

the
national
ballet of
canada



Relaxed Performance Venue Guide

Welcome to The National Ballet of Canada!

This venue guide was created to help you prepare for the performance you will be attending.

Relaxed Performances are for anyone who would like a more gentle approach to a performance. They are for anyone living on the autism spectrum and/or with developmental and/or learning delays or disabilities, with anxiety, or anyone who feels a more relaxed atmosphere will make their visit to the ballet more enjoyable.



Image Description: A photo looking onto stage from the backstage (wings) area. Dancers are waiting to enter the stage. They are dressed in white tutus.

Let's Go!

I am going to a ballet performance by The National Ballet of Canada.



Image Description: Dancers enter onto stage from the backstage (wings) area. One dancer smiles broadly and extends their hand back towards another dancer so they can enter together.

Theatre

The performance is at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts.



Image Description: The exterior of the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts.

Getting There

I can take the subway or a private vehicle to the performance.

If I take the subway I may see people I do not know. These people won't all be going to the performance but some might be.



Image Description: A subway photo. The train is in the station and people are getting on and off the train and walking along the platform. The driver has their head out of the window.

Subway

If I take the subway, I will get off at Osgoode Station.



Image Description: A photo of the Osgoode subway sign inside the station.

Subway

Take the southeast exit (stairs or elevator) directly into the building.

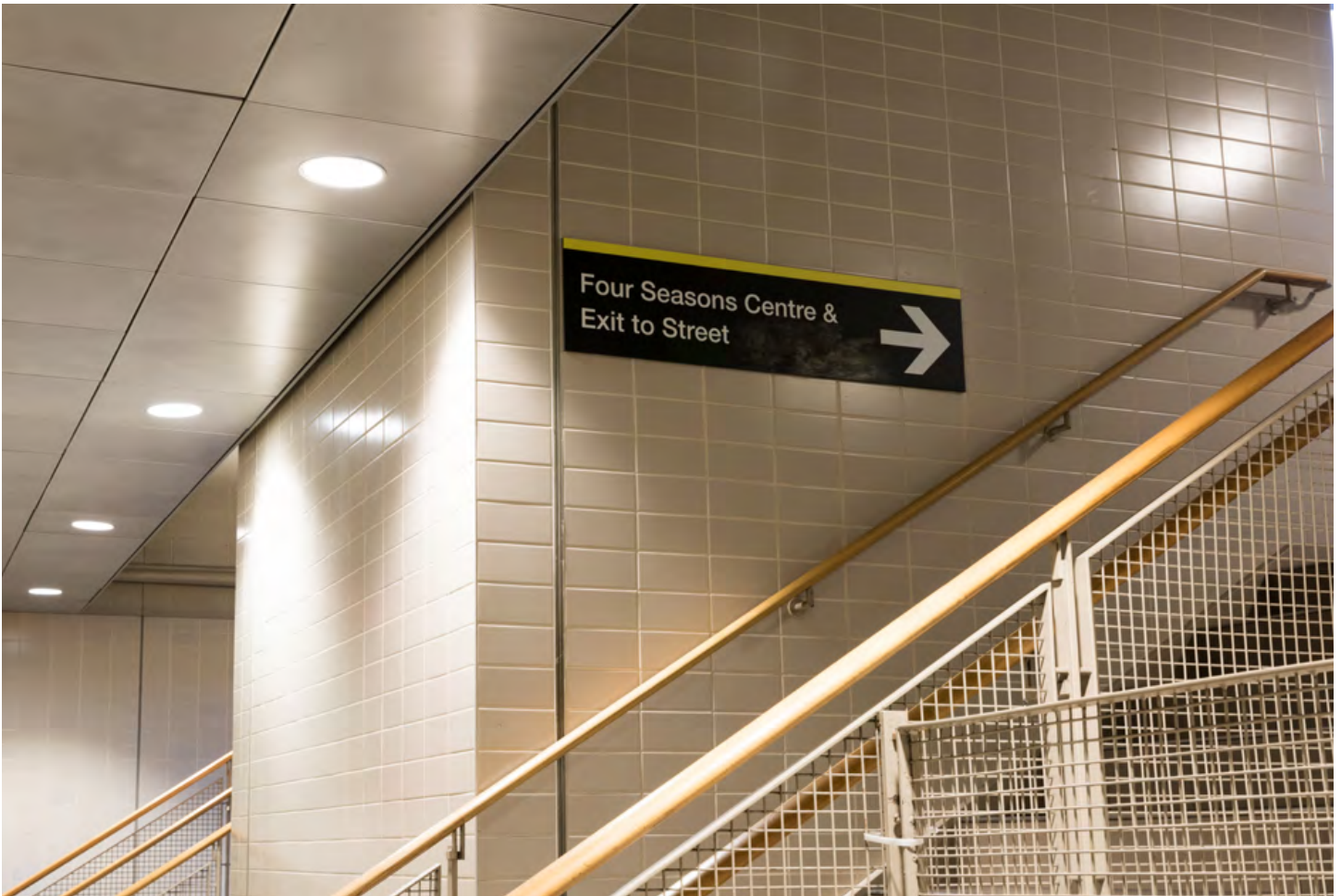


Image Description: A photo in the Osgoode subway station of the directional sign pointing to the Four Seasons Centre exit. There are stairs in the photo.

Car/Vehicle

If we take a personal vehicle, we can park at many places around the theatre.



Image Description: A close-up photo of a Green P municipal parking lot sign.

Parking Lot

There is a public parking lot underneath the theatre. It costs \$25 to park during performances.



Image Description: The Four Seasons Centre parking lot entrance off of York Street. The entrance has prices, height restrictions and operating hours printed on signs around the door.

Parking Lot

The parking lot does not have an attendant but we can pay via credit card at the ticket machine.



Image Description: The parking ticket/payment machine at the exit of the Four Seasons Centre parking lot.

Parking Lot

We should come prepared to pay more just in case.



Image Description: The parking ticket/payment machine at the exit of the Four Seasons Centre parking lot.

Drop Off Location

If someone else is driving me, like a taxi, Uber or TTC Wheel-Trans, and I need an accessible drop off spot, we will find the safest, closest location for me to be dropped off.



Image Description: A photo of a city traffic scene. Taxis and cars are parked along the street.

Box Office

If I need to collect my tickets from the Box Office, I can do this before I enter the theatre. The entrance to the Box Office is off of Queen Street or we can take the stairs or elevator from the parking lot or the subway directly into the Box Office lobby.



Image Description: Inside the Box Office lobby at the Four Seasons Centre. Box Office ticket stalls are in the background of the photo and stanchions are set up to guide patrons while they wait.

Entering the Theatre

Once we have arrived at the theatre, we can go inside and wait in the lobby if we like. We can also go inside to use the washrooms. The entrance to the building is at the corner of Queen Street and University Avenue but the doors are on Queen Street.



Image Description: The exterior of the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, taken from across the street. Street signs and traffic lights are in the photo frame.

Ticket Scanning

After I enter the building, I will walk to the usher who will scan my ticket and direct me to where my seats are.



Image Description: An usher uses a scanner to scan a patron's ticket.

Ushers

I can ask any of the ushers to tell me where the washrooms, water fountains, quiet room and the seats are. All ushers at the performance are there to help me and everyone else who has come to see the ballet.



Image Description: Two ushers stand in front of doors to the auditorium. Both ushers are in uniform.

Stairs

There are many floors at the Four Seasons Centre. To get between them I can take the stairs – when I take the stairs, I will walk slowly and carefully and hold on to the handrail.

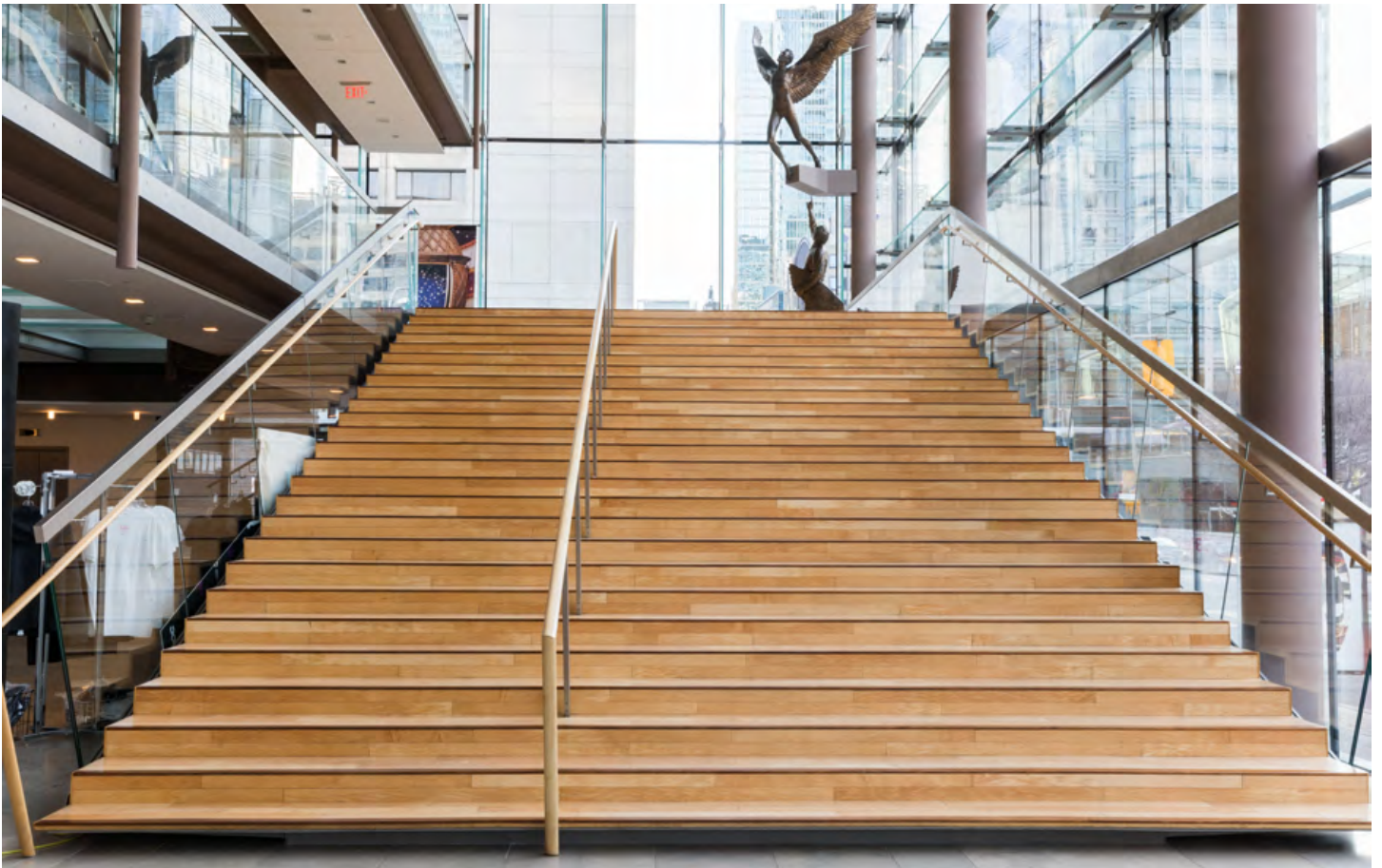


Image Description: Stairs from the Main Floor Lobby to the Grand Ring Lobby. The stairs are wooden and have handrails on either side and down the centre. There are windows on the right side of the stairs.

Elevators

Or I can take the elevators to different floors.



Image Description: The Orchestra (main floor) elevators. The doors of the elevator are closed. There is a sanitizing station to the left of the elevator doors.

Lobby

The lobby at the Four Seasons Centre is directly outside of the auditorium.



Image Description: The Four Seasons Centre lobby, empty. The stairs and boutique are on the left. The photo is taken facing the main entrance. The photo is of four levels of the lobby.

Lobby

If everyone were in it at once it might feel quite full. If it feels too full, I can go to the washrooms or I can go to the quiet room or, if the weather is nice, we may decide to wait outside.



Image Description: The Four Seasons Centre lobby, full. Many people are in the lobby.

Concession

There is a concession in the lobby. It will be open before the performance and during the intermission only. If I need a drink or a snack, I can buy one there.



Image Description: The concession in the lobby. Ushers are working at the concession and stand behind it. Various foods and drinks are on the top of the concession bar.

Boutique

On the main floor, in the lobby, is a boutique. The boutique sells ballet related items and gifts. If I want to buy something at the boutique I can use cash, debit or credit cards.



Image Description: The boutique in the lobby. Gifts, water bottles, sweatshirts and other souvenirs from The National Ballet of Canada are arranged on different shelves and racks for patrons to choose from.

Coat Check

I can leave my coat at the coat check during the performance. The coat check is on the lower level in the lobby, close to the washrooms. There is a \$3 cost for coat check. I can pay with debit or credit card, or with coins or bills.

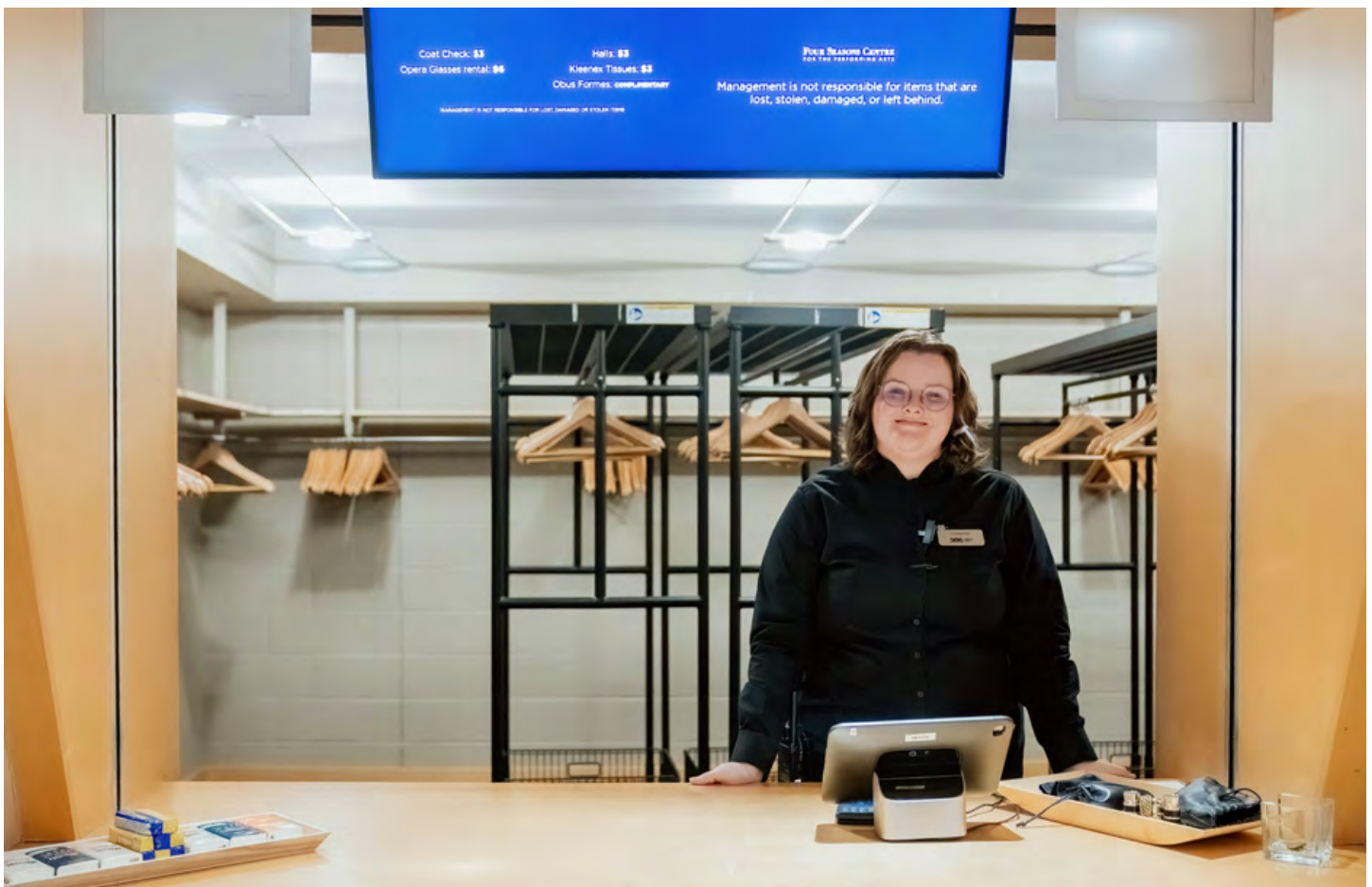


Image Description: An usher stands in the coatcheck. There is a screen above their head and racks for coats behind them.

Lobby Announcements

There may be announcements made while I wait in the lobby. These announcements may be loud. I can cover my ears or put on sound dampening headphones if they are too loud. The announcements give me information about the theatre and when the auditorium will open.



Image Description: The main floor lobby photographed from a floor above. Patrons are entering the auditorium to take their seats for the performance. Some patrons are still sitting at the lobby tables.

Time to Take Our Seats

When it is time to find our seats, bells will ring in the lobby and the ushers will open the doors to the auditorium. I will go into the auditorium and find my seat.



Image Description: A photo of the auditorium. The seats are full and people are waiting for the performance to begin.

Ticketed Seating

Seating at the National Ballet performance is “Ticketed Seating”. That means that I have a ticket that tells me exactly where to sit.



Image Description: A ticket to *Pinocchio*. The ticket has a date and seating location on it.

Seats

The seats in the auditorium fold down so we can sit on them. When they are closed it helps make more room for walking down the aisle.

There are many areas of seats in the auditorium – some are in long rows and some are in short rows.



Image Description: A close-up shot of the side of the seats. The row letter is clearly in the shot – it is row K. The seats are folded and no one is sitting in them.

Main Floor – Orchestra Level

I will enter the Orchestra level of the auditorium at the back of the room. The seats at the front of the auditorium are lower than those at the back. I will use the stairs to get to my seat if I need to.



Image Description: A photo of the auditorium taken from the front of the auditorium facing the back. All of the seats are empty.

Balcony – Grand Ring

I might be sitting in the Grand Ring. If I am, I can take the stairs or an elevator to the second level. Then I will find my seat.

If I am sitting in the Grand Ring, my family may be the only group in our seating area or there may be other people with us.



Image Description: The Grand Ring lobby. One entrance with boxes in the centre. Directional signs to other boxes are above the entrance.

Balcony – Rings 3 and 4

I might be sitting in Ring 3. If I am, I can take the stairs or an elevator to the third level. Then I will find my seat. I might be sitting in Ring 4. If I am, I can take the stairs or an elevator to the fourth level. Then I will find my seat.



Image Description: A photo of the seating area on Ring 3, showing the curve of the seats in the balcony.

Balcony – Rings 3 and 4

Rings 3 and 4 are quite steep. I will enter at the back of the seating area and will walk down some steps to my seat. There is a railing in front of the seating. I will not look, reach or throw anything over the railing. It is not safe to do so. It is safe to sit in my seat and watch the performance from Ring 3 or 4.



Image Description: The stage as viewed from the upper Rings/levels. Different areas of the auditorium seating are also in the photo.

Accessible Seating

There are seats around the auditorium which can be removed to make room for a wheelchair.



Image Description: A wheelchair beside seating in the auditorium on the Orchestra (main floor) level.

Accessible Seating

Beside these seats are seats for family members of wheelchair users.



Image Description: From behind, a wheelchair is placed beside the seating in the Orchestra level of the auditorium.

Grand Ring Accessible Seating

Many of the seats in the Grand Ring have chairs that can be removed to make room for mobility devices like wheelchairs and strollers.



Image Description: In the Grand Ring box, a chair has been removed to make room for a wheelchair. There is a chair beside it and two others in front of the wheelchair.

Grand Ring Accessible Seating

There will be seats for my family beside me.



Image Description: From the side, a wheelchair in one of the Grand Ring boxes. It has moveable chairs in front of and beside it.

Ring 3 Accessible Seating

Like the rest of the auditorium, there are special areas for accessible seating in Rings 3 and 4. There will be seats for my family beside me.



Image Description: A wheelchair beside seating in the auditorium.

Stroller and Mobility Device Parking

If I, or someone in my family/group, uses a stroller or mobility device (such as a walker) and then transfers into a seat, the usher will take the device and put it in a safe place during the performance. I can ask an usher to get that for me if I want to leave the auditorium.

This is done because the theatre cannot have strollers and walkers in the aisles during the show. I won't be worried as I know that an usher will bring it back to me whenever I need it.



Image Description: In the Orchestra level of the auditorium, a transfer seat has the wooden end opened so that patrons can easily transfer from their mobility device to the seat.

The Orchestra Pit

At the front of all the seats is the Orchestra Pit. This is where the musicians play their instruments. I should stay back from the Orchestra Pit. I cannot climb, reach or throw anything into it.



Image Description: The Orchestra Pit at the front of the auditorium. The Orchestra is in the pit, are holding their instruments and are looking at the camera. There are many Orchestra members.

The Orchestra Warms Up

When the auditorium opens and I take my seat the Orchestra will be warming up. This means they will be playing their instruments but that each person is playing something different to get ready for the performance. If it is too loud I can cover my ears or wear sound dampening headphones.



Image Description: From inside the Orchestra Pit, members of the Orchestra are warming up with their instruments. They have music and lights on their music stands.

The Stage

Beyond and above the Orchestra Pit is the stage. I cannot get near the stage because of the Orchestra Pit.

I cannot touch, go under or up onto the stage before or during the performance.

The stage is where the dancers will perform.



Image Description: A photo of the stage from the back of the auditorium. A black curtain covers the stage completely.

The Dancing Begins!

When it is time for the performance to begin, the lights will dim but not go out. I can tell the performance is starting because the hosts will come out and welcome the audience to the performance.



Image Description: A photo of dancer Stephanie Hutchison (left) and Lisa Robinson, Host of the performance (right).

The Host

There is a host for the performance. The host will talk to the audience and introduce the performance. The host is an expert on ballet and is here to help us enjoy the performance.

The host will be joined onstage by an ASL Interpreter and a special guest – one of the dancers from the ballet!



Image Description: A photo of Lisa Robinson, Host of the performance (centre), with dancer Stephanie Hutchison (left) and Marcia Adolphe, American Sign Language-English Interpreter (right).

During the Performance

During the performance I can sit in my seat and watch the dancing. I can also dance in my seat or stand. If I stand, I need to make sure the people around and behind me can still see. If they cannot I will sit back down.



Image Description: A photo of a young audience member. She is looking at the stage and clapping.

During the Performance

If I am sitting in the Orchestra level and feel the dancing is too close to my seat, I can move to the back three rows of the auditorium on that level.



Image Description: A photo of the back rows of the Orchestra level of the auditorium. All seats are empty.

During the Performance

If it is still too close, I can take a break by using the aisles to get to the lobby.



Image Description: From the aisle, a photo of the doors from the auditorium to the lobby.

During the Performance

If I want to watch the performance from the lobby, I can go up to the Ring 3 level and watch on the television.



Image Description: A photo from the seating in the lobby on Ring 3 facing down towards a large television with chairs set up in front of it.

Quiet Room

If I need to use the Quiet Room, I can ask an usher to show me where it is.



Image Description: A doorway. Beside the doorway is a sign that reads “Henry N.R. Jackman Lounge”.

Quiet Room

The quiet room is located on the Grand Ring level. The Grand Ring is one level up from the main lobby and Orchestra level.

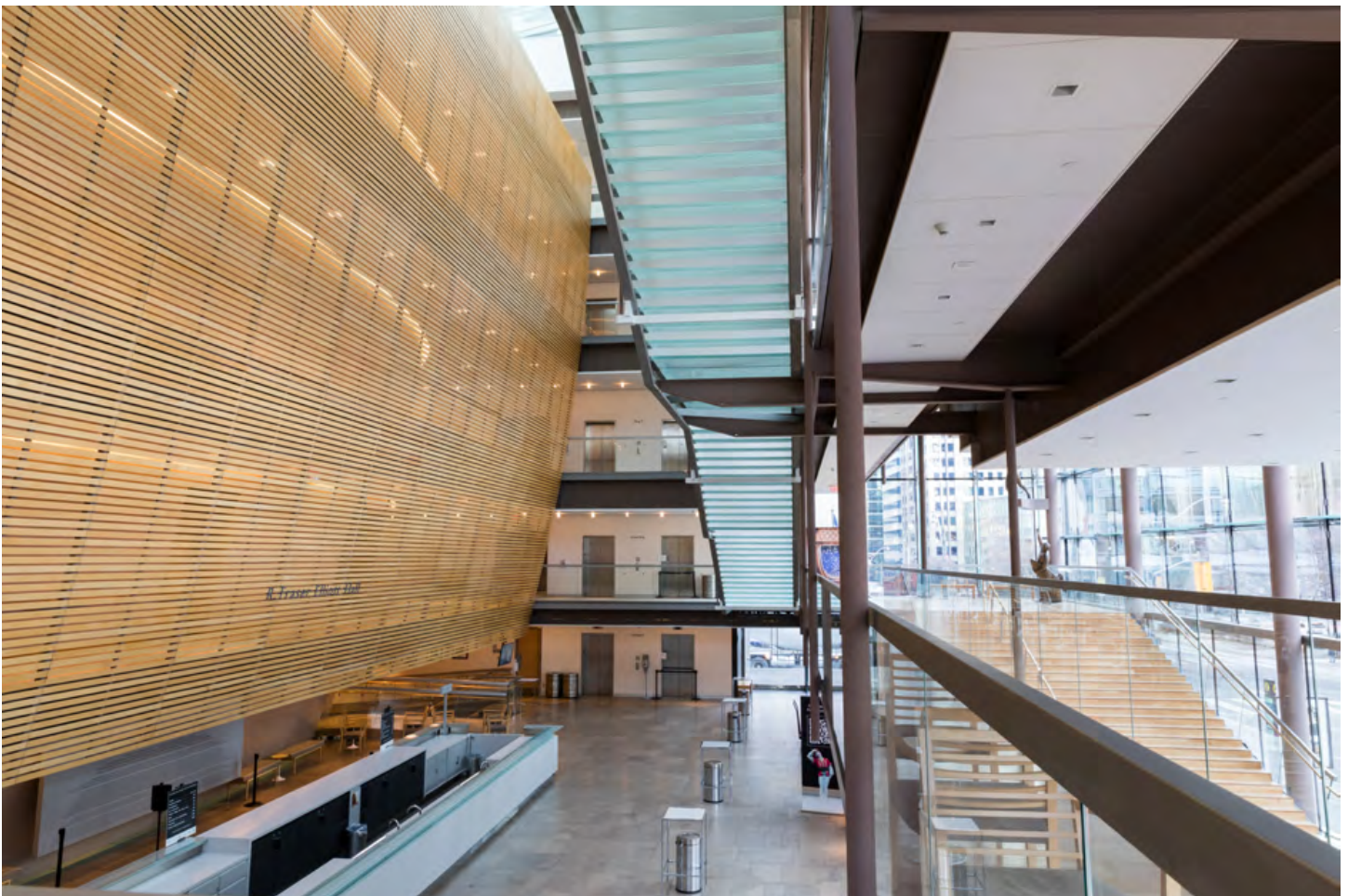


Image Description: From one side of the Grand Ring, a photo facing down into the Orchestra level lobby.

Quiet Room

It is bright in the Jackman Lounge as there are many windows but I can relax there until I am ready to go back to the performance.



Image Description: Inside the Henry N.R. Jackman Lounge. Windows are on the right of the photo. There is no furniture in the photo.

Quiet Room

If I need a darker room to relax in, I can ask to be taken to the smaller Quiet Room. It is in the Boardroom and is on the Ring 4 level on the fourth floor.



Image Description: A large boardroom. On the left wall are posters from different ballet performances. On the right is a table with chairs.

Washrooms

If I need to use the washroom during the performance, I can. My seat will be saved for me when I come back. The show will continue while I am in the washroom.



Image Description: A corridor with an alcove opening. Above the opening is a sign that reads “Washrooms”.

Washrooms

To get to a washroom, I will need to go back to the lobby. From the Orchestra level lobby, I can take the stairs down or up one level to a washroom.

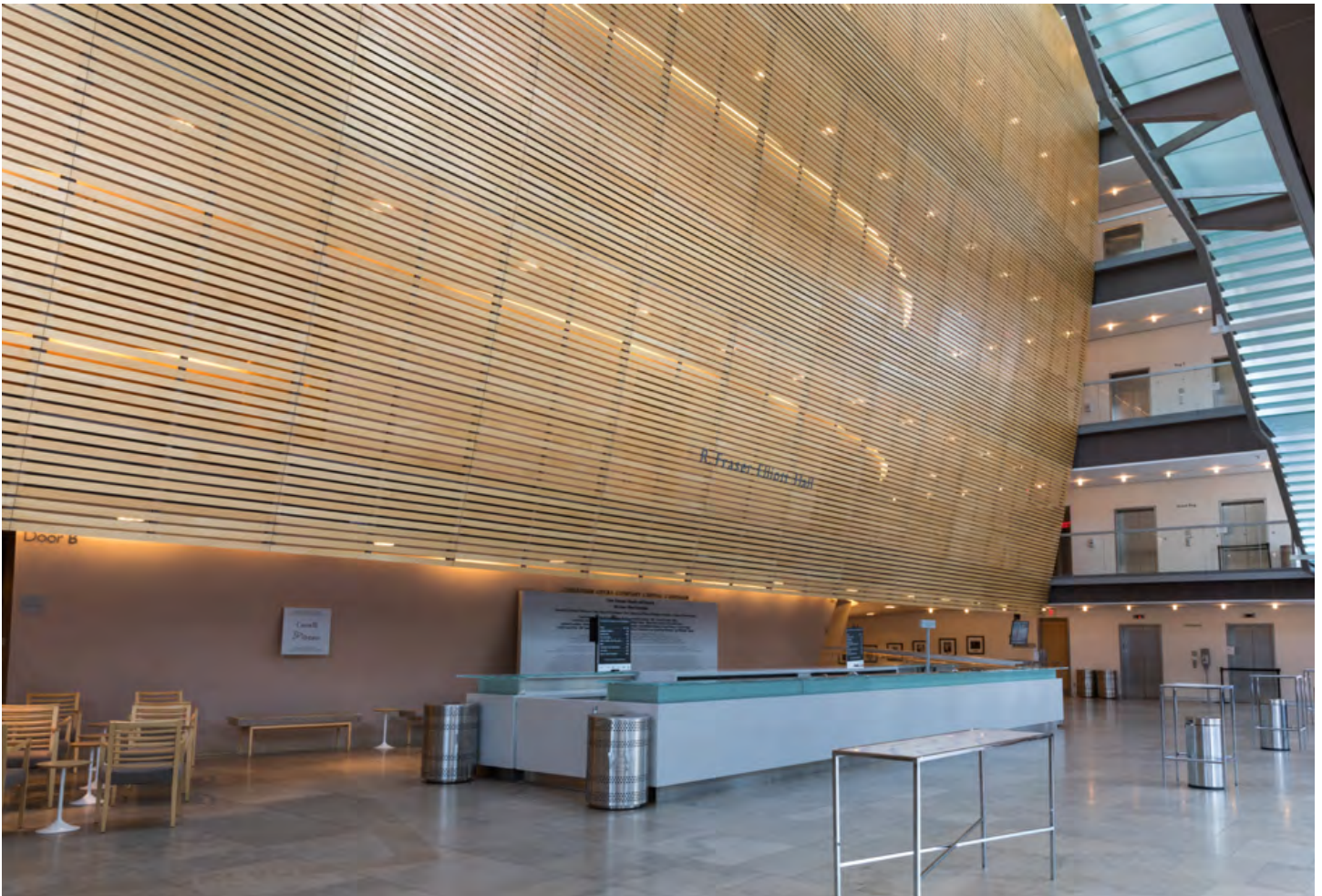


Image Description: The lobby of the Four Seasons Centre.

Washrooms

If I am sitting in the Grand Ring, there are washrooms on that level.



Image Description: Along a wall is an opening to the washrooms. There is a short hallway that leads to the washrooms. An elevator is to the extreme right of the photo.

Washrooms

If I am sitting in the Rings 3 or 4, there are washrooms on each of those levels.



Image Description: Along a wall is an opening to the washrooms. There is a short hallway that leads to the washrooms. An elevator is to the extreme right of the photo.

Washrooms

There are washrooms for men and washrooms for women. There are also washrooms that I can go into with my family. We will choose the washroom we are comfortable using and go to that one.



Image Description: A sign for the women's washroom. There is an open doorway that leads to the washroom.

Washrooms

The washrooms are bright and the toilets and sinks are automatic — that means the flush and the taps will happen without me pushing anything. This might come as a surprise. I will be ready.



Image Description: Inside a washroom, we see a long sink with oval mirrors above it. Soap dispensers and taps are built into the wall. Washroom stalls are to the right.

Accessible Washroom

There is an accessible washroom on the Grand Ring level at the theatre. It is large enough for wheelchair users. However, there isn't a push button for the door, so I might need someone to help me open the door. My family/group can help me or I can ask an usher to open the door for me.

All other washrooms have accessible stalls in them also.



Image Description: Inside the accessible washroom. It is a large space with plenty of room to manoeuvre. There is one toilet with a helpful bar on the wall next to it, a sink with a tap, a soap dispenser and an oval mirror above it.

Clapping

I can clap at the end of a dance if I like it. Other people may clap too, this may make a loud sound. If it is too loud I can cover my ears or put on my sound dampening headphones.



Image Description: Young audience members sit in their seats during a performance. They are clapping.

Emergency Exits

In case of an emergency, I will make my way calmly towards the lit-up exit signs and an usher will direct me where to go to exit the building safely. This may include waiting in a refuge area until I can be safely escorted out of the building.

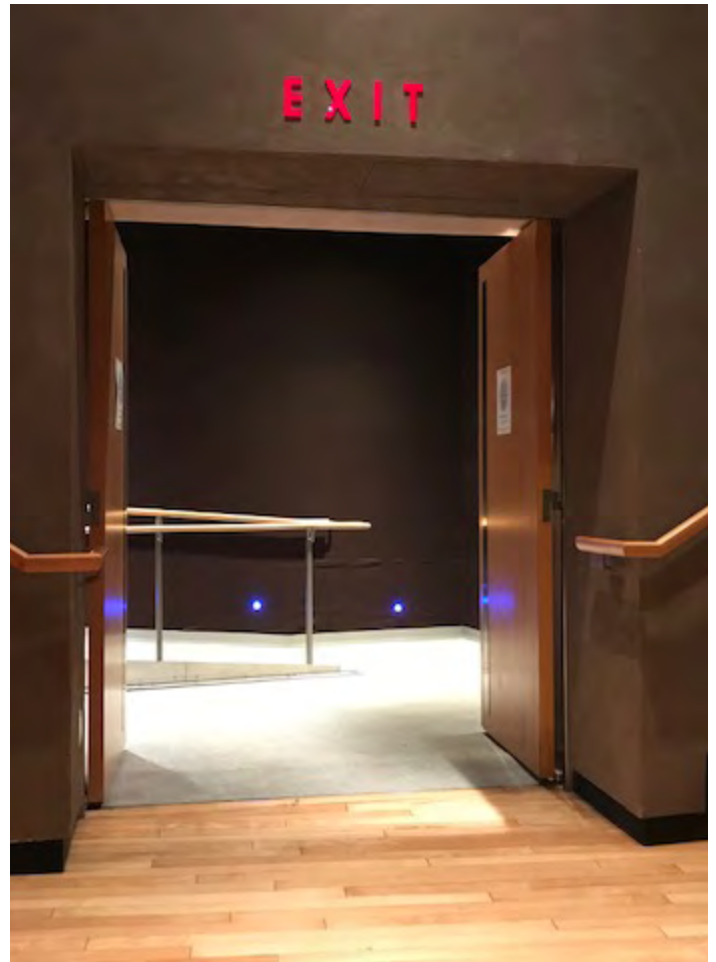
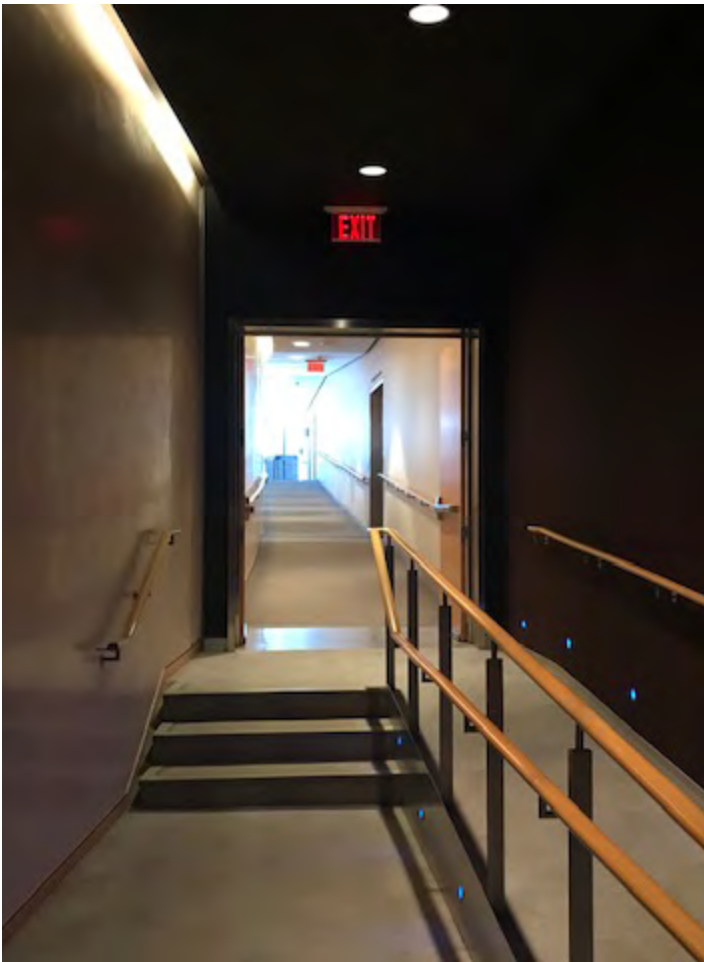


Image Description: Two photos, both depicting illuminated signs that read “EXIT”. These are the emergency exit signs.

BOWS

I will know it is the end of the performance because the dancers will stand and bow. I can clap during the bows to show them how much I enjoyed the performance.



Image Description: From the side of the stage, dancers are onstage in rows. It is time for them to take their bows.

Leaving the Performance

After the bows the lights will come back up and it is time to leave. I will leave the auditorium and go to the lobby. I can use the washroom before I leave the lobby if I need to.



Image Description: A photo of the auditorium. All seats are empty. The photo is taken from the front of the auditorium facing back towards all of the seats. More than one level of seating is in the photo.

Relaxed Performance Venue Guide

Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts

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The National Ballet of Canada's Accessibility Initiatives are made possible thanks to lead philanthropic support by The Anna McCowan-Johnson Dance Accessibility Fund, The Lawrence Schafer Foundation, The McLean Foundation with additional support from Ruth Watts-Gransden.

The National Ballet of Canada gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the Canada Council for the Arts; the Ontario Arts Council; the City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council; the Government of Canada – Department of Canadian Heritage with the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages; and the Government of Ontario with the Honourable Stan Cho, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming and Minister of Sport.

Cover: Jack Bertinshaw with Artists of the Ballet in *Pinocchio*. Photo by Aleksandar Antonijevic. Page 2: Genevieve Penn Nabity with Artists of the Ballet in the wings. Page 3: Tene Ward with Artists of the Ballet backstage at *Giselle*. Pages 15, 16, 21 and 23: Ushers and Staff of the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts. Pages 38 and 39: Members of The National Ballet of Canada Orchestra. Page 41: Stephanie Hutchison and Lisa Robinson, Senior Manager Education and Community Engagement on stage at *Cinderella*. Page 43: Lisa Robinson with Stephanie Hutchison and Marcia Adolphe, American Sign Language-English Interpreter. Pages 43 and 58: Audience members during a performance. Page 60: Artists of the Ballet during curtain call for *The Sleeping Beauty*.

Photos by Aleksandar Antonijevic, Alana de Haan, Smita Jacob, Karolina Kuras, Edwin Luk, Daniel Neuhaus, Aidan Tooth and Bruce Zinger.