

Benedict Cumberbatch gives message of encouragement to Stonehenge School Actors.

Stonehenge LAMDA Acting students were thrilled last week when I read them an email sent to them by Benedict Cumberbatch, television's 'Sherlock', an ex LAMDA student himself!

Mr Cumberbatch, famous for many contrasting roles on television and in the cinema, took time to write directly to our students, offering them encouragement and detailed advice on how to approach the many difficult aspects of performance. Our students found his insights and suggestions most valuable and his letter has given everyone a real extra boost. Here's an extract:

'Cooperate and listen. Think. Don't react all the time. You'd be amazed at how internalised thoughts can translate into outside forms. Think about how others in the scene are affecting your character and what your character has to do to adjust to the changes. This is very helpful when breaking down the script especially with complex actions and characters.'

Mr Cumberbatch also points out the importance of keeping fit and being able to adapt to the challenges of a role. He emphasises the need for an actor to have a good sounding board, perhaps a friend, colleague, or family member, to help you keep things in perspective when you are trying for roles and facing rejection.

Benedict Cumberbatch is an actor admired and respected the world over. He is much in demand. Taking time, during a very busy schedule to write to our students is, in our opinion, a most considerate thing to do.

Actor and director, Mark McGann visited us in 2009 to deliver a brilliant workshop on 'The Crucible' to our GCSE students. Learning from successful professional actors offers our students vital insights into the craft of performance.

The Stonehenge School is a Private Centre for LAMDA awards.

Phil Jamieson
Head of Drama