

Hasbian & Queer Diary R&D

Producer

Fee:

£1500 equivalent to 3 weeks of work, to be spread across March - May 2021.
Exact working timetable to be discussed and decided.

Job:

This role would suit a producer with experience producing fringe theatre with an important community engagement element. You'll be someone who's looking to develop a new working relationship with an artist who makes theatre and creates community spaces with and for LGBTQ+ people.

Due to the nature of this project I'm looking to create an all-Queer team. I use the term 'Queer' to include all gender/sexual identities under the LGBTQ+ umbrella, but particularly encourage applicants whose experiences and identities are less often represented on theatre stages and in 'mainstream' queer spaces.

This work will mostly take place online. If rules allow, and in the longer-term future, we may be working together in person, so you'll need to be based in London, or easily able to travel.

(Full job description below)

Application Deadline:

17th March 2021. This project is funded by Arts Council England, the short application window is due to recent delays in ACE response-time.

To apply:

Send your CV/website to Beth at hasbianshow@gmail.com including:

- A sentence or two highlighting relevant experience & what appeals to you about this project.
- An indication of your availability from now until May 31st.

Please also complete an [anonymous Equal Opps form](#). This will help me to consider and evaluate the field of applicants that I'm reaching with this call-out. All the questions are entirely optional.

The hiring process:

I will have capacity to conduct a maximum of 4 interviews, but will reply to every email received with a clear 'yes' or 'no' as soon as possible in respect of your scheduling.

Once the job is accepted, a formal working contract will be agreed on and signed by both of us.

About the project

A brief outline of the project:

***Hasbian* is a theatre show.** It's based on teenage diaries depicting the contradictory experiences of growing up queer in Brighton during Section 28. It uses humour & nostalgia to create a warm, fun atmosphere whilst challenging bi-phobia & creating conversations around the complexity of young queer identity and sexuality.

***Queer Diary* is a community-focused project.** LGBTQ+ adults are invited to share their teenage diaries (or creative writing/love letters/poems/artwork etc.) with a live audience. It aims to create spaces for queer connection, solidarity, and fun. Every QD event raises money for an LGBTQ+ run charity or organisation that centres community, youth, and education.

I'm looking for an experienced freelance producer to work in collaboration with me for the period of this R&D, taking on organising and coordinating work, and helping to nurture and grow a clear vision for the future of this project.

One of the key goals with this R&D is to begin building a strong working relationship with a producer, along with other creative collaborators.

If we find each other to be a good match, there's potential that we could continue working together. In the long-term I'm aiming to take *Hasbian* from this R&D to its first full performances in London then hopefully a longer run and tour, alongside continuing to develop *Queer Diary* in new directions.

About me

I'm a performer, deviser and facilitator. I'm the founder and co-director of Bechdel Theatre CIC, and a member of The Family Jewels drag king collective. *Hasbian* is my first solo performance project.

I'm a collaborator by nature, so I'm thrilled to finally have funding to start bringing together a team to work on *Hasbian* and *Queer Diary* - a project I've mostly been working on by myself, entirely self-producing and self-funding until now.

Find out more about me and my work outside of this project on [my website](#).

The work so far

In 2018 I took part in a night called *Dear Diary*, where people were invited to read their teenage diaries live on stage. I volunteered, thinking it might be a laugh. I had even more fun doing it than I expected, and was encouraged by audience responses to develop my diaries into a full-length show, which became *Hasbian*.

I spent 2019 working on the *Hasbian* script, scratching it at venues from fringe theatres to queer cabaret spaces, from comedy nights to storytelling afternoons. I tested a 45 minute version of the show at Omnibus Theatre, and had support from a dramaturg and director who helped me shape the script into an hour-long piece.

I was booked to debut the show in Summer 2020 at Omnibus and Camden People's Theatre, and had not yet submitted my ACE application for those performances when they were cancelled in March.

While developing *Hasbian*, I was keen to create space for other LGBTQ+ people to feel the thrilling combination of adrenaline and nostalgia that comes with sharing something personal on stage. I wanted to give more queer people time to collectively reflect on and own their narratives.

Based on differing responses of queer and straight audience members to my own diary entries, I sensed it would be valuable to create a space that centred LGBTQ+ experiences. I also know my experience is not representative of the 'average' queer coming-of-age experience (there's no such thing as 'normal!'), so was eager to platform stories different from my own.

In 2020 I developed online events called *Queer Diary*. QD aims to replicate the experience I had in 2018, but with a queer focus. From April - September 2020 I hosted Queer Diary on a LGBTQ+ community Zoom channel called QAF Space, with participants and audience members covering a huge range of experiences, backgrounds, and ages, Zooming in from across the world.

Queer Diary events in 2020 raised money for LGBTQ+ run charities and organisations, with a focus on youth, community, and education. I created a Zine about it, which you can [read here](#) (high-quality pdf - may take a while to load).

I've self-produced *Hasbian* and *Queer Diary* up to now, and am ready to hand over the producing role so I can focus on my job/s as writer/performer of *Hasbian*, and host/facilitator of QD.

In 2021 I've been offered an ACE project grant to R&D this project. I'm extremely excited that this funding will enable me to hire a producer at the exact point where I feel like it would benefit from a more experienced producer than myself.

Aims of the R&D

The main aim of this R&D is to build a team and develop a shared working language.

We will develop new design elements of *Hasbian* (original animations and sound), experiment with how it might be adapted to be performed IRL under social-distancing, and consider how elements of the whole project might continue to exist and grow in online spaces.

We will generate material to share online and on stage: animations, original audio, and marketing imagery. We will aim to share something live for an invited audience at the end of the process: to test out new online ideas/socially distanced elements of in-person performance, or a combination of both.

We will make *Queer Diary* more accessible and welcoming to more people. We'll trial ways to make it more inclusive for audience members and participants with varying access requirements, and figure out how to create the most fun and supportive environment, especially for newcomers. We will be continuing work that began in 2020, building and further opening up a community around *Queer Diary*.

We will be thinking about how to integrate *Hasbian* and *Queer Diary* as interconnected parts of a whole project, whilst clearly distinguishing between the different experiences of attending each of these events as an audience member.

About the job

What I'm looking for in a producer

Below, I've outlined a job description and some hopes/expectations I have for the person who might join me.

However, this is my first time being ACE funded as an individual, and being able to hire a producer in this way, so I am open-minded about what you will bring to the table as part of this process.

During this R&D we will be actively thinking and talking about how we can work together, in the present and potential future. It's an opportunity to ensure we understand each other's strengths, working patterns, communication styles, and boundaries, at a stage in the project before the stakes are raised by venue contracts and paying audiences.

My number one priority is to find someone who's genuinely excited by the ideas behind *Hasbian* and *Queer Diary*. Someone who deeply cares about LGBTQ+ communities, and will be committed to keeping community, accessibility, and connection at the heart of this work going forward. Above all else, these values are vital to us working cohesively together.

Experience is also very important in this role. I don't mind where you've gained your experience - whether it's fringe theatre, grass-roots organising, commercial producing, or university (I don't have a degree and work well with others from non-academic backgrounds, but some of my best friends are doing PhDs!). What's vital is that this role is filled by someone who has a higher level of producing experience, skill, and knowledge than my own.

It's essential that the team working on *Hasbian* and *Queer Diary* will embody a broad range of the experiences, identities and perspectives that make up LGBTQ+ communities. This project explicitly aims to centre the queer people who are often less visible on theatre stages and in 'mainstream' LGBTQ+ spaces, and less privileged in society. Therefore, I'm particularly keen to work with anyone who considers themselves part of an under-represented group in terms of: gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, disability, neurodiversity, class or socio-economic status (or anything else - this list is not exhaustive).

Job Description

- Working with me to complete and then coordinate the team of freelance creatives and access-specialists needed to work on this project.
- Manage the existing timeline and budget: Ensuring they're adhered to, and making adjustments according to ongoing needs of the R&D (eg. co-ordinating the schedule to fit artists availability, reallocating budget to accommodate any unexpected costs).
- Helping to grow and develop the identity and profile of *Hasbian* and *Queer Diary* - thinking creatively and collaboratively about how to reach and engage with audiences and participants, and nurture early relationships with partners and venues. This will relate directly to activities within this R&D, and the broader future of the project.
- Help to keep a record of the R&D process, and evaluate it for ACE.

Skills & Experience

- **Experience finding and contracting artists.** Some of the creative team are already pencilled, but some positions still need to be filled and all need to be formally contracted. You will bring knowledge of (and commitment to) ethical, fair employer practices, and awareness of the legal and moral responsibilities that come with hiring a team of freelancers, to ensure this is done to the highest standard.
- **Organisation.** I need someone who's extremely confident and practiced in taking the reins when it comes to coordinating and maintaining a project timeline and budget.
- **Communication skills.** You will need to feel comfortable liaising between artists, participants, and partners, and being a 'voice' for this project alongside me, in meetings and emails.

- **Collaborative decision-making.** You will be someone who enjoys working in a collaborative capacity alongside the rest of the creative team to make decisions about how this R&D will run, and the future of this project.
- **A strong personal and professional connection with LGBTQ+ communities.** My ideal producer would be experienced in organising community events for the benefit of participants who are not theatre-professionals or regular theatre-goers, as well as producing theatre aimed at LGBTQ+ audiences.
You will have an understanding of queer identities, histories, and politics, and in particular will be passionate about upending the dominance of wealthy cis white gay men in queer and theatre spaces. You will be invested in challenging biphobia and transphobia from within the queer community.
- **Experience of growing a similar-sized project from early stages onwards.** I would love to work with someone with more knowledge and expertise than I have in growing a project, to help me plan practically, as well as dream ambitiously, for the future.
- **Experience working with neurodiverse and disabled artists and audiences.** I'm neurodivergent, so an understanding and awareness of different styles of thinking and communicating is useful when working with me.
Due to the focus of this R&D on accessibility, it would be beneficial to have experience/knowledge of booking and working with access specialists such as BSL interpreters, audio describers, and captioners, and of relaxed performances/spaces.
- **Up-to-date awareness of the current performance and live theatre landscape.** Particularly when it comes to using digital elements in live performance, and making theatre more accessible and reaching new audiences. You will have creative ideas about producing theatre and live events safely during COVID, and a vision of how the sector could be 'built better' post-COVID. I'd love to work with someone who feels inspired by thinking about adapting performances for new audiences and unconventional spaces and forms, integrating online and digital work with IRL spaces, and engaging audiences and participants in innovative and inclusive ways, online and offline.