

# Drama Alumnus Awarded Fellowship At Leading Arts Institute



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Rhodes 2010 Drama Masters graduate, Mr Richard Antrobus, has been awarded a prestigious Fellowship at the University of Cape Town, Donald Gordon Institute for Creative and Performing Arts (GIPCA) for 2012.

A Grahamstown local currently teaching Drama at Diocesan School for Girls and St Andrew's College in Grahamstown, Mr Antrobus is keen to expand his skills in theatre and the use of multi-media in contemporary performance.

He is very excited about the opportunity to cut his teeth among some of the top professors of the arts. "My fellow GIPCA fellows have impressive resumes including Standard Bank Young Artist Award Winners so I feel privileged (and a little daunted, to be honest) to be working alongside some amazing top artists and professionals," he added.

As a Rhodes Drama graduate, he said he is privileged to have learned from some of the leading practitioners in the country. "There's no substitute for learning from a master," he added. "It offers the freedom to cross boundaries and art-forms and tries new things."

"Rhodes teaches you to ask questions and push boundaries and explore your own style as not just an actor or dancer, but as a creator-performer that interrogates the status quo."

GIPCA is an innovative institution at the University of Cape Town that promotes new interdisciplinary creative research in the disciplines of, among others, music, dance, fine art, drama and new media, and in particular collaborations among different disciplines.

According to GIPCA, interdisciplinarity is a key theme of the institute, defined as consisting of two or more disciplines, with at least one being a participating GIPCA department at the University of Cape Town. Projects are therefore developed within the institute within the year-long fellowship period.

Mr Antrobus dissertation entitled: "The Advent of the 'Festivore': An Exploration of South African Audience Attendance in the Performing Arts at the National Arts Festival" explores live performance art and South Africa's changing theatre audience profile, while his coursework focused on the body at risk in performance.

“For this I explored using stilts in performance for both the performer and the set, so that the body was in physical danger in performance,” he elaborates.

“This eventually evolved into my final work *Stilted* which I had the fortune of playing to critical acclaim at the National Arts Festival for 2009 and 2010.”

Humorous and serious in turn, *Stilted* explored the nature of contemporary performance, questioning and exploring the overlap between different genres and the interdisciplinarity of theatre and film.

By Anna-Karien Otto

Photo by Malcolm Freeman