

ANNUAL digital:works REVIEW 2011

Participation Through Creative Skills

digital:works is a group of artists and trainers who work with local communities, providing training and creative assistance, to produce arts and media projects.

We are committed to a participatory approach. Creative 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.

Thanks to our breadth of experience and expertise, we can provide training and creative support in a wide range of media, from web development, video and digital animation, to textile and oral history projects.

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.

Background

In 2007 digital:works became constituted and run by a group of trustees. Charitable status was gained in 2008.

Chair's Report



Still from John Hall's original 1952 footage used in the St Hilda's film

The past year has been a difficult one due to financial constrictions but we have emerged relatively unscathed. Long running projects have come to a successful conclusion and this success has seen us approached to carry out similar work in a variety of different contexts where the models of good practice we have used in the past have helped us to deliver successful outcomes. We are continuing to expand the range of our work and recent funding applications have garnered favourable responses from the awarding bodies.

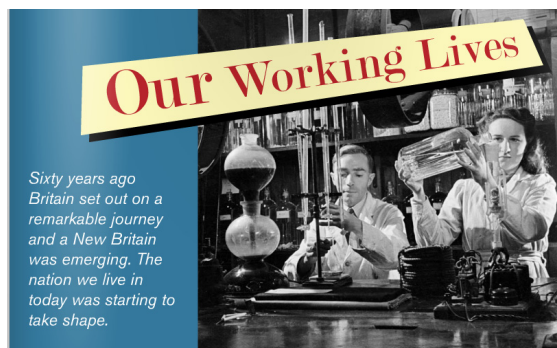
Although there will be challenges to come we are confident that our ability to identify and respond to the needs of our clients will allow us to flourish in an increasingly competitive environment. The enthusiasm of our workers remains undiminished and we look forward to the year ahead.

A fuller record of this years' work and a financial report are attached.

Peter McKenna, Chair

Projects Review

Our Working Lives



We finished our first digital:works initiated and funded (by Heritage Lottery Fund) project. We had a successful grand opening of the exhibition, The Way We Worked, at Poole Museum. This was very well attended, with a great mix of everyday folk and dignitaries.

Nerys Watts, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund South West, said: *"For many people the 1950s seem like only yesterday, but the current pace of technological and social change means that our lives now are lived in a very different way than they were in the post war period, despite the fact that it too saw a great deal of development and progress. We were delighted to support the 'Our Working Lives' project which will highlight both the differences and the similarities between the recent past and the present day in a fascinating and memorable way"*

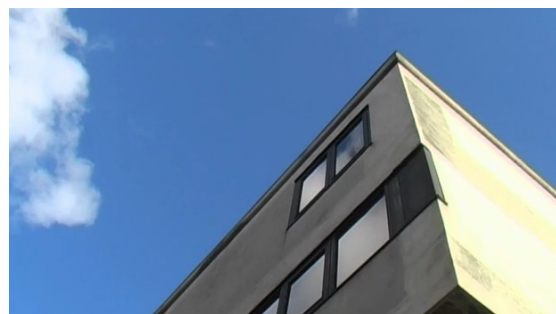
Poole Museum has extended the exhibition till April 2012 (was due to come down in September 2011). So far over 72,378 people have visited and audience figures are still growing of course.

Joe Stevens, who has led this project for digital:works, offered his thanks to all the participants who contributed their life stories and paid tribute to the volunteers who gave of their time freely in recording these oral histories.

www.ourworkinglives.org

Rowley Way Speaks for Itself

[August 2009 - May 2010]



Since the launch of the film at the Tricycle Cinema in May 2010 the Rowley Way film continues to be shown. Online it has been viewed around 2,000 times. It was included in an exhibition at the Building Design Centre in Bloomsbury as part of a retrospective of Camden's Architecture Department and the film was singled out in various reviews of the exhibition. The film has been shown as part of a smaller exhibition at Camden Archive in Holborn and was recently shown back in the Tenants Hall on the estate on which it was made.

www.rowleyway.org.uk

La Sainte Union Animation Project



In December 2010 and January 2011 we worked with three year 10 Art classes at La Sainte Union school in London. Looking at the topic of poems this year's groups used stop motion animation to create short films of Tam O'Shanter by Robert Burns, Composed Upon Westminster Bridge by William Wordsworth and The Lady of Shalott by Alfred Lord Tennyson.

vimeo.com/channels/103823

ISHA Film

[Summer 2010]



We were approached by the Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association (ISHA) to make a film with their tenants about issues that were important to them concerning where they live. The final film was called "I wouldn't need a Mansion" and was launched in October 2010 and has had over 5000 views online. The film was a very honest investigation of issues that were important to residents and did not stop short of criticising ISHA itself. ISHA responded positively to those criticisms and altered some of its approaches and the Chief Executive has told us that it was an invaluable way of getting to the root of residents concerns.

vimeo.com/channels/103823

We also carried out a one day video booth for ISHA to collect residents views on a number of issues.

St Hilda's Film



In the summer of 2010, digital:works was commissioned by St. Hilda's East Community Centre to make a film to celebrate their 120th anniversary. Volunteers had conducted interviews of local residents to record an oral history of St. Hilda's that were being used along with old photographs to create a community archive. A beautiful BBC film had been made about the work of St. Hilda's in 1952 and was donated to the archive.

Digital:works recruited members of the boys group at St. Hilda's to capture contemporary footage of St. Hilda's and the surrounding community to compliment the other sources. The boys were trained to use digital video equipment and were then given free reign to go out into their community and film what they thought was important. In one session, the boys followed local resident Patsy around their community to hear about her childhood experiences after the war and how much the area had changed. They discovered that they all attended the same primary school and even lived in some of the same buildings.

The film was shown at the Rich Mix Cinema and had two back to back screenings to a packed house of residents, staff and users of St. Hilda's. John Hall, the filmmaker who made the 1952 film travelled up from the Southwest of England to attend and shared filmmaking tips with the boys. Local press interviewed the boys and some of the local residents who were featured in the film.

vimeo.com/channels/103823

Financial Report

Our yearly accounts cover the year 6 April 2010 until the tax year end of 5 April 2011.

We had an opening balance of £10,689 which was mainly made up of restricted funds to be spent on the Rowley Way film project and Our Working lives. Further Restricted Funds (successful funding applications) income for the period was £10,843 made up mainly from £7,340 of which accounts for the ISHA film project commission; an award of £2,943 from First Light Movies; and £560 for the ISHA Video Booth. There is further income of £1,506 made up from admin and management fees and investment income.

Our total expenditure for the year was £18,242 of which £724 was Governance costs. Our balance at the end of the financial year is £3,530 of which £3,250 is designated for projects and £280 which is undesignated and will be used to run the organisation. We have no fixed assets as yet so are not affected by depreciation. We have no current liabilities but have agreed to continue our public liability insurance with AON and have appointed Ioannou & Co Chartered Accountants to conduct our independent financial examinations.

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

Trustees

Peter McKenna (Chair)

David Rogers (Treasurer)

Sally Booth

Workers

Sav Kyriacou

Matthew Rosenberg

Lindsay Starbuck

Joe Stevens

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