

When being cast in our First Year RADA Scenic Studies, *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *The Glass Menagerie*, I arrogantly remarked “Of course, I’m Blanche Dubois.” Doreen fixed upon me with those wise blue eyes and replied, “No, you’re a Laura Wingfield.”

I discovered quickly that this was a tough, smart woman who made you leave your arrogance outside the classroom and if you didn’t have ‘a problem’ you’d better find one damn quick!

In the weeks to come, my ‘gentleman caller’, Simon Ash, and I, sweated out our rehearsals in Room 9 with Doreen at the helm and she showed me, under her guidance, support and skill, that it was possible to transform a confrontational and difficult London tom-boy into a fragile, lonely, Southern girl.

In three years at the Royal Academy, I consider that brief afternoon in a crowded Room 9, performing a scene of a Tennessee Williams play, to be my best performance and proudest moment. As an actress, you are only as good as your director and I believe we reflected in our work the greatness of the mind behind it.

Doreen’s teaching remains tireless and she has left us with a great gift – the tools with which to search for the truth.

The last word, of course, should go to her. When asked what is the most important thing an actor should do, she smiled and said simply, “Enjoy it.”

Rachel Power