

Winners of 2018-19 MaxLiteracy Awards announced

Attenborough Arts Centre, Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, Kirkleatham Museum and the Whitworth to host the Awards



Images (clockwise, from top left): Attenborough Arts Centre, Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, Kirkleatham Museum and the Whitworth.

The Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust, the National Association for Writers in Education (NAWE), and Engage, the National Association for Gallery Education, are delighted to announce the host venues for the 2018-19 MaxLiteracy Awards.

Funded by the Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust, MaxLiteracy is an exciting initiative that develops new ways of teaching creative writing by bringing together writers, schools, galleries, art museums and visual arts venues. Funding from the Awards will allow each of the four venues to employ a creative writer to work with a local school on a creative writing or literacy project, taking inspiration from the venue's collections, displays or building.

The activities will lead to the development of a set of new resources for the venues, designed to encourage engagement with the venue through creative writing. These will be widely shared within the arts and education sectors to encourage the greater use of galleries/ art museums/ visual arts venues by schools for creative writing and literacy work. The Awards are run in partnership by Engage, the National Association for Gallery Education and the National Association for Writers in Education (NAWE).

Veronica Reinhardt, Trustee of the Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust, said: "The four venues chosen have offered ground breaking ideas that provide really stimulating opportunities for children and young people to explore writing in a new environment. We are incredibly excited to be part of their discovery and hope this is the just the start of many wonderful new collaborations between schools and galleries to help more young people discover their own voices."

Seraphima Kennedy, Director of NAWE, said: “The National Association of Writers in Education is delighted to select these innovative, unique projects with a strong focus on inclusion, mental health, and wellbeing. These writers are experts in their field, and we are delighted to work with all the schools and venues selected. Previous evaluations have demonstrated that teaching creative writing through the visual arts and historic collections can have a powerful impact on students of all levels and abilities: increased fluency, creativity, confidence and attainment for students across subject boundaries and levels. This work becomes more vital each year. NAWE has many members who work with galleries, schools, museums and heritage centres year in year out. We hope the resources and case studies produced by this diverse group of practitioners will be of immense benefit to writers, teachers and gallery educators working in these contexts.”

Jane Sillis, Director of Engage, said: “Since 2014 Engage has had the privilege of working with galleries, museums, schools and creative writers on MaxLiteracy. The four outstanding hosts for this year’s awards are working with a really diverse range of children and young people on creative writing and literacy projects inspired by the visual arts. We are keen to share the resources and learning they generate through the MaxLiteracy website www.maxliteracy.org to inspire others to use the arts as a stimulus for writing. We are grateful to the Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust for both initiating MaxLiteracy and for their generous support of the programme and to the National Association for Writers in Education for co-delivering the programme with Engage.”

Attenborough Arts Centre is the University of Leicester's arts centre - a venue that is open to everyone, with a studio theatre, art studios, and four purpose built contemporary art galleries providing the largest gallery in Leicester and one of the largest in the East Midlands area. The Centre produces an all year programme of public events with a focus on exhibitions, music, theatre, dance, comedy and children’s events, with a dedicated Learning and Outreach team who create dynamic programmes to facilitate access to the arts, by creating tailored resources such as sensory suitcases, differentiated session plans for gallery visits, and tactile tours for children with complex needs.

Attenborough Arts Centre will use the Award to explore a dynamic approach to gallery learning for children and young people with the most complex SEND, using contemporary art, augmented communication technology, Makaton and poetry to support pupil’s access to exhibitions, and creative responses, whatever their learning and literacy ability. The venue will work with Ashmount SEN School to develop a new literacy and contemporary art resource for galleries. The project will also include a public exhibition, which will raise awareness of the talents of children and their lived experience of complex learning disabilities and how to support children’s creativity inclusively.

Michaela Butter MBE, Director of the Attenborough Arts Centre said: “The University of Leicester is delighted to fund the AAC as a valuable community resource. Raising standards of literacy is at the core of our widening participation agenda to ensure we are providing our children with the appropriate skills for their future study and employment, and providing access to culture for all children.”

Bristol Museum & Art Gallery attracts around 400,000 visitors a year, with a programme of temporary exhibitions as well as displays of natural history, geology and archaeology; European Old Master paintings; Victorian Art; French Art; Eastern Art, and the Bristol School of Artists. The Formal Learning team runs a comprehensive programme of learning activities, including workshops that are co-created with teachers and aligned to the National Curriculum. Children have the maximum opportunity to engage with the collections, with real or replica artefacts to handle and access to expert knowledge. The team also runs outreach activities such as workshops and assemblies, and a limited loan box scheme for secondary history topics.

Bristol Museum and Art Gallery plan to develop closer links with local teachers and schools and create and pilot literacy activities suitable for a range of abilities. The intention is to co-create resources with teachers and a professional writer so that all primary schools in the city could potentially benefit from them. The Award will also increase the Formal Learning team's knowledge and understanding of how literacy is taught in schools. The venue will build on recent successful creative writing workshops that have inspired Bristol Museum and Art Gallery to make literacy the over-arching focus of the venue's entire learning programme.

Councillor Anna Keen, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills at Bristol City Council, said: "As a teacher I often find the most stimulating learning experiences happen outside of the classroom. Immersing children in different environments is essential to widen their horizons and engage their creativity, something this project clearly puts at the core of its activity. I am delighted that Bristol Museum and Art Gallery has been selected as one of the hosts and that our local schools will have another opportunity to benefit from the excellent work our Museum Learning Team undertake."

Kirkleatham Museum aims to enable all people to use its buildings and collections for enjoyment, learning and inspiration, with a focus on community. The museum's collections reflect the diversity of life in the area: from stories of the distant past captured in the unique Saxon Princess burial goods to the Victorian heyday, from the industrial strength and decline to farming and rural life. Visual art is also represented in the collections with a regular programme of temporary art exhibitions. The museum currently runs popular programmes for schools and for families, making use of both permanent and temporary exhibitions as well as the wider museum site.

The MaxLiteracy Award will give the Kirkleatham education team the opportunity to access a new and hard to reach audience; bringing new visitors to the museum and widening access to the museum's collection. The museum is already working in partnership with Teeside University to research and develop the Steel Stories exhibition, which documents the rise and fall of the borough's major employer. Local students will develop skills in writing accurately, fluently, effectively and at length through writing scripts for new audio resources that will be used in Steel Stories – making use of photos, paintings and objects to stimulate questions about the steel industry and local community – leading to interviews and the creation of stories, poems, descriptive writing and re-telling of local histories

Councillor Craig Hannaway, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Children said: "Learning shouldn't be limited to the classroom. True creativity takes place when we're inspired and by engaging young people in projects at

Kirkleatham Museum, learning will be fun and fruitful. Many thanks to the MaxLiteracy project for this award. I'm really looking forward to seeing the work our talented young people will produce.”

The Whitworth was established in 1889 as the first gallery in a park, for the 'perpetual gratification of the people of Manchester,' and this mission is still at its heart. Home to internationally renowned collections of modern art, textiles and sculpture and the largest public collection of Outsider Art in the UK, the learning team programmes holistically with the curatorial team, generating new approaches to working with non-traditional arts audiences and fostering co-productive strategies with communities. The Whitworth has a vibrant Learning & Engagement Programme, ranging from Early Years through to Age Friendly sessions, formal and informal, with extensive experience in working with schools and colleges.

The Whitworth plan to use the Award to design a groundbreaking mental health literacy resource focused on the Musgrave Kinley Outsider Art collection. The project will allow the learning team to combine their work in arts and health with their experience of working with young people on our schools programme. The Mental Health Foundation states there is a clear link between improving a young person's literacy and language skills and improving mental health literacy. The project will benefit the organisation by enabling the development of a 'speak out' resource, exploring the links between literacy, mental health and creativity. This project will be the first joint curatorial and learning venture that embodies the gallery's 'useful museum' ethos; working to create an entirely user-led resource that uses the collection to address current needs, in this case, around young people's mental health and literacy.

Ed Watts, Head of Learning and Engagement at the Whitworth said: “The Max Literacy Award provides an opportunity for us to co-develop a sustainable mental health literacy resource for children and young people across Greater Manchester. We are excited by the possibilities offered by the Whitworth's diverse collections, including the UK's largest public collection of Outsider Art, to open up conversations around mental health, emotional wellbeing and creativity. Using our collection to address what matters in people's lives, respond to current urgencies and propose solutions to the issues around us.”

**For images and further information, please contact Ailbhe Mac Eoin,
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Notes to Editors:

The MaxLiteracy Awards & Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust

MaxLiteracy was initiated and is funded by the Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust. It is run by the National Association for Writers in Education (NAWE) and Engage (National Association for Gallery Education). This is the third time this Award has been held. In 2018 a website was launched to disseminate learning and resources generated since the Awards began in 2014. **www.maxliteracy.org**

The Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust are also the funders of the Alexandra Reinhardt Memorial Award (ARMA), the artist residency and public art commission programme organised since 2012 by Engage: **www.engage.org/arma**

National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE)

NAWE's mission is to further knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of Creative Writing and to support good practice in its teaching and learning at all levels. As a Subject Association, NAWE promotes Creative Writing as both a distinct discipline and an essential element in education generally. NAWE's 1,500 members include those working in higher education, the many freelance writers working in schools and community contexts, and the teachers and other professionals who work with them.

www.nawe.co.uk

Engage

Engage is the lead advocacy and training network for gallery education. We support arts educators, organisations and artists to work together with communities in dynamic, open exchanges that give everyone the opportunity to learn and benefit from the arts. Engage has 800 members in the UK and abroad in c.270 organisations. **www.engage.org**

Attenborough Arts Centre

Attenborough arts centre is an inclusive arts venue, part of the University of Leicester and open to all. With 109,000 visitors / year, AAC is one of only 5 purpose built disability arts centre in England, which programmes and commissions dynamic pioneering work around disability, inclusion and talent development, with a full award winning learning and outreach programme in the heart of Leicester. We want everyone to feel welcome and get involved in what we do. With 21 years of experience, our programme offers performance, courses and workshops, contemporary art exhibitions, activities for children and families, and more. Attenborough Arts Centre's work is inspired by Richard Attenborough, a world leading filmmaker, actor and lifelong patron of the arts who helped establishing our arts centre. **www.attenborougharts.com**

Bristol Museum and Art Gallery

Bristol Museum and Art Gallery attracts around 400,000 visitors a year, with a programme of temporary exhibitions as well as displays of natural history, geology and archaeology; European Old Master paintings; Victorian Art; French Art; Eastern Art, and the Bristol School of Artists. The Formal Learning team runs a comprehensive programme of learning activities, including workshops that are co-created with teachers and aligned to the National Curriculum. The team also runs outreach activities such as workshops and assemblies, and a limited loan box scheme for secondary history topics.

www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-museum-and-art-gallery/

Kirleatham Museum

Kirleatham Museum is home to a treasure trove of artefacts and exhibitions; all housed in a magnificent 1709 Queen Anne building. Featuring a wide range of exhibitions and displays covering local industrial, maritime and social history, as well as a packed programme of exciting visiting exhibitions, family events, musical performances and seasonal activities, Kirleatham Museum is one of Redcar and Cleveland most valued attractions. **www.redcarcleveland.co.uk/enjoy/kirleatham-museum/**

The Whitworth

The Whitworth is part of The University of Manchester. It is home to internationally renowned collections of modern art, wallpaper, textiles, watercolours, prints, drawings and sculpture. Created in 1889 as the first English gallery in a park, the Whitworth has

developed a new vision for the role of a university gallery. A creative laboratory within an ambitious university, the Whitworth is a place where good, unusual things happen. The Whitworth re-opened to the public on 14 February 2015 after a major £17 million redevelopment by architects MUMA. The Whitworth has welcomed over one million visitors since re-opening, and more than doubled its previous annual records. The redevelopment has doubled public space and created state-of-the-art new facilities including expanded gallery spaces, a study centre, learning studio, and a collections centre. The gallery was crowned Art Fund Museum of Year 2015, nominated for the prestigious Stirling Prize and named Best Emerging Cultural Destination in Europe. www.manchester.ac.uk/whitworth

