



## ARTSCAPES UPDATE REPORT EVALUATION JULY 2014

- **7 projects delivered**
- **1 project extended and developed** with additional arts council funding
- **2 exhibitions: ARTSCAPES** at The Witham in April 2014, bringing together works from all 7 proposals and "**godsbridgeX-the exhibition**" at The Bowes Museum April 5<sup>th</sup> – July 6<sup>th</sup> 2014 showing 10 new works produced by professional artists as a result of the God's Bridge Artist Project with Tania Kovats. Documenting of all projects by professional photographers Jill Cole/Matt Case
- **125 active participants each produced artworks**
- **74 Helpers/Volunteers gained skills**
- **7 professional artists supported**
- **1 video** documenting the God's Bridge Project shown at The Witham, Bowes Museum and mima
- **13 postcards** of artwork produced during Hay Meadow Workshops
- **1 full colour catalogue** of the ARTSCAPES
- **1 fold-out brochure** directing visitors to the god's bridge artworks within the museum
- **1 events day** Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April at The Bowes Museum, featuring the godsbridge X artists and Tania Kovats, who gave a talk and a tour of the exhibition

## Projects to date in detail:

### Mapping the Landscape : Completed

34 Primary school children participants

2 teachers

1 teaching assistant

4 parent volunteers

Teesdale artist Sara Cox delivered this project with Cotherstone School pupils. Examining the connection between cartography, art and the landscape Sara worked with the children using felt. A walk around the village and by the river was a starting point for the project. Using a map of their route the children gathered source material by taking photographs to create an individual "colour bar code " of their chosen landscape. The children used their newly gained skills in felt making to create a large communal textile as a final piece. The landscape around Cotherstone is particularly rich both in texture and features. Sara has a long term interest in cartography and is an experienced participatory artist working and living in the Teesdale community. This is the first time she has been involved with ARTworks and we are excited about working with her.

Sara's comment:

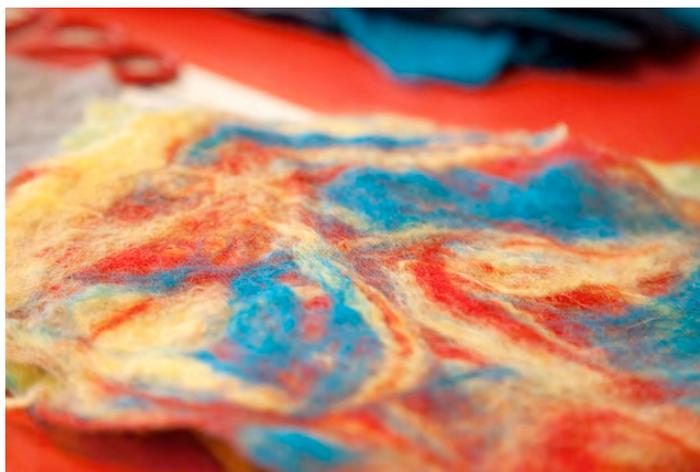
*It was great seeing the children's excitement whilst colour mixing , their concentration when in engaged in the making process and their joyful teamwork when felting the group piece*

How the children responded to the project:

*I enjoyed blending the merino wool..I liked finding the colours of wool and experimenting to make the colour I want.....*

*....it introduced me to loads of new colours*

The project is now completed. Some wonderful work and photos produced:



## 2.Turner's Yellow – Sunsets in Teesdale: Completed

10 Student Participants

2 teachers (1 trainee teacher)

Art Students from Teesdale School, Year 10s participated in this project. The school was very enthusiastic about being involved. There was a walk around the Tees to the point where Turner painted his iconic view of the river and Barnard Castle. The students worked with local watercolourist Anne Mason who showed them watercolour techniques using superior arts materials. The students kept a sketch book of ideas and test pieces and also produced finished work. The project examined Turner's specific colour theory and practice as well as looking at contemporary landscape artists, and challenging the students to produce innovative work.

Some comments:

Teacher Nic Hollindale:

*..all students really enjoyed the workshops; especially working with Anne and seeing how a professional artist works first hand..*

*..Student's confidence has grown...this has been clearly seen in their classwork*

Students:

*...the project was fun and I learnt new watercolour techniques..*

*...I enjoyed the project and found the techniques we learnt useful and hope to use them in some of my other work in class...*

The project took place in November and December 2012.



### 3.Hay Meadow Workshops: Completed

13 participants

Anne Mason delivered 4 afternoon workshops, as well as a field trip to a Teesdale Hay Meadow during May/June 2012. The results were some wonderful detailed drawings and paintings of Teesdale flora. A presentation of local botanical specimens and the science behind them was delivered by Geoff Herbert, a local scientist. Packs of 13 postcards have been produced, one image by each participant, and have been distributed to each participant. We have sold some sets and broken some sets up as some participants wanted a set of their own!

The project was widely advertised and well attended by artists as well as complete beginners. All comments and evaluation forms were very positive.

Over 90% of the participants agreed that they had:

- increased their knowledge about Teesdale's Landscape
- increased their knowledge of local flora and grasses
- learnt new skills/techniques

Some comments by the participants:

*Anne is a fantastic teacher and in just 4 weeks all students have improved dramatically....Please may we have more.*

*I enjoyed the walk in the hay meadow and that certainly helped to put the whole project into context.*



#### **4.Cotman on the Greta: Completed**

48 attendees for talk

21 participants

1 volunteer (walk)

48 people attended the talk at the Morrish and 21 participants attended the four subsequent workshops.

The walk took place on a bright sunny afternoon and Anne demonstrated sketching outdoors, many of the participants worked from sketchbooks as well as taking photos. All this has been documented by Jill Cole.

Evaluation forms and final photos of the watercolours produced from the workshops reveal that the project fulfilled and exceeded participants expectations.

*"Really enjoyed the talk. the walk and workshops. I was aware of John S. Cotman, and now have a better understanding of his work and expertise as a watercolourist."*  
Richard Gibson

*" I particularly liked the walk and sketching along the Greta"* Gill Brodie

*"Excellent Anne Mason could not have been more helpful"* David Caig

#### **5.God's Bridge Project with Tania Kovats: In Progress**

10 Artist Participants

1 Geologist

1 Lead artist

1 video artist

1 volunteer (walk)

With additional support from Arts Council England, we have been able develop this project into an ambitious explorative artist mentoring opportunity.

We have attracted an internationally renowned British artist Tania Kovats to lead the project.

Over 80 applications were received for the 10 places on this project including applicants from Singapore, Spain, France and all over GB.

Links have been made with mima, and the Bowes Museum and we are discussing tie-ins with Platform A, and the Contemporary Art Society.

The two-day initial walk and mentoring day programme exceeded expectations. Feedback and reactions to both the project and the delivery were overwhelmingly positive.

We all met on a bright sunny but pretty breezy Monday morning. Many had travelled far and wide to be there: Tania had arrived from deepest Devon the night before, and had a taste of the Teesdale landscape on the winding, hilly drive over the moor. After general introductions it transpired that some of us formed a well travelled group that had lived and worked and hailed from many countries before settling, albeit

temporarily for some, in the UK and more particularly the North. One had lived in Teesdale all her life, her home only 2 minutes from the venue.

After introductions Trevor Morse gave us a gallop through the geological timeline of the area, and the history of the formation of the Great Limestone. This proved helpful on the walk, answering the “why” and the “how” of the landscape we experienced.

Arriving at God's Bridge was quite like a school outing. Sandwiches were eaten, a bit of paddling under the bridge for the intrepid: icy cold and treacherous slippery limestone, and a lot wider than appears from above. The extraordinary disappearing river kept us all guessing, dry river bed upstream from the bridge, not a result of water shortage, or lack of rainfall, (this is Teesdale!), but the continuing erosion of rock by water: the story of our landscape. The river bubbles back up a hundred meters or so downstream of the bridge and by the time it nears the Tees at the poetic Meeting of the Waters, flows so deep and strong that it is quite treacherous.

The farm hand who lives at God's Bridge Cottage, emerged from his shed complete with quad bike and collie seated on the rear, and calmly greeted us as he crossed over the geological formation we were all there to see, a timely reminder of its function.

We retraced our steps back to Bowes, accompanied by the never ceasing low throb of the trucks hurtling along The Street : the old roman road now the A66 cross Pennine route.

The afternoon was Tania's opportunity to show and tell about her work, a fascinating glimpse at her development as an artist and her ability to get projects made and funded. The integrity of the work shone through with ambitious concepts that she refused to compromise and saw through to completion.

Sharing a meal together at the Ancient Unicorn finished off an inspiring day. The creativity was almost palpable as everyone started to reflect on their experiences.

Day 2 was the turn of the participating artist to share their working practice and their ideas. Encouraged by Tania's comment and support it was an inspiring and revealing process.

We are now looking forward to the review day on July 8<sup>th</sup>, the artists have been in contact with ARTworks in Teesdale and with each other. Tania has given feedback to each artist, both about their work and ideas and suggested relevant information or practice.

### Review Day 8<sup>th</sup> July

The morning was a chance for the artists to feed back their ideas. Some were very developed others still examining their responses. We discussed how the project could be brought to a conclusion and how all these very different ideas can be put together and exhibited in a coherent way.

Viv Vallack from the Bowes Museum attended as did Marie Neeson and Claire Pounder from mima. Viv suggested that the pieces be placed within the museum's collection, a sort of God's Bridge walk through the museum. This was greeted with enthusiasm by the artists and the Bowes has a track record of curating exhibitions in

this way. There was discussion regarding a brochure/ exhibition catalogue funding allowing.

After lunch each artist was interviewed by Jill (the photographer) so we have a record of a mid-point in a progressing project, and had a one-to-one session with Tania to discuss their ideas.

We agreed a timetable for each artist to submit their draft proposal for their piece for the exhibition which Tania will respond to, once agreed the final exhibition proposal will be collated.

Sadly Viv left The Bowes at the end of October. The exhibition arrangements are progressing: Jon Old, the conservation officer has taken over the curation of the exhibition, and we are in discussion with a designer for a brochure/leaflet and a colour catalogue for the ARTSCAPES exhibition. (summary of the artists proposals included in the Directors papers)

Additional funding from HoT secured the legacy of a full colour catalogue for the ARTSCAPES projects and a brochure detailing **godsbridgeX-the exhibition** at The Bowes Museum. An Events Day and special workshop for Bowes primary school were very successful.

The exhibition and Events Day promoted critical debate and discussion on contemporary art, landscape and place. Please see additional evaluation in Go'ds Bridge Artist's Mentoring Report.

Further information and images can be found on the website <http://www.artworksinteesdale.org/god-s-bridge-artist-project/> where the brochure can be downloaded and on Facebook at; <http://www.facebook.com/ARTworksInTeesdale>



God's Bridge Project has now been completed  
See additional evaluation in Report at end

## **6.Landscape and Industry- weaving and carpets in Barnard Castle: Completed**

32 Primary School Children Participants

2 teachers

1 teaching assistant

1 Curator Volunteer

This project was designed to address the urban landscape of the Heart of Teesdale. Looking at the weaving industry of the town Becky Sunter, a weaving artist worked with Year 4s at Green Lanes Primary School in Barnard Castle. The children wove individual pieces and then worked jointly on some larger table looms. Becky talked about the history of the weaving industry in the town, its connection with the wool trade and sheep farming as well as the geography of the town and the necessity of the constant supply of water for driving machines and dyeing the wool.

A trip to the Bowes Museum, was an integral part of the project. Joanna Hashagan curator of textiles explained to the children the history of the industry and it's connection with their town. The children were enthralled by seeing the full sized loom and identified with those children who had worked the machinery as well as recognising some of the buildings in the town, which had housed looms. The decimation of the industry, hastened by the cholera epidemics in the 1850s also gave the visit a particular resonance.

Joanna also showed the children the "glass box" in the textile gallery where a variety of woven cloth was felt by the children. The project was extremely successful.

Becky is joining the woven pieces in the traditional way and they will be displayed at the ARTSCAPES exhibition.

Jill took some photos of the children during the workshop.

Please look on website for photos.



**7.Synesthesia: Completed**  
5 participants  
5 volunteers/carers  
2 volunteer Teesdale Radio

Anne Mason delivered this project to young adults with learning difficulties in June /July 2013. A field trip to a Teesdale moorland was organised. The participants listened to a diverse range of birdsong on the moor: including curlew, red shank, oyster catcher, and plovers while making sketches using colours and marks to interpret the sounds in a visual medium. Anne then worked with the same group over 3 weeks using different mediums: acrylics, collage and printmaking to develop their sketches.

Participants came from Craigmore House, a residential facility in Barnard Castle for adults with learning difficulties.

Teesdale Radio supported this project with sound equipment and video to record the birdsong which could then be played back during the workshop activities.

The project has been documented by photographer Jill Cole..

Some brilliant photos, and portraits have been produced. Judy to check with Craigmore that it is Ok to display these on website/facebook.



For more images go to:  
<http://www.artworksinteesdale.org/artscapes/>  
and download the catalogue or view images

# God's Bridge Artist Mentoring Project Report

The project has been an unqualified success.

Tania Kovats has mentored 10 professional artists who have produced work in response to God's Bridge, a natural limestone formation spanning the River Greta in rural Teesdale. An exhibition of the 10 works has been installed in The Bowes Museum in Barnard Castle: godsbridgeX-the exhibition.

**Stage 1:** Tania Kovats engaged in the project and over 90 applications from artists all over the world were received. A selection panel including the curator of exhibitions at The Bowes Museum and the Director of mima, helped select the final 10 participating artists.

Selection Criteria:/(Scoring system)

- quality of artists practice 3 images/examples were asked for (3)
- how and why they would benefit from this (5)
- professional practice and experience (1)
- living and/or working in Teesdale/NorthEast (1)

Also a sense of engagement in the spirit of the project.

We looked for evidence of:

- willingness to engage in developing their practice
- ability to engage in peer review, reflection and sharing skills
- interest in, engagement with lead artist
- awareness of contemporary visual art thinking and practice

**Stage 2:** A 2-day intensive series of workshop, discussions, presentations (including one from geologist Dr Trevor Morse) and a field trip to God's Bridge created a strong group dynamic as a starting point for the project.

Tania Kovats gave feedback on all the artists work and practice. The willingness and openness of all the artists involved in sharing their practice and ideas proved a real strength at this stage and continued to inform the work throughout the year.

**Stage 3:** A review day after 3 months provided an opportunity for the artists to share their ideas and responses so far, to meet up again and receive feedback and comments from Tania, and to discuss any challenges. Video footage was taken of each artist commenting on their work and project at this halfway stage. There was also a discussion on how to finalise the project. Both mima and The Bowes Museum were represented. It was agreed that the artists would present a draft proposal for feedback by Tania initially, and then would present a final proposal for a piece that could be exhibited.

This provided the artists with a clear framework for planning and creating their work. The artists had to consider how best to present their pieces within The Museum's own collection. For some this was the first time they had to contextualise their work in terms of the very specific constraints of a venue and spaces available within it.

#### **Stage 4:**

- Working closely with The Museum's press and publicity department we achieved the following media coverage:
- article/story BBC News Online
- articles in local press
- articles in regional press
- listings in national and regional press
- online press listings
- twitter and Facebook presence
- strong poster campaign
- High quality brochure professionally designed and printed with images of work and the artists involved distributed to key regional outlets and available as downloadable PDF online
- video documenting the process and featuring interviews with Tania and individual artists, available to be viewed online and screened at mima, The Bowes Museum and regional arts venues.
- ARTworks in Teesdale's managers and the individual artists collaborated closely with curators at The Bowes Museum to ensure effective installation and display of the artworks. The final exhibition led visitors on a journey around The Bowes own collection to find these contemporary landscape inspired artworks. The professionally designed brochure catalogued the pieces and served as a map to guide audiences around the exhibition.

#### **Stage 5:**

An Events Day for the exhibition was held on Saturday April 12th. Tania spoke of her role as mentor and led an invited audience of around the exhibition. Invitations had gone to leading contemporary art figures in the North East, and supporters of the project. The artists stood before their artworks to explain their process and practice and their involvement in the God's Bridge Artists' Mentoring Project.

In the afternoon Tania Kovats gave a talk to 50+ people who had responded to the advertised event.

#### **Evaluation**

The 10 participating artists were invited to complete a monitoring and evaluation form. Some quotes on the effect the project has had on them as artists, and their overall feelings about the project are below.

#### **Robyn LeRoy-Evans:**

"The God's Bridge project has urged me to take risks and put myself out of my comfort zone."

"I think the best thing about it has been meeting and working with the other artists"

"In years to come, I know that this project will signify a momentous time for me as a professional artist. It has opened my eyes in so many ways: I feel I have gained better knowledge and understanding of my own artistic practice, my abilities, and my personal expectations of myself and others. The experience of working with other artists, an organisation and an institution has been both challenging and

rewarding."

**Suzanne Williams:**

"I hope this will be a model of practice that can be repeated at other landscape locations"

Lesley Hicks:

"..this has been an exciting and invigorating project to work on, well structured and thought through."

Bryony Purvis:

"I am incredibly indebted to the project and feel that it is a model of artist development that should be heavily invested into in the future."

" The project has given me a great deal of confidence in taking on new exhibition challenges."

**Ewan Allinson:**

"I think Artworks in Teesdale's handling of this innovative project has been great throughout and I congratulate them on conceiving of the project in the way they did. It is to be hoped that other landscape partnerships become aware of the model developed and apply it elsewhere."

"This project has proved to be a milestone in the development of my own practice as a sculptor and I am grateful to everyone involved for being so supportive a family."

**Charli Clark:**

"The experience was an eye-opener into a new form of making work .....It changed my usual method of working which normally involves me performing within the work."

"participating in this project has been very fruitful..."

**Gillian Tallentire**

"I think the thought that Artworks had put into this project was first class. The concept of our GodsbridgeX project was amazing and bringing Tania's enthusiasm and experience into this was an excellent coup."

"I feel richer for this experience. Not just for the new friendships that I have made, but for giving me the chance to take part in something that I feel has opened up new horizons for me."

**Henna Asikainen:**

"I treasure many of memories brought by this project."

"I found it very beneficial to have a chance to talk and present one's work in a supportive and safe environment."

**Hannah Leighton-Boyce:**

"A really interesting experience which has opened up my practice to new processes and methods of working and sharing with a great group of artists and project organisers. The people and project has undoubtedly had an impact on my self and work, which I am sure, will impact future opportunities and collaborations."

**Steve Messam:**

"Researching and building the work has really opened me up to working with sound in a way which feels like a continuation of my practice. I've subsequently worked with sound on other landscape projects, which I probably wouldn't have considered before this project."

"Overall, I've enjoyed the experience. I've particularly enjoyed meeting other artists and seeing the variety of different working practices and processes responding to the same subject matter."

"I've really enjoyed the dialogue with all the other artists as part of that process, along with the challenge of working indoors and the steering from Tania. "

"I've been particularly impressed with how everyone has stepped up to the challenge and pushed themselves to deliver final pieces which are beyond what I imagined."

**Tania Kovats:**

"My work has landscape at its centre and my most recent artworks consider water in the landscape as a connective element. Coming to God's Bridge with a group of artists to explore a particular place and engage in conversations that opened up how we make art generated a very rare connection, as these creative processes and reflections more often happen in isolation. We made our own bridges between this diverse group of individuals that I think were rich and generative."

"I think you generated something very special with this project that will have impact on that group of artists for some time to come."

**2 Exhibitions****ARTSCAPES**

Venue: Witham Hall

04/04/2014 -02/05/2014

Numbers Attending : 500

**godsbridgeX-the exhibition**

Venue; The Bowes Museum

05/04/2014 – 06/07/2014

Numbers Attending : 20,000 (estimate based on 2013 Trustees Report visitor numbers)

**Who Benefitted from Activity**

12 Artists

12 Participants

20,500 (Audience for exhibition)

1,000 (Audience: broadcast, online, writing)

Total: 21,524

**Activity: School Workshop**

Jill Cole held an additional workshop for Bowes Primary School children, focusing on godsbridgeX-the exhibition, at The Bowes Museum on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June at The Bowes Museum. The children came from Bowes village and were familiar with God's Bridge. They were asked how they would create an artwork about it, as the artists had done. They were shown the exhibition and discussed why the artists had decided to make the pieces on display. They were then asked to make additional responses.

10 Primary school children

1 teacher

1 education assistant

