



# Teaching Participation and Research

Focus on young people and residents in Lambeth  
and Southwark, and on young directors



Tobias and the Angel

Young Vic is this country's leading home for younger theatre makers and young directors. We present seasons of classic plays - old and new - directed by great directors of the world alongside seasons of work by young directors. Built 35 years ago to last for 100 years, our theatre on The Cut is at last being rebuilt. Whilst on Walkabout we are delighted to have been given free use of Kennington Park Studios, owned by ITV London. This incredibly generous offer has meant that we have been able to remain in our home borough of Lambeth, and continue to provide a full programme of schools' workshops, community projects and professional development for young artists.

With three huge studios at our disposal, this programme has expanded to include evening and weekend classes, community projects and rehearsals. The central rehearsal room means that actors, directors, young people and practitioners are able to work together and create a real buzz of activity and creativity.

From the plays we present to the ways we rehearse, and the special events and workshops we create to support our productions, we involve young people and our local community in all aspects of our work, aiming to develop the skills, ambition and confidence of the theatre-makers of the future.

Our work with young people is focused on three key areas:

## Teaching

Our work with schools and colleges

- workshops in schools and on stage
- collaborative work with young children
- subsidised tickets
- comprehensive resource packs
- work experience placements
- career initiatives
- teachers' activities

## Participation

Our work with young people outside school

- workshops developing theatre skills
- productions without décor
- projects developing independent theatre-going
- opportunities to learn about careers in theatre including acting, directing and technical careers

## Research

Our work developing theatre practice

- The Genesis Directors Project, which consists of:
  - the Directors Network
  - directors' workshops with theatre practitioners
  - explorations of process
  - directing full productions through the Direct Action scheme
  - assisting on productions
- The Jerwood Young Directors Award
- The Doorway Project
- Two Boroughs Project providing free or subsidised tickets for residents of Lambeth and Southwark

The experiences they've had in the theatre have been so unique: as an audience member, as a performer, as a technician. These are experiences they wouldn't have had if it wasn't for the Young Vic.

Teacher, Johanna Primary School

Our TPR activities are focused on three groups:

- Young people from South East London, especially our home boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark. Around 9,000 young people are currently on our contact list
- Young directors wishing to develop their craft. Our Directors Network has over 400 members at present
- Residents of Lambeth and Southwark. Over 8,500 residents are currently on our contact list

If you would like to find out more about these activities contact us on 020 7820 3350 or email [info@youngvic.org](mailto:info@youngvic.org)

## Overview of the year: Key facts and figures

Over **1,600 young people** took part in workshops and projects. The majority were aged between 7-20 years from Lambeth and Southwark.

Over **400 young directors** were supported in their professional development.

**212 free opportunities** were provided for teachers. These included free tickets, professional development workshops and access to theatre professionals.

**3,340 residents** took advantage of free tickets and other activities provided through the Two Boroughs Project.

**3,541 young people** independently or through school saw a performance for free on our Funded Ticket Scheme, many experiencing live theatre for the first time.

**183 schools and organisations** collaborated with the Young Vic during the course of the year.

**103 schools** and colleges benefited from Funded Tickets.

# Teaching

The Young Vic provides invaluable support in helping pupils realise their achievement in drama. In particular the experience of professional theatre.

Teacher, Stockwell Park High School, Lambeth

## Teaching Support

To enhance young people's understanding and experience of Young Vic productions, we provide teachers with the following support:

- A Resource Pack to accompany main stage productions, containing extensive background material on the plays, information about the rehearsal process, interviews with actors and production crews, designs, drawings and warm-up exercises
- Teachers' Evenings and Forums, where teachers are provided with Funded Tickets, complimentary refreshments and the opportunity to meet with Young Vic staff. In this way we are able to obtain teachers' feedback on our work and keep them informed of future projects
- Workshops which give teachers access to artists and practitioners, enabling them to develop their own knowledge and creativity

## Access onstage and backstage

To develop young people's understanding of how we work, and to introduce them to the range of career opportunities available in theatre, we provide access to our stage and creative and technical teams through:

- Backstage Pass, giving young people the opportunity to shadow a member of our technical crew during a performance, so they can see how lighting, sound and stage management contribute to the show
- Post-Show Discussions with directors and cast
- Backstage Tours

A magical experience which the children greatly enjoyed.

Teacher, Stockwell Primary School, Lambeth

## Productions and Projects

This year the Young Vic left our home on The Cut while our theatre is redeveloped, but we have continued to produce a wide range of shows in theatres around London. Our Walkabout period has given us the opportunity to revive some of our greatest hits, providing schools and colleges with a chance to revisit our best-loved plays and take part in an extensive range of activities.

### Direct Action

Young Vic production, Main Stage

May – June 2004

The Young Vic has a reputation for rediscovering great plays and for finding the best young directors. Direct Action was a series of productions that did both. In two double bills we presented *Winners* by Brian Friel directed by Dawn Walton; *Interior* by Maurice Maeterlinck directed by Christopher Heimann; *The Exception and the Rule* by Bertolt Brecht directed by Jan-Willem van den Bosch; and *The New Tenant* by Eugène Ionesco directed by Alex Murdoch.

Four rarely produced plays provided a remarkable opportunity for schools and colleges to see arresting theatre with two contrasting styles of work in each double bill.

Direct Action is supported by the Tara Ulemek Foundation & Genesis Foundation

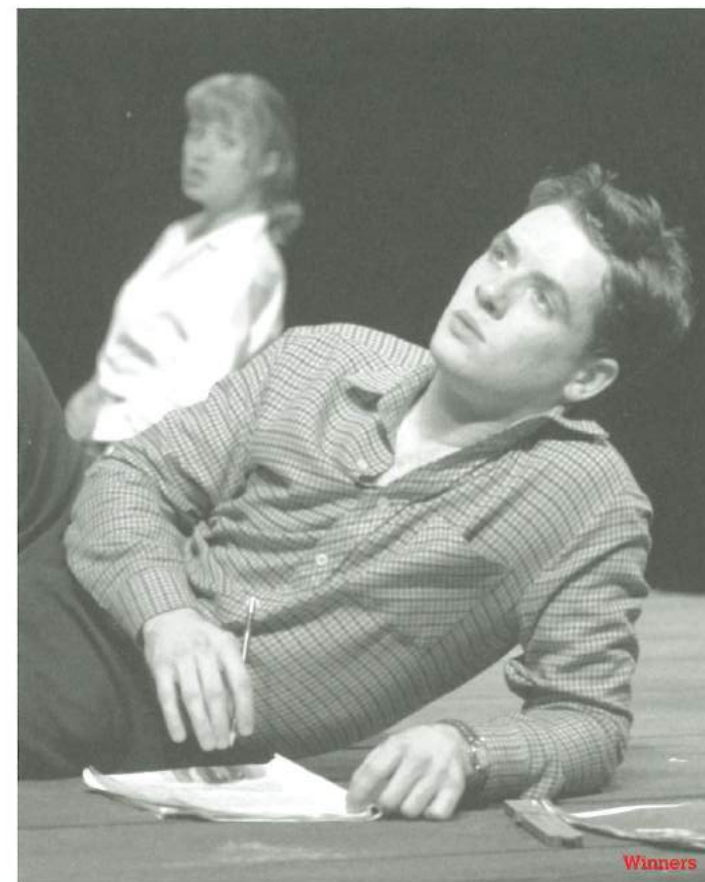
### Cruel and Tender

A Young Vic, Wiener Festwochen and Chichester Festival Theatre production. In co-production with the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord and Ruhrfestspiele Recklinghausen, Main Stage

May – July 2004

Martin Crimp's new play propelled Sophocles' *Trachiniae* into a modern world of political hypocrisy and emotional terrorism. Directed by Luc Bondy, one of the finest opera and theatre directors in Europe, it enabled the Young Vic to extend its relationships with local Universities and adult education colleges. The 27 groups who attended were challenged by the production's distinctive style and uncompromising content, sparking animated post-show discussions.

In addition we continued our work with the DfES-led London Challenge initiative and 17 schools and colleges visited the production from Lewisham, Greenwich, Islington, Croydon, Merton, Wandsworth, Bexley, Bromley and Sutton.



### Simply Heavenly

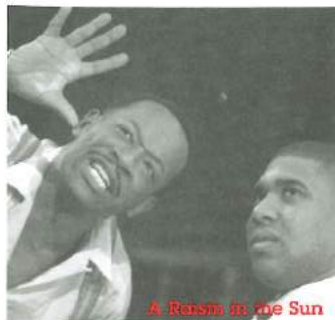
A Young Vic production presented by the Ambassador Theatre Group at the Trafalgar Studios

October 2004 – February 2005

The revival of the Young Vic's production of *Simply Heavenly* at the Trafalgar Studios was our first show on Walkabout and a perfect opportunity for more schools and colleges to experience Langston Hughes' uplifting story of an African American community in 1950s Chicago. The combination of gospel and blues music with sassy humour ensured that after we'd accommodated 24 schools through the DfES London Challenge there was still a demand we couldn't satisfy.



Workshop



A Raisin in the Sun



Workshop

### A Raisin in the Sun

Young Vic in association with the Lyric Hammersmith at the Lyric Hammersmith February - March 2005 & on tour April - May

A Raisin in the Sun was a huge success in 2001 and Walkabout gave us the chance to revive Lorraine Hansberry's classic story of the Younger family's dream to make a better life in 1950s Chicago.

As with all our productions, we provided secondary schools with a chance to see the show through Funded Tickets but we also felt A Raisin in the Sun was a perfect opportunity for Further Education colleges and sixth form groups to see our work and explore the play through workshops. Seven workshops looked at the 'obstacles' a character might encounter in a scene, and how they attempted to overcome them. Participants considered immediate obstacles (e.g. the problem of getting money) and long-term obstacles (e.g. the problem of raising one's status in society) through improvisation exercises and then in detailed work on the text of the play.

### Directing in Schools Workshops

March 2005

We have had vital and regular support from the DFES since December 2003 which has increased not only the number of tickets we distribute but also the breadth of London boroughs we work in.

In a new initiative the DFES also supported our work introducing young people to the role of the director. For each class involved in the project, three intensive workshops introduced the director's role in bringing a text to life, with a visit to the Lyric Hammersmith or Hackney Empire placed in the middle of the workshop to maximize the learning opportunities. We worked with 18 classes from 12 schools over four months.

Funded by DFES London Challenge Programme

**The workshops I attended open opened my eyes to directing.**

Student, Cator Park School for Girls, Bromley

## Special Walkabout Projects

On Walkabout we have had the chance to experiment and play whilst out of our building. We've tried new things, worked with new groups and emphasised key areas of our work.

### Southwark Theatres Education Partnership Festival

April 2004

As part of Southwark Council's STEP festival we ran Fresh Direction - directing workshops for primary schools. The Young Vic's Artistic Director, David Lan, introduced young people to theatre directing as an imaginative and creative craft. The emphasis was on exploration and experimentation. By asking young people to write and direct their own short stories, the workshops demonstrated how each choice a director makes creates meaning for an audience.

### Young Vic Book

To celebrate and disseminate the Young Vic's work with schools and young people, Methuen commissioned Ruth Little to write a book. *The Young Vic Book: Theatre Work and Play* is a practical resource for teachers and directors to draw on when working with young people.

### Tobias and the Angel Taster Workshops in School

May 2004

To generate interest in the auditions for the *Tobias and the Angel* children's choir, we held Taster Workshops in five Lambeth and Southwark primary schools. 280 young people were given the chance to encounter the story of *Tobias and the Angel* and learn songs from the opera.

### My Favourite Place: Young Vic 1970 to 2004

May to July 2004

In the final part of the CLPE Brixton & North Lambeth Action Zone Animating Literacy project, we worked with Johanna Primary School to explore literacy through documentary film-making. The young people examined materials from the Young Vic archive, including press cuttings, reviews, production shots and also information gathered from local sources such as bomb reports from World War Two.

A freelance film-maker provided training in the use of camera and sound recording equipment. The pupils then interviewed a range of people involved with the Young Vic, from the Artistic Director and actors to local residents and businesses.

The film was screened both at the school and the Young Vic as a timely and entertaining celebration of our history shortly before closing for redevelopment.

### Working in Theatre

September - December 2004

In partnership with Metier (the national training organisation for the arts and entertainment sector) we ran a number of projects exploring careers in theatre. Very often young people have no idea of the range of careers available to them and struggle to secure voluntary work or to gain professional experience. As part of the scheme we offered paid work experience placements to two local young adults in directing. Careers afternoons introduced secondary school pupils to the whole spectrum of jobs in theatre and provided practical sessions with technicians, administrators and designers.

### Increased Opportunities for Teachers

The discussions at our regular Teacher's Forums have made clear the growing interest in specifically tailored out of school sessions for teachers.

The resulting programme of workshops explored different aspects of the directors' craft, from the meaning and use of status, to how a character's needs and wants can unlock a text and the visual dimension of theatre in the relationship between the director and the designer.

In addition we launched a new initiative which enabled teachers to attend theatre without the pressures and demands of organising a school group. See Theatre supported a small group of teachers attending productions in a variety of theatres to develop and deepen their knowledge of current theatre practice.

### Work Experience

Despite the physical limitations of being without a theatre, we have been able to provide long term placements for a student from City University studying for a Postgraduate Diploma in Cultural Management and a teaching student from Southbank University. Two other placements from secondary schools had the chance to work over one week in a range of departments including stage management, development, finance, press and theatre administration.

**This placement helped me grasp what theatre actually is.**

Young Southwark resident on Paid Metier Placement

# Participation

Having introduced young people to theatre experiences through their schools and colleges, we encourage them to pursue their interest in theatre independently. Our participation projects take place outside of school and provide opportunities for young people to take part in extended projects, theatre visits and weekend or evening workshops.

This year we extended our body of work to include projects for young adults aged 18 to 25 who are committed to exploring a career in the arts whether that be as a director, actor or technician.

The Angel

## Tobias and the Angel Community Opera

8 - 12 year olds ■ May - September 2004

*Tobias and the Angel* was written by composer Jonathan Dove to include three non-professional (community) choirs, one of which is a chorus of children aged 8 -12.

To introduce participants to the story and music of *Tobias and the Angel*, we ran three weekend Taster Workshops. A chorus of 28 young people was chosen through the auditions. They rehearsed over the summer and eventually joined the professional actors and singers in rehearsal and performances.

The performances took place in St John's Church Waterloo over four nights in September 2004 to full houses and an ecstatic response. The event set a benchmark for future community projects and was as significant for the Young Vic as it was for its local participants. Funded tickets were provided to local groups and all those young people who had taken part in auditions.

## Tobias and the Angel Summer Mix

8 - 12 year olds ■ August 2004

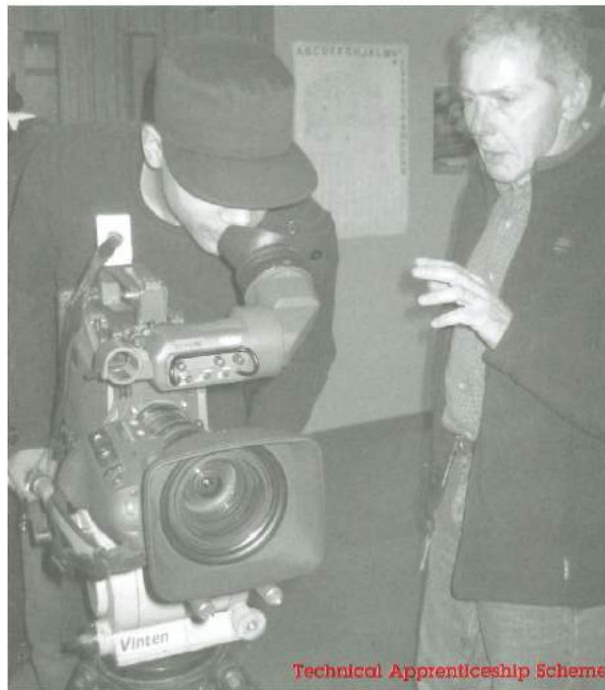
49 young people who chose not to be fully involved or were not successful in auditions were invited to take part in further workshops on singing and movement, led by professional practitioners, and to attend final performances at St John's.



Spring Half Term Project

**It has strengthened my desire to be an actor whilst affirming that I want to go to drama school**

Centre Stage participant



Technical Apprenticeship Scheme

## Introduction to Directing

18 - 25 year olds ■ July - August 2004

Many members of the community continue to be underrepresented in the arts, and, in particular, professional theatre practice. The Young Vic is committed to supporting and nurturing directors from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds and in partnership with Talawa Theatre Company, one of the UK's leading voices for Black theatre, we have begun to address this imbalance.

For six weeks a group of young adults worked with directors from Talawa and the Young Vic in sessions focusing on the practical role of the director and on training and employment opportunities available in the theatre. Professional directors spoke about their own experiences and career paths to provide positive and affirming role models.

## See Theatre

16 - 25 year olds ■ October - November 2004

Working again with Talawa, we developed our See Theatre programme to include reading and structured discussion of specific play texts in advance of a theatre visit. Follow-up sessions encouraged participants to consider the director and creative team's choices in staging the play. Participants experienced a range of productions from Kneehigh's *The Bacchae* to the Almeida's production of *Festen* in the West End and *Woyzeck* at the Gate.

At the feedback session for the project the group's ability to express their views and opinions with confidence and clarity was striking. All were able to stand their ground when faced with conflicting interpretations and opinions.

## Technical Apprenticeship Scheme

18 - 25 year olds ■ January - March 2005

The Technical Apprenticeship Scheme (TAS) is being developed with talkbackTHAMES in response to the concern that there are currently very few full time technicians from ethnic minority backgrounds working in either theatre or television.

The first year, 2004/5, focused on research, a Taster Week and placements. Research was commissioned to identify barriers to participation by ethnic minorities, consider existing training models, highlight good practice and recommend a possible structure for the TAS.

The first Taster Week was held in January at the Young Vic Studios in Kennington Park, and on location with *The Bill* and *Family Affairs*. The week included introductory sessions on technical skills and roles in theatre and TV, studio tours, shadowing, backstage passes and career discussions. The first series of placements worked on the Young Vic's productions of *A Raisin in the Sun* at the Lyric Hammersmith and Hackney Empire, *Direct Action* at Theatre 503 in Battersea and one placement was based in the press department at talkbackTHAMES.

The second stage of the project will take place in the autumn of 2005.