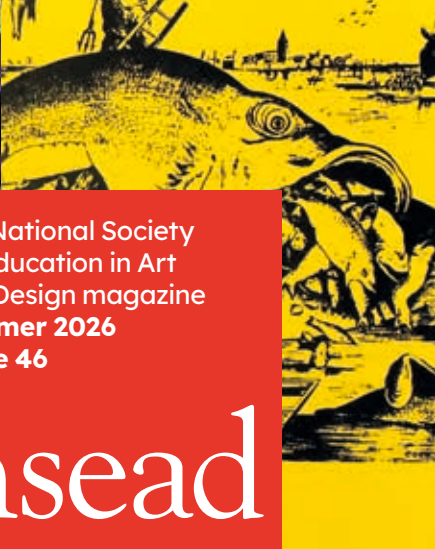
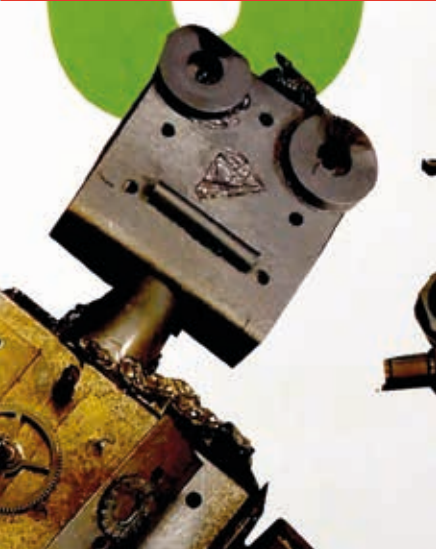




**The power of the archive**  
teaching through memory and material



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**Summer 2026**  
Issue 46  
**nsead**

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Royal Drawing School

# Royal Drawing School

## Editorial

Walking into the NSEAD archive at Mason's Wharf in Wiltshire, you step into more than 138 years of art education history. Row upon row of carefully labelled boxes line shelves from floor to ceiling. Open one box, and you feel not only its physical weight, but the weight of thousands of art educator policies, stories and histories. Inside might be dry plate negatives from 1888, photographs of NSEAD founders, or handwritten minute books over a century old – each item is a part or slice of art education history.

Among these records are traces of trailblazing individuals and art students, schools and universities. A photograph from 1888, taken outside the Royal College of Art, shows Miss Edith Giles sitting among her otherwise male 'art master' peers. By 1895 she is joined by another pioneering female, Miss E. Ray.

Fast forward 133 years, and we read the presidential address of Canon Marlene Wylie, who in 2022 became NSEAD's first Black president. These moments mark vital changes not only in our subject, but in the profession and society it reflects.

Archives ask whose voices are heard, and whose contributions were missing. They ask what actions are needed to close the equity gaps, and how can we make the changes we want to see. Archives shape our understanding of the past; they must also inform how we act in the present and future. These questions are for us all, and this issue is filled with ways that art educators today are using archives – personal or public – to help challenge and advance education.

The work is ongoing. We hope this issue inspires you to engage with archives and

collections, as it has the authors in these pages. Each author has shown us ways that archives or collections can offer rich opportunities to engage with memory and materiality, to develop questioning, dialogue and change.

This issue is dedicated to the thousands of art educators who have shaped, challenged and continue to advance our subject. The challenge now is not only to preserve the stories and histories in our archives, but to explore how we can use them – to see the gaps and use these new insights to inspire, and to inform the actions, policies and practice that will shape better futures. ●

Sophie Leach, Editor, *AD*  
✉ [sophieleach@nsead.org](mailto:sophieleach@nsead.org)

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View of Weston Collections Hall, V&A East Storehouse  
© David Parry

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# The NSEAD Archive

Recording art and design education since 1888

**Professor Ron George**, NSEAD Council member and volunteer archivist, describes how the NSEAD Archive evolved and developed, and what it reveals about the history of art, craft and design education since 1888



years. As with many such archives, much work is still to be done and more material will be added – both documents and books – through donations from our members and other parties.

When you enter our archive website, you will see that it offers access to four sections. These reduce in scale as you explore them. The first section, the NSEAD Document Archive contains the catalogue of NSEAD's records. We have listed a summary of some key documents and reports, with catalogue numbers showing where these can be located. The full catalogue is also available for you to view online. The second section, we have called the Library Archive, which contains details of roughly 1,000 books which we currently hold. The third section contains details of our magazine collection, which holds publications from NSEAD and a few publications from overseas. The fourth section (or Gallery) holds a small collection of photographs which represent a visual reminder of the years that our archive covers.

## The Documents Archive

The Documents section begins with a selection of 35 boxes prepared by Dr Roslyn Thistlewood in 1983. Dr David Thistlewood was her husband – both worked for the University of Liverpool and contributed significantly to NSEAD. With her agreement I have left this initial selection of documents intact – which are key papers covering the years 1888 to 1983 – and used them as an introduction to the full catalogue. It is in here that you will find a diagram (see opposite page) of the evolution of the Society from its foundation as the Society of Art Masters in 1888 to its formation as NSEAD in 1984. You will see that it was amalgamated with other societies during those years, which was a complex process.

**T**he NSEAD Archive is located in Corsham, Wiltshire, and consists of the records of the Society from 1888 to 2020. During that time, our name has changed many times and we have merged and integrated with other organisations. The records contained in the archive are substantial as it contains some 3,000 books and magazines, in addition to around 250,000 documents.

## Archiving the collection

Due to the sheer scale of the collection, we knew that documenting its contents would be a long and detailed process, and that the first stage would take many years. This was recognised by Michele Gregson, general secretary and CEO of NSEAD, who hoped the collection could be a valuable resource for teachers and researchers involved in art education. Because of my experience in founding and building the National Arts Education Archive (NAEA), located in the Yorkshire Sculpture Park at Bretton Hall, she invited me to undertake this work.

The first phase of the process has now been completed with the publication of the online catalogue, which has taken four



**Left**  
Map denoting the regional offices where NSEA operated across England and Wales

**Below (clockwise from left)**  
Demonstration photo, Hornsey (1969); *Think inside the sketchbook* (2011), NSEAD and Collins; Minute books dating from 1888

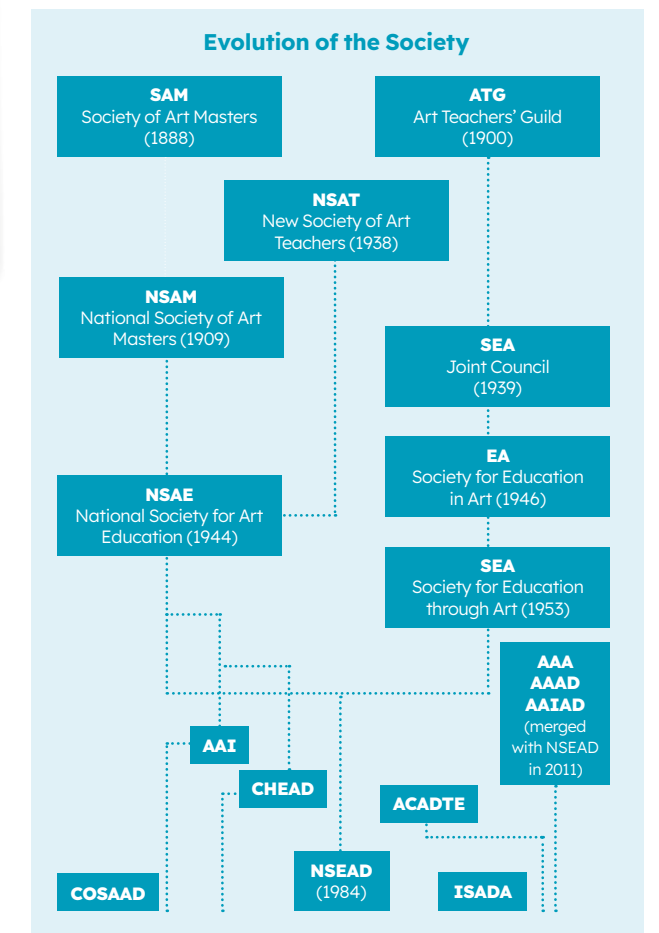


## The Archive, the profession and NSEAD

Established in 1888, the Society of Art Masters was largely a gathering of male staff from the country's art schools. The Society spent its early years seeking to become a Royal organisation, with many applications to Queen Victoria and then to the new King and the Government. It was partly successful and sought opportunities to model teaching content and represent the employment rights of its members, many of whom were very poorly paid.

Once the balance between teaching in art schools and the need to teach children in schools became a focus within the sector, and the famous Rules 109 were introduced by the Board of Education in 1913, full-time courses in schools of art, whether intentionally or not, were now designed to produce teachers. The significance of Franz Cizek, Viola Wilhelm, Victor Lowenfeld, Sir Herbert Read and Marion Richardson would emerge, and the Hadow Report of 1926 would recognise the critical need for formal art instruction in schools.

The Society was reconstructed as The National Society in 1909 and became the National Society for Art Education in 1944 when it merged with the Society of Art Teachers. The NSEAD operated across England, Wales and Scotland where it established regional offices. Detailed records have been provided by these offices and the map opposite illustrates the areas covered. Members will be surprised to see how the regions were arranged.



## Above right

Photo dated 1890, taken outside the Royal College of Art, London, two years after the Society of Art Masters was formed

### Regional work and records

The offices covering the North West and North East of England were particularly active, but written records from all areas remain. These were transferred to the NSEAD central office, wrapped in newspaper and string, and stored over the years in many boxes where they remained unpacked until this archive was initiated.

The period up to and including the Second World War can be followed in the records, but the thinking that emerged from 1940 onward is especially fascinating. The groups of artists and art teachers who came together to steer the future shape of public education, which would be mapped into the legislation that followed, can be found in the archive. There are many references to Sir Herbert Read, Dick Field and RR Tomlinson. The Inspectorate team of the London County Council were particularly active, with teachers and inspectors such as Alexander Barclay Russell and John Morley providing leadership. They sought to re-establish the subject, particularly in secondary schools, and they used subject associations such as NSAE and the Society for Education through Art to promote new forms of curriculum content. Large exhibitions were staged at London venues such as the Royal Festival Hall and County Hall.



**‘Due to the sheer scale of the archive and collection, we knew that documenting its contents would be a long and detailed process, and that the first stage would take many years’**

### Government legislation and new approaches to education

The 1944 Education Act and other related government legislation that followed the Second World War gave art education the opportunity to feature in the national rebuilding programme and our records illustrate the innovative roles played by individuals such as Sir Alec Clegg in the West Riding of Yorkshire, Clifford Ellis at Corsham Court in Wiltshire and Ernest Goodman in Manchester High School. In that process, the Government supported local authorities to purchase stately homes it had used during wartime so that these could be redeveloped for educational use.

With Sir Henry Moore, Dame Barbara Hepworth, Richard Halliwell and Victor Pasmore leading the way in art schools, the northern institutions shaped the basic design course in Newcastle and the Scarborough summer school, influencing the Developing Process movement. Pasmore and Tom Hudson reference the Bauhaus in conceiving a new approach in art and design education, giving new ideas about form and basic design. In *Education Through Art* (1943) Herbert Read proposes that art education is to foster the growth of the individual in each human being.

It should be remembered that women were barred by law to teach if they married, a law which remained in place until after the Second World War. The Education Reform Act 1944 transformed school experience and liberated the profession to deliver new approaches which would benefit communities.

The significant role played by art education during the 1950s was enhanced by the Festival of Britain celebrations of a post-war community seeking alternatives to conflict. The national festivals promoted art and design in the school curriculum, whilst school rebuilding and new larger schools led to ambitious art and design developments such as The

Leicestershire Plan, promoting increased activity and the introduction of basic design in secondary schools.

During the 1960s significant Government committees, Coldstream, Summerson and the Robbins Committee, were appointed to review art education, leading eventually to the Royal College of Art becoming a university institution. In this process local art schools were to lose out to the new state-operated polytechnics. This was to lead to significant student unrest in local art schools by 1968. Most notorious of these was in Hornsey, where students took over the college and forced the principal to leave, and at Guildford School of Art where art teachers would eventually be dismissed. The unrest, based initially on the schools of art losing degree awarding powers to the polytechnics, caused national disruption and can be followed in our documents.

### Reshaping the curriculum

The establishment of the Schools Council, its national projects and the reshaping of the curriculum during the 1970s would lead to the shaping of the National Curriculum during the 1980s and early 1990s. This process is extensively covered in the documents with many papers and publications eventually leading to the formation of the National Curriculum for Art and Design. The appointment of John Steers as general secretary of NSAE in 1982, which then became the NSEAD in 1984, resulted in the establishment of a new network of art teachers across the UK. In Devon, Bob Clement formed an active inspectorate which sought to transform approaches to art teaching in primary schools. In the North West Rod Taylor established Drumcoon, a vibrant education art centre hosting the work of primary and secondary groups working on innovative projects, and in the Northeast the focus for art teachers was led by individuals such as Keith Gentle and David Marjoram.

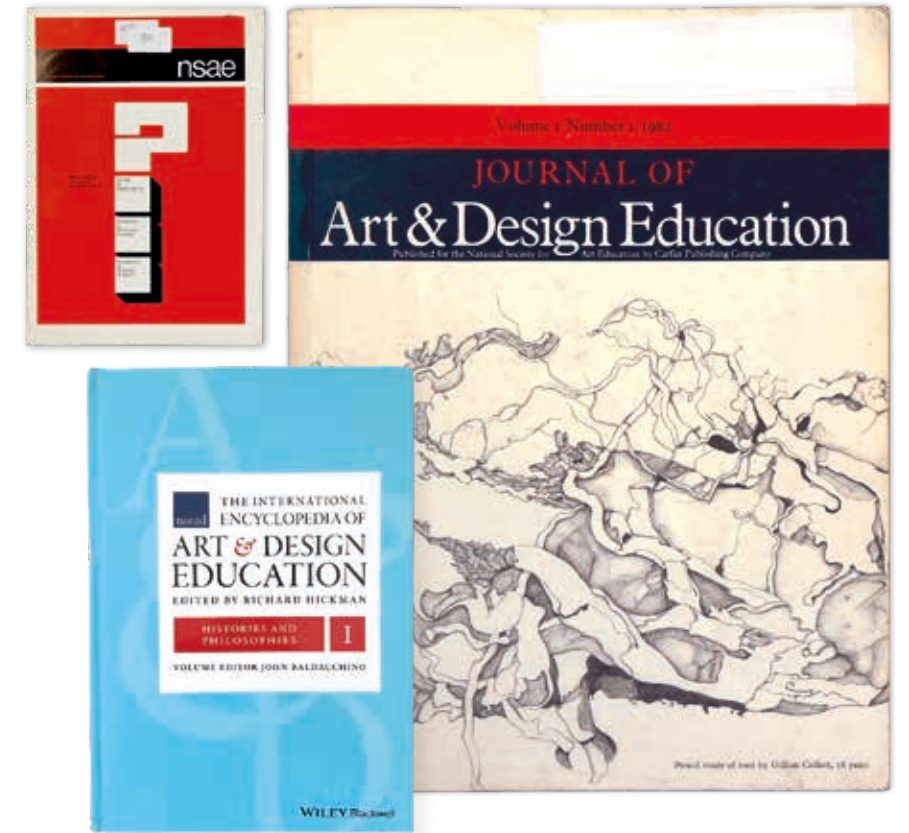
### The library and magazine archives

From such groups came papers and books promoted and published by NSEAD. Beginning in the 1990s, the Society embarked on a programme of book publications under its own imprint. Eight books were co-published with Intellect between 2005 and 2009, and other partnerships included Collins Education. In this period, the Society also developed a ‘mobile bookshop’ and online bookstore offering publications of interest to art educators from other publishers and organisations including InSEA and NAEA in the USA. All these titles are included in the archive. Interest in book purchases diminished in later years as more material became freely available on the web.

From 2000 to 2020, the papers cover the setting up and operation of the Artist Teacher Scheme; the Skills in the Making project; and the Athene and the Head Trusts. The records also cover the purchase of property at Mason’s Wharf, Corsham, as the location of the NSEAD central office. Also recorded is the contribution the Society made to the Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum and New Secondary Curriculum 2008.

It is our hope that it will prove particularly easy to locate the references you seek within the documents, as reports, records, annual conferences and Government papers are all referenced.

**‘The groups of artists and art teachers who came together to steer the future shape of public education, which would be mapped into the legislation that followed, can be found in the archive’**



**Above (clockwise)**  
Member magazine NSAE (1944-1984); first issue of *iJADE* (1982) NSAE; and NSEAD’s *The International Encyclopedia of Art and Design Education* (IEADE), Volume 1, Wiley Blackwell (2019)

### Opposite page

**Top:** *AD* magazines, first published in 2011

**Below:** *StART* magazine, NSEAD. Published 2003 to 2010

Board and Executive meetings and written communication between members are also listed. However, to complement this huge record of growth and development we have also assembled a collection of specialist books and magazines which form the second and third sections of our publication archive. The books date from the 1920s and the magazines archive covers our publications, including the *International Journal of Art and Design Education (iJADE)* from 1982 onwards, and *AD* magazine from 2011. There are also several relevant overseas journals that may be of interest. Many key texts relating to art and design education can be found here and should prove useful for teachers as most of the books are now out of print.

We will continue to add to, amend and enrich this collection so that it can support members with their daily teaching, practice and research. It is our hope that you find the contents of the NSEAD Archive useful and enriching. ●

[archive.nsead.org](https://archive.nsead.org)

NSEAD wishes to thank Professor Ron George for his dedication, time and expertise that have led to the NSEAD Archive being listed online. Thank you, Ron, for making sure this archive is organised and can be shared with generations to come.



# Archives beyond the present

**Dr Anna Robb (SFHEA)**, senior lecturer in art education (Teaching and Research) and academic lead MEd Programmes, University of Dundee, reflects on her archival research into the history of art education in Scotland and what it reveals about advocacy, institutions and national context

Archives are filled with the voices of previous generations, all with views and opinions that have resulted in actions that have flowed through to the present. By accessing archives, we gain a deeper understanding of why we teach the way we do today, as they reveal systems of relationships and practices connecting past to present.

I recently began a research project focused on the history of art education in Scotland. This was prompted by earlier work I had completed which

**‘They [archives] remind us that we are part of a narrative that extends beyond the present. We need to continue this so that the work of previous generations is not in vain’**

highlighted that the history of art and design education in the UK tends to focus on England, despite different education systems across the country. It is therefore difficult to gain a comprehensive understanding of the history of art education in Scotland.

The Royal Society of Edinburgh has provided me with funding to explore archives in the UK to

find out what they hold in relation to this theme; my first visit was therefore to the NSEAD archives in Corsham earlier this year. I wanted to know who the key Scottish figures were that passionately advocated for the subject, what they did, how they interacted with the rest of the UK and how Scottish educational institutions evolved as a result.

Within the first half hour of the first day, I had found a handwritten members list from the Society of Art Masters from 1888. On it were the names of two men who were based in Scotland;

one a member of staff at Glasgow School of Art, the other a teacher at a Dundee secondary school which still exists today.

As I worked

through the other records in the file, I discovered further AGM minutes and members lists for the following ten years. Through these lists I was able to map the growth of Scottish membership across the first ten years of the Society’s existence.

On my second day I focused on the 20th century, which revealed a story of how the relationship with Scotland waxed and waned over

**Below (clockwise from top left)**

Herbert Read’s *The Future of Industrial Design* first published in 1943; extract from the minutes of a Special General Meeting of the Society of Art Masters held in Birmingham on May 20th 1899; BBC pamphlet accompanying a radio series by art historian Anthony Bertram in 1937; classroom layout proposed in Frank E Dodman’s pamphlet



the decades, as NSEAD evolved through various organisations. It took over a century from that first members list in 1888 for an NSEAD conference to be held in Scotland, which it did in Glasgow in 1990.

Alongside this there were plenty of other documents to distract me from my goal, such as a curious document about how to design an art classroom in the 1930s, and guidance on what should be present in an art school library. Photos of past members sit alongside fascinating speeches and original documents written by art education experts such as Sir Herbert Read.

The archive highlights that people have consistently fought for the subject of art education and thought it worth fighting for, keeping its profile high in the UK. They remind us that we are part of a narrative that extends beyond the present. We need to continue this so that the work of previous generations is not in vain. ●

pedagogyandpalette.substack.com  
 Dr Anna Robb SFHEA

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# iniva

Challenging and  
advancing art and  
design education



Since it was founded in 1994, the Institute of International Visual Arts (iniva) has aimed to make art from a global perspective accessible to everyone. Today, it is an international research organisation and home to the Stuart Hall Library, which contains over 10,000 books, from exhibition catalogues and theory texts to periodicals, zines and artist monographs. Here, **Kaitlene Koranteng**, archivist and engagement producer at iniva, speaks with creativity consultant and UBAE (United Black Art Educators) co-founder and leader **Canon Marlene Wylie**, exploring the value of object-based learning and the role of archives in facilitating creative exploration across subjects

**Top (left)**  
Kaitlene Koranteng  
© Rahil Ahmed.

**Top (right)**  
Canon Marlene Wylie  
© Eileen Perrier

**Left**  
iniva's Art Educators  
Lab event in London  
© Jemima Yong

**Marlene Wylie (MW): How do archives help us to challenge and advance art and design education from your experience as an archivist at iniva?**

**Kaitlene Koranteng (KK):** I was recently working to archive specific areas of our educational work, so was looking back at our past programmes and engagement with schools and teachers. The thing that was quite revealing to me was the amount of experimentation that was allowed, which was both illuminating and slightly sad, because I know teachers don't have as much freedom today. But I think that's changing and we'll keep pushing for that change. I know lots of people

are working behind the scenes to reopen that space.

When exploring our archive, there's an element that's very inspiring, and that is seeing work that has already happened, seeing how teachers

in schools have worked with artists before, or experiencing art in the classroom and letting it be experimental.

One of the programmes I was drawn to specifically was the Artists in Schools residency that iniva hosted from 1997 to 2000. I know there are versions of that today, where we have artists in schools, or artists in residence in schools, but it was reaffirming to see what has worked before.

'Art and creativity are not confined to art and design but extend to how we approach subjects such as maths or geography, giving young people space to think and play'

Looking at our residency programme, it wasn't just in the art and design classroom; artist educators were in maths or geography, for example. Art and creativity are not confined to art and design but extend to how we approach those sorts of subjects, giving young people space to think and play. I found that really inspiring.

We also delivered a project called Digital Art Resource for Education (DARE) that was exciting. It was a CD-ROM designed as a digital resource for primary art education. In the early 2000s, having a digital project in classrooms meant that it was being sent out as a resource and again could be used across

the curriculum. DARE was developed through an iniva research project, through a collaboration with children, artists and designers.

Speaking to teachers today, one of the things they have shared is the need for new, exciting resources that open up archives. These are harder to find than you might expect.

Archives provide an opportunity to sit and research. I know that having this time is a privilege for many people, but I also think it is important to look at what has been done before and consider how art histories have been reframed. We had a researcher, Jessica Midgley, who came in last year to investigate iniva's education archive. She was conducting interesting research around how the Western art canon can be challenged in classroom settings. It is great to see that people are interested in this work. Even though not everyone has the privilege of conducting extended periods of research, I think having a few researchers and allowing them to disseminate their work and share it with others is important.



I would love teachers to bring their students to our archive and library, especially A-level students. There are a vast number of resources that they could use to develop their portfolios. I know it's hard to bring students out of the classroom setting, but we would welcome visits from classes or even encourage students to come and visit us in their own time, because iniva and our library are amazing resources.

The Stuart Hall Library in Pimlico, London, is a specialist library dedicated to art and theory that focuses on perspectives from the Global Majority, including African, Asian, Caribbean, Polynesian, Latinx and diasporic communities. There isn't another place like it. Art history has overwhelmingly represented white male artists, and I believe our library can offer students a chance to engage with art history beyond the traditional canon.

I think it would be great for a young person to be introduced to iniva. On one occasion, a college student came in. We usually have mostly university students visit us, but it was wonderful to welcome a sixth-form student because their teacher had encouraged them and introduced them to the idea. They were looking at the British Black art movement and we had a lovely conversation. They were looking at the British Black art movement, but couldn't find any resources in their local library. They hadn't known about the movement, so asked questions like: 'Why didn't I know about this before?' and 'Why can't I find information about this in my local library?' I would absolutely encourage any teacher to send their students our way, because there is a wealth of invaluable material for them to access.

**MW:** You talked earlier about the importance of resources and how teachers are particularly wanting new, exciting and refreshing choices. What practical resources are available for teachers and learners to better use and access archives, start conversations, generate discourse and challenge the status quo?

**KK:** I'm going to mention iniva's innovative Emotional Learning Cards here. These are a great resource that we've developed with an art therapy organisation called A Space. It's been a long relationship and for several years we've been working together to create these cards, which encourage emotional literacy, critique and meaning-making – challenging ideas about what art can be and what its purpose is.

## 'It is important to look at what has been done before and consider how art histories have been reframed'

### Top

What do you feel?  
Emotional Learning  
Card set

### Below

Artist Meera Chauda  
delivering a workshop at  
iniva's Art Educators Lab  
event © Jemima Yong



We have made a few editions around this theme, all designed to facilitate understanding of who people are and how we make sense of the world. The cards use artwork from various artists as prompts for discussion, with questions and commentary on the back. The content covers a variety of topics from diversity and different histories to personal experience and community. The idea is that each card can facilitate discussions about feelings, which can sometimes be difficult. Having artwork as a facilitator is important. We've worked in a number of school settings and have had art therapists and artists working together. This is something we've consistently done as an organisation. I have spoken with people who have used them to facilitate meaningful conversations and positive classroom experiences.

Another helpful resource is online archival material. Within our education archive, we have digital material that allows people to browse parts of the collection. Not everyone has the opportunity to research in person or to visit an archive, so connecting with online resources can be very helpful.

We also have a selection of material from our artist files collection available digitally. Today, we're exploring the future of the artist files and how we might expand them. We would love people to engage with these materials, even if they can't come to us in person or attend our events. Recently, we secured funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to launch Living Legacies: Collaboration, Community and Radicality – a four-year project activating iniva's archive as a living, community-powered resource. We look forward to working with NSEAD during the project and we hope to support even more people to access our archives.

I also really encourage people to use their local authority archives. Librarians and archivists are lovely people. I am a little biased, but we do love helping people. Send a question to your local archive and see how they can support you.

**MW:** I endorse school visits completely. Although you are in the south-east of England, having a digital platform that individuals can engage with also benefits schools further afield. Of course, you're contactable via email, so if there is specific material individuals would like to look at, I am sure you would want to support their research. ●

[iniva.org](https://iniva.org)

iniva would like to open up archives for children, young people and communities. We would love teachers to visit; all you need to do is email [library@iniva.org](mailto:library@iniva.org) and let us know what topics you would like to explore.

The Stuart Hall Library is in Pimlico, London, and is open from Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 5pm. Membership is free. To view physical archive material, simply email us to arrange a visit.



## Reflections on an archival space

Creative education consultant and artist educator **Canon Marlene Wylie (FCCT/FRSA)**, Past President and senior fellow of NSEAD, shares the importance and value of her own personal and professional archive

### Above

Collected pieces  
of art, craft and  
exhibition catalogues

**M**y creative workspace reflects markers of time. It is a studio practice that draws people and material objects into communion, and which is deeply important to me.

Objects reflect current thoughts, memories of the past and the prospects of future legacy – a collection of material reflections that speak through the curation of personal experience. A conversation is underway between the past, the present and hopes for the future. The sharing and exchange of intimate thoughts and feelings is mentally and spiritually stimulating.

Healing happens here. My archival practice is lived. My collection of things support my sense of self which, like most of us, is complicated. The concepts of motherhood, spirituality, faith, migration, colonialism, minoritisation and assimilation are intricately woven into the material wealth of my being, thus manifesting in my work to activate stories. My personal and professional archive, entwined, is an autoethnographic pilgrimage.

There is an art to collecting and preserving, and to knowing when to stop and let go. My archival space is treasure. I mine this space to lighten the load of our contested histories and to bring hope for the future, and for future generations of creative and critical thinkers. ●

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📷 [Wyliework](#)

# YSP's National Arts Education Archive

## Improving access and collaborative working

Archive coordinator **Sophie Yaniw**, and **Christina Barras**, formal learning lead, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, reflect on how collaborative working with the National Arts Education Archive (NAEA) is widening access, supporting artist educators and positioning the archive as a living pedagogical resource

Since the National Arts Education Archive (NAEA) was transferred to Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) in 2009, it has positioned itself as a living, evolving pedagogical space, offering regular study days and workshops for students and trainee teachers of the arts. While practising art teachers and their students already maintain a strong relationship with YSP through its learning programme, they have not historically been considered a primary audience for the NAEA. Working closely together, the NAEA and YSP Learning have committed to opening the archive to this community by developing an offer that bridges the gap between historic material and contemporary practice.

The NAEA is home to over 200 collections that trace the development of arts education from the 1870s to the present day. These include the writings of key educationalists alongside exemplary work created by pupils at every stage of their development. The collections document decades of debate, advocacy and best practice in art and design education. At a time when the

education landscape is increasingly fragmented, this material offers critical reference points, enabling educators to contextualise current practice within longer pedagogical traditions.

A central concern for the NAEA has been the translation of archival material into actionable pedagogical practice, ensuring that time spent away from the classroom yields tangible benefits for teachers. Together, the NAEA and YSP Learning are exploring the potential for artist educators to act as mediators between the archive and lived educational practice. Using NAEA collections as a starting point, artist educators can create accessible, experiential encounters for teachers, pupils and communities. This includes facilitating study days, guided archival engagement and co-produced learning sessions that prioritise process, dialogue and material engagement rather than passive consumption of content.

The analogue nature of the archive supports this form of learning by offering something increasingly rare – evidence of the haptic and iterative nature of creativity. Whether



### Left (top to bottom)

Self-portrait by Michael Biggins, aged 14 years, Sir Alec Clegg Collection (1969)

Work from the Learning Through Drawing Collection, unknown artist (1970s)

Work from the Learning Through Drawing Collection, unknown artist (1970s)

### Right

Workshop at the NAEA during YSP's annual Teacher Study Day (2025)



encountered physically or through digital records, the materials show traces of touch, revision and material exploration. This supports wellbeing, regulation and deep understanding of materials, benefits increasingly recognised across health and education research.

### Equity, voice and the future of the archive

Meaningful continuing professional development led by artist educators working in the archive should operate in two directions. It should open archives to artist educators and teachers, while also feeding contemporary pedagogy, innovation and classroom knowledge back into the NAEA. Through this dialogue, critical questions can be addressed about whose voices are absent from the

## 'Using NAEA collections as a starting point, artist educators can create accessible, experiential encounters for teachers, pupils and communities'

archive and how these omissions mirror wider inequities in education. Some communities, pedagogies and contemporary innovations are not yet fully represented, risking the reinforcement of existing gaps. Artist educators, archivists and teachers working collaboratively can help surface, document and legitimise these practices, using the archive as a tool for equity rather than exclusion.

The thinking of figures such as Sir Alec Clegg (1909–1986), who positioned art education as a counter to the 'inevitability of failure' in areas affected by social, health and wellbeing deprivation, provides a strong theoretical anchor. Against a backdrop of standardised testing and streaming, he argued that a student of the arts solves problems 'in his own way rather than in accordance with specific instructions', meaning that 'all can achieve some success'. By sharing student work and preserving it within the archive, Clegg gave it status as art-in-its-own-right, reinforcing the importance of student voice, aspiration and visibility.

In a context where funding cuts and reduced staffing have limited schools' capacity to display

and celebrate student work, the NAEA and YSP Learning offer alternative ways of valuing and exhibiting creative practice. Work from the *Learning Through Drawing Collection*, co-curated by visiting students, is now displayed in the YSP Learning lunchroom, and archival material is shared during artist-led workshops. Research by Art Fund has shown that viewing original artworks benefits the human body, and preserving children's work affirms its value culturally and pedagogically. Seeing peer work exhibited or archived can raise confidence and aspiration, while reminding educators and

policymakers of the developmental importance of making, handling and experimenting.

An archive that enables genuine collaboration between staff, artist educators, teachers and students is not a static historical record. Instead, it is a responsive space that can address contemporary pressures around curriculum, equity and wellbeing, while grounding practice in material experience and long-standing educational values. ●

[yosp.org.uk/learn/national-arts-education-archive](https://www.yosp.org.uk/learn/national-arts-education-archive)  
[sophie.yaniw@yosp.org.uk](mailto:sophie.yaniw@yosp.org.uk)

Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) is a registered charity and accredited museum situated within the 500-acre 18th-century Bretton Hall estate. It is the largest sculpture park in Europe and is home to Barbara Hepworth's *The Family of Man* in its entirety, alongside a significant collection of sculpture, including works by Henry Moore, Hemali Bhuta, Daniel Arsham and Damien Hirst. YSP also presents a year-round programme of temporary exhibitions by leading international artists. In 2026, this will include exhibitions by The Tia Collection, LR Vandy, Andi Walker, Thabo Mkwanzani, Jakob Rowlinson and Louise Lockhart. NAEA is open by appointment on Tuesdays from 10am to 4pm. Group bookings can be accommodated on other days by special request.



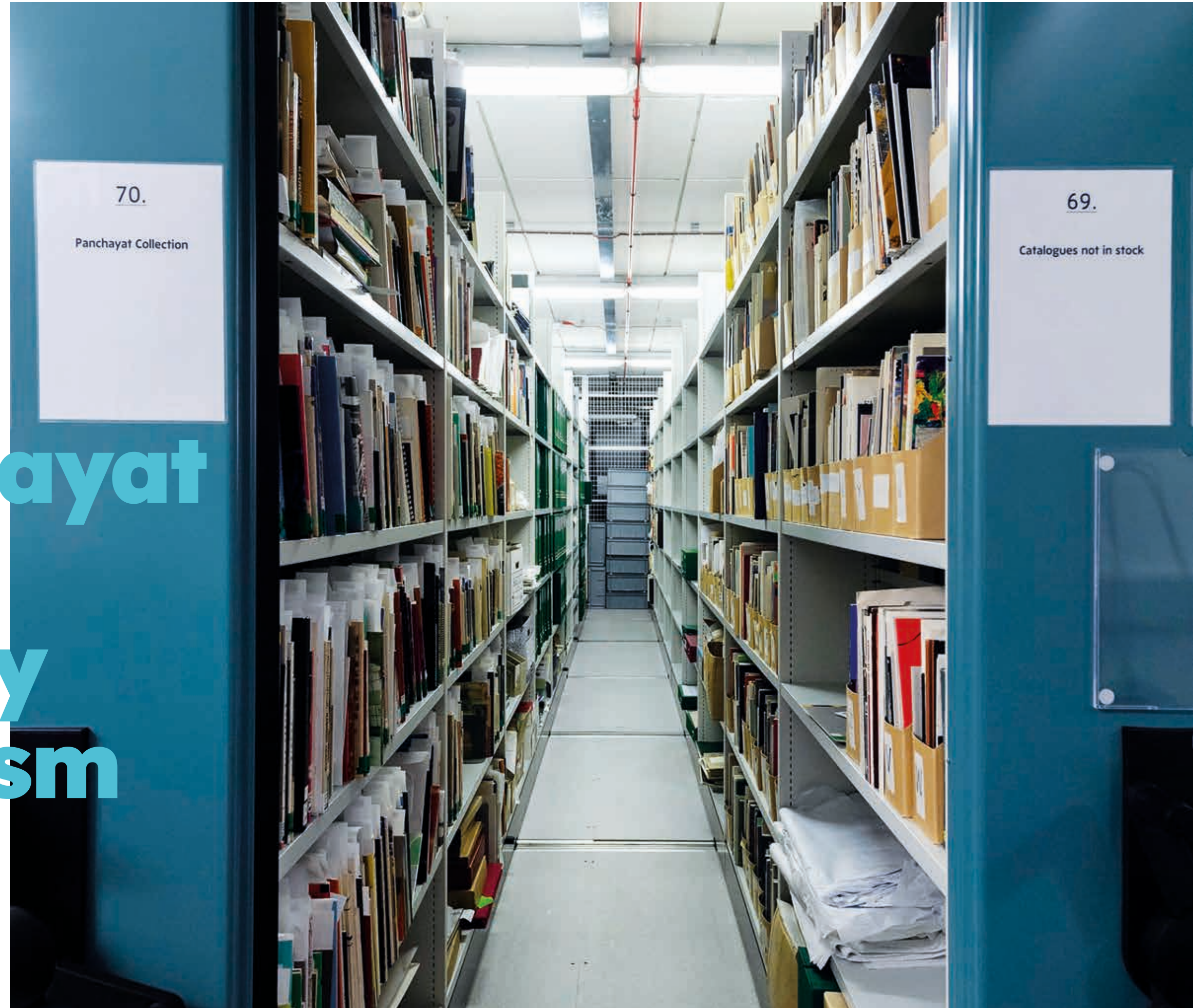
Artist **Meera Chauda** and Tate Library Collections and Engagement Manager **Gustavo Grandal Montero** explore the Panchayat Collection, considering how its histories of art, activism and self-organised practice resonate today, and can provide opportunities for discourse, creativity and critical inquiry

# The Panchayat Collection: art, agency and activism

**T**he Panchayat Collection, based at Tate since 2015, originated as an art collective founded in London in 1988 by Shaheen Merali, Al-An deSouza, Bhajan Hunjan, Symrath Patti and Shanti Thomas.

It consists of ephemera, catalogues, books, journals, slides and videos relating to cultural activities and activism by contemporary artists working between the 1980s and early 2000s. The collection has a particular focus on the intersection between race, class, gender and sexuality, as well as colonialism, (dis)ability, migration, exile, political Blackness and Third-Worldism.

**Right**  
Panchayat Collection  
in Tate Library  
© Matt Greenwood



Founded at a time when the mainstream art world frequently excluded artists with marginalised identities, the Panchayat Collection is a vital record of art, agency and activism.

This conversation was prompted by a series of questions posed by the Tate Schools and Teachers team (TST), who are exploring how to support teachers and young people to engage with the collection.

## ‘It’s more than just an archive of art; it’s a record of artists and communities who created their own spaces when the mainstream art world often excluded them’

**TST:** Can you say something about your first experience with the Panchayat Collection?

**Meera Chauda (MC):** I first came across the collection in the mid 1990s while at Winchester School of Art. My tutor, Simone Kesselheim, introduced me to Shaheen Merali because I was researching the Black Art Movement and ideas of marginalisation.

After I graduated, Shaheen invited me to help reorganise the collection, which at the time was housed on Folgate Street in East London. I spent days physically sorting and labelling posters, flyers and exhibition invites, in addition to slides, publications and ephemera – all by hand.

**Gustavo Grandal Montero (GGM):** I had seen references to the collection in the African-Caribbean, Asian and African Art in Britain Archive at Chelsea College of Arts, where I worked as librarian between 2007 and 2021, and was aware of its move to Tate in 2015.

**What felt significant about that encounter with the Panchayat Collection?**

**MC:** Spending time with it was such an important part of my art education. It introduced me to so many artists and people I’d never known about on my degree. My own practice is rooted in questions of identity, place and belonging as a British-born Indian artist, so it was exciting to see how many artists in the archive were exploring these themes in such diverse and distinctive ways. I was learning about social history and activism, and about the racial violence of the 70s and 80s. The archive was about people who looked like me, whose experiences and voices spoke directly to my own life, and of a broader struggle for social justice. It was a space where I felt like I could belong.

**GGM:** I remember attending a ‘show and share’ session with Shaheen Merali and Janice Cheddie in the Reading Rooms at Tate Britain in 2015 and seeing a selection of its wide-ranging contents. I was impressed by its richness and relevance to contemporary art research and practice, as well as the wider social and cultural discourse.

**MC:** That’s interesting because the collection is where I discovered what was then called ‘community education’. Until that point, my teaching experience had mostly been in higher education, so seeing evidence of artists working directly in schools and community spaces was a revelation. It was Shaheen who encouraged me to design and deliver my first community workshops.

**Can you share what you feel the Panchayat Collection can offer a teacher in a classroom today?**

**MC:** For me, it offers both teachers and students a powerful way to bring overlooked histories and diverse perspectives into the classroom. It’s more than just an archive of art; it’s a record of artists and communities who created their own spaces when the mainstream art world often excluded them. It also reveals how art can have this deeper function, connecting to social and historical questions, from migration to colonialism, and inviting the classroom to be a radical space for dialogue, debate, creativity and critical inquiry – much like the collection itself.

**GGM:** The history of Panchayat is as important as the individual items that are part of it. It tells multiple stories about what institutions do or do not do at different points in time, but also it shows how artists have used their agency to create their own communities and institutions. It crucially offers the possibility of engaging deeply, not only with information and resources on art, but with a range of primary source historical materials, and all that ephemera mentioned earlier, which influenced and changed the art world and wider society.

**What do you think the Panchayat Collection holds from the past that feels relevant or useful for today?**

**MC:** The collection reminds us that these struggles aren’t new. Artists and communities have been pushing back against exclusion and racism for decades. It’s a reminder that creativity and solidarity can be forms of resistance,



and that art still has the power to bring people together to question who gets to be seen and heard.

It also offers valuable insights into the history of arts education for Black and Asian artists and the grassroots, artist-led projects that shaped it. One example is the Arts Education in a Multicultural Society (AEMS) project, which was part of the Panchayat network and can be seen in the archive today. It places artists of colour into schools in marginalised areas, encouraging collaboration between artists, teachers and children.

**GGM:** In addition to providing a record of important artistic developments and wider cultural and social historical perspectives, the content of the collection shows the very earliest stage of the transition from print to digital media, with much material created using photocopiers as well as commercial printing, but also media that would be considered obsolete today, such as slides and VHS. The materiality of these items contributes additional layers of historical specificity and, by looking at them in their original form, you experience how content and container are deeply interconnected, and how technological change and changes in production and distribution facilitate and condition new forms of expression. This feels like a very tangible and physical example of the kind of rapid technological, but also societal change that young people are navigating every day, and makes me wonder about the notion of ‘lessons from the past’ to equip us for the future.

## ‘The collection reminds us that these struggles aren’t new. Artists and communities have been pushing back against exclusion and racism for decades’

**Above**  
Panchayat Collection  
in Tate Library  
© Matt Greenwood

**MC:** Yes, it invites reflection on a broader set of questions like how new technologies for production and distribution create opportunities for more voices to be heard, or how we might creatively gather around archives to create and maintain memories.

**What ONE question do you think the Panchayat Collection would put to a classroom in 2026?**

**MC:** Whose stories are missing from the art and design histories we learn about, and how can we individually and collectively make space for them?

**GGM:** How are historical narratives constructed, and what are the sources of those narratives? ●

If you are a teacher interested in learning more, or visiting the Panchayat Collection, find out more here: [tate.org.uk/art/library](https://tate.org.uk/art/library)

**Below**  
Panchayat Collection  
in the Library Stores  
© Tate, Matt Greenwood





# Whose voices are not heard?

Artist and Shape Arts chair **Tony Heaton OBE** reflects on the absence of disabled artists' work and stories in art history and education, and on the urgent need to create archives that reflect the voices of artists who are not heard

**I**n 2002, I ran a two-day arts conference called DA21: Disability Arts in the 21st Century. Following the conclusion of the conference, my mission was to address the clear reality that our voices as disabled artists were not being heard. There was nowhere to record our stories or collect our work for future initiatives that might want to include us. This reinforced my belief that archives for art education are vital and that I should initiate something. That 'something' became the National Disability Arts Collection and Archive (NDACA).

Prior to establishing NDACA, I realised that I needed to undertake research to determine what already existed in the archives holding records of disabled artists' work. After visiting many of the major arts archives, I quickly discovered that no one was recording the art or artists that interested me. This strengthened my resolve to act. The old adage, 'if you want something done, do it yourself', rang true.

This marked the beginning of a slow march to establish an archive of work that nobody wanted to fund, about artists and artworks that no one

**'The deeply conservative and tradition-bound art establishment had its doors firmly closed, positioned at the top of ramp-free classical staircases'**

seemed to understand or were even interested in.

The deeply conservative and tradition-bound art establishment had its doors firmly closed, positioned at the top of ramp-free classical staircases. It was within this climate of hostility and apathy that NDACA was born and struggled to reflect the voices of those who are not heard.

## The DA21 Conference

The DA21 Conference brought disabled artists together. At the time, I was already collecting work by disabled artists on an ad hoc basis. As the organisation of which I was then director owned a number of buildings, I began exhibiting disabled artists' work on the walls of these spaces and established a small arts library. The idea of a collection and archive felt like a natural extension of this activity.

The importance of archives for art education is beyond question. This is why the NDACA collection and archive are now housed at Buckinghamshire New University, a supportive partner of Shape Arts that recognises the value of housing the first collection and archive in the world dedicated to works by disabled artists.

Initially, the project focused on capturing the early days of the disability arts movement before it was too late, particularly as artists from that period died and their works were lost or dispersed. The collection has continued to grow,

and a new Shape Arts-led project is now in development. With funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, this project aims to collect the heritage story of the UK Disability Movement, which fought for inclusion and rights, and ultimately led to the Disability Discrimination Act.

More recently, I was fortunate to be awarded an Artists Research Fellowship Grant from the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds. As a sculptor, this was a rare and valuable opportunity to spend time immersed in their world-class archive and library. I was also encouraged to deposit some of the ephemeral materials from my own sculptural practice there, which was an unexpected and welcome outcome.

NDACA was established because we were being ignored and marginalised, but I believe that art education is slowly helping to change this. NDACA plays an important role in that change and is increasingly being used for research, dissertations and exhibitions. ●

[tonyheaton.co.uk](http://tonyheaton.co.uk)  
[the-ndaca.org](http://the-ndaca.org)



**Opposite**  
*Shaken not Stirred*,  
 Tony Heaton OBE,  
 Attenborough Arts  
 Centre (2023)

**Left**  
 Left to right: Tony Heaton  
 OBE, artist Tanya  
 Raabe-Webber and Alex  
 Cowen, NDACA project  
 archivist © Andy Barker

**Above**  
*Sitting without Purpose*,  
 James Lake, NDACA,  
 Bucks New University  
 © Andy Barker

**Below**  
V&A East Storehouse  
© Hufton+Crow

**Right**  
Section of Robin Hood  
Gardens at V&A East  
Storehouse © Kemka Ajoku

V&A East Storehouse positions archives and collections at the centre of creative learning, offering open access to museum processes, objects, and stories as a living resource for art and design education. **Catherine Ritman-Smith**, head of Learning and Engagement for Young V&A and V&A East, outlines its approach and significance for students, educators and artist practitioners

# Creative Sourcebook for Art Education: V&A East Storehouse



**T**he V&A East is dedicated to creative opportunity and its power to bring change. The storehouse and museum are two free cultural destinations created in partnership with young people, inspired by East London's creative heritage and creating new access to V&A collections.

V&A East Storehouse opened to the public in May 2025, while V&A East Museum opened in April 2026. Both venues are situated within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and are part of East Bank, a new cultural quarter and collaboration between BBC Music Studios, London College of Fashion and University of Arts London (UAL), as well as Sadler's Wells East, University College London (UCL) and V&A East.

More than a museum, an archive or a conventional exhibition, V&A East Storehouse was conceived as a creative sourcebook for everyone, functioning as both a working museum store and visitor attraction. As home to 250,000 museum objects, 350,000 library books and 1,000 archives, it is a helpful case study when considering the role of archives and collections



in art and design education. As a working store and archive where visitors glimpse technicians, conservators and curators at work, they can also enjoy the informal displays and huge architectural fragments that are too large to have been displayed in a conventional museum. Alongside this is the David Bowie Centre, a display space and study facility providing access to a vast archive of 90,000 items including Bowie's unrealised projects, scribbled song lyrics, costumes and musical instruments.

V&A East Storehouse is a place where the mechanisms of a museum are revealed, and where daily behind-the-scenes activity is not artificially separated from more familiar public operations. It is a resource for artist educators and learners as a site of primary research, a space to contextualise the subject of art and design, and a unique starting point for fresh ideas. Schools and colleges are warmly welcomed to organise free self-guided visits, and our compact Aladdin's cave of artefacts can support learners to explore and expand their understanding of the subject.



### A philosophy of many voices

In answer to the question: 'Whose voice is not documented in art and design education?', V&A East, as a collection, store and archive, provides a resounding response – all our voices are important, and the philosophy of 'many voices' is at the heart of our approach at V&A East. We are convinced that multiple perspectives, personal

## 'All our voices are important, and the philosophy of 'many voices' is at the heart of our approach at V&A East'

experiences, and diverse contemporary responses to our archives and collections, build a polyphony of voices that enrich our understanding of art and design. In our complex world, we need to build nuance and support divergence. As a result, work at V&A East is understood as an ongoing journey of discovery, where every new contribution adds to our understanding of the significance of an idea, a design or a moment in time.

Our co-created displays also offer glimpses into personal stories and new creative collaborations inspired by the larger architectural fragments within V&A East Storehouse. In particular, a two-storey section of a maisonette flat from the Robin Hood Gardens housing estate, demolished in 2017, forms the centrepiece of a long-term collaborative community project.

As a unique and relatable starting point for student projects exploring architectural shape and form, Robin Hood Gardens

provides artist educators with a breathtaking object that offers literal windows into our recent past, while provoking questions about the relationship between art and the 'real world' through a focus on societal attitudes towards housing, community and design.

Community films and oral histories sit alongside the work of world-famous South Korean contemporary artist Do Ho Suh, whose panoramic film also responds to the architectural fragment. Commissioned in 2017, as Robin Hood Gardens underwent its first phase of demolition, Suh's work, *A Ruin in Reverse*, uses 3D scanning, photogrammetry, drone footage and time-lapse photography to map a visual journey through the building. It offers an immersive way to introduce the artist's work to students, while also inviting reflection on differences between established artistic perspectives and community voices.

### The Order an Object service

V&A East Storehouse provides an opportunity to get closer to museum objects and archives. Through the Order an Object service, anyone can book a free appointment to see an object from the V&A collection. The service moves visitors from the edges to the centre, placing them in the role of researchers who contribute fresh thoughts, perspectives and stories, enriching collective understanding of the V&A and of the objects it preserves for future generations. Objects can be ordered from the David Bowie archive or the main collection, ranging from handwritten song lyrics to handmade furniture. Anyone over the age of 16 can access the Order an Object service for free, including individual students undertaking original research and artist educators pursuing their own practice.

While Order an Object is a resource for individuals, V&A East also supports educational groups through curriculum-based and co-designed workshops for schools and colleges. These sessions provide a unique opportunity to engage closely with relevant collection items while developing new skills. Following two years of taking V&A objects into classrooms, we have worked collaboratively with local schools and



'By asking questions such as 'what is waste?' and 'how is our identity reflected in visual communication and design?', we invite learners to consider their own creative ideas in dialogue with our collections and expertise'

**Above**  
Neighbours Day  
© Jimmy Lee,  
commissioned by  
the V&A

**Left**  
V&A East Storehouse  
© Hufton+Crow

**Opposite**  
Overview of the  
David Bowie Centre  
© David Parry

partner organisations to develop an accessible programme of activities that help teachers and learners use V&A East as a vital resource for art and design education.

Alongside visits and workshops for students, V&A East Storehouse is also used as a space to connect educators, share ideas and build communities of practice around our collections and environments. In addition, our youth programme encourages 16- to 24-year-olds to connect with careers education, develop new skills, and build professional and social networks through talks, workshops, projects and the V&A East Youth Collective. ●

📍 Catherine.RitmanSmith  
🌐 [vam.ac.uk/info/learn#schools](http://vam.ac.uk/info/learn#schools)

# Lost Lines

## Drawing to explore a personal archive

**Dr Claire Penketh** is principal editor of the *International Journal of Art and Design Education (iJADE)*. Here, she reflects on how drawing can be used to explore the material, ethical and emotional dimensions of a personal family archive

**I** open the case again – the chaos of letters still crammed inside. Some push forward to be read, while others shift beneath the layers. I take one, unfold it and then quickly read another. Your lost words are ‘dog tired’, ‘jiggered’ and ‘dead-beat’. On the back of an envelope, a note in soft kohl reads *Dear M, Peas in the fridge. Meat in the oven. Love G.* And then a jewel, a piece of blotting paper, its printed codes of blue ink rubbed deep into the soft material. I imagine your hand smoothing its surface, imprinting the essence of every letter without disclosing a word.



**Opposite**  
Sorted Soft Printed Codes

**Right**  
Lost Lines – Inked codes

**Far right**  
Lost Lines – Redaction



‘This rushed note felt larger than simple arrangements for tea. It prompted reflections on what we hold on to, what we let go and the significance of lost lines’

In 2017, I took ownership of two old brown suitcases, each containing family letters written between 1960 and 1962. Most of these document communications between my mum and dad while he was away in Kenya during a period of national service. He must have been among the last to be called up, receiving his posting shortly before the scheme closed in December 1960.

Although I recognised one suitcase, the other was more surprising. It contained letters, predominantly written by my mum, offering detailed accounts of her daily life as she reported back to my dad almost every day during the 18 months they were apart. During this time, they exchanged wedding plans, reminisced about their honeymoon, and shared adventures, anxieties and bereavements. There were also insights into cinema trips, popular music, holidays, day trips and local gossip, alongside references to a new television programme, *Coronation Street*. Having lost my mum 30 years earlier, the rediscovery of this archive offered insights into a family history that there had been little time to share.

Nearly ten years later, this personal collection has provided a starting point for my arts practice as I examine the role of contemporary drawing in exploring archival material. While this remains very much a work in progress, I share some of those explorations here.

### Materiality

Each suitcase held a chaotic clutter of letters. Without chronological order, my early readings became a matter of chance. Drawing on Jane

Bennett’s writing on ‘thing power’ and the agency of objects, published in 2004, I began to explore how particular letters attracted my attention through their material qualities.

Initial drawings focused on the physicality of the archive as I worked on and with paper. I became particularly intrigued by the onion-skin paper used for airmail, whose light, translucent quality allowed traces of ink to be seen in reverse. These explorations developed into drawings that echoed the archive’s apparent desire for contact, to be ordered, unfolded, folded and turned over in my hands. I thought about the anticipation of removing each letter from its envelope, the reader eager for communication. A piece of blotting paper pushed its way forward, demanding attention. Its soft material and spots of blue ink seemed to hold the essence of correspondence.

### Redactions

The idea of divulging the contents of these letters, or even reading them closely myself, is not straightforward. While personal archives may hold material of wider significance, these were private letters, never intended for public disclosure. Although I can reconcile myself with reading family correspondence, I feel less certain about revealing its contents. There are ethical challenges in representing others when permission can no longer be sought. Exploring the materiality of the archive without disclosing its content offers a way to raise questions about the ethics of disclosure. I wrote responses to my mum, sharing thoughts and feelings about onion-skin paper,

before redacting my replies and using them as a starting point for further drawings.

### Mum’s the word

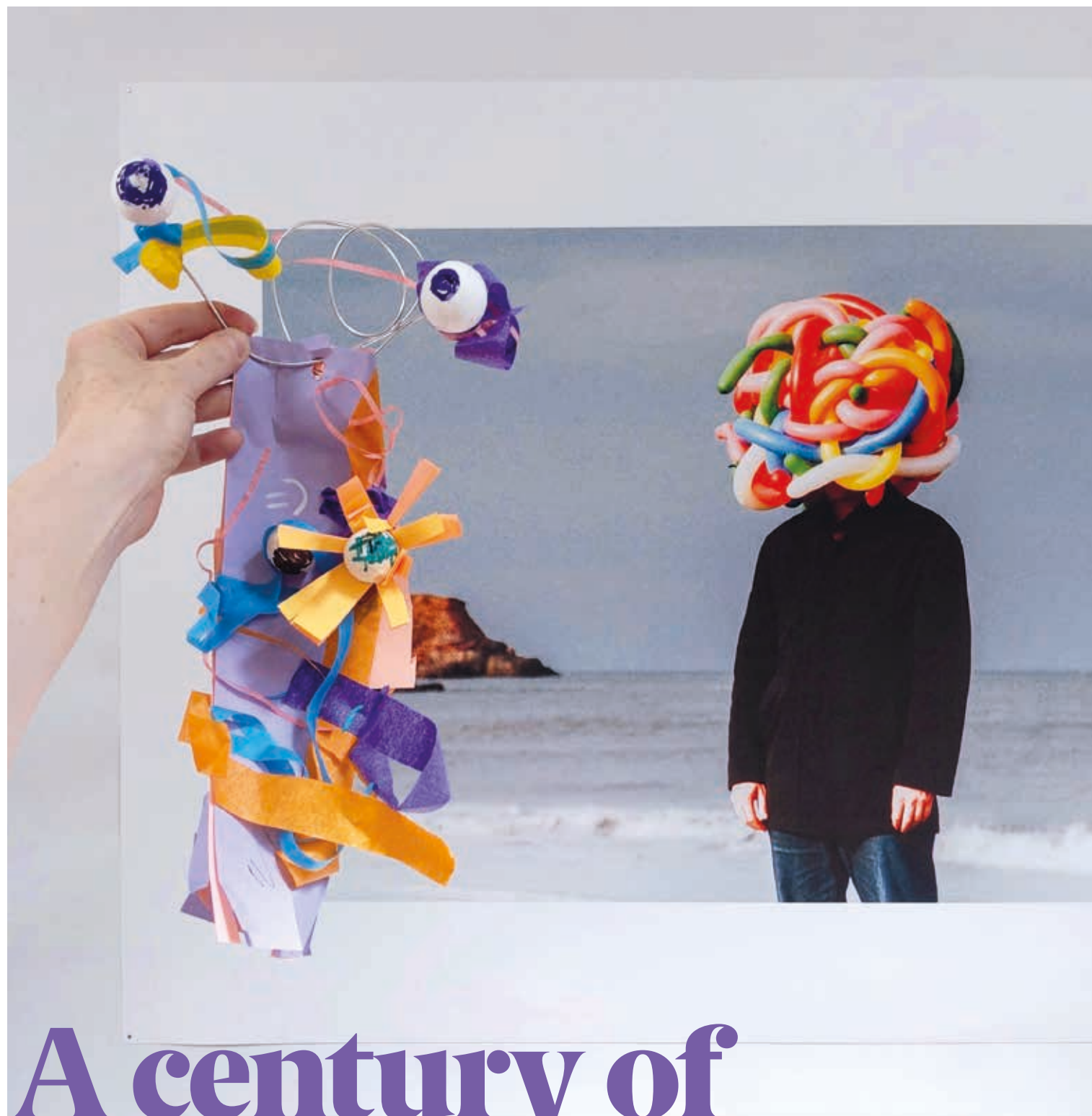
I recalled a paper by Helen Farrell, published in *Drawing: Research, Theory, Practice* in 2021, which described her painstaking process of re-drawing notes made by the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty. During my reading of the archive, I noticed words my mum used to describe tiredness – ‘jiggered’, ‘dog-tired’ and ‘dead-beat’ – and attempted to recreate the direction and shape of her marks. I also found a hastily written note from my mum to her own mother; a drawing of sorts in kohl on an airmail envelope reading *Dear M, Peas in the fridge, meat in the oven. Love G.* Seemingly inconsequential, this rushed note felt larger than simple arrangements for tea. It prompted reflections on what we hold on to, what we let go and the significance of lost lines.

I recognise that not everyone carries the weight or privilege of a family archive. I will continue to explore the materiality of these kept things, ordering a chaotic narrative through the openness and uncertainty that drawing affords. ●

✉ [c.l.penketh1967@gmail.com](mailto:c.l.penketh1967@gmail.com)

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# A century of collecting and creative learning

**Lesley Cheung**, assistant curator of Art Works in Schools at Manchester Art Gallery, reflects on the 100-year legacy of the Rutherston Collection and how it continues to inspire creative learning in schools today

**I**n January 1939, when students at a senior school in Halifax returned in the new year to pick up library books, something was different about the room. There was an oil painting of a snow scene by Frederick James Porter, an acclaimed artist associated with The London Group. Along with other paintings, drawings and prints in the art room and music room, this came from the Rutherston collection, developed by Bradford industrialist and collector Charles Rutherston. It was gifted to Manchester Art Gallery in 1925 on the condition that the works would be lent to art schools and galleries across Lancashire and Yorkshire to inspire young artists and the public.

#### Rutherston Collection then and now

This is an early glimpse of the Rutherston Collection, which grew with gifts, bequests, transfers and acquisitions over the following decades. The gallery purchased from far and near, including the Pictures for Schools exhibitions at the Royal Academy, organised by the Society for Education Through Art, which became NSEAD, and drawings exhibited just off Mosley Street by Manchester artist Harry Stevens. Stevens had learnt from works in the collection, placed in his school by art teacher Mrs McGlynn in 1946. The works travelled extensively to schools in Manchester, Salford, Bury, Warrington, Halifax and surrounding regions every term through a loan scheme up to the 1980s.

In 2023, the gallery was able to revisit the collection in earnest as part of the wider Taking Stock collections review. With a curatorial approach that honours the collection's purpose for creative learning, we reflected on how it could be accessible and useful again today. We worked with six emergent artists, who had previously studied at The Manchester College, and spent a year engaging with works and developing their creative responses. They shared their insights with over 350 visual art students from the



**'As a public gallery, we are compelled to strike a fine balance between the long life the works will have being preserved in perpetuity and the good life they can enjoy being placed in schools'**

college, who also responded to the collection and provided insight into what still sparked curiosity. Some of the responses have gone on to inspire later students at the college.

#### Art Works in Schools project

These fruitful attempts gave us confidence that opening up the collection increases collective knowledge for everyone, not just for students and artists to learn from examples, but also for us to understand the collection better and collect new works more in line with current interests. As a public gallery, we are compelled to strike a fine balance between the long life the works will have being preserved in perpetuity and the good life they can enjoy being placed in schools.

Forty years on, public and educational sectors have evolved immensely to shape and serve our society. With the experience we've gained through developing the Art of Resilience programme, we've been exploring what schools, pupils and teachers in Manchester need in order to thrive in the 21st century – and how the gallery, along with the Rutherston Collection, can help support those needs. Borne out of these learnings is the Art Works in Schools pilot project designed to test new ways of sharing our collections with schools, with support from Art Fund and Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund.

Since early 2025, we have been co-designing the project with eight primary and secondary schools, colleges and alternative provision settings in areas of Manchester where children and young people have limited access to art,

as well as artist facilitators Kate Freeborough, Sam Owen Hull and Kayt Woods. A selection of up to ten works is placed in each setting for one or two terms, with the ambition to embed art and creativity in everyday learning. We adapt the vision of supporting the development of visual literacy skills, creative expression, good mental health and resilience to specific ambitions in each school. These include helping pupils create space for themselves, encouraging them to form their own opinions and understand others, building confidence around art and enriching their cultural life and supporting teaching staff to deliver the art and design curriculum.

We are just halfway through, and there have been profound moments of curious encounters. When we pulled out a rack in the art store, out of

all the paintings, pupils were again drawn to the snow scene that had once been in Halifax. Some were keen to express ideas, while others simply looked with extreme concentration.

In their school library, pupils were telling us how the *Kite in the Sea* painting by Harry Stevens made them feel and why. We also got more adventurous with small sculptures, such as *Noli me Tangere* by Ian Davidson, which came from a Pictures for Schools exhibition. For one day, the sculpture is taken to schools, where the artist facilitator leads a workshop. Pupils observe and touch the smooth and rugged surfaces with supervision, and learn how sculpture could be cast from a model.

As we continue to scope out how our collections can be experienced and support learning in schools, we also look forward to hearing from school leaders, artist and designer teachers, SENCOs, artist facilitators and gallery colleagues with comparable experiences, with the hope of creating a viable programme for the people of Manchester. For such a programme to be fit for purpose, sustainable and future-proof as a resource, it is not just about having artworks in schools, but how art works in schools. ●

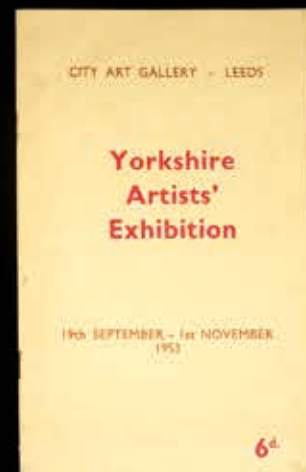
[manchesterartgallery.org/art-works-in-school](https://manchesterartgallery.org/art-works-in-school)

**Opposite**  
*Sea Mammal* (2003), creative works by pupils from a Manchester primary school in response to Marcus Coates © Sam Owen Hull

**Top**  
*The Witch's Hat* (1980-1981), Paul Waplington © Manchester Art Gallery

Curator and researcher **Dr Kerry Harker** is also a Bridget Riley Art Foundation Fellow at the University of Leeds. Here, she explores how new insights into a dynamic period in the advancement of art education in England emerge from the little-known archive of artist and educator **Maurice de Sausmarez**

# A continuous circulation



During the 1950s, Leeds became a meeting point for an extraordinary confluence of artist educators working across Leeds College of Art and the University of Leeds. This enabled the city to emerge as an internationally significant centre for new thinking on art education. Many readers will be familiar with Harry Thubron, who was appointed to the college in 1955. His formative contributions to the development of 'Basic Design', as this pedagogical approach came to be known, are relatively well documented. Far fewer, however, will recognise the name of artist and educator Maurice de Sausmarez, Thubron's close friend and collaborator.

De Sausmarez arrived in Leeds in 1948 to teach briefly at the college, before becoming head of the newly established Department of Fine Art at the University of Leeds. During his years in the city,

**'The thesis that the arts today have their true importance in 'education for leisure' is wholly contrary to my conception of the arts'**

he addressed the challenges of situating Fine Art within a university context, laying the foundations for a distinctive and enduring pedagogical model that integrated the history and theory of art with studio practice. His writings from this period remain relevant today, exemplified by this passage from *The Place of the Arts in Contemporary Society* (1956). In this he wrote:

'The thesis that the arts today have their true importance in 'education for leisure' is wholly contrary to my conception of the arts. They are not the tinsel decorations on the top but rays of light which strike upwards from the foundations of a civilisation, illuminating every stage and aspect of its life and growth.'

## Collaboration, debate and the Coldstream years

By 1959, de Sausmarez was preparing to leave Leeds to return to teaching in London. During

this decade in the city, however, he was deeply embedded in both the cultural life of the region and national debates on the future of art education. The archive includes, for example, a memo from 1958 circulated in response to a letter from Robin Darwin, principal of the Royal College of Art, to William Coldstream. That same year, Coldstream had been appointed chair of the National Advisory Council on Art Education, which would publish its first report in 1960 outlining proposals for a new diploma in Art and Design.

In the heated debates leading up to the so-called *Coldstream Report*, de Sausmarez and his colleagues used this memo to challenge Darwin's views on the purpose of art schools, the nature of the art and design curriculum, and the most appropriate training for art teachers.

He wrote: 'The question of the training of teachers as distinct from what Darwin terms

'the training of artists in the real sense' raises perhaps the most crucial issues. We disagree with this distinction because it is, firstly, a continuation of

19th-century "Bohemian" ideas and, in the second place, totally unrealistic. It is well known that almost every "real artist" in this country teaches or has taught. We would submit that the attempt to make clear distinctions between art teachers, "real" artists and freelance activities is meaningless in the contemporary world and, in the present context, harmful.'

The memo, which bears the hallmarks of de Sausmarez's writing, was co-signed by Harry Thubron, then head of the School of Painting at Leeds College of Art, and Eric Taylor, its principal, alongside de Sausmarez and colleagues from the University of Leeds – George Clapton, professor of French; Asa Briggs, professor of Modern History; and Hubert Dalwood, who was at that time Gregory Fellow in Sculpture. The archive is rich with similar material, revealing close collaboration across institutions and disciplines, and showing how the voices of artist educators were amplified through collective action.

## Reassessing Maurice de Sausmarez

The relationship between Maurice de Sausmarez and Harry Thubron has at times been misrepresented, with suggestions that de Sausmarez merely followed developments in art education for which Thubron alone was responsible. This interpretation does not hold. While approaches to the new art education and to Basic Design varied between individuals, and debates were often passionate, it was only collectively, through a continuous circulation of



ideas, that a new model of art education could be articulated, contested and secured. This model was responsive to a Britain transformed by the Second World War and capable of addressing the questions posed by modern art.

De Sausmarez's collected writings, teaching aids, correspondence and library, forming a rich and expansive archive of his life and work, were acquired from his widow, Jane de Sausmarez, by the University of Leeds in 2019, with support from the Bridget Riley Art Foundation. De Sausmarez was an early champion of Riley's work. Now fully catalogued, the archive is available to researchers for the first time.

In my role, I have had the privilege of working with this material since early 2025, motivated by the opportunity to reassess a decisive period in the history of art education in England, a story we may think we know well, but which still has much to reveal. ●

✉ [k.harker@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:k.harker@leeds.ac.uk)

🔗 [library.leeds.ac.uk/special-collections/collection](https://library.leeds.ac.uk/special-collections/collection)

## Opposite

Exhibition catalogues from the 1950s demonstrate how extensively de Sausmarez knitted himself into the cultural life of the region, including as an artist exhibiting regularly in Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield. University of Leeds Libraries & Galleries © Maurice de Sausmarez Family Trust

## Above

Maurice de Sausmarez in the studio (c.1966), University of Leeds Libraries & Galleries © Maurice de Sausmarez Family Trust

## Left

Central Court of the Parkinson Building, used as a venue for exhibitions organised by de Sausmarez, including work by Kenneth Armitage, Reg Butler, Hubert Dalwood and Terry Frost, all Gregory Fellows at the University of Leeds (1954) © Maurice de Sausmarez Family Trust



# Advancing access and closing equity gaps



**Above**  
Cassia Clarke (2024)  
© Ben Turner

**Opposite**  
The First Archive We Knew, The London Archives (2024)  
© Amy Johnson

**Post-it note insert**  
Adult participant feedback for Honour Thy: Archiving to Remember, iniva, May Day Rooms (2024)

Independent community archivist **Cassia Clarke** reflects on pathways into archival practice, the barriers to access, and how compassionate, person-centred approaches can democratise care for domestic and community archives

**M**y introduction to the profession of artist educator began with a pivotal conversation and a handwritten letter. In May 2023, I spoke with Mark Sealy, executive director of Autograph ABP, at my graduate showcase symposium, where my peers, Sealy and I explored our archival practices. Encouraged to keep in touch, I sent Mark a handwritten letter expressing my gratitude and shared an early copy of my publication, *Preserving the Familial Archive*.

Building on this connection, Jolie Hockings, engagement curator at Autograph ABP, contacted me in June 2023 after seeing my graduate project *Take My Word For It*. Connecting with Jolie led to a rewarding collaboration in the form of the

Schools' Workshop: Preserving the Archive, which ran from September 2023 to February 2024. Initially, my project was created to combat creative fatigue, but a tutorial revealed the communal benefits of person-centred archiving and prompted me to adapt my approach for a broader audience. Through these workshops, I taught a wide range of learners, from art teachers and young people to students and families.

#### **My journey as an independent researcher**

To open access for others, I first had to gain access for myself. This journey came with many hurdles, especially as an independent researcher travelling in and around London to learn from practitioners. My process of learning is, in itself, an accessibility issue. It requires significant time, financial resources and proactivity.

In the early stages of my research, I came across several publicly available archive courses and resources online. However, many were designed for audiences looking to build an archive space or required an application process that I struggled to navigate as a beginner in the practice. I needed a space that required nothing but my enthusiasm to learn and that started with the basics. This led me to the Institute of International Visual Arts (iniva).



I enjoyed being able to talk about family histories/ complexities in a group setting. ~~It was~~ I think the space held everyone's vulnerability safely.



The iniva volunteer programme built the foundation of my archival knowledge and contributed immensely to *Take My Word For It*. Following the end of my studies, I participated in further programmes to develop my skillset and build industry connections, allowing me to

### 'What we make and collect is essential to capturing, validating and remembering those who and what were photographed'

continue learning through practice. Entering institutional archives first as a researcher and later as an educator, I have found it fascinating to speak about domestic archives. Practitioners I meet consistently express interest in my research and in my journey as an independent researcher.

#### Creating and owning domestic archives

It is important that I begin all my sessions by acknowledging the inherent intent behind creating and owning domestic archives, and by clarifying that the purpose of my teaching is to meet that initial intention with care, attention and a commitment to preservation. I am taking people into a space that many have not visited before or feel immediately comfortable in, and turning the gaze back onto them. There is a

duality in this. It involves recognising the commonalities between institutional and domestic archives. While they may differ in treatment, documentation and perception, both are equally important to protect. One thing I have learnt is that many people want to care for their materials

themselves, and they enjoy doing so in institutional spaces, enacting care in a communal environment.

Since September 2023, I have been teaching anyone who wishes to learn a democratised understanding of how to care for printed photographs. What began as a self-directed research project has grown into a communal one. I am dedicated to compassionate conservation, facilitation and knowledge sharing, as I believe I am well positioned to navigate and overcome the challenges of independent research.

As artist and archivist Rita Keegan OBE said in a 2021 interview with *The Guardian*: 'It's very easy to be written out of history if you don't have those pieces of paper'. What we make and collect is essential to capturing, validating and remembering those who and what were photographed. Opening access to archival knowledge is my contribution to this work. ●

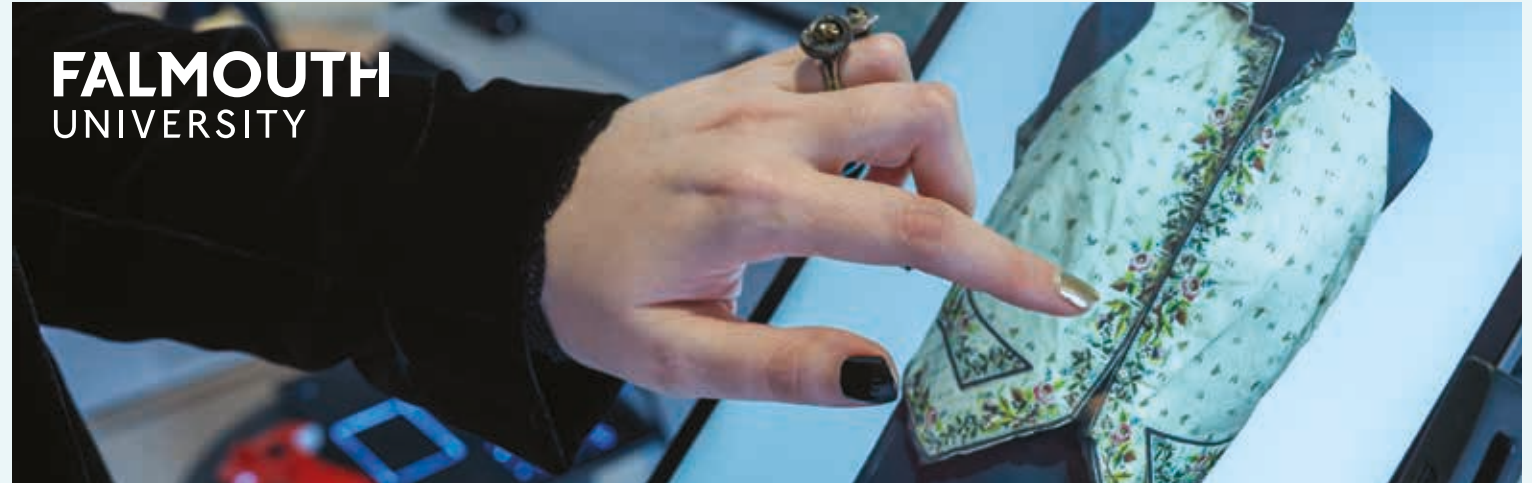
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#### Above

The First Archive We Knew,  
 The London Archives (2025)  
 © Myles Mears

I am an independent community archivist and artist educator whose work blends archival research with creative facilitation. My practice centres on reconstructing and sharing knowledge through compassionate conservation and person-centred methodologies. I believe deeply in learning as a form of liberation and joy, and I draw on lived experience and community dialogue to reimagine archival practices rooted in cultural responsibility and personal care.

My debut publication, *Preserving the Familial Archive*, offers sustainable, cost-effective strategies for home archiving, enriched with personal anecdotes and insights.



## Archives in Action: Heritage, culture and the power of memory through fashion

In 2025, tens of thousands of textiles and dress artefacts journeyed to the specially built, museum-quality, climate-controlled chill of the Falmouth University archives. Delicately embroidered waistcoats, exquisite handmade lace, shawls, shoes, handbags, hats – the entire gamut of historical dress now form Falmouth University Textiles & Dress Collection. But the question remained: how to preserve 18th Century artefacts while making them widely available to a 21st Century audience of researchers, students and historians?

**The Devonshire Collection of Period Costume was founded in 1967 by theatre enthusiasts Peter Clapham, Paula Morel and Annette Ingold: a trio who combined their personal collections into one of the largest privately owned dress and textile collections in the UK, displayed for decades in a dedicated museum in Totnes. Until now.**

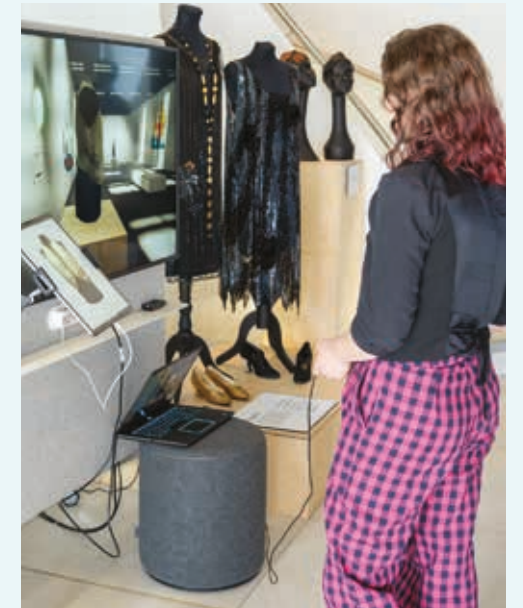
In 2025, the Collection joined a thriving fashion and materials archive at Falmouth University and began a new adventure. The Textile & Dress Collection's new home isn't just a repository; it's a living showcase of exceptional objects and a gateway for exploring how such collections can be accessible and relevant in education and beyond.

Collaborations so far have included 360° digitisation: using exceptional quality 3D scanners to create immensely detailed

digital artefacts which have been built into video games and virtual, immersive exhibitions. Items have also been digitally replicated to use or study from afar, such as imaging 300-year-old weaves to make new, archival-inspired wallpapers for the homes of tomorrow.

For teachers and educators interested in the value of archives in education, the Collection has become a major asset, and a powerful tool. Housing thousands of historic garments, textiles, patterns and fashion publications, it provides deep insight into the evolution of dress, materials and techniques.

Together, the facilities and archives create a learning and knowledge exchange environment where making and historical inquiry inform each other, supporting innovative and critically engaged fashion and textile education. ●



**All images**  
 Textiles & Dress Collection  
 © Falmouth University

Fancy seeing behind the scenes? Explore more of our Textiles and Dress Collections on our website: [falmouth.ac.uk/fashion-textiles-dress-collection](https://falmouth.ac.uk/fashion-textiles-dress-collection)

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