

EVALUATION



“I’m not going to lie to you Bryn. It’s Genuine. Simple as.”

Comment from audience member, Bristol¹

“I was introduced to new ways of thinking and practices, a fact that was amazing.”

Feedback, symposium attendee

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¹ Quote based on ‘Gavin and Stacey’, Popular TV programme

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1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 *The shape of things* was a national initiative funded by Arts Council England. It considered what distinctive contribution culturally diverse artists whose practice is contemporary craft make to influence or reflect national identity. The programme encouraged new thinking about cultural diversity within the crafts sector in relation to professional practice, developing audiences and creating new markets. The main delivery phase of *the shape of things* was from January 2009 to June 2012 following a six year research and development period.

The specific aims of the shape of things were:

- To provide bursaries to artist makers for the production of significant bodies of new craftwork as a context for considering and debating what distinctive contribution artists make to influence or reflect national identity, to connect Britain with global cultures and to reference the intercultural nature of British society
- To create opportunities for that work to be presented in specific locations and venues, and introducing artists and curators to each other's work thereby supporting their creative and professional development and enhancing their professional profile
- To interact with the process of commissioning contemporary craft and that of making acquisitions for public collections, exploring ideas for extending audiences and marketing to private buyers.
- To provide a programme of professional development events to engage those creatively involved in making, presenting and interpreting contemporary crafts in critical debate and build a strong network of those concerned with diversity in crafts
- To add value to the work of museums and galleries in education and enhance curriculum development as well as in building audiences and marketing for exhibition

The main activities of the shape of things were:

- Nine artist's were awarded bursaries to create new work which was exhibited in galleries across England: Rezia Wahid at the Crafts Study Centre (Farnham) and at the City Gallery (Leicester); Rosa Nguyen and Alinah Azadeh at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery; Halima Cassell and Seiko Kinoshita at Bilston Craft Gallery and Touchstones Rochdale; Tanvi Kant and Taslim Martin at Touchstones Rochdale; Chien-Wei Chang and Maggie Scott (exhibited separately) at New Walk Museum & Art Gallery (Leicester); all the artists also exhibited at Flow Gallery (London) and the Crafts Study Centre

- A public engagement programme linked to the exhibitions including participatory workshops for the public, opportunities for the public to talk to the artists, and workshops for undergraduates
- A programme of professional development including events and seminars, an audience development toolkit, a Symposium, and on-line essays, film and commentary

Evaluation: Summary

- 1.2 The evaluation was structured around the five questions that form the basis of *the shape of things*' programme of activity.

Research Approach

- 1.3 Hybrid adopted a mixed research approach in order to deliver the evaluation. The programme was also contextualised within the changing cultural and social landscape, as well as recognising strategy and policy related to *the shape of things*.

Terminology

- 1.4 *The shape of things* encouraged new thinking regarding the term 'diversity', raised questions that were not yet being addressed within the crafts sector and recognised that some 'museums did exemplary work in relative isolation while others appeared to ignore the place and need for conscious diversity programming'.
- 1.5 *The shape of things* faced challenges in establishing itself as a programme with a focus upon diversity whilst avoiding thematic parameters. Equally, however, it provided spaces for discussion on the complex themes of diversity. Even so, as the programme draws to a close, stakeholders recognised that changes within the arts sector meant that *tsot* might need to thematically reposition itself.

Programme Infrastructure

- 1.6 *tsot* was both driven by an individual and developed as an organisation that was seeking charitable status. The tension that existed between these directions was never entirely resolved. The programme infrastructure did not make the full shift to that of an organisation with a management board.

Artist Engagement, The Sharing Day

- 1.7 *tsot* delivered an innovative application process, specifically through the sharing day which brought short listed artists and venues together. Overall the sharing day scored 3.7 out of a possible score of 4. There were mixed

responses in terms of both artists' and curators' more detailed responses to the format of the day.

Placements

- 1.8 On concluding their placements, the artists were asked whether they were satisfied with their placements, their responses were mixed.

Branding, Marketing, PR, Audience Development

- 1.9 A core aim for *tsot* had been to develop a national brand for the programme whilst also building up new audiences. Two of the venues thought that *tsot* had developed a sense of connectedness between participating artists/ museums/ galleries. 75% of the artists felt that the programme had developed a sense of connectedness between participating artists/ museums/galleries.
- 1.10 A substantial amount of press coverage was achieved, with some artists benefiting more than others. All of those interviewed were aware of the national profile sought by *tsot*. However, artists gave this a low average score of 1.8.
- 1.11 Interviewees suggested that some venues did not *"put in the effort to get the same national coverage as other artists benefited from."*
- 1.12 Whilst acknowledging the comments made, the evidence of the amount of media publicity garnered as a result of the work done by the PR consultant is significant. All of the venues, for example, reached specialist media that they hadn't previously been featured in.

Building a network, national Representation

- 1.13 Out of the 4 venues, only one felt that *tsot* hadn't raised their profile, perhaps, as the curator outlined, because a high profile had already been achieved through previous exhibitions.

Audience Development

- 1.14 Galleries and museums had sought to build up new audiences; curators felt that they achieved this well, with an average response of 3.3 (out of a possible score of 4).
- 1.15 A substantial report on the topic of audience development was produced for *tsot*. Whilst this was noted as 'useful' by a number of curators, no one commented on having used it to deliver outputs.
- 1.16 When asked if they thought that encouraging new audiences by programming their work was appropriate, over 71% of the artists agreed

that it was. Early on in the process, some of the artists had already expressed a desire to engage new audiences.

Marketing

- 1.17 All of the venues carried out additional or different marketing/ audience development for *tsot*.

Artists, Curators, Venues, Participant Engagement

- 1.18 On the whole, curators felt that the artists they connected with worked well with their gallery / museums collections. The average score from curators was 3. Similarly, artists felt that they worked well with the curator identified to support *tsot*, the average score being 3.2 out of 4.

Artist Engagement

- 1.19 Artists' experiences of their placement differed, in some cases this was dependent on the venue that they were placed with.

Artist/ Curator Relationship

- 1.20 Apart from one of the artists, they all saw the artist / curator relationship as a two way learning process.
- 1.21 It is commendable that all (100%) of the artists commented that they had developed professionally as a result of their *tsot* commission.
- 1.22 All of the artists felt that they had had sufficient time to produce a significant body of work. However, only 37% thought that the bursary level was appropriate to the quality of work required from the commission.

Artistic Practice

- 1.23 50% of the artists felt that *tsot* provided them with the freedom to explore new ways of working that might not otherwise have been possible and considered *tsot* an empowering experience that allowed them to move their practice in new directions. 100% of the artists were pleased with the body of work that they produced.

The evaluation asked artists what changes they might make in the future, their responses varied from wider engagement with the museum sector to personal and professional development.

Programming

- 1.24 75% of curators believed that *tsot* had challenged their existing audiences' understanding of what is included in contemporary crafts.

Producing new work

- 1.25 3 curators gave the artist's final work a score of 4 out of 4, one curator gave the work a score of 3.
- 1.26 The evaluation found that the commercial aspect of the programme was not significant to participating curators. None of the curators felt that participating in *tsot* had helped them to connect with private buyers.
- 1.27 57% of the artists that responded did not feel that the programme had provided them with a strong basis to engage with the commercial aspects of the programme. 14% of the artists recognised the benefits of showing work at Flow.

Collections, Commissions

- 1.28 50% of the artists felt that they hadn't learnt more about the continuum of being commissioned to produce new work by a public art space through to acquisitions for private collections/ private buyers.

Professional Development Events; Critical Debate

- 1.29 100% of the curators felt that the programme had impacted upon their own learning and development. It is disappointing that none of the curators interviewed were planning any further personal development as a result of *tsot*.
- 1.30 75% of the venues had made changes either in their programmes or in how they approached their programming decisions as a result of *tsot*.
- 1.31 100% of artists felt that the content of the educational and events programme produced by the venue/gallery/ museum was appropriate.
- 1.32 The evaluation found that *tsot* was perceived as having had a significant impact upon the crafts sector. There was no doubt that *tsot* had been adversely impacted by the substantially changed climate within which the cultural sector now found itself. Interviewees were clear that *tsot* had identified a gap in provision.

Evaluatory STEEP

- 1.33 The evaluatory STEEP (where a sample of stakeholders were asked to consider how Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental and Political themes might impact upon *tsot*) found that there wasn't a clear format for *tsot* in the future. Advisory group members felt that the programme needed to be re-contextualised, particularly given changes to strategic thinking concerning diversity. This particularly related to the

creative case for diversity².

Legacy Options

- 1.34 The evaluation considered a number of options in reviewing how *tsot* might move forward – network / consortium; organisation; project only; absorbed within an existing Arts Council England New Portfolio Organisation (NPO); closure.
- 1.35 *tsot* could establish an informal network of public and private spaces. Terms such as networks and connectivity were often inter-linked, both seen as vital to raising the capacity of *tsot*.
- 1.36 A consortium was seen positively in terms of delivering a collaborative approach across venues, curators, artists and marketing/ audience development.
- 1.37 Delivering aims were perceived as of more importance than developing an organisation.
- 1.38 For many of those interviewed, *tsot*'s legacy was dependent upon the right projects coming forward.
- 1.39 Interviewees expressed some interest in continuing to work together however, they were also aware that this could require quite complicated brokering.

Concluding Recommendations

- 1.40 The evaluation findings suggested that a suitable NPO might be best placed to take on project led work that adhered to *tsot*'s aims.
- 1.41 *tsot* could draw to a natural conclusion with the funding coming to a close. It is unlikely that *tsot* will benefit from as substantial an award as it did through the national Grants for the Arts award.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 *The shape of things* focused on issues of cultural identity in contemporary crafts practice. The evaluation assesses both the qualitative values and quantitative outcomes of the programme. It concentrates on the delivery phase rather than the period of development that took place prior to Grants for the Arts funding.

² Particular consideration was given to Arts Council England's 'Creative Case for Diversity', which can be downloaded here http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/What_is_the_Creative_Case_for_Diversity.pdf

- 2.2 The evaluation was structured around the five questions that form the basis of *the shape of things* programme of activity. Namely,
1. Has *the shape of things* been through effective processes to fulfil its strategic aims?
 2. Has the method and quality of *the shape of things*' communication and engagement with its participants enabled them to achieve ownership of its aims and add value to their own work?
 3. Has *the shape of things* successfully linked the artist's creation of contemporary craftwork for public presentation to the market of public and private purchase?
 4. Has the level of quality of the work produced by artists receiving bursaries, the interpretation of their work by curators through exhibition presentation, and the critical debate within the events programme met their expectations and those of the stakeholders?
 5. Does the outcome of the evaluation suggest that there is a future need for *the shape of things* to continue as an organisation within the crafts sector?

3.0 RESEARCH APPROACH

- 3.1 Hybrid adopted a mixed research approach in order to deliver the evaluation. This included one to one qualitative interviews, quantitative questions, statistical analysis and a review of existing material collected through the duration of the programme delivery.
- 3.2 Scoring formats were used in questionnaires, alongside open questions in order to assist with analysis towards the evaluation findings.
- 3.3 Extensive interviews were carried out with artists, venue curators, the marketing and PR agent and members of the steering group. The programme was also contextualised within the changing cultural and social landscape, as well as recognising strategy and policy related to *the shape of things*.
- 3.4 Disappointingly, although evaluators produced an evaluation template that requested feedback in a formulaic pattern so that it could be used for comparison, none of the venues utilised the template. Each venue drew together different subsets of information that couldn't be compared for the evaluation.

Terminology: A focus on diversity

- 3.5 *The shape of things* encouraged new thinking regarding the term 'diversity' (see also timeline in Appendices). It raised questions that, at the time, were not being addressed within the crafts sector. It was a

forerunner in encouraging more detailed thinking pertaining to the creative case for diversity. As *the shape of things* (tsot) programme manager commented, on the period when the programme commenced

“What was abidingly clear at the time was a national policy and strategy vacuum within which some organisations with craft programmes and museums did exemplary work in relative isolation while others appeared to ignore the place and need for conscious diversity programming. Organisations that were programming for diverse cultural forms of expression and audiences for that work had no tangible network to enable sharing of knowledge and experience.”

3.6 The starting point for *the shape of things* was in 2003, a piece of research commissioned by Arts Council England, South West. The research sought to develop ideas for exhibition projects which, by *‘presenting works by contemporary makers to explore the link between cultural identity and creative practice in the crafts [would] test viability, identify makers, establish contact with potential venues and develop an exhibition methodology’*. The initiative therefore recognised the need for a network that enabled the sharing of knowledge and experience.

3.7 Both steering group members and artists gave careful consideration to the theme of ‘diversity’. In terms of *the shape of things* programme, it provided both a draw and a challenge. Stakeholders overwhelmingly recognised at one interviewee outlined, there hadn’t been *“a huge debate about diversity in crafts at all so I think this is just scratching the surface.”*

3.8 It is notable that the successful artists expressed a sense of conflict in applying to the programme. This sensibility was recognised by a number of interviewees, as outlined

A reflection on the whole process is that diversity itself and dialogues around the issues have moved on so much in the last 5 years and tsot emerged from this and sought to redefine notions of diversity. The artists have made it very clear that none of them applied for it on the basis of their ethnicity and were not in favour of being defined by their ethnicity – it would not have been productive to have a network that was defined by the original model of diversity (based solely on ethnicity).

3.9 The challenge faced by *the shape of things* was how to engage artists on the basis of ethnicity whilst enabling them to produce work that was not unduly contained by categories and limited understanding of the relationship between ethnicity, aesthetics and creativity.

3.10 As is often the case with a pioneering project, there were challenges. From the outset, *tsot* experienced challenges in delivering a programme

that, whilst focused upon BME artists, enabled them to develop their practice without thematic parameters.

tsot emerged during a period of media attention upon the term diversity and initiatives such as the Decibel Penguin Prize received considerable, largely negative, critical, attention for its approach. It is telling that the award changed significantly in its second year (2007, first offered in 2005), see here

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2007/jan/18/news.awardsandprizes> for a brief overview of the criticism that it faced. So, for *tsot* there were key logistical challenges that needed to be addressed before the programme could begin to market and publicise work taking place.

- 3.11 *tsot* was asked to provide a full legal outline on the programme. This was delivered by Bircham, Dyson, Bell who advised *tsot* on drafting policy guidelines to govern the selection of artists who would be awarded a commission. They set out the case that so long as *tsot* clearly defined the commission criteria they could commission on this basis. As they highlight:

“In order to ensure that the tsot project achieves its aims, it needs to encourage the widest range of appropriate applicants. I have therefore advised you that the selection policy must set out clearly:

- *What tsot bursaries are for.*
- *The aim of tsot in granting the bursaries.*
- *The criteria for the award of a tsot bursary.”*

Ultimately, the legal complexities impacted upon *tsot*'s ability to draw down funding from a key foundation that had expressed an interest in supporting the programme.

- 3.12 One interviewee highlighted *“it has been such a tough project over certain issues – marketing and how to present it – it was a difficult subject to present.”* In part, this was due to very different modes of engagement, on the one hand connecting with diverse artists and on the other enabling considerable fluidity in the work that was produced.

- 3.13 The challenges of working within the complex terrain of diversity were frequently noted by steering group members. As one interviewee outlined *“From an art form perspective I got very frustrated about ACE language around diversity and the early initiatives around this. I'm from a Chinese-English background, I don't like ticking boxes and people making assumptions about my background.”*

- 3.14 The evaluation found that *tsot* undoubtedly gave spaces for discussion on such complex issues. Of particular note in the evaluation findings was the launch at the RSA. This was positively commented on (scoring an

average mark of 3, out of a possible top score of 4) by a number of interviewees *“I was very impressed with the launch at RSA chaired by Bonnie Greer. The makers responded to some highly complex questions very eloquently.”* Although one artist felt that *“the structure of it could have been different, there weren’t that many people and a lack of timing for Q&A. It was not publicised successfully and so there was not a diversity of opinion in the room. An opportunity lost.”*

3.15 As the programme draws to a close, stakeholders recognised that changes within the arts sector meant that *tsot* might need to reposition itself. As one interviewee highlighted *“teasing out the creative case for diversity is the stage that the sector is in now.”* Interviewees considered that *“the Arts Council’s thinking has moved on hugely since this project started. This was the first project that I felt was addressing the concerns of the practitioners and was one that I felt confident about signing up to.”*

3.16 The evaluation found that stakeholders believed that there was still a role for the programme. Its specialist understanding of crafts and the theme of diversity was still considered necessary when working within museums.

“There was very varying knowledge and expertise around diversity – there is a tension here – part of the project is about challenging perceptions and bringing people on but this can be difficult if the starting point is low and this held back sophisticated conversation. There were times when there were outmoded assumptions about diversity and different agendas.”

The challenge for *tsot* programme therefore was how to be sufficiently flexible so that it could engage at multiple levels. The difficulty lay in being able to provide critical debate that was widely accessible. A theme that will be picked up and developed further when considering professional development and *tsot* events.

3.17 Given that the focus and themes of *tsot* were important in its delivery and approach, the evaluation asked the artists if this element was important or significant to them. Their response demonstrated a mixed perspective with scores ranging from 4 (extremely important) to 1 (not at all important). The average score was 3.4 with the majority rating this 3 or 4, one artist allocated this a score of 1, reflecting that not all of the artists had bought into the diversity led theme of *tsot*.

3.18 For some of the artists, the political, ethnographic, social and participatory aspects of *tsot* were of particular interest and they had individual aims that they hoped to achieve within this. We asked them whether they felt these had been met. For those for whom this was significant, 100% felt that they had achieved these aims. Their reasons varied and unsurprisingly, were not duplicated across any two artists

“Yes I expanded the boundaries of my social/participatory practice to quite a radical degree”

“Yes, referencing my cultural heritage in my new work is very strong. I address social issues as a recent migrant to Britain and the political treatment [I have received] due to my nationality “

“I was passionate about breaking the stereotype of diverse craft as community based ‘ethnic’ work.”

4.0 PROGRAMME INFRASTRUCTURE

- 4.1 The evaluation was interested in both the thematic development of the programme but also the infrastructural framework that *tsot* utilised.
- 4.2 *tsot* was both driven by an individual and developed as an organisation that was seeking charitable status. When discussions regarding the organisational infrastructure commenced, it was suggested that *tsot* be formed as a company however, this was something that ACE was not comfortable with. As an independent company it could also have been problematic for Craftspace, since – as an independent company - it may have been in direct competition for funding. Stakeholders were therefore keen that *tsot* had its own independence but remain within Craftspace.
- 4.3 The tension that existed between these directions was never entirely resolved. With broad, far-reaching aims, the programme had the ability to engage in wide-ranging discourse and opportunities that absolutely fitted the aims of the programme. Curators felt that it was a *‘great project to be involved in’* (Bristol) whilst at the same time considering that *‘the aims were too ambitious’*.
- 4.4 The challenge however, was how to assess each opportunity against the core remit of the programme and agree strategy and priorities through objective critical discussion. This point was noted in the steering group minutes, recognising that *“The shape of things has high reaching aims, which require intensive implementation - potentially overwhelming strategic direction.”*³ Equally, stakeholders acknowledged that it might *“be necessary to review the strategic framework or use consultants to implement certain aspects of it [the programme].”*⁴
- 4.5 Since the *tsot* developed out of the work of an individual, the steering group consisted of individuals who had had a role in this journey. Consideration was given whether to have a tight steering group or for the group to play a looser advisory role. Levels of commitment to the steering

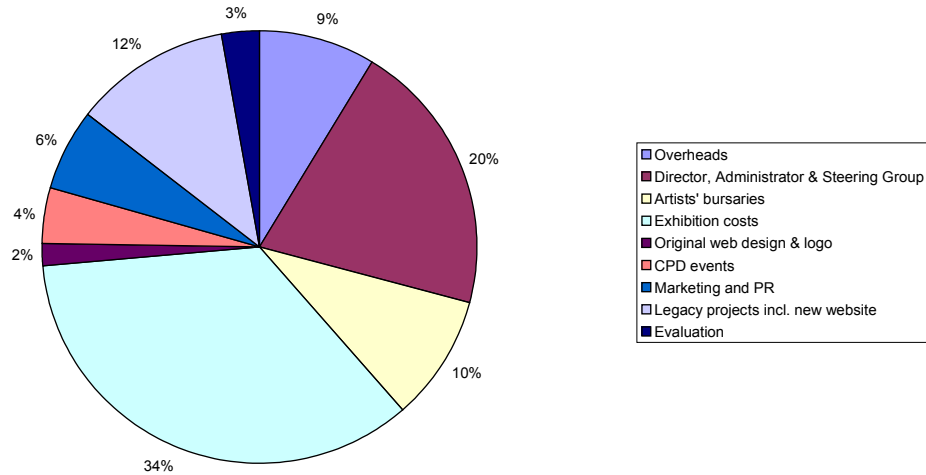
³ *tsot*, Steering Group Minutes, 18th March 2010

⁴ *ibid*

group varied. The steering group consisted of representatives from the participating venues, strategic bodies such as Arts Council England (West Midlands and South West), participating artists and interested organisations, such as Shisha. The Crafts Council, despite initial interest in the *tsot* chose not to engage with the steering group.

- 4.6 Responses from the steering group recognised the vital role played by the Programme Director and how he had been instrumental in establishing the programme. The evaluation also found that they were aware of the challenges in delivering such a substantial programme of work.
- 4.7 Given that the steering group's role was that of an advisory body, or critical friend, decisions were discussed and agreed during steering group meetings. In some cases this required a change of direction or approach on the part of the Programme Director, in other cases the steering group agreed with the approach.
- 4.8 It is important to note however, that the programme infrastructure did not make the shift to that of an organisation with a management board. There was no legal responsibility upon steering group members and whilst decisions were discussed and agreed in meetings, the Programme Director was not managed or supervised by anyone on the steering group.
- 4.8 Key milestones were not set beyond the information included in the Grants for the Arts application and some elements were therefore more developed than others. Since the programme worked towards relatively broad aims, rather than clearly setting out quantitative objectives, it is harder to assess success or identify where further progress might have been made.
- 4.9 Staffing for the programme consisted of the Director, who worked on a part time basis and part time administrative support through Craftspace. PR and marketing support was delivered by a freelance consultant, similarly elements such as audience development and branding were delivered by freelancers. Staffing costs for the programme were fairly high and the chart below provides some insight into how the budget was broken down.
- 4.10 *tsot* received a substantial award from ACE of £400, 000. It sought further funds of up to £245, 000 and was successful in a £5, 000 award. ACE funding was to be delivered over a three year period, giving an approximate expenditure of slightly over £133, 000.00 per year. There was a significant amount of support in kind given to the programme from venues – the equivalent of £123,235.

tsot spend incl. contribution from venues (£528,000 in total)



Graph showing budget expenditure breakdown

Artist Engagement

4.11 For *tsot* pilot programme, artists had been approached directly. So Rezia Wahid spoke of contact being made by the Programme Director, and a discussion on how she might engage with *tsot* ensued. This model was shifted to one of open application, artists were *“asked to respond to the context of identity the shape of things explores, and to propose how their potential participation was relevant to their work and creative development and contribute to the programme.”* This approach attracted considerable interest and 94 responses were received from the 2000 downloaded application packs. As the Programme Director commented *“from the quality of the responses and proposals there was no doubt of the capacity of artists to contribute to the shape of things.”*

4.12 The evaluation asked the artists to comment on the commissioning process. Overall, this scored highly, the artists gave the publicity/ advertising of *tsot* an overall rating of 3.3, with this largely made up of scores of 3 and 4, one score of 2 reduced the overall average slightly.

The application process also scored well, with a score of 3.6. The Programme Director commented that *“a great deal of attention was given to preparing the artist application material, the questions asked on the form and the information about the shape of things and venue partners so that artists were very well briefed from the outset”*. This investment paid off in the artists’ feedback.

The Sharing Day

- 4.13 The sharing day was an innovative approach towards artist selection and evaluators spoke to both curators and artists to explore their experience of this. A score of 3.7 was given for the sharing day, which received a number of positive comments from artists that are developed below.
- 4.14 The sharing day was an opportunity for the eleven short listed artists and venue curators to come together to explore relationships. As the Programme Director commented *“the tsot was designed to operate as a co-operative structure where artists, curators, project team and steering group were equal partners without hierarchy.”* It was with this in mind that the Project Director chose to take a route that avoided the *“traditional imposition made of artists to attend interview to justify their participation in the project”* so tsot utilised elements of ‘open space’ systems to develop the sharing day but did not deliver an ‘open space’ event.
- 4.15 As the artists had been asked to consider the work they wished to produce and who they were interested in working with, both parties (artists and curators) knew a little about each other. During the sharing day they introduced their work/ venue, then ‘world café’ style discussions took place on themes of practical working issues. As commented *“The first step towards creating a community of interest amongst hitherto strangers and building relationships between artists, curators and the tsot team was taken on this day.”* tsot project co-ordinators recognised that *“the relationship between artist and curator was especially important to the success of the bursaries and thus the programme”*
- 4.16 However, the sharing day also had its challenges. The group of eleven artists had to be reduced to eight. Ultimately, the curators could choose whom they wished to work with. Inevitably, there were overlaps in the artists chosen and both artists and curators were disappointed. Disappointed artists felt *“badly let down from having their expectations raised by participating in the day.”*
- 4.17 The sharing day had delivered a very different way of placing artists and engaged them in a two way process that was new to many of those involved. Whilst 57% of the artists interviewed commented that they had enjoyed the process the process was not wholly successful. 29% saw it as a more holistic way of selecting, similarly 29% felt that it had been a good experience. Collectively, artists and curators recognised that the day provided them with an opportunity to meet other artists and curators as a way of engendering discussion and therefore delivering a useful learning process. However, 14% thought that the day was time consuming, while 29% considered it stressful in its competitive nature.
- 4.18 Curators responses to this process were also mixed, although overall comfortable (average score of 3.3). Some were less comfortable with the decision making process that took place following two way engagement. Interestingly, responses scored either 4 (the highest) or 2, this score was

also reflected in how final decisions were made (4 and 2).

- 4.19 Greater understanding of the scoring can be gained by considering curators' qualitative feedback, as one curator commented "*the process was interesting – good national advertising, involvement in short-listing and a great initial sharing day in Bristol*".

However, curators comments also echo those of the Programme Director above, commenting that it was "*tough to select 8 artists from 11*".

- 4.20 Another curator outlined how "*the selection of the artists was a direct result of the sharing event and artist's feelings were considered (this meant that we didn't work with one artist who didn't want to place work in Rochdale)*." It is unlikely that this situation would have been any different had any other system been utilised in placing artists with venues. Both artists and curators had to want to work together if the process and framework established by *tsot* was to work.

- 4.21 One comment regarding the structure of the sharing day was that "*the curators' meeting was rushed, so the selection process was difficult and the choice of the larger galleries had a knock on effect for the others - a follow up meeting with some room for objectivity would have been useful*." It may have been useful for *tsot* to have scheduled a further meeting, although - this would have had a resource - financial and time - implication.

Placements

- 4.22 Artists had been asked to select the venue that they wished to work with in their application. At the close of the sharing day, there were some changes, others stayed with their first preference or commented that they were open to working with any of the venue partners.
- 4.23 With the venues/ curators deciding the artists that they wished to engage, the evaluation asked the artists for their initial thoughts on their selected venue. The artists partnered with Bristol, Bilston, Leicester (Alinah, Rosa, Seiko, Halima, Maggie, Chien Wei) were placed with their 'first choice' space, for the artists placed with Touchstones Rochdale (Tanvi, Taslim) this was not their first choice.
- 4.24 The evaluation asked the artists how happy they were with their venue before the start of their commission. Unsurprisingly most of those who were placed with their first choice were extremely happy, scoring this at either 3 or 4.
- 4.25 Following the placement, a number of the artist's scores remained constant, comments were typically:

“My expectations were fulfilled”

“Offered the best collection & space for the work & I was interested in the environment”

“My 1st choice was a gallery that I had visited before but I was extremely impressed with the presentation for the gallery I was placed with”

- 4.26 One of the artists, placed with their first choice venue, increased their score from 3 to 4 following a successful placement:

“I felt I have been fully supported and they really trust and respect my suggestions and decisions I have made. It has been a very enjoyable and pleasant working experience with them”

- 4.27 Both artists who had been placed with Bilston reduced their scores (before your commission how happy were you with the museum / gallery that was selected for you?) following their placement (following your commission how happy were you with the museum/ gallery that was selected for you?). One artist reduced the score from 4 to 3 and the other significantly from 4 to 1. One of the main reasons cited for this was that one of the curators left the gallery during *tso*t programme.

- 4.28 In Bristol, one of the artist’s scores remained at 4, the other dropped half a point to 3.5. Comments included

“I was offered the best collection and space for the work and I was interested in the environment”

‘I wasn't able to work with the 'fabric' of the museum but it wasn't until I got the commission that I realised they wanted me to work in a specific space - the outdoor space was not available”

- 4.29 The artists placed with Leicester had very differing experiences, one artist increased their score from 3 to 4, the other reduced their score from 4 to 2.

A number of factors were listed as having impacted on one of the artist’s experiences with Leicester. In part, this was due to the remit for Leicester having changed from a new, purpose built independent gallery to working within the museum. A further change was that the commission changed from a joint exhibition to a solo show. Both artists therefore needed to reposition their work and thinking, as one artist commented, *“some of the impact of working together was obviously lost, particularly as we were working together on political themes.”*

Essentially however, it was a change of personnel and organisational

shifts that impacted upon this placement *“the museum staff’s attention was elsewhere so it was extremely difficult to engage them in the concept and content of the work.”*

4.30 It is important to note however, that this was not the experience of both artists, as the following comment illustrates *“I have been fully supported, they really trust and respect my suggestions and the decisions that I have made. It has been a very enjoyable and pleasant working experience with them.”*

4.31 Both artists placed with Rochdale had not listed this venue as their first choice. They gave initial scores of 3 and 2. For both artists, changes were positive, moving from 3 to 4 and 2 to 4. As they comment

“My expectations were fulfilled”

“I wanted to broaden my audience”

“I had a good relationship with the curator – a good balance”

The evaluation could develop an argument based upon human psychology (when one has high expectations, these are rarely met; where expectations are not so high, they are more easily fulfilled), but this is beyond the remit of this evaluation and needs to be contextualised in further evaluation findings.

4.32 Some of the challenges that arose with venues do raise the question of what would have happened had *tsot* support not been in place. The evaluation found that *tsot* was frequently drawn in to mediate between artist and venue, often resolving issues that developed due to mistrust or the perceived lack of shared values, in addition to a lack of mentoring support. As one artist commented *“The venue relationship with the curator was difficult and I would have pulled out if it wasn’t for David [the Project Director] and [the other artist].”* The evaluation recognises the important role of *tsot* and the value brought to the sector by the programme.

4.33 In terms of working with *tsot* artists, most of the curators felt that they had worked well together. Two curators gave scores of 4 (Bilston and Rochdale), one curator a score of 3 (Bristol) and another a score of 2.5 (Leicester). The evaluation found that all of the curators felt that there had been a two way learning process between them and the artists.

5.0 BRANDING, MARKETING, PR, AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

5.1 A core aim for *tsot* had been to develop a national brand for the programme whilst also building up new audiences. Audiences were

sought both for the selected artists as well as encouraging more diverse audiences to engage in other programmes at all of the partner venues.

- 5.2 *tsot* brand was developed by Bharat Patel, a Birmingham based designer. It was used across all publicity, press releases, marketing, in catalogues and across all exhibition signage. Although one *tsot* curator did comment that that “*centrally run marketing was not always beneficial*” most appreciated the overview and national identity provided by the programme branding.

Building a Network

- 5.3 2 (50%) of the **venues** thought that *tsot* had developed a sense of connectedness between participating artists/ museums/ galleries. In some ways this was driven by each partner’s level of engagement and interest in deepening relationships. For the other 2 venues, whilst there was a sense of identity for those on the steering group and between artist and venue, there was ‘*no network for venues per se*’.
- 5.4 75% of the **artists** felt that the programme had developed a sense of connectedness between participating artists/ museums/galleries. Some artists (25%) felt that this was not the case due to them being “*geographically apart*”, although there was a “*connection with fellow artists but not others*”, the “*emerging critical dialogue as the project develops*” was thought to provide greater connectivity.
- 5.5 The evaluation sought to learn whether the existence of a network mattered to partners. Those who wished to remain connected affirmed that they would ‘*keep in touch with other venues*’. Equally however, “*it was hard to develop the brand due to differing buildings, geographies and audiences*”.
- 5.6 Whilst neither Bristol nor Leicester had any future plans to work on partnership programmes with other *tsot* partners in future, this ‘*wasn’t being ruled out*’. Positively, both Bilston and Rochdale had already collaborated in that Earth | Atmosphere exhibition originally at Bilston had toured to Touchstones Rochdale.

National Representation

- 5.7 The evaluation reviewed the press coverage achieved by *tsot*, drew in feedback from artists, curators, venues and the marketing/ PR consultant appointed to lead on this area. A full list of the media coverage is included in the Appendices. A substantial amount of coverage was achieved, with some artists benefiting more than others. Media representation can never be guaranteed and whilst substantial efforts were made for all artists, the rate of engagement by the media varied depending on each artist’s individual story. This cannot be controlled since the media can be fickle

were levels of interest are concerned.

5.8 The evaluation found that some interviewees expressed concerns regarding the marketing, press and media approach, although interestingly this was not solely dependent on whether artists/ venues had received national coverage. Although most of the artists who had had significant media exposure were positive about the national profile being developed for *tsot*, it is notable that this was not the case for all.

5.9 3 out of the 4 venues felt that *tsot* had gained media coverage and generated media contacts that had benefitted their profile. All of the venues felt that they had reached specialist media as a result of the programme. Out of the 4 venues, only Bristol felt that *tsot* hadn't raised their profile. For those venues where staff felt that *tsot* had raised their profile, a number of reasons were given. That the programme "*increased an already existing national profile*", and "*raised the profile with participating galleries*".

One venue commented that they had "*targeted specific members of the community, who have responded – both new audiences for us – the artists achieved this, not tsot or us.*" Staff at Leicester stressed that whilst engaging in *tsot* "*helped develop the brand successfully, this was not especially in the crafts sector – more in fine arts and black community.*"

5.10 All of those interviewed for the evaluation were aware of the national profile sought by *tsot*. However, when asked whether they felt their professional development had benefited from the national profile sought by *tsot*, the average score was low at 1.8.

5.11 The rationale behind this feedback was positioned both with venues and the chosen PR campaign. "*I don't know why they chose the PR campaign they did as it was limited and could have been much, much better*" another artist commented '*the national campaign has not been effective*'.

5.12 Some of the artists interviewed suggested that some of the venues did not "*put in the effort to get the same national coverage as other artists benefited from*", or that "*there was a feeling that as long as you got one or two things written then the aim was satisfied. The majority of the profile I got was through my own work.*"

5.13 Some artists recognised however, that this was "*a good opportunity to show work in a different part of the country which broadens your reach as an artist*," another artist commented "*my profile has definitely risen because of tsot.*" In some cases *tsot* '*generated offers for future work*'.

5.14 Yet, even allowing for the above comments, the evidence of the amount of media publicity garnered as a result of the work done by MRPR is significant, all of the venues reached specialist media that they hadn't

previously been featured in (see 5.9 above). There were reviews in a variety of papers/ press of all of the exhibitions, some included specialist press, for example Maggie Scott in *The Voice* and Taslim Martin in *Crafts* magazine. Significantly, there was coverage in both thematic (specialist) and geographic specific press. 24 different articles/ press entries were recorded. The reach of the media was extensive, through editorial alone, *tsot* reached 1,297,091 people.

Reach was measured using software called Focus and based on circulation figures of publications. The actual readership can be 3 to 5 times more than the circulation figure – since more than one person is likely to read a paper. This applies to articles rather than adverts. Interestingly, local press has larger readerships than specialised publications, so local coverage was important to *tsot*.

- 5.15 In many ways the feedback is a reflection of the work that the artists themselves put into developing relationships, yet it is also about levels of resource and the commitment of the venue to each particular exhibition and artist.
- 5.16 In some cases, profile raising was seen as a direct result of media coverage, so for example “*Taslim had a four page article in Crafts magazine*”. It is therefore unsurprising that this venue (Rochdale) believed that *tsot* had gained media coverage and generated media contacts that had benefited the profile of their venue. This was also the case for Bilston and Leicester but not for Bristol, perhaps, as the curator outlined, because a high profile had already been achieved through previous exhibitions, since the “*Banksy show set an anomalous benchmark*”.

Audience Development

- 5.17 A particular aim for galleries and museums had been to build up new audiences. Curators felt that they achieved this well, with an average response of 3.3 out of a highest possible score of 4.
- 5.18 Asked how existing audiences reacted to their exhibitions, curators responded ‘*feedback was very positive*’, another noted that audiences were also challenged ‘*80% enthusiastic, 20% bemused*’. Touchstones Rochdale felt that it was ‘*too soon to tell, we need to analyse the results*’. Leicester’s response to this question was disappointing in that they “*didn’t log audience feedback as part of the exhibition process.*”
- 5.19 The evaluation sought to understand if there were any audience changes or shifts as a result of *tsot* exhibitions. Curators commented that audience feedback varied to such a degree that it wasn’t possible to compare the work “*we have a mixed audience with mixed tastes*’. Interestingly, curators who did see a shift in audience feedback commented that

responses to *tsot* exhibition had been “*more positive than expected*”.

- 5.20 A substantial audience development toolkit was produced for *tsot*. Whilst this was noted as ‘useful’ by a number of curators, no one commented on having used it to deliver outputs. So, for example, during *tsot*, the Bristol curator “*didn’t have the time or resources to make use of the (useful) marketing toolkit.*” Sometimes, an over-flow or excess of information can stymie engagement.
- 5.21 Artists on *tsot* were also asked to support elements of the audience development programmes. The artists fed back on how viable they felt the audience development element was, with typical responses being ‘*challenging but admirable*’, or ‘*difficult to tell how successful this area was*’. Whilst the artists thought that the audience development aims were ‘*very viable*’, they also thought that it wasn’t ‘*clear which audiences were being targeted*’. Some of the artists struggled to understand how ‘*new audiences might be generated*’ by their work but recognised that their ‘*work was new to the audience*’.
- 5.22 When asked if they thought that encouraging new audiences by programming their work was appropriate, over 71% agreed that it was. Some of *tsot* artists saw it as an opportunity for self development, as one artist commented ‘*the gallery talk was particularly interesting – thinking about communicating with different groups*’.
- 5.23 Artists were asked to what extent they were requested to consider engaging new audiences by the curator or venue with whom they were working. In most cases, artists were asked to deliver workshops. Fewer artists were asked to build audience development into the project at initiation.
- 5.24 Some of the artists were already ‘*keen to engage with new audiences – particularly teenagers – Bristol has established connections with groups*’, others recognised that this was something that ‘*should happen when both artist and museum shared the same view/ vision*’. For another artist, audience engagement was vital and she engaged with several local community groups “*I reached young Muslim women, an African Caribbean mental health support group (mainly women) and a group of African heritage young adults. We discussed the exhibition content and then they shared their stories and their thoughts about being British and their ethnicity.*”
- 5.25 In some cases, there were perceived tensions between the artist’s commitment and desire for audience development and what was perceived as the venue’s lack of interest in engaging communities “*my pitch was engaging new audiences and this was true of the original gallery. This commitment wasn’t carried through by the museum*”. As another artist outlined

“There was also an institutional reluctance to engage with the workshops for hard-to-reach groups. The museum were put-out by the communities that I was engaging with. Several participants were in fact told the workshops weren’t happening and sent away for example. This is symptomatic of the structural problems of the museum. Staff are not motivated and are uninformed about multi-cultural involvement in their space. This was very frustrating.”

- 5.26 For some artists, it was specifically the venue’s responsibility to produce all marketing and deliver audience development. So, one artist, for example, was disappointed ‘with the marketing in quality and timelines – this all effected attracting audiences’.

Marketing

- 5.27 The venues carried out both standardised and additional or different marketing/ audience development for *tsot*.

Bilston

- increased their advertising in national craft magazines
- increased their advertising in specialist Asian press.

Bristol

- delivered Facebook and Twitter campaigns
- ran a participatory project as part of the work
- delivered an outreach and learning programme
- ran Pilot BSL and described tours and advertised these

Leicester

- printed brochures 20, 000
- Leicester City Council marketing, 300, 000 reach
- regional & crafts press

Rochdale

- increased their advertising in national craft magazines
- delivered Facebook and Twitter campaigns
- delivered an outreach and learning programme
- ran advertising in the specialist arts press
- targeted hard to reach audiences and ran a specific audience development event in crafts

All confirmed that they would use this approach again for another exhibition.

- 5.28 The artists were interested in elements of broader reach, as one curator commented the *“artists were interested in communities at a national level. Distribution through national outlets like the Taiwanese consulate, Demijohn [the event sponsors] and fine arts press. Then there was the Voice [article], 2 coaches from London for the private view - [which provided] two thirds of [the private view] audience and national reach for project.”*

6.0 ARTISTS, CURATORS, VENUES, PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

Artist Engagement

- 6.1 Encouraging work by diverse artists was a central tenet for *tsot*. Curators were asked how comfortable they were with the overall process of engagement on *tsot*. Not all of the curators had been involved from the outset, of those who had, the average score was 3.3. For curators who had been involved in the programme from the outset, either some or all of the artists who applied to *tsot* were new to them. The overall quality of the artists who applied was felt to be high, with the average response to this question giving a score of 3.3.
- 6.2 Notably however, none of the curators felt that being part of this process had changed their perceptions of the quality of the work being produced by diverse artists.

Artist/ Curator Relationship

- 6.3 On the whole, curators felt that the artists they connected with worked well with their gallery/ museums collections, the average score from curators was 3.
- 6.4 Curators at Leicester recognised that there had been changes with the new space, there was *“a shift from working in a new gallery space to working in a municipal institution - no huge enthusiasm for the space therefore – this happened within 6 months of the programme starting - continued postponement until it became very clear that [the] new space wasn't going to happen.”*

This perspective was also reflected in comments made by one of the artists. Leicester was expecting that the artists would exhibit in a new gallery space, unfortunately with the changing economic climate, funding for the space fell through and Leicester was forced to reconvene. The artists subsequently exhibited in the museum gallery space.

- 6.5 The evaluation asked the artists how well they felt they worked with the curator identified to support *tsot*. The average score was 3.2.

- 6.6 Some venues were given consistently more positive reviews by the artists than others. Artists placed with Touchstones Rochdale gave the highest scores, followed by Bristol, then Leicester, slightly lower scores were allocated by artists to Bilston. It is worth noting that the curators at Bilston positively rated their involvement in the programme.
- 6.7 88% of artists saw the artist/ curator relationship as a two way learning process.
- 6.8 There were numerous positive comments from artists relating to successful relationships with curators, those below provide an overview and pick upon key themes that emerged through the evaluation

“I can't fault her – incredibly supportive and professional”

“We got on very well and I was given room to grow and develop”

“It was a first for both artist and curator working with ambitious projects”

“It was a very positive relationship throughout - negotiating the flexibility needed”

“I learnt a lot about the work & challenges of a curator within a museum context”

“A very creative process”

“It was an extraordinary opportunity - dealing with the challenge of the physical space, being given full creative license and building a strong collaboration with community engagement”

- 6.9 However, there were also times when artists were quite critical of the relationship that they had with the curator or venue. In some cases this was due to staff changes, one of the artists commented that they found

“the relationship with the new curator was difficult”

Another artist found that

“Curators were changed during the process. It felt like there was a lack of commitment to the project.”

- 6.10 The following comment made by another artist was notable in that they were experienced in the process of engagement between artist and curator.

"I have a lot of experience of the artist - curator relationship and there was none of that here"

In this instance, the artist was contextualising their previous experience with that of *tsot*, their understanding was based on what they perceived as being present or absent in the artist / curator relationship. This knowledge and experience was not accessible to all of the artists on *tsot*.

6.11 For one of the artists, there was disparity between their perception of the institution and their experience of working with the assigned curator. As commented when asked whether the relationship had been a two way learning process *"not between myself and the museum but with [the curator], yes. [They were] receptive, thoughtful and tried to engage with the subject... the museum was not interested or committed to the project and actively sabotaged it at several points."*

6.12 It is commendable that all (100%) of the artists commented that they had developed professionally as a result of their *tsot* commission. Whilst most of the artists (76%) felt that the curator they worked with had also developed professionally, this was not always the case.

Programming

6.13 From a broader programming perspective, the majority of the artists felt that their commission had made a lasting impression on their assigned venue. The reasons for such thinking were varied, as evidenced by the following comments

"Positive opening night response from audience and organisations"

"The work was different to the museum's usual experience as it was site specific and ephemeral - not conserving the work was a challenge for them"

"The concept was challenging but the impact was powerful"

"The work received very positive feedback from museum staff"

"It has changed their view of installation work"

"The curator also has learned to work with individual artists. According to the response and reception from audiences in the museum, my exhibition really has created a lasting impression"

6.14 One of the artist's placed with Bristol categorised this only as 'possibly' one of the Leicester based artists felt that this was not the case, commenting *"no because they didn't co-operate but for the audiences there will be a lasting impression and I hope that they will use the*

museum differently as a consequence.”

Producing new work

- 6.15 *tsot* provided artists with a commission to produce a new body of work. All of the artists felt that they had had sufficient time to produce a significant body of work. However, the evaluation findings noted a mixed response to the bursary level being appropriate to the quality required from the commission. A considerable 63% felt that it was not sufficient, 37% felt that it was. A number (almost 30%) of artists commented that it covered the costs of the materials but not their time.

“The bursary barely covers my cost of creating this show ... not to mention covering my living costs during the long period of preparation. [In the current] economic climate, it will be extremely difficult to survive as an artist who is making a living from selling his artwork, [whilst] at the same time deliver this kind of exhibition and make a profit out of it.”

- 6.16 It is important to note that the artists were able to define for themselves the format that their work would take as well as the detail and scope of the work. They were responsible for their own budget and how this money was spent. However, this also needs to be contextualised with the fact that they knew that they were producing work for recognised institutions all with a strong reputation. Even so, they may have benefited from guidance from venues. As one artist commented

“[I’m] out of pocket by about £8k but that was my decision to go for it and produce work at the large scale. Having had so much time and given up other work as a result of the delays, I felt I should take the risk and move to the large scale. The materials I use are expensive so this also had an impact.”

- 6.17 50% of the artists felt that *tsot* provided them with the space, freedom, research and development time to explore new ways of working that might not otherwise have been possible. They considered *tsot* an empowering experience that allowed them to move their practice in new directions, as well as draw upon and learn a range of techniques and artistic approaches.

This included changing expectations of how participation takes place, working with new materials, working in an installation context – including working with designers, artistic experimentation and confidence building such as through improved negotiation skills. The artist’s reasons were both about people and place

“tsot definitely changed my understanding of how participation takes place - particularly by working alongside Alinah but also

through the museum's learning infrastructure, which brought up new ways of working. I also had the freedom to work with new materials - this was an unexpected benefit as it was not my aim."

"A new body of work has enabled me to experiment and play and understand the challenges of producing quality work. It has opened up new possibilities and I will refine ideas that developed as part of tsot"

"Although my work remains conceptual in its primary intentions, it brought me closer to the physical making of my work and so a new balance of process and product emerged i.e. a self-contained artwork as a result of a combination of mass participation/contribution to the work & my own studio practice"

- 6.18 100% of the artists were pleased with the body of work that they produced. However, the evaluation sought to challenge this perception and asked artists what changes they might make in the future. The artist's responses were varied, for some this was about wider engagement within the museum sector, for others it was connected to their personal and professional development. The comments below provide an overview of the areas picked upon by the artists

Personal Development

"I'm learning to manage my own expectations and to manage risk whilst still pushing boundaries"

"Better time management"

"Work Life Balance"

"To present less within the body of work"

"To collaborate more"

Artistic Development

"To experiment with new materials"

"I'm still developing solutions to tour the work"

"I will be adding to the work"

"To create work on that scale pushed me to think about how to really make use of the space"

"My future work will change according to my new ideas and concepts and next move."

Resources

"Have a studio assistant"

"Have gallery technicians to hang the work"

Artistic Practice

- 6.19 The evaluation asked the artists if they felt that, as a result of tsot they had

shifted the direction of their practice, or whether new opportunities had opened up. All commented that this had happened as a result of the programme. For each of the artists that we talked to, this was evident in different ways.

- 6.20 Alinah Azadeh had identified a new area of practice, developing a new approach towards commissions. The scheme had given her practice focus. Crucially, she was also thinking beyond *tsot*, to the future, where she saw potential for her work to tour and recognised that her work had a legacy beyond the initial project.
- 6.21 Similarly Rosa Nguyen was thinking strategically about the market that she was working in. She also felt that she had developed her practice – both artistic and in terms of her own learning and personal development.
- 6.22 Seiko Kinoshita felt that her vision was far more focused as a result of *tsot*.
- 6.23 Halima Cassell believed that as a result of *tsot* being a national programme she had developed her reputation – as well as through her own determination.
- 6.24 For Tanvi Kant, the programme encouraged her to think strategically about the market she was working in, *tsot* had developed her artistic practice and her learning.
- 6.25 For Taslim Martin, *tsot* meant that a new body of work had been produced, this enabled him to experiment and play but also to understand the challenges of producing quality work. It opened up new possibilities and refined ideas that developed as part of *tsot*.
- 6.26 Rezia Wahid believed that participating in the programme had given her time and space to reflect upon her practice, determine new direction and gain the confidence to act upon this.
- 6.27 Chien-Wei Chang outlined how it had developed his practice as a solo artist who was now able – and sufficiently confident – to work in a large public space. *tsot* provided him with the opportunity to work with a museum to exhibit an installation.
- 6.28 Maggie Scott had benefited from working on a large scale, something that she didn't usually do, she was therefore able to produce a greater quantity of work. Significantly, *tsot* allowed her to link her textile practice with her politics in a manner she perceived as powerful and useful.

The Exhibitions

- 6.28 Having a high end product was vital in delivering the aims of *tsot*. We

asked curators how they rated the work produced for each exhibition, 3 curators gave the final work a score of 4 and 1 curator scored the work at 3, giving an impressive average of 3.75 out of a possible highest score of 4.

6.29 2 curators felt that the exhibition had helped to develop their brand/ image as a venue showing high quality crafts work.

6.30 The challenge for *tsot* was that the nuances that the programme was working with were complex and stretched existing parameters. How such nuances were portrayed was dependent upon the focus of each venue, so for example one venue commented that *“profiling diversity became the prime focus.”* This perspective was shared by most venues, there was *“more emphasis on diverse perspectives and experiences of cultural heritage and identity in Britain”*, so not all exhibitions drew upon the multiple themes of *tsot* equally.

6.31 Curators were asked whether *tsot* had challenged their own audiences’ understanding of what is included in contemporary crafts, 75% believed that it had. The curator representing Bilston commented that *“I think the work may have challenged some of our audiences, although possibly not as much as we had anticipated, as the overwhelming response has been very positive and visitors have been very open to the work.”* For Bristol and Rochdale, the rationale behind their response was that *“both artists were challenging traditional craft practice.”*

In some venues, audiences were also believed to be *“challenged by the materials used and the cross-over with fine art and crafts (making) process”*, this sensibility was evident in another exhibition where *“both artists were challenging traditional craft practice.”*

6.32 One curator commented that *“none of the audiences saw it [the exhibition] as a craft show, rather as fine art, the level of specific issue based politics was not associated with craft”*, it was this element, the curator felt, that made *tsot* programme ‘very exciting’. It is notable that even in the short-listing approach utilised by *tsot*, the curator from Rochdale felt that this positively *“challenged ideas of contemporary crafts”*.

Collections, Commissions

6.33 *tsot* sought to develop connections for artists between the public and private sectors. The programme worked with Flow Gallery in West London to deliver an exhibition of work by *tsot* artists. An event at Pentagram attended by over 100 people was also produced by *tsot* to encourage debate/ discussion. There was good media coverage of the exhibition at Flow, this garnered good footfall and high visitor numbers.

6.34 14% of the artists recognised the benefits of showing work at Flow - a low

number. Artists felt that the gallery marketing was limited and so therefore was not hugely supportive of commercial opportunities for their work. However, within the private arts sector, networks and databases are gradually built up and Flow Gallery has developed a strong reputation for its focus upon contemporary craft, owning a permanent collection. Flow Gallery benefited from connections within the public sector. There was also significant cross-pollination through the Pentagonam event.

- 6.35 Flow Gallery was interested in connecting with artists and facilitating successful commissioning. They were looking at routes to identify new audiences – particularly those whom they hadn't previously been in a position to engage. Whilst *tsot* had been an enjoyable experience for staff at Flow, it hadn't delivered on this desired audience development element.
- 6.36 Feedback from Flow was that their existing gallery audience might have appreciated, smaller, more bespoke work. In some ways, the work produced struggled to cross very different sectors, work produced for gallery/ museum spaces versus that produced for private galleries.
- 6.37 *tsot* did connect Flow to artists whom they hadn't previously encountered, a positive result of the programme has been a solo show of Rosa Nguyen's work, running from November 2011 till January 2012 – a peak time with Christmas sales.
- 6.38 Staff at Flow had also been interested in how producing events might facilitate audience development. Whilst the Pentagonam activity was seen positively, staff felt that further events could have built on this, particularly if future events had explored or demonstrated new routes for audience development.
- 6.39 57% of the artists that responded did not feel that the programme had provided them with a strong basis to engage with the commercial aspects of the programme, although 43% felt that it did. 50% of the artists felt that they hadn't learnt more about the continuum of being commissioned to produce new work by a public art space through to acquisitions for private collections/ private buyers, 50% felt that they had.
- 6.40 Artist's evaluation feedback suggested that their learning hadn't moved forward in the area of understanding and being able to deliver work of interest to private collectors. It is therefore of note that 14% of artists felt that they needed more advice. For 14% of the artists, the needs and interests of private collectors/ buyers remained relatively unknown to them.
- 6.41 Although 14% did feel that they learned a considerable amount about working in the public arts sector they didn't feel that they had also learned about acquisitions or private buyers. This corresponded to the experience of staff at Flow Gallery who also felt that commercial sales hadn't been a

priority for artists.

- 6.42 That neither artists nor curators felt that they had learnt more about private buyers and galleries is notable. There is a sense that this element of the programme may have received less attention. The main focus for this aim was the relationship with Flow Gallery. In some ways, this element was about *tsot* moving into an area that was more widely less well known. The programme therefore relied far more on partners, who may not have had resources, or capacity, to engage to any substantial degree. Developing private collectors requires years of on-going investment and research. One might also consider however, that in raising the profile of the *tsot* artists (the exhibition at Flow Gallery is archived and accessible on their website), the programme potentially showcased their work to future collectors.
- 6.43 The evaluation also found that the commercial aspect of the programme was not significant to participating curators. This is disappointing since *tsot* might have provided curators with a model for future consideration, perhaps exploring new avenues of revenue for publically funded museums/ galleries. It is notable that none of the curators felt that participating in *tsot* had helped them to connect with private buyers – perhaps as much because of their own rationale for engaging in the programme as with the programme itself.
- 6.44 Although commissioning was a key aim for *tsot*, participating venues had not anticipated commissioning further new work by the selected artists. This was for a number of wide ranging reasons. For Bristol this was due to not having a '*purchasing budget*'. Since Bilston presents temporary and changing exhibitions they did not have a collections policy and had not anticipated commissioning further new work. The Gallery did gain the opportunity to manage a public art commission with another partner. This opportunity rested externally, so they were not ultimately in control of the budget or approach, although both artists were invited to submit proposals.
- 6.45 Rochdale purchased two pieces of work, one from both Tanvi Kant and Taslim Martin. Leicester also purchased work produced by Maggie Scott for *tsot*, and would like to purchase work by Chien-Wei Chang if suitable finances are identified. Furthermore, a significant purchase of glass by Rosa Nguyen was made by a private collector who went on to contribute the collection to York Museums. So, 50% of *tsot* commissioned artists sold work.
- 6.46 Some of the artists were critical of the collections/ acquisitions aspect of the programme. Just under 30% of the artists felt that there hadn't seemed the imperative to push this side – so that whilst acquisition had appeared to be stated as a priority often, in the end, this wasn't possible.

7.0 CRITICAL DEBATE, EDUCATIONAL, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

7.1 *tsot* organised a range of critical debates, educational and professional development events for the wider crafts sector as well as those directly involved in *tsot*. Informal learning took place between artists and curators and a number of conferences and seminars took place. In addition, there were workshops held within venues and participatory arts sessions delivered by artists which were programmed alongside the exhibitions to encourage more diverse audiences and participants.

Professional Development: Curators, Artists

7.2 It is notable, and to the credit of *tsot*, that all of the curators felt that the programme had impacted upon their own learning and development. This was for a cross section of reasons, both thematic and practical and for each curator it was very different.

7.3 The areas that involved learning for more than one of *tsot* partners was either the opportunity to 'edit a catalogue' or significantly, curators commented, "it was the first time I'd worked closely with artists." As another partner commented "it was interesting to see how hard it is to sustain a conversation over a long period of time with numerous stakeholders on the issue of diversity." Particular attention was also given to learning more about the artistic process:

"I developed an understanding of collaboration"

"It was my first time developing a commission"

"It was my first time curating a new exhibition"

"It was my first time actively working in marketing"

"It broadened my artist knowledge"

7.4 Other than the above, responses from curators were very mixed and perhaps reflect the very bespoke way in which each institution/organisation was enabled to work.

7.5 There are a notable number of 'firsts' within the set mentioned above at 7.3, such as developing a commission, curating a new exhibition and actively working in marketing.

Curators also developed more people (self and other) oriented skills and knowledge:

"I learnt to manage expectations"

"It challenged me to work outside my comfort zone at times"

In addition there were benefits that ensued from shared learning namely

“peer learning with other venues”

- 7.6 One of the curators noted the challenges when craft was, to a greater or lesser extent, politicised in its connection with diversity, commenting that it *“extended the sense of issues around politics within craft – the challenges of using craft media to explore social, economic and political issues.”*
- 7.7 Curators commented that they *“learnt about artists needs and contributing to the creative process.”* Furthermore some of the curators *“learnt about participatory practice”* within the museum space. For another of the curators, shared learning was also due to the *“different approaches and priorities on both sides”* so they *“tried very hard to support artists within a period of institutional flux.”*
- 7.8 In some cases learning was in softer ways, *“studio visits meant I learnt more about the artists’ practice”*, in others it was highly challenging *“there were problems with delivering to deadlines for one artist, tsot was aware of slippage in timeframes and spoke to [the artist], ultimately the exhibition didn’t include as much work as originally planned but it was none the less an excellent exhibition.”*
- 7.9 Some of the curators referenced personal relationships with the artists *“I got on well with both artists. It was stressful at times but hugely enjoyable.”*
- 7.10 None of the curators interviewed were planning any further personal development as a result of *tsot*.
- 7.11 An impressive 75% of the venues had made changes either in their programmes or in how they approached their programming decisions as a result of *tsot*. Two curators commented that they were *“programming more challenging work.”* One curator felt that they were already *“programming a wide variety of exhibitions, disciplines and makers.”* Similarly, for another curator, engagement in *tsot* was part of their *“ongoing programming.”* One curator highlighted that whilst it had *“influenced our programme [they were] hard pushed to evidence this. Diversity was a big issue for us anyway.”*
- 7.12 Bringing crafts into a close association with diversity was felt to positively challenge programming decisions. As one curator outlined, *tsot* programme by *‘programming crafts people in a political context’* offered them an opportunity to programme craft as a *“tool for doing some of the heavy lifting of critical practice.”*
- 7.13 Other reasons given by curators for choosing to be involved in *tsot* was because it met their *“aims to develop BME and young audiences and to work with BME artists.”*
- 7.14 Notably, both curators and artists stressed that *tsot* had developed an

interesting model. The “*artists learnt about museum curation*” and in so doing, better understood the processes that impacted upon their work. As one curator outlined “*it’s an interesting structure for a programme – a mentoring model for artists from curators however, we were not able to deliver this aspect, I would tweak this for the future to build this into the infrastructure.*”

- 7.15 *tsot* recognised the importance of including an educational element within all of the commissions and the artists worked within their placements to deliver this. All (100%) felt that the content of the educational and events programme produced by the venue/gallery/ museum was appropriate. All felt comfortable delivering participation, education and community engagement, as the following comments highlight

“The helix as a work-in-progress meant that participation was integral to the installation”

“It’s an essential part of my practice”

“Some [events] were better organised than others – I liked the information learning atmosphere”

“I had assistance and support which was great”

- 7.16 It is notable that all of the venues found it easy to connect the theme of the exhibition to the educational work that was carried out, with a high average score of 4. Interestingly, none of those who responded felt that the specificity of *tsot* shifted their thinking about how they might connect the exhibition to educational work. This suggests that curators may not always have responded to challenges within each exhibition or the artists’ work and approach (see also New Audiences section above). Curators commented that they approached it “*in the same way as other exhibitions - we have a sophisticated interaction between programme and education.*”

- 7.17 The evaluation found that the majority of education work was instigated and delivered by the artists commissioned as part of *tsot*. Some venues didn’t organise any additional education work themselves, rather they left it to the artists to deliver what they felt was appropriate. This could potentially have limited the degree to which the wider educational remit of the venues were connected to the work of *tsot*.

- 7.18 Connecting with groups categorised as hard to reach was listed as a key reason in delivering educational work, although another venue commented that they “*found it hard to connect in a sustained way with hard to reach communities.*”

Professional Development, Wider Engagement

7.19 *tsot* wider CPD programme sought to engage individuals beyond those involved in the immediate programme. Events such as ‘Disruptive Difference’ were developed and the evaluation findings outline a positive response from those who attended. ‘Disruptive Difference’ was a one day symposium, held at the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, which explored transnational identities in relation to craft.

7.20 Those who attended were asked whether the symposium had helped their understanding of the distinctive contribution artists make to influence or reflect national identity. This question raised some of the tensions often faced by those working in this field, for one attendee

“Identity, yes, national identity, no. However, I don’t agree with the concept of national identity because it implies there is only one and clearly there isn’t. The lack of one identity came through strongly in the conference, so this is rather a surprising question really!”

For another attendee

“I achieved greater understanding through the eyes of students, artists, journalists, makers etc on individual experiences and cultures. National identity is often not recognized in its own country until people see it from a distance as described by the students coming from other countries and looking back at their own identities.

These are precisely the debates that *tsot* sought to open out, encouraging thinking that recognised social and cultural complexity.

7.21 Other attendees responded more broadly to the themes and ideas generated by the programme:

“increased my understanding of the different influences acting upon museums and makers”

“allowed me some focused time/ space to reflect”

“Broadened my understanding, was thought provoking”

“Confirmed what I already knew/ thought”

“the ability of makers to open a dialogue with each other ... craft can communicate directly to anyone who’s ever made something”

7.22 Attendees considered the work discussed to be informative, provocative and strong. Where Chien-Wei’s work had been viewed, the response was positive about the thinking that it encouraged, that this was their *“light bulb moment”*.

- 7.23 The feedback received from the day recognised the role that crafts based work could play when considering the shape of contemporary identities. The speakers and content of presentations meant that this was largely positive. For one respondent their light bulb moment came from a *“discussion with Carol Tulloch and the other presentations, the importance of the process of making”*.
- 7.24 However, this was not always the case and it is interesting that the theme that generated most feedback in evaluation responses, was that of a speaker who was considered *‘ill informed’, ‘sweepingly generalised’, and ‘badly explained’* although attendees also recognised that *‘she perhaps misrepresented her argument’*.

8.0 LEGACY, IMPACT, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

EVALUATORY ‘STEEP’

- 8.1 *The shape of things* was seen as an innovative venture that pre-dated Arts Council England’s Creative Case for Diversity. The initiative sought to complicate simplistic understandings of cultural diversity, ethnicity and creativity, and in doing so it provided a programme of work that questioned existing categories, approaches and overly simplistic audience development initiatives. Those interviewed for the evaluation commended its approach, although they were unable to outline a framework for the programme in the future.
- 8.2 Overall, those who were involved in the programme believed that core staff had worked hard to deliver and meet the aims of the programme. The initiative had focused upon wide-ranging and complex themes and sought innovative means of questioning understanding – at a time when ACE’s Creative Case for Diversity was not yet in the public realm.
- 8.3 The evaluation found that *tsot* was perceived as having had a significant impact upon the crafts sector, as one interviewee noted *“it was pioneering, it had never happened before, and was a long term embedded project with the support of ACE – in this way it was strategically significant - less so in the wider sector because the crafts is considered less significant than other art forms and gets less profile therefore.” tsot “demonstrably placed excellent work across the country as part of exhibition programming which was more substantive than if tsot hadn’t been there.”*
- 8.4 The evaluation findings recognised that there were a number of key interconnecting themes that shaped the programme. These were considered when drawing together potential legacy models.

- 8.5 Interviewees felt that, in terms of diversity, *“we would need to reposition [tsot] within the creative case and also take on board the nature of curating which has changed since the project began. Artists are self-curators and producers creating their own exhibitions and happenings. So think about less-admin heavy and expensive programmes but rather facilitating artists to make work in public spaces/public arena (not institutions).”*
- 8.6 Crafts and crafting were also felt by interviewees to have undergone change, in part due to greater national interest in work that is local, done by hand and unique. These ideas also recognised the need for sustainability and the role of crafts practice in engendering greater connectivity towards environmental, sustainable modes of engagement. As one interviewee outlined there is undoubtedly *“currency in some of the ideas that have come from the project and the debates. There is still a need but the shape will need to change. There is something around the legacy and the viability of crafting and craft and we need to have discussions about how sustainable some practices are.”*
- 8.7 Changes to education, funding cuts, less support for students and the need for those entering higher and further education to think long term, were felt to particularly impact on the crafts sector. As commented, there will be *“lots of course closure for crafts in education (further and higher) and this will impact detrimentally on diversity in crafts. Craftspace is championing social enterprise and collectives as establishing craft businesses. This is a shift in our thinking from when tsot began.”*
- 8.8 There is no doubt that *tsot* has been adversely impacted by the substantially changed climate within which the cultural sector now finds itself. This means that not only is funding highly competitive but resources, such as staff time or internal exhibitions budgets, are in scarce supply. This has been an over-arching factor impacting upon the legacy of *tsot*.
- 8.9 The challenge now however, was whether the programme could be sustained during difficult economic times. The evaluation findings suggested that this would require a very focused approach, one which could utilise the work under-taken by *tsot* to date whilst generating an innovative model that could offer sufficient appeal to curators and venues. As one interviewee commented
- “As an idea it [tsot] has vitality and force. If its impact is to engage curators more vividly in the values of tsot then the work will continue - but independently rather than collectively – a consequence of funding and institutional constraints.”*
- 8.10 Yet, interviewees were also clear that *tsot* had identified a gap in provision. For some *“In my thinking originally this was for an organisation*

who can particularly work with diverse artists in the crafts and craft production. In the future it could become a charitable organisation which understands the cultural and political perspectives of the crafts in relation to political, social and demographic relationships – for artists to develop their profile to contribute meaning as well as aesthetic quality. But given the current climate that will be spectacularly difficult to achieve.”

- 8.11 Recognising that a very changed economic landscape now exists, it is perhaps unsurprising that interviewees were reluctant to propose an organisationally heavy framework. The evaluatory STEEP found that there wasn't a clear format for *tsot* in the future. Steering group members felt that the programme needed to be re-contextualised, particularly given changes to strategic thinking concerning diversity. This particularly related to ACE's creative case for diversity.

Legacy Options

- 8.12 Consideration needed to be given to a number of different models. *tsot* had grown out of a period of research, delivered during ACE's decibel programme. It had pioneered new ways of seeing culture/identity and creative practice. The programme had been shaped through research led by one key individual. This developed as discussions were held with a wide range of partners, many of whom actively bought into the programme. As the programme developed, funding was sought and an informal steering group established. The steering group was not legally responsible – although they recognised a professional and perhaps moral duty towards the programme. Whilst *tsot* explored both charitable and ACE National Portfolio Organisation status (NPO), neither of these were realised.
- 8.13 *tsot* existing status was as a programme of work that was supported by an NPO, Craftspace, led by one individual and a loose network of individuals who were each responsible for and connected to elements of the programme. The programme had administrative support based at Craftspace. Rather than having a project co-ordinator however, the programme had a Director who had been involved in the programme from the outset.
- 8.14 The evaluation therefore considered a number of options in reviewing how *tsot* might move forward.
1. Network/ Consortium
 2. Organisation: not for profit, charity or social enterprise
 3. Project only
 4. Absorbed within existing NPO
 5. Closure

Network/ Consortium

8.15 One proposal was to establish an informal network of museums that crossed the public and private sector. Inviting up to 50 spaces/ venues to engage including private and public galleries that were focused upon non-Western arts and audiences. *“Realistically an informal ad-hoc network is an appropriate way forward unless funding is found for an independent organisation to move this forward, the change in mind-set is more important than a model for delivery.”* Supporting such an approach, vibrant networks had been seen as vital in project delivery.

8.16 The need for a coherent network across venues was raised a number of times. In some ways, *tsot* had suffered from the lack of an existing shared network that understood issues surrounding diversity. As one interviewee commented *“there is not currently a coherent network between the venues.”* Curators and venues were at different stages of development (in wide ranging ways) and brokering connectivity to *tsot* required considerable resource investment that did not always pay off.

8.17 Terms such as networks and connectivity were often inter-linked, both seen as vital to raising the capacity of *tsot*. Although, as one interviewee highlighted *“we have the process right but what about the capacity.”* One solution was seen as

“looking at the possibility of creating a more formal network – working towards evolving that thinking. At the moment, if it’s there it’s invisible (through the website and people that we are networking with) there isn’t any independent networking happening that I’m aware of. Whilst there’s a lot of connectivity through artists and some through curators, particularly around the cultural and political aspect in diversity in crafts, I’ve not yet seen a way to move forward.”

8.18 A consortium approach was seen positively in terms of delivering a collaborative approach across venues, curators, artists and marketing/ audience development. The fact that it drew together individuals with different experiences from across the sector was seen as vital in delivering a strong and connected programme.

“It wouldn’t have happened without the consortium. The sector is fragmented with very few craft specific organisations. A lot of work is done by freelancers and they tend to tap into organisations with enthusiasm but lack capacity to deliver on their own. We were very lucky to have Craftspace – without the support of David [the Project Director] and the sensitive overview of Deirdre [from Craftspace] this wouldn’t have happened.”

8.19 A key aspect for the consortium was that it provided a network that crossed education, museums, artists, arts sector and funders – and was

fairly unique in doing so.

- 8.20 For some interviewees, more could have been done to generate a much needed sense of a cohesive whole, a network that operated nationally but had a strong brand/ image

“I have thought more about programming exhibitions on the theme of diversity but don’t feel that I am doing this in a formal network – more work needs to be done to establish a coherency overall – I suspect the problem is not associated with will or desire – but that the focus is rightly on delivering activities and public outcomes rather than a network for debate.”

- 8.21 Whilst a network approach was seen as important in meeting *tsot*’s aims, it was also felt to have had limited success. As one interviewee outlined *“from the venue’s point of view, my perspective is that it hasn’t formed a particularly strong network of engagement in ideas and what they might do next as a group.”* The evaluation found that the lack of a clear direction regarding what *tsot* might do next as a group was reflected in there being no clear sense of the future direction for the programme too.

- 8.22 Members of the steering group stressed that the programme *“would have failed if there wasn’t a single minded Project Director to drive things forward”*. The commitment of the Project Director was seen as a key strength of the programme, particularly as they had been involved in the initiative from the outset.

Organisation: not for profit, charity or social enterprise

- 8.23 Steering group members were focused upon effecting change, ensuring that the approaches taken by venues and curators made an impact. This was seen as being more important than carrying the weight of responsibility of an organisation.

- 8.24 One respondent outlined, the current framework *“suits the purpose of the project, [it’s] quite a nimble structure”*, it may therefore be possible to explore establishing *tsot* as a *“regularly funded organisation – via ACE or any suitable funding streams.”*

- 8.25 Given the current economic climate, developing artists thinking in relation to commercial sales, is vital. As above (paragraphs 6.35 – 6.42), the artists didn’t feel that the programme had engendered learning in this area, Flow Gallery had been involved but few of the artists had made work specifically for this context. The number of commissions that will come through the public sector are likely to reduce and artists will need to consider a wide range of income streams.

Projects Only

- 8.26 For many of those interviewed, *tsot* legacy was dependent upon the right projects coming forward.
- 8.27 Interviewees expressed some interest in continuing to work together however, they were also aware that this could require quite complicated brokering *“If the appropriate project came forward [we would work together]. We worked with Flow on other projects. ... There is a question of scale, we can work with Flow – they’re a similar size - but Bristol is much bigger than us for example.”*

Absorbed within existing National Portfolio Organisation⁵

- 8.28 One suggestion that resonated with the evaluation findings was that it might be interesting to explore an already existing organisation and perhaps even an *“administrative base and budget holder (and PR) within an established organisation but to have mini-projects where the leadership changes so that you congregate round an idea as a project. Making the creative case creatively. Maybe through a set of producers.”* This model echoes some of the ways in which theatre/ performance work is developed at embryo stage, for example through development agencies such as PANDA in Manchester.
- 8.29 This model was reflected in the following feedback, where *tsot* as a
- “project would potentially end. If people want to continue they could do this via GfA and trusts and position itself for NPO status in the next round. In terms of the future a structure where one or two individuals who want to work together can look at strategic opportunity, and where they can deliver with partner venues to support artists (the producer model). The economic climate is going that way, it seems that funding is going into a rigid structure and method of delivery. We need a good balance between this and the development of entrepreneurial ideas.”*

Closure

- 8.30 *tsot* could draw to a natural conclusion with the funding coming to a close. It is a challenging period to seek new funds, although with the Olympic schedule concluding in September, there will be considerably more lottery funds. It is unlikely that *tsot* will benefit from as substantial an award as it did through the national grants for the arts award.

Concluding Recommendations

⁵ National Portfolio Organisations receive regular funding from Arts Council England, generally for a period of three years.

- 8.31 *tsot* has been a high cost programme. It has benefited from having a Programme Director to manage the work. It is unlikely that funding of a similar amount would be given to a programme within the current economic climate. Therefore any future recommendations must consider the changed landscape and recognise that where there are substantial overheads, this will not be viewed as value for money, subsequently a future framework will need to be adjusted accordingly.
- 8.32 It isn't possible at this relatively early stage in *tsot's* journey to assess the full impact made by the programme. The evaluation findings suggest that there has been considerable benefit in the relationships developed between artists, curators, and across some of the venues. The level of artists' support has been considerable. The continuing professional development events and critical dialogues have been positively received but perhaps, have not been of sufficient intensity or number for impact or legacy to be assessed.
- 8.33 From the possible avenues outlined above for *tsot*, the evaluation recommends one of two options. That *tsot* does not seek to establish an organisation but focuses either upon delivering a range of projects in keeping with the themes and aims of *tsot* or closure by being absorbed within another organisation that shares the aims/ objects of *tsot* and enables the values and aims of *tsot* to continue.
- 8.34 *tsot* would benefit from reduced overheads and focusing on delivering projects. Greater partnership development, with structured mentoring for both artists and curators could help to 'troubleshoot' prior to exhibitions and events taking place.
- 8.35 An agreed format for exhibitions, which included events, training, continuing professional development, critical dialogue and community engagement could be part of a recognised structure that is signed up to by all *tsot* partners.
- 8.36 Organisational support would be required to continue the programme. Collaborating with an existing organisation would provide the easiest framework for *tsot*. There is a pre-existing relationship with Craftspace. This could be maintained and developed, with Craftspace taking on full management of the programme, although it may also be a useful exercise for *tsot* to consider a range of organisational options.
- 8.37 Thinking needs to take place which connects the ethos and approach taken by *tsot* to Arts Council England's 'creative case' for diversity. There is undoubtedly a role for *tsot* to play as a broker, working with venues and artists who are exploring – and challenging – how diversity functions in today's contemporary, global, society.

9.0 THE SHAPE OF THINGS, APPENDICES

9.1 TIMELINE

The shape of things timeline

- April – August 2003 David Kay undertakes Decibel funded research for an exhibition project commissioned by ACESW
- November 2003 Agreement with ACESW to undertake further research and development
- November 2004 grant awarded and first R&D commissions underway
- February 2006 Watershed Seminar presenting commissions from Rezia Wahid, Vannetta Seecherran, Takeshi Yasuda
- March 2007 Grants for the Arts award granted of £400K
- April 2007 Steering Group formed and first meeting held
- September 2007 – January 2008 Rezia Wahid exhibition at Craft Study Centre
- October 2007 – October 2008 development of partners, fundraising and identity / logo produced
- October 2008 bursaries advertised - 2000 downloads made by artists; 94 proposals received
- January, February 2009 short listed artists meet venue curators and selection made
- April – September 2009 audience development toolkit produced and soft launch
- September 2009 Rezia Wahid exhibition transfers to City Gallery, Leicester
- December 2009 Emmay Syer appointed as administrator
- February 2010 – April 2010 Rosa Nguyen and Alinah Azadeh exhibition at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery
- May 2010 – July 2010 Halima Cassell and Seiko Kinoshita exhibition at Bilston Craft Gallery
- July 2010 – October 2010 Tanvi Kant and Taslim Martin exhibition at Touchstones Rochdale
- September 2010 – November 2010 all artists show at ‘the shape of things at flow’, Flow Gallery, London
- October 2010 event to debate acquisition of craft by private buyers and public collections in the context of *the shape of things* at Pentagonam, London
- December 2010 ‘the shape of things at flow’ exhibition transfers to the Crafts Study Centre
- February 2011 event at Crafts Study Centre as follow up to Pentagonam event
- July 2011 – September 2011 Halima Cassell and Seiko Kinoshita exhibition transfers to Touchstones Rochdale
- September 2011 event at Touchstones Rochdale to discuss encouraging culturally diverse crafts audiences

- September 2011 David Kay retires as Director, Ruth Hecht appointed
- February 2012 – March 2012 Chien-Wei Chang exhibition at New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester
- February 2012 ‘Disruptive Difference’ Symposium at University of Leicester, Museum Studies Centre
- April 2012 – May 2012 Maggie Scott exhibition at New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester
- June 2012 Hybrid presentation of evaluation, and formal event with artists and curators, marking the close of the project
- September 2012 legacy website launched

At the time of writing *tsot* is due to finish at the end of March 2013 following a small legacy programme.

9.2 ARTISTS AND VENUES

The information provided in this section was that given by artists and curators at the start of the programme

Alinah Azadeh and Rosa Nguyen at Bristol’s City Museum and Art Gallery

Alinah Azadeh incorporates crafts practices into her multi media work that have the important value of adding personal narratives to Alinah’s collaborative projects that incorporate elements of performance and participation of others. Alinah is “interested in the cross over between anthropology, intercultural identity, social psychology and the metaphor of the woven/crafted object to create intensely ‘live’ work within a public context.” For *the shape of things* Alinah’s work will use the processes of weaving, binding, wrapping, writing and drawing to transform objects with materials. Its production will rely on substantial input from individuals in specific groups drawn from Bristol communities, the framework and context provided by *the shape of things* and the vital space and resources only available through work with a significant cultural institution.

Rosa Nguyen describes the fusion of her French and Vietnamese sensibility and cultural experience as embodied throughout the personal visual and tactile language of form, colour and surface inherent to the objects she makes and the environments she creates with them. Rosa has described anthropomorphic forms and the context of Chi merging in her ceramic work as a unification of spiritual and shiatsu practice that leads to new creative departures. These incorporate collaborations with artists, designers, florists, museums and manufacturers. While her work does not consciously reflect her cultural heritage through it Rosa contributes to enriching the perception and experience of the impact of cultural diversity on contemporary British ceramic practice

Bristol’s City Museum and Art Gallery priorities for working with *the shape of things* artists and reasons for wishing to present the work of Rosa Nguyen and

Alinah Azadeh:

Julia Carver Assistant Curator of Fine Art says, 'Contemporary artist's work that references the wider Museum and Gallery will always create different paths of enquiry and allows us at the Museum and Art Gallery to work with quite diverse audiences and communities. We also feel that these artists are questioning how or even if cultural heritage does or should inform their work. This means that the Museum will be able to work with our target audiences including young people, older people and BME communities.'

Rosa's proposal would involve her looking at the collections in a number of diverse and exciting ways and her high quality work is visually different to work we have shown before. Rosa has a respected practice as an artist. Her ideas/concepts are accessible but thought provoking. Her proposal includes a desire to use the museum collections as inspiration and it will be interesting to see how this manifests itself in new work with an opportunity to transform the gallery space and possibly other areas of the building and possibility for a programme of public events and talks.

Alinah produces high quality work and has a desire to work with Bristol. Alinah is responsive to audience participation and a good communicator. Her work is very accessible and would allow participation for any visitors but also to target specific communities particularly through reminiscence, collecting and 'gifting' objects, and linking to schools and the wider school community including parents and grandparents. Alinah explores universal themes of family, relationships and memories in her work. These offer opportunity to build on the outreach work already started by the Community Engagement Team working on the Museum of Bristol to raise the profile of Bristol's City Museum & Art Gallery amongst these new audiences. The outcome of Alinah's bursary would be to potentially transform the gallery space over a period of time as the installation grows, to develop a programme of workshops and outreach sessions and perhaps produce a work with a legacy for the collection.'

Seiko Kinoshita and Halima Cassell at Bilston Crafts Gallery

Seiko Kinoshita's background is in commercial textile design in Japan then coming to the UK to train further at Nottingham Trent University in 2000. From her studio in Perseverance Works in Sheffield Seiko produces ingenious unique woven textile structures. These explore how to incorporate traditional Japanese methods of weaving and dyeing techniques into making contemporary work for specific spaces that ultimately define the form of the final piece. The work encompasses harmony with simplicity to reach for appreciation from a wide audience. Seiko describes undergoing the sense of confusion of a new arrival to the UK and the difficulties of adjustment and working hard to make a contribution to British society in order to be able to pursue her career

Halima Cassell began her career as a professional artist in 2002 and benefited from the support of SHISHA the international agency for South Asian crafts and

visual arts at this crucial stage. Halima's approach to her carved ceramic work originally derived from a combination of North African and Islamic stylistic influences. Thus it carries the influence of architecture and surface design, explores the universal language of number, geometry and symmetry that makes a point of connection for audiences of all kinds through a common language of number, pattern and tactile surface. Halima has been working on a commission for the new Hepworth Sculpture Gallery in Wakefield and has begun to work in carved stone and wood which the bursary will help her to develop further.

Bilston Craft Gallery priorities for working with *the shape of things* artists and reasons for wishing to present the work of Seiko Kinoshita and Halima Casell:

Sophie Heath Craft Curator says, 'Seiko Kinoshita's woven, constructed textile works are of very high quality and textiles are very popular, more people find them easier to relate to but Seiko's work will also challenge audiences. We are keen to see how she will respond to our space at Bilston which is not something we have had done before. The possibilities of Seiko working with the Bilston Craft Gallery Textile Group are also very exciting. How Seiko's work with the community has made it possible for her to stay in the UK, due to the contribution she makes is also an interesting aspect; how hard she has to work to stay here will resonate with local audiences. Seiko's keenness to work with the community to develop audiences for craft and ownership for craft and the venue, her experience of working with community groups, schools and on public art commission working with architects will be well drawn on at Bilston hopefully also crossing over to the Urban Village development that will provide another location to extend the work of the Craft Gallery elsewhere in the Borough.

Halima Cassell produces high quality, very strong work that is going in a new direction. It is very accessible and could resonate with many different communities. However it is challenging work too and we are interested to see her responses to the collections, the venue and the local area, this would also be of interest to local audiences. Halima's work was very popular in a previous group exhibition at Bilston in 2006, it would be good to show how her work has developed and expanded creatively. Halima's and Seiko's work will be complementary when shown together. Halima's willingness like Seiko to take part in talks, demonstrations and workshops will also be utilised. It will be good to programme in events which will make use of our ceramic kiln, building audiences for craft through providing the opportunity to develop skills and produce more refined pieces. Both artists will also be good to programme for the benefit of our craft aware audience and repeat visitors who are used to seeing exhibitions of innovative work.'

Tanvi Kant and Taslim Martin at Touchstones Rochdale

Tanvi Kant is interested in the poetry and mystery of objects mixing materials such as fabric and ceramic in her jewellery pieces. The choice and use of material reflects the source of the work and its narrative. The content of the resulting objects can be autobiographical drawn out of a combination of the

sources of influence and material on its making and the journey of experience from the subliminal influence of the artist's own Indian Gujarati cultural heritage has on her work. The bursary will allow Tanvi to consolidate the research and developmental projects she has undertaken in the recent past and to explore her interests in the tradition of weaving fine gold wire fabrics, gold work embroidery and the incorporation of precious stones within fabric - such as may be seen in Indian textiles, military regalia and Tudor and Viking clothing.

Taslim Martin before turning to art and attending art school trained and worked as a carpenter. Craft skills remain essential to his work and practise that can produce both figurative sculpture and functional objects. He describes the evolution of his pieces as frequently working of one craft process into another during the process of making and completing the work. Taslim has a strong interest in making portrait sculpture while his work that explores function, such as 'Secret Dovetail' the metal stool made for 'Mixed Belongings' seeks to apply logical solutions in design to resolve complex construction and aesthetic problems. Secret Dovetail was acquired by the British Museum. The work refers to traditional headrests used in African and Asian cultures to preserve elaborate hairstyles while sleeping.

*An exhibition organised by Raimi Gadambosi for the Crafts Council 2005 as part of the Africa 05 programme

Touchstones Rochdale priorities for working with *the shape of things* artists and reasons for presenting the work of Tanvi Kant and Taslim Martin:

Yvonne Hardman, Art Gallery Officer says 'I have a curatorial interest in contemporary craft and in research into artists and makers from culturally diverse backgrounds, particularly South Asian, with a view to future exhibitions and acquiring work for our permanent collection potentially across fine art and contemporary craft. Rochdale has a large Asian population and we are trying to engage with all our communities. We have done projects in the past and would like to build on this work. This is with a view to curating future exhibitions, hopefully acquiring work by artists of Asian descent for our permanent collection and alongside this, developing new audiences for the Gallery.

Tanvi will be able to develop her new work in the way she wants to in Rochdale. There are plenty of shops selling saris and jewellery as sources of material and as points of reference for her own work and we also have historic textiles in the museum collection which she might like to work with. The Asian community here is mainly Pakistani and Bangladeshi but the themes in Tanvi's work cut across boundaries and I think it cut be interesting to explore and tease out subtle differences that may exist linked to sari fabrics and styles of traditional gold jewellery within communities. We have worked with shops in the Asian community before on an exhibition we did with Shisha (food shops in that case) and it would be interesting to revisit this way of linking with the people.

Chien-Wei Chang and Maggie Scott at The City Gallery, Leicester.

Chien-Wei Chang works in silver and other metals. Before becoming an artist his professional background was in retail with internationally known companies selling fine metalwork and jewellery. Chien-Wei came to the UK in 2000 to learn about making in metal and following a Masters degree made rapid progress in his career as an artist. A large scale sculptural work that visually adapted his cultural background at 'One Year On' exhibition (organised by the Crafts Council at the New Designers event in London) had huge impact creating recognition for his work. It led to an opportunity for a first solo show with CGA (clerkenwell green association) and propelled him into a selling career as a professional artist. Chien-Wei is conscious of how his cultural heritage is perceived through his work in the present British interest and awareness of China in politics, economics and culture and will explore the context of this effect in the work he will produce from the bursary.

Maggie Scott is a textile designer with more than 25 years experience in her field who has built a loyal client base based on direct selling of her painted and printed textile products through the craft fair market. Her life as an artist has had a parallel life stemming from her activism in gender and race politics. *The shape of things* presents Maggie with an opportunity to unite these two until now separate aspects of her life by her intention to produce work experimenting with material practice and incorporating autobiographical narrative content that plays on the artist's memory of her childhood in 1950's Notting Hill. Maggie's proposal for *the shape of things* is for work that will reflect on British identity especially as a visual artist 'visible' identity and in this she acknowledges the impact on her thinking of the exhibition 'The Other Story' held at the Hayward Gallery (date). Especially work by Sonia Boyce that in Maggie's words depicted 'images of me and my life in national institutions' included in this that reinforced her perception of the invisibility of people of colour.

The City Gallery priorities for working with *the shape of things* artists and reasons for presenting the work of Chien-Wei Chang and Maggie Scott:

Kathy Fawcett, Exhibition Manager for The City Gallery believes Chien Wei and Maggie are artists who will engage with our agenda for encouraging artistic innovation and risk taking in our research led exhibition programme. We seek to connect with audiences in innovative ways whilst *the shape of things* aims addresses our brief on interculturalism and craft. Presenting their respective practice meets our agenda for contributing to understanding the ways in which ideas have informed the development of craft and the ideas that have developed about craft and intention to participate in the 'Shape of Things' CPD programme.

Their bursary produced work will attract new users, while continuing to cater for our loyal repeat visitors and that contribute to and add value to our audience development and education plans, in particular addressing our requirements for our audiences to reflect more fully the demographic of the City of Leicester and increase the number of children and young people using The City Gallery through improved schools, family and youth programmes based upon their needs.

Chien-Wei Chang incorporates innovation and excellence of work and The City Gallery is particularly supportive of his move into producing installation, his wish to experiment and develop his practice. He will contribute through the quality of his ideas and his communication skills and his ability to articulate the ideas informing his practice with great precision and critical insight. Chien-Wei's willingness to both consider and take an interest in the perspectives of different cultures and communities make him a good choice for Leicester as a diverse city with many Diaspora communities.

Maggie Scott is an artist on a deeply inspiring artistic odyssey that we believe will resonate greatly with Leicester audiences, particularly Afro-Caribbean communities. Maggie is deeply committed to research methodologies and experimental approaches with awe-inspiring communication skills and an active desire to work with communities on a shared project.

9.3 MEDIA

A sample of *the shape of things* press:

Coates and Scarry's Blog: Still Living & The Gifts at Bristol Museum & Art Gallery
Crafts magazine: The Gifts & Still Living Preview
Bristol Evening Post: A Wave of Emotion
MakeMeNeon.Com: **** Review
A-N Magazine: The Gifts & Still Living
Ceramic Review: Still Living
Halima Cassell and Seiko Kinoshita: Bilston Craft Gallery
Staffordshire Living: Earth|Atmosphere
Express & Star: Earth|Atmosphere
Asian Art Review: Earth|Atmosphere
Crafts magazine: Online Feature on Taslim Martin
Crafts magazine: Print: Feature on Taslim Martin, Page 1 & 2, Page 3 & Page 4
Selvedge: Feature on Tanvi Kant & Taslim Martin
Culture 24: Taslim Martin at Touchstones, Rochdale
Manchester Evening News: Taslim Martin
World of Interiors: Flow Gallery
Asiana Magazine: Women in Craft: Page 1, Page 2 & 3
Arts Industry: How We Are Made
Arts Industry: Print: How We Are Made: Page 1, Page 2 & 3
A-N Magazine: *The shape of things* at Flow
Emel Magazine: *The shape of things* at Flow
Ceramic Review: Audience Development Discussion Report
Crafts magazine: Chien-Wei Chang

LOCAL PRESS (Sample)

Rochdale Observer (main Rochdale paper), Sat 24 July 2010, feature on Tanvi Kant's exhibition and the preview with photograph of preview attendees with

Tanvi.

Rochdale Express, Fri 30 July 2010, feature on Tanvi Kant's exhibition and the preview with photograph of Tanvi in her exhibition.

Rochdale Express, Fri 20 Aug 2010, article on Taslim Martin's exhibition with photo of Taslim working on the Helix Form sculpture in the exhibition watched by a visitor from Spain.

Rochdale Independent, approx late August 2010, article on Taslim Martin's exhibition with same photo as above and image of Taslim's wax Runner piece.

Selvedge, Sept 2010, review of both exhibitions.

Metro, 23 Aug 2010 article/review of both exhibitions with image of Tanvi with her work (taken in studio) and Taslim's Portrait Head, Raimi.

Adverts in Crafts (for both shows), Ikon (for Taslim) and Selvedge (for Tanvi).

9.4 QUANTITATIVE DATA

As noted in the evaluation (5.20), each venue gathered different data and so it wasn't possible to draw all of the statistics together for comparative purposes. Where this has been possible, it is included in the table below.

BILSTON

Exhibition attendance	
Total number of exhibition days	51
Total number of people attending exhibition (Adults 1988, children 961)	2949
Events:	
Children's workshops: 9 sessions	44 children
Adult workshops: 2 workshops led by Seiko Kinoshita	17 adults
Artist talk by Halima Cassell	15
School group visits:	
Loxdale Primary Yr 1	(10 pupils)
Holy Trinity Primary School Yr 1	(26 pupils)
Shireland Academy Yr 11	(12 pupils)
Wolverhampton College 17-18 year olds	(12 pupils)
Young curators group	(11 pupils)
Private view attendance	175
Catalogues sold	40
Quantitative data and demographic segmentation based on digital survey in exhibition	completed by 109 visitors
Sample Findings New visitors: First visit to gallery 45.9% I've been before but not in the last 12 months 16.5% I'm a regular visitor 37.6%	

Gender

Female 73.6%
 Male 26.4%

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes 14.3%
 No 85.7%

Ethnicity

Bangladeshi 2.2%
 Black African 4.4%
 Black Caribbean 4.4%
 Chinese 3.3%
 Indian 4.4%
 Mixed – White and Asian 11%
 Mixed – White and African 1.1%
 Mixed – White and Caribbean 3.3%
 White 65.9%

Age ranges

Children under 16 31.9%
 Sixteen to nineteen 9.9%
 Twenty to twenty four 7.7%
 Twenty-five to thirty-four 16.5%
 Thirty-five to forty-four 11%
 Forty-five to fifty-four 16.5%
 Fifty-five to sixty-four 3.3%
 Sixty-five and over 3.3%

Qualitative data - based on digital survey in exhibition, completed by 109 visitors:**How would you describe your overall experience of visiting Bilston Craft Gallery Today?**

Very satisfied 62.1%
 Quite satisfied 34%
 Neither satisfied or dissatisfied 1.9%
 Quite dissatisfied 0%
 Very dissatisfied 1.9%

How satisfied are you with the exhibition Earth | Atmosphere

Very satisfied 66%
 Quite satisfied 32%
 Neither satisfied or dissatisfied 0%
 Quite dissatisfied 0%
 Very dissatisfied 2%

Did you feel the exhibition had adequate information about the makers?

Yes, the information satisfied my requirements 77.7%

Yes, however I would have liked a little more 19.2%

No, I require more information 2.1%

No, I require the information in a different format 1%

Visitor comments from the digital survey:

I thought that the set up was great, I love it

Awe inspiring

Beautiful work from both artists

Not what I expected, very interesting

Very cool

Brill

There could be more to look at

Great combination of textiles and ceramics

Very good

The colours of the clay were rather interesting, as was the designs of the bowls, giving a depth of structure and strength. The mirrors reflections of the bases enhanced what one could not see from above

I've been taught that even if you do not like a piece of work you are to appreciate it. Not only did I appreciate this work from both Cassell and Kinoshita but I also more than liked it. Original and personal aspects of designs from both artists, well deserving of high prices.

Very exciting, Seiko and Halima's work are very different, but also very complementary, I would like to see them collaborate on individual pieces.

Very artistic and fun

The bowls are very fine

So calming and beautiful and interesting

New and interesting hidden in Bilston

Great, needs more for children, but otherwise interesting

Intricate design on ceramic pottery

It was ok and nice

Very well laid out, very interesting

Well displayed and well laid out. A good selection of work and very helpful.

We all liked the sun and rain display, this is a very good art gallery

The work is even more impressive in the flesh than the email flyer showed it to be

I love it here

It is unusual for the gallery to use this form of bare necessity in art, but I think that it will make people realize that they too can do the same or similar which is a good thing

I thought it was good and fun

I think all of the exhibitions are very good

Very good

Amazing!!!

It is very nice that the artists have put a lot of thought into the work and I am very inspired by their work and I hope to do the same some day

I am very surprised at this work
Seating needed facing films. Two sound tracks can be difficult to listen to
Very interesting and enjoyable!
Fascinating. I like both of the installments they are very different but worked well together. I liked the films showing the creative process.
Interesting to find new things out
Boring
Beautiful work
Effective use of gallery space look forward to next visit

Visitor comments from the comments book:

Great idea with the interactive map! I am going to copy this idea for my art room at school.
I think the colours and textures are really nice
I find the work innovative and questionable in terms of cultural identity. Myself I work with exploring identity. Very interesting exhibition.
Wonderful exhibition. Very enjoyable and thought provoking.
Love the movement and colour in the weavings. The bowls are stunning – all the different colour clays.
Two interesting artists with different skills that complement each other. I like the geometric patterns in the sculptures and the different colours of clay. The Sunny day installation makes you feel good, just like the real thing would.
Really enjoyed the show – have been looking forward to it. Great installation of both bodies of work, enjoyed Halima's use of the 'shards' as wall pieces, enjoyed walking through Seiko's 'rain'. Also enjoyed the artist's statements and the films – they look good projected.
Very interesting
A wonderful space filled with marvellous craft. Well worth the journey.
Feel that chunky carving just by looking.
Another wonderful show – you never fail, honestly. This cool and calm oasis is food for the soul. The installations are inspirational, fresh and thoughtful.
Curating excellent as usual. Thank you.
Halima – wonderful work, very inspirational and beautiful. Excellent concept and delivery.
Interesting.
Great visit
Love the ceramics, feel inspired to carve.

Selection of comments from the map board, about cultures and countries that have inspired visitors:

Shanghai Museum is fantastic for culture and ancient artifacts. I would go again and again.
Nanjing and Shanghai – Art and silk paintings very impressive
Yucatan – just below Yucatan there is fantastic wall paintings of old Mexican civilizations
Montreal 0 the beautiful woven belts the French fur trappers wore
New York – inspired by the vibrant city life and colourful signs and buildings – fantastic collection of modern art

Cuba inspires me its colour, culture. What I particularly love about Cuba is that all its people are one – not divided by colour.

America, New England I was inspired by their patchwork and quilting.

I was born in St John New Brunswick and was (still am) inspired by the landscape

Dublin – Irish Museum of Modern Art, full of fascinating paintings and a place of history and learning

Visited Barcelona when it was Valentines weekend. Beautiful city very romantic. I was really inspired by the Gaudi buildings and spent a lot of time sketching them.

Venice – inspired by architecture and paintings

Antique cameras, junk shops and ephemerae pinned on boards in the street inspired me in Prague

Living in Nuremburg for a year gave me an insight into a different more relaxed way of being. The feeling of space and time made me more creative.

Belgrade; Serbia. I have been born in Seebia, but now live and work in UK.

Serbia has good weather, nice people, folk music

I recently visited Gujarat. Me and my partner were married there and experiencing the sights, flavours and colours has really awakened me.

I have been to Mumbai. I was inspired by the vibrancy and colour. The architecture is absolutely amazing.

Chiang Mai is the real centre of crafts in Thailand. The way craft is so interspersed with every day culture is fascinating here.

Java, Indonesia, Batik art works

Beijing architecture amazing

I lived in Cape Town and the textile inspires me still

BRISTOL

Total number of exhibition days	77
Actual number of people attending exhibition	36,612
11 events attended by	118 visitors
6 events with artists, inc 2 BSL tours	7 and 10 attendees
1 described tour for visually impaired visitors with a curator	15
4 gallery/store tours with curators	
17 events attended	354 adults, young people and children
Teachers' CPD day	12
Curators' seminar	12
2 Visiting artists lectures with University of the West of England Drawing and Applied Arts students	12 8
5 workshops with adults	12
4 workshops with schools, key stage II	240
2 free day workshops with under 5s	
Private view attendance	150

<p>Age ranges Children under five 30 Children (five to 11) 180 Young people (12 to 15) 60 Young people (16 to 19) Young people (20 to 24) 3 Adults (25 to 64) 28 Adults (65 and over) 8</p> <p>Asian or Asian British (includes Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani or any other Asian background) Black or Black British (includes African, Caribbean) 2 Chinese Any other ethnic group</p> <p>Detailed questionnaires were collected during the final weeks of the exhibition and of 22 respondents 18 were white European and four were minority ethnic 24 respondents 18 were female and seven were male 26 respondents</p> <p>5 were 56-65 3 were 46-55 8 were 36-45 2 were 26-35 5 were 16-25 1 10-16 2 under 10s</p>	
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QUALITATIVE COMMENTS

I loved this exhibition. It reminded me of the things I hold precious as well. It's not the things with ££ value.

It took a bit of effort to understand the concept. However when understood the descriptions of the gifts were moving. Very interesting.

Really beautiful. I felt like I had some of my own things to leave here, wrapped beautifully – becoming even more than they were. Very moving.

Each item carries energy. I found this element a wonderful creation of energy in transition! Congratulations.

I really loved all the different colours and it's done so well you can even tell what some of them were!

Wonderful and very inspiring

I love art, which has a sense of humour, smile and feel your heart strings plucked.

We thought both elements of the exhibition were stunning beautifully executed and complementary of each other.

Both sets of work are extremely moving and beautiful. An exhibition to engage both the emotions and the intellect

I like the way you made mirrors look magic

Beautifully crafted. So much work, effort and thought has gone into these pieces.

I really liked this exhibition. I was fascinated by the objects and matching the numbers to the cards. This was tricky though when not allowed to touch the sculpture to see the numbers. Thank you for an interesting exhibition!

I saw a jellyfish, crab and fish

I really enjoyed the magic mirrors on the ceiling and floor. Sorry about the people who said mean things.

I loved it, it is very good, you should do another one like this. It is a very odd piece of art.

I like to comment on art. I like piece by Alinah what was her inspiration and message?

I really like the colours and is really pretty.

We loved it my 3 year old had a fun time guessing what was in the gifts.

Beautiful.

I wish I wasn't so sentimental and that I'd been able to contribute a gift...

I think it opens your mind to pure imagination

I love it - had inspired me to borrow some of these ideas to do a class project with my infants.

I think it opens your imagination to a whole new world full of poetry, art and colours

This is the fifth or sixth time I've been in to see this show - I imagine I'll come back lots more times before it closes. Also came to Alinah's talk on Sat, which was excellent. Love the show (can you tell?)

I think it opens your imagination and makes you dream.

Interesting - a nice combination - well done to both artists.

Very beautiful colours, very original and a lovely way of immortalising peoples special memories.

The mirror was really cool. I loved it! It seems it goes on forever like infinity!

I think it is beautiful and really creative. I would love to see the follow-up. I didn't expect more than clothe on string. But it opened me up and I am inspired.

A kaleidoscope of colourful memories. Beautiful, original and meaningful.

I really enjoyed it, so, so much. Beautiful and extremely moving. She has presented her life to us as a gift.

I feel such a mixture of emotions. It is so moving. I love the range of gifts and some of the explanations so emotional and some so simple. The use of colours and line is gorgeous - the wave, the circle with the mirrors.

It's very good and must have taken years to make my favourite is the mirrors it's absolutely fab - the way it goes on for ever and ever like time!

I think you have a boost of hope, imagination and colour that warms the room with song.

One could feel the emotion and the thoughtful comments for each gift was very

touching to the heart.
Inspiring. What good ideas so well displayed and how generous and heart-warming people who contributed.
The exhibition was great. Lots of things to look at and I learnt a lot.
It was wonderful and very colourful. I loved it so much.
Inspirational use of textiles/objects and relationship with audience. More of this 'type' of innovative textile work please.
Very good, really liked it. I will come back again.
Marvellous, captures the imagination and makes one wonder the things you could do with all the stuff you own.
I gasped when I walked in and felt a rush of emotion - loved it
So calming. We walked almost reverently around this space of beauty. The imagination of the artists has pared away all clutter and detail - it is so precise.
Awe-inspiring.
A very beautiful piece of art that also feels symbolically significant - so interesting to hear the artists 'meaning' behind it. I hope it finds a permanent home where I can take friends to see it.
I think your exhibitions are great!
Really good great use of junk, so brilliant.
This exhibition is really colourful
Very good but people sent in valuable things but I like the idea.
I like the ideas and may use them for decorating my room!
Lush for all the things they sent in
Fascinating ideas by both artists and really beautiful visual results. Very thought provoking.
I started smiling as soon as I walked in. The shapes, colours and textures of all the art pieces were startlingly beautiful.
Fantastic. Very inspiring and thought provoking. I also found one Persian carpet comments very moving. A Brilliant idea.
Stunning - absolutely wonderful. Poignant and affirming
Thank you - stunning, beautiful and thoughtful. I'll remember this for a long time - hopefully forever
Fantastic, exotic, excellent piece of art well done to both artists Alinah and Rosa.
It is inspiring and moving, I love it. Well done Alinah
The finished exhibition looks amazing, I didn't know how you could imagine in your head to make an installation which is this well done. Lovely, lovely stuff.
I found it very interesting, especially the mirrors
The textiles very vibrant which is part of their charm - gradational of colour, why the wave shape? Items chosen very thought provoking. Liked the mirrors - raining shapes - easier to see from all angles. Liked the open glass and dried plants very ethereal.
It was quite good but I liked the mirrors the best :)
Emotional - very moving and personal thank you
Amazing concept of life and earth, history and relationship.
Wicked I liked the wave in the middle
I think that the artwork with all the items is really cool and impressive how long did it take to wrap them all and suspend them in the air?
I thought it was a brilliant idea to do this I have got a toy lion in there so it's great.

Alinah is our next door neighbour so it's wonderful.
A beautiful piece that has a moving spirituality to it. A lovely quotation about giving. So pleased we could come and see it
A very unusual idea which grew on me as I looked, read and absorbed. One suggestion; how about bringing a little movement onto the hanging pieces, via a small fan??
Fascinating. V thoughtful and thought provoking. Needs several visits. Hope no-one damages it!
Fascinating, why the strings? And why the contour?
Infinity in a room. Very heartfelt and indescribable in its still moods.
An inspirational exhibition touching on many aspects of what it means to be human and an artist.
Thank you for using my pregnancy test gift. I couldn't quite work out where it was but it meant a lot to have it in this exhibition.
I am an art student at Loughborough Uni and I found this exhibition very inspirational for my current project.
I enjoyed looking at the objects. I was number 467. I like having my work on display and for the public to see.
Enjoyable - Slowing down time good combination of art work both very sensitive, delicate and thoughtful
Beautiful use of texture, textile and colour. Much inspired, loved it!
Poetic and dramatic display. Very inspiring and moving.
It was a brilliant piece of art it is emotional, very moving.
Really amazing and unbelievable. I loved it!
It's very cool in the never ending things and the millions of things hanging down.
Judith Scott? Good work. Enthusiastic staff - helpful and spirited.
I really enjoyed it and thought reading and learning about the gifts was interesting!
It's beautiful - could read the cards for hours.
Very moving and emotional - trying to imagine the thoughts and events behind the objects - though I had no 'connection' with the tsunami - it upsets me thinking about it.
Best exhibition I've seen at this museum in many years. It's beautiful and very moving.
Great exhibition! My son contributed to the display, so we had to come and see it, glad we did
A superbly hung/presented exhibition - one wonders whether it would create such an impact or be so aesthetically appealing in a lesser space.
Fantastic exhibition. Enjoyed the relationship between the museum and collection and the artists - felt the exhibition was very accessible and provided visitors with a strong and personal narrative to follow.
I thought it was dead good, it was all interesting, I didn't enjoy the maps.
It was really cool but some of the teddies are almost sinister the way you can't see their eyes. Some people do too many.
I loved the part where there are sea animals. I loved it.
Totally extraordinarily, beautiful and extremely impressive. I love it!!
Unfortunately I was ill when we got to wrap them up so I am sad that I could not do one. It is beautiful and I would love to come again.

Hi. We have used your exhibition as inspiration for our own gift for a friend and made a class mobile. We will exhibit this at the southville arts trail. The class yr 3 7-8s loved this exhibition. Thanks for the inspiration.

Very well executed. Like a lot of contemporary art. Very introspective and self-involved needs a lot of reading to underpin the artifacts.

It is a very moving experience to be here with 'the gifts' and 'still living'. I have been looking forward to coming but it has exceeded my hopes! It is a profoundly beautiful collection.

I thought the whole concept of 'the gifts' was both poignant and amusing. I absolutely loved it, it blew me away more than any other exhibition I have ever seen.

I am amazed! How long did it take you? I cannot believe that some people think this exhibition is a load of rubbish! It is awesome!! Standing and looking over the mirror makes me want to jump in! The gifts on string in the shape of a wave is absolutely amazing! Brilliant!

It's in a wave and it's really creative it must of taken a while to put up! Never had a piece of art work in the gallery/museum that is a big group including mine!

NEGATIVE COMMENTS

I'm speechless! What a load of old tosh! Rubbish. Awful.

Look it was all right.

Rubbish.

More resembling a child's classroom exercise than art?

Did absolutely nothing for me. What are they trying to get at? Couldn't see any explanation in the guide? Not a success for me.

It's OK? But pretty pointless as the gifts inside may have been useful to someone in need. Rosa must have been bored.

Quite the most pathetic exhibition I have ever seen here. What a waste of money. Me no like.

Why can't you have proper exhibitions of nice oil paintings of landscape and stuff? This exhibition here is a load of ****. Waste of bristolian taxpayers money.

Rubbish

I was very disappointed. I wanted to see the actual objects arranged artistically. Yes it's pretty to look at but I'd much rather have seen the real objects. Perhaps another time?

A total waste of space

It is just wrapping paper with string tied around it, it is very despicable and boring, not art.

OTHER COMMENTS

When Jessie looked down in the mirrors she said, "It goes on forever"

On a brief visit I noticed that most visitors spent (much) more time reading the cards than looking at the installations. Hopefully this may mean we are still more interested in people (and feelings) than objects.

I feel that this piece represents the diverse society of today's world.

Where is the Nintendo Wii?

How long did it take to gather all of the toys?

Mixed views

Hard to tally cards with objects (due to no's hard to find visually on objects.)

(Visually colours are stunning!)

I don't get it but I recon it's beautiful to look at and understand why it's hard to give away things so close

Fascinating and beautiful exhibition. Security guard told some children off for reaching to touch objects - seems a bit OTT.

It was ok, but I liked the mirrors.

Interesting, thought provoking work from Alinah Azadeh, which I like very much.

Less sure about Rosa Nguyeh, but worth seeing

LEICESTER

Private view attendance	
Chien Wei	177
Maggie Scott	165
Total	342
Total number of exhibition days	86
Exhibition attendance:	
Chien Wei - 36, 021 total museum visitors, @ 70% total	25, 214
Maggie Scott - 24, 223 total museum visitors, @ 70% total	16, 956
Actual number of people attending events (5)	
Maggie Scott	142
Chien Wei	105
Total	247
The number of education/taking part/ participatory sessions	1
Jan-Mar 2012 demographic breakdown percentages for NWM are as follows: Male 34%, Female 66% BME 17%, Non BME 83% Under 16s 32%, 16-59 49%, Over 60s 20% Disabled visitors 3% C2DE 34% City 42%, County 42%, Other 16%	
Demographic breakdown percentages for NWM, based on visitor surveys for this period, are as follows: Male 39%, Female 61% BME 33%, Non BME 67% Under 16s 32%, 16-59 56%, Over 60s 12% Disabled visitors 2% C2DE 26% City 59%, County 28%, Other 13%	
Catalogues sold:	
Chien Wei	24
Maggie Scott	45
Commissions purchased	1

(Maggie Scott)	
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TOUCHSTONES ROCHDALE (figures for Tanvi Kant and Taslim Martin's exhibitions only)

Private view attendance	Attending – 75
Total number of exhibition days	77
Exhibition attendance: Actual number of people attending exhibition	18,266
Actual number of people attending events	118
The number of education/taking part/ participatory sessions	12
Demographic segmentation - From observation of attendees to the Craft Show & Share event:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age ranges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Children under five - 2 o Children (five to 11) - 4 o Young people (12 to 15) - 4 o Young people (16 to 19) - 2 o Young people (20 to 24) - 4 o Adults (25 to 64) - 49 o Adults (65 and over) - 15 • Ethnicity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Asian or Asian British (includes Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani or any other Asian background) - 20 o Black or Black British (includes African, Caribbean) - 15 o Chinese - 0 o Mixed or Dual Heritage - unknown o Any other ethnic group - 45 	
From observation and feedback forms completed by attendees to Tanvi Kant's workshop:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age ranges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Children under five - 0 o Children (five to 11) - 0 o Young people (12 to 15) - 0 o Young people (16 to 19) - 1 o Young people (20 to 24) - 0 o Adults (25 to 64) - 10 o Adults (65 and over) - 2 • Ethnicity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Asian or Asian British (includes Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o or any other Asian background) - 2 o Black or Black British (includes African, Caribbean) - 0 o Chinese - 0 o Mixed or Dual Heritage - unknown o Any other ethnic group - 11 	
Catalogues sold	19

9.5 WEBSITE STATISTICS

The website became functional in 2009. Prior to 2012, statistics were not collated, apart from a three month period between June and September 2010, included here:

DATE	VISITS	UNIQUE VISITORS	NEW VISITORS	RETURN VISITORS
June 2010	1087	760	479	281
July 2010	1235	914	530	384
August 2010	1551	951	418	533
September 2010	1760	951	315	636

It has therefore only been possible to report on the most recent statistics. The following evidence is sourced from Smarter Stats web analysis.

Week Day	Page Views	Visits	Hits
Sunday	1,846	1,043	6,194
Monday	2,795	1,218	10,047
Tuesday	2,335	1,090	8,055
Wednesday	4,998	1,069	11,789
Thursday	2,471	1,213	9,392
Friday	2,659	1,286	8,925
Saturday	1,527	950	5,168

The website is most visited during week days, with lower usage at the weekends. Wednesday is the day when most people visit the website, with most views and hits.

Hour	Page Views	Visits	Hits
12:00 AM	388	236	1,040
1:00 AM	330	188	956
2:00 AM	180	204	559
3:00 AM	577	219	1,158
4:00 AM	270	260	1,083
5:00 AM	256	247	738
6:00 AM	518	233	1,104
7:00 AM	350	274	891

8:00 AM	661	355	1,757
9:00 AM	724	352	2,529
10:00 AM	1,265	405	3,560
11:00 AM	1,248	348	4,200
12:00 PM	1,179	379	3,925
1:00 PM	1,114	370	3,910
2:00 PM	1,090	380	3,946
3:00 PM	1,134	363	3,564
4:00 PM	1,071	354	3,701
5:00 PM	2,769	405	5,384
6:00 PM	695	387	2,707
7:00 PM	597	395	2,877
8:00 PM	620	413	2,464
9:00 PM	624	381	2,833
10:00 PM	514	361	2,235
11:00 PM	457	360	2,449

Peak times for visits are between 10am and 5pm, with numbers dropping considerably outside of these times. Interestingly however, the website is always visited, suggesting that it is viewed worldwide.

Visits to the website began in March 2012, peaking in May, suggesting that there has been a steady increase in visitors to the site.

January, 2012	0	0	0
February, 2012	0	0	0
March, 2012	5,943	2,885	21,204
April, 2012	5,310	2,610	19,796
May, 2012	7,112	2,235	17,671
June, 2012	266	139	899

TABLE DRAWING TOGETHER QUANTITATIVE DATA WHERE SHARED ACROSS VENUES

THEME	BILSTON	BRISTOL	LEICESTER	ROCHDALE
Total number of exhibition days	51	77	86	77
Total number of people attending exhibition	2949	36,612	25, 214 (Chien Wei) 16, 956 (Maggie Scott)	18,266 Rochdale also programmed Earth Atmosphere which had visitor figures of 9920 - on for a much shorter period
Number of Events	17	37	5	12
Events: Total attending	76	682	247 (235) Maggie Scott – 142 Chien Wei – 105	118
Private view attendance	175	150	177 (Chien Wei) 165 (Maggie Scott)	75
Catalogues sold	40	147	24 (Chien Wei) 45 (Maggie Scott)	19
Demographic segmentation – Samples	Sample Findings New visitors: First visit to gallery	Age ranges Children under five 30	Jan-Mar 2012: Male 34%,	Craft Show: Age ranges Children under five -

	<p>45.9% I've been before but not in the last 12 months 16.5% I'm a regular visitor 37.6%</p> <p>Gender Female 73.6% Male 26.4%</p> <p>Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Yes 14.3% No 85.7%</p> <p>Ethnicity Bangladeshi 2.2% Black African 4.4% Black Caribbean 4.4% Chinese 3.3% Indian 4.4% Mixed – White and Asian 11% Mixed – White and African 1.1%</p>	<p>Children (five to 11) 180 Young people (12 to 15) 60 Young people (16 to 19) Young people (20 to 24) 3 Adults (25 to 64) 28 Adults (65 and over) 8</p> <p>Asian or Asian British (includes Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani or any other Asian background) Black or Black British (includes African, Caribbean) 2 Chinese Any other ethnic group</p> <p>Detailed questionnaires were collected during the final weeks of the</p>	<p>Female 66% BME 17%, Non BME 83% Under 16s 32%, 16-59 49% Over 60s 20% Disabled visitors 3%</p> <p>Demographic Male 39%, Female 61% BME 33%, Non BME 67% Under 16s 32% 16-59 56% Over 60s 12% Disabled visitors 2%</p>	<p>2 Children (five to 11) - 4 Young people (12 to 15) - 4 Young people (16 to 19) - 2 Young people (20 to 24) - 4 Adults (25 to 64) - 49 Adults (65 and over) - 15</p> <p>Ethnicity Asian or Asian British (includes Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani or any other Asian background) - 20 Black or Black British (includes African, Caribbean) - 15 Chinese - 0 Mixed or Dual Heritage - unknown Any other ethnic group - 45</p> <p>Share event:</p>
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	<p>Mixed – White and Caribbean 3.3% White 65.9%</p> <p>Age ranges Children under 16 31.9% Sixteen to nineteen 9.9% Twenty to twenty four 7.7% Twenty-five to thirty-four 16.5% Thirty-five to forty-four 11% Forty-five to fifty-four 16.5% Fifty-five to sixty-four 3.3% Sixty-five and over 3.3%</p>	<p>exhibition and of 22 respondents 18 were white European and four were minority ethnic 24 respondents 18 were female and seven were male 26 respondents</p> <p>5 were 56-65 3 were 46-55 8 were 36-45 2 were 26-35 5 were 16-25 1 10-16 2 under 10s</p>		<p>Age ranges Children under five - 0 Children (five to 11) - 0 Young people (12 to 15) - 0 Young people (16 to 19) - 1 Young people (20 to 24) - 0 Adults (25 to 64) - 10 Adults (65 and over) - 2</p> <p>Ethnicity Asian or Asian British (includes Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani or any other Asian background) - 2 Black or Black British (includes African, Caribbean) - 0 Chinese - 0 Mixed or Dual Heritage - unknown Any other ethnic</p>
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PROFESSIONAL EVENTS PROGRAMME

Name	Purpose	Main Themes	Date, Time & Length	Audience	Facilitators	Speakers	Audience Numbers	Documentation
Selection Day	For shortlisted artists and curators to meet each other and select who they would like to work with	Each artist presented to curators and each curator presented to the artists. Then each artist spoke to each curator individually (speed-dating style) to decide which venue they would most suit.	Watershed, Bristol Full Day	TSOT Curators & Artists	Will Kay		Selected Makers (9) Curators (5) David Will 16	None
Launch Event	To launch the shape of things	Discussion around diversity within crafts sector – see video	Tuesday 10 th November 2009 – evening. RSA, London	Curators, artists, press	Bonnie Greer (Host)	Deirdre David	Around 50	http://www.theshapeofthings.org.uk/?id=32
Collecting Contemporary Craft	Discussion & debate exploring collection of contemporary craft within public and private collections	Are public collections representative? The relationship between commissioning for exhibition and the subsequent entry of that work into public and	Tuesday 26th October 6 - 9.30 pm Pentagram & Flow	Curators, artists, press, sector, students.	Emma Crichton-Miller		103	Video

		private collections. Reputational value of public exhibition to enhancing artists' careers and the interests in their work from curators and collectors. Whether mediation of the artist's work through curatorship has an impact on the market place.	Gallery, London					
Artists' Review Day	To reflect on participation in TSOT so far and to look forward to the remainder of the programme.	How does TSOT provide a framework for individual & collective creative challenge on a personal, collective & structural level?" What do we take forward from here and how?	Wednesday 6th April 2011 11am – 4pm Oxford House, London	TSOT members	Will Kay		11	Brief Report
Audience Development Discussion: Achieving a more culturally	Reflects on what, if anything has changed with regards to the audience experience or to the market for contemporary	See document in dropbox. Themes were circulated beforehand as a starting point but not a limiting factor.	Thursday 1 st September 2011 11.30am – 4.30pm Touchstones					

diverse audience for contemporary crafts	crafts. Look to the future and imagine how to ensure it is vibrant and thriving, with culturally diverse artists and audiences integrated into mainstream practice as a matter of course.		Rochdale					
Disruptive Difference – transnational craft dialogues	A one day symposium to explore how cultural and geographical dis/location is changing craft practice, and how notions of national and cultural identity are contributing to experiences of craft	How is craft in an international context challenging or contesting dominant cultural paradigms? How are radical craft interventions challenging institutional / museological contexts? How do international makers impact on the UK craft environment? How do	Friday 17 th February 2012 10.00am – 4 pm School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester	Curators, artists, ACE, Crafts Council, academics, students, TSOT	Samina Zahir, Deirdre Figueiredo, Kathy Fawcett, Annabelle Campbell	Key contributors : Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, Janet Marstine, Carol Tulloch, Steve Dixon, Nima Poovaya-Smith, Karin-Beate Phillips, Rosa	107	Audio of key speakers; notes of workshop sessions; photos

	nationally and internationally.	culturally diverse makers from the UK impact on international craft markets?				Nguyen,		
Petcha Kucha events	An opportunity for commissioners, curators, buyers of contemporary craft and culturally diverse makers to hear about each other's work in a high-energy exchange of information	Bringing curators and culturally diverse artists together to learn about each other's work	22nd March 2.00 – 5.00 p.m., Toynbee Studios, London 27th March 1.30 – 4.30 p.m., New Art Exchange, Nottingham	Artists and curators	Note: these two events were cancelled because very few curators signed up for the London event, and only two artists signed up for the Nottingham event			

MEDIA REACH

National Arts	Circulation	Number of articles	Total Reach
Crafts	18000	2	36000
a-n magazine	32,000	2	64000
Ceramic Review	45000	1	45000
Asian Art	8000	1	8000
Selvedge	25000	1	25000
World of Interiors	86816	1	86816
Arts Industry	6,500	1	6,500
TOTAL			264,816

National BME Press	Circulation	Number of articles	Total Reach
Asiana Magazine	37,000	1	37,000
EMEL Magazine	20,000	1	20,000
Eastern Eye Newspaper	21, 000	1	21, 000
Asian Art	8000	1	8000
The Voice	30,000	4	120, 000
TOTAL			198, 000

Local	Circulation	Number of articles	Total Reach
Bristol Evening Post	49,386	1	49,386
Staffordshire Living	25, 000	1	25, 000
Express and Star	380,065	1	380,065
Manchester Evening News	379, 824	1	379, 824
TOTAL			834, 275

GRAND TOTAL		1,297,091
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