

PRESS RELEASE



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THE WIZ CAST CHOOSE TOP DOGS

Two dogs have been selected to join the cast of Yeovil College's forthcoming production of '**The Wiz: The Super Soul Musical**'.

Two-year-old Scottish Terrier Dougal and six-month-old springer Hermia will share the role of Toto in the show, due to take place at the Octagon Theatre, Yeovil, between Wednesday 8 and Friday 10 February 2012. Dougal is owned by Joanne Hayward of Yeovil and her sons Lewis (11) and Benjie (7), while Hermia belongs to Yeovil College Performing Arts lecturer Julie Read.

Mrs Hayward said "I saw the advert in the Western Gazette about the auditions and thought it would be good to bring Dougal along. I think he looks like Toto and I thought it would be a fun thing to do. It will be a challenge for Dougal, but I think he'll enjoy his role. He also takes part in agility training and has won a lot of rosettes. We're very proud that he's been chosen to be Toto and looking forward to seeing him on stage."

Dougal and Hermia were selected from a shortlist of four possible canine actors by show director Ben Woof and his team. Ben said *"Aesthetically, Dougal hit the major profile factors we were looking for in Toto. What I saw **was** Toto – Dougal definitely has the bow-wow factor! Hermia, on the other hand, looks like a working dog, which makes sense as Dorothy lives on a farm, so brings that element to the role. Both dogs showed they have great personalities and good camaraderie with Dorothy, which is very important. I'm sure this will come across on stage and add a special something to the show."*

Dougal and Hermia will play Toto at the beginning and end of the show while Dorothy is still in Kansas. While she is in Oz, student Stefen Mounter (17) of South Petherton will fulfil the role, adding to the fantasy feel of the show. He said *"Once I saw the real-life versions of my character, I knew it was going to be a lot easier to play around with the role. I was able to see a little bit of how the dogs reacted and I'm going to try to play Toto in the same sort of way. It'll be harder to reflect two dogs rather than one, but I think that it was a great decision as I'm sure Dougal and Hermia will do a great job."*

'**The Wiz: The Super Soul Musical**' will be on at the Octagon Theatre on Wednesday 8, Thursday 9 and Friday 10 February 2012. The show starts at 7.30 pm and tickets are £12 (£10 concessions). For more information or to buy tickets, please visit www.octagon-theatre.co.uk.

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Notes to Editors

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