



# University of Chichester

**With foundation, undergraduate, postgraduate and short courses available, Bristol Old Vic Theatre School has produced some of the UK's finest theatre, TV and film professionals of the last century, as the school tells *D&T***

As described in *The Guardian*, the city of Chichester is known for being 'generally lovely, well-rounded and nicely brought up'. It punches well above its weight culturally, with a Chagall stained-glass window in the cathedral, film festivals, poetry slams and the Chichester Festival Theatre and Pallant House Gallery.

The University of Chichester, nestled in by the Roman city walls, is rapidly becoming a hub for all things Musical Theatre. It already has four Single Honours Musical Theatre undergraduate degrees – the hugely successful Triple Threat, MT Performance, MT Cabaret and its newest popular addition MT Music with its emphasis on vocal studies and upcoming production of new work 'We Aren't Kids Anymore' by the world renown composer Drew Gasparini at the Minerva Theatre CFT, in performance in February 2024.

## New courses

From January 2025, the University of Chichester is launching a groundbreaking new Postgraduate Masters course in Musical Theatre. Creator and senior lecturer Meredith Braun sets out its mission of opportunity, inclusivity and diversity: 'Entirely project-based, the course is both affordable and humanistic. It offers two highly practical routes either as a Performer or a Creative (Director, Musical Director, Choreographer) and aims to equip students to go out into the industry armed with well-honed skills, imagination and the ability to create exciting new work.'

Throughout their studies, students engage in seven performance projects that span a wide range of theatrical styles, genres and formats. All shows will be gender non-conforming, meaning that each role is open to all members of the student company. Simply put, student actors will be cast on their ability and commitment to portray a character. These

projects provide hands-on experience and allow students to showcase their talents while honing their skills and creativity under the guidance of experienced faculty and industry professionals.

Programme leader Braun's pedigree includes leading roles in the West End such *Éponine* in *Les Misérables*, Christine in *The Phantom of the Opera*, originating the roles of Betty Schaefer in *Sunset Boulevard* and Lilv in *The Secret Garden* (RSC and West End) as well as playing Belle in the much-loved *Muppet Christmas Carol* with Michael Caine. Director in Residence for the MA – Steven Dexter's extensive directing career features the Olivier-nominated West End musical *Loserville* (Garrick Theatre), the recently reimaged *Pippin* (Charing Cross Theatre) and the world premiere of Stiles and Drewe's *Honk!* (The Watermill, Newbury).

## Black Box Project

Students exploring innovative approaches to performance working in collaboration with a highly experienced director and musical director. Skills are honed on an established piece from the musical theatre repertoire with deep exploration of the work through structural analysis, physical experimentation, generous collaboration and culminating in performance.

## Out of the Box Project

In this project, students participate in a collaborative process to create a musical theatre piece from scratch. They work closely with a team of fellow students, with guidance from tutors, to devise a unique and imaginative small-scale production that reflects their collective artistic vision. These small collectives will develop current or original theatre producing exciting and relevant material able to be cultivated into professional self-generated work, post-graduation.

## Straight Play Project

In this project, students have the opportunity to explore non-musical theatrical works and further develop their acting skills. They participate in a straight play production, working with faculty or guest directors to delve into the world of dramatic storytelling and a broader theatrical landscape.

## Juke Box Project

Students will devise a full-length musical using a score of existing, contemporary pop songs. They will explore structure, storytelling and the integration of songs to develop character and plot. Collaborating closely with an experienced director, musical director and choreographer students develop a compelling storyline, through rehearsal and ultimately, successfully performing the work.

## New Musical Project

In this project, students have the opportunity to participate in the development of a new musical. Composers, lyricists and playwrights, lead our students in exploring the creative process of shaping and refining their new work. Through workshops, readings, rehearsals and performance, students contribute their talents to the growth of a fresh and original musical.

## Main Show Production

The main show production serves as a centrepiece of the programme, allowing students to take part in a large-scale musical production that showcases their skills and talents. Students audition for and are cast in roles, working alongside faculty and professional directors, choreographers and designers to mount a fully realised public musical theatre production.

## Industry Forum and Showcase

In addition to the projects above, the Industry Forum and Showcase provides students with platforms to present their talents to industry professionals including casting directors, agents and producers. This project serves as a bridge between academic training and professional opportunities, potentially leading to future career prospects.

Upon completion of the University of Chichester's Musical Theatre Master's Degree programme, students will graduate with a comprehensive portfolio of performance experiences that demonstrate their range, adaptability and artistic growth. They are equipped with the tools and knowledge to pursue careers as versatile and skilled musical theatre professionals, capable of thriving in a variety of performance and creative roles. *D&T*

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