RPI Playhouse

Fly System Safety and Operation

Emergencies

1. If rigging/fly system accident occurs resulting in injury, call Public Safety at campus phone extension 6611 or by cell phone at 518-276-6611. For non-emergencies dial 518-276-6656.

2. If a rigging/fly system accident occurs, resulting in damaged equipment, DO NOT assume the stage is safe. Evacuate the area immediately and call the Technical Director. Contact information is in the Playhouse office and on the front door.

3. Do not attempt to move an injured person unless there is an imminent danger to life.

Playhouse Officer and Crew Responsibilities

4. The Technical Director is the ultimate overseer of the fly system and all rigging operations within the RPI Playhouse.

5. The stage, lighting, and scenic department chairs may also serve as supervisors for fly system and rigging operations, at the discretion of the Technical Director.

6. Only the Technical Director, and those appointed by the Technical Director, may certify others to use the Fly System and Pulley Systems.

7. Only certified users are to use the Fly System and Pulley Systems.

General Safety

1. Rigging and Fly System accidents are the leading cause of death in the theater. ALWAYS use caution when operating the fly system.

2. Line sets should always be kept in balance. Do not use the rope lock alone to hold an unbalanced load.

3. Use common sense, and do not take chances.

Commands

1. Moving calls - Whenever a batten is moved in or out
   a. “[line set number] coming in-going out!”
   b. “[name of batten ex: 1st Elec.] moving”
   c. etc.

2. Loading/Unloading
   a. “Clear the Rail!”
   b. “Loading/Unloading weight from [line set number]”

3. Runaways
   a. “RUNWAY [location]!”
   b. “RUNAWAY, CLEAR THE DECK” “HEADS! RUNAWAY”
4. Acknowledgment
   a. “Thank you” should be called by PERSONS IN THE AREA OF THE MOVING BATTEN, AND ONLY THESE PERSONS.
   b. If no acknowledgment is received, the line set should not move.

Loading and Unloading

1. At least two certified users are required to load and unload weight from a line set. One in the loading gallery (fly loft) and one on the deck to spot, test the line, and call commands.
2. Remove all items from pockets or which could fall off before climbing up to the fly loft.
3. During the loading/unloading process, an unbalanced load condition exists. This is potentially VERY DANGEROUS. Do not deviate from the loading and unloading procedure taught during fly system certification.
4. Whenever possible, battens should be loaded at Low Trim (deck height). Counterweights should be the LAST THING LOADED, and the FIRST THING UNLOADED. Remember: Minimize potential energy.
5. Use the weight guide determine how much counterweight is needed.
6. Never load or unload weights when anyone is standing below the loading gallery.
7. Lift weights with your legs while keeping your back as vertical as possible.
8. A spreader plate should be used for each 24” of counterweights stacked on the arbor. Unused spreader plate shall be stored on top of the counterweight stack at all times.
9. Stop collars should remain fastened in place (thumb screws tightened) after loading and unloading.
10. There should be quiet on stage whenever counterweights are being loaded/unloaded. Commands that cannot be heard cannot be followed.
11. Counterweights should never be stacked higher than the top of the kick rail and should be evenly distributed along the length of the loading gallery.
   a. Deck → 1 Full Plate high
   b. Fly Loft → 2 Full Plates high
12. Never add or remove more than 150 pounds (68 kg, 6.5 ROT) on pipe batten at any one time without adding or removing a corresponding amount to or from the counterweight arbor.
13. Line sets should always be kept in balance. Never rely on the rope lock to hold an unbalanced load.
14. If the line can’t be perfectly balanced because the imbalance is smaller than the smallest weight available, it is usually better to leave the line arbor heavy.
Operation

1. Two trained people are required to operate the fly system, one to spot and one to operate the line set.
2. Know what is on the line set before you open the lock to move it. Ask yourself “is this line out of weight or is it in weight?” If the line set is out of weight by a lot and you open the lock, it is too late to do anything about it.
3. Do not lower a line set if people are under the batten.
4. Never walk under a moving line set.
5. Call for “Quiet On Stage” when the system is used, as commands must be heard.
6. Always lock the line set with the locking ring in place before leaving.
7. Use common sense during the operation of the system. A noisy or hard pulling set may indicate a problem. If something doesn’t look or feel right, it probably isn’t.
8. Line sets that should not be moved for safety reason must be marked as such. Never move a line set that is marked with a warning not to do so, or one that is locked out.

Runaway Line Sets

1. Do not attempt to stop the run-away line set.
2. Shout a warning call to all persons on the stage.
3. Exit stage or take cover. The possibility of flying counterweights and objects falling from the grid is great.
4. Enact emergency procedures.

Rigging

1. No equipment that is not suitably rated for load is to be used to rig any object.
2. Chains, carabiners, shackles, slings, and other hardware are not to be used for anything other than their intended purpose.
3. Consult the Technical Director if you are unsure of how to safely rig ANYTHING.
   a. This could be as simple as a curtain, or as complex as a custom set piece.