



July 2006



Greg Garrard



National Teaching Fellowship for Greg Garrard

Greg Garrard from the School of English and Creative Studies has been awarded a prestigious National Teaching Fellowship – often referred to as the ‘Oscars’ of the lecturing profession. He was chosen from a record 242 nominations submitted by higher education institutions across England and Northern Ireland, and will receive an award of £10,000 to support his learning and teaching. Only fifty Fellowships are awarded nationwide.

The National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) is run by the Higher Education Academy and funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. It recognises and rewards individual excellence in teaching in higher education in England and Northern Ireland.

The award recognises the quality of Greg’s work with students at Bath Spa over a number of years. His particular field of expertise is writing and environmentalism, and he has been at the forefront of the development of this aspect of English Studies in the UK. He has also developed the use of technology in his teaching and has pioneered innovative forms of assessment.

Bath Spa has a remarkable achievement of success in the NTF Awards. Greg will be joining two other Fellows - Paul Hyland and Chrissie Harrington - in the Artswork CETL team as Senior Teaching Fellow leading the PublishingLab. Bath Spa’s other NTF is Joe Bennett, who received his award in 2004.

Professor Frank Morgan commented: "For one of the smallest UK universities to have a fourth National Teaching Fellow is exceptional. It is just one indication of the high standards delivered by our academic staff. My congratulations go to Greg for this well deserved award."



Degree Show Exhibit Wins National Acclaim



Lauren Porter

Fine Art student Lauren Porter has won national – and even international – recognition following her degree show exhibit 'Twelve Miles of Yarn'.

When she presented a full scale knitted version of a Ferrari - complete with windscreen wipers, wing mirrors, low profile tyres and the famous prancing horse logo - she had little idea of the impact it would have on the national media. Within days of the exhibit appearing Lauren was bombarded by requests for radio and TV appearances, and her knitted Ferrari has appeared in most of the national newspapers and numerous magazines.



Lauren's Ferrari is visually stunning, but is more than a car that happens to be made of wool. It is a carefully considered object that questions the relationship between male symbols and feminine craft to suggest the relationship is more complex than first thought. It speaks to audiences on many different levels - also giving a new meaning to the knitted sweater, for example: are cars themselves forms of clothing, perhaps?

In addition to the knitted Ferrari the Degree Show included many examples of outstanding talent from students of Ceramics, Fine Art, Fashion and Graphic Design in the annual showcase of student work. Visitors were also able to view the state-of-the-art Artwork facilities, and to see work by students specialising in the area of new technologies such Digital Design, Fine Art Video and Interactive Media.



The exhibition coincided with the launch of the Bath Visual Arts Festival, a collaboration between The Bath School of Art and Design, the Centre for Creative Arts at City of Bath College and Bath Area Network of Artists (BANA). The Bath Visual Arts Festival intends to re-establish a festival of visual art and design practice in the city, contributing to the city's festival programme and raising the profile of the visual arts in Bath.



Meadow

Yet another exciting project from the School of Art and Design.



Meadow

MEADOW, the first commission for Bath Sculpture Garden, is a floating meadow housed on a barge that was towed by a tug along the Kennet & Avon canal. The installation was designed by renowned artist Tania Kovats, and the project led by sculptor Michael Pennie, with the help of a team of students and staff from the School of Art and Design.

Meadow was officially 'launched' on its journey from a reception at Sydney Gardens on 11 June and completed it in London three weeks later. During its journey the floating transported garden followed the Kennet & Avon canal through Bradford-on Avon, Trowbridge, Devizes, Horton, on through the Vale of Pewsey, Crofton, Hungerford, Kintbury, Newbury, Thatcham and Theale, with Tania Kovats delivering workshops at selected "Festival" locations along the way. MEADOW having completed its journey has been returned to its original site where it continues to grow.

Bath Spa's 'Ten Characteristics'

Our vision as Bath Spa University is to 'build on our reputation as one of the UK's best teaching-led universities'. However the term 'teaching-led' is a relatively new one in higher education, and in order to focus our strategic planning ten 'characteristics' of a teaching-led university have been formulated, along with accompanying performance indicators to enable us to judge our performance against our peers.

The ten characteristics are:

1. Teaching quality
2. Academic staff development in furtherance of the mission
3. Student-centred
4. The whole teaching spectrum
5. Employability and the curriculum
6. Delivery through partnership
7. A national contributor to teaching excellence
8. Teaching-led research, not research-led teaching
9. Working with business
10. International dimension

A brief description of these characteristics is available at:

<http://oldsite.bathspa.ac.uk/departments/academic-office/strategic-plans/strat-plan-2006-7-2008-9.pdf>



Somerset Place

Somerset Place

Contracts have now been exchanged for the sale of Somerset Place, and arrangements are in hand to lease the premises back from the buyer (identity not yet released) until September 2009, with the exception of Nos 17 – 20 Somerset Place, which will be released in September 2008. Discussions are now in hand with the appropriate managers around the relocation of the non-residential facilities currently housed in Somerset Place.

South Quays

Plans for the acquisition of the central Bath South Quays site, which we hope to acquire with the assistance of B&NES Council, are progressing. A brief for the new campus is now being prepared, with a preliminary programme for occupation by 2009 (subject to site acquisition, budget and planning permissions). The site adjacent to the Bath Spa campus has been identified for development by the James Dyson Foundation as a School of Innovation and Design.

The University has been supported throughout its negotiations by positive help and advice from B&NES and the Regional Development Agency, and there is every indication that the RDA will be able to deliver us a serviced site on which to develop the new campus. A new riverside walk and pedestrian bridge over the river will form part of the plans for the development.

It is pleasing that the University has featured consistently and emphatically in B&NES' Vision of Bath statement and plans.

New student Accommodation

The loss of Somerset Place will, of course, lead to a reduction in the number of student residences, and discussions are ongoing with a number of commercial providers about partnership arrangements to provide additional student housing. The arrangements for this are likely to be similar to those operating very successfully at Waterside Court. Various sites are being explored for this, including Western Riverside.



Waterside Court



Campus Developments

Both Newton Park and Sion Hill campuses have benefited from significant investment in facilities through the Artwork CETL funding. In the first development phase, DesignLab at Sion Hill has been completed and provides superb resources for graphic and multimedia students. At Newton Park, part of Compton has been converted into MusicLab, with state-of-the-art recording studios and mixing desks, whilst BroadcastLab in the Gatehouse provides the latest script to screen editing and broadcasting facilities. The Bath Spa University Theatre is on schedule for completion in October and has already attracted considerable interest in architecture and building circles for its distinctive façade, featuring a series of projecting slate 'fins'.

The second phase of CETL developments will incorporate PerformanceLab, PublishingLab and FashionLab.

Student Employee of the Year



Sophie Kent-Ledger
(pictured with certificate)

The JobShop ran its annual Student Employee of the Year competition recently and after much deliberation of an extremely high set of entries, the judging panel awarded the prize to 2nd year Education student Sophie Kent-Ledger. Sophie's award recognised the outstanding contribution she made in her part-time work with Quarriers, a national charity working with vulnerable adults and children, who manage the residential respite care unit, Beaumonds, on behalf of Bath and North East Somerset Council.

David Niven, Development Manager of Quarriers, commented: "We're delighted for Sophie who is a popular and valued member of staff. As well as her colleagues, the children and families appreciate her hard work and enthusiasm. I hope that this is the first in a series of positive collaborations between Quarriers and the University."



Ecological Impact Assessment: Science & Best Practice



On 11th-12th July 2006, the School of Science & the Environment ran a highly successful two-day conference on Ecological Impact Assessment with over 200 delegates attending. The meeting was designed to bring together scientists and practitioners from this growing sector to exchange and develop ideas on best practice and to ensure a sound scientific basis to the work undertaken.

Delegates from UK, Ireland, Germany, Sweden, Kenya and South Africa contributed to presentations and discussions on a wide range of topics including wind farm developments, predictive modelling, GIS applications and habitat creation. Discussions on Survey and Monitoring, Evaluation, Impacts & Significance, and Mitigation were initiated and will continue via discussion boards via www.myotis.co.uk/ecia. The conference presentations are available via www.ieem.org.uk/ and the proceedings will be published by Blackwells in the autumn of 2007.

The meeting was organised on behalf of the British Ecological Society (BES) and the Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (IEEM). It received financial support from BES and IEEM, and through Bath Spa University's HEIF initiative.

For further information, please contact the conference organiser, Dr David Watson, d.watson@bathspa.ac.uk 01225 875755.

Full Tilt Theatre Productions

Bath Spa's Full Tilt Theatre Company staged a mini series of four different plays at the Rondo Theatre in June – all very well received by the appreciative audiences.

- 'A Cool Billion' - physical theatre inspired by Nathaniel West's A Cool Million directed by Sam Grogan
- 'The Bald Prima Donna' - produced jointly by Proactive Productions and Full Tilt Theatre Company directed by Emma Gersch
- '4:48 Psychosis' - Sarah Kane's last play, adapted by third year Drama Studies student Katy Mitton as a final dissertation piece
- 'Blood' - a reworking of Sophocles' Oedipus Rex by Lars Noren set in present day Paris directed by third year Drama Studies student Matt Bracken, also a final dissertation piece.



Full Tilt is a collaboration between students, staff and guest professionals, and provides excellent practical performance opportunities for the student actors, directors and producers.

At the end of July Full Tilt will be playing at the Minack Theatre in Cornwall. Commissioned by the Bath Shakespeare Festival 2006, Gunduz Kalic's adaptation of 'Hamlet', directed by Emma Gersch, will take to the famous open stage. The site specific production was originally staged around the lake at the Newton Park campus, and Minack theatre-goers are promised "a vivid, impacting and memorable theatrical experience".

Radio Production Taster

Nine youngsters from Bristol City Academy attended a five day Radio Summer School in July to gain an insight into working in radio. The students, who are due to start their GCSEs in September this year, learnt how to use radio and associated technology such as podcasting to communicate imaginatively to different audiences. Iain Hunter, a BBC Radio Producer, joined them for the first day of the project. The week culminated in a short two minute radio programme in a genre of the students' choice, which was presented at a 'Showdown' on the final afternoon. The programmes will be played to their fellow students at Bristol City Academy at their Academy Awards Evening on Thursday 20 July.

Resolution of Pay Dispute

The pay dispute that academic staff were recently involved in is hopefully now resolved. UCU (formally NATFHE) was in dispute with the employers' association UCEA regarding the annual pay increase for academic staff. The dispute had led to industrial action by the academic unions, with a one day strike, followed by withholding of student marks. However, after intense negotiations between both sides, facilitated by ACAS, the academic union agreed to ballot their members on a proposed three year deal which would see a pay rise of 13.1% in total, over the three year period.

As a result, the industrial action has been suspended, and we remain hopeful that union members accept the offer.



Pay Framework Agreement

This is reminder to all staff that the latest details of the implementation of the pay framework agreement are now available on the personnel web pages at

<http://oldsite.bathspa.ac.uk/departments/personnel/pay-framework-project/pfp-update.asp>

C-SAP Project Funding

Dr Kay Wood has been awarded £6,500 for a project designed to improve the critical thinking skills of first year Sociology students with a view to providing a firm foundation for later progression. The project will focus on the pedagogy surrounding first year teaching and will involve first year Sociology tutors in Bath Spa and collaborating FE institutions. The project will lead to a national conference at Bath Spa in 2007 and associated publications.