

Principal's Blog December 2014

It is nearly the end of term already! This has by far been the busiest term and I can't believe how quickly it has flown by.

Since my last blog, Mr Dodzo, Year 10 Broadcast students and I have been to Malta. BOA students have been commissioned to work in partnership with St Martins Institute of Higher Education and the Maltese Film Commission to create a series of promotional videos for the Maltese Tourism Authority. The videos will be used to draw new visitors to the country and our Y13 Broadcast and Media students were certainly set for the challenge— Y13 Broadcast student, Robin Parker, has written about his time in Malta which you can read [here](#).

I was also in Malta following BOA's successful tender to deliver the creative industry courses to adults in Malta. The Maltese film commission will be funding a certified training programme led by BOA and St Martin's Institute of Higher Education, encouraging individuals to further their studies, as well develop their skills in order to increase their opportunities for employment within the film servicing industry.

Now, a week in Malta sounds rather glamorous but, being there on business, I had to deliver 50 hours of teaching over a 5 day period which meant I was very, very busy! Similarly, I couldn't enjoy too much sunshine – my long days teaching meant that I was getting up in the dark and returning to my hotel in the dark. Malta also experienced a cyclone on the day that I was due to fly home so I was concerned about being able to get back, especially when they closed the airport.

Our students did us proud and produced some amazing footage. Our final group of students are due to fly over to Malta for the project during Easter 2015.

This years' [Free Radio Live 2014](#) was a huge success and BOA is immensely proud to have a number of students that performed, worked and supported the concert. Free Radio Live is an annual, large-scale event with an audience of over 15, 000 people and, this year, it boasted musical artists including Ed Sheeran, Nicole Scherzinger and Labrinth as the concert headliners. BOA students were performing in different places around the LG Arena on the night, as well as recording and documenting the concert and helping to run the event itself. We also had ten dancers opening the concert on the main stage with HumFree the Free radio Hamster! I was immensely proud of everyone involved and it was wonderful seeing you all on the night. My nephews were in attendance and they had a wonderful evening – they were especially delighted to meet and have a photo with two of the artists featured, Ella Eyre and McBusted!

BOAs Musical Theatre department have been very busy this term. On Saturday, November 15th, we launched our [BOA Musical Masterclasses](#) with a free taster day! The Musical Masterclasses, led by BOA Musical Theatre staff, offers aims to give young people (ages 10 – 19) the opportunity to understand the professional, creative and dynamic industry. Starting from 10th January 2015 for a period of 11 weeks, participants will be schooled in acting, singing and dancing and their classes will

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culminate in an end-of-term performance in the BOA Theatre. For more information please visit our [website](#) or follow BOA Musical Masterclass on [Twitter](#).

The Musical Theatre department have also just completed a run of performances of [Spring Awakening](#), the Tony Award winning rock musical. Based on a play by Frank Wedekind, the play is set in late-19th century Germany and tells the story of a group of friends' coming-of-age. Following hugely successful runs on Broadway - with a cast that have gone on to become well-known actors and actresses - *Spring Awakening* is certainly a show that you never forget. The BOA production received great reviews from all who came to see it, so congratulations to all involved. I cannot wait for the next BOA Musical Theatre show, *Peter Pan*, which will be running at The Old Rep Theatre from 4th – 7th February 2015. Tickets for the swash-buckling adventure are on sale [here](#).

[Tickets](#) are also currently available for [The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe](#). Staged by our Year 11 Acting Pathway students, it is sure to be a fittingly festive performance of the C.S Lewis' classic and is not to be missed! Our Acting Pathway students also recently enjoyed a thrilling performance of Shakespeare's *Othello* by Frantic Assembly earlier in the month – we have no doubt that they would have been greatly inspired by this infamous tale.

Y12 Dance students performed in an ensemble piece entitled 'Conception' on November 19th. From 5pm, the show featured a variety of student choreographed dances with technical support from our Production students. A huge 'well done' to them for all their hard work!

Plans are well underway for the 2015 New York trip! Lucky students are gearing up for a visit to the Big Apple, BOA style, with performance workshops and trips to two Broadway productions planned! Keep an eye on our website for any important updates regarding BOA in NYC.

Art and Visual Design students and Broadcast students partook in the Clothes Show at the Birmingham NEC on December over the past weekend. VAD students ran a stall selling their personally designed Christmas cards, temporary tattoos, t-shirts and tote bags. Meanwhile, Broadcast students and B2 Radio were there reporting live from the event. A great time was had by all.

As we near Christmas, I am sure the search for the perfect Christmas gift is at the forefront of your mind. We may have the ideal solution which offers you the chance to be a part of Birmingham's most beloved sites. Whether you wish to commemorate someone special, mark a special occasion, give a thoughtful gift, celebrate a loved one, promote your business or simply celebrate your love of the theatre, you can support the arts in a unique way by dedicating a seat at The Old Rep Theatre. To find out more about Dedicating a Seat, visit here or email seating@oldreptheatre.co.uk.

School closes for Christmas on Friday 19th December at noon. Staff will be at BOA from Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th January for training days with students returning on Wednesday 7th January for the new term.

From all of us at BOA, have a very Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year!

Gaynor