

# Summer Newsletter 2007

25th Anniversary Edition





that we should do what we do for nothing (or very little) and exist on a hand-to-mouth basis (back on the roller coaster..) after all, artists are used to being skint... and who thought of community art as a profession anyway.. isn't it what artists do when they can't sell enough paintings?

Twenty five years ago... that might have been the case.

But then again, twenty five years ago the Arts Council England, North East was known as Northern Arts and very well resourced it was too. To hold a position within the 'inner sanctum' was a thing aspired to by many a would-be arts administrator, and artists and arts organisations alike cherished their support and advice. It is true that over the last two and a half decades, treasury funding for the arts has itself followed a roller coaster ride - determined by the policy interests of ministers - and this has been one of the contributing factors to the instability of arts organisations, despite the concerted efforts of the Arts Council. However it has been the psychological and financial dependency on 'others' that has made this problem more acute. 2007 has witnessed the £60 million pound redistribution of funding from the arts to the Olympics. Where does this leave arts organisations that cling onto the 'old model'?

I believe that society needs our service more now than ever, just as it needs good education and a good health service; without robust cultural provision for all; we are lost. Arts organisations which hang by a grant-aided thread need to get real and discover the only way to change the perceptions of those who would purchase our services, is by our collective re-invention and advocacy. We should not have to pick up the crumbs under the policy making table; we should be lobbying as a cultural sector to become recognised as a professional entity with the weight of ACE behind us.

TVA is trying to make it happen in the Tees Valley. We have big ideas and somewhat unorthodox approaches to how we are going to ensure a sustained existence; perhaps re-modelling the traditional arts organisation for the 21st century.

The autumn will be a time of great celebration for us, as in addition to our planned 25th anniversary party (VIP invites in the post shortly), we will be moving into new (larger) offices on the ground floor of Melrose House, in Middlesbrough (with Tees Valley Unlimited spreading up to the top floor) providing us with 2 fully functioning training rooms that will enable us to deliver all kinds of cultural education and professional development for community artists. We are about to appoint a Skills Manager in partnership with NCSP, and will become the south of the region centre for Arts Award training. We will be applying to become a core funded LSC training provider for young people categorised as NEET, and to provide basic skills programmes for adult learners. We will manage an enterprise office kitted out for eight 'Tees Valley Creatives' (young creative, social companies based in the TV) for whom TVA will act as Mom, best friend and director.

Meanwhile our (brilliant) core staff team (soon to be nine) drive their respective thematic programmes through ever increasing partnerships and deliver really great socially engaged art work with, through and across the sub region. The hard work of our programme managers who constantly make the case for the arts in all kinds of environments should not be underestimated. Blood, sweat and tears ensure there is never a dull moment at TVA HQ - as you might imagine! I'd like to thank them for their endeavours. I'd also like to thank our support team for keeping us sane - don't worry - they know what I mean. Penultimately, I'd like to give recognition to our Board, who have also endured the roller coaster ride. Without their unwavering interest, commitment and voluntary contribution to the company we would not have come so far.

I'd finally like to take this opportunity to thank everyone with whom TVA has had the pleasure of working over the last twenty five years; staff, artists, partners and funders. Your support has been invaluable in the success of the company over the years; we could not have done it without you. We look forward to working with you over the next twenty five... on an even keel.



**Rosi Lister**  
Executive Director 2005-Present

# Art In The Tees Valley

## A Celebration Of 25 Years Of Achievement

I'm delighted to add my congratulations to Tees Valley Arts on its 25th anniversary. In that time it has proved itself an absolutely vital organisation, supporting generations of artists, audiences and participants. It has established new ways of working with communities, in schools, with commissioning partners and with local people.

There are very few organisations which have negotiated the ebbs and flows of change so well and with so much imagination. I'm personally also hugely grateful for this opportunity, as my first professional role in the arts was as its Literature Development Worker, in 1993, when a brave interview panel took a chance on a young enthusiast. In that role, and later as Director, I learnt most of the biggest lessons of my career. The values of creativity, engagement, diversity and commitment to the role of the arts in improving our communities still inform my work today.

My thanks to all the people who have helped over this quarter century, either as members of staff or as Board members.

**Mark Robinson**

Executive Director

Arts Council England, North East

We all have many good reasons to celebrate 25 years of an organisation that has developed into Tees Valley Arts, the prominent catalyst for the promotion, and development of art and culture in the Tees Valley.

Over these 25 years many people and partners must be thanked for volunteered their efforts, resources, and expertise to create the unique vitality that has evolved to be Tees Valley Arts, and of course prior to this Cleveland Arts.

These people and partners include Staff, Artists, Art Professionals, Arts Bodies, Local Authorities, Development Agencies, the business community, many other professionals, advisors, and members of the public, who together have collaborated to provide inspiration, often transcending boundaries to educate, encourage aspirations, and nurture creativity in art and culture in the widest sense. These people and partners have been enriched by their involvement, we thank them all as this region has benefited greatly from their contribution.

The future for the Tees Valley is very bright, many new strategies, and regeneration projects are going to change the landscape and create new opportunities for the Arts, and Artists' to give new buildings, and ventures real cultural personalities, and unique identities to project our regions individuality across the world.

Tees Valley Arts objective is inclusion, Art is for everyone.

**Tony Campbell**

Chair of Tees Valley Arts

# 25 Years of Diversity

I don't know exactly what the ethnic mix of the Tees Valley in 1982 was, but I bet the presence of people from diverse cultures was neither very large, nor very evident, nor very celebrated.

William Gladstone famously described Middlesbrough as 'the infant Hercules' when he visited in 1860 – referring to its dynamic growth and its industrial strength; its population went from 19,000 in 1861 to 138,000 in 1930 – many of these arrivals being from Ireland – and this growth was replicated across the urban core of Teesside. The new arrivals included the occasional 'exotic' – some migrant sailors, a Native American who came with Buffalo Bill's travelling show (and stayed – he's buried in Green Lane Cemetery) – but the first main immigrant group to settle here in the twentieth century were Asians who primarily came from Pakistan to work in the chemical and steel works.

Earlier in my career at TVA, I compiled and edited *Writing/home* – an anthology of writings about home, what it means when you have one, when you lose one, when it feels like a prison, when it is a Prison, and so on. I had the pleasure of working with a group of older Asian ladies, the Ojalah group – it means 'sunlight' I think - on their memories of arrival here. The group included the first and third ever Asian ladies to settle in the Tees Valley – in 1947 and 1950 respectively. They remembered the shock of the cold, having to buy English curry powder at Liptons, buying kosher chicken as there was no halal meat, and polishing their photos of home in the firm belief that they would one day return. For them, Pakistan stayed as it was in the cherished photos, while their own lives and communities changed, their children grew up bi-lingual and their grandchildren grew up speaking English and eating McDonalds. For the few who ever made it back to Pakistan (to visit, not to stay), they found that it too had changed, especially in the cities and most especially with respect to the lives of women – only the photos stayed still.



I was so struck by those women – their lives were cloistered and secluded by my standards, seemed limited by their generally not learning to speak English, diminished by not having careers or a 'civic' life – and yet, what bravery, what cultural, historical and geographical change they had encompassed, arriving with their flimsy clothes in flimsy suitcases, and how fantastic to be able to tell a little of their story to the wider world, through the making of the book.

# 25 Years of Diversity continued...

The Asian population of the Tees Valley has established a public presence now – through shops and restaurants, through the Middlesbrough Mela which has gone from a few local performers and a handful of stalls in the Town Hall when it began in 1991 to a day-long festival in Albert Park with 25,000 visitors, and through the very positive civic activity of Asian Borough Councillors and Ashok Kumar MP – successful stories of integration.

According to Joint Strategy Unit statistics, in 2001, the BME community represented 3% of the Tees Valley population – I imagine that the percentage has increased since then, partly through students and staff at our local colleges and universities, and also through asylum and refuge, as the Tees Valley became a designated government dispersal area in 2001, which brought in people from over 60 countries – in small numbers, but creating a highly charged and identifiable presence.

I think the main drivers of successful ethnic integration are food, sport, culture and love – now three of those TVA is not paid to deliver! But regarding culture, it is evident every day through music and fashion in the mainstream, and through literature, cinema and performance at the artier end of things, that bringing people together to enjoy themselves rather than to be lectured, is the best way to engender cohesiveness, toleration and understanding, and to promote both communal and personal interaction. This is especially the case in a sector like asylum, where much of the national media has peddled lazy negativity, and about which the Government is equivocal, to say the least.

Through the Writing/home project I also met a group of people seeking asylum from Iran, and then became involved in delivering creative activities with refugees and asylum seekers. Funding for the 'You Are Here' project was obtained from the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, and with support from the Borough Councils and from the North of England Refugee Service, TVA was able to deliver programmes of workshops - to support some talented individuals, to help some people who have experienced terrible things ease their minds a little through creativity, to promote a message of welcome and explanation, and to put on events which showcased talents and cultures in harmonious gatherings.



Of course TVA has not been alone in this – besides the well-established Mela, Stockton International Riverside Festival has added greatly to the local cultural mix, the Boroughs and many other diversity initiatives have brought people together to enjoy music and food, and venues like the Arc and other arts centres have run diverse and exciting programming where possible. Tees Valley World Drummers (an ethnically mixed collective) make an enjoyably loud noise and a visually positive statement wherever they perform – not just to the converted, but also in public arenas like the centre of Middlesbrough on a busy Saturday.

TVA's most high profile event in this sector is the WinterFest, primarily funded by the Northern Rock Foundation and Arts Council England North East, and run in collaboration with the African Arts Association. The WinterFest celebrates our local diversity through community and youth events, and brings in top line world music talent. March 07 saw the second such festival, and we are slowly establishing ourselves and growing the audience, but what is already very clear is the support and appetite for partnerships and co-branded events from, for example, Middlesbrough Council, the Arc, and the Teesside University Students Union, as well as commercial and promotional support from key local businesses and media companies. We are now going to re-brand as 'WorldFest', to allow for themed events at other times of the year.

During the run up to WinterFest 07, I received a phone call from Charlie Gillett – BBC World Service presenter and world music expert – ringing from London to say that he had seen publicity for the WinterFest, and that the thought of Kanda Bongo Man playing in Stockton, and of Tinariwen playing in Middlesbrough was absolutely mind-boggling to him. He said he originally came from Teesside, hadn't been back in over twenty years, and that he thought the place must really have changed if such acts were being showcased there. Well, I think it has, and for the better, and I think the diversity and happy sociability of the audiences at the WinterFest would have boggled his mind still further! TVA is proud of the part it has played in those continuing changes, and hopes to carry on doing so.

One love, brothers and sisters, and see you at WorldFest 08!

**Rowena Sommerville**  
Community Programme Manager





## (R)Evolution

Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1519) was an Italian polymath: scientist, mathematician, engineer, inventor, anatomist, painter, sculptor, architect, musician and writer. Today he is held as an example of the Renaissance man - a man whose seemingly infinite curiosity was equalled only by his powers of invention. As a painter his most famous works include the Mona Lisa and The Last Supper; as an engineer he was ahead of his time; theorising a helicopter, a calculator, the use of concentrated solar power...and much more. How can we be more like Leonardo, and (re)invent and (re)discover the pathways of understanding that connect the arts and science - which have existed for centuries, but seem to need to be re-invented every so often?

The value of educating a person in a wide variety of subjects so that they are able to excel in many/any fields, is a growing focus in the world of education. It revisits (for there truly is nothing new under the sun) the original idea of a classical gentleman's education equipping him for inquiry, discovery, philosophy and the humanities. This focus has led to the small town of Reggio Emilia in Northern Italy becoming an international centre of interest for educationalists working with young children. The Reggio approach is underpinned by a philosophy which continues to develop and grow; among its sources are the teachings of Maria Montessori, Loris Malaguzzi and the British nursery/infant tradition.



The growing shift towards “whole child” learning has become supported in the UK, eg through the first Government funded study of Steiner schools, based on the philosophy of Rudolph Steiner, which prioritises educating the “whole child”, with a strong emphasis on creativity. The study aimed to identify good practice, to find differences and common ground with mainstream education, and to find out how the two sectors might learn from each other. The research comes at a time when the government is trying to encourage diversity and innovation. This is welcome research; we hope it will inform mainstream teaching, and we also hope the Government looks at innovation within the mainstream, where it does exist, and deals with real everyday challenges.

The Tees Valley is an area more traditionally associated with its chemical and steel industry than with cultural innovation. However, a partnership between TVA and NEPIC (North East Process Industry Cluster) is now in its sixth year. This exciting programme of work continues to grow and push the boundaries of science and arts collaboration; it addresses a local and national need - that there are not enough people going into the science industry – and it makes it fun as well – revolutionary or what!



The NEPIC Skills and Education Action Plan (locally) and the Leitch Review of Skills (nationally) both identify crucial issues affecting potential long-term skills and staffing shortages – now I'm going to tell you why a room full of teachers, jumping up and down and shouting rude words, is helping to address those very issues....

Evolve is a two-year initiative which aims to raise the aspirations and achievements of young people in the Tees Valley through the development of creative teaching in sciences which will more effectively engage, inspire, and support their learning. That's the official version, and it's true, but how (and why) it works in practice is this – arts practitioners in drama, movement and creative writing work with a class and a teacher on a specific science curriculum area such as habitats, or circuits, or reproduction (tremble!). All sorts of unexpected, stimulating and enjoyable exercises then take place, and the students suddenly find they have learned, in a very direct and unforgettable way, all sorts of facts and words and processes. The rude words come in through 'Fruit Salad', which is a bit like musical chairs, only one of three persons is an apple, one is a pear, and one is an orange (all make a fruit salad) and whoever is 'it' gets to call out which group moves next. Now for reproduction, we replace the fruit words with reproductive words, and instead of 'fruit salad' you shout – well, you get the picture. What this does of course, is that it dispenses with all sorts of embarrassments and sniggers, because the whole class has just spent 10 minutes shouting 'apple!' as it were, very loudly at each other, and now those dread words can be said without everyone fainting – though possibly not in this article....

Students have danced their way through the lifecycle, they have written love letters to the planets, they have acted out the digestive system and now they can't forget it. The evaluation of the whole programme has shown how successful this approach is for all ages and abilities. And now Evolve has been invited to deliver courses at both the National and Regional Science Learning Centres, taking this method of working to teaching staff throughout the UK.

We have discovered the Evolve model easily transfers to other curricular subjects, from English to Engineering, and we are developing future collaborations between schools, industry and artists, promoting creativity and innovation within the fields of biomedical, engineering and technological advancement.

I like to think that in a few years time, a senior chemical engineer, or atomic physicist, or brain surgeon, will be asked about their career path, and will locate the first, vital step of their engagement with science in the moment when they played the (hitherto unappreciated) part at the end of the digestive system, and joyously exploded blue balloons into the waiting arms of their expectant classmates.

Well, maybe you had to be there, and I'm glad I was, and according to all the Evolve evaluations, a thousand pupils were glad they had been there, too.

**Janette Pratt**  
Education Programme Manager

# Art:works

Over the past four years the Education Programme has been working with schools to deliver a range of exciting and challenging arts and cultural activities - the Art:works programme. From contemporary dance and improvisational drama to mosaic and didgeridoo, children and staff have learnt new skills, developed confidence, and had enjoyable opportunities to work alongside professional artists.



A drama project at Beverley School, Middlesbrough has proved to be particularly beneficial for a young pupil who is an 'elective mute', and who had previously only occasionally spoken in a whisper. The drama work has helped him gain in confidence so much that he now speaks regularly during the project; in fact he is so vocal that he has to be told to let other people have a say! The school are delighted with this development and are hoping that this will encourage him to speak more openly.

The Art:works programme has operated on an enquiry basis with schools contacting TVA to discuss, devise and implement arts projects. This "dial a project" approach has provided an opportunity to build relationships with schools who have little or no experience in hosting arts residencies.

## Deep roots/ New shoots ...our Heritage and Environment

The new Heritage & Environment Arts post represents an exciting innovative approach, linking expertise from the heritage, environmental and arts sectors to work collectively towards a unified goal, to highlight and celebrate the industrial, natural and maritime landscapes that sit so closely together in the Tees Valley. The post is, we believe, the first of its kind in the country and was developed from a joint realisation that the environmental, heritage and arts sectors needed to work together to raise aspiration and pride in an area that has been recognised more for its industry than for its cultural and environmental distinctiveness.

When people from the environmental and heritage sectors talk about their roles it is often a discussion about protection - protection of natural environments and species in danger of disappearing, or of cultural artefacts with historical or community importance. This protection agenda often sits alongside the apparently conflicting drive towards access and engagement. Can these imperatives be reconciled, and how, and by whom?

Whilst there has always been a protection component within the arts through galleries

and museums, the participative arts have always been much more focused on creativity and accessibility. Art forms that encompass more time and process based work encourage community engagement and reach out to a range of audiences. With this in mind, the programme will develop projects that encourage these forms over more traditional representative arts associated with these areas. It's a chance to lose some of the fluffiness, fustiness and tree hugging stereotypes traditionally linked to these areas and explore contemporary and innovative ways of engaging new audiences.



These small projects act as seed corn for bigger, better partnerships, and an increasing number of schools are contacting TVA with requests for more sophisticated projects. The traditional focus on small to mid-scale projects is therefore

extending to embrace larger scale integrated partnerships involving clusters of schools.

Art:works is also developing a more coherent approach to working with schools by working in partnership with Extended Schools as a service provider, addressing government directives such as "Every Child Matters". Schools participating in this way are able to develop exciting and innovative projects which include family based learning, early years and projects that explore healthy lifestyles, foreign culture and languages.

Art:works supports schools in their application for Artsmark

awards by providing projects that target areas of school arts provision. Art:works is now looking at future developments including working in partnership with gifted and talented pupils and the University of Teesside and Early Years practitioner development and the provision of a range of arts projects focussing on the needs of Early Years groups.

I look forward to steering the programme through its next phase, we've come a long way, and we still have a long, positive and creative way to go.

**Tim Coyte**  
Education Officer

The environmental sector within Tees Valley has an interesting task ahead - not just exclusively considering the global green agenda but also considering the local spaces we inhabit and use. These environments both encompass what we consider the natural and the man-made, an interesting distinction not clearly defined in Teesside where protected and rare wildlife sites sit on, next to or were created by the imposing industrial plants such as those famously replicated in Ridley Scott's 'Blade Runner'. The Tees Valley challenges our ideas about wilderness.

One of the first projects to be developed within the programme is Green Hearts, a collaboration between Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, Tees Forest, schools and artists, that will encourage greater understanding and interpretation of such sites. The project will provide a lasting legacy in developing site education staff and teachers' skills, and in raising children's understanding and appreciation of the value and complexity of their local environment.

Tees Valley has a wealth of industrial heritage to draw from; the surface of which is only just beginning to be scratched. Heritage is waking up from the terrifying chipped plastic dummies with false eyes dressed in old clothes scaring small children (and adults for that matter) and is becoming more about creating contemporary dialogues with the past so they become something more tangible and relevant to modern society.

The post is as much about the strengthening of the sectors as it is about the increased understanding of specific items or areas that are being preserved, but not in an overtly precious static way, more as a dialogue. If we protect what is there but forget to excite people and increase their understanding about what is being protected, then how can we expect them to care? If people start to understand and care, they hopefully start to invest in the future. Businesses promote the green agenda – sometimes with dubious motivation – but we can thank them for raising the nation's consciousness as to sustainability and 'walking lightly on the earth' (I'm not a plastic bag!); I hope TVA will be able to develop and instil positive attitudes towards our special little part of a special little planet, and with the purest of motives!

**Rachel Clarke**  
Heritage & Environmental Arts Officer

# A Slice of HAAM



Having worked in folk music within the rural wilderness of Northumberland and having promoted rock and metal bands in urban Glasgow, I prided myself in having a well-rounded knowledge of the British music industry. Yet I was not prepared for my placement at Tees Music Alliance which has been an interesting and often eye-opening experience and certainly a steep learning curve.



As I have discovered, the Tees Valley is an area which doesn't have an established music industry – as you wander down the street, the pubs are not saturated with the sound of acoustic open-mics and band nights as in other towns and cities. However the few venues and studios that do exist are working extremely hard with the small amount of resources they have and organisations such as **From Teesside with Love** are providing opportunities for local musicians and labels to engage with the music industry in the North-east and beyond.

The music industry is big business – Britain's music industry itself is Europe's largest and the third largest in the world. Music and music technology is now taught as a viable and exciting job to get involved with at schools, colleges and universities alike – a far cry from the classically-focussed music teaching when I was at school. The advent of modern technology and consequently the opportunities for people to make, distribute and promote music from a home computer has allowed artists to get their music heard all over the world. Nevertheless there still needs to be a basic structure in place to encourage, support and sustain the young (and older!) budding musicians and bands. **Tees Music Alliance** and other similar organisations are slowly but surely building the profile of the Tees Valley music industry providing not only the physical space, but also opportunities for musicians and bands to play, collaborate and develop their talent. They also bring a vitally important commercial perspective to the Tees music industry, employing consultants such as Russ Conway – a very respected A&R man who keeps Tees musicians up-to-date with the latest developments in music and music technology, provides valuable links with organisations such as **Generator** in Newcastle and has also represented Teesside music at Midem in Cannes!



The great thing about being involved in music here is that there is so much room to grow and develop – it's such an exciting time to be involved in this scene. Slowly but surely the confidence is growing in the region and people from vastly different backgrounds and cultures are getting involved in events and festivals such as **Winterfest** with bigger and better names each year. The future of music nationally and internationally is digital and with the University of Teesside and Digital City raising the profile of new media, I hope it won't be long before Teesside puts itself firmly on the map as a pioneering and exciting cultural centre with music at its very heart.



**Jill Heslop**  
Higher Apprentice in Arts Management



# “New job, extra brain please.”

From the newest addition to the TVA team...

**The feeling of being lost and not knowing my way round has soon disappeared a few weeks into the job, and has now been replaced by the daunting task of understanding the paperwork that goes with it whilst ensuring I make the job work for me.**

After being a freelance artist for the past six years and doing the usual paperwork and filing (and sometimes not doing it because there is something more interesting to do and then regretting it when my tax return is due), I didn't think that paperwork would be one of the first things to baffle me. Paperwork is going to lose every time set against working in an environment where there is always something far more interesting going on, and people to meet to talk through new project ideas. I will have to develop whole new strategies of engaging fully in a conversation whilst thinking about the next arts project that will save the planet and typing up notes from a meeting I had a week ago trying to remember what on earth it was about. How does anybody get anything done?

## It's all about spinning even more plates

than usual, and understanding when to make necessary changes without wasting time. Changing from full-time freelance to a combination of freelance and part-time employment was acknowledging as an individual artist there was a limit to what I could spin and deliver, no matter how motivated or how hard I worked. Working with TVA is a way of developing bigger and better projects and feeling supported by a well respected team. The change is about being challenged and being able to take greater risks with projects, something TVA are good at, knowing wherever there are gaps in my knowledge I can rely on the expertise of others to achieve a longer term vision.



For the short term, I just need to get my brain in gear to balance paperwork and people and once I have the balance of freelance and employed work sorted I will be laughing even more than I am now with my monthly pay cheque. Welcome to the land of employment and getting paid for something I'm passionate about.

**Rachel Clarke**

Heritage & Environmental Arts Officer

# Memory Lane

The two longest serving members of staff, **Andrea Williams** and **Simon Smith**, tell us about their experience of working at Tees Valley Arts.

## When and how did you first start work at Tees Valley Arts?



Simon: I first started work at Cleveland Arts in January 1987 as a clerical assistant on a one year community programme. The Director at the time, Denis Coe, was a keen Opera buff and I think I must have made an impression by telling him that I'd seen Pavorotti in Verona on a family holiday – in truth I think I was dragged along by my parents!



Andrea: I came to Cleveland Arts in June 1989 from my Youth Training Scheme. I was meant to have been on a three month placement to help with the first Visual Arts Festival – it's been a long three months!

## What are some of the changes that have taken place in the organisation?



Simon: Probably the biggest change has been the introduction and growth of Information Technology. When I first started the company had one Electronic Typewriter which soon made way for a word processor that was about the size of a tank. I brought my own personal computer to work in about 1994, (it was stolen when our offices were broken into once) and eventually, with the help of Arts Council Lottery money, we were able to purchase new computers for all members of staff. There have been many changes regarding programming within the organisation as well – I was originally employed to help out with the Cleveland Music Festival and the company organised a lot of classical music events, in the years that followed, many programmes and projects have come and gone including the Public Art and Literature Development programmes and Asian Music Project, for example.

Andrea: When I first took over the responsibility for finance, all the accounts and wages were processed manually, as you can imagine this was a very laborious task. The introduction of computers and software allowing us to deal with finance electronically has enabled TVA to work in a much more efficient way.

## You are currently based at Melrose House; has the company had any other offices?

Simon's first office was in a small section of the ground floor of Teesside House, Middlesbrough which has recently been transformed into swanky student accommodation with a Tapas Bar occupying where Cleveland Arts used to have its offices. We then moved to Marton House, which was the former Cleveland County Social Services building - since demolished. From there, we moved to Eastbourne Road, Linthorpe into a converted Police Station which is now a Housing Office, and in 1996 we moved to Gurney House which has stood empty since 1999 when we moved into our current offices in Melrose House. Fortunately for Simon, Melrose House is a stone's throw away from his house although he had no influence with the decision!

## You both must have worked under a number of different Directors?

Yes, Rosi is Simon's eighth Director and Andrea's seventh. We have both been lucky enough to work under some great Directors, some of whom have used the experience gained within the organisation to go onto some bigger jobs - notably Reuben Kench at Northern Arts and now Head of Culture at Stockton Council, and Mark Robinson who is now Executive Director of Arts Council England, North East.

**Tell us about your current role and how you got the job?**

Simon: I briefly left the organisation in 2001 and worked for the dark side (banking) for a couple of years. I was lucky enough to be offered the opportunity to return to Tees Valley Arts as maternity cover for Andrea as Finance Officer when she was on maternity leave in 2003, and was then able to stay on a contract basis as Administration Officer before the role of Communications Officer was advertised in the summer of 2006. My job can involve things like co-ordinating this quarterly newsletter and helping to publicise events such as the WinterFest and is a varied and interesting role.

Andrea: I took over the role of Administrator in 1999 when the previous administrator left. The role has evolved over the years into my current position of Finance Manager – which briefly consists of processing and maintaining all aspects of Tees Valley Arts financial records, line management and human resources.

**What do you enjoy most about your job?**

Simon: I think it would probably be seeing events and projects come to fruition such as the WinterFest and Evolve.

Andrea: The colourful characters we work with, the great projects we deliver and the fact that our work is both varied and challenging.

**Do you find you are able to balance work with social/family life while working in your current job?**

Simon: As a new father of a baby girl born this year I would ask what social life?!

Andrea: After the birth of my son in 2003 I returned to work part-time for three days per week. My hours have just recently increased to four days which still allows me the freedom and flexibility a working mother needs. I would also tend to agree with Simon regarding the lack of a social life.

**If you had to do it all over again, would you still recommend a career in an arts organisation?**

Simon: Yes definitely, it may not be the most highly paid business to get into but I would have to say that it is definitely a very rewarding and enjoyable field to get into.

Andrea: Yes, Yes, Yes – could there be any other answer to this question? We wouldn't have stayed so long if it wasn't such a great field to work in.

**What do you think the future holds for Tees Valley Arts?**

Simon: Well, apart from flying cars and time machines, having worked at TVA in my teens, twenties and thirties I have seen many ups and downs within the company, but I would say that, now, as I have (just) entered my forties I think the future looks very bright or should I say "Rosi" for the organisation.

Andrea: Financial stability, continued growth, our great new office – and for me, I hope, many more happy years with TVA!

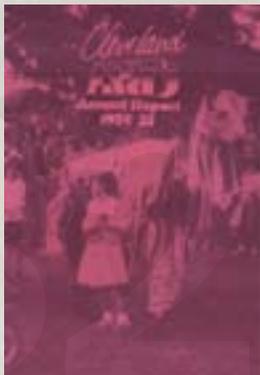


IN THE MIDDLESBROUGH CITY CHALLENGE AREA

# Tees Valley Arts Timeline

Cleveland Arts was established in September 1982 – one of a number of initiatives by Northern Arts to further develop and encourage the arts in the, then, County of Cleveland

Some highlights from the last 25 years -



**1982** Cleveland Arts established and based in Teesside House, Middlesbrough with a performing arts development officer and visual arts development officer

**1983** Sculpture: New Directions – an exhibition of work by eight young sculptors selected from The Hayward Gallery's 1983 Sculpture Show including Anish Kapoor and David Mach held at Cleveland Gallery. English Dance Theatre gave performances in Middlesbrough, Hartlepool and Saltburn and undertook workshops in schools. Visits were made by touring Drama Companies, Welfare State International, Three Monkeys Theatre Company and Horse and Bamboo.

**1984** Cleveland Youth Dance Project established. Writer in Residence, Bob Pegg published an anthology of writing, "Crossing the T's".

**1985** The 1st Cleveland Music Festival was held at venues across Teesside and included a first public performance of a 'Cleveland Overture' by Anthony Hedges; the world premiere of a new dance by the English Dance Theatre; and the personal appearance of distinguished composer, Sir Michael Tippett. Nightshriek, a production by the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain of a musical by the talented young Redcar composer, Trisha Ward, was staged by Cleveland Arts at the Forum Theatre, Billingham and later played in London. Chamber concerts were held at Cleveland Gallery. Horse and Bamboo had a two month residency in Wolviston which culminated in a "Midsummer Cabaret"

**1986** Cleveland Youth Opera was set up and performed "The Marriage of Figaro" at Middlesbrough Little Theatre.

Dance performances promoted by English Dance Theatre, Phoenix Dance Company and John Mowat and Rae. Cleveland Arts appointed a Multicultural Arts Officer. Seminar "The Arts and Disabled People" held at Cleveland College of Art, Hartlepool.

**1987** Cleveland Arts moves to Marton House, Middlesbrough. 2nd Cleveland Music Festival involving 67 concerts and over 1,000 local musicians. Dance performances by Asian dancers Nahid Siddiqui and Shobana Jeyasingh. Cleveland Arts promoted "Alali – Festival Time" an installation of sculptures by the Nigerian born sculptor, Sokari Douglas Camp at the Dorman Museum, Middlesbrough.

**1988** Asian Writer in Residence Rukhsana Ahmed appointed. Exhibition "Art and Computers"



arranged with Cleveland Gallery. Sculptor Alain Ayers worked on a New Milestones project in Hilton. Landscape and Environment was the subject of a major exhibition at the Gray Art Gallery and Museum and Ward Jackson Park, Hartlepool featuring works by leading regional sculptors.

**1989** 1st Cleveland Visual Arts Festival held in October 1989 featuring 180 events. Residency by Asian Theatre Company Tara Arts. Sculptor, Kate Noakes appointed as Artist in Residence at Middlesbrough Football Club. Introduction of the Teesside Arts Awards, administered by Cleveland Arts on behalf of Teesside Development Corporation. Alastair Snow appointed as Director following the retirement of Denis Coe. Third Cleveland Music Festival held including a performance by Brodsky String Quartet.

**1990** Founder member of Phoenix Dance, Merville Jones appointed Dance Development Officer for Cleveland Dance Project based at Mosaic Dance Studios, Middlesbrough. Large-scale murals for South Cleveland Hospital's maternity and children's wards by James Quin. Artwork by Richard Farrington for Skelton & Brotton New Milestones project opened in September 1990. Sculptor Julian Bond appointed as artist in residence in Easterside Primary School. The 4th Cleveland Music Festival was held throughout October 1990 and featured 60 events in 26 venues including the Inner Sense Percussion Orchestra in Middlesbrough Bus Station and Scottish Opera creating a rock opera "Chicago Way" with four East Cleveland Schools. Cleveland Schools Folk Development Project commenced in partnership with

Folkworks with tutors including Alastair Anderson, Vin Garbutt and Sandra Kerr.

**1991** Public Arts and Arts Equality Officers appointed. Asian Music Project launched with musician Mohammed Sarwar. From 91-97 the project included schools residencies, special events and workshops, visits from international artists and new music commissions. Arts and Disabilities: Working Together seminar organised at Menro House, Middlesbrough. Irie Dance Company gave workshops throughout Cleveland to complement "Let Reggae Touch Your Soul" performance. Red Ladder Theatre Company presented "Consequences" at the International Centre, Middlesbrough targeting Asian girls. Marking the Ways was a major initiative commissioning permanent craftworks for the Teesdale Way riverside



footpath. Public Arts Cleveland conference held promoting the Arts as part of regeneration. Mural by Keith Bridgewood completed at Middlesbrough Railway Station. Thornaby Adult Training Centre hosted a pioneering long-term Crafts Residency. "LOOK" – the second Cleveland Visual Arts Festival was held in October and featured over 200 events in 78 locations countywide. Interplay Theatre Company toured five Cleveland special schools in 1991.

**1992** Riverscape international arts project – four artists from Great Britain, India, Japan and Poland were invited to study the river Tees and its relationship with people, community and industry which culminated with a major exhibition at Cleveland Gallery in 1993. Visits to Cleveland by theatre companies Graeae, Mockbeggar and

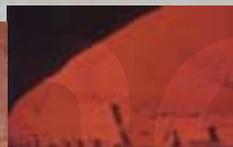
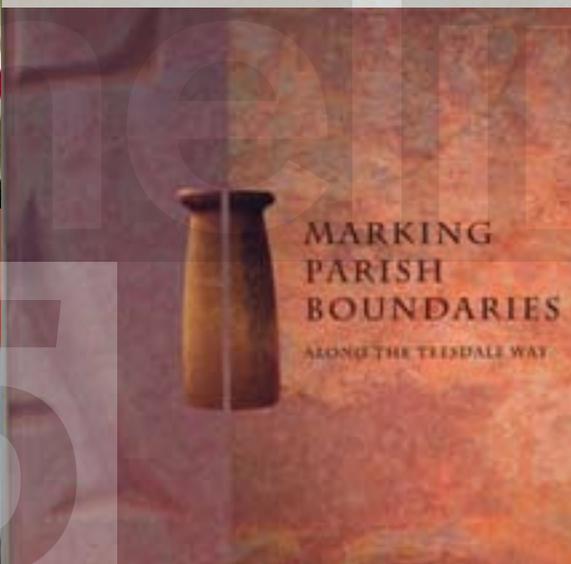
Interplay. Commission of Peter Spafford and GW Theatre Company to write and perform a play "All Upstairs" illustrating the issues in community care in Cleveland. Artist residencies in music, video, dance and textiles at Tithe Barn House Resource Centre for Older People in Hardwick, Stockton. An evening with refugees in Cleveland was held featuring a Somali band, Yugoslavian folk music, and an exhibition of Iraqi children's art. Concert of classical Asian Music at St Paul's Neighbourhood Centre with Gurdev Singh and Pandit Sharda Sahai. Swedish artist Anders Holmquist created the first flags for Pallister Park's 'flag park'. Residencies by Phoenix Dance Company and Horse & Bamboo Theatre Company.

**1993** Appointments of Literature Development Worker and a Public Arts Officer for

Middlesbrough City Challenge. Reuben Kench appointed Director. Organisation moves to Eastbourne Road.

**1994** "Magazines and Literary Journals: A Guide" published by Cleveland Arts. The 9th national Poets and Small Press festival hosted by Cleveland Arts. "You Don't Look Like A Writer" an exhibition of photographs of local writing activity by photographer Dermot Blackburn. Launch of local press "Mudfog Books". Danny Lane glass wall "Broken Sea" installed at the TAD Centre, Middlesbrough.

**1995** A resource and information pack for Writing Group leaders published. Scottish artist Adrian Wiszniewski was commissioned to make 5 public artworks under the Collective residency "Inside Out – from the Gallery to the Built Environment". Exhibition "Disability, Arts &



The Environment” photography exhibition toured throughout Cleveland. Residency by video artist Chris Meigh-Andrews. Sundial by artist Neil Talbot created for Church Square, Hartlepool. Writearound 1995 featured a launch party with the Old Rope String Band and readings by Liz Lochhead, Julia Darling, Alan Sillitoe, Harry Pearson and Barney Hoskyns. An A2 map – A Writers Map of Teesside was produced highlighting Teesside writers, past and present. The East Cleveland Hospital Art Project was officially opened featuring a stunning cobblestone water feature by Maggy Howarth, etched glass by Chloe Buck, brick reliefs by Julia Barton, paintings by John Carter and ironwork by Peat Oberon and Graeme Hopper. Irene Brown’s sculpture “Racing Ahead” featuring 3 lifesize greyhounds installed on Stockton High

Street. Greatham, Hartlepool unveiled a new landmark “Sheaf Thrower” by Mike Disley.

**1996** “Logos” – the first national conference on the use of writing in Public Art was held in Middlesbrough. Number of projects organised for national Year of the Visual Arts in the Northern Arts region. A number of artworks were created for Cleveland Community Forest sites. Sculpture by John Clinch celebrating a host of film characters created at Regent Cinema, Redcar. Text based billboards promoting Cleveland Community Forest sited at various locations. Middlesbrough football player “Juninho” helps to launch Writearound’s Book of children’s poetry Boom Boom Bang on National Poetry Day. Richard Wentworth’s boundary markers “Marking Parish Boundaries” along the Teesdale Way installed.

**1997** Literature Development Unit relaunched as Buzzwords. David Mach’s ‘TRAIN’ unveiled in Darlington - Cleveland Arts managed the successful Lottery bid. Arts & Health Partnership launched with South Tees Community & Mental Health NHS Trust. Arts Education Agency launched. “Panorama of Arts” Arts & Disability Festival held in August,

**1998** Cleveland Arts collaborated with Middlesbrough Football Club to promote the arts to an audience of 35,000 at home matches during the 1998-99 season as part of the Arts Council’s New Audiences scheme. Ten performances were held including opera, dance, a string quartet, folk music and poetry readings. Digital arts residency by Geoff Broadway at the University of Teesside. Writearound attracted over 1,300 people to events



throughout Middlesbrough. The 'Art Taxis' scheme provided better access to arts events for people who experienced difficulty using public transport

**1999** Poet and travel writer Paul Hyland worked in East Cleveland for twelve days. "A Fortnight in Seaton Carew" involved fourteen writers each taking a day trip to Seaton Carew to record their impressions in poetry and prose. Beyond Trainspotting project – an outreach library promotion of cult reading aimed at 16-25 year olds including DJ sessions, breakdancing, comic strip art and story-making, cult movies, the martial arts and boxing. Heaven and Earth roundabout by Eric Bainbridge installed in Hartlepool. Company moves to Melrose House. Articulate – a three year programme of arts and disability projects across the Tees Valley was launched.

**2000** "The New Reality Festival" of Disability Arts held including performances by Mind The...Gap and Mat Fraser. Tony Harrison read at the Verb Garden at the Cornerhouse in Middlesbrough. Graphic novel artist Richard Piers Rayner appointed Artist in Residence at Middlesbrough Football Club.

**2001** Cleveland Arts delivered the Public Art Strategy for Middlesbrough Town centre. Healing Arts Programme launched at James Cook University Hospital – the project included a landmark sculpture by Andrew Burton and glass hanging by Laura Johnston. Neville Gabie created a series of public art interventions for the housing development on Ayresome Park, the former site of Middlesbrough Football Club. Dance for the Camera schools residency – five schools working with a dancer and film-maker for

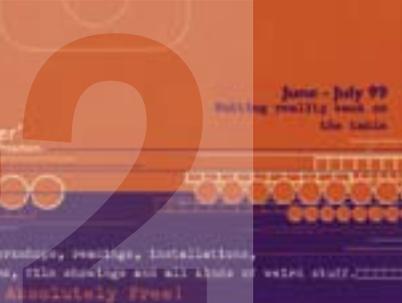
one week to create short dance films. Caliban – an exhibition of youth arts was held in the main hall in the University of Teesside. Kathleen McCreery worked as writer in residence for Tees and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust. A Fortnight in Seaton Carew book launched. The Verb Garden Live Literature events continued. Seen and Heard was a project that targeted disadvantaged children in Middlesbrough. Ink Spot residency at SCOPE. Metalworks blacksmithing project with adults with learning difficulties at Upsall Hall.

**2002** Phase 2 of the arts, disability and social inclusion project Articulate continued with SYMO, a digital video project with a group of physically disabled people that would investigate issues of prejudice and access; Get A Life, an arts and consultation project with people with Learning disabilities;

# Trainspotting

Reading Cult Writing  
Cult Living

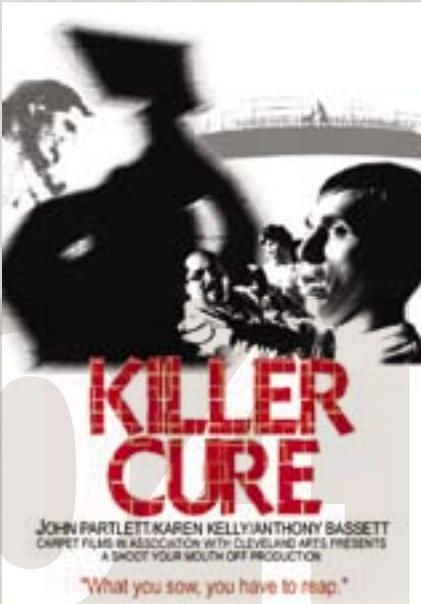
# me



Phoenix Arts, a programme of arts activities with people with mental health problems in Stockton on Tees. Verb Garden events continued with guest writers including Tom Leonard, Dana Bryant, Liz Lochhead and Don Paterson. Seven Red Plaice, a sculpture by David Kemp, sited at Regents Walk, in Redcar Town Centre and Long Scar, a sound beacon by Reinhild Beuther sited at the Summerhill Country Park in Hartlepool. The AIRIS (Artists in Residence in Science) project commenced, placing artists in science departments of secondary schools to introduce different ways of learning. Cleveland Arts delivered "Medicine Show", the launch event for Creative Partnerships in Middlesbrough working directly with Easterside and Tollesby Schools.

**2003** Cleveland Arts renamed as Tees Valley Arts with a focus on cultural education. You Are Here project working with refugees and asylum seekers commenced, funded by the Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund. The In:volve programme funded by ERDF developed the Articulate and Seen & heard programmes and consisted of 8 projects with the aim of setting up community/social enterprises. Ventures supported included Roaring Mouse, a group of people with learning disabilities, constituted as an Independent Theatre Group and small world: Big Drums multi-arts project. Education highlights included the Art:works programme which consisted of a series of small-scale schools residencies from contemporary dance and improvisational drama to giant willow sculpture and didgeridoo.

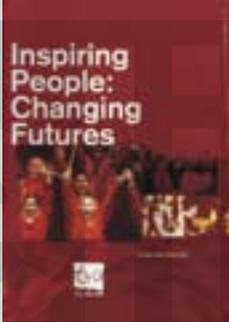
**2004** Path in the Dark, an anthology by parents at Sure Start, Abingdon, Middlesbrough working with poet Maureen Almond Gallery TS1 arts apprenticeship scheme launched in Middlesbrough funded through Middlesbrough Council. Hartlepool Young Parents project worked with artists Bob Beagrie and Adrian Moule. During refugee week 2004, the "Bard of Barnsley" Ian McMillan gave a series of workshops and performances and Helen Shannon was commissioned to create five poster designs for the back of Arriva buses. TIN productions worked with six schools in Hartlepool to create a performance event at Hartlepool Town Hall Theatre. The EIGHT project was an artist in residence project taking place in nine schools with nine artists for one academic year and featured platform



events in Hartlepool and Eston. Bio-animations involved three animation projects in schools in the Tees Valley looking at a different aspect of the key stage 2 Biology curriculum. SYMO's film "Killer Cure" was shown at the second Moscow Disability Film Festival. Tees Valley Arts co-ordinated MUSE, professional development courses for teachers on behalf of Creative Partnerships Tees Valley. Grangetown Primary School hosted a summer workshop series and performance on the theme of dragons. Phoenix Arts held an exhibition at the Arc, Stockton in collaboration with Gail Henderson. Warrior Women, a group of women who were all survivors of abuse and domestic violence came together to produce an exhibition in the Dundas Arcade as part of Arts Week for Everyone.

**2005** 1:3 a project working with youth groups in Hartlepool, Darlington, Stockton and South Bank with artists Paul McKenna, Rachel Clarke, Andy McCall-Smith and Kerry Flear. You Are Here Safe Havens DVD – a film made with a class of Year 5 pupils from Cromwell Road Primary School, South Bank exploring issues surrounding refugees and asylum seekers and endorsed by John McCarthy. The Education through the Arts in Science & Industry programme placed artists in three special schools exploring science subjects. Café International celebrated the completion of the first stage of the You Are Here project and featured a local blues band, a Chinese opera singer and a Reggae band. A grant from UK Online enabled TVA to purchase mobile computer equipment to work with community groups.

Phoenix Arts held a residential in Whitby and had an exhibition at the Arc, with Andy Broderick. The SIGMA Arts and Media project in Hartlepool held boat building workshops as part of the Tall Ships events in Hartlepool. Metalworks created a decorative "Metalworks" arch at Upsall Hall Rural Centre. Small world: Big Drums gave their first ever public performance at the Pop Up Festival in Kirkleatham. Pupils at Gillbrook Technical College made a short horror film "The Inheritance" with animator Andrew Liddell. The Roaring Mouse Drama Group made a film "Nuts for Pudding" with Carpet Films. TVA held two events at the Arc – creativeChange focusing on young people with Teacher Inset training and presentations and performances and a Creative Education Fair and creativeChange.com which brought together specialists



working in the fields of social enterprise, local regeneration and social inclusion. The Evolve science in education through the arts programme was launched. Rosi Lister was appointed Director in November.

**2006** The first WinterFest was held in March 2006 to celebrate diversity in the region with headliners Transglobal Underground. TVA were commissioned by Middlesbrough Council to manage the design and installation of major arts feature for the Middlesbrough A66 corridor. Kerri Page created a mosaic for new school South Bank Primary School. The Elements project exploring Teesside's chemical industry was celebrated at an event at Darlington Education Village in July. The You Are Here project celebrated Refugee Week with public performances in Middlesbrough Town Centre

attracting hundreds of people. Small world: Big Drums performed at The Sage, Gateshead and held a week long residency with five Tees Valley special schools. Twister Arts ran a festival and events training course for 50 unemployed young people in the lead up to Middlesbrough Music Live. Lifecycle arts and environment project culminated with a performance at Middlesbrough Town Hall featuring a pedal-powered PA system, poetry, song and dance. Waveband, a composition project, was given its world premiere at the Arc. Five Higher Apprentices in Arts Management arrived in the Tees Valley, managed by TVA on behalf of the 5 Tees Valley Strategic Arts Officers. You Are Here held an event at Liberty's in Town featuring Kasai Masai, Robert Maseko and Kurdish dancers. 24 young people took

part in a three week training programme "Fish Supper" learning fishing and cooking, healthy catering, film and photography, DJ'ing and MC'ing and technical event skills.

**2007** The second WinterFest takes place with headline acts Kanda Bongo Man and Tinariwen. Ian McChesney is appointed as architect to design landscape feature for Middlesbrough's A66. Best Dresses, a digital art, writing and textile project working with women with a history of substance abuse. Green Hearts environmental arts project commences. Gallery TS1 continues in the heart of Middlesbrough. Energise, a project for gifted and talented pupils to explore Fuels of the Future alongside artists, begins.

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**Rosi Lister**  
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Finance Manager

**Rachel Clarke**  
Heritage & Environmental  
Arts Officer

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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