

sedos grapevine

july 2013

Can't wait for show week

With the Sedos Summer Festival starting this week, we chatted to the longest-standing Sedos member in each cast, plus one brand new member. Read on to hear how they found Sedos, how rehearsals are going and what they are looking forward to about the next three weeks

Meet the stalwarts:

Chris de Pury
(right, *Enron*)

Andy Marchant
(below, *Autobahn*)

Charlotte Price
(below right, *A Man of No Importance*)



Enron

Chris de Pury plays Ken Lay

Technically, I think I am labelled a lawyer in real life — at present it is part-social worker, part-commercial adviser, part-business school regurgitator and, suitably, significant part-actor!

I haven't been a Sedos member as long as the Harrison-Wallaces, but **I've been here long enough to have been in the previous West Side Story (before 2011) and now the previous Sedos Hot Mikado.**

I found Sedos because I was in Anything Goes at the Bloomsbury Theatre and a member of the production team suggested I audition. **I keep coming back because it beats going to the gym (so I am told).**

Enron is a slightly strange show as it is quite fragmented, but notwithstanding that it is really a great ensemble piece, which always helps the cast to gel with a mixture of new and old members. **I think [director] Matt Hudson and his team are doing a great job with some ambitious plans.**

I do miss Ocean House (I am doing this interview the day after heading to the wrong rehearsal venue...)

Show week is the final vindication or not as to how well a production is received. I am not looking forward to the tech rehearsal(s). For those divided between musicals and plays, **Enron has something to appeal to both camps (sic).**

Autobahn

Andy Marchant plays Man in Long Division, one of seven short plays that make up Autobahn

I currently sell my soul to a bank, but it pays for my favourite pastime of mucking around in plays and it keeps me (relatively) honest.

My first Sedos show was way back in 2007 with Comic Potential.

I love working in amateur theatre in London. I always seem to be involved in a show, whether it's directing, producing, writing or acting. The atmosphere when you work with people so hard to create a show is amazing. That's what keeps me here. The enthusiasm. The commitment, balanced with the love of being there. Also, the Bridewell is awesome.

This show is so different! As a director I lean to ensemble shows, and as an actor I've had back and forth and cues to worry about. Here it's a monologue, but in the presence of another person, so the key has been it not just being a recitation, but treating it as a dialogue. [Director] Jacqui [Adams] has worked hard to make sure my passenger Paul and I have this clear relationship and it's dynamic, even though only one of us (for the most part) is speaking.

In show week, I'll put some Ramones in the cassette deck of my Dodge Charger and **swing by a drive through McDonalds.**

People should see the show for some brilliant language, some disturbing drama, some disturbing humour, and **at least one utterly bonkers character per scene.**

A Man of No Importance

Charlotte Price plays Mrs Grace

My day job is being chief sub editor for Boots Parenting Club magazines. Lots of pregnancy and baby information, which I now know loads about, despite not having a baby.

I've been a Sedos member since Christmas 1998, so **it'll be 15 years this year.**

A friend from uni recommended Sedos. Now, my friends keep me coming back! But also the quality — it makes things much easier to sell if it's actually going to be good.

For an ensemble show, **there's an awful lot for the ensemble to do in this production** — it feels as though we're never off the stage. There's also a surprising amount of dancing for a group of non-dancers (luckily the people we're playing are also mainly non-dancers, so we're not expected to do triple pirouettes or coupé jetés)! We're having an amazing time — especially attempting to master an Irish accent.

Show week's always brilliant — I get such a buzz being on stage, especially when the audience are enjoying themselves. As I have the first funny line, the first laugh will hopefully be at me (or with me).

This is actually a really lovely piece of theatre. It's not complicated or challenging, but it's the occasionally moving story of a man trying to come to terms with who he really is, interspersed with some very funny ridiculousness, some gorgeous songs, some Irish music and a bit of dancing. The audience definitely should not come to laugh at the accents as they will be, of course, perfect.

Meet the newbies:

Andy Smith
(right, Enron)

Katerina Georgiou
(below, Autobahn)

Sarah Shephard
(below right, A Man of
No Importance)



Pictures by Michael Smith, Carl Fletcher and Neil Ballinger

Don't forget the Festival gala nights!

On Friday, 19 July we are holding a Silent Disco in the theatre after Autobahn.

And on Friday, 26 July, there will be an Open Mic Night in the theatre after A Man of No Importance (sign up to sing by emailing KaytieMLee@gmail.com).

And finally, remember if you book for all three shows in one transaction online at sedos.co.uk, you will receive a 20% discount — which means as a Sedos member you can see the three Summer Festival productions (excluding gala nights) for less than £30 in total!

Enron

Andy Smith is in the ensemble

I am working as a paralegal (basically, a legal assistant) at a law firm in Bromley, but aiming for a career in a City firm in the future.

I found out about Sedos through a friend who was in Sedos' Gormenghast which I went to see. I had been looking for the chance to get involved in some theatre outside of work, so auditioning for Enron seemed perfect.

I was attracted to the society by seeing the canon of past productions on the website and hearing the appraisals of the people involved from my friend. Coupled with the opportunity to do a show such as Enron, there was no way I couldn't get involved.

The auditions were really great. **Having not auditioned for anything in a while I was a little nervous, but as soon as I arrived I knew it would be a fun night.** Getting to work with the text in different groups of people, while being taught movement and singing, was a great introduction.

It is so satisfying to have this creative outlet outside of work, I find myself really looking forward to rehearsals.

Being able to perform everything we've spent this past few months working on to an actual paying audience is terrifying and exciting in equal measure, but I could never tire of the buzz of show week.

Enron. The biggest corporate crime the Western World has ever seen. Electricity. Sex. Violence. Dinosaurs. Money. **Why wouldn't you want to see it?**

Tickets for Enron on 13-14 July at the Bridewell Theatre are on sale at sedos.co.uk. The show is sold out on 10, 11 and 12 July.

Autobahn

Katerina Georgiou plays Younger Woman in Funny, one of seven short plays that make up Autobahn

I am a full-time performer, auditioning and trying to get work done. However, since bills are running, I am also walking dogs and teaching dance during the week too.

A friend is friends with Sebastian Revell, who was in Gormenghast and she asked me to go with her to see it. **I loved the performance, the level of professionalism and the talent,** even though it is an amateur company. **I logged onto the website the next day.**

I found it really helpful that Sedos offers workshops before auditions, which helps the candidates figure out if they want to get involved, and whether they feel as if they fit into specific roles. That's how I figured out my heart was leaning towards Autobahn. Auditions were thorough and I felt that I received fair time to show what I've got.

Rehearsals are smooth, we discuss each others' scenes and give feedback, **which helps me build my character's back story.**

What am I looking forward to about show week? Playing my part! **I've wanted to play such a dark character for a very long time!**

Each and every story in Autobahn is obviously dark — however, each and every real, and relatable to all. Drugs, abuse, infidelity, dead end relationships, crazy partners — **let's face it, we all can relate to at least one.** And I am a fan of realistic relatable stories when I watch plays, films etc. Besides, art imitates life and vice versa.

Autobahn is on 16-20 July at the Bridewell Theatre. Tickets on sale at sedos.co.uk

A Man of No Importance

Sarah Shephard plays Adele Rice

I'm a controllers associate at Goldman Sachs and qualified as an accountant last year.

I found Sedos through Facebook stalking! A few people I had performed with at Durham uni joined Sedos and I saw their show photos.

The professionalism of the society drew me in — from the photos to the reviews of previous shows, **it seemed the right level of performance for what I wanted to get involved in.** Performances and rehearsals are also very close to work which is a bonus.

This was my first audition since leaving university so **I was very nervous about how rusty my voice might be and my Irish accent...** The production team were very friendly though, which helped.

Rehearsals have been really good fun, the cast get along well. **Everyone in the musical has their moment** as well, so it's nice watching the scenes you're not involved in.

I'm looking forward to performing! So many elements of a show only come together with a couple of weeks to go so **I look forward to when the band, tech, costumes and props are all in, lines and songs are all learnt and you can just go for it.**

As well as the traditional strengths of a musical — great songs, really funny scenes — **A Man of No Importance has more subtlety than most musicals and the characters have real depth.** It's also a really strong cast — but then, I would say that!

A Man of No Importance is on 23-27 July at the Bridewell Theatre. Tickets on sale at [sedos](http://sedos.co.uk).

Dates for the diary

10-14 July

Summer Festival: Enron performances

16-20 July

Summer Festival: Autobahn performances

23-27 July

Summer Festival: A Man of No Importance performances

11 July

Love Story recalls

3 & 4 August/10 & 11 August

Macbeth auditions/recalls

3 & 4 August/10 & 11 August

Hot Mikado auditions/recalls

Contacts

Grapevine editorial

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Sedos website

sedos.co.uk

Find us at

facebook.com/sedostheatre
youtube.com/sedosvideo
twitter.com/sedos flickr.com/sedos

Sedos committee

Chris de Pury (chairman), Matt Gould (secretary), Craig Topp (treasurer), Jacqui Adams, Stephen Beeny, Dawn Harrison-Wallace, Matt Hudson, Angus Jacobs, Deborah Lean, Pippa Roome, Bob Stanex
committee@sedos.co.uk

From the committee

• **City Library:** we're settling into our new home and the space was recently re-organised and the dance floor laid to create a spacious rehearsal area alongside areas for costumes, props and simple set building and prep. In the coming months we hope to partition these spaces, so we may need your help! We'll also decorate the walls of the entrance with our archive of posters.

• **GODSPELL:** 843 people saw our exciting new interpretation of Godspell — see page nine for the reviews. Well done one and all!

• **Art exhibition:** Sedos celebrates its residency at the Bridewell with a photography exhibition on the walls of the bar from 10 June-28 September. Check it out!

• **Branding:** if you're coming to the Summer Festival you'll see our new pop-up display banners (designs pictured) that we're going to use to push the Sedos brand and help "own"



the Bridewell Theatre while we're in residence. They're portable so we can take them on tour!

• **Rates relief:** As you may know, Sedos paid business rates when we rented Ocean House. We were originally only granted mandatory relief on the rates bill, but due to an appeal by our treasurer, we have been granted discretionary relief

to the tune of c£5k.

• **Sedance:** our weekly dance class celebrated its second birthday on 10 June by re-creating its very first dance routine. We'd like to thank to everyone involved in making it happen. It's an amazing USP for Sedos and you all do a wonderful job.

• **Union Theatre:** thanks to those who signed the petition to help save the Union Theatre in Southwark, where Sedos has performed. The venue has a temporary reprieve but the battle isn't over yet!

• **Summer Festival:** break a leg everyone! We're excited about the productions — and getting our 20% discount on the trio of shows.

• **Auditions:** Love Story's auditions were taking place as we went to press, while auditions for Macbeth and Hot Mikado take place next month. More info: sedos.co.uk.

• **Pub chat:** we still haven't got any emails to our pubchat@sedos.co.uk email address, so we presume you're all happy! Send us your questions and answer the most interesting in the Grapevine. So, what do you want to know?



From Hazel East at Angel Shed

Angel Shed has had an exciting term. Instead of our usual end of term show, we've been working on different skills-based workshops and our children and young people have been treated to a show by the wonderful Chickenshed.

We have also had sessions led and devised by our fabulous volunteer practitioners and will be doing a puppet workshop with the brilliant Little Angel Puppet Theatre soon.

We have also taken part in Islington Giving Week, holding an open workshop on the 6 June where anyone could join in the session. It was a great night with lots of fun games and brilliant scenes and Andy from Islington Giving came along to have a go at being a crocodile, among other things.

We'd like to share a quote from Andy's blog: "Any initial concerns about my lack of acting experience (and indeed, talent) being a barrier to getting involved quickly dissipate as Charlie, the volunteer creative practitioner supporting the group I've been put in, leads some name games and warm-up exercises. One involves us all doing our best frog

impressions and reacting when another 'frog' moves; how we react depends on if it's a little hop or a giant leap".

If you'd like to join a session as a practitioner, or you know young people who might like to come along from September tweet us @angelshed or drop us an email at info@angelshedtheatre.org.uk



In late April, around 40 people attended the Sedos AGM, which was followed by the Summer Festival launch party. The AGM included speeches from our chair and treasurer, an intro to the new Sedos groups, plus a goodbye to a special committee member. Read on...

'A testament to our ambition'



Chairman Chris de Pury described 2012's season as "a testament to the ambition of the society." Not only did Sedos stage more productions than ever before, but

he paid tribute to the "sustained level of quality".

Cherry-picking from the impressive array of numbers he had assembled, last year's season saw seven first-time Sedos directors, more than 140 people on stage, five producers, three people with primary responsibility for show costumes and nearly 1,000 people auditioning.

He also mentioned the many other elements of Sedos — from massages to dance classes, to our partnership with the Bridewell, to relationships, marriages and babies.

Chris mentioned the lessons we have learnt over the past year in terms of how we organise our archives, work with other societies and in our commercial arrangements.

"But I am proud of what we have collectively achieved," he said. "The real praise goes to the unsung heroes. We couldn't do it without

these people putting in a huge amount of time and work. Sedos is a charity, but it is larger than charities some people work for in their full-time employment."

Chris made some concluding remarks cautioning against crossing the line between exhibiting confidence in our own success and self-indulgence, and posing the question as to whether the concept of professionalism as opposed to amateurism was no more than a matter of attitude and approach.



Sedos members after the AGM — about to 'launch' into the party

Picture by Michael Smith

From the treasurer: Craig Topp

Shows

- Loss from shows in 2012 totalled £5,254. This compares to a £15,807 profit in the bonza year of 2011, but as Craig explained, the 2012 season contained a "number of risks", including our first Summer Festival and the linked plays House and Garden.

- The profit making shows in 2012 were Three Sisters (£2,013), the Festival double bill of Man of Destiny and Sink the Belgrano (£481) and As You Like It (£143 — a rare profit-making Edinburgh show).

- We averaged 80 tickets per performance in 2012, compared to 101 in 2011. This is partly attributable to the risks above and it is also worth noting that Edinburgh shows have much lower ticket sales expectations than London runs — the 2011 season did not

include an Edinburgh show. In 2010, when we last did an Edinburgh show, average tickets per performance was 79.

- In total, we sold 5,525 tickets in 2012 to 69 performances (5,670 to 56 in 2011). Average ticket price was £12.62 (£13.71 in 2011).

Overall

- Membership fees did not cover the administrative costs of running the society to the tune of a £3,518 loss. This is down to various factors including investment in the box office to allow for multi-buy deals etc.

- Ocean House earned us a great profit of £45,474 in 2012 and over the whole life of the deal there raised £126,074 for the society.

- Sedos made an overall profit of £33,789 in 2011. Net assets of the society at the year end totalled £399,797.

New committee

Two members of the 2012/2013 committee, Will Harrison-Wallace and Matt Prince, decided to stand down this year, while three new faces put themselves forward for election: Angus Jacobs, Pippa Roome and Bob Stanex.

An email to members explained: "This means that 11 members are standing for 10 places, which is a fairly unique situation. We are keen to ensure that the committee gets new blood and new ideas and energy.

"The society's constitution provides that in addition to the elected 10 members, a further three members may be 'co-opted' onto the committee. We have therefore decided (for this year only) that we will co-opt the 11th person... to ensure that we get all the new blood we can! As such, we will ask the members at the AGM to vote in one go for all 11 members standing and deem one person co-opted."



Consequently at the AGM the 11 committee members were voted in, so your 2013/2014 committee is (left to right above): Chris de Pury (chair), Dawn Harrison-Wallace, Angus Jacobs, Matt Gould (secretary), Matt Hudson, Deborah Lean, Pippa Roome, Bob Stanex, Jacqui Adams, Craig Topp (treasurer) and Stephen Beeny.

You can contact the committee by emailing committee@sedos.co.uk.



Chris de Pury and Will H-W

Will Harrison-Wallace, who stood down at the AGM, has served as a member of the Sedos committee for 20 years, including five years as chair.

One committee member said: "What I loved about working with Will was his theatrical knowledge and calming influence. He was always supportive, enthusiastic and ready to try a new idea. His length of service made him realise that it had all happened before, so not to worry as things would be okay."

Will's first Sedos show was in 1989 and he performed in over 30 before giving up the City to pursue a professional acting career.

During his time in the City, Will was instrumental in securing sizeable donations to help the society get back on its feet. Over the years Will has also donated a constant supply of shoes, suits, ties and shirts, but given his new career this supply has just about dried up!

Since Will left the committee his wife, Dawn, says it amazing how much time has been

Goodbye to Will H-W

freed up as they don't have a constant stream of committee e-mails to discuss — we can't imagine long silences in the H-W household!

Will continues to be actively involved in Sedos and since leaving the committee he has cleaned kitchens at City Library — what a job!

He will be involved in the forthcoming production of Macbeth and is the honorary chair of the ambassadors group (see page 6), so as he said at the AGM, while it was time to stand down to make way for some new blood, he's not going to ever be far from Sedos.

The society gave Will a "golden ticket" — free entrance to any Sedos show, forever!

Will is currently performing in The Royal Court's Peckham Soap Opera, which is streamed live every night until 12 July at 7pm, with a live omnibus on 13 July at 7pm. Visit: www.royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/soapopera/



Will's 'golden ticket'

From Will:

Time waits for no one... and suddenly I have been a member of Sedos for 24 years. Some 20 of those were spent on the committee, and of those 20, five were as chairman and I think another five as treasurer.

I am a firm believer in getting out what you put in — I certainly have enjoyed much that Sedos has had to offer and I can only hope my contribution along the way both on and off the stage has gone some way to redressing the balance.

A connection with the past is I hope something to be encouraged, but as I reflect on the fact that I am that connection stretching back over the past four decades and that the forthcoming production of Hot Mikado marks the third show in recent years that I have (it feels) not that long ago performed in for Sedos, I think it's probably no bad thing to be stepping aside and ushering in some young blood and new enthusiasm to help carry the society forward.

Sedos has transformed immeasurably since I first joined the ranks as a Penzance Pirate and I am proud and happy to have been a part of that transformation.

I shall continue my support from the fifth row of the auditorium!

Matt Prince

Matt Prince has also stood down, after three years on the Sedos committee. Among his contributions were looking after our box office and being heavily involved in drawing up the pitch document.

One committee member said: "I worked with Matt for two years on the committee and I always appreciated his honesty, frank emails and smiling face! He was a committed member of the society and I'm sorry to see him go — plus I'll miss those long, precise messages that told it how it was."



Matt hosting the open mic night at last year's Festival

Sedos' new groups

The AGM was an opportunity for members to be introduced to the new groups, which have been set up to increase efficiency and let more people to be part of running of the society.

Most of the groups have had at least one meeting since the AGM and the relationship between them and the elected committee, and where responsibilities lie, is constantly evolving.

All the groups are happy to accept new members, so do email the address provided if you would like to join a group.

Elected committee/trustees

Responsibilities:

- To act as advocates for Sedos
- To provide financial management — approving general budgets, monitoring financial performance and protecting assets
- Show budgets (including allocation of Jeremy Lewis grants)
- Artistic policy, including season choices
- Charity of the Year
- To contribute to and approve medium to long term plans for the society
- To implement and ensure compliance with the law and the charities commission
- Ensure the effective operation of the society through effective working of empowered groups
- To participate in any subcommittees/groups as appropriate

Sedos Ambassadors "Securing our future"

Responsibilities:

- Sponsorship and fundraising
- Recommendations for securing capital assets/ investing monies
- Maintaining links with the city
- Maintaining links with other societies
- Maintaining "high-level" links with the Bridewell
- Long-term future of performing space (whether Bridewell or elsewhere) aka a long-term home
- Securing ongoing rehearsal space / storage space / build space

Co-ordinator: Dawn Harrison-Wallace
ambassadors@sedos.co.uk

Membership group "Engaging our membership"

Responsibilities

- Social events inc Christmas Party
- Workshop Programme
- Establishing membership benefits e.g. discounts in Sea Horse, reciprocal discounts
- Members Survey & feedback forum
- Administration of membership registration & payments

Co-ordinator: Jacqui Adams
membership@sedos.co.uk

Marketing group "Growing our audiences"

Responsibilities:

- Sedos "general" marketing: Newsletters, Grapevine, website and social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr and season postcards
- Branding policy
- Show specific Guidelines and support to show producers (including sign-off on show marketing) [NB show marketing itself remains the responsibility of the show production team]
- Social media support
- Print "deals"
- Internal advertising in programmes — Sedos and Season

Support to other teams:
Membership team, capital project in terms of "raising awareness and profile", advice on ticket pricing

Co-ordinators: Stephen Beeny & Pippa Roome
marketing@sedos.co.uk

Production group "Achieving production excellence"

Responsibilities:

- Prepare and maintain Sedos guides e.g producer, stage manager, FOH
- Maintain a preferred supplier list
- Provide workshops/training for "non acting membership" (in conjunction with membership committee)
- Manage external hires of props, set, costumes
- Purchase props, set etc from any hire revenue as long as break even position maintained
- Identify/propose any larger investment purchases to committee that would improve production values across the board
- Identify/propose any longer term arrangements e.g. with sound companies
- Day to day liaison with Mikey P / Bridewell to ensure consistency across all requests (eg gala nights/special events/fizz pricing/use of other spaces etc) but working with individual show producers
- Box office/front of house operation
- Rehearsal room/workshop/auditions booking/co-ordination
- Health and safety

Co-ordinator: Matt Hudson
production@sedos.co.uk

Autumn romance

In October, Sedos is set to make you fall in love all over again with the timeless classic, Love Story.

Inspired by Erich Segal's best-selling iconic novel and one of the most romantic films of all time, this life-affirming musical is scored by the Emmy and BAFTA award-winning composer Howard Goodall with lyrics by Stephen Clarke.

As the production team geared up for their auditions, we sat them down in the Southbank's Royal Festival Hall and asked them all to tell us about their own personal favourite love story. And while we're feeling all romantic, who and where was their first kiss?

If you don't know the story, you may not know that the show has various links to pasta! Including an entire song called just that... 'Pasta'! So the final question for the team clearly was... 'What pasta would you be?' It's the important things that matter.

Maria Waters (director)

Favorite love story: Juno, because it always makes me cry, every f**king time. It's such a sweet story.

First kiss: Andrew Garard (after a good minute of Maria struggling to remember his surname...)

Pasta: linguine, because it's very tall and thin.

#anthonyandorskyla (costumes)

Favorite love story: Lady and the Tramp; we're suckers for love stories with pasta. Plus, Skyla is both a lady AND a tramp.

First kiss: we're still waiting for the magic moment...

Pasta: we'd be a couple of lasagne sheets — we couldn't think of anything better than being covered in meat and cheese.

Valentine Monot (stage manager)

Plus belle histoire d'amour: "N'oublie jamais" — pour une fois la traduction française du titre est belle.

Premier baiser: Je passé.

Plat de pâtes préféré: les pâtes sauce Papa, parce ça veut dire qu'on est enfin en vacances.

Hannah Williams (assistant stage manager)

Favorite love story: Klaine (Blaine and Kurt from Glee). They've broken up now but they'll

We meet the team behind the society's October one-week musical — with some up close and personal questions

get back together.

First kiss: I think it was Tim from summer camp.

Pasta: farfalle (bow ties to most) because Blaine loves bow ties (can you spot the Glee love?).

Michael Bettel (set design)

Favorite love story: Wall-E and Eve: the space ballet is my favourite bit.

First kiss: Tina Allan during a game of kiss chase (at this point in the interview Maria gets excited about pinning people down on the ground...)

Pasta: pappardelle because often what is left over is the best bit.

Ryan Macaulay (musical director/producer)

Favorite love story: Silver Linings Playbook — basically because it's an incredible heart-warming story about.... wait, who am I kidding... Bradley Cooper. It's because of Bradley Cooper.

First kiss: Joanne Wells in a Wendy House in my best friend's back garden. She was very sloppy. (Chris: Wendy House was a sign).

Pasta: spaghetti hoops; it's the only pasta we had in the north...

Chris Warner (marketing)

Favorite love story: Beautiful Thing, which you can now watch on Digitaltheatre.com! (Editor: We will forgive this shameless plug!).

First kiss: Megan Damour (yep, her last name is French for love). I was drunk, there was too much tongue. Waterloo, Belgium.

Pasta: tortellini, full of cheese.

Isabella Van Braeckel (set dressing)

Favorite love story: Rose and The Doctor (Doctor Who?) because they're fated never to be with each other.

First kiss: outside a theatre... with a guy called Alex and I really thought he was going to be something he REALLY wasn't. Quite a bitter one.

Pasta: fusilli. Because they are great for any left over sauce.



Anti-clockwise from Chris Warner (pale blue T-shirt), Isabella Van Braeckel, Maria Waters, #anthonyandorskyla, Val Monot, Hannah Williams, Michael Bettel

Love Story is on 1-5 October at the Bridewell Theare. Tickets on sale soon at sedos.co.uk

Our 2014 season

Information will be released this week on email and on our website about pitching for show slots in 2014. The committee wants to hear all your ideas — however whacky and wonderful — so don't hold back! To give you an idea of what to expect, the Grapevine spoke to Bob Stanex, who pitched for a show for the first time last year and was successful, directing GODSPELL

When did you first think about pitching?

Probably about 18 months before we opened... I had the initial idea about nine months before the pitch process so the idea had had time to brew and take form before I tried to put it down on paper.

How did you find the process overall?

As I was a new director I wasn't expecting to get it, so I was quite relaxed throughout. I was using it as a learning experience and as a way of putting my name in the hat for the following year... Then as I got further in the process it got more real. Sedos is always looking for new directors so just because it's your first time pitching or even directing it doesn't mean you're at a disadvantage.

What were the most difficult parts of filling in the pitch document?

It's a fairly straightforward document but it does take a lot of thought... especially the show vision section. This is the main space to sell your show so don't waste it. The committee read lots of pitches so you need to make yours stand out for all the right reasons.

Who did you call on for advice?

I sent it through to Dawn Harrison-Wallace to have a gander at first, then ran it by the rest of the team to make sure they were comfortable

putting their name to the show — it's always difficult as you don't want to give too much away at the early stages of the process so I kept it quite closed — the committee are always there to give advice at any stage though so you have that support if you need it.

Did you have to see the committee face to face and how was that?

I did. I had met everyone before and I don't know whether that made it more or less daunting. Everyone was really nice but they didn't leave a stone unturned. You just have to remember that the committee want to produce the best theatre possible and they want to make good shows happen.

How much of your team did you have in place when you pitched?

Out of those that became the final team I had 1.5 — Dawn was on board from the start and Kim (choreographer) was a maybe. Until the season is announced everyone is a maybe really as it all depends on dates and other commitments so you need to be flexible and have some people up your sleeve.

How did you go about recruiting your team, both before and after pitching?

Bribery, blackmail, puppy-dog eyes and old-school debauchery! As my core team I went to

people I'd worked with before and respected. You'll be seeing these people every day and you're putting your baby in their hands so you need a strong team around you who you trust.

Having been successful, how was your first directing experience with Sedos?

I have experienced a full range of emotions I was not aware I had. Directing a show on this scale envelopes every moment of your waking life so just be prepared to age 10 years. I have learnt so much, not just about directing but also about performing and even business management. The team, the cast, the finished show — the whole experience was amazing!

How similar was your show to the original pitch?

I had set out to create a piece of community collaborative theatre and that is exactly what was on stage. Some scenes were completely different from my vision but that's the joy of working collaboratively. I tried to keep as closely to my original pitch as possible, but along the process some things inevitably develop and have to change.

Would you pitch again?

Definitely — ideas are currently brewing — so it can't have been that bad an experience!

What tips would you give to someone thinking of pitching for the first time?

Go for it — it's not everyday you'll get the opportunity to put on an off-West End show — and especially not one of this calibre.



Rights: from Sedos secretary Matt Gould

In order to be able to perform a show, we generally need to apply for the rights to do so.

Getting permission is harder than you might think. Generally shows on in the West End, or on tour are restricted. But sometimes rights holders restrict the rights where a professional production is only being considered, or "just in case". Because we perform in central London, rights holders are even more protective.

We have very good relations with many of the principal rights holders — such as Josef Weinberger, who license many well-known musicals and Samuel French, who are one of the biggest licensors of plays.

If you are considering pitching a play/musical which has recently been on in the West End, then it is worth checking. You can often find the information on their websites — and they are also generally very helpful about giving guidance.

During the pitch process we will check availability, but it is always worth finding out in advance as much as possible! If you are unsure and want some help, do ask myself or Chris de Pury, who can assist (email secretary@sedos.co.uk).

Sadly, it is unlikely that Sedos will be performing Phantom of the Opera or the Mousetrap any time soon! But there are many other shows that are available, so be creative and have a really good look at what is available and needs to be revived.

We are the community

Bob Stanex made his Sedos directorial debut with April's production of GODSPELL, supported by Kim Barker as choreographer, David Griffiths as musical director and Dawn Harrison-Wallace as co-director. With a young cast who were largely new to Sedos and the show set on the steps of St Paul's during Occupy London, the production embraced the themes of collaboration, fairness, ecological friendliness and sustainability. Reviews said:

- "This is quite simply the best amateur production I have ever seen... Any director worth their salt would be proud of what Stanex and choreographer Kimberley Barker have achieved... It goes without saying that the role of Jesus is crucial and Joe Penny, a researcher at the New Economics Foundation in his day job, is astounding. Many a West End performer should count themselves lucky that they are not up against this immensely talented young man when auditioning for professional shows... as an ensemble [the supporting cast] are faultless..." Front Row Dress
- "Pulses with unflagging energy... The ensemble work in this show is outstanding. The cast takes ownership of the whole playing area and often the auditorium as well as the side entrances... The slickly professional movement work is a great credit to choreographer Kimberly Barker and really shows how a company of the calibre of Sedos can seriously blur the difference between professional and amateur work." Sardines
- "This production confounds expectations on every level." The Public Reviews



Pictures by Michael Smith



Team Sedos Summer Festival

We decided to take our back page in a slightly different direction to usual this time, because we wanted to show you this fabulous picture of — well, not quite all, but a lot of — the people involved in bringing you the 2013 Summer Festival, whether on stage or backstage.

We hope you've been following the "Festival in numbers" series on our facebook page. Over 100 people will be involved in staging the Festival, including 44 cast members. It's a true team effort!

This picture was taken on 15 June, when the teams held a "show and tell", each putting on a short extract for the others to watch. This certainly whetted everyone's appetites to see more and we look forward to sharing the full shows with you over the next three weeks.

Picture by Neil Ballinger

A glass of wine with... Sedos member Laura Graham-Matheson



When did you join Sedos and what was your first show?

Last year, as stage manager (SM) for *Baby*.

Are you involved in a Sedos show at the moment?

I'm SM for *Enron* and *A Man of*

No Importance in the Summer Festival, and producer and SM for *Hot Mikado* in November.

What do you do in real life?

I spend a lot of time being silly with small children, which is a pretty good way to spend your time. At the moment I'm a primary teacher and a nanny, but I'm just about to go back to student life to finish my PhD.

If you had 24 hours before the world combusted, what would you do?

I think I'd like to spend my last hours somewhere beautiful, wild and in the middle

of nowhere. Perhaps by the sea or out in the African bush. I suspect, however, that with only 24 hours until combustion (well, 23 hours and 45 minutes when I've written this), I'd head to my parents' house to be with my family.

It's our round, what are you having?

White wine, please.

One food you couldn't live without?

Soy sauce. Though perhaps that's more of a condiment than a food?

Name the first and last show you ever saw and were they any good?

I think the first show I saw was *Postman Pat*. I can't remember if it was good, or not, but I do remember that they had very big shoes. The last show I saw was *Merrily We Roll Along*. I

wasn't entirely convinced until the second act, but by the end it had succeeded in making me feel really happy and really sad at the same time, and left me absolutely convinced that you mustn't let life carry you away down a path that wasn't quite the one you intended. Pretty profound for a Wednesday night.

Ever won anything in a competition?

Yes! Front row seats to *White Christmas* on Broadway! It was the perfect combination of snow, romance, glitter and musical theatre, all wrapped up in a Christmas jumper bundle.

A good production begins with...?

Laughter and enthusiasm.

And ends with?

A very large glass of wine.