



COLLABORATION

CONSTANT DISGRACE

ELLIE MITCHELL IS AN ILLUSTRATOR BASED IN SOUTH EAST LONDON, HAVING TRAINED AS A PERFORMER FOR 10 YEARS IN THE WEST END, ELLIE DECIDED TO PICK UP AN APPLE PEN DURING COVID 19, AND THE REST IS HISTORY.



Contents

Issue 19
May 2024
© Association of Sound Design and Production 2024

The Association of Sound Design and Production is a registered charity in the UK, number 1165633.

Design by Made In Earnest
Printed by Premier Print Group

Adverts can be purchased by any corporate member of the ASDP. Rates on request.

Views expressed editorially or by correspondants are not necessarily those of the ASDP.

Contact us at:
admin@theasdp.com
theasdp.com

COVER
Ellie Mitchell

BACK ISSUES
Back issues of *The Echo* can be downloaded from
theasdp.com

- 4 Welcome**
Peter Rice, ASDP Chair
- 7 Our Values**
- 9 Introduction to the Audio Echo**
Vicki Hill, ASDP Deputy Chair
- 10 Profile: Melanie Wilson**
Zoe Milton
- 16 FP Profile: Gareth & Georgina**
- 18 Working with the DSM**
Vicki Hill
- 26 FP Profile: Andrew & Anna**
- 28 Profile: Rosie Stroud**
- 32 The Audio Story Company**
Calum Paterson
- 36 Further Listening 1**
- 38 Zoe Milton: ASDP volunteer**
- 40 Theatre Sound Education: collaboration and community**
Clare Hibberd
- 44 FP Profile: Fraser & Nathan**
- 45 Further Listening 2**
- 46 Profile: Paul Arditti**
- 52 FP Profile: Jess & Pierre**
- 53 Further Listening 3**
- 54 Profile: John Leonard**
- 56 The No.2**
Vicki Hill
- 64 Profile: Mike Beer**
- 68 The ASDP Equipment Loan Scheme**

Welcome



Hello and welcome to issue 19 of the ASDP *Echo*.

This is my first edition as Chair and I would like to firstly thank Melanie Wilson for her tireless work to lead the ASD/ASDP by increasing the representation and reach of the organisation in her time like never before. We will miss her as a source of energy and grace and wish her well in her future projects. The ASDP has a wonderful legacy of Chairs who still support the Board and Association and we are sure that Mel will continue to advise and encourage us through the years to come. Joining me this year as Deputy Chair is Vicki Hill. We hope to serve our membership with the same force and vigour as our predecessors.

This issue of *The Echo* has once again been curated by Vicki, and centres on a common theme for us all, 'Collaboration'. In no way would it be possible for us to undertake our work and deliver the projects and performances without deep and interconnected collaboration, and in this issue we examine the many facets and

variations of the collaborative process.

We are especially grateful to our Future Professional members who have contributed to this issue with Sound art pieces. Working together, they have made some wonderful pieces which can be heard by scanning the QR code on each page, a first for *The Echo* magazine.

We reflect on a strong start to the year with Winter School; three days of events focussed on education, with presentations, panels and workshops at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. Thanks once again to Central and all our corporate sponsors for making that possible. I would also like to sincerely thank all the Board for their work on Winter School, especially Sam Vincent who took the helm.

Looking to the year ahead of us, you can expect a rich programme of events and training. We will be delivering seminars both online and in-person around the country and have organised some of our ever-popular Walk and Talks as well as social

events. Our focus is on a diverse offering both in terms of content, but also in our commitment to host more regional events than ever before.

I would like to direct you to our Values Statement, that we have included in this edition. These Values have always been at the centre of all the ASDP/ASDP's work and form the core of our Mission Statement, which can be found on our website. The Board have worked to formalise these Values so that we can guide all of our work.

As always, we would love to hear from you and from anyone who would like to have more involvement with the ASDP, we are only as strong as our collective efforts!

I will leave you to enjoy *The Echo* with this final quote from Rick Rubin; 'Nothing begins with us. The more we pay attention, the more we realise that all the work we ever do is collaboration'

Peter Rice, ASDP Chair
Peter's pronouns are he/him



OSCA-R2



The OSCA-R2 is a next generation multiple command destination show control button box featuring OSC Network input, POE or 5v DC powering, two large high quality illuminated momentary push buttons and three independent OSC triggered Red, Amber and Green high quality LED indicators which react to appropriate OSC commands found on the network.

The OSCA-R2 is ideal for Immersive Theatre and Live Event environments where extensive OSC networks can be designed offering safe control of multiple devices over ethernet.

OSCA-I016



The professional's choice, housed in a rugged 1U rack mount case sporting 16 independent GPI input channels and 16 separate independent GPO output channels. The 36 front mounted status LED's monitor the twin redundant onboard AC power supplies, GPI activity, GPO activity and network status.



The OSCA-I016 can hold up to 16 OSC network device destinations in its memory. Each of the 16 separate GPI inputs can send 4 individual OSC commands to 4 separate OSC network device destinations at the same time.

Opto-isolated inputs allow both dry contact closure & low volt logic circuits to be connected. Packed with power & advanced features.

CCS-2 **HD**



Now available with factory fitted HD HDMI video ports and also as a retro-fit kit for existing owners to easily upgrade their own CCS-2 stock, in just a few minutes. No programming or additional firmware is needed as the auto sensing HDMI receives its resolution from the connected computers / screen settings.



With hundreds deployed world-wide on mission critical audio events the Nemesis CCS-2 is the go-to solution for powerful audio redundancy.

- 1920 x 1080 > 60hz
- 1440 x 2550 > 60hz
- 3840 x 2160 > 30hz
- Full stereo pass-through audio
- Supplied as user retro-fit kit
- Return to factory upgrade option
- Pre-installed with new purchase

OSCA-I8



The new OSCA-I8 is ideal for controlling Figure 53's QLab and other devices directly using OSC by repurposing your existing buttons like the industry standard 8 button Nemesis REM8D, simply by plugging into the 9 pin D-Sub connector.



Uniquely each of the 8 individual GPI inputs can send 4 individual commands to 4 separate OSC network device destinations at the same time making the OSCA-I8 PRO a hugely powerful device in a tiny, cost effective box.

The OSCA I8 sports all the features common to the OSCA range including Backup and Restore and Opto-Isolated input circuits allowing the more knowledgeable user to create hi/low voltage logic triggers.

Our Values



SCAN ME

The ASDP Mission Statement

The ASDP Board have begun a process of defining our Values and creating a Mission Statement. We have done this to focus our work and provide guidance to us as we plan the future of the Association. We have defined our Values here, and if you follow the QR Code, you can see our full Mission Statement on our website.

The Mission Statement is a reflection on the work that we already do as an Association which we have collated to evaluate the work that is still to be done. If you have any thoughts about our Values or our Mission Statement, then please get in touch with us!

If you would like to join any of our Working Groups, or if a particular part of this resonates with work that you are already doing, then please let us know. We are an Association of our members and rely on your input and engagement to achieve our goals.

Inclusion

We believe that Sound is for everyone, regardless of background, income, race or religion. We want to make sure that our industry reflects the diversity of the world in which we live and champions under-represented groups across the whole of the UK.

Education

We believe that we are all learning, wherever we are in our careers. We aim to serve our Sound community by providing as broad an education programme as we can. We also provide the means for our membership to access peer support through our forum and events.

Community Support

The ASDP was originally conceived to provide peer support in an otherwise isolating industry. We strive to honour this legacy by encouraging our membership to connect and form a community.

Environmental Responsibility

We all have a responsibility to acknowledge the climate crisis and play our part in preserving the environment upon which we depend. Much work has been done to improve theatre practices, but there is much left to do. We strive to make as small an impact as we can and to be open to new practices that will reduce harm to the environment.

Responsible Working Practices

We acknowledge our responsibility to influence the Industry in which so many of us work. We advocate for best work practices with regard to pay, working hours, working conditions and safety at work.

MORE INFO
theasdp.com

QR Code address:
theasdp.com/missionstatement

BETTER BY THE NUMBERS

SERIES9™
microphones

12,000 bend-tested connectors

142 dB max SPL

-39 dBV sensitivity

IP57 waterproof rated

70% isopropyl alcohol cleanable

360° bendable booms

180° reversible earhooks

2 matched element options

Your audience is waiting for the sound only you can deliver with SERIES9 microphones. Elevate to higher max SPL, higher sensitivity, and higher durability for the ultimate microphone experience—all in one package!

Ready to raise the bar? point-sourceaudio.com/series9

POINT
SOURCE
AUDIO

© 2024 Point Source Audio

Introduction to the Audio Echo



By Vicki Hill, ASDP Deputy Chair
Vicki's pronouns are she/her

As Peter mentioned in his Welcome to this edition, we are exploring a new venture in this, our nineteenth issue of the ASDP *Echo*.

It occurred to me as I was planning to build this publication that, although we all cherish the tradition of a written publication, it doesn't seem to be in our native language. I often find myself urging contributors to communicate to me in whatever way they feel most comfortable; I have built articles out of streams of WhatsApp messages or voicenotes. Sometimes I will have a catch up with someone with a cup of coffee and record it, then sit at home and try to both transcribe the words, but also distill a bit of the warmth of that chat.

As a huge consumer of personal audio; music, radio and podcasts; the moment it

dawned on me that we should be offering an audio communication to our membership, I really struggled to put it down.

Here's my conundrum though; how do we mesh together this wonderfully lush publication with audio? And, maybe more worryingly for me, how do I offer this to a community of Sound professionals? I am good at mixing live Sound... but this is outside of my wheelhouse.

As a first step, we are offering this, Issue 19; our hybrid issue. Throughout this publication you will find QR codes which will lead you to our SoundCloud page where we have uploaded some Sounds for you to enjoy alongside your reading. I have brought some of our best seminars featuring the theme of Collaboration into this issue for you to enjoy as you would a podcast.

I would love to develop this concept further

in the future; maybe we can make a whole audio publication one day. If you are as excited about this as I am, please let me know. I definitely won't be able to realise this on my own.

As ever, our Future Professionals picked up the idea and have formed the very backbone of this issue by teaming up in pairs to collaborate on a little audio piece for us. The brief we gave them was the word 'Collaboration' and they have made some incredibly thought-provoking pieces that I am sure you will all enjoy immensely.

Our future-Future Professionals also got involved – a group of young people, led by the team at Audio Story who joined us at Winter School Glasgow made a fabulous piece entitled *The Haunted House*. There is a piece about Audio Story and a link to the piece in the pages of this edition.

Happy reading, happy listening. Let me know what you think!

Profile: Melanie Wilson

Melanie Wilson is a multi-disciplinary artist who uses Sound as her medium, she is a true collaborator and it is her unique lateral approach that has made such a difference to the way that the ASDP has operated over the duration of her tenure.

She would not describe herself as classic example of a Sound Designer and this may explain why her tenure as the Chair of the Association has seen such a shift in dynamic. How has her background in collaborative theatre-making shaped the choices made by the ASDP and what are her hopes for the Association now that she has finished her tenure?

Melanie Wilson does not conform to the traditional conventions of how a Sound Designer is created. Wilson is a graduate of RCSSD's MA Advanced Theatre Practise, rather than any Sound Design programme and her Sound knowledge is self-taught with a background in DIY music and Sound art. It's this freedom from convention that has defined Wilson's tenure of the ASDP. She has little experience of commercial West End theatre making and has brought a different perspective to who the ASDP should represent and how the Board should best serve those members.

Instrumental in redeveloping the Mentorship scheme and shaping how the Board engage with the membership, Wilson recently developed the role of Co-Chair, with Peter Rice working alongside her to deliver the day-to-day running of the Association. At the heart of everything she does is engaged compassion. Delivering the message of the ASDP with this language of

inclusion can be credited with making the Association even more welcoming to new members. It is this gentle shift in outlook that Wilson hopes will ensure that the membership continues to grow and engage with the next generation of the Sound industry and all the generations to come.

The ASDP membership grows year on year, it is now well over a thousand subscribed members and many more engage via the public platforms and free training sessions. Wilson explains what it's like to be part of something so instrumental in the lives of so many.

"The first thing to say is that when I joined the Board, I absolutely never envisaged that I would become the Chair. I was invited to join the Board by Gareth Fry, he was the architect of lots of Board members joining across that time. My main reason for agreeing was because he made it clear that there was no one set way of doing this, he



By Zoe Milton
Zoe's pronouns are she/her



just said, it'd be great to have you and that there are lots of different ways in which a Board member can function."

Wilson joined the Board back in 2018, the Association felt more contained then and the role of a Board member was much less involved, as she recalls:

"When I joined the Board, the ask was much lower, it was more like cheerleading," Wilson says. "I suppose coming from a devised theatre making background, where there is a collaborative ethic and colleagues have equal stature in the creation of work, I had an insight into more lateral power structures, more shared responsibility."

She continues, "For me, Leadership isn't about always getting to define what happens. I believe strongly in a sense of shared responsibility: if you're involved in a shared interest group, I do believe there is a onus on participation."

So that was the basis on which Wilson began her Chair-ship and shaped how the Board might function. Wilson was very clear with the Board that if she was going to be Chair, then they needed to share responsibility and workload in order to

follow the more lateral executive structure that she envisaged. She recalls that it took about a year for them to really work out what that meant together.

The idea that we're all different and there is not one correct way to work in the industry is one that Wilson has weaved into every aspect of the ASDP, with really positive results. She has taken a focus on language and compassion into every corner of the ASDP, and used these two simple ideas to make real shifts in the ethos of the Association's interactions with the members and the wider industry.

"A big part of being Chair has been the language we use, language and encouragement. I was keen for us to go out of our way to exhibit the qualities that perhaps I didn't always feel I was exposed to when I first started out in Sound making: that sense of people being really interested in you and your voice. Discrimination in the workplace can absolutely be about people making comments. But there is also more hidden, pervasive behaviour in people ignoring you and just not engaging with your work. I wanted to try and create an environment where everyone felt really included. The language that we used across

every platform shifted slightly to be more inclusive. Every email, every newsletter, every bit of textual material that we transmitted had to be grammatically correct, but it also had to have this mission, this sense of inclusion and invitation behind it. My perfectionist tendencies had a field day if things crept through that were not absolutely correct!"

Before the ASDP existed, the theatrical Sound industry was a very different place. It was not always a welcoming place for someone who didn't really fit the mould, who wasn't motivated by the latest technology and was more interested in the design and storytelling aspects of the industry. Sound Design was in its infancy and people who did not fit the more traditional role of technical facilitator of Sound had a slightly more complicated time of things. It is not lost on Wilson that she is not a typical Sound Designer and possibly not an obvious choice for the Chairperson of the Association.

"I'm a musician and I'm a self-taught Designer," Wilson explains. "a multidisciplinary artist and theatre maker who uses Sound as an art form. I'm frequently operating on the periphery of

Right: PPD session with
Munotida Chinyanga

technical knowledge, but I'm curious, I educate myself as much as possible and this is who I am. Those are my strengths. My initial impetus to change the way the Association talked about itself, who it talked about, and who it talked to was as much about making a virtue of the fact that I wasn't actually a classical Sound Designer as anything else, that I am coming more from the art side. I knew that this could be a real benefit to the way that we talk about Sound."

The language of the industry has changed massively since the early days of Sound Design. The idea that Sound Designers just supply dog barks and doorbells is a thing of the past. How we work has also changed seismically. People rarely just work in just one environment, many more of us are now multidisciplinary, working in theatre, corporate, live events and recorded media. Some members realised that the name did not really represent us all and didn't always make sense when viewed in the context of the whole industry, but what could do the job better? And why expend the Association's limited resources in changing the name? Continuing with the name as it stood sometimes took a little explaining, but what impact was it really having? For



some members and prospective members, the name was a real problem, but their voices were not being heard.

"The idea of the name change was something that came out of the membership and was steered by Vicki Hill." Wilson explains: "She was the one that brought the idea to the Board and as soon as she spoke about it, I felt that it was totally obvious. We talk about marginalisation, but in this instance, I was in

the dominant position as a Sound Designer and never thought about the name and how it could actually be encoding exclusion. As soon as you see it, as with any form of discrimination, you begin to see it everywhere."

The lateral model of power shows here as Wilson expands on the process of including and involving members in the entire process of developing a way forward, regardless of the outcome.

“There are different ways of leading an organisation or a Board. Some Boards make decisions and then come to the membership and say, right, this is what we’ve decided to do. There are benefits in that, but that was not my mode. I really felt like you [the membership] voted us in and it’s your choice that we’re here.”

Engaging the ASDP membership can be a daunting task, with such a wide membership pool, how do you engage all members? Wilson expands on the process:

“People join the Association for different reasons and not all of them want to participate in the running of it. For me, this process felt like a really great example of how we say ‘this idea has emerged from the membership, let’s look at this together.’ The process had lots of flaws and loads of non-participation. But then ultimately we got to a place where we did agree to change the name and that was a real testament to the identity of the Association itself, the fact that enough people engaged with it to keep that fire alive, to keep that interest in self-governance.”

“It’s hard to enact big changes and the move was definitely not fast. It’s possible to

break things unless you’re really mindful of all the people who have come before who have put the foundations in place. There is a stellar lineage there, but the Association is still relatively new and you don’t want to be burning down the house that they carefully built. You do have to trust your principles. I really appreciated being able to participate in the whole process, it’s a great example of diversity of practice”.

Wilson is clear that the choice to power the name change conversation forward was a process that she participated in and was not the main driving force:

“The real achievement in the process was Vicki bringing the proposal to the Board. It felt very much that I was participating in change with the others, rather than enacting it and I really appreciated being able to be part of that whole process. I didn’t make the connection at the time, but being Chair is akin to facilitating an ensemble, which is very much a feature of my creative practice. Now I have the perspective and distance that stepping down gives you, I can begin to glimpse that. When you’re in the day to day with the ASDP, there is little option for perspective. It’s a full-on role, so the option to reflect is

rarely available. Now I see that being part of the ASDP was an extension of my practice in a way, it’s a gift, I just feel so delighted to have been part of it.”

Wilson takes this moment to reflect on her hopes for the Board for the future.

“The success of the ASDP can be realised in large part by a Board growing more and more into itself, and into the membership. I’m so excited to see where they go next because they are a fantastically imaginative, fertile group of people. There’s a great deal of care and ambition in the Board at the moment, which is a formidable thing.”

But it is not just the Board who are responsible for the shape of the Association, the future professionals and newly emerging professionals are a growing category of membership who are beginning to find their voice and using their power to change the industry in positive ways. Wilson concludes with her hopes for the industry and the next generation of Sound practitioners:

“I think that the model for how the theatre industry moves toward the future is interconnection. There is important solace

to be found in binding our own community together, but we can and are achieving so much more through connection and conversation across disciplines and organisations, not just to negotiate better pay and conditions, but for our own wellbeing and practise.

We have the opportunity to shape an industry that serves us better, and I think the ASDP can be at the forefront of that wave of change. I'm hopeful for what comes next, despite the challenging economic circumstances we find ourselves in.

We have a hugely talented group of Future Professional members, and a really world class cohort of emerging and mid-career members too, who are building on the achievements of those pioneer trail blazers in our field. We should be really proud of what we've all done collectively to raise the profile of Sound in our industry so far, and continue to lift each other forwards." ●

MORE INFO
melaniewilson.org.uk



FP Profile: Gareth & Georgina



SCAN ME

What region(s) are you based in?

Gareth Wales/West Midlands. I'm right on the border!

Georgina Cardiff/Norfolk

Are you studying or working?

What are you working on at the moment?

Georgina I graduated from Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in July 2023, and I'm currently working as Sound No.2 on the tour of *Operation Julie* with Theatr na nOg. I'm also looking forward to working on a Sound Design for *The Other Room* in July!

Gareth Six months after graduating from RWCMD, I've returned to the college this time as staff, to Sound Design their production of *A Very Expensive Poison* at the Seligman Theatre in Cardiff. I'm also working as Sound Designer and Composer on a puppetry tour around Wales with PuppetSoup.

Tell us a bit about your piece of audio?

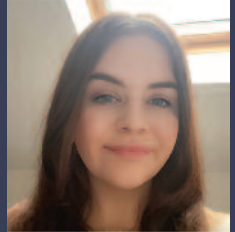
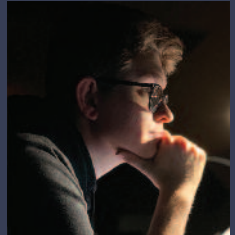
Gareth We created this piece just after graduating. It was very much inspired by our love of Cardiff and nostalgia for the last three years studying together at RWCMD. In this we take a journey from Cardiff Bay, up to the beautiful and often rainy setting of Bute Park where the college is set, with part of one of my compositions, aptly called *Memories*. All the sounds were ones we recorded ourselves around Cardiff.

Georgina We really wanted to capture our feelings and experiences of Cardiff within this piece – especially after studying here for the past three years! The overlap from the sounds of Cardiff Bay, through to rainy Bute Park, really captured all of our memories (which Gareth's composition is very appropriately named), and our absolute love of Cardiff and all it offers.

How did you find it collaborating with another Sound artist?

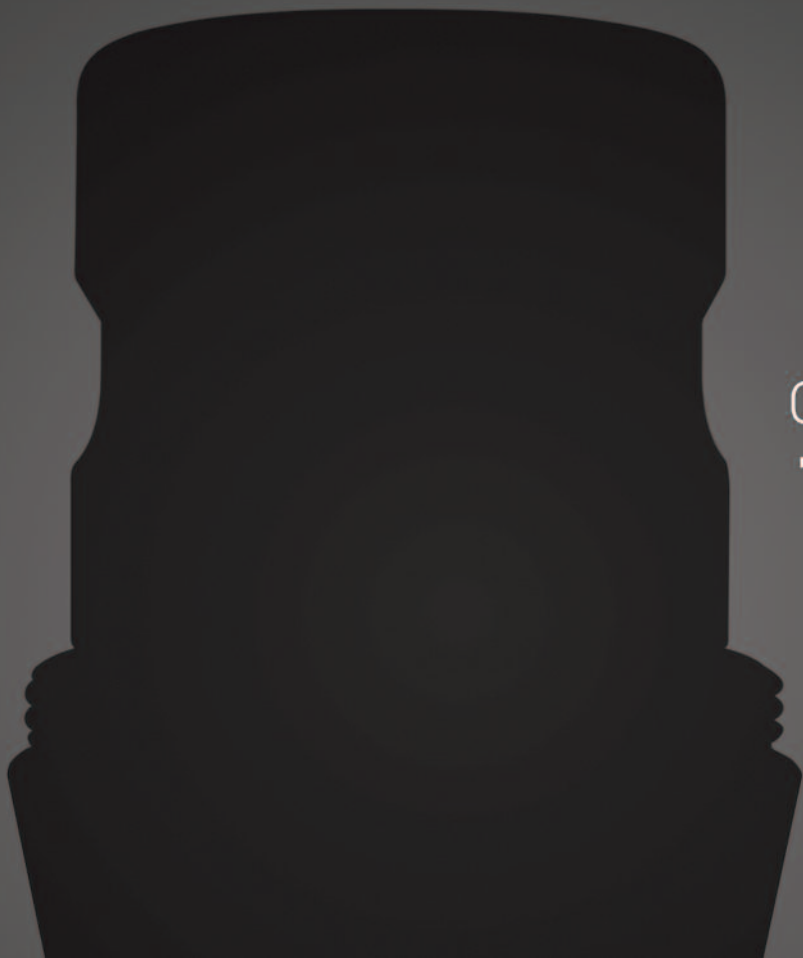
Georgina I found working with Gareth an extremely fulfilling experience – it was so helpful to be able to have someone else to run ideas and pieces of audio by! Throughout uni we both supported each other through our own personal Sound Designs, and this piece meant that we could finally collaborate, which was incredible.

Gareth It was absolutely amazing to be collaborating with George, as we've supported each other for a long time as Sound Designers but never had the chance to collaborate on a piece. It was great to combine our styles of design around a shared memory and sense of place after graduating which was such an enjoyable and cathartic experience.



Gareth Swindail-Parry and Georgina Nobbs worked together to create their piece – have a listen by scanning the QR code or searching for The ASDP on SoundCloud.

QR Code address:
soundcloud.com/the-asdp/cardiff-collaboration



COMING SOON

THE NEXT ICON

SHURE

Working with the DSM

As I was thinking about Collaboration for this edition, I reflected upon all the people that I work with in the theatre and how we work together. I have been fortunate enough over the last few years to open a number of shows, either as their UK premiere, or sometimes transfers. There are a huge number of people that make these productions happen and then the show teams have to then keep the show running whilst still communicating with the creative team. I learnt how to do this by watching my previous Heads of Sound and picking up the things that suited my personality and working style and learning from their successes (and very occasional missteps).

But one of the collaborations that I now enjoy (maybe the most) when I open a new show was not one that I saw modelled for me, not because it wasn't there on those shows when I was learning, but because it's a working relationship that dwells on the comms ring or in the persistent blinking of a little red light.

When I first appear in the rehearsal room, a production is probably weeks into rehearsals and the company is tightly formed – the acting company, the creative team and Stage Management. I often find it disorientating, especially if I have appeared in the rehearsal room for a busy play, to find a DSM behind the Qlab machine, knowing everything about what the show sounds like and should be, and I sit sheepishly behind them as they deftly trigger all the cues and note down blocking changes, whilst cueing dropped lines and commanding a stopwatch. It's a remarkable feat.

At this point, I have learnt that the best thing to do is schedule a coffee date with the DSM. If it is someone I haven't worked with before especially, I like to make sure we are on the same page (sometimes quite literally) before we embark upon tech and become voices at the end of comms rather than people. I will ask about how they like to work; how they like to use cue lights, who is taking visual cues and make sure

that we are both naming the cues the same things and have them all marked in our respective scripts. I will also offer how I like to work – I like to take my own cues, unless they are linked to other cues or there is a safety element. I prefer to look out for my own visuals but I am always grateful for a supportive cue light. I will be on comms for the top of each act, but if you flash a cue light at me, I will make myself available as soon as I can.

I will always try to keep this going as we progress through tech. A quick catch up at the start of the day to check in – even just a few minutes as I walk through the stalls – really builds a relationship where we can chat about what's working and what we can improve on. I think a huge misconception with any sort of working relationship is an one-size-fits-all approach, different people work differently and need different things and different productions demand different things from us too.

I find that this progresses well into the show



By Vicki Hill, ASDP Deputy Chair
Vicki's pronouns are she/her

run. I'll always pick up my comms at the end of the show to answer any questions about the show or offer things for the show report as necessary. I always finish this conversation with 'do you have anything for me?' to give opportunity for any notes or questions. I really encourage my teams as they learn the mix to ask this question too. Sometimes it is a query about a cue point or a dropped line, and sometimes it's a request for a camera to be refocused. It's good to check in and be open to notes and comments.

In the spirit of collaboration, I asked a few of the DSMs that I have worked with over the years about their experiences of working with Sound; both in the rehearsal room and in shows. They have also been Sound operators for smaller-scale shows, so I asked about that too.

Elli Andrews is currently on tour with *Wicked* having also been the DSM on *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* and the China tour of *Evita* (which is where we met).



Laura Wilson and I worked together at The Bridge Theatre, where she has worked consistently since being part of its opening. She cites Production Stage Managing *Les Mis* around the world as her other career highlight.

Kirsty O'Neill is currently the DSM of *Mrs Doubtfire the Musical* (my current show) and said that her favourite show that she worked on was *The Producers* at the Manchester Exchange.

Robyn Clogg was the DSM on NTP's recent tour of *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*. We met at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre in 2022.

How common is it for you to have to operate Sound in the rehearsal room?

Robyn: I often operate Sound during rehearsals, but rarely in shows, although I think that's because the majority of shows I work on, the cast are in mics. I know it's more common for DSMs to operate Sound if mics aren't involved.

Kirsty: It can be quite common, especially for plays. Musicals tend to cope as long as there are piano and drums in the rehearsal room and then it becomes the Sound

Department's domain in the theatre.

Elli: It means that the Sound Team don't need to be in rehearsals constantly and it pairs well with learning the show.

Robyn: I think operating Sound in the rehearsal room works well, as it allows for basic elements to be added very early on and the level of finesse isn't as required. If something goes wrong it's ok to just run without Sound until someone with the correct level of knowledge can come and fix it. Personally, I also like it as it allows the DSM and Sound Designer to have some great conversations and learn about how each other work before hitting tech.

Laura: I think it works if there is something to operate prior to rehearsals. It doesn't work when the show is new and I relentlessly get emailed new tracks to feed into the computer as it then becomes a full-time job and distracting from the job I'm actually employed to do.

The challenge is when you are semi-confident with, for example, Qlab. The expectation from the Director then becomes one where they just expect you can do all sorts of complicated things

within the program the moment they want it. When in reality, no one has ever taught me and I learn as I go. The pressure is big.

Kirsty: Sometimes it can feel like you are stretched between two roles in a rehearsal room, giving neither the attention you feel you should, or becoming increasingly frustrated because you are spending too much time being the Sound Operator and very little time being the DSM.

If you operate Sound for the show (or the rehearsal room), how does it work if there's a problem with the kit or something needs reprogramming?

Elli: I learnt how to re-programme cues in Qlab when I worked for *The Imperial Ice Stars* – I had never used a Mac before but after a while I got the hang of it! I really enjoy using the program and found it easy to edit. This was useful for small adjustments that needed to be made on *War Horse* or *The Comedy About A Bank Robbery* and it meant I didn't need to bother the Sound team – any large adjustments I'd write in the rehearsal report and any smaller, rehearsal room specific things I'd create a rehearsal show-file for. For *The Ice Stars*, I ran a backup mini-disk (this was a while ago!) if we had any issues,

Right: Laura Wilson

and the in-house technician was around to help with anything hardware related.

Kirsty: I usually put my foot down when it comes to reprogramming, (old in the tooth and all that) but being younger I may not have been so confident. I cannot stress enough that it is not a show caller's job to re-programme Sound. It's a programmer's job, hence the title, plus the decision would have to come from a creative of sorts. I doubt the contract would ever say re-programming, I can't imagine the producers are that switched on and if they are then re-programming is another skill and should be charged for.

Elli: I had a lot of issues when it came to operating Sound for the *The Comedy About A Bank Robbery* tour. This originally included a few radio mics used just for songs which were made live using cues in Qlab. When we started the tour, it was supposed to be just me (DSM) on Sound, however, we had a lot of large venues on the tour and with the wordy script, a lot of the dialogue was being lost without the full cast being mic'd so they brought in a Sound No.1 to mix. I continued to operate the Sound cues from the prompt desk and he focussed on mixing the show. I was glad



they brought him on board as one of our first performances had issues with the Sound and I couldn't do anything to fix it as all the equipment was Front of House and I was calling the show backstage at the prompt desk!

Laura: In the rehearsal room it ends up looking like your fault if something doesn't work. In my experience, there has never been any Sound department support in the rehearsal room, which is of great frustration and annoyance to me. I end up effectively also working a full-time Sound position.

If you do operate Sound in the rehearsal room, how does it then work when a Sound operator arrives for tech? Is it an easy handover process?

Laura: It's easy in a sense – they know what they are doing technically. It's frustrating because I feel I have put a lot of work into making the show file workable. In my experience there is very little handover and Sound staff often don't like it when you try and explain rehearsal processes to them.

Robyn: I tend to find it fairly easy. I tend to continue operating in the rehearsal room (for runs) which gives us time to chat through where cues have been going and

what visuals I've been using etc., so that we both have the same reference points at the start of tech.

Kirsty: I like to mark up a script for them if they haven't spent any time in rehearsal, having said that if it is Sound cue heavy I would stress to have op in rehearsals as soon as possible. People have their own style and that is useful for you may not be useful to someone else.

Elli: I just ensure any edits I have done are communicated fully in the rehearsal report and then give them my rehearsal edited Qlab file as well. It's usually quite an easy handover – what they do next is completely up to them and the creative team as the rehearsal version is usually different to the performance version and it's their show to edit how they'd like.

How involved are you (or can you be) with the process of the prompt desk, comms, cameras, cue lights in the pre-production period? What does this all mean for you when you arrive in the theatre for tech?

Kirsty: I think it is important to be helpful regarding what you want, after all you are the one stuck with it for as long as the show runs; a badly designed prompt desk

will make you feel older than you are, back and knee pain galore! Any PSE worth their salt will want your opinion on how you want the desk and if they don't I make sure that I am heard!

I always request Soft Cue as this is a desk I am more familiar with and I like the way the masters work. I hate flick switches as I feel I am flying a very dodgy old plane. Cameras are another important one, you have to be comfortable calling especially with a show with automation or chickens falling out of the sky! (Spoiler: this is a *Mrs Doubtfire* reference)

When I arrive for tech at the theatre and I have the desk that I know, I feel confident, less anxious, it makes the experience a lot less stressful not having to learn how something else works as well as tech a new production.

Laura: In recent years I have been very involved and always make sure I ask for exactly what I need. This means when I arrive in the theatre I feel like I can safely call the show knowing I can see and hear what I need to.

Elli: Pre-production, I don't feel that I usually have much of an input – I specify how

Right: Robyn Clogg

many comms packs we need and where I'd like cue-lights/cameras on the stage (after being told how many we have available). For prompt desks, I usually just get what I'm given - only changing which cameras I'd like where or the set-up of cuelights on the desk. I would love to be able to talk about the set-up of a desk as some of them can be very uncomfortable to work on (on one tour, my desk was tall and thin to try and minimise wing space, but I could barely fit my prompt copy on it and it was painful to use it as everything was so high up!). A lot of the time you are having to use a desk which already exists from a previous iteration of the tour, or just whatever they have in stock.

I do try to be as flexible as possible with how I want my desk to be set up but it is obviously something I need to use almost every day for a year on tour. I have found that some Sound teams resent having to do the comms/cuelights side of the fit-ups and leave it till last or rush it, however I have also had Sound teams that really take into account what I need to be able to cue the show effectively and work hard to ensure that everything is working well for me.

Robyn: On my most recent tour we had to



change the configuration of the prompt desk part way through the tour (from sitting to standing) and everyone was very receptive.

How do you like to work with Sound Designers and Operators in rehearsals and tech?

Laura: I like to think of myself as a positive person who likes to work with very clear and open communication channels, meaning all information is always shared. How well it works often depends on the experience of the Designer and Operator.

Kirsty: I like to work closely with the Designer if I am operating Sound, if not then my Operator is the person I want to know is ok. I tend to ask how they'd like me to check in with them during tech. Usually they'll respond to the standby cue light if they are with us, if not, they'll pick up the phone. It is good to remember that most operators have creatives in their ears just as you do during tech, so it is good to establish what you can do to make their lives, and therefore yours, easier.

Robyn: The best relationships I have had are with those people who recognise the job I do and that having been in the rehearsal room full time, I have a deep

understanding of the show and the work that the Director is trying to create.

Elli: I usually leave it up to the individual team as to how they'd like things to run. My job is all about communication and ensuring that the Sound team know exactly where we are going from in tech. I also communicate before-hand to see if they'd like cuelights or not.

How do you decide which cues to give cue lights for and which the operator should take themselves?

Kirsty: If I have an experienced Sound op then I usually have that conversation, most of the time a cue light to your Sound operator will become more of a comfort blanket, not something that they actually need. Also if the cues are visual they tend to have the better view using their own eyes instead of yourself who will usually be looking through a screen. I do like to give musical ones as most ops will mix with script and not score.

Elli: I usually just ask the Sound operator what they'd prefer. I've worked on shows where I have cued every Sound effect and shows where I've only needed to give an op one green at the top of each act and they

take all the cues themselves. If there's a cue that needs to be synced up to another technical element (e.g. lighting) then I may ask to give them a green for it so we all are on the same page and it happens at the same time consistently.

Laura: For me, I like all big scene changes to be cued together for safety. I will ideally give a cue light for every cue, then if the operator decides to use the light, fine, and if not, that's their choice. The best collaborators are the ones that understand that the show works best when the DSM has overall control. For the simple reason of continuity.

Kirsty: As a DSM, the main thing I have carried with me is that your operators are everything, without them you, no matter how good a show caller you are, if they are not with you, the show will not look or sound how it is supposed to. It is really useful to have a basic knowledge of what your ops go through during a show, in order to give them what they need to make their working lives easier or at least not any harder!

Robyn: This has to be an ongoing conversation. I tend to go by the basic rule

Right: Prompt desk at *Sister Act* tour

that if the cue is a visual where the sound comes from the visual (i.e. a door knock or a gun shot) then it should be taken by the operator, as the delay would be too great if it was cued. However, everything else I would give a green for.

It helps if we both (DSM and Operator) have an understanding of what is involved in the cue and what it happening on stage - i.e. is there a desk scene change built into the cue - which would mean it can't happen before someone finishes a line, or has to have happened before someone starts, also is anything else happening with the cue - is a set piece moving etc. I have had it before that a cue should go with the end of a set piece moving, but it also had a desk scene in and the actor was getting quicker at coming in with their line - so the Sound cue kept happening earlier and earlier and I didn't understand why the operator wasn't waiting for my green. Through conversation we worked out why, which meant we could have a conversation with the AD about making sure the actor understood that they had to wait for certain things before coming into the scene, or alternatively adapting the programming to be more flexible. ●



FP Profile: Andrew & Anna



SCAN ME

What region(s) are you based in?

Andrew Wiltshire

Anna Manchester/the North West

Are you studying or working?

What are you working on at the moment ?

Andrew I completed my Masters in Sound Design at Bath Spa University last year. Since then, I have been working as a visual artist and landscape painter for the last decade or so and got distracted by Sound Design in its most abstract sense, and so took a year away from painting to focus on the MA course. Since then, I have continued to develop my practices in parallel. I have released two albums from field recorded source material combined with modular and software instruments.

Anna I'm currently freelancing as a Sound Designer, alongside some technical and administrative work. At the moment, I've just finished working on a play called *Bang Bang Bang* at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, and I'm about to start rehearsals as an Associate Sound Designer on a play at Jermyn Street Theatre, called *Laughing Boy*.

Tell us a bit about your piece of audio.

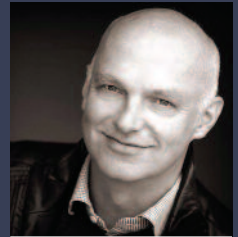
Anna Andrew and I developed a process where he would send me fragments of music or bits of instrumentation that he'd written, and I would then manipulate them using Reaper and layer various synths over the top, and send them back again. The piece we ended up with was quite short - it would be interesting to see if the process could carry on for longer!

Andrew The audio started out as a piece from an improvised session, which is often how I kick off an idea, with the intention of developing and refining that sound by processing. Software used in this piece was Izotope RX, which gives a good visual handle on what is going on. It is literally like making a Sound image. Sections can be cut and reiterated, inverted, sped up or slowed down. Selected frequencies can also be adjusted for gain or transparency. It's a fun process and rewarding in terms of the detail that can be worked.

How did you find it collaborating with another Sound artist?

Andrew It was great to work with another practitioner. We come from completely different disciplines, with Anna being a composer and musician, whilst my angle is more that of an opportunist artist seeking an outcome without a fixed aim in mind, and without the benefit of an academic background that comes from studying music at a post grad level. Sound Design can produce music, but is not the same thing as music composition. It was interesting to be involved in producing a piece that came from collaboration of two diverse practitioners.

Anna It was interesting collaborating with another Sound artist, although geography was a bit of a hindrance as it turned out we live quite far away from each other - it would have been nice to have met up in person to chat about the process! That being said, I think we produced good work and I hope other Sound artists can benefit from this collaboration project too.



Andrew Lansley and Anna Wood made this piece for us by working together and combining their different strengths to make something new. Follow the QR link or search for The ASDP on SoundCloud to have a listen.

QR Code address :
soundcloud.com/the-asdp/collaboration

AUDIO & VISUAL RENTAL SPECIALISTS BASED IN THE NORTH WEST.

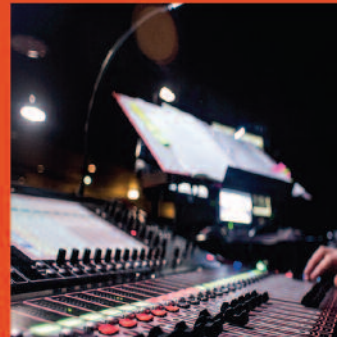
- TOURING THEATRE
- LIVE MUSIC CONCERTS
- CORPORATE
- SPECIAL PROJECTS
- INSTALLATIONS

As a theatre rental specialist, dBS Solutions appreciates that choosing a supplier for your next production can be a difficult choice. The sound of your next big show may depend on it. Our company was built on theatrical foundations and have been supporting theatre performances large & small for over 15 years.

e: hire@dbs-solutions.co.uk

t: 01925 357388

w: dbs-solutions.co.uk



STOCKISTS OF

 **DIGICO**



 **SENNHEISER**

SHURE

Profile: Rosie Stroud

Rosie Stroud has been a ASDP Board Member since 2022 and has been heading up our Social Media and Outreach work. Recently, Rosie has made a career change; moving from being part of a touring show team to a freelance Production Sound Engineer.

Rosie's pronouns are she/her

How did you decide that a career in Sound was for you? What are your early memories of seeing/experiencing Sound and realising that it was a viable profession?

There wasn't one thing that led me to choosing Sound as a career! But I first realised that it was a job that I could do when I was handed a leaflet at a careers fair by my local theatre that listed all the jobs that a person could do backstage. At that point I was having a great time mixing a youth production of *Quadrophenia the Musical* at said local theatre and the idea that I could do that as a job sparked a fire in me to research how to get there. That's a reason why I love talking to young people about my job, you never know when you might be the person that sparks the fire for them.

Tell us about your career and how it, and your goals/priorities have shifted.

I've toured for the majority of my career as

show crew and I did love it, but the structure of touring doesn't allow for any other priorities in life. As I eek into the final years of my twenties, my priorities have shifted a little. Things like birthdays, Christmases, weddings seem a little more important and touring typically doesn't allow you to prioritise those things.

So I've segued into Production Sound Engineering, fully freelance so I can still face the ever-new challenges of touring life that I love but with a slightly more flexible schedule.

How do you feel about setting career goals?

Had you asked me even a couple of years ago what my goal was, it would have been 'Eventually I'd like to be a touring Sound No.1' but that goal has dissipated for me. I like to fantasise about the future, but I don't like to lay down any hard and fast goals,

you never know what's around the corner.

What impact did the pandemic have on your career, both at the time and long-term?

The pandemic had both positive and negative effects on my career. Having been away from it for so long, I felt very anxious when going back that I might have forgotten how to do my job, or that I wouldn't enjoy it anymore. The positive effect has been that being forced to have down-time made me realise the value of it. I feel more aware of my mental state and when I might need to take a step back.

How have your skills transferred to your PSE work? What insights can you bring to the role from your previous experience of being part of a show team?

I was so anxious when making the switch into PSE work that I'd have a whole new skillset to learn, but actually I find my skills



very transferable and sometimes of benefit. There are heaps of things I've yet to learn but occasionally I feel of particular use.

Because I've stood at a mixing desk, ran backstage and set up an orchestra pit, I might spot things that someone who hasn't done those roles as show crew might not. Small things that make little to no difference to the Sound of the show, but a big difference to the show crews having to deal with them every day.

What advice do you have for people embarking upon freelance work?

I put off the switch for ages, booking myself up with show crew work that I didn't really want to do in case I didn't get any freelance work, not allowing myself any time to take freelance work I might have been offered. Make space in your diary and trust that the work you want will come up. Even if it doesn't, there's an abundance of last minute work at the moment.

My other piece of overriding advice for anyone starting out in any field is to be honest about your experience. The fake-it-till-you-make-it tactic is found out eventually. If you're confident in the skills you do have and honest about the ones

you don't, you'll find yourself in a better position to ask questions and learn!

Is it easier or more difficult to manage work/life balance as a freelancer? How do you find balance between saying 'yes' to everything and making sure you take breaks?

It's easier in some ways, because if there's an important event in your diary, you can just say no, but if there isn't anything in particular in the diary, it's easy to fill up all the days and forget that you need time to be a functioning human, eat, rest, do washing etc.

In my first few months I felt a pressure to say yes to everything, for the fear of not getting asked again, but I soon realised that that doesn't end well. It's hard to say no to a job when you are technically available, but I think the world nowadays is a little better in understanding that time off is important.

Do you think it's important to build a 'team' as a freelancer for support and advice? Is it something that you miss from being in a show team?

I did wonder if I would miss the team spirit of a touring family, but actually I've found it not too dissimilar. The periods may be

shorter, but with touring 'moves', you're still all away from home, often in the same hotel and will go for dinner or a beer together after a shift. I often run into people I haven't seen for ages too, which is so nice, to have a slight catch up on the job. On tour you're a tight knit group, but with no time for your wider circle of friends and colleagues.

Personally and/or professionally, what are you most proud of?

I'm am pretty proud of myself for the career leap I made last year. It was nerve wracking, there's no particular guide on how to get into PSEing, no job advertisements, it felt a bit like trying to crack into a secret club, especially since the PSE's who've turned up on a Saturday night when I was show crew didn't typically look anything like me. I've not worked with a fellow female PSE yet, but I'm hopeful that it'll become a little more balanced given time.

(Personally, it's still got to be building my campervan - three years and going strong!) ●

MORE INFO

Rosie can be contacted through the ASDP



The Audio Story Company



SCAN ME

Core Team members Calum Paterson and Sarah Miele wanted to give their nieces a lockdown activity that didn't involve looking at a screen and were told, in no uncertain terms by a three year old that they were making more...

I would love to tell you that The Audio Story Company was the product of a genius piece of thought... painstakingly agonised over for years... conjured up through many hours of fireside chats, sipping on coffee and planning every detail... but the truth is, like most great stories, we discovered ourselves in the middle of it without realising how we got there...

In 2020 we found ourselves, like a lot of our colleagues, jobless and wondering what the future might look like. After the novelty of staying at home had worn off, we started to crave the creativity we had been missing. Sarah is an actor, writer and voice artist. I am a Sound Designer, composer and audio-producer. We decided to make a few short-audio stories for our nieces (who were getting sick of all the home-schooling) to keep them entertained.

We didn't anticipate how much they were going to love their stories... and I don't mean the listen once and never listen again

kind of love... I'm talking about the listening to them over and over again and then getting annoyed at their Uncle Calum when he didn't have anymore stories, kind of loved them. So we made more. We let more people hear them and we snowballed from there; moving from audio-stories, to live performances to immersive experiences and everything in between.

To date our work has been enjoyed across the UK, as well as, in Canada, Switzerland and Ireland. Our immersive theatrical performances have played 650 times to over 22,000 audience members. Our work has outgrown the two of us, and we regularly employ freelancers help us deliver on our core programme of activity; which includes the touring and presentation of our immersive theatrical experiences, leading workshops and other forms of arts facilitation, delivering creative engagement events and producing digital audio assets.

We have grand plans for 2024 and beyond, with collaborations with new collaborators



By Calum Paterson
Calum's pronouns are he/him



such as the RAF Museums and Perth Theatre, as well as continuing our creative relationships with Falkirk Council and Tron Theatre. We are also heading back to The International School of Zug & Luzern in Switzerland for a winter presentation of *MERRY*, our festive experience.

Recently we had a joyous time at the ASDP Winter School in Glasgow, where we held an all-day workshop for the young people of attendees. At The Audio Story Company we have an ingrained belief that theatrical arts should be accessible and we have been practically engaged in ways to do just that.

When I first spoke to ASDP Board Member, Clare Hibberd, about the possibility of doing a presentation about The Audio Story Company for members in Glasgow, we knew that there was also an opportunity for us to practice what we preach and put in place a facility to increase the accessibility of the Winter School for those who have child-caring responsibilities.

In addition to our closing presentation, we created a bespoke set of creative activities for the young attendees which would introduce them to storytelling with sound and music.

We had four enthusiastic young people attend, allowing their adults the opportunity to attend the Winter School's main programme of talks and seminars. These were parents who otherwise wouldn't have been able to attend.

We started the day with some Sound and listening games, all designed to encourage enquiry through play. We then worked with our audio-adventure learning resources, responding to a series of immersive soundscapes in creative ways, such as writing, drawing and telling stories. We realised quite quickly that we had some awesome ideas developing, and with the National Theatre of Scotland's recording studio lying empty, we took it upon ourselves to create the ASDP's first ever young person-led audio stories.

With these types of projects, the challenge for any facilitator is to generate the conditions where the young people can be the driver and the creator of the content. In our approach, we work very carefully to ask probing and supportive questions that allow the young people to make creative discoveries for themselves. Of course, we set up the recording studio, but the ideas, the writing, the Sound effects, the voice

and the music was all the product of the young people.

Regardless of whether we are working directly with young people, or producing work that is intended to be enjoyed by young people, we work within our core company values to ensure that we provide a fun and enriching experience. As artists we discourage passive consumption and promote the benefits of being active participants with the arts and your environment. We want our audiences to gain a deeper awareness of the world around them and to be present in every moment. We want to provide experiences where imagination is stimulated and encouraged through acts of play and creative enquiry.

We take a similar ethos when we think about collaboration. We firmly believe that our biggest asset as an organisation, and as artists, are the people around us. It's no secret that it takes a big team to create truly breathtaking experiences, and we enjoy working with those who are aligned with our ambitions and creative morals. For us, we know that our role and responsibility as an emerging organisation is to lead by example. We are passionate about creating

the conditions where those around us can flourish, where creative potential can be realised and where people can feel value in what they are doing.

We want The Audio Story Company to be the next generation of creative organisation, where we can reimagine the theatrical boundaries between art and the people and communities it serves. We are committed to being the change we want to see within the creative industries.

Our ambition is to work with young people, families, underserved communities and artists to empower and embolden their engagement with the arts and to facilitate space for personal and communal development. We exist to make a positive difference to people's lives.

If you are reading this and feel aligned to any of it, then we encourage you to say hello, and let's make a difference together. ●

MORE INFO
audiostory.co.uk

QR Code address:
soundcloud.com/the-asdp/haunted-house



Further Listening 1

TOOLBOX TALK AND CAREER COACHING

In July 2022, I hosted a panel discussion with career coach and performance psychologist, Dr Lucie Clements to discuss the way that we work in show Sound teams. Featuring Seeta Mistry-Cox (Head of Sound), George Lumkin (Head of Sound), Jack Drury (Shure) and Wendy Baker (HR), we talked about the roles in the department and how we juggle perfectionism, career goals, pay and everything else that goes along with the job.

This is a great listen for anyone who works in a Sound Department, or who wants to understand how the dynamics of a running show feel like to those inside it. We talk about our relationship to the show report, Seeta and I explain how it is a useful document rather than something to be feared. Jack filled us in on how recording and debriefing is essential for a manufacturer to support a show effectively.

We also discussed goal-setting whilst working in this industry. Is the ultimate goal being the No.1? Or should we be considering other factors when we are deciding which job role suits us the best. Lucie and Wendy have brilliant outsider-insights into the things that we should all be thinking about here.

All of us discuss how we balance our striving for perfection with working in a creative environment – how do we cope when we make mistakes? How should we be teaching our teams about asking for help and troubleshooting?

This is a really great discussion amongst a really broad range of professionals and I hope you enjoy reflecting upon our insights.



SCAN ME

Scan the QR code or search for the ASDP on SoundCloud to listen.

QR Code address:
soundcloud.com/the-asdp/toolbox-talks-panel-discussion-career-coaching

By Vicki Hill

emerge



Zoe Milton: ASDP volunteer

When I first started out as a freelancer, I needed PLI. Someone mentioned this new thing, The Association of Sound Designers, they offered PLI and training, plus they were cheaper than other providers... That afternoon in a rehearsal room somewhere, a relationship began that would last much longer than the job and actually ended up offering me a position that would last almost a decade.

In my opinion, the ASDP isn't just an Association, it's a prime example of an entity becoming more than the sum of its parts. I joined for the PLI, but I stayed for the community.

At trade shows, I was often asked, what's the point of the ASDP? I would explain all the benefits: training, discounts, membership directory and of course the forum. If you have a question, the remarkably clever members will have had that exact problem before, usually somewhere completely random. They will have fixed it with a hair pin or a line of script or something that you'd never had the courage to think of on your own and they'll be only too pleased to share the solution with you, and the rest of the members.

Starting out in the 90s, I didn't have that kind of community. The industry was a very different place and I didn't ever really feel like I fitted in. Only ever working with a small group meant that getting perspective on your position was hard work, The ASDP set out to change that and bring Sound

people together in ways that had not happened before and because of this, it has fundamentally changed our industry for the better.

The ASDP has been a massive part of my journey. It's been there for me when I needed support but I've also been able to support a fair number of members as part of my role as administrator and I enjoyed every minute of it.

The pandemic changed everything, in ways we still don't understand. The workload involved in maintaining industry connections through those darker days still makes me well up just thinking about it. Our family was completely rocked, but the members did what they do best, they cracked on. They rose to challenges in ways that couldn't have been imagined in the weeks before the ghost lights went on. As our calendars emptied out members found ways to survive, they did it all, delivery drivers, care workers, shop keepers, there were Sound engineers in places you'd never expect them to be.



By Zoe Milton
Zoe's pronouns are she/her

From March 2020 The ASDP worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the difficulty our members were facing. It was a crazy time. As the jobs disappeared from diaries we realised that freelancers were going to be disproportionately affected by the pandemic. There was no hope of furlough, even for many fixed term contracted freelancers. It was a tough time for all of us, but despite that, the Board kept coming up with ways to support members.

Within a week we had gone from hopeful to resolute. The other Associations acted just as quickly and as fervently as we did. Coming together to ensure that their members were supported and as uplifted as possible. Not one of us stopped.

Coming out the other side was like waking up with a massive hangover. Shows started up, but it was different, people were scared and we were all exhausted by it. That was the time at which I realised that I had worn myself out. I looked at the ASDP and I realised that it was growing and I was holding it back. We had a new chair person

and I began to realise that instead of looking forward the new Board were turning to me and asking how it had been done in the past, it dawned on me that they didn't need to know how we'd always done it, they needed to just do it.

So I explained to Melanie that it was time for me to stop being the administrator.

We talked a lot about what the Association needed and how to best support the Board in the administration of the Association. Thanks to Melanie's vision, the new way forward would be much more sustainable. The workload would not be able to fall on just one or two people, it would be a collective effort. It sounded fantastic.

Getting involved was the best thing I ever did and now that I am less involved I'm even more grateful for the work that the Board and the administrators do to support members every single day.

It's a full time job and we're all much better off because of their generosity. ●



Theatre Sound Education: collaboration and community

Right: Sound students and staff outside the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland on the last day of term 2023

In this article, I wanted to explore how Higher Education institutions teaching Theatre Sound are working to move towards programmes that are outward looking, building community, and sharing knowledge. I am currently a Lecturer of Sound on the BA Production, Technology and Management at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and so I draw upon my teaching experiences over the last ten years or so in several diverse settings.

Who is influencing future industry professionals?

In recent decades, increasing numbers of early career theatre Sound practitioners start their journey in a formal education setting. Many of us older folk did not have the opportunity to benefit from a selection of school qualifications as diverse as to include Music Technology, Graphic Communication and Computer Science, all of which feed into supporting young people gain a broad skill set that helps feed into an Arts career.

Despite the Conservative government's asserted efforts to diminish the type of arts qualifications available, such as BTEC awards and National Progression Awards, recently there is anecdotal evidence that there has been an increase in apprenticeships and mentored roles.

National theatre companies such as the National Theatre of Scotland, Donmar Warehouse and the Royal Shakespeare Company have created roles for training on the job, all feeding a highly positive wider path into the Sound industry. On the other hand, worryingly, with further Arts funding cuts, this might be temporary resolve to increasing opportunities for future professionals.

I'm keen to express that some of the best learning opportunities come from 'doing the job'. The general feeling amongst professionals is that this is the best way to pick up skills but often overlooked, are the social aspects that an educational institution can offer. Social development skills, that were so badly affected during the Covid years, communication and self-management are, in my opinion, of equal weighting and



By Clare Hibberd
Clare's pronouns are she/her



arguably are the biggest factor in a student gaining access to workplace opportunities. Who would want to employ someone who couldn't confidently explain foldback to a cast member or didn't turn up to their calls on time?

In my opinion, a Sound student shouldn't only receive influence or training from one narrow reference but be encouraged to reach out and be a part of a wider community that can offer a richer range of experiences and opportunities. Higher Education can offer spaces to make mistakes in a safe, supportive environment that would be too risky in a professional environment.

It takes a village to raise a... Theatre Sound Engineer?

Many modern undergraduate curriculums in Theatre Sound Design embrace a constructivist model. Students tend to be encouraged to reflect, question and practice self-motivated learning. Despite the stubborn conception that students attend Higher Education to be vessels to receive information, programme designers are working hard to find more inclusive ways of working. This includes greater collaboration with sister programmes (such as music,

musical theatre, traditional music) and community outreach work.

One way that the Sound section of the Production Technology Management course at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland has found to increase industry valid collaboration opportunities with the students, has been to find new collaborations with programmes that haven't traditionally been included in course. Looking for short, often one-day events has led to a wider variety of Sound experiences for the students. Recently, the second-year Sound specialists teamed up with first year traditional music students to do the Sound for their first public concert. The second-year Sound students needed to contact the Creative Programmer and lecturer, Jenn Butterworth, to arrange the load in, Sound checks and IO list. Jenn herself is a highly awarded acoustic folk guitarist, playing with Kinnaris Quintet as well as being recognised as an accomplished teacher. Access to expert practitioners beyond the immediate Sound community is vital in developing collaborative skills. Needless to say, not all experts beyond the safe spaces of educational institutions are as forgiving as maybe they could be.

A Sound community

Further to the Constructivist model of education, the term 'learning communities' is used in higher education to describe a group of learners with similar learning goals who meet, collaborate and study together. Arguably, in the niche world of Theatre Sound, the access to the 'community' is central to any learning opportunity. This can be achieved through several routes, not limited to the five below:

1. Digital communities

Examples of these are casual interest groups on social media to more specific groups who denote members by paid membership or characteristics such as location or specialism within the Audio Industry. Digital Audio Ecofeminism (DA'EF) as coined by Dr Eddie Dobson (2012), is used to describe groups that have 'glocal' impact on all-female communities in audio.

2. Professional networking

Examples include past and present colleagues and informal and formal social gatherings. The ASDP run social events across the UK several times a year for members and sometimes non-members to meet up and share ideas.

3. Formal education

As highlighted earlier, formal education, at school, Further Education or Higher Education level can help build networks and support for learning. The people that you study with, particularly later in life, are often those offering you work or vice versa.

4. Friends and family

Friends and family can play a pivotal and encouraging role in informing an early-stage career path. Family and friends who themselves work in the industry can give insights and support with work placements and despite nepotism often being seen as negatively impacting fair access to the profession, a supportive home network is pivotal in assisting early career individuals take a brave leap into an industry that could feel out of reach to some members of society. Support such as this can help ensure resilience when faced with challenge.

5. Hobby groups

Amateur dramatic and youth groups play a key part in providing opportunities. Practical experience is difficult to simulate for Sound Design beyond the walls of a theatre and these groups often allow participants to access material that would otherwise be

difficult to replicate.

The evolving collaborative environment

Higher Education institutions are slowly evolving with social shifts in a greater understanding around equality and inclusion. Whether this is in response to, or in partnership with industry, is debatable depending on who you speak to. Some of the measures that have been written into policy include updated Dignity at Work and Study Guidelines.

This shift could be seen because of a generation who is far more likely to be involved in social justice than previous generations. Caring for the planet, equal opportunities and a far greater awareness of injustices means that increasingly educational institutions have needed to respond with new policies and codes of behaviour.

Some questions

A few final questions to ponder; is our industry leading education or is education leading our industry? What matters more, education or experience? In times of



unprecedented economic pressures is it better to learn in the workplace or a university with all the associated costs?

From my point of view as an educator, the answer lies within the individual. We need to move on from historical, dusty preconceptions of Higher Education for Theatre Sound being about didactic teaching and move more towards the reality of how our institutions function

today. Student-centred learning, with an abundance of real-world opportunities alongside current professionals who have a growth mindset and understanding that we are all learning together, all the time. Students learn best from their peers, when they feel comfortable to make mistakes and are supported to realise where their passions might lie. In an ideal learning environment, there would be little way to tell who is a student and who is a facilitator, with collaboration and respect working together synonymously. ●

MORE INFO

drilzobson.wordpress.com
jennbutterworth.co.uk

FP Profile: Fraser & Nathan



SCAN ME

What region are you based in?

Fraser I am based in Glasgow but tour Scotland regularly.

Nathan Based in Glasgow

Are you studying or working?

What are you working on at the moment ?

Nathan I am studying at RCS on the Production Course graduating this July.

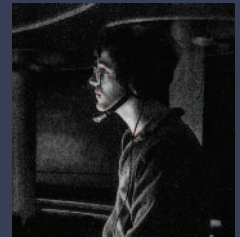
Fraser I am currently working. My next project is as operator on the National Theatre of Scotland's production *Maggie & Me*, based on Damian Barr's memoir of the same name, with Sound Design by Susan Bear.

Tell us a bit about your piece of audio?

Our audio is a rudimentary data sonification using a basic data set to create midi sequences which we then turned into a piece of Sound art. We achieved this using Python which is new for the both of us. What you hear is an excerpt of a piece in which the data is from different aspects of Scottish football – something close to both of our hearts.

How did you find it collaborating with another Sound artist?

We have collaborated together a lot when we were at RCS so it was a nice opportunity to work with each other again. We felt we brought complementary skill sets to the piece which lay the foundations for a well-rounded artistic project. We particularly enjoyed exploring the world of data sonification, which is new sonic territory for me, I think it's something we may not know enough about as an industry, but may be seeing much more of in the near future not only in data, science and tech industries as a useful communication tool, but in the arts as well.



Fraser Douglas Mackie and Nathan Farndale already knew each other. They made a piece of Sound Art for us which you can have a listen to by scanning the QR code or searching for The ASDP on SoundCloud.

QR Code address :
[soundcloud.com/
the-asdp/sound-art](https://soundcloud.com/the-asdp/sound-art)

Further Listening 2

WORKING WITH DIRECTORS

Over the last year, the ASDP and the SDUK conducted a mini-series of chats between Sound Designers and Directors about how they work together to create work.

Both of those discussions are included as part of this audio *Echo* - how could we not?

The first is between Ian Dickinson and Matthew Dunster about their process. The two discuss their shared music tastes and influences and how these things are involved in the process right from the beginning of rehearsals. Matthew talks about how he uses music to energise the room during rehearsals and how this trickles into Ian's Sound Design.

Melanie Wilson and Rachel Bagshaw are long-time collaborators and talk about composition and how it works alongside a piece to enhance the storytelling. They discuss the realities of budget constraints and the role that a director has in steering a production. Rachel also shares insights into her work at The Globe and using Creative Captioning.

Both Rachel and Matthew are clearly huge advocates of Sound Design and it is a joy to listen to non-Sound Artists talk so passionately about the role of Sound in the creative process.



SCAN ME



SCAN ME

Scan the QR codes to listen to these discussions or search for The ASDP on SoundCloud.

Top QR Code address:
[soundcloud.com/
the-asdp/sound-
designers-and-directors-
in-conversation-ian-
dickinson-matthew-
dunster](https://soundcloud.com/the-asdp/sound-designers-and-directors-in-conversation-ian-dickinson-matthew-dunster)

Bottom QR Code address:
[soundcloud.com/
the-asdp/sound-
designers-and-directors-
in-conversation-melanie-
wilson-rachel-bagshaw](https://soundcloud.com/the-asdp/sound-designers-and-directors-in-conversation-melanie-wilson-rachel-bagshaw)

By Vicki Hill

Profile: Paul Arditti

Right: Louis McCartney as Henry Creel in *Stranger Things* (Manuel Harlan)

Paul Arditti is a Sound Designer with a huge catalogue of work. He's at a point in his career where he can enjoy and reflect on the confidence that experience affords him. He is an Associate Director at the National Theatre, a role that is coming to an end next April. He's looking to the future, hoping for more time to enjoy the finer things in life, like long cycle rides and getting out into nature. He is a founding member of the ASDP and was its treasurer for several years.

He is a passionate advocate for better conditions in the industry and creating stronger communities for the people who work in it. Paul is clearly very busy, but he has taken time out to speak to us about his process, his relationships and his latest production, *Stranger Things: The First Shadow*.

Talking about the process behind the giant that is *Stranger Things: The First Shadow* (STFS) doesn't faze him, but we start our time together talking about cycling and houses, plus a tiny sprinkle of the joy of dogs. I know from experience that Paul has an unfathomable attention to detail. Not just within his design process, but also through the people he surrounds himself with. He takes his relationships very seriously and when I visit the theatre, his team are genuinely excited to see him back in the building. As a result, I end up hanging out for much longer than I expected, as he chats with everyone and finds out about their days. It is a joy to behold.

STFS is a complex show that kept evolving right up to the last moment. The version performed on Press Night was still being

programmed at 4:30pm. Right up to the wire, scenes were being re-written, new Sounds and music were being composed. "Creating this show was mammoth," Paul says. "We did two four-week workshops followed straight away by six weeks of rehearsals, four weeks of tech, dozens of previews and we were still adding content on the last day."

The show may have been mammoth, but the Phoenix Theatre stage is anything but giant. The set feels pared back, there are few flats on show. The show starts on a bare stage with multiple set pieces that are rotated on and off stage in balletic choreography. One piece of stage-filling 3D scenery instantaneously appears and disappears, somehow folded into a space 60cm deep – a design feat that is pure



By Zoe Milton
Zoe's pronouns are she/her



magic to this Sound person's eyes.

The result is a true theatrical experience and one that is a real team effort. Paul beams when he talks about his team, from his associates Rob Bettle and Chris Reid to his magician of a No.1, Andy Waddell; from his backstage team Joe Berry and Liv McColl, to his newest team member, Sarah, the hard fought-for No.4 who is going to take the pressure off the backstage team and provide all-important cover and continuity. It's not just the Sound team: he is excited to explain to me about the wonderful DSM, Jen Tait, who can instantly recall any one of Paul's thousand or so cues by its number. Which is no mean feat when you consider that the LX department have a completely different numbering system and most of the Sound cues are MIDI-linked to LX!

The show is a proper theatrical extravaganza, with exceptional Sound that is a seamless part of the action. Lightbulbs pop and fizz, voices boom and bounce through the auditorium and jump scares literally pull you out of your seat. It is a good example of what happens when collaboration is organic and every member of every team is focussed on working

together to create something magical. The feeling you get when you talk to Paul is that he's happy and close to contented with the end result, something that rarely happens. He and his team have made something remarkable and he's proud of it, he's proud of them.

I met with Paul on the day of his Olivier nomination announcement. At warm-up every single member of the company came over and congratulated him, or just came up to say hello. This is a Sound Designer who has made a real impact on the company and is a valued and respected member of the team.

Stranger Things, I should explain, for those people who avoid internet sensations and TV drama in general, is available to watch on Netflix. The first four seasons have wowed viewers around the world, and there's a fifth on the way. Like the Netflix series, the stage show is set in a small town called Hawkins in Indiana, which is plagued by strange goings on and has a large and mysterious out-of-town secure facility that no one initially pays any attention to.

The stage show isn't just a cheap tie-in, it is a new story that stands alone. Produced by

Sonia Friedman Productions, the producers of *Harry Potter: The Cursed Child*, STFS follows a similar formula of existing in the same universe but not the same timeline as previous episodes. STFS takes us back to the teenage years of the TV show's adult characters and tells the untold story of one of the main characters. At its heart, it is a boy meets girl story with a twist, and you don't need to know the TV show to enjoy it.

Paul tells me about the first plans for STFS, which were floated back in 2019. The original idea was to create a blueprint show, which could then be copied and pasted simultaneously in other cities.

"There was a sense of urgency. We were working to Netflix's original season five release dates, as our story fits between Netflix seasons four and five," says Paul. Over several years of discussions, the reality of making such a huge and complex show in many places at once became clear. A more conventional journey was planned instead, with a first production in London, followed by a period of reassessment, hopefully a second production in New York, and then on to other territories. The American writers and actors' strikes changed things too, as Netflix was unable

to release season five of *Stranger Things* as planned.

“Filming for season five is only just getting underway, almost a year later than expected”, says Paul. “Plans were made and then remade. One of the early ideas that stuck was to have two Sound associates in London rather than one.” The logic behind this was that the rapid roll-out of the show to other cities would need multiple associates in different places at the same time.

“The promise and the process were not entirely in alignment on this show,” admits Paul, “But it has worked out well so far.”

Paul worked with Rob Bettle of Sound Quiet Time on the system specification and installation, and with Chris Reid to help with content.

“Working with two associates made the workflow as efficient as it could be,” Paul says. “Chris took ownership of large sections of the content creation. It was hugely reassuring that I could entrust him to work independently alongside me at the production desk and know that he would deliver.”



Having used a loudspeaker system based around d&b Soundscape to great effect at the Bridge Theatre for *Guys and Dolls*, Paul’s first plan was to use the same system for STFS. However, lack of space for speakers in the Phoenix Theatre alongside Miriam Buether’s set design, plus the need for a super-fast workflow when creating and delivering Sound effects during the production period led Paul in a different direction.

“I decided to go ‘old school’ and use a point source system PA, predominately based around Meyer Ultra X40s and X20s,” explains Paul. “I needed high quality and high SPL, but with a fairly small footprint, and the latest generation of Meyer speakers are unbeatable in that regard. I sacrificed

the amazing ability of Soundscape to locate objects in space, for a simpler system that allowed faster programming. The result works well for both the actors’ voices and for the recorded sounds.”

Arditti knew from the workshops that it was going to be important to deliver highly localised sounds, not just from the myriad practical props, but for more ethereal moments. Having a system that could place these SFX accurately, but with minimal extraneous programming, was key to responding quickly in technical rehearsals, especially when the show was growing and developing right up to the last moment.

“We looked at several different automated systems to locate sounds,” Paul recalls, “and ended up basically creating our own system. We made a series of timed zones on stage and around the auditorium to be accessed via QLab, so we were able to quickly place audio in different locations. It was important to keep up and not have to go back and tidy everything we placed during rehearsals.”

On stage, Arditti installed spot effects speakers into both moving and static set pieces. Practical props and furniture all



required wireless speakers.

“Most of the practical props make sounds,” says Paul, “so we started out with over 30 IEM channels. This got cut down to 22 or so, which was a bonus, because we had maxed out the available busses on the DiGiCo 338T on day one and were able to reuse the redundant IEM outputs for other things!”

In the auditorium, the surround system is cleverly situated on piping that runs around the stalls and circle levels. This was a design idea from Rob Bettle, which allowed the team to place more speakers in better positions without needing to drill holes or chase cables for each speaker. It also helps out the lighting and special effects departments by providing space on the bar for their units.

The sound system works perfectly and feels completely integrated. After watching the show, the word I came away with was seamless. Sound and video merge effortlessly together to transform the environment in a matter of moments, and the old-school theatrical magic is completely at home next to the unbelievable technology, which doesn't

overshadow the acting but completely supports it.

Paul is grateful for the help Netflix have given throughout the process. “When it came to recreating the famous *Stranger Things* sounds, the Netflix studio team could not have been more helpful”, he explains. “We had access to musical and sound effects assets, even original Pro Tools sessions. There was a moment when we realised we needed a recognisable live vocal effect from the TV show and Netflix simply gave us access to the appropriate Pro Tools session with all the plug-ins and effect parameters they had been using. We just had to copy and paste it into Ableton Live and we were pretty much set. We also have Stein and Dixon's music stems that we've been able to weave into the show. DJ Walde has composed all the original music, but having the ability to tease in the themes from the TV show has been brilliant.”

Paul visits all of his running shows as often as he can and he's already seen STFS several times since Press Night. “From experience, I know that it's easy for things to slip,” he explains. “I generally find that if things are going to change, they change pretty soon after press night, then they get

entrenched, so I make sure I stay close and watch the shows as often as I can. The changes can be due to anything, whether that's blocking that has changed, or a moment of character work that shifts away from the original intention. It can have a dramatic effect on the sound for a show, so it's better to keep an eye on things.”

The sound team at the Phoenix is at the end of an intense process, but you get the feeling that they're all happy to be there and excited by the work ahead. Meeting them and getting to spend a day in their world was fantastic. The mood was reflective, with the EPK (Electronic Press Kit, used for promotion for digital media and broadcast) being filmed the day before I arrived. The long-delayed promise of a lie-in was tantalisingly close! Paul has his mind on Broadway and the likelihood of more rehearsals for that. He also has the recast for *Guys and Dolls* at the Bridge to concentrate on. I get the feeling that as much as Paul says he is going to start taking less work and going on more bike rides, he's going to be busy for a little while yet! ●

MORE INFO
uk.strangerthingsonstage.com

FP Profile: Jess & Pierre



SCAN ME

What region are you based in?

Jess London

Pierre North West

Are you studying or working?

What are you working on at the moment?

Jess I am an apprentice creative venue technician, with a focus in Sound. Apprenticeships are work and study at the same time, with full-time work for four days a week and study for one. I have been working at the Opera House for the last six months, and have recently started at d&b solutions. In my spare time, I am working on building generative instruments, and am participating in Pauline Oliveros' 'Deep Listening' 1 Intensive. I have been studying orchestra mic techniques, patch systems and modular synthesis.

Pierre I'm working on two shows at the moment - one called *Joy Unspeakable*, which is a piece of verbatim gig theatre that explores relationships with eating disorders through four women's testimonies. The other is the follow-up tour for *BIG STRONG MAN*, a cabaret show with games, intimacy and karaoke that explores definitions of masculinity in working class communities.

Tell us a bit about your piece of audio?

We thought it would be interesting to approach the idea of collaboration through making different types of sounds 'collaborate' with each other. We recorded a set of sounds that we defined as squeaky/soft/hard/rough, and then processed them in a variety of different ways so we could create a soundscape that played these sounds against or with one another.

How did you find it collaborating with another sound artist?

It was really good fun to see where we each took the direction of the audio. So often in the act of creating we can end up totally isolated, and so it's brilliant being able to work with other people as you get amazing insight into their process, their style and their methods of doing things - it's a great learning opportunity.



Jessica Kempe and Pierre Flasse worked out a process to create a piece of audio for us. You can listen to it by scanning the QR code or searching for The ASDP on SoundCloud.

QR Code address:
[soundcloud.com/
the-asdp/sound-
collaboration](https://soundcloud.com/the-asdp/sound-collaboration)

Further Listening 3

KEEPING PERFORMERS ONSIDE

This discussion was recorded in 2014 at Winter School, so spot the references to the Cadac at Wicked. But the advice and insights shared here by Gareth Fry, Paul Groothuis, Hyder Khalil and Zoe Milton is just as important now as it was then.

They talk about how we, as sound professionals work with a performing company, focussing on making sure that they are comfortable in their radio mics and working with onstage foldback.

Both of these things are constant points of both collaboration and friction when working on plays and musicals and there are some really important thoughts raised here. The team discuss the infamous 'DFA' button, cast members with big foldback demands and how we should be educating all theatre collaborators about Sound.

It is really interesting for me as an operator to hear how Sound Designers approach performers during tech and the little tricks that they employ to make everyone happy. Paul talks about 'hooking a line' which is a tip that I will be using when I teach mixes going forward. It is also fascinating to hear how he views his operators as his performers – their mixes should be noted as performances and they should receive support as well as notes.

I wholly recommend this discussion if you are embarking upon any endeavour with an acting company. The team get right to the heart of true Collaboration for performance.



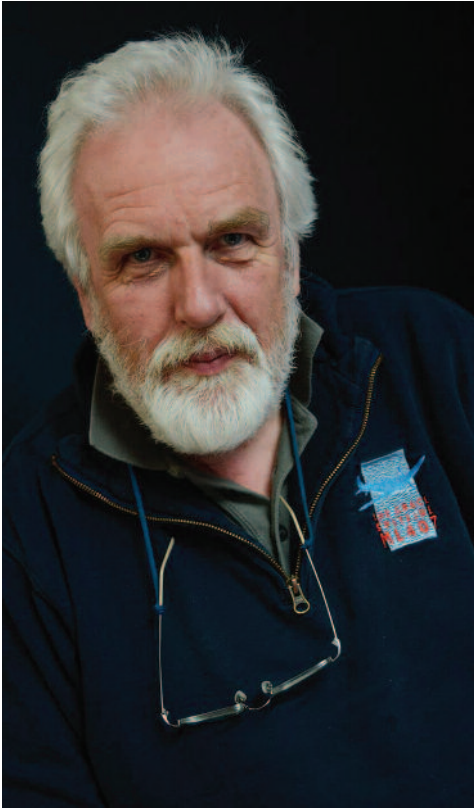
SCAN ME

Scan the QR Code or search for The ASDP on SoundCloud to listen for yourself – enjoy!

QR Code address :
soundcloud.com/the-asdp/keeping-performers-onside

By Vicki Hill

Profile: John Leonard



How did you decide that a career in sound was for you? What are your memories of seeing/experiencing sound and realising that it was a viable profession?

I didn't know that such a thing existed when I first started out: sound was just something I wanted to do and theatre was something I wanted to be involved in and the fact that I could combine the two was something of a bonus.

My school had a deal with the local theatre company, which meant that I got to see a lot of shows very cheaply and I was incredibly lucky, both with my first boss, Nigel Gibbons, who was a brilliant and intuitive Sound Designer, although the term wasn't known about in the UK back then (1972, if you want to know) and with my first theatre company, The Bristol Old Vic. Where three very different theatres ran four weekly rep in each venue, which meant three new shows every four weeks, so I learned a lot quite quickly.

Tell us about your career and how it and your goals/priorities have shifted over time.

My career path went like this:

1970; Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, one year technical course.
1971; Bristol Arts Centre, Technician and Assistant Projectionist.
1971; Bristol Old Vic Company, Stage Technician.
1972; Sound Assistant.
1973; Head of Sound.
1976; Production Manager.
1977; Freelance.
1978; Royal Shakespeare Company, London Sound Department.
1984; Head of Sound and Associate Artist.
1989; Freelance.
1995; Aura Sound Design.
2004; Freelance.

My goals – and my priorities – were just to keep working. I never had a plan, goals or any other aspiration other than to do what I enjoyed doing and which contributed to whatever production I was working on. My main priority these days is to get more sleep.

What advice do you have for people as they move through their careers?

There's no connection between money and

art... and turn up early. Turning up on time is usually too late.

Personally and/or professionally, what are you most proud of?

Personally, managed to remain married to the same person for forty years.
Professionally, no idea - maybe Tussauds New York, though, which morphed from a bit of a demo to the full installed design of both system and content, including writing the script.

How long have you been a member of the ASD/ASDP? How has the formation for the ASD/ASDP contributed or changed the industry?

Since day one, I think. It's gathered what was a disparate bunch of sound people into a coherent group and simplified and democratised the exchange of ideas and information.

It's also helped to raise the profile of Sound Design from what was almost an afterthought in creative terms, to being recognised as a full and productive member of the creative team. ●



The No.2

When I am offered a job, the first thing I think about is who my No.2 should be. It's such a vital role when it comes to setting up and running shows. There is a lot of activity going on in the auditorium during tech; furious programming and note-giving, operating and adjusting. But somewhere just behind the iron line is the backstage team who are working just as diligently. Sometimes it's a team of two or three people back there, sometimes only one person, but their roles are vital. Nothing out front would happen without them, and so we couldn't explore Collaboration without thinking about how the Sound Department is so clearly split during technical rehearsals and how we manage that divide.

I was a No.2 for a very long time before stepping up, but I thought I would ask some of the people who occupy this role now about their careers, their top tips for tech and how they find communicating with their team during tech.

Tom Bosworth was my No.2 as we set up *Mrs Doubtfire the Musical* both in Manchester and the West End. He is now working on *The Hills of California*. Since leaving Drama School nearly ten years ago, Tom has worked his way up through West End Sound departments. He has been a dep, No.3 and now No.2. He has also toured the UK, Europe and the US.

Leeluu Dallas King is currently the No.2 on *Sister Act* at the Dominion Theatre, having recently worked on *Clueless* in the same role. Leeluu started out on *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* tour as the No.2, but was promoted to Head of Sound during the course of the run.

Tess Dacre is the Head of Sound on *My*

Neighbour Totoro at The Barbican, having been the No.2 when it opened originally. This is Tess's first venture as a No.1, but has worked extensively as a deputy.

Isobel Mackintosh is about to embark upon the opening of *Mean Girls*, having finished as the No.2 on *The Time Traveller's Wife* at The Apollo Theatre.

How would you describe the role of a No.2?

Tess: I would best describe this role as, majorly a supportive figure to the No.1. Primarily, the No.2 is cover for the No.1. Also a leading figure into the running of a show backstage, which includes the setting up of a show, or taking over of pre-existing show. This role can also require you to manage people who are also working backstage in the Sound Team.

Tom: We oversee everything backstage from a sound perspective. We make sure microphones are fitted and maintained to a consistently high standard. We devise and



By Vicki Hill, ASDP Deputy Chair
Vicki's pronouns are she/her

run stage plots, execute onstage cues, and react to any sound related issues that come up backstage during a show as well as mixing the show regularly and deputising for the No.1 when they are away.

Leeluu: During tech, if you are setting up a new show, it's a more creative moment; building mic rigs that work for different cast members, sound good for the designer and No.1 and look visually pleasing. In the early stages there's lots of collaboration between all departments to build a show and create a backstage plot. Tech is time to experiment with techniques and try something new until you find something right.

Isobel: The No.2 is the head of backstage Sound. You need to be friendly and approachable because you work so closely with multiple departments; cast, in-house crew, show staff and the band. You are mostly monitoring mics; how they sound before they go onstage and while they're onstage and making sure that they are in





the same, consistent position. It's really important to always be one step ahead; always have spares and extras. Being creative is also important, you need to come up with unique solutions to very niche problems.

How do you prepare for tech?

Tess: Always read through the script, especially if it is a show you are unfamiliar with. As this allows you to gain some insight into what the show is about.

Tom: I am usually brought in a week or two before tech and I try to split that time between the rehearsal room, the hire store, and the theatre. It's useful to see at least one full run of the show so you can meet the cast and take note of anything that might trip you up in tech.

Leeluu: I prepare firstly by memorising the headshot sheet, it's a lot easier to build mics when you can visualise and know whose mic you are working on. I ask my No.1 when they'd like me to do fittings and then book in a session with the Company Manager to go to rehearsals for this once I have the microphones. I use the fittings with cast to try and get a relationship started where they feel comfortable coming to me about

questions and thoughts, as this means when we get to tech issues like foldback etc. come to me rather than to Stage Management.

Isobel: I always find the hardest part of starting a new job is learning all the faces and names – learning character names and human names gets confusing. Labels are so important! I label absolutely everything. This helps keep track of things and also helps me learn names faster. ‘Human name’ label on radio mic connector, ‘character name’ AND ‘human name’ on transmitter packs. On my most recent gig, I bought little pots to stick on dressing room doors to dish the mics to, and on the pots I put the actors’ names and a picture of their headshot to learn names and faces easier. Later down the line, it also makes it easier for deps.

Tess: Ask what kind of mic fittings you are going to be aiming for and a list of any equipment so that you can get to grips with any pieces that you don’t know beforehand.

Most of the time, I have been required to attend the rehearsal room, this might be for a run through or even some prep work before you get to the theatre. I like to make

a colour chart of people’s hair colours which means that I can ensure that I have colours to match.

Isobel: Always be ready with stock and extras of anything you might need. I always make sure to make as many wig clips as possible in different varieties before tech so that I have them ready to throw on and don’t have to sit making clips during tech when they need them.

Tess: Sometimes I have been required to go to the hire store as well, to help prep some kit before it arrives at the theatre. It’s a great chance to meet some of the production sound engineers that are going to be working on the show.

Leeluu: It’s nice to be involved in the building of the RF rack if possible as it’s easier to troubleshoot something you’ve put together yourself, however this depends on the start of contract sometimes.

Tom: Getting to know the kit you will be using is imperative so some time in the hire store to familiarise yourself with the equipment and meet the PSEs is always helpful. Especially when touring. It’s likely

that by the time a No.2 is on board, fit-up will already have started. Get in early to set up your workspace and find your way around the theatre and dressing rooms.

Isobel: Most importantly always have sweets at the radio rack; it’s a good way to bond and get cast comfortable with you and it’s a great conversation starter. Once one person finds out you have sweets at the rack the word will get out and eventually everyone come to see you at the rack for a sweet which means you can check their mic position and have a listen while there right in front of you.

Tom: Actually, at *Mrs Doubtfire*, we started a quiz board where there was a new riddle or puzzle at the radio rack for each show. Same effect!

What questions should people ask before the start of tech?

Isobel: I always ask who is on my team, who the designer is and who is in the cast.

Tom: You should never be afraid to ask the obvious questions before tech, it may seem like you are bothering people during a very busy time, but most people will appreciate you checking in. It can also save you a lot of

hassle later on. Have wardrobe made mic belts? If not do I need to get some ordered? Have the correct number of microphones been ordered and in the appropriate colours? Are we aiming for totally discreet mic fittings? How many people in the cast are wearing wigs and are wigs happy to fit those mics? Does anyone in the cast have any allergies or intolerances to any of the tapes or wipes I might be using? The more you know before you start, the better.

Tess: It's also good to find out where mic transmitters are being located on actors. If they are inside wigs then this is usually a process that needs to be discussed well before tech as it takes time to incorporate this into the design and making of the wigs.

Leeluu: I ask if the Designer or No.1 has any preferences about the mics. For example, the order in which they want the TX in and who they'd like on double rigs. Ask for access to Dropbox or any shared drives so that you can be as clued in as possible before you start the role. Ask about anything you're unsure of, this can be your No.1 or asking advice from your friends, colleagues and peers.



What is your relationship to your No.1 / Sound Designer in tech?

Tom: I think fundamentally, it is the job of a No.2 to allow the No.1 and Sound Designer to do their jobs. In order for them to get the show sounding as good as it can from FOH, they need everything backstage running smoothly. Solid and consistent mic fittings and a happy RF system means that they can focus on the mix.

Tess: You are mainly a link between the backstage and how it affects the FOH

running of a show, I always try and pop out regularly to check if what is happening backstage is coming across right FOH.

Leeluu: I see my job in tech as making my No.1's life as easy as possible, making sure to feedback on any issues and also to find solutions wherever possible. I make an effort to start tech with mics in the correct position, you can work on colouring as you go, you'll be working with your No.1 to find the perfect position on each person. I also check-in with Designers once you think you're at a place you're happy with mics and ask for feedback.

Tom: Every team dynamic is different, but it's not uncommon for a No.2 to have minimal contact with the No.1 and Designer through tech as everyone is busy doing their own thing. I always check in at the beginning of the day and at the end of every session to see if there's anything they need from me and if they have any notes.

Tess: I am a big fan of using a shared to-do list where a general list of things can either be allocated to a certain person or just separated out into either backstage or FOH. It's a good method for seeing which jobs have been taken care of and what is still left

to be achieved. I often create a WhatsApp group as well so that if people are running late or are not contactable on a radio, you can still communicate.

Isobel: Wavetool chat is also great in tech for sharing information with FOH.

Leeluu: Tech is a bit crazy, so anything that's not a high priority goes on a list to discuss at the end of a tech session or in a break. Writing things down for later makes both your and their lives easier. We try and keep radio channels clear so the No.1 doesn't get spoken over. Also expect call times to be flexible and if you're managing to get a break make sure to check in as others might not (always offer someone a coffee if they're not going to be able to leave the building).

Tom: Plan your day and assign responsibilities. Understand which jobs are yours and which you can share or delegate. A group chat and a shared to-do list will make this much easier.

How do you go about building good relationships with the cast and the rest of the crew?

Tess: This is very important, especially with

departments and colleagues who you spend a lot of time amongst. Nobody wants to feel like they are treading on eggshells around anyone.

Tom: Be nice and be professional! It's really important to gain the trust of the company. Your personality can be just as important as your technical knowledge as you will be in and out of dressing rooms and in their personal space quite a lot. Mutual trust is essential to allow everybody to do their jobs effectively. You have to strike a balance between always being present and available to help but also not being in the way and only getting involved when you need to.

Leeluu: I always have sweets, when I go to my first fitting session with cast, I'll know all their names, have some snacks and also be as personable as possible. Be someone people feel they can come to if there's an issue; information is always better first hand. Also work with wardrobe and WHAM as early as possible, Any little things you can do to help others will make them more likely to help you later down the line. Being nice is key!

Tess: I believe a good way of starting good relationships is by offering biscuits or even

just a small selection of sweets, gum or mints. Because you never know when you might need to ask them to do something that will help you out.

Isobel: You're the face of the Sound Department backstage. Often the cast won't recognise the No.1 until after Press as the No.1 is always in the darkness at the back of the stalls. It's so important to have a good relationship with the cast so they like and trust you as you often have to get to quite intimate areas, like bras or jock straps, to get to a mic pack.

Tom: A can of deodorant and a packet of chewing gum at the ready is also a must!

How do you deal with difficult personalities?

Tess: You can come across some difficult personalities at times. I always try and keep my cool and if it ever becomes a bigger problem, then I seek advice from a superior.

Tom: Empathy, good humour, and diplomacy will see you through most difficult situations in a theatre. Remember everyone is stressed during tech but ultimately everyone is working towards the same goal. Most minor things are forgiven

and forgotten at the pub afterwards. Having said that, never be afraid to take any serious issues higher up to your HOD or Company Manager. We all have a right to feel safe, respected and valued at work.

Tess: I once remember having to deal with a couple of cast members who 'refused' to wear mics as they thought that their acting technique did not require a microphone. The Sound Designer helped with this as yes, he agreed that at some moments the use of microphones was not necessarily needed but due to there being some loud sound effects used in other parts of the show, he explained that they would be utilised for those moments. Something to which the acting company had not realised and thought of.

Leeluu: Just respect boundaries, you might not be everyone's cup of tea, also some people might be under a lot of pressure and stress. Always try and have as much empathy as possible. 99% of times it's not personal if there's an issue, so try not to take everything to heart. Building relationships is key, it's a team sport and you'll have a nicer time if you're a team player.

Tom: Sometimes the downside of being the

onstage face of the Sound Department is that you can be on the receiving end of angry outbursts from the cast, often about things beyond your control. All you can do in these situations is remain calm and pass on the problem (perhaps more diplomatically) up the line.

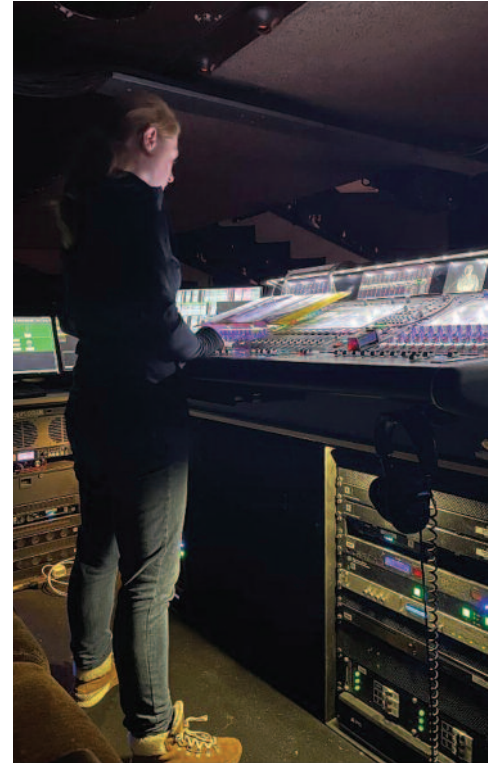
Who gives you notes about mics (look or placement)? How do you respond to these notes (e.g. do you wait for a break, the next day or jump onto stage straightaway)?

Leeluu: The No.1 and the Designer give me feedback. If the issue is position in tech, then I run on stage in the next stop, if it's an aesthetic issue, then I try and do this on breaks or before the start of the next session, if time allows.

Tess: I would normally expect notes regarding mic look or placement to come from either the No.1 or whoever is FOH and Sound Designer. Although I have experienced in the past comments also coming from a set designer and director before, although the route of these comments are often through the Sound Designer.

Isobel: I've had wig supervisors come up to

me about mic positions and asking to move them. I ask them to go have a conversation with the Sound Designer as it's their design I'm working on and trying to fulfil and it's



their decision at the end of the day.

Tom: It's collaborative. Wigs, wardrobe, designers, and performers can all have valid things to say when it comes to mics and mic placement. It's your job to come up with a solution that looks and sounds great, and is also comfortable for the performer.

Have you ever had to devise a clever solution to a mic fitting? Did you have to get other people involved?

Isobel: Our principle lady was on a double rig with two mic packs on her bra, they couldn't go in a wig as she wasn't wearing one for the whole show. At the end of Act One she got into a corset, which wasn't able to cope with the two mic packs in it. The Wardrobe team and I worked together and created garter mic belts, one for each leg. So in the costume change we had a cue to remove the packs from her bra and move them into pouches in her garters, which also had little elastic loops on them to tuck the antennae into so they didn't stick out. It worked really well.

Tom: Recently as No.2 for *Mrs Doubtfire*, I dealt with prosthetics for the first time. The main Mrs Doubtfire's mic was in his hairline, well out the way of the prosthetic mask.

However, the understudy was bald so had to be on an ear hanger. The trouble was that this got right in the way of the prosthetic mask. In collaboration with the prosthetic department, we were able to come up with a slightly unusual under-ear fitting that fitted into a special recess put into the mask.

On the premier of the *Fisherman's Friends* musical, I was faced with the task of radio mic-ing some quite unusual folk instruments. Mics down the actor's sleeves for accordions and one set in the brim of a hat for a penny whistle were a couple of the solutions I came up with.

Tess: Once I had to disguise a cable for an actor who was performing a topless scene. This also involved the Designer as the route of cable had to be carefully planned as they did not want to see cable during the scene.

Leeluu: I once had issues with a cast member not wanting to have their hair touched. It was a team effort with WHAM and Sound to find a solution that worked for everyone, including making the cast member feel comfortable. My No.1 was very patient with us whilst we worked on this and offered support throughout.

How do you interact with the PSEs?

Tess: I think it is really important to have a good relationship with PSEs as they can make your life much easier. If you relay information and needs to them. Again this is highly recommended in the opening of a show, as for instance setting up an area backstage that is workable early on is great.

Isobel: It varies gig to gig. I've met so many lovely PSEs and have stayed good friends with a lot of them. However, truthfully, as a woman I've also encountered sexism and misogyny, particularly from male PSEs who laugh at my expense and think that I'm not capable. I will always offer my help to PSEs during tech and if I'm not busy with my own jobs and at a loose end will ask if they have anything they need help with.

Leeluu: My main thing is to Google the instructions or look at the manual first and use your common sense. Of course ask, but 9/10 times the PSE will be Googling the manual too, so just save them and yourself time.

I find that PSEs can be a boys' club and that can be hard, but don't be scared to get involved and speak up on opinions you might have. ●

Profile: Mike Beer



Mike Beer is a Sound Designer who loves what he does. He has found a winning combination that keeps him coming back for more, so we sat down with him to find out what is so exciting about working in theatre and why site specific performances fill him with glee.

Mike started out in the Sherman Theatre in the 80s, as a YTS trainee, learning all technical duties while working on the job. But didn't get behind the desk until he was a full time employee nine months later when he was shown how to mix shows, operate the Revox, focus lights, fly scenery and show 35mm film.

As a keen guitarist he was always interested in Sound and naturally gravitated towards the Sound department. Within four years of starting at the Sherman he was head of Sound and a further year saw him become Chief LX, he was just 22 years old. Mike lived and breathed the venue, it was his whole life and you get the feeling that he absolutely loved every second of it.

When the time came to move on, Mike started at The Cliffs Pavilion in Southend on Sea, a large receiving house. He spent nine months watching large theatre and rock tours coming in and out and he realised that there were many different ways of working, something he hadn't been

exposed to working in just one venue previously, it brought him thumping back to earth and he decided that he needed to give touring a try if he was going to continue learning.

"I was just so lucky to see what people were doing," Mike explains. "I learnt so much, but it was all on the job training. Sometimes I get asked to teach at drama schools, but I'm reluctant as I never had any formal training myself and so much of what I do is from many years of just doing it, I'd be worried about passing on bad habits!"

Looking back at the opportunities Beer has had for learning reminds him of a collaboration that he feels might not happen in the same way today.

"When you're working as part of the performance it feels great," He recalls. "The Sound becomes almost another character in the show. The first time I remember feeling like that was back in 1995, for a play called *A Song From A Forgotten City*. It



By Zoe Milton
Zoe's pronouns are she/her

was before QLab or DAW, we were working with REVOX and DAT. The edited show audio had to be taken to a studio, traveling with DAT masters from Cardiff to London where it was transferred onto four CDs for the show. I mixed it all live into the various speakers and moved the audio around the space manually using groups. There were no mics, so I had to feel every line, pushing and pulling the underscore with the action.”

“I learnt so much going through that process and I feel like if I’d had QLab, it might have been a simple push button show and I would never have learnt all those skills and really got to grips with the mechanics of what I was doing with Sound.”

Understanding what it takes to put on a performance is only part of what Mike does so well. He is a regular freelancer with Stage Sound Services (SSS) and had worked with Phil Hurley (Company Director) since the early days of the company. Watching the company grow from a six person outfit to the large company it is today has taken his

knowledge to even further reaches of the industry.

“I’ve learnt so much from Phil,” Mike continues. “he really loves getting the best for each client, regardless of their budget. You get to see the whole process, from production management, prepping, budget management, Phil just wants every show to be as good as it can be, he’ll take time to consider the budget with every client and make sure they get the best that they can afford. It’s a care and love of theatre. The company is huge now, but it hasn’t grown because of empire building, it’s grown out of that love and care for the clients and the staff.”

It’s not about doing work for free, or exhausting staff with long hours and no breaks. Mike understands the need to protect the workforce while producing the very best theatre performances. The idea that Theatre Folk work for love is one that permeates our entire industry. The attitude that insists that ‘the show must go on’ is



one that we’ve agreed since the pandemic is not a healthy ideal with producers and managers understanding that there needs to be adequate cover for all roles in the production and the budget needs to be available to pay them a fair wage.

“If people in your team feel like they have to work without breaks and really push themselves to get the show on, ultimately they suffer and the show suffers too.” Mike agrees. “It has to be a balance. We’re all there to get the best show possible, but it has to happen without breaking the people



Left: *The Tempest* (Wiltshire Creative / Ash Mills)

who are working on the show. That kind of life isn't sustainable."

"It's a privilege to do a job that you love," He explains. "but if something goes wrong, if you miss a cue or mess something up, it's all ok. My daughter is a nurse, she loves her job and works hard doing it, but if she has a bad day it's a very different situation."

There are companies where missing a cue could be the end of the world and in situations like that Mike is much more likely to walk away.

"I've worked on shows where making a mistake is unacceptable and everyone ends up on tenterhooks, the stress can be massive. It's not healthy for anyone to work like that, so I try not to. The sort of job I love is one where everyone is free to try stuff and have it fail, otherwise how do you learn? I suppose that's why I love site specific shows, nothing is the same twice."

Beer goes onto explain why it is so much fun to be part of the creation of one of these performances.

"I never stop learning with the site specific shows, it's always a clean palette and a

massive learning curve, you have to be led by your surroundings. Outside in a field, everything can change in an instant. You usually have tight perimeters to work in or restrictions due to your surroundings, but that just forces you to come up with solutions which can be really creative. I always think that you've got to enjoy it, the wages usually aren't good enough to be doing it just for the money!"

"There are always shows that stick in your mind and last year we did one, *The Tempest*. The show was the beginning to the Wiltshire Arts Festival, a professional cast of ten along side a community cast of 40 were performing in the middle of Churchill Gardens, Salisbury. There was no existing power infrastructure and the show was a promenade performance performed during summer evenings, so no lighting. To tell the story we would need loads of PA to cover all of the different performances zones. We were on a really tight budget, so that much kit wasn't an option, plus it was being performed in a park, with no fencing, a small security team overnight and nowhere to secure anything. Faced with all of those restrictions, I looked at the electric buggies that we were using to move around the site and I wondered, maybe I

could fit a battery and some PA in there? So that's what we did! It was brilliant fun. If we needed surround, or effect speakers, we just moved them to where the Sound needed to be, we really experimented during rehearsals and it worked perfectly for the performance."

Learning is a fundamental part of what keeps Mike interested and in his creative zone. The site specific shows that he enjoys so much have been in short supply the last year or so, funding cuts are changing the way that theatres approach productions in general with work getting safer and less experimental, so what keeps Mike interested when he's not on a beach or halfway up a mountain?

"I've recently been working with the Royal College Welsh College of Music and Drama on their BA Musical Theatre showcase. It's a brilliant project for the final year students. We do two shows in Cardiff, then we pack everything into a van, drive it down to London, stick it on stage in the West End, rehearse, do a matinee, stick it all back in the van and go home. It's a massive undertaking. We loaded into the Shaftsbury at 8:30am and we're playing in front of an audience by 1:30pm. There are five band, 16

cast, d&b PA, Avioms, it all comes with us from Cardiff, there's no time to check anything in the morning so we have to bring everything with us. I mix and design from front of house and have a PSE/No. 2 looking after back stage. It's one of those gigs where I get to stand at the back saying 'could we just run that again?' or 'could we do that without the actors?' it's lovely to have that trust from the company, it means that we can make it happen very quickly."

Chatting with Beer you get a real sense of his excitement and gratitude for the longevity of the career he loves. We are always hearing that to experience true happiness we must value the journey as much as the destination. Mike Beer is a lesson to us all in enjoying the ride and valuing the constant opportunity to learn through experience.

The balance between his joy at being part of this fantastic industry, whilst ensuring that he protects safe working boundaries for himself and his team means that he is able to achieve extraordinary Sound Designs in a sustainable way without risking burnout for everyone involved. It is a rare combination and one that Beer clearly is still loving every second of. ●

The ASDP Equipment Loan Scheme

Did you know that the ASDP's Equipment Loan Scheme is in its twelfth year?

The first documented mention of the Equipment Loan Scheme was at the 2013 ASD AGM. A lot has changed for us in that time, not only our name, but our membership has increased by almost exactly three times since then.

Our Association is, and always has been, a product of our industry and our membership. All of the things that we do and invest in are from ideas brought to us by our members, or in answer to what is happening in our industry. And that's exactly how the Equipment Loan Scheme came about too.

The idea seemed to come from a discussion between Gareth Fry (our founding chair) and Jonthan Suffolk (the then HOD of Sound and Video at the National Theatre).

I asked Gareth for some details; "I know it came about in a meeting between myself and Jonathan Suffolk who was HOD Sound and Video at the NT at the time. I think it focused initially on the KU100 binaural head

that the NT had acquired relatively recently. That was something the NT had but not much use for, and it was something that people kept wanting to borrow. I think Jonathan suggested it could be a scheme to loan it out. And from there the NT's Sound Devices 722 recorder and MKH416 rifle mic was also very kindly offered. The idea met a lot of interest at the AGM. Nick Pemberton from Sennheiser, was very interested by the idea of the scheme as it felt like it was something manufacturers could offer to the ASD. That resulted in us receiving a Sennheiser Esfera system to go on to the scheme too.

The intent with the scheme was to provide the kind of kit that designers might need to create a design, rather than what is needed to run a show, hence the focus on recording



By Sam Vincent
Sam's pronouns are he/him



equipment. This also helped to avoid stepping on the toes of our rental company corporate members who make their living from the latter!”

And so the Equipment Loan Scheme was born, run out of the National Theatre in London.

The Scheme was a success, but as the Board were trying to make the Association more accessible and representative of our membership across the whole of the UK, the Equipment Loan Scheme needed updating to reflect this. So, in 2021 it was decided by the Board that the scheme would be expanded to the north. Sorcha Steele (the then Head of Sound at the Manchester Royal Exchange) agreed to arrange for the Royal Exchange to host the Scheme.

The items that were already included in the Scheme at the National Theatre were assessed for popularity and it was decided to buy another binaural head. After some research we purchased an Inari Audio Pro 4060 trinaural head. This head uses DPA 4060s and is a binaural head with an extra third mic in the centre of the forehead allowing for a mono reference recording or

maybe use of a LCR setup, or (with some processing) possibly a mid/side arrangement.

After some consultation with the membership we also added a Tenma CCTV and Video Tester and a Brother PT-E550WSP Label Printer to be made available in Manchester. A lot of productions seem to be mounting in Manchester these days and it seemed these could potentially be put to good use.

John Leonard kindly offered his Rode NT-SF1 Ambisonic Microphone to be added to the London equipment and that is now available too!

Having run a Binaural Workshop at Glasgow’s Winter School we have made the Inari Head available in Scotland thanks to Board member Clare Hibberd hosting it at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

The current scheme includes;

- Sennheiser MKH416 Shotgun Microphone with a Rycote Windshield
- Neumann KU100 Binaural Microphone (courtesy of the NT)
- Sound Devices 722 Portable Recorder
- Zoom F8 Portable Recorder

- SMAART V8 Analysis System
- Rode NT-SF1 Ambisonic Microphone (with thanks to John Leonard)
- Tenma CCTV and Video Tester
- Inari Audio Trinaural Head
- Brother PT-E550WSP Label Printer

Thanks to Clear-Com, members also have access to a Clear-Com DX410 System from their Demo kit. This is offered by them and we can give you details of how to get in touch with them.

Our hope is that this Scheme will continue to grow and evolve with our membership, and we can only do that effectively with the input from everyone as to what you would like to see in terms of equipment. We would love to also expand the number of locations that host our kit, this is a more involved process, but we are always open to suggestions and are very grateful for all offers. ●

MORE INFO

You can find more details about the Equipment Loan Scheme at theasdp.com/kitloan. If you would like to use any of the equipment as part of the scheme please do get in touch. You can email us, loan@theasdp.com if you have any ideas for the future of the scheme.

Our Corporate Members provide vital financial support to the ASDP

Our Corporate Members

d&b audio



Harman



Meyer



Shure



Yamaha



AED Audio



DBS Solutions



HD Pro Audio



Nemesis Research



Sonosphere



Our Affiliate Members

Autograph



Digico



Holoplot



Orbital Sound



Stage Sound Services



PIPA



Calm Theatre Sounds



DPA Microphones



Innovate Audio



Point Source Audio



TiMax



AAPTLE



Clear-Com



EM Acoustics



KV2



Riedel



Tube



Creative Technology



Figure 53



L-Acoustics



Sennheiser



Wavetool



Please contact us via the website or email to discuss becoming a Corporate Member of the ASDP:
admin@theadsp.com
theadsp.com

We are here for you!

Backup - provides financial support to industry technical professionals in the UK entertainment industry specifically live events, music touring and theatre.

Backup offers confidential support and help to get you back on your feet.

If you, or someone you know is in need of help, please get in contact.

Scan QR Code for full details on support and contact info.



Backup Tech

the technical entertainment charity

