

Institution: Manchester Metropolitan University
Unit of Assessment: D34 Art and Design: History Practice and Theory
Title of case study: Angels of Anarchy: Women Artists and Surrealism
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>The case study discusses the impact of Dr Patricia Allmer's major exhibition and catalogue project <i>Angels of Anarchy: Women Artists and Surrealism</i> held at Manchester Art Gallery between September 2009 and January 2010. The exhibition had a significant social, cultural and economic impact attracting over 9,600 visitors and winning awards for being Manchester's "tourism experience of the year" (described as "one of the most successful cultural tourist campaigns that Manchester has ever run" by Renaissance Northwest). A full programme of events ran alongside the exhibition including schools' workshops, short courses, cinema screenings and the development of a significant online resource all of which has contributed to a re-examination of the place of women artists in the Surrealist canon.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The research project <i>Angels of Anarchy: Women Artists and Surrealism</i> (2007-2009) was a collaboration between the Manchester Institute for Research and Innovation in Art and Design (MIRIAD) at Manchester Metropolitan University and Manchester Art Gallery [1]. Under the lead curatorship of the principal investigator, Dr Patricia Allmer (MMU 2006 - 2013, now Edinburgh University), the project was the first major survey of women Surrealist artists in the form of an exhibition. The major output was the exhibition and its accompanying catalogue [2] (published by Prestel and including internationally recognised scholars of Surrealism such as Professor Mary Ann Caws, Professor Katharine Conley, Professor Roger Cardinal and Dr Alyce Mahon). The project's major contribution to the field was its re-examination of the feminist history of Surrealism. In doing so, it highlighted and explored artists previously largely omitted from or marginalised by the Surrealist canon. The exhibition drew on an international range of 32 women Surrealist artists (from America, Britain, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Mexico, Spain and Switzerland) to investigate how their artistic practices respond to, develop, enrich and challenge some of the generic conventions of art history and how, in doing so, new lines of development and new counter-traditions are created.</p> <p><i>Angels of Anarchy</i> continued Allmer's long-standing research into the Surrealist movement which began in 2003 with the journal article "<i>L'Age d'Or-dinaire: A Voyage Through Surrealism</i>" in <i>Art History</i> [3]. In 2009 Allmer's work on Magritte, "<i>Rene Magritte: Beyond Painting</i>" (Manchester University Press) [4] was the first to focus on philosophical implications and other neglected and marginalised aspects of his work. Other articles have focused on Lee Miller's cartographies [5].</p>
<p>3. References to the research</p> <p>[1] <i>Angels of Anarchy: Women Artists and Surrealism</i> Exhibition (Manchester Art Gallery), October 2009 – January 2010</p> <p>[2] <i>Angels of Anarchy: Women Artists and Surrealism</i>, Edited Book, Published by Munchen, Berlin, London, New York, Prestel. ISBN: 978-3-7913-4365, pagination 280</p> <p>[3] <i>L'Age d'Or-dinaire: A Voyage Through Surrealism</i> in <i>Art History</i> (2003) 26 (2) pages 296-301 DOI: 10.1111/j.0141-6790.2003.02602003.x</p> <p>[4] <i>Rene Magritte: Beyond Painting</i>, Authored Book, Published by Manchester University Press (2009) ISBN: 978-0719079283</p> <p>[5] <i>Lee Miller's Revenge on Fascist Culture</i>. Journal Article in <i>History of Photography</i> 36/4 2012 DOI: 10.1080/03087298.2012.703374</p> <p>Indicators of Research Quality</p> <p>In 2010 Allmer won a Philip Leverhulme Prize in Art History (£10K) <i>Angels of Anarchy</i> won a Manchester Tourist Award and helped Manchester Art Gallery to win a national award for "Large Tourist Attraction of the Year"</p>

4. Details of the impact

Social and Cultural Impacts: *Angels of Anarchy* attracted funding from the Regional Development Agency (RDA) and all of the visitor targets set by the agency were met, including total visitor figures. According to Manchester Art Gallery's report, *Angels of Anarchy* has received "unprecedented media coverage" (Manchester Art Gallery, RDA report) [A], hitting the gallery's target of 25 national and international major media features (broadcast and printed press). It achieved a national printed press coverage at an estimated advertising equivalent value of over £600,000. The coverage included double-page reviews in *The Observer*, *The Saturday Times* and a 5* review in *The Guardian* <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2009/sep/25/angels-of-anarchy-review>, as well as coverage in international broadsheets such as the Italian *La Repubblica*, Portuguese *Publica*, Greek *Ethnos* and the Swiss *Neue Zuercher Zeitung* <http://www.nzz.ch/aktuell/feuilleton/uebersicht/engel-in-eigene-probleme-verstrickt-1.4087042> [Full list of reviews at D].

Major features focusing on individual artists were also published by *The Independent* and *Stella* magazine, and BBC Radio 4's *Woman's Hour* broadcast an interview with Dr Allmer and Jeanette Winterson [B]. Specialist art and design publications, women's glossy lifestyle magazines (such as Portuguese, Japanese and Greek *Vogue*, *Grazia*, *Marie Claire*) and weekly current affairs publications (*The Wall Street Journal* and *New Australian Financial Review*) have all profiled the exhibition as a major cultural event. The exhibition also had, for Manchester Art Gallery, "unprecedented coverage online by both official media outlets and blogs and e-zines" (MAG, RDA report) [A] (over 50 online sites featured previews, reviews or recommendations of the exhibition). According to Morris Hargreaves McIntyre research, audience satisfaction with the exhibition was 100%. The conversion rate of the exhibition was also significant. 24.5% of people who visited Manchester Art Gallery while *Angels of Anarchy* was on came to see the exhibition [C]. According to Manchester Art Gallery's Evaluation Report, "this compares very favorably with similar group exhibitions in the region, which are more of a challenge to promote than exhibitions with one major artist. For example Manchester Art Gallery's *Art of the Garden* (on tour from Tate Britain) achieved a 17.9% conversion rate, while *Summer of Love* (Tate Liverpool's most successful ever group show) had only a 12% conversion rate. The conversion rate is comparable with [but better than] that of the *Dali* exhibition at Tate Liverpool, which had a 24% conversion rate." (MAG, RDA report) [A]. A range of public events were organised to accompany the exhibition. Dr Allmer organised with Manchester Art Gallery a lecture series which was very well attended; two of the lectures were fully booked. She also organised a well-attended *Women Surrealist Filmmakers* series, together with Manchester Art Gallery and *Cornerhouse*. In addition, Dr Allmer was invited by *Cornerhouse* to lead an 8-week course on *Surrealism and the Everyday* (which involved a special focus on women Surrealists, and a guided tour of *Angels of Anarchy*) - the course was fully booked.

Angels of Anarchy had a dedicated website which is now an online web-resource on women surrealists, featuring biographies of artists, links to women surrealist publications, streamings of the filmed lecture series, recordings of Antony Penrose's guided tour and lecture, conversations between Dr Allmer and the exhibition co-ordinator Fiona Corridan, and poetry composed in relation to the exhibition. During the exhibition, it also featured an online Surreal poetry 'exquisite corpse' game to which audiences could contribute. Contributors included Jeanette Winterson and Guy Garvey (from the band *Elbow*), and the total number of contributions was 585.

The *Angels of Anarchy* dedicated microsite attracted 32,218 visits from 1 September to 10 January 2010. This increased the regular Manchester Art Gallery website visits by 8,000 visits per month. The microsite remains online as a legacy of the exhibition, and as an online resource on women surrealists. It still attracts a large number of visits - in February 2010, it had over 2,000 visits. Similarly, the online streamed 'in conversation' event between Dr Allmer and Jeanette Winterson, filmed by *creativetourist.com*, had 640 hits by the end of the exhibition. To date it has had 6,040 hits (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHyW1x5N5e4>)

Economic Impacts: *Angels of Anarchy* was a major high profile international exhibition promoting Manchester as a cultural centre and providing a focus for the city's intellectual community and its

institutions. The exhibition won Manchester Tourism's 'Tourism Experience of the Year, 2010' award <http://www.miriad.mmu.ac.uk/news/item.php?id=357> and helped Manchester Art Gallery to win the 'Large Tourist Attraction of the Year, 2010'. It was described by Manchester City Council's Renaissance Executive Board report as: "one of the most significant exhibitions staged by the Gallery. Praised by visitors, it was also a critical triumph, attracting glowing reviews in the quality press and specialist art journals. Feedback from museum colleagues at the London nationals has indicated that it is seen as a major achievement for a non-national to put on such an intellectually and curatorially ambitious international historic art exhibition, which revealed for the first time women artists' long-term contribution to this traditionally male-dominated art movement. They perceived Angels of Anarchy as raising our game to an international level." (Renaissance report)

According to Manchester Art Gallery's Report Angels of Anarchy had a "significant effect" on Manchester Art Gallery's tourist numbers (MAG, RDA report) [A]. The exhibition was described in the Renaissance Executive Board report as "one of the most successful cultural tourism campaigns Manchester has run". In the period of Sept-Dec. 2009 31% of total visitors were national tourists, compared to the 2008/9 annual percentage of 24%. This equates to over 8,300 national tourist visits for Angels. A further 1,384 international tourists attended the exhibition (5% of the total). In addition, the exhibition was "a great motivator to women Patrons", and to the recruitment of new Gallery Friends memberships (Renaissance report).

Impact on Students and Schools: The project included a close collaboration with Levenshulme High School, a Manchester-based inner city school. Seven students completing a GCSE Applied Art course made new artworks in response to the exhibition's key themes, which were exhibited under the title Teenangels, adjacent to the Angels of Anarchy exhibition. In addition 20 It's So Surreal workshops were held by Manchester Art Gallery's Education team using the exhibition's key themes and works from Manchester Art Gallery's permanent collection to explore Surrealist concepts and to develop students' "analytical and critical thinking skills" (Manchester Art Gallery, RDA report). In total 2,362 secondary school/college students visited the exhibition, 1,867 of these on self-guided visits from groups across the UK. According to the Renaissance report, this was "the highest number of self-guided college visits [Manchester Art Gallery] has achieved for a temporary exhibition." (MAG, RDA report) [A].

Influence upon researcher and gallery relationships: Angels of Anarchy raised awareness of the lack of contemporary research on women surrealists, and is now the forerunner of a range of upcoming exhibitions on women Surrealists in venues such as LACMA and Pallant House. The significance of the exhibition is evident from a range of international art journal reviews and previews of the exhibition in Art Quarterly, Art Review, Arte e Critica, The Burlington and Design Week. Dr Allmer received invitations to give public talks and contribute to academic events at institutions and organisations such as the Oxford Women in Politics group, the Friends of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the University of Cambridge, and the Association of Art Historians' seminar Don't Ask for the Mona Lisa: Exhibition Collaborations between Academics and Art Galleries (University of Leeds).

The exhibition fostered and developed already existing strong links between MIRIAD and Manchester Art Gallery, as well as with other collaborating key Manchester institutions and organisations such as Manchester City Council and Cornerhouse. Dr Allmer and the Gallery were able to establish strong relationships with these, as well as with a wide range of national and international institutions such as Tate Gallery, SFMoma, Kunstmuseum Bern, Edward James Foundation and the Lee Miller Foundation. The national and international contacts developed during the Angels of Anarchy project are directly feeding into a number of projects including Dr Allmer's external examining for two MPhils (on Surrealism and women artists) at the University of Cambridge, and the development of her current book project Lee Miller: Beyond Frontiers, a monograph proposal accepted for publication with Manchester University Press. Research for this book involves visiting many of the institutions and developing several of the contacts established during the Angels of Anarchy project.

Impact case study (REF3b)

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[A] Manchester Art Gallery report for Regional Development Agency (available on request) corroborates audience numbers, major tourist and cultural impacts of Angels of Anarchy exhibition.

[B] Link to Women's Hour broadcast including contributions from Jeanette Winterson and Patricia Allmer: http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/womanshour/01/2009_39_fri.shtml

[C] Further Evidence of impact can be collated from: Morris Hargreaves McIntyre audience research (available on request)

[D] Reviews (corroborating international reach and cultural and critical significance of the exhibition) in:

The Guardian <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2009/sep/25/angels-of-anarchy-review> (5 star)

Neue Zuercher Zeitung <http://www.nzz.ch/aktuell/feuilleton/uebersicht/engel-in-eigene-probleme-verstrickt-1.4087042> (12.01.2010)

The Independent <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/reviews/angels-of-anarchy-women-artists-and-surrealism-art-gallery-manchester-1798543.html> (07.10.2009)

The Telegraph "My Discovery of the Year" (11.12.2009) Guy Garvey (Lead singer of Elbow) talks about Angels of Anarchy "It was the most inspiring show I've ever seen"

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/6770112/My-discovery-of-the-year.html>

The Observer <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2009/sep/27/angels-anarchy-surrealism-women-artists> (27.09.2009)

And *The Financial Times* (26.09.2009), *Design Week* (24.09.2009), *The Observer* (27.09.2009), *The Times* (24.10.2009), *ArtWorld* (2009), *Publica* (03.03.2010), *Art Quarterly* (Autumn, 2009), *Prospect* (October, 2009), *Hotline* (Virgin) (September, 2009), *Vogue* (British, Portuguese, Greek, Japanese)

Full list of online coverage please see: https://delicious.com/#manchester_art_gallery/angels and <http://www.manchestergalleries.org/angelsfanarchy/explore/reviews>

[E] Angels flickr showing Patricia Allmer collecting the Tourist Experience of the Year Award at the Visit Manchester Awards: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/visitmanchester/4646535613/>