

Dusting off Untapped Potential

A case study of the collaboration between the University of Huddersfield and the National Arts Education Archive, Yorkshire Sculpture Park.



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School of Art, Design and Architecture and Yorkshire Sculpture Park

- After information relationships, agreed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2009
- MOU agreed some key actions for collaboration which included formal opportunities to exploit the research environment of both organisations
- Particularly between contemporary arts and pedagogy, publications and lecturing opportunities



UoH and YSP



- UoH provides affiliate status for YSP staff for library access and to key research staff
- YSP provided a rich arts venue setting which included the National Arts Education Archive (NAEA)
- Immediate aim to provide support to develop the potential of the archive
- Invited by Peter Murray CEO to be part of the steering group , managing the transfer of the NAEA trust to the guardianship of the YSP

NAEA History

- Lively introduction in 1985
- Supported by a trust and funding from Sir Alec Clegg and Lawrence Batley
- In purpose built (1985) building by BDP architects, close to the old manor house in Bretton
- Struggled in recent years to keep abreast of funding, new changes in archival and retrieval technologies and infrastructure
- Range of problems including land ownership, previous HEI involvement, and lack of sustained investment



Keeping the archive alive

- Enthusiastic volunteer, who knows where everything is – two days a week for the love of it
- Some archives digitally archived with now outmoded technology and in desperate need of reawakening, modernising and literally in cases, ‘dusting off’
- Well maintained records of donations, loans, and a ‘sort of catalogue’



‘Dusting off’ since 2009

- Transfer of assets, approved by the Charities Commission from the independent board of trustees, to the YSP
- Fruitful links with York St John, Manchester and Huddersfield Universities
- New steering group set up as sub group of the board of trustees of YSP



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Archive established to..

- *To provide a documentary trace of the development of arts education in the UK and worldwide, by collecting children's art and students work and the papers, letters, and work of key arts educators and artists in the visual arts, music and language.*
- Includes, Sir Alec Clegg, Tom Hudson, Richard Hamilton, and Victor Passmore amongst others



Changes in Higher Education, and the English Baccalaureate

- The recent changes to Higher Education in the UK, has put some subjects under scrutiny as to their economic value and status, and the larger contribution to UK plc – art and design was amongst these subjects.
- The educational ladder of art and design education is perceived as being under threat and as a result of this the archive has once again become a source of information for educators looking to the past for inspiration and direction in times of economic cutbacks.
- Never has a time been more poignant for an archive to provide resources for untapped potential than now.



UoH's commitment to art and design education

- Continued investment in the work of the archive – for arts education and its impact today
- Committee member of the Parliamentary Design Commission's Design Education Enquiry (2011)
- Saturday Art School started October 2012, with the endorsement from the Sorrell Foundation
- Continued Higher Education in Art, Design and Architecture – and joined up thinking to develop and enhance West Yorkshire's long association of developing arts education in the broader community, and also as a research base for creating new knowledge and influence in arts education

Joint interests UoH, YSP, and NAEA

- The joint interest in pedagogy became the natural territory to explore first
- UoH offered first full PhD scholarship – basic design course that forms much of our art and design education today.
- Suzy Tibbetts – The influence of Tom Hudson



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2013

- UoH offering PhD fee waivers for first class honours students in areas of strategic importance
- 2nd full PhD scholarship – project about the Policy, Practice and Implementation of Arts Education in the West Ridings – being advertised shortly.



Huddersfield's history

- Typical of many post 92 institutions, traces its history back to 1825 (before the education select committee of 1835 which established most art schools)
- 1825 for textiles education, design and engineering: education for the 'useful arts and at a cheap rate'
- Today ambitious, creative and developing strategic partnerships



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Knowledge Transfer and the Arts

- Like other institutions knowledge transfer/exchange is a priority
- Challenge in the arts, and in the regions, (who exactly do you exchange with in rural communities – if there isn't the cultural and intellectual capital to reciprocate?)
- Aim of YSP/UoH is to challenge this concept, and to see if previously thought of regions as on the periphery, to a place a place where it is more mainstream as this case study demonstrates



Cont...

- Emphasis on joint knowledge generation and knowledge sharing
- Development of creative and cultural regeneration through these connections
- Both partners outside of a city have a mutual desire to develop audiences and to consider other forms of access.
- The relationship between the archive, the YSP programme, student body, and research intentions forms the basis of the relationship rather than any civic push – resulting in shared ambitions and mutual benefit.



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- Relationship between YSP and UoH subject of a working party hosted by the Arts Council
- Relationship based on research continues, beyond the archive- for example a joint conference supporting the forthcoming Yinka Shonibare exhibition
- Support from other colleagues, eg the UoH archives and library team on best practice in archives and new technologies.



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<http://www.ysp.co.uk/naea>



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