

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: University College London
Unit of Assessment: 34B – Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory: Fine Art
Title of case study: Dryden Goodwin: Animating portraits in the public realm
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Dryden Goodwin's research into drawing and portraiture as a means of communication has achieved significant public impacts through strategically sited public interventions. <i>Linear</i> (2010) engaged passengers on the London Underground system with contemporary art while raising awareness and visibility of the staff working in the stations, leading to improved staff morale, and had tangible impacts on the Art on the Underground curatorial strategy. It also led to the commissioning of <i>Breathe</i> 2012, which made the vital issue of urban air pollution visible, and was used to educate policymakers, students and the wider public about this important issue.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Since 2007 Dryden Goodwin (Lecturer at the UCL Slade School since September 2007; appointed Reader in Fine Art in October 2012) has explored and exploited the experience of portraiture within different contexts to investigate the experience of the contemporary city, reflecting on notions of public and private, the relationship between anonymity and intimacy, voyeurism, desire and emotional distance. His research questions the ability of any portrait to adequately describe (or portray) a subject; he particularly considers the influence of the artist's relationship to subjects who may be family, celebrities, strangers or communities of people with a shared work or environment. More broadly, his work explores the role of drawing and its animation, which has fed into an expansive notion of portraiture. A key aspect of this is using the relationship between pencil and video to explore and encourage an active relationship between the still and moving image in the imagination of the viewer.</p> <p>His examination of some of these issues began with <i>The Calvert Centre Project</i>, 2007 [a], a permanent artwork installed in a new building in Hull and consisting of 20 small drawings of the patients, local residents, medical and council staff who were to use the centre. This idea of relating the subject of the portraits directly to their location was further developed in <i>12 Portraits</i>, 2008 [b], commissioned for a retail centre in Bristol. Here, Goodwin emphasised a "kind of democracy of shared endeavour" and sought to "counterbalance the eventual inevitable invisibility of these people" by etching portraits of the construction workforce into 12 metal plates in the central stairwell. The relationship between anonymity and intimacy within the city was explored in <i>Cast</i>, 2008 [c], a major solo exhibition and monograph at The Photographer's Gallery, London, which focused on strangers travelling through London's West End, engrossed in private moments of quiet reflection.</p> <p>These themes were further developed in the two projects underpinning the impacts. <i>Linear</i> (2010) [d] was commissioned for Transport for London (TfL)'s Art on the Underground (AotU) programme. Goodwin sought to explore the context of the London Underground (LU) in recording encounters with Underground staff and presenting them into the same environment. Goodwin made 60 pencil portraits of Jubilee Line staff with films recording both the drawing process and Goodwin's conversations with each sitter. The work explored the relationship between the anonymity of the context in which they were displayed and the intimacy of the interaction between the artist and sitter. <i>Linear</i> was presented across the LU network on poster sites, light boxes, leaflets and digital video displays, with exhibition sites at three Underground stations. The monochrome aesthetic of the drawings was intentionally distinct from the usual colourful and photographic advertising displayed, creating a distinctive imaginative space for the general public to contemplate the ideas raised by the project. The graphic design of the project was supported by Rose Design, with an online exhibition of all 60 films by online technology company Nice Spots. <i>Linear</i> actively explored relationships between these media.</p> <p><i>Breathe</i> (2012) [e] was an 8-metre animated portrait of a young child (Goodwin's son) progressing through fluctuating breathing patterns, projected at night time onto St Thomas' Hospital, facing the Houses of Parliament across the Thames. The portrait, which was made up of more than 1,300 tiny pencil drawings, critiqued the quality of London's air and conveyed the dangers posed by air pollution to children in urban areas. Goodwin worked on the project with Professor Frank Kelly, an expert on lung health at King's College London and an advisor to the Government on air pollutants.</p>

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Breathe was curated by Alice Sharp as part of a wider project, *Invisible Dust*, which seeks to encourage awareness of and promote meaningful responses to environmental issues.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

[a] GOODWIN, D. (2007) *The Calvert Centre Project*. [Permanent artwork] Calvert Centre, Hull. http://drydengoodwin.com/the_calvert_centre.htm

[b] GOODWIN, D. (2008) *12 Portraits*. [Permanent artwork] Cabot Circus, Bristol. Funded by Arts Council England [text removed for publication]. http://drydengoodwin.com/12_portraits.htm

[c] GOODWIN, D. (2008) *Cast*. [Solo exhibition] Photographer's Gallery, London; Hasselblad Centre, Gothenburg, Sweden, 2009. Co-commissioned by Photoworks, Brighton and the Photographer's Gallery, London. Funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Arts Council England [text removed for publication]. *Cast* (2009) [Monograph] London: Steidl & Photoworks, with The Photographers' Gallery. ISBN 978-3-86521-727-1. Submitted to REF2

[d] GOODWIN, D. (2010) *Linear*. [Art installation, website] Art on the Underground, Transport for London, London. Commission part-funded by Arts Council England [text removed for publication] http://www.awardcore.com/nicespots/Linear_Dryden_Goodwin/ Submitted to REF2

[e] GOODWIN, D. (2012) *Breathe*. St Thomas Hospital, London. Commissioned by *Invisible Dust* [text removed for publication] supported by the Wellcome Trust, also funded by Guy's and St Thomas' Charity and Arts Council England. <http://tinyurl.com/8jqzwx> Submitted to REF2

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The research described above has achieved significant impacts on public engagement with, understanding of, and participation in contemporary art outside the museum or gallery context. In combination with extensive public engagement through publications, interviews, public talks and lectures, the public and strategic siting of the works has also increased awareness of important issues raised by Goodwin's research, and contributed to improvements in the quality of London life, including in terms of enhanced community cohesion and employee satisfaction among particular groups of workers.

Goodwin's work has **engaged broad public audiences with a range of important social, political and artistic issues**, including ideas of anonymity, individuality and communication in urban contexts, and with the ways in which these may be explored through portraiture. In work produced as part of *Linear*, these issues were mirrored by the unique blend of anonymity and proximity within the London Underground (LU) environment, where 4 million individuals per day are packed in close proximity but with minimal interaction. Many of these encountered *Linear*: the work was distributed not only across the network but in 2,000 6'x4' sheet posters, placed in light boxes across the underground; as 3,000 A1 posters; 30,000 fold-out leaflets; and at exhibition sites at Southwark, London Bridge and Stanmore Underground stations [1]. The reach of impacts on public engagement with ideas of anonymity and individuality was extended through presentations including at the National Portrait Gallery (19.10.2010); and screenings in London (National Transport Museum 2010, Canary Wharf Screen, May–July 2013), Oxford (Nuffield College), and Norway (Bergen National Academy of the Arts). The films and drawings were also shown as part of *One Thing Leads to Another – Everything is Connected*, a group exhibition at London's City Hall (14 May–10 June 2010) curated by Art on the Underground and accompanied by a free public discussion on 1.6.2010 [2]. An accompanying book of the same title, featuring *Linear*, was published in 2012. The impacts were expanded further through teaching and discussion materials available on the project website, including teaching packs on drawing and the nature of portraiture.

The project was, moreover, widely covered in print and online media, including ITN London Tonight, ArtSlant, Art Online, and the *Guardian*, in which Jonathan Jones described it as “gripping, thought-provoking and evocative of life in the big city” [3], and whose review of *Linear* provoked a lively public discussion in the comments section about the work, in particular about the drawing method. The popularity of *Linear* was such that its duration was extended for an additional 16 months to June 2012 [1].

As well as engaging LU customers with these ‘big ideas’ about the nature of life in London, *Linear* gave a face (through its portraits), a voice (through its films), and thereby an identity to its subjects among the LU staff. As such, **it engaged millions of Underground travellers with the lives, personalities and stories of people often overlooked as individuals** by the public. The London

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SE1 community website noted that staff involved in the project opened up to Goodwin “about life, love and the highs and lows of working on the Jubilee Line. From the mundane to the moving, staff revealed surprisingly intimate details of their lives” [4]. Posters invited passengers to “unlock the drawings” by watching the associated films online and to come to know the sitters as individuals. The call worked: by 1 March 2010, just a month after launch, the 60 films showing Goodwin drawing and in conversation with each sitter had received over 9,500 unique views [5], and comments on the project site included statements on these lines: “It is also a good reminder to us of the people behind the uniforms” [6]. Between May and July 2010, they were played on digital moving screens along the escalators and on larger video screens in stations across the Underground [1].

Linear had a particularly **positive impact on the morale of TfL staff at a time of severe cuts**. At a public meeting, the then Head of Customer Service Strategy described it as “the best piece of work we’ve achieved in humanising our staff” [1]. Its individualising and humanising effects were immediately recognised and appreciated by staff members themselves: writing on 14 June 2010 on the AotU project page, one anonymous commentator affiliated with the LU said: “This project has brought LUL uniforms and suits to life and shown the human side of staff” [6]. Three years later, staff at an event in July 2013 to celebrate *Linear* still reported positive feelings: “I was very proud of my involvement from start to finish”, one respondent said, whilst another reported “for some reason [it] made me feel valued as a member of staff” [7]. A number of staff-focused events were organised around *Linear*, including the project launch at the London Transport Museum on 5 February 2010; screenings and accompanying discussion sessions for staff; and a special event at Canary Wharf on 23 July 2013. The exhibition curator stated that *Linear* had the highest recognisability of an AotU art project amongst London Underground staff, and attributed this to its medium as one that people easily recognise and are receptive towards, to the work’s audio-visual element and the artist-staff interaction [1]. The project’s interest and value to LU staff is further suggested by its inclusion in internal communications, including *On the Move* magazine for TfL pensioners (13,000 circ.) and *Newsline*, the magazine for employees of the Jubilee Line [8].

Linear’s broader **significance to LU identity** is indicated by its inclusion in the London Transport Museum’s 2013 exhibition, *Poster Art 150: London Underground’s Greatest Designs*, as part of the celebrations of 150 years of the London Underground. The *Linear* poster was one of only 150 works selected from over 3,300, and the only moving image poster [9]. *Linear*’s significance has also been recognised externally: at the Design Week Benchmark Awards in 2010, Goodwin’s technical collaborator, Rose Design, won both Best in Show and the Public Sector Campaigns Category for *Linear*, which the judges described as an exceptional piece of public art and an important piece of employer communication [10]. The unique approach taken in *Linear* to public and staff engagement has further ensured its special significance to the development of its Art on the Underground curatorial strategy. Run before the introduction of now-ubiquitous Twitter promotions and QR codes, *Linear* marked the first use by AotU of a ‘Call to Action’ in the form of the invitation to ‘unlock’ the drawings online. This was also the first (and so far only) time that the Underground’s LCD screens had been used to display art, the monochrome drawings providing a striking change from conventional colourful advertisements. This novel, multi-channel approach provided a model for *Labyrinth*, a 2013 AotU project with artist Mark Wallinger, covering 270 stations and with extensive accompanying learning resources, public engagement and interactivity [1].

To these myriad positive effects *Breathe* (2012) added additional impacts on **public engagement with and understanding of important environmental and health issues**, in particular, air quality issues. The success of *Linear* influenced *Breathe*, both in form and its emphasis on the relationship between the intimate and anonymous. The reach of its public impacts were significantly enhanced by the fact that, instead of placing *Breathe* inside St Thomas’ Hospital as originally intended, the 8-metre-high animation was projected onto the exterior with an estimated audience of over 225,000 people [11]. The significant media coverage of *Breathe* extended the reach of impacts on public engagement, not only with the work itself, but also with the otherwise largely invisible issue of inner city air pollution [12]. The Visual Arts Development Manager at Guy’s and St Thomas’ Charity noted “the benefit to Guy’s and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust was twofold: an opportunity for them to highlight the effects of modern air pollution on the London population, as well as raising the profile of Dr Frank Kelly’s work and the Exhale project” [13].

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As with *Linear*, further engagement was facilitated and educational benefits delivered through associated teaching and learning resources. This was achieved through an educational programme developed by the *Breathe* producers, Invisible Dust, of drawing workshops to engage East London primary school children at the Evelina School with the science of breathing [14].

The fact that the outdoor screen onto which *Breathe* was projected faced the Houses of Parliament across the Thames assured impacts on discussion and debate about this and related scientific, health and environmental issues among policymakers. The benefits that the work offered to scientists and advocacy groups as a new way of connecting audiences directly with these issues were acknowledged at an accompanying seminar, *Breathe: Turner Updated*, at the Houses of Parliament (16/10/2012), which explored the effects of air pollution and the important role of highly public and visible **art as a strategy to communicate and highlight these issues** [15]. A questionnaire completed by over 60% of the attendees returned resoundingly positive feedback, with a recognition of the importance of and capacity for art and science to act together to engage both the public and policymakers with environmental and health issues [15]. Meanwhile, Goodwin's scientific collaborator, Frank Kelly, described it as "a 'refreshing' experience for him to work with Goodwin, both because he learned to explain and view his own work differently, and also because he witnessed how his scientific findings were received and re-translated" [16]. The seminar, which was organised by the Environmental Audit Committee and Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, and attended by 80 students, scientists, media professionals, researchers, and parliamentary staff, also helped forge new links between Parliament and St Thomas' Hospital [14].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- [1] Exhibition duration and impacts corroborated by the Curator of *Linear* for AotU in a statement (1.10.13) confirming contents of an interview on 20.05.13. Available on request.
- [2] Examples of public engagement activities relating to *Linear: One Thing Leads to Another: Everything is Connected*: <http://art.tfl.gov.uk/projects/detail/1756/>
- [3] Media coverage of *Linear*: Jonathan Jones, Art blog, Guardian.co.uk (08.02.10), <http://gu.com/p/2ez5t/>; David Yu, ArtSlant (11.04.10) <http://tinyurl.com/na9sun9>; Public Art Online (08.02.10), <http://tinyurl.com/of6ue2t> – PDFs available on request. London Tonight (06.02.10), <http://tinyurl.com/getu32q>
- [4] Coverage of *Linear* on the London SE1 community website: <http://www.london-se1.co.uk/news/view/4384>. PDF available on request.
- [5] Viewing figures available on request, provided by the Managing Director of Nice Spots.
- [6] Anonymous TfL staff comment on *Linear* see: <http://art.tfl.gov.uk/projects/detail/1632>
- [7] *Linear* Participant Questionnaires (July 2013) available on request.
- [8] *On The Move*, October 2009, No.163, *Newsline*, Issue 3, 2009. PDFs available on request.
- [9] *Poster Art 150* (2013) [Catalogue] London Transport Museum. <http://bit.ly/17AvVOM>. London Transport Museum exhibitions website <http://bit.ly/1awSZhA>.
- [10] Design Week's assessment of *Linear* as art and exercise in employer communication: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/static/corporate/media/newscentre/archive/17633.html>. PDF available.
- [11] Viewing figures of *Breathe/Invisible Breath*. provided by *Invisible Dust*. Available on request.
- [12] Media coverage of *Breathe*: Tom Banks 'Dryden Goodwin's *Breathe* unveiled on side of St Thomas' Hospital', *Design Week* (08.10.12), <http://tinyurl.com/lqj79b5>; John Vidal, 'An artist's impression of London's air pollution problem', *Guardian Environment* blog, (25.10.12), <http://gu.com/p/3bck6/>; Martin Coomer, *Breathe* Preview, *Time Out* (24.09.12) <http://tinyurl.com/n2r4gvh>. PDFs available on request.
- [13] *Invisible Breath* Evaluation Report compiled by External Evaluators Orlagh Woods & Jason E. Bowman, December 2012. p. 22. Available on request.
- [14] *Breathe* school events and new links formed with Parliament confirmed by Stakeholder Engagement Specialist, Essentia, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust. Copy available.
- [15] House of Commons seminar *Breathe: Turner Updated* (16/10/2012) <http://tinyurl.com/q6kpk9> List of attendees and questionnaire responses available on request.
- [16] Sasha Engelmann 'Dryden Goodwin's *Breathe*: art, science and the invisible', *Environmental Scientist*, October 2012, p. 35. PDF available on request.