

October – December 2004

news



tees valley arts **21st**

Annual General Meeting

**Thursday 14th October 2004, The Arc,
Dovecot Street, Stockton**

This year's AGM was held at Arc in Stockton. An excellent buffet was provided and attendees were invited to meet more informally, later, in the bar. There was also an opportunity for company members to stay on and attend the Comedy Night, "Catch 22".

In her report, Director, Lesley Featherstone summarised the organisation's new focus, adopted in July 2003 and identified some of

the key challenges that would be faced by the organisation in both the short and long terms. The development of strategic partnerships would widen **tees valley arts'** ability to work in new areas, in ways that were in tune with Tees Valley priorities, and would also help to increase funding resources for cultural projects. **tees valley arts** is currently working with a Fundraising Consultant, Clive Rawson, to analyse the situation and co-ordinate a fundraising strategy.

Phoenix Art Group Exhibition with Gail Henderson

Phoenix are a group of people who have experienced mental health difficulties, and all of whom have artistic skills and aspirations. They have recently been exhibiting work produced with visual artist Gail Henderson. The exhibition looked at gender issues relating to use of the female form and self identity and was a strong and bold statement, and a declaration of the group's interests and abilities.

Gail's work shows a strong sense of issue-led direction, and it was evident from the work produced that the group responded to this with great energy and sense of purpose.

The Arc in Stockton was temporarily transformed by the space-changing installation of large group works (with some smaller individual pieces) and many people commented favourably on it.

Phoenix also recently exhibited another group of works, 'Sounds of Flowers', in a shop window in the Dundas Arcade, Middlesbrough as part of Arts Week for Everyone.



gallery TS1 "making not breaking"

Initiated by Middlesbrough Council's Cultural Services Team and managed by **tees valley arts**, gallery TS1 was a resounding success in terms of allowing young people to experience high quality arts practice, raising their aspirations and allowing them to contribute to the cultural renaissance of Middlesbrough TS1.

gallery TS1 was an arts apprenticeship scheme for young people, operating in central Middlesbrough throughout the summer holiday period 2004. The project broadly aimed to motivate and inspire young people through cutting edge creative arts opportunities, developing skills, revealing talent and building self-confidence through training and 'work type' experience. Working with a team of artists and business support workers, the trainees learnt how to make and market a variety of craft products. Sales were good and many commissions were received to produce personalised pieces of work. The comments book attests to the public support of and delight in the project.

"Classy, original merchandise produced by talented young artists from the area. Bravo! – more please."

gallery TS1 was incredibly successful as a model to create positive work experience for young people who could be classed as 'hard to reach'. The attendance, punctuality, levels of retention of participants on the course and assessments of their achievement, far outperformed national averages recorded by training providers. gallery TS1 exceeded all of its targets. The response from the trainees, the artists, partners, stakeholders and the public alike has been universally positive and Middlesbrough Council and **tees valley arts** are committed to developing the project further, ensuring that more young people in Middlesbrough and potentially throughout the Tees Valley get the opportunity to participate.

Creative Education Fair drop in

information and networking
event open to all schools and
teachers in the Tees Valley.



The Creative Education Fair held during October at SPARK, a Space for the Arts based in Stockton, provided an opportunity for teachers from all Tees Valley schools to meet with a variety of agencies who develop and manage creative education projects in the Tees Valley, to meet local artists who have experience of working in educational settings and to research information on funding available for creative education projects.

Organisations present included **tees valley arts**, Arc, Cleveland Theatre Company, Tees Valley Dance, Individuals, the Arts Council, ArtisanCam, Busy Ape Arts, local artists and representatives from Local Authority Arts Teams. 100 people attended the event and there was a lively atmosphere, as people made contact, creative seeds were sown, ideas and opportunities were exchanged.

The Creative Education Fair was organised by The Arts Education Forum, Tees Valley, a group of organisations who work in the arts and education, which aims to broker partnerships that promote the development of creative education in Tees Valley schools and communities. The Forum aims to improve communications between agencies, promote the sharing of resources and the development of evidence to support the value of creative education. The Forum provides a focus for dialogue and debate about the potential of creative education in the Tees Valley.

Creative Education promotes learning through creative personal expression. It enriches the school curriculum and develops the whole individual towards lifelong appreciation and skills development.

the MUSE Programme



Professional Development for Teachers

As part of the Tees Valley Creative Partnerships Programme **tees valley arts** delivered stage two of a creative programme for school staff across the Tees Valley. During March and September 2004, schools were provided with a series of opportunities to contribute to the development of creative skills amongst staff working alongside experienced arts practitioners. The courses came together for two full days in March and September at Eston City Learning Centre and Darlington Arts Centre. Following the success of the first two MUSE days with Creative Partnership schools in March, the September courses were open to all schools in the Tees Valley.

Eston City Learning Centre hosted a day of Introductory Courses, which were applicable to all areas of the curriculum. Darlington Arts Centre offered a day of Cross Curricular Courses aimed specifically at non arts subjects being taught in a creative and imaginative way through a particular art form.

The courses aimed to look at new ways for children to present, learn and recollect lessons and to give teachers an experience of new ways of delivering the curriculum.

Each session included practical workshops, consultation and discussion.

Artist led workshops were delivered in dance, drama, music, literature, batik and visual art in a professional development opportunity for participants to develop new creative skills that could be developed within their own lessons.

A consultant led discussion directly followed the workshops looking at building up focussed project ideas and highlighting issues, both positive and negative, relating to the participants' teaching and their attitude towards developing creative, cultural and artistic education within their lessons.

The evaluation throughout the programme helped to inform the content of the courses and has provided an invaluable insight into the school staffs' views upon preferred professional development programmes.

The Consultants report concluded that over 90% of attendees strongly agreed that the delivery of the event was highly professional; the event was enjoyable and contributed in a positive way to their personal development and the quality of the learning experience was high.



The Perfect Garden Hartlepool Warrior Women Hartlepool Eco festival

The Perfect Garden project was designed by a group of women from Hartlepool.

The women who are all survivors of abuse and domestic violence came together to produce work, which not only reflects their experiences but also is a celebration of their lives now.

The concept of The Perfect Garden grew from the idea of how we may be down trodden, but if our roots are not destroyed we are able to grow back stronger.

The Perfect Garden is a place where we can find sanctuary and peace.

The women, using photography and digital techniques with the support of Artists Helen and Julie Ward, created three banners which were shown in an empty shop window in the Dundas Arcade, Middlesbrough as part of Arts Week For Everyone. The Banners and Garden attracted considerable attention from local press and television. A visit to Belsay Hall in Northumberland resulted in the production of the 3 banners, which were first hung at the Hartlepool ECO festival. The women took photos with disposable cameras and digitally manipulated the images to produce the banners, which represent themselves in their perfect gardens. The group also built a garden at the ECO festival that became a tranquil respite and attracted a lot of attention. Focus DIY donated all materials and furnishings.

The work of this group goes from strength to strength and its members have been involved in activities they would not have previously thought possible. **For further information regarding the work of the group visit www.warriorwomen.org.uk**

The Hartlepool ECO festival took place on the Town Moor in Hartlepool in September and was an event where the whole family could learn all about ecology and recycling comprising of workshops, hands on activities, displays and exhibitions in five large themed tents, enviro-world, holistic world, crafts world, youth world and music world.

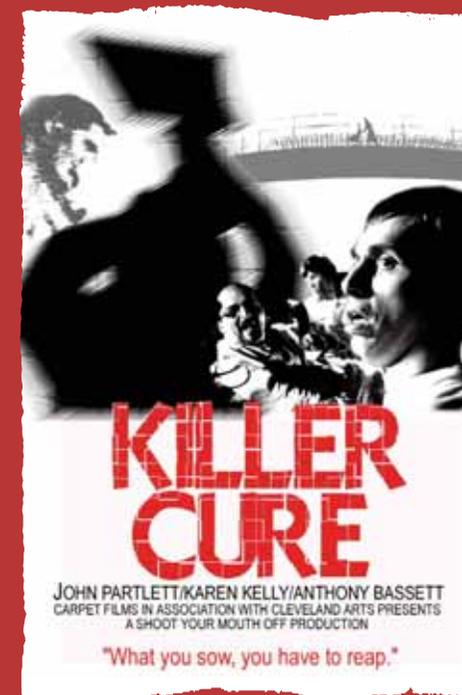
The festival also included work produced by the Hartlepool Teenage Parents Creative Writing project including their own illustrated children's stories and T-shirts.



killercure

on show in

Moscow



The Shoot Your Mouth Off disabled film-maker's group had one of its productions screened in Moscow in November at the 2nd Moscow International Disability Film Festival.

Shoot Your Mouth Off was represented in Moscow by its project manager Karen Sheader and Derek Mathews, film-maker for Carpet Films, who made *Killer Cure*, the film screened at the Russian Festival.

Killer Cure is a black comedy/horror film in which disabled people, played by actors from the group (John Partlett, Karen Kelly, Anthony Bassett and John Billon), are kidnapped by a mad woman who wants to 'cure' them of their disabilities using a variety of methods including hammers, knives and shovels. The film is a broadcast quality production written and directed by Steve Carolan of Carpet

Films. It has already been shown at the National Film Theatre in London, the Leeds International Short Film Festival and at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts. Caglar Kinyoncu, who selected *Killer Cure* to be part of the 5th Disability Film Festival in London, described the film as a 'model of excellent practice.'

In a strange twist of fate Karen Sheader, from Hartlepool, who played the part of the mad woman who kidnapped the disabled people by snatching them as they sat alone in their wheelchairs, has herself become a wheelchair user in the past two months.

Copies of Killer Cure are available, priced £15 for DVD and £10 from [tees valley arts](http://teesvalleyarts.com).



tees valley arts is a cultural education agency which operates throughout the Tees Valley, to lead cultural education across the region through developing partnerships for delivering innovative creative programmes. For more information about these and other projects please contact **tees valley arts**.

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