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### From the Presidents...

It has been a particularly exciting and busy year for the DramaWest committee with the National Conference "Spaces of Performance" taking up most of our time and space (sorry, couldn't resist being clever). However now that the conference is behind us, we have time to focus on other projects that will support the professional development of our members.

We are in the process of creating some support materials to assist teachers with preparing their students for the practical and written exams. Lots of brain storming and mind mapping is taking place to work out the best format for these materials. Input from members is most welcome. We want it to be as up to date as possible but affordable and effective.

Due to popular demand we have again held workshops to assist Stage 2 and 3 students prepare for the practical and written exams. The sessions were very well received by the students thanks to the expertise of our presenters - Max Leech, Ros Jennings, Mark Sills and Moya Thomas.

The AGM will take place at ECU on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> of November from 5- 6 pm followed by a few drinks and tasty nibbles. The 4<sup>th</sup> year Drama students from ECU have invited all members attending the AGM to their final show which begins at 7pm. Great networking and a show!

Planning for our August 2012 State Conference at ECU will begin soon. Watch this space for more information. We'd also love to hear from you if you would like to present, have particular professional develop needs or ideas you would like to share. All Welcome.

How about joining us on the committee? We have such a great bunch of people on the DramaWest committee. Our meetings are always productive, lively, yummy and good fun. If you would like to join us... we'd love to have you! Perhaps consider nominating for a position at the next AGM!

See you there

*Christina Gray and Christine Adams*

### The National Conference Update



After a huge amount of work by all members of the committee, the Spaces of Performance Drama Australia National Conference 2011 took place in early April. Approximately 150 Drama educators gathered at the State Theatre Centre of Western Australia to enjoy a rich and extensive program. Patrice Baldwin was a most generous and inspirational key speaker, making many new friends and providing lots of support. For Patrice the conference lasted over a week with

workshops at universities, private and government schools and trips around Perth including Rottness on her last day. We are most grateful to Patrice for coming to WA, but we know that the experience was valuable for her too. Only a Drama teacher would not hesitate to say 'Yes' when asked 'Shall we go to the cemetery to see the kangaroos?'



DramaWest was very well supported by all at Drama Australia throughout the process. The most stressful time was in the early planning and feeling the risk of staging such a big event with so few resources. We need to be honest here and admit that it was an enormous amount of work for all of us. The staff at Ogdens were amazed that we could achieve so much to such a high standard with all volunteers. At least a third of all attendees had travelled from other states and DramaWest certainly appreciates the investment involved in coming so far for a conference. We are still finalising our finances from the conference but will not make a loss.



Some highlights of the conference were:

- The enthusiasm and friendliness from all
- The kindness and tolerance of all at Black Swan State Theatre Company who let us use their office throughout the conference. We are hugely grateful to Black Swan and to Alena in particular for all her work and being her.
- The presentation from the John Curtin Students at the cocktail party
- Robin Pascoe receiving the President's Award.
- Everything to do with Patrice and her program all co-ordinated by Christine Lovering. Thank you Christine. Patrice is still telling the world about her fabulous time here.
- Australian playwright, musician and composer David Milroy, our other key note speaker.
- The smooth running of the program and venue and catering due in large part to Christina Gray
- The pre-service teachers who were the hosts for the event. Huge thank you to Hayley and Laura and team.
- The location, the spaces of the theatre centre and the Heath Ledger Theatre
- The great support from the staff at the State Theatre Centre.
- Hoods by Barking Gecko, and the presentation by the Big Hoo Haa. Fabulous performances. Thank you all.
- The ArtsEdge Thinking inside the triangle (of the cultural centre) partnership offered some new spaces for drama educators as well as a chance to see the Year 12 Visual Arts
- Perspectives exhibition and the Accidental Monsters of Meaning in the old Museum spaces.
- The Playwrights Panel
- The exceptionally high standard of workshops and papers presented
- Having the opportunity to work closely as a committee.
- The showbags and T-shirts ...thank you Felicity and
- Thanks to Felicity's kind husband, Scott Glendinning, for our graphic designs
- The great program thanks to Jess Wilkey and Sven Sorenson



To an extent, all at DramaWest are still resting after the conference, apart from a few workshops. We are aware of what we could do better and full of advice for others but we know that we did the best we could, and we are happy with that.



*Thanks to Jho Suckling at Jho's Pics Photography for the beautiful images you see above!*

Drama Australia and DramaWest would like to thank all of our event partners, supporters and volunteers.

#### **Event Partners:**

Barking Gecko Theatre Company, Black Swan State Theatre Company, The Blue Room Theatre, Edith Cowan University, Mindfield Branding, Murdoch University, PICA: Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts, ArtsEdge, Art Gallery Of Western Australia, State Library of Western Australia, Western Australian Museum.

#### **Supporters:**

Perth Convention Bureau, EECW, Jho Suckling – Jho's Pics Photography, Gary Arnell, Pilpel Print, Book Nook - Australia's Performing Arts Bookshop, The State Theatre Centre of WA, Melbourne Theatre Company, Sydney Theatre Company, Regal Theatre, Banyai Theatre Company, Patrice Baldwin, John Curtin College of the Arts, Robin Pascoe, Libby Klysz, David Milroy, Pete Goodwin, Peter Holland, Sally Burton, and the various schools and employers who have kindly made it possible for all attendees and presenters to attend the conference.

#### **Volunteers:**

Laura Carman, Hayley MacNeill, Aaron Doulton, Courtney Johnston, Joanna Tyler, Emma Payne, Emily Vaneijndhoven, Laura Furse, Tessa Perich, Dan Jonkov, Tess Warner, Kelsi Davis.

**DramaWest Committee members:**

Christine Adams, Christina Gray, Sven Sorenson, Felicity Glendinning, Christine Lovering, Angela Zaknich, Sinead O'Callaghan, Courtney Johnston, Jessica Wilkey, Ashleigh Crawford, Jennifer Ridgewell, Moya Thomas, Laura Carman, Hayley MacNeill, Jude Sorenson, Alena Tompkins

**SPOTLIGHT ON: Robin Pascoe, Recipient of the Drama Australia President's Award**

A highlight of the Spaces of Performance Drama Australia National Conference 2011 was that our very own Robin Pascoe was awarded the Drama Australia President's Award for his contribution to Drama Australia. Some of us know of Robin's contribution to Drama in Western Australia but how much do we really know about the equally huge contribution Robin has made to the work of Drama Australia which we all belong to through our DramaWest memberships? Christine thought it was time to delve deeper and ask Robin about his journey with Drama Australia.

In 1979/80 Robin was teaching English and Drama at Mount Lawley SHS. At the same time, Gary Hodge was running drama workshops for the Education Department at Bagot Road Subiaco and Robin was part of that; in those days WAADIE which had been formed at a meeting in the Teachers Union, and the Department were closely aligned. Some of us remember the WAADIE conferences in Yanchep (freezing) though they were probably a bit later in the late 80s.

In 1981, the first National conference was held in the then just-renovated His Majesty's Theatre. Robin eagerly attended. By then he was a senior master at Katanning Senior High School. That first national conference was controversial, making headlines about the goings on in the Ballet Company studios with Aldo Genaro and slabs of raw meat. Robin says that he remembers labouring through several days of Alex Buzo *not* communicating about playwriting – but because he had signed up for the whole week, couldn't escape to something more interesting.

In all Robin has been part of in some shape or form, the four previous national conferences in Perth: 1981 at The His Majesty's; 1986 at the Subiaco Speech and Drama Centre; 1994 and 2002 at Notre Dame in Fremantle and of course, with the Spaces of Performance conference in 2011. Indeed, it is 30 years since the first national conference in Perth.

Robin says that he can't quite remember when he was first elected to WAADIE but that it was probably about 1987/88 when Sally Crawford was President. By then he was running the short-lived but fabulous Performing Arts Services Centre in Subiaco. The association and work became intertwined with conferences and workshops and intermittently published Stage Directions (initiated by John Foreman). Christine remembers wonderful two day workshops in Subiaco about how to teach Drama and the WAADIE conference: Directing the Decade, in Scarborough at the then new Observation City.

Robin first represented WAADIE at the 1990 Conference in Sydney and he participated in those meetings for the next few years (the 1990 conference was infamous for the airline pilots strike that had Robin stranded in Sydney for days after the conference finished). This came at a difficult time in the relationship between WAADIE and NADIE but Robin was welcomed by Kate Donelan in her role as NADIE President. In 1992 he became one of the Vice-Presidents working with Chris Comans, and in 1997 in Launceston Robin was elected President, a role he held until 2001 when he handed over to Richard Sallis. After a couple of years as Immediate Past-President and still on the executive/board, Robin took on the role of Director of Research until he stepped down in 2009.

So in all Robin Pascoe has served as Committee member, Vice-President, Editor of Stage Directions and President of WAADIE. Additionally he has been NLO/Vice President/President/Immediate Past President/Director of Publications for NADIE/Drama Australia.

In his time in these positions Robin represented NADIE/Drama Australia at meetings in Budapest (1997), Kisumu Kenya (1998), Washington (2000), Bergen (2001), Montpellier (2002), Ottawa (2004). He held positions in IDEA as Secretary of General Meetings Council (Bergen to Ottawa) and as Secretary of IDEA itself. Robin represented DA as keynote speaker to the national conference in New Zealand in 2001. As well... he has attended all the IDEA congresses: 1992 in Oporto; 1995 in Brisbane; 1998 in Kisumu (who could forget); 2001 in Bergen; 2004 in Ottawa; 2007 in Hong Kong; and 2010 in Belém, Brazil. Robin was also NADIE/Drama Australia representative to the NAAE National Affiliation of Arts Educators and served as Chair. Through NADIE Robin was drama writer on the 1992-94 national curriculum project. (Robin agrees that it's a bit exhausting when he looks at all this written down!)

Robin is quick to say that he has not been alone in the roles he has undertaken for Drama Australia. There has been tremendous support from NADIE/Drama Australia colleagues and friends (Kate Donelan, Chris Hopper, Richard Sallis, Mark Bailey – and many others in the DramaWest scene).

Robin says that of course, he couldn't have managed without the support of Liz his family – mind you the children have all been part of the journey too: Phillip went with him to Budapest; Ben has accompanied Robin to both Kisumu and Belém; and Hannah was with him in Ottawa and Hong Kong.

Most of all Robin says that he has always received more from his time with Drama Australia than he gave. Robin strives in his work at Murdoch with students, to instil a sense of community, of belonging to a guild of drama educators. Thank you Robin, you are a great role model for all of us!

**What's On...**



**DramaWest AGM**

When: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November

Time: AGM 5 - 6pm followed by drinks and nibbles. Performance at 7pm

Where: Building 16 Room 105 (AGM) Room 117 (performance)

Details: Members attending the AGM will receive a free ticket into the 4<sup>th</sup> year ECU Drama students' final performance (Check out the info below!).

The AGM package was sent to all members last week. Please contact Sven if you haven't received yours.

## ...In Schools

### **Mother Knows Best**

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2011 (After the AGM)

7pm

Theatre 16, ECU Mt Lawley

Entry FREE if you attend the AGM!

*Mother knows best is a dark comedy exploring the running of a nanny state in the fictional country of "Home". The Government is headed by a kind, lovely, yet twisted lady named Mother (self-titled). She cares for her citizens by giving them nap time and milk... laced with "Vitamins" to help them sleep; and while asleep her "S.O.N.S" rummage through their belongings and listen into secrets. But questions are being asked and favours are being recalled. Is a storm of rebellion brewing in this well controlled and silent town? Whatever you do... don't go against mother, because remember... mother knows best.*

*This show has been workshopped by 4<sup>th</sup> year Drama Education students in collaboration with ECU's Contemporary Arts department.*

Directed by Aaron Doulton

Assistant Director Nicole Beaton

Set Design by Tyler Jacob Jones

Choreography by Molly McPhail

Music by Bakia Kangombe and Aaron Doulton

**The show contains adult themes and moderate course language. Adult supervision is advised for people under the age of 15.**

A special thanks to DramaWest for sponsoring this project.

*If you require any more information regarding this performance, please contact:*

Aaron Doulton (Director): [adoulto@our.ecu.edu.au](mailto:adoulto@our.ecu.edu.au)



### **Hollywood Heroes (Incursion)**

**Available for Bookings throughout Term 4**

**Big Sky Entertainment**

As we get towards the end of the year and the temptation to throw a DVD on for the kids gets stronger, there is an alternative – HOLLYWOOD HEROES! This is the funny, fast-paced swashbuckling romp starring Andy Fraser (Antonio Bandanas) and Stuart Halusz (Errol Fling). HOLLYWOOD HEROES takes the audience on a journey through a variety of the most famous swashbuckling films of all time. It runs for approximately 30 minutes, involves a bit of audience participation and is suitable for school audiences of all ages. It has already been performed at MLC, Frederick Irwin, Perth College and Winthrop Baptist College.

Information and bookings are available through Big Sky Entertainment WA [info@bigskyentertainment.com.au](mailto:info@bigskyentertainment.com.au) and a flyer is attached to this e-mail

## ...In the Community



### **When the Rain Stops Falling**

**29<sup>th</sup> October – 13<sup>th</sup> November**

**Heath Ledger Theatre**

**Tickets through BOCS**

*Andrew Bovell's much anticipated tragedy finally arrives at the State Theatre Centre! Hurry, tickets for this show are selling like crazy!*

**When the Rain Stops Falling** is a gut-wrenching tragedy that will leave you breathless and spellbound.

The play opens in Alice Springs in the year 2039, where a fish falls from the sky and lands at the feet of Gabriel York. It still smells of the sea. It's been raining for days and Gabriel knows something is wrong. Eighty years earlier, his grandfather predicted that, in 2039, fish would fall from the sky heralding a great flood that would overcome the human race.

**When The Rain Stops Falling** takes place between the worlds of these two men – between a prediction in 1959 and its outcome eighty years later – through four generations of interconnected stories, creating a multi-layered tale of a family for whom voices of the past echo into the future, telling of betrayal, abandonment and love

## **Curriculum Updates**

### **The Curriculum Council is to be replaced with the School Curriculum and Standards Authority**

The Curriculum Council Act has been amended to

- Replace the 13-member representative CC with the School Curriculum and Standards Authority consisting of seven members appointed by the Minister based on experience, expertise and knowledge of curriculum and educational standards.
- Streamline and refine monitoring of standards and student achievement.
- Enable the new Authority to prepare reports on the standards being achieved in schools.

Two new statutory committees will advise the Authority:

- Standards Committee – five experts in development and measurement of educational achievement appointed by the Minister.
- Curriculum and Assessment Committee – 13 experienced educators with expertise in development and implementation of courses in schools and post schools destinations.

The regulatory functions of the Curriculum Council have been clarified and functions relating to delivery of the curriculum in schools have been removed. New functions include:

- Development of standards setting mechanisms and their measurement
- Accommodation of the emergence and integration of a national curriculum

- Authority to approve current practices not explicitly recognised in the existing act e.g. capacity to endorse courses other than courses developed by the Curriculum Council.
- Recognition of educational achievements attained outside Western Australia by students who move to WA to complete their schooling.
- Permit participation of candidates other than school students as private candidates.

The requirement for schools to adhere to the Curriculum Framework has been removed. The Authority will be responsible only for preparing an outline for curriculum and assessment in schools but it will not be mandatory.

#### What will the Authority do?

1. Publish a document that outlines the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that students are expected to attain through a school's curriculum and how that attainment should be expressed.
2. The Authority is able to prepare independent reports on standards being achieved in WA schools based on external examinations and moderated school assessments administered by the Authority, taking into account the results of and national and international testing.
3. Accredite courses, support materials, tests and associated standards.
4. Establish certification and graduation requirements
5. Maintain a register of students from Kindergarten to Year 12.

*The Curriculum Council is now on Facebook. The page is for students and is a great way to communicate up to the minute information. The Council is also on Twitter.*

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/CurriculumCouncil>

While we are talking about the website... **Do you have your login?** More and more information is uploaded to the extranet now and can only be accessed with a login. Details of how to do this are on the home page of the council website.

**Exam Reports...** In these last moments with your year 12 students, you might like to revisit the exam reports from 2010. In these reports, the exam panel provides golden tips and information about how to achieve better results. There is a clear emphasis on writing good short answer form in section one. The marking keys from last year show that students are not able to gain all the possible marks if they do not use short answer form when asked. Clear annotated diagrams are also mentioned in the exam report.

**Teachers of senior students: Have you downloaded the WACE syllabus for 2012? It is now available on the Curriculum Council website:**  
[www.curriculum.wa.edu.au](http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au)

#### What changes have been made since last year?

- Overall, only very minor changes have been made to the syllabus.
- The names of the units have been edited so state what they really are about.
- There is a clear direction that the content of the units is to be studied in the context of the content as it is described and defined on pages 4 and 5 of the syllabus.
- There is a clear differentiation between suggested content and examinable content. This is what the exam panels will work with when writing the exam for 2012.
- The types of spaces of performance have been named. We have been including these ones always but they have not been explicitly named before.
- The visual elements and principles of design have been specifically named.
- There are changes to the set text lists and the list of suggested texts for Stage 1. (Actually many of these Stage 1 texts would be great for other years).
- For Stages 2 and 3, the texts that no one has been using for the exams have been tagged for deletion after next year. You will see that as a note after each one in the list. Others have been included.

*Rather than making radical changes to the set text list in one hit, the list will change a little each year so that teachers can have notice of which texts will be coming on to the list and which ones will be deleted after another one year.*

**November 10 is not far away so best wishes to all year 12 Drama Students. Good luck is not enough. They need to study the syllabus content on the unit pages, write clearly and concisely and provide lots of justification and quotes for the points they make. .. but we know that you've already told them that!**

#### Upcoming PD

*Once again, Banyai Arts Education have outdone themselves with another fabulous PD on offer in November...and this time, English teachers are encouraged to register as well, with one English teacher registration at half price when you register a Drama teacher for the master class! What a great way to advocate for Drama as a cross-curricular teaching tool in your school! Another special is also on offer for 2 or more Drama teachers who attend from the same school. More information is below, or check out the flyer attached with this newsletter for details and how to register.*

#### Banyai Arts Education Master class

**November 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> 2011, Subiaco Arts Centre**

PHYSICAL THEATRE for Drama & Dance / SHAKESPEARE: Contemporary Pedagogical practices for Drama & English

KEY NOTE SPEAKER: Sven Sorenson

Cost: One Day = \$265 / Both Days = \$495

Contact Carmen on 03 9534 4191 or [office@banyai.com.au](mailto:office@banyai.com.au) for more information, or to register.

**SPECIAL! Go to Banyai's Facebook page... <http://www.facebook.com/#!/Banyai.Arts.Education> ...LIKE them, tell them why you want to come to the PD and automatically receive a 10% discount off the cost of the workshops!**

Banyai also has a range of Educational DVDs for sale, which can be ordered through [office@banyai.com.au](mailto:office@banyai.com.au). Go to these YouTube clips for more info on the Commedia Evolution series: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79gOZ814EcQ> AND <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tIMH0IxuYyk>

*Black Swan has a rare and amazing opportunity coming up for interested teachers. See below.*

#### **EOI Hilary Bell Master class**

Taking expressions of interest for 20 places available in Black Swan State Theatre Company's Hilary Bell Scriptwriting master class. It will be held on a Saturday (TBC) in December and repeated on a Saturday (TBC) in January. Four hours / \$100. Contact [alena@bsstc.com.au](mailto:alena@bsstc.com.au) to register your interest.

#### **ACARA News**

The writing of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts has begun! Five discrete arts subjects with two organisers: Making and Responding. The Shape Paper for the Arts was published in August and is available for downloading from the ACARA website. When you read it, there are clear links to what we in the west already have. The organisers fit our four Arts outcomes nicely. In Drama circles there seems to be an air of confidence that we will be well served by this move to a national curriculum for Drama.

In the first half of next year the draft curriculum will be completed for consultation.

At this stage it is not known whether or not a senior years curriculum will be developed. The decision has not been made.

#### **News for Primary**

Another advocacy tool in our belt until Patrice's revised book, *With Drama in Mind*, comes out next March. The link below is a story from the 7.30 report.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-10-11/dramatising-the-syllabus/3503434>

The Sydney State Theatre Company is running a very successful Drama program to improve literacy in primary schools. The story briefly explains the processes in the program and then has Cate Blanchett advocating the importance of the Arts and creativity in education. We thought it might be something you'd want to send to your Principal or just have playing on a loop in the staffroom.

#### **News for Secondary**

*Writing relief lessons can be so difficult, especially when we never seem to get enough time with our students as it is! We thought you might like a sample relief lesson that allows your students to still get valuable learning experiences without you there!*

**This lesson would suit Year 10-12 students who already have prior knowledge of the Drama Elements (based on a 60 minute lesson)**

What you'll need to prepare:

- Class List
- Copies of A/B dialogue
- A list of the Drama Elements (if this is a new topic for your students, you may wish to provide a definition of each too)

What students will need:

- Pens, pencils

LESSON PLAN

#### **Role Call (5 minutes)**

#### **Independent work (15 minutes)**

1. Students, in pairs, are given a copy of the A/B dialogue
2. Each pair is to create a scene using the dialogue given

#### **Independent work, part 2 (20 minutes)**

1. Each pair is now given the list of Drama Elements
2. They are to choose one, and brainstorm how they will re-work their scene to focus on the drama element they have been given
3. Students should now rehearse the scene, focusing on developing/highlighting their given drama element

EXTENSION: If students are working quickly, a second drama element could be given to pairs. Students would then need to highlight BOTH drama elements in the scene

#### **Consolidation (15 minutes)**

1. 1-3 pairs (depending on timing and length of scenes) should perform their scene for the class.
2. Students need to guess which drama element was being focused on, and say why they guessed this.
3. The pair who performed should be instructed to listen to the feedback given and take it on board. The idea is not to tell people whether they are right or wrong, but instead to consider, based on the feedback received, whether or not they managed to portray what they intended.

IT FLASHBOX: If students have access to laptops with cameras, they could film their performance and upload it to the class wiki/shared site for feedback instead.

#### **Conclusion (5 minutes)**

1. Students to pack up & receive homework questions

#### HOMEWORK QUESTIONS:

1. Explain how you first approached the scene you were given. Be specific about how you used techniques such as vocals and non-verbals, blocking and subtext.
2. Explain how the scene changed when you were given one drama element to focus on. What did you need to change? How did focusing on one drama element impact on the other drama elements in your scene (for example, if you focus on language, does it impact on mood & atmosphere)?
3. Do you think your performance was effective? Do you think you successfully highlighted the drama element you were focusing on? What did you do well? What could you have improved?
4. Choose one other group. Describe what you saw and heard them do. Which drama element were they focusing on? Do you think they were successful in highlighting the chosen element? What could they have done to improve their performance?

#### Relief Teacher checklist:

- Students rehearse the lines given- up and moving around, not just sitting and reading
- Students, during the rehearsal process, should be regularly revising the information about their drama element to ensure they are on track
- During performances, you should see students behave in the following way:
  - Focused – not laughing or breaking character
  - Clear character that is different to themselves
  - Facing the audience
  - Students should bow at the end of the scene
  - All audience members should quietly and attentively watch the performance – no calling out, talking to others, looking around the room, or fiddling with items in hands
  - All audience members to applaud each performance

#### News for Pre-Service

### SPECIAL OFFER FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS: BANYAI ARTS EDUCATION PD

Banyai are offering a special rate for pre-service teachers for their upcoming PD on 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> November. \$75 for one day, or \$135 for both! WOW! More info about these days, and how to register, is above in the [Upcoming PD](#) section.

*ECU Drama Education students have just returned from their various pracs out in our schools. We have included some reflections here from students about their experiences:*

#### Rebecca Trevisan

**Highlight:** Working with upper school classes. The students were extremely dedicated, hard-working and clearly passionate about their drama. I loved being able to try more risk taking approaches with the students without the fear of failure.

**What I have learnt about teaching drama:** The main thing I learnt on my recent prac is the importance of a well-structured lesson. Planning activities, assessments, keeping the students engaged; that's the easy part. But this simply isn't enough. Developing a sense of 'flow' in each and every lesson was something I struggled with; I often doubted myself and what I had planned. I wasn't sure how long to spend on each activity, whether the students were getting bored, or how to connect different parts of the lesson to help students make meaning and find relevance in the material. Luckily, I had an amazingly supportive mentor teacher who was always happy to give me any assistance I needed with my planning. She also helped me to think about the purpose of each activity in my lessons and to find a way to link them together. I feel more confident now in my ability to plan effectively as a result.

#### Samantha Williams

**Highlight:** Being able to plan and teach for 5 weeks for the year 10 students. This allowed me to introduce and conclude a topic as well as start them on their assessment task.

**What I have learnt about teaching drama:** That while the planning of activities is fairly straight forward, the implementation of these activities takes a large amount of enthusiasm for what you are teaching. I have also found that scaffolding students and easing them into a topic such as Theatre of the Absurd is immensely rewarding. I have learnt that good time management is essential and to always have a back-up plan and be ready to let activities go if they are not working. The most important thing I have discovered about teaching drama is my love for it! This is largely due to the two fantastic prac experiences and amazing mentor teachers I have had.

#### Aimee Walker

**Highlight:** Having the time to build rapport with students and teachers alike. Enjoying the support of a FANTASTIC mentor teacher.

**What you have learnt about teaching drama:** On my most recent prac, I developed my presence within the classroom and how to adapt it for different groups of students. I learnt the importance of keeping students informed of the purpose for every exercise used in the classroom and ensuring they are engaged in the subject they are exploring. I also learnt that I have a lot to look forward to in the 'real world' of teaching!

#### Nadia Forte

**Highlight:** Prac!

**What I have learnt about teaching Drama:** Drama teaching is challenging! I have learnt that the drama class contains students who are dedicated; students who think it is a 'free lesson' and students who have been thrown in by chance. This experience has taught me that as a teacher in training I cannot be boring. My lessons have to be interactive, informative, fun and challenging so that I can stimulate all of my students and not just a handful. I have also learnt that positive encouragement can go a long way and the results are just as rewarding for them as it is to me. I love the fact that every day is different.

#### Bonnie Anderson

**Highlight:** The highlight of my second professional practice was a lesson I created in my second week. I was still unfamiliar with the group of students, but they all listened and really responded to the lesson I had planned.

**What I have learnt about teaching Drama:** The importance of good reflection. Whether this was with a class of students about the work they were doing, with my mentor teacher or just by myself; I found that it was really helpful to reflect.

## Regional Update

In regional news, Bell Shakespeare has just been touring around the North West with their production of Julius Caesar. We were lucky enough to have many schools experience workshops with the actors and also many students were offered the opportunity to audition for the chance to be flown to the eastern states to workshop with Bell Shakespeare.

The Country Arts WA 'Open Your Eyes' conference was a great success in Geraldton during September. Artists from all disciplines combined to raise awareness of the many arts projects operating in regional WA. The conference opened with a 'Musicircus' celebrating music and a range of other performances by community groups and schools. Discussions were had among professionals aiming to integrate country arts into the many aspects of regional and rural life.

Looking forward, there are many exciting shows and projects touring to regional WA in the coming months. Lots of exciting opportunities for our students to come!

## Interesting Bits

YouTube has launched a YouTube site for teachers! Click on the links below to check it out, or read an article about the new site.

<http://gettingsmart.com/news/2011/09/youtube-launches-new-channel-for-teachers>

<http://www.youtube.com/teachers>

**Sven Sorenson fills us in on some great new texts from Currency Press that might help support your students' learning:**

*In the 2012 version of the Drama Syllabus, teacher and students will find the following:*

*Stage 2 Other texts: in this unit, students must also study a minimum of one script excerpt (not necessarily from the Set Text List). This representational/realistic excerpt should allow students exposure to different ideas and approaches to Drama. In their written examination students may include discussion of this excerpt but the focus of their answer must be on the complete text studied from the Stage 2 Set Text Lists.*

*Stage 3 Other texts: in this unit, students must study two additional script excerpts (not necessarily from the Set Text List). Each script excerpt should allow students exposure to different ideas and approaches to Drama. In their written examination, students may include discussion of these excerpts but the focus of their answer must be on the complete text studied from the Stage 3 Set Text Lists.*

*In support of that encouragement, teachers may choose extracts from the set text lists or perhaps one of the Australian texts below (all from Currency Press):*

### STAGE 2

Title	THE WEB			Playwright	KATE MULVANY
Year	2011	Characters	3 M, 2 F (3 teenaged)	Setting	Country Australia
Synopsis	"Fred is a 16 year old boy living on a farm without stokes or crops in an Australian country town. When Travis, a charismatic head boy at their school begins to take an interest in him, Fred gets lured into the intricate world of The Web, where nothing and nobody is as they seem. A whodunit of the modern age, THE WEB is a fascinating exploration of isolation, friendship, and what happens when social experiments go frighteningly wrong.				
Form(s)	Suspense, thriller		Style(s)	Representational acting, presentational at times with audience interactions and online worlds	
Themes & issues	Online communities		Country life		Social experiments/pranks
Warnings	Some strong language		Adult themes		

### Stage 1

Title	House on Fire			Playwright	Debra Oswald
Year	2011	Characters	11 female characters (though 4 can be males)	Setting	Sydney, suburbia
Synopsis	"Things aren't going well for the Conway sisters. Dad's just married the Geography teacher, oldest sister Bec's been fired, dumped and evicted and Evie's suffering serious issue with her new best friends. Michaela has 24 hours to solve her sister's problems before she sits the most important exams of her life. What could go wrong?"				
Form(s)	Comedy, domestic drama, episodic		Style(s)	Representational, selective realism, some presentational elements	
Themes & issues	Family dynamics		School and peers		Friendship
Warnings	Mild coarse language				

### Stage 1 or 2

Title	The Stones / Burnt / Taboo			Playwright	Tom Lycos and Stefo Nantsou
Year	1996, 2009, 2007	Characters	4 male characters 9 male, 1 female 10 male, 5 female	Setting	Australian suburbia Outback Australia Australian suburbia
Synopsis	"The Stones is based on the true story of two boys charged with manslaughter after throwing rocks from a freeway overpass and killing a motorist. It asks the question whether the boys were old enough to be responsible for their actions. "Burnt is a bush yarn, born and bred out of the true stories of people from regional Australia struggling with prolonged dryness. It looks at the impact of the stresses and strains of continued drought on families and young people. "Taboo is both a warning to young people who might make themselves sexually vulnerable through date rape, and a				

	celebration of a young woman brave enough to tell her story. It looks at the varying degrees of sexual exploitation in the modern age."		
Form(s)	Comedy, drama, personal tragedy	Style(s)	Representational, presentational (some strong uses of audience interaction elements), multiple characters and rapid changes.
Themes & issues	Synopsis give a good indication.		
Warnings	Strong language	Adult themes	

### Stage 3:

Title	Silent Disco		Playwright	Lachlan Philpott	
Year	2011	Characters	5 females (played by 2) 4 males (played by 2)	Setting	Melbourne suburbia and metro lifestyle
Synopsis	"Tamara and Jasyn are in love. Tamara counts the weeks and days since they got together. Jasyn doesn't. In a world of absent mothers and missing fathers, Mrs Petchell battles to keep another year of students out of the ranks of the vanished. <i>The Outsiders</i> is on the syllabus again, but instead of Socs and Greasers, this is the world of Speds and Bitches – fuelled by Red Bull and powered by iPods. It can be hard to find your own rhythm when everyone is marching to the beat of a different drum."				
Form(s)	Teen drama, domestic drama, episodic structure		Style(s)	Presentational, representational, rapid character changes – surreal/dream sequences	
Themes & issues	Leaving high school		Education	Sexual politics	
Warnings	Strong coarse language		Violence	Adult themes	

### Q & A

#### Aundraea Stevens from Kalamunda S.H.S. sent us this very topical question over the holidays:

"I'm looking to get in touch with any teachers who have combined year 11 and 12 classes, with year 11's doing Stage 2 and year 12's doing stage 3. I don't have a problem teaching the different stages, but I have trouble teaching them at the same time, to *two different skill levels* and am looking for ideas / feedback on timetabling to maximise the time I spend with each group."

Can you offer help or suggestions? Got an important question of your own? Send us your questions and responses to [newsletter@dramawest.com](mailto:newsletter@dramawest.com), and we'll put it up for discussion!

### Classifieds/Swap Mart

Buy, Sell or Swap your costumes/props/etc. here! We have [For Sale](#), [Wanted](#), [Free/To Swap](#) and [Miscellaneous](#) sections!

#### Attention all regional drama teachers:

I am aiming to set up a web of communication between all drama teachers in country areas. The purpose, I hope, will be to provide links and support for each other, as well as opportunities to share resources and guest artists/performers. If you are interested in participating please contact me at [socallaghan@gegs.wa.edu.au](mailto:socallaghan@gegs.wa.edu.au) A.S.A.P. Thank you, Sinead O'Callaghan

#### WANTED: Pirate costumes

Mazenod College is looking for Pirate costumes for a production of *Treasure Island* next year. If you can help, please contact Jess Wilkey at [wilkey.jess@mazenod.wa.edu.au](mailto:wilkey.jess@mazenod.wa.edu.au)

Email your Classifieds items to [newsletter@dramawest.com](mailto:newsletter@dramawest.com) with the subject line: CLASSIFIEDS ITEM.

Want us to feature your school production? Found a great resource lately? Offering workshops/PD?

Send us your info and suggestions to: [newsletter@dramawest.com](mailto:newsletter@dramawest.com)