



E-Newsletter Issue #2

December, 2010

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SPOILER ALERT!! IN THIS ISSUE...[INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR ADAM MITCHELL](#), [Call for Contributions: DramaWest National Conference](#), [National Conference Schools Project Announcement](#), [TED Talks](#)

From the Presidents...

Wow what a year! Hope that it has been a good one for you. The exams are over the reports are written and the holidays are beckoning. It's been incredibly busy for us at DramaWest. The fabulous committee is working full speed on your behalf planning the National Conference. I think we are doing our own version of an MBA. It is certainly a steep learning curve some days. Have you thought about joining us for some fun on the working committee for the conference? We promise you lots of fun. Also, the conference website is up and happening... www.spacesofperformance2011.com.

We've also been busy with advocacy work in relation to the National curriculum. It was great to see so many DramaWest members at the John O'Toole presentation at Wesley. It was also good to see a range of members from our dedicated ex presidents Tim Walker and Val Johnson, life member Robin Pascoe through to newer members and about to graduate young teachers. Marguerite Flynn was there with Lorraine Scorer who had brought along some Arts HOLAS after a pd day. If you didn't get to go, then no problem! Frank Murphy of Wesley, and his student s, filmed the whole event and are putting it on Youtube. A similar meeting was held in Brisbane and that is also on YouTube in eight episodes. Search for it under Qld Arts . We also took lots of notes from John's address and they are included in this newsletter.

Make sure that you don't forget to submit your feedback to ACARA. You need to register to give feedback by December 17. We will also email you the feedback to ACARA from DramaWest as an association. Thank you to everyone provided their feedback.

All DramaWest members are members of DramaAustralia and they have also been working hard for us through their role on the NAAE, the advocacy group that pushed for a National Arts Curriculum. The NAAE met recently with Peter Garrett about arguing for more resources and increased funding for training arts teachers. They did not report success but the discussion was had.

Check out the great interview with Adam Mitchell. He certainly offers a great perspective on the role of the director. We would like to thank Adam very much for taking the time to write for us.

Do join us at the AGM. It will be an excellent launch for the year.

Christina Gray and Christine Adams

The Role of Director: An interview with Adam Mitchell

Adam Mitchell is an award winning director well known for his inventive contemporary theatre productions. He has received acclaim for his direction of the Hot Bed Ensemble at Black Swan State Theatre Company.

Recently DramaWest caught up with Adam who is currently working as assistant director on True West, a Sam Shepard play at the Sydney Theatre Company. Apart from his extensive directing and performing CV, Adam has been the artistic director and presenter for the Year 12 Performing Arts Perspectives. Not only is he young, talented and charming but he immediately agreed to do this interview and got back to us within days.

We began by asking Adam about his work with Black Swan and then about his current role.

What was it like working with such a controversial script, such as The Laramie Project, knowing that it would be touring through country WA?

I never thought of Laramie as something that was controversial. I approached the play like I would any other, with one condition. Normally I would honour the

work of a playwright by using their text as accurately as possible and being true to their intention. This was the case with Laramie and the artists who put the work together, but I did feel an added responsibility to honour the people represented in the piece. It's verbatim theatre, these are real people, and that comes with a certain amount of accountability. The ensemble did not judge any of the characters in the play, even John Robertson who played the Rev. Fred Phelps with his vitriolic propaganda, had to find a way to enjoy and sympathise with his ideas. Only by the actor fully committing to his hateful intent does the audience get to see the extent of his repulsive histrionics.

The whole experience was incredibly cathartic for the cast. The regional audiences responded with exactly the same compassion and reverence as the Perth audience. Laramie being a small town perhaps resonated even more in the smaller places we played.

Moses Kaufman, (who directed the first production) has recently returned to Laramie. It's more than a decade after the death of Matthew Shepard and they have written an epilogue for the play. It explores how this brutal hate crime changed the town in Wyoming and what good has come out of it. The truth is, very little.

Adam, what was your approach to The Caucasian Chalk Circle? How did you go about making Brecht relevant to younger audiences?

I had no intention in making CCC more relevant to a younger audience. The tools that I chose to use to tell the story just resonated with a younger demographic. The pastiche of TV drama, the romance of a swelling score or the use of a tango to represent the first moments of falling in love are all recognisable to our audience. If they understand the form they will engage more fully with the ideas of the play.

I did shift the tone of the piece from the Brecht's original, and that is simply because the political ideas in the play don't have the same teeth in the here and now as they once did in Europe in the 1940's. I am not interested in staging something traditionally or because that's the way it's always been done, if we want this art form to have any relevance we need make it live for today.

Pool [no water] pushed all sorts of boundaries with its audiences. It was a true ensemble piece, with no dialogue specific lines for the characters. Help or hindrance?

This is not a usual play, so we couldn't approach it in the usual way. We worked it back to front. We began the process by creating 5 fascinating characters. We used some references from the text to guide what kind of attributes these characters might possess, but did not directly use the text in the first part of the rehearsals. I guided the actors in certain directions, so the mix of characters in the end would allow for tension and colour. From there we read the play, it became very clear very quickly who should say what. The characters literally fought to speak, which created a vital delivery, and a dynamic performance.

What are you working on right now ?

Currently I am working as the Assistant Director for Sydney Theatre Company on their production of Sam Shepard's True West. The play is directed by Philip Seymour Hoffman and the actors are Bredan Cowell, Wayne Blair, Alan Dukes and Heather Mitchell.

The role of assistant director changes dramatically from director to director. Some assistants do very little in terms of the rehearsal process, others may actually work through scenes with the actors, liaise with the designers on the project, and generally throw lots of ideas or questions to the director to help clarify a moment, scene or even the tone of the play.

I was a sounding board for the ideas he wanted to try in the rehearsal room, an advocate for the actors (helping them with lines and intentions etc), and generally another set of eyes and ears in the room.

The assistant is expected to follow leads that come out of the rehearsal room and bring as much helpful research to the process as possible. For example I brought in maps and images of the location of where the play is set (on the edge of the Mojave Desert), I researched phone numbers from the 1980's in California (so that the amount of numbers dialed into the phone was correct), provided some essays on the mythology of The West (one of themes of the piece), shared insights from other productions from around the world- really whatever you think might be helpful to the actors in creating a shared world in which to tell the story.

Some actors find this very helpful, others don't, but as the assistant it pays to be prepared. It also helps the assistant to build a trusting relationship with the actors, because the director finishes working on the play on opening night, and the assistant takes over and maintains the show until it closes.

I go to see the show 2 or 3 times a week and give the actors and stage manager notes. I make sure the story the director wanted to tell is still being told. It's very easy in a long run like this one (10 weeks) for new ideas to creep into the play, (which are often welcomed) though they need to be within the boundaries set up by the director in the rehearsal period.

How did 'Phil' (Phillip Seymour Hoffman) approach the role of director for True West?

Phil played both male roles in the play 10 years ago on Broadway (they are brothers). Every 3 performances they would swap parts, which gave him a very good understanding of the play.

At no time during the process did he refer to the previous production. This would have been theatrical suicide. This play only works if the director can get the actors to bring their own experiences, passion and instincts to the play. Trying to adapt a previous production would have proved phony; an audience is very good at sniffing out anything that isn't authentic.

Phil is very much from the 'Method' school of acting. In a nutshell this means he expects the actors he is directing to 'become' the characters as much as possible. There is no room for a 'performative' style. Shepard's play is his own style of naturalism, he asks the actors to try and affect the others on stage rather

than respond in a rehearsed way. Anything can happen, anything is possible. This creates a sense of danger for an audience and that can be thrilling.

What I have found most intriguing about his process are the endless anecdotes he tells in the rehearsals, some of which are very personal. These are intended to make the actors personalise the play by relating each moment to their own experience. Some of them were related to the play, others weren't, but it forced the actors to explore their own idea of what is being said, or how they might achieve an objective.

In your work, to what degree are you looking for the actors to work with you in the direction? At what point do you draw the line on decision making?

The old model of the Director being a tyrant and actors following every word is not the way of my generation of theatre makers. I want to work with intelligent actors, who are able to contribute to process and ideas in the play, they might bring in some images to help describe an aesthetic or have the solution to final moments of the piece. Usually the ideas that come from the actors will be much better than mine, as they will have ownership of that particular moment which will help them invest more fully in the work. That means better work! It helps if you leave the ego outside the rehearsal room.

Directors need to be flexible. You need to be prepared and well planned but at the same time you need to be able to let all of your expectations, pre-conceived notions go, otherwise you may miss something far more interesting that may be present which you couldn't have possibly thought of working the script in isolation in the weeks before rehearsals.

Peter Brook says it very well:

"In a sense the director is always an imposter, a guide at night who does not know the territory, and yet they have no choice they must guide, learning the route as they go."

The director has serious dilemma. If you lock down all of the choices early in the rehearsal process (blocking, delivery, character choices etc) slowly they will lose potency. All of the 'play' will disappear and a rote-learned, wooden production will be the result.

If the director leaves these decisions too late, the actors get unsettled, feeling like they haven't yet learnt the piece. The real skill is setting enough work to support the artists and leaving enough room for new discoveries during the performances, which is the lifeblood of actors trying to work in the moment.

Adam, it was great to have you work with the ex-year 12 Drama students for Performing Arts Perspectives.

I have really enjoyed working on Perspectives. I love the ideas of the performers. So many original ideas, told in a bold, fearless manner. It really is the most electric night in Theatre.

Thank you Adam Mitchell! We really appreciate you taking the time to write for us. What a great insight into the role of the contemporary director. We wish Adam all the best for his work in 2011 and whatever exciting ventures come his way. For more information about Adam's work, check out the following:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Swan_State_Theatre_Company#Adam_Mitchell_-_Director_of_The_HotBed_Ensemble

www.adammitchell.com.au

The National Conference Update



Call for Contributions

Submissions Close 5 pm (Perth time) 31 January 2011

You are invited to submit an abstract of a workshop or paper presentation for the Spaces of Performance, Drama Australia National Conference 2011 hosted by DramaWest. March 31st to April 2nd.

Presentation format

- 30 minute oral presentation of a paper (including 5-7 minutes question time)
- 60 minute workshop presentation
- 80 minute workshop presentation

Themes

We encourage you to submit a presentation that relates to the conference theme of Spaces of Performance. You are also welcome to interpret the conference theme in other ways for yourself. Sub themes include:

- Our space...Spaces of interaction
- Spaces that perform
- My space... Spaces of belonging
- Empty spaces... Creating and organising physical drama spaces
- New space/old space/found space...

Submitting an abstract

Abstracts can only be submitted online via the abstract submission button on the conference website from Tuesday December 7.

<http://www.spacesofperformance2011.com>

You will receive a confirmation once your abstract has been received along with a number which must be used in further communication regarding your proposal.

Abstracts must be submitted online as Microsoft Word documents only.

- Abstracts are to be a maximum of 75-100 words and submitted in Arial 11 point font
- Include the presenter's name/s underlined, affiliations, email details and where possible, a mobile phone number
- The abstract title (upper and lowercase only) must be typed in bold.

Guidelines

- Those presenting must register and pay to attend at least one day of the conference by March 1st 2011. If you don't register by this date your paper/presentation will be withdrawn.
- Submission of abstracts for presentations implies the author's agreement to publish the abstract in all conference publications including the web site. Successful abstracts must be presented by the author or nominated co-author.
- Presenters are invited to consider submitting articles to NJ The Drama Australia Journal where they will be considered for publication through the blind refereeing processes of that journal.
- Acceptance of abstracts does not imply any payment from the organising committee. Authors must arrange and pay their own accommodation, travel etc to attend the conference.
- Acceptance or otherwise is at the discretion of the program committee whose decision is final.

!!!IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!!

Introducing the National Conference Schools Project...

Australian drama teachers are invited to showcase some of the work of their students in an innovative project presented at the National Drama Australia Conference 2011.

The Challenge...

To produce a piece of work (5-10) minutes, focusing on the use of exciting interdisciplinary approaches, relating to the following concept...

Audience and the 'other' spaces of performance –
The experience of a live event.

Expressions of interest and information packs can be sought from Sinead O'Callaghan at contact@dramawest.com

What's On...

DON'T FORGET! DRAMAWEST AGM

Monday 24th January 2011, 4pm

To be held at Ecu, Mt Lawley (Parking off Central Ave), Room 16.117 (Theatre).

All members welcome.

...In the Community



D.I.Y. Disaster Movie
Wed 1 Dec – Sat 4 Dec & Tue 7 Dec – Sat 11 Dec
8.00pm
Blue Room Theatre
Tickets \$25/\$20
Bookings: 9227 7005
www.blueroom.org.au

Sticking (mostly) to the rules of all great disaster movies local actors, Damon Lockwood and Sam Longley, will create a brand new cinema classic before your very eyes.

The audience, will get to choose who - of the disaster film character clichés - dies in the most elaborate and horrible way (excluding the dog and cute kid, of course); and who will save the world from certain annihilation.

*No improbable or ridiculous world disaster is out of bounds – these lads can tackle anything.
D.I.Y. will culminate in the screening of a three minute film - shot and edited throughout the course of the show.
Come quick, the end is nigh...
WARNING: A Megashark may inexplicably come from nowhere and eat you while you are watching this show.*

Performing Arts Perspectives

March 8th & 9th 2011

7pm

His Majesty's Theatre

Tickets \$18.00

Bookings @ BOCS ticketing

A showcase of all the outstanding works from the 2010 WACE Practical Exams in Drama, Dance and Music. Gets your tickets in a hurry before it sells out!

Curriculum Updates

www.curriculum.wa.edu.au

Drama Standards Package 2009 and 2010

The Standards Package for Drama contains questions, marking keys and statistics from the 2009 and soon the 2010 Drama WACE exam. Better still it includes the top response for each question and a response that is at the mean.

You can find the Standards Package for Drama in the online learning section. Only 40 people have checked the Standards Package for Drama online. That means that most DramaWest members have not seen this great resource.

Exam Report

Early in the new school year there will be an examiner's meeting for Drama where the examiner's report for Stage 2 and Stage 3 Drama is presented. The report will also be available to read online.

Performing Arts Perspectives

Have you booked your tickets yet?

DramaWest is a proud supporter of Performing Arts Perspectives and has a seat on the committee.

The 15th Performing Arts Perspectives will be held at His Majesty's Theatre, Hay Street, Perth on the 7 & 8 March, 2011.

The Performing Arts Perspectives is an important educational event on the annual calendar of Year 11 and 12 students of the Performing Arts. The event showcases the highest standard of student performance and provides benchmarks of excellence in dance, drama and music for students and teachers from the Public, Independent and Catholic education systems and sectors

Early in January, the top students in the Drama practical exam in the Original Solo Performance and the Scripted Monologue will be invited to audition for Perspectives. They are not guaranteed a place in the performance as it is the task of the panel and the artistic director to put together a show that includes a range of works for an entertaining evening. For lots more information about Perspectives and to book tickets or place an order for a DVD...

<http://www.performingartsperspectiveswa.com/>

Can find what you want? Need some help? Contact Christine Adams 92736390 or Christine.adams@curriculum.wa.edu.au

Christine is at the Curriculum Council Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and checks emails every day.

Upcoming PD

DramaWest will be running a range of PD in 2011 including student workshops for both the practical and the written examinations. And of course the National conference will be a HUGE PD opportunity.

Stage Combat Perth

Andy will be running PD's on Tuesday, February 22nd (Venue: Hale School) and Thursday, April 7th (Venue TBA). DVD's to support his workshops are also now available. Contact Andy: stagecombatperth@yahoo.com.au or 0417 980 366.

ACARA News

John O'Toole's visit to Perth.

On Monday 29th November, Professor John O'Toole, lead writer of the Draft Shape Paper for the National Arts Curriculum, ACARA addressed Western Australian Arts teachers at an after school forum held at Wesley College. John O'Toole was invited to WA by all of the key arts education professional associations working together: Ausdance WA, DramaWest, ATOM (Australian Teachers of Media) WA, ASME (Australian Society of Music Education) WA and the ArtEd Association of Western Australia. The meeting was an initiative of Gemma Wright of ATOM and the presidents of all the associations met together to plan the forum. Consequently, Robin Pascoe of Murdoch University was invited to chair the forum.

The purpose of the forum was for teachers and educators to hear about the development of the Draft Shape Paper for the Arts from the lead writer, John O'Toole. As this paper represents only the very beginning of an Australian Arts Curriculum, most questions the audience might have had could not be answered. Rather, everyone was encouraged to register with ACARA and provide their feedback, questions and concerns in the online feedback which is open until December 17.

The following notes were taken at the forum. They represent an approximation of what John was saying (and more importantly, Christine's ability to read her own handwriting afterwards).

John O'Toole said that we are not starting from scratch. The Arts are a key learning area in WA and all of the other states. The Arts are not always equal to other learning areas or done well but they have a presence in each state curriculum due to 50 years plus of advocacy.

There was a national Arts Statement in 2007 and we must acknowledge the work of Robin Pascoe on that. The importance of the Arts was recognized more recently by Kevin Rudd as a new prime minister when he convened the Creativity Summit chaired by Cate Blanchett. The Arts are also a large but not large enough part of the Early Years Framework. Finally, the Arts are in the National Curriculum because of the work done by the NAAE. (DramaWest is represented on the NAAE through Drama Australia.)

Originally there were 3 subjects in the National Curriculum then history and Geography crept in next. Then the NAAE stepped in and fought for the place of the Arts as a key learning area. The politicians shocked at the cohesiveness of the approach gave way and for the first time we have a mandate for Arts education across Australia.

In WA as in every state, there is a patchy delivery of the Arts. Some children enjoy an arts rich education. Others do not. What goes to make a rounded human being? The Arts is a philosophy of education as well as autonomous art forms; each offering valuable learning.

The implementation of the Arts National Curriculum has also seen a 'détente' between the Arts industry and education. After all the years spent at school represent a big part of one's life span. In the past the Arts industry has only looked at grown up audiences. This has now changed.

Initially ACARA set up a reference group from across Australia. This group met for two separate days. These meetings were very affirming as all present were keen to make the most of the opportunity they had. A number of decisions were taken by this group. The NAAE had fought for five arts forms and that these were to remain. It would have been nice to have included literary arts but this was not to be.

The next decision was that children should have an entitlement that was equal over the years k-8. The group was surprised that ACARA agreed decided on equal delivery of Arts k-8. (ACARA in this case means the ACARA board. The WA representative on the ACARA board is also the chair of the Curriculum Council). The majority of the reference group argued that each child k-8 should receive a foundation in all of the arts and not be dependent on going to the right school. The reference group said that the arts belong to every Australian child and they should have equal access to the arts.

Primary school learning involves about 25 hours per week. ACARA then decides how much time for each subject. The breakdown is approximately: literacy and numeracy 8 hours, history and geography 2 hours, science 2 hours, arts 2 hours and mandated health and phys ed 2 hours. This does not include LOTE. Considering the economics of time in primary school, it is an enormous breakthrough to have mandated time in the arts for every school. Most good primary schools will go way beyond the minimum requirement in one or more art forms.

The National Arts Curriculum is an aspirational curriculum. It is in no way a dumbing down curriculum but a challenging one for both teachers and students. This aspirational curriculum gives teachers an imperative. The teachers on the reference group said that they wanted this. Teachers on two separate working groups said this. Imperatives are usually only made about literacy and numeracy.

The notion of connectivity is important. Each of the arts forms has a distinct way of being but there are commonalities. In terms of integration of the arts, some terrible things have happened in the name of integrated arts in the past.

In regard to the Draft Shape Paper, five writers were commissioned. Apart from the lead writer, four others were commissioned to write Dance, Media, Music and Visual Art. These writers got together with a new reference group. It was agreed that all children have arts capabilities and entitlement to discovering what those individual arts capabilities are. Three key concepts link the arts forms: Creativity, imagination and Play. In this context play is about experimenting and being playful. The lead has been taken from Early Childhood learning.

Arts' knowing is sensory, cognitive and affective. Most curriculums usually focus on only the cognitive. To understand the arts, first you have to Do the arts. We cannot come to an understanding of the arts without practising the arts. In the arts, process is as important as the product. Not all forms of art have a product. There needs to be an acknowledgement of this in the curriculum.

All of the arts are collaborative. The arts involve multiple forms and increasingly the arts forms are merged in contemporary arts works. How do we organise the Arts curriculum?

A set of organizers had to be developed. They needed to be some sense of comparable activities. What are the commonalities? The organizers had to be simple and not too many. In WA there are four common organizers: Arts Ideas, Arts skills and processes, Arts responses and Arts in society. In one state there are eight such organizers. An analysis was done of 40 syllabuses from around Australia and across arts forms. The organizers also needed to be dynamic. Three were decided on: generating, realizing with a z and responding.

It is hoped that people will look to the concepts behind each of these terms rather than just focus on the words themselves.

There are terrific challenges in the writing of the curriculum. In terms of time, forget about 2 hours a week. Realistically in years k-8 we are looking at 160 hours over a 2 year period, a basic minimum of 140 hours of each art form per child. It won't be 24 minutes per week. Different art forms need different approaches. How schools organise their time allocation will be up to them.

This time allocation would seem to barely scratch the surface. Even if you cannot deliver extended time in class, extracurricular arts learning will still happen as it does now. Can one imagine teaching the Renaissance without a focus on the arts? There will be lots of opportunities to crank up the time spent in the arts. Space and physical resources will be a problem for all arts forms. We need to be positive about the power of parents. Given the chance, parents want this. School administrations need to be persuaded that it is possible.

There is a widespread concern about training teachers. The arts are subtly different from some other subjects. It would not be possible to teach students about the Napoleonic Wars if you knew nothing about it but we are saturated in the arts, all day every day: music, drama, dance, media, art, design are with us constantly. Whether teachers are aware of it or not they are awash with the aesthetic they live in. It will be up to the writers and the experts to help teachers realise what they already know.

Following John O'Toole's address, there was a short opportunity for the audience to talk about the draft shape paper in groups and in turn, raise their key concerns, questions and also offer positive feedback.

Robin Pascoe was superb as a chair person for the meeting and he reminded us about a mythical Mrs Rose who teaches year 3. How will a National Arts Curriculum work for her?

Meanwhile it is vital that we all provide our feedback to ACARA and remember that it is equally important to say what it is that we like about the Draft Shape Paper for the Arts.

A video link to this forum will be available soon, so keep your eyes peeled in the next newsletter! In the meantime, have a look at the video of the QLD forum in the Interesting Bits section of this issue.

Also, this article came through just the other day:

"National Advocates for Arts Education call for curriculum action

NAAE members met with Peter Garrett, Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth; Senator Christine Milne, Greens spokesperson for the Arts, and Helen O'Neil, adviser to Arts Minister Simon Crean in Canberra on Tuesday. The NAAE canvassed strategies that will prepare generalist and specialist teachers for implementation of the developing Australian arts curriculum. "Teachers need to be adequately prepared to teach the new Australian arts curriculum" says NAAE Chair, Julie Dyson, "otherwise the aspiration for all young Australians to have access to sequential and continuous learning in dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts will be difficult to realise".

Tamara Winikoff, Executive Director at NAVA added: "The required resourcing to ensure the effective delivery of a new national arts curriculum presents an exciting challenge for Australia if it is to genuinely enrich artistic and cultural learning for all children."

NAAE's position

The implementation of the new Australian curriculum provides a unique opportunity to raise standards in arts teaching and learning and to develop a culture of creativity and innovation in schools. "NAAE is responding to ACARA's draft Arts Shape Paper to support the development of sophisticated curricula in five art forms that nurture young people's learning in the 21st century" says Derek Weeks of ATOM.

MCA Executive Director, Dr Dick Letts, says, "New approaches to pre-service teacher education are required to prepare for the arts curriculum in primary and secondary schools."

The NAAE asserts that quality professional learning programs are required to support the current workforce for teaching the arts effectively across Australia. The NAAE recognises the potential of a national broadband network to play a key role in the delivery and implementation of the new arts curriculum, particularly in regional and remote communities, and in areas of disadvantage.

"NAAE acknowledges the importance of the Arts in early childhood education and recommends that the Australian Arts curriculum should build upon the Early Years Learning Framework's practices and pedagogy to support arts-rich learning with children in the early years of school" says Jeff Meiners of Ausdance.

Drama Australia President Mark Bailey affirms that NAAE supports ACARA's plans for a world-class arts curriculum which may be delivered by both generalist and specialist teachers in primary schools. The NAAE also supports the provision of arts learning throughout the secondary curriculum and the development of a continuum of learning that allows for increasing degrees of specialisation as students progress through to the senior years.

Future NAAE proposals include arts curriculum research to investigate students' arts learning in the achievement standards for each art form. Research would include the connection between the arts and proposed general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities in the Australian curriculum.

ASME's Jay McPherson reminded teachers that NAAE strongly encourages all teachers to provide considered feedback on the draft Arts Shape Paper by the deadline of 17 December 2010, using the ACARA online questionnaire.

For further comment contact

Julie Dyson, Chair, NAAE – 041 2211 513

Tamara Winikoff, Executive Director, NAVA – 0411 162 156

18 November 2010"

NAAE: Australian Dance Council – Ausdance, Australian Society for Music Education, Australian Teachers of Media, Drama Australia, Music Council of Australia, National Association for the Visual Arts

News for Primary

Acting for the Screen for Kids (10-12 years)

Mon January 17- Fri 21 January 2011

9am - 1pm

\$300 (\$270 early bird special)

This action packed course is aimed at the young actor or performer seeking to gain or develop their on screen performance experience.

Taught by leading Perth acting coach and respected casting director Annie Murtagh Monks, this course is a great way to have fun, develop acting skills and technique, and build self esteem and confidence.

The students will work with two hander scenes (two people in a scene) working on performance, blocking and camera coverage.

Places are limited so enrol on-line today at www.openprogram.aftrs.edu.au.

For further information please contact AFTRS WA..... carol.brearley@aftrs.edu.au

News for Secondary

The National Conference Schools Project

Information is now available from Sinead @ DramaWest regarding this exciting initiative for the National Conference. Get you entries in ASAP! See the [National Conference Update](#) section for more details.

Feedback for the Arts Shape Paper is due by December 17th! Don't forget to have your say on what the Arts in the National Curriculum should look like! See the [ACARA News](#) Section above for more info.

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! Workshops for students!!

Screen Acting Intensive for Teens

Mon January 24, Tues 25, Thurs 27 & Fri 28 January 2011

9am - 2pm

\$300 (\$270 early bird special)

Got your eye on an Academy Award?

Aged from 13 - 17?

Then this course is designed just for you! Taught by leading Perth acting coach and respected casting director Annie Murtagh Monks, this is the chance for you to learn how to 'act' for screen! The requirements of screen acting are different from the theatre - takes, angles, marks and equipment restrictions impact profoundly on interpretation. Learning the techniques whilst developing your own ability is paramount. Who better than Australia's national film school to teach you.

Places are limited so enrol on-line today at www.openprogram.aftrs.edu.au.

For further information please contact AFTRS WA..... carol.brearley@aftrs.edu.au

[This just in from BEAT \(Banyai Education and Arts Training\)!](#)

End of the year is fast approaching!

If you want to get your resources at a great price before holidays break then see our special prices on DVDs & Books attached below.

We also have a Competition for you to WIN over \$250 worth of DVDs & Books of your choice. Just enter your details and email / fax back to us. Draw will be held before holidays break. Winner announced on our website and via direct email so don't forget your email addresses on the form or your entry will be invalid.

Need the resources but no budget left? We have payment plans to help you get what you need, when you need it! Just email us first and we can forward you the details: carmen@banyaitheatre.com

With the National Curriculum in focus lately, there's seems to be a swing towards a focus on the non-acting roles available in the Drama community, so we've decided to do a little spotlight on two important roles this issue: Directing and Playwriting.

Check out our interview with director Adam Mitchell in the Interesting Bits section!!!

This is a great resource for you to use with your students.

News for Pre-Service

Graduates, enjoy your holidays before your new jobs begin! Get your rest, because you're going to need it! Have a look at our Interesting Bits section below for some great ideas and inspiration to take you into the New Year.

Interesting Bits

Where you'll find everything of interest!

Check out these YouTube videos:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcdGpL4U>

This video was adapted from a talk given at the RSA by Sir Ken Robinson, world-renowned education and creativity expert and recipient of the RSA's Benjamin Franklin award. It deals with the shape of education, and is really relevant at the moment with all the talk about the National Curriculum. The video goes for 11 minutes, so make a cup of tea and watch it today. It's well worth your time!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52SH91pHMa0>

This is a video of the QLD NAAE forum with John O'Toole. Some very helpful and informative details about the National Curriculum Arts Shape Paper here!

Check out this article from the New York Times about the trend for successful playwrights to move between stage and screen.

Really interesting!

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/21/theater/21hbou.html?_r=1&src=dayp

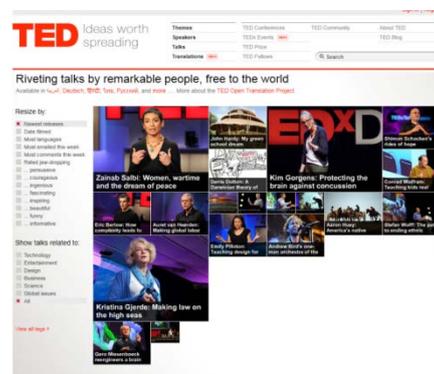
What is Ted Talks?

Contribution from Sven Sorenson

<http://www.ted.com/>

In this month's eNewsletter we've include a link from Libby Klysz which featured an animated rendition of Sir Ken Robinson's speech "Do schools kill creativity?" The original presentation is available through the above site:

The great news is you can log onto the above site or download them free from iTunes. What IS Ted Talks? From the site: "TED is a small nonprofit devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading. It started out (in 1984) as a



conference bringing together people from three worlds: **Technology, Entertainment, Design**. Since then its scope has become ever broader. [Each presentation is only 18 minutes]. On TED.com, we make **the best talks and performances from TED and partners available to the world, for free**. More than 700 TEDTalks are now available, with more added each week.”

Some examples:

J.J. Abrams traces his love for the unseen mystery -- a passion that’s evident in his films and TV shows, including Cloverfield, Lost and Alias -- back to its magical beginnings.

Sir Ken Robinson makes an entertaining and profoundly moving case for creating an education system that nurtures (rather than undermines) creativity AND in this poignant, funny follow-up to his fabled 2006 talk, Sir Ken Robinson makes the case for a radical shift from standardized schools to personalized learning -- creating conditions where kids' natural talents can flourish.

Musician and activist Bono accepts the 2005 TED Prize with a riveting talk, arguing that aid to Africa isn't just another celebrity cause; it's a global emergency.

Eve Ensler, creator of "The Vagina Monologues," shares how a discussion about menopause with her friends led to talking about all sorts of sexual acts onstage, waging a global campaign to end violence toward women and finding her own happiness.

At his Stanford University commencement speech, Steve Jobs, CEO and co-founder of Apple and Pixar, urges us to pursue our dreams and see the opportunities in life's setbacks -- including death itself.

TedTalks are available (in HD as well) via iTunes.

iTunesU:

No, we’re not being sponsored by Apple (yet! ... *joke*): another free resource for teachers.

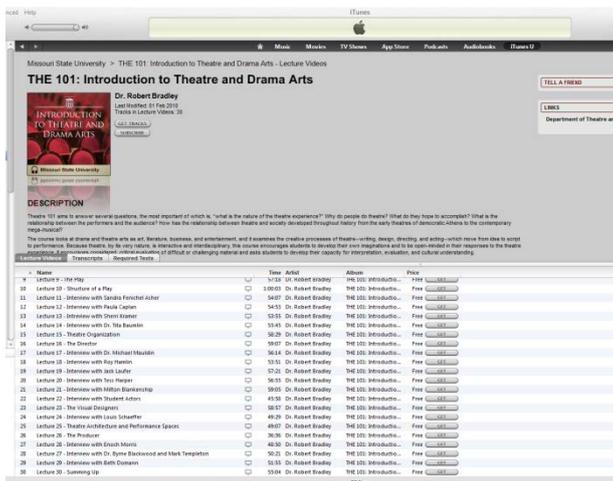
Open iTunes, go to the Store. On the top, click on iTunesU.

Do two searches:

theater (wrong spelling) and

The 101

For the second search you will see a list of 30 lectures addressing a broad range of Drama relevant topics:



Concept of the month: Analytical Marking Keys

Stephen Humphry and Sandy Heldsinger have done considerable work investigating “good assessment practices”. Last year in Perth they presented two papers looking at analytical marking keys, presenting research that supports the importance of good assessment practice. In one of their papers, “Do rubrics help to inform and direct teaching practice?” they provided the following explanation of “analytical marking keys”:

“[Analytical marking keys] typically has three parts: (1) performance criteria (2) performance level and (3) a description of features evident in the performance level ... The predominant format of [AMK] is that each criterion has the same number of performance levels, and most commercially available [AMK] have four performance levels for each criterion.” (Humphry&Heldsinger, 2009, p. 58).

However in the same paper, Humphry and Heldsinger noted that sometimes a particular criterion will support more or less than the standard four levels.

Humphry, S., &Heldsinger, S. (2009). Do rubrics help to inform and direct teaching practice? In M. O’Keefe, E. Webb & K.-A.Hoad (Eds.), 2009 - ACER Research Conference series (pp. 57-62). Sydney, NSW: ACER.

The biggest challenge for Drama teachers remains *what* language to use to express the progression? The term most employed by the Curriculum Council (WA) is *observable*. That is, we are assessing what we see or hear the students *do* that informs our judgement about achievement.

In 2001, Bloom’s Taxonomy was significantly revised and updated by a team of education researchers. The updated taxonomy is a useful reference when trying to separate lower order skills and abilities from more advanced responses. This text is worth reviewing:

Krathwohl, D. R., Anderson, L. W., & Bloom, B. S. (2001). A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing : a revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives (Complete ed.). New York, NY: Longman.

However, in the 2009 Examiner's Report for Drama featured both sets of analytical marking keys (for the practical component and the written component of the external examination for Drama). These are a useful resource to support the development of analytical marking keys in schools for Drama as well as ongoing understanding of good assessment practice in Drama.

<http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/ Documents/Reports/Drama+Stage+2+examination+report+2009.pdf>

<http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/internet/ Documents/Reports/Drama+Stage+3+examination+report+2009.pdf>

Q & A

Got an important or interesting question? Send us your question to newsletter@dramawest.com, and we'll put it up for discussion!

Last month, Jess Wilkey, Drama Teacher at Mazenod College, Lesmurdie, asked:

How do you incorporate technology into your Drama classes? Our school is heading towards 1:1 laptops, and I'm having a tough time coming up with ideas that go beyond PowerPoint presentations!

Answer from Sven:

1. Sound editing (music, soundscapes and voice overs)
2. Video editing (for digital set design) and reviewing student performances as well as analyzing good technique
3. Stage Design (instead of dioramas)
4. Costume Design
5. Research – next issue Sven will talk about researching using reliable sources
6. Playwrighting – Sven will talk too about creating a TEMPLATE for script writing (and maybe he will stick one on the DramaWest website for easy downloading) if you can't afford copyrighted packages like Final Draft
7. Music selection (iTunes for example ... avoid file sharing options)
8. Publicity and marketing (flyers, posters, brochures)

Send your further answers to newsletter@dramawest.com, with the subject line: Q & A RESPONSE.

Classifieds/Swap Mart

Buy, Sell or Swap your costumes/props/etc here! We have For Sale, Wanted, Free/To Swap and Miscellaneous sections!

MISCELLANEOUS

DramaWest are searching for Perth residents willing to host country participants for the duration of the National Conference. If you have some spare room, and you are willing and able to accommodate, please contact Dramawest. Email info@dramawest.com.

Email your Classifieds items to newsletter@dramawest.com with the subject line: CLASSIFIEDS ITEM.

Want us to feature your school production? Found a great resource lately? Offering workshops/PD?

Send us your info and suggestions to: newsletter@dramawest.com