



## Cambridge University Amateur Dramatic Club

Minutes, 18.03.21, 17.00, Zoom

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Present: Ella Fitt, William Audis, Hannah Collins, Derek Penny, Jonathan Black, Jonathan Powell, Aine McNamara, Elliot Aitken, Maria Cleasby, Annabelle York, Amber De Ruyt, Mahon Hughes

Absent with apology: Iona Rogan

### 2. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes to be sent out promptly.

Action Point: HC to set up a slack channel to distribute the minutes each week

### 3. Action Points

- a. All committee members to read the constitution, with particular reference to their roles **Done**
- b. EF to organise welfare training with the Student Union **Done - taking place on 24/03/21**
- c. WA to set up funding meetings for successful applicants **Ongoing - 'No Quarter' Meeting has happened, 'The Parnassus Players', 'The Passion' and 'The Calligrapher' meetings are happening soon**
- d. EF to contact absent committee members about Code of Conduct sub-committee and create slack channel **Done**
- e. EF to find out more information on the ADC Sustainability Working Group **Done, it is confirmed that MC will be student representative on this**
- f. HC to open expressions of interest for vacant positions up for co-option **Done**
- g. WA to draft a constitutional amendment to introduce a Diversity and Inclusion Officer **Deferred - to be discussed further in this meeting**

### 4. Event Reports

AY hosted a Zoom event with the Association of Lighting Designers Student representatives on the 18th of March. They spoke about the benefit of the association

and careers in Lighting Design and tech more generally. This was successful and well attended.

Other event plans will be deferred until we have a Social and Outreach Secretary.

## **5. General Updates**

EF comments that the CUADC/Footlights online Panto was a success

## **6. Co-option**

We have received expressions of interest for each vacant role.

The committee votes and agrees:

Designers' Rep - Cat Salvini

Club Publicist - Emily Shen

Diversity and Inclusion Consultant - Mithiran Ravindran

The decision for Social and Outreach Officer is deferred until we have received more information about the interested parties' experience and ideas.

## **7. Diversity and Inclusion Officer (Constitutional Amendment)**

EF comments that if we are to introduce a Constitutional Amendment to have a Diversity and Inclusion Officer as a permanent role on committee then we need to define what the role would involve. Her suggestions of role responsibilities are: to promote equality and advise on matters of diversity and inclusion and to create spaces where people from minority backgrounds feel comfortable to express their experiences within Cambridge Theatre.

WA suggests in line with the outlines of other roles within the constitution, the officer should organise events such workshops or Q&As with those who are in the industry and identify as a minority.

EA queries whether applicants for the officer should be people who self-identify as a minority or whether it will be an open position to everyone.

EF responds that creating safe spaces is more likely if led by someone from a minority background. WA raises the issue that this would also depend on what we envision this role will be, we cannot necessarily say they have to be one minority if this role is intended to cover all minorities.

AY suggests that we have a non-exhaustive list of what we class as a minority - class, disability, gender, sexuality, race, religion etc. as this could be helpful if we go in the direction of only allowing self-identifying minorities to vote for this position in the election.

JB asserts we should ask newly elected Diversity and Inclusion Consultant Mithi what they think is necessary for the Officer role and when they get involved they can lead the agenda.

[Action Point: WA to start drafting a job description informed by discussion with Mithi and put in slack for feedback from committee](#)

## **8. Executive Committee Meeting (15/03/21)**

EF and MC attended the meeting. EF updates the committee on what was discussed and asks for specific feedback on the ADC Long Term Plan.

## **9. ADC Theatre Long Term Plan**

The ADC Theatre Long Term Plan concerns the long term priorities of the theatre. MC describes it as where we see the ADC being in 10 years time. Suggested subheadings to focus on are community, diversity, accessibility, opportunity, experience, sustainability, innovation, collaboration and facilities although our input is not limited to these sections.

DP comments that inclusivity should be key and we need to widen participation and expand the range of people who feel they are comfortable getting involved at the ADC. Theatre can often be viewed as a cliquy environment where people from different backgrounds find it hard to get involved. Our top priority should be outreach. EF comments that we should work with the theatre more on our outreach plans such as during freshers.

MH suggests as a part of 'Facility' reducing the ice cream price by 50p back to the default of £2 (£1 with discount)

DP comments ticket prices could be an access issue as they are quite expensive, this could be something to look into initiatives for.

EA suggests in line with our focus on code of conduct the theatre itself should put more training and safeguarding in place to respond to harassment and discrimination. There needs to be accountability and a change in culture. EA further comments that the ADC chooses what productions and therefore what topics are brought to the stage and these can often be sensitive so we need to make the culture and space of the theatre more professional and safe.

MC asks if the theatre itself should be putting safeguarding training in place for management and show selection committees

EA responds that this would be good but paired with an offer of support for things like intimate scenes. There needs to be a practise of checking in and a better process in place if harassment is brought up.

ADR suggests if management have specific training and a greater awareness, they can intervene if necessary. This training could also be relayed to producers and directors of individual shows.

EA notes that not all responsibility should be on management but they should be points of contact and streamline the process.

Under facility, MC comments in the long run it would be great to have a fully accessible Corpus Playroom and fire proof the lift in the ADC to increase accessibility.

On accessibility, EA raises a point about improving content warnings and having a practise to get directors to think carefully about how things they are using may be an access issue e.g. using strobe lighting. If it's only used in the first 10 minutes of a production then content warnings should signpost this so people aren't excluded completely from being able to watch and be involved with productions.

AY raises a point about tech inclusion and access saying that there should be a new culture that every show is an opportunity for someone to learn something and there should be a more standard procedure for getting new people involved. This could help tackle the cliquy environment.

EA suggests that we change the culture around get ins and get outs in the long term. The fact that we have to do technical work so late at night is potentially dangerous and if we could change the timings it could be both more manageable and safer for the people involved.

MC suggests that we could long term extend the tech prep time for shows which is currently only 3 days for an ADC mainshow. If this was extended it could mean less overnights and get outs could be completed at a more sensible time perhaps on the next day.

EF comments that perhaps it would make a difference if shows began on a Wednesday instead of a Tuesday. MC agrees that the extension of time would be good and would perhaps allow for more complicated tech projects to be undertaken if there was more time to set up.

ADR adds that this could provide a better opportunity for shadowing as well as the extra time would enable more opportunity for things to be explained. Also, get ins are a huge time sacrifice for technicians, if this was changed to not blocking out a whole day for people then perhaps people would feel more able to get involved.

EA suggests the extension could make a huge welfare difference. We should frame this issue as saying if we don't look after people who do the theatre, we minimise the number of exciting projects that go on as people could be hesitant to get involved.

AY raises the issue that this would mean a whole night of ticket revenue lost and that financially something will have to give if we sacrifice this one day: either runs are longer or ticket prices will rise. Higher ticket prices could substantially affect students so perhaps it is a case of the lesser of two evils. MC comments that it is up to the theatre to come up with the solution to this, we can just raise that we see this as a problem and we would like to see it changed in the long run.

On ticket prices, AM suggests there should be more deals for example how CUADC offers the 2 for 1 on club shows on a Wednesday. She also comments that there should be a greater diversification of programming. Although it should be financially viable, student theatre should have more leeway to branch out.

For long term facility, MC says an automated counterweight system could make get ins and outs both faster and safer.

AM makes a comment on the long term sustainability of the ADC suggesting that decreasing waste should be a priority whether that be within productions or in aspects of the theatre such as the bar.

Action point: EF to make a slack channel so we can discuss this in more detail and come up with more concrete ideas

## **10. Code of Conduct Update**

EF updates the committee on the work of the code of conduct subcommittee who have thought about subcategories for the document and looked at other examples of professional codes of conduct. EA will send over his resources on this from Oxford's version of the ADC.

Action Point: Code of Conduct subcommittee to finalise the subsections for the initial draft and divide them up for writing.

## **11. Freshers' Shows**

EF comments that it is better rights wise if we start thinking about possible options for the Freshers' Shows now.

Action Point: AM to share handed down spreadsheet from the previous committee which includes many options of plays to slack so we can add ideas for plays onto there.

EF suggests the structure of the spreadsheet should outline the play, what slot it would be suitable for (main, late or corpus main), a short synopsis and a space for any comments.

Last year decisions on freshers plays were split between actors', directors' and producers' reps. They organised the spreadsheet, read plays of interest and narrowed down options.

Action Point: EF to set up subcommittee for freshers show selection (however it is noted that everyone on committee is very welcome to suggest plays on AM's spreadsheet )

EF asks committee what qualities do we want in a freshers show. Her suggestions are large cast, interesting settings for designers to create, accessible pieces and popular

plays as even though our society does not pursue a need for profit it can be really encouraging to see your play selling well which often happens with well known titles.

AY raises the issues that freshers' plays should not be too heavy content wise to avoid welfare issues with a fresher director, though we should try and display a range of narratives and issues.

ADR comments a range of genre is very important. This will be many peoples' first intro to theatre and as such it is a possibility to see which parts of theatre really interest you e.g. comedy, drama etc. She also comments that interesting space and setting are great however we need to ensure there isn't too much pressure on fresher set designers and TDs to make particular visions. We need to ensure directors know what is feasible.

AM suggests that it is really important to have an established relationship between reps and freshers in their respective areas. JP says we should concentrate on making committee clearly visible to freshers from the outset as points of contact to go to and so that people have a better general idea of the scope of Cambridge Theatre before they begin.

## **12. Freshers' Campaign – Workshops etc.**

EF comments that it is never too early to start thinking about the freshers campaign. Workshops are such an important part of it to establish connections and demystify aspects of theatre.

[Action Point: Each rep to think about ideas for how to get more people involved in freshers including contingency plans for different types of term dependent on the COVID-19 situation of the country.](#)

## **13. Refreshers Ideas for Easter**

EF suggests that even though Easter is a very busy term for everyone in terms of exams we as a committee should still aim to provide (re)freshers support and potentially events in this term as this will be the first time since early November that people will have had access to the theatre. The main "refreshers" focus will be providing support to our belated freshers play 'No Quarter' however other opportunities would be good.

Initial ideas for this include: a pitching workshop (i.e. how does the process work), drama games (chilled events and ways for people to get involved), potentially socials

and perhaps an intro to tech workshop (which could be difficult to achieve over Zoom so we will have to keep an eye on what is feasible re government guidelines.) She opens up for any further ideas from the floor.

ADR suggests we set up a drop in Q&A style event for people applying to roles with less experience. She suggests this could include all Easter show directors and producers. She also thinks it would be valuable to introduce the people on this year's committee to our members via social media to make us recognisable faces that people can approach for help and queries.

DP suggests if it is possible for tech there could be small socially distanced taster days to allow people to get involved in a low commitment way.

ADR says that we could reach out to subjects not typically associated with theatre - e.g. engineers - we should demystify opportunities available and frame Cambridge Theatre as a space for all people and not just classic "thesps."

JB recommends it would be nice to have a social for freshers, although this would be highly dependent on the government covid roadmap. This could be a good chance for freshers to chat to each other as well as committee members to ensure they feel connected and engaged within the community.

AM suggests a virtual games night may be a good social idea as this could be held both over zoom and in person and provides a structured chatting opportunity. There could be potential for this to be weekly. DP would be happy to help organise these. EF suggests that this is a good idea to keep that social aspect of theatre going however is hesitant that people may not turn up. Perhaps this is something we should test out.

JB reminds everyone of the theatre families scheme and thinks it would be a good idea to push these again whether for meeting online or in person. ADR suggests it would be good to remind people about this. MC raises the issue that finalist parents may be hesitant to get involved in this in Easter term.

EF says that she still has the spreadsheet from last year and so can email everyone who has signed up to test the water. If people don't want to be involved this time we could ask pre-existing families to adopt new members. She suggests the idea of a theatre family online quiz where each family is a team.

ADR really wants to make a quiz. She is very excited about this.



Action Point: EF to email theatre family parents to ask if they still want to be involved.

JP thinks a good refreshers' idea would be to make a more official shadowing scheme as if it is official it would be easier for people to access it. EF says that this must be organised with other productions and funding bodies as we would not be able to intervene on non-CUADC shows without permission. Also shadowing is something that would work better in a non-covid world due to social distancing restrictions meaning less people are currently allowed in the theatre.

JP suggests that maybe this is something to add to the ADC long term policies so that all productions work to foster an inclusive culture.

ADR raises the issue that many freshers haven't visited the ADC yet so it may be nice to do things like tours of the theatre. EF suggests this could be possible in smaller groups because of Covid rules and is something that should definitely be done for our 'No Quarter' Team.

Action Point: EF to make a Slack channel to discuss refreshers ideas further

#### 14. CUADC Job Guides

EF comments that the pre-existing CUADC guides are very old and really could do with an update. She asks if reps would be up for doing this and if MH would update the website when this has been done so these are easier to locate.

ADR agrees this would be helpful and improve accessibility. She suggests it may be good to have a physical copy of the guides in the theatre so that people can check things on the go.

AY raises an issue linked to this but also **techie access statements** . AY outlines that techie roles can often be quite demanding both physically and mentally of people and so it would be helpful to have something which examines every step of the process. This would involve outlining the responsibilities of each role so that people with certain access needs can know what the process involves. She suggests we ask the DRC for help on this.

MC raises the point that we should edit and update the CUADC wiki as this is a useful resource now integrated into Camdram. It is agreed that this would be a good idea.

## **15. Techie Access Statements (above)**

EF asks tech role reps (AY, MC & DP) to start compiling ideas for this.

AY is happy to do this but not immediately due to upcoming exams.

Action point: AY, MC, DP & CS (when she joins) to start collating ideas for techie access statements (ongoing project).

## **16. Show Contact Guide**

Nick Harris has drafted a Show Contact guide which EF will distribute to everyone acting as show contacts for Easter Term. She will let people know about contact details for the relevant shows once budget meetings have been completed.

Action Point: EF to make a slack channel and share the document with Easter Show Contacts.

## **17. Stash**

EF notes that we do love stash and it is obviously a 'very important' topic. She asks if anyone has any strong opinions and encourages everyone to fill out the Slack stash poll.

ADR suggests different colours for different groups of roles as this would make respective committee roles literally recognisable to freshers. EF notes this would be a positive thing as the point of our stash is so that we are recognisable at CUADC freshers events.

AM raises the contentious point of what is the difference between a quarter zip fleece or jumper. EF responds that it's simply a matter of material. AM asserts allegiance to the fleece claiming it is better.

DP suggests the techie colour is black which just makes sense. EF says if this goes ahead then each area will choose their own colour.

ADR asks what the formatting of the stash will be - will the roles be on the back or front and how big will the font be - DP suggests we should make the writing really clear, especially if we are going to have to operate in a socially distanced world.

## **18. AOB**

EF updates the committee on the situation raised in our last meeting concerning the Cambridge Creatives SWIM project. We are continuing to fund the project because both fair and open applications weren't expressed explicitly to CC and CC have approached us with an action plan to rectify the situation. Also, from talking to CC, this is a hugely positive project which has plans to involve a wider community of people in the creative Cambridge scene.

EF suggests that from this we have learnt that we need to make fair and open applications more obvious to shows. This needs to be explicitly mentioned in budget meetings, and the constitution and contracts should be redrafted to include it.

[Action point: WA to work on redrafting the constitution and contracts to include this as a clause](#)

HC suggests that we should set a regular meeting time as this would be an easier way of setting a schedule.

[Action point: HC to put out one final poll on slack to find a regular meeting day and time](#)

AM raises a point about an email she has had on the actors' email about the Cambridge Period Project wanting CUADC to sign their petition. AM to send to Slack and it is agreed that CUADC should sign.

MH relays to committee a form response on anonymous feedback form. This discussion is confidential and will not be minuted.

[Action point: a response to be written up and sent back](#)

MH raises the point that Fernando Georgiou will be leaving Cambridge soon and as such we will need somebody else to be in charge of uploading minutes to docushare as MH is unable to do so. EF agrees to do this.

Meeting concluded