

Q = Julia Bishop (researcher)

A = Kenton I (Musical Theatre Group)

Q I'll put the recorder on now Kenton, that's lovely. And perhaps what I can do is get your email address, or you could send the signed consent form to my email, or photograph it and zap it over to me on WhatsApp or something like that please?

A Yes I'll be able to.

Q Oh thank you ever so much. Well first of all a big thank you just for letting me come to the rehearsal the other night. It looks as though it's getting there, your production, and as we spoke about....

A It's going, I would say it was going, it's going in a direction.

Q That's right, it's going in the right direction, absolutely.

A Well maybe not the right direction yet but it's definitely going in a direction!

Q I love your approach! So as the information sheet mentions, our focus of this project is about children aged between 3 and 11 years, technology and play and the way those things mix together. And when we're talking about technologies I would sort of stress that we are not just thinking about digital devices but also the kind of apps and media content that children and young people can actually access through those devices as well.

A Yeah.

Q So many of the questions may not seem relevant, and if that's the case please just tell me, it's just fine, don't feel you've got to answer. But I'm going to go through my list here and we're going to start off with some general questions and then we'll move into talking about technology and media a bit more specifically as it relates to your group. And I just wondered actually if you could tell me the name again of your group and what it does please?

A It's [North Sheffield suburb] Musical Theatre Group. And it's an amateur theatre group that's been around for over 70 years that do a lot of stuff in the local community, where every Christmas we'll do a carol service at old people's homes and stuff like that. But the main thing we do is we put two shows on a year. We put a summer show on which is always something like the Wizard of Oz, or Annie or something like that, and then we'll always do a pantomime at Christmas.

Q Fantastic. How long have you been associated with the group, Kenton?

A I have done theatre from being about 7 or 8, and I've been with this group for, I'd say, since I was about 10. On and off since I was about 10.

Q Oh my heavens, how old you are now?

A I'm 22 now.

Q So how long have you been sort of directing it, is that more or less the same sort of period, or you've just....

A No, I was always just happy to be on the stage and then about 3 years ago they had someone who was producing the shows and she dropped out with 6 weeks to go before a show, and none of the work had been done so they asked me if I'd do it, like try and get it done as quick as I could. So I did. And then this woman was like 'I'm really sorry I couldn't do it' and she came back and the same thing happened a second time. So I stepped in again 2 years ago. So I did that for a year and then they asked me if I'd produce it like full time, like do it as a role. And I've done that for 2 years and then this is the first show I've directed, because I went to do a course run by NODA who are the national body for theatre, a directing musical theatre course in Stoke in August, and I did that.

Q Fantastic. Can you just tell me, is there like a funding body or someone who actually funds the activity?

A We fund ourselves, we're sort of self-sufficient. We've been struggling for quite a long time for money, and then over 3 years we've hit a patch where every production we've done has made money, so we're finally starting to consistently and regularly turn a profit.

Yeah we've been selling out all our shows, the last four shows....the last five shows we've done have all been sell-outs so we're hoping that we can push the next one to be a sell-out as well.

Q Excellent. And the shows that you do they're at the local theatre in [North Sheffield] where I met you the other day?

A Yes they are, we rehearse there and we put our shows on there as well.

Q Fantastic. So how often does the group run?

A How often do we rehearse?

A Just once a week every Tuesday night 7 till 10. We don't normally have kids under 11 take part. Just because of the NODA regulations. I'm not 100% sure on this because it's not something I deal with, but because they're only....if you're under 11 you can only do so many shows in a week, and with pantomimes....or with main shows like things such as the Wizard of Oz we just use adults because we put more shows on, and if we had children it would be a lot more, so we sort of say 11. But for pantomimes we do always bring kids in because they're a family oriented thing, a pantomime, so we like to get kids involved for them.

Q Oh that's brilliant. So the family I've been working with. It's particularly Chloe that I wanted to focus on in this interview. I know that Alison her older sister's involved as well and we can talk about them both. But we are asked as part of the study to observe each of them in different activities so I observed Alison in another activity earlier in the evening as it happened, and I was watching Chloe at the practice. And also she's really quite a young one in your production of Cinderella, if not the youngest.

A I'll just say....??? I think she is the youngest.

Q Yeah. How frequently has she started to come to the group, does she come every week since you started to rehearse for Cinderella?

A Because the kids don't have....like they're not going to be there every night, the children, like I was saying about they can't do all the shows in a row, and that's just because of like it's the law sort of thing, so you can't have kids doing too many performances because then it can come under like child labour. If you ??? that's what it starts to come under because the company's making a profit off the children performing. So we only have them every sort of other night on a show week, so they do a show and then they miss a show and then they do a show. And so because of that we've not wanted them to be there every week from September til like that late because it's not really fair. So all the Tuesdays in November we asked the kids to come down, and then on Sundays as well. In November we started.....oh no that's not true sorry. We asked the kids to come down all the Tuesdays in October to get used to the late nights. It was Tuesdays in October because then that gave them enough time if the kids weren't settling well at school on Wednesdays then they could let us know and we could take them out. And then it was Tuesdays and Sundays in November.

Q And what sort of things would Chloe normally be doing in a rehearsal when she comes?

A The kids are in four or five dances and they are playing the Fairy Godmother's mice. So she would be coming on with the Fairy, and while the Fairy's doing her speech, because the Fairy is sort of telling the story of the show as it's going on, like giving like little brief things to what's happened in the scene that's just gone on and then moving us on to the next one. So they're coming on and they're like doing some actions to what the Fairy's saying, because the Fairy is very forgetful so they are helping the Fairy remember her lines. So that's the acting side of it. And then they're in dances as well, so they'll learn a few dances, quite simple dances, and then they are singing in all the songs they're on as well.

Q Brilliant. I think the number I saw you doing was Bibbitty Bobbitty Boo the other day, and that was lovely.

A Yeah. And they were told to sing it as loud as they could.

Q Fantastic thank you. So let's move on to the technology and media as it might feature in your activity, if we can call it that, your group. I mean obviously you are a musical theatre company so I understand what it involves but I just wondered if technologies and media would feature in the activity and if you can tell us a little bit – just a bit – about how they do that.

A So how do we utilise technology sort of at rehearsal sort of thing?

Q Yeah that's right, and I guess a little in performance. But I think I might be taking the lid off a very big box there, and I suppose you know just keeping it also thinking about Chloe. I was also thinking about the fact there's also the technologies but there's also the whole thing that to some extent most people there will have encountered Cinderella through content on media as well.

A Yeah. One of the main things technology wise we encounter at rehearsal is, nothing really with Chloe but just in a general sense is....because we have a lot of teenage members,

we have a lot of ‘please put your phone down’ a lot of times when you’re going ‘please put your phone away, please put your phone away’. But on the other side of it we use it for technology, not necessarily on....we do use it on the week of the show because we use like the microphones and we use sort of like technology that way.

Like to do....we very rarely use them but through sound effects and through the band and things, we use technology that way, but we also do it when we are building the set sometimes. With the set we’ve built we’ve not used it but previously we’ve used it to help us, because I do all the tidy up and build all the sets and do all the painting as much as I can but I’m not the best painter so I’ll use sort of like projection and things like that to draw, to like trace and then create the set that way.

Yeah. But in a sort of rehearsal capacity that you came to observe, we are quite old school, we don’t really use a lot of technology.

Q I notice that you mentioned – or someone mentioned – about sort of perhaps was it recording yourselves, or doing something with your lines, using it to learn your lines or to learn the songs or something, I’m not sure what it was now.

A What a few people do is they will record their lines, they will record the script of their lines on their phone and then just listen to it on repeat. They’ll like say their line and then the next line, their like cue line and their line and they’ll just do it scene by scene and then they’ll just listen to it. And then what people start to do then is then they’ll just say the cue line and then pause, and they’ll say their line. So when they listen to it on the second time they’ve recorded it they’ll say the cue line and then in that gap they’ll think ‘oh that’s what I’m going to say’ and then the line will follow it so they can make sure that they’re right.

Q OK, that’s interesting. Do you use technology I was wondering to sort of...on the musical side, you know some of the songs, to teach the songs, and do you get people to listen when they’re not actually at the rehearsal but perhaps between rehearsals or something like that?

A We have in the past, we’ve recorded all the songs through the keyboard and then we’ve like burnt them on to disc and given them people. And we’ve sort of tried to do versions of that in the past where we’ve done a version with the words and a version without song words just to give people that chance to practice with and without.

Q Yeah. And did you say you’ve done that in the past, but is it not so much the case at the moment?

A It’s not been for this show I think mainly because this is the first show our Musical Director has played the piano at the same time, because we’ve normally had a pianist and a Musical Director separate. Because our Musical Director said that she doesn’t play the piano any more sort of thing so she’s doing us a favour by playing, but it’s took up a lot of her time. And with the keys being changed a lot, or harmonies being added to songs, they’re always sort of changing and evolving. Which if we do the recording Week 1 and then by show week it’s a completely different song.

Q Right, so you don’t want to fix it on a recording.

A Yeah. It’s just one of them.

Q OK that's really interesting. Thank you. Do you use sort of things like websites or refer to films or anything like that as part of what you do, producing the show, or for inspiration, or to get scripts or anything like that?

A We have a website and that's sort of just got like photos on it and a little bit about the society and where we rehearse and contact information and stuff. But other than that we don't really use the website. We've just sort of started with all the social media stuff and I don't ??? I'm not really sure how it goes. But when it comes to all the directing side of it, I've found watching videos and watching films, like we're doing Annie next year, so like watching the films, going online and trying to find other amateur versions and watching West End versions online gives you other ideas and other sort of ways to look at it. And for me it gives you a lot of ideas as well about set more than anything, how they've sort of staged it, how they've used levels and what they've done with they've done with their like....because watching amateur versions is better because everyone's got that limited budget and everybody has got limited space, so it's watching how people have overcome those obstacles – and then we'll have like different obstacles to overcome but if you see how everyone else has done things it makes you think differently. You're not necessarily just doing it to steal their ideas but....

Q No, no, but it inspires you, sort of sets thoughts running and stuff maybe.

A Yeah. Lots of times you just think 'that's a great idea, I want to do that' but you have to avoid that but as well it just gives you that different thinking and it makes you think differently about it.

Q Yeah. Do you have any technologies or media that you'd like to use if you had more funding or support of any kind?

A I feel if we did push our social media a little bit more I feel that would be really good for us because we could then do....if we're ever struggling for sales we could do like promotions on there and we could do all sorts of stuff like that. But I quite like how we do it really without technology as much because I think it gives us that urban minute? anyway, it gives us that kind of like authentic feel. And we do have a lot of young members but we've got more older members than we have younger members, and I'm not saying that older members would be less inclined to take on the technology but our oldest member is 95.

He was a person that founded the society 70 years ago. His grand-daughter does it, and she's just had some time off to have a baby and so now his great-granddaughter, she's our youngest member at 1 year old.

Q Just going back to you were saying about looking at other amateur productions to get ideas and things, and I just wondered if you ever film your own performances?

A We have done in the past, we don't do it any more because we....someone that used to be in it did a lot, was really like, I don't know like a technical company and they did all stuff like that, and they left. That's why we used to do all sorts of different... And then they left so we've not really filmed it since then. But we take pictures instead now because one of the girls that's in it their dad's a professional photographer, so he'll just come down to like the dress rehearsals and stuff and take pictures of the show and stuff.

Q Right, and then do you put those on the website, or are they just for use for the company?

A Yeah, they're put on the website and we do all the consent forms and stuff. So if people want a disc with all the pictures on they can have one and....

Q Yeah. And does that sort of play a role in terms of....you know do you think it has any kind of social or performative kind of benefits, do you think that's an important thing to do? I know it's a standard thing to do when you do a production, do people value it in certain ways, do you value it in certain ways to take those pictures?

A I value it personally. Our secretary is a guy called Fred and him and his wife have done it for about 50 years, and their daughter's with us now as well. And they're sort of like....they don't run it but they're like with Fred being the secretary and Karen being the treasurer and everything, they're like the family that are very pivotal and they're like in the middle of everything. And they've got everything, they've got all the show posters we've ever done, all the programmes, the tickets from every show we've ever done, they've got all the pictures from all the shows. But I think it is a tradition and it is something that we should try and.... like you know....

Q Yeah, you're going to continue with that.

A Yeah.

Q Brilliant. Oh thank you. So just moving on to Chloe herself. Obviously she wouldn't have much direct contact with technology or media as part of the production as such, I mean she wouldn't be using any devices and, I don't know I can ask the family themselves if they've taken pictures or if they plan to when it's the production and so on and they get into costume. But I just wondered if...well two things I suppose, one is whether you feel....I mean some of the songs....well the song I know that you are doing is definitely Bibbity Bobbity Boo which includes the children, and I think you mentioned there will be some other ones as well.

A Yes.

Q So that comes from the Disney film I think doesn't it?

A Yes it comes from the film, it comes from Cinderella.

Q Yes exactly, so do you think that it affects her or her friends you know in the production to have sort of seen those films, which you know one presumes they have. You know does that help in any way, does it hinder, do you think it affects what they're doing or do you think they see this in a whole other context and are you aware of any indications of that?

A The reason we picked that song and some of the other songs that the kids are in is because they're quite well known, they'll have already had that sort of exposure to it, whether it be on the radio or through kids films, that sort of thing.

Q Oh OK.

A And that's always in our minds when we're writing the pantomime, because we write our own scripts.

Q Oh I didn't realise that, OK.

A When I was writing this pantomime we take into account what's topical. So the Elton John film came out so we've got an Elton John song in there. We're doing Annie in June so we've put Together At Last, the song from Annie at the very end of the show. Because it's for kids we've got a lot of Disney songs in it. So we sort of try and keep it like up to date so people are going to have heard the songs either on the radio or through, like I said, the Disney films. So we'll then say to people 'if you don't know the song, find it' and we have like a closed Facebook group for all the cast, everyone on it – I'm personally not part of it because I'm not on Facebook but it's there for everyone that is. And we'll put us kids on it, we'll put their parents in it, and that's where people sort of talk about rehearsals and what time it starts and that kind of thing, but we'll also post links to videos and we'll post videos of like dance stuff and things like that. So we'll post all of that sort of stuff on there so that people can watch and learn and practice at home.

Q Oh that's brilliant, that's a really interesting thing. So it's like a resource that families whose children are taking part in the show might draw on to reinforce that existing knowledge that you referred to.

A Yeah. All the dances for the children I believe are on there. All the songs and all the adult dances are so I assume the children's ones are as well.

Q Yeah. So I'm just going on about Bibbity Bobbity Boo because that's the one I know that you did the other night, but are there other ones as well that the children are doing in this production?

A They are in Together At Last at the very end. They are in Colour My World and....oh no I can't remember the opening of the show now....it's called....  
Oh no! I can't tell you.

Q It will come back to you in a second. I wanted to ask you about your knowledge of Disney films and things like that. I mean are you just going on your own knowledge or do you have, you know kids you can draw on, or do you just follow what's the latest films that come out and do you follow the latest songs that are on Disney or other musicals?

A Yeah, I wouldn't say I necessarily follow them. I do like....everybody likes Disney films don't they so....I'm not going to lie, I'm going to see Frozen 2 on Saturday with my girlfriend because we are children!

Q It's a good excuse to go.

A Yeah. But you know what's coming out like, even without going, I've not seen the Aladdin film but that came out this year, so if we'd have done like Aladdin in the pantomime we'd have obviously tried to tie it in with that. So just looking at....when it's around panto time we'll just look at what Disney films have come out or what kids films have come out and see what the most popular and what the most famous songs are from it and see if they fit anywhere.

Q And do you have any sense of how the families are using that sort of resource on the closed Facebook group that you mentioned? Do you get any feedback on there?

A We ask, we sort of say to everyone you know like at the end of rehearsals we'll always say....not now because the show's only in like 17 days, but a lot earlier on we were like 'make sure you're going home and you're practising your dances, all your things are on there' and it's that constant reminder from like myself and the production team for people. And a lot of people are saying that they like it when stuff goes on. Or if they've missed a rehearsal they'll say....so I'll say 'oh we're going to be doing this dance on Tuesday' and they'll say 'I'm not here, will you be recording it' and we'll say 'yes' you know like yeah we can do and we'll put it on there. So people do use it and people do ask for it.

Q So just going over what you provide. So you provide on that. You might provide clips to actual films and things on YouTube, is that right?

A The links, so like a link to the song on YouTube. If it's the whole song it would just be the whole song, or if it's not it will just be like someone will post it and they'll just put 'this is the first minute and a half of this' or 'this is the closest version we've got' and just learn the words and learn the tune kind of thing. Depending on how it is and how it works and what part of it we use we just make sure we can make that clear, but not everyone gets the message.

Q No And then the dances, how does that part work again as part of these web resources that you are pointing to, or things you ??? yourselves.

A Our choreographer, she will set the dance and if people aren't there sort of before a rehearsal or after a rehearsal she will do a video, she'll get someone to just film her on the stage. And they'll tend to do a video from behind, so someone will stand behind her and video her so that people can see where her feet are moving. Because if you do it from the front and people are looking, they'll be doing the wrong foot. So if you do it from behind they'll sort of do it the right way. So they'll either do that, or they'll sometimes just film a dance while it's going on. So if it's like a dance number they'll just film it from the audience and then just upload it to the thing and say 'this is this dance'.

Q I see yeah. That's really interesting. And I suppose the other area that occurs to me is about costuming and I wondered if you used the internet, or websites, or film in regards to the costumes?

A A lot of costumes sort of will take from period, so depending on when it's set we'll look at that period and we'll sort of try and match costumes to that period. But we don't try and sort of copy really costumes from films and other musicals, we try and go a little bit on our own. We did Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs last Christmas but the Director at the time, she wanted it to have like a steam punk kind of theme.

So our Snow White was a girl with....she had bright red hair and we sort of....so we did it a little bit differently, so it was completely like nothing was based on anything. But then sometimes, with Cinderella....oh no we did the Wizard of Oz, so everyone knows Dorothy has the blue dress and the white apron and the pigtails and that kind of thing, so we do follow sort of things that way. So sometimes we do, sometimes we don't use films and pictures and Google kind of thing. Google images is where we get a lot of costume ideas



from. But we also have contacts in different theatres. The lady who does our wardrobe, I don't know how she knows her but it's something like their brothers or her someone-in-law works for the Crucible Theatre in town and we use their costumes. They do charge us and stuff but we use their costumes. And another local community theatre, we have a deal with them where we store our set with them and our costumes with them and we can use their costumes and their set and they can use our costumes and our set, just for sharing storage. We sort of see what we've got as well.

Q Yes, so it's a mixture of all those things. That's brilliant.

A Charity, sort of like when church halls do sort of like....not where they do, where they're selling stuff to get rid of, a lot of them will have costumes from when the Sunday School's done shows, or when there's been a show on at the church, so a lot of places like that we get a lot of props from and costumes from and we'll just try and use what we've got rather than buying in if we can help it.

Q Oh that's fascinating. So just talking about now your own perceptions of technology and media in general, and I wondered whether you feel that technologies or media are particularly positive or negative for the young people and children at the rehearsals that you run?

A I think it can be both, I bet everyone gives that answer don't they, it can be both. When it's 'get off your phones', 'I'm taking your phone off you if you're on it again', 'you're on stage you shouldn't be on your phone' ??? if I'm directing a scene and I've got my chorus on the back and I want the....when I direct I get on stage with the cast because I feel like because I've done it, because I've done theatre so long, like when I'm first teaching it and directing it I don't like watching it from the audience because I don't get a feel for it properly, I like to be in it. So I'll be sort of looking at ??? talking to the principal parts at the front of the stage, and you'll turn round, and because you're not engaging with like the chorus and people in the background, when you turn round it's just instinctive to 'oh I'm not doing anything, I'll get my phone out'. They'll not watch and they'll not want to watch what I'm telling the people at the front of the stage because it doesn't affect them at all, so you'll just turn round and people will be on their phones and not looking. So in that respect it's bad. But also for some rehearsals one of our....because when I write a script I can only print so many from home and people can only print so many at work kind of thing, but I can share the Word document. I send it to the person that runs the Facebook site, they can ??? get it to the Facebook group as a Word document so they can just copy it and pull it up on their phones while at rehearsal. So instead of holding a full A4 folder with their script in they can just hold their phone, so it gives them a bit more movement through their hands and their arms and it opens their body up a little bit more. So in some respects it's good, and then not in....

Q I'm getting the feeling that you're not talking just about children and young people here, you're talking about everybody's phone is....

A Yeah, everyone. The only person I can say that I've never seen get their phone out is my 95 year old. Because he doesn't own one, I don't ???

Q And how important do you think technologies and media are for children just in general terms I wonder?

A Well I used to do all the social media stuff but I came off it all about a year ago. Yeah about a year ago I came off all social media because to me it takes over. I went to Australia for a year, I had a gap year out there and I didn't have a phone for a year. And it didn't affect me in any way. At no point did I think 'oh I wish I had my phone'. Like I had a phone so that I could phone people but that was it. But other than that I went a year without it so I thought I don't need it, so I got rid. And since then I've found I've got so much more time and ??? in general terms that, yeah it's got to be positive but for me it's not. It's almost a necessity now to have Facebook and social media and Instagram and Twitter, it's almost a necessity, like you've got to have it. Not having it for me is so much better. Because I know people wake up and can spend two hours, two and a half hours laid in bed flicking between different types. Whereas my alarm goes off and I get up. So in that respect, in that I'd say I think for me it's a negative because it takes over and people live their life through that instead of actually socialising. But technology as a whole I think is brilliant, like when it comes to gadgets and little things that do two things, I think are brilliant.

The way technology is I think is really good, but the media side of technology I don't, I don't like.

Q Social media, yeah. And again I'm getting the sort of sense that you're thinking of young people like yourself but also older people you know sort of using it, as well as young children. I know that not many of them are on social media not sort of in the first instance, only through their parents and stuff.

A Yeah. With the very, very little kids I feel that sometimes technology is put on them a little bit too soon in a way. Because when I was little I never was given a phone when I went somewhere, like I was never just given a phone and say 'play on that', for me that never happened. But now it just seems like if you take children somewhere, like when people bring their child to join in in the rehearsal, they also bring other children that aren't taking part, and the children instead of playing like with the other children that come they all sit there on their mum and dad's phone.

Q Mmm, I was going to ask you about that, yeah.

A Instead of taking an interest and going 'I want to do that' which is how I ended up doing theatre, being taken to a rehearsal with my brother and watching him do the rehearsal and thinking 'I want to do this'. So I think with the little, little kids I think technology is given to them a lot too early.

Q That's really interesting, thank you. Do you have any concerns about data privacy in relationship to children and technology?

A I've never really thought about it.

Q That's OK, no worries. And I guess you've sort of answered this a bit but I just wondered about how important technologies and media are for you. So we've kind of mentioned a bit about that already, we've talked a bit about the way you use YouTube and so on in sort of productions, and we've talked about social media and sort of personal use, is there anything you wanted to add to that at all?

A I don't want it to....you know I'm not some form of like I don't hate technology, I don't want that to come across.

Q No. I'm interested in what's shaping your views as well, and you've been talking about your experiences as a child, and you've been talking about your recent experience in Australia, so that's really interesting.

A I think I always say when people talk about it, I always say 'I'm glad I was born when I was' because if I was born a little bit earlier I'd have been before all the technology. I was born just like a couple of years either side, like if I was born a couple of years later I would have been well and truly in like the technological upbringing kind of thing. For me, all like technology and everything didn't really take off until I was a teenager, like mid teens, like 13/14 about 10 years ago.

So all my childhood was mixed, it was I'd go out all day and like play out, and then I'd also do the....and then have the option as well. But whereas now it's....before, before me it was like all playing out; then for me it was sort of just a little bit mixed, I had the choice; but now it doesn't feel like there is a choice, it feels like it's all ???

Q It's really interesting to talk to you because people of different generations sometimes have obviously different points of view on the same thing, what you've just identified. Thank you. So we've got a couple more minutes left and we've just got about half a dozen more questions, some of which may not be totally relevant. So these ones are to do with playing with technology and media and the sort of well-being and health kind of aspect, and we just wondered if you've got any thoughts about children's emotions and well-being in relationship to play with technologies or with media content?

A What do you mean 'with play'?

Q Well just about anything really, it can be play you know sort of that's informed by media – so they might act out something, or imaginary play or something like that where the actual technology isn't present. Or we can think of play which actually with internet connected toys, or in VR worlds, or on Fortnite or things like that. So take it whichever way you like really. But children's play and their emotional sort of lives and well-being. It's a very wide-open question, it's just to see if you have any thoughts around any connections or difficulties or issues you see in that area, or indeed any experiences you've had in that respect.

A Well I used to....me and my brother when we were little we used to, when we used to go round to my Grandma's mum's house we used to always make up our own little plays for her to watch. And so we used to make up all these like little plays and stuff and that kind of thing. And now, with my cousins who are the same side of the family, they're only 8, they're just like we were but they're more....they want to play with more, not necessarily computers and stuff but they want to play with more toys that do things in a way, you know that are like more toys that sort of we didn't have, if you know what I mean.

Q Yeah, slightly more perhaps sort of complex or sophisticated, or enabled toys in some way.

A Yeah things like that. They're more interested in that, and then like just having someone's phone, they're more interested in that than when we were. And with just being at the theatre, I know that when I did it as a child, there's always drama and there's always politics and drama in amateur theatre because it's just part of the thing, you know,

everybody's got their own opinion and everybody's quite extravagant so there's always going to be friction. But doing it when I was a child, sort of the age that people who are in the society now, if you had a problem with someone it was fine because you didn't see them for 7 days and then you saw them again. But now it feels that on like a Sunday someone will message me, because being the producer I'm like the person that talks to the....like I'm the interim between the cast and the committee as well, they'll come to me and say 'oh this has happened, someone's done this and this has happened because someone put this on Facebook and this has upset this person and stuff'. So it feels like if they don't like that person then they're more in their life because of technology.

Q Yeah that's really interesting. I just wanted to go back to that point you made about the plays you made up and whether you can remember what influence, what were the topics, what did you draw on in your own media lives or your own imagination for those plays?

A We had all sorts. Books. My brother used to read books all the time. He's one of those people that can read books like really, really quickly. He read the longest Harry Potter book in like 6 hours.

Yeah. So like he ??? so he read everything at school, like he just read loads of stuff. So he'd tell me loads of like things that he'd read in books and stuff. So if we ever like watched telly or anything, things we saw on telly, we'd like put it all together. And we just used to like make up characters, and we had like a bank of characters we used to just make up and have names for, and they always used to make an appearance. It was like we had loads of different personalities.

And it was like 'and I'll be this person and that person', if you said that to this person then they'll be really angry so then I'll react really angrily because I'll be that person.

Q Yeah. I mean you mentioned telly there and I suppose that was one of the media of that earlier time sort of thing. Do you remember were there particular programmes, or did you see films on TV or on cinema?

A Yeah, Tom and Jerry, a lot of Tom and Jerry type thing. Like the silly things and that, because they were never like nitty gritty kind of like you know Emmerdale kind of things, they were more just like stupid mess around funny things. So like cartoons like Tom and Jerry and things like that.

Q Yeah, oh that's brilliant, that's really interesting. And do you think you picked up other things to do with acting there? I was thinking about like catchphrases and intonations and bodily sort of gestures and stuff like that, you know I was thinking of the slapstick of Tom and Jerry for example?

A Yeah there are still some things that we joke about now. And we still do it together. But it's a little bit different now because when we were little, because he's the older one he used to sort of direct it then, but now I've directed the theatre – because we're still both at the theatre together, he wasn't there though on Tuesday my brother, it's just roles reversed and now I direct him instead.

Q And do you think certain types of technology and media might lead to more kind of sociable play than others? You mentioned earlier about the children at the rehearsal perhaps on phones and not interacting with each other, I wondered if you thought maybe there's an opposite example where it does encourage them to sort of interact more or something?

A Yeah definitely I think it does, because I know that my brother plays a lot of like online games and stuff, and he's obviously not a child now but he's one of the only people I know who does a lot of online games, and he's got friends from all over the country that he's met playing online games. And he's got into so many different things through playing online games with these different people and making friends with them and finding out what they enjoy, and he's got into things and he does different things with them like outside of the games now. So I think it does, it gives a lot more....you know it gives you that, it's almost a different kind of socialising now and it opens doors to different things.

Q Yeah. So he's actually met them offline as well as playing online?

A Yeah. Because it like shows you different things doesn't it with the playing the games, and it....

Q Yeah, so they've found other shared interests and it's led into appreciate other things he perhaps didn't know about before.

A Yeah. And if everybody's doing like the one thing, like you say it's that common interest and it will get like a conversation starter then isn't it?

Q Yeah that's right.

A So it can have that effect as well.

Q Is there anything you'd like to add that sort of crossed your mind and I perhaps haven't asked about but you'd like to add to the sort of general topic, or do you think we've covered most things?

A No. I didn't personally think there was a lot of technology sort of stuff with the theatre, but talking about it it kind of makes you think that there's a lot more than you think isn't there? I hadn't thought that the actual like keyboard and speaker that we use to record things and stuff.

Q Yes absolutely, yes that's right we often tend to sort of think of phones and iPads don't we, but of course there's a lot of it about, technology, in lots of different ways. The lighting I guess is another whole area.

A Oh that's a whole topic. You don't want to ask people about theatre lights! Never ask a lighting technician about the lights because it will be 45 minutes of your life, ??? all sorts of stuff.

Q Well thank you so, so much.