



Cambridge University Amateur Dramatic Club

Handover Minutes, 29.02.23, 15.00, Larkum Studio

1. Apologies for Absence

Present (outgoing): Jonathan Black, Izzie Sayer, Thomas Shortland, Zachary Green, Rosie McLeish, Tungsten Tang, Kate South, Stephanie Cho, Evie Chandler, Rishi Sharma, Lily Blundell, Amy Meyer, Lucas Holt

Present (incoming): Holly Varndell, Hugh Bowers, Eva Lemmy, Christopher Wordsworth, Fiona Popplewell, Vivian Wang, Stan Hunt, Amber Heal, Katie Stapleton, Freya Cowan (via Facetime)

Absent with apologies: Wahida Seisay, Frederick Upton, Mercy Brewer, Christian Longstaff

Absent without apologies:

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

JB invites everyone, explains the nature of the meeting

3. Event Reports

a. Club Dinner

JB thanks KS for her work on Club Dinner. Luke Dell is concerned we will not be allowed back but KS believes it will be fine.

JB notes there may also have been an overspend. LH notes this is tradition.

4. Show Reports

a. The Hollow

LH reports that it did go well, despite the challenges.

RM does not have a SPATE but does have a sales report. They sold 1139 tickets at a value of ~£14.5k not including the settlement.

TS is concerned they will not break even due to the fines; the show overran but this seemed inconsistent with the pitch. There are ongoing discussions. JB is

confident there will be some profit for perhaps the first show ever. This is false, Vanity Fair made £38.

b. Kiss Me, Kate!

AM has a SPATE report. She reports:

Sales: 403 with the Tues and Wed of Week 2 being worst. Publicity has started.

Production: Nothing is going massively wrong.

Acting: All going okay

Tech: Most tech roles filled, some concern over set builders and head carpenter but not yet a massive problem

It is noted that the ADC banners say that CUMTS are funding this but hopefully will be corrected in time.

JB notes that sales, publicity and tech report (particularly for the set) will be necessary, but there is a set plan.

JB adds that a member of the incoming committee will need to take over from AM as the show contact. They must not be involved in the show.

There is a brief interlude while JB explains the SPAT reports and show contact systems.

c. Greater Than Ourselves

The outgoing committee are uncertain if the show has a show contact. Anyway.

5. Funding Mandem on the Bridge [TS]

CUADC have been contact asking if we want to fund the show.

TS summarises the email sent to him: its is a mini-series anthology of films, written by a Footlights alum, about belonging, acceptance and power in places of tradition with themes including classism, faith, competitiveness. They are asking for funding.

TS notes CUADC have tried funding short films in the past but it has not gone that well as we don't have a process for this.

IS notes this production is somewhat contentious within the Footlights.

TS notes there is no breakdown or figures.

JB asks if there are any questions about it.

TT asks if there is any way for CUADC to get profits; it would not.

The committee unanimously decides not to fund the production.

TS asks if there are any ways we could support them. EL suggests that we suggest the Film Association which may be more appropriate.

6. Election

JB reports that it happened.

There are several roles which are unfilled and which will need to be coopted. This is left for the incoming committee to discuss. JB recommends some system of individuals expressing interest and the committee voting as he has already heard interest from multiple people.

KS throws a thought into the thought process. She suggests VP is re-opened. JB vetoes this as there is no constitutional process.

VP, Designers Rep, Club Publicit and 1 actors rep.

JB also explains the process followed by the outgoing committee this time last year. He advises emphasising those who ran for the committee but weren't elected especially for the VP role as it is a new, varied and senior role; someone with experience of the breath of Cambridge Theatre would be great.

EL asks about how the committee decides who is coopted: JB notes that the incoming committee vote on those who have expressed interest.

EC asks about election delays.

IS goes into detail about the issues of the election. These are not minuted for the sake of her sanity.

EC suggests looking into the Student Voting Consortium for next year.

7. Mandate Change

JB notes that the mandate for the bank account will change to Holly Varndell and Christopher Wordsworth. Jonathan Black and Thomas Shortland will be taken off the mandate.

The committee agrees unanimously on this.

JB will set up a meeting with the appropriate individuals for a trip to Metro Bank, his favourite place in the world.

8. Ongoing Projects

This is a chance for the outgoing committee to inform the new committee of any ongoing projects.

JB notes there should be specific handover meeting for individual committee members but this is for committee wide issues.

a. Fringe

JB notes it is useful for the committee to be aware that there are 2 shows going to fringe:

Pasiphae going to Camden Fringe, which has a venue

Mrs Van Gogh going to Edinburgh Fringe, of which not much has happened yet but will need support from the committee.

b. Show Feedback

JB notes that often shows don't reflect on how well they've gone/potential improvements. The outgoing committee feel it would be useful to have some more formalised feedback; some things have been set in motion with respect to this. This involved a Google form followed by a meeting with the president and another members of Group O, and also for the directors and producers which would hopefully benefit everyone.

The outgoing committee essentially ran out of time for this; the Google form exists on the 'Big CUADC Drive'. JB notes it is the incoming committee's decision what to do with this but he would recommend it.

LH asks if this meeting would be helpful for all shows; JB notes this did happen for one show due to some specific circumstances which was helpful but could be more widely used.

[KS leaves]

c. Code of Conduct

JB notes the ADC has a code of conduct; the outgoing committee felt it would be useful for CUADC to have a similar code but ran out of time to implement it fully. He feels it would be useful in particular for fringe shows

not bound by ADC guidance; it is important for the minority of situations when issues occur.

Similarly there is a draft code of conduct in the drive which JB encourages the incoming committee to continue with but it is of course their decision.

There are also some remaining questions about complaints; the levels at which they are raised and who they are passed on to.

JB adds that a lot of what CUADC does is not formalised; it would be useful for an effort to formalise this. He will discuss Panto later.

d. Freshers support

JB has some feedback from this year's fresher's plays; he will talk to HV in more detail about this but the committee at this time of year had a lot on, making it challenging to support the fresher's shows as much as possible. He thinks the outgoing committee did a great job but there were still gaps. He suggests a sub-committee of people not from the committee to support this, in a more formalised capacity, particularly for tech but also producing and directing.

AM adds that a large challenge was a lot of the committee were involved in Panto which made it challenging to support the freshers.

JB recommends that the incoming committee does not do too many shows in the Michaelmas term. He strongly recommends no involvement in shows in Week 0, 1 or 2.

e. Publicity

JB adds this will be discussed in more detail with LB and the incoming Club Publicist; he believes there should be a publicity team as the role is expansive as it includes both supporting Club shows but also Club events.

HV suggests recruiting multiple individuals. JB notes this would involve a constitutional review.

LH suggests including some of this in the Webmaster role; IS notes to formalise this it would need a constitutional change.

EL suggests a termly event. JB agrees it does not need to be all the time

f. Panto

JB believes Panto has already been chosen which is great, as it gives them 8-10 months to put on a show put on in 2 weeks last year.

Several committee members note they did not see the publicity of panto director and producer applications; RS notes wider publicity could be beneficial next year for this, including perhaps on Camdram.

JB notes that as the Panto has already been chosen, it will need support from the committee for now. He intends to create a loose timeline for what to expect from panto which he will pass on to HV and Luke Dell. He notes most casting and key prod team roles should occur in Easter, with a few roles held back for freshers. He adds it is the incoming committee's decision how to handle show contacts; perhaps it will be a shared role.

JB also notes funding: although there is not a contract, Panto is co-funded 50/50 by CUADC and Footlights. However, last year, all of the support was from CUADC with no Footlights involvement. JB doesn't think this is fair. The show is also the most profitable show for CUADC and the money would be used to fund fringe bursaries, new student writing etc. JB would like incoming and outgoing group O to discuss with the Footlights how they could better support the show and how the split might be changed. JB adds it's not that Footlights don't have the potential to help and CUADC did not reach out to them.

JB and IS add that negotiations have previously occurred and did not end well so this is something else to consider.

9. Outgoing Committee AOB

a. Reviewing

EC notes that she and RS started writing a guide for reviewers including the perspective of show welfare and the reviewing perspective. It was proposed to management who gave some critical feedback on it and did not include it on the ADC's website. They both became busy with other projects and did not pick it up again but would recommend a meeting with the theatre editors, potentially management and some members of the committee as an important project.

RS adds it's been an ongoing issue with people's names being left off, people being misgendered and other issues.

TS adds that the requests were very reasonable.

EL suggests that it is encouraged that some of this should come from producers

RS adds that there was a section on what shows can expect from producers including photos, a list of names and pronouns, a comp ticket etc. He notes that one of management's main objections was that they cannot policy what reviewers say. He believes a way to have this conversation without policing what they say is having a 'roundtable conversation' to develop best practice for reviewing in Cambridge theatre. He also notes the differences between amateur and professional theatre and hence importance of this.

HV asks if it was the concept of having a guide that was not liked by management or something else.

RS notes management wanted lots of the wording to be toned down in the guide; they weren't against having discussion with theatre editors. Hence the 'best practice' meeting to draw up a guide in collaboration with the theatre editors.

EL suggests the producers could proofread the reviews. RS believes this might not be welcomed by student writers or great optics wise.

EC suggests more press releases would be helpful with information about who is involved, their pronouns, what they do etc.

HV asks if there is any type of complaints system for errors in articles.

RS notes you can email people but it is difficult to find the relevant emails in order to complain about it.

LB adds as someone who went through this complaint process that these complaints go to the person who wrote the article and also she doesn't think we should normalise a producer having to email corrections to a writer.

There is unanimous support of the press release idea.

AM also notes that the current theatre editor of Varsity is involved in Cambridge theatre and so may be more amenable to these discussions but also the editors change termly which is another challenge.

TT suggests a formalised press release template to support this.

RS offers support to any incoming committee members who are interested in continuing this work.

JB adds that it would be useful to get in touch with Varsity and the Tab individually without management following a discussion with them. JB adds Gabrielle James handles the strike system for reviewers.

b. Freshers Plays Actors Reps [ZG]

ZG notes that JB did a lot of work for this; a sub-committee needs to be set up immediately to start reading plays to choose them before the summer holiday and then helping with the auditions; the actor's reps need to be in alternative audition rooms meaning other members of the committee need to be involved. ZG will share his spreadsheet on running the auditions with personal information redacted

c. Welfare Warmups [ZG]

ZG notes this was started this year, but would be helpful to formalise with producers as a requirement for CUADC shows. He notes this can be challenging as two actor's reps mean it can be challenging to pin down. ZG briefly explains welfare warmups.

d. Announcement [ZG]

ZG explains he intended to implement an announcement from (ideally Stephen Fry) encouraging people to turn off their phones etc. He will get the ball rolling and will then hand it over to the Actor's reps or HV

e. Oxford Collaboration [RS]

RS notes some OUDS people got in touch to express interest in a collaboration. Nothing came of this but there were discussions of a '24 hour Shakespeare' type event to allow people to meet, potentially with some of it in Cambridge, some in Oxford. A lot of people were keen on this but OUDS encountered some issues leaving them with not much space to pursue the project. He encourages the committee to get back in contact with OUDS if they are interested. JB will pass on various details.

f. Workshops [RS]

RS encourages the continuation of the Tech for Directors and Producers workshops, and others, including directly contacting producers and directors that term to encourage them to attend various workshops.

JB adds he has had some feedback from directors on maybe running 2 levels of this to give directors a bit more information on how to use tech to elevate their show rather than being a beginners introduction only.

LH adds it can be challenging as you don't want to restrict directors.

EL suggests encouraging directors to attend tech workshops instead of this

g. BME Engagement [RS]

RS notes the running of the BME writers and directors social which was successful but maybe not as well publicised as it could be; he suggests working with Bread for publicity on similar things next year. He adds working more closely with Bread and outreach for the freshers shows especially to encourage more ethnic diversity. He suggests reaching out to BME societies for publicity and JCRs. He has heard from BME actors/prod team members that they have rarely got involved via Cambridge Theatre FB page/Camdram.

EL suggests having a Diversity & Inclusion Officer. JB notes the Diversity & Inclusion Consultant the last year's committee has. It is something the outgoing committee would like to have continued with this but it became a question of time; JB adds that the committee is currently structured around representing roles in theatre rather than identity roles and it may open the scope for various identify representatives; consultant was a way between this and this person could have attended any committee meetings.

TT notes there is a difference between e.g. BME Shakespeare and shows written to be set in a specific place or LGBT+ shows written to tell those stories; it is impossible to have a single person responsible for diversity and inclusion across all identities. They suggest it would be useful therefore to work more closely with Bread to better support shows with underrepresented communities; would be a more democratic method than having a single Diversity & Inclusion rep on CUADC.

RS adds that it is also important to encourage more BME producers & directors and in the prod team at large as this is something which can be missed.

EC adds that there was some ableism in the inclusivity document put out as it was not written by a disabled person; people from different

marginalised communities should come together in a sub-committee or similar to write this document, potentially with someone on committee running this sub-committee.

h. Job Guides [RS]

RS suggests increasing the number of job guides available on the website and potentially publishing them more widely.

JB adds that continually updating them is crucial.

i. Designer's Rep [AM]

AM notes someone will need to be responsible for opening the costume store each week before the Designer's rep is coopted. EL volunteers.

JB adds he will make sure the new committee have access to the costume store.

j. Committee Support [TT]

TT suggests that there could be more thought as to how the committee can support shows and what shows we choose. The note that every show has different requirements for tech and maybe a consideration of this should be included in funding agreements. This may also help with accessibility.

k. Kitchen [LB]

LB wanted to refurbish the kitchen. HB has fixed the dishwasher.

LH notes we have no money. JB notes we now have a club cafetiere.

l. CUADC Wiki [SC]

LH notes it is the committee's responsibility to edit the CUADC wiki, but anyone can edit it. He suggests guiding it but encouraging others to use it also and publicising it more.

m. Rishi's Proverb

When the going gets tough, the issue is not the other students, it's the building.

n. Funding

JB notes next week's meeting will be funding.

o. ADC

JB notes that this forum is great to have access to management and it is important to keep an ongoing relationship with them and this can be the mechanism for larger change in the wider community.

p. Committee Meal

JB encourages people to share their availability. It is suggested the meal will be a Mainsbury's meal deal, in keeping with tradition.

q. Thank you

JB thanks the outgoing committee from the bottom of his heart and wishes the incoming committee luck. That's all folks.

[Outgoing Committee Left 16:31]

10. HV welcomed incoming committee

The committee introduced themselves and briefly recapped their manifestos to each other.

11. Co-Opting Roles

HV addressed that there is a lot of interest in vacant roles and we will therefore send out an email for expressions of interest. EL will send out a group email and post on Facebook theatre.

12. Fresher's Plays

HV is keen to decide on the sub-committee for Fresher's plays including particularly Actor's Reps and Director's Rep. SH offered to read plays as well.

13. Kiss Me Kate Show Contact

VW offered to be Kiss Me Kate show contact. HV will put her in contact with Kiss Me Kate Producers.

14. Panto Show Contact

HV would like to take on the role of Panto Show Rep until Summer and the committee agreed this could be reviewed and changed over summer and before Michaelmas.

15. Newsletter

EL suggested due to lack of use of mailing lists we implement an update newsletter that would contain updates from each sector. SC updated that the mailing lists had failed in the past and would need looking into to see if they are going to the right people.

POA

EL to send out expressions of interest, to be voted on Sunday 26th.

Meeting adjourned at: 17:00