

ADA Events

ADA Skill Set 2024 - Awareness and Development with Tim Calvert.

Apr: Thinking Outside The Box, with Dan Parr of Hear the Picture @ Tues 30th Apr 14:00 - 15:30

May: The American Dream - A unique perspective into Audio Description practices stateside, with Magan Harms @Tues 28th of May 14:00 - 15:30

Jun: Describing for Younger People, with Kate Taylor Davis @Tues 25th of Jun 14:00 - 15.30
All times are British Summer Time. Further sessions will be announced later this year.

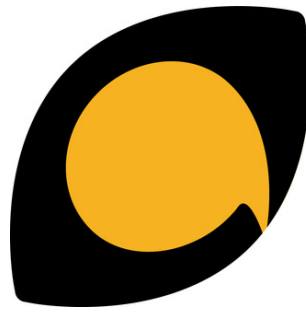
ADA's AD Soup Sessions with Roz Chalmers.

Apr: Getting into screen description with Cara Edney from Hear Say Audio Description. Monday 15th April 19:00 - 20:00

May: How to Prepare for an AD performance with Anne Hornsby from Mind's Eye. Monday 13th May 19:00 - 20:00

Jun: Touch Tours from a CSM and Actors perspective: with David Marsland, Senior Stage Manager at the National Theatre.

TBC - details will be sent via email to confirm.
Hosts needed - please email to sign up:
info@audiodescription.co.uk



Audio Description Association

Welcome Back Members and friends of ADA!

We're thrilled to welcome you back after the Easter Break for the Q2 issue of the ADA Newsletter, packed with valuable insights, resources, and events.

We're delighted to feature an exclusive interview with Trish Hodson, ADA's Membership Secretary and a luminary in the field of accessibility and inclusion.

But that's not all—our team has been hard at work sourcing fantastic events, from workshops to webinars so there's something for everyone eager to delve deeper into the world of accessibility.

Thank you for being part of our vibrant community, and we can't wait to continue this journey together.

Warm regards,
The ADA Comms Team :)

ADA Spotlight -

🥁 Drumroll, please! 🥁 We're thrilled to kick off our ADA Spotlight with Trish Hodson. You can listen to the full interview on the *A View On Access Podcast*. Take it away Tim.....

Tim: Let's begin by asking what started you on your accessibility journey and how that led to your current role as ADA's Membership Secretary.

Trish: Thanks Tim, officially my accessibility journey started in the early nineties when I got what I thought would be a short term job as an office clerk at the Bristol Hippodrome theatre. But, uhmm, 24 years later, I was still there! A full-time job came up in the group sales department, and the person leaving was also in charge of liaising with the theatre's disabled patrons.

He was building a mailing list and thinking about setting up an access newsletter. The venue just offered a few BSL performances at that time. Anyway, I took on the role of Access Officer and developed it over the next 20 years. In due course, under my management we became the Groups and Access department.



In the mid-nineties, one of our blind patrons heard that in Scotland football fans were audio describing the matches to their mates. He was excited as he'd also learnt that AD was happening in theatres too. We managed to get some funding for some expensive Sennheiser infrared kit; I treated it like the crown jewels! Once we found describers we suddenly could offer AD performances and start building our offer for blind and partially blind customers. We moved onto offering captioned and relaxed performances too. After 24 years, unfortunately, my team and I were made redundant and the groups and access teams were centralised.

Tim: So, what did you do next and how did it lead you to ADA?

Trish: My passion has always been the customer service side of accessibility. In 2017, I decided I would set myself up as an accessibility trainer, because one thing I did know is that nobody ever gives you a manual outlining how to 'do access' in arts and community venues. I broke my old job down into modules and workshops; covering box office, marketing, front-of-house, equipment and assisted performances. So I thought, okay, well I'll just sell it to venues, and they'll bite my hand off to take this information. The reality is, that it's one thing working within a company, but selling your own wares is much harder!



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What's On TV:

Breathhtaking - New Series ITV X

The Jury: Murder Trial - All 4

Ted Lasso - Apple TV

Bridgerton S3 (New Series)
Netflix
Airs May 16th Eps 1 - 4
Jun 13th Eps 5 - 8

You Vs Wild - Bear Grylls
Netflix
Interactive - Choose Your Adventure.

One Day - New Series
Netflix

The Gentlemen - New Series
Netflix

Mammals - Documentary - New Series
BBC iPlayer

Trigger Point - New Series
ITV X.

For Trigger Point Character Descriptions

[Click Here](#)



Audio Description Association

ADA Spotlight...

Access budgets are very small. I persevered though and delivered my training to several organisations; I even went to Singapore! Working with Paul Adams at the Singapore Repertory Theatre, I delivered the training to lots of cultural organisations, which was fantastic, and it made me believe that there was mileage in this, literally! Back home, I diversified into restaurants, leisure and community centres, because accessible customer service applies everywhere. Very few people have this information to hand; so delivering it in a modular format and giving people hefty resources of information, proved successful. I realised I needed another string to my bow though. Luckily, VocalEyes advertised a Live AD for Theatre training course, and I thought, I've spent 20 years booking live AD, could I actually do it myself? I'm resolutely a backstage person. I cried at age 4 when they tried to put me in a nativity play, but I thought, this isn't a performance; it's primarily writing and delivering, and I had the huge benefit of being trained by Andrew Holland and Roz Chalmers. To solidify the training, we had to deliver a professional AD performance. Our assessment was in March 2020. Of twenty students, I was one of the few who did a live show before COVID closed the theatres!

Fortuitously for me though I was taken on by Veronika Hyks to learn how to describe for film and TV, which I loved, and is what I'm lucky enough to be doing now as a career.

Tim: Can you describe how you became involved as the Membership Secretary?

Trish: During the COVID shutdown, it was a great time of learning because through ADA and VocalEyes there were lots of CPD sessions and workshops on audio description, including how to use digital formats, Zoom and various technologies that were suddenly needed. Some people have returned to their usual way of things now, but as a freelancer

working from home, I missed the contact and felt I could do with some more colleagues! I'd been an ADA member for years, and there were vacancies on the ADA committee so I thought, this is the time to do it. I put my name in the hat to be a committee member, but as the previous membership secretary decided to step down I was taken on in that role. It's been really fun actually. I mean, there's been a lot to learn as it's coincided with the new website going live, and the development of membership functions with other committee members. We're still developing new things, including website functionality. Fortunately for me, we've got experienced members working on these things with me, which is brilliant, so I've been trying to learn as quickly as possible. Just a few months in, we've managed to welcome more members and develop some social media interest, plus the new newsletter, the audio newsletter that you put out there Tim; it all helps to bring awareness of what The Audio Description Association is trying to achieve. And with strength in numbers, hopefully, we can keep adding more members to our cause.

Tim: What do you hope for the next 12 months in this role?

Trish: I hope to continue working on increasing membership and bringing my experience to bear in terms of tackling social media and tapping into my theatre and accessibility training contacts, drawing together all the strands of my career. It's now me going back to old colleagues and patrons saying, "Oh, remember me? What about you come and join ADA? I'm sure you'll find it fantastic!"

To hear about Trish's first Live AD performance and how she started describing AD for TV Content you can listen to the complete interview in full on the A View On Access podcast at

www.audiodescription.co.uk/podcast



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**What's On
Theatre:**

APRIL:

Moby Dick

Royal and Derngate
Audio Described: Fri 12th Apr
Touch Tour @ 18:30
Curtain Up @ 19:30

The Human Body

Donmar Warehouse London
Audio Described: Sat 13th Apr
Touch Tour: 13:00
Curtain Up: 14:30
Booking line - 020 3282 3808

Come From Away

Mayflower Southampton
Audio Described: Thur 18th Apr
Touch Tour: 12:30
Curtain Up: 14:00
Booking Line - 02380 711811

Frozen The Musical

Theatre Royal Drury Lane
Audio Described: Fri 19th Apr
Touch tour: 17:00
Curtain Up: 19:00
Booking line - 020 3925 2998



The Divine Mrs S

Hampstead Theatre
Audio Described: Sat 27th Apr
Touch Tour: 13:00
Curtain Up: 14:30
Booking Line - 020 7722 9301

Moulin Rouge

Piccadilly Theatre London
Audio Described: Sat 27th Apr
Touch tour: TBC
Curtain Up: 14:30
Booking Line - 0333 009 5399

Opening Night

Gielgud Theatre, London
Audio Described: Sat 27th Apr
Touch Tour: TBC
Curtain Up: 14:30
Booking Line - 0344 482 5137

Hadestown

Lyric Theatre, London
Audio Described: Sat 27th Apr
Curtain Up: 14:30pm
Booking Line - 0330 333 4812



Audio Description Association

A Fond Farewell to Paula Suchy:

With a heavy heart, we announce Paula Suchy's departure from the ADA Board of Trustees...

As Paula Suchy steps down from her role on the ADA Board of Trustees, we reflect on her remarkable contributions and extend our heartfelt gratitude for her years of service. Paula's departure marks the end of an era, but her impact will resonate within our organisation for years to come.

ADA Vice Chair, Tim Calvert, expressed the sentiments of the entire executive committee by saying, "It's my honour to extend my thanks and appreciation to Paula on behalf of everyone on the executive committee as you step down from your duty. Paula, you have been a shining light and an important and integral contributor to ADA for over a decade and it's simply not going to be the same without you. Over the last 10 years during my time on the committee you have been an amazing colleague, a good friend and have made a difference in so many ways with your unique insight, your positive attitude and warm supportive nature, and you've always been there for us. We wish you all the best. Please don't be a stranger and you're always welcome to return."

Paula was instrumental in helping to organise the audio description association conference in Birmingham and attended talking newspaper conferences to promote ADA and helped to give important feedback on audio description from a VI perspective

Throughout her tenure, Paula has left an indelible mark on the ADA community. While we bid farewell to Paula as a trustee, we know that her influence will endure. Her legacy serves as a guiding light as we continue our work to advance the goals and objectives of the ADA. We extend our best wishes to Paula as she embarks on new endeavours, and we invite her to remain connected with us as a valued member of the ADA family.

Thank you, Paula, for your dedication, passion, and friendship. Your contributions have made a difference, and your presence will be greatly missed.



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What's On Theatre: May & June

Guys and Dolls

The Bridge Theatre, London
Audio Described: Sat 4th May
Touch Tour: 12.25
Curtain Up: 14.30
Booking Line - 0333 320 0051

The Hills of California

Harold Pinter, London
Audio Described: Sat 11th May
Curtain Up: 14.30
Booking Line - 0333 009 5399

Two Strangers Carry a Cake Across New York

Criterion Theatre, London
Audio Described: Sat 18th May
Touch Tour: 12.30
Curtain Up: 14.30
Booking line - 020 7839 8811

The School For Scandal

Royal and Derngate
Audio Described: Wed 22nd May
AD Intro at 19.15
Curtain Up at 19.30



Spirited Away

Coliseum London
Audio Described: Thur 23rd May
Touch Tour: TBC
Curtain Up: 19:30
Booking Line - 020 7845 9300

Withnail and I

Birmingham Rep
Audio Described: Sat 25th May
Touch Tour: 13.00pm
Curtain Up: 14.30pm
Booking Line - 0121 236 4455

John Cleese's Fawlty Towers

Apollo Shaftesbury Ave, London
Audio Described: Wed 29th May
Touch Tour: TBC
Curtain Up: 19:30
Booking Line - 020 7851 2711

Maggie and Me

Royal and Derngate
Audio Described: Fri 7th Jun
AD Intro: 19.15pm
Curtain Up: 19:30
Booking Line - 01604 624811



Audio Description Association

Industry News:

The Witches: National Theatre Article by Roz Chalmers.

On 24th January this year, 12-year-old Eleanor Stollery became the youngest person to deliver audio description at the National Theatre, and the first visually impaired young person to do so in the UK. The show was a musical, The Witches.

Andrew Holland and I were already working on the audio description. The Witches had three AD performances, one totally for schools, and the question came up about using a child's voice. There were going to be at least seventy-five blind children in the audience and for the touch tour.

Originally children from the show were going to be trained, and I was anxious to have a particular blind consultant. I have worked on A Christmas Carol at the Old Vic for several years where Eleanor had been playing Tiny Tim and had met her and her family at many audio described shows. When the scheduling proved impossible for the Witches cast, she was the obvious choice. Eleanor has been partially sighted since she was four, has acted onstage in professional productions, is the voice of a character in a children's cartoon, Milo, and is an avid consumer of audio description.

Now the question became how would she read the descriptions, operate the equipment, and more importantly how would she know when to deliver the descriptions? Eleanor is a Braille reader, and that takes two hands, so she wouldn't be able to operate a fader, and we had already agreed that an open mic was out of the question.

Our access officer at the NT, David Bellwood, had the brainwave of a foot pedal, the same as used by Speech to Text reporters.

The audio description would be set out in Braille in columns, each with a letter of the alphabet, A to Z, and then repeating to the end. Numbers were ruled out because they take up too many Braille codes, and timing was critical.



I cued Eleanor like a DSM, using the words 'A Go. B Go,' etc, so we set up the sound desk with two channels for Eleanor – one for foldback in her headset and one for listening to the show. I had three channels, one for the show, one to deliver cues into Eleanor's headset, and one in case of a show stop where I might have to step in.

The script was edited to allow Eleanor time to react and read her script, and two live rehearsals so that I could adjust my cue timing to her reading speed. She was a triumph. When she hit the word 'Darkness' spot on at the end of the first act I (silently) cheered.

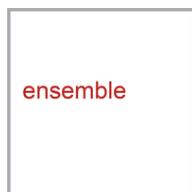
The children were thrilled to hear someone just like them deliver the description and the feedback from teachers, parents, and the children themselves were that they felt totally immersed in the story. They were laughing at the fart jokes and gasping at amputated mouse tails, and I hope they came out realising, as Eleanor said, 'anything is possible.'



Follow

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Exhibition:



About the APT exhibition:

Ensemble explores Audio Description as a collaborative art form and accessible communication tool, challenging audiences to experience artworks with their minds in an entirely audio-based exhibition.

This exhibition has received support from the Arts Council and The De Laszlo Foundation.

As a part of this exhibition we are running a public events programme with workshops on Audio Description.

Exhibition Details:

Date: 2nd - 26th May 2024

Opening Night: 2nd May 2024

Address: APT Gallery, Deptford, SE8 4SA.

Participating Artists: Louise Ashcroft, Cash Aspeek, Terence Birch, Fran Cottell, Colin Lievens, Aaron McPeake.

Independent artwork descriptions produced by Collective Agency, written by Joe Rizzo Naudi, edited by Sasha Galitzine, after conversations with Jen Calleja, Nicole Clif, Timna Fibert, Annie Hayter and Autumn Sharkey.

For further details check out the website and audio introduction links below.

Website:

<https://www.aptstudios.org/exhibitions2324ensemble>

Youtube Audio Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WxYdudtqYg>



Audio Description Association

ADA Needs You!!! Trustee Vacancies

We have some vacancies coming up on the ADA committee!

Secretary

Our brilliant Secretary Jenni is leaving us in the summer to have a baby! She has spent the last two years transforming our administrative systems and we're looking for somebody organised and energetic to maintain and develop this role.

Key tasks:

- Plan and minute four annual executive meetings (mixture of online and in-person) and one open AGM.
- Ensure all official Charity Commission records are kept up to date, including new and retiring trustees. Support the Treasurer with submission of the Annual Return.
- Act as "second signatory"; on the ADA bank account, using online banking to approve expenditure.
- Distribute information to exec members e.g. constitutional documents, induction materials and shared working documents. Maintain the shared Google Drive and lead the development of this to improve workflows within the executive committee.



- Support the Membership Secretary and Communications Working Group to develop and maintain our Customer Records Management and member subscription functions.

- Support other ADA working groups according to individual skills, interests and availability.

Time commitment: 10-15 hours per month, plus away days (2+ per year).

Start date: As soon as possible (handover with the outgoing Secretary to take place by late June / early July.)

The role is mostly remote, with 1 or 2 face-to-face meetings annually. These mainly take place in London, and ADA can pay for travel within the UK.



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Industry Podcast Resources:

RNIB Connect Radio

Broadcasts 24/7 and serves as your very own radio station. Enjoy a mix of information, entertainment and interviews hosted by our blind and partially sighted presenters.

Schedule:

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/connect-radio/rnib-connect-radio-schedule/>

Listen Live:

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/connect-radio/>

RNIB

Connect Radio

The Audio Description Network Alliance Podcast

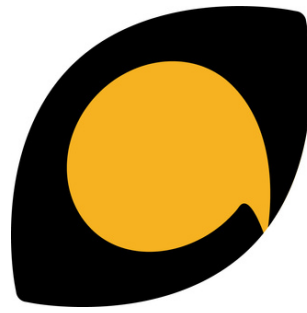
Listen to interviews of your favourite audio description professionals for movies, series, and more.

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/4VJKMp4gs12qu0khF9D1Bg>

A View On Access Podcast - Tim Calvert presents

A View on Access, showcasing the best of accessible entertainment, arts and culture around the UK. This podcast offers a spotlight on audio description, venue access and general information that visually impaired audiences may find helpful.

www.audiodescription.co.uk/podcasts/



Audio Description Association

ADA Trustee Vacancies

Assistant Treasurer

Our Hon. Treasurer Andrew Piper is set to do some work with the 'Describing for Screen' working party around standards and training but needs to free up some of the time he is currently devoting to his role as Treasurer to get stuck into this important area. Almost all our financial activity is electronic, with minimal need for additional record keeping, so now is an excellent moment for somebody to take on the role of Assistant Treasurer, getting to grips with our banking, payments and financial reporting requirements.

You don't need a background in accounts, but you do need to be comfortable with numbers and Internet banking and be fairly methodical. "Unlike me!" says Andrew, "My ADHD brain could do with someone level-headed and organised to make sure that I's are dotted and T's are crossed. I have infinite patience for showing someone how the technology works, and the memory of a goldfish for what important things need to happen and when!" Like all trustees, we would encourage you to join and support other working groups and committee functions according to your skills, interests and availability.

Time commitment: 3-4 hrs a month. The role is mostly remote, with 1 or 2 face-to-face meetings annually in London, and ADA can pay for travel within the UK.

Start date: Flexible

For more information or to express an interest in these roles, please email Jenni at admin@audiodescription.co.uk



Read All About It!

What we need:

- Information about forthcoming audio-described TV shows, performances, or related events and workshops.
- Suggestions for newsletter stories and thought pieces that can enrich our readers' experiences.
- Volunteers to host AD Soup Sessions, where we can come together to share ideas and insights.

Get involved and help us create a more inclusive and engaging platform for all.

Drop us a line at:
info@audiodescription.co.uk



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