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Strathclyde Regional Council

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Our ref: Arts Initiatives

Date: 27 September 1995

Our location : Strathclyde Arts Centre, 12 Washington Street, Glasgow G3 8AZ

If phoning or calling please ask for: Brenda Carson

Mike Hayward
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Dear Mike

"THE AUDITION"

I was very impressed by the show, which I saw in Whitehill Secondary School.

Both the script, by A.L. Kennedy, and your own performance were outstanding.

I feel that the show has a great deal to offer school pupils, not only as a means of explaining and coming to terms with alcohol abuse problems, but as a piece of drama in its own right.

There would also be great potential for the show to be used with adults in communities, or with teachers as an in-service piece, or indeed in any workplace where alcohol abuse might become an issue.

"The Audition" deals with the relationships and insecurities which we all experience, puts the alcohol abuse aspects of the show into context, and offers an explanation, not an excuse, for dysfunctional and destructive behaviour.

I wish you the best of luck with the show and will pass on your information to other colleagues as appropriate.

Best wishes

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Brenda Carson'.

Brenda Carson
Arts Officer



YSGOL Y PRESELI

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March 2019

My husband and I heard of Mike's "One Man Show" performance in Burry Port and were intrigued to see it. Due to the awards it won in the 1990s, I was aware that the script and acting were of a good standard, but was wary as to whether the themes would still be current in 2019. We were NOT disappointed. Mike performed with vigour throughout the play and made us laugh out loud and cry in equal measure.

Due to the importance of the key messages in the play (alcoholism, paranoia and general mental health) I asked Mike to visit my school to perform his play for the 6th Form students who study Psychology. By this performance, Mike had made the One Man Show element even more impressive by controlling the lights seamlessly from on stage. The students were engrossed by the performance and found it very useful as they study addiction and schizophrenia as part of their A-Level course. Mike also offered an "after-show" talk to the students, which really allowed them to engage with Mike's personal story and journey.

Two months later, they are still talking about the performance and Mike himself. Highly recommend and looking forward to our next cohort of students to see the play too.

Head of Psychology

Ysgol y Preseli

“Just About Ready To Jump”

Kevin Metchear, Head of Box Office and Front of House, Chickenshed:

This one-man show is a tremendous piece of writing by AL Kennedy, and Mike Hayward delivers a powerhouse performance in the role of Jack Rees, a man with a tale to tell – and much like the Ancient Mariner, one has the impression of Jack as a man compelled to share his confessional story, perhaps partly in a bid to prevent the audience from making the same mistakes, but also because of an actor’s overwhelming desire to be loved. This is a man with a hole to fill, a terrible void that can only be filled by an audience – or a bottle. By turns hugely confident and grandiose, then painfully wracked by memories and regrets, it is never anything other than a truthful depiction of an entirely credible character. The piece is simply, but powerfully, staged with the minimal props and lighting used to great effect.

This is theatrical, dramatic and deserves to reach a wider audience. At Chickenshed, we presented the piece to an audience of students, staff and volunteers, and the reception was tremendous.

- ◆ “Powerful, personally relevant – food for thought”
- ◆ “Very powerful and moving, a great piece of theatre”
- ◆ “I found this piece and the ensuing discussion really interesting and thought provoking”

A highly recommended piece, not least because of the opportunity Mike Hayward offers for post-show discussions to enable the audience to discuss the themes and issues raised.

Jonny Morton, Education Manager, Chickenshed:

“We were delighted to have the chance to present this piece to our students, and will certainly continue to do so. Mike Hayward delivers a wonderful showcase of stagecraft and performance, and our students were captivated and inspired. The post-show discussion gave an even greater insight into the story and the man.”

Review from 6th Form Student 28th May 2013

Hello Mike, I came to see your show on Friday with my Mother, Aunty Carol, Mair and Dee and you asked if I'd give you feedback; so here it goes...

The performance was absolutely fantastic. It was powerful, funny, eye opening and it dealt with touching issues; which grasps the attention of the audience very well, with the different emotions throughout. In one of my GCSE Drama performances I included a monologue into the piece, so I know how difficult they are but also how effective they are.

I personally think you should perform to people in college and sixth form because I found the literature very unique and educational. It deals with issues that people in my age group will be able to understand, as alcohol affects most teenagers. Most don't fully understand its full affects as far as "having a laugh". Alcoholism is an illness. It proved to me that tough obstacles face you in life in order to reach your goal but alcohol doesn't discard your worries, it creates bigger problems.

It doesn't help that schools don't emphasize this enough because we're not fully aware of the consequences. We all understand you change once you drink, but we're only faced with these images of being loud, funny and clumsy but we never really think of the selfish, abusive side that alcohol highlights.

Your monologue would be suitable for 15 year olds onward (year 10, 11, 12, 13) - I say this because it shows how to use different emotions correctly in a monologue and how to engage the audience to believe the emotion; these are things I wasn't taught for my work and I wish I was. I genuinely felt quite on edge when you performed "drunk" with a bottle of Vodka because I didn't know what your character was going to do next; smash the bottle maybe?

It's a mature topic which we should be aware of from a younger age. It's not a lesson that you should be afraid of alcohol but just to be enlightened about these things.

I'd also like to bring my friends to see your show because I know they'd enjoy it as much as I did. I would also like to thank you for re-kindling my love for acting because I always forget how much I miss it until I see a performance as good as yours.

I'd like to wish you the best of luck with future performances and I'll most likely come to another show with some friends too.

Best wishes, Sam J



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The Audition - a one-man play by Alison Kennedy performed by Mike Hayward.

Mike Hayward's performance in the one-man play written especially for him was an unforgettable experience for all those parents staff and pupils fortunate enough to be in the Main Hall on 15th February 1995.

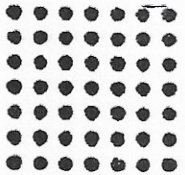
It is a rare talent that can single-handedly captivate an audience for 2 hours. Mike's portrayal of the life story of actor Jack Rees ran the full range of human emotions. From his rejected childhood, through his career, personal relationships and alcoholism Mike carried the audience in the palm of his hand, taking them from hysterical laughter to long expectant silences.

The simple set was augmented by fantastic lighting techniques which made a significant contribution to the atmosphere surrounding the different stages in Jack's life.

There is no doubt that this play should be a must for Drama and English Literature students but I would have no hesitation in recommending it for all students from Year 10 upwards because Jack's experiences and problems are extremely relevant for today's youngsters.

As someone who has seen hundreds of plays this performance was one of the few I shall always remember. I hope it is repeated so that those who missed it can experience the same enjoyment as we all did last night.

Tony Payton



Our ref

Your ref

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11 June 1996

To whom it may concern.

Mike Hayward toured his one-man show "The Audition" by A.L.Kennedy to several cities in India under the management of the British Council during the Spring of 1994. The tour was a considerable success with audiences and critics alike.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Gammell', written over a horizontal line.

Simon Gammell
Head of Drama & Dance