

CAODS

SHREK THE MUSICAL

Directors Welcome

Hello all,

Firstly, may I take this opportunity to say how excited I am to meet and work with you all. It's always great to meet and work with a new company and to do Shrek is just great. There are a lot of questions I'm sure you have for me and thoughts on how I work, so I hope to put some information that'll be useful for you.

How I work....

I grew up working in community theatre and after graduating Drama School, I felt it was really important to ensure I do a couple every year as well as my professional work, they're an integral part of our industry.

I always say that I don't care if you've trained for three years or not had a day of training, but I'll treat you all as professionals in the room and expect the same, however I'm aware that it's a hobby, but my standards and expectations are high. A rehearsal room is one that has to be a safe place to play and have fun and create work and I always ensure that the room is a place you can leave your life behind and be fresh to work.

I work quick and will be asking a lot of you. My role as Director is to work with you the actor, You bring the character and I'll work with you. I won't block you or tell you where to stand, I need you the actor to bring your ideas and my job is as much to facilitate and interrogate the character with you. As Choreographer, I will block and create the physical structure and steps, but together we'll ensure it looks and feel right. The key word for my productions they're a team production, I may lead the team, but we're an ensemble from the lead to costume dress and chorus number 12.

It's always an experience but one that I hope you'll embrace and go on.

Auditions

This is always a big question that people have.. What does he want me to do, look for, expect... I hope below helps.

An audition if you're time to show the panel who you are and your interpretation in the room. it's also your time to see what you think of us, remember that it's a two-way thing. With this in mind, it's key that you make your own choices of who you think the character is and what you'd like to portray. I don't have any thoughts on the character, that's something we'll explore together, it's important you do your audition. Don't over sing with the recording, that will give you an idea, but I want to see your version of the character. Even with a show as Shrek, who's your Shrek or Gingy.

Please don't wear costume, it doesn't do anything for me in your audition as I want to see you, the actor.

Lastly, don't over rehearse your audition, obviously look and learn the material, but don't over rehearse, I'll work with you all in your audition, I will always see and ask you to do the opposite, I'll get you to read your read your lyrics as text and not as song.. Be ready to have fun.

Schedule

The schedule for Shrek may be different to how you've worked before. The dates that are on the list are correct and as best I can I've put a rough idea of which will be principals and chorus, but please be aware that this might change.

We will be sending out 3 weeks' worth of rehearsals that will be fixed and then on the third week, you'll get the next three and so on. I feel this is the best way so that you can plan, but also allows the flexibility for change, which is so important as creating a show is an organic process and so important to ensure we're rehearsing what's needed to be rehearsed, rather than guessing now.

With Saturdays, I ask that you keep them free, however, apart from after Christmas, you'll never be called for the full day unless you're a lead. I'll always try to keep them to a split day. Also when we get nearer to the show, as any production, you'll be needed.

SHREK

On the 2nd October, you'll hear more about what I think of the production, but as with all my productions I'm keen to ensure we please the Shrek Fans and deliver the production but to also find the truth of the piece, it's easy for Shrek to become pantomime in moments and I'm keen not to do that but to bring the heart of the story across, without getting lost in the Production Values which are huge in a show like this.

Talking more about the truth of the characters, they all have a need and a want in life and I guess in a way of thinking 'Into The Woods' it's about looking at the world we know they live/come from and seeing how that fits in the world of Lord F...? Whist doing this work, it is important not to forget the world of the show and the style of that.

I'm keen that we all forget the show and movie and we make our production something that is unique to Chelmsford.

Best wishes

Chris Cuming

Director | Choreographer

W. www.chriscuming.co.uk