

Summer School 2012

Approaching Shakespeare with the RSC & Theatre Mezze with Ben Humphrey

Offering a choice of two courses, the Drama Association of Wales returned to the University of Wales, Caerleon this August for our annual Theatre Summer School. Our attendees and tutors duly arrived on Campus and following a brief induction our students were thrown straight into workshops with our excellent tutors.

Ben Humphrey led our Theatre Mezze course. Using devising as a basis for the course Ben took his students through a variety of theatre techniques including acting, vocal skills and improvisation.



Warm up sessions at Caerleon's impressive Amphitheatre

Ben's knowledge and expertise belies his youth and I think that initially some of the attendees may have had doubts but within a session or two, everyone was on board and fully invested in the daily workshops.



Theatre Mezze – a photo from one of the pieces devised throughout the week on Theatre Mezze

The weather was typically Welsh for our week in Caerleon but on a few occasions was kind enough

This included a great vocal and physical warm up one morning is Caerleon's brilliant Amphitheatre. A brilliant experience which, I'm sure, will stay with our summers-schoolers for quite some time.

The Theatre Mezze students were split into two groups and using the same techniques and starting point, created two very different



Approaching Shakespeare course with RSC directing practitioner Helen Leblique

pieces of theatre, which they presented to the other summer-schoolers at the end of the week.

Meanwhile Victoria Williams from the Royal Shakespeare Company was leading the other course through the pretty physical vocal exercises.

Following some weeks delivering a variety of workshops all over the UK Victoria led the RSC sessions for three days before Anna Morrissey took over to take our students through sessions in movement for two days – fresh from working on the Olympics Opening Ceremony.

Finally, Helen Leblique (RSC Directing practitioner) created short scenes with the group for the remainder of the week. The RSC course-goers had also taken the opportunity to share some of their work earlier in the week with Victoria Williams. They presented a variety of scenes.

The week is hard work but ultimately incredibly rewarding for those taking part. All of our tutors and the course as a whole were very well received. Here's a few of the comments from some of our attendees.

“An opportunity to learn with top notch tutors” – Jill Hughes, Penmaenmawr, North Wales

“Great fun and a sense of achievement” – Derek Williams, Dorset

“You can’t make it better!” – Bettina Kuenzel, Berlin



Theatre Mezze Group

“This course provides us with the essential skills to keep those creative traditions alive” – Dave Perkins, Chester

“The level of the course material was delivered in an excellent way and at appropriate levels for the group. Fab!” – Sam Densham, Monmouthshire

“As ever, this was very well organised and enjoyable course teaching new skills and techniques. The DAW is to be commended for its dedication in encouraging theatre activity by these means” – Carol Shone, Mold, North Wales

If you would like to receive the details of any future training projects, let Gary have your email address/contact details and we’ll ensure that you are added to the mailing lists:
Gary@dramawales.org.uk

A Catch Up With Teresa Hennessey

We had a brief chat with Teresa, Publications and Library Coordinator to find out what she’s working on at the moment, what she does on a day-to-day basis and her favourite parts of her job..

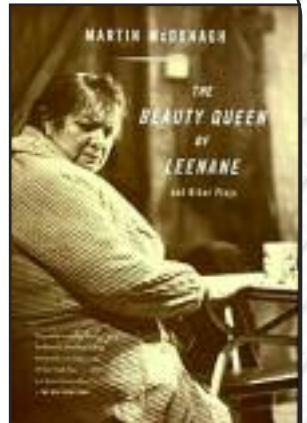


How long have you been at the Drama Association of Wales?

Since 1998

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Developing drama projects, such as the Promenade Play, in conjunction with Cardiff Central Library; Encouraging new writing and new playwrights; Meeting our members at festivals; Sourcing and working on the publications that DAW publish; Being surrounded by plays everyday; Going to see members’ productions and helping our members choose plays to suit their group. Oh, and receiving cakes on a Friday morning from the Marketing Officer!



The Beauty Queen of Leenane Script

As the Library and Publications Co-ordinator you obviously know your scripts, what is your favourite play and why?

Out of them all, I think ‘The Beauty Queen of Leenane’ by Martin McDonagh is my favourite. A black comedy beautifully written and one of the best pieces of theatre written for two strong female leads. The best production I’ve ever seen was by DAW Group member, Neath Little Theatre.

What are you working on at the moment?

One of the things I’m doing at the moment is producing a Promenade Play taking place in Cardiff Central Library. It’s a fabulous building and lends itself to a promenade type production which includes excerpts from different plays in the different sections of the library. We have an incredibly inspired and original young director, Dafydd Weeks, working with us (after I head-hunted him from the Glamorgan Area Festival rounds!) The Drama Association of Wales and Cardiff Central Library have always had a great relationship but we felt we wanted to work a little more closely together.

In one way it would be a great opportunity to let people know about the DAW and the services we provide whilst encouraging and highlighting the genres and subjects of books provided by the superb facility which is CCL. It's on Friday 26th October 2012. We're particularly keen to try out new projects which can take place in all our areas of Wales... and the rest of the UK for that matter!



Cardiff Central Library

What has been your proudest moment at DAW?

Moving the final box of plays from the Old Library to our new premises in The Maltings. The transportation of 300,000 plays and books is not a simple task - it nearly killed me and our valiant volunteers, but it was worth it in the end to have the collection safe and secure.

Also, seeing the first completed DAW Publication printed for which I was responsible as the Publications co-ordinator; working closely with the publishing team on the new format; the new covers; in general raising the quality of the final product. Encouraging young playwrights to write plays and to have faith in their abilities in whatever section of the arts they decide to work in.

How long have you been at your new offices and how do you find the new place?

Just over a year. It is a much better environment to work in. The building is safe, secure and the people at The Maltings could not have made us feel more welcome. I love it here.



Our Library at The Maltings

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Obviously, I love going to the theatre. I enjoy going to the cinema; walking (usually sections of the Pembrokeshire National Coastal Path, where I'm from) and attending ice hockey matches. I support the Cardiff Devils, only because Fishguard doesn't have an ice hockey team!

As part of your role you travel all over Wales, anywhere in particular you would recommend visiting?

All of it! Every single part. There is something for everyone in Wales and although the A470 (which I've travelled on numerous occasions to get me from north to south and vice versa) is little more than a drover's road still, the scenery is breathtaking with the geology changing every few miles.

That's why we encourage all our members to attend the Wales Area Rounds and the Wales Final; it's surprising how many people haven't had the experience of other parts of the country and what could be a better way to explore than to combine the travelling with something you love to do.

2012 Bafta Cymru Awards Bafta Cymru Comes of Age!

**The 21st British Academy Cymru Award Ceremony will be held on
Sunday 30th September 2012
at the Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff Bay.**

To celebrate Bafta Cymru's 21st anniversary, this highly respected organisation of excellence has very kindly allowed the Drama Association of Wales to be party to the advance notice that the tickets for the public will go on sale at the Wales Millennium Centre on 8th September 2012. Tickets are just £10 each and must be purchased through the Wales Millennium Centre website www.wmc.org.uk - not through the Bafta Cymru office.

LIBRARY REVIEWS

compiled by Teresa Hennessy

FULL LENGTH – SINGLE COPIES – MIXED
CAST

THE KITCHEN SINK by Tom Wells

Things aren't going to plan for one family in Withersay, Yorkshire. Pieces are falling off Martin's milk float as quickly as he's losing customers and something's up with Kath's kitchen sink. Billy is pinning his hopes of a place at Art College on a revealing portrait of Dolly Parton, whilst Sophie's dreams of becoming a ju-jitsu teacher might be disappearing down the plughole. Amid the dreaming, the dramas and the dirty dishes, something has to give. But will it be Kath or the kitchen sink?

Comedy Drama. Casts: M3 F 2

Publisher: Nick Hern Books

BASKET CASE by Nick Fisher

Dependable Miranda and her ex-husband, the smooth-talking, charming and utterly unreliable Guy are thrown together in distressing circumstances when their faithful aging family pet takes a turn for the worse. Reunited over the dog basket, Guy and Miranda soon discover they haven't 'moved on' quite as smoothly as they'd imagined. When they are joined by their family friend James, who rarely sees a stick without getting the wrong end of it, and Martin, the vet and a long time admirer of Miranda, the scene is set for some startling home-truths as this rapid-fire four-some mines laughter and touching observations in equal measure. Will this be the end of Guy's hopes of a reunion with Miranda, or the beginning of an unlikely romance? And has Guy really discovered a love for his old dog that he failed to find during his marriage?

Comedy. Cast: M2 F2

Publisher: Josef Weinberger Plays

THE LADYKILLERS by Graham Linehan, from the motion picture screenplay by William Rose



The Ladykillers is a classic black comedy; a sweet little old lady, alone in her house, is pitted against a gang of criminal misfits who will stop at nothing... Posing as amateur musicians, Professor Marcus and his gang rent rooms in the lopsided house of sweet but strict Mrs Wilberforce. The villains plot to involve her, unwittingly, in Marcus' brilliantly conceived heist job. The police are left stumped but Mrs Wilberforce becomes wise to their ruse and Marcus concludes that there is only one way to keep the old lady quiet. With only her parrot, General Gordon, to help her, Mrs Wilberforce is alone with five desperate men. But who will be forced to face the music?

Black Comedy. Cast: M6 F2 + extras

Publisher: Samuel French Ltd

ONE ACT – SETS

PRIMROSE WAY by Ron Nicol



The ageing bag lady on the street who opens the play is the eponymous Primrose Way, once a professional actress. As she reminisces and her story unfolds, we see her enthusiastic youthful self retracing her career in the theatre, and reliving the memories of her ambitious mother, herself a professional actress, who delights in playing a number of other characters who drift through Primrose's recollections. This poignant drama is an ideal festival play for three women of varying ages. The brief scene with Primrose's father can be played with an empty armchair if preferred.

Drama. Cast: M1 (non speaking) F3

Publisher: Samuel French Ltd

FROM DAW PUBLICATIONS

MUM'S THE WORD by Susan J. Bevan

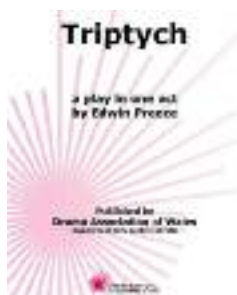


Sisters Jane and Sophie are hitting forty. Jane is happily settled with two teenagers and a third child on the way; Sophie, though, has shunned motherhood in favour of a career after their mother walked out on them as children. When Sophie's biological clock strikes twelve, she goes in search of the mother she has never since seen. The subsequent train of events unravels the stories of three generations of mothers in her family in a way she could never have imagined.

Play. Cast: F3 £4.50

Performance Fee: £38.00

TRIPTYCH by Edwin Preece



A famous painter, Benedict St. John spots Isabel reading in a café and paints Girl Sipping Tea. The picture is an enormous success and soon Isabel is more than just his muse. But Benedict is restless and has seen Dan posing by a swimming pool to get the attention of an attractive girl, and Trevor entertaining tourists in Covent Garden. Benedict immortalises them all on canvas but when he decides that they should meet in real life, they don't discover why until much later.

Play. Cast: M2 F1 £4.50

Performance Fee: £38.00

FROM DAW PUBLICATIONS

PORTH Y GWYLL gan Gareth Evans-Jones



Beth yw'r enaid? Beth yw ei berthynas gyda'r corff? A yw ffawd wedi pennu trywydd ein bywyd? Dyma'r math o gwestiynau yr ymdrinir â hwy yn y ddrama ddamcaniaethol Porth y Gwyll.

Yn y ddrama mae Enaid ar fin croesi'r rhiniog i'r Byd a chael ei uno gyda'i gorff ond cyn iddo allu gwneud hynny mae'n rhaid iddo geisio deall y gweledigaethau y cafodd yn ystod y naw mis diwethaf. Digwydd y sgwrsio a'r dadlau rhwng Enaid, Cydwybod a Chwant ynglŷn â'r gweledigaethau ym Mhorth y Gwyll. Wrth i'r ddrama fynd rhagddi caiff gwirionedd ei ddatgelu na fydd modd ei newid. Ynteu a fydd?

Drama. Cast: Five characters

Tâl Perfformiad: £38.00

STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT

For those of you that have taken the time to write and email in, on behalf of the Drama Association of Wales we Thank You so very much. We have received a wonderful response and your support is greatly appreciated.

Since asking for support we have had over 80 responses and it will all help to illustrate the need for the Drama Association of Wales to prospective funders.

If you would like to know more please visit the website, alternatively, if you would like to send us your statement of support please send it to Teresa@dramawales.org.uk




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