

## **Role**

The Automation Department is responsible for a production's moving scenery, creating and controlling a complex sequence of scene changes that happen on stage. For example, in Tina, the Tina Turner Musical scenery rises and lowers from the stage to represent numerous scenes including Tina's houses as a young girl; a recording studio, backstage in Las Vegas etc.

It's imperative that these scenes are automated correctly and safely as the automation system can control elements such as electric motors, hydraulics and pneumatics to move lifts, flying scenery and stage trucks.

Automation is a very specific job within theatre and operators often transition from a Stage Crew or Stagehand position. Once sufficiently trained up into this position, Automation operators have a very distinct skill set and can then transfer from show to show.

## **Responsibilities include**

Powering up a range of equipment on the automation system

Checking individual show components

Overseeing multiple moving elements that fly, revolve or move on trucks

Operating digital systems that are used in automation

Operating deck plots (cues on stage)

Performing safety checks and maintenance on any moving pieces of scenery

## **Key Skills**

Understanding hydraulic lifts, elevators, revolves and flown elements

Concentration

Communication

Remaining calm under pressure

Some level of creative understanding

Comfortable with digital software

## **Training**

Automation can be a highly specific field. It is possible to train within a theatre but the below qualification areas may also help:

Technical Theatre

Engineering

Set Design

Electronics

IT

Digital Design

### **Useful Information**

<http://www.theatrecrafts.com/pages/home/topics/automation-scenic/>

<https://www.thestage.co.uk/advice/2017/theatre-automation-operator/>

<https://www.tomorrowseengineers.org.uk/real-jobs/theatre-automation-engineer-ben-phillips/>

[www.automation.london](http://www.automation.london)

<https://www.abttac.org/>