**KESHO AMAHORO – PEACE TOMORROW – MARCH 2013 UPDATE**

* **REHEARSALS**

Today’s rehearsal was the final rehearsal for the spring term. There will NOT be a rehearsal on Wednesday 20th or Wednesday 27th. The next rehearsal will be Wednesday 17th April.

IMPORTANT DATES for your diaries – we will meet the Kenyan cast and rehearse intensively over the weekend of **20-21 July**. It is crucial that all of the children involved in this project, including orchestra and backstage crew, attend these rehearsals. Thank you, in advance.

* **PERFORMANCE DATES**

I am pleased to announce that we have been allocated (in pencil / TBC) prestigious performance slots during the International Youth Arts Festival:

Friday 26th July 12:00 – 14:00

Saturday 27th July 19:30 – 21:30  *primetime!*

Sunday 28th July 13:30 – 15:30

I am travelling to Kenya over the Easter holidays to rehearse with the cast and orchestra there. I’ve been informed that they’re all ecstatic to be coming to perform on a London stage!

* **SOCIAL MEDIA**

PLEASE ‘Like’ the Kesho Amahoro **Facebook** page and share its content when you have the time. Please also ‘follow’ @KeshoAmahoro if you have a **Twitter** account. This will regularly update you on all developments regarding this ambitious and exciting project.

Also, don’t forget the main site: [www.keshoamahoro.com](http://www.keshoamahoro.com) and the school music website: [www.downsjuniormusic.com](http://www.downsjuniormusic.com) for updates and links: There’s currently a new promo trailer to view.

* **PRESS & SPONSORSHIP**

Contacts, contacts, contacts…! I am reaching out to you lovely, well-connected, talented, professional people to ask you if you have any personal experience in journalism/media or links with the local press to assist with exposure and advertising. Do you know someone or an organisation/business who would be interested in sponsoring this project?

In return we could offer free advertising in and around school, on various websites, in festival programmes, on merchandise such as t-shirts (which the cast will be wearing in Brighton during the May festival and whilst in Kingston), mentions during any TV/radio interviews that may occur in the build up to the performances in the summer.

We could offer VIP complimentary tickets for theatre reviewers and critics – do you know any?

Also, we are particularly hoping for support from major NGOs e.g. UNHCR, Oxfam, Save the Children, ICRC, Concern, Care etc. They are featured heavily within the story of Kesho Amahoro and, as the central characters are refugees, we are hoping it will raise awareness about the current refugee situation in countries such as Syria. We are planning to give some of the money raised through ticket sales to one/some of the aforementioned charities and organisations. Do you know anyone within these NGOs?

* **FUNDRAISING**

Some ideas for raising some money in the summer term: Bag packing at ASDA or Sainsbury’s, a themed non-uniform day in school and possibly busking in the streets of Brighton during the Brighton Festival in May.

* **CHAPERONES**

What would it involve? Essentially, accompanying the cast and crew to London on Wednesday 24th July and staying with the group until Sunday 28th July. A CRB certificate will also be required.

You would be responsible for 5 or 6 children in Kingston: The University Halls of Residence, backstage during rehearsals and performances and on the streets of Kingston throughout the festival. Assistance backstage will be particularly helpful in the dressing rooms to ensure the children are where they’re supposed to be and are not being too loud! We would ensure that all chaperones have the opportunity to watch a performance as an audience member so the responsibilities backstage would be limited and rotated.

In between performances at the Rose Theatre we will be exploring Kingston and experiencing as many acts and performances as possible. There will be hundreds of performers from all over the world aged 5-26 performing puppetry, singing, dancing, acting, rapping, poetry, story telling etc. in the streets, small cafes, local libraries, open parkland areas and, of course, in the Rose Theatre. Programming is due to conclude by the end of this week. I will upload this year’s programme of events as soon as it’s published.

Members of staff from Downs Junior School will be amongst the adults responsible for the children and I will be personally coordinating the activities with a specific itinerary each day. The Downs Junior cast will stick together whilst soaking up the Kingston atmosphere but it’s likely that the Kenyan teenagers will head off to explore in smaller groups with accompanying adults from their school in Kenya.

FOOD – we will mostly be self-catering in the halls of residence

* **TRANSPORT**

Do you know anyone in the transport industry, namely coach hire or South West Trains, who would be in a position to discuss ‘sponsorship in kind’ regarding transporting the cast between Brighton and London?

**CAN YOU HELP?**

Do not hesitate to contact Anna Rusbatch regarding any element of this project. Please note that my online activity will be limited whilst in Kenya (29th March – 14th April).

Soon into the summer term I will send a simple questionnaire home to you to find out who is able and willing to act as a chaperone (we will need roughly 15 people in total – male and female) and also to find out the preferred age and gender of the child(ren) you would like to host.

Thank you very much for all of your support so far. The kids have been so inspiring and dedicated in rehearsals – it’s the highlight of my week! Goosebumps guaranteed whenever they sing the songs as it conjures such wonderful memories within me.

Musical regards,

Anna Rusbatch