

# Epic Awards Seminar - Participation & Location

at Salford University - Media City Campus

Thursday 21st May 2015

From 1pm until 4pm

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**Voluntary Arts England**

## Preamble

Voluntary Arts presents an afternoon seminar on 21 May 2015, focusing on arts participation and engagement - what it is, what works and what key barriers exist to involvement. The seminar forms part of Voluntary Arts' Epic Awards annual programme - with the prestigious awards ceremony held later on in the day at BBC Media City.

The seminar, chaired by Sheila McClennon (BBC Radio 4) will focus on insightful panel discussion looking at the historical role of location as a coordinate of cultural policy and investment. The event will provide a platform to consider and discuss the interim findings of research carried out by Dr. Andrew Miles (Manchester University) in his work 'Understanding Everyday Participation', which focuses on Salford as a case study area.

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## Context

When Salford took the bold step of acquiring the docks, the area had a declining industrial base with high unemployment, poor housing and a degraded physical environment. It is now home to high-tech industries (BBC, ITV, Independent Production companies etc.) new flats and apartments, retail, leisure and sporting facilities, museums and art galleries (Lowry & Imperial War Museum). Contrast that with the adjacent Ordsall housing estate, which is one of the disadvantaged and deprived communities in England, ranked 399 out of 32,482 in the latest Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

The seminar will discuss whether the long-term investment in Media City has paid dividends, including increasing levels of engagement and participation in the arts. Or, alternatively, created more barriers to engagement by fashioning two Salfords... sitting side by side, with a distinct 'them and us' culture.

By the end of the seminar attendees will:

- **Know more about the latest research undertaken by Manchester University - 'Understanding Everyday Participation'.**
- **Be aware of the variety of cultural partnerships underway in Salford and what they are achieving.**
- **Be aware of the impact that embedded arts projects can have on local communities.**
- **Understand more about 'Our Cultural Commons' and the work of Voluntary Arts.**

# Programme

12.30pm - 1.15pm	<b>Registration and lunch</b>
1.15pm - 1.20pm	<b>Sheila McClennon's opening remarks and housekeeping</b>
1.20pm - 2.20pm	<p><b>Session Title - Understanding Everyday Participation</b></p> <p>Chair will interview all key presenters and focus on the interim research findings from Understanding Everyday Participation and whether investment in the arts reaps dividends.</p> <p>Panel to include:</p> <p><b>Dr Andrew Miles</b>      Reader in Sociology - Manchester University</p> <p><b>Peter Stark</b>      Chair - Voluntary Arts</p> <p><b>Michael Simpson</b>      Director of Visual Arts &amp; Engagement - The Lowry</p> <p><b>Mary Sackville West</b>      Campaign Manager - BBC Arts: Get Creative</p> <p><b>Bernadette Conlon</b>      CEO - Start in Salford</p>
2.20pm - 2.45pm	<b>Questions from the floor</b>
2.45pm - 3.05pm	<b>Refreshments</b> Networking opportunity.
3.05pm - 4.05pm	<p><b>Session Title – Engaging The Hard To Reach</b></p> <p>Focusing on the issue that targeted arts development makes a positive impact on those disadvantaged or excluded, but how do we continue to support such work during a period of austerity?</p> <p>Panel to include:</p> <p><b>Gail Skelly</b>      Project Manager - Ordsall Community Arts</p> <p><b>Bernadette Elder</b>      Co-ordinator - Inspiring Communities Together</p> <p><b>Janet Charlesworth</b>      Chair - Loud and Proud</p> <p><b>Leslie Holmes</b>      Project Manager - Salford Lads' Club</p>
4.05pm - 4.20pm	<b>Q &amp; A</b>
4.20pm	<b>Chair's Final Remarks</b>



## Participants

### Sheila McClennon

Broadcaster - BBC

Sheila McClennon began her broadcasting career on local radio on Merseyside and the West Midlands and is now a regular voice on BBC Radio 4 having presented Pick of the Week, Any Answers, Woman's Hour, Saturday Live, You and Yours, The Message and Sunday. She has also worked for 5Live, BBC1 television and was a reporter on London Tonight. Sheila also runs media training workshops preparing people for radio and television.

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### Dr. Andrew Miles

Reader in Sociology - Manchester University

Dr. Andrew Miles is a Reader in Sociology at the University of Manchester, where he works on issues of cultural participation, mobilities and inequality. Andrew is Principal Investigator on the Art and Humanities Research Council-funded 'Understanding Everyday Participation - Articulating Cultural Values' project and also a Co-Investigator on a study of changes in everyday travel practices and transport behaviour, which is funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council. He started out in his academic career as a social historian in the 1980s and 90s, before taking a temporary break from university life to set up a research business in the cultural sector. As an historian his main focus was on trends in class formation and social mobility, and he has recently returned to this field of research, but in a contemporary context, as a member of the team working on the BBC's Great British Class Survey.

## UNDERSTANDING EVERYDAY PARTICIPATION: ARTICULATING CULTURAL VALUES

'Understanding Everyday Participation - Articulating Cultural Values' ([www.everydayparticipation.org](http://www.everydayparticipation.org)) is an interdisciplinary research project funded for 5 years from 2012 by the Arts and Humanities Research Council as part of its 'Connected Communities' programme. The project is led from the University of Manchester but also involves researchers from the Universities of Leicester, Exeter and Warwick, and from the cultural sector.

The project proposes a radical re-evaluation of the relationship between participation and cultural value. We are used to thinking about the benefits of the arts as a traditional way of understanding culture and its value but what about the meanings and stakes people attach to their hobbies and pastimes? Can we speak of supposedly mundane activities like shopping, taking the dog for a walk, or meeting up with friends as having cultural worth? Orthodox models of culture and the creative economy are based on a narrow definition of participation: one that captures engagement with traditional institutions such as museums and galleries but overlooks more informal activities such as community festivals or creative practices carried out in and around the home. The project aims to paint a broader picture of how people make their lives through culture and in particular how communities are formed and connected through participation.

The research brings together evidence from in-depth historical analyses, the re-use of existing quantitative data and new qualitative research to reveal the detail, dynamics and significance of 'everyday participation'. The project is particularly interested to explore the ways in which participation is shaped by place and location, and to that end is working in six contrasting case study areas - or

‘cultural ecosystems’ - in England and Scotland, including Manchester/Salford, Aberdeen, Gateshead, Dartmoor, Peterborough and the Western Isles.

In addition to contributing to academic debates on participation, the project aims to facilitate dialogue across practice communities in the cultural sector and to influence debates on cultural policy. In this respect it is working with national stakeholder group comprised of representatives of sixteen key agencies and organisations in the cultural field, whilst in each case study area there is a strong emphasis on collaboration with local authorities and community groups.

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## Peter Stark OBE

Chair - Voluntary Arts

Peter Stark OBE is an internationally acknowledged leader in cultural policy research, leadership and management. In 1985, leading the funding agency for the arts in the North of England, he initiated the policies that led to the Gateshead Quays developments and the culturally led transformation of his native Tyneside - including The Gateshead Millennium Bridge, the Baltic Visual Arts Centre and the ground breaking International Music Centre - The Sage Gateshead. Between 1995 and 2000, as Special Projects Adviser to Gateshead Council, he was part of the team that delivered them.

His earlier career was in experimental and community arts with Birmingham Arts Laboratory and Welfare State International, as a cultural management teacher and as founding Director of South Hill Park Community Arts Centre in Bracknell New Town. He was awarded the OBE in 1990 for his work at Northern Arts, a Chair at Northumbria University in 2000 and an Honorary Professorship at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in 2010.

Between 2000 and 2012, he lived and worked in South Africa where he now has rights of Permanent Residence. His work here began in Inner City Johannesburg in Newtown, on Constitution Hill and in co-founding the Masters programme in Cultural Management at Wits. He then relocated to the Eastern Cape, working in Mandela Bay and in the former Transkei and Ciskei, founding Sihlanganiswa Ziinkonjane/The Swallows Partnership and establishing his company - cultures in regeneration.

Since 2012 Peter has been based in Northumberland while continuing to work in both countries. In South Africa, current contracts include developing a cultural precinct around the new Soweto Theatre at Jabulani, considering options for the future of the fire damaged historic Rissik Street Post Office in Johannesburg City Centre and considering how the National Cultural Precinct at Newtown can be ‘re-visited’ and restructured.

In the UK and in 2013 and 2014 Peter collaborated with two longstanding colleagues, David Powell and Christopher Gordon, on for major cultural policy reports: ‘Rebalancing our Cultural Capital’, ‘Policy for the Lottery, the Arts and Community in England’, ‘Hard Facts to Swallow’ and ‘A New Destination for the Arts’. Peter was appointed to the chair of Voluntary Arts in the UK and Ireland in October 2012.

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## Michael Simpson

Director of Visual Art & Engagement - The Lowry

Michael Simpson is Director of Visual Art and Engagement at The Lowry, leading both the Galleries and Learning & Engagement teams. Previously he was Head of Exhibitions at Imperial War Museum North; Keeper of Art at the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool; and Curator of Modern Art at the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester.

Opened in 2000, The Lowry is a cross-arts venue, whose mission is to enrich, engage and entertain our visitors and to contribute to the creative and educational well-being of the North West. Each year we welcome over 850,000 visitors who enjoy our award-winning theatres and galleries programme. Central to our vision is our commitment to the regeneration of our local communities, especially through our work with young people. Underpinning this work are the Lowry's values; the belief that everyone has the right to access the benefits of experiencing great art, to use the arts to bring about social change and the belief that all young people can be supported to achieve a better future for themselves.

Our work increases the employability skills of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) from vocational training schemes through to professional arts training. We do this by working intensively with groups of disadvantaged young people in our community to overcome barriers to education, skills development and personal growth. Over the years we have developed close relationships with significant numbers of Salford's Young Carers, Looked after Children and Young Parents. We are currently in the middle of a year-long creative engagement with local children on the Autistic spectrum.

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## Mary Sackville-West

Campaign Manager - BBC Get Creative

Mary Sackville-West has been working in arts television for twenty five years, producing programmes and series for BBC ONE, BBC TWO and BBC FOUR. They have ranged from large multi-platform projects The Big Read and How We Built Britain to landmark series on literature such as Faulks on Fiction and Reading the Decades; live cultural and political discussions on The Late Show to feature length documentaries The Real Blow Up, Silent Britain and The Waughs.

Mary is the Campaign Manager for Get Creative, forging partnerships with hundreds of arts organisations across the UK, such as BFI, Hay Festival and Art Fund.

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## Bernadette Conlon

CEO - Start in Salford

Bernadette Conlon is an artist, CEO and founder of Start in Salford which was set up in 1993. Start in Salford is an Arts and wellbeing charity and social enterprise. Bernadette also sits on the board of the Salford Third Sector Consortium as well as several boards and steering groups across the region both wellbeing, health and arts.

Start in Salford is an Arts & Wellbeing Charity and was established twenty two years ago and is contracted by the Salford CCG commissioning board and previously the Primary Care Trust. Start delivers a range of mental health services which provide emotional wellbeing and recovery interventions and training opportunities through creative arts-based and horticultural activities to vulnerable individuals and family members in Salford. The organisation provides an innovative range of creative arts/horticultural programmes that build resilience and are directed to improving and enhancing the quality of life, health, wellbeing and social integration of particular groups within the local community, in particular older people, young people and people who are, or maybe at risk of experiencing mental health issues or social exclusion.

## Gail Skelly

Project Manager - Ordsall Community Arts

Gail Skelly has worked as Project Manager for Ordsall Community Arts since 2004, producing many arts projects and events with local residents and artists. From the Campaign for drawing award-winning annual Big Draw project, to the night-time spectacle, lighting the Legend, Gail believes in programming focussed project work, as well as investing time in the long-term relationships necessary to engage with residents on their own terms. Ordsall Community Arts produces celebratory art projects and events with local people.

With a local employment policy, OCA recruits local artists, volunteers and residents to collaborate on a range of projects which offer exciting art activity, group based experience, informal education and intergenerational working. The organisation is currently working towards its 40th Anniversary in 2018 to celebrate and share some of the incredible projects and achievements co-produced with local residents, voluntary groups, strategic agencies and Local Authority teams spanning four decades.

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## Leslie Holmes

Project Manager - Salford Lads Club

Leslie first got involved with Salford Lads Club to create a project in 2001 for the Arts Council Architecture Week programme. He has lived in Ordsall since 1991 and approached AMEC Developments for a studio in their then empty Anchorage development on the Quays, becoming an artist in residence from 3 years. Leslie has worked as a freelance artist with Ordsall Community Arts since 1992 and he is the current chair.

Salford Lads Club was established in 1903 as a purpose built club for working lads. The club has continued to provide this facility for more than 100 years and is now considered to be the “finest example of a pre First World War club surviving and operating today. The club is now open to girls and boys throughout the year. In addition, the club is a dedicated stop for fans of the band The Smiths, a regular backdrop for film and TV productions and host to a variety of community projects. Salford Lads club is run by volunteers.

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## Bernadette Elder

Co-ordinator - Inspiring Communities Together

Bernadette has more than fifteen years' experience of working with communities supporting individuals to come together to generate positive actions to neighbourhood priorities. This work has involved working with communities to enable them to use their knowledge and skills to:

- **Establish community organisations**
- **Deliver community services**
- **Develop neighbourhood action plans**

In 2004 Bernadette took up the Community Development Managers role for the award winning ten year New Deal for Communities (NDC) Regeneration Programme in Salford. Priority was given to ensure community organisations would be sustainable post NDC funding. The approach developed included working with organisations to agree action plans, developing a programme of learning and

master classes and helping organisations to become tender ready. Bernadette also worked with local residents to implement the succession plan for the NDC and in April 2011 took up the role of Coordinator for the successor vehicle DFG (CHALK).

Now a Charity Incorporated Organisation and renamed Inspiring Communities Together the organisation has, through its continued belief that communities have the skills and knowledge to do things for themselves, been able to build strong relationships with partners working in neighbourhoods, as well as support community voices to be heard concerning local priorities. The organisation has quickly built a can do reputation for their skills in bringing communities and partner agencies together. This asset based approach to neighbourhood working has enabled the organisation to develop a range of tools often delivered in partnership.

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## Janet Charles Worth

Chair - Proud and Loud

Proud & Loud Arts is a theatre company based in Salford, Greater Manchester. They formed in 2000 and have grown and developed into an ambitious theatre company seeking to tour nationally and internationally.

We aim to create awareness, increase visibility, and ensure that a disability perspective is seen and heard by as many people as possible. We are committed to promoting, advocating and modelling the independence of people labelled with disability.

We want to contribute to local and national debates that affect the lives of people labelled with disability. We understand that our voice has an important social contribution to make.

We hope that we can be heard, viewed and treated with the same courtesy, respect and humanity as anyone else.

What do we do?

- **We create medium scale touring performance.**
- **We seek to collaborate with industry professionals to create work of the highest standard.**
- **Encourages its members to be brave and take risks.**
- **Encourages members to speak up for themselves**
- **Encourages people to take responsibility for their own creativity.**

What we believe our work should be about...

- **Being light-hearted about real subjects**
- **Making people laugh**
- **Saying something about what is important to us**
- **Commenting on the world as we experience it**
- **Promoting equality for all people**