

HINTERLAND



MED Theatre's community play for 2010 is *Hinterland*, due to tour between March 6th and March 13th. *Hinterland* is based on the life of Thomas Tyrwhitt, who built Dartmoor Prison and created Princetown. This play has been designed to complement the young company's play about life for the war prisoners, *All That Was Left Behind*.

It is the story of a man whose aim was to colonise Dartmoor (his own words), aided by the erratic support of George, Prince of Wales. But as always with colonisation, there are the aboriginal inhabitants to take into account, even where the country looks at first glance to be barren and uninhabited. Tyrwhitt rides roughshod over the ancient grazing rights of farmers and cottagers in his plans to reclaim the 'desert' as well as ignoring advice about the climate.

The conflict between London culture and local customs on the high moor is

played out against the backdrop of the Napoleonic Wars, investing Dartmoor life with an international dimension as the prisoners incarcerated or paroled at the heart of the desolate back country, as well as Tyrwhitt and his circle, encounter the moor's age-old lore.

Some Key Performance Dates:
6th March - Manaton Parish Hall
12th, 13th March - Moretonhampstead Parish Hall.



ALL THAT WAS LEFT BEHIND

The War Prison at Princetown project reached its climax with two site-specific performances of our young company's play *All That Was Left Behind* in the big barn at Dartmoor Prison Museum, on November 14th. The weather outside was atrocious and the temperature in the unheated building proved a challenge, but the production was a great success, and the Honorary French Consul, who attended the evening performances, made a closing speech in which he presented the young people with an award.



From our Youth Rep...

Wild Nights has had a busy couple of months, the Princetown project being our focus. In November we risked frostbite, and battled the dreary weather to freeze in our very atmospheric first performance of *All That Was Left Behind*. Our dragon's breath, and the leaking ceiling, gave a very realistic portrayal of the conditions which the prisoners lived in. The barn at Dartmoor Prison Museum proved to be the perfect location for our war prison play - we were happy with the performance and the feedback we were given, and to top it off we even had the Honorary French Consul making a speech at the end of the play. We then proceeded to change our promenade play to fit Moretonhampstead Parish Hall; luckily we did so with little casualty, and only one or two wrong entrances or exits.

Back in September we made an accompanying film to introduce *All That Was Left Behind*. The film proved successful, and the editors did a fantastic job. We were also lucky to get some of the Princetown youth involved and they did a wonderful war dance representing the French and English armies. *All That Was Left Behind* proved to be a collaboration of performing arts with theatre, dance, and music. Sarah Stewart-Watson sung beautifully welcoming our audience to the performance.

At the moment in Wild Nights we look forward to starting our new project, making a video game based on *Loricum* and writing new plays for next year's Dartfest.

Molly Millward-Nicholls

Drogo Lantern Procession



Before Christmas MED Theatre worked in partnership with the National Trust and Okehampton Secondary and Chagford Primary Schools to stage a Lantern Procession at Castle Drogo followed by a play performed in front of the castle which charted its history. The making of the lanterns was mentored by MED Theatre artist Sandy Berridge, and the procession, which took place on a still evening with the rain holding off, was beautifully atmospheric as it wound down the drive to the forecourt of the castle.



Loricum Video Game

Our young people are beginning an exciting new project in March - to create a video game based on the MED Theatre play about growing up on Dartmoor, *Loricum*. Funded by Mini Media Box, the process that will be led by former Wild Nights Young Company member Jamie Holding.

From the Education Officer

Happy 2010! The MED Theatre Education Programme's year ahead looks to be a full one. On top of our regular programme, gifted and talented students from four different primary schools – Hatherleigh, Exbourne, Northlew and Boasley Cross – are creating their own radio play based on Dartmoor myths. Continuing the multi-media theme, we are planning to create films with two local primary schools and Coombeshead College, that will be inspired by experiences of their local areas.

I am thrilled that the Education Programme is also exploring new forms of work, for example last term I led a workshop for primary school teachers on how to use drama and devising techniques in the classroom. The National Trust invited us to partner on an unusual project just before Christmas, which culminated in a fantastic lantern procession event at Castle Drogo. Recently MED Theatre has been requested by a Devon-based arts centre to lead a summer residential drama week in August.

Our junior drama group has grown to the point where it has now evolved into two groups - 10-12 years, and 8-9 years. After much debate with the groups they have decided on the names Bright Nights (10-12) and Night Lights (8-9).

Finally, congratulations to Wild Nights Young Company on the professionalism of their performance in *All That Was Left Behind*.

We are delighted to have on board a work placement MA student from Exeter University for the next few months. Hui Ling is an accomplished theatre practitioner from Singapore.

Best wishes
Abby Stobart