



## 2023 Spring play A Bunch of Amateurs

Written by: Ian Hislop and Nick Newman

Directed by: Joe O'Connor and Pip Burns

Keen to boost his flagging career, fading Hollywood action hero Jefferson Steele arrives in England to play King Lear in Stratford – only to find that this is not the birthplace of the Bard, but a sleepy Suffolk village. And instead of Kenneth Branagh and Dame Judi Dench, the cast are a bunch of amateurs trying to save their theatre from developers. Jefferson's monstrous ego, vanity and insecurity are tested to the limit by the enthusiastic am-dram thespians. As acting worlds collide and Jefferson's career implodes, he discovers some truths about himself – along with his inner Lear!

### Rehearsal Schedule

Rehearsals start on Wednesday 8th Feb, with Monday rehearsals starting 20th February onwards.

**Set build - Sun 7 May (TBC)**

**Set dress/tech - Sat/Sun 13/14 May**

Details TBC

**Dress rehearsal- Mon 15 May**

**Performance dates - Wed 17-20 May**

**Set strike- Sun 21 May**

### Notices

#### Extra hands

ABoA has lots of quick set changes and some small roles (journalists), so from about Easter onwards we will be looking for some additional volunteers. Please come down to rehearsals or let us know you are interested in taking part.

## Events and announcements

### Pub drink (Wed 8th February)

It would be great to see everyone again, and with lots of new faces it would be great to continue our monthly pub meets. Please join us at the Red Lion in Eynsham after our Wednesday 8th Feb rehearsal.

### Wardrobe

With the amazing Sally Firth taking a break, we are in need of a volunteer to help with Wardrobe with Bunch of Amateurs. Please get in touch with Joe or Pip if you'd like to be involved ([bart.players@gmail.com](mailto:bart.players@gmail.com))

### Props

The 'props' team (Keith, Judy and Valerie) would be so very grateful if you would all check the "props list" for ABoA to see if you have any of the myriad of bizarre props that we are currently trying to source.

### How-to series

This month's how-to series continues with Denise's How-to Produce. I am always bowled over by how much goes into BP, and I think we can all agree that Denise does such a fantastic job, read on to find out how she does it.

### Reading Series

This year we are looking for a couple of volunteers to run a series of three reading sessions to run in parallel with the main plays. Ideally we would like to find a one act play to perform at a Summer 2023 festival. If you are interested in taking part or running some reading sessions please contact [liberty.foreman@gmail.com](mailto:liberty.foreman@gmail.com) and/or [bart.players@gmail.com](mailto:bart.players@gmail.com)



# How-to: Produce



by  
**Denise  
Santilli**

Producers themselves often joke that they don't actually know what a theatre producer does. It's a broad role – one which requires the individual to wear many hats.

## What skills are needed to become a producer?

### 1) Communication

The ability to listen and communicate with the team

### 2) IT

Familiarity with commonly used office programmes to help with admin, ticketing, feedback

### 3) Confidence

To give your opinion, to challenge others and have the confidence to get things wrong, to fail and learn from them

### 4) Creativity

To offer creative ideas and solutions to the challenges that arise during the production

### 5) Calm

In high pressure situations

### 6) Passion

About the production you're working on to ensure their success

### 7) Organisation

To ensure that no essential tasks and timings are missed

At the Bartholomew Players, the Producer of a play is the "Project Manager" who ensures that tasks are completed at the appropriate time by the appropriate person so that everything comes together at the right time to make the play a success.

## Producers roles and responsibilities

### a) Assemble production team

Generally this occurs in association with the director, and will include include: set designer, wardrobe, set construction crew, lighting and sound technicians, stage manager, props and backstage crew, and Front of House manager etc

### b) Distributing scripts

Ensure sufficient copies of scripts are obtained and – via the club secretary and generally in association with the Director. Ensure that these are distributed to all involved.

### c) Contact details

Collect contact details for the complete onstage and backstage production team including any new members brought in for a production. This should be done in conjunction with the club secretary.

### d) Budget

Oversee the production budget in accordance with the Committee's Standing Orders

### e) Performance rights

Ensure all necessary licences and consents are obtained for the entire run at an early stage (eg performing rights, firearms and edged weapons, smoking on stage, and child performance licences etc)

### f) Set loans/stage properties

Any special stage properties (ie on loan, hire or purchase) are obtained and arranging to obtain any necessary equipment (eg lighting and/or set construction tools)

### g) Publicity

Suitable publicity (in consultation with Committee Publicity Representative) is arranged, organising an early photo call, and arranging for the production of all print requirements (tickets, programme, posters etc) which shall include any necessary acknowledgements (eg property loans etc). Ensure posters are taken down after the show.

### h) Policies

All policies relevant to potentially dangerous special effects (eg pyrotechnics, stage hangings, stage fights, smoking, edged weapons, stroboscopic lights etc) are obtained and ensure first aid & fire procedures are in place & known

### i) Organising performance nights

The smooth running of the performance nights i.e. confirm FOH rota, organise chairs (& tables) for performances, ensure skylight blinds are closed and reopened, ensure door blackouts are applied & removed

### j) Follow-up forms

ensure all follow-up forms are collated and mailing lists updated after the show

### k) Village hall

be fully familiar with the requirements and security of the Village Hall (eg door keys, burglar alarm setting etc)

### l) Members

all participants in a production hold the appropriate levels of membership (eg adult actors must be or become full members)

Alongside the “checklist” of tasks to be completed, the Producer is also there to morally support any cast and crew members who may be new to their role or may be uncertain of how to complete the task assigned to them.

I have been doing the Producer role for some years now and find that having a timed checklist helps me to ensure I don't forget any key tasks and timings for myself and others. I'd be very happy to mentor someone who would like to take on this role for future productions – it's always a good idea to share the skill base in the team!

This is what my checklist looked like for our recent play “Rutherford and Son”. It may look daunting, but it isn't! Come and have a go!!

Weeks before play	Date	Task	Who	Done
12	07/09/2022	Write press release	Producer & Director	Y
		Produce poster (jpg, landscape, portrait formats)	Elaine + Director / Producer	Y
		send posters to print	Producer	Y
		Identify and approach charity partner	Producer & Director	Y
		Brief charity partner on requirements	Producer & Director	Y
11	14/09/2022	Send press release & poster to all publicity outlets	Publicity officer	Y
		book library window	Publicity officer	Y
		Update website & Facebook	Elaine + Director / Publicity Officer	Y
		Post event on Ticketsource	Publicity officer	Y
		Design & print tickets	Elaine / Publicity officer	Y
		Invite reviewers (Daily Info, ODN, NODA)	Publicity officer	Y
10	21/09/2022	Design roadside poster	Elaine + Director / Producer	Y
		tickets and poster to Evenlode	publicity officer	Y
9	28/09/2022	Send artwork for poster for printing	Publicity officer	Y
8	05/10/2022	start programme artwork	Steve Ashcroft	Y
7	12/10/2022	Check Cereta can do dress rehearsal photos	Producer	Y
		posters to cast to distribute in villages	publicity officer	Y
6	19/10/2022	Press photo shoot	Publicity officer	Y
		check Film night showings & give talk /handouts	publicity officer	Y
		Approach Co-op for Mince pies	producer	Y
5	26/10/2022	Call for FOH staff and raffle prizes	producer	Y
4	02/11/2022	post A5 posters on parish noticeboards	Publicity officer	Y
		Reminder to cast and crew re. set build, dress	producer / Director	Y
		Check refreshment supplies	Committee	Y
3	09/11/2022	put posters up on lampposts in Village	publicity officer	Y
		put up roadside posters	Gareth	Y
		set up display in Library window	publicity officer	Y
		send programme artwork for printing	Steve Ashcroft	Y
		order icecreams	Denise	Y
		Set build	all	Y
2	16/11/2022	reminder to all re. set dress tasks	producer / Director	Y
		obtain approval to put freezer in VH	producer	Y
1	22/11/2022	handouts for film night & contact John Richards	producer	Y
		Print feedback forms	publicity officer	
<b>Days before 1st night</b>		print price lists inc. those for Friday night	publicity officer	
7	23/11/2022	check sufficient raffle tickets	Producer / FOH	
6	24/11/2022	Film night presentation and handouts	Director	
5	25/11/2022	Sort out raffle prizes by night	Producer / FOH	
		set dress	all	
4	26/11/2022	technical rehearsal	all	
		bring freezer to VH	Denise	
3	27/11/2022	Deliver icecreams to VH	Denise	
		Rehearsal photos taken	Cereta	
2	28/11/2022	Rehearsal photos printed and put on board	publicity officer	
		Collect glasses & wine from Eynsham Cellars	Debi	
1				
<b>Opening night</b>	30/11/2022			
Post show	04/12/2022	take down posters from lampposts	all / publicity officer	
		take down Library display	Publicity officer	
		return glasses and unused wine to Eynsham Cellars	Debi	
	07/12/2022	Post show debrief	all	