



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

FOCUS

Autumn 2011

News from the School of Performance and Cultural Industries



10 YEARS 2001 - 2011

PCI Celebrates 10 Years!

The School of Performance and Cultural Industries celebrates its 10th birthday this Autumn - and there is much to celebrate! The School was founded in 2001 when Bretton Hall

College merged with the University of Leeds. PCI relocated to its brand new, purpose-built stage@leeds complex in the heart of the Leeds city campus in the summer of 2007. July 2011 saw our 10th summer graduation ceremony, at which our total number of graduates exceeded 2000! You will meet PCI graduates working all over the world, acting as leaders and catalysts for the future of performance and the cultural industries. PCI staff are active in a wide range of research fields covering many areas, including festival performance and risk, the cultural industries and innovation,

and performance linking memory and sense of smell. We pride ourselves on our vibrant research-led approach to teaching, which informs all our programmes from Undergraduate to Postgraduate. PCI students and staff engage in a wide variety of community and industry activities, both within the curriculum and extra-curricular. We have close partnership relations with a number of major cultural industries organisations, including Opera North, National Media Museum, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds City Art Gallery, Phoenix Dance, West Yorkshire Fire Service, the

prison service, health groups and local schools. As the School moves into its second decade, we have a lot to look forward to. For example, in June 2012 the School will be hosting the world's largest performance research conference, Performance Studies international #18. Two of our current students have won University Undergraduate Research Scholarships to work on the conference team this year. Lots more students will be able to get involved as we get nearer to the event.

So happy birthday PCI! And here's to the next 10 years!

Dr Sita Popat, Head of School



Othello's Revenge Review

Othello's Revenge, directed by Dr George Rodosthenous was commissioned by the Cyprus Embassy in Berlin and presented in Munich on 15 April 2011 and Munster on 17 April 2011.

This new physical adaptation of Shakespeare's original play, *Othello*, dealt with jealousy, rivalry between men and the presence/absence of a female in the army barracks. What happens when the promotion is given to a rival? What happens when love turns to jealousy? And what are the destructive forces of dark rage? Several in the cast and technical team were graduates and current students from PCI. The music was composed by PCI alumnus, Dr Demetris Zavros and the dramaturgy was

by Dr Duska Radosavljevic (University of Kent).

The piece received excellent reviews and the *Münstersche Zeitung* said 'Rarely has *Othello* been staged in such a dynamic, barbaric and at the same time human way'.

Dr Rodosthenous and theatre historian Dr Eleni Pilla are now co-authoring an article called " 'Love is a con. A construction. And I am an engineer': De-constructing love and rejection in Rodosthenous' *Othello's Revenge*".

Read more about '*Othello's Revenge*' on the PCI Website under '*News & Events*'



Postgraduate Student Celebration

Postgraduate students and staff from PCI recently met to celebrate the end of a successful teaching year. The lunch provided an opportunity for students to talk about their achievements in the Individual Projects and Creative Work modules and to discuss plans for their forthcoming Research Projects. Many students would soon be heading home to destinations spread across the globe. Sharing a celebratory lunch together was a positive way to acknowledge new

friendships made and the hard work undertaken by the students who will now move towards completion of their MA study in September 2011. Dr Javier Stanzola is the Postgraduate Taught Tutor for the new academic session. The school currently offers three programmes at MA level, MA Culture, Creativity and Entrepreneurship, MA Performance, Culture & Context and MA Writing for Performance & Publication. For further details please link to <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/pci/postgraduate.html>

For Postgraduate Course
information visit [http://www.
leeds.ac.uk/pci/postgraduate.html](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/pci/postgraduate.html)

Momentary Distractions PCI Performance



Momentary Distractions is the culminating performance of a two year HEIF funded project DownTownDance. The project has been coordinated by Dr Fiona Bannon in PCI working in partnership with Yorkshire Dance. The aim of the project has been to explore the processes and creation of performance works that each respond to the City of Leeds as the starting point. In this final work three independent dance artists, Vanessa Grasse, Daliah Toure and Kathinka Walter were commissioned to create and disseminate a series of new works. The result of this summer long project can be found in Momentary Distractions; An Austrian, a German, an Italian, a red chair, a camera, and a Victorian dress. Three dance artists, each on a different journey, explore their relationship to Leeds through sounds, film and movement, finding correlations between their explorations of the city they now call home. They stood still in public places, picked cherries on Belle Vue Road and left echoes of red wooden chairs in small side streets. This interactive performance installation weaves together snapshots of moments as they journey and invite the audience to rediscover and reconnect with what has become familiar.

For more information about the events please visit ;
www.yorkshiredance.com/whatson/at-yorkshire-dance
or visit the stage@leeds website, www.stage.leeds.ac.uk

Book examines humanities' role in society

In research news, Dr Anna Upchurch will co-edit a collection of essays titled Humanities in the Twenty-First Century to be published in 2012 by Palgrave Macmillan. Thirteen authors from the United Kingdom and the United States will discuss how humanities education and research contributes to the wider world. This diverse group of researchers and practitioners will examine topics such as the skills-gap which the humanities addresses, how humanist thinking shapes professional practice in museums and other cultural organisations, and how the humanities contribute solutions to complex challenges in contemporary life. The need for the humanities to respond to the challenges, both practical and ethical, posed by the digital revolution is another major theme the book explores.

The book evolved from the Warwick-Duke Humanities project, organised in 2009 by Dr Upchurch and Dr Eleonora Belfiore at the University of Warwick. That project brought together 42 participants including humanities scholars, scientists, business executives, policymakers, and arts professionals to discuss and debate the role of the arts and humanities in society. The project was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. In November 2010, Dr Upchurch gave a keynote presentation about the project to the Danish Council of Independent Research/Humanities in Copenhagen.

Dr Belfiore and Dr Upchurch will co-edit the book, co-author the introduction, and contribute chapters of their own. Palgrave plans to publish the book in both the US and the UK.

Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space 2011

Every four years professional designers, performance artists and students of performance design from all over the world come together in the city of Prague to celebrate the many forms of contemporary performance design including the best in performance, lighting, sound, and fashion design. Through art exhibitions,

interactive and site-specific installations, workshops, lectures, discussions and performances visitors to PQ can experience performance design (or scenography) as an autonomous discipline that exists between visual art and theatre.

This June, students and staff from all three years of the Performance Design programme in PCI took part in workshops and



discussions and saw exhibits and performances from more than 70 countries. The range of work on offer spanned mainstream, commercial work (UK designer Es Devlin talked about designing stage sets for Take That and Lady Gaga) to emergent performance forms which inhabit the spaces between the disciplines of design, installation and performance (highlights here included Hooman Sharifi's

Welcome new Staff!



Becs Andrews
DARE Cultural Fellow



Jenny Lawson
Teaching Fellow in Theatre and Performance



Chris Megginson
Technical Co-ordinator



Kathinka Walter
Teaching Fellow in Dance

'Impure Company' where a dancer performs inside a small white room full of fabrics, paper and paints for an audience of two or three and 'The Telling Orchestra', an electromechanical theatre using animated objects, light and an evocative soundscape). Dr Joslin McKinney, programme manager for Performance Design, was also invited to do a book-signing for her book, the 'Cambridge Introduction to Scenography'.

My Meksikana Journey by Study Abroad student Michaela Lesayova

Everything started at Heathrow where the airline had oversold my flight to Mexico City. Full of energy and positive expectations, I ignored this little complication and managed to get my flight to the land of tequila at the last minute. My enthusiasm wasn't shaken by a very Mexican university enrolment either, nor by all the other experiences that accompanied me from the very first moment of my 'Meksikana' journey. These included crazy landlords, street dogs and some over-friendly residents of

our barrio. After a year I am tougher and know a good batch of Mexican swear words. Do not get me wrong though, Mexico is a very genuine country and my experience there is something that I would never change.

My Study Abroad year took place in Puebla, Mexico's 5th largest city. Puebla is a 2 hour bus ride from the capital and lies right below Mexico's most active volcano. I really enjoyed all my classes. I did voluntary community service as one of my modules in the first

semester and the second semester was delivered in Spanish only. I got to know a number of very interesting and adorable people.

Mexicans are the warmest people I have ever met and the bonds that we formed are very strong. I dearly miss my Mexican family and their tasty cuisine that they always offered me so kindly! Spending Christmas away from your family is tough, but opening presents on the sunny beach with piña colada in your hand instead of a Christmas punch is not bad either. The possibility of

travel to Cuba and Guatemala showed me many new life perspectives too and I have never learnt so much about myself as on my Study Abroad. Wherever you decide to go, I encourage you to take up this opportunity as it comes just once and it is not to be missed!



Image of Monte Albán, Zapotec ruins in Oaxaca by Suzy Gonzáles



PAD: Professional Artists Development

stage@leeds is committed to providing a resource and environment for emerging and established professional contemporary performance practitioners. Over the last year we have worked with a number of artists including Balbir Singh dance company, Gary Clark, Douglas Thorp and Paper Birds Theatre Company as part of the stage@leeds

PAD (professional Artists Development) programme. PAD provides artists with rehearsal space, technical support and a welcoming and creative working environment. In return the artists we work with present the created work as part of the stage@leeds performance season and provide our students with talks and feedback sessions.

Paper Birds most recent work 'Thirsty', which was created in conjunction with the stage@leeds PAD programme, has received rave reviews at this year's Edinburgh Fringe festival and recently featured on the BBC Newsnight: The Review Show. In addition to rehearsing and devising at stage@leeds the productions deft and clever

set designed by Fiammetta Horvat was constructed with considerable skill by PCI technical staff member Ian Lindley.

Paper Birds will be performing 'Thirsty' at stage@leeds Stage One Theatre on Monday 27th Feb. Tickets are available on line or from the theatre box office

stage@Leeds

What's on

October

Wingbeats
Flight Paths
Sat 1 Oct
3.00pm & 7.30pm

Mother Libation
Mon Oct 3
7.30pm

Light Night 2011
George Rodosthenous
Othello's Revenge
Fri Oct 7
9.00pm

David Shearing
If Anyone wonders why rocks breakdown
Fri Oct 7
5 - 9pm

Yorkshire Dance & PCI
Momentary Distractions
Sat 15 October
7.30pm

LUU Theatre Group
Festen
22, 24-26 Oct
7.30pm

Gary Clarke's
Menage a Trois
Fri 28 Oct
7.30pm

November

Dugout Theatre Company
The Birthday Party
02 - 5 Nov
7.30pm

LUU Theatre Group
The Snow Queen
09-12 Nov
7.30pm

Indra Theatre
Albert and Equiano
17 - 18 Nov
7.30pm

PCI Production
The Seagull
23-26 Nov
7.30pm

LUU Open Theatre Society
Pretty When Drunk
30 Nov
7.30pm

December

LUU Open Theatre Society
Pretty When Drunk
01-03 Dec
7.30pm

PCI Production
All About Eve
07-10 Dec
7.30pm

Find out more about the latest productions here
www.stage.leeds.ac.uk



Concessions available. For all ticket information contact the **Box Office** on 0113 343 8730