

MaCS Media & Cultural Studies

“ Welcome to MaCS: A unique blend ”

by Dr Carolyn Pedwell

What is the BA (hons) Media, Communication and Cultural Studies all about and what will it offer you?

The programme inspires graduates to develop a rigorous understanding of how information is created, managed, circulated and consumed in a globalised world. It introduces students to the diversity of media and communication forms and technologies and the complexity of cultural representations and practices. The BA degree brings together a wide range of exciting modules - including theoretically oriented modules such as Media Studies; Cultural Representations; Television Studies; Advertising and Consumption; and Celebrity Culture, and more 'hands on' modules such as Journalism; Public Relations and Writing for the Media - which enable students to build scholarly and professional knowledge and skills and explore how 'theory' and 'practice' are intertwined. Above all, we seek to cultivate critical thinking among our students so that they can approach media, communication and culture in all their guises intelligently, incisively and imaginatively. Our undergraduate cohort is very diverse and very friendly. Students bring to the programme a wealth of different cultural, social, religious and educational experiences and

perspectives, which make for extremely interesting and internationally oriented class discussions - allowing us to think critically about how media and culture vary and transform across different social and geo-political contexts. The degree programme is also distinguished by its location in Newcastle - and the city's vibrant social, media, culture, music and arts scene - as well as by our links with local and national media and cultural industries, which allows us to offer students master classes with leading media professionals (featured later in this newsletter), as well as access to work experience both locally and across the UK.

Last year students completed placements at the BBC, The Press Association, X-Factor to name just a few! Many of our graduates go on to work in media and communication industries, such as journalism, marketing, public relations, communications, television and radio, but they also build careers in a range of other important fields, including government, management, charity/NGO work, finance, teaching and the leisure industry - as well as further study at the MA and/or PhD level. Look out for future editions of the MaCS newsletter, which

will showcase more of the unique blend media and cultural courses, activities and opportunities we offer!

What's On

John Perry - The Sun

Tues 7 Feb 12:00-13:00

2.33 King George VI Building

Working at the top-selling red-top tabloid newspaper, John will follow Jeremy Armstrong (Daily Mirror) by speaking about how he got into the industry, how they work and how the job is changing, followed by a Q&A session.

Sally Pearson - PR Consultant

Wed 8 Feb 15:00-17:00

1.49 Armstrong Building

Sally, who was until very recently head of PR at Robson Brown the biggest PR consultancy in the North-East of England, will focus on planning delivering and implementing PR campaigns.

Steve Noble - KYEO-TV

Wed 15 Feb 15:00-17:00

2.96 Armstrong Building

Keep Your Eyes Open TV is a media business set up by two former journalism students who became fed up working for other people and decided to start their own organisation.

David Haywood - BBC

Wed 22 Feb 15:00-17:00

2.96 Armstrong Building

David from the BBC's College of Journalism will talk about innovative approaches to journalism and about a BBC competition open to media students.

In this issue:

Media Showcase: p4

MaCS Course Nationally Recognised: p4

Students, alumni and staff make magazine in 48hr: p3

New sculptures have their own commissioned student film: p2

Journalism Bootcamps: p2

MaCS Masterclasses: p3

Remember this is an *interactive online edition* so there will be plenty of links to additional media content. Watch out for **orange circles** - conspicuous buttons that when clicked will take you to this content.

Issue 1 February 2012
Editor: Chris Falzon

Photography: Tomas Cinga
Karolina Tamasauskaite

Additional artwork:
Ieva Pivoriunaite

Student film looks at new sculptures on campus

The first in a series of short films from a student in Media and Cultural Studies, chronicling the arrival on campus of three iconic sculptures by artist and Newcastle graduate Joseph Hillier (BA Fine Art 1997), is now online.

Produced by Zaruhi Arzumanyan, a student on the MA in International Multimedia Journalism, the six-minute film captures the removal of 'Generation' – a group of three sculptured human heads – from its previous site at defunct regional development agency, One North East, to a new temporary home on Claremont Quad, outside the Old Library Building. It features interviews with the artist, both on campus



Zaruhi Arzumanyan

and in his studio, and a score by Newcastle graduate and current Music student, Felix Hardy (BA English Literature 2010).

The installation will move to the Student Forum – a new central square currently under development next to the Students' Union and Armstrong Building – later this year.

Zara produced the film as part of the Careers Service's

Newcastle Work Experience scheme, which gives students a £600 bursary on completion of a 100-hour project designed to enhance their employability whilst improving the student experience at Newcastle.

'We're delighted with Zara's work,' said Jenny Allinson, Cultural Affairs Development Officer at the University. 'She has worked incredibly hard using her creativity and skills, including those acquired on her digital film module, to produce an excellent film. Zara asked graduate Felix Hardy to compose the music and we think this really adds to the film.'

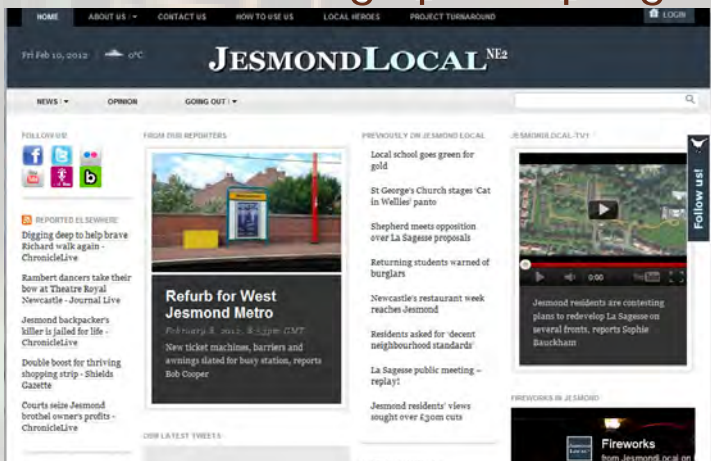
'Paid work experience in filmmaking is rare, and this sort of project will really enhance Zara's CV and portfolio if she pursues filmmaking as a career after graduation.'

The sculptures will be joined by another installation by Joseph Hillier called 'Being Human' later this term.

You can view the film, also called 'Generation', using the orange button.

“Paid work experience in filmmaking is rare, and this sort of project will really enhance Zara's CV and portfolio”

We are booting up new programmes in community journalism



Homepage of the hyper-local publication 'JesmondLocal'

The Catherine Cookson Foundation is supporting an innovative project in community journalism run by our students and graduates and led by former Guardian journalist Ian Wylie.

The 'Journalism Bootcamps' will see our students working with residents in Jesmond, a Newcastle suburb, to share their skills and knowledge and collaborate with local people in finding and telling untold stories using video, text, images, social media and mobile technology.

The stories will be showcased at venues around the community as part of the Jesmond Festival in May this year.

This is part of a continuing venture exploring the ways in which journalism is undergoing major changes - technologically, economically, socially and culturally. One aspect of these changes has been the development of community-based 'hyper-local' journalism enterprises across Europe and the USA.

'JesmondLocal' was set up by Ian Wylie, a freelance journalist who works primarily for The Guardian, the Financial Times and Monocle Magazine, to serve and inform the people of Jesmond.

Our students work on JesmondLocal, putting into practice in the wider world what they learn in class, enhancing their employability

and experimenting with new ways of doing journalism.

Jesmond Local provides a supportive and reflective environment which also facilitates academic research into the ways in which new forms of journalism and journalism education can support both community sustainability, and the sustainability of professional practices and values.

One of our graduates, who now works on a newspaper in Massachusetts, USA, said recently: "I think my time at JesmondLocal made and taught me to really appreciate the role of a journalist within a community.

"That has helped greatly in my current job, which is as a night-time cops, breaking news, and general assignment reporter.

"Part of the future of my job is going to be finding ways to engage the community more, both in print and online. I think a lot of what I learned from JesmondLocal, and especially the way Ian viewed local journalism, will give me a lot of ideas on how to interact with an already strong readership."

A graduate who now works for the BBC said: Ian really kept me at the forefront

of new digital media, introducing me to tools such as 'cover it live', which I use to live blog the council ward committee meetings - a service which has been praised by Jesmond residents who can't make it along to the meeting, 'audio boo' which I use to record and post short interviews, and 'bambuser' which is a live video streaming app that I used to live stream JesmondLocal's meeting with the Geordie Shore cast. These sorts of apps are used by professionals working in online media, and knowing how to use them puts me one step ahead of a lot of other journalists when applying for jobs.

Working with JesmondLocal has also given me a huge insight into social and community journalism.



Ian Wylie, founder of JesmondLocal

“ Students, alumni and staff make magazine in 48 hours ”

Newcastle alumni, students and staff descended on the BALTIC gallery in Gateshead in November to create a magazine in 48 hours about the Turner Prize – with support from the Alumni Association Student Initiative Fund.

● Turnaround: 48 hours at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art chronicled the weekend of 25–27 November at the City's flagship gallery, as it became the first non-Tate venue—and only the second venue outside London—to host what is arguably the UK's most famous award for contemporary art.

The non-profit project was led by JesmondLocal.com, a hyperlocal news website serving the Newcastle suburb of Jesmond which is mainly written by student journalists at Newcastle University, and featured some of the North East's finest independent talent—including Warm Design, Novel Magazine and the Cloud Commission. The 44-strong team of volunteers also included schoolchildren, members of the public and creative professionals from across the North East.

Its aim, according to co-editor Dan Howarth (BA English Language 2005, MA Media & Journalism 2008), was to help ordinary people understand the purpose and power of contemporary art at a grassroots level, rather than the top-down approach traditionally associated with prestigious arts prizes—whilst raising money for charity.

'BALTIC attracted 149,000 visitors to this year's Turner Prize, generating a huge amount of opinions and experiences. Turnaround has harnessed just a few in its 24 pages of

journalism, creative writing, photography and illustration, and we hope people will keep it as a memento of this unique occasion,' said Howarth.

The project was funded by advertising, along with a start-up grant from the Alumni Association Student Initiative Fund, which is supported by alumni donations to Newcastle University's Annual Fund.

'We don't know the exact total just yet, but the project has made over £1,000 for local charities, through advertising sales, honesty box donations and raffle prizes at the launch party,' said Howarth. 'We'll be distributing the cash in the next few weeks through charity search engine, LocalGiving.com, with a chunk going back to the Annual Fund to help breathe life into similar projects in the future.'



Some of the Turnaround team. Photo: Alexander Wilson

Christopher Jackson (MA Creative Writing 2008), a writer who is currently producing a children's storybook app for the iPad, was one of the graduates involved in the magazine. 'Project Turnaround was a

fantastic experience,' he said. 'To work in such a creative environment, with so many talented people and under a strict deadline, was really exciting, fun and inspiring. It was a nice change from the isolation of freelancing.'

The team also included other alumni from over the last eight years and thirteen current Newcastle students and six members of staff.

● You can find out more about the project on its website, see an online version of the magazine on Issuu, and get a free printed copy by contacting Dan Howarth. ●

The merits of Masterclasses

Every year our students get the chance to meet and learn from a broad range of front-rank media professionals who come to the university to deliver guest lectures, workshops and master classes.

In February our students have had the chance to grill Jeremy Armstrong of the Daily Mirror and Robin Perrie, one of The Sun's most senior journalists. They will meet Sally Pearson, former head

of PR at Robson Brown the biggest PR consultancy in the North-East of England. And they will hear from media entrepreneur Steve Noble of Keep Your Eyes Open TV (KYEO-TV). ●

● Students will also have a master class with David Haywood of the BBC's College of Journalism on creative and innovative approaches to journalism – and new ways to tell stories

and new ways to engage audiences.

In March Students will hear from reporter Tanya Thompson of The Scotsman newspaper, whose hard-hitting investigations have changed the way courts deal with rape cases and won justice for mothers wrongly accused of killing their children. They will also have the chance to hear how one cover Glastonbury

and the Bafta Awards from Jon Bennett, until recently head of entertainment coverage at Sky News. ●

Although these masterclasses are primarily for students on our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, staff and members of the public are most welcome.

National Media-Industry Accolade given to MaCS Course

An innovative Newcastle University degree programme in journalism has been awarded a key industry body's top award in its first year of full accreditation.

The MA in International Multimedia Journalism was launched in 2007-8, and achieved accreditation by the Broadcast Journalism Training Council in 2009-10.

The BJTC award recognises the programme's excellence in innovation in teaching and is all the more welcome because it was awarded on the basis of the course's level of achievement by its first year full accreditation.

The BJTC is the largest journalism course accrediting body in the UK and accredits nearly 70 courses at 42 colleges, universities and commercial organisations.

The postgraduate degree, offered by the Media and Cultural Studies team in SACS is unique in that it is delivered in partnership with the editorial training arm of The Press Association, the national multi-media news agency of Britain and Ireland.

Students spend the first two semesters on campus immersed in a broad range of modules on media theory and professional practice.

They spend the third semester at PA's training centre in Newcastle and at the organisation's international news centre near York, working on modules in advanced reporting, broadcast journalism and online journalism.

The programme's "promise of performance" featured on the BJTC's website says: "Newcastle University's MA in International Multi-Media Journalism can rightly be regarded as 'an MA and a half.'"

"The Masters combines the strength of the university's academic staff in the field of media with The Press Association's strength as one of the UK's leading editorial training organisations with a long and successful record of training working journalists in UK and international media and journalism organisations." The programme's teaching and assessment strategies are designed to foster creativity, innovation and experimentation in media practice, as well as skill sets and knowledge firmly situated within media industry traditions and conventions.

Students are also prepared for the rapidly changing patterns



David Baines (centre) with Tony Johnston (left) and Paul Jones of Press Association Training.

of work in the media sector by offering tuition in business skills and knowledge, and are encouraged to undertake internships with entrepreneurial media ventures.

They are also encouraged to develop enterprising media ventures of their own.

This publication is bi-monthly. We are always eager to receive contributions from you the readership about aspects of the local and academic media for inclusion in a future addition. So if you see yourself as a budding reporter, have some news or event you would like to share, or just wish to gain some reporting or publishing experience then contact the editor.

Media Showcase

Students on the BA Media Communication and Culture studies programme have been busy producing their final year magazines. A great opportunity for them to practice their industry-based skills in the field and learn directly from professionals.



NU Media

A student magazine for new students at Newcastle. 32 Pages.



Crisp

A 32-page magazine centred around student culture.

The BBC Radio Three Free-Thinking Festival came to Gateshead this year, and once again MaCS students gained valuable insight into live radio broadcasts by working behind the scenes. This year the BBC also commissioned our students to come up with innovative ways to express 'change' in the form of six short films. These films were premiered publicly at the festival by the BBC.

The biggest change in your life

Changes that have had the greatest personal impact.

Micro-Changes Tynes Lapse

A visual realization of daily change on the Quayside.

The Good Old Day

Personal reflection from retired seniors and their commentary on life.

Changing Dialects

Three generations of families discuss the changes in their lifetime.

Wings And Hurricanes

A tale of the art of hindsight.

When I was a child I wanted to be...

Professional aspirations from childhood to present day.

I hope you agree that the students has once again excelled themselves as all the films were produced, from concept to premiere, in just 13 days!