



Utah Symphony | Utah Opera Scenic Studio: Fact Sheet

The Utah Opera is known for its ability to transport viewers to other times, worlds, and places through operatic productions that are aided by elaborate set constructions and painted backdrops. This work is done by The USUO Scenic Studio, housed at the USUO Production Studios in Salt Lake City. Our craftsmen are skilled in carpentry and welding.

- The first technical director was Tim Stetler, who established the Scenic Studio in Ogden. The studio was relocated to Salt Lake City in the 1990s, and it moved to its current home in 2002, when the new Production Studios buildings were constructed.
- The Scenic Studio employs four USUO staff and hires members of the IATSE (International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees) to help with construction.
- Work within the Scenic Studio includes prop designers and handlers, backdrop painters, lighting experts, woodworkers, construction crews, and welders.
- Sets are frequently purchased, traded and used by other opera companies all around the country.
- A full elaborate set can cost between \$100,000 and \$200,000 and take over a year to build from scratch.
- Storage compartments for each full production set are the size of semi-truck trailers so the shows can be organized for easy loading and unloading.
- The Scenic Studio also provides sets, props and backdrops for Ballet West, and musical productions for area high schools and theatres, in addition to trade shows including Stamp It Up and the annual Sundance Film Festival in Park City
- Scenic Artist John Cook was commissioned to paint the backdrops for Sarasota Opera's productions of *The Golden Cockerel* in February 2015 and *Aida*, slated for February 2016.
- Installing a set at Capitol Theatre can take up to one week, and is completed early enough for the performers to rehearse on the set.
- The Scenic Studio has 24 full production sets in its storage that are available for other opera companies to rent. The most frequently rented sets are *The Barber of Seville* and *Mary Widow*.
- The Scenic Studio can average \$150,000 in rental revenues each year.

PROP STUDIO

Anything that is not worn or is not a piece of scenery is the responsibility of the prop department. Pieces as small as a wedding ring or as large as a truck may need to be found or created.

- Most unique props have included horses, snakes and a magical dancing broom.
- Props are borrowed, purchased or built from all available resources
- Extensive research is conducted to create authentic props for every performance.

ASSEMBLY BAY

This area allows us to build our own quality sets as well as meet the increasing requests from outside companies that generate an important source of revenue.

- 7,956 square feet and 30-foot ceilings allow crews to fit-up and inspect sets before moving to the theatre.

- A vertical and horizontal paint frame, lift system and proper ventilation provide a safe and enjoyable working environment.