Lockdown Legacy Webinar:  
The Digital Future of the Art and Cultural Heritage World

7 November 2020, 10am-1pm

Keynote speaker: Terence Gould, Technology Manager, Art UK

SESSION 1  
Chair: Alice Strang, Art Historian and Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art

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<td>‘Curating by all &amp; for all: Art UK as a digital exhibitions platform’</td>
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<td>10.30 - 10.40am</td>
<td>Abi Webster, Programme Assistant, Edinburgh Art Festival,</td>
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<td>‘Performance in the digital realm: potentials and challenges for new</td>
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<td>10.40 - 10.50am</td>
<td>Margaret Sweetnam, Marketing &amp; Communications Manager, Aberdeen</td>
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<td>Archives, Gallery &amp; Museums, ‘How To be More Joe Wicks - Finding our</td>
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<td>10.50 - 11.00am</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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FIRST BREAK - 11.00 - 11.10am

Visual presentation #1  
Isabella Wagner, University of Glasgow / The Hunterian  
‘The Hunterian’s Approach to Digital Engagement’

Visual presentation #2  
Bianca Callegaro, University of Glasgow & Co-Founder, Art Gate Blog  
‘Online Engagement with Culture in the New Normal: The case of Art Gate Blog’

SESSION 2  
Chair: Shona Elliott, Lead Curator (Collections Access), Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums

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<td>11.30 - 11.40am</td>
<td>Sandy Wood, Collections Curator, Royal Scottish Academy of Art &amp;</td>
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<td>Architecture, ‘Pandemic: The Royal Scottish Academy during lockdown</td>
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11.50 - 12noon Q&A
SECOND BREAK - 12.00 - 12.10pm
Visual presentation Martin Disley, Artist and Technology Researcher Cartographic Hallucination: Generative A.I. and the National Library of Scotland Map Collection
SESSION 3
Chair: Claire Robinson, Collections & Exhibitions Curator, University of St Andrews Museums
12.10 - 12.20pm Welcome
12.20 - 12.30pm Nicola Osborne, Programme Manager, Creative Informatics, ‘Collaborating through the crisis: innovative art/tech partnerships emerging from lockdown’
12.30 - 12.40pm Alexandra Jones, Collaborative Doctoral student, University of St Andrews and National Museums Scotland, ‘Automating access to collections during lockdown’
12.40 - 12.50pm Rhona Taylor, Vice President, Society of Scottish Artists, ‘Providing a Digital Toolkit for Artists’
12.50 - 1pm Q&A and concluding remarks

Zoom Director: Kam Chan, Programme Administrator, Creative Informatics
Comms Officer: Judith Liddle, Scottish Society for Art History

SSAH: https://ssahistory.wordpress.com/
Creative Informatics: https://creativeinformatics.org/
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Coming up:

SSAH ‘Art, Landscape and Space’ webinar, 5 & 6 February 2021, for details see https://ssahistory.wordpress.com/study/

Fancy becoming a member of the Scottish Society for Art History? Annual membership costs from just £18: https://ssahistory.wordpress.com/how-to-join/

Sign up to the Creative Informatics mailing list for regular updates on funding opportunities and events: https://creativeinformatics.org/contact/
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Contributor and Paper / Presentation Information  

SESSION 1  

Terence Gould, Technology Manager, Art UK  

Terence Gould has been Art UK’s Technology Manager since 2018. Leading on the development of Art UK’s shared digital platform for collections, his work has included the delivery of Curations and Art UK’s Learning Resource portal (to be launched in 2021). He has previously worked on mass digitisation and digital collections projects within the National Galleries of Scotland, including the redevelopment of their collection website.  

‘Curating by all & for all: Art UK as a digital exhibitions platform’  

Art UK is an online platform that enables public collections in the UK to share their holdings with audiences around the world. Seeking to democratise access to these rich collections, our Curations tool was developed to allow anyone, anywhere to create online exhibitions from the works on our site. Launching a few weeks into the national lockdown, Curations was adopted by museums across the UK to present surrogates of displays that had been shuttered due to Covid-19. This paper will discuss the thinking and development process behind Curations, its usage during lockdown by both collections and everyday users, and will consider the future role of the online exhibition as a surrogate for collections, and a creative and learning tool for our audiences.  

https://tgld.me / https://artuk.org  
Instagram: @tlgould / @artukdotorg  
Twitter: @tl_gould / @artukdotorg  

Abi Webster, Programme Assistant, Edinburgh Art Festival  

Abigail Webster lives and works in Edinburgh. She is presently employed as Programme Assistant at Edinburgh Art Festival, while continuing to curate self-organised projects at EMBASSY gallery. She obtained her undergraduate degree from Edinburgh College of Art and is due to complete an MA in Arts, Festival and Cultural Management at Queen Margaret University in December. Her current research seeks to explore the dialogic relationship
between contemporary artists and curators through the lens of hospitality.

‘Performance in the digital realm: potentials and challenges for new commissions’

Drawing from the work of Calvin Z. Laing, Tamara MacArthur and Hanna Tuulikki, each of whom were commissioned as part of Edinburgh Art Festival’s 2020 digital programme, this paper seeks to explore the creative potential of online performance; the use of digital tools when ‘liveness’ and human interaction are crucial to the artists’ practice; and the challenges of producing new work during a period of unprecedented change.

www.edinburghhartfestival.com
Instagram: @EdArtFest
Twitter: @edartfest

Margaret Sweetnam, Marketing & Communications Manager, Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums

Margaret Sweetnam joined Aberdeen Archives, Gallery & Museums in 2016 in the new role of Marketing & Communications Manager which was created as part of the Aberdeen City Council / National Lottery Heritage Fund investment in the redevelopment of Aberdeen Art Gallery. The Art Gallery opened in November 2019, welcoming over 100,000 visitors in its first 100 days, and then closed again due to the Covid-19 pandemic. During lockdown, Margaret found herself outside of her comfort zone most days as the AAGM team rose to the challenge of sharing Aberdeen’s outstanding collections to an online audience. Margaret is immensely proud that Aberdeen Art Gallery is a winner of the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2020.

‘How To be More Joe Wicks - Finding our Digital Mojo’

The Covid-19 lockdown brutally exposed our limitations in the area of digital engagement - previously the preserve of the Marketing team (2 FTE) and largely focused on social media, managing the website and a schedule of blogs. Suddenly everyone wanted to do everything online and we were completely overwhelmed! We took a deep breath and asked ourselves: “How do we become the Joe Wicks of museums?” The lockdown experience has highlighted for us the importance of reaching our visitors remotely, not just in our buildings, to increase access to Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums’ important collections of art and history for audiences of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/AAGM
Twitter: @AbdnArtMuseums
Instagram: @abdnartmuseums

BREAK 1: VISUAL PRESENTATIONS

Isabella Wagner, University of Glasgow / The Hunterian
Isabella Wagner is a student at the University of Glasgow in her final year studying History of Art and English Literature. She is a volunteer tour guide with the MuSE programme (Museums Student Educators) at The Hunterian Art Gallery. She delivered tours on *The German Revolution: Expressionist Prints* exhibition in 2019 before writing her own tour: ‘Whistler and the Glasgow School.’ This year she was awarded ‘MuSE of the Year’ for the contributions she made to the programme. She also undertook a work placement with the Hunterian’s Outreach project as part of its 2020 cohort and participated in initiatives to move both of these projects online during the COVID-19 lockdown.

‘The Hunterian’s Approach to Digital Engagement’

This slideshow will focus on The Hunterian’s student-based MuSE programme (Museum Student Educators) and Outreach project and how they carried out their work online to ameliorate the effects of the closure of The Hunterian’s premises during lockdown.

https://www.gla.ac.uk/hunterian/
Instagram hunterianglasgow
Twitter @hunterian

Bianca Callegaro, University of Glasgow & Co-Founder, Art Gate Blog

Bianca Callegaro is the co-founder, editor and manager of Art Gate blog. She is currently studying History of Art with Film and Television Studies (MA) at the University of Glasgow and aims to pursue further study in the field of art curation. In addition to focusing on her studies, she is a columnist for Glasgow University Magazine and volunteers as a museum guide at the Hunterian Art Gallery. She is currently working as gallery intern at Six Foot Gallery in Glasgow.

‘Online Engagement with Culture in the New Normal: The case of Art Gate Blog’

This slideshow will focus on Art Gate, an online blog founded by three History of Art students at the University of Glasgow in March 2020, in the attempt to engage with the arts and cultural field. The presentation will reflect on digital engagement, particularly through blogs, and interpersonal exchanges as fundamental to the proliferation of culture. The challenges involved will be analysed and strategies to re-establish the connection between heritage and the general audience will be proposed, through the framework of the legacy of COVID-19 and taking our project as a case study.

https://artgateblog.altervista.org/
Instagram: @gu_art_as
Twitter: @CallegaroBianca / @GUartAS

SESSION 2
Norman McBeath, Printmaker and Photographer

Norman McBeath is a photographer and printmaker living in Edinburgh. His work has been exhibited extensively in the UK and overseas. The National Portrait Galleries in London and Edinburgh have over seventy of his portraits in their collections. Among his published works are collaborations with poets and writers including Jeanette Winterson, Paul Muldoon, Kathleen Jamie and Robert Crawford. Simonides, with Robert Crawford, was shortlisted for the Ted Hughes Award and exhibited at Yale University. Collections which hold his work include the British Library; the National Library of Scotland; the British Council; Harvard University and Yale Center for British Art.

‘Perdendosi’

I will share my experience of how lockdown affected the way I approached a new photographic body of work - Perdendosi. In this work, I study the individual delicacy and grace exhibited by leaves poised on the cusp of decay and disintegration. I will share a selection of the emerging work and explore how familiar subjects of study became freighted with new associations and symbolism, reflecting the prolonged and profound shock and anxiety permeating our everyday lives at this time.

https://www.normanmcbeath.com/
Instagram: @normanmcbeath

Sandy Wood, Collections Curator, Royal Scottish Academy of Art & Architecture

Sandy Wood is Collections Curator at the Royal Scottish Academy of Art & Architecture, Scotland’s oldest surviving artist-run institution. Having entered the profession from a Fine Art degree at Gray’s School of Art in Aberdeen, Sandy has a particular interest in how curatorial and artistic practice can operate together in the gallery context and how the historic and contemporary can be engaged in dialogue. Over the last ten years Sandy has helped actively develop the RSA’s collections while publishing on related subjects. He has curated numerous exhibitions, including the major 2017 exhibition Ages of Wonder: Scotland’s Art 1540 to Now.

‘Pandemic: The Royal Scottish Academy during lockdown and beyond’

The covid-19 pandemic arrived at a particularly challenging time for the Royal Scottish Academy, requiring a downing of tools in the midst of hanging our 2020 Annual Exhibition. Taking the exhibition online meant its first non-physical showing since 1827. Like many other art institutions the pandemic has presented major challenges, but it has also inspired new opportunities for artists and a focus on digital development. This paper will highlight RSA activity during the pandemic and what the future holds in an uncertain world.

https://www.royalscottishacademy.org/
Instagram: @royal_scottish_academy
Alice Strang, Art Historian & Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art

Alice Strang is a Senior Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the National Galleries of Scotland. Highlights of her career include the Scottish Colourist series of exhibitions of the work of F. C. B. Cadell, J. D. Ferguson and G. L Hunter. She is a BBC Expert Woman and was made a Saltire Society Outstanding Woman of Scotland for her leadership of the 2015 *Modern Scottish Women: Painters & Sculptors 1885-1965* project, including exhibition and publication. Following the COVID-19 lockdown, Alice was on furlough leave for six months during which time she moved her curatorial practice on-line, to twitter, Instagram and her own website.

‘A Curatorial History of Lockdown in 164 Posts’

Between April and July 2020 I made 164 posts on Instagram, from the day after I was put on furlough leave until the day after museums and galleries were allowed to re-open in England. The posts featured works from UK public collections and responded to the coronavirus COVID-19 lockdown as it unfolded, addressed broader current affairs or provided respite from them. Translating analogue curatorial skills into the digital sphere and establishing new audience relationships, the intention was to demonstrate the power of art to comfort and inspire during a time of unprecedented, communal change, when the works could not be seen in the flesh.

https://alicestrang.co.uk/
Instagram: @alice.strang
Twitter: @AliceStrang

BREAK 2: VISUAL PRESENTATION

Martin Disley, Artist and Technology Researcher

Martin Disley is an artist and technology researcher based in Edinburgh. His work develops out of a practice of counterfoil research into advanced technologies, with a current focus on machine vision technology. His practice leverages machine-learning technologies to co-create image and video that aims to elucidate the impact of these systems overreach. He was previously artist-in-residence at the National Library of Scotland and is currently working on a commission for NEoN festival. His work has been exhibited at the V&A Museum (Dundee), Summerhall (Edinburgh), The Centre for Contemporary Arts (Glasgow), Guterhallen Gallery (Soligen, Germany), Sala Aranyo (Barcelona) and Kunstencentrum Vooruit (Ghent).

‘Cartographic Hallucination: Generative A.I. and the National Library of Scotland Map Collection’
As the National Library of Scotland’s artist-in-residence, I sought to address the challenge of exhibiting vast collections online. In this presentation, I will outline my process of creating ‘fake’ maps from the library’s collection using a generative artificial intelligence. Utilizing machine-learning I was able to synthesise these expansive collections down into representational models which could render the stylistic breadth of a collection in a single video. This work was funded as part of the Creative Informatics Resident Entrepreneur programme.

http://www.martindisley.co.uk/
Twitter: @martin_disley

SESSION 3

Nicola Osborne, Programme Manager, Creative Informatics

Nicola Osborne is Programme Manager for Creative Informatics, leading delivery of this Project which brings together Edinburgh’s creative, cultural and tech sectors to create ground-breaking new products, services and experiences – which has continued to provide support and funding throughout lockdown. Previously, Nicola managed innovative digital projects and undertook business development at EDINA. Since 2014 Nicola has been Co investigator on the Managing Your Digital Footprint research and co-tutor of the Digital Footprint MOOC. Nicola is a member of the Turing Institute Humanities and Data Science Interest Group, the Journal of Open Research Software Editorial Advisory Board and the Association of Internet Researchers.

‘Collaborating through the crisis: innovative art.tech partnerships emerging from lockdown’

Creative Informatics supports creative people and organisations to innovate and explore the potential of data and data driven technologies. In this paper we introduce new collaborations arising from lockdown that address shifts in demand, increased motivation to experiment with technology and opportunities for new modalities of experience: (1) #FridayForumEdi rapid response online event series in partnership with Visual Arts Scotland; (2) Fruitmarket Gallery Cardiff Miller’s Night Walk for Edinburgh app enabling socially distant self-led participation using data to protect artist IP; (3) Talbot Rice Gallery audience flow tool, created by a student team to track audiences across physical exhibition space.

https://creativeinformatics.org/
Instagram: @creativeinformatics
Twitter: @CreateInf

Alexandra Jones, Collaborative Doctoral student, University of St Andrews and National Museums Scotland

Alexandra Jones is currently working on a Collaborative PhD with the University of St Andrews and National Museums Scotland. Her research focuses on the museum’s collections from Ethiopia, exploring the biographies of these objects and their journeys into
the museum collection. Her research follows on from four years spent working at the Victoria and Albert Museum from 2015-2019, where she curated a display of the museum’s Ethiopian collections.

Before joining the museum world Alex spent seven years working as a software engineer, before returning to university in 2014 to obtain an MSc in Museum Studies. Her unusual route into the sector has given her a particular interest in the intersection of art, heritage and technology.

‘Automating access to collections during lockdown’

The COVID-19 lockdown and the subsequent closure of museums, libraries and archives has presented a significant challenge to PhD students. Finding herself unable to access any collections at an early stage of her research into Ethiopian material culture in UK museums, Jones produced a range of automated tools to pull information from online collections databases and to carry out some basic analysis of the results. In this paper, Jones will present some of the tools she developed, and the ways in which they helped her to continue with her research during a difficult time.

alexmjones.net
Instagram: @jonesalexm
Twitter: @jonesalexm

Rhona Taylor, Vice President, Society of Scottish Artists

Rhona Taylor is a practising visual artist based in Edinburgh, and the current vice-president of the Society of Scottish Artists. She has worked for a number of arts organisations, including Art UK as a co-ordinator on their sculpture project and the Art360 Foundation as an associate archivist on the Art360 Scotland project. Before studying painting at Edinburgh College of Art, she worked as an arts journalist, writer and editor. Since lockdown began, she has been one of the main people behind the SSA’s online professional development programme.

‘Providing a Digital Toolkit for Artists’

Digital skills have become an integral part of any artist’s professional toolkit; an effective online presence is crucial if artists are to showcase their work and secure exhibitions, as well as manage their practice. The Society of Scottish Artists had already identified a digital knowledge gap among some of its membership, which put many artists at a disadvantage. The SSA has used the break in its exhibition programming in 2020 to deliver an online professional development programme addressing that gap, and has also embraced a stronger online presence as a Society, which it intends to build on in the future.

https://rhonataylor.co.uk/ / https://www.s-s-a.org/
Instagram: @rhonabtaylor / @societyscottishartists
Twitter: @rhona_taylor / @SocietyScotArt