



# Playbox Theatre

## Members' Newsletter

August 2024

### SUMMER HOLIDAY PROJECTS



We have been busy this summer at The Dream Factory, running an array of marvellous Holiday Project-we reflect on some of the highlights below.

For two weeks, director Hannah Hampson had a talented cohort picking-pockets and revolting, with her musical courses 'Oliver!' and 'Les Misérables'- finishing the weeks of hard work with two grand showcases. Senior Assistant Jennie was beaming with pride- "It was wonderful to see the children progress in confidence throughout the two weeks and perform to such a high standard. I loved being part of the projects and watching the children form strong bonds of friendship".

Along with that musical magnificence, we travelled to many faraway lands with our members this summer, including the wacky world of Wonderland (led by director Sammie Horton), The Magic Faraway Tree and the World of Roahl Dahl (both led by actor Tom Briggs). Meanwhile, some of our senior members had guidance on how to approach the Professional world of the Arts with director Alfie Jones, who took members through various techniques utilised in drama schools and beyond. As well as this, our younger team investigated the life and work of William Shakespeare (led by Mary King) and learned impressive circus skills from Emily Quash and Juliet Vankay during our 'Angelo' project.

We ended the summer with the spectacular 'Starry Nights Light' (following our usual Starry Nights bonanza in the Spring). Featuring show tunes to Shakespeare, these members displayed bundles of creativity and talent. Thankyou so much to anyone who joined us for Holiday Projects this summer, we hope you had as much fun as we did. If you missed out on our summer fun or wish for more imaginative projects, not to worry, as our Autumn season Holiday Projects are all up on our website for you to sign up for!

Next edition due October 2024

If you have news to share, please email - [info@playboxtheatre.com](mailto:info@playboxtheatre.com)



### WELCOME

*Hello! My name is Mery and I'm so excited to be guest editing the upcoming Playbox newsletters and sharing all the fantastic events we have coming up, whilst summarising the fun-packed August that we had here at The Dream Factory and beyond! Currently, I am in my Gap Year, hoping (in the future) to work in Theatrical Directing to some capacity- but in the meantime I will be spending this final year as a Playbox Member Senior assisting, running Magic Carpet and performing in upcoming productions (having been a member for over 10 years). In this summer edition, we will be recapping our numerous Holiday Projects (as well as previewing our upcoming Autumn projects); taking a sneak peak into rehearsals for our spooky October musical, 'The Addams Family' and our upcoming Christmas production, 'Alice Through the Looking-glass' . We also hear how our members and Alumni have tackled The Edinburgh Fringe Festival this summer . In other Alumni news, we also hear from the wonderful Emma Bentley on her action-packed time on the road with Giffords Circus. So many brilliant things are happening at Playbox this season, we hope you all had a creative summer and look forward to seeing you in the Autumn season!*



Mery Sutherland

## COMING UP....



Join the Sanderson sisters in their meddlesome plans in our 'Hocus Pocus' holiday project (28th-29th October) or bring your cauldrons along to our 'Winnie the Witch and Friends' (30th October). If you're feeling gravely groovy make sure to sign up for both our Pumpkin and Werewolf parties (both on the 31st)! Or if you're more in the mood for a Musical Mash-up sign up for our Musical project (31st October-1st November).

We would love you to join us this Halloween season, so head over to our website to see more!

<https://www.playboxtheatre.com/holiday-projects/>

## ADDAM'S FAMILY REHEARSALS

Dust off your cleavers and coffins because this August we continued the rehearsals for our upcoming musical 'The Addams Family' (running from 10th-13th of October). Rehearsals were full of energy and dedication as director Juliet Vankay assigned each member of the cast an individual persona (ranging from fictional scarers to real life gruesome murderers). The cast were also challenged by choreographer Hannah Hampson, who put them to the test teaching beautifully intricate dance numbers whilst they simultaneously jumped through the vocal hurdles of Rich Norris' musical direction. Attempting to stay true to their character, members of the cast found themselves pondering things that had never occurred to them, such as- "How would a possessed twelve-year-old do the twist?". The whole week proved to be tonnes of fun and helped create the foundations for what promises to be a truly wonderful and 'ghastly' production.

<https://www.playboxtheatre.com/events/the-addams-family/>



## LOOKING-GLASS REHEARSALS

It's never too early to start the festivities at The Dream Factory as this month marked the start of our Christmas production 'Alice Through The Looking Glass' (written by Toby Quash and the Blank-Shift Writers). The week included the exploration of larger than life characters with the cast sweating buckets, dedicated to forming a magical show. As the cast includes lots of senior members, for many of us it will sadly be our last Christmas show here at Playbox, so it promises to be a fabulous final hurrah!

You can now book your tickets for this Christmas on our website!

<https://www.playboxtheatre.com/events/alice-through-the-looking-glass/>



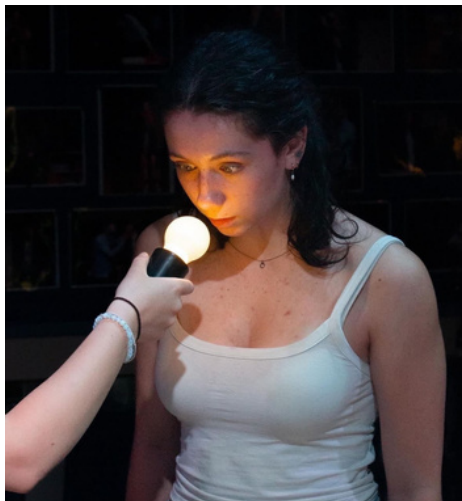
## ALUMNI NEWS- EMMA BENTLEY



Photo Credit: benedict campbell

For the last few months, wonderful Playbox Alumna Emma Bentley has been on tour with the magical Giffords Circus! Below she tells us all about her experience on the road. "Ever since seeing "Caravan" in 2007 I've wanted to be a part of Giffords Circus. I got lucky and was a late addition to the Front of House team after they had a drop out on this year's show, 'Avalon'. Touring life has suited me to a tee, being outdoors in beautiful landscapes, spending time with like-minded creatives, playing games and making each other laugh. It's been physically challenging at times and I've definitely gained some muscle mass, but we are well fed (due to leftovers from our resident Circus Sauce Restaurant) and there's time for rest when your bed is 1 minute away from the tent! I hope to be back in some form next year for the 25th anniversary, which is sure to be pretty special. For anyone reading this who is interested I would definitely recommend running away with the circus! You can get in touch with me via insta @bents.bentley for any more info." Emma has also been keeping a blog whilst in the Big Top, make sure to give it a read by following the link: <https://talesfromthecircus.substack.com/> - Thankyou Emma and we send bundles of Playbox love and luck for the upcoming shows!

## MEMBERS AT THE FRINGE



A few of our members ventured off to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this summer, performing the show 'Mothello' with King Edward VI Shakespeare's School. The show was an amalgamation of Shakespearean skits providing 'refreshing spins on some of the Bard's classic works' (including rapping and live music). Member Ella Anderton (pictured) said 'It was a great week of not only performing but also experiencing so many different types of theatre, like circus, improv and musicals!'

The company were at the festival from the 18th August - 25th August and received a very positive reception, with audience describing the show as 'A cleverly devised show that's extremely funny'.

We are very proud of our imaginative members who performed at the Fringe this year and hope they had a wonderful time!

## ALUMNI AT THE FRINGE



As well as our current members, our Alumni also had a marvellous time in Edinburgh. One of many being the brilliant Evanthe Gee, who co-wrote and directed her "first ever full-length play", 'The Bachelor Girls'. The play was about "four queer women during World War II" and, like 'Mothello', was extremely well received by audiences. Evanthe says "The Nerd Party even said we were 'unquestionably one of the standout shows of this year's Fringe!'"

Evanthe hopes to go to the Fringe again and we are on the edge of our seats waiting to hear about her future endeavours.

**Thankyou so much for reading our August edition,  
See you again next time!**

