

Audio Description Association

note pad

Items 296 - 300

July 2019

296 ADA Annual General Meeting

Reform Club, London, 23 September 2019, 11.45-12.30pm



The 20th Annual General Meeting of the Audio Description Association will take place at the Reform Club, 104 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EW, on Monday 23 September 2019 from (11.00 for) 11.45-12.30pm.

The AGM is open to all members of ADA and non-members are also very welcome to attend in a non-voting capacity. The agenda, minutes and voting papers will be sent to members beforehand.

We look forward to meeting you on the day – for administrative purposes we need the names of attendees in advance, so **please email** office@audiodescription.co.uk **by Friday 13 September 2019 to reserve your place.**

This year's traditional post-AGM event is a double session, combining a presentation of the preliminary findings of the Describing Diversity Survey carried out by VocalEyes with Royal Holloway, University of London, and a twentieth-anniversary celebration of ADA past, present and future. More details are given in item 297.

Light refreshments will be available in the interval between the AGM and the afternoon session for people leaving after the AGM, or staying on/arriving for the afternoon.

For **directions**, **accessibility**, and **dress code**, please visit the Reform Club's website at www.reformclub.com

For **enquiries** related to the AGM other than booking, please email Carolyn Smith at adasecretarycarolyn@gmail.com

297 Post-AGM Afternoon Session: The Long View
Reform Club, London, 23 September 2019, 1.45-4.00pm

Both sessions in this year's Post-AGM double bill take the long view of the audio description scene in the UK as it was, is now, and may develop.

Join us for an exciting glimpse of the preliminary findings of the Describing Diversity research project carried out by VocalEyes with Royal Holloway, University of London. At a time of growing inclusivity in theatre making, the research team have taken the long-standing and increasingly complex debate about how describers handle visible characteristics associated with race, disability, gender, age and body shape, and surveyed present-day opinion and practice. The ultimate aim is to compile guidelines on describing diversity for future use by describers, producers and service providers. While primarily concerned with theatre description, the project's outcome will also be relevant to those involved with audio description in other sectors.

The second session brings an opportunity to meet some of the familiar and not-so-familiar faces from ADA's twenty-year journey, as we reflect on the past, celebrate the present, and anticipate the future – and a chance to add your views on ADA's future direction to those of our Panel of Speakers.

Programme

(1.30 for) 1.45-2.40pm	Describing Diversity: presentation and discussion of the preliminary findings of the Describing Diversity Survey, with speakers Matthew Cock (Chief Executive, VocalEyes) and Rachel Hutchinson (researcher)
2.40-3.00pm	Break
3.00-3.55pm	ADA's First and Next Twenty Years: a 20 th anniversary celebration, with perspectives from a Panel of Speakers and comments from the Floor
4.00pm	Close

Bookings

The Long View is a free event, but for planning purposes we need to know the names of attendees in advance. **Please email office@audiodescription.co.uk by Friday 13 September 2019 to book your place.**

Venue

For **directions**, **accessibility** and **dress code**, please consult the Reform Club's website at www.reformclub.com

Enquiries

For enquiries about *The Long View* other than bookings, please email Emily Malen, ADA Events Organiser, at emily.malen@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Factfile: The **Reform Club** is considered to be one of the finest Victorian buildings in the country, a palatial masterpiece that has remained largely unchanged since it was completed in 1841. VocalEyes produced an **audio introduction** to the building for Open House London 2007, which has been archived on VocalEyes' website. You can find it by entering *Reform Club* in the Search box located at the end of the website's main Menu.

www.vocaleyeyes.co.uk

298 Open Access Smart Capture and audio description London's National Theatre embarks on feasibility study

Last October the National Theatre launched its smart caption glasses, using the Open Access Smart Capture (OASC) system developed by the National in collaboration with Accenture, and Epson's new Moverio BT-35 smart glasses designed for arts and culture applications. OASC is a fully automated system which utilises voice-following software plus sound, lighting, video and other cues to track where the live show is in relation to the script and deliver the right caption at the right time. Phase 2 of the project will investigate the feasibility of applying OASC to audio description. Below is a summary of the National's current position (with thanks to Matthew Cock of VocalEyes):

"The NT have launched the captioning provision, and have had about 800 bookings of the smart caption glasses. Using a grant from Innovate UK's Audience of the Future fund, they are now re-developing the content management system which sits at the heart of the OASC system so that they can control the content more efficiently and look at how feasible it is to trigger other types of content like audio description. They will then be testing this with some AD of an NT show to see whether it's possible to use the speech-follower to automate the delivery of the AD in a way that takes account of the gaps in between the speech. Once - and if - they have something to show, then

they will invite visually impaired people in to test and give feedback. The project will last until December 2020, at which point the NT will be in a better place to work out whether it's a service that would be of a high enough quality to be useful to users."

More information to follow when available

299 Creative audio description projects

BLINK Dance Theatre's *Girl Meets Boy* and Tamar Saphra's production of *The Noises*

How creative audio description can bring a fresh perspective to devising and New Writing is the title of Jenni Elbourne's account of working as a describer with two theatre projects that have explored accessibility for visually impaired audiences as part of their Research and Development phase: BLINK Dance Theatre's *Girl Meets Boy* and Tamar Saphra's production of *The Noises*.

Published in the Magazine section of *Disability Arts Online* on April 2, 2019, Jenni's article concludes:

"Conversations about integrating audio description are never completely free of challenges. Delivery style is a matter of personal preference and no doubt some people would prefer a traditional headset-based description.

Crucially, both *Girl Meets Boy* and *The Noises* involved visually impaired consultants in their process to advise and give feedback during their development phase. BLINK will move towards their next stage of production with some perplexing questions to consider: at what point does integrated audio description begin to interfere with the artistic essence of something that is highly spontaneous and frequently wordless? They may yet decide that the best way to achieve a comprehensive description is to 'go traditional' after all. But this doesn't mean they'll go back and erase every trace of description that was weaved into the fabric of the work they shared on their R&D."

BLINK plan to take *Girl Meets Boy* on national tour in Spring 2020 – see their website for venues and dates when announced (www.blinkdancetheatre.org)

Jenni's account can be read in full at <https://disabilityarts.online/magazine/opinion/>

300 Describing Diversity Survey – beat the deadline!

There are THREE DAYS left to complete and return the Describing Diversity project's online questionnaire before the deadline of 17.00 (BST) on Wednesday 31 July 2019.

Wherever you are in the world, and whatever your role in relation to audio description – user, describer, producer, director, performer or service provider – researchers on this VocalEyes/Royal Holloway project would welcome your views on the much-debated topic of how human characteristics such as race and disability should be handled in the describer's introduction to the show and the ongoing scene description. Unlike many questionnaires, this survey allows ample free text opportunities to expand your answers to the questions asked, and add any further points you want to make.

To read more about the project and complete the questionnaire, visit:

<https://vocaleyeyes.co.uk/describing-diversity-survey/>



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