



Winter eNewsletter 2010

Opening remarks...

The north wind doth blow
And we shall have snow
And what will we artists do then, poor things

We'll hide in a barn
And keep ourselves warm
And wait for the flowers of spring, poor things
We'll pray for the flowers of spring

Well, those icy blasts are a-blowin', the answer doesn't seem to be a-blowin' with them, the times are definitely a-changin', and how many roads must an arts administrator walk down before she can be sure she's covered her core costs? (Bob – where are you when we need you?)

TVA has been working away like billy-oh as usual, and the project officers will update you on activity in their various bits of the newsletter. The programme headlines are that Jane has been successful with her application to Comic Relief for work in partnership with Barnardo's with young people at risk of exploitation, activity to begin shortly; that Joe has continued to book coaches, erect gazebos and garner excellent press coverage for Green TV (and save the Planet); that Tim has continued to deliver the stART project to vulnerable young people in Middlesbrough and to help them achieve a bit of self-respect and pride; and that Maurice has continued to run the Musicmix project and to meet with and offer support and guidance to numerous people from varied backgrounds.

We've submitted a large-scale application for creative activities with young people in the care of the local authority, in partnership with all five Tees Valley boroughs, so fingers crossed on that one – such a challenging and deserving group of young people, with whom these interventions can make such a huge and positive difference; and we're developing other partnerships and projects as always.

I've attended several sessions of my Leadership in Cultural Diversity course with Dr Nima Poovaya Smith and Baroness Lola Young – fascinating stuff. For the second session we began the day with a screening of 'Eye of the Storm', the film about teacher Jane Elliott and her third grade class in Riceville, Iowa in 1968. Following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Ms Elliott wanted to make discrimination real for her class of white small town kids, so she divided them up into 'blue eyes' and 'brown eyes', and proceeded to privilege one group above the other.



Opening remarks...



She categorised all protest or resistance as 'typical of those pesky brown eyes', denied the brown-eyes access to the playground equipment or to seconds at lunch, and repeated the 'fact' that brown-eyes were known to be troublesome, slow-witted and dishonest. In no time at all the brown-eyes were all depressed underachievers, and the blue-eyes were saying that the brown-eyes might benefit from being hit with a big stick.

Frightening stuff, and not easy to watch.

This particular session was led by Karen Murphy of People Facing History who asked us all to introduce ourselves by telling the group something about our names – their meaning, their significance to us, our identification (or not) with them; this was very interesting and very revealing. Once the whole group had done this, she pointed out that we had the luxury of being able to do this in a country and situation where giving our names didn't immediately make someone else want to kill or harm us – a sobering thought.



Someone who has some experience of those issues as they are lived is Gassan Mohammed, now a UK citizen living in Middlesbrough with his wife and children, but previously from Iraq. Gassan was a professional sculptor in Iraq, when he was able to practise his craft, but has had to rebuild his life, including his professional and creative activities, since settling here.



Gassan has recently finished his Masters' Degree in Future Arts at Teesside University, where his work was on show last month. Gassan based his work on the flying machines of Leonardo da Vinci, making engines of flight out of wood and rope; he wanted to express his feelings about the hope of travel, the dream of flight, and to make flying machines that would not be engines of war. His work is absolutely beautiful.

Gassan says, 'This project represents a story that has never stopped and never ended. Through the ages people have tried to achieve their dreams and ambitions. My dream machines are an attempt to represent millions of people who cannot achieve their dream in their home land but who are still dreaming that their dream will come true. However they cannot physically follow their dreams in their own different dream lands. I see my dream machines not as physical forms of transport but as symbols of spiritual desire to cross all barriers and boundaries'.



Gassan's work demonstrates the triumph of the creative spirit – let's hope we can all muster up some of that while we huddle from the storm.



Rowena Sommerville
Director, TVA



Education

What do you see?



Would you agree that all the pictures were a chair, even if it's in different positions, including upside down?

What do you see now?

p b d q



Education



This was the wonderfully simple, but visual and creative way in which Alan Heath demonstrated how difficult children can find it when learning to read and write; a chair is always a chair, no matter what the position, but a 'p' suddenly becomes a 'b', a 'd' or a 'q' – no wonder they're confused!

I was able to attend Alan's seminar at Special Needs London thanks to a bursary from Creative Partnerships, through my Creative Agent role. Two days in October were filled with eight seminars, excellent speakers (bar one, but let's not dwell), an insight into learning and teaching for children and young people with Special Needs and plenty of caffeine to keep going, not to mention a wonderful opportunity to meet up with friends in London during the evening - I get to see them far too rarely these days.

Since attending I've written up notes, and will put them into some sort of sensible order and get them onto the website, so, if SEN is an area you're interested in, take a look over the next few months.

Celebrations

In the last newsletter I mentioned the Getting It and Moving On projects, which have now ended (although we're working on that – see What's New) but we had a couple of wonderful celebration events to mark and share the successes of all the young people involved. Moving On (with the Leaving Care Team in Darlington) enjoyed an exhibition of their work at Darlington Arts Centre, with His Worshipful The Mayor Bryan Thistlethwaite presenting the group with their Bronze Arts Awards. It was all quite wonderful and rather emotional, and we wish the young people every success in their future – there was a lot of talent and potential in that room.

Thanks to artists Vicky Holbrough and Nicola Parkin and to Michael Burlison and Alan Welsh of the Leaving Care Team, and to Awards for All and Positive Activities for Young People at Darlington Council for funding the project.

The glorious Hartlepool Art Gallery was the setting for the Getting It celebration (with teenage mums & mums-to-be in Hartlepool). The DVD was screened and photographs exhibited for participants, their babies (including a very new baby at 11 days old!) and families, and colleagues from the Council, NHS & Tees Valley Arts. I doubt there were many dry eyes in the house, and the work produced was remarkable – they didn't have many sessions (only 12) and yet produced stunning creative writing (now in a booklet) and a DVD using that written work which will be used across schools in Hartlepool for education purposes – quite an impact! Go to www.youtube.com/worldfest2009 to see the DVD.

Thanks to artists Andy Willoughby, Bob Beagrie, Kev Howard and Ian Paine and to Deborah Gibbin and Gail Nicholson of the Hartlepool Teenage Pregnancy Partnership. Thanks also to Hartlepool NHS Primary Care Trust Public Health Grant Scheme & Hartlepool Voluntary Development Agency.

What's New?

We're all celebrating the wonderful news from Comic Relief that we were successful in our bid to work in partnership with Barnardo's, delivering a range of arts activities with young people who access their services, and who may be at risk of sexual exploitation. It's a two year programme and young people



Education



will be creating/ making/ producing their own work alongside professional artists and working towards their Bronze Arts Award. We'll be starting in December, and will feature work/ progress/ information on the website and in the next newsletters.

Big Sky Arts is about to start a new phase, building on the wonderful CD created earlier in the year (go to www.teesvalleyarts.org.uk/TVAInclusionCaseStudies.html to listen). This time around, we'll be working on live performance, and hope to link in with any performance opportunities in Hartlepool around late February time – if you know of any, please get in touch!

Pudsey Bear is currently very busy looking at our application to develop the work with teenage mums and mums-to-be in Hartlepool – we submitted to Children in Need a couple of weeks ago, and will have a final decision by February.

I'm now working with 4 schools as part of my Creative Agent role with Creative Partnerships, so it's all pretty busy.

Arts Award News

Happy Birthday to you...Arts Award has just celebrated it's 5th birthday and since it was born, over 35,000 young people have achieved awards. Go to the facebook page to join in the celebrations... <http://www.facebook.com/artsaward>

We're sure you've all heard, but just to shout it from the rooftops, Arts Award Gold now has 35 UCAS points attached to it, so young people applying for University from 2011 can use it as part of the points they need. But, just as important for anyone working with young people is that Bronze is on the Foundation Learning Tier and holds 6 credit value points. For more information about the qualification information go to <http://www.artsaward.org.uk/site/?id=1971>

We're delighted to now be 'Arts Award Welcome', which means that more organisations and young people will know that we're able to support young people to achieve their Awards in a variety of ways. You'll be able to see us on the Arts Award Welcome map <http://www.artsaward.org.uk/centre/welcomemap.php> and on our website shortly.

We've been busy delivering more Bronze/ Silver public and in-house training for advisers, and have delivered our very first Gold training – so here's to more young people of the Tees Valley achieving their awards.



Jane Gray
Education Officer





Heritage & Environment



When thinking of what to write for the newsletter, I have been reflecting on Green TV - since TVA got the nod from the HLF for Green TV back in March, one thing that stands out is that time truly flies! And now that we are into the winter, I've used that as an analogy - I think Green TV is like the seasons, and this is why:

Spring: plants and creatures starting to bud, grow and emerge, and so did Green TV - springing into life from its dormant state of words on paper and computer screens

Summer: like so many plants and indeed certain insects at this time of year, Green TV established itself out there (in its habitat, I mean - a bit of artistic licence required here) and developed a rather colourful, eccentric and interesting bloom thanks to the collective creative minds of pupils, public and artists

Autumn: the final five Year One education residencies and the work being produced by the artists for the wildlife sites (which is very interesting and exciting) is wonderfully vibrant and rich, just like the colour of the autumn leaves and berries

Winter: and now we find ourselves in the clutch of winter, where the project delivery goes into a state of hibernation (compared to the rest of the year anyway), waiting for the spring for the whole process to start again.



Heritage & Environment



Things are progressing nicely, with all Year One residencies being completed (in ten different primary schools and on five different wildlife sites), three CPD/INSET training sessions completed, and informative/ interpretative arts works well on the way to being completed and installed. So get yourself out to Maze Park & Portrack Marsh (near Tees Barrage), The Whinnies (Middleton St George) & South Burdon Community Forest (near Lingfield Point, Darlington), RSPB Saltholme, North Gare & Seal Sands (Teessmouth Nature Reserve) and Coatham Marsh (Redcar) and sometime soon you will be experiencing some Green TV artwork!

Throughout Green TV I am constantly gathering feedback from those that take part and deliver the project, in a variety of different forms. Some is written - gently and politely teased out of pupils, teachers, parents, artists & partners; some is in the form of superb photographs taken by the Green TV photographer Bob Mitchell (of Profile Gallery); and some is in the artwork itself. So now I find myself lavishly furnished with a wealth of feedback, which tells the story of Year One of Green TV. So I won't write anymore myself, and instead I'll let these images and words tell the story of Green TV thus far...



“ She has absolutely loved Green TV! She has constantly talked about it and what she had done while working with Adrian (artist) and Steve (Wildlife Trust). I think the interaction she's had with them is wonderful and such a positive thing. ”

Peter Barnes, parent of Year 3 pupil participant, Sacred Heart Primary, Middlesbrough

“ Alex has loved Green TV - he has been so enthusiastic and engaged. By going to the site it brought learning to life instead of just learning from books. ”

Fiona, parent of Year 3 pupil participant, Cockerton C of E Primary, Darlington

“ Children have created striking images and self esteem has been raised amongst the children and the class as a whole. ”

E. Frankland, Year 4 teacher at Lynfield Primary, Hartlepool

“ The response from the kids was really good. It was really rewarding just witnessing the kids being in the natural environment. It reminded me how simple it can be to make learning enjoyable. ”

Paul Dolan, artist

“ I loved pond dipping lots because you don't know what will be under the pond! ”

Rachel Taylor, Westgarth Primary, Marske

“ I want to go to Portrack Marsh again so I can see all the lovely animals again. ”

Tamzyn Appleby, Sacred Heart Primary, Middlesbrough

“ The children from our school gained so much from their involvement with Paul and Joe from Green TV and they have passed on their enthusiasm and interest to their parents and families. We now have families going on trips to the Whinnies and involving their parents in art work at the woods. Most parents (despite living in Darlington all their life) did not know the woods existed – they do now!! ”

Maureen Hobbs, teacher at Gurney Pease Primary, Darlington



Heritage & Environment

“ It has further enabled us to achieve our goals of widening involvement and community appreciation in and of our reserves. ”

Daniel van den Toorn, Tees Valley Wildlife Trust

“ I want to go to Maze Park again because I want to learn more stuff about nature. ”

Uswah Khan, Year 4 pupil at Abingdon Primary, Middlesbrough

“ The project has been a very positive and creative experience. ”

Lindsay Duncanson, artist

“ The children enjoyed Green TV as it was the first time many had even been to a nature environment; it opened the children's eyes to new experiences. ”

Mr Fraser, Year 3 teacher at Gurney Pease Primary, Darlington

“ I learnt that nature and industry worked so close to each other and that they still carry on. ”

Sophie Huggins, Year 5 pupil at Yarm Primary

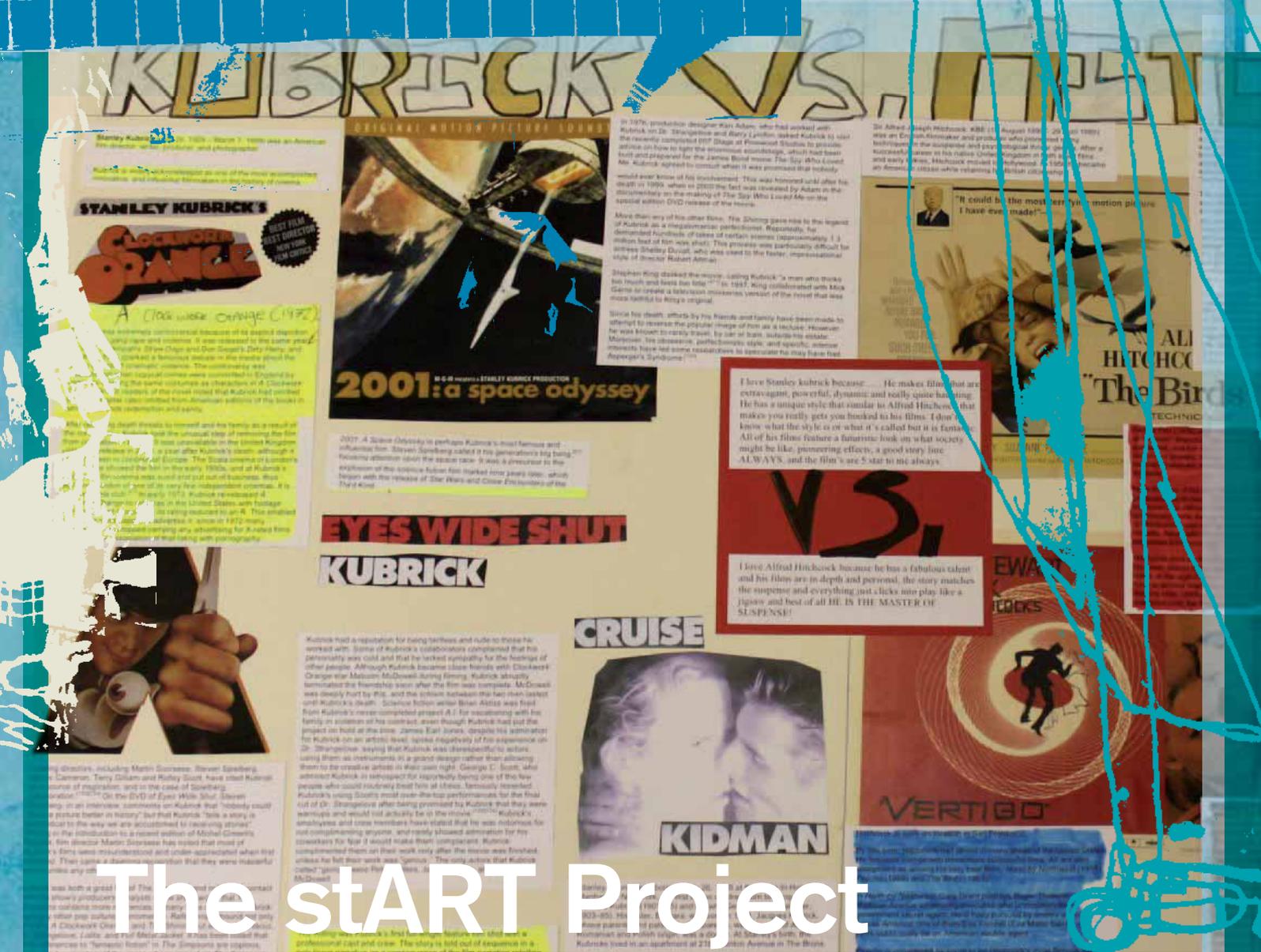
<http://www.teesvalleyarts.org.uk/greentv.html>

Nuff said really!



Joe Dunne
Heritage & Environment Officer





The stART Project



The stART Project is at the half-way point, so how does the game look in the dressing room at half-time? Well I have to say that from this player/managers point of view, we have achieved a comfortable lead and can rely on a rock solid defence to see us through the second half!

Cohort #1 - Six submitted for Bronze Arts Award – Six Bronze Awards achieved

Cohort #2 - Six submitted for Bronze Arts Award – Six Bronze Awards achieved

Retaining a 100% success rate is very pleasing however there is even more to shout about: the stART Project has a progression rate of 92%! This means that eleven out of twelve young people who completed the course have gone on to education, employment or training. This is, after all, what it's all about when working with young people categorised as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

These figures demonstrate the project's success in supporting and developing young people's hopes, aspirations and achievements but numbers are numbers, I would like to look at the project from a more human perspective.

“ The stART Project helped me because before I was probably very quiet and unsocial in the working environment, but now I have built my confidence up and I am able to make my voice heard and work well with others. Concerning my plans for the future, The stART Project has been very helpful. Beforehand I don't think I would have the courage to go and get what I want but now I believe I am a better person.

– Kelly Clapp, 17

The stART Project



This is what the project means to the young people and it is this transformation that they will take with them into the future.

I have developed some new approaches to delivering the “Art Hero” section of the Arts Awards; using a mix of images and text to create a “homage collage”, participants have responded with some very interesting subject matter (Hitchcock Vs Kubrick!) and with superb results.

We have had further praise from Arts Award moderators who were impressed by the new approaches to The Arts Hero.

“The work presented for moderation spanned a very wide ability range and the advisor is to be complimented on nurturing the whole group to successful completion.”

Candidates’ files were very visual and individual – a nice mix of the creative and the reflective. Presentation of the Arts Hero section of the Award through the creation of collage posters was particularly effective with some quite stunning examples.

– Tony Goode: Arts Award Moderator

I would like to thank all of The stART Team; support workers, artists and photographers for making the project so effective and am looking forward to delivering the second half of the project.

Hopefully I won’t be starting my next newsletter article with

“Well, it was a game of two halves, Brian!”

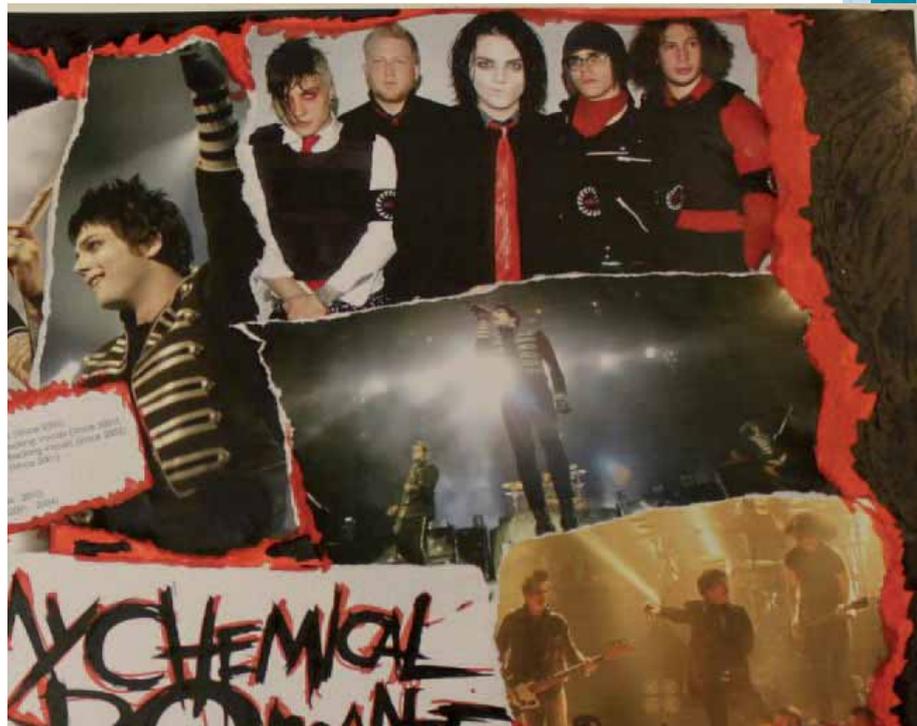


David Hockney's paintings are fantastic because they are colourful and my favourite David Hockney pictures are The Splash, because they have got colour and make to the art work, because I like

David Hockney



Tim Coyte
Projects Officer



Simon Says...

This time last year I wrote about enjoying Saturday afternoons with my family instead of going to see the Boro and whether Gordon Strachan could entice me back. One year later and I can say that the answer to that was an emphatic no! Anyway, with Gordon Strachan's departure as Middlesbrough manager it enables me to welcome the new manager Tony Mowbray back to Teesside with a link to a Remember When piece, as I go back 20 years to when he was immortalised in steel by Middlesbrough FC's first ever Artist in Residence Kate Noakes in the 1989/90 season.

Kate Noakes' residency was arranged by Cleveland Arts in association with Northern Arts, the Chaplaincy to the Arts and Recreation in the North East and Middlesbrough Football Club.

Kate was selected from a national submission, and worked on a series of steel sculptures, drawing and mono-prints, produced over a period of six months. The residency brought Art and Sport together in a dynamic and mutually supportive way. Kate had good support from the club and she had studio space with Artists-in-Middlesbrough. The work produced was exhibited at Middlesbrough Art Gallery and Middlesbrough Council purchased two pieces – one full size footballer (Tony Mowbray) was on view in the Gallery's Sculpture Garden and a smaller piece toured sports halls in the Borough. The work was concerned with the movements which were unique to football and the sculptures were made from welded and forged steel.

Having already got me back to the Riverside I wish Tony the best of luck as Middlesbrough Manager – and I wonder if the sculpture is still in Mima's collection?

On a separate Middlesbrough FC related note, I notice that Neville Gabie has just been appointed as artist in residence for the London 2012 Olympic Park. Ten years ago Neville worked on Trophy Room - a Cleveland Arts project that commemorated Middlesbrough's former home Ayresome Park after a housing development was built at the site. We were way ahead of the times in Middlesbrough!

Simon Smith

Communications Officer





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:



c/o Tees Valley Arts,
Melrose House, Melrose Street, Middlesbrough TS1 2HZ
T: 01642 264 651 F: 01642 264 955
E: info@teesvalleyarts.org.uk W: www.teesvalleyarts.org.uk

Tees Valley Arts is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee

Photo credits: Tony Charles, Tim Coyte, Paul Dolan, Joe Dunne, Kev Howard, Bob Mitchell, Gassan Mohammed, Simon Smith

All photos are taken from TVA Projects (except Gassan Mohammed's on page 2 and 3)

Design: www.proportionmarketing.co.uk



Supported by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



The Baring Foundation

