



On the Obama Campaign Trail

**Meet the Brunel alumnus who
helped the world's most powerful
man secure a second term in office**

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- Global warming – are we responsible?
- Brunel rocked! Bands at Brunel over the years

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Welcome

FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR

When I joined Brunel in 2012 I was struck by the wonderful sense of community on campus. But, of course this community does not end at the campus gateway; you, our alumni, are part of a lifelong global network through which you can rediscover old friends, make new connections and continue to inspire one another.

Something that has really surprised me is that fewer people know about the University's expertise and exceptional achievements than I had expected. I want us to spread the word about our ground breaking research, the quality of our graduates and our many other achievements so as to enhance our reputation and raise the profile of the University to the benefit of our whole community and give all Brunel alumni an edge. I hope that you will join me in shouting about our successes and showing the rest of the world what a wonderful institution Brunel is.

I also hope that the pages of this magazine will inspire you and give you a sense of pride in being one of our alumni. The research done at Brunel is having an impact across the globe and changing people's lives, for example by challenging previously accepted theories about heart attack recovery [\[page 4\]](#). Furthermore, alumni such as Stephen Bediako are influencing global politics and changing the world's future [\[page 25\]](#). Others, like Eniola Aluko, are achieving excellence in multiple fields [\[page 13\]](#) while Sam Ajidore's hobby at university has turned into an international success, which has seen him enter the Power List [\[page 14\]](#).

You are an inspiration not only to one another, but also to our students. We are so grateful to those of you who give your time to come and speak to the students about your current work and your career path since you graduated. We are working hard to equip our students with the broader skills that go beyond a student's academic discipline and are highly sought after by employers. We are particularly grateful to those of you who help us with this by providing the work placements and internships for our students – these opportunities are critically important in enabling students to secure a job of their choice in this fiercely competitive market.

I must of course thank you for the wonderful donations you have made. The generosity of our alumni donors has helped us offer more than 700 scholarships to talented students who might otherwise have been unable to come to university, particularly in light of the recently introduced fees regime. The impact you have had on



their lives is immeasurable [\[page 16\]](#). These are students who want to change the world and you have made their ambitions achievable.

Finally, I encourage you to make the most of your alumni network. We have a global alumni population and, no matter where you are in the world, there are ways to stay connected and involved. We have thriving online groups for professional networking and international chapters looking to reconnect with fellow Brunelians. If you find yourself closer to London, you have a range of events, lectures and professional development and networking opportunities at your fingertips and we would love to see you back on campus.

With very best wishes for the year ahead,

Professor Julia Buckingham
Vice Chancellor and Principal



High intensity exercise can reduce scar tissue in the heart

New Brunel research demonstrates for the first time that high intensity interval exercise can lead to cardiac repair.

Dr Richard Godfrey, a Senior Lecturer in Sports Coaching and Human Performance at Brunel, suffered a heart attack in 2007 in the absence of any heart disease, resulting in 16% myocardial scar tissue. The cause was later found to be coagulopathy - a blood clotting disorder.

Dr Godfrey, who was formerly Chief Physiologist at the British Olympic Medical Centre, undertook 60 weeks of high intensity aerobic interval exercise, three times per week. Sessions involved six to 10 exercise intervals of one minute hard alternating with one minute easy, designed to take his heart rate just above 90% of maximum.

Cardiac MRI scans before, during and after showed a 50% decrease in the amount of scar tissue in the heart - the first time that exercise has been shown to cause cardiac repair.

Dr Godfrey said: "These findings question what many doctors believe - namely that once scar tissue is present in the heart it cannot be reversed - and suggest that AHIT may be increasingly important in the future prevention and reversing of disease and improvement of symptoms." The research was published in the BMJ Case Reports.

Everyday chemicals may pose serious health risk



Rising exposure to chemicals that disrupt and mimic hormones may present a significant threat to human health and to wildlife populations, a new global study has concluded.

The study says that the sharp, global rise in many hormonal diseases and disorders over the past half century cannot be solely due to genetic causes.

"Instances of infertility, subfertility, hormone-related cancers and childhood neurodevelopmental disorders have increased too fast and too steeply to be natural phenomena," said report editor, Brunel's Professor Susan Jobling.

"These increases coincide with accelerated industrialisation, involving the release of large numbers of chemicals into the environment."

Of the 143,000 industrial chemicals now in use around the world, around 800 have been shown to be

endocrine disruptors - substances that can interfere with hormonal functions. Little is known about the health impact of the rest, but they are nevertheless present in almost everything around us, including furniture, food, cosmetics, clothing, and even water and air.

"A key outcome of the research is that irreversible adverse effects of endocrine disruptors are more likely to occur when exposures take place during the very earliest stages of life, in children in the womb. Their organs are still developing, and hormones are critical for normal development during this time."

The study urges investment in better testing for such chemicals and their effects, so that governments can make informed decisions about which substances to allow and which to ban outright.

Read more about the scale of the threat of chemicals to human health on page 21.

Brunel to drive national research centre

Brunel has been awarded £15M of funding to help research into structural integrity. This is the largest single award for research that Brunel has ever received, enabling the university to establish a National Research Centre that will house more than 100 postgraduate students and 50 staff. It will provide the most up-to-date facilities for engineering materials research in the UK.

The centre is being launched in Cambridge and is the result of a partnership between Brunel and TWI Ltd. It will also involve industry partners such as rail, marine, aerospace and energy companies, as well as three other UK universities.

Brunel's Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, Professor Geoff Rodgers, explained that when structural integrity management fails, the results can be catastrophic. He said "All types of products and plant are at risk if designers, manufacturers and users do not know how to build safe structures." The aim for the centre is to equip UK industry with world-class engineers who can lead the development of new products in industries ranging from energy generation to aerospace, road transport and medical devices.

For more information about this initiative, please email alumni@brunel.ac.uk.



Perri Shakes-Drayton takes gold in the 4x400m relay in Gothenburg

Shakes-Drayton wins double European gold

Brunel graduate Perri Shakes-Drayton won two gold medals at the European Indoor Athletics Championships in Gothenburg in March.

She took gold in the individual 400m in a personal best time of 50.85 seconds, the fastest time in the world this year, before anchoring the women's 4x400m relay team to gold in a championship record time of 3 minutes 27.56 seconds.

The 400m gold, her first major individual title, marks a breakthrough onto the world stage for the 2011 Sport Sciences graduate, whose 2012 Olympic campaign was hampered by a hamstring injury.

"A lot of people were tipping me for gold," she told BBC Sport. "I said I can't be too complacent - I just wanted to stay out of trouble. I just hope it will benefit me when it comes to the outdoors."

The success stands the London-based athlete in good stead for the 2013 outdoor season, which culminates in the World Athletics Championships to be held in Moscow in August.

Golden weekend at the BUCS Nationals

Brunel athletics team took three gold medals and one silver at the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) Indoor Athletics Championships in February.

Second year Sports Science students, Melissa Courtney, and Shanice Harrison both took home gold medals on the track. Melissa ran 4:20.73 in the 1500m. While sprinter, Shanice, won the 200m in a time of 24.59.

Maths student, Andre Wright, achieved a new Championship Best Performance of 21.18 in the 200m. He also took a bronze in the 60m (6.81 seconds). He is hoping to be selected for the U23 GB team for the European championships in Finland this year.

Meanwhile on the field, MSc Sports Sciences (Sport Psychology) student, Jo Rowland, took silver in the Women's shot put with a 13.19m throw.

Did you know...?

Brunel alumni can use the Sports Centre at discounted rates.

Alumni will receive staff rates when showing their alumni card at the time of booking. To order an alumni card, email your name, year of graduation, subject of study and address to alumni@brunel.ac.uk and we'll send you your card.



World Championship bid begins at Brunel

Brunel is to take a central role in the future development of netball in England as one of only three Intensive Netball Training Centres (INTCs) in the country.

The three INTCs will provide the key infrastructure and support necessary to achieve England Netball's goal of becoming World Netball Champions by 2019.

"This is a great win for Brunel," said Director of Sport Paul Dimmock. "It was a long and very demanding selection process, but our combination of excellent sporting facilities, outstanding reputation in sport sciences and unrivalled ability to support high performance athletes meant that we were clearly the best choice."

"Netball is already one of the most popular sports in the country, and by focusing resources in these Centres, we hope to match and surpass the international success of our cyclists and athletes."

Taillisa Haynes (centre above), Brunel Netball's head coach and a Super League Netball Player herself, said that she was looking forward to welcoming England's world class netball players to Brunel.

"We currently have six netball teams in the University, and the INTC will provide our performance netballers with their own opportunities to develop, whether by joining in some of the INTC sessions or simply by watching and learning from the very best," she said. "I know that our players will be relishing the opportunity to pit themselves against the world's best."

The INTCs will provide programmes of regular, coached training with supervised strength and conditioning work, alongside on-site physiotherapy, performance, lifestyle and medical services.



Hayley's Comet lighting up Dubai

A new children's theatre company has been opened in Dubai thanks to Hayley Doyle (MA Creative Writing: The Novel, 2010). *Hayley's Comet Theatre Company* launched in January, giving 7-14 year olds the chance to use their creative force in drama, dance and singing.

"I love working with kids as they are so creative; they have no boundaries," said Hayley. "I have always wanted my own theatre company and what better way than to set it up for children?"

No stranger to the stage, Hayley played Ali in *Mamma Mia* in London's West End and has a range of other performances under her belt. "I wanted to use my experience and skills as a performer and those as a writer to combine and create plays for children. Dubai is a thriving multicultural place with so many children from all over the world, and they bring a very unique and open way to theatre, which is great because theatre is still on the rise in Dubai."

The new venture aims to combine classical performance training with imagination and innovation – an approach that draws on Hayley's experiences from both her Creative Writing MA and her acting career. She currently works with around fifty young aspiring actors. She also offers creative writing sessions at *Hayley's Comet*, including a six-week course for adults.

United Arab Emirates

Building Bridges

Taking the lead from the university's namesake, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, alumnus Waldemar Buettner has joined a firm that has been building bridges in Dubai. *Buettner Architects & Engineers*, where Waldi works in Business Development, was selected to design and construct a series of bridges to improve pedestrian safety in Dubai. The striking designs will help pedestrians move around the city avoiding notoriously busy roads and accident black spots.

A familiar face to many at Brunel, Waldi represented the interests of international students as a chair on the Union of Brunel Students, in addition to completing his BSc Business and Management in 2009.

Canada

Physics expert makes political history

Dr Reza Moridi has been appointed as Minister of Research and Innovation in Ontario. Dr Moridi was born in Iran and educated in the UK, where he completed a PhD at Brunel in 1976. The award-winning scientist, engineer, educator, business leader and community activist became the first Iranian to hold such a position outside of Iran.

He was first elected to represent Richmond Hill in Southern Ontario in 2007. He was re-elected in 2011 and has now been appointed to the Cabinet by Premier of Ontario, Kathleen Wynne.

Bahrain

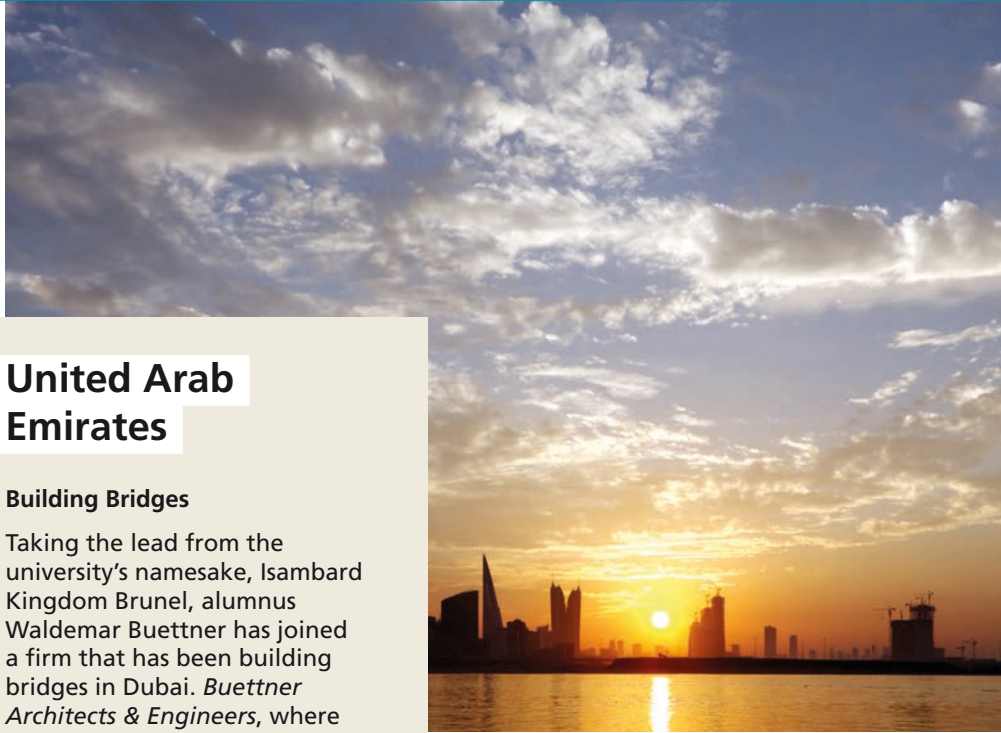
Networking opportunities for Bahrain alumni

A new initiative is being launched to help alumni in Bahrain to make the most of their Brunel network. There are great opportunities for making business and personal contacts through networking and other events. If you are based in Bahrain or regularly visit, and would like to be part of a Brunel Chapter there, we would love to hear from you. Email alumni@brunel.ac.uk to express your interest.

Czech Republic

Cheers! Alumnus heads up brewery

Raise your glass to alumnus Stanislav Hamara who has been appointed as Manager of Plzensky Prazdroj, the brewery which brought pilsner lager to the world's bars. Stanislav completed MSc Packaging Technology at Brunel in 2009. Of his new role he said: "I am honoured to be working at the Pilsen brewery that has changed the face of the beer brewing tradition all over the world."





Because there isn't much music industry infrastructure in Memphis, I knew if I wanted a job in music I was going to have to make one up – so I did. I started *Signal Flow Public Relations*, a music publicity and marketing firm, with just two clients in July of 2011. Now I have a roster of about 15, a mix of independent artists and music businesses or non-profits. I provide publicity and PR services, but also work with clients on branding, marketing, merchandise and distribution.

The unexpected entrepreneur

"I always imagined myself writing about music, so I got a BA in journalism and a Master's in music. Those were also just the things I loved, and I knew eventually I would work out a way to have a career that involved both of them.

"I will say that I never imagined myself an entrepreneur or a business owner, and now I'm both. Navigating that landscape has been tricky and stressful at times but ultimately so very worth it. I can't imagine not being my own boss and I can't imagine not having this much ownership and investment in my work.

"I'm most proud of the great media placements I've gotten for artists I represent, like Chris Milam's appearance on the acclaimed PBS series *The Sun Sessions*, and Myla Smith's recent feature in *American Songwriter Magazine*.

"Right now, my primary aim is to keep my business healthy and growing and to create a piece of infrastructure in the Memphis music industry that can help bring the city back to the national prominence it enjoyed in the '60s and '70s. I want to invest in the city and its music and be a force that allows musicians to stay in Memphis and make a career of making music."

Memories of Brunel

"I absolutely loved the time I spent at Brunel. It was immensely challenging but a time of incredible growth for me. I loved the campus and the friends I made, I still cherish."

USA

No Memphis blues for Elizabeth

Elizabeth Cawein (MA Contemporary Music, 2008) has been named by Memphis Flyer as one of the top 20 young people to be shaping the future of Memphis. Since starting her own PR firm for musicians and music businesses in Memphis in 2011, she has seen her portfolio of clients grow steadily. In addition, she also teaches publicity and marketing, distribution and merchandising at the Visible Music College. She told Brunel Link all about her unexpected journey to business ownership.

"I worked in social media and web development briefly before I found the position that ultimately led me to where I am now – communications coordinator for the Memphis Music Foundation. That job allowed me to work with musicians and the music industry, to use my journalism background and to be challenged constantly.

"The nonprofit organisation had funding cuts in 2011, as they often do, and my position was eliminated. I was heartbroken, but really in hindsight it was the best thing that could've happened. I knew that I loved working with musicians and that I wanted to help put Memphis music on the map.



China

Designer helps create opportunities

Brunel staff met up with former student Qiu Song (MA Design Strategy & Innovation 2006) when they visited China recently.

Qiu (pictured, second from the left) has helped establish a partnership between Brunel and Tsinghua, one of China's leading universities. The connection has helped provide opportunities for collaboration and has seen Tsinghua students taking part in the Made in Brunel exhibition in London.

Qiu is Associate Professor at Tsinghua University and is also credited with designing presentation stands for the Beijing Olympics.



Journalism lecturer reports to Parliament

A Brunel lecturer has shared her expertise with Parliament to help the Government devise the new Communications Bill.

Journalism lecturer, Jacquie Hughes, provided a report on the future of current affairs programmes, which was distributed to every member of both Houses of Parliament.

Hughes, who also works as a journalist and TV producer, was commissioned to write the report by the International Broadcasting Trust (IBT), an educational and media charity. Entitled *An Uncertain Future – the threat to current affairs*, the report recommends that the Government should ensure that there is no diminishing of standards in public affairs broadcasting.

Hughes said: "Independent producers say that without regulation, current affairs would be marginalised, commercial broadcasters would be far less likely to commission it at all, and, if they did, it would be softer and there would be fewer international stories."

Sophie Chalk, IBT's Director of Campaigns, added: "We believe that current affairs programming on television is essential in a modern democracy. It uncovers those stories that we wouldn't otherwise see."

International book deal for steampunk author

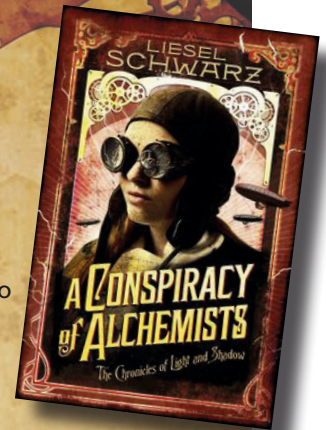
School of Arts research student, Liesel Schwarz, has been offered a spectacular three-book international publishing contract by Random House.

The contract, for Liesel's belle époque steampunk trilogy *The Chronicles of Light and Shadow*, is said to be one of the most impressive in British publishing this year. The deal is the first international signing for a Brunel student and includes publication in the UK, USA and Germany.

Opening with *A Conspiracy of Alchemists*, the trilogy is set in an alternative Europe in 1903 and focusing on the adventures of airship pilot Eleanor Chance. The fantasy series has been described as a fast-paced romantic adventure within a richly textured and complex world, where the forces of shadow and light battle for power.



You can find out more about Liesel's writing at www.lieselschwarz.com



World tour for music alumnus

Alberto Fabris (Music and Sports Sciences 1991) is currently on a world tour with the renowned Italian pianist Ludovico Einaudi.

Alberto appears on Einaudi's latest album: *In a Time Lapse*. The album tour will take in major venues around

the globe and include dates in London, Paris and New York.

Alberto has released twelve albums featuring his own compositions. He has excelled not only in music, but also in sport as he formerly played for a professional football club in Italy.

For tour dates visit www.inatimelapse.com, where you can also contribute to an online image gallery.



Creative Tweeting

Head of Creative Writing at Brunel, Max Kinnings, has established a student-curated Twitter account.

The account sees a new student take the helm every fortnight to try their hand at micro-blogging.

Topics covered include writing advice, literary events and avenues for potential publication, as well as exploring students' thoughts on the topics they are studying and books they are reading.

Inspired by a Swedish initiative, Kinnings wanted to see a feed that gave a real perspective on the student experience. The scheme also gives students an insight into networking and social media, which are increasingly valued as employability skills.

You can follow the creative writing bloggers at twitter.com/brunelwriter and exchange ideas and recommendations with our students.

MBA Alumni got together for an annual networking event in London in March



MBA alumni connect in India

Brunel events in Mumbai earlier this year, gave our Business School alumni two unique networking opportunities.

Five current MBA students met with our alumni at a dinner in the Grand Hyatt Hotel as part of their study trip. The evening was organised with the help of Shazaad Nalwalla (MBA 2011) and alumni and current students enjoyed both reminiscing and looking to the future.

Current students Nadiyah Yusoff and Maruti Pilani were very enthusiastic about the opportunity: "it was good to get a chance to network with previous students to see how successful they have been after gaining their Brunel degree. It sets us a challenge to exceed their success!"

The following week Professors Ashley Braganza and Francesco Moscone hosted a dynamic round table event exploring the subject of entrepreneurship. Two guest speakers attended and helped initiate the discussions. First up

was Mr Rishi Vedanarayanan, General Manager at Eureka Forbes' Consumer Division. Also speaking was Mr Vijay Gaba. Vijay runs his own financial research and strategy firm with over two decades of experience in the field, including at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

Surbhi Agarwal (MSc Management, 2008) said: "The Mumbai Alumni Chapter meetings gave me the opportunity to meet the ex-students and the current students of Brunel. We shared ideas with each other and learned from each other's experiences how the theories of management can be applied at work. The key to success is networking and I think the students who attend these alumni events will definitely benefit."

Pravash Dey (MBA, 2009) added: "It's a great experience to have current MBA students and alumni under one roof. The guest speakers were awesome and the round table discussion was very lively. I look forward to similar events in the future".

If you are interested in joining the Mumbai Chapter to make the most of local networking opportunities, please email us on alumni@brunel.ac.uk.



Students name their top placement employers

Global data storage company, NetApp, was chosen as the *Best Placement Employer* by the Brunel Business School. Although its headquarters are in California, NetApp is also a local employer, with a branch based in Stockley Park, that has been recruiting Brunel students over the last three years.

Both Brunel and NetApp are keen to retain local talent and add value to the local economy by working together to develop students' and graduates' employability skills.

The annual prize is decided through nominations by placement students, who highlight how their placement provider has gone beyond the call of duty to support their personal and professional objectives. Thirteen different nominations were received this year including several for blue chip organisations including Porsche, Bosch and IBM. NetApp was chosen as the overall winner for demonstrating outstanding commitment to the development of Brunel students.

Zahir Irani, Head of Brunel Business School, said: "Brunel Business School is delighted to present this prize to NetApp. It recognises the commitment of the placement employers in developing our students through challenging and enriching placements. Placements are an integral part of the academic curriculum. Students who have had a positive placement experience return to university with a better insight into their chosen profession."

If your organisation is interested in working with Brunel by taking on a work placement student or graduate, please contact us on alumni@brunel.ac.uk.

Getting to grips with a robot octopus

A soft bodied robot has been under development at Brunel as part of a European project.

Reader in Biomimetics and Design, Dr Richard Bonser, has been working on a robot octopus design which avoids the use of rigid materials and joints. Dr Bonser's role in the process has been to develop the artificial skin and suckers.

"The octopus is a brilliant model for a new class of soft, bio-inspired robots", he said. "It has a high degree of multi-functionality due to its flexible arms, and can squeeze through gaps marginally bigger than its brain."

It is hoped that the project could result in the creation of a robot that can be used underwater to perform tasks that might be hazardous for human divers. "A robot that can operate underwater will be able to work on undersea pipelines, oil rigs and ship hulls. It could even do search-and-rescue operations, like retrieving black boxes from crashed aircraft" explained Dr Bonser.

Dr Bonser with the robot octopus arm



Photo: Jennie Hills, Science Museum

The project went on show at the Science Museum and you can read more about it at <http://antenna.sciencemuseum.org.uk/robotoctopus>.



James May (front) with the team of Brunel engineers and their glider

Students star in BBC show with James May

A team of student engineers from Brunel University helped design and build an unmanned, engineless toy glider in an attempt to fly over 22 miles of sea for a BBC TV Christmas special. *Toy Stories* saw Top Gear presenter James May making life-sized constructions of some of Britain's best loved toys.

A team of 14 aerospace and aviation engineering students spent a week in an aircraft hangar to construct the glider. They were responsible for assembling the wings, tail and fin and worked alongside May, a keen aviator himself, who constructed the fuselage.

The flight attempt involved a launch from an airborne helicopter at approximately 10,000ft above the sea, with an aviation student at the helm of the glider controls.

James May said: "I was very impressed with the students for the work they put in on the new wing. I knew, as soon as I saw the plan, that the wing section was pretty inefficient but didn't know how to calculate a new one. The students came up with something pretty quickly. It worked very well."

Research highlights

The School of Engineering and Design will be helping to identify ways of reducing energy use in the food chain, thanks to a £12M funding boost from Research Councils UK. The funding will help launch a research centre bringing industry and university partners together to help reduce CO₂ emissions in the food chain.

The School has also attracted a further £4M grant to research the food and packaging supply chain in order to further reduce emissions and waste. The collaboration with University of Nottingham will focus on using ICT to modernise food manufacturing and will consult consumers in the process.

For more information about these projects, email alumni@brunel.ac.uk.

Supporting breastfeeding could save the NHS £millions



Academics at Brunel have co-authored a UNICEF-commissioned report into the economic impact of low breastfeeding rates in the UK.

The report found that increasing the adoption and duration of breastfeeding could save the NHS money by reducing illness in both mother and baby. Calculations, involving some of the conditions in which evidence for the health advantages of breastfeeding are the strongest, suggest that potential savings could top £40M.

The research centred on five illnesses – breast cancer in mothers, and gastroenteritis, respiratory infections, middle ear infections and necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) in babies and investigated the impact of only a moderate increase in breastfeeding rates.

The report entitled *Preventing Disease and Saving Resources: Potential Contribution of Increasing Breastfeeding Rates in the UK*, recommends that health services put in appropriate legislation and investment in place to give mothers a more positive experience of breastfeeding and help them to breastfeed for longer. This could provide a return on investment in as little as one year.

Alumnus elected as Academy Fellow

Dr Eric Hunter

(PhD Biology 1972) has been elected as an Academy Fellow at the American Academy of Microbiology. This prestigious honour recognises those who have made significant contributions to the field of microbiology. His long career has included researching tumor immunology, AIDS and retroviruses.



Airline food danger for allergy sufferers

A study led by Professor in Health Research, Julie Barnett, has warned that airlines are putting lives at risk through a lack of interest in catering for the needs of passengers with nut allergies.

The study, published in the journal *Clinical and Translational Allergy*, looked at the experiences of 32 patients with nut or peanut allergy and how they cope with travel. Among the responses were reports of a crew member stroking a passenger's arm in comfort and saying 'poor you' after they had explained that people could not eat nuts around them, while another gave a customer a walnut salad after they had informed them of an allergy.

Professor Barnett explained that flights were a particular danger to sufferers due to the inconsistency of information provided. She said: "Inconsistent practice on the part of airlines undermines the best efforts of individuals to manage risk, so it is vital we see the development of a consistent and helpful approach which food allergic passengers can trust and rely on."

Study co-author Hazel Gowland, from the research and training organisation *Allergy Action*, added: "Inconsistency between airlines and even between flights on the same airline is a problem and it is going to take a complete and independent overhaul to overcome it. Policies available or explained to staff may not be implemented in practice, special meals are often not available or suitable for the particular passenger and flight crews don't always remember or implement the company's best practice."

Dr Jane Lucas, a respiratory and allergy specialist based at Southampton General Hospital and the University of Southampton, commented: "This study demonstrates that, despite nut allergic individuals taking extremely sensible steps to remain safe, airlines are consistently putting lives at risk and are yet to make any significant steps towards taking this risk seriously."



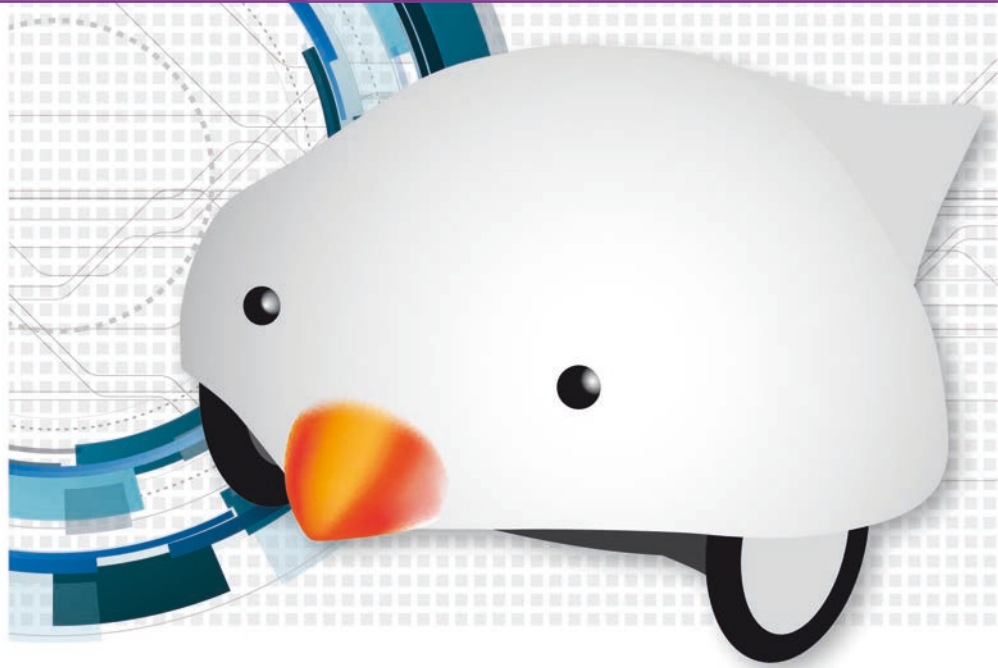
Placement student shortlisted for national award

Student, Augustine Manu, was shortlisted for a national award that recognised his outstanding contribution during his work placement.

Gus, who studies Mathematics with Computer Science, was considered to have made such an impact at NetApp, that he was nominated and shortlisted for the "Best Placement Student" award at the *National Placement and Internship Awards*.

Gus was handpicked from a large number of entries as he was considered to have contributed to tangible savings for the company and demonstrated that he had exceeded all expectations. He was also deemed to have held a position of responsibility and overcome challenges.

NetApp is a multinational computer storage and data management company and Gus completed a placement with them during his sandwich year.



Students prepare for 'Robot Olympics'

Forget Rio 2016 – the next Olympics set to brighten Brunel's calendar will involve not elite athletes but high-functioning robots programmed by first year students.

This is part of a pilot initiative in which the students are each given a robot at the start of the year to take home and use to apply the programming skills they learn.

The USB-powered units are known as 'Finches' and were designed by a team at Carnegie-Mellon University in the USA.

Martin Sheppard, Professor in Software Technologies and Modelling, explained the appeal of the robots for learning and teaching. "The difficulty with software and computer science is that we're dealing with subjects that are intangible. It's useful to have

devices such as robots to visualise the behaviour of the software."

The Finch can be programmed to perform a variety of actions, including moving in different directions, sounding a buzzer, changing the colour of its 'beak', detecting its orientation using an accelerometer, using infrared sensors to detect obstacles and determining ambient temperature.

Some students have really pushed the boundaries of the Finches' capabilities by enabling them to navigate previously unseen mazes and produce intricate geometric artwork using an attached pen. They can also receive commands via Twitter.

The 'Robot Olympics' will form part of the students' end of year assessments.

Students in community IT support initiative

Brunel IT students are helping local people and businesses with their computing problems. What's more, they're gaining invaluable work experience at the same time.

The Student@Home initiative employs 25 Brunel students who are on hand to provide cost-effective expert tuition and technology support for home computer users

and small businesses in the local area.

Founder of Student@Home, Kelly Klein says "We're really pleased to have Brunel IT students on board. They are a great bunch and more importantly are delivering a really important service to people that might otherwise be struggling with digital technology".

"I am also aware of high unemployment rates and the difficulties that graduates face when trying to get their foot on the employment ladder so it is great to be able to offer students an opportunity to gain employment."

The Brunel students make up almost half of the students on the scheme.

Olympian scores traineeship with media law firm

If you think preparing for the Olympics was hard work for Team GB athletes, spare a thought for Eniola Aluko, who, in addition to training and preparing for London 2012, was also in the process of completing her Legal Practice Course last summer.

After a memorable summer, where she reached the football quarter finals at the Olympics, the striker has now begun working with Lee & Thomson, media and entertainment lawyers whose clients include David Beckham, Charlotte Church and Stephen Fry.

One of her first tasks at the firm was to assist with a libel case for Frankie Boyle, which saw them successfully challenge the *Daily Mirror* on an article that described him as a "racist comedian".

She continues to juggle her law and football careers; winning the Cyprus Cup and training for the 2013 Euros, whilst tackling family, music, film and corporate law at Lee & Thomson.

In a recent interview, Eniola (LLB Law 2008) said she would eventually like to combine her two careers and open a sports law practice.



"Whether that's part of what I do or is the main focus, I'm not quite sure yet" she said. "But I think it would be a shame for me to have had a career in football and met so many influential people in the game and not bring that into law in some way."



Zara awarded Jessup Mooting Prize

A Brunel Law student was presented with the prestigious Spirit of the Jessup moot prize this year. Zara Asante represented Brunel as sole agent and took on five-person teams from Exeter, UCL, Durham and Cambridge in the national contest.

Zara is the first-ever contestant to have been sole agent at the competition. She was unanimously voted by the judges as winner of the *Spirit of the Jessup prize*.

Zara's mentor, Professor Dr. Benedict Tendayi Chigara had

said: "I have never encountered such commitment to a cause as displayed by Zara in this contest. She is testament to the quality of Brunel Law School".

Named after Philip C. Jessup - judge of the International Court of Justice (1961-1970) - the Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition is the largest and most prestigious moot competition in the world today. Over 500 Law Schools from more than 100 countries participate in the event. The competition is a simulation of a fictional dispute between countries before the International Court of Justice.



Brunel students experience the Supreme Court

Torture moot in Supreme Court

The Supreme Court played host to a group of ambitious law students, in February, for a mooting competition.

The judging panel consisted of teaching staff and two external judges of Hardwicke Chambers.

"Members of the Brunel Law Society had been eagerly anticipating the Moot Finals at the Supreme Court" said Rebecca Chambers, society member. "The competitors had put in a lot of hard work and library time to make up the bundles to present to the judges."

The beginners' moot covered the virtual certainty test. "The judges certainly kept the mooters on their toes with an onslaught of questions, which the mooters answered professionally and promptly," said Rebecca.

The advanced moot saw a head-to-head between the Chambers of the Law Society President, Henna Malik, and the Society's Debating Officer, Catriona Harris, concerning the admission of evidence obtained through torture: "This made for a very interesting and controversial debate!" Rebecca recalled.

Exposure to the court environment and interaction with law professionals forms a vital part of the law programme; opportunities which Brunel students embrace enthusiastically.

The judge praised the students saying "everyone performed to a high standard; the points of law discussed are ones which have been debated over the years by academics and lawyers".



Sam meets Toni Braxton

Sam's blog becomes global hit

When he started writing a blog as a Brunel student, Sam Ajilore could never have imagined that it would become one of the world's most popular urban culture websites and would see him added to "The Power List".

That Grape Juice was created in 2007 while Sam was just 18 and studying Sociology & Media at Brunel. Inspired by bloggers such as Perez Hilton, he began by sharing his views about urban entertainment online.

As its popularity grew and the number of hits on his blog began to rise, Sam realised that this could become more than just a hobby: "for the first three years *That Grape Juice* generated enough to (just about) pay my phone bill," said Sam. "In its fourth, it helped fund the lion's share of my Master's, and in more recent times has blossomed into one of our advertisers' best performing publishers."

The site now gets 70,000 hits a day and 3.5 million page views per month. Sam also employs a team of six staff. The site has taken off overseas with around 68% of its users based in the USA. It has received attention from MTV, the MOBO Awards and BBC 1Xtra, and Sam was named as one of the most influential black people in Britain in the 2013 Power List.

Throughout his time at Brunel, he was supported in earnest by the Media Services department, who would routinely loan him camera equipment to film celebrity interviews and features. He credits the content of his degrees with helping him better understand media audiences and more specifically his own audience. But more than anything, Sam attributes his success to persisting with his passion.

His star studded interview archive includes Janet Jackson, Mary J. Blige, Ke\$ha, Ciara, John Legend, Kelly Rowland, Toni Braxton and Nicole Scherzinger.

Schizophrenia dissertation published in journal



Philip Erritty and Prof Wydell

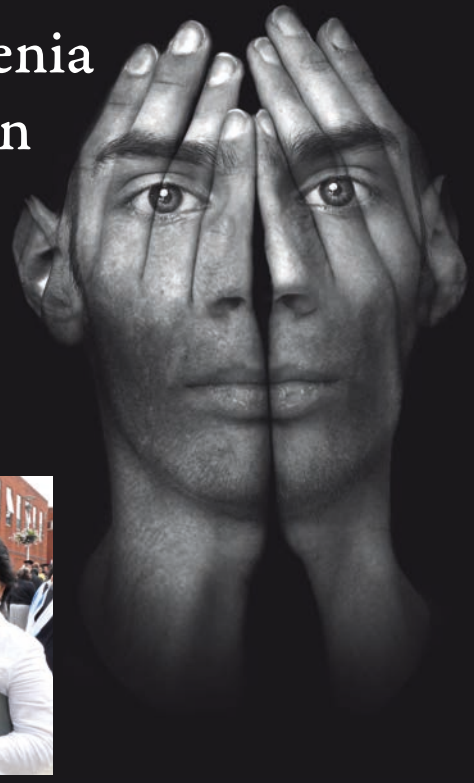
Former Brunel Psychology student, Philip Erritty, with the help of his university Professor, Taeko Wydell, recently published new findings about schizophrenia in the online scientific journal, PLOS ONE.

The aim of Philip's study was to explore the general public's perception of schizophrenia symptoms and the need to seek help for them. The recognition (or 'labelling') of schizophrenia symptoms, help-seeking behaviours and public awareness of schizophrenia have been suggested as potentially important factors relating to untreated psychosis.

The study, which was carried out for Philip's undergraduate dissertation, examined how well laypersons could identify the symptoms of schizophrenia. Only three symptoms (hallucinatory behaviour, unusual thought content and suspiciousness) were reasonably well perceived as indicating mental illness more than the other symptoms. Even when the participants recognised that the symptoms indicated mental illness, not everyone recommended professional help.

Early detection and the initiation of effective treatment, particularly for people suffering from a first-episode of schizophrenia, is becoming an increasingly important issue in mental healthcare and these findings suggest that there may be a need to improve public awareness of schizophrenia and psychosis symptoms, particularly regarding an awareness of the importance of early intervention for psychosis.

Philip chose to study schizophrenia for his dissertation following the two work placements he undertook during his studies. He completed his first placement at the Institute of Psychiatry in London as a research assistant, and for his second placement he worked as a Therapeutic Care Worker in a psychiatric rehabilitation hospital. He worked alongside clinical psychologists, experienced nurses and psychiatrists in the 24-hour care of vulnerable adults with mental health problems at the hospital. He now plans to develop his career in clinical psychology/psychiatry.





Why are the top footballers so good at intercepting?

By studying brain scans, Brunel researchers have discovered that highly-skilled footballers are able to activate more areas of their brain than novices when they see an opponent heading towards them, making them better able to anticipate their moves. The research, published in the *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, found that experienced players seem to have developed a 'checking' system that suppresses the urge to react instinctively, making them less likely to fall for deceptive feints.

The research, which looks to discover the neural basis for cognitive superiority, involved 39 participants ranging from semi-professional footballers to novices. The participants lay in an MRI scanner whilst watching clips of a junior international-level player dribbling a ball toward them. On some occasions the oncoming player performed a deceptive manoeuvre and participants had to decide in

which direction to move, while their brain activity was monitored. They were then grouped according to how well they performed. The skilled footballers were more attuned to the actions and deceptive movements of opponents than their less-skilled counterparts.

The results also showed evidence of stronger activation of the Mirror Neuron System (MNS) when predicting an opponent's actions. The MNS is active not only when performing an action within our personal repertoire, but also when viewing that same action performed by others. Hence, there was clear evidence of 'recognition' of the opponents' movements in the more skilled performers.

It is hoped that this research will lead to greater insight into how professional sports people come to develop their abilities over time and will eventually be used to help improve and speed up training techniques.



Williams aims to make his mark on new Olympic project

Professor Mark Williams, subject leader for Sport Sciences, will form part of a major government-funded project to investigate the role of bioscience research in generating Olympic and Paralympic medals in Rio 2016 and beyond. The £1.4M programme, which is to be funded by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, UK Sport and the Economic and Social Research Council, will also focus on the role of bioscience in supporting longevity and functional living in older populations.

Williams is set to play a leading role in one of the three projects funded by the scheme. He will lead the project alongside Professors from the University of Birmingham and University of Oxford, in partnership with GB Archery. Professor Williams and the team will seek to identify the behavioural and biological mechanisms underpinning elite performance in aiming tasks.

Dr Scott Drawer of UK Sport said: "Continued research and funding into projects like this allows us to look for those marginal gains that can make such a big difference in world-class sport as well as having a wider benefit for the health of the general population."

Does celebrity culture affect young people's aspirations?

Two education researchers have turned to social media to facilitate further debate around their research. They have examined the impact of celebrity culture on young people's aspirations and argue that blaming this culture diverts attention away from wider economic problems.

Dr Heather Mendick, Director of Research in Education and Dr Laura Harvey, a post-doctoral researcher in Education, had an article published on the Guardian Teachers' Network online and the team has now embraced blogging, Twitter and Facebook to encourage more discussion around the subject.

Read more about the research on their blog (www.celebyouth.org), Twitter (@celebyouthUK) or Facebook (CelebYouthUK group).



Telephone campaign

Last year's telephone campaign gave alumni the chance to exchange Brunel anecdotes with our students, share news and impart invaluable study and careers advice. The 36 students involved also gained useful skills and experience for the future. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to speak to our callers.

The campaign also saw alumni donating more than £97,000 to support the Brunel community. These contributions will help bright and determined students who, for social and/or economic reasons, might not otherwise have the opportunity to pursue a university education. The Brunel Scholarship Fund alleviates some of the costs involved in attending university. All donations received are used solely for the purposes that they are intended, and none of them are used for administrative or Development Office running costs.

We will be contacting hundreds of alumni again this year to find out what they have been up to since graduation, to update them on campus news and developments and to ask if they would be willing to support the Brunel Scholarship Fund. This campaign will take place from 1 – 30 June.



Alumni offer life-changing support

With the recent changes in UK university funding, it is more important than ever that Brunel is able to support students financially to ensure they are able to study at university. This year over 700 scholarships were awarded to our students. This financial support has made a huge difference thanks to the generosity of our alumni.

We caught up with Kirsty Greener (BSc Civil Engineering with Sustainability, year one) to find out how her scholarship has helped.

"I chose this degree due to its endless limits. One day I can be studying Geotechnics with the impact of earthquakes, the next fluids mechanics for water solutions and then the structure of a building. The course is so diverse and offers many options. This appealed so much to me, and knowing that in the future I could be so diverse, and so could my career opportunities with the chance to change the world!

"The most interesting part of my course so far has been the multi-

disciplinary project at the end of term one. This gave me a chance to work with multi-engineering disciplines such as mechanical and electrical engineers. The project was to build a robot using a Lego mind storm kit, to conquer an assault course. This was a very challenging week that tested skills that I have not previously attempted such as programming. It was a challenge, but it was worth it to create a walking, working robot.

"The scholarship has enabled me to buy extra study and practical equipment (such as work boots) that previously I could have not afforded. It also enabled me to spend more time on my studies with a lower need for more work hours, as engineering has a largely filled timetable. But the main way it has helped is it has given me a support ensuring that my studies will be as effective as possible.

"I owe a giant thank you for the donations that have made my experience so wonderful and I hope that future students are able to receive help just like me."

If you would like to support a Brunel student by contributing to a scholarship, please visit www.brunel.ac.uk/supportus. Together our alumni donations enable us to maintain a vital fund that changes lives. Our sincere thanks go out to everyone that has been part of this so far.



Comedian Lee Mack receives his Honorary Doctorate



Former Head of Alumni Relations, Sue Curley, is honoured

Honorary graduates

The University awards Honorary Doctorates in recognition of outstanding scholarly achievement, services to the university, or to the local, national or international community.

Our latest honorary graduates include alumnus, **Lee Mack**, who was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities for his outstanding services to the arts. Lee, who graduated from Brunel with a degree in Drama with Film & Television Studies in 1996, commented that his time at university literally changed his life; not only did it inspire him to take the plunge into comedy, but Brunel was also where he met his wife Tara.

Talking about his time at Brunel, he said: "It was during my time as a student at Brunel that I started performing stand-up comedy. I was worried that my ambitions wouldn't fit in with the ethos of such an academic institution, but they couldn't have been any more supportive, regularly letting me turn part of their building into a stand-up comedy club where I performed many of my early gigs. I am proud to have been honoured by and associated with such an institution."

The other recipients were:

Dr Robert John OBE, Director General Emeritus of TWI - *Doctor of Engineering*

Judith Knight MBE, co-Director and founder of Artsadmin - *Doctor of Humanities*

Professor Conor Gearty, Barrister, founder member of Matrix Chambers and Human Rights Law expert - *Doctor of Laws*

Professor John Brewer, Sociologist, active contributor to Northern Ireland Peace Process - *Doctor of Social Sciences*

Professor Rajiv Hanspal, Medical Director at the Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability, Putney - *Doctor of Science*

Rory Sutherland, Vice-Chairman of Ogilvy UK - *Doctor of Letters*

The Rt Hon Baroness Hayman GBE first elected Lord Speaker of the House of Lords - *Doctor of Laws*

Thomas Webb, former MD of the London Tourist Board and Convention Bureau and former Brunel Council Chair - *Doctor of the University*

Honorary fellows

Honorary Fellowships were awarded to retired staff who have made an exceptional contribution to the university, or to friends of Brunel that have developed strong relationships/partnerships with us.

This year, fellowship recipients included **Sue Curley** who coordinated Brunel's Alumni Relations programme from its inception in the early 1990s through to her retirement in 2011.

The other recipients were:

Carol Bagnald, HSBC Regional Commercial Director, London

Marianne Bevis, former Head of Publications

Denise Bufton, former Head of Student Services

Professor Stephen A Greyser, Visiting Professor and Advisory Board member

John Hall, Chair of Eversheds LLP

Peter Hall, Worshipful Company of Water Conservators and Brunel alumnus

Robert Lougee, former University Council member

John Thirkettle, local community sports advocate

Bob Westaway, former Head of Registry

For further details about the recipients, visit www.brunel.ac.uk/about/people.

Brunel Rocked!

Brunel hosted some of the biggest names in music during the 1970s. John Bates looks back over some of the highlights from a prolific decade of university gigs.

In the early days at Acton College most student concerts were booked into either the Lyceum Ballroom or The Roundhouse at Chalk Farm. *Fleetwood Mac*, *Deep Purple* and *The Who* were just a few of the bands that drew crowds of students.

During the transition from the Acton campus to Uxbridge, such events could not be held as the Refectory (Hamilton Building) was being built in two stages. But the completion of the second half in the autumn of 1969 opened up the opportunity to hold concerts at the Brunel campus.

Around the same time, Paul King was studying Nuclear Chemistry at Brunel, and was involved with the students' entertainment committee. During 1970 he started to promote live shows at the university. Such was the success during those early years under his guidance the university fast became a major venue on the touring circuit for bands!

"Elton doing handstands while playing the piano is quite a sight!"

One of the more memorable concerts booked in the early days was an up and coming artist, Elton John. Elton played in February 1971 and, having had a recent top ten hit with *Your Song*, the concert was a sell out. Though I didn't attend I've seen 16mm film footage amongst the university's archive; it was shot as part of a university promotional film by the department I worked in at the time, Audio Visual Services. Elton doing handstands while playing the piano is quite a sight!

I started work at Brunel in 1970 but it was not until October 1973 that I saw my first band. My friend Pete and I got tickets to see *Family* who were on a farewell tour. Roger Chapman's characteristic dynamic on-stage presence certainly made it a night to remember during their farewell tour!

Jon Vidler succeeded Paul King and during this time I became involved with Jon and the students' entertainment committee. He was keen to promote ticket sales to staff at Hillingdon hospital; I mentioned an opportunity to sell tickets via my friend, Pete who worked at the hospital.

Later, Jon asked if I would provide photos of bands when attending concerts. By mutual arrangement I was given a free ticket in exchange for copies of photos. A few weeks after the *Family* concert the first photos were taken and made available for Jon.

Earlier that summer a new rock band hit the UK charts with a No.1 and a No.3 chart hit in June and July respectively. What made this band stand out from the rest? It was the first rock band to be fronted by a woman playing bass guitar. The name? *Suzi Quatro*.

"I managed to get one shot before being chased out of the room by Suzi Quatro's boyfriend"

Bookings for *Suzi Quatro* and her band were coming in fast from colleges and universities as a result of her earlier chart successes and Jon managed to book her.

After photographing the concert I decided to try my luck; I knew where the band's rest room was located and sneaked in to get some photos. I managed to get one shot before being

chased out of the room by an angry Len Tuckey, Suzi Quatro's boyfriend.

A few weeks later I was back again photographing *ELO* this time, a sell out concert made popular by their recent chart successes with *10538 Overture*, *Roll Over Beethoven* and *Showdown*.

Despite these concerts being packed I always managed to find somewhere to stand and take the pictures, next to the speaker stacks - nobody stood there! My ears would ring for hours afterwards (I guess I'll suffer hearing loss as I grow older?). After photographing an event the film would be taken the same night to an overnight processing lab and I usually received them back within 48 hours.

October 1972 saw the completion of the Sports Hall. Two years later, on 22 November, the first concert took place with *Humble Pie* headlining supported by *McGuiness Flint*. January 1975 saw *Argent* playing in the Sports Hall, while in May 1975 *The Kinks* returned with their musical concept album *The Kinks Present a Soap Opera* for the final end of term concert.

In early December 1975 another band was booked to play in the Sports Hall: Justin Hayward and John Lodge, of *The Moody Blues* fame, were touring as *Blue Jays* and had recently released an album of the same name which was a big success.

I recall walking into the Sports Hall before the concert and was amazed at the massive speaker stacks towering above me, nearly two-thirds of the height of the hall! Amazingly, it didn't turn out to be a deafeningly loud concert - *Blue Jays* proved you don't need to play loud to sound good! The concert was a sell-out and I believe nearly a thousand tickets were sold!



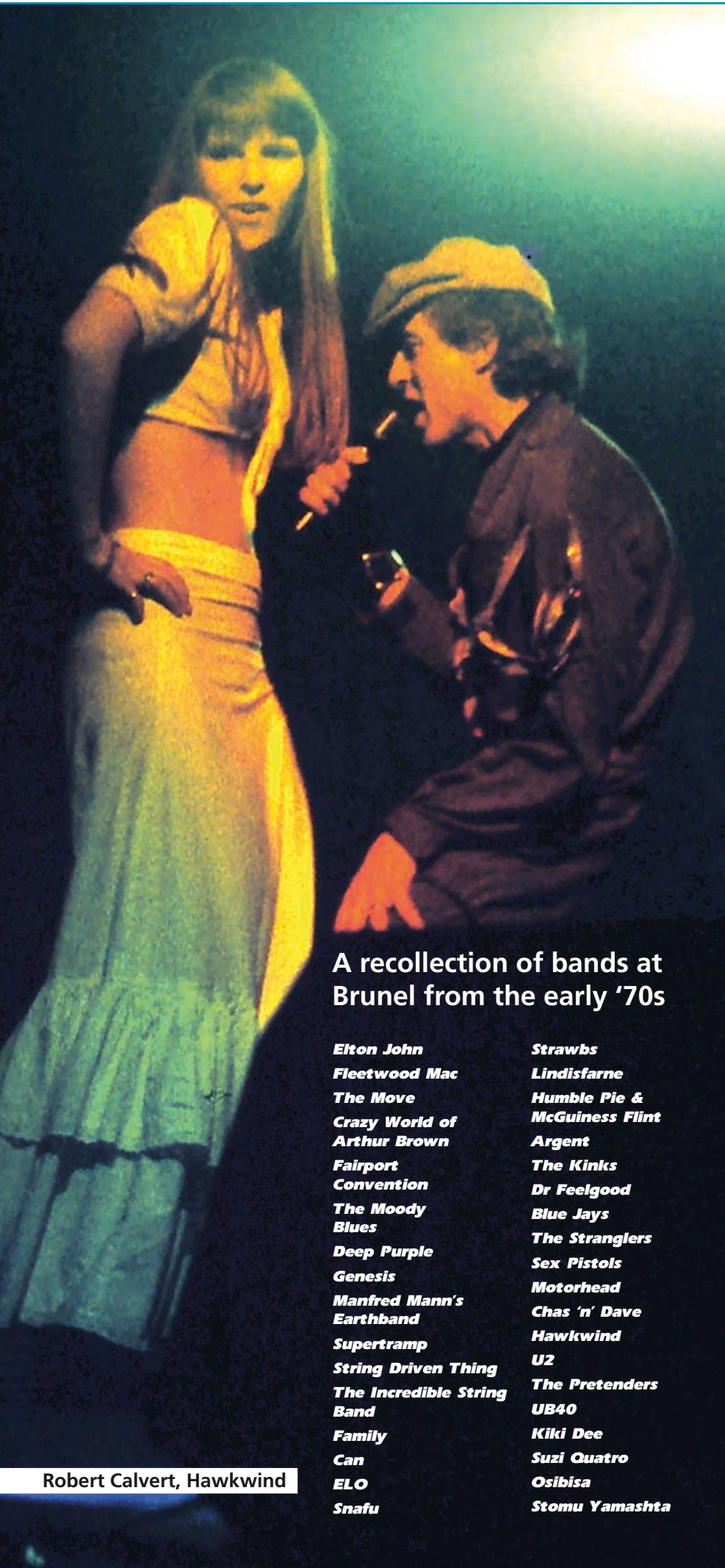
Suzi Quatro



Jeff Lynne, ELO



Ray Davies, The Kinks



A recollection of bands at Brunel from the early '70s

Elton John	Strawbs
Fleetwood Mac	Lindisfarne
The Move	Humble Pie &
Crazy World of	McGuinness Flint
Arthur Brown	Argent
Fairport	The Kinks
Convention	Dr Feelgood
The Moody	Blue Jays
Blues	The Stranglers
Deep Purple	Sex Pistols
Genesis	Motorhead
Manfred Mann's	Chas 'n' Dave
Earthband	Hawkwind
Supertramp	U2
String Driven Thing	The Pretenders
The Incredible String	UB40
Band	Kiki Dee
Family	Suzi Quatro
Can	Osibisa
ELO	Stomu Yamashta
Snafu	

Robert Calvert, Hawkwind

The end of term concert saw *Hawkwind* in the Sports Hall on 17 December. Another sell out concert possibly helped by people remembering *Hawkwind's* recent 1972 hit *Silver Machine*. The support band was *Nova* - they were not appreciated by the fans! *Hawkwind* took to the stage and showed how it's really done. The sound was loud and the audience were entranced with a combination of music, slide effects, the use of strobe lights and *Hawkwind's* dancer!

Ten years at Brunel had passed quickly without me realising, perhaps too quickly? It was time to move on, a new job in nurse training beckoned. During that time I'd been involved in the making of *A Clockwork Orange* and watched episodes of *The Sweeney* and *The New Avengers* shot on campus. I also saw many big name bands of the day - something today's students will not experience, due to financial and health and safety regulations. What have they missed I ask? I made many student friends, went to parties, discos and all-nighters! Starting at 8 pm finishing at 8 am a disco would be held upstairs in the Hamilton while bands played downstairs. Luckily for me they were usually held on a Friday!

Those mentioned here are just a few of the 100 or so bands who played at Brunel during my time - I certainly had the time of my life!

The last band I saw was on 27 February 1980. *The Pretenders*, who were riding high on their successful UK chart hit *Brass in Pocket*, were booked into the Sports Hall and were supported by *UB40*. Two brilliant bands for £10 (I think) made a nice end to my time at Brunel before leaving for pastures new. Two days later a chapter in my life closed.

John Bates is back at Brunel working as a Media Technician in Media Services.



Mik Kaminski, ELO



The issue of climate change will inevitably divide opinion, but the subject is never far from the news headlines.

So have we caused climate change? And is there an even bigger threat to humanity lurking?

We asked researchers from Brunel's Institute for the Environment for their thoughts.

Join in the discussion



If you would like to discuss this topic with fellow alumni, why not join our LinkedIn group and get the debate going?

Visit www.linkedin.com and search for "Official Brunel University Alumni".

Why haven't we "proved" the human link with climate change yet?

Dr Andrew Russell

Climate Change Lecturer

I want the world! Well, to be specific, I want another world. Or maybe a few more...

I'm a climate scientist and some of my research tries to uncover what impact human civilization has had on our climate.

If I were a chemist and I wanted to work out what impact temperature, say, has on some chemical reaction then I could use controlled conditions in a lab to perform repeatable experiments to build up a robust picture of the relationship. When it comes to climate science, though, we only have one Earth, which is inconvenient if you'd like to do repeat experiments with it!

Nonetheless, humanity is in the middle of an unplanned "experiment" to see what happens to the climate of the one world we do have if the concentration of atmospheric greenhouse gases is increased through the burning of fossil fuels. It is quite a slow experiment and is very likely to have important environmental and socio-economic consequences. Aptly enough, it was initiated in part by our namesake, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, alongside other 19th Century engineers and industrialists.

So, if I had multiple Earths, I would change the greenhouse gas concentration in some of them and leave other ones alone. All other factors would be the same, as we would do in a controlled lab experiment. If our hypotheses about climate change are correct then we would see significant difference between the two sets of planets.

It is, of course, incredibly unlikely that my wish for extra planet Earths will be met. So what do we do instead? On the one hand,

a "preponderance of evidence" approach is taken. We have decades to centuries of observations of different climatic factors – by piecing these lines of evidence together we can identify changes in Earth's climate and determine whether they are likely to be linked to human activities.

On the other hand, we can examine the problem from the point of view of the underlying physics and develop computer models, or simulations, of the real climate system – this is as close as we are likely to get to a collection of Earths to experiment with. In both cases, these approaches point towards a clear fingerprint of human activities on recent climate change.

But so far, there has been little policy action to slow down the rate of our global experiment with the climate system. I suspect the reason for this is, in part, the demand by policy makers for "proof" of global climate change. But this demonstrates not only a misunderstanding of this particular issue but also of the scientific method in general – no scientific theory is ever "proved" but some remain unfalsified for longer than others. These are the useful ones. The other major problem is the mismatch of timescales between politics and climate change: expensive action on climate change would take decades to have an effect whereas political careers are generally assessed on discrete steps of around five years.

So what is the answer? Well, like my suite of multiple worlds, I don't have it. I do believe, however, that a higher proportion of scientists in government would be an ideal place to start. Out of the 650 MPs that sit in the House of Commons in the UK, only two have a PhD in a scientific discipline. Dealing with this lack of expertise in government would start to address part of the problem.



Are environmental pollutants a global threat on the scale of climate change?

By Dr Olwenn Martin
Post Doctoral Research Fellow

Environmental issues, by their very nature, deal with the complexity of reality and rarely - if ever - fit in neat little boxes. Comparing the human health and ecological effects of environmental chemicals with the impact of climate change would be an easier task if the two issues could be considered independently.

Anthropogenic climate change is however an indirect effect of a specific group of environmental pollutants, greenhouse gases. Further, the interactions between climate and both the fate and behaviour of pollutants and their use is a field of emerging interest.

Droughts may lead to increased volatilisation of some pollutants to the atmosphere, while floods may result in increased run-off. Pest pressures in agriculture and the geographical range of vector-borne diseases will also be altered in response to new weather patterns, and so will the use of the chemicals habitually used to control them. In short, chemicals may both exacerbate the effects of climatic changes and contribute to mitigating them.

Both issues raise some of the same ethical and political challenges, particularly in terms of social justice and intergenerational rights. In the same manner that countries most vulnerable to the effects of global climatic changes are often not those that have contributed most to greenhouse gas emissions historically, or economically those best able to adapt, poor communities frequently involuntarily end up in the front row seats of industrial pollution.

The issue of intergenerational rights may not be as intuitive for the toxic effects of chemicals as it is with climatic changes and the

availability of natural resources. Barker's hypothesis on the fetal origins of adult disease, or how small disruptions of the intra-uterine environment may influence long-term health, has graduated from contested to accepted biology. Where there may be differences between climate change and direct health and ecological effects of chemical pollutants is arguably with the application of the *precautionary principle* (ie if there is a suspected risk of harm, it is down to the pollutant-producer to prove that they do not harm, rather than for anyone else to prove that they do).

Although still controversial to a non-climate scientist, there seems to be widespread consensus amongst climate scientists that greenhouse gas emissions contribute to global warming. However, causal links between a given chemical substance and a specific health effect often remain much more elusive.

This can be related to the fact that the effect of exposure to chemicals during a critical stage of development may only become apparent in later life, but also because we are exposed to many chemicals simultaneously and consecutively. Some chemicals may act together to induce the same effects.

There have been initiatives in Europe and elsewhere to shift the burden-of-proof from the regulators to the manufacturers, so that manufacturers demonstrate that a chemical product is safe before it is allowed on the market. Nonetheless, the difficulties in attributing a contribution to the disease burden carried by society to a specific substance will impede a full and true application of the 'polluter pays' principle for the foreseeable future.

Both the effects of climate change and those of environmental chemicals are shrouded in scientific uncertainty. Because there is no spare Earth to

carry out a controlled experiment, and the same applies to the human health effects of a mixture of pollutants. Estimating the health and ecological impacts and economic burden of those environmental issues necessarily requires increasingly complex models, and there is clearly a trade-off between complexity and transparency.

We could argue ad infinitum about different figures obtained making different assumptions by different models comparing relative damages that have only subjective economic value if any. But the real challenge facing all environmentalists is to communicate scientific uncertainty and complexity in a manner that will allow society to make informed and democratic decisions.



Made in Brunel at the V&A

Made in Brunel students led a workshop at the Victoria and Albert Museum as part of its recent series of late-night events related to furniture design. 'The Secret Life of Furniture' series celebrated the opening of the Dr Susan Weber Gallery of furniture design and production on the sixth floor of the V&A.



The students used their pop-up house (furniture built from found materials) to demonstrate the possibilities created by embracing a make-do-and-mend approach.



The 'Spy Chair' was created by some of the younger visitors.



'Mesh' was a chandelier created from paper mesh material.

Amy O'Connor,
Marketing Officer
for Made in Brunel,
reflected on the event.

“

At Made in Brunel, we love it when a plan comes together; especially when that plan was only two weeks in the making! On a Friday night, with our cardboard scene set, some dodgy furniture and a random assortment of materials, we donned our t-shirts and trusty lanyards, and got ready to make-do-and-mend.

After the first few people entered our workshop, hundreds seemed to flood in. Like a well-oiled machine everyone manned their stations, as we greeted our visitors.

With three problem areas and various odds and ends you'd have lying around your home, the name of the game was creative problem solving. And people of all ages were getting stuck into the action.

The outcomes were not only exciting, but each attempt was completely different! Some guests visited our pop-up house to enjoy the buzz and relax around the coffee table, while others were there for hours solving our wonky furniture problems. Clearly there is plenty of fun to be had with an assortment of household materials and some old seating!

Some of the most imaginative creations from the evening included 'Weaver', the string chair, and 'A Table with Balls', made from just newspaper and tape.

The Low family, a brother and sister duo, created 'Not so Low', a stool with the most extravagant back imaginable. They used just bamboo, string and cable ties for their masterpiece. The aptly and rather elegantly named 'Chaise Ouvert' (Open Chair), was another take on the stool back.

Children also got involved and their 'Spy Chair' even had accessories in the form of spy goggles! For some, a love of the paper mesh material spurred innovation, especially the two ladies who created a rather ornate chandelier, 'Mesh'.

It wasn't just the visitors to our pop-up house that enjoyed themselves; we all had an absolute ball and the team was on such a high at the end of the night. We were all amazed that something planned in such a small amount of time could give such a positive result. I think it's safe to say that if we were given the chance to do this again we would jump at it.

”

2013 Made in Brunel exhibition

Encompassing a host of events throughout the year, Made in Brunel aims to engage and inspire industry, opening their eyes to a rich pool of up and coming talent.

Each year culminates in a main exhibition, which is supported by the Made in Brunel annual book: a record of the culmination of work from Brunel University's most innovative thinkers.

This year's show promises to be another inspiring event. Three of this year's designers share the inspiration behind their final year projects.



The Made in Brunel exhibition takes place between 13 and 16 June 2013, at the Bargehouse in Waterloo. More information and booking is available online at <http://madeinbrunel.com>



Jeremy Ireland

JalaPira - Floating Rescue Device

"Around 1,800 children drown every year in Bangladesh, so I am developing a cost-effective and affordable floating rescue device that can be used by children and adults. It is developed alongside recent UNICEF research into what is now considered to be a 'hidden epidemic' and the largest single cause of child deaths in the nation.

"I am basing it around using anthropometric data to really think about a size that is suitable for a nine or 10 year old child to sit on. I am looking into different routes in terms of materials and maybe other retrieval methods for example a ribbon instead of a rope so that the target users are less likely to find another use for it. This is in an environment where every resource is in demand."



Sam Etherington

Generating Renewable Power From Ocean Waves

"My major project is about generating electricity from waves. It is a semi-submersible structure which sits just under the surface. It replicates any movements that the wave has to offer and converts those movements into energy through the use of hydraulics. It seems like an enormous waste to not use all this natural power that's available all the time every day. We use less than one percent of the available resources around the UK anyway, so given that we need extra electricity over the coming years it might be something interesting to explore.

"This has been designed to run in the Orkneys at a site called the Billia Croo which is where the majority of the wave devices are being tested at the moment."



James Eaton

Adjustable Sprint Shoe

"My major project is an adjustable sprint shoe. Being an athlete and training six days a week, I've always been involved in the sport and sprint shoes are very expensive. I wanted to come up with a design that would last a lot longer and had an adjustable length. I was sitting with some adjustable headphones on and I thought it would be great if I could put that idea into a shoe. So I decided to design a sprint shoe for junior athletes that could last twice as long as normal footwear, preventing usable sprint shoes from being thrown away.

"I'm working alongside a professional shoe designer who has 30 years' experience working with Clarks and Timberland."

Graduate job hunting

Brunel offers careers support to new alumni, for up to two years after graduation. Siobhan Feeney graduated last summer with a degree in Business & Management. She then used the Brunel Placement & Careers Centre to help her secure a place on a graduate scheme with Nestlé.

Siobhan went travelling soon after graduating and then came back to the UK to focus on applying for graduate schemes. She found that the PCC could help her when applying for jobs: "It was great to have someone there that could look over my CV and applications at a time when I was actually going through a recruitment process."

"The careers advisers are very helpful; they are all knowledgeable and experienced individuals who are willing to give you an awful lot of their time".

The PCC helped Siobhan secure invitations to assessment days for some high profile companies including Vodafone, Unilever and Virgin Media.

One-to-one appointments

"The careers advisers provide you with a one-to-one service. You are able to request as much or as little time as you need, which is extremely useful if you have lots of applications to go through. I had a list of about 15 graduate schemes I planned on applying for so it was really good to be provided with the one-to-one time that I needed to cover my CV and all my applications. After the meetings, the advisors also had a genuine interest in my progress and how I was getting on which really helped when I needed to go back and ask them any questions."

All the hard work has now paid off as Siobhan recently heard that she has been accepted onto the Nestlé Marketing Graduate Scheme, starting in September.

"I would recommend that all graduates use the career services. When applying for numerous jobs at the same time, it is easy to make silly mistakes and become 'word blind' when going over applications and CVs. It is also often just a little thing that needs changing that doesn't take long at all, but makes a huge difference. I think it is rare for us to still have access to these services after graduating - especially one-on-one attention - so we are really lucky. You get a more specialised and personalised service than you would from a recruitment agency, so why not use your own university to help give you guidance and refresh it all in your mind?"

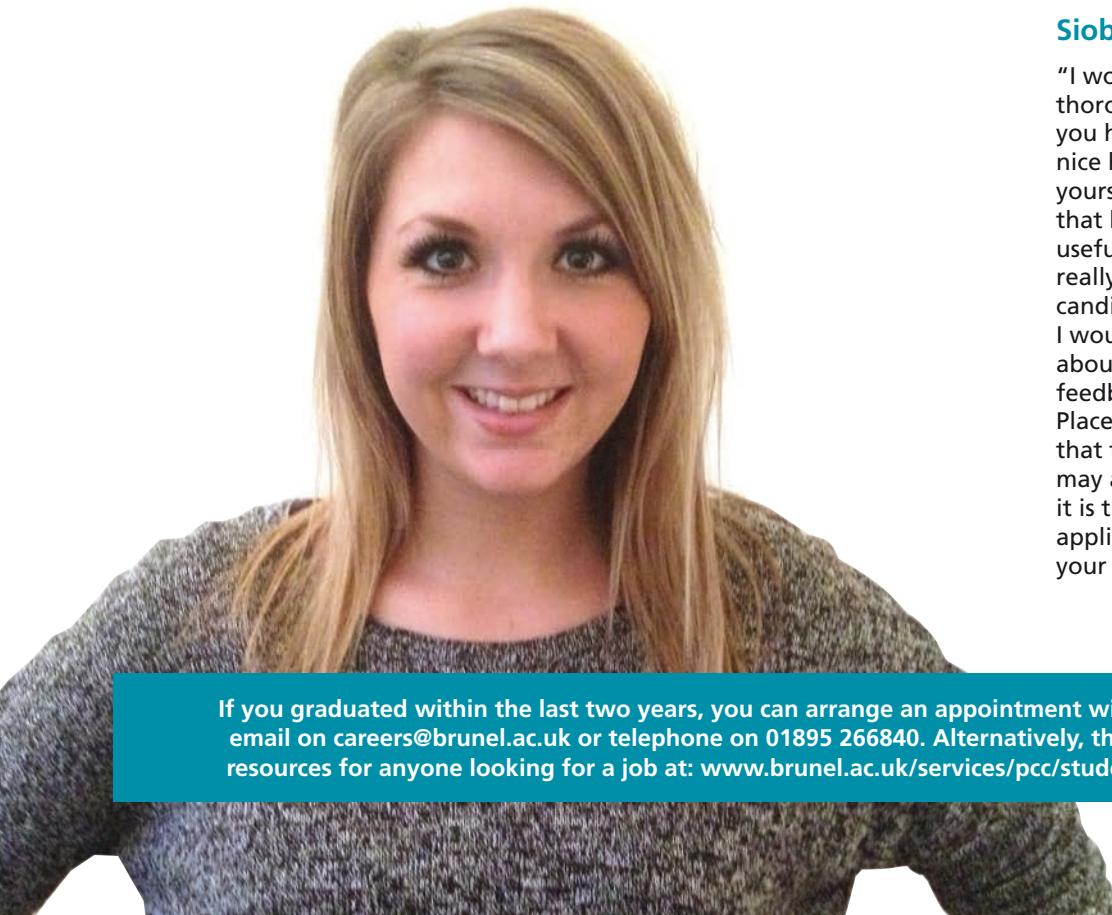
Help from a distance

Even if you aren't able to get to the campus, you can still access help by email, telephone or online. "The PCC website is jam-packed full of information" says Siobhan, "from current job postings and links to UK and international internships, to interview tips, psychometric test practice and loads more".

Siobhan's top job hunting tip

"I would recommend trying to get thorough feedback from the places you have applied to. Although it isn't nice hearing negative things about yourself that you need to improve, that kind of feedback is a lot more useful and constructive than 'We really liked you but the other candidate was just a bit stronger'. So I would recommend being persistent about requesting constructive feedback and then going to see the Placement & Careers Centre with that to see if they can help. They may also be able to understand what it is that you are missing on your application forms or not doing in your interviews."

If you graduated within the last two years, you can arrange an appointment with a careers adviser by email on careers@brunel.ac.uk or telephone on 01895 266840. Alternatively, there are lots of helpful resources for anyone looking for a job at: www.brunel.ac.uk/services/pcc/students/still-here-to-help.



On the Obama campaign trail

Stephen Bediako (Politics and History, 2003) worked on Barack Obama's re-election campaigns during the US elections in 2012. We caught up with Stephen to chart his career since leaving Brunel and find out more about life on the campaign trail.

It is widely acknowledged that Barack Obama's successful campaign in 2012 was highly effective in "getting out the vote" – his use of technology to identify potential voters and then help them cast their ballot was one of the most important factors in his bid for re-election.

Working in the midst of this operation – unprecedented in its depth and efficiency – was social entrepreneur Stephen Bediako, a Brunel graduate whose career has taken him from management consultancy at Deloitte Consulting to directing the Social Innovation Partnership, an advisory business that aims to solve some of society's most intractable problems.

Based at Obama's campaign headquarters in Richmond, Virginia, for three and a half weeks, Stephen helped organise field workers and campaigners, analysed the campaign, explored techniques to encourage people to register to vote, and assisted in developing innovative ideas that helped secure the Democrat vote in the state.

"It was an eye-opening and inspiring experience," said Stephen. "There were many highlights – the debates, the economy, the impact of Hurricane Sandy, the TV adverts, the Super PACs, and more."

Particularly memorable was Stephen's experience of the 'Ground Game', or the process of using the VAN vote builder system to acquire a 'data universe' about Democrat voters, which could then be connected to practice and organisation in the community. Gathering this data helped campaign organisers to ensure that

key supporters were registered to vote and to target canvassing to encourage those who had previously expressed their support to follow through and vote for Obama. It is a system that Stephen believes is transferable to the UK.

Canvassing centres were established on both North and South sides of Richmond, which attracted people of all ages along to volunteer as canvassers and also became general community hubs. Stephen is enthusiastic about the importance of this volunteer involvement during the campaign: "People could get involved in a variety of ways, such as through regular phone bank sessions and going out canvassing in pairs," he explained. "There was food, drink, and a little music in the background." Canvassers were deployed "all over the city", to people's homes, playgrounds, schools and even car parks. As Stephen put it: "If VAN was the brain, and Obama was the heart, the community volunteer effort was the lifeblood of this campaign."

Since leaving Brunel in 2003 with a first class degree in Politics and History, Stephen has accrued a wide range of experience in the private, public and voluntary sectors, including in the House of Commons and Home Office, at Deloitte in public sector consulting, and as a volunteer in Africa. He explained the benefit of this broad experience: "The main skills I gained were an interest in and love for politics, a solid foundation to break down and understand socio-political themes and phenomena, a good work ethic, and a useful framework for writing and considering literature."



"If Obama was the heart, the community volunteer effort was the lifeblood of this campaign."

In August 2010, Stephen founded The Social Innovation Partnership (TSIP), an advisory social business that aims to combine academic research and rigour with strategy and delivery support. He leads TSIP's work on violence, youth and partnership building.

On his plans for the future, Stephen said: "In 2013 I will be focusing on TSIP as we deliver more evaluations in the justice and education space, and I plan to travel to Brazil to explore how gangs are tackled in that part of the world."

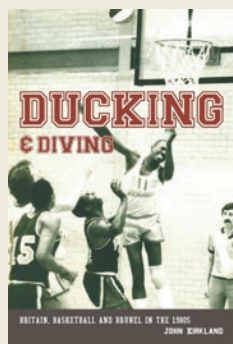
Looking back

Applied Biology 1973

Having started our applied biology course at Acton in 1969 we moved into the brand new biology and chemistry building, now called Heinz Wolff, at Uxbridge. Twenty five of us graduated in 1973. We loved our time at Brunel, and each other, and have kept in touch ever since. There were 15, plus partners for our latest reunion weekend, held in Sheffield in October 2012. As the concrete of Heinz Wolff dried out, we were told, it lost half its mass. Most of us are heavier.

By Richard Clubleby

The glory days of Brunel Basketball



For eight years in the 1980s, "The Ducks" – Brunel's semi-professional basketball team – were a major Saturday night entertainment on the campus. Despite competition from big name professional teams, including one owned by Manchester United football club, The Ducks fought their way up through the National Basketball League, in 1987 becoming Britain's most unlikely national champions ever, before a capacity crowd at the Wembley Arena.

The inside story of The Ducks is now told in a new book – *Ducking and Diving – Britain, Basketball and Brunel in the 1980s* by alumnus John Kirkland, the former club Director and Brunel researcher. In addition to chronicling the team's triumphs, John paints a tongue-in-cheek picture of Brunel and its personalities at the time, reveals some of the devious tactics behind the club's success.

The Alumni Office has a limited supply of copies, which are being sold in aid of the Brunel Sports Scholarships Fund. These cost £10, including UK package and postage. Reserve your copy by emailing alumni@brunel.ac.uk.

From mathematics to motorcycles



After a career as a teacher, advisory teacher and university lecturer (during which time he added a degree and two Masters' to his long list of accomplishments), Reg Eyre eventually retired. After writing two books, he then combined his love of motorcycles and academia, obtaining a PhD from Birkbeck College with his thesis: *A Social Constructivist Approach to the Study of Personal Motor Transport, Especially the Motor Cycle, in New Zealand, 1895-1915*. Reg (Certificate of Education - Mathematics and Natural Sciences, 1969) continues his passion for riding early motorcycles by competing in time trials and riding in the London to Brighton Run. His next research project is *Women and Motorcycling pre-1915*.

Thank you Borough Road

Among his fascinating list of experiences, Dr John Sealey (Class of 1958), cites his two years at Borough Road College as something of a turning point in his life. Until that 1956 he'd undertaken nine different jobs, including bread salesman.

"I left school at compulsory school age, which was fourteen" said John. "And, after private studies, was given a second chance at Borough Road under the Principal, Mr Hamilton. I owe a very great deal to Borough Road College where I qualified as a teacher".

John went on to add many more letters to his name, and was a lecturer in the UK and overseas. He has also turned his hand to journalism and published books and journal articles.

His claim to fame was the moment he was stopped by police for revising for an exam whilst driving along the M1 motorway; an incident which even made the newspapers in New York!



Share your memories



We are collating photos and memories of Brunel and its predecessor institutions on Facebook. We would love you to share yours. Simply upload your photos and tag your friends at www.facebook.com/brunelalumni

Behind the scenes at London 2012

Julian Yeandle (BSc Business & Management 1998) had a key role in the success of the London 2012 last summer, setting up and running the main accreditation centre for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. He had over half a million volunteers, technical, security and army personnel through his doors requiring accreditation and uniforms. So what does it take to run such an important venue? And what was it like to work with so many volunteers? We found out...

After applying for the role in July 2010 it was another six months before Julian heard that he had been invited for an interview.

"I got a call out of the blue from one of the recruitment team who said they had received my CV and would be very interested to talk further. A week later I was heading to Canary Wharf to the Barclays building where Locog had some offices. The reception and welcome there was quite spectacular: bright posters, a scaled model of the Olympic Park and a view out to North London where the top of the Stadium could be seen. It felt quite special."

A huge task

Julian was recruited as General Manager of UDAC – the Uniform Distribution and Accreditation Centre in West Ham. His venue held all the security passes for the entire London-based Olympics operation, including those for all staff and the thousands of volunteers.

"The highlight for me was moving 100 staff and setting up shop in our Games Time venue; the one which I had project managed and was to be 'my venue'."

Julian's operation handled up to 2000 people per day between April and September 2012, and he had 350 staff facilitating the operations, many of whom were volunteers.

The Gamesmakers

"I was actually a volunteer at a local Rally Cross meeting in France during my teens", he said. "Being on the other side was awesome."

Every single Gamesmaker working in or around London passed through the doors of Julian's venue. "These were fantastic people. They were from all walks of life but they had a common goal – to make the Olympics a success. Without the dedication and hard work from each one of the volunteers the Olympics would never have happened on time or on budget."

"I met some amazing people and have some very fond memories. And I can conclude that most hard work can be suitably rewarded with a chilled glass of wine or a cold beer and an honest thank you!"

Looking ahead

For those that would like to end up in a similar role, Julian offers the following advice: "Persevere. Large organisations can be slow moving. All their systems and processes are in place and if they tell you to apply via the website and keep checking the website for job offers, that's what you have to do."

Julian is now working as a sole trader again: "After the Games, I reflected on what had been achieved for a couple of weeks, slept, pondered on what to do next and went for it. I've now resurrected my company V10 Events and have two clients I'm doing business for on retainers. Life is not quite as exciting but just as fulfilling!"



Julian Yeandle



'Gamesmakers' were key to the Olympic success

Did you work or volunteer at the Olympics or Paralympics?

We would love to hear about your London 2012 experiences. Join in the discussion on LinkedIn.



Visit www.linkedin.com and search for 'Official Brunel University Alumni' in groups.

Professional development

When you graduate from Brunel, your connection with the university becomes invaluable. With more than 100,000 alumni across the world, you are part of a diverse network with a wide range and depth of experience.

Brunel is here to support you throughout your career by providing networking and skills development opportunities as well as access to academic and research materials that may be relevant to your field.

Careers guidance

Our careers advisers are here to support you for up to two years after graduation. Whether you are able to come to the campus and meet in person, or need to contact them from afar, they are on hand to offer CV advice, interview tips and practice, job searches and general job hunting advice.

If you graduated more than two years ago, our website offers a rich source of information and advice: www.brunel.ac.uk/pcc.

Networking and careers events

We host a number of events on campus each year which provide a perfect opportunity for you to meet new people and do some networking. Networking events like this in the private sector often cost a subscription fee, but you have the opportunity to try out networking for free. We also have receptions and networking opportunities before and after talks on campus so keep an eye on our events calendar for details.

Online networking

If you are not able to attend any events, our LinkedIn group also has thousands of members looking for professional networking opportunities. Whether you wish to discuss a new government policy, your ideas for boosting the economy, job hunting advice or an industry development, this is the place for you. We also have a number of subgroups including one for job opportunities – whether you are hiring or looking.

Our members range from those seeking work or in graduate level jobs through to CEOs and business owners: all of whom can benefit a great deal from being part of the Brunel community.

Further study / Continuing Professional Development

We offer a discount for alumni wishing to pursue postgraduate study or research. Our alumni are now entitled to a 15% discount on fees. In addition, those who achieved a first class degree will receive a further 15% discount with our Postgraduate Excellence Scholarships. If you would like further information about this, email alumni@brunel.ac.uk.

Research

The Brunel University Research Archive showcases the research that has been completed here at Brunel and is fully available to you. You can search online for topics relevant to your own research or your field of work. Visit the archive at <http://bura.brunel.ac.uk>.

Business support

If you have a problem that needs solving in your business that our researchers might be able to help with, you could find the Knowledge Transfer Partnership scheme at Brunel is just what you need. KTPs can be arranged with a wide range of businesses and organisations. For more information visit www.brunel.ac.uk/business/knowledge-transfer-partnership.

Obituaries

Andrew Law (BTech Metallurgy 1973)

Andrew Law spent his working life at Post Office Telecommunications, later to become British Telecom, before taking early retirement in the 1990s. Andrew was not far below England's leading chess players in the 1970s and 1980s, and obtained two International Master norms. Andrew had been a keen tennis player in his earlier years and also excelled at bridge, winning the National Life Masters Ranked Pairs in 2011. Andrew was modest and softly spoken, with a profound intelligence combined with a self-deprecating sense of humour. He will be much missed by his many friends in the chess world.

Read the full tributes to Andrew and Neil online at www.brunel.ac.uk/alumni

Neil Smith (Physics and Electronics 1985)

Originally from Birmingham, Neil loved University life making sure he made the most of every aspect. He was part of the award-winning show *John Latex* on Radio Brunel, and was particularly proud of his role as Jane Latex! He was also the guitarist in two bands – *Scientist Toybox* and *Neil's in Charge*.

After Neil graduated, he went to work for Hanovia developing Ultraviolet water purification systems, worked on the telephone systems at the BBC and then joined Cable and Wireless, running their Caribbean network. Then, after living in Dubai for six years, we did what we always wanted to do: bought a run-down barn in rural Ireland and planned to build our dream house and be self-sufficient. Neil and I had just started this work when he unexpectedly died in his sleep in December 2012. He leaves behind, not only myself, but also his three wonderful children Grace, Rose and Jack. We are carrying on the work of building our dream in his memory.

By Juliette Smith (nee Latham), MMS 1988

Alumni Awards and accolades



Masterchef winner

Shelina Permalloo (BSc Psychology, 2004) was crowned the winner of MasterChef 2012. Since then she has gone on to write her own cookery book, which is published in June.

Shelina recalled her time living in student residences on campus, where she often made meals for her fellow students. "I lived in Mill Hall and I did a lot of cooking," she said. "I was always making stuff up out of whatever we had left in the cupboard - just spicing it up a bit!"

"If it wasn't for Brunel I wouldn't have got any of the jobs that I had before MasterChef," she said. "I learned skills like managing people, planning my time and project management. You pick up skills like that at uni but you only really learn them when you're working in the real world."



The winning habit

Lorraine Wright (BSc Information Systems, 2009) has received two national awards for founding the University Gospel Choir of the Year competition (UGCY). She was so inspired when she watched the film *Sister Act 2* while studying at Brunel, that she felt she could recreate a contest for university choirs.

She was named Community Champion in the 2012 Ghana UK Based Achievement Awards, which celebrate excellence in the British Ghanaian community. She also received the Performing Arts Award from the London-based social enterprise, Black Youth Achievements, which aims to challenge negative stereotypes of young black people.



The Next Big Thing

Raevannan Husbandes (BA Contemporary Music and Performance 2010) has won the same music competition that kick-started Ed Sheeran's career: *The Next Big Thing*

But it hasn't been plain sailing for Raevannan. After playing Glastonbury Festival in 2010, she was struck down with a rare condition that left her temporarily blind, deaf and paralysed. The condition, Vogt-Koyanagi-Harada, forced her to put aside her music career for two years in order to rehabilitate.

Following treatment, Raevannan entered *The Next Big Thing* contest to help increase her confidence, but defied her own expectations by winning! Watch this space...

Mission accomplished

Dr Ehsan Farsimadan (BEng Mechanical Engineering & Design 2004) has won Young Mission-Critical Engineer of the Year at the Data Centre Dynamics EMEA Awards. The award recognises exceptional contributions and performance by young engineers in the field. Ehsan provides consulting and modelling engagements around the world for Romonet.

Building a bright future

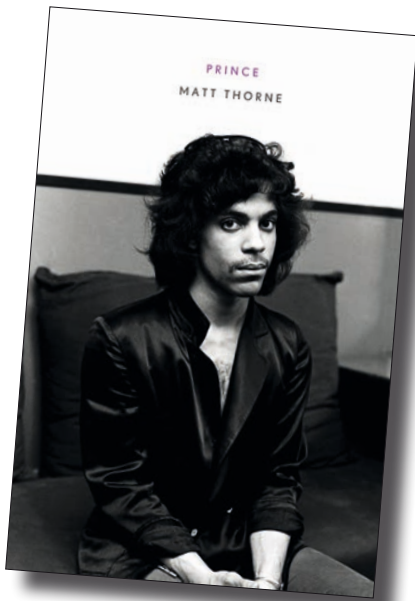
Chris Marien (MSc Building Services Engineering with Sustainable Energy, 2012) was runner up at the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) / ASHRAE Graduate of the Year awards in October. His MSc dissertation was also shortlisted for the CIBSE Building Simulation Group Prize for Best Dissertation 2012.

Siemens Fellow

Gary Merrill (BSc Materials Science & Technology 1988) has been appointed as Fellow Engineer at Siemens Energy in Florida. Having worked at Siemens for thirteen years, he was given the honour in January. Gary currently holds 42 patents on CMC manufacturing development and design.

Sitting comfortably

Ben Harris (BSc Industrial Design, 2006) won two major awards at the 2012 Irish Design Institute Awards Night, including the coveted *Universal Design of the Year* accolade. His *Comfee Seat* for children with special needs, designed for Belfast manufacturer Leckey, also won him the *Best Furniture Design Award*. Ben has also opened his own consultancy, *White Zebra Studios*.



Matt Thorne publishes definitive biography of Prince

Creative Writing lecturer, Matt Thorne, has published a new and definitive biography of Prince.

Notoriously reticent and misleading, Prince is one of the few remaining 80s superstars who remains an enigma. His classics such as *Purple Rain*, *Sign o' the Times* and *Parade* regularly feature in Best Ever Album polls, and his live performances are legendary. Although recent releases have been modestly successful at best, his influence on urban music, and RnB in particular, are inescapable.

Matt Thorne's *Prince* is the account of a maverick whose experiments with rock, funk, techno and jazz revolutionised pop. Referencing every phase of his career including over 35 years in the recording studio and onstage, Thorne's book developed through years of research and interviews with ex-Revolution members.



Yasmin publishes own debut novel

Yasmin Selena Butt (BSc Politics & Modern History, 1995) has not only realised her dream in seeing her work in print, but she also published it herself! She told us why she chose this route and gave her advice for aspiring authors.

"I wanted full creative control of the finished result, including the cover. Traditional publishing I discovered didn't allow for that, even if you'd sold a million books. This isn't to say I didn't have external input; I had my novel Beta read, professionally proofread and received editorial feedback. I didn't want to compromise on standards. I just wanted to publish on my own terms.

"Gunshot Glitter has an original narrative which so far (touch wood) readers have loved... but the commercial market is risk adverse at present especially with books which are hard to pigeonhole.

"I'm not anti-traditional publishing at all. If the right fit were found I'd be happy to enter into a partnership, but I didn't want to be focus all my energy on that elusive hunt. It's been very, very hard work, but at least I've done this my way and it's happening now to my own time-scale."

Yasmin's next novel is now in the making, and draws inspiration from some of the students she met at Brunel. Find out how in the full interview with Yasmin online at www.brunel.ac.uk/alumni.



Will Self nominated for Booker Prize

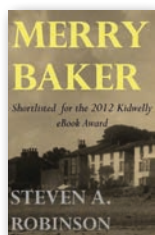
Brunel's Professor of Contemporary Thought, Will Self, was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize for his novel *Umbrella*, but narrowly missed out on the Prize to Hilary Mantel when it was awarded in October.

Self's novel begins when psychiatrist Zack Busner finds a successful treatment for encephalitis lethargica, or sleeping sickness.

It weaves together incidents from the life of one of Busner's patients, Audrey Death, and her brothers Albert and Stanley, and was inspired by psychiatrist Oliver Sacks' 1973 text *Awakenings*, in which he describes his attempts to rouse encephalics.



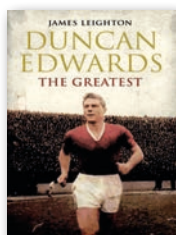
Alumni in print



Merry Baker by Steven Robinson

BSc Computer Science, 1994

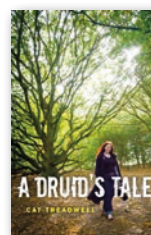
Shortlisted for the 2012 Kidwelly e-book Award, *Merry Baker* is a cybercrime thriller written during Steven's daily commute to Lehman Brothers' European IT Security Department. The plot revolves around a sophisticated computer hack built to steal millions of pounds from online bank accounts.



Duncan Edwards: The Greatest by James Leighton

LLB Law, 2002

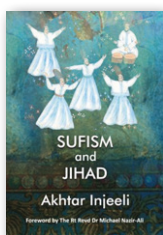
James Leighton charts the tragic story of Duncan Edwards, the highly respected Manchester United and England footballer who was killed as a result of the Munich air disaster in 1958. This, James' fourth book, was the bestselling football book of May last year.



A Druid's Tale by Cat Treadwell

BA American Studies & English, 1998

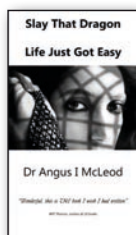
A practising druid of ten years, Cat answers some of the common questions people have about Druidry and examines how it is constantly evolving to be relevant and accessible in the modern world.



Sufism and Jihad by Akhtar Injeeli

MTh Theology, 2006

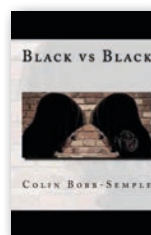
This book is a critique of the popular view of Sufism as the peaceful and non-militant aspect of Islam. Drawing on authoritative sources, the author discusses several aspects of Sufism, using them to bring into focus the Sufi views and interpretations of Jihad.



Slay that Dragon: Life just got easy by Dr Angus McLeod

BTech Applied Chemistry 1975

The author explores the idea that our lives are easily hampered by blocks – metaphorical St George's dragons obstructing our path to an easy life. He aims to unmask the 'dragons' using practical stories about identifying and ultimately slaying them.



Black vs Black by Colin Bobb-Semple

MA Criminal Justice, 1994

This play, a Courtroom Drama for Film, TV and Stage, concerns the murder trial of a young man of African-Caribbean descent, who became involved, at a London night club, in a fatal wounding of another young man of African-Caribbean descent.



Black Egyptians: The African Origins of Ancient Egypt by Olusegun Magbagbeola

BSc Information Systems, 2007

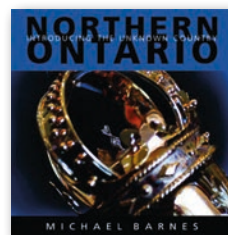
This book sets out to prove that Black Africans started and inhabited the Ancient Egyptian civilisation. Drawing on a wealth of sources including Nuwaupu, genetics and archaeology, the author combines conventional and unconventional Egyptology together to form a unique record of Egyptian history and set the stage for Black Africans to unite under one common creed.



Effective Interviewing for Disciplinary, Grievance and Complaints Investigations by Leslie Cuthbert

LLB Law, 1994

A 'how to' guide designed to give new or experienced managers an understanding of the practicalities of conducting investigative interviews and looking to provide them with 'best practice' guidance to thereby improve their investigations and make them more defensible if challenged.



Northern Ontario: Introducing the Unknown Country by Michael Barnes

Borough Road College, 1954

Having published a range of books about Canada, Michael Barnes now explores the little-known region of Northern Ontario to uncover its dramatic history, scenic beauty, natural wealth and the opportunities offered there for travel, exploration and development.



2012 Alumnus of the Year: Ross Ramgobin



Since receiving my Alumnus of the Year award from Brunel last summer, life has been very busy. In September, I performed Benjamin Britten's opera *Curlew River* in Spitalfields and Suffolk with an orchestra from Japan. This was followed in October by the highlight of the year: a trip to the United States to sing at Carnegie Hall in New York with the World Orchestra for Peace alongside opera stars including Angela Gheorgiu and Rene Pape. The concert was also performed in Chicago, where it was broadcast live on radio across the world and recorded for broadcast on the BBC.

After Christmas, my attention turned to Tchaikovsky, and a performance of the opera *Eugene Onegin* in Russian at the Royal Academy of Music, in which I played the title role. Preparing for the role involved Russian language coaching, dance lessons and intensive acting work. The performances in March were a huge success and well worth the months of rehearsal! Just over a week after the final show, I flew out to Germany, to rehearse and perform in a production of Handel's opera *Siroe* for the International Handel Festival in Goettingen.

All in all, I've had a fantastic year, and I'm grateful to all at Brunel for their support.



2013 Alumnus of the Year

Our alumni are a source of inspiration to thousands of current students at Brunel. Each year, to recognise some of the outstanding achievements in our community, and to encourage our students as they edge closer to graduation, we welcome nominations for the Alumna/Alumnus of the Year award. This year, you voted for your favourite from our shortlist and we are delighted to introduce you to this year's Alumnus of the Year...



Jordan Chitty Creative Director, Naked Creativity

Jordan studied Industrial Design at Brunel. During his placement year he worked at leading design consultancy iDC then returned to Brunel for his final year to lead the team that coordinated the *Made in Brunel* show. He graduated with a first class honours degree in 2007 and started his own consultancy.

Naked Creativity is a central London design consultancy with a five-strong team of creative and technical individuals all passionate about web, graphic and branding design. Over the last six years, the company has gone from strength to strength with clients including Virgin Wines, London South Bank University and Olympic Delivery Authority.

Jordan has maintained strong links with Brunel. Since the launch of Naked Creativity, he has taken on students from Brunel for year-long work placements, providing invaluable practical experience of

working in industry. This is a crucial part of the student experience and in offering these placements Jordan has helped launch the careers of a number of his fellow alumni. He has also gone on to employ two Brunel graduates on a permanent basis. Last year he helped develop the *Made in Brunel* portfolio website.

Jordan is a great role-model for Brunel students. Not only has he made a great success of his own business, but he has also shown outstanding commitment to the university both during his studies and, most notably, since graduating. He continues to make a genuine and significant difference to the lives of our students and we are delighted to present this award to Jordan this year.

If you would like to nominate someone for this award next year, please email alumni@brunel.ac.uk.