

Se-e Me Now

LIPA ALUMNI E-NEWSLETTER WINTER 2019/20

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Solid Foundations 2018

What next for our 2018 Foundation Certificate students?

Sweat Success



Frankie, left and Lynette, photo by Alex Brenner

Stepping up to accept *The Stage* Debut Award for Creative West End Debut, alongside director Lynette Linton, was a proud moment for Frankie Bradshaw. It was also an acknowledgement of the special role that designers play in realising a theatrical vision.

Frankie and Lynette won the award for *Sweat* at the Donmar Warehouse and Gielgud Theatre. Theirs was the only dual nomination for the new award, most of the other nominees were writers.

Sweat is about a group of factory workers in a small town in the American rustbelt. The play explores what it is to be a working class American against a background of industrial decline and racial tension. Acting graduate Leanne Best played Jessie in the show.

The Pulitzer prize-winning play, written by Lynn Nottage, is the third show that Frankie (TPD, 2014) has designed with Lynette. “It felt like such an important, timely project to be a part of, and one that everyone was ploughing their very best work into. We never envisaged it going as far as it did, and it was so rewarding to see our work reach such a wide audience.” Lynette and Frankie visited the town of Reading in Pennsylvania, where the play is based, when they started work on the production.

“We were very lucky that the Donmar was able to support this degree of preparatory research, and it’s a part of the process that I always push to make happen. I find first-hand experiential research to be some of the most valuable work you can do when preparing a design.”

The visit proved inspirational for Frankie’s stage set which featured a neon lit bar descending from the ceiling inside a framework of rusting girders. The 27-year-old has received a string of accolades. She won an Off-West End Award in 2017, has been nominated for several Broadway World/UK West End Awards and reached the finals of the Linbury Prize.

She shares her advice for successful design: “The most important thing is to make sure you are always doing what is right for the piece and that your design is in tune with the vision of the director. If those things are in line, then you’re on the right track.”

In complete contrast to the gritty realism of *Sweat*, Frankie most recently worked on *Cinderella* at the Lyric Hammersmith. “It’s the first time I’ve ever designed a pantomime, and it was great fun really unleashing the most over-the-top, silliest, glitziest side to my design work.”

www.frankiebradshawdesign.com/

Janco’s journey

Ian Janco’s* musical journey has taken him from the Idaho ranch of singer-songwriter icon Carole King to Liverpool via Santa Cruz, California. For now, though, he has decided that London is where he needs to be to develop as an artist. It’s proved to be a good decision – the 24-year-old’s career got a welcome boost when he supported GRAMMY winner Lauren Daigle in May at the O2 Academy.

“My manager had been in touch with a promoter from Live Nation, who sent my music to Lauren and her management. They loved it and invited me to be the support act which was an honour and an incredible experience. Her fans listened to every song and showed great respect for me and the band. Lauren is a powerhouse. Watching her perform from backstage was so inspiring. There were a few label A&Rs and promoters at the gig, and we’ve been in talks with them since, so we’ll see where it leads.”

Ian (Music, 2017) has released three singles this year and his debut EP will be out at the beginning of next year on Young Poet Records. His music has been played on Radio 2, ITV, MTV and international channels and had millions of streams on Spotify, Apple Music, and YouTube. He also produces and writes for dozens of up-and-coming artists.

His formative years in Idaho inspired his passion for music. He lived on Carole’s ranch, where his parents were caretakers, until he was 11 when the family moved to California.

“It was a unique place to grow up. I learned to play music and write songs in her bespoke recording studio, which seemed normal at the time... In hindsight, it was clearly an unreal blessing. I’m grateful to call Carole a friend and a mentor – she’s an incredible human.”

His Liverpool years also made a lasting impression: “The people I work most closely with now were in my year at LIPA, and many of my close friends and collaborators here in London went there. LIPA works!”

*Ian Gillberg at LIPA

www.ianjanco.com

Tom takes a hit with *Collide*

The release of Tom Speight's debut album has been a long time coming. It was worth the wait. *Collide* has earned the singer-songwriter a legion of new fans and been garlanded by critics.

"It's been so rewarding to finally have *Collide* out there for people to listen to. I loved making it and I'm super thankful I got the chance to release an album. I never imagined seeing the cover on giant billboards around London and for it to go to number one in the indie charts [the album topped the UK independent album breakers chart on its release in April]. Plus, the songs reached two million monthly listeners. I'm excited to finish touring the record and then hopefully start album two." Tom (Music, 2009) toured the UK, Europe and the USA promoting the album which he released on his own label.

June saw him make his Glastonbury debut in the acoustic tent before 5,000 people in glorious sunshine. In September, he opened for Emeli Sandé in his hometown of Kingston when she debuted her new album.

"I've been really lucky with people championing the songs. Banquet Records have been one of my biggest supporters, they hosted Emeli's album launch and put me forward. It's been great to support Emeli Sandé, Lewis Capaldi, The Kooks and Kaiser Chiefs via Banquet."

Success is all the sweeter for the 33-year-old whose promising career faltered when he developed Chron's disease. "You've got to stay strong and not let the illness beat you. I always put aside money in case I can't work because I can't get insurance for Crohn's. I also work quite ahead of schedule to avoid delays in releases. It's a tough disease but I'm not going to let it hold me back.



me back.

"It took me six years after leaving LIPA to make any money from music. I had a very strong belief in the songs and knew if I was proud of them everything else would find its way. It's not an overnight thing. You have to work hard and focus on making sure your output is the best it can be. Stay patient and remember you're doing something you love."

www.tomspeightmusic.com

Alien technology

If you're a fan of Jeff Wayne's musical *War of the Worlds*, now is your chance to live through the Martian invasion of Victorian London. The immersive experience in the heart of the city uses virtual reality, holograms and live performance to recreate the story, based on H. G. Wells' sci-fi classic. It's not an easy task bringing an alien invasion vividly to life. As technical production manager on the show from dotdotdot, Mike Williams is the man behind the installation. The technology in numbers includes around 500 independently controlled lighting fixtures; 192 channels of audio; multiple video and show control systems and a range of VR headsets, tracking systems and control servers. Throw in over 500 networked devices; 70 plus CCTV cameras; hazers and smoke machines and you have some inkling of the complexity of the

show's set-up.

Timing is crucial in enabling 200-300 people to go through the multi-sensory experience each night. Visitors embark on the journey in groups of twelve, spaced out at ten-minute intervals. During the eight-part show they encounter 15 performers (there are multiple casts) and take a break in the steampunk bar.

"We had a rolling upgrade plan as we opened, slowly integrating and testing the virtual reality systems. The show and the reliability of the VR and new systems is still improving. We have found that, although it's a very good medium for this kind of show it's incredibly hard to make reliable and stable. Also, the immersive aspect is difficult to rehearse fully, you just don't know how long it will take a real-life audience to do something until you put 100 people through the show."

Mike (TPT, 2007) is now working on another immersive experience scheduled to open next August near a famous historic site. The project is strictly under wraps for now.

He says that anyone interested in working in immersive entertainment requires a broad skill-set: "Although from an installation point of view we still have LX, SFX, video, sound, network and electrics departments, for us they are all contractors. All our permanent staff are multi-role techs who have to deal with all these areas, calling in the specialists when something truly big breaks. It's that appreciation of communication and interconnectivity between all elements that is the greatest skill to chase." The 33-year-old, from Woodford in London, still has a foot in the real world. He spends the summer working on the festival circuit and live gigs.

Jurell makes waves in TV soap

As **mysterious** newcomer Nate Robinson, Jurell Carter has brought havoc to *Emmerdale*. He's romanced several of the village women, including the wife of his estranged father, Cain Dingle, been in a bloody fight with Cain and almost died in an explosion on board a boat. The 2016 Acting graduate has also caused quite a stir offscreen. He's been nominated for Best Newcomer at both the Inside Soap Awards (won by Maureen Lipman) and the National Television Awards. Jurell, who is from Leicester, joined the ITV show in March. He is relishing getting his teeth into the high-profile role of Nate and enjoying life on the soap.

"I genuinely couldn't have had a better team. It feels like I'm among a big extended family rather than a big show. "Depending on your character storyline it can be very full-on, during a busy week you can be doing 12-hour days consistently. Because you work so intensely with the same people, you gain that rapport and trust with one another."



Jurell, left gets to grips with Cain (Jeff Hordley), photo courtesy of ITV

He's learning from the *Emmerdale* cast and crew as he goes along. One simple but effective mantra shared by his colleagues is take it scene by scene and don't worry about the dramatic storylines looming ahead.

Despite Jurell's demanding schedule he still has time for voiceover work: "It allows me to stretch a different type of muscle and have fun with it, just like I do with my TV work but in a different setting."

He's naturally looking forward to the NTA ceremony on 28th January and says that he feels blessed to have his work recognised with award nominations. However, his focus remains on doing his job to the best of his ability: "If you're doing your job well and you're being recognised with a nomination in the process, it's a bonus."

He also points out that it hasn't all been plain sailing. "It may seem like I've got my break really fast, but I'd had so many rejections before this, at times I've questioned whether I was in the right industry. It's important to remember we all have our own journeys and there's no deadline to it. So, don't compare yourself to anyone. You literally never know when you're about to get that role or job you've always wanted."

No place like home for placement

For his final year management placement Liam McMullan wanted to save money and get hands-on experience – no tea making for him. He decided to return home to Belfast, stepped into a position in GBL Productions and immediately started assistant producing. Three years down the line, he is a full-time producer with the company developing his own shows.

Liam (Management, 2017) has just had a hit with *The Miami Showband Story*. Dubbed the Irish Beatles, the Miami Showband packed out dance halls across Ireland in the 1960s. Tragically, three members of the band were murdered in 1975 by paramilitary gunmen who ambushed their bus. The idea for the show came from writer Martin Lynch, also an Executive Producer for GBL, after a meeting with a survivor of the massacre. Liam and Martin agreed that the show would not focus on the tragedy. Instead, it would be a celebration of the band's music and the joy they brought to young people across the divide of the troubles.

"We knew it would be a big undertaking to produce, as the only way this show would work was packing it with actor musicians to give it authenticity. So, after a year of development on the new script by



Martin and Marie Jones we set out to find a director, creative team and a standout cast. We were very happy with how it sold and more importantly how the audience loved every second. There were people dancing in the isles and throwing themselves at the actors – madness!" As part of his search for the band Liam found the ideal Dickie Rock (one of the lead singers) in Acting graduate Chris Mohan. Sound operator on the show was Dom Beale (TPT, 2017) who Liam says did an outstanding job of working with the actor musicians.

When we caught up with Liam, he was busy working on pantos and shows for the Christmas and New Year season.

His approach to his projects has been informed by a recent read he would recommend – *The Ride of a Lifetime* by Bob Iger, CEO of Disney. "The attitude of 'it's good enough' isn't going to cut it, we need to be great."

A big year for rebel dancer

It's been a landmark year for Kristine Berget. A video she appeared in clocked up a staggering 13 million views on YouTube and she performed at the Barbican in London. She also took part in Tilt Grow, a scheme in her native Norway to help young dancers develop as artists.

The performance that reached millions of viewers was the official video for Florence + the Machine's *Big God*. Kristine (Dance, 2015) was one of eight dancers chosen after six hours of auditioning for the routine, choreographed by the celebrated Akram Khan and Florence Welch. The dancers, dressed in diaphanous costumes, move with Florence on water, evoking witchcraft and old religions.

Kristine's appearance at the Barbican in February was with award-winning hip-hop company Boy Blue Entertainment. She joined the company in 2016, after attending their annual open audition. "Project R.E.B.E.L. was very challenging both physically and mentally, as it is a hard show to perform, but it was also incredibly rewarding. We performed it three times at the Barbican to standing ovations."

That same month, the 27-year-old auditioned for Tilt Grow and was one of ten successful dancers taken on to the project, run by Panta Rei Danse Teater.



Photo by Erik Berg-Johansen

with another Dance graduate, Eirik Dreyer Sellevoll. The directors of Panta Rei saw *I Wish I Was* online and invited her to audition. "It only goes to show that putting yourself and your work out there comes back around to reward you."

Both Kristine and Eirik are members of the Ashton Collective, a creative contemporary company working across disciplines, directed by fellow Dance graduate Thomas Ashton.* They are currently working on an idea for a new production and two concept videos.

*Thomas Wilkinson at LIPA

The dancers receive training to help them grow as dance artists, including leadership skills, with each participant assigned a mentor to support their journey. The project culminated in a tour of performances and community dance events. "I ran a dance activity with both a nursery school and a home for the elderly, where the students and the residents got to dance and spend time together. I've also worked with six local dance schools creating curtain-raisers for when the tour reaches my hometown of Ringebu."

Kristine's place with Tilt Grow came thanks to a video that she created

Arts across the ages

The arts can have a profound impact on the lives of people at both ends of the age spectrum. Shannon Wild works with both children and elderly people and finds that their needs are not as different as you might expect.

As activities co-ordinator for Marmaduke Street Care Home, the 2015 Community Drama graduate works with residents with dementia and learning difficulties. "They really enjoy singing and dancing especially the ones that have severe dementia. Music is important to them, as it brings back memories from their past. I also do a lot of arts and crafts."

Mid-afternoon Shannon dashes off from her role in the Liverpool care home to her second job as a director

with Manchester Musical Youth. She has just finished working on a musical with the apprentice group of 8-12-year-olds. The young people devised the show, *South Brook Hits the Road*, and Shannon wrote the script. They are hoping to adapt the show to take into schools. Combining her roles can make for long days – if she's rehearsing for a show with the young people it can be 11.00 p.m. before she gets home. But Shannon finds both aspects of her work rewarding: "I enjoy switching between the two, bringing joy to people is what I love doing. Surprisingly, there is a lot of common ground as both age groups enjoy getting involved and having fun."

The 25-year-old, from Rochdale, is currently busy with Christmas activities for the care home, including writing a panto for staff to perform. January will see her start work on the next musical for her apprentice group.

Shannon's advice to get started on a freelance career is to make the most of your connections: "Even just connecting with other people from LIPA, that's how you'll get some work. Be enthusiastic and say yes to whatever you can, just try to get as much experience as possible. Do what makes you happy and your career will find you."

Captain of the Kit Kat Club

“It all fits together like a jigsaw. The show is unusual in not having any off-stage swing. Every dancer is on stage for two performances a day and each has their own character and their own stage track, sometimes moving scenery as they go. Covering for any absent dancers means moving all the pieces around so that the show still works.”

The show is Bill Kenwright’s hit tour of *Cabaret*. The man keeping the dance pieces of the puzzle connected is dance captain, Oliver Roll.

Each week when the tour opens in a different venue Oliver leads a warm-up and navigates the stage to consider any changes needed in the routines. He also gives notes to the dancers on their performance. Aside from his own role in the show and his extra duties as dance captain, he understudies for the lead role of Emcee.

This is Oliver’s second *Cabaret* tour, he previously appeared in the UK tour of the production six years ago. It’s directed by Rufus Norris with choreography by Javier de Frutos, who won an Olivier Award in 2007 for his work on the show.

“The choreography is so clever and intricate. I’m still noticing things I’ve never seen before. It gives a subtle nod to the Fosse style that people associate with the film version but it’s much darker and contemporary in style with undertones of sexual debauchery.”

Aside from his two residencies of the Kit Kat Club, the 40-year-old has built up a solid body of musical theatre work. His credits range from traditional shows such as *Oliver!* via *Chicago* to rock musicals including *We Will Rock You*.

Oliver classes himself as an old-school triple threat performer. One of his most memorable moments was a featured role in *Hair* when he sang onstage next to two Broadway veterans. “It’s about storytelling through song, not about having the best voice.”

He graduated from the Dance program in 2001. “I’m very proud of my LIPA training, I felt it encouraged individuality and played to my strengths. When

I started, I had skills in acting and singing. I wanted to learn more about dance to improve my chance of working in musical theatre, which I’d always wanted to do. I soaked up everything I could like a sponge. I lived with actors and took an avid interest in their studies.”

He’s found a kindred spirit in the cast in fellow Dance graduate Mary Hodgkinson (2013). They will perform in Luxembourg over Christmas and New Year, then return to the UK for the second leg of the tour until May.



Stage doors open for Kate



“I’ve found myself controlling remote-control geese in a Christmas panto, buying military grade handcuffs at the Young Vic and even lending my voice at Park when we needed another Canadian accent. The ability to be flexible and respond to each new show is what keeps my job so interesting.”

Kate Condon says that doors started to open for her during her professional placement, prior to graduating from our TPT programme in 2018. They’ve never stopped. Since then she has worked on shows ranging from intimate fringe productions to large-scale opera. Credits include assistant stage manager on *Jesus Hopped the A Train* at The Young Vic and Grange Park Opera’s *Porgy and Bess*. On her most recent show, Park Theatre’s *Mother of Him*, she worked with TPD graduates, designer Lee Newby and Isobel Clayton in wardrobe.

Alongside this, she gives her creativity free range as a member of theatre company Despite the Monkey. Aside from the 22-year-old, the other LIPA members are 2017 graduates Dylan Howells (TPD), Harry Machray and Findlay Clayton (TPT) and Tammy Howarth (Music). The collective uses technology, cutting edge sound and interactive media combined with live performance to create new work. They have appeared for two years at Buxton Fringe with shows *Debris* (in connection with Young Everyman Playhouse) and *Dumat*. Their productions explore what it means to be a member of the audience today.

Kate, from Vancouver, is currently ASM on Orange Tree Theatre’s *Candida* and will spend Christmas and New Year with the show.



A note to our recent graduates

If you graduated in 2019 you will be contacted from September by the Higher Education Statistics Agency to take part in **Graduate Outcomes**. It’s the biggest UK annual social survey and captures the perspectives and current status of recent graduates.

We would really appreciate your support in taking part, please keep us informed of any changes in your contact details. You can find out more at:

www.graduateoutcomes.ac.uk

Increased sales are just the ticket

New Year's Day will see James Pyrah celebrate in style. The date will mark the final night of this year's Warehouse Project season, along with a whopping 120% increase in ticket sales since last year.

James (Management, 2015) is head of marketing & ticketing for The Warehouse Project and Parklife Festival. He leads a team of five to six people in the office (promoting and selling the events) along with over 400 who are part of the company's street team across the UK. "We've more than doubled ticket sales for the Warehouse Project from just over 100,000 to 220,000 in under a year for our new venue (Manchester's Mayfield Depot). Operationally it's a mammoth task to maintain as we have up to 10,000 people per night for the events. We're constantly working on ways to try to improve the experience for people coming in every week as no one likes a queue.

"Parklife is an even bigger operation to manage as we have up to 160,000 people attending across the two days. As it's a non-camping festival, it takes a huge team of volunteers to make sure the gates can deal with those numbers coming in

and out two days in a row. Some years we get it spot on, others it can be a test, especially in the glorious Manchester weather."

The series of club nights that make up Warehouse Project start in September and go through to the end of the year. Parklife takes place in the city's Heaton Park in June. Between the two, James and his team work full-on all year round.

"The team and I are all quite young, super keen and very much into the scenes we're promoting so we are constantly modernising the way we approach pushing the shows and trying to change up the plans for marketing them year on year."

The 25-year-old, from Biggleswade, has this advice for anyone aiming to break into the industry: "Try all avenues. I think I sent around 200 emails before getting my first internship role, whilst writing my dissertation at LIPA. It looked bleak, but after a while people started getting back and it resulted in a placement that I was able to learn a huge amount from and could start work on as soon as the final year finished."



Moonlight Mentor

Making her way in the acting world Sade Malone has a valuable asset – a Hollywood A-lister she can call on. Sade won a BAFTA scholarship in her final year on our Acting programme before graduating in 2018. Aside from financial help, her prize also included the support of a mentor, Academy Award nominee, Naomie Harris.

"Naomie has been very generous with her time, she's so approachable and is always



there when I need to ask even the smallest of things. I can still contact her if I need advice. It was great having a mentor who has had such a successful career and one that I admire."

Since graduating Sade's credits include TV movie *The Queen and I*, alongside David Walliams and Samantha Bond, and *Casualty*. She plays the regular role of Siobhan in upcoming BBC3 comedy drama *My Left Nut* alongside another Acting graduate, Jessica Reynolds (2019). She also appeared in short film *Underwater* which recently won a best global short award at the SCAD Film Festival.

Sade was already an acting veteran when she started her studies – she first appeared on TV aged 14 in CBBC's *4 O'clock Club* and spent four years with the show.

LIPA introduced her to theatre acting, and she got a taste for what goes on behind the camera, as well as in front of it, from lecturer Philip Wood, which informed her screen skills.

She made her stage debut in *POP*, written and directed by head of acting, Will Hammond, soon after graduating. The play also starred fellow Acting graduate Martha Godber and was designed by Kirsty Barlow (TPD) with sound by David Grimes (Sound Technology). It collected a Pick of the Fringe Award from the Manchester Fringe Festival. Sade went on to appear in *Cuckoo* at Soho Theatre.

Originally from Rochdale, the 22-year-old also spent seven years in Dublin and lived in Leeds. "I think that is why I have a good ear for accents. I've moved around a lot which is great for different roles. In *My Left Nut* I play a girl from Belfast, which is an accent I've fallen in love with."

Her vocal acting skills haven't gone unnoticed. She has just been nominated for Best Debut Performance in the 2020 BBC Audio Drama Awards for her performance as Nicole in *Torn*.

Sound equalizer

The gender imbalance in the sound industry is slowly improving but there is still a long way to go. As a sound engineer, producer, songwriter and governor of the LA chapter board of the Recording Academy, Lynne Earls is part of the movement for change.

“The numbers are still shocking, women make up two percent of producers, engineers, mixers, mastering engineers, and only 16 percent of songwriters. So not only is the sound, the process, and all that goes with record production widely unbalanced: the lyrics, messages and emotional content is also not representative of life around us.

“However, over the past year I have seen an avalanche of support, events, organisations, and people coming together, both women and male allies who feel it’s time for change.”

Lynne (Sound Technology, 2000) is in her second year on the board. Most people associate the Recording Academy with the GRAMMYS, but the



organisation also represents the voices of music-makers and the issues affecting them. A diversity task force looks at equal representation. The 41-year-old also co-chairs the P&E (producers and engineers) wing. Their work plays a vital role in standardising procedures and in education.

“They have created resources such as

Delivery Recommendations, which provides guidelines and suggested practices for engineers and producers on how to store, organize and deliver their projects. This is extremely helpful and something we would like to see as part of the educational curriculum for engineering and music

production and for assistants and runners training at studios.

“If you create these habits from day one, you are lining yourself up for success moving forward and not leaving yourself vulnerable to lost material and incorrect crediting. Proper archiving and backup means the material is future proof and always available.”

Lynne, from Wicklow Town in Ireland, has run her own studio in LA for the past twelve years. She has worked with artists including k.d. lang, Lemar and Melody Gardot. She describes herself as ‘A digital girl with an analog soul’ creating an organic sound that combines the best of modern and vintage. This year she has been engineer to Peter Asher producing a track for Steve Martin in his alternative career as a banjo player. As a member of the Academy she gets to cast her vote for the GRAMMY Awards. “My gauge is what makes me lean forward, or stand up, or want to turn it up and just think, wow how did they do that? If it lights me up, then I know it’s good.”

www.lynnearls.com

Clouds and ozone at ENO

“**We had** 40 cloud skirts made from crinolines and covered in balloons. These had to be stored in the flies and flown in for each performance. It was sometimes hard to do maintenance on them especially as we work in rep with four other productions and have set turn around, so there was always something happening on stage.”

Dealing with 40 airborne skirts was one of the daily challenges facing Fiona McIntosh on English National Opera’s recent production of *Orpheus in the Underworld*, directed by Emma Rice and with costumes by Lez Brotherston. Fiona (TPD, 2012) is one of three wardrobe mistresses with ENO, based at its home in the London Coliseum. She heads up a team of seven to fourteen dressers, depending on whether the show has a full chorus or any extra dancers and actors. For *Orpheus in the Underworld* with its large chorus there was a team of 12 dressers and over 100 costumes.

The start of any show at the ENO involves a lot of paperwork for Fiona as she prepares dressers packs for her team, comprising dressing plots, costume descriptions, entrance and exit plots and an overall running plot for the production. Once the show is live, she is responsible for the day-to-day running of the wardrobe department. She manages the dressers’ schedule and oversees performances, general costume maintenance and laundry, noting alterations and updating schedules. The opera’s off season is an opportunity to work in the costume store where the team check off the last seasons productions, pack them away and sort out the many rails of costume and shoes that have been returned during the season.

While most of the costumes can be hand or machine-washed, period and costume prop pieces often need specialist dry cleaning or ozone cleaning. Costumes that can’t be adapted from the company’s store are sourced online

or made either in the ENO workshop or externally. Fiona, from Bury, is excited about working on upcoming shows *Carmen* and *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Starting her job with ENO in January is one of the 29-year-old’s career high points. “Working in theatre is like a big game of snakes and ladders. I have worked in a variety of roles throughout the past seven years and they have all given me different skills and knowledge to get where I am now. It’s true what they tell you at LIPA, sometimes you might be working two jobs – I’ve been a supervisor’s assistant running up and down Oxford during the day, then dressing on a West End show at night. I love my job and I wouldn’t swap it for anything. You don’t regret all the hard work when you get where you want to be.”

Career launch from 20 Stories High

Shortly after she graduated in 2018, Stephanie Peet's career in community theatre took off – with a little help from two Liverpool theatre companies. Steph was one of 13 successful applicants to 'Launch', a professional development programme for emerging theatre makers on Merseyside. The scheme was run by 20 Stories High and Unity Theatre and funded by Arts Council England.

Participants attended Launch Academy, six months of weekly workshops covering everything from finance and marketing to design and producing your own work.

"Lots of professionals came in to share their experience of the industry. The sessions helped build our confidence. We explored how to carry ourselves as professionals and make people listen to what we have to say."

The scheme also offered those taking part the opportunity to apply either for an opening as a freelance facilitator or for project funding. Steph was thrilled to be offered the facilitator post with 20 Stories High. The Applied Theatre and Community Drama graduate worked with the company's youth theatre and young actors company. She also ran projects in schools including one about consent and a six-week beatboxing programme alongside a professional beatboxer.

This summer the theatre offered Steph a further contract, providing mental health support to a group of 12 young people travelling to Germany to take part in youth theatre festival, Europefiction. Steph, 25, from South Africa, is currently writing a play about the experience of refugees travelling to this country. Working alongside the refugee community, she is aiming to change the British public's perception of war and refugee status.

Saucerful takes flight

When it comes to psychedelic rock, there are few bands more influential than Pink Floyd. Now Nick Mason's Saucerful of Secrets has given the music of their early years a new lease of life. Nick, Pink Floyd's drummer and the only consistent member through the band's history is joined by Guy Pratt (former Floyd touring bassist), Gary Kemp (Spandau Ballet), Lee Harris (Blockheads) and Dom Beken.

Dom, who plays keys and sings backing vocals with Saucerful of Secrets was one of the first cohort of our Popular Music and Sound Technology programme in 1997.

The 45-year-old is a long-term friend and writing/producing partner of Guy's and he had also worked with Floyd's keyboardist, Rick Wright, on his solo work and later, after his death, on his archive.

"I think my close connection with Guy and Rick plus being able to produce the experimental sound design and synth work aspects of the Floyd sound put my name in the frame for the band. There were no auditions, we all fell into the project in a similar manner and knew each other one way or another - the first get together was simply fun and productive."

The band launched with a few dates in small London venues early in 2018. While they expected some interest from loyal fans keen to hear the tracks again, the response from both audiences and critics blew them away. A European tour followed, with a tour of North America and Canada this year. In September, Nick was crowned Prog God at the Progressive Music Awards. In 2020, the band will tour the UK and Ireland, including the Royal Albert Hall. As the reputation of the band grows, the gigs are attracting a generation of younger fans keen to hear a new take on the music that inspired so many artists.

Dom, from Great Missenden, has lots of other projects on the go, including writing and producing for artists such as Ian Astbury.

He shares his tips on how he has built a varied music career that spans two decades: "What's been most fun for me and made it possible to keep doing music full-time, is having a really diverse roster of work. I've had a go at everything from music for adverts (TV and radio) to video game score and sound design via remixes, co-writes and producing/engineering.

"A couple of years ago I became a founding partner in a gaming company called Snap Finger Click as head of audio which is producing some very interesting new work to be released soon. It really is possible to play to your strengths and work across lots of different areas."



Dom, right on keys, photo by Jill Furmanovsky

www.dombeken.com

First class post



How does the world sound to someone with dementia? Using audio to create an insight into the mind of someone affected by the condition was the challenge facing Harry Tulley when he worked on recent BBC One drama *Care*.

The TV movie, written by Jimmy McGovern, starred Sheridan Smith and Alison Steadman. “My role in this show was sound effects editor, which involved creating, recording and editing all the sound effects. One particularly interesting aspect was designing a soundscape that puts the viewer inside the head of someone who has dementia. Mary, played by Alison Steadman, is in a car accident and suffers a stroke resulting in long-term mental health problems. Working with the editorial department’s shot choices, we wanted to give the viewer a sense of what Mary is going through as she tries to understand the world around her.”

Harry, 25, is a dubbing mixer with Liverpool-based LA Post, working mainly on dramas produced by LA Productions, but also on shows for external clients. “I take several sound elements (dialogue, ADR, foley, sound effects, atmos, and music) and mix them to create the final soundtrack for the TV show. Throughout this process, I work closely with the editor, director and producers making sure that they are happy creatively. From a technical point of view, I ensure that the final sound delivery meets the broadcaster specifications. I also run any ADR/voiceover sessions.”

Other shows Harry has worked on include four series of *Moving On* and *Broken*, starring Sean Bean. He was assistant dubbing mixer on *Broken*, for which the sound team was nominated for a Royal Television Society (RTS) Craft Award. The company is up for six awards in this year’s RTS Northwest Awards.

Harry, originally from Stoke-on-Trent, got a foot in the door at LA Post by working for them on a voluntary basis one day a week during his third year here. He was then offered a trainee position when he graduated from the Sound Technology programme in 2016.

“Completing the placement during my final year meant that I was putting into practice the things I was learning while studying. It was also a good way to improve my time and workload management. Working to strict deadlines and short timeframes is a regular challenge in post and having that experience of meeting assignment and portfolio deadlines at LIPA made the transition much easier.”

Contact us

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Stories by Jan Buchanan, with thanks to Corinne Lewis and a special thank you to all the alumni featured in this issue.

Solid Foundations 2018

We recently surveyed students who completed our Foundation Certificates in **Commercial Dance** and **Popular Music & Music Technology** in 2018, to find out their career and training outcomes after they left us. The programmes aim to help students to either make the next step into degree-level study within higher education or to move directly into employment.

• **Emily Bainbridge**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Dance programme • **Lea Birkhoff**, On the second year of the three-year education programme in stage dance and dance pedagogy at Dance Emotion in Freiburg in her home country of Germany • **Olivia Bryan**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Dance programme • **Anna Fauske**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music programme • **Yegor Goldobin**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music programme • **Garam Hong**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music programme • **Carly Hopkins**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Dance programme • **Antonio Knoblauch**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music (Songwriting and Performance) programme • **Georgia Lainton**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Dance programme • **Emma Love**, Went on to work abroad as a show entertainer with Thomas Cook, she started her first season in Portugal soon after graduation. Her second season in Cyprus was unfortunately cut short by the demise of the company in October. This Christmas she will be working as an elf in Lapland. She had a team leader role set up for next season with Thomas Cook, but will now be seeking alternative work performing abroad or on cruise ships • **Luke Lowen**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music (Songwriting and Performance) programme • **Melissa Middleton**, Took a year out while continuing her training and has recently started a three-year degree course in professional and commercial dance at Shockout Arts in Manchester • **Marie Nenseth**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music programme • **Natalie Papa**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music (Songwriting and Performance) programme • **Kerem Peniç**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music programme • **Charlie Roberts**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Dance programme • **Sam Ryu**, Studying for a Masters in Media Art and Design at Bauhaus University in Germany. Her studies focus on electro acoustic composition and she has started researching soundscapes and psychoacoustics for her thesis, with the goal of becoming a sound designer or editor for documentary film • **Milica Serbedzija**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music (Songwriting and Performance) programme • **Eleanor Sheerin**, Working for leading event management company, Pastiche, as a dancer, fire breather and stilt-walker performing at events • **Saebyeol Shin**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music (Songwriting and Performance) programme • **Hege Sky Mokkelbost**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music (Songwriting and Performance) programme • **Megan Smith**, Studying for a degree in musical theatre at Stella Mann in Bedford • **Emily Watton**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Dance programme • **Georgina Wood**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Dance programme • **Holly Wright**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Music (Songwriting and Performance) programme • **Olivia Wright**, On to the LIPA BA (Hons) Management of Music, Entertainment, Theatre and Events programme.

Wishing all our readers a Merry Christmas and a happy and successful 2020