



# RUI LONG 瑞龙

## ISB Alumni Newsletter

Vol 3, Issue 2 / Summer 2014

[www.isb.bj.edu.cn/news](http://www.isb.bj.edu.cn/news)

### THE DRAGON NETWORK

Dear ISB Alumni,

We would like to congratulate the ISB class of 2014, and wish them all the best as they head off for further study, a gap year, or even travel. We hope they always stay part of the ISB family.

Our final alumni newsletter of this school year highlights the lives of three amazing alumnae, including an ironman (woman), playwright and a singer/actress. The pages to follow give an insight into the journey they have taken in pursuit of the passion in their lives. As you will read, we also have news of two alumni, Owen Fidler and Sunil Jogi returning to work at ISB in the coming academic year and are delighted to welcome them on board.

Finally, we would like to wish all our alumni a great summer. Stay happy, healthy and safe, and stay in touch!

Mick Green, Mel Ker, and Beth Toole - The ISB Alumni Team

### REUNION EVENTS, WINTER 2014

We have had another fantastic season of reunion events, including get-togethers in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. As always, it has been fantastic to see former students and ISB community members and to build on that keen sense of belonging that all of our Dragon alumni feel. See photographs from the events overleaf.

### THE CLASS OF 2004 TEN-YEAR REUNION

The ten-year reunion for the class of 2004 will be held  
on **Thursday, June 5th** and **Friday, June 6th**.

The reunion dinner will be held **6:30pm to 9:30pm** on **Friday, June 6th** at the  
**Marriott Courtyard Beijing Northeast** on Jingmi Road.

All ISB Alumni are welcome to attend the dinner.

Please contact our Alumni Coordinator Mel Ker via [alumni@isb.bj.edu.cn](mailto:alumni@isb.bj.edu.cn)  
for further details.

We hope to see you there!

# Recent Reunions and Celebrations

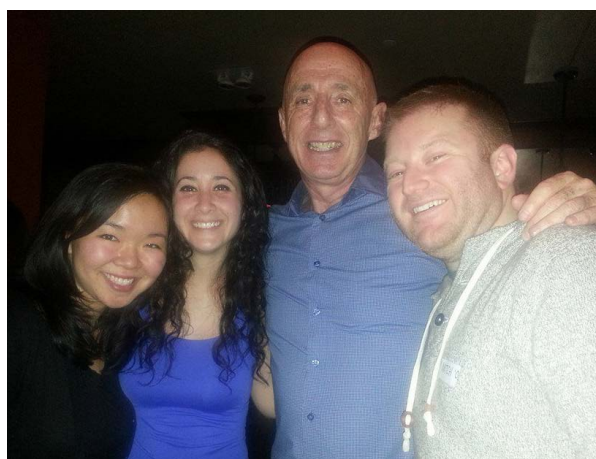
*Alumni Coordinator Mick Green reports on several successful alumni events of the winter of 2014, including school-sponsored gatherings in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles.*

## Dragons, Drawn Together



*ISB alumni from recent years turned out in force in Los Angeles*

In early February, the ISB Alumni Association held events in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. Despite some of the coldest and most severe weather for decades, we had tremendous turnouts in New York and Chicago, as well as in the relative warmth of Los Angeles. In all, we met over 200 alumni in these cities which was quite incredible. I would like to thank Gautam Bahadur, Kristine Cho (New York), Jade Chen, Tiffany Kwong (Chicago) and Julia (Juky) Lin (Los Angeles) for their organization of these events. We are very lucky to have such talented people who remain committed to ISB. We would also like to thank Mel Ker for not only being on hand to support each event, but for her tireless work and attention to detail. Fantastic job Mel!



*Mick with some of our New York-based alumni*



*A group from the Chicago reunion*



## Kate Smith (class of 2005) talks about her strongest memories of ISB

*Mick Green recalls Kate being everywhere in the school; whether it be singing, starring in plays, or being involved in the Model United Nations program. Kate graduated in 2005 after coming to ISB as a sophomore in 2002.*

*Kate recalls her fondest memories of her time at ISB:*

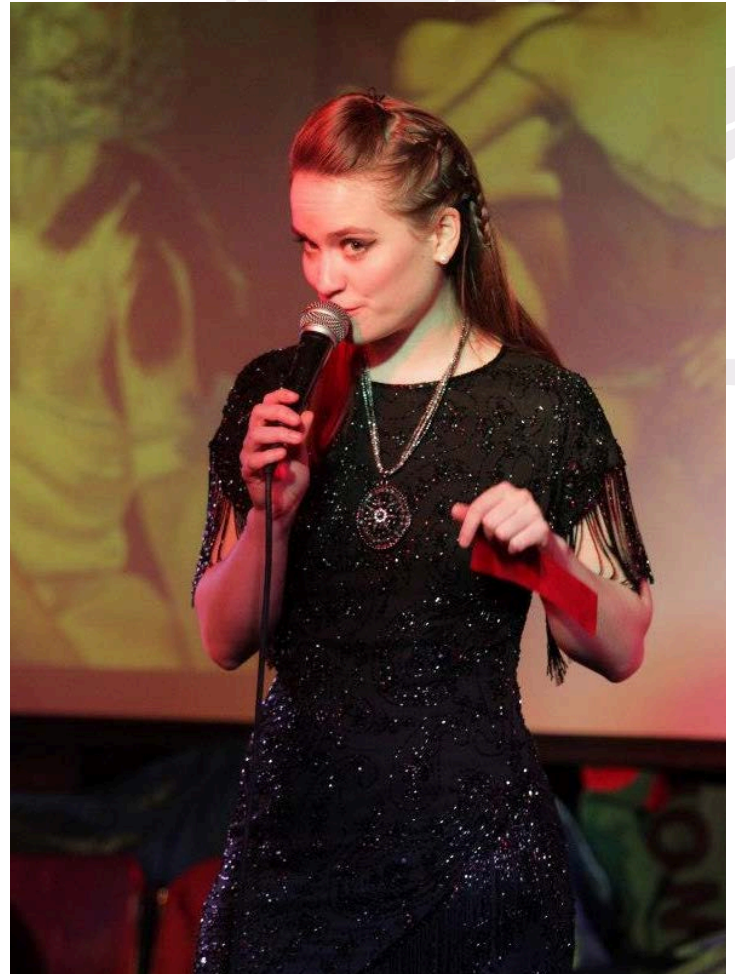
Theater classes with Mr. Randy Moss were always a riot, and never predictable. Practicing Butoh in the black box, improvising with my dearest friend Sam Dickens, IB theater with Fred and Eric. The Wizard of Oz was a great experience since it was my first large role, and also my little puppy Holly's first role. She was only a few months old and we cast her as Toto. I will never forget her pulling on Sonia's big puffy dress during a live performance (Sonia Livdahl played the Good Witch). I also had so many great experiences with my buddies from Impromptune and honor choir with Ms. Haussman. Dressing up as members of a royal court for madrigals one year was fun, but I also loved just being in the choir room singing and rehearsing with my friends. Of course, I enjoyed going on the trips to The Hague for International Honor Choir, goofing around with my roommates. I also was lucky enough to travel lots with Model United Nations. On one trip, I got lost in The Hague and had to hitch hike my way back to my homestay. I remember going out with friends after a conference in Portugal and eating greasy chicken wrapped in brown paper. Beijing was a great place to have interesting experiences and make deep friendships.

*Kate was always a brilliant student and attended Columbia University in New York, graduating magna cum laude in 2009 with a BA in Film Studies, with also a focus on East Asian Studies, and wrote her final thesis on Chinese film. Kate went on to say:*

A lot of my education also came from internships that I did in New York City, as well as all the musical extra-curricula's I was involved in. I had studied as much voice as I could in Beijing, and sang in pretty much every ensemble I could throughout college. I worked in New York for two years in film and advocacy before returning to Beijing to study Mandarin for a year at the Inter-University Program at Tsinghua. I am moving to London in the fall to earn a Masters in Vocal Performance at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

*I know Kate always loved singing and performing but was it her intention to make it a career?*

I have always wanted to be a singer – by which I mean I have always wanted to sing well - but I never thought of it as a career. I grew up with role models in government, academia, the non-profit world and so on, so I always



assumed I would end up having a “real” career in one of those fields. However, as time went by, I have found that singing keeps getting in the way and taking priority. It was not until last year that I realized my work in other fields had always seemed like the side-project, while the pursuit of music and performance has really been my chief motivator and the thing I care about the most. It was not my intention to make music my career but it has come to a point where I have to step up and dive in or give it up, and I am not giving it up. In fact, I feel rather fatalistic about it. I know that the life of a musician is tough and unforgiving and low-paid and that there is almost no chance I will “make it” (whatever that means), but at the moment, I feel as though I have no choice. On the other hand, this is a kind of happy place to be in, as once you have made the decision, you just deal with the circumstances as they come. At the moment I am happy to be focusing completely on what has always felt like my “real job”.

*Most occupations have some form of career path but how do you even get a start in the music industry and how do you improve your skills? Kate had some excellent advice that cross over to many fields:*

What has made the difference for me is other musicians. This is a distinction I have felt keenly in contrast to fields like musical theater where people can be so competitive it brings everyone down. I have found the music world to be incredibly encouraging and collaborative. Making music with other people, talking to them about ideas you have, helping them create something, and vice versa, is an amazing route to personal and musical growth, as well as performance opportunities. It is important to network. What I have done is gone out and met other musicians who I click with. You show them that you are skilled, easy to work with, hard-working, earnest. They will know people, who know people, and you form your band, or your troupe, and then you find a place to perform. This is kind of the metaphor for anything that we manage to accomplish as a community. Everything I have developed into as a musician has been quite organic and self-driven. I was intimidated and confused by the auditioning process in New York and never got into it. Instead I have grown so much through collaborating with other people, and have learned how to be my own advocate and how to be a musical entrepreneur of sorts. In this day and age, I think you really do have to make your own opportunities. At some point you probably do need to go door to door introducing yourself and auditioning but if you always have your own projects and your team behind you, I think you can remain inspired and engaged. It is a tough balance to make music your career and maintain the love for it. There is a dark side to it; the rejection, exhaustion, uncertainty, and loss-of-confidence. I am just beginning to work out how to stay strong and avoid that as much as possible. However, it is good to go in with your eyes open and to have a contingency plan to keep yourself busy with passion projects.

*You are working in a very competitive field. How do you cope with having friends in the same industry who are after the same job as you?*

This can be an issue but it does not bring you down unless you let it. The solution to being surrounded by talented friends: work with them. They are an asset. One problem I have with Beijing right now is that there are lots of great musicians but there are very few in each genre, and of those great musicians there are the types who are more session musicians and other who want to build something. I struggle to find people who fit the different projects I am working on. I am partly leaving Beijing so that I can find a wider array of people to collaborate with. When I get to London I will be beginning a new stage of my musical career. I will be entering a Conservatory where many of my peers will intend to build careers in the traditional institutions and pathways, such as through opera companies, concert halls and so on. The competition for places in these arenas is incredibly tough, and only about 5 percent of musicians graduating with a classical music degree actually are able to make any sort of living at it. I

am approaching it with the mind set of: do your best, you judge yourself against yourself and know your strengths and weaknesses. There will be a lot of rejections ahead and “perceived failures”, but I think that such experiences can either push you to do better, or show you that you should change direction. I intend to be very flexible and constantly be looking for opportunities outside the box.

*What would be your ultimate dream project as a performer?*

Personally, because I come to Conservatory from an odd career background, I have different expectations of my career path than if I had gone to Conservatory right after college. I do not imagine that I will become a professional opera singer. I have too much of a love for and interest in world music and diverse singing techniques. My ultimate goal is to become a top-notch singer who can tackle any genre I set my mind to and produce my own inter-disciplinary projects. I would like to be my own boss, work with musicians I admire and create meaningful artistic experiences for audiences. Even though I am leaving film for a little while, I still love the genre, I love the images and story-telling. Whatever I do in the future will have an element of theater, imagery, sound and words. I can not be more specific than that. As each project arises out of the collaboration of the moment, and I am excited to meet the best London has to offer. One dream of mine would be to travel the world and study different vocal techniques, from Balkan singing to Vietnamese folk singing. Right now, I am diving into American country music and have a new band called Honky Tonk Angels. I am modeling myself on Dolly Parton and I am learning a lot about my voice because of it. In July I will hopefully be putting on a Chinese cabaret of 20's and 30's Shanghai music, which will be a whole new adventure!

*What advice would you like to give our current students and recent graduates that you wish you had received?*

Some lucky people know exactly what they want to do as soon as they are five. The rest of us have to struggle with that question, often for the rest of our careers. When in High School, college, or right out of college, I think perhaps it is easy to get stuck thinking too much about what you want to do with your life, or what your true talent is. Personally, I think that while introspection is important and necessary, it is sometimes better to go out and do. Try lots of things, and do each of them with passion, and see what sticks, or if it points you in a new direction. It has taken me a while to finally settle in and accept that I am probably going to be some iteration of a musician from here on out, but I do not regret my journey. I have tried out a lot of other career fields, and I feel confident that I am now on the right track. There is absolutely no rule that says you have to choose one field in college and stick to it. Change is good. In fact, you can express this well in economic terms. There is a sunk cost fallacy; you think you have put so much effort into one field that you cannot quit now. On the other hand there is an opportunity cost; every hour you put into that sunk cost field is an hour your taking away from something else that could be better for you. There is so much to see and to experience in the world and in ourselves. It is an exciting adventure!



# Mick Green speaks to Shi-Hua (class of 2008) about her Ironman experience

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*Along with her two sisters (Shi-Min and Shi-Ying) Shi-Hua (Hua) started as a student at ISB in 1997, and graduated in 2008. Hua always loved sports and played on various sports teams in every season available, and credits this to enhancing her competitive edge. The term ironman applies to men and women. As Hua explained, 'I believe that it doesn't matter if you're a man or a woman, it's just called "Ironman". Sexist, I know, but that's just how it is.'*

*After leaving ISB, Hua furthered her studies at Boston University. I asked Hua how she then began her post ISB athletic career. Hua had this to say:*

I had friends on the track team who were runners as well and we bonded over that. One of the coaches saw me and asked if I wanted to try out as a "walk-on" (not an athlete who gets a scholarship or is scouted). I turned it down though but I did get back my drive to run. After that, I watched the Boston Marathon and thought it was the coolest thing ever. The next year (2010) I decided to run it as a bandit (not a registered participant). I had never run more than 3 miles before that, and for a week after, I was in agony. That being said, I was hooked on the endurance lifestyle. I ran two more marathons but at the back of my mind I wanted something more. I became obsessed with the idea of the Hawaii Ironman event and started signing up for the races.

*Hua has an intense training regime. Even reading Hua's average day makes me want to rest.*

Basically, I just do what my coach tells me. He understands that I have a job so he tries to structure big days on my weekends and all other workouts around my work hours. That being said, I wake up relatively early (5am-6am) and usually do one to two hours of bike drills: cadence drills, speed work and so on and then I head to work. I am lucky enough to have a gym two minutes from my work so at lunch time I go to the gym and do some strength training. After work, I usually head back to the gym or track for run training; hills, speed work, mile intervals and so on. After that, I head to the pool for about one hour and do the workout my coach has set up for me. Sometimes it is a recovery swim, sometimes it is a hard swim with paddles and resistance. It all depends on the day. Then I eat dinner, usually with Brady my boyfriend. Weekends involve even more training. I am lucky I do not have a family and can be flexible with when I wake up. As long as I have enough hours left in the day to complete my workout, I can wake up whenever I want. When training for an Ironman event, Saturdays are usually big bike days. This means four to six hours in the saddle at a moderate to moderately hard pace. That is usually followed by a 30 minute hard run off the bike - to get the legs used to running after you have been riding for a while. Then I take an ice bath and go about my weekend, doing the usual twenty-something things on the 'to do' list. Sundays are also bike-run days. Usually it is a bike workout and my indoor training which includes recovery heart rate (relatively easy), followed

by 30 minutes of tabatas - 20 seconds sprints with a 10 second recovery period. Then immediately after that, I have a long run: one hour and thirty minutes to two hours and thirty minutes at a moderate pace, ending with thirty to forty-five minutes at a fast pace. Then I take an ice bath and then continue on with my day. Maybe a movie, date night, or whatever I feel like.

*So how does Hua balance her full time job, a social life and this type of training?*

As mentioned before, I have been obsessed with the Hawaii Ironman. That is what keeps me motivated. I just sacrifice the things I need to, in order to get the most out of my training. If that means I party less then so be it, I do not mind. Being an Ironman, it is very normal to spend long hours alone so I am pretty introverted now. If I have to wake up earlier to get in training, I will, and I am fine with that. I am lucky enough that my boyfriend, friends and family understand my passion for the sport and let me do what needs to be done. They have their own lives, I have mine and it works well.

*I asked Hua about the lead up to the San Juan Ironman and the actual race in April of 2014.*

This season, I hired a coach who seems to work really well with me. Our coach-athlete relationship just seems to click. This was also the first race I went into feeling very well prepared. That being said, one week before the race, I strained my IT band and was 'gimping' around for a while. My goals for the 2014 season were to qualify for the Ironman 70.3 World Championships in Mont Tremblant in September, and also the Ironman World Championships in Hawaii. I planned to use San Juan 70.3 to qualify for Mont Tremblant and Cairns to qualify for Kona. That being said, my gimp injury made me question my abilities. Coach and I worked on my swim section a great deal in the winter and my time improved from 57 minutes to 43 minutes. That being said, I was still last out of the water in my age group. As I exited the water I thought, that is alright, I have just got to really go for it in all the other events. I got a new bike (I named him Thor) recently and was excited to break it in. My coach discussed nutrition and pacing on the bike so I made sure to eat every ten minutes - something I tend to forget if I do not set an alarm. I take two Clif bloks every ten minutes, wash it down with Gatorade with added Nuun electrolyte drink in it. I got off the bike feeling good. Not great - it is impossible to feel great after cycling hard for fifty-six miles! The first place competitor had left

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# IRONMAN 70.3

Puerto Rico

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THE ALL STAR ISLAND  
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THE ALL STAR ISLAND

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transition long before me so she was probably a couple of miles down the road. That being said, I ran out of T2 and had a spring in my step. Despite being one of the hardest run courses in the 70.3 circuit, I had managed to hold a steady pace throughout. I gained first place about four miles in and just powered through. I ended up winning my age group by more than 30 minutes and qualified for the 70.3 World Championships.

*You have qualified for the world championship in Mont Tremblant in September. This is amazing achievement. It might be an obvious question but how do you feel about this?*

I am pretty pleased with it. It has given me confidence to know that you do not have to feel awful straight off the bike. I am also feeling a little more confident about Cairns and qualifying for Kona.'

*Tell us about the Cairns (Australia) event and possibly Kona.*

I chose the full Ironman in Cairns as a Kona qualifier because my sister Ying lives in Australia and it is a close trip for my parents to come and see me. Cairns is also

beautiful and I heard it has one of the most spectacular bike courses - 112 miles this time. I am hoping to win my age group in Cairns by doing a sub-11 hour Ironman and therefore qualify for Hawaii. I will just try to soak in the entire experience because who knows when I will be able to be back there.

*Most people have an image of an ironman as a 6 foot + muscle machine. You do not fit that image Hua. Do you get strange looks at events and comments from people when you tell them what you do?*

The triathlon community is great. Most people do not understand it but when you are in it, it feels like a family. Everyone sacrifices and suffers so much to be there that we all respect one another for it. It does not matter what body type you are, the fact that you are there means that everyone will be supportive. Sure, I wish I were taller, that would most likely make me faster on the bike and when running, but what can you do?

*Well said Hua. You are an inspiration to all of us.*

## An interview with Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig (class of 2001)

*Frances attended ISB from Grade 8 to 12. She shares some of her fondest memories of ISB.*

*What are your strongest and also fondest memories of your time at ISB?*

Some of my fondest memories stem from the China Studies experiences, the MUN trips to the Hague and the ISTA (theatre) visit to Hong Kong. Like any other school, ISB has a social hierarchy among the students, with the different clichés of Middle and High School students. Those social divisions seemed to dissolve when we were off campus. I also enjoyed being a young person in Beijing: the Sanlitun night life, going for hotpot and dim sum with friends, and of course bargaining for knock-off clothing. In my junior year I was class president and head of the prom committee. I enjoyed planning and fundraising for the event with my fellow student council members. Going to the Beijing Opera street to have tiaras made for the Fall Formal, working with the hotel to plan the event and taste testing the menu were all things I really enjoyed because of the range of social interactions and amount of creativity required. And of course, the tradition of going to watch the sun rise at Tiananmen after prom night.

*Can you give a brief summary of your education after you left high school?*

After graduating from ISB I went on to gain a BA in Sociology at Brown University (Rhode Island), where I also studied visual art and playwriting. Then I was awarded a certificate in Ensemble Devised Theatre from the Dell'Arte School of Physical Theatre (rural Northern California). After that I took on a three-year fellowship to study creative

writing (and get an MFA) at the Michener Center for Writers at UT Austin, Texas.





### *Did you dream of a career which involved writing?*

I was not passionate about a specific subject in Middle or High School and so focussed my energy on getting into a good college. I have never taken a creative writing class until my first year of college. Fellow ISB alum Mandy Tang ('00), who attended Brown the year before me, had taken a playwriting class and recommended it. It was a 'Research-to-Performance' playwriting class, meaning that you were supposed to do a lot of research before writing the play. My first play was about footbinding in ancient China and one woman's attempt to defy the tradition. I found that I really enjoyed the process of brainstorming, researching, drafting and revising a play – it allowed me to access an open, creative space that I had never inhabited before which felt exciting and freeing. While at college I gained a wide variety of work experience. I took on an internship with Amnesty International and the United Nations Association, I gained work experience at various theatres, I worked as a day care provider, as a tutor, and in food service. I learned that none of the industries offered the (working) life I was looking for. I did not enjoy commuting to work, having a boss, or the work space with its cubicles and florescent lights and all the moving papers around.

Another thing that really transformed the way I thought about my life was that during my first year of college, my younger brother became severely depressed and had to be hospitalized multiple times for suicide attempts. He eventually succeeded in taking his life in my third year of college. Trying to help him, grieving for him, and having my worst fear (his death) come true was a galvanizing experience, one which made me unwilling to pursue anything I did not find meaningful. As one of my theatre teachers said: "the hours of your life are your most precious, non-renewable resource. Be careful what you do with them, because you essentially become what you spend your time doing". With this in mind, I decided that what I was interested in doing, and pursuing was telling stories that revealed worlds and perspectives that hadn't been explored before in theatre.

### *How did you get started as a playwright?*

You are always creating your own jobs by the plays you write and the way you advocate for them. I have a manager and agents who help me with this, and theatre professionals who work in institutions across the country that admire and advocate for my work. However, like most freelance artists I have no regular income, and must constantly apply for grants and fellowships to support myself financially. There is a lot more grant money and support for playwrights in the United States than in other countries, and I was very fortunate to receive some large grants and fellowships that allowed me to pursue writing full time. I have also pursued alternative ways of living, so that I can keep my costs down and can avoid wage slavery and pursue writing full time. For example, I currently live with my partner Brian and dog Delilah in a rural coastal town in Northern California. We rent a commercial office for \$250 a month, sleep in a camper van, and shower at the community pool. This would be considered extreme by a lot of people, but I find

that I flourish in this type of situation, where I have few possessions, a simple routine, and a degree of freedom from traditional economic pressures.

### *You have achieved so much in such a short time. What has been the highlight (or highlights) of your career so far?*

The highlight so far would be working on a show at the National Theatre in London - it was such an empowering and exciting place to do work. It was a great experience to be working in theatre in a country and city where it is really vital and relevant.

### *What would be your ultimate dream project as a playwright?*

What constitutes a dream project for me is the quality of work, the commitment of the producers and the excellence of the artistic team. I am working on a 'dream project' right now, actually – it is called 'The World of Extreme Happiness'. I wrote it a couple years ago to address what I saw as a major hole in the Western theatre landscape. There were no plays about contemporary China that had an all-Asian cast, without a Western outsider/interloper that the audience was supposed to identify with and follow. Two major regional theatres in the US, in New York and Chicago are co-producing the world premiere of the piece. The producers approved my director selection and his designer selections, and we are about to go audition the best Asian American theatre actors in the country. It really is shaping up to be a dream team, and I am very excited to see what we create and share it with audiences. It will run in Chicago in the Fall of 2014 and in the New York Spring 2015.

### *What advice would you give our recent graduates that you wish you had been given at the same stage in your life?*

There is a wonderful essay called "This is Water" by David Foster Wallace which he delivered as a commencement address to students at Kenyon College. It opens with the image of two fish swimming through the water who pass an older fish who says "Morning boys, how's the water?" The younger fish swim along for a bit, then one looks to the other and says "What the hell is water?" There are wonderful experiences and opportunities that come with attending a privileged international school. The quality of teaching is excellent, the opportunity to learn and grow with an abundance of resources is invaluable. However, there are also assumptions that accompany that existence which can challenge a young person's ability to, freely and with a full understanding of their place and context, develop as a human being if those assumptions are just accepted as 'reality' and not questioned and openly interrogated. I really enjoyed the Model United Nations at ISB but wish I was exposed to frames that would have complicated and enriched my understanding of such institutions, such as the dark side of nationalism, patriotism and state-making, as well as the stateless and indigenous people whose ability to self-determine their lives have been greatly hindered by the nation-state frame that we have to accept as our reality. I think it is extremely important to find ways to think about and interrogate what you do and do not see – and what you accept as 'reality.'



# Following in their parents' footsteps

## Sunil Jogi(class of 2008) returns as a Teaching Assistant

*Mick Green catches up with Sunil Jogi, son of long time ISB teachers Mala and Bharat, to talk about his return to work at ISB for the 2014/15 school year.*

*How long did you attend ISB, and in which grades?*

I was a student at ISB for ten years. I started at ISB in Grade 3 in 1998 and I stayed at ISB until I graduated in 2008. It is hard to believe that six years have gone by since I graduated, it has gone by so fast!

*What are your strongest memories from your time spent at ISB as a student?*

I spent most of my childhood and teenage years at ISB so I am very lucky to have had lots of fond memories from my time as an ISB student. I remember the Lido campus, the move to Shunyi, and the many teachers and friends that have come and gone who make up the ISB community. Some of my best memories have been from the various sporting tournaments (APAC, ISAAC and so on) and China experience field trips we were able to go on every year. Those trips gave me so many memories and fun stories to share over the years! I have also noticed how much has changed over time. I remember when there were very few things to do in Shunyi and you had to travel further to get to a decent restaurant or a shop that sold western products. Now, you have a metro station in Shunyi, Pinnacle Plaza, Euro Plaza, Burger King and a 24 hour McDonalds!

*Give a brief summary of what you have done since you have left ISB.*

On leaving ISB, I went to the UK for university and gained my business and management degree from Aston University. As part of my degree I completed a year in industry, working in London in the business environment. I worked as a recruitment consultant for an agency called



“ *I look forward to learning more about ISB from a different point of view and taking on some new challenges along the way.* ”  
– Sunil Jogi

Hays Recruitment. This was a very good experience for me as it taught me a lot about business and sales. After completing my degree, I applied for a gap year teaching assistant job at the British School of Guangzhou where I currently work.

*Explain your new position at ISB for the next academic year.*

Next academic year I will be an Elementary School Teaching Assistant at ISB. I will be supporting the class teacher during the lessons and helping groups of students and individuals with their learning. I will also be providing additional learning support to those students whose first language is not English.

*What are you most looking forward to about working in your old school next year, and what are you apprehensive about, if anything?*

I very much look forward to working with the staff and getting to know them as co-workers instead of seeing them as teachers. I am also keen to see how things look 'behind the scenes'. As a student, I never really knew much about those meetings my mum and dad were always talking about but I am sure I will find out soon enough! I look forward to learning more about ISB from a different point of view and taking on some new challenges along the way.

*How do you feel about returning to ISB when both your parents are still here? What are the advantages you see? Are there any disadvantages?*

It will certainly be different to work at ISB as part of the faculty alongside both my parents, although I am sure I will get used to this very quickly. Both my parents have always worked as teachers at my school, so it will be a familiar feeling having them close by. As they have both been teaching for many years, I am in a lucky position to be able to learn from them and ask for their advice on all things ISB and teaching. In return, I will try to keep them out of trouble. I look forward to returning to ISB and I am sure I will settle in and feel right at home.

# Owen Fidler: Prepares for his return to ISB

*Mick Green catches up with Owen Fidler, son of Jim and Karen. Owen is returning to ISB for the 2014/15 school year to follow in his parents' footsteps.*

*How long did you attend ISB, and in which grades?*

I was a student at ISB in Grade 7, 8, 9; from 2000-2003.

*What are your strongest memories from your time spent at ISB as a student?*

There are many day-to-day memories but moving from the Lido to the Shunyi campus is something that stays with me. There was such a huge difference between the two campuses that it completely changed my experience as a student. I have very strong memories of both campuses. I remember having to put on multiple layers in the winter just to run to the toilet or go between classes. We played soccer on the dirt field and ultimate Frisbee on concrete and I remember going over to the Long Market after school to practice my Chinese. The Lido campus facilities always felt like a bad bricklayer had thrown it together and yet the phenomenal teachers made a brilliant school out of it. The move to Shunyi was significant – we had grass! We looked out of our classrooms to see corn drying on the road in the autumn and I could ride to school. It took years for the new campus to develop the homely feel that the Lido campus had. It has been interesting and satisfying to watch the facilities grow in character over the last ten years.

My time in Beijing catalyzed important life lessons that were not realized until after I left. Creating and maintaining friendships with people who might not be in your life for very long is the most enduring lesson I learned from my time at ISB - a lesson which has impacted the way I create and maintain relationships as an adult.

*Give a brief summary of what you have done since you have left ISB.*

Since I left ISB I have lived in Canada, China, Australia and India. I completed a double bachelor at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, majoring in Social Studies and Outdoor Education. I have worked as an outdoor and rafting guide and taught at four different schools. So far, my classes have ranged from grades 6 to 12, and I have taught PE, English, Social Studies and Outdoor Education. I married the most amazing women in the entire world, which is surely the most significant accomplishment of everything I have done so far!

*Explain your new position at ISB for the next academic year.*

I will be the High School Educational Technology Facilitator. My job will be to listen to teachers in the High School and help them improve their students' learning. Technology will play a role in that – just as it does elsewhere in our lives.

*What are you most looking forward to about working in your old school next year, and what are you apprehensive about, if anything?*

“*Creating and maintaining friendships with people who might not be in your life for very long is the most enduring lesson I learned from my time at ISB - a lesson which has impacted the way I create and maintain relationships as an adult.*”  
– Owen Fidler

My excitement and apprehension is more about my job and less about ISB. I have been in and out of ISB ever since I left; it feels like I am coming home.

In regards to my job, I am more interested in pedagogy than computers, so it is going to be an interesting position for me. I will be fortunate enough to float between departments and I am really excited to see some of the world's best teachers in action. Every teacher has their own style and philosophy and I am looking forward to listening and facilitating growth in their pedagogy - using technology as a way to help them teach in new ways and create more learning opportunities for their students.

*How do you feel about returning to ISB when both your parents are still here? What are the advantages you see? Are there any disadvantages?*

I am super excited about being back in Beijing - my sister and her family are here too! It will be the first time our family has been in the same place for over 16 years. The family support network was a big part of our decision to move back to Beijing instead of elsewhere in the world – Beijing is another home for us.

The Fidler name is well known at ISB and I am sure it will cause some confusion amongst the students with two Mr. Fidlers on campus! My parents have always been superb role models for me and instilled a love for teaching and learning. I hope I too can be an exceptional educator one day!





# Help Us Keep Memories Up to Date

On recent visits to school, alumni have universally been impressed and pleased with the ISB Memory Wall.

Constructed to commemorate the 30th anniversary of ISB's founding, the wall is set out in three columns, each representing a decade of school history. The Memory Wall is not static: All of the photos, news clippings, and stories that are posted now can be exchanged for other interesting artifacts, so that we have a dynamic portrait of our past.

We would welcome your contributions to this tableau. Please send photos or documents to one of the alumni coordinator, [alumni@isb.bj.edu.cn](mailto:alumni@isb.bj.edu.cn).



## Staying Connected with ISB

If you have received this newsletter, then we have your correct email address. This newsletter is published electronically, so please pass it on to other alumni you are in contact with.

If an ISB friend has passed you this information, please make sure to join the Alumni Association!

### Here's what to tell us:

- Your name, current email address, and current mailing address
- Your status at ISB—e.g. student, graduate, parent, staff member
- The years you were at ISB? e.g. 1999-2005
- If you are a student, where you are studying and what degree or major you are pursuing
- If you are working, where you work, what your job title and responsibilities are

### Here's where to send your information:

Send a message via the Alumni-International School of Beijing Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/AlumniISB>

Visit the Alumni page of the ISB Website – this appears under the "Community" drop-down tab

[www.isb.bj.edu.cn/community/Alumni/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.isb.bj.edu.cn/community/Alumni/Pages/default.aspx)

Send an email to our Alumni Coordinators:

[alumni@isb.bj.edu.cn](mailto:alumni@isb.bj.edu.cn)



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