

Dear ACT International 2021 participants

We are writing to update you on our current position as a response to any concern that may have arisen in the past few days regarding the recent advice on booking travel given by the UK Government.

First of all we are here to listen to any questions you have so please do email us and we can gather FAQ's to mount a Zoom discussion if there is considerable need. Although we cannot always answer every question you have in person or by email, we do have a rolling COVID-19 policy built in partnership with Centro Anidra and legal authorities in Italy and UK as well as mentors from leading ensemble theatre organisations (including David Glass Ensemble, Ockham's Razor and LIMF) which we can send to you on request. The policy is periodically updated as a response to the national news in our respective countries but also as a direct response to you and your queries.

Before proceeding with the nuts and bolts of our contractual agreement we would like to emphasise that after cancelling the residency last year - due to uncertainty around the pandemic - we are very confident that, for this year, travel bans will be at least partially lifted by August and that the general situation worldwide will be improved, in terms of working with the virus. For this reason we are focused on the residency going ahead and Centro Anidra are also sticking to their already well-adapted COVID secure activity for this summer. Any major pandemic related change of course would not be considered until May at the earliest.

<https://www.ucsf.edu/magazine/covid-predictions>

Second of all, in the unlikely event that travel bans do persist, we can provide each participant with a formal invitation letter providing evidence that your travel plans are due to an educational placement and not touristic. As an affiliation with a registered University and part of ICARUS, Centro Anidra is in an excellent position to formally back this fact up in writing.

As well as anyway requesting that the two weeks prior to the workshop you take exceptional care in any public setting to optimally reduce the chance of catching and spreading the virus (hygiene, masks, minimal public travel and avoid large groups especially indoors) we are also ready to run the event quarantine style. This would require testing before and possibly also during the event and an eventual 3-day isolated period before the beginning of the residency. It might be that you are required to quarantine again on your return home, but this is only hypothetical at present.

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ACTANIDRA@GMAIL.COM

This way of running of the immersive experience will include isolating our group as a bubble separate from other persons living or working at Centro Anidra at the same time with us plus complete sanitation procedures before and after any group activities. This would also influence our plans for the day off although there will be ways around it if we operate as a bubble, which we are already well adapted to.

In the most severe situation we will advise you to have minimal contact with others and travel at least two days before the event. We are not suggesting this will be the case but just that it might be in a worst case scenario. We do hope of course that this does not come across as overtly alarming since much of this type of behaviour has been incorporated into our 'new normal' anyway. We are illustrating this less than ideal picture in advance by way of reassurance that we do have plans in place in case of need and we will have dedicated employees working with us and you to support us all in staying alert, responsive and responsible while working with the flow and needs of the organic creative exchange.

These are possible precautionary measures outlined only to offer you our most feasible response to the current news. If you are committed to the training and experience we wholeheartedly invite you to feel confident and open to take up the place you are hoping for and meet the payment plans outlined. The positive movement helps the experience manifest as well as being critical to the ecosystem for a smooth running of the residency. We will update you in May as outlined to each of you on applying, and also again in July with the latest guidelines which will inevitably be better than they are now.

Regarding refunds, our general policy is that we can offer a full refund by the 29th of June but consider this as an option only after discussion with the administration in person and due to exceptional need. To claim a refund we would need a formal reason such as a medical emergency supported by a doctor's note. After 29th June only a partial refund can be claimed as a £500 deposit from each participant will be spent by that date to secure lodging and catering. Unfortunately after 27th July no refunds can be claimed due to spending made for the residency to go ahead. We will be keeping a waiting list of interested candidates and should one of those be able to take your place for the difference to meet the full fee, or if you can find someone to take your place in conjunction with your evidence of exceptional need to cancel then a special condition may be possible, but not guaranteed.

If Centro Anidra or Moon Fool cancels the residency due to a pandemic-related global emergency or exceptional need then all fees for the catering, board and tuition will be reimbursed. From previous experience in case of cancellation or refunds we work closely with each individual to find a solution that works best with the financial position the individual is in and both Moon Fool and Centro Anidra endeavour to support you as transparently possibly until a resolution is found.

We ask for your cooperation and understanding that Moon Fool is a sole trading, non-profit organisation. The concessionary offers have been pitched at an exceptional reduction to acknowledge the impact the pandemic has had on the arts and artists. We took this decision to help compensate for the increased uncertainty that advance payment can bring applicants especially during a pandemic.

Please talk to us and do what research you need to to make the decision that best suits you and your personal response to the pandemic and its related uncertainties. We suggest that once you commit the payment to then work with us to find the solutions for the programme to proceed safely and with all of you on board without undue concern about cancellations or refunds. By May you will each receive the participant pack and up to date health and safety policy and we should be in a stronger position to book travel and even take extra precautions if required, such as arranging home testing kits and purchasing private vaccination appointments if they are not available to all by the Summer.

We hope you can understand the conditions and that we feel it is our responsibility to make them transparent to you, if they are not already. These are unprecedented times and for some the relentlessly alarming and negative news triggers yet a new wave of anxiety and concern. ACT INTERNATIONAL believe things will settle into something we can work with by the Summer. We feel that if you are passionate about making this year happen with us we are certain we can find a way just as so many other theatre companies have already been doing since last March 2020.

Thank you for your patience, for cherishing this unique opportunity and for investing in ACT INTERNATIONAL and the value of the arts.

We cannot wait to meet you all in August and realising all the good will and hard work you have put into this adventure.

Stay safe and keep faith.

WITH ALL OUR WARMTH

ANNA-HELENA MCLEAN
ROBI BOGDANOV-SCHEIN
ANTONELLA TARDITI
