



Exchange

Autumn 2014

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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Case studies

As *Exchange* goes to print, the searchable online database at www.teg.org.uk contains details of 250 diverse exhibitions available for hire from TEG members, in subject areas ranging from the visual arts and craft to humanities, natural history and science. In this issue of *Exchange*, TEG takes a closer look at two different exhibitions exploring the themes of history and archaeology.

- Following the opening of ***Ming: The Golden Empire*** at the National Museum of Scotland in June, Manon Delaury, Director of International Partnerships at Nomad Exhibitions, outlines the high level of partnership interaction essential to the success of touring treasures internationally.
- ***Way of the Warrior: Epic Movie Arms and Armour***, an exhibition that blends popular culture with history, has toured to eight UK venues to date. As the exhibition approaches its 100,000th visitor, Barry Chandler, Director of Pop-Up Exhibitions Ltd, reviews the keys to its audience appeal.

New Exhibitions for Hire: The latest titles added to the searchable database at www.teg.org.uk

How to contact TEG



Xu Bing, *Landscape 1 (detail)*, 2013, © Xu Bing Studio, *Landscape Landscript*, Ashmolean Museum

TEG's

Professional Development Programme

- There are two courses on offer in 2014.
- They are both open to members and non-members.

The **Principles of Touring** course introduces the principles and practices of touring exhibitions. The session is aimed at people who are new to touring exhibition work and want to develop their knowledge.

The **Beginning to Tour** course is aimed at people who want to start producing their own touring exhibitions and provides basic level skills and knowledge for producing touring programmes.

Both courses encourage active learning by sharing up-to-date examples of best practice and creating practical resources. Delivered by trainers with a wide range of experience of working in the sector, the seminars are also an opportunity to meet other professionals or students interested in touring exhibition work.

The spring 2014 series of professional development seminars was very popular and so we are now programming new dates.

The next **Beginning to Tour seminar will take place at the Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh on Monday 8 September 2014 from 10:30 to 16:30.**

The cost of this day seminar is £40 for TEG members and £60 for non-members.

TEG aims to make training opportunities affordable by keeping travel costs low. This seminar will be open to delegates living in the local region first; it will then be opened up to all, subject to availability of places. If you are interested in attending please email seminars@teg.org.uk.

The two courses can be booked as one full-day or a half-day session or as individual modules, and the details of the modules can be found on the professional development page of TEG's website, www.teg.org.uk. If you are interested in booking a future date for a seminar in your region, have a venue that could be used for training or would like to discuss specific training needs please email seminars@teg.org.uk.

TEG's professional development programme is sponsored by TESS Demountable

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Exhibition case study

Ming: The Golden Empire

Touring Treasures: Collections from China on an international tour

Manon Delaury, Director of International Partnerships at Nomad Exhibitions, provides an insight into the challenges of international touring through an exhibition that brings the treasures of the Ming dynasty to Europe.

Background to the exhibition

Ming: The Golden Empire presents an extraordinary rediscovery of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), one of the greatest empires in Chinese history. Developed with exceptional collections from Nanjing Museum, one of China's largest museums, the exhibition invites visitors to explore the dynasty's major artistic, architectural, political and social achievements that have marked the Ming era as the Golden Empire of ancient China. The exhibition opened at the National Museums of Scotland in June following a successful run at De Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam last winter.

The creation and touring of this unique exhibition raised unique challenges for its

creators at Nomad Exhibitions. Nomad is a UK-based organisation specialising in touring exhibitions designed to 'build bridges between cultures' through fostering international cultural exchanges.

Touring treasures

The *Ming* exhibition features remarkable original artefacts from the outstanding imperial collections held by Nanjing Museum. Imperial porcelain and cloisonné, traditional paintings and calligraphy by some of the foremost Ming masters of the art, elaborate jewellery and refined textiles and embroidery are presented, providing unprecedented access to unique cultural relics. The selection includes an exceptional number of national treasures, many of which have never toured outside China.

Strong partnerships

A very high level of partnership interaction is essential for the success of such a touring exhibition featuring highly culturally-significant and valuable collections:

- Firstly, with the lenders, with whom content is created through a creative and collaborative process that gives a central role to the curators of the lending institution. In turn, the curators provide the project with the best expertise for the selection of artefacts and with strong scientific input regarding their collections. They also accompany collections all along their journey.
- Secondly, with the hosts, who are involved from the early stages of development in the collaborative process of creating a tailored exhibition for their venue.
- Thirdly, with all the key members of the wider production team involved with the exhibition, with careful selection of experts in logistics, transportation and insurance alongside Nomad's team of display designers, project and collection managers, to ensure access to the best skills, resources and experience of international specialists.

Long-term established partnerships with all these stakeholders, combined with a detailed understanding of international cultural interactions, contributes to the production of a high-profile and comprehensive touring exhibition.

Care and planning

The touring of such valuable artefacts and national treasures requires the utmost care and expertise, with the continuous involvement of the curators and conservators of the lender institution. For the touring of the Ming collections, particular attention was given to the care of artefacts during transportation and

installation, with strict review of the climate and security conditions provided at all times during the tour and display periods at both venues. A detailed process of project planning, risk assessment and monitoring, together with in-depth knowledge of institutional and legal frameworks, enabled a safe and successful tour for the Ming treasures.

Each show is unique

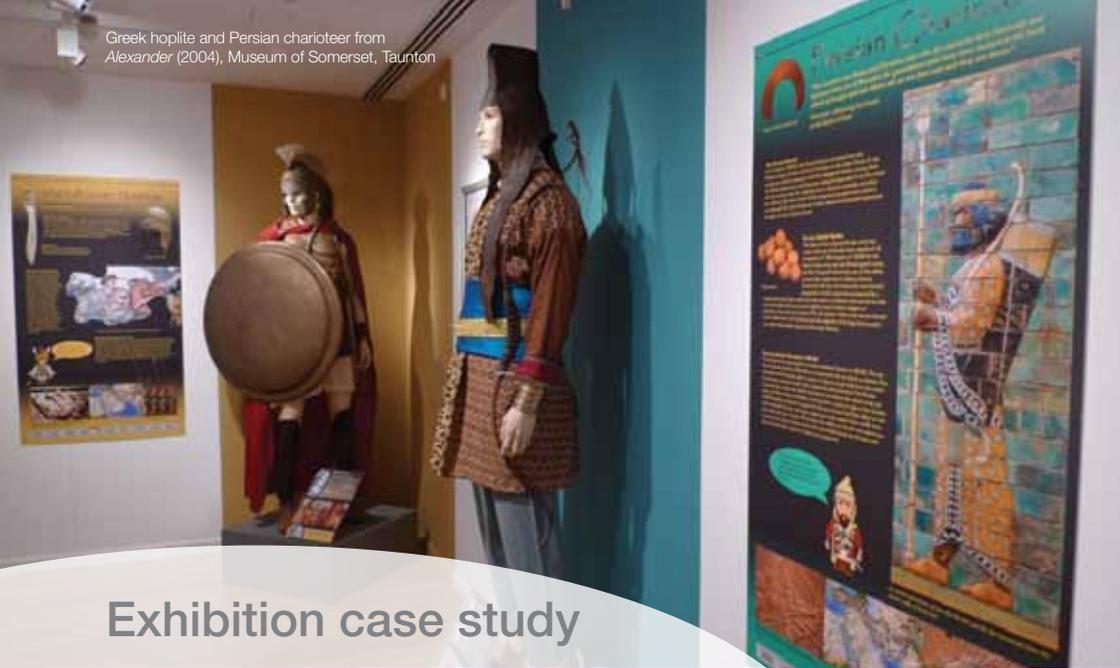
Another important aspect for the success of a touring exhibition such as *Ming: The Golden Empire*, is the ability to adapt the exhibition for each hosting venue and avoid the proposition of a standard show to all partners. Local audiences, unique exhibition spaces, exhibition presentation philosophies and curatorial approaches are different for each museum and cultural venue worldwide. Providing access to the Ming collections to a diverse public and in a variety of space configurations, whilst offering a very tailored service to the hosts, is a central mission of Nomad Exhibitions. Also allowing the possibility for the hosting team to be involved in content development and the shaping of their own vision of the exhibition, along with the opportunity to integrate local collections in the interpretation.

Tour schedule

Ming: The Golden Empire will be on show at the National Museum of Scotland until 19 October 2014. Following its successful first tour, the exhibition will be proposed for a new tour in 2016-2018, featuring the beautiful collections of Nanjing Museum and providing a memorable and unique journey through Ming art, commerce, history and creativity.

Further information

Exhibitions for hire at www.teg.org.uk
www.nms.ac.uk
www.nomadexhibitions.com



Exhibition case study

Way of the Warrior

Epic Movie Arms and Armour

Barry Chandler, Director of Pop-Up Exhibitions Ltd, reveals how a touring exhibition that blends pop culture with history and archaeology has succeeded in attracting new visitors to venues, with some unexpected results.

Inspiration behind the exhibition

It was the desire of Pop-Up Exhibitions to create the sort of shows we desperately wanted to see but were not being made. Our tag line is 'where popular culture and history meet' and this is our aim: to blend pop culture and historical subjects to promote history, archaeology and ethnography in new and exciting ways. *Way of the Warrior: Epic Movie Arms and Armour* was our first attempt to create a visually inspiring show. It contains a collection of screen-used arms, armour and costumes from some of the largest historically-based productions of the last 20 years including, *Gladiator* (2000), *The*

Last Samurai (2003), and *Saving Private Ryan* (1998). The focus of the exhibition was to use carefully curated screen-used costumes to show the chronological development of arms and armour from Ancient Greece to the modern era, while expanding on the history and archaeology behind the films. The selected pieces would allow us to compare them with historical sources and known artefacts. The films would also provide the hook for us to interpret the true stories that influenced the famous battles depicted and to explore the motivations of warriors through time. We decided to add to this with a range of interactive objects to reinforce the educational content and physical experience.

Exhibition style and design

Way of the Warrior was created in an entirely modular way and can be broken down into eras, suitable for small venues with very limited space, or expanded for showings in galleries of over 300 square metres. We aimed to create a blockbuster in style that was potentially affordable to any size of venue. It comes complete with all mannequins, plinths, exhibits, interactives, cinema banners and posters as well as graphic interpretation panels and educational resources. We are constantly adding to the collection from new productions to keep the exhibits fresh and relevant. We spend years researching the content, because we know many visitors will also be passionate about these subjects so anything less would not do them justice. We present information for a wide audience: from film caricatures for children to detailed histories for re-enactors and military historians, with content on both the history behind the warriors and the film connections; our aim is to present something for everyone.

Transport and packaging

Another important prerequisite for this exhibition was that, for a medium-sized venue, it would fit in a Luton van or smaller. This would allow for easy transportation and we could provide a complete service, including delivery, keeping costs low for the venue. It was also important to us that the exhibition could be constructed in less than two days, further reducing the cost to the host venue. The construction process has been one of continuous development and improvements; we have progressively removed most of the packaging, which caused storage problems, transporting the mannequins complete rather than constructing them onsite. We have also been looking at ways of utilising plinths as packing, so that some of the packaging is incorporated into the final exhibition.

Developing audiences

The most important goal we set ourselves when creating *Way of the Warrior* was one of audience development. We attempted to create an exhibition which would have universal appeal, young and old, male and female, from the fans to the mildly curious. We hoped that anyone interested in the epic historical movie genre (and there are many, as the popularity of the films and continued production of new films testify) would want to visit. We particularly hoped to encourage the sort of visitors that are rarely seen in museum exhibitions: teenagers and young adults, as well as increasing visiting by young dads with their children.

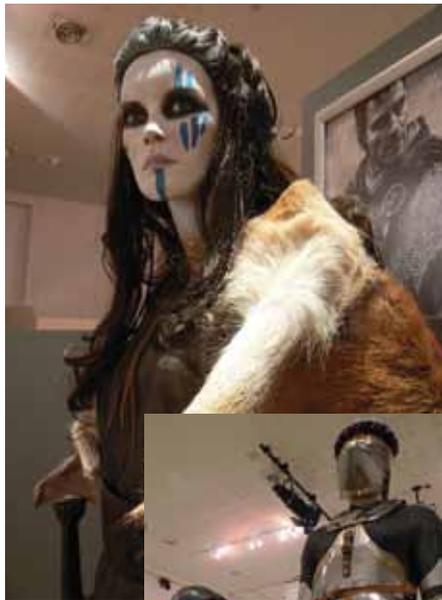
Audience responses

From the first venue at Torquay Museum we knew we had tapped into a popular genre but with some unexpected results. We immediately started to see the young adults we had hoped for and even teenagers. Despite the high certification of many of the films, many younger children had heard of them and were fascinated by the costumes and props as historical representations. We saw just as much interest from young girls as from boys, even though we only have one female warrior. The unexpected audience was the older generation, especially women around retirement age who were fascinated by the costume design and production and were often big fans of the films. Something we know as fans ourselves is that many of these films are visitors' 'favourite films' and people get a real buzz out of being close to the original props and costumes.

The handling objects have proved hugely popular. Our approach is simple and low tech; we provided objects that are highly tactile and desirable to hold and try on, comprising a mixture of reproductions and film props. Some objects, for example the Roman legionary shield from *Gladiator*

(2000), cover both, being both screen-used and remarkably accurate reproductions. We also added a trail for children (and interested adults), which could be used with a prize competition to encourage visitors to engage with the graphic interpretation.

Way of the Warrior has now toured to eight venues and is approaching its 100,000th visitor. We have amassed some interesting audience response data. Online reviews by both film critics and mothers have been remarkably positive and we have incorporated many of the visitor comments into our marketing strategy. Perhaps our favourite comment is from Nadia of Cardiff who wrote: "Finally an exhibition in Devon that makes classics interesting for the masses!" This summed up, in one line, exactly what we had been trying to achieve.



Pictish warrior costume from *Centurion* (2010), Torquay Museum

The importance of authenticity

Way of the Warrior contains some fabulous weapons, armour and costumes from some very high profile films of the last 20 years. While it would have been possible to create a chronology of arms and armour from reproductions alone, the cachet that comes from the screen-used props cannot be underestimated. They raise considerable media interest wherever they go, making marketing to the local press easy and raising the profile of the venue as well as the exhibition, proving a draw to many visitors who may not otherwise engage with a museum at all. Seeing up-close and even handling screen-used props leaves a lasting impression on many, bringing them closer to the film medium with which they are so familiar. But perhaps most importantly, this level of engagement brings the opportunity for learning about the history and archaeology which inspired these films.

Latest venues

Warriors of the Ancient World: Epic Movie Arms and Armour
Brading Roman Villa, Isle of Wight,
26 July – 31 August 2014

Way of the Warrior: Epic Movie Arms and Armour
Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum,
13 June – 5 September 2015

Further information

Search for Pop-Up Exhibitions in the Exhibitions for Hire database at www.teg.org.uk or visit www.pop-upexhibitions.com

For an online review of *Way of the Warrior* at Inverness Museum and Art Gallery see <http://northings.com/2011/03/18/the-way-of-the-warrior-at-imag/>

Schoolboy with interactive knight's armour doing the *Warrior Code* trail, Torquay Museum

New Exhibitions for Hire

The following new titles have been added to the Exhibitions search database at www.teg.org.uk between January and mid-July 2014.

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

- *Scream and Scream Again: The Golden Age of British Horror*

Ashmolean Museum

- Xu Bing, *Landscape Landscipt*

British Museum

- *Celebrating Ganesha*
- *Social Fabric, African Textiles Today*

Centre for Contemporary Art & the Natural World

- *Soil Culture*

Christine Sawyer

- *Signs of the Times*

The Civic, Barnsley

- *Carol Harris-Wood: There's No Place Like Home?*
- *Michelle Clarke-Stables: Shapshots of Familial Gazes*
- *Reflections on Space*
- *Sacha Ferrier: Transience*
- *The Handwritten Letter Project*

Crafts Council

- *Crafting Narratives*
- *Hidden Agenda: Socially Conscious Craft*
- *Legacy: Two Works on Hope and Memory*
- *Space Craft*

Elastic Theatre

- *Icons & Idols – Marta Czok, Jacek Ludwig Scarso with Elastic Theatre*



Clockwise from above:

Sacha Ferrier, *Ascent*, *Transience*, The Civic, Barnsley

Mummy's Shroud Poster, *Scream and Scream Again: The Golden Age of British Horror*, Aberystwyth Arts Centre

Michelle Clarke-Stables, *Snapshots of Familial Gazes*, The Civic, Barnsley

Carol Harries-Wood, *There's No Place Like Home*, The Civic, Barnsley



EMAP

- Archaeomusica – Exploring the Sounds and Music of Ancient Europe

English Heritage

- Aerofilms: Britain from Above

Exhibitions on Tour

- British Wildlife Photography Awards 2013
- Visions of the Universe

Hayward Touring

- J D 'Okhai Ojeikere: Hairstyles and Headdresses

Hilliard Society

- The Very Best of Contemporary Miniature Art

IMOS Foundation

- A Portrait of Europe

Jeremy Moore

- Bird/land

JORVIK Group – York Archaeological Trust

- Valhalla – In Search of the Viking Dead

Leicestershire County Council Museums Service

- Frank Brangwyn
- The Medieval Woman
- Palitoy: The Toys that Shaped our Childhoods

Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre

- The Curious World of Becky Adams
- On My Mother's Knee

Maidstone Museum & Bentlif Art Gallery

- Contemporary British Watercolours

Makers Guild in Wales, Craft in the Bay

- Heat Exchange 2
- The Sensorial Object
- Tilleke Schwarz

National Museums Liverpool

- Eye for Colour
- Their Spirits by Laura Facey

New Art Exchange

- Exhibition by Faiza Butt (title tbc)
- Kanaval: Voudou, Politics and Revolution on the Streets of Haiti
- The Current Situation

North Lincolnshire Council, 20-21 Visual Arts Centre

- Pirates, Pants and Wellyphants

Penlee House Gallery & Museum

- John Armstrong (1983-1973)

Northampton Museums & Art Gallery

- Sport to Street
- The Vintage Dream Shoe Closet

Oriel Gallery

- Steve Brockett: Flight Files

Renée Pfister Art & Gallery Consultancy

- A Continuation of Colour, Form and Pattern
- Inverse-Evoke: Art and Text
- Pip Dickens – Screen

Royal Photographic Society

- 158th International Print Exhibition

Science Museum

- Only in England: Photographs by Tony Ray-Jones and Martin Parr

Seven Stories Centre for Children's Books

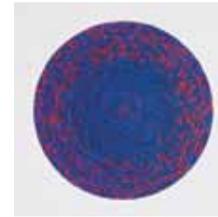
- Picturebook in Progress
- Twists and Tails: An Angelina Ballerina Exhibition

Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery Trust

- Richard Slee: Work and Play

Zero3 Textile Artists

- Signature VII



Left to right from above:

Steve Brockett, *Flight Files*, Oriel Gallery

Yara El-Sherbini, *End of History, The Current Situation*, New Art Exchange

Carl Clerkin, *Broom*, 2013, Photo: Gallery SO, *Crafting Narratives*, Crafts Council

Danny Green, *Dormouse Hibernating, Wild Woods*, *British Wildlife Photography Awards 2013*, Exhibitions on Tour

© Soon Yul Kang, *Unity*, 2012, *Inverse-Evoke: Art and Text*, Renée Pfister Art & Gallery Consultancy

Grayson Perry, *Mad Kid's Bedroom Wall Pot*, 1996, Crafts Council Collection P442, Photo: Nick Moss, *Hidden Agenda: Socially Conscious Craft*, Crafts Council

Albert Goodwin, *Contemporary British Watercolours*, Maidstone Museum & Bentlif Art Gallery

Xu Bing, *Landscape 1*, 2013, © Xu Bing Studio, *Landscape Landscape*, Ashmolean Museum

David Levenson, *Pitstone Windmill*, *British Life Photography Awards*, Exhibitions on Tour

Christine Sawyer, *Out of the Blue*, woven tapestry, *Signs of the Times*

Kate Jenkins, *On My Mother's Knee*, Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre

J D 'Okhai Ojeikere, *Modern Suku*, 1979, Courtesy Gallery MAGNIN-A, Paris, *Hairstyles and Headdresses*, Hayward Touring

Laura Facey, *Their Spirits*, National Museums Liverpool
Eye for Colour © National Museums Liverpool

Jeremy Moore, *Great White Egrets, The Camargue*, *Bird/Land*

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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