



Summer eNewsletter 2012

Opening remarks...

Welcome to the Summer 2012 TVA newsletter

At the time of writing this, we are in a prolonged late spring-time wet spell, following the prolonged cold spell of the winter, following the prolonged dull spell of last summer and all of it meaning I'm not getting good value out of my sandals.... of which more later.

Looking for poetic inspiration to pep up my introductory remarks I came across a fine poem by Tony Hoagland (American poet) called 'A Colour of the Sky' – here's part of it:

*Windy today and I feel less than brilliant,
driving over hills from work.
There are the dark parts on the road
when you pass through clumps of wood
and the bright spots where you have a view of the ocean,
but that doesn't make the road an allegory.*

*What I thought was an end turned out to be a middle.
What I thought was a brick wall turned out to be a tunnel.
What I thought was an injustice
turned out to be a colour of the sky.*

*Outside the youth centre, between the liquor store
and the police station,
a little dogwood tree is losing its mind;
overflowing with blossom foam,
like a sudsy mug of beer;
like a bride ripping off her clothes,
dropping snow white petals to the ground in clouds,
so Nature's wastefulness seems quietly obscene.*

*It's been doing that all week:
making beauty,
and throwing it away,
and making more.*



Opening remarks...



The first section is very resonant for me personally, as it mirrors my homeward journey from work across the moors to the sea; the second section feels very resonant for TVA, facing up to life without Arts Council support, making changes, hoping brick walls are tunnels, and that what we feel to have been an injustice may turn out to be a temporary colour of the sky; and the last parts are very resonant of late Spring/ early Summer, when nature goes mad and pavements are awash with petals.

Here at TVA everyone is continuing to work, create, enjoy and celebrate with even more energy and commitment than usual – which is saying something. The office will usually be empty on a Monday for the foreseeable future, and we're trying to force 5 busy days of work into 4 frantic days.

The other members of staff will tell you more about projects elsewhere in the newsletter, but of particular note has been: Green TV (environmental learning through the arts, across the Tees Valley) edging towards a close; Moving On (creative support for young people in the care of the Tees Valley Local Authorities) inching towards a start; a module of stART being delivered in Stockton (8 out of 9 NEET young people completed the course and achieved their Arts Award); Risky Biz (partnership with Barnardo's SECOS) continuing; activity beginning with the young people who are in-patients in the Evergreen Unit for adolescents with acute eating disorders; activity beginning with people who attend Hope North East (substance abuse recovery); activity and events continuing with people who are newly arrived and refugees. Quite a list! Alongside this we have a host of other developments and partnerships, and have been busy with Arts Award and Artsmark.

A new project which will be starting shortly is the Journeys project, working with local playwright Ishy Din, following the brilliant news that we have been successful with our application to Grants for the Arts – thanks to Ann Fletcher-Williams, Arts Council NE Relationship Manager in Diversity for her support with that. Ishy Din has recently returned to Middlesbrough from the national tour and London residency of his play 'Snookered' – extensively reviewed and praised in the national press. Ishy's life has been turned upside down by a whirlwind of success and its consequent creative challenges; he is now involved in any number of fantastic possible developments and projects. The Journeys project will see Ishy working locally, with young people, at the recently opened Middlesbrough Myplace. His other opportunities are scattered across the country, so we are delighted to have secured the funding to pin him down for a bit in Teesside.

In early April, on a day which began for me with heavy snow and power and phone cuts at home (feeling less than brilliant driving across the hills TO work....), Kate Brindley (Director of mima) and I were visited by Martin Bright and Marcus Mason of New Deal of the Mind. NDotM is a very interesting organisation, based in central London, which works on a variety of initiatives to support young people (from all backgrounds) into work in the creative industries. They have met with considerable success both in helping young people and in campaigning/ advocating for such work, and/ but are conscious that there is a huge gulf of opportunity between central London and, say, Teesside. We hope that they may be interested in expanding their activities towards us – you couldn't really get a greater contrast!

Opening remarks...

I hope I will shortly be able to announce a second patron for TVA – I had better hold fire before it is confirmed, but it is someone born and raised locally, who now has a national media profile, and who is passionate about the area and particularly passionate about our young people, and their achievements and aspirations – which makes a perfect fit with us.

Now – back to the sandals... I will be off to South Africa in mid-June for my cultural safari with the Swallows Foundation, and I'm so excited. I have never been to the African continent before, and everything about the trip will be new, fresh, undiscovered, stimulating, challenging, exciting and enlivening. And I'll get to wear my sandals under African skies, if not with diamonds on their soles.... I will try to take photographs (not my best thing) and will report on my experiences in the next newsletter.



Rowena Sommerville
Director, TVA





Inclusion



My three years working as TVA's Refugee Arts Worker funded by the Baring Foundation is coming to an end so I would like to begin by offering my thanks to them for their support over the last three years. I'll be writing the final report soon, so coming up to that it is time to reflect on the people, partnerships and events that have enriched the experience.

One important partner has been the Melting Pot; this is a small non-profit making community organisation, which seeks to provide a safe, supportive environment one afternoon a week for those who find themselves destitute following their asylum process in the UK. The group meets every Wednesday afternoon at a church hall in central Stockton. The Melting Pot provides a safe and welcoming space for adults to meet together, to socialise and to have fun in a relaxed atmosphere, to provide a bag of free food to those who are destitute, to enjoy a warm meal together and to foster friendship and mutual understanding.

I've been able, as the RAW, to contribute to their activities, through meeting and chatting with people, and occasionally providing live music-making and showing films. It has been great to be able to contribute to and work alongside other people offering a genuine welcome to fellow human beings who are displaced and suffering.

The guys who attend the group say: 'I feel happy when I hear the drums... it reminds me of my country' and 'it is fun with the drums and music and it helps me forget my problems'. These social events help to bind the group together and give people a sense of cultural identity, as well as learning a new skill. The drumming has involved people across many different nationalities and from a variety of countries.

Inclusion



While we haven't been able to stage a full-scale WorldFest this year, we are going to be able to put on a smaller scale world music event featuring African stars Kasai Masai and (by way of contrast) North Yorkshire's acappella stars Henwen, thanks to the Baring Foundation, to the Northern Rock Foundation, to the Youth Music Fund and to Middlesbrough Council. This will take place on Saturday July 21st at 8pm in the Middlesbrough Town Hall Crypt. Be there or be disappointed!

Meanwhile, I'll get on with reviewing the last three years in diversity in Teesside, and hoping for a positive decision about future funding for my post here - meeting, welcoming and supporting people from all over the world who have had to leave their own countries to have a chance of a positive life.

Newsletter readers might also be interested to know that currently there are some 'behind the scenes' developments going on, working towards establishing a regional festival to celebrate the culture of Africa here in the North East, and to learn more about our new communities and their cultural heritage and traditions.

I've been meeting with David Faulkner (Newcastle Councillor) to explore initial plans to bring together and showcase African music, dance, song and visual arts in a festival that hopefully can become an annual event for our region. This will build on events like TVA's WorldFest, and world music programming at Sage Gateshead.

The North East region has an increasingly rich and diverse mix of communities, many from the African continent. There's also growing interest in how cultures migrate and what happens to different cultural heritages as they move around the world – how they are sustained but also how they can fuse with other cultures to create new artistic possibilities for us to enjoy and share.

Besides showcasing international icons such as Manu Dibango, Tinariwen and Kanda Bongo Man, this would also encourage locally-based African musicians and artists, and would engage communities and schools through exhibitions, workshops and tasters.

If you are interested in this and would like to be involved, or just be kept informed of the festival planning and arrangements, contact me (Maurice Dezou) on 07525053193 or mauricedezou@hotmail.com

See you there!



Maurice Dezou

Refugee Arts Worker and Filmmaker





Education



All too soon, Simon reminds us that it's time to submit our newsletter articles, so here we are, in Summer 2012, with the rain falling, and the imminent arrival of the Jubilee and Olympics. We shall be having celebrations of our own this Summer (apart from TVA being 30), as young people taking part in the Moving On and Risky Biz projects will all be moderated for Arts Award and exhibiting the work created. Speaking of which...

Moving On (working with young people in the care of all five local authorities)

I've had my scheduling abilities tested with the commencement of Moving On in four of the five boroughs (Middlesbrough will start in the Summer holidays), and am keeping my fingers crossed that I've not double or triple booked anyone! Tasters all took place at the beginning of May, with some great work already being created. The groups will be working with a variety of wonderful artists and host artist workers, visiting some of our region's arts and cultural venues, working towards Bronze Arts Award and celebrating together in September.

Risky Biz (in partnership with Barnardo's)

Risky Biz moves on apace, with artists Nicola Parkin, Vicky Holbrough and Laura Degnan working with the group to produce a film and visual arts that we will screen, exhibit and celebrate at mima in July, following their undoubted success in achieving Arts Award Bronze.

We've been successful with our bid to Youth Music, to continue our work with young people who are newly arrived and/or from diverse backgrounds, so plans will be hatching over the summer, with activity beginning in the autumn.

Education

There's a couple of other projects I'm gearing up for project managing, so plenty to keep me out of trouble!

Artsmark

Congratulations to all schools who achieved an Artsmark Award in Round 12.

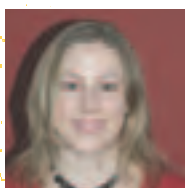
My visits to schools as an assessor were always interesting, and it was good to get out and see some of the great work being done, and the teachers, artists and children and young people delivering and taking part in the arts.

Round 13 will open in September for those of you thinking of applying next time www.artsmark.org.uk and as some of you will know, Trinity College London have been selected as the national provider for Artsmark; news of that will be coming out during the summer term.

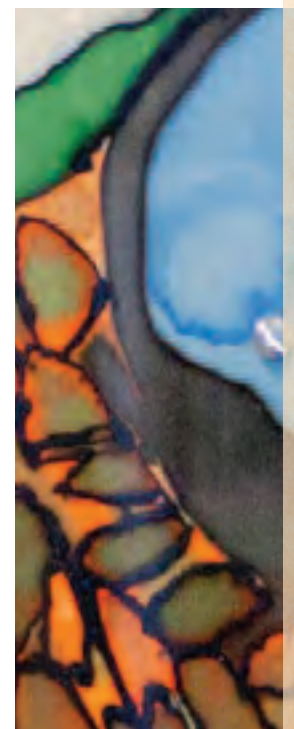
Arts Award

Tees Valley Arts were delighted to be selected as one of the Arts Award Training and Support Agencies for 2012 – 2013. I'll be attending a briefing session in June, and we'll be able to tell you more about what will be going on after that – keep an eye on the website and on twitter.

We're continuing to deliver public and in-house Bronze, Silver and Gold Adviser Training www.artsaward.org.uk and no pressure, but a senior trainer will be attending mine for monitoring purposes shortly. I'm also preparing to put myself in the very capable hands of Fiona Kelly at Customs House, South Shields for Discover and Explore Adviser Training – really looking forward to that.



Jane Gray
Education Officer





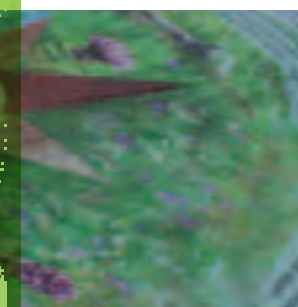
Heritage & Environment

What an eventful year 2012 is turning out to be for me. In the last newsletter I reported on my recent marriage, and this one I seem to be upping the ante somewhat – come August I am going to be a father! And if that wasn't going to be challenging enough, we have found out we are having twins!! As someone recently said, it will be a baptism of fire, and I'm sure they are right, but all I say is 'bring it on'. I cannot wait, I'm so excited and am so looking forward to my new life of sleep deprivation, nappy changing and all the other wonderful things that they bring, times two!

May also saw the installation and unveiling of a great piece of interpretative artwork for the summit of the newly sculpted amphitheatre at Saltholme. I thoroughly enjoyed wielding the paint brushes and working with PD Ports, RSPB Saltholme and Creative Glass to make it happen. Why not pop along to Saltholme yourself and enjoy it the work in the flesh (well glass really)?

Depending on when you read this, Green TV will be at various stages of completion, and when it is over, it will feel like an end of an era. This project has been with me in one form or another since I started at TVA over four years ago – it has been wonderful, I've loved managing it, and feel very lucky to have the pleasure of working with so many wonderful people that have made it the great success it has been. Thank you HLF for making it happen – why don't we do it again?!

So, what is happening - there are unveiling/ launch events (see over) on sites with the artists, wildlife partners, school pupils and guests of honour – everyone is welcome.



Heritage & Environment



Simon King

When	Where	What
Friday 25th May, 1pm	Coatham Marsh, Redcar	Series of bird windsocks
Monday 11th June 10am	Portrack Marsh & Maze Park, Stockton/ Middlesbrough	Bird Silhouettes Grayling sculpture
Tuesday 19th June, 10am	RSPB Saltholme, Stockton	Sounds of Saltholme audio trail & Conflict Zone film
Friday 13th July, 1pm	Redhall NR & South Burdon Community Woodland, Darlington	Green TV Mobile Phone app Glass obelisk sculpture
Monday 16th – Friday 27th July	Hartlepool Central Library	Exhibition of prints and photographs of Teesmouth Nature Reserve

There will also be the two other main events, which are free but places will need to be booked:

- **Thursday 5th July, 5-7pm at MIMA, Middlesbrough, Talk and discussion with Kane Cunningham**
- **Friday 6th July, 9am -2.30pm. Main event with Simon King as keynote speaker at TAD Centre, Middlesbrough**

Losing a day a week of work has been tough, especially in light of news of twins on the way, but I have been fortunate enough to be the visual artist on the Evergreen project. It has been challenging yet highly rewarding, and the young people are producing some great work for their book. Images to follow in the next newsletter.

So, to sign off, I think I'll borrow words from the great Bob Dylan which couldn't ring more true for me –“The times they are a'changin”



Joe Dunne
Heritage & Environment Officer



Kane Cunningham



Youth & Community

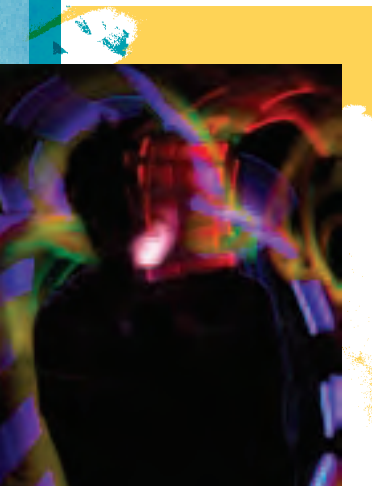
I ended my last newsletter article talking about the future of stART – our very successful intervention with young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training – which seems to be my ongoing preoccupation. Since the last newsletter, TVA has been accepted as a “delivery partner” for the Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) bid to the DWP Innovation Fund. TVU are now through to the second stage, and are currently working up a more detailed bid. If their application is successful, the funding could support regular cohorts of stART in both Middlesbrough and Stockton for three years....MORE CROSSING OF FINGERS AND HOLDING OF BREATH!

Additionally, TVA has been included as a potential delivery partner in the current Youth Contract bids from Middlesbrough, Stockton and Redcar & Cleveland. The Youth Contract funding would support projects working with young people aged 16 and 17 whereas the Innovation Fund would focus on 14 and 15 year olds; if all of this comes off I am going to be very busy! (What's new?)

Meanwhile, the stART pilot project in Stockton has reached its conclusion. Once again the project has been very successful in engaging vulnerable young people - 8 young people attended regularly from day 1. This group included a large number of young people with complex and additional needs which obviously presents a number of challenges and issues. The results (all 8 young people achieved their Bronze Arts Award) clearly show excellent work from Project Leader Nicola Parkin and Project Support Worker John Greenan (a Stockton Integrated Youth Services worker). TVA is grateful for the support and partnership of Stockton IYSS, we hope to see it blossom further.

“When I joined the stART project I didn't know what I wanted to do. Nicola and John helped me learn new skills, now I'm leaving the project I know what I want in life, so I will not stop or give up until I achieve it. So I give Nicola and John 10/10.” Participant

Youth & Community



I have to take my hat off in praise as I know how difficult this work can be! The Arts Award moderator's comments provide a good summary:

"This stART project working with NEET young people achieves work of a high standard. Portfolios evidence excellent levels of commitment and engagement. The group have been exposed to an interesting and challenging but well supported programme of activities and all members of the group have risen to the challenge."

Well done us!

'Hope springs eternal in the human breast' – Alexander Pope

Whilst keeping a watchful eye on stART I have been developing and launching a new project.

"Hope Springs" is a multi-arts project working with partners Hope North East (HNE). HNE supports people attempting to achieve and maintain recovery from addiction. Hope Springs will enable members to: gain new skills, have a positive focus, develop reflectivity and self-control, engage with their own demons, and work towards a positive shared aim.

The first step in achieving this was a "creative consultation"; this involved an informal "have a laugh" drumming workshop and a discussion around what people wanted from the project. This was a wholly positive experience and I now have a solid understanding to develop a series of workshops which will involve: more drumming, creative writing, visual arts and some drama activities. The group have taken part in two drumming workshops and responses demonstrate that the project is already achieving its aims:

"I thought the drumming session was very enjoyable and very therapeutic, it helped to let go of emotions and problems and relieved stress."

This is a great start for "Hope Springs" I look forward to seeing this project develop.

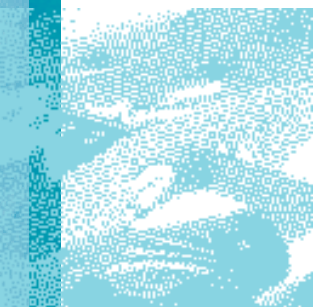


Tim Coyte

Projects Officer: Youth & Community



Simon Says...



As I think I may have mentioned here before, most of my weekends are taken up with thinking of things to take my daughter to instead of the usual Wacky Warehouse type things. Well, the definite recent highlight for Ruby (and me!) was seeing Mr Tumble (Justin Fletcher MBE) as part of the Cbeebies Live show at Newcastle Arena at Easter. We managed to keep it a secret from her until just before we entered the building and the look on her face when Mr Tumble was on stage was priceless. He is definitely a modern day Brian Cant (for anyone under a certain age – he used to present Play School!).....which talking about things from bygone days, here is my usual blast from the past about TVA in yesteryear.....

5 Years ago: (Summer 2007)

A dragon had taken up residence at Sacred Heart Primary School, Middlesbrough. Twelve pupils aged from 7 to 11 worked with their art teacher, Sue Tatterton, and artist in residence, Steve Iredale, to design and produce a carved wooden sculpture for their playground. The dragon was named Eragon, from the story of a boy named Eragon who befriended a dragon called Saphira.

Pupils from Grangetown Primary School created stunning batik banners with artist Naina Malde. The banners explored a range of themes including tolerance, unity, the rainforest and Grangetown!

10 years ago (Summer 2002)

Animator Andrew Liddell and poet Maureen Almond worked on two films for Nature's World at Newham Bridge Primary School, Acklam, using the arts to introduce aspects of the science curriculum.

The Stockton Mental Health Arts Group renamed itself as Phoenix Arts, and were working with three artists towards a media project, combining visual arts, creative writing and digital arts to create a series of posters that would be exhibited on Stockton High Street during Mental Health Week.

15 years ago (Summer 1997)

A Public Art project carried out by Mark Robinson in Shildon was nearing completion with three text-based pieces being installed: 'Waiting for the Bus', 'Job Titles' and an excerpt from a Sid Chaplin novel were carved by sculptor Vivien Mousdell.

A second Arts & Disability Festival: "Panorama of Arts" 1997, was being organised for 19-30th August. The Festival involved creative writing and performances from Karen Sheader and Michelle Taylor (a blind Caribbean poet based in London); line dancing and comedy/poetry from Rupa Sarka (London); live music outdoors in Central Gardens, Middlesbrough and Cabaret at Hartlepool Town Hall from local groups.

Middlesbrough FC were not the only representatives of Teesside showing off their talents in London in May that year. Whilst the Boro's international stars battled it out at Wembley in the FA Cup Final against Chelsea, two of Teesside's best-known poets, Andy Croft and Mark Robinson, and Saltburn-based Irish photographer, Dermot Blackburn, had their exhibition Gaps Between Hills on show at the prestigious Poetry Library in the Royal Festival Hall. The exhibition was all about Teesside's landscape and people, and included two pieces specifically about the football team - one about Ayresome Park, and one entitled 'Rio de Juninho' about the impact of the Brazilian on the dreams of Teesside people.

Simon Says...



20 years ago (Summer 1992)

As part of the Riverscape International Drawing residency, Indian artist Vivan Sundaram had been working at Kirkleatham Old Hall Museum; Polish artist Hanna Luczak had been based at Billingham Art Gallery and Gray Art Gallery, Hartlepool; and Graham Crowley, British artist, had been based at Middlesbrough Art Gallery.

As part of the European Arts Festival, German artist Ulrika Scriba had met with blacksmith Peat Oberon from Preston Hall Museum with whom she intended to design and make a series of seats for public sites.

25 years ago (Summer 1987)

The cast and orchestra had been auditioned and chosen for Cleveland Youth Opera's 2nd production in September of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. The success of the previous year's first production led to Cleveland Arts' then Director Denis Coe setting up a national youth opera company, British Youth Opera, in 1987 who are still going strong today.

Preparations were being made for an exhibition "Alali Festival Time" by Nigerian born artist Sokari Douglas-Camp at the Dorman Museum, Middlesbrough in September 1987.

Look out for more reminiscing in our 30th Anniversary next time!

Simon Smith

Communications Officer





TVA can work with you to plan a programme of creative activities, work up a budget, write funding applications, find suitable artists, and then manage the project both artistically and administratively. If you have an idea that you would like to discuss, please contact us:



c/o Tees Valley Arts,

Melrose House, Melrose Street, Middlesbrough TS1 2HZ

T: 01642 264 651 F: 01642 264 955

E: info@teesvalleyarts.org.uk W: www.teesvalleyarts.org.uk

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