

# SEEMENOW

Alumni Magazine

Issue 20 - December 2023



## CAPTURING THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

TPD graduate Mari Lotherington is pictured participating in the sensory exhibition she designed on display at the Arctic University Museum of Norway.

Inside this issue she reflects on her fascination with theatrical lighting and shares some stand out projects.

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# EDITOR'S NOTE



Welcome to *See Me Now*, our annual alumni publication. You may have noticed we have a new look and a fresh editorial approach. Having listened to feedback from graduates and members of our green team, we've also decided to produce this as a digital publication only.

The first section of the magazine celebrates our alumni voices. We interviewed graduates from across the years and degree subject areas to enable us to share their inspiring stories and careers advice with you. This is followed by two new features: the first focuses on our expanding postgraduate community and we begin by highlighting our MA Costume Making course.

The second puts an international territory in the spotlight, starting with India.

Last summer, we also reached out to our 2022 graduates to find out what they were up to in their first year out. You can read about them in the Class of 2022.

The final section is a round-up of Institute news, including looking back to this summer's graduation event which marks our 2023 graduates joining our global network of alumni.

It's been a privilege and a pleasure creating this new style alumni magazine. We'd love to know what you think of it. We always welcome your feedback on how we communicate or engage with you. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us at [alumni@lipa.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@lipa.ac.uk).

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# WELCOME FROM OUR PRINCIPAL AND CEO

The end of the year provides an opportunity to reflect and evaluate. 2023 has been a year of significant progress and great individual and collective achievements from students and alumni in terms of impact and accomplishment.

This year saw the launch of our Strategic Plan 2023-26. To align with our vision and values, the ambitious plan focusses on the themes of Excellence, Equity, Environment, Empowerment, Employability and Entrepreneurship. It maintains at its core our ethos and focus upon ensuring aspiration and attainment is realised through the provision of a collaborative and creative learning environment that develops graduates ready to meet the complex and evolving challenges of the creative economies.

A key objective of our strategic plan is the acquisition of degree awarding powers. We have submitted our application to the Office for Students (OfS) and expect the institutional review to be undertaken during 2024 with students enrolling upon LIPA awarded degrees in 2025/26.

Another strategic priority is to improve accessibility, and following the removal of audition fees last year, 2024 will see us further widen our reach with regional auditions across the UK.

Investment in the estate and the learning environment continues with the improvements and the refurbishment of the cathedral foyer, the atrium music studio, music pods, recording studio 5, and new pianos as part of a partnership with Yamaha.

At the beginning of the year, we were informed by the OfS that we had been successful in our bid for Specialist Institution Funding and were awarded £5m towards the high costs of practice intensive teaching.

Across our learning group we continue to grow and develop with our High School moving into the former LMA building on Hope Street and the Sixth Form College was awarded £3.95m to create an additional 100 places with the provision of new facilities by extending the sixth form building by 2025.

Liverpool's hosting of Eurovision in May on behalf of Ukraine was a spectacular success for the city and the institution. We were heavily involved and prominently featured in many high-profile elements of the festival and the arena events as our alumni and students embraced the once in a lifetime opportunity to participate and demonstrate their impressive array of skills and abilities in front of a global television audience of 160 million people. July saw Graduation return to the Philharmonic. Both of these events are covered in detail later.

During Induction Week we welcomed BA Acting Alumnus, Stephen Smith to perform two of his plays, *Dog Actor* and *One Man Poe* to the next generation of students at the beginning of their creative journeys with us. In December, our annual *Christmas Concert* was staged for the first time at the Philharmonic in front of a thrilled capacity audience.

Finally, I would like to borrow from my predecessor, and our Founder, Mark, who summed up perfectly the purpose of *See Me Now*; 'This magazine is a celebration of your lives. To have been a part of your life, even for a short time, is a wonderful thing.'

Sean

# CASTING COMES TO THE FORE

It's no secret that for a play or musical to be a success it must have a convincing and believable cast. Strange then that for so long the vital work of casting directors has gone unrecognised and uncelebrated. That, however, appears to be changing.



Natalie (right) with her Casting Direction trophy, alongside Pippa Ailion (centre), and award presenter Danielle Tarento. Photograph: Dan Wooler for WhatsOnStage.

This year, Natalie Gallacher (Management, 2005), alongside long-time working partner Pippa Ailion, was awarded WhatsOnStage's first ever Casting Direction award for their work on *Spring Awakening* last year at the Almeida Theatre.

"It's amazing that Casting Directors are getting recognised," Natalie told us. "The casting process is such a vital part of the creative process it feels like such a positive step that award ceremonies and the industry are celebrating that."

Casting Directors play a large role in the success of a production. Not only do they choose the performers that bring a script to life, they also need to balance the technical details of schedules, fees, and many other back-stage decisions that contribute to the shows that we enjoy. "It's a hard career to get into," Natalie notes, "the hours can be incredibly long but it is so rewarding."

London-based Natalie, who originally hails from Leicestershire, began her career as an intern, becoming an assistant, and then an associate, before stepping into her current role of Casting Director. She and Pippa have worked alongside each other for around 18 years, successfully casting many West End shows and tours, including *The Lion King*, *Tina*, *Book of Mormon*, *Dreamgirls*, and *Moulin Rouge*.

"We've always been part of the creative process and have great relationships with creative teams but I think it's taken some amazing work from the Casting Director's Guild for everyone else in the industry to notice what we do and how vital our work is to the success of a production."

On her degree course, Natalie had lots of theatre opportunities, gaining experience working front of house and in company management and directing. She also developed her administrative skills and skills in writing contracts, financial and business planning.

She told us "My time at LIPA helped me blend the creative side with the administrative side and a Casting Director needs both of those skillsets."

For any students or recent graduates looking to thrive in casting, Natalie recommends gaining as much experience as possible. "Lots of our former assistants, who are now casting directors in their own right, started off doing audition running or internships.

"It's basically about gaining as much experience as you can and getting in contact with casting directors to see if they need help, in any way."

# RUTH ENDEAVOURS TO TEAR DOWN BARRIERS

Applied Theatre and Community Drama (ATCD) graduate Ruth Allison has been managing youth arts projects since graduating in 2021, with one key goal: to reduce barriers to participation in the arts for young people.



Ruth leading a workshop for a group of children at Octagon Theatre. Photograph: Grant Archer and the Octagon Theatre, Bolton.

"It's really important for me to fight the stigma that a lot of young people may have, that the arts are just for the elite. There are definitely barriers to the arts - I remember going to dance classes when I was younger, and people in the class couldn't afford the costumes.

"There are so many people facing financial barriers, and I always think about the potential that is lost by them not being able to participate. That's why I love community arts so much - I want to help those people to find their way in and unleash that potential."

Ruth's first role after graduating was to lead The Georgian Youth Theatre in Richmond, North Yorkshire. She ran classes for young people aged between six and eighteen and directed her first ever youth theatre production. "Directing for theatre was something I was so keen to explore, and I'm also passionate about working with young people.

Becoming a youth theatre director combines these interests perfectly."

Ruth now works as a Youth Theatre Director for Bolton Octagon and also provides classroom support at a school for children with special educational needs. She believes the two roles inform each other - as does her time on the ATCD degree. "I learnt a lot about the different ways of learning in LIPA. I'll always remember how Brendon Burns explained capitalism to us - it's such a big topic, but he helped us to understand it so practically.

"We were put into groups and essentially made factories, cutting out paper stars and using them as currency to buy more materials to make the stars. Learning things practically helps me so much, and I love using this creativity to help the children that I support to develop their understanding too. Everybody's

brain works differently, there's a lot of creativity to be found in that difference and the arts is a great way to explore this."

Through her work at Bolton Octagon, creating Young Octagon - a next step programme for Octagon's Youth Theatre alumni, Ruth has worked with fellow LIPA graduates, Charly Dunford and Eleanor Ferguson (both TPTD 2021) on productions. She says:

**"It was just wonderful to collaborate after graduating. We're still such a great team. I feel very, very thankful for the friendships that LIPA has given me."**

# DOUBLE SCORE FOR COMPOSER

The night that *An Irish Goodbye* won an Academy Award, Anthony Eve (Music, 2018) was at home, with his phone switched off. It wasn't until the next morning that he found out that the short film that he composed for had won the Best Live Action Short Film Oscar.



"When we first got the BAFTA nomination, I thought: that's already the win. I didn't think it was going to go any further and then we won the BAFTA and got the Oscar nomination around the same time. That's some life changing news.

"To find out we'd won the Oscar too - it was a real pinch me moment."

Coming from Belfast originally, Anthony is inspired by the culture and landscapes of Ireland. This is always present in his work - particularly in his work on *An Irish Goodbye*.

"I knew I wasn't going to have the budget to do an orchestral recording or an extended band or anything like that. So, I thought: what instruments might the brothers have lying around the farm? And how can I make a score out of those instruments?

"So, I took anything I could easily get my hands on, like a banjo, mandolin and a fiddle, and then I imagined how the brothers would actually play them.

"With everything I recorded, I tried not to make it overly polished. To play behind the beat a wee bit, and make sure nothing was perfectly tuned. I tried to use limitations in the budget to actually set the tone and make everything gel."

Anthony wasn't the only LIPA graduate to work on the multi-award-winning short film. He was joined by Dubbing Mixer Fred Pearson who graduated from Sound Technology in 2011.

"You can always spot a Sound Technology graduate, because he was just super sharp. He was clearly from LIPA - really on the ball. It was great to work together, knowing we had that connection."

When reflecting on his career so far, Anthony believes that he has particularly benefited from the broad array of courses here, which gave him the opportunity to collaborate across disciplines while he trained. "I work so often in film and on TV, they're so collaborative," he told us.

"On any given day, I could be working with a costume designer or a set designer, directors and actors, it's basically all the art forms coming together. So, I am so glad I went to LIPA. If I had gone somewhere that focused purely on music, it might've been a shock to the system when I was thrown into that world.

"At LIPA, I had a chance to collaborate with so many different people, and then got the practical experience from the hours and hours of practical time I built up working in the studio."

This stood him in good stead on recent large-scale orchestral projects: one was in Air Studios recording an orchestra for a BBC project.

The other was in Budapest recording a 32-piece orchestra for his upcoming EP. He was nervous in the lead up to them but says: "I would not have achieved the same results out of them if I hadn't built up the confidence that I did, through that practical experience in LIPA."

From creating dance routines in their Port Talbot garden as children, to appearing together in Netflix's top dance show, siblings Shakara and Deavion Brown have been connected through dance for most of their lives.

# DANCING DUO DAZZLE ON NETFLIX SHOW



Deavion and Shakara captured together on the set of *Dance 100*.

Shakara (*Dance*, 2015) has worked continuously since graduation, with a career spanning the West End, film, TV and touring. Her brother Deavion (*Dance*, 2019) followed suit, dancing across stages internationally.

The siblings have been able to thrive in their individual careers, and they've also relished the opportunity to work together when it's arisen. They have performed together in the West End and, most recently in the Netflix original *Dance 100*.

*Dance 100* is a dance competition designed to find the next superstar choreographer. Deavion and Shakara were members of the collection of 100 elite dancers, who performed in the different choreographed routines. It was a high accolade to be welcomed into this collection of dancers. And then getting to work together as siblings on the show was the icing on the cake.

"Working together feels like home and I absolutely adore watching Deav shine in whatever production he is a part of," Shakara shared. "He is always the hardest working and we push each other to be better every time."

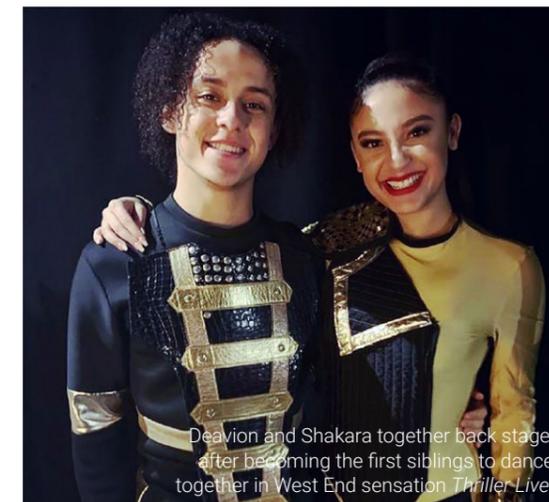
"Everyone on *Dance 100* (that didn't previously know us) thought that we were twins" she noted; "because we have this kind of telepathy. It's so awesome because when one of us is feeling overwhelmed or anxious, we would gravitate towards each other and it would be grounding, and then we were good!"

Deavion was particularly excited to meet so many fantastic dancers on the hit Netflix show. "I had a great time on *Dance 100*, and not only did I get to work with my sister, but I left that job with a real sense of community with all of the dancers I shared the stage with - it's meant to look like there's drama among the dancers, but we loved each other really!"

The journey for the dancing pair hasn't stopped after *Dance 100*. Deavion is currently on tour with ZooNations's *Message in a Bottle*, which is set for an international tour, and to reach the screens in 2024. Shakara is currently working on an exciting show that is set to announce its West End debut next year.

"I am so grateful that my passion is also my career because I know that is rare," Shakara told us. Ultimately, what I've been up to since leaving LIPA is learning. I know when I was leaving LIPA I was in such a rush to be a 'finished product' by the time I graduated, but the learning never really stops. Each job and or audition will require something different from you."

Deavion said "My time at LIPA taught me to dismantle my previous notions of what is 'good' and what is 'bad' in terms of movement, which in turn helped me widen my range of movement and learn new tricks. I also benefited from the focus on dance theatre work and characterisation within that."



Deavion and Shakara together back stage, after becoming the first siblings to dance together in West End sensation *Thriller Live*.

The siblings both believe that their time on the *Dance BA* helped them to get to where they are today. Shakara explained:

"Something that always sticks with me is from my very first talk in the Paul McCartney Auditorium with Mark Featherstone-Witty. He told us that we need to practice something for 10,000 hours to master it - that has always kept me humble and in the student mindset. I'm so eager to learn and know that I'm nowhere near mastery - it keeps things exciting and fresh. It also takes the pressure off when I'm met with a new style of dance or skill on a job; I cannot expect my body or mind to 'master' it within the first few hours, I will just keep working on it and do my best."

# CAPTURING THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

Theatre and Performance Design graduate Mari Lotherington (2013) credits her fascination with theatrical lighting to two things - her introduction to the specialty here, and the inspiration that she takes from the landscapes of Norway.

She remembers: "The way the lecturers introduced lighting to us was that we always had to make a storyboard and then we had to light the model and take pictures, and so from the beginning, we've been learning to always think lighting into our designs."

Mari has experience of living and working in the UK, France and USA - but it is her native Norway that continues to inspire.

"In Norway, a few months in the winter the sun does not rise and in the summer it never goes down. When we're in these seasons, there are such big changes to the sunlight, and its reflection on the snow just makes the air feel like it has this texture. I love working with smoke and lighting materials in certain ways to bring this feeling to the stage."

In her ten years since graduating, Mari has chalked up work on over 30 projects as the set designer or a combination of set, costume and lighting designer. Here, she talks us through three of her stand out projects, giving us an insight into the design decisions that she made.



This room welcomes you into Tromsø Herreekvipering, the clothing store of the Jewish Sakolsky family. Photograph: Daria Klima

## Who Are You in a World on Fire?

A sensory exhibition at The Arctic University Museum of Norway, *Hvem er du når verden brenner?* (which translates as *Who Are You in a World on Fire?*) is Mari's first large scale design for an exhibition space. It explores World War II from six individual perspectives.

Mari's approach was to create six individual rooms, as she explains: "For each space you're presented with the story of the person. You'd be asked a question, or given a choice that they had to make, but you're not told what they chose to do right away. You explore the surrounding information in the room and reflect on what you would do in that situation, and then in the end you find the answer behind a closet's doors, or a drawer, somewhere within the space."

Although a look at the war from six different viewpoints, Mari wanted to ensure there was a connection to create a bigger picture. "The wall sections of the rooms are covered in see through textiles, so you can see through each room to the next room. The idea is that the whole space represents the history of World War II so when you're in a room, you can see through to the rest of history."

*Who Are You in a World on Fire* is open until May 2024.



The exhibition includes experiences such as sound, smell, lighting, video and tactile. Photograph: Daria Klima



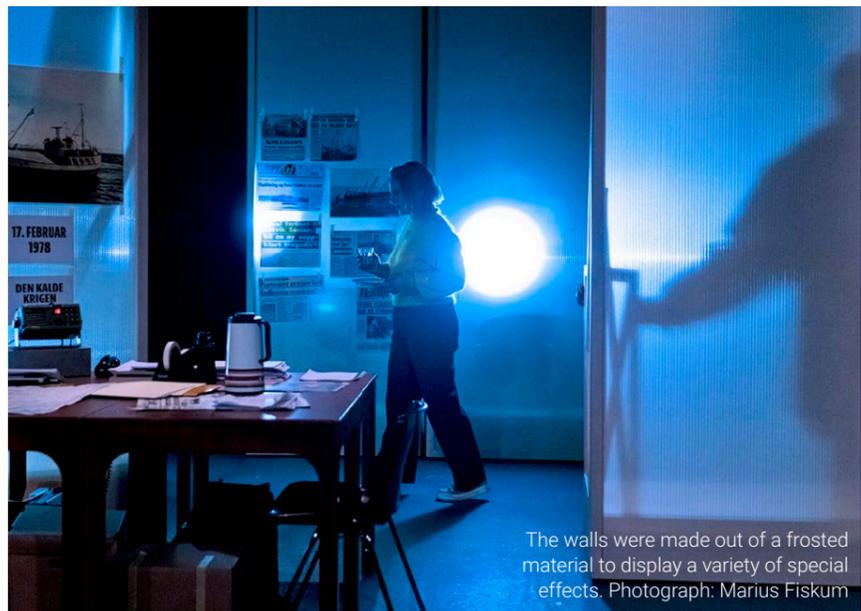
## Utvik Senior

In February 1978 fishing boat *Utvik Senior* was lost with a crew of nine people on board. Exactly what happened remains a mystery and a controversy. This play, directed by Nina Wester and produced by Rimfrost Productions, was described by producers as an 'experience intersecting between true crime, documentary and tragedy.'

It was performed at The Arctic Arts Festival in 2021, as well as touring in Norway. Mari was the set and costume designer and for the set design she was inspired by claims that the investigations into the tragedy were being deliberately hampered by the state. "They tried to kind of hide the incident by having loads of paperwork going back and forth, so it was important to design this bureaucratic space that then could be shifted and broken apart."

"The walls could move, and it consisted of lots of parts that could be pushed around and used by the actors and the choir on stage to create different abstract shapes and figurative spaces."

In 2022 *Utvik Senior* won the Årets Hedda prestige prize at the Norwegian Hedda Awards. This was a new award created in recognition of this exceptional project.



The walls were made out of a frosted material to display a variety of special effects. Photograph: Marius Fiskum



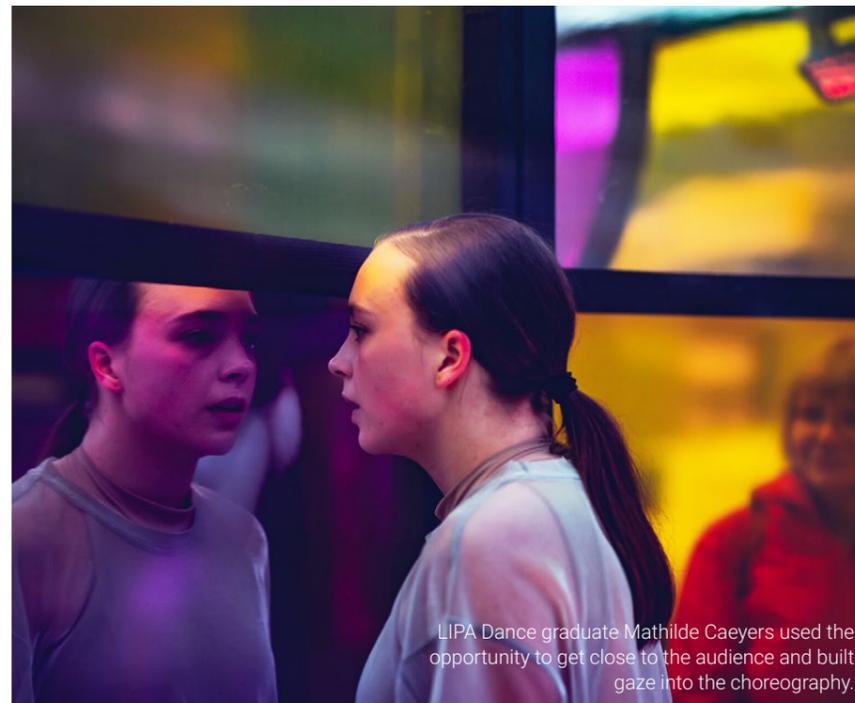
LuxTempus in situ at one of Norway's cultural hubs. Photographs: Rob South and Rudi Caeyers

## LuxTempus

*LuxTempus* was an interactive performance that combined installation art with dance that premiered in 2020 before touring round Norway. It was created by Mari in collaboration with LIPA Dance graduate Mathilde Caeyers (2018) and Lighting and Set Designer Torbjørn T. Sandnes. Inspired by the Norwegian summer light, the installation reacted to weather changes to create a unique audience experience for each performance.

Mari explains: "We wanted differently coloured glass around the whole thing so that you can change your perspective from where you see the dancer, making the performance look different from every angle. Some of the sheets of glass were more reflective, so you could see yourself."

*LuxTempus* was created as a direct response to COVID-19. Mari says it was designed to enable the audience to experience the performance in a safe environment. "To make it completely corona safe, we made these things that stuck out from the octagon so that you could also see each other as audience members through this glass. So, if you have your friends with you, you can see them safely."



LIPA Dance graduate Mathilde Caeyers used the opportunity to get close to the audience and built gaze into the choreography.

## What's next?

Mari is working on several projects, including one she originated herself that has received funding from the Arts Council in Norway. Inspired by the darkness of northern Norway, it's a collaboration with dancers that explores the use of their bodies as sculptures.

# THE SOUND OF SUCCESS IN THE NORTH WEST

Too often the UK's cultural and media institutions are viewed through a London-centric lens. However, Harry Tulley (Sound Technology, 2016) is here to prove that there are plenty of opportunities outside of the capital.

Dubbing Mixer and Sound Editor Harry, who is originally from Stoke-on-Trent, has worked on television dramas for a range of UK broadcasters. His credits include *Waterloo Road* (BBC), *Am I Being Unreasonable?* (BBC), *We Are Not Alone* (Dave), *Time* (BBC) and *Anthony* (BBC).

Although, he was once worried that remaining outside of London would limit his opportunities. He told us: "Working predominantly in the North West has been a really positive experience for me and eye-opening in terms of the amount of opportunities there are.

"I've been able to work on really interesting projects and collaborate with such talented people from all over the country and the increase in remote working over the past few years has only broadened these opportunities.

"There are many productions that use Liverpool and Manchester as filming locations and this has helped to build the reputation and talent base of post-production across the North West."

Harry's journey into sound mixing for television started during his time here. He gained an internship at post-production facility LA Post during his final year, which led to a full-time trainee position shortly after his graduation. "I started out with the responsibilities of a runner, making sure the clients were looked after and assisting the Head of Sound. I eventually gained more responsibilities and exposure until I was given the opportunity to mix shows by myself. Along the way, I had the chance to work alongside lots of different directors and producers who all have unique approaches to the way they work."

Consistently building his skills, Harry is particularly keen to work on challenging projects. "One of the most exciting projects I've worked on since graduating was definitely *Am I Being Unreasonable*," he said. "It was a challenging project as the show, although scripted, contained lots of improvisation which meant that often no two takes were the same.

The show also contained lots of subtle sound design which was both exciting and challenging from a creative point of view. Working alongside Daisy May Cooper was also a fantastic experience."

His commitment to building and developing his skills was celebrated in 2021, when Harry was nominated in the Emerging Talent: Fiction category at the BAFTA Television Craft Awards for his work on *Anthony*. He was invited to the BAFTA headquarters, giving Harry the opportunity to network with lots of post production sound and wider TV industry professionals - something which Harry heralds as key to thriving in the industry.

"My advice to anyone hoping to find work outside of London would be to focus on building up your network and seeking out opportunities wherever you can. The post-production sound industry is smaller than you think. Don't be afraid to put yourself out there and take on new challenges."

Harry has achieved a lot in the seven years since he graduated, and we're pleased to hear that he still accesses the skills that he built here in his work. "Something I learned at LIPA that's been particularly useful during my career is the importance of staying adaptable and being willing to learn new things."

"The industry is constantly evolving, so it's important to stay up-to-date and adaptable with new techniques and technology. LIPA also taught me the importance of being a good team player as collaboration and interpersonal skills are highly important aspects of being professional."

Harry urges both current and prospective students to remember that making mistakes is a part of the process.

He says: "It's how you learn from mistakes that counts. Don't be afraid to ask for advice from your peers, there's often more than one way of doing things and you may pick up some useful ways of working."

**“Working predominantly in the North West has been a really positive experience for me and eye-opening in terms of the amount of opportunities there are.”**

# DREAM JOB AT ICONIC VENUE



It only took one visit to the Royal Albert Hall (RAH) for Theatre & Performance Technology graduate May-Kate Woods to fall in love with the venue and make it her ambition to work there.

May-Kate, who graduated in 2017, attended a comedy show at the venue earlier this year and was instantly “blown away”. She says a job there immediately went to the top of her wish list. “I knew that working at the RAH would offer me a chance to be part of something truly special. You can make a positive impact on people’s lives by helping to create unforgettable moments. I needed to be part of that.”

Not long after that gig a position as technical supervisor was advertised. May-Kate applied and was offered the job. She says it was a dream come true: “To be offered such a fantastic opportunity was almost overwhelming. I was shocked. I do feel like this is my time to really shine.”

The role at the Royal Albert Hall is the culmination of 11 years hard work for May-Kate, that started at Merseyside-based production company Adlib as a lighting apprentice before she enrolled here. May-Kate, who’s originally from Merseyside, says the experience and her time here have been invaluable. “Adlib was a great starting point for me and throughout my career I’ve had so

many opportunities to explore different disciplines and work on a variety of events and productions which has helped me build a strong foundation of core technical skills.

“LIPA was a fantastic experience. I loved that I could study a degree with hands-on experience, while gaining valuable industry connections as I went. The most useful thing I learnt was to effectively communicate and work within a production team. Collaborating with performers, directors, and other technical staff on my show allocations as chief LX has also helped me develop strong interpersonal and organisational skills which has really helped my career.”

After graduating May-Kate worked as a freelancer, including time at Liverpool’s M&S Bank Arena, before joining Dreamtek as a technical production technician based at Meta’s offices in London.

She started at RAH in September and one of the early highlights was working her first solo technical supervisor shift for two performances by Diana Ross, which was, “a spectacular performance and a massive learning curve.”

Kylie Minogue, Dame Judi Dench, Lang Lang and Cirque du Soleil are among the many performers over the coming months and it’s this variety that is enabling the Royal Albert Hall to live up to May-Kate’s expectations. She says:

“There’s always something different happening! This diversity brings a sense of anticipation and excitement, as each day can present new challenges and opportunities. There really is always something extraordinary happening within these iconic walls.”



# SADE FLIES HIGH

Critics have been heaping praise on Acting graduate Sade Malone (2018) for her performance in a new adaptation of *Lord of the Flies*.

Playing the part of a gender-reversed Ralph in The Leeds Playhouse and Belgrade Theatre Coventry co-production, The Daily Telegraph praised the way her portrayal walks a “fine line between moral leadership and childish bewilderment with impressive conviction,” the Guardian highlights how she is “by turns commanding and vulnerable,” while The Stage described her performance as providing a “strong, calm, relatable presence to the spiralling action around her.”

We caught up with Sade, whose other credits include *Hope Street* (BBC/Britbox), *Frank of Ireland* (Channel 4/Amazon) and *Tin Star* (Sky Atlantic), to discuss *Lord of the Flies* and her time here.

**Q Your performance in the recent reimagining of *Lord of the Flies* was met with rave reviews. How did you find this experience?**

It was amazing to be a part of this production. The cast and the creative team I worked with were phenomenal and so was our director Amy Leach, who created such a wonderfully inclusive and safe space to work.

**Q What was the process for you in taking on the character of Ralph, and reimagining her as a young girl, instead of a boy from a private school?**

It was really interesting playing the part of Ralph who is traditionally described as ‘fair haired athletic boy’. At first that was a barrier I had to break through which I discussed with our director and got over it very quickly when we started doing some character work in rehearsals. Gender is also so fluid in today’s society that it really didn’t matter that we were changing the gender as we’re telling a story about humans, and these children being catapulted into such extraordinary circumstances, and telling the truth of that is what matters.

**Q What do you think it means to reimagine *Lord of the Flies* today? What elements were really important in making this text relevant to today’s audiences?**

The text directly correlates with a lot of what is happening in today’s society. I think it is interesting to look back and see how far we have come and haven’t. Amy and Lucy (the Casting Director) did such a great job of casting the show in such a diverse way which was so exciting for me.

The show really represented young audiences that would be coming to see that show, which I think is so important as they get to see themselves represented on stage.

I think toxic masculinity is a big theme in the original play and this was certainly present in our version but with the show being cast so diversely, we were tackling racism, sexism and ableism.

**Q How do you feel that your experience here prepared you to go out and engage with politically engaged work such as this production?**

At LIPA I actually never felt any boundaries when it came to my casting; I played Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* and was cast in ‘colour blind casting’ for my final third year show. Experiences like these made me not put any boundaries on myself and believe that any character is possible.

**Q Is there a lesson that you learnt here, either through the curriculum or generally being a student here, that you still draw upon today?**

At LIPA it was wonderful how we got to work with people on other courses, from designers to stage managers - it is a small taste of the industry. The teachers would always talk about staying connected with people across courses as you don’t know who you will end up working with in the future and this has happened on past jobs where I’ve worked with other LIPA actors, costume designers and stage managers, which is amazing.

On *Lord of the Flies*, former LIPA student Max Emmerson was producing the play and it felt like what had been spoken about in training had come to life.

**Q Do you have any advice for current/prospective students who are daunted by the prospect of putting their own stamp on a well-known character?**

What works for me personally is to get things up on their feet as I am a very physical person and doing this helps me to unlock possible character traits which can then help to tap in to parts of the character. I have learnt that it is important to find truth in any character you’re playing - if you start from there, the rest will follow. The beauty of it is that it’s your interpretation, so you can never be wrong and can enjoy putting your own spin on a classic character.

**Q Do you have anything that you’re currently working on, or plans for the future, that you’d like to tell us about?**

I am currently filming a TV series in Northern Ireland at the moment and I also have a film coming soon where I play the lead role ‘Twig’ in a modern day’s interpretation of the Greek tragedy *Antigone*.



Sade on stage at Leeds Playhouse, performing as Ralph in *Lord of the Flies*. Photograph: Anthony Robbing

LIPA's postgraduate community is steadily expanding. We currently offer three taught postgraduate programmes and have plans to create a new postgraduate school.



Performers in a production photo from *Dick Whittington* pantomime, for which Liza Ashby made the children's costumes. Featuring Ada Campe as Queen Rat.



One of Emily's pieces that she created during her Masters. Photograph: Brian Roberts

In this edition, we are putting the spotlight on a postgraduate course that we believe to be the first of its kind in the UK: our MA Costume Making. The course welcomed its first cohort of students in September 2019.

In the words of one of last year's graduates, Michela Manduca: "The MA in Costume Making provides a structured framework for individuals to learn about construction and costume techniques.

"It was especially appealing to me as it provides learners with the opportunity to explore a wide spectrum of skills. It also provides an interesting outlook on the different viable industries for makers and how they can make their passion a full-time occupation."

Course Leader, Toni Bate, was driven to create the course to give costume makers the space to develop their craft. "When you're working, there's never much time to consider the process and what is it we actually do as costume makers, because the priority is to have everything made to the deadline, within a budget, while also fulfilling the designers' vision and the practicalities of the performance.



Toni walking a guest through the Costume Making MA Exhibition 2021. Photograph: Brian Roberts

"As well as preparing students for industry, this programme also gives costume makers the space to develop and reflect on their process without these constraints, enabling them to produce original practice research that has the potential to have a positive impact on the development of future industry practices."

Emily Midgley, who is from Calderdale, graduated from the programme in 2021. Before studying at LIPA she worked in the fashion industry but found the work didn't allow her to be creative. "I trained as a tailor, so I absolutely loved making bespoke things, I just didn't want to be on a conveyor belt of work, I wanted to create things that matter to me.

"What LIPA offered really appealed to me. I knew the course would teach me loads of skills, ones that translate from fashion to costume. There are so many different practices, different ways of doing things and I think LIPA's course was key for me in learning how costume works before coming into the industry."

Emily worked on her first film while still at LIPA and has been non-stop since graduating. "I've worked on numerous films and a bit of theatre, some crews. It's been brilliant. I worked on *The Crown*, which was so much fun and I have just designed for a film down in Derby, which was great. That was my first time being a costume designer, which was amazing. Honestly, I just love what I do now."

Liza Ashby, who is from Mid Wales and graduated from the course last year, had undertaken a degree in Linguistics, and was looking to upskill her hobby of sewing into a profession. "I was struggling to break into the industry without sufficient experience" Liza explained. Through the course, she was able to make connections that led to her first professional roles in the industry.

Her second placement during the MA was at Theatr Clwyd, and it was from that that they offered her the role of Dresser on the theatre's immersive *Great Gatsby* project. She was also offered the role of Junior Maker after interviewing the Producer at Chipping Norton during her dissertation research.

**What LIPA offered really appealed to me. I knew the course would teach me loads of skills, ones that translate from fashion to costume.**

Liza happily explained: "I went from sewing as a hobby, and working on amateur productions, to getting paid to do what I love."

Michela Manduca's also been busy. Since graduating she's returned to her native Malta and is working as a Daily on the film *Gladiator 2* and has also been booked for the TV series: *The Madame Blanc Mysteries*.

Michela praises the MA's professional focus. "I found the course to be extremely hands-on and was delighted that it also provided students with the opportunity to meet lots of industry professionals - this is extremely valuable as it allows students to start networking immediately."

If you graduated from one of LIPA's undergraduate programmes and are interested in returning here to study at postgraduate level, you can find out more about our programmes [here](#). We offer our graduates a 10% discount on the postgraduate tuition fees.

If you are a graduate from one of our postgraduate programmes and are interested in sharing your story about where the programme has taken you, please get in touch with us at [alumni@lipa.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@lipa.ac.uk)



Michela dressing a model as part of her dissertation sharing. Photograph: Brian Roberts

LIPA has always had a high proportion of international students. Typically 25%, which is the highest for a specialist performing arts higher education institution in England. And they come from a wide variety of locations, often up to 40 different countries.

These students and the diversity of viewpoints, cultures and influences they bring has been crucial to LIPA's development. They have had, and continue to have, an immeasurable impact on our students' learning as well as day-to-day life across the institute.

We want to celebrate our international students, hear about their experiences of LIPA, Liverpool and England and how it's influenced their life and careers after graduating. In each issue of See Me Now we will be highlighting a different country - and first up is India.

We have a small but growing community of Indian students and graduates. And like so many of our international students, one of the things that has helped to make their experience so special is our location.

As Dance graduate Sanea Singh (2017) told us in her final year: "Liverpool is the best city I could have chosen from the whole of the UK because people here are amazing as they're friendly, kind and helpful. My class has become like a second family so I don't feel homesick for India."

It's a view that's echoed by Shayaan Oshidar, who graduated from our BA Music programme in 2018.

When we caught up with her earlier this summer Shayaan told us she considers both Mumbai (where she's located now) and Liverpool to be home.

"Liverpool as a whole is so diverse, so many nationalities in one. For me, the multiculturalism was a huge, huge part of it."

**"Liverpool is the best city I could have chosen from the whole of the UK because people here are amazing as they're friendly, kind and helpful. My class has become like a second family so I don't feel homesick for India."**

Liverpool has an international reputation for being a welcoming and friendly city. That warmth and openness is replicated across our campus - and nowhere is it more obvious than in our canteen! Shayaan made an instant connection to the canteen ladies - who she referred to as 'mamas'. "They really made an impression on me. My favourite thing to do was go down for lunch and see them, I'd usually have a cuddle."

We hope our community of Indian students and graduates continues to grow and we will be once again holding dance auditions, workshops and taster-sessions in Mumbai next year.

Shayaan's career continues to go from strength to strength. She has been co-writing with A-list talent while working on her own project which has garnered huge support from BBC Asian Network who are backing Shayaan to be a "breakout star".

She believes training overseas has played a role in her success. "I think initially when you're from a different culture you worry - I used to think I was too British for India and too Indian for England, until I realised that was a unique selling point for me.

"Now, I make music with a mix of Hindi, Punjabi and English! It's a transient sound, where there's a mix of languages, but also a mix of influences."

If you are one of our international graduates, we'd love to hear your story. If you'd like to be considered for our international celebration in the next issue of See Me Now please get in touch: [alumni@lipa.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@lipa.ac.uk).



Shayaan at BBC Asian Network studios.

After only a year since graduating, our 2022 graduates are already achieving great things. Whether they're thriving in the industry that they studied, or excelling in an entirely new field, we wanted to take this opportunity to celebrate the class of 2022.

## BA Acting

**Ruchi Rai** and **Tom Storey** made their professional debut in *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* just three months after graduating. Ruchi plays the role of Gryffindor student Polly Chapman; and Tom performs as Yann Fredericks in the West End hit show.

**Jada-Li Warrican** secured her first professional acting role as 'Lara' in BBC's *Doctors*. She has subsequently met rave reviews for her portrayal of Chloe in Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse's production *Our Town Needs a Nando's*.

## BA Acting (Screen and Digital Media)

**Amy Lockwood** joined outdoor touring theatre company, Illyria on their UK tour of operetta *Pirates of Penzance*. This year, she has been on another tour with the company, performing as Viola and Maria in their production of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*.

## BA Applied Theatre & Community Drama

**Jake Davies** has been planning and delivering workshops, alongside performing in pirate interactive performances, as part of Ykids' literacy project *Kingsley and Co* summer festival. The festival aims to bring a holiday to local children who aren't able to travel.

**Morven Currie** has been made the Learning and Engagement Producer at Shakespeare North Playhouse, and she also took part in the Young Everyman & Playhouse Directors programme. Morven co-founded Folk Sake theatre company alongside Oliver Thomas (Applied Theatre & Community Drama), and directed their premier piece *The Boy and the Bird*. The play, written by Oliver, involved fellow alumni: Theatre and Production Design graduate Isabelle Friend (Set & Costume Design) and Acting graduate Joseph Owens (Actor).

**Rhiannon May** gained a guest role in *Silent Witness*, playing Cara which has been reprised as a recurring character. Rhiannon has also shared her first exhibition of her textile work: Please Touch The Art (Itch My Brain) at the Liverpool Everyman, as part of her residency as a Homotopia QueerCore Artist.

## BA Dance

**Isabelle Ouattara** signed to AMCK Management upon graduating, and performed with Kendrick Lamar as part of his Glastonbury Headline set last summer. She also performed at Eurovision.

## BA Management of Music, Theatre, Entertainment and Events

**Emily Darlington** landed her first professional role as a Production Coordinator on Channel 4 *Steph's Packed Lunch*.

**Molly Glinn** has worked within the productions department on multiple films. While based at Warner Bros Studios in London her work there included two major movies for Paramount One: *A Quiet Place: Day One* starring Lupita Nyong'o and Joseph Quinn, and *Apartment 7A* starring Julia Garner and Dianne Wiest. She's also worked on *House of the Dragon* season 2 for HBO and is producing a TEDx event, following on from producing *TEDxLIPA* back in 2021.

**Pati Just** has been working on several music and film festivals in her home country of Poland. This year, Pati worked on *Krakow Film Music Festival* managing a couple of multimedia concerts, discussion panels with composers and additional festival events. She is currently working as Junior Music Specialist in Krakow Main Festival Centre - KBF, as well as Podcast Producer on PMovie -podcast about young adults and cinema.

**Sara McPhail** has worked across numerous major events, as well as with artists such as Arctic Monkeys, Genesis, Elton John and Shirley Ballas while continuing her marketing career as part of Modern Sky UK and Sound City.

**Anya Weston-Shaw** has worked at multiple festivals since graduating including Download and Live at Leeds festival.

## BA Music

**Gavin Sullivan's** band Daisy Brain have played a sold-out UK headline tour, had appearances at multiple festivals including Reading and Leeds, Community, Docklands in Germany, a main stage slot at Y-Not fest and many others. They are set to release their debut album very soon.

**Amy Woodall, Holly Minto** and **Olivia Kettle** form three quarters of four-piece rock band Crawlers, signed to Polydor Records this year. They have performed at Sound City, Glastonbury, and completed tours across the UK and USA since graduating.

## BA Music (Songwriting & Performance)

**Lilly Boughey** is currently running her own business full-time as a vocal coach. She provides private lessons, in addition to running a number of choirs for schools and colleges across Merseyside. Lilly is also still gigging regularly and creating music.

**Charlotte Molloy** is running independent promotion company Sunset Promotions, hosting gigs for local artists. In addition to actively gigging around Liverpool, she is preparing to release her own music, and combines this with performing as a backing vocalist and doing cover gigs as part of an acoustic soul duo. She is also a part-time vocal teacher.

## Mary Nova (Marya Novik)

formed a live psych rock/dream pop band. She performed at festivals and showcases like Great Escape and BBC Introducing, and many others. Aside from that, Mary represents a premium high-end acoustic guitar brand named Homestead Guitars, based in London on Denmark St. As an independent artist, she has composed, recorded, and produced over an hour's worth of original music and sound design for Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2023.

## BA Sound Technology

**Ryan Shickell** did a six-month internship at JBJ studios, then landed an Assistant role there, which has led to him assisting for Stormzy, Leigh-Anne Pinnoch, James Arthur, Daniel Caesar and Smino among many other artists.

**Charlie Warhurst** has gone from sound waves to ocean waves. He is a pro-sailor and a First Mate with the Clipper Around the World race.

## BA Theatre and Performance Design

**Ian Kirk** has performed various roles in the art department for *Hollyoaks* - managing tasks from set dressing to part-designing the Valentine's Day episode. He has also worked in the make-up and costume department at Farmageddon. He was recently the Art Director on a short film called *Bag for Life*.

**Fay Rusted** worked as a dresser on two productions at Liverpool's Royal Court, before securing her first costume designing role for leo&hyde's production of *The Coffee Shop Musical*. She also became an Associate Designer on The Thelma's production of *Santi and Naz* which previewed in the summer before a full fringe run at the Pleasance in Edinburgh.

## BA Theatre and Performance Technology

**Jess Brigham** stepped into the role of Lighting Designer that she was aspiring to right away. She has already designed 12 shows and assisted on the West End production of *Lemons Lemons Lemons*. She was also associate lighting designer on the new Take That Musical: *Greatest Days*.

**Grace Moore's** first job was working on the annual summer UK opera festival: *The Grange Festival* as Assistant Stage Manager. Her next job was with the Royal Shakespeare Company as ASM Bookcover on their *Mischief Festival*. She has subsequently returned to the Grange Festival. This year, she's setting out on an international tour with *Madagascar the Musical*, as Assistant Stage Manager.

**Georgina Nash** worked as a production intern at an events company called Brandfuel, and upon completion of her internship, she was offered a permanent position as Junior Production Manager, working for companies such as Google, Formula 1, and Niantic (the creators of Pokémon).

We've very much enjoyed receiving these early career highlights from our 2022 graduates, and we'd love to hear from more of you.

Please do keep in touch and let us know what you've been up to since graduating. We're keen to hear from alumni across the years, and celebrate the vast array of journeys that have taken place since you collected your degree certificates.

# LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE STAFF

This June saw the launch of our very first Teaching Excellence and Employee Recognition Awards to celebrate the outstanding work and contribution to the performing arts of our teaching and professional services staff.

Colleagues from across the Institute came together to celebrate each other's success as teams and individuals.

Our Principal and CEO Professor Sean McNamara presented the awards to our staff in the Paul McCartney Auditorium - with celebrations continuing into the evening in our bar.



Employability

DANCE TEAM

The awards reflected our strategic pillars of Excellence, Equity, Environment, Empowerment, Employability, Entrepreneurship, and were voted for by staff.

The full list of winners is:

**Excellence - School of Creative Technologies:**  
Pippa Lea, Lecturer, Management for the Creative Industries and Performing Arts

**Excellence - School of Music:**  
Dori Howard, Assistant Lecturer, Music

**Excellence - School of Performance:** Stuart Crowther, Course Leader, Acting

**Excellence - Early Career:**  
Rosemary Berkon, Teaching Fellow, Acting

**Excellence - Professional Services:**  
Michelle Rushforth, Quality Manager

**Principal's Excellence Award:**  
Zube Xtra Team

**Equity:**  
Ben Leventhall, Access & Schools/Colleges Liaison Manager

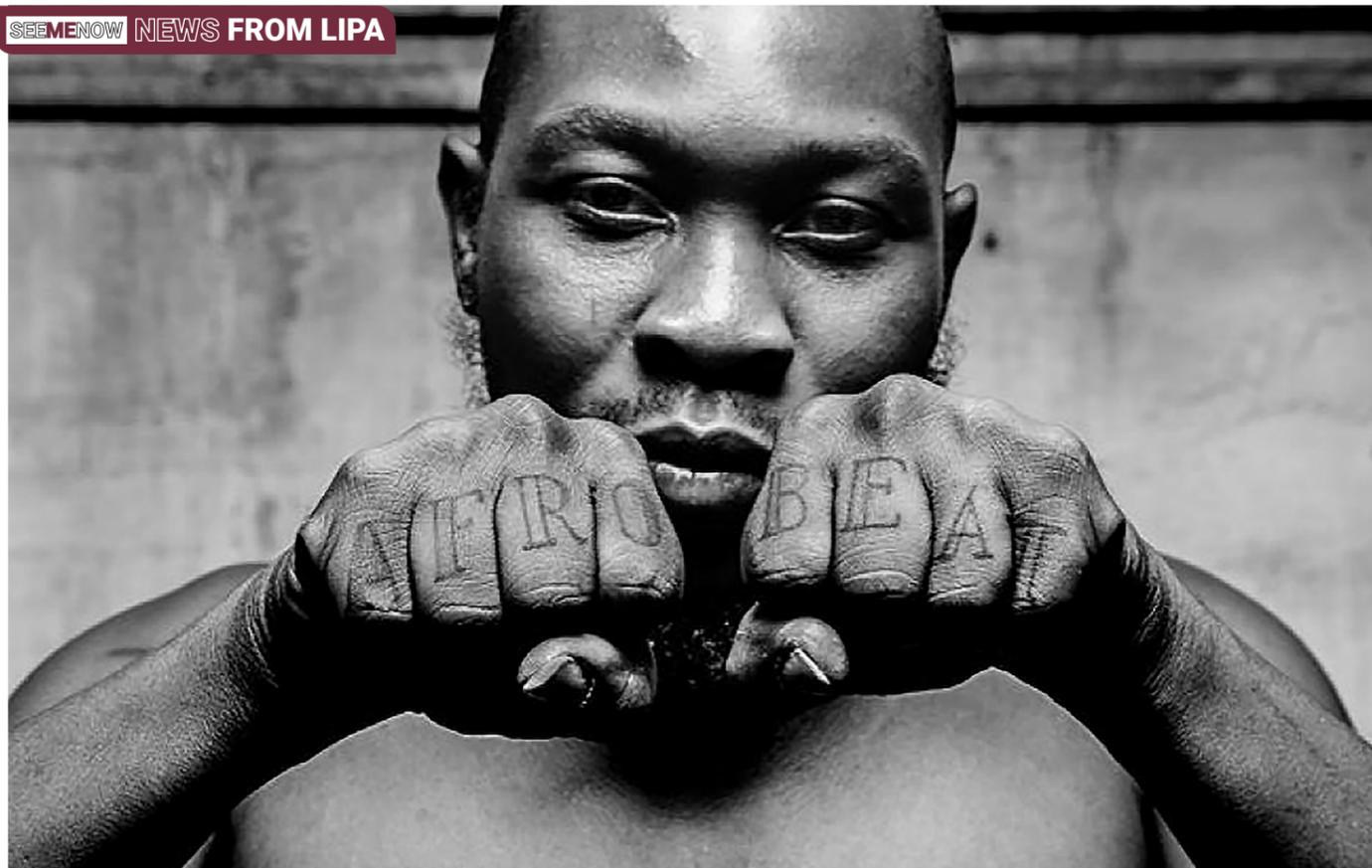
**Entrepreneurship:**  
Ash Fraser, Group Business Systems Development Manager

**Environment:**  
Stella Okafor-Ross, Production Coordinator

**Employability:**  
Dance Team

**Empowerment:**  
Angela MacFarlane, Payroll Officer

Our Dance team being presented their award by Sean. Photograph: Brian Roberts



## SEUN'S MEMORIES OF LIPA LAUNCH NEW PODCAST

Afrobeats superstar and LIPA graduate Seun Kuti revealed how studying here gave him confidence in his own musical abilities for the first time when he appeared on our brand-new podcast, *Come Together*.

Seun (2004), who studied the one-year Diploma in Popular Music and Sound Technology (now the FC Popular Music & Music Technology), was our first guest on the podcast.

Chatting to host, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Cherise Weaver, he discussed his childhood in Nigeria playing music with musicians from his dad, Fela Kuti's, band and how by deciding to study in Liverpool rather than London he was able to escape the distractions of friends and family and, "be by myself for the first time. It gave me a chance to find myself."

"LIPA gave me so much... it gave me confidence. Back in Nigeria young people didn't play musical instruments, they played football or ran track. I played music with these veteran musicians, and I was always lagging behind. LIPA was the first time I played and practiced with my peers, and I discovered I wasn't that bad!"

Seun discussed how he's still in touch with friends from his time here with his former flat mate at Anthony House, Percy Street, Alex James remixing tracks from his album *Black Times*.

Seun's appearance on *Come Together* tied in with his headline slot at *Africa Oyé* at Sefton Park in June.

You can listen to the Seun Kuti episode of *Come Together* along with episode two with *Africa Oyé* director Paul Duhane [here](#).

*Come Together* celebrates the creative work and cultural scene in Liverpool and here through conversations with cultural organisations and leaders, artists and performers.

If you've got a story or are working on a project you think Cherise would like to talk to you about, please get in touch at [marketing@lipa.ac.uk](mailto:marketing@lipa.ac.uk).

## LIPA REPRESENTS THE UK AT THEATRE OLYMPICS

Ten of our graduating Acting and Acting (Screen & Digital) students performed at the 10th Theatre Olympics in Budapest after LIPA was chosen to represent the UK.



Rehearsals for Theatre Olympics. Photograph: Brian Roberts

Fifty-eight countries took part in the event with LIPA performing the London scene of *The Tragedy of Man* for the Madách Project, which featured a cast of over 200 people.

Performed at the Eiffel Műhelyház on 23 June, the scene was directed by Acting graduate - and new BA (Hons) Acting, Course Leader - Stuart Crowther. He described it as, "A great way for our students to begin their professional careers by working in a truly collaborative way with people from all over the globe, who have their own performance practices and methods."

"It's a great opportunity to put those practices into conversation with each other and to network and share."

The Theatre Olympics was established in 1994 - with the first event staged in 1995. It's a not-for-profit organisation that promotes theatrical exchange and encourages dialogue between theatre makers no matter what their cultural, ideological or language differences may be. The event is usually staged every four years.

# NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH TOP SINGAPORE ARTS INSTITUTION

As part of our Internationalisation Strategy, we've entered a new partnership with Singapore's leading arts institution, LASALLE College of the Arts, University of the Arts Singapore.



The partnership will provide new opportunities for students and staff, along with curriculum development. One of the aims is for LIPA students to work on productions at LASALLE, with students from Singapore coming to Liverpool to work on projects here.

The two institutes signed a Memorandum of Understanding in May. LIPA's Principal and CEO Professor Sean McNamara says the exchanges will be highly beneficial. "I believe working in a similar environment but in a different culture will give students new perspectives and ideas. It will be an opportunity for them to really stretch themselves and take their learning to the next level."

Professor Steve Dixon, President of LASALLE, agrees that students are at the centre of this agreement and believes the two institutes are well matched. "There is a shared energy and sense of ambition. We offer many similar programmes and disciplines. Both institutes are practice oriented and work to produce outstanding graduates who have a sense of originality and personality."

Our new Internationalisation Strategy will see us collaborate with an increasingly diverse set of global partners.

Left, Professor Sean McNamara (LIPA) and right, Professor Steve Dixon (LASALLE College of the Arts). Photograph: Brian Roberts

# EUROVISION FEVER HITS LIVERPOOL

The Eurovision Song Contest being held in Liverpool, on behalf of Ukraine, was a great opportunity to be involved in a huge global event for our students AND graduates.

Working with the BBC and Motionhouse our Dance team invited graduates to join our students for auditions. The BBC selected 30 students and graduates to perform during finals' week at the M&S Bank Arena, including performing with Rita Ora in the semi-finals and last year's winner from Ukraine, the Kalush Orchestra in the Grand Final.

Another 15 were chosen to work as stand-in performers and were tasked with learning the routines of the participating countries and then performing them at the arena for technical rehearsals. While 37 students and graduates performed alongside Frankie Goes to Hollywood at the Big European Welcome opening ceremony at St George's Hall after auditioning for Motionhouse.

The weeks - and even months - building up to Eurovision were a real whirlwind around LIPA and Liverpool. As well as Dance students we had Costume Making, Management, Music, Sound

Technology and Theatre & Performance Technology students actively involved. We organised and hosted an official Eurovision delegates and press event and a reception for the Estonia Ambassador. You can find out more about our student's involvement [here](#).

Media interest in our involvement was high and we welcomed film and radio crews from *The One Show*, *BBC Bite Sized*, *BBC Morning Live* and BBC Radio Four's *Today* programme onto campus, while students appeared and performed on *BBC Breakfast* and students and graduates were interviewed by *BBC News* and on location by *The One Show*.

Given the amount of activity we hope you'll be able to understand why we haven't been able to comprehensively track and cover all our graduate involvement. Management graduate Ed Millet's company TaP Management was involved from the outset, helping to select the UK's entrant; Sound Technology graduate Sivert Hagvet co-wrote and produced Denmark's entry and Natalie McCool, *Stealing Sheep* and *The Crawlers* all performed at the Eurovision Village. We are sure there will have been even more graduate involvement than that, so if you were part of the event, we'd love to hear about it. Please let us know at: [alumni@lipa.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@lipa.ac.uk)



Rita Ora with LIPA dance students and graduates during the Eurovision semi-final. Photograph: Sarah Louise Bennett

Lottie and Mollie performing *Counterpoint*.  
Photograph: Brian Roberts



# LIPA HOSTS ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS FORUM

As an institution we are committed to the exchange of knowledge. It takes place as an essential part of learning through collaboration with industry; a truly two-way process where students not only experience the latest trends but also influence them.

Increasingly we're extending this exchange, moving beyond direct teaching and learning sessions. An example of this was us hosting the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) Northern Forum: Arts & Citizenship in July.

The event came about following a discussion between our Head of Applied Theatre & Community Drama (ATCD) - and RSA Fellow - Brendon Burns and the RSA's northern engagement manager Roger Hurley.

Together they assembled an impressive set of cultural, academic, political and charity figures who delivered a series of informative, invigorating and inspiring TED Talk style presentations on how the arts can have real influence and impact on society and politics.

The event started with ATCD graduates Lottie Lazenby and Mollie MacPherson (both 2022) setting the scene with a performance of their spoken word piece *Counterpoint*.

The other guests were: Jon Alexander (New Citizenship Partnership), Matthew Brown (Leader, Preston City Council), Brendon Burns (Head of ATCD, LIPA), Ashleigh Nugent (Rise Up), Katy Rubin (Legislative Theatre and Participatory Democracy Practitioner) and Natasha and Kemi Ryan (Reformed Development).

# WELCOME TO OUR 2023 GRADUATES AND COMPANIONS

A very warm welcome to our 2023 graduates and companions. Around 330 of our students celebrated successfully completing their undergraduate or postgraduate degrees and foundation certificates in front of friends and family at this year's graduation ceremony on 28 July at the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall.



The Poet Laureate Simon Armitage reciting one of his unpublished poems, that celebrated the joys of day dreaming, was just one of the many highlights of this year's ceremony.

Simon Armitage, who worked closely with our graduating Actors on *Gilgamesh* in their second year was one of nine Companions this year.

He was joined by Oscar winning costume designer Jenny Beavan, West End performer Anna-Jane Casey, singer and former UK Eurovision representative Sonia, playwright and director John Godber, Broadway and West End theatre producer Ashley Herman, multi award-winning lighting designer Tim Routledge and social justice and anti-racism champion Jacqueline Stewart, from campaigning women's theatre company Clean Break.

Rock legend and former Led Zeppelin frontman Robert Plant was also made a Companion, accepting it via video.

All nine Companions, along with our Founding Patron Sir Paul spoke to our graduating students, offering their congratulations and reflecting on their own careers to offer advice - with a theme of the importance of being kind emerging.

The afternoon was joyous and uplifting and for those of us who work here an affirmation of why we do what we do.

We hope you and your loved ones enjoyed it just as much.

Back row (left-to-right): Ashley Herman, John Godber, Sean McNamara, Paul McCartney, Mark Featherstone-Witty, Tim Routledge, Simon Armitage. Front row: Jacqueline Stewart, Jenny Beavan, Sonia, Anna-Jane Casey. Photograph: PA Media Group/Peter Byrne



# STAY CONNECTED

As a LIPA graduate you are a valued lifelong member of our global community of over 7,000 alumni.

We are extremely proud of our graduates, and love to share and celebrate your career news, while also keeping you up to date with what's going on here.

We also love it when you come back to visit us, whether that is to share your experiences with LIPA students or on a more informal basis. Even if that is just a quick look-around, while you happen to be back in Liverpool.

As one of our graduates you can benefit from discounted tuition fees if you choose to study one of our postgraduate courses and discounted tickets for shows in our public seasons of performances that are staged in the Paul McCartney Auditorium.

If any of your contact details have changed, or you would like to tell us what you are doing now in your career, please complete [our alumni update form](#).

## SEEMENOW

You can also find out the latest alumni and institutional news by following:

 [@LIPA\\_Alumni](#) on X  
(formerly known as Twitter).

 and by joining our LIPA Alumni [Facebook group](#).

You may find the career opportunity you have been looking for there and you can also share your own updates.

 We also have a group on [LinkedIn](#).