

• Readers' Letters

• Exam

• David's Reflections

• Fun & Games

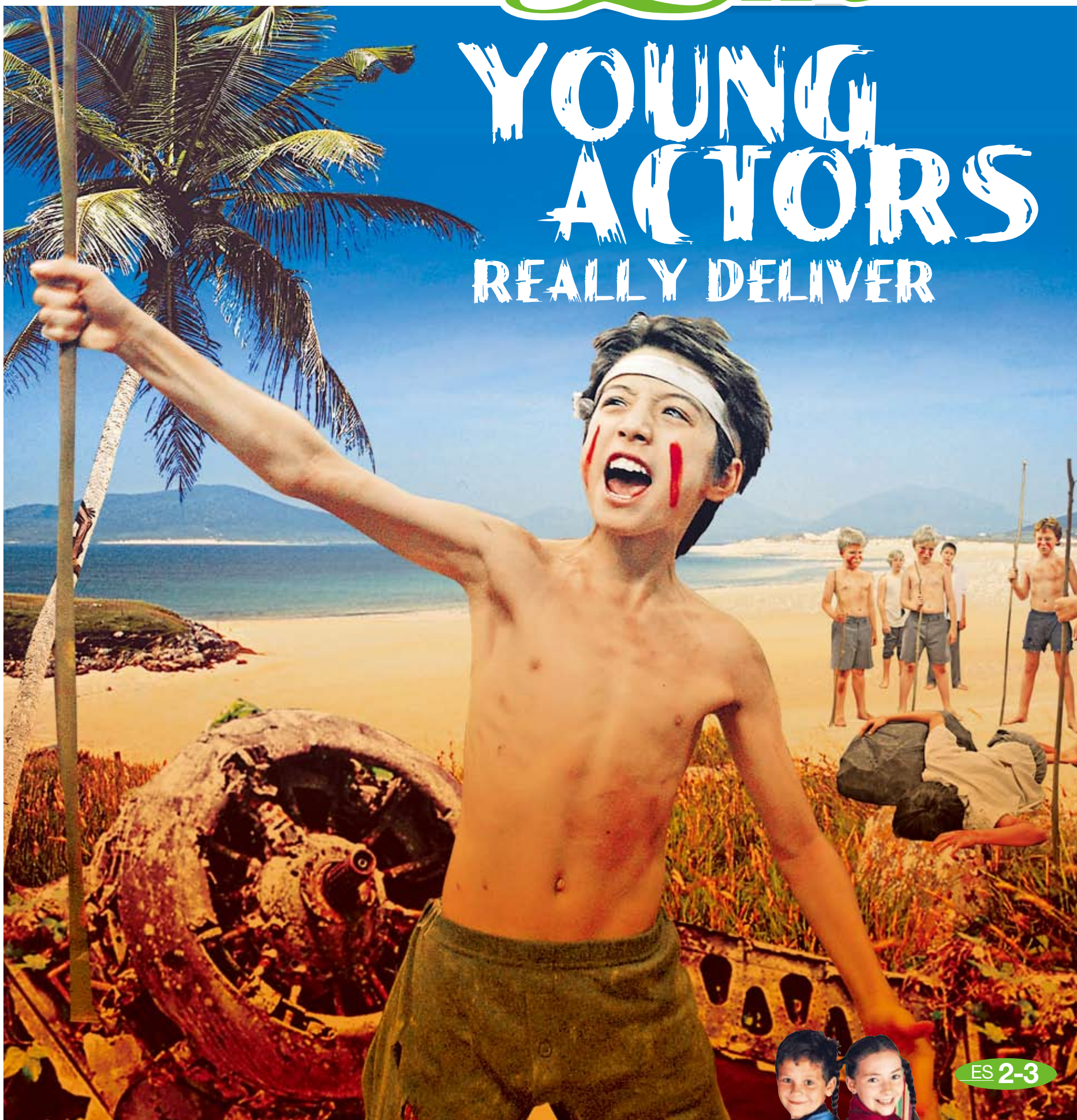
• Mastering Logic

• Key of Life

• Thespians 'n' Theatre

• News Journal

• Feature



YOUNG ACTORS REALLY DELIVER

ES 2-3

ES Life Columns



Key of Life

Home Sweet Home

| ES 8 |



Eat Right

Ginger Food? Medicine? Both?

| ES 9 |



Mastering Logic

Socratic Love

| ES 10 |



A children's drama adapted from a famous novel of the same name, *Lord of the Flies* will be presented later this month and early next month. Director Matthew Gregory talked to *English Street* about team building behind the scenes, writes **Sara Chan**.

Lord of the Flies



▷ Director Gregory gives instructions to the cast.



▷ They put on make-up before rehearsal.



▷ They also learn to tie a tie.



▷ This young actor plays Ralph.



▷ Kill the pig, spill the blood," the boys exclaim.

ON stage, the boys are rivals. They have developed into two tribes – one focuses on hunting and exploiting their belief in the beast while the other tribe insists on creating and maintaining a beacon of hope – a constant, ever-ready fire signal – and keeping to their **civilised** way of life.

The Team

Off the stage, the boys are a normal group of young team players. They are united, with just one goal – to produce a great show for their audiences. It is this strong team spirit that has enabled these young people to act as real rivals in the play.

Seventeen boys, aged between 8½ and 15, were selected late last year to take part in the children's drama, *Lord of the Flies*, produced by Faust International Theatre and directed by Matthew Gregory.

The story

Published in 1954, the story was written by Nobel-prize winning author William Golding and later, much later, adapted for the stage by British playwright Nigel Williams in 1995.

The cast attended an audition at the beginning of December. Thus in just four short months, they have become sufficiently well trained to perform the complete play by the end of the month.

Last week, this writer was invited to the boys' dress rehearsal. On entering the studio, I suddenly found it filled with laughter. Some of the boys, naturally, were playing around, while others sat engrossed, memorising their lines from the script.

The director

"Salute!" When director Gregory called the **shots**, the children's **boisterous** antics were reduced to silence. They then turned to the director and listened to his instructions.

When the music rose in mild crescendo, the players started to rehearse. And when the music was turned off, they stood still waiting for the next command.

Behind the scenes, the cast show great **conformity**. To Matthew Gregory, their willingness to work was the most important criterion for selecting the cast.

Roles reflect young perspectives

"It doesn't matter if the boys are a little bit naughty as it would be fun. But what we look for is: Are these kids easy to work with? Are they willing to work when we say it's time to work?" said Matthew.

Lord of the Flies tells the story of a group of schoolboys who survive a plane crash and find themselves on a deserted island.

The boys initially gather as a group to build shelters, gather food, and create fire signals in the hope of being rescued. But later they come into conflict with each other.

Some of the better-behaved boys turn into a bloodthirsty, murderous tribe. They go hunting for local animals and even attack other boys on the island.

It sounds like an adult story because it includes elements of **mayhem**, power and betrayal. But the kids seem well

able and capable of **grasping** the subject matter.

"I think the children do not look at it like you and me because we are older. Our interpretation of the story is different," said Matthew.

"It is quite sensible for them to play



▷ It's like this ...



the themes. When the boys in the story first arrive on the island, they are filled with excitement. Then they find food and shelter. It is just a normal reaction," he added.

"Then the children experience the democracy of order. They divide into different groups. They lose their innocence quicker and earlier than they should. They find that when they get food, they will get more power," Matthew continued. "[The plot] is fairly **sensible** for kids to play. The cast understand that [apart from the story] it's bad to do such things."

Team spirit

While the cast perform such conflict on stage they are, in effect, showing a **unity** of purpose. Indeed, they will encounter separate, though similar, emotions throughout their lives. And it needs a strong team spirit to achieve such a positive result.

Four weeks before rehearsals began, Matthew and the cast went camping and engaged in many team-building activities. They played football, built fires and cooked their food together. They found natural things with which to paint their faces – earthly resources such as charcoal and leaves.

"We've got 17 boys in the play and we treat them like a team," said Matthew. "The reason for building up team spirit is because you need to know that you can trust the person next to you."



▷ The conch, which the boys use as a horn to call other survivors.

Building character

Each of us has a different character. It is difficult to perform a role in which the player's personality and qualities are quite different from our own.

In *Lord of the Flies*, each character shows a uniqueness of spirit and **enterprise**. For example, said Matthew, "Ralph represents order and decency; Jack is about the misuse of power; Roger represents brutality; Simon looks at the good quality of humanity; and the twins understand the rules of survival."

So how would each member of the cast play a role that is essentially different from their own?

Matthew told *ES* that it was all to do with training. "We asked them to draw a **persona** of themselves and assume different characteristics. We get them to think what the person might say and do; what adjectives they might employ to describe the person; what adverbs they would use to describe the way the person does things. They would then write these down on paper," said Matthew.

In this way, each member of the cast became more capable of understanding his role in the play and thus was better able to perform the traits demanded of the role's character.

Lord of the flies

Show dates:
March 26-27 at 7.30pm
March 28 at 2.30pm and 7.30pm
April 2-3 at 7.30pm and April 4 at 2.30pm & 7.30pm

Where: McAulay Studio, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2 Harbour Road, Wan Chai.

Tickets:
From Urbtix
Telephone bookings:
2111 599
Internet bookings:
www.urbtix.hk
Contact Faust direct:
Tel 2547 9114;
email:
lordoftheflies@faustworld.com



Glossary

1. civilised (adj. 文明的)
 2. call the shots (phr. 發號施令)
 3. boisterous (adj. 喧鬧的)
 4. conformity (n. 順從)
 5. mayhem (n. 破壞; 暴行)
 6. grasp (v. 理解; 掌握)
 7. sensible (adj. 合情理的)
 8. unity (n. 合情理的)
 9. enterprise (n. 進取心)
 10. persona (n. 角色)
- *Big word(s) and Amazing phrase(s) are published on ES15.