

Tees Valley Arts can work with you to plan and set up a programme of creative activities, find a suitable artist, help to frame a budget and secure funding, and then manage the project, both artistically and administratively. If you have an idea you would like to discuss, please contact us:



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Spring Newsletter 2007



A note from the Director...

I am always impressed by the hardiness of northern women when out for a good night's revelling. The distinct lack of substance to their attire with bare legs and high heels in the middle of January sends me shivering into the thermal insulation of several layers of far less glamorous 'middle-aged' cardigans. They tell me age is a state of mind. What? Does that mean I can think my way back to being twenty? And then I begin to imagine this as a reality and realise that I am much happier wearing cardigans and sensible shoes than I was standing around in draughty concert halls dressed in a tartan kilt and Doc Marten boots - which I did in the eighties as a punk rocker - no giggles from the front row please...

But this 'state of mind thing' that one goes through throughout the chapters of one's life, is an interesting idea.



I was recently involved in a seminar at the University of Teesside about the changing role of the Voluntary and Community Sector, in light of Tony Blair's push for the commissioning of much public service delivery. The discussions, facilitated by Tony Chapman and Judith Brown from the School of Social Science, were highly charged. There is an apparent identity crisis afoot in the VCS, as it, along with all other business communities is having to adapt to a changing environment. The Voluntary and Community Sector is facing several fundamental changes in its 'state of mind' arguably borne out of it reaching a more mature point in its life and receiving professional recognition for its achievements. The main change relates to its traditional reliance on grant aid and subsequent resistance to operating more 'commercially' and generating reserves which can then, for the good of the wider community be re-invested into the company, group or directly to the beneficiaries. I am quite taken aback, as the Director of just such an organisation, by the general resistance to such a model - which makes perfect sense to me; especially in a climate that is witnessing shrinking EU investment and therefore general public funding. As a sector we have to 'get our heads' round this idea that we are professional entities and that our sustainability is inextricably linked to our credibility as equal partners around the table with policy makers. The Voluntary and Community Sector adds immense capacity to the Public Sector by providing additional human and fiscal resources through our imaginative approach to survival and our 'can - do' attitude. In addition to this we offer society an alternative way to do 'successful' business - with social rather than financial motivations.

Whilst I look back on my days as a rebellious, head-strong punk rocker sticking two fingers up to the establishment (much to the embarrassment of my poor mother), in adult life you realise that so much more can be achieved in terms of 'change' through conformity, partnership work and the alignment of core priorities. I guess as a last thought ... we (the Voluntary and Community Sector) should perhaps learn to get out of the state of mind of the donkey kicking against the pen, and become more like the owl; who watches for opportunity...

At Tees Valley Arts we are working hard towards becoming an example of how a Voluntary Sector organisation can respond to the challenges of becoming a sustainable 'service provider'; adding capacity and imagination to public service delivery and contributing to local and regional policy.

2007 marks our 25th anniversary - look out for our next newsletter for details of how we will be marking the occasion

Rosi Lister

NESTA Research

As part of the new focus for TVA's education work, Rosi Lister, Director and Janette Pratt, Education Manager have been developing a whole range of work which will focus on the SKILLS agenda and specifically; INNOVATION for industry.

A one year action-research proposal has gone off to the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts and will explore how the 'creative process' can be taught as a transferable skill outside of subjects traditionally considered 'creative'. The initial sample groups proposed for the study will be Yr. 10 Science pupils in the Tees Valley and NVQ L2 Apprentice Engineers in the North East.

The partnership behind this and a series of multi-year pilot projects includes Tees Valley Regeneration, Arts Council England; North East, Arup Engineering, the Tees Valley Engineering Partnership, the North East Processing Industries Cluster and Durham University. Watch this space for exciting developments.....

Higher Apprenticeship in Arts Management

Now in their second 'term' the apprentices are now well ensconced within the Tees Valley Cultural landscape - I think they have managed to meet everyone and get fingers into most pies! Some really great opportunities have been provided for them including placements within the local authorities who are financially supporting this years scheme, Tees Valley Regeneration (in association with Commissions North) in relation to cultural 'input' to the Middlehaven and West Park Regeneration sites, the Tees Valley Winterfest celebration of world music and culture (more in this newsletter) and the grand MIMA opening events. TVA would like to thank all our partners supporting this scheme for their enthusiastic support for the programme - I know that Scott, Kit, Claire, Jill and Ruth are having a really wonderful and worthwhile experience. Watch out for news of their LIVE summer project - not to be missed!!!

TVA Celebrates New Appointment



TVA is highly delighted to welcome Rachel Clarke (of Twisted Digits) to their core team as Heritage and Environmental Arts Officer. Rachel, a practicing artist specialising in digital media, has extensive experience of working in collaborative partnerships with the Heritage and Environmental sectors across the North East and in Canada. She can also boast an array of schools work and has achieved national awards for her work with young people in community and educational settings. She's a real find and we can't wait for her to start in March. Rachel will be working with our existing and developing H&E partners such as Tees Forest, the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, the North East Museums and Library services, the RSPB and many more...

Rosi Lister

A66/Cargo Fleet Transport Interchange: competition shortlist announced

The shortlist is announced for the RIBA competition to design a major creative landscape feature for Middlesbrough's A66



Expressions of interest were sought from landscape architects; architects; horticulturists; ecologists; engineers; designers and artists working in the public realm, to develop proposals for the landscape of the A66 between Cargo Fleet and Newport. Major developments along the A66 are the spur for the project and it is hoped that the design phase of the competition will bring forward ideas for improvement to the built and natural environment and give visitors and investors a real sense of arrival when they come to Middlesbrough.

The shortlisting panel were pleased by the response to the competition which elicited twenty eight (28) expressions of interest from across the world and five companies have been shortlisted by a panel including representatives from Middlesbrough Council, Tees Valley Regeneration, Halcrow, RIBA, Arts Council England, North East and the project managers; Tees Valley Arts.

The five teams selected to take part in the design phase of this competition are those that the assessment panel felt would be most capable of producing high quality and innovative designs that would invigorate the A66 road corridor from Newport to Cargo Fleet.

The five practices (in alphabetical order) invited to proceed to the design phase of the competition were as follows:

Anthony Walker + Partners
Arkenspaces Architecture
Halsall Lloyd Partnership
McChesney Architects
Newbetter

Each shortlisted team will be invited to present their final designs to the Panel on the 20th March after which a winner will be announced.

WATCH OUT FOR THIS IN THE SUMMER '07 NEWSLETTER.



Community Programme

Activities for the community programme in the quarter have had two main focuses - WinterFest 07, and developing partnerships.

The WinterFest is covered elsewhere in this newsletter, so on to partnerships - we have been developing bids with Middlesbrough Council on a number of fronts including creative activities for people with mental health problems, supporting them in becoming advocates, and also looking at a possible major initiative in arts activities for young people in East Middlesbrough, working with the Safer Middlesbrough Partnership.

We've been working with - Grove Hill Surestart, who want to write, manage and put on their own family panto - Daddy Goose!; with Campus 87 (charity which works with homeless young people; with Tees Valley Housing Temporary Homeless Families Unit (does what it says on the very wide tin); with North of England Refugee Service - arts activities with young asylum seekers and refugees and their families; with Stockton PCT Public Health; with Redcar and Cleveland Children's Services; with the Social Futures Institute at the University; and with the prison and young offenders services. All of these partnership projects have funding applications at various stages of the process - some we're waiting to hear about soon, others are just a twinkle in the programme manager's eye.

Best Dresses is up and running in Redcar - this is a project funded by the Home Office, which works with women with histories of substance abuse, and supports them in creative 'play' with a writer, a digital artist and a textile artist. These women have very low levels of self esteem, and this allows them to enjoy themselves and gain some skills, whilst also thinking and talking about appearances and what makes a best dress and/or a nightmare nightie....we have had a lot of press interest in this project, from an interested and supportive angle, which is nice.

We're putting together an application to the European Cultural Programme for Textlines - a three-way exchange between writers and artists from Tees Valley UK; Tampere, Finland; and Den Haag, Holland, which builds on existing creative relationships, and aims to take them further, and to bring about new cross-cultural collaborations.

The atmosphere in the office is very buzzy and lively these days, there's always a lot going on, and the apprentices and various artists coming in and out all add to the gaiety of nations - it's a good place to be.



WinterFest 07

Yes - once again TVA and Maurice Dezou invite you to throw off your vest and boogie to the rhythms of the world - WinterFest 07 will extend from Wednesday 21st March to Sunday 8th April, with a rich and varied programme celebrating diversity here in the Tees Valley and bringing in great talent from far afield.

At the time of writing this we don't have all the details - the programme will be constantly updated on www.winterfest.org.uk - but we are delighted to confirm that on Saturday March 24th at Middlesbrough Town Hall will be headline act Tinariwen - poet-guitarist soul rebels from the Sahara Desert supported by The Northern Lights Bhangra Band.



On the Wednesday night there will be an evening of poetry and acoustic music, at Bar2Zero2, Middlesbrough., featuring local poets and performers and including a visit from the Identity on Tyne writers; on the Friday we will have a night of top African Soukous music with Kanda Bongo Man and his dancers and band, at Arc, Stockton; Saturday day time will feature a youth event in Middlesbrough Crypt, featuring young local bands and top DJs, and showcasing Masked Ball - a Creative Partnerships project through which musician Maurice Dezou, dancer/ choreographer Merville Jones and artist/ maker Kate Ryder have worked with students at Manor College of Technology, Hartlepool; Saturday night brings us Tinariwen as outlined; and Tuesday 27th is the WinterFest Comedy Night, featuring comedian Matt Blaize at Club One at the University of Teesside. Finally, on Sunday April 8th, Neville Staples and The Beat will be playing Middlesbrough Town Hall.

Additionally, Middlesbrough Borough Council events team are going to put together a WinterFest event on either the Thursday or Sunday, with yet another top line act - details to be confirmed - watch this space.

It's really great to see the WinterFest growing in this way, with varied events in varied places arranged by varied agencies, all under the WinterFest umbrella.

Get out your glad rags and see you on the dance floor.

Thanks as always are due to our main sponsors - Northern Rock Foundation, Arts Council England North East and Middlesbrough Council.



'There are plenty of bands who know how to rock, but very few who know how to roll. Tinariwen are the masters of roll'n'roll' -

Andy Kershaw

Rowena Sommerville

Education Energise

The innovative partnership between NEPIC and Tees Valley Arts continues.....

Energise is a project for Gifted and Talented pupils' and delegate teachers to work with artists and industry partners to explore the **Fuels of the Future agenda through the arts. The project will explore biofuels, the hydrogen fuel cell, wood as a renewable resource, climate change and aspects of environmental monitoring.**

Pupils will discover their own inspiration and creativity, focusing on the following objectives:

- To develop detailed Knowledge and understanding of the current energy crisis,
- alternative energy sources and the science of structures and materials within a complex system.
- To appreciate the moral, ethical and environmental implications of the energy crisis for industry past, present and in the future.
- To understand and develop a sense of individual, local, national and global responsibility for our planet.
- To develop communication, enquiry and problem solving skills.
- To develop appreciation of the impact of local and national government on the chemical industry.
- To develop appreciation of the misconceptions of the environmental impact of industry on local communities.
- To understand the reasons behind potential conflicts between local communities, industry and energy supplies.

We will achieve this through:

- Inspirational and informative visits to relevant industrial partner sites for pupils, teachers and the artists. The visits will broaden the pupils' experience and understanding of the environmental issues inherent in the Tees Valley and the wider world.
- Workshops will expand pupils' learning through creative processes and creative media. Culminating in an exhibition of Sculptural designs and Marquette's created by the pupils with the artists.
- Workbooks created by the pupils' for the enrichment of their peers. To be distributed to all secondary schools. To be designed and printed by a professional design company.

The above resources will be created through exploration and consolidation of their knowledge of future energy developments.



Janette Pratt



Evolve

After a tremendous response of twenty-nine applications, eighteen schools were selected to host Evolve residencies during the spring term of 2007.

These residencies feature creative writing, drama and dance workshops that develop new approaches to teaching the national science curriculum with arts-based activities.

Residencies explore a diverse range of science curriculum subjects including forces and movement, solids, liquids and gases, habitats, electricity and reproduction!

Rather than cover tried and tested topics, several schools have targeted subject matter that often poses problems for teachers such as rocks and weathering which can be difficult to teach in an engaging and exciting way. Teachers and artists have targeted these areas specifically; developing arts based activities that can inject excitement and fun into an often mundane subject matter.

There has already been a great deal of positive feedback from schools hosting residencies; teachers have observed improvements in children's vocabulary and retention of information. Teachers have also commented on how the workshops are reinforcing and consolidating science lessons. One teacher has been extremely pleased with the project and has said that she would "recommend it to anyone".

Tim Coyte

Gallery TS1 is an NRF programme initiated by Middlesbrough Council's Cultural Services Department. Managed by Tees Valley Arts and delivered by Twister Arts, the project is designed to excite, engage and teach employability skills to young people from Middlesbrough. In 2005/6 90% of those trained in Gallery TS1 went on to find training or jobs.

The gallery will be open from Tuesday - Saturday 10 am til 4pm from 27th February - 10th March and 3rd April - 14th April selling Jewellery and Accessories, gifts for Easter and regional images and cards.

Gallery TS1

Virtual Valley



School pupils were given the chance to take over a Middlesbrough gallery for one night as part of an innovative work experience project.

The pupils, who are studying art, spent a week helping to produce a virtual art installation.

And they were given the chance to showcase their work at a special event at Gallery TS1 on Corporation Road.

To give them the true experience of working as an artist, they had to clean up after their event as well!

The pupils, from St Patrick's School in Thornaby and Our Lady and St Bede's School in Stockton, spent a week working on the installation entitled The Virtual Valley. The students used work produced by professional artists Michelle Cook and David Allinson as the basis of the installation which looks at the Tees Valley in the past, present and future.

They spent time on trips around the area to get inspiration for the project, including a plane flight over the Tees Valley.

The schools project was funded by Creative Partnerships Tees Valley.

Mike McGrother, manager of Gallery TS1, said: "The project looks at how creativity and art can be used in different ways. These are young people who are looking at becoming artists for a career and they have been able to work with the artists and look at how creative practices can be used in different ways. We have put that across in a journey which will see them taking over the gallery. They have to make it ready for use, which gives them experience in employability skills, and they have to be involved with setting up and clearing up so they know that this is part of an artist's line of work."