



dialogue

The newsletter of London Drama

Two Primary Reviews

There are currently two prestigious reviews of the Primary Curriculum going on at the moment: The Cambridge Primary Review initiated by the University of Cambridge in 2006 and led by Professor Robin Alexander; and the Government's Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum led by Sir Jim Rose. Each report is due to be published this year.



for further learning at the secondary stage' rather than by their intrinsic value."

The Cambridge report identifies areas of convergence with the interim Rose report (like the need to regroup the primary curriculum into areas of study rather than traditional subjects)

Is there a difference between the two reports, and if so, what is it? According to the authors of the Cambridge Review, the answer is one of remit and focus:

"...there is a sense in which the very focused remit of Rose, and the number of matters which are apparently to be taken as given, may encourage the view that the two enquiries are incompatible - though we hope not. For while the Cambridge Primary Review asks what children should learn and of what the curriculum should be constituted, with the Rose Review the government itself answers that question - reading, writing, numeracy, science, ICT, a modern foreign language and 'personal development' - and invites respondents to consider only how these might more effectively be planned and taught. The Secretary of State's remit letter does mention other curriculum areas ('the creative arts, the humanities, PE and sport'), but these are justified 'as preparation

but also important differences which reflect the reviews' contrasting remits, scope, evidence and degrees of independence. The Cambridge review is rather less sanguine about the problems of the existing primary curriculum, and does not exempt current policies from comment. It asks whether the Rose review is more about curriculum rearrangement than reform, with educational aims added after the event rather than argued from first principles. It expresses concern that QCA's detailed work on the programmes of study for Rose's six 'areas of learning' has pre-empted a consultation process which was until recently (28 Feb) still open and to which people were still contributing in good faith. Nevertheless, the Cambridge report expresses the hope that the two reviews can be seen as complementary.

Both reports are available from London Drama as PDF files.

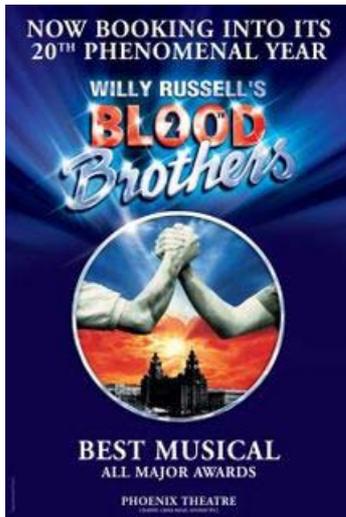
Chris Lawrence

for your diary

LONDON DRAMA Courses & Workshops

- ★ Wed 4 Mar; 7-9pm
Voices in the Park (Primary)
at Central School
- * * *
- ★ Wed 11 Mar; 6.30-8.30pm
Drama with EAL Students
at Central School
- * * *
- ★ Sat 14 Mar; 10-1.15pm
Half Day Workshop:
Hoipolloi & WebPlay
at Unicorn Theatre
- * * *
- ★ Thurs 19 Mar; 6.30-8.30pm
Drama & SEN students (KS1/2)
at Bloomsbury Theatre
- * * *
- ★ Wed 25 Mar; 6.30-8.30pm
Voice Workshop
at Central School
- * * *
- ★ Fri 27 Mar; 9.30-3.30pm
Full Day Workshop:
RSC & Shakespeare
at St Mary's College
- * * *
- ★ Sat 28 Mar; 10-3.30pm
Full Day Workshop:
Oily Cart
at Oval House

London Drama Theatre Review and News



WILLY RUSSELL'S Blood Brothers is one of the longest running and best-loved musicals in the West End, the current run at the Phoenix Theatre having started two decades ago in 1988.

Blood Brothers has enticed and entertained for years, and as a result never fails to deliver. A Wednesday night performance could draw images of emptiness and lonely claps, yet this could have easily been a Saturday night sell out. The audience combines all ages and all are taken on a journey regardless of background or culture, a relationship will be formed with the twin you never had.

Set in Liverpool, the performance follows twins separated at birth but whose paths cross in later life.

Now commonly regarded as one of the all time great British musicals, *Blood Brothers* deals with two of the most pressing social issues in modern times- inequality and unemployment. Shown here through the time of the miners

strikes, but more than easily transferred to issues post 1980's Britain.

The production itself could be described as being dynamic in its delivery, the cast were engaging through their energy, which accompanied the interesting use of set, costume and intriguing use of theatrical conventions. The lead characters, 'Eddie' and 'Micky', were thoughtfully and enthusiastically portrayed, through the use of childhood games, education and the importance of family connections. The development of two contrasting, yet similar characters provides food for thought for any person, including those who are at a crucial stage in their life, school children. The relationship between the twins was extended to characters of a family and friend nature, there was a running theme through the plot and characters of contrast, in life, relationship and ultimately, fate.

This was viewed with an 'educational head'; there is an automatic tendency to dwell on themes and issues that have been related to, but what about those that will need to be addressed? The idea of choice and possible pathways will be relevant to a school audience, so how does this provide scope for potential self-relation?

James Waight



Willy Russell

News

RAINBOW OF DESIRES WEEK
30 Mar-3 Apr - Jerwood Space SE1

Led by Augusto Boal, Julian Boal & Adrian Jackson and hosted by Cardboard Citizens the next training week in *Theatre of the Oppressed* takes place at the Jerwood Space SE1 OLN from 30 March to 3 April.

'Through this intensive week, Augusto will introduce the work he has subtitled *theatre and therapy* by means of anecdote, games and exercises. As the group develops the trust and confidence to share stories, the work will progress from simple image work to increasingly complex means of uncovering and confronting *the cops in the head*.' More details at: www.cardboardcitizens.org.uk

A NIGHT LESS ORDINARY

A Night Less Ordinary, launched on 16 February, is Arts Council England's new initiative that will give away over 258,000 free theatre tickets to Londoners under 26 years old.

With more than 30 venues in London offering tickets as part of the scheme over the next two years, there will be a variety of top performances across the capital to inspire, excite and entertain and develop new young audiences.

A Night Less Ordinary is supported by £2.5 million additional funding to the Arts Council's core grant from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

To search for participating venues and book free tickets go to the dedicated web site at: www.anightlessordinary.org.uk

Theatre Review - *The Wizard of Oz*



The theatre version of this Hollywood classic opened at London's Southbank Centre on 23rd July 2008 for a limited 6 week run and received rather lukewarm reviews by various theatre critics. This new stage version of the classic tale, by Artistic Director Jude Kelly, retained all the original features of the film including its magnificent music score and fantastic characters however, one vital ingredient that this play lacked was the magic of the 1939, Victor Fleming film.

The production used a large screen to depict the more technically challenging aspects of the story; for example, it was used to represent the "twister" and the iconic view of the Emerald City. Childlike drawings were used to show Moira Gulch, morphing into the Wicked Witch of the West during the "twister" and Dorothy's house "falling" into Oz. Although the use of these drawings was fun and inventive and indicated to the adult members of the audience that the play was not taking itself too seriously, I must admit it was rather disappointing, especially as the cast turned to look at a rather unimpressive view of the Emerald City. It rather detracted from the excitement that the audience should feel at this point in the story, as at last our intrepid travellers are finally

about to meet "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz".

A revolving, circular conveyor belt was used around the central acting space to create movement and transitions throughout scenes and most commonly as the Yellow Brick Road. Although simplistic, this was an effective method of transition between scenes, which would not have confused younger audience members.



Sian Brooke as Dorothy & Bobby as Toto

The central characters of the play were performed extremely well by a fairly unknown cast. Oddly, the star of the show was Bobby, the real life dog, playing Dorothy's dog Toto. The Director took a great risk casting a real life dog however that risk most certainly paid off as Bobby received rapturous applause during the curtain call. Gary Wilmot performs a loveable, Cowardly Lion and Adam Cooper's Tin Man is full of energy and brought another modern twist to the show through his robotic dancing that younger audience members seemed to love. Although Sian Brooke performed very well as Dorothy, as an

audience member it was very difficult not to compare her to the legendary Judy Garland, which of course is an insurmountable task.

The highlight of the show for me was the cast's amazing rendition of *Jolly Old Land of Oz*, which involved a highly intricate and energetic dance routine with most cast members joining in. It bore some resemblance to the West End version of Mary Poppins' *Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious*; however the rest of the songs performed did not quite reach this high standard.

The biggest issue for me and the rest of the audience members was the length of the play which totalled just over 3 hours in length; with the play aimed at audience members aged 7 years and upwards I noticed the auditorium getting slightly restless in the final few scenes. Just as the *Wizard of Oz* failed to live up to expectations and turned out to be nothing more than an elderly man behind a curtain, this version at the Southbank Centre failed to sparkle as brightly as Dorothy's ruby red slippers.

Holly Hawks





London Drama is the Professional Subject Association of Teachers of Drama and Theatre in London. We are a charity and we are run by teachers for teachers:

- We organise INSET Evening Courses in drama/theatre in educational contexts
- We organise Full Day Workshops/INSET
- We arrange INSET for whole LEAs in London
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Workshop with Hoipolloi

in partnership with WebPlay

Saturday 14th March 2009

10am-1.15pm at The Unicorn Theatre

Nearest Tube: London Bridge

Members: £50; Student Members: £30

To book: contact londondrama1@gmail.com or T/F: 020 7388 6555

***Bloomsbury Theatre**, 15 Gordon Street WC1H 0AH (Rebecca Reed)
12-14 Mar: *Evolution* with UCLU Stage Crew

***Blue Elephant Theatre**, 59A Bethwin Road, SE5 0XT 7701 0100 (Jas Cullingford)
Until 14 Mar: *The Soldier With No Name* by the Winged Cranes

***Courtyard**, Bowling Green Walk, 40 Pitfield St. N1 6EU: 7251 6018 (June Abbot)
2-29 Mar: *East - Elegy for the East and its Energetic Waste* by Steven Berkoff; 8pm

***Fandango Th Co**, 42 Frankham House, Frankham St, SE8 4RL: 8692 1220 (Jamie Honeybourne)

***GLYPT**, No 1 St, Royal Arsenal, Woolwich SE18 6ST: 8854 1316
Touring Spring: *Mud City* by Deborah Ellis

***Half Moon YPT**, 43 White Horse Road, E1 0ND: 7265 8138 (Amy Jones)
Touring: *Locked In* by Fin Kennedy
Full youth theatre prog.

***Hampstead Theatre**, 98 Avenue Rd, NW3 3EX: 7449 4166 (Andrew Given)
5 Mar-4 Apr: *Berlin Hanover Express* by Ian Kennedy Martin
plus youth theatre w/shops

***London Bubble Th Co**, 5 Elephant Lane, SE16 4JD: 7237 4434
New participatory theatre project starting now

Lyric Theatre, King Street, Hammersmith W6 0QL: 8741 0824 (Cookie Rameder)
Until 4 Mar: *Spring Awakening* by Frank Wedekind

National Theatre, South Bank, London SE1: 7452 3739 (Sherry Neyhus) INSET/CPD
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk

Orange Tree Theatre, Clarence Rd, Richmond TW9 2SA: 8940 3633 (Sam Walters)
Until 21 Mar: *Greenwash* by David Lewis

***Oval House Theatre**, 52-54 Kennington Oval, SE11 5SW: 7582 6279 (Stella Barnes)
12-14 Mar: *Chodzenie - Siberia* with 30 Bird

Polka Theatre, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon SW19 1SB: 8543 4888 (Annie Wood)
Until 9 May: *The Jolly Postman* by Janet & Allan Ahlberg (4-7yrs)

***Pop-Up Theatre**, 27A Brewery Rd N7 9PU: 7609 3339 (Jo Johnson)
Campaign at www.pop-up.net

***Putney Arts Theatre**, Ravenna Rd SW15 6AW: 8788 6943 (Marie Thackwell)
10-14 Mar: *The Taming of the Shrew* by William Shakespeare
28 Apr-2 May: *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare

***Redbridge Drama Centre**, Churchfields, E18 2RB: 8504 5451 (Keith Homer) Children's Theatre/Drama Workshops; Teachers' INSET and theatre programme

***Richmond Theatre**, The Green, Richmond TW9 1QJ: 8929 9360 (Morrigan Mullen)
9-14 Mar: *God of Carnage* by Yasmina Reza
19-28 Jan: *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare (RSC)

***Shakespeare's Globe**, New Globe Walk, London SE1 9DT: 7902 1432 (Fiona Banks)

Full Resources and INSET on Shakespeare's Plays

***Theatre Centre**, Shoreditch Town Hall, Old St, EC1V 9LT: 7729 3066 (Michael Judge)
Until 29 Mar: *Under The Bed* by Brendan Murray (4-7yrs)
17 Sep-21 Nov: *Rigged* by Ashmeed Sohoye (14+)

***Trestle Theatre Co**, Trestle Arts Base, Russet Drive, St Albans AL4 0JQ: 01727 850 950 (Mark Londesborough)
Touring 5 Mar-1 Apr: *Lola* by Trestle

***Tricycle**, 269 Kilburn High Rd, NW6 7JR: 7328 1000
10-14 Apr: *Deep Cut* by Philip Ralph

***Unicorn Arts Theatre**, 147 Tooley St, SE1 2HZ: 7645 0500 (Cath Greenwood)
10-13 Mar: *My Uncle Arly* with HoiPolloi Th Co (8+)
8 May-7 Jun: *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare (10+)

***WebPlay**, 1st Floor, Downstream Building, 1 London Bridge SE1 9BG: 7022 1836 (Sydney Thornbury)
My Uncle Arly with HoiPolloi and Tiebreak Th. Cos.