

About Ensemble

In response to barriers faced by many Deaf and disabled artists, as well as a lack of diversity within the current theatre climate, Graeae's groundbreaking new work-based paid training programme **Ensemble** launched its six-month pilot in October 2015.

Over this period, six artists between the ages of 19 and 22 undertook intensive acting and theatre-making training to help further their professional development. Graeae are currently fundraising to run a second year of the programme, which will launch in 2017.

To deliver the first year of the training, Graeae worked in partnership with leading drama schools **London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA)**, **Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (RCSSD)**, **Goldsmiths University** and **Rose Bruford College**. All these partners showed a genuine commitment to working collectively towards a barrier free education and an inclusive and diverse theatre environment.

Other artistic partners on the programme included **Giants Theatre Company**, **Frantic Assembly** and **Cardboard Citizens**.

The Ensemble Training

The Ensemble artists on the 2015-16 intake were employed by Graeae for a period of six months to train with highly qualified freelance and drama school practitioners working intensively in the areas of Vocal Preparation, Physical Theatre, Devising, Classical Text, New Writing, Theatre for Social Change and Workshop Facilitation. Alongside these modules, the Ensemble artists also shared learning with students from the partner drama schools and were paired with a mentor from the industry who guided, supported and advised on the individuals professional development throughout the programme.

Throughout the first term, the Ensemble artists developed their practical performance skills and theoretical frameworks, as well as how to use drama as a means for social change and personal exploration. This practical learning fed into a six-week rehearsal of a play in the second term, which was shared at London's Soho Theatre with casting agents and leading industry professionals present.

The future of Ensemble

We are currently seeking funding for a second year of the Ensemble programme, so that we can train up the next generation of Deaf and disabled theatre makers. If you can help, please contact kevin@graeae.org

The Ensemble Artists

The first in-take of Ensemble artists from 2015 – 2016 were (L to R):

Joshua King

Poppy Hammond

David Young

Kellan Frankland

Jamal Ajala

Vanessa Smith



Testimonies

'I have grown more than I could have imagined. I have worked with some of the industry's best and have managed to break down personal barriers. This was the best way for me to start my career as an actor, Graeae has helped me so much.'

Josh King, Ensemble Artist 2015-16

'The strongest quality of the Ensemble programme is that it provides a unique learning experience in equal measure for the young people involved, as well as for the individuals and organisations who contribute to the planning and delivery – the programme definitely lives up to its name.'

Rhiannon Fisher, London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (2015-16 partner).

Contact information

For more information on the Ensemble programme, contact:

Jodi Alissa Bickerton

Creative Learning Director

Tel: 020 7613 6908

Email: jodi@graeae.org

About Graeae

Graeae is a force of change in world-class theatre - breaking down barriers, challenging preconceptions and boldly placing Deaf and disabled artists centre stage. Artistically led by Jenny Sealey, Graeae's signature characteristic is the compelling creative integration of captioning, sign language and audio description, which engages brilliantly with both disabled and non-disabled audiences. Championing accessibility and providing a platform for new generations of artists, Graeae leads the way in pioneering, trail-blazing theatre. Graeae won the Promotion of Diversity Award at the TMA Theatre Awards UK 2012. www.graeae.org