

London Deaf Drama Group's 25th Anniversary

The London Deaf Drama Group, one of London's premier performing Deaf Theatre troupes, are celebrating their 25th Anniversary this year. LDDG began when three deaf men, Stanley Stevens, Alex Cranwell and Colyn Walden got together in January 1986. Their shared love of performance led them to enter the 'World Theatre Festival' in Spain, a chance for deaf actors and actresses to perform in Barcelona. On their return, they performed in London – and thus the LDDG was born. Since 1986, LDDG has grown into a successful group of talented actors, actresses and writers, putting on plays that inspire and delight audiences.

London Deaf Drama Group operates on a voluntary basis. The cast, set designer, writers and committee members all pour their time and effort into creating performances for the sheer love of theatre. They collaborate with professionals, artistically and behind the scenes – for example, this year they have a talented stage manager on board who has offered her time free of charge. The money from performances is used for the running costs of projects; they are not a theatre company nor do they receive sponsorship. At the moment, LDDG have a core group but they want to encourage more people to get involved. Although it is voluntary, the rewards are great – a chance to perform, get involved with set design, production, publicity and marketing and other aspects of running a theatre group. They would love anyone who is interested in getting involved to get in touch with them, including your CV. You can get in touch via email at info@lddg.org.uk if you are outer London based and Deaf.

LDDG are different to other Deaf theatre companies as they put a Deaf 'twist' on their performances, using Deaf cultural humour and performing the plays from a Deaf perspective. This means that their plays are produced by Deaf people for Deaf people – as opposed to taking a written play and translating it into BSL. Julian Peedle-Calloo, the Chair of LDDG says: 'The Wizard of DeafOz has Dorothy wearing red gloves rather than red shoes...and without giving too much away she is escaping Oz for another reason - which if you come to one the performances you will see why. We pride ourselves in performing all our plays in BSL, we also have a voiced-over performance for whoever may need it and this is done by voluntary interpreters.'

For their 25th Anniversary, LDDG have collaborated with Nick Sturley, a professional writer and author. He has written two plays for LDDG, the first being Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Missing Father Christmas, and the forthcoming performance of The Wizard of Deafoz in early December, which promises to be a brilliant and witty spin on the classic tale of The Wizard of Oz. They are also having a special anniversary cake made which they will be sharing with the audience; they appreciate your support and want to celebrate in style! Tickets are selling fast - book at www.lddg.org.uk.