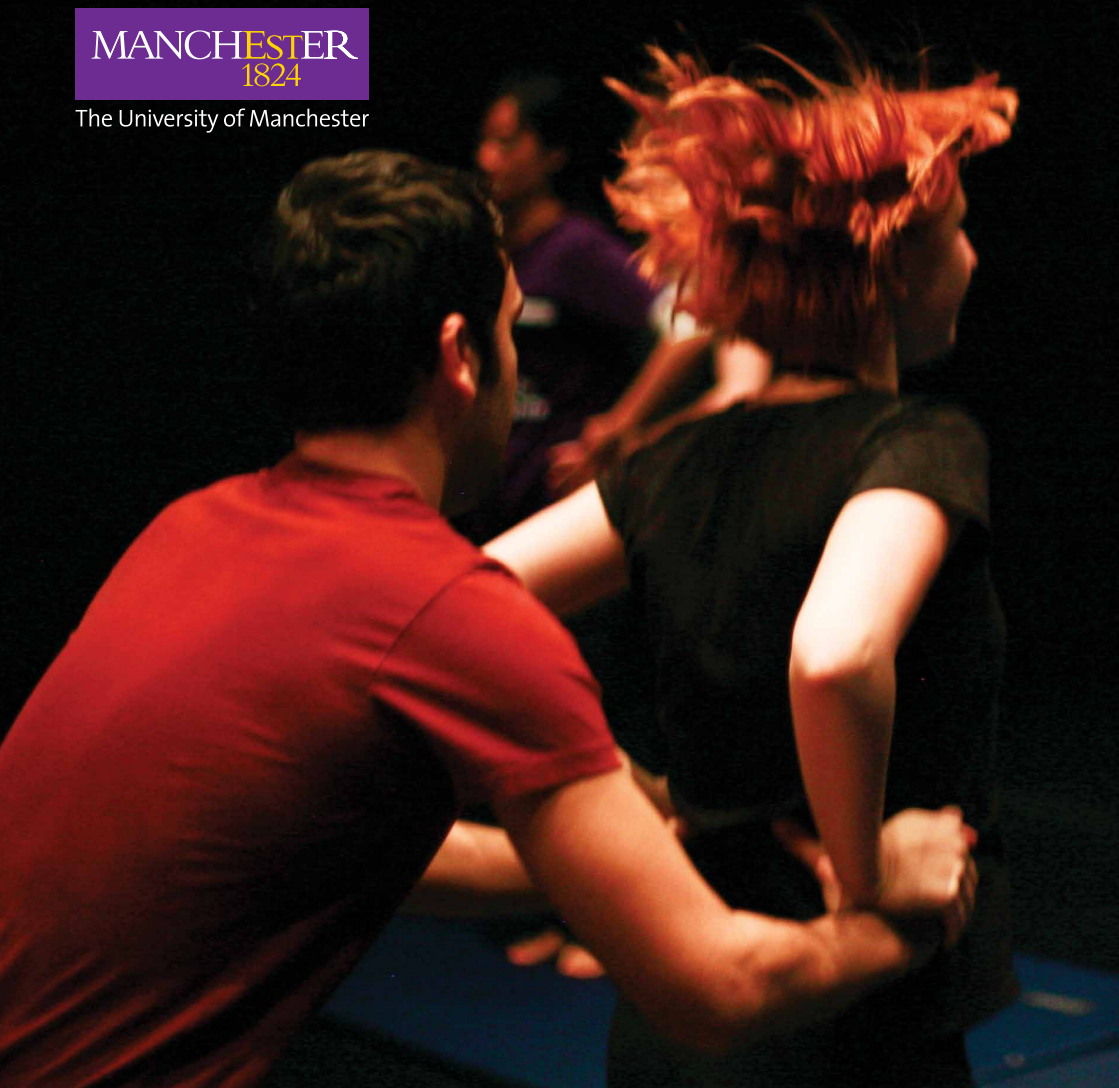


MANCHESTER  
1824

The University of Manchester



# Drama Alumni

SCHOOL OF ARTS, LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

**Our students graduate as the creative professionals of the future**

BA (Hons) Drama/Drama and English/Drama and Screen

MA Theatre and Performance/Applied Theatre/Screen Studies/PhDs/Professional Doctorate

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Drama at Manchester has a worldwide reputation for quality and for promoting a culture of learning and enquiry. We think it is really important to integrate teaching and research and our curriculum is informed by recent innovations in theatre, performance and screen studies as well as by historical practices. In addition to our in-house teaching we offer undergraduate students the opportunity to engage with professional practitioners working in the cultural industries, and the option to spend the second semester of their second year of study at a university in Australia or the United States, with which The University of Manchester has exchange programs.



Our students graduate as the creative professionals of the future – many find employment in the cultural sector as writers, producers, directors, performers and administrators. Many also go into education and into management. We also offer an exciting portfolio of postgraduate programs and a number of our graduates stay with Drama for a fourth year of study.

## Alumni Include...

- Dickie Beau (Performer/Artist)
- Tim Booth (Vocalist)
- Laurence Boswell (Director)
- Richard Boswell (Teacher)
- Benedict Cumberbatch (Actor)
- Ade Edmondson (Actor/Writer)
- Helen Edmundson (Writer)
- Ben Elton (Actor/Playwright/Writer)
- Vicky Featherstone (Director)
- Vicki Gardner (Teacher)
- Olivia Hallinan (Actor)
- Raza Jaffrey (Actor)
- Louise Jeffreys (Director of Programming, Barbican Centre)
- Toby Jones (Actor)
- Mel Kenyon (Agent)
- Euros Lyn (Director)
- Doon Mackichan (Actor/Writer)
- Rik Mayall (Actor/Writer)
- Alistair McDowall (Playwright)
- Rajiv Nathwani (Producer)
- William Newell (Video and Film Editor)
- James Peacock (Lecturer)
- Olivia Poulet (Actor)
- Liz Pugh (Performance Artist)
- Barry J.C. Purves (Animator)
- Caroline Raphael (Radio Editor)
- Simon Ruding (Director Theatre in Prisons and Probation)
- Nick Sherman (Producer)
- Ben Stephenson (Producer)
- Meera Syal (Actor/Writer/Producer)
- Katie Taylor (Journalist)
- Polly Teale (Playwright/Director)
- Tom Watt (Actor/Writer)
- Zoe Zontou (Lecturer)



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## **Lucy Roper: BA (Hons) Drama, 2011 [Freelance floor runner at BBC, ITV and Sky TV]**

'My degree helped me gain an appreciation for the television and film programmes I now work on. Our studies opened my eyes to the sheer scope and depth of the history and theory behind the moving picture. The contacts I made among my peers, and the enthusiasm and knowledge that surrounded me, provided by both fellow students and lecturers alike, also fuelled my interests and inspired me to take part in societies and groups outside of academia. I spent some time with 'Fuse TV' and the Drama Society and helped found The Manchester University Comedy Society. Both my academic studies and extra-curricular activities at Manchester added much to my CV, my confidence and experience – not to mention giving me plenty to talk about in interviews!'

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## **Frances Paterson: BA (Hons) Drama BA, 2010 [Artistic Director of Tandem Theatre working with vulnerable adults and young people, Drama Facilitator and actor]**

'The TiPP (Theatre in Prisons and Probation) course and applied theatre modules were invaluable for training me to be a drama facilitator as well as learning the ethos behind such a role. Doing an arts degree has developed my critical thinking and analytical skills, which are essential when starting your own business. The skills learnt while writing essays and making arguments has been really useful for funding application bids, which my work survives on.'

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## **Caroline Raphael: BA (Hons Drama) [She has been with the BBC since 1984 has been Commissioning Editor Comedy BBC Radio 4 and Commissioning Editor Radio 4 Extra since 1997]**

Since graduating Caroline had jobs as... Assistant Director, Nuffield Theatre Southampton, Assistant to Directors at the Royal Exchange Theatre Manchester, Assistant Director, Bristol Old Vic Theatre, Producer BBC Radio Drama, Editor Youth Programmes BBC Radio 5, Head of Radio Drama.

'The impact of doing Drama at Manchester on my professional life has been immense. I draw on the knowledge and experience gained there on an almost daily basis and the directing experience I got on the course led absolutely to my first job and without my first job (as Assistant Director, Nuffield Theatre) I don't believe I would be where I am now. It is undoubtedly a calling card and I always feel a sense of delight and pride when I meet younger Manchester drama graduates in the profession as performers or 'on the other side'.'



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## **Lynsey Merrick: MA Applied Theatre, 2009 [Participation & Learning Manager at The Lowry Arts Centre, Salford]**

'Looking back, the impact of doing Drama at Manchester on my professional life has been hugely significant. The MA unlocked doors for me that have led to notable developments in my career path since graduation. My advice to anyone graduating from the degree now is that you need direction & purpose. Work hard & don't think that any position is below you. Do as much as you can to immerse yourself in the sector at any level.'

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## **Dickie Beau: BA (Hons) Drama, 1999 [Performer/Writer]**

'My degree helped me get my foot in the door for a first job in TV. Now, it is not the fact of having a drama degree from a respectable university that influences my professional life, it is more the case that the academic principle of enquiry, and of exercising independent thought, have become central to what I do. It is actually only now, over ten years after graduating, that I can recognise the real impact of doing Drama at Manchester.'

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## **Emma Smallman: MA in Applied Theatre 2009 [Geese Theatre Company]**

'At Manchester I had the chance to experiment in a safe workshop environment with fellow students a wide range of methodologies which helped me increase my skill base, whilst also focussing in on the areas which were of most interest to me. Also the course gave an opportunity to try out these practical skills and ideas.'

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## **Abbie Wilcox: BA Hons Music and Drama, 2010 [Creative Projects Officer at Contact Theatre, Manchester]**

'The degree in Drama from the University of Manchester helped me to gain the necessary skills to be able to have a job in the arts and it also gave me the chance to explore creative ideas in a structured environment. I totally believe that I wouldn't have got my job without having done my degree first. Drama at Manchester is also a very competitive course and you really are working with some of the best students and teachers in the country. If you take full advantage of the opportunity then it will be a solid investment.'

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## **Helen Edmundson: BA (Hons) Drama 1985; PG Dip. Playwriting 1986 [Playwright]**

'The degree gave me the opportunity and the confidence to explore the diverse skills involved in making theatre. It opened my eyes to different styles and traditions of theatre and film. In my fellow students, I found inspiring, creative people – many of whom I continue to work with today. At University I learnt creative discipline – the sheer hard work and dedication that goes into creating a piece of theatre. I learnt about the building blocks of effective creative writing, and I learnt about the endless possibilities of theatre in all its three-dimensional glory. Drama at the University of Manchester has a legendary reputation. Many people in theatre and TV know about the course and respect it. The breadth and diversity of skills and knowledge it teaches means that it's a great option for anyone who is drawn towards theatre and TV but not completely certain about the specific career path they want to follow.'

## **Bronwen Kenny Jones: BA Hons Drama 2009 [Events & Corporate Hire Officer at National Museum Wales, Cardiff]**

'If anything employers appreciate that doing a Drama degree equips students with a wide range of skills, including writing and presentation skills which are needed in the majority of job roles. The Drama degree at the University of Manchester enhanced my confidence and encouraged me to go out and seek work experience in a wide range of areas. Many of my friends who completed more 'employment worthy' degrees did not have the foresight to seek unpaid work experience like myself and many of my drama friends. This has undoubtedly been a massive help in securing me constant employment since graduation.'

## **Ranjiv Nathwani: BA (Hons) Drama and English 2010 [Assistant Producer, EastEnders / EastEnders: E20, BBC Drama Production]**

'The degree at the University of Manchester taught me to be resourceful, how to find funding, audiences and spaces when producing my own work, how to be disciplined in using my time effectively – balancing academic deadlines with personal ones: dissertations and job apps, essays and play openings and so on. My advice to recent Drama graduates would be this – I have a dream job... but I couldn't say that there's a step-by-step guide of how to get one, particularly not in the Arts sector. Learn how to be the best in your current role by watching and listening to those around you, understanding what they do and how they do it, and always ask questions when you don't know the answer. You'll develop 'professionally' much quicker this way.'



## **Louise Jeffreys: BA (Hons) Drama 1978 [Director of Programming, Barbican Centre, London]**

In 1999 she was appointed to run the newly-created BITE (Barbican International Theatre Events), recognised as one of London's most innovative artistic programmes, bringing to the UK leading figures from international theatre and dance and co-commissioning some of the most influential artists and productions of the last decade.



'Drama at Manchester gave me a broad education that did not mean I had to decide exactly how I wanted to work in the arts at too early a stage. My varied career has been enjoyable – and experience in one area supports working in other areas. Whilst there I took all the chances I could to do stuff outside the framework of the course – Edinburgh Fringe, Student Drama Festival and so on. Having screen studies and film as part of the course gave us a broad definition of what a drama course might include.'

## **Toby Jones: BA Hons Drama 1989 [Actor & Honorary Professor of Drama, The University of Manchester]**

'After Manchester I studied at L'Ecole Internationale du Theatre in Paris under the late Jacques Lecoq. I left Paris in the summer of 1991 and have worked consistently since then. I have worked as an actor, director, writer and teacher. The impact of doing Drama at Manchester on my professional life has been both profound and hard to quantify. Leaving for Paris directly after graduation meant that I had five years of further education. I would probably not have gone to Paris if I hadn't studied at Manchester. The decision to study with Jacques Lecoq emerged directly from ongoing debates and discussions we were having as students about the purpose, function and future of theatre.'



I have always claimed that going to Lecoq has been the most significant decision I have made as an actor, the best decision. Yet Manchester gave me the impetus to make that decision. At Manchester I learned to question, to debate and to address a certain 'complacency' in my assumptions about what drama was, is and might be in the future. The degree at Manchester broadened my understanding about what Drama actually is. It taught me to ask the right questions.'

## **Olivia Hallinan: BA (Hons) Drama 2006 [Actress]**

'The impact of Drama at the University of Manchester on my professional life has been invaluable really. University allowed me to explore different playwrights and genres while also giving me the confidence to carry on acting as a professional career. I developed people skills, knowledge and an independence that have helped tremendously. The degree enhanced my ability to stand on my own two feet and feel able to branch out into the hugely competitive acting world. I enjoyed taking risks and picked modules that were not the 'safe' option – I did Directing and found it incredibly rewarding.'





Our staff are award-winning teachers and researchers and their expertise and innovative approaches to learning are central to our exciting degree programs at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

## Drama

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