

THE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

CENTRAL SCHOOL OF SPEECH & DRAMA, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

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Central launches international networking groups

Stage and Screen news

Central and Michael Grandage host New York event

Relaunch of Lord Olivier's Pivot Club

After Central, tales of the unexpected

Central awards its first PhD

Welcome to the latest edition of the Central Alumni Newsletter, our twice-yearly publication for alumni and friends of the School.

In this issue we hear about the multitude of successes our alumni are enjoying in their varied careers and a range of news from the School itself. Stories include details of the new Andrew Lloyd Webber scholarship for our musical theatre students and the exciting news of our first PhD, awarded to Dr Broderick Chow for his research in performance comedy, culminating in his thesis entitled *How to Do Things with Jokes: Relocating the political dimension of performance comedy* (page 21).

The alumni community is gathering great momentum; more alumni are meeting each other, networking with peers, reconnecting with friends, beginning new collaborations and forming overseas groups. Alumni are also showing their ongoing commitment to Central with significant numbers of you visiting the School to give talks, supporting student projects, offering work placements and donating generously to our fundraising efforts. To find out about the ways in which you can help, read more on page 18.

Central is all about creativity and we're always interested in hearing about the fascinating paths our alumni choose after graduation. On page 16 you can read the profile of Timothy Lenkiewicz (BA TP 02) professional juggler, acrobat and fire dancer! You can also catch up on the latest School events and upcoming alumni reunions on page 30.

We look forward to your continued involvement, and we hope to see you at Central again soon.

With our best wishes for a wonderful summer,
The Alumni Relations Office team

PS If you bump into fellow alumni that aren't in touch with us, please do send them our way so that we can update them with the latest alumni news, events and benefits.



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AWARDS AND NOMINATIONS



Congratulations to our alumni for their many marks of achievement. We do our best to find out about alumni who are nominated for and win awards. Please let us know if you receive any, or know of a fellow graduate who has. Thank you!

BAFTA AWARDS

Martin Freeman (S 95) won the Best Supporting Actor award during May's BAFTA ceremony for his portrayal of Doctor Watson in BBC1's acclaimed modern retelling of *Sherlock Holmes*. The show also picked up the Best Drama Series award.

Graham Norton (S 88), who hosted the ceremony, was also presented with the Best Entertainment Performance award for *The Graham Norton Show*.

LAURENCE OLIVIER AWARDS

Nick Manning (SM 94) was nominated for Best Sound for his work on *Ghost Stories*. Nick, who is Head of Sound at the Lyric Hammersmith, said, "We use sound to play with people's emotions, their sense of fear. We researched how sound is used in horror films and brought those techniques to the theatre to make audience members jump out of their seats. Sound ratchets up the tension in the horror genre, and generally, I think it works... which is rather fun!"

Michael Grandage (S 84) was recognised with a Best Director nomination for his work on *King Lear* at the Donmar. The production has been widely acclaimed, with five-star reviews from the *Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Guardian*.

YOUNG LIGHTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Christopher Knowlton (BA TP 06) has been awarded the Young Lighter of the Year award by The Society of Light and Lighting (SLL) following a presentation on his work creating user-controlled environments. SLL's awards provide a chance for young lighting students and professionals to investigate a lighting subject of their choice. Christopher used a temporary lighting installation in an office space and offered users the ability to control their lit environment through their iPhones. "I'm thrilled to have won the award of Young Lighter of the Year and to have the opportunity to share my work with the lighting community," said Christopher, who was also awarded the Institute of Lighting Professionals prize for the best written paper.

BRITISH SOAP AWARDS / TV CHOICE AWARDS

Victoria Atkin (MA MT 09) was recently nominated as Best Actress in both the British Soap Awards and the TV Choice Awards for her role as transsexual teenager Jasmine/Jason Costello in the soap opera *Hollyoaks*.

Clockwise from top left: Martin Freeman (care of BAFTA – Stephen Butler); Victoria Atkin (by Kirill Kozlov); Naranjas Exprimidas; Graham Norton (care of BAFTA – Stephen Butler); *Amphibians* (by Phoebe Rudomino)



SOUTH BANK SKY ARTS AWARDS

Judi Dench (S 57) received the top honour at the South Bank Sky Arts Awards in January. Sir Peter Hall presented her with the Dorchester Outstanding Achievement award for her lifelong career.

WHAT'S ON STAGE AWARDS

Zoë Wanamaker (S 79) won Best Actress in a Play at the 2011 WhatsOnStage.com Awards during February, for her performance as Kate Keller in *All My Sons* at the Apollo Theatre, London.

Cameron Mackintosh's (TP 64) production of the *Les Misérables* 25th anniversary show won The Ambassador Theatre Group Best Musical Revival award and the AKA Theatre Event of the Year award.

SPANISH THEATRE AWARDS

Raúl Fuertes' (MA ATP 10) play, *Naranjas Exprimidas*, was nominated as the Best New Play at the Spanish Theatre Awards.

OFF WEST END THEATRE AWARDS

Amphibians, produced by Offstage Theatre and involving over 15 alumni, has picked up six nominations at the Off West End Theatre Awards. Nominations include Best New Play, Best Lighting Designer, Best Set Designer, Best Sound Designer, **Cressida Brown** (BA A 06) for Best Director and **Kate Sagovsky** (MA MS 07) for Best Choreographer. The winners will be announced in spring 2012.

Richard Bevan (MA WfSBM 09) received a Best Play nomination from the Off West End Awards for his first commissioned play, *Trading Faces*, staged at the Lion & Unicorn Theatre, London, in 2010. The play, about three couples struggling with fidelity, was described by *Time Out* as "witty, poignant and salacious". Richard was also recently selected by the BBC Writers' Room for a New Writers' Residential Course on the back of his first play, *Cockeyed*. The Actors' Studio Workshop based in Halifax,

West Yorkshire, will be staging the play, a black comedy drama, in 2012 in the Calderdale town where the drama is set. The play, about a group of Asian and white characters trying to live across the racial and sexual divide, was initially showcased at the ICA during Central's Accidental Festival in 2008.

THE MAGIC CIRCLE CLOSE-UP MAGICIAN OF THE YEAR

John van der Put (MA ATP 05) beat stiff competition in March to take home the much-coveted trophy and title of The Magic Circle Close-Up Magician of the Year 2011. Renowned internationally for his solo performances, John has also gained much acclaim for his groundbreaking work as artistic director of standnotamazed, a theatre company set up alongside fellow Central alumni Alexis Terry, Maya Politaki and Lucy Cullingford. The company creates performances that blur the line between the real and the imagined. Their vision of theatre incorporates cutting edge magic, dance and text in equal measure, attracting a new audience to the possibilities of truly magical theatre.

STAGE MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Two alumni, **Sophie Acreman** (BA TP 02) and **Robyn Clogg** (BA TP 08), were nominated for the Stage Management Association Stage Manager of Year award, along with **Rebecca Davey** (current BA TP student) who was nominated for the Student of the Year Award.

QUEEN'S HONOUR LIST

Michael Grandage (S 84) was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the annual Queen's Birthday Honours List 2011 for his services to Drama.

Charles Harris (T 71) was also honoured during the ceremony with an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his services to Young People as Director of Youth Projects for the Rank Foundation, and Consultant to the Joseph Rank Trust.



Top left to bottom right: *Standnotamazed* (by Kate Rhodes); John Nayagam and Sandra Darnell in *Trading Faces* (by Ben Bird); Charlie Harris (by Lynne Harris)

ALUMNI COLLABORATIONS

The theatre world is relatively small, and inevitably, our alumni find themselves working together on a variety of projects from time to time. If you have a story of collaboration to tell, please get in touch with the Alumni Office.



CLERKENWELL ACTORS' STUDIO

Miriam Lucia Kerbavcic (MA ATC 10) set up the Clerkenwell Actors' Studio in 2009, which operates as a continuous training centre for professionals.

In January 2011, Miriam began working with Central alumna, **Avon Harpley** (MA ATC 10), to collaborate and produce new writing and in May, they produced their third *Mini Play Fest* at the Hen and Chickens Theatre. New collaborating writers include **Sarah Pitard** (MA WfSBM 10), and actors include **Colin Waitt** (MA AfS 10) and **Nicola Lamont** (MA MT 10).

The motivating force behind the *Fest* projects (which have previously attracted attention from the BBC writersroom, Hat Trick Productions and Feelgood Fiction) is Miriam's commitment to creating inspiring and competitive work. She aims to establish the Clerkenwell Actors' Studio as a respected industry vehicle for work by new writers and actors. For more information about how to get involved, contact Miriam via the website www.clerkenwellactorsstudio.co.uk



Full House (by Shaun Armstrong)

FULL HOUSE THEATRE COMPANY

Ten years ago, in October 2001, **Ben Miles** and **Harriet Hardie** (née Ayres), both BA Drama and Education graduates, founded Full House Theatre Company, a regional company with the aim of creating and performing high quality shows for family audiences. It delivers a variety of applied theatre projects, as well as education and outreach work.

Good news in arts funding is thin on the ground these days so there was cause to celebrate in the Full House office when project funding from Arts Council England was secured to create a new physical and visual musical theatre piece, *The Snow Dog*. The show will premiere with a gala launch in October and then tour UK, finishing with a three-week run at Luton Library Theatre in December.

Full House, based in Bedfordshire, has built up strong contacts with professional venues around the country and has continued to tour nationally every year since. In the early days of their development, Full House was helped along the way with advice and support from Central in the form of free costume hire and production

support. In 2003, Dr Sally Mackey, Deputy Dean of Studies at Central, became Chair of the Board of Trustees. In the last ten years Ben and Harriet have employed more than 40 Central graduates and now Full House is delighted to receive the support of another Central alumnus: **Kevin Whately** (S 75), who has kindly agreed to become the company's patron during this 10th anniversary year.

This year Full House is staging several gala events to celebrate and showcase the broad spectrum of work that it delivers both nationally and regionally. In April, 25 children with cerebral palsy worked with the Full House team, including Central alumni **Will Ashwell** (DE 99) and **Lydia Toumazou** (DE 98), on a project in which the children devised, rehearsed and performed *Cirque Fantastique* - a circus show that took theatre to its most accessible, most magical level, and all in the amazing atmosphere of a giant big top tent.

To find out more about the work of Full House Theatre Company visit www.fullhouse.org.uk



Miriam Lucia (care of Clerkenwell Actors' Studio)



Director **Bijan Sheibani** (MA ATP 01), Video Designer **Finn Ross** (BA TP 03) and Deputy Production Manager **Jon Hare** (BA TP 07) worked together on *Greenland* at the National Theatre, a new piece of theatre exploring the big questions around climate change. The production was the culmination of six months of work by four of the country's most exciting writers interviewing key individuals from the worlds of science, politics, business and philosophy in an effort to understand our changing planet.

Greenland (care of National Theatre)



Limelight (care of Jessica Sherman)

SHARING THE LIMELIGHT...

Two Central alumni, **Sue Appleby** (PGDip AMT 01) and **Jessica Sherman** (BA A 07) are working together in the jazz and swing band *Limelight*. The band, formed by Sue in 2002, is billed as "the perfect accompaniment". They perform at corporate events, festivals, weddings, private parties and music venues, specialising in jazz and swing classics with a contemporary twist.

Both Sue and Jessica are extremely proud of their Central heritage. "To tell the story of the songs is so important, as is our relationship with the audience," says Sue. "I use many of the same skills that I learnt at Central and employ in my theatre work, and find that audiences respond very well to this kind of delivery." Proud of their high level of musicianship, *Limelight's* select pool of singers and musicians' credits include: BBC Proms, The Glenn Miller Orchestra, West End's *The Rat Pack* and BBC Radio 2's *Friday Night is Music Night*.

PANICLAB AND TUGA

Since autumn of last year, PanicLab, has been working on a new show about the Bosnian war called *Tuga*, the Bosnian word for grief. Inspired by one of the team member's experiences as a refugee in London during the conflict, the company created a 20-minute work in development performance for Resolution! in January at The Place, London.

PanicLab is a collaborative company making work that crosses the borders between dance and theatre and seeks to tackle political and cultural issues through performance.

Devised by company members (including MA ATP 08 graduates **Hannah Ballou**, **Zlata Camdzic**, **Clara Giraud**, and **Joseph**

Mercier), *Tuga* aims to navigate through moments of loss, vulnerability and grief through the use of movement and the re-telling of personal stories of the war.

Katerina Pantelides, critic for Resolution!, said of the performance: "The merits of this piece were too many to list, but Joseph Mercier deserves particular praise for his convincing portrayal of a bullet-haunted body."

A new version of *Tuga* will be developed early in 2012, as the company is in talks with the renowned MESS performance arts festival in Sarajevo to be part of their Memory programme in April 2012. Visit www.paniclab.co.uk for further information.



PanicLab's *Tuga* (by Luc Boulianne)

ALUMNI IN THE COMMUNITY

Central Alumni are shaping communities both at home and abroad through arts projects, teaching and charity work.

WORKING WITH VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN SOUTH AFRICA

Lesley Bester (MA DMT 02) returned to her home country, South Africa, in 2001. Since her return, she has worked as a dramatherapist, predominantly with children made vulnerable as a result of HIV/AIDS, as well as their care workers. In 2003 she partnered with other arts therapists to develop the FireMaker Project, a skills development workshop for care workers to use the creative arts in the psychosocial support of vulnerable children. The project met a real need amongst communities in South Africa and has grown significantly over the last few years. FireMaker is one of the projects of the Zakheni Arts Therapy Foundation, of which Lesley is the Director.

Zakheni is a registered not-for-profit organisation whose objective is to provide psychosocial support to children, adolescents and adults through creative arts therapies and the applied arts field. The term 'Zakheni' is both isiZulu and isiXhosa for "to build yourself and others up".

The creative arts have traditionally been an intrinsic part of South African communities' capacity to express, support and heal, and yet some of this ancient wisdom has been lost as a result of oppression and high levels of poverty. Contributing to this, modernisation has shifted values away from the traditional. As taught on the Sesame Dramatherapy programme, in ancient times, through ritual drama, primitive art, dance and music, communities came together in a positive and creative way to share and reflect on their daily lives. Even now, these forms are used as tools as ways of reflecting on present day issues. The artist has a chance to express their individual views, feelings, hopes, concerns and in this way the arts can be used as platforms for healing.

Zakheni works predominantly within communities affected by trauma, poverty, HIV and conflict in South Africa. Zakheni runs a number of projects including a Schools Dramatherapy Project, The FireMaker Project and the Bonfire Theatre Project (a Playback Theatre Company).

For more information, to get involved or support Lesley's work, please visit www.zakheni.org.za

THEATRE ROYAL STRATFORD EAST

Maria Dimitriou (MA ATP 09) joined Theatre Royal Stratford East and the Young People's Work department as an apprentice youth arts facilitator and assistant producer last September. During this time, Maria worked with State of the Nation Crew, a company of young people aged 17-24 years old who are committed to working closely with the community to make theatre that reflects their experiences.

The company has been part of Cultural Warriors, a three-year leadership collaboration jointly realised by People's Palace Project and Grupo Cultural AffoReggae with cultural organisations across the UK. The aim: to inspire and support young people to be active and innovative in making a change in their communities and the lives of other young people through artistic activities.

This year, State of the Nation Crew created and developed an interactive project based on Islamophobia in the UK. The project, titled *These Sour Times*, was presented at Theatre Royal Stratford East and Queen Mary University in April. It involved both performance and debate, and used the technique of verbatim theatre. Performers invited the audience to become part of a unique onstage "tea party", listen to real stories and share experiences, thoughts and feelings.



These Sour Times (care of State of the Nation Crew)

CREATIVE APPRENTICESHIP IN TECHNICAL THEATRE AT EXETER COLLEGE



Creative apprentices at Exeter College (care of Victoria Morris)

Victoria Morris (SM 94) is the founder of the new Level 2 Creative Apprenticeship in Technical Theatre (lighting, rigging and sound) at Exeter College, the first such course to run in southwest England. Victoria has built relationships with theatres, event and television companies and, although the course is still relatively new, it is already proving to be successful.

With arts funding being cut and a lack of skilled technicians available to the industry, the apprentices, aged 17-22 years, are considered as extremely valuable members of their teams. The apprentices spend one day per month at college where they are taught creative and cultural skills, and the rest of their time is spent training in the workplace, covering lights, sound, stage management and any other relevant tasks for their role. The apprenticeships are an alternative to full-time Level 2 and 3 courses as the students gain knowledge about their industry along with real life experience, which gives them a foot in the door.

INTOUNIVERSITY

Devina Evanson (BA DATE 04) is currently working as a Senior Education Worker at IntoUniversity, an education charity that inspires young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to study at university.

The charity works with children as young as seven to help raise their aspirations and provides long-term pastoral support to enable them to achieve their goals.

At local IntoUniversity learning centres, children and young people are provided with an innovative programme including after-school academic

support, mentoring and a specially devised primary and secondary school programme which aims to inspire a love of learning.

Day-to-day activities vary, but a typical week at an IntoUniversity centre could include working with a class of Year 5 pupils to introduce them to university, delivering a leadership and personal development session at a secondary school, giving one-to-one help with students' homework, matching a new mentoring pair and so much more.

Most recently, IntoUniversity has been chosen by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge as one of 26 recipients of their charitable gift fund. Being chosen for this accolade is a testament to the invaluable work of the charity and the impact it will have on future generations. For more information, please see www.intouniversity.org.



Devina Evanson (care of IntoUniversity)

THE BIG ACT THEATRE SCHOOL



The Big Act Theatre School (by Lucy Biszczanik)

Lucy Biszczanik (PGCE 07) began her career as a journalist in local radio before moving into television, where she directed and produced a number of children's programmes including *Blue Peter*, *Tracy Beaker*, *Red Dwarf 8*, and *Short Change*. As her latest venture, Lucy launched her children's theatre school, The Big Act, for children aged 8-16 years old, in 2008. On the back of its success, Lucy has also developed The Little Act, for 4-7 year olds in Epsom and Cobham in Surrey, with her sister, Eve Stafford.

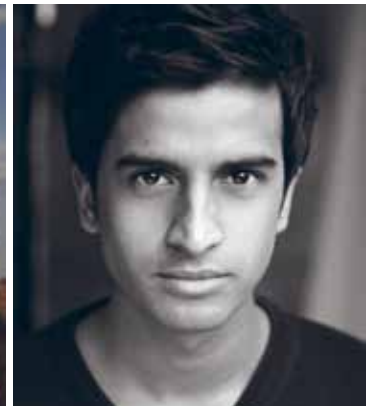
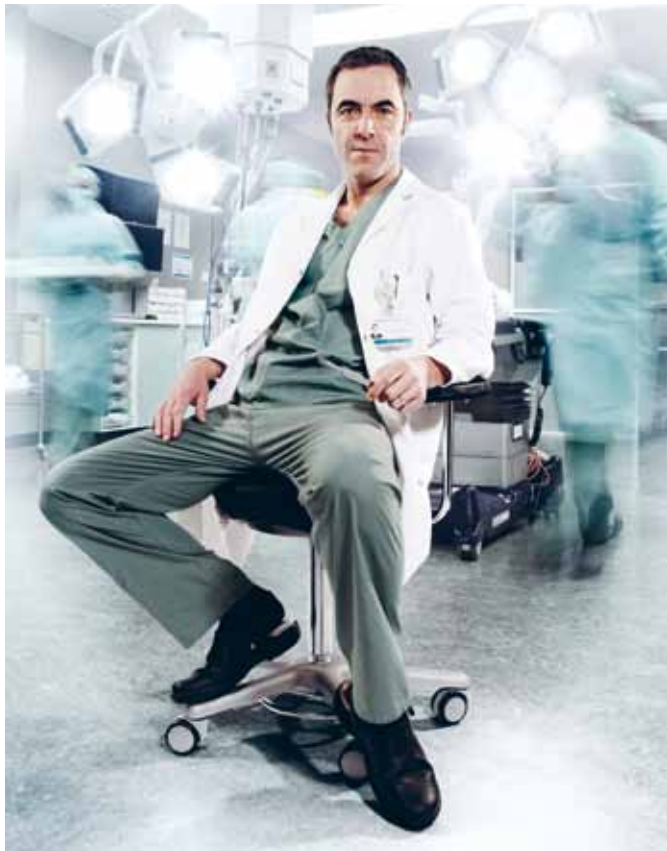
Lucy's goal is to develop and nurture student's skills to enable them to reach their full potential by providing high quality drama, dance and singing workshops in a relaxed, fun and friendly atmosphere.

Lucy believes that through a specially created curriculum, her classes develop skills which are not just used in the theatre but are also important in everyday life. Skills such as self-discipline, creativity, commitment and working as part of a

team, help to develop confidence and maturity. Highly skilled teachers lead all of the classes and each term professionals from the fields of theatre, TV and film lead master classes in everything from film-making to stage combat. The school also regularly produces large-scale productions in professional venues in Surrey. They are currently working on *Bugsy Malone* for the older students and *Where The Wild Things Are* for the 4-7 year olds.

SCREEN NEWS

Central alumni star on both the big and small screens.



Clockwise from top left: James Nesbitt in *Monroe* (courtesy of ITV); Jason Isaacs in *Case Histories* (care of BBC/Ruby Films/Steffan Hill); Hamza Jeetooa; James Purefoy in *Injustice* (courtesy of ITV); *The Milkshake! Show* (care of Channel 5)

THE KING'S SPEECH

Central alumna **Kate Firth** (Dip Ed Voice 96), **Annie Morrison** (Ad Dip Voice 90) and **Neil Swain** (MA VS 98) coached Colin Firth in preparing for his role as the stammering King George VI in *The King's Speech*. The multi-award winning film also featured **Jennifer Ehle** (S 91) as the wife of speech therapist Lionel Logue, played by Geoffrey Rush.

THE INBETWEENERS

David Chrysanthou (MA Afs 08) and **Cush Jumbo** (BA A06) both landed parts in the film version of the popular E4 comedy *The Inbetweeners*. The film, which focuses on the exploits of four teenage boys, is due out in cinemas this summer.

THE HOUR

Julian Rhind-Tutt (S 92) features in *The Hour*, a new BBC America co-production written by the BAFTA award-winning writer Abi Morgan (*White Girl*, *Sex Traffic*, *Brick Lane*, *Murder*). The series, set behind the scenes of the BBC's news room in London in the mid '50s, is an edge-of-your-seat spy thriller unfolding over six episodes.

MONROE

James Nesbitt (S 88) starred as neuroscientist Gabriel Monroe in ITV's six-part medical drama, *Monroe*, during March/April. The show premiered with more than six million viewers.

COMBAT HOSPITAL

Hamza Jeetooa (MA AFS 10) has landed a role in a new series for ABC America/Shaw Media called *Combat Hospital*. Set in an allied forces military hospital in Kandahar, Afghanistan, Hamza plays a local Afghan teenager, who works as an interpreter. The series will run for 13 episodes and aired in Canada in June. It has now been picked up by Sony for international distribution.

ZEBRA CROSSING

Richard Pryal (BA A 05) plays the role of Charlie in *Zebra Crossing*, an independent British movie, shot by first-time director Sam Holland. The film has won awards at several international film festivals including the Raindance Film Festival, BIFA Award, Hamburg Film Festival, Southern California Festival and European Independent Film Festival.

CASE HISTORIES

Jason Isaacs (S 88) starred as Jackson Brodie in the BBC One drama series, *Case Histories*, during June. The show, set in Edinburgh, brings to life the novels of Kate Atkinson and tells the story of private detective Jackson, a former soldier and policeman, with an empathetic heart.

THE HARDEST PART

Nickolas Grace (S 69) plays the lead role in Oliver Refson's film *The Hardest Part*, which won Best Short Film at the Montreal Film Festival and the Festroia Film Festival in Portugal.

INJUSTICE

James Purefoy (S 88) starred as William Travers, a criminal barrister recovering from a traumatic series of events that have shaken his belief in the legal system in ITV's five-part series, aired during June. The series, from acclaimed writer Anthony Horowitz (*Collision*, *Foyle's War*) also feature **Tariq Jordan** (BA A 07).

DOWNTON ABBEY

Zoe Boyle (MA CA 06) has been cast in the new ITV drama series *Downton Abbey*. Zoe will play new character Miss Lavinia Swire in the second, and much anticipated series, of the show when it airs in Autumn 2011.

ALUMNI IN THE BUILDING



Helen Lederer

Alumni return to Central as visiting speakers, to collaborate on student projects, to attend events, to mentor and to encourage Central students in a wide variety of ways. If you plan a visit, please contact the Alumni Office on alumni@cssd.ac.uk

Helen Lederer (AdC SD 87) visited Geoff Colman, Head of Acting, in February to discuss future collaborations and in March visited again to provide a session for third year BA Acting students.

Nickolas Grace (S 69) directed Stephen Sondheim's *Pacific Overtures* with second-year BA Acting Musical Theatre students during May.

Parrot {in the} Tank, a company made up of BA (Hons) Theatre Practice graduates, worked with first-year BA TP on their London Walks project.

Lucy Cullingford (MA MS 05) and **Diane Mitchell** (MA MS 09) have been developing their research with current MA Movement Studies students, exploring how dances in Shakespeare's plays can inform the actor's body knowledge and how principles of African and Caribbean dance can be translated into actor movement training.

Vicky Aracio Casas (MA MS 09) movement directed *Anthony and Cleopatra* for MA Acting students.

Duncan Macmillan (MA ATP 03) recently led a workshop for MA ATP students. Duncan is an award-winning writer whose work has been produced at various theatres in the UK and abroad to critical acclaim.

Nick Llewellyn (BA DE 03), Director of the Rainbow Drama Group, **Sylvan Baker** (MA AT 07), Associate Director of Cultural Warriors People's Palace Theatre, **Natalie Mitchell** (BA DE 05), playwright and Projects Coordinator for Almeida Theatre, **Fiona Burgess** (BA DATE 09), C&T drama animator, **James Atherton** (BA DE 96), Director of Oldham Theatre Workshop, **Sophie Walding** (PGCE D 04), Head of Performing Arts at the Raines Foundation and **Carissa Lynch** (MA AT 09), Literary Manager for Graeae Theatre, all led reflective practitioner sessions with the BA DATE third-years in May.

Neil Swain (Ad Dip VS 98), **Marina Tyndall** (MA VS 07), **Rick Lipton** (MA VS 07), **Jan Haydn-Rowles** (Ad Dip VS 91), **Jeanette Nelson** (Ad Dip VS 88) and **Elsbeth Morrison** (MA VS 00) all took part in the first International Centre for Voice Symposium, Accent and Dialect Coaching, during April.

Joanna Ronan (MA ATC 09), **Hannah Ballou** (MA ATP 08), **Ita O'Brien** (MA MS 07), **Dr Broderick Chow** (PHD 10), **Colin Waitt** (MA AFS 10) and **Deirdre McLaughlin** (MA ATP 09) all took part in the week-long cross-course programme of research activities for MA courses during January.

Alex Bingley (MA VS 03) has recently been teaching on the MA Voice Studies, MA Acting and the MA Acting for Screen courses.



Southampton Passion 2011 (by Alex Elliot)

BA THEATRE PRACTICE – A PERFORMANCE OF PASSION

Matt Bunday (BA TP 07) recently produced and event-managed the Southampton Passion 2011, the third of the large 'Passion Plays' to happen in the UK over the last five years, following Manchester and Winchester. The play tells the story of the last few days of the life of Jesus and was performed on Good Friday 2011 in Southampton's brand new open-air venue, Guildhall Square. The performance unfolded on multiple stages assembled around the square, supported by lighting, sound and multiple camera positions. The whole show was broadcast live to the 10,000-strong crowd on two of the largest screens commercially available.

This very successful show was the result of over two years of planning and incorporated over 250 individuals working together as site crew, performers, choir, technicians and volunteers, and was truly a city-wide effort incorporating performance, dance and live music.

What was particularly challenging about this show for Matt and his production team (including BA TP current third-year stage manager Joseph Watkinson), was that they only had one day to set up the show before the rehearsals started that night and the performance took place the following day. The "get out" of the show happened overnight, straight after the curtain call, meaning several of the team worked over 50 hours in a three-day period! They faced some tough challenges along the way with Guildhall Square being in a new venue and having a very tight budget to work with, but everyone in the team rallied together to give Southampton a show to remember.

STAGE NEWS

Central alumni treading the boards and behind the curtain.



Frankenstein



Clockwise from top left: Zoë Wanamaker in *The Cherry Orchard* (by Catherine Ashmore); *Frankenstein* (care of National Theatre); *Ghost the Musical* (by Sean Ebsworth Barnes); Adebayo Bolaji; Tariq Jordan in *Great Expectations* (by Robert Day); Oliver Chris in *One Man, Two Gvnors* (by Johan Persson)

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANYY

Scott Handy (S 93), **Emily Plumtree** (BA A 09) and **Alex Hassell** (BA A 02) are all performing at the RSC this season, helping to celebrate the theatre's 50th anniversary. Scott stars in *Macbeth*, Emily plays in *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merchant of Venice*, and Alex in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Cardenio*.

NATIONAL THEATRE

Zoë Wanamaker (S 70) stars in Andrew Upton's new version of Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* at the National Theatre until 13 August. The show was also broadcast live on 30 June into cinemas around the world as part of the National Theatre Live season.

Oliver Chris (BA A 00) stars opposite James Corden in *One Man, Two Gvnors* at the National until 19 September. The production, by Richard Bean and based on *The Servant of Two Masters* by Carlo Goldoni, has received excellent reviews and is being broadcast live on the 15 September.

Annie Morrison (Ad Dip VS 09), a voice tutor, therapist and regular visiting lecturer at Central, recently worked as a voice and speech consultant on the National Theatre's production

of *Frankenstein*. The show, directed by Danny Boyle and starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Jonny Lee Miller, played until May.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE AND ROYAL COURT

Lizzie Clachan (MA ATP 98) recently designed Nina Raine's *Tiger Country* at the Hampstead Theatre and received great reviews for her design of *Wasswater*, directed by Katie Mitchell, which played at the Royal Court. "Lizzie Clachan's design ingeniously embraces three radically different settings" said Michael Billington of *The Guardian* and "...virtuosic designs by Lizzie Clachan ..." said Charles Spencer, *Daily Telegraph*.

WATFORD PALACE THEATRE

Tariq Jordan (BA A 07) starred as Pip in Watford Palace Theatre's new version of *Great Expectations*. The novel was transposed to 19th century India at the time of the Raj by award-winning playwright, Tanika Gupta. The show was commissioned in a co-production with the English Touring Theatre.

WEST END

Kristin Scott Thomas (BED SD 80) is starring in Ian Rickson's new production of Harold Pinter's Olivier award winning play, *Betrayal*, at The Comedy Theatre until 20 August.

Rupert Everett stars as Professor Henry Higgins in the Chichester Festival's 2010 revival of *Pygmalion*, which transferred to the West End this spring. The show has a limited season, and runs until 3 September 2011 at the Garrick Theatre.

Adebayo Bolaji (MA AMT 08) appears as the subway ghost in the tour of *Ghost the Musical*. The show opened at the Manchester Opera House and moved to the Piccadilly Theatre, London in June.

Ruth Clarke-Irons (MA AMT 06) has recently finished a run in the West End at the Arts Theatre in the musical *Woody Sez*, a tribute musical about the life and music of Woody Guthrie. The four-person actor-musician show, written by David M Lutken and written and directed by Nick Corley, ran from January to April.

BARBICAN THEATRE

Deborah Warner (TP 79) directed *The School for Scandal* for the Barbican Theatre during May/June. Also starring in the show was current third-year BA Acting student **Miles Yekinni**.

Adrienne Quartly (MA ATP 03) sound designed *And the Horse You Rode in On* for the company Told by an Idiot, which played



Clockwise from top left: Lighting by Neil Carson; Harriet Thorpe (care of Gavin Baker Associates); Blake (care of 2011 Music Infinity); The Jellyfish Theatre (by Brian Benson); *And the Horse You Rode In On* (care of Told by an Idiot); *The School for Scandal* (by Ben Westwood)

in the Barbican Pit and Brighton Festival. The show sought to tackle extreme acts of political violence through the medium of the company's unique physical comedic style. Adrienne also designed Chekov in Hell at the Soho Theatre.

NEW DIORAMA THEATRE

Kamaal Hussain (MA ATP 02) directed *Public Interest* by Drew Ballantyne at the New Diorama Theatre during June.

ROSE THEATRE

Michael Feast (S 67) has recently finished playing Touchstone in *As You Like It* at the Rose Theatre, Kingston.

OPEN AIR THEATRE

Harriet Thorpe (S 81) has recently been cast in the upcoming production of George and Ira Gershwin's hit musical comedy *Crazy for You*, being performed at Regent's Park Open Air Theatre from 8 August to 10 September. Harriet's other recent credits include roles in *Mamma Mia!* at the Prince of Wales Theatre, *Wicked* at the Apollo Victoria and *Cabaret* at the Lyric.

TOURS

Sinéad Rushe (MA ATP 98) directed a tour of *Something or Nothing*, created and performed by renowned artist Guy Darnell, during February. The play explored the concept of mistaken identity, not just of an individual, but of the human race en masse.

Neil Carson (BA TP 06) has been working as the lighting designer for the drum & bass music acts Pendulum and Chase & Status throughout 2010 and 2011. The Pendulum world tour has included shows in the UK, USA, Russia, New Zealand and Australia, including a sold-out show at Wembley Arena. His work with Chase & Status has taken him on both UK and European tours. The group is currently touring the USA and warming up for a busy summer festival run.

Chris Myles and **Dominic Tighe** feature in the cast of Propeller, an all-male Shakespeare company, for their UK and international tour of critically acclaimed new productions of *Richard III* and *The Comedy of Errors*. Two other alumni also support the tour; sound designer **David Gregory** (BA TP 07) and lighting designer **Andy Purves** (MA ATP 06). Central alumna and Governor **Jodi Myers** (Tech 72) is also on Propeller's Board of Trustees.

Jules Knight (MA AfS 06) is currently working on his fourth album as part of the classical vocal quartet, Blake. The group have been touring China, the UK, Australia and Japan, as well as preparing to launch in America. The group performed on the *Today Show* and *Piers Morgan Tonight* during April following the launch of their hit single All of Me, in celebration of the royal wedding.

Ben Melchioris (MA PPR 10) has been a producer to the major performance artist Franko B, including producing his work *You Me Nothing* during Battersea Arts Centre's 2010 ONE-ON-ONE Festival. Ben also served as project manager for The Red Room's Oikos Project, which built The Jellyfish Theatre out of 30 tonnes of reclaimed timber at London Bridge. The theatre, which was designed by award-winning Berlin-based architects Köberling and Kaltwasser, produced two new plays on climate change, *Oikos* and *Protozoa*.

ALUMNI ABROAD

Central alumni are spread far and wide across the globe.



Clockwise from top left: Laertis Vasiliou, National Theatre in Tirane; *Fatherland* (by Caroline Steinbeis); *Parrots at the Seabed* (by Elpida Orfanidou); Liz Flint, Fannie Gemtos (by Y. Manos); Lee Maxwell (by Emilie Bailey); Jessica Swale and Nell Leyshon in Newfoundland, Canada.

ALBANIA

Andrew Visnevski's (S76) production of Gogol's *Diary of a Madman* featuring Greek film and theatre actor Laertis Vasilliou, was shown as the Greek entry at the culmination of the First Balkan Theatre Festival at the Albanian National Theatre in Tirane. Andrew is also the associate director of the MA in Text and Performance at RADA.

CANADA

Jessica Swale (MA ATP 06), director of Nell Leyshon's play *Bedlam* at Shakespeare's Globe in 2010, will be reuniting with the writer this year to direct her latest play, *Winter*, in Newfoundland, Canada. A far cry from a London summer, the team rehearsed in saloppes when temperatures dropped as low as -20° for the workshop period. Jessica soon returns to London to direct Hannah Cowley's forgotten masterpiece, *The Belle's Stratagem* at Southwark Playhouse for her theatre company, Red Handed.

CHINA

Lee Maxwell (MA CA 09) is now living and working in Beijing presenting an English language television show for the national Chinese network CCTV. He has also recently been cast in an American independent film to be shot in Shanghai this year.

FRANCE

Rachel Hafiza Hosein Nisbet (MA ATP 07), having worked previously as an environmental and development outreach facilitator is now a storyteller in France. Her most recent storytelling work took place at the Aushraha Festival and the ProNatura Festival.

Priscilla Lai (MA AT 10) is the co-artistic director (Education and Community) of Theatre de la Feuille, a theatre company based in Paris. Priscilla also works freelance as a facilitator, workshop leader and actress.

GERMANY

Caroline Steinbeis' (MA ATP 02) production of *Fatherland* by Tom Holloway had its world premier at the Gate Theatre in Notting Hill earlier this year. The production was then invited to the prestigious Radikal Jung Festival at the Volkstheater in Munich. The festival celebrates and supports the next generation of leading theatre makers in Europe, and *Fatherland* was very well received by participants, audiences and the jury.

GREECE

Fannie Gemtos (PG MT 01) recently performed in *Visitors without Permission* and is currently rehearsing a new musical comedy, entitled *She and She*, which she has written

and directed herself. Fannie has also written and directed a musical play for children, entitled *The Game of Heart and Mind* and is the founder of the cultural and entertaining centre, Technotopos.

George Sachinis (MA ATP 03) co-directed a site-specific theatre/dance project at the Marathon Dam in Greece for the Global Day for the Environment 2010. The performance, entitled *Water!*, which featured ten climbers scaling the dam wall, was selected among the top ten of more than 600 entries in the international eco-art contest, Pure Water Vision.

Elpida Orfanidou (MA PPR 09) as choreographer and performer, **Vasiliki Mouteveli** (MA PPR 09) as dramaturg and **Valentina Tamiolaki** (MA ATP 08) as lighting designer were invited to present the choreographic composition *Parrots at the Seabed* which premiered in June as part of the Athens Festival 2011.

NEW ZEALAND

Liz Flint (MA VS 10) has taken up the position of voice lecturer at Unitec in Auckland, for a year from April, heading up the voice element of the BA Performing and Screen Arts programme.



Water! (by George Sachinis)

RUSSIA

Laura Bodell (MA AS 08) lives in Moscow and voice coaches Russian film actors working in Hollywood. She has also recently set up the English Drama School Moscow with two other British actors. She welcomes any Central alumni passing through Moscow to stop by the school!

SOUTH KOREA

Seong Kyun Yoo (MA ATP 03) is currently working for Yongin University in Korea on the Devising Theatre course. Seong also organised the An Yong Bok Public Art Festival in Ullung Island in 2010. The three-day festival included a traditional shaman ceremony, musical concerts, outdoor performances, photographic exhibitions and puppetry.

SPAIN

Maria Goiricelaya (MA AMT 07) is currently working as an actress for KABIA, the Dramatic Research Space of the Basque company Gaitzerdi Teatro. Its second production, *You Say Rain and the Rain Falls*, tells of our contemporary civilisation, of the loss of identity, the fading away of individuality and alienation. The show recently won the CENIT (The New Dramatic Researchers Award), the ERCILLA Theatre Award (to the Best Basque Play) and has been nominated for the Max Award in the candidature of Best New Play.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Jack MacCabe (BA TP 08) visited Abu Dhabi during April with community arts collective Dot to Dot, run by Central's Theatre Arts and Crafts Lecturer Dot Young and Kierion Carroll. The collective ran sculptural workshops as part of the world music festival WOMAD Abu

Dhabi 2011. Over 150 participants joined the workshops and the group produced further new work and workshops at the WOMAD festival in Wiltshire during July.

USA

Freia Canals (MA AMT 08) has appeared in Robert Dominguez's off-Broadway production of *Midnight in Havana* at the Jerry Orbach Theater in New York. Freia played one of the showgirls/dancers in the show, set in a Havana club in 1958, the eve of the outbreak of the Cuban Revolution.

Larissa Archer (MA CA 07) assistant-directed a production of *Streetcar Named Desire* at the Actors Theatre in San Francisco and has recently started rehearsals for a production of *The Boar's Head*, an adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry* plays.

John Longenbaugh's (Ad Dip CT 94) new play *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol* broke box-office records at Seattle's Taproot Theatre last Christmas and will be performed at Portland's Actor's Repertory Theatre during 2011. John has also been workshopping the script at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival while continuing his work as a freelance director and playwright in Seattle.

INTERNATIONAL

Windson Liong (MA MT 10) has recently returned from a tour of the Caribbean, Germany, Belgium, Spain, and South America after starring as Mirage Productions' lead singer on board the Black Watch. Windson also appeared as Lum in Theatre Royal Stratford East's new musical, *Takeaway During June*.

INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI GROUPS

We are pleased to announce the formation of our new international alumni groups! The groups will be coordinated through Facebook and will allow Central graduates based in particular geographic areas to connect directly with one another socially and professionally:

> **USA West Coast Network** (search Facebook for 'Central Alumni - USA West Coast')

> **USA East Coast Network** (search Facebook for 'Central Alumni - USA East Coast')

> **German Network** (search Facebook for 'Central Alumni - Germany')

> **East Asia Network** (search Facebook for 'CSSD Alumni - East Asia')

> **Dutch Network** (contact the Alumni Office who will put you in touch with Pieter Hofman, group coordinator)

The aims of the networks are to allow members to make new contacts with people who share a common history, provide expertise in a range of areas, support each other with business and career advancement opportunities and promote their work. It's hoped that the groups will develop beyond the online environment and allow graduates to meet and network in the real world, too!

The groups might also be able to help Central by providing, amongst other things, a network of friendly individuals for graduates returning to their home countries or working/travelling abroad, helping to raise the profile and reputation of Central, and a useful contact point for visiting Central staff.

If you live, or spend significant amounts of time working in, any of the above mentioned areas, please do join the groups. We love to see you there!

AFTER CENTRAL

In this section we like to hear from alumni whose careers have taken unexpected or interesting turns.



Tony Stowers

Central taught me to think of both my work and myself as standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the best.

TONY STOWERS (S 88)

From actor to writer, director and teacher

Tony left Central aged 25 with an agent and a seemingly mapped-out film career, but emerging rough and ready from the political and social upheaval of the early 80s and despite early promise as a playwright and performance poet, he found that his own goals and those others had for him post-Central didn't match. He wandered the Earth for seven years odd-jobbing and writing as he went, though watching with interest the careers of some of his old Stage 1987/88/89 friends.

In 1995 he returned to his hometown of Darlington and began writing, directing and performing, mostly 'theatre in education' pieces, drawing on many of his own experiences, then later on plays for adults with wider audience appeal. He created all his own work, often with grants, employing up to 20 professional theatre artists as well as starting youth theatres and working with special needs clients.

In 2010, his theatre in education play, *Harry's Dream*, and his family comedy, *Cyrano*, were

picked up by American publishers JAC and a back-catalogue of 11 other plays are also now available. He performed his one-man show, *Space Jockey*, in London in 2004 attracting reviews from *Time Out*, *The Guardian* and *The Stage* and admits that without Central's education he'd never have had the discipline to achieve what he has thus far managed.

He has since lived in France for five years and teaches English professionally, something he sidelines in when "the day job doesn't pay", finding the memorable voice workshops of Julia Wilson-Dixon (one of Central's respected voice and dialects coaches) invaluable for teaching purposes.

His advice to acting students is: "It's all about working. It's not about fame or achievement or even money. It's all about working. Central taught me to think of both my work and myself as standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the best. It's not only about fame but also integrity and only your audience can decide if you merit it."

TIMOTHY LENKIEWICZ (BA TP 02)

Juggler, acrobat and firedancer!

Timothy started his career in the circus and, for the last fourteen years, it has led him around the world and back again. As well as countless performances, he trained at London's Circus Space and the Kiev State College for Circus and Variety arts, in the Ukraine where he specialised in acrobatics and juggling. He is also an accomplished and experienced teacher, director and project leader.

In 2008, Tim became involved with the Roundhouse in North London, where he conceived and set up the Acrostudio programme and then the Roundhouse Circus Company, who he directed. They went on to perform his adaptation of Ovid's *Echo and Narcissus* to sold-out audiences for four nights in the main auditorium at the Roundhouse Circus Festival in May 2010. This ambitious group of young people has gone on to become Square Peg, a Roundhouse associate company and the new Resident Circus Company at Jacksons Lane. He is still actively involved with managing the company as well as coaching them in acrobatics and directing their performances. (www.wearesquare.co.uk)

Aside from his work with Square Peg, Tim is developing several other new projects including a multimedia acrobatic adaptation of Gogol's classic story: *Diary of a Madman*, which received an Arts Council R&D grant in 2009; and a new collaboration with Goldsmiths, University of London's Embodied Audiovisual Interaction Group exploring improvised acrobatic dance within multimedia immersive environments.

Between Nov 2010 and Jan 2011 he was one of the Battersea Arts Centre's 'Independents' working with People Create and the Cultural Leadership Programme in order to understand the principle that artists can be leaders through their practice and is currently looking for interesting collaborations as well as venue and production partners with whom to develop his work.

Tim's work combines Circus with Dance, Theatre and Technology to create beautiful, innovative story telling.

(www.timlenkiewicz.com)



Tim Lenkiewicz and Will Davis (by Huri Murphy)

SPOTLIGHT ON JOAN PLOWRIGHT



Joan Plowright (care of Independent Talent)

Few people are honoured for being both part of the establishment and also the rebel outside of it. Few people can so successfully assume the role of fiercely devoted mother as well as award-winning international artist. Few people can claim to have shaped British theatre history whilst being labelled by another's name. Lady Olivier – Joan Plowright, has been at the forefront of her profession since she first appeared at The Royal Court Theatre over 50 years ago.

Plowright recalls her early struggle for employment, lamenting that agents at that time were looking for more commercially useful drama school trained platinum-blonde actresses. Rather than give up as advised, she decided to take an adult education course in acting with one of Max Reinhardt's exiled actors, Wilhelm Marckwald. So impressed by her artistry, he created a sort of bespoke individual training for her and prepared her audition for the Old Vic Theatre School. Plowright decided not to audition for a place with a platinum-blonde Juliet but the girl's mad scene from *Danton's Death*.

with the very unsentimental dishevelled figure of La Ponica, the lonely black-dressed housekeeper without friend or companion, searching through the chaos of her past for some form of control. One of Lorca's aging close friends saw that production, Rafael Martinez Nadal, and stated that he had seen eight Ponicas in Spain, France and England, but never one to match Joan Plowright. This was my first encounter with Plowright and I shall never forget it. She was more animal than woman – a sort of impatient angry beast in a dress, ready to explode at any moment. This was a terrifying transformation and easily entered the nightmare spectrum.

Throughout all of her work there is a woman of true animal as opposed to intellectual compassion – but equally there is also a woman of mixed feelings, like La Ponica, gripped and forever fixed by the need to interrogate both the noble heroines of our past and ordinary women of our present. Her gaze whilst now often considered matriarchal – is actually more often than not gentle – the gentleness that found its way silently to the centre of Olivier's heart. Perhaps her understanding of character comes from her living experience of the world, of being a mother and not a star.

Whilst watching his beloved Olivier perform at the Royal Court, Kenneth Tynan noted of the co-star Plowright that she “received applause that had the blind deafening intensity of a newly formed cult – one that filled a theatre full of young men and women who had been distracted from the movies, from television, from love making, by the powerful lure of truth”.

Joan Plowright's internationally award-winning creative presence has had such impact on both theatre and film. Her contribution to the formation of the new wave at the Royal Court, establishment of both the Chichester Theatre and The Royal National Theatre sets her apart. Plowright's contribution to British theatre is immense, and whilst Olivier's statue rightly protects the entrance to the National Theatre, Plowright's (if ever captured in bronze) should stand near to the Royal Court – and then be moved each year to outside our other great theatres for her greatness cannot be cemented in a singular way.

(The full version of this article appeared in the Stage newspaper on 7 April 2011)

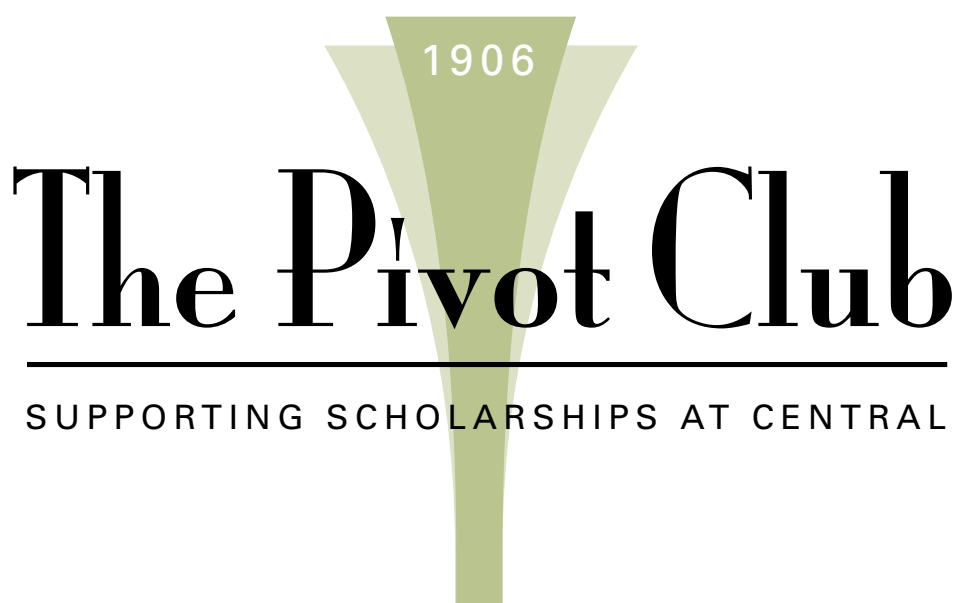
Standing out from the blonde starlets of the fifties, Joan Plowright (also known as Lady Olivier) carved out a career of outstanding creativity, writes Geoffrey Colman, Head of Acting

Identified with the new wave of post-war dramatists she captured a sort of raw ecstatic passing moment in new British theatre performance, a new society trying to mend, trying to heal, trying to understand the new post-war age.

This was not broad brush stroke stuff of a wannabe star – her early work rarely acknowledged the bits that make us all feel better – but rather the small fractured hopeless moments that drive people together or apart. In fact, it was her lack of glamour in a generation decorated by the pin up that perversely made her relationship with Laurence Olivier all the more fascinating. Olivier said of her: “I feel such a peacefulness come over me when I think of Joan.”

Though moral in dimension, her characters often lack obvious sentimentality. Indeed, in the 1986 London revival of Federico García Lorca's *House of Bernarda Alba*, Lyric Hammersmith audiences were confronted

THE PIVOT CLUB: SUPPORTING SCHOLARSHIPS



If you are passionate about the Theatre, be passionate about its future.

Central alumni Sir Laurence Olivier and Dame Peggy Ashcroft first launched The Pivot Club in the 1920's to raise money for talented students without means. They hosted a number of special performances and readings for patrons.

Inspired by Sir Laurence Olivier and Dame Peggy Ashcroft, we are re-launching The Pivot Club to ensure that exceptional students can benefit from the Central experience, in spite of recent government funding cuts.

THE CENTRAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

We are not just an acting school, (although we offer classical, contemporary and musical theatre courses), we are exclusively based on a professional theatre making model. We distinctively offer an entire theatre making ecology of undergraduate and postgraduate courses, with specialist training in lighting, sound, scenography, prop making and much more.

We are the only university conservatoire in Europe, combining pioneering academic work with high student to tutor contact hours, excellent facilities and strong industry connections. Many of our students undertake up to five industry placements from the BBC to the National Theatre, and are highly employable, gaining jobs before they graduate, or going on to found their own successful companies.

Central consistently ranks in the top five universities for satisfied student experience. Please consider supporting our tradition

of outstanding and exceptional training by supporting our scholarships programme.

THE PIVOT CLUB MEMBER PRIVILEGES PER ANNUM

The Pivot Club Circle: £250+

- > An invitation to the Annual Donors' Reception attended by high profile alumni and hosted by our President, and Chairman of The Pivot Club, Michael Grandage
- > Complimentary invitations to exhibitions such as prop making, costume making and scenic design, theatre festivals and industry speaker events
- > Tickets and complimentary programmes for shows and entry to our pre and post show reception with the cast
- > Crediting on the Central Support Us website page as appropriate

The Pivot Club Stalls: £1000+

All of The Pivot Club Circle privileges plus:

- > Invitations to join in our Master Classes or to gift them to others
- > A named seat in the historic Embassy Theatre at Central

The Pivot Club Stage: £5000+

All The Pivot Club Stalls privileges plus:

- > A named scholarship for one year
- > A VIP pass to our annual, invitation only, industry acting showcase

- > Attend a West End, Southbank, or Broadway show to see a performance with a Central alumni(us) and meet them post show

The Pivot Club Founders: £10,000+

- > All The Pivot Club Stage privileges plus:
- > A short performance, reading or song for you and your guests
- > Invitation to our annual dinner hosted by Michael Grandage with special guests on the stage of the historic Embassy Theatre
- > Recognition on our production posters and all show publicity
- > Named recognition in the foyer at Central

PIVOT CLUB SUPPORTERS

You can also support the ethos of The Pivot Club by becoming a Pivot Club Supporter. All donations will be gladly accepted and no matter how modest the individual contribution, these aggregate to significant sums. By donating an amount of your choice you will support a general scholarship fund taking funds to a student on any course with the greatest need. Pivot Club Supporters will be credited on the Central website.

To make a donation or to join the Pivot Club please complete and return the enclosed feedback/donation form.

For further information about the Pivot Club, please contact:

The Development Office
Meg Ryan
meg.ryan@cssd.ac.uk
Tel: +44(0) 20 7449 1636



Michael Grandage, Central President and Chair of the Pivot Club (by Thomas Haywood).

OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT CENTRAL

Remembering Central in your will

A will is a very personal and sensitive document, and we strongly advise you to consult your legal advisor before drafting a new will or updating an existing one. It is entirely up to you whether or not you wish to disclose any of the details of your will to Central; however, it would help us to plan for the future if we know of your intentions in advance.

Help in kind

We are aware that our alumni have immense potential to support us not only financially but also in non-financial ways, because you move in circles in which we may not have direct contacts. Alumni who are engaged with corporate organisations may be able to provide relevant in-kind support (for example by contributing towards our termly productions through the provision of technical supplies). Alternatively, you may be able to support our activities by volunteering to contact your year group, by agreeing to act as a figurehead for a fundraising campaign, or by supporting us in a charitable trust application.

We are also always pleased to hear from graduates who are willing to support our recruitment drives by providing us with positive testimonials, or by joining our international alumni groups or supporting our overseas auditions.

Introduce us

Perhaps an individual or organisation you know would be interested in sponsoring Central, donating to The Pivot Club, or providing a contribution in kind. Could you introduce us?

CONTACT US

If you would like to discuss any of the ideas above, or have thoughts of your own about the ways in which you could support Central, please contact:

The Alumni Office
Zoe Haddock
zoe.haddock@cssd.ac.uk
Tel: +44(0) 20 7449 1628



THE VERA SARGENT SCHOLARSHIP FUND

It is with great sadness that Central reports that Vera Sargent, known to many as "Sarge", passed away peacefully on January 15th 2011, aged 102 years.

Sarge joined Central as a private secretary and personal assistant to Elsie Fogerty in 1930, aged just 20 years old. She proved herself to be an invaluable asset to the School and quickly progressed to become registrar and school secretary. For the next 30 years, she was intricately involved in the lives and development of Central student actors, stage managers, speech therapists, technicians and teachers.

Vera was also responsible for all financial aspects of the school and was a great supporter of student fundraising activities. Inspired by her generosity of spirit and great contributions, Central is very pleased to announce the launch of the Vera Sargent Scholarship Fund. We would like to take this opportunity to invite all willing alumni who may have been touched by Vera's influence to donate to the cause.

To make a donation to the fund please complete the donation form enclosed with this newsletter and clearly mark it with "Vera Sargent Scholarship Fund".

As many of our Royal Albert Hall alumni will already know, we are planning to hold our third RAH gathering in October 2011 (more details on page 30). As a mark of respect to Vera, we would like to open this event up to other graduates who many have known Vera during her 40 years of service. We will also be delighted to report back to you about our fundraising efforts toward the scholarship fund during this special memorial event.

SCHOOL-WIDE NEWS

ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER FOUNDATION SELECTS CENTRAL FOR SCHOLARSHIP



One lucky student beginning in 2011 will, therefore, have their tuition funded for the entire BA (Hons) Acting: Musical Theatre degree.

This marks the beginning of Central's extensive fundraising drive aimed at providing further scholarships. The Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation Scholarship will be allocated based on the talent shown in the audition and application process.

"I am delighted that the unique quality of the BA (Hons) Acting: Musical Theatre course has been recognised in this way," says course leader Wendy Gadian.

"Students are trained to the highest standards of professional music theatre performance

within Central's world-renowned acting course, and are thus achieving considerable success across film, TV, theatre and, of course, musical theatre. We are extremely grateful to the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation for this opportunity."

Since its creation in 1992, the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation has supported the arts, culture and heritage for public benefit.

It has been a good year for the current students on BA (Hons) Acting: Musical Theatre; they travelled to Moscow in January 2011 to perform *Black Snow* on a trip that was sponsored by generous private donations and in March, they took part in a large-scale public production of *Guys and Dolls*.

Central is proud to announce that its musical theatre course has been granted an award by the prestigious Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation in the form of a three-year scholarship.

AHRC AWARDS £135K GRANT FOR APPLIED THEATRE RESEARCH



Sally Mackey (by Villeneuve George)

In essence, Sally will use place-based performing techniques with people struggling with their sense of place because of, for example, dislocation. The research asks whether levels of satisfaction with their location can be affected by these techniques. This research is made possible by a generous grant of £135k by the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

The grant of funding is an achievement for Central's Research department and a credit to its thriving courses in applied theatre – those which use drama in non-traditional theatre settings to bring about forms of change. The AHRC judging panel gave Sally's application the highest score, which is described as "an outstanding proposal meeting world-class standards of scholarship, originality, quality and significance".

Sally is particularly pleased about this award because it builds on work that started many years ago with students on the BA (Hons) Drama, Applied Theatre and Education course on their annual project in Cornwall, and with alumni of that course in the Welsh borderlands, as well as work with MA Applied Theatre students on site and place.

"The strength of the work lies in that history," says Sally. "One of the participants in the original research was James Atherton, now artistic director of my partner research organisation, Oldham Theatre Workshop, for example. The other partner organisation is Half Moon, whose artistic director is a former Central lecturer and colleague, Chris Elwell."

"I am absolutely delighted with this grant and want to thank the Research Office for their unquenchable support. I look forward to working with my co-investigators (Margaret Ames and Professor Mike Pearson from Aberystwyth University) in practical research that challenges the way we think about and 'perform our environments.'"

Each year the AHRC provides funding from the Government to support research and postgraduate study in the arts and humanities. Only applications of the highest quality are funded and the range of research supported by this investment of public funds not only provides social and cultural benefits but also contributes to the economic success of the UK.

For further information on the AHRC, please visit: www.ahrc.ac.uk

Central's Deputy Dean of Studies Dr Sally Mackey is investigating how performance can ease people's responses to "place" in her research project entitled *Challenging Concepts of "Liquid" Place through Performing Practices in Community Contexts*.

CENTRAL AWARDS ITS FIRST PHD

Central is happy to announce that it has awarded its first ever doctoral degree. “This marks Central’s maturity as a fully-rounded higher education institution and a centre of expertise in research into contemporary performance,” says Professor Andrew Lavender, former Dean of Research.

Practice-based research has become an important means of developing knowledge and understanding in the performing arts, and Dr Broderick Chow carried out his research in performance comedy, culminating in his thesis entitled *How to Do Things with Jokes: Relocating the political dimension of performance comedy*.

Dr Chow, also an alumnus of Central’s MA Advanced Theatre Practice, works as a stand-up comedian, writer, visual artist and lecturer at the University of East London. His practice-as-research project examined the potential of performance comedy – that is, stand-up, sketch and improvised comedy, as opposed to that which is in narrative plays.

“I am honoured to be Central’s first PhD graduate,” he says. “Doing a PhD is an incredible but often frustrating and lonely experience.

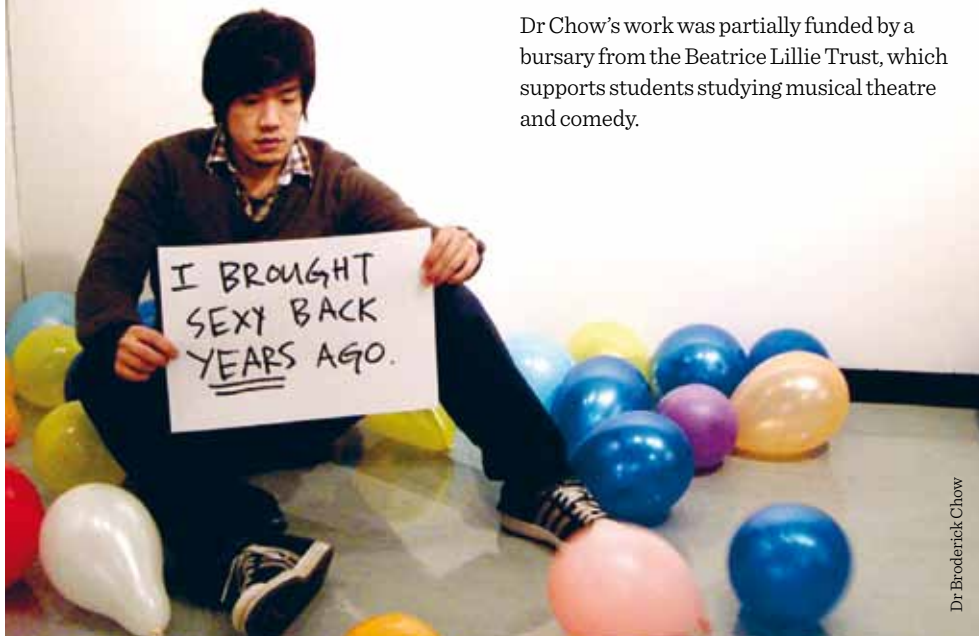
I was incredibly fortunate to have two wonderful supervisors, Professor Andrew Lavender and Dr Stephen Farrier, as well as a course convenor (Dr Tony Fisher) who instilled a real sense of collegiality in the programme.

“Today, more than ever, universities must defend themselves as places for research and thinking. When presented with the problems in today’s world, we must have courage and defend our abilities to question and analyse the problems themselves, rather than acting rashly, out of fear or anger. I learned this in my time at Central, and it’s something I want to impart to my students.”

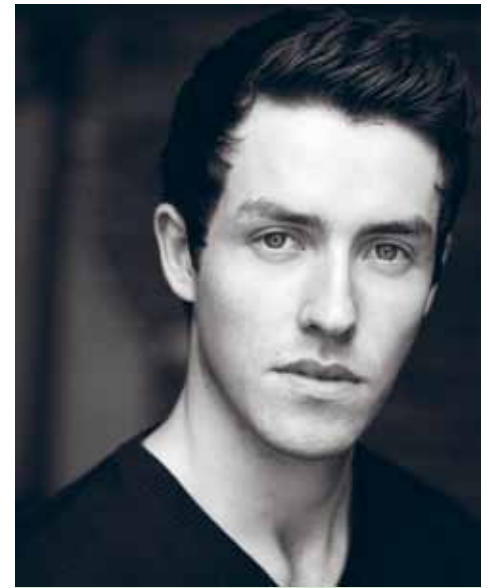
A cohort of 25 PhD students follows Dr Chow; Central looks forward to awarding more doctorates in the future.

“We expect our students to make a healthy contribution to our discipline in the years to come,” says Professor Lavender.

Dr Chow’s work was partially funded by a bursary from the Beatrice Lillie Trust, which supports students studying musical theatre and comedy.



Dr Broderick Chow



CENTRAL STUDENT PERFORMS AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Matt Nalton, soon to graduate from Central’s BA (Hons) Acting Musical Theatre course, had a rare honour: performing at Buckingham Palace for Her Majesty the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and other members of the royal family. The event was produced by English National Ballet and Dramatico Entertainment in recognition of young people in the performing arts.

Matt has long been a part of the National Youth Music Theatre (NYMT) and was nominated by them to sing at the palace in a performance inspired by *Romeo and Juliet*.

With seven others, he sang with Joe McElderry on ‘Something’s Coming’ from *West Side Story* and with Rumer on Taylor Swift’s *Love Story*. Docklands Sinfonia, the dance group Flawless and the Royal Opera were among the other performers. Afterwards, Matt attended a drinks reception to mingle with other famous faces, including Michael McIntyre, Helen Mirren, Kevin Spacey and Ellie Goulding.

“I aspire to performing at some big venues, but I never thought I’d sing in Buckingham Palace,” Matt says humbly. “It’s a huge honour and I met some great people; I can’t thank NYMT enough for putting me forward for it.”

RESEARCH AT CENTRAL



Plastic Bag by Nenagh Watson

CREATIVE RESEARCH FELLOW, NENAGH WATSON TALKS ABOUT PUPPETRY AND HER RESEARCH

“I feel as if I’ve arrived at the back door of paradise. An 8% chance of securing funding was the chance I took to arrive here. The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funds my five-year part-time Creative Research Fellowship hosted by Central.”

“It was a gamble partly because I’m a puppeteer and I’ve grown up with puppetry being the Cinderella of theatre. Within academia, my art-form is even more marginalised. I pay credit to the strategic support of the Research team and the peer reviewers who all saw the potential that puppetry has to begin to define and assert itself within the frame of academic discourse.

At the end of March I presented a paper at the Postdramatic Puppetry Conference held at the University of Connecticut in the US. This was the first major international puppetry conference to be held in English. Ciriad Astles, Central’s Lecturer in Movement and Object Theatre, also

spoke and Dr. John Bell, the conference convener, is to visit Central in the autumn.

What was very clear is that puppetry is certainly taking centre stage. Who hasn’t heard of *War Horse*? The headline mainstream theatre’s appropriation of puppetry is very positive to encourage a wider appreciation of the art-form. However, my research is a bit more left field. I spent my first year and a half looking at what I have termed ‘ephemeral animation’. I’m talking about debris animated by the elements, the plastic bag blowing in the wind or the chance throwing of moving shadows of foliage on a window blind.

These beautiful moments of fragile ephemeral animation are a sheer joy to see and demand a moment’s pause for reflection. It’s been like giving people a gift, framing this rubbish in a performative discourse has given it credibility – lifting it from the gutter and into people’s hearts. It is free and out there just waiting to be noticed. It has proved invaluable with students, to be humbled by the fact that this beautiful animation is without any human ego.

I’m taking puppetry back to minus zero to enable me to unpack the essential elements and gain a greater appreciation. By observing nothing, it has become everything.”

CENTRAL RESEARCH AND CREATIVITY ONLINE

Central Research and Creativity Online (CRCO) (<http://crco.cssd.ac.uk>) has been developed to act as a repository for a variety of the School’s research and creative outputs. The project was developed in collaboration with a company called ePrints, which is based at the University of Southampton.

Digital repositories are proliferating across the world as universities and other types of educational bodies seek to open up their work to wider audiences. The same philosophy has underpinned the development of CRCO. It will allow us to safely store and make freely accessible, where possible, a wide variety of the work that is undertaken here at the School. This can range from transcriptions of research seminars through to PhD theses and scholarly articles.

Searches can be made for specific words or phrases or the contents can be browsed through a number of different off categories such as author, project, year and so on. Items can be downloaded and printed off if required.

As time progresses, the intention is to develop CRCO by adding more and more high quality content to share some of the great work that goes on within the walls of Central.



Figure 7 (by Nick Moran)

AN ONLINE RESOURCE FOR COLLABORATORS

The outcome of an exciting research project is Exchange Collaborations, an online resource that provides support and networking opportunities for those involved in collaborations within the performing arts. www.exchangecollaborations.org assists in the devising, management and maintenance of collaborative partnerships and provides a forum where practitioners, students and staff can learn more about how these partnerships operate.

A January symposium gave the opportunity for educators and professionals from the performing arts to discuss pressing questions in this area and to explore models of work-based learning. The online tool follows the research project called Exchange, which was funded by PALATINE and led by Amanda Stuart-Fisher and Susan Oman and PhD student Jessica Hartley. Using examples of work between universities and other organisations, it examined innovative partnerships, particularly internships, apprenticeships and placements. By focusing on collaborative teaching and assessment, it outlined guidelines and distinctive models of practice.



CENTRAL'S NEW RESEARCH CENTRES

Research at Central continues to thrive; following the award of its first doctoral degree to Dr Broderick Chow, the department launched three research centres in February.

- > Centre for Research into Objects and Puppets in Performance
www.cropp.org.uk
- > Theatre Applied: the Centre for Research in Performance & Social Practice
www.theatreapplied.org
- > Centre for Intermediality in Performance
www.intermediality.org

The Centre for Intermediality in Performance is the most recent addition and is concerned with interdisciplinary and intermedial performance, exploring the increasing range of performance that uses different media. The centre's aim is to share knowledge about emergent production processes, technologies and outputs, and relating these to cultural production. Though the emphasis is on digital culture, the domain has a history in analogue culture, and is dynamic. It features the work

of international scholars and practice-researchers.

The Centre is international in its outlook, featuring and exploring work by international scholars and practitioner-researchers. Some recent events and work of the Centre for Intermediality in Performance include:

- > Professor Andrew Lavender's company, Lightwork, presented an installation as part of the Digital Stages Festival in April.
www.thegoodactor.co.uk
- > An Intermedial Performer Prepares is the research project of Professor Robin Nelson, in which he uses international partnerships to explore how performer training may need to adjust for the increased use of digital media in performance.
- > Matt Adams, a visiting professor, took part in May's HOUSE festival with Blast Theory.
www.blasttheory.co.uk
- > Julian Maynard Smith, a creative fellow, took part in the Arab Dance Platform in Beirut in April. The showcase was organised by Maqamat Theatre as part of the BIPOD festival. www.stationhouseopera.com

To learn more about the new research centres, please visit their individual websites.



SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The School of Professional and Community Development (SPCD), an outward-facing department of Central is committed to high quality enhancement and the application of knowledge about theatre and performance techniques within local, national and international communities.



TRANSFORMING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN IRAQ

SPCD recently undertook a unique project to improve the learning environment at the University of Basra in Iraq by using techniques usually practised in drama training. These techniques are used to modify behaviour, with a focus on female teachers and students, as well as developing the staff-student relationship.

This project aims to change what Paulo Freire, the Brazilian education reformer, calls “banking education”, where the student passively receives knowledge without question. The new model reactivates the students’ mentality so that they become more analytical.

“We acknowledge the need for knowledge exchange to transcend local and European boundaries,” says Bruce Wooding, Head of SPCD. “It is important to work with emerging economies

and strategically we wish to move beyond the markets of Brazil, Russia, India, and China.”

The British Council awarded £55k of Development Partnerships in Higher Education funding (in association with the Department for International Development) to the project and the work continued throughout spring 2011. Bruce’s initial visit to Iraq in March was followed by Iraqi professors visiting Central in April, and the training of 18 academic staff members in Turkey in May.

Amir Al-Araki, lecturer at the University of Basra, said, “This promising project is revolutionising the learning environment in the University of Basra; it will radicalise the banking of education and the teachers’ pedagogical mentality.”

Iraq project (care of SPCD)

STAGE YOUR BUSINESS, THEATRE PRODUCTION BOOT CAMP

SPCD successfully secured part-funding for an intensive theatre production boot camp, which allowed budding entrepreneurs and start-up companies to increase industry awareness, explore and implement key business and financial management frameworks and receive marketing and planning advice from industry experts.

The intensive training allows participants to overcome and problem solve sector specific barriers by maximising income through effective funding strategies and other sources, as well as meet the stars for industry positioning and personal development. The first boot camp took place in the June-July period hosting a wealth of industry experts including the Marketing Manager at Shakespeare’s Globe, Head of Broadcast and New Media at the Roundhouse, Executive Director at Arcola Theatre, Artistic Director of Yellow Earth and General Manager of Matthew Bourne, New Adventures’ educational arm Re:bourne, to name but a few.

This initiative is well-timed; with public investment in the arts being cut back, there are fewer opportunities in the industry. The creative industries are notoriously competitive; success often relies on already having experience and good contacts. As a recent DIUS report states, “Too often, a fledgling creative career depends on who you know, how far from home you are prepared to travel, or how little you are prepared to work

for.” Meeting the industry experts in this boot camp provides useful contacts and helps with personal development – giving participants a competitive edge.

SPCD hosted the event in partnership with the Roundhouse, enhancing and developing the Cultural Camden initiative. The course is taught over six intensive weekly workshops with the next commencing 11 October – 15 November, 2011.

The project is part-funded by the Royal Bank of Scotland Group, Inspiring Open Innovation Teams, EU Interreg programme, Capital Enterprise, Westminster Business School, and the Mayor of London’s Office in a scheme to provide specialist business training. Thanks to this generous funding, participants pay only £170 for the six intensive workshops.

For more information on forthcoming boot camps please contact Lizzie Yirrell, Project Manager Innovations, SPCD on +44 (0)20 7559 3960/3954 or at lizzie.yirrell@cssd.ac.uk.

OPMENT NEWS



SHORT COURSE SUCCESS STORIES

Daniel Raggett

Saturday Youth Theatre (2001-2006)

"I started attending Central's Saturday Youth Theatre in 2001 when I was 11 years old. Back then it consisted of only two groups but over the six years (and two summer schools) of which I was a member, they grew and grew, and rightly so. Central was both a hugely enjoyable and invaluable experience for me as a young person. Not only was I encouraged to explore my passion for theatre, but I was also taught how to understand and apply it and I believe my time there was instrumental in forming my desire to pursue a career in the arts.

Since leaving Central, I have worked with the National Theatre Young Company, RADA Youth Group and Shared Experience Youth Theatre and I am currently in my final year of a BA at University College London, where I have both acted in and directed productions in the Bloomsbury Theatre and at the Edinburgh Fringe. I recently put into use the training I received on Central's Moscow Art Theatre School trip to inform my direction of a production of *The Seagull* in the Bloomsbury Theatre as part of Chekhov's 150th Anniversary celebrations.

My time at Central was extremely formative and I truly believe that projects such as the Saturday Youth Theatre and Summer Schools are vital for offering young people the opportunity to get involved in theatre from an early stage. Not only did I learn a great many lessons which I still draw upon in my work today, but I also made some of my closest and most enduring friendships. For this reason, Central will always mean a great deal to me. I am grateful to them for giving me the best possible start and I hope one day to make them proud!"



OutBox (by B. Fitzgerald)

BIG LOTTERY FUND AWARDS £60K FOR 3-YEAR LGB INTERGENERATIONAL THEATRE PROJECT

Listening to your grandparents retell you stories of when they were young and in love is an invaluable treasure. Unfortunately, for young gay, lesbian and bisexuals it may prove quite difficult to come across their elder counterparts who are willing to share their own experiences. It was a different time and most of them lived closeted lives.

Fortunately, however, Central is proud to announce that the Big Lottery Fund awarded £60,000 for Outbox, a new performance project that focuses on relationships between older and younger lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people.

Following on from the success of their LGB youth performance, *SSA: Same Sex Attraction*, SPCD then turned its attention to older LGB people and the isolation that they can face within their communities. Outbox will produce one show per year, running both in London and northern England. There will also be six national follow-up workshops for young LGB people.

Outbox produces devised theatre with a company of all LGB performers, focusing on telling the forgotten and unheard stories of the gay community. Noticing the lack of social mechanisms for LGB people, Outbox creates theatre that tells the story of these older people, many of whom were activists and pioneers and now face isolation, ageism and homophobia.

Keegan Peacey, 20, took part in *SSA* and is now part of the steering group for Outbox.

He said, "As a young gay actor, *SSA* was the best thing. It gave our company the opportunity to discuss and debate our experiences, opinions and lives and then put them on stage. Furthermore, to create a piece of theatre about yourself and a celebration of the LGB community was an honour."

Ben Buratta, Project Leader and Director of Outbox said, "The lives and histories of the older members of the LGB community are both fascinating and inspiring for the younger generations. We are delighted that The Big Lottery Fund has chosen to fund this important and relevant theatre project. The performances and workshops will have a national reach, allowing us to educate and raise awareness for LGB people who may feel isolated and alone."

Bruce Wooding, Head of SPCD, said, "This project allows for a model of actor training to be developed which gives young performers the right to explore their psycho-physical interpretations of role from a gay centre. Previous work demonstrated that most young LGB actors do not get to explore their 'gay self' nor do they get to be cast in meaningful gay roles. This double-blow of discrimination is something to be attended to."

For more information on forthcoming productions please contact Ben Buratta, Community Drama Officer, SPCD on +44 (0)20 7512 4448 or at ben.buratta@cssd.ac.uk.

ALUMNI EVENT ROUND-UP



FESTIVE FUN FOR BA TP AND BA DATE '06, '07 AND '08

Jon Hare (BA TP 07) organised a pre-Christmas alumni reunion party for graduates from BA TP and BA DATE 06, 07 and 08 on Thursday 23 December at The Spice of Life pub in Soho. Over 30 alumni attended and the

evening featured the old Central Live Karaoke Band and several ex-SU DJs. Some of the least incriminating photos from the evening are printed above!

Clockwise from top: B ATP and BA DATE 06, 07 and 08; Jay Mobbs-Beal, Santa, Alex Morris and James Matthews; Tom Hackley and Emma Pile; James Matthews and Russell Cobden; Neil Carson; Beth Morris, Toby Koch, Emily Hardy, Amy Wyatt, Dave Gregory, and Jon Hare, Mary Chiltern, Jay Mobbs-Beal, Shane Craig and Alex Morris.

GEORGE KITSON MEMORIAL EVENT

On 9 March Central hosted a memorial event for friends, family and students of George Kitson, Central's principal from 1978 to 1987. Numerous alumni who fondly remembered George attended, along with family members and colleagues from the Conference of Drama Schools.

During his time as principal, George oversaw the development of the speech therapy course and the drama teachers' course. Both of these had been diploma or certificate courses before his time, and were each raised to degree level under his leadership. He also introduced a voice course to train voice teachers.

George retired from Central in 1987, and subsequently served on the National Council for Drama Training and helped to set up the Conference of Drama Schools, of which he became chairman. In his final years, he also initiated a street theatre festival, Arts Fresco in Market Harborough, Leicestershire, which takes place every September.



Top: George Kitson memorial - Gavin Henderson, Shelley and Raphael Jago. Bottom: The Kitson brothers - Paul, Neil, Giles and Simon.



CENTRAL VISITS THE USA

Thank you to all alumni who attended our New York and San Francisco receptions in March and April when Principal Gavin Henderson and various representatives of our teaching faculty visited the States as part of Central's annual US audition tour.

The receptions in both cities were well attended and we look forward to the development of our US alumni groups (more details on page 15) in the coming months.

Central will be visiting the US again in September when Michael Grandage will be hosting a special alumni gathering. Read more in our Upcoming Events section on page 30.



ALUMNI SOLICITATION EVENT

As you will have read in our Supporting Central section on page 18, the School is developing a scholarship and bursary fundraising initiative and we have been turning to our alumni for support.

On 5 May a small group of influential alumni, including Helen Lederer, Wendy Craig, Jason Barnes, Lolly Susi and Jodi Myers were invited to brainstorm ideas for future fundraising activities. Topics covered included the development of the Pivot Club, an auction of promises and theatrical items (read more in the Supporting Central pages) and a series of ticketed on-stage Q&A and master class sessions. Guests were also asked to consider how alumni might be able to support our endeavours, whether by making potentially lucrative introductions between Central and their personal acquaintances or by making a financial commitment and joining the Pivot Club themselves.

STAGE '81 REUNION

On a wet and blustery Friday evening, alumni from Stage 81 met at Central, some for the first time in 30 years. Signs of how the evening was going to go were evident within minutes of the first arrivals because of the exclamations and hugging which began before they even had their coats off in reception and it was all we could do to persuade them to stop to come upstairs for some wine and a more comfortable room.

Lolly Susi (author of *The Central Book* and *George Hall: An Untidy Career*) had traced over 25 of her fellow students, gathered from far and wide (Russell Sommers had even flown over specially from Los Angeles) and it was clear why they had made so much effort to be there as everyone was so patently pleased to see each other. What made it extra special was that George Hall, our legendary, former Head of Acting, was there too. If the noise volume was anything to go by this was one of our best ever reunions.

The event was also notable as it included our first alumni to attend by Skype! Charles Shaughnessy and Keith 'Hoppy' Harle were contacted in the US and Portugal respectively on a laptop and remained part of the party propped up on a shelf for everyone to drop by for a chat and for them to see who was in the room.

The reunion was very exciting for us as most of the alumni who attended had lost touch with the School and it was great to be able to pass on news of developments here at Central including The Pivot Club and our international alumni groups. As one almost tearful alumnus put it as he left giving us a hug "thank you so, so much, you have no idea what you have begun for us tonight". We think Stage 81 will be seeing more of each other from now on.



Clockwise from top: Class of Stage 1981 reunion; Charles Shaughnessy skyped in from USA; George Hall and members of S 81

ACCIDENTAL FESTIVAL

The sixth student-produced Accidental Festival took place in May 2011 at the Roundhouse in Camden. The Festival is a contemporary art extravaganza featuring dance, theatre, live art, new writing, music, photography and installation.

This annual event is entirely produced and organised by students from Central's Performance Arts pathway, part of BA (Hons) Theatre Practice.

The Accidental Festival began, by accident, five years ago. Karl Rouse, pathway leader for Performance Arts, said, "Through the great efforts of the student teams, the spirit of effective collaboration, and the generosity of our artists and audiences, it has become a community, part of the cultural calendar of London, and it is now noticed internationally".

The festival opened on Thursday 19 May with a lively panel discussion focusing on the future of arts education funding. An invited audience of nearly 100 alumni, students, staff and independent arts professionals gathered to hear the panel (Tim Melville Ross, Chair of Higher Education Funding Council for England, Marcus Davey, Artistic Director of the Roundhouse, Moira Sinclair, Executive Director of Arts Council England and chair Professor Gavin Henderson, Principal of Central), discuss the recent changes to arts funding and training.



Accidental Festival (by Emily Morgan)

CALLING ALL SPEECH THERAPY '91!

Dust off your twin-sets and pearls and cast your memories back to 1991!

Stella Letanka-Jeffs, Juanita Hurley and Heather Allen are organising a class reunion on Saturday 8 October 2011 and would love to see you there. They are planning a lunchtime get-together (exact time and location to be confirmed soon, though they hope it to take place in the Swiss Cottage area). If you can (or can't) make it, please contact Stella on sletankajeffs@btinternet.com or telephone +44 (0)7968 818885.

EVENT NEWS

RESEARCH EVENT NEWS

The following Research events and seminars took place at Central during the spring term:

Symposium - Exchange: Enhancing Collaborative Models of Learning and Teaching in the Performing Arts with HEIs and their Professional Partners

Symposium exploring some of the pressing questions that have emerged from research into the way that learning and teaching collaborations negotiate different models of work-based learning.

Introduction to Commedia as a Performance Tool (in association with the London Mime Festival)

Workshop led by Barry Grantham followed by a discussion with Barry Grantham and Jon Davison.

Reality, Celebrity and the Art of Acting

Seminar event examining performances of 'real' and 'celebrity' personae, and the complex interplay between the two with Mary Luckhurst (University of York) and Susan Smith (University of Sunderland).

Research Centres launch event

Inauguration of the work of Central's three new research centres; Applied Theatre, Centre for Performance and Social Practice, Centre for Research into Objects and Puppets in Performance and the Research Centre for Intermediality in Performance.

Theatres of Experience

A roundtable exploring the work of contemporary theatre performance in the UK, US and Europe that engages participation, immersion and the experiential encounter with Toni Sant (University of Hull), Liesbeth Groot Nibbelink (University of Utrecht) and Kate Adams (University of Salford). Chaired by David Annen.

The Edward Gordon Craig Lecture: Giving Shape to the Darkness

By Paule Constable, lighting designer, with respondent Christopher Baugh.

Symposium/Seminar on Telematic Theatre: How Might the Whole World Become a Stage?

Exploration of the potential for theatre to be produced, performed and experienced in

real-time across the globe. With Dr Maria Chatzichristodoulou (University of Hull), Alex Haw (Architect, Artist, and Director of Atmos), Stephen Hodge (University of Exeter) and Julian Maynard Smith (Creative Fellow at Central).

Research Seminar: Dance on Film: William Forsythe

Emma Gladstone (Artistic Programmer and Producer at Sadlers Wells Theatre) in conversation with Sinéad Rushe (Central) and Helen Heaslip (Central) to discuss the film *One Flat Thing, Reproduced*, directed by Thierry de Mey, and her experience working with Forsythe.

Authoring Theatre Conference: New Performance, Text and the Return of the Auteur

Debates about authorship have been ongoing in all areas of theatrical production. In recent years, we have seen a 'return to writing', but what of the sceno-graphic inscription of the stage as a form of authorship? What of choreo-graphy? Not to mention the rise in autobio-graphical performance?

Keynote Speakers included: Helgard Haug (Rimini Protokoll) and Christopher Balme (Professor of Theatre Studies, University of Munich). Other speakers included: playwrights Alecky Blythe, Dennis Kelly, Neil Grutchfield and Colin Teevan, performance artist Adrian Howells, and Dan Rebellato (Royal Holloway University). The conference also included round tables with Tony Fisher (Central) and Amanda Stuart Fisher (Central), paper panels, performances and workshops, as well as a social space for networking.



Authoring Theatre Conference (by Jemima Yong)



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Royal Albert Hall Annual Reunion and Vera Sargent Remembrance

Wednesday 26 October, 3 – 6pm

Following on from 2009's spectacular Albert Hall reunion day, our annual RAH reunion will be held this year on 26 October. As you will have read on page 19, as a mark of respect to Vera Sargent, this year we would like to open this gathering up to other graduates who many have known Vera during her 40 years of service. More information will be available in due course but in the meantime, please save the date and spread the word with your alumni friends who may not be registered on our contact database.

Suspense – London Festival of Adult Puppetry

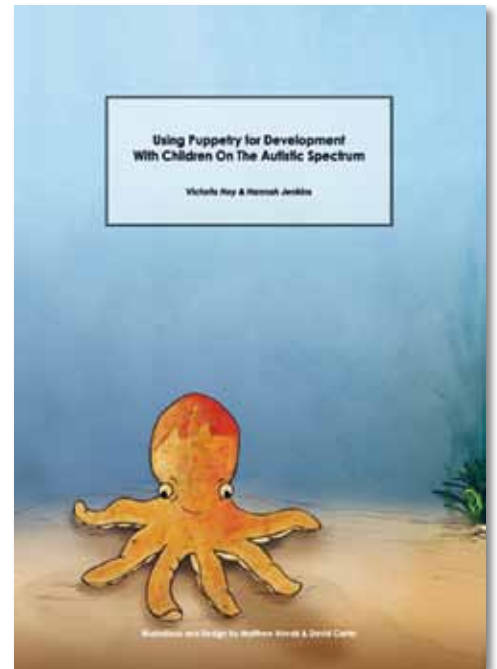
Monday 31 October – Friday 4 November

Central is collaborating with the organisers of the festival to host an international master class with Dr John Bell of Great Small Works during the week and a symposium on political puppetry on Friday 4 November. For more information contact cariad.astles@cssd.ac.uk

ALUMNI PUBLICATIONS



Black Snow, student public production (by Patrick Baldwin)



KEITH ORTON (PGC TL 01)

Creating Pantomime

Keith Orton's book, *Creating Pantomime*, explores how a writer, director and designer can together conceive original work using the established traditions of pantomime. The book was co-written with Joyce Branagh and is due out at the end of June.

HARRY BURTON (S 85)

Selected Letters of Harold Pinter

Harry Burton is editing a volume of selected letters of Harold Pinter for publication by Faber and Faber. Harry would be very grateful to hear from anyone who has correspondence that they would be willing to share and be contacted on harryburton@me.com

DAVID JACKSON (MA ATC 09)

21st Century Russian Actor Training

David Jackson will have his first article published this September in the journal *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training*. The article started life at Central when David set up experimental workshops with fellow MA ATC students to experiment with the Stanislavskian rehearsal method of "active analysis" and carried out further practical research with students on the MA Classical Acting course. Additional inspiration came from the Central visit to the Moscow Art Theatre in the summer of 2009. His MA dissertation documented this practice-based research and it was revised for the article, *21st. Century Russian Actor Training*.

HANNAH JENKINS, VICTORIA HOY, MATTHEW BAKER AND KATY MORRIS (BA DATE 10)

Using Puppets for Children on the Autistic Spectrum

Hannah, Victoria, Matthew and Katy were successfully awarded funding by the Higher Education Innovative Fund whilst at Central to write a 20-page booklet, *Using Puppets for Children on the Autistic Spectrum*. The book explores and outlines the uses of puppetry for children with autism. It is ideal for teachers and practitioners who want to find new ways of approaching subjects with their class, and parents who want fun activities to do at home with their children. The content informs the reader of practical exercises and techniques that will engage a group to make, manipulate and play with puppets. The booklet can be purchased via www.highvoltagetheatre.co.uk

Embodiment and Embodied Knowledge

Tuesday 8 November, 5.30 – 7pm

A research seminar with Professor Jonathan Rothwell (University College London), Dr Stefanie Sachsenmaier (Middlesex University), and Dick McCaw (Royal Holloway University).

Student Public Productions and Alumni Free Ticket Nights

The student public production schedule will commence in November and full show details will be published on our website. Each term 30 free tickets are made available to alumni for one of our student shows. For details of the autumn term's alumni night, please consult our website in September.

Intermediality Research Centre: Open Forum

Wednesday 19 October, time TBC

Open forum with Robin Nelson, Matt Adams and Julian Maynard Smith.

Event details were correct at the time of going to print. Please check our website www.cssd.ac.uk for full event listings, updated information and booking details.

IN MEMORIAM



LAURA POPKIN (PGCE D 02)

Written by Paul Glynn

Laura was young, too young, when she discovered she had skin cancer. She was only 32 when she died. I met Laura in 1998 on the Drama and Education BA at Central where we formed a lasting and close relationship. After graduating Laura went on to become a talented drama teacher, dedicated to her pupils and much-loved by them. Laura had applied to run the London Marathon last year but due to her health deteriorating quicker than anyone had imagined, she was unable to take part.

I recently ran the 2011 London Marathon in Laura's honour. I wanted to raise money for Saint Francis Hospice in Romford, where she received incredible care towards the end of her life. I was very touched by the response from Sally Mackey and the DE 01 year group to my request for sponsorship. In total I raised well over £3,000 for the hospice and the page is still open if you want to contribute (<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/laurapopkin>). Laura will never be forgotten. She was a kind, generous and humorous person and I miss her deeply.

PAULINE MEDDINGS (NÉE SMITH) (T 54)

Written by her daughter
Tamsin Meddings

Pauline joined Central in 1951, based at the Albert Hall with "Thurbie" as Principal. On graduating she was invited back to begin her career, teaching Voice, Phonetics and Speech Therapy as well as Verse Speaking. In 1964 she married Tom Meddings and settled in a quiet corner of Sussex, where she was blissfully

happy with two children, cats, dogs and ponies. She returned to Central, teaching at Swiss Cottage throughout the 1970s and, on leaving, transferred her skills to a challenging local secondary modern, going on to teach at primary and special schools as well as tutoring children at her home and working as an external examiner for Spoken English.

Pauline always spoke with great affection of her time as an undergraduate at Central and saw it as fundamental to her own development as a young adult. Later, she relished working in such a richly satisfying creative and collaborative environment. As a child in wartime London, Pauline was chosen to broadcast a BBC radio speech to the children of Canada. Throughout her life, she made the most of her gift for communicating with people of all ages – imbued with her joyful and positive energy, humour, wisdom and generosity.



PAUL VAUGHAN-TEAGUE (S 71)

Written by Rod Culbertson

Paul was an assistant stage manager before being accepted into Central in 1968. On leaving the school he appeared on film – *That'll Be The Day*, *A Bridge Too Far* – and TV – *Sam*, *Tales of The Unexpected* – but his greatest passion was always for the stage, so he was delighted to work with The Prospect Theatre Company and later with the Royal Shakespeare Company on Broadway.

Paul had been living with skin cancer for a number of years. Last summer he was rehearsing *Shades of Brown* by Michael Picardie at The Chapter Theatre, Cardiff. Sadly, Paul did not make the first night and passed away on Christmas Day 2010 aged 60.

CONTACT

CAN WE REACH YOU?

Our database contains over 1,900 alumni for whom we have no email address recorded. Help us improve our communication with you by registering your email today. Please either complete and return the feedback form enclosed with this newsletter, or register online in the alumni area of www.cssd.ac.uk

Email: alumni@cssd.ac.uk

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7449 1628

Post: Alumni Office, Central School of Speech & Drama, Eton Avenue, London NW3 3HY, UK

Website: www.cssd.ac.uk (click on the 'alumni' link at the top of the page).



You can also join our Alumni Facebook group:
CSSD Alumni News – Official Site

Thanks from the Alumni Relations Team.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW...?

Well... they are now on the Central website!

Over the last few years, the volume of news we receive from our alumni has grown significantly. In order to save space in the newsletter the "Where are they now?" section has been moved to the alumni section of the Central website. Please visit www.cssd.ac.uk and click on the 'Alumni' link to read all the latest details.