

The 2022 School

SUMMARY

Summer School:	A week-long, residential theatre summer school for actors, developers/directors, music theatre singers and writers/devisers based around two main courses. Participants can select 1 of the 4 options offered in each course.
Workshops:	One 3-day Intensive Workshop on an acting theme
Tutors:	Professional theatre practitioners who also teach at accredited drama schools
Dates:	Saturday 23rd to Sunday 31st July 2022 inclusive
Venue:	The <i>Centre d'Accueil Clairefontaine</i> on the Luxembourg–Belgium border.
Applications:	Detailed information and on-line applications at www.leadss.lu or email to admin@leadss.lu

SUMMER SCHOOL

The School

LEATSS is a collaborative, project-based summer school particularly suited to amateur enthusiasts (and those who may be a little hesitant) who wish to develop and improve their practical skills, knowledge, understanding and capabilities.

We provide expert professional tuition within a friendly and fully supportive environment and a high tutor-to-participant ratio (about 1:12). Because the emphasis is on process and not product (how can we do it, not how well do we perform), we can encompass a wide range of age, experience and skill. LEATSS is, however, primarily an adult school.

The Course

Activity revolves entirely around **project work** designed to accommodate and integrate the different strands offered. Tutors work with students throughout the day and the various projects interweave from time to time: there are sessions where staff move across from one project to another; particular explorations may be shared or pooled; there may be developments that briefly pull in the entire student body. By the end of the week, everyone should have sampled something of the experience of everyone else.

After two years' enforced break due to Covid, Summer School will be returning to its usual format, but with some form of collaboration between courses at the end.

A **3-day workshop** – separate from the main Summer School – will be held from Sunday 24th to Tuesday 26th July inclusive. This will be residential, and also open to day students.

We are active throughout each day, with time off on Thursday afternoon and evening. Although the course is intensive the atmosphere is relaxed, and we ensure that there is time – in breaks, around the grounds and winding down at the end of the day – to chat and share the experience.

The Projects

The banner theme for 2022 is **ABOUT TIME**.

Students can choose to follow courses from:

THEME: acting, storytelling, musical theatre, singing. Four options are offered, each student takes one.

SKILLS: acting, comedy (Commedia), voice work, singing. Four options are offered, each student takes one.

There is also a third, student-led but tutor-mentored, 4-hour practical course for actors and directors.

The Tutors

GRAEME DU FRESNE	Course Director; musical director, singing teacher, director, actor
GEORGE RYAN	voice coach, actor, teacher
JANICE DUNN	director, writer, deviser, teacher
MITCH MITCHELSON	actor, director, teacher

The tutors' biographies are posted on the LEATSS website.

The Options

THEME:

Graeme Du Fresne	Strange Times (<i>singing</i>) songs from shows with non-linear timescales. Ensemble, duets, and solo opportunities
George Ryan	Deciphering and Demystifying Shakespeare (<i>acting</i>) exploring, as an actor, Shakespeare's treatment of language and time
Janice Dunn	Modern Times in Musical Theatre (<i>acting, movement</i>) the craft of musicals and how to act in them
Mitch Mitchelson	Story-telling (<i>acting</i>) techniques to translate stories into theatre

SKILLS:

Graeme Du Fresne	A Singing Glossary (<i>singing</i>) techniques, methods and processes for improving singing skills
George Ryan	Voice and the Senses (<i>voicing the written word</i>) harnessing the full expression of the voice
Janice Dunn	An Actor's Viewpoint (<i>acting</i>) different methods to improve acting skills
Mitch Mitchelson	Lazzi! The Business of Comedy (<i>acting</i>) exploring the dark underbelly of comedy

Details are below and also posted on the LEATSS website.

The Timetable

Summer School starts with lunch on Saturday 23rd at 12:30 followed by an introduction to the school, explanations and tasters of the courses, voting for course options and then a working session after supper. It ends at lunchtime on Sunday 31st. Students can stay at the venue on the night of Friday 22nd by prior arrangement with the LEATSS administrator.

INTENSIVE WORKSHOP

The Workshop

A 3-day Intensive Workshop is offered, details to be announced. This workshop does not require previous knowledge or experience in the subject.

The workshop will start on Sunday morning and continue until Tuesday afternoon. The timetable will follow that of the Summer School so that breaks and mealtimes coincide. Residential students can stay at Clairefontaine for the duration of the workshop.

The Workshop Course

Sun 24th to Tues 26th July: Title to be announced (*acting*)

The Tutor

LAWRENCE EVANS director, actor, teacher

Details of the course are below and are posted – together with the tutor's biography – on the LEATSS website.

The Timetable

The Workshop has 16 hours of class plus 4 hours of voluntary attendance at courses by regular summer school tutors, broken down as follows:

Sunday from 11:30 am until 21:00 pm with breaks for tea/coffee, lunch and supper.

Monday from 9:30 am until 21:00 pm with breaks for tea/coffee, lunch and supper.

Tuesday from 9.30 am until 15:30 pm with breaks for tea/coffee and lunch.

Students are encouraged to attend the summer school warm-up at 9.00 am.

3 nights' accommodation with breakfast are included as well as all meals. Registration and room occupation will be before the first session (or by prior arrangement with the course administrator). For day students, all meals are included.

Looking forward to welcoming you to Clairefontaine,

Graeme Du Fresne
(Course Director)

and

John Brigg
(Administrator)



The Course Details

SUMMER SCHOOL 2022

COURSE 1: THEME – **About Time**

GRAEME DU FRESNE **STRANGE TIMES (singing)**

(Musical theatre and other songs with non-linear time scales)

One musical that starts at the end of the story and finishes at the beginning! Another in which one character starts at the end of the story whilst the other starts at the beginning, and a musical in which the characters remain the same age despite the story spanning 150 years! In order, these shows are: *Merrily We Roll Along* by Stephen Sondheim, *The Last Five Years* by Jason Robert Brown and *Love Life* by Kurt Weil. We will be working on songs from these non-linear pieces as well as other time related works including *Racing With The Clock* from *The Pyjama Game* and a setting of Shakespeare's *Sonnet 18*.

The arrangements will consist of some ensemble pieces, a duet that will initially be learnt by the ensemble and at least one solo that we will also learn together before attempting sections solo and/or the whole song. Hopefully as each participant's confidence builds, volunteering for solo singing won't be too daunting a prospect. We will work on acting the songs as well as singing them. The aim of the course is to explore the material in a supportive environment, improve technically and have some fun.

GEORGE RYAN **DECIPHERING AND DEMYSTIFYING SHAKESPEARE (acting)**

(How to communicate Shakespeare's language and philosophy of time – and better understand our own)

Pleasure and action make the hours seem short (Othello)

Words without thoughts never to heaven go (Hamlet)

How do actors communicate the complex language in his plays? This course will unlock the secrets of what makes Shakespeare seem impenetrable. We will explore active and fun approaches that will enable each participant to discover and develop their ability to speak and perform Shakespeare's poetic texts with confidence and conviction.

Over the last two years since the lockdown a lot of us have thought about time. Either we have less time, or the time we do have with people has become more precious. Shakespeare is one of the world's best storytellers, and through storytelling we '*hold the mirror up to nature*' (*Hamlet*) in order to understand more about ourselves. This course is an opportunity to examine Shakespeare's specific philosophy of time, and in doing so understand more about ourselves and our place in this new world.

JANICE DUNN **MODERN TIMES IN MUSICAL THEATRE (acting and movement)**

(Exploring the craft of musicals and how to act in them)

A course examining elements of the musical theatre genre; how it transcends boundaries, and why it remains so powerful, poignant, and popular in a post-modern 21st century. (Please note that this is not a singing course.)

We will work with a selection of songs, texts, and scenes from a variety of musicals (classic, show, story, political, jukebox, controversial, and mould breaking).

There will be group and pair work, and individual work for those who would like to.

Our examination will cover elements such as:

- song as text,
- movement and staging possibilities of numbers,
- character and scene exercises linked to how song/ numbers, and story/ narrative, co-exist.

These will be our starting points, and work will elaborate and develop throughout the week according to the make-up of the group, and its needs.

I hope it will be a joyous, fun, and dynamic course, suitable for everyone; those who are musical theatre buffs, those new to musicals, and everyone in between. There will be movement elements, but they do not require people to be dancers, choreographers, or of course singers, as this is not a singing course; it is an acting course. But we can sing and dance if we want to, while exploring the craft of musicals and how to act them. And all that jazz.....

MITCH MITCHELSON **STORY-TELLING (acting)**

(Exploring techniques to translate stories into theatre)

Story-telling is just being a human being. It's what we do, from the very beginning of time, when we were writing on caves. That's how we communicate. (Spike Lee, A workshop in the art of story-telling, and taking it to the stage)

To cast a spell, to tell a story. We will search in the art of finding inspiration, exploring techniques to translate these stories into theatre, into plays. This course will explore the art of devised theatre, using the means at our disposal: the transformation of simple, everyday objects, the body and voice as sources of character creation and atmosphere generation, ensemble work and dynamics, the Shakespearean transposition of space and time.

We will look at extant stories as a model for theatrical discovery, generate scenes from fictive sources and create our own collective story and play. We will also evoke the insights of the theatre practitioner Arne Zaslav and his theories of total theatre, with its evolution from the basic truths of everyday life to epic theatre techniques. As in the prologue to Shakespeare's *Henry V*, we will *on your imaginary forces work* and will be *jumping o'er times* in our theatre telling.

COURSE 2: SKILLS

GRAEME DU FRESNE **A SINGING GLOSSARY (singing techniques)**

(Techniques, methods and processes for improving singing skills)

During the last 20 years there have been some huge developments and changes in the way singing is often taught in Musical Theatre and Pop Music training. There is tendency toward the 'guru', with each system claiming exclusive rights over the correct singing methodology. As a teacher of singing for many years, my experience and success has been to select freely from a range of methods and processes that I believe work for everyone. We will be looking at some of these today widely taught systems (Estill, Speech Level Singing, Bel Canto & Linklater). They all have an important and valuable contribution to make in developing a fluent and confident singing voice.

We will be using exercises, rounds and part songs to develop each participant's singing technique by introducing and consolidating some of the fundamentals required to sing safely and openly. From A for alignment to V for vowels, various essential techniques will be drawn from the singing skills glossary and will be integrated into our work on the rounds and part songs. We will sing as an ensemble in a supportive and fun environment. The material will range from Folk, Classical and Musical Theatre.

GEORGE RYAN **VOICE AND THE SENSES (voicing the written word)**

(Harnessing the full expression of the voice)

Ever wonder how some individuals in the public eye speak so beautifully and engagingly? Or how some people always seem to exude confidence and seem so assured in expressing themselves? In these voice sessions throughout the week, we will explore our voices and our connection to words and images through the practice of physical release and use of images to enhance our vocal use in reaching our vocal potential. We will apply the vocal release techniques acquired in sessions onto various written works such as Haikus, ancient Greek drama and song lyrics!

We will practice various vocal exercises that will help inform and enhance your voicing of the written word. The focus is on your voicing of a writer's words and images and not an intellectual examination or analysis. We will examine and analyse only so far as needed to voice!

JANICE DUNN **AN ACTORS' VIEWPOINT (acting technique)**

(Exploring different methods to improve acting skills)

This course will be an advanced, and in-depth examination of the processes of character development and choice during the rehearsal period of a show.

We will cover characterisation development techniques, physicalisation, text work techniques and choices, culminating with impulse work that allows us to unify all the preceding elements.

We will start the course with a practical examination of the 'Viewpoints' method; and we will go on to utilise other techniques related to Stanislavski, Meisner, Grotowski, in a direct and dynamic way.

The course will use scenes and characters from classic and new texts to stimulate these creative experiences and observations. We will use full group, and smaller group work, with frequent group sharing.

This course will allow participants to go deeper into character development techniques and follow through on these developments post summer school. It is a practical look at very useful acting processes, and as such is appropriate for experienced performers, and those newer to performing, who are keen to learn and explore a variety of techniques.

It will be a focussed and fun examination of how we 'become' the character, how we 'grow' the character, and how we 'perform' the character.

MITCH MITCHELSON **LAZZI! – THE BUSINESS OF COMEDY (Commedia dell'Arte)**

(Exploring the dark underbelly of comedy)

...tragic-comical-historical-pastoral. Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.

(Polonius, Hamlet)

Lazzi is a term from Commedia dell'Arte that references comic routines that serve various functions. Sometimes they are a suspension in time from the approaching drama, or their placement can rivet up the tension of the approaching denouement. They can stand alone as an audience favorite set piece and virtuoso vehicle for the actors or be integrated into the dramatic plotting. They can function as comic relief and a contrast to a serious scene to intensify the overall tragic nature of the play.

The renaissance of classical drama from the Greeks and Romans would have left a legacy for the Commedia companies, complemented by the skills of the street performers and the character driven inventiveness of the acting companies. We see the timeless routines in Shakespeare and Moliere, Goldoni and Brecht. They reverberate through Music Hall, the silent movie comedians and comedic actors like the late Eric Sykes' turn in Moliere's *School For Wives*. Pantomime absorbed the lazzi's influence. Yet, beneath the comic veneer of physical and verbal comic business and dexterity lurk themes of social rebellion, fear and survival, status, anxiety and potential tragedy.

The workshop will explore these lazzi from classical, commedia dell'arte, cinematic and contemporary comedy sources. We will also be encouraged to improvise and initiate our own routines, embracing a variety of forms. Accessible, fun, and challenging.

INTENSIVE WORKSHOP

LAWRENCE EVANS **TITLE (and brief description) to be announced**

About the tutor: Lawrence has been a full – and popular – Summer School tutor a number of times. He is returning to give students the benefit of his extensive experience and skills.