

Travelling stories: the continuing journeys of the Derbyshire Museums Resources collection

Artist Brief

Oriel Môn has been fortunate enough to receive 3 new acquisitions to the collection. The artworks have been kindly donated through the 'Travelling Stories Project', managed by the Buxton Museum and Art Gallery team for Derbyshire County Council. As part of the project, Oriol Môn would now like to invite two artists to creatively explore the stories our new artworks tell, and find ways of sharing stories that will inspire, intrigue or draw visitors into a deeper understanding of our collection.

The 3 new acquisitions are as follows:-

1. Farm, Newborough – Charles Wyatt Warren



2. Pony on Llanddwyn Island – Kyffin Williams



3. Print of Traditional Welsh Costume – Maida Harris



PROJECT BACKGROUND

Revisiting 20th century acquisitions – uncovering truths and stories in the search for new audiences.

For over 80 years in the 20th century, school children in Derbyshire had a privileged opportunity to see and handle objects with remarkable stories in their own classrooms. However, changes in the way education is delivered both in the classroom, through television and the internet meant that the resources to maintain this collection diminished. Eventually, the collection was withdrawn permanently in 2018. With the help of the Esmee Fairbairn Collections Trust and the Museums Association, staff at Buxton Museum have been turning a sad story into a happier one.

Over 50 museums across the country have welcomed the opportunity to acquire new material for their collections, Oriol Môn being one. While the project has managed to return items to communities all across the world, the project has mostly found homes in museums where there are already complimentary collections and where there are curators with the skills to understand, explain and care for them.

The Project leaders, the Buxton Museum and Art Gallery team wish to create an opportunity for digital and printed public involvement in the project.

This work will lead to

- new pieces of art for each museum with a direct relevance to their newly acquired collection
- a dynamic digital presence tracking the evolution of the different creative works, hosted by Buxton Museum
- a possible publication gathering together images and stories of the dispersed collection with the new work produced by the creative teams.

The Opportunity

We are offering £750 each to two artists; a visual artist and writer. This amount will include the artists' fee and materials.

THE CREATIVE CHALLENGE

We are looking for artists who can find new ways of engaging with some or all of the new artworks. Finding ways of encouraging visitors (either physically or digitally) to explore the collection and think about what the stories embodied in these artworks might mean to them.

The brief is fairly open, we are most interested in how the artists can find ways of reaching out to and inspiring visitors to look more carefully, think more deeply about the artworks in question, rather than in setting defined creative goals. Please note, The Travelling Stories Project is looking for material to share online and possibly in book format.

Some themes and threads to think about – these are offered simply as starting points, the artists are welcome to go in any direction they feel is most appropriate.

- **homecoming:** objects returning to their original places of origin: the sense of a journey completed
- **bridging gaps:** ways in which these objects help tell the stories of the people or places they came from, in some ways bridging the distance between that society and the museum's community

- **connecting with the environment:** sometimes these objects reflect the relationship between their origin and the world around them: as spiritual artefacts, perhaps, or as reflections on the use of local resources
- **embodied emotions:** that these objects themselves or the journey that they are undertaking from home to museum might hold a sense of fear or sorrow or conquest or more unexpectedly perhaps manipulation (making “old carvings” for tourist markets) or just simply trade
- **travels:** looking at chosen items (especially collections) as waymarks tracing historic trade routes across the globe

THE CHALLENGE

- To explore the stories of the new acquisitions: their formal history perhaps or the responses and emotions they wake in you as artists.
- To share that inspiration with the wider creative team (anticipating 10 artists across 5 museums) – the project leaders are not expecting collaboration here, but an awareness of what is taking shape elsewhere and being part of dispersed creativity exploring a dispersed collection
- The artists need not work with all 3 of the artworks: they may choose a particular one, all three or the society that stands behind the artworks, but it should be with the new acquisitions to the collection
- Connections: during the project you will be asked to submit a progress piece for the project blog

4.1 Submission and Deadlines

We are looking for the artists to be able to start and finish work in March 2021.

Deadline for submitting your idea: **12 noon, Friday 26 February 2021.**

What to submit: **Proposal or idea, no more than 1 side of A4 and a link to CV/portfolio/website or pdf by email: orielynysmon@ynysmon.gov.uk**