

Christopher Newell
GSMDSM, MSc (Distinction), PhD

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Reviews:

Punch: *“Some of the most strikingly effective images I have seen on any stage.”*
Financial Times: *“I have a powerful contempt for Christopher Newell.”*

Website:

www.chrisnewell.eu

Key skills and interests

- Computer speech
- Interdisciplinary research and practice
- Opera and theatre directing
- Human-computer interaction
- New media production

Education

- 2010 - University of York. Computer Science Department
PhD Computer Science. Thesis: Place, authenticity, and time: a framework for liveness in synthetic speech
- 2001 - University of Huddersfield
MSc (Distinction) Interactive Multimedia Production
- 1982 - Università Italiana per Stranieri di Perugia
Certificato in Italiano
- 1980 - Guildhall School of Music and Drama
Certificate in Stage Management

Professional qualifications

2013 - Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, HEA

Professional Memberships

In the 1980s and 1990's member of British Equity and the American Actors Equity. Since becoming an academic a member of Leonardo.org; the Society for the Study of Artificial Intelligence and the Simulation of Behaviour; and Communication Matters, the UK Chapter of ISAAC (International Society of Augmentative and Alternative Communication).

Languages

English, Italian (conversational), German training at Goethe-Institut London (somewhat forgotten)

2013 biography and activities in brief

Christopher Newell trained in Stage Management at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in the early 1980s. He had a twenty year career as an opera director including five years at Glyndebourne and the National Theatre as an associate director to Sir Peter Hall. With Paul Barker he set up the Modern Music Theatre Troupe and produced over twenty world premiere music theatre works. After completing a PhD in Computer Science at the University of York in 2010 he was awarded a Wingate Scholarship to research computer speech and melodrama. He was a co-recipient of an EPSRC grant to develop the Creative Speech Technology (CreST) Network. He is co-guest-editor of a special issue for Logopedics Phoniatrics Vocology and is writing a chapter on Essays on Opera and the Media for McFarland and Co. He is currently a consultant for the Toshiba Speech Lab in Cambridge and is collaborating with the AHRC funded Creative Exchange led by Lancaster University and the Culture Lab (Newcastle University) on projects exploring performance, participation and technology. He is currently Research Theme Leader for the Creative Economy at the University of Hull.

Employment record:

Please note my professional career falls into three parts listed chronologically -

Part 3: 2003 – 2013: Academic.

In 2003 I started my part-time PhD at the University of York and secured my post as a lecturer in Digital Media at the University of Hull in the School of Arts. I was awarded my PhD at the University of York in 2010 with no corrections.

Roles in education

- Research Theme Leader: Creative Economy, University of Hull. Current.
- Academic Director iHull (Institute for Creativity and Innovation). 2011
- Subject group leader: Digital Media, University of Hull. 2010 -2012
- Marketing Manager: School of Arts and New Media, University of Hull 2008 –2010
- Programme Director: Music Theatre, Birmingham Conservatoire 1988-1993

Visiting lecturer posts in education

I taught at a number of HE Institutions, mainly conservatoires and colleges of art, music or drama - many of them on several different occasions. They include:

- The University of York – 1999
- The Birmingham Conservatoire 1987-1995
- The University of Birmingham 1992
- The Slade School of Art – 1987
- The Royal College of Music 1984
- The Royal Academy of Music 1984
- The Guildhall School of Music and Drama 1982 -1984

Part 2: 1997 – 2003: Company Director.

I was joint director of a Multimedia SME 'yo-yo.uk.com ltd' while continuing my freelance career. The company ran successfully for six years and at its peak employed 6 people including freelance developers, programmers and designers. We had a large commercial portfolio, including:

- The Chemical Industry Education Centre
- The NHS Centre for Reviews and Dissemination
- The Learning Skills Council
- The Family Fund Trust

Part 1: 1983 – 2003: Self-employed opera and theatre director /digital artist/performance lecturer.

During this period I was employed by dozens of different companies and organisations. Some of the more significant ones are listed below. For a full account of my freelance career please see ‘Opera and Theatre Career’ below.

Self-employment: significant institutions, post held, and dates:

- Associate Director: Glyndebourne Festival Opera. 1983-1989
- Assistant Director: The National Theatre. 1988
- Artistic Director: The Grand Opera House York. 1989-90
- Assistant Director: The Peter Hall Company. 1989
- Artistic Director: Pavilion Opera. 1990-1992
- Production Director (5 specific operas): Mid Wales Opera. 1992-2002

Research Publications

My research domain is highly interdisciplinary and collaborative with publications in the sciences and arts and creative practice.

Publications Journals

2013: 50% Newell C and Barker P. Can a computer-generated voice be sincere? A case study combining music and synthetic speech. Logopedics Phoniatrics Vocology (Informa Healthcare.) Special Edition on the CresT Network (potential selection for REF 2013)

2013: In press. 60% Newell C and Martin A. Living through a Computer Voice: a personal account. Logopedics Phoniatrics Vocology (Informa Healthcare.) Special Edition on the CreST Network

2013: Edwards A & 60% Newell C. ‘The Creative Speech Technology Network’ Communication Matters. Vol. 26. No. 3. pp. 46 - 48 ISSN 0969-9554

2011: 60% Newell, C., Edwards, A., Cairns P. ‘Liveness’ in human-machine interaction. International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media. Vol. 7, No. 2. pp. 221 – 237. ISSN 1479-4713

2009: 60% Newell, C and Edwards, A. Place, Authenticity Time: a framework for synthetic voice acting. International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media. Vol. 4 Nos. 2&3. pp. 117 - 136 ISSN 1479-4713

2005: 60% Newell, C and Edwards, A. Achieving a lively voice. International Journal for Language Data Processing 28/2/2004, pp. 133-151, ISSN: 0343-5202.

Publications: Book Chapters (Invited contribution)

2013: In press. 50% Newell C. and Newell G. 'Opera Singers as Pop Stars: Opera within the popular music industry.' In 'Opera and the Media.' Ed. Fryer P. McFarland and Co

Publications: Conference Proceedings

2005: 60% Newell, C and Edwards, A. Unnatural but lively voice synthesis for empathic, synthetic performers. Pages 137-143 AISB 2005: Social Intelligence and Interaction in Animals, Robots and Agents, Joint symposium on Virtual Social Agents. The University of Hertfordshire, ISSN:1 902956492.

2004: 60% Newell, C and Edwards, A. To be or to seem to be: that is the question. Unnatural but lively, speech synthesis for synthetic performers: models from acting, Pages 124-131. AISB 2004: Symposium on Language, Speech and Gesture for Synthetic Characters. The University of Leeds, ISSN:1 902956390.

Publications: Public performances and exhibitions

Please note the following list includes some items that contribute to my REF 2013 online portfolio of practice which can be viewed here:

http://www.gravityisahat.com/Liveness_portfolio/Newell_Liveness_in_Synthetic_Speech_Portfolio/

These projects frequently have a significant number of collaborative partners. Where appropriate the full lists of collaborators and credits can be found by following the links. In each case I have attempted to give an objective estimate of my contribution to the project but in many cases this is difficult to formally evaluate.

2013: 50% Author. 'My Voice and Me.' A live performance. Woodend Scarborough 26th January 2013. <http://crestnetwork.org.uk/page/scarborough-concert>

2012: 50% Producer. 'Voice by Choice.' A short film. City Screen York. 03 Dec 2012. <http://crestnetwork.org.uk/page/voice-by-choice>

2012: 90% Deviser. 'Frank'. An artefact for public engagement in speech technology. City Screen York, Sheffield Winter Garden, Hull Truck Theatre 3-5 Dec 2013. <http://crestnetwork.org.uk/page/frank>

2011: 50% Author. 'My Voice and Me: A melodrama for synthetic voice'. Creative Speech Technology Network. University of York. 18 Oct 2011. <http://crestnetwork.org.uk/page/my-voice-and-me>

2009: 90% Author. 'Experiments in sympathetic engagement elicited through silence, sounds and slips in synthetic speech'. 'Theatre Noise' Central School of Speech and Drama, London University, London. 22 April - 24 April 2009. http://www.chrisnewell.eu/wordpress/?page_id=122

2009: 90% Author. 'A telephonic installation. Sonic Interaction Symposium. University of York. 02 April 2009. http://www.chrisnewell.eu/wordpress/?page_id=122

2009: 90% Devisor. 'Frank'. An artefact for public engagement in speech technology. Interspeech 2009. 07 - 10 September 2009. http://www.chrisnewell.eu/wordpress/?page_id=122

2008: 80% Producer, director, contributor. 'P.A.T. Testing' (Newell, C., Andrews, S. et al). A performance piece shown at the University of Hull Scarborough Campus. 09 April 2008 http://www.chrisnewell.eu/wordpress/?page_id=132

2008: 80% Devisor. 'Please wait with me' (Newell, C. and S. Andrews). A telephone based installation shown at Sight Sonic in York, 14 -15 March 2008. http://www.chrisnewell.eu/wordpress/?page_id=132

2007: 80% Devisor. 'Call Centre' (Newell, C.; S. Andrews; A. Edwards et al.). A telephone based installation shown at the Digital Music Research Network in Leeds, 7- 8 July 2007. http://www.chrisnewell.eu/wordpress/?page_id=132

2006: 60% Devisor. 'Tide'. British HCI Conference 2006, London, 11-15 Sept 2006. http://www.chrisnewell.eu/wordpress/?page_id=132

Grants

2012: Arts Council England. 20904105. PI Christopher Newell. 'CreST Network Roadshow – Full Award to University of Hull £6,000

2010: EPSRC EP/1010416/1. PI Alistair Edwards (York) and Christopher Newell (Hull) 'The Creative Speech Technology Network' – Total Award: £66,000. Award to University of Hull £13, 963.34

2009: Wingate Scholarship. PI. Christopher Newell. 'Masque for Artificial Voices'. Full award to University of Hull £6,238

Commercialisation

2013: Consultancy with The Creative Exchange (CX). Academic Consultant. <http://thecreativeexchange.org/>

'Participatory Production Technologies' with the BBC and Co-Opera Co (see Co-Opera link below) (80% FEC) £4483.20

'On the Precipice' with ISIS Arts <http://www.isisarts.org.uk/> and Modular <http://modular.org.uk/projects/uksg/> (80% FEC) £4483.20

2012 – 2013: Consultancy with Toshiba Research Europe Limited TREL. Supporting the training of actors in the development of a Speech Corpus. <http://www.toshiba.eu/eu/Cambridge-Research-Laboratory/Speech-Technology-Group/About-Speech-Technology-Group/>

2011: Consultancy with Co-Opera Co. <http://www.co-opera-co.org/> Engagement to direct 'Die Zauberflöte' by W.A. Mozart and to develop the 'Tingle Factor' research project. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2012/jan/16/research-operatic-singers-speech-generating-technology>

Conferences and seminars

2013: Commercial seminar at Toby Churchill Ltd. Invitation to present - Trans and Re-mediation for Augmentative and Alternative Communication Devices. 25 April 2013

2013: Research Seminar. Invitation to present - Using digital technologies to capture experience of participation. Guildhall School of Music and Drama. 10 May 2013

2013: Richard Wagner's Impact on His World and Ours. Invitation to present and to lead a workshop on directing Die Walkure. University of Leeds. 30 May 2013

2013: Symposium on Poetry and AI. Invitation to demonstrate. Do serendipitous slips in synthetic speech elicit 'liveness' in synthetic poets? University of Exeter. 03 April 2013

The CreST Network Presentation at Communication Matters 2012. University of Leicester. 24 September 2012

2012: Exploring Interdisciplinary & Collaborative Practices in the Context of Contemporary Economic and Cultural Drivers. Panel at PSi18: University of Leeds. 30 June 2012

2012 – Paper: “Melos, Tingles and Vocal Prosthetics: Invitation to present. Teasing Interactions Between Opera and Technology”. at The Theory, Practice, and Business of Opera Today. University of Leeds. 13 April 2012

2010 - ‘Whose Voice is it Anyway?’ demonstration and performance. “(re)Performing the Posthuman: A Conference on Performance Arts and Posthumanism”. Centre for Research in Opera and Music Theatre. University of Sussex, Brighton. 21-22 May 2010

Research Students

Kane Cunningham. PhD Digital Media (part-time) Due to complete 2016 - self funding

Steven Reynolds. PhD Digital Media (full-time) Registration in progress - self funding

Reviewer for conferences and journals

- International Journal for Performance Arts and Digital Media
- Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems CHI -2011
- HCI Conference (British HCI Group) 2011
- ‘AI and poetry’ at the AISB Symposia part of the activities generated by ‘Research in Interactive Drama Environments (RIDERS) 2013

Earlier experimental digital work

2001 - Digital Artist. “*Sepia Sands.*” University of Huddersfield research project. Software prototype only. This was an experimental attempt to present the e-shopping experience in a narrative, multimedia environment. Preliminary exploration of the “pixel basket” concept: a method of distributing images by individual pixels.

2001 - Digital Artist. “*Norman’s Leap.*” A digital video taster for live web show. Produced using web-cam technology and crude audio sampling.

2000 - Digital Artist. “*The Major.*” University of Huddersfield research project. Experimental composition tool merging poetry, morse code and chaotically-generated musical bytes.

1997 - Digital Artist. “*The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit.*” AHRB research and development grant. An online opera. adapted from the pamphlet by Jonathan Swift.

1996 - Digital Artist. “*Opera. Exe.*” Birmingham Conservatoire. One year funded research project. Web-based music experiment merged Yamaha MIDI XG technology with streaming spoken audio.

1994 - Digital Artist. “*Mind over Matter.*” An early attempt to merge live and digital media. The only technology available was an Atari games console, and a voice modulator/pitch shifter. The show was presented in an historic greenhouse within a London Park in about 110 degrees of summer sun. The computers crashed and the screen images were invisible against the sunlight.

Opera and theatre career

Artistic Directorships

Modern Music Theatre Troupe 1985- 1998

MMTT produced innovative, exciting music theatre, and pioneering education and community work since it was formed in 1985. Productions included 15 new commissions, community operas, and education projects leading to performances. The company played venues and festivals across the UK, abroad, and major London venues including the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Place Theatre. Compositions included premieres by William Craft and John Adams.

Pavilion Opera and Theatre Company 1990 – 1992

Pavilion Opera toured chamber opera and theatre internationally.

The Grand Opera House York 1989 – 1990

The Grand Opera House hosted a program of national and international theatre, music and conferences.

Awards

In 1994 MMTT was nominated for an Olivier Award, and in 1995 MMTT won the Prudential Opera Award Commendation. Mid Wales Opera, for whom Christopher directed *The Barber of Seville* (Rossini), *Die Fledermaus* (Strauss), *The Tales of Hoffmann* (Offenbach), *Rigoletto* (Verdi), *The Magic Flute* (Mozart) and *La Cenerentola* (Rossini), was one of three companies short-listed for a Prudential Opera Award.

Theatre Production Credits

2011 - Director: *The Magic Flute, Mozart*. Co-Opera Co, UK Tour

2002 - Director: *Carmen, Bizet*. Diva Opera. European Tour

2002 - Director: *La Cenerentola, Rossini*. Mid Wales Opera.

Published as a Newtonian Production Video: david_pugh@lycos.co.uk

2000 - Director. *Curlew River, Britten*. University of York

1999 - Director: *Pierrot Lunaire, Schoenberg*. Black Hair, University of York

1999 - Director. *A Whitehouse Cantata, Bernstein*, Nagano, London Symphony Orchestra

1998 - Director. *The Magic Flute, Mozart*. Mid Wales Opera

1998 - Digital Artist. "Dirty Tricks." *Newell, Barker, Chance*.

A major Arts Council commission.

1997 - Director. *Salome, Strauss*. Bournemouth Orchestras Tour,

1996 - Director. *The Tempest, Shakespeare*. The Green Room, Manchester

1996 - Director. *Noises, Sounds and Sweet Airs, Nyman*. Festival di Fano, Italy

1996 - Director. *The Turn of the Screw, Britten*. Aldeburgh Festival

1996 - Director and Devisor. *On the Road with Ron and Ros. Newell, Buckeridge, Chance.* Arts Council commission.

1995 - Director. *Tosca, Puccini.* Pavilion Opera International Tour

1995 - Director. *Rigoletto, Verdi.* Mid Wales Opera.
Published as a Newtonian Production Video

1995 - Director. *The Coronation of Poppea, Monteverdi.* Birmingham Conservatoire

1995 - Director. *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Britten.* Sir Colin Davis. LSO

1994 - Stage Director. *'The Voices Foundation,'* Barbican Theatre London

1994 - Director. *The Merry Widow, Lehár.* Pavilion Opera International Tour

1994 - Director. *Tales of Hoffman, Offenbach.* Mid Wales Opera.
Published as a Newtonian Production Video: david_pugh@lycos.co.uk

1993 - Director. *Blood Wedding, Lorca.* Birmingham Conservatoire

1993 - Director. *Alice in Wonderland.* Gardner Arts Centre

1993 - Director. *Barber of Seville, Rossini.* Mid Wales Opera.
Published as a Newtonian Production Video: david_pugh@lycos.co.uk

1993 - Director. *Carmen, Bizet.* Pavilion Opera International Tour

1992 - Director. *Die Fledermaus, Strauss.* Mid Wales Opera.
Published as a Newtonian Production Video: david_pugh@lycos.co.uk

1992 - Producer. *Fungus the Bogeyman, Briggs/Carter.* Belgrade Theatre, Coventry

1992 - Director. *The Turn of the Screw, Britten.* Aldeburgh Festival

1991 - Director. *La Pazzia Senile, Banchieri.* MMTT at the Purcell Room, South Bank, London

1991 - Director. *Into The Woods, Sondheim.* Birmingham Conservatoire

1991 - Director. *Higglety Pigglety Pop, Knussen.* Barbican London

1989 - Director: *The Golem workshops.* Almeida Festival, London

1990 - Director. *Die Entführung aus dem Serail, Mozart.* Pavilion Opera International Tour

1990 - Director. *The Bartered Bride, Smetana.* The Birmingham Conservatoire

1989 - Verse coach. *The Merchant of Venice, Shakespeare.* The Peter Hall Company, London

1989 - Associate Director. *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Britten.* Glyndebourne Festival and Touring Opera

1988 - Director. *La Traviata, Verdi.* Macau International Festival

1988 - Director. *Die Fledermaus, Strauss.* Pavilion Opera International Tour

1988 - Assistant Director. *'The Late Shakespeares': Cymbeline, A Winters Tale, The Tempest, Shakespeare.* The National Theatre, London

1987 - Adaptation Director. *La Traviata, Verdi.* Glyndebourne Festival Opera, The Royal Albert Hall, London

1987 - Director. *Christopher Columbus, Offenbach.* Birmingham Conservatoire

1987 - Associate Director. *The Electrification of the Soviet Union, Osborne.* Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Tour

1987 - Associate Director. *La Traviata, Verdi.* Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Tour

1987 - Associate Director. *Albert Herring, Britten.* Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London

1987 - Director. *Die Zauberflote, Mozart.* Pavilion Opera International Tour

1987 - Director. *The Siege of Rochelle, Balfe.* John Lewis Opera, London

1987 - Director. *The Devils Wall, Smetana.* University College Opera, The Bloomsbury Theatre, London

1987 - Director. *Fantastic Mr Fox, Dahl/Carter.* Gardener Arts Centre, Brighton

1986 - Director. *Phantastes, Barker.* The Place Theatre, London

1986 - Director. *Così Fan Tutte, Mozart.* Pavilion Opera Tour

1986 - Associate Director. *Porgy and Bess, Gershwin.* Glyndebourne Festival Opera

1986 - Associate Director. *Higglety Pigglety Pop and Where the Wild Things Are, Knussen.* Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Tour

1986 - Associate Director. *Albert Herring, Britten.* Accademia Philharmonica, Roma

1986 – Director. *La Bohème, Puccini.* Ashcroft Theatre, Croydon

1986 - Associate Director. *Albert Herring, Britten.* Summerscope, Queen Elizabeth Hall

1986 – Director. *Nabucco, Verdi.* Epsom Playhouse

1985 – Director. *The Canterville Ghost, Wilde/Barker.* Hoxton Hall, London

1985 - Associate Director. *Albert Herring, Britten.* Glyndebourne Festival Opera and Tour

1985 - Associate Director. *The Coronation of Poppea, Monteverdi.* Glyndebourne Festival Opera

1985 - Associate Director. *A Midsummer Nights Dream, Britten.* Glyndebourne Festival Opera

1985 - Director. *Hands Across the Sky, Hopkins.* London Chamber Opera

1985 - Director. *The Marriage Between Zones 3, 4 and 5, Barker.* Opera Viva, The Place Theatre, London

1984 - Director. *A Midsummer Nights Dream, Britten.* Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London

1984 - Director. *Ariadne auf Naxos, Strauss.* Opera Viva, London

1983 - Assistant Director. *Intermezzo, Strauss*. Glyndebourne Festival Opera

1983 - Assistant Director. *Idomeneo, Mozart*. Glyndebourne Festival Opera

1983 - Assistant Director. *The Love of Three Oranges, Prokofiev*. Glyndebourne Festival Opera

1983 - Director. *Opera Scenes*. The Wexford Festival, Ireland

1982 - Director. *Il Trittico, Puccini*. Abbey Opera, London

1982 - Director. *The Threepenny Opera, Brecht/Weil*. Opera Viva, London

1982 - Director. *Don Pasquale, Donizetti*. Pavilion Opera Tour

1981 - Director. *Così Fan Tutte, Mozart*. Pavilion Opera Tour

1981 - Director. *The Triumph of Virtue, Scarlatti*. Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London

1980 - Director. *Ariadne auf Naxos, Strauss*. Opera Orfeo, London

1979 - Director. *L'Elisir D'Amore, Donizetti*. Opera Orfeo, London

1979 - Director. *La Serva Padrona, Pergolesi*. Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London

Television/video and audio production credits

1987 - Assistant Stage Director. *The Electrification of the Soviet Union, Osborne*. BBC broadcast

1986 - Assistant Stage Director. *Where the Wild Things Are, Knussen*. TVS broadcast and video release.
UPC#: 032031445192

1986 - Assistant Stage Director. *Higglety Pigglety Pop, Knussen*. TVS broadcast and video release.
UPC#: 032031445192

1985 - Assistant Stage Director. *Albert Herring, Britten*. BBC broadcast and video release.
ASIN: B0009PQWYY

1986 - Assistant Stage Director. *La Traviata, Verdi*. BBC broadcast and video release.
ASIN: B0000541Y0

1985 - Assistant Stage Director. *The Coronation of Poppea, Monteverdi*. TVS broadcast and video release.
ASIN: B00019HP1M

1986 - Stage Director. *Arts Review of the Year*. LWT broadcast.

1982 - Stage Director. *Songs over the Garden Wall*. BBC broadcast

1995 - Stage Director and Dialogue Coach. *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Britten*. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Colin Davis.
ASIN: B0000041ET