



Welcome to this month's NMDC newsletter which contains an update on our activities and the latest news from the museum sector in the UK and beyond. www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

NMDC News

Value of Partnership Collaborative Projects Between Regional and National Museums

MLA and NMDC have jointly commissioned Kingshurst Consulting Group, Anne Murch & Associates and Gaby Porter & Associates to review current partnerships between the United Kingdom's regional and national museums.

Partnership activity across the UK's museums is varied and complex, encompassing the loan of single objects, exhibition projects and a range of longer-term programmes. There is also a wealth of information about this activity, whether in published reports – NMDC's National Dimensions published in 2004, for example, or the forthcoming Flourishing Partnerships report by KPMG for Renaissance West Midlands and the Regional Agency – and in the evaluation work carried out by individual museums on their own projects. The current commission will take forward discussions on the need for a more strategic approach to partnership working, and explore the practical resource and capacity implications which should be addressed in order to achieve this.

The study will begin with a series of focused and reflective consultations, leading to an interim report in early July and final recommendations in late summer 2006. For further information, contact Alison Hems at MLA alison.hems@mmla.gov.uk or Emily Candler at NMDC. ecandler@iwm.org.uk www.mla.gov.uk/webdav/harmonise?Page/@id=90

Members News

British Library Consultation on Content Strategy

The British Library has published its content strategy for consultation, as part of the process to determine its purchasing priorities for the future. The strategy is designed to respond to the increasing volume and changing nature of information produced and consumed around the world and relates mainly to international material that the Library collects, which is in addition to the UK material it receives via legal deposit.

Key changes proposed in the strategy include:

- Overseas collecting to take greater account of changing patterns of research, with more priority given to China, India, Anglophone Africa and Latin America;
- Focus on areas of the social sciences, including international law, politics, economics and social policy;
- Focus on non-text materials such as primary research data and audio-visual collections;
- A shift to electronic formats in some areas – such as conference proceedings – to respond to moves to online-only distribution;
- Supplementing existing manuscripts and archives with a greater focus on e-manuscripts

The consultation closes on 21 July 2006. Feedback will be analysed and a summary will be available at the end of the year. The content strategy will then be revised and rolled out in 2007.

To read the strategy in full visit: www.bl.uk/about/strategic/contentstrat.html
www.bl.uk/news/2006/pressrelease20060524a.html

Work to Start on New Museum of Liverpool

The Northwest Regional Development Agency has announced a grant of £32.7 million for the new Museum of Liverpool. Building work on the landmark Museum, designed by 3XN architects, will start in the autumn and is due to complete in 2008.

The Museum of Liverpool, with a budget of £65m, will provide 5,000 square metres of flexible exhibition space, which will allow more of the collections to be displayed. The display will focus on four main themes: Port City, Global City, My Liverpool and Expressive City.

£7.5 million from the European Regional Development Fund has been reserved for the project and will be subject to a full appraisal in the coming months. The remaining funding will come from fundraising and the Museum is planning to reapply to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding to fit out the museum. Exhibition fit-out is due to be completed by 2009/10.

www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

20th Century Naval History to go On-line

The Royal Naval Museum in Portsmouth has received funding of £664,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop an on-line museum of the Royal Navy in the Twentieth Century. The new website - *Sea Your History: the digital resource for the Twentieth Century Navy* will digitise 15,000 items from the collections of the Royal Naval Museum and the other Museums of the Royal Navy. These will include photographs, extracts from letters and diaries, a wide range of artefacts and recordings of interviews with Naval veterans of all ages and conflicts.

The three year project will also develop online learning packages exploring issues such as 'The Navy's People' and 'Conflict and Change', record 90 new oral history interviews and run education projects with local schools and community groups.

www.royalnavalmuseum.org/SeaYourHistory.htm

National Maritime Museum Voted Large Visitor Attraction of the Year

The National Maritime Museum has won the award for Large Visitor Attraction of the Year at the tourism industry's annual Enjoy England Awards for Excellence. The award was presented following the success of the 'Nelson & Napoleon' exhibition and the Museum's involvement with SeaBritain 2005. The judges praised Museum staff and the range of activities available for children.

www.nmm.ac.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.20915

Civic Trust Award for Royal Air Force Museum

The Royal Air Force Museum has been awarded the Civic Trust Award, for "projects that make an outstanding contribution to the quality and appearance of the environment" for its Milestones of Flight exhibition hall, which exhibits historic aircraft from the first hundred years of aviation history.

The judges admired the 'thoughtfully designed museum' 'which provides a simple setting fit for purpose' and the 'exemplary' lighting.

www.rafmuseum.org www.civictrust.org.uk/cta%202006/awardpages/awardraf.htm

Designation Challenge Fund Awards

Grants totalling £3 million are being made to museums across England by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to ensure that outstanding collections can be appreciated by as many people as possible. Thirty-four projects have received funding from the Designation Challenge Fund, through MLA's Renaissance programme. Two NMDC member institutions have been awarded grants under the scheme:

The *Museum of London* will use a grant of £100,000 to create a new website for its internationally important Roman collections.

Sir John Soane's Museum will spend a grant of £99,135 on the *A Passion for Building* project. Two special exhibitions relating ordinary people to architecture and building will draw on museum, library and archive material and new research from the Museum. The exhibitions, which will tour to three venues across England, will be supported by educational events and a DVD.

A full list of the DCF Opening up Collections Projects is available on the MLA website at:
[www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//D/DCF Opening Up Collections project summaries 9429.doc](http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//D/DCF%20Opening%20Up%20Collections%20project%20summaries%209429.doc)

New Chairman for British Museum Board of Trustees

The Trustees of the British Museum have elected Niall FitzGerald KBE, Chairman of Reuters PLC, as the new Chairman of the Board of Trustees. He will take over from Sir John Boyd on 3 July 2006.

Niall FitzGerald is an Irish citizen and is the first non-British Chairman of the Museum. He became the Chairman of Reuters in 2004 after more than thirty years with Unilever, where he was Chairman and CEO of the company from 1996.

Mr FitzGerald is Chairman of the Nelson Mandela Legacy Trust (UK) and co-chairs the Investment Climate Facility (ICF) for Africa. He is a member of the Foundation Board of the World Economic Forum and a member of the President of South Africa's International Advisory Council.

www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk

Current Issues

Government to Make *ex gratia* Payment for Old Master Drawings Stolen by Nazis

The Government has accepted the recommendation of the independent Spoliation Advisory Panel to make an *ex gratia* payment of £175,000 to the heirs of Dr Arthur Feldmann in compensation for four drawings that were seized by the Nazis in 1939. The drawings were acquired by the British Museum, which was not aware of their history.

The drawings in question are:

The Holy Family by Niccolo dell'Abbate;

An Allegory on Poetic Inspiration with Mercury and Apollo by Nicholas Blakey;

Virgin and Infant Christ, adored by St Elizabeth and the Infant St John by Martin Johann Schmidt;

St Dorothy with the Christ Child by School of Martin Schongauer.

The claim to the Panel was supported by a joint submission on behalf of the claimants and the British Museum proposing that the claimants should be compensated for the full value of the drawings, and that the drawings should remain in the British Museum.

The Panel, which was established in February 2000 to help resolve claims on art looted during the Nazi era, concluded that there was firm evidence showing that the drawings were seized from Dr Feldmann's home by the Gestapo in March 1939. Three of the drawings were acquired by the British Museum at auction in 1946, and the fourth in 1949 as part of a bequest.

The claim was originally presented to the Panel in May 2002 but withdrawn following a High Court decision that the British Museum was unable to return the drawings, even though it felt morally obliged to do so, because Section 3 of the British Museum Act 1963 requires the Trustees not to dispose of objects vested in them as part of their collections.

The Panel's report findings are available at: www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/default.htm

Shortlist for Gulbenkian Prize for Museums and Galleries

The shortlist for the £100,000 Gulbenkian Prize has been announced. The shortlisted museums are:

Brunel's SS Great Britain, Bristol – The ship, which brings the Victorian maritime world to life, was towed from the Falkland Islands and preserved in an £11.3 million project. SS Great Britain now rests on a giant dehumidification system beneath a glass 'sea'.

The Collection: Art & Archaeology in Lincolnshire, Lincoln – This new £12.5 million museum displays fine art and artefacts from Roman, Viking and Medieval eras. The Collection was created after local residents lobbied councillors to build a new museum to house the archaeological objects.

The Hunterian Museum, London – The permanent galleries of this important medical collection have undergone a £3.1 million renewal. The museum houses the collection of the 18th century pioneer of scientific surgery, John Hunter and spans 200 years of medicine, natural history and the arts.

Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield – The new £2.75 million, 600m² Underground Gallery extends the scope and range of media of works of art that can be displayed at Yorkshire Sculpture Park and has been sensitively incorporated into the historic landscape.

The winner will be announced on Thursday 25 May 2006. www.thegulbenkianprize.org.uk

Creative Commons Events

Creative Commons is a new way of making digital resources available to the public using online licences. Recently launched in the UK, it has the potential to enable museums, libraries and archives to protect their intellectual property rights, whilst increasing public access to collections. Two MDA events, in London and Edinburgh, offer an opportunity to explore Creative Commons:

15 May 2006 at the Women's Library, Aldgate, London

5 June 2006 at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh

For further information and to book visit: www.mda.org.uk/ccevent.htm

Dame Sue Street to Retire

DCMS Permanent Secretary Dame Sue Street is to retire in September 2006, following nearly five years at the DCMS. Dame Sue intends to continue her association with the arts and to undertake a portfolio of work in the public and private sectors. www.culture.gov.uk

Museums and Galleries Month Debates

Museums and Galleries Month 2006 was launched last week. Across the country, museums, galleries and heritage attractions will be running events in May on the theme of *Making Connections: Past, present and future*.

Three debates will explore the role of the museum in connecting to the past, present and future:

Making Connections: The Future – Creating Tomorrow's Heritage

Monday 15 May at The Wallace Collection 18.30 – 20.30

A discussion on the challenges of collecting contemporary art and objects for the future.

James Naughtie, BBC Today presenter, will chair the debate. Speakers include David Barrie, Director of The Art Fund, Dr Mike Phillips, Trustee, Heritage Lottery Fund, Dr Augustus Casely-Hayford, Director of the Institute of International Visual Arts and Julia Peyton Jones, Director, Serpentine Gallery. Booking: Tel. 020 7563 9551; or bookings@wallacecollection.org

Making Connections: the Past – The influence of Film and Television

Thursday 18 May at the National Portrait Gallery – 19.00 – 20.30

This debate will explore the role that television and film play in interpreting history.

Chaired by Dan Snow, broadcaster and historian, speakers include Robert Hewison, author and journalist, Mark Wallis of Past Pleasures Ltd – specialists in reenactments, Richard Farmbrough of Reef TV, producers of The People's Museum and Sandie Dawe of VisitBritain.

Booking: www.npg.org.uk

Making Connections: The Present – The Global Museum

Monday 22 May at the Museum of London 18.30 – 20.30

Should museums play a role on the international stage? This debate, held in conjunction with the Institute of Ideas will be chaired by Gillian Reynolds, radio critic of the Daily Telegraph. Speakers include Professor Jack Lohman, Museum of London, Claude Ardouin, Head of the Africa section, British Museum, Tiffany Jenkins, Institute of Ideas, and Henrietta Hopkins, Hopkins Van Mil, an international consultancy for innovative collaborations. Booking: 0870 444 3850

More information www.mgm.org.uk

Diploma in Art Profession Law and Ethics

The Institute of Art and Law is launching a new course for museum professionals: the Diploma in Art Profession Law and Ethics, which is designed to introduce art professionals to the legal risks and safeguards that underpin art transactions.

The course will be held on six Saturdays in London from May 2006 to September 2006 and is aimed at people without a law background. Speakers include Professor Norman Palmer (barrister, chair Illicit Trade Advisory Panel and member of the Spoliation Advisory Panel), Anthony Misquitta (solicitor, Farrer and Co), Rosalie Cass (Chief Registrar, National Gallery) and Kevin Chamberlain (barrister, formerly legal adviser to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

Further information at www.ial.uk.com/intensive2.php or email rc@ial.uk.com

Commission on the Future of Volunteering

The Commission on the Future of Volunteering has been established by the England Volunteering Development Council to develop a long term vision for volunteering in England as a legacy of the Year of the Volunteer 2005.

Chair of the new body, Baroness Julia Neuberger, said 'I cannot remember a time when volunteering has featured so prominently in the thinking of policy makers. Whilst this is encouraging, I do not believe that volunteering should be a way of offering public services on the cheap. Volunteering is a gift of time freely given by individuals. The relationship between this gift and the development and implementation of policy will be an area that the Commission will explore in depth.'

The first task of the Commission will be to review the current thinking and state of volunteering. It will undertake a literature review, request written submissions on a range of topics and hold hearings. The Commission's report is expected to be published in June 2007.

Comments are invited at: www.volcomm.org.uk/getinvolved/index.htm

Volunteers' Week 1-7 June 2006

Volunteers' Week (1-7 June) is the UK's annual celebration of the work done by volunteers. During the Week events are held across the country to recognise, reward and recruit volunteers. This year's theme is diversity 'a wide range of time giving opportunities for a wide range of volunteers' with the aim of promoting a more inclusive and flexible attitude to volunteers of all ages and backgrounds.

Further information and a range of tools and resources to help celebrate Volunteers' Week and the contribution that volunteers make are available at: www.volunteersweek.org.uk

Acevo Launches Online Learning Centre

Acevo, the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations, has launched the first online learning resource for the sector. The Virtual Learning Resource Centre has been developed in partnership with Ashridge Business School.

Access to the Virtual Learning Resource Centre is open to all members of Acevo, through the members section of the website. Acevo intends to develop the content to tailor resources to members' interests in future. www.acevo.org.uk/main/index.php?content=newsitem&news_id=218

Second Round of Funding for Subject Specialist Networks

MLA has announced a second round of funding for Subject Specialist Networks (SSNs). SSNs are a mechanism for sharing scholarship, collections, research and expertise with a view to improving the way audiences experience collections. MLA has already invested £200,000 towards this initiative through Renaissance in the Regions.

Applications for Exploratory grants are currently being invited and there will be a call for applications for Implementation grants in Autumn 2006. Grants of £4,000 each are available for the exploration of the establishment of Subject Specialist Networks. The SSNs being explored must be fully committed to developing the potential of collections for the benefit of audiences.

The deadline for applications is 3rd July 2006. Application guidance notes, application form and further detail about the SSNs are available at:

www.mla.gov.uk/website/programmes/renaissance/Subject_Specialist_Networks

Further details: Stephanie Batchelor, phone 020 7273 1407 stephanie.batchelor@mla.gov.uk

Videoconferencing Grants for Cultural Sector Organisations

The Department for Education and Skills has provided MLA with funding to enable cultural sector organisations, including museums, galleries, archives and libraries, in England to connect to the National Education Network (NEN) in order to provide videoconferencing sessions to schools.

A small number of grants, totalling £50,000, will be provided to cultural sector organisations that have expressed interest in providing videoconferencing sessions, but are currently unable to fund their connection to the NEN.

For more information: www.mla.gov.uk/website/programmes/online_initiatives/Videoconferencing/

Research Strategy Forum

The Research Strategy Forum will bring together speakers from Vice-Chancellor's Offices, Research Directorates and University and National Libraries to consider how institutional strategies might be formulated to enable research institutions to engage effectively with the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, the sixth exercise to assess the quality of UK research and to distribute funds in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The Research Strategy Forum is hosted by Dartington College of Arts and UCL Library Services in association with The Higher Education Academy and other stakeholders in the UK Higher Education sector.

29-30 June 2006 - Dartington College of Arts Further details: www.dartington.ac.uk/rsf

New Lottery Launched

A new lottery that allows players to choose which good causes will benefit has been launched. 30p from every ticket bought will go to 70 nominated charities, which include Barnados, The British Red Cross, St John Ambulance, Marie Curie Cancer Care, Sense, Shelter and WWF. The charities will receive the money within days and will be free to use the funds as they see fit.

The new lottery, called *monday*, will operate online and by telephone. The first draw will take place on 8 May 2006. www.playmonday.com

National Inventory Research Project Seminar: *Researchers and Curators*

NIRP is working with 200 small and regional museums across the UK researching and cataloguing pre-1900 Continental European oil paintings for a searchable web database. Following the successful Glasgow seminar last autumn curators and project researchers will present examples of productive collaborations that have inspired new exhibitions and displays, conservation projects and re-evaluations of collections. Friday 19 May 2007 Birkbeck College, London 2-5 pm, Free.

For the full programme see: www.arthist.arts.gla.ac.uk/Temp%20files/Nirp%20Seminar%20May.htm

Musematic: New Museum Technology Website

The Museum Computer Network and the AAM Media and Technology Committee have launched Musematic, a website where colleagues can discuss online the latest trends in the world of museum informatics and technology. Experts from both organisations will share insights, observations and tricks of the trade. www.musematic.net

Parliamentary Report

Select Committee on Science and Technology

The House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology is conducting an inquiry into Science and Heritage. In May, evidence will be heard from English Heritage and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. Later sessions will hear from the British Museum, National Museum of Scotland, the Institute for Conservation Science and the Institute of Conservation (ICON), as well as from David Lammy MP, Minister for Culture; and Lord Sainsbury of Turville, Minister for Science and Innovation.

www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/lords_s_t_select/heritage.cfm

Written evidence submitted to the committee can be viewed at:

www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/lords_s_t_select/sub2evidence.cfm

National Lottery Bill

The National Lottery Bill, which is currently before Parliament, will establish the Big Lottery Fund as a new lottery distributing body, replacing three of the existing distributing bodies: the Community Fund, the New Opportunities Fund and the Millennium Commission.

The Government is seeking Parliamentary approval for additional resources to begin the process of recruiting the board of the Big Lottery Fund while the Bill is still before Parliament. Pending approval, urgent expenditure, estimated at £33,200, will be met by advances from the Contingencies Fund. The current version of the bill can be read at:

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200506/ldbills/097/06097.i-ii.html

Written Evidence to Culture Media and Sport Select Committee

Written evidence submitted to the Culture Media and Sport Select Committee inquiry into protecting and preserving our heritage has been published. It can be read, and copies can be ordered, at: www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cmcmds.htm#evid

International Issues

Europa Nostra Awards: Call for Entries 2006

Outstanding heritage achievements will be recognised by the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards. Six prizes of 10 000€ each are to be won in the following categories: Conservation of Architectural Heritage; Landscapes; Works of Art; and Archaeological Sites. Awards are also made for study in the field of cultural heritage conservation and for dedicated service to heritage conservation.

Closing date for applications: 15/09/2006. Category 2 (Study): 1/09/2006 www.europanostra.org

Joint Venture for Smithsonian and Showtime Networks

The Smithsonian Institution and Showtime Networks, a subsidiary of CBS, have announced the creation of Smithsonian Networks, a joint venture to develop television services.

Smithsonian On Demand is due to be launched in December 2006 and will develop and operate Smithsonian-branded television programming services for distribution to multi-channel video distributors and new media platforms. The programmes, which will include documentaries and children's programmes on history, the arts, science and nature, will draw on the resources of the Smithsonian Institution and its research centres, as well the editorial content of the Smithsonian and Air & Space magazines.

Filmmakers and academics have raised concerns about the venture on the basis that it would give Smithsonian Networks the right of first refusal on commercial documentaries that rely significantly on the museum's archives, curators or scientists.

newsdesk.si.edu/ www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/04/03/AR2006040301699.html

Museum Podcasts

A selection of museum-related Podcasts - multimedia files that are distributed over the Internet for playback on MP3 players and personal computers - is available at the Global Museum at: www4.wave.co.nz/~jollyroger/GM2/podcasts.htm

Podcasting automates the transfer of digital media files, such as audio programs or music videos, to the user's computer for later use. Users can subscribe to programmes and regular updates from a variety of sources in the form of podcasts, which they can listen to or view on a computer or mobile device at their convenience.

MoMA Tours for Alzheimer's Sufferers

Meet Me at MoMA offers people with Alzheimer's and their carers a free interactive guided tour of the Museum. The tours are aimed at people in the early to middle stages of the disease and are held on Tuesdays, when the museum is closed to the public. The programme is part of Moma's education provision for specialized audiences.

www.moma.org/about_moma/press/2006/alzheimersMainSite.pdf

Tokyo Museum to Offer Digital Guides

It is reported that the National Museum of Western Art in Tokyo plans to introduce a digital guide to make its collection more accessible to people without a background in history of art. The museum will place electronic tags on its exhibits - which include Auguste Rodin's "The Thinker" and Claude Monet's "Water Lilies" - to provide information about the works via mobile video terminals.

It is planned to start introducing electronic tags for the 5,000 works in the museum's collection in autumn 2006. Visitors will be able to create their own virtual gallery using the electronic handsets and there are plans to install an on-demand printing system in the museum to allow visitors to print posters and postcards of artworks. www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/features/culture/20060414TDY03002.htm

Funding Deadlines Online

A new website that highlights deadlines for European Union and UK funding has been launched by EUCLID, who provide European & international information, research and consultancy services to the cultural sector. The site deadline.culture.info lists funding deadlines for the next nine months. www.culture.info the parent website, holds information on a range of cultural topics, including researched links and listings.

Three Convicted of Munch Theft

Three people have been convicted in Norway of the theft of two paintings by Edvard Munch - *The Scream* and *Madonna* - from the Munch Museum in Oslo. They were jailed and ordered to pay 750m kroner (£66.3m) to the City of Oslo in compensation for the lost paintings.

Three other people were acquitted. The paintings, which were stolen in an armed raid in August 2004, have not been recovered. news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/4964872.stm

Munch Works Missing

According to scholars working on his catalogue raisonné, the location and ownership of more than 70 paintings by Edvard Munch are unknown. Researchers at the Munch Museum in Oslo have been unable to trace significant works such as *Old Aker Church* (1882), *Kiss* (1892), *The Girls on the Bridge* (1902) and *Felix Auerbach* (1906). It is thought that the paintings that cannot be traced are probably in private collections. www.theartnewspaper.com

Conservation Information Website

www.eur-heritage.org, an initiative of Conservare, the European Heritage Forum, hosts listings for conferences, workshops and courses on cultural heritage protection, restoration, management and interpretation taking place in Europe. Information for publication on the website should reach the editorial board at least 9 weeks in advance.

Video Art in Shopping Mall

A shopping mall in Pasadena, California is showing video art on a giant open-air screen. Works by seven artists, including Bruce Nauman and John Baldessari, were selected by the Armory Center for the Arts and are screened twice a night. Previous free summer film series at the mall have featured James Bond films and Marilyn Monroe.

www.nytimes.com/2006/04/09/arts/design/09finkel.html

Forthcoming Meetings

Learning and Access Committee

Friday 12 May, 2.30pm, National Portrait Gallery

Spoliation Working Group

Tuesday 23 May, 4.30pm, Tate Britain

Advocacy Committee

Thursday 25 May, Imperial War Museum

HR Forum

Friday 9 June, time TBC, Museum of Scotland

Operations Committee

Friday 16 June, 11am, Science Museum

Marketing Group

Wednesday 21 June, 2pm, V&A

Museum Copyright Group - Wider Group meeting

Friday 23 June, time TBC, National Portrait Gallery

NMDC meeting

Friday 7 July, 11am, Imperial War Museum

PR Group

Friday 14 July, 11am, Museum in Docklands

If you have any comments on the NMDC Newsletter or would like to contribute to a future edition, please email: nmdcnews@iwm.org.uk

www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

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