

As Artistic Director of Quayside my responsibility is to give the public a proper fringe theatre which means having a bash at things which might not work. This is quite the opposite of a rep. theatre which cannot afford to take risks, so Lancaster has a healthy theatre scene with the best of both worlds and a healthy intermingling of the two. There is no sense of competition as we must strive for different things.

We in Quayside are unlucky in that we do not get paid but lucky in that we can do the WRONG thing such as using an actor to play a fierce and ugly part when usually she/he is cast as soft and gentle, so the actor is stretched, fulfilled and can return to paid work having learned a bit more of her/his trade.

An actor has to be prepared to be out of work for more time than he is in work. The times 'resting' can be depressing and destructive to confidence and so auditions can become an ordeal. An actor may say, 'Well, of course, I did not have much of a chance as there were 200 other people trying for the part,' but deep down he is saying to himself, 'maybe I was just not good enough,' and so he goes home and thinks gloomy thoughts while reading the ads and battling on alone.

How much better if a fringe company such as Quayside be used by actors who live in this area to 'phone me and say, 'I finish this job in May, can you find something for me to do then, while I audition for other parts?' You say, 'But that could be tricky, he may leave you halfway through rehearsals.' Yes, he could, but that is a risk we can take and gladly.

Quayside can be used too by musicians who want to compose, dancers who want to dance/choreograph or act, in fact by anyone in our profession who feels he or she needs stretching in a new direction.

If you are interested in our aims as a company, do introduce yourself to us when we present our next production.

Simone Vause
Artistic Director