

Visual Arts Panel Meeting Minutes 21 October 2020 / 9-10.30am / Zoom

Attending: Rebecca Maddox(SCC), David McLeavy (Bloc Projects), Yuen Fong Ling (Artist), Tyler Mellins (Yorkshire Artspace), Kirstie Hamilton (Museums Sheffield), James Green (Artist), Angelica Sule (Site Gallery), Anna Santomauro (Art Catalyst), Emma Harnett (Artworks), Georgina Kettlewell (YAS), Janet Jennings (Museums Sheffield).

Apologies: Sara Unwin (University of Sheffield), Karen Sherwood (Cupola Gallery), Cat Powell (Artfelt), Penny McCarthy (SHU).

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1. Minutes

Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.

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2. Actions from previous meeting

Our Favourite Places: their statistics indicate a roughly half and half Sheffield/outside Sheffield audiences with a large contingent from London. There are plans for the website to change in 2021, with Welcome to Sheffield being revised to focus on presenting activity to audiences and OFP representing culture in the city.

Studio Groupings: David and Tyler and still planning to meet with a view to opening up discussions around how studios might work better together. Richard Bartle (Bloc Studios) is currently still in Turkey and so the meeting might be delayed until his return. Other studios (Kiac, Womp etc) will be invited into this discussion.

Unconscious Bias Training: Angelica reported that Site are still looking into this and if it's available by zoom.

Action - Angelica to share details

Action - Kirstie said that she would also share anti-racist leadership training information.

Artists database - Janet met with Oriana from the Creative Guild who said their new free artists database will be live at the end of October. Artists are responsible for their own content which can be as limited or comprehensive as they like and there will be searchable options, 'visual art' for example.

There were questions around quality assurance and who the database is for (end users), but it was agreed that there are always likely to be different offer for different artists/ audiences (OFP, YAS, Creative Guild, Axis) and that we should assist CG in the growth of this database by promoting it to artists, and indicate its now free to be in here.

It currently looks like this - <https://sheffieldcreativeguild.com/members/>

But it is being updated, so is likely to change.

Making Our Way website: this is now live and is here -

<https://www.visual-arts-sheffield.com>

It still needs a few tweaks, but is aimed at promoting opportunities to Sheffield visual artists and informing them about useful links, resources and news.

Universities: A dialogue with the Universities around how we best collaborate and share opportunities (in a 'Bazaar style event') has not moved forward yet as Off the Shelf has taken all of Sara's time.

Equipment Library: Ideas for a equipment library resource were forwarded after the end of the last meeting. Further discussion revealed:

SHU - although it is impossible to open up facilities any further safely during this time, an commitment has been made to support students graduating in 2020.

YAS - Discussions are in early days around Sheffield Print Club being sited at Exchange Place. East St Arts, Leeds model with Leeds Print coop is being researched.

Additionally YAS are researching the communal area at the back of Persistence Works as a Communal Kiln facility and the possibility of a photographic dark room set up.

Site - Site are researching loaning AV kit (cameras, recording equipment, edit suite etc) to artists and community organisations for free, as well as some kind of support for artists who applied to Platform but weren't successful.

Action - find out what is happening with Access Space, with their building closing.

Visual Art Festival sub-Group - meeting 22 October. David, Yuen, James + Penny.

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3. How we progress the Visual Art Panel

This agenda item was added to allow the group to reflect on how it can be most effective in order to help us shape the aims, structure and feedback to the Culture Consortium, with a view to taking things forward.

Culture is being talked about more than ever right now with the culture consortium, culture recovery plan and culture collective and so it's important that views from the panel to be heard. Especially as since the strategy was written things have changed due not only to covid, but Black Lives Matter, environmental issues and Brexit.

Going forward it was agreed that

- the Panel would look at priorities to develop a new potential project/funding bid fronted by the Culture Consortium, that builds on MW.
- the Panel need to report back to artists/the public. This will be done via occasional updates via the Making Our Way newsletter list with more details on the website to ensure people are aware things are happening and the process is transparent.
- Decisions need to build from the strategy, be ambitious, build on the success of Making Ways and ensure buy in from Culture Consortium.
- Rebecca will chair the panel, until March and then this will be reviewed again, with a panel chair being appointed for a specific time frame, maybe one year.
- Consider what each group member can offer (specialisms) and what they give to the group, helping the group to know our strengths and where the gaps might lie. (Are there organisations missing? Do we share this as part of our public updates)

Actions:

Janet - Circulate the Making Ways final report/evaluation + a summary of this to the group.

Janet - write a summary of what we are doing to circulate to wider community

All - re-read strategy and identify five themes which are a priority for you. Return this by 13 November by email to Janet who will amalgamate and circulate prior to the next meeting.

All - identify one thing we would like to see happen within the next five years - bringing step change to sheffield visual arts.

All - write a few sentences on who you are + photo for inclusion in info for artists community

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4. **Code of Practice**

The Panel agreed that it's important for Sheffield to develop a code of practice that is unique and relevant to us, as this shows our values and the importance of this. It fits with the narrative of the city and sends a strong message of collective action and collaboration.

Angelica said that Site are still working in their code of practice and she is happy to share this once it is complete. It is likely that this will go some way to forming the basis of a charter for the city.

Once we have this in place, how do we promote this?

The values identified should underpin programmes and artistic activity coming out of and supported by the panel and the visual art strategy.

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5. **Investing in Talent**

Annual Survey - this would be relatively simple to undertake and information would be useful for everyone. Important to come up with questions which don't repeat what the strategy consultation provided already.

Mid-career artist provision - whilst there is a lot happening in the city - Platform at Site, Bloc programme of talks and workshops, YAS start up studios etc. we need to identify areas where this support doesn't fit or where more support is needed.

James highlighted the lack of opportunities and support for more traditional artists, with much of that in offer being targeted at contemporary fine artists.

Tyler also pointed out that emergent artists and graduates have little support outside the FABS scheme - which only offers support for 6-9 artists a year - especially 2020 graduates, who have missed degree shows.

Angelica said Site are developing ideas around supporting applicants to the Platform scheme who were unsuccessful. Yuen said access to facilities at SHU are being extended to recent graduates.

Actions:

All - consider and share (email Janet by 13 November) values that are important to visual arts, you, your organisation, as a starting point for the Code.

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Next Meeting

November 19 2020

2pm-3.30pm

Via Zoom - 837 5447 3358 / passcode - 871351