



Bridge House Young Company

Mission statement

Bridge House Young Company is a creative, collaborative youth theatre community for ages 7-18. Facilitated by industry professionals, members work in three groups: Juniors (7-11), Intermediates (11-14), and Seniors (14-18).

Young Company operates on Saturday mornings during term-time as well as offering holiday projects, theatre trips and stand-alone masterclasses.

The company are resident to the Bridge House Theatre, Warwick, part of the Warwick Schools Foundation.

Imagination, collaboration, connection

AIMS

- To provide young people with varied opportunities to create consequential, ambitious, and high-quality theatre.
- To encourage creative collaborations that spark new friendships and moments of joy.
- To cultivate a safe environment for young people to express their individuality and be celebrated for doing so.
- To allow members agency over the work they create and regular opportunities to contribute to creative decision-making.
- To build self-esteem and challenge young people's expectations of themselves through critically constructive feedback from both staff and peers.
- To maintain low termly fees and offer subsidised places to encourage wider, more diverse participation.
- To provide professional mentorship and positive role models who share relevant insight into the arts industry.
- To meaningfully connect with the local community through bespoke festivals, projects, and performances.

Devising

Creating original group work and exercising the imagination is a key skill for budding theatre-makers and allows us to connect more immediately to the social and political world around us. Members will develop devised projects of varying scales throughout the year, often inspired by a given stimulus. Devising is a great means of provoking positive collaboration and allowing the participants to drive the creative process. Our contribution to the Warwick Schools Foundation's Creative Festival is devised around that year's specific theme.

Full scale main stage productions (in a purpose-built specialist theatre building)

Biennially we produce a full-scale major production in which the young people work across age groups. Involvement in a more complex project with a large cast allows members greater understanding of the various creative and logistical considerations of a theatre-maker.

Working as a whole unit, from ages 7-18, emphasises the importance of ensemble and encourages peer mentorship.

Text and voice work

Developing both text and voice skills are essential for performance.

We explore a huge range of text which challenges our groups; this includes classic dramatists such as Shakespeare, and exciting modern theatre-makers like Company Three; alongside the development of our own original scripts, poetry and spoken word.

It is crucial that our young performers feel able to share their voice proudly and confidently, whilst knowing it is protected and supported by the breathing techniques they have learnt working alongside our facilitators.

Skills-based workshops and masterclasses

Workshops and masterclasses provide the opportunity to investigate a particular theatrical skill, practitioner, or style. They challenge young people to explore techniques or ideas that they might find unusual or difficult in a safe, playful environment.

This style of working also allows us to be led by the interests of the Young Company whether this be direction, stand-up comedy, musical theatre performance, improv, text-study, puppetry, or mime.

Visiting practitioners

Inviting external artists to deliver bespoke workshops and productions exposes our young people to a broader range of practices and techniques. This, in turn, develops their theatre criticism skills and cultivates enduring connections with companies and practitioners who inspire them.

Also, our relationship with Bridge House Theatre allows for joined up thinking, enabling members access to the range of performances on offer and experiences such as post-show Q&As and cast meet and greets throughout the year.

Community outreach

Working collaboratively to engage with others in the community actively spreads our ethos that *theatre is for everyone*. We encourage members to be present in their local area and get involved with any opportunities for engagement, such as The Regency Ball which takes place in the ballroom at the Jury Street Court House, facilitated by *Unlocking Warwick*.

Holiday projects

Being part of a stand-alone holiday project, such as the Three-Day Play, allows for intensive ensemble-building and the opportunity to develop practical theatre-making skills in a project-based setting.

Long term ambitions

- Expand our membership to 25 regulars in each group.
- Seek external funding in order to increase our number of subsidised and bursary places (at least 5 fully funded places by 2025. *£210 for academic year x 5. £1,050 total.*)
- Organise collaborations with other youth theatre programmes in the county and beyond
- Develop an artist development programme for ages 16+.
- Create a technical and design specialism cohort.
- Seek opportunities for performance elsewhere – other festivals etc. National Connections.

Imogen Tong, Theatre Outreach Manager

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