



Cambridge University Amateur Dramatic Club

Minutes, 02.10.22, 15.00, Larkum Studio

1. Apologies for Absence

Present: Jonathan Black, Izzie Sayer, Tom Shortland, Lucas Holt, Christian Longstaff, Mercy Brewer, Tungsten Tang, Stephanie Cho, Amy Meyer, Kate South, Rishi Sharma

Absent with apologies: Rosie McLeish

Absent without apologies:

2. Minutes and Matters Arising.

JB welcomes everyone. He hopes the committee are all prepared for freshers.

3. Action Points

JB mentions that he intends to ask ZG about his plan for a pre-show announcement.

RS asks what form it will take. JB believes ZG is planning to ask a famous alumni of Cambridge Theatre to record an announcement which will be played before shows.

LH and RS ask how asking people not to film productions might be handled; JB thinks it depends on the show. CL suggests we record several announcements depending on the preferences of the show. LH jokes that a scarier famous alumni should be asked to record a pre-show announcement asking audience members not to film. KS doesn't think Ian McKellan will have space in his diary.

[ZG arrives, is offered cake]

ZG reports that management are also keen for the recorded pre-show announcement. He has a meeting with Luke Dell (LD, Current ADC Theatre Manager) and Gabrielle James (GJ, Current ADC Production Manager) where they will also discuss the re-admittance policy including the implications for stewarding.

4. Event Reports

JB notes many events are happening.

a. Club Night

There have been discussions about renaming the event as it may be confusing as it doesn't involve clubbing. JB confirms it will remain Club Night as it has already been advertised.

KS suggests it is renamed 'stage-y social'. it is met with a luke-warm reception. She then suggest 'an hour of stand up comedy with KS'.

KS thinks the name Club Night will encourage the kids (freshers) to come. She also thinks it may lead to actual clubbing (although not in the ADC).

JB encourages the committee to come to the social.

JB adds that the plan for the theatre families social is to see *Chess* and then go to the ADC Club Night.

KS enquiries about show cocktail. Thus far it's ingredients are unknown but she is sure it will nevertheless be a success.

b. Wuthering Heights Freshers Social

JB has confirmed LD has agreed to give freshers discounted £8 tickets. He adds that a sections of seats have been booked out for freshers.

CL spends some time imagining what the negotiation between JB and LD regarding the freshers discount was like.

TT volunteers to attend the social in place of KS; they are also TDing the show.

c. Socials Volunteers

JB asks KS to find volunteers to attend each of the upcoming socials.

TC volunteers to attend the disable students' for the disabled social.

RS volunteers to attend the BME social.

d. Winter Party

KS confirms it is happening on 27th November.

JB adds that management are aware this is taking place.

JB and KS encourage the committee to attend and to bring their friends.

5. Show Reports

a. Wuthering Heights

LH doesn't have a SPAT but has heard it is going well. The team are making a training trailer.

JB asks LH to encourage them to do more publicity.

Action: LH to get SPAT report and encourage more publicity

b. An Uncomfortable Silence

CL reports with all due seriousness; he shares the poster design. There is consensus that it is very nice.

TC reports they are intending to push publicity within the Cambridge arts scene.

CL confirms we can now return to 'bants mode'

JB thinks tickets will sell "by word of mouth. Lol."

c. Adrift

JB reports he has had a funding meeting with the team and they need some support. They have no producer, cast or prod team (but haven't yet run auditions). JB adds that the show is not massively complex so it should be okay.

JB asks TT to introduce themselves to the *Adrift!* Team and ask for a SPAT report.

Action: TT to send an email introducing themselves and asking for a SPAT report

d. Panto

JB gives some updates, including the fact that £12,000 of tickets have already been sold. CL promises maths to come.

Action: i will search for a spat

LH reports on the prod team: he has been trying to find a suitable Technical Director, and a keen fresher has emailed him may be a good fit for Lighting Designer.

TC suggests that they may still need support as the ADC can still be confusing even if they have other theatre experience. LH will give them a lot of support.

JB adds there is a lot to do in terms of production, tech and auditions but he has a meeting with the producers tomorrow and will report back next week.

CL shares the maths he has done about the length of panto. A 'covert spy' has sent a copy of Rapunzel to CL and he intends for this year's panto to be shorter. He has found out that Rapunzel's lines are, on average, 1.5-2 times longer than the current panto. He spends some time discussing formatting and pages. He concludes that his maths shows that the show will be reduced by 13.2% when it is cut and then will triumph from the shorter line lengths and hence be an acceptable length.

RS suggests this maths is added to the panto.

JB reminds RS that the aim is to reduce the length of the current panto script rather than adding to it.

6. Freshers

JB talks through his document 'CUADC at the SU Freshers Fair' while cake is distributed.

a. Fair

JB goes over specific details for the freshers fair, as per the document.

The fair is on Tuesday and Wednesday this week. JB asks if people are around specifically on Wednesday between 10-11 and to pack down.

JB goes over the things the committee can give out at the fair:

- an ADC pin badge
- a CUADC pen
- a CUADC flyer: JB shows everyone the useful info on the flyer
- ADC bookmarks [not here yet]
- CUADC term card [both not here yet]
- a QR code to cuadc's linktree

These are all met with appropriate 'oohhs' from the committee.

JB adds that there will NOT be 'Get Involved' booklets at freshers fair as it will likely be wasteful as many people will take them and subsequently not get involved.

JB confirms that CUADC also has tablets that can sign people up to mailing lists but these have not yet been located.

JB encourages the committee to direct freshers first to freshers events first but to encourage very keen freshers to get involved in other theatre that's going on like the *Wuthering Heights* build.

b. Friday

JB reminds the committee that, as the name suggests, it is on Friday. Ideally the committee will be available from 2:30 for setup and then JB will host a mock tour. Then half the committee will stay in the bar to chat to people while the other half do tours.

KS and RM will be doing meet and greet instead and giving freshers 'Get Involved' booklets and drinks vouchers. JB confirms that the committee do not get drinks vouchers as we do not have money for that.

JB adds he has also organised a social w/ CUMTS, BREAD and Footlights for after freshers friday.

JB encourages committee members to be their lovely selves.

c. Plays

JB confirms applications are open. They have been publicised on Instagram, Cambridge Theatre Facebook but are not yet on Camdram. :(

KS reports that she has not seen it on the Cambridge Theatre Facebook group and she is on there every day. Various committee members suggest that it could be made more clear how to sign up.

KS suggests maybe separating the individual adverts could be helpful or including a large Auditions banner. KS realises she has started some massive beef with this as the post has already been posted and is unlikely to be significantly edited now, but it will be re-posted.

Various committee members roast IS's minuting style for a hot second.

JB hopes everyone is aware of everything that is happening with freshers fairs. He thinks most freshers will find out about the freshers plays from freshers friday.

RS adds that he won't be able to cut the script for *The Government Inspector* as he has quite a few other commitments. He has been working on the directing guide and he intends to release it sometime this term.

Several committee members offer to help with the cuts. RS notes the script is on a google doc in the committee Slack. LH suggests adding an aim for the length of the script following cuts. He implies CL should apply his genius lines maths to this project.

RS adds that the fresher director will also be able to edit the script; JB confirms the show can be up to 90mins. TS adds the show is a comedy, more edits may come out of rehearsals.

JB adds that while of course cutting the script is important, he doesn't want anyone on the committee to stress over things like this; we all have our own capacities and we don't need to stress about CUADC things. He adds that it may also be possible to put 3 directors on the show which could help.

LH suggests advertising for a dramaturg/script editor for *The Government Inspector* to help with the cutting problem. It would also would be a good for freshers who want to write.

TC is happy to write an application for this. They think it is a good play but needs modernising and streamlining, and they think it would be helpful for a fresher to have that experience.

ZG suggests looking for another version of the play online. JB think they are unlikely to out of copyright.

ZG asks about freshers auditions: when casting, how much should the audition panels consider the plays people may be recalled for. He mentions that, for instance, for *Blue Stockings* the cast could be 22 or it could be 11 actors playing double roles and he wants to get the balance right between getting people involved and not overwhelming the fresher directors.

[Richard Barnes, senior treasurer, arrives]

TC adds that *Hatch* and a few other projects are available for freshers who want to write; they will make a quick 'what to tell freshers who want to write' sheet for freshers fair.

Action: TC to create 'How to get involved in writing for theatre' sheet for freshers

JB briefly introduces Richard.

7. Workshops, Guides and Events

JB does not go into detail in the interest of time

a. Tech for Directors and Producers

TT wants to check if the Tech for Directors and Producers workshop has been advertised. RS has emailed all directors & producers involved in shows this term to advertise and he thinks people will come if they are aware of it as it is quite a specific workshop

TS asks if it has been publicised on the Cambridge Theatre Facebook page. It is confirmed that it is.

b. Writing workshops

TC will get in touch with LB RE the Facebook event for the writing workshops. They have a plan for first workshop, but not the second yet, but that workshop is not until November.

Action: TC to get in touch with LB re the Writer's Workshop Facebook event

JB has also made a canva and he will send it through.

Action: JB to send canva to TC.

JB mentions LB can publicise events on behalf of CUADC but committee members can also individual advertise.

c. Freshers' Tech Interviews

There is no room booked for this; LH is tempted to run them in Nero/similar, as was done last year. He adds committee reps are planning on switching in and out depending on the freshers' interests. He is also keen for them to be more informal 'chats' rather than serious interviews.

8. SM Rep Co-Option

IS has not received any applications.

JB encourages committee members to reach out to anyone they know who might be interested.

AM has had people contact her about the props store. She offers to open it when she opens the costume store for now but hopes a separate SM rep can be found soon.

9. Vice President Role

JB has written a proposal for the introduction of a vice president role.

Group O have previously discussed this and think it will be a positive step

JB outlines more details from his proposal.

He believes CUADC has 2 roles:

- Supporting productions, freshers events and the day-to-day running of the club
- Reflecting on what the theatre community does and influencing larger changes

Currently, CUADC doesn't have enough capacity to do both things.

He summarises the main difference between roles: The VP would be responsible for the internal running of CUADC, including the committee, the fringe, show contacts and supporting group O (specifically financials); committee welfare (although JB thinks should perhaps be out of the scope of the role) and some slack. The would leave the President time and space for external affairs - acting as the primary external contact for CUADC, working with other theatre societies, the executive committee and longer term planning.

JB adds that the document has circulated to the committee has more details, and the additional role would require a constitutional amendment if the committee agree to it.

RB comments that CUADC's accounts, interim accounts and constitution must be submitted to proctors before the end of next term so constitution change (if this goes ahead) must be carried out soon in order to have that.

JB notes than an SGM is planned for some other constitutional changes as well.

TC adds that the CUADC election cycle lines up quite badly with the fringe cycle as it is around the time where liason with venues takes place.

KS suggests the VP could continue their responsibilities for slightly longer than the election cyce.

AM suggests fringe decisions are brought forward.

RB adds that there are 2 main elements which need consideration for the fringe: selection of what productions go to fringe and then detailed organisation following this. He suggests that in some ways February divides these 2 elements and so this could be a useful deliniation for the different committees.

JB has found that venue confirmation can take place around the end of January and so this may still present issues.

TC suggests that the outgoing VP could continue their duties until fringe venues are confirmed.

KS agrees that this could encourage a nice handover time.

General consensus is the the VP suggestions in a good idea.

CL asks if, assuming the constitution change is approved, the current committee will co-opt a VP or if this role will be added at the next elections. JB confirms it will be for the next election cycle.

JB also confirms he will share his proposal document and he encourages committee members to bring thoughts to on it to the next meeting. It will be voted on next week or the week after, then taken to the SGM.

RB suggests that committee members check the constitution for other changes that anyone wishes to make the constitutional changes process easier.

TS notes that the committee has some constitutional changes planned for suggestion.

JB encourages committee members to check the constitution especially for their roles and send any proposed changes to IS.

Action: Committee members to send any constitutional change proposals to IS

TS asks what membership changes have been suggested previously. JB says the constitution states that if you have 3 annual membership you become a life member but this doesn't happen automatically and so may need changing. He also suggests that the committee considers proposing the removal of annual membership altogether. LD is also keen the graduated CUADC members then become part of a database that the ADC has access to, but this would require changes to membership systems to ensure it complied with GDPR.

RB adds that it may be useful to include a clause in the constitution allowing the committee to make decisions on things like this without requiring a constitutional review.

10. Fringe Feedback Update

JB updates. He asks TS if CUADC have broke even/made a profit on the production sent to the fringe, but TS is still missing some documents and so can't report back yet, but he confirms CUADC haven't done badly.

[RM joins the meeting]

JB reports that both fringe shows were well received.

JB notes that CUADC ran a bursary scheme which amounted to a figure higher than expected. He is pleased that CUADC committed to supporting people going to the fringe, but the amount spent this year was unsustainable.

TS clarifies there are a few different reasons for this, including the fact that colleges haven't been supporting students as much as in the past.

RB adds that many people going to the fringe this year were graduating 3rd years who could no longer be supported by their colleges as it doesn't fulfil the requirements for charitable status that colleges hold.

RS adds that support from college can also be dependent on individual tutors/colleges which is also challenging. This also led to some bursary applications being late as people intended to apply to their colleges for support first, and some found that responses from colleges were quite slow during the summer holidays.

TC adds colleges often close travel grant/similar applications earlier than decisions are made about production teams for fringe shows.

RB suggests that if individuals have an idea of the cost beforehand then applications could be made to colleges. He explains that the CUADC bursary process involves 2 forms: the first is financial data which no-one affiliated with CUADC sees but which the tutor confirms. The second is an application to CUADC for the bursary. He suggests that the first form could potentially get signed off earlier, but reiterates that colleges are unlikely to support graduates.

JB believes making this clear at point of advertising for production teams could also be useful.

RB adds that many people who were able to go this year have not been able to go before and so it's been a good thing that CUADC were able to support so many people.

TS adds that more people applied to the bursary than expected, as the ratio of company members:those applying for bursaries was much lower for CUMTS.

JB suggests the following steps going forwards:

- Bring the timeline for fringe applications earlier
- Limit the maximum individual bursary and make this clear at the start of the process (limit to be determined by ~£250)
- Only taking one production to Edinburgh

RS asks if this would involve enforcing a limit to the number of people in a production team.

TC adds that the number of people who go to the fringe needs to be economical; they suggest that individuals who are involved but are not necessary for the full run are given micro grants to allow them to visit the fringe but not stay in Edinburgh for the full run.

JB also suggests exploring the potential of taking a second show to the Camden fringe, which from his experience with a CUMTS show, is much more affordable, much less financially risky and also a fantastic opportunity. This would need a discussion about if the bursary scheme is applied to this show with potentially a lower bursary limit as it is more affordable generally.

RS suggests that rather than putting a limit on numbers in a team, instead CUADC could just offer to pay an amount (say £2500) towards accommodation as this is generally the most expensive part of the fringe. He notes this might be helpful to streamline the difficult process but acknowledges that it wouldn't be needs tested.

RB believes that it is essential for the bursary scheme to be needs tested.

RS agrees.

JB would be keen to hear opinions on the Camden fringe. He notes that it was also challenging in a different way to productions in either Edinburgh or Cambridge.

RB offers to write to senior tutors saying he is disappointed in the lack of support offered to students this year.

The committee are very keen on this in general

KS is in particular keen on this due to the lack of support from colleges for the garden party.

RB adds that the bursaries scheme was very worthwhile, and TS and JB have done a great job implementing it.

TC adds that the Camden fringe may also be better for professional opportunities as there London agents there.

11. Code of Conduct Update

JB shares another, in progress document, adapted from the ADC and 2 other theatre's code of conducts. He talks through the main points.

TS asks if this could be part of funding agreement for simplicity, such that when core production team members sign they agree to the Code of Conduct and agree to circulate it with the team, at which point responsibility is conferred to individuals.

JB asks committee members to read the proposed Code of Conduct and comment.

TT suggests that if it is part of the funding agreement, it will be signed by producers but they can't be the only person to uphold it. They ask how this would be passed on to the production team.

JB explains that when a producer or director signs, they are taking on responsibility to share the Code of Conduct with the rest of the team. CUADC could have this responsibility but this seems logistically challenging.

RB believes it should be the producer's responsibility.

RB adds that the Senior Treasurer cannot be the decision maker and should not be the person referred to as the arbiter.

ZG asks if this is for the company of the production (i.e. and not the audience). JB confirms it does not include the audience.

TS asks if it can be made available on website.

LH suggests it should be referred to on the membership website as well; potentially Charlie Jonas should be asked about this.

LH also clarifies with JB that expulsion from society means you can no longer be involved in a CUADC show.

JB adds, as per TC's comments earlier in the year, the constitution has significant power to remove individual's memberships. JB believes that the Code of Conduct gives the committee more of a justification for expulsion, rather than it being a result of the whims of the committee.

ZG suggests we add a section on audience behaviour if it is going to be circulated to all CUADC members.

JB agrees and suggests that more details are included on, for instance, how to behave in rehearsals, as an audience member etc.

TS suggests it is added to membership as a tick box that you have to agree to when you get CUADC membership; again Charlie Jonas would need to change this.

RB adds that the ADC has a Code of Conduct which applies to audience members means that if they are banned from the theatre they are also, by default, banned by CUADC.

TC adds that it needs to be handled well and should ensure that decisions cannot be taken based on unfounded rumours/anonymous reporting.

JB encourages the committee to come back with more feedback.

12. Comments on Show Feedback Form

JB has drafted a more formal feedback system for productions, useful for both the production and for CUADC. The concept is that, on the Monday after show finishes, the form is sent out to everyone on the production, then the Monday after that, JB and 1 other member of Group O will sit down to discuss the feedback.

JB asks the committee to go away and add comments on this.

JB is keen that there is the option to add a name and role in the feedback form but he thinks anonymous comments are still valuable. He also wants to get the balance between overly lengthy and too short right.

TC confirms that this would be in the form of a google form.

LH suggests adding that the information will not be shared with Group O if there is a conflict of interest in the form.

JB adds that the responses to the form will not be accessible to anyone involved in the production, and instead they would be filtered and packaged in a constructive way. The text of the form also encourages this.

MB asks if it is just for crew - JB confirms it is for everyone involved.

LH suggests adding an 'off the record' section but can see that this may be problematic.

TC adds that officially everything is off the record as it can be anonymous.

JB suggests it is up to Group O to decide what is useful to pass on to the producers/directors.

JB asks for general feedback - the committee seems keen on the form in general.

13. AOB

a. Cambridge Creatives [RS]

Amy Lever from Cambridge Creatives are struggling to recruit and have asked if we can publicise for them.

Action: RS to tell Amy Lever to get in touch with Lily Blundell

b. Oxford Writer's Group [TC]

TC has organised a Writer's Group with Oxford University. It will be quite open ended; people will be asked for which university they attend and what genre they are interested in and they will set up groups of 4 to meet twice this term to discuss/share work/give feedback. They feel the small groups will also hopefully enable closer connections and therefore the groups will be more collaborative. TC is in touch with a rep from OUDS (Oxford University Dramatic Society) to organise this. They are keen that it will be a useful and productive thing for writers at both universities. They have no plans for trips yet but this is a fun start.

LH asks if there were any opportunities to meet other uni people at the fringe. The consensus is that there was not much opportunity.

TC adds that another University ran a UK tour of their musical before taking it to fringe and this could be an interesting thing for CUADC to do.

KS and AM add that this may be prohibitively expensive but they suggest a Corpus run before the fringe.

TS suggests Week 0 Michaelmas run.

JB and TC suggest a run at the end of Easter term may be more useful as it helps the show to get on its feet before the fringe.

TT suggests breaking up May Week such that a larger number of shows are on than 2/3 per venue in that week.

JB adds that this has happened in the past but has been a big challenge organisationally.

c. Review Guide

RS confirms with TC that they are happy with the reviewing guide. RS will look over and put it in the Slack, where he will give the committee 48 hours to review, as he is keen to publish it before term properly starts.

KS asks if there have been any communications with a specific person at Varsity.

RS explains that the guide gives some information on how Cambridge Theatre works, how the reviewing process works, what the show is responsible for (comps, pronouns, photos, a responsibility not to be nasty to reviewers); and the responsibilities of the reviewer (to publish on time, be accurate, do some basic research, to include the name, writer and basic theme of the production; be respectful to student artists and workers); and finally an explanation of the strike system.

ZG asks if alongside this CUADC could add a press pack for producers to send out to reviewers with standard information like show dates, the name of the production, the name and pronouns of all members of the company, photos etc.

KS asks if there could be something added for a review that is written then never published as this has happened in the past e.g. for *The Man Who Wouldn't Be Murdered* at the Camden fringe.

RS suggests that it would be up to the ADC to enforce sanctions on reviewers.

JB suggests RS gets in touch with Gabrielle/Luke as well.

Action: RS to get in touch with Management and put the guide on Slack, with the intention of publishing a draft by this week.

d. Fringe Audience Member [CL]

CL was contacted by an amateur writer while at Gringe. Unfortunately he has not asked for the script. TS may pitch it next term.

e. Costume Store [TT]

They report that the deadline to remove costumes from Queens is the end of Michaelmas.

JB fills in RB on the email from Queens and the immense fire risk posed by the costume store.

JB says the real choice is if and how to get rid of lots of the costumes. AM agrees that a lot of the costumes aren't that useful, hopefully some could go to Corpus/other societies, but the rest is for the skip.

KS suggests a junk sale before halloween.

JB doesn't think we will have time to do it this month, but fortunately we now have 2 committee members with cars.

LH suggests a sale is held at Queens, although he thinks that Queens might not be keen on this.

KS adds that she has some great Club Dinner ideas and thinks people may wish to accessorise. She reports that she has a powerpoint and a vision. She assures the committee it is all fine but encourages them to get ready.

JB adds club dinner is on February 12th.

KS, TS and JB have got the finances under control.

f. Bank Cards [AM]

AM asks if they are working and can be publicised.

TS is okay if people are told about the cards and encouraged to email him but notes that a google form will be set up to standardise use.

g. Cambridge theatre group [LH]

LH asks if the spin off Cambridge Theatre Facebook groups are still active. AM and MB are attempting to resurrect the designers and producers groups. A few others are active. LH suggests removing non-active one.

h. Footlight Panto Negotiations [JB]

JB doesn't think there is a contract between CUADC and the Footlights. He thinks there should be a contract. Currently there is a 50/50 financial split but CUADC does essentially all of the on the ground support for the show. However Footlights bring their brand which is also valuable.

JB has found from minutes in 2018 a meeting between CUADC and the Footlights which was arbitrated by Management where things got heated.

JB asks if the committee thinks we should re-negotiate this. The committee seems keen on this.

He also asks if the committee thinks we should ask the Footlights for more support; the committee doesn't seem keen on this. The Footlights also don't have a technicians rep currently, but even then they are often not that helpful with things like Panto.

JB thinks this is a this-term problem for this panto.

RB suggests working out how much work CUADC puts into the panto to have more grounds for asking to renegotiate the financial split.

LH adds that the fringe angle could also be useful (i.e. CUADC want to support more people at fringe rather than just wanting more money)

TT suggests this is based on how things are going currently as, for instance, LH is currently de-facto in charge of all tech for the panto.

TS suggests this then forms the basis of the contract.

JB reminds the committee of the key points regarding freshers. He will send more information on the Get Involved carousel. JB also invites everyone to attend his birthday (happy birthday icon).

Meeting adjourned at 17:20pm