

THEATRE ROYAL
STRATFORD EAST
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Birkbeck
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
STRATFORD

MA in Creative Producing for Theatre and Live Performance

Class of 2010



The Birkbeck MA in Creative Producing
is operated in association with the
Theatre Royal Stratford East

www.stratfordeast.com

Birkbeck, University of London
MA in Creative Producing
for Theatre and Live Performance

Class of 2010

SABA BURALI

SARAH CLEWS

SOPHIE LARSMON

THERESA PINE

ROWAN RUTTER

CLARE SHUCKSMITH

ROISIN STIMPSON

LEONORA WOOD

MA in Creative Producing for Theatre and Live Performance 2009–10

Students have experienced a wide range of professional training centred on practice-based exercises, budgets and presentations, with extensive input from many experienced professional practitioners.

Andrew McKinnon (Birkbeck Senior Lecturer and Programme Director) leads the programme and has conducted a wide range of teaching sessions and classes on directly relevant subjects including funding strategies and planning.

Julius Green (Producer, Bill Kenwright Ltd and Birkbeck Honorary Research Fellow) has led a considerable number of extended and detailed classes and sessions on commercial production and on the realities of the contemporary producer's life and work.

Student work has also included sessions with

- senior Theatre Royal Stratford East staff (Mary Caws, Karen Fisher, Ali Fellows, Alix Hearn, Kerry Michael, Jan Sharkey-Dodds);
- commercial producer Neil Laidlaw;
- investment consultant Philippe Carden;
- Jackie Elliman (Legal Officer ITC); and
- academic consultant Dr Fleur Rothschild.

In addition students participated in conversations and discussions with, amongst others, Chenine Bhathena (GLA London 2012), Gareth Brierley & Sadie Cook (People Show), Chloe Dear (Iron Oxide), Lyn Gardner (The Guardian), Rachel Feuchtwang, Bill Gee, Louise Jeffreys (Barbican), Tim Jones (Solar), Jonathan Kennedy (TARA), Laura Kriefman (Tristan Bates Theatre), Annette Mees (Coney), Angela McSherry (TippingPoint), Neil Murray (National Theatre of Scotland), George Perrin & James Grieve (Paines Plough), Simon Pittman (Frantic Assembly), Karen Poley, Hilary Salmon (BBC TV) and Rachel Tackley (English Touring Theatre).

As a group, the students saw and analysed *Wicked* and *Blood Brothers* in the West End; *Behhudth*, *The Great Extension* and *Aladdin* at Theatre Royal Stratford East, *Peter Pan* in Kensington Gardens, *Filter's Three Sisters* at the Lyric Hammersmith, *First Ladies* at the Union Theatre, and several productions at Tristan Bates Theatre.

Thanks to all our supporters in the industry...

Throughout the year students have worked with, or been seconded to, a very diverse range of professional companies. Birkbeck is very grateful to all the companies who have welcomed these students, and in particular to Live Art Development Agency, People Show, Cardboard Citizens, Metis Arts, Artangel, Crying Out Loud, and Tristan Bates Theatre, who kindly provided initial secondment opportunities.

Special thanks to the Theatre Royal Stratford East, Bill Kenwright and Michael McCabe.

Birkbeck is very grateful to Stage One/SOLT for its support in providing a bursary fund towards UK student fees on this programme during both 2008–09 and 2009–10.

The MA in Creative Producing prepares students for professional roles as creative producers in a wide variety of theatre and live performance events, including outdoor performance and street arts. It is:

- practice-centred and practice-based;
- rooted in the present-day realities of the role of the professional creative producer, and in the blend of personal taste and judgement, practical skills, creative team working, and problem solving needed for that role;
- designed to appeal to a diverse range of potential students – reflected in its diverse content, teaching and assessment methods;
- based on current industrial practice; and
- planned in consultation with a wide range of current practitioners.

The MA works in conjunction with the Birkbeck MFA in Theatre Directing, www.bbk.ac.uk/study/pg/theatrestudies/index.html

The 2010/11 session of the MA begins on 29 September 2010.

**For further details about the programme
or the class of 2010 please contact:**

**Andrew McKinnon,
Programme Director
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Saba Burali

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After graduating in Theatre Studies in 2003 at Ca' Foscari University in Venice, Saba worked there at the Giorgio Cini Foundation on a range of research and educational projects linked with theatre.

In 2008, after a placement in London at the National Theatre Archive, she started to collaborate with Tricolore, a bilingual London-based theatre company producing a range of events with particular attention to the Italian tradition. These included a Leopardi poetry night at the Italian Cultural Institute. Currently Saba is working on the production of *A Gold Chain*, a comedy inspired by the Italian commedia dell'arte. In November and December 2009 she worked with 'Crying Out Loud'.

Saba is currently collaborating as a producer with Dogorange, a young theatre company recently founded by director Matthew Parker, that creates fresh and inventive adaptations of classics. Their forthcoming shows are: Dario Fo and Franca Rame's *A Woman Alone* and Chekhov's short story *Ward Number Six*.

Saba is passionate about literature and its potential on stage, and is keen to find new ways of looking at classics and literary works that were not originally conceived for performance. She is interested in developing small scale shows that provide an engaging and magical experience for the audience by challenging the performers involved and using different media.

Saba has recently begun to collaborate with visual artist Alda Terracciano on the development of a blog about her video audio installation *Streets of... (seven minutes in seven cities around the world)*, which is intended for exhibition in 2012 at the London Cultural Olympiad.



Sarah Clews

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Sarah is interested in new writing and devised work, with an emphasis on its immediate political relevance. She is currently developing a project investigating notions of citizenship and identity. In 2011 she will be producing a site-specific performance in Battersea Park. Her recent work includes producing *People Show 121: The Detective Show* (autumn 2010 national tour, www.peopleshow.co.uk) and working as Participation Officer for the TARA Arts 2012 youth arts and heritage project, *Sailing to Britain*, which explores the untold stories of Lascars – migrant sailors from Africa and Asia who worked on British merchant ships (www.sailingtobritain.blogspot.com).

Her other producing credits include: *Zazzi & Co* – vibrant educational shows for 3–7 year olds (touring 2003–2009); *Pocket Pantos* – traditional pantomimes performed by three actors (touring 2002–2008); and *Hello! OK?* – a comedy sketch show exploring society’s obsession with fame (London, Brighton and Edinburgh Fringe Festival, 2008)

Sarah has extensive professional experience in theatre, including venue management, production management, stage management, company management and arts marketing. She has previously worked with numerous companies including Frantic Assembly, ATG, Attic Theatre Company, Graeae, Diverse City, the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames, RADA and the Royal Court.

In 2007 Sarah gained a BA in Arts Management and Theatre Studies from London Metropolitan University.



Sophie Larsmon

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Sophie is currently balancing a three-month secondment as Trainee Producer at Paines Plough with working as a freelance producer on various theatrical projects. Her work at Paines Plough has included booking the UK tour of their forthcoming show *Tiny Volcanoes* by Laurence Wilson and co-ordinating open casting sessions in conjunction with The Actors' Centre. She looks forward to continuing her relationship with Paines Plough in her new role as their Assistant Producer from autumn 2010.

She also recently produced *Elephant 21* for The Mayhem Company (Elephant & Castle Shopping Centre, July 2010) which has further inspired her to pursue her love of new work in non-conventional theatre buildings. Her previous producing and directing credits include *When Shakespeare's Ladies Meet* (Southbank,

London, 2009); *The Importance of Waiting for Macbeth* (Thespo Festival, Mumbai, 2008); and *A Latesummer Night's Dream* (Open-air production at Westbrook, Surrey, 2008).

Since graduating from the University of York with a BA (First Class Hons) in English/Writing and Performance, Sophie has worked in different creative capacities for various theatre companies including Cardboard Citizens, Shared Experience, Tamasha and York Theatre Royal.

She also works in the Diversity Team at Arts Council England, where she manages the Independent Disability Equality Advisory Group; and previously assisted in the delivery of the fourth *Decibel Performing Arts Showcase* (September 2009), which aims to promote artists from diverse backgrounds.

Theresa Pine

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Theresa lives in South East London where she studied Drama and Theatre Studies at Goldsmiths College. She has worked in several capacities in the theatre as a stage manager, in ticketing, and as front of house management; and she has produced and directed productions on the fringe in London.

She is currently working with Illumini, who stage events with artists and performers who use light and illumination in their work. As a result, Theresa has developed a new interest in producing and curating exhibitions of artists' work, and hopes to undertake more in the future.

Theresa is working on several other projects during 2010: *Secret Subterranean London in Shoreditch* (September); *Crypt-Mass*, a month-long mini-festival running in Central London (December); weekly workshops with Spare Tyre; and Giant Olive's Christmas show at The Lion and Unicorn. She has also recently founded her own company Helicon to work with actors and writers who are over 60.

Following her MA at Birkbeck, Theresa has been offered the opportunity to embark upon a PhD at the University of East London from February 2011. Her research will look at the producing of the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games, and how this performance represents the culture of the host nation. She also hopes that, as part of her PhD, she will be able to assist in cataloguing the material related to the Olympics that is held in the archives at UEL.

At Birkbeck, Theresa received a Denton Wilde Sapte Bursary, which greatly assisted her in taking her MA in Creative Producing. She is very grateful for this support.

Rowan Rutter

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From a professional theatre family, Rowan studied English Literature and Creative Writing at Warwick University, where she was Production Manager for all student shows in Warwick Arts Centre (2007–2009), including award winning shows at the National Student Drama Festival and Edinburgh Fringe.

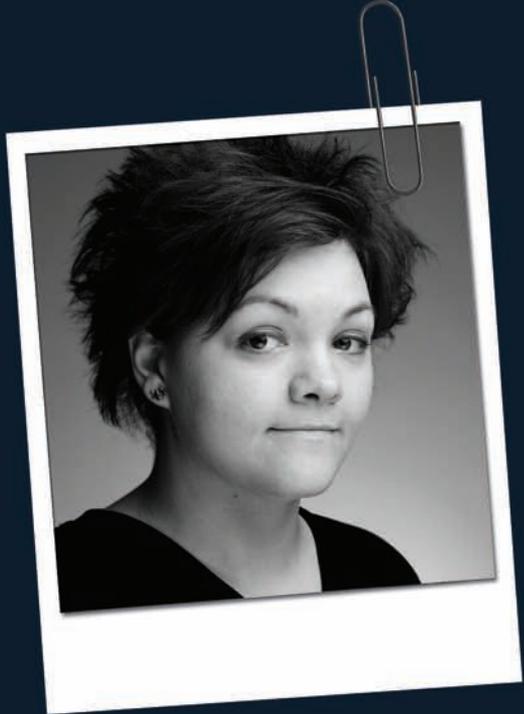
She produced and devised work for Edinburgh Fringe (*Grimoire*, Bedlam, 2007); co-ordinated the artistic programme, workshops, performances and volunteer teams for *One World Week* with the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Sphinx and Graeae; and re-branded, co-ordinated and programmed Warwick Student Arts Festival, the largest student arts festival in Europe with more than 60 individual events over five days (2008–2009). Rowan also acted as Visual Archivist for Footsbarn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2008–2009) and was Production Assistant at Sonia Friedman Productions (2009).

Rowan started her professional career as acting ASM for Northern Broadsides in their extensive national tour of *School for Scandal* (2005). In 2009, working with the Prostate Cancer Charity, she produced and raised funds for *A One Night Stand* at Trafalgar Studios; and became Interaction Assistant for Artangel's *Staying*. She was Producer for EyeSpy puppet theatre company, touring *The Kapok Tree* locally in Wandsworth, London (2009–2010).

In 2010 she assisted with production, marketing and press activity on Cartoon de Salvo's *Pub Rock* at the Lyric Hammersmith (2010), and produced The Wedding Collective's opera *The Shoreditch Consul* at Cordy House, Shoreditch (2010).

In summer 2010, Rowan will be managing areas and events at the Serenata festival in Dorset; and she will be working on a new touring production of the *The Shoreditch Consul* in the autumn.





Clare Shucksmith

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Clare founded 2headedpigeon Theatre Company in 2003. She now acts as Artistic Director for the company, which is resident at the Firestation Centre for Arts and Culture in Windsor. Most recently, the company's award-winning punk anti-musical *The Inconsiderate Aberrations of Billy the Kid* received 5 star reviews at the Brighton and Edinburgh Fringe Festivals, and was featured in *The Guardian*.

A graduate of the innovative Contemporary Theatre BA (Hons) at East 15 Acting School, Clare has worked as a performer and director. Her working method focuses on ensemble experimentation, drawing much of its inspiration from clowning and playfulness.

In autumn 2009 she worked with the Live Art Development Agency, writing a resource pack designed to assist young people to

engage with Live Art. This allowed her to utilise her skills as a performing arts tutor and youth worker. She has administered and led numerous youth projects and worked extensively with young people. Currently, alongside her work in theatre, Clare is employed by the City of London to encourage young people on inner city estates to reclaim open spaces as play environments.

Clare has used her year of study at Birkbeck to explore the artistic and strategic contexts of her work, and to investigate how that work can be financially sustainable. She has also sought to foster collaborations to further develop *Threadbare Greebo*, a dark parable about social exclusion. Over the year she has become increasingly interested in counter-cultural art, and she explored this in a dissertation for her MA Personal Project. On graduation she intends to re-focus 2headedpigeon Theatre Company's work to reflect this new focus.

Roisin Stimpson

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Roisin is Co-Director of Speakeasy Entertainment Ltd. The company is due to launch The Nightjar, a new night-time venue, in Old Street in November 2010.

The Nightjar is an underground bar inspired by European cabaret venues and American Prohibition establishments of the 1920s and 30s. It will combine fine cocktails and hospitality with a varied programme of live music and cabaret performance. The Nightjar will champion the art of cabaret song in particular: intimate, sung storytelling relevant to the here and now.

Roisin is also interested in site-specific work and community engagement, and is working on a pilot street festival to take place in London in summer 2011. The festival is inspired by the life and home of a past resident of the capital, the father of modern clowns, Joseph Grimaldi (1778–1837). Its aims are to celebrate not only Grimaldi's contribution to the arts, but also London's rich heritage and impressive built environment. The pilot will act as a platform for a series of similar mini-festivals to take part across the city in the lead-up to and during London 2012.



In addition, Roisin works for Forma, a creative production agency that specialises in new artistic collaborations and innovations, often influenced by wider disciplines such as mathematics, biotechnology or engineering. Forma's programme ranges across performances, exhibitions, public art, film and publications. Company highlights in Spring/ Summer 2010 include Lynette Wallworth's video artwork for the Young Vic/ENO co-production of *Elegy for Young Lovers*, Chris Watson's sound installation *Whispering in the Leaves* at Kew Gardens (a co-production with Sound and Music), and *The Miners' Hymns*, an audio-visual collaboration between Bill Morrison and Jóhann Jóhannsson for BRASS 2010, premiered at Durham Cathedral.

Roisin has a BA Honours from Trinity College Dublin in History of Art and Spanish. She began her career in Proposals at Christie's auction house, assisting top specialists to win key business at the highest levels. She rose to Deputy Manager before moving into arts production and the public sector.



Leonora Wood

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Since 2008, Leo has worked as a freelance arts producer for film and literature festivals and, more recently, in theatre. She has tended to work on international, politically engaged projects such as the Palestine Literature Festival and Africa in Motion film festival. Other recent projects included producing a season of Werner Herzog films at pop-up venues and cinemas in London in Autumn 2009, and working with Jude Kelly at Metal to develop an art and gastronomy project in Spain and to take a one-woman show to the 2009 Edinburgh Fringe. Prior to 2008, Leo assisted at arts festivals including the Harare International Festival of the Arts and Edinburgh International Festival.

Most recently, for the new Scottish organization Beyond Borders Productions Ltd, she has produced a festival that included theatre performances and film screenings in August 2010 from small nations including Palestine, Georgia, Kurdistan and Zimbabwe.

Leo is also currently producing *The Tempest* with Jericho House. This will be performed in association with the Barbican as part of their BITE season and then tour for two weeks to Palestine and Israel in Autumn 2011. For the first time since 1611, Jericho are reviving the 'lost' musical score for *The Tempest* written by Jacobean composer Robert Johnson in direct collaboration with Shakespeare. Director Jonathan Holmes rediscovered this musical score whilst undertaking academic research at the Bodleian Library; and now, on the 400th anniversary of the play's first performance at the Blackfriars Theatre, the text and music of this remarkable play will at last be reunited.

www.jerichohouse.org.uk

www.beyondborders2010.com

www.palfest.org

www.metalculture.com

www.africa-in-motion.org.uk

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Further information

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