

Welcome to NMDC's monthly news update...

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and much more...

NMDC NEWS

International activity project

NMDC has embarked on a new project looking at the international work of its members. UK museums are involved in a huge range of projects and partnerships with organisations all over the world. International activity includes:

- International loans and touring exhibitions
- Partnership working to share skills and expertise and to run joint research and conservation projects
- Contributing to cultural diplomacy - building relationships with organisations in countries where formal government relations are difficult.
- Involvement in international showcase events such as expos and biennales
- Providing commercial consultancy services.

NMDC is undertaking a survey of its members' international work, to understand the current spread and types of international activity as well as different approaches to working internationally. The project findings will allow us to open a dialogue with Government departments beyond DCMS, to discuss the value of museums' international work and how ministers and policy makers can most helpfully support museums' international activity.

The project also aims to help NMDC members to learn from each other and explore potential for collaboration on international projects, and to promote best practice across the museum sector by highlighting excellent and innovative projects. Findings of the project will be published in September 2010. For further details please contact Suzie Tucker, NMDC Projects and Policy Officer: suzie.tucker@nationalmuseums.org.uk / 020 7942 5388.

DIRECTORS IN THE NEWS

Dame Rosalind Savill

Dame Rosalind Savill, Director of the Wallace Collection, has announced that she will be retiring in October 2011 after nineteen years in the post. She will be retiring after the transformation of the twelve rooms now filled with eighteenth-century French works of art and ten years after completion of the Centenary Project which she devised to create 30% more visitor space and new facilities. Dame Rosalind joined the Wallace Collection from the V&A in 1974. [More](#)

Ten years of Tate Modern

To mark Tate Modern's 10th birthday, the *Observer* asked figures from the art world and readers to put their questions to the Director, Sir Nicholas Serota. As well as answering questions on his favourite works, childhood inspiration, collecting priorities and the need for tax incentives, free admission and priorities for the next government, Sir Nicholas said if he was a work of art he would like to be one of the dancers in Picasso's *Three Dancers*. The *Observer's* website also has an interactive with Sir Nicholas Serota talking about the highlights of Tate Modern's first decade. [Observer article](#) [Interactive](#)

The Financial Times recently considered the transformation of culture in the UK in the past decade, and highlighted the work of Sir Nicholas Serota and Neil MacGregor, Director of the British Museum.

The article, on 19 April, also lamented the paucity of political debate on culture during the election campaign. [Financial Times](#)

In a similar vein, the *Guardian* asked on 28 April "why politicians fight shy of campaigning on the arts" and quoted Neil MacGregor as wanting to "give politicians the confidence to put on their CVs not what football team they support, but why life without Schubert is impossible". [Guardian](#)

A trip through time and space in one hour

In a recent article on how best to visit museum collections in sixty minutes, Neil MacGregor gave his tips for a whistle-stop tour of the British Museum, artists Bob & Roberta Smith and Grayson Perry chose the Tate Modern and V&A, and actress Alison Steadman identified her favourite items in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. [Times](#)

GENERAL ELECTION 2010

Election manifestos promise greater independence for national museums

In their election manifestos and statements, the three main political parties have all committed to maintain free admission to national museums. The Labour Party and Conservative Party have also promised moves to increase national museums' independence from government. Here is a snap-shot of the cultural policies included in the manifestos.

Labour Party Manifesto – *A future fair for all*

The Labour Party manifesto included a section on arts, culture and museums in a chapter on "Creative Britain: active and flourishing communities". It included the following statements:

- Culture and the arts are vital to a modern economy. But they stand for more than material success, reminding us that society is not just a marketplace.
- Our major museums and galleries should be operationally independent of government, so we will legislate to ensure their managerial and financial autonomy.
- We will maintain our commitment to free admissions, encouraging people of all ages and a wide range of backgrounds to visit.
- We will give public institutions new rights to borrow works of art from the national collection, so that more people can benefit from access to our national artistic heritage.
- Every child and young person should be entitled to five hours of art, music and culture per week, through learning to play a musical instrument, visiting local museums and joining film clubs, or taking part in local theatre.
- Through Creative Partnerships we are ensuring that young people in the most deprived parts of the country are able to fulfil their artistic talents by working with local arts and cultural organisations.
- Creative Bursaries will support the most artistically gifted young people in their early professional careers.
- We will review how incentives for philanthropic support can be strengthened.
- We will review the structures that oversee English Heritage, putting mutual principles at the heart of its governance so that people can have a direct say over the protection and maintenance of Britain's built historical legacy.
- We will promote greater public involvement in the way that National Lottery proceeds are spent on good causes. A proportion of Lottery funding is going to the Olympics. After 2012, this proportion will return to culture, heritage and sport.
- We will update the intellectual property framework that is crucial to the creative industries – and take further action to tackle online piracy.

Creative Britain manifesto

The Labour Party also published a separate *Creative Britain* manifesto on 1 May, launched by the Prime Minister at the National Glass Centre in Sunderland. *Creative Britain* includes evidence of how the arts and culture in Britain have flourished over the last decades and provides further details on some of the manifesto commitments. In particular:

- As well as helping museums and galleries raise more money from philanthropy, we need to free them to spend the money they have already raised. Museums and galleries hold over £200 million

of reserves. In a period of tight public spending settlement we want to ensure they can access this money properly. We will legislate to ensure the managerial and financial autonomy of our major museums and galleries.

- We will support national museums and galleries that establish new affiliated institutions in the English regions. Whether it is the Tate in Liverpool and St Ives, or The Imperial War Museum in Greater Manchester, the benefits such projects bring are clear. We will support the establishment of the Victoria and Albert Museum in Blackpool and the Royal Opera House opening in Manchester. Spending will be more constrained in the years ahead but within the allocated resources we will prioritise support for institutions looking to establish a regional footprint.
- The arts at their best have embraced the digital age - organisations such as Tate and the British Museum have innovative digital programmes and partnerships with the BBC - but the arts world as a whole needs to catch up with the best. We will encourage arts organisations to take advantage of the existing research and development incentives provided by government which the games and other digital innovators have used effectively, and encourage our public service broadcasters to go further in working with the arts and museums online.
- To mark the Queen's Golden Jubilee we will work with English Heritage to ensure all facilities are open for free to senior citizens on the day of the Jubilee Bank Holiday. We will make our Heritage a theme for events surrounding the Queen's Jubilee and organise a series of special celebrations in partnership with English Heritage and the Royal Palaces and Parks. [Labour Party Manifesto](#) [Creative Britain](#) [Gordon Brown's speech](#)

Conservative Party Manifesto: *Invitation to join the Government of Britain*

The Conservative Party Manifesto included plans for the National Lottery and made one specific reference to culture in relation to foreign policy, with the following statements:

- We will build up British influence by deepening our alliances beyond Europe and the United States, not only diplomatically but in culture, education, commerce and security.
- We will restore the National Lottery to its original purpose and, by cutting down on administration costs, make sure more money goes to good causes. The Big Lottery Fund will focus purely on supporting social action through the voluntary and community sector. Sports, heritage and the arts will each see their original allocations of 20 per cent of good cause money restored.

The Conservative manifesto includes a photograph of the Imperial War Museum North as an illustration Manchester's successful regeneration.

Modern Conservatism: Our Quality of Life Agenda

A separate document, *Modern Conservatism: Our Quality of Life Agenda*, launched by David Cameron on 26th April, gave more details of the party's cultural policy commitments. The section entitled "Support for the arts" included the following statements:

- The arts need coherent and sustained support in order to consolidate and build on their achievements.
- A Conservative government will maintain free access to the National Museums and Galleries.
- We will give our national museums greater independence so that they are free to spend the money they raise as they see fit. We will introduce a Museums and Heritage Bill that will establish a new administrative status for non-departmental public bodies within the cultural and heritage sectors. This will recognise their role as public organisations with responsibility to steward the nation's assets. But it will also allow them the independence to be truly effective and entrepreneurial fundraising bodies. They must have both the ability and responsibility to raise money both for capital projects and also for endowments to give them funding security over the long term.
- A Conservative government will make use of public funding to catalyse philanthropy and private sector investment by requiring a wider use of 'matched grants' by the Arts Council.
- We will also introduce a fourth pillar to arts funding by enabling our leading museums and performing venues to build up endowments.
- One-off endowment grants will also be available on a competitive basis from the Lottery every year.

[Conservative Manifesto](#) [Modern Conservatism: Our Quality of Life Agenda](#)

Liberal Democrat Manifesto – *Change that works for you: Building a fairer Britain*

The Liberal Democrat manifesto has a section on “access to culture and sport” including the following statements:

- Liberal Democrats believe that the arts are a central part of civic and community life. They contribute to innovation, education, diversity, and social inclusion and the creative industries are one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy. Britain’s culture and heritage play a vital role in attracting visitors to the UK and boosting the very important tourism industry. We will foster an environment in which all forms of creativity are able to flourish.

Liberal Democrats will:

- Open up the Government Art Collection for greater public use.
- Set up a ‘Creative Enterprise Fund’ offering training, mentoring and small grants or loans to help creative businesses get off the ground.
- Change the way the National Lottery is taxed from a ticket tax to a gross profits tax, which is forecast to deliver more for good causes and the Exchequer.
- Reforming Gift Aid to operate at a single rate of 23 per cent – giving more money to charity while closing down a loophole for higher rate tax payers.

[Liberal Democrat Manifesto](#)

Scottish National Party Manifesto – *Elect a local champion*

The Scottish National Party asserts that the “promotion of Scottish culture overseas” would be one of the top priorities of an independent Scotland’s international relations strategy. The SNP also says it will also “continue to lead cross-party calls for the return of £150 million lottery funds diverted from Scotland to help fund the London 2012 games. The return of the diverted funds would turn a good legacy for the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games into a great legacy.” SNP Manifesto [SNP Manifesto](#)

Plaid Cymru Manifesto – *Think Different. Think Plaid*

Plaid Cymru’s manifesto has no specific reference to museums, culture or the creative industries but states that “Plaid is proud of Wales’ unique heritage” and “believes that Wales has a lot to offer the world in culture, economic and social terms.” [Plaid Cymru Manifesto](#)

Also

The second Prime Ministerial debate on 22 April was held at a contemporary arts venue - the Arnolfini in Bristol. The Conservative Culture team’s weekly news email described this as “possibly the only time the arts will really take, or provide, the centre stage during this election.” [More](#)

Several Members of Parliament who promoted cultural issues in the House of Commons are standing down at the general election including former Ministers, Mark Fisher and Robert Key. Sir Patrick Cormack, Chair of the All-Party Arts and Heritage Group, is standing down after 40 years in the House of Commons.

DIGITAL ACCESS

Orphan works left out of Digital Economy Act

The Digital Economy Act received Royal Assent on 9 April after being rushed through the House of Commons just before Parliament was dissolved for the General Election. The clauses that would have enabled cultural organisations to digitise and use 'orphan works' - works that remain in copyright where, even after a diligent search, the owner cannot be identified or found - were withdrawn by the Government in the final stage. The clause was withdrawn because there was no time for further debate or amendments to deal with concerns raised by some Lords and MPs about protection of photographers' rights. The British Library and national museums had argued that the change in legislation was necessary to remove one of the greatest barriers to mass digitisation of content by the UK's leading national institutions. Whilst national museums and libraries always attempt to identify and reach agreements with rights-holders when reproducing images of works they hold, many of these rights holders will never be found. An estimated 40% of some national institutions' collections are orphan works. [Parliamentary debates](#) [Digital Economy Act 2010](#)

Encouraging digital access to culture

At the end of March, DCMS published *Encouraging Digital Access to Culture*, a report by Jonathan Drori intended to give guidance to decision makers in the cultural sector so that they can accelerate public digital access to cultural institutions. The aim is "to encourage more rapid deployment of digital techniques where they will do good, by engaging more people, raising the quality of experiences, or saving money." The report highlights the role of DCMS sectors in supporting the *National Plan for Digital Participation* launched by the Government in March. The recommendations in the report include:

- A culture of playful, rapid small-scale experimentation needs to be fostered, complementing the desire for quality and integrity which already exists.
- The focus needs to shift from digitisation projects as an objective to a focus on getting existing assets into the public domain, gaining audience reach and then strategically identifying gaps.
- There needs to be a change in organisational attitude to ownership of material and to targets and measures which at present encourage an over-emphasis on control.
- There is huge scope to share market data, analysis and insights across the sector and to co-commission market-research that will be useful to all.

The report ends with a brief summary of the new technologies with which it recommends managers should be familiar, including social media, self publishing, location based services, augmented reality, image recognition, audio recognition and "the wisdom of crowds". As well as the shift in editorial control enabled through collaborative computing tools, collaborative filtering and games. Tate, British Library, National Archives, British Museum are among the case-studies in the report.

[DCMS website](#) [National Plan for Digital Participation](#)

£12m Digital Participation Fund

The Digital Participation Consortium has announced the first round of funding from the Digital Participation Fund. The Fund will provide a total of £12m in over the next 3 years. The Digital Participation Consortium is a UK-wide coalition of Government, industry and third sector organisations, including Tate, British Library and MLA are members of the Digital Participation Consortium. Membership is open to any organisation throughout the UK who can use their communication channels to inform and motivate people to become engaged with digital technologies, or offer support to people who need it. Initiatives receiving support from the Digital Participation Fund should:

- Align with the priorities outlined in the National Plan for Digital Participation:
- Encourage broad-based partnerships across a range of member organisations
- Have the potential to be scalable, replicable in other parts of the country and sustainable after the initial funding (where appropriate)

The deadline for applications to the first round is Tuesday 1 June. It is anticipated that there will be a further round of funding later on this year. [Digital Participation Consortium](#)

DCMS funding for Culture24 Smartphone app

Margaret Hodge, Minister for Culture, announced on 1 April a £50k grant to Culture24 to fund a new application for smart phones which will enable users to find nearby museums, galleries, heritage attractions or other interesting venues. The data will be drawn from the Culture24 database, which the whole of the UK and contains details on over 4,400 cultural venues. [DCMS](#)

MUSEUM SECTOR NEWS

Over 260 venues participating in *Museums at Night 2010*

Museums at Night 2010 will run from Friday 14 May to Sunday 16 May. There will be more than twice as many events as last year, with over 260 venues across the UK currently registered on the Culture 24 website. Last year 60% of people who attended *Museums at Night* events had never been to the venues before. Special events include:

- "A good old fashioned country fete" at Shipley Art Gallery
- Torchlight tours, lantern-lit performances at Royal Armouries, Fort Nelson.
- A silent disco on a 1970s-inspired light up dance floor at Tate Liverpool
- India Noir, a packed programme of Indian contemporary culture, at the National Portrait Gallery
- Violent Universe, a free planetarium show at the National Maritime Museum
- Terrible Trenches at Night, an experience aimed at 8-12 year olds at the Imperial War Museum

The BBC and the British Museum's A History of the World project is offering all museums free screenings of the CBBC programme *Relic: Guardians of the Museum* over the weekend, and providing an associated template for a family-friendly trail inspired by the challenges the children encounter in the series, which can be tailored to any museum artefacts. [Museums at Night](#)

DCMS funding for NML and Museum Centre for British History

On 1 April DCMS announced additional funding for National Museums Liverpool (NML) and for a feasibility study for a Museum Centre for British History. National Museums Liverpool was granted £500,000 for two projects to repair the roof of the Walker Art Gallery and carry out maintenance of the two transport stores at Juniper Street 1. The funding was added to National Museums Liverpool's capital grant-in-aid for 2009-2010. The People's History Museum in Manchester was granted £200,000 for a feasibility study to look at how it might house a new Museum Centre for British History. The People's History Museum is currently undergoing redevelopment to create a new museum to tell the story of growth of democracy and house exhibits and archives from the major political parties. [More](#)

2010 Guardian Family Friendly Museum Award

The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry has won The 2010 Guardian Family Friendly Museum Award. The competition used a team of undercover family judges to assess six shortlisted museums against the *Kid in Museums* Manifesto's "20 ways to make a museum family friendly". [Kids in Museums](#)

Collecting survey highlights rise in object loans and joint acquisitions

The Art Fund has published the *Collecting Challenge 2010* survey, which provides an overview of collecting activity in UK public collections over the last five years. 276 museums participated in the survey, which was last conducted in 2006. The research found that budget cuts have taken their toll on museums' ability to add to their collections, and fewer museums are happy with the level of their collecting activity than five years ago. The findings also demonstrate increased collaboration between museums to refresh collections through joint purchases and through the borrowing of objects from other museums. Key findings include:

- 50% of museums were able to allocate income to collecting last year, up from 40% in 2006. Almost 85% of museums expanded their collection through purchasing, while 59% benefited from one or more bequests;
- 60% of museums said the most common method of acquiring over the last five years was through gifts (down from 69% in 2006);
- However, only 45% of museum curators said that their collecting ambitions were being met, down from 71% in 2006;

- Three-quarters of museums say that inadequate funding and spending cuts are the biggest barrier to museums' collecting activity. 20% of museums and galleries say that avoiding staff cuts, and therefore loss of expertise, is a major obstacle to collecting.;
- 47% of museums and galleries said they are displaying an increasing number of items that are borrowed from other institutions, and 59% expect this trend to rise;
- 11% of museums have seen an increase in joint acquisitions in the last five years and 20% expect further combined purchases to be made in the future;
- The top priorities for museums remain the same as in 2006: displaying and interpreting collections; education and outreach; and engaging with local communities. 19% of respondents said collecting was one of their top three priorities.

Asked about priorities for government, respondents said the next government's top three priorities for the museum sector should be to:

- maintain core funding for museums;
- boost funding to the Lottery 'good causes' so that the HLF has more to spend on museums; and
- commit to maintaining funding for Renaissance.

[Art Fund](#)

MLA completes national transformation

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) completed its national transformation on 1 April with the creation of a regional team for London and closure of its last remaining regional MLA agency. The Museum development officers will transfer to the Museum of London, as the London Museums Renaissance Hub lead, which has funded the programme since it began in 2006. MLA London's Workforce Development Training Programme will be transferred to Hopkins Van Mil: Creating Connections. [MLA website](#)

Invitation to host Creative Apprenticeships

The MLA is inviting museums to submit applications to host one of this year's Creative Apprenticeship places. The two-year programme combines practical on-the-jobs skills with classroom-based learning. The MLA will provide £5,000 towards employment costs per annum, for up to two years. The MLA aims to fund 50 Creative Apprenticeships in museums across 2009-2011. The deadline for applications is 14 May. [MLA website](#)

Also

The Museums Association is seeking views from members and non-members to help improve the services that it offers and inform its new business plan. The online questionnaire should take a few minutes to complete. [More](#)

Five men have been cleared of trying to extort £4.25m from the Duke of Buccleuch over the stolen Leonardo Da Vinci painting, *Madonna of the Yarnwinder*. [More](#)

The *Guardian* reports that the UK Government has been criticised by the Italian Government and leading archaeologists over plans to sell 'looted' 3,000-year-old Etruscan artefacts to pay the tax bill of an antiquities dealer. [More](#)

The *Sunday Telegraph* published a summary of compensation payments made by cultural organisations to people injured on their premises. 24 publicly funded visitor attractions have paid out £2.15m in compensation and legal fees in the past 5 years. [More](#)

PRIVATE GIVING

Directors invited to nominate leading cultural philanthropists

HRH The Prince of Wales and Arts & Business are inviting nominations from Chief Executives and Development Directors of arts organisations to honour the most inspiring philanthropists in the UK. The Prince of Wales Medal for Arts Philanthropy was first awarded to five honourees in 2008 and it continues to recognise:

- Inspirational supporters who capture the imagination of the wider society through their support to the arts
- Great philanthropists whose name is synonymous with support for the arts over a number of years

- The value of a variety of supporters from across the UK
- Innovative givers who are supporting in new ways to show the impact they can have

The honourees, UK or international, are recognised for their philanthropic support of cultural activities in the United Kingdom (or if UK artists or organisations are presented overseas). In addition, the award could be in recognition of a sustained contribution to our nation's cultural life over a period of time. The aim is that the "unknown hero", as well as established philanthropists, are recognised, to reflect the importance of philanthropy of all sizes. Nominations close on 25 June.

Private Investment in Culture 2008/9: the arts in the 'new normal'

Arts & Business has published its full report on Private Investment in Culture 2008/9. The headline figures were published in January showing that Private sector investment in culture in the UK fell by 7% to £654.9m in 2008/09, down from the record high of £687m in 2007/08. The greatest fall in private investment was to museums, with funding falling by 37.5% from £124m to £81m. The full report provides a detailed breakdown of private investment trends by region, art form and size of organisation. The report shows that outside London, the regions with greatest private investment in museums in 2008/9 were the South East, Yorkshire and South West. The report also explores the state of the mixed funding economy of culture, looking at how to maximise investment through 'corporate cultural diplomacy' and the future of collaboration, co-donations and partnerships.

The report also finds that the number of full time fundraisers has decreased. In 2007/8 arts organisations surveyed reported that on average they employed five full-time fundraisers and this figure has fallen to an average of only two fundraisers 2008/09.

LEARNING

Local culture offer for all children and young people

DCMS has published a policy paper setting out proposals to build on the Find Your Talent pilot scheme and ensure all children have access to high-quality cultural activity for five hours a week. A *Place for Culture: Local Cultural Offer for Children and Young People* puts emphasis on local agencies working together to deliver the cultural offer: "we have invested heavily in national programmes, but the move towards localism and the success of the [*Find Your Talent*] pathfinders means that we need to rethink our delivery model. Following the principles set out in the 21st Century Schools White Paper, budgets and decisions will be increasingly devolved to the people that know their areas and young people best". At a national level, the paper proposes a series of measures to strengthen advocacy promoting the power of cultural education. Over £570m has been invested in cultural education between 2008-11 in programmes delivered by various organisations.

[DCMS website](#)

MPs call for learning outside the classroom entitlement

The Children, Schools and Families (CSF) Commons Committee published its latest progress report on learning outside the classroom on 1 April. The report highlights the lack of growth in recent years in the number of school trips and visits, says that pupils from poorer areas are still much less likely to access education outside the classroom and calls on the Government to ensure access to education beyond the classroom for all children: "all children should have opportunities to experience environments away from their local area, and to visit museums and galleries and other sites of interest, including the natural environment of the English countryside". The Committee says "We are of the view that learning outside the classroom, if it is to be taken seriously by all schools, needs to be made an entitlement within the National Curriculum. Learning outside the classroom should be considered by Ofsted as part of school inspections and be reflected in the School Report Card. The Committee also concludes that learning outside the classroom urgently needs high profile champions, within government and nationally, and recommends more funding for the Council for Learning Outside the Class Room and the Quality Badge Scheme. [More](#)

Also

The Cultural Learning Alliance is inviting people to sign up show support for children and young people's entitlement to quality cultural experiences, and to help "build a vibrant, coherent voice for cultural learning and participation." [Cultural Learning Alliance](#)

CULTURAL SECTOR NEWS

Cultural Workforce Survey

The National Campaign for the Arts is asking everyone who works in the cultural sector, from CEOs and trustees to freelancers and volunteers, to complete a new Cultural Workforce Survey. The survey is intended provide a snapshot of the cultural workforce that supports the UK's world-class cultural sector and enable the sector to adapt, improve and develop to meet current challenges. The NCA plans to repeat the survey annually to build up an important body of evidence about employment in the cultural sector which will help those working in and for the sector to understand existing challenges and identify where changes could be made. The survey should take 10 minutes to complete. [NCA survey](#)

Creative Survival in Hard Times

A new report published by *New Deal of The Mind* and commissioned by Arts Council England looks at the obstacles facing young people who want to pursue a career in the arts and creative field. The report highlights that UK's creative sector is the largest in the European Union, representing an estimated 6.4% of the economy (and growing faster than any other sector). It is currently comparable in size to the financial services industry and, according to research published in February 2009 by the National Endowment, is likely to employ more people than the financial sector by 2013.

Creative Survival in Hard Times provides a series of recommendations and concludes that provision of workspace and access to information, mentoring and business skills, are the highest priorities for creative entrepreneurs. The report urges the next government to establish an enterprise scheme for the 21st century, based on the Enterprise Allowance Scheme of 1983-91. It also says publicly funded museums and arts centres should, where possible, provide free Wifi and meeting spaces and encourage their use by freelancers, and that employers in the sector should also ensure that professional skills training is readily available to freelancers. [New Deal of the Mind](#)

Mayor outlines 2012 vision for London

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, has unveiled his vision for how London will "look, feel, move and party" during the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Mayor emphasised the importance of ensuring that London "showcases all its creative dynamism". At the heart of the cultural celebrations surrounding the Olympics will be a 12-week, once-in-a-lifetime arts festival with commissions from some of the world's finest artists. [Mayor of London](#)

Archives for the 21st Century

The National Archives and the MLA have published 'Archives for the 21st Century in action', a tool to support senior archives professionals in engaging with funders and showcase the potential of archives and their contribution to the public sector. The document is intended to demonstrate to leaders of local authorities and universities how to get the most out of archive services, ensuring better value for money for those who run and fund the services, and a higher standard of services which is tailored to the users' needs. [MLA website](#)

Three archives organisations merge

Three archives organisations have announced that they will merge to create a single body, the Archives and Records Association (UK and Ireland) from 1 June. The merger brings together the Association of Chief Archivists in Local Government, the National Council on Archives and the Society of Archivists. The new body will provide support to archivists, records managers and conservators; give advice to users; and promote the views of the sector as a whole to government and the wider society. The ARA will receive some funding from The National Archives and Museums, Libraries and Archives Council for specific objectives within the fields of advocacy, awareness raising and sector development. [ARA press release](#)

New research into barriers to arts participation

Nottingham Trent University has published the findings of research into the barriers behind people not participating in the arts. More than a third (34.5%) of participants claimed it was too difficult to find the time to attend events, with only slightly fewer (32.8%) blaming the cost and more than a quarter (26%) stating the reason as a lack of information. The other most popular reasons identified were not having enough notice about the event (18.1%) not being close enough to home or place of work (15.9%) not being interested (15.1%). [Nottingham Trent University](#)

APPOINTMENTS

Paul Boateng, former Chief Secretary to the Treasury and former British High Commissioner to South Africa, has been appointed to the Board of Governors of the **Museum of London**. [More](#)

Marc Sands, the former marketing director of the *Guardian* and *Observer*, has been appointed as Director of Audiences and Media at **Tate**. He takes up his new post on 17 May. [More](#)

INTERNATIONAL

Poland's Minister of Culture among the victims of Smolensk air crash

Tomasz Merta, Poland's Under Secretary of State for Culture and National Heritage and Poland's General Conservator of Monuments, was among the many eminent political and cultural figures killed in the aeroplane crash at Smolensk on 10 April. Mr Merta, a historian of political thought, journalist and education expert, had been Culture Minister since 2005 and was previously director of the Institute of National Heritage. Jack Lohman, Director of the Museum of London and Chair of the National Museum in Warsaw, described Mr Merta as "a great champion of change in Polish museums and particularly important in promoting high standards across all of Poland's cultural institutions." [More](#)

US museum relaxes environmental controls

The *Art Newspaper* reports that the Indianapolis Museum of Art (IMA) has decided to relax the environmental controls in its gallery in an effort to reduce the museum's carbon footprint. The IMA will allow the range of its exhibition gallery's temperature and relative humidity to fluctuate by a few degrees on either side of the standard. The museum's director and chief executive, Maxwell Anderson, wrote an article in the April edition of the *Art Newspaper* exploring the scientific evidence and arguing the need for "international consensus on loosening environmental strictures." [The Art Newspaper](#)

UK national museum directors have been playing a leading role in international discussions about how to review environmental standards. [NMDC website](#)

MAXXI – National Museum of 21st Century

MAXXI, Italy's new National Museum of the XXI Century Arts in Rome will open to the public on 30 May. MAXXI is Italy's first national museum devoted to contemporary creativity and will house two distinct institutions: MAXXI art and MAXXI architecture. The building by Zaha Hadid Architects has been designed as a "multi-disciplinary and multi-purpose *campus* of the arts and culture". In addition to the two museums it will house an auditorium, library and media library, bookshop and cafeteria, spaces for temporary exhibitions, outdoor spaces, live events and commercial activities, laboratories, and places for study and leisure. UK based engineering practice, Max Fordham, worked with the architects to construct the largest glass roof on a museum in the world and manage environmental conditions within the building. The project cost €150m and has taken 10 years to complete. It is expected to attract 200-400,000 visitors per year. [MAXXI](#)

EU defends value of culture as a source of wealth

Delegates at the Second European Forum on Cultural Industries in Barcelona on 29-30 March underlined the value of culture as a source of employment and wealth and singled out intellectual piracy as one of the main problems facing the sector. Spain's Minister of Culture, Mercedes Elvira de Palacio, opened the conference by saying "from now on, culture must go hand-in-hand with the economy", and Odile Quintin, the European Commission's Director General for Culture and Education, stated that "the culture industry represents 2.6% of the GDP of all the countries of the EU and acts as an engine for creativity and innovation". The UK delegation at the meeting was led by Fiona Hyslop, Scotland's Minister for Culture. [European Union](#)

Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries

The European Commission has published a Green Paper, *Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries*, for consultation. The Green Paper identifies the following strategic areas as key to the future of the cultural and creative sector: internationalisation, improving professional standards, regional and local development, financing and the establishment of a single legal framework to regulate intellectual property and the management of rights. The consultation closes on 30 July. [European Commission](#)

NEWS FROM NMDC MEMBERS

The [Museum of London Docklands](#) has introduced free admission for all. The museum has charged for adult admission charge since it opened in 2003, with children and students going free. The Museum's Board of Governors have now decided to extend the free admission policy to all visitors. [More](#)

[Tate Modern](#) is celebrating its tenth birthday with a free arts festival on 14-16 May. *No Soul For Sale – A Festival of Independents*, will see over 70 international artist collectives come together in Tate Modern's Turbine Hall to produce cutting-edge art events, performances, music, and film. Tate Modern is the world's most visited gallery of modern art and has received over 45m visits since it first opened on 12 May 2000. Over the last ten years, Tate Modern has presented 52 exhibitions, staged over 135 performances, held around 400 film screenings, mounted ten Unilever Commissions and hosted one million school visits. Almost 3.5 million people have taken part in the gallery's learning programme. Tate Modern contributes over £100 million in economic benefits to London annually. [More](#)

[Tate](#) has meanwhile submitted the planning application for a major project to transform Tate Britain. The £45m project will include a major upgrade to nine galleries and creation of new galleries in the area currently occupied by the shop, the opening up of the domed atrium and the creation of new learning studios and public spaces. Construction is due to begin in March 2011 and be completed in 2013. The project architects are Caruso St John. [More](#)

The [National Portrait Gallery's](#) Ondaatje Wing also opened 10 years ago this month, transforming the NPG with a new theatre, rooftop restaurant and new display galleries. Visitor numbers have increased by 99% since the Ondaatje Wing was opened, and last year the NPG received its highest ever number of visits - 1.98 million, an increase of 8% on 2008-9 and 20% increase on 2006-7. [More](#)

Judging of the [Walker Arts Gallery's](#) *John Moores Painting Prize* took place on both sides of the Atlantic this year after volcanic ash grounded two of the judges. Sir Norman Rosenthal and Goshka Macuga who were both stranded in America made their selection from almost 3,000 entrants, online. They maintained communications with the other jurors, who were also viewing the works digitally, and organisers to ensure their opinions were heard. Judges will see all shortlisted artworks at Stage 2 of the judging process in Liverpool in June. [More](#)

[Museum of Liverpool](#) is inviting people to support the new museum by sponsoring one of the 770 façade panel that will cover the riverside building. Over 10,000 local people have been consulted on the content for the building which will open in 2011 providing 8,000 square metres of public space across three floors. [More](#)

[National Museums Liverpool](#) is staging a series of "Cultural Cabbie" sessions giving cab drivers tours of Liverpool's museums and art galleries. NML also organised a pub quiz to find the number one Cultural Cabbie 2010. The move is designed to help cabbies provide expert advice to tourists and visitors. [More](#)

[Birmingham Museum Collections Centre](#) opened its stores in the middle of the night on 27 April for the *4am Project*, a flickr-based project to capture images of the world at 4am. The photo shoot fed into Birmingham's 24 Hour Blog, a part of the City's bid to become the first UK City of Culture in 2013. [More](#)

[Sir John Soane's Museum](#) is collecting donations online to establish the Eileen Harris Book Conservation Fund. The fund has already reached 79% of its target for donations. Dr Harris, a distinguished architectural historian who catalogued Soane's architectural library, retired at the end of 2009 and requested that a fund be established instead of a leaving present. [More](#)

The [British Library](#), in partnership with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, has opened an exhibition of historic images of Afghanistan in the Queen's Palace in Kabul, including high-quality printed copies of images from British collections which will remain in Afghanistan's National Archive after the exhibition ends. The exhibition and gift to the archives are supported the World Collections Programme – funded by DCMS, and the Government of Norway. [More](#)

The [Ashmolean Museum](#) opened its Arts of the Eighteenth Century Gallery on 29 April, presenting the redisplay of furniture, miniatures, ceramics, metalwork, clocks and sculpture. [More](#)

The [Royal Armouries](#) is hosting a free one-day event for museum and archive professionals in Leeds on May 6. The event will be led by speakers from three different Initial Teacher Training (ITT) providers and will examine the ways in which ITT Institutions and museums and archives can best work together to support trainee teachers. [More](#)

The [National Museum of Costume](#) near Dumfries is offering free admission to its new exhibition *Marriage in the Movies* anyone who turns up wearing their wedding dress. [More](#)

[The National Archives](#) is introducing a new online process to order copies of documents that are not already downloadable from its website. The new streamlined service will provide an instant quote based on the average cost of copying similar documents and will protect the documents as they will only need to be handled once. [More](#)

Awards

[Birmingham's Museum of the Jewellery Quarter](#) has won the Best Small Visitor Attraction in the *Enjoy England Awards for Excellence 2010*. The Museum had its busiest year ever in 2009-10 with over 51,000 visitors - a 50 per cent increase on the previous high. The [Science Museum](#) was a national finalist in the Large Visitor Attraction of the Year Award which was won by Harewood House, Leeds. The [RAF Museum Cosford](#) was a Regional Winner in the Access for All Award. [More](#)

The renovation of the [Ashmolean Museum](#) has been named as Building Project of the Year in the *Building Awards 2010*, the biggest awards event in the construction industry. The [Natural History Museum's](#) Darwin Centre Phase 2 was a runner up. [More](#)

Several NMDC member organisations have been shortlisted for the *Museums & Heritage Awards for Excellence 2010*, including National Portrait Gallery, British Library, Tyne & Wear Museums, National Museums Northern Ireland, Ashmolean, Natural History Museum, National Maritime Museum and the V&A. There are 10 award categories and the winners will be announced on 12 May. [More](#)

The [Royal Air Force Museum's](#) has been awarded the world record for the most model Spitfires constructed in a day, by the Guinness Book of World Records. 250 model Spitfire aircraft were constructed and painted over a 6 hour period at a special event last December. [More](#)

NMDC JOBS

Our jobs website, www.nationalmuseumjobs.org.uk currently has details of over 30 vacancies at museums around the UK including:

- Digital Marketing Officer, National Maritime Museum
- Schools & Young Audiences Web Editor, British Museum
- Merchandising Assistant, Science Museum
- Furniture Conservator, V&A
- Assistant Collections Registrar, National Portrait Gallery
- Events Officer, National Museums Scotland

- Interpretation Manager, British Library
- Assistant AV Technician, Royal Armouries

For details of these jobs and many more visit www.nationalmuseumjobs.org.uk

And finally...

Tony Butler, Director of the Museum of East Anglian Life, featured in the *Independent on Sunday Happy List 2010*. The paper says that "focusing on people rather than collections, Tony has made the museum an experiment in happiness." [More](#)

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This newsletter can also be read online at <http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/news/newsletters/>