

Performing the local
school), as well as
people



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Performing arts in the Community In this report I will compare and contrast Community Theatre near me, I will also discuss their contributions to their local area.

The first group I shall discuss is Bakewell Youth Theatre otherwise known as BYT, they are a group of teens aged eleven to eighteen that are 'all engaging, articulate and enthusiastic about the work they were doing' (Paul Morgans 2013). They do several performances a year most are with the purpose of enjoyment such as their most recent production of Fame. The group welcome anyone within the age ranges, as they believe everyone should get the equal opportunity to become involved with the arts, much like Joan Littlewood. Although the weekly classes aren't free, they are only £2 a session or £10 a term (as of 2016), such low prices are due to the local funding from the council and as some more disadvantaged students may not be able to afford this they are given the opportunity for a lower price.

The target audience is mostly the performers family and friends (from the local school), as well as people from the small town at each performance they do a prize draw which, along with the tickets helps raise money for charities such as Bluebell Wood Hospice.

The company also helps keep gives the local teens a distraction from their possibly stressful lives once a week, giving them a safe space for them to talk to other people who share their love for the arts.

Their most recent performance of Fame was held at the Medway Centre, which is easily accessible to all, this performance fulfilled its purpose to entertain and promote the arts towards the audience.

Fame the musical explores students of a performing school in New York who are using performance as a way of discovering their identity much like the

students of BYT, I believe that these themes are used to change the way that audience thinks about performing arts.

Although Bakewell Youth Theatre raises money for large chain charities The Hathersage Players (located in Hathersage) use the money they raise with the tickets and give it to local businesses. They are a performance company for all ages, they put on three shows a year (plays in October and May, and a big pantomime every February). Their latest upcoming show *Nell Gwynn*, (set in the past) it is about casting a woman actor in a patriarchal society - "they've disgraced our trade, ruined our art - they've put a woman on the stage!" (*Nell Gwynn* poster by Hathersage Players) by focusing on the issue of sexism it teaches the local community about the past and like Augusto Boal's Theatre of Oppression it forces the audience to want to change it. The production is a comedy aimed at teens and older; it also helps to promote social and cultural diversity within the local community.

As these performances are widely popular in the local village they often raise more money than anticipated which these extra donations they contribute to other causes for example a few years ago the money they raised helped a few people to go to their school prom. " "

The Pomegranate Youth Theatre offers weekly drama workshops that are available to all regardless of their ethnic or social background at a low cost." (P using the ethics of Joan Littlewood allowing anyone to have an opportunity to get involved in the arts. They are a group of amateur performers; their most recent performance of 'Animal Farm' is a satire (a comedic way of presenting political, economic or social views that are sometimes controversial). It is about the equality between several farm

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animals, saying: 'All Animals Are Equal but Some Are More Equal Than Others', the animals representing genuine people.

On the youth theatres website when talking about their thoughts on this production they explained how they explored this piece's relevance today through physical theatre. It battles the issues of equality and much like the Boal's idea of Theatre of Oppression it shows us as an audience the worst possible scenario making us want to change the outcome, although they did not use audience participation and getting them up on stage it does leave the audience wanting a change. As a satire it does use of Joan's techniques of making the audience laugh at something then moments later they question whether it was right to laugh, this then in effect forces the audience to question their own moral compasses.

The performance will be held at the Pomegranate theatre near to the centre of the town of Chesterfield. They also perform at festivals to promote their local community and the performing arts themselves. The classes are for all standards of performers the weekly sessions give people a safe place to be and grow as individuals for a small price. The money they raise from the yearly performances goes to funding their company as well as contributing to other surrounding theatres, unlike BYT and Hathersage Players which contribute to charities both local and chain.

Within the time before each performance the marketing team places posters around town to get as many people interested as possible. This production's target audience is for the more mature audience such as teenagers and older, as it has lots of somewhat controversial moments, but also

promotes the idea of equality to the audience, which may help in the future with cultural diversity and acceptance. This piece explores the negativity of equality by showing how inequality corrupts and destroys individuals and societies. In conclusion I believe that I have explained different types of Community Theatre and how they contribute to their local community, through charity work and society as a whole with moral messages and promoting the arts.