

AE/FR

16TH May 1951

The Chief Education Officer (Further)
M.C.C.
10 Great George Street

Dear Sir,

Student Course 1951/52

The Questors Theatre Student Course is now approaching the end of its fourth year, and I think it may be claimed that it has been successful towards achieving the aims it has set. A number of ex students of the Group are now taking a prominent part in the work of the theatre, others are contributing to dramatic work in the County in other groups.

Last year, for the first time, the Course was extended to be for two years so that during this current year there have been running simultaneously a First Year Course and a Second Year Course. I believe that this is entirely justifying itself. The Second Year Group produced with considerable success four one act plays here in February (one of which, *The Mask* by Anne Ridler, was a premiere) and three of these were subsequently produced at the B.D.L. Festival at Rudolf Steiner Hall, where the students did well. With one of the plays they were placed first on their night, and came near to being selected for promotion to the following round. The Group is now working on a production of *The Women have Their Way* to be played here for a run in July.

I believe that the Course as at present constituted and run is an important contribution to the adult education work in the County, and that its association with this theatre gives it a unique and valuable quality.

I therefore submit the following scheme for approval for 1951/52 and I shall be glad to know if this can be brought under the County Council's evening classes as for the past four years.

OUTLINE OF THE COURSE. It is proposed that the main lines of the syllabus, shall be as for the current year, that is that to say that in the First year the emphasis would be on the training of the imagination and the creative powers and the technical training of the voice and body, whilst in the Second year the emphasis would be on applying what has been learned to the script. To facilitate this plan the First Year Group would not give a full production at the end of their year, but it is hoped to arrange an informal kind of performance-demonstration.

The Second year group would do two productions - probably a group of one act plays about February and a production I would

hope of a full length play in July. The rehearsals for these productions would be an integral part of the class work of the second year.

SIZE OF THE GROUP. It is proposed that the maximum size of the group for the first year would be twenty students, assuming that a sufficient number of candidates of adequate standard present themselves.

Admission would be by open audition, and only candidates of suitable standard would be taken. Extensive publicity would be given to the scheme throughout the County especially through youth groups, schools etc.

The second Year Group would be selected from the 1950/52 First Year Group and it is intended that the size of this Group should be limited to about ten students. The selection would be made by myself in consultation with other members of the staff, based on our assessment of the work and progress of the students during the present year. I would like to reserve the right to admit one or two students (particularly men) direct to the Second Year Group if it seems advisable to do so.

FEES. It is proposed that these should remain at £1.1.0 per term as heretofore. It is understood that in cases of genuine inability to meet the fees, a limited number of free places would be available to students of talent.

INCOME. The maximum total income from the fees would be, as seen from the above, £63 for the First Year Group and £31.10.0. for the Second Year Group. This assumes a maximum number. of students in each Group.

FIRST YEAR GROUP SYLLABUS. The syllabus for the First Year would be much on the same lines as in the past, namely:

Acting. (Classes to be held on Saturday afternoons from 3 to 5.30 p.m. at The Questors Theatre.)

The nature of acting; the approach to acting; training the imagination and powers of concentration; the creative process; a study of character and study of the part; improvisations; technical training.

Make-up.

Two or three Saturday afternoons would be devoted to an introduction to the study and practice of make up.

Stage Management.

On one or two Saturday afternoons there would be lectures and practical demonstrations on stage management. The students would be given the opportunity also of practical work on the stage management side of the theatre's regular productions, working in small teams under the

direction of the stage manager.

Speech.

It would be proposed as in the past to divide the First Year Group into two classes for speech training to enable the maximum individual attention to be given. The Speech class would be each of 1½ hours duration on two evenings - half the class on one evening and half on the other. These would probably be on Tuesday and Friday evenings from 7.30 to 9 p.m. and I would ask for accommodation to be made available as in the past.

Movement.

Movement classes would be held once a week probably on Thursdays, the First Year class being from 7 to 8 p.m. to be immediately followed by the Second Year Group Movement class as referred to below.

It is desirable that for a proportion of the Movement classes an accompanist should be made available and, as in the past, this has been allowed for in the under-noted Budget on the footing of four classes per term. I would ask for a suitable hall to be made available for these classes as in the past.

SECOND YEAR GROUP SYLLABUS. IT IS proposed that the Second Year students would attend classes as follows:

Acting.

The classes would be mainly taken up with rehearsals of plays for performance as referred to above. The classes would be on Saturday afternoons from 3 to 5.30p.m. at The Questors Theatre, and on Friday evenings for two hours from 7.30 to 9.30 p.m. For the Friday evening classes I would ask for a room to be made available.

There would be, as may be required, additional rehearsals as the dates of performance approach, but these would be extra- syllabus.

Movement

It is proposed that the second year students attend Movement classes once a week on Thursday from 8 to 9 p.m. immediately following the First Year class.

Speech.

It has been found that to set aside a separate evening for Speech class has been rather a strain on the Group in addition to other classes and rehearsals. It is proposed, therefore, that the Second Year Group should attend a weekly speech class on Thursday evenings from 7 to 8 p.m. That is to say, the Second Year students will on Thursday

evenings have a speech class from 7 to 8 p.m. to be followed immediately by a Movement class from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. Accommodation is asked for these Speech Classes.

STAFF.

Acting.

It is proposed that the First Year class on Saturday afternoons should be taken by the writer, Alfred Emmet, with Eric Voce as an occasional substitute dealing particularly with technical points.

For the Second Year Group it is hoped to retain the services of Miss Dorothy Dickinson, who has been doing exceptionally good work during the current year.

Remuneration would be the usual County Council scale, namely 26/6 per class of 2 [$\frac{1}{2}$] hours and 22/6 per class of two hours.

Make up

The classe would be Mr Francis Smith. The remuneration would be 26/6 per session of 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

Movement.

We have been exceptionally fortunate to have had the quite outstanding services of Miss Anny Boalth for the Movement classes. Miss Boalth is, of course, one of the leaders of her profession. I would strongly urge that her services be retained, and I understand her fee for the two classes on Thursday evenings would be £3.3.0 per evening, equivalent to £1.11.6. per session of one hour.

Miss Boalth would provide her own accompanist, and the cost would be 16/- for each double class of two hour's, at the usual County Council rate of 8/- per class of one hour.

Speech.

The intention is to retain the services of Miss Mollie Coldicott, and here also she would be on the usual County Council scale, that is to say 18/6 per class for the First Year Group where the Class is of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours duration and 14/6 for the Second Year class where the class is of one hour's duration.

Stage Management

It would be proposed to nominate an experienced stage manager from the theatre to take the class or classes in this subject, and this would be in substitution for the writer on or two Saturdays

BUDGET. The estimated total expenses for the Croup for 1951/2 are as follows:

General.

Publicity, printing and administrative expenses. ...£25.0.0
Lighting and Heating(it would be proposed to make a nominal charge for the Saturday afternoon classes of £2.10.0 per term to cover the two classes held simultaneously in the theatre and green room) ...7.10.0
No charge would be made for the theatre

Acting (including makeup etc)

First Year Group 43 classes at 26/6 ...56.19.6
Second Year Group 43 classes at 26/6 ... 56.19.6
146.9.0
40 Friday classes at 22/6d. ... 45.0.0

Movement

40 classes at £3.3.0 per class ...126.0.0
Pianist 12 classes at 16/ per class ... 9.12.0

Speech

First Year, 80 classes at 18/6d ... 74.0.0
Second Year, 40 classes at 14/6d ... 29.0.0
£ 430. 1.0

TERMS

It is proposed that the three terms should run as follows:
15th September to 15th December 1951.
5th January to 5th April 1952
19th April to 19th July' 1952.

I shall be most grateful for the earliest possible decision; as it will be necessary to have the prospectus printed at an early date in order to ensure adequate publicity for the Course.

If there is any further information you require, I shall be happy to supply it.

Yours faithfully,

Director of Studies

