



CENTRESTAGE

School of Speech and Drama

May 2008



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School of
Speech
and
Drama

Dear Parents and Guardians,

There are so many projects underway at **CENTRESTAGE** this summer that it is difficult to know where to start! This newsletter is primarily to give you necessary information about the projects, events and exams in which your child is involved. Feel free to contact me if you have any queries or concerns.

Summer is a busy time, and we know that certain pupils may be away at certain times. Please let me know as soon as possible if your child is unable to perform in any of the planned events. We hope you will enjoy the forthcoming summer events and I look forward to welcoming you to them.

Rebekah O'Dowd
CENTRESTAGE Principal

- SENIOR PLAY -

'The Witches'

9th – 11th October 2008
At Highbury Theatre Centre

Our Senior play this October will be 'The Witches' by Roald Dahl. We hope to involve all lower secondary pupils from year 7 (currently year 6) to year 10 (currently year 9). We are aiming for 4 performances on Thursday 9th to Saturday 11th. Please get these dates on your calendars now; box office will open after half term.

- JUNIOR PLAY -

'Birthday Surprise'

Our Junior pupils have been working hard for their performance of 'Birthday Surprise' by Julia Donaldson, which is planned for Saturday 21st June at St Michael's Church Hall. Speech pupils will also delight us with some of their poems.

Following their usual 9.30am drama lesson, please return pupils to St Michael's at 2:00pm then come back to enjoy their performance at 3.30pm.

There will be a small charge per person on the door to cover hall hire charges and production costs.

Many thanks for your support!

Closure of St Michael's Hall for Refurbishment

Some eagle-eyed parents and pupils may have spotted a notice that has been up in the St Michael's foyer for some time: the hall will be closed for complete refurbishment during the months of July & August. When it re-opens, there will be many changes to the layout of the rooms, and there will no longer be a stage! We hope instead to have some modern, more versatile staging that can be used in more exciting ways. The last formal lessons at **CENTRESTAGE** will be on Saturday 5th July, and these lessons will take place at Wylde Green United Reformed Church on the corner of Highbridge and Britwell Roads.

National Youth Theatre!

If you want to apply for 2009...

- 1** - Decide early that you want to apply (Sept 2008)
- 2** - Choose an audition piece that suits you by Christmas. Make sure that you get advice on whether it is a piece that suits you. Rebekah, Becky and Fiona are all able to advise you in acting classes.
- 3** - Take acting classes!
- 4** - Learn your audition piece by Jan 2009, take your time to experiment with it, research your character and perform it in class.

Well Done Lucy!

Only a couple of pupils took up the challenge to audition for the fiercely competitive 'National Youth Theatre' this year. We were delighted that Lucy Oldacre-Bartley, year 10, has gained a place for 2009. She will be off to London next Easter for a two-week course where she will be learning acting skills with top teachers in the profession. If she does well, she could be invited back in subsequent years and gain access to the casting auditions for summer productions. Many of the country's top actors have started in the NYT, so this is well trodden, proven route to the acting profession. But for those who don't want to act professionally, this is a fantastic and enriching opportunity for any young person.



- INTERMEDIATE PLAY –
 Years 5 and 6

'Persephone'

by Julia Donaldson

We plan to perform 'Persephone' at Britwell Hall, Wylde Green United Reformed Church on Sunday 6th July at 4.30pm. We hope that you will all be able to join us for the event.

Extra rehearsals at Wylde Green URC will be as follows:

- Friday 4th July, 6:30 – 8:00pm
- Saturday 5th July, 11:00 – 1:00pm (please note extra time)
- Sunday 6th July, 2:00pm

Please make every effort to be at these extra classes so that the play can be a success. The pupils do very well to get the play ready within the one hour per week, we hope that you will support our need for extra time.

CENTRESTAGE at Arts Festival!

The first Sutton Coldfield Arts Festival, backed by the Sutton News, will take place in and round the Sutton Coldfield area, on the weekend of 11th – 13th July. The main day for events will be Saturday 12th July when we have been invited to perform at both Starbucks and Waterstones.

The day should be great fun, and will be all about celebrating the Arts in a whole range of ways. I am really excited about the opportunity to perform in central Sutton Coldfield locations, in unusual and challenging performance venues.

At Starbucks we will be performing upstairs. Planning is still in early stages, but we hope to present a Year 10 devised piece, Year 11 acting piece, Year 12/13 acting piece and 'Jimmy Seville Investigates' penned by our own David O'Sullivan and Sion Perks.

At Waterstones we hope that many of the speech classes will contribute items of either prose or poetry, probably as group pieces. So bring your family and friends to Starbucks, where you can enjoy some quality drama over a drink, then pop to Waterstones to hear the speech pupils.

If your child is not able to take part, please let me know as a matter of urgency.

LAMDA Exam Success!

On April 29th, our youngest speech pupils, year 8 and 9 Acting class and Bronze and Silver Medal actors took LAMDA exams at St. Michael's Church Hall. Our visiting examiner, Mrs. Val Pickering, was extremely pleasant and very complimentary about all the pupils and the standard of drama presented. The day was enjoyable; Fiona Paterson our most recently appointed teacher was assisting Rebekah in running the Centre, and the exams went smoothly. We are still waiting for the results from individual examinations, but our Grade 6 Group Acting was awarded an astonishing 92 marks for their presentation of 'Adult Child Dead Child' by Claire Dowie. The pass mark for a LAMDA Acting exam is 50, a merit is received for a mark of 65 and above, and a Distinction for 80 marks. Very well done to Aoife, Amy, Helen, Amelia and Jenny for achieving such an outstanding mark.



Upstage Showcase!

Tuesday 7th October

This year we have hired Highbury Theatre for a whole week. The main performance will be 'The Witches' but we are planning an Upstage Showcase on the Tuesday evening.

We hope to present scenes from 'Find Me' by Olwyn Wymark; speech and acting pieces and an extract from 'Adult Child Dead Child' by Claire Dowie. Obviously this is an event for friends and families of performers, but also an opportunity for Seniors to sample the type of work they could be involved in in the future at **CENTRESTAGE**.

'Living With Lady Macbeth'

In March this year our Senior Year 10s put on a production of 'Living with Lady Macbeth' by Rob John in the Highbury Theatre Studio. It was a fantastic success, and left their audiences thoroughly entertained. It was the first play to be solely directed by **CENTRESTAGE** teacher Becky Owen, and it was an experience which she enjoyed greatly. Congratulations again to the cast for their hard work and outstanding performances.



Further Success...

Our Junior pupils also gained excellent results in their very first exams:

Sophie Dunne – Distinction
 Sarah Norton – Distinction
 Annabal Kemp – Distinction
 Sureena Phagura – Distinction

Well done to you all!

DATE TO REMEMBER

Up Coming LAMDA Exams...

On **Sunday June 29th** the next batch of pupils will be entering for LAMDA Speech and Acting exams, this time at the Birmingham School of Acting, Millennium Point, Curzon Street, Birmingham, B4 7XG. We wish them the best of luck!

MAY							JUNE						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29 	30	31 	29 	30					

JULY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4 	5 
6 	7	8	9	10	11	12 
13	14	15	16	17 	18	19 
20	21	22	23	24 	25	26 
27	28	29	30	31 		

DATES TO REMEMBER.....

29TH May & 31ST May – SCHOOL CLOSED

21ST June – Performance 'BIRTHDAY SURPRISE'

29TH June – LAMDA Exams

4TH July – Rehearsal 'PERSEPHONE'

5TH July – Last Formal Lessons for term @ **Wyld Green United Reformed Church.**
 - Rehearsal 'PERSEPHONE'

6TH July – Performance – 'PERSEPHONE'

12TH July – ARTS FESTIVAL

17TH July – 5TH September – SCHOOL CLOSED.



Photos from two recent performances at **CENTRESTAGE**.
 Left: 'Living with Lady Macbeth' March 08.
 Right: 'Adult Child Dead Child' April 08.

