

See Me Now

THE LIPA ALUMNI E-NEWSLETTER



WINTER 2006

Welcome to the first edition of your e-newsletter. If you know any LIPA alumni who haven't received a copy please forward this on to them. If you have received this from a friend make sure that you are on our mailing list by e-mailing alumni@lipa.ac.uk or by registering on the web site at www.lipa.ac.uk/alumni/. One of the benefits that you wanted from the site was the facility to track down people to collaborate with on work projects, this is most successful when users fill in their profile details about their skills and work experience, so if you have registered please do complete your profile. Don't forget that you can also use the site notice board to advertise vacancies or find people with the skills you are looking for. If you have any other ideas about services and benefits that you would like us to offer, please let us know at alumni@lipa.ac.uk – we would love to hear from you. At the moment we are investing in new software which will allow you to network more effectively with each other and enable us to record how your careers progress. We will keep you posted about developments with this over the coming months.

Jan Buchanan
Alumni Relations Manager

Guys, Dolls and LIPA Grads...

When Lisa Stokke (Acting 1998) took on the starring role of Miss Sarah Brown in the UK tour of *Guys and Dolls* she discovered that she would be under the direction of fellow LIPA Acting graduate Jamie Lloyd (2002) and that another Acting graduate, Stuart Reid (2004) would be in the cast. Norwegian Lisa has been playing in Frank Loesser's classic musical alongside Claire Sweeney, Joe McGann and Ben Richards. As a Salvation Army style reformer Miss Sarah represents a romantic challenge to gambler Sky Masterson (played by Ben Richards). Stuart

plays a mobster. Jamie Lloyd joined the production straight from directing *The Caretaker* at the Crucible in Sheffield. Lisa describes Jamie as one of her favourite Directors – "I really trust him, he's pushed my work in a new direction – one that I like". The tour began in September in Glasgow and Lisa has just discovered that she will be staying with the show for its West End run next year, when Don Johnson joins the cast. Jamie had previously directed Patrick Swayze in the London cast.

Liam Strides Towards Destiny Alongside Jack Black

The multi-talented Liam Lynch notched up another first this autumn when he became the first LIPA graduate to direct a Hollywood blockbuster. The 1998 Performing Arts (Music) graduate co-wrote and directed *Tenacious D In The Pick Of Destiny* starring Jack Black and Kyle Gass. The comedy hit features the roly-poly rockers on a quest to hunt down the world's most powerful plectrum and change the course of rock history.

It's just the latest success for American Liam who reached number nine in the UK charts with *United States of Whatever* back in 2002. He was the first of our graduates to break into the top ten. Liam, 36, from Ohio, also directed the video for the Tenacious D track *Tribute* and *Times Like These* for the Foo Fighters as well as having his own puppet show, *The Sifl and Olly Show*, on MTV for two seasons.

Beyond The Fringe

When Jo Turbitt appeared in *A New Routine* at the Edinburgh Fringe this year she not only had to act, dance and sing, she also choreographed the production. Reviews of the show at the Bedlam Theatre, about three young women facing challenges in life, relationships and making their way

in the world, particularly picked out Jo's choreography for praise. Jo, who graduated in Dance in 2004, was in London prior to the Fringe performance training the boys for the role of Billy Elliot in the award winning West End musical. Jo says: "The Director/Choreographer Stephen Daldry commented that he

loves my style and choreography, so I was asked to teach tap on the summer intensive, total privilege, totally loved it!". Jo is appearing in *Robin Ince's Christmas Book Club* at the Bloomsbury Theatre in London on 17 December.

Stories by Jan Buchanan and Chris Smith. Thanks to those graduates and staff who contributed to this publication. Please send comments to alumni@lipa.ac.uk

Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year

Neil Bowls Them Over

Performing at the Hollywood Bowl was the highlight of a world tour taking in Japan, Europe and the USA for 2003 Performing Arts (Music) graduate Neil Thomas. Neil was appearing as lead vocalist with jazz/electonica leading light Matthew Herbert. The tour started in April at the Moers festival in Austria, and ended at Koko in Camden on 16th November. Neil described the gig at the Hollywood Bowl as “Insane, 17,800 people all stacked up in front of you...They run a tight ship over there and we had a giant LED at the front of the stage, counting down the minutes of our set, the whole thing was over before I knew it, but it was definitely a show to remember.” Neil is working on a number of other projects with Matthew including a French musical film

and he also plays guitar, beatbox and backing vocals on Dani Sicilano’s new album *Slappers*.



Neil on stage at the Hollywood Bowl

‘I Was Hoping To Burn Down The Grove’

Appearing in the final ever episode of *Byker Grove* would be a considerable achievement for any young actor, but for 2006 Acting graduate Scott Turnbull it wasn’t quite enough. “I was hoping I would get to burn down the Grove or something,” said the native North-Easterner, who played Jason Mason in the final series of long-running children’s BBC show. “Seriously though it was fun. A really enjoyable experience, even if the hours were really, really long, and of course it was nice to be in the last episode of the show”. Scott also made his professional theatre debut this autumn playing a soldier in the show *How Many Miles To Basra* at the West Yorkshire playhouse - a stage adaptation of a highly acclaimed BBC Radio play.

Alex In A Spin

From promoting a West End show, such as the recent production of *Cabaret* to PR for a documentary on Tourettes fronted by Keith Allen, it’s all in a day’s work for Alex Wilkinson (Arts Music & Entertainment Management, 2005). Alex works as a Junior Account Executive on the entertainment team for Borkowski

PR in London, so much of his work involves theatre and TV promotion. His first campaign was for the film *Thank you for Smoking* featuring Katie Holmes, Aaron Eckhart, William H Macy and Robert Duvall, which he describes as “An incredible introduction to the job”. Alex is used to mixing with famous people. He thinks the most bizarre situation he has found himself in was a launch

party for a musical with “John Major on one side and Michael Parkinson on the other, discussing circus midgets.” Alex recommends persistence and making the most of contacts made at LIPA, to anyone looking to break into the industry. He started at Borkowski on work experience, which led to him getting the full-time job.

Estelle Buckridge joined LIPA in October 2006 as the new Widening Participation Officer. Widening Participation is all about reaching out to under-represented groups and ensuring students from all backgrounds can apply to LIPA. Her first job has been to find out what outreach activities have been taking place across all programme areas and she will be getting staff, students and alumni involved in activities with schools, colleges and other target groups over the coming year. She is particularly interested in using past and present students as role models to speak to aspiring young students to encourage them to study Performing Arts or Performance-related courses. If this is something you would be interested in getting involved in please contact Estelle on e.buckridge@lipa.ac.uk or 0151 3303010 or watch out for future editions of *See Me Now* for updates on projects.

Shane Writes The Songs

2005 Music graduate Shane Beales wanted to find a way of reaching a wider audience with his music. Inspired by the feeling that “There is a place for songs to exist in a particular moment in time...and the idea that MP3s could be emailed to people...to arrive each week in your inbox – like a little present,” Shane came up with the idea for Project 52. Shane says: “In November 2005 I decided to go on a journey. I wanted to challenge myself as a songwriter and reach people in an unprecedented way. Every week in 2006 I have committed to write, record, and deliver a song to subscribers.” During his last year at LIPA Shane specialised in songwriting and says that he “Was really blessed having such interested tutors”, this gave him a good grounding for the project. The songs are delivered via the Internet with subscribers signing up after sampling some of Shane’s songs for free.

As the project nears its end Shane concedes that some weeks have been difficult, but he has used current affairs, his marriage in October and invented characters for inspiration. The song for week 26 was called *Half Way*. Another song entitled *Walnuts, Mothers and Tortoises (I’m Hungry for Connection)* used lyrics made up of contributions from subscribers.

Shane considers the project to have been very successful artistically. The discipline of composing a new song every week has certainly developed his songwriting skills. He is now considering a number of options for promoting the work: a tour, an installation, 52 track box set or an album of the 10 best tracks – something to capture people’s imagination and tell them the story... Visit the project at www.project52.com/

Ola Gets Her Teeth Into Polanski Role

When Aleksandra (stage name Ola) Bienkowska attended an open audition at Warsaw's Roma Theatre she thought that she would be lucky to get a part in the ensemble of *Dance of the Vampires*. But after a number of recalls she was down to the final three actresses who performed in front of iconic film director Roman Polanski and was chosen by him to share the lead role of Sarah. The production was a musical version of Polanski's film *The Vampire Killers* and he was the Artistic Director of the show, spending a week with the cast in rehearsals.

The show was gory, but fun, Aleksandra says: "As Sarah I had to bite my partner at the end of each show and I must admit I liked to make it gory – I didn't see the point of wearing an elaborate ball gown if I couldn't splash blood all over it! But the challenge was actually in wearing the false set of fangs. We literally had to re-learn how to speak and sing wearing them, which is quite difficult considering Polish pronunciation." Aleksandra, who graduated in Performing Arts (Music) in 2004, is currently producing, and will star in, the Polish production of *The Last Five Years*.

The Big Challenge Of Pinnochio's Nose

Bernhard Niechotz's work as a Designer for the Giessen Stadttheater in his native Germany present new challenges every day. Bernhard (Performance Design, 2002) designs sets and costumes for opera, musicals and plays. Recently he had to design a nose mask for the theatre's Christmas panto *Pinnochio*, Bernhard explained "I wanted it to grow from about four to twenty inches... it also had to be solid enough to sustain about 50 shows, lightweight and comfortable to wear, plus you cannot hide too much of the actor's face". After trying everything from light sabre toys to plastic plumbing he managed to get the effect he wanted with a paper roll pulled out of the mask using magnets. Another recent project was creating a dress to fit freaky balding zombie "Fruma Sarah" in *Fiddler on the Roof* (pictured right). The costume was 13 feet high and constructed around a moving platform with a fitted railing and



safety belts to secure the actress. Bernhard's next job will be designing the set for the operetta *Csardasfürstin* in Nordhausen.

Emma Tells All On Confidential Role

1998 Acting Graduate Emma Bispham is back up north and back on our TV screens in the new Kay Mellor drama *Strictly Confidential*. Emma, from Liverpool, spent eight years in London performing in West End musicals like *Blood Brothers* and *Spend, Spend, Spend* but has returned to the North West to pursue television work. The six-part ITV serial, starring Suranne Jones, aired in November and December 2006, with four shows featuring Emma as a marriage guidance counselor. She says: "It's a police drama/love story. I play a counselor who works alongside a sex therapist played by Suranne Jones. I only originally employed as a read-through actress, but Kay really liked me in the part, so here I am and hopefully it'll lead to more work in the future. I'm also going to be in *Emmerdale* as a midwife to Vic and Bob's baby!"

On Tour And In The Pink

A term spent on work experience at CMP Entertainment lead to a full-time job as Tour Manager for the Australian Pink Floyd Show for Sarah Moir (Management, 2006). Sarah is currently on tour with the show, visiting 25 states across the USA and Canada. The band have performed at Glastonbury and the Royal Albert Hall and even in front of members of the real Pink Floyd. Being the Tour Manager means that Sarah is responsible for everything from arranging rehearsals and transport to making sure that the band has guitar strings and the drummer has a bag of ice for his sore arms outside his dressing room after every gig. The tour is covering a lot of ground which means some long drives - 23 hours is the record. Sarah's working day starts at 8.30am and ends when the crew get back on the tour bus at 1.30am. Despite the hard work the tour has been a lot of fun, Sarah says: "I'm not only the youngest, but the only female crew member – so I get teased like a little sister would – lots of banter!". The show will be touring the UK in the Spring (www.aussiefloyd.com/).

Tine Gets Tango'd

Tine Lund has just finished touring with *Tanghost* – a theatrical production fusing Ibsen's *Ghosts* with Argentinean Tango. Tine was appointed Stage Manager of the production shortly after graduating in Theatre and Performance Technology this year. The tour started in August in Grimstad, Norway and ended in October in the National Theatre of Sofia in Bulgaria, taking in China along the way. The show played to full houses throughout the tour and Tine was thrilled to be working with some famous actors and actresses from the National Theatre in her native Norway. Tine was responsible for costumes and props and for liaising with theatre staff at the different venues – not an easy task in China and Bulgaria where no one spoke Tine's language and only one interpreter was on hand to help the crew.

James Mixes It With The Big Guns

Natalie Imbruglia and Sinéad O'Connor are the latest big names on record producer James Lewis' CV as he continues his ascension through the profession. James, who graduated from Sound Technology in 2005, has also developed a knack of helping bands make the breakthrough to national radio airplay. Another product of Andy McCluskey's Motor Museum studio, James worked with fellow graduate Mike Crossey on the first Arctic Monkeys EP and has produced acclaimed artists Dirty Little Faces, Roland Shanks, The Dead 60s and many others.

He says: "It's a really busy time. As well as producing tracks for a large range of indie/rock artists who're currently making waves, I've been keeping my hand in in the pop world too. I have continued working with songwriter Sacha Skarbek with artists like Natalie Imbruglia, Brian McFadden, Melanie Blatt, Nicola Bedingfield, Jamie Hartman and Sarah Whatmore and I also provided additional engineering for Sinéad O'Connor's new album. I'm currently in a lot of meetings to discuss new projects for 2007"

Anissa's Work In The Worldwide Community

Since graduating from LIPA two years ago Anissa Ladjemi's freelance community arts work has taken her from Eastern Europe to the USA. Anissa was inspired to volunteer overseas by a lecture at LIPA by Mary Turner, who worked with Musicka, running music workshops in Romanian hospitals. Anissa was initially based in an orphanage in the mountains in Romania which was home to six children with special needs. Her job was to help run a summer school in the nearby town of Sibiu offering activities including painting and music. She then moved on to work with young people in Norway and Slovakia with the European Voluntary

Services. In Slovakia she devised a play with local teenagers, which they performed in Poland. Next stop was New England, USA where Anissa worked for a charity training volunteers to prepare them for working in Africa and South America, through lectures and classes, using role play. Anissa is currently based in London and working with Half Moon Young People's Theatre. Next summer she will be working on a project in Brazil, teaching basic English and drama skills to street kids in the favelas (squatter settlements) of Rio. Anissa credits ex LIPA lecturer Roger Hill with helping her to become the artist she is today and encouraging her to work abroad.

On The Road Again

Since graduating in Music in 2005 Mike Smith has spent most of his time on the road. Mike played before a crowd of 25,000 with The Muffin Men at the the Cropredy Festival. He then spent three months playing sax with *The Official Tribute to the Blues Brothers*, at the beginning of this year, on a 90 gig tour covering Germany, Switzerland, Denmark and Italy. From July to November of this year he played double bass and sang lead vocals with The Buddy Holly Show. He also spent part of the summer arranging and

playing sax and flute on Sandi Thom's second album. One of Mike's proudest moments was playing flute sax and Hammond with platinum selling rock legend Steve Winwood, Mike said "I really learned a lot about Hammond playing just by watching him play. Hammond organ is a completely different animal!". Mike is heavily involved with the Liverpool 2008 music scene and, when he's not on tour, he can be seen playing in Liverpool most nights, see www.mikesax.co.uk and www.myspace.co.uk/mikesmithsaxophonist

LIPA News

LIPA will hold the third Arts, Music & Entertainment Management Graduate Conference on 15th March 2007, with selected AMEM graduates returning here to speak to students about their careers. For 2007, this event will be part of a Management Conference week, which will also include a short film of some of the graduates at work and extracts and insights into the industry.

Those of you living in Norway may soon see a TV campaign inviting music applicants to take part in a scholarship competition, with a place at LIPA as the prize. A Norway TV company is funding a bursary to pay the tuition fees of the winner, to celebrate Liverpool and Stavanger being the EU and non-EU Capitals of Culture in 2008.

Congratulations to 3rd year Music student Hannah Rockcliffe who won the MBF songwriting award in November. The Wombats won this award in 2005, making it two years on the run for LIPA students.

More congratulations to Louise Croft and Mark Rowland, both winners in the Dada Awards in November. Louise won the award for Emerging Visual Artist and Mark won the Music Award. Both studied at LIPA for the Certificate of Higher Education in Performing Arts for Disabled People in 2001.

In Memory of Chris Thompson

We learnt with deep regret that Chris Thompson (Community Arts 2000) died in September. Nick Owen, ex Head of Community Arts said "Watching Chris in rehearsal or on stage, you always had the sense that he was about to take you on a roller coaster of theatrical thrills and spills – he'd tear off your safety harness, lock you into the front seat – and then, like a figurehead at the bow of a ship, perform to blazes, completely fearless in his imagination and shameless in his performance." Roger Hill, former Community Arts Lecturer, described him as "A great student, companion, colleague and friend". Fellow Community Arts graduate Gail McLintock said: "Chris always made me feel at ease and helped me through some dark LIPA days! Chris I just remember you with JOY!" Our condolences go out to Chris's family, friends and loved ones.

On The Ladder To Success

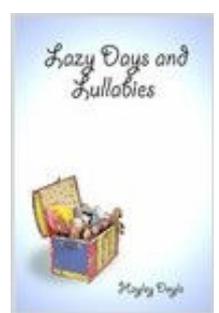
Genevieve Say choreographed a piece for *Stepping up the Ladder*, a dance production staged on 13th December at the Cornerstone Theatre in Liverpool Hope University. The performance was organised by Andrea Buckley, a leading light of the North West dance scene. Genevieve's piece, set at a Liverpool bus stop, looks at the way we behave in the company of strangers and how we interact with those around us and with the environment. The dance was performed by three of her fellow 2006 Dance graduates: Danielle Robinson, Rebecca Steel and Paul Win. Genevieve appeared recently in *Lyrics*, inspired by the lyrics of The Beatles, with Collision Dance Company. The show will be staged again at the Merseyside Leap Festival on the 10th March followed by a spring and autumn tour.

Hollyoaks Invasion

LIPA graduates invaded the set of Hollyoaks this summer, just weeks after completing the Acting degree. 2006 graduates Leah Hackett, and Kent Riley (returning for his second stint in the show) both landed roles in the popular Channel 4 soap. Leah, from Warrington, plays sweet and innocent Tina McQueen, while Kent has revived his role as scouser Zac Barnes. Both have played major roles in recently aired storylines. Leah says: "Tina is quite a shy, geeky girl really. Quite the opposite of the rest of her family. She's very much the rose between the thorns! "It's been loads of fun so far, the Hollyoaks people are a great bunch to work for. My contract is until the end of June and we'll see what happens then, but everything is going really well." Kent recently returned to LIPA for the day as an ambassador for Aimhigher, a campaign aimed at encouraging young people from families with little experience of higher education to consider the benefits of university.

Not So Lazy Days for Hayley

Hayley Doyle (Acting 2003) has just published her first book *Lazy Days and Lullabies*, but her days have been anything but lazy – she combined writing the book in the day with evening performances on stage as Ali in *Mama Mia* in the West End. Hayley describes the book as "A comedy, quite chick-lit, and with a romantic story about a girl, six boys and a little baby all crammed into one South London house trying to get somewhere with their lives." The inspiration for the book came when Hayley moved with friends to London after graduating from LIPA and "Started life trying to be actors in the big scary world! I was the only girl living with a bunch of lads, and we'd joke about what would happen if I had a baby!...So it was based on fact, but it is pure fiction". She decided to publish the book through lulu, an online self-publishing site, after seeking advice from well-known Liverpool writer, Maureen Lee. You can



Dawneey's bLatent Success

Dawneey Warren's film production company may be called Latent, but there's no hiding its success. The 1999 Community Arts graduate co-founded Latent Productions with Nick Owen; the former head of the programme at LIPA, which remains based in Liverpool. Dawneey said: "We received funding from the film council to make original film and, following a period of osmosis, the company is really going from strength to strength. We develop, write and produce varied film

projects for the commercial, public and private sectors. So far we have created comedies, documentaries, music and promotional videos. We are currently in negotiation with VH1 USA and in talks with Channel 4 commissioners for pilot backing. I'm also working on a project called Ministry of Misinformation, which is a parody on news coverage. It's all very exciting."

Keeping The Music Alive

Adam Brown's work as a Sound Engineer for FX Copyroom involves preserving music for future generations. Adam, who graduated in Sound Technology in 1999, works on digitising back catalogues of artists including Paul McCartney, U2 and Van Morrison. Most old analogue tapes start to decay after around 10 years, but Adam can be working with tapes dating from the 60s. These need to be restored to playable standards by methods such as incubation or even bathing them in distilled water. The tapes are then

transferred into a digital format such as Pro Tools. One of the current projects he is working on is the restoration and digitisation of 35 years worth of Ronnie Wood tapes. Adam has recorded artists including Ian Brown, Mystery Jets, The Arctic Monkeys and Craig David. When he's not behind a sound desk he can be seen gigging around London with his band John Lacey & The Times (<http://www.myspace.com/noizeboybrown>).

Jens Net-working To Feed Internet Frenzy

As the online craze continues to sweep through the music industry, Jens Van Slooten is ensuring that his bands are represented at the forefront of the revolution. Jens, 40, is a self-employed consultant for Online Marketing, in Germany, working for SonyBMG and Warner, promoting the likes of fast-rising Brit rockers Bullet For My

Valentine. The 2005 Management graduate, from Osnabrueck, Germany, said: "I try and place the singles of my clients on the front page of download stores like iTunes, AOL and Musicload. I also try to connect brands (such as Vodafone, Napster, Shockwaves) with artists for product placement opportunities or marketing co-

operations. A special and surprising moment for me so far was writing to the webmaster for German punk icon Nina Hagen (of whom I'm a big fan) in connection with a promotion. Nina replied herself, saying she was her own Webmaster and asked what she could do for me."

Apply Now For LIPA's Part-time Masters Programmes

LIPA is offering four part-time Masters qualifications, which may be of interest to a wide range of LIPA graduates. The courses are delivered part-time, over two years, starting in September each year. Teaching will be delivered over a number of weekends and during some school holidays. There are also opportunities to take modules at The University of The Arts in Philadelphia, United States.

The tuition fee for each MA is £4,250, payable in five instalments.

The MA in Dance Theatre Practice and the MA in Performing Arts: Education both started running this September and a number of LIPA graduates have already enrolled on these courses. All four courses should be on stream in September 2007 with applications being accepted now.

For more information please contact the admissions team at admissions@lipa.ac.uk, or check out the website at www.lipa.ac.uk

MA in Community Music

This is for musicians wishing to progress their careers as:

- Music leaders working in such settings as schools, youth and community sector, prison and probation services, health and local authority services, Further and Higher Education, orchestral and opera outreach.
- Pioneers in community cultural development, such as, arts strategy and policy making, recreation and leisure, arts project management

MA in Contemporary Theatre Practice

This is for performers, actors and directors wishing to develop and enhance their own creative practice. It encourages your growth as an individual theatre artist, able to confidently create work that pushes the boundaries of what we currently conceive of as theatre. We integrate practice with critical theories in the field. You examine the significant features of ground-breaking theatre practice and apply practice through research, developing practical skills and cognition in acting, directing, movement, voice and performance technology.

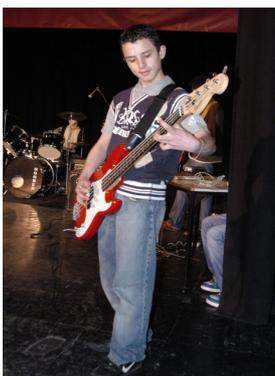
MA in Dance Theatre Practice

This offers dance artists the chance to discover new practice and challenge the perceptions of what, where and how dance can happen in the 21st century. The programme of study includes: devising principles and practice; choreographic and creative processes; dance function and purpose; the role of the dance artist; experimentation in site-specific or alternative spaces; new media; collaborative practices; creative and practical projects; critical and theoretical frameworks and research methods.

MA in Performing Arts Education

This is for teachers of performing arts, drama and dance in schools and colleges. It is run in conjunction with Liverpool Hope University. Through action research you have the opportunity to develop best practice in your department. The MA will assist you with:

- Threshold assessment
- UPS progression
- AST/Excellent Teacher applications
- Meeting Performance Management targets



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