

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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Winter Newsletter 2007

A note from the Director

At TVA we seem to have all become quite reflective recently. Probably something to do with our 25th Anniversary being on our minds.

I've been thinking about how I got here... how I arrived with the skills and experience that were deemed appropriate to lead TVA into its next quarter century...

I grew up in a house filled with creativity. My siblings and I ate the arts up greedily as children; we slept with it in our heads at night and had it peering over our shoulders as we progressed through school sometimes as muse, sometimes as spectre. I loved (actually love..) to draw and thoroughly enjoyed an exciting spell with John Godber at Hull Truck Theatre in those very early days. I could not, cannot, imagine a life without the Arts. They are a part of my fabric; they influence my thinking, my seeing and pretty much all the rest of my senses. But very often I feel now on the periphery of them - a bit like a curator - buying the ingredients, arranging the utensils but leaving the baking to someone else...

My father started out in his youth as a painter - until his father told him it was an unsuitable career. He subsequently (and again without much parental support) studied architecture in which he excelled. My mother, inherently creative in the crafty sense also wrote prolifically - poetry, short stories and latterly comprehensive manuscripts, none of which have ever seen the light of a publisher's desk. Not because of any lack of talent or competence but because of a lack of confidence. My mother newly arrived from a war torn Germany in her mid twenties applied for a place at Art School. Sadly she was turned away because she was already married to my father. Married women were not considered appropriate student material in the 1950's.

I have realised that in adult life the unfairness of these two occurrences that deeply affected my parents lives, along with my somewhat bohemian upbringing have impacted upon my life quite significantly. Three passions seem to have emerged from and through most of the jobs I have had over the years - and I think these are as a consequence of my realisation that creativity is an inherent part of the human struggle.

I believe in the right of every child and young person to enjoy an intimate relationship with creativity and the arts as a form of self exploration and development.

I believe in the advocacy of the creative industries as valid professional career paths.

I believe in the concept of life long learning and personal creative development for all.

Having returned to education as a mature student myself, and somewhat ironically by this time a 'mum', I chose to leave my 'practice' as a designer behind for a career as an educationalist. I began to look for and find ways of making a difference. This was about the time of the PAT 10 reports on social inclusion and subsequently inclusion projects (mostly but not exclusively through the arts) became my secondary career whilst teaching art and design. Mentoring young people about vibrant careers in the arts also helped me to dispel some of the local urban myths about solitary artists starving in garrets. But I experienced an on-going struggle with careers staff who consistently wanted to direct 'arty' pupils only into floristry or hairdressing!

We have come a long way in the last decade (or two) - the creative industries are now stamped with a seal of approval by those that know they are the fastest growing sector of the economy in the UK. But, plenty still haven't heard yet - our work is not yet done.

In the Tees Valley we have plenty of work still to do in order to support the artists who want to stay here (or arrive here) and develop their careers.

At TVA we are working hard on the idea of being able to offer all children and young people progressive and stimulating creative experiences - as a matter of course... In many cases we are using the Young Peoples Arts Award as a way of bringing additional 'credit' to a young person's record of achievement and provide them with a passport to further creative progression. We continue to find new ways of engaging young people with and through the arts - especially those young people who have perhaps lost sight of the future and of hope.

We are also collaborating with the University of Teesside to ensure a consistent programme of professional development for artists and would-be arts managers in the Tees Valley.

We want to build momentum - we want to increase demand - we want to make sure that everyone who pursues an interest or a career in the arts receives the right opportunities, advice and support they need... easily... and under one roof.

Read further about some of our exciting initiatives and how they are building real opportunities for a more 'Creative' Tees Valley.



Rosi Lister
Executive Director

Programme Notes

Change - but not decay! - has been all around us in this last three months. I am delighted to say that I have been appointed as Director of Programmes, leading and shaping TVA's delivery programme. It's a wonderful opportunity and a big stretch, and certainly gives me plenty to think about, as we embrace the artistic, financial and social challenges of the 21st century (why, I may have said something like that in my interview presentation....). I've also been away on tour with my band, Henwen, and the Bard of Barnsley, Ian McMillan. This all went very well and had several highlights, including singing live on the Fred McAuley Show on Radio Scotland via a mobile phone whilst parked in a lay-by somewhere in Norfolk (ah the glamour), and participating in the Lincoln Sausage Festival - it's important to have artistic ambition.

Back at the ranch, we've continued to deliver Gallery TS1 for Middlesbrough Council - shop early for Christmas - and our usual variety of unlikely, exciting, innovative and life-enhancing activities, with the varied population and communities of the Tees Valley. We're also beavering away building new partnerships and re-inforcing old ones, looking at new ways of working and new ways of generating/ maintaining income - all this given a new imperative since the recent, unforeseen and unforeseeable, butterfly effect of financial disasters in the region.

Of course TVA has moved into our new suite of rooms at Melrose House, and also held our very successful 25th Anniversary event - both of which will be covered elsewhere in the newsletter - but here's to the future, for TVA and for the region.

Rowena Sommerville
Director of Programmes

Andy Broderick - Hartlepool Schools Residency

Gifted and Talented children from West View, Barnard Grove, Clavering and St. Helen's Primary schools, Hartlepool, are working with visual artist, Andy Broderick, exploring what it is to be an artist! Pupils have studied Andy's work, looking at what inspired him to become an artist and how he came about this; they are developing their own individual artwork and working in groups to create exciting art that will be displayed in their schools.

The project aims to raise aspirations and promote self-esteem through creativity, whilst signposting the arts as a potential career path.

Layfield Primary School Mosaic

Families at Layfield Primary School, Yarm are excavating through layers of history, digging up subject matter for a large scale mosaic mural which will be installed in the school dining hall. Ceramicist Derek Mosey is leading workshops creating a view of Yarm High Street which will depict a number of scenes; local wildlife and the horse fair will be featured with the fantastic viaduct stretching across the entire vista; each arch of the viaduct will encapsulate a time window into the past.

One of the aims of the project has been to encourage family groups into the school, this has been extremely successful and the school are now looking to recruit more families into the project.



Art:works

Art:works is currently developing projects that will provide CPD (Continuing Professional Development) for teachers. Courses will focus on developing creative skills for teaching staff with mixed levels of skill and experience, building confidence and disseminating practical activities that can be incorporated into everyday learning provision.

Art:works

2007-08 Higher Apprenticeships in Arts Management

We are about to shortlist for our 2nd cohort of Tees Valley Higher Apprentices in Arts Management and are pleased to be able to report we have received 140 applications for the 4 places that will be funded through the Cultural Skills Development Initiative administered by the Arts Council England North East.

The shortlisting panel - made up of Jenny Hall, Middlesbrough Council, Kevin Edwards, Darlington Council, Lisa Corbett, Arts Council England North East and Rosi Lister and Rowena Sommerville, TVA will sit down at the end of November to whittle the applications down to 16 who will then be invited for interview.

Due to some funding changes the scheme will be pro rata three days per week and a coordinator (to be based within TVA) will be appointed shortly.

The HAAM scheme was originally set up by the Tees Valley Strategic Arts Officers as a way of increasing the pool of experienced arts development professionals in the Tees Valley area. The work-based graduate training approach is a model now being explored by some of our HE partners as a possible way forward for the Cultural Sector to develop its higher level skills. TVA is working productively with Universities for the North East and the University of Teesside to help make this a reality.

Last year's apprentices are now involved in a variety of arts development work - Ruth Raynor is working with Arts & Business in Newcastle, Jill Heslop continues to help out at the Stockton based Tees Music Alliance and Scott Illingworth is supporting Middlesbrough Council's Arts Development team on a variety of initiatives. Claire and Kit have both moved away from the area - Claire back to Scotland and Kit to Manchester to work on event related contracts.

Good Luck to them all!

Walk

Walk the Walk

Creative writing duo Bob Beagrie and Andy Willoughby worked 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 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! It was uplifting to watch, and we all wish the young women well for their futures. Many thanks to the unit for all their support.

The project was funded by TVA and Creative Partnerships.



Travelogue

Film maker Ellie Land has 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 has been funded by a 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'.

The films will be 'premiered' at a public showing at the Community Cinema in Saltburn.



Para

Parachute

Creative activities with young asylum seekers and refugees and their families, funded through the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, are continuing - we are about to begin creative writing with the Stockton Youth group - looking at myths and fairy tales from a variety of cultures; we're currently recruiting for a musician to work with a group of (predominantly) young Africans; Gassan Mohammed (originally from Iraq) is working with youngsters within the Nawroz Kurdish group, making a ceramic wall piece; and Adrian Moule has been working with the Stockton girls' group, adding some artistry to their cooking group. Apparently he has shown them how to make a simple animation based on a turnip! Very simple indeed one would imagine, but apparently the turnip got quite lively.....



Gallery TS1

The November Gallery has just finished, and the next will begin on the 6th December - now, what could be better - original, exciting, creative, good value gifts, and offering encouragement to local youths at the same time. You know you want to!



The November Gallery placed artists Nicola Parkin, Adrian Moule and Antonia Clark with 'shopkeeper' Rob Vickers, and the young participants made cards, flowers, bags, prints, photographs, jewellery..... a resounding success as always. Gallery TS1 is such an excellent initiative, especially now it's incorporating the Arts Award, and it is a good feeling to be able offer such a good and 'restorative' opportunity to young people whose lives have already proved challenging.



Don't forget to buy 'lovely fun exciting things' for your fun, exciting loved ones this Christmas.



Arts Award: Adviser Training Centre

TVA is thrilled to be working in partnership with the regional Arts Award Agency, Theatre-Cap-A-Pie, and will shortly be awarded an Adviser Training Licence.

The Arts Award is central to many of our new initiatives, providing an opportunity to accredit young people's achievement when participating in the creative arts. For the 'uninitiated' the Arts Award comes in three levels - Bronze, Silver and Gold. Each level is QCA approved and sits on the National Qualifications Framework being proportionally equivalent to performance thresholds at levels one, two and three. The award represents a real step forward for young people and especially for those young people who have, for what ever reason become disengaged with mainstream education and need to get back onto the ladder.

The demand for trained Arts Award Advisers is growing - due to the expanding utilisation of the award in all kinds of community and educational settings. TVA will now be able to offer in-house as well as nationally coordinated adviser training - see the website www.artsaward.org.uk for more information both about the Arts Award itself and for training days coming up locally.

Arts Award