

Institution: SOAS

Unit of Assessment: 34 Art and Design: History, Dance and Performing Arts

a. Context

Art history has an inherent outreach appeal due to the visual nature of its field of study. We take full advantage of this to maximise engagement with the arts of Asia and Africa. HAA runs a highly regarded Post-graduate Diploma in Asian Art, making recent scholarship available to persons not part of the normal university environment, such as gallery owners, museum professionals and collectors. In 2012, the Diploma received a philanthropic gift of £600,000 to provide scholarships for those otherwise unable to follow its courses. In 2013, this same donor gave £20m to SOAS through his charitable foundation (Alphawood) – one of the biggest ever donations to a UK university, and the biggest pro rata to the size of SOAS. £15m of this is for the History of Art. We will use the funds to expand capacity and access.

Some of the scholarly monographs and journal publications by HAA members have had direct and significant impact (see Case Studies below). Members also work in out-reaching: Screech and Pierson contributed to the EU-funded Executive Training Scheme, held in SOAS, with a £0.5m budget over three years, and aimed at assisting business by teaching East Asian cultures. We are much engaged in the management of museum exhibitions, natural areas of impact for historians of art. We work with the SOAS Brunei Gallery, which has the highest number of visitors of any museum in the Bloomsbury precinct. We work with other spaces, and contribute and initiate, exhibitions and collection catalogues. Many of us also contribute to popular museum guides. Some such contributions have been widely discussed outside HE: McCausland's catalogue essay for the V&A *Masterpieces of Chinese Painting* (2013) provoked a BBC2 Culture Show special. Pierson wrote a book on the V&A Chinese ceramics collection for general readers (2009).

Contadini's project on the Pisa Griffin and related bronze sculptures has 19 partners, including many non-HE, with 1,500+ youtube hits.

All members of HAA offer museum lectures and outreach, such as seminars, gallery talks and object-handling sessions. Nickel's and Pierson's study days at the British Museum attract 200 visitors each. Pierson has undertaken Chinese Ceramic handling sessions at the V&A, British Museum and Hong Kong University Museum of Art.

Three major exhibitions were devised and curated by HAA members during the assessment period: *Gifts of Recognition: Contemporary Art Treasures of SOAS* (Contadini), timed to coincide with the Olympics, with over 7,000 visitors, and resulting in a permanent digital archive. *Telling Images of China: Narrative and Figure Paintings from the Shanghai Museum*, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (McCausland) had 45,000 visitors. *The Emperor of Ethiopia in Lusoland: Ethiopia, Portugal and the Organization of African Unity*, Brunei Gallery, 2010 (co-curated by Tribe). In addition, Gerstle in the Japan Department has collaborated with the British Museum over the last ten years to conduct AHRC and Leverhulme-funded research projects which have led to two major exhibitions accompanied by research catalogues that reached a wide general public in the UK and Japan, the most recent in 2013 on Japanese erotic art. The first focussed on the ukiyo-e art tradition of Osaka Kabuki, forgotten even in Japan with the dominance of modern Tokyo, and the second the dispelling of the taboo both within and outside Japan over Japanese traditional erotic art (Shunga)

Staff work as consultants: Abouseif to the Museum of Islamic Art, Kuwait, the Louvre Abu Dhabi and Islamic Museum of Qatar. Nickel was on a Specialist Panel to assess research priorities for the Pitt Rivers Museum, and was consultant for the Art Gallery of New South Wales (2008). Pierson is Consultant to the V&A Asia Dept and Geffrye Museum, and is trustee of the Bath Museum of East Asian Art. Screech worked on reordering the Mt Kunô Museum (Japan) and is assisting in research leading to securing for its most famous object Japanese National Treasure status; he is also working to twin this museum with the Tower of London. Our strong relations with the British Museum resulted in relocation of the Percival David Collection (Chinese ceramics) in 2011 to maximize impact of this world's famous resource.

Like many academics, we put our expertise at disposal through public lectures. Significant are: Lecture given to mark opening of the Islamic Gallery at the Metropolitan Museum, New York, 2012 (Contadini). In the commercial world, staff assist galleries and auction houses in background research (Nickel) and appraising objects destined for sale (Pierson, McCausland). In 2012, Wang organised a seminar and training session for Chinese art auctioneers; 25 experts came for intensive courses at SOAS and visits to auction houses, taking new-found knowledge back to

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create a world-class art trade in China. The course earned £15,000 for the Dept, used to support our Research Seminars.

Most members of the Department are involved in wide issues of heritage, conservation and education. Nickel undertook reviews of nominations for World Heritage Sites (for ICOMOS). These researches were the subject of a film (Storyhouse productions/Terra X) broadcast by ARTE and German ZDF (2013). Other members of the department have appeared on public media, including Abouseif on Radio 4. King has assisted the Department of Antiquities, Abu Dhabi with surveying and registering historic buildings in areas of intensive rebuilding, and with oil companies seeking to minimise heritage impact of exploration and drilling. Highly significant is Moore's work with UNESCO in Myanmar: as a member of the World Heritage Nomination Committee, she secured listing of the 1st site in Myanmar) (2012-13). She has also worked with the government of Dawei province to establish a conservation zone around the proposed deep-water port.

Tribe's Ethiopian project touches communities in rural areas through schools programmes, promoting care and sense of ownership; her research has led to tourism and economic reconstruction; at the request of the religious community she organized funding for a vernacular translation of the key medieval chronicle of the local religious community.

Perhaps the biggest single impact is by Screech. 1613-14 marks the 400th anniversary of Japan-British Relations, and the entire enterprise to commemorate this was initiated, and is now co-chaired, by Screech, who has published widely on the subject in academic contexts. Some £100,000 has been raised, including from British Airways, Chugai Pharmaceutical and Mitsubishi. While much falls outside the present assessment period, 2013 has seen more than 200 events in Japan and UK. Screech has lectured extensively to HE and non-HE institutions on the significance of this anniversary in the UK and Japan, including at the British Embassy in Japan, Barclays Bank (Japan), the Foreign Press Association (Tokyo) and the Houses of Parliament (Westminster) and numerous Japanese museums. He was also called to the Palace to brief the Crown Prince of Japan (in Japanese). He has been interviewed repeatedly, notably on the BBC Today Programme. At his instigation, the Lord Mayor of London hosted a one-day Seminar and Dinner in the Guildhall for 100 business leaders and VIPs, and a Matsuri (Japanese Festival) was held in Trafalgar Square attended by 80,000 members of the general public. In recognition of his efforts, Screech was sponsored by Unilever to attend the British Business Awards gala dinner at the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (2013).

b. Approach to impact

In order to promote impact, HAA offers staff as much support as possible. This often takes the form of reduced teaching so as to concentrate on a project. For example, in 2013, Moore was on externally funded leave at the International Program of Collaborative Research-Center for Southeast Asia Studies, Kyoto University, the purpose of which was to create a research link on the arts of Myanmar. The long-term goal is to survey and enhance curatorial capacity in that developing nation. Other staff are required to assume extra burdens to compensate at such times.

A variety of other incentives are available to staff to promote such engagement, such as through the School's Research and Enterprise Office. Cooperation can also take place beyond the Dept, at a School level, where workload is similarly reduced, or allowances made, so staff can work on impact-related events. Screech was given leave by SOAS to spend the large amount of time required to work on the 400th anniversary.

The SOAS Vision and Strategy for its 2016 Centenary and beyond explicitly recognises 'volunteering' as an organisational priority, and for a number of staff, active engagement with non-academic bodies on a pro-bono basis is supported and facilitated. At both School and Faculty level, funding is available for colleagues who wish to organise workshops, conferences and other events at SOAS which have a wider impact component. Through internal peer review, we seek to provide support to researchers to develop strong impact plans at an early stage of writing of external grant proposals, in line also with the increasing emphasis of a range of funding bodies on impact.

c. Strategy and plans

A major strategic asset of the Department is the Brunei Gallery, dedicated to the display of Asian and African Art, which hosts temporary exhibitions as well as a offering a permanent, rotating display of the SOAS collections, which are displayed in the Foyle Gallery (funded by Foyles Foundation with £300k) (2007). The BG provides a fine opportunity for staff and students and is an in-house platform for impact now, and in our future plans. Department members are crucial to the

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gallery board, and contribute to all decisions on programming, so as to ensure integration and diversity in planning and exposure of artworks.

Given the broad nature of research within the Department, with work taking place over a range of countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia, our focus is on developing a strategy that creates enabling conditions for engagement with non-academic users. The Alphawood donation will be launched in 2014, and envisages some 20 fully-funded students coming to study within this Department. Such, of course, is within HE, but the students will be drawn from curators and arts professionals working in the emerging economies of South-east Asia (the sphere of expertise of Moore). Knowledge gained will be taken back for building capacity and expertise in the diverse arts and arts-administration institutions from which the students will come. Alphawood – a US charity – selected HAA from all possibilities worldwide because of its credibility in such an outreach training enterprise. A new post in Curating and Museology will be tasked with formulating training courses for students including Alphawood scholarship holders from Southeast Asia who are envisaged as returning to their country to work in curation and heritage support.

Staff will continue to work (sometimes on a pro bono basis) to guide and assist overseas museums and galleries in their own outreach projects, including facilitating access to their resources by world-viewers, such as with assistance with the medium of English. A further dimension to our institutional strategy in relation to impact involves discussion of incorporation of activity relating to impact into existing systems and procedures for staff development, reward, promotion, probation, performance assessment, etc. The formulation of plans for impact is now embedded within the great majority of external grants, and the Department and institution more broadly are keen to ensure that, where appropriate, achievable plans are incorporated into all research activity planning, whether internally or externally funded. Plans involve the specification of intended audiences, communication plans for the outputs of the research, funding for specific enhancement activity, and a plan for evidence collection.

Some specific future impact-related projects: research for the SOAS centenary exhibitions, one curated by Pierson (for 2016) which will present a visual history of SOAS as an institution and reveal the many contributions of its students and staff to world politics, economics, education and entertainment from 1916 to the present day; and one curated by Contadini on SOAS collections, not just of important objects and manuscripts accumulated over a century, but also of music and video recordings, bringing together the pioneering and ground-breaking research of SOAS academics that has had an impact in the territories of origin as well as on generations of students. McCausland is in discussion with the Royal Academy for a major exhibition of artists in the Early Modern World, seeking funding from the AHRC and using the expertise of other HAA members. Tribe is building on a successful British Council grant for forward planning of an exhibition on cultural links in the Nile region, in collaboration with Cambridge University and ISCTE-Lisbon. She also plans a collaborative exhibition with Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw, of Eastern Christian icons.

Some writing projects now underway are intended for impact. For example, Screech is under contract to write the Oxford History of Japanese Art (which, in due course, will take its place within that long-lasting and accessible series), and his book on the events of 1613 in Japan, though built on a decade of scholarship, is intended as a book for the general reader.

d. Relationship to case studies

Nickel's project exemplifies the department's engagement with archaeology and its interdisciplinary approach. It is based on textual and visual analyses and does not shun radical interpretations. Nickel's research evolves from studying in many European universities and from fieldwork in China based on his international scholarly networks. His discoveries have been exciting enough to be the basis of major television broadcasting and his peer reviewed articles have been picked up by museums and in the popular press worldwide. Gerstle's AHRC project led to an exhibition on Kabuki Theatre at the British Museum in 2005 which then travelled to two museums in Osaka and Tokyo in early 2006, and again Gerstle was encouraged and supported within SOAS in gaining a Leverhulme project to work once more with the British Museum and two Japanese universities that has culminated in a major exhibition '*Shunga: Sex and Pleasure in Japanese Art*' (Oct 2013). This recent collaboration between SOAS and the British Museum to produce both a scholarly and popular exhibition and catalogue have been hailed by Neil McGregor, Director of the British Museum, as an ideal partnership. SOAS plans to build on this development.