

Stage Directions Readers Theatre Script

By Barbara Crowther, Catholic University student in
Dr. Rosalind M. Flynn's course, The Teaching of Theatre

- | | | | |
|-------|--|-----|---|
| 1 | What are all these words beside the lines of the script? [gesture] | All | Stages were raked. [gesture] |
| 2 | Those are directions for the actor to follow in the scene. | 1 | Why rake them? Did they have leaves on them? |
| 3 | Stage left, | All | [sound effect] |
| 4 | Stage right, | 6 | No, stages were build on a slope, level in front of the audience and gradually sloping upward to the back of the theatre. |
| 5 | Downstage, | | |
| 6 | Upstage,...etc. | | |
| 1 | Huh? | 1 | But wasn't it hard to act on a raked stage? |
| 2 | Well, "stage left" means you're going to your left. | All | Oh, yes! [Gesture] |
| 7 | Right. [gesture] | 7 | But stages are flat today...? |
| All | Wrong. [Sound effect] | 6 | Many are, but some are still raked. |
| 3 | "Stage left" means | 3 | Improvements and developments in theatres and how they built their seating reduced the need for a raked stage. |
| All | The actor's left [gesture] | 7 | Neat. |
| 2 | not the director's or audience's. | 1 | So remind me again... |
| 7 | Oh. | 4 | Stage left is the actor's left, |
| 4 | Same for stage right. The actor moves stage right-- | 3 | Stage right is the actor's right, |
| All | his or her right [gesture] | 4 | Center stage is the middle, |
| 4 | --the audience's left. [gesture] | 5 | Downstage is the space closest to the audience, |
| 5 | Oh, and the stage is divided in three sections horizontally too. | 6 | And upstage is the space farthest from the audience. |
| All | The center. [gesture] | All | Stage left [gesture]. |
| 3 | This is the middle section of the stage. | | Stage right [gesture]. |
| All | Downstage [gesture] and upstage. [gesture] | | Downstage [gesture]. |
| 1 | And downstage means go backwards? | | Upstage [gesture]. |
| 4 | No, downstage means moving down towards the audience, | 7 | Right! |
| 2 | And upstage is the area farthest from the audience, | 1 | Left! |
| 3 | Near the back wall or scenery. | All | Never mind... [Gesture] |
| 1 & 7 | Why? | | |
| 5 | Well, in the earlier theatre, | | |

From the web site of Dr. Rosalind M. Flynn, Educational Drama Specialist

www.rosalindflynn.com