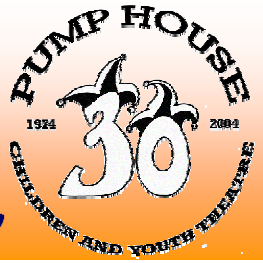


June 2006

Pump House Children and Youth Theatre

# NEWSLETTER



Email: [cyt@pumphouse.info](mailto:cyt@pumphouse.info) Web: [www.pumphouse.info](http://www.pumphouse.info)

Your editors would like to thank you for your contributions and to apologise for the delay with this issue. Performances and festivals, exams and work, life the universe and all that took over. In the future there will be 3 newsletters: November, Feb/March and June and it is hoped there will be a Youth Speaks section. We are handing over the editorial mantle to Bridget Curran and Elaine Lardner from the committee, so please keep those contributions coming. Put dates in diaries or palm tops or what ever for the shows in July from the Children with Guys and Dolls and the Youth with 2 plays: Chatroom and Multiplex, whilst not forgetting to tread the boards yourself and stretch your own vocal chords and brush down your own performing talents for the 30<sup>th</sup> September's Queen Night in the Colne River Room!!

Enjoy the Summer!

*Moya Brewer and Olivia Gunter*

## Recent Performances

### A word from the chair — *Elisabeth Gunter*

Though it's several months since the brilliant production of *Les Misérables* by the Youth Theatre directed by Roger Martin and Lee Farman, I still have the occasional flash back, particularly to the last night when I witnessed and participated in the well deserved standing ovation for the cast and crew. It was a remarkable production by all who participated. This production pushed back the boundaries of CYT productions with a live orchestra playing in the rehearsal space at the front of the theatre where Lee conducted both the musicians in that part of the building and the actors on stage thanks to a video link into the theatre. This was achieved by Lee's inventiveness and the technical mastery of Jason Brameld using a spaghetti of cabling. Jason also designed and built the atmospheric lighting. I also heard a few gasps from the audience at the stunning set especially when the barricade magically appeared from under a raised level at the back of the stage. This was particularly down to the creative and technical skills of Chris Swallow, Keith Rhodes, David Fergus and Jon Sadie amongst others.

You will know how many weeks it takes to rehearse the actors to get to such a splendid level of performance. You have probably cursed the rehearsal schedule and the director if you have sat outside the theatre on a cold, rainy night waiting to pick up a cast member – I know I have and I should know better! Well, I can tell you that the technical side of the production takes nearly as many hours but condensed into about two weeks as that's usually the time allowed for a group to have the theatre space before a production. So when we were all relaxing over Christmas and the New Year holiday, people were in the theatre working well into the night to have it all ready for the

dress rehearsal. Ursula Hodgkinson and her costumiers began even earlier and in the run up to the production, the bar link often resembled the pictures I have seen in magazines showing behind the scenes during British Fashion Week, all sewing machines, swathes of fabric, cups of coffee and pins. I will never tire of thanking these people for what they do and the time they donate to give us such splendid entertainment on our doorstep.

Roger Martin directed a triumph of a production and the cast surpassed themselves, thank you to all for such a good night's theatre.

After the richness of *Les Mis*, members of the Children and Youth theatres tantalised us with the palate cleansing *New Writing and Improv* nights in March. These evenings never fail to produce the unexpected by drawing out some terrific performances especially in the improvisations and mimes. Without costumes and sets the performers look relaxed and more informal though with nothing else to distract other than the odd prop, it must be quite a challenge especially for the improvisations when the actors are only given the subject matter a short time before they have to devise and perform it. I strongly urge you to come and watch next year's offerings, I love this part of the CYT calendar for the inventiveness and the unexpected and there's so much laughter. The performances also build confidence for the *Bushey Festival* which follows shortly after in late March. There were two diverse and interesting evenings' pro-

grammes this year with full participation from the Children's and Youth theatres. Our entries won a number of well deserved awards especially Karen Rhodes's *You Are My Sunshine* which she wrote and directed and *The Spider Men* this year's National Theatre/Shell Connections entry directed by Moya Brewer and Karen Rhodes. A full list of the awards winners is printed elsewhere in this newsletter, congratulations to them all. I felt incredibly proud and lucky to be associated with the CYT when I watched the performances.



The *Spider Men* was chosen to play at Watford Palace Theatre on 6 May which was well deserved and very exciting.

I certainly look forward to seeing you in July at *Guys and Dolls* and *Multiplex*. I will be in touch beforehand though to ask for help with the set builds, painting, costumes and the front of house and bar rota for the productions so please keep some spaces in your diaries free. I must say you have all been brilliant at donating your time towards recent productions. If everyone does something to help it makes such a difference to the shows. Thanks for that.



# Recent Performances

## LES MISÉRABLES

SCHOOL EDITION

Nikki Cater

I joined The Pump House in September and when I found out that my first show would be Les Misérables, my first thought was, what have I let myself in for?! I had seen the show on a video at school and knew that it was going to be really hard work. The auditions were held and almost immediately after these we began work on some of the chorus scenes in the show. Within a week or so, the parts were announced- that was when the real work began!

The rehearsals whizzed by and before we knew it, Christmas was upon us. Whilst most of the cast welcomed the break, I think the directors were rather worried that the hard work could be forgotten! Thankfully when we returned in January it was almost like we had never been away.

After a few more rehearsals it dawned on most of us how close the opening night was and we suddenly realised how hard we were going to need to work to pull the show off. We soon began rehearsing on stage with the set and some props and the show seemed to come to life. It looked and sounded brilliant.

The opening night arrived and the youth were buzzing with nervous excitement. The show started and was fantastic; the audience loved it! Night after night, the show went from strength to strength but too soon it was all over.

Taking part in Les Mis was fantastic and as well as giving me the opportunity to perform in an amazing show, it also enabled me to make some great friends in other members of the youth theatre. I can't wait for the summer project!

## THE SPIDERMEN ;SHELL CONNECTIONS ENTRY;3 VENUES, 3 SHOWS

Moya and Karen and the Youth theatre

Since the last newsletter we have performed this new play in 3 different venues: Bushey festival at Queens School, Pump House post festival of new writing night and the Palace Theatre as part of its own celebration of new writing performed by local schools and youth theatres. It has been a tough few months as we've been under the spotlight with different adjudications, at different venues with tight rehearsals, "get outs" and "get ins" schedules.

It has been a positive, though exhausting experience and we've all learned and shared much supported by everyone connected with the Pump House, so that we've been able to create 3 different shows and develop with each thanks to the cast and the crew as well as

the parent , committee and stage and technical crews. We've been able to resurrect these Marvel heroes and engage the tutoring of Tom Kanji and Richard and Mark Weinmen who added their acting and directorial thoughts and expertise and gave insights to the cast when they joined our rehearsals. The sound track was remarked upon by both adjudicators, as was the hauntingly eerie black and white set contrasting the colourful exaggeration of the comic heroes and heroines in their masks, capes and with their posturings. David Fish and Keith and Karen Rho-

des with their volunteer supports deserve praise for this. The professional stage crew at the Palace praised our youth crew led by Lee Farman, calm as ever, for their slickness and their ability to work so effectively in a professional theatre. Ursula's detail with the costumes added credibility and provided the contrasts we needed to support the light and shade of the show, whilst Jason's technical expertise as ever provided the final dramatic moment at the Palace with the screens lit by a spider caught in its web just as David was caught in his web of being

unable to grow up into the adult world he experienced around him. Accolades were heaped onto the cast who worked as a chorus with individuals maintaining the play's momentum supported by their chorus shadows and reflections. We took risks and continued to do so which was a headache for the cast and crew but enabled the



final performance at the Palace to be superb, and the "curtain call" choreographed by Elliott to have the audience dancing with the cast. Without everyone's support and time we would not have been able to realise our ideas or to enhance each show and we would not have gained the trophies and praise we did.

Would we do it all again? Well, next year the plan is to enter 2 plays from the older Children and the Youth and to go for all the festivals as Welwyn was over subscribed this year. So. who's up for driving the van then?!!

## Fun at the palace

by Adam Webster

6<sup>th</sup> May 06 - A day full of emotional highs is my thought as I am writing this article at the end of the day.

On my day off, which I assumed I was going to get a lie in; I was wrong. I was at Pumhouse at 8:15 helping to load the truck with my parents. (A big thank you to everyone who helped to load the truck.) After sorting out the costumes, props and set and helping to load it into the truck, we made the short trip to the Palace theatre. Here we had to unload the truck and sort out the costumes and props, while the tech crew went through the play, marking it out. (Thank you to the tech crew) While this was going on we had the ever reliable Jason, sorting out the lights (thank you!) and David [fish] sorting out the sound (thank you!) We then had a run through at about 12:15. (Here you would have been able to see me, very anxiously, in the wings holding my phone up as high as possible to get a good reception so I could listen to the Watford game.) After the run through we left the theatre because Francis Combe had to set up for their play. During the break I quickly run to the pub to watch the second half of the Watford game-where they had made the sort trip to play crystal palace – where we demolished them 3-0. Soon we were back at the theatre, watching Francis Combe do their performance of Shut Up by Andrew Paine. (who wrote Mugged.) It was then time for our performance, after the usual nerves it was in fact a great ending performance to lay Spidermen to rest. We then went up stairs to say a thank you to everyone who made it possible for the performance to happen. We then had the fun job of loading the truck back up and unloading it, back at pumphouse. (A big thank you to everyone who helped to unload the truck) by 11:30 it was time to leave and go home. So overall, a great day for Watford F.C at palace and a great performance at the palace theatre.

Thanks to everyone who helped (sorry if I've missed anyone out or got their job description wrong.)

Lee: stage manager

Jason: lights

David [fish]: sound

Emma: props

Isabelle: props

Lauren Murdock: props and stage crew

Sean Lovell: stage crew

John BJ: stage crew

Duncan: stage crew

James: stage crew (despite him being too sick to do it on the day has been there all the other times.)

Urusla: costumes

Karen: director (a huge massive thank you for making everything possible and for a great performance.)

Moya: director (a huge massive thank you for making everything possible and for a great performance.)



# What's happening in the PHCYT

## Burn by Deborah Gearing and Chatroom by Enda Walsh at the National Theatre

As you know, the Youth Theatre is participating for the second year, in the National Theatre Shell Connections competition. Specially commissioned plays are written for youth theatre groups from all over the country. Last year the Youth performed Mugged. This year it's The Spider Men.

This month and until the beginning of June, you can see some of last year's plays at the National Theatre performed by professional actors. A small group of us went last week to see two of the plays. Burn is about the tragic last day of a boy in foster care who asks a girl out on a date in a stolen car. Chatroom is a black comedy looking at bullying, manipulation and concern among six 15 year olds who get involved in an internet suicide website.

Burn has an almost poetic quality to its dialogue with a rhythm and pace that's sharp and funny but also shows us the harsh reality of kids with little hope and a bleak future. The acting was superb with minimal but very effective staging. I was intimidated by the pack mentality of the group of friends and their tendency to turn on each other with little compassion.

Chatroom, the play preferred by the youth members in the outing was also simply but effectively staged to show youths sitting in isolation at their computers logging into an internet chatroom. Each person had their own problems, some were more honest about them than others which led to a nail biting climax as the one person's honesty was ruthlessly exploited.

It was a great evening and led to much post theatre discussion.

### LOST PROPERTY

**Please come and claim any items you or your child or youth member may have lost or left at the Pump House. All unclaimed items will be taken to a charity shop next month so don't delay.**

## THE BIGGER PICTURE: MULTIPLEX AND CHATROOM

*James Bradshaw and Henry Williams*

This Summer the Youth Theatre will be performing not one, but two Shell Connections plays. These 2 plays will be a double billing on the nights of the 13th, 14<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of July.

MULTIPLEX is a one act play with an excellent script which promises many laughs. It is set in a local Multiplex cinema and looks at a group of young ushers and how their lives change with the addition of a new usher who appears to know all there is to know about film!...

CHATROOM has a witty, quick moving script as events unfold in the cyber world. The dialogue between characters moves the plot along to a tense climax, revealing the turbulence behind the chatrooms.

Roger is once again providing his experience to supporting the youth who have the challenge of doing, set, props, costume and film for these shows and recruiting others to help them to execute these tasks!

India Barby from the Youth is co-directing these plays so we are certainly being set challenges which we are facing with energy and enthusiasm so come and support us in our efforts and achievements in July!!

## FROM URSULA HODGKINSON – COSTUME MISTRESS

Hi everyone. Happy Christmas, best wishes for 2006, Happy Easter etc.

I would like to thank all who helped with the costumes for the recent shows. It's been a marathon task these last six months!!! To show how marvellous our needle skills are, I have managed to loan all the Les Misérables costumes to a school in Greenwich for their June production, pretty good eh?

## Bushey & South West Herts Youth Drama Festival Results 18/4/2006 – Alan Cox adjudicator

### Best Senior Play

Runner up Shakers *Queens*  
Winner The Spidermen *PHYT*

### Best Performance Senior Boy

Nominations Ben Harris *St James*, Adam Webster *PHYT*, Adam Feighoney *PHYT*, Elliot Powell *PHYT*, Dominic Powell *PHYT*.

Runner up Nick Corre *PHYT*  
Winner Sean Curran *PHYT*

### Best Performance Senior Girl

Nominations .... Reid Shakers *Queens*, India Barby *loBE Queens*.  
Runner up Niamh Brewer *PHYT*  
Winner Rosie Spearpoint *PHYT*

### Best Mime

Runner up Just a few Guys and Dolls *PHCT*  
Winner Answers *St James'*

### Best Presentation: Costume/Set/Make Up

Nominations Shakers *Queens*, You are my Sunshine *PHCT*  
Winner Spidermen *PHYT*

### Jeanette Behn Award for Comedy

Nominations Ben Corre *PHCT*, *Queens'* improvisation, *St James'* impro Old Uncle, *PHYT* impro Danger at the Zoo

Runner up Barney Littlely *PHCT*  
Winner Jon Bolitho-Jones *Queens*

### Adjudicator's Award

Nominations for teamwork in Shakers *Queens*, Hoodies improvisation *PHYT*, Jon Bolitho Jones for various in Teachers *Queens*, *St James'* improvisation & Answers mime *St James'*  
Winner Karen Rhodes script for You are my sunshine *PHCYT*

### Best Junior Play

Winner You are my Sunshine *PHCT*

### Best Performance Junior Boy

Runner up Ben Corre *PHCT*  
Winner Harry Price *PHCT*

### Best Performance Junior Girl

Runner up Rachel Mulcahy *PHCT*  
Winner Saoirse Brewer *PHCT*



# Back to the Future

## Diary dates

### JULY

4-8th - Guys and Dolls Jnr

13-15th - Multiplex / Chatroom

### SEPTEMBER

Sat 30th—Queen night

### DECEMBER

Fri 8th—Sat 9th

Showcase performance

Children's theatre

### JANUARY

18-28th—Youth Musical

### MARCH

28-31st— 4 plays

Both Children and Youth sections

## Future Shows

Next years programme (06/07) is taking shape:

**September**—Queen night

**December**—Showcase by the Children's Theatre of work they have started during the term, with a Christmas twist

**January**—Subject to confirmation but this is likely to be Batman in Love, a new fun light hearted musical based on the music of Queen.

**March**—We are entering two plays from the Shell connections programme, one for the Youth and one for the older Children. We will also be performing two other plays with the Children's theatre, one of which will be a new work by Karen Rhodes

**May**—We are planning to enter the Welwyn Youth Drama festival this year

**July**—The Children's Theatre will be doing a fun musical (to be announced once we have confirmed the licenses) and the Youth theatre will be taking on a challenging project

## Footnotes



Let battle commence!

Your new editors would welcome contributions for the next newsletter which will go out in November.

So please send anything to Bridget Curran or Elaine Lardener at

[john.j.curran@bopenworld.com](mailto:john.j.curran@bopenworld.com)

[hojilard@hotmail.com](mailto:hojilard@hotmail.com)

This newsletter is also available online at [www.pumphouse.info/cyt](http://www.pumphouse.info/cyt)

## ONLINE

Have you seen the new website?

[www.pumphouse.info](http://www.pumphouse.info)

### Tickets

We are changing our prices so that the cheapest method for you to purchase tickets is by using your credit/debit card online. All other methods such as via the phone, reservation form or on the door will incur a surcharge of 50p a ticket.

### Letters

Copies of letters sent out, newsletters and rehearsal schedules are available on the website

### E-mail

If you are responding to a letter or giving notice that you can not attend a rehearsal then please do this by e-mail to [cyt@pumphouse.info](mailto:cyt@pumphouse.info)

## Queen Night

On Saturday 30th (in the Colne River Room) we will be presenting a night of Queen music (well probably 2 performances, afternoon and early evening because of demand)

Everyone is to be involved, Children, Youth, Tutors, production teams and parents.

We will be doing a number of Queen songs performed in several ways, sung, acted, groups, solos and of course some audience karaoke.

### WE NEED YOU

Over the next few months we will be making our own version of Bohemian Rhapsody video and we would like to include absolutely everyone involved with the CYT on it. So parents let me know if you want to be in it, as soon as possible so you can get the best lines!

Also if you would like to perform your favourite Queen number then here is your opportunity. You can sing or play, take part in a group or recreate one of the famous Queen videos. If you want to take part please let me know.

Lee

[lee.farman@pumphouse.info](mailto:lee.farman@pumphouse.info)

07958 955512



## BOX OFFICE

This is a big job, please help us by telling everyone:

- Use online credit card booking (which is the cheapest method for the customer) where possible
- All tickets will be available on the door and will not be sent out
- Quote the name that you booked your tickets with (e.g. name on credit card) when picking up tickets on the door
- Please check the details on the PayPal receipt that you receive to make sure you booked the tickets you thought you did
- Please be patient with the box office

**MULTIPLIX** by Christopher William Hill

**Chatroom** by Edna Malish

Two 1 act touching comedies that look behind the scenes of a multiplex cinema and online chatrooms

'A 60 minute masterpiece, a computer-age Lord of the Flies. The writing is taut, vivid, cool, scary and often funny.'  
The Times

ADMISSION

Thur 13th - Sat 15th July 2006  
7:30pm (no Sat matinee)  
tickets £5 (conc. £3)



Box office:  
[www.pumphouse.info](http://www.pumphouse.info)  
07903 411150

Pump House Theatre, Local Board Road, Watford

