This year has turned out to be our most difficult and frustrating since ACTS started! As I have stated before, we are not a ‘Drama Club’ and we approach everything we do very seriously. Therefore ‘Commitment’ is our main watch word. Without it we cannot run ACTS in the professional manner to which we are accustomed and other students suffer. This was very apparent when we had to, for the first time ever, pull one section out of a One Act Festival, losing money and depriving other students of performing in competition after weeks of hard work. This will not happen again!

May I also make a plea to parents to RING me if there are any problems. I know I have said this before but I do not constantly look at emails. In any case, it is always nicer to speak to everyone. It is more reliable and I have an answer phone which is always switched on and checked! I know this is considered ‘old hat’ but for me it is easier and more acceptable. Going back to the matter of ACT I missing out on a performance, please make a careful note of any dates we give out and make sure they do not clash with other commitments the students may have.

Good ‘Communication’ is vital to us. We fully realise that students have other activities. As long as we are made aware of these well in advance and when they occur, then this avoids major problems. However, we must stress that if there are clashes with any production dates or many absences then students must be aware that they may not be given a role.

May I wish you all a very good summer.
Valerie Harris—Head Tutor

ACTS Auditions

Auditions for A.C.T.S will take place at 10.30am on Saturday the 3rd September at ACT I’s meeting place, the large Unitarian Chapel School Room on Sylvan Grove, off Dunham Road, Altrincham, WA14 4NX. If you know of any one who is interested in joining, then please get them to give Head Tutor Valerie Harris a call on 0161 928 2277 or email us at info@acts4u.org.uk. As already mentioned, boys will be very welcome as we desperately need more to redress the imbalance we have at present. Prospective students will be expected to read a piece of their own choosing. They do not need to learn this off by heart but can if they wish and then talk a little about themselves. All students must be accompanied by a parent.
The One Act Play Festival season this year has proved to be a very difficult one for us. We again entered three One Act Play Festivals. The GMDF which was held at Cheadle, the Chelford Festival and we were back again at Glossop.

It was the first time we had entered the Greater Manchester Drama Federation Festival and we had some excellent feedback from the people there. The school came away with two Certificates of Merit. One was awarded to Liz Fraser for her performance as ‘Sarah’ and to ACT II as a whole for their presentation of ‘Maria Marten’.

At Chelford, ACT I student Jamie Bennett won the David Wood Trophy for Best Individual Junior Performance for his role as ‘Azaeus’ in ACT I’s production of ‘Pandemonium’. He has worked very hard and well done for all the support given by his fellow cast members. ACT II received two nominations for students, Liz Fraser and Sophie Parker. However, at this Festival the ACT II students really raised their game by 100% and so we were stunned that they won nothing after the adjudicator praised them for the ‘excellent representation’ of their play after telling another group that they had only made a ‘good attempt’ with theirs. It was very telling by the clear groan of surprise and disappointment (something we have never heard before) that went up from the audience when the youth awards were given out. We went to impress and both sections certainly did that! Sadly, ACT II’s hard work was not recognized by the adjudicators while it was by everyone else.

With regards to the Partington Players One Act Play Festival we had to, for the first time ever, withdraw one of our sections from this event. This was due to some students who had to attend a Dress Rehearsal for another organisation. We knew nothing about this, only that they were not available on the Saturday night. Therefore, we especially asked to perform on the Friday so that no one would miss out. Upon contacting the Dance School we were informed that they had given their dates out in Jan. We sent the date about the Play Festival out on the 20th April but were only informed about the dance dress rehearsal when sorting out transport on the 28th May....5 weeks later!!! With 3 members not being available we were left with no option but to withdraw ACT I from this Festival which not only cost us money but also meant that the remaining students were unable to perform.

We were very pleased to come away with 3 more awards for ‘Maria Marten’. It was another super performance from ACT II and so the awards were well deserved!! A Certificate of Merit was gained by Liz Fraser for her role. Fraser Dalgliesh won the Best Supporting Youth Award and Emma Kinsey won the Best Youth Actress Award. Well done to all of ACT II for all their hard work with this play which at every Drama Festival was highly praised by many people as well as the Adjudicators.

The students were especially grateful to Janet Reidsma who once again was there to help backstage with costume and hair. Thank you, Janet. We would also like to thank Alison Kinsey and Dee Gallagher who between them organised the transport needed for both the GMDF and Chelford Festivals. Students were safely transported to and from these venues and we thank all the parents who undertook to do this for us. It is very important and we must stress however that if parents do undertake these duties, no student must ever be left alone until a parent arrives to pick them up.
Looking for the unusual or something different as a present?
When we were setting up ACTS, we were greatly supported by artist Philip Wright. It was he who helped set up the Facebook accounts and also painted several signs for our productions. For example, remember the Pub sign in ‘Treasure Island’? Well Philip is now doing pencil portraits starting at £30 ranging from an A5 picture to a group picture done on A2. Interested? If you have Instagram you can see more of his work by going to www.instagram.com/phildjw or you can email him for more details at Phildjw@gmail.com

Dates for Diaries

ACT I Winter term starts on Saturday the 10th Sept, 2016 and finishes on Saturday the 17th Dec, 2016.

ACT II Winter term starts on Sunday the 11th Sept, 2016 and finishes on Sunday the 18th Dec, 2016.

The traditional ACT II first meet at Valerie Harris’ house will take place on Sunday the 4th September at 10.30am. As usual, students will be required to prepare a performance piece.

ACT I Theatre Make Up Workshop

We have been trying for sometime to organise another Theatre Make Up Workshop but this time for ACT I and we finally did it! Our thanks to Charlotte Hemming and her assistant, Hannah Dawson who ran this for us. Charlotte has been a Make Up Artist in this field for 3 years now and has worked on a variety of productions including ‘Cats’ and ‘The Merchant of Venice’ to name but two. After a brief introduction, the students were all issued with tissues, sponges, make up sticks and make up and under the careful supervision and guidance of Charlotte and Hannah began to make each other and themselves up. Burns, bruises, black eyes and the odd bullet wound began to appear. The session was very busy, interesting and enjoyed by all. The make up effects looked very convincing, so much so that one parent on picking up their very battered and scarred daughter said to us. ‘My lawyers will be in touch”. He was joking of course (well we hope so!).

The morning was voted a great success so we hope to ask them back again soon.

Pencil Portraits

Looking for the unusual or something different as a present? When we were setting up ACTS, we were greatly supported by artist Philip Wright. It was he who helped set up the Facebook accounts and also painted several signs for our productions. For example, remember the Pub sign in ‘Treasure Island’? Well Philip is now doing pencil portraits starting at £30 ranging from an A5 picture to a group picture done on A2. Interested? If you have Instagram you can see more of his work by going to www.instagram.com/phildjw or you can email him for more details at Phildjw@gmail.com

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The End Bit

If you have anything interesting or amusing for ‘The End Bit’ do send it to us.

It is very off putting when you are on stage and a mobile phone goes off, someone suddenly develops a very bad cough, people start discussing your performance before it is over or there is some other distraction which can ruin all your hard work.

Oh yes, we have seen and heard it all before and suffered! So this seemed a nice reply!

An Actor's Revenge
by Richard John Scarr

He had positioned himself stage centre.
And was giving the audience his all.
When suddenly a seat went up with a "Crash!"
And a woman walked down from the stalls.

And ignoring the audience hissing.
And the thespian's renderings too.
She crossed in front of the Footlights.
And disappeared into the Loo.

And feeling decidedly slighted.
The actor waited, enraged.
And when the woman came out of the Loo,
He walked to the front of the stage.

Then adopting a theatrical posture.
And in a voice filled with venom and bite.
That carried its way clear up to the Gods
He delivered the best of the night!

He said: "Madam-- Whilst there in the Privy.
Could you hear my excellent King Lear?
You couldn't? Well I find that amazing!
For we heard you quite clearly out here!"

Suit Carriers

In the past we made a request for suit carriers and received a large amount that have proved invaluable in keeping costumes clean and all together. This is especially important to us as a lot of the costumes we use are hired. However, we now seem to have acquired some very long dresses. So if you have any LONGER zipped carriers that we could have then they will be gratefully received so that these items can be hung without creases!!


Website: www.actsdrama.wordpress.com

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