

John Ford Project in Full Swing



WNYC inspect Eagle Rock on a walk down the River Dart during their residential

In May 2011 MED Theatre's Wild Nights Young Company received funding from Heritage Lottery Fund Young Roots for their John Ford on Dartmoor Project. They have been researching the careers of the playwright John Ford and the artist John Elford who both lived on Dartmoor in the 17th century. This has involved a residential at Pixie's Holt Training Centre and outings to Burrator Reservoir and Ilsington and Widecombe churches. They are now writing a play which will be performed at Buckland Abbey on September 24th.



Starting from the left: Lauren, Lucy & Vicki

Every year July brings Work Experience students to MED Theatre. For two or three weeks the office, and anywhere else we work, is buzzing with teenagers getting stuck into creative tasks - and of course making the obligatory cup of tea. Some of this year's students - Lauren Fabian-Miller, Lucy Connolly and Vicki Gunning - have been helping to put together this newsletter. Teresa Hellyer & Zoe Lyne have also done work experience with the company in previous weeks.

Work Experience Students

Lauren, Lucy and Zoe worked in two primary schools, Kenn & Moretonhampstead. In both schools they helped the children create their own pieces of work, at Kenn a play, and at Moretonhampstead poems inspired by memories of the old school.

Teresa helped with making a film at Bovey Tracey Primary, and with a play at Lamerton Primary, as well as doing some writing on the John Ford project.

Vicki helped with Bright Lights and Bright Nights, edited the John Ford project documentary video alongside Lucy and Lauren, and typed in feedback onto spreadsheets. Brilliant!

This year we have also been lucky to receive an MA work placement student from Exeter University, and Philippa (see right) has been an asset to our team over recent months.

TREE STORIES family learning workshop

In May MED Theatre delivered the third in its series of family learning workshops on the theme of trees, held in the orchard at Parke, in partnership with the National Trust. Using the myth of the garden of the Hesperides, participants took advantage of the beautiful location and a break in the weather to re-enact the story of Heracles' theft of the famous golden apples growing in the fabled isles of the West (possibly the South West). Before this, participants warmed up by creating a theatrical version of a hedge (see below). Further tree workshops to follow.



No Access

No Access was a contemporary comedy written by Mark Beeson, with Abby Stobart and four young writers, and performed by the community at venues in Manaton, Princetown, Moretonhampstead and Scoriton. The performances were really successful and the audience found it a real pleasure to watch. There was plenty of excellent feedback and



Philippa Glanvill as 'the owl' in No Access.

From the Education Officer

Our conventional Playwriting and Performance Course was delivered in a very non-conventional way at Lamerton Primary School: instead of working with a single class once weekly over a term, MED Theatre delivered the course to the whole school over an intensive and fun week, thanks to funding from West Devon Borough Council. It culminated in two performances of their play *Mining Mayhem* which explored connections to their local mining heritage including lots of naughty mining spirits, the Buccas, haunting children down the mine.

Bovey Tracey Primary made a film thanks to funding assistance from the Helen Foundation, about a war between two spy schools! Not only the acting was action packed, but the film-shoot itself was an intense process of working on the technical aspects of making a film.

As a celebration of their time at the school, Kenn Primary created their own script about their past experiences through a devising process. They performed their comical play *Yawn* to family and friends at their leavers assembly.

The Moretonhamstead Community Heritage Project is taking place to set up a heritage centre at the site of the old school. MED Theatre has been working with pupils on writing poems to capture their memories, which will be displayed and played from audio at the new centre. MED Theatre has also been training adult volunteers to carry out oral history interviews in order to gather memories from the past.

Abby Stobart



John leads WNYC down the Dart

Training Workshops



As part of the John Ford Project, workshops were held at MED Theatre so the young people could develop their understanding of the period when John Ford and John Elford lived. The picture above shows a 17th century dance workshop which was led by Rosalyn Maynard.

Mask-making



The young people in the process of creating their masks

A mask-making workshop, led by Kat Thomas, was also held at MED Theatre where the young people could make masks for their play. The materials used in the process were feathers, sequins, fabrics and tissue paper. The young people shared their ideas and were inspired by each other's work. Other skills workshops include research with Tom Greeves, webskills with Tony Walker and context with Katie Shewen.

Youth Report

Harrie-Rae and Kumar were really pleased to have been elected to become the two new youth reps for MED Theatre. They are looking forward to representing the voice of the young people of MED Theatre.

Before starting the John Ford Project, Wild Nights Young Company have been doing a number of training sessions, which included voicework, and forum theatre.

Bright Nights and Bright Lights continue their Tuesday sessions with enthusiasm.

Community Fundraising

1: MED Theatre 50/50 Lottery
The next draw is in March - half the money taken is given back in 3 CASH PRIZES, the other half goes to MED Theatre. Tickets are £3 each, and you can buy as many as you like for one draw. Or pay £12 upfront for a year (4 draws). Please contact the office and pay by cash or cheque, giving a name and a phone number.

2: Costume & stage block hire
MED Theatre costumes and stage blocks are available for hire on an informal basis. For more info contact the office.

3: Easysearch
Set <http://medtheatre.easysearch.org.uk> as your home page, use it to search the internet and you will raise money for MED Theatre - for free! No need to register, just use the website address above.

4: Easyfundraising
If you buy goods from the internet via the following link www.easyfundraising.org.uk the retailer will donate a percentage of the purchase price to us (e.g. 15% from ebay). Simply choose Manaton and East Dartmoor Theatre as your favoured charity (i.e. not MED). Ask us for set-up help if necessary.

In 10 months easysearch and easyfundraising have raised £123 for MED at no additional expense - please join in & help to escalate this.