

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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Autumn Newsletter 2006



Wave continues!
The heat!

Wow what a summer we've had... endless blue skies and unprecedented temperatures. TVA Head Quarters has felt a bit like a green house - but like all good green houses it has produced fruitful growth!

Since our last newsletter, TVA has been full steam ahead. Major initiatives have included the development and submission of our 0.5 Million Pound BIG Lottery bid for the **INSPIRE** programme. This strategic programme proposes three distinct strands of working with and through the Health and Well Being agenda by approaching mind and body holistically through participation in the arts. Rowena Sommerville; currently managing TVA's Community Programme has spent considerable time and energy building the supporting partnerships that have enabled such a groundbreaking project to go forward. Fingers crossed for a successful outcome!

A strengthening relationship with Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council is also seeing some ambitious projects and none more than the development of a Film and Media hub (working title Red Carpet) for young people in association with Jackie Phillips and Ian Dowson from **Subzero Productions** and **Northern Film & Media**. Read more about this initiative in Rowena's Community Programme report.

Meanwhile Janette Pratt has spent most of July in the South West (part business, part pleasure!) and between swimming off the Devon and Cornish coast (and getting a lovely tan); she managed to attend a very interesting environmental art conference entitled '**Artful Ecologies**' at Falmouth College of Art & Design. She has also successfully organised a work placement for herself at the internationally renowned **Eden Project**. Both these professional development opportunities support the development of TVA's new Heritage and Environment Programme which Janette will be taking forward in association with Tees Valley partners. Janette expands about her experiences inside...

Just so that I am not left out of all the fun (Rowena is currently at Edinburgh Fringe researching for **Winterfest 2007!**) I will be jetting off to Tempere in Southern Finland with locally based poets; Andy Willoughby and Bob Beagrie to commence with plans to develop a **Culture 2007** project entitled 'Textlines'. This project will invite poets, musicians and visual artists to respond to the social and physical heritage of each others' countries via a three year cultural exchange programme. (Wish me luck as I've heard they make the local liquor in a washing machine!)

Finally I'd like to thank and congratulate all TVA staff and associate staff for a very productive and inspiring three months. The diversification and step change of TVA has meant that we have been able to appoint Simon Smith as our new full-time **Communications Officer** (congratulations Simon!!!). Simon is now responsible for leading on TVA communication strategies and managing the communications services that TVA make available to all public and private sector partners and community clients.

At this rate - I'm really looking forward to the next three months!



Rosi Lister

TVA go GREEN

Tees Valley Arts are about to launch their new Heritage & Environment Programme with two major Tees Valley Programmes of work:

GREEN TV has forged an initial partnership between TVA, Tees Valley Wildlife Trust and Groundwork Tees Valley (however it is envisaged that this partnership will grow as the programme develops). **GREEN TV** is essentially about two things; environmental education and increased awareness and access to the natural heritage of the Tees Valley through participation in cultural activity. **GREEN TV** will subsequently create:

- An arts-based environmental education programme; Green HeARTS.
- A 'Delivering Art in The Environment' (DATE) support network and web service that will facilitate arts-based professional development opportunities amongst environmental education practitioners. It will also promote and support good practice in terms of delivering art and cultural activity in environmental contexts.
- A Green Map of Art in the Environment sites and site-based activity or events

HERITAGE COAST is in an early developmental phase with potential partnerships between TVA and Redcar & Cleveland and Hartlepool Borough Councils, Tees Archaeology, English Heritage, North York Moors National Park, Tees Archdeaconry and the Tees Valley Tourism Bureau. The Heritage Coast project will add value to existing Heritage Venues and Maritime Festivals by facilitating a 'Cultural Heritage' education programme and coordinated support for community based cultural events both new and existing. The project will join the Tees Coastal Arc with that of North East Yorkshire to Whitby. Watch out for updates as this project develops... Contact Janette for more information.

TEXTLINES across Europe

TVA are about to go European through a Tees Valley UK - Finland - Holland 'cooperation'!

The Textlines project will build upon the partnership links already developed by Poets Andy Willoughby and Bob Beagrie in Tempere in Southern Finland and the Dutch Haag. The three year project will enable three groups of professional artists; Poets, Musicians and Visual Artists, to visit each of the three participating countries and make individual and collective creative responses to the social and physical environments they encounter on this triadic journey. Particular significance will be given to the cross cultural interpretation of heritage and the commonality and difference of what we call place.

The project will include a performance programme, a cross-country mentoring programme and a fully translated cultural resource that will be made available to the three European country library services. Planned start date... Summer 2007...

Contact Rosi Lister or Andy or Bob at TVA HQ (usual contact details)

Community Programme



This is a phase of networking, planning and applying for future funding. We are working with the Northern Rock Foundation and Arts Council England, North East to design and establish the future of the **WinterFest World Culture Festival**. We hope that WinterFest 07 will take place in March 07 - it will probably be similar in scale to WinterFest 06 - but plans for 08 and 09 are bigger, better, wider, deeper.... We do believe that the WinterFest will become a notable feature of and contribution to local cultural life.

Community Programme Plans

A major application (the **Inspire Programme**) has been submitted to the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, for activities over three years to work across the Tees Valley in three participant areas - '**Wellbeing**' will work with people with mental health difficulties, physical and/or learning difficulties; '**Sorted**' will work with people with substance abuse issues, or otherwise involved in the criminal justice system; and '**You Are Here**' will work with refugees and people seeking asylum and in the general area of cultural diversity. We'll know in a few months time - fingers crossed!

As a precursor to '**Sorted**', we have run a short project with Addaction Middlesbrough, working with people who have had histories of chronic drug abuse. Poet Andy Croft and musician Maurice Dezou worked with a small group of people and helped them devise a short performance piece. The resultant performance was stunning, and allowed this very conflicted group of people to present themselves in a new light and explain some of how they came to be where they now find themselves. It was very moving, and once again revealed what we believe, that all kinds of unlikely people in all kinds of unfortunate circumstances have talents that can grow and shine when allowed space and support.

Another initiative in its early days is provisionally entitled '**Redcarpet**' - we are working with Ian Dowson and Jackie Phillips of **Sub Zero Film Productions** and Joanne Hodgson of Redcar and Cleveland Arts Development to look at the possibility of setting up a community based film academy/ suite of equipment/ bank of expertise to work with young people in Redcar and Cleveland, using film as a method of engagement, exploration, skills acquisition, and vocational accreditation

Watch this space.....

Rowena Sommerville
August 2006

Community Programme News

In June the **You Are Here** project ran two events to celebrate national Refugee Week, in collaboration with the North of England Refugee Service, African Arts Association and MIMA. The first was an evening at Sassari's with various bands, including a Peruvian salsa band - it's not every day you can say that.... and showing short films and animations. Sadly, given that it was a great night's entertainment, it clashed with Outer Mongolia versus Liechtenstein in the World Cup (how long ago does that seem now?) and attracted a disappointingly small, though very appreciative, audience.

The following Saturday we put on three acts in the town centre - Kurdish Dancers, Young Riders, Tees Valley World Drummers - and attracted crowds of hundreds. The whole occasion was friendly, relaxed and positive and it was cheering to see small children accompanying their parents round shops clutching Refugee Week balloons - education by stealth!

Really big crowds enjoyed the Kurds - many of whom seemed to resemble Elvis Presley, which helped; the Young Riders drew their usual adoring following and impressed many more; and Tees Valley World Drummers created infectious rhythms, enlivening the Saturday afternoon trudge round the shops. It was all really enjoyable and positive.





July marked the end of this current phase of the **small world: Big Drums** creative writing and music performance group for people with physical disabilities, learning difficulties and mental health issues living across the Tees Valley.

small world: Big Drums

Both elements of the project has helped support the participants' creativity in music and creative writing to the point where the music group has been able to perform at various mainstream community events across the region, culminating in their last performance, headlining the "Music Sparks" disability performance event at The Sage Gateshead. "The group has developed and written all of their own music, which has given the members a great sense of ownership over the work they have created. This in turn has boosted the individuals' self esteem, confidence and also given members of the group a renewed focus in their own individual creativity".

Bob Beagrie, one of the artists working with the creative writers group commented,

"The writing group, because it was a small group, allowed Andy Willoughby and myself to work intensely with the members over a significant period of time. Some of the members required close working relationships, and the group acted as a support mechanism for the members, providing not only an outlet for their thoughts and feelings, but also as a support mechanism for their lives. The quality and quantity of writing that emerged from the group was staggering. We were able to develop a piece of work or a theme across a number of weeks, look at redrafting and editing and explore some very personal issues around disability and social pressure. Some of the work has been published in KENAZ magazine, but there is a body of work that remains unpublished and I feel this would make a very powerful anthology should funds be raised to produce it"

The final project for the **small world: Big Drums**, was a week long residency summer school project working with five special needs schools from across the Tees Valley. Two pupils from each of the five schools involved, were invited to work with musicians Tim Coyte, Andy McCall Smith and Kev Howard, to produce a piece of music which would be performed on the last day of the project. The children proceeded to write two pieces of music over the course of the week, which was documented by filmmaker and photographer Ian Paine, to produce a documentary of the **small world: Big Drums** summer school project.



Saltburn Didgeridu Player Takes Coals To Newcastle (Australia)!

Small world: Big Drums' Co-ordinator Kev Howard, a Didgeridu player, is to embark on a three month visit to Australia in September.

The visit comes about after a successful collaboration with Australian band, The Good - Heather Barnes and Gareth Hudson who come from Newcastle, New South Wales. The Good were based in the UK in 2004 and 2005 when they met Kev and they recently returned to complete an extensive UK tour with Kev.

In the first part of his visit Kev will be performing in a Rock Opera, The Shining Isle at the Civic Playhouse, Newcastle in October. The Shining Isle is a new rock opera created by composer/musician Gareth Hudson (The Good) and lyricist/writer Nick Higginbotham. Using the energy of a live rock show, and the sentiments of an opera, the Shining Isle is an action, adventure and love story about the battle between the forces of creation and destruction. In this musical, the normally invisible world of the gods suddenly collides with the lives of today's Newcastle (Australia) teenagers.

In the second part of his visit, Kev will be touring at venues across Australia, with The Good.

Kev commented "As a Didgeridu player, I've performed at venues and festivals, nationally and internationally but this will be the first time that I've actually visited the home of the didgeridu - Australia and I'm really excited about the opportunity"

The Good's Gareth Hudson commented about Kev "Hearing Kev play didge at the Whitby Regatta was an amazing moment. I'd never heard anybody play didgeridu like that, even in Australia."

Middlesbrough Music Live

Tees Valley Arts and Twister Arts recently collaborated with Middlesbrough Borough Council and Ten Feet Tall to deliver festival and events training to 50 unemployed young people from across the Tees Valley. In an aim to build capacity for festival employment, the training looked at all aspects of large scale festival delivery including technical crafts, marketing, performance and documentation. The young people worked with staff from Ten Feet Tall, Middlesbrough Council and the festival itself in an intensive two week, accredited programme.



Funded by Connexions' Kick Start Programme, the idea was to introduce participants to the notion that the arts, far from, being an attractive 'add-on', can in fact be the basis and first step for a host of different kinds of employment. They came from a variety of backgrounds including : school / college leavers; young carers; young offenders; NEET; and some with learning difficulties. Throughout, such labels were forgotten about as they worked as teams to prepare for the Festival.

The day culminated with a Kick Start stage featuring over 80 young performers and, despite the rain, crowds were massive all day. All 50 young people were employed to work on the day and received payment for a job well done! A film was also produced by the participants and this will be premiered in Gallery TS1 when it re-opens in the coming weeks.

Mike McGrother

Education

Art:works

Three Art:works projects took place over the summer term.

After the success of last year's macabre masterpiece - "The Inheritance" pupils at Gillbrook Technical College have created a new spine-tingling film- "The Puppet".

Working with animator Andrew Liddell, students continued to explore the "Eastern European Grotesque" theme with an eight minute animated film that follows the murderous exploits of a certain sinister looking puppet.

The team of scriptwriters, actors, set designers and film crew have excelled themselves, managing to improve upon their previous high standards.



Pupils from Dormanstown Primary School and felt-maker Louise Drennan have created a large banner that brightens up the school with colourful rainforest animals peering through luscious equatorial foliage.



During an arts week at Yarm Preparatory School children from nursery to Year Six worked with artists Adrian Moule, Rachel Willis, Andy Broderick and Shirley Wells. Taking inspiration from the arts and craft movement, activities included children making wallpaper designs with paint made from natural materials, creating three dimensional images from household waste, making mock "stained glass" panels with transparent materials and creating unique embossed collagraph prints from bog roll!

Children thoroughly enjoyed the experience producing some excellent work which is being displayed in the school.



Tim Coyte



Education Lifecycle

North Road Primary School, Darlington and Ormesby Primary School worked with artists Bob Beagrie and Tim Coyte in July on the project 'Lifecycle' which combined music, technology and creative writing to explore issues related to the environment.

The project came to a conclusion with a sharing of ideas when all children involved performed at Middlesbrough Town Hall on Friday, 14th July. The short performance featured a pedal-powered PA system created especially for the project, poetry recitals and song and dance.



Mike McGrother, project co-ordinator, said "This was an opportunity for the parents of the children to come and enjoy the performance with the children and celebrate their talents and creativity. For some of the children it was a real creative release from the pressures of doing their exams."

Heritage & Environment Programme

In the pursuit of research into the development of the Heritage and Environment Programme, I headed South West to enjoy sun, sea and the Artful Ecologies Conference hosted by the University College Falmouth.

Research in Art, Nature & Environment (RANE) developed a conference exploring the relationship between art and the environment. Using the established category of ecological art, the conference aimed to present and consider particular examples within the framework of holistic thinking and process-based modes of practice. A full programme of events was enjoyed by over 80 delegates from across the UK, which included eight international speakers and a supporting exhibition displaying some current RANE research projects. It proved to be a fascinating experience and has created some interesting developmental opportunities for the Tees Valley Arts programme.

The next adventure takes place at the internationally renowned Eden Project in Cornwall. I have been fortunate in being awarded a professional development placement within their education team and will experience first hand the challenges of such work. This is an excellent opportunity to bring to the region a deepened appreciation of how a venue, which is alive and changing, grows with its visitors and incorporates a varied educational focus.

Elements

Prime Minister Opens Darlington Education Village

The **Elements** project came together for its final celebration, bringing three schools; Beaumont Hill Technology College, Springfield Primary School and Haughton Community School through a journey which investigated art, science and their place in the world using the Wilton site industry as their inspiration. The journey was also physical in the sense that the schools have moved to a new site in Darlington within the Education Village to create one "learning campus" to develop a unique approach to inclusive schools.

The **easi** programme brought together the three schools before they moved to their new site, introducing them to each other's differing interests and abilities. One of the key aims was to help those disparate schools forge a coherent identity. Gifted and talented pupils from Haughton Secondary School joined Year 10 pupils from Beaumont Hill Special School and Year 5 pupils from Springfield Primary School. Together they explored the chemical industries at Wilton. Wilton site visits provided the opportunity for pupils and their artists: a sculptor, dancer, animator and visual artist, to expand their understanding of the history of Wilton and the wider role of the chemical industry on Teesside.

Animator Andrew Liddell developed work with Springfield Primary pupils exploring the history of the Wilton Site, specifically focussing on the social context. Dancer Emma McGurrell from Tin Productions worked with Beaumont Hill Special School developing work based on the processes within the Wilton Site and visual/textile artist Rachel Willis from Bravura worked with the pupils exploring the materials and products of the Wilton Site. Sculptor Andy Comley from Gallum Arts Services worked with Haughton Community School students exploring the themes of transformation and their changing perceptions of the chemical industry, art, themselves, and the world. Filmmaker Ian Paine contributed to the final pieces of work and documented the project.

The subsequent artworks created - an animation; a dance piece, with set design (which was invited to perform at the Gala Theatre, Durham) and the sculptures are captured onto a DVD. This was projected as part of the sculptural installation at the grand opening event for the Education Village at which the Prime Minister Tony Blair was guest of honour. This celebrated the completion of this exciting collaboration between schools and marks their journey forward together as one educational community.

Waveband Premiere - 20th July 2006

Waveband - a fantastic performance of music and dance was given its world premiere at the Arc, Stockton on Thursday 20th July. **Waveband** was an Arts Council funded project that linked young people from across the Tees Valley with professional artists to explore new ways of composing, creating and performing music in schools. This year Tees Valley Arts worked with Branksome School, Darlington and Redcar Community College to realise a piece of music created by Branksome students and English Martyrs students in Hartlepool.



Over the last two years, over 80 young musicians have benefited from the **Waveband** project as new approaches to GCSE composition were developed.

Tees Valley Arts' Project Co-ordinator Mike McGrother commented "**Waveband** is a piece of music which combines rhythm, harmony and experimentation rarely heard played by those of a school age. Facilitated by Tony McNally and Danny Allinson, and a whole host of professional artists and educators, a picture of the River Tees was created for people to enjoy and appreciate".