

An Introduction To Cambridge Theatre

2017 - 2018

Getting Started

With over 40 shows entirely run by students every term there is always something to match your interests and availability. From stand-up comedy to musicals, and from Greek tragedy to new writing, Cambridge theatre provides opportunities to actors, comedians and directors (regardless of experience), and there are hugely rewarding jobs to be found in technical theatre, production and design. And as if that wasn't enough, every year there are opportunities for students to perform at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and to tour America, Europe or Asia!

This booklet lays out all the different roles available in Cambridge theatre and offers advice on how best to get involved in each of them. This guide is produced by the Cambridge University Amateur Dramatic Club (CUADC), the oldest and largest theatrical society in Cambridge. On the CUADC committee is a rep for every aspect of Cambridge theatre who will be glad to answer any questions and offer advice.

It couldn't be easier to get involved in the theatre scene; just keep an eye out for auditions and adverts for technical positions. All adverts are posted on camdram.net, and most are advertised in the Cambridge Theatre Facebook group (bit.ly/cam-theatre). Weekly email lists can be subscribed to at cuadc.org/get-involved, which summarise any show opportunities, as well as all the other fun activities that go on in the theatre scene. The Freshers' plays which run mid way through Michaelmas term are a great way to get started, so keep an eye out for auditions and tech team applications.

Have fun in one of the most popular student activities in Cambridge, and enjoy the chance to learn and develop together.

How Does Cambridge Theatre Work?

The Cambridge theatre scene can be a bit tricky to get your head around at first, as it's a little more complicated than at other universities. Instead of having a single theatrical society, Cambridge has many; in fact, most colleges have one! As well as all the college societies, there are also larger intercollegiate societies. CUADC is the largest and oldest society, and is a resident company in the ADC Theatre. The Footlights are the famous comedy group, CUMTS is the musical theatre society, and there are other societies, such as the Marlowe society, the Gilbert & Sullivan Society and the Relaxed Theatre Company.

The ADC Theatre is the main theatre in Cambridge, and hosts two shows a night; a Mainshow and a Lateshow. The Corpus Playroom is also managed by the ADC, and is a

smaller theatre just off King's Parade. A few colleges have their own theatres as well, such as the Fitzpatrick Hall at Queens', and the Pembroke New Cellars. If you want to put on a show in Cambridge, applications open midway through the term before. You'll be interviewed by an applications panel where you will pitch your idea. If they like your pitch, you'll be assigned a slot for the next term! You can then apply to the theatre societies for funding, and once that's sorted you're good to go! Plan auditions and open applications for a tech team.

Diversity in Theatre

Cambridge Theatre strives to be an environment where all types of people are represented and valued. Send an email to **Sophie**, the CUADC Social and Outreach Officer at **outreach@cuadc.org** if you have any questions.

The trans and non-binary community at the ADC is small but supportive, and you can find us being fabulous both onstage and behind the scenes. Please contact **Avi Velevski (technician@cuadc.org)** or message them on Facebook if you would like to be added to a secret group for trans/nb/gender questioning people interested in participating in theatre, and feel free to contact them if you have any concerns or just want a friendly chat.

There is a large community of women and non-binary people who are involved in Cambridge technical theatre. From lighting designers and sound designers to stage managers and technical directors, they cover all areas of technical theatre. The female and non-binary techie community is incredibly supportive and we can't wait to welcome any new female and non-binary techie freshers, so come along to our drinks event in the **ADC bar at 8pm on Saturday 7th October** - we'd love to meet you! Whether you're an English student, an Art Historian, or a Natural Scientist, technical theatre is for everyone and Cambridge is the perfect place to try it out.

The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) theatre community has also grown rapidly over the past few years, with numerous BAME shows each term and plenty of opportunities both on and offstage. Please contact **Andrew Tan (treasurer@cuadc.org)** or message him on Facebook if you'd like to be added to the BAME Facebook group or if you have any questions and want to get involved. CUADC will be hosting BAME Freshers' drinks on **Tuesday 10th October at 8pm in the ADC Bar**, so feel free to come along and meet some current BAME students.

Find links to all the CUADC Facebook groups at [cuadc.org/resources](https://www.cuadc.org/resources)

The Venues

There are two main venues in Cambridge: the ADC Theatre and the Corpus Playroom. The ADC is the largest student theatre space in Cambridge, seating 228 audience members in the traditional proscenium arch layout. The stage is fully equipped with a counterweights system for rigging lights and flying-in set pieces, making it an excellent venue for people

interested in technical theatre. Beneath the stage is the workshop where all the sets are built, as well as the props and furniture stores. The ADC also has its own clubroom, which is open only to students and is yours to use; whether that be as a space for production meetings, or just to hang out in.

The Corpus Playroom is a smaller, more intimate venue, where the audience flanks the stage on two sides. Shows at the Playroom are generally shorter than at the ADC, making it a great venue for comedy and new writing.

As well as these theatres, many colleges have their own, such as the Fitzpatrick hall at Queens', and theatres at Robinson and Pembroke.

Acting

There are so many opportunities to act in Cambridge. With upwards of 40 shows every term, there is something for everyone. You can find auditions listings on Camdram or on the Cambridge Theatre Facebook page. Most auditions happen either at the ADC Theatre, the Corpus Playroom or in one of the colleges, and there is always an email address to contact if you don't know the way (or ask a porter/friendly passer-by).

For most auditions the director will leave an extract outside the door for you to have a look at and then ask you to come into the audition room and read the piece through before giving you a bit of direction to see how you react. For musical auditions, you should prepare a song and bring along some sheet music if you have it. If you are interested in acting in Cambridge or just want a friendly face to talk to, speak to **Adam** or **Ellie**.

Get involved

Sign up to the actors' list to receive details of all auditions.

Email **Adam** and **Ellie** at **actor@cuadc.org** if you have any questions.

Stewarding

Getting involved in Cambridge theatre does not have to mean getting near the stage at all! Every show at the ADC Theatre and Corpus Playroom needs volunteer stewards. You get to see the show for free (and sometimes a free ice cream) in return for checking tickets and showing people to their seats.

To sign up for stewarding, head to the Google Doc for Michaelmas term (**bit.ly/adcstewarding**). Remember to show up with plenty of time and find a replacement if you suddenly can't make it.

For more information email Jamie at **jamie@adctheatre.com**.

Directing

Cambridge Theatre offers unique opportunities in directing. You can be given the resources to stage whatever your mind might conjure. Make the most of it! Directors are the initial driving force behind almost every show in Cambridge, the people who pitch the ideas that become performances. The opportunities for freshers are plentiful: there are three freshers' shows which will all have a fresher director and assistant director. A lot of directors also start by working as an assistant director with another more experienced student. If you want to find out more, contact **Eva**.

Get involved

Sign up to the directors' & producers' mailing list for details of when venues are programming, and for opportunities to take on 'assistant' positions to gain valuable experience.

Email any questions to **Eva** at director@cuadc.org.

Writing

Cambridge is a brilliant place to try out new writing. From sketch comedy to longer dramas or devised pieces, Cambridge theatre provides the perfect stage to realise your ideas and share them with an audience. If you've written something longer, you can apply to put your show on at the ADC Theatre or the Corpus Playroom, just look out for programming applications, which open in the first half of every term. If a script demonstrates potential the ADC offers a public rehearsed reading of the work as part of the Papercuts programme.

Get involved

Get writing! You stand a much better chance of getting a slot if you apply with a completed script.

Keep an eye out for programming applications, which open in the first half of every term.

Producing

Producers are responsible for making sure that a show gets to the stage, and for managing the production team throughout that process. There is never a dull day for a producer: one day you will be liaising with actors to create rehearsal schedules, another day you will be ordering and distributing publicity materials. A producer needs to be organised, with good people skills and the ability to think on their feet. If you want to get involved, keep an eye out for vacancies for producers and assistant producers on Camdram - assistant producing is a great way to get stuck in and see how it all works. If you have any questions at all about producing or how to get involved, please speak to **Charlotte**.

Get involved

Sign up to the producers' and directors' list for information on production vacancies and programming applications.

Email any questions to **Charlotte** at producer@cuadc.org.

Publicity

With upwards of 40 shows taking place in Cambridge every term, you need to make yours stand out from the rest. The best way to do this is by having a great publicist. Publicists are the people who spend their hours laminating and putting posters up around Cambridge, running Facebook events and live-tweeting dress rehearsals. A good publicity campaign is the key to selling well, which is exactly what you want after putting in the hard work bringing a show to stage.

Publicity Designers are the people with the artistic vision and skills to put together a cohesive set of publicity images. Very few people have had the chance to try publicity design before they get to Cambridge and it's so easy to get started, just speak to **Charlie**.

Get involved

Sign up to the designers' list and the producers' and directors' list for opportunities for publicity designers and publicists.

Send any questions to **Charlie** at publicist@cuadc.org.

Production Photography

Every show needs a production photographer. The photos they take form the core of a good publicity campaign: most people want to know what a show will look like before they buy a ticket. Production photographers take photos of rehearsals for release in the weeks before a show, they take headshots of the cast and crew for Facebook, and they take photos of the dress run for use in review articles. Anyone can try their hand at production photography, and if you don't have your own camera, the ADC has one you can borrow.

Get Involved

Join the Cambridge Theatre Photographers Facebook group (bit.ly/cam-theatre-photo) or for more information, email **Charlie** at publicist@cuadc.org.

Set Design

The set designer is one of the most exciting and creative roles Cambridge theatre has to offer. The set designer's role is to work with the director and the technical director to turn a vision into a design. The sky really is the limit (even on a relatively low budget). There are so many opportunities to get involved with set design, from the lead role, to assisting, to helping out with painting. You absolutely do not need any prior experience and you will

always be part of a production team that will support you along the way. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact **Sammie** and make sure to join the Cambridge Theatre Designers' Facebook Page (bit.ly/camtheatredesign) to keep up to date with information, workshops, talks, and weekly vacancies!

Get involved

Sign up to the designers' mailing list for updates on production vacancies.
Send questions to **Sammie** at designer@cuadc.org.

Costumes

Costume is a key element of every show; often it's what anchors the show in its time period. Costume designers are often savvy shoppers who can spot the perfect vintage blouse in a charity shop or are even a dab-hand with a sewing machine. There is also a well-stocked costume cupboard that costume designers can take full advantage of. It's really easy to get into costume design, just look for shows advertising on Camdram. If you fancy teaching an ensemble about how to put their hair into the perfect 40s do or making a 20 year-old student look like a 60 year-old, then maybe hair and make-up design is for you! Speak to **Sammie** for more information.

Get involved

Sign up to the designers' mailing list for updates on production vacancies.
Send questions to **Sammie** at designer@cuadc.org.

Set building

Set building is all about making the set designer's plans a reality; choosing your materials and using the tools and machines at the ADC Theatre to create something physical, something that can be quite refreshing amidst the monotony of essay writing! To get involved, look for shows advertising for set builders and head carpenters or contact John at john@adctheatre.com for advice and training. Technical directors often build sets too, but their job is to ensure that all the technical aspects of shows are safe, putting the set on the stage and making sure that everyone is safe during the get-in and get-out periods (the time before and after the run of the show where the set, lighting and other technical aspects of the show are set up or taken down). For more information about any of these roles speak to **Theo**.

Get involved

Sign up to the technical mailing list to hear about tech team vacancies.
If you have any questions, don't hesitate to email **Theo** at td@cuadc.org.

Lighting and Sound

Theatre lighting is a tricky art: you need to make an impact while at the same time not overwhelming the action. Lighting designers work with directors to create a design which is in keeping with the artistic direction of the show. Lighting designers are often assisted by chief and production electricians whose job it is to make sure that the technical aspects of the lighting design work, such as making sure that lighting changes are programmed into the desk. Lend a hand at an Overnight (most Saturday nights at the ADC) to see what lighting a show is all about.

Sound designers are responsible for all the sound effects in plays. In musicals this job also includes organising all the mics for the cast and the band and creating the perfect mix. They are often assisted by mic runners who organise the care and distribution of fragile face microphones and make sure that they work through every performance. To get involved in any of these roles, speak to **Avi**.

Get involved

Sign up to the technical mailing list to hear about tech team vacancies.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to email **Avi** at technician@cuadc.org.

Stage Managing

Stage managers are responsible for making sure that the show runs exactly the same way every night. This includes making sure that actors are where they're supposed to be, firing fake guns, or conducting set movements. The stage manager is usually also responsible for sourcing and maintaining all of the show's props. Many props can be found in the CUADC props store: speak to **Milly** for more information.

At the ADC Theatre, shows often have a deputy stage manager too, whose job it is to follow the script and cue lighting, sound, and set changes, as well as making all the important front-of-house announcements! Assistant stage managers are an important part of the backstage team, helping the stage manager run the show. Assistant stage managing is a great way of getting involved backstage. For more information, speak to **Milly**.

Get involved

Sign up to the technical mailing list to hear about vacancies.

Email **Milly** at sm@cuadc.org if you have any questions.

Music

There are several musicals and operas produced in Cambridge every year, many seeking full scale pit bands: it's a wonderful way to perform. In addition to musicals, many other shows are enhanced by incidental or accompanying music. There are opportunities for composers - from the annual pantomime, entirely written and composed by students, to shows seeking original incidental music, accompaniment and soundscapes.



Cambridge University
Amateur Dramatic Club



Michaelmas Events

Friday 6th October

Freshers' Friday

Come to the ADC Theatre for tours backstage and the chance to ask any questions. Free drinks for Freshers. **4 – 7pm ADC Theatre**

Saturday 7th October

Directing Workshop

Discussing methods for creating and pitching concepts, running rehearsals and organising a show. **12 – 1pm ADC Bar**

Design Workshop

Intro to set design and basics of photoshop and CAD. **12 – 1pm Clubroom**

Stage Managing Workshop

Learn how to write risk assessments, source props, and cue a show. **1 – 2pm Dressing Room 2**

Lighting Workshop

Learn how to design, rig, and program lights. **2 – 3pm Dressing Room 2**

Sound Workshop

Learn what it takes to be a sound designer, both for plays and musicals. **3 – 4pm Dressing Room 2**

Technical Directing Workshop

Learn how to build a theatre set, from rough sketches to installing it onstage. **4 – 5.30pm Dressing Room 2**

Producing Drop-In Session

Find out what producing involves, how to get started, and some top tips! **4 – 5pm Prod Office**

Actors' Workshop

Find out what it's like to audition in Cambridge. **5 – 6pm Larkum Studio**

Female / Non-Binary Techie Drinks

Come and meet others from this great community and find out how you can get involved. **8 – 11pm ADC Bar**

Sunday 8th October

Directing Workshop

12 – 1pm Bar

Actors' Workshop

4 – 5pm Larkum Studio

Producing Drop-In Session

4 – 5pm Dressing Room 2

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 9 – 11th October

Auditions for Freshers' Plays

Mon & Tue for people who have signed up for a slot. Wed for 'drop-ins'. Auditions ~ 10min each, extracts will be outside the door. **10am – 6pm Dressing Room 1 or 2**

Tuesday 10th October

BAME Freshers' Drinks

Open to all BAME Freshers' who are interested in participating in Cambridge Theatre. Meet some current BAME students in the theatre scene. **8 – 10pm ADC Bar**

Saturday 14th October

Production Photography Workshop

Learn how to take good production photographs, and try it out with the cast of Frost/Nixon. **12 – 1pm ADC Stage**

Design Workshop

12 – 1pm Clubroom

Stage Managing Workshop

1 – 2pm ADC Stage

Lighting Workshop
2 – 3pm Larkum Studio

Sound Workshop
3 – 4pm Larkum Studio

Publicity Workshop
Learn what makes a good publicity campaign, and some basics of poster design.
4 – 5pm Dressing Room 2

Technical Directing Workshop
4 – 5.30pm Workshop

Saturday 21st October

Design Workshop
12 – 1pm Clubroom

Stage Managing Workshop
1 – 2pm ADC Stage

Lighting Workshop
2 – 3pm ADC Stage

Sound Workshop
3 – 4pm ADC Stage

Technical Directing Workshop
4 – 5.30pm ADC Stage

Saturday 28th October

Lighting Workshop
2 – 3pm Corpus Playroom

Sound Workshop
3 – 4pm ADC Stage

Every Sunday from 22nd October

Stage Managing Drop-in Session

3pm Clubroom