

Introducing the Ottawa Theatre School - The Acting Conservatory Program!

In 2004, under the direction of Bruce Bissonnette, The Ottawa School of Speech & Drama introduced the Pre-Professional Acting Program. With five years of professional training under its belt, the program changed its name to the Ottawa Theatre School; The Acting Conservatory Program. The program offers a unique opportunity for dedicated post secondary students to develop the skills that they need for a career in acting. The School's exciting Acting Conservatory Program is an intensive, 2-year diploma program in which students train with committed theatre professionals. It's a program where students are encouraged to find their own artistic voice while honing specific acting skills.



Acting Conservatory Program students (l. to r.) Mélodie Courval, Ryan Buffone, Brent Landry and alumna Michelle Leblanc.

OTTAWA
THEATRE
SCHOOL
The Acting Conservatory Program

The primary emphasis of the program is to embed the basic skills that an actor relies on to work successfully in the profession. At OSSD there is a focus on the development and creation of new work, coupled with intensive and specific training. The school's involvement with the Ottawa theatre community uniquely positions the students to work with top professionals in the field.

Housed in the Ottawa School of Speech & Drama, students of the Ottawa Theatre School regularly perform in the Natalie Stern Studio Theatre. Working partnerships with organizations such as Third Wall Theatre and the Canadian Screen Training Centre give increased access to a variety of industry professionals.

Enrolment is limited, ensuring individualized attention and a personalized approach benefiting students from a diverse range of experiences and backgrounds. Approximately twelve students are admitted into the program each year.

The School's alumni are being recognized as some of the city's most exciting new emerging artists. Our graduates are leading the way as they create new companies and bring fresh faces to established companies, helping to develop Ottawa's thriving professional theatre community.

To find out more about the Acting Conservatory Program at the Ottawa Theatre School, visit www.ottawatheatreschool.com or contact Bruce Bissonnette, Director of Adult Programs at bbissonnette@ossd.com or (613)578-6788X 203.

Message from the ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Welcome to our chilly winter edition of our newsletter. The devastating transit strike is finally over. Being hale and hearty, and totally dedicated to classes at OSSD, students

and parents found alternate means of transport and braved the conditions to begin new classes this semester. Our studios are filled with creative energy and many are relieving their stress in our Yoga classes, laughing their way through Improv classes, and finding new ideas and friends in our acting classes. Winter really brings people together in Ottawa, and nowhere is that more evident than at OSSD.

For those who couldn't make it out to us this semester because of the transit strike, we are offering a special short series of classes. "Acting Tapas" is a great way for you to get back into your creative self. See our notice in this newsletter for more information about this exciting new series. I look forward to watching everyone's dramatic explorations over the next few months. From monologues, scenes and poetry, to singing, dancing and masks and mime, OSSD continues to enrich all of our lives, to give us a place to grow and to dream.

Thank you for trekking through the snow to join us.

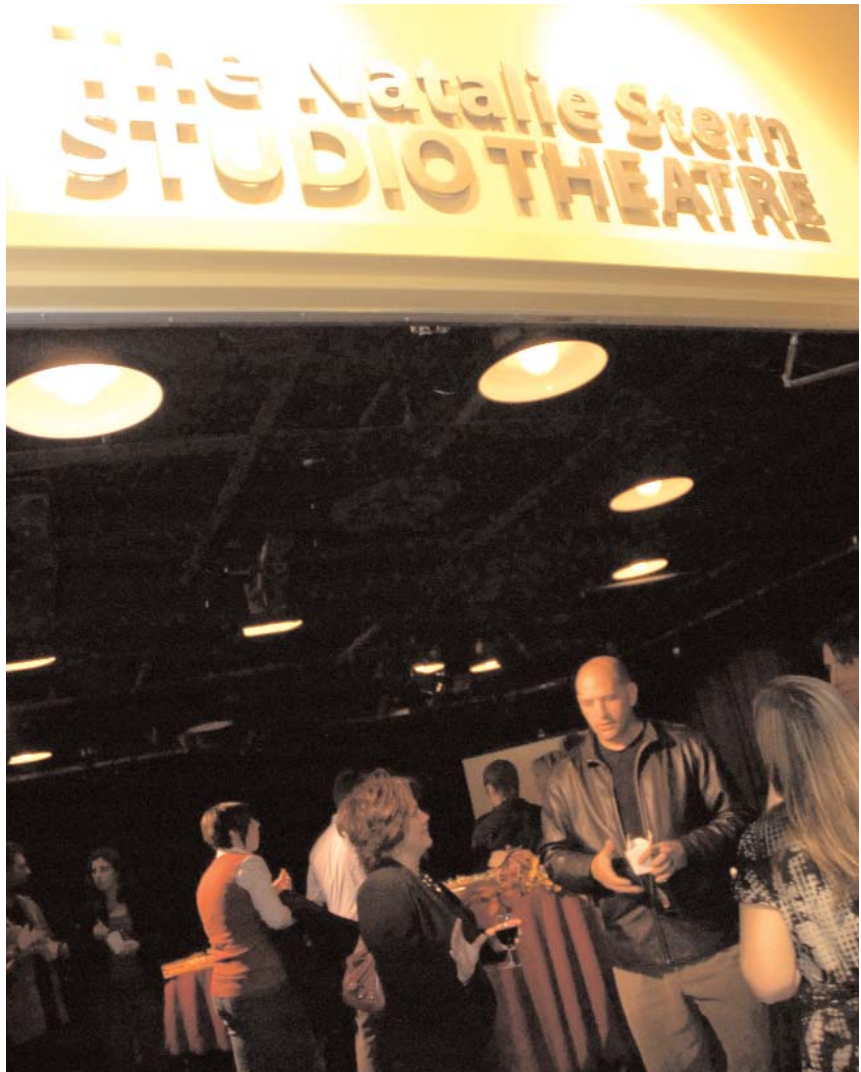
Amanda Lewis

Summer Camp Volunteers

Summer Camp Volunteers are needed for Summer Break Camps. Volunteers must be able to commit for at least an entire week and will be needed for the duration of the day from 9am to 4pm. Applicants must be at least 14 years of age.

Email info@ossd.com for an application form.

Corporate Training at OSSD



Guests of the Westboro BIA networking event mingle in the Natalie Stern Studio Theatre

You already know that OSSD is the place for drama education for children, youth and adults, but did you know that OSSD also offers a Corporate Training program?

The Ottawa School of Speech & Drama can help you and your colleagues get an edge over your competition with our Corporate Training workshops. Visit the Programs page at www.OSSD.com for information on how you and your colleagues can participate in fun and engaging team-building exercises. The Corporate Training program offers workshops that will sharpen your presentation and voice skills, build your confidence and teach you the skills and techniques that work for acting professionals. Full day or half day workshops can be tailored to the needs of your group. Please contact Francesco Corsaro at (613) 567-6788 x 202 for more information or for a proposal that will get you and your team into the act! Workshops can also be tailored for private, individual sessions! Please inquire with the front desk for more details.

A Reading of the Children's Republic

During the week of November 18 - 22, 2009, OSSD students were part of a special workshop on the second draft of Hannah Moscovitch's new play *The Children's Republic* (formerly known as *The King of The Children*). The Great Canadian Theatre Company (GCTC) and OSSD co-commissioned this play from Hannah Moscovitch to explore of the life and philosophies of Dr. Janus Korczak, Polish pediatrician, novelist and children's activist. Friend and benefactor of OSSD, Leon Gluzman, was an orphan in Dr. Korczak's orphanage in Poland in the 1920's and Mr. Gluzman continues to be the inspiration behind work on the project.



Nick Carpenter, Musical Composer (l.),
Hannah Moscovitch, Playwright (r.)

On November 22, student actors Victoria Bleeks, Curtis Gough, Juliana Krajcovic, Luke LeTourneau, Liam McMunagle, Adrien Pyke, Hannah Sideris Hersh and Savannah Vetter joined professional actors Kate Hurman, John Koensgen, Amy Rutherford and Kim Selody in a staged reading of the play for an invited audience of donors, interested parties and members of the Gluzman family.

Based on her experiences in our workshop, Hannah Moscovitch has gone to work on a further draft of the play. Stay tuned to hear about where *The Children's Republic* is going next...

DESIGNING FOR THEATRE

A free mentorship course for students age 16 - 21

OSSD is offering a special course in set, costume and prop design with designer Sarah Waghorn. The course involves technical and hands-on knowledge as students are mentored through the design and production process. Students will work on two different productions: *Great Expectations* and *Mischief City* (a production of the school's Acting Conservatory Program).

Classes will take place on various Saturdays and Sundays throughout the term. Interested students should contact OSSD at info@ossd.com or (613) 567-6788 for more details. The course begins February 22.

*This project is made possible in part through Theatre Ontario's Youth Theatre Training Program, funded by the Ontario Arts Council

DECEMBER WAS BUSY @ OSSD!

Here are a couple of highlights from some special events that took place:

OPEN HOUSE WEEK

From December 7 - 15, OSSD held OPEN HOUSE WEEK in which 32 different classes presented theatre exercises and games, improvisations, dances, scenes and monologues and creative work of all kinds. Approximately 1,200 people attended Open House week and celebrated the end of the semester with us.

ANGEL SQUARE

OSSD Students were invited to perform in Angel Square by Brian Doyle at the Ottawa Little Theatre. Performing with Ottawa actors and celebrities, to an audience of approximately 400 people, OSSD students helped to raise over \$10,000 for the Ottawa International Children's Festival.

OUR STORIES

Students from the Our Stories program at the Debra Dynes Family house presented their work on December 16th at OSSD. It was a very high energy evening and a great learning process for everyone. Students were bused to OSSD, where they rehearsed, were treated to a pizza dinner, and performed for family and friends. Many thanks go to instructor Kate Smith, assistant Laura Mac Neil, Debra Dynes coordinator Régine Doirin and project coordinator Kat Bissonnette for helping to make this special evening so successful.

Amer from Debra Dynes House rehearses for his presentation



Upcoming Events



Students from the Shout Out class prepare for All the World's a Stage

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

March 6 & 7, 7:00 pm

Join OSSD students and instructors in celebrating Theatre of all kinds. "All the World's a Stage" will showcase student performers in scenes and monologues from a variety of plays as part of a special fundraiser for OSSD's scholarship program. The evening will include a silent auction, raffle draws and refreshments.

March 6 - Conservatory & Playwriting students; Mature content

March 7 - Shout Out, Shakespeare & Page to Stage students; all ages Suitable for all audiences.

Tickets \$10.00 & \$8.00

Natalie Stern Studio Theatre

MISCHIEF CITY: The Musical Play

April 20 & 21, 7:00 pm

School performances April 20 - 22
11am & 1pm

Eight-year old Winchell has been yanked into Mischief City to solve a problem. Winchell's imaginary friend Maxine has an older brother who is planning something big, "really big", to destroy Maxine's birthday. And when Winchell's baby sister Cleantha is gobbled up by the horrible vacuum cleaner Hoove, Winchell knows that he must try and save her, and Maxine, from destruction. Written by award winning children's book author Tim Wynne-Jones, the musical *Mischief City* will delight audiences of all ages.

Tickets: \$15.00 & \$12.00
\$6.00 for school performances

Natalie Stern Studio Theatre

THEATRE SMORGASBORD 2

Saturday, April 18, 8:00 pm

An exciting evening of experimental performance art called "Vocal Masques", performed by the Ottawa Theatre School students from The Ottawa School of Speech & Drama. "Theatre Smorgasbord" is an evening where you can get a peak into some of OSSD's rising stars. Suitable for adult audiences.

Tickets: \$10.00

Natalie Stern Studio Theatre

YOUNG ACTORS' COMPANY

OSSD is again collaborating with the Museum of Nature to create an original, site specific theatre piece. This year's theme is Endangered Species. The piece will be performed in the museum on April 18th and 19th at 11am and 1pm as part of Wildlife Month. Admission to the play is free with museum admission. Contact OSSD for performance times.

The play will also be performed at OSSD on April 28 at 5:00.

Admission is free.

Ottawa School of Speech & Drama
294 Picton Ave. in Westboro
(613) 567-6788

www.ossd.com

OPEN HOUSE WEEK

April 28 - May 4

All child and youth classes (except production courses) are open to the public. It's a great chance to see all of the amazing things going on at OSSD. Check the web site or notice boards for specific times and classes. Admission is free.

Ottawa School of Speech & Drama

HELLO DOLLY!

May 7 - 9, 7:00 pm, May 9, 2:00 p.m.

The Studio 1 Musical Theatre Company will be directed by Natalie Fraser Purdy in *Hello Dolly!*, suitable for all audiences.

Tickets: \$15.00 & \$12.00

Natalie Stern Studio Theatre

CONNECTIONS: THE SENIOR COMPANY

May 13 - 15, 7:30 pm

The OSSD Senior Company will be directed by James Richardson (Artistic Director of Third Wall theatre) in 2 moving one-act plays about the difficulties faced by teenagers in contemporary society. Please note: these plays are suitable for mature audiences.

Tickets: \$15.00 & \$12.00

Natalie Stern Studio Theatre

SEUSSICAL

May 21 - 23, 7:00 pm

May 23, 2:00 pm

The Studio 2 Musical Theatre Company will be directed by Emmanuelle Zeesman in *Seussical*, a Broadway musical, suitable for all audiences.

Tickets: \$15.00 & \$12.00

Natalie Stern Studio Theatre

HONK

May 28 - 30, 7:00 pm

May 30, 2:00 pm

The Studio 3 Musical Theatre Company will be directed by Natalie Fraser Purdy in "Honk", a musical suitable for all audiences.

Tickets: \$15.00 & \$12.00

Natalie Stern Studio Theatre

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

May 28 - 30, 7:00 pm

May 30, 2:00 pm

The OSSD Performance Company, directed by Amanda Lewis and Emmanuelle Zeesman will produce *Great Expectations* adapted by Barbara Field.

Tickets: \$18.00 & \$12.00

Academic Hall, University of Ottawa
133 Séraphin-Marion St

Student Profile



Like many busy OSSD students, Norah Paton has a lot on the go. With the pressures of being a grade 12 student on the cusp of deciding what path to take next, Norah still finds time to grace the halls and studios at OSSD to fine tune her acting skills. When asked what brought her to OSSD, Norah credits her sister's interest in Shakespeare – and the copy of *Julius Caesar* she stole from her – for sparking her interest in drama.

Norah had previously studied piano and had also taken the Royal Conservatory of Music exams to test her skills. The Trinity exams, the drama equivalent to the RCM exams, drew

Norah further in to OSSD, and eventually decided to take the exams to test her ability in speech and drama. When asked what she found valuable about preparing for and taking the exams, Norah had this to say, "They're a great goal to work toward. The examiner's comments are valuable and helped me develop my skills beyond what I would have been able to do on my own. It also helped to hear the same comments and feedback from the examiner that my instructors gave – it reinforced that the instructors at OSSD had it right."

Norah went on to explain that the testing process is very straightforward. Whether you are starting with a poem in the early stage or have moved on to the next levels with monologues, students present themselves to the examiner and hand in the text so that they can follow along. The exam begins with announcing the work, the author and the character portrayed. After performing the piece, the

examiner may ask about context or historical information relevant to the piece or the character.

Norah stressed that the Trinity Exam process helped her focus on the skills that she may not have been able to improve upon in a typical ensemble setting. The preparation and exam are both a magnifying glass that forces one to concentrate on skill and ability. The process also allows one to choose pieces that fall outside of your comfort zone, an important thing in drama education. Norah also believes that Trinity will give her an edge when she has to audition for post-secondary programs. With a knowing smile, Norah noted that those programs require an audition process that is similar to Trinity.

Norah is the Co-Producer for the OSSD fundraiser **All the World's a Stage**, in March.

NEW! ACTING TAPAS

Acting treats for Adults & Teens

The transit strike is over, winter is almost over and OSSD is offering a short series of acting classes to pick up your spirits. Improv, Musical Theatre, Stage Fighting – there's a little bit of everything on this Tapas menu. On Monday nights, come to OSSD with your teen – you'll get separate classes, but you'll learn the same skills and come together at the end to show off to each other.

Mondays: March 2 - April 6
6:30 - 8:30, \$135.00

LIVE! Online Registration!

OSSD now offers Secure, Online Registration. In an effort to keep costs from increasing we have taken steps to make things easier. Online registration is Secure, Fast, Effective and Convenient. In less than 5 minutes you can register for a class, pay and receive your receipt.

Register now for March Break and Summer Camp! Look for Fall 2009 registration this summer!

Alumni Spotlight

I was seven years old when I first went to OSSD.

My time at OSSD was full of so much rich creativity and was the perfect platform to let any kid's spontaneous and wild imagination run free.

I am in my third year at Ryerson in the Acting program, and one thing that the faculty and the program itself teaches us is that the imagination is the actor's most powerful tool.

I am immediately harkened back to my years at OSSD, where a group of 7 year olds were given boxes of various shapes and a section of a white picket fence and simply asked to create a story.

Even as a teenager at OSSD I still found that same freedom. I could show up to class and tackle any Shakespeare character I wanted, or pick a monologue from *Death of a Salesman* and try my hand at that.

It was that fearlessness that OSSD inspired, fostered, and has still stuck with me through my years at Ryerson. I have no doubt it will stay with me as I tackle a career in theatre. I can't thank Natalie and OSSD enough for the years they have given me, and I wish all the best for OSSD in the years to come.



David Coomber former student pursuing a degree in Theatre at Ryerson

Dates to Remember

- March 16 to 20 - March Break
- OSSD is closed for the Easter Holiday, April 10-13
- OSSD Fundraiser
All the World's a Stage
March 6 & 7
Tickets: \$10 for adults & \$8 students/seniors



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- Visit us at OSSD at 294 Picton Ave. We'd be very glad to accept your donation!

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