



Newsletter Spring 2018

Spring has finally sprung!

We're basking in the sun at Wac Arts and hope that you all enjoy reading our highlights whilst enjoying this glorious weather. Have a great few months, and catch up again in Summer...

Wac Arts Weekender: Beyond Time

Following the success of the first ever Wac Arts Weekender in 2017, 'Beyond Time' aimed even bigger. With 26 events over five days, we opened up our building to over 900 members of the public, who were invited to Discover, Take Part, Watch, and Discuss. We invited local organisations and our building partners to join us for breakfast networking events, strengthening ties with our community and exploring new ways to collaborate. Diploma alum Kloé Dean returned to run a Hip Hop Masterclass, and our Diploma students shared their beautiful vocal ability at their showcase. Our Disability Inclusion groups entranced audiences with an interactive murder mystery on Friday evening – Seeing all of the audience on their knees and under their chairs looking for the missing courgette was Friday's highlight!



Discussions were lead by our Young Advisors on diversity and age in the arts, alongside guests including our Patron, Owen Teale. Audiences left with a lot to think about on their way home. The whole Weekender ended with a performance from our Senior Wac Arts students, performing the fast, fun and passionate Afro-Fusion Dance piece which proved that Wac Arts is a place where diversity is nourished. Thank you to everyone involved with making the Wac Arts Weekender possible.



The Wac Arts Runners

On Sunday 25th March, 9277 runners began a race that would take them past iconic London landmarks as part of the inaugural London Landmarks Half Marathon, raising over £1million for charity. Seven of those runners represented Wac Arts, raising over £6300 and smashing their goal of £5000. This donation will go towards subsidising our programmes, keeping them accessible to all young people.

In more running news, the 22nd April is the London Marathon, with more than 50,000 people taking part. Wac Arts are fortunate enough to have received a Charity Ballot place, and are delighted that AJ Lipford will be running for us. AJ was originally a member of our London Landmarks Half Marathon team, but jumped at the chance to go for the full marathon instead. You can support AJ at <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/AaronLipford>

London Youth

We are delighted to collaborate with many organisations across the city, including London Youth. We recently hosted their first Young Culture Makers Exhibition, which showcased the work of over seventy young people from ten different organisations, including artwork from our Wonder Wac Arts programme. The winning artwork from this competition will be displayed at Woodrow High House, where it will be enjoyed by the children, youth people, youth leaders and teachers who visit throughout the year.



In April, our young people and staff headed to Woodrow High House for a weekend residential. We were joined by six other organisations who are also part of London Youth, for a day of music, physical theatre, film-making and art work ran by our staff. By the end of the day, they had transformed the 17th Century Manor into a haunted house, and took it in turns to scare other groups with their spooky performances. The Wac Arts Reach team also ran a CPD session for other Youth Workers, teaching them how to utilise creative technology in their own sessions using the Wonder Pod Toolkit (bit.ly/WonderPod).

Success for Students and Alumni

One of the volunteers making the Curiosity project happen was longtime member of the Wac Arts family, John Gaine. John started with Wonder Wac Arts before moving into Ignite and the Over-18s group (Urban Motivation), and then becoming an Ambassador for our work. When he's not busy working for Sega, he is also a member of our Senior Wac Arts programme – You may have seen him at the Weekender where he performed an amazing scene from Blood Brothers. He received the Peter Brinson award this year, for attending 100% of his classes, and this summer will be moving from Drama Level Two to Professional Approaches to Drama – the first young person with a disability to join this class. Well done John!



Everyone has been talking about Sheila Atim since she started appearing in 'Girl from the North Country' last year. In addition to five star reviews, Sheila received nominations at the Evening Standard Theatre Awards and the What's On Stage Awards, before collecting a Clarence Derwent Award at the end of January. She then went on to win an Olivier Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role in a Musical for her role, after performing 'Tight Connection to My Heart' on the Royal Albert Hall stage.

Also on stage at the Olivier Awards was fellow Senior Wac Arts alum Jamael Westman, who performed with the 'Hamilton' cast in the title role. 'Hamilton' took home seven Oliviers at the end of the evening.

The award success does not end there. Daniel Kaluuya, star of Jordan Peele's 'Get Out', received his first Academy Award nomination for his role in the film. He also received a BAFTA nomination, and was awarded the BAFTA Rising Star Award. In his speech, he thanked Wac Arts, saying; 'I am a product of arts funding within the United Kingdom... Thank you for letting me think differently.'

Curiosity Funding

We were fortunate to receive funding from BBC Children in Need as part of their Curiosity partnership with the Wellcome Trust. This funding was to create exciting ways to encourage children and young people to be curious about the world around them. For Wac Arts, this meant a three-day project, culminating in an immersive sensory performance, which took the audience through the human body. Blindfolded and sat on a wheeled-desk chair, the audience were moved around the space as they listened to a narration of the story, enhanced by live cued sound effects. Meanwhile, other members of the group gave us objects to feel and squirted us with water. The performance was a fantastic demonstration of the talents of the group, and we cannot wait to see where this project goes next!

Welcome to Our New Building Partners

We are excited to have two new building partners joining the Old Town Hall. The first is Immigration Lawyer Rimmy Bedi-Whaley, who has been a fantastic addition to our community already. We have also been joined by KIDS, who we have previously collaborated with in delivering short breaks for Camden Council. We are looking forward to more chances to work with KIDS in the future, and creating a home full of organisations that can collaborate, support and develop together.

Save the Date

Audition for Wac Arts Diploma in Professional Musical Theatre – 31st May

Contact Gary.Grant@WacArts.co.uk or visit www.WacArts.co.uk/Diploma for more information.

Threepenny Opera

Presented by the Wac Arts Diploma in Professional Musical Theatre – 29th-30th June

At John Lyons Theatre

Reserve your ticket by emailing Diploma@WacArts.co.uk



www.WacArts.co.uk

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