# The Edinburgh Galleries Artist Training Programme
in collaboration with the Art, Design & Museology department,
School of Arts & Humanities,
Institute of Education, University of London

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**Course Co-ordinator:**
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**Course Venues:**
Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh
National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh

**Participating Organisations:**
The Collective Gallery
Edinburgh Printmakers Workshop
Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop
The Fruitmarket Gallery
Stills Gallery
Talbot Rice Gallery

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**EDINBURGH GALLERIES ARTIST TRAINING PROGRAMME**
**RESEARCH EVALUATION REPORT OCTOBER 2003**

## 1. Introduction

The Edinburgh Galleries Artist Training Programme was established to provide a strategic training scheme for local professional artists who could demonstrate a commitment to the field of visual art education. The scheme was developed in consultation with a consortium of Edinburgh-based visual arts organisations. These were: The Collective Gallery, Edinburgh Printmakers, The Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop, The Fruitmarket Gallery, The National Galleries of Scotland, Stills Gallery and the Institute of Education, University of London. The programme comprised a series of seminars and practical sessions and ran for six days over six weeks during February and March 2003 (see Appendix 1 for a detailed course schedule). The group of twenty-five participants in the programme included artists and representatives from the consortium members.

## 2. Background to the Training Programme

The Artist Training Programme developed in response to an identified need from the consortium of Edinburgh galleries for structured, comprehensive professional training to support artists working within gallery education. Research was also conducted with artist groups through telephone interviews; questionnaires (sent to Out of the Blue, the three WASPS studios and the Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop); focus group interviews conducted by Stills Gallery and through a membership survey of existing experience in delivering education projects at the Collective Gallery. This research identified a need to create opportunities for artists to network with other artists and arts professionals and gain employment skills in an arts-related area. These results, alongside national government priorities such as social inclusion, cultural diversity and the use of ICT, informed the design and content of the course and the selection of the speakers. The programme was also intended to complement existing training opportunities for artists in Scotland and to inform the development of a model of gallery education training for potential use across the country.

The specific aims of the Artist Training Programme were as follows:

1. To raise the professional standards of gallery education locally through a high quality course of seminars and practical sessions for artists.

2. To equip artists with the specialist knowledge needed for professional art education. In particular:

   • Knowledge of the history and methodologies of visual arts education;
   • Knowledge of arts and cultural policy locally and nationally;
   • Knowledge of art history and critical studies;
   • Practical support and information about working with a range of audiences including Health and Safety;
   • Disability Awareness and Child Protection legislation;
   • Improved organisational skills – planning, delivering and documenting work.

3. To increase artists' awareness of good pedagogic practice and the interpersonal skills essential in this field. In particular:

- Models of good practice in different areas of visual arts education – including the requirements of diverse audiences, such as specialist schools, community schools, special needs and the general public;
- The creative uses of new technologies in gallery spaces and of access issues;
- The pedagogic and interpersonal skills needed to work with individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds.

4. To disseminate the results of the report to key arts organisations across Scotland, in order to inform the development of a viable, national model of training in art gallery education.

The Programme also intended to produce certain key outcomes. These were as follows:

- A database of trained artists (noting their strengths/working styles/ specialisms) to be kept informally by participating galleries and shared on request (see Appendix 2);
- Clear fee structures and guidelines for paying artists for education work;
- An informal network of trained artists who could provide support for each other and possibly mentor others who wish to work in gallery education;
- A viable model of training in art gallery education with the potential for delivery across Scotland.



## 3. The Methodology

The aim of the research report is to assess the impact of the training programme in relation to its stated aims, as outlined above. The report has two further aims:

1. To assess the programme in relation to the context of current artists' training provision in Scotland and the Scottish Arts Council's (SAC) strategy for development of artist training opportunities.

2. To assess the programme in relation to:
   - the needs of the consortium organisers and employers of artists
   - the needs of artists
   - the criteria of the project funders and potential future funding bodies.

In light of the particular aims of the programme, the following methods/strategies were adopted:

1. A pre-course questionnaire was sent to each of the artists participating on the course (see Appendix 3);
2. A pre-course questionnaire was sent to each of the consortium members. This questionnaire requested information on the consortium members' needs,

aspirations and expectations in relation to the course and their previous experience of working with artists within galleries;

3. A letter was sent to SAC restating the aims and objectives of the course before it began and offering SAC the opportunity to add any further thoughts they had at that stage;

4. All participants were asked to keep a diary for the duration of the course in which they could record any reflections on their experiences of participating in whatever medium they chose;

5. At the end of each day there was a 20-30 minutes evaluation session where participants working in pairs or small group were asked to reflect on, discuss and feedback to the whole group their critical response to the day's activities; these critical evaluations were recorded using overheads and flipcharts:

6. During the session on Evaluation, participants engaged in a practical activity designed to enable them to consider creative ways of evaluating, not only this course, but also future education activities;

7. Post-course questionnaires were completed by the artists (see Appendix 4);

8. A series of post-course questions were sent to the consortium members;

9. The report drew on any relevant documentation, such as notes made by the presenters, course directors and co-ordinator and the independent evaluator who was present as a participant observer for the final two days of the course;

10. The report has also made use of research and information provided by the SAC, consortium members and other arts organisations in order to place this course in context, particularly in relation to current provision for artists' training in Scotland;

11. Post-course telephone interviews were conducted with the course co-ordinator and the Course Director from The National Galleries of Scotland (NGS).

## 4.    Analysis of the Data

As stated, this report draws on a range of different data.  In the first instance a total of 24 pre-course questionnaires and application forms and 23 post-course questionnaires completed by the artists were analysed using a very basic coding system so as to order the data.  This process involved indexing the data texts under a number of simple headings, in order to map and measure the incidence of various responses.  The intention was to identify key themes and patterns to enable further analysis and interpretation.  It must be noted that, since the participants often gave detailed answers to the questions, the total of 'responses' in relation to the individual questions is greater than the number of respondents.  Where appropriate, particular quotations from the questionnaires and from the written evaluations completed at the end of days 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the programme have also been used within this report.

Quantitative information was also sought from the participants in the post-course questionnaires in the form of a 1-5 scale for 'not at all' to 'fully' or 'poor' to 'good' in relation to the programme's content and individual sessions.  Again where useful the scores for specific sessions are given within the body of the report.  No formal coding was conducted on the telephone interview data.

## 5.    The Recruitment of the Artist Participants

The Artist Training Programme was advertised in 'The List' and in SAC's Opportunities Newsletter.  In addition each of the galleries within the consortium sent details of the programme to the artists on their databases.  Interested artists completed an application form and the Course Director from NGS and the Programme Co-ordinator drew up the shortlist.  The 25 artist participants had a wide range of different experiences, some were new to gallery education whilst others had a wealth of

experience in gallery education, community work and work in mainstream education. It was noted that some artists with greater experience were working and therefore were unable to attend or were unwilling to forego loss of earnings.

One of the consortium members identified on their post-course questionnaire that they had received feedback from artists who had applied but had not been offered a place and who were interested to know the criteria used to select successful participants, since they seemed to have such a diverse range of experience. The consortium member added:

> The selection process is perhaps an issue we could address if the course were to be delivered again.



## 6.    The Profile of the Artist Participants

On the application form for the training programme and on the pre-course questionnaire, the participants were asked to describe the nature of their own creative practice and their experience of working within galleries. Their comments can be briefly summarised as follows. The range of creative practice was broad, with eight artists describing their practice as involving mixed-media and four stating that they were painters. Four others described their practice as involving photography/digital media, whilst three identified themselves as sculptors. The remaining four identified their practice as drawing, tapestry, installation and gallery education respectively.

The programme was particularly targeted at artists who had left formal education for at least one year, however, the range of experience within the participant group was recognisable and ranged from those who had left college in 2002 to artists who had been working for over 20 years. The participants brought with them a variety of education experience. Eighteen of the participants stated that they had direct experience of working within galleries, although the extent of that experience again varied significantly, from those who were volunteering on education programmes to artists who had worked within galleries for a number of years. Ten participants had experience of working on community-based arts projects outside of galleries (again the degree of experience was considerable), three taught in art colleges and four were involved in adult education. Two had taught in schools.

The range of experience was also reflected in the extent and nature of any previous training for working in gallery education or other educational contexts that the artists had received. Four participants had received some training in community arts/ education and two artists had undergone formal teacher training. One participant was a trained art therapist, another had undergone training in student counselling, a third had completed an 'Arts in Education' course and another had completed a City and Guilds training course in relation to their work within an FE college. Other participants had received sporadic training in Child Protection, Health and Safety and Disability and Mental Health Awareness issues. Eleven artists stated that they had experienced no

previous relevant training in this field, although two artists did state that they had 'learnt on the job', or as one said:

I have 12 years practical experience, which has doubled up as training.

This range of experience was perceived to have been a positive aspect of the programme by the Course Leader, since the more experienced artists were in a position to engage in, and at times, lead the more detailed discussions, thereby passing on their experience to the others and to a certain extent acting as mentors.

## 7.     The Participants' Expectations/Experience of Working in Galleries

In the pre-course questionnaire the question *'Please explain why you want to work in galleries'* elicited broadly similar responses from the participants.  Thirteen articulated that they saw galleries as having an important educational role, whilst six indicated that they saw galleries as dynamic and interesting places to work.  Twelve respondents stressed that they were committed to making art and galleries more accessible.  As one participant stated:

I believe that artists (as well as galleries) have a responsibility to render their work accessible to a broad spectrum of audiences – not necessarily through populism or 'dumbing down', but making a real and constructive effort to explain their work; its ideas and motives.  I've seen 'the emperor's new clothes' written in too many visitors' books….

Seven participants identified that they liked working with others, both artists and members of the public.  Four participants stated that galleries were important to their own practice, whilst one was clear that working in galleries was a way of improving their employment prospects.

## 8.     The Participants' Expectations of the Artist Training Course

In the pre- and post-course questionnaires the artists were asked what they expected to gain from the course.  On the pre-course questionnaire they were also asked how they envisaged these expectations would be fulfilled and what specific areas of gallery education they would like to see addressed, whereas on the follow-up survey they were asked to identify how their expectations had been fulfilled.  This was largely to gain a sense of how their perceptions of the course had been changed by the experience of participating in it and to what extent the course addressed the specific issues and areas the artists had identified as being important to them.  A short summary of their responses is given below.
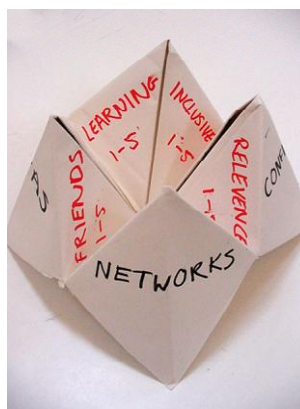
In the pre-course questionnaire when asked what their expectations of the course were, the artists most popularly (12 responses) expected to learn about different approaches to gallery education.  They also expected to be able to exchange ideas and share experiences (10 responses) and be challenged and excited (7 responses). Four artists expected to learn about working with different groups, learn about gallery education theory, make contacts and develop confidence respectively.  Two artists were particularly keen to discuss case studies, whereas two other artists wanted to develop presentation skills and see professional gallery educators in action.

In terms of how they envisaged that these expectations would be fulfilled, the artists strongly identified the sharing of the groups' experiences (12 responses) and discussions (13 responses) as being relevant.  The respondents also envisaged that lectures and seminars (9 responses), practical hands-on sessions (7 responses) and

case studies (7 responses) would take place during the course.   The contributions from individual gallery education specialists were seen as important to 5 respondents and two others specifically mentioned that the input from the Institute of Education, University of London (IoE) would contribute to fulfilling their expectations.  Two artists were keen to engage in small group work.  Other issues that were mentioned were; gallery visits, time for reflection, provision of a reading list/course documentation and the ongoing dialogue between the artists and the galleries that would hopefully develop after the course.  However, one artist simply stated that their expectation would be fulfilled by:

> Being allowed to be myself, as an artist, within the context of this programme.

Not surprisingly, in the pre-course questionnaires, the artists identify a wide range of issues and areas they would like to see addressed during the programme. Interestingly, the area most artists (7 responses) wished to see covered was working with the community and social inclusion issues.  Three respondents wished to see organisational issues addressed.  The following areas were each identified by two participants; working with special needs groups, school and curriculum related issues, legal implications associated with gallery education work, communication skills, funding and payment issues, creativity and the relationship between gallery education and the artists' own creative practice.  Six respondents did not identify any specific areas.



The responses in the post-course questionnaire to the question *'what were your expectations of the Artist Training Programme?'* do not differ radically from those on the pre-course survey.  Again the most popular comments are in relation to learning more about gallery education generally (11 responses).  Eight respondents indicated that they expected to gain practical knowledge about running workshops, with two respondents identifying case studies and examples of good practice specifically, but fewer artists (4 responses) expected to share experiences.  Six artists expected to make contacts with other artists and the galleries, whilst four expected to increase their employment opportunities.  Only two artists identified on this questionnaire state that they anticipated having their existing ideas challenged by the programme, whereas three identify that they anticipated consolidating their existing ideas and skills.  Two respondents expected the course to have a theoretical approach.  In contrast to the earlier questionnaire, only three artists stated that they expected to learn about working with different groups and social inclusion issues in this one.  Other issues mentioned once in the post-course questionnaires were; working with gallery education professionals, finding out about the IoE's methods/styles of teaching and gaining funding advice.

The responses to the question *'to what extent were these expectations fulfilled?'* were varied, but generally positive. Eight respondents indicate that they were positively surprised and challenged by the programme. For example:

> My expectations have been fully fulfilled. All of my concerns as a practising gallery educator have been addressed in depth which is empowering.

> I was pleasantly surprised and delighted at the pitch of the course – it did far more than I thought it would and was really aimed at intelligent people with a good background knowledge and a willingness to learn.

The participants appear to have particularly valued what they variously describe as the 'theoretical', 'intellectual' or 'academic' approach (8 responses). As one artist stated, the course:

> Far exceeded them [their expectations]. Much more 'intellectual' than expected – much more stimulating, enriching and provocative. [I] feel my analytical and interpretive skills have been developed.

Two artists did express concerns at the amount of information given out during the course, with one stating:

> I am not sure if we are all clear about how we will apply this theory to our work.

Associated with this, one respondent wanted more practical/hands-on information concerning the actual delivery of workshops.

There was a mixed response to the level at which the course was pitched, with some conflicting views depending on the experience of the respondents. In addition to the respondent above, who identified that the course was 'aimed at intelligent people with a good background knowledge', another artist stated that the course was a:

> Good opportunity to meet other artists but frustrating in the first few days as I felt the course seemed aimed at people beginning to work in education and found some of it patronising and unnecessary.

Whereas, another respondent stated that the course:

> Seemed geared to those already working in well-established relationships with galleries/institutions and offered only a little advice on how to become more actively involved.

A fourth artist with little experience particularly valued mixing with their peer group:

> Brilliant and extremely inspiring, being able to talk with artists about their practice and gallery education experience.

Three artists considered that the programme had helped them develop personally, with one particularly valuing the opportunity for individual professional development:

> I have come away motivated and excited – mainly because of having had the opportunity to feed myself instead of always taking the facilitator's role.

Some of these themes were further developed in the space given to participants on the post-course questionnaire to discuss the strengths of the programme and how it could be improved in the future. This is analysed in sections 10 and 11.

## 9.    The Consortium Members' Expectations of the Programme

Consortium members were requested to complete both a pre-course questionnaire and a post-course questionnaire.  It emerged from these and from the telephone interviews conducted after the course that the consortium members had the following expectations of the programme:

1.  To raise the artists' confidence and provide them with increased knowledge about art, art history and theory and greater awareness of current gallery education practice, in order to feed into their own practices;
2.  To provide them with specific training in areas such as, 'the presentation of work and, in particular, the submission of high quality artist [sic] proposals for education projects';
3.  To contribute to the creation of a pool of professional, skilled and informed artists who are equipped to deliver a range of high quality arts and gallery education projects;
4.  To enable the artists to gain, 'a greater understanding of the relationship between the artist, the gallery education officer and the gallery as a whole. Hopefully the artists will feel valued as an essential part of the gallery education programme';
5.  To raise the level of debate around contemporary art gallery practice for artists and employers in Scotland.



## 10.    The Strengths of the Programme

*a. Visiting speakers and case studies:*
For the artists on the course, the most common response to this question on the post-course questionnaire was the calibre of the visiting lecturers and the quality and variety of the case studies (14 responses).  Positive comments on their presentations ranged from the style in which they worked, such as: 'Fantastic, interesting, 2-way, inclusive, space for feedback and chat' to the content:  'Very interesting to have an intense art history input'.

The consortium members also identified that the case studies by gallery educators and the contributions made by representatives from the IoE were particular strengths of the course.  As one stated:

There was a good balance between the IoE approach – more pedagogic with real academic expertise and the practical sessions.  It would have been a weaker course without that input.

*b. Group discussions and practical workshops:*
The artists also clearly valued the opportunity to come together as a group (10 responses) and engage in discussions (7 responses). Also the group work undertaken was identified as a strength by 7 respondents. This is supported by the scores that specific sessions received, for example, the 'Interpretation in Practice session' received 111/115, one of the highest scores overall.

Comments such as the following are also relevant:

> It has been a brilliant opportunity for artists to meet and work together, put faces to names and not feel so isolated.

> [There were] some fabulous participants and the group-interaction provoked dialogue and discussion [giving] opportunities to share ideas.

> The constant challenges to our thinking and the need to work in groups in a constructive and productive way. Each day I felt something new and significant was taken on board.

*c. The structure and content of the Programme:*
As identified above, the participants valued the 'intellectual' approach taken during the course and three artists identified this specifically as a strength. However, six respondents also positively highlighted the practical workshops. 8 respondents perceived the overall balance between practical and theoretical content and the variety in the structure of the different days as a positive:

> The in-depth discussion, workshops, group work, location visits – all were well balanced throughout each day.

In particular, the structure of Day 3 appears to have worked well, with artists commenting at the end of that day:

> One of the best days so far. Transferring theory into practice makes sense of the previous.

Three respondents commented that they valued the investment in training being made by the organisers and funders. The feedback after day 1 of the course identifies as a key issue the fact that:

> Artists were recognised as a <u>valuable resource</u> for gallery education and brought together for training. (All artists agreed that they were delighted with this recognition of their worth and training needs.)

One consortium member also identified that the structure and content of the course had:

> Given artists greater confidence by increasing their knowledge of art and its histories, thereby giving them a basic framework which many felt they had lacked (and) given artists' practical experience of planning and developing learning programmes.

## 11.  In What Ways could the Programme be Improved in the Future

*a. Issues around programme content:*
In terms of how the course could be improved in the future, eight respondents considered that the course should contain more practical advice and workshops. For example:

> More practical advice on working as gallery educators (including actual experience of it?) would be particularly welcome and useful.

> More chances to make on site gallery workshops with collections (with) discussions on interpretations or design of workshops.

> More practical 'ways in' to working with groups.

This issue was also touched on in the 'issues arising' section of the feedback after Day 3 of the course:

> The 'design of workshop' exercise could well be done again with a totally different exhibition scenario… A hands-on opportunity to actually run a mini session/workshop. Then have this supportive environment to feedback into and develop (sic).

In particular participants considered that areas such as Child Protection and Disability Awareness needed to be addressed differently and covered more fully.  This is reflected in the scores assigned to these sessions, which were the lowest given.  As one artist said of the afternoon in which these areas were covered:

> This section felt too rushed and 'pigeon-holed', i.e. all 'inclusion' issues lumped together merely underlined the fact that still little weight is given to those audiences.

The Course Directors also considered that, in retrospect, there was too much information in one afternoon and that, rather than having individual speakers on the different areas (each of whom went over time), it would have been more effective to have one person give a broad outline of the major issues.

Three respondents wanted more emphasis on theory, art history and interpretation, areas that one artist in particular found useful:

> I loved the theory!  I would have enjoyed even more of the theories on learning, creativity, media, interpretation, etc.  I found this a really good base for opening up my idea and interpretation of gallery education.

Another artist simply stated:

> More time with art history/context/interpretation – this was great, but sadly short.

Six artists identified that the course should contain less information on policy and a shorter or possibly revised input from the SAC. Some artists identified that the presentations were less useful (this was not helped by the difficulties with the visual aids), although the more open question and answer session was more valuable. This session received the relatively low score of 66.5/105.

Five artists considered that there should be more of a Scottish bias, with less orientation towards London. With one respondent stating:

> At times I felt threatened both by the pace and by the 'London' centred-ness of the course. Early on in the course I was wanting more acknowledgement of our [the artist-students'] skills and practice. So a wider geographical/cultural spread of experience coming in, and some time put aside for presenting an example of our practice in the gallery education context.

One consortium member considered that, although it was inspirational to have examples of good practice from the South, there was a need to put the Scottish experience in context and, in particular, to recognise the differences between the Scottish and English education systems.

Four other artists also suggested there should be more time for participants to introduce themselves at the start of the course and share skills and experience throughout:

> It would have been interesting and educational to find out more about the other artists on the programme and allowed them [us] to give a brief talk on their own experiences in gallery education/education and how it affects their practice.

This issue of the balance between input and group discussion was identified in the 'Issues arising' section of the evaluation sheet from Day 2:

> Name badges – the opportunity to find out more about each other's previous experience in gallery education and/or personal situations – again no consensus – others felt that coffee/tea/lunch/wine breaks afford an opportunity for the latter.

Associated with this, three respondents wanted fewer lectures and more discussion. For example:

> Maybe less information delivery (in a didactic way!). More structure based on the principles inherent in the content – more open-ended, with more space allowed for participants reactions, responses. Less lecturing and more dialogue.

This issue of the balance between input and group discussion was also documented in the evaluation sheet from Day 2:

> A few artists said they had hoped for more opportunity to discuss their prior experiences and share ideas – They saw the course as an opportunity to share knowledge and expertise and thought this should be a priority – given more time to. Others disagreed and didn't want to use up too much time within group discussions unless linked very directly to taught sessions. They wanted to use the course to gain new knowledge not celebrate/discuss existing. It was agreed that a balance between presentation/discussion/activity had been achieved on day one, but not on day two.

*b. Issues around programme structure and timing:*
Six of the respondents commented on issues related to the structure and timing of the programme. For some, such as the artist cited above, the pace of the course was very fast, whilst others expressed frustration that some presentations were incomplete due to lack of time:

> The time structure could maybe be revised. Some presentations were very rushed at the end or cut short, which was quite frustrating.

> The course perhaps tried to tackle too much. Could have been 2 days on each topic almost?

The issue of the different levels of experience amongst the group emerged again, with some suggestions that differentiated group discussions would have been more beneficial at times. First, to enable less dominant members of the group to share their thoughts and second, as one artist said:

> So that issues could have been approached by different groups – maybe (the group) could have been split into levels of experience so valuable issues could have been addressed for people.

One respondent considered that it would be beneficial to broaden the range of artists participating on the course, both in terms of art forms and social and cultural diversity, since:

> This (the course) does not reflect the environments in which some of us work nor the artist teams with whom some of us work outside this course, when facilitating creativity and expression in the community.

They went on to say:

> I think this could be overcome by targeting particular minority/marginal arts organisations inviting applications and taking this into consideration when selecting candidates.

One artist commented that more advance warning of the course dates would have been useful, as they found it very difficult to attend all six days as 'freelance artists' diaries tend to fill up in advance'.

Two consortium members commented on how impressed they had been by the high levels of attendance amongst participants. It must be noted that very few of the consortium members themselves attended the sessions, although as one stated:

I didn't have the opportunity to attend the training sessions. I was fairly new in post and was caught up with programming and fundraising during that period. I would like to attend any future training courses and I do feel it is vital that the gallery education officers attend at least one dedicated day of any future arts training course.

Another consortium member, who considered that there was a real need for training for gallery educators within Scotland as the majority of them are relatively young and inexperienced, raised the issue of whether the gallery staff should be present during the course. They considered that there was an issue around the level of debate and theorised practice across galleries that could be addressed through further training.

## 12. Questions Addressing the Specific Aims of the Artist Training Programme

Two questions on the post-course questionnaire asked the artists to indicate the extent to which the programme had addressed the two particular aims of the programme. The first of these focused on the issue of whether the course had equipped participants with specialist knowledge in relation to particular areas. The results of this question, which asked participants to score each item from 1 (not at all) to 5 (fully), are summarised below. The maximum possible score was 115.

| | |
|---|---|
| History and methodologies of visual arts education: | 86 |
| Cultural and education policy locally and nationally: | 77.5 |
| Working with a range of audiences and health and safety: | 69.5 |
| Disability awareness and child protection legislation: | 68.5 |
| Planning, delivering and documenting workshops: | 90 |

The second of these two questions, to which participants gave a written response, focused on whether the course had given participants increased awareness in three areas:

*a) Models of good practice in different areas of visual arts organisation:*
Twelve of the respondents indicated that the course had achieved this fully, with seven commenting how 'useful' or 'inspiring' the case studies had been. As one artist stated:

(I am) much more aware of current practice (sic). Case studies were very good at showing what can be achieved – ambitious projects.

However, two respondents mentioned again that they would have preferred less of a London focus and more Scottish examples. One reiterated that it would have been useful to have shared more of the group's experience.

*b) Increased awareness of new technologies in gallery spaces and of access issues:*
This received a more mixed response, with four respondents indicated that it had been achieved fully, nine indicating that it had been partially addressed and seven stating that it had not been achieved at all.

*c) Increased teaching and interpersonal skills:*
Seventeen of the respondents indicated that the course had achieved this fully, with a number going on to make very positive comments such as the following:

Very much so. I feel that this is where the course has been for me the most relevant and useful.

Yes, the programme has made me think about the way I do things and ways of doing it better. It has been good in this area.

A number of artists commented that they had acquired new skills and awareness and gained confidence in themselves and what they do. Although, one respondent did indicate that:

> I would have liked to have learned more about teaching techniques, i.e. keeping control, discipline, planning.



### 13. Future Development of the Course: including issues regarding accreditation and fees

The consortium members all considered that the course should continue in the future, with one stating:

> I think it is important to continue to deliver regular training for both artists and gallery education officers…. It would be great to have a dedicated course in Scotland!

Six artists specifically stated that the course should carry on, with two suggesting that the programme could usefully include an element of work experience, or:

> A mentoring programme where we could have the chance to work alongside a gallery educator or observe practice and practise good policy and group working with feedback afterwards – and be paid to do this!

Consortium members also recommended that in future the course should include workshops with specific audiences and artworks, with one stating:

> If the course were to be delivered again I would like to see a clear end product for the galleries and artists for example could we ask the artists to deliver a practical session to a previously identified target group in the gallery on completion of the course. I think this would be a fantastic opportunity for me as a gallery education manager to see how the artists deliver sessions and this would be an ideal opportunity for artists to promote their work to galleries.

One suggestion from NGS was that in future the course could operate as two strands – one styled more as a series of lectures in order to address the more theoretical issues and the other based much more around practical or workshop sessions.

Five respondents suggested that there should be some form of follow-up course in order to 'stay stimulated.' One artist suggested that there should be different courses for artists with different levels of experience.

The majority of artists considered that accrediting the course in the future would be a positive step, giving a variety of reasons why.  One artist considered that it would: 'be helpful on my CV', whilst another stated: 'An accreditation is important – it has been difficult to describe to others and quantify'.  Finally, one observed: 'Accreditation would be welcome; essential if we would be expected to pay (the above) costs'.  However, some artists had reservations.  For example:

> If a certificate was given at the end would it really count for anything if Edinburgh Galleries employ artists without it anyway?  Maybe if a higher rate of pay was given to artists with the certificate it would encourage artists to make the investment in their learning.

Others considered that any accredited course should not be 'preferable' to the experience and knowledge artists gain from actually working in galleries, but should function to complement that experience.  Concerns about how the participants would be examined in order to gain the accreditation were also raised.

Consortium members generally supported the idea of accrediting the course, in order to reinforce the professional status of the artists' activities, although some reservations were aired.  In particular the need for sophisticated tools in order to evaluate what people have learnt on the course was considered important, as well as a means of embracing the broadness and complexity of gallery education practice.  The involvement of an academic institution such as the IoE was considered essential if the course was to be accredited.

The issue of whether it was important to locate the course more firmly 'in Scotland' was raised.  Although it was considered important that the course recognised its uniquely Scottish context, it was also felt that the role of the IoE could not be replicated by a Scottish education establishment at present.  NGS suggested that the course should continue to be coordinated by them in partnership with the IoE for the foreseeable future.  It was generally agreed that the course needed to be co-ordinated and managed by one gallery, rather than the consortium, as, apart from NGS, the other galleries had not been as involved as was originally envisaged and did not appear to have as great a sense of ownership of the programme.

Not surprisingly the artists felt strongly that charging for the training in the future would be inappropriate and make it difficult for artists to attend.  This view was supported by consortium members, with one stating that 'it was vital' that the course remained free to artists.  Only two respondents suggested a fee might be charged for attending (this ranged from £60 - £250) and both qualified this by advocating that additional financial support should be made available in the form of subsidies from employers or through grants in order to cover the cost.  Two respondents suggested that artists should be paid to attend, in order to cover loss of earnings.  Three artists also identified the benefits to galleries, in terms of having a pool of better-trained artists to draw on.
As one argued:

> I really feel that this programme should be free.  Artists earn on average £4,000 per year and as such are a disadvantaged group.  We provide a genuinely valuable resource and should be appreciated. This course can do nothing but help the publicly funded galleries provide a better service.

The two artists who had received financial support to cover childcare costs were very supportive, with one stating that: 'this is a <u>very</u> good model of practice.'  The participants were asked to identify what they considered were appropriate fees for artists working in galleries.  The responses to this question are summarised overleaf:

**Daily Rate:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Less than £100 | Three responses |
| £100 - £200 | Twelve responses |
| £200 - £250 | One response |

**Weekly Rate:**

| | |
|---|---|
| £250 | One response |
| £300 - £500 | Seven responses |
| £500 - £1000 | Six responses |

**Six week Project (1 day a week):**

| | |
|---|---|
| £600 | One response |
| £700 - £1,200 | Four responses |
| £1,500 | Two responses |

**Six week Project (5 days a week):**

| | |
|---|---|
| £2,000 - £4,000 | Four responses |
| £4,500 | One response |

**Hourly Rate:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Less than £15 | Three responses |
| £15 - £25 | Eight responses |

A number of respondents qualified their answers. One artist acknowledged that the nature of the organisation impacted on what they charged. Others stated that fees should vary according to the level of the artist's experience. One respondent reported that the Scottish Artists Union advocate a sliding daily rate, which is as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Artist with less than one year's experience: | £100 – £120 |
| Artist with 2-5 year's experience: | £150 |
| Artist with more than 5 year's experience: | £200 |

(Additional research conducted by the evaluators identified that the Artists Newsletter website (www.anweb.co.uk) suggests that an artist should base their daily charges on £125.00 per day. Assuming they work 5 days a week for 48 weeks per annum, this would give them an income of £25,000 p.a. plus overheads, taking the total to £30,000). A number of the artists felt strongly that they should be paid for preparation and planning time. The broader issue of how 'community' arts and artists are viewed by funders was raised during Day 3 and featured in the feedback:

Community artist label seen as something 'less than' in comparison to artist label. The Scottish Arts Council themselves should address the way they give funding for artists, i.e. funding currently falls into two very separate areas. (1) visual arts funding – creating their own work. (2) arts projects in the community – artist as facilitator. Experience as a facilitator seems not to count as 'artistic worth' <u>even</u> when excellent documentation exists.

## 14. Conclusions

In terms of the specific aims of the Artist Training Programme, the following conclusions can be drawn.

1. <u>To raise the professional standards of gallery education locally through a high quality course of seminars and practical sessions for artists</u>

The course succeeded in delivering high quality seminars for artists; in particular the visiting speakers and case studies. The artists also valued the opportunity to come together as a group, share their own practice and engage in discussions. Some participants wanted more formal sessions where this could happen during the course.

The participants valued the opportunity to engage in practical workshops and would have appreciated more 'hands-on' sessions, within galleries, where they could work directly with the collections and specific groups.

The course appears to have succeeded in raising the level of debate around contemporary art gallery education practice amongst participants and, to a certain extent, consortium members. However, without a longer-term evaluation it is difficult to assess the extent to which the course has raised the professional standards of gallery education.

2. <u>To equip artists with the specialist knowledge needed for professional art education. In particular:</u>

*a) Knowledge of the history and methodologies of visual arts education*
This area was particularly well addressed during the course. Participants particularly valued the sessions that explored learning theory, creativity and other aspects of visual art education. The input of the IoE was clearly important in enabling this area to be covered effectively.

*b) Knowledge of arts and cultural policy locally and nationally*
This area was less successfully addressed during the course. The participants were uncomfortable with the format and content of the formal presentations from SAC, although they responded more positively to the question and answer sessions, wherein the artists could focus on the particular areas of policy and funding strategy that interested and were relevant to them.

*c) Knowledge of art history and critical studies*
As with (a) above, this area was successfully addressed during the course. Participants particularly valued the input from Nicholas Addison, as well as Lesley Burgess' sessions that explored aspects of critical theory and interpretation. The participants appear to have been inspired and enriched by the level at which the sessions were pitched.

*d) Practical support and information about working with a range of audiences Health and safety*

*e) Disability Awareness and Child Protection Legislation*
The areas of Health and Safety, Disability Awareness and Child Protection legislation were not especially well covered during the course. The timing of the session that looked at this area was too short and the amount of information was too dense for the participants to take in. There is a need to investigate ways in which to deliver this important knowledge in a different format.

*f) Improved organisational skills – planning, delivering and documenting work*
These issues were covered during the course and participants appear to have acquired new skills and awareness and feel more confident about their ability to plan, deliver and document work. The session on creative evaluation was also well received. As referred to in (1) above, however, participants would have welcomed the opportunity to 'try out' their skills in on-site gallery workshops and to have received more practical information on how to work with specific groups.

3.     <u>To increase artists' awareness of good practice and the interpersonal skills essential in this field. In particular:</u>

*Models of good practice in different areas of visual arts education – including the requirements of diverse audiences, such as specialist schools, community schools, special needs and the general public*
As identified in (1) above, the quality of the case studies during the course was extremely high and succeeded in providing a variety of models of good gallery education practice. The majority of these case studies were drawn from London and participants clearly considered that there was a need to put the Scottish experience in context and include some relevant examples from Scotland itself. It was particularly unfortunate that the case study from an Edinburgh Gallery had to be cancelled at the last minute due to an emergency at the gallery.

*The creative uses of new technologies in gallery spaces and of access issues*
The wording of this particular aim is somewhat ambiguous, which resulted in it being partially addressed during the course. Although there were no specific sessions within the programme that addressed new technology, certain of the case studies (most specifically the DARE/inIVA presentation) explored new technology and several other presentations (e.g. the Chisenhale Gallery's presentation) touched on access issues in different ways.

*The teaching and interpersonal skills needed to work with individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds.*
This area was successfully addressed during the course. Participants appear to have gained considerable knowledge and relevant skills, with many indicating that the programme had reinforced their interest in and commitment to working in gallery education.

The following additional conclusions can be drawn:

1.     The selection procedure adopted for the programme resulted in participants with a wide range of experience, both in terms of their own practice and in gallery education. This had implications in terms of people's expectations of the programme and the level of dialogue and nature of involvement within the course as a whole.

2.     There exists considerable support for the continuation and future development of the course and general support for it to become an accredited programme whilst remaining free for artists; hence requiring some form of external funding.

3.     The consortium structure appears to have been only partially successful in terms of the co-ordination and ownership of the course. The major responsibility for the programme appears to have been taken by NGS, with the other consortium members having only a peripheral involvement.

**15. Points for Consideration**

There clearly exists a need for a programme such as this one and there is significant support for its continuation.

Consideration needs to be given to exactly who the programme is targeted at, in terms of the level of experience of the artist participants and whether gallery educators should be included as part of the programme. This should be reflected in the criteria used for selecting the participants and the specific aims of a future programme.

The course was clearly very successful in delivering essential knowledge around learning theory, art history and critical theory, largely in a lecture/seminar format. However, future courses might involve more practical gallery-based sessions, for example, addressing specific issues such as Disability Awareness that were not so comprehensively addressed during this first programme. The possibility of NGS co-ordinating such a course in conjunction with the IoE and/or an Edinburgh-based art college is one possible development.

The issue of whether future courses should be accredited needs to be given further consideration, particularly in light of which academic institution would be associated with the programme and how the learning outcomes would be assessed.

**The Edinburgh Galleries' Artist Programme in relation to the current provision in Scotland for training artists and the Scottish Arts Council's strategy for the development of such training opportunity**

The Edinburgh Galleries' programme was developed in response to the identified need for structured and comprehensive training to support artists working in the consortium of galleries. A need clearly articulated by both artists and gallery educators participating in the project and fully recognised by SAC. SAC's Visual Arts Officer has over the last few years developed a number of initiatives to encourage, support and promote good educational practice; integrated into the policy and programming of visual arts and organisations. One of her priorities for the future is the provision of CPD for visual artists. SAC's Education Officer confirmed the current limitations; she acknowledged that there is a 'huge gap' in current provision of professional development for artists working in galleries. However, she explained that this would be '*actioned*' in the SAC's *New Education Strategy* to be published in 2004. This action will include '*increased CDP opportunities for artists*'. Also '*under consideration is the possibility of a separate agency to facilitate this CPD*'.

**Scottish Artists Training Initiative (SATI)**
Business and Professional Skills Training; Models and Provision for Visual and Applied Artists in Scotland

**SATI** was a research project funded by the Scottish Arts Council (SAC), Edinburgh College of Art and the Association for Applied Arts. Its role was twofold:

- to gather and disseminate information on business and professional skills training for visual and applied artists in Scotland.

- to advocate, at all levels, the importance of business and professional skills training for visual and applied artists.

The project, which started in 1999, set out to 'develop a strategy which will identify priorities and pilot projects with a view to sustainable long-term provision' (Pilgrim 2000). It built upon initial research by SAC 'to determine the degree to which a coherent programme of training is needed and the methods by which it could be delivered' (Lewis 1998). The Lewis report identified that current provision for training was erratic and that historical models of good training practice, despite attracting interest and positive feedback, had not proved viable to sustain.

The SATI researched training opportunities in Scotland and the UK. It drew on the Creative Industries Mapping Document (DfCMS 1998) and other current reports to support and inform its primary research.

Although its findings have implications for training artists to work in galleries its remit was much wider, with its focus on business and professional development. It provides a useful definition of a professional artist*:*

> an artist working in a professional context. It is recognised that this may not be in a full-time capacity and that few artists are exclusively engaged in or supported by their artistic practice. Artists' working patterns are complex, fluid and multifarious through choice and/or necessity.

The only reference to training artists to work in galleries comes under the section *Training providers for Government schemes* in which it claims:

For visual and applied artists outside the traditional business provision remit, the most relevant and effective training comes from New Deal and Training for Work programmes **along with other placements with art galleries and organisations** (pp14-15).

It identified that a number of galleries facilitated government work-placements and many who have traditionally operated voluntary placements are keen to run them on a more formal, funded basis if their resources allow. However, it also acknowledges that most of these placements concentrate on arts administration and exhibition officer training. In conclusion the report points out that 'very little formal training exists for creative practitioners who do not fit into a traditional full-time business model', that 'there is a lack of formally recognised professional development paths for artists' and there is 'no national agency specific to the visual and applied arts to articulate the training needs of the sector' (p 25).

In its **Stage III Report** (Pilgrim and Mitchell August 2001), SATI cited 'information exchange with Engage with regard to their members developing training for artists in gallery context with Edinburgh gallery consortium' (p.1) as part of its commitment to pursue the promotion of networks with other agencies. However, this is just one of many networks identified and clearly not a particular priority.

**Engage Scotland** has a growing membership of nearly 100 members including 30 organisations. It runs four seminars a year plus an annual residential seminar (the first residential, entitled *Access to Contemporary Art,* was held at An Tuirean, Isle of Skye 2003). The co-ordinator for Engage Scotland explained that 'events are open to members and non-members. These training networking opportunities are not solely for artists but for all involved in gallery education. Agendas for future meetings include 'New Models for engaging people with disabilities' and 'Child Protection Guidelines' <scotland @engage.org>.' She attended the Edinburgh Galleries' Artists Training Programme her insights into how the course fits into the wider picture are insightful.

**Artists Network** through its website (http://www.anweb.co.uk) and AN Magazine has a reputation as an excellent provider of topical information for artists (p 23). It is currently developing ways to support the networking of artists, and artist networks throughout the UK. The LiG Course Co-ordinator has been commissioned by AN to look into provision for artists' training in Scotland, this includes research and a series of Networking Artists Network (NAN) pilot events in Scotland (August 2003–March 2004). In addition Kirsty will be collating information about:

- Key events, projects, conferences and meetings offering artists in Scotland opportunities for networking and for professional development;
- Opportunities for artists in Scotland to have critical discourse, peer critique and advice.

**Dundee Artists Training Initiative**
**(Executive Summary Bonnar, Keenlyside, July 2003, www.b-k.co.uk)**
In January 2003 Dundee City Council, SAC and Scottish Enterprise Tayside commissioned a feasibility study into the development of a training programme for visual artists in Dundee (2003). It was identified that there was no cohesive or coordinated approach; that provision was *piecemeal with some key gaps* (p 3). Over 30 organisations employing artists were consulted and demand for artists' training identified in the following areas:

- education and community work;
- business, administration and marketing;
- communication and organisation.

The 95 artists who responded to their survey identified the following as important aspects of training. It should:

- be local, flexible and tailored;
- include mentoring and critical feedback;
- practical, high quality and allow exposure to outside influences.

There was less demand for full-time than part-time courses; formal accreditation was not a priority.  In summary Keenlyside claimed:

> The most successful training models investigated were partnerships that had achieved sustainability from ongoing commitment from funding bodied and the support from larger host organisations including academic institutions or from activities not related to CPD such facility hire or new media training.  They generally provided short term, non-accredited courses with an element of 1 to1 discourse. (p 3-1.8)

Keenlyside also maintained that there was insufficient demand to justify the establishment of an additional (full-time) training organisation for visual artists in Dundee; rather there was a need for a partnership approach and that the 'only feasible option is based on the role out of a national organisation' (ibid).  Within this national framework a local (Dundee) roll out model for training is proposed, one which includes gallery and community education within its remit.

Evidence gleaned from the above comments/reports clearly identifies the gap in provision of CPD for Artists working in galleries although SAC's new Education Strategy promises to move towards addressing this.  Clearly there is a commitment on behalf of the above organisations to address the shortfall in the provision of CPD for artists working in galleries.  But with the exception of Engage it is not their primary concern.

The Edinburgh Galleries' Artist Programme provides a useful framework for future development.  Its content and structure, with minor revisions, could usefully form a template for a Scotland wide programme.  Findings reflect and complement evaluations and recommendations made by SATI and the Dundee Programme and have a clear resonance with the proposals for future development identified by EnGAGE Scotland.

**Artists Network** (http://www.anweb.co.uk)

**DfCMS (1998)** *Creative Industries Mapping Document*. Department for Culture Media and Sport.

**Engage Scotland** (http://www.scotland@engage.org)

**Keenlyside, B. 2003** *Dundee Artists Training Initiative*  Executive Summary (www.b-k.co.uk)

**Pilgrim, F. (2000)** *Business and Professional Skills Training: Models and Provision for Visual and Applied Artists in Scotland*. A Report from the Scottish Artists Training Initiative (SATI), Edinburgh College of Art (http://www.arttrain.org.uk)