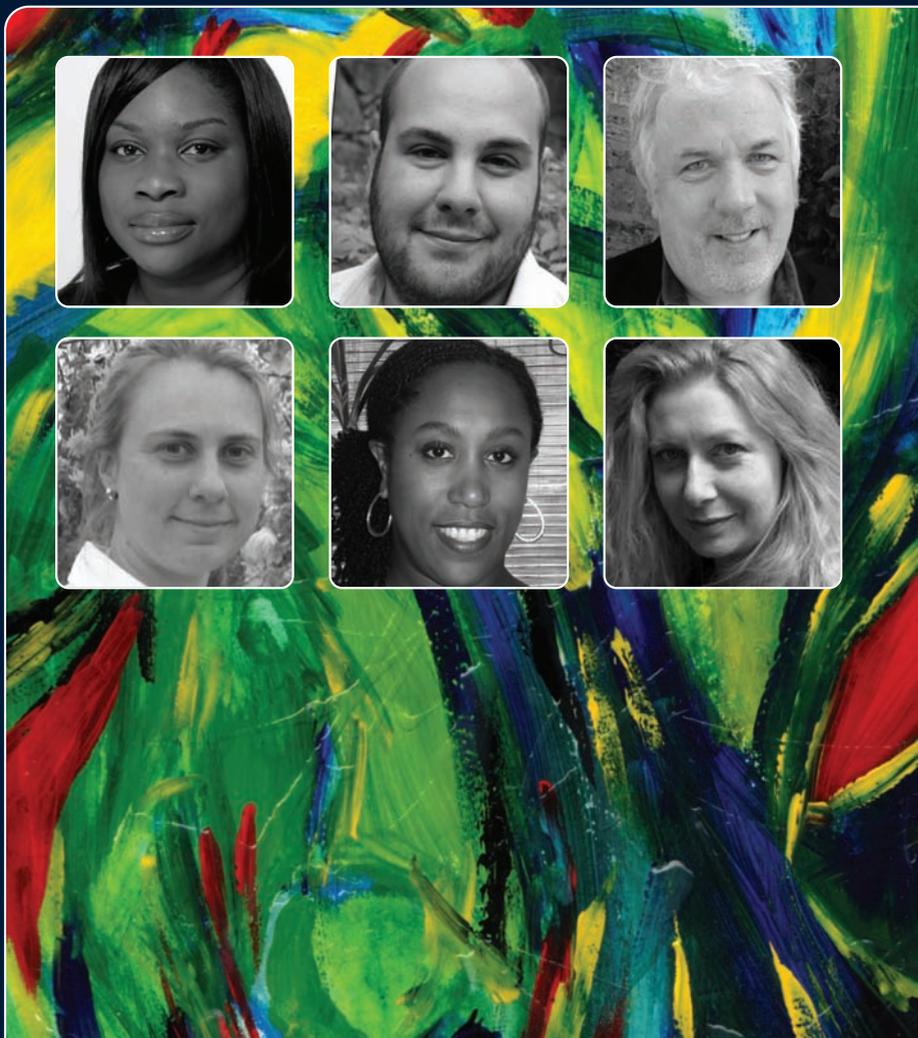


MA in Creative Producing for Theatre and Live Performance

Class of 2009



MA in Creative Producing for Theatre and Live Performance **Class of 2009**

Abena Adofo / Nicholas Boalch / Nicholas Hennegan / Karen Jemison / Samantha Nurse / Michelle Owoo.

These full-time students are currently completing their work on the programme. Theresa Pine also entered the programme in 2008 on a part-time basis and will be a member of the Class of 2010.

The MA 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 programme includes extensive input from many experienced professional practitioners and industry professionals.

Andrew McKinnon leads the programme and has conducted a wide range of sessions on relevant subjects including funding strategies and planning. Students have experienced a varied range of professional training centering on practice-based exercises, budgets and presentations.

Student work has included;

- sessions with senior members of TRSE staff (Barry Burke, Karen Fisher, Murray Melvin, Kerry Michael, Jan Sharkey-Dodds and Vanessa Stone);
- over forty hours of extended and detailed tuition centring on commercial production from Julius Green (Associate Producer, Bill Kenwright Ltd);
- sessions from commercial producers Neil Laidlaw, Jeremy Meadow, Derek Nicholls, Nick Salmon; investment consultant Philippe Carden; and a range of independent producers including Chloe Dear, Bill Gee, Angela McSherry and Sita Ramamurthy;
- conversations and discussions with Lyn Gardner, Neil Murray (National Theatre of Scotland), Gene David Kirk (Theatre 503), Chenine Bhathena (ACE London), Leyla Jones (Roundhouse ACE Fellow), Jackie Elliman (ITC), Manick Govinda (Artsadmin), Jonathan Kennedy (TARA) and casting director Sophie Marshall.

Students undertook short secondments in the autumn term with The Actors Centre, Arden Entertainment, Churchill Theatre Bromley, Bill Gee, Mimbre, Mark Rubenstein Ltd, Soho Theatre and Theatre Royal Stratford East. Final Personal Projects include work with Artichoke, Cardboard Citizens, Emergency Exit Arts and Forest Forge as well as the development of projects with Maverick Theatre and Manilla Street Productions.

As a group the students saw and analysed *Wicked* and *Blood Brothers* in the West End; *Come Dancing*, *Hansel & Gretel*, *Mad Blut*, *Bad Blood Blues* and *Foreplay* at Stratford East; *Pied Piper* at the Barbican; *Warm* at Theatre 503; and *The Trapeze Artist* at TARA. They also formed part of the onstage audience at the first dress rehearsal of *Spring Awakening* at the Lyric Hammersmith.

The MA in Creative Producing is operated in association with the Theatre Royal Stratford East: www.stratfordeast.com.

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

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

The 2009/10 session of the MA in Creative Producing begins on 8 September 2009.

For further details about the programme or the class of 2009 please contact:

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Abena Adofo

Abena is a new producer from East London. She studied Media Arts and Drama at St Mary's University College and is just completing her MA in Creative Producing at Birkbeck. She has a varied background in the creative industry (theatre, film, television and radio) and has worked in many different roles in front of and behind the scenes – as Production Manager, TV Researcher, Actress, Production Co-ordinator and Liaison Officer for companies such as ITV, Theatre Royal Stratford East, Hackney Empire, Soho and UBC Media.

Abena has produced Gospel concerts and African Cultural Events in Waltham Forest, Fashion Shows for the designer and record label *Howell 2 be Harsh*, and several short plays. Whilst on the MA she worked on the *Soho Script Slam* and *Soho Streets* at Soho Theatre, and as Trainee Producer and Lead Researcher on a Theatre Royal Stratford East production, *Mad Blud*, a verbatim piece created by Philip Osment.

She then worked on Cardboard Citizens' *Keep Calm and Carry On* – a promenade performance in Churchill's underground bunker, devised by young refugees and asylum seekers – and continued with Cardboard Citizens on their Hostels tour.

Abena is keen to produce new writing. Her principal interest are Anglo-African writing and theatre that deals with social issues; and she wants to bridge the gap between the community and mainstream theatre. She is always on the lookout for new talent!

She is currently developing four projects – *Africa Speaks!* a Writers Festival celebrating the African Diaspora; a cabaret show in East London, with local and professional artists; a youth/community project in Waltham Forest dealing with some the issues and problems in the borough surrounding NEET youth; and a project with a deaf performance artist.

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Nicholas Boalch

Nicholas is a theatremaker and translator. His interests as a creative producer are in new writing, new translation and the promotion of international theatre, and he is particularly interested in developing work for audiences outside London.

As a student he co-founded the companies Captain Theatre (Edinburgh Fringe sellout *Antigone*, 2005) and rather like a shark (Edinburgh Fringe sellout *Assassins*, 2007). With these and other companies he has produced over thirty shows including new writing (*Hansel & Gretel*, Edinburgh Fringe 2006), translation (*Pains of Youth* by Ferdinand Bruckner, Edinburgh Fringe 2006), musicals (*Sweeney Todd*, Gala Theatre, Durham, 2007) and sketch comedy (*WitTank*, London, Edinburgh and touring 2005–present).

His academic research is practice-based and focuses on issues of theatre creation and performance in an intercultural context. He graduated from the University of Durham with a BA Hons in Modern European Languages and an MA by research in the translation of theatre, and is currently completing a PhD in the theory of translation.

During the MA he was seconded to the Actors Centre and Tristan Bates Theatre in Covent Garden, where he continues to work on a regular basis, and to Forest Forge Theatre Company in Hampshire, where he worked on the Roots Youth Theatre Festival and a touring production of *Around the World in 80 Days*, with a particular focus on marketing and audience development.

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Nick Hennegan

Nick Hennegan's first production was a transfer of Nicolai Erdman's *The Suicide* to Solihull Library Theatre in 1992. After success at the Edinburgh Festival with a one-person version of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, Nick established the Maverick Theatre Company in Birmingham in 1994 – to encourage new theatre audiences and new local talent, increasing access to the performing arts through the presentation of contemporary classics and new works in mainly non-theatre environments. Over the next ten years, Nick and Maverick won numerous awards, produced over thirty shows in Birmingham – some touring nationally and to the USA – and established the Fox Maverick Youth Theatre and the Rocket Writers Group.

Nick has been involved in the creative industries most of his working life and has a flair for creating new, popular events, working with creative teams and generating new ideas. During 1989–1993 he headed 'Sharp Images' – a Birmingham based company producing commercial openings, product launches and

retail support for many bluechip clients and agencies. He was a radio presenter and producer for commercial and BBC stations 1980–1988, mainly on music presentation and documentary programmes (Sony Award Winner for *Susan and Friends*).

Nick has worked on a number of projects during his time at Birkbeck. He is currently planning a national tour of a new play about Tony Hancock during 2010 and he also hopes to tour and present in London Behan's *The Hostage*, for which he now has the UK rights. He is also working on a possible West End presentation of the critically acclaimed *Thatcher – The Musical* and a tour of *PALS*, an earlier Maverick success. His screenplay *George's Seventh Dimension* has been placed in the top 30 screenplays for the UK Screenwriters Festival 09; and he is running a series of *Introduction to Producing* workshops nationally.

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Karen Jemison

Karen Jemison is an independent theatre producer. Karen is originally from Australia where she worked for Tourism Victoria promoting Melbourne as the 'theatre capital of Australia'. This included working with commercial theatre producers such as Really Useful Group, IMG and Cameron Macintosh to develop cooperative marketing campaigns promoting Melbourne's theatre offerings. Karen initiated the successful 'Melbourne the Musical' marketing campaign which was launched by the Minister of Tourism and ran for three years.

Karen moved to the UK in 2000 where she worked internationally as a senior management consultant with A.T. Kearney. Karen is a member of Mercury Musical Developments (MMD) and Musical Theatre Matters (MTM) and was an Olivier Award Panel judge for Musicals in 2006. She has a Graduate Diploma in Arts Management from Melbourne University and an MBA.

As part of the MA in Creative Producing, Karen undertook an internship with Arden Entertainment in the West End. She also recently worked at the Southwark Playhouse as a Curator of the *Secrets* Series. As Curator, Karen organised the programming of artists, marketing of the series, box office and provided production support. Artists who performed as part of *Secrets* included Tangled Feet, Myernark and Scratch Interact.

Karen established Manilla Street Productions in 2008 and has a number of projects in development.

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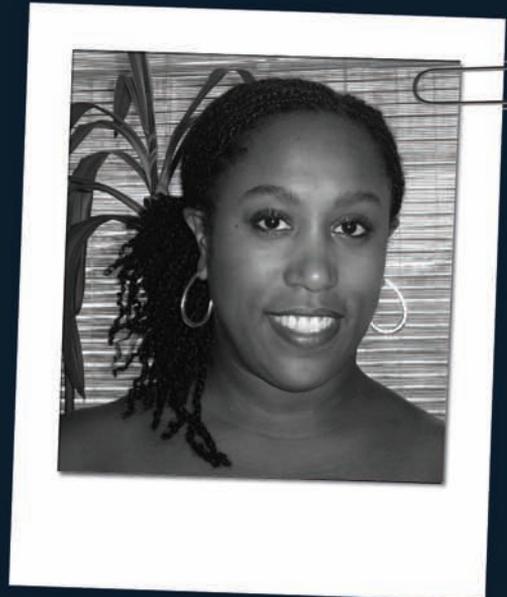
Samantha Nurse

Samantha Nurse previously trained as a theatre technician and has spent most of her professional life working in theatre. Working across a spectrum of disciplines such as music, audio visual, dance, comedy and performance Samantha has worked with such companies as Talawa, Theatre Centre, Graeae Theatre Company and Theatre Royal Stratford East.

Samantha turned her attention to professional training and development in theatre and became a lecturer at Brooke House Sixth Form College where she taught Technical Theatre and Stage Management. She was Course Designer & Tutor for the first practical traineeship for BME women at Clean Break, where she also currently teaches a short annual Technical Theatre Course. Samantha has also designed and taught technical theatre courses for Streets Alive Theatre Company and Streetwise Opera. She is currently developing an educational package for her company SamTec Productions, providing short intense training in Technical Theatre & Stage Management to various groups.

As a producer, Samantha has assisted in a number of well received projects with such companies as Theatre Royal Stratford East, Talawa Theatre Company and Rukus! Federation. She has become particularly interested in new writing and in bringing the theatre experience to wider communities including collaborating with artists from various art forms and countries. Whilst on the MA, Samantha was seconded to Mark Rubinstein Ltd and most recently was working with Emergency Exit Arts. She currently has two producing projects in development.

www.samtecproductions.com





Michelle Owoo

Michelle Owoo is particularly interested in multi-disciplinary collaboration and the staging of theatre, performance and art in the public domain, mixing the everyday with the unexpected, as well as in the regenerative potential of arts projects. She is currently working with Artichoke on Antony Gormley's project *One and Other* in Trafalgar Square, sponsored by Sky Arts (www.oneandother.co.uk). As part of her role she has interviewed and photographed many of the participants going up on the plinth (including the Director of the National Portrait Gallery!).

In 2008 she co-produced a special live Kenneth Anger event with Shunt, bringing the celebrated film maker to London for a rare showing of new work and a Q&A session. She also completed a short work placement at Artsadmin with Associate Producer Bill Gee on the development of a site specific project for the Thames Festival. She had previously worked at Theatre Royal Stratford East on the first International Festival

for Emerging Artists, and has since done other work for TRSE. She has also co-produced a series of alternative cabaret events showcasing the work of musicians, dancers, artists and spoken word performers from across the UK including John Cooper Clarke and Antony Joseph.

As a performer, Michelle has worked in theatre and live television. Just before embarking on this MA she performed in and produced *The Greatest Ever Dada Show* based on early 20th century French Dada texts, staged at Tate Modern, Liverpool Biennial of Contemporary Art and Hackney Empire Spice Festival.

Michelle has a BA in French and History of Art from the University of Central Lancashire and spent a year living in Nantes. Her translations of Dada poems and manifestos by artists and writers such as Picabia, Tzara etc. have been published by Tate Modern in *The Dada Reader*.

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Further information

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