

NEW STAFF IN PCI

Javier Stanzola:
Lecturer in Management and Cultural Industries



What did you do before you joined PCI?

I was Head of Research at the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and at Arts and Business. In the US, I was a lecturer in economics for the Florida State University System.

What attracted you to the School?

There are very few universities in the world actively combining performance, cultural management and policy analysis. I wanted to be part of it.

What particular projects are you going to be involved with in the coming year?

In the summer, I will be travelling to Panama to direct my most recent play. The text of the play will be published in the autumn so alongside my teaching, I will also be busy with proofreading and revisions.

NEW STAGES Postgraduate Festival

March 6th and 7th 2009

Celebrating its third birthday, and growing each year, *New Stages* is a two-day postgraduate platform and festival of new work. There is now an established overall pattern for the event with interactive panels, workshops and discussion fora, coupled with the showing of new work by students across the Faculty and focused on PCI. This year saw a further extension of the event with a mini film festival curated by MA CCE student, Ruth Mulvey; a work in progress writing laboratory, with Richard Millburn, a graduate of the MA Writing for Performance and Publication programme; and a burlesque installation in the stage@leeds foyer created by Maxine Fox (MA Performance Studies).

The 2009 festival enjoyed the greatest contribution of new writing yet and gave MA writers and practitioners the



PHOTO BY MEDIA SERVICES

invaluable experience of working with actors and technicians to stage their plays. No less than seven writers and two choreographers produced new work for the 'festival of talent' and many more attended the event. The website for the 2009 event is still live and shows the scope of the festival and the details of the artists involved:

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/paci/Newstages09.html>

The festival was managed by a cross-disciplinary committee with student representatives from all areas of postgraduate activity. Students from our programmes were therefore able to get first hand curatorial experience and a significant insight into the challenges of project managing a large event. Representatives from the part time cohort of MA students have already come forward for the next festival and plans are afoot to make this even better than the 2009 event. The theme for next year is Direction. Watch this space for more developments.

Professor Jonathan Pitches
Festival Director

NEW STAFF IN PCI

Katie Beswick:
Research Associate in Applied Theatre



What did you do before you joined PCI?

I was a performer and produced work with my own company 'Built-Up'. I have been involved in community projects in London's East End and as a housing officer in Hackney, which is where I became interested in exploring the theatrical representation of socially excluded groups - the basis for my PhD research.

What attracted you to the School?

The strong research culture. On my first visit, I was impressed by the school's facilities and the opportunities that teaching and studying alongside a working theatre offered to staff and students alike.

What particular projects are you going to be involved with in the coming year?

This summer I am running an outreach project called 'My House' on an estate in Hackney, which will encourage groups of young people to become involved in theatre by producing their own work.

Research into Performer Training

Bryan Brown, postgraduate research student, who was awarded a Performer Training scholarship by the School, has been leading Theatre-Laboratory workshops since his arrival at the University in early 2009.



PHOTO BY BRYAN BROWN

Gathering undergraduate, postgraduate and Leeds-area performers, Bryan leads research that develops and investigates contemporary actor training. Through a joyful yet rigorous process, the laboratory seeks to establish a group that challenges its own habitual ways of devising and performing. By mining the rich tradition of training, particularly from early 20th century Russia and the experimental practices from the United States and Poland begun in the 1960's, the research attempts to discover afresh the actor's work, and by extension, the relevance and power of live performance. While the aim is to provide a space and ethos for consistent practice and development of craft, the core group is taking steps towards a potential production. Workshops are offered weekly and will continue throughout the summer. If you would like to attend, please contact:

Bryan Brown
bryan@arteltheatre.org

For more information
www.arteltheatre.org

PANDORA'S BOX 18th - 21st March 2009



PHOTO BY MALCOLM JOHNSON

"This third year self-devised performance in the style of a promenade, was a reinterpretation of the writings of German Expressionist, Frank Wedekind. The result was an enticingly provocative performance dramatising 'the essence of woman' and 'female sexual awakening'.



PHOTO BY MALCOLM JOHNSON

As an installation performance it allowed the audience to walk around the set guided by the protagonist Lulu as if entering an entirely new world. As a member of the audience you were able to completely immerse yourself into Lulu's world therefore no longer simply watching the action but physically involving, communicating and navigating yourself with the characters and maze of the theatre.



PHOTO BY MALCOLM JOHNSON

By means of the actors interweaving amongst the audience the plot of Pandora's Box was gradually uncovered from very different points of view for each individual. This innovative style meant that no two performances were ever the same, challenging both actors and audience alike."

Charlotte Bonny

Red Ladder Theatre Company comes to PCI

stage@leeds is proud to welcome Red Ladder this autumn with their production 'Forgotten Things', a darkly comic play designed for cross-generational audiences, fusing puppetry and surreal style.

The company will rehearse the show in a PCI studio space during July before taking the show to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

On October 13th they will bring the show to stage@leeds, launching our autumn season.

Forgotten Things by Emma Adams

Directed by Rod Dixon and John Barber

A Red Ladder Production



PHOTO © RED LADDER

16 year old Toby believes he's a failure. He's losing the will to live..... His parents are frightened. They don't want to lose their baby..... Then there's Grandma Lilly - she's just losing her mind having forgotten 'something important' Lilly interrupts Toby to lead him into a mystery of half memories and family secrets. Finding answers might just save both their lives...

"Thinking theatre..."
Kevin Berry, The Stage
"A weird and wonderful production." The Metro

Red Ladder is acknowledged as one of Britain's leading national touring companies producing high quality challenging new plays for 21st century audiences.

Images from POP4: Actions and Interventions



PHOTO BY JON BRAZIL

All pictures involve second year undergraduates from the Theatre and Performance degree within the School of Performance and Cultural Industries.



PHOTO BY JON BRAZIL

The day's performances, lasting six and a half hours, were the outcome for an option called Actions and Interventions that requires students to explore the possibilities of performances in non-theatrical spaces. The devised pieces were



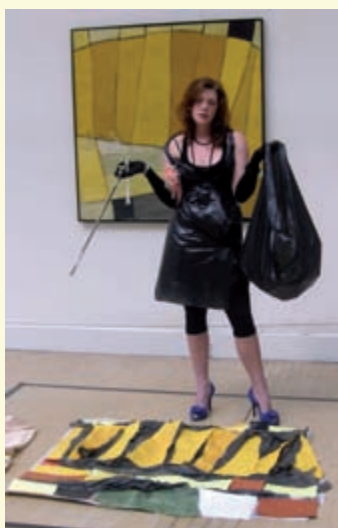
PHOTO BY JON BRAZIL

based around a fairy tale theme, involving the escape from the library of a number of storybook characters, who then acted out a variety of scenarios across the campus, often involving an interrogatory approach to familiar storylines. Thankfully, all the escapees were successfully rounded up and returned to the library by the end of the day.

COLLABORATIVE PERFORMANCE: BEYOND THE THEATRE

PCI is not only about what happens in theatre. From the first year students are encouraged to think about the role and purpose of theatre in the wider community. And in their second year, all undergraduates have the chance to explore this further by working on projects with organisations outside the School itself.

2009 has produced another bumper crop of exceptional projects from the second year undergraduates on Peci 2102 Collaborative Performance Project. Working with external partners seems to bring out the very best in our students, devising and delivering performances and workshops that one staff member described as 'what the School is all about'.



The Fire Service collaboration produced some deeply moving performances targeted at secondary school pupils, while the Leeds City Art Gallery saw one whole room taken over by a promenade performance that combined dance and performances inspired by the art exhibited.



The Opera North project used children's stories (*Narnia* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*) as a way of introducing primary pupils to the delights of opera, and the collaboration between three local secondary schools and the National Coal Mining Museum culminated in a drama festival at the Museum. Work with New Hall Prison continues to inspire deeply-committed work and introduce students to exciting ways of applying performance, and the Spohr project saw PCI students collaborating very successfully with the School of Music to stage the first British performance of *Pietro von Abano*.

Images from Collaborative Performance



PHOTO BY GEORGES BACOUST

Second year students were given the opportunity to gain experience of working on a practical operatic project with input from professionals. They worked with the School of Music in staging, in collaboration with Opera North, two performances of Spohr's *Pietro von Abano* (in English translation) on 6th and 7th March 2009 in the Riley Smith Theatre. The production commemorated the 150th anniversary of Spohr's death.

The opera was first performed under Spohr's baton at the Court Theatre in Kassel in 1827. From the beginning it was controversial. Spohr reported on the production to a friend that 'a real deadly silence from beginning to end showed the active involvement of every listener.'

The research element of the project was to investigate aspects of 19th century practice. This included vocal and instrumental techniques and, as far as practicable, we wanted to recapture the spirit of a 19th century production (obviously not the staging, which fire regulations alone would forbid!). A one day conference was also planned, provisionally entitled 'Sex and sensationalism in early Romantic opera', including international speakers, on the day of the last performance.

Term Dates
2009-10

Session starts

Wednesday
23rd September 2009

Semester One

Teaching starts
Monday
28th September 2009

Teaching ends
Friday
11th December 2009

Examination Period

11th January -
22nd January 2010

Semester Two

Teaching starts
Monday
25th January 2010

Teaching ends
Friday
7th May 2010

Examination Period

17th May -
4th June 2010

Session ends

Friday
18th June 2010

This newsletter is printed three times a year in September, January and May.

If you have items of interest, including any accompanying images, then please forward them, by email.

enquiries-pci@leeds.ac.uk

**OPENCOV:
OPERATIC ENCOUNTERS - COMMON VOICES**

This two year project, funded by the European Cultural Co-operation programme aims to form long lasting partnerships and promote cultural understanding between Europe and China through



PHOTO BY JONATHAN PITCHES

arts workshops, performance, and research. Led by the University of Leeds – PCI, Music, ICS and Communications, it engages Opera North, Sibelius Academy Finland, Bregenz Opera Festival and the Shanghai Theatre Academy.

In January, Peter Collis, Susan Daniels, Jonathan Pitches and PhD student Haili Heaton led work in Shanghai. In April the project came to Leeds. The programme included transnational masterclasses for staff and students in composition



PHOTO BY JONATHAN PITCHES

and choreography, and seminars on such diverse topics as arts in education in the UK and in Leeds specifically, the phenomenon of opera writing in Finland, the training of performers and of arts managers,

how young people engage in the arts, why going to the opera is age related, and the connection between James Bond and the Bregenz Opera Festival.

From July 2009 to January 2010, two of the Chinese colleagues – Professor Lu Ang, Head of Directing at Shanghai Theatre Academy and Yan Li, a teacher and opera performer - will be resident at the University. One of their projects will be to work with an interdisciplinary group of final year undergraduates, leading a production of *Romeo and Juliet*. They have a particular interest in how the classical theatre can be presented to a modern audience, and in how eastern and western approaches to theatre can interact.

Susan Daniels, Head of the School of Performance and Cultural Industries said, "This project looks to promote artistic and cultural understanding through a series of encounters. We have big ambitions; OPENCOV is about



PHOTO BY JONATHAN PITCHES

going beyond the exchange of superficial cultural images or artistic techniques to a more challenging and rewarding encounter of complex artistic modes and cultural contexts."

**From Improvisation to
Composition**

Theatre and Performance students took part in the Research Project "From Improvisation to Composition" which took place from 26th - 31st March 2009 in Cyprus.



PHOTO BY GEORGES BACOUST

The Project was co-organised by the School of Performance and Cultural Industries, Echo Arts (Cyprus), Dance Gate Dancehouse Lefkosia (Cyprus) and the Ministry of Education (Cyprus). It involved an international selection of dancers, choreographers, actors, physical theatre performers, directors and composers.

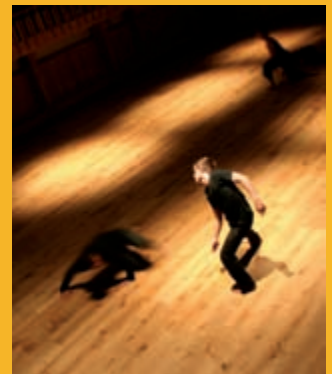


PHOTO BY ALKISTIS OLYMPIOU

Dr George Rodosthenous (project director) writes that the project explores "how the improvisational process can be honed into a 'finished' product and investigates how different disciplines inform this as a process of composition". Tom Colley, Leo Town and Ashley Scott Layton have been part of the first phase in Cyprus, but were also involved in the public sharing of the research in Howard Assembly Room on the **10th June 2009**.