

Information for Hirers

Gala Mission Statement

To be a vibrant and cherished building, and present on our stages and screens, a programme of the highest quality, which encourages creativity, participation, innovation and diversity, within a sound and sustainable financial framework.

Introduction to Hiring the Gala Theatre

Gala prides itself on being at the heart of the community in Durham. As well as presenting some of the country's finest touring companies and performers, we are delighted that so many schools, amateur societies and community groups want to perform at our venue.

As a professional theatre, we need to have in place, a number of rules and regulations for incoming companies, and whether you have visited us before, or are looking to hire the venue for the first time, please take a moment to read through the details below. This will outline the facilities and services we can provide to you, and the expectations we have from you.

We hope you choose to visit Gala, and if you have any queries about hiring the venue, please contact us, as we would be pleased to answer your questions.

Guidance for Hiring the Gala Theatre

When deciding whether you wish to hire the Gala Theatre, you will need to consider many different factors. You must give consideration to the time it will take you to get in, and set-up for your event.

You will need to allow enough time to load in any equipment; erect your set (if applicable); rig and plot any specific lighting requirements you may have; test and balance the sound when using radio microphones; and perform a soundcheck, technical rehearsal or dress rehearsal.

When you arrive on the day of your show, our Technical staff will be awaiting your instructions, and are there to help you set up and run your event. Please ensure you understand the facilities we have on-site, and what we can and can't provide.

Our Technical staff will do everything possible to make your event a success - but they can only work with the information you give them; they will not have seen your show before. If in doubt, you can speak to one of our technical team, even before booking your event. They will be pleased to advise you on what is possible, what we can provide, potential additional costs and the ideal timings for your event.

Public Perception

At Gala, we always try to give our visitors the best possible experience. So, it is in both our interests that your time here is efficient and effective, and your show is presented to the highest possible standard. You can help us by ensuring that you

bring us a well-rehearsed and presented production, describe your performance accurately in any publicity you send out, provide us with accurate running times, and so on.

Theatre Capacity - Audience

The capacity of the auditorium is 500 (fully seated) or a maximum of 1,000 (with a fully standing stalls area and a seated circle). Use of the orchestra pit removes the first three rows of seats and reduces the capacity to 440.

Theatre Capacity - Backstage

As a public building, Gala operates very strict Fire Regulations. For this reason, the maximum numbers of people in your company must not exceed 100. This is the number which the Fire Department have judged can be safely evacuated in an emergency situation. This number must include all performers, the legally prescribed number of chaperones and any backstage staff you supply.

Backstage Accommodation

Total Dressing Room capacity is 64, with two further musicians' changing rooms:

Basement: 1 Dressing Room for 14 with showers

Ground Floor: 1 Dressing Room for 3 with disabled WC and shower

Ground Floor: 2 Dressing Rooms for 2 with showers

Ground Floor: 1 Dressing Room for 12 with showers

First Floor: 1 Dressing Room for 4 with shower

First Floor: 1 Dressing Room for 7 with shower

First Floor: 1 Dressing Room for 9 with shower

First Floor: 1 Dressing Room for 11 with shower

Protection of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

The Gala has a policy to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults. We would expect any group working with these groups to have a similar policy in place. Please note that as part of this policy it is not permitted for members of the public to take pictures or make recordings of children and young people on stage.

For more information please contact the Theatre Education Officer.

For some guidance notes about bringing young performers into Gala, please see our document entitled Young Performers Notes.

Health and Safety and Risk Assessments

All equipment and procedures within the technical areas of the theatre have associated written Risk Assessments and Safe Working Instructions and hiring

groups must adhere to these. It may be that the production you bring will require additional Risk Assessments or Health and Safety checks, and we would ask for your co-operation with this. Any accident which happens at Gala, no matter how small, must be recorded by Gala staff.

For more information regarding Health & Safety, please speak to any member of the Gala Theatre technical team.

What's included in the Price?

The cost of Hiring our Main Auditorium includes: the supervised use of our in-house sound and lighting systems. This will be enough to present most shows. Please refer to our Technical Specification for the equipment we have available. Any additional equipment not listed can be purchased or hired on your behalf; but will be chargeable.

The Technical staff we provide for your event will usually be a Sound Operator, a Lighting Operator and a Stage Technician; although this can be tailored to your requirements. Additional staff can be arranged and will be charged at £18 per hour, with a minimum call of 4 hours.

Get Out

For larger productions, with substantial sets, the Get Out period will be chargeable at defined United Kingdom (UK) Theatre rates.

These are currently £82.44 per person for the first two hours; then £41.19 per person, per hour after that, for each member of staff. Industry regulations state that the number of crew who were called for the Get In (bringing in and fitting up the set, lighting rig and other technical equipment) must match the number of crew for the Get Out.

Any show which has a substantial set will incur this charge. If in doubt whether your show will be subject to these rates, please contact us.

Sound / Lighting Design

For events with basic sound and lighting requirements, our technicians will be happy to set-up and operate the equipment you require. This would generally include three of four general lighting washes, and some lighting specials, with around 25 lighting cues.

Our Sound Operator can play your recorded music cues, as instructed by a Stage Manager, and can mix two or three radio or hand-held microphones. In general, this will cover most relatively simple performances and presentations. In our experience musical productions require considerable preparation and technical time, so will require additional experienced technical staff.

Box Office

Included in the cost of your hire, is the use of our Box Office to sell your tickets. Our staff are not only skilled at selling tickets, but are trained to ensure that customers get the best experience possible from their visit to Gala, ensure that customers get the seats most suitable to their needs; and are also:

- trained to maximise your revenue by ensuring there are no single seats left
- ensure the auditorium doesn't look empty by placing customers in particular parts of the theatre
- know the most appropriate position for those with mobility or vision problems and their carers
- able to ensure that the correct price is always allocated at the time of booking
- able to give out relevant information about your show, and details of special offers available
- collect data on customers, and their buying patterns, which is hugely valuable information for targeting your promotional activity
- able to resolve any problems which occur, by using booking data to trace customers; (for example, if tickets are lost, they can be re-printed)
- able to enforce normal booking rules, to maximise your income (for example, refunds are not available, and exchanged tickets are subject to a transfer fee of £1 per ticket)
- able to provide accurate sales figures for your show at regular intervals

We offer the convenience of having one point of contact for anyone wishing to make a booking. Payment can be made in person, by telephone and online, and tickets can be paid for by cash, cheque, credit and debit cards, or National Theatre Tokens.

As you are presenting your show in a professional theatre, we have strict Health & Safety rules by which we have to abide. This means all tickets for your show must be sold through our Box Office. It is not possible for any tickets to be taken away unless they are paid for in full.

Pricing

When setting the ticket prices for your show, this needs to be in line with Gala pricing policy, where Stalls and Circle seats are set at the same price. When concession prices are available, Gala Members are entitled to the same concession.

Company Point of Contact

You should have one person within your company, who liaises with our Box Office to get sales updates and request company tickets when needed. Any tickets required by your company should be agreed in advance of the show being put on sale, to guarantee availability. For requests made any later, seats cannot be guaranteed.

Marketing

All marketing support provided by the staff at Gala is to be mutually agreed, and is not a contractual obligation. All inclusions in the Gala Theatre events brochure will be at the discretion of the Gala Programme Manager. You are hiring the theatre from us, and the onus is on you to make your event a success. Our presented programme seeks to offer a wide and diverse range of events for our audience and as such, the capacity to display posters and flyers within the building is limited. We therefore cannot display promotional material for hire events. We are happy to advise on other ways of distributing these materials.

Catering and Additional Rooms

Your hire of the main auditorium includes the theatre bar being open before the show and during the interval. We have other spaces which can be used for hospitality and receptions, and can provide a full range of drinks and catering facilities. Please contact our Front of House team for more details.

Hire Charges 2021 – 22

Main Auditorium

The Gala Theatre's Main Auditorium is a state-of-the-art venue, which is fully equipped with all the sound, lighting and backstage facilities you would expect from a modern theatre.

Commercial Rate

£1800 + Valued Added Tax (VAT) per day.

This applies for each day of the Hire (Get In, Performance and Get Out) and allows access to the auditorium from 2pm onwards. It also includes eight hours of time per day for each of three technicians.

For each day the venue is required prior to 2pm, an additional £900 + VAT is payable. This includes an additional 4 hours of time per day for each of 3 Technicians.

Charity Rate

£900 + VAT per day

This applies for each day of the Hire (Get In, Performance and Get Out) and allows access to the auditorium from 2pm onwards. It also includes eight hours of time per day for each of three technicians.

For each day the venue is required prior to 2pm, an additional £450 + VAT is payable. This includes an additional 4 hours of time per day for each of 3 Technicians.

Both of the above rates are subject to the following additional charges:

- 10% of NET Box Office income for each performance
- Performing Rights Society (PRS) charges at approximately 3% of total NET income
- Payment for any additional staff required
- Payment for any additional technical equipment hired on your behalf

Tariffs

A hirer will be eligible for the charity rate when the organisation hiring the Gala Theatre is a school within the Durham County Council boundary, a UK Registered Charity or an organisation where the sole purpose of the hire is to raise funds for a UK Registered Charity.

Proof of charitable status will be required. The decision to hire the theatre and the tariff band into which your event falls will be at the discretion of the Theatre Management. The Theatre Management also retain the right to alter the Tariffs at any time.

Useful Contacts

Lizzie Glazier, Arts Programme Manager

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Kate Sorahan, Theatre Education Officer

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Marketing Team

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Technical Team

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