



INTRODUCTION

Drama Troupe is a Musical Theatre School for children and Young Adults. It is affiliated to St Martin's College. The main objectives of the school are those of encouraging and developing the enjoyment, abilities and confidence in the fields of drama and musical theatre.

The principal of the school is Lorraine Aquilina BEd. Hons, who founded the school the year 1999 together with Gillian Zammit who is the musical director. Today the school has close to 200 students ranging from 4 to 17 years. The students are taught by teachers qualified in their particular field and include Krista Paris ATCL Malcolm Galea TCL Performer's Cert, Francesca Aquilina ATCL (musical theatre) and Joe Gatt Associate Diploma music. Francis Ghersci, Christina Aquilina and Debbie Schembri have all passed their advanced exams and are currently in the process of sitting for their teacher's diploma.



Drama is OKAY

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school holds classes for children and adults from the age of 4 years. Students are divided according to age-group and according to experience. Classes include acting, mime, music and singing skills, dance and movement (according to the level). Optional voice classes on a one-to-one basis are held for students 9 years and above. Students are exposed to different play genres and dance and singing styles. Open classes give parents the opportunity to watch the students at work while assessments and newsletters provide regular information about activities and progress.

Students are given the opportunity to sit for Lamda examinations in Drama and or musical theatre. Voice students are also prepared for singing examinations.

Classes are held on Fridays and Saturdays in the dance, music and drama studios at Cheswick House School in Kappara and at St Martin's College in Swatar



a Dance Class

OPEN CLASSES FOR YOUNG ADULTS

These are held on Fridays at Chiswick house School between 6.00pm and 8.00pm. During this class students explore different texts, and combine this with projects and exercises designed to provide the technique required for the actor. Texts include serious realistic dramas, comedies, musical scripts and Shakespearean verse. Technique is taught through the exploration of simple every day tasks- pursuing an objective, encountering obstacles, active listening, responding to inner stimuli, generating an emotion, speaking a memorized text, substituting personal images and playing different characters. Sessions in vocal and dance technique are also held.





some of the adult students in the opera The Little Sweep

INDIVIDUAL VOICE TRAINING (10 years and above)

Individual voice training sessions may be arranged with our singing tutor Gillian Zammit. These sessions are organised by appointment with the singing tutor and include breathing, voice production, music theory and sight singing, articulation and general understanding and exploration of accomplished singing from pop to opera. Voice students may opt to sit for Trinity College London Exams in singing which are held in November and in May.



SUMMER CLUB

During the summer months, Drama Troupe runs intensive courses for students aged 4 and above. These courses run from mid-July to the first week of September. Students attend 3 OR 5 times a week and participate in various workshops which include stage-craft, make-up skills, circus skills, script writing and production skills other than the skills normally taught. Students attending the Monday and Friday sessions can take the video dance course, the slam poetry classes and the hip hop class. Intensive individual singing lessons are also an option. All students work towards an end of course production which is held at the end of the summer course.



A make-up session during summer Club

THE CHOIR AND THE COMPANY

The youth company was established in the year 2000 when under the musical direction of Gillian Zammit it performed Handel's 'The Young Messiah in Song and Dance,' Today, it has established itself among the main youth companies in Malta. Other productions have included 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,' at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, the operas 'Old Befana,' and 'The little Mermaid,' at St James Cavalier, Britten's 'Let's Make An Opera – The Little Sweep,' at the Manoel Theatre, Sondheim's 'Into the Woods,' at the Manoel Theatre, 'West Side Story,' also at the Manoel Theatre and Humperdinck's 'Hansel and Gretel,' at St James Cavalier.



A concert held at the British High Commission together with the Malta Opera Company

The choir has established excellent international contacts. It has collaborated with foreign choirs and directors. Such collaboration has included Jeremy Walker from the Westminster Boys Choir, a workshop and concert with the Ely Choir and recently collaboration with Napier University in the educational project 'Faraway Pictures,' and 'The Little Sweep.'

The Little Sweep, Included the participation of The Edinburgh String Quartet.



Gillian Zammit together with the younger members of Drama Troupe in 'The Little Sweep,' at the Manoel Theatre



Isabelle Warrington as the Witch and Jean Pierre Busuttill and Katherine Brown as the Baker and his wife.



One of the Dance numbers in 'West Side Story,' at the Manoel Theatre



Drama Troupe students as the children in the opera 'Hansel and Gretel.' This was done in collaboration with Napier University in Edinburgh. Direction was by Kenneth Dempster

The Drama Troupe Choir also performs in December when it carol sings in various locations. It has also performed during wedding masses and during concerts with a classical repertoire such as during Karl Orff's 'Carmina Burana,' at the Mediterranean Conference Centre and with a modern repertoire such as during the 'Tribute to Abba,' Concert at the MFCC in Naxxar.



Drama Troupe Uniform

This consists of a Drama Troupe T-shirt or Sweat-shirt (obtainable from Co-Ed on the B'kara by-pass) and black jazz pants or tracksuit trousers. Black cycling shorts may also be worn in summer. Jazz shoes in material or leather or jazz sneakers are also compulsory. (trousers and shoes may be obtained from the YADA dance shop or from any other dance wear shop). Adults (18 and over) may choose not to wear the T-shirt and the sweat-shirt. Black dance wear may be worn instead.

Scholarships and Prizes

The school annually awards prizes in the junior and senior sections for singing, acting and dancing. Prizes for effort are also awarded. Every year the most promising junior and senior students are also awarded a one year scholarship or a summer school scholarship. The 'Oreste Kirkop,' Music Award is given to the most promising singing students that year.

Lamda Examinations

Drama Troupe students have the opportunity of sitting for Lamda examinations in Singing, Drama or musical Theatre both on an individual and as a group. Examinations are conducted by a foreign examiner and are held in July. Successful students receive a certificate. A grade 6 is equivalent to an O Level while a Grade 8 is equivalent to an A Level.



THE CLASSES

BEGINNER AND INTRODUCTORY

These classes are specially designed for our youngest students. It is an excellent introduction for the preschooler to the world of imagination, creative communication and dramatic play with others his or her own age. These classes are perfect for the child who loves to dress-up and pretend and also for those who need a little encouragement out of their shell. An interactive and supportive staff works with our tots on an appropriate programme. Dancing is made more fun with Melody and Milligan Bear while lots of improvisation and puppet work to various well known tale ensure that there is lots of singing, dancing and fun.

PREPARATORY AND PRELIMINARY

These classes are designed for young students and first timers. Skills which include counting music, basic choreography and blocking are introduced at this level. These gentle and playful courses explore acting and drama games in a creative and supportive environment. Using the tools of the acting process, we aim to increase each student's ability to bring their inner world to life and have a great time while doing it! Students are encouraged to be expressive and imaginative while strengthening their abilities to observe and make choices about the world around them.

LEVEL 1

This class is ideal for children above the first grade and new to Drama Troupe or graduates of the Primary class. Ongoing technique in music, choreography and blocking are present in this level while basic character development and speech articulation is introduced. Classes are fun and introductory

GRADE 1 AND GRADE 2

Designed especially for preteens, these classes offer a fast paced yet welcoming environment for the young artist. More advanced skills in character development as well as vocal technique and challenging choreography are all implemented at this level.

GRADE 3 AND 4

Enrolment to these classes is by audition only. Created for the experienced and young performer this fast paced class offers a unique professional environment. While maintaining a nurturing atmosphere, teachers continue to encourage their students to grow both in discipline and in ability. Character rehearsal attire, challenging choreography and vocal harmonies are implemented at this level.

GRADES 5 AND 6

Enrolment is by audition only. Teen grades are challenged to reach standards suitable for performing on the local stage. It is a fast paced class designed for the serious teen performer. It offers a safe, nurturing yet demanding arena for the young artist to grow. Complex technique in character work, vocal harmonies and choreographies are offered to students.

GRADES 7 AND 8

Enrolments is by audition only. Drama Troupe's most advanced class is offered to teens who are serious performers looking to grow and express themselves artistically. Classes operated in the manner of a theatre company and qualified teachers offer the most challenging opportunities to these emerging artists.

Further information may be obtained by contacting Lorraine Aquilina on 7940-2179 or by email: dramatroupe@gmail.com

