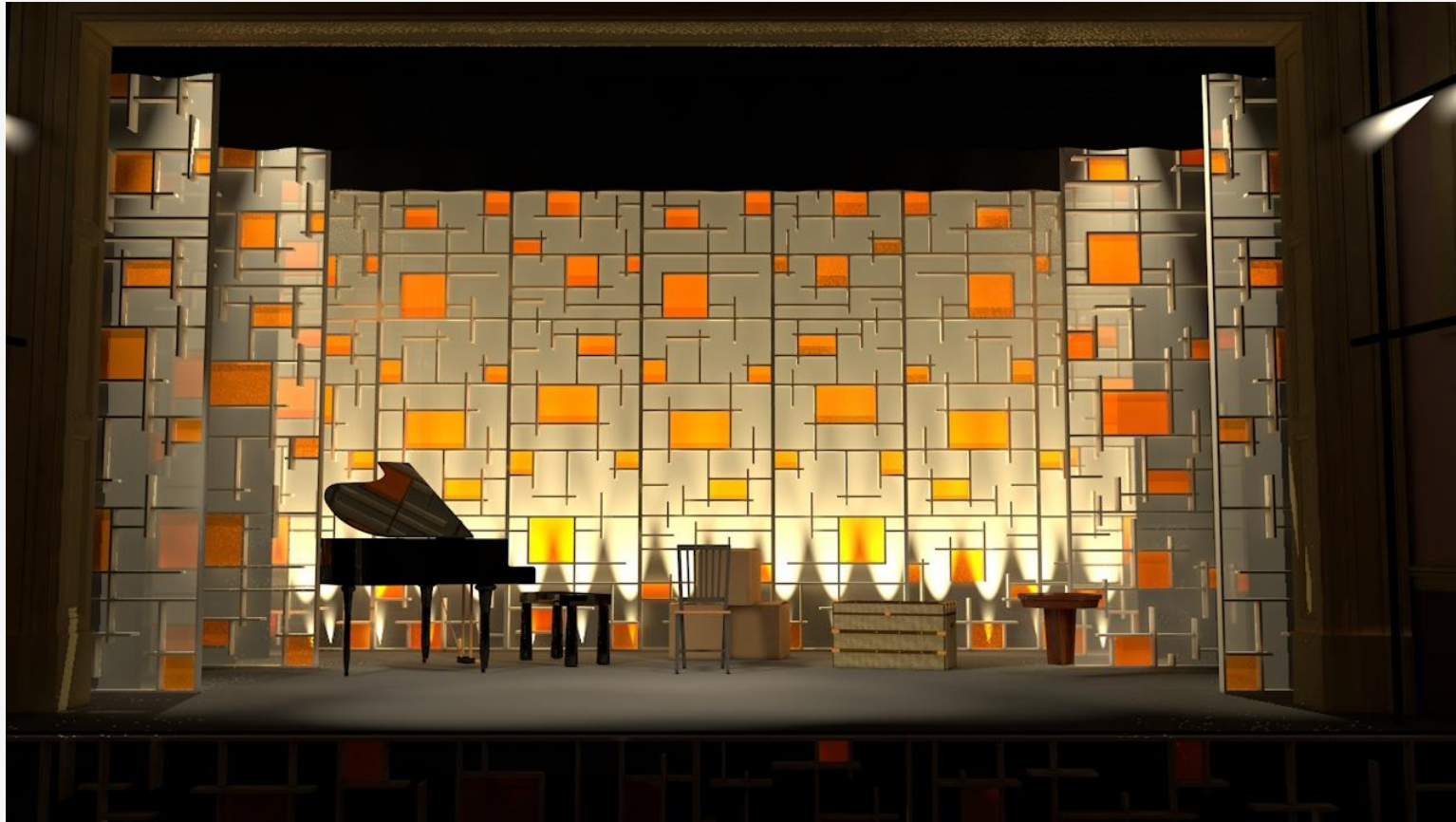


*Equipment
Needs for
Modeling
and
Rendering
with CAD*

Sufficient
processing power.

Dual monitors.

*RENDERING
SOFTWARE
(CINEMA 4D)
DEMO*



Equipment Needs for Rendering Software

Sufficient
processing power.

Dual monitors.

When the Audience Is Stuck at Home, the Play Is in the Mail

That package in your hallway may be an exciting new theatrical experience. Or maybe not.

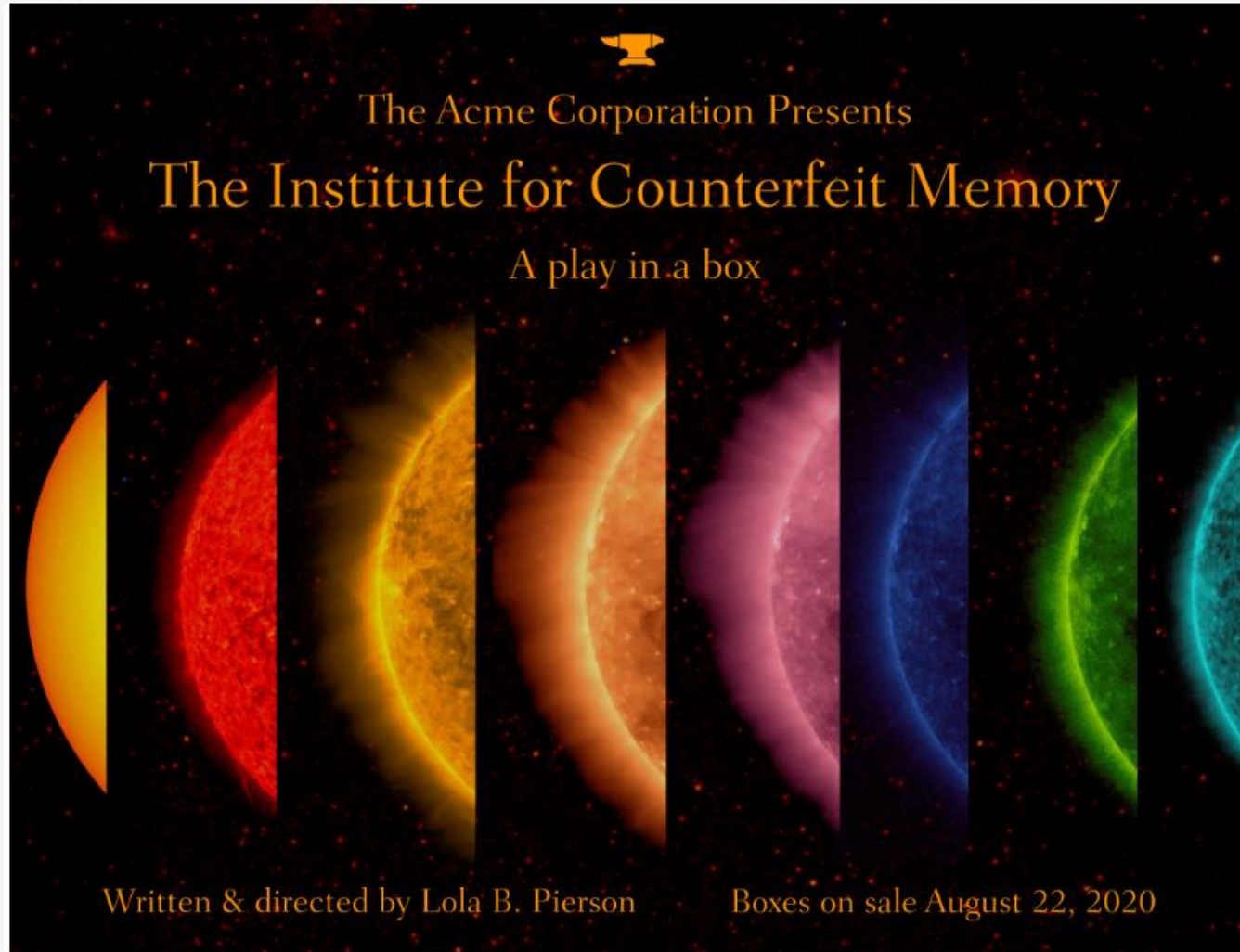


Several of the props that arrive by mail to experience “Portaleza,” which includes a short movie watched on a phone. Tony Cenicola/The New York Times

Reimagining Theatre: Theatre via the USPS

- Some companies are offering “mail order theatre”.
- Audience members receive a box with props and a self-guided story they can watch on their phone.

Green, Jesse. “When the Audience Is Stuck at Home, the Play Is in the Mail.” *The New York Times*, 10 Sept. 2020. *NYTimes.com*



Written & Directed by Lola B. Pierson

THE ACME CORPORATION

- Experimental Theatre company based in Baltimore Maryland.
- Tickets range from \$10-\$70
- Ticketholders are sent a box through the mail, and a video link 1 hour before the show starts.

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE



- Based in La Jolla, CA
- Playhouse Without Walls program has been in existence for a decade.
- *Portaleza* was created by designer David Israel Reynoso and Optika Moderna



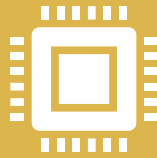
ARTISTIC STAMP

- Sends a series of handwritten letters.
- Ticketholders must write back to receive the next letter.
- Currently offering six different plays.

The Future of Design and Technology in Theatre



The immediate future.




Integration of new technologies.



A refined practice.

Protocols for a return

- IATSE, AEA, and AFM have issued guidelines for a return to work.
 - All guidelines rely on effective testing, contact tracing, and a reduction of regional cases.
 - A rushed return can be dangerous for technicians, actors, and musicians given the proximity they are to others (control booths, orchestra pits, dressing rooms).
 - Guidelines call for PPE, UVC Sterilization lamps, plexiglass partitions, etc.
- 

*AEA
approved
productions
since
March.*

- Barrington Stage Company: *Harry Clarke*
- Berkshire Theatre Group: *Godspell*
- Walt Disney World (as of August 12)
- **Upcoming-** Weathervane Playhouse: *Miracle of South Division Street, The World Goes Round, and Little Shop of Horrors.*
- **Upcoming-** Music Theatre of Connecticut: *Fully Committed.*
- **Upcoming-** Northern Stage Company: *It's Fine, I'm Fine.*

When can we return to normal?

“I would think by the time we get to the end of 2021, maybe even the middle of 2021, if we get a vaccine that’s a knockout vaccine that’s 85 to 90 percent effective—I don’t think we’ll get that, I’ll settle for 70 percent effective—and just about everyone gets vaccinated, you’ll have a degree of immunity in a general community that I think you could walk into a theatre without a mask and feel like it’s comfortable that you’re not going to be at risk.”

-Dr. Anthony Fauci, September 9, 2020