

## ***Sing Yer Heart Out for the Lads***

The first time I visited Chichester Festival Theatre was back in 2015 for Jonathan Kent's *Young Chekhov* trilogy. Admittedly, I came to see Anna Chancellor (a hero of mine) in *The Seagull*, but I also met my best friend, Margaux, who had come all the way from Belgium to see the play. Unsurprisingly, Chichester quickly became a special place for me.

During my third year of drama school, I saw advertised in one of the CFT newsletters a programme called the *Young Commissioning Circle*. I hadn't heard of this opportunity before, but quickly read up, sent in my application and got accepted to take part!

I visited the theatre on four occasions for Roy Williams' *Sing Yer Heart Out For The Lads* (the production I had just performed at drama school). The lucky bunch of us in the YCC got to partake in a Q&A with the director, Nicole Charles, observe a technical and dress rehearsal and see the show on Supporters Night – where I met with the cast and crew afterwards.

As an Acting student, I cannot explain how valuable this opportunity has been; to observe industry professionals in rehearsals create and build their characters. However, the YCC is not just for inspiring actors, with me were budding stage managers, and they too got to watch those working on the production and learn from them.

Even if you are not involved in the arts in any capacity, simply an avid theatre goer (or even just nosey to what goes on behind the scenes!) I could not recommend the YCC enough. Seeing a production go from the rehearsal stages to the end of the run was incredible, noticing the tiny detail changes and developments the whole team have created together.

I had such a joyful and informative experience on the Young Commissioning Circle. I urge you to take part yourself. All theatres should have a scheme like.

Charlie

