



**Exclusive workshops with** 

**West End star Kerry Ellis!** 

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# **SENIOR CORNER**

Thank you to the students at Razzamataz Torbay for letting us into their world of Razz.

Name: Kiernan Harris

**Age:** 15

**Ambition:** West End or TV Actor

"Since I joined Razz I have transformed into a person that I want to be. I don't know what I would have done without it."

Name: Aimee Evans

**Age: 12** 

Ambition: Professional Singer/Interior Designer "I love Razz because it improves my vocal skills and range and adds to my school lessons. This is the only activity I have ever stuck at. Six years and counting."

Name: Holly Robinson

**Age: 15** 

**Ambition:** Astrophysicist

"I think I have grown since being at Razz (7 years) and honestly one of the most exciting things of my week is to come and see my friends at Razz on a Saturday."

Name: Abbie Jones,

**Age: 17** 

Ambition: Drama Teacher

"I started in the Juniors and I am really hoping to be able to work at Razz when I am old enough as I really enjoy being around people who share the same love of musical theatre as me."

Name: Bradley Alcock

**Age: 14** 

**Ambition:** Game Designer or Actor

"I've been at Razz for four years now and I am definitely far more confident. I'm even singing solos now! Razz is perfect for escaping the negativity that can be outside."

Name: Stella Swift

**Age: 12** 

Ambition: Music Industry or performance "Razz has helped me grow in confidence. It has improved my acting skills and toned my voice."



# RAZZAMATAZ EARLY YEARS

Got a baby brother or sister who loves to boogie, play make-believe or sing?

Well they may not be able to walk just yet but it doesn't mean that they can't join the Razz Family!

We are delighted to launch a whole new product called Razzamataz Early Years.

Within the offering is a new class called Razz Tiny Tots, which is a session especially designed for babies age 6 to 24 months along with their parent or carer. Tiny Tots has been developed to inspire little ones to see the world through imagination, senses, play and performing arts. The Tiny Tots class structure features a mix of "Time to bond" and "Time to share", allowing for more one to one time between parent and child. Classes run in 6 week 'themes' rather than a full term, with each 6 weeks exploring a different and varied theme.

Razzamataz Early Years will also include the established products of Razz Tots for children age two and three and Razz Minis for those age four and five. Razz Tots and Minis are already very well attended with parents keen to share the progress of their children. "My eldest son has been going to Razzamataz for the last four years. He absolutely loves it and he enjoys going every week.

His little brother and sister joined Razz Tots when they turned two. Today was their first day at Razz Minis. They went off without crying and their teachers were full of praise for them as they joined in all the activities. I am so proud of them all and so pleased we are part of the Razz Family!"

Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

We can't wait to welcome more families into our schools. To find out the location of your nearest Early Years classes, contact your local school.

If you are interested in running your own Razzamataz Early Years classes, contact Suzie McCafferty on E:suzie@razzamataz.co.uk or call 07793 054 233.



# MEET KERRY ELLIS, LEADING LADY OF MUSICAL THEATRE

From the West End to Broadway, Kerry Ellis has starred in some of the most iconic shows as well as achieving chart-topping success as a recording artist. As a mother to two young boys, Kerry is passionate about the benefits of performing arts for children. Razzamataz was delighted to exclusively host Kerry's singing and performing masterclasses in Scotland, Sheffield and London.

#### Starting out

I come from a small town in Suffolk and although I always loved to perform, I didn't really know how that would develop into a career. I did lots of dance classes as a child and was very sporty, taking part in swimming and horse riding too. As I got older, I knew that my passion lay in performing and decided to focus on that. My dance teacher went to Laine Theatre Arts, which is probably why I decided to audition there too. I went for three years and had an amazing time and threw myself into every aspect of college life. As well as training, I worked professionally in a local Panto and singing at a holiday park and that combination of performance and training together was invaluable.

#### Career highs

From working on the West End stage to Broadway, there's really been so many special moments in my career and I'm eternally grateful for it all. Some of the most special memories are performing with Brian May (Queen's guitarist) at the Royal Festival of Remembrance to honour those who have given their lives fighting for the country. The emotion in the theatre was incredible and it was very special to be part of it all. Another place that was awe inspiring was when I performed in Verona, Italy in front of 70,000 in an outside colosseum. As someone who loves musical theatre, performing on Broadway for the first time was of course a dream come true and recording my first album was a wonderful experience.

#### I love my job because

I really love everything about being a performer from the rehearsal period through to being on stage. I love being part of a team and watching a performance take shape and being able to move an audience, whether that's making them laugh or cry, that aspect of the work is wonderful.

#### The challenges

I'm now a mum to two young boys, Alfie aged 4 and Freddy aged 2, so for me it is about striking a balance. When I was younger I threw myself into everything work-wise and never really took a break but now it is about creating a balance. But I love my career and I think it is important to show children that it is essential to follow your passion and the importance of hard work and pushing yourself out of your comfort zone. It is also really vital to stay healthy and to look after my body and vocal chords to be able to continue to perform to my best ability.



You have to love and have a passion for the performing arts because it can be a tough career. There will be times that you don't get the jobs that you really want, there may be times that you have to take a break because you are injured and all that can be tough emotionally. But if you love it, that will get you through any difficult periods.

Performing arts is really diminishing in schools and this is one of the subjects that can teach children so many skills that they can carry with them through life. Theatre practice really brings in an awareness of yourself and teaches skills such as team work, communication as well as general physical fitness.

There's still so much that I want to achieve and I still have a passion for what I do. which is often ignited from working with young people in workshops. I'm currently in a play. The Importance of Being Earnest and I'm really enjoying the radio show that I present. I love the variety of the work I do and as long as I'm being creatively challenged, I'm inspired to keep going.

#### Top tips for Razzamataz students

- Embrace it all. During your training get involved in as much as possible.
- The friendships you make may well be the friends you have for life.
- Ask questions. When you have the opportunity to meet professionals, don't be shy of talking to them.
- Push yourself outside of your comfort zone. Schools and colleges are the best places to experience new things.

#### Sheffield and London where she put on an exclusive masterclass for our students. The start of the workshop was to focus on the students and what they wanted to get out of the class. Kerry explained that she loved to also learn from them and to find out how they access music, what their aspirations are and what challenges they face. During the workshop, the students

learnt how to act through a song and how to approach a song right from the start. Kerry also shared her knowledge and experience on audition prep and how to get the most out of each performance.

The relaxed workshop allowed the students to ask her lots of questions and it gave them a wonderful insight into the life of a professional performer who has achieved a huge level of success.

"Kerry Ellis was wonderful, so lovely and I learned so much from her. It was so surreal to be able to sing for her and gain advice from a pro," Razzamataz Carlisle student Lewis Logie, aged 17.



# **SHOWTIME**

#### Razzamataz Yeovil presents:

#### **Dreams Can Come True!**

Yeovil held a 'Name our Show' competition and the winning name was inspired by the dreams and aspirations of the students. They were asked what they wanted to be when they were older and there were a few interesting suggestions. The results formed the basis of the show and ranged from: I want to be a dinosaur (Minis), I want to be accepted (Seniors) and included time travel, have friends and be happy.

#### Students say:

"I loved the show. Performing with all of my friends meant it was really fun. I loved it when I spotted my family in the audience during the 90's medley. I like performing to an audience, it was especially fun in a real theatre. My favourite part was doing the heroes dance. Our staff were really helpful and friendly,"

Harry.



"Just wanted to say a huge thank you to everyone in the Razzamataz team and children for the amazing Summer Showcase performance. Loved Minis' sweet stage debuts and Seniors' West End quality performance! But of course, we're absolutely thrilled with how Oliver progressed and how confident he looked on stage. The whole school's 90s medley and other songs have absolutely blown us away! We were also very impressed with how well everything was organised - true professionals."

Irina and Julian Swift.





## Razzamataz Newcastle presents:

## **Razz Family Portrait**

Razz Family Portrait is a show all about celebrating how we are all different, have different stories and are stronger together!
The students performed excerpts from Annie, Oliver, Billy Elliot, Adams Family, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Mary Poppins and Matilda as well as pop songs and commercial dances. This was a show to make the audience laugh, cry, and cheer. Students explained how they love their home families and how they love their Razzamataz Family.

#### Students say:

"It was the best day ever! I've made loads of new friends, been singing and dancing so it was everything I love all in one day,"

Lexie Ward.

#### Parents say:

"Well done to the whole team. Everyone was brilliant last night from Juniors through to Seniors. On a personal note, thank you to the staff for all you do. Leah has come on so much in 12 months and it's hard to remember when she wasn't a member of the Razz family." **Neil Marshall.** 



Albert Mills



Ethan Chudley



Paulo from Barnet



Mava Hultman-Johnson



Zoe Wenman



Cody Mitchell

# STUDENT SUCCESS!

Congratulations to all of our students who are not only securing professional work on stage and screen but also being brave and volunteering to perform in their school productions, many taking on main parts for the first time. At Razzamataz, we love to celebrate all forms of success. #BelievelnYou.

Miss Saigon - Huge congrats to two students at Razzamataz Plymouth who have landed the role of Tam in the tour of Miss Saigon. Albert Mills and Ethan Chudley will both be performing at the Theatre Royal in Plymouth. Principal Deborah says: "I am over the moon that two of my Minis have been successful in auditioning for the role of Tam in Miss Saigon, Both boys are very focused and bring a bundle of energy to their Razz classes which I am sure paid off for them when they auditioned. Their parents mentioned that the boys stood out for being a little more confident than the others. How great to hear our wonderful Razzamataz training really does pay off. I can't wait to go and see these little chaps perform."

Film star! - Well done to Cody Mitchell from Razzamataz Carlisle who has a film coming out on Netflix! Cody's film "Calibre" was given its world premiere at the Edinburgh International Film Festival before streaming globally as a Netflix original on June 29th. It was also in the running for this year's prestigious Michael Powell Award for Best British Film. Cody had the amazing experience of attending the film premiere with his fellow actors at the Festival.

CITV's Scrambled! - Many of our students across the UK took part in CITV's Scrambled! Inters student Zoe Wenman from Razzamataz Cambridge was announced as the star of the whole series of 'Scrambled's Got The Eggs Factor'. Zoe performed a song that she had written herself.

Mindfulness - What an incredible opportunity for Junior student from Razzamataz Barnet Maya Hultman-Johnson. Maya was invited to attend, talk and take a practice by Jon Kabat-Zinn who is an American professor and founding father of contemporary mindfulness. Maya aged 7 was up on stage leading the whole room before being interviewed live. #Mindfulness, #Serenity, #Practice. Also in Barnet, one of the Junior students Paulo has been offered a part in the Millfield Theatre Panto Beauty and the Beast.

Chitty Chitty Bang Bang - Well done to Junior student Logan from Razzamataz Paisley who has recently found out that he's going to be part of the ensemble at the King's Theatre in Glasgow in this fantastic musical.

TV success - Sisters Caitlin and Ciara Jackson from Razzamataz Sheffield will be appearing in Channel 4's Ackley Bridge. Caitlin is also currently recording for CBBC's The Worst Witch, which just happens to star another Razzamataz student in a lead role! She has also recorded for Age Before Beauty starring Robson Green and Ciara has also worked on War of the Worlds. They have both been busy!

West End musicals - Huge congrats to Maidstone Inters students Jovy Domingos who has been offered a contract with Motown the Musical, at The Shaftesbury Theatre located on Shaftesbury Avenue in the West End. He auditioned back in January and has been busy training with them over the last five months.



Junior Student Logan



Ciara Jackson



Caitlin Jackson

# RAZZ UPDATE

It's been another incredibly busy year for our Head Office and all of our schools. We have been delighted to welcome new schools in Brentwood, Queens Park and Pendle and also have some more Principals come on board. We've been nominated for a number of Awards and a number of our schools are busy rehearsing for our next big showcase at the Indigo at the 02 in London.

#### **Move It**

The Principal of the Barnet school Michael French, was invited to Move It to put on a special 42nd Street inspired tap masterclass. Michael has performed in West End shows and many musicals so it was no surprise that his class was a sell-out. This year, many Razzamataz students went along to find out more about careers in dance and to take part in the workshops. They also cheered along former Razzamataz Medway students who performed with their new full-time colleges on the main stage.



# A STANTAN



#### Student opportunities

Do you follow our Razzamataz Head Office Facebook and Instagram pages as well as your own school? We post lots of opportunities for students including auditions for West End shows, auditions for TV programmes and lots more!

#### **Awards success**

Known as the biggest and most influential event in the franchising world, the finalists for the British Franchise Association (bfa) Awards included two Razzamataz Theatre Schools Franchisees. Hayley Limpkin, Founding Principal and now co-owner of Razzamataz Medway and Helen Bell, Principal of Razzamataz Sheffield were both shortlisted in this prestigious event. Further congratulations to our MD and Founder Denise on being shortlisted for FWIF's Award. When Denise started Razzamataz in 2000, it was with a simple dream to make performing arts accessible to children. She never could have imagined the incredible journey she has been on, which led her to being shortlisted for EWIF's Final for 'Woman Franchisor of the Year.'



# **GUEST WORKSHOPS AND MASTERCLASSES**

#### **Newcastle**



Students enjoyed a #BelievelnYou workshop with Brian Costello, a mind expert from Headstrong. The Senior students worked with Brian for three hours to help with general stress. They completed exercises that made them think about confidence and fear and near the end of the three hours their mindset had subtly changed. At the end of the session, Brian pulled out hard wooden boards and told them they were going to break them. You could see the fear creep in with a few of them but they all supported each other and did it!

After the workshop, Principal Kayleigh received a message from a Senior who had been particularly struggling with stress: "Today was amazing, it really helped me. Thank you so much."

#### **Reading and Marlow**

JP Omari, street dance specialist, visited Razzamataz Marlow and Reading for an exhilarating and exhausting morning! Students were treated to a showcase of his skills as well as a masterclass in street dance. The students worked with JP on a short routine with plenty of moves and JP's own special brand of funk. "I had an amazing morning, I want to dance like JP when I am older," said one Junior student.

"He taught us so much in such a short session.
When is he coming again?", asked an Inter student.



## Newbury



Senior students at Razzamataz Newbury had a fantastic masterclass with Jamie Read from READ College. The students worked on the hits from Les Miserables, and more specifically concentrated on acting through song.

The whole school also enjoyed a workshop with Victoria Farley from West End Theatre Workshops.

#### **Tonbridge**

Great fun was had by all when Tonbridge students were treated to a Stomp The Musical workshop. West End musical theatre star Charley Ruane asked all the students to bring a bucket and broom to school, and they learnt to beat a rhythm using buckets, and then a routine with the sweeping movement of their broom.

Charley also demonstrated some amazing tricks from the show, which the students performed in their summer showcase.



### Weymouth

Just ahead of the hugely anticipated new Lion King film, one of the London cast members from the West End stage show paid a visit to Razzamataz Weymouth to deliver a West End workshop. Tamara McKoy-Patterson has worked extensively in musical theatre appearing in shows including The Lion King, Mary Poppins and Saturday Night Fever.

Tamara was most impressed with the professional attitudes and abilities from the students and enjoyed the Q&A session with the students discussing auditions, professional contracts, mistakes on stage (!) and much more.

## **Cambridge**



Cambridge students enjoyed an Audition Technique Workshop with Elite Theatre Arts (ETA). Students participated in a Musical Theatre 'audition' based workshop learning a song and dance routine with three-part harmony. Four students also got the opportunity to perform a solo audition and receive personalised feedback. "The audition process was a great experience, the way they auditioned us was really positive and they gave me very valuable feedback which I have since used in other auditions," said Alex from the Seniors.

Emily from the Inters group said: "I was really nervous to begin but after I sang the feedback they gave me really helped me gain confidence to sing in front of other people."

#### **Carlisle**

Former West End cast member Charlotte Jeffrey came to Carlisle for a Mamma Mia! Workshop. Student Annie Lewis said: "It was an eye-opening experience into the professional industry and an amazing experience, now we're all Dancing Queens!"



#### **Sheffield**



Lots of great workshops happening at Sheffield including Rachel Moran from the West End cast of Matilda. Rachel taught the students the audition choreography from the iconic song Revolting Children. Harry Blumenau did a special child's casting workshop for the Razz Project Intense students where he did a two stage audition workshop. The first part was a song and dance from Annie and then the students had to perform their own piece and he critiqued them to give them feedback for real auditions. Dan Burman also came to do a Stage Combat workshop designed to give students an insight into stage combat

both as a practical performance skill and also as a tool for academic drama study. Students were taught a range of basic techniques and how to portray stage fights effectively with correct actions and reactions.

#### Wimbledon

Former Razzamataz student Peter Reid who is currently appearing in Matilda in the West End came to do a fantastic workshop with all the students at Wimbledon. It was lovely to have Peter back and he was a huge inspiration to the current Razz students.

## **RAZZ MINIS TAKEOVER**

Our Razz Minis classes for four and five-year olds are the perfect way to start an adventure in performing arts. Thanks to Razzamataz Edinburgh and their Razz Minis stars for showing us how it is done.



# **NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS**

#### **Dancing with Darcey**

Enthusiastic students from Razzamataz Tonbridge got the incredible opportunity to dance with Darcey Bussell and try her new dance fitness workout.

The lucky 'Darcey Dozen' were selected to attend the dance class with their dance teacher. Darcey Bussell is widely acclaimed as one of the great British Ballerinas, starting her professional career at Sadlers Wells Royal Ballet then moving to the Royal Ballet where she became a Principal Dancer. Today, she is perhaps best known for her role as a judge of BBC's Strictly Come Dancing.

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RazzaMagazine caught up with Darcey who offered some wonderful advice for our students:

"We are all born as creative, inquisitive and curious individuals. As we grow, so do our inhibitions, which in turn restricts our willingness to be creative and inventive. The creative arts, both performing and visual, help to keep these innate qualities alive. In a more complex society, we increasingly depend on the creative individual.

Of course, dance is my favourite!"

"We should all dance, our whole lives. It improves our physical and mental well-being, it is social and allows everyone to express themselves more. As a performer, dance allows you to bring others a lot of joy. The many attributes of being a dancer or a performer are self-confidence, discipline, versatility, resilience, dedication and adaptability. With every career in performing arts there are highs and lows, just remember to keep believing in yourself, remember it's your passion and come back stronger each time."

#### **Proud to support Ugandan student**

Razzamataz Sutton Coldfield are paying for a child to attend school in Uganda, after finding out just how little money it costs for them to access schooling but just how few can afford it. Nick Furlong and Gemma Hextall are the Principals of Razzamataz Sutton Coldfield and reached out to the Nkuringo Schools Project, who work with the Singing Gorilla Music Schools Project. The organisation works with many children who are peasants or orphans who are trapped in the cycle of poverty, being unable to afford education. The school is supporting 14-year-old Ronald Byamukama. As well as tuition fees, they will be providing money for a bed for him to sleep in at the school to board, all his food and his school uniform. This will be paid each year to enable him to continue his education until graduation. #BelieveInYou.

#### **Wicked Top Tips**

The students at Razzamataz Queens Park got some fantastic insider tips from the West End cast of Wicked. The students will be performing sections of the show in their own summer showcase. Student Archie posed with professional Sophie Evans who plays Glinda and student Lili met with Elphaba aka Alice Fearn who told her to just 'go for it' when singing Defying Gravity.



# MAGIC MOMENTS AT DISNEY

Eighteen of our theatre schools had the chance to invite their students and families to take part in a special gala performance called RazzaMagique in November 2017 at Disneyland® Paris.

It was such a special experience that it was overwhelmingly decided that we just have to go back! So in 2020, we shall be dreaming of all things Disney once again as we prepare to perform our own special show and take part in the iconic Disney Performing Arts® Pre-Parade down Main Street USA® in the Disneyland® Park.

#### The RazzaMagique cast

Here's a snapshot of the wonderful moments from performing on stage at The Dome Disney Village®, where Cirque Du Soleil once performed their iconic shows. Each and every student gave their all and there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

#### **Carlisle and Penrith**

Opening the show with a "mash up" taking us through the years of Disney. From Snow White to Moana visiting various magical kingdoms on route.

#### Maidstone

Students transported us to Victorian London to pay a visit to Burt, Mary, Jane, Michael, street sellers and Chimney sweeps.

#### Durham

"Razz Cats" was based on 'High School Musical'. This highly energetic young cast worked well together on stage and the charming Troy melted all our hearts.

#### **Edinburgh**

'Be Brave' featured songs from the modern Disney film with a traditional theme, 'Brave'.

#### **Paisley**

The next number gave us an insight into the dark lives of some popular Disney villains.

#### Dumfries and West Cumbria

These schools joined together to create a "A Whole New World". The trio of Aladdins and Jasmines were especially charming during the title number of this piece.

#### Sheffield

Twenty six students covered head to toe in gold glitter graced the stage and treated us to a very well rehearsed, polished performance of 'Hercules'.



#### **Mansfield and Nottingham**

The evening show opened with a visit to Aladdin's cave of wonders. These students displayed great stamina, particularly during "Never Had a Friend Like Me" and there were some lovely solo lines and harmonies during "A Whole New World".



These two schools joined together to create an original piece "Razz Jungle" which incorporated 'The Jungle Book', 'The Lion King' and 'Tarzan'.

#### **Rickmansworth**

'Alice in Razzland' captured Lewis Carroll's dark and disturbing world wonderfully. Cleverly conceived featuring modern choreography, clips from the 1951 Disney classic animation and sections from the original book, the students delivered the story very well.

#### Parents say:

"It has been a magical and wonderful experience which has exceeded all of our expectations by a mile," says Andrew Govier, parent of Razzamataz Medway student Ruby. "We were truly transported into a fantasy world of mystery and wonder watching our daughter perform in the pre-parade. The seamless process of the Take Us To The Magic organisation has added to our wonderful holiday experience."

#### Newbury

This was an original story featuring songs from several films and musicals and included some very confident solo singers.

#### Weymouth

'Zero to Hero', based on Hercules showed a classic Greek story that was re invented by Disney. This cast managed to achieve classic meets modern with great success.

#### Derby

'When You Wish Upon a Star' was an exciting 'mash up' of Disney themes opening with the characters 'Ryan and Sharpay', famously from 'High School Musical' auditioning for the roles of 'Mickey and Minnie'.

#### Medway

The final school to perform was 'A Tale As Old As Time' from the Disney hit 'Beauty and the Beast'. All thirty students on stage performed with energy and conviction but a special mention to the young Belle who delivered the opening number with immense charm and to Lumierre who oozed confidence and sang wonderfully.

# **FUTURE FUND WINNER**

A huge well done to Sarah Burrows from Razzamataz Carlisle who has been awarded our Future Fund scholarship. Judged by a panel of professionals, we were delighted to offer Sarah a scholarship to help towards the cost of her performing arts course at the University of Cumbria.

#### Meet our judges

Peter Houston, former Razzamataz student and now professional West End musical theatre performer in Matilda at the Cambridge Theatre, London. Murray Grant, professional dancer who has performed all over the world in shows such as Moulin Rouge and The Phantom of the Opera. Sarah Story, former Razzamataz student and now radio DJ on the Capital network. Ian Kelsey, television actor from Emmerdale, Coronation Street, Doctors and host of other TV shows.





# **COMPETITION TIME!**

Want to win a Razz Goody Bag and feature on our national website?

**Enter our RazzAmazing competition!** 

Simply complete this sentence:

"I love Razz because ....."

Email your answer to: franchise@razzamataz.co.uk Remember to include your name, age, school attended and your contact details.

**Deadline for entries: Saturday November 3rd.** 

**GOOD LUCK RAZZERS!** 

# TEEN TITANS GO! TO THE MOVIES

To celebrate the UK release of Teen Titans GO! to the Movies, children attending our Razzamataz Summer Schools, enjoyed learning moves from the film's soundtrack.

The film's storyline is one our talented performers could relate to, Robin wants to star in his own Hollywood film, but does he have what it takes and will it all go to plan? Razzamataz were delighted to work alongside Warner Bros. to help promote this feel-good summer film.

We are looking forward to hearing your reviews Razzers!

# **FREE TASTER SESSIONS!**

We think you'd love coming to Razzamataz Theatre Schools!

But don't take our word for it!

We'd like to invite you to a **FREE** taster session at your closest school.

Telephone your nearest school by visiting razzamataz.co.uk and find their contact details.

