
Animating museums

Provided is a list of themes for successful collaboration and examples of where this has taken place in galleries and museums UK-wide. The themes were gathered in the course of the scoping research for animating museums and are not aimed at being comprehensive but were circulated to symposia participants prior to events.

You may find them a useful starting point to discovering what creative path your Talking Objects project may take.

1. **Opening up** – moving people through new spaces, in new ways – Darwin Centre, Natural History Museum; Blythe House/ Concise Dictionary of Dress, V&A; outdoor installations, Kedleston Hall, National Trust; Punchdrunk (in other buildings not museums).
2. **Creating extraordinary effects** in and animating existing spaces - embellishing and transforming – Enchanted Palace: Kensington Palace, Historic Royal Palaces with Wildworks; A Dark Day in Paradise: Brighton Royal Pavilion with Clare Twomey; residency at Tate Britain with English National Ballet.
3. **Stimulating people's curiosity** – enabling them to take imaginative leaps – Tower of London; Mont Orgeuil and The Maritime Museum, Jersey Heritage; Late at Tate: Will Dutta – New Music Plus.
4. **Creating new 'languages'** – emotional, sensory, immersive, tactile, fluid, changing. All of these are a new way in for audiences with a variety of learning styles who are less able to read objects – Jason Singh and breakdancers at V&A.
5. **Bringing stories to life**, connecting past and present – Fashion Monkey, Potsdam; Metamorphosis and Titian 2012 – Artists, Royal Ballet with National Gallery; Coney and Wildworks at Historic Royal Palaces; Foundling Museum.
6. **Saying the unsayable, thinking the impossible**: providing external perspective/voice; breaking the rules, unsettling and challenging assumptions and opening up new possibilities, freeing things up. 'The intellectual tussle – developing intellectual culture of museums'. Grayson Perry: The Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman at the British Museum; the Manchester Hermit; Fred Wilson – Mining the Museum and others.
7. **Breathing new life into collections**, new perspectives, changing cultures and behaviours in relation to collections; creating research opportunities for artists – Jason Singh, sound residency at the V&A; Uninvited Guests, theatre company interpreting John Martin at Tate; Carol Ann Duffy, working with Cambridge University Museums; poetry

and writing workshops for young people at the Holburne Museum; Metamorphosis poetry programme at National Gallery.

- 8. Inspiring artists and creativity** – many, many examples.
- 9. Juxtaposing different interpretations** – Banqueting House Project (planned for 2013), Historic Royal Palaces; Car crime – Tyne & Wear Museums.
- 10. Connecting at an emotional and personal level** – Clare Twomey, A Dark Day in Paradise, Brighton Royal Pavilion and museummaker; Susie Macmurray, Promenade, Kedleston Hall and museummaker; Pacitti Company, A People's Peculiar, Museum of East Anglian Life. People *are* the performers, and performance – Punchdrunk; Common Dance, Rosemary Lee at Richmond.
- 11. Making/bridging cultural connections** between communities and museums – Material Response, Luton Museum of Transport, National College of the Arts and young people.
- 12. Developing new skills** and a new organisational culture – developing a programme to create a sense of event and excitement, new job roles, new ways of working internally, challenging practice and behaviour, risk taking on both sides – Sarah Punshon Natural History Museum; Historic Royal Palaces.
- 13. Writers, choreographers, performers, producers and artists at a senior level (staff and trustees)** e.g. senior staff, consultants, trustees – bringing new perspectives, access to funding and networks – Antony Gormley – British Museum; Martha Fleming – Natural History Museum.
- 14. Pooling resources and cultivating support** (in times of austerity): making more through creative collaboration: 2+2=5.