

TED

CAMERA PLAYBOOK

shooting practices

2012 edition

The Camera is Always Live

Not only is the TED Conference live broadcasting a multi-camera event, the *footage from each camera is recorded, to be edited and shown to millions of viewers on TED.com*

As a result, even if the show caller cuts away from your camera during the event, be mindful that each frame of your footage has a life in post-production. Operate the camera as if it's always live.

Adjustments & Re-focusing

TED Conferences are broken down to sessions. Each session consists of a line up of Speakers, who are introduced by the Host or Hosts.

Framing adjustments and major re-focusing should be done only when the Host(s) are onstage.

Camera Movement

Zooms, pans, tilts, and moves at the TED Conference should ALWAYS be executed slowly and smoothly. Rarely - if ever - are there sudden punch-ins or whip-pans.

One common shooting convention at the conference is what's known as the Top and Tail™. The director may ask you to execute this move, depending on the upcoming Speaker and situation:

- At the top (beginning) of a Speaker's talk, start out wide and slowly zoom in to a medium close or close-up, depending on your camera's range of motion.
- As the Speaker gets to the tail of his/her presentation, slowly zoom back out to a wide shot.

Coverage

Since this is a multi-camera event, each camera is responsible for a unique angle and range of shot sizes. It's imperative that at any given time, each camera covers a different shot size, for ease of editing.

This year at Long Beach, the Terrace Theater has a 9 camera set up. The Center Theater has a 5 camera set up. The next few sections covers each camera angle and the shooting practices specific to that angle.



THE CLOSE

Because the majority of our audience watches TED talks on computer screens, laptops, and mobile devices, the close up is the single most important camera angle and helps connect the viewer to the speaker through the small screen.

It is the angle that we cut to most often during the live stream and for editing.

The Speaker is your best friend

Stay close to his/her eyeline.

Keep it asymmetrical

Frame the Speaker a little to the left or right of frame, with plenty of headroom.

Anticipate movement

Many speakers like to pace, and even speakers who stand still have a tendency to sway. Keep this in mind as you follow them to maintain composition.



THE MEDIUM

The medium shot offers respite from the intensity of the close up. This is a shot we heavily rely on for demos or speakers who have a wide range of action.

Keep it asymmetrical

Frame the Speaker a little to the left or right of frame, with plenty of headroom.

Frame out the projection screen

Avoid getting part of the projection screen in this shot.



THE WIDE

Like most wide shots, the wide shot at TED establishes the space and orients the viewer. The wide shot frames in the projection screen, so that our online viewers get a sense of what the live experience is like.

Anticipate movement

Though the camera with the wide shot often stays locked off, there are many instances when this camera will be used to employ slow zoom ins and outs.

Allow room for projection screen

Unless specified otherwise, keep the top of the screen below your frameline.



THE AUDIENCE

This shot is often set behind the speaker, either over-the-shoulder of the speaker toward the audience or just a clean audience shot.

Avoid close ups

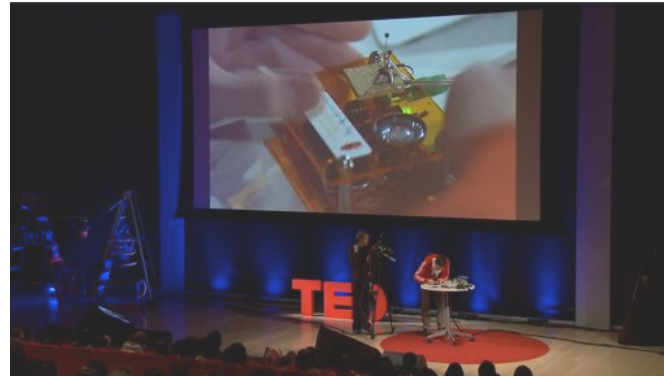
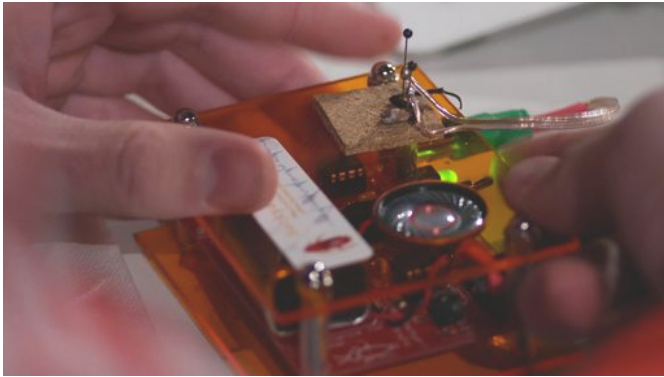
Stay mainly on the medium shot. Going close up on audience members presents tough editing challenges.

Choose the interested & interesting

Audience members can be in rapt and still look bored or sleepy. If possible, try to focus on a section of people that seem engaged in the presentation.

Exploit the stage lighting

Often, the backstage camera catches flare from the stage lights. Use this - as it often adds a bit of drama to the shot.



THE DEMO

The demo camera can either be handheld or on sticks. It focuses on hard-to-shoot angles, particularly during demonstrations and performances. This is good for getting close ups or extreme close ups of the Speakers' hands or objects. When not being used for demos, this camera can act as another audience camera.

Get on stage

If the demo involves hard to see objects or requires a change in vantage point in order to film, don't be afraid to get on stage to get the best shot possible. But be sure not to block the Speaker from the audience.

Rehearse and Anticipate Movement

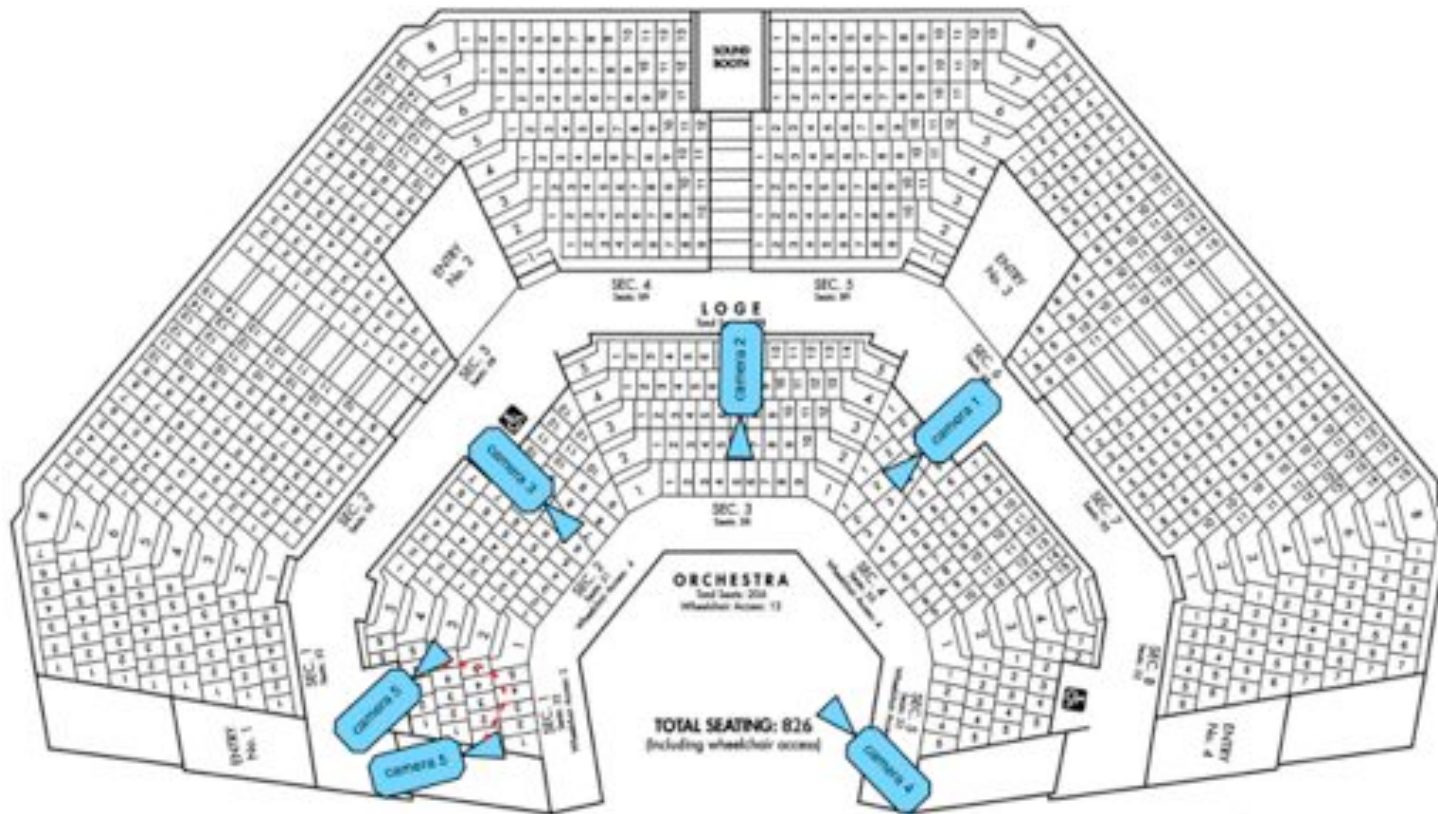
Speakers often move quickly. If possible, work with the Speaker beforehand so you get a good sense of timing.

Be ready to go handheld

The demo camera should be set up to move quickly between shooting on sticks and handheld. Don't be shy to take the camera off the sticks to get challenging shots.

CENTER THEATER

CAMERA LAYOUT*

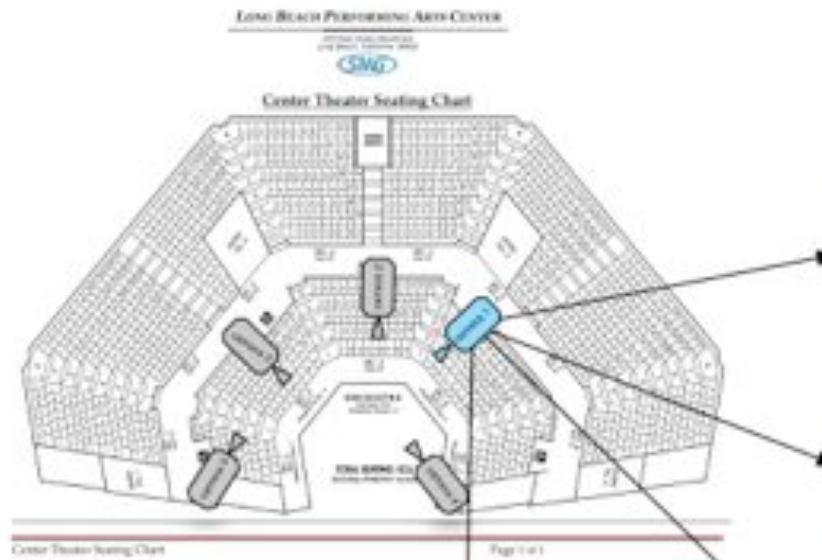


*Center Stage has been renovated - stage layout not entirely accurate

1

RANGE:

Close Up ==> Wide Shot



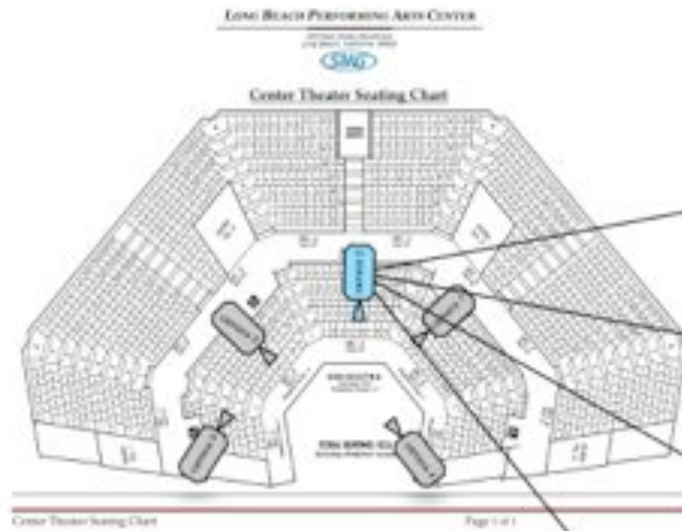
CAMERA 1



2

RANGE:

Close Up ==> Wide Shot



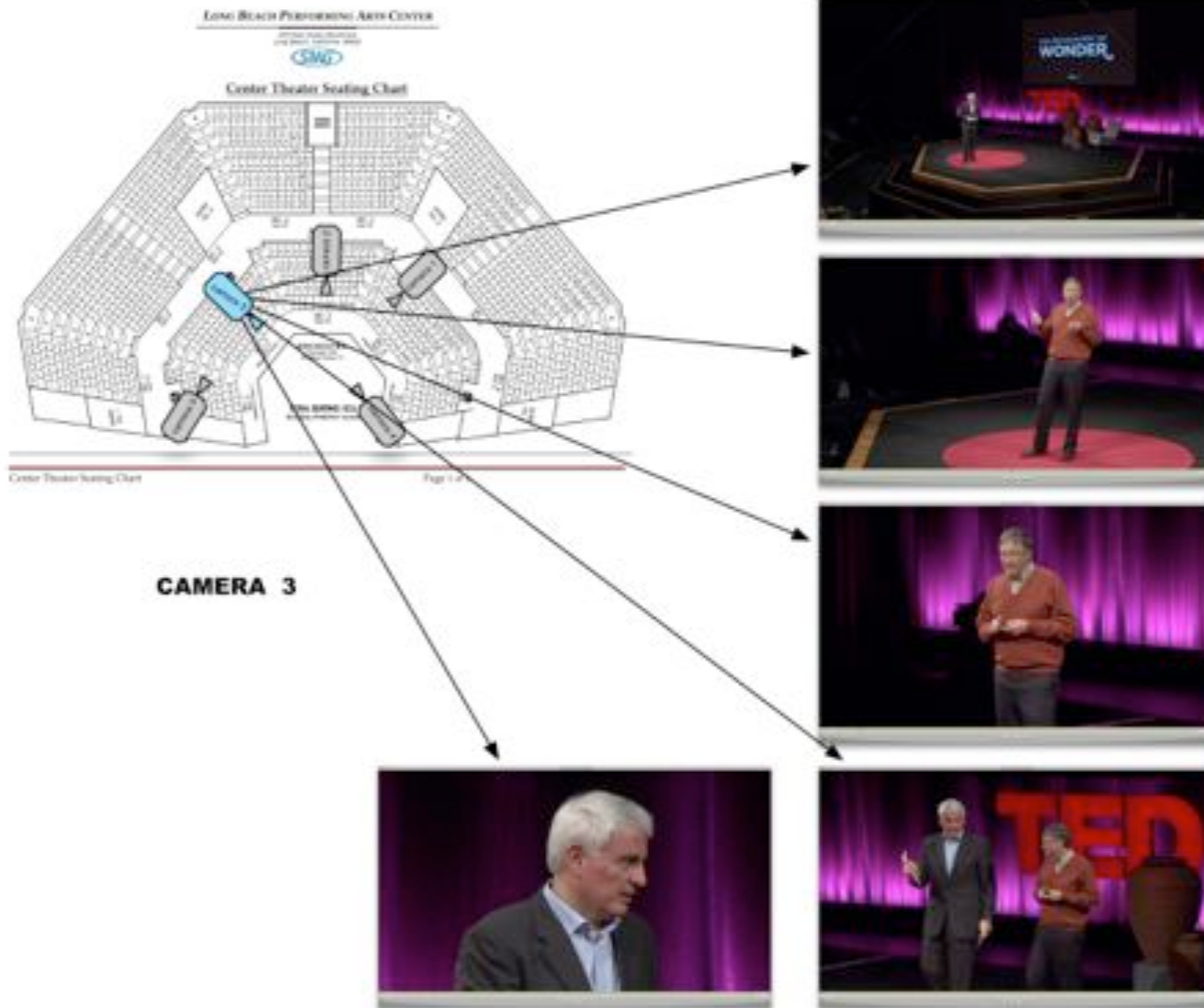
CAMERA 2



3

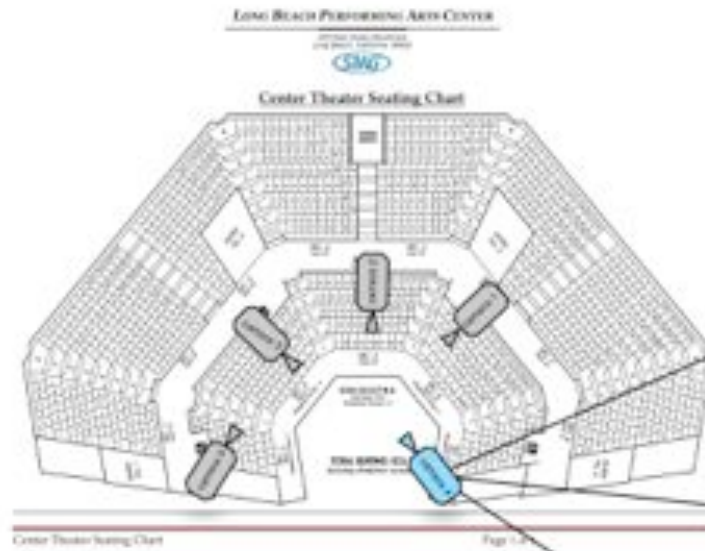
RANGE:

Close Up ==> Wide



4

RANGE: Ots Speaker, Wide ==> Medium

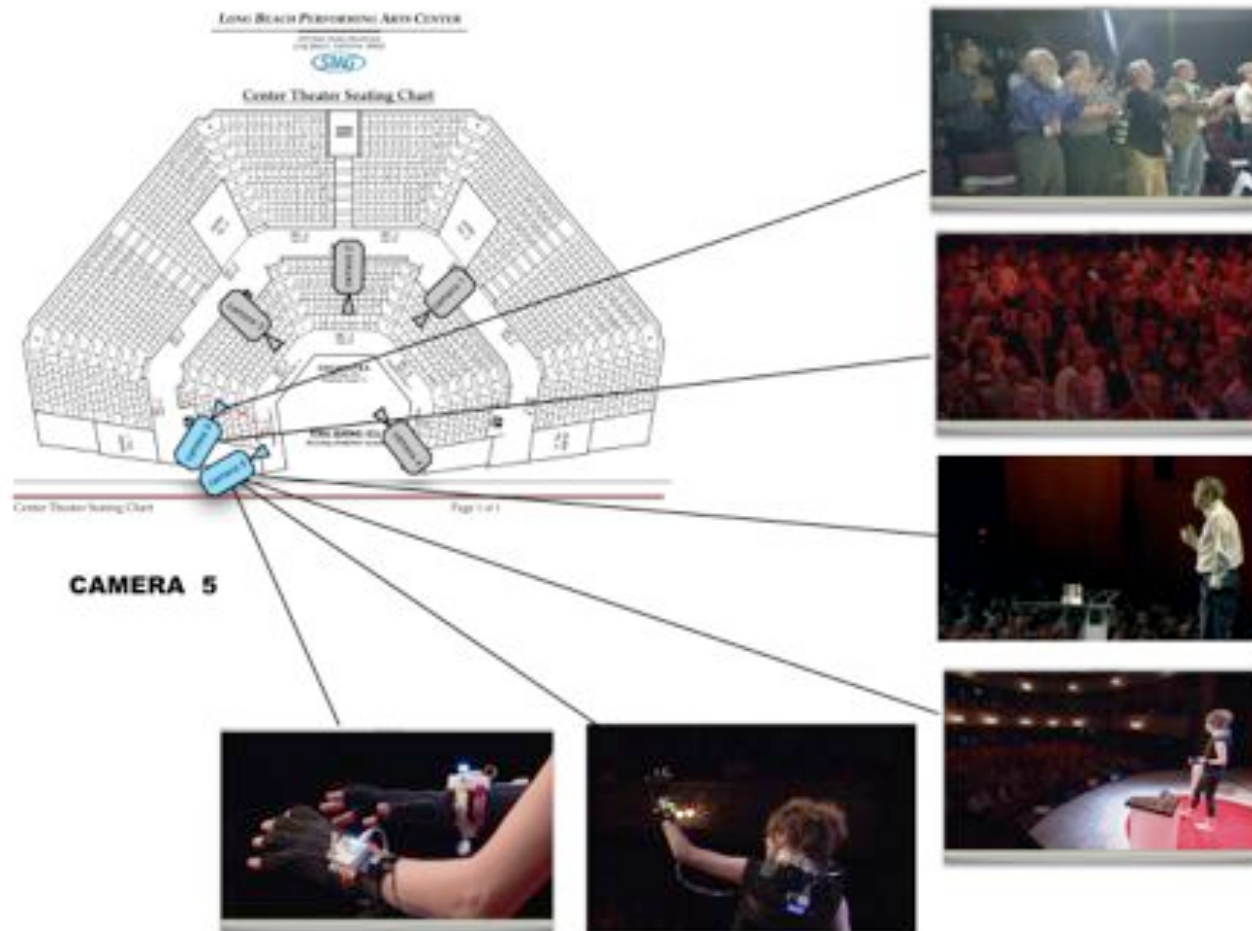


CAMERA 4



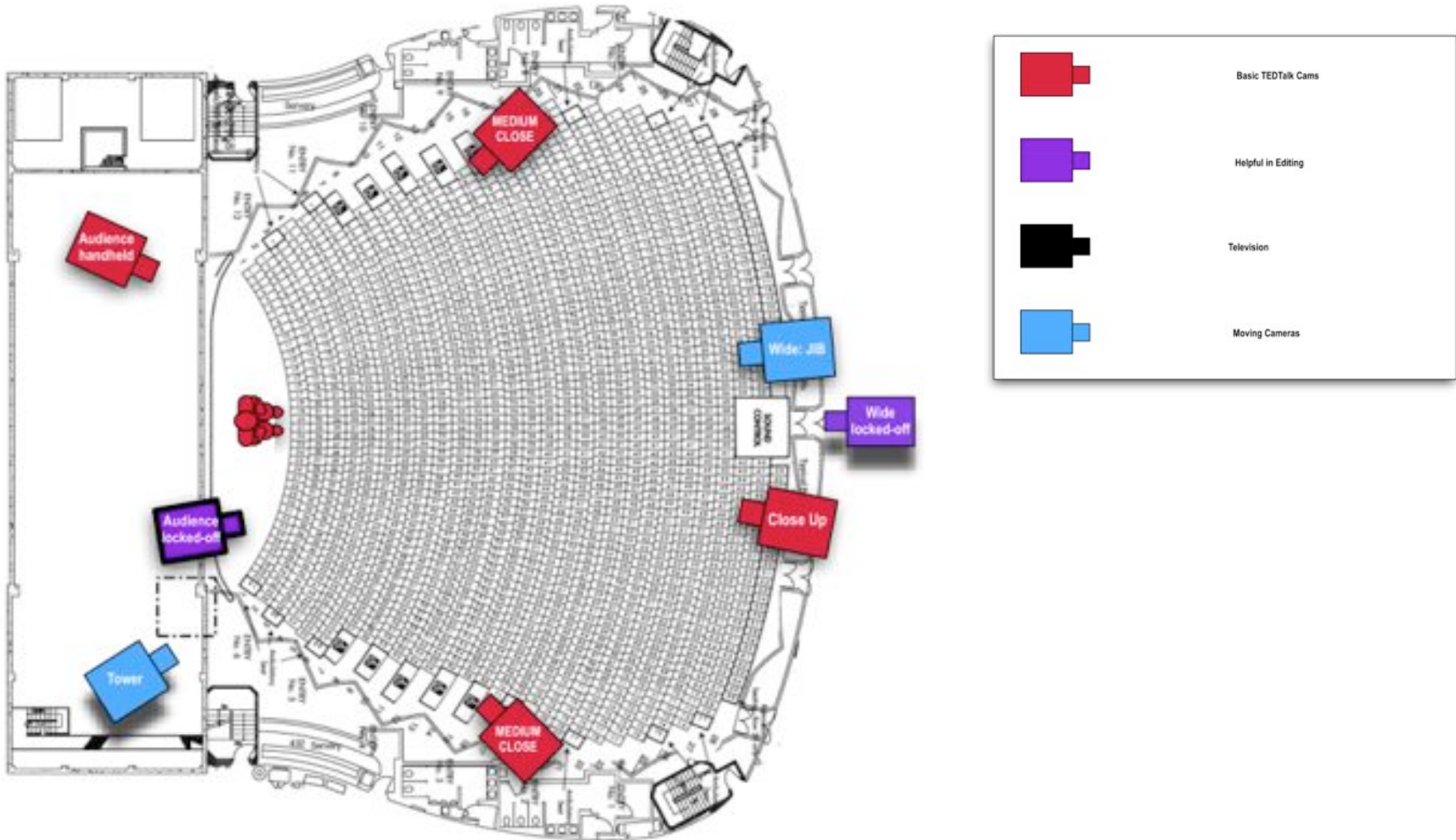
4

RANGE: Demo + Audience



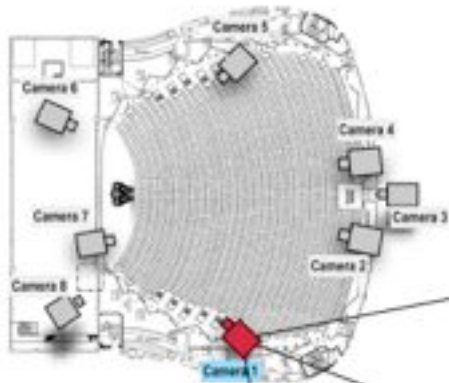
TERRACE THEATER

CAMERA LAYOUT



1

RANGE: Close Up ==> Wide Shot

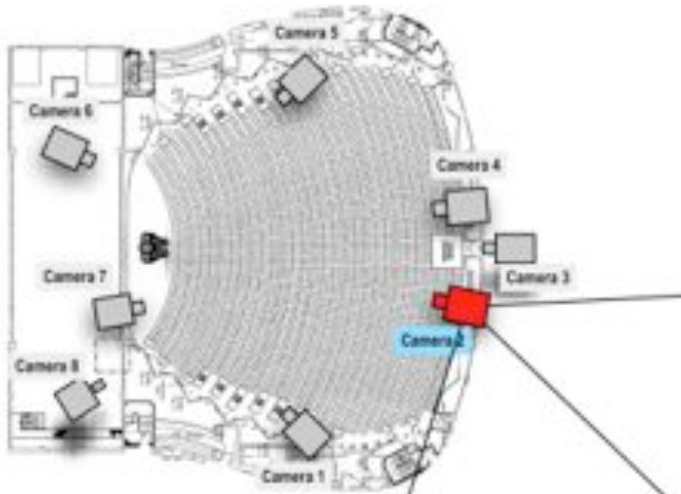


CAMERA 1



2

RANGE (1 of 2): Close Up ==> Wide Shot

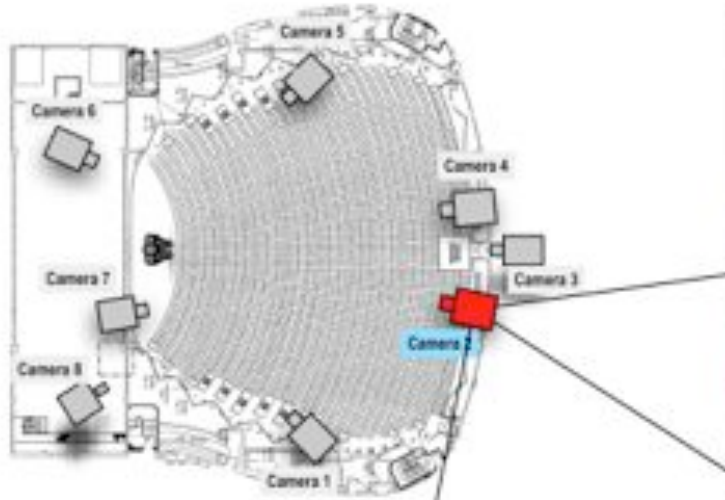


CAMERA 2: 1 of 2



2

RANGE (2 of 2): Close Up ==> Wide Shot

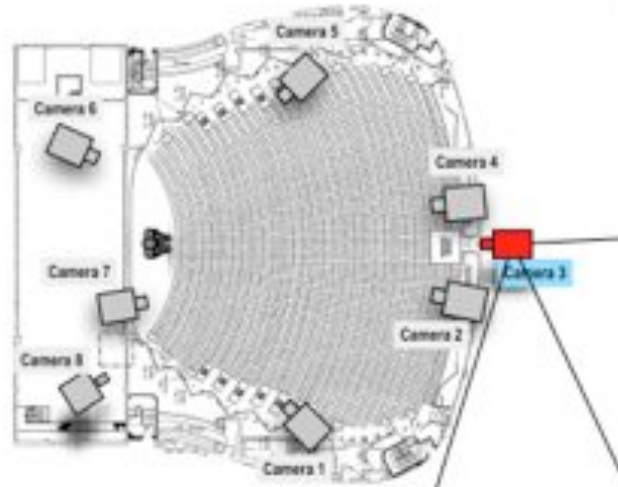


CAMERA 2: 2 of 2



3

RANGE: Medium Wide ==> Wide

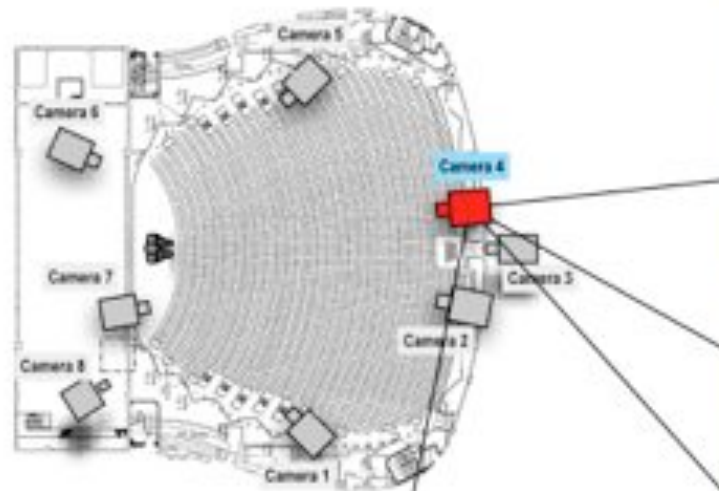


CAMERA 3



4

RANGE: Close Up ==> Wide Shot

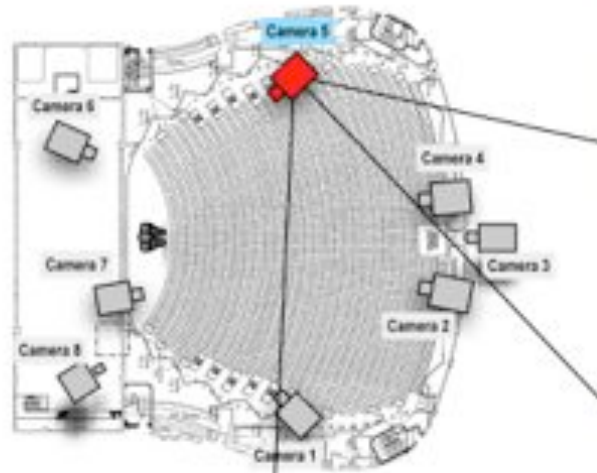


CAMERA 4



5

RANGE: Wide ==> Extreme Wide

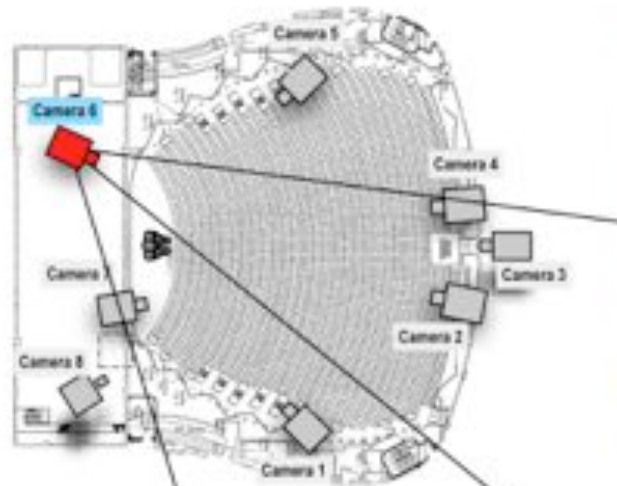


CAMERA 5



6

RANGE: OTS Speaker, Wide

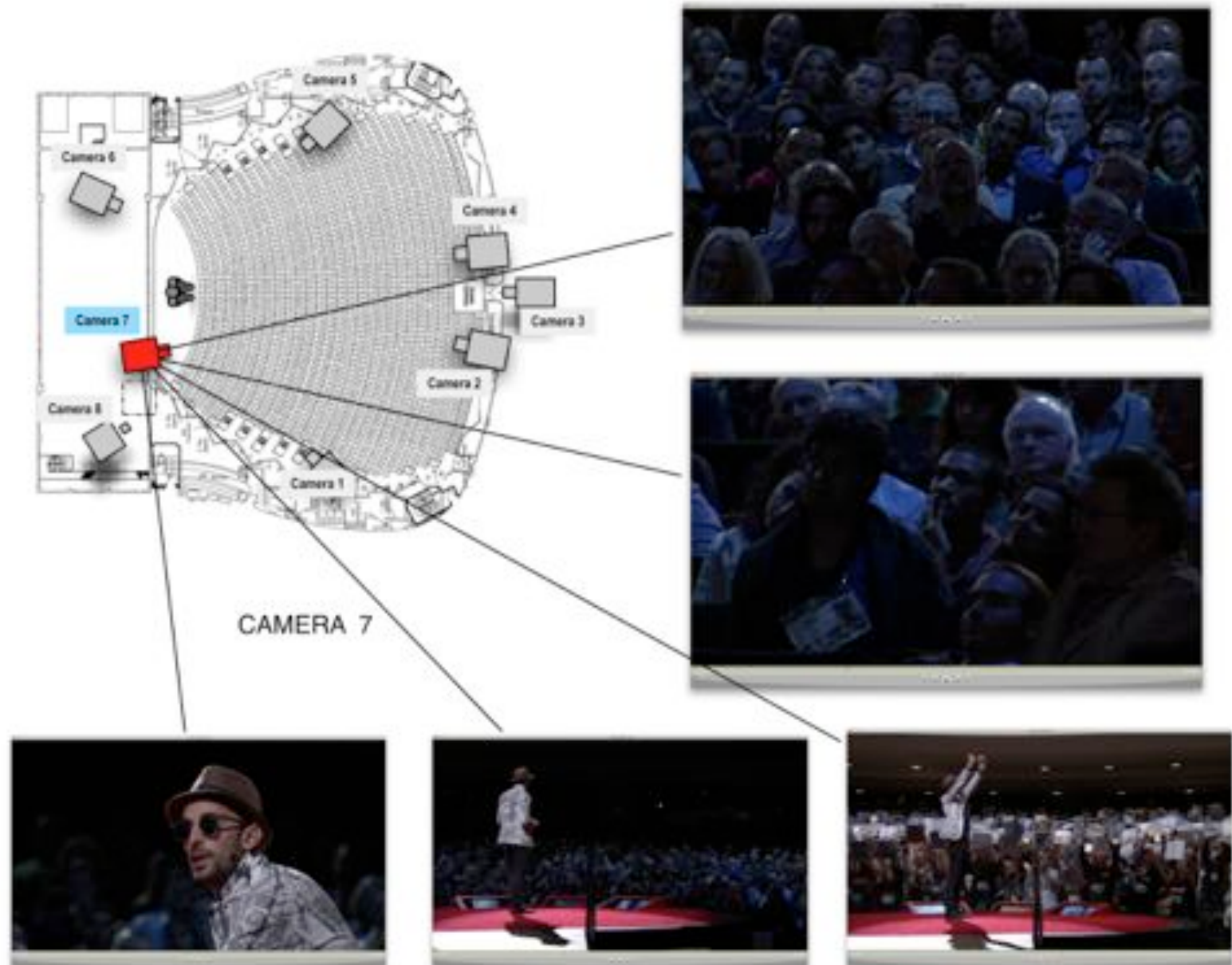


CAMERA 6



7

RANGE: Close Up ==> OTS Speaker, Wide



8

RANGE: OTS Speaker, Medium ==> Wide

