



digital:works

annual report 2022-23

About digital:works



Participation Through Creative Skills

digital:works is an Arts, Education and Heritage organisation which works with local communities, providing training and creative assistance,

to produce oral history-based digital media projects.

We are committed to a participatory approach. Creative digital arts are an exciting way for people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with and learn more about others from their local community – especially if they are the ones shaping and leading the creative process.

Accessible Projects for All

Our commitment to participation means we place great emphasis on inclusivity.

Our projects actively involve people from all corners of the community – be they young or old, visually or hearing impaired, or someone for whom English is not the first language.

The skills required in taking part in our projects do not depend on advanced media literacy or prior experience with digital equipment.

Community Ownership

Our goal with all projects is to encourage and maintain participants' sense of ownership of both the process and the final product. This, we believe, is the guiding principle of true participation work.

Chair's Report

This year we said goodbye to two valued and long-term Trustees in Peter McKenna and Jenny Donaldson. Peter has been with us from the start and chaired the Trustees throughout his tenure. His knowledge of the Education sector was invaluable as we built our work up in schools and colleges. Jenny's knowledge of social housing was a great help in our housing and local community-based projects and she often led on our policy-making. We will miss them both and hope the future treats them well.

The Trustees have been joined by Maya Gottlieb and Chris Conway, both of whom discovered our work through volunteering on projects. Maya brings the enthusiasm and perspective of a young person to our group while Chris offers great experience in local government.

Our main project this year was our exploration of the history of Kings Cross rail workers, a fascinating look at more than just train drivers but many of the staff roles required to keep the station running smoothly. We worked with a group of 12 adult volunteers and was funded through a successful bid by digital:works to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Another successful bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund was our Cinema in Kingston project which was an opportunity to work with Kingston Heritage Service and build on our Reel Stories project from the year before. As well as projectionists we looked at other jobs in the cinema, cinema-going, collectors and the buildings themselves.

We had two commissions this year from organisations we have worked with before. Notting Hill Genesis asked us to build on a project we had done before but this time make it more participatory and train their residents to carry out the work. CRAY were exploring the English Civil War and gave us the opportunity to work with their young people over the summer.

During the year we also made another application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to join up with Camden and Westminster's Archives and explore the history of London's Session Musicians, a little known, but vital part of - mainly central - London's musical history. This project bid was successful and will be carried out in 2023-24.

So, all in all a very busy year with plenty of positives to look forward to.

Sally Booth, Chair

Review of the Year

digital:works have completed two National Lottery Heritage Funded projects this year, begun another and completed two commissions.



The Train at Platform 5 - An Oral History of Kings Cross Rail Workers

With funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, digital-works brought together a group of train enthusiasts, and people interested in local and social history to work alongside Camden Local History and Archives Centre, ASLEF and retired Kings Cross rail workers to uncover the history and working lives of rail workers at Kings Cross Station.

The group had an illustrated talk from a historian, attended a reminiscence group meeting, took a guided tour of the station and visited the National Rail Museum as part of their research.

After these workshops and activities the group worked with digital-works to understand oral history techniques and recording. They developed interview questions which they used to conduct and record oral history interviews with rail workers.

These interviews were edited and combined with wonderful archive film footage to make a unique and fascinating documentary film starring the workers themselves.

The film, titled "The Train at Platform 5" was premiered at Kings Place - right next to the station - in front of an appreciative audience of 200. Online views quickly rose to 80,000, the film has been broadcast on national TV and at local events.

The film, podcasts and full interviews can be found on the project website and have also be given to the TUC archives, Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre and the Bishopsgate Institute for safe-keeping and future access.

www.kingscrossrailworkers.org.uk

Cinema In Kingston

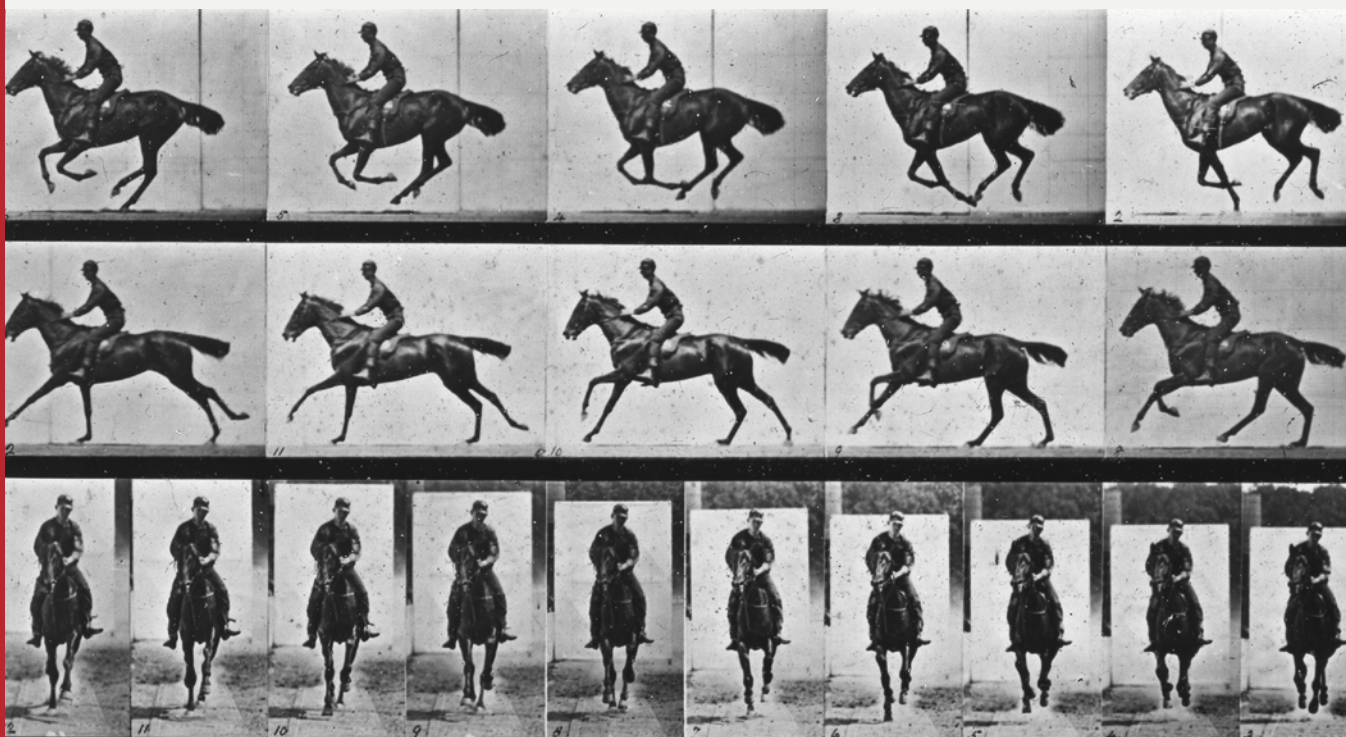
Following on from our successful project exploring London's cinema projectionists and with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund we teamed up with Kingston Heritage Service on a new project to explore the rich history of the Royal Borough's cinemas and father of film projection and local resident Eadweard Muybridge.

Working with volunteers who were trained in oral history, interviewing techniques and sound recording, 15 interviews with projectionists, usherettes, house managers, cinema-goers and local historians have been filmed.

These have been used to create a film to make the project easily accessible to all, while the full interviews and photographic and other material collected has been deposited with the Kingston Heritage Service. The film and interviews are housed on a website for everyone to access.

A mixture of cinema, local and social history, working lives, leisure and entertainment and a fascinating insight into the lengths an enthusiast will go to all add up to a captivating piece of work.

www.reelstories.org.uk/kingston



Commissions

Every Kinda People 2

In 2020 we were commissioned by Notting Hill Genesis Housing Association to run an oral history podcast project built around how music shaped people's lives. The original intention was to train up some of their residents to conduct the interviews but COVID-19 made that difficult, so we conducted the interviews ourselves. In Spring/Summer 2022 we ran a follow up project and trained 12 of their residents in oral history techniques and supported them when undertaking their interviews. The completed podcasts include extracts from the songs/pieces of music chosen by the interviewees and are streamed on MixCloud. It was a fascinating project to be part of and the finished pieces are both very enjoyable to listen to and often very emotional.

The Vindication of Christmas

In the Summer of 2022, the young members of Crayford Reminiscence and Youth [CRAY] worked with digital-works, to create a documentary film. The film looks at how Parliament's cancellation of Christmas in 1644, led to the Plum Pudding Riots in 1647 and the Second Civil War in 1648. The group interviewed a number of leading historians at some awe inspiring venues. This included Bexley Local Studies and Archives, Canterbury Christchurch University, Canterbury Cathedral, The National Archives, The Mithraeum, The Household Cavalry Museum, The Parliamentary Archive, Westminster Abbey, The National Army Museum and the National Civil War Centre, Newark. The interviews with these historians, who specialise in the English Civil War, were combined with the outputs that they created with animators Zoom Rockman, and Tom Hillenbrand of Beautness Animation and the 3DVR recreation of Crayford in 1648 made with RH Viz to create the finished film.



The running time for the completed film is forty three minutes. We hope the documentary will enable local people to learn how the momentous national events of the 1640s impacted on the small town of Crayford and the rest of Kent.

Future Projects

Confirmed projects for 2023/24 include a look at the work of London's session musicians and how that has changed over time; a commission to train a group of adults in oral history and audio recording to study how non-European food culture has affected the North Westminster area and an oral history project exploring Londoner's experiences of British holiday camps.

Financial Report

The independent examination covered the year 6th April 2022 to 5th April 2023.

Our total income for the period was £116,034 [£116,924] made up mainly from Restricted Funds (successful funding applications) consisting of £102,134 [£95,624] accounted for mainly by the Kings Cross Rail Workers and Cinema in Kingston projects. Designated Income (commissions) amounted to £9,850 [£15,900]. The balance is made up from voluntary and management fees.

Our total expenditure to date is £136,813 [£109,151] which has mostly been spent directly on costs relating to the HLF funded projects £109,544 [£79,404], the commissions £22,850 [£27,090] and governance costs of £4,419 [£2,657] which includes insurance costs and accountancy fees.

The difference between income and expenditure over the year can be accounted for by projects being funded in one financial year while expenditure takes place in another.

We have no fixed assets as yet so are not affected by depreciation. We have no current liabilities.

Please contact us by email if you would like a copy of the full accounts.

[Last year's figures in brackets]

Trustees

Sally Booth (Chair)

David Rogers (Treasurer)

Peter McKenna
[Retired 12/12/22]

Jenny Donaldson
[Retired 12/12/22]

Eshan Puri

Maya Gottlieb [Joined 12/12/22]

Chris Conway [Joined 12/12/22]

Workers

Sav Kyriacou

Matthew Rosenberg



A visit to the National Rail Museum in York

digital-works 
documenting life-stories through creative participation

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