



CENTRE STAGE LONDON

2025
SEASON

PITCH PROCESS

 Centre Stage
LONDON

INTRODUCTION

Individuality. Diversity. Uniqueness. Community. At Centre Stage London we celebrate that which makes our shows so unique: you.

Our membership, and its diversity, makes our shows successful and reflects the vibrant community that we serve. It is our differences - be it age, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability - that make us what we are, and they are the foundations of Centre Stage London.

Bring your true self; it is why we love you.

We are Centre Stage, a central London based amateur theatre charity that has been entertaining audiences with musicals and cabarets for over 55 years! We first began life as a light opera company in 1966. Today, we put on at least two major musical theatre productions a year at The Bridewell Theatre, just off Fleet Street. We also produce a number of smaller cabarets and throw fun-filled socials open to everyone!



The Little Mermaid, 2024 Season

Our charity is run by a dedicated Board of Trustees, supported by excellent volunteers both front and back stage and has a very loyal and talented membership, with new people joining every day. Our Artistic Director is here to help you on all matters regarding the pitch process and putting on a show should we proceed with your suggestions. Please feel free to email them via artisticdirector@centrestage.london and use their knowledge and experience if you are stuck or looking for ideas or guidance.

We have secured dates at the Bridewell Theatre (a 135 seat venue) for 2025 in February, July and November. Each Bridewell show will have a 11-12 week rehearsal period that does not overlap with the other shows. To help you visualize, the table below gives an idea of production timelines.

	Audition Dates	Rehearsal Period	Show Week
Spring Show 2025	First rounds: w/c 18 th November Recalls: w/c 25 th November	First rehearsal: 7 th January 2025 Last rehearsal: 29 th March 2025	Get-In 30 th March 2025 Dress 31 st March 2025 Performances 1 st – 5 th April 2025
Summer Show 2025	First rounds: w/c 7 th April 2025 Recalls: w/c 14 th April 2025	First rehearsal: 26 th April 2025 Last rehearsal: 12 th July 2025	Get-In 13 th July 2025 Dress 15 th July 2025 Performances 16 th -25 th July 2025
Winter Show 2025	First rounds: w/c 28 th July 2025 Recalls: w/c 4 th August 2025	First rehearsal: 8 th September 2025 Last rehearsal: 29 th November 2025	Get-In 30 th November 2025 Dress 1 st December 2025 Performances 2 nd -6 th December 2025

When you fill out the form, please let us know your order of preference for these slots, as well as if any of them are unworkable for you. For more information about us and our previous shows, visit

www.centrestagelondon.co.uk.

We look forward to receiving your pitch, please do let us know if we can help during the process.

Zsolti Szabo,
Chair of Trustees

Alexis Rose
President



Centre Stage
LONDON

THE PITCH PROCESS



The Hunchback of Notre Dame, 2023 Season

There are a number of ways you can pitch a show to us:

1. **Suggest** an idea for a show
2. **Volunteer** to be a part of a production team as Director, Choreographer, Producer etc.
3. **Pitch a show** with a partial or complete production team that includes you!

Things to Consider

We aim to put on **great, high quality** shows that get as many of our members involved across the year as possible in a variety of contrasting productions. We have **three slots** at The Bridewell this year and are happy to consider musicals, cabarets and plays.

We know that show selection is hard! A major item to consider in show selection is the expense of putting on a fully staged show including fixed costs (theatre hire, lighting etc), flexible costs (set, props etc) and rehearsal space. While as an amateur organisation we do not pay actors or the creative team, we do pay musicians for show week. Shows that have very significant costs for specific sets etc, are quite hard to make work financially.

As a registered charity, all Centre Stage shows must aim to break-even or make a profit. We will not consider pitches with a budget that comes in at a loss. If you need help with your pitch budget, please contact our Artistic Director or Business Team and they can help you explore options to make your show financially viable.

With this in mind, it's also really important to think about the size of the show you are pitching. Though there are many amazing musicals with smaller casts (2-15) it is not often feasible financially to produce them as our main stage offering. This is because it reduces participation fee income, and most significantly increases the difficulty of selling out our shows. A full-scale musical would typically have a cast between 25 –30. Over 30 becomes unwieldy both onstage and in the dressing room. However, we are open to ideas of how these smaller shows might be produced and also break-even/make profit, so don't discard them as ideas completely!

We would consider including one play during the year. As per our musicals, we are looking for shows which will allow as many members as possible to be involved in the production. So any play pitched should have a large cast (10+).

If you are pitching a show you will need to fill out both the pitch form and the budget form. This is a workbook in excel which helps you to consider the financial viability of the show. There are fixed costs for you to consider as well as sections for all the flexible costs you will need to think about. We realise that flexible costs can be harder to lock down so far in advance and we are here to assist if you would like extra guidance. We have many budgets from past shows that can help in terms of predicting those unfixed costs. Some shows are set heavy, others costume and props; we appreciate every show will be different! Your budget will also need to include rehearsal space costs, which we will negotiate on your behalf. Don't panic if you've never done a budget before! We are here to help and will ask for clarification on anything we are uncertain about before any decisions are made. Our Pitch Budget Tool will also hopefully help!



Our House, 2023 Season

Please don't panic about getting things perfect, we really want to hear your thoughts, suggestions and ideas. As trustees we have a wealth of experience and we are here to help. Take a look through our website and the pages of our previous shows and you will see the types of shows that are a good fit for us!



Holiday Inn, 2023 Season

There are three ways to participate in the process:

1. Suggesting an idea for a show

We really want our members to suggest to us what shows and cabarets they'd like to see us produce. It helps us to select shows from the pitches we receive and we are not adverse to picking a show/cabaret from our members' desires and finding a team to take it on! You don't have to want to be on the team to stage it either; any and all ideas welcome. We would only ask that you think about the viability of the title for us given the guidelines above. You do not have to fill out documents if you just want to suggest an idea – you can simply send us an email to secretary@centrestage.london, with "2025 Show Suggestion" as the title.

2. Volunteering to be part of a team

If you would like to be involved as a director, a musical director, choreographer, producer, stage manager, costume designer etc. but you don't know anyone to join up with to put a full pitch together, or you can't decide on a specific show you'd like to do - that's fine. Use the form to tell us about yourself and that you're keen to get involved and we can match you up with a pitch that has a gap for the role you would like to do.

If you have past experience at any of the roles do let us know when you fill out the form, but experience is not mandatory – we love enthusiasm! You only have to fill out the relevant parts of the word document, and not the budget form.

3. Pitching a show with a partial or complete team

If you are a creative (e.g. Director, MD, Choreographer) and have a great idea for a show you want to do – amazing. You can submit a pitch with just yourself involved or with a partial or complete team. Please fill out as much as you can in the pitch form. We have tried to lay things out so it's logical and easy to complete. Don't panic if you have gaps as we can always come back to you! Just tell us your ideas. We can often help you complete a team.

The process is designed so we can get the best understanding possible of how you will stage your show or cabaret. Please don't stress about details – we are more than happy for you to lift sections like the synopsis of a show from elsewhere. What is important for us to know at this point is the number of cast you intend to have, the role opportunities for the cast, what you have in mind in terms of set, props, costuming and orchestra/band size. Be as detailed and specific as you can be! Go for your life. If you are pitching you will need to fill out both documents as best you can.

How does it work?

1. Submit the form, plus the budget form if you are pitching a show (rather than suggesting or volunteering) by **31st May 2024**
2. During June, the Board of Trustees will collate and review all of the forms, and discuss in a face to face meeting to determine a shortlist. We think about what would be best for our members and audience, rights availability, whether the show has been done recently by other societies, the ease of casting, whether we think it would sell... there's a lot to consider!
3. The Board of Trustees will approach short listed teams for more information if required to make a final decision (we may email questions or request a phone interview). We may decide not to take some ideas further forward, or we may come back to you for clarification or to propose a more detailed discussion. In all circumstances we will let you know ASAP.
4. The Board will then work to obtain the rights for the first choice season. Sometimes rights that look available on the website are turned down. If this happens, we will work through our second choices until all rights are secured. This can take time, and we have earmarked June to go through this process.
5. Season will be confirmed to successful teams under embargo. Launch graphics designed and approved with rights holders (July)
Season announced to members at Centre Stage AGM (September) and then released on social media.



Holiday Inn, 2023 Season

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DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, we joined with two other major central London amateur theatre societies (SEDOS and Geoids Musical Theatre) to launch London Drama Societies, a working group with the aim of promoting and facilitating a greater degree of diversity and inclusion in all areas of activity of London amateur dramatics societies.

London Drama Societies Mission Statement:

"Collectively, we commit to take constant steps to be more inclusive and attract members and audiences reflecting London's diversity. We will identify and remove barriers to create a safe and inclusive environment. We want everyone to feel empowered to participate, on stage or off. We want stories to be told authentically."

You may find policies on Casting and Authentic Storytelling and Marketing on the London Drama Societies instagram account [@londondramasocieties](https://www.instagram.com/londondramasocieties). Before completing the pitch process forms, please read these documents carefully and keep these in mind when answering every section. Each creative team will be held accountable and is expected to adhere to these policies when working with Centre Stage London.

Read more about our commitment to Diversity and Inclusion by visiting-
<https://www.centrestage.london/diversityandinclusion>



ACCESS FUND AND RELAXED PERFORMANCES

Access Fund

Centre Stage London is committed to making theatre more accessible to those experiencing financial hardship. We are introducing an **Access Fund** which is dedicated to reduce participation fees for a limited number of members taking part in our shows. Distribution is based on trust and may be requested either during the audition or rehearsal process by contacting the production team or the Centre Stage trustees directly. All of this is made possible by the generous donations received via our 'Friend of Centre Stage' membership which go entirely towards this fund.

Relaxed Performances

Centre Stage London is a charity that aims to increase access to theatre for people across London. We are committed to improving diversity across our community, including accommodating additional needs in our performances.

A relaxed performance is a great way to ensure that more people can enjoy our productions and we would like to encourage creative teams to consider running one during show week. Such performance aims to make a show more accessible to people with diverse needs including those with autism, learning difficulties, or sensory communication disorders.

A performance can be made "relaxed" through several ways, such as:

- allowing audience members to exit and enter the auditorium freely
- amending sudden changes in lighting or sound
- creating a relaxing area in the theatre foyer
- reducing the number of seats sold to increase space

Some changes can be implemented at no cost, whilst others may have budget implications. Please let us know in your pitch if you are willing to consider running a relaxed performance and if shortlisted we will discuss the possibilities with you.

FINAL WORDS



The Little Mermaid, 2024 Season

It's important to remember that Centre Stage is not a "production house" – by which we mean, we don't just fund your original show. Throughout the process of putting on a show the society will work collaboratively with you. We will help with production and technical requirements, planning, communications, and marketing; there are areas we will take off your hands completely and others where we can just advise. We are hands-on but not stifling, we just want to make sure our members and audience are looked after and our brand is kept in the best possible light. You will receive support right through from announcing your show to the afterparty.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email us, our key contact list is below:

Artistic Director (for creative questions): artisticdirector@centrestage.london

Secretary (for pitch process related questions): secretary@centrestage.london

For all other questions: centrestagetheatrelondon@gmail.com

Thanks, and we will be really excited to hear from you,

THE CENTRE STAGE TRUSTEES