

3 MARCH 2015

## **Royal Opera House Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop opens its doors to Hassenbrook Academy students for Inspiration Day**

**The Royal Opera House Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop in Purfleet welcomed more than 80 students from Hassenbrook Academy on Friday 27 February as they took part in an Inspiration Day.**

Engineering and Drama students from Hassenbrook Academy in Stanford le Hope toured the Production Workshop to see the skilled work of the craftspeople; the scenic artists, carpenters and metalworkers, who create the sets and scenery for the ballets and operas staged at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. They also took part in hands-on workshops with Royal Opera House practitioners. For the first time, a very specific science focus was added to an Inspiration Day. The GCSE Engineering students from Hassenbrook Academy explored how geometric shapes and mathematics play a vital role in designing and creating structures for the stage.

They also looked at the making of a model box focusing on the construction and putting together of sets. The visit enabled the students to examine new and exciting ways to approach engineering and appreciate

that it has a vital role in the arts. It also gave them an insight into the broad range of careers that are open to engineers.

**Emma Mills, Senior Teacher, Technology and Innovation** at Hassenbrook Academy said ‘Thank you so much Royal Opera House for showing and enabling our students to explore and see how technology helps to bring to life creative projects. The students had the fantastic opportunity of working with professionals in the field, learning industrial techniques and being given the chance to apply some learnt skills in mini projects.’

### **Thurrock Trailblazer**

Hassenbrook Academy’s Inspiration Day was part of **Thurrock Trailblazer**, a project run by the Royal Opera House Learning and Participation Team in Thurrock for Thurrock Council.

Thurrock Council is transforming education in Thurrock and Royal Opera House Thurrock is delighted to be delivering the Cultural Entitlement Pathfinder Initiative, **Thurrock Trailblazer**. The programme will use involvement in the arts to inspire and engage young people, raise aspiration and improve educational attainment.

The Learning and Participation Team will build on its strong partnerships across Thurrock and the wider cultural sector locally, regionally and nationally to create an exciting programme of activities for pupils and teachers in the 21 Trailblazer Schools across Thurrock. It will develop targeted offers for schools to take part in activities in Covent Garden and Thurrock and form new relationships between schools and other cultural providers.

**Gabrielle Forster-Still, Deputy Head, Learning and Participation (ROH Thurrock)** said: ‘We believe that involvement and participation with high quality arts and culture can transform young people’s lives and

we look forward to working with local schools, teachers and pupils to deliver this.'

For more information about **Thurrock Trailblazer**, please go to <http://www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/thurrock-trailblazer>

For more information about the highly successful **Inspiration Days** at the Royal Opera House Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop in Purfleet, please go to [www.roh.org.uk/inspiration](http://www.roh.org.uk/inspiration). Inspiration Days are available for schools, colleges, business and groups to discover more about the amazing world of backstage skills.

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**Notes for Editors**

### **Royal Opera House Learning and Participation in Thurrock**

Royal Opera House Learning and Participation in Thurrock has been offering innovative and creative projects and programmes in schools, colleges and across communities in the Thames Gateway for the past six years. In 2010, more than 1000 people from Thurrock, young and old, took part in creating and performing the spectacular Purfleet Opera: *Ludd and Isis*, the third large scale ROH performance created with communities in Thurrock. As a result of this work a Thurrock Community Chorus has been created with over 140 members of all ages. For further information, please go to:

[www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/community-chorus](http://www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/community-chorus). RM19, a

new Youth Chorus for 11-25 year olds was started in 2012:

[www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/rm19-youth-singing-group](http://www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/rm19-youth-singing-group).

Public and educational tours of the state-of-the-art Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop where the sets and scenery for the Royal Opera House stage in Covent Garden are built are now available. Please go to [www.roh.org.uk/visit/tours/thurrock-tours](http://www.roh.org.uk/visit/tours/thurrock-tours) for further details.

The High House Production Park is supported by a unique partnership including Arts Council England, Creative & Cultural Skills, the Royal Opera House and Thurrock Council: [www.highhouseproductionpark.co.uk](http://www.highhouseproductionpark.co.uk)