

The REVIEWERS

JUNE 2014



WHAT IS THE
MUST SEE SHOW
OF THE YEAR IN
LONDON ?

TANTALISING,
INSPIRATIONAL, and
RIVETING productions
reviewed

OLD PALACE OF JOHN WHITGIFT SCHOOL REVIEWEES MAGAZINE

The REVIEWERS

The Reviewers IS A MAGAZINE SET UP BY MYSELF WITH THE INTENTION OF ENCOURAGING OTHER STUDENTS TO BECOME MORE CULTURED AND EXPERIENCE WHAT THE BIG CITY AND OUR LOCAL TOWN, CROYDON, HAS TO OFFER.

OVER THE COURSE OF THE YEAR STUDENTS HAVE SIGNED UP TO A NUMEROUS NUMBER OF TRIPS ORGANISED BY THOSE IN THE DANCE, DRAMA, ART AND ENGLISH DEPARTMENTS AT OLD PALACE. THOSE WHO HAVE WISHED TO REVIEW THESE EVENTS HAVE ATTENDED MEETINGS WITH MYSELF. IN THESE MEETINGS I WOULD TEACH STUDENTS HOW TO WRITE A GOOD REVIEW AND THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS NECESSARY TO DO SO. WE ALL WOULD THEN ATTEND THE EVENT AND HAVE A FOLLOW-UP MEETING WHERE THIS WOULD BE DISCUSSED. STUDENTS THEN WROTE REVIEWS AND I WOULD EDIT THEM TO PUT THEM IN THIS MAGAZINE.

I HOPE YOU WILL ENJOY READING THIS NEW CREATION.

HOLLY NICHOLLS, Editor

CONTRIBUTORS:

**SIMRAN BHARJ, RAQUEL CHAMBERS, JESSICA CROSS,
CAMILLE KOOSYIAL, STEPHANIE PEGASIOU, ELOISE
SHEFFIELD**

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**What makes the
perfect
Reviewer...**

The Reviewers



THE PERFECT REVIEWEE IS NOT NECESSARILY SOMEONE WHO HAS SEEN A LOT OF THEATRE PRODUCTIONS OR ATTENDED MANY ART EXHIBITIONS. IN FACT I BELIEVE A GREAT REVIEWEE IS SOMEONE WHO IS PASSIONATE ABOUT THE ARTS AND WANTS TO EXPERIENCE IT MORE, THEREFORE IT SEEMS ALMOST ANYONE COULD BE A REVIEWEE (INCLUDING YOU)!

THE PERFECT REVIEWEE HOWEVER SEEMS TO BE SOMEONE WHO IS ABLE TO CONCISELY COMMENT ON AN EVENT THAT MAY OR MAY NOT MAKE THE READER WANT TO ATTEND IT. THIS IS ONE OF **The Reviewees AIMS AS A NEW MAGAZINE; AS WELL AS INTENDING ON ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO WRITE MORE AND EXPERIENCE DIFFERENT ART FORMS.**

****The Reviewees** WILL HOPEFULLY INSPIRE YOU TO ATTEND ARTISTIC EVENTS AND MAYBE EVEN BE A REVIEWEE YOURSELF!**



What does the West Side offer?



JESSICA CROSS

17TH SEPTEMBER 2013 – **West Side Story**

THE CHOREOGRAPHY WAS SHARP, THE COSTUMES EXQUISITE AND SO THE STORY BEGINS...

IT IS SAID TO BE ONE OF THE 'GREAT STAGE MUSICALS'! I AGREE WITH THIS. IT IS A CONTEMPORARY VERSION OF *ROMEO AND JULIET* WITH JETS AND SHARKS, WRITTEN BY LEONARD BERNSTEIN.

THE CHOREOGRAPHY CAPTIVATED ME THE MOST WITH THE MUSIC BEING IN SYNCHRONISATION WITH NEW AND EXCITING MOVES. THE SPANISH GIRLS REALLY EMBODIED THEIR CHARACTERS AND EACH MOVE WAS PERFORMED WITH CONVICTION AND WAS TRUE TO THE LATINO STYLE. THE COSTUME DESIGNS WERE VIBRANT, COLOURFUL AND INTRICATE. IT CLEARLY SHOWED THE COSTUME DESIGNER, (RENATE SCHMITZER) THOUGHT A LOT ABOUT HOW THE OUTFITS SHOULD HAVE LOOKED IN THE '50s (WHEN IT IS SET). SHE ALSO CONSIDERED HOW THE COSTUMES COULD RELATE TO THE CHOREOGRAPHY AND WOULD BEST SUIT THE MOVEMENT.

THE DANCERS PULLED OFF AN EXHILARATING, EXCITING, UPBEAT FIGHT SCENE WITH ANITA (PLAYED BY PENELOPE ARMSTEAD-WILLIAMS) AND OFFICER KRUPKE (PLAYED BY MEL SHRAWDER), BEING MORE EXCITING CHARACTERS THAN MARIA AND TONY (THE LEADS). YOU WOULD THINK THESE LEAD CHARACTERS WOULD BE THE CENTRE OF ATTENTION, HOWEVER I OFTEN FOUND MYSELF LOOKING AT ANITA MORE THAN MARIA.

I FELT THE SET DESIGN WAS POOR, AND FOR WHAT IT WAS I DO NOT BELIEVE IT WAS USED MUCH. I THINK THE USE OF LIGHTING ADDED DRAMA AND AN ELEMENT OF MYSTERY AND HELPED TO CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE FOR THE AUDIENCE.

OVERALL I DO BELIEVE IT IS ONE OF THE 'GREAT STAGE MUSICALS' WITH FANTASTIC CHOREOGRAPHY AND INTRICATE COSTUMES.

**visiting a
'DOLL'S
house**



A DOLL'S HOUSE WAS PERFORMED AT THE DUKE OF YORK THEATRE IN LONDON FOLLOWING ITS PRIOR SUCCESS AT THE YOUNG VIC.

THE ROLE OF NORA HELMER WAS AGAIN PERFORMED BY HATTIE MORAHAN WHO PREVIOUSLY WON BEST ACTRESS FOR HER EXQUISITE PERFORMANCE. THE CHARACTER, NORA, THAT SHE PLAYS IS A RATHER SUBMISSIVE WIFE TO HER HUSBAND TORVALD (DOMINIC ROWAN), WHO SIMPLY ADORES HER.

HOWEVER THE MOST STRIKING THING ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION HAS TO BE THE SET. THIS WAS AMAZINGLY DESIGNED BY IAN MCNEIL. THE WHOLE THREE HOUR LONG PLAY TAKES PLACE IN A DOLL'S HOUSE THAT INCREDIBLY REVOLVES, ALLOWING US TO SEE INTO EVERY ROOM IN THE HOUSE. IN ADDITION THERE IS SPACE AROUND THIS REVOLVING SET, ALLOWING THE ACTORS TO OCCASIONALLY STEP OUTSIDE OF THE HOUSE AND HAVE THEIR OWN SPACE .

THE PLOT ITSELF IS ALSO VERY CAPTIVATING WITH THERE BEING LOTS OF PLOT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TWISTS. THIS CREATED A VERY TENSE ATMOSPHERE FOR US AS THE AUDIENCE; ENGAGING US FURTHER INTO THE PLAY. HENCE THIS PRODUCTION IS VERY INSPIRATIONAL IN THE WAY SIMON STEPHENS' TEXT IS VERY QUICK AND LIVELY; MAKING IBSEN'S ORIGINAL WORK STILL ENCHANTING FOR A MODERN AUDIENCE.

RAQUEL CHAMBERS

STEPHANIE PEGASIOU



Is it
really **NOT**
all about
heroes
in
PROPAGANDA?

Not About Heroes WAS PERFORMED BY DIPPERMOUTH IN FEBRUARY IN CROYDON. DIPPERMOUTH ARE A YOUNG COMPANY OF GRADUATES WHOSE MAIN AIM IS TO MAKE THEATRE 'ACCESSIBLE TO ALL'. HENCE THEIR RECENT PRODUCTION OF **Not About Heroes** OPENING NIGHT WAS FREE AND PERFECTLY PERFORMED IN MATTHEW'S YARD. THIS WAS SAID "TO ALLOW US AS A COMPANY TO PERFORM AND GET FEEDBACK. WE KNOW THIS PRODUCTION IS NOT YET READY FOR A PAYING AUDIENCE, BUT IT SOON WILL BE AND SO WE HAVE A POST SHOW TALK IN WHICH WE WANT TO HEAR ALL YOUR COMMENTS.' THE IDEA OF THEATRE NEEDING TO BE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL, ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE (WHICH MATTHEW'S YARD SEEMS TO ATTRACT), IS THOUGHT TO CURRENTLY BE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. A DRAMA STUDENT FROM OLD PALACE SCHOOL COMMENTED: "THEATRE IS PART OF THE GREATER ARTS INDUSTRY AND ALLOWS US TO EXPERIENCE A DIFFERENT CULTURE."

Not About Heroes BY STEPHEN MACDONALD WAS A PLAY BASED ON A TRUE STORY EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMOUS WORLD WAR I POETS; SIEGFRIED SASSOON AND WILFRED OWEN. THE SPACE WAS INTIMATE WITH THE ACTORS BEING VERY CLOSE TO THE AUDIENCE ON A RAISED PLATFORM. THIS ADDED TO THE INTENSE MOMENTS. THE SET WAS SIMPLISTIC YET ENGAGING WITH A BACKDROP OF A COLLAGE OF LETTERS AND ENVELOPES SYMBOLISING THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE TWO FRIENDS. THIS WAS ALSO MADE OBVIOUS TO THE AUDIENCE WITH THE ACTORS SPLITTING THE STAGE TO CONVEY THEY WERE IN SEPARATE LOCATIONS. THIS KEPT THE AUDIENCES' FOCUS THROUGHOUT.

THE POST SHOW DISCUSSION WAS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO ASK QUESTIONS TO THE DIRECTOR AND ACTORS. THE QUESTIONS INQUIRED ABOUT THE PLAY ITSELF AS WELL AS MORE PERSONAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LIVES OF THE ACTORS AND DIRECTOR. WHEN ASKED THE QUESTION REGARDING THE ACTORS TAKING ON 'REAL LIFE PEOPLE AS CHARACTERS', THE ACTORS RESPONDED '(CHUCKLING) IT WAS RATHER DAUNTING INITIALLY BUT IT SEEMED ALMOST EASIER TO PLAY THIS SORT OF ROLE AS YOU CAN ACTUALLY BASE YOUR CHARACTER ON SOMEONE RATHER THAN INVENTING THEIR CHARACTERISTICS.'

IT WAS INTERESTING TO LEARN THAT DIPPERMOUTH ARE TAKING THIS PRODUCTION TO ANOTHER LOCATION IN LONDON. PERHAPS YOU WILL HAVE THE CHANCE TO SEE IT.

**Who
is OUT
AJAW?**



ON THE 14TH OF NOVEMBER 2013, I WENT TO SEE **THE AJAX** AT SOUTHWARK PLAYHOUSE IN LONDON.

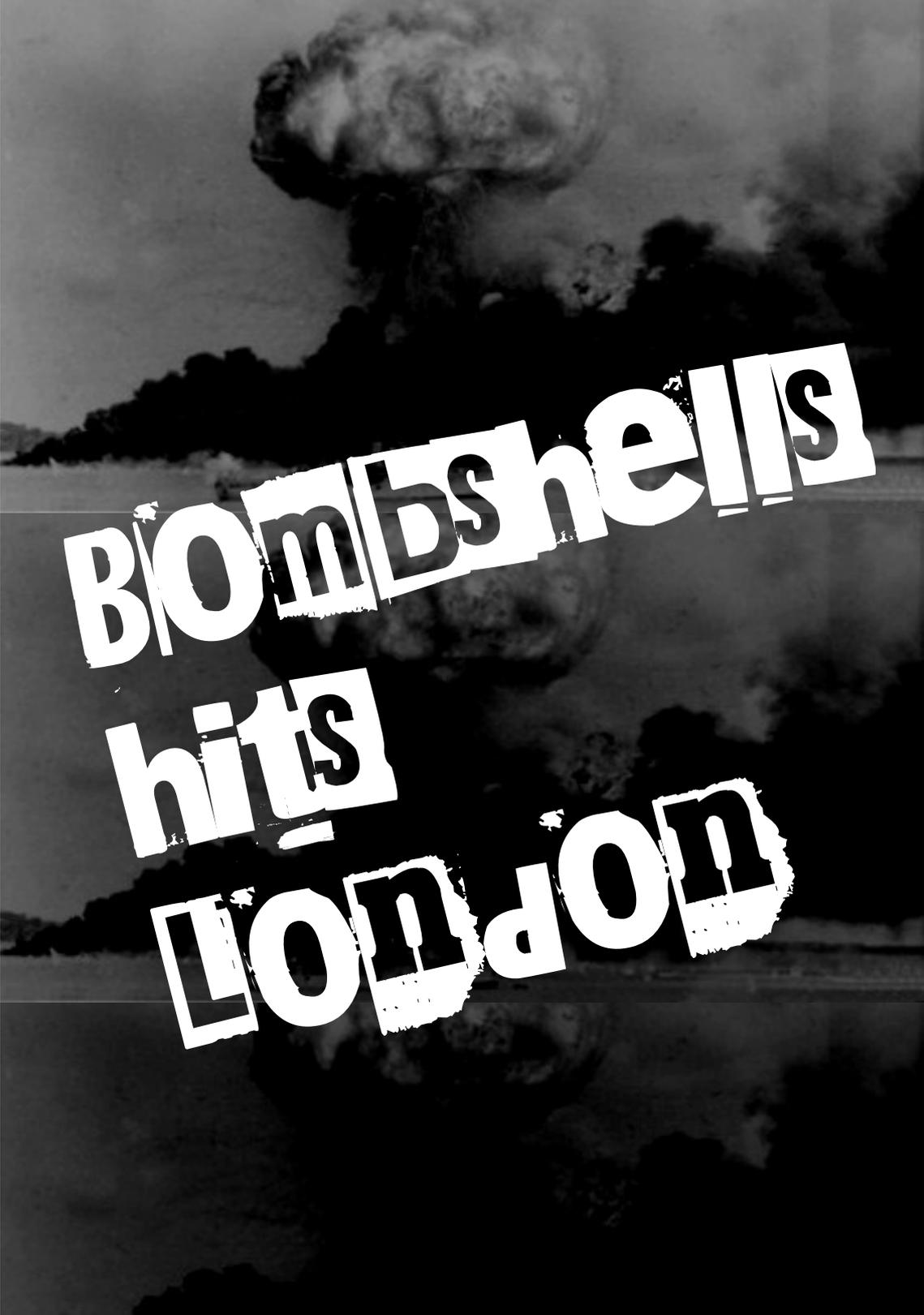
IT IS ABOUT THE PROTAGONIST, AJAX (PLAYED BY JOE DIXON) WHO IS IN THE MILITARY. IN THIS MODERNISED VERSION, THE CHARACTER AJAX SUFFERS FROM MENTAL PROBLEMS. THIS IS DRIVEN BY THE GODDESS ATHENA (PLAYED BY GEMMA CHAN); WHO MANIPULATES HIS MIND AND BRINGS BACK OLD MEMORIES. THE PLOT FOCUSES ON AJAX'S STRUGGLES AND HOW HE TRIES TO COPE WITH HIS MENTAL PROBLEMS AND THE EFFECT IT HAS ON THE PEOPLE AROUND HIM. AS THIS IS A TRAGEDY, IT IS INEVITABLE THAT AJAX DOES NOT HAVE A HAPPY ENDING!

THE PLAY LEFT AN OUTSTANDING OVERALL IMPRESSION ON THE AUDIENCE. THE COSTUMES AND PROPS WERE VERY REALISTIC. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS EFFECTIVELY CREATED BY THE USE OF LIGHTING THAT VARIED IN INTENSITY AND BRIGHTNESS. IN ADDITION THE FLOOR WAS COVERED IN A LAYER OF SAND. THIS GAVE US A SENSE OF BEING IN A REAL CAMP. THE ACTING WAS ALSO VERY CONVINCING; WITH EACH ACTOR EMBODYING THEIR ROLE. ONE OF MY FAVOURITE ROLES WAS THE SON OF AJAX WHO DID NOT HAVE ANY LINES TO SPEAK. THROUGH HIS BODY LANGUAGE HE CONVINCINGLY SHOWED THE INNOCENCE OF A YOUNG BOY WHO WAS CONFUSED ABOUT WHAT WAS HAPPENING.

ANOTHER ASPECT OF THIS PLAY THAT I THOUGHT WAS INNOVATIVE WAS WERTENBAKER'S OVERALL ADAPTATION TO SOPHOCLES' ORIGINAL TEXT. THE PLOT WAS MODERNISED AND INCLUDED A CELEBRATORY DANCE TO THE SONG "CAN'T HOLD US" BY MACKLEMORE AND RYAN LEWIS. I FELT THIS MODERNISATION HELPED ME TO UNDERSTAND THE PLOT MORE AND BE ABLE TO CONNECT TO THE CHARACTERS.

I WOULD HIGHLY RECOMMEND GOING TO SEE **THE AJAX** AS IT POWERFULLY PORTRAYED THE MESSAGE OF RESPECT AND WAS A RELATABLE PIECE OF THEATRE.

SIMRAN BHARJ



Bombshells CERTAINLY HIT LONDON'S JERMYN STREET THEATRE BY STORM! THE PHENOMENAL ONE WOMAN SHOW WRITTEN BY JOANNA MURRAY SMITH AND STARRING THE UP AND COMING ELLIE NUNN WAS EXCITING AND ENTERTAINING.

THE PRODUCTION WAS PUT ON BY LOCAL THEATRE COMPANY DIPPERMOUTH.

IT PRESENTED THE AUDIENCE WITH A RANGE OF MONOLOGUES FROM WOMEN VERGING ON THE THOUGHT PROVOKING SADNESS OF BEING A SINGLE MOTHER TO TEENAGE ANGST.

THE COSTUME CHANGES BETWEEN EACH CHARACTER WERE EXPLICIT TO THE AUDIENCE IN THE WAY NUNN DISAPPEARED BEHIND A TRANSLUCENT CURTAIN WITH A DRESSING TABLE AND CLOTHING RAIL BEHIND IT. THIS ILLUSTRATED THE CHANGE ACTORS UNDERGO WHEN BECOMING A CHARACTER AND THE COMPLEXITY OF THE SKILLS INVOLVED IN ACTING. THERE WAS UPLIFTING MUSIC (OF A JAZZ STYLE) PLAYED WHILST WE WATCHED THE ACTOR TRANSFORM FROM ONE CHARACTER TO ANOTHER. THIS WAS VERY INFORMAL AND COMICAL; INCLUDING WHEN THERE WAS A TECHNICAL HITCH AND THE MUSIC DID NOT PLAY! NUNN CARRIED ON AS A TRUE PROFESSIONAL AND EVEN MADE A LIGHT JOKE OF THIS; ENCOURAGING US TO "BE THE MUSIC".

ALTHOUGH I WAS INITIALLY APPREHENSIVE ABOUT SEEING THIS SHOW, THIS PRODUCTION WAS IMPRESSIVE WITH THE USE OF MINIMALISTIC, MULTI-FUNCTIONING SETS AND SOME OF THE QUICKEST ONSTAGE CHANGES I HAVE EVER SEEN! ACTOR ELLIE NUNN WAS BRILLIANTLY CONVINCING IN EVERY ROLE SHE PLAYED. I ALONG WITH THE OTHER STUDENTS FOUND IT HUGELY INSPIRATIONAL AND USEFUL IN RELATION TO OUR A-LEVEL WORK.

CAMILLE KOOSYIAL



ELOISE SHEFFIELD

**The
expertise
of**

Emma Rice

KNEEHIGH'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, **Emma Rice** GAVE A MASTERCLASS IN DEVISING AND THE COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AT THEATRE ROYAL HAYMARKET. AS A-LEVEL DRAMA STUDENTS ARE CREATING A DEVISED PIECE OF THEATRE THIS MASTERCLASS SEEMED IDEAL FOR US.

ON ARRIVAL, THERE WAS A LONG QUEUE OF PEOPLE WAITING TO GO INTO THE THEATRE. THERE WAS A REAL MIX OF AGES, BUT CERTAINLY MOST WERE DRAMA STUDENTS.

ONCE SEATED IN THE THEATRE **Emma Rice** STEPPED ONTO THE STAGE. SHE WAS A VERY LIVELY PERSON WHO CERTAINLY WAS KEEN TO GET US ALL WARMED UP (EVEN IF THE MASTERCLASS DID NOT ACTUALLY INVOLVE MUCH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY). WE COLLECTIVELY WARMED UP OUR BODIES WITH GENTLY STRETCHES, OUR VOICES WITH A SING SONG TOGETHER (AND IN THE ROUND); AND WERE THEN READY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MASTERCLASS. IT WAS A VERY PLAYFUL MASTERCLASS WITH RICE FIRSTLY BEGINNING BY WANTING TO GET TO KNOW US. SHE INVITED SOME MEMBERS ONTO THE STAGE WITH THEIR BAGS. SHE THEN GOT THEM TO SLOWLY EMPTY THEIR BAGS. SHE THEN ANALYSED THE WAY THEY DISPLAYED THEIR THINGS AND THE OBJECTS IN THEIR BAGS (INCLUDING A LITTLE DINOSAUR MODEL). THIS WAS TO ILLUSTRATE THE IMPORTANCE OF ACTORS KNOWING EACH OTHER WELL; AS WELL AS HIGHLIGHTING HOW SHE LIKES HER ACTORS TO PLAY THE OPPOSITES TO THEMSELVES. FOR EXAMPLE IF SOMEONE HAD LOTS OF BOOKS IN THEIR NEATLY, ORGANISED BAG, SHE WOULD WANT THEM TO BE A VERY MESSY CHARACTER. I THINK THIS NOTION IS PERFECT FOR CHALLENGING ACTORS.

ONE OF THE MOST HELPFUL PARTS OF THE MASTERCLASS WAS WHEN SHE PICKED A WELL KNOWN STORY (LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD) AND GOT US TO SELECT A CHARACTER (THE WOLF). WE THEN HAD TO DESCRIBE THAT CHARACTER UNTIL THERE WAS LITERALLY NOTHING ELSE TO BE SAID. THIS WAS A TECHNIQUE WE TOOK AWAY WITH US AND USED IN OUR A-LEVEL PIECE.

FOLLOWING THE MASTERCLASS, THERE WAS A Q & A. ONE QUESTION THAT PARTICULARLY CAUGHT MY ATTENTION WAS ONE ABOUT DEVISING FROM A STIMULUS WITH A GROUP OF PEOPLE. SHE SAID THIS WAS NEAR 'IMPOSSIBLE', LEAVING US A-LEVEL DRAMA STUDENTS WHO HAD THIS TASK, FEELING RATHER DEFLATED.

YET WE LEFT FOCUSING ON THE POSITIVES FROM THIS MASTERCLASS WHICH REALLY HIGHLIGHTED HOW RICE IS AN EXPERT ON THE COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION.



Shadowland WAS STUNNING AND EXUBERATING. I DECIDED TO ATTEND THIS SHOW AS I HAD THE IDEA OF MY GOLD ARTS AWARD CHALLENGE SECTION TO BE BASED ON THE BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT WINNER'S EXTRACTION. IT WAS AMAZING TO SEE THE PERFORMANCE FIRST HAND AS IT GAVE ME A REAL INSIGHT INTO HOW THE SHADOWS ARE CREATED ALLOWING ME TO GATHER SOME IDEAS ON HOW I SHALL PRODUCE MY PERFORMANCE.

I THINK WE WERE ALL FLABBERGASTED AT HOW EXQUISITELY AND WELL PERFORMED ALL THE PERFORMERS WERE. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY CLEAR IN THE DANCERS' LIFTS WHICH WERE PERFORMED WITH SUCH EASE AND GRACE. THE MOST ASTONISHING THING WAS THAT MOST OF THE PROPS WERE CREATED FROM THE DANCERS BODIES. WHO KNEW SHADOWS OF HUMAN ATTRIBUTES COULD LOOK LIKE FOR EXAMPLE A DOG OR A PALM TREE!

I AM NOW ABLE TO DEVELOP THINGS INTO MY PERFORMANCE AS I WILL BE USING A CONTEMPORARY STYLE TO PORTRAY A LYRICAL MOVEMENT WHICH IS NARRATIVE.

OVERALL IT WAS ONE OF THE BEST PERFORMANCES I HAVE EVER SEEN AND I SHALL REMEMBER IT FOR A LONG TIME.

JESSICA CROSS



**Become a
Reviewee**