

Resource Pack

2016/17

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT DRAMA AND PERFORMING ARTS YOU MIGHT IMMEDIATELY THINK OF ACTING - ON STAGE AND ON SCREEN. HOWEVER THIS IS A FIELD THAT HAS A WIDE RANGE OF CAREER OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS A WIDE RANGE OF COMPANIES AND INDUSTRIES.

In association with:

ROYAL CENTRAL
SCHOOL OF SPEECH & DRAMA
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Many different skills and disciplines go into the creative process that brings the characters and settings to life for our entertainment.

As an industry, Performing Arts covers areas not limited to: drama, musical theatre, applied theatre, contemporary dance and opera and everything that goes into the production, performance, touring, costume design and making, set making, lighting, sound and more. That list is also without considering the periphery roles such as administration, marketing and finances.

And it is big business! Figures from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport show that the industry currently pumps £5.4 billion into the UK economy, with the wider creative industries (of which a lot of skills you will get aiming for a Performing Arts career will also apply) contributes a massive £76.9 billion.

Around 1 in 11 jobs (8.8%) is within the Creative Industries and it is an industry that continues to offer good and varied opportunities regardless of the economic situation.

If you have acting, design, sound production, fashion or any number of skills you might be able to find a position that offers you part of a dynamic, creative process that delivers new favourites to stage and screen.

Some of the companies you can work for directly in the Performing Arts field could include National Theatre, Harvey Nicholls, Latitude Festival, Sky Arts, Secret Cinema, Shakespeare's Globe amongst a long and varied list.

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DRAMA & PERFORMING ARTS ROLES

WHAT TYPE OF PERFORMING ARTS JOB CAN I DO?

Many different people have input into the final production. Here are just some of the roles you could consider in Performing Arts:



ACTOR

Actors bring characters to life with speech, movement and expression and interpret and deliver the work of others in the creative process.

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COSTUME MAKER

Costume makers are responsible for the overall appearance and practicality of the clothes and costumes worn by performers in theatre, film and television.

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DRAMA FACILITATOR

Facilitators lead drama workshops and often work with a wide range of community groups helping to create performance and develop skills in theatre.

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PROP MAKERS

Prop makers create physical objects for use in films, TV programmes and theatre.

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STAGE MANAGER

A Stage Manager manages the performance, acting as a conduit between the director and production team to ensure the smooth running of a production.

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LIGHTING TECHNICIAN

These Technicians are responsible for implementing lighting designs; this includes setting up and operating lighting for concerts, events and in productions for theatre, film and television.

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YOUR ROUTE INTO A PERFORMING ARTS CAREER



It is not necessary to gain formal qualifications in all areas of Performing Arts to get into the industry, but being able to display your skills in a formal way can give you a major advantage. Additionally, the opportunities to develop skills, network with industry professionals and hone your abilities can often only come with formal training at a reputable institution.

A-LEVELS AND EQUIVALENT

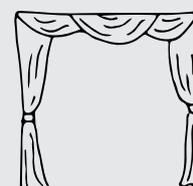


Traditional academic qualifications still offer much as a starting point for a Performing Arts career post-GCSE. Most theatre practitioners, for example, study drama at university or a conservatoire; to progress to this stage you will need to achieve grades in further education.

The most useful, directly related, subjects at A-level are Drama or Theatre Studies, although as the industry requires different skills various subjects in art, design, English or even engineering can be right to progress in to related careers.

English Literature, Theatre Studies, Art, Dance & Music are all useful subjects for creative types. Business Studies will help you if you are interested in managerial roles and Maths and Sciences are useful if you are more into technical theatre.

For a less academic route for more practical backstage, technical, design and stage management roles a BTEC qualification is a good route. The most common would be the BTEC Diploma in Performing Arts. For these roles you'll normally need at least a level 3 or 4 BTEC or a level 5 HNC/Diploma in the aforementioned subject or Production Arts, Music Technology or Art & Design.



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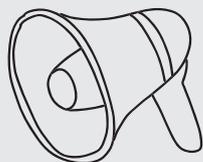
APPRENTICESHIPS

There are also creative intermediate and advance apprenticeships available in many technical and backstage roles such as lighting technicians, sound engineers, stage carpenters and costume makers. These offer the chance to earn a wage in the industry whilst gaining the necessary qualifications needed.

HIGHER EDUCATION



The traditional university route is still a good one to take for a career in Performing Arts. While many roles within the industry do rely on individual talent, a formal understanding of the industry and the gathering of essential skills are still best obtained via an academic route. Most drama practitioners will have studied the subject to a high level.



Many reputable universities around the UK have quality courses in Performing Arts, Drama and related Art and Design subjects. Entry requirements will vary depending on the institution and specific degree but you will, in most cases, be expected to have two A-levels at C grade or above in a related subject or an A-level equivalent vocation qualification, and a number of GCSEs at C grade or above. Some courses may also select by audition.



If you are set on a career in Performing Arts then, like universities, there are a number of conservatoires that specialise in qualifications specifically for the industry. A top example of this is The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (RCSSD) which offers a wide range of courses in Acting, Drama and Applied Theatre, and Theatre Practice (that focusses



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on the behind the scenes aspects of performance such as Stage Management and Props construction). All of which provide academic learning and practical skills for specific aspects of working in Performing Arts.

Studying at schools like this offer more focused learning in small groups taught by experts in the field, as well as offering high contact hours and unique access to networking opportunities within the industry.

The RCSSD's high profile alumni is a testament to the quality of this specific learning, Past students include Hugh Bonneville, Toby Olié, Judi Dench, Christopher Eccleston, Martin Freeman, Dawn French, Andrew Garfield and Abi Morgan amongst many, many others.

They offer courses at both Bachelors and Masters level.

You can find out more about the school and their courses at www.cssd.ac.uk satisfaction.



**You can find out more about
Your route into a Performing Arts career at:**

[HTTPS://WWW.CSSD.AC.UK](https://www.cssd.ac.uk)

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TIPS FOR GETTING A DRAMA AND PERFORMING ARTS JOB



We asked the experts at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama for their top tips to help get you ahead in the race for a top Performing Arts career:

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR FROM STUDYING THE COURSE?

Really understand what it is you are looking to do. Taking acting as an example, the first task is not to perfect some extraordinarily well honed accent or radical audition monologue interpretation but rather, many months prior to this process, to undertake a sleeves rolled up systematic approach to a lot of very necessary research into the sector itself. If you are going to commit three years of your life to something you really should find out what that something is!



CHECK US OUT

All drama schools publish their entry requirements in either a glossy prospectus or more typically on a website, but as such these only really describe required entry criteria, and brief course outline. Check out other content such as course videos that may be on Youtube and social media pages to get a more immersive feel for the individual places.



IF POSSIBLE, VISIT THE UNIVERSITY OR COURSE YOU ARE INTERESTED IN

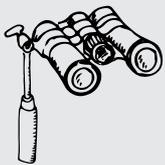
Many drama schools offer open day events which afford a terrific and all important onsite 'experience' of the building, its community of staff and students and general but never the less important 'feel' of the place. Or if opens days are not possible, attend a few plays or musicals performed by final year students from different schools as this can be extremely useful in that it demonstrates a very public slice of the quality of teaching and professional guidance that a particular school might offer.



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WHY?



Once started, this level of nerdy cultural forensic work will certainly enable you to identify at least where you would actually like to study. But why do you want to work in the performing arts? This is the real question that you must ask. Not so that you can decorate your personal statement with incredible but quite useless prose (as often audition candidates do), but rather, in order for you to align all future coordinates to it. You will need to refer to this answer for the rest of your life.

GAIN EXPERIENCE



Most theatres offer a youth theatre program that focusses on the performing side but increasingly there are ones for those looking to pursue a technical career backstage. As well as great training these experiences are a valuable insight into the theatre industry. Work experience can also be a great way to develop a knowledge of the field and put yourself ahead of the competition.

PERFORM ALOT



Acting is a difficult profession. Before you make the decision to train or become a professional actor, spend time performing. Read new plays, learn monologues from them. Rope friends in to watch and read new plays with you. Join a company. There are lots of brilliant theatre companies creating exciting work in London's fringe theatres. There are also scratch nights and monologue slams. Sign up to the casting websites, keep looking, and get auditioning!

IMMERSE YOURSELF AND BUILD NETWORKS



Get involved with the arts community. Go to shows, workshops, and talks and get chatting. These relationships provide an important support network but they can also be a great opportunity to meet people you'd like to collaborate and work with. But be yourself! Every actor has a unique quality that only they bring, so be loyal to that. You don't have to be a super confident networker if that's not your style. Just get chatting, ask questions, and swap details!

Case Study



Kate Scarlett Duffy

Refugee Youth Practitioner and
co-Artistic Director

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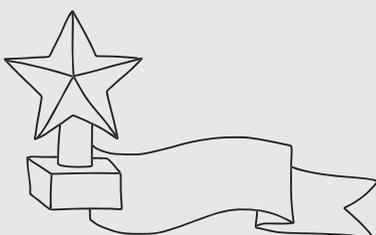
Refugee Youth Practitioner and co-Artistic Director of Applied Theatre company Phosphoros Theatre. Graduate from Central's BA (Hons) Drama, Applied Theatre and Education.

Central's focus on practice as research meant I could take ideas out of the library and into communities, making mistakes along the way and learning from professionals. The course gave me a passion and flexibility for drama in unusual spaces with people with limited access to self-representation.

As a result I've developed a show with Phosphoros Theatre, 'Dear Home Office', that shares the untold stories of young refugee men who came to the UK on their own.

My grounding in studying Drama, Applied Theatre and Education gave me the confidence to believe that it would be possible to empower non-actors from an incredibly hard to reach community to perform at the Edinburgh Fringe and in London theatres.

Thinking critically about Applied Theatre has also led me to undertake interdisciplinary research on an MA in Migration & Diaspora Studies at SOAS.



Case Study



Zoe Cotton

Technical and Production
Management

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ROYAL CENTRAL
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UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Graduate from Central's BA (Hons) Technical and Production Management

Studying at Central meant that as well as gaining practical skills I needed, I was able to develop critical thinking processes essential to my field of work such as analytical and self-reflective skills, equipping me with the right attitude to work in the theatre industry. As I was on the Production Management course I also learnt a lot of transferable skills such as leadership, planning, scheduling and effective time management.

Central provided me with a safe environment in which to make mistakes, challenge and experiment with my practice, often taking me out of my comfort zone, which pushed me to develop not only as a practitioner, but also personally.

Being on the BA Theatre Practice course at Central allowed me to live and work in London where networking with peers and professionals was much more effective than what I would have been able to do on my own and enabled me to get that all important foot in the door. In less than a year of graduating, I was working as an Assistant Stage Manager on a West End musical and have never been out of work.

My advice to those thinking of studying at Central and working in the theatre industry would be to go for it! Be open to new experiences and seize every opportunity.

Thinking critically about Applied Theatre has also led me to undertake interdisciplinary research on an MA in Migration & Diaspora Studies at SOAS.

More useful resources

Need more help with your careers choices? You can find a wealth of help and opportunities at the following places:

ROYAL CENTRAL
SCHOOL OF SPEECH & DRAMA
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

ROYAL CENTRAL SCHOOL OF SPEECH AND DRAMA

Specialist school for the Performing Arts.

THE STAGE

THE STAGE

The Stage provides news and services for the UK theatre, entertainment and performing arts industry.

the
actors
centre

THE ACTORS CENTRE

A leading organisation in the UK supporting actors throughout their careers.

Creative & Cultural Skills

CREATIVE AND CULTURAL SKILLS

Careers advice and resources from Creative & Cultural Skills.

backstage.

BACKSTAGE

A trusted resources for actors and performers to find jobs and careers advice.

TheBigChoice.com™
youth career network

THEBIGCHOICE.COM

Find quality advice on courses, apprenticeships and careers on this youth careers portal.