

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**24 October 2013**

## **Guildhall School of Music & Drama supports first nine Creative Entrepreneurs**

The Guildhall School of Music & Drama today announced the first nine entrepreneurs who will be supported to set up their own businesses/social enterprises and develop their entrepreneurship skills through its new Creative Entrepreneurs scheme.

The successful group, made up of alumni and staff members, will take part in an intensive 12-month pilot programme of training and individual support led by fundraising and development enterprise *Cause4*.

Training will be provided in business planning, marketing, sales and funding, and individual support will include the provision of mentoring, coaching and business plan development. The growing ventures will inhabit a dedicated space within the *Cause4* offices in Liverpool Street, which can be used both creatively and as office space. The aim of the scheme is to enable these entrepreneurs to develop sustainable businesses and secure vital seed funding at the end of the year.

Applications were open to alumni and staff of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and were assessed on the basis of strength of the business concept, its readiness for development, the artistic quality of the venture and the anticipated contribution to the Guildhall School and community.

The nine Creative Entrepreneurs chosen with discipline and graduation dates are:

- Jenny Beer (Guildhall-Barbican Creative Learning Division current staff member)
- John-Paul Bowman (Composition 2013)
- Ed Hughes (Acting 1999)
- Alex McCartney (Lute 2013)
- Evi Nakou (Leadership 2013)
- Nikesh Patel (Acting 2010) with his business partner Emily Plumtree
- Gavin Roberts (Piano 2011)
- Sophie Roberts (Acting 2005) and Sam Redford (Acting 2001)
- Fernando Pinho (Stage Management & Technical Theatre 2010)

The nine entrepreneurs come to the Creative Entrepreneurs scheme from around the UK and Europe including London, York, Ipswich, Epsom, Swindon, Porto in Portugal and Thessaloniki in Greece. The business ideas include work in education, artist management development, community theatre and dance.

The programme has been devised by Professor Helena Gaunt, Assistant Principal (Research and Academic Development) of the Guildhall School, in partnership with the development and fundraising organisation *Cause4*. Michelle Wright, the CEO of *Cause4*, is an alumna and Fellow of the Guildhall School (Violin 1995-1999) and founded *Cause4* in 2009. Since being founded *Cause4* has grown rapidly and represents an experienced partner in the development of entrepreneurial ideas and associated business models.

Professor Helena Gaunt said *"These alumni will pioneer a step-change in supporting entrepreneurship in the performing arts. They are outstanding artists whose work has potential to create value in multiple ways. I am delighted that at the Guildhall School we now have this opportunity to catalyse new businesses and entrepreneurship within the sector."*

Michelle Wright, CEO of *Cause4* says *"This new initiative from the Guildhall School offering nine alumni the chance to develop their own businesses is a golden opportunity to invest in a new generation of creative entrepreneurs. I believe that the training that musicians, actors and technical theatre staff experience at*

conservatoires makes them well placed to run successful businesses. The skills learned at college including creativity, resilience and hard work are just the ingredients for successful entrepreneurship. This is a brilliant innovation from the Guildhall School to support graduates in a more challenging economy for the arts and culture.”

**For further press information please contact:**

Rebecca Driver Media Relations

Tel: 0207 247 1894 | Email: [rebecca@rdmr.co.uk](mailto:rebecca@rdmr.co.uk) | [isobel@rdmr.co.uk](mailto:isobel@rdmr.co.uk) | [annabel@rdmr.co.uk](mailto:annabel@rdmr.co.uk)

[www.rdmr.co.uk](http://www.rdmr.co.uk)

**Notes to Editors**

**Guildhall Creative Entrepreneurs 2013**

- **Jenny Beer**  
Business idea: Jenny is currently developing the Guildhall-Barbican Creative Learning division’s Drum Works programme, a secondary school project that reaches over 250 young East Londoners every week and is aiming to reach over 500 young people by 2015. Participants take part in weekly drumming sessions with experienced artist leaders, creating original beats inspired by music they listen to and working towards performances on the Barbican’s main stages and at festivals and events around London. Jenny’s project aims to enable Drum Works to become a spin-out enterprise from the Barbican Centre and Guildhall School which would allow the project to pursue income-generating ideas, enabling it to expand its reach.
- **John-Paul Bowman**  
Business idea: John-Paul’s enterprise idea is to expand the brand of Convivium Records - a recording and distribution company - into Artist Management, creating a new, ethical agency model. The aim of the company is to provide opportunities, advice and support to musicians and ensembles transitioning into professional careers.
- **Ed Hughes**  
Business idea: Ed is the Founder and Co-Artistic Director of Salida Productions - [www.salidaproductions.com](http://www.salidaproductions.com) - an East London Theatre and Film Company which has been awarded a Stage One New Producers Bursary and UNESCO High Achievement for *Romeo and Juliet* (Mercury Theatre) with Astillero Tango Orchestra from Argentina which Ed directed and co-produced. Salida's Projects include *Mayakovsky: The Slanting Rain* (RSC), *Formby* (Currently on a UK Tour and touring in 2014), *Gutter Junky* (Edinburgh Festival) and a film *Farmer and the Shepherd*.
- **Alex McCartney**  
Business idea: Alex’s business is Poeticall Musicke - [www.poeticallmusicke.co.uk](http://www.poeticallmusicke.co.uk) - an early music band founded in 2011. Their exhilarating sound, engaging programmes and energetic schedule have attracted a growing audience, and notably the support of Dame Emma Kirkby DBE and Suzi Digby OBE as honorary patrons.
- **Evi Nakou**  
Business idea: Evi is the co-founder, together with Liza Barley, of *ontoSonics*, a collaborative duo that explores human experience as the stimulus for creative process that culminates in living performance and installation. As a flutist she has concentrated on the performance of new music, has recorded music for theatre and cinema and performed in the Barbican Centre and Wigmore Hall and Thessaloniki Concert Hall among others.
- **Nikesh Patel** and Emily Plumtree  
Business idea: Nikesh’s enterprise with Emily Plumtree, called No Quills, provides Shakespeare workshops to primary and secondary schools across London. Workshops are led by professional actors with experience at some of the leading theatre companies in the country, including the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare’s Globe and the National Theatre.
- **Fernando Pinho**  
Business idea: Fernando’s project aims long-term to open a new community theatre in East London comprised of two performance spaces, a café, rehearsal and office space. A first-stage pop-up theatre model will link closely to the Barbican Centre and Guildhall School of Music & Drama’s East London programme.

- **Gavin Roberts**

Business idea: Gavin's enterprise Song in the City (a registered charity) programmes concerts around imaginative themes, bringing talented performers to the heart of the Square Mile, in the inspiring setting of the Hall at St Botolph without Bishopsgate.

- **Sophie Roberts** and Sam Redford

Business idea: Sophie's enterprise, co-founded with Sam Redford, is entitled the SR<sup>2</sup> Ensemble and involves plans to build a theatre company that provides graduates of Guildhall the opportunity to work together as like-minded people who have experienced the same training and therefore share an artistic vocabulary.

**About the Guildhall School of Music & Drama [www.gsmd.ac.uk](http://www.gsmd.ac.uk)**

Rated No. 1 specialist institution in the UK by the Guardian University Guide 2013 and 2014, the Guildhall School is one of the world's leading conservatoires and drama schools – a vibrant, international community of young musicians, actors and theatre technicians in the heart of the City of London. Founded in 1880, the School is a global leader of creative and professional practice which promotes innovation, experiment and research, with nearly 900 students in higher education, drawn from nearly 60 countries around the world. It is also the UK's leading provider of specialist music training at the under-18 level with nearly 2,500 students attending Junior Guildhall and the Centre for Young Musicians. The School is widely recognised for the quality of its teaching and its graduates, and its new building Milton Court, which opened in September, offers new state-of-the-art facilities to match the talent within its walls, ensuring that students enter their chosen profession at the highest level.

The Guildhall School of Music & Drama is provided by the City of London Corporation.

**About Cause4 [www.cause4.co.uk](http://www.cause4.co.uk)**

*Cause4* was set up in May 2009 to support charities, social enterprises and philanthropists in development and fundraising across the charity, arts, sports and educational sectors. *Cause4* seeks to be a modernising influence and leader within the charitable sector, offering relevant, contemporary solutions for charities and social enterprises at a time when more creative, entrepreneurial approaches are much needed. The organisation works in three main areas: strategy and fundraising, philanthropy and enterprise development.

In 2010 *Cause4* developed the Entrepreneurship training programme through which it seeks to address the widely-acknowledged shortage of entrepreneurial development and fundraising personnel within the charity, arts, sports and education sectors. The programme identifies young graduates with a passion for the charitable sector and with the entrepreneurial drive, personality and talent to succeed.

*Cause4* has won a string of awards including female entrepreneur of the year at the Natwest Start Up Awards 2011 for Michelle Wright, and a top 10 winner in the Ernst and Young Future 100 awards 2011 for demonstrating innovation in social enterprise. *Cause4* was also a winner in the 2012 Startups 100 list for most innovative small businesses across the UK. In November 2012 *Cause4* won two prestigious silver international Stevie Awards for innovation.

In recent months *Cause4* was invited by Lord Young of Graffham and Sir Terry Leahy to join the Accelerate 250 for UK small businesses showing rapid growth and great potential and the company won a fast growth award from Unltd to develop its Entrepreneurship programme.