LONDON THEATRE PROGRAMME
OF
SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE
AND
BRITISH AMERICAN DRAMA ACADEMY
PRE-ARRIVAL HANDBOOK
SPRING 2024
Congratulations and welcome to the London Theatre Programme.

Please read through this handbook carefully as it contains essential information for your participation in the course.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact:

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TERM DATES

Students arrive: Saturday 20th January
Semester starts: Monday 22nd January
Midterm break: Saturday 16th - Sunday 24th March
Rehearsal period starts: Monday 25th March
Production Week: Monday 22nd - Friday 26th April
End of semester party: Friday 26th April
Students must vacate housing: Saturday 27th April

You are expected to arrive in London on the Saturday stipulated and are required to be present throughout the course of study.
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDYING IN THE UK FOR 6 MONTHS OR LESS

Please note: UK Immigration requirements for entering the United Kingdom to study changed on 31 December 2020. Please consult this document to ensure that you have the correct documentation to be granted leave to study in the United Kingdom. Should you have any questions, please contact Prema Samuel (psamuel@sarahlawrence.edu). BADA and Sarah Lawrence College must comply with the legal requirements set out by United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI). It is important that you read and fully understand this document to ensure your smooth entry into the UK.

If you are citizen of the United States, or an EU, EEA or Swiss national, you will not need to apply for a visa to study in the UK prior to your arrival (you are classed a ‘non-visa national’). Under the new system, you will be entering as a Visitor, which permits study of up to 6 months, in effect applying to enter the UK on arrival at your point of entry.

Given that you are entering the UK under a Visitor visa permitting up to 6 months of study, we strongly recommend that you have at least 6 months remaining on your passport from the start date of your period of study. (Your period of study starts on Saturday 20th January therefore your passport needs to be valid until 20th July 2024 at the very minimum).

Please be sure to take on the plane with you all the documents given to you by Sarah Lawrence College and BADA for your entry to the UK. It is essential that you have with you your BADA Visa Letter, which contains information required by UKVI for evidencing your intention to undertake studying the UK. This letter will be sent to you separately by BADA.
AT YOUR POINT OF ENTRY (THE UK BORDER)
YOU WILL HAVE THE CHOICE OF EITHER:

1. Using eGates to enter the UK: In order to use an eGate, your passport must have a biometric symbol on the cover. Using eGates to enter the UK as a visitor will mean that you do not receive a stamp endorsed in your passport as you do not have to see a Border Force Officer in order to use one. Following using the eGates however, you will be permitted to enter the UK as a visitor for a period of six months. You will need to evidence your arrival date to BADA using your paper or electronic boarding pass or e-ticket in order for us to complete the checks we are required to carry out by UKVI, so please retain these until a member of staff at BADA has inspected them (please bring them to the office on the Sunday following your arrival).

OR

2. Passing through an immigration point staffed by a Border Force Officer: If using a staffed immigration point, you will need to present all necessary documents to support your application to enter the UK as a visitor to the Border Force Officer (see below).
AT THE UK BORDER YOU WILL NEED:

1. **A valid passport.** Your passport must be valid for the whole of your stay in the UK, and we strongly recommend that you have at least 6 months remaining on your passport from the start date of your period of study.

2. **Your plane ticket.** We strongly recommend that you purchase a return ticket, as this enables you to comply with the potential need to evidence at entry that you will leave the UK at the end of your visit and that you are able to pay for your return or onward journey (or have funding from someone else to do so).

3. **A letter of acceptance from BADA and Sarah Lawrence College in paper copy.** This is to enable you to evidence that you have been accepted on to a course by an accredited institution. This is evidenced by separate letters which will be sent to you by BADA and SLC.

4. **Documentary evidence that you have enough money to pay your tuition fees and accommodate yourself while you are in the UK.** This is evidenced by separate letters which will be sent to you by BADA and SLC.

YOU MAY ALSO BE ASKED TO PROVE THAT:

1. You have arranged accommodation for your stay. This is evidenced by separate letters which will be sent to you by BADA and SLC

2. You are able to support yourself during your trip (or have funding from someone else to support you). This is evidenced by separate letters which will be sent to you by BADA and SLC.
TRAVELLING TO THE UK

You are responsible for making your own flight arrangements.

STA Travel is a student travel service, which can often find affordable fares to which many travel agencies don’t seem to have access.

You are encouraged to visit the STA Travel website before booking your flights as you could save a considerable amount of money. Information on flights as well as the ISIC (International Student Identity Card), can be found at www.statravel.com. They can also be reached at 800-781-4040. Another student travel site is www.studentuniverse.com (800-272-9676).

Using the student travel may offer the ability to change your return dates with little or no penalty. However, you should always check before booking as to any possible penalties for changing your ticket.

You must register with STEP (Smart Traveler Enrollment Program).

This is a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.
GETTING TO THE STAY CLUB

From Gatwick:
- Take the train to Victoria Station. From there, take a licensed taxi/Uber, etc. to 65-69 Holmes Road, NW5 3AN.
- Alternatively, get a Thameslink train to Blackfriars and change Thameslink trains to Kentish Town. The Stay Club is a 6 minute walk from the station.

From Heathrow:
- Take the Heathrow Express to Paddington Station or Heathrow Connect, this takes longer but usually costs less. From there, take a licensed taxi/Uber, etc. to 65-69 Holmes Road, NW5 3AN.
The Stay Club Kentish Town offers accommodation in single rooms. All rooms include a sofa and desk space, as well as cooking facilities, and a private bathroom with shower. There is a cafe, cinema, classrooms which can be used free of charge for rehearsals, a disco room, a private gym and spacious social areas all within the same building.

The Stay Club’s location means that the immediate area around the accommodation remains busy at all times. To ensure the safety and security of our students, the building has a concierge at the front door twenty-four hours a day and CCTV is in constant operation, not only at the entrance to the building but also in public areas on each floor.

The Stay Club has WiFi available in the rooms and some common spaces, although BADA accepts no responsibility for ensuring computer access.

You will not be able to move into your room prior to the start of the programme on Saturday 20th January 2024.

The Stay Club is located minutes from Kentish Town High Street. There are buses that take students straight to BADA’s building and central London locations. It is a 10-minute walk to Kentish Town Overground, and a 30-minute walk to BADA.

Please be aware that the Kentish Town underground station will be closed during your stay.
PACKING

Please bring:
- Clothes for movement. This means loose and comfortable (but not revealing) clothes. Jeans are not appropriate clothes for class.
- One outfit for a formal occasion.
- Formal/character shoes if you already own them (BADA has these onsite if you wish to borrow them).

You may wish to bring:
- A laptop or tablet; please note individual laptops are not covered by BADA’s insurance, so you must organize insurance of your own. There are computer facilities and WiFi at BADA as well as WiFi at The Stay Club.

Do not pack:
- Electrical appliances (hair dryer, alarm clock, etc) as the voltage is not compatible with UK sockets.
- Electrical converters for small appliances
- Any valuable or items that are not insured or replaceable.
Security
The safety of all students while studying in London is paramount to both BADA and The Stay Club. Every effort is made to minimize risk to students and their belongings. However, BADA also expects students to act responsibly to ensure their own well-being; living in a major city inevitably brings new risks that need to be taken very seriously to avoid incident.

Valuable belongings, such as passports, laptops, mobile phones, etc. should be kept under lock and key, not left out in public spaces around the accommodation.

If for any reason you have suspicions or concerns about strangers, please notify a representative of BADA or The Stay Club immediately.

Cost of Living
The cost of living is higher in London; you will need approximately £100/week to cover food, transportation, laundry, etc.

Public Transport
You can use contactless credit/debit cards and mobile payments throughout the public transport system.
**Tuition & Housing Fees**
A tuition bill will be sent to you through the Sarah Lawrence College Controller’s Office. Please address any questions or concerns about this payment directly to the Controller’s Office at (914) 395-2553. Different payment plans are available, so feel free to talk directly with the Bursar about the various options. You may not pay your tuition directly to BADA. Sarah Lawrence will also charge you for your room.

**Housing Damages**
You are responsible for ensuring your room is left in a satisfactory state at the end of the programme. Any damages to your room will be assessed at the end of the semester and you will be charged accordingly. The Stay Club determines the charges for students; neither Sarah Lawrence College nor BADA have any say in setting damage charges and are unable to intercede on your behalf if there is a dispute.
MONEY AND BANKING

We recommend students maintain a bank account in the United States and withdraw money overseas with an ATM card. Check with your bank to see if their ATM network includes British banks. While ATM cards give the greatest convenience (and favorable exchange rates), a lost ATM card can pose delays in your ability to access your money.

Be sure to have a back-up system in the event of an emergency: a credit card, or information on Western Union wire transfers can help. Please note: ATMs dispense cash in pounds, not dollars! You should bring a credit card with you if possible but be aware that credit card transactions in the UK can only be processed by ‘chip & pin’ – you will need to memorize your card’s PIN number in advance of your trip.

Some students have found Revolut multi-currency card a useful option as they do not charge for withdrawals in foreign countries.
While on the London Theatre Programme, you must have an active mobile phone where you can be reached in an emergency.

Depending on your provider and phone, your current mobile may work while you are in the UK. Consult with your provider to confirm that your phone will work while living in London and to determine what additional fees you may incur.

If your American phone does not work overseas, you will need to purchase a UK sim and keep it active for the duration of the course. There are a number of options for inexpensive mobile phones in the UK offered as Pay as You Go. Pay as You Go phones do not require an on-going contract and can be topped up inexpensively as needed.

**Do not sign an ongoing or multi-month contract for a mobile phone.** If you sign a 12-month contract for a phone, you are liable for that cost for the entire year even after you depart London and return to your home country. Failure to keep to the terms of the contract or to pay the monthly installments will result in your credit being black-listed and may affect your ability to re-enter the UK in the future.

BADA is required to pass on your home details to phone companies if you leave without paying your final bills.
**MEDICAL INFORMATION**

You will be covered while abroad by a policy administered by GeoBlue unless your home institution (non-SLC students) requires you to be on their policy. Please be aware that GeoBlue insurance **does not cover dental work or continuing sessions** (such as physical therapy) during convalescence. The easiest way for you to see a doctor in London is via your insurance. Further information on GeoBlue (for students who are being billed for it) will be sent to you.

We strongly advise all students who use prescription medicines to seek their doctor's advice in advance of the start of the programme, and if necessary, request sufficient medicines for the entire duration of your time in England.

Please also bear in mind when travelling that prescription medicines should be carried with you in your hand luggage with any necessary documentation to avoid any delays or difficulties at Immigration and Customs.

Please note: **in addition to this study abroad policy, you need to have your own medical insurance through either the Sarah Lawrence plan or your home institution or your parents.** This is to ensure you have adequate health insurance before you leave the US and upon your return. GeoBlue only covers your medical expense while you are studying abroad. To avoid a lapse in your medical coverage, you must have your own medical insurance based in the US in the event you return to the US earlier than anticipated.

All enrolling students are required to complete the medical form in the portal. The information provided will remain confidential and will be shared with program staff, faculty, or appropriate professionals only if pertinent to your own wellbeing.
Course details can be found on our website (http://www.bada.org.uk/study/london-theatre-program/) and more information will be provided when you arrive. However, please bear two things in mind before the start of the semester:

**Production Week Visitors**
Your family and friends are welcome to visit you in London during the final week to see your performance during the Production period. Those family members visiting you in the final week are also invited to the Farewell Party on Friday 26th April.

**Personal Travel While on the Program**
Travel plans should be made with the expectation that you will be working until 6pm on Fridays. All students travelling on weekends must ensure they return by Sunday night. This is to avoid students missing classes due to travel delays or cancellations.

We ask that students remain in London for the weekend before Production week in order to ensure their availability for technical rehearsals in the theatre.
See you in the Spring!