

<b>Institution: Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance (RBC)</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: UOA 35</b>
<b>Title of case study: Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA)</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b>          RBC has a long-standing relationship to this area of practice, culminating in the establishing of its Theatre for Young Audiences Centre, April 2011. The research outlined has had an impact on professional practice, international co-operation, training and critical approaches in this under-investigated area of practice. The Lead Researcher/Head of Centre, Jeremy Harrison (JH), built on the work of Julian Bryant, Director of Community Outreach, whose activities in this area began in the 1990s. It is augmented and strengthened by contributions from a range of Associate Researchers all of whom are leading practitioners within the TYA sectors of UK and Europe. TYA Centre website: <a href="http://bit.ly/IgVmcw">bit.ly/IgVmcw</a></p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b>          Research has focussed on three main areas:</p> <p><b>1. Performance practice:</b>  <b>'Acting for Children'</b>, symposia in 2011/12 with Associate Researchers: award winning company Oily Cart; leading playwright/director David Wood; internationally acclaimed company Punchdrunk; John Martin, Director of PAN Intercultural Arts; Tall Stories; and Olive Branch Theatre; which examined process and performance methodology in this area. <b>'For, By and With'</b> a forum event in 2011, exploring the nature of participation in performance in collaboration with Trinity College London's <i>International Children's Playwriting Competition</i> at The Unicorn Theatre. <b>'Acting Like Children'</b> an event in 2011, examining approaches to the performance of child characters with Associate Researchers: London's Polka Theatre; Action Transport Theatre; Travelling Light; Early Years expert Jo Belloli; director Sally Cookson; Vice Chair of Action for Children's Arts Vicky Ireland, and David Harradine, Artistic Director of acclaimed company Fevered Sleep. <b>'Dream: the joy of creating'</b> two week-long residencies in 2012/13, in association with Kent Count Council, Ashford Borough Council and TYAUK the UK Centre of ASSITEJ, examining the practice of TYA innovators, with award winning artist Mark Storer and Oily Cart, a company with a 30 year history of making ground-breaking work for children with complex disabilities (see section 4).</p> <p><b>2. New Writing:</b>  <b>Whose Title is it Anyway?</b>, a symposium in 2013, exploring approaches to creating new work, in association with TYAUK and Associate Researchers: RBC Visiting Professor and director Tony Graham; award winning children's playwright Carl Miller; Kate Cross, Director, The Egg, Bath; Dr. Cecily O'Neill; and Associate Company, Paper Balloon. <b>'Narrative Spaces'</b> a forum in 2013, exploring how space informs the creation of new work with Associate Researchers, site-specific experts Bad Physics; The London Storytelling Centre; Dr. Katherine Sandys, RBC and Mountview Academy; and Dr. David Broster, Worcester University. During <b>2008/12</b> JH initiated a research and development process funded through Bexley Council's Cultural Olympiad offer, Kent Count Council and Ashford Borough Council, resulting in the creation of four original pieces of music-theatre, leading to the formation of Theatre Jemilda: <a href="http://www.theatrejemilda.co.uk">www.theatrejemilda.co.uk</a>. <b>2011/13</b>, saw a research and development process initiated in association with leading London-based companies: Theatre Centre, Half Moon Theatre, Bromley's Churchill Theatre (part of the Ambassadors Group), Dumbwise in association with Greenwich Theatre, and Pants on Fire, resulting in the development of nine new pieces of work which were performed in schools and theatres including London's Tramshed, Greenwich Theatre, Half Moon and Churchill Theatre.</p> <p><b>3. Music in performance:</b>  <b>2001/05</b>, JH and Gabriel Gawin (RBC, Manchester Metropolitan University) led a research project exploring the practice of award winning Polish company Teatr Piesn Kozla, resulting in the</p>

development of new approaches to integrating music into work for and with children and young people. **Bridging the Gap, 2006/08**, a project led by JH in association with Lewisham College, focussing on the application of the above project for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, exploring means of improving progression routes into HE (see section. 3). **2011/13**, the above project extended to secondary and primary schools in Ashford, Kent.

### 3. References to the research

Examples of performance and playwriting outcomes with national and international impact: **May 2013**, *Tomorrow's World*, an umbrella term for three new seed commissions for teenage audiences by Theatre Centre, an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, in partnership with RBC. Research Associates: Artistic Director Natalie Wilson and established writers Lisa Evans, Steven Bloomer and Gbemisola Ikumelo. – documented at [bit.ly/1bVqIMW](http://bit.ly/1bVqIMW) **2009/12**, the creation of four pieces of new actor musician theatre for primary school children, commissioned, developed and produced by RBC initiated by JH. *Xeno's Tortoise*, *Ron Strong's Magical Gymnasium*, *Story Drum* and *How High?* were written and created by a range of established and emerging writers and TYA practitioners including Neil Carter of Barbican Theatre and National Theatre; Jane Karen who has worked for Warner Brothers; JH and Laurence Alliston-Greiner of Floods of Ink. They toured as part of the Cultural Olympiad offer of Bexley Council, Ashford Borough Council and under Kent County Council's Extended School's Service. Theatre Jemilda, a company specialising in work for children aged 4 to 11 was formed as a result (see section 2 and 5.3) ; **2009/13**, *Metamorphosis* and *Pinocchio*: [bit.ly/1iSTWTn](http://bit.ly/1iSTWTn) new pieces of work developed by Pants on Fire, under the direction of lead researcher and RBC Head of Movement, Peter Bramley. Both shows toured the UK extensively and went to New York and were funded by Arts Council England. Combined they reached an audience of over 11,000. *Metamorphosis* won the Carol Tambor Best of Edinburgh Award 2010. [www.pantsonfiretheatre.com](http://www.pantsonfiretheatre.com). Reviews: <http://nyti.ms/1if9Yt5> [bit.ly/1874iHL](http://bit.ly/1874iHL)

The following are conference papers and published articles underpinned by the research outlined in section 2: **'When Acting Like Children Becomes Acting for Children'**, JH, 2012; JH invited to speak at NYU Steinhardt convened conference *Which Way TYA?* on the dissemination of outcomes from *Acting Like Children* and *Acting For Children*. An account of the event can be found here: [bit.ly/1b4mUbd](http://bit.ly/1b4mUbd); **'Urban Theatre Arts: bridging the gap'**, (JH, 2008, [bit.ly/1iSVzQY](http://bit.ly/1iSVzQY)) a project report published by Creative Way and Higher Education Academy. This document outlines how underpinning research into the use of musicality in performance has applications for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The project focussed on ways of improving progression routes into HE for young people from within this demographic; and resulted in changes to audition processes, pedagogy and teaching at both FE and HE levels (see section 2). ; **'Making Musgrave Dance'**, JH, 2012, a paper exploring actor musician practice given at the fourth bi-annual international conference *Music on Stage* hosted by RBC. An article of the same title is to be published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing in 2014.

#### Project Funding:

Researcher	Funding Body and Title	Award	Period
Jeremy Harrison	Creative Way - <i>Urban Theatre Arts: bridging the gap</i>	£6,000	2006-08
Jeremy Harrison	HEIF/Bexley Borough Council, children's theatre project: Cultural Olympiad	£56,000	2009-12
Jeremy Harrison	Kent County Council Extended School's Service – <i>Xeno's Tortoise</i>	£6,000	2010
Peter Bramley	Arts Council England – <i>Metamorphosis</i> and <i>Pinocchio</i>	£18,000	2010-13
Jeremy Harrison	Ashford Borough Council – <i>Story Drum</i>	£2,000	2012
Jeremy Harrison	TYAUK/Paul Harman <i>Dream; the joy of creating</i> with Mark Storer	£2,000	2012
Jeremy Harrison	Kent County Council and Ashford Borough Council <i>Dream: the joy of creating with Oily Cart</i>	£7,000	2013

**Impact case study (REF3b)****4. Details of the impact** (indicative maximum 750 words)

These outcomes support the achievement of Article 31 of the *International Human Rights Convention: Rights of the Child*, which expresses the right of children to participate fully in cultural life. This is particularly true of the Kent output, which targeted an area identified by ACE and local authorities as a cultural 'cold-spot'. Theatre Jemilda, the company formed to extend this work, has prioritised hard-to-reach rural communities, where this lack of access is most acute. Examples of feedback from young people and schools can be found on the websites of Theatre Jemilda, Theatre Centre and Pants on Fire (see section 2 and 3). Deep relationships have been formed with a small number of primary schools within Bexley and Kent, where creative learning practices and staff skills continue to be enhanced by an ongoing relationship with RBC, underpinned by this research. In addition progression from FE to HE for students from Lewisham College has also been enhanced (see sections 2 and 3).

The research underpinning and contributing to the development of the new writing and performance work, has had significant impact and benefit to children and young people, aged 4 to 18, both in the UK and USA. The work has reached an audience of over 22,000 children and young people and feedback from schools groups and individual audiences has substantiated a range of benefits, both in terms of associated learning and broader social and cultural outcomes, in line with the acknowledged benefits of arts engagement for young people, as quantified in a range of studies including those collated in the Cultural Learning Alliance's ImagineNation report. Quality and benefit can also be evidenced by national press reviews of some of the work particularly Pants on Fire's work and the award they received in 2010 (see section 3).

Impact of the two 'Dream: the joy of creating' residencies has also been rich. The two events have engaged 24 established practitioners from the UK, France, Belgium, Ireland, Portugal, Germany and Puerto Rico, who have used the research to underpin their own practice. The second of the two events, focussing on methodologies for working with children with profound disability has been particularly influential, with a range of new performance and process methodologies being adopted by companies including Replay, Northern Ireland; Eclectico Internacional, Puerto Rico; Teatro do Biombo, Portugal; Peplum Cactus, France; and Commotion Dance, SE UK. Moreover, the research outcomes are underpinning new teaching practice in special schools in Ashford, Newcastle Under Lyme, Leicester and Inner London.

The benefits of the TYA Centre's work can be seen also in the impact it has had on the national TYA landscape. TYAUK, the UK Branch of ASSITEJ, has collaborated on a number of projects and are now working with RBC to create a new postgraduate qualification for established practitioners. Drawing on the body of research outlined above, this will become an important means of developing the TYA sector both in the UK and internationally; of raising standards and quality, a strategic ambition of ACE, expressed in its guidelines on theatre for, by and with children and young people.

It should be noted that there is very little published research in this area internationally, and next to nothing on practice in the UK. TYA has been largely viewed as a subset of Applied Theatre. By focussing on it as a performance practice RBC is pioneering the dissemination and exploration of UK practice. The range of outcomes underpinned by this work has had impact on established professional practice, the work of emerging artists, students and academics (see sections 2, 3 and 5).

It is evident that the research has directly influenced practice within the UKTYA sector, in particular through a number of RBC graduate companies, some of which are now receiving ACE funding. It is clear that their approach is informed by the methodologies resulting from the research, using them as an impulse for original work which is reaching new audiences and garnering critical acclaim.

The companies are itemised in 5.7 below. Moreover, the College website [www.bruford.ac.uk](http://www.bruford.ac.uk) gives examples of graduate destinations and impact; and this article in *The Stage* reflects RBC's unique position in this sector: [bit.ly/1hibJUI](http://bit.ly/1hibJUI)

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

1. Half Moon Theatre's *Exchange for Change* event, a Paul Hamlyn Foundation funded initiative aimed at encouraging new approaches to TYA, has been supported between 2012/13 by this research, resulting in the development of two new pieces of work for early years audiences: *Scrub a Dub*, 2012, and *Dig and Delve*, 2013, and a conference focussing on the role HE plays

## Impact case study (REF3b)

- in the development of new work. More information on RBC's relationship with Half Moon can be found at [bit.ly/1aYo2kb](http://bit.ly/1aYo2kb)
2. The *Takeoff! Festival 2013*, includes within its programme *How High?* a piece written and directed by JH and informed by this research (see section 3). The festival "celebrates the best of theatre for young audiences from the UK and beyond" and is one of the major festivals in the UK TYA calendar. The selection of *How High?* provides evidence of the quality, impact and credibility of this research and of the lead researcher. (see p.12 at [bit.ly/1hicEV9](http://bit.ly/1hicEV9))
  3. At *Le Petit et Grand Festival* in Nantes, France April 2013, the work of the RBC's TYA Centre and *Dream: the joy of creating* in particular, were cited by Cyrille Planson, Chair of ASSITEJ France, as an example of good practice with international impact, at a platform discussion on International Co-operation led by Maria Ines Falconi, Vice President of ASSITEJ International. An account of this event written by JH can be found on the TYAUK website: [bit.ly/loHMnN](http://bit.ly/loHMnN)
  4. NYU Steinhardt's esteemed Theatre and Education Programme are collaborating with RBC and JH on their International Summer School provision for postgraduate students from the US and beyond. 2013 saw the first of these events with another planned for 2014. This is evidence of the international impact and recognition afforded to RBC's research in this area. NYU had previously been working with other UK HEIs but are now using RBC's model of TYA as a performance practice as a research paradigm, that is informing this area of their post graduate provision. [bit.ly/1c8yt5L](http://bit.ly/1c8yt5L)
  5. Within the Heart of the Waves, Olive Branch Arts ([bit.ly/1aYooHk](http://bit.ly/1aYooHk)) a project developed by MATYA graduate David Stothard ([bit.ly/1b4osC7](http://bit.ly/1b4osC7)) as part of his final MA module, which saw approaches informed by this research being explored with and for children and young people of the Saharawi Refugee Camps, Western Sahara. An account of this event can also be found on the TYA Centre Webpage (see point 9).
  6. JH is an advisor to TYAUK the UK Centre of ASSITEJ's Executive and is part of the strategic planning group supporting the UK bid for the ASSITEJ 2016 Congress.
  7. The impact of this body of work can be evidenced in the work of a range of graduate companies, who were exposed to this research through the pedagogies that informed their training and the events detailed in sections 2 and 3: **Mini Mal** (<http://www.mini-mall.co.uk/>), an emerging graduate company specialising in actor musician work; recent pieces such as *Tiny Tempest* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UNe9SJW09Y#t=31>) a version of *The Tempest* for young audiences (Brighton Festival and Pleasance Theatre, London) provide clear corroboration for the impact of this approach to making work. Reviews: [bit.ly/195Pidn](http://bit.ly/195Pidn) [bit.ly/1ghX3Sy](http://bit.ly/1ghX3Sy). **Dumbwise** ([bit.ly/1jJWxN0](http://bit.ly/1jJWxN0)) an ACE funded actor musician graduate company producing work including *Nicobobinus*, an adaptation of Terry Jones' children's book, developed in association with RBC; performed at Tramshed and Greenwich Theatre's Children's Theatre Festival ([bit.ly/1iSWPUk](http://bit.ly/1iSWPUk)). **Floods of Ink** ([www.floodsofink.co.uk](http://www.floodsofink.co.uk)) an MATYA graduate company. Its show *Finders*, for under-fives, won support from the Farnham Maltings ([bit.ly/1fJ1bO1](http://bit.ly/1fJ1bO1)), whilst *M for Medea* a piece for teenagers, started out as a final MA piece, and went on to receive an £8,000 grant from ACE. It has performed at Half Moon, Marlowe Theatre and The Jasmin Vardimon Production Space and is currently being produced as part of Half Moon Presents ([bit.ly/1iMxi2](http://bit.ly/1iMxi2))
  8. *Dream: the Joy of Creating* evaluation documents 2012-13 outline the impact and benefit these events had on the 48 international participants, the partner schools and other stakeholders, the children and young people who participated in the events and the range of practitioners, educationalists, local government officials, funders and academics who attended the sharing sessions. These documents can be seen at TYA Centre's website (see below).
  9. The TYA Centre's web presence as part of RBC's Theatre Futures site is a unique resource providing accounts, research papers, resources and information about CPD and training available as a result of this work. It has an international advisor panel and includes contributions from Paul Harman (founder of Takeoff! and TYAUK) and Stuart Bennett (London Drama). Details of much of the output discussed in this document can be found there: [bit.ly/1gVmcw](http://bit.ly/1gVmcw)