



CENTRESTAGE

School of Speech and Drama

October 2008



CENTRESTAGE

School of
Speech
and
Drama

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Many congratulations to all our senior pupils who have provided us with top quality entertainment at Highbury Theatre this half term. The Senior Showcase displayed the individual talents of our older pupils, whilst 'The Witches' was, without doubt, a great success! A huge thank you to everyone who bought tickets for the show, including parents of Junior and Intermediate pupils. 3 of the 4 performances were nearly or completely sold out, giving our cast a fantastic experience of performing and also ensuring the viability of future shows.

CENTRESTAGE closes for half term after classes on Thursday 23rd October. The school will re-open on Thursday 6th October. On Saturday 8th November, St Michael's Church Hall hold their Christmas bazaar, so the first Saturday classes next term will be held at **Wyld Green United Reformed Church** on Britwell Road on **Saturday 8th November.**

This is an exciting time of year as many pupils who have been involved in 'The Witches' will be moving up into higher classes after half term. Changes are detailed on page 2 of this newsletter; please check them carefully.

Rebekah O'Dowd (**CENTRESTAGE** Principal)

'The Witches'

October 9th - 11th 2008

CENTRESTAGE's performance of 'The Witches' was, to borrow an adjective from the Grand High Witch, "GIGANTICUS!" even if we do say so ourselves! But how could it not be, with four performances and a cast of 46 enthusiastic and talented actors? And for those of you who witnessed this rollercoaster, I'm sure you will agree they did a spectacular job.

The audience were plunged into darkness for the 'curtain raiser' to be teased and frightened by the Year 7s. Dressed as witches, they tiptoed around the audience whispering dastardly poems, and if they were lucky enough, members of the auditorium had plastic spiders tickling their noses!

The first act started in true **CENTRESTAGE** style with every senior cast member taking part in an eerie yet exciting opener, where actors used their bodies and voices to depict a car crash...and even the laying of an egg!

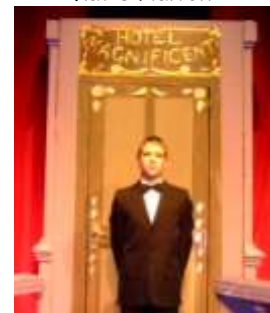
The excellent Elvie Broom took on the role of Boy which required her to be on stage continuously for almost the whole of the first act, supported by the endearing character of Grandma played by Ruth Marples.

It was in front of the Hotel Magnificent that the audience were first introduced to the greedy Bruno Jenkins (Rose McGoldrick) and his equally offensive (and 'chavy'!) parents Mr and Mrs Jenkins (Megan Yates and Katie Halton). All three parts were brilliantly captured, with the actors delivering ridiculous yet fitting performances. The scene was brought some decorum by Luke Robinson as the Doorman, who patiently guarded his door through all the commotion before it.



'Look at you...Your shorts are all grubby!'

Bruno and Mrs Jenkins
Played by Rose McGoldrick and
Katie Halton



Doorman

Played by Luke Robinson



'Vee Have Ignition'

Grand High Witch - played by
Miranda Burns

The first act closed with the climactic demonstration of the Grand High Witch's 'Formula 86: Delayed Action Mouse Maker'. Miranda Burns drove this scene into uproar with a skilled and fearless performance; she 'frizzled vitches', told off 'brainless bogvumpers', and brought her adoring kindred to rapturous applause with the transformation of Boy and Bruno.

The second act started in a much calmer (and cuter!) fashion, as Boy-Mouse waddled out onto stage. Elvie Broom gave a mature and animated performance, later to be joined by her comical counterpart, Bruno, munching on a giant sized 'ancient fish paste sandwich'. It would surprise even the hardest of critics to know that these two actors had only been working together for 4 weeks prior to performance, and this is thanks in part to the dedication and skill of Rose McGoldrick.

This is the first production in which **CENTRESTAGE** has used puppets, so directing and acting with them was a new experience. However our puppeteer, Charlotte Ridout, coped wonderfully; sneaking on and off stage, hiding behind objects and making our toy mice look as though they really were talking! Ruth Marples (Grandma) also has her fair share of puppeteering to cope with, at times holding the whole stage with just her and a puppet mouse, and she did a superb job.

How does a mouse get from dining room to kitchen in order to shrink the witches of England down to mice? Much to the joy of the audience, our puppet mouse was strapped to a remote controlled car, along with his potion bottle, and whizzed off stage to save the day! However, on the Saturday matinee our 'whizz' was more of a 'wumph' when the batteries in the car died. It would have been quite disastrous were it not for the quick thinking of Ruth Marples, who calmly pushed the car off stage with words of encouragement to her seemingly terrified grandson - well done Ruth!

The play ended as Boy-Mouse saved the day, but not before the audience was treated to the comedy delights of Niall Henshaw and Luke Robinson. As chefs, they flung themselves about the stage, presented some very suspect cooking skills and even, in the case of Luke Robinson, revealed pink spotty underwear! It was undeniably one of the highlights of the show!



'I Don't Wanna be a Mouse!
Boy and Bruno - played by Elvie
Broom and Rose McGoldrick



'What Has She Done to You?'
Boy- Mouse and Grandma -
played by Ruth Marples

Changes to Class Times:

Year 7:

Creative Drama will run on Saturdays 1.15 - 2.30pm, and will cost £8.00 per lesson. Speech will run 2.30 - 3pm at St Michael's Church Hall (SMH)

Year 10:

Creative Drama will run on Thursdays 6.15 - 7.30pm at Wylde Green United Reformed Church (WGURC). Acting classes will continue to take place 5 - 6pm on Thursdays, giving pupils taking both classes a break. Speech classes will take place 11 - 12 noon on Saturday mornings at SMH. As pupils are now preparing for advanced level examination (Bronze medal) Speech classes will run for 1 hour and cost £8.00.

Year 11:

Speech classes will take place 11-12 noon on Saturdays at SMH. Acting classes will take place 6.30 - 7.45pm on Friday evenings at WGURC. Year 11 pupils are now officially part of Upstage, which takes places 7.30 - 9pm on Thursdays.

Year 12:

Speech classes will run from 6.15 - 7.15pm on Thursdays at WGURC.

Year 13 +

Gold Medal Acting classes will take place 5-6pm Thursdays at WGURC.

SENIOR SHOWCASE

Tuesday 7th October 2008

Our year 7-10s were not the only ones who performed this month; the upper school also showcased their recent work. They presented a total of 12 separate items in one show, ranging from acting examination pieces to original work.

The undeniable highlight of the show was 'Jimmy Seville Investigates', in which with lights, sound and a happy audience, the cast shone. David O'Sullivan, (Jimmy Seville and co-author), caused hysterics in the auditorium with a dance only he could do. Extracts from "Find Me" and "Adult Child Dead Child" were moving and sensitive performances, whilst the Year 11s intrigued us with their devised murder investigation.

Thank you to everybody who supported the show; we are sure you had a thoroughly enjoyable evening. Parents have already asked us for more evenings of this sort; with your support we will do our best!

Important Information...

- On **Saturday 8th November**, **CENTRESTAGE** will not be held at St Michael's Church Hall; instead it will be at Wylde Green United Reformed Church on the corner of Highbridge and Britwell Roads.
- This term **CENTRESTAGE** will be closed both Saturdays of the half term (**25th Oct** and **1st Nov**)
- Birrminaham Public Centre LAMDA exams next term are scheduled for Sunday 15th March.

GOOD BYE BECKY! 😊

On Saturday 18th September we say goodbye and farewell to Becky Owen, who leaves us to travel around Europe. We hope that she has a fantastic time! The whole school has benefited from the time and creativity that Becky has given to **CENTRESTAGE**, and since September Rebekah has had a full time assistant - assistant teacher, director and p.a. How will she ever manage alone again??

Fortunately, Becky plans to return after Christmas for a short while, to work with Rebekah on some specific administration projects. We hope that she will be offering some teaching support at **CENTRESTAGE**, particularly in the run up to the LAMDA examinations in March.

Jane Smith, who has been involved at **CENTRESTAGE** for 5 years now, and who teaches Drama at The Shrubbery School, will continue to teach on Saturday mornings after half term. Becky's Saturday afternoon classes and Thursday classes will be taught by Fiona Paterson, now in her second year at **CENTRESTAGE**. We look forward to sharing all that she will bring to lessons.

November							December						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
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30													

Key:

- ☆ REHEARSAL
- 😊 PERFORMANCE
- ☹️ SCHOOL CLOSED
- 🌟 IMPORTANT/ EXAMINATIONS

"The Witches" Mementos:

A professional video recording of the production was not taken, but we snapped over 100 photos during performances, of which Becky has chosen the best 40 to put on our website. You can view them at www.centrestageschool.org.uk. Alternatively, we can put these onto a CD for you for £3.00 per CD, but orders and money must be received by **Saturday 15th November**. There are a few programmes left, which are available at £3.00 per copy, or if anyone would like a souvenir rat (!) we would love to get rid of them as they cost a whopping £4.00 each! Please phone, or bring the money after half term if you are interested!