

sedos grapevine

april 2011

Jets v. Sharks!

With West Side Story opening on Wednesday, the Grapevine caught up with director/choreographer Kim Barker, musical director Ben Nicholls, assistant choreographer Jo Barrett Constantinou and assistant director Michael Gray

So, Something's definitely Coming — who's winning — Sharks or Jets?

Ben: Too tough to call at this stage — they're all pretty damn good on everything!

Jo: The Jets have attitude and determination but the Sharks have spunk (yes I did say that).

Kim: At the last social the Sharks were winning on the banter front and the Jets on the "dance off" front. Overall, I wouldn't mess with either.

Michael: As I have just been inducted into the Jet boys I'm gonna have to fall off the fence — Jets rule! (sorry Sharks).

How are the cast bearing up under the gruelling dance schedule?

Ben: I can't dance for anything but they're INCREDIBLE! Three extra-special cheers for Tom Lennard, who has been running the most amazing dance warm-ups. His legs can

literally kick to his chest. I can barely walk — it's pretty impressive stuff.

Jo: I've heard rumours of jazz classes, yoga and pilates classes.

West Side Story is
on 6-16 April at the
Bridewell Theatre.
Tickets at
sedos.co.uk.

Kim: Ben, it's Tom Leonard not Lennard... shocking. "Gruelling" is a good word, I may look sweet and innocent but I have pretty high expectations... it says everything about our cast that they are totally rising to the challenge

Michael: They're working their behinds off!

What have been the best bits so far?

Ben: My conversations with Doc (aka Sir Henry Chester, a future Oscar winner) while all the beautiful girls are dancing.

Jo: Watching the cast bond and trust each other. Everyone is as ease with each other so can go for it without feeling uncomfortable.

Kim: Geoff Chang approaching a bent over Matt Morden yelling "Matt, I'm coming" while practising leapfrogs in the prologue... (Call me juvenile but even now it makes me double over).

Michael: Watching Kim and Jo beat each other up (in the fight workshop, obviously!).

Ben, Bernstein... That's quite tricky, right? Any anxiety dreams yet?

Ben: There would be if we didn't have such great musicians and singers! I guess my only fear is that we don't manage to bring out every single incredible thing in the music... but we'll do our best! I love how the score reflects

all the tension in the dialogue. For example, there's this recurring tritone motif all the way through that the ancients used to call the "Devil In Music" because it was such a weird sound — Bernstein's way of creating tension. It's all really clever and I hope we do it justice!

What are you looking forward to now?

Ben: Sounds cliched, but there's nothing like the buzz of a first and last night.

Jo: Watching the final product and seeing how good they will feel when the audience break into applause. I feel proud thinking about it.

Kim: Hopefully seeing everything coming together seamlessly... hey, I can dream!

Michael: Seeing the show take life as we start to run with set, costumes etc. It's gonna be emotional. <Group Hug>

And what do you find daunting?

Ben: For an MD the Sitzprobe is always the scary moment — when the two halves of the show world come together and make music together for the first time. But with this company, I'm more than confident we can do it!

Kim: Probably just the fact this is such a well loved show and everyone has strong opinions on how they expect to see it done.

Michael: I just hope people like the show. It's a tough one as it's so challenging and everyone expects the best. We've given it our best shot so fingers crossed.

What is the show motto/mantra?

Ben/Jo/Kim: "She flicks herself off."

Kim: Should give some context to this?

Michael: Perhaps — in the stage directions after Anita has been attacked by the jet boys it says "she flicks herself off". A truly priceless moment

in the read through which has stayed with us all.

And finally, are you a Shark or a Jet?

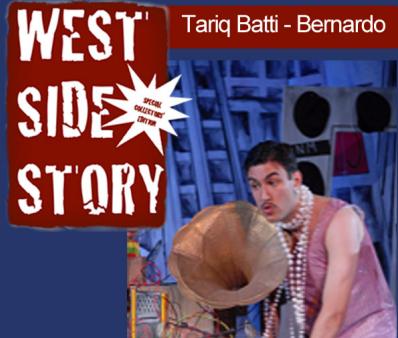
Ben: I'm clearly Gladhands.

Jo: As I'm a girl briefly in both gangs I think I am having identity issues.

Kim: I'm dual heritage. Both feel like my children — I couldn't possibly choose.

Michael: JET! (sorry Sharks).

Find more West Side Story top trumps in this Grapevine...



Tariq Batti - Bernardo

Weapons Skills	8
Love-o-meter score	9
Cool Points	7
Survival Skills	awkward...
Most Likely to...	Mambo your mama

Sex and tortoises: Arcadia's coming

Two new plays have been added to Sedos's season, with the first one just three months away

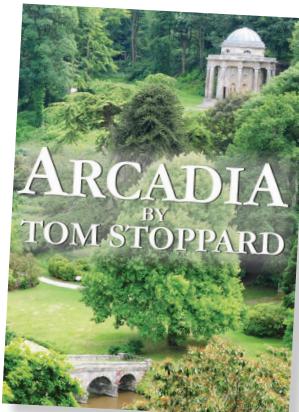
The recent news that Sedos will be performing Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* in July caused plenty of chat during the final days of *Romeo and Juliet* — will you be auditioning? Are you a Septimus, a Valentine or perhaps a Bernard? Lady Croom or Hannah?

Arcadia replaces *Push Up*, which has had to be bumped due to the demands of director Chris de Pury's day job. The performance dates for *Arcadia* are 19-23 July at the Bridewell, where Sedos is now the resident theatre company.

The decision to put on *Arcadia* follows Sedos's successful production of the same author's spy thriller, *Hapgood*, in November last year. Matt Gould, who made his directorial debut with that show, is at the helm again this time.

He says: "I'm delighted to have the opportunity to direct again so soon after the wonderful experience of *Hapgood*. I love Stoppard's language and it will be great to work another brilliant Stoppard script. I've always loved the conceit of *Arcadia* — two time periods, but in the same room. I can't wait to get going!"

First performed in 1993, *Arcadia* is one of Stoppard's best



same room — in the final scene, simultaneously.

Filled with mystery and brilliant one-liners, the play explores the nature of truth and time, the difference between classical and romantic temperaments, and the disruptive influence of sex on our lives, "the attraction Newton left out".

There are 12 parts in *Arcadia* — four women and eight men — and auditions are this week, visit sedos.co.uk for the full audition notice. Oh yes, there's a tortoise in it too. Any volunteers?

The mini-pitch process for the September play slot resulted in fierce competition, but the winner was Zoe Thomas-Webb, who will direct *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, by the America playwright Stephen Adly Guirgis, at the Bridewell from 27 September to 1 October. First staged off-Broadway in 2005, this play had its European premier at the Almeida Theatre in 2008.

Zoe, who was assistant director to Rebecca Smith for Sedos's recent *Romeo and Juliet*, introduces the show: "Judas can't speak. Judas can't move. Judas is in a catatonic state in the ninth circle of hell. But does he deserve to be?"

"In the courtroom of Hope, located in downtown Purgatory, the biggest players in history aim to find out whether Judas is guilty of the most famous betrayal of all. Pontius Pilate, Mother

known works, partly due to a 2009 London run at the Duke of York's theatre, which starred the author's son Ed as Valentine. The action moves between the early 19th century and the present, with characters from both eras occupying the

Theresa, Henrietta Iscariot and Satan are all called to the witness stand, never let it be said that the Prince of Tyre stood in the way of truth.

Zoe goes on: "I'm so excited at the prospect of being able to direct such a riot of a play which has so many great opportunities for actors to really show off their acting talents in a show that grabs you by the throat and shakes a response out of you, whether that's laughing till you cry or crying until you realise that you all you can do is laugh."

Auditions for *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* will be in June and there are 26 roles, using 21 actors (11 men, eight women, three of either sex). More details on sedos.co.uk in due course.

Stop press: as the Grapevine went to press, we heard Sedos is adding Jason Robert Brown's musical *The Last 5 Years* to the season, performance dates 20-23 October at The Rag Factory. More details on sedos.co.uk.

WEST
SIDE
STORY

SPECIAL COLLECTORS EDITION

Matt Morden - Riff



Matt Morden - Riff

7

Weapons Skills	7
Love-o-meter score	5
Cool Points	8
Survival Skills	-3
Most Likely to...	spend the second half in the bar

Dates for the diary

6-16 April

West Side Story performances

8 & 9 April/10 April

Arcadia auditions/recalls

20 April

AGM

7 & 8 May/14 May

Assassins auditions/recalls

Contacts

In charge of the Grapevine (supposedly)

Pippa Roome

She makes it look beautiful

Nicole Rush

Contact the Grapevine at

grapevine@sedos.co.uk

Sedos website

sedos.co.uk

Find us at

facebook.com/sedostheatre

twitter.com/sedos

youtube.com/sedosvideo

flickr.com/sedos

Sedos committee

Chris de Pury (chairman),
Chloë Faine (secretary),
Craig Topp (treasurer),
Deborah Lean, Matt Prince,
Matt Gould, Rebecca Smith,
Will Harrison-Wallace and Chris Warner

Contact the committee at:

admin@sedos.co.uk

Make the most of Sedos online



Sedos has an active and thriving virtual community, so make sure you're getting involved

How often do you think the Sedos website and facebook page get updated? Once a week? Once a month? Each time a show comes down?

The answer is actually five days a week for facebook (facebook.com/sedostheatre) and nearly as regularly for the Sedos website (sedos.co.uk).

The Sedos website and facebook are the first places to hear about **auditions**, what **tickets are on sale**, what **socials** you can sign up for and more. In addition, **rehearsal** photos and flyers are displayed here and you can get a **sneak preview** of shows by looking at their dress rehearsal photos the day after.

Or perhaps you're having a fit of nostalgia and want to remember your Sedos shows? All our **photos are archived** online — follow the archive link on sedos.co.uk or take a look at our Flickr page, flickr.com/sedos.

Sedos's **facebook** page has 587 fans — could you help us make it to the 600 milestone? Do suggest the page to friends with an interest in theatre — that way they can keep up to date with Sedos too.

Sedos also has a new regular **weekly email newsletter**. If you are a Sedos member, you should receive this automatically, but if you are not getting it — or a friend wants to sign up — they can do so online by visiting sedos.co.uk/general/contact.htm and entering their email address.

Meanwhile, our hard-working webmaster Stephen Beeney has some useful advice about facebook:

Facebook: check your newsfeed settings!

Have you noticed that you are only seeing updates in your newsfeed from the same people lately? Have you also noticed that when you post things like status messages, photos and links, the same circle of people are commenting and everyone else seems to be ignoring you?

Don't worry, everyone still loves you and nobody has intentionally blocked you. The problem is that a large chunk of your friend/fan list can't see anything you post and here's why: The "New Facebook" has a newsfeed setting that by default is automatically set to show ONLY posts from people who you've recently interacted with or interacted the most with (which would be limited to the couple of weeks just before people started switching to the new profile). So in other words, for both business and personal pages, unless your friends/fans commented on one of your posts within those few weeks or vice versa — you are now invisible to them and they are invisible to you!

HERE'S THE FIX: Scroll down to the bottom of the newsfeed on the homepage and click on "Edit Options", click on "Show Posts From" and change the setting to "All Of Your Friends and Pages".



Rachel Barry - Anita

WEST SIDE STORY

WE ARE GROWING! COME AND JOIN US!



Weapons Skills	7
Love-o-meter score	scorpio
Cool Points	6
Survival Skills	8
Most likely to...	eat you alive

News in brief

- Several Sedos members were in the recent burlesque cabaret *Femme*, by Sedos member Ed Walsh's Von W Productions. The show sold out, but we hear there may be more dates.
- Sedos members in Tower shows: Sedos's Theo Leonard (The Tragedy of the Prince of Denmark) co-directed Dinner, in which Mark Macey (Oscar Wilde in *Gross Indecency*) played Mike. And Sedos's Nick Edwards (Taking Steps) was Tom in *The Vortex* in March.
- Sedos members in KDC shows: Douglas Baker (Gregory in *Romeo and Juliet*) was in She Ventures and He Wins last week, while Charlie Golding (Sampson in R&J) is in A Clockwork Orange next week (12-16 April).
- Cygnets' The Wedding Singer: Sedos's Kevin Shen (Hapgood) was Sammy and Grapevine designer Nicole Rush was the choreographer.

Tips for the perfect audition

With auditions for two Sedos shows coming up in the next month, the Grapevine asked Sedos directors and performers for advice on impressing the panel

Before the audition

Be prepared and be brave — if you're up against another 50 people you need to stand out. Practise in front of an audience.

Preparation demonstrates that you are prepared to work hard, which goes down well with a production team.

Read the whole play for an understanding of your character's journey in the story — and be aware of who your character is talking to in the scene. If it helps (and not everyone agrees with this), find a copy of the film if there is one. Don't copy, but by all means get inspiration from a performance.

If it's a historical play find out what you can about the character; if time allows, do some research on the era.

Read the audition notice! Be realistic about yourself and think about the most appropriate role for your look/voice/type.

Be wary of over-rehearsing your piece — it should sound as though you are speaking it for the first time.

Sleep well, eat well, get hydrated and find somewhere to warm-up.

Do something well just before the audition — whether it be hit a high note once or kick ass at Sudoku — to give you gobs of confidence.

Choose an audition piece that shows a straightforward presentation of your capabilities and how it applies to the show. It's good to have a little bit of glitter, but the first auditions are there to get you to recalls, not to get you the part.

Pay attention to what you wear — if the audition notice says wear clothing you can move around easily in, do it. Otherwise, don't come in costume — or bring a range of props — but perhaps try and dress a little like the character.

Focus on having fun and making friends, and be supportive of your fellow prospective cast members — the director wants people who can form a team.

Tits, teeth and well groomed. If the show is glamorous — dress that way! Show 'em what you've got, don't presume anything.

Respect other auditionees in the waiting area.

Don'ts

Don't panic! And don't worry if you mess up at the start of an audition/forget your words etc. The process is about the panel taking a judgment about what you'll be like after 10 weeks of rehearsals — they're not expecting to see the finished article.

Don't perform "This is the moment" if auditioning for a Sondheim.

Don't do anything from The Last 5 Years unless you are 100% sure that the audition pianist can play it.

Don't be afraid of trying something a bit different — as long as it's well thought through and rehearsed, done with conviction.

Practicalities

Sign up with plenty of time to go. Don't be needy and ask oodles of pointless questions or ones already answered — read the notice!

Call if you're going to be late. Be on time or early.

Answer emails promptly and confirm your spot asap.

If you know you're not that bothered, don't sign up in the first place

If you can't make it, cancel as soon as you know.

WEST SIDE STORY

Anthony Hagan - Baby John



Weapons Skills

2

Love-o-meter score

10/10 for cute

Cool Points

see above

Survival Skills

5

Most likely to...

run screaming from a rumble

backstage

Upcoming auditions

Arcadia: Tom Stoppard's fascinating play combines mysteries from sex to science across two eras in one room.

Director: Matt Gould

Performance dates: 19-23 July, Bridewell Theatre

Audition dates: Friday, 8 April and Saturday, 9 April.

Recalls: Sunday, 10 April

Need to know: 12 parts, eight men and four women

Contact: arcadiasedos@gmail.com

Full audition notice: sedos.co.uk

Assassins: Stephen Sondheim and John Weidman's powerful musical about the men and women who tried to kill American presidents.

Director: Maria Waters

Performance dates: 9-13 August, Winterflood Theatre

Audition dates: Saturday 7 and Sunday, 8 May.

Recalls: Saturday, 14 May

Need to know: cast of 20-24, including nine principal males and three principal females

Contact: mattkhudson@gmail.com

Full audition notice: sedos.co.uk

WEST SIDE STORY

Fran Rafferty - Anybody's

Weapons Skills 9

Love-o-meter score she's a fighter not a lover

Cool Points 2

Survival Skills 9

Most likely to... Not wear a dress.



Pictures by www.nickchronnell.com and Amy Daw

During the audition

Be friendly and confident — artistic brooding only alienates the audition panel no matter how good you are.

If the part requires an accent, try to demonstrate an appropriate one. There are fantastic CDs available at the National Theatre bookshop to help.

Remember that the production team are on your side and want you to be as good as you can be so that they can cast their show well.

Make it easy for yourself — unless directed to, don't worry about accents and physicality too much. Clarity, diction and an ability to convey the sense and, particularly with Shakespeare, that you understand the train of thought are key — certainly for the initial audition.

Respond to direction. The audition panel are looking for fit, so don't take any direction personally. It's not just about talent.

Relax. Your audition might last only five minutes so you can afford to take a few seconds to compose yourself. You are being a different person, but try also to be natural and show some of "you" — don't try to "act" too much! Take off your sunglasses.

Concentrate on showing your potential, not all aspects of your talent.



Phones may go off, or someone interrupt

while you're giving your magnificent rendition Lady Macbeth. Don't be a diva. Either keep calm and carry on, or take direction from your panel.

After the audition

Take rejection in good spirit — tears and tantrums may mean people are reluctant to consider you favourably for a future role.

And a final gem...

Tell your more talented friends that the auditions are the week after...

With thanks to Sedos members Jacqui Adams, Richard Ash, Kim Barker, Susan Booth, Angharad Davies, Matt Gould, Will Harrison-Wallace, Michael Smith, Rebecca Smith, Maria Waters and Rebecca Weymouth for their contributions.

Read more audition tips online at sedos.co.uk/audition/index.htm

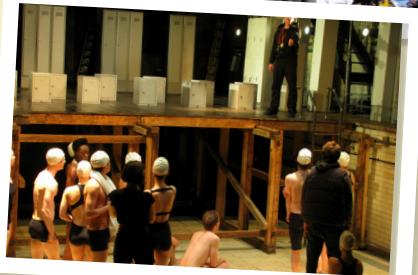


Sedos shines at Shakespeare

Romeo and Juliet (8-12 March at the Bridewell) was not only Sedos's first full production of 2011, but also the company's first full-length Shakespeare in its 106-year history. Rebecca Smith took on the challenge of directing the show, with an energetic and talented cast of new members and Sedos regulars bringing this classic romantic tragedy to life against the backdrop of a beautiful set, designed by Chloë Faine and built by Brian Tucker.

Pictures by Michael Smith

'Sedos can call the Bridewell home'



To celebrate Sedos's recent partnership with the Bridewell Theatre, the Grapevine put some questions to theatre manager Lucy Hillard

What does your job involve?

As venue manager, my role at St Bride Foundation covers the Conference and Events Department and the Theatre. The Theatre aspect involves programming the space and managing the team.

How does the Bridewell fit into the St Bride Institute?

Built in 1893, the Foundation's original remit was to prepare new workers for the local printing industry. This included formal training

and study in a purpose-built school and library, and fitness and recreation through the provision of a gym and the City's first swimming pool and baths.

Since its inception the Foundation has been a home to the arts. The building's original users were passionate about opera and theatre, and the St Bride Operatic Society and Dramatic Society rehearsed in the Passmore Edwards Room, now one of our prime meeting rooms, and performed on top of the swimming pool in winter when it was covered.

Today, with over 80,000 visitors a year, St Bride Foundation continues its charitable aims by providing historical insight into printing and typography through the St Bride Library and Printing Workshop. We offer lunchtime and after-work classes, such as yoga and pilates, and put on entertainment year-round through our lunchbox and evening theatre. The Conference and Events Department provides comfortable and affordable meeting rooms for local businesses and charities.

What other companies use the theatre?

Our three most regular companies, other than Sedos, are: London School of Musical Theatre, Guildhall School of Music and Drama and Tower Theatre.

What's the most unusual way you've seen the theatre space used?

My favourite has to be our January production of *Amphibians* (pictured above left). Offstage Theatre company removed two-thirds of the theatre flooring, re-configured the seating rake to have it emerging out of the shallow end and then directed the performance over two levels, in and above the pool.

On the spot

When your phone rings, who do you hope is calling?

The BBC inviting me to perform on Strictly Come Dancing.

What were you doing this time yesterday?

Singing along to Chicago's "When You're Good To Mama" (I do a mean Mama Morton).

What will you be doing this time tomorrow?

Getting ready for Lunchbox (A Bold Stroke For a Husband).

Plays or musicals?

Musicals — love musicals.

Facebook or twitter?

Have yet to write on a wall or send a tweet.

Backstage or onstage?

Backstage. I have a joint honours in English and theatre studies from Bristol University. I specialized in stage management. However, I have been in the chorus for Cabaret and Sweet Charity, to name just a couple.

Sedos have just become "resident" at the Bridewell — what's the benefit?

Sedos can now call the Bridewell Theatre its home, providing it with a central location to meet, rehearse, perform and party. With Sedos on board, we are looking forward to further developing the Theatre and with the talent Sedos brings, ensuring high quality entertainment throughout the year.

We love the Bridewell Bar (!), but how does it benefit the theatre?

WEST SIDE STORY

Hannah Brunt - Maria



Weapons Skills	1
Love-o-meter score	9
Cool Points	4
Survival Skills	7
Most likely to...	Fall off a balcony

The Bridewell Bar loves Sedos!

Formerly an old laundry, the Bridewell Bar, still showcasing many of its original features, provides an atmospheric space pre- and post-theatre for companies and patrons — including Mikey's legendary aftershow parties.

Introducing it as a venue in its own right, we have launched a Monday Night Live slot for budding musicians — catch London quartet Cantabile, artists in residence here, on 9 May — and have provided gallery space for exhibitions.

What's your favourite thing about the theatre?

People's reactions when I take them under the stage into the pool — although I'm also fond of our new electric blinds above the auditorium.

And what niggles you the most?

Noisy punters outside the wine bar next door. Pictures of *Amphibians* by John Rankin

backstage

A glass of wine with... Sedos member Matt Morden

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

Rent was my first show — I played a "hobo thug"!

Are you in a Sedos show at the moment?

Yes, I'm in West Side Story playing Riff, the leader of the Jets. Loving it!

What's the best thing about Sedos?

Being able to do a variety of good quality shows with great production teams that you have lots of faith in! Everyone works really hard and has high standards.

What do you do in "real life"?

I'm a primary school teacher in Battersea.

What's the worst thing that has ever happened to you on stage?

I did Crazy for You at university — ran on for the curtain call, ready to bow and skidded over, falling flat on my face (too much dry ice!).

If you could choose any superpower, what would it be?

I always wished that I could fly... how good would that be?! Plus you'd have no TFL worries!

Describe your perfect night out.

A night out with the West Side Story cast (obviously!).

Bearing in mind what Sedos stands for, have you ever owned any stocks?

Nope.

And if you could exchange one thing, what would it be?

My nose, having broken it twice(!), I'd like to



swap it for a newer model.

If you had to represent your country in international competition, what would it be for?

Rumbling!!

Have you ever had a Hollywood diva moment?

Nope, I tend to leave that to the Sharks...

If you were a kangaroo what would you keep in your pocket?

A can of Irn B-Roo.

Finish the sentence: a good production begins with....?

A group of people who are all really passionate about the show and willing to give up their lives for a couple of months!

And ends with....?

Alcohol/The Bridewell Bar!

What does a musical director do?

In each The Grapevine, we tell you what a creative or backstage role in a Sedos show involves. Here's what's expected of an MD:

- Work with director and choreographer to select the cast during auditions
- Work with director and choreographer to support their artistic vision musically

In the wings with... Sedos member Michael Smith

The official Seahorse drinking guide:

- Be aware of your tolerance and consumption (and ratio thereof) before you grab the karaoke mic.
- Don't indulge too strongly in the cheesy chips if you're destined to take your clothes off in a Sedos production. For you newbies, statistical odds of this happening for any given show are a scant 84.3%.
- Certain Sedos members (you know who you are) will entice you to stay until 2am as they — enjoyably — corner you and ply you with "just another cheeky pint". Avoid these people if you have high notes or soliloquies the next day. Otherwise, sit back and enjoy, as you're in the hands of practiced party professionals. ("Practiced party professionals" being a fun vocal warm-up to try the next day while suffering through the consequences.)
- Cameras are encouraged "for documentation purposes". But be kind. Only tag the person on Facebook if a) they look beautiful/sexy/cute or b) you want to blackmail them.
- Hook-ups that begin in the Seahorse do not count the next morning. Except when brought up during rehearsal.

• For the ladies: those cute guys in suits have been drinking since 3pm, and most certainly will a) hit on you, b) dispel their "cute" image with the first four words out of their mouths.

• For the men: those hot women have also been drinking since 3pm. If you speak to them, you will have a friend for the evening. Or two.

• Know your sober grope quotient, as number of gropes/hour. When this exceeds four times the normal gropes/hour, take stock. Think to yourself: "What the hell am I doing maths for?"

• Remember: Ocean House is to the Bridewell as the Seahorse is to the Bridewell bar. Rehearse accordingly, and break a leg!

By day, Michael leads the software engineering group in INQ Mobile making social mobile phones. With Sedos, he was in Putting it Together, co-produced Hapgood, and is a regular photographer. He is also directing The Last 5 Years this autumn.



• Liaise with the sound team throughout the rehearsal and performance period providing assistance where needed

• Rehearse the orchestra and help set up the orchestra pit

• Conduct the cast and orchestra for each performance, potentially from the piano (depending on the style of musical)

Think you can do it? Why not consider putting together a pitch for next year's season? Look out for more details in the autumn.