

RENEWED CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Curating, Care and Community

A seminar organised by the British Art Network's Early Career Curators Group

Date: Thursday 3 September 2020 (timings tbc)

Seminar Platform: Online - Zoom

Deadline for proposals: Friday 26 June 2020, 12.00

Agenda:

This seminar will seek to explore how we care for others both within and beyond the curatorial community. The organisers feel that this subject is now even more relevant and urgent, given the current global pandemic. Many of us are now furloughed, working from home, or otherwise struggling to maintain 'normal' working practices. The recent murder of George Floyd and the intensification of the Black Lives Matter movement throw into sharp focus the need for institutions to reassess their roles as custodians of culture, and act on their duty of care to confront their racist pasts and presents. With so many anxieties for the future, personal and professional care have never been more essential. While examining the professional context in which we operate and the challenges posed by Covid-19, the seminar will provide an opportunity to investigate issues such as mental health and wellbeing, representation and ally-ship, funding and resources, and how these issues affect everyone connected with museums and galleries, from staff and collaborators to participants and visitors.

Abstract:

The word 'curator' derives from the Latin word *curare*, 'to care'. As curators, we are charged with the physical and intellectual care of collections – the artworks, objects and narratives found within our cultural institutions. However, it is evident to us as a group of early career curators from a range of disciplinary backgrounds that the concept of care within our sector must stretch beyond the guardianship of cultural heritage, to the care of and concern for those around us.

With this in mind, what role does 'care' play in a more holistic sense in our work? How do we care for each other, within both our institutional and local communities?

Even before the Covid-19 pandemic, museum staff increasingly struggled to fulfil their expanding responsibilities due to funding and resource shortages. With the additional pressures and uncertainties presented by the current situation, it is even more vital to ask how our organisations can care sufficiently for staff, artists and collaborators, as well as the audiences and public they serve. What opportunities might this new context offer to reshape our sector and working practices around principles of care? We do not seek consensus in searching for answers to these questions – rather we hope to provoke substantive, productive discussion.

We invite contributions from across a range of disciplines that seek to explore these questions and challenges. We welcome contributions both as traditional paper presentations and in more discursive forms, to prompt open discussion based on recent, ongoing or potential projects and case studies. We equally welcome contributions in other forms such as performance and time-based media.

Subject areas and proposed discussions might include: mental health and wellbeing, accessibility, Disability Arts, socially engaged exhibitions and curation projects, representation within collections and workforces, financial and collaborative partnerships, and creating a legacy of 'care'. We encourage proposals and interdisciplinary case studies from museum and gallery professionals, artists, activists, health professionals, academics and independent scholars. Contributions, which can be submitted individually or in collaboration, should be a maximum of 15 minutes in length. Please let us know of any access requirements when submitting contributions.

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Contact for enquiries: Rachel Smith, curatingcare@gmail.com

All potential contributors will be contacted regarding their submissions.

The British Art Network Early Career Curators Group, 2019–2020

Rebecca Burton (Harewood House)

Alice Eden (Leamington Spa Art Gallery and Museum)

Mels Evers (Tate Britain)

James Finch (Tate Britain)

Becky Gee (York Museums Trust)

Samantha Howard (The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery)

Marcus Jack (Glasgow School of Art)

Tessa Kilgarriff (English Heritage)

Jessie Petheram (National Museums Liverpool)

Helen Record (Royal Academy of Arts)

Emily Riddle (The Hepworth Wakefield)

Tor Scott (Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art)

Rachel Smith (Independent)

Charlotte Thomas (Glynn Vivian Art Gallery)