I am proud to introduce Drama St Mary’s Annual Review 2016/17

Drama students and staff are trailblazers within their field and within the School of Arts and Humanities at St Mary’s University.

The School is undergoing an exciting time of expansion, offering programmes that will equip graduates to be confident, creative and critically reflective citizens. Undergraduate programmes in Politics, International Relations, Creative Writing, Sports Communication and Communication and Marketing form part of the new portfolio of programmes in which BA Acting, BA Technical Theatre and MA Theatre Directing are key players.

Drama is playing a vital role in the drive for excellence in all we do at St Mary’s. Drama St Mary’s also contributes in significant and innovative ways to the building of the inclusive and compassionate community which is central to the University’s ethos.

Congratulations to everyone in Drama St Mary’s who have contributed to making 2016/17 such a successful year.

Professor Karen Sanders
Head of The School of Arts and Humanities
Validated BA (Hons) Acting degree

257 students

15 undergraduate interview/audition days

International Theatre for Development trip to Santiago, Chile

55 student performances

Walpole prize win

2 year BA (Hons) Technical Theatre

3964 audience members attended on-campus Drama events

95.5% Overall Student Satisfaction

Drama St Mary's 2016/17

Project 10

Embedded employability programme for finalists

BA (Hons) Drama and Applied Theatre
BA (Hons) Drama and Physical Theatre
BA (Hons) Drama and Theatre Arts

12 pre-UCAS recruitment workshops

The Stage top pick in London

100% good honours degrees
2016/17 has been an exciting and busy year for Drama St Mary’s. Not only seeing many projects that have been in development for some time come to fruition, but also the beginning of inventive and creative projects for the years to come.

Our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes continue to move us closer towards our ambitious offer to students - to give conservatoire style, industry standard training within a university context. Our newly validated BA Acting degree, 2 year Technical Theatre degree and MA Theatre Directing, our unique collaboration with Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond, put us firmly in line with the industry and higher education provider forerunners.

The work we have undertaken shows we continue to value the importance of theatre as a positive tool for social change, in communities local, national and international. We strive contribute to public discussions, as well as create work which is vital and relevant - not merely as inactive observers.

Next year promises to offer further creative collaborations - with education and private providers. We also see the development of our new Drama Plus programmes - designed to expand our traditional academic routes for students, and build further capacity for staff research interests. This propels us into the next stage of our business plan which aligned with the university’s corporate vision.

We hope you enjoy reading about our work this year. We look forward to another year of exciting developments and expansion.

Patsy Gilbert
Academic Director
Project 10 is a fully integrated employability programme which is ran in conjunction with the careers service. The programme gets its title from the idea of giving each students 10 contacts or links upon graduation.

Throughout 7 weeks all year 3 students attended a series of workshops, masterclasses and advice sessions with industry professionals, including Drama St Mary's successful alumni.

Masterclasses took place with Huw Prall, historical dance expert who has worked at Shakespeare’s Globe and the Royal Shakespeare Company, Graeme Danby, Principal Bass for the English National Opera, stage combat specialist Alison De Burgh and Gareth Thomas who took students through the technical world of motion capture.

Students also met representatives Emma Dyson and Charlotte Bence from Sopt-light and Equity respectively. They also met with The Stage casting director of the year Ben Cogan who discussed the art of good audition techniques.

Drama St Mary's alumni Haste Theatre and Joana Nastari came in to give advice on what life is really like after graduation and who has been particularly helpful them as a company and as an individual in the industry.

The programme also offered a range of sessions delivered by the Careers team which focussed on students creating 1, 3 and 5 years plans, as well as using social media and online profiles.

The programme won St Mary’s Walpole Prize for Teaching and Learning in 2017.
MA Theatre Directing

MA Theatre Directing, a unique collaboration with Orange Tree Theatre, Richmond, completed its first successful year, culminating in the critically acclaimed Directors’ Festival - 2 weeks of productions directed by the cohort.

Plays included Mister-man by Enda Walsh, The End of Hope by David Ireland, Even Still-ness Breathes Softly Against a Brick Wall by Brad Birch, Albert’s Boy by James Graham and Wasted by Kate Tempest. Students Grace Vaughan, Max Elton, Hannah de Ville, Kate Campbell and Jamie Woods have enjoyed an exciting programme working with Artistic Director Paul Miller and Education Director Imogen Bond. The course looks at the specific techniques associated with directing professional actors as well as experience of directing in the community - a shared core ethos of the Theatre and Drama St Mary’s.

The Directors’ Festival enjoyed packed-out houses for its two week run - boosted by ‘top pick’ mention in trade industry newspaper The Stage.

Since the festival The End of Hope, directed by Max Elton, has been given an extended 5 week run at Soho Theatre, London in October 2017.
T Junction Festival 2016

In its fifth year, T Junction Festival yet again brought an exciting range of finalists’ showcase productions to Drama St Mary’s Theatre. In November 2016 Drama’s 94 finalist students, working with 5 professional directors, performed over 22 productions in 11 days.

The Physical Theatre company, working with theatre Director and Drama St Mary’s alumni Sam Buitekant, produced Alan in Wonderland - a devised piece based on the Lewis Carroll classic, where nothing is as it seems.

The Applied Theatre Group, under the direction of professional director/practitioner Madelaine Moore, worked with members of The Mulberry Centre, an organisation to support those diagnosed with Cancer and their families. Their experiences formed the basis for their performance of Wit by Margaret Edson which follows an academic living her final days.

It was a celebration of British comedy for the Theatre Arts group who tackled Not Now Darling by John Chapman and Ray Cooney, A Small Family Business by Alan Ayckbourn and Joe Orton’s Erpingham Camp. They were directed by Oscar Blustin, Mitch Mitchelson and Ally Cologna.

Dead Rabbits Theatre Company

‘A dark and mysterious story of a balloon expedition to the North Pole. In 1897 three explorers took off to conquer the North Pole in a free-flying balloon. The trip was supposed to last 3 months. It took a little longer... ‘

Dead Rabbits Theatre Company, under the direction of Drama St Mary’s Senior Lecturer Kasia Zaremba-Byrne, took their new show My Love Lies Frozen in the Ice to Edmonton Festival, Canada. The company, which comprises of students and graduates from Drama St Mary’s, received a 5 star review in the Edmonton Journal as well as release further performances dates due to popular demand.

This project was partly funded by the School of Arts and Humanities research fund and is part of Kasia’s extended research into physical theatre live performance.
Productions

**Mind The Gap** Devised by the company
Applied Theatre Year 2 - Replay Nightclub, Kingston

**Once Upon a Time in Europe**
Physical Theatre Year 2 - DSM Theatre

**Blue Stockings** by Jessica Swale
Theatre Arts Year 2 - DSM Theatre

**Frontline** by Che Walker
Theatre Arts Year 2 - DSM Theatre

13 by Mike Bartlett
Theatre Arts Year 2 - DSM Theatre

**Macbeth** by William Shakespeare
Theatre Arts Year 2 - DSM Theatre

**I Wish** Community Drama performance with Balance CIC, Surbiton - DSM Theatre

**Finalists Showcase**
Theatre Arts Year 3 - Soho Theatre, London

**Joke’N’Word** Applied Theatre Year 3 - Etcetera Theatre, Camden
Visual Lab Showcase
Physical Theatre Year 3 - DSM Theatre

**The Weir** by Conor McPherson
MA Theatre Director final production
The White Bear Theatre, Kennington

**T Junction Festival**
5 productions in repertory over 11 days

**Teenage Cancer Trust Double Bill**
4 Funerals and a Wedding and Other People by Trevor Walker
Outreach & Participation

#MyWellbeing
Drama St Mary's worked with student services on their #MyWellbeing initiative. Working with Lisette Barlow, Multimedia Services, they created three short films around the themes of Anxiety. The films showcased the work of Drama St Mary’s finalist, Rachel O’Neill.

Theatre in Education Tour
For the 6th year running Drama St Mary’s teamed up with Orange Tree Theatre Richmond to create a theatre in education tour. The Shows, based around Romeo and Juliet were performed, alongside participatory workshops, in 4 local Richmond schools.

I Wish
Second year Applied Theatre students worked with Balance CIC, an organisation for vulnerable adults, and St Mary’s No Ordinary Society to create new writing pieces based on the themes of hopes, dreams and ambitions. The performance, I Wish, saw performances from members of all three groups.

Macbeth Schools Visit
Pupils of Radnor House School, Teddington, attended a performance of Macbeth, before being introduced to the cast and attending a workshop with director Julie Spencer.

Teenage Cancer Trust Double-Bill
November saw a double bill of productions, written by Trevor Walker and performed by Drama St Mary’s students, which were commissioned by the Teenage Cancer Trust. The plays, based on written accounts from cancer sufferers, survivors and their families followed teenage protagonists as they deal with their diagnosis.

Amy McCann plays Fiona in Four Funerals and a Wedding
In September 2016 Drama and Applied Theatre students travelled to Santiago, Chile to work with disadvantaged young people linked to Ventena De Color NGO. During the trip students created Drama projects with students between 14 - 18 years old who have limited access to the arts. The project aimed to share knowledge on how the arts can be used to enhance students’ learning. The visit also saw students working in a children’s prison where they created a performance based on dreams and aspirations.

This is the 6th year of the Theatre for Development international programme - previous students have travelled to South Africa and Malawi. Applied Theatre students will travel back to Chile to continue their work in September 2017.
Recruitment

For the fourth year running Drama St Mary’s have offered Pre-UCAS audition days. These sessions, either delivered on campus as part of the university open days, or in other institutions, give potential applicants immediate feedback on their audition pieces and, crucially, find out, if they were to apply to St Mary’s whether they would be likely to be offered a place.

We continue to make new links with schools and organisations, for example Gibraltar Academy of Music and Performing Arts, and Hertford College - both of which have since sent students to auditions for the undergraduate programmes.

We have also promoted and advertised our programmes through local networks including hosting Richmond Running Festival, taking part in Kingston Big Sing and working with the Kingston International Youth Arts Festival team.

We have mounted advertising campaigns in the theatre industry newspaper, The Stage, for both undergraduate and postgraduate courses, with specific features on the MA in Theatre Directing and editorial around vocational training within university settings.

BA Acting and Technical Theatre programmes have seen a 23% increase in applications for 2017 entry. We continue to interview or audition every applicant to the programme - this year we have seen over 450 applicants over 15 audition days.

Pre-UCAS audition days are already confirmed for next year, as well as a mail out to all schools, colleges and youth theatres.

Mia Chrisou, Drama St Mary’s graduate, as part of the Time To Act 2017 recruitment campaign
Student Success

Some 2017 graduates

Henry Mettle - Simon How Management; Vanessa Owen - Theatre in Education national tour; Daniel Delaney - Momentum Management;
Beth Watts - Actors Network Agency; Dominic Crosby - P&O Australia;
Joe Parrish - Brynmoor Associates/Channel 4 shorts; Jake Hogan - National Theatre ‘Space to Create’ programme; Sarah Arden - Guidhall Creative Entrepreneurs course; The Bearded Dog - Anathema 4 week run at Edinburgh Festival; Teacup Theatre Company - Double Bill, Bread and Roses Theatre;
Dark Roots Theatre Company - Untitled Doc 8 episode internet series

Drama St Mary’s Recent Graduates

Fahad Quayyum - starring in Judwaa 2; Dramatize Theatre Company - disability arts programme in Surbiton; Siobhan Sharp - Marketing Campaign Manager Battersea Arts; Tom Grennan - Sony Records, Something in the Water; Kaigan Garcia - Arts Ed MA performance course; Charlotte Maltby - Frantic Assembly Devised Theatre MA; In The Quirks Theatre Company - Missing Girl of Grigglewood tours IYAF and Edinburgh Festival; Curtis Burrows - Byrons Management; Matthew Blagdon - Platform Talent Management
Paul Irwin - Forbes Sutherland Management; Joe Sangha - Universal Management; Diany Samba-Bandza - Top Talent Agency; Emma Overy - 1984PM Agency; Charlotte Lund - General Manager Tall Stories; Haste Theatre - Oyster Boy, Edinburgh Tour, Alex Bambrick - RCSSD MA Acting for Screen, Tuan Ly - Director, Performer and Choreographer, Tim Bifield - Technical Manager, Barbican

Notable Alumni

Pete Postlethwaite - Actor
Chris Chibnall - Writer Doctor Who, Broadchurch
Stef O’Driscoll - Artistic Director Nabakov Theatre Company
Monsay Whitney - Writer Box Clever
Katie Henry - Associate Director National Theatre’s War Horse
Lara Lewington - BBC Presenter and Journalist
Ama K Abebrese - Actor, Presenter, Producer
Carole Stott - Director and Chair, Association of Colleges
Kanneth Emson - Writer BBC Radio 3 and 4, Eastenders
Staff Profiles 2017

Tina Bicat
Designer Tina continues to work professionally for a range of production companies including Turtle Key Arts, and as design associate with Ockham’s Razor. She is currently completing a Barbican Box poetry project with Michael Rosen, the children’s author and past laureate for the Barbican’s Creative Team.

Dan Ford
Dan has performed as part of Your Connection is not Private, a collaboration with interactive theatre-makers Coney. He is currently completing his PhD-thesis entitled The Actor in Immersive Theatre.

Patsy Gilbert
Patsy has presented a paper on Vocational Training in Generation TEF at the HEA Annual Conference and continues to research vocational Drama training challenges and issues in higher education. She continues to facilitate community choir and singing groups, including The Big Sing, as well as performing as a guest soloist.

Matthew Hahn
Matthew launched the publication of his first play; The Robben Island Shakespeare at the South African High Commission in May 2017. Next year he is working with Canterbury Christchurch University as part of a research project in theatre and healthcare.
Dr Michelle Paull
Michelle has published articles in publications Contemporary Drama in English and Dermot Healey Vol 1. She is currently part of the supervisory team for Drama’s PhD student in theatre, performance and healthcare. She is currently writing a new Drama MA programme in London Theatre.

Julie Spencer
Julie has spoken at Theatre to Educate conferences in Malta and Italy on an immigration arts research project she has facilitated. This year she begins an EdD focussing on developing and redeveloping transculturate pedagogy within Actor training.

Prof Trevor Walker
Trevor wrote and directed a double bill of plays commissioned for Teenage Cancer Trust. He is currently writing the impact case study for the upcoming REF submission based on Cancer Tales. He is also part of the supervisory team for Drama’s PhD student in theatre, performance and healthcare and is developing new undergraduate programmes for 2019.

Kasia Zaremba Byrne
Kasia’s Physical Theatre company Dead Rabbits toured to Edmonton Festival, Canada in August 2017 with their new show My Love Lies Frozen in the Ice, as well as presenting as part of The University of Surrey’s Labanarium.

Ellen Brooker Joined 2017 as Drama Productions Co-ordinator; Alistair Milne Senior Technician; Paul Stowe Theatre Technician; Iman Ahmed Administrator; Louise Troup Administrator;
The Future

• 2017 sees first cohorts of BA (Hons) Acting.
• First cohort of Technical Theatre students graduate Spring 2018.
• 1 practice based PhD student in Theatre and Healthcare
• MA Theatre Directing has recruited a further 3 students for 2017-18.
• First classes delivered in The Exchange, St Mary’s new venue in Twickenham.

• 2017 sees first cohorts of BA (Hons) Acting.
• MA London Theatre and MA Playwriting, due for recruitment in 2018
• BA programmes in development for 2019, collaborating with Creative Writing and Education

• Current collaborative partnership with Academy of Live and Recorded Arts
• Further agreements being pursued with University College, Copenhagen, Dance City, Newcastle and West Thames College.
• Shakespeare Summer School will welcome students to the Twickenham campus in Summer 2018

BA (Hons) Acting
BA (Hons) Technical Theatre
MA Theatre Directing

New for 2018
MA London Theatre
MA Playwriting

For more information about Drama St Mary’s please go to: www.stmarys.ac.uk/Drama

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