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magic 'if' -- the actor's technique to imagine themselves as one with the situations they play; What would I do IF I were this person in this situation?

main curtain -- used to separate the auditorium from the stage in a proscenium theatre

malapropism -- use of an incorrect word that sounds similar to the intended word

male plug -- an electrical plug carrying the pronged end as opposed to the female plug which carries the receptacle end

manuscript -- the typed version of a play

marquee -- an overhanging canopy or lighted billboard over the main entrance of a theatre which advertises the current production

masculine ending -- a stressed syllable ending a verse line.

masking -- the draperies or flats that hide backstage from the audience's view

master carpenter -- the person in charge of all the carpenters

master electrician -- the person in charge of all the electricians

master fader -- on a lighting control board, the slider that causes all the lights to fade out

matinee -- an afternoon performance

medieval drama -- the simple religious drama originating in the 10th century and evolving over 600 years into the great European plays

melodrama -- suspenseful, plot-oriented drama featuring all-good heroes, all-bad villains, simplistic and naturalistic dialogue, soaring moral conclusions, and bravura acting. Only when taken to extreme is melodrama laughable. Mysteries and problem plays are two types of drama that fall under this category.

metaphor -- a comparison that suggests two dissimilar things are actually the same.

meter -- how the rhythm of verse is measured; the inner rhythmical structure of a line; the regular rhythm that is created when syllables are stressed and unstressed in a systematic pattern.

mezzanine -- lower section of the second tier of seating

mime -- communication by gesture, no words

minstrel show -- a type of variety show popular in America between 1850 and 1870

minor part -- a role with few lines necessary for advancing the plot or aiding other characters

miscast -- a situation where an actor was cast in a role that proved to be beyond his capabilities to perform

miracle play -- based on the Biblical miracles or lives of the saints

mise en scene -- the setting of a dramatic piece on stage; all the visual surroundings including the actors

moment-by-moment reality --instinctive, believable interaction between two actors concerning whatever takes place at the moment; includes blocked action as well as unexpected stage occurrences like set or costume malfunctions.

monologue -- uninterrupted speech delivered by one character in a play to other characters who are at least present, if not listening

morality play -- a play with a message popular in late Medieval times having allegorical characters representing vice, greed, etc.

motif -- recurring thematic element or a pattern of repetition of design elements in a work of art

motivation -- the reason behind an actor speaking a line or making a movement

motivational light -- where the light in a scene is "supposed" to be coming from, i.e., the sun, an overhead light, etc.

motivational side -- the side of the stage where the motivational light is coming from

movable spotlight -- a mechanically operated spotlight that can turn and pan to send light in any direction; often called a vari-light after the first company that made them popular

move in -- to cross toward the center of the stage

move out -- to cross away from the center of the stage

mugging -- using excessive, exaggerated expressions

multi-set show -- a show that requires several distinct sets, such as a large Broadway musical

musical soliloquy -- show tune which gives information to the audience about what the singer is thinking and feeling

muslin -- a reasonably priced, commonly used fabric for drops and flats