Introduction to the Production Process

This document is designed to introduce the production process for shows at the ADC Theatre and Corpus Playroom. It should be a useful template for approaching your show as a Producer or Director, but please do feel free to bring your own touches to the process! The ADC is first and foremost a learning theatre, which means the production process is in many ways more important than the finished product. Don't be afraid to try things out, to suggest an idea then change your mind, to make mistakes, to think big, or to talk things through with me.

The ADC management team are always around to lend a helping hand, provide training, give advice, and make cups of tea! We were all in your position a few years ago, so please don't hesitate to drop into the office, pick up the phone or send an email.

Meetings

The Production Manager will be in touch to arrange an initial meeting at the start of the production process, to discuss your plans for the show and flag up any issues at an early stage.

You'll then want to have a whole production team meeting as soon as possible, so that you can get to know everyone and get the ball rolling. In this meeting, the Directors may want to share their vision for the show with everyone, and each Designer and Technician may want to share their ideas in response. From here, you can set up further meetings that focus for instance on the set, or on lighting and sound, or on costume and makeup. The producer's role in these meetings is often to act as a sounding board for everyone's ideas, to provide an overview perspective, and to follow up on any action points that come up.

It's a good idea to have these whole-team meetings on a regular basis, at least every two weeks, so that each department can be kept in the loop about what the others are doing and to provide a place for everyone to discuss ideas together.

Finally, in addition to meeting with your own team, you will want to get in touch with your Mainshow or Lateshow as soon as possible to ensure there are no disputes about stage, furniture or prop use! It's also helpful to stay in touch throughout the process, simply so you can troubleshoot issues together and share tips.

Marketing (More info can be found in our Publicity Guide at www.adctheatre.com/guides)

Publicity Design

The sooner you have your poster design ready, the sooner you can start advertising your show! Once your designs are done, send it to me for approval - you can then order A3 posters through the theatre, or yourself through a site like InstantPrint. The theatre also prints A1 posters for you and displays them in the Front of House areas.

Marketing Strategy

It's also best to come up with this as early as possible - this can be devised in collaboration with the Production Manager, particularly if you're unsure where to start! The aim is to identify a USP for the show and to contact as many people as possible – this can be done via emails to relevant departments, social media, postering and contacting local press.

Programme

You only have to have a programme if you're an ADC Mainshow, but it can be nice to produce one anyway if your designer is keen! Programmes can contain photos from rehearsals, design sketches, and notes from the Directors, Producers and Designers.

Technical

General Information Form

You'll receive a link to this from the Production Manager when it's time to fill it out. It's a form where you indicate which Special Permissions you may need for the show (e.g. smoking, or pyrotechnics) and provide details such as the age suitability of the show. It should only take a short time to fill in!

As part of the General Information Form, you will need to indicate what kind of music you plan to use, so that I can notify PPLPRS (the music licensing company). If you're using music that the characters react to in the show or can hear 'in world', we will need to send off an application in advance to clear those particular songs. This is called interpolated music. If you're just using background (incidental) music or entrance/exit music, you won't need to fill out a form until the show is finished.

Section 2

This is the set-focused part of your production's Risk Assessment. It details set and construction plans and identifies any risks that may need to be mitigated. This will be filled out and signed off in a meeting with the Production Manager and the Technical Manager. It would be great if everyone involved in the show in a technical capacity could be there, and at the very least the Technical Director and Stage Manager should be present.

Section 3

This is a follow-up section to Section 2. It determines if there have been any changes in plans just before your Get-In Weekend and fills in additional details relating to lighting plans. It should be filled out and signed off with at least the Technical Director, Stage Manager and Lighting Designer present.

Get-In Weekend

This is the few days during which your show comes to life! For an ADC Mainshow, the Get-In Weekend consists of a Set-In during the Sunday before your show. The whole production team should attend this, and techies who aren't associated with your show may also choose to come along and lend a hand. Mainshows then traditionally do a Tech Rehearsal on the Monday and a Dress Rehearsal on the Tuesday, ready for the opening performance that night.

ADC Lateshows have Wednesday as their Get-In day, during which they add any set or lighting to the stage and do their own Tech/Dress Rehearsals.

A Playroom Mainshow has all day Sunday and until 6pm on Monday to do their Set-In and Tech/Dress Rehearsals, leaving Tuesday for the Playroom Lateshow.

What's a Tech Rehearsal?

This is the Technicians' chance to realise their designs on the stage with the set and actors there. It can involve running some scenes several times, with the Directors present to work with the Lighting Designer and Sound Designer on getting the cues where everyone would like them. The Stage Manager runs the Tech Rehearsal and is responsible for scheduling a time at which everyone is free to be there. They will also begin the Tech Rehearsal by giving a safety talk to the whole cast and crew, and doing a stage walk-around to point out risks and their mitigations. Before the Tech Rehearsal can take place, a member of the management team (usually me or Eduardo) must have signed off the stage as safe to use.

What's a Dress Rehearsal?

Once the Tech Rehearsal has taken place, the set and technical team may take some time to resolve any issues that may have arisen, and perhaps change their designs slightly now that they've seen them on stage. The Dress Rehearsal   is then the first full run of the show where everything comes together, and is the Directors' chance to offer any final notes before opening night! Again, the Stage Manager runs the Dress Rehearsal.

Section 4

This is filled out by the Stage Manager and needs to be signed off prior to the Tech Rehearsal along with the stage. It contains the Risk Assessment for any set or performance related risks, and for any props used in the show.

Section 5

This is usually filled out by the Technical Director and Stage Manager and should be done prior to the Get-Out, for which it details the plans.

Get-Out

This takes place as soon as the Lateshow finishes! It involves striking the set, returning all props, clearing the stage, and often painting the stage so it's ready for the following week's shows. It will be run by your Technical Director, but overseen by a member of management who will be the Duty Manager for that evening. At the ADC, a Get-Out can go on into the early hours, so it's important to get some sleep and not come into the building too early that day!

Afterparty!

Yay! Party time! Once the Get-out is complete and the Duty Manager is satisfied that everything has been done properly, they will open the bar for a private party! The cast and crew of the Playroom show are of course welcome to join this party. The bar can then stays open until the terrifying hour of 8am….