

ABOUT ME

Hi! I'm Elliot (he/him) I'm a third year English student going into my fourth year and I'd love to be your director's rep of CUADC!

When I first arrived in Cambridge, I hadn't done much theatre and initially felt overwhelmed, especially with the seemingly elusive directing side of the scene. Since then, I've been able to pitch, direct & associate direct multiple shows and it's one of my favourite parts of theatre! I'd love to help continue to make Cambridge Theatre a more inclusive and accessible space so that more people might want to take a chance on directing, and that the whole process is more transparent!

In terms of my previous experience, I have been the Artistic Director of Pembroke Players for the past year, as well as the LGBT Officer & Transgender and Non-Binary officer for the Murray Edwards JCR. I'd love to take what I've learnt from these roles, as well as my time in Cambridge Theatre, to help make it more approachable!



KEY IDEAS

DIVERSITY

A current huge problem in Cambridge Theatre is its lack of diversity, especially in representing BAME students. As director's rep, I'd like to help where possible to take strides to include this. As artistic director for Pembroke Players, I organised a showcase for Black History Month which was incredibly illuminating and emphasised the importance of representing authentic voices on stage.

I'd like to take steps such as:

- Carefully considering show selection & fresher's week shows to encourage people to want to engage with narratives they feel they can relate to

- Thinking about how we can recommend changes for directors in the audition process to make this a more welcoming space, such as specific BAME roles & drop-in times

- Always being open to feedback & criticism on what I can do to best help with these issues. This can include frequent forum discussions & having a clear line of communication for people to voice their feedback.

ACCESSIBILITY

For many inexperienced with theatre, the process can seem frightening, especially in directing spheres where it can seem like prior knowledge is required. I'd like to help by:

- Organising workshops and groups for all interesting in directing so that we can more easily spread information and guidance about things like how to run rehearsals, advice on giving notes and more.

- Continuing the Fresher's Play tradition & encouraging all who might be interested to try out for different roles, no matter their experience

- Extending efforts to make Cambridge Theatre accessible especially for neurodivergent people. I've been involved with both the Pembroke Players and CUADC regarding how to give contextual content warnings which can help audiences make more informed choices about how they engage with the show. I'd like to continue this, particularly encouraging directors to consider the welfare and mental side of looking out for their cast and crew. Cambridge Theatre can sometimes be a time crunch and seem stressful, which can be exacerbated by mental health problems

- Recommending guidance such as structured rehearsals, clear notes & transparency are some ideas I'd love to explore in an effort to keep promoting accessibility among all those who might be interested in directing.

TRANSPARENCY

Something crucial to remember is that everyone is coming into theatre with a different level of cultural capital and they might not be familiar with all of the potential responsibilities and opportunities of the directing side of theatre. From pitching a show, to running rehearsals, to being a point of call for cast and crew, I'd like to continue to help explain and give guidance to what these can mean. This ties in with making Cambridge Theatre a more welcoming space, and ideas include

- Guidance for how to run auditions and give feedback. This is a particularly vulnerable time in which actors are placing a lot of trust in the directors & being able to be as friendly and inclusive as possible will help encourage people, even if it is a rejection

- Encouraging and delivering consent workshops. While this takes on a different shape in Pandemic times, it is always important to respect and encourage awareness of boundaries of cast and crew to help lead to a healthier group dynamic

- Considering how we can make shows inclusive for transgender & non-binary cast & crew. Giving guidance on "gendered" roles in auditions and how to create a welcoming space including pronoun circles, avoiding assumptions and more.