

## ALUMNI ARTICLE NETWORK

As well as the successes of its current students, St Leonard's College is proud to celebrate those of its alumni. And there are many of whom the College can be proud. In this article, we profile five alumni who have achieved recognition since their school days.

Two of those, Heidi Yardley (nee Titshall) (peer year 1992) and Greg Eldridge (peer year 2004) are now building careers in the arts. "I need to be an artist" says Heidi, and she meets this need through a career in art which has already been most productive and successful. Art was always her favourite subject at St Leonard's; she was always drawing. By year 12, she was studying both Art and Studio Art with the intention of studying Fine Arts at University. When she finished her degree she went straight out and rented a studio to start creating work for her first exhibition. As the art industry is extremely difficult to break into, she had to spend many years exhibiting, studying and developing her craft in order to arrive at a position where she could make it a full time career.

This she has now done, as she is a full time visual artist with a practice mainly consisting of painting and drawing. She has held numerous solo and group exhibitions, has won many awards, and last year was named as a finalist in the prestigious Archibald Prize portrait competition. Last year she was also named one of '50 of Australia's most collectible artists' by *Australian Art Collector* magazine. Heidi has found it 'really rewarding to have my work acquired by museums and international collectors.'

Heidi loves 'the potential of visual imagery in general', working within different themes and exploring the imagery within them. She often uses collage, an art form she loves as she finds it 'highly intuitive.' Her work has been described as 'dream like', with echoes of surrealism and magical realism. As well as from photographic images, her inspiration comes from 'fragmented memory.' 'Art needs to pose a question', she believes, 'not create answers.'

Heidi is looking forward to participating in more artist residencies and projects both in Australia and overseas and to exhibit internationally. She will continue to develop her work and looks forward to expanding the scale and scope of her practice.

To satisfy his artistic bent, Greg Eldridge is now building a career as a stage director for opera. An outstanding student at St Leonard's, he won a National Achievement Award from the Children's Literary Board in 2000, as well as a Premier's Award for Excellence in Philosophy in 2004. He followed these achievements with a Foundation for Youth Excellence Award in 2010. Besides studying law, Greg trained as an actor, working with his close friend from school, Liam Suckling, on a number of projects, including an adaptation of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, which they wrote and directed together.

Later, Greg went to Florence, Italy, where he completed specialist studies in opera directing. More recently, he has won a place as the youngest director accepted in the prestigious Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at the Royal Opera House, London. This award, founded in 2001, offers exceptionally talented artists at the start of their careers in music a tailored program of coaching and performance opportunities. Many of its graduates are seen regularly on the international stage. In his current role, Greg will have the privilege of working with the likes of Bryn Terfel and Placido Domingo. He is receiving specialist coaching in all the main operatic languages – Italian, German,

French, Russian and Czech – as well as weekly sessions in dance, fencing and stage combat. He anticipates enjoying an ‘amazing two years’ and wants to make the most of every minute.

Other of our alumni have also spent time overseas, in different capacities. Both Fiona Stitfold (peer year 1983) and Jenny Jamieson (peer year 2000) have engaged in humanitarian work in Third World countries. Fiona currently manages the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) program within the United Nations Mission in Juba, South Sudan. The UNV program contributes to peace and development through volunteerism. Approximately 400 international and national UN Volunteers are deployed throughout South Sudan in professional capacities to support the UN mandate focusing on the Protection of Civilians, monitoring of and reporting on Human Rights violations, and facilitating of humanitarian assistance and support to peace initiatives, including the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) who are monitoring cease fire violations.

Fiona describes working with the UNV program as ‘not as a career decision, but rather a decision to accept opportunities and experience.’ These opportunities have convinced her that we are all fundamentally the same, for ‘we all want peace, respect, equality and a caring community in which to shelter and belong.’ Through her work, she has learned of ‘the richness and wealth of people, their ability to survive and undertake incredible acts of bravery, but also of the devastation and absolute horror inflicted by inherent greed and power.’ She shares with Kofi Annan, former United Nations Secretary General, the belief that ‘together we can make the world a better place.’

Jenny Jamieson, too, strives to make the world a better place. As a student, she had a desire to pursue a career ‘which had elements of humanitarianism, further education, team work and leadership, plus an ability to give back to society at large.’ She has found this in her current work as an emergency doctor in Melbourne. She has just finished a stint at the Royal Children’s Hospital and is now returning to the Alfred Hospital. She loves ‘the acuity’ and the ‘diversity’ of emergency medicine. ‘One minute you can have a patient with a broken leg’, she reflects, ‘the next minute a cardiac arrest, and the next a trauma callout from a multi-vehicle accident.’

Prior to these local postings, Jenny spent seven months of 2012 working in Afghanistan for Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders.) She worked in a trauma hospital in the northern province of Kunduz, dealing with a great deal of post-conflict violence and mass casualties. She describes this experience as ‘incredibly rewarding, but challenging at the same time.’

Jenny has also been occupied with ‘trying to navigate a path between fulltime clinical work and my passion for global health.’ She has enjoyed helping to co-found the Global Health Gateway, as well as staying engaged in Medecins Sans Frontieres activities. In 2011, she was one of eight writers who collaborated to write *The Guide to Working Abroad*, a resource for students and junior health professionals interested in working in low-resource settings. She maintains a keen interest in medical education and global health research.

Bryce Doherty (py 1991) is now making his mark in a different field. He completed a Bachelor of Commerce at university, and although he initially wanted to be an investor, he found he was far more suited to sales. He started in 1999 manning a telephone at National Mutual and slowly worked his way up from there. He is currently CEO of UBS Asset Management, a company which manages over \$45 billion on behalf of Australian and international investors in equities, bonds, property and multi-asset portfolios. His large team manages money for insurance companies, superannuation and

private investments. Bryce is passionate about the superannuation system and about working in an industry that aims to allow Australians to be self-sufficient in their retirements. He feels that despite the issue of superannuation sometimes being used as a 'political football', both government and opposition agree that a system helping Australians to have a financially secure retirement is a good thing.

Bryce is also passionate about exporting Australian investment expertise to investors offshore. UBS has Australian equities, bonds and real estate teams based in Sydney who all manage investments for international investors.

He considers his most satisfying achievement from a career perspective to be getting his first job in the finance industry. He hopes to lead UBS to be the number one fund manager in Australia. At the moment, he comments, they are thirteenth in a field of 120 with plenty of work to do.

We salute all of these Old Collegians and wish them continued success in their careers.