

*National Operatic & Dramatic
Association*

South West Amateur Theatre Magazine

"A First-rate Opportunity"

AUTUMN 2009

Spotlight on Youth across the Region !

Noda Youth Academy 2009

<p><i>Everyone appears to have enjoyed the experience and they were obviously fed well!</i></p> <p>After settling in, we had three one hour lessons including dance (knackering), singing (tiring) and acting. I was completely wiped out after this and ready for bed. Throughout Day 2 we covered circus skills, including juggling and stilts, more dancing, and for acting we had to pretend we were in a soap, - really funny. Day 3 - more singing and dancing followed by a quiz in the evening. Our team was called 'Showers' and I won a little camera. Day 4 - lots of rehearsals for our performance which I thought went well. We did a dance, a song and a sketch, followed by karaoke, where all CUDOS members did 'Valerie' by Amy Winehouse. The next day we went home having made loads of friends which was good!</p> <p><i>Abigail</i></p>	<p>I didn't really know what to expect from this trip. After a scary night of thunder we warmed up a bit and had to lie on the floor and imagine our own secret garden. In our singing lesson we learned different techniques for breathing, and then we did a dance to the Hairspray song. I have never had a work out so hard in my life! Drama - we practised improvisation which is really difficult, but fun. In the evening we did circus skills and I could only balance a feather on my nose. In drama we worked in twos. Then we practised our songs. It's all getting much harder but I'm enjoying it. The next day, rehearsals for the end performance before the other groups, practising to get in the right frame of mind. Both songs were very powerful so we had to be serious; the drama required passion and confidence, and the dancing was good. . All in all I had a great time, a fab experience. My confidence has grown and also my posture is now straight and upright.</p> <p><i>Beth</i></p>	<p>At 4.30 me and Lee were woken up by a huge thunderstorm (scary). We then played games in drama again, and for the evening activity we did circus skills, - it was more fun than I expected. Next day we started our piece its to do with a storm on a ship. The evening activity was a quiz and our team came last. Woop woop. Put the finishing touches to our piece. It took a while then everyone shared their pieces and they were amazing. The evening activity was karaoke.</p> <p><i>Emily</i></p>
<p>It looked very posh! We were all so excited. We did some acting, dancing and singing which were all very good. In the evening we mixed with others to get to know them. Bed. <i>Fantastic day, can't wait for tomorrow!</i> More singing, dancing and acting next day. The dancing is very productive and I can't wait to perform. Evening sessions were good, soap operas and circus skills. I'm a pro already. I'm not even tired, I need chocolate aaaahhhh.... <i>Bring on tomorrow!</i> After warm ups, me and Beth worked on our improvisation skills and as we built characters, made them to be half sisters, which we made a drama about. The evening activity was very successful as it was a quiz. The next</p>	<p>Our acting session we had to imagine being in a secret garden and put stuff in it. We started doing a play to show everyone. It was based on ten words that we could say in the whole play. <i>We played lots of games which we thought were just games but they helped us</i> with various emotions. In the evening activity we had circus skills, followed by a soap opera . We had fun for the first lesson but then had to settle down and start our final pieces. That was when we found out that the games had been for our benefit. We based our piece on the storm the night before. We did a bit more on our final piece, and only put</p>	<p>We arrived, our teacher, Sarah, taught us new games and we played Human Bingo. The next day after a warm up, we had to decide on drama pieces to be about the storm last night. In the evening we learnt circus tricks and made our own TV Soap. On Thursday we did some warm up and then started work on our piece. In the quiz we came second. Friday was our last day and we performed all our pieces, and they were all good. Then we got down to karaoke where CUDOS sang a song with each</p>

<p>day we practised our dance which tired us out. I hurt my ankle and had to have it bandaged up so have to be careful. We then went to the sports centre to practise our performances. After our performance later on we CUDOS lot cried at the end, really didn't want it to be over. <i>Dani</i></p>	<p>a few words into it and we found that could really work well. Afterwards we showed our pieces and it was really scary but it was OK. When we had our disco, that was so good. We went to sleep and <i>I can't wait for next year!</i> Thank you for giving us the chance to come here. <i>Ellen</i></p>	<p>other. Thanks to CUDOS my drama skills have improved and I have got lots of new friends that I can keep in contact with for ever. <i>George</i></p>
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Spotlight on Youth across the Region !

<p>After settling in, we did warm ups to get to know some people in the musical drama group. Then the juniors and seniors split into 2 separate groups; us seniors did music first of all. We sang to Sweeney Todd's prologue which we had to learn and there were harmonies too. We had a tongue twister to learn as well and it was very hard. After tea we did dance and we all felt a bit sick, - food and dancing don't mix. During the evening activity I had to recite the 7 Dwarfs. <i>The next day was packed</i> with sessions of music, dance and drama. In music we sang a Sweeney Todd song again and I am loving it. Learnt another prologue from 'Once on this Island' and the song is called 'We Dance'. In drama we learnt about breathing properly and read a pantomime script. We started doing 'Hairspray', it was so fun, <i>can't wait till tomorrow.</i> The following day was a bit different as we had drama, dance, music and drama, and had to make up a person to play. After that we added more steps to our dance for Hairspray and some Sweeney Todd singing, and finally drama when we produced our character building scene. The evening activity was circus skills and instant soap opera which I thought was pretty enjoyable. This is the last day so a bit of a rush to get everything finished for Sweeney Todd and 'Once On This Island'. We performed our pieces to everyone which was fantastic and everyone did so well, I was very impressed by all of them. Thank you CUDOS for paying for me to go and thanks to all girls who went, for making it enjoyable. Great experience and thanks again. Xxx <i>Leonie</i></p>	<p>We arrived safe and sound and our rooms were nice. We started with drama exercises , and then singing. Lynne, our chaperone, is really nice. Woke up after the storm which I never heard. After breakfast, we went for our first singing, followed by drama and lunch. After lunch, dance and then another session of singing. Fun, yet again tiring. Really enjoying the experience so far. <i>Many more fun but tiring days to come.</i> The next day was our first drama session where we built up a character. Second was dance which was really energetic. Third was a singing session and Sweeney Todd and we danced to the songs we are singing which are very strong and powerful. Last session of the day was drama where we continued with our characters and did some improvisation. <i>This whole experience keeps on getting better.</i> The next day was long one. We had class work rehearsals in both the morning and the afternoon. We perfected our various sketches and routines ready for the performances ahead. These went really well. Tonight we had a leaving party complete with karaoke. It was a really nice end to the week. I've made some new friends. Of course there were some tears but everyone is now fine and happy and I know we've really enjoyed ourselves. I've taken from this experience, posture, diction, breathing techniques, confidence and lots of new friends. <i>I would like to do it again</i> if the opportunity comes around. I would also like to thank CUDOS for giving me most of the money towards this course and I really appreciate it. Lynne, our chaperone, is very nice. <i>Vikkie</i></p>
<p><u>My Day in Bath</u> On 23rd May I was sponsored by BOF Productions to attend a NODA training day which consisted of 90 minutes of dance, 90 minutes of drama and 90 minutes of singing. I was very excited and the journey from Lyme</p>	<p>out the letter m, for ends of words, like time. Third came drama. This, to me, was the funniest thing I have done. We discussed the Roman people, and what their characteristics were like; then we acted them out. At the end of the day, we performed in front of the parents</p>

Regis seemed very long. We left at 6:45 a.m. I felt very nervous: would I know anyone ?
 At registration we were all put into groups. I was in group C. First my group had dance. I like dance and learnt many new steps. We put together a routine to show the parents at the end of the day in which we used glittering hats.
 Second came signing. I love singing and I learnt to breathe from my diaphragm which helps my singing a lot. I also learnt to sound

what we had learnt in the different classes. I was very tired, but had had a great day and would love to go to another. I have already started to put what I have learnt into practice at school and at a recent audition.

Nicole Richardson-Ward

News from Loughborough Summer School 2009

The Producers – Musical Performance Class

This was my first time at the NODA Summer School and after having been convinced to try it by a few friends who have been previously and told me what a fantastic experience it is but not much more than that, I was eager to see what all the fuss was about.

I was on the The Producers performance course and simply the experience of building up a small section of performance day by day is a huge plus.

The director and MD are all-important for a course like this and I thought they were both very good at pushing us to get the very best out of ourselves. I learned a lot from both of them, small specific things such as different warm up exercises, certain vocal exercises as well as more general points about characterisation or not just singing the song but telling the story. Many of the points were not brand new to me but were put across with a new emphasis which made me realise them much more clearly.

I also learned a lot from watching the other people on my course. It was a great pleasure to be part of a group so committed to what we were doing but also (on the whole) so open to new ideas and to learning how to improve their performance.

I enjoyed the other aspects of the school too. The evening sessions I really enjoyed; working with other people, and getting a taste of some of the other courses was a great way to turn off from The Producers for a while. The atmosphere all round was very friendly and welcoming, food was great, and it was so easy to talk to anyone whether on your course or not. As a first-

Stage Make up

This was my first visit to the Summer School and I hope it won't be my last. I was a complete beginner, I think one of 3 in my group of 7. My tutor, Christine Castle, a professional make up artist working in TV and Amateur Dramatics, was obviously very knowledgeable; but very willing and capable of sharing her expertise. I learned basic stage; period and geisha; pantomime dame and drag queen; ageing and "youthing"; animal; character; and special effects make up. It was hard but absorbing work, and made easy by Christine and the other members of the group. We hardly stopped laughing and on occasion laughed so much we had to re-apply the make up !

The separate evening workshops/activities were many and various and it was difficult to choose what to do. After the general quiz night on Sunday (at which the make up team of Alan and the Powder Puffs came joint second); for Monday I chose "Instant Musicals" with Jim Pearson. Jim had about 30 of us performing the first act (condensed) of Phantom of the Opera inside an hour and a half! It was wonderful and everyone was really buzzing by the time we'd finished. Tuesday evening for me was "the Big Sing" at which the student musical directors took it in turns to teach us, "the choir", several pieces, including "Cabaret". On Wednesday I attended Tri Cumming's workshop "All by Myself" during which I picked up some very useful tips regarding the preparation and delivery of monologues.

Friday was the Presentation day, where each group had

<p>timer I felt the spirit was very relaxing and inviting. Finally, I definitely hope to go again and intend to recommend it to anyone with the energy, so thank-you very much for the bursary this year, I had a fantastic week.</p> <p><i>Chris Williamson – Chardstock, District 8A</i></p>	<p>15 minutes to show off what they had learned during the week. It was clear that everyone had really enjoyed themselves and learned a lot.</p> <p>On Saturday morning, we departed – tired but happy. I am very grateful to NODA South West region for giving me the bursary which helped me to get to the Summer School.</p> <p><i>Ann Baseden – Sturminster, Newton District 11</i></p>
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Stage Lighting

Although I had some previous experience I approached the course with some trepidation, which soon proved to be entirely unfounded. The course truly caters for every level except the real expert (who wouldn't be taking it anyway!)

The friendly and relaxed (but nevertheless focussed) atmosphere allowed everyone to get pretty well what they wanted from the course. Ian Leonard is obviously a very experienced operator, who still retains a great enthusiasm for, and belief in, the art of theatre lighting. He clarified a lot of my misapprehensions and gave us all the chance to examine the latest kit and see its potential.

The individuals in the group had a variety of reasons for being on the course but soon coalesced into a friendly and supportive team who I suspect will maintain contact in the future. And where else in England can you get such good accommodation, excellent catering, good company AND tuition in your chosen subject from working professionals, all for £510.00 ?

Finally, as a pensioner, I particularly appreciated the award of a bursary.

Graham Baseden – Strumminster Newton, District 11

News from Summer School 2009

Sound

I very much enjoyed my time at summer school. I was concerned that I would not fit in, but this was not the case.

day one (Sat)

we enrolled and met the rest of the students and our tutor who I must say was great, and a good bunch of guys. He explained what was in store for us, and we had time to get to know one another.

day two (Sun)

We unpacked equipment and then were shown how to step up from scratch which was good as normally every thing is in place.

day three

Was to do with our own music and the difference in each piece. We also learn't about mini disc.

day four

We went out on a placement which was great seeing all the different equipment and how to bring our own equipment up to date.

day five

Quality control best describes today. How to give us the right balance and how to put it right if it's not.

day six

sound effects and cutting on to mini disc.

day seven

grouped today for performance. I was chosen to do the conductors rehearsals and show.

I would just like to say that Paul, my tutor, was fantastic as I myself have problems with reading and writing

which makes me feel second rate sometimes, the course was great. I feel that I have learnt a lot from my week. I have not only gained the knowledge, but it has built my confidence. I feel that I can go

Acting Through Song

If you are passionate about theatre there can be few better ways of spending a week in August than with other such folk at NODA Summer School at Loughborough University.

This year my chosen course was “Acting Through Song”, the tutors, Jacqui Craigo and Chris Pike. I had been very impressed with their presentation the previous year and the tutors had been strongly recommended so I knew the week would be good. It was fabulous !

The combination of Jacqui with her knowledge, teaching skills and relentless determination to make us give everything our ability allowed, and then more, and Chris with his musical skill and way of guiding us to feel the music and make it live was perfect. All this with a group of really good friends, because whether this is your first Summer School or you have been many times before, everyone quickly becomes part of the Summer School family.

At the end of the week we leave with new skills, and the self belief that makes you realise that many things are possible if you care enough.

Here's to next year when hopefully I will be back to enjoy the magic again. Will you be there ?

Joyce Pomeroy - Lyme Regis Operatic, District 6

to our theatre with confidence and of knowledge. I was very scared to go, but a very big thank you to everyone who made this week possible - from the person who sent the papers to the cooks, the cleaners and especially all at Noda who made it possible for me to attend this course.

Thank you again

Philip Dennis - Kidz R Us, District 1

Actors Approach to Voice & Text I wasn't sure what to expect from this course, but I certainly got more out of it than it promised, and it promised well. Simon Ratcliffe is a most inspiring tutor: very quiet in his approach but just as determined as his more vociferous counterparts. Every day was a revelation as he began with tiny seeds which gradually grew into something really tangible and useful. Simon's leadership was carefully organised allowing each individual member of the course to come to in their own time. This aspect was what made Simon so special. It was as though the day was structured for each of us individually. Time and assistance was lavished on each of us. Yes, I was lucky to be surrounded by a whole group of like-minded, courageous and inspiring students, but what sealed the week was the outstanding leadership we were given. Noda did it again ! After a number of visits to Summer School one wonders whether there can be another superb year – but there can. *Nick Lawrence – Exmouth Players, District 5*