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The Business of Performance

There's no doubt about it – the acting world is a competitive and challenging industry. But there's far more on offer for the Performing Arts graduate than landing a part in Corrie or treading the boards in the West End. Many Northumbria graduates have carved out high-profile acting careers finding employment in TV, film and theatre. Others, however, have become their own boss, launching successful cultural businesses and in turn creating even more acting and theatrical opportunities. NU News looks at the work of four performing arts graduates making waves in the industry.

Becky Zimmerman and Stephanie Noble
Performance graduates

Founders: One Day Creative

A successful funding application to the Business Enterprise Fund in Bradford secured £15,000 to kick-start the business. One Day Creative Education now works with over 500 schools across the country using drama to educate children on subjects as diverse as e-safety, environmental concerns and historical events. After studying a range of specialist modules, year three Performance students at Northumbria are offered the freedom and support to create and deliver their very own cultural project. It was this element of the course, alongside work experience with regional dance agency, Dance City's Creative Projects team that inspired Becky and Stephanie to look beyond acting and explore the world of theatre in education.

The two entrepreneurs launched One Day Creative Education in 2013 following several years working for other theatre in education companies. At that point they had already gained extensive industry experience – such as the delivery of international projects including community work in Romania. Becky said: “We wanted stability and the chance to employ a wider range of business skills. I believe that strong performers are usually strong communicators – and I think this is why I enjoy the sales and marketing elements of business today

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To find out more about their work visit www.onedaycreative.com

Amy Golding

Drama and Applied theatre graduate

Founder: Curious monkey

An organisation creating new opportunities for students is Curious Monkey founded by Amy Golding. After several enjoyable years with Live Theatre (one of Northumbria's key cultural partners), Amy was looking for a new challenge. Curious Monkey was born to bring together her love of working in community settings and the professional directing experience gained at Live.

The company brings to life stories that deserve to be told, and this has taken

Amy as far as South Africa to work with young women from the Eastern Cape creating a production that was performed at South Africa's National Arts Festival and within a number of male prisons. Amy points out that the course at Northumbria provided her with a strong grounding for her professional career. She said: "Having practical experience, accessing rehearsal space and delivering projects in the community during my time at Northumbria really set me up for the world of work".

The practical facilitation, as well as covering topics such as fundraising, evaluation, production and management – all crucial skills require to take on many roles – added a real edge to Amy's graduate CV. She added: "I urge Performing Arts students to make the most of their university days and the vast range of resources on offer at Northumbria."

For further information, or to book, visit www.curiousmonkeytheatre.com
Check out Curious Monkey's latest project Beats North blog
here: <http://beatsnorth.tumblr.com>

Ali Pritchard
Drama and scriptwriting graduate
Founder: Alphabetti spaghetti

"Original, off the wall and clever". This is how the BBC described Alphabetti Spaghetti's debut production in 2012 – a great start for this new writing theatre company founded by Northumbria graduate Ali Pritchard. The company was formed to create opportunities for new talent and bridge the gap between study and employment. And it's working! Taking over the upstairs space in a city centre venue, Ali has created a public platform for writers, directors, actors and set designers. He's already seen one of his new discoveries snapped up by a leading actor's agent, immediately securing work with an internationally-renowned theatre company.

In launching Alphabetti Spaghetti, Ali has had to put into practice the wider business skills that he developed through degree modules such as Arts and Entrepreneurship and Professional Directions. He is now responsible for writing funding bids, pitching for sponsorship, running and programming a venue, commissioning new writing and of course, his biggest passion, writing and directing new work.

For more information, and to find out what's on, visit
www.alphabettispaghettheatre.co.uk

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