

Royal High School biography interview

Izuka Hoyle

1. Which primary School did you attend?

I went to Cramond Primary – it was really small compared to high school.

2. Which years did you attend the Royal High?

I was at The Royal High from 2008 and left at the end of my fourth year in June 2012.

3. What were your first impressions of the Royal High?

Overwhelming. I loved primary and found coming up from a small primary to the school quite scary first. Being separated from my friends from primary felt quite lonely at the start. But then I made new friends and it was cool to share the building with older pupils. I loved being part of something in the school – I remember a sense of pride that I was part of what seemed a prestigious school. Growing up in the catchment area, I'd seen the uniform and now I felt part of the school and I was proud about that.

4. What were your favourite subjects?

I loved Music. Oddly, given my future career, I wasn't the biggest fan of Drama. But I enjoyed RE – it gave me an introduction to philosophy and psychology, areas that I am still interested in today. I wasn't really committed to academic work when I was at school but now I have a real need for knowledge. I read and listen a lot!

5. Who were your favourite teachers?

Mrs Carter in Maths – I kept in contact with her after I left and she always came to see me in shows and took an interest in my career. And I liked Ms Davis (Mrs Maclean) – I wasn't the easiest kid to keep quiet and could be a bit chatty in class and sometimes talked back but she was very patient with me and gave me a chance. I remember laughing a lot in her class and looking forward to being in her class.

6. What are your best memories?

Being in 'Hairspray' – I loved the whole experience of being part of that show. It was amazing and it was the first time I felt that I could do something in musical theatre. It made me think "I can really do this". Being part of the Dance groups was fun. It was partly the social aspect – being part of a group and working together after school. I got friendly with older pupils and we became quite close.

7. What was your greatest achievement?

I didn't invest in academia when I was at school but something that I found very fulfilling was writing my own composition in Music. It's something I remember clearly and I can still play the notes to this day!

8. What was your impression of school as you left?

I left young, leaving at the end of S4, and went on to college and then to study in London. I was excited about getting out. But something that caught me by surprise was when the Memorial Door opened at the Leavers' Ceremony. I burst into tears when that door opened and I walked through. My friends were asking why I was crying when I was so glad to be leaving... I suppose it was realising that I was leaving a whole world behind, just like in primary.

9. What did you do immediately after School?

I went to college – MGA Academy – for 2 years and that set me up to audition for Drama school in London. I studied at Arts Education School in London from 2014 until 2017 and that really was a step up and taught me a lot about the realities of performing.

10. What has your career been?

In 2018, shortly after graduating from London's Arts Educational School, I was listed in The Evening Standards as a 'Rising Star'. I immediately landed the role of Mary Seton in Josie Rourke's 2018 epic MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, marking my screen debut. I followed this by joining series two of the hit BBC's CLIQUE as new series regular Dani, then filmed the BBC comedy JERK before filming the David Tennant lead Channel 4 drama DEADWATER FELL. I originated the role of Catherine Parr in the worldwide phenomenon SIX, and can be heard on the original soundtrack. I played the iconic role of Emily Davison in the original production of SYLVIA at London's Old Vic Theatre, and originated the lead role of Darrell in Emma Rice's adaptation of Enid Blyton's MALORY TOWERS. I next appeared in the

feature-film VILLAIN which was streamed worldwide along with THE OUTPOST where I portray lead character Wren; that was streamed in the US on the CW network. It was recently announced I have joined the cast of the forthcoming epic new Amazon and Sony series WHEEL OF TIME, and will star in the feature BOILING POINT, taking the role of Camille, opposite Stephen Graham and Jason Fleming.

11. What message do you have for today's pupils?

I don't feel qualified to give a message – I'm only 24! And when I think back to my 13 or 14 year old self I was never that receptive to advice from adults - alumni or teachers. But if I have to, I'd say: Stay in the present. Live in the present and be receptive to whatever opportunities that might be offered to you. Be open to experiences and learn from your mistakes. Remember that it's only with the bravery to fail that growth comes. And to teachers as well as pupils: Encourage students to be themselves.

12. Have you kept in contact with your contemporaries?

When I was at school I was really friendly with Louise Lyall – we laughed a lot in French – and we're still in contact. I'm still in touch with Struan Blacklock who was in the same music class as me - we jammed a lot and laughed a lot together.

I also keep in touch with Thomas Docherty. He's in the same industry as me, currently working in America - we trained together.

13. Do you want to tell us about your family?

I'm very close with my sister Kim who also went to The Royal High. She studied dance in London and lives there now. I'm also very close to my Granny – she was and still is my epicentre. When I was at school she kept me right... and she still does!

14. What's next for you in work, social and family?

I'm currently filming the second series of 'The Outpost' in Serbia until March 2021. There's a new film, Boiling Point, coming out in December. Next year I'll be filming 'The Wheel of Time' series. After that, it depends what comes along.

When not filming, I live in Marble Arch with seven housemates (all 'muggles' as opposed to actors) and a dog called Suji.



2018 Evening Standard article - 'Rising Stars'



Izuka Hoyle as Mary Seton in MQS 2018



Izuka (centre) in stage show 'Working' 2018



Izuka with Julia Mackenzie – presented with the Stephen Sondheim award in 2017



2010 RHS 'Hairspray'



At 2018 MQS launch



At a 2018 Old Vic launch party



Izuka – publicity photograph