



cymdeithas ddrama cymru
drama association of wales

Drama Association of Wales
NEWSLETTER - November 2011

COMPETITION TIME

Would you like to win a Marketing package for your group's next show?

To enter simply send a 20 second video via smartphone to Harriet@dramawales.org.uk answering the following question:

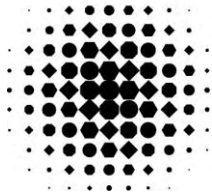
What do you and your group think is good about the Drama Association of Wales?

The most entertaining video will be judged and the winning group will receive a Marketing package* for an upcoming show that includes:

- Two press releases (one for the company and one for the specific show)
- Leaflet design with discounted printing and distribution
- Poster design with discounted printing

* Entrance subject to terms and conditions available online at www.dramawales.org.uk/marketingpackage.html

TRAINING NEWS – FESTIVAL WORKSHOPS



CANOLFAN
MILENIWM
CYMRU
WALES
MILLENNIUM
CENTRE®

An excellent opportunity for amateur groups across Wales!

DAW is working together with **Wales Millennium Centre** to provide a series of weekend workshops throughout Wales in 2012!

We will be running two day-long workshops in each of the festival areas: one on **Acting Skills** and a second on **Enhancing Festival Productions**. Our intention is to enable groups to enhance festival entries and their productions in general. However, the workshops will also be relevant to those who don't participate in festivals.

Established one-act festivals in Wales are: Anglesey, Conwy, Clwyd, Montgomeryshire, Gwent, Glamorgan and Pembrokeshire and we will be holding these workshops in each of these regions.

We're working with **Wales Millennium Centre** to deliver these workshops.

Dates and details will be available soon - we are currently working to set a schedule for the workshops. We want to get these up and running early in the New Year in preparation for the 2012 one-act festival season. Dates will be released very soon.

The talented **Ben Humphrey** will be leading these workshops for us. Many of you will remember Ben from his adjudications of the regional one act festivals earlier this year. Ben was very warmly received by the regional festivals and we received excellent feedback on his adjudications. Having been a part of this year's festival circuit, he is in an excellent position to work with the groups in Wales and help improve productions.



The **Acting Skills** day will cover many aspects of performing including tips and 'tricks of the trade' for performers which can be applied to all forms of acting: stage, screen and radio. It will also include a section on avoiding the pitfalls often seen made by performers in festivals.

Enhancing Festival Productions will advise on the many aspects you will need to get right in order to achieve success in competitive festivals. It will include the selection of plays, set design, directing, production and advice on how to develop your creative teamwork.

Once launched, we're expecting the bookings to be coming in thick and fast so you'd be advised to book early.

See overleaf for more upcoming courses planned for the next few months.



MORE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

The following workshops are currently in development and will be available to book very shortly. Full details will be posted on the [DAW website](#) very soon.

Applying to Drama School

Will include detailed guidance on:

- Picking the best course for you
- The Experience of Drama School
- The Application Process
- Putting together an Audition Tool Kit
- Audition Clinic

Facilitator: Rebecca Hammond trained at Central School of Speech and Drama and has worked extensively in theatre. She currently runs Hammerpuzzle Theatre Company and lectures in Drama Studies at Bath Spa University School of Music and Performing Arts.

January/February 2012, Cardiff

Cost: DAW individual members £70, Non-members £90

Health & Safety for the Theatre

The course will cover the essential aspects of Risk Management and Production Management. Detailed course breakdown available on the DAW website very soon.

Facilitators: Neil Maidman and Aneurin Brown. Neil is an IOSH Qualified Consultant with 25 years theatre experience. Aneurin has a wealth of experience including stage managing the National Eisteddfod and the Urdd Eisteddfod. 18 February 2012, Blackwood Little Theatre, Blackwood
25 February 2012, Theatr Twm o'r Nant, Denbigh

Cost: DAW individual members £70, Non-members £90

Characterisation

A workshop for actors and directors. Viv Buckley will explain the techniques and devices used to develop a convincing character on stage. Detailed course content available on the DAW website very soon.

Facilitator: Viv Buckley trained at Central School of Speech and Drama. She is former Performing Arts Co-coordinator at Gorseignon College and currently teaches Performing Arts at Coleg Powys.

February/March, Brecon (date to be confirmed)

Cost: DAW individual members £30, Non-members £40

SAD NEWS

We were deeply saddened to hear the news of the recent deaths of former DAW Welsh Drama Officer **George Owen** and DAW Honorary Life Member and stalwart supporter of amateur theatre in the Clwyd Community Theatre Association **Angela Tidswell**.

We were honoured to be the chosen charity to receive donations in memory of Angela.

You can read more about Angela and George on our [website](#).

RIGHT SAID FRED; HAD TO TAKE THE DOORS OFF...

by Teresa Hennessy

Gosh! If we'd known how difficult it was to move a library from one premises to another, we would never have started. I, for one, would've stayed in bed... for 6 months. Why 6 months? Because that is how long it has taken us to move the entire collection, plus office, to our new home at The Maltings in East Tyndall Street, Cardiff. We have an office which incorporates a small but perfectly formed selection of plays, plus an archive room upstairs on the top floor. Miss Haversham looks after that collection.

We needed to bear in mind that this amazing cultural resource must still be available to everyone; a collection Wales, not to mention the rest of the UK, can be extremely proud of. We didn't wish our members to experience any decline in the quality of service we provide; a service we are pleased to say, is appreciated by our members worldwide.

Weekends were spent filling boxes; boxes that were provided and delivered by the transportation team of The Maltings. This move would have been nigh on impossible without the close

collaboration between DAW and our new landlords. The management has been entirely supportive; they have bent over backwards to assist us in any way they can.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has given of their time generously and selflessly, ruining their weekends and making themselves incredibly unpopular with their families but having our eternal gratitude in helping us to achieve this mammoth task.

We look forward to welcoming you to the new premises.

The archive room where our library collections are stored in a safe, dry environment.



DAW office and library





TALK OF MURDER...

Cardiff based *Telstars Theatre Company* have recently ventured into performing Murder Mystery Evenings. We caught up with Director **Teri McCarthy** to chat about the transition from performing regular plays on stage to the more up close and personal world of Murder Mysteries.

So, Telstars have undertaken their first Murder Mystery evening; how did that go?

It was nerve-racking to say the least. But it went very well and we had some wonderful comments afterwards. The biggest shock was being in with the audience and not being on stage and having people actually talking with you while you're trying to remember your lines. But the evening gave us such a buzz and we left on such a high. It really was fabulous.

Did it result in Telstars getting further bookings?

It did yes. We've had three approaches for further bookings. Plus we had done another evening for a synagogue in Cardiff and we've had a further booking from that night too. Plus the Synagogue has given us national exposure through their national newsletter. So we've got four possible future bookings from these first two performances.

What was the reason that Telstars ventured into Murder Mystery Evenings as a departure from the more conventional plays?

We're a self-funded, self-supporting company with about fifteen members paying a monthly subscription. We don't have a venue or rehearsal facilities. We have to hire space to perform and rehearse. Also, we don't have any storage facilities for any sets or props, so these are all costs that eat in to our income. Our money was dwindling away and we thought: "Come on, we need to get some money behind us to be able to continue with our productions." And it just came from a conversation we had one evening. **Derek Traverse** of *Bridgend Castle Players* came in and worked with us for a few weeks as none of us had ever been in one of these before. We ended up selecting an excellent murder mystery script, written by **Graham J Evans** who works with both *The Players' Theatre* and *Blackwood Little Theatre*.

How much, and in what ways does performing in a Murder Mystery evening differ from performing in a regular play?

I think the biggest difference is actually being in amongst the audience. We begin with all the characters sitting with the other guests and you actually have a meal with the audience members and, of course, you have to stay in character the whole time. Because two cast members knew almost everybody in the room at our first gig so it was very difficult remaining in character throughout especially when there's people coming up to you, going "*Hiya Teri, how you do doing?*"! The biggest shock was, just how many questions we were asked as characters. People were asking things like "*How long have you been married?*", "*Have you got any children?*". But, I've got to say, it was a lovely buzz.



Telstars cast members John Minkes and Joanne Symon in action

So you all had to have a really detailed knowledge of your character.

Oh yes. You really need to do character research. It's so important. I do character biographies with my casts when I'm directing a conventional play but this was another level entirely.

What would your advice be to any amateur groups considering going into the Murder Mystery evening scene?

Oh, do it! Do it! Make sure it's a good script, make sure you all know your characters and to start with I think it's worth not overcharging. Some people thought we were selling the evenings too cheaply but I don't think we did in hindsight. Because of what we charged initially we've had enquiries about further bookings. Although we have explained to these people making enquiries that we'll be charging a higher rate next time, they were happy to pay. It gets you known and can secure further bookings at a higher rate. But just do it! If you're thinking about doing it. Do it because it really is a fun, fun night!

www.telstarstheatrecompany.co.uk



THEATRE USERS FORM COMPANY TO SAVE LOCAL THEATRE

Local theatre groups have joined forces with users of the Civic Hall in Conwy in forming a Community Interest Company to try to save their local theatre from closure.

In November 2010 Conwy County Council announced that no more bookings would be taken for the hall after 28 December but that they would honour bookings already made up to the end of March 2011. It transpired that the Council had entered a lock out agreement with a local developer to redevelop the site.

A campaign group has arisen from a well attended meeting of concerned local supporters and a community interest company formed called **Ciwb Conwy Cube** to enable the group to apply for grants for future funding and development of the hall.

In September 2011 the group presented their business plan to the county council along another bidder. After a nervous week's wait the Cube discovered that they were the preferred choice to run the Civic Hall on the proviso that they secured a proportion of funding from Conwy Town Council.



Tony Franks, Chairperson of Ciwb Conwy Cube said *"This is great news for all involved and a major milestone on our path to securing the future of the Civic Hall"*.

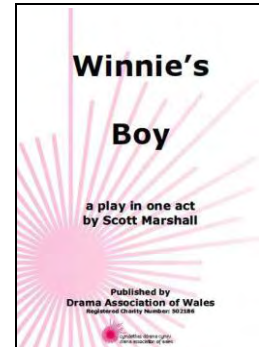
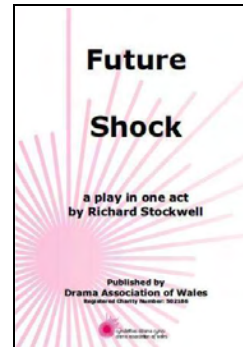
The Cube is now in the process of refining their long term business plan and awaits their application for funding from Conwy Town Council.

Their progress can be followed on the Facebook site 'Save Conwy Civic Hall'.



NEW FROM DAW PUBLICATIONS

With the one act festival just around the corner, many of you will be looking for suitable scripts for the 2012 season. Here are two great new plays from DAW publications.



FUTURE SHOCK by Richard Stockwell

Laura is woken from an eight hundred year hyper-sleep because she has run out of money. It is a hundred years before her partner will return from surveying new planets. How can she reach him? She has no money to be returned to hyper-sleep, and she is alone in an unfamiliar time. All she has are the stories of the past until she is offered a strange and desperate way of reaching the future. Is she brave enough to accept? *"Terrific new play"* Chris Jaeger, Director of The Swan Theatre, Worcester

Cast: M1 F2. Available for purchase and performance immediately

WINNIE'S BOY by Scott Marshall

Two elderly women, the frail little Lilly and the kindly, capable Brenda visit their old friend, Essie, in the bedroom of her comfortable retirement home. They chat and reminisce about many things, including Polo mints, shopping and the acceptance of death, always in a highly comic manner. With skilful, impressionistic strokes, the very different lives of the three friends are vividly painted, revealing, amidst the constant flow of comedy, the regrets and pathos of lives which in many ways have been unfulfilled, with an ending that will take the audience by surprise. This beautifully written play gives stunning roles for three mature actresses. *"A wonderful mix of acutely-observed comedy and achingly nostalgic reminiscence"* Chris Jaeger, Director of the Swan Theatre, Worcester

Cast: F3. Available for purchase and performance from 29 December 2011.

You can download a full [catalogue](#) of DAW publications from our website.



**LIBRARY REVIEWS compiled by Teresa Hennessy
FULL LENGTH – SETS**

GHOST WRITER by David Tristram

A theatre company decides to stage a new production of Hamlet – fronted by TV soap star Julian Dando, and backed by a cast of second-rate hams. At the last-night party is one Edward Pinfold, a promising young playwright, and husband of the talented but tempestuous actress Ruby, who had played Ophelia.

Tragically, that very night, Ruby – a renowned reveller with a reputation for burning the candle at all three ends – is found dead in bed; an overdose of naughty pills and booze. The theatre world went into a state of mourning that barely lasted into the afternoon. We join the story on the first anniversary of the death of Ruby Pinfold.

Comedy/Thriller. Cast: M3 F3 Publisher: Flying Ducks Publications

FULL LENGTH – SINGLE COPIES – MIXED CAST

LIFE & BETH by Alan Ayckbourn

It's Christmas, and Beth Timms is mourning the recent death of her health and safety officer husband, Gordon. Beth's sister-in-law Connie and son Martin have come to stay, determined to ensure that she should have a stress-free Christmas, but between Connie's drinking problem and Martin's unspeaking and emotionally volatile girlfriend Elola, their intentions prove to be short-lived.

Play. Cast: M4 F4 Publisher: Samuel French Ltd

ANNE BOLEYN by Howard Brenton

A celebration of a great English heroine, *Anne Boleyn*, dramatises the life and legacy of Henry VIII's notorious second wife, who helped change the curse of the nation's history. Traditionally seen as either the pawn of an ambitious family manoeuvred into the King's bed or as a predator manipulating her way to power, Anne – and her ghost – are seen in a very different light in Howard Brenton's epic play.

Play. Cast: M13 F4 Publisher: Nick Hern Books

VISITING MR. GREEN by Jeff Baron

Mr. Green, an elderly, retired dry cleaner, wanders into New York traffic and is almost hit by a car driven by Ross Gardiner, a 29-year-old corporate executive. The Young man is given a community service of helping the recent widower once a week for six months. What starts as a comedy about two men who do not want to be in the same room together becomes a gripping and moving drama as they get to know each other, come to care about each other, and open old wounds they've been hiding and nursing for years.

Play. Cast: M2 Publisher: Dramatis Play Service Inc.

RATTIGAN'S NIJINSKY by Nicholas Wright, based on a screenplay by Terence Rattigan

In a hotel room a once-lauded playwright meets Nijinsky's elderly widow, Romola, to fight over his latest play. Meanwhile, in the same room, Diaghilev and the young Romola fight over the tormented Nijinsky.

Drama. Large mixed cast

Publisher: Nick Hern Books

FIRST EPISODE by Terence Rattigan, co-authored with Philip Heimann

Published here for the first time, *First Episode* is Terence Rattigan's first play. Written with his fellow student, Philip Heimann, while they were both at Oxford, it shows an infatuated undergraduate, Tony, falling for Margot, an actress ten years his senior. And vice-versa. Completing a triangle of rival affections is Tony's best friend, David.

Play. Cast: M6 F2

Publisher: Nick Hern Books

ONE ACT – SINGLE COPIES – MIXED CAST

HOME DEATH by Nell Dunn

70% of us want to die at home, but in reality only a quarter of us do. A lingering death in a nursing home is one of the biggest fears of the elderly, and yet research from the think-tank Demos predicts that by 2013, 90% of us will die in the soulless setting of a hospital ward.

Drama. Cast: M4 F7 with potential to cut

Publisher: Nick Hern Books

THE OMELET MURDER CASE by Tim Kelly

Imagine what would happen if the tragedy of *Hamlet* were played like a story in a trashy detective magazine! The bard would never be the same – and neither would the audience. Shy on poetry but loaded with poetic license (and laughter) *The Omelet Murder Case* introduces Chicago's number one private investigator and hack writer "Shake" Speare.

Comedy. Cast: M3 F5

Publisher: Dramatists Play Service INC.

YOUTH

BLACKOUT by Davey Anderson

Inspired by the true stories of a young offender from Glasgow, a 15 year old who had committed a violent crime, this short play was part of the National Theatre's New Connections programme which commissions plays about and for young people and was presented to critical acclaim at the Royal National Theatre. It's a hard-hitting play about 'getting bullied, fighting back, trying to make a name for yourself, turning vicious, doing something stupid, losing everything, then finding your way again.'

Publisher: Samuel French Ltd