



President's Message

Ah! The sun is shining and spring is in the air! There is something invigorating about this time of year... perhaps our theatre spaces keep us in the dark a little too much! While that's certainly my comfort zone I do look forward to some warm sunshine. I hope that wherever you are in the province you are feeling invigorated as well. I'm super excited to be gearing up for our big production in May! Because of conflicts at our local school I will miss both the Goodwill Shakespeare Festival in Vernon and the Provincial Drama Festival in New Westminster. I do hope all of you have better luck and are planning to attend either or both of these amazing ABCDE sponsored events!

Lana O'Brien is working hard towards preparations for Goodwill Shakespeare Festival, April 28-30, in Vernon, and from her updates at our last meeting I think those of you attending are in for a real treat! If you would like more information or to find out if there is still room to attend, contact <http://goodwillshakespeare.ca/> Likewise, Gord Hamilton and Sharon Conrad and their team are already hard at work getting ready for the Provincial Drama Festival running May 2-4 at Douglas College in New Westminster. It's also that time of year to start thinking about recommending students for scholarships and your ABCDE executive is happy to announce that this year we will be sponsoring two separate scholarships. One will be for performing arts and the other for technical theatre. Go to <http://www.bcdramateachers.com/abcde-student-scholarship.html> for applications. Over and above the ones we are offering are the scholarships generously offered by Vancouver Film School. Did you know there are also other scholarship opportunities available to your students only through attending the Provincial Festival? It's another good reason to make your way there as a performing or a non-performing delegate.

While I am sad that I will miss out on these events I will be busy in the next little while giving a voice to the ABCDE members and our concerns around the new ministry proposed funding model. I'm sure most of you have heard wind of this by now, but for those of you in the dark (likely busy in your dark theatre spaces) the ministry has released a proposed funding model for next year that has many of us concerned. There is language in the document that could potentially force school districts to cancel classes offered outside the timetable. That would affect many drama teachers should that prospect come to fruition. This is not a certainty, but we are concerned and are asking the Ministry for clarification in order to avoid potential loss of classes in the future. Luckily we live in a time where it isn't as challenging to convince the powers that be that what we do is essential programming. I have drafted a letter to the Minister of Education and am working on one that you can send out to your MLAs. We can stay in contact through our ABCDE on Facebook page.

If you'd like to talk shop with your fellow ABCDE members, you are in luck. Your exec is looking to sponsor a few "Shop Talk" events. Our first one will be after Arts Club's "Matilda the Musical" on Saturday, June 8th. The intention is for many of us to attend the same show so that afterward we can gather and just catch up and visit. This is often the highlight of our conference and your ABCDE executive is hoping to provide more opportunities for you to get together. The meetings will be low key, casual, no formal workshops, just wine, good food, friends, theatre artists, colleagues! Hope to see you there. Book your ticket soon as they are going fast! Until next time, I wish you all the best in finishing out the year and hope you enjoy a restful and rejuvenating break!

Heather Lee - President, ABCDE

The Ashgirl - Langley Fine Arts School, Langley



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SPOTLIGHT ON...

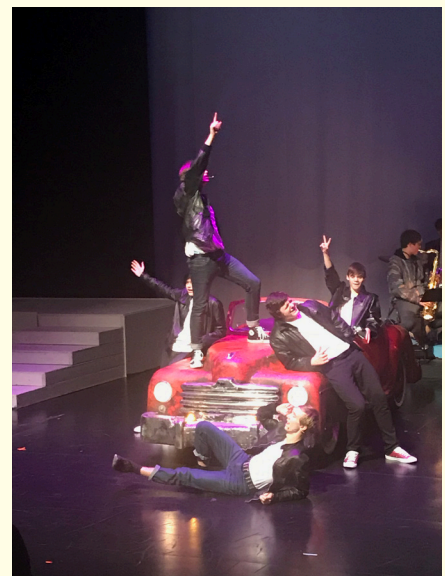
Brooks Secondary School in Powell River.

We recently performed Grease for 3 sold out shows in December of 2018, and this spring we are taking our children's theatre troupe on the road performing "A Bunch of Munsch" for our local elementary schools. 2019 will bring to the stage a steam punk themed Romeo and Juliet.

I'm excited to offer the "Theatre Company" course as I feel that the new curriculum is more in line with my core beliefs about teaching the wide range of competencies required in performing arts. My students have played a big part in the marketing and branding of Brooks Theatre Company. Their investment and community building is nothing short of inspirational!

We are so very blessed to have within our school, access to the Max Cameron Theatre, with our own theatre manager, Jacquie Dawson and technical director, Jason Leane. The space is a 402 seat, professional level theatre, and recently our tech kids had the pleasure to run Grease with the new LED lights!

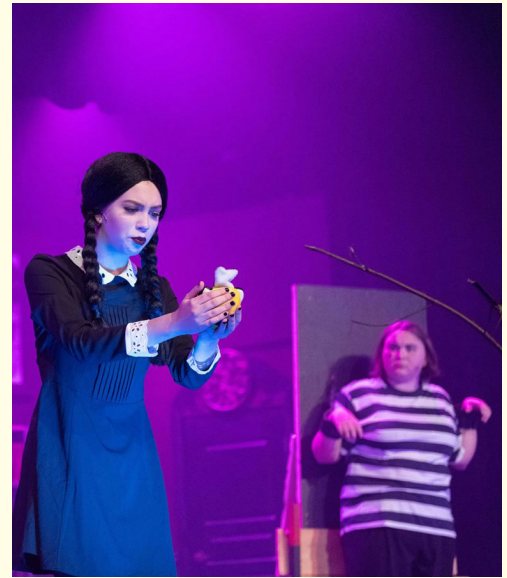
Jennifer Didcott
Theatre Arts Educator
Brooks Secondary School



Newsies - Riverside Secondary, Coquitlam



The Addams Family - Claremont Secondary, Victoria



Les Miserables -
Okanagan Mission Secondary School,
Kelowna



MASK WORK with Susan Bertoia

Photos by David Ingram

Students in SD 71, Courtenay/Comox were lucky enough to have an opportunity to work with Susan Bertoia on Physical Devising and Mask work during a week long ArtStarts grant workshop.



Broken - An Alternative Musical - Kalamalka Secondary, Coldstream



ABCDE Youthwright 2019

Congratulations to the top three selections in this year's Youthwright playwright competition, adjudicated by playwright Mark Leiren-Young

Eros in Training

by Samantha Moura Novais de Quadros
Brookswood Secondary, Langley
Teacher Sponsor: Sheri Eyre

To Grow Up

by Miranda Baker
Charles Hays Secondary, Prince Rupert
Teacher Sponsor: Alison O'Toole

Trust Me I'm Okay

by Jasmine Rutigliano and Louise Steinberg
Rockridge Secondary, West Vancouver
Teacher Sponsor: Avril Foster

Seeing Double! A Look inside our Double Casting Experience - A reflection

By Avril Foster & Jennifer Ohlhauser
Rockridge Secondary School, West Vancouver, BC

Got too much talent? "Double cast it!" Lots of drama teachers around the province double cast mainstage productions to allow for more actors to be able to showcase their skills and talents. We did it for our play "Radium Girls" this year.

When it came time to cast for "Radium Girls" by DW Gregory we decided to double cast for the roles of Grace, Kathryn, Irene and Mrs Fryer. Grace is the female lead and the other three are significant roles throughout the two-act play. We gave them all smaller roles as well. We named the two casts Dialpainters cast and Watercolours cast (thematic to the show) but didn't begin using these phrases until further on in the process, when we would run an entire act and when we set up the schedule for the performance nights. This year's play ran Wednesday to Friday for two weeks. So, the Dialpainters cast played on Opening night, third night and fifth night. The Watercolours cast played on second night, fourth night and Closing night.

Also, every double cast actor was in the play every night. They played their lead role in the Dialpainters cast and they played a small 1-20 lines role in the Watercolours cast, and vice versa.

How we did it:

In rehearsals, we required both actors to attend every rehearsal. Initially, for the blocking rehearsals, we asked the actors to shadow each other. Both people were on stage for every moment. For the directors, it took a bit to get used to at first. There were double the amount of people on stage at times. The actor who was shadowing would hover behind the actor that was rehearsing, kneeling when she kneeled, gesturing when she gestured, and even mouthing the lines along with her partner. It took a high level of trust for this to work, but it did. This was useful for giving blocking notes. Each student would take their own shorthand notes in their own script. As we began to run a scene or unit, the double cast actors would take turns practicing a scene. The next time we ran it, they would switch. One would watch and one would play the role. We did not administer this, rather we asked the double cast people to arrange it themselves. They were very good at making sure they each got a chance to practice each scene.

Our poster image was photographs of the three main characters and so we produced two versions of the poster. There were two cover pages of the programs too, but the contents inside were all the same, with the two casts labelled and listed fully.

...continued on next page.

Double casting, continued...

Benefits: As you can imagine, it is quite lovely to watch the different actors make their own choices about delivery, physicalization and subtext. Each of the double cast actors was given the freedom to make the role their own. It also so happened that one of our students who was double cast dropped out. No extra auditions or casting was required. Easy fix! Some of our double casting was Grade 12s and Grade 10s and so watching the close relationships form between the students was beneficial to the students and to our program. It helped close the gap between grades and increased the level of trust and teamwork. We observed that they were supportive and non-competitive with each other. Perhaps it was because we did six nights of the show and each double cast actor had three nights as their primary role and still got to be a part of the show on their “off” night as a secondary character. They all accepted this arrangement and saw it as positive. It was beautiful to watch. Also, having more actors in large roles means more students being highly motivated to sell lots of tickets - on different nights.

Drawbacks: In terms of scheduling and rehearsing, this created more work for us as directors. For example, there were more people to contact, and more people to give notes to (especially if there was an absence). Two dress rehearsals were required, obviously and we forgot to schedule that in version one of the production schedule! Whoops! Also...we never considered in advance that one actor would be required to kiss two actresses. Last, we needed to have different costumes for each actor because they were not the same sizes.

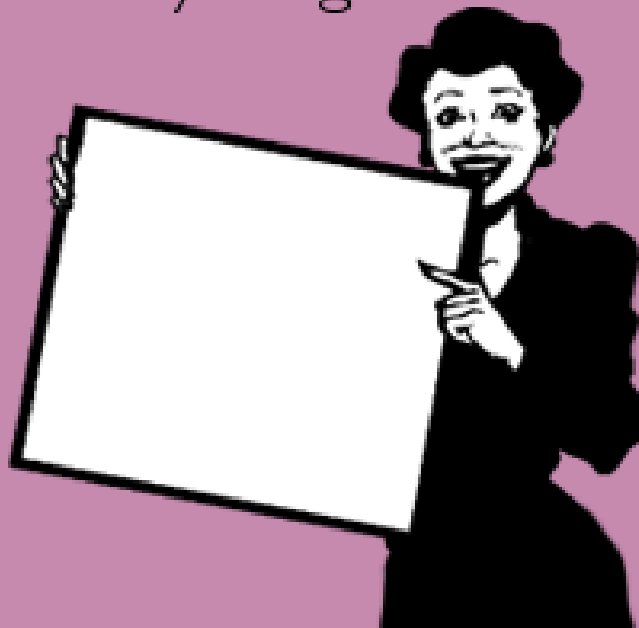
Student Response: “It was a lot of fun to work with the actor I was double cast with. It was also cool to see how someone else played the same role as me. Being double cast gave me a break on one of the nights so I didn’t feel burnt out at the end of the show. I also liked playing both of my characters because they were so different. I think that the show nights were done perfectly as the grade 12s got to have closing night and they 100% deserved it.” - anonymous Grade 10 actor



School of Rock - SD71 (Highland, Isfeld and Vanier Secondary, Courtenay/Comox)



And here's a list of everything
I will do on
Spring Break.



Become a member of the ABCDE... a PSA of the BCTF

#1 Do you want to join/subscribe to the ABCDE? Need to renew your membership? Online registration can be found at <https://www.bctf.ca/psa/join.aspx>

#2 Do you prefer to print off the application and mail it in? Find a link to the form at www.bcdramateachers.com

#3 Join our moderated email list-serv and connect with other Drama practitioners! Share ideas, ask for help, post info about your shows. Almost anything Drama-related goes. Anyone can read our list-serv, but only members/subscribers can post (membership has its privileges ...*sometimes we will post FREE offers for teachers on behalf of non-members)

To join our list-serv:

Use the drop-down list to select “psa-abcde” (fortunately we are the first one in the list!).

To post a message to our list-serv, please email Colin Plant at colinplant@shaw.ca

Our list-serv is moderated to avoid getting spammed.