

Programmes in The Department of Arts

- BA (Hons) Contemporary Photographic Practice
- BA (Hons) Drama
- BA (Hons) Drama and Scriptwriting
- BA (Hons) Film and TV Studies
- BA (Hons) Fine Art
- BA (Hons) Performance
- MA Conservation of Fine Art
- MA Cultural Management
- MA Event and Conference Management
- MA Film Studies
- MA Fine Art
- MA Fine Art and Education
- MA Museum and Heritage Management
- MA Music Management and Promotion
- MA Preventive Conservation
- MRes Arts
- Professional Doctorate in Arts

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Gallery North

Since its opening in 2009, Gallery North has become an important addition to Newcastle's burgeoning art scene. A flagship, cutting-edge contemporary art space, bringing big international names to the region, as well as showcasing emerging, home-grown talent.

Opportunities to collaborate

There are opportunities to get involved in any aspect of our work that fits with your aims and values, or has significance for you and/or your organisation as a Friend, Partner or Sponsor of the Gallery.

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Foreword

by Dr Heather Robson,
Head of Department

The Department of Arts, in the School of Arts and Social Sciences, is an extraordinary place in a special location. We are a leading centre for supporting and energising creative practice and academic study. The University's position in the heart of Newcastle upon Tyne, a vibrant city with a flourishing visual and performing arts scene and home to numerous creative and cultural venues, contributes to the main aim of the Department, which is to make a difference to the artistic and cultural landscape through dedicated research and scholarly activity, the delivery of excellence in learning and teaching, reflective professional practice, knowledge exchange and enterprise.

The community of enthusiastic and talented artists, performers, scholars and educators has helped the Department to establish a track record for producing educated and highly skilled graduates. These alumni go on to pursue careers in a wide range of areas including art practice, arts development, museum and gallery curatorship and administration, theatre management, community engagement, cultural enterprise, art conservation, choreography and performance, as well as in education and academic research – and I am delighted to say that many of our graduates remain professionally active in the North East.

The quality and depth of the curriculum is reinforced by a dynamic research and enterprise culture, covering all aspects of the work of staff and students in the Department. Home to 42 academic staff who are renowned specialists in their particular fields, the creative community includes fine artists, photographers and performers whose work is exhibited at venues across the

world, and choreographers, writers and research-active staff who publish widely and collaborate with the cultural sector and creative organisations internationally. In addition, the Department supports a thriving postgraduate community with approximately 30 doctoral students who make a significant contribution to research and knowledge exchange. The work of the Department is supported and developed by three experienced administrators.

Our research and enterprise activity, whether through practice or in written form, explores in innovative and diverse ways the complexity of the cultural field. Departmental staff were submitted against Art and Design and History of Art, Architecture and Design, Units of Assessment in the 2008 RAE. The majority of the work was identified as of an international quality and much of it was acknowledged as internationally excellent or outstanding.

The Department is continually investing in facilities and has its very own

contemporary exhibition space Gallery North, as well as an exciting and flourishing artist's studio resource, Graduate Studio Northumbria, created to help graduate artists develop their practice and activate professional contacts across creative networks. Gallery North is home to a range of practice-led undergraduate and postgraduate activities as well as the venue for curated exhibitions of work by national and international artists. At the very core of this is a commitment to cutting-edge research that explores theoretical, practical, historical and applied themes underpinned by interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary working.

The opening of a purpose built theatre in September 2010 and the development of a centre for excellence in paper-making and drawing will further enhance the excellent facilities we have for studying and working in the visual and performing arts, including dedicated facilities for dance, drama, digital media, performance, photography, sculpture, printmaking, photography, woodwork, metal work and ceramics and generous-sized and good quality studio spaces for students. These facilities demonstrate the importance the Department places on the connections between high-quality research and enterprise, learning and teaching, knowledge transfer and the creative and cultural industries.

The Department is entering a very exciting phase of development as our investment in staff, high quality research, practice and innovation positions us to be one of the leading Universities in the country for research and study in the visual and performing arts and as a centre for excellence in professional arts practice.



A fusion of talent

The tenth annual art and design show, Free Range 2010, opened in London this summer at the Old Truman Brewery, showcasing the Department of Arts most talented future artists. Free Range included a fusion of student work chosen from across the Department's disciplines of fine art and photography.

Since its inception ten years ago, Free Range has become the number one platform for graduates to showcase their work both to the public and creative industry. Featuring the UK's hottest new creative talent all under one roof, the show has quite rightly earned itself a reputation as Europe's largest graduate art and design show.

Attracting visitors in their thousands over an eight week period in June and July, shows rotate weekly and are curated by discipline including design, graphics, photography, art and interiors.

In particular, the show in London provides Northumbria graduates with an all-important launchpad to be seen and acknowledged by the creative industry, beyond the parameters of their course and University environment.

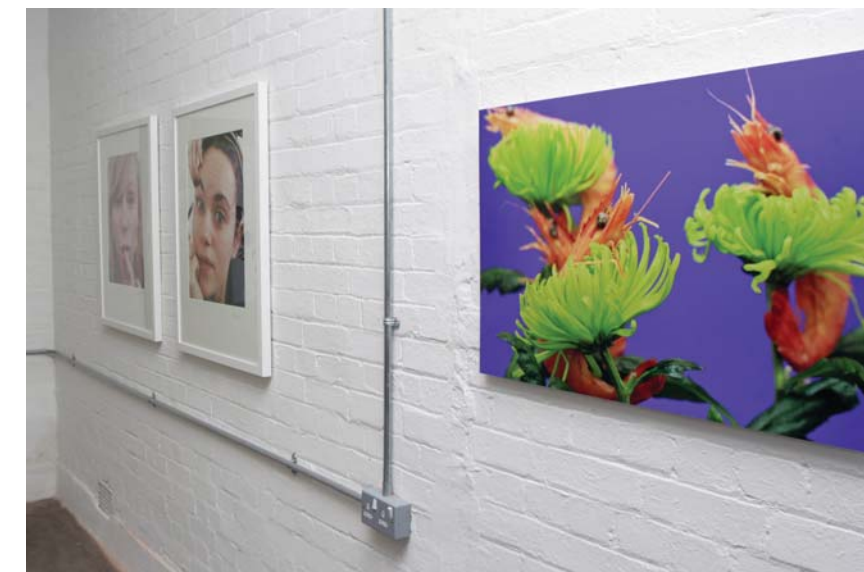
"Free Range provides new graduates with their first real opportunity to engage with the general public, future client base, and potential employers, as well as making connections with each other, sparking relationships that can take them on to new creative journeys," said Free Range Director Tamsin O'Hanlon.

"We're still in touch with many who came through Free Range and are now well-established in their chosen fields."

Featuring a diverse range of outstanding pieces from final-year students, who graduated this summer in BA (Hons) Fine Art and BA (Hons) Contemporary Photographic Practice, Free Range celebrated the best of young British art.

The London Show followed on from the success of the Department's own Visual Arts Degree Show in Newcastle, which was the culmination of undergraduate studies for 2010 and this year exhibited over 150 new art works by 70 artists. As in previous years, the exhibition demonstrated an extremely high level of creative achievement with each student cultivating an individual practice that is distinctively his or her own.

The number one platform for graduates to showcase their work both to the public and creative industry



The Department of Arts, Northumbria University exhibiting at Free Range 2010 in The Old Truman Brewery, Brick Lane, London.

Profile

Dr Peter Hutchings, Professor in Film Studies

Visiting a disused RAF base to discuss the alien invasion of Earth is not something that many academics get to do, even if it is only for a BBC documentary about British science fiction cinema.

Peter Hutchings, a Professor in Film Studies, recalls that his scenes were filmed in a building previously used for aligning gun sights. "Given the subject matter of the show, it was an eerie experience," he says. "I was acutely aware that I was standing in the kind of location that would not have been out of place in the films that I was talking about. It was a useful reminder of how British science fiction films and television programmes, for all their fantastic elements, have relied on actual landscapes and settings for their atmospheric power."

Peter has spent much of his career exploring connections between fantasy-based genres such as science fiction and horror and broader social and economic histories. His first book, published back in 1993, was a study of the British horror film, and he has since acquired an international reputation for work on the horror genre which has included four more books and

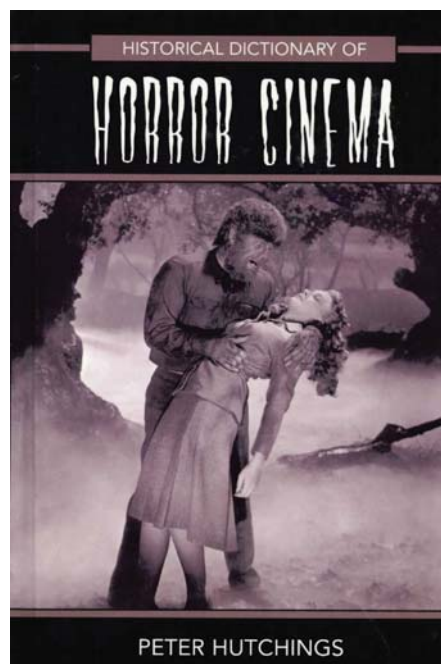
numerous essays and articles. Some of this work has been anthologised and translated into several foreign languages including Chinese, Italian, Korean and Russian, but the subject matter has sometimes caused problems. "Presenting yourself as a specialist in horror has occasionally caused eyebrows to be raised," Peter acknowledges. "But for all the disreputability associated with it, horror has been a significant aspect of commercial film production since the 1930s and is an especially notable presence in British film history. Looking at horror with an unprejudiced eye reveals an area of creative activity that is vital and unpredictable and which raises important questions about cultural values and hierarchies."

Peter's work has often approached horror and science fiction from a social-historical perspective, seeing them as genres that offer valuable insights into socially and nationally specific fears

and anxieties. However, he is also preoccupied with the location of fantasy genres within the cultural industries. "Films don't just appear magically from a social context," he points out, "they are manufactured within particular industrial structures, and you need to understand those structures in order to grasp why the films are fashioned in the way they are." For example, his recent work on the revival of European horror production has focused on the contribution of small independent production companies and regional film funds to the development of a new kind of genre product.

"There is something inexhaustible about the horror genre," Peter claims. "This is not just to do with its longevity and its consistent popularity but also its geographical reach. It has always been one of the most internationalised of genres, and approaching it in these terms can cast an interesting new light on contemporary debates about the globalisation of culture." For his next projects, however, Peter is staying closer to home. A second edition of his book on British horror is in preparation, and he is also working on a book on the British thriller on film and television. "I seem to be drawn to the more sensational aspects of British culture," he admits. "The British are actually very adept at producing this kind of fiction but are often embarrassed by the results. I hope that my own work dispels some of that discomfort and shows how complex and challenging this part of our cultural history can be and how much it tells us about our own changing identities."

Despite all his efforts to lose himself in his research, Peter still manages to find time to be a member of the Arts and Humanities Research Council Peer Review College and to serve on the editorial board for the journal Visual Culture in Britain. He also has co-leadership responsibilities for research in the Department of Arts.



Two books by Professor Hutchings, pictured above



Mania!

From railway mania, Japan mania, Egypto-mania through to Beatles mania, wrestle mania and now Obama mania, Dr Elizabeth Kramer looks at the phenomenon of mania through the material culture that is often closely associated with them.

"Whenever a mania occurs, there is often an upsurge in amateur art and craft as people strive to participate personally, creatively and, usually, inexpensively with the mania," she says. "In traditional art history, such widely accessible activities are dismissed and belittled, but, for me, when a lot of people are engaged in a common form of expression, there must be something profound going on."

Elizabeth's interest in manias began with her research into British consumption of Japanese decorative arts during the Japan mania of the 1870s-80s. The closed world of Japan was forcibly opened up to Western trade in 1858, and the British public had its first large-scale exposure to Japanese culture during the London International Exhibition of 1862. In Elizabeth's view this sudden influx of a richly decorated, beautifully crafted

material culture created ideas about Japan that remain with us today.

"At the time, Japan was a place that was linguistically, geographically and culturally very distant," she explains. "Thus the first way that the British had to react to Japan was through its material culture, and this created an idea of Japan that remains with us still – the Japan of exquisite design and aesthetic sensibility. When you read late-nineteenth century travel literature, you find that when travellers arrive on the shores of Japan their point of reference is often the material culture. The Japanese, they say, look like they do on the vases."

"At about the same time, the British were coming to terms to the Indian mutiny of 1857 and the Opium Wars with China, and Japan therefore offered a new, exotic ideal of the East. As a country that itself was going through

a rapid transition from feudalism to industrialization, Japan also offered Britain and other countries in the West a model of their own recent histories. The mania grew from this."

From an original fascination with Britain's late nineteenth century decorative culture, Elizabeth's primary research work is now the material culture of manias. Her current interest is Obama mania and the plethora of items that are being made by professional and amateur artists, designers and crafters.

"I know I am living through a mania at the moment," she says. "The cup cakes, dolls, earrings, mugs, quilts and myriad other items bearing the President's name or image speak of large numbers of people articulating their hopes, their values and their politics through their creativity, many for perhaps the first time. What is different about this mania is that this time the internet allows me to view all of these objects being produced and contact the participants directly and ask them what they think is going on."

The inauguration of Barack Obama, 2009





A shining example of what two energetic and culturally ambitious organisations can do in partnership

A Northumbria partnership with BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art

All good partnerships are built on trust and respect and this is evident in the quality and ambition of collaborative activities between BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art and Northumbria University.

In 2001 Northumbria Fine Art was invited by Emma Thomas (Director of Learning at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art) to discuss the potential of a new Master's course for teachers of art that would support and promote continuing professional development and bring them up to date in terms of contemporary art production. BALTIC as an organisation has always been particularly interested to promote a greater understanding of contemporary art practice and is the biggest gallery of its kind in the world – presenting an ever-changing calendar of exhibitions. This was the beginning of the MA Fine Art and Education course, now as old as BALTIC itself.

Helen Baker-Alder who is presently a Trustee on the BALTIC Board of Directors and Director of Gallery North is also Programme Leader for the MA and explains the idea behind its creation:

“The MA Fine Art and Education course was built around a model that was endorsed by the Artist Teacher Scheme and supported by the National Society for Art and Design and Arts Council England. It offers students a subject specialist course with modules that integrate learning into their teaching practice and initiates active research that questions assessment, curriculum and challenges assumptions. This student research has been described

by external examiners as innovative, excellent and dynamic.” Helen adds: “BALTIC also works with the University to offer a yearly summer school for artist teachers wanting to explore their personal and professional practice. The taster course also forms an essential component of the MA Fine Art and Education programme.”

In addition the newly established Gallery North collaborated in a joint exhibition marking the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Artist Teacher Scheme (ATS) 2009. The exhibition showcased work from artist teachers from six universities and culminated in a conference at the BALTIC. Staff and students at Northumbria are also delighted that the project's continued success inspired the BALTIC to initiate the Artist Teacher Award. This offers a student graduating from the programme the opportunity to exhibit at

BALTIC each year. The award-winner is chosen by Godfrey Worsdale, Director of BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art.

Godfrey explains the value and achievement behind the initiative:

“It is important as ever to recognise not only those who have joined and benefited from the course, but also those who conceived, developed and delivered it. The project stands as a shining example of what two of Newcastle Gateshead's energetic and ambitious, culturally focused organisations can do in partnership and I hope and expect this inspiration to continue to be built upon.”

This long collaboration with a major art gallery clearly offers a raft of possible provision in a field where resources are being challenged. In recent years, Northumbria has had involvement in BALTIC publications and international conferences and these are evident on their website archive. However, arguably the Department's most pleasurable success is that of their alumni such as Bharti Kher, Claire Morgan and Ben Jeans Houghton who have all exhibited at BALTIC as major international artists.



Subterranea, BALTIC © Colin Davison

Paper and ice

The work of Sian Bowen

First they were Renaissance prints, carried as merchandise on a 1596 expedition to the Far East. Then, as the expedition failed in the icy waters of the North East passage, they became hard, blackened blocks of papier-mache, frozen together for nearly 300 years in the refuge where they were abandoned. Rediscovered in the late 1800s, the blocks became the object of technical and chemical enquiry in the 1970s as methods were devised to separate the layers and reassemble the fragments.

Known as the Nova Zembla prints after the island in the Russian Arctic where they were found, the prints have, at different times and in different circumstances, been considered to be art, goods, debris or artefacts. Now they are to become something new again – the inspiration and the stimulus for a suite of drawings by Northumbria lecturer Sian Bowen.

Working in collaboration with Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum, which houses the Nova Zembla collection,

Sian will develop an exhibition which shows her new drawings alongside a selection of the prints. This practice-based research project is funded by the AHRC and is titled 'Capturing the Ephemeral: Transience and Materiality through Drawing'.

"What I find intriguing is the material transformation of the prints in relation to possibilities for drawing," she says. "They are extraordinary not so much for their content but for how they have survived such extreme conditions – the

fragile paper fragments mounted onto Japanese paper supports seem to be more like pieces of soft, kid leather than paper. At times it looks as though it has been burnished again and again."

"This transformation from two-dimensional prints to three-dimensional papier-mache blocks and then back once again to single sheets of prints, is also intriguing. Through the passage of time they have been transformed back and forth between wet and dry states. They were encased in ice for three centuries – and now are held in the controlled and monitored conditions of the Rijks' stores."

Over the last ten years Sian has created works in response to a number of museum collections, most recently at Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum and at Stonehenge World Heritage Site. From 2006-8, she was Resident Artist in Drawing at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and solo exhibitions of her work have been held throughout the UK and at a wide range of venues internationally.

The exhibition of Sian's new works opens at the Rijksmuseum in November 2012. She is currently working her way through the now divided stacks and, together with the museum's Photographic Studio, has been documenting the prints, a process that has made her see them in a new light.

"Fragments of the same cloud appear again and again," she says. "The houses in a Flemish landscape no longer appear to stand upright – the whole scene has been distorted through the material transformation of the paper support."

"This project is proving to be extremely complex and rewarding. I am currently working with a range of experts including a Berlin-based paper-maker who specialises in historical paper processes, archaeologists who have excavated the site where the prints were originally found and paper conservators at the Rijksmuseum. I have also re-traced part of the journey of the 1596 expedition through the ice-pack, which was an extraordinary experience."



The work of Sian Bowen

Power in art

At the boundaries of performance, academic writing and the creation of manifestos

"Power in art is not like that in a nation or in big business. A picture never changed the price of eggs. But a picture can change our dreams; and pictures may in time clarify our values. The power of artists is precisely the influence they wield over the fantasies of their public." (Laura Cull)

These are the words of Allan Kaprow, redelivered by Dr Laura Cull, lecturer in performing arts, editor of Deleuze and Performance, chair of the Performance and Philosophy Working Group within Performance Studies International, and member of the artists collective SpRoUt. The words appear in her 2008 work Manifesto, which she delivered at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA) show Nought to Sixty.

For Laura, it is the manifesto's potential to combine theory, the announcement of belief and a call to action that makes it such a compelling form, one that she has returned to many times and with a number of collaborators.

"Manifestos have always been used to propose alternative futures," she explains. "The status quo does not have to be the only set of possibilities; there are myriad ways of doing things; and by the performativity of the language you can bring that future into being just by saying it."

"Performance in this sense can be understood as a manifesto in itself. What you are doing when you make a performance is enacting another possibility, another presence that exists but is denied, or another possible future. That interests me as a political idea. It is a way of staging utopia."

Apart from Deleuze, Laura's teaching and research has been influenced by her reflection on the history, politics and philosophical implications of experimental theatre and performance (which was the subject of her doctoral

thesis). There is the work of The Living Theatre, the archetype of 1960s experimentalism in which audiences were encouraged to enter the performance, so attempting to create a link between theatrical and political



Dr Laura Cull (main picture)

revolution. There is the poet, actor and theorist Artaud, who rejected Brecht's communication of messages to distanced, 'smoking spectators', and who instead urged a 'Theatre of Cruelty' that directly assaulted the sensibilities of the audience. Then there is Kaprow, who developed the concept of 'the happening', and whose art involved volunteer participants enacting sets

of instructions, often without the presence of an audience. Also, there is the performance company, Goat Island, who use slowness, waiting, and repetitive chronologies to recalibrate the audience's sense of time.

"Goat Island's work shows how when we pay attention we are also taking part," she says. "Their performances do not involve audience participation in its traditional sense. They do however impress upon us the need to develop the patience and the modes of perception necessary to affirm the reality of durations other than our own."

The performance becomes a critique, not of movement itself, but of the capitalist attempt to establish one homogeneous rhythm and speed as universal: to segregate the (valuable) moving and the (useless) still from one's own perspective. In this way, performance becomes a mechanism for testing and questioning capitalist values."



01

01 In *Fading Light* from 1989 (North Shields fishing industry)
 02 *Eden Valley* from 1995 (horsey/trotting community)
 03 *Shooting Magpies* from 2005 (post-industrial East Durham and heroin)
 04 *Launch* from 1973 (Shipbuilding)



02



03



Dr James Leggott's writing on the Amber Collective

When people think about the North East of England in movies or on television, it's more than likely that certain images come to mind. Perhaps it's the gritty Newcastle backdrop to the 1970s thriller *Get Carter*, or maybe the Durham mining town where *Billy Elliot* was filmed. It might even be the Northumbrian countryside of many a Catherine Cookson drama. All of these well known representations, among others, have helped to promote popular ideas about the region's people, places and history.

But what is not so well known is that some of the most interesting films about the region have been produced by an artistic group based in the heart of Tyneside. Since the late 1960s, the Amber Collective has been making thoughtful documentaries and feature films about the lives of people in the North East. Over the course of its forty year career, Amber has remained committed to capturing and celebrating the experiences of communities that might be regarded as marginalised.

Its well-respected films tackle such themes as the difficult working lives of North Shields fishermen, and the impact of unemployment upon families and young people in the former coalfields of East Durham. As well as offering a fascinating document of the changing face of the region, Amber's work has been championed internationally by critics, and shown on television and at film festivals around the world.

James Leggott, Senior Lecturer in Film and Television Studies, is currently

writing the first book-length study of Amber and its remarkable films. This study (which is being jointly written with a colleague based in Germany) will tell the story of why Amber came to Newcastle in 1969, and how their organic working methods developed over time. In his book, James will be analysing what makes the group unique and important.

"One of the most unusual aspects of Amber is its practice of making films from the very heart of particular communities," he says.

"The film-makers build their stories from the experiences of real people, which results in stories that give a very different perspective from more mainstream films and television programmes."

But just as distinctive is Amber's democratic working method. In fact, film-making is only one part of the wide-ranging activity of the group, who also produce photographic exhibitions, in addition to running their own cinema and exhibition space on their Newcastle premises. James adds:

"The team who make up the Amber Collective take responsibility for all of these activities, so they work in a genuinely collaborative and egalitarian way."

Amber is still very much active, and has adapted to the demands of 21st century audiences by digitising much of its extensive archive, and also by streaming films on its dedicated web channel (Side TV). James says this is the perfect moment for a re-evaluation of Amber's achievements.

"Amber is starting to get the critical recognition it deserves, not just for making such an important contribution to British film culture, but for providing a lasting document of local communities and culture."



04



Durham mysteries

Ten stories. Two thousand years in the making

The Durham Mysteries is a contemporary revival of Durham's medieval mystery play cycle for a modern audience.

This major theatrical landmark generated by Gala Theatre and Cinema, Durham City Council and Culture 10 and further supported by Northern Rock provided theatre directors Fiona MacPherson and Steve Gilroy, both Senior Lecturers in the Department of Arts, with the unique research opportunity to engage with regional and national collaborators in this exciting event.

Historically, the medieval mystery plays dramatised stories from the Bible. From the Creation through to the Last Judgement, they served to retell 'salvation history' to the largely illiterate population. They were hugely popular, featuring battles between good and evil,

darkness and light, struggle and redemption. The stories were epic with broad universal themes. Written by local clergy, staged by medieval guilds (groups made up of different tradesmen and crafts), and performed by local townspeople; a core characteristic of the medieval re-enactments, was the involvement of the whole community.

This 2010 initiative attempted to involve the people of the city of Durham in exactly the same way. Nothing remained of the original mystery plays apart from a fragment of the prologue so the project required a complete reimagining of the stories and the event itself. Local writers and groups were asked to contribute to the project by

selecting a story, and retelling it for a contemporary audience. Over eighty submissions were made and ten were selected to form the new canon.

Amongst the ten were Cain and Abel by mother and son team Ellen Phethean and DJ drop dead Fred Phethean (directed by Fiona MacPherson) and The Miracle of Lazarus by Judy Upton (directed by Steve Gilroy). Both of these pieces allowed for the exploration of biblical narratives and medieval theatrical traditions within a contemporary investigation of site specificity and popular cultural forms in performance; and to interrogate to what extent a contemporary version of these plays can successfully transpose the political and moral intentions of both the Lazarus and Cain and Abel stories into a modern British context.



CAIN AND ABEL by Ellen and Fred Phethean Directed by Fiona MacPherson

Cain and Abel is an innovative retelling of the infamous fratricide set in a twenty first century hip hop culture, told through urban street forms of rap, break dance and graffiti. In this tale of sibling rivalry, jealousy and murder, the brothers do battle as they vie for approval and love. The text is sympathetic to the character of Cain and explores how a young man can be forever marked by the actions of his youth.

THE MIRACLE OF LAZARUS by Judy Upton Directed by Steve Gilroy

The Miracle of Lazarus combines naturalistic performances with theatrical spectacle; live feed filming with site specific performance the aim of the piece was to make a seamless journey from an 'invisible theatre' to the spectacle of the arrival of Jesus triggering a mass 'flash mob response' from elements of the audience.

Nervous genres

From a 1930s classic of avant garde cinema to British children's television of the 1980s and 1990s to Korean horror films from the 1960s, Alison Peirse's interests are wide ranging. At their heart however, is a fascination with the popular and the fantastic.



Alison has written on *Vampyr* for example, a 1932 film by the Danish director Carl Theodor Dreyer which was the first film to be awarded the British Board of Film Classification's 'H' for horror certificate. A year before its release, in 1931, the three great classics of horror cinema had been unleashed: *Dracula*, *Frankenstein* and *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. However, despite this context, Alison locates the film in the tradition of European art cinema, citing influences such as Eisenstein and the German Expressionists.

"*Vampyr* visually resembles 1920s avant-garde films such as Epstein's *La Chute de la Maison de Usher* and Surrealist films such as *Un Chien Andalou*," she says. "While *Vampyr* is certainly not the only 1930s horror film to draw upon art movements such as Bauhaus, its myriad of avant-garde and artistic European influences create a spectacularly dense and haunting

text, with staring characters, oblique narratives and a languid, almost somnambulant tone."

For Alison, the text is the focus of her interest. However, her analysis of children's television programmes of the 1980s and 1990s also places her subjects in the context of their times. "If someone was asked to name the classics of 1980s and 1990s children's television, they would probably come up with the BBC's lavishly produced adaptations of classic children's novels such as *The Box of Delights* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*," she says:

"In these programmes, incredible adventures occur to middle-class children in strange spaces, often in the country, away from the term-time world of boarding school. These programmes, with their country mansions, 'received pronunciation', polite children decked out in fitted tweed suits, crumpets toasted over the fire and loyal servants, all presented a nostalgic vision of pre-war Britishness calculated to have international commercial appeal."

In the 1990s, however, children's telefantasy became increasingly concerned with contemporary settings and working-class spaces. Alison points to two early Russell T Davies serials, *Dark Season* and *Century Falls*, programmes which brought populist genres such as horror and science to a children's audience.

"These programmes represent a distinctive period that has been lost to academic study and suggest

that British telefantasy should be re-conceptualized," she says. "Rather than a series of fragmented and disconnected moments in history, dominated by the over-arching presence of *Doctor Who*, British telefantasy is a broken tradition, with peaks, troughs and transformations in every decade since the 1960s."

And so to Korean horror. One of the reasons Alison likes this genre so much is because it is a very female-led horror. Like Japanese horror, the men are usually away somewhere, and any violence is about and for women. "It is very ghostly," she says, "with haunted homes and school buildings. Fundamentally, it is about women's spaces and their relationships, so undermining the idea that horror is a genre concerned with male sexual violence and female victimization."



Profile

Dr Cheryl Buckley, Professor in Design History

Writing and researching design has dominated Cheryl Buckley's academic life for over 30 years, but she remains fascinated by design in its broadest sense.



Professor Buckley's research has led her to investigate the Isokon Furniture and Architecture Company in 1930s Britain; women potters in Britain and America, the nature of 'modern' design in Britain, and women and fashion. She has also interviewed numerous designers including the internationally important ceramic designers Susie Cooper, Star Wedgwood, Grete Marks and Eva Zeisel (the latter she interviewed last year in New York aged 103 years). As well as being invited to give numerous keynote lectures in Germany, the USA, Canada and Britain, she was guest curator at the prestigious Bard Graduate Center Gallery in New York in 2000 and just this year at the Musée des Beaux Arts de Montreal.

It is her work on Design and Gender that initially gained her most critical attention internationally; particularly

her theoretical work in this field including 'Made in Patriarchy' (*Design Issues*, 1986) and empirical research such as *Potters and Paintresses* (1990). Latterly she consolidated her long standing commitment to research design on fashion with *Fashioning the Feminine* (2002) and design in Britain with her recent monograph, *Designing Modern Britain* published in 2007.

Since 2006, Cheryl has been Visiting Professor at the Cooper-Hewitt Smithsonian National Design Museum and Parsons School of Design in New York where she teaches an intensive MA module each spring on her research to the top design students in the field. Her latest research investigates fashion and everyday life in Britain and America in the 20th century in a collaborative project with a colleague at Parsons School of Design. She will be undertaking a detailed study of fashion in everyday life by drawing on family photographs, documentary film and newsreel and individual life stories. This project, like many that

Cheryl has researched before, will bring together empirical research in archives, but it also reconceptualises the relationships between fashion and the modern world.

Cheryl's research has helped to change the ways in which we teach and think about design, and a number of themes persist. For example, due to an interest in émigrés designers and architects working in Britain that began with research on Isokon at the beginning of her career, she has just developed an on-going collaborative project with a colleague at the University of Kiel in Germany to establish an interdisciplinary research network and web-based database on the topography of German-speaking émigrés within visual culture in Britain, 1933-1961.

A new challenge, but also a delight is her leadership of research in the Department of Arts in the School of Arts and Social Sciences and of the University's Design, Creativity, and Digital Media research strand, one of four established in January 2010.

Cheryl's research has helped to change the ways in which we teach and think about design

FIONA CRISP

Subterranea

31 July – 4 October 2009

BALTIC presents a solo exhibition of large-scale photographic works by British artist Fiona Crisp curated from a number of distinct series of images evolved over the last six years. The images have been developed at a series of diverse European locations ranging from early Christian Catacombs in Rome, to a Second World War underground hospital in Guernsey and, locally to the North East, Crisp has produced still and meditative images of Killhope, a lead mining museum in County Durham.

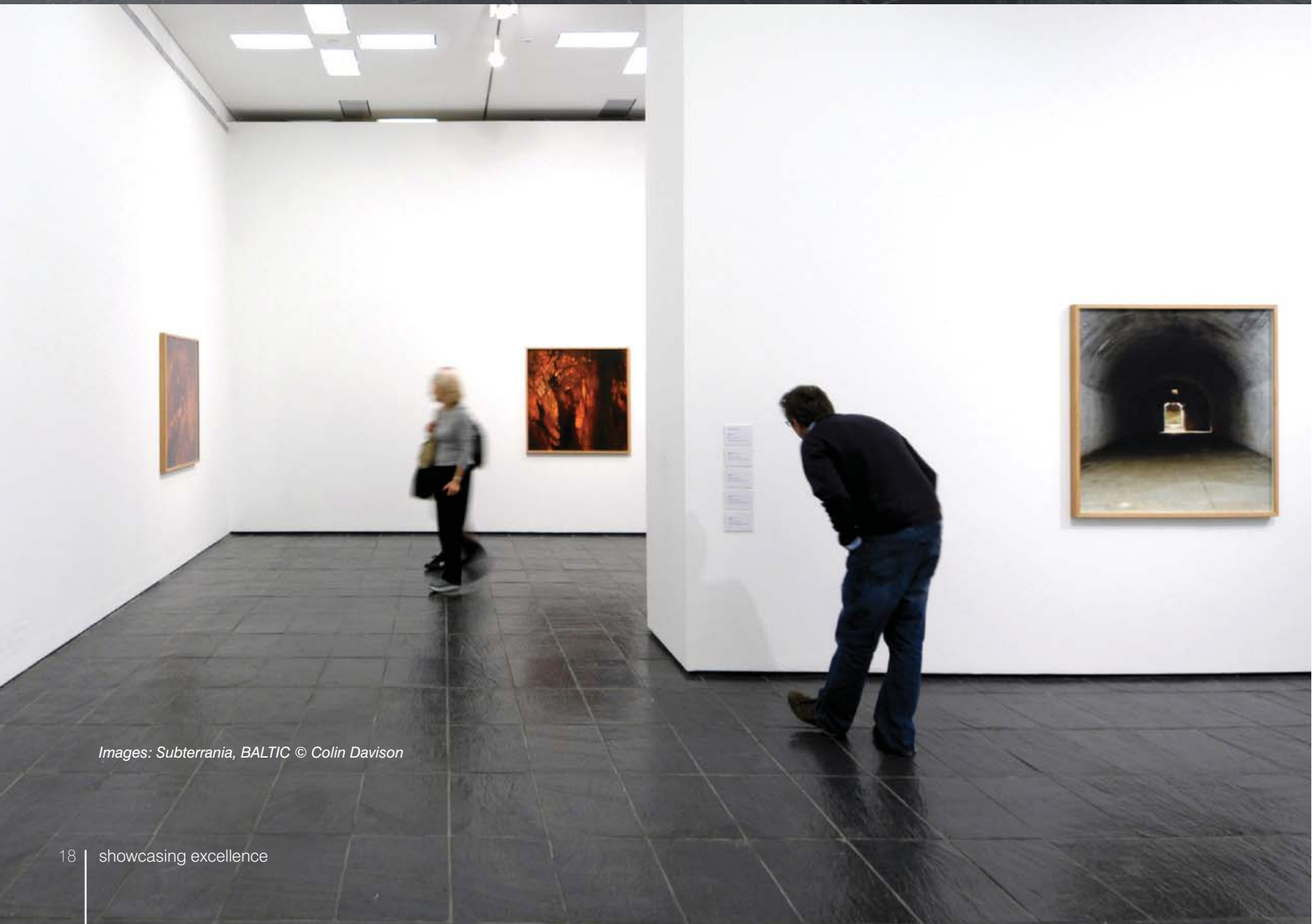
All these underground locations were chosen by the artist primarily for their sense of physical power and also for the fact that they are all now tourist sites where complex relationships between heritage, leisure and history are brought into question. These compelling images of interior space question the role of the photograph, and explore concepts of architecture and time.

Born in 1966, Fiona Crisp lives and works in Northumberland and is a Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at Northumbria University. Her work is held in the collections of Tate, The Government Art Collection, The Arts Council Collection and private collections.

Fiona Crisp is represented by Matt's Gallery, London.

Subterranea is a Newlyn Art Gallery touring exhibition

exchange
neulyn



Images: Subterranea, BALTIC © Colin Davison

Exploring the relationship between photography and architectural space

Fiona Crisp is an artist who has become known for creating installations of large-scale photographs that question the ontological presence of the photographic image.

in April 2010. Subterranea was widely reviewed in local, national and art press as well as being featured in a Sky Arts documentary alongside Martin Parr and Malcolm McLaren.

Her works are often generated by spending intensive periods of time in particular locations, recent projects having variously involved her working in the Early Christian catacombs of Rome, a Second World War underground military hospital in the Channel Islands and a Dark Matter research laboratory housed in Britain's deepest working mine. What unites these apparently disparate sites is that, contrary to their historic purpose that allowed access to a defined group of users, they have now been opened up as tourist sites where the boundaries between heritage, leisure and historical truth become inevitably blurred.

Fiona completed a postgraduate degree at The Slade School of Fine Art, London in 1993 and since this time has exhibited both nationally and internationally. In 1999/2000 she spent a period of time working in the North East of England whilst on the Berwick

Gymnasium Fellowship. Since then she has spent time working in Norway and in Rome where she held a Wingate Scholarship at The British School.

In 2006 Fiona undertook a residency based at the world-famous 18th Century landscape gardens at Stourhead, Wiltshire jointly commissioned by the British School at Rome and the National Trust. The residency was linked to Beauty and the Beast, an exhibition of outdoor sculpture with artists ranging from Barbara Hepworth to Gavin Turk looking at the often-contentious relationship between Classicism and The Contemporary. Of particular interest to Fiona in this context was the role that both literal and metaphorical image-making plays in what she refers to as the 'production of spectacle and experience'. Fiona continues to explore aspects of the consumption of history and heritage as a leisure activity in an ongoing research partnership she has developed with the National Trust.

More recently, projects that Fiona has undertaken over the last seven years came together in the major solo touring exhibition Subterranea that launched at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art in July 2009 before travelling to Impressions Gallery, Bradford and concluding at Newlyn Gallery, Cornwall

A monograph, Hyper Passive, surveying the visual, conceptual and philosophical aspects of Fiona's large-scale photographic work from the last decade, was published by Matt's Gallery, London to coincide with the launch of Subterranea. The publication looks at the role Fiona's work plays in the current dialogue surrounding the ontology of the photographic image and includes an essay by Professor Christopher Townsend of London University and an interview with Alessandro Vincentelli, Curator at BALTIC.

Fiona is currently a Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at Northumbria University. Previously she taught at Camberwell, University of the Arts, London (2002-3) as well as being a visiting lecturer at several institutions including The Slade, Winchester, Coventry, Derby, Sunderland and Newcastle University and an external assessor for Crawford College, Cork, The Republic of Ireland (2007-2009).

Fiona Crisp's work is represented by Matt's Gallery, London and is held in the collections of The Tate Gallery, The Government Art Collection, The Arts Council Collection, The National Trust, Worcester City Art Gallery and private collections.



Fiona Crisp, Hyper Passive

The materials and techniques of Francis Bacon, 1909-1992

"In my case all painting... is an accident. I foresee it and yet I hardly ever carry it out as I foresee it. It transforms itself by the actual paint. I don't in fact know very often what the paint will do, and it does many things which are very much better than I could make it do." (Francis Bacon)

Funded by the Estate of Francis Bacon, an important project is underway to examine the materials and techniques used by the painter Francis Bacon. With a view to helping authentication and the conservation of his works, the research

is building a database of materials used at different dates. Brian Singer who is leading the research project in Conservation of Art explains:

"The aim of this research is to examine the materials and techniques used by

the artist Francis Bacon, through the examination and sampling of paintings, and of materials left in Bacon's studio. Analysis is being carried out to identify the pigments and binders present in the paint in order to build up a timeline of materials used throughout his career."

As well as assisting with the authentication and dating of paintings by Bacon, the findings reveal new knowledge about Bacon's work as an artist such as the extent to which he adopted modern materials and how these might have helped to shape his art.

Thirty paintings by Francis Bacon have been examined and sampled, of which eleven are partially destroyed canvases that were left in Bacon's studio. Over seventy samples have been taken from materials remaining in Bacon's studio and are being analysed using a combination of techniques. The results have begun to identify some patterns in the use of materials, for example, the transition from lead white to titanium white pigment, and the use of some pigments over long periods, and cobalt violet and cadmium red. Results have also shown that Bacon used household paints such as PVA emulsions and alkyd paints as well as artists materials. Brian Singer, Senior Lecturer in Conservation explains:

"We have already sampled and analysed a large number of paintings that belong to the Estate, art galleries and museums, and private owners who have been happy to participate in the development of this work. I am delighted that the knowledge gained from this project will result in a publicly available resource and that the findings will be important for the conservation of these works in the future."



The Francis Bacon doctoral student at work

Staff engage in professional practice. These links bring new thinking and project opportunities for our students.

Modern painters: The Camden Town Group

Dr Ysanne Holt, Reader in Art History and Editor of Visual Culture in Britain is currently working with Tate Britain as Academic Advisor to a major project funded by the Getty Foundation.

fields such as Art and Design History, Conservation Studies, the History of Photography, Literature and Film Studies to explore different aspects of Camden Town art in relation to such themes as modernity and the metropolis, class and social type, popular culture and performance.

The project launched in spring 2011, is expected to make a considerable impact on the future of museum cataloguing projects in general, as well as an important contribution to the current widespread reassessment of Edwardian Visual Culture.

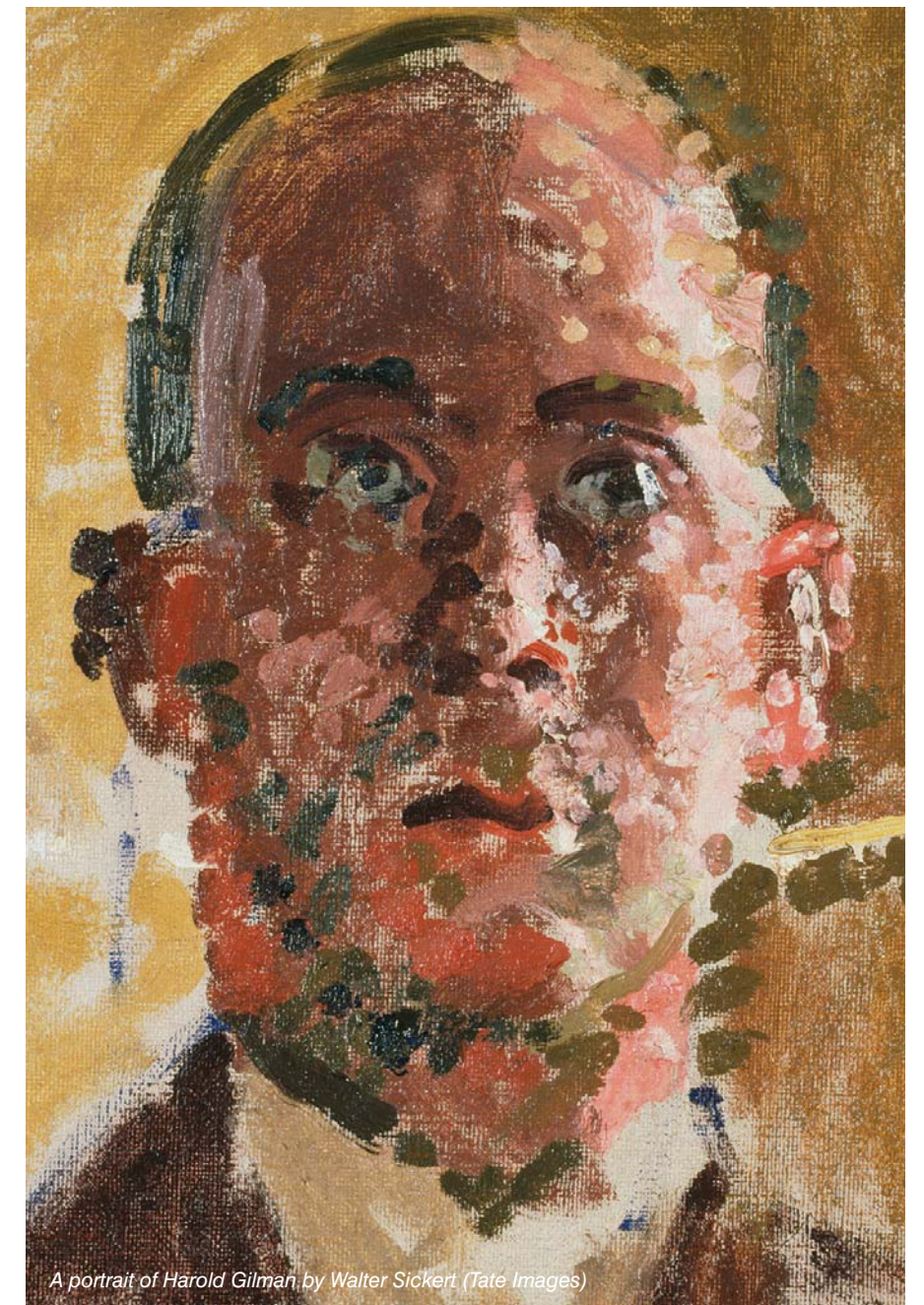
The Camden Town Group of artists was formed over 'a good dinner with an abundance of wine' in 1911. Walter Sickert and a collection of younger painters such as Harold Gilman, Charles Ginner and Spencer Gore were influenced by recent examples of French painting and took London, and frequently the north London suburb of Camden, as their subject.

by Tate curators and cataloguers. Each art work will have an entry, with a full scholarly apparatus including an exhibition history and literature references, technical notes and comparative illustrations. The project, however, is conceived as a broad and multidisciplinary investigation into the Camden Town Group. Dr Ysanne Holt has commissioned leading scholars in

The Group was fascinated by the changing ways of life in London in the 1910s and the capital as a bustling modern metropolis. The modern painters celebrated ordinary people and urban scenes and captured the mood of this transitional period in British history, preferring to paint themes such as – life in the city; people; style; sex; and the infamous Camden Town murder.

Tate Britain holds the most extensive collection of Camden Town Group paintings and drawings in the world. Together these works constitute a major resource for understanding an important period in the development of modern art in Britain and for appreciating the impact of cultural and social changes in British society in the years before the First World War. The innovative project by Tate aims to reflect upon the significance today of the Camden Town Group and to stimulate further research and thinking about this key period in history.

The project will include collating transcripts of contemporary reviews and letters, excerpts of historical films of London sites, vintage photographs and films, and music hall songs, which will provide a rich and flexible research resource for future generations. The project also involves innovative work in the development of the technological infrastructure to support this and future cataloguing projects in ways that will maximise the research value of the published materials. The Online Research Project has at its core a catalogue of Tate's holdings, prepared



A portrait of Harold Gilman by Walter Sickert (Tate Images)



Motherland

Opening at the International Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2008, Motherland was described as the 'Hit of the Festival' by the Scotsman. The production received three major awards and several award nominations, including Best Ensemble and The Spirit of The Fringe Award.

Motherland is a verbatim text drawing on testimony from women who have a relationship with those who have served or were currently serving, with the armed forces in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Verbatim theatre is a form of documentary theatre in which the play is built on the precise words of the subjects interviewed. Senior Lecturer in The Department of Arts,

Steve Gilroy wrote and directed the play after interviewing a large number of women from the region. Talking about this process he said:

"Before our play the women and their stories had primarily been mediated through specific journalistic forms. For example local news and occasional broadsheet features, presented often as patriotic symbols of loss. I wanted to see to what extent a verbatim theatre process could provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding for the participants and an audience."

continued to build on the success of this work. Supported by the Arts Council Gilroy has been in Palestine collecting testimonies from the West Bank. From this research he has developed a new verbatim piece. He explains the significance:

"Fact On The Ground grew out of a series of interviews that I carried out in Israel and the West Bank with those whose lives have been impacted by the construction of the Israeli security fence and the land confiscations. In particular those involved in the cultivation of the olive tree and associated products. The testimony provides insight into the daily lives of a community, breaking down stereotyped notions of 'Arab' society and offering a series of sad and moving stories from quite 'ordinary' individuals."

The project was produced as part of the International New Writing Festival (Different Stages) at Live Theatre. The performance received a four star review. More script development will follow a second research trip to the Middle East this year and a full production and publication is expected next year.

With plans to stage a conference on documentary theatre in the coming year the success of these projects and the relationship with Live Theatre has certainly created a raft of exciting opportunities for the Department and the University.

Motherland



The success at Edinburgh led to a production at Live Theatre in 2009 which was the launchpad for a national tour of the play. Motherland has continued to garner praise from the press with four and five star reviews. It is a fine example of regional research influencing practice and growing to have national and international importance. The relevance and universality of Motherland's themes are evidenced by a recent production at The University of Michigan, USA and The New York Times' decision to name it "Best Verbatim Play".

Gilroy's practice-based research into verbatim theatre and his collaboration with Live Theatre (a theatre with a national and international reputation as a leading producing house) have

Motherland is a rich assortment of voices, memories, acute observations and heart-wrenching snapshots of war and its ramifications

Telegraph, 2009

Outward facing

A succession of high profile engagements with outside organisations and individuals is helping to build research capacity in performance research fields.

The BA (Hons) Performance programme produced three graduate show productions this year, engaging with three high profile directors from the industry and the Department. Alan Lyddiard (artistic director of Northern Stage for 12 years) created an exciting ensemble production of *Blood Wedding* with graduating students.

The production staged with a hundred wooden folding chairs, reminiscent of the modern dance choreographer, Pina Bausch's staging, was a thrilling challenge for students. This coupled with a stripped down production of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* directed by Richard Beecham and a beautifully controlled, anarchic *Marat Sade*,

directed by Senior Lecturer Fiona MacPherson, created a vibrant and thrilling end to the academic year and helped to demonstrate the constant dialogue between the academic engagement in the Department and the current exploration of contemporary performance practice in the industry.

This dialogue between performance practitioners in the Department and the industry has also led to an exciting engagement with the RSC (Royal Shakespeare Company). Keen to build on 20 years of association with Newcastle the company, through Associate Director Roxana Silbert, has been in talks with the Department of Arts regarding a long term relationship, supporting research and teaching in Performance. As a key exponent of practice as research in the region the Department of Arts was an obvious choice of partner.

As well as creating exciting opportunities for teaching support, the relationship has already led to an opportunity for cross fertilisation of ideas in research. In October 2010, Senior Lecturer Steve Gilroy will direct half of a double bill of new plays to be co-produced by the RSC and Live Theatre. The two plays by Ali Muriel and Roz Wylie (a recent graduate of the MA in Creative Writing at Northumbria) will explore the nature of imagination. The project demonstrates the advantages of the constant engagement of researchers at Northumbria with current practice and practitioners.



The next stage

A striking new presence at the heart of the University campus is the new theatre opening later this year. This versatile performance space can be configured for many styles of performance and presentation.

The exciting venue based in the Students' Union presents new teaching, experimentation and performance opportunities for staff, students and visiting artists alike.

We are continually investing in facilities and have an array of resources for staff and students to experiment and engage with.



To boldly go...

Graduate Studio Northumbria (GSN) in the Department of Arts, is helping the next generation of new artists establish themselves in the art world. With a membership of twenty emerging new talents, GSN has created a business platform allowing new graduates to focus on their art practice and activate professional contacts across the arts, business and community networks.

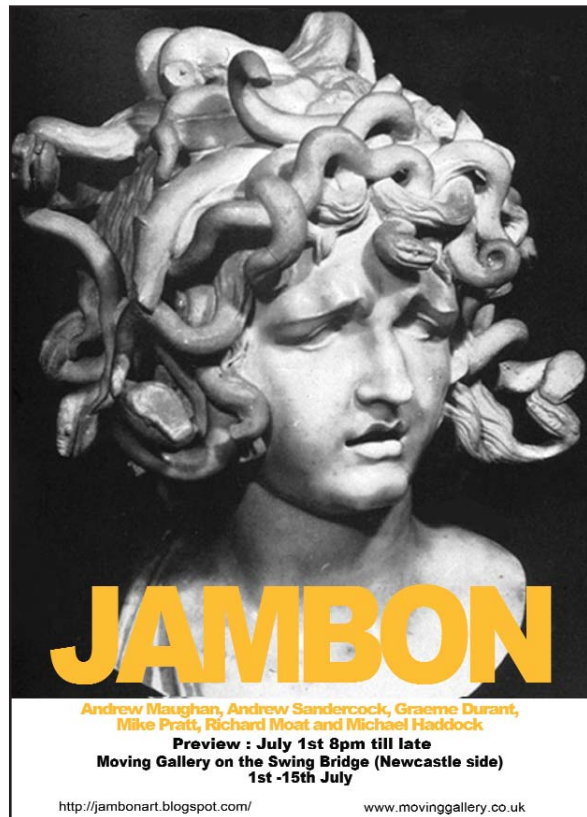
Located above Gallery North, the Department's contemporary art space in the centre of bustling Newcastle, is GSN. Resident graduate artists work in generous studio spaces and have access to dedicated office equipment, conference and meeting facilities and business support to help kick-start their careers. The concept of GSN was developed in 2009 by Director Keith McIntyre, whose initial objective was to develop a scheme to nurture home grown talent and provide a creative platform for artists to develop a national (and in some cases international) profile in the challenging period following graduation.

A Reader in Visual Arts, Keith's work is well renowned for crossing over a range of studio practice and performance disciplines. His interest lies in drawing, graphic fine art and theatre, he has had numerous exhibitions across the globe and took up the role as GSN Director in 2009.

"The creation of GSN is about helping our talented artists to develop their practice and offer opportunities for enterprise and professional networking. I believe we are the only institution in the UK that has a resource like this. There are other graduate projects but nothing quite as ambitious and as conceptually worked out as what we offer at Northumbria," said Keith.

The initiative has proved so successful that the enterprise concept has also been formally embedded within the curriculum to inspire current undergraduates to go on to the same level of success. GSN is now recognised in the region and beyond as a dynamic new Centre for Professional Practice focusing on education, enterprise, learning, production and exhibition.

He added, "I am so proud of our arts graduates, they get outstanding reviews. GSN is all about providing a platform to support our students after graduation and allow them to develop their practice before going out on their own in a highly competitive market."



Alison Hayes (top left and main picture) is a talented painter, specialising in seascapes. She was winner of the British Airways Travel Award for her degree show last year and has recently returned from New York. Earlier this year she exhibited work at York University and most recently took up a residency at the Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Arts Centre in North Uist in the Outer Hebrides.

Alex Breeze and Leann De La Hay, opened The Moving Gallery in Newcastle this year. After securing impressive investment in the project, the two GSN members have planned seven exhibitions (such as Jambon, see above) over the coming year, showcasing works by GSN artists, Northumbria graduates and other emerging talent in the North East.

Bob Lee (bottom left), a GSN Fellow, won a commission for a short film animation, shown on Channel 4 this year. Since then, his film 'Tomorrow' has been screened at film festivals across the country including Encounters and Animex.

