

Exchange

Autumn 2010

Sharing the skills, knowledge and
experience of working with exhibitions
www.teg.org.uk



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.

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

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Johnny White, *BSE Minotaur*, kinetic sculpture, from *Beastly Machines*, a 20-21 Visual Arts Centre touring exhibition

TEG Seminar Programme 2010-11

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of TESS Demountable we are able to continue our successful seminar programme into 2010 and 2011. The seminar manager, Paddy McNulty, was appointed in February and has spent the intervening months carrying out research into what members would like the seminar programme to focus on. We'd like to say thank you to all our members who were able to respond to the online survey – the information we received has been invaluable in our seminar planning. You provided us with some excellent seminar themes and have helped us to timetable the seminar programme to best suit your needs for dates and locations.

In response to the replies an outline programme of three seminars has been agreed upon for 2010/11:

Seminar theme	Duration	Date	Location
Promoting Touring Exhibitions	Full day	October 2010	Birmingham
Partnerships and Collaborative Working	Full day	May 2011	Bristol
International touring	Half day, as part of Marketplace event	March 2011	London

Promoting Touring Exhibitions will provide delegates with an introduction to marketing techniques and strategies, looking at how one can identify key target audiences and deliver your product to them. The day will explore both how to promote exhibitions for hire and also how to market the hired exhibition to the general public in the host venue. Consisting of a mixture of practical advice and case studies from large and small organisations, it will be an excellent opportunity to discover new marketing skills, brush up on your existing ones, and network with other people and organisations in the touring exhibitions world. The seminar will take place in Birmingham towards the end of October 2010.

Partnership and Collaborative Working will examine how working in partnership with other organisations and groups can bring benefits to exhibition development and help engage communities and new audiences. In addition, in these difficult times organisations can provide extra value by working collaboratively, helping to share cost and resources whilst still delivering successful exhibitions. We hope to secure a venue in the Bristol area for May 2011.

Our half day seminar on **International Touring Exhibitions** will provide an introduction to those wanting to learn about the international market, or thinking about entering it. More details will be available when the Marketplace has been announced.

To book a place or for more information on the seminars please visit the TEG website; information will also be emailed direct to members. If you would like to be involved in any of the seminars, or have any ideas or comments please email Paddy McNulty at seminars@teg.org.uk.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Review

“Don’t Ask for the Mona Lisa”:

Exhibitions Collaborations between Academics and Art Galleries, organised by the Museums and Exhibitions Group of the Association of Art Historians

Mike Sixsmith reports on a seminar and a new set of guidelines aimed at helping academics and galleries to work in partnership.

Sheer chance, rather than careful planning, located this seminar in the same city and on the day before our Marketplace at Leeds Museum on 19th March 2010, and some of our delegates turned up the day before to see what they might learn. On their side, the organisers – the Museums and Exhibitions Group of the Association of Art Historians (AAH) – expressed pleasure and surprise that they had, for once, a good balance between curators and academics.

The main body of the seminar itself consisted of a series of case studies, each one a double-act of academic and curator who shared their experiences of working together. Although these case studies appear to have been positive experiences – and each pair of collaborators certainly behaved politely to each other – there were sub-texts of friction and disappointed expectations.

One sub-text – represented by the title of the seminar – was that, whereas a book could reproduce almost any work of art anywhere in the world, the viability of an exhibition depended on what owners were prepared to lend and what exhibition budgets could afford to ship in (and out again). Another sub-text was that

academics might see the exhibition only as a pretext for a book – and might then be disappointed by what a gallery could afford (“All they are after is an ISBN” was one curator’s frustrated comment).

On the other hand, speakers who had collaborated with galleries on a number of occasions, had been excited, even exhilarated, by access to an audience larger, more various and vastly different from the small peer group which read the learned journals, even if adjusting their writing style for a reading age of eight years was a challenge.

To try to meet unrealistic expectations head-on, and to prepare academics for an activity very different from academic publications, AAH’s Museums and Exhibitions Group is putting together a set of guidelines aimed at academics who wish to collaborate with a museum or gallery in putting on an exhibition. The questions which accompanied the papers on 18 March give an idea of what such guidelines will cover:

- Can particular academic research projects influence exhibition planning?
- Who contacts who: the researcher or the gallery and who has the initial concept? Should the aim be to fit into a wider set of themes proposed by the Gallery in its programme planning?
- How do you prepare the proposal: should it consist of a written proposal or a formal presentation?
- Should you use illustrations and suggestions for exhibits as part of your proposal?
- Do the gallery and the researcher develop their own views of how the exhibition might look, or is this the role of a designer at a later stage?
- Does the proposal have to progress through several stages before it is finally accepted?
- How long does this process take?
- How long does it take from having the proposal to the opening of the exhibition? At what stage do you agree the allocation of responsibilities between the curator and the researcher for producing the exhibition?
- How much is the average overall budget for producing an exhibition?
- What are the benefits/limitations/problems of working in collaboration with researchers from outside of the gallery?

All this begs the question whether curators, on their side, might also benefit from guidance on how to respond to a pitch which might initially be too academic in its approach or unrealistic in expectations.

In their chapters in TEG’s on-line Handbook, Judith Kelly (Funding) and Matthew Shaul (University Galleries) touch on some of the reasons for patience and understanding, and the seminar at Leeds underlined just how large could be the research budgets funded by grants from the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

Such grants are generally limited to the direct costs of research, but AHRC’s Knowledge Transfer Partnership scheme does allow some funding to be put into exhibitions, in the form of funding events, internships for planning and research, etc. These schemes are currently under-subscribed and relatively straightforward to apply for, but the applications have to be generated by the academic institution.

Some of these grants are in six figures, easily exceeding the exhibition budgets of all but the very largest galleries. However, as the very first speakers underlined, the Bowes Museum and Harewood House individually may not have been able to afford an exhibition devoted to Cotman in the North, but together and working in partnership with the University of Leeds, they were able to pull it off.

Which brings us back to touring exhibitions, but perhaps with a conclusion that professional groups like AAH and TEG really cannot afford to plough their own furrows without regard to those working in the adjacent strips. Deliberately timing events on consecutive days, as happened by chance in Leeds in mid-March, allows different networks to overlap, opens up new possibilities and offers unforeseen opportunities.

REVIEW

Case Study

20-21 Visual Arts Centre's Handy Hints for Organising Touring Exhibitions

Janine Parrish, Visual Arts Officer at 20-21 Visual Arts Centre in Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, offers practical tips on touring for new exhibition organisers.

About 20-21

20-21 Visual Arts Centre opened in 2001 following a £1.6 million refurbishment and extension to St John's, a derelict late Victorian church situated on the outskirts of Scunthorpe town centre. The gallery organises approximately 20 contemporary art and craft exhibitions per year which it shows in its four indoor and one outdoor gallery spaces.

The idea to tour our shows came about when the curator of another venue visited our Inside Art exhibition. This show was aimed at schools and explained various aspects of the practise and process of producing artworks. The curator, seeing the educational potential of the show, asked if it would be possible to borrow it when it finished at 20-21. The same curator then saw our Art with a Pulse tattoo exhibition and asked to hire this one too. Through word of mouth alone, this show went on to tour to four subsequent venues, and our touring exhibitions programme was born.

Over the last nine years we have toured seven exhibitions to 36 venues around the country. In 2009, as acknowledgement of the success of the touring side of our work, Arts Council England agreed to fund a part time Touring Exhibition Officer post for three years and we now currently have eight touring exhibitions on offer.

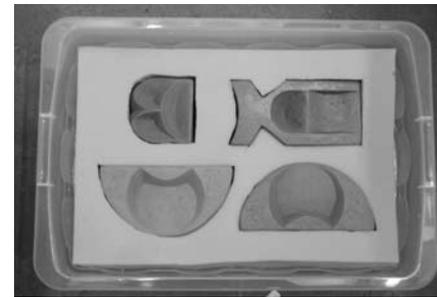
Planning hints and tips

The benefits of touring exhibitions are many and varied but beware! Whilst they have the potential to generate income for you, they could also cost you money too. Some of our shows have proved to be more successful than others and here are some practical hints and suggestions if you are considering touring an exhibition:

- **Concept:** Think about why another venue might want to hire your show. What makes your show special? Is it aimed at a specific target audience? Are there themes within the show that would appeal to venues in specific geographical locations? Our *A Month of Sundays* exhibition of paintings by Pete McKee, with their holiday themes, has proved to be very successful with seaside venues and has been shown in Cleethorpes, Great Yarmouth and is due to tour to Scarborough next year.
- **Size:** Is your exhibition flexible? Venues come in all different shapes and sizes. Will the integrity of your exhibition be compromised if you have to omit several key pieces of work for it to fit into a different gallery?
- **Content:** Make sure that all the work in the show will be available for the duration of its tour, especially pieces that are featured in publicity shots or the exhibition's catalogue. When working with artists, make sure that

they are aware of the potential length of time that they could be without their work and draw up a touring exhibitions contract with them to make this clear. If using objects from your own collection, make sure they are robust enough to withstand being unpacked, displayed and packed numerous times.

- **Packaging:** Make packaging as simple and as straightforward as possible, so that exhibits require the minimum amount of handling. Wrapping ceramics in copious amounts of packaging material may protect work whilst in transit but it increases the chance of work being damaged when attempts are made to extricate it from 20 layers of bubble wrap. To further assist with unpacking, include a picture of the work on the outside of the packaging, along with an indication of the number of separate pieces contained within.



Halima Cassell, *Manitou*, packaged work



Manitou on display in the Dreams Made Manifest exhibition

- **Storing packaging:** If boxing the work, think about where a hiring venue will store these boxes whilst the exhibition is on show. Most museums and galleries have very little temporary storage space. Can the empty storage boxes be stacked inside each other or will they fold flat to reduce the amount of storage space required?
- **Storing the exhibition:** Another potential cost is storage if there is a gap in the tour schedule. Do you have enough space in your own venue to store the exhibition or will you have to hire storage space?
- **Transport:** The transportation of work is also an important consideration. Will your touring exhibition fit into the back of a transit or Luton van or will you require a nine ton truck and a driver with a special license to drive it? Is the work so heavy that you will require a van with a tail lift? Are exhibits so fragile that they will require specialist transportation and handling? All of these issues can dramatically increase costs.
- **Delivery to venues:** When delivering an exhibition, don't forget to ask in advance if there are any parking or access issues that you should know about. If the gallery is on the second floor, does it have a lift? Will there be staff on hand to help unload and carry the exhibition?

Further advice

For further information about organising touring exhibitions, TEG's Handbook, an online guide to organising and managing exhibitions, is available for members to download from the Resources area of the website; www.teg.org.uk.

If you would like further information about any of 20-21's touring exhibitions, please email janine.parrish@northlincs.gov.uk or call 01724 297076 (Monday to Wednesday).

New Exhibitions for Hire

The following new titles have been added to the Exhibitions search at www.teg.org.uk (Resources area) between January and mid-July 2010.

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 webpage.



20-21 Visual Arts Centre, North Lincolnshire Council

- Paola McClure – Textiles, Sculptures
- Tales from the Sock Drawer
- Art with a Pulse II – Tattoo Exhibitionism from Side Show to Gallery
- Beastly Machines – Kinetic Sculptures by Johnny White
- The Art of Play

Alexis Rago

- An Artificial Natural History

Alison Milner

- More Than Floral

Andrew Morley (Street Jewellery Society)

- So Near & Yet So Far

Autograph ABP

- Not Natasha

Barbara Downs

- The Colour of Time

Barbican International Enterprises

- Howard Hodgkin – Prints
- RRRIPPI!! Paper Fashion

Ben Uri Gallery

- Auktion 392: Reclaiming the Galerie Stern, Dusseldorf
- Forced Journeys: Artists in Exile in Britain c.1933-45
- Robert Lenkiewicz, Self Portraits 1956-2002
- Schmatte Couture
- Portraits of a “Licensed Hetic”
- Rediscovering Wolmark

Brent Museum

- Ernest Trobridge: Visionary of the Suburbs

Bridging Arts

- Stitch

Ceramics Collection, Aberystwyth University

- Animal Fantasies
- Sensational Ceramics
- Taking Tea

Chinese Arts Centre

- Lanwei/ Decaying End

The Civic

- A Personal Collection – Vivienne Westwood Shoes

Crafts Council

- CraftCubes
- Digital Craft
- Hot Glass

Denbighshire Arts Service

- Tim Pugh – Environmental Artist

DLI Museum & Durham Art Gallery

- Juliet Chenery-Robson: A Diagnosis of Exclusion

Edinburgh Printmakers

- Graeme Todd
- Chad McCaill

English Heritage (National Monuments Record)

- John Gay: England Observed

Clockwise from top left:

Blackpool Beach, from John Gay: England Observed, © English Heritage, NMR

Michael Eden, The Wedgwoodnt Tureen (tall pink), 2010, from Craftcubes, Crafts Council. Photo: Adrian Sassoon, London

Art with a Pulse II – Tattoo Exhibitionism from Side Show to Gallery, 20-21 Visual Arts Centre © Tony Jones

Amelia's Kingdom, from Juliet Chenery-Robson: A Diagnosis of Exclusion, DLI Museum & Durham Art Gallery. Courtesy of the artist

Chad McCaill, The Competitive Reflex, 2008, Edinburgh Printmakers

for Hire

New Exhibitions for Hire *continued*

Emma Warren

- The 1950s: Having It So Good

Fashion & Textile Museum

- Horrockses Fashions: Off the Peg Style in the 40s and 50s

Flow Gallery

- Still Life from Flanders

Gallery Oldham

- Liam Spencer – Painting from Life

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum

- Secret Egypt: Unravelling truth from myth

Impressions Gallery

- Cockroach Diary & other stories by Anna Fox
- Front & Other Works by Trish Morrissey
- Hand to Mouth
- Sharpe's Wood by Liza Dracup
- Ultima Thule by Stephen Vaughan

Miranda Leonard

- Shelter

National Coal Mining Museum for England

- Northern Soul – John Bulmer's images of life and times in the 1960s

National Media Museum

- The British Landscape
- Lives of the Great Photographers
- The Art of Arrangements: Still Life and the Photographic Tradition
- Simon Roberts: We English

National Museums Liverpool

- Hitched; Wedding Clothes and Customs

Natural History Museum

- Dinosaur Encounter
- T.rex: The Killer Question
- Ice Station Antarctica

Pop-Up Exhibitions Ltd

- Way of the Warrior: Epic Movie Arms & Armour

[re]design

- Doing It For The Kids: The Sustainable Toy Story
- Away?
- Lighten Up: Switched On Lighting Design
- Sit Up: Sustainable Seating Stories

RIBA Gallery

- Open: Poland – Architecture and Identity

Rugby Art Gallery and Museum

- The Uses of Drawing

Scottish Mask & Puppet Centre

- The Magic of Masks and Puppets

Start in Manchester

- Held

Text + Work

- A Short Grand Tour

Waterside Arts Centre

- Almost There by Joe Simpson

Wilhelmina Barns-Graham Trust

- A Discipline of the Mind: The Drawings of Wilhelmina Barns-Graham

York Museums Trust

- Gordon Baldwin

Zoe Barker

- Relative Spaces: Documenting the Transformation of a Home



Clockwise from top left:

Northern Soul – John Bulmer's images of life and times in the 1960s, National Coal Mining Museum for England, © John Bulmer

Shepherd, Bargau Mountains, Romania, 2006 from Hand to Mouth, Impressions Gallery, © Tessa Bunney

Triceratops from Dinosaur Encounter, Natural History Museum

Tony Ray-Jones (1941-1972), Auto Show, Daytona, 1965, from Lives of the Great Photographers, National Media Museum

AWAY? exhibition at City of London Festival 2009, [re]design

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 Membership area of www.teg.org.uk. For a complete list of TEG's Executive Committee members, see the Contacts webpage.

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Cover images (clockwise from top left)

Pete McKee, 40 Winks Too Many, from A Month of Sundays exhibition 20-21 Visual Arts Centre

Hermann Fechenbach, Lenin, Woodcut on paper, from Forced Journeys; Artists in Exile in Britain c.1933-45, Ben Uri Gallery

Dreams Made Manifest exhibition at the 20-21 Visual Arts Centre

Hayley Coles, June 17th 2006, from Front & Other Works by Trish Morrissey, Impressions Gallery

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TESSDEMOUNTABLE