

Newsletter

Welcome to your newsletter

- Keep up with examination news.
- Learn about extra workshops and other events
- Who's doing what? Are you appearing in a show? Taking music or dancing exams? Going for auditions or interviews? Let's all hear about your activities so we can cheer you on—or buy a ticket.

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Exam News

There were only three LAMDA candidates at this term's exam session at Haywards Heath on 7th/8th March, since we had a fairly large group last term and I am at present expecting an even larger one next term. The three people entering this term were Laura Parkins (Grade 7(S) Acting), Emily Hilditch (Grade 7(S) Acting) and Phil Coupland (Grade 5 Acting). At the time of writing I am still awaiting their results.

The next LAMDA exam session is on 18th/19th July and there are currently 9 candidates expected: Hrishu Hariharan, Grade 7 (Silver) Acting; Katie Price, Grade 1 Verse &

Prose; Serena Duffield-Lawson, Grade 1 Acting; Steve Robertson, Grade 8 (Gold) Verse & Prose; Phoebe Coghlan, Grade 6 (Bronze) Verse & Prose; Rosie Baggs, Grade 5 Acting; Ben Williams, Grade 3 Verse & Prose; Cori Samuel, Grade 6 (Bronze) Verse & Prose. Also this term Duncan Vicat-Brown, having now passed Grade 8 (Gold) Acting, will be entering for the Bronze RADA Shakespeare Certificate, examination sessions for which are held monthly at RADA in London. If anyone else is interested in these exams

please ask me for more information. You do have to be at least 16 years of age to take them.



One RADA Shakespeare candidate this term

Stage Stars

Congratulations to Duncan Vicat-Brown and Rosie Baggs, both of whom did us proud with their performances in *You Can't Take it With You* at the Barn Theatre, Southwick in March. They can now get the play lines out of their heads in order to learn those needed for their exams!

Don't forget to let me know if you are doing any public performing so I can plug it for you in the Newsletter.



Applause, applause!

Examination Workshops

This term the two special exam workshops at St. Michael's Church Hall will take place on Monday 19th May and Monday 14th July at 7.30.

There will be a charge of £10 per person to cover costs. It is highly recommended that all those taking exams this term (see list on page 1) should take this opportunity to practise their pieces in this large space, both for vocal projection and, in the case of Acting candidates, for movement, so that you can adjust your performance so as to use all the space available as much as possible without throwing your timing out. I'm aware that 7.30 may be a little late for the Grade Ones, so I may possibly see if I can arrange

earlier ones for them, either on the same dates or at another time. I will keep parents informed.

Candidates for the Autumn Term would also find it very helpful to attend one or both of these workshops as by then your pieces should be set and you will find it helpful to test them out in the bigger space to get an idea of how much bigger

your final performance will need to be so that this can be borne in mind during your normal lessons.



“please would everyone remember to complete the enclosed enrolment form and bring it, completed, (along with the term’s fee please) to the first lesson of the new term”

Enrolment Forms

Last term I had seventeen private students, which means I should have seventeen enrolment forms. In actual fact I have six, which means eleven private students do not seem to have bothered to complete and return them. I know that it's a bit tedious asking you to complete a new form every term, but there are two very important reasons for this:

1. To make absolutely sure I have your up to date contact details.
2. To have your signature (or a parent's in the case of a minor) agreeing to the Terms and Conditions of Enrolment shown in the green box at the bottom of the form.

So please would everyone remember to complete the enclosed enrolment form and bring it, completed, (along with the term's fee please) to the first lesson of the new term.

All of which brings me onto another old chestnut, namely

Payment of Fees and Notice of Withdrawal

You will note that the Terms and Conditions box on your enrolment form reads:

“PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY THE FOLLOWING TERMS OF ENROLMENT:

The full term's fee is required in advance by the first week of term.

Except under very exceptional circumstances or where an alternative arrangement has been made, I require one full term's written notice of withdrawal OR one term's fee in lieu of notice.

In order to avoid wasted les-

son and preparation time, please let me know *as soon as possible* if you need to change an appointment or are unavoidably prevented from attending. Please note there will be no refunds for missed lessons unless cancelled by me with no possibility of being rearranged.

By signing this form you are agreeing to the above terms.”

I would be extremely grateful if private students, or their parents where appropriate, could ensure that *all four* of these requirements are ob-

served. I am a qualified self-employed Teacher of Speech and Drama, which means my teaching practice is run as a professional business and not a hobby. I do not have income from any other employment. Therefore I am sure it can easily be appreciated that I need to be advised in advance if my professional services are no longer required. Also, like any other business, to prevent my experiencing difficult cash flow problems (which means I can't pay my bills) I need to be paid on time. Even Speech and Drama Teachers need to eat!

Monday Classes

Sadly I have finally had to admit defeat with the Monday Classes at St Michael's Church Hall since numbers had dropped so low that I was not

able to cover the hire fee for the hall. However the two remaining stalwarts, Serena and Katie, both of whom hope to take Grade I exams this

term, will be sharing a lesson at my home on Monday afternoons.

New Term

The Summer Term begins on 21st April. You should find a copy of the new term's timetable, showing your regular lesson appointment as already agreed, enclosed with this Newsletter. Please contact me immediately if this is not the case. The lesson

slots which are currently vacant appear in white on the sheet. If you would prefer to change your regular appointment to one of the vacant ones please contact me as soon as possible as it could be that the one you have your

eye on will go to a new student.

Please do take the trouble to read the notes on the reverse of the timetable as they contain important information.

"Please do take the trouble to read the notes on the reverse of the timetable"



Get Learning!

Just a gentle reminder for those of you who are currently learning the texts of your examination pieces for the new term. You will now have a whole two weeks

break from lessons during which you can get stuck into them. It would be great if you all turned up at the first lesson of term knowing all your words! Those of you with theory notes to study, re-

search to undertake and books/plays to finish reading would also be well advised to make as much use of the break as possible.

Fees and Costs

As indicated in last term's Newsletter some long standing private students will have an increase in fees this term to bring them up to the same rate as more recently enrolled ones. Your attached enrol-

ment form will show the current fee as shown in the Guidance Notes attached to last term's Newsletter and given to all new students. Those affected should already have received a letter from me.



A fee rise for some this term

Much Ado About Rapping

The following is an item published under the above heading in *The Stage* recently. I thought you might find it amusing:

'something for all of you hip hop-loving theatregoers out there. Yes, Tabard knows who you are. Hip hop, by the way, in case you are in any doubt, is a type of music.

An upcoming rapper (as they refer to themselves) has been brought to Tabard's attention. He calls himself Akala. He is the brother of a lady who calls her-

self Ms Dynamite.

And he raps (that's a form of singing, which is a bit like speaking quickly in rhythm) about Shakespeare.

In fact, he has a new song called Comedy Tragedy History, which manages to soundcheck 27 of the Bard's works. He calls himself a "black Shakespeare".

So, let's see the evidence.

"You bellow, but you fellows get played

like the cello,

I'm doin my ting, you're jealous like

Othello."

"I don't know about Timon, I know he was in Athens."

"Bat boy Akala. I do it as you like it, You're Much Ado About Nothing. All you do is bite it."

Quite. We couldn't agree more and look forward to seeing Akala's work performed at Shakespeare's Globe in the near future.'



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The Easy Stages School of Speech and Drama offers coaching in Speech, Drama, Voice, Presentation and Communication Skills (including interview skills) and audition coaching.

Courses leading to the graded examinations of the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) and the RADA Shakespeare Certificates.

Group workshops for businesses, schools and organisations by arrangement.

Maggie Hall is a Licentiate of the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, and a member of the LAMDA Teachers' Association, Society of Teachers of Speech and Drama, the British Voice Association and Voice Care Network UK. She is also a member of Toastmasters International and holds the CTM (Competent Toastmaster) Award for Public Speaking.

Study Notes—Movement and Gesture (3)

Eyes

“Looking” needs practice. When you are on the stage look at the people and things on the stage. Don't let the eyes rove. Focus your attention. Is the object you are looking at familiar or strange? When playing a scene with another character, look them in the eyes, not the nose, ears, mouth, tie or buttonhole. The communication then flows between you and holds the attention of each other and the audience. “The eyes are the windows of the soul”. They can express a lot of thought and feeling.

Head

The head is the heaviest part of the body. Keep it centred and looking forward as much as possible. Don't pull the chin in or crane upwards.

Body

When walking, oppose hip

and shoulder. If picking up an object from the ground, do so with opposition. If sitting cross legged, oppose the shoulder with the hip. The opposite shoulder to the raised hip will come forward.

When you need to turn on stage, always try to turn outwards (towards audience). If crossing and turning to a chair, turn with the shoulder nearest the object. Don't be afraid to turn your back to the audience if that's what you'd naturally do, but try to avoid speaking upstage as much as possible.



Turn towards your fellow actor on a sofa

If two characters are sitting on a sofa having a conversation, they should turn towards each other, not sit bolt upright staring out to the audience.

Hamlet's Advice

“Suit the action to the word, the word to the action: with this special observance, that you o'er step not the modesty of nature; for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure”.

Dates For Your Diary

Most of these have been mentioned elsewhere but here they are summarised for your convenience:

Start of Summer Term
May Day Bank Holiday (no lessons)
Exam workshop
Half Term
Entry cut off date for LAMDA exams
End of private teaching term
“Catch-up” or extra lessons as required
Exam workshop
LAMDA Examination Session at Haywards Heath

Monday 21st April
Monday 5th May
Monday 19th May (7.30 at St Michael's hall)
26th-30th May
18th June
4th July
7-18th July
Monday 14th July (7.30 at St Michael's hall)
18th/19th July