



ABTT TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD: 2020 CANDIDATE

Sarah Hemsley-Cole – SC Productions:

NOMINATION STATEMENT:

"I first met Sarah at the Welsh College of Music and Drama in 1992, where she was on a 1-year Post Grad course. After graduating she started work as Technical Manager at Blackwood Miners Institute in Caerphilly, after a twinning with a town in the Czech Republic Sarah organised her first festival and after that there was no stopping her. She moved to Cardiff City Council and ran their festivals, before setting up her own company SC Productions which has become a massive success running everything from Ed Sheeran, Donnington & Cardiff Castle gigs and most recently providing accreditation and site assistants for the building of the make shift hospital at the Principality Stadium in Cardiff for Covid-19 patients.

Alongside all this activity Sarah is still in great demand as a Production Manager and regularly manages the Eisteddfod, Stereophonics and National Theatre Wales. She also passes her knowledge onto the next generation, teaching at The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, along with taking placements on her shows and taking a risk with young people giving them a chance.

Everyone seems to know Sarah as she is such a charismatic person, she is very well known for her love of Penguins, purple and DM's!"

Louise Birchall, ABTT Trustee

SUPPORTING STATEMENT ONE:

" I met Sarah for the first time when she guest lectured in my final year at RWCMD where she was a fantastic tutor and inspired me to explore the amazing welsh theatre companies and those future opportunities.

I was lucky enough a few months after my graduation to meet Sarah again in a job interview for national theatre wales where I was hired for a TSM role on their tour of 'Peggy's song'. Sarah was my pm and was a fantastic role model as she welcomed and introduced me into the NTW family.

Throughout the tour she shared her knowledge and guidance. Personally for me I found her to be incredibly inspiring which was down to her work ethic, expertise and love for her job. She has worked on many incredible productions over the course of her career and I feel very lucky to have worked with her twice now with hopefully more opportunities ahead."

Cara Hood, (Stage Manager & Ex-student)

SUPPORTING STATEMENT TWO:

"Sarah has been such a positive female influence on the whole events industry and has done it all by herself. She has had no support from any of her family, and in fact, it is an honor that she considers us, her close friends, her family now. I know she has faced hardships but she always tries to keep a positive outlook in all that she achieves.

I would also like to add, that as well as professionally being a huge influence, on a personal level she is also highly influential. The role model she has become to my two children has just been fantastic to watch as both love her dearly. In fact, she now takes my 19-year-old daughter into town of an evening for a 'lash up' - hysterical!"

Frankie Carlin, (Stage Manager & Floor Manager for BBC)

SUPPORTING STATEMENT THREE:

"Sarah's skill base is extraordinary, from production managing children shows in traditional theatres for the BBC to film to site surveying, drawing up and laying out the Eisteddfod site, a gig that attracts over 150,000 visitors. Sarah teaches at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and runs SC Productions which Productions and Site manages such varied projects as Ed Sheeran, Bloodstock, and Westlife. When she is mounting events in Cardiff Castle I have heard the venue staff say "Thank God it's you, we know everything will be alright".

When the lockdown descended Sarah was Production Managing "Hail Cremation!" For NTW - we had just teched the band and were about to launch into the first tech session - this was the culmination of a very challenging production period when Sarah had been running three rehearsal rooms. One with a full-scale rehearsal stage, a band, dancers, actors, over 150 costumes, not to mention two directors, a choreographer, Video, lighting and sound designers and assorted associates and of course teams of over worked technicians. Yet she was still the person who had her Podger /Spanner out putting up the steel deck, she even covered for the SM when they had to self-isolate.

Sarah is a Production Manager and Producer, she is also a company Director, but she is still on the tools and she is the best AutoCAD user that I have met. Another factor that always impresses

me when I arrive on a site that she is managing, be it the Millennium Stadium or a small studio theatre; nobody is shouting. Everyone knows what they are doing, the sites are collegiate, and it is all planned, but if anyone needs to know anything, they know that Sarah has the answer.”

David Evans, ABTT Trustee

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOUR:

“I worked with Sarah Cole recently for NTW’s original production of ‘Price’ which sadly got cut short due to the impact of COVID-19.

During this time I was so grateful for her inspirational leadership as it made my role as choreographer easier to deliver and her understanding of the creative needs of the production with her uncompromising high quality meant that we were on target to produce such an exciting piece of theatre. As the music, narrative and movement were seamlessly integrated, the piece was successfully realised by Sarah’s technical imagination and unwavering brilliance.

When asking for rollerskating, robed Druids on a 8 foot high platform, she didn’t flinch or try to alter my commitment to the idea but instead, joined me for that specific creative rollercoaster ride and the ultimately, gave me exactly what I needed!”

Emma Woods, Choreographer

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FIVE:

“I first worked with Sarah on The Passion in 2010/11. It's fair to say that everyone on that project was under no illusion that Sarah was the only Production Manager for that job.

Managing a huge technical team and a huge amateur team of technical and Stage Management volunteers across 10 separate locations in a 4 mile radius over 72 hours, creating a rolling plan for fit up and take down, she was the only person who could have come out of it beaming, irrepressible and with super human energy (and a wife!).

But that's not why Sarah was the only person for the job. It's the fact that she does all this with huge dedication and understanding of the creative vision and with overflowing love for communities and companies. This has not changed since I first worked with her. She deserves this award because she is somehow both Production Manager and artist.”

Adele Thomas, Director