

Third year playwriting module transcript

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Video: **Third year playwriting module** (<http://youtu.be/6pPYxqHGogQ>)

Duration: 4:20 mins

An alcoholics anonymous meeting held in the Church Hall in Lewisham. The Hall is beige with no natural light. There is a table stage left with a coffee urn and a plate of biscuits. A door is stage right. A whiteboard with the 12 steps written on it stands next to the door.

I'm Alex Ismail and I'm in my third year studying Drama and Theatre Arts.

I wasn't actually aware when I first started the course of the playwriting module, but when you get into second year you get a form of what you want to do and you put it in order. Once I saw playwriting I put it in first. I've never thought about going into playwriting or doing anything like that, but it just seems so interesting because I've never done anything like it, but as a drama student you depend on plays and the playwright so much that it's nice to have a go at it and start things afresh rather than getting the finished project.

Basically, you discuss all plays at the beginning few weeks and then you're told to go and write your own play. So, everyone's is completely different and you don't have any inspiration so you just have to go completely on your own.

This is the third week of it. We've all had twenty minutes to read our play out and then you have five minutes discussion on it.

It's the same as watching yourself back after you've done performances. You're just so nervous because of course when you write it, obviously you don't find yourself funny. You type stuff and think that's not funny, so you're waiting for the reaction of everyone else watching it for the first time to see if they understand anything or even if they're even interested. You can have a piece and think 'Oh, I didn't get anything from that'.

It's nice to get everyone's reactions and then once you get the reactions you are able to tweak it a bit and see and make it hopefully better for next time.

I was happy, yes. I was expecting everyone to just sit there in silence and just not find anything funny or not get it at all. I was quite happy with how it went. Because I hadn't had any feedback on it whatsoever, it's now nice to know what people liked and didn't like so I can go and change it and then hopefully write a better play.

Fraser, the module conveyor, having the idea of putting a pressure into the situation. Rather than them just being there because they have to be there, being there because, saying their stories but under a pressure situation, so they feel that someone's going to come and find them out basically and see if they're drinking. I'd definitely work on that and make it a bit more pressurised.

He knows what he's talking about. It's nice to hear his feedback and then hear other people in the class' feedback. A lot of the time it is along the same tracks but then other times they say two different things so you can think about whether I want to take Fraser's idea or did I prefer my class members' ideas.

It's definitely a case of, having both of them, being able to play with two ideas.

We started looking at other people's plays and that definitely helped because you can see different styles. We've read plays where there's just one character talking, we've read plays where there's five or six. As a drama student you do read lots of different types of plays, it definitely helped to see which style you liked, which you preferred because there was no boundaries, you could write as many characters as you wanted, any situation you wanted.

About five minutes ago! Literally we sit down and go through the script straight away. It is good because you know they can take a script and they act it, normally how you want them to. It also shows a lot on the playwright, if you put enough in there that they feel they can perform the character how you want it performed.

We have to perform them next week as it counts as 25% of our module for this course. You're able to have a rehearsed reading. You can sit down with them, give them a bit of guidance. Say how you see the character being performed, but they seemed to do it exactly how I wanted!

