

creative endeavors

A curatorial guide for artists in Somerset

This guide aims to support Somerset based artists and exhibition organisers who wish to introduce a curatorial element into their work. It aims to provide details of all aspects of developing an exhibition, from establishing a clear thematic to the installation of work and the standards of work expected. It provides an overview of what is expected from both artists and curators at each stage of the exhibition making process, including conceptualisation, planning, fundraising, exhibition presentation, and audience development. It aims to define curatorial expectations in a contemporary context, and outline the relationship between artists and curators in order to produce projects that are mutually beneficial.

This guide: Provides information and case studies for artists who either wish to know more about curating, or are working with a curator. Gives an overview of the basics of curating for individuals wishing to know more about the process of exhibition making.

FORWARD

This guide is part of a wider project 'Maximum Exposure' which commissioned three new public artworks for the region of Somerset, supporting artists in pushing boundaries within their existing practices and bringing new work to the region. Through the process of working on Maximum Exposure there was revealed to be a perceived need in the county for more curatorial and contextual direction, both in terms of the production of artworks for exhibitions, and the production of exhibitions per se. Through its curatorial services SAW

receives ongoing requests for support in the production and contextualisation of exhibitions, with much of what seems to be required being a basic knowledge of the fundamentals of exhibition making. Part of my role as guest curator has been to feed into this knowledge, and to help SAW both define and expand its support base and understand what is needed in the future to support creative endeavors.

Some of the aspects of being more rurally located seems from my perspective to be that it is perhaps more difficult as an artist to locate your work within a critical framework. Somerset has an active but geographically spread art scene, with many practitioners working from home studios or in small collectives. In comparison to cities, where studio groups are numerous and rich in exchange and dialogue, it is often difficult to establish these continual forms of exchange in rural areas. This is not to say that the resultant practices are not as dynamic or well informed, but perhaps less challenged on an ongoing basis by peers and audiences alike.

The impossibility of large studio groups means that the circulation of knowledge is reduced, as is perhaps the level of critical expectation. Many smaller city studios have events like crit groups, artist talks, etc. to foster such forms of exchange, but also on a basic level to set a precedent and knowledge for what consists of quality practice, in both content and production.

So in order to support Somerset's rural and spread out art scene, the guide was introduced as an idea to begin to answer some basic questions and provide some of this fundamental knowledge, specific to Somerset and its artist culture. Events such as Art Weeks and other programmes aim to: bring new work into the region, thus increasing local artists and audiences exposure to new work; support local artists in their professional development and opportunities to show their work; profile the region as a place for hosting visual art and to profile the work of artists from elsewhere.

This guide aims to connect the dots where possible; supporting the work of Somerset based artists in pushing their practice forwards, preparing work for exhibition and curating shows of their own. Written from a curatorial perspective, it sets out approaches to exhibition making, basic principles of curating and the associated responsibilities and expectations. It is not intended to be an exhaustive resource, but a starting point or catalyst to inspire confident moves forward.

Karen Gaskill
July 2012

INTRODUCTION

Somerset currently has no dedicated public art galleries that focus on contemporary visual arts. There is a level of visual arts programmes offered by venues, such as The Brewhouse Theatre and Arts Centre at Taunton, Ilminster Arts Centre, Octagon Theatre at Yeovil, Rook Lane Arts, Black Swan Arts in Frome, Somerset Guild and Craftsman at Somerton, Atkinson Gallery at Street, and several commercial galleries. There is also a strong provision of visual arts activities in unconventional spaces, such as Somerset Art Weeks, Shepton Mallet Digital Festival, 10 Parishes Festival, and Frome Festival. Most of these activities are

supported by small amounts of public funding or run entirely on a voluntary basis. With minimal financial support, none of these institutions have inhouse curators, and rely on artists or programming staff to carry out the role, and to work with artists to oversee the exhibitions.

The rural environment of the county has meant that artists have to be proactive and resourceful at finding ways to show their work. Therefore artists are often responsible for developing the theme and presentation of an exhibition or project. Combining artist and curator roles can be simply a practical choice.

SECTION 1

the basic principles of Curating

In our contemporary art world, the term 'curation or curating' means the specific knowledge and expertise that a curator brings to contextualizing an exhibition and to presenting art works in a specific location and context. It is a commonly used term in contemporary art exhibitions and projects, and historically it has represented the curator in the context of museums, but in its current meaning represents the contextualization of exhibitions. The curatorial role is still in evolution, and is becoming more defined through active critique and review.

Ideas Catalyst

This involves the development of an idea into the outline for an exhibition. It includes the initial selection of artists and/or artworks and the consideration of all aspects of how the exhibition will function. It often addresses particular social, cultural and political issues, and considers the initiation of a dialogue between artwork, audience and space.

Curator

A curator can play a key role in contemporary arts and cultural activities. They not only provide ideas to the audience but also select and filter a diverse range of ideas. A curator often has specialist subjects of interest and a particular way of working in relation to artists, venues and the work to, as there are no set rules. The role of curator is evolving and it is crucial in contributing the vibrant and diverse contemporary art scene that we see today. A curator from an institution is very different from those who work independently. Section 2 outlines some examples of curatorial approach.

Producer

This aspect of the role often considers the best way to bring artworks together and present them to the viewer. It involves a selection of artists and works, interpreting the works, presenting the works, placing captions and statements and profiling the artists and the exhibition.

Guest Curator

Somerset Art Works Guest Curator Karen Gaskill describes a previous commission looking to bring contemporary practice to a new audience as part of Barnaby Festival, Macclesfield, Cheshire, in July 2010..

Case Study Save Us



Ian Davenport
Poured Lines
2006
Water-based paints on paper
Courtesy Waddington Galleries,
London

Image Credit: Karen Gaskill

Save Us was an exhibition that took place as part of Barnaby Festival, Macclesfield, Cheshire, in July 2010. Macclesfield is a rural suburb of Manchester and has a lively assortment of artists, musicians and makers living in and around its reach. Barnaby Festival is a longstanding town festival, hosted annually in town centre venues and public spaces.

I was approached through an artist working in the town to look at curating an exhibition for Barnaby, aimed at bringing more contemporary art to Macclesfield. As a suburb of Manchester, the town although active, struggles to compete with some of the central Manchester galleries and audiences, a common problem among many suburban and rural locations.

Barnaby Festival was an opportunity to address some of this imbalance, and host an exhibition that would draw audiences from Manchester and beyond, but also develop new local and regional audiences through the introduction of dynamic contemporary artworks.

I had been allocated a venue to work with, Christ Church, one of Macclesfield's oldest churches, and although still consecrated no longer hosted an active congregation. It was a difficult venue to consider installing artworks in, primarily as it was so overpowering and austere in its presence, and with all its original fixtures and fittings felt there was little room for anything else cultural.

Seeing the venue as a challenge but also as a thematic starting point, I developed a curatorial overview that connected many of the elements I wanted to consider. I decided that I wanted to work with artists who were either from or currently lived in Macclesfield, as traditionally the roots of a church congregation are of course the local community. I decided to curate the exhibition around the connections of the artists to the town as opposed to the contexts of the works to the theme. I worked closely with all of the invited artists in defining what they wanted to include in the show, with the resulting selection being an interesting representation of an affinity to Macclesfield. I should also point out that I attended school in Macclesfield for a number of years, so my connection to the town became another component of the overall context.

The final selection ranged from emergent to established artists and spanned a range of mediums. Detailed below is a summary of the artists and their work excerpted from the exhibitions press materials:

Hilary Jack's Broken Cortège Leave Devastated Arcadia was a new site specific installation work, consisting of a diverse group of broken figurines, saved from the brink of oblivion. **MitSenoj's** drawing Alterpiece borrowed from the authority of historical anatomies and medical dissections to create new mutations or chimera. **David Shrigley's** scribbled and strangely funny animation Who I Am & What I Want portrayed a highly unsettling examination of the human condition. The story of a man who bares his emotions, history, hang ups and desires in all of their dysfunctional absurdity then left us to assemble not only his identity but to question our own.

Ian Davenport's paintings Poured Lines revealed an unconventionality of method and process, influenced by musical scores the repetition of vertical lines of various colours created a rhythm that merged and overlapped. **Jen Southern's** new series of silk maps and associated walking tour referenced Macclesfield's production of silk for WW2 escape maps and parachutes. Textile artist **Ben Cook's** digitally printed silk canvases, using the famous Macclesfield Stripe design as their reference point, were described as being like 'photograph of speeding objects, or a concrete spin with mere traces of colour'. **Ralph McGaul's** new mosaic work Death Size considered the dark twists of human character and thwarted ambition that first necessitated and then shaped the erection of Christ Church and its burial grounds.

Daniel Staincliffe's Fauna Automata presented a series of images taken by specially constructed cameras that enabled wild animals to trigger their own photographs. **Nick Crowe** and **Ian Rawlinson's** video work England's Glory presented a contrasting view of nationhood through a continually igniting and extinguishing burnt out pile of England's Glory matches, set to the soundtrack of the popular patriotic hymn, I Vow To Thee My Country. **Andrea Booker's** reclaimed signage work, UNITE, reorders the original letters into reflections on social conditioning and regeneration appropriate to the area in which the signage was found.

I worked closely with Barnaby Festivals Press team to advertise the exhibition. We produced a small printed campaign and a larger online version incorporating social media and a website. Our objective of highlighting the exhibition to as wide an audience as possible, both arts and nonarts was difficult on the limited budget. Much of this was done

digitally through e-flyers, mailing lists and online press. Macclesfield has a small artist studio community, so making use of this to further our reach worked well, and also marketing the show through Manchester's Rogue Studios, where several of the artists had workspaces.

The opening weekend of the exhibition, and also the festival, saw 2400 visitors through our doors. This was very overwhelming and something we had not quite catered for. We had a small team of volunteer invigilators who were prepared to answer questions on the work, but not enforce crowd control. At times it became necessary to restrict access due to overcrowding, and concern about the freestanding artworks. This exceptionally positive response showed a broad interest from local people but also, from the records kept from sign in sheets and postcode details, included national audiences.

Throughout the overall process I had to work responsively, as there was no precedent model for me to learn from. Working closely with the festival team helped no end for their on the ground knowledge, but I also had to consider the wide range of audiences that would see the actual exhibition, and how it could stand apart from the other community art activities taking place during the festival. It helped having a strong curatorial overview and critical agenda and being able to discuss this direction clearly with diverse members of the festival team and audiences.

My task had been to set an agenda for contemporary practice in Macclesfield, so the show needed to be positioned in a critical arts context but also work on a more local and accessible level. There were many learning curves and moot points, but overall we achieved incredible success with what we produced. There has since been two more festivals and a strong presence of contemporary art in both of them.

SECTION 2

different curatorial approaches and best practice

There are no set rules on how curators develop their work. There are starting points to curating which can be separated into a number of distinct approaches. These are loosely based on the most common aspects of contextualising exhibitions, and span practical, thematic, site and engagement perspectives.

An Artist-led approach

The Artist/curator is very common and often a pragmatic approach based on financial and practical reasons. An artist who curates their work can be found among artist run spaces/initiatives where artists wish to engage their ideas to wider audiences through organising an exhibition, event or other activities. This approach is common in Somerset and the majority of exhibitions and projects seen in Somerset Art Weeks are initiated and organised by the artists. There may not be a particular role of artist curator, but the two roles are fulfilled by the same person; their curatorial concern evolving from the perspective of the artist themselves. However, the intention of such a cross over role should be further examined, including its intention and motivation, including how this role effectively presents work in an open and stimulating environment for a wide range of audiences. The role of curator is not purely one of just being a facilitator, but being responsible for the thematic and presentation aspects of the show, and by setting a clear brief and defining how artist and curator interaction can be beneficial.

Case study Mother Love



Jenni Dutton
Mother Love
2011
Cotley Barn

Image credit Ingrid Hesling

Somerset based artists Ingrid Hesling and Jenni Dutton created an installation of their work in a Tithe Barn at Coley near Chard for Somerset Art Weeks 2011. They managed and created the exhibition without involvement of a curator. This was the first time they had worked together to extend their practice and considered how to present their work in this way.

Ingrid Hesling and Jenni Dutton presented a body of work that explores the complexities of mother/daughter relationships using traditional domestic materials and techniques applied in unexpected ways.

Jenni produces large scale sewn portraits of her mother and grandmother in The Dementia Darnings. Ingrid works from memories of her childhood using inherited fabrics and thread, exploring concepts that link with her practice as a photographer.

The collaboration of these two artists has encouraged them both to acknowledge the conflicts to be found within the theme. The exhibition touches on the discomforts as well as delights and questions where responsibility begins and ends in the mother/daughter relationship.

A year on, the work Mother Love was shown at Thelma Hulbert Gallery, Honiton in September 2012, working with curator Angela Blackwell and supported by SAW's Curatorial Services. Both artists strengthen the curatorial element in their work.

Thematic approach

This is one of many approaches and it often starts from a particular concern from the curator who selects artists whose work will address or explore the theme further. It has advantages in terms of providing audiences with a clear outline of the work and it is suitable for creating a group exhibition. A curator offers a strategy in addressing the theme through a diverse range of work, as well as considering how to balance the different works. Therefore, the curator undertakes a selection process and this often includes dialogue with the selected artists to ensure works not only illustrate the concept devised by the curator but also present the unique artistic concerns of each of the artists involved. The interaction between artists and curator is key to creating a meaningful show for the audiences.

Case study 'Artists at Work'



Bronwen Bradshaw
Artists at Work
Japanese books

Image credit Bronwen Bradshaw

A programme of films was commissioned during Art Weeks 2009, three artists, Mark Perry, Bronwen Bradshaw and Kate Noble created film installations in response to the idea of 'Artists at Work'. Each of the artists created short film about artists in Somerset to highlight the making process behind the artists' creativity, such as their inspiration, influence and environment. The aim was to raise the profile of the individual artists in Somerset and promote their practices. An exhibition was held at the Brewhouse during Art Weeks 2010. Each installation brought up different technical issues for the artist concerned showing work. Artist film work requires quality equipment to be shown to full effect in a public gallery space **Mark Parry's** large video installation work in the main gallery space conveys the perception of the artistic process by referencing the widely differing approaches and work of a small number of Somerset artists.

Bronwen Bradshaw's Reading Room includes a video projection and a collection of handmade artists' books revealing the passion and skills of some of the artists in Somerset. The work is based on the process of book making from artists working in different disciplines.

Kate Noble produced a series of short films and large format silver inkjet prints focusing on 6 Somerset artists, showing the way they work and what inspires them.

Commissioned by Somerset Art Works (SAW), organised by SAW's Curatorial Services and supported by The Brewhouse Visual Arts

For more <http://www.somersetartworks.org.uk/projects/artists-work>

Site-specific work

There is a long history of artists creating work in unconventional spaces. Often the artist is inspired by a location and takes this into account while planning and creating the artwork. Many curators develop specific knowledge and experience working in this particular setting. They will have a good practical knowledge in presenting work in temporary spaces and are often involved in the liaison with nonart partners, identifying a suitable site with artists and assessing the access and safety issues. This is essential for a curator to have such practical knowledge otherwise ideas from artists will not be fully realized. Some of the practical work may be carried out by a supporting role, such as project manager or technician.

Case study Taunton Stop Line Live



Matt and Rob Vale - Illuminos
Taunton stop line live
2012
Working in the field
Image credit Richard Tomlinson

Illuminos are lighting designer and film/installation artist brothers Rob and Matt Vale. Using website, archive, projection and endurance, for Maximum Exposure Illuminos created a unique video projection event along the Taunton Stop Line. Built during World War II, the Taunton Stop Line consists of hundreds of 'pill boxes' – military bunkers designed to stop a potential German advance from the west. Over the course of ten nights each pillbox was be illuminated and projected upon in turn, using imagery and iconography from the structures original usage. Stopping at ten sites each evening, by the end of the ten days one hundred structures from the Stop Line were brought into the light.

Key to the success of the project was the efforts of local coordinator Caroline Wookey who contacted local people ahead. It was quite an undertaking to get people to come along to something that was so nebulous, so in the dark, and so never in one place for long. Therefore we were surprised at the numbers who did attend. The event was hard to describe, and ever changing due to the nature of the locations and subject matter of the projections. However the skills of the artists at using social media and the internet to engage people remote from the site proved how powerful these tools are at creating a new audience.

The project formed part of the Light waves contribution to the Cultural Olympiad.

For more.....<http://www.tauntonstophilive.co.uk/>

Venue based exhibitions

Often curators operate within an established venue that has specific organisational aims and policies attached to it. Exhibitions are part of a wider programme of work delivered by the organisation. Curators may play a role delivering objectives set by others which may have specific audiences and groups connected to the venue. Curators involved in some of the visual arts venues in the South West such as Arnolfini, Plymouth Arts Centre, and Spacex are responsible for developing a programme of exhibitions that align with their organisations' core aims. There is a certain amount of freedom for a curator to develop their own expertise but sometimes it can also be restricted by the physical space offered by the venue. However, many public art galleries now will carry out their work in off site locations, some integrated to their main artistic programme and many are focusing on engaging with particular communities and groups.

Case study Cultivate 2



Cultivate 2
A gift for Somerset
2012
OSR Project
Brewhouse

Image Credit: Simon Ledson

From pin badges or pandas to artisan cheese, gifts often represent something unique and emblematic about their place of origin. They are offered as a way of saying 'I was here', 'This is what we are about', or 'we want you to share in the identity of this place'. Artists from around the world were invited to send gifts to Somerset, representing some aspect of their own locality. They may be bought, found, made, or conceptual gifts including ideas or policies all accumulated in and around The Brewhouse throughout the exhibition. Later, each giver received a gift back to exhibit in their community, creating a 'global exhibition' spread across time and space. Little pieces of local identity was trans-posed from one cultural context to another in an analogue network, and documented to reveal how their meanings and interpretations evolved. An open call was sent out globally for artists to 'gift' instructions for works to be made or enacted by transitional artists group OSR Projects at the Brewhouse.

There have been several concrete outcomes beyond the exhibition itself. A publication and **Jethro Brice, Sue Palmer, Megan Calver** and **Simon Lee Dicker** are all taking part in a group show, 'Nothing Ever Happens' at the OSR Projectspace in Somerset Art Weeks September 2012. Megan Calver's reUNION canal provocation developed into a piece for Tivvyfest 2012.

Artists' work was included in a Gifting exhibition at **Kunsthoch Weissenhule Berlin**, Simon Lee Dicker secured a Turning Point South West artist travel bursary and went to Kiev

with Tim Martin, where they met with Ukrainian art world contacts (including referrals from Open Place), such as R.E.P. Group and Centre for Contemporary Art, as well as visiting the inaugural Kiev Biennale. A short film with interviews they conducted is available on the Reveal Somerset Youtube page, <http://www.youtube.com/user/revealsomerset>. one of the legacies of Cultivate 2 is to help start a process of identifying commonalities and possibilities for productive collaboration which reach out beyond the UK and to different kinds of physical and cultural landscapes. Contemporary art practice in rural areas has a particular set of challenges, but similar strategies may be shared and applied by artists in very different circumstances.

This was A Reveal Somerset project led by independent curator Karen MacDonald and artist Simon Lee Dicker (OSR Projects) and with support from Reveal partner Tim Martin and the Brewhouse.
For more <http://revealsomerset.wordpress.com/2012/03/28/cultivate-2-a-gift-for-somerset/>

Socially-engaged work

Socially-engaged practice is an increasingly common term used in contemporary art making and this largely focus on the engagement perspective from the artist, curator and the organisation. The starting point varies. A major study New Model Visual Arts Institutions and Social Engagement carried out by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) in 2011 is a comprehensive piece of research that attempts to find the relationship between art and engagement, and the profound effects that art can make to those involved in the process of making. (www.uclan.ac.uk/schools/school_of_social.../wzw_nmi_report.pdf) It slightly differs from 'community art' as commonly understood. Curators and artists involved in this approach often have a very strong social political agenda and clear social purpose in their work. Artists working in this way include Antony Gormley, Jeremy Deller, and Sarah Lucas. Organisations such as Art Angel in London and Grizedale in Cumbria also look to develop this approach.

Selling or non-selling

The Curator who develops an exhibition that focuses on selling will employ a different approach from that of non-selling. He/she needs particular expertise and knowledge in promoting artists work to a buying audience. Curating is not merely just about hanging work and presenting work, it may involve mentoring and be crucial in supporting artists to develop their full artistic potential and professional profile. Curators will often work with a number of artists for a long-period of time, 'representing' artists at art fairs and shows.

Some curators do not engage in selling activity at all, but work mainly for public galleries and museums. These curators commission artists to make new artworks to show, rather than showing existing work.

SECTION 3

Responsibilities and expectations

This section explores a complex relationship between artist and curator and what is expected from each role. Below demonstrates the role and responsibility between artist and curator in each stage of an exhibition making process.

Developing the concept /setting the scene

Artist Let the curator do the job, but ensure you are aware of how your work is to be presented in the physical space as well as conceptually. Always ask for a written brief or discussion with the curator.

Curator This is your main responsibility, but it cannot be developed without understanding the artists practice and knowledge of, and around his/her work, despite having a particular theme or theoretical interest, using different approaches in developing the concept or working in different contexts. Clear communication between curator and artists is key to developing a written brief/statement which can be circulated to all parties. Always envision the final presentation in association with the way the work will be shown and displayed. Take all the practical details into account, including budget, venue, audiences, etc.

Selecting artists and developing artist/curator dialogue

Artist Selecting artists is the responsibility of the curator. When a curator approaches you, you should expect them to have good knowledge of your work and a willingness to have dialogue with you before both commit. Don't expect them to know everything about you and your work, there may be limited information available, therefore you will need to provide information about your latest work, good documentation and a CV. Develop a good working relationship with your curator from the beginning even though you may not commit to the offer. A positive working relationship is about building trust and setting boundaries around the roles. Don't be afraid to ask questions and for clarification when necessary.

Curator Have a purpose when contacting artists even if you are still in the research stage. Be honest about what stage you are at in your planning, finance and support. Be open and listen to the artist's ideas and help them accessing your intentions Not all artists welcome a critical dialogue and challenging conversations. So being clear about your approach and idas is key.

Developing audiences

Artist How the work engages with audiences may not be the primary concern from the artist's point of view, but a piece of work can be open for all kinds of interpretations in different 'contexts'. Therefore, make sure you understand where and how the works are to be presented, and be open with different ideas from the curator.

Curator This should certainly be a curator's top priority. The key role of curator is about presenting the work to audiences. Consider the audience groups and what experience and impact the work can offer.

Contracting

Artist Make sure you have a contract or agreement no matter the scale of the exhibition/project. Please visit 'a-n' and 'Artquest' website to familiarise yourself with the legal issue associated with artist contracts.

Curator Please visit 'a-n' and 'Artquest' website to familiarise yourself with the legal issue associated with artist contracts. This can support to build the trust between you and the artists.

Budget and fundraising

Artist This is the responsibility of the curator in many cases, but it is often a joint responsibility between the curator and the venue/organisations.

Curator Curator has responsibility to communicate this to the artists although you are not solely responsible for the budget of the project/exhibition. Independent curators often fundraise for the project with support from the organisation or the venue.

Risk assessment and insurance

Artist You will be asked to assist in the risk assessment, especially if it is a site-specific installation or work that is presented in public locations. In some occasions, you will be asked to provide Public Liability insurance that covers your work. A-N provides £5m PPL cover for artists, this will be sufficient in most cases. However, to cover damage to your work, you will need to liaise with the curator to check whether sufficient security is in place. The cost of insuring your work maybe very high and most of the venues and organisations will not be able to be covered. Therefore, do discuss this with the curator.

Curator Risk assessment and insurance are essential, however, there is common sense applying to this; it depends on the type of work that will be on show. Make sure you ask the artist whether they have Public Liability Insurance in place for their work and raise

the issue related to the security and potential risk of damage to the work. Build an insurance cost in your overall budget if necessary.

Technical requirement, hanging

Artist Assist and inform the curator about the technical requirements associated with the work to ensure your work is presented in the best way. In some occasions and for artists working on installation and digital media, you will be asked to provide a document of 'Methodology'. It outlines the equipment and support you will require when hanging/displaying the work. This will also support the risk assessment.

Curator As curator, you should have good understanding of the practicality and technical issues related to the work. It is your job to consider how realistic to present the work within the resources you have. Curating does not merely means hanging and installing the work yourself, and this point should be understood by the artist. Find appropriate support and often ask the artist to get involved in the hanging and installing.

Interpretation

Artist This is the responsibility of the curator in many cases. But to providing an 'artist statement' to outline your intension behind the making will help the curator to formulate the appropriate interpretation materials and programme in order to help your work to reach the audiences.

Curator This is vital part of your work, and will require expertise and experience. There are different levels of interpretation, from a personal perspective to educational and learning purposes. Interpretation can be a process to begin a dialogue between you, the artist and the audiences. Give yourself plenty of time to consider this. Drawing expertise from other fields that related to particular aspect of the work often strengthens the content of your exhibition/project.

Caption, label, information etc. but focus on the use of language

Artist You may want to provide your own captions, labels and information about you and yourself, however the curator has expertise and understanding of the audiences, so you should discuss this with the curator and assist and provide relevant information for this. The language and format often reflects the quality, branding and consistency of information provided, especially in a group exhibition.

Curator Consistency and the use of language are key to this. Make it accessible, especially if the work that is challenging. Simple and clear information is the most effective to put the message across. Don't assume your audience will understand complicated words and don't limit your audience by the language you use.

Managing your project and your relationships

Artist Trust your curator and make sure you have regular contact with them. Don't assume they are always available, because many curators will have several projects in hand at the same time. Be clear about your expectation at the beginning, this will help the curator to understand your need.

Curator Project management skills are key to a curator who is often multitasking and managing several projects at the same time. It is key to keep close communication with the artist and be clear about the way you work and how regularly you will be in contact. Sending regular updates and setting deadlines will help to establish good communication. Be clear about your role, and producing working documents to share with everyone involved will help you avoid any miscommunication.

Marketing (Link to Arts Marketing www.a-m-a.co.uk)

Artist This will be the job of the curator and the organisation, but you may like to promote the work to your own contacts as well. You need to liaise with your curator to make sure your work is appropriately presented in all marketing materials. Do make yourself available for interviews and provide materials and good images for any publicity use. Have your work professionally photographed and prepare an artist statement about your work and a CV.

Curator The curator should be closely involved in how the work is presented and the language use in all marketing materials. Visitors will see the marketing materials before they visit; make sure you envisage the audience's expectation and how best the exhibition matches that. Marketing is also about identifying your audience; therefore, this will be one of many things to be had in mind from the outset.

Launch, private view

Artist Launch and private view can be a good opportunity to sell your work and raise your profile. Don't forget the curator is your collaborator as well, so his/her hard work are to be celebrated and praised as well. Do be aware who you want to invite. The curator may not be the person who organising this, but she/he will give the best advice for the format. In some occasions artist will be asked to give a short talk about their work, and it is good way to engage the guest, who can be the press, curators, potential buyers and writers.

Curator Not all exhibitions need a private view and launch. Be clear about the purpose who covers the cost and has the capacity to organise this. This is a joint decision between you, the venue and the artists, and you should be able to celebrate the success as well.

Take down

Artist The artist is often involved in taking down the work or picking up the work after the exhibition. The curator may not be present during the take down, but arrangements should be by communication in advance.

Curator You may not be involved in the taking down of the work, but make sure some one present at the venue when the artist takes down and picks up their work. Again, the curator may oversee the management of the exhibition/project, therefore, you are responsible to communicate this to your artist if there is no one else to do this for you.

Evaluation and reporting

Artist Don't assume this is only the job of the curator. You and your work are represented in the exhibition. Your feedback and assistance is important. Feel free and be proactive to give your feedback to the curator, both positive and negative. Curators are expected to look at the outcome in a critical manner and they will appreciate your open and constructive comments.

Curator Evaluation is a critical part of the role. You will be working closely with your funders and partners to evaluate the success of the project. This provides an opportunity to have a meeting with everyone working with you, as well as the audiences. Reports are required when working with other partners to give clear updates of your work.

SECTION 4

resources and links

<http://curating.info>

Curating.info was founded in 2006 with the mission of becoming the top resource for curators of contemporary art on the web. Curating.info provides essential information on jobs and opportunities as well as insightful editorial opinion that is relevant to the professional development of curators worldwide.

<http://curatorsincontext.wikispaces.com/>

Curators in Context is a collaborative web project brought together several generations of art curators in Canada working in or with art museums, art galleries, and artist-run centres around the country in overlapping modes as art museum curators, as independents, as collaborators, as writers, and/or as visual artists. Its wiki site offers information on different curatorial approaches.

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/62137551/Curatorial-Toolkit>

Produced by Karen Love, Manager of Curatorial Affairs at the Vancouver Art Gallery, and 2010 Legacies Now. An indepth practical guide to curatorial practices, with topics including the role of the curator, researching a concept, securing a venue and funding, budgeting and fundraising, exhibition programming, media relations and audience development.

<http://www.curators-network.eu/>

Curators' Network a platform made up of European curators, cultural managers and nonprofit organizations. The aim is to enhance and facilitate in the exchange of knowledge among European professionals working in the contemporary arts.

<http://www.a-n.co.uk/>

A comprehensive resource for artists. It focuses on professional development of artists.

<http://www.artquest.org.uk/>

Helping artists to make work, sell work, find work and network, Artquest provides the information to drive creative practice and help artists thrive on some of the lowest incomes in the creative sector. Run by artists, for artists, we build a bridge from student experience to sustainable working life, and throughout your professional career. Artquest launched in 2001, is hosted by University of the Arts London and is a National Portfolio Organisation of Arts Council England.

<http://www.axisweb.org/Directory.aspx>

An online resource for contemporary art in the UK. It has an online directory of artists and curators.

<http://www.vaga.co.uk/>

VAGA (Visual Arts and Galleries Association) website. There is specific section on curating in the resources area.

<http://www.crumbweb.org/>

Resources and online communities on new media curating

<http://www.curatingdegreezero.org/>

Curating Degree Zero was launched to research, present and discusses changes in the practice of freelance curators, artist curators, new media curators and curatorial collaborations. Beginning in 1998 with a three day symposium and an ensuing publication, the project now focuses on an expanding archive about these practices.

Links to:

Sample contract Risk Assessment template Evaluation template via <http://www.somersetartworks.org.uk/resources2>

SAW works holistically developing the quality, range and accessibility of the visual arts in Somerset. We want Somerset to be a place where people expect to engage with excellent visual art that is surprising and distinctive. We want to create an atmosphere of adventure and experimentation that inspires artists to produce and present new work, and audiences to experience it first hand. We work almost exclusively in partnership with other arts and non-arts organisations initiating visual arts projects in a wide variety of settings, and always inte-grating professional development for artists .

The Reveal partnership focuses on contemporary visual arts in Somerset – specifically on professional and infrastructure development, engagement andwidening audiences. Reveal is a partnership between three visual arts and media organisations –Brewhouse Visual Arts, Somerset Art Works and Somerset Film. The partnership has emerged and grown with the support of Arts Council England’s Thrive programme. Our mission statement is quite simply: growing great art. For more go to www.revealsomerset.org.uk

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