



Cambridge Arts Theatre

Interview data sheet: Behind the Scenes Project

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Interviewee's surname: Mellor

Title: Prof.

Interviewee's forename(s): David Hugh

Gender: Male

Occupation: Emeritus professor of philosophy

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Name of interviewer: Beth Aitken

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Abstract: The late Hugh Mellor talks fondly of friends he made and productions he was photographed in and remembers witnessing the start of the careers of many, now, well-known names. His support for Cambridge Arts Theatre has been apparent from the start of his career, not only as an actor but also in the Theatre's renovation projects.

Key words:	Cambridge University, Cambridge Arts Theatre, ADC Theatre, Pembroke College, Darwin College, Peter Cook. Pembroke Players, Minack Theatre, Pied Pipers, Clive James, Footlights, Pembroke Smokers, Eric Idle, Germaine Greer, Stephan Siddall, Shakespeare, Theatre Syndicate, Dave Murphy, Roger Mander, The Leys School, Dadie Rylands, Marlow Society, Dan Stevens, Rebecca Hall, Peter Hall, Barry Brown, Corpus Christie.
File	Mellor.wav
00.00	Hugh's earliest memory of the theatre was when he was an undergraduate from 1956-1960. At the time Hugh was trying to get into acting with Pembroke college (run by Peter Cooke) who Hugh believed Peter didn't see a match for Hugh and the group. Hugh found interest in politics instead and started attending the union society.
01.52	Hugh started acting with student groups. After Hugh graduated he moved to the US for two years and worked in the industry for 1 year. He returned to Cambridge as a graduate student and signed with a graduate group who produced plays for the Minack Theatre in Cornwall. He later returned to Pembroke college as a graduate and a fellow and became the Senior Treasure of the Pembroke Players.
02.40	Sometime in the 60's Hugh arranged performance spaces for the Pembroke Players. He was later involved in a musical with the theatre group <i>Pied Pipers</i> as an actor called ' <i>How to succeed in business without really trying</i> '. Whilst enjoying productions as an audience member throughout the 60s this was the first time Hugh experienced the Arts Theatre as an actor.
3.20	Whilst Hugh was a fellow at Pembroke he got together with Clive James (Research student and Footlights President). Both Hugh and Clive created 'trial runs' for the Footlights Summer Show at Pembroke College called Pembroke Smokers including names Eric Idle (Monty Python) and Germaine Greer (Australian writer). Hugh remembers watching productions at the Arts Theatre, cast with James and Greer.
04.19	Throughout the 70s and 80s Hugh left Pembroke and went on to Darwin College where he got involved in talent groups who mostly acted at the ADC theatre. Hugh also talks about a town and gown group run by head of drama of The Leys School, Stephan Siddall who directed a number of productions staged by the Arts Theatre and involved both students and members of the public. Hugh was photographed in rehearsals with the large cast mostly Shakespeare plays.
05.29	In the 90's Hugh helped with fund raising for the Arts Theatre from the National Lottery for the first renovation. Hugh became a property trustee of the ADC, who then sat on the committee called The Theatre Syndicate who Dave Murphy was also member.

07.06	Hughes most memorable performance was his role of Ulysses in <i>Troilus and Cressida</i> directed by Stephan Siddall. This production was favourable commented on by Dadie Rylands (literary scholar and theatre director).
08.00	Since the start of the millennium Hugh hadn't continued to act until 2002, when the Marlow Society asked him to play Duncan the King in <i>Macbeth</i> .
08.35	Hugh talks about the people he worked with mentioning Germaine Greer being 'frightening', Eric Idle and fondly mentions Cambridge Arts Theatre's stage door keeper Roger Mander who he worked with outside the Arts Theatre on a number of occasions. Including the open air theatre production of <i>The Tempest</i> where Hugh played Prospero and Roger played 'some villains character' Roger also appeared in <i>Troilus and Cressida</i> with Hugh. Hugh talks about acting in the Marlow Society's production of <i>Macbeth</i> and mentions the role of <i>Macbeth</i> being played by Dan Stevens (<i>Downton Abby</i>) and <i>Lady Macbeth</i> was played by Rebecca Hall who Hugh says her father, Peter Hall (Director of the Royal National Theatre), gave the cast a pre dress rehearsal lecture on how to speak first.
10.20	Hugh talks about the renovation of the Arts Theatre in the 90's and reflects on memories of the restaurant located on the 5 th floor and how the space is now used for rehearsals and small events. Hugh knew the architect of the renovation, Barry Brown (President of the Footlights after Clive James) Barry is still acting and directing. Hugh says Barry's involvement in theatre and acting helped the how the backstage area was designed. Hugh says he was never in a production with Barry at the Arts but he was the most fun to act with.
13.28	Hugh talks about directors he has worked with at the Arts Theatre and again talks highly of Stephan Siddall.
14.08	Hugh talks about the negotiation that happened between the Arts Theatre and Corpus Christie that allowed extra spacing for the theatre. Including making the stage deeper. He talks about attempting to gain shop access at the front of the theatre for a coffee bar but it was decided against as there were too many coffee shops surrounding the theatre.
15.35	Hugh talks about the Maynard Bar and how it would be lovely to have a kitchen there to use as a restaurant but says it is a great sociable area.