



Giving a voice to museum people  
in the North West since 1927

## Co-Production in Practice

**Venue:** Ordsall Hall, 322 Ordsall Lane, Salford, M5 3AN

**Date:** Thursday 26 March

10.30 **Welcome and housekeeping**

10.35 **'Bridging the gap between collection development and community engagement'**

**Jennie Vickers**

Community Engagement Manager, the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust

In this presentation, I will explore how engagement work with communities over the past 21 years has led to the current project 'Coming in from the Cold' and our 'co-production' model for developing archive collections. I will share examples of past projects and current archives, outlining some of the benefits we have discovered and the challenges we have faced on our journey.

11.10 **'Collective Endeavour: Co-producing a South Asia Gallery'**

**Andrea Winn**

Curator of Community Exhibitions, Manchester Museum

This presentation will draw on the experiences Manchester Museum South Asia Gallery development. It will explore the highs and lows of working differently using the journey of the gallery development to illustrate how we challenging ourselves to do things differently with a values driven and people centred approach.

11.45 **'Building Connections'**

**James Arnold**

History Curator, The Harris Museum, Art Gallery & Library, Preston

A recent exhibition at the Harris Museum, 'Beautiful and brutal: 50 years in the life of Preston Bus Station, has involved co-curation with UCLAN as well as extensive community involvement.

12.30	<p><b>Welcome to the NWFED</b></p> <p><b>Andy Pearce</b> NWFED Board Member</p>
12.35	<p><b>Lunch</b> Lunch is not provided. Delegates are welcome to use the café at Ordsall Hall or bring their own food.</p>
1.30	<p><b>‘Creative Families’</b></p> <p><b>Katy McCall</b> Family Learning Manager, Manchester Art Gallery (MAG)</p> <p>The Creative Families gallery at MAG is a space where public services can be delivered surrounded and supported by a careful curation of art objects and considered flexible spaces. It is currently being redeveloped through an interdisciplinary partnership between the gallery, Manchester Metropolitan University (Education and Social Research Institute), Manchester Health Visitors Team, Sure Start and two local nurseries.</p>
2.05	<p><b>‘Putting communities at the centre of Museum practice’</b></p> <p><b>Mark Wilson</b> Exhibition Officer, People’s History Museum</p> <p>People’s History Museum in Manchester is the national museum of democracy and the home of ideas worth fighting for. Over the last seven years we have taken a community-focused approach to how we shape our exhibitions, collections and programme. We have re-examined our relationship with the audiences and communities we seek to represent and moved away from a singular curatorial voice, putting co-creation at the centre of the museum’s practice. The presentation will reflected on past and current projects looking at the merits and challenges of different models of co-creation.</p>
2.40	<p><b>Comfort Break</b></p>
2.50	<p><b>‘Not Quite’</b></p> <p><b>Jean-Francois Manicom</b> Curator of Transatlantic Slavery Legacies, International Slavery Museum</p> <p>At the ISM, we bring into connection the impact and consequences of the Transatlantic Slave Trade with those of modern slavery. This has resulted into a collaboration with Manchester based visual artist Elisabeth Kwant, a choreographer from Barbados, an Indian musician and worldwide survivors of modern slavery. The title of the artwork is «Am I Not a Woman and a sister», and</p>

	it is now on display in the Slavery gallery until February 2020. My paper will present this artwork and its construction process.
3.25	<p><b>‘Scratching a New Museum’</b></p> <p><b>Gareth Redston</b> Head of Programmes, Manchester Jewish Museum</p> <p>Manchester Jewish Museum is being reimagined from the ground up. What is a Jewish Museum? Who is it for? The ‘Scratch’ process has been instrumental in helping the museum begin to answer some of these questions, to build closer relationships and to ensure that the stories they share are useful and relevant to the people who need to hear them.</p> <p>This presentation will explore the museum’s journey through the choppy waters of co-creation and look at some of the lessons they’ve learned along the way.</p>
4.00	Group Discussion - Lessons Learned
4.30	Ends

## Speaker Biographies:

**James Arnold** – [J.Arnold@preston.gov.uk](mailto:J.Arnold@preston.gov.uk)

History Curator, The Harris Museum, Art Gallery & Library, Preston

James Arnold is a curator with over 14 years of experience in the museum sector. He studied archaeology at the University of Birmingham and is an Associate of the Museums Association. He previously worked for Lakeland Arts at Blackwell, the Arts and Crafts House, Abbot Hall Art Gallery and The Museum of Lakeland Life & Industry, where he curated historical exhibitions and worked with artists such as Richard Skelton to reinterpret social history items and exhibit them in contemporary art settings. He was also involved in the development of the interpretive themes at Windermere Jetty, a Heritage Lottery Fund project to redevelop the Windermere Steamboat Museum. He has worked at the Harris for five years where he is responsible for the historical collections. At the Harris he has curated exhibitions that include Streets of Change: Beattie's Preston & Beyond, which investigated the changing architecture of Preston, as well as collaborating with Charles Quick on Beautiful and Brutal: 50 years in the life of Preston Bus Station.

Co-production is becoming increasingly embedded in the way we work at the Harris and we have a strong programme that includes community-led displays and exhibitions. We are also carrying out projects in areas that traditionally have lower engagement with the museum and its collections, getting to know these areas and the people who live there.

### **James's top co-production tip is:**

'When appealing for objects and photographs, give yourself enough time to let people know what you are doing and keep faith that the process will greatly enrich the work that you are doing.'

**Katy McCall** – [k.mccall1@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:k.mccall1@manchester.gov.uk)

Family Learning Manager, Manchester Art Gallery (MAG)

Katy McCall has worked as Family Learning Manager at MAG since February 2017, where she tests out ways to make galleries and museums accessible and creative spaces for everyone. Working in partnership with other agencies from the NHS, Sure Start and MMU, Katy is interested in re-imagining what a gallery setting can offer families. A key element of her work is around raising awareness and facilitating debate round the importance of creative and playful experiences for child development.

Additionally, she is keen to discuss how in times of austerity and desperate inequality, we might achievably work collaboratively with other public services to offer resident families a creative sanctuary in the city centre.

Co- production is key to the vision at Manchester Art Gallery, under the directorship of Alistair Hudson we are beginning to re-imagine the gallery as an institute for the 21st Century, focused more on 'user-ship' than spectatorship. We are encouraged to think of our public gallery spaces as places to be radical, experimental and imaginative, working with integrity to combine art and ethics throughout all of our work.

**Katy's top co-production tip is:**

'Make time to build strong and mutually supportive relationships'

**Jean-François Manicom – [Jean-Francois.Manicom@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:Jean-Francois.Manicom@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)**

Curator of Transatlantic Slavery & Legacies, International Slavery Museum

Jean-François Manicom is Curator of Transatlantic Slavery & Legacies at the International Slavery Museum (Liverpool - UK). He holds a Master's Degree in Arts and Cultural Management from the IESA (Institute of Superior Arts), Paris. Before coming to Liverpool, he worked as curator of the permanent collection of the Memorial ACTe (Guadeloupe - French West Indies), which is the first memorial site dedicated to the history of slavery and to the expression of contemporary Caribbean Art in the Caribbean region. In 2015, he directed and curated the first Caribbean Festival of the Image that showcased the works of 41 contemporary artists from the Caribbean. With an expertise on photography, photographic archives and contemporary visual art, Jean-François has curated multiple exhibitions since 1998 that focused on the visual archives of slavery and its legacies in contemporary post-plantation societies, in France, in the Caribbean and in the UK. He is an internationally prized photographer, whose work questions the universal enigmas of our nowadays, in a world where multiple and fragmented pasts challenge our power to imagine new possible futures.

**Gareth Redston – [gareth@manchesterjewishmuseum.com](mailto:gareth@manchesterjewishmuseum.com)**

Gareth Redston is Head of Programmes at Manchester Jewish Museum and has been overseeing the museum's audience development work for the last four and a half years as part of their ambitious development project which will see the launch of a new museum in early 2021. Prior to taking up this role, Gareth worked in the learning team at The Science and Industry Museum for nine years and has been working in museums and science centres for the last 20 years.

Co-production has been instrumental in changing the way audiences interact with the museum and its collections and the museum has embedded a process known as 'Scratch' across all aspects of their work in an attempt to make the stories held within their collection as useful and relevant as possible to their diverse audiences.

**Gareth's top co-production tip is:**

'Honesty is the best policy. Hold your hands up when things go wrong and embrace the opportunity to learn that only happens when things don't quite go to plan - or when it all blows up in your face!'

**Jennie Vickers – [jennifer.vickers@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:jennifer.vickers@manchester.ac.uk)**

Community Engagement Manager, the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust (affiliated to the AIU Race Relations Resource Centre and part of the University of Manchester Library special collections).

I manage 'Coming in From the Cold' - a 3-year National Lottery Heritage Funded project to increase the representation and profile of BAME communities in archives. The AIU works with communities through various stages of this process, from funding applications to

project delivery, archiving and the dissemination of research. This approach supports underrepresented people to identify, frame and record their stories, which subsequently become integral to the shared history of our city.

I previously managed a further two heritage projects for the AIUET, collecting and representing oral histories through audio, publications and exhibitions. Prior to this, I held community engagement roles at Museums Sheffield, Imperial War Museum North, Gallery Oldham and The Lowry, developing inclusive programmes and delivering a range of learning and access initiatives. I'm also a visual artist with work in collections at the Victoria & Albert Museum, The Whitworth Art Gallery and Weston Park Museum.

**Jennie's top co-production tip is:**

'Remember the value of this work, when times are tough! It's easy to get frustrated when things don't go to plan, or to avoid working with groups after a difficult experience. However, the best kind of collecting comes from good working relationships, which take time and trust to develop.

**Mark Wilson** – [mark.wilson@phm.org.uk](mailto:mark.wilson@phm.org.uk)  
Exhibition Officer, People's History Museum -

Mark Wilson studied Fine Art Printmaking at the Manchester School of Art. Then worked in theatre in education until 2004 when he started at People's History Museum. Where he has curated the changing exhibitions ***Dedicated to all Defenders of Human Freedoms: The Art of Paul Peter Piech*** (2016) and ***Savage Ink: The Cartoon & The Caricature*** (2017). Alongside these more traditional exhibitions Mark was one of the project leads on the award winning community co-production exhibitions ***Never Going Underground: The Fight for LGBT+ Rights*** (2017) and ***Represent! Voices 100 Years On*** (2018) and more recently ***Nothing About Us Without Us*** an ongoing community led project, which looks at the representation of disabled and neurodiverse people and their activism. Museum and Mark are both passionate about the co-creation and the ways it can reinvigorate collections and open up the museum's spaces and structures to communities.

**Mark's top co-production tip is:**

'Don't be frightened to learn in public. Co-production should be about opening up museums to different perspectives and debate.'

**Andrea Winn** – [Andrea.Winn@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Andrea.Winn@manchester.ac.uk)  
Curator of Community Exhibitions, Manchester Museum

Andrea Winn is the Curator of Community Exhibitions at Manchester Museum and has been responsible for managing the Museum's Community Engagement, Outreach and Volunteer programmes over the last 12 years. Andrea is joint lead on the development of the Museum's new South Asia gallery, due to open in 2022. This new gallery, part of the Museum's £13M future capital project, will be co-produced working closely with Manchester's South Asia Diaspora communities, artist, academics and musicians.

**Andrea's top co-production tip is:**

'Co-production is a journey that requires a lot energy and you have to have full commitment from all staff from top to bottom. Be prepared for highs and lows but they are part of the Journey and no two coproduction projects will be the same.'

