



DRAMA NEWSLETTER

Hi everyone!

Welcome to the very first Drama newsletter! In this edition, some year 12 students have selected articles related to the performing arts that have interested them and have written about these for you.

Further on in the newsletter you will find details about what's been happening in the subject so far this year, an interview with an industry professional, an introduction to your sixth form subject champions, a character profile and details on a department competition! Enjoy your read!

Theatre in the news - by year 12

<https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/theatre-for-women-and-non-binary-writers-to-open-in-north-london> (The full article unfortunately requires a

subscription to read but you can read a synopsis of it below.)

A brand new theatre will soon be opening in Islington, north London, specifically founded to showcase the new works of writers who are women or non-binary, creating an opening for so many creative people in a male-dominated environment. The Bomb Factory Theatre will be run by its own company, co-founded by India Harrison Peppe, Philippa Lawford and Merle Wheldon-Posner, all of whom wish to “use this space to find, develop and produce new writing by emerging women and non-binary-identifying artists”. A theatre like this will bring masses of diversity to theatre, a space where finding accurate representation and places of expression has been incredibly difficult for women and exponentially more so for non-binary people, whose gender identities are historically scarcely even mentioned or recognised in theatre - seeing characters that are often stereotyped and generalised versions being well-written with depth and accuracy will be amazing. The theatre will be a relatively small performance space, with only a one hundred-person capacity, and is currently undergoing renovations (as it was formerly an art gallery) to include a bar and also be fully accessible. Bomb Factory Theatre will then open a three-month window for submissions from writers on January 1, and will be recruiting voluntary readers from December 1. The venue is set to officially open in

late February with a trilogy of plays by the company's three founders, followed by a programme of work by writers selected from the submission window.

By Sumaya Noshin

<https://www.reuters.com/lifestyle/photographer-rankin-captures-london-theatres-post-pandemic-revival-2021-11-03/>

Theatre has now returned to London's West End and so the British photographer Rankin captured portraits of the crews to put into his new exhibition. Rankin talks about how he wanted to take pictures of everyone who was involved in the production, such as the stage managers and orchestra, as all of these people are needed to create an amazing production. He wanted to showcase the idea of everyone coming back together to celebrate the return of theatre.

By Jaya Hujan.

<https://theconversation.com/art-drama-and-music-lower-stress-heres-what-you-need-to-know-if-youre-thinking-of-taking-arts-in-years-11-and-12-164713>

What are the benefits of studying drama? This article talks about how taking any subject that comes under the umbrella term of the Performing Arts reduces stress and is very beneficial. This is because taking a practical and imaginative subject, such as drama, provides you with the

opportunity to use a different part of your brain in comparison to when you are studying more science or maths based subjects. From research we can see that a subject such as drama can enable you to “learn from extensive creative processes” for example: experimenting with different practical techniques, learning from people around you and developing the skills needed to visualise an idea then bring it to life. It enables you to develop life skills such as confidence, communication, teamwork and emotional intelligence - all of which are key skills needed throughout life. These skills you learn can be adapted into public speaking, presenting, teaching, working with others and a whole variety of other situations. However, beyond these skills, you are also able to study a subject which will provide enjoyment, stress relief, a boost in self-esteem and a chance to express yourself which is thought to be very therapeutic. Studying a performing arts subject is proven to increase creativity profusely as you will study a vast variety of different aspects of theatre such as costume design, set design, lighting, make-up, props, interaction, staging and acting. With this much variety within a subject there is something that interests everyone. Fundamentally, Drama as a subject provides you with a whole set of skills, benefits and challenges which are an opportunity for personal growth

By Kannan Sachdeva

Meet your Subject Champions!!!

Freya Hobday



My A-levels are Drama, German and Psychology and I plan to go on to do Modern Languages and Culture at University.

I wanted to be a drama subject champion because

drama is (undoubtedly) the coolest subject and some of my best memories of school have been during opportunities provided by the drama department. I really enjoy acting and the arts so I love to encourage people to share in this passion and pursue drama throughout school.

I am a total musical theatre nut so this would have to be one of my favourite aspects of drama and my favourite musical is probably Les Miserables or Mamma Mia! I also adore Shakespeare (a passion instilled in me through the Shakespeare Schools Festival which was so much fun that I did it three times!) and Macbeth is definitely the one I like the most; Lady Macbeth is perhaps my favourite character of all time.

I have been part of my drama company outside of school for about three years now and have loved every minute of it. Most recently, we performed at the Midlands Arts Centre over the summer with our play "Rough Magic" which was a joyous performance of different supernatural Shakespeare extracts alongside original music and songs. It's so difficult to choose my favourite drama moment in school, as it's always been so much fun, especially Shakespeare Schools Festival!

Karis Hal



My A-Levels are Drama, English and History and I plan to go on to do English Literature at University.

I wanted to be Drama Subject Champion because

I love theatre and filmmaking, having been very passionate about performing arts from a young age. With my particular interest in English Literature, I love how Drama combines multiple artforms and facilitates even more creativity. Some of my most fulfilling moments of school have been pushing myself to explore theatre which may have been out of my comfort zone.

My favourite play that we study is Medea as it is very interesting to write about the intersection of theatre and mythology. I attended the Crescent Youth Theatre for 2 years where we put on showcase performances and productions of plays which included plays such as Consent, 100 and Buckets. It was a great experience in improving my ability to perform onstage as each member performed scenes in small groups or monologues. This group allowed me to experience the inner workings of a theatre every week which was extremely rewarding and helpful.

What's happening in the department?

Read on below to find out what each year group has been doing so far this year in drama - we're sure you'll agree there's a massive variety of stuff going on!

Thank you to all students who have contributed to the information here.

Year 7

In their first experiences of drama at Camp Hill year 7 have been exploring the style of storytelling as they get comfortable with the idea of creating and presenting performance work. So far this year they've been able to explore moments from The Lion King as well as Arabian Nights and other well known fairy stories and will now be moving on to exploring the story of Peter Pan.

Welcome to Camp Hill, Year 7 - we hope it's been fun so far!

Year 8

Year 8 have spent the start of this year getting in touch with their melodramatic side as they explore Victorian Melodrama! They've spent time kidnapping heroines, beating up villains and getting frustrated as comic fools mess up everyone's plans and we've seen some amazing 'silent movies' come to life on stage before us. Well done Year 8 - embrace the drama!

Year 9 By Louisa Dilling, 9V

In drama this year we looked at commedia and its different techniques such as double takes, walking in figure of eights and over exaggeration. We learnt to take on the roles of very stereotypical characters and interpret them in our own unique ways. We were also able to explore different techniques when writing our own scripts and everyone was able to get a say in how they wanted their character to act or sound. We learnt how to play our characters convincingly and stay in character. Currently we are studying pantomime in our lessons and are looking at different aspects of what makes pantomime unique. We are looking at audience interaction and engagement, as well as applying the over exaggeration that we learnt in commedia.

Year 10 By Johayna Boujamaa, 10S

Year 10 commenced with an informative introduction and outline of the course. Currently, we are working on our first topic GCSE drama: Texts in practice. We were provided with a range of published plays including Shakers by Jane Thornton and John Godber, Be My Baby by Amanda Whittington and Blue Remembered Hills by Dennis Potter. So far, the enriched course has enabled us to improve our teamwork efficiency and organisation as well as responding to constructive feedback from both our peers and teacher. Overall, GCSE drama this year has been an extremely enjoyable experience and I look forward to the remainder of my time as a GCSE student.

Year 11 By Aisha Thomas, 11S, Maya Desai, 11W

This year so far, Year 11 have been busy working on our devising projects. We were provided with a range of thought provoking stimuli including the likes of Bluebeard, the Aberfan Disaster, and Pandora's Box. We have created performances from a wide range of genres, pulling from the main themes throughout the stimuli and developed devising logs, noting our progress throughout the course of study. It has been an enriching experience, with some people choosing to explore set design and costume as well as performance. We currently are looking forward to showcasing our hard work with two weeks of performances.

Year 12 By Kannan Sachdeva 12C, Jaya Hujan 12P, Vel Noshin 12S

Year 12 started with us studying the play text Othello. We have explored scenes as a group and experimented with various directorial perspectives. We have created individual production overviews which detailed our own interpretations of the play. On the other side of the course, we have studied Frankenstein and discussed the key themes of human nature, villainy and tragic heroes. As well as this, we have studied different practitioners such as Brecht and Berkoff and explored their styles which has led to us developing a performance taking inspiration from them.

Year 13 By Freya Hobday 13S

Year 13 began by recapping our Othello and Frankenstein texts and getting to know the practitioners we decided on in Year 12. To do this, we engaged in a range of drama rehearsal techniques and activities that were extremely enriching and lots of fun! We read parts of Jane Eyre and used the play to further our knowledge of the different theatrical techniques and features that Kneehigh Theatre and Shared Experience utilise in their productions. We have also started creating and constructing our devised piece by using the post-modern text "Attempts on her Life" as a stimulus and we have already come up with our dramatic intention (you may spot this on the chalkboard in the drama studio!)

Theatre Folk Under The Spotlight!

Interview with Kerry Frampton, Artistic Director of Splendid Productions

Who Are Splendid?

Splendid are creative adaptors, we take old stories and spin them into new thought provoking, theatrical, inclusive, political, anti-4th wall, heart-exposing versions. As storytellers, we are interested in the universal human experience and specifically what will engage and provoke a young audience. We also want to give a voice to those characters that have been neglected, stereotyped or written out of the original version.

Tell us a bit about yourself - who are you and what do you do?

My name is Kerry Frampton and I'm Artistic Director of Splendid Productions.



What are some of the main aspects of your job?

One of the best things about my job is that it is varied, interesting and there are always new challenges.

For Splendid, each year I decide what plays/novels we are going to adapt each year. I will come up with the concepts (including design) and co-write them.

On a day to day basis I spend a big chunk of time travelling around the country leading workshops for Splendid. I love meeting and working with young people and each day I'll be creating practical workshops on something different: various theatre practitioners, companies, devising, text or directing sessions. As a company we engage with on average 15,000 young people a year.

The logistics of running a theatre company also have to be covered; the office based stuff: booking the tours, liaising with our practitioners and clients, making sure that the administration and financial side are up to date.

This year I'm performing with the company in our version of Alfred Jarry's UBU but for the last 5 years I've hired a team of actors and facilitators to take the work out to schools and colleges.

Outside of Splendid I facilitate & direct within further education and at drama schools (LAMDA, LIPA & Trinity Laban) and am a freelance director for other companies. I'm currently directing the Christmas show at the Battersea Arts Centre 'Sleeping Beauty & The Beast' with the comedy trio Sleeping Trees. This year I've found a good balance between theatre making, directing, teaching and performing.

What do you love about your job?

Pretty much everything, the creative problem solving, working in a room with other people, making something out of nothing and encouraging young people to be brave and test out ideas

and ways of working that are new and unfamiliar.

How did you get into your role?

I set Splendid up in 2003 and did a part time creative business course to help me structure the idea.

But after that I learnt through doing it, making mistakes and then doing it again differently. For me the joy is in the learning with everything I do.

What advice would you give to someone who is interested in following a similar career path? What kinds of training or experiences should they be on the lookout for?

My advice is that there are so many ways to get into what you love and there is not one particular path – most people who come to work with us have not had a traditional route into performance.

Get as much experience as you can by either joining a youth theatre, running drama clubs or events at school, if you love writing then write your own play or adaptation and get stuck in with whatever you have access to.

It's also useful to recognise what you aren't quite so good at and either learn how to do those things or build a little team of people who can cover those areas.

Work with the process in mind rather than the product – this will help you to take risks, play, experiment without fear – seeking perfection in ourselves and what we make is both limiting and damaging.

“Perfection is a vanity” said Peter Brook and he's right.



We all love an evening at the theatre! What production have you seen that stuck with you?

As a working class person my relationship with theatre was the yearly panto at Christmas – which I still love – but when I was 7 my eccentric primary school teacher (Mr Foster) took the whole class to watch a production of the Mikado by Gilbert and Sullivan. I had never seen, heard or experienced anything like it. I sat there and wept, as my little self was transported and overwhelmed with how beautiful it was.

Theatrically the following left a mark: Jane Eyre by Shared Experience at The West Yorkshire Playhouse in 1999 – the first time I had seen a rough/poor/simple approach to storytelling where the actors were everything and it blew my mind. Black Watch by Gregory Burke for the National Theatre of Scotland, movement directed by John Tiffany at the Edinburgh Festival 2006 – for the combination of a well written, directed & performed play with exquisite use of movement and physicality. Still one of the most impressive pieces of theatre I have seen, I saw this on press night in Edinburgh and the atmosphere in the room was extraordinary. SEMIANYKI – THE FAMILY – Edinburgh Festival 2006 – A clown show which

was anarchic and involved the entire audience, this piece changed my idea about what theatre could be.

Tristan & Yseult by Kneehigh at The National Theatre in 2006 – the chorus of love spotters was so effective that we immediately installed a chorus into every other piece we made.

Emilia – by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm at The Globe in 2018 – we all went to watch it whilst rehearsing our version of The Oresteia and were struck by the similarity in social politics and approach. With this alongside Breach Theatre's It's True, it's True, it's True we felt that there was something rising that year. Theatre made by women who were angry and were making audience-centred anarchic work about it.

Favourite quote from a play?

The prologue to *The Exception and the Rule* by Bertolt Brecht is brilliant, specifically the end:

“...Please, we say to you now, do not accept

Events that happen every day as natural!

For in these times of bloody confusion
Ordered disorder, deliberate violence
Inhuman humanity –

Nothing must be called natural, so that nothing

May be thought unchangeable.”

My favourite quote though is from the artist Louise Bourgeois:

“I do. I undo. I redo.”

Which is my life motto, so much so that I put it in our version of *The Odyssey*.

Thank you so much for answering our questions Kerry! If you've enjoyed reading the interview with Kerry you can follow her on twitter - @Kramps

and her theatre company
@Team_Splendid



COMPETITION TIME!!!

For our first issue we are having a Costume Design Competition!

Please draw a design for a costume to be worn by your favourite Shakespeare character!

Make sure that you write the character's name above your design, draw out your costume and use some colour.

Take a photo of your design and email it to p.long@kechg.org.uk by 30th November 2021.

The winning design(s) will be displayed in the department and announced in the next issue of the newsletter.





Jodie Whittaker as Antigone at the National Theatre

CHARACTER PROFILE - ANTIGONE

by **Connie Bacharach**

Antigone - Greek tragedy written by playwright Sophocles in approximately 441 BC. Antigone is the third installment of the three Theban plays, following on after Oedipus Rex and Oedipus at Colonus.

Play Backstory

The trilogy of plays follows King Oedipus of Thebes, as he unknowingly kills his father and marries his mother. Antigone is set after Oedipus' death, during the aftermath of a civil war, in which Antigone's brothers Polynices and Eteocles kill each other in battle over kingship of Thebes. Their successor Creon buries Eteocles, but leaves Polynices unburied on the battlefield, as he was a leader of an opposing army. In Ancient Greek culture, being ritually buried was the only way to enter the afterlife, so after hearing that her brother was left uncovered, Antigone took matters into her own hands. This play is the ultimate conflict between family and state, where Creon has to weigh up his responsibilities as king against the actions of his own family.

Character Overview

Antigone is the daughter of Oedipus and Jocasta and is engaged to Haemon, Creon's son (the family tree is a bit confusing!) She's a determined character who stands her ground throughout the play; she strongly believes that her brother deserves a proper burial. Antigone never tries to hide, she even turns herself in, admitting to illegally burying Polynices. After hours of disagreement with Creon she is eventually taken away to a desolate cave to be left to die. Her fiancé Haemon finds her and is distraught.

Character qualities

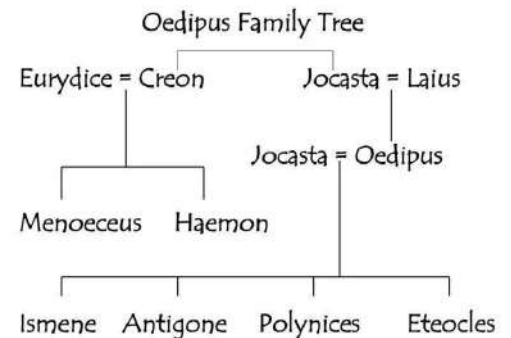
- Determined
- Unafraid
- Stubborn
- Loyal
- Driven
- Loving

Quotes

"It is the dead, not the living, who make the longest demands."

"Say I am mad and give my madness rein to wreck itself; the worst that can befall is but to die an honorable death."

"No man shall say that I betrayed a brother."



Antigone by Theatre Lab Company (Cyprus)