Growing up in Southern Africa, we learned how to type and do accounting. Almost everyone who I went to school with is an accountant or administrator, so a career in the arts in any form was unimaginable. My family moved to The Netherlands when I was 17, and I soon lost interest in the long hours of study that would have set me on my intended career in medicine. I attended my first gig in Amsterdam soon after moving. I looked up during one of the songs, and realised that the lighting was magical. When I was 19, I moved to the UK. I spent every spare penny earned going to see shows in London, while doing a part time drama degree. After a year, I'd realised two things: (a) I fiercely disliked many people who identified as actors; (b) I really did love performance lighting.

After a few years of working in photography and saving up, I chose to study Lighting Design and Practice at Wimbledon College of Art, which included City & Guilds electrical qualifications. We were encouraged to undertake industry work during our studies, and I volunteered on the design team for pioneering theatre company Punchdrunk. When the Technical Manager learned that I was a technical theatre student, he took me under his wing, and I began working for the company as a show operator. I continued to work for the company on various projects for over 10 years, from installing an opera in a pharmaceuticals lab, maintaining a faded 1960’s Hollywood in an old postal sorting office and making ghosts appear in listed buildings.

After graduating, I made ends meet by working in the National Theatre’s box office, but by 2012, after co-creating the Vault Festival, I was working in technical theatre full time. I’ve worked as a venue technician, facilitating touring theatre productions and installing exhibitions in galleries. I’ve designed theatrical lighting installations for interactive games. I’ve installed power for secret shows. The theatre industry is constantly advancing in terms of technology, so each new show is a chance to practise a new technique or explore a different piece of equipment. I decided to pursue a role in education following a series of jobs at the University of the Arts Platform Theatre, and an educational show for children at The National Maritime Museum, to share the knowledge and experience that I have gained to support the theatre makers of tomorrow.