

Why Stage2?

- There are no auditions to join **Stage2**. We are **totally open access** with an **active equal opportunities policy: anyone** between the ages of 7 and 21 can join, regardless of experience, background, confidence, financial situation or anything else!
- **Stage2's** number one rule is **no-one is ever left out at any time**, so all members know they can be confident in us as a company to provide a supportive and secure environment.
- **Based at Millennium Point**, right in the centre of Birmingham, we welcome young people from all over the region and from all the city's **different backgrounds, cultures and communities**.
- Our unique **Subsidy Fund** can be used to fund **any member** for **any** aspect of **Stage2**: membership fees, LAMDA lessons, outings, trips, drama school auditions etc – to ensure **no member is excluded from any opportunity** due to financial challenges.
- Approximately one third of **Stage2's** members have some form of specific need, challenge or disability. **Stage2** is totally inclusive of all abilities, and **everyone** takes part **together** and works to **support each other as a team**, celebrating each other's differences.
- **Every year** we produce 3-4 **professional-standard productions** in **professional city centre theatres** (with regular casts of up to and over 100) with members taking on all technical, backstage and front of house roles.
- We hold a range of informal performances from end of term **Workshop 'Sharings'** and **Showcase Evenings** to social events, such as, **Cabarets** and **Karaoke nights**, to give all members a chance to develop confidence, socialise and have fun.
- We encourage young people to be **dynamic** and **pro-active** and regularly create opportunities for members to give feedback and have ownership of **their** company and we continually adapt our practice to best suit the requirements of members, schools and the industry
- We have **member involvement at every level** of the company: members make up the Management Committee, attend board meetings, choose workshops, assist in leading sessions and represent **Stage2** in a variety of different ways. This sheet for example, has been written by Zac (17) and Priya (14).
- As well as productions and workshops, **Stage2** offers a unique range of **Work Experience** including **Marketing** and **Fundraising Committees**, a **Trainee Tutor Scheme**, **Apprenticeships** and an acclaimed **Peer Mentor Scheme**, used as a model of good practice for other organisations.
- **Stage2's** **nationally accredited Peer Mentoring Scheme** is the **only one** of its kind to be recognised as an approved provider of **safe and effective practice** by the **Mentoring and Befriending Foundation**. We are also still the only Youth Theatre in the UK to run such a scheme.
- **Stage2** has a **100% success rate in LAMDA Exams** (QCA accredited and generate UCAS points) in Acting, Devising, Musical Theatre, Choral Speaking, Verse and Prose, which are open to all members, with tuition being offered on weekday evenings.
- We stage as many **set and classical texts** as we can, bringing them vividly to life for our members and other Birmingham students to assist in their studies: we're constantly looking out for **interesting** and **stimulating** links to help members engage in productions. We also stage a mixture of contemporary work to give members a full experience of modern and classical theatre.

- Members enter pieces in the **BDTG** (Birmingham District Theatre Guild) '**BFAME**' Festival; and we have a superb track record, having **won in the Solo and Duo Acting and Poetry Categories every single year members have entered them**, as well as numerous other awards for one act and full length plays.
- All **Stage2 productions are also entered for the annual NODA (National Operatic and Dramatic Association) Awards**. '*Shakers*' won the award for **Best Youth Play** in Birmingham 2010 and '*Romeo and Juliet*' winning **Best Adult Play** in Birmingham for the whole of 2011 - and, as an example of our diverse selection of shows, our version of Willy Russell's musical '*Our Day Out*' was runner up in the same category!
- In 2010, **Stage2** was named the '**Best Cultural Thing**' in **Birmingham** in the *Media Circus Invisible City Awards* and continues to be a major cultural organisation, regularly speaking out about young people's rights and discussing strategies for better engaging communities, particularly young people in Birmingham.
- Since becoming a **Registered Charity (no. 1108213)** we have been awarded grants from such prestigious organisations such as The Big Lottery, The Heritage Fund, Awards for All, Esmée Fairbairn, Network for Social Change, The Network Fund and Four Acre Trust.
- We collaborate with **top professionals** such as Danny Price (Choreographer for Madonna and Janet Jackson), Wayne Fitzsimons (Numerous West End performances including Chicago and The Lord of The Rings) and Lisa Spink (The Shakespeare Institute), to give our members **invaluable training**.
- Many members have gone on to be professional actors including Arthur Darvill (Rory in Doctor Who), Lauren Crace (Danielle in Eastenders) and John Light (Max Schneide in Holby City) to name but a few.
- Our Patrons are internationally-renowned playwright and actress **Claire Dowie**, and director **Colin Watkeys**, who not only let us do unique treatments of their work but also **visit our rehearsal studios to take workshops with our members**.
- **Every backstage role in every production:** Assistant Director, Production Assistant, Lighting Operator, Sound Operator and Stage Manager; are carried out by **our members**, having been fully trained by professionals.
- We regularly run **Technical Training Courses** (covering everything from lighting design to Health and Safety Legislation), responding to the industry's need to recruit new technicians with many members going straight into the industry. **Stage2** members have provided technical support and design for major events such as the local (Midlands) and National Arts and Business Awards.
- We help members with applications for **further education at University and Drama School** and **wider opportunities**, such as **National Youth Theatre**, and we have an excellent track record across the country.
- Our Company Director is still leading **Stage2**, a quarter of a century after setting the company up, and most of our staff are **ex-members** who have gone on to develop the skills they learnt with us and become **practitioners, directors, administrators and teachers in their own right**.

Over 7000 members have benefited from the company in its 25 year history and, to this day, Stage2 still runs with the same core ethos and values that it started with:

Turn up. Try hard. Be nice.

Why Stage2? Why Not?