

Access to Art

taking art to homes for the elderly

A learning project from The Museum of East Asian Art
Made possible by an award from the Concertina Charitable Cost

Project report: January – May 2007

Tom Boden

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Summary

Access to Art is a project designed to give elderly people access to the collections of the Museum of East Asian Art by taking objects out to homes for the elderly. The project received a generous award from The Concertina Charitable Trust that enabled the Museum to visit ten homes in Bath. The project enabled 97 residents to access the Museum's collections and all feedback was very positive.

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Project Plan

Aim: to provide elderly people access to East Asian Art and enable them to learn from this experience

Outcomes:

Generic Learning Outcome (GLO)	Specific Target	How that will be achieved
Knowledge and Understanding	Learning about East Asian Art	Handling session with discussion of objects.
	Using prior knowledge in new ways	Asking participants about their prior knowledge connected to the objects, drawing out what they already know.
Skills	Physical skills	Learning the art of paper folding to create exciting object.
Attitudes and Values	Attitudes towards an organisation	Outreach project will demonstrate that the museum has not forgotten about the elderly community.
Enjoyment Inspiration Creativity	Having fun	The origami session and music will hopefully enable participants to enjoy themselves!
Activity Behaviour and Progression	Actions	Hopefully this workshop will encourage participants to be more creative in the future.

Plan of activities:

Activity	Resources	Time
Handling Session – take objects out, discuss and pass them round.	8 objects for the handling session. Research about these objects	40 mins
Origami – make at least 4 different shapes	Origami paper, instructions	30 mins
Evaluation – photograph participants with their objects and get comments	Digital camera, photograph form, clipboard, pencil	10 mins
Music – show the instruments, talk about the differences in Western and Chinese music, compare English to Chinese fiddle. Play a couple of example pieces	Erhu, Yueqin, (fiddle?)	10 mins

Total time: 1 hour 30 minutes

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Methods used to evaluate learning programme

Evaluation Form – to be completed by the activity organiser from the home.
(see page 10 for example).

Photographs – to be taken during the session.

Comments – at the same time a photograph is taken, a comment about the activity should be asked for and written down (if they are happy to give a comment).

Suggestions – what other activities would they be interested in that the museum could offer? This should form a brief questionnaire to accompany the evaluation form above, to be completed by the activity organiser and the participants (if possible).

All information obtained from the methods above to be collated and evaluated in the end of project report.

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Workshops carried out

Date	Name of home	Number of participants
18 January 2007	Stratton House	8
31 January 2007	Bridgemoor	9
15 February 2007	Cranhill Nursing Home	8
20 March 2007	Smallcombe House	14
22 March 2007	Henrietta House	4
27 March 2007	St Bathens	9
28 March 2007	Oriel Lodge	9
19 April 2007	Woodland Grove	9
24 April 2007	Greystones	13
9 May 2007	Ivybank House	14
TOTAL		97

All homes for the elderly in Bath were sent a publicity leaflet (see page 11) inviting them to take part in this project. At the same time, an article in the Bath Chronicle detailing the experience of participants at Stratton House further raised awareness of the project. The mailing was then followed by phoning homes direct.

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Evaluation

Residents responded very positively to the programme. The following is a representative selection of their comments (see page 12 for pictures from Stratton House).

“I enjoyed it, something different.” Peggy, Oriel Lodge

“I thoroughly enjoyed this afternoon. I hope we have more talks like this.”
Diana, Ivybank House

“This was an excellent performance and very well put to us by the gentleman speaking. I thoroughly enjoyed the workmanship of the objects. It is beyond speaking.” Mary, Henrietta House.

“An enjoyable afternoon, especially the music. We’ll hope you’ll come again.” Joyce, Greystones

“It’s brought back memories.” Maude, Woodland Grove

“I’m always interested in finding out about other people and other countries.” Alice, Cranhill Nursing Home

“It was something entirely different to anything we’ve ever seen. This is the first occasion we have had anyone like you come to us.” Ivy, Smallcombe House

“I used to go to the museum. I had no idea it was going to be such a treat!”
Ursula, Bridgemoor

“I found it all very interesting. I loved being able to feel all the different stones.” Joan, St Bathens

These positive comments were echoed by comments in the evaluation forms:

“A wonderful afternoon enjoyed by all. Thank you so much.” Juliette Grier, Manager, St Bathens

“The afternoon was enjoyed by all. Tom was extremely good and understood the residents well.” Lyn Gould, Activity Co-ordinator, Bridgemoor

“Very well done. Everybody that took part really enjoyed themselves. We would love you to come again.” Virginia Hughes, Cranhill Nursing Home

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“It was very interesting for the residents, it’s good to have the variety of objects, activities and instruments. Good to be able to handle the objects and entrust them with them. It also brought back some travelling memories for them. Also a very good approach to the elderly.” Hannah Dawson, Activity Co-ordinator, Woodland Grove

“We really appreciated the time given to us for this activity. The residents are not as able to attend museums as they once were, so to have this brought to them enables them to continue to learn new things and maintain any interests they have. This all leads to a fulfilled life for them. Thank you for offering this service.” Joy Parker, Manager, Stratton House

This corresponds with the very positive responses to the specific questions on the evaluation form.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The workshop met my expectations.	8	1	1	0	0
Participants finished the session having learnt something new about East Asian Art.	8	2	0	0	0
The handling session gave participants an opportunity to share their prior knowledge or experiences with the rest of the group.	8	2	0	0	0
All participants learnt how to make something new out of paper during the origami session.	6	3	1	0	0
I am really pleased that the Museum of East Asian Art has developed this project.	8	2	0	0	0
I feel it is important that people living in homes for the elderly have the opportunity to access the arts through projects such as this.	9	1	0	0	0
Everyone taking part had fun and enjoyed themselves.	9	1	0	0	0
I would recommend this project to other homes for the elderly.	10	0	0	0	0

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Conclusion

This project met its stated aim of providing elderly people access to East Asian Art and enable them to learn from this experience. All participants enjoyed themselves and many commented on how interesting, different and informative this experience was for them.

The Museum of East Asian Art is proud to have carried out this project as it demonstrates a firm commitment to lifelong learning. We would like to make this project a regular feature of our education programme following comments from residents and carers that they would like us to return and bring more objects from our collection out to them.

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Appendix 1: Evaluation Form

Please complete this form and return it to:

Tom Boden, The Museum of East Asian Art, 12 Bennett Street, Bath BA1 2QJ

Thank you!

Name of person completing this form:

Position:

Name of home for the elderly:

Date of workshop:

Please complete the following table by ticking in the appropriate boxes.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The workshop met my expectations.					
Participants finished the session having learnt something new about East Asian Art.					
The handling session gave participants an opportunity to share their prior knowledge or experiences with the rest of the group.					
All participants learnt how to make something new out of paper during the origami session.					
I am really pleased that the Museum of East Asian Art has developed this project.					
I feel it is important that people living in homes for the elderly have the opportunity to access the arts through projects such as this.					
Everyone taking part had fun and enjoyed themselves.					
I would recommend this project to other homes for the elderly.					

Are there any other activities you (or your residents) would like to see offered by The Museum of East Asian Art?

How could we improve this service?

Any other comments?

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Appendix 2: Publicity Leaflet

To book a free workshop


Please contact:

Tom Boden
Education Officer
The Museum of East Asian Art
12 Bennett Street, Bath BA1 2QJ
Telephone: 01225 464640 Fax: 01225 461718
Email: tomboden@hotmail.com
www.meaa.org.uk



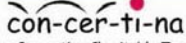
Available in large print

東亞藝術博物館 The Museum of East Asian Art



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Free workshops for homes for the elderly
from The Museum of East Asian Art

Made possible by generous support from  **con-cer-ti-na**
www.concertinamusic.org.uk The Concertina Charitable Trust


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Access to Art is a learning project designed to provide access to the arts for those who are least able to access them. Thanks to generous support from The Concertina Charitable Trust, we are now able to offer a limited number of workshops **free** to homes for the elderly in Bath and the surrounding area.

The workshops are designed to provide elderly people access to objects from the Museum's handling collection. There are nearly two hundred objects in the handling collection including Ming porcelain, jade animals and bronzes that are over 2000 years old!

A typical workshop will include the following:

- looking and learning about eight objects from our handling collection;
- a creative activity (for example, origami);
- looking and listening to two Chinese instruments from our collection, an erhu and yueqin (fiddle and lute).




Adult workshop at The Museum Of East Asian Art – making paper cuts

Tailored to your needs

The Museum of East Asian Art is committed to providing access for all. We are happy to adapt our programme to the needs of your residents and we hope this will enable everyone to get the most out of this unique experience. Please feel free to contact us to discuss your specific requirements.

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Appendix 3 – Pictures from Stratton House

Access to Art at Stratton House Thursday 18th January 2007



Marion

"I think the whole thing was very fascinating. I enjoyed learning about different materials and periods."



Fran

"Most interesting and most enlightening."



**Vera
(aged 100)**

"I'm deaf and blind but I've still had a most enjoyable morning!"



Kiki

"I've enjoyed making all those things."



George

"Intricate and interesting!"



Alan

"Historically fascinating and amusing. I've never done that (origami) before."



Marjorie

"I've had a nice morning."



Marjorie

"Very interesting."

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Appendix 4: Article sent to Group for Education in Museums (GEM) for publication in GEM News (forthcoming)

Life-long learning – taking collections to homes for the elderly

How can we demonstrate our commitment to life-long learning?

As a small independent museum in Bath we have limited resources, but small project grants can make all the difference. A grant from The Concertina Charitable Trust enabled us to offer free workshops to a limited number of homes for the elderly. These workshops were designed to provide access to objects from the museum by carrying out a handling session with up to twelve participants. This was followed by a creative activity and a chance to listen to Chinese instruments. We hoped that this project, 'Access to Art', would benefit participants, enabling them to experience something new and different and at the same time demonstrate our commitment to lifelong learning.

One concern before starting the project was how to ensure the safety of the objects taken out to homes. We have a handling collection of approximately 200 objects from East Asia. The materials of these objects are primarily jade, other hard stone, metals and ceramics. I have to confess to refusing to take ceramic objects out for the handling sessions. Aside from the concern for the safety of the objects, I did not want to make participants nervous! ("And this next object is a Ming vase, so don't drop it...") In the end, the objects selected were fairly durable (stone and metal) but we were still able to include objects of great antiquity, up to 2,400 years old.

We piloted the workshop with a local home, 'Stratton House', where my grandmother was also a resident. This was useful as I was already familiar with the way the home was run and could concentrate on evaluating the workshop. I soon learnt the importance of speaking loudly, slowly and clearly. To start with, this felt a bit uncomfortable as I was anxious not to patronise participants, however, it was clear that those residents that could hear well appreciated the need to speak loudly for those that were hard of hearing.

For many participants, this workshop was the first time they had ever held museum objects and they responded very positively.

"It was a pleasure for me handle things that were hundreds of years old." Mrs Clara Sellen, Henrietta House

The objects prompted recollections of past experiences and provided an opportunity for residents to share memories. It was striking how the same objects could be used for handling sessions that resulted in completely different conversations and learning outcomes. The tactile nature of the objects also

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allowed residents who were hearing impaired or visually impaired (or both) to take part and it was clear that they really enjoyed holding the objects.

“I’m deaf and blind but I’ve had a most enjoyable morning!” Vera, Stratton House (aged 100)

We followed the handling session with an origami activity. This provided a good change of pace to the workshop as well as an opportunity for participants to learn new skills. I chose origami for practical reasons: paper folding requires no additional resources, has no mess and is relatively easy to teach. However, manipulating the paper to fold it accurately was challenging for some elderly residents and I found myself rushing around helping everyone. This part of the workshop worked much better when carers from the home were around to help out.

The final part of the workshop was a demonstration of two traditional Chinese instruments: erhu (violin) and yueqin (lute). This was very popular with participants and with hindsight it would have been good to make this a bigger feature.

Perhaps the most striking memory of these workshops was seeing the way participants came alive when given the opportunity to try something different and learn something new. Many commented that this was the first time a museum had visited them. If we are institutions committed to lifelong learning, then the community of people living in homes for the elderly should not be forgotten.

“We really appreciated the time given to us for this activity. The residents are not as able to attend museums as they once were, so to have this brought to them enables them to continue to learn new things and maintain any interests they have. This all leads to a fulfilled life for them.” Joy Parker, Home Manager, Stratton House

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