

## What will you be doing this Summer?

**It seems early to be talking about the summer months, but we have rounded up the main summer schools for you to start planning now. It may seem like months away, but they fill up quickly.**

**Green Candle Dance Company** leads the Dance Summer School for Deaf Children at Sadler's Wells Theatre in London from 25 - 30 July 2005. This acclaimed Summer School is now in its 7th year, providing a top-quality experience of dance in a world-class venue.

It is suitable for both boys and girls from 6-19 years of age, with or without previous experience of dance and is accessible to children with all degrees of hearing loss, using all communication methods. Deaf children are able to invite a hearing sibling or friend to join them for the week, space allowing.

For booking information please contact **Sarah Baker** at Sadler's Wells on **020 7863 8096** or email [sarah.baker@sadlerswells.com](mailto:sarah.baker@sadlerswells.com) For more information about Green Candle Dance Company, please visit [www.greencandle.com](http://www.greencandle.com) or call **020 7739 7722**

**Polka Theatre's** Integrated Summer School is for deaf and hearing children aged 11-16 years. If you love drama, dance and music then this is the place for you! You will work with professional artists to devise your very own performance, which will be shown live on Polka's main stage at the end of the week. They are also offering Easter Holidays Integrated workshop – an intensive two day drama devising workshop led by professional actors for deaf and hearing young people.

Contact **Beth** at Polka Theatre for further details, SMS **07762 800821**, call **020 8545 8329** or email [beth@polkatheatre.com](mailto:beth@polkatheatre.com).



Green Candle Summer School 2004 PHOTO Phil Polglaze

*"..It's a brilliant way for deaf and hearing people to work together as a team... I made lots of new friends. I liked learning BSL... An excellent experience."*

That's what some of the participants & volunteers said in 2004, and if you're aged 13-18 you can join **Cambridge Arts** on stage this summer from Monday 8th to Friday 19th August. There are 30 places for hearing and deaf performers and 10 places for hearing and deaf stage management and technical crew. There will be a performance and post show party Friday 19th August.

*"The end performance is accessible to everyone... Great to work in a professional theatre... I liked working in a bilingual environment and being able to communicate with new skills."*

For more information contact Roberta Hamond using one of the following methods: [rhamond@cambridgeartstheatre.com](mailto:rhamond@cambridgeartstheatre.com), [www.cambridgeartstheatre.com](http://www.cambridgeartstheatre.com), 01223 578933(v), -578929(fax) 579003(txt)

If you are 18+, Deaf and a BSL user, then **Shape's National Deaf Academy** 2005, running from 8th-20th August in London, gives you the chance to develop skills and gain a unique qualification in Deaf theatre arts. Using BSL in acting, stage management and stage lighting, you will have a chance to showcase your talents to an invited audience from the world of entertainment. They are accepting bookings now, and you can e-mail [john@shapearts.org.uk](mailto:john@shapearts.org.uk) or [julia@shapearts.org.uk](mailto:julia@shapearts.org.uk), or visit the website [www.shapearts.org.uk](http://www.shapearts.org.uk). Minicom **020 7619 6164** Voice **020 7619 2613**.

## CACDP

Council for the  
Advancement of  
Communication  
with Deaf People  
t 0191 383 1155

## SASLI

Scottish  
Association of  
Sign Language  
Interpreters  
t 0131 347 5601

## ASLI

Association of  
Sign Language  
Interpreters  
t 0871 474 0522

## MRS LI

Member of the  
Register of  
BSL/English  
Interpreters

## TI

Trainee  
BSL/English  
Interpreter

**Letter 1** – Terry Ruane of *Theatresign* became aware of a young signer getting a great deal of work in theatres around the country including some of the major musicals.

When he made enquiries at the theatres, he found that all of them said that he gave the cheapest quote of all. A recent check of his website showed that he only had CACDP\* Level 2 and it transpires that theatres do not understand that CACDP Level 2 is **not** an interpreting qualification.

Theatres need to be aware of the difference between CACDP level 2 which is taught at evening classes around the country and the CACDP Interpreting qualifications which SPIT recommends for theatre Interpreting. If you feel your theatre Interpreter is not up to standard – **complain** to the Theatre (*and to SPIT – ed.*) as you may have an Interpreter without the proper qualifications.

**Letter 2** – I have been working in theatres for 2 years. Many theatre[s] still don't know the difference between MRS LI's\* and a good competent interpreter. Theatres I work with are asked not for my feedback but to survey their patrons – Hearing and Deaf. That's real monitoring. Hearing people know as well as Deaf people if the interpreter is doing a good job.

I think SPIT should change their MRS LI policy to include and prioritise 'competent' interpreters. Some qualified interpreters are not always liked by Deaf people for their interpretational theatre skill and they prefer some unqualified interpreters who theatres use and Deaf people like. How does SPIT know if a qualified person or unqualified theatre interpreter is doing their job right?

Should SPIT decide who they list and who they don't, or allow Deaf people to decide if they want to see that interpreted performance or not?

*Via E-mail*

## Response from Paul Reeve, SPIT Chair.

These letters raise some interesting issues, including SPIT's position regarding which interpreters it's prepared to list and those it refuses to.

As the national advocate of good practice throughout the development of Sign Language Interpreted Performances (SLIPs) over the last decade, SPIT's position regarding the qualifications necessary for an interpreter to be 'endorsed' is very clear. She/he must be CACDP or SASLI registered MRS LI or TI; or an ASLI Licensed or Associate member.\*

There are many misconceptions about 'interpreting', sometimes among people who consider themselves pretty conversant with access and disability issues. For instance, being fluent in BSL **does not qualify someone to be an interpreter**. (As with any other language, 'speaking' and interpreting are different skills, the latter requiring very specific training.) Having potential, enthusiasm and CACDP Level 2 is not enough. SPIT's members are professional theatre organisations that should aim to offer the highest possible quality of experience to their deaf patrons.

Five years ago we made the decision to stop listing SLIPs by interpreters who don't hold the recommended qualifications. We lost a member organisation or two as a result but it was a price worth paying. The reaction from deaf theatregoers to our hardened stance was overwhelmingly positive.

## letters (cont)

Of course there is no failsafe way of measuring competence but professional qualifications will always be the bottom line. However, as with lawyers and electricians, there may be a difference between being qualified to do a job and doing the job really well. So we would strongly recommend that theatres seek feedback from deaf patrons. Opinions on interpreters DO vary and, by listening to what deaf audiences think about SLIPs they've attended, you'll be able to take their likes/dislikes into consideration in future decision making.

Sign language interpreting is already a highly specialist field and theatre interpreting is an even more specialist area within it! Acknowledging that, and strengthening its commitment to raising standards, this February SPIT holds its first training event for interpreters interested in developing their theatre skills. Significantly, the event is fully subscribed.

## Youth Theatre



*Grubs, Slugs and Boogie Bugs* from Half Moon

**Half Moon** bursts into life this Spring with a glittering new production for 2 to 5 year olds! Taking inspiration from the 70's Glam Rock period, *Grubs, Slugs and Boogie Bugs* opens with eight performances at Half Moon in London's East End from Wednesday 2nd to Saturday 5th February, before going on tour across London and nationally until 8 May 2005.

Half Moon actively seeks to be inclusive in all aspects of the work they programme and produce. The building is fully accessible, with a loop system fitted, and they offer touch tours prior to the majority of their productions. To further this commitment to accessible theatre and to engage with audience members who are deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing, *Grubs, Slugs and Boogie Bugs* will feature fully integrated British Sign Language.

Voted Best Children's Show 2003 by Time Out and originally commissioned and produced with Unicorn Theatre for Children, **Graeae**, Britain's leading company of disabled theatre practitioners, is reviving its production of *Diary of an Action Man*. Mike Kenny's play is aimed at 7-11 year olds and follows Little Ezra who is on a mission – a mission to rescue his dad. He told his mate Spud that Dad was dead. That wasn't exactly true, but how else can he explain why Dad isn't here? Ten year old Ezra believes his father died a war hero, but dreams of his dad's secret missions are suddenly shattered when he discovers his father is alive and well and living in Manchester. Ezra's toy action man springs to life when no-one's looking. Escaping the clutches of his mum, his teacher and his incredibly irritating younger sister, Ezra and his secret comrade jump from helicopters and swim with man-eating sharks before embarking upon their big adventure to find Ezra's dad.

In this funny and touching play, friendship, heroes, sibling rivalry and the complexity of growing up are explored. The imaginative descriptive story-telling and sign language together, make it accessible for all children including deaf, visually-impaired and blind children.

*Diary of an Action Man* is directed by Artistic Director of Graeae, Jenny Sealey whose recent credits include the national tours of *Bent*, *Peeling* and *On Blindness*.



*Diary of an Action Man* from Graeae

Disability Arts  
Online  
[www.disabilityarts.com](http://www.disabilityarts.com)

Information on the full range of disability arts, including deaf arts, learning disabled arts, inclusive arts, integrated arts, arts and disability and survivor arts organisations.

Deaf World  
[www.deafworld.com](http://www.deafworld.com)

World directory for the deaf and hard of hearing community.

Arts Access  
Database  
[www.artsaccessuk.org](http://www.artsaccessuk.org)

Venues can enter their access details into this first national Arts Access database.

### Keep in touch!

To join SPIT's free mailing list, simply send us your name, address and contact details. If you received this issue by post, you are already on the list!

Signed Performances in Theatre (SPIT), 1 Stobart Avenue, Manchester M25 0AJ  
Tel/Fax 0161 773 1715  
T/phone 0161 798 4894, email [sarah@spit.org.uk](mailto:sarah@spit.org.uk)  
[www.spit.org.uk](http://www.spit.org.uk)

*'By the final week, we all had a basic knowledge of sign and felt more at ease communicating with our Deaf audience.'* PAST PARTICIPANT

**From April, SPIT will be running its Introductory BSL Course in London and Harrogate. The course aims to equip theatre staff with basic BSL skills in order to communicate better with Deaf theatre patrons. Participants will meet for 2 hours once a week over 10 weeks. Please contact SPIT.**

## Theatre Snapshot

Take a look 'Behind the Scenes' at the **Theatre Museum London**, with their free BSL events: *Shakespeare through the centuries* (Sat 19 Feb); *Comedy/Clowning* (Sat 16 April); *Masks/Mask Theatre* (Sat 18 June); 14.00-15.30  
Booking essential. Contact Gemma, email [tmgroups@vam.ac.uk](mailto:tmgroups@vam.ac.uk), fax (0)20 7943 4777 call (0)20 7943 4806

**NWDA conference: BSL Recognition; 2 Years On...** on Saturday 19th March 2005 (10am to 4pm) at the University of Central Lancashire, Foster Building Lecture Theatre, Preston. Please contact NWDA at 13 Wilson Patten Street, Warrington, WA1 1PG  
Textphone 0800 6522965, fax: 01925 232903 or email [lauram@bda.org.uk](mailto:lauram@bda.org.uk)

**The Dukes, Lancaster's BSL**-interpreted performance of *Tom Thumb & Other Giant Stories* will take place on Saturday 23rd July at 7.15pm. This is the annual big outdoor walkabout production in Williamson Park, Lancaster (just off M6 J33 or J34). The interpreter is Kyra Pollitt.

**English Touring Opera** recently became the first opera company in the country to purchase their own captioning equipment using money raised through a partnership with the RNID. Members of staff at ETO are now trained captioners. Some performances of *Mary, Queen of Scots*, *Così fan tutte* and *The (Little) Magic Flute* will be captioned during their spring 2005 tour including The Hawth, Crawley on 29th and 30th March (see listing). More information can be found at [www.englishtouringopera.org.uk](http://www.englishtouringopera.org.uk).

**Clin D'oeil 2005 Festival of Deaf Arts**, Reims, France will take place 1-3rd July. More information from [clindoeil@cinesourds.fr](mailto:clindoeil@cinesourds.fr) or [www.cinesourds.fr](http://www.cinesourds.fr)

**Civic Theatre, Chelmsford** is launching its own captioning unit with a Stagertext trained captioner in March. They will be captioning every week-long run, regardless of bookings, so check out their programme.

**This issue of SPIT News cost £1.00. SPIT relies on donations from individuals, trusts and foundations for half of its income. Please support us. All donations large and small are vital. For more information on how you could support SPIT please contact us.**

*SPIT reserves the right to edit any copy submitted. Although SPIT carefully check all information provided it cannot accept legal liability for any inaccuracy or omissions.*

**Copy deadline for Spring SPIT News is Tuesday 3 May 2005. Signed Performances in Theatre (SPIT), 1 Stobart Avenue, Manchester M25 0AJ. Tel/Fax 0161 773 1715 Text phone 0161 798 4894 Email [sarah@spit.org.uk](mailto:sarah@spit.org.uk), [www.spit.org.uk](http://www.spit.org.uk)**

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