

**Meet Me at the Blue Box
Community Workshops - Stage 1
Information for evaluation**

Workshop Aims:

- Engage with communities who will naturally spread the word about the Turner Prize 2017.
- Increase participants knowledge of the Turner Prize and contemporary Art.
- Encourage conversation and debate on the topic of the Turner Prize and Contemporary art.

Workshops

Hack & Host artists held a series of workshops with four community groups across the city. The workshops are based around each person's experience of contemporary art and explored themes of communication and sharing opinions.

Communities:

The community groups were selected because they will naturally spread the word about the Turner Prize to communities who may not be engaged in the arts. They are of mixed backgrounds, knowledge and ability. We designed a series of activities aimed at each group.

HSAD

Fine art students from Hull school of art and design. A mix of students from the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year of the fine art BA. Art students are the next generation of artists in the city.

Library staff

A mix of public facing library staff including librarians, cafe staff, and the central library janitor.

The rotary club

Retired business people who are all members of the local rotary club. They have a mixture of personal interests and each year they run the Young Artist of the Year award with local schools and Central Library. They bring in artists to work on this project and are keen to learn more about the arts and act as ambassadors.

HMP Everthorpe and Wolds

Inmates, wardens and educators based at HMP Everthorpe and Wolds came together to experience the Turner Prize at the prison. They had a shared experience of the Turner Prize which we created to them and will write their responses having not actually seen the exhibition.

Workshop Activities

The 1st workshop included a tour of the Turner Prize followed by an informal conversation in either the Ferens cafe or another local cafe.

For the first workshop we developed a set of questions which we altered for each community group (See attached documents HSAD and Libraries). These questions acted as prompts but there was no obligation to answer all of them.

Participants were encouraged to share images and thoughts on social media using the hashtag Meetmeatthebluebox. These have since been collected and some used in the publication.

At HMP Humber, we had to overcome difficult barriers when delivering the Turner Prize to a community which has been nearly completely isolated from engaging with the outside world - especially external city of culture events during 2017. Not being able to visit the Turner Prize and see the exhibition, however, is no reason as to not being able to engage with it in some format. During our visit, we presented an open discussion detailing the artists and a selection of their individual pieces shown in the exhibition. We focused on the processes, and themes behind a variety of the pieces - and discussed how the artists' identities related to and informed some of the work. The aim of this conversation was to break down any barriers to communication amongst the participants as well as to develop their knowledge base of art, and this particular exhibition. Here, we touched on each artist however mainly focused on Hurvin Anderson and Rosalind Nashashibi.

Following this, we wanted to engage the participants on a different level and worked to foster a practical learning environment - we held three activity workshops which small groups rotated between. These were a printmaking workshop, a 'Himid' style newspaper painting activity, and a creative writing exercise. During the printmaking workshop, participants were invited to engage further with the processes behind Andrea Buttners work - getting to experience and understand the practicalities and aesthetics behind mono printing. The second workshop asked the residents and staff to read prison specific newspapers and paint onto them, highlighting, accentuating and 'deleting' certain articles and editorial decisions that they could begin to unpick between the headlines. The final creative writing workshop developed responses from everybody, focusing on reducing opinions and thoughts to 140 characters to highlight and overcome the barriers to social media that the residents are all familiar with.

One technique used when hitting stumbling blocks with creative writing is to write a stream of consciousness or a list of questions related to the subject. The purpose isn't to stop and answer them, or even think about answering them, but simply get them down on paper, whatever comes to mind. One question will often spark another and you can soon fill a page with your own interrogations on the subject. You can then return to them later, to answer the most pressing or interesting, using these as an interesting way in to your subject. One of the art

student participants used this method but left them unanswered, on the subject of “edgy”, instead inviting the reader to join the conversation.

For the rotary club we wanted to deliver the workshop in a way that meant it could be repeated with no assistance. The rotary club were a really mixed group in that some of them attend arts events regularly and some never attend at all. We wanted to encourage the group to go back to the Ferens and other creative activities in the future so we created a workshop that could be repeated with no equipment or artists present. We used copies of the Ferens echo, Ferens comments and crayons found at the gallery. Each participant was asked to complete one comment card which summed up their visit.

Workshop outcomes - Attendance figures

Community	Attendance	Artists
HSAD	Workshop 1 - 12 Workshop 2 - 8	Rachel Jamie Luke
Library Staff	Workshop 1 - 4 Workshop 2 - 3 Workshop 3 - 3	Rachel Jamie
HMP Humber	Workshop 1 - 13 Workshop 2 - 13	Rachel Luke Jamie Lydia
The Rotart Club	Workshop 1 - 8 Workshop 2 - 8	Rachel Jamie Luke
	TOTAL PARTICIPANTS - 37	

Community Groups

We encountered problems recruiting community groups. We had expected to work with 5 different communities which were initially Librarians, art students, Hairdressers, bar tenders and taxi drivers. We had planned to connect with 25 participants on the project at this stage of the project - 5 from each group.

We had mixed success recruiting the different communities and used a range of methods for making contact. Firstly we prepared a document(attached) and emailed this out to taxi firms, hairdressers, HSAD, bars, and the library. HSAD and hull central library responded immediately however we received no responses from other communities.

We recruited a mixed group of 2 hairdressers and a bar tender by visiting bars and hairdressers other venues. This was very time consuming but appeared to have more positive results. None of the participants attended their workshop so we focused on the other groups instead. Despite having one less group we still met our target of 25 workshop participants.

Workshops

Workshops were initially going to be in 2 stages, the first being a tour and the second workshop with a writer. The librarians felt they needed a third workshop so we scheduled one for them. HMP Humber workshops were condensed into one day and required a third tutor. The mixed community of hairdressers etc did not attend their workshop. We were able to make these changes and stay within the workshops budget.

Access

Before we began the workshops we were aware of a number of our participants having additional needs and we worked to ensure that we met all of the access requirements of our groups. Though this was mostly successful and we received no complaints we did encounter some problems during the workshops.

One participant is a wheelchair user and though the Ferens has automatic doors at the entrance its does not have them between the galleries which meant the participant needed assistance throughout the exhibition. Though it was easy for us to provide this assistance to her it did mean that she was committed to being with other members of the group at all times which is not ideal. She was also unable to see most of Lubaina Himids pottery as the plinths were too high and she could not see the back two rows or see the first row close up, this was before iPads displaying images of the pottery were available. She experienced the same issues with the height of the Guardian newspaper collages. This impacted her view of Lubaina artwork as she did not experience the full exhibition. It was also difficult for her to get in and out of the cinema rooms due to the curtain.

We discussed the barriers faced by this participant with her and she understood that some were caused by curatorial decisions but commented that for an artist who is highlighting problems faced by one community it is ironic that she created barriers for another.

One workshop had 12 participants so we held our conversation in a local cafe as space is limited at the Ferens and they do not allow reservations. Unfortunately the cafe we preselected had roadworks nearby which was upsetting to one member of the group who has a sensory impairment. In future we will ensure we select more appropriate locations and this is something we need to consider when scheduling the tour of the box.

One participant is unable to read but had not reported this to us prior to the workshop. Audio was not available on the day we attended so we assigned a member of Hack and Host to this participant to read the Andrea Büttner display to him. This experience appeared to put him off her exhibition and he expressed that he felt audio should be available every day as he may want to go back when he happens to be in the area rather than pre-booking an audio tour.

Feedback

All of the groups have been invited to the Turner Return and will be invited to the box tour. We do have some initial feedback about the workshops and we expect more as the project progresses.

HMP Humber

We actually presumed that we had missed a Golden opportunity to get involved with the Turner Prize as everything seemed out of reach.

However with your involvement in this you have given us all the second chance to contribute in ways that we failed to broker ourselves.

I would like to personally thank you for the Brilliant Turner prize workshops with Prison and learner involvement.

- Graeme Brooks - Head of Art, HMP Humber

The turner prize workshop went really well on Tuesday, with some amazing feedback too. I wasn't surprised by how well engaged all of the lads were - for the main part they were leading the group conversations, prompting and challenging the staff attendees and even putting the Hack & Hosters on the spot.

What was probably more of a pleasant surprise was how well it was received by the staff too, who after a rocky start seemed to get really involved and developed some strong conversations with the lads - most importantly they enjoyed themselves and asked for more in the future.

We all know that our own working ethos and attitude towards the lads, the relationships that we

build and develop, are instrumental to destigmatising the residents and creating an accessible environment for learning to take place. On Tuesday, the few staff attendees became yet further evidence of this.

- Luke Beech - Tutor, HMP Humber

Just want to say 'thank you' for yesterday's workshop. Really enjoyed it and feel I have come away with a bit more artistic knowledge

- Jaquie - Interventions officer

The rotary club

"i volunteer for city of culture and Ive been doing shifts at the Ferens for the turner prize. I feel like this has helped me learn more about the exhibition and i'll be able to talk to people about the work more confidently in the future"

The Library

"I have been looking for a new interest, something that will stop me always just thinking about work, work, work. I think I have found it now. I didn't expect to enjoy it this much". - Janet Davies