



THEATRE STUDIES AT AS & A2

Lent 2015

For success in **Theatre Studies**, what matters most is that you have shown a real enthusiasm for and interest in drama at Dulwich lower down the school. You need to be prepared to be bold and fearless and to take the plunge.

This is how the course works: at both AS and A2 you will need to understand how performers, designers, directors and theatre practitioners communicate meaning and dramatic intent to an audience, using specialist terminology.

DRAM 1A: Live Theatre is at the heart of the **AS** course and boys relish the regular visits to some of the best and most dynamic productions London has to offer, from the conventional to the avant-garde. Theatre visits allow you to make a personal response to often challenging material. The aim is for you to be able to experience and evaluate the impact of different actor/audience relationships. Live Theatre also provides fuel for your understanding of performance and production techniques as well as diverse play-writing styles. Plays seen this year include; **A Curious Incident**, Declan Donellan’s production of **Shakespeare in Love**, **Electra** at the Old Vic, with a dynamic performance from Kristin Scott-Thomas, as well as the thrilling provocative and devastating musical **Scottsboro Boys** and the sensational **Fuerzabruta** at the Camden Roundhouse.

DRAM 1B: At **AS** you study a play, exploring how style, form, dramatic structure and characterisation can be interpreted in performance. We will be working practically on Sophocles’ play **Antigone**. A Greek Tragedy which weaves intimate familial conflict with the tyrannical politics of the state, revealing how startlingly relevant this iconic play is to the world we live in today. It is a play about the human condition; choice, duty, loyalty, justice.

DRAM 2: The practical unit is a group performance of a scripted play, fuelled by research into the work of an influential director, designer, theatre company or practitioner. You will explore practically his/her methodology and demands on the actor to develop an original interpretation of a scripted extract. In recent years we have studied **STEVEN BERKOFF**. We often have specialist directors and practitioners working with students to further enhance and develop performance and technical skills including, most recently Clive Mendus (actor and associate director with Theatre de Complicite), Katrina Gilroy, technical director of the National Theatre, Jessica Swale (writer and director of the recent production of **Blue Stockings** at The Globe, and assistant director to Max Stafford-Clark),

AS Examination

(DRAM1A & 1B) 60% - Written

Essays on Live theatre productions seen & set text

(DRAM2) 40% - Practical Coursework

Performance by ensemble of an extract from a published play. Can be assessed on acting, directing, design or technical design skills accompanied by supporting notes.



At **A2** the work follows on naturally from AS but becomes more sophisticated; connections are made between theory and practice. This is demonstrated through a range of forms, genres and performance styles. You will study two further plays; Farquar's Restoration Comedy *The Recruiting Officer* and Wertenbaker's *Our Country's Good*, which you will interpret from a director's perspective. Wider experience of professional theatre will give you a more eclectic frame of reference.

At A Level we look for a more advanced level of performance and production skills, the ability to think independently, make judgements and refine your work in the light of research, as well as make synoptic links to the relevance of theatre in social and political contexts.

A2 Examination

(DRAM3) 60% - Written

Further prescribed plays and a synoptic question

(DRAM4) 40% - Practical

Presentation of Devised Drama. Range of skills as before – in a chose theatrical style fuelled by experience of Live Theatre

At AS & A2 we regularly collaborate with girls from JAGS for rehearsed play-readings and theatre trips and also combine with Drama departments of all three schools for specialist workshops from visiting theatre professionals.

We can help you scoop a place at Drama school or on a technical design or acting degree course. Many students, of course, go on to further their drama skills at university, often combined with study of other subjects, scooping places at the very best universities. Boys regularly gain Oxbridge places with Theatre Studies as one of their A Levels. Skills we develop in this subject are complementary to many others. Commitment, responsiveness, powers of analysis, independence of thought, group awareness, as in any other Arts degree, together with the more specific skills of creative inventiveness and technical accomplishments, could be developed in careers such as broadcasting, film, media, PR, producing, casting, advertising and arts administration as well as professional theatre.

Whatever your goal, you will relish the experience and opportunities of a vibrant and stimulating course which will stretch the potential of the brightest and most talented boys here at Dulwich.

[All photographs are of Upper School boys performing their own AS and A2 Practical Coursework]

