



March 2009



*Artwork Media filming for
Bristol City Council*

Council Hires Students to Film Noisy Streets

Bristol City Council is working with students from Bath Spa University to highlight the problem of environmental noise. The students, from the University's new production company Artwork Media, have made a series of short films for a council website to raise public awareness of the noisiest areas in Bristol.

The three 90-second videos were shot in parts of South Bristol where noise pollution from sources like traffic and roadworks is a big issue for the people living and working there.

The commission from Bristol City Council is one of the first for Artwork Media, which was launched in November 2008 at the Paintworks site in Bristol. The production company has been established by Bath Spa to create work experience for a small group of students from the University's foundation degree in Broadcast Media and its BA Creative Writing course.

Their brief was to raise awareness of noise pollution in an interesting and entertaining way. The videos will appear on Bristol City Council's new Citizengate website at <http://www.bristol.citizenscape.net/core/portal/home>

Citizenscape is an innovative consultation project run by the council and funded by the European Union. The aim is to increase democratic participation in South Bristol by providing a forum for opinions on traffic noise and other local issues. It's hoped the student films will encourage people to join in the consultation.

Steve Crawshaw from Bristol City Council said: "We're really excited to be working with Bath Spa University and the talented students at Artwork Media. Their videos are a core part of the project and will support our work on engaging with our communities."

Nic Jeune, Director of Artwork Media, said: "The students jumped at the opportunity to be involved in this European backed initiative and to work with the council's environment department."

Artwork Media has a dozen other projects in the pipeline. These include making a 10-minute promotional video for the Egg Theatre at Bath Theatre Royal and creating filmed content for Wells Cathedral's proposed new website. The company's premises at Paintworks, which have state-of-the-art broadcast facilities, will also be the venue for part of a new Bath Spa University course, BA Creative Media Practice, from autumn 2009.



Dr James Nicholls

Binge Drinking – the Role of Tradition

Britain is often portrayed in the media as having a binge drinking culture. There is also much debate over whether that is being curbed or reinforced by government legislation.

Dr James Nicholls, senior lecturer in Bath Spa's School of Historical and Cultural studies, explored the issue from an historical perspective in a seminar at the University of London on 5 March. He was invited to make his presentation by the Centre for History in Public Health.

In his paper Dr Nicholls pointed out that recent news coverage of binge drinking depicts it as not only a worrying new development but also as the continuation of a tradition of heavy drinking among the British. He looked at ways in which ideas about tradition have become embedded in wider discussions of the subject.

Dr Nicholls raised historical examples of how 'tradition' has shaped the actions of both the alcohol industry and government, while framing broader cultural expectations about drinking behaviour. He concluded by questioning this interpretation of the past as the rationale for our attitudes towards alcohol now.



Samantha Bond Masterclass

The Name's Bond – Samantha Bond

Performing arts students had a real treat when they were given a masterclass by the actress who played Miss Money Penny in four James Bond films.

Samantha Bond gave a talk to 100 final year drama and dance students in the University Theatre on 2 March. She spoke for two hours about her career and how she progressed from training at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School to stardom on stage and screen.

Samantha is best known for her role as Miss Money Penny in the Bond films with Pierce Brosnan playing 007. Her first appearance as the famous super-secretary came in *GoldenEye* in 1995. She followed it up by taking the part again in *Tomorrow Never Dies*, *The World Is Not Enough* and *Die Another Day*.

Samantha is a regular member of the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre and starred opposite Dame Judi Dench in David Hare's award-winning play *Amy's View* in London's West End.

She has also appeared in many television series, including *Emma*, *Mansfield Park*, *Rumpole of the Bailey*, *Inspector Morse* and *Poirot*. She starred in the BBC's recent hit sitcom *Outnumbered* as Auntie Angela.

Samantha's visit to Bath Spa University resulted from her long-standing friendship with drama lecturer and fellow actor Chris Jury. Although they have never worked together, the pair and their families have known each other for more than 20 years.

Chris, who is joint organiser of Bath Spa's masterclass series, said: "I asked her if she would do it and she said yes – simple as that. I'm delighted the students had someone so prominent in the industry to pass on her experiences."

The talk by Samantha Bond was one of more than 20 masterclasses at the University so far this year, featuring established actors, directors, producers, screenwriters and other industry professionals.

The Rough Guide to Food by Bath Spa Lecturer

A new book on where to find the UK's best food has been co-written by Bath Spa lecturer Katharine Reeve. She is the joint author, together with George Miller, of *The Rough Guide to Food*.

Alongside her work teaching creative writing at the University and running its Foundation Degree Publishing, Katharine researched the subject of food for 18 gruelling months. The result is the first food bible that aims to dig beneath the myths and celebrity hype surrounding campaigns by the likes of Jamie Oliver and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall.

Katharine was an early convert to the home-delivered vegetable box, who has become an expert on small producers and food markets. The guide explores topics as varied as GM food, global sustainability and the impact of big supermarkets on the food industry.

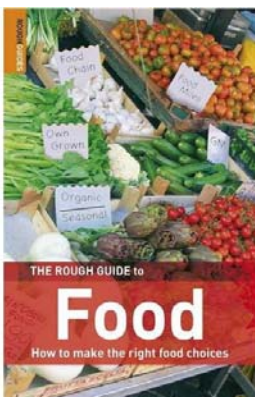
Katharine said: "When we set out to write this book we couldn't understand why nobody had tackled the subject before, but now we know because it's immensely complex and there are so many myths and misinformation.

"Although it was tough, every bit of the slog was worth it. I think we've produced a guide which appeals not just to those with a specific academic interest in food, but also to those who want a reference book on all sorts of topics, be it Fair Trade products, the organic movement or making healthier kids' packed lunches."

The Rough Guide to Food tells you how the world of food works and how to control what you eat with simple steps. It contains a plethora of good honest advice, from avoiding vulnerable fish species to creating the perfect allotment or window box salad garden.



Katharine Reeve





Students to Launch Own Professional Theatre Companies

The University is helping its performing arts students to set up their own fully professional stage companies after graduation. They will be offered expert support for this pioneering project, including premises in Bath to rehearse in and to create a show for the Edinburgh Festival.

The scheme, called the Launchpad, is one of the first of its kind for a UK university. It's open to final year students graduating from their courses in Drama Studies, Dance or Performing Arts next July.

The aim is to nurture and develop two graduate performance companies to become fully professional, working, self-sufficient business organisations for the long term. The students are being invited to group together and pitch rival ideas for their enterprise in a business plan competition run by the University. The successful applicants, to be announced in May, will win a start-up prize of £750 for each company.

During a 15-month 'incubation' period they can then access a wide range of assistance – including intensive business skills training and mentoring from industry professionals, rehearsal and office space, help with marketing and introduction to a network of industry contracts. The package amounts to more than £10,000 worth of in-kind support.

The graduate entrepreneurs will be expected to create and sell their own show for a tour in the South West and to perform it at the Edinburgh Festival in 2010.

Organiser Emma Gersch, from Artsworld, said: "This is a superb opportunity for students who are hungry, determined, creative and ready to fulfil a dream of launching their own performance company."

Holly's Fashions on London Catwalk and on TV

Bath Spa fashion student Holly Simpkins had the perfect opportunity to showcase her work with an appearance at the London Fashion Show. 21-year-old Holly was one of 14 finalists in a competition for the UK's most promising undergraduate designers.

There was a space age theme for all the finalists' designs, which were paraded on the catwalk before an audience of key people from the fashion industry and media. For her two striking outfits Holly drew inspiration from the planets Mars and Venus.

Holly was accompanied to the show by her proud parents, Bath Spa's Fashion Course Leader Louise Pickles and a television news crew from BBC Bristol. Her story then featured the next evening on Points West.



One of Holly's Catwalk Designs



Catherine Busby



Artistic Volunteer

Louise said: "For Holly to reach the finals of a national competition and to have her designs presented at the London Fashion Show was a great achievement and an amazing experience. It's also fantastic exposure, which will stand her in good stead for her career in future."

Foundation Degree Publishing – Student Success

Publishing student Catherine Busby has found an excellent job while still in the first year of her course. Catherine, who is studying on the Foundation Degree Publishing, has been appointed as the UK copywriter for the website of a new Swedish fashion company.

The firm, called Walk on Water, produces super-cool laptop and gadget bags. Catherine will be responsible for the content of the English language version of its website.

Professor Tim Middleton, Head of the School of English and Creative Studies, said: "This is a great example of how the Foundation Degree Publishing can help students to get work even while they are still studying."

You can view Catherine's work at <http://www.walkonwater.se/>

Volunteers Spread Their Wings

Volunteering at Bath Spa has gone from strength to strength. Completely reorganised under the name Just V, projects are now far more geared to degree courses, while helping even more people in the local community.

For instance, students from the School of Art and Design are creating murals with children at Castle Primary School in Keynsham to improve a drab courtyard. Others from Music and Performing Arts are arranging talent shows at local youth centres. Diet and Health students are running healthy eating classes in community centres. A group from Social Sciences are aiding professionals on a new exercise and lifestyle project for stroke victims.

The projects are an ideal way for students to trial potential careers and to develop personal and professional skills. All volunteers receive specialist training tailored to their chosen scheme. It's also an opportunity for the local community to benefit from the specialist skills and knowledge learnt by students on their degrees.

Just V Co-ordinator Ed Stevens said: "I'm delighted that we've forged links with a range of community organisations and provided opportunities that students have been very keen to take up."



Graphic Display

Student Designers Mount London Exhibition

Forty five highly enterprising students from the School of Art and Design are organising their own exhibition in London to show their work. The group, all final year students in BA Graphic Communication, have raised the money themselves to exhibit in a gallery in London's Brick Lane.

They hope that by taking their work to the capital it's more likely to gain attention from the design industry. An East End location has been chosen because so many professional design studios are based there.

One of the students, Mike White, said: "Industry professionals are notoriously busy and will be far more likely to visit a gallery that is five minutes' walk away rather than getting on a train to Bath.

"We also picked Brick Lane because the atmosphere there is perfect for a student show. It's a vibrant and busy area of London that is filled with young professionals and students at weekends."

The free exhibition is being held over four days at the Dray Walk Gallery from Friday 3 to Monday 6 April, starting with a private view 6-10 pm on the Friday. See also their website www.weareinprogress.co.uk

It's Child's Play at the Club of Hearts

First year performing arts students provided the grand finale to a hugely successful family festival at Bath's Egg Theatre over half term week. They created 'The Club of Hearts', turning the theatre building into a club for three to five year olds. Adults and older brothers or sisters were allowed in, but only when accompanied by a responsible toddler!

With around 250 tickets sold, the non-stop party event saw parents and children dancing and schmoozing for two hours with a host of colourful characters, all created by the Bath Spa students.

The event, directed by Bath Spa's Performing Arts subject leader Sam Grogan, was successfully piloted at the Egg and is now moving into rep. There are plans to expand it for a variety of platforms and occasions. Possibilities already proposed include the music festival season this summer and the Bath Fringe Festival.



The Club of Hearts