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FOCUS Summer 2015

## News from the School of Performance and Cultural Industries



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

## Congratulations graduates of 2015

Staff at the School of Performance and Cultural Industries were proud to celebrate with the graduates of 2015 this summer. The School held an informal celebration in stage@leeds where staff, graduates and families joined together to toast their success. Awards were given to students with the highest achievements throughout their degree, including Teresa Anderson for the best independent research project and Amelia O'Loughlin for most improved student between Levels 2 and 3.



*BA Theatre and Performance graduates*



*Staff celebrating with graduates*



*Class of 2015*

## Theatre as Voyeurism: The Pleasures of Watching edited by Dr George Rodosthenous

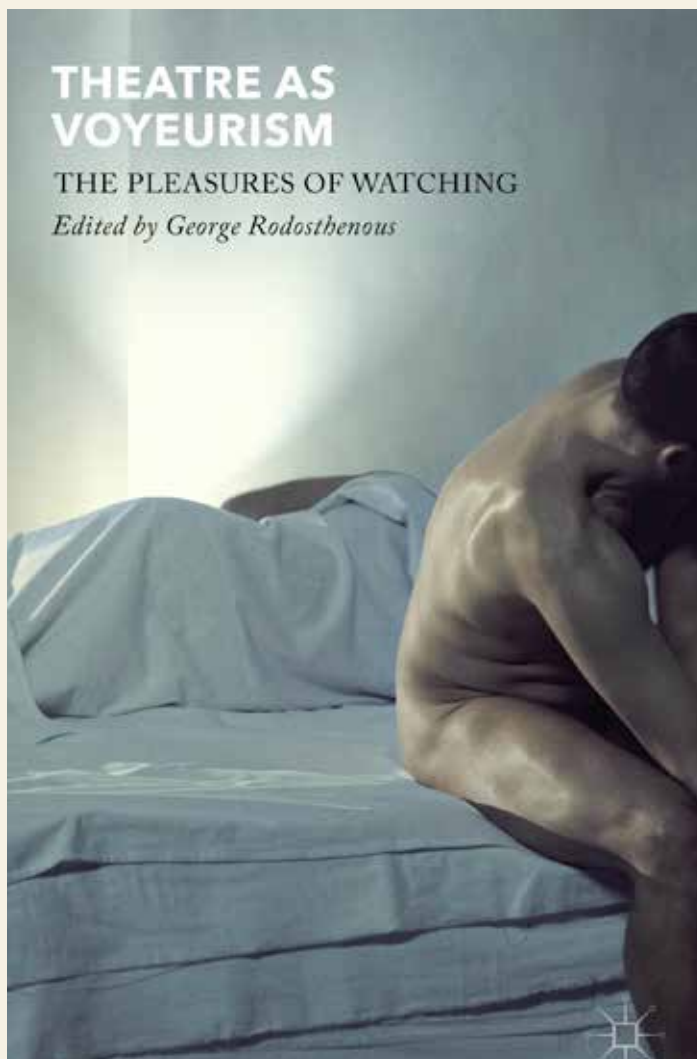
Dr George Rodosthenous (Associate Professor in Theatre Directing) has edited the volume *Theatre as Voyeurism: The Pleasures of Watching* (Palgrave, 2015)

The volume was published in May 2015 and features the work of 3 other PCI members of staff: Dr Tim Stephenson, Dr Fiona Bannon and David Shearing.

*Theatre as Voyeurism* redefines the notion of voyeurism as an 'exchange' between performers and audience members in contemporary theatre and performance. Pleasure (erotic and/or aesthetic) is here privileged as a crucial factor in the way meaning is produced in the encounter with a theatrical work. Rodosthenous has drawn together an intriguing selection of authors and the ten chapters make a significant contribution to the overarching critical project of assessing the value of approaching theatre through – and as – voyeurism. The authors focus on a range of case studies including specific theatre artists such as Jan Fabre, Romeo Castellucci, Ann Liv Young, Olivier Dubois and Punchdrunk. This edited volume is therefore relevant to prospective readers interested in various aspects of visual experience in the theatre today.

For more information, you can contact Dr Rodosthenous by email: [g.rodosthenous@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:g.rodosthenous@leeds.ac.uk)

Rodosthenous is currently editing the forthcoming volumes *Contemporary Approaches to Greek Tragedy: Auteurship and Directorial Visions* and *The Disney Musical on Stage and Screen: Critical Approaches from 'Snow White' to 'Frozen'* for Bloomsbury Methuen Drama.



## Enterprise projects

Theatre, comedy, music and experimental performance were presented in the Little Leeds Fringe festival, held 23-28 February 2015 at stage@leeds. This was the third year of the festival, which showcases student performances and new writing and has been produced by final year undergraduate students in the School's Enterprise Project module. Hannah Workman was festival producer, joined by Charles Booth and Jordan Brooks from the Enterprise module. The 2015 festival featured specific nights dedicated to comedy and music. Jordan produced the comedy night on the first night of the festival, and Charles the music nights on Friday and Saturday to wrap up the week. Theatre and experimental performance were featured on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights. For photos and highlights of the 2015 festival, check out the Little Leeds Fringe festival facebook page.



## Welcome to new PCI staff



**Dr Allison Singer**  
Programme Leader  
MA Applied Theatre and  
Intervention  
Lecturer in Applied Theatre



**Dr Nicolas Salazar Sutil**  
Academic Fellow in  
Digital Performance

To view PCI staff profiles  
visit our website:  
[www.pci.leeds.ac.uk/people/](http://www.pci.leeds.ac.uk/people/)

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# Prague Quadrennial 2015

The Prague Quadrennial (PQ) is the highest profile international event for anyone interested in performance design, space and visual theatre. It is a 'live exhibition' of world theatre and scenography that takes place over 11 days in the multiple venues in the centre of Prague. It consists of exhibitions, performances, lectures, discussions and workshops and involves thousands of participants from all over the world.

This year, Joslin McKinney, Associate Professor in Scenography (and newly appointed Deputy Head of the School of PCI) was appointed as chair of the PQ international jury. Joslin was working with a team of nine internationally renowned designers and directors, including Antonio Araujo, director Teatro da Vertigem (Brazil), Kirsten Delholm, director of Hotel Pro Forma (Denmark), Dmitry Krymov (Russia), Katrina Neiburga (Latvia), Dominic Huber (Switzerland), Kamila Polívková (Czech Republic), Radivoje Dinulovi (Serbia) and Eloise Kazan (Mexico). The jury's job is to nominate and award prizes for the best and most innovative work in contemporary performance design. Below is a small selection of some the prize winners.

As part of the PQ programme, Scott Palmer, Lecturer in Scenography, convened a three-day International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) research symposium to discuss the idea of scenography as a 'shared space' and three PhD candidates from PCI - David Shearing, Katherine Graham and Kristina Penna - all made presentations as part of that discussion.



*Bar III/VI* is a scenographic installation by Christoph Fischer and Jenny Schlieff, Austria. They describe it as 'a small parallel world filled with the smell of booze and cigarettes. The radio only gets the Top 40, and it feels like it is always three o'clock in the morning... once you arrive in this in-between world, you get an unfiltered experience. The longer and drunker the night, the more interesting the discussions.' (Image above)



*The Other Side*, by students from Aalto University School of Art and University of the Arts Theatre Academy, Finland. A large sheet of thick latex rubber is stretched diagonally across an empty room. The performance is created when visitors press the material and start to wonder who or what is on the other side. Using reciprocal gestures it is possible to communicate with the unknown and 'the other'. (Image above)



*The Submission*, the Latvian national exhibit, designed by Vladislav Nastavshev was based on his 2012 production of Strindberg's *Miss Julie* where kitchen objects and human performers have to counterbalance each other. It is an integrated work of art in which the space is shared equally by performers. The set, objects, sound and light. (Image above)



This set design for *The Peony Pavilion* is by Xinglin Liu, China. The set design synthesises the aesthetic principles of traditional Chinese opera with contemporary visual style. It uses a restrained and subtle selection of mobile elements that recombine in an elegant and beautifully balanced design. (Image above)

**More on PQ:** <http://www.pq.cz/en/>  
All photos courtesy of PQ 2015

# stage@leeds

## Theatre Company

**stage@leeds Artistic Director, Steve Ansell, talks about his recent visit to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and how stage@leeds and the School of PCI plays it's part in the biggest and most recognisable arts festival.**

### At the heart of the Fringe

by Steve Ansell

The person on the street outside my window is attempting an enthusiastic, but not entirely tuneful, rendition of *Disco Inferno*. A second voice, presumably that of a friend explains, with ever increasing volume, that they might like to curtail the singing as it's past midnight. I am at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2015, the festival will not officially start for two days but as my disco serenade clearly shows, festival fever has already begun.

Since 2013 stage@leedstouring has been working with International companies bringing productions to the Edinburgh Fringe. Once again this year we are providing technical support, advice and consultation to companies from Taiwan who will be taking part in the second *Taiwan Season* (<http://taiwanseasonfringe.com/>).

This year the Taiwan Season will feature three shows. *Tjimur Dance*, performing at Dance Base, return to the fringe with the sexually charged and beautifully choreographed contemporary dance work *Gaze of the Kavaluan*. Formosa Circus Arts who make their Edinburgh Debut at Zoo Southside with the brilliant *Self and Others* combine stunning acrobatics, aerial work, contemporary dance, tumbling and juggling. The final company we have the pleasure of working with this year are also making their Edinburgh debut. *Paper Play* by Puppet Beings Theatre which takes to the stage at Summerhall, is a beguiling, charming and deceptively simple piece of puppet theatre that is simultaneously one of the most skilful and joyous pieces of theatre I have seen for a long time. Even the venue technician can't hide the broad smile on his face.

I am joined in Edinburgh by stage@leeds technician Natalie McLoughlin and our three days are hectic and very busy with technical rehearsals taking place in venues across the city. As I'm walking from the Summerhall venue back towards Zoo Southside I meet director and ex University of Leeds student Dick Bonham. He is directing two shows at the fringe and is currently heading for the Northern Venues stage at Summerhall where ex PCI PhD graduate Dan Bye is performing his current show *Going Viral*. As I finally arrive at Zoo Southside I get a text message from stage@leeds associate artists Worklight Theatre with an offer of seeing their first performance of *Labels* at the Pleasance. The new show was developed at stage@leeds and I would love to see what has changed since the company were in residence but sadly I need to be at a technical rehearsal. I wish the company all the best and make a note that I need to return to see the show before the festival is over.



*Labels* - photo courtesy of Worklight Theatre

As I muse over my timetable and the correct route backstage it occurs to me that I haven't had an opportunity to see recent PCI graduates 203 Theatre Company <https://www.facebook.com/203theatre> and their new verbatim musical *Untold Wars*. The company, who were formed as the result of working together on the level 3 performance project *War Songs* have been rehearsing a specially re-worked version of the show for the fringe with support from Dr George Rodosthenous. Another reason to come back in a few weeks.



*War Songs* - photography by George Bacoust

Over three long, exciting and hectic days of taping stages, PAT testing equipment, liaising with venues, working with great artists and late night pavement serenades I meet students and ex-students who are performing, directing, working front of house and backstage at the Fringe. DugOut Theatre Company who formed at stage@leeds and took part in both our Young Entrepreneur Programme and Professional Artist Development programme tweet me about their new show *Sunset Five* at the Pleasance Dome and as I'm re-tweeting something finally hits me: stage@leeds and PCI are now part of the Fringe. Our students, ex-students and our staff are entwined at all levels into the fabric of this most prestigious event. Pleased with my revelation I decide to bore Natalie with my brilliant insight and then I remember.... she's already hard at work as a technical manager at Paradise Green supporting several other Fringe venues for the next two weeks...

**For details of the stage@leeds Autumn programme visit [www.stage.leeds.ac.uk](http://www.stage.leeds.ac.uk)**