



personal journeys

One of the Collected Wisdom in
Arts Management Series

all ways learning

About All Ways Learning

All Ways Learning is a catalyst, leader and guide in professional development for people managing the arts in the South East of England.

We provide access to research, information and advice, and we support individual and organisational development. Our programme of activities is designed to help arts managers, self-managed artists, co-ordinators, administrators; arts development officers or policy makers; people working in fundraising, finance, marketing, education or other specialist areas of work; board members or trustees; and anyone thinking of arts management as a career.

We aim to be inclusive, helping people who work in an organisation or alone, in a network, partnership or group, to invest in their professional development. All Ways Learning can also be useful for educators, trainers, facilitators and consultants.

We welcome all those involved in managing the arts to be part of our learning community, and join via our website at www.allwayslearning.org.uk

Our website is a growing resource. This book, **Diverse Voices: Personal Journeys**, and subsequent publications in the **Collected Wisdom** series, will be available on both the All Ways Learning website and that of Ksam (Knowledge Services for Arts Management), the specialist arts and cultural management knowledge bank.

In order to ensure we are anticipating and understanding the changing landscape, as well as being abreast of new knowledge about learning and professional development, we place a heavy emphasis on research. Research helps us all clarify what it means to manage in our field. Our

research is about reflection, analysis and encouraging new thinking - sorting out what is good, appropriate practice in various settings, and dealing with multiple agendas. We favour action research and collaborative enquiry, methods which place a high value on the contribution and expertise of people working in the field.

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We have a structural link with Knowledge Services for Arts Management (KSAM) which is the knowledge bank supporting arts and cultural management developing a website of text-based knowledge. Research reports and other material from All Ways Learning's work are held on KSAM's site for the benefit of the UK-wide arts management community. www.ksam.org.uk

All Ways Learning is a partner in Creative People, a national network providing information, advice and guidance to support all those who work in arts and craft industries in making the most of their careers. www.creativepeople.org.uk

Diverse Voices Personal Journeys

One of the Collected Wisdom in Arts
Management Series

Researched & Collected by Anouk Perinpanayagam

Edited by Janet Summerton & Madeline Hutchins

Published by
all ways learning

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Personal Journeys

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Anouk Perinpanayagam

Collected Wisdom... a pilot project focusing on praxis - articulating theory from practice, and encouraging reflectivity. It is a vehicle for those involved in arts management (including artists) to share their stories and highlight good practice. Some of the key themes are managing relationships, self-management, diverse voices and working patterns.

This was essentially my brief in collating the stories gathered here. Having observed the progression of *CreativePeople* as a national network focusing on continuous professional development, and having been involved in some of its advancement from inception, I was especially pleased to be approached about *Collected Wisdom* for *All Ways Learning* as the management 'hub' within the overall set-up.

The chance to work with Dr. Janet Summerton and Madeline Hutchins as specialists in the arts management field also enabled an approach which resonated well with my own interest in looking at why highly capable managers, producers, curators and administrative personnel associated with the arts field do not always get the recognition that they deserve. However, there are those who have made it their business to confront risk, seize as well as make opportunities, and gather important lessons along the way. In short, experience and track record count, as does delivery, and we have something to learn from them. I'm delighted to be at the point now where these stories are entering the public domain as a contribution to extend a shared understanding about the characteristics of skilful arts managers.

The title *Collected Wisdom* also attracted me to this project as one that sets the ground for understanding more about a diverse range of professional voices. The word 'diverse' is significant here in reflecting a multiplicity of management experiences, artform backgrounds, the entrepreneurial edge and generosity of spirit in sharing expertise and knowledge. In an English situation, *Diverse Voices: Personal Journeys* draws on a range of personal histories that gives a flavour of the cultural wealth that exists within our arts landscape – practice and person combined with the rich strands that accompany each individual journey. In writing up the narratives, there had to be a careful balancing act between the personal and public, and I am grateful to all who were generous spirited in giving information about their lives and to trust that an equilibrium could be achieved. This is equally not about pedestalling anyone – they are role models with substance, not just as figures for the catwalk.

Working within this environment myself, and knowing that reflectivity is an essential feature of the collection brought together here, the idea was to present interesting career paths by people that cannot be 'boxed' in a simplistic category. By the same token, the interpretation of 'management' is elastic – everyone has their own style and there is no formula as these stories illustrate, but there are common threads throughout. Many have showed a tendency for 'kaleidoscopic' careers as captured by Summerton¹, a distinct feature of the cultural panorama where a linear avenue is not an obvious route. Rather, they have followed intuitive signals that have meant throwing themselves in at the deep end in various situations but in an informed way, learning hard lessons and finding

out how things do or don't work. In doing so, they have made a difference, however small or big...and will, no doubt, continue to lead the way for others following.

My thanks go to Arts Council England for supporting me to undertake this project. Please also note that throughout the texts following Arts Council England (as opposed to Arts Council of England) is referred to simply as 'the Arts Council' given that we are limited to the English context for this project.

Finally and not least, my appreciation to *All Ways Learning*, Janet and Madeline as supportive colleagues whose commitment to this area of work is unstinting, and my warmest thanks again to the eleven individuals for agreeing to be part of the first phase of *Collected Wisdom*.

Anouk Perinpanayagam
Freelance arts manager

¹ Dr. Janet Summerton: *Kaleidoscopes and Chameleons – Tailor made careers in the Arts*

introduction

Current paradigms about working lives make it easy to understand people who take a primarily clear series of steps ascending through increasingly responsible positions in organisational settings. Collected Wisdom values and respects the significant contribution these people make to the profession of arts and cultural management. In parallel we think it is important to include the people managing and leading who may not be as visible - those who move in and out of organisations, establish new ones and work semi-independently. Regardless, no two working paths are identical, nor obvious, as amply demonstrated in the eleven stories in this publication. There is considerable evidence here of people who would fit Charles Handy's description of *New Alchemists* - those who create something out of nothing. While it may be easy to conclude that their activity is nothing other than the meandering of a creative spirit, along the way, their work has considerable impact on the field and frequently they are creating work and opportunities for others. In other words, we think there is value in appreciating the full spectrum of paths travelled through the arts and cultural landscape.

Two cornerstones of Collected Wisdom are narratives and dialogues. Narratives help us to make sense of our world. Dialogues help us to become conscious of our own narrative and to build common understandings. These eleven stories tell of interesting personal journeys, highlighting a wide range of managerial practice, replete with evidence of powerful creative entrepreneurialism and leadership. We are indebted to Anouk Perinpanayagam for her work on this project. She selected the people, conducted the interviews and wrote up the stories. In the process she demonstrated

her personal expertise and concerns for developing professionalism in the field with verve.

The stories illustrate the importance of people, the connections they make and sustain in a plethora of situations. The eleven are smart, curious, capable and highly skilled. They spot openings and opportunities. They are creative thinkers, innovators – people who are active, engaged and engaging, driven by infectious passions ranging from concern for ensuring that culture is living and growing, to challenging the historic predominant ideologies which would restrict the community of people who can engage in and with arts and culture. In many cases distinctions between artist, creative individual and manager are blurred and focus changes over time.

These people acknowledge those they have learnt from along the way, and are now in positions to contribute to the professional development of others. Story after story demonstrates the value of learning 'on the job' as individuals found themselves in situations which pushed them to expand their competence (often rapidly, in order to deal with circumstances). Such learning can be downplayed in agendas to professionalise, yet here it is well documented that such learning is to be prized and encouraged.

There is frequent reference to a concept of the holistic approach to arts and cultural management – one that nurtures the artistic and cultural development with sympathetic, appropriate management. Surely this is the key to best practice in our profession. And even if the management takes place some distance from the

actualities of creative cultural practice, the appreciation of the processes are essential.

In 1994, the management writer, Charles Handy said of arts managers he saw at LIFT (London International Festival of Theatre)

“watching them at work, I often felt that if only more businesses had their sort of infectious enthusiasm, blended with their talent for understated and almost invisible management, our economy would be different from what it is today.”

In these stories too, not many talk directly about management per se. However their narratives imply sophisticated management expertise, and point the way to how we might continue to tease out more explicit information. These will be useful guides.

There are other themes here. A number express their journeys as having elements of exploration, of situations where they can push boundaries and move into new territories. Some talk about the importance of enjoying what they do and the company they keep. Many have a mix of professional activities – not just those with kaleidoscopic careers, but also some of the full time employees make the time to play an unpaid role in areas and activities of special interest. Education is frequently mentioned as a way to work with peers and the next generation. Overall there is a sense of generosity, of sharing. It is gratifying that these eleven people have been so willing to contribute to Collected Wisdom. To call these personal journeys careers does

not seem to fit the definition of the word, with its roots in the industrial age. They are perhaps better thought of as indicative of personally directed working lives. The arts and cultural arena is particularly conducive for these, perhaps more contemporary, responses to the changing world of work and the advent of the recognition of knowledge workers.

In this collection of stories we are initiating a platform for constructive, ongoing exploration of arts and cultural management practice. We hope this and the continued programme of Collected Wisdom research will make it easier for others to step forward as role models, and to more openly share expertise and debate the parameters and principles of the field. Anecdotal evidence indicates many people reflect, evaluate and refine their practice. In the past they often have been apologetic and self-deprecating about their own informed and enlightened practice seeing it as divorced from 'real management'. This is a recurrent theme - comments such as 'I don't know anything about management but ...' frequently lead to a description of a wise and wholly appropriate action or solution to a complex, sophisticated management agenda which is quite under-appreciated by the individual.

In recent years here in Britain interest in arts and cultural activity has been on the rise, public investment has increased and the numbers of people involved in the field have risen. Yet little is recorded of the people who manage and lead this activity. (Even the programmes we buy at theatre, dance and music performances are usually without biographies of the managers.) Tacit knowledge abounds among various communities and networks. By its very nature, this is

hidden - not always easily accessible to the outsider, nor, for that matter, reflected back to the professional spheres. The nature of much of the work with intense activity and deadlines can leave little time for reflection. This inhibits learning for ourselves and the transfer of knowledge and expertise to others.

The purpose of the Collected Wisdom research programme is to collect and share that knowledge. We will build up a living bank of the wisdom from the vast array of people managing within the arts and cultural milieu. Documenting this authentic material will strengthen the profession and build respect and understanding of the distinctiveness of much of our management practice. This will unfold a new vision - not a modest ambition! We expect this work will inspire and confirm the practice of others as well as challenge the perceptions of those who find our field wanting - lacking expertise.

How can we best describe arts and cultural management? It occurs in a rich, diverse field with a variety of logics: a field populated by artists, creative individuals and others who play various roles bringing in support, often equal enthusiasm and complementary expertise. These people may inhabit the milieu as much as they inhabit the recognisable organisational structures of all shapes and sizes. Some operate moderately independently but connected to others. This is a field where being static in terms of a job is not the norm and people take on roles both serially and consecutively, working in a fairly fluid manner moving in, out and alongside organisations. Much of this calls for a sensitivity in management practice. The roles, of necessity, are complex and certainly non-formulaic.

An adjacent programme of research at All Ways Learning is investigating Maps and Models of Arts Management to help clarify the roles, and the skills and knowledge we bring to them.

In many ways ours is a young profession, which has yet to value itself. People just get on with the work, using large doses of common sense, learning from each other and by trial and error. All Ways Learning wants to make visible the way people managing in the arts do their work as well as the values, purposes and ethos behind it. This can give credence to the conscientious, considered work in our field, build confidence and help us become a well-regarded profession which knows its own strengths and confidently adapts other expertise to suit its own purposes. It can also provide new insights into patterns of and principles for supporting creativity.

It is time to talk intelligently about the rich tapestry of appropriately managed activity in the arts and cultural milieu, thus to avoid inadvertently curtailing its inventiveness and vitality. Outsiders are encouraged to look more carefully and respectfully at the management practices. Potentially we are contributing to what Richard Pascale refers to as the 'new chapter to be written in management thought'.

Creative and cultural enterprise are now acknowledged as a major area of social and economic importance. At the same time, interest in creativity, entrepreneurship and new ways of working are increasing. Yet paradoxically, there is little shared understanding amongst the arts communities and elsewhere about how people working in the field

successfully create and sustain their activities. We hope this publication is one step towards rectifying this situation.

Janet Summerton & Madeline Hutchins
February, 2005



Anita Bhalla

Anita Bhalla is a 'do-er'. She is happiest creating new initiatives, working with teams and channelling her energies towards innovative projects - all attributes that are brought to the fore in her role with the BBC. She is Head of Political & Community Affairs for the English regions, the largest of the areas that the corporation covers. She also works in a voluntary capacity across a number of bodies, and retains a strong commitment to public duty as a central part of her philosophy.

It seems a natural fit for me to be at the BBC but it was not my first ambition ...

Anita's initial experiences in the arts were at school, where she took part in acting, singing and dancing, captured in an abiding memory of playing the heroine in Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*. However, having enjoyed these formative experiences, she quickly learnt that her motivation was more as observer and participant rather than centre-stage, and she felt early on that she was most likely to follow another route as a career option.

She decided on teaching English and drama, which would allow her to indulge in the arts. But her real driving force soon became obvious once she entered university to read English where she became heavily involved in student politics. She became vice-president of the student union. She was stimulated to have a multi-layered existence; not to be one-dimensional in any sense, and followed her instinct to pursue her keen interest in race and gender.

When there was a freeze on inner-city teachers' jobs, she found herself becoming more active in community relations, and took up a post focusing on this very matter in Leicester, located within an inner city environment. Anita was drawn to working with women and young people of Asian and Caribbean origin, and became part of the network of Community Relations Officers set up by the Council for Racial Equality (CRE), still a fledgling organisation at that point. Over the next two years, she set up an Asian women's hostel, dealt with welfare problems related directly to the women, as well as thornier issues such as immigration. Additionally, she organised steel band and dance performances, and an ambassadorial trip to Dieppe in France which attracted local and regional press coverage, gaining further profile for her groundbreaking work.

The centre was attacked by the National Front ... as well as Asian men protesting, but it made me more determined ...

Anita's attitude ensured she looked out as well as in, informed by her environment, and undaunted by the strength of negative forces at play. She then went to the Asian Resource Centre in Handsworth as a Community Worker, running another hostel project as well as being involved in advice and advocarical work. Afterwards she got involved with the Industrial Language Training Unit (ILTU), part of the Manpower Services Commission, to undertake work in the Black Country. She delivered racism awareness training, language and employment skills in such places as the factories and foundries of the West Midlands. She was

able to tackle this role with ease, partly because of her heritage. Her parents had come to the Midlands as immigrants from Nairobi, Kenya. Her mother, who grew up in Bombay and Lahore also trained as a teacher, and was the first Asian-origin woman to work at Cadburys. Her father was in the British army in the colonial era, a civil servant in Kenya and later a shop steward in a Birmingham factory. He was instrumental in fighting for workers' rights and provided a champion and role model for the Bangladeshi workers at that time. This shaped and informed Anita's own social conscience.

She was approached by the BBC to become a radio reporter and presenter of its Asian programme. She worked with Mohammed Ayub of the Oriental Star agency; he was an older Muslim man working alongside a young liberal woman who did not identify herself in a fixed religious or racial box. Although it was not obvious, she was doing this voluntarily, developing her skills through self-teaching. Whilst still full-time with ILTU she was given leave to work with the BBC. She was paid the grand sum of £6 per week to work on four hours of weekly programming.

Anita decided that she needed to move on, and left ILTU in order to work full-time on the Asian network. She took this new development forward with no staff and no training, but she had knowledge of Asian languages, of building teams and was able to break new ground.

I was happy learning on the job, and it allowed me to be creative and imaginative ... and importantly, I was open to failure ...

This entry into a major public corporation could not be underestimated for a young Asian woman in the early 1980s. The route into this phase of her career took place through the door of London Weekend Television, where she had a screen test to work on the first fully English independent programme *Eastern Eye* with Shyama Perera and Aziz Khurtha for Channel 4.

Anita found herself dealing with a wide range of responsibilities and, having proved her capabilities, she was appointed as one of the first bi-media (i.e. radio and television) journalists as Community Affairs and Education correspondent for Television News. This both stretched and developed her skills and included everything from working in the news room in a predominantly male and hierarchical environment to developing the Radio Asian network in the West Midlands, manifesting itself as the BBC's sixth national station.

Critically, her job enabled Anita to rectify the poor reputation that the BBC had with certain communities and to start building trust with regional groups. Her tenacious determination to effect change was recognised, evidenced by the number of trophies to her name, including the CRE's Race in the Media prize when she won the national Television News Award. In 2000, she won Broadcaster of the Year - Impact Magazine's Windrush Award. Simultaneously, she has been making inroads internally, actively contributing to the Equal Opportunities committee and taking the step to launch positive action programmes to enable those following her to move into the BBC.

I live in Handsworth and have stayed there as an important part of my involvement in the community. I belong there, the people know me and where I live ... I'm a Brummie amongst the other identities I own ... South Asian ... British ... Apart from this, I try not to have conflict or compromise in my work situation. I don't have any paid jobs outside the BBC and my interest in terms of voluntary work is to add value, enable interchange ... my motivating factor is the community and life values.

Anita never shied away from challenging circumstances, either for her reporting assignments or personal developments. For example she continued to work across social affairs, focussing on articles such as 'sex slaves on the internet'. She ensured that she maintained a foothold in the diverse communities within the West Midlands. This further established her professional reputation. Aside from this, Anita's voluntary work continued apace. She was treasurer of the Asian Resource Centre, Birmingham, chair of governors of Grestone Junior and Infant Schools; more recently she became chair of Midlands Arts Centre (*mac*), a director of Symphony Hall in Birmingham and a governor of the University of Central England. At *mac*, she is involved in a major capital development for an arts centre that attracts over half a million users a year. For the concert hall (of international repute), she assists in ensuring it can enhance its services and be more inclusive of the diverse communities surrounding it. As a principle, Anita does not claim any expenses for her voluntary work and remains

committed to supporting valuable community causes. Her ethos is essentially about being "rich in people" to contribute to a more coherent society.

Anita's successful balancing of her professional and voluntary life, and impressive track record as a correspondent led to her appointment as the BBC's Head of Political and Community Affairs for the English Regions in January 2002. She kept the option of returning to the news room open for the first year in her new position but found herself striding ahead with the ever-growing role involving the cross-cutting areas of external affairs, politics and community affairs. She still feels there is still much to do ...

I am fiercely independent ... I have learnt to keep my personal and professional life separate ... and I am still to find the day that I don't want to go to work ...

Apart from all this, and alongside a busy family life, Anita also found space to undertake a Masters in Media & Communications and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. All these combine her interests in a happy alliance that continues to both stimulate and excite her. As a confident and subtly assertive individual who encourages and empowers others, the factors that influence her professional journey include:

- *Liking the space she occupies*
- *Having a challenging but fun environment*
- *Knowing how the context works*
- *Problem solving*
- *Being hopeful and optimistic*
- *Not least, being passionate*

I was happy learning on the job, and it allowed me to be creative and imaginative ... and importantly, I was open to failure ...



Josette Bushell-Mingo

Josette Bushell-Mingo does not fit into a 'box' of any description, being at once an actor, producer, director and teacher; all labels she is happy with, and adopts according to which one(s) she happens to be engaged with at the time. Her introduction to the performing arts started at a young age, directing Edward Lear's *The Owl and the Pussycat* when she was nine years old. It was already obvious to her at this point that the power of imagination was what propelled her rather than having a 'vision' or stimulated by a sense of risk. Rather, she is attracted by the empowerment, inspiration, at times consolation, and mischievousness that are offered by the world of theatre

To see is to do

For Josette, life itself is her greatest motivating force. She never questioned her destiny, not least as she could see that theatre as an artform had the scope to see one's dreams realised. In her teens she thought briefly about a career in journalism, but her studies in the performing arts at Barking College of Technology launched her on her chosen path. Her time there ended with an invitation to join Kaboodle, an established international touring theatre company - her first job as a performer after doing a workshop with the troupe. She stayed with the company for three years travelling across the Atlantic and to Europe. From this point she found herself acquiring work through recommendations and auditions, and did not have need of an agent till eight years into her acting career.

Her outlook in taking the broad perspective and context and being open to a wide range of opportunities

enabled her to place herself well. This approach has informed all her decisions working with a variety of organisations including Theatre de Complicité, Black Mime Theatre Company, Lumiere & Son, The Royal Shakespeare Company, The National Theatre; and commercial openings - most conspicuously, the part of Rafiki in the highly successful production of Disney's *The Lion King* in the West End.

As part of this trajectory sharing skills through workshops was a big and valuable part of the progression that still informs Josette's willingness to continue teaching and pass on her knowledge, as well as find out from others. She enjoys the transitions between being actor; producer; teacher because one informs the other, builds on trusted instinct and knowledge, and gives her the courage to move into the next arena.

Get on with it!

Given this eclectic range of practice, Josette's go-get attitude has not been hampered by issues of colour or race, and neither are critical agendas for her selection of acting roles. Similarly her personal situation now as mother to children of Swedish and British origin, with a part-Guyanese background; and a life in both England and Sweden, makes her more determined to continue to deflate the colour bar and to meaningfully celebrate diversity or *mangfald* in Swedish. Whilst she acknowledges that she has 'made it' professionally, she feels there is still much more to do in Britain and that the journey is a long one, especially as she still encounters the trite adage of Black performers being

seen on television as a complacent statement of equal opportunities. In this context, she is fully aware that she can use her position as innovator and director to 'create a stink', but in the most constructive way so that those like herself can be taken seriously, respected by peers and on a par with those who can make a difference. So she has taken on roles such as Board member of the Almeida Theatre. Her motivation is to effect change and influence the cultural environment, counting those still dominated by the imperial mode as seen in some of the bigger arts institutions. This particular situation poses continual challenges:

There are two glass ceilings, and I'm still breaking the second ... I have to have a 'muscular' relationship with certain organisations and funders, and that can be everything from a thorn in the side to a healing balm ...

For this reason, her current involvement with the PUSH programme, supported by NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts), has created an ideal platform for her to champion established and emerging British Black artists who have contributed, and continue to contribute to the cultural landscape in the UK.

Josette approached producer Ruth Nutter and together they came up with Push 01, a trailblazing multidisciplinary arts festival which saw not only the first ever all-black British circus, but also introduced many black performers to mainstream venues - such as the Young Vic, their key partner. The week-long

event, which involved 200 black artists and attracted a 3,000-strong audience, featured theatre, circus, opera, performance art, dance, visual art and large-scale outdoor spectacles. It went on to win a Peter Brook Empty Space special achievement award.

From NESTA's website

More recently the adaptation of Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage* by Oladipo Agbolaje, directed by Josette and starring Carmen Munroe illustrates this development further. The production has toured nationally to major theatres, supported by the Arts Council's *Eclipse* initiative.

Josette has ensured PUSH allows a wide breadth of artistic practice to be represented, and sees being invited for a NESTA Fellowship as a privileged gateway and a major learning opportunity at a welcome time for her - to refresh, experiment and take creative risks.

She uses the metaphor of 'keeper of the flame' to best describe her position, and critically, 'making the flame happen'. Precisely because of this, her achievements have been recognised through the *Woman of the Year Craymer Prize 2004 for Enterprise* as founder of and creative driver of PUSH, and more recently the recipient of the South Bank Show's *decibel* award 2005, supported by the Arts Council for her commitment to diversity and specifically Black-led artistic practice.

Josette's commitment with ideas such as PUSH mean she can happily sit within the producing and entrepreneurial milieu of those with portfolio arts careers.

She is refining a holistic methodology where creative impetus and managerial insight are combined to suit her professional drive. She maintains a network of critical friends. These include her husband Stefan Karsberg, a theatre producer; fellow British theatre achievers such as Indu Rubasingham, her agent of fifteen years Barbara Pemberton and close work associates such as Paul Medford.

Sometimes I question if it is worth being separated from my husband and children to do what I want to do, but weighing it all up, it is worth it. I know it's selfish but at the same time I want to construct the environment I would choose to work in myself and to give others the prospect to be fulfilled ...

She wants to 'give back' to those that have helped shape her as well as more widely. She likes to help others learn by example in various ways such as teaching workshops in both home territories of England and Sweden, as well as being patron to two schools with which she has close associations.

'Mischief' is a favoured expression of Josette's and this sense of impishness aligned with exuberance runs through everything she does, fed by the fundamental lessons she carries with her and imparts to others:

Get on with it; try and be respectful and honest; always have fun; reflect on yourself. Have courage ... Nothing is impossible.



Lynne Dick

Pages from a handmade book made for the group exhibition, *My Grandmother, My Mother, Myself* which toured UK, and Standton Art Gallery, Johannesburg between 1994 and 1996.

Lynne trained as a painter at Portsmouth Polytechnic. She is British-born South African, based in Portsmouth. Going back to South Africa for the first time in 1984 and discovering new family members gave her a greater sense of identity and direction in her work. It also made her appreciate the choices her parents had made.

Her Fine Arts course was predominantly male-orientated with no sense of awareness of cultural diversity but she gained from visiting artists such as Veronica Ryan. She left the course with a sense of freedom and relief, although she had thoroughly enjoyed the social life.

The summer she graduated Lynne went to a local arts centre in order to find out how to get involved in community arts. They suggested she attend a two-day course organised by Solent Artlink. This opened up issues surrounding arts and disability and Lynne became involved in a new network of artists and arts managers. The idea of equality was a major emphasis in this new community. She was introduced to the notion of 'social' apartheid as opposed to the more familiar perception of 'racial' apartheid, and it opened up new ways of thinking about equalities.

Simultaneously she was making large-scale drawings and planning for exhibitions with other artists. She enrolled for computer and typing classes, with the aim of temping for a few months of each year to pay for time to paint and develop her practice. She also volunteered alongside recent graduates to create new studios.

Lynne's life was absolutely full at this point. She was working in community arts, had joined a dance and disability company; was an advocacy worker with disabled people - dealing with new personalities all the time and spinning a number of plates while trying to maintain her painting.

After two years she got her first 'proper job' with Solent Artlink. Here she found she could be part of something within the community arts programme. As part-time Administrator she had contact with a diverse range of creative disabled and non-disabled individuals, extended her knowledge and social framework, and developed new values. She later became Project Co-ordinator – a post she held for six years. She learnt the virtue of perseverance and was encouraged by people who were willing to advise her as her job evolved.

Lynne began working at the local College of Arts, teaching disabled adults one day a week and collaborating with other artform tutors. After two years she decided to leave, as over time, the place and people stopped progressing.

Where was I working ... I questioned the motivation, impact and effect ...

In part her decision was spurred on by the offer of a new studio within Art Space Portsmouth and Aspex Gallery. The only hitch was that the studios had not been built. The building was an old chapel. The project required financial investment including studio rent being paid while the renovation progressed. But it was

too good an opportunity to be missed, and Lynne decided to take her artistic endeavours seriously and throw herself fully into making the studio work.

Lynne's paintings reflected her personal journey and were informed by her cultural identity. She exhibited and sold her work - pleased that there was a market for her artistic output. She started to work with other culturally diverse artists. Meg Campbell, originally from South Africa invited Lynne to participate in a touring exhibition, *My Grandmother, My Mother, Myself*, which involved the creation of a hand-made book. Lynne interviewed her own mother, rousing memories of her deceased grandmother in the process. It was an intensely personal project but one that was highly influential to her artistic development - life-changing in the most positive sense. She became aware that she was a free agent, not constrained by having to fit into a clique of any kind. Eventually the exhibition went on tour to Johannesburg, South Africa:

My mother who had not yet returned to South Africa said that she felt she had gone home before she'd really travelled home ...

Meanwhile, Solent Artlink went through several management crises, instigated first by the departure of its first director, Peter Taylor, who had made arts management and good team work appear effortless. Lynne learnt how small arts organisations rely heavily on the personalities and skills of staff, and had to adapt to new ways of doing things as staff and Board turnover took their course. Observing the impact of managers and their various styles led her to one certain

conclusion - life's too short! Time was also at a premium with Lynne expecting her first baby and earning more through her studio work.

In the early 1990s, the trend for positive action programmes for employing disabled and culturally diverse people made Lynne interrogate her position further. She pondered over questions such as:

Should I go back after my maternity leave? Shouldn't our organisation be employing disabled arts managers? Have I outgrown the organisation?

Lynne spent a brief time working with more experienced artist Emmanuel Jegede, which she found inspiring. At the same time her experience of working with dancers and artists of other disciplines within a community arts context, and her belief in sharing skills pushed her to make greater links around cultural identity. This mode of working created a fruitful way of extending her journey and confirmed to Lynne that she felt the need to move on from Solent Artlink. Lynne went to work at Portsmouth Arts Centre. Although it was less pay and half the time it allowed her to balance home and freelance activity.

A pivotal opportunity was provided by Chris Carrell, Arts Officer at Portsmouth City Council, who initiated an inspired project entitled HOME – A Celebration of Cultural Diversity, which Lynne coordinated and evaluated. A month-long festival, it galvanised the local community and featured well-known artists such as Malika Surabai; companies like Sakoba, complemented

by photography, oral history and museum projects:

Home – it can be two places and there can be more than one source – of heritage

Then a re-organisation took Lynne to Portsmouth City Council as Cultural Diversity Officer one day a week, alongside her work at the arts centre. This opened up avenues for new partnerships and allowed the possibility to be a part of a useful, vibrant networking group, meeting other arts managers, sharing information and supporting each other. This afforded the possibility to be honest and be effective - working strategically, making more meaningful links with communities and letting local voices be heard - including those of artists. Good friendships were made. Lynne was still creating her artwork, and volunteered on several project steering committees involving local multi-cultural groups and artists, all of which led to festivals, events and commissions.

When Portsmouth acquired unitary status the decision was taken to close Portsmouth Arts Centre – consequently there was a loss of vibrancy within the team and key people departed. Co-incidentally, Lynne was due to take maternity leave, which would provide her with some thinking time. This enforced a change of pace and Lynne made the hard decision to give up her studio after fourteen years.

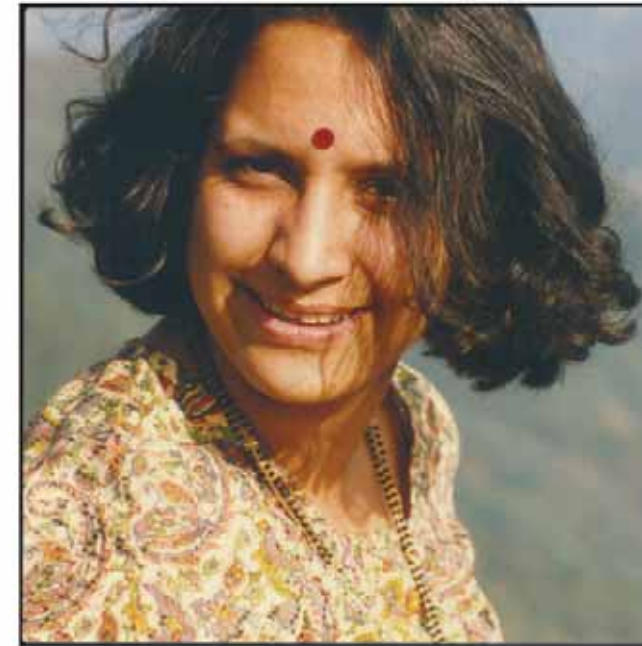
I learnt to be upfront and I reshaped my time around the children ... it was OK to change emphasis

Without the studio or time to create paintings, Lynne returned to work with renewed energy and seeking something more. Her manager agreed to support her to study for a post graduate diploma in Arts Management at Sussex University, which allowed her time for reflection on the last twelve years of management whilst acquiring the extra currency of a qualification which she felt would be useful when applying for future jobs. She found that the real gain was working with Janet Summerton, Madeleine Hutchins and fellow students, and Lynne especially valued the time afterwards to implement some of what she had learnt.

A year later her manager retired, the arts centre closed and Lynne was temporarily City Arts Officer. The job was rewarding but a promised promotion did not materialise. Lynne decided that in order to remain positive about her skills and abilities she would go back to the University of Sussex to complete her MA. Lynne has moved on to become the first Community Arts Development Officer at Bracknell Forest Borough Council. She does not believe she has reached some pinnacle, but that this new opportunity is part of her journey as a creative thinker...

Many aspects of my development have run in parallel, one area benefiting another; much of it has been gained through informal learning – through working with others and through creative exchange of ideas, skills and experiences in given situations.

Home – it can be two places and there can be more than one source – of heritage



Shreela Ghosh

Shreela Ghosh is Programme Director, Arts & Heritage at the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. It is a job that involves advocacy, policy-making, grant-giving and the development of strategic programmes overseeing a budget of £5.5million. She is the first person in this relatively new post, and has primary responsibility to ensure that the arts has a profile alongside heritage, amongst the organisation's other funding programmes (education, environment and social development). Arguing the case for the arts is familiar territory for Shreela, established through the variety of positions she has held over the last two decades as actor, arts consultant, journalist and TV reporter/producer, as well as previous key roles in public sector institutions such as the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and the former Arts Council of England.

I am almost evangelical about the arts – it is for everybody; it is a principle of life ...

Shreela's career started as a Classical (Bharatanatyam and Kathak) Indian dancer and singer, and her expectation was that she would be a professional artist. At the age of seventeen, acquiring an agent and an Equity card, she started as a freelance theatre practitioner and was constantly in demand. In the subsidised arts field, this included her work with leading organisations such as Max Stafford-Clark's Joint Stock Theatre Company where she was also working as Marketing & Publicity Officer. Here she observed performers contributing to, and taking responsibility for the troupe, complemented by effective management by the General Manager, Lynda Farran. For television, she was cast in the part of Minnie in the award-winning

Granada series *Jewel in the Crown*. Whilst this was a wonderful break in terms of acting, it was simultaneously akin to attending drama school for eighteen months having never been previously trained as an actor in any conventional sense. However her coaching in voice and the dramatic techniques within Indian dance styles came into play, and she successfully incorporated her own artistic practice with her ability to listen, discover and understand well on the job.

How do I do this properly? I learnt to crack the codes...

She continued her television career as Naima in the original cast of the popular BBC soap series *Eastenders*, and then took a conscious step out of this path stemming in part from the insecurity of the jobbing performer, coupled with the frustration of being typecast within the mould of run-away Asian bride and stories of Asian shop-keepers.

This feeling of restlessness was also instigated by her situation as a young mother with small children. Having endured post-natal depression as part of this journey, she nevertheless found it allowed her to think about herself for the first time, and threw up questions in her mind about 'not being trained to do anything'. However her early classical instruction was always there as a backbone and has never been lost; she sees it as a root or a well-spring, the rigour and discipline being essential components to her character.

As part of this growing awareness about her abilities and priorities she was influenced by active individuals

such as Naseem Khan, who had written seminal publications such as *The Arts Britain Ignores* and set up the Minorities Arts Advisory Service (MAAS). This stimulated Shreela's interest and involvement in programmes such as the five-month long *Festival of India* in the UK (1983) as fund-raiser and administrator, after which she was part of the editorial team that produced *Bazaar* magazine, a cutting-edge cultural quarterly funded by the Arts Council.

Yet for artists who wanted to change direction to a more managerial profession, there were no such initiatives as the Independent Theatre Council's Fast-track scheme (targeting potential Black and Asian managers), leading her to seek out openings beyond the performing arts field. The first step in the transition to her second career with a more administrative focus in the arts took place through a successful application to a positive action scheme run by the BBC News and Current Affairs department in Pebble Mill, Birmingham. Her role as Reporter/Assistant Producer gave her an excellent starting point on the management route, guided through skills development in TV and Radio, learning about working in a competitive environment, constructing arguments, and dealing directly with significant social issues such as child abuse and arranged marriages.

While she was equally pressured in terms of time and home-life, this kind of insight enabled her to make a more effective contribution to the cultural sector, and determined her interest further, along with her own developing self-confidence.

I took more risks ... I didn't know where the sharks were ... and didn't know where it might lead ... but I had less fear.

Her 'baptism of fire' came with her position as Executive Director of Aditi (then the national organisation for South Asian dance), which was undergoing major structural shifts and was at a precarious juncture in its life. She learnt about having to lead an organisation through a difficult period of fundamental change at the same time as keeping its constituency and stakeholders on board. The support from appropriate consultants such as Madeline Hutchins, as well as funding officers including Jeanette Siddall (now Director of Dance at the Arts Council's national office) meant Shreela acquired meaningful knowledge about running organisations, sensitivity to managerial processes such as redundancy and exit strategies; and how to safeguard resources for the sector concerned. She knew that following her intuition in taking up new opportunities at selective moments like this had served her well thus far.

I stock-take constantly ... and try to think strategically but plans can always change. I have more confidence and can be assertive ... I still have lots of '(c)hutzpah'...

Her next job as Lottery/Liaison Officer at the Arts Council co-incided with a personal change of circumstances that meant she was keen not only to renew and engender a sense of value and self-esteem, but also find a new way of developing herself

professionally which was intellectually invigorating. This was realised through her manager's support to undertake an MA in European Cultural Policy & Administration at the University of Warwick on a part-time basis, addressing both her motivation and psychology as twin forces that were challenged and fortified by this opportunity.

I have learnt to do things I have not done before; discover my strengths and weaknesses; acknowledge what I don't know and ask for help; and I now know who to ask. Being honest and open, combined with trust is absolutely essential together with finding the best way to say 'no'. I know that giving feedback well rather than hiding behind a smokescreen of bureaucratic machinery is a large part of my current work.

Shreela positively acknowledges the encouragement and endorsement from colleagues that she has benefited from in the past. Whilst not wanting to throw away friendships that were made along the way, she became equally aware of having to 'grow up' and be self-reliant. She does not have any role models or specific mentors as such but retains an essential group of friends, networks, constructive critics and contemporaries that she has held over twenty years in the arts. She also finds her own rewards through, for example, feedback from staff as well as reciprocating with advice and constructive responses to them. It is a crucial process of exchange for her. A particularly special moment recently was the sentiment 'I've learnt more from you than anyone else...' expressed by an experienced arts colleague, affirming her own fluid and

open approach as a manager that aims to instil trust and a team spirit with her work relationships.

Shreela does not consider herself to have 'made it' professionally and has a sense that there is yet much more to do. Especially having had her children at a young age, she, alongside them, is in a different phase now. They are looking at future directions as a positive next stage, and one of her most important learning experiences has been as a mother, her children being collectively a 'teacher' of sorts.

I left Bengal when I was eleven but I carried the culture, language and food with me ... I continue learning all the time and looking at the next generation ... and my children are not bilingual as I am, nor explicitly South Asian ...

In terms of her vocation, Shreela enjoys the large canvas she now has at the foundation that has a UK-wide remit. Esmée Fairbairn, like all foundations,

wants to make a difference. She is personally excited by exploring new areas such as heritage and is now embarking on a further avenue of interest to study History of Art at Birkbeck University, adding another strand to her artistic journey and expanding portfolio of expertise. Reflecting on her own approach, she promotes the ideas of:

- *Sharing your experiences*
- *Not worrying about change and being prepared to move on*
- *Following your passion*
- *Being excited about the new - not being scared!*

In the same vein she takes pleasure in imaginative spaces, both physically and meditatively such as the Rothko Room in the Tate Modern. Here she finds a place where can easily make the seamless connections of life and creative spirit that illustrate the UNESCO tenet, consistent with her own philosophy - that *everyone has the right to art*.

I took more risks ... I didn't know where the sharks were ... and didn't know where it might lead ... and I had less fear.



Manick Govinda

From left to right, Mum, baby sister Pam, cousin Harikrishna Munday, sister Dem, Manick age 11, 1973

Manick Govinda is an enabler, producer, promoter and project manager 'who wants to make things happen', all evidenced in his current position as the Artists' Adviser with Artsadmin, the long-established resource for contemporary artists based in London. This position allows Manick the scope to work proactively with creative people, and experience their joys and dilemmas as they embark on their individual journeys.

I enjoy my role ... especially the one-to-one meetings with artists. It involves active listening, instilling confidence, and offering support and much needed critique to the artists. Furthermore, I have a fantastic team who have a vast range of experience and interest in contemporary arts and performance.

Manick's residence in England began at the age of three, his family having moved from Mauritius. His ethnicity has always been an important factor in his life, but not a hindrance despite being part of a minority. His outlook kept his interests broad, and led him to continually evaluate his own position within the public environment he found himself in.

His first encounter with the arts came through activities at school - seeing and participating in theatre and later taking English literature and liberal arts subjects for his 'A' levels. He first thought of journalism as a career, having been keenly involved in writing and producing the school magazine, but instead decided to study for a Combined Arts degree at Bradford & Ilkley College in Yorkshire. The course brought cross-art form influences

and the hybridity of arts practice to the fore, alongside humanities, politics and social agendas, albeit from a Euro-centric perspective.

After completing his studies Manick moved back to London in the mid-1980s, at first taking on casual jobs and observing the upbeat energy of the Greater London Council (GLC) where culturally-specific skills seemed to be valued. He also noticed the increasing visibility of Black and Asian theatre including the likes of Tara Arts and Black Theatre Co-op, as well as organisations such as the Minority Arts Advisory Service (MAAS) with its influential publication *Artrage*. Manick's curiosity and excitement on experiencing this rich activity changed his life, the catalyst being Tara's *This Story's Not for Telling*. The sheer physicality of the performances, the mix of tradition and innovation, and the Brechtian qualities resonated strongly with him.

*It was an exhilarating time. After my degree in 1985 I spent the summer reading Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, in the heat of the West Yorkshire moors. For me, this was a time when modernity and 'Asianness' were colliding.*

These events led him to seek out new opportunities that would enable a closer involvement with a variety of culturally diverse, and particularly Asian, artistic developments. He found the chance to achieve this in some way through Newham Council's financial support to a voluntary Asian arts project in the borough, where he became one of the two part-time workers recruited

to set up arts activities. The *Asian Arts Group*, as it became known, concentrated on drama, film, photography and dance programmes. *The Asian Drama Youth Group*, which Manick also instigated, focused on contemporary issues such as race, colonialism and feminism, while encouraging partnerships with Theatre Royal Stratford East and the Tom Allen Centre as significant venues. Besides this, the youth group gave a platform to writers, notably Dolly Dhingra, now a respected journalist, having written for the Guardian and other national papers.

Manick's knowledge and growing confidence within a culturally varied arts scene led him to apply for an Arts Council traineeship, hosted by the Black Dance Development Trust. Although he did not get this post he was recommended to MAAS by Anne Millman, an established figure in the arts. A four-month period with MAAS gave him the chance to work on *Artrage*, nurturing his administrative and fundraising skills under the guidance of the Director Karin Woodley alongside progressing on his own initiative.

This also gave him an opportunity to network, and led him on to work on *Bazaar* magazine, a specialist South Asian arts publication covering, for example, urban and suburban concerns as well as cross-artform disciplines. As assistant editor Manick interviewed and profiled personalities such as Hanif Kureishi, Talvin Singh, Sheila Chandra and young talents such as Parv Bancel.

... of course I think about identity, especially with a background in Asian arts. It gave me the chance to learn about myself. Being open

to new experiences, I can't think in a one-dimensional frame ... as migrants we live in multiple worlds.

Manick then went to work with local authorities split between Lambeth Council and as Asian Arts Development worker for the Tom Allen Arts Centre in Newham – both part time posts. He then moved to his first full-time position in Hounslow, undertaking direct programming to include legendary qawwali singers, the Sabri Brothers and dancer/choreographer Alpana Sengupta. However Hounslow proved to be too 'safe' an environment. Manick wanted to push the boundaries of the artistic programme and was keen to advance his skills.

Fortunately, he was able to realise his aims as Black and Ethnic Minorities Arts Development Officer at Newham Borough Council where Mark Mulqueen was the Arts Officer. Here Manick had space, support and a good manager. It proved a highly rewarding experience, particularly as it allowed him to take some calculated risks. For instance, he mounted a big Asian mela which featured gifted bands such as *State of Bengal* and *Fun-da-mental* attracting a capacity crowd of 25,000 people. In time, he succeeded Mulqueen as Arts Officer.

By the early 1990s Manick was ready to broaden his expertise in the cultural sector. He successfully applied for, and became Projects Manager (Arts and Book Publishing) for the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, where he stayed for four years. He was attracted to the post

because it gave him the chance to work within a Trust or Foundation to enhance his professional acumen and maximise his Asian arts interest. There was the potential to expand partnerships with bodies akin to the Nehru Gallery at the Victoria & Albert Museum. His previous experience of working on applications and assessing grants was a distinct advantage. Again, he found his period with the Hamlyn Foundation a constructive learning experience extending his understanding within the arts.

Reflecting on his career path, he cites Jane Hamlyn as a significant mentor, especially in supplementing his knowledge of contemporary arts practice. Likewise, he considers Jatinder Verma, Artistic Director of Tara Arts as a prominent guiding figure; Woodley as another critical inspiration and Mulqueen, who knew how to be empowering.

On leaving the Hamlyn Foundation Manick became Director of DanceXchange (DX), one of the national dance agencies within the country-wide network. This took him to Birmingham, and into a challenging new situation. He not only had to manage staff and a re-structuring process, but simultaneously oversee a capital development programme for the organisation. The intense nature of the business meant that the pressures frequently took him away from working with artists directly:

I learnt a great deal here ... especially about what I really wanted to do ... The characteristics of a good arts job that I know I now value are:

- *Satisfaction of working with artists*
- *Being in the field of pushing boundaries and finding new territories*
- *That the nature of the work allows flexibility*
- *A good team spirit*
- *The possibility of networking*
- *Recognition - both in terms of achievement and contribution*

After leaving DX, Manick moved back to London and went into freelance consultancy, and was approached to undertake a feasibility study for the Baylis Programme at English National Opera (ENO). From the positive feedback he received, he realised that this could be a promising route to pursue. On the other hand, he had to think about the cost of living in London and paying his mortgage. Unexpectedly the Artists' Adviser position at Artadmin came up. While it meant a sharp drop in the salary level he was used to, it did permit a steady income that could be relied upon and essentially provided the direct contact with artists that he wished to engage in more fully.

The post was a new one for the company. This was manifestly a test period under Manick's direction and the service grew quickly to be a much-needed resource. A review and a re-negotiation of his position, salary and department was part of a strategic evolution for the organisation; and reflected the contribution and leverage that this arm of the company was now delivering. There were also advantageous new networks forming around major Arts Council schemes, especially *decibel*, *Creative Partnerships* and *Creative Capital*. His role as a Board member and

commissioning editor for The Artists Information Company augmented the capability of the Artist Advisers' function in a productive way.

Having reached this place in his professional journey Manick does not see himself at the peak of his career. He is presently concentrating on balancing time with family and work to ensure a happy medium. He does not have a 'career plan' but would like to explore further opportunities for personal, professional and intellectual development when the suitable time arises...

I'd like to pursue a couple of crazy ideas that I have in the back of my mind that involve Ghandi, Science Fiction and mythology!



Peter Jenkinson

at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles
taken by Marc Jaffrey

Peter Jenkinson is motivated by making a difference to people's lives, and 'complete optimism' captures his general outlook. As a creative individual he thrives on challenges, overcoming obstacles and constantly questioning the status quo. This is in part as the relationship between culture and society looms large as a driving force, but also an allegiance to his position as an 'honest broker' in a charged political landscape. He has recently concluded his tenure as National Director for *Creative Partnerships*, after spearheading this major government initiative. It attracted £40 million in the two-year pilot phase designed to set in motion a targeted programme around creative learning for young people across England.¹ Given Peter's resolute belief in bringing creative stimulus to children in the formative period of their lives, his resistance to authoritarian or corrective instruction was clear from the inception ...

It was like being a kid again ... I was interested in a consensual way forward ... and of course manipulation and charm are in the mix ... children are not stupid ...

Peter's interest in the arts started when he was a boy growing up in an isolated part of mid-Suffolk, where he created his own private museum in the attic enthused by his fascination with history and archaeology. At the age of seventeen, before moving onto further studies, he was drawn to work as a volunteer in the museums service classifying and re-ordering collections at Norfolk Museums. Staying true to his early passions, he won a place to read history at Cambridge University, followed by a

museum studies postgraduate course at Leicester University. He became Research Officer at the Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery where he investigated the shifting communities of post-war Birmingham using oral history and photography. He enjoyed and gleaned much from this imaginative experience, confirming that his commitment and interest rested with the museums sector.

Soon after he became Assistant Curator at Weybridge Museum, then Principal Curator at the Grange Museum in Brent – a post which offered the sharp but welcome contrast of moving from a suburban to urban environment. Inner-city London was particularly appealing to him, and the Grange Museum post gave him the opportunity to expand his knowledge within one of the most diverse boroughs in the country. Brent was promoting profound cultural change, and being administered under the auspices of the Greater London Council. He found himself thrown into a different yet even more stimulating world where he had to respond to unfamiliar demographics, including the significant Black, South Asian and Irish populations. However personal matters and his widening interest in the visual arts took Peter back to Birmingham.

A 'career' itself is not so important to me, and whilst leaving a job means the 'fear' factor is there, I'm willing to take the risk. Moving to Birmingham to pursue a relationship rather than my career raised a number of issues not least around gender. Should a woman take the 'lead'? It certainly tested friendships and expectations ...

Having made his home in the West Midlands he took the job of Director of Walsall Museums and Galleries. This was a critical moment in his professional path. It gave him the opportunity to polish his skills as an increasingly respected curator, and fashioned him as a politician and publicist in the best sense. The museum and gallery were located above the public library, and Peter intuitively used its prize possession of The Garman Ryan Collection to increase the profile of the building and its contents. This was the first step along the arduous but ultimately gratifying journey to the award-winning creation of The New Art Gallery Walsall. The sculptures that made up the Garman Ryan Collection were those of Jacob Epstein. Epstein's widow left his work to the town as a valuable, tangible legacy of which Walsall could be proud. A celebratory book entitled *The New Art Gallery Walsall*, edited by Rowan Moore, attracted the attention of the national 'taste-makers' in the British visual arts field such as Rosie Millard.

Working in culture, I'm interested in institutions being permeable, open to a wide range of relationships and partnerships and to create solutions to common problems. The staff consequently have to be constantly inquisitive, politically astute, empathetic, flexible, open and ... ultimately promiscuous in the best sense!

Taking on the Walsall directorship was a major professional development experience. Peter had not had any formal management training and was facing the responsibility of moving a relatively unknown

facility into a multi-million pound contemporary gallery that was to be unapologetically world class yet aimed to be a national model of access to the arts for the broader public - a huge task. But having embarked on this route, in just over ten years, Peter had fundamentally changed the local and regional environment. He attracted renowned architects Caruso St John to build the new gallery in the heart of the town shopping centre. It was to be admired nationally and internationally.

This period of expansion was underpinned by Peter's work to empower staff and engender a sense of collective ownership. Supporting people to grow seemed the most obvious management principle for him. He trusts in ambiguity in order for individuals to realise their aptitude on their own terms.

Here Peter's cultural heritage came into play and shaped his political attitude. With a father from Lancashire and an Irish mother, he inherited the qualities of warmth, an ability to talk and the 'cheekiness' of the stereotypical Irish figure. He uses the latter in an informed way whilst using any suitable occasion to undercut it. Similarly his Catholic and Celtic background cannot be divorced from social status, his up-bringing most aptly explained as rooted in the ranks of the lower middle-class. As with many people in that period, he did not originate from a literary or artistic background, and was the first person in his family to attend university. From a young age an ethos was instilled of making good while never losing sight of taking responsibilities seriously. In this context, receiving the OBE keeps the question of *Who for?* alive for him while equally making his family proud of his achievements.

Key features of Peter's professional direction are commitment to public service, awareness of those who are appreciably generous, not simply stimulated by power or financial gain and a determination to contribute to cultural-political change. In his view, *Creative Partnerships* demonstrated this aspect to the full, evidenced by the winter school gathering of the regional directors in the first year of setting up of the programme. This group was made up of 90% women with the remainder largely constituting feminised or gay men. This again, proved a fascinating learning experience ...

Talking stereotypically, men often force their way ahead whilst women are more used to negotiating or working collaboratively to find a way forward. There can be no question that a more 'feminised' approach, as the winter school showed - less competitive, more collegiate, open to making partnerships, self-reflective, slowing down in order to speed up - is the approach we'll need to pursue in the future to be successful.

Peter draws his inspiration from many artists and colleagues. The most potent figure of all for him is Declan McDonnagle, presently with the City Arts Centre in Dublin and one of the few cultural leaders who successfully combines community and arts without making either reductive in any way. Apart from such professional luminaries, he also has a strong network beyond work including contemporaries and friends although he admits that his mantra of 'life is work' has been counter-productive at times.

Where do I go next?

Recently Peter took Myers-Briggs and Belbin exercises which revealed he was out of balance as a driven personality that was constantly 'on the edge'. On reflection, this helped him understand that he should be more discriminating about his next professional step. His path to date illustrated to him that maturity comes with acquired experience rather than age. For example taking on *Creative Partnerships* may have seemed incongruous for a former museum Director as it did not initially appear to carry the same underlying philosophy. But digging deeper reveals a consistent thread of integrating culture, education and regeneration in innovative ways to be as inclusive as possible, and impact on thinking and doing at a national level. Whilst *Creative Partnerships* was happening against a background of change in relation to public arts funding, it allowed Peter to continue developing new ways of working and building on his, now recognisable, focus with community, education and curatorial strands having equal standing. Undoubtedly, his underlying sense of wickedness and wit has also held him in good stead. So what next?

For the first time, I have actually stopped. It means there is time for deliberation on moving the vision forward ... I want to keep the debate running. I'm really optimistic and excited about the potential for culture in this country to move ever closer to the centre of national life and to the lives of individuals, and I look forward to helping to push this along ... clearly in as promiscuous a way as possible!

¹ Funding for the following two-year period is set at £70 million and will increase as the programme extends to new partnerships.



Mel Jennings

Mel Jennings describes herself as a *creative explorer* - someone who is 'willing to try out new things and can happily step into the unknown'. She is interested in probing new ideas. Two of her current activities (from a diverse portfolio that includes consultancy) as a Fine Artist and Life Coach merge well to complement each other and fuel her creativity. Her career has taken various turns into exciting phases of discovery.

I have to be inspired by what I do ...

Mel describes her background as being mixed heritage of White English and Black Jamaican parentage. She lived in many places as a child including Libya and Gibraltar and attended a range of schools. She did not immediately look for a career but chose, without much thought, to study for a diploma in Retail Display at the remote Isle of Ely College in Wisbech because it incorporated elements of graphic design, in order to build on her interests in drawing and painting. Although she gained an overall distinction at the end of the course at this stage she still lacked confidence, role models and career advice. Hence her first job was a year of uninspiring menial work at Sainsbury's. Spurred on by boredom she moved on to become an occupational therapy assistant at the Ida Darwin Hospital, Cambridge for a year, where she enjoyed working with adults with learning difficulties. From here she went to the Health Education Unit at Addenbrookes Hospital as an audio visual aids technician, where she met Ian Pinchen; a significant encounter as he persuaded her to undertake a degree course to develop her growing interest in philosophy and sociology. She attended Anglia University, reading

European Thought & Literature alongside History of Art. The course encouraged making artwork and she began to see her potential as an artist.

As her studies were opening up another world, Mel also began to explore her cultural heritage and she joined a Black Women's group in Cambridge. She organised an arts event where she met Margaret Holder, then of Eastern Arts Board, who subsequently contracted her to take on a research project on Black and Asian arts in the East Anglia region. It was Mel's first consultancy for a public body and she was terrified. However her work was well received ...

I was often lucky enough to be offered work ... which took me into new experiences I probably wouldn't have chosen alone ...

At this time Black Mime Theatre company (BMT) was looking for an Administrator. Both Holder and Peter Thornton, another officer in EAB, persuaded her to seriously consider applying for the job, convincing her that despite her inexperience, 'basic common sense' would prevail. The job proved to be 'trial by fire' initially, but turned out to be a constructive partnership relationship, with individuals in the company and the arts funding system. Denise Wong, the Artistic Director, was a visionary and inspiring leader. Mel loved the company's artistic vision and this enthusiasm gave her the energy to put in the long hours and determination the job required. She secured three-year revenue funding, major sponsorship from BT, established a touring circuit and learned how to administer an arts organisation that grew from five to ten permanent

employees, including two separate touring troupes. The company continued its success for some time after Mel had helped to establish its place on the cultural map. Reflecting on the experience she notes ...

... many young women successfully run major touring theatre companies but this is often not acknowledged ...

Mel was approached by Talawa Theatre, a much larger company with a longer track record, and invited to become its Marketing Officer. She was daunted by taking on the task, working with industry heavyweights, Yvonne Brewster, the Artistic Director and Angela McSherry, Executive Director. However as she had developed a growing interest in marketing, Mel decided it would be a useful opportunity. Also she was still attracted to working with Black arts organisations in order to develop better representation in the field. She was becoming more politically savvy and passionate about important issues such as equality and inclusion. This ethos has stayed with her. Her strong allegiance to the arts is based on:

- *A love of creativity*
- *Liking the kind of people that work in the arts*
- *The team spirit which is not solely motivated by profit*
- *Her passion for the work*

Mel found herself once again working with inspiring and powerful women from whom she learned a great deal. McSherry was a rigorous and effective manager

and Brewster was a fearless and creative producer/director. It was a challenging time as it became increasingly apparent that the company vision could not be fully met in within the constraints of its venue.

Mel also began a personal development course run by the Institute of Creativity called 'The Mastery', through which her awareness of what could be possible was again expanded.

It was the first time I had stopped to think about the choices I was making. I felt I had started a new life. I wanted to try new things ...

She has continued to stretch herself in this way through programmes such as Landmark Education and Mindstore.

While with BMT and Talawa, Mel sat on a number of committees. She chaired the Mime Action Group (now Total Theatre) and the Black Theatre Forum, while also being a member of the TMA's marketing committee. Through this she met well-known industry 'guru' Roger Tomlinson who invited her to work with him on a major feasibility study. This exciting opportunity led her to make a leap into the unknown and enter a new freelance life. Contracts appeared immediately and shortly after Tomlinson invited her to become an Associate at A.R.T.S. Over the next three years she supported numerous organisations and agencies through her research work.

I started to see that I was capable of much more than I had thought ...

Around half her work was marketing directly linked to developing cultural diversity in some way. Her role models had included Wong, Brewster, McSherry and Tomlinson, and most importantly her mother, Kathie: a determined, kind-hearted and creative woman. Mel enjoyed working at A.R.T.S. deepening her experience in marketing but decided that her creative impulse needed attention - she was asking more questions of herself ...

I enjoyed facilitating other people's creativity but I needed to find other ways of contributing my own ... I could not wait any more ...

She moved back to independent consultancy and devoted time to being an artist and artistic producer herself. Her portfolio has enabled time for meaningful voluntary work such as founding and directing the Streatham Festival, embarking on a part-time Fine Arts degree at Central Saint Martins where she is flourishing as a practising artist. Apart from showing her own art at exhibitions she has set up projects such as *Yellow Bowl*, a community-led artists collective and *The Artists Tea Party*, an informal inspiration group for visual artists.

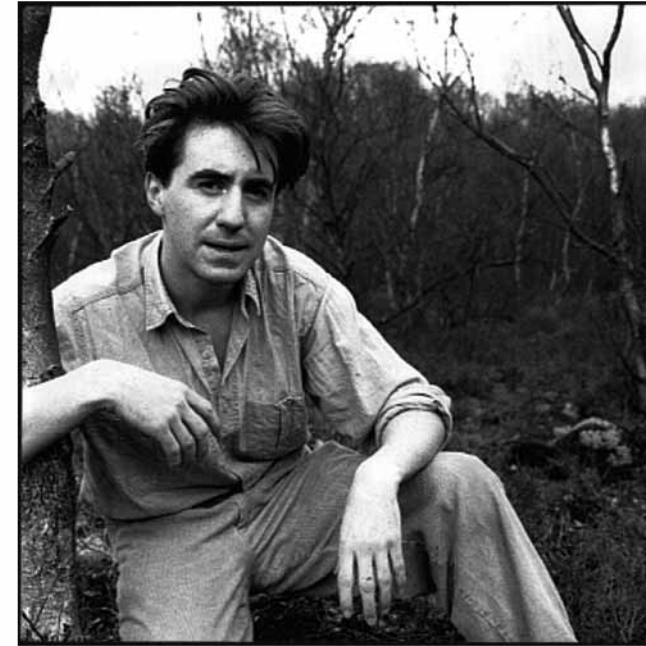
Sometimes the choice to develop her artistic practice has meant declining stimulating consultancy work. However, she is beginning to find a balance in

continuing to attract opportunities for major, groundbreaking research and development projects. Her professional commitments include working in the Caribbean for a major British Council project; with Morton Smyth Ltd on the Arts Council's 'Not for the Likes of You' programme and professional coaching for the Arts Marketing Association's 'Step Up' scheme.

She is also an occasional 'Creative Consumer' for Fifteen 20, an organisation specialising in new product development. She recently authored *A Practical Guide to Working with Arts Ambassadors*, published by the Arts Council, which has been positively commended, resulting in an invitation to a seminar and workshop tour of Australia and New Zealand. In this context, she can happily say she is a successful arts professional.

I now think of myself as ambitious, determined and creative ... a career is a creative thing ...

... many young women successfully run major touring theatre companies but this is often not acknowledged ...



David Morley

Photo: Michael Wilson

David Morley would not describe himself as a 'teacher' or a 'poet' although both are used to explain his current profession. In whatever way David is labelled by others, his own preference is a position of some ambiguity and even risk. Nevertheless, he is business-savvy artist, manager and educator, driven by the idea that no perfection in his work is possible or likely. The shortfall between expectation and achievement propels his own desire and passion for making the work and place of writers more profitable in every sense, and on a global platform:

I was always impressed by some of the ideas behind the Venetian Academy in which international trading and entrepreneurship furnished artists with colossal projects. I am still attracted to large-scale projects that require minute attention to every detail. One contemporary example which I admire is the undergraduate Writing Programme at Princeton which the poet Paul Muldoon helped to put together. Paul is a poet on top of his craft, yet he is also a strong advocate for the advancement of poetry while remaining an acute educator and critic.

David's career in the cultural landscape was not planned. It manifested itself through a series of connections and decisions that led him to his current position as Director of the Writing Programme at the University of Warwick.

Although he has written poetry and journalism from the age of twelve, his first step into the professional literature field happened following the sudden closure of the laboratory where he was working as a scientist.

Without employment and faced with a need for income, he sent thirty poems to the Society of Authors. These won him an Eric Gregory Award for young poets, a timely chance happening which literally saved him from hunger. His instinct to move in this direction was informed by his childhood, as a part-Romany youth who learnt to stave off poverty by using cunning and wit. His mother utilised this method for her own survival when she became a widow while David was a child. David's stammer also played, and still performs, an important role:

If you cannot speak you must listen instead. I have always been behindhand in talking in public. I can only do so with freedom if I plan carefully, or if I 'perform' or sing. It makes you very private and, unfortunately, even anti-social. Not being able or willing to speak means that I tend not to offer an opinion readily. But, because of enforced silence, I have been able to observe, possibly quite closely, those people with good ideas and good practice. You watch carefully how they behave, you hear minutely what they say, you feel clearly what they are really thinking. There is the converse of course: enforced silence leading you to listen carefully to people offering the opposite of good ideas and practice. I have been mentored by my stammer to be attentive, even when I am not in agreement. On the one hand I am deeply ashamed of, and embarrassed by my inarticulacy. It can be self-destructive and it can lead to severe depression, even self-loathing. On the other it has probably saved me from speaking without thinking or, worse

still, without feeling. You learn from it: silence teaches you more about language than speech can. Any pain it causes is worth it.

Having seen and experienced the clichéd images of the Romany in the worlds of petty crime, violence and machismo, the self-destructive streak that he still carries was firmly instilled but tempered by his own willingness to seek out and rise to new challenges. This latter characteristic led to him being talent-spotted by Jenny Attala, Literature Officer at Northern Arts Board (NAB), who supported him to attend a writers' retreat at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre in Ireland. She also assisted him in opening up opportunities to work within the education field in north England. He was soon catapulted into being a prominent player advising on curriculum agendas, chairing major events with leading figures in the education sector, and being an adviser to NAB.

He became the first 'Worker' for the National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE). Before this he had worked in 300 different schools (for ages 5-18yrs) through his own instigation and will, an effort that was hugely successful. With his natural business acumen David was able to get the children's writing published. He became established as a Writer-in-Education and was regularly commissioning other writers to work in schools. This professional step-up led to not only being paid more (although still meagre) but it also made him appreciate the ways and means of self-managing organisational and artistic ambitions, and understanding the value of building a reputation by word-of-mouth.

At the same time, he was almost seduced into the world of local government with aspirations to become a Labour MP for the 1997 General Election. David soon realised the manipulative world he would be entering would not satisfy him. His ability to perform to an audience had got him noticed, but his political antennae were primed enough to be repelled by the 'super-ego' tricks of the political machine, and he was unwilling to be continually wheeled out as one of the 'marginalised' who could make a difference.

Sometimes I will make errors and receive flak and mockery. I have this coming. Those times are very difficult, but they are essential for learning.

After he left NAWE, he worked as Kirklees Literature Co-ordinator where he was better paid and had more resources available to deliver a literature agenda. David was still in the mode of 'getting-to-know' and continued to operate with a strategic overview, entrepreneurial nous and mounting an ambitious programme for the constituency. More importantly, he also learnt about the nature of expectations and friendships, motivating factors for the roles he had occupied so far, tied to his addiction to getting the job done well.

But his work experiences had made him more questioning and dissatisfied with himself. He knew for example, that the Romany, or simply working-class trait of respecting elders informed his attitude to other people. He became aware he was seeking approval from those who were apparently older and wiser. And he gave far too much respect to viewpoints that were suspicious of the links he made, say, between science and art and between art and business.

Overwork led to pneumonia and an enforced break. David's journey from scientist to writer-in-education had allowed his sense of opportunistic endeavour to flourish. This is illustrated by his ability to improvise when required, and 'wing it' when needed. He also took advantage of prospects such as a Hawthorden Fellowship that allowed him to complete his first serious collection of poems. He met other poets such as Michael Hulse, an influencing figure in helping David realise his level of ignorance in comparison with such a well-rounded reader. This encounter led to the joint editing of *The New Poetry* for Bloodaxe Books with Hulse and David Kennedy, a momentous event due to the success of the publication. But another lesson learnt in facing the vicious attacks by critics proved a dismaying yet salutary experience.

David started to appreciate that many literary reputations were based on fairly shallow foundations. He began a process of decoding the ones that were worth recognition. This has come into play at Warwick where his aim is to teach people to do it for themselves, and take responsibility for their own work with a degree of self-assessment. He imbues an ethic motivated by the next challenge rather than the dangerous potions of flattery, vanity and complacency.

David's association with the university started through his successful application for an Arts Council Fellowship. The opportunity was great but the fee of £7,000 presented a sharp drop in income. Aged thirty, he was ready for new directions and being a single parent, he had responsibilities. But he was rich in ideas and fervour to make things happen:

I told the university that if they backed my ideas, not with cash but with space, I'd be

paying my own wage in a year. Within one year the resources had indeed gone up exponentially and continued year on year on year, until now we can turn around and say to the Arts Council and university that their joint venture capital of £11,000 in 1995-96 has since yielded over £4million to the art of literature that otherwise would not have existed.

After the fellowship was complete David became Co-ordinator and then Senior Lecturer, ensuring creative writing and poetry were, and continue as, major contributors to the overall English department syllabus. While not following the usual academic route he has secured loyalty through his track record and been rewarded through increased remuneration, most recently manifesting itself in the chance for study leave and the completion of new books of poems for Carcanet Press. Alongside this, as a practising artist, he aims high in measuring the ambition of his longer work in poetry against the practice of the Classical tradition. This is consistent with his approach to reach beyond one's apparent capability. His own role models include Mary Wollstonecraft as an author and activist; Charles Tomlinson as a classicist and poet, and Jeremy Treglown, as a refined, sympathetic and widely read writer and mediator.

David does not consider himself to have 'made it' professionally, either as a poet or in his academic life. As he says:

I model my work after individuals and groups that have refused to understand impossibility and who embrace risk as a way of life; that

work within communities with verve and respect; that are not afraid of business and the importance of money to working lives; that act, rather than talk, to create art that lasts and innovates.

And he continues to do so. He still inhabits a place somewhere in between 'teacher' and 'poet'. At this stage in his career he has not stopped learning. On the contrary, he surrounds himself with family, good friends and those who care for writing and the arts, with 'lean minds and limber imaginations'. In the same way mentoring relationships are influenced by the idea of exchange:

If I teach somebody, I am expected to be taught in return. It is a symbiosis, or it is nothing.

David intends to develop the creative writing agenda more internationally to the United States and China as part of the development of the Warwick Writing Programme, and equally to extend knowledge and appreciation about the practice of creative writing through publication by a monograph forthcoming from Cambridge University Press.



Marie Remy

Marie Remy is currently undertaking a feasibility stage and researching the viability of a new publication for children. This brings together her skills as a business manager as well as a mother in order to embark on a new stage in her life, and importantly, working for herself for the first time.

It's time to strike out on my own ... to get my own project off the ground and not be constrained by other external concerns ...

Marie's upbringing, being born in rural France and as the first person in her family to attend university, proved a formative experience itself. She gained the baccalaureate (analogous to 'A' levels in the British education system) and achieved a place at the prestigious Institute of Political Studies in Paris (comparable to the London School of Economics).

During her years as a student, she worked voluntarily with a literary festival *Le Livre Sur La Place* run by Nancy City Council, learning about the melding of artistic, administrative and public relations spheres. After this she had the chance to do the same with the Alain Germain Company, observing dance as a discipline, with its combination of choreographic and musical elements.

Having thoroughly enjoyed the educative process of her degree and encounters with cultural activities, she decided to come to England to undertake an MA in Arts Management at City University in London. She also involved herself in writing about bands for fanzines. After completing her course, she recognized that she

wanted to remain in the city for the immediate future rather than move to another location, and that she would not take the obvious route of seeking employment that was led by the French language as the major link. Although her MA was effectively international, the English job market proved more difficult for someone who was interested in the arts world but had no profile in the sector as yet. However, her principal pursuits being performing arts and literature led her to seek out opportunities to expand her horizons both professionally and personally.

Despite her enthusiasm and accomplishments in voluntary roles up to this point, she found herself overqualified and she was not short-listed for administrative assistants' jobs. She decided to omit this more junior rung on the ladder and find suitable voluntary work again. This resulted in placements with contemporary dance organisations – the Cholmondeleys & Featherstonehaughs, Imlata and Second Stride. At the same time, she secured a part-time post at the International Workshop Festival (IWF) based in London. The Artistic Director, Dick McCaw was a Francophile and sympathetic to her aspiration to establish herself in the cultural sector. She seized the opening to prove herself and start building up a track-record as a manager in the British context.

I was very pleased to have this chance ... and I know I was still an unknown risk in the English arts environment ... This opened up more prospects for contacts and exposure to the people I might want to work with and I found myself in a post with responsibilities without having been in an assistant role first.

Having also had some time to think about her situation and make decisions about the direction for her professional life balanced against financial imperatives, Marie's role with IWF and investment in unpaid time with the dance companies was rewarded. This came about through her association with Lucy Mason, the General Manager of Second Stride, who recommended Marie to the chair of Scarlet Theatre, a touring company that was seeking to appoint to the position of Administrator. Marie acquired the job while continuing to work with Imlata. This arrangement lasted for one year and satisfied her desire to work with a physical theatre company in addition to her already evident draw to contemporary dance. She was particularly happy to have overcome the obstacle of not being a native English speaker.

During this period of her life she improved her business skills, developed international relationships and learnt about the public arts funding system in England. At the same time her role with Scarlet Theatre enlarged during a period of expansion and exciting growth for the company, and she worked in a symbiotic and dynamic partnership with Gráinne Byrne, the Artistic Director.

Marie's natural inclination for entrepreneurial enterprise, she realised, was also down to watching and absorbing the business acumen displayed by her parents, her father being a mechanic and owner/manager of a small garage and petrol station, and dealing with a difficult period during the oil crisis in the 1970s. Her mother, who assisted in the car business also reflected their circumstances of continual hard work, following Marie's grandmother's activities in a previous era, having run her own bicycle shop and being self-reliant.

After nearly four years with Scarlet Theatre Marie acknowledged that she was outgrowing the post and also had to consider increasing her income. As employment in the arts sphere was limited for those seeking to boost their financial remuneration, she decided to take up a position as General Manager with the advertising and guerrilla marketing agency Diabolical Liberties. This brought her music interest to the fore, complemented by a substantial salary increase with a steady wage and status within the organisation. In effect, she had 'made it' in professional terms.

Her initial ease with Diabolical Liberties was made smoother by her knowledge of co-working with her partner's band Cornershop in the early days of its critical success and development, offering each other mutual support. Though the band itself was a thriving venture, her new situation with greater responsibilities spurred her on to further her independent career as a manager. At Diabolical Liberties she was heavily involved on the operational side of a company with a turnover of £8 million, but one that faced regular legal concerns (around, for example, flyposting) because of the nature of its business.

Marie had a vast workload, managing eighty staff, formulating human resources policies, and overseeing all day-to-day operations and business affairs. However, she was offered too little backing from the senior management tier.

What lessons did I learn? Not asking for help earlier, not saying 'no' and giving myself limits. I was so used to being assertive on

behalf of others ... but not enough for myself ... I can say I really appreciate the value of support mechanisms now.

The intensity of the work and demands came to a head when she was, to all intents and purposes, made the 'scapegoat' figure when the company was forced to undergo an internal reorganisation process. Having to implement heavy cut-backs and unpopular operational changes, she had to deal with the fall-out and their grievances, with very little support. It led to her own resignation, after almost six years in the post. Perversely, this act seemed to stimulate an awareness that personnel support was badly needed. But she was by now at the point of no return, compounded by the fact that the job she had left was soon after divided up in recognition of the reality that it was always too much for one person.

Marie also knew that she needed a break and some head-space, and although it could be seen as a backward step in career terms, she was glad of the opportunity to take a six-month contract to cover maternity leave for Scarlet Theatre, working with Gráinne Byrne again in a supportive environment. Although this was familiar territory, she soon had to deal with troubled times for the company due to the impact of changes with Arts Council funding. But she weathered the storms with the relevant individuals in a mutually effective way.

I was drawn back to the passion that I felt for the arts ... in the commercial sector, I lost the sense of purpose as money was the main objective. It felt like fire-fighting all the time ...

Her appreciation of the differences between the public and private sectors became more acute in that she felt there was the possibility of taking a more holistic approach with small subsidised businesses, especially those led by a strong artistic vision whereas the bigger corporations, whatever their rhetoric, were dominated by the requirement to reduce overheads and make profit.

Marie's return to the subsidised arts sector made her re-think what was important about her career history so far, most notably citing the use of volunteers in a constructive way, working with good professionals and being conscious of the instinctive understanding of self-management. While some of the salutary lessons have taught her to be more cautious, she nevertheless knows that she enjoys recruiting and training people. She thinks being generous with information inevitably breeds a culture of reciprocity and willingness to delegate without fear of crossing professional boundaries.

Marie would like to do more mentoring and shadowing and cites the accountant at Diabolical Liberties as an essential and trusted colleague that instilled respect and admiration. Similarly, she was grateful for the support of Board members in Scarlet Theatre who freely helped her with professional development needs, supplemented by, for instance, Independent Theatre Council short courses.

Those in the arts sector know a lot but it is not always recognised ... especially as there are transferable skills. My advice is don't hold back if you have an arts background as you probably have a good foundation ... it's a fantastic learning ground.



Amanda Roberts

The Hip Hop Happening, July 2004.

Photo: Robert Day

Amanda Roberts is currently Director of Derby Dance Centre, and describes her motivation as being centred on 'artists and people development', informed by her experiences of working in both the public and private sectors. Being 'arts obsessed' from a young age, she has maintained her commitment throughout and learnt where her strengths lie.

I got to know that I was good at facilitating other people's creativity ... and testing out different models to make sure that the management side is equally imaginative.

Amanda's interest in the arts was prompted by her involvement in theatre at school as well as music (in the form of violin and viola lessons). Growing up in rural Wales meant her choices were limited to a point, but nevertheless fulfilling, in that she was able to follow her desire to both indulge in, and study, arts subjects.

The concept of venue management did not enter the frame at this stage. However her degree in theatre introduced her to a range of genres including ritual theatre, mask and physical theatre, underpinned by her music background. She was also spurred on to find out more about her own cultural origins. While she enjoyed participating in plays as an actor, she found she was better at being supportive rather than actually in the productions themselves.

After leaving college, financial imperatives and the need to find work led her to the commercial sector working initially on temporary service jobs, followed by

three years as an office manager for a manufacturing firm. This period established an invaluable knowledge base that helped her to appreciate administrative efficiency, speed, money matters, negotiation skills and promptness, together with customer-care.

Her creative impetus took over again and through the Guardian newspaper arts pages she applied for, and acquired the post of Administrator with *Salongo*: Afrikan and Caribbean Dance and Music Resource in Bristol. Here she was mentored by Diana Warden, chair of the organisation that was principally youth arts focussed. Amanda's remit involved establishing youth groups, initiating partnerships and administrative duties such as cash-flow forecasts. She also undertook the First National Diploma in Arts Management at Arts Training Central, considered an arts management training 'all-rounder'.

After a year at *Salongo* she was encouraged to apply for an Arts Council-funded Fellowship scheme, which targeted those originating from a 'Black and Minority Ethnic' background. Again she was successful and situated with a reputable arts centre - *mac* in Birmingham, where she was Projects Assistant working on programming, education and production.

I enjoyed the freedom to be creative, take responsibility and learn about the venue programming and touring side of the organisation ... it also confirmed to me that I did not want to specialise in one aspect such as arts education but continue in making creative opportunities happen for artists and those involved in producing work for a larger audience.

Amanda's tenure at *mac* allowed her to sharpen her skills as well as develop her network more widely, and paved the way for her to review at the point that she had effectively outgrown the job. Soon after she was attracted by the opportunity to work as Cultural Partnerships Officer at Birmingham City Council (BCC). In terms of a career trajectory this was a conscious move to enable a strategic way to advance her experience. This not only allowed her to expand her professional and artistic goals but ensured she attuned herself more closely to the political context of a larger local authority. Here, she was able to understand funding decisions and partnerships from the point-of-view of a public sector institution, as well as keep her primary aim of liaison with artists to support their creative potential. After initiating and implementing a new arts festival for the city, she again knew that she was ready to move on, and took the chance in applying for the post of Director for Derby Dance Centre. She was offered the job. Still, because it was considered a leap up in managerial status, the idea of professional development support was introduced with an additional expectation that the Board would work with her very pro-actively, but she found that she did not require hands-on intervention at all.

What I came to realise is that I was undervaluing what I had to offer. I was placed in situations that compelled me to be self-reliant, using and trusting my intuition ...

Amanda soon appreciated that she was countering expectations on all levels. This was not just around her own competence and maturity but that her knowledge

base, particularly having been involved in the South West Arts networks and gaining a national perspective with the Fellowship experience, had equipped her well for the challenges she faced. From previous experiences, she thought that both her gender and younger age rather than being considered as 'Black and Minority Ethnic', might create a barrier, especially associated with someone in a Director position, but this has not proved to be the case. In fact she was excited about progressing her arts management experience within a venue that had scope and possibilities, as well as engaging in a new process of organisational development that has positioned the company with an expansive interpretation of dance as an artform. It has also manifested itself in the teamwork ethos that she has engendered at Derby Dance Centre, where there is a culture of honest feedback and possibility to develop within and beyond the confines of a generic post. This approach is supported by a well-respected manager Shona Powell, as the chair of the Board who is herself Director of the Lakeside in Nottingham.

Throughout Amanda's professional journey she considers creative learning, people and project management to have been at the fore, with consideration of:

- *Different styles and team dynamics*
- *Balancing artistic and business concerns*
- *Contact with one project per season to maintain the link with artistic production*
- *Ensuring time management is respected to include essential tasks and staff*

management within 'core' hours, and respect for holiday time

- *Continuing to test models for best practice*
- *Respecting and drawing upon differing cultural practice and experience*

With this in mind, other colleagues and peers such as Ammo Talwar of Punch in Birmingham, Suhail Khan at Manchester City Council, Tony Wills and James Burkmar of the Arts Council in the East Midlands (ACEEM) have been supportive and challenging. Similarly, she cites personnel within West Midlands Arts (now ACEWM), and other funders including local authority officers, contributing to her belief that there is a rich artistic community across the Midlands.

Amanda has made a deliberate attempt to always appreciate rural/urban tensions, in part because of her own roots in Wales but also reflecting her own mixed heritage so as not to see things in 'black' and 'white' terms due to race or any other factor. Her emphasis is more to do with a sense of place and connections about how and where one lives, what is practised, and who works with whom.

She does not see herself as someone who has 'made it' professionally yet acknowledges that she has positively striven to develop her skills, particularly over the last five years. She has been most intent on establishing a framework for artists to allow their vision to come to life and pursue their passions, complemented by the creative management she can offer of helping to bring together a cohesive artistic team. In this case she has

found the rewards highly satisfactory unlike the commercial world she has observed, where the salaries are more often generous, but ultimately do not meet the need for exceptional stimulus or freedom in the same way.

She cites her role models as Diana Warden, as a 'white' woman chairing a 'black' organisation, Dorothy Wilson as Director of *mac* who empowers and enriches her colleagues, as well as her own brother who has focussed on his music and writing over money and career. All these individuals are essentially comfortable with who they are, self-reliant and independent; and in being so, attract others to contemplate a similar journey.

Amanda knows she will continue to heed intuitive pointers, but at the same time is happy to see where events lead. This may include a part-academic route but could be a business-oriented path such as an MA in Business Management or Creative practice; or even a formal Theatre Director's course. However for now she is concentrating on the happy medium of work and life balance that will not lead to 'burn-out'. Because of her capacity to produce and direct, there is the possibility of being freelance at some point but that is for future consideration. For now she is still reflecting on her Fellowship experience which was hugely influential, brought home more recently because of hosting a similar placement at Derby Dance Centre.

In advising others that might follow a comparable path, she considers:

- *Sense of possibility – there is no one route or A-Z steps to get there – take time*
- *Create your own climate for things to happen and find solutions*
- *Being of 'Black'/dual heritage is not a barrier – help others support you and don't expect/wait for it to happen*
- *Recognise that you need others for the different aspects of what you want to do*
- *Seniority is not about status or hierarchy.*



Nicola Thorold

Photo: Jim Four

Nicola Thorold is presently Director of theatre at the national office of the Arts Council. Her job encompasses having a countrywide overview of theatre; the setting up and implementation of national policy as well as being a potent advocate for the sector. Her previous roles, most significantly as Director of the Independent Theatre Council (ITC), gave her a good grounding and paved the way for her move to the larger and more diverse theatre environment that she now represents.

It is important to divide the role from the person which can be challenging at times, but it is still an enjoyable and manageable alignment ...

Nicola was connected with the world of drama from a young age, participating in school plays and being involved with companies such as Unicorn, one of the leading children's theatre organisations. Her interest continued through to university where she was heavily involved with the college theatre society, whilst she read History.

Having tried acting, she found her niche in producing. Combining her inspiration with many useful skills, this creative role satisfied her motivation to generate good theatre. This extended to her being involved in producing a music festival in France over two summer breaks. She was unsure of what direction she should take after graduation and to the surprise of many around her, she went into the business world.

I flirted with the idea of glamorous international jobs, working in the City ... the idea of making money ... I was ambitious and wanted to find out more ...

Nicola went into her new career with some excitement. However after eighteen months she realised that not only was the work-life balance frustrating but that the financial remuneration was not enough of a driving force for her. A salutary lesson was when she witnessed the culture clash of two worlds; the champagne-soaked celebrations of traders seeing the income tax drop for the rich from 60% to 40% while public sector workers such as nurses were forced out on strike for better pay. Nevertheless, on the positive side, this experience did allow her an entry into, and an understanding of, the workings of the commercial sector that she still finds valuable today. It also impresses those who would unknowingly categorise her as an arts professional with little knowledge of commercial practice.

The experience made it clear to her that she was not interested in being in such a highly competitive environment. Yet she was still ambitious. She nearly took a three-month placement on the news programme for ABC which would potentially give her time to consider her next career move but an opportunity to join the Arts Council threw up another avenue. Working in the finance department gave her a means of entering an arena where her commitment to the arts and her aptitude for business could be successfully pooled.

She was working directly with the drama and literature departments focusing on special projects including appraisals of major companies and business development. Thus she gained an insight into the portfolio of these artform disciplines as well as the monitoring of the organisational competency of Arts Council clients.

Her next step was to ITC and a key position in the theatre field and in the arts landscape. As part of this job she was involved in re-structuring the organisation at the same time as the Arts Council was cutting back on project funding which was directly affecting ITC's members.

Apart from having the responsibility as chief executive of an organisation where advocacy was paramount, her belief in what she was working for and why became clearer. The spectrum of her work embraced everything from familiarising herself with touring and non-institutional organisations to investment in more experimental theatre practice. It also included training and development programmes. Nicola herself took part in the spirit of professional development - for example, taking part in an action learning set that balanced the support she received from ITC board members.

She has also been a coach to others and has herself had informal mentoring from people such as Grahame Morris and Ruth McKenzie, key arts professionals and individuals who have been invaluable - giving constructive advice, understanding the issues and being fully conversant with the territory. At the same time, she recognised the standards she regarded as important. These included being properly prepared, good time-keeping, punctuality and delivering effectively.

As her career progressed, she was informed by her own life-changes including the birth of her children. She ensured her work-life balance was kept in check, and was clear that time at home was very important. Having a partner with a sense of perspective about when it was the right moment to move on from one job to the next also helped her judgment.

She knew by this stage that she valued financial security and was not interested in the idea of a freelance life. More significantly she was aware she was motivated by the people who she worked with and enthused by intelligent individuals who made it possible to have a mutually beneficial relationship while striving for professional excellence. This was the case at ITC where she worked closely with the General Manager.

Her expanding horizons and increasing profile within the field led her to her current post. In taking the job, she was aware that the theatre world could not continue as it was, and necessary shifts would lead to tough decisions and periods of upheaval for many.

Working alongside the Arts Council senior team of Gerry Robinson, Peter Hewitt and Kim Evans has heightened her appreciation of the possibilities of the arts to benefit social and political agendas without losing integrity. She, in collaboration with them, was fully engaged with one of the most significant and rewarding achievements of the Arts Council in recent times: The Theatre Review (2000/01). It resulted in much-needed investment and distribution of resources for theatre across the country. Personally it was a significant professional development opportunity as a new experience in a politically charged climate.

I learned to develop a thick skin ... it was a 'growing up' period ... having to face confrontation rather than run away from it ... knowing the decisions may be unpopular ... and not wanting everyone to be your best friend ...

Apart from refining her advocacy skills even further, the work posed personal challenges. These included self-image and building interpersonal skills; establishing relationships with weighty national institutions like the Royal Shakespeare Company or the National Theatre. She was often dealing with men in powerful positions and with chairs of important cultural organisations. She developed confidence in her own instincts; her ability to focus on key issues and to establish mutually beneficial relationships. She became more skilful in assessing the motivations of others and mindful of those who were being genuinely supportive without ulterior motives.

I had to think about how I presented myself ... I always looked younger than I was ... would I be taken seriously? How can I make an impact fast enough? I made sure of talking early on in meetings ...

Whilst undoubtedly demanding, the forward-looking agenda for these developments on a large scale with major players allowed Nicola to be on top of the detail, politically astute and strategic, working alongside the right people to realise the scale of the task in hand.

In this context she considers the Arts Council a good place to learn and foster self-motivation alongside team-working and delegating as needed.

Developing networks is still a challenge due to the nature of the job; inevitably, it can be a lonely position at times. While she enjoys good line management and there are friendships to be made internally and externally, her professional veil cannot ever be left behind. Her own management style means she prioritises supporting her own departmental staff, and she sees it as part of her job to encourage them to grow out of their positions although this is always countered by the fear of losing them!

For those following after her, she would recommend:

- *Know why you are doing it*
- *Behave with integrity and learn from mistakes*
- *Manage time well and know how to prioritise*
- *Know how to balance the big issues without losing the detail and vice versa*
- *Know what you are trying to achieve in your position*
- *Develop the self-confidence to make the right choices*

Her own role models are predominantly women with gravitas, her own mother being a woman who is decisive and independent-minded alongside colleagues.

Nicola does not see her current role as a pinnacle in her career and has no end point in sight. She is

unambiguous in her drive to make things happen that change people's lives. Seeing good theatre, or indeed any art, well done is still a primary stimulus. She is pleased to be acknowledged or recognised if she has had a significant part to play in bringing something to fruition - however small or big - that makes a difference.

She is also manifestly a Londoner. This is a culturally important factor for her, particularly as London profits from diversity in its widest sense, and as a city necessarily looks beyond a narrow mono-cultural perspective. She is rooted in London, and thrives as part of large international metropolis with a vibrant cultural life alongside other major Western capitals such as Paris or New York.

Reflections on professional development for managing in arts and culture

Refining our knowledge of the ways we organise and manage are essential foundations for professional development. Throughout this publication the focus has been on the people and their professional journeys. Now we turn our attention to implications arising from these stories - for Collected Wisdom, All Ways Learning and our field in general. To appreciate and replicate good management requires further examination of how people and organisations fit together as well as the structures and styles of our 'organisations'. The stories are rich in information on the matter as the individuals have reflected on their experiences.

As a starting point consider the observation made by Summerton & Kay in 1997:

"It might be useful to think of arts organisations as changing coalitions of people who may be paid or unpaid, in the conventional senses. These people vary in their levels of commitment and involvement, and have a multiplicity of personal goals or motives. ... They are less likely to leave the responsibility of management in the hands of one designated individual."

It is clear that many of these stories reinforce the notion that those who manage rarely have that as a single task. Rather, multi-tasking is endemic, and it is common for people to undertake various roles simultaneously. There is considerable evidence of management with a light but effective touch.

The stories also alert us to the multiplicity of structures in the field, from the fairly conventionally hierarchical

and bureaucratic to the virtual or temporary as well as organisations which expand and contract and of course the preponderance of the relatively small-scale.

Perhaps not as evident is the substantial element of unpaid involvement throughout many organisations. The range of relationships which the unpaid can have with an organisation can cause what Summerton & Kay called 'structural ambiguity'. Conventional management models and processes often do not serve all these features well, nor are they as neutral or value free as often assumed. Nor do these conventional theories adequately encompass those who work as freelancers supplying certain services or expertise.

Form should follow function when it comes to organisational design, and often does in the very early days of groups and organisations before outside influences and the pressure to conform come into play. To remain congruent with the art product and values, means we should be open to understanding and respecting *new* ways of organising, new structures and new labels.

The issues of legal structure and charitable status are ripe for review. There is a growing feeling that the current structures are restrictive and the time and energy absorbed in making them work are not justified. More planned opportunities to exchange stories regarding organisations' development will be a feature of future Collected Wisdom and other All Ways Learning projects.

If we look at just the world of the organisations receiving public money, there are some particular concerns. Given the heterogeneity of art forms, size and style of

organisations which render generalisation nigh impossible it is surprising that the majority have adopted the legal structure of Company Limited by Guarantee with most of them also having charitable status. Undoubtedly funders and advisers can influence these decisions. While elements of the company structure are very flexible and can accommodate many scales of operation, it is doubtful that this one solution fits all.

Do we really expect that all small emerging arts organisations will grow up to be like and structure themselves as the existing older, larger organisations (although there is much evidence to the contrary)? We do not have the same expectations of the art. Here we prize innovation. Should not, then, the organisational structure that supports the innovative practice be equally imaginative?

Entrepreneurship, and two of its cousins, social and cultural entrepreneurship, provide interesting models worth considering. One of two new legal structures being developed, the *Community Interest Company* offers new possibilities. This will call into question the principle strongly held by some that public investment in arts organisations is best protected where the members of the governing body do not earn a living from the organisation.

There is some anxiety that these boards, while having the ultimate responsibility for the company, and often the goodwill to act conscientiously, are not best placed for the role. There is the danger that they can do little more than serve a ritualistic function, providing a reason for management teams to produce reports and review their progress. Where the company is artist-led,

and in some cases is clearly accepted as a vehicle for that artist's talents, the situation is more complex. Often the board does not want to or feel able to challenge artistic matters, giving a strange dislocation to the governance of these companies.

In the field in general there is considerable evidence regarding the problematic nature of operating Companies Limited by Guarantee, especially those with charitable status. It is a credit to those managing that this cumbersome structure works as well as it does in many organisations. In fact they are a talented and intelligent lot, who do indeed have a great deal of expertise on these issues.

There are serious matters for enquiry, examination and debate here which go far beyond the usual fare of up-skilling those who manage in the arts.

The idea that arts and culture inhabit a 'sector' of their own or clearly belong to a public, non-profit or commercial sector possibly skews understanding. Yet there are many examples of people and their organisations operating, often simultaneously, with diverse orientations - a foot in the public or non-profit, and another in profit-oriented activity. As Hutchins et al wrote in 2001,

"Much enterprise grows in between the voluntary/not-for-profit and the commercial sectors, characterised by mixed motives of self and mutual help, sustainability, independence, recognition ... priorities are usually headed by the urge to continue to develop artistic and cultural activity."

Patterns of work are kaleidoscopic and individuals are often chameleon-like, being simultaneously self-employed, employed and owner-managers of micro enterprises.

Many valuable peer group dialogues for arts managers exist within art form or arts practice groupings, such as Arts Marketing Association, APD, Association of British Orchestras, Crafts Council, Dance UK, engage, Foundation for Community Dance, Independent Theatre Council, Sound Sense, and the Theatrical Management Association. These organisations are a great strength in the arts, and their work to disseminate good practice, exchange ideas, and provide professional development is often exemplary. However, the lack of an equally strong network of discussions between managers that straddles the art form divides means that often learning remains within one community and is not shared by others. Arts Professional in its position as the quality magazine for arts and cultural managers goes some way to cut across these divisions. Collected Wisdom plays a role in making connections between the different worlds, bringing managers together in unusual combinations to have thoughtful conversations about their practice.

Other perceived divides are between theory and practice, often with the former identified with the Higher Education world and the latter the domain of those who manage in 'the real world'. Collected Wisdom belongs to both these worlds, and makes links between theory (implicit and explicit) and practice - closing the gap between those primarily interested in one or the other. It encourages people to recognise that there can be different perceptions, and we all are able to see things at a number of levels.

A basic tenet of All Ways Learning is that, for people absorbed in the busyness of managing, it pays to stop sometimes and think about what they do, to talk about it with others, and to consider others' views, either from those in similar settings, or perhaps management writers who walk in other worlds but may have perceptions that are relevant to ours. Giep Hagoort (2003) discusses in great detail where and how he thinks the arts and cultural field can draw on the ideas from the corporate world of management. The writings of people such as Charles Handy, Henry Mintzberg and Peter Drucker are also worth looking at.

What other implications are there for professional development? It needs to be seen as valuable and important to both individuals and organisations. In this people-intensive field building and maintaining relationships is essential, highlighting the importance of soft management skills. To foster and support a dynamic arts and cultural scene requires creative, imaginative management. Those practicing this style of management need to be nurtured and encouraged to be open to learning from all quarters.

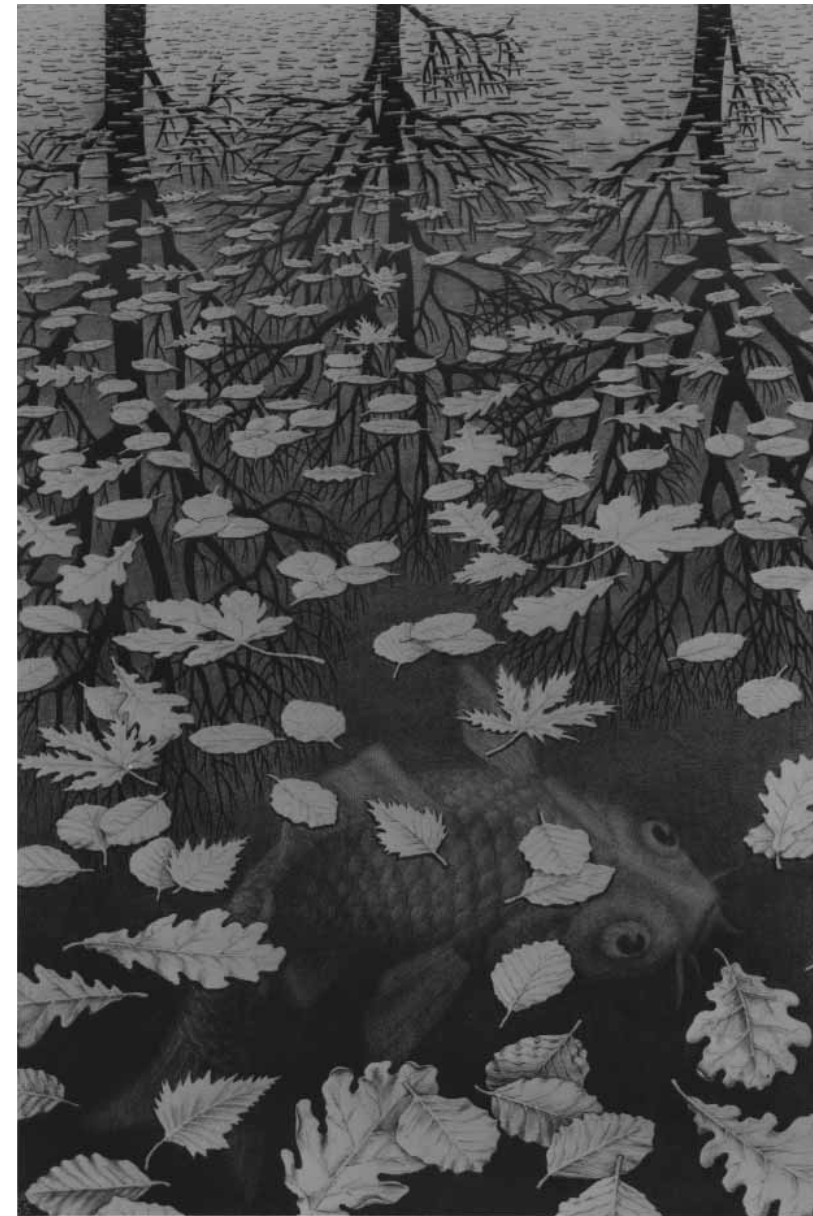
In our field huge value is, quite rightly, placed on informal (or non-formal) learning such as learning through experience, and by the example of others, or at work. Many people in this book attest to that and to the equally important, powerful knowledge gained from conversations with colleagues, from contact with peers, and from inspiring individuals. All Ways Learning promotes and also creates events and other opportunities at which people come together to do all these.

At the same time, many experienced managers, like the eleven who are profiled in this publication, already take the time to recycle their knowledge for the benefit of others. This recycling takes many forms including mentoring, writing articles, contributing to research, speaking at conferences, accepting work placements, answering questionnaires, teaching on courses, and taking part in informal learning events. Most of these activities stimulate reflection on practice, which in itself provides valuable learning. These are important aspects of quality professional development.

The Collected Wisdom research programmes and resulting publications will continue to surface and disseminate interesting management practices including new organisational models, and examples of powerful learning experiences. We would be very pleased if, in turn, we knew that reading the publications encouraged others to invest in their own professional development and to recycle their expertise for the benefit of the world of arts and cultural management.

As the Escher image opposite indicates, there is great joy in stopping to look closely at something that has many layers within it and hidden depths that will be revealed. Sometimes, perhaps, we need to be reminded that managing is about thinking and doing, and give ourselves opportunities to pause – growing the wisdom within. Reflection, frequently mentioned by the individuals in this book, is one of the most powerful competencies at our disposal.

Janet Summerton & Madeline Hutchins
February 2005



M.C. Escher's "Three Worlds"
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notes on contributors

Madeline Hutchins has worked in arts management since 1979, initially in small-scale theatre, and was Director of the Independent Theatre Council. She is now a freelance trainer, consultant and facilitator, specialising in learning and the legal, organisational and people aspects of arts management. She is a core tutor on the MA and Certificate programmes in Arts and Cultural Management at Sussex University, and a visiting lecturer at other Universities and Colleges. She has a Masters Degree in Management Development, and a particular interest in building an infrastructure to support arts managers' learning, hence her involvement as a Board member of All Ways Learning, the lead partner of Knowledge Services for Arts Management, and running SAM's Books, the specialist books service for arts management. Madeline is on the Board of Theatre Exchange. Current research includes new models for governance and organisational design, mapping arts management, and the use of the arts in learning and management.

Anouk Perinpanayagam is currently refining her own 'kaleidoscopic' career as well as undertaking a part-time MA in English Literature at the University of Warwick. Her freelance activities include her developing profile as a poet on the publishing route; working with a range of arts organisations such as *All Ways Learning*, *Black Country Touring*, *Arts & Media Training*, *The Curve Foundation (Scotland)* and *Arts Council England* national and regional offices on a variety of projects ranging from *The Role of Creative Producer* to *Medical Humanities*. She also mentors and coaches select individuals in the arts field such as those working in audience development, programming and cultural partnerships. Previous to this, she was Performing Arts Officer at West Midlands Arts; Producer and freelance manager for theatre and dance companies including *The Right Size*; *Scarlet Theatre*, *Claire Russ Ensemble* and *Kokuma Dance Theatre*, before which she was Co-Director of *Pegasus Theatre*, Oxford. She presently sits on the Board of *Birmingham Repertory Theatre* and *Foursight Theatre* and is a *Dance & Drama Advisor* to the *British Council* and *Arts Council England*.

Janet Summerton is also re-ordering her work & life pattern. The main thread of her professional interest remains how people manage and organise in this field. She stepped down from leading the Arts & Cultural Management programmes (after 10 years) at University of Sussex in 2004 and now concentrates on research, writing, mentoring, consultancy with organisations, groups and individuals. She has published a number of papers, edited *The Business of Being an Artist*, with Eric Moody, wrote *Through the Maze; A Guide to Planning* with Sue Kay and *Briefing Papers: Notes for Arts Organisations on Conducting Research* with Mick Taylor. As well as being chair of All Ways Learning she has taken the lead, with Madeline Hutchins, to shape their research activities, firmly believing in the value of encouraging the concept of reflective practitioner. These collaborations have been significant professional development experiences for her. She conducted two studies of arts practitioners in the South East. The most recent, *Dimensions of Practice*, is now available on the Arts Council web site. Janet has been chair and on the board of a number of other organisations and the Brighton & Hove Art Commission. She has ambitions to re-develop her early interest in textiles and complete a book on Arts & Cultural Management.

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I look Anouk Mishti

I look on W.W.W. PERINPANAYAGAM and find my given name three times,
now three uncles and an aunty
and still famous a VIP,
my 1890 paternal grandfather;
then my parents and my brother's
and two hundred more of the antique hierarchy,
you know it's a native joke
as we're all related somehow
hailing from 'Little England',
an island race now
scattered in the circular
matter of isolation
and I don't know half of them
as I search through – many cut dead,
caught in the cross-fires of integrity
demanding to be recognised
with the grandfather on the internet,
the Christianised and faithful gent
baptized as an Englishman
who Tamilised his name right back again,
while the habitual jokes wore thin,
they may be called back to some 21st century
tiger-torn idiom.

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