

Rocky Horror Picture Show

Lights Set-Up Quick Reference

Here's a short guide on how to set up lights at the Rialto. If it seems to meander oddly towards an explanation, it's because I'm not feeling too well as I'm writing this. Deal with it. It also briefly covers what I know of sound setup.

There are four floor lights:

- Flood, house left
- Flood, house right
- Columbia, house right
- Toucha, house right

Three spools of extension cords:

- Bigass orange cords
- Smaller orange cord
- Smaller black cord

Two turtledoves, and a partridge in a pear tree. There's also the bundle of four cables that goes to the Control Panel, but I couldn't think of a clever way to fit it into the above song parody.

Cords

The two spools with orange cords are behind the screen on the house right side of things, immediately inside the door where cast changes costumes. Pull them both out — the shorter, single cord is tied to the power outlet above, into which it should be plugged — and run the short one along the wall of the theater and the front row of seats to where the lighting table is (or will be) set up. Plug Mr. Switchboard 5000 into the short orange one, and then plug the end of the long one into the one-to-three-outlet-adaptor marked "Floods." Then run the long one back along the wall, behind the screen, through the door nearest the curtain on house left, along the wall on house left, and along the front row of seats 'til it reaches the Criminologists table.

The short black cord is behind the screen, along the house left wall. Plug it into the outlet just inside the stage door nearest the emergency exit, then run the spool out through the stage door nearest the curtain, along the stage, and stash it under the taller of the two risers. Plug the sex scene lamp into it, put the blue and red gels under the tall riser, and there it'll all wait until sex scene.

Flood, house left

This light goes between the Criminologist's table and the first row of seats. If you're sitting in the Crim's chair, the base — the pre-assembled black one *without* the panties on it — goes next to the far right corner of the Crim's table. On top goes the rectangular orange flood. Open the blinders (or whatever the fuck they're called) but don't bother aiming them yet. Then plug the light into the long-ass extension cord that you wound all behind the screen.

Flood and Columbia, house right

Sitting in the lighting operator's seat, put the flood light base — the pre-assembled one *with* the panties on it — roughly on the far left corner of the table. It should be on the left-hand side of the table, between it and the carpeting in the aisle. Behind that — which is to say, closer to you and also between the carpeting and the table — goes the silver and orange "Some Assembly Required" light stand that's in the lighting box. Slap the circular orange flood light on top of the black flood stand, slap the rectangular black Columbia light on top of the Columbia stand, and open their blinders (you may need to open the Columbia light's blinders before extending the stand all the way since it's very likely taller than you are). Plug the Columbia light into the socket marked "Columbia" and the flood into the other usable outlet on the "Floods" adaptor.

Toucha

This squat little bastard of a light goes in front of the table and plugs into the socket labeled "Toucha." I don't even know why I wrote this paragraph.

Aiming the lights

The floods should bathe the stage area in light but should not glare in the eyes of the performers, should not light the carpet area too much, should not illuminate any of the audience, and *must* not shine on the screen. Adjust the blinders on the lights — watch it, they get really hot really fast! — until you've achieved something like that.

Aim Columbia's light so that it illuminates the carpeted area between the first two or three rows of seats, and a couple feet in front of that. It just needs to light up Columbia — who will be standing right next to it — and Eddie when he gets murdered.

Control Panel

There are two parts to the Control Panel's setup routine.

Before the show

Unspool a little of the control panel's wiring bundle and plug the ends into the appropriate sockets — match the plug's color to the word on the label, not the outlet's color (no, I don't know why it was done this way). There should be four of them: Red, blue, yellow, and white.

During the show

To the other end of the extension cord bundle you'll be hooking up the Control Panel, as follows. I generally opt to start hooking this end of things up when Brad and Janet start getting disrobed and entering the elevator after the end of "Time Warp" mostly to keep from having the bigass Control Panel in the way during "There's a Light" and to minimize the number of things that the cast might trip over, but I'm not there so it's up to you.

Once you're hooking up the Control Panel — and don't forget you might have a floods cue during the "We are the world" audience participation line — start by putting the two halves together, facing the audience. From the back, the panel with the monitor on it should be on your left and the panel with the crank wheel on it should be on your right. I usually place the half without the monitor roughly at the corner of the carpet, but still on the non-carpeted floor, and use that for placing the other half. Unwrap the cables that're wound around the crossbeams, and plug the ones on the right-hand side (when viewed from behind) into both outlets near the top of the left-hand side. Next, between the two and near the bottom, is a plug to connect the Christmas lights between the two halves. Drag your bundle of wires coming from Mr. Switchboard over, and plug the brown cord from the top of the left-hand panel into the socket marked "Monitor," the Christmas light plug coming out near the bottom into the socket marked "Main lights," and the little right-angle brown cord also near the bottom into "Sonic Oscillator." This last one is optional, but it's hooked up to the switch on the switchboard labeled "Blinker" and that switch is solely responsible for annoying whichever cast member is interacting with the Control Panel so you may want to hook it up.

Sound

Before the show starts, get the microphone out of the top drawer in the left A/V rack, turn it on, turn on its receiver which is sitting in the little window overlooking the audience to your left, and increase the slider marked "SM-58" (or something like that) to about "-5." Go back downstairs, into the theater, and give yourself a volume check. You'll probably need to move the slider up, but I'd rather tell you to set it to low and you have to increase it than tell you to start with it too high and have you break something.

On the right-hand A/V rack, near the top, are a couple of black knobs, labeled "monitor" (I think). Turn the left most one down almost all the way or it'll get really fucking loud in there when someone starts bellowing into the microphone.

For the intro music, set the "CD" slider all the way down, put in the blue pre-show CD (or which ever CD you feel like using) into the DVD player, and start hitting the play/pause button until it finds the CD, gets its wits about it, and then pauses for you. Then crank the slider up to around "10," unpause the CD, and fade the slider down at a moderate pace when the emcee starts talking. Then stop the CD, eject it, and put it back in its case. You're done, the show is off and running, and you're all just that much closer to getting to pack up and go home.