



Newsletter

Winter 2016

A Note from the Chief Executive

After my first four months as Chief Executive of this amazing organisation, it's been fantastic to reflect on what's happened recently across Wac Arts – from our disabilities groups putting on an inspiring performance for friends and family to our Diploma students enjoying rare master classes from renowned industry professionals. Every day I feel deeply honoured to be a part of a team that is building on our brilliant history and creating a future for the organisation that our young people deserve.

Kind regards
Karen

Diploma Alumni on Stages Across the UK

Huge congratulations are in order for alumnus KM Drew Boateng, who announced that he'll be making his West End debut by joining the cast of the legendary Motown: The Musical at The Shaftesbury Theatre. Motown: The Musical follows the legendary career of Berry Gordy and the creation of his musical empire, Motown Records. In addition to this Wac Arts alumna Sophia Mackay is starring in an upcoming production of The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin, taking place at Stratford Royal in March. She'll be playing Viveca, a young African American girl who dreams of becoming a dancer. We're hugely excited to watch what's sure to be a completely fantastic performance. Rounding up a fantastic run by our Diploma alumni is Newton Matthews, who earlier this month announced that he'd be joining the cast of One Love, a new musical about the life of Bob Marley opening in March at the Birmingham Rep. He'll be playing Bunny Wilder, one of Marley's close friends. Diploma Co-ordinator Martha Stylianou said, "We're proud but unsurprised at the fantastic roles our alumni are getting on stages across London, the UK and beyond – it's been fantastic to work with these talented individuals at the beginning of their careers."

Swarovski Foundation Scholarship Award Winners and The Stage Scholar Announced

We were thrilled to announce that the two students selected to receive Swarovski Foundation Scholarship Awards were first-years Daniela Vieco and Virginie Diwantesa, both of whom have already displayed a great deal of commitment and promise over the autumn term. Both are delighted to receive the scholarships, with Virginie particularly passionate about the singing and acting strands of the course and Daniela enjoying contemporary and jazz dance. More good news followed with our announcement of The Stage Scholar for this year's new Diploma in Professional Musical Theatre intake. After a day of interviews student Anais Lone was chosen by a panel of industry professionals to be the recipient of the award. After receiving the news Anais said, "I'm so thankful and incredibly honoured to receive The Stage Scholarship! Having the support of both Wac Arts and The Stage to guide me down this yellow brick road through the arts is an amazing feeling – now I'm even more motivated to make everyone and myself proud. Watch this space."

Wac Arts Board Member Included in New Year's Honours



Many congratulations to Wac Arts board member Mark Malcomson, who was included in 2016's New Year's Honours List! Mark was awarded a CBE for his work as City Lit Principal and CEO, a role he's held since May 2011. We're so proud to have such an influential figure in the world of further education contributing to the journey Wac Arts is on.



Simon Callow's 7 Ages of Man a Roaring Success

We saw out the end of the autumn term in style with our annual festive fundraiser. This year Patron Simon Callow worked with students and alumni to create a unique performance of The Seven Ages of Man, Shakespeare's iconic piece. Joined by friends including Vanessa Redgrave, Ann Mitchell and Sheila Atim, the evening was a huge success and has so far raised over £43,000 for our programmes.

DramJam2K16 Turns Up The Volume

Our disabilities groups ended another fantastic year with the dynamic, exciting 'DramJam'! It was a brilliant evening of entertainment, kicked off with performances from the over 18s group, who have spent the past few months devising their own plays and scenes around the theme of Healthy Living. After the joy of the over 18s, the Wac Arts



Interactive crew closed the show. Taking to the stage, the crew unveiled the product of a 6 week live band project. Dividing into 3 bands, each group had created their very own bespoke anthems, from conventional hip hop to the formation of a new genre of music, Cat Punk, the Interactive crew had everybody on their feet and getting their boogie on. All our young people excelled themselves with the time and effort they put into these projects – they even made a Mannequin Challenge video to promote the event!

Diploma Students Enjoy Alvin Ailey Masterclass

Diploma students were thrown head on into a packed term in the run up to Christmas. Students enjoyed a one off master class by Alvin Ailey Dance Company's New York based Jeroboam Bozeman, who was in town performing in Chroma at The Royal Opera House. Put through their paces, Jeroboam followed an energetic class with a meditative time for students to rest and reflect, finished with a fantastic question and answer session where he inspired students with the story of his personal journey.



Wac Arts Supporter Sam Edge Scales Mt. Kenya

Whilst the rest of us were sat on the sofa eating mince pies and watching Christmas specials on TV, Wac Arts supporter Sam Edge was having a rather different December... After months of training he flew over to Africa to scale Mount Kenya – a staggering 17,000 feet – to raise money for Wac Arts. Shortly after he made his ascent he'd beaten his fundraising target of £1500. We're hugely grateful to all our supporters for the myriad of ways they raise funds for our programmes – the money Sam raised will go straight back into our vital work with children and young people who most need it.

Patron Owen Teale Drops In On Diploma Class

Wac Arts patron and star of stage and screen Owen Teale dropped in on a Level 2 Horton Technique Diploma class in January. After watching the students being put through their paces there was a chance for an informal chat after the class, where he spoke to students about breaking into the industry, ensuring they got the most from their training, and being confident in aiming high in their careers. Owen said, "It was fantastic to sit in on the class this morning - watching young people like these at the beginning of their careers is really exciting."

Wac Arts Vacancy

The Wac Arts Board is looking for an inspiring new Trustee with a real passion for the work we do, with demonstrable experience and expertise in the field of finance or accounting. For more information on this role and to download a detailed job description please visit **www.WacArts.co.uk/Vacancies**

News From Our Friends

Africarmen, Tavaziva Dance,

21 March – Through a synthesis of ballet, contemporary and African dance, Bawren Tavaziva's interpretation of the Carmen story is strikingly fierce yet sensual and is beautifully performed by six dancers. <http://bit.ly/1P5YO07>

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