

<b>Institution: Liverpool John Moores University</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: U0A34 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory</b>
<b>Title of case study:</b> Art Projects in the Public Realm (with Liverpool Biennial)
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Collaboration between the Liverpool Biennial and Liverpool School of Art &amp; Design (LSAD) has stimulated public awareness of Biennial commissioned art and enlarged its presence in the social life of the city in two ways: by extending the opportunities for local communities to participate in public art projects in the region; and by improving the opportunities to talk about and share experiences of Biennial art.</p> <p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The Liverpool Biennial, the largest international contemporary art festival in the UK, brings over 200 artists to work in Liverpool each biennial year. Although it caters for a wide audience of visitors to the City (attracting nearly 700,000 visitors), the Biennial is committed to encouraging residents to rediscover the city in newly commissioned artworks and projects presented in diverse locations. In 2012, 42% of festival visitors were from the city region. Researchers at LSAD have been instrumental in mediating its impact on the cultural life of the city, inspiring people to engage with art. It does this by supporting and creating site specific art works that directly engage the local public; by organising and hosting events for the public discussion of contemporary art; and by enhancing opportunities for talking and thinking about art events in the City.</p> <p>Joint projects with the Biennial by Peter Appleton (Reader in Creative Technology) and Patricia MacKinnon-Day (Reader in Environmental Art) have developed practice-led research projects that seek ways of engaging new audiences into contemporary art environments, and engage with themes of place.</p> <p>Researchers at LSAD have created community-responsive arts programmes designed to assist audiences to develop their appreciation and understanding of contemporary visual art. The Biennial operates an integrated programme of education, commissions and exhibitions and provides the City of Liverpool with a rich open space in which people can discover and engage with art as part of their everyday lives. Appleton's interactive sound and light installation, the <i>Hope Street Project</i> (Liverpool Biennial, 29/10/08-26/11/08) at Liverpool Metropolitan and Liverpool Anglican Cathedrals, linked the towers of Liverpool's two cathedrals with two lasers: one visible during hours of darkness and the second an invisible beam carrying the voices of around 650 local participants, relayed between the two buildings. Appleton's <i>Shang-pool Arcadia</i> for the Liverpool Biennial 2010 invited the public to participate in the creation of a hybrid Anglo-Sino Arcadia and link via a variety of virtual encounters with people in Shanghai. For <i>Private Views Made Public and Rural Voices</i> (Biennial 2010) MacKinnon-Day collaborated with twelve regional women farmers, exploring their individual histories and relationship to their country environment. The research resulted in a number of interventions in non-art venues, such as village halls and town halls and culminated in an event in an ancient barn on the farm of one of the women; it was also shown at the Biennial.</p> <p>Researchers at LSAD and the Biennial recognise that creating opportunities for local audiences to talk about art is key to improving the reception of public art in the social and cultural life of the city. The research has sought to deepen audiences' engagement with artists work and enhance their image and perceptions of contemporary art. This has been enabled, in practical terms, by improving access to and participation in cultural events, for example, by hosting collaborative events at University sites. Since 2008 LSAD has curated international exhibitions with the Biennial and hosted three major exhibitions at its Copperas Hill building during the Liverpool Biennial 2012: 'City States', 'Bloomberg New Contemporaries' and 'The Unexpected Guest'.</p>

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

1. Peter Appleton, *The Hope Street Project* [multi-media installation, live between 29/10/08-26/11/08]. See P. Appleton, 'Infinite Possibility of New Technology' *CNK Journal* (ISSN 1674-7038), pp. 20-25. [can be supplied by the HEI on request]
2. Peter Appleton, *Shang-pool Arcadia* [multi-media art project] <http://www.shang-pool.com/>  
See P. Appleton, 'Shang-Pool Arcadia', in (Eds) Chris Meigh-Andrews and Aneta Krzemie, *Digital Aesthetic 2* (Preston: The Electronic & Digital Art Unit (EDAU) (ISBN: 978-1-901922-67-7) [can be supplied by the HEI on request].
3. Patricia MacKinnon-Day *Private Views Made Public and Rural Voices* (Liverpool Biennial 2010) Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. 17 September 2010 - 20 September 2010.
4. Patricia MacKinnon-Day, *10 Day Rehearsal*, Pagoda Chinese Centre (Liverpool Biennial 2012). [can be supplied by the HEI on request]; also shown in the "Jai & Jai" gallery in Los Angeles 2013: <http://www.jainjai.com/>.

#### Relevant Research Grants:

In 2008 Peter Appleton received £12,000 of Arts Council England funding for *The Hope Street Project*. This was one of only three major projects funded by the Arts Council England within Liverpool's 08 Capital of Culture. He also received £6,000 from the Performing Rights Society Fund for the project in 2008.

Patricia MacKinnon-Day received £20,000 from Heritage Lottery Fund (2009); £6,500 from Arts Council (2010); and £3,000 from Deva Film Festival for *Private Views Made Public*.

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

A large proportion of activity around the Biennial creates process-based, temporary and site-specific art projects. Liverpool, whose visual arts venues were amongst the first to develop programmes of artists working with communities, has provided a fertile environment for arts participation, although public art has not always been well received by local audiences. However, artists at LJMU have shown how many contemporary art practices bear upon local perspectives and identities, helping to ameliorate public perceptions of contemporary art. Significant outreach took place as part of Appleton's *Hope Street Project* at project: Appleton collected 'phrases of aspiration', recordings by around 650 locals, school children and visitors articulating their hopes for the city, at outreach events including the Hope Street Festival, FACT's *Tenantspin* project, the Long Night at the Biennial and in a *Radio City* phone in with local DJ Peter Price - as well as via the automatic recording system within Cathedrals. Appleton relayed the phrases between the cathedrals in *The Hope Street Project*, which became a nocturnal landmark during Liverpool's European City of Culture Celebrations, and was affectionately known in Liverpool as 'God's Washing Line'. It featured extensively in the local press, radio and television (for example, *BBC News* 20/11/08 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/7740086.stm>). Many thousands of people saw the installation and thousands visited the two Cathedrals to experience the sound installations.

Beneficiaries of the research have also gained by participation in community-responsive arts programmes designed to assist audiences develop their appreciation and understanding of visual culture. By showing how art works foster shared meaning, the research shows that attitudes towards place – such as a sense of belonging – are enhanced. In addition to being screened at the Biennial, MacKinnon-Day's *Private Views Made Public* (Biennial 2010) was installed in seven, non-art rural locations throughout the region and led to a series of community events, including a

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culinary master-class in a regional restaurant and a screening at the Merz Barn in Cumbria. Mackinnon-Day has extended her community-responsive research into a local urban farm. MacKinnon-Day's Arts Council-funded residency for at Rice Lane City Farm (2012 on-going) is an artist-led project in an economically deprived district of Liverpool with a long history of community activism (the author of *The Ragged-Legged Philanthropist*, Robert Tressell, is buried there). The research is driven by a goal of engaging local audiences in the history of the site, and in facilitating activity around local environmental issues.

Audience surveys conducted by the Biennial show that there is now an exceptional level of local awareness of the Biennial and that 68% of local residents were aware that the 2012 festival was taking place and 96% of those asked believe that the Biennial is an important event for Liverpool. The breadth of the Biennial's reach has continually expanded and in 2012 35% of the audience is new to the visual arts, having little or no knowledge of contemporary art. Our collaborative work with the Biennial has provided opportunities for participants to get involved in trying new things. Appleton's *Shang-pool Arcadia* (Biennial 2010) invited the public to link via a variety of virtual encounters with people in Shanghai. Audiences engaged with *Shang-pool Arcadia* in two live linked simultaneous events: *Picnic in Arcadia* at the Bluecoat (23/10/10) and *Voyages in Arcadia* as part of a Biennial Late Night event (26/11/10). The project involved cross-disciplinary participation and collaboration with audiences from schools in Merseyside and Shanghai. For example, 20 pupils from Upton Hall Grammar School, Wirral were introduced to modelling techniques inside Second Life in preparation for the project. The Second-Life virtual park is accessible from anywhere in the world and has been accessed by thousands of people. *Shang-pool Arcadia* was shortlisted as one of three projects for the international Learning Without Frontiers Awards 2011. (<http://www.learningwithoutfrontiers.com/lwf-awards-finalists-2011>).

The work of Appleton and MacKinnon-Day for the Liverpool Biennial has fostered networks and connections for participating audiences. It also offers social networks that inform users about other people's cultures. Around 200 members of the public participated in Appleton's *Shang-pool Arcadia* live event, which enabled virtual meetings between people from Liverpool and Shanghai in the artist's Second Life landscape of Stanley Park. MacKinnon-Day used an artist's residency in Shanghai to create 10 Day Rehearsal, which compared her experiences of working with Chinese women in military and social situations. The final film work was shown to the women at the *qipao* club, Shanghai and at The Pagoda Arts Centre, Liverpool, during the Liverpool Biennial 2012. The piece was also used as part of a Chinese workshop on Chinese culture at Edge Hill University and it has subsequently been shown at the Jai and Jai Gallery in Los Angeles.

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

Director, Liverpool Biennial