

**“All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances ...”
From Shakespeare's As You Like It**

In January pupils of the LVD, Kempen were able to experience a fantastic spectrum of professional, native English theatre from The Phoenix Theatre live in the school Aula. From “Captain Jack” a funny, pirate musical for classes 5 and 6, to “Echoes – The Loss of Lilly” for classes 9 – 10 about the effects of cyber-bullying; (both written by Kristi-Anne Seth); through to a menagerie of some of Shakespeare’s greatest works in “Shakespeare’s Bottom or Getting to the Bottom of Shakespeare” for classes 11 and 12 (written and directed by Kelly Griffiths).

The newly formed Phoenix Theatre (formerly The Flying Fish Theatre) didn’t disappoint with its sharp wit, perfect comic timing and honest expressions of feeling captivating pupils immediately. Whether playing Romeo & Juliet, Macbeth, a dim witted pirate or a desperate teenager, the acting talents of Joseph Glenny, Rhianna Compton and Kelly Griffiths would impress even the most cynical of observers.

In this the 400th year of Shakespeare’s death our pupils were pulled into the intrigues of Romeo and Juliet and Macbeth by the mechanicals, Flute and Bottom, from A Midsummer Night’s Dream. With a mixture of early English and modern language the acting duo, Rhianna and Kelly, opened up the understanding of Shakespeare and involved several of the pupils in the action. Whether to play Friar Lawrence, Nurse, a Capulet or a Montague, a tree or a wall this “hands on” approach proved very popular with our pupils. With copious amounts of wit, as the play’s title suggests, charm and talent the play is reminiscent of the work of The Young Shakespeare’s Company and definitely a fantastic learning experience and stimulus.

Echoes-The Loss of Lilly deals with the topic of cyber-bullying that many of us would like to sweep under the carpet. However, in this day and age we cannot afford to ignore the immense effect that technology is having on our lives and that of our children. The Phoenix Theatre faces this situation head on and through use of humour, honesty and emotion in their playing was able to connect with pupils on their level.

Captain Jack on the other hand is a joyous, entertaining pirate musical that is a pleasure to watch. This interactive show is a roller coaster ride of laughs and one cannot help but leave with a big smile on ones face. The positive experience for our pupils cannot be underestimated and the patience and skill through which The Phoenix Theatre supports and motivates pupils in their language learning is priceless.

The professionalism, personable and easy-going attitude of the actors was incredibly refreshing and we thank the team of The Phoenix Theatre for staging the plays in an approachable and entertaining manner. We would also like to praise the talents of the actors Rhianna Compton, Joseph Glenny and Kelly Griffiths and of course to the Producer & Artistic Director of the company, Kristi-Anne Seth. We look forward to seeing you again next year.

Frau Seth-Hollenbeck
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