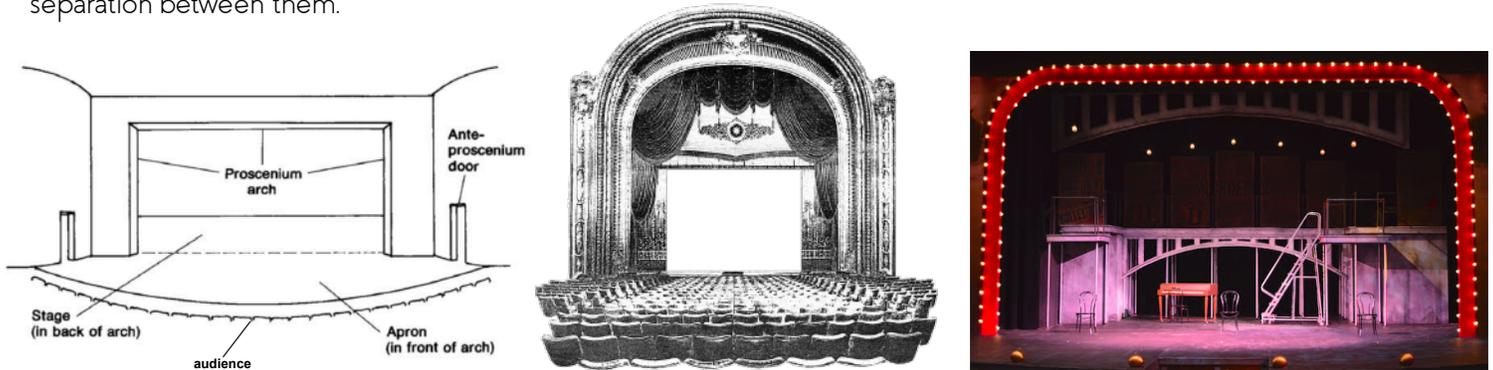


# Conventional Theater Configurations

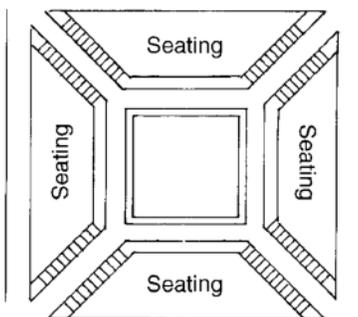
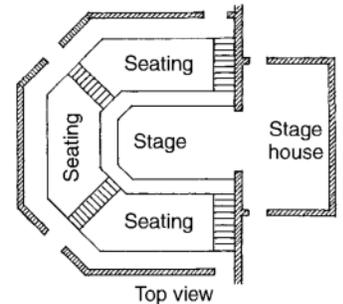
## Proscenium Theater

Proscenium theaters are what you picture when you think of a conventional Broadway production. The audience is on one end and the stage on the other, which is called an **end stage** configuration in other contexts. The audience and the performers are divided by an architectural opening that frames the stage, called a **proscenium arch**. Sometimes the stage extends out in front of the proscenium arch, and that section of stage is known as the **apron**. In this configuration the audience is in a different volume of space than the performers and it can create a feeling of separation between them.

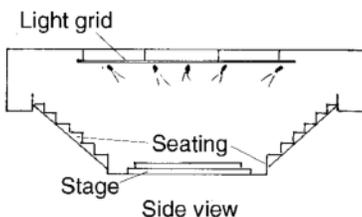


## Thrust Stage

A thrust stage is when the stage thrusts out from one side of the space into the audience. The audience is on three sides of the stage, with some sort of end stage scenery. In both arena and thrust stage theatres, some members of the audience will be looking at other members of the audience across the stage, so that they appear as the background to the performance. Shakespeare was performed on a thrust stage at The Globe.



Top view



Side view

## Arena or Theater-in-the-Round

Arena theaters have audience on four sides of the stage or completely surrounding the stage. The stage shape can be circular or rectangular or any other irregular shape, but the audience is on all sides. Typically the performance space is sunken and the audience is in rising tiers. This configuration can create a sense of community or shared experience between audience and performers.



## Black Box

Black Box theaters are a flexible performance space that can be configured to fit a production's needs. It is usually a sizable black rectangular room that has moveable audience seating or risers.

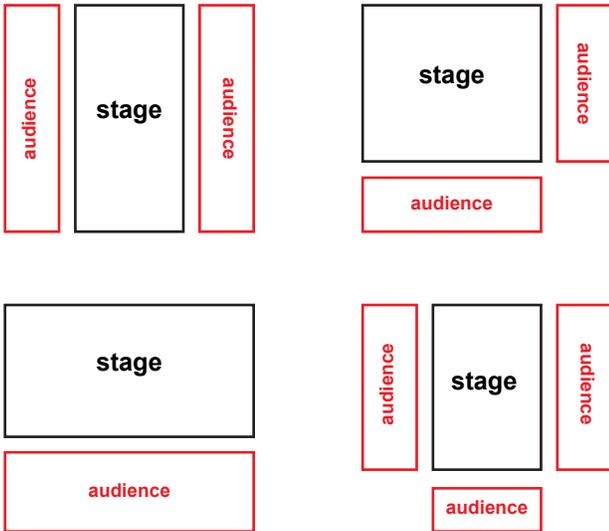
Common uses of the space include:

**Alley** - audience on two opposing sides, performs in the middle

**L-shaped** - audience on two adjacent sides, creating an L.

**End stage** - audience on one end, performers on the other.

**3/4 Thrust** - audience on 3 sides



## Outdoor Theater

Outdoor theaters are often an end stage or thrust configuration but are able to utilize the natural light of the sun to light the stage, sometimes combined with additional theatrical lighting fixtures. Shakespeare in the Park in New York is an example of an outdoor theater.



## Site Specific

Site specific theater is becoming more and more popular as it enables a level of interaction with the performers not often achieved in conventional theater arrangements. A production will find a location, it could be anything from an abandoned warehouse to an apartment complex to a stately mansion and they stage the production throughout the location, with the audience following the performers throughout the space or exploring at will.



## Future Theaters

We live in a constantly changing world, and theater must continue to be reimagined.

