



BOA Alumni Easter Newsletter

Principal's Message:

"It is great to hear about how well many of our alumni are doing and I hope that their stories will inspire our current students as they face their examinations and assessments in the coming weeks. I look forward to hearing of future success for BOA students past and present."

- John Reilly, Principal



★ BOA WINS 2 AWARDS!! ★

BOA wins national awards for academic performance. In the top 10% of schools nationally

BOA has been recognised nationally for its excellent results in 2018. Based on data from the Department for Education and Ofsted, BOA was found to be one of the best performing secondary schools in the country, receiving two awards for attainment and progress.

We already knew we were in the top 5% of Birmingham schools with only academically selective grammar schools achieving higher exam results, but to be in the top 10% of all schools nationally is a testament to the hard work and dedication of all staff.

BOA has also been invited to be a “Leading Edge” school, a national network exclusively for higher performing schools.

A big well done and thank you to students, parents, staff and governors.

Alumni Coffee & Catch up ...

Thank you to all of our 2018 Alumni for coming in and collecting your certificates. It was great to see so many familiar faces in the building and to find out what you're up to now!

I do urge you all to stay in touch with us here at BOA and keep us posted on what you're up to.

We wish all of our 2018 Alumni every success.



West End Workshops ...



Workshop led by Christopher Tendai – performer from the original Hamilton West End Theatre cast.



News from BOA ...



Year 13 Musical Theatre's performance of:

Phantom of the Opera.

The Charity Gala Event at The Old Rep Theatre raised over £600 towards the theatre running costs.



Year 13 Acting students each performed in one of three productions at The Old Rep Theatre – 'Enron', 'Nell Gwynn' and 'Road'.

Year 13 Dance students production of, 'Step Right Up'.



Year 13 Music students organised and performed two showcases in external venues – 'Then and now' at The Hare & Hound and 'Decades' at The Medicine Bakery. The gig at the Hare & Hound also raised £900 towards 'Young Minds'.

Our 'Jazz Collective' and songwriting group performed at the MAC, at the end of February.

LAMDA

THE LONDON ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND DRAMATIC ART

This term, our Year 10 Musical Theatre students have been introduced to LAMDA qualifications, as they sat Grades 5, 6 & 7 on Wednesday 27th—Friday 29th. For these exams, the students had to prepare monologues and songs to perform in front of external examiners. All students performed really well on the day and are now awaiting their results.

BOA would like to say a massive well done to our Year 10 students who conducted their work experience placements on the Monday 25th February to the Friday 1st of March.

All feedback we received was extremely positive, and the students have reported that they enjoyed their placements in the working world.

Five of our Yr10/11 pupils have taken part in the current BBC 2 Series - 'Back in Time for School'. Congratulations to Saffron-Bluebell Groom, Georgia Williams, Toby Gretton, Emily Haycock and Adelaide Morgan- The show is definitely worth a look especially for those who remember the 1960's and the 1970's.

Sam Hughes in Year 12 Music Technology Pathway who organised the 5-a-side football competition before Christmas which raised £100 to be split between Young Minds and a local Homeless Charity. The event was very competitive, well supported and was a great success.



News from BOA ...



Year 11 Musical Theatre in the production of 'We Will Rock You'.

Year 11 Dance in the production of 'Hercules'.



Year 12 Broadcast students produced two TV shows.

Congratulations to all of our students who have been involved in performances, events and showcases this past term. We would also like to say well done to our Year 12 and Year 13 Technical Theatre Arts students who tirelessly support all of our performances. These shows could not go ahead without their hard work.

Another well done to our Orchestra and Musicians who support many productions, as well as keeping up with the demands of their own pathways.

In Other News...



Kinky boots workshop with our Musical Theatre Year 13 students, led by George Grayson and Jacob McIntosh (cast of Kinky Boots)



A day in Stratford with our Danish friends

New York, New York!



We took 64 of our current students visited New York this term, where they visited famous landmarks such as; The Empire State building, the Statue of Liberty, Ground Zero Memorial Park and Museum, Central Park Zoo, the Lincoln Centre for Performing arts and Radio City Music Hall. The students also participated in a Broadway workshop and a dance workshop with Steps on Broadway, as well as watching two Broadway shows, 'King Kong' and 'Frozen'. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the trip!

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Easter Workshops

Monday 15th – Thursday 18th & Thursday 25th April

Learn how to make your own puppet, try your hand at circus skills, make a play in a day or try your hand at dance with our fun workshops. Our workshops cater to all levels of ability from beginners to experienced performers. Find out more information below.

Ages 8 - 16 years old

Price £30 per workshop, £75 for 3 workshops or £100 for 4 workshops

Time 10am - 3.30pm (Play in a day: 10am - 5.30pm)

Location The Old Rep Theatre, Station Street, Birmingham, B5 4DY

Book on our website. Or contact our Box Office on 0121 359 9444 (office hours are open from: Mon – Fri, 10am – 5pm)



Use the code **EASTERFUN** to get up to £10 off Puppetry, Circus Skills and Play In A Day workshops. (*Offer ends Thursday 11 April, 11.59pm)



Join us this November and December as we bring Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale **The Snow Queen** to The Old Rep stage.

This adaptation of the magical adventure follows inseparable friends Kai and Gerda. When the heartless Snow Queen steals Kai to help rebuild her broken treasure, can Gerda rescue him in time before she plunges the world into an eternal winter? With the help of an unlikely band of companions, Gerda travels to the Kingdom of Ice to confront the Snow Queen and rescue her friend.

To find out dates and times please see the back page of this newsletter.



The Old Rep have launched their brand new Youth Theatre!

The Old Rep Youth Theatre is a fantastic opportunity for young people to develop a brand-new show to be performed onstage at The Old Rep Theatre. Learning from our professional tutors, our youth theatre caters for young people with all levels of ability. Whether you are an experienced performer, or just want to have fun and try out something new, The Old Rep's Youth Theatre is a brilliant chance to learn new skills, meet new friends and perform onstage at Birmingham's iconic theatre.

Junior Youth Theatre: Ages 8 – 13

Senior Youth Theatre: Ages 14 – 19

The Youth Theatre will feature a Senior and a Junior group, and both groups will get involved in some Acting, Dancing and Singing. No need to worry if you're less experienced or interested in one of these areas, we will tailor the sessions around what you want to do!

Find out more information about dates and times by visiting the Learning & Participation page on our website.

To book onto a group now, use our special code **PRESALE**. General sale starts Friday 12 April, 10am.

Success Stories of BOA Alumni ...

Where did you study?

“I studied at Bird and graduated with a 1st!”

What are you up to now, Ben ?

“ I am currently teaching in London and in-between teaching, I am auditioning for shows. I have been extremely busy with my finals this year that I haven’t been in much just yet – but watch this space!”

Can you give our current students some pointers on how to stand out at auditions?

“Work on yourself and don’t concentrate on what other people are doing. Take every audition you do seriously. Show your individuality and what you’re good at. Making sure all sheet music you provide is clear. Going into the industry from School/College, is really hard and at the moment you are currently sheltered with all of the support you get from the teachers. Make the most of your training before auditions.”



Ben Powney, *Dance 2015*



Workshops led by Ben, Megan and a guest to BOA, Tom Lowe.

Where did you study?

“I studied at Rambert.”

What are you up to now, Megan?

“I will be travelling to Venice from the beginning of April 2019 with the Tri-sha Brown Dance Company, for the international festival of contemporary dance also known as Biennale Danza.”

Any audition tips for our current students at BOA?

“Hopefully you can take some inspiration from some of the snippets I showed from the workshops, as this could be something you would learn within an audition. As soon as you walk through the door, you need to be ready to stand out and you’ve got to have it. Don’t lose your technique, if you’re going to improve. Always be a nice person and show that you’re humble.”



Megan Harris, *Dance 2015*

Alumni Workshops

BOA are looking for Alumni across all pathways who would be interested in delivering workshops and talks to our current students at BOA, in the hope of integrating your experience into our current students’ progression.

Thank you to those who have already shown your interest. We have had lots of workshops this year already and we cannot wait for the upcoming also.

If you are interested, please email Lauren at:

boa-alumni@boa-academy.co.uk

Success Stories of BOA Alumni ...

How have you been successful since leaving BOA?

“I completed the Acting pathway in 2018 and since then I have been in adverts for Nokia and for West Midlands metro. I have been in two short films, which were both paid work. I have also worked on set at the BBC, following on from that, I have just been shortlisted for an episode on the BBC today too!”

Is there anything specifically you enjoyed about filming and being in front of the camera?

“I have enjoyed improvising on camera, when filming the Nokia advert and the short films I have done, I had to improvise within the scenes, which I have really enjoyed doing. When working for the BBC and doing a commercial for the NHS and other short films, they have been scripted which I have also enjoyed but there is something I really enjoy about improvisation.”



Do you have any wise words and/or guidance that you can offer to current students?

“I was recently actor of the week on The Mandy Network, where I was asked the same question. I think it’s very important not to let other people’s success get you down. You should always focus on yourself and your own progress and be happy for other people even though it can sometimes be easy to focus on how well others are doing, don’t put yourself down!”

Are you able to share any news on the episode you have been shortlisted for?

“Not right now. I can tell you it is for the BBC and I am currently on the last round of auditions. It is only for one episode I believe, but I will keep you updated on the process of the application!”

Do you feel as though your time at BOA has helped you after completing your pathway?

“BOA has helped me massively, from the moment I started BOA, my confidence has increased massively. I will always be grateful for the ongoing support I have received from BOA when studying there and after leaving. I have been to a few showcases including 'Road' a few weeks ago to continue supporting BOA as they did for me.“

Isabelle Albutt, Acting 2018

“I was the first year at BOA and I studied Musical Theatre and Music Performance. Since leaving BOA I went on to gain my Degree in Musical Theatre and this year have done some amazing things. I won Miss Black Country 2018/19 in March and then went on to compete for the prestigious title Miss England 2018. I competed against 22000 women and came 24th in total. I have raised over £5000 for different charities throughout the year and now find myself starting my own campaign and raising awareness for Dementia and Mental Health.”

Alexandra also leads confidence workshops alongside the work that she does in raising awareness.



Alexandra Darby, *Musical Theatre 2013*

“BOA was invaluable for my career development and I’ll always be grateful for the skills I learned during my time there. I’m glad to see it’s also going from strength to strength!”

“I graduated from the Broadcast course in 2015 and went on to study a degree in Radio Production at the University of Westminster.”

“Since leaving BOA, I went on to direct live sports coverage for channels and companies such as the BBC, BT Sport and Premier Sports as well as over 70 other channels worldwide on large sporting events.”

“I now work for Birmingham City Football Club as a video producer, producing live coverage of matches as well as the video content that fans see during the week. I’m also a producer at LBC radio in London, working on shows that reach over 1.3 million listeners on a weekly basis.”

Callum Denning, *Broadcast 2015*

Success Stories of BOA Alumni ...

“It seems like a lot longer than nearly two years ago that I left BOA. Having not gotten into drama school the first time around, I headed out into the industry prepared to seize as many opportunities as I could using the skills that BOA had given me. In addition to appearing in some fringe theatre and a campaign commercial for Green Peace, I also continued to teach in youth theatres which was something I had begun to do whilst still at BOA. Expanding on this area of my career, I directed a piece for the National Theatre Connections Festival and also somehow ended up becoming a chap-erone for the RSC's UK tour of Matilda and worked as a dresser for my local theatres. With all of this going on, I was unable to apply for drama schools as not only was I so busy, but I also felt incredibly unprepared! With this in mind, but knowing that acting was and always will be my main goal, I applied for a few foundation courses, which was a route I had been offered as I was leaving BOA but at the time felt that it was unnecessary and out of reach financially. “

“I'm currently halfway through my foundation year at READ College, which has students currently training at schools such as RADA, Mountview, ArtsEd, ALRA and LI-PA, just to name a few! I'm currently auditioning for drama schools and have received recalls from Academy of Live and Recorded Arts, Mountview, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Rose Bruford, Italia Conti and Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts. Though I'm by no means out of the woods yet, I'm so proud of how far I've come in terms of achieving what is a very difficult goal- as I'm sure many students at BOA may be realising and experiencing! “

“My advice for those of you auditioning for drama schools at the minute is to keep going! It's tiring and can be upsetting, but drama school rejections are no comment on your talent whatsoever, stay determined, stay hard working and you'll get there! If you are struggling with getting into drama school, I would highly recommend looking into foundation courses. I very much doubt I would have gotten any recalls without mine. In addition, remember that drama school is not the only way to get into the industry and is not the be all and end all!”



Nicki Thompson, Acting 2017



“Keep an open mind when it comes to moving on in education. Following a career path and following a trail of hobbies are two very different things and it’s stressful when you get them mixed up. “

“For the last two months I have been in a professional production of hamlet at the Leeds playhouse. It has been a two month run, running until March 30th. I play the part of Marcellus, a young conscripted soldier of Denmark and friend of Hamlet. Photo will be attached. From September I shall be studying fashion photography at Leeds arts University. Just goes to show that you can always change your career path. “

Jacob Lowe, *Acting 2018*

“I left back in 2013 and have now taken a new path. After leaving BOA I moved to the states and taught sailing for 3 years and now I live back in the UK (have done for a couple of years) and I am 2nd year student at the University of Cumbria, living in Ambleside in the Lake District. I now study a Bsc in Outdoor Adventure and Environment and plan on going into environmental research science when I graduate next year. I loved my time at BOA and still engage in the arts in my spare time, I just took a very different path and feel like it would be good for students to hear that other paths are available and the performing arts can help in so many ways. The performance skills that I gained have helped in the practical sides of my degree and the coursework I completed at BOA set me up really well for academic writing at university. “

Jack Riley, *Broadcast 2014*

Success Stories of BOA Alumni ...

“So since leaving BOA I have learnt a lot! I gained agent representation, and have attended a few auditions through this, however I learnt that if you want something to happen you have to do it yourself!

I joined the Entertainment Team at West Midland’s Safari Park so I could keep within the industry whilst earning. This involved different characters such as; Witches, Scientists, Mrs Claus, being an Elf, a Dinosaur Keeper etc., but also puppetry, mascot, storytelling and most of all being an adaptable performer.

Since then I have been offered to work for Murder57, which is a Murder Mystery events company in the UK. I have also been offered a years place at Italia Conti to start in September, which I believe will help a LOT and be a clear indicator on whether I want to pursue it for a further 3 years. I have a couple of auditions left but believe this is where I’ll be going in September.

I’ve also done a couple of short films. This month alone, I have two auditions, a bridal model shoot and two days of filming for a paid short film! I’m saving for a professional show reel, headshots and some needed holidays!

My advice is to chase those dreams and to not let money or opinions get in the way!”

Emily Taylor, *Acting 2018*

“My time since BOA has gone extremely quickly and opened my eyes to the big wide world.”

“Since leaving BOA, I have taken my degree at Edge Hill University this has been somewhat challenging but rewarding. My time at BOA prepared me for this big jump to University giving me the foundation and confidence to be successful. I am now in the process of setting up my own dance company in which I’m hoping will be successful and have many tours further to my graduation in May. Further to this, I’m going on to study my PGCE to become a college teacher myself. If I could give any advice it would be to get yourself involved in as many dance projects as possible. Having experience behind you puts you in a much better position in interviews, whether it’s a paid job or voluntary and don’t stop dancing over summer! I will be holding an audition in Cannock for the youth company on the 29th of May and would love to see some BOA students there, as it’s also free!

Please see Danni’s Instagram page for further information on technique classes and her youth theatre class: @ddf_dancefitness

“BOA gave me the stepping stones to building the confidence to work in a fun and enthusiastic environment.”

“I studied Dance from 2011-2013, as the first year at BOA. After leaving BOA, I went onto De Montfort University to study Arts and Festival Management and Dance.

Since graduating, I began working at a company called ‘The Challenge’ as an Engagement Coordinator. I personally love this role, because I am passionate about the programme and want to encourage young people to take up this opportunity, as I did it when I was younger and found it beneficial.

The National Citizen Service is a Summer programme for 15-17 year olds, it enhances their personal and social development.

There are different aspects to the programme which include:

Adventure - We go to an outdoor activity center for 5days 4 nights, where they can work with they can work with other young people across different schools and do adrenaline-fueled activities including rock-climbing, canoeing, hiking and archery.

Discovery - Young people get to live in University style accommodation and will learn how to cook and budget a food shop. During the day they'll be doing different skills workshops which can help boost their CV's and applications for further education.

Action - This is where young people have the power to make a change in their community where they get to plan and deliver their own social action project. NCS offers the necessary tools to help achieve your goals and complete an incredible project.

At the end young people get a certificate signed by the Prime Minister to take to interviews and will also have access to graduate opportunities for future development.”

Alice Samuels, *Dance 2011*

Success Stories of BOA Alumni ...

“From the Birmingham NEC stage to a Saturday night primetime television show.”

Why the voice?

“I auditioned back when I was 16, but I definitely wasn’t ready then. I have been for auditions at other shows, such as, X-Factor, but that definitely wasn’t for me. This time I felt ready when auditioning for The Voice, because I knew what I was getting myself in for. You have to make mistakes and laugh at yourself, always take chances even if you get knocked back.”

What was your X-Factor audition like?

“It was in Manchester and I left just before the six chair challenge, but none of this was shown on TV. Nicole had told me in my audition to take off my high heels, as they were making me shake because I was so nervous. I’ll never forget that!”

What made you choose Music over Musical Theatre?

“I’ve always had a passion for music and improving my vocals. Jazz was a big part in my family and it’s always been something I enjoy. Musical Theatre bought a lot of character and performance, which was an amazing opportunity for me to come here and improved myself. I wanted to improve my vocals further and so I went to BIMM to study Professional Music.”



“It was the best 2 years at BOA, because I found out who I was.”



You were on Olly’s team – Did you spend a lot of time with Olly?

“Olly put the most time in with his contestants out of all of the coaches. He had said he wanted to be a part of our journey and give us feedback when he could. Olly always said before a battle ‘Look, I’ve been here before, I did X-Factor, I know how you must be feeling. This room is where you can make mistakes.’ He was great.”

Did you apply to Drama Schools before this?

“I auditioned for LIPA and Edge Hill. But, I decided I wanted to concentrate on Music and writing.”

Do you get to pick your own songs?

“You have some say in what you sing, you have to pick 5 slow tempo, 5 fast tempo and 5 mid. They then get you to practice these and then Olly will come in with musicians and give feedback and which they liked and asked me where I wanted to go within the competition.”

How was your time at BOA?

“I LOVED it! Boa was so cool compared to any other academy/school. Everyone loved the same thing as me, and I feel like it helped me grow as a person. Use your time wisely at BOA.”

Have you been contacted since the show?

“Olly contacted me every day to see how I was getting on. The Voice contacts every couple of weeks to check in. It’s definitely a positive platform.”

What type of person do you need to be to be in this industry?

“Just be yourself. Don’t be a diva.”

Have you built a fan-base since The Voice?

“I’ve gained lots of followers on Social Media.”

Have you had support with dealing with Social Media and press?

“The Voice gave us a full day to go through how to deal with Social Media platforms and to not search for your own name. There’s always going to be someone that doesn’t like you, or like what you do. But you just need to remember that you don’t know them, they don’t know you, it’s not personal.”

What’s the next step for you?

“I’ve been contacted by a well-known record company, but I do have to wait until my contract ends with The Voice to pursue anything. I am currently writing my own material and look to record a demo in the future. “

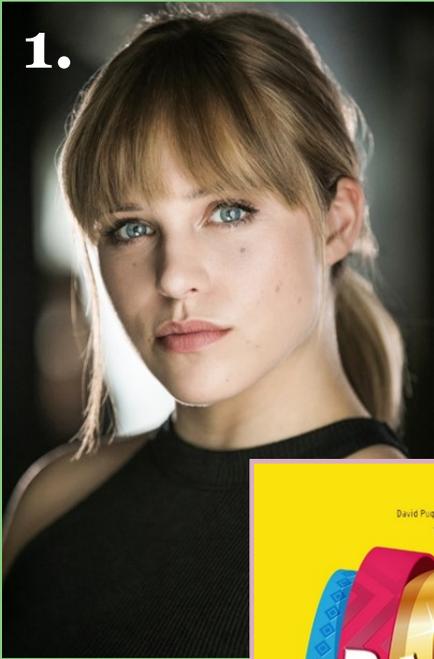
“The Voice was like a massive family. Everyone is so nice!”



Georgia Bray, *Musical Theatre*

Your Future in Photos ...

1.



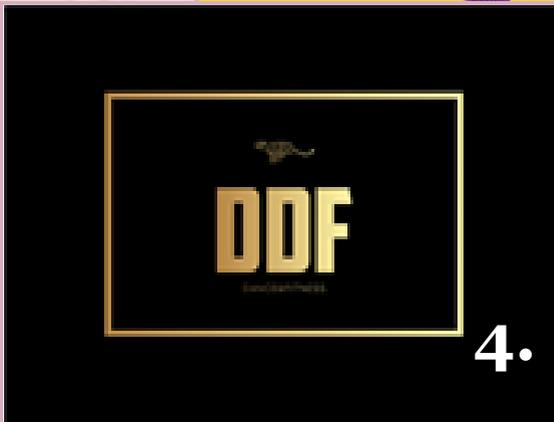
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3.



3.



4.

5.



What are they up to now!?

1. Lydia Gardiner graduated from the MTA and signed with an agent called Cowley, Knox and Guy. She has just signed a contract to perform for 6 months as a lead vocalist with TUI at a resort in Lanzarote. Congrats!
2. Michael Warnock, Tom Rushton and Will Clews formed a band called Karkosa whilst studying at BOA a couple of years ago. Since then they have gone on to be signed by a Korean record label. They returned back to Korea in February on tour with sold out shows. Well done!
3. Harry Brown is still touring with 'The Band' the musical cast. One of our current Year 10 students here at BOA managed to get a quick picture with him when she was on her work experience.
4. Danni Grove has created her own Youth Company and will be holding auditions to develop this on the 29th of May 2019. If you would like any further information, contact Danni via email: danni.grove@yahoo.co.uk.
5. Georgia Bray appearing on 'The Voice' in the Battle. Congratulations!



Another great shot from BOA Alumni band, Karkosa's gig in Korea.

Upcoming Performances & Events...

WHAT?	WHERE?	WHEN?
Year 10 Music Show – ‘Lost Legends’	BOA Theatre	24th & 25th June at 7pm
Year 12 Music and Music Technology Showcase – ‘Best Of Brum’	BOA Theatre	26th & 27th June at 7pm
Year 12 Musical Theatre – ‘Decades’	Old Rep Theatre	26th & 27th June at 7pm
Year 10 Acting Show – ‘Private Peaceful’	BOA Theatre	2nd July at 7pm
Year 10 Acting Show – ‘Not In My Name’	BOA Theatre	3rd July at 7pm
Year 12 Dance – ‘Raising The Barre’	Old Rep Theatre	3rd & 4th July at 7pm
Year 10 Musical Theatre Showcase - ‘Heroes & Villains’	BOA Theatre	9th & 10th July at 7pm
Year 12 Acting Showcase	Old Rep Theatre	10th & 11th July at 7pm
Year 10 Dance Show – ‘Odyssey’	BOA Theatre	16th & 17th July at 7pm

Our current students really appreciate the continued support of our Alumni coming to watch their performances and attend their events. Tickets can be booked via BOA Reception or www.ticketsource.co.uk/boa.

Some BOA performances are also held at the Old Rep Theatre. Tickets for these shows can be booked at www.oldreptheatre.co.uk.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Tickets are available to buy now from the following website link: www.oldreptheatre.co.uk.

Performance dates are as follows:

Saturday 16th November – Monday 30th December 2019

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Thank you for keeping in touch with BOA after your studies. We really appreciate hearing your stories of success, and seeing which paths your careers take.

Please feel free to update us by following our social media pages, or emailing the address below.

We hope you have a lovely, chocolate-filled Easter!



@BOAAlumni



@BOA_Alumni

