

Live Art Archives come to Bristol



The Live Art Archives, which include the Live Art Archive, National Review of Live Art (NRLA) Archive and Digital Performance Archive, have recently transferred to the University's Theatre Collection from the University of Nottingham.

The Archives, which were established in 1994, provide a fascinating insight into the establishment and development of performance/live art in the late 20th and

early 21st century. Photos, videos, event programmes and A-Z listings of practitioners are just some of the resources held in the Archives.

They also include a unique collection featuring contemporary performance work from the NRLA. A three-year project run by Professor Barry Smith and his research team in the Drama Department, will digitally preserve the NRLA material for posterity and wider access.

The Archives will continue to document current events as they occur and Bristol will make the historical record as complete as possible through further acquisitions.

Further information on the Live Art Archives is available at www.bristol.ac.uk/theatreollection/live-art.html.

welcome

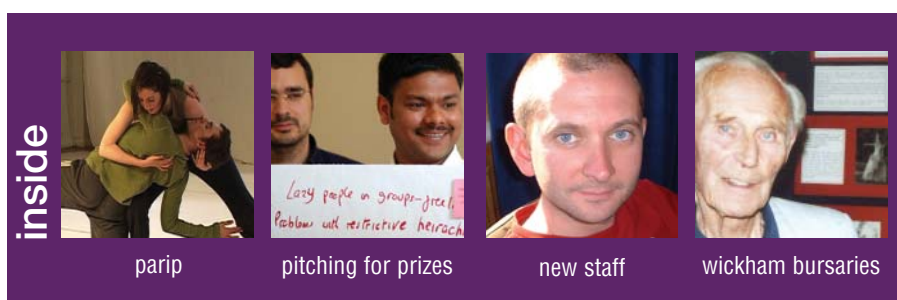
As the Department becomes part of the new School of Arts in the Faculty, along with Archaeology and Anthropology, History of Art, Music and Philosophy, we are entering an exciting phase of more interdisciplinary work.

In addition, a number of changes are taking place internally. The appointments of a performance-studies lecturer and theatre technician have been brought forward with help from the Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Fund and we are recruiting a new Chair in Drama following the departure of Professor Baz Kershaw.

I myself will be handing over to Jon Dovey as Head of Subject and to Jacqueline Maingard as Head of Education. I will be on a University Research Fellowship for the next year, developing a book project and working with my performance company.

It has been a challenging but rewarding time. We are now seeing greater investment in staff and facilities, which will enhance what we offer students as well as our contribution to performance and screen media.

Dr Simon Jones, Head of Drama



Mark Sinfield retires

Many of you will remember Mark Sinfield, the Department's Executive Assistant, a man to whom everyone turned when a procedure, date or anything else eluded them. Mark could always be relied on to have the answer. Mark retired in August after 16 years in the Department and will be very much missed.

PARIP report



PARIP (Practice as Research in Performance) ended in June, after five years of research that gathered together a variety of international practices across the performance and media arts.

The project was a huge success: three conferences were held, conference papers were delivered in over ten countries, journal articles were published, a collection of unique case studies of creative practitioners has been created and the advanced digital search engine PARIP explorer has been produced.

The project's culmination will be the publication of a celebratory combined book and DVD that will provide the first

major analysis and record of British and international practice as research pursued across a range of media.

As a result of PARIP, there is significantly more evidence of activity, energy, creative confidence, clarity of analysis and circulation of knowledge among the many hundreds of practice as researchers in the UK than there was five years ago.

The project has earned the team – Angela Piccini, Caroline Rye, Ludivine Allegue-Fuschini and Baz Kershaw – a world-class reputation for pioneering creative practice as research internationally.

Bristol film students were among those nominated for Best Non-Factual Film at the Royal Television Society Student Awards held on 5 May 2006. Staff and students from the MA in Film and TV Production attended the prestigious ceremony at the Magic Circle headquarters in Euston, to present their film *The Comeback Queen*, a comedy about Elvis impersonators in the Welsh valleys written by Simon Hicks (MA 2005) and directed by Rachel Stone (MA 2005).

New lecturer in Screen Studies

Glyn Davis joined the Department in September 2005 as Senior Lecturer in Screen Studies, replacing the recently retired Janet Thumim as the director of the MA programme in Television Studies. Glyn was previously the Head of the Centre for Visual and Cultural Studies at Edinburgh College of Art, where he worked for five years.

Glyn's first degree was in psychology at the University of Edinburgh. He worked in arts administration for the Tyneside Cinema in Newcastle for a couple of years, before undertaking an MA in Film Studies at the University of Newcastle.

Glyn's recent publications include an essay on Stephen Fry and the film *Wilde*, and a co-edited book on Teen TV. His research interests include youth culture, British and American television drama, independent and alternative film, and comic books. He is currently writing a monograph on *Queer as Folk* for the British Film Institute's *TV Classics* series, which will be published in 2007. Forthcoming projects include a book on Todd Haynes' film *Superstar: The Karen Carpenter Story*, and a co-edited collection of essays provisionally entitled *Queer TV*.





Pitching for prizes

As one of the finalists in the University's New Enterprise competition, Drama Department tutor Pete Bailie is up for a share in a £30,000 prize fund. Together with colleagues from personnel and careers, Pete has piloted a series of training courses for research staff and doctoral students.

Focusing on the areas of Pitching, Presentations and Personal Impact, the courses bring drama expertise to working environments. They use the structures of

Forum Theatre, and the understanding developed through years of training actors and directors for careers in the media. The courses have proved so popular at Bristol that they are now being offered to other universities.

The New Enterprise Competition aims to encourage the commercial application of research discoveries. Ideas from engineering, computing and sciences generally dominate the competition and it is rare for finalists to come from the arts.



Dynamic history

Prehistoric henges, Saxon ships, Victorian manors. Each succeeding era has made its mark on the landscape. Yet a visit to any heritage site today reveals that only one aspect is presented, packaged in a guide book. How can visitors access a more complete record of the past and explore the many facets of the dynamic historic environment? **Elaine Massung** (MA Archaeology for Screen Media 2006) tried to answer these questions in her dissertation.

‘ I sought to investigate the emerging field of location-based media and its enormous potential for the interpretation of heritage sites. Using a form of location-tracking technology, such as radio-frequency identification tags or the Global Positioning System, it is possible to use the visitor's exact location to play audio narration and display images on a handheld device such as a PDA or mobile phone.

Through my research and the creation of a working prototype, it was possible to explore the advantages this system offers.

First and foremost, visitors are no longer restricted to following a pre-planned trail: rather, they have the freedom to wander as they wish, developing their own narrative and creating a unique experience of a site.

Furthermore, as the information is kept in a virtual space, a practically unlimited amount of data can be stored. In turn, this allows for multiple interpretations of the same site to be easily presented, whether through different points of view or different periods of time. ’

inbrief

WE HAD VISITORS

The past year saw a number of high-profile alumni and friends returning to the University ...

STEPHANIE COLE

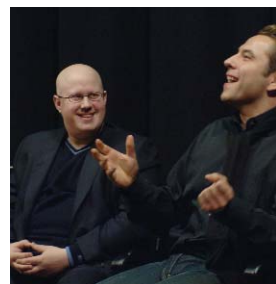
In April 2006, Stephanie Cole, one of Britain's best-loved actresses and President of the Friends of the University of Bristol Theatre Collection, visited the University to talk to Professor George Brandt about her fascinating career.

GREGORY DORAN

In October 2005, the Department welcomed back Gregory Doran (BA 1980), who is an Associate Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company and one of the country's finest directors of Shakespeare. Gregory was *In Conversation* with Martin White, Professor of Theatre. He entertained the packed house at the Wickham Theatre with tales from the rehearsal room and described the role of a director.

LITTLE BRITAIN

Award-winning comedy team Matt Lucas (Drama 1993-95) and David Walliams (BA 1992) made a



one-off appearance at the University to talk to students about their time at Bristol. Almost 150 members of the Department of Drama packed into the Wickham Theatre to hear how the pair started off.

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Wickham Bursaries

The Wickam Bursaries, part of the Wickham Fund which was set up in honour of Professor Glynne Wickham, enable undergraduates to attend performances and screenings. Last year's recipients report back.

I saw three shows in the Bristol Old Vic's Mayfest season. I also used the Bursary to fund a trip to London, which included a visit to the exciting new Siobhan Davies Dance Company venue. That evening I saw Cheek by Jowl's production of *The Changeling* in the reconstructed Barbican Theatre. This provided not only a thrilling evening of theatre, but a chance to hear director Declan Donnellan talk about his work, and an opportunity to watch many of the ideas that I had explored in my dissertation in action.

I have had a fantastic three years in the Department, and the Wickham Bursary has enabled me to finish my time here with a series of experiences of new, exciting work and theatre environments, as I set out into the world of professional theatre.

Ben Webb (BA 2006)

I attended performances at the Beckett Centenary Festival at the Barbican Theatre, organised to celebrate Samuel Beckett's birthday, including the film production of *Waiting For Godot* directed by Michael Lindsay-Hogg.

I also saw *Catastrophe* and *Rough for Theatre 2* in the Barbican Cinema, as well as the film version of Krapp's *Last Tape*, introduced by (and starring) John Hurt. In the Barbican Theatre I saw *Endgame*, directed by Charles Sturridge and in the Barbican Pit Theatre, Annie Ryan's production of *Come and Go* and Alan Gilson's production of *Footfalls*.

It was a fantastic chance to see so much of Beckett's work housed under one roof and I am so grateful to have had the opportunity.

Sophie Elliott (BA 2006)

New initiatives for Theatre Collection

The Department is undertaking a number of initiatives to strengthen the links between the Theatre Collection and current research and teaching: first, with the appointment of Dr Catherine Pedley-Hindson from Birmingham University, who specialises in late 19th-century popular theatre, a key area of holdings for the Collection; second, with the acquisition of the Live Art Archives; third, with a six-figure research grant for a cutting-edge archive-digitisation project.

Looking forward, the Department has proposed plans for a new Research Centre for Performance and Screen Media to provide state-of-the-art laboratory practice space, and to house the Collection. The Department is currently appointing architects to undertake a feasibility study. If the study's conclusions are positive, then building work could begin as early as spring 2008.

The proposed Centre would provide facilities for students and staff undertaking research through practice. It could also give the Collection purpose-built archives and provide a dedicated exhibition space.

Screen research training for postgrads

A series of events was organised by PhD student Steven Gregory to provide screen research training for postgraduate students working in Film Studies, TV Studies and New Media at the Universities of Bristol, Exeter and the West of England. Stephen organised a conference at Watershed Media Centre which entitled the 'Problems and Perspectives in Researching Cinema and Television in Britain and the US' as well as a training day, held at the Drama Department, to inform researchers and postgraduates about resources, archives and strategies for research projects. The events were funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

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