



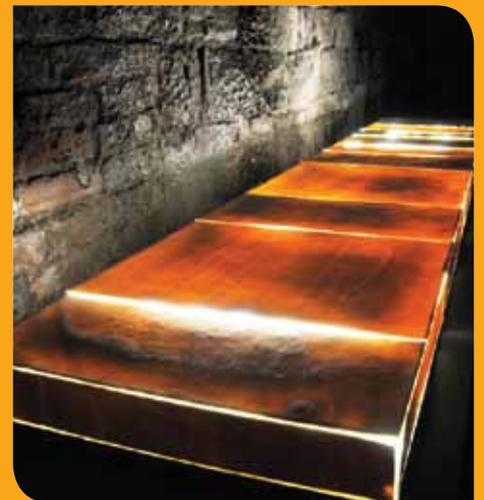
Sharing the impact of New Expressions 3

Unlocking the creative potential of museums:
A national pathfinder programme

www.newexpressions.org



new
expressions
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About New Expressions



New Expressions 3 establishes a national approach to collaboration between contemporary artists and museums. It explores how partnership working can be structured to provide fresh approaches to collections and engaging visitor experiences across England.

From Cumbria to Cornwall, 18 lead artists presented specially commissioned work in partnership with 15 museums. Taking historic collections and buildings as their starting point, projects ranged from long-term interventions to one-off public events.

And the impact stretched far beyond the 18 lead artists and organisations: More than 40 creative industry professionals worked to realize the commissions, or developed new products connected to them, and over 600,000 people encountered a new reason to visit museums.

“The public dimension of this project has been the people working on it: The divers, block makers, Babcock’s* engineers, the musicians in the band. It’s become a cast of many people”

Keith Harrison, artist, worked with Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery

*Egg Photographs' (2015) Uta Kögelsberger. Abbot Hall Art Gallery. Commissioned by Cumbria Museum Consortium for New Expressions 3. Photo: New Expressions © Jane Hobson

Sound artist Chris Watson making 'Ebb and Flow' (2015). Commissioned by Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery for New Expressions 3. Photo: Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery © Matt Austin



Participating museums and lead artists

Major Partner Museums

Birmingham Museums Trust, Soho House – Poolman and Rowe

Bristol City Museums, Galleries and Archives – Wood and Harrison

Cumbria Museum Consortium – Uta Kögelsberger

Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery – Keith Harrison

Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery (RAMM), Exeter – Chris Watson

York Museums Trust – Philip Eglin

National Trust properties

Lyme Park and Gardens, Cheshire – Sean Griffiths

Tyntesfield, Bristol – Emma Smith

Upton House and Gardens, Warwickshire – Yelena Popova

New Opportunities Award projects

David Bridges – Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills

Hannah Leighton-Boyce – Touchstones, Rochdale

Field Notes – Penryn Museum, Cornwall

Nancy J Clemance – Bridport Museum, Dorset

Tim Shore – The Workhouse, Southwell, Nottinghamshire

Tristram Aver – Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire

Key statistics for New Expressions 3

- 18 lead artists created 38 new works of art including installations, sound compositions and one-off events
- 6,902 people took part as makers, contributors, performers, volunteers and participants in activity
- 604,673 people experienced the new artworks 'live'
- More than 48 million people accessed the commissions via digital, print and broadcast media**
- Museums and artists ran 368 activity sessions for people to take part in
- The New Expressions 3 Live Season 2015 ran for 39 weeks, offering a total of 2,066 exhibition days across 15 projects
- The commissions generated more than 1,000 days of employment for artists and creative practitioners
- 243 museum and property staff helped realise the creative commissions, sharing their time, skills and professional expertise
- 40 curators and specialists provided expert advice and knowledge sharing
- 270 museum professionals and artists participated in field visits and peer-to-peer learning events across four English regions

Front cover, clockwise from top left:

'Heavy Rock / Plymouth Sound' (2015) Keith Harrison. Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery (installed at KARST). Photo: Plymouth City Council Arts and Heritage

'Aerial' (2015) David Bridges. Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills. Photo: Leeds City Council

'The Portrait of a Gentleman' (2015) Yelena Popova. Upton House and Gardens, National Trust. Photo: National Trust

'Good Money: A currency competition for Handsworth' (2015) Poolman and Rowe. Soho House. Photo: Birmingham Museums Trust

'Blue Jug' (2015) Philip Eglin. Photo: York Museums Trust

Sound artist Chris Watson (Left) making 'Ebb and Flow' (2015). Photo: Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery © Matt Austin

Museums and historic properties



Unlocking historic collections and spaces

The creative collaborations brought undervisited collections into the public eye, introduced fresh perspectives and opened up new dialogues between the historic and the contemporary.

Eight out of 10 participating museums agreed that their project helped them to open up their collections and spaces.

“It’s hard to tell the story of a structure two miles out to sea. The artist’s recent interaction with it gives us a new hook to captivate future visitors”

Nigel Overton, Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery

“The New Opportunities Award has refreshed and invigorated”

Haidee Jackson, Newstead Abbey

“The artists have managed to bring comedy to what can sometimes be viewed as a boring and specialist subject”

Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives

Clockwise from top:

‘Good Money: A currency competition for Handsworth’ (2015) Poolman & Rowe. Commissioned by Soho House for New Expressions 3. Photo: Birmingham Museums Trust

‘Gleam’ (2015) David Bridges. Commissioned by Leeds Industrial Museum at Armlley Mills as part of New Expressions 3 New Opportunities Award scheme. Photo: Leeds City Council

‘The Working End’ (2015) Nancy J Clemanca (artist) at AmSafe net manufacturers. Commissioned by Bridport Museum as part of New Expressions 3 New Opportunities Award scheme. Photo: Tara Harland Viney

Adventure, risk and imagination

New Expressions enabled museums and artists alike to try out new ideas and stretch possibilities within a well-managed and peer-supported environment.

Nine out of 10 museums said that their projects had been adventurous.

“Yelena is brilliant at thinking slightly out-of-the-box. She will take an idea from one thing and she will make it work”

Rachael O’Connor-Boyd, Upton House and Gardens (National Trust)

“As the National Trust, we have to be politically objective about the workhouse system – and its current equivalents. An artist can help us say: ‘yes, that’s an interesting idea, let’s explore that view further”

Fiona Lewin, The Workhouse, Southwell (National Trust)

“Anything you do out on the breakwater, even taking a party out there, can be cancelled at any time. The story of the breakwater is embedded in the events that have unfolded”

Nigel Overton, Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery

Visitor experience

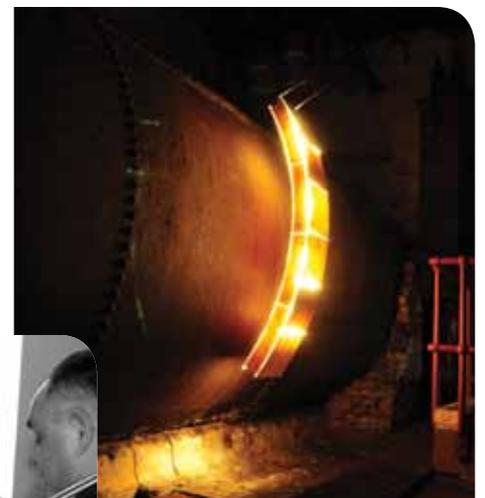
New Expressions is all about making innovative and distinctive experiences. **Seven out of 10** participating museums said that their projects had increased the quality of visitor experience at their sites.

“Visitor reaction has been very positive. We will be programming in art to our annual programme off the back of this project”

Ceinwen Paynton, Lyme Park and Gardens (National Trust)

“Phil Eglin’s work uses contemporary culture to spotlight issues and that gives visitors a way in to the historical themes in our collections”

Helen Walsh, York Museums Trust





Developing audiences

People are at the heart of museums, and the projects in New Expressions 3 captivated young and old visitors alike.

“The project has left a strong legacy in terms of community engagement. It made it possible to put heritage, art and communities together and – with a spirit of creativity and imagination – mix it all up and allow the magic to happen”

Oliver Buckley, Birmingham Museums Trust

“The reach of it has far exceeded our expectations. The numbers of people it’s involved, the numbers of people it’s touched, has been quite overwhelming at times”

Hannah Kemp, Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills

Developing people and organisations

New Expressions builds understanding and confidence through peer-to-peer events.

Field visits offered chance to experience some of England’s leading examples of collaborative working.

Over the course of New Expressions 3, the percentage of participating museums that felt confident about working with contemporary artists rose from **75% to 90%**.

“One volunteer took a visitor who was being a bit shy about the exhibition and, because of her own confidence, she’d managed to turn that around. That was really beautiful”

Rachael O’Connor-Boyd, Upton House and Gardens (National Trust)

“There will be a continued legacy for the project – we have just received funding through Birmingham City Council to continue working in Handsworth”

Oliver Buckley, Birmingham Museums Trust

Specialist mentors are part of the framework of New Expressions, offering advice and support to museums and artists working in new ways together.

“Our New Expressions mentor has been brilliant. I don’t think it would have occurred to us to invest in an artist to draft a proposal for us. Just sharing her experience on communicating with artists, making sure artists are aware of what’s required, guiding us through. It’s been really, really good”

Helen Watson, Cumbria Museum Consortium

“Our staff have gained greater insight and greater confidence in commissioning contemporary artists through the support of our New Expressions mentor”

Oliver Buckley, Birmingham Museums Trust



Clockwise from top:

‘Egg Photographs’ (2015) Uta Kögelsberger. Abbot Hall Art Gallery. Commissioned by Cumbria Museum Consortium for New Expressions 3. Photo: New Expressions © Jane Hobson

‘Magister Dixit’ (2015) Emma Smith. Tyntesfield (National Trust). Commissioned by Trust New Art Bristol for New Expressions 3. Photo: © Paul Blakemore

Artist Keith Harrison during boat trip to Plymouth Breakwater. Live event as part of ‘Heavy Rock’ (2015) Keith Harrison. Commissioned by Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery for New Expressions 3.

Photo: Plymouth City Council Arts and Heritage

Artists

Artist Keith Harrison inside his replica wave breaker for 'Heavy Rock' (2015). Installed at KARST. Commissioned by Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery for New Expressions 3. Photo: Plymouth City Council Arts & Heritage



Challenging artists

New Expressions 3 and the New Opportunities Award (NOA) scheme challenged artists to work on different scales, with new materials, and to make some of their most imaginative and exciting work to date.

Eight out of nine artists said their project had stretched them creatively and **seven out of nine** said that it had stretched them critically. Some deepened continuing investigations while others pursued new ideas and knowledge. Others still developed their working processes in new social contexts.

“Through this project I have incorporated new materials into the way that I work as well as having the opportunity to consider how my work can function over longer timeframes”

Emma Smith, artist, worked with Tynesfield (National Trust)

“It’s quite interesting what comes out when you’re not working with things that you’re usually used to working with – that’s sometimes when the most unexpected, surprising and interesting works come out, so it’s really pushed me”

Uta Kögelsberger, artist, worked with Cumbria Museum Consortium

“Bridport is a small town and you have to deal with everything head-on. So to have taken it head-on and to have produced something people may or may not feel is pretty ... and feel better for it, definitely”

Nancy J Clemanace, artist, New Opportunities Award, worked with Bridport Museum

Empowering artists

New Expressions 3 piloted a groundbreaking scheme to enable artists to initiate their own collaborations with heritage partners. The New Opportunities Award (NOA) supported six artists, independent curators and museums new to creative partnership working.

Five out of six New Opportunities Award artists agreed that the initiative had allowed them to develop new models of museum-artist collaboration.

“This New Opportunities Award is such a massive award. Opportunities like this are quite rare”

David Bridges, artist, New Opportunities Award, worked with Leeds Industrial Museum at Armley Mills



'BlindSpot' (still from film) (2015) Tim Shore. Commissioned by The Workhouse, Southwell (National Trust) as part of New Expressions 3 New Opportunities Award scheme. Image: © Tim Shore

Artists Wood and Harrison with the geology collection, Bristol Museum and Art Gallery. Artists commissioned by Bristol Museum and Art Gallery for New Expressions 3. Photo: New Expressions © Jane Hobson

Evolving creative practice

The collaborations at the centre of New Expressions stretched artists' creative practice, prompting them to develop new ways of working and engaging.

“Playing the Cave’ is very much a sound piece and that’s quite different to what I’ve done before. It’s been interesting in terms of my practice, being put in a situation where you’re not used to working and you have to come up with something”

Uta Kögelsberger, artist, worked with Cumbria Museum Consortium

“My practice has been tangibly informed by this project. I have a new confidence about the way that I work and what I have to offer”

Nancy J Clemanace, artist, New Opportunities Award, worked with Bridport Museum

“This project was more socially engaged than my usual practice. During the two years the volunteers have got to know me. You never really get that when you work with a contemporary art institution”

Yelena Popova, artist, worked with Upton House and Gardens (National Trust)



Audiences



Creating new reasons to visit

Contemporary artistic responses to historic buildings and collections add a compelling new reason to visit, or revisit, museums and properties.

'Experiencing the new contemporary art commissions' was visitors' **second biggest reason** for visiting the New Expressions museums and properties. Only 'Seeing the museum or property generally' was a bigger reason. That's ahead of 'Spending time with family and friends'. It was a particularly important motivation for visitors to Arts Council Major Partner Museums, over one third of whom (36%) were motivated by the chance to see the new artwork.

Contemporary art collaborations are a key driver of repeat visits, deepening engagement and making each visit unique. **40%** of returning visitors said they were motivated to make fresh visits by the contemporary art commissions.

"It changed how I saw the space"

"A complete revelation"

Building new art encounters

Museums and historic properties are great places to come across contemporary art in a different environment. More than a third – **36%** – of those experiencing the new art commissions had not attended any contemporary art events in the previous year.

"This painting is such a surprise to find behind the Wordsworth Trust Museum"

"It's interesting to see items from the Geology collection filtered through the minds of artists"

Making high quality experiences

Historic buildings and museums offer a unique and distinctive way to experience contemporary art and collections. Almost two thirds – **64%** – of visitors saw the link between the contemporary artwork and the collections of the museum, house or garden. **57%** said that the artwork opened up the collections in an unexpected way.

"Mesmerizing!! What a sound to hear in this space"

"The work revived the space and prompted us to look more closely"

"A wonderful and poetic way of displaying a collection"

Contemporary art collaborations bring a sense of adventure to museums and historic houses. **74%** of visitors said that the artist's work dealt with something unusual or unexplored.

"It was fantastic to go into so many different spaces"

60% of visitors said that the artist's work stretched their mind beyond day-to-day thoughts, including **71%** of those experiencing the art commissions at Major Partner Museums.

"A powerful impact – emotional, intellectual and contextual"

"A space to contemplate"

"Moving – opened my thinking"

It's an active experience too, prompting poetic and powerful ideas among audiences. More than half of visitors – **52%** – said that the artist's work had given them thoughts or feelings of their own, including **64%** of those experiencing the collaborations in Major Partner Museums.

"To imagine the male's sky dance, his loss, hope, perseverance in making nests"

"I tweeted a pic of the painting and wish there was a hashtag to link thoughts on"

"Thinking about one's origins and origins in general"

Creative partnerships between museums, historic properties and artists is also a fantastic way of forming a sense of place: **44%** of visitors said the artwork inspired thoughts and feelings about the place or location.

"Having been for a walk in the area of Haweswater, after originally seeing the artist's photographs, I feel a lot more connected to it"

"It made me feel so proud to be part of Plymouth"

Shaping new ways to take part

New Expressions 3 crafted innovative opportunities for people to become involved with contemporary collaborations. By sharing what works and investing in participatory activity, the programme placed people at the heart of the creative process.

Almost 6,000 people took part in activities which linked to the art commissions. **94%** of those taking part saw a link between the activity and the artist's work or the historic collections.

74% of people taking part in activity said they felt part of the artistic experience themselves and **82%** said the activity was different from things they've experienced before.

"The activity helped me to understand the history of the town and how people worked. It inspired me as an art piece"

"Good fun, original"

"The event went well with the exhibition and gave a great sense of community and continuity"

Above left: 'Egg Photographs' (2015) Uta Kögelsberger. Abbot Hall Art Gallery. Commissioned by Cumbria Museum Consortium for New Expressions 3. Photo: New Expressions © Jane Hobson

Above right: 'Magister Dixit' (2015) Emma Smith. Tynesfield (National Trust). Commissioned by Trust New Art Bristol for New Expressions 3. Photo: © Paul Blakemore

Shaping a national approach

Leading thinking

From York to Plymouth and Folkestone to Bristol, New Expressions advanced its knowledge-sharing model through a series of field visits.

270 cultural professionals shared challenges and solutions and debated possibilities for a national network for collaborative practice.

"I gained a great deal, both in terms of networking and enhancing my knowledge. The walking tours made the visit very active and the artists' input added value and insight. Great mix of attendees!"

Zoe Lippett, The New Art Gallery, Walsall, participant in field visit hosted by Folkestone Triennial.

Inspiring practice

Delivered in partnership with national peer organisations, at the heart of each field visit was the chance to experience ambitious and inspiring site specific collaboration.

89% of survey respondents at the field visits said that the events moved forward their thinking about collaboration.

"A well structured and enjoyable day. Good opportunity to network. I am strongly in favour of the support networks offer"

Erica Steer, Devon Guild of Craftsmen, participant in field visit hosted by Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery and KARST

Increasing impact

At the end of New Expressions 3, **eight out of 10** museums said that being part of a national initiative had added greater value to their work than they could have achieved by working alone.

Sharing knowledge

New Expressions 3 is the cumulative achievement of seven years of creative and professional practice in artist and museum collaboration.

For comprehensive details of all the museum partners and artists, their collaborative commissions and community projects, from all three rounds of the programme, visit the New Expressions website.

In addition to building a wealth of expertise through practice and evaluation, New Expressions has built a legacy bank of free-to-use professional resources. These include short films, case studies, useful tips and links. All are available on the New Expressions website.

New Expressions 3: Field visits

'Artists, volunteers and historic houses' Upton House & Gardens

'Artists working in heritage settings' M Shed, Bristol

'Commissioning and sense of place' Folkestone Triennial

'Commissioning one-off outdoor events' Plymouth Museum & Art Gallery and KARST

'Contemporary art commissions in capital redevelopments' York Art Gallery

'Coming Full Circle' sharing event, Bristol Museum and Art Gallery and Tyntesfield



Artist Emma Smith discusses her New Expressions 3 commission with participants in 'Coming Full Circle' sharing event, Tyntesfield, National Trust.

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Research framework: Claire Gulliver for New Expressions

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New Expressions 3 is a national pathfinder programme led by Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery and delivered with its partners: the network of Arts Council Major Partner Museums, the National Trust and the Contemporary Visual Arts Network. Its activity and legacy are managed by the New Expressions programme board.



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Notes:

1. New Expressions audience data in this document is taken from a survey of 398 adult visitors across six project sites in three regions.
 2. New Expressions participant data in this document is taken from a survey of 68 adult participants across three project sites in three regions.
- * Babcock International Group PLC is contracted by the MOD at Devonport to support the maintenance of the Plymouth Breakwater.
- ** Digital, print and broadcast access figures include launch of Centre for Ceramic Art, York. York Museums Trust's Philip Eglin commission for New Expressions 3 was part of the launch.