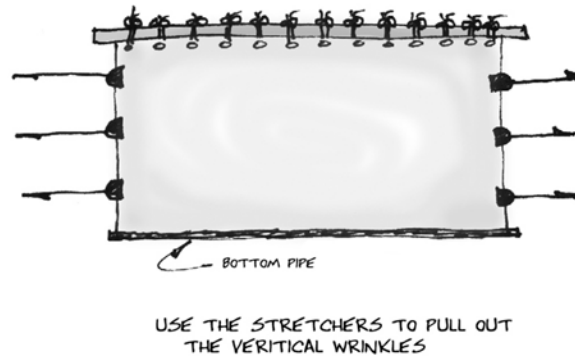


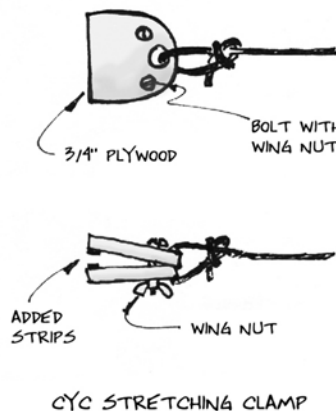
How Do You MAKE ...

CYC STRETCHING CLAMPS

A sky cyclorama is a 30-foot-tall piece of fabric that is as wide as the rigging system will allow. It is difficult to keep this curtain from becoming wrinkled, especially if it has been folded for storage. A cyc is usually washed with very bright lights in order to create a sky effect. These lights are almost always at a rather oblique angle, which causes any wrinkles or folds in the fabric to create unsightly shadows. As a result, it is often necessary to stretch the cyc out in order to remove the wrinkles. A bottom pipe will stretch out the bottom of the cyc, but something more is required for lateral stretching left and right.



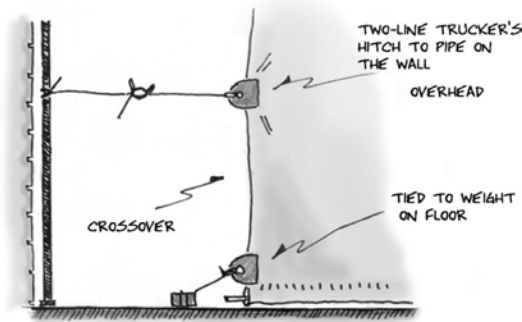
A series of clamps attached to the sides of the cyc are used with pull lines leading offstage to do the stretching. The clamps should be designed to minimize any damage to the cyc from tearing.



Two 8"-wide, $\frac{3}{4}$ "-thick plywood blocks can be used for the two sides of the clamp. They will have a better appearance if you dress them up a bit with some chamfering, and it is absolutely necessary to sand all corners and edges in order to avoid ripping the cyc fabric. Two $\frac{1}{8}$ "-thick strips on the clamping side of the jaws will make it easier for the device to get a good bite on the cloth. Drill oversized holes for the quarter-inch bolts that hold the two

sides together. The clamp halves will sit at an angle, and the bolt needs extra room to fit loosely. A larger hole on the offstage side provides a point to attach the tying-off line.

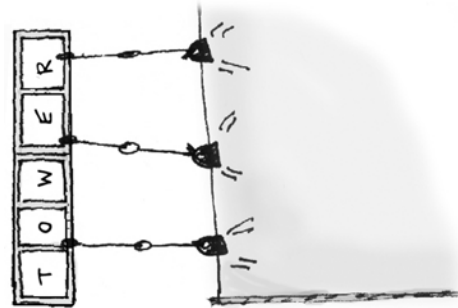
Use a trucker's hitch to get a nice tight pull on the lines. If you leave a short line with a bowline at the end of it tied to the clamp, you can use the two-line method of the trucker's hitch, and then the clamps can just stay on the cyc even when it is not in use. It will take several clamps on each side to get all of the wrinkles out of the drop.



AVOID BLOCKING THE CROSSOVER

Sometimes it is difficult to find anything to tie off to in the theatre, especially when a crossover is required.

On these occasions, tie the bottom clamp off to stage weights on the floor, and the next one over head height. This will allow actors to pass by the ropes. Another method is to lag a lighting tower to the stage at either end of the cyc, and use them as tying-off points.



YOU CAN TIE THE LINES TO A TOWER

Lately there is a trend toward using a *rear projection screen* (RP) and a bounce drop to do the same sort of effect as a sky cyc. It is not advisable to use these stretchers on an RP screen because the material is too delicate. It is generally not necessary anyway. Rear projection material is used to make video screens, and has excellent reflective properties.