



**Theatre Royal, Bristol, UK - opened in 1776**

The **Bristol Theatre Royal** is the United Kingdom's oldest continuously operating theatre, dating from 1766. It opened as the Bristol Theatre, not possessing the royal patent required for the public performance of plays. Early productions were disguised as concerts and the audiences entered through the garden of a next-door house. The theatre is a rare example of an 18th century horseshoe theatre, originally cramming 1600 people into the small auditorium.

The stage area was completely rebuilt in the 1970s, but much of the auditorium is original, with some modifications made over the years. The roof space contains a 'thunder run' - a wooden trough down which canon balls are rolled to simulate the sound of thunder. As a student, I designed lighting for **The Demon Barber of Fleet Street** there.



Nick Hunt  
Rose Bruford College  
Sidcup  
DA15 9DF  
United Kingdom