

RADA

THE MAGAZINE

JOAN COLLINS TOASTS
THE ASSOCIATES'
BIG FUND RAISER

SYLVIA SYMS HITS
'ON THE TOWN'

100 PORTRAITS
CELEBRATE 100 YEARS

HANCOCK, HOLM,
BLAKEMORE VIE FOR
YOUR SHELVES



RADA BAR

The fully-licensed Foyer of RADA's Malet Street entrance is an increasingly popular meeting-place for our Friends, visitors, neighbours, theatre-goers, students and staff. It's also the convivial host to a diverse programme of evening entertainment including music, play and poetry readings and stand-up comedy. We are open 9.30am - 11pm (Happy Hour prices 6-7pm). If you have not yet visited the RADA Bar, come soon!

During production weeks, you can pre-order theatre suppers from a delicious menu (changed each term), or choose from the range of sandwiches and snacks on sale. On matinée days pre-order a matinée tea to follow the performance. The quality is excellent, the prices competitive, the atmosphere congenial and creative.

This facility is now a venue in itself: the home, during non-production weeks, of a season of new events featuring RADA graduates and guests. It regularly hosts play-readings – including new work – open-mic nights, cabaret and video showings. Friends will find advance notice of them in the termly production brochures.

Help guarantee the success of this wonderful facility by making regular use of it throughout the term. Check with the Box Office for the dates of the RADA Tours which are available for members of the public during the production seasons; drop in for morning coffee or lunch; meet friends for a drink and a bar snack after work; enjoy a pre-theatre supper when you come in to see RADA student productions in our three in-house theatres or book this lovely space for a private party.

Bon appétit!

Please pre-order your theatre supper, to ensure seating is available, using the form in the termly production brochure sent to all Friends. If you are not yet a Friend of RADA (see page 19), please contact the Box Office Manager on 020 7908 4800.

Subject to availability, RADA's three in-house theatres, rehearsal rooms, sound studios, workshop facilities and the RADA Bar are available for private hire for presentations, productions and private parties. All enquiries should be made to Genevieve Cleghorn on 020 7908 4754.

CONTENTS

4-5

DREAM DEBUT

52 years after RADA, Sylvia Syms achieved her ambition to play in a big West End musical. And, as she records, she had a ball

6-8

A NIGHT OF STARS

The stars turn out for CentenaRada, the RADA Associates' hugely successful gala fund-raiser

9-11

50 YEARS ON

When the Class of '55(ish) returned for a summer reunion, the memories flowed. Christine Ozanne relished the time warp

12-13

2005 PRODUCTIONS

A glimpse of RADA students' public performances

14-15

A CENTENARY IN CAMERA

ARADA Special Book Offer for photographer Cambridge Jones' brilliant portraits of 100 RADA alumni

16-17

GENTLEMEN'S TALK

The Garrick Club, temple of acting history, invited RADA finalists for a privileged tour. Lily Bevan sensed irony amidst the icons

18

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

New memoirs by Michael Blakemore, Sheila Hancock and Ian Holm reviewed

20-21

STAGE MOVES

Our Who's Where of RADA graduates

22-23

RADA THANKS ITS GENEROUS DONORS

A word for our sponsors

RADA

THE MAGAZINE

Friends of RADA
62 - 64 Gower Street
London WC1E 6ED

For membership enquiries
Tel: 020 7908 4800

EDITOR: Peter Fiddick

COVER: Msimisi Dlamini in *The America Play*

RADA PRODUCTION PHOTOS: Mick Hurdus



PAGE 6-8



PAGE 14-15



PATRON
Her Majesty The Queen

PRESIDENT
Lord Attenborough KC CBE

COUNCIL
Chairman
John Whitney

Vice-Chairmen
Michael Attenborough Alan Rickman

Gordon Ashbee Catherine Bailey Zac Barratt Robert Bourne Kenneth Branagh
Richard Briers CBE Nicholas Cooper Ralph Fiennes Nicholas Gold
Vyvyan Harmsworth LVO Margaret Heffernan Thelma Holt CBE Sir Anthony Hopkins CBE
Richard Johnson Adrian Lester Dame Diana Rigg Sir Evelyn de Rothschild Sylvia Syms
Zoë Waites Sir Stephen Waley-Cohen Hugh Whitmore FRSL Richard Wilson OBE

PRINCIPAL
Nicholas Barter MA (CANTAB) FRSA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Richard Elder

DEAN OF STUDIES
Bardy Thomas DIP ED

REGISTRAR
Patricia Myers DIP ED

RADA
ROYAL ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ART

DREAM DEBUT

52 years after RADA, Sylvia Syms achieved her ambition to play in a big West End musical. And, as she records, she had a ball

I always wanted to do a musical, not because I could either dance or sing but because I just love the atmosphere. So, when Jude Kelly, mounting the English National Opera's new production of Leonard Bernstein's *On the Town*, asked me if I'd do the small part of Madame Dilly – no, she doesn't have to sing (at least only badly) and it's funny and they needed somebody loud – I leapt at the chance.

It is impressive simply to be working in this astounding theatre, for the Colosseum (opened in 1904, the same year as RADA) is truly one of the most beautiful theatres in the whole of London. And Bernstein's score is beautiful too. But the total joy is being with this fantastic young company: all the young principals, the dancers, who work incredibly hard and have to practise every day, and the ENO's orchestra. The wonderful thing about the atmosphere of rehearsals was that there was no question of some being chorus, some dancers, some orchestra or whatever; we were all part of the same company.

The atmosphere backstage is electric. The cast are always rushing off for another costume change (the chorus play dozens of different parts) and it is as if we become this huge, huge, family. People hang around and watch the show every night. Backstage, the people who move the sets and do all the technical things, the sound and so on, they have to be working very hard every minute, but they love the show. Many of the chaps back stage join in the choruses and....

I'm afraid, for me, there aren't

enough performances because it is a delight to come in. We don't, alas, do that many and they are all sold out. I am never bored. I watch a lot every evening and all actors could learn from being in a company like this. The care, the thoughtfulness, the hellos every evening, the how are you? – it is simply amazing. As for the young principals, they have to practise every night, they are always doing their scales, new tunes, they dance, they sing, and, if I had my choice, I would like to bring an entire year of RADA students here to

“ *The wonderful thing was that there was no question of some being chorus, some dancers, some orchestra or whatever; we were all part of the same company* **”**

watch, backstage, at how people can work so hard, and how fantastic the atmosphere is; and of course, we know that the audience love it, because the applause at the end is overwhelming – they don't want to let us go.

Some people say that the show is very long, because we are doing it absolutely as Bernstein wanted it. He regarded it as a totally musical theatre so everybody has to act, sing, dance, and of course the score is

tremendous. He wanted all the ballet sequences to illustrate various things in the story and characters integrated into one huge piece of musical theatre. We were not allowed to change anything.

I think it might have been easier if we'd been able to possibly not have such a long first act, but according to the Bernstein estate it was agreed that we would do it with the same atmosphere as he would have if you were doing an opera: no messing about. It is a period piece.

It's about three young sailors who come to New York having been on a battleship. It's 1944, people are being killed, the sailors don't necessarily want to go away. They're all from different parts of the States so they don't know New York where they have 24 hour leave. Of course, we all know that they are eventually going back to great danger. So much of them is reflected in the music, in particular the ballet near the end when the young men, the young sailors going on that big ship have to leave their loved ones behind. What Bernstein understood so profoundly is that they are babies, they are young, young men.

It's a bit like knowing that the people who flew the planes for the Battle of Britain were between 18 and 25; 21-year-olds were regarded as quite old and these young sailors are the same. They're kids, and they're giving up everything to go and serve their country, so, yes, it's a period piece and a joy.

Caroline O'Connor is a massively experienced actor, dancer, singer from many musical shows. In one sequence, she has to drive a car, sing



'They needed somebody loud': Sylvia Syms at the piano, Helen Anker at work

and jump about. It was a pain at the rehearsals but she worked it all out and manages to do the number superbly. Then she has to cook and do an elaborate dance around a flat, again all in time to the music, all with dance steps!

The boys are pretty well cast perfectly. Adam Garcia is very thoughtful and the rather sad hero who is desperately looking for his dream love. Aaron Lassar is a handsome young boy who resists Caroline O'Connor, the taxi driver, until she forces him to go up to her place. The famous sequence with

Timothy Hower is in the Natural History Museum where they have a fight almost with the skeleton of an enormous dinosaur. Again, dancing and singing and moving around, all perfectly in time, with Lucy Schauer, who has the most amazing opera voice and is in fact an opera singer, being jazzy and cool and fantastic.

Then, of course, we have Helen Anker. My scenes are opposite her mostly. I'm the nasty person who keeps her away from her true love and she comes to me for inadequate singing lessons. Helen is also a

wonderful dancer and does a whole ballet, ending up by actually managing to pick up a handkerchief with her teeth while doing the splits – just all in a days work!

I have learned so much. I wish I had done all this earlier and then maybe I would be able to participate rather more in a musical than being the drunken old trout who gets a few laughs. It's a great education, and you must go on being educated as long as your careers lasts. This is a joy for me. God bless you Mr Bernstein, you brought me alive again.

A NIGHT OF STARS

ALL PHOTOS
COURTESY OF
SOPHIE BAKER

The RADA Associates' Centenary celebration was a highly successful gala fund-raiser. Peter Fiddick reports

It was on Monday 18 April 1904 that Herbert Beerbohm Tree invited the cream of British theatre life to an afternoon ceremony in his own theatre, His Majesty's, Haymarket, to celebrate his announcement that at that very moment, elsewhere in the building, the first students of his Academy of Dramatic Art were commencing their studies.

One hundred and one years later, 18 April 2005 also fell on a Monday – making it all the more appropriate that the RADA Associates had chosen the previous evening to mount, now in the Academy's own Jerwood Vanbrugh theatre, their particular contribution to RADA's Centenary year celebrations.

CentenaRada proved to be not only the Associates' most ambitious and entertaining event to date but also the most effective in its prime objective: the night raised more than £17,000 for the RADA Associates' Student Hardship Fund.

The status of Associate was created only a few years after Tree's ADA itself, as the nine-strong Council of theatre luminaries who took over from him in 1906 looked to extend the school's range of contacts in the profession – and in society – at large. The Associates were built into the constitution in the Royal Charter of 1920 that created RADA and in recent decades have numbered some 300 of the Academy's most prominent graduates and other supporters – a formidable pool of talent to call upon when mounting a fund-raiser.

Devised and directed by Richard Digby-Day, *CentenaRada* followed in



“Ambitious... entertaining... effective... the night raised more than £17,000 for the Associates' student hardship fund”



Joan Collins (top) in post-show party spirit; rising star Tom Burke meets CentenaRada's oldest graduate, 93-year-old director Frith Banbury

mostly light-hearted mode the Academy's history, from Tree's inaugural speech to spots from the current second-year acting students' RADA Choir and a number from *The Boy Friend* performed in deft period style by final year students Lucy Voller and David Dawson.

Other musical interludes featured Rosemary Ashe, Gary Tushaw, Siân Phillips, Gabrielle Drake, Amanda Drew and David Rintoul, and Imelda Staunton.

The memories, both written and live, included that of one of the oldest living graduates, Frith Banbury, who was at Gower Street in 1932 and is still directing professionally in his 90s, while Richard Digby Day conducted a delightfully informal on-stage 'chat-show' with several other veterans from the 1940s.

One section of the second half offered a sequence of poems about the theatre, another a wry set of extracts from the letters of RADA's most famous graduate and late President, Sir John Gielgud. A series of tributes to the Academy's five Principals ended with that of the present Chairman, John Whitney, to the Principal since 1993, Nicholas Barter:

'As Principal and as teacher, he provides the inspiration and guidance to both technical and acting students which keep the Academy's graduates at the forefront of their professions. We owe him an enormous debt of gratitude that the name of RADA continues to be synonymous with excellence'.

The climax of the evening was an appearance by Joan Collins, jokily



'Bid me fare well': Louise Jameson concludes the starry CentenaRada cast's toast to RADA



'Inspiration and guidance': RADA Principal Nicholas Barter with his wife Noriko

CENTENARADA THE CAST

Barbara Jefford
Rosemary Ashe
Stephen Greif
Mary Tamm
Anton Lesser
Margaret Tyzack
Michael Simkins
Nicholas Woodeson
Ronald Pickup
Martin Jarvis
David Rintoul
Frith Banbury
Gary Tushaw
Naomi Frederick
Ann Beach
Gemma Jones
Sherrie Hewson
Gabrielle Drake
David Harewood
Tom Burke
Deddie Davies
Patrick Mower
Miriam Karlin
Patricia Kneale
Peter Sallis
Frederick Treves
Siân Phillips
Sylvia Syms
Sian Brooke
Rosemary Leach
David Warner
Faith Brook
David Dawson
Lucy Voller
Tara Hugo
Imelda Staunton
Linda Thorson
Lolita Chakrabarti
Hugh Ross
Margaret Wolfit
Michelle Terry
Joan Bassie
Amanda Drew
Joan Collins
Louise Jameson

Musical Director
Andrew Charity

Stage Management
Barry Bryant
Rosemary Beattie

Lighting
Paul Pyant



recalling a RADA report which predicted no great things for her before leading the assembled company with raised glasses in a toast to RADA, as Louise Jameson came to the front of the Vanbrugh's stage to offer the full house Rosalind's epilogue to *As You Like It*...

'And, I am sure, as many as have good beards, or good faces, or sweet breaths, will, for my kind offer, when I make curtsy, bid me fare well.'

Which indeed they did.



50 YEARS ON

When the Class of '55(ish) returned for a summer reunion, the memories flowed. Christine Ozanne relished the time warp

Early this Spring the call went out for any graduates from the mid-1950s to join in a Reunion in the RADA Bar, and this highly successful event took place on May 7. There was a splendid turn out – as the cast list demonstrates – and I can confidently report that the occasion went, not so much with a bang, but with a wonderfully happy collision of past fellow students eager to take a trip down memory lane.

It was pure nostalgia, and although some fifty years have passed, I heard plenty of 'Well, we all fancied you like mad, you know', and 'I'd better not talk to him, I stole his girlfriend'. Our very first *Spotlight* photographs were rotated on a screen and pictures, RADA cast lists and write-ups from old newspapers covered display boards.

We all wore name tags (just in case), so either you read the name and said 'Ha, ha, of course, it's you', or 'Oh dear, I don't think we were ever in the same class, were we?'. Was I mistaken or did I really hear somebody say: 'My God, I thought you were dead!'

Personally, I loved it all. Some of those present I have kept in touch with over the years, others I have worked with from time to time. Embarrassments shared, ghastly performances recalled and apologies accepted. One now well-known actress told how, during a Shakespeare class, she was stopped in mid-flow by the teacher with: 'Tell me dear, can you type?'

A 'RADA Quiz', compiled and



Kenneth Farrington, Felicity Ross, Valerie Pitts



“ RADA's stars, Friends and supporters join in the after-show jollity ”



“ It was pure nostalgia, and although some fifty years have passed, I heard plenty of 'Well, we all fancied you like mad, you know', and 'I'd better not talk to him, I stole his girlfriend' ”

events of our day and no way of keeping the answers a secret. In any case, Derek's proffered prize of a free pint of beer he deservedly awarded to himself.

Tours were arranged for us to take in the amazing 'state of the art', award-winning building, the only recognisable feature being the Gower Street windows at the far end of the old fencing room, and impersonations of Mr. Froeschlen's 'down, down, lower, sit' were given full voice by all and sundry. One actor remembers saying to him, 'Look at me – I'm going to play losers, why are you trying to teach me how to win?'

We visited what used to be our Vanbrugh Theatre, now unrecognisable since its reconstruction. Chris Deakin, RADA's house manager and our



ebulliently MC'd by Derek Ware, was held to see whom and what we remembered, which lead to squeals of delight at familiar recollections of the teachers and

wonderfully long-suffering guide, explained how the seating could be changed to suit all manner of configuration: proscenium arch, thrust, apron, in the round, you name it. The stalls area is on a hydraulic lift and can raise the floor to stage level or lowered to form a pit to accommodate an orchestra for musicals. Wow! A single piano did for us way back then.

I have to confess that, with all the wonderful variations of staging, I saw nothing that might prepare students for the challenges of acting in Shakespeare's Globe, for example, with the audience on all sides and two enormous pillars

to negotiate, but actors are remarkably adaptable when needs be. Most professional theatres would be lucky to have such facilities as we saw here – so make the most of it, I say.

The greatest differences between then and now seem to be: the extension of academic facilities (we had no screen training, for example); the numbers of acting students being reduced from around 200 a year to 34 (altogether there are more students training in this country today than there are actors working at any one time); and the extension from a two- to a three-year course.

Back then, repertory companies

were abundant and most of us could look forward to several years in theatre jobs playing dozens of different roles. Now, the 'few' will get snapped up by the big theatre companies and most students are likely to find their first few professional jobs will be in front of a camera.

It was a shock to learn that the awards system bit the dust in 1985. Looking at all those familiar names on the walls, some of whom were among us, I remember how it boosted our confidence to leave with a Medal, a Prize, an Honours (or plain ordinary) Diploma. Now every graduating student goes away with a BA degree in acting, which is a complete change of direction, but the competition will be just as hot for them out there in the real world.

Some among us on that Saturday afternoon have found fulfilment and success in other professions, but it was heartening to see so many working actors, writers, directors and drama teachers, and I felt a great sense of pride at being one of this prominent bunch of people.

The Academy today houses wonderful technical facilities of course, but I still maintain that any drama school is only as good as the people who teach at it, and the likes of Richard Ainley, Peter Barkworth, Hugh Miller, Ellen Pollock, Clifford Turner and John Fernald himself, RADA's Principal from 1956, were talked about with great affection and appreciation at this delightful Reunion.



RADA President Attenborough's 80th birthday portrait beams on the class of '55



Tim Seely, Henley Thomas, Delia Corrie, MC Ian Keill



Valerie Singleton, Clinton Greyn

THE REUNION CAST LIST

Robert Aldous; Michael Ashton; Liane Aukin; Ann Beach; Jean Beardmore; Christopher Benjamin; Diana Bishop; Caroline Blakiston; Jill Brooke; Delia Corrie; Dedic Davis; Edward de Souza; Pauline Devaney; Marian Diamond; Joanna Dunham; Janice Edgard; Moris Farhi; Ken Farrington; David Forder; Rosemary Folley-Davey; Michael Friend; Clinton Greyn; Malcolm Gerard; Rita Guenigault; David Haas; Jennifer Hales; Alan Halley; Sheila Hammond; Bryan Hands; Janet Hargreaves; Ann Harpur; Sarah Harter; Jack Hedley; Tamara Hinchco; Antony Higginson; Ewan Hooper; Susan Icke; Ralph Jaques; Neville Jason; Peter John; Charles Kay; Ian Keill; Barbara Latham; Nicholas Light; Douglas Livingstone; Gillian Martell; Alan Mason; Bruce Montague; Patrick O'Connell; Anne Ogden; Clare Owen; Christine Ozanne; Felicity Peel; George Pensotti; Valerie Pitts; Joan Privett; Gary Raymond; Michael Reed; Daphne Rogers; Rod Sangorski; Tim Seely; Jill Simcox; Valerie Singleton; Roy Spencer; Virginia Stride; Dudley Sutton; Barbara Sykes; Anne Taylor; Malcolm Taylor; Henley Thomas; Alan Thompson; Stephen Thorne; Barbara Sykes; Susan Travers; Virginia Valentine; Derek Ware; Hugh Whitmore; Benjamin Whitrow; Susannah York



Gillian Martell, Dudley Sutton, Patrick O'Connell, Joan Privett, Clinton Greyn

2005 PRODUCTIONS

SPRING TERM

SUMMER TERM



**JERWOOD VANBRUGH
THEATRE**

THE FOOL

by Edward Bond
Directed by Paul Jepson
Designed by James Cotterill



**JERWOOD VANBRUGH
THEATRE**

TEN DAYS A-MAZE

**OR THE PRODIGIOUS MYSTERIES OF
THE SARAGOSSA MANUSCRIPT AS
RELATED BY COUNT JAN POTOCKI**

Dramatised by Vi Marriott
Directed by Andrew Visnevski
Designed by Jason Southgate



THE GBS

DON JUAN COMES BACK FROM THE WAR

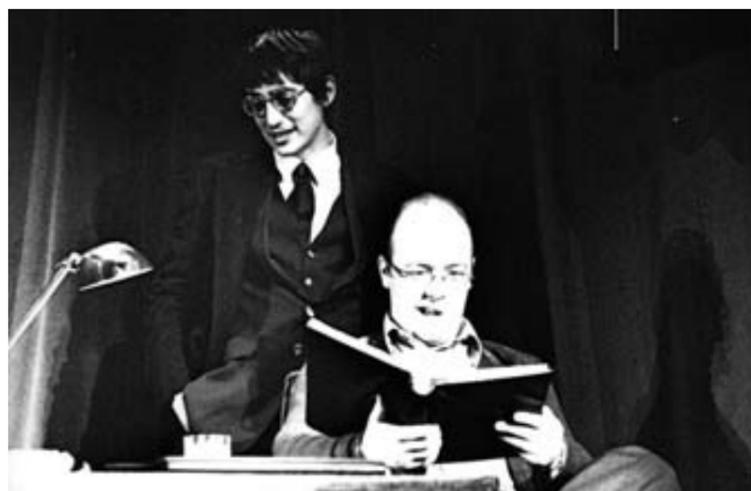
by Odon von Horvath
Translated by Christopher Hampton
Directed by Gadi Roll
Designed by Douglas Heap



THE GBS

THE MARRIAGE OF BETTE AND BOO

by Christopher Durang
Directed by Toby Frow
Designed by Ben Stones



JOHN GIELGUD THEATRE

CLAW

by Howard Barker
Directed by Hugh Wooldrige
Designed by Tracy Cliffe



JOHN GIELGUD THEATRE

UNIDENTIFIED HUMAN REMAINS AND THE TRUE NATURE OF LOVE

by Brad Fraser
Directed by John Gardyne

A CENTENARY IN CAMERA

A RADA Special Book Offer

Graduates of any academy, college, university, can find their careers developing on lines never expected. So it was with Cambridge Jones, who graduated from RADA in 1994 but quite soon found himself in demand for a talent which until then had seemed a sideline: photography. In the decade which followed, Cambridge established himself as a notable portrait photographer, his work including exhibitions of the images of leading politicians who sat for him as they might do for a portrait painter.

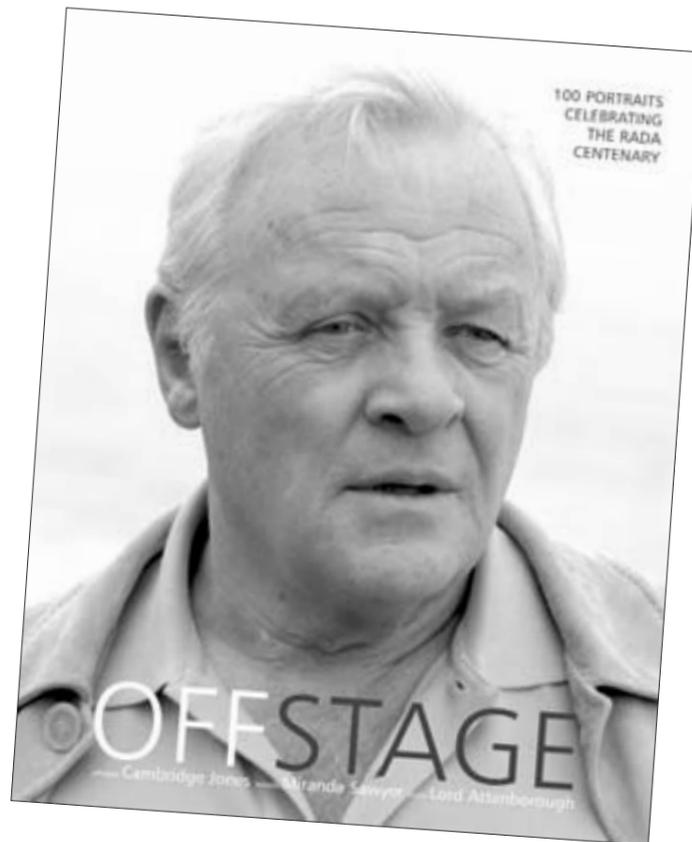
As 2004, the Centenary of his acting alma mater, approached, he looked to put his talent to help the celebration. The result is *Off Stage* (Dewi Lewis Media), a handsome collection of 100 photographic portraits of RADA alumni spanning, if not quite the full

century, a remarkable part of it.

The most senior graduate caught here is Frith Banbury, who arrived at Gower Street in 1931 and, 93 years old this year, is still an active theatre director. The most recent are Sibu Mamba (1999–02), who came to RADA from Zimbabwe via a video link audition from South Africa and has since developed his talent as a writer, and Ben Wishaw (2000–03), who was playing Hamlet at the Old Vic within months of his final RADA productions.

With each portrait there is an autobiographical commentary, about the subject's RADA audition or career. John Hurt (facing page) recalls: 'I tried several times to get into RADA... Getting in was the red letter day of my life and remains so to this day... I thought I was terrible at everything. Fortunately, this was not an opinion shared by others'.

Cambridge Jones' portraits were exhibited at the Getty Gallery in London, then at the South Bank. Among his other promotional activities are a CD containing all the portraits, a DVD of all 100 portraits set to music composed by



Adrian Munsey and an auction of prints signed by each star.

All profits will go towards a RADA Centenary Bursary. Further information: www.cambridgejones.com

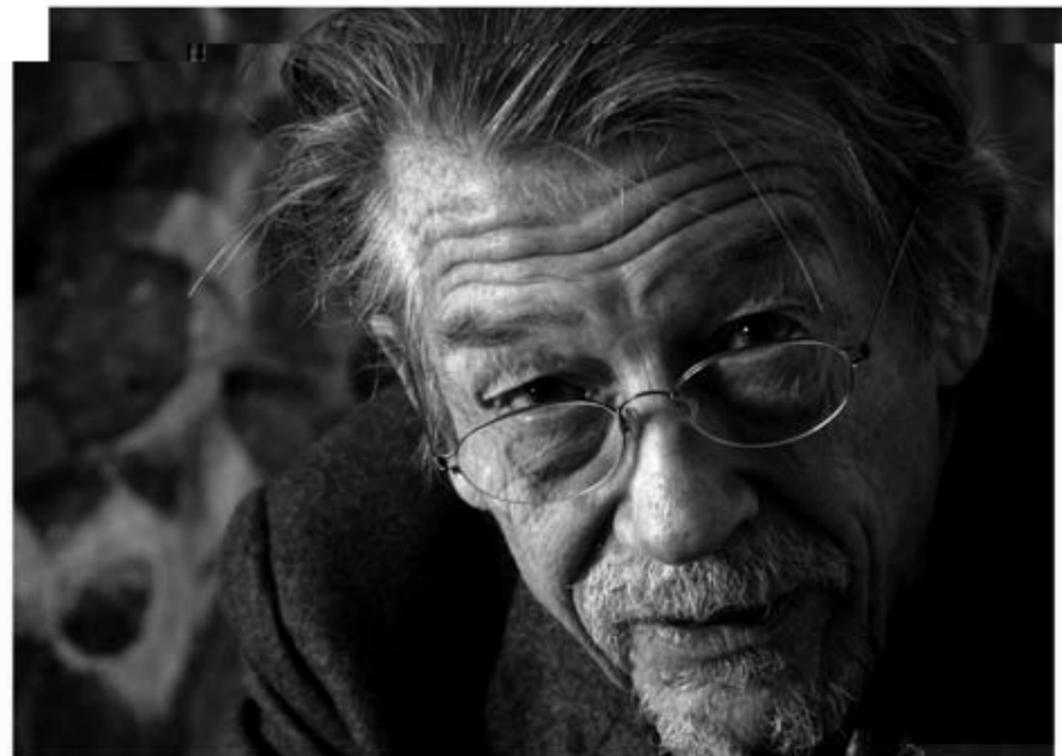
1000 signed copies of the book are available direct from RADA at the discounted price of £17 (RRP £19.99). They can be collected from the RADA Box Office or posted for £4.50 in UK, £6.50 rest of world. Cheques, payable to RADA, at Offstage Book Offer, RADA Box Office, 62-64 Gower Street, London WC1E 6ED. Info and reserving copies boxoffice@rada.ac.uk

“Capturing the essence of a singular personality is, for me, the great skill of the portrait photographer and this Cambridge Jones has achieved brilliantly with the fascinating studies contained in this book

Lord Attenborough
President, RADA

”

John Hurt, C.B.E., 1960-62



This man gets more debonair and suave by the year, I swear. John was so alive and full of enthusiasm and stories that I could happily have gone on shooting all day. He is also the only person I know who has a PA in one country while living in another.

I tried several times to get into RADA. At my successful audition, I wore an old pair of plain cords, a worn out knee length sweater. Which was all I owned.

Getting in was the red letter day of my life and remains so to this day. In my year were David Warner, Ian McShane, Gemma Jones.

I thought I was terrible at everything. Fortunately, this was not an opinion shared by others.

I burnt my candle at both ends. It will not last the night. But ah, my foes and oh, my friends, it gives a lovely light.

Theatre
The Dwarf; The Caretaker; Shadow of a Gunman; Travesties (RSC); A Month in The Country; Chips With Everything; Inadmissible Evidence; Krapp's Last Tape (Gate)

Film
Allen; Heaven's Gate; The Elephant Man; Midnight Express; 1984; White Mischief; Scandal; Love and Death on Long Island; Captain Correll's Mandolin; Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone; Dogville

TV
The Naked Civil Servant; I, Claudius; Crime and Punishment; Who Bombed Birmingham?; The Alan Clark Diaries

GENTLEMEN'S TALK

The Garrick Club, temple of acting history, invited RADA finalists for a privileged tour of its trophies and traditions. Lily Bevan sensed irony amidst the icons

Monday, May 13, 2005. Music icon Michael Jackson is cleared of the ten sex charges against him. A radioactive leak at Sellafield, it is revealed, will cost £300 million to clean-up. And on the fringes of Covent Garden, history is also in the making, as the doors of the extremely refined Garrick Club are opened, for its first-ever drama school introductory tour, to fifteen slightly less refined RADA students.

Our tour guide is none other than the well-loved actor Sir Donald Sinden, 45 years a member. Never was the salmon-and-cucumber striped tie worn with such finesse.

The Garrick was founded by a group of literary gentlemen (including 24 peers of the realm), under the patronage of the King's brother, the Duke of Sussex, in 1831, when actors – 'rogues and vagabonds' – were barred from London's other gentlemen's clubs. Theirs would be a place where 'actors and men of refinement and education might meet on equal terms', where 'easy intercourse was to be promoted between artists and patrons'.

Today the club has around 1300 members, although only one-in-ten are actors: close to the courts and the City, it draws lawyers and businessmen. A prospective member's name is entered by a current member in a book. If enough others sign in support, the club votes, members placing coloured balls in a box. If two or more balls are black, membership is denied; hence, 'blackballed'.

It happened to Trollope, later elected, and to the revered journalist Bernard Levin, famously sharp

theatre critic, who never joined another club in his life.

The original assurance of the committee, 'that it would be better that ten unobjectionable men should be excluded than one terrible bore should be admitted', aimed to ensure desirably entertaining members. Yet the system allows two old grudges to bar the doors. And, to this day, there are no women...

The club was named after the great 18th century actor David Garrick, who had a great love for women, not least the consummate

“ In all dining rooms reading and writing materials are banned: 'The point of the Garrick Club', Sir Donald affirms, 'is conversation' **”**

actress Peg Woffington, and Garrick's theatrical world was ahead of its time in pioneering equality between the sexes. It is ironic that the club bearing his name is so behind its own: a vote two years ago almost unanimously rejected women members and banned discussion of the subject for twenty years – a peculiar step for an establishment designed to promote 'discourse'. (A satirical article recently reported that a dalek proceeded through the application process until members realised its name was Susan.)

The Garrick is stately, venerable and gothic in feel. A chocolate box of oak panelled rooms feel more crowded than they are, due to the countless portraits of actors, mainly mid board-treading, smouldering down from shadowy walls. On the day of our visit, paintings outnumbered patrons by about 30:1.

Smoking is encouraged throughout by a wholesale quantity of ashtrays and the place has a vaporous, foggy, faggy air. Our extensive tour included the Library (very Colonel Mustard did it with the candlestick), the ladies toilets (some of the finest I have ever frequented – one expects Noël Coward to be handing out Martinis), the Coffee Room, three dining rooms and the male-only Cocktail Bar.

In the largest dining room a long table provides for lone members to dine in company, the chair at its head reserved for the leading actor of the time. (Note to RADA grads who'd like a nice sit down and some adoration: this position is currently vacant.) In all dining rooms reading and writing materials are banned: 'The point of the Garrick Club', Sir Donald affirms, 'is conversation'.

(Might suspicion of women's inadequacy, or otherwise, in this field contribute to their continuing exclusion?)

The collection of theatrical paintings, drawings, texts and memorabilia, the most extensive world-wide, is the Club's greatest asset. Here is David Garrick's chair from Drury Lane, his powder puff and his fly-fishing rod, the widest collection of Henry Irving memorabilia anywhere, a lotus flower



Anna Hyunsook Paik's 2003 Garrick/Milne prizewinner: (from left) RADA students Charlie Walker-Wise and Jamie Doyle in rehearsal at RADA

REPRODUCTION COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

worn by Sara Bernhardt as Ixeil, the dog collar worn by Charles Kean's St Bernard, and Noël Coward's perfume ioniser.

A library started by members presenting their own dramatic works now holds over 10,000 volumes, including the texts of most of the English dramatists and books from David Garrick's library.

In the 20th century the club gained from a share of the rights to Winnie the Pooh, bequeathed by member A A Milne and now profitably sold to Disney. The Garrick/Milne prize, launched in Milne's memory to encourage the art of painting and portraiture, champions the integration of the arts and in 2003 was won by Anna Hyunsook Paik's depiction of a rehearsal at RADA, featuring the modelling talents of third-year

students. It was a pleasant surprise to find this hung prominently in the male-only Cocktail Bar.

The list of former members is impressive. Here, a famous quarrel between Dickens and Thackeray fuelled a feud until just before the latter's death. P G Wodehouse's notorious Drones club was allegedly inspired by the Garrick: 'We're pretty broad minded here, and if you stop short of smashing the piano, there isn't much you can do at the Drones that will cause the raised eyebrow and the sharp intake of breath'.

Traditionally the only deadly sin at the Garrick was to be a bore. Anyone who told long stories, showed sycophancy towards famous people, mistook simple rudeness for rudeness coupled with wit, envied other people's success or boasted of their own, was ripe for massacre. The

playwright Frederick Lonsdale instinctively understood the rules. Accosted by a stranger with 'Aren't you Freddy Lonsdale?', he swiftly replied, 'No, not tonight'.

A club with such tradition, beauty, history, surely has its place in our contemporary acting world. Our tour was a pleasure. I am sure many of the boys in our year might be tempted to join, but they too found its exclusion of women confounding.

In a profession which pioneers liberalism, here is the 'actors club' that excludes half of all actors. One cannot help feel younger actors will look to the newer West End clubs which welcome women and thrive with business and social interaction.

Meantime, were one invited to the Garrick, the correct response must surely, albeit courteously, echo Freddy's: 'No, not tonight'.

BOOKS: WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

Acting My Life, Ian Holm (Bantam Press)

Arguments with England, Michael Blakemore (Faber)

The Two of Us, Sheila Hancock (Bloomsbury)

It is no surprise that actors, who seek their livings through a close understanding of other people's words and the effects they achieve, themselves turn to writing. RADA has a long roll of playwrights across its century and many stylish memoirs.

The last publishing season added three more such to the shelf, gaining also a collective interest in that all four actors (one book being a double-biography) came to Gower Street in much the same period.

Ian Holm arrived in 1949, although, after a year in the forces and an oddball theatre tour of the USA, he took his RADA diploma in 1953. Sheila Hancock and the Australian Michael Blakemore started their two-year course in 1950 and the late John Thaw – whose life story Sheila Hancock tells in parallel with her own – in 1958.

For Holm, Hancock and Blakemore this was still the period of postwar austerity, food and clothes rationed, the Academy fighting for funds to rebuild the blitzed Malet Street theatre, acting confined to the little theatre in the Gower Street basement, while the Academy was packed with 200-plus students.

It was perhaps surprising that serious work could be done and talent emerge. All three authors do record frustrations with the training, Michael Blakemore etching in acid portraits of 'Miss Ecks', 'Miss Wye' and 'Miss Zedd', 'three RADA witches who would come close to undoing me... their derision was unlike anything I was to experience later'. His RADA career was, he felt, rescued only by the Principal Sir Kenneth Barnes' own judgment of

the young man's potential.

Sheila Hancock, too, felt herself embattled, with the groomed 'Honourables and Lady Mucks' or less exalted student beauties (Joan Collins, Diane Cilento) or with the voice teachers: the legendary Clifford Turner, prescribed a tooth prop. 'This was an evil instrument shaped like a tiny dog's bone, that was held between the teeth in the centre of your mouth, with the object of opening up the vowels. I had it in my mouth for most of my time at RADA.'

She worked hard at her studies and hard away from them, scraping the money to help keep her in the course. A prominent part in her final show was denied her: 'In 1951 I left RADA having achieved the near impossible feat of winning nothing at all'. Where Ian Holm, Kendal prizewinner, went to carry spears at Stratford, Blakemore and Hancock headed to Huddersfield, Oldham

and the educative grind.

Yet all destined for glittering if very different careers. All three accounts are rich in anecdote and insight, not just into their own lives but also reflecting the wider profession and the changing society in which it practises.

The most detailed is Blakemore's, whose 390 pages take him as far as the 1971 National Theatre production which confirmed his leap from jobbing actor to director of stature. One senses a very readable trilogy in the making. (Readers of his 1969 seaside rep novel, *Next Season*, will find here Very Famous Names for the rising young actress with whom the narrator has a passionate affair and the ambitious young director who steals her.)

Ian Holm's is no less frank an account of professional highs and lows, shot through with a sense that, in his 70s, Sir Ian is still working to understand various episodes of his life, not least his 'spirit of the chase' relationships with women.

Were this an old-style RADA prize-competition, for graduate memoirs, however, Sheila Hancock should at last take her prize. Her book's title is commercially understandable, given her late husband's celebrity, but less than generous to the writer. Yes, it gives a close-up account of a big television star, with Hancock's diary-entries from the time of John Thaw's cancer diagnosis as poignant counterpoint, but Sheila Hancock's account of her own life, its political as well as professional development, makes this a book out of the ordinary, most deftly crafted.

Peter Fiddick

BECOME A FRIEND OF RADA AND SUPPORT THE STARS OF TOMORROW, TODAY!

RADA, a founding affiliate of the newly created Conservatoire for Dance and Drama, provides training of the highest order for actors and technicians and is a world leader in its field. The newly rebuilt and refurbished Academy in Gower/Malet Street houses three in-house theatres, through which RADA finalist students are launched into their professional careers. Around 16 productions a year enable you to watch the acting students in the final stages of their training, very often performing in productions seldom staged in the commercial theatre.

The Friends of RADA assist the Academy in numerous ways, not least by providing an income to support the student production seasons and by contributing to the Friends of RADA Scholarship/Bursary, which is awarded annually to a finalist student. Friends also support the Academy by:

- introducing friends and colleagues to the Friends of RADA
- bringing guests to Academy productions
- introducing potential sponsors who may be able to offer additional financial assistance
- offering paid casual work for students at weekends and during the holidays
- offering temporary accommodation to new students relocating to London for the first time in September
- supporting fund raising events held by the Academy
- making a bequest to the RADA Scholarship/Bursary fund.

WHY DOES RADA NEED FRIENDS?

The creation of the new Conservatoire for Dance and Drama has ensured that all home and EU students now receive fee support from the Higher Education Funding Council paid through the Conservatoire. However, the Academy must continually raise new funds by its own efforts, not only to maintain the calibre of the teaching but also to ensure financial support for students in genuine need. There is currently no funding available, other than the Student Loan system, to provide for term time living costs in London.

HOW MUCH DO I CONTRIBUTE?

The Friends of RADA annual membership fee, though modest, provides a regular income, particularly if we are able to attract new members each year. So, as well as joining us yourself, please introduce a friend.

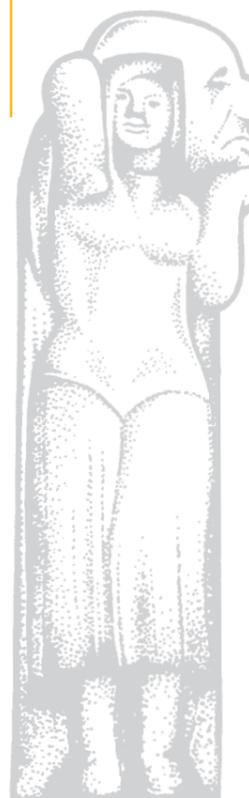
| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| RADA Graduates | £15.00 a year |
| Non-RADA Graduate. | £25.00 a year |
| Five Year Membership. | £100.00 |
| Ten Year Membership. | £175.00 |

HOW WILL I BENEFIT?

- advance booking facilities for all RADA student productions and the opportunity to follow the rising talent in student productions in our three in-house theatres
- concessionary rate tickets for Friends visits to other London productions featuring RADA graduates
- invitations to post-show discussions with the director and cast
- an invitation to the dress rehearsal of the Prize Fights
- *RADA, The Magazine* – founded for the Friends
- and, most of all, the gratitude of the students and staff for actively supporting the actors and technicians of the future.

Contact the Registrar, Patricia Myers, for further details.

ROYAL A •



STAGE MOVES

**RADA's own intelligence service charts
who's working where**

RADA ACTING GRADUATES 2005

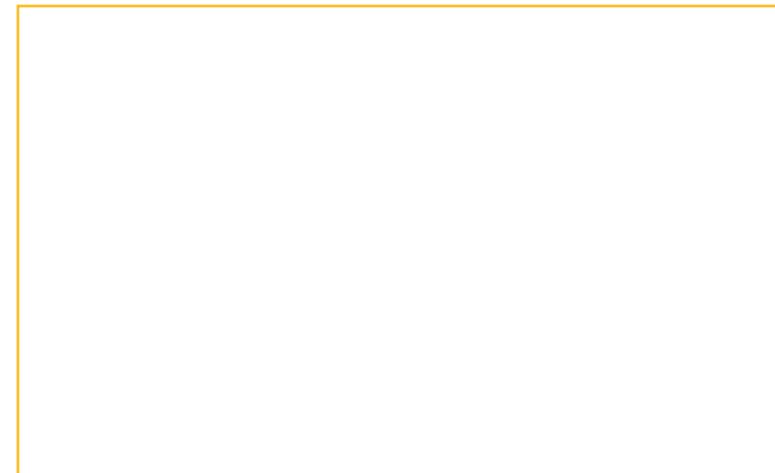
ALISA ARNAH, *Riders To The Sea*, Southwark Playhouse, *Dancing with Lucy*, short film, NFTS. ANNIKA BORAS, *Carver*, Arcola Theatre. ANDREW BUCHAN, *Romeo and Juliet* (Mercutio), Royal Exchange Manchester. JOHN CUMMINS, *The Last Voyage*, BBC Radio. MSIMISI DLAMINI, *Romeo and Juliet*, Arundel Festival. JAMIE DOYLE, *The Last Voyage*, BBC Radio, *Romeo and Juliet*, Birmingham and national tour transferring to The Barbican, London. RUTH EVERETT, *Special K*, advert. AMANDA HALE, *The Fence* by Howard Barker, tour with The Wrestling School. TOM HIDDLESTON, *Raw Sienna*, film. DANIEL PERCIVAL, *Cat's Paw*, film, *Van Wilder 2*, film. ANDREA RISEBOROUGH, *Whatever Love Means*, *A Very Social Secretary*, and *Doc Martin*, all TV. ALEX WYNDHAM, *As You Like It*, Kenneth Branagh's new film. CHARLIE WALKER-WISE, *As You Desire*, The Playhouse Theatre with Kristen Scott Thomas, Bob Hoskins and Maggie Tyzack.

RADA TECHNICAL GRADUATES 2005

KATE CHAPMAN, working for construction company All Scene All Props. NICOLA CHISHOLM, SM, Edinburgh Festival. ANDREW MCCARTHY, SM, Edinburgh Festival. PAUL RHODES, working for Unusual Rigging.

RADA ACTING GRADUATES 2004

JOTHAM ANNAN, *As You Like It*, Kenneth Branagh's new film. PEPPER BINKLEY, *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*, TV, *The Bedford Diaries*, new Warner Brothers TV show by Tom Fontana, *The Real Thing*, Huntingdon Theatre, Boston. PHILIP CUMBUS, *Great Expectations*, RSC production. TOM DAVEY, BBC TV drama and sitcom. ROBERT HASTIE, *Flash for Freedom*, BBC1, *The Rat Quartet*, BBC Radio 4. LEANDRA LAWRENCE, *The Bill*, ITV, *The Little Fir Tree*, The Crucible Sheffield, *Be My Baby*, short film. PHILIPPA LEON, *The Frogs* by Aristophanes, *The White Bear*, *Kaspar*, Bridewell Theatre. RHIANNON OLIVER, *Rookery Nook*, directed by Dominic Dromgoole, Oxford Stage Company, touring May to August. Season at the Dukes Theatre, Lancaster, *Under Radio . The Frogs*



RADA THANKS ITS GENEROUS DONORS

CONTRIBUTIONS TO RADA'S CENTENARY APPEAL HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM

Her Majesty The Queen
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother
The Princess Margaret Countess of Snowdon

CENTENARY APPEAL PRINCIPAL BENEFACTORS

The Arts Council of England
Lord and Lady Attenborough
BBC
British Telecommunications
Channel 4 Television
Nicholas Cooper
The Foundation for Sport and the Arts
Sir John Gielgud
The Jerwood Foundation
The Garfield Weston Foundation
The Woo Foundation

CENTENARY APPEAL PRINCIPAL DONORS

Messrs Ashurst Morris Crisp
AXA Sun Life Services plc
Baker Tilly
British Steel plc
Michael Codron Plays Ltd
Messrs Dibb Lupton Alsop
The Robert Gavron Charitable Trust
The Goldsmiths' Company
The Gosling Foundation
Sally Greene/Criterion Theatre Trust
Thelma Holt
Bill Kenwright Ltd
The Kirby Laing Foundation
Deborah Loeb Brice Foundation
Messrs Marriott Harrison
Austin and Hope Pilkington Charitable Trust
The Really Useful Group Ltd
Sebastian McLean International Ltd
Stoll Moss Theatres
Messrs Theodore Goddard
UIP Charitable Trust
Sir Stephen Waley-Cohen
John Michael Williams

CENTENARY APPEAL MAJOR DONORS

Messrs Ashurst Morris Crisp

AXA Sun Life Services plc
Baker Tilly
British Steel plc
Michael Codron Plays Ltd
Messrs Dibb Lupton Alsop
The Robert Gavron Charitable Trust
The Goldsmiths' Company
The Gosling Foundation
Sally Greene/Criterion Theatre Trust
Thelma Holt
Bill Kenwright Ltd
The Kirby Laing Foundation
Deborah Loeb Brice Foundation
Messrs Marriott Harrison
Austin & Hope Pilkington Charitable Trust
The Really Useful Group Ltd
Sebastian McLean International Ltd
Stoll Moss Theatres
Messrs Theodore Goddard
UIP Charitable Trust
Sir Stephen Waley-Cohen
Duncan C Weldon
John Michael Williams

CENTENARY APPEAL SUPPORT IN KIND

Entryphone
FSS Financial
Spitalfields Market Opera House
The Nicholas Stanley Foundation
Tricon Foodservice Consultants plc

COMPETITIVE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Lilian Baylis Award
Henry Cotton Memorial Trust
The Laurence Olivier Award
The Lady Rothermere Scholarship
Sir John Gielgud Award

SCHOLARSHIP/BURSARY AWARDS IN PERPETUITY (*Bequest)

Lord and Lady Attenborough Bursary
Lord Attenborough Centenary Bursary
Peter Barkworth Bursary
Hugh Cruttwell Student Bursary
CT & J Bursary
Keely Donovan Bursary Award
Kate Dreyer Memorial Bursary
The Friends of RADA Bursary
Sir John Gielgud Bursary*
Mary Higgins Bursary*
Jane Horrocks Bursary

Roy Kinnear Bursary
Terence Knapp in memory of John Rogers
James H Lawrie Bursary*
Mary Morris Bursary*
The Lady Pilkington Scholarship Trust*
Princess Diana Bursary
RADA Associates Student Hardship Fund
RADA Student Hardship Fund
The Rayne Foundation Bursary
Max Reinhardt Student Bursary
C Stanley Searle Bursary*
St Clair Bayfield Bursary*
Sir Anthony Hopkins Bursary
John Thaw Student Bursary
Miss Waddilove*
WCRS Student Bursary
Garth Wilson Student Bursary* – dedicated to Ann Wilton

SCHOLARSHIP/BURSARY AWARDS

The Sir John Cass's Foundation
D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
The Foundation for Sport and the Arts
The Sir Anthony Hopkins Charitable Foundation
The Boris Karloff Foundation
The Leverhulme Trust
The Ogden Trust
The Rayne Foundation
Stanley Picker Trust
The Wall Trust
Richard Wilson

PART SCHOLARSHIP/BURSARY AWARDS

The Atlantic Foundation
Mr Peter Barkworth
Caroline Blakiston
The Clothworkers' Foundation
Gilbert and Eileen Edgar Foundation
John Lewis Partnership plc
William and Katherine Longman Charitable Trust
Mercers' Company
South Square Trust
Wilkinson

SCHOLARSHIP/BURSARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Leigh's Paints
Sylvia London
Mr Bryan Montgomery
Mr and Mrs Anne Mountford

The Alan Rickman Fanclub
Tay Charitable Trust
Valerie White Memorial Fund

SPONSORS OF NON-SCHOLARSHIP RADA ACTIVITIES

Peter Barkworth (Pianos)
Beaverbrook Foundation (Development of Media Training)
Cambridge Marketing (RADA Centenary Christmas card)
Sheila Bennett (Reprint of the RADA Keepsake and Counsellor to mark the Academy's Centenary in memory of her late husband Peter Bennett, actor, RADA graduate and benefactor)
Clive Francis (Programme designs for fundraising events)
HM Government (Purchase of 18 Chenies Street)
Charles Russell Solicitors (Donation towards the cost of the Annual Report)
Stage Electrics Limited
The Wolfson Foundation (1st/3rd floor studios, 18 Chenies Street)
Michael Kamen Memorial Fund (Annual Outreach Programme).
Contributions to this fund were received from: Eric Clapton; Flying Colours Communications; Sir George Martin CBE; Material World Foundation; Virgin Unite
Vari-Lite automated lighting equipment supplied by PRG Europe

STUDENT SPONSORS

AdHoc Theatre Company
Mr Archibold
Becketts and Sergeants Educational Foundation
Bedford Players Trust
Lady Boulton
Mr Ronald Brown
Tracey Budd Nail Consultancy
Carlton House Charitable Trust
Click Drive
Countryside Properties
Cozette Cordwell Fry
Mr David Conville OBE
The Cray Trust
Pat Davies
Beryl Dunkley
Jo Garcia
JLD Trust

The Dorothy Johnson Charitable Trust
Mr N Gray
Olive Hanna
Hodnet 2000
Elizabeth Hobden
Kim Hope
Mr and Mrs Kyan
Kempston Rotary Club
Kempston Charity
Marina Kleinwort Charitable Foundation
Hanni Kyan
L Kronidov
Lady Margaret College Drama Society
The Nancie Massey Charitable Trust
MM Productions – Sound Design and Hire
Helen Mirren
The Laurie Nidditch Foundation
Alan and Rita Peterson
Mrs Jennifer Pettit
Mrs Pickering
P & H Services
Provincial Insurance Company For Bolton
Rio Tinto
Mr and Mrs Reid
Reuben Brothers Foundation
The Reverend John Robson LVO
Martin Rouse
Merchant Taylors
Richmond Associates
Rotary Club of Langley Park
Rotary Club of Swansea
Rotherham Trust
Tom Slater
Sunderland Rotary Club
Sunderland Youth Enterprise Trust
Tema Music
Kate Townsend
Vale Furnishings
David Waddell
Wedlake Bell
York Children's Trust

BEQUESTS (*held in the RADA Hardship Fund **held in RADA Friends Scholarship Fund)

Miss Marjory Blanks**
Mrs Mary Higgins
Mary Morris
Miss NS Rogers
C Stanley Searle
Miss L Sherwood*

St. Clair Bayfield
Miss Mary Agatha Wane*
Marc Sheldon in Memory of James Haldane Lawrie
LT & J Mortimer Wilmot Bennitt Memorial Fund
Vivian George Toland**
Mrs Joan White Memorial Fund*

MEMORIAL AWARDS (which provide the funding for the RADA Hardship Fund)

Meggie Albanesi
George Arliss
Sir Squire Bancroft
Sir Kenneth Barnes
Caryl Brahms
Miriam Brickman
Pamela Brown
Pamela Burns
Ivo Currall
Robert Donat
Fabia Drake
Dame Edith Evans
Romany Evens
Sir Johnston Forbes Robertson
Edmund Gray
Jan Groth
Anmer Hall
Hannam-Clark
George Howe
Madge Kendal
Charles Killick
Roy Kinnear
Charles Lefeaux
Sir Emile Littler
Lord Lurgan (In Memory of Capt Eric Dance and Ivor Novello)
Cyril Maude
Stephen Murray
Winifred Oughton
William Poel
Flora Robson
Christine SilverPamela Sherek
Lydia Sherwood
Alan Sleath
John Sloane
Arthur Talbot Smith
Dorothy Taylor
Vivian George Toland
Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree
Irene and Violet Vanbrugh
Arthur Wontner
Diana Wynyard

SPONSORSHIP AND CHARITABLE DONATION OPPORTUNITIES AT RADA

The Academy welcomes the opportunity of entering into partnership with grant giving trusts, companies and philanthropic individuals to support a wide range of its activities, including student scholarships/bursaries, student productions, short courses and special projects. It is only by maintaining its fundraising activities that the Academy can maintain the calibre of its teaching and its broad selection policy. This enables it to continue to offer places on the basis of an individual's potential and talent rather than the ability to cover the term time living costs.

Throughout its history, the Academy has been fortunate in benefiting from the support of donors, both named and anonymous, who have made substantial contributions to the Academy and its Scholarship/Bursary funds. Donations can be made in several ways.

A bequest to the Academy.

As a registered charity, it is free from Inheritance Tax as the Gift is deducted from the total net value of your estate when assessing Tax liability. For further information regarding arranging a bequest to RADA, please contact Patricia Myers on 020 7908 4728 or patriciamyers@rada.ac.uk

Donations through the Gift Aid Scheme.

As a registered charity, the Academy is eligible for a donation through the Gift Aid Scheme which now has no lower limit. Tax relief will apply to all donations made through this scheme from £1 upwards. Donations can be

directed towards the support of individual students to contribute to the fees or term time living costs in the following ways:

- £680 per year to cover student travel card costs during term time
- £630 per year to provide meal vouchers for a two course lunch in the Academy Refectory during term time
- £895 per year to provide meal vouchers for breakfast and lunch in the Academy Refectory during term time
- £250 per year for a third year acting student to cover additional costs of photographs and mailings to agents and casting directors
- £3980 per year provides the balance on a student's fee account between the cost of the course and the grant received
- £1150 per year provides the mandatory student fee contribution for a graduate ineligible to receive LEA support
- £7800 per year provides a student with £150 per week towards rent, bills, travel costs and food
- £2750 per year provides the balance between the maximum student loan available to a student living in London and the minimum £7800 we estimate is required to cover the BASIC living costs during term time.

Five and ten year membership of the friends of RADA.

All long term subscriptions are held on deposit and the interest is used annually to provide a Friends of RADA bursary to a final year student.

RADA

ROYAL ACADEMY OF DRAMATIC ART