



Creative Connections: Museums, Makers and Inclusion Symposium

17-18 October

Hochhauser Auditorium, Learning Centre, V&A South Kensington

Engaging underserved audiences remains a pressing concern across the museum and creative sector. While many institutions recognise the importance of broadening access and participation for groups that don't traditionally engage with the sector, effective and sustainable strategies remain complex and varied. Through the lens of creative practice, how can artists and museums work together to connect with these audiences in new ways?

This international symposium will bring together museum professionals, educators and multi-disciplinary practitioners to explore innovative cross-disciplinary collaborations and projects that have used art, design and making to break down barriers. It will provide a platform for sharing pilot projects, works in progress, and new research, creating a space for knowledge exchange and future partnerships.

Day 1: Friday, October 17

10:00 – 10:30 – Registration and Refreshments

10:30 – 11:00

Welcome

Dr. Helen Charman, Director, Learning, National Programmes and Young V&A

11:00 – 12:00

Keynote

Whuia ki te ao, whuia ki te rangi: take it to the world, take it to the sky

Enabling cultural continuity and community engagement in museum programming

Puawai Cairns, Director of Audience and Insight, Te Papa Museum, New Zealand

12:00 – 13:00 – Lunch provided

13:00 – 14:30

Panel: (re)Making Spaces

This session focuses on how museum and heritage spaces are being reimagined through creative collaboration with artists and makers. From public high streets to historic castles, artists and communities are reshaping how spaces are understood and accessed. Speakers will discuss the power of creative practice to transform relationships between people, place, and history.

Chair: Catherine Ritman Smith, Head of Learning and Engagement, Young V&A

Ertach Zhoosh! ('Heritage Zhoosh!'): Remaking public spaces for creative inclusivity in Cornwall
Celine Elliott, National Youth Partnerships Manager, English Heritage, and Lauryn Etheridge,
Interpretation and Exhibitions Manager, Royal Horticultural Society

Practicing Togetherness: Singapore Art Museum Residencies as Platforms for Artistic and Institutional Transformation
Haeju Kim, Senior Curator and Head of Residencies, Singapore Art Museum (Singapore)

Picturing High Streets: scaling up local delivery into a national conversation
Dr. Tamsin Silvey, Cultural Programme Curator, Historic England
Tony Mallon, Photographic Artist
Elizabeth Wewiora, Head of Social Practice, Open Eye Gallery

14.30 – 15.00 – Break with Refreshments

15:00 – 17:00

Practical Workshops and Tours

Sign up on the day at morning registration, there will be two slots available (15:00-16:00 and 16:00-17:00)

Clay and Conversations

Ceramics workshop exploring themes of home and belonging, inspired by her work with the Indo-Caribbean diaspora at the V&A
Lead by Jacqui Ramrayka 2024 V&A Adobe Creative Resident: Global Ceramics

Open Studios with 2025 V&A x Adobe Creative Residents Jessica Starns, Michael Akuagwu and Ciara Neufeldt

Curator's tour of 'Artists at Work: Adobe Creative Residents showcase'
Lead by Justine Sambrook, Curator

17:00 – 17:15 – Day One Wrap up & Close

17:15 – 19:00 – Evening Reception

Day 2: Saturday, October 18

10:00 – 10:30 – Registration and Refreshments

10:30 – 12:00

Museum Collections and Creative Collaborations

This panel explores how creative of partnerships with audiences and artists can help museums rethink how they engage with their collections and displays. How does creative partnerships with artists allow visitors to engage with process, making, and engage with museum collections in a new light. Through artistic engagement, can programmes like these expand to new audiences that have historically been underserved by creative industries?

Chair: Corinna Gardner, Senior Curator: Design and Digital, V&A South Kensington

Sparking Joy: The Art of Creative Collaboration at the Immigration Museum

Rebecca Lal, Experience and Interpretation Manager, Museums Victoria (Melbourne, Australia)

Horizons of Possibility: relational models between artists, museums, and communities

Leonardo Bravo, Director of Public Engagement, Museum of Modern Art (New York, USA)

Artists and Audiences: creators as bridge-builders with new learners

Elizabeth Galvin, Head of Learning and Digital Programmes, V&A South Kensington

12:00 – 13:30 Lunch provided

13:30 – 14:30

Embedding Creativity in Formal Education

This session explores how artists can be embedded within formal education systems with museums to support wellbeing and engagement. Focusing on long-term partnerships between artists, educators, and institutions, speakers will discuss what happens when schools and museums embrace creative practice as core to learning, not just enrichment.

Chair: David Houston, Team Leader: Schools and Colleges, V&A South Kensington

Crafting Creative Economies: art education at the Iziko Museums of South Africa

Hylton Arnolds, Director of Education, Iziko Museums of South Africa (Cape Town, South Africa)

Art of Resilience: a practical case study of an artist-led programme to support children's wellbeing in schools in Manchester

Emma Carroll, Senior Learning Manager: Schools and Colleges, Manchester Art Gallery (Art Of Resilience)

Dr. Simon Parry, Senior Lecturer, University of Manchester

Sam Owen Hull, Lead Artist

14.30 – 15.00 – Break with Refreshments

15:00 – 16:30

Co-working: creating fresh perspectives through amplifying voices

This panel will explore how working closely with makers and communities can offer new insights into museum collections and engagement. Speakers will reflect on collaborative processes with artists, communities, and collections, and consider how institutional structures can better support storytelling that is plural, authentic, and inclusive.

Chair: Kat Box, Team Leader: Young People and Families, V&A South Kensington

Engaging Underserved Communities Through Creativity at National Museums Scotland

Ashley Mackenzie-White (Engagement Manager) and Dr. Alison Clark, (Senior Curator: Oceania)
National Museums Scotland

Crafting Connections: Arctic Indigenous Fashion and Museum Collaborations

Dr. Elisa Palomino, Researcher, Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center (Washington, DC, USA) and
Ana Córdoba Crespo, Multidisciplinary artist

Artists as Change Agents: Diversifying Narratives and Transforming Museum Culture

Grace Davies, Experiences and Partnerships Curator, National Trust

16:30 – 16:45 – Day Two Wrap up and Close

The Adobe Creative Residency at the V&A is Supported by the Adobe Foundation