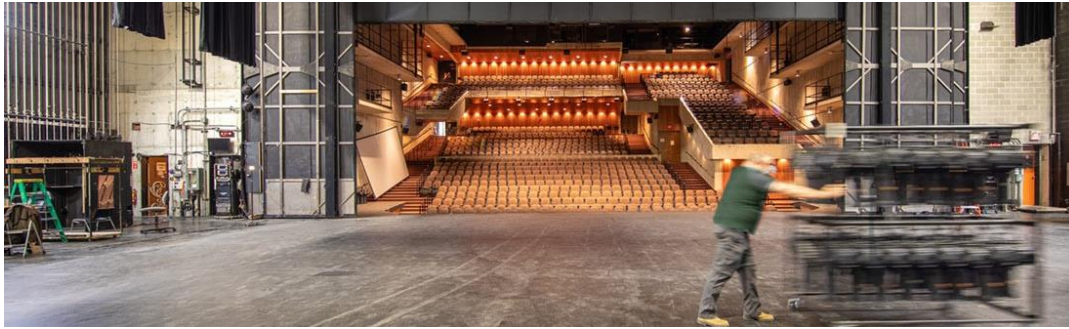


Theatre People: Stage Crew

Once the set, costumes, and props are built and painted, they are moved from the shops and rehearsal hall to the stage and become the charge of the stage crew. The stage crew will consist of people for each department: Head Carpenter, Head of Wardrobe, Head of Wigs, Head Electrician, Head of Sound/Audio, Head Stagehand – and possibly more crew members under each of them. The Head Electrician and Head of Sound spend much of their time up in their booths to operate their parts of the show, but the others are in the wings backstage. MTC employs each Head for the season, and brings in other crew on a show-by-show basis. At MTC and many other theatres in Winnipeg, Stage Crew are members of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, the local “backstage union.”



Tasks and activities in a typical day

- Loading and unloading
- Move show pieces to the stage, install and put in place
- Keep pieces organized
- Perform maintenance and repairs (eg oil a squeaky door, sew a hole in a jacket)
- Flypeople (at MTC, this is the Stagehand) operate hanging scenery and curtains that are raised and lowered – they use a system of ropes, pulleys, and counterweights to make this happen
- Operate moving scenery
- Use ladders and lifts
- Reset the for the next show: stagehands might move furniture back into place; wardrobe would do laundry...
- Ensuring the safe load-in, operation, and strike of all systems and items in the show
- Collaborating with stage management and the rest of the technical team to keep all effects and cues integrated
- Interact professionally with actors and other crew members

Skills that stage crew members use:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Operating quickly and efficiently | • Safety awareness |
| • Working as a team and independently | • Problem solving |
| • Keeping calm | • Quick thinking |
| • Attention to detail and ability to follow directions | • Skills specific to their field, eg carpentry, sewing, rigging/fly system |
| | • Maintaining clear communication |

Building Abilities

To serve you in a career backstage, try to:

- Join a school theatre program or community group and volunteer to work backstage.
- Learn about other theatre roles: crew may bounce from department to department in their careers, and you will have to interact with and respect the work of people in all areas.
- Take care of your body. Stage crew work is a physical job that can keep you on your feet for extended periods, so knowing ways to rest and rejuvenate that work for you is important.