

The 'Take a Bow' Judges

7–11 years category

Samuel Skey



Grew up in Shaftesbury and moved back to grow his own 2 daughters. Sam has many years experience with amateur, and not so amateur, dramatics as well as performances and productions of every kind. A long standing member of Shaftesbury Arts Centre, Sam has been involved in many productions here including helping run the Junior Drama club for 7-11's on Tuesdays.

David Grierson



David was, for many years, Head of Music and Drama at Shaftesbury School as well as being a part-time OFSTED inspector. He has taught in both the state and independent sectors and also completed a lengthy tour of duty in China teaching in international and Chinese schools. He is well known as an accompanist, conductor, adjudicator, musical director, writer and occasional speaker; his exploits whilst overseas were serialised in the Blackmore Vale Magazine winning him an enthusiastic following! David founded the Shaftesbury Community Choir. He is a member of the Phoenix Café Orchestra and of the sax ensemble Saxophony.

12–18 years category

Zoe Binns



“My family moved to South Africa when I was young so when I finished school I decided to come back to the UK for university and this is where I met my husband. We moved to Shaftesbury 14 years ago. I think we are very fortunate to have Shaftesbury Art Centre in our town. I am passionate about inclusion and have helped with junior and youth drama for many years. I have also been a committee member of the Shaftesbury Scouts for several years.”

James Thrift



James has been involved in organising all manner of events in and around Shaftesbury for many years, including the Late Night Shopping, The Christmas Fair, The Shaftesbury Food Festival, and more recently Co-Chair of The Shaftesbury Fringe. He can often be found up a ladder putting up trees, lights, bunting and flowers, which he admits is all just a ruse to go The Ship and drink beer.

19 years+ category

Hattie Slim



Hattie worked in the West End, Regional Theatre and the National Theatre where her plays included Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, directed by Trevor Nunn, *Machinal* with Stephen Daldry and *the Philanthropist* by Christopher Hampton.

Television comedies, dramas and commercials include: *The Darling Buds of May*, *Casualty*, *The Student Prince*, *A Wing and a Prayer*, *A Certain Justice*, *The Mary Whitehouse Experience*. She was once a mermaid for Danone yoghurt.

She gained a Distinction in her Associate Diploma of Performing Arts Teaching certificate and has also taught drama over the last ten years for Stagecoach Theatre School in Shaftesbury and at Sandroyd School.

Preparing children for LAMDA exams and coaching those doing Drama or All Rounder Scholarships and teaching Group Drama classes.

Her favourite thing is improvisation and she has done many workshops and courses with the legendary David Farmer at the Toynebee Institute, to learn how to direct and be a drama facilitator.

Hattie also prepares and coaches groups or individual clients of all ages, for interviews and speaking in public with confidence. Her speciality is extremely nervous people who dread having to stand up and say anything.

The rest of the time she looks after her sheep.

Samantha Singer



Samantha trained as a classical soprano and has been full-time professional for seven years.

She divides her time between teaching local singers and touring her stage shows. She always premieres her shows at the Shaftesbury Arts Centre! Then she takes them on tour around UK theatres and sometimes overseas - she has performed in Las Vegas, Japan and South Africa.

Samantha is a very keen supporter of local performers and, in 2016, along with her partner and a local journalist, organised the first Shaftesbury Fringe Festival.