

LEATTS 2014

This summer I was blessed to be given the opportunity to go to the summer school thanks to the Pirates! It was a fabulous week full of wonderful people, lots of singing around the bar (rain or shine!) sunny walks in the forest, and a lot of learning and connecting with others.



Our group (minus me as I was taking the picture!)



Our fearless leaders (and John and Mad!)

Since I had already worked with Peta Lily before and I wanted to do some work on developing characters physically, I joined her theme. We worked to embody characters we had chosen physically. This course was so interesting and dynamic. She is a fantastic teacher, a wonderfully creative and positive woman who brings out the best in her students and helps people feel brave enough to try new things. It was also a great group to work with full of respect and encouragement. I worked on Queen Elizabeth from Mary Stuart as I have been working to broaden my range from just prostitutes and ditzy nuns ☺ to play stronger, more imposing characters. I can honestly say that it helped me a great deal.

My skill was directing with Janice Dunn. Having never directed a show before, I felt a bit underqualified at first, but I found myself absolutely loving every moment of the course. I read 3 full plays just because she said she liked them (and they were good!) and came out of there full of new tools to use whenever I get the chance to try it out. In our shares we practiced auditioning people the first time and in the second share we tried out a few techniques in a small group. I got to team up with none other than Julie Fraser herself and my old babysitter Charlotte Coles.

Our student led project, like all the others, were war themed. Ours was a touching WW2 piece directed by Mad – she did a fantastic job but sadly, by the end of the week I was too ill to participate as one of the lead characters so she had to rearrange the cast for the shares. It was set literally in the forest near a stream, and the physical environment was perfect for portraying the feelings of isolation and desperation of the men stuck underground digging tunnels in order to find and destroy enemy tunnels as the war ends and they continue to lose lives, left for dead.



Peta Lily and her themes group



Janice Dunn and her skills group (minus me, photographer again!)



The picnic was held in Tuntange this year in a big park. It was a much needed time for chilling out and having fun.



Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity to learn and get to know so many other people who love all things thespian. I enjoyed every minute of it (when I wasn't sick in bed, but even that I enjoyed because I didn't have to take care of kids and could just rest, read and do homework!)

Tara Donnell