

**Call for proposals — Engage Journal 43**

**Profession and Practice (working title)**

***The outline below, stimulated by a discussion with the Engage Journal Editorial Advisory Board (EAB), is followed by a series of questions. Please address these or use them as prompts in proposals for articles.***



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This year Engage marks thirty years advocating for and supporting visual arts and gallery education. Appropriately, this issue celebrates the development of the profession, and pays tribute to key figures that have conceived, developed and analysed gallery education pedagogies and practice. Given the maturity of the sector, it is not surprising that many of these key figures are enjoying retirement, pursuing personal projects or nearing the end of their formal careers; Sue Clive, Felicity Allen, Vivien Lovell, Jenni Lomax, Helen O'Donoghue, Veronica Sekules, Lindsey Fryer, to name a few.

While looking back, this issue also aims to pinpoint work that currently defines gallery education and what motivates people to enter the profession now. This year is a time to take stock of all that has been achieved, and what the sector values in moving into the future.

In the editorial for issue 35 of the Journal, which marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of Engage, Karen Raney described the context and conditions for the emergence of 'gallery education'. The community arts movement and investment in cultural organisations for example, were crucial, but it was the vision and personal world-view of individuals that enabled the distinct practices to grow. These individuals included artists, art historians, curators, educators and academics "interested in the liberatory and inclusive agenda of community arts, de-schooling or feminism found their way into museum and gallery education ... As gallery education is not statutory or regulated, and has no age progression, it was, and continues to be, seen as a site where greater educational freedom and experimentation can take place".[1] Engage was established in 1989 to recognise and support this growing profession.

Thirty years on 'gallery' education — which always included museums — has burst out beyond the walls and is a rich and diverse field. Supporting schools and the curriculum has always been the foundation of education in museums and galleries aimed at resourcing teachers, providing experience of real objects and works of art, and enabling children and young people to access cultural institutions.

Looking back, Toby Jackson was appointed at Modern Art Oxford in the 1980's, specifically to work with schools. He went on to be Head of Education and Public Programmes at Tate Liverpool 1988–1999, and Head of Interpretation and Education at Tate Modern 1999–2005 and throughout energetically promoted the importance of work with schools,[2] as have educators at numerous other galleries and museums internationally. *The Arts in Schools: Principles, Practices and Provision*,[3] commissioned from Ken Robinson by the Gulbenkian Foundation in 1982 has been enormously influential. Pier Arts Centre Orkney is also celebrating 30 years this year. Engage Board member Carol Dunbar is Education Officer and has set up long term relationships with local nurseries and schools.

However, the categories of practice have grown and expanded, through innovatory artists, educators and leaders of cultural institutions, with different areas of interest and expertise. Now gallery education embraces 'socially engaged practice' and 'participatory practice' — practice that has grown out of the community arts movement and through political activism to increase diversity of audiences, artists and the workforce, and a focus on specific artists' practice. SPACE, a disability-led arts organisation, is currently celebrating its fortieth anniversary.

The aim to increase cultural diversity in all aspects of cultural life has been spearheaded by organisations such as Iniva and Autograph. More recently the LGBTQIA+ movement has come to the fore in recent years, given urgency by the high levels of mental illness in these communities. Giving agency to audiences has been a key objective.

This is by no means an exhaustive list and it is invidious to list names. It is important to recognise leaders — who have not been educators — who have supported and enabled gallery education to develop and thrive. This list includes Sir Nicholas Serota who has supported education as Director of the Whitechapel Gallery 1976–1988 and Tate 1988–2017, Declan McGonagle at the Irish Museum of Modern Art 1990–2001, and Professor Mike Tooby when curator at Third Eye Glasgow, Keeper at the Mappin Gallery Sheffield, before becoming the first director of Tate St Ives, 1992–1999.

The profession has also benefited from academic research and writing. People including Veronica Sekules and Maria Xanthoudaki, Carmen Moesch, Jocelyn Dodds, Eileen Cooper Greenhill and Emily Pringle have led critical debate, provided context and proposed frameworks for practice. A list could be lengthy but publications that have had a particular impact include *Moving Culture* by Paul Willis,[4] and *Neither Use nor Ornament* by Francois Matarosso.[5]

Engage and the Journal's editorial board want to know who you in the profession regard as innovators, who have informed and inspired the work you do. The quick summary above is mono-cultural and dominated by women, so this Journal should seek out the other influencers in what is a generous and collaborative field.

## Notes

- 1 <https://engage.org/engage35>
- 2 <https://www.amazon.com/Critical-Studies-Modern-Art-Dawtre/dp/0300067984>
- 3 <https://gulbenkian.pt/uk-branch/publication/the-arts-in-schools/>
- 4 <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2803778-moving-culture>
- 5 [https://www.academia.edu/1272437/Use or Ornament The social impact of participation in the arts](https://www.academia.edu/1272437/Use_or_Ornament_The_social_impact_of_participation_in_the_arts)

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**We are interested in contributions from colleagues in the UK and worldwide that reflect on the development of gallery education policy and practice, highlighting the contribution of key individuals. Proposals should address questions such as:**

- What have been the key developments in gallery education practice in museums and galleries over the last 30 years and who have been the innovators?
- Gallery education emerged alongside the community arts movement, which strove to effect social change and cultural democracy through the arts. In what ways have gallery educators been able to 'make a difference'?
- Who are the key figures that have shaped gallery education, and what are their lasting achievements?
- What has been the role of leaders in galleries and museums who have supported education and participation?
- How have path breaking gallery educators supported colleagues coming into the profession?
- What areas of practice or specific projects are currently inspiring to gallery educators?
- Citing examples of important gallery educators and others who have developed the field results in a monocultural list. Has the sector succeeded in diversifying the sector workforce to any significant extent?

**If you are interested in contributing to this issue, please send an informal proposal of no more than 300 words, your job/freelance title and contact details to [communications@engage.org](mailto:communications@engage.org) by 10am on Monday 3 June 2019.**

**Contributions may take the format of articles, interviews, collaborative pieces, conversations, photo essays or discussions, and engage welcomes those which take advantage of the Journal's online format, through the use of sound or video clips, film and html links to digital content. As a guide, final articles lie between 1,500 and 3,000 words.**

### Issue timeline:

- Proposals deadline: 10am, Monday 3 June 2019
- Finished article deadline: 10am, Monday 8 July 2019 (TBC)
- Engage 43: Profession and Practice (working title) will be published in Autumn 2019



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