



Winter

eNewsletter

2012



tees valley arts

Opening remarks...



Welcome to the TVA Winter 2012 newsletter!

Here is a poem to set the seasonal tone:

‘Winter Trees’ by William Carlos Williams

*All the complicated details
of the attiring and
the disattiring are completed!
A liquid moon
moves gently among
the long branches.
Thus having prepared their buds
against a sure winter
the wise trees
stand sleeping in the cold.*

I listened to a poetry workshop with Ruth Padel on Radio 4 the other day, in which she was exploring line breaks, and – for the poetry lovers amongst you – William Carlos Williams makes very interesting use of his.

So – back to TVA – what challenging and wintry times we find ourselves in, along with the entire voluntary sector, the arts in general, the local authorities, and probably everywhere in the UK that’s not central London; the important thing to remember is that we’re all in it together!

The question we have to answer is: have we prepared our buds against the sure winter, so that we can wisely sleep through the cold and awake refreshed in the spring? Surely time will tell!

So, that’s enough of the poetic similes, back in the office we’re all working away on projects, developing partnerships and applying for funding, as always. We have recently applied to the Lankelly Chase Foundation to continue working with people who attend Hope North East, the admirable organisation which supports people living in abstinence from drug and alcohol abuse, and Lankelly Chase Foundation told me that in the current round of grant-making they have received over 600 applications for what will be around 30-40 grants awarded. Wintry odds, so shivering fingers crossed!

On a more positive note, Jane Gray (TVA Education Officer) and I recently attended training/ selection for Artsmark Round 13, and I am delighted to announce that we will be the Artsmark Training Agency for the Tees Valley, and I will be an Artsmark validator. For those of our readers unfamiliar with Artsmark, it is the national benchmark for schools of their quality of creative and cultural provision. At the time of writing this it is unclear quite what role ‘the arts’ will have in any outline of the national core curriculum (and in due course the Government’s core requirements may be classical Greek and the study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and/or going up chimneys) but we absolutely believe that A) there can be no menu of education for turning children into proper adult human beings that doesn’t contain the arts, and B) schools should think about, review and celebrate their creative provision – through initiatives like Artsmark. (Advert over).

Opening remarks...



The Evergreen project which partnered TVA with the in-patient unit for adolescents with eating orders, is almost over now, and we're proud to say that the project has been nominated and shortlisted for the Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust 'making a difference' awards – easy for me to say. That's great though, and our lovely patron, Steph McGovern, hopes to attend the project celebration in the New Year.

We've been developing new partnerships, whilst maintaining (and valuing) the old ones, and are now a partner of the Tees Valley Music Service Hub; we've also met with Community Campus 87, and hope to be working with them in the future, and we're helping Teesside University with the inaugural Winter Lights Festival, which they intend to develop into an annual activity for all on campus, celebrating all cultures.

We've also got a new volunteer – Julie Bailey, Head of Governance, NHS Tees – has been giving us some of her very valuable time and expertise, and we thank her for that. She got interested in us through hearing about one of our projects with young people in the care of the local authority, and thought she would like to help us – much appreciated! Challenging times in the NHS at the moment too, I think it's fair to say.

I hope you all enjoy reading through our various, and varied, activities, and looking at the lovely, inspiring and unexpected images they produce.

We wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and New Year; strength to all our partners, thanks to all our funders and supporters, and seasonal good wishes to one and all.

May your wise trees sleep through the cold, and may sensible garden fleece protect all our vulnerable jasmines till Spring comes again!

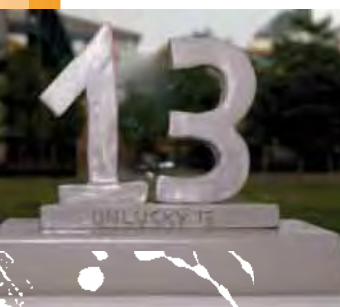


Rowena Sommerville
Director, TVA





Education



September was full of celebrations for me: both Risky Biz and Moving On celebrations took place (more on those later) and it was my parents' 40th Wedding Anniversary. As a present, my brother and I decided to have their 1972 Wedding cinefilm, which had been collecting dust in the bottom of a wardrobe pretty much since then, converted to DVD. It was absolutely joyous to watch; from the fact that my parents bore a remarkable resemblance to The Queen and Prince Phillip in their youth (but for the lure of teaching they could have had a lucrative career as look-alikes); to the 1970's fashions and grainy film with no sound. The eight minute long film highlighted just how much things have changed – certainly in terms of arts and technology, but also how some things, like celebration and positive relationships, remain essentially the same, and are crucial to our very being. All of which brings me ever so neatly on to the other celebrations of September:

Moving On (our project working with young people in the care of all five Tees Valley local authorities) Thursday 20th September saw young people, parents, carers, staff and other guests enjoy the wonderful work created by the young people during Year One of Moving On. From glass pieces, to poetry performances, sculpture, photography, collographs, etchings and films, there was a wealth of talent and achievement exhibited and celebrated at myplace, Middlesbrough that night. Congratulations to all the young people who participated, and to those who achieved their Bronze Arts Award. Thanks to all the artists, support workers, anyone who transported young people to and from sessions, myplace, Dennis at Pic-A-Frame who was framing through the night for us, the J Paul Getty Jr Charitable Trust, and of course, to all the young people who took part.

Education



Quotes from some of the young people in the comments book are:

"I love the moving on it was unreal thank you for letting me come"

"I really enjoyed the moving on in 2012 it was great. I was able to meet new people and learn new things."

"It was good so thank you for letting us do it. Wish we could do it again"

I'm currently spending some time meeting with all our local authority partners, planning for Year Two, which will begin delivery early next year.

Just a week after the Moving On celebration, we were at mima for the Risky Biz exhibition, screening and celebration event. The work created with artists Laura Degan, Vicky Holbrough and Nicola Parkin was haunting, moving, powerful and wonderful to see. It was clear that all the young people involved had taken real care and pride in their work. Congratulations and thanks to everyone involved, and of course, to Comic Relief for funding and the wonderful staff at mima for making us so welcome again. We're now well into delivery with another group, planning for their celebration and event and planning for year three!

MusicMix

Maurice has been busy recruiting for MusicMix which will be starting shortly, with young people from diverse backgrounds coming together to develop various music skills; recording and production skills; music technology; instrumental and vocal skills; setting up a band; and really anything else the young people want to know about music and the music industry! Some of the young people will also work towards Arts Award, and we'll be looking towards performances and recordings next summer.



Education



Arts Award and Artsmark

I had a couple of intensive days in London during October, doing all things Trinity College London related, which also gave me the opportunity to catch up and have dinner with a friend of mine and ex TVA Board Member, Middlesbrough-born artist Hannah Campion, whilst she's at Chelsea doing her MA. I was also able to catch up with the rather wonderful Fiona Melvin from The Forge – typically, as we're both so busy, we don't often get chance in the North East!

TVA has been selected to be the second Discover and Explore Training Agency in the North East and so a day was spent being trained, and I'm really looking forward to getting started. I know I'll have a lot to learn from Fiona Kelly at Customs House, who has been delivering it solo so far.

We've also been selected to be an Artsmark Training Agency, with me being the trainer, as well as Rowena being a validator. We're looking forward to getting back into Artsmark, and to working with schools who are delivering such great work.

Training and support continues for Arts Award, so keep an eye out for dates in 2013.

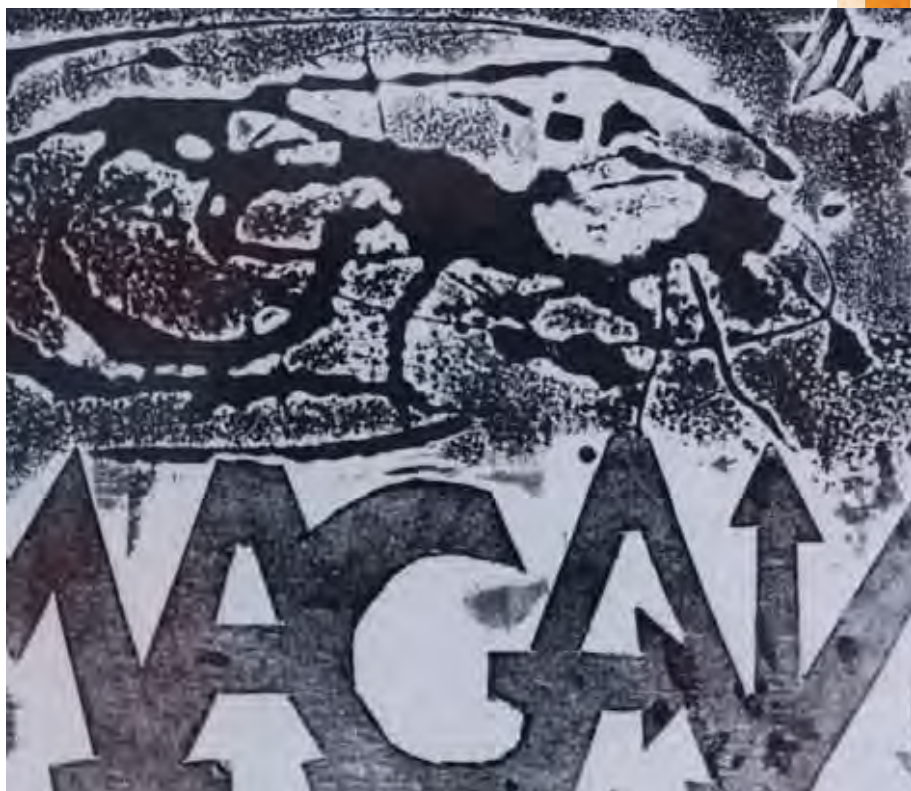
www.artsaward.org.uk

www.artsmark.org.uk

There are various small bits of work happening with local schools, and all in all, the diary is looking pretty full!




Jane Gray
Education Officer





Heritage & Environment



What a year 2012 has been for me!! Getting married and becoming a Dad of twins – they don't come much bigger than that really! It has, however, been a bit of a mixed bag really relating to the H&E programme, with the highs of the Green TV celebration events, the low of the project finishing, more lows with unsuccessful applications, and important and valuable time spent on the Common Purpose leadership course.

Lots of effort, delayed huge rewards! This has certainly been the case in the recent past, what with great projects like Green TV, Going Underground etc, but at the time of writing, all my recent efforts aren't quite giving me the rewards planned (and hoped for): Funding applications are in for a variety of projects of varying scales, partnerships are being developed and avenues being explored, but all these things take time, so it's a bit of a waiting game.

Heritage & Environment



On a positive note, TVA were identified as a delivery partner in Middlesbrough Environment City's application to BIG Lottery Fund's Communities Living Sustainably programme. Congratulations to MEC as they were successful in that application, and therefore great news for us as we will be delivering a programme of creative engagement with Middlesbrough communities for the next couple of years! Activity is planned to start in July 2013... watch this space.

The work I have been doing with the young people from the Evergreen Unit for Acute Eating Disorders has gone very well indeed. The book of the young people's creative writing and artwork looks fantastic and is now in the running to win an award (!). I have also installed the young people's work in the courtyard, which looks fantastic – well done them. In addition to the book and the courtyard, I worked with them to construct, design and decorate their own bird nest boxes, which have been placed around the centre, and again I think you'll agree, they look wonderful. Here's to hoping that local wildlife take up residence in the boxes next spring!

We hope to celebrate this work early in the New Year, and we are delighted that Steph McGovern, our Patron, is intending to attend the event.



Joe Dunne
Heritage & Environment Officer





Refugee Arts



In my role as Refugee Arts Worker I meet with many individuals and groups who are trying to make things happen for themselves and to rebuild their lives here in the Tees Valley. Sometimes people from the same country or background come together to set up a community group, for mutual support and to allow some of their culture to live on and have meaning in their new lives.

I regularly visit drop ins like the Melting Pot in Stockton Parish Church, and I see people meeting each other, developing friendships, sometimes finding comfort in talking to their countrymen, and then endeavouring to establish identifiable community groups. For the groups to bond together effectively, members often find it important to get together to celebrate events like religious festivals or traditional feast days.



Recently I was invited to the Eid celebration of the Sudanese community, and I helped them source a PA system so there could be some music – and that was provided by a talented Sudanese musician, who completely lifted the atmosphere, as everyone sang along to Sudanese hit songs!



Maurice Dezou
Refugee Arts Worker and Filmmaker



Youth & Community

I wrote my last article in August in “a haze of hideous hayfever symptoms” which I had despite a summer of endless rain. As I write this article I have just returned from time off over the autumn half term; I may not be suffering from hayfever but I think I may have been affected by an unprecedented intake of pumpkin! I have consumed several versions of pumpkin soup, a variety of pumpkin curries and pumpkin pie (as a pudding). Yes, I grew an enormous pumpkin (not a turnip like in the fairytale) in my allotment. The best way to describe the size of the monster vegetable would be to say it was #*^!*#! massive.

It took four hours to hollow out, needed a giant candle for illumination and provided fun and food for my family, friends and distant relatives. So as I write the world seems slightly orange!

In keeping with bad news first: in the last article I wrote “There is still potential funding for stART as TVA has been accepted as a “delivery partner” for the Tees Valley Unlimited (TVU) bid to the DWP Innovation Fund.” I’m afraid to say that this bid was not successful and so the stART Project currently has no foreseeable way forward in terms of funding. This is not good news for TVA or me, as this project (our very successful intervention with young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training) is close to my heart, and it is not good news for the young people of Teesside who need some help in getting their first step on the ladder of adult life. TVA will continue to search for funding opportunities for this project and look at other opportunities to work with disengaged and disaffected young people; where there’s a will there’s a way and all that!

“Hope Springs” is now coming to a close. This project has used a variety of artforms to support people attempting to achieve and maintain recovery from addiction with partners Hope North East (HNE). On 20th September HNE hosted an Open Day as part of Middlesbrough recovery week. As part of this event writers Andy Willoughby and Bob Beagrie and a SPECTACULAR percussionist called Tim Coyte performed a multi-media piece informed and inspired by work created by HNE service users.

Youth & Community

This is tricky to describe but I'll have a go...spoken word fused with percussive soundscapes and rhythms, interpreting the content and structure of the service users' words to create atmosphere, tension, release and relief. Images of artwork which had been used as a stimulus for the service users writing was projected onto the performing poets. This performance was a celebration of self-empowerment and the overcoming of adversity.

This is one of the poems that was used in the performance.

Orange, Yellow & Gold

(After Mark Rothko)

You are the woman in the sari
Triumphant in the joy of the gathering
You are Africa, the continent
Home of all creation
You are the strength of Mars
Spewing its power to the lion
You are the lion who keeps at bay
The unjust and those who wish to suppress
You are the rhythm of the waves
Moon magnetised in a tantalizing dance
You are the woman in the sari
Triumphant in the joy of the gathering
The creation is nigh
The new creation is nigh
You are the new creation.

In my last article, the Journeys project was in the very early stages. To recap...

Journeys is an exciting project working with Middlesbrough-based playwright Ishy Din, whose play "Snookered" has toured nationally and who is currently writing for Channel 4. The aim of the project is for young people to work with Ishy to create a short, youth-based drama piece, exploring modern, diverse identities in the economically and spiritually tough sub-region of Teesside. We have recruited drama workers Clara Shield and Scott Young to form a creative team who will work together with Ishy to develop the project and support young people in achieving Arts Award. We have the added support of playwright Fin Kennedy, who will mentor Ishy, and whose experience of developing (award winning) youth oriented plays will be extremely useful. From the initial meetings I can say that this is a very strong team, consisting of experienced and creative individuals with a strong sense of purpose. I look forward to working with such a committed group.

And by the way, if you know of a young lady with a wicked stepmother, who is bullied by step sisters and forced to cook and clean..... well if she needs a carriage to get to the ball I have a pumpkin that could be very useful.



Ischy Din



Tim Coyte

Projects Officer: Youth & Community

Simon Says...



The last newsletter was taken up with contributions from past colleagues and collaborators giving us their greetings for our thirtieth birthday. A couple of messages came through too late for inclusion in the last newsletter but I thought I would include them in this issue. The messages came from John Cairns who oversaw a lot of Cleveland Arts' successful Public Arts projects in the nineties and his successor Judith Winter who continued his good work – it was good to hear from them.

Many happy returns TVA or Cleveland Arts as you once were. 30 years is an impressive age for an arts organisation but you have an impressive track record as well and gave me good memories. From Eric Bainbridge's cast iron balls (!) in Hartlepool to Simon Patterson's Kites at the Captain Cook Museum and outlandish proposals by Vito Acconci for Stockton Riverside, the organisation always aimed to push the boundaries and bring world renowned talent to the area. Not forgetting Irvine Welsh reading extracts from the yet to be published Acid House Tales to four of us in a back street pub in Middlesbrough or Glenn Humphrey's shaking hands with Tony Blair as he put the finishing touches to a sculpture at a housing estate (Glenn that is, not Tony), you just couldn't make it up! Anyway loads of memories, great people and ...still going strong, nice one!

John Cairns, Relationship Manager Digital and Creative Economy, Arts Council England East Midlands; Public Arts Officer, Cleveland Arts 1993-1998

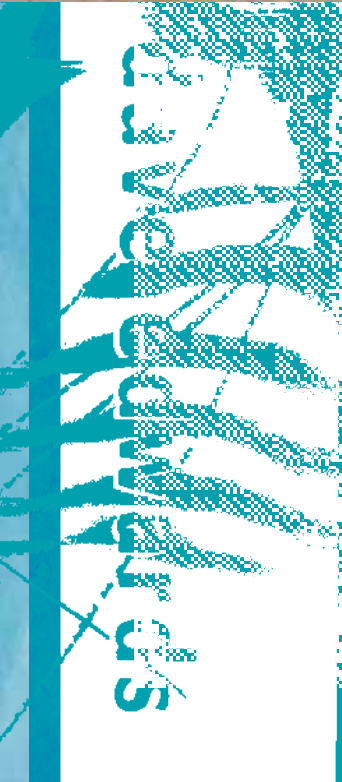
Happy Birthday and huge congratulations to you and the team.

My role at that time was to support and encourage the regeneration of the Tees Valley, through raising the creative aspirations of policy makers and communities. I had an incredible experience and was able to continue the work of Reuben Kench and John Cairns. I was responsible for commissioning and managing a number of public art projects with James Cook University Hospital, Middlesbrough Football Club and with the Middlesbrough Town Centre Company. Professionally I learnt so much and I am very thankful for those early foundations.

Tees Valley Arts is proof that a small group of committed people can achieve really important things. You are a real inspiration as an organisation that works with socially engaged practice and supports emergent talent.

Since leaving the organisation I have had a career working as a curator both within and beyond the gallery context. Perhaps most well known for developing the fine art collection and inaugural exhibitions programme for mima (Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art) and leading on the international arts programme for Dundee Contemporary Arts (DCA).

Judith Winter, Independent Arts Consultant & Curator, Winter Projects Ltd; Deputy Director, Commissions, Cleveland Arts 1998-2001



Simon Says...



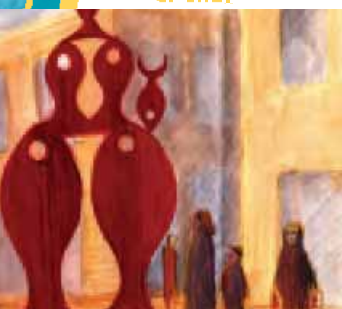
Anyway, after a short hiatus, it is back to my regular look back down memory lane.....

5 Years ago: (Winter 2007):

Families at Layfield Primary School, Yarm were excavating through layers of history, digging up subject matter for a large scale mosaic mural to be installed in the school dining hall. Ceramicist Derek Mosey was leading workshops creating a view of Yarm High Street which would depict a number of scenes through arches of the Yarm viaduct

Creative writing duo Bob Beagrie and Andy Willoughby had been working with young mums and mums-to-be attending the Teenage Pregnancy Support Unit in Stockton, exploring the themes of Identity and Aspiration using creative writing and digital technology to produce a play and poetry performance for the public. The performance of *Walk the Walk* took place at ARC, Stockton, and was well attended and well received - the play and the performances were strong, funny, thought-provoking and emotive; the role of young dads received a particularly clear-eyed going over!

Film maker Ellie Land had been working with some groups of young people from Redcar and Cleveland, making short films about the area and what it means to them. This had been funded by Northern Film and Media, using the work of early documentary film makers as a catalyst - in this case, specifically Marion Grierson's travelogue 'Beside the Seaside'.



10 years ago (Winter 2002):

David Kemp's 'Seven Red Plaice' was successfully erected in Redcar's Regent's Walk.

The James Cook University Hospital's Healing Arts Programme was approaching an exciting stage. The landmark sculpture by Andrew Burton was being made in wax for casting in bronze. The main element was an 8 ft diameter globe, to be surmounted by a giant sextant, and was being constructed in sections in the artist's studio. Meanwhile, Laura Johnston's glass suspension for the atrium was having its fixings put in place. Lee Brewster's decorated floor for the Paediatrics waiting room had been laid, and the same artist's 'Captain Cook Table', for the same area, had been exhibited at the Captain Cook Birthplace Museum and was waiting for the building's completion so that it could be put in place.

15 years ago (Winter 1997):

Redcar nineteen year-old Dave Edwards had just had his first novel, *Sunday* published by Mudfog Books, an initiative to promote new writing from Teesside. *Sunday* was a cool and funny tale of two weeks in the life of The Jamie, a third year with a host of problems and a quirky sense of humour. The book was wryly observant of a world where sex, image and reputation are everything and nothing is sacred. It was described as "Holden Caulfield transfers to Grange Hill, written by a teenage Roddy Doyle".

Among the writers taking part in Writearound 97, Teesside's ninth annual celebration of all that's great about writing were Philippa Gregory, Simon Armitage, Matthew Sweeney, Matt Simpson and Labi Siffre.

20 years ago (Winter 1992):

Swedish artist Anders Holquist had been working with 40 Middlesbrough schoolchildren to design flags for Pallister Park to celebrate Britain's presidency of the European community.

A musician, dancer and textile artist were working with elderly residents, daycentre users and staff at Tithe Barn House Resource Centre.

GW Theatre had performed *All Upstairs* by Peter Spafford in several venues across Teesside. The play had been commissioned by Cleveland Arts and the Community Care Forum

25 years ago (Winter 1987):

Six music workshops were held in November over two days in schools in Guisborough and Middlesbrough by Kokuma Dance Theatre.





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:



Digital

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