



Grand Central Recording Studios is one of London’s renowned award-winning creative sound design and audio post recording companies. We caught up with our Alumnus Tess Ludlow, who got snapped up to work for them the second after she graduated.

So you’ve worked for GC for two years now, how did that journey begin?

When I was studying for my degree, I managed to secure an internship with GC. It was only for one week but I was hooked; I returned five months later to gain more experience. Then, when I was part way through writing my dissertation, I heard about a vacancy there, applied and got the job before I had even graduated.

Employment straight away - that’s the dream...

Yes, I was so pleased. And it meant that I channeled all of my enthusiasm around graduating straight into my new job. It couldn’t have been better.

What’s inspirational about your job?

The people I work with. Their scope of knowledge and experience means that I get to practice what I love on a daily basis, while learning more and more about it - often in unexpected ways. I work on quality control across the spots before they go off to our clients and often the engineers ask us to help out on music searches or literally anything else.

What made you choose to work on shorts, not full length features?

Full feature length productions can take so long to complete and it just doesn't interest me. I love the fast-paced nature of my work; the adrenalin rush of arriving at the studio to be called on by an engineer to turn something around ASAP for a client creates a creative pressure that really gets my juices flowing.

Is it a good kind of pressure that connects the team?

It is a highly pressurised industry in terms of the deadlines, but also the psychology. With an advertising spot you've often only got 30 seconds to two minutes max, to create a story, sell a brand and connect with the viewer. It's a great challenge to work on as part of a team and see it come together.

Did you feel prepared for the workplace after graduating from SAE?

Absolutely. You learn such a wide breadth about sound, I felt as though my knowledge was well-rounded enough to be able to hit the ground running. There was not one area that I did not feel comfortable in.

Were your parents supportive of your choice of a creative career?

Yes, and I'm really grateful for that. They might not always get everything I'm doing or talking about, but they always support me 100%.

Did you foresee a career in post-production after your degree?

No, not at all; it was something that surprised me during my studies. There are so many avenues to go down with a career in sound, and I just got more and more interested in it.

What made you fall in love with GC?

I could see on my internships that everyone was really motivated and passionate. Plus, you can see progression through the company. I knew that even by starting as a runner that I could work hard and grow a good career within the company. A lot of people have been here for years and started off, like me, as a runner.

So working from the ground up is the best option?

Yes, totally. It gives you the best appreciation for how everything comes together. Being a runner for an engineer can be a real challenge; they're working on unique, creative concepts and often they'll suddenly think of something – a new track to be sourced or some random foley [sound effect] – and it's my job to make sure that they get it as quickly as possible to ensure that the

project comes together on time. My time management, research and people skills are constantly improving as a result, as well as my audio knowledge.

What bugs you about the industry generally?

The lack of women in it - it would be nice to have more female perspectives in the mix. There were only four women studying audio with me, out of a full class of around 60. The year before I think there were none.

What do you think will make the number of women in the audio industry rise?

Honestly, I think it's a number of things. From better advertising of the career options at high school, prolific women winning industry awards, to simply getting the message out this is an accessible and exciting industry for both men and women.

Does living in London help your career?

Yes. I see London as a never ending supply of inspiration. I find that the city always pushes me forward with my audio.

How so?

It's such a city of contrasts; there are new sights and most importantly to me, sounds around every corner. I spend a lot of my time exploring and recording new foley outside of work. It's wicked to spend a day capturing sound that way, purely instantaneously.