

A music video project is proving a learning experience for all concerned, **Dan Eady** reports.

On the fifth floor of an Otago Polytechnic tower block in Dunedin, a unique and ambitious project is taking place. Led by film lecturer Jon Wilson, from Shine On Films, young film-makers from the polytechnic's School of Design are collaborating with Dunedin-based musicians to create music videos for their songs. Now in its second year, the project aims to generate synergies between up-and-coming film-makers and local bands or composers, providing a platform for both parties to showcase their artistic prowess.

Last year, the project attracted interest from about 30 bands. This time, 25 applications came in and eight were selected for production. The musicians must be Otago-based, and the films cannot be live recordings of gigs, but beyond that the only limit is the imagination.

Last year's collaborations included videos for the songs *Sunflower Scent*, brought to the screen by Ryan Dombroski and Jacob Burnett, and *Place I Want To Be*, by Trelise Wadsworth — both now available online. For Dombroski and Burnett, their work led to real-world collaborations with Dunedin musicians Hot Sauce Club and Leo Lilley through their newly minted production company, Animal House.

Wilson emphasises the importance of giving film-makers the freedom to explore their ideas.

“My intention is that the film-



Students and lecturer, from left, Jordi Evanssen, Ossian Lawne, Jon Wilson, Anna Jokela and Shengyi Gong.

Finding story in songs



A frame from Trelise Wadsworth's video from last year.

maker will meet with the band, get the feeling and thinking behind the track, and then that is where the collaboration ends. I want the film-maker to have complete freedom and not be constrained by the band.”

Despite the creative freedom given to the film-makers, the

students are learning the importance of collaboration and communication, among them Anna Jokela, a Finnish exchange student.

“It was quite relieving when I emailed this person and they were really understanding that it's about my point of view, and

it's my film. Though, I wanted to know 'what were their inspirations for this song? What was the song about for them?', so that I'm not dishonouring them with my film.”

The students are challenged with interpreting and visualising abstract concepts, navigating the importance of feedback and ideas from others, and experimenting with different film-making techniques. Approaches can involve anything from Super 8, to scratch animations, through to the latest Blackmagic Cinema Cameras.

“I'd say, at the start, it was a bit overwhelming, just because, you know, you're flooded with so many different ideas of things you could do,” another of the aspiring film-makers, Connor Moffat, says. “But, yeah, once you pick a certain path and go down that way, then it starts to get a bit easier.”

The importance of appropriate planning and preparation is key.

“Put time in the planning. There is weeks' of planning, going back to the planning. Revising, revising, revising,” Dombroski says.

Yet, the assignment is fuelled by excitement, as the students engage with their projects.

“It was basically a lot trickier than I thought . . . but it was fun,” Shengyi Gong says of his project based on the song, *A Funk Jazz Supreme*, by Downside Up.

Despite the band claiming that their song has no meaning, Gong, together with fellow student Ossian Lawne, came up with a story featuring two pizza delivery guys working at competing pizza chains. The idea was to create a fun and light-hearted story that showcased the band's music authentically.

The project allows the students to gain real-world experience and perhaps spark lasting relationships with local musicians — potentially leaving an indelible mark on the creative landscape of Dunedin.

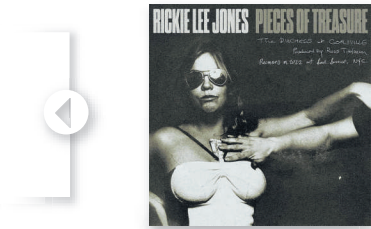
Certainly that was Wadsworth's experience.

“The band used mine, which was cool. Like, put it on their socials and YouTubes, which was cool, we've got a bit of traction, but it wasn't the case for everybody in the class. I guess this was the first client project we did too. So, yeah, it was really different, intimidating but cool to get that experience.”

Music videos enable the creatives to explore different techniques with non-linear narratives, Wilson says.

“They are a rich source of material. It is where I started. It is a great way to learn.”

This year's chosen bands include Hot Sauce Club, Keira Wallace, Europa Kid, Julian Temple, Alpaca Brothers, and Downside Up.



Rickie Lee Jones. *Pieces of Treasure*. ★★★★★

Rickie Lee Jones came on strong with her debut record in 1979, on the back of the hit song *Chuck E's in Love*. She's been in and out of the recording studios ever since, and now, at 68, she's nailed her colours to the mast again with a jazzy new LP called *Pieces of Treasure*. She's scored a couple of Grammys and continues to deliver a sassy and unique mix of jazz-influenced music. This time you'll hear her excellent take on Gershwin's *They can't take that away from me*, putting her own stamp on one of Louis Armstrong's favourites, *On the Sunny Side of the Street*, and Fred Astaire and Johnny Mercer's collaboration *One for my Baby*. Don't expect to hear Jones deliver the American Songbook as a note perfect version of the originals. Instead she makes every song her own

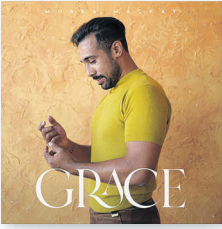
— Tony Nielsen



The National. *First Two Pages of Frankenstein*. ★★★★★

By now you already know where you stand on The National. To some, they're an era-defining rock band. Arriving like the well-dressed and dispossessed uncles of LCD Soundsystem and the Yeah Yeah Yeahs. They added a certain regret-based soulfulness to the big party. To others, The National have been making the same album for 10 years, all in the key of Eeyore. So when it is pointed out that *First Two Pages of Frankenstein* sounds like The National with minor changes you know if you're in or not. The tiny alterations are notable, gone are the glitchy percussive nods of *Sleep Well Beast*, replaced with subtle electronics working at the edges of the tracks. The sprawl of the last album has been swapped for concision. Yet, it's still The National, as stoic and weathered as ever, obsessing over the details of their sadness.

— Cain Lindegreen



Moses MacKay. *Grace*. ★★★★★

With brothers Pene and Amitai Pati, baritone singer Moses MacKay bewitched audiences live and on four memorable albums as Sol3Mio. With their rich Samoan background, and wonderful musical talents, the trio raised the roofs across New Zealand. Now MacKay has released a new solo record *Grace*, featuring songs painstakingly built from the ground up, assisted by world-class musicians and producers in Los Angeles. *Grace* will leave you spellbound as MacKay delivers 10 glorious songs in a style that is genuinely unique. *Avon, Rain A Comin, Embers of Fire, Back to you, Scent of a Woman, Maurice the Cleaner, Farewell of an Irishman, Made my bed (for your Ma)*, and the title track, *Grace*. Moses and the musicians cover breathtaking variations of style and vocal delivery.

— Tony Nielsen

THE CHARTS

Singles

1

Daylight

David Kushner

2

Kill Bill

SZA

3

Last Night

Morgan Wallen

4

Flowers

Miley Cyrus

5

People

Libianca

6

Boy's A Liar Pt. 2

PinkPantheress And Ice Spice

7

Cupid (Twin Version)

Fifty Fifty

8

Die For You (Remix)

The Weeknd And Ariana Grande

9

Calm Down

Rema And Selena Gomez

10

Escapism.

RAYE feat. 070 Shake

Luke Combs

PHOTO: REUTERS

Albums

1

SOS

SZA

2

Midnights

Taylor Swift

3

One Thing At A Time

Morgan Wallen

4

Being Funny In A Foreign Language

The 1975

5

Harry's House

Harry Styles

6

Heroes And Villains

Metro Boomin

7

D-DAY

Agust D

8

72 Seasons

Metallica

9

Drive

Tiësto

10

Gettin' Old

Luke Combs



Suga (Agust D) PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES