PERFORMANCES, EVENTS, SHOWCASES...

EVENTS

For information regarding all Bath Spa Live Events in Music & Performing Arts, please click on the link below:

**Bath Spa Live**

Now that the Summer term is drawing to a close, and Graduation is the next event in the calendar, we would like to wish all our students best wishes for the coming year. To all our graduates, well done and good luck for the future!

Events over the Summer include:

**(re)Storing Performance – The Feldenkrais Method & Creative Practice Symposium**
Commons, Saturday 27th June

**Stage Combat Summer School**
University Theatre, 20th – 31st July

Plus the welcome return of the popular **UK Songwriting Festival**
Commons, 15th – 20th August

For more info about the festival, including the full programme of events, click on the link below

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Photo by Nick Spratling
Newton Park campus was transformed in May for an afternoon of Georgian Pleasures as part of the Bath International Music Festival. Devised by Dr Matthew Spring (Reader in Music), the afternoon’s entertainments were divided into three acts - just as they would have been in the garden concerts of the late 18th century in Bath. The programme featured songs written by the great Roman castrato Rauzzini for his Bath concerts, plus pieces by James Brooks, which were written for use in Bath’s pleasure gardens. The event also included a rare staging of Thomas Lampe’s opera The Dragon of Wantley, performed by students on the MMus Performance course. With picnics in the sunshine, walks around the lake and interactive entertainment provided by BA (Hons) Acting students, the event was a huge success and received some great audience feedback.
Films & Fringe Shows Create a Buzz

Three films written, directed, performed, produced and edited by 3rd year BA (Hons) Acting students undertaking recorded media projects, were recently screened at Komedia in Bath with great success. For a look at the films please click below:

- Forget Me Not
- Love Factually
- The Fish Eagle Has Landed

Meanwhile, five student-led productions were presented as part of the Bath Fringe Festival in Burdall’s Yard. Here is just a taste of a four star review for The Nightflyer, in Theatre Bath:

“The playing of the flawed and damaged characters is vivid and utterly convincing throughout. Altogether a hugely impressive example of the standard of professionalism and passion that comes out of Bath Spa University these days.”

John Christopher Wood

Written by Bristol writer Martin Malcolm, the play is now due to be performed at the Tristan Bates Theatre, in London, in July, so the Fringe has produced a winner. Acting Subject Leader Ellie Nixon said: “Reviews were very positive as the quote above exemplifies, and overall, the quality of the work has been exceptional and showcases the multifarious and diverse talents of our graduating students.”

Head of Department of Performing Arts Mark Langley said: “Along with Bath Spa Live and The Cracked Festival at the egg - through the university partnership with the Theatre Royal Bath - students have helped to programme and stage a whole programme of events spanning three weeks. Staff and students have all been excited by the buzz and atmosphere created over the festival and delighted to have been involved in a great project with the wider city.”

CM Alumni Has Over a Million Hits

BA (Hons) Commercial Music alumni Alex Kotz, aka Elderbrook, currently has 1.2 million YouTube hits for the title track of his new album ‘Could’ which he wrote at the start of his second year here at Bath Spa. Alex is signed to Black Butter Records, home of Clean Bandit and Gorgon City, and as a London-based artist has made his mark on the music scene with his down-tempo hip-hop inspired tracks.
Science & Composition Collaboration

May heralded the premiere of a new piece from Head of Centre for Musical Research, Professor James Saunders, which was created through collaboration between scientists at the Universities of Bath and Bristol, as well as composers from the South West. These compositions were brought about by a new project, lab notes, which convenes science and music collaborative partnerships, bringing together research scientists and composers to develop new creative work. James has been working with chemical engineers Mirella Di Lorenzo and Jon Chouler from University of Bath to explore the processes found in microbial fuel cells - devices that generate electricity from any sort of domestic, industrial or agricultural wastewater through the action of 'electrical' bacteria.

James’s piece, titled different water environments, models this process of electricity generation through the players’ response to the sonic characteristics of waste audio, balancing their sound production against changes in quality of a shortwave radio signal. Experimental group Set Ensemble performed the new composition in the atmospheric surroundings of the old crypt at St George’s in Bristol.

Students’ Cry for Liberty

Third year BA (Hons) Acting students played to appreciative audiences in May as part of a successful collaboration between BA (Hons) Music and BA (Hons) Theatre Production that resulted in a production of new jukebox musical The Liberty Tree. Filled with ‘agitprop’ songs and an array of projections, the experience was visually and sensorially intense, reflecting a powerful narrative. The show now heads to the Cockpit Theatre, in Marylebone, London, for a run of performances 24th – 27th June.
Behaviour in the Atrium

For several hours on May 13th the Commons Atrium was subtly changed by the slowly shifting ambient sound and responsive visuals on the Media Wall of Creative Music Technology's experimental sonic ensemble Behaviour in collaboration with MPA's Tech Team wizards Jon Savage and Kyle Roberts. The electronic and digital ensemble is an annual project led by CMT Subject Leader Dr Andy Keep, enabling students that select to do the optional module the chance to develop bespoke sonic instruments and perform on them in public concerts. This year, they collaborated with Jon and Kyle, who have been researching interactive possibilities of the visual software Resolume. The resulting site-specific performance was supported by Media Wall Coordinator Neil Glen, and beautifully documented on his twitter feed.

Moving Somatic Perspectives


Thomas also presented a paper at the Symposium on Acting and Embodied Cognition at the University of Kent in April. As an invited speaker he was also part of a round table presentation of the International Body Mind Centering Conference in Ghent, Belgium, as part of ISMETA (International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association) at the end of May. He also presented his paper 'Dancing with Castoriadis: Disrupting the Corporeal Imaginary' at the Congress of Dance Research (CORD) Conference 'Cut and Paste: Dance in the Age of Austerity' in Athens, early in June.

In July, his article 'Eros and Inquiry: the Feldenkrais Method as a Complex Resource' will be published by the journal Theatre, Dance and Performer Training (TDPT, Taylor & Francis). The article reflects on innovative perspectives on actor training, and draws upon the student experience and feedback from BA Acting students at BSU.
Special Shanghai Visit

Shanghai University String Orchestra visited Bath Spa University in May and performed a successful joint concert with students from the Department of Music in the Michael Tippett Centre. The 33 students and six staff from Shanghai attended rehearsals, lectures and workshops, and visited Corsham Court during their stay. Staff from both institutions met to plan a joint ‘2+2’ programme, where students will be able to spend two years in Shanghai followed by two years at Bath Spa where they will graduate with a BA (Hons) in Music. Renowned Chinese violinist Professor Xiao Xiao Cao (Sha) was awarded an honorary doctorate at a ceremony after she performed at the special concert. Sha made her Carnegie Hall debut in 2003 and has performed extensively in the USA, Asia and Europe. Upon receiving her degree, Sha said: “I am delighted to accept Bath Spa’s invitation to join their list of Honorary Doctors. The University has many years of teaching in a wide range of arts and its music courses are highly regarded in the industry. I am honoured to become part of such a long and distinguished tradition.”

MPA Teaching Stars

University Teaching Fellowships for MPA staff were awarded in May to Chris Lewis-Smith, Course Director of MA Dance (Established Staff category), and Senior Lecturer in Scenography Chris Britton of BA (Hons) Theatre Production (Rising Star category).

The annual celebration of fantastic teaching also took place in May with a great response of over 400 nominations. The judging panel comprised School and Department representatives, as well as SU President Bruce Galliver, and MPA’s Andrew Cowie was awarded the title of Teacher of the Year (BA Acting) while Dr Thomas Kampe (BA Acting) was awarded for Best Innovative Teaching.

Monsterfest - 23 Productions In 4 Weeks!

Third year BA (Hons) Drama Studies Performance Project students, in collaboration with Bath Spa Live and second year Introduction to Production students, presented their annual theatre festival Monsterfest in April and May. As usual, the festival comprised diverse theatre and performance events on campus and in Bath - theatre venues, caravans, nightclubs and the Georgian streets of the city. Monsterfest productions generate extra-curricular performance opportunities for many Bath Spa students, inside the drama programme and out. On offer was feminist theatre, retellings of fairy tales and Aesop’s fables; stand-up comedy, film comedy, street performance, heritage theatre, theatre about the WW1 homefront; theatre about mental health, paedophilia, human and sex trafficking and the death penalty; a gender swap reinvention of Macbeth, a play by Dickens, a version of Dante’s Inferno, a new take on the butterfly effect and more! Second year students are already planning their entries for next year’s festival.
Meta-mbira - A Cross-Cultural Project

A unique cross-cultural music and dance project funded by Arts Council England resulted in a performance in the Commons atrium in April, given by the Marenje Ensemble, comprising world-renowned Zimbabwean mbira player Chartwell Dutiro, Denise Rowe (dance/mbira) and the string quartet from Exeter Contemporary Sounds. As part of their coursework, BSU’s ArtsWork Media students produced documentary and promo films from the project, incorporating interviews with the musicians and dancer. Cross-cultural exchanges were explored in workshops with BSU’s PGCE music students, children at St. Mark’s School, Bath, City of Bath College, and primary and secondary schools in Devon. Professor of Music Amanda Bayley and Chartwell (now Visiting Research Fellow at BSU) have given two conference presentations on their research relating to this project, and have co-authored a book chapter on ‘Developing Dialogues in Inter-Cultural Music-Making’ for the International Handbook for Interdisciplinary Arts Research to be published by Routledge.

Shakespeare in the Sunshine

BA (Hons) Acting second years finished their academic year with an outdoor performance of A Midsummer Night’s Dream in the University’s Amphitheatre earlier this month. Performing in four separate companies with varied interpretations, the students took the audience on a journey through the fantasy worlds of nature, festival and circus, exploring the chaos, magic, and mischief of Shakespeare’s imagination. Here is just a taste of the Bath Chronicle Review by Petra Schofield:

“This was an enjoyable production with some clearly well constructed performances and ideas. The setting was idyllic - a fine amphitheatre on the campus provided a glorious back drop and enabled the young actors to make full use of the natural landscape with minimal input of scenery or props.”

Music Across the City

Students from BA Music and MMus Performance performed in a number of events as part of the Bath International Music Festival in May, including an opera gala at the Guildhall in collaboration with Iford Opera and a performance with Red Note at Cleveland Pools, the only remaining Georgian Lido in the UK at Bathwick. Burdall’s Yard also threw open its doors for the annual Party in the City celebration which kick starts the festival. This year, easy listening and contemporary choral music was provided by The Accidentals; traditional jazz and grooving funk came from dancefloor fillers George & the Dragons, jazz and big band classics featured from Bath Spa Big Band and chamber music was provided by the BSU Chamber Winds.
Dance News

Dance student Jake Harrison joined us at BSU in January from the Dance department at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane, a conservatory oriented dance-training programme, which is part of our Australian partnering scheme through GALA. MPA established a connection with the QUT Dance department through a research and pedagogical exchange between Dr Jennifer Roche (QUT) and Dr Thomas Kampe (BA Acting) in 2014, both here and in Brisbane.

Dance first years have enjoyed week-long intensives with guest professional artists Jean Abreu and Laila Diallo in which they created two original works that were performed at the Open Space dance platform in the University Theatre in May. Meanwhile, students across all years of the BA (Hons) Dance and MA Dance took part in a week-long Easter intensive with Stuart Waters, another guest professional artist whose work was also showcased in Open Space.

Senior Lecturer Paul Clayden has been working with Arcadia on a spectacular new choreography for the Lords of Lightning. The first leg of the tour took them to Macau and they are now busy rehearsing for Glastonbury festival. The show features BSU dance graduates Amy Osbourne, Fleur Hoefkens & Nome Hunter. Paul's company The Bureau of Random Acts will also be returning to Glastonbury with their street show Granthology, which can be found in the Circus & Theatre fields over the festival weekend.

CMT End of Year Show

Creative Music Technology's annual End of Year Show at Burdall's Yard celebrated another diverse range of final year projects. Subject Leader Dr Andy Keep said: “Most of the programme’s third year focuses on outward-facing creative projects that will act as a professional portfolio for graduates, some of which will have already secured further public presentations or record releases. The teaching team are always excited about the strength of the work, which also seems to have a distinct character and aesthetic which we are aware has been discussed in many reviews and interviews with successful alumni. We also experience many applicants applying to the course based on this reputation.”

This year's event included audio tracks, movies, multimedia work, audio post for film, composition portfolios for broadcast media and sonic art installations.
The Space Play

When planet earth belongs to women, who will fight for the rights of men? BSU Associate Drama Lecturer Rebecca Pollock and her collaborators presented their work in progress The Space Play, at Rose Bruford College in April. Cast adrift in the darkest reaches of outer space, two women awake to discover Earth is no longer the home they knew and their mission - to save mankind from extinction - is soon going to become a bigger battle than they ever could have imagined. In the breaking dawn of ‘Fourth Wave Feminism,’ Shady Dolls Theatre Company present a provocative new play exploring exactly what it could mean to finally achieve ‘equality.’

Development Award Success

MMus Songwriting student Stuart Vallans has been successful with his application for a Francis Chagrin Award, which is a development grant administered by Sound and Music. Stuart is a quartet-based composer and also an associate lecturer at the University of Derby, focusing his teaching on DIY (decide it yourself) ethics in music, and the idea that professional sounding recordings can be made with any gear, regardless of perceived monetary value. The support from the award will allow Stuart to invest in out of favour, often overlooked recording equipment, including standalone hard disk recorders, recycled spring reverb tanks and exotic guitar pedals to be used as outboard gear. All of this will be used to record Stuart's latest ‘Midsleep’ project, which utilises ideas and motifs realised during semi-conscious periods of sleep.

Cullum Family Award

Two BA (Hons) Commercial Music students, Silas Blackburn-Chandler and Lil Patuck have won grant applications from the Cullum Family Award of £625 to help them with their internships. Lil is currently working with Music Ally in London, and Silas is off to work at Nylon Studios in New York, where he will join Rob Ballingall (Commercial Music graduate 2011) in the post-production department. Silas also has plans to create a film about his experience in New York.

Pamela’s Contribution to Voice Studies Collection

Dr Pamela Karantonis, Senior Lecturer in Voice (BA Acting) and Head of The Performance Research Centre has a chapter ‘Transcribing Vocality: voice at the border of music after modernism’ being published in the Routledge collection Voice Studies: Critical Approaches to Process, Performance and Experience, this summer. Edited by Ben Macpherson and Konstantinos Thomaidis, the volume includes aspects of spoken voice, singing, listening, the body, music philosophy, sound art, puppetry and cultural studies, from diverse international contributors.
Music Professor News

**Professor Roger Heaton** (BA Music) has a new recording of Mihailo Trandafilovski's clarinet quintet 'Magnets, Lava, Crystals,' with the Kreutzer String Quartet, being released in August on the US label Innova Recordings.

Meanwhile, Associate Professor of Music **Joe Duddell** appeared in the Guardian in May in a feature about why orchestras are changing their tune with regards to new sounds and alliances. Joe specialises in bringing together orchestras with non-classical musicians and has successfully combined the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra with Richard Hawley, the dubstep artists Nero and the band James. For a look at the article and the evolution of the traditional orchestra please click here.

Beryl Cook & BA Acting Students

The Victoria Art Gallery has been working with **BA (Hons) Acting** students to bring its Beryl Cook: Intimate Relations exhibition to life. The show, devoted to one of Britain’s best loved painters, has been breaking attendance records since it opened to the public in March. In May the acting students were on hand to introduce visitors to the paintings. Stationed next to key works they responded to the people and situations in the artworks with words and poetry readings. The public response was overwhelming positive:

“Great exhibition, brought to life brilliantly by talented Bath Spa University acting students.”

“Fabulous art – fabulous students bringing it to life with their poems.”

“Inspirational. Thank you.”