

Debut

Project Evaluation

Workshop attendees 11
Plays submitted for the performance event 5
Actors used 9
Audience number 41



Background to the project

Debut built on other new writing initiatives that have taken place between Crave Arts and Worcester Theatres, beginning in 2020 with the 'Is This Love' online workshop and continuing with in person workshops and performance projects 'Whisper to Voice', 2021, and 'On The Verge', Fringe Festival, 2022.

These new writing workshops and subsequent performances have now become part of an established programme between Crave Arts and Worcester Theatres in which Crave Arts has developed work with over 30 writers of all ages and backgrounds.

The methodology includes workshop(s) led by Steve from Crave Arts on different aspects of writing for the stage; a subject or theme to inspire the writers; feedback given by Steve on plays drafted and then subsequent rehearsals and performances by local actors.



DEBUT

Be part of the
Worcester Fringe 2023!

A creative writing workshop for the stage, led by **Crave Arts**, that will investigate character and conflict. For all levels of experience, from complete beginner to experienced writer.

Date - Thu 25 May, 7pm - 9pm
Swan Theatre

Writers will then have the opportunity to write a short play to be performed at the **Worcester Fringe** on Thu 27 July.

Cost - £5

To book - worcestertheatres.co.uk
For more info - craveartsbusiness@gmail.com

CRAVE Worcester **FRINGE 2023** **WT WORCESTER THEATRES**



The Workshop

The Debut workshop took place on Thursday 25th May 2023 at Worcester Theatres. The theme was examining conflict through character. There were 11 attendees from a wide range of ages and backgrounds. The workshop looked at:

- Examining the group's real life examples of characters
- Examining individual characteristics of these characters
- Examining our own individual characteristics
- Looking at what our characteristics stop us from doing
- Writing a short scene about two people who meet for the first time.

The brief for the writers

The writers' brief was to write a play lasting no more than 15 minutes with up to 3 characters. They were asked to write about some form of conflict within a meeting or encounter with people who may not know each other or are new in their relationship.

After the workshop

5 writers submitted work. This was around the number we had hoped for and expected. Each writer was given detailed feedback by Steve and 3 of the 5 redrafted their plays as a result. The work was of a very good standard.

The five plays submitted were:

Saving the Planet by Betty Hagglund

Game Over by Lance Woodman

Life Inside The Box by Chantelle Cox

Cloth Ears by Margaret Adkins

The Last Voices in the World by Laura Liptrott

Each of the five writers was featured on Crave Arts social media and given a good profile with photographs and a short interview.

The performance day

Rehearsals

The rehearsals consisted of a whole day at Worcester Theatres with Steve directing 2 of the plays, Aaron directing 1 play and Owen the final 2. Each play was rehearsed for 1.5 hours. Local actors were engaged. The rehearsals were a real pleasure to undertake and the actors with whom we worked were excellent.

Final performance

The performance took place to a near full audience. The plays were performed script in hand with Steve acting as compere. Each of the plays fitted the brief and audience feedback was excellent. There was an interval and the night lasted just under 2 hours. It was a great success.



Owen Harper from Worcester Theatres said:

“The project has really grown from previous years.
‘We didn’t expect to have such a big audience for the show’
It was great to see new writing at The Studio Theatre.
‘There were no negatives, it was a great success.’”

Case study one – Lance Woodman

Lance is an established writer but hadn't written for a couple of years.

What did you hope to achieve from the Debut project and other projects you have undertaken with us?

This is the first project I've worked on with Crave Arts. For the initial workshop, I wanted to be in a room with other playwrights enjoying a conversation about the craft and practice of dramaturgy. I looked forward to exercises that would make me think about how I wrote and what the essential elements of dramatic writing are.

What support did you receive from Crave Arts in the development of your play?

The workshop delivered on my wishes and also offered the chance to submit a short piece for consideration for a rehearsed reading event at The Worcester Fringe Festival. Being given a task and a deadline is really useful for me and it prompted me to create a new piece of work (Game Over) for the project. I submitted a draft and Steve at Crave gave me feedback that fed into subsequent drafts.

What was the rehearsal process like?

The rehearsal was short (75 minutes) and intense. There were five pieces to rehearse, so this timetable was understandable. Steve directed my play and I had a great cast (Aaron Corbett and Susan Doran). We had three run throughs and managed to tease out some of the characters' backgrounds and make some minor cuts.

What did you think of the quality of the final showcase?

It was great to see work in development in front of an almost full house in the Studio at Worcester Swan Theatre. I could watch how my play was received by the audience and talk to them afterwards to gauge the reception. It was fascinating to see the great variety of the work produced by all of the writers considering that we had attended the same workshop and responded to the same prompt. I hope the actors also used the audience to test the piece in performance. I think they did.

The show was well advertised and run very well.

Could we have done anything better?

It would have been nice to have more time to rehearse and perhaps time between a first and second rehearsal to go away and do some considered rewrites. I appreciate that this is difficult to timetable and resource. As ever with these projects, it would be good if contributors (actors, directors, writers, technicians etc.) were paid.



Case study two Margaret Adkins

Margaret had been writing with us for some time now. Her writing is measured and well crafted.

What did you hope to achieve from the Debut project and other projects you have undertaken with us?

I enjoy writing for theatre and love to see what I've written come to life when a play is performed. It's such a thrill to hear words that have been in my head spoken out loud on stage. In the Debut project, as in previous Crave Arts projects, I hoped to continue to improve my playwriting skills, find inspiration to write a new play and be able to develop it for the stage. Steve's workshop allowed time for his teaching, group discussion and the sharing of ideas. As a result, I wrote 'Cloth Ears' and couldn't have been happier when I saw it performed by local actors.

What support did you receive from Crave Arts in the development of your play?

I received a lot of generous support and mentorship from Crave Arts. In the Debut project, Steve read my scripts closely and gave thorough feedback.. Steve's experience helped me to move the play forward. He listened carefully and so I always felt in control of my own script.

What was the rehearsal process like?

I was grateful for the opportunity to attend a rehearsal of 'Cloth Ears' and contribute thoughts and ideas on the performance. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to attend. However, I had faith in the actors and the director, and I was delighted with their interpretation of the script. It was great to hear it for the first time, fully rehearsed and ready for performance. Before he started rehearsals with the actors, Steve went through every line of my script with me, asking questions about what I meant and hoped to convey.

What did you think of the quality of the final showcase?

The plays had very different in themes. People I knew in the audience were very positive after the show and without exception they each one and were impressed with the quality of the event. I found each play engaging. Each one made an impression. The quality of the acting and directing that I have seen in projects run by Crave Arts makes me feel my script is in safe hands.

Could we have done anything better?

I can't think of anything to write here!

