

## The Girl with the Iron Claws



Photos by Patrick Baldwin

The performance was funny and entertaining. The plot was about a princess who wanted to marry a bear, but she has to overcome the troll who is also in love with the bear. The troll was very horrible but also really, really funny except when she got angry. Then grew into a scary creature. The actors played many parts which were very good, and as I said, entertaining and I really enjoyed it.

I liked seeing it at the Arcola because the acting space is very quiet, warm and cosy. It is also very environmentally friendly as it has eco toilets and low lights. It also has a bar and a lift for buggies.

The Arcola has performances during the days for teachers to take their class to which is a great opportunity for school children and I think all schools should do this. To find out more about productions and workshops for primary and secondary schools and read about children's and teachers' experiences go to 'creative learning' [arcolatheatre.com](http://arcolatheatre.com)

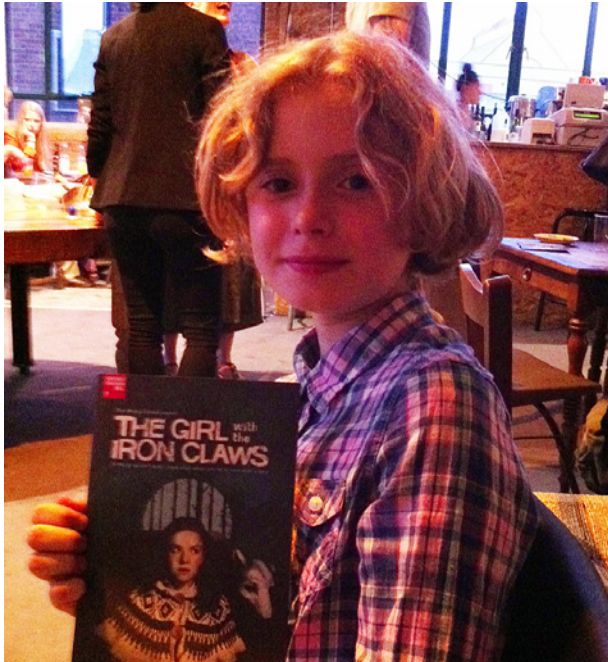
The Wrong Crowd's next performance is called 'Hag' and will be about Baba Yaga a Russian witch who eats children! Hopefully it will also play at the Arcola so we can go and see it.

**By Kitty Cox, 9 years old, Rushmore School**

# DALSTON CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

The Girl with the Iron Claws  
8 – 13 July 2013  
arcolatheatre.com  
wrongcrowdtheatre.co.uk

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'I'm excited to go because at the Arcola they do really good shows and I always come away with a smile on my face, so I'm pretty sure this show will be of good quality.'

Jonathan, 10 years old

'I'm excited to see it as it is a fairy tale with a mysterious twist.'

Serena, 10 years old

Picture: Hackney Wow Cub reporter Lili from Colvestone at Arcola – twice in a week!

## Beauty and the Beast with a Twist

On Monday 8 July and Friday 12 July I went to see the performance of 'The Girl with the Iron Claws'. I was lucky enough to see this twice, once with my class and once for Hackney Wow.

Before my first visit I was able to get some quotes from my classmates about what they thought the show would be about.

Jonathan aged 10: 'I am excited to go because at the Arcola they do really good shows and I always come away with a smile on my face, so I'm pretty sure this show will be of good quality'. Serena aged 10 commented, 'I'm excited to see it as it is a fairy tale with a mysterious and unknown twist'.

That is what it was really about. Four actors and puppets told the story of a girl who chased true love and changed the future. It was loosely based on 'Beauty and the Beast' but with a twist. So if you enjoy fairy tales and live in Hackney watch out for 'The Girl with the Iron Claws'. I recommend you go and see it.

**By Lili Strachan, 9 years old, Colvestone school**

**Hackney WOW!**

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## Interview with Joe Darke who plays Valemon

**Lili: If you weren't an actor what would you be?**

Joe Darke: I would have been a film composer or a fireman.

**Kitty: What or who inspired you to be an actor?**

Joe Darke: I was actually a really quiet child and my mum made me go to drama lessons when I was about eight years old, just to get me to come out of my shell a little and that's when I really fell in love with it. In terms of inspiration I would say Mark Rylance who is a big Shakespeare actor.

**Lili: How many performances do you do a day?**

Joe Darke: We have done three today but usually it is two.

**Kitty: What is it like to play so many different characters?**

Joe Darke: It's exhausting! As you can see by how much I am sweating but it is very rewarding because you get to play around a lot with lots of different things and very different movements. So with the bear the slightest movement resonates with the audience whereas with the black smiths son you can use lots of big movements. So it's very exciting as an actor.

**Lili: How did you get this role?**

Joe Darke: My agent asked if I could audition. I was interested in puppetry so it was a good mixture of things I'm interested in.

**Lili: Have you performed lots of times before?**

Joe Darke: I've done lots before. I have been an actor for four years but I have been acting since I was ten years old.

**Lili: Has the show been successful?**

Joe Darke: Yes, we toured in Edinburgh at the festival. It has also been nominated for the 'Total Theatre Review'. We are really pleased about this. There was a previous tour which did well, this tour we were all new cast.



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## Interview with writer/director Hannah Mulder

**Kitty: Why did you decide to write this play?**

Hannah Mulder: I was with friends in a yurt on Dartmoor in the middle of winter and a friend told me this tale often known as 'Valemon, The White Bear King' and I loved it and really wanted to put it on the stage. Not long after I discussed it with my friend Rachael who designs plays and we decided to do it together.

**Kitty: What made you want to become a writer?**

Hannah Mulder: Well, I was really lucky to be taken to the Little Angel Puppet theatre as a child a lot and really loved theatre so I thought I wanted to be an actor. I went to drama school to train to be an actor. Whilst I was there I started writing scenes for people to do and I really loved doing that and found I had a talent for it and I think I am probably a better writer than I was an actor. And I also like being in charge and making things up from scratch and when your a writer you get to make things up.

**Kitty: What do you like about the Arcola?**

Hannah Mulder: I think it has a lovely vibe. And one of the things I really like about it is how green it is so it has a really amazing approach to environmental impact. They have eco toilets and really low carbon emitting lighting rigs. I also think there is a really great audience, which we have really enjoyed.



Kitty COX AGE 9



Lili Strachan Age: 9