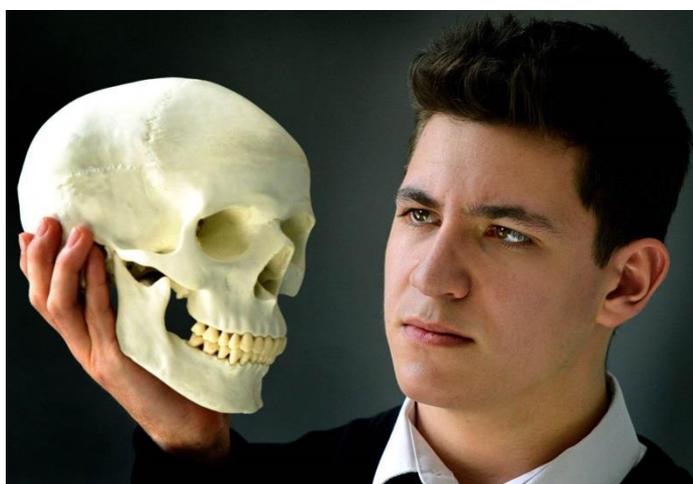


BOWDON ACTOR JONAH IS ACCEPTED BY RADA

Hours, no days, indeed, months of standing in front of a mirror to practise his Hamlet soliloquy has paid rich rewards for charismatic St. Ambrose College actor Jonah Rzeskiewicz who has won a coveted place at RADA.

Thought to be the single most competitive student admissions procedure in Great Britain, if not the world, with thousands and thousands of young hopefuls applying for just 25 places, the Bowdon 18-year-old has now had to turn down his offer from Paul McCartney's LIPA to go to the spiritual home of British stage and film craft.

Indeed, many of those who are successful often have to apply three, four, five even six years in succession before being accepted and Jonah has come through at his first attempt.



Jonah had been rehearsing two soliloquies since October, from Hamlet and Coriolanus, for the first of four stages of his audition. He then had to perform another soliloquy, choosing an Edward 11 epic by Christopher Marlow, with only a week to prepare, of which he had professional first-hand experience, having played the young Edward II at Manchester's Royal Exchange in 2011 when he was only 13, watching his co-star Christopher New give a stunning performance as the older version of the young King.

Jonah said: "I remember Christopher performing that soliloquy so vividly on stage and bringing so much to that role, so when I was asked to pick another soliloquy I called up Christopher and we met in Manchester to discuss my approach; it was invaluable." After passing that stage Jonah then had to work through another day of drama workshops for his final test and said: "It was incredibly draining and incredibly challenging but if every day of my learning experience is going to be like that then I know I will have a fantastic few years ahead."

Jonah sadly has now had to decline an offer LIPA and said "So many of the most respected actors of this and any other generation have been trained at RADA: Tom Hiddleston, Kenneth Branagh, Richard Attenborough, Alan Rickman and Ralph Fiennes the list goes on and on, so how could I not accept."

Jonah, who is currently sitting A Levels in English, Art and Philosophy, in the St. Ambrose College Sixth Form, said of working at the Royal Exchange: "I remember going into first reading room with all the professional actors, some fully 6ft 5 ins tall with deep resonant voices and thinking how am I going to share the same stage with these professionals. They all know what they are doing and I am going to be embarrassed but they all made it so easy for me and made me feel very much part of the team and since then I have wanted to be a classically trained theatre actor."

Mair Bull, Head of Drama at St. Ambrose College, said: "Jonah is a striking young character actor who played Prospero in the College's production of The Tempest and gave such a memorable and polished performance. He has always been a joy to work with."