

Tab 1

AD / Producer Application Pack

DEADLINE: Saturday 2nd August, 23:59

I'm looking for:

- 💖 Assistant Director(s) 💖
- 🌟 Producer 🌟

This application pack includes:

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- About the play + Content warnings
- Plot synopsis
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Director's Intro

Hi! I'm Louisa (she/they), I study English at Pembroke and I'm so so excited to be directing *Les Bonnes*. This play brings together my love for true crime, fur coats, twisted relationships, and weird theatre. I'm a huge fan of anything experimental in theatre (dangerously so!) and

love a play where it gets a bit strange and you start to question everything. This is definitely one of those – I’m really interested in the endless possibilities this play offers for actors and the prod team, in terms of creating art which dives deep into abnormal psychology and interrogates the fragile roles and structures we subscribe to. I’m French, and I grew up adoring Genet’s plays so I’m incredibly excited at the opportunity to put one on. I’d describe my directing style as collaborative and experimental: I want the rehearsal room to be a place where everyone can suggest ideas, and for us to work closely together to create the show.

About the play

Though Genet vehemently denies it, the play is based on a true story (look it up! Les sœurs Papin, 1933 – tw: it’s graphic and horrible) about two sisters, maids who graphically murdered their employer. This is a play about violence and hierarchy, about discomfort and identity in the act of playing a (social/theatrical) role.

Content warnings (highlight to view)

Synopsis

Two maids (Claire and Solange) fantasize about killing their employer (Madame) by putting phenobarbital in her tea. As soon as Madame leaves the house, the girls take turns roleplaying as her - forcing the other to serve them - in a ritual always interrupted by the alarm clock before Madame can die. This 'ceremony', as they call it, exposes the fragility of roles and hierarchy and gets dangerously close to actual violence.

The play slowly exposes the tenuous murder plot the maids have concocted, down to getting Madame's lover arrested for a fake crime. Madame returns home, distraught, and begins to discard all the trappings of her lifestyle. The revelation that her lover has made bail sends the girls into a panic, and they desperately attempt to make her drink the poisoned tea. This fails, and Madame leaves in a hurry.

As their plot unravels, the girls fight, unable to decide whether they should run away, and in a frenzy begin a rushed recreation of the 'ceremony'. Claire ends the play by drinking the poisoned tea, symbolically rendering Madame's death and suspending the ceremony as the curtain closes before she can actually die.

My vision (experimental + metatheatrical + collaborative)

I want this show to be an experiment in discomfort and claustrophobia, and to force the audience to confront the implications of the performance before them. Physical theatre will play a huge part, as well as different sensory experiments in light/sound/smell? Claustrophobia will be echoed in the staging; and as the show progresses, the actors will continue to self-embellish whilst their acting becomes more stylised and ambiguous, uncertain and prone to reversal at any time.

Physical theatre also explores the ethics of performance/roleplay. The show will definitely be (at least somewhat) meta – probably opening with Madame handcuffed to a table while the maids play with puppets. I want roleplay to come in under a queer lens, and make drag a focus of the show. Costumes are central to this aspect, as is the materiality of fabric and the act of undressing. The show will (hopefully) not be the two white women in black maid's dresses which come up when you google this play!

I am committed to **casting and recruiting diversely** for this production, and encourage everyone to apply/audition, particularly those who identify as BME, queer, or disabled! I will be aiming to cast as 'blind' as possible, and will encourage the audition team to be aware of biases. This is particularly important for this show which centres around class and gender, and because queerness is a focus of this production. I want to ensure that no one is made uncomfortable by the way we approach the play's exploration of these issues, and create a safe casting and rehearsal environment! xx

Key values

- **Welfare:** this show is definitely an intense one (lmao sorry!!). My hope is that it will be hugely rewarding for all involved; but to make this happen, recruiting a welfare team from the get-go is a priority. I want to have welfare reps very present in rehearsals and create an environment where all feel safe to raise any concerns.
- **Diversity and inclusion:** I aim to recruit as diverse a cast/team as possible, and encourage all individuals to apply! Accessibility and diversity will be prioritized throughout the production.
- **A collaborative environment:** Please see 'The rehearsal room' below for more info!

The rehearsal room

I want the rehearsal room for this production to feel like a collaborative and experimental creative environment where everyone can participate. As this is such a small cast and team, I want everyone to be closely involved in the creative process. I want prod team members to be present at rehearsals so that we can craft this piece together. Blocking, costumes, line delivery and intention etc will not be something that I work out in advance and then tell you to do, but something we work through together in real time: so all members of the prod team can expect to be creatives as well, and be as involved as they'd like with rehearsals!

HOW TO APPLY:

- Email me at lh885@cam.ac.uk with your **name**, **pronouns** (if comfortable), and the **answers to the application questions for your role**.
- The deadline for applications is **SATURDAY 2ND AUGUST 23:59**.
- If you require an **extension** or have any **questions/concerns/anything** to get in touch with me about at all, please don't hesitate to contact me via email. Looking forward to hearing from you!

♥ Assistant Director(s) ♥

Role description: 📢

As AD, you'd help me **craft and execute the creative vision** for the show. Your ideas would be valued throughout, from casting, to production choices (e.g. costume/staging), to giving notes in rehearsals. In practice, your role would involve coming to the same things I go to (e.g. prod meetings, character chats, rehearsals) but with less commitment as you could choose to come to fewer of these and be more flexible.

Production Process: 🧤

As AD, your production process would probably look similar to this:

- Summer vacation: Pretty low-commitment. Help me finalise casting, and then attend some character chats, prod meetings and an online-read through, but without too much to do!! We are all out here tryna earn money 😊 so do not worry!
- Start of term: I'm planning on starting rehearsals a bit before term, so ideally you'd be able to come back slightly earlier than term, but this is NOT AT ALL required! We'd then have a steady rehearsal process up to Week 2. :)

Questions to apply:

- Why would you like to work on *Les Bonnes*?
- Tell me about any relevant experience, theatrical or otherwise (none at all required! This show welcomes newcomers to theatre and/or directing :)
- How do you envision working as an AD on this show? Do you have any ideas about your vision or how you would approach directing this production?
- Tell me about a piece of theatre or performance you've seen in the last year (in Cambridge or elsewhere) which shocked or surprised you. What creative elements intrigued you?

🌟 Producer 🌟

Role description: 🚧

As producer, your role is to help organise and coordinate the show's production process. The producer focuses on streamlining the admin side of things. In practice, your main responsibilities would include: taking care of tracking and reimbursement for our budget, organising rehearsals, and checking that deadlines are met in prod. If you're an organisational boss and a spreadsheet warrior, this is the role for you!

Production Process: 🧤

As producer, your production process would be fairly evenly spread and flexible. There is not too much paperwork involved for BATS productions (as opposed to e.g. the ADC) so this would be more chilled.

- Summer: You'd mainly help coordinate meetings, and make sure the prod process is getting off the ground smoothly.
- Start of term: You'd help me with organising rehearsals and making sure timelines and deadlines are working for prod.

Questions to apply:

- Why would you like to work on *Les Bonnes*?
- Do you have any relevant experience in producing, or in another organisational/leadership position?
- What skills do you have that make you well-suited for this role?
- How do you envision the production process for this show?
- (Bonus) If you were a rich woman in late 1940s France, what would be your go-to fashion statement/accessory? Or - tell me about your favourite play!