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Off-Broadway. A group of theatres in New York, clustered round Greenwich Village and mid-and uptown on the east side, which are organized on shoe-string budgets and present new plays of a more or less experimental (or at least non-commercial) type, foreign plays, revivals, etc. The theatres are smaller than on Broadway, often improvised in halls or cellars, and the actors and technicians are paid at lower rates than the American unions require for full-scale Broadway shows, while various other union restrictions are also waived. Much of the most lively American theatre today comes from, and often stays, off-Broadway.

Pageant. Originally the word referred to the movable stage on which scenes of medieval religious plays were performed; later it came to be applied to the entertainment enacted upon them, and so to its modern usage to describe a procession made up of spectacular tableaux and usually including songs, dances, and dramatic scenes with some bearing on local history. The great era of this sort of entertainment was in the 1900s and 1920s, but it still lingers on and elements of it are to be found in the annual Lord Mayor's Shows in London.

Pantomime. The principal modern meaning of the term, when it is not used as interchangeable with 'MIME' is an exotic and irrational Christmas entertainment. Based remotely on fairy tales but padded out with popular songs of the moment, topical comedy, and audience participation routines, it requires the hero (principal boy), to be played by a girl in tights and the comic older woman (dame) to be played by a man.

This species of entertainment began life as an appendage to or variation on the HARLEQUINADE, and by the early nineteenth century had grown and developed to the point where it became the main item on the bill, with perhaps a one-act comedy to start and a vestigial harlequinade to round things off. The most popular subjects for pantomimes are CINDERELLA (which has **two** principal boys, the Prince and his valet Dandini, taken over from Rossini's opera on the subject), ALADDIN (from a burlesque of the 1860s), DICK WHITTINGTON, THE BABES IN THE WOOD, and JACK AND THE BEAN STALK, though most other familiar fairy-stories have been called on as an excuse at least once.

Other meanings of the term pantomime include entertainments in ancient Rome given by one actor who, with the aid of a compartmented mask, played **several** roles in enactments of fabulous tales; eighteenth-century mythical ballets; mime-plays as performed by **DEBURAU'S** company at the Funambules; and dumb-show melodrama.

Properties (usually shortened to **Props**). Everything required during the action of a play which does not count as furniture, costume, or scenery--such as letters, spectacles, cigarettes, knitting, weapons of various sorts (known as hand props, since they are carried by the actors), and food, drink, china and cutlery, telephones, and other oddments of the sort. They are looked after by the property-man and kept by him in a special room or cupboard when not actually in use.

Stock company. American term for a theatrical company operating along repertory lines in some out-of-town theatre during the summer months.

Theatricalism. Theory of theatre evolved in Russia and Germany during the 1900s as a counter-blast to **NATURALISM** and based on the reasonable principle that 'theatre is theatre, not life'.

Upstage. Towards the back of the stage, once literally 'up' because of the **RAKE**. To 'upstage' an actor is to manoeuvre him into a less favourable position, literally or metaphorically, for catching and holding the audience's attention

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