

Organising the work of the English Drama Group – the assistants

It is true that a director has all the responsibility – especially in a school drama group, and that responsibility can be something pressing. But the decisions in the English Drama Group are not reached in a dictatorial manner. Certainly the director, i.e. I, has the final word, and sometimes the decisions are not unanimous, but there has always been a group of actors who take over some responsibility by advising, checking, discussing, putting forward ideas, organising, mediating, and transmitting. Every new idea the director has, first goes to this team – using them like a wall at which he throws new ideas like balls that bounce off. All new ideas are tested on them – they react to them, accept them, ask for alterations, offer compromises – before the ideas are introduced to the rest of the group.

These team members who hold a special place in the whole group for the director, have for practicality been divided into director's assistants, production assistants, stage managers, stage designers, and treasurers. Sometimes, in the history of our group, the functions have overlapped, and some have developed only recently. But my thanks as a director go to all those who contributed even more than all the others to the success of the fringe, and this is a contribution to them. In the following, you will be introduced to some of those people – only some because over the past 21 years many many people have contributed here.

The treasurers

The people who control the money are always very important. In 19 years, the group has now had nine treasurers: Martin Reichinger (1997-98), Christian Reichinger (1998-2001), Susanne Ruch (2001-2004), Lena Schmidt (2004-2006), Marlene Münzel (2006-2009), Lilly Fleischmann (2009-2010), Jasmin Rahimy (2010-2013), Sophie Jungermayr (2013-2014), Vinzent Meister (2014-2016), Vanessa Pham (2016-2018), and at the moment Nina Dötsch (since 2018).

The stage managers

From its second year of production, the fringe has always had a stage manager who is responsible for the props, for the cleaning up and away, for the preparation of the stage, transportation, and the general happiness of all the actors. Many of them went on to be assistants. In 2019, Reni Lazarova took over the position.

The production assistants

Rather a new invention, it is the production assistant's task to take over where the assistants leave. During the rehearsals, the assistants assist the director, but when the final dress rehearsals are going on, they don't have any time for this any more. In steps the production assistant who accompanies the director and takes notes of everything he says. Between 2016 and 2018, Eleanor Frost proved invaluable in this position. In 2018, Jael Gallert took over.

The stage designers

Stage designers and technicians are most important for any production, and our stage designs have grown more creative and extravagant by the year, also more costly. Several of the designs were so-called Facharbeiten, like the ones

by Valentin Bräunlein for *The Rivals* in 1998

by Theresa Greim for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2000

by Nadine Friedrich for *An Ideal Husband* in 2005

by Andreas Romeike for *The New Woman* in 2007.

A team of Olga Bartuli, Jacqueline Fulger, Rebekka Jesch, and Moritz Hacker designed and built the fabulous set for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2008, with Moritz Hacker doing nearly all the woodwork. In 2009, he proved indispensable again, building two coffins for *Dracula* and organising light, sound, and fog. In 2010, he built the complete stage set – a turntable of 5m in diameter, with a dividing wall on top of it. In 2011, he wanted to do something with light – the director inspired him to create a changeable stage set by using two big beamers and a high door that could be turned. In 2012 and 2013, the undefatigable Hanna Prykhodzka designed dances, posters and the set – building a stairway and a 4 m long bar in wood.

In 2014/15 Marco Jantos and Matthias Lauterbach organized light and sound, edited the programme, and built a smaller turntable with stairs and doors and side walls that were over three metres high. In 2017, Marco installed a lot of extra lighting for the new venue, and he built an extra platform. Without his contribution, the play would have been nearly invisible.

In 2017/18 Luis Zappe and Nina Pickl built a 3.2 meter high tower with the help of two fathers (Mr Ziegler and Mr Pyschik). Thank you.

Thank you all!

The assistants

They are the most important people in the team. They help the director in any necessary manner, especially by sacrificing a lot of time and brainwork. They are sometimes like sheepdogs trying to keep the herd together, and sometimes they really take over parts of the directing work, e.g. by directing some vocal training, or leading rehearsals, if the director is absent. In the following, there is a hopefully complete list of the assistants up to now:

1996-2005

Constanze Fehske, Marion Müller, Katharina Babenko, Katharina Beiergrößlein, Theresa Greim, Larisa Ring, Nadine Friedrich, Irina Medowaja, May Brümmer, Katharina Lopatin.

2005-2020

Katharina Lopatin, Kira Sesselmann, Romina Heinrich, Anne Eisenhuth, Jana Pittel, Marlene Münzel, Bettina Wagner, Alina Wanitzek, Peter Tscheperkow, Nick Hagemann, Hanna Prichodko, Karolina Panow, Jasmin Rahimy, Antonia Schimmöller, Sophie Jungermayr, Elisabeth Scholz, Jacqueline Reißeweber, Frederike Dobelke, Lukas Kollböck, Lisa Gräbner, Isabella Catanese, Sylvia Giesa, Eleanor Frost, Jael Gallert, Viola Griebel, Nina Dötsch.

The director



Hans-Dieter Scholz (born 1965) teaches English, History, and Social Sciences. He went to school in nearby Bamberg, where he also went to university to study English and History. While at university, he joined the university English Drama Group under Michael Claridge – a lasting influence, just like the dancing school influence due to Scholz's personal hobby. 1989/1990, he was foreign language assistant at Queensmead School and Bishop Ramsey School in the London Borough of Hillingdon, where he first came in contact with school drama classes. During his teacher training, he spent time in Nürnberg, Immenstadt and Ansbach, before he arrived at

the Graf-Münster-Gymnasium in 1994. In 1996, students from a year 10 – class pressured him to try out an English Drama Group, which then formed as an informal AG (Arbeitsgemeinschaft – work group) of already 18 members. Since then, the English Drama Group, which took the name of “the fringe” in 1997, has flourished and developed. In 2016, the director was awarded the Kulturpreis der Stadt Bayreuth for the work with this drama group. We will try to continue the good work.