



Policy Statement: Directing a Bawds' Production

1. Introduction

Bawds is a production company, staging high quality drama for Cambridge audiences. Our aim is to stage three major productions each year, generally at the ADC Theatre, plus one or two studio or festival productions, subject to funding. We welcome submissions from local directors for interesting drama that will entertain and challenge our audiences and will also deliver the financial returns that allow us to continue to operate successfully in Cambridge.

2. Our programme

Our programme is planned well in advance, generally looking 18 months ahead. For productions due to be staged from 2018/19 onwards, we intend to advertise for submissions from interested directors in order to widen the pool of directors who work with the Company.

Advertisements will appear on the Bawds' website and in 'Combinations', the magazine produced monthly by Combined Actors of Cambridge for the local amateur drama scene. We will specify a clear deadline by which submissions must be received and will set out:

- the format in which submissions must be presented
- the process by which decisions will be made
- the support the Company can offer directors in formulating submissions
- the dates by which decisions will be made
- the reason(s) for any decisions reached.

Wherever possible, the programme will continue to be agreed 18 months in advance, although this may be subject to change.

a) Main stage productions

The Company makes a considerable commitment to each main stage production in terms of funding and resources, so submissions for main stage shows will only be accepted from experienced directors with a track record of delivering successful productions either for Bawds or elsewhere.

b) Studio productions

Submissions of ideas for studio productions are also welcome. Directors who may have worked either with Bawds or elsewhere but do not yet have a substantial body of work to draw on may be invited to develop a studio production.

c) Drama festival productions

As a company, Bawds supports local drama festivals where possible, particularly the Cambridge and Sawston Drama Festivals. We believe that drama festivals offer an excellent opportunity for new or less-experienced directors, so we are keen to encourage first time directors to submit ideas that may be suitable for development. Submissions are also welcome from more experienced directors.

3. Submitting an application to direct for Bawds

Directors are asked to complete the pro forma set out in Appendix 1 and send it by email to the Bawds' Secretary by the deadline specified in Combinations or on the Bawds' website. Directors are asked to provide a copy of the script to accompany their submission.

Prospective directors are welcome to contact the Secretary for assistance in completing the submission, although it should be understood that this will not guarantee its acceptance by the Committee.

4. Decision-making process

All submissions received by the publicised deadline will be considered carefully by the Bawds' Committee. The director will normally be invited to meet the Committee to discuss the prospective production in more detail before a decision is made.

Where possible, decisions to accept or reject a submission will be made within four weeks of receipt. In the event that the Committee decides not to proceed with the submission, the director will be given an explanation for the decision and may be offered the opportunity to submit a different piece. The decision of the Bawds' Committee to accept or reject a submission will be final.

5. Putting together the cast

a) Main stage productions

Our policy is to hold open auditions for all main stage productions. Members of the Committee will be happy to assist with auditions, although the decision on the type of audition rests with the director. Auditions are normally held at the Cambridge Deaf Centre over two evenings in the same week or on a Sunday. Auditions will be advertised via the Bawds' website and in Combinations.

b) Studio productions

Our policy is to hold open auditions for all studio productions as above.

c) Drama festivals

For a drama festival production only, the director will normally be expected to have assembled the cast and crew prior to submitting the production for consideration. Pre-assembling the cast and crew helps to keep the cost and the administration to a minimum, which is important in view of the fact that drama festival productions do not generate any income. The exception would apply to a director new to the area who may not have the necessary contacts or knowledge of the local drama scene.

6. Putting together the production team

Members of the Bawds' Committee will be happy to advise and assist new directors in sourcing a suitable production team. Bawds has a long history of working with The Penguin Club of Cambridge, who provide technical and backstage expertise to the local theatre community. Details of the services available can be obtained via www.penguinclub.org.uk or by e-mail: clubcontact@penguinclub.org.uk.

7. The Director's role

The role of director can vary between theatre companies so we have produced a role description for directors working with Bawds, which is attached at Appendix 2.

8. The support available to the Director

We recognise that directing a show can be hugely challenging and complex. We can, however, offer plenty of support and advice to experienced or inexperienced directors alike. An outline of the support that can be made available is attached at Appendix 3. Please contact any member of the Committee if you have any questions at all about working with Bawds.

Thank you for your interest. We look forward to hearing from you!