



Playbox Theatre

Members' Newsletter

March 2024



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CAST OF THREE SISTERS!

A huge congratulations to the cast of *Three Sisters*, for completing an enormously successful run in March, and earning some fantastic reviews in the Stratford Herald and Leamington Courier. It was incredible to see this young cast take on such a mature, challenging piece and execute it with such success. Their Saturday afternoon understudy performance was also truly impressive. With little rehearsal and directed by the Playbox member assistant directors, the company smoothly performed the entire show, taking on other characters and staging a fantastic performance. A true testament to Playbox teamwork.



Photo credit: Lucy Bariball

WELCOME

Hello Playbox families!

Long time, no see. Our newsletter has been slightly delayed this month as Easter was packed full of activity (as I'm sure you all know).

I performed my last major speaking role for Playbox in *Three Sisters*, but don't worry, you'll see me again running around as an AD in our upcoming show, *Lord of the Flies*, which began rehearsal in the Easter holidays. We don't want to spoil too much, all we'll say is there are coconuts, hammers, and a bucket of blood on the props list...

We've also enjoyed a performance inspired by Shakespeare's narrative poem, *Venus and Adonis* not in the theatre, but in our new space, The Cube', in front of house! The music, choreography, stage magic and even cocktails were all created and performed by the Shakespeare Young Company.

We're also looking forward to our holiday projects coming up this summer. They're now on sale, including a film course run by Playbox alumni and filmmaker Will Dolan. Will was in the original cast of *Lord of the Flies*, and will be coming in to film a trailer for us!

Hope you enjoy our newsletter!



Amelie Friess
Guest Editor

Next edition due April 2024
If you have news to share, please email - info@playboxtheatre.com

LORD OF THE FLIES IN REHEARSAL

Rehearsals for our next production, a stage adaptation of 'The Lord of the Flies', are well underway. With an all male cast (apart from an occasional ghostly mother), this story delves into the darkest realms of the male psyche and the hunt for power and survival.

Even though the book is considered a great classic of English literature, we're keeping our production fairly under wraps. So, to avoid spoilers, we'll delve into all the other reasons why Lord of the Flies is a must see show.



THE INSPIRATION

Published in 1954, William Golding's novel was inspired by another book describing a similar situation, which he deemed to be horribly unrealistic. The book 'The Coral Island' by William Blythe, told the story of a group of boys stuck on an island after a shipwreck. The book essentially tells the story of the civilising effects of Christianity and British colonialism upon a native population and a few lucky pirates. Golding felt that Blythe's portrayal of the native people as blood thirsty savages and the English boys as pinnacles of moralistic society was entirely false. Surely, when left with no supervision, in such an extreme situation, the boys would descend into anarchy. Surely, when left with no consequences, we're all capable of terrible things. And so, 'Lord of the Flies' was born.

IN FILM

Feel like you've seen this before? Well, there's every chance you've watched one of the many films and TV shows inspired by this timeless plot. Its been adapted to film twice, but countless other tv shows reference the novel. An episode of *Spongebob* references the story (with Patrick, of course, as Piggy). The plots of TV shows *Lost* and *The Walking Dead* draw on the book, as well as more recently *Yellowjackets*, which uses all female survivors. There's even a U2 song inspired by it!

ADAPTED FOR STAGE

Golding's novel was first adapted for stage by Elliot Watkins in 1984, for a performance at Clifton College Preparatory School in Bristol. All of the parts were played by students of similar age to the characters, apart from the naval officer, who was played by a real naval officer

associated with the school. Golding himself came to the performance and spoke with the boys after, noting their excitement at performing the violence of the show- almost proving the play's point.

The first professional stage version was in 1995, just down the road at the RSC! The cast also happened to include a number of Playbox members in principal roles. Our version is a blend of text and movement that we hope will capture the spirit of the original, and give our cast the opportunity to dig their teeth into a really action-packed, challenging show.

This gritty, thought provoking show is a Playbox favourite. Our young actors never shy away from such mature pieces, and the challenge of a gruesome, tough show always brings out some incredible performances. We can't wait to see what they add to this novel's long legacy.

Book tickets now to avoid disappointment!



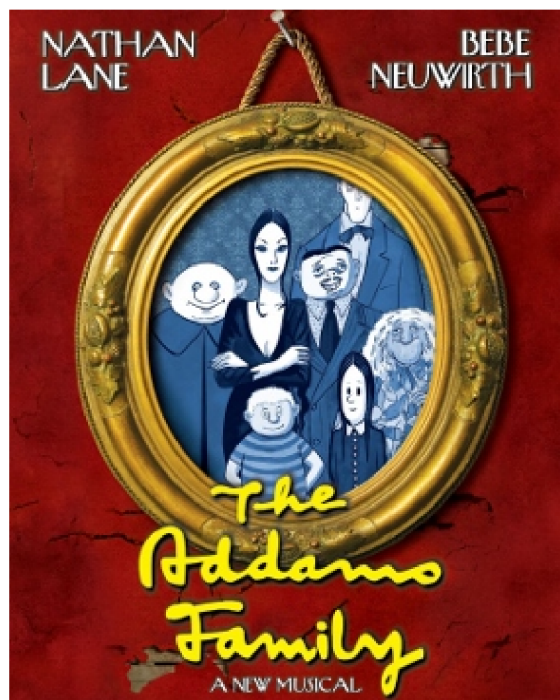
UPCOMING AUDITIONS



ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Written by Toby Quash with Blank Shift Writers, this new adaptation of Lewis Carroll's classic promises opportunities for brave young performers to bring some magic to Playbox this Christmas. This high energy performance follows Alice as she journeys through a strange and backward Looking Glass World, full of bizarre characters and reflections of our modern world. Director Emily Quash is seeking a creative and physical company to bring this world to life.

Auditions are open to members of acting workshops aged 10+
Tuesday 7th May



THE ADDAMS FAMILY

Director Juliet Vankay is looking for a talented cast to bring this hilarious, spooktacular show to life this Halloween. Following the peculiar Addams family's attempt to impress their daughters new 'normal' boyfriend, the show promises spectacular numbers, lots of laughs, and opportunities for musical theatre performers to really shine.

Auditions are open to members of acting and musical theatre workshops aged 10+.
Tuesday 14th May

For more information, visit the 'member essentials' section of our website.

PLAYBOX ALUMNUS RETURNS THIS SUMMER FOR FILM-MAKING MASTERCLASS



We're delighted that this summer Playbox alumnus Will Dolan will be returning to run a 2 day film-making program at Playbox. Alongside fellow Playbox alumnus Asher Hardy, and longtime friend Oli Fitzgibbon, the three run a successful film company, Firewood Pictures. This holiday project offers young filmmakers access to professional equipment and the opportunity to make their own cinematic masterpieces. Having worked for them myself, I'm so excited for this opportunity to come to Playbox, and caught up with Will about all things film.

When did you get into film-making?

I got into film-making when I was 15, it was actually a Stratford Playbox session, when me and my friend Sam had an idea to make a short film, and it's been an obsession ever since!

If you're starting out in film, what 3 skills should you learn first?

The biggest skill I think people who want to do film need to learn is story structure. A lot is put into camera, and lights, and all the exciting tech, but a good story is more important than literally anything else in the process. Look up 3 act structure and learn how stories are made! The other two things people should learn is actually nothing to do with film. One is communication. You need to be able to clearly ask questions and make sure others understand you if you're going to work in film. And then finally- initiative! Whether you're working with others or trying to make your own films, you have to be able to take initiative. No one will do it for you!

What's your favourite piece of equipment?

My favourite piece of equipment is always going to be the camera I have available to me. Some days on a commercial set that might be an expensive camera, but other days it'll just be my phone (and yes, I have also shot professional work on my phone- on our instagram you can find some work made on a google Pixel 5 in 2020).

What can we expect in your film-making masterclass?

In the masterclass you'll learn the basics of film-making how to set up and light a scene, how to pick your shots, and some storytelling fundamentals, as well as have an opportunity to act in front of the camera!



You can book this and other projects through the 'Holiday Projects' section of our website. Open to Playbox and non-Playbox members age 14+. Playbox Members can use discount code 'HOLIDAY24' at checkout.