



Exchange

Autumn 2015

Sharing the skills, knowledge and
experience of working with exhibitions

www.teg.org.uk



Green Tree Python, *Snakes... a slither into a secretive life*,
a touring exhibition by Blue Tokay Ltd (see pages 6-8)

Image courtesy of Blue Tokay

Welcome to the Touring Exhibitions Group's *Exchange* publication.

Exchange is published twice yearly to keep TEG members and associates informed about forthcoming events, membership services and resources and the latest additions to our web site, including a list of titles of TEG members' newly-available exhibitions for hire. In addition, each issue of *Exchange* features a review or case study to help TEG members to share ideas and practical tips on organising, touring and hosting exhibitions. We are keen to hear from any member who would like to contribute to *Exchange* – please email judith@teg.org.uk. You can also download our guidelines for contributors at the *Exchange* webpage in the Publications and Research area at www.teg.org.uk.

Please note that views expressed in articles published in *Exchange* are those of the individual contributor and are not necessarily held by TEG.

Note: In line with TEG's environmental policy aimed at ensuring that our working methods are analysed and developed in a sustainable and environmentally-aware manner, this is the final issue of *Exchange* that will be posted to members in printed format. From 2016, *Exchange* will be distributed via email only.

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Economics of Touring Exhibitions: Models for Practice Programme Update

Over the summer, TEG has been undertaking the research phase of its ACE Resilience Fund and TESS Demountable funded programme *Economics of Touring Exhibitions: Models for Practice*. Thank you to everyone who completed the survey, or contributed a case study to the research; your input has been invaluable and much appreciated. If you are interested to submit a case study, but have not had the opportunity to do so yet, it is not too late, please email charlotte@teg.org.uk for more details.

Over the next two months, Alice Lobb, Professional Development Manager, and I will be shaping the *Economics of Touring Exhibitions* training and online resources that will be the outcome of the research. We will be running a series of 10 seminars around the country from February 2016 – January 2017; two in each ACE region.

The *Economics of Touring Exhibitions* training will be piloted at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery on 4 November 2015, 10.30-16.00. The cost to attend will be £15 for members and £25 for non-members.

The first two *Economics of Touring Exhibitions* seminars can also now be booked:

8 February 2016 – Seven Stories, Newcastle

17 March 2016 – Fashion and Textile Museum, London

The training has been subsidised by our ACE funding, so will be delivered at the very reasonable cost of £25 for members and £35 for non-members, for a full day's training. We are also able to offer a number of travel bursaries to assist attendance.

TEG will be presenting its *Economics of Touring Exhibitions* research at the 2015 MUSCON conference in Barcelona, 30 September – 3 October 2015. The aim of the conference is to promote the exchange of travelling exhibitions and other projects between European, American and Asian museums and galleries. Do let us know if you will be attending. Conference details can be found at: www.design-museum.de/en/

Charlotte Dew, TEG Researcher

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Please visit
the Events page
on the TEG website to
book your place on
these seminars.

A Farewell from Mike

Mike Sixsmith, TEG's long-serving administrator, retired on 31 March 2015. The following is the text of his farewell given at TEG's 2015 Marketplace on 17 April. A longer version, in which he puts down some markers and adds details of a career in touring exhibitions, is available on the website.

I've had a great time working for TEG. I've worked with a lot of wonderful people, and I'm going to miss you all. But I've been here long enough.

I'll give you a couple of examples why I think so. When I arrived in 1995, IT was the new thing, and I was riding the crest of the wave, pushing for things like an online database of exhibitions. Twenty years on, I'm afraid that I just haven't been keeping up with the Joneses – I don't even have a smartphone. Many of the conversations in the Committee, not least about social media, have passed clean over my head. Rather than riding the wave, I now feel that the undertow is dragging me under.

The other example. One of my jobs as administrator had been to minute the meetings of the Executive Committee, but I couldn't keep blaming members for talking in a low voice, or criticising the acoustics of

the room: other people round the table didn't have the same problem, so I have to conclude that my hearing isn't getting any better.

It may be that many of you do not read TEG's Constitution regularly. If, or when you do next, you might be struck by the very slight mention given to what is known as 'the secretariat'. It simply says: 'Functions and responsibilities may be delegated to paid staff where appropriate'. Compare that to the regulation of the members elected to the Executive Committee. Ordinary members need to be re-elected each year, and can only stand for a total of three years. It's slightly better for the Officers who have to stand for re-election every two years, but they are normally allowed only two terms of two years. When drafting the Constitution in 1985, TEG's founding members clearly intended checks and balances to avoid anyone dominating the organisation for long. Ten years later, this order might have been upset when TEG employed me as its first member of staff. If TEG's Constitution wasn't subverted at that point, it might be partly because I was convinced that my job was essentially to provide stability and continuity, in order that the Committee of the day had the freedom to do what it thought best.

Another guiding principle was self-sufficiency. I hoped TEG could stand on its own feet, without relying on regular funding from other organisations. It was crucial to safeguard the ability of the membership to determine policy. Without an external

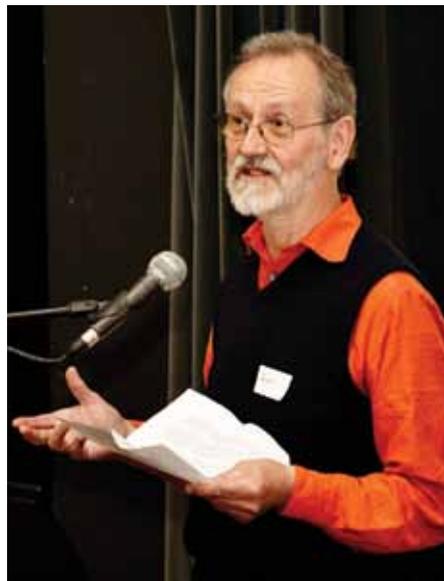
funder to distract it, the Executive Committee kept its focus on the services that it provided its members. And without regular external funding, the secretariat stayed small. And subordinate. I hope it stays that way!

Over 20 years, I have 'embedded' myself in TEG, so I'm now in the process of digging myself out. It's been quite a long process, and the thought and effort has helped to suppress the sadness and regret of leaving an organisation with which I identified myself. Digging myself out has been possible because a very capable replacement was identified and appointed

early on. It makes my departure easier to know that the background management of TEG's affairs is in the very capable hands of Charlotte Dew. I have already briefed her on much of the detail, so I'll restrict myself here to one piece of advice: perhaps not twenty years!

Thank you and goodbye. I hope that TEG and its membership continues to flourish.

And thank you, Mike! Mike takes with him the good wishes of TEG's Committee and membership for a long and happy retirement.



Mike Sixsmith at TEG's 2015 AGM
© Robert W Mason, photography/robertwmason.co.uk

TEG Marketplace 2016 – Save the Date

TEG's Executive Committee is working on exciting plans for our 2016 Marketplace to be held at **Cartwright Hall in Bradford on 12-13 May**. Please ensure you reserve the date. Details of the programme will be available later this year at www.teg.org.uk/marketplace and included in our monthly e-newsletters. If you don't already receive TEG newsletters directly, you can subscribe to our mailing list at the Contacts webpage of www.teg.org.uk.



Delegates at Marketplace 2015 held at Southampton City Art Gallery in April enjoyed opportunities to network and an inspiring programme of talks and tours.
Photos: Robert W Mason



Exhibition case study



Snakes... a slither into a secretive life

Nicola Newton, co-director of Blue Tokay, an exhibitions company specialising in natural history, reveals the process of preparing an exhibition of snake material for tour and describes how it can be adapted in collaboration with hiring venues.

Exhibition overview

As a touring exhibition, the subject matter has to be transferable to many venues and audiences. We considered the concept of *Snakes* very carefully and thought it would appeal to many different socio-economic groups, including schools and the sought-after teenage group.

The exhibition comprises 15 cases of snake material – from taxidermy to models and skeletal material, a suite of interactives and high-quality supporting images. The interpretation is designed to be very accessible. There are QR codes within the graphics that allow us to add more information with the option of tailoring further elements to specific venues if needed.

The exhibition was on display at World Museum Liverpool from September 2014 – February 2015. Here, we adapted our *Snakes... a slither into a secretive life* exhibition in collaboration with National Museums Liverpool to produce *Sssnakes Alive!*

Natural history specimens

The specimens themselves are bespoke pieces which we had prepared by taxidermists. We worked very closely with them to see which available specimens would fit in with the exhibition narrative. We were lucky enough to get some venomous specimens from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, which otherwise we would have struggled to acquire.

Exhibition interactives – the *Discovery Zone*



Interactives

The exhibition as it stands has six interactive elements. We make our interactives as robust as we can to prevent them breaking and having to be constantly repaired while on tour. Since the interactives have to be transportable, we are careful not to make them so robust and heavy duty that they are difficult to move. Our *Discovery Zone* has wheels to allow us to move it.

Images

We work in close collaboration with an amazing photographer who specialises in wildlife images. This relationship allows us to use his images as a fantastic supportive resource. We can add to the selection that we used in Liverpool to expand that element. The photographer is very happy to be involved and supports the whole project.

Exhibition transport and installation

Natural history specimens have their issues for transportation. They can become damaged by packaging material and are often not easily packed into boxes. We overcame this by having individual transportation boxes made for each specimen. This meant that we could stack the specimen crates within a truck and not have to use bubble wrap or tissue paper to cover them. The crates also provide an extra layer of protection against pests and humidity.

Specimen transportation crates



All of our cases are collapsible and are packaged in their own carrying bags. We deliver the whole exhibition and can take away the bags, specimen transportation crates and any other packaging if a venue has limited space for storage. Everything is packed and installed by ourselves and our team. We do require help to install images and wall hangings as they need to comply with a venue's health and safety.

Touring display cases

The cases for *Snakes* are from Framework R&D. They provided us with very high quality but easily transportable cases which click together and have a Perspex lid, with secure locks. The cases are all internally lit, which solves the problem of too few gallery lights, or shadowing from external lights. We designed a graphic panel top that goes inside the Perspex lid. This has text and images to support the specimen. We found this a solution to the damage that external graphic panels sustain with large audience numbers.

Collaboration with National Museums Liverpool (NML)

We needed to extend our original exhibition for NML because their gallery space is much bigger than we originally had in mind at the planning stage. So, we added a section on venom, including three cases of extra specimens and more images. We worked with NML to produce a number of

interactives which wouldn't continue on to tour with our exhibition. We assisted the team to produce a live animal section in the exhibition. We would always allow a venue to do this. Since World Museum does have animal keepers we used their expertise and contacts to develop a live animal section that was bespoke to their exhibition. We made sure that the labels and images complemented our graphics.

Issues that arose from the first hire

The exhibition received over 200,000 visitors and withstood much of the wear and tear. There were issues with the *Discovery Zone* interactive in that the opening and closing of the doors took its toll on the hinges. We have changed all of the hinges for ones that are much stronger. The 25ft drawing of a reticulated python for the *Longest Snake* jigsaw game was remade as the pieces ripped through use. We were very happy with how the exhibition in general stood up to the visitor numbers.

Adaptation to venues

We work closely with any venue to ensure that the exhibition fits the space and works well as an event that audiences will love. For the future, we are considering adding more interactives and images to support the displays. We are happy to add material from a venue's own collections if they keep natural history. We will help a venue to think about suitable extra activities and events while the exhibition is with them. Animal handling is always a big draw for audiences, and we are keen to facilitate that.

Forthcoming venues

Woodhorn Colliery Museum:
February-March 2016

Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens:
July-November 2016

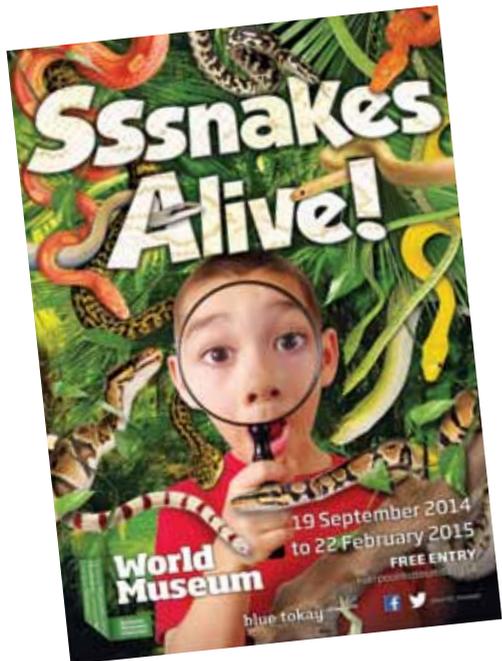
Further information

Blue Tokay Ltd:
<http://www.bluetokay.co.uk>

Snakes promotional video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4KSo5CPHb7Y>

Touring exhibition display cases:
<http://www.framework-rd.co.uk>

Sssnakes Alive! promotional poster,
courtesy of National Museums Liverpool



New Exhibitions for Hire

The following new titles have been added to the Exhibitions search database at www.teg.org.uk between January and July 2015.

TEG members can view full details and send booking enquiries via the web site. To search for exhibitions listed enter the title or select the organiser's name from the drop-down list on the Exhibitions for Hire webpage.

Aberystwyth Arts Centre

- James Morris: Time & Remains
- Olivia Arthur: Jeddah Diary

Arts Catalyst, The

- The Space Tapestry

Ashmolean Museum

- Artists Under Fire
- Beauties and Heroes: Legends and Stories in Chinese Art
- Japanese Ghosts and Demons: Ukiyo-e Prints from the Ashmolean
- Love Bites: Caricatures by James Gillray

Cabaret Mechanical Theatre

- The Mechanical Circus
- The Mechanicals

Camera Voices

- Livingstone's Living Legacy: Football and the Three Cs

Crafts Council

- I Am Here

Craftspace

- Outsider Craft (working title)

Durham University Library

- Books for Boys

Exhibitions for Europe

- Between Life and Death – Rites of Farewell
- The Rainforest
- The Sick Body – Anatomy of Disease
- Strange Bodies – Deformity in Medicine, Art and Society
- Ghenghis Khan



Clockwise from top left:

James Gillray, *The Gout*, 1799, Etching, Hand Coloured, *Love Bites*, Ashmolean Museum © Courtesy of the Warden and Scholars of New College Oxford/Bridgeman Images

Kate Bajic, *Windfall*, *Lichenology*, National Centre for Craft & Design

Armenia: Legend and Reality, Nomad Exhibitions

Caroline Broadhead, *Blue Rainbow*, 1978, *I Am Here*, Crafts Council Collection J98 Photo: Todd-White Art Photography

Kistin Shinoyama, *Chrysanthemum Tattoo*, *Japanese Photography of the 1960s*, Institute for Cultural Exchange

Expositionis Ltd

- Sophia Loren – An Italian Star in the Sky of England

Fashion & Textile Museum

- Artist Textiles – Picasso to Warhol
- POP! Design Culture Fashion
- Riviera Style – Resort & Swimwear since 1900

Gallery A.M.I.

- Breathless Beauty, Broken Beauty

Hayward Touring

- Claude Cahun: Beneath this Mask

House of Illustration

- E H Shepard – An Illustrator's War
- Quentin Blake: Inside Stories

Institute for Cultural Exchange

- Egypt at the Time of Flaubert
- Ferenc Berko – The Discovering Eye
- Leonardo da Vinci – Inventor & Scientist
- WEEGEE – The Famous 1935-60

Leicestershire City Council Museums Service

- Amazing Plants! Exploring the powerful relationships between people and plants

Liz West

- Your Colour Perception

Miranda Leonard

- Making Collaborations

Mogul Image

- Of Our Times: The Price of Money

Nancy Honey

- 100 Leading Ladies

National Centre for Craft & Design

- Alexis Rago: Chaos Contained
- Kate Bajic: Lichenology

National Coal Mining Museum for England

- Aria of Canaries – Flight of the Mining Canary
- The Craft of the Miner, Agricolos Masterpiece

Nomad Exhibitions

- Armenia: Legend and Reality
- Ghengis: Rise of the Mongol Khans
- Tombs of the Liao Dynasty: Secrets of the Afterlife

Quilt Art

- Small Talk

Renée Pfister Art & Gallery Consultancy

- Celebrating Figuration & Abstraction

Royal Shakespeare Company

- Tom Hunter: A Midsummer Night's Dream

School of Art Aberystwyth

- Contemporary Chinese Printmaking

Science Museum

- 3D: Printing the Future (Blueprint Pack)

Southend Museums Service

- Beauty and the Beach

V&A Museum of Childhood

- Game Plan: 500 Years of Board Games

William Heath Robinson Trust, The

- Heath Robinson – Saved for the Nation

Members' news

Made in the Middle

Craftspace is now developing the eighth in the series of their cyclical exhibition *Made in the Middle*, an inter-regional (East and West Midlands), open selling exhibition of contemporary craft which will tour nationally. Makers based in or strongly affiliated to the Midlands region will be selected by a panel of curators and craft sector specialists.

Developed with The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum in Coventry (the launch venue) and the National Centre for Craft and Design in Sleaford, the next exhibition will launch in December 2016 to tie in with Craftspace's 30th anniversary celebrations. In addition to reflecting the current contemporary craft sector, it will continue exploring the growing use of digital technologies and processes within making, alongside more traditional methods.

For further information on this exhibition series, tour details and availability between July 2017 and July 2018, please visit www.craftspace.co.uk

Picturing England: the photographic collections of Historic England Mike Evans, Gary Winter, Anne Woodward

Coming this autumn – *Picturing England* – a new touring exhibition from Historic England that supports a publication of the same name. The book – out now – features over 300 stunning images that illustrate the changing appearance of England's buildings, landscapes and people from the 1850s to the present day.

For further details of the forthcoming exhibition, contact Anne Woodward via Exhibitions>Members Search at www.teg.org.uk.

The book, published by Historic England (previously English Heritage), is available at HistoricEngland.org.uk/publications/ordering



Clockwise from top left:

Ghengis Khan, Exhibitions for Europe

Aleksandra Mir, Halley, Detail from the Bayeux Tapestry, 1066, *The Space Tapestry*, The Arts Catalyst

Gernot Kissel, The Blond, 1999, Oil on canvas, *Celebrating Figuration & Abstraction*, Renée Pfister Art & Gallery Consultancy

Elephant and Castle, *500 Years of Board Games*, V&A Museum of Childhood

Claude Cahun, Untitled © 1928 Courtesy Jersey Heritage, *Beneath This Mask*, Hayward Touring

How to contact TEG

The Touring Exhibitions Group is an independent membership network of galleries, museums, libraries, art and science centres and other organisations and individuals committed to exchanging exhibitions as a means of sharing ideas, materials and resources. We aim to promote professional standards and consistent practice and to encourage exhibition touring as widely as possible in order to extend public awareness, knowledge and enjoyment of historical and contemporary culture.

For full details about TEG membership benefits and to join online, please visit the Join webpage at www.teg.org.uk. For a complete list of TEG's Executive Committee members, see the Contacts webpage.

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Design www.ninepoint.co.uk



TEG's professional development programme is supported by

TESSDEMOUNTABLE

TEG's *Economics of Touring* programme is supported by



Exchange is distributed with assistance from

