



FOCUS

June 2008

News from the School of Performance and Cultural Industries

WELCOME

The School of Performance and Cultural Industries (PCI), provides excellent experience for students from a wide range of arts and social science disciplines. PCI researches and teaches theatre, drama and dance; arts education and management; cultural performance; cultural industries' policy and practice. IT works in interdisciplinary ways to generate initiatives between academia, industry and public bodies. There are four undergraduate degrees, Dance, Managing Performance, Performance Design; Theatre & Performance. There are also four Masters programmes: Choreography; Culture, Creativity & Entrepreneurship, Performance Studies; Writing for Performance & Publication.

Opened in August 2007, the performance and cultural industries building provides a home for the offices and staff rooms of the School together with the University's new theatre complex, stage@leeds. This is a suite of facilities supported by cutting edge technology including stage one, the 180 seat main theatre; the 60 seat Alec Clegg Studio theatre; a dance studio; a foyer/exhibition space and a range of backstage rooms.

Stage@leeds has a clear academic role in its provision of state of the art resources for undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and research, and as a publicly licensed venue, it is a University facility which will make a major contribution to the cultural and creative life of the University and the city of Leeds. In nearby Manmade Fibres building the School has other specialist spaces including a design suite with CAD work stations, dark area, dirty modelling area, and general work space; sound and video editing suites; two rigged performance studio spaces; a staffed construction workshop; an enterprise room with high specification IT equipment; two workshop spaces; costume storage and sewing areas.

The stage@leeds building has been shortlisted in April 2008 for consideration for a RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) award.



Current Students

What, When, Where

Enterprise Awards

In 2007-08 The University offered four Young Entrepreneur scholarships to final year undergraduates to enable them to activate a project and to attend related conferences, and exhibitions. Two were won by PCI students, Katherine Stewart (Theatre and Performance) and Kate Green (Performance Design).

The Northern Universities consortium holds an annual competition for young entrepreneurs, with winners gaining a place on an intensive residential course followed by a year's support from a business mentor. Two groups of students (NAMES ?? includes Nathaniel Hall & Claire Lancaster) and one individual Carl Harvey were awarded this great opportunity.

Teaching

Lucy Hurford (Theatre and Performance 2008) will join the PGCE programme at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London, whilst Sophie Horton (Theatre and Performance 2008) joins the PGCE at Bath Spa University.

Further Study

NAMES??

Daniel Lawrence (Theatre and Performance 2008) will move full time into work he has been undertaking part time throughout his studies, leading the development of Capoeira in Leeds.

Elena Moutsakis (Theatre and Performance 2008) will spend a year as a volunteer in Brazil working on a dance project with children, whilst learning Spanish.

Emily Newbon (Theatre and Performance 2008) is starting her own photography business.

NAME?? will be appearing in a National Youth Theatre production at the opening of the Olympics in Beijing this summer.

Students from PCI shared their level 3 Dance Theatre Production 'Points of Departure' with students from Huddersfield New College in May 2008. The student company comprising designers, dancers,

performers and arts managers presented an excerpt of the work and delivered an educational workshop based on the themes of leaving, travelling and arriving contained within the performance work.

Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2008

The School of PCI is well represented in this year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival. There are shows from current students (A Stranger in the House), recent Graduates (Lost in the Wind) and former staff Arthur Pritchard and Mike Casey (On Human Folly).

Year 2 students take a collaborative project module in which they work with their tutors to develop collaborative work with a range of valued partnership organisations. In 2008 they have worked for the West Yorkshire Fire Service, the Education Department at Opera North, the National Coal Mining Museum England, Leeds City Art Gallery, and a local prison & young offenders' unit. Responding to briefs provided by the partnership organisations, the first three projects involved students working with local primary and secondary schools. The first culminated in performances in schools, the second will bring the schools in to perform for their parents in stage one; the mining project engaged secondary pupils from four schools in a drama festival at the museum, with a visit from the Right Hon Ed Balls MP, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families. The projects with offenders involved students going into prisons and working with inmates. The art gallery project, delivered on site, was devised to encourage visitors to engage in unexpected ways with the works exhibited. These joint projects provide students with a valued and horizon-stretching experience that often change the way they think about applied performance.

The year three performance project module brings together students on all of the School's undergraduate courses, leading to performances in stage one. This year there were five productions. The first was a devised production supervised by Dr Anna Fenemore, appropriately entitled 'To Begin'. The piece was created from a series of openings of European films and played with ideas of narrative and miscommunications. It was performed within a striking setting in which several performers were submerged under hundreds of litres of wood chippings in their evening dress!



'Helen of Troy', supervised by Dr George Rodosthenous was an adaptation of Euripides' play transposed to a traveller's camp and which featured a mixture of dance, singing and a highly theatrical invasion of the space by a parade of surreal characters.



'The Shakespeare Project' used 'The Tempest' as its inspiration. It combined projection and new staging technologies to create a contemporary performance with a twist. The projection technologies have been developed directly from Dr Sita Popat and Scott Palmer's current research project in collaboration with KMA Technology.



A contemporary dance theatre piece, 'Points of Departure' led by lecturer Victoria Hunter, was based on the themes of leaving, travelling and arriving, drawing on observation of travellers in Leeds station.



'Out of Words', a week-long festival, curated by lecturer Garry Lyons, was a celebration of new writing by final year creative writing students. This included performances, short films, workshops and mini careers fair. Students from other School degrees were engaged as managers, designers and performers



Staff News

The Experimental Stage of the Theatrical Organisation of Cyprus presented an original devised piece of music theatre called ON/OFF. The direction/scenography/dramaturgy is by Lea Maleni, the music of the songs by George Rodosthenous and all other additional music/orchestrations/musical direction is by Demetris Zavros (PhD student in Music Theatre at the School of PCI).

Dr Kara McKechnie's biography of Alan Bennett received its book launch in Stage One during their annual postgraduate festival and conference.

Professor Mick Wallis led a team of staff in a key note presentation at the Chicago Designers Conference.

The end of a three year project Emerging Objects, part of the Design for the 21st Century initiative founded by the Engineering & Science Research Funding Council and the Arts and Humanities Research

Council, was marked by an international conference in **stage@leeds**. This was led by a team of PCI tutors and included collaborative work with the Professor of Artificial Intelligence and his researchers.

Dr Calvin Taylor visited Latvia as a consultant to the government on the development of the cultural industries.

PCI was a partner in a number of conferences, most notably on the Cultural Industries in Shanghai, working with Chinese Academies, led by Professor Justin O'Connor and Dr Calvin Taylor.

Professor Jonathan Pitches, Susan Daniels and **Rosemary Preece** curator of the National Coal Mining Museum for England presented with their collaborative PhD student at the international Performing Heritage conference in Manchester.

Peter Collis received the award of a University Teaching Fellowship

and began work on the impact of Deeming management theories and practice on PCI students and graduates.

Adam Strickson, part time lecturer and PhD student, has had a very creative year with commissions including 'Burlington Dreams', an animated film with poetry; 'The Cage', a major educational project for 16 - 21 year olds exploring contemporary child slavery in the UK; Lyrics for a song sequence composed by Daniel Bath, 'Breath', to be performed by Ravenscliffe Voice Crew (Halifax) at the National Finals of the Music for Youth Festival, Birmingham, July 08; work as artist in residence at High Bank School Liversedge Appearing on 'Songs of Praise' talking about Polish Christmas traditions; and beginning work on 'Red Angel', an opera with composer Ayanna Witter-Johnson in association with Opera North.

Former Students

What happens to our graduates? Some recent news

Finn Gill, John Hubbard, Dan Ngyou, Naomi Roth well, Toby Poster (Acting 2007) are the theatre company Lost Spectacles. Their latest production, *Lost in the Wind* won the Judges' Award for Creative Collaboration and a Design Award for Costume Design at the National Student Drama Festival 2008. The company will take their show to Edinburgh in August 2008. Space to rehearse has been made available by the School with financial support from the University of Leeds.

Rosalind Sarah Marsh (Performance Design and Production 2000?) is a freelance costume worker for clients including Northern Ballet Theatre, Leopardrama (for ITV) and Flashback Television and most recently Costume Supervisor for Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory

Amy Lazzerini (Arts Management 2007) has been appointed Marketing & Audience Development Officer at Watford Palace Theatre where she joins Management graduate of 2007 Adrian LeSurf who has just become the theatre's Communications Director.

Stephanie Klinger (Arts Management 2006) is ???? at Opera North, having first worked there on a work placement as an undergraduate. Another graduate ????? (????) is PA to the Opera North Chief Executive and responsible for their student placements and internships.

Lucy Weston (Performance Design and Production 2000?) has her own company www.fancypantsfurniture.co.uk She has worked with Paragon (was Scenic Route), Stage One (Eurovision!!!!) and for two months on the new ITV adaptation of "Mansfield Park as an art department assistant. She says 'It was a fantastic experience; I got to make stunt leeches, the wedding cake (wood & real icing!), prepare and dress all the food on set and just basically do anything else wanted.'

Melanie Ward (Dance 2006) & Rachel Sparks (Dance 2007) are founder members of Wasted Grace Dance Theatre, based in Kent. The company is currently touring with Melanie's choreography, 'Potato Eaters'. Their associated youth dance group, Wasted Youth, is about to start work on 'The Landscape Project', inspired by urban landscapes. In 2007, Wasted Grace Dance Theatre returned to the University to work as performers for the staff research project, Projecting Performance.

Louise Geater (Music Theatre 2000?) appeared in July 2007 a semi-staged version at the Southbank of Stephen Sondheim's dark masterpiece *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* with Bryn Terfel in the title role.. The show was directed by David Freeman and the London Philharmonic Orchestra performed the orchestral score. (This production set a precedent for a highly visual approach to theatre in the Royal Festival Hall, using its new state-of-the-art stage facilities.)

Delia Muir (Acting 2007) is a locum Senior Teaching Fellow in communication skills at the medical education unit of the university. Part of her job is the development of simulated patients who are used as role players to teach communication skills, and we are currently planning some collaboration.

Victoria Allen (Arts Education 2002) worked locally as Community Development Officer at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, then became Senior Arts Development Officer with Learning and Leisure at Leeds City Council and now is Creative Learning Director at Theatre Royal, Plymouth. 'We aim to engage people in every aspect of creativity through the theatre making process' Victoria says, 'and to be a living example of how the arts can change people's lives'. Alongside projects working with local schools, Victoria's team is also developing work with homeless people, refugees and asylum seekers..

Stephen Musa (Dance 2005) has been involved, since graduating, in dance education via a number of routes. Initially he worked with the Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company, facilitating educational workshops and teaching repertoire and is now a Dance tutor at Riverside College, Widnes teaching BTEC National Diploma in Dance.

Claire Rogerson (Arts Education 2007) is Senior Team Manager for North & West Yorkshire with Young Enterprise Yorkshire & Humber. The organisation offers more than 15,000 young people in over 300 schools, colleges and universities each year the opportunity to experience enterprise. Claire's appreciation of the arts' potential led her to recruit current PCI students as volunteers to support the agency's work, while also providing the students with a valuable addition to their developing CVs.

Tom Frith (BA?? 2000??) was awarded the Feiweles Trust Bursary of £10,000 for community based work in Physical Theatre, Dance and Movement. This started in Sept 2007 and runs through to July 2009 with a performance at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Nick Howard (BA Acting 2000??). Nick's company Lime house Film was this 2008 outright winner in the University of Leeds Business Plan Competition (prize = £1,000). The competition is open to any student who has graduated from the University in the last five years. Lime house was selected from a final shortlist of 20 plans. The panel judging the plans consisted of external professionals from banks, the Leeds Chamber of Commerce and Business Link. Lime house produces a mix of commercial and creative work. Their most recent offering was nominated for a BAFTA in the '60 seconds of fame' category.

School of Performance and Cultural Industries

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