

This has been a particularly short half term. We returned from the break straight into aptitude week. Staff have been busy processing the applications for next years year 10 and 12.

Current Year 10 students enjoyed a weeks work experience and Year 11 students had a core week followed by their final mock exams.

For many of our students, this term has been very much focused on final major project (FMP) work. This is a largely self-directed element of the pathways, where students showcase their learning throughout their time at the academy through performance, production and exhibition.

Within Gaming, Digital and New Media, projects undertaken include students designing 'game worlds' and making 3D game levels, while Broadcast students are engaged on a number of live briefs with organisations, agencies and employers across the city. Since December, students have been involved with filming at the Barclaycard Arena using a multi camera set up including GoPro cameras mounted on performers, and also provided multimedia projection, photographic and video coverage of the Dialysis Ball, a charity event at Edgbaston Cricket Ground. Additionally, a number of students recently attended workshops and seminars as part of National Apprenticeships Week; others have taken part in masterclasses at, and exhibited work within, the BBC Digital Cities event at Innovation Birmingham. We have developed links with the National Radio Academy and look forward to creating a joint event in the next term.

Year 10 Visual Art and Design pathway have been focussing on their Textiles project based on organic forms and nature. Students were asked to produce a hanging. Below are some examples of their work.



The Year 13 Final Major Project exhibition *Imagine* will take place on 25th April, showcasing the talent, skills and range of work produced by our final year students.



I would like to congratulate the Maths department and all Year 10 and 12 pupils who participated in the National UK Senior Maths Challenge competition. Silver Awards were achieved by Stephanie Goodall in Year 12, who was within the Top 30% of competitors in the country and 'Best in BOA'; and Kai Deighton 'Best in Year 10'. A special mention goes to Ben Spalding who achieved a Gold Award and was in the Top 10% of competitors in the country.

Further congratulations go to Year 13 Musical Theatre for their excellent production of *The Witches of Eastwick* at The Old Rep last week, and to Year 12 Actors for the *Persecution! Persecution!* season earlier this month: the range of styles was extraordinary, from classic American plays by Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams to edgy British drama from a new generation of writers and actors. Year 13 Acting students will showcase their final productions in the coming term, beginning with *All Our Cost*, a season of three plays exploring and connected to the Holocaust, at The Old Rep from 20th-22nd April.



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Witches of Eastwick

As part of the BOA group, The Old Rep regularly offers discounts to BOA staff, students and their families on visiting comedy, dance and theatre productions. If you would like to be kept informed of these offers, email emma.cann@oldreptheatre.co.uk or call the Box Office on 0121 359 9444 and we will add you to The Old Rep's BOA Family mailing list.

BOA continues to build its international connections. Half term saw another visit to New York, where 63 students and 8 staff met and had a private Q&A with the Broadway cast of 'The Color Purple' including Oscar winner Jennifer Hudson, Cynthia Erivo and Danielle Brooks. Students also went to the top of the Empire State Building, toured Radio City Music Hall and the Lincoln Centre of Performing Arts, visited Central Park Zoo, took part in *Broadway 101* and *Steps on Broadway* workshops, travelled by boat to The Statue of Liberty, watched the new musical *School of Rock* and experienced the bright lights of Times Square. All students were a credit to BOA and made the visit extremely enjoyable with their energy and enthusiasm to explore the Big Apple despite the varying weather conditions.

Following last year's successful exchange programme with Denmark, partnering with Balletskolen in Holstebro, we once again hosted students and staff at BOA for a week. Students from Denmark attended joint dance lessons, shadowed BOA students in a range of lessons, visited the Black Country Museum and a cinema, had a pot luck dinner with parents and students at BOA, and visited families at their homes. On their return to Denmark, Balletskolen's Lead Teacher emailed "Thanks for a great week, the children were so happy about it all - and some of them said goodbye with tears in their eyes. Also some parents invited them back for private visits, and the English want to go to DK soon." We plan to take the Year 10 Dance students who applied for the exchange project to Denmark later in the year, where they will experience a different culture and a range of dance opportunities.

BOA's Musical Theatre students gave a "stunning" performance at the prestigious Ormiston Trust Awards at the Grand Connaught Rooms, London on 10th March. The CEO of UCAS tweeted that it was a "completely outstanding performance". Additionally, our very own Emma Rickard received the national Securing Futures Award, presented by actor Hugh Dennis, for her outstanding contribution to inspire and support students into higher education. Well Done Emma!



Nathan Lloyd from Year 13 Broadcast was awarded the Sport Birmingham Unsung Hero for 2016 Award at the Turkish Airlines Birmingham School Games Winter 2016 Celebration Evening, on 17th March. The award was for his services and contributions to the various events organised by the company, capturing their work in the community and producing some amazing corporate videos for their website and to share with their stakeholders. Ryan Armes, Youth, Education and Events Manager at Sport Birmingham said they were impressed by his "professionalism, hard work, knowledge, motivation and determination". His standard of creative work and his attitude were a credit to BOA.

This term, Mercury House are raising money for Midlands Air Ambulance as their chosen charity. Air Ambulance offers a vital service across all counties of the Midlands, yet receive no government funding and rely on donations and supporters, with each rescue mission costing approximately £2,500. There have been a range of activities in the final weeks of term, including a sponsored silence, non-uniform day, a giant chocolate hamper raffle and collections of donations from parents and audience members at the performances of *The Witches of Eastwick* and *The Flicks*. During the first week back after the holidays there will be a “Doughnuts for Dough” sale happening at break and lunchtimes, where students can purchase Krispy Kreme doughnuts, with all proceeds going to the charity. Anybody who wishes to support the Mercury House fundraising cause can contact Mr Cole.

This week saw Year 13 Dance FMP which was a stunning showcase of dance. Well done to all students involved. Many thanks as always to our Technical Theatre Arts students who provided the lighting, sound and scenery for many of the performances.

We sadly say goodbye to Michelle King, Teacher of Musical Theatre, and Sue, Sue, Karen, Andrea and Sarah, our Catering Staff. We wish them all the best for the future.

Have a great Easter holiday (Year 11s and 13s – please do your revision!).