***Musical Director Guide***

**Christmas Show (MD)**

The MD for the Christmas show is responsible for assembling an orchestra/band that will perform live in an underground pit under the stage. The “actors” above the band like to think they’re the stars, but it is within the dark, cramped musical trench where the real magic happens.

When the songs for the show have been finalised, it is the MD’s job to arrange them for the band; these songs typically include a love song, an ‘evil’ song, a couple of upbeat and happy songs, a finale song, and a walkdown song (…if you want to be really posh why not stick in an overture as well?). It is advisable to arrange these songs as soon as very possible because the arranging process can be a long and gruelling task … especially to those who are new to it. The best arranging software is definitely Sibelius, but there are loads of alternatives out there (e.g. ‘Finale Print Music’, ‘Magic Score Maestro’, ‘Forte Home’ and ‘Cubase’ to name but a few).

Just in case the above paragraph puts anybody off being MD, hearing your own arrangements performed live by your musical minions whilst you manically wave a stick at them makes all the hard work pay off... honestly, it’s brilliant.

The MD also has to source a band and run the band rehearsals. This too can be stressful and often makes you really question the term “it will all be alright on the night”. It does however, surprise surprise, turn out to be not just alright but a raging success, providing you stay organised and DON’T BE SCARED TO NAG PEOPLE. If people aren’t turning up for rehearsals, you must question their poor life choices. If you are struggling recruiting a band, then keep nagging friends, different performing arts societies (particularly Bristol Symphonia and BUJO, they have performers coming out their ears), and even Halls of Residences can be great in snapping up keen Freshers who didn’t quite make it through their Wind Band audition.

**Christmas Show (VD)**

The Vocal Director is responsible for helping the cast members to sing like angels, or, at least, making them *think* they can sing like angels. This involves rehearsals with lead singers and chorus members, which will consist of a vocal and physical warm-up, a cup of tea for the particularly nervous cast members, and, most importantly, helping them sing with confidence. Feel free to add vocal harmonies, but only if they work and if the singers are comfortable with singing them and are able to perform them consistently.

**Easter & Summer Shows (MD)**

There is no live band at either Easter or Summer, so the role of the MD is essentially the same as the Christmas VD. The only differences are that there are fewer songs in these two shows because there is less time to rehearse them; there are usually about 5 songs in an Easter show (for which there is about 4-5 weeks rehearsal time), and about 3 songs in Summer show (for which the rehearsal time is only 24 hours). Furthermore, although there is no live band, it is still the MD’s job to source the karaoke tracks for the chosen songs. This is a very easy thing to do nowadays with the invention of the internet, and pretty much any song is available. Whether you want to source these tracks legally by paying for them on iTunes or slightly less legally for free through some other website you kids use is up to you, but Pantosoc takes no responsibility for the methods used in obtaining the tracks.