

Access and SEN Programme

Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation Annual Report

April 2018 - March 2019

Over the past twelve months the Wallace Collection's Access and SEN Programme has continued to flourish. We have expanded familiar and successful sessions and tours as well as added new and experimental elements to our programme. Of course we also continue to support colleagues in other cultural organisations to implement and improve their offer of accessible events and activities.



From April 2018 - March 2019 we hosted a total of 48 adult events reaching 836 adults, almost double last year's amount, and ran 19 SEN school workshops, reaching 622 pupils and teachers.

Events for D/deaf and hard of hearing visitors

This year we have held a total of 24 talks, events, lectures and workshops which have engaged 242 of our D/deaf and hard of hearing visitors (131 last year). The Wallace is able

support a wide range of needs through our range of events on the access programme and this is reflected in our feedback from participants:

"You can't make it better. It's superb for certain range of people with hearing loss and their communication needs."

Deaf-led BSL Talks, Tours and Art classes

This year we ran 4 *Deaf Visions* events. These are Deaf-led and combine a talk/tour with a practical, creative activity there by giving visitors a number of different routes to engagement with the collection. Activities focus on both the permanent collection as well as temporary exhibitions and as such have ranged from a focus on the artist Jean-Antoine Watteau followed by a life-drawing session with Deaf artist John Pearson to a tour of the exhibition *Henry Moore: The Helmet Heads* followed by a sculpture workshop with Deaf ceramicist Ruby Sharp.



We have also run 4 Deaf-led BSL talks this year, two of which we given by a young Deaf person.

"Really appreciate all the information, encouragement and support. Thank you for organising an art group for deaf people with signing. Not sure who funds this but very grateful as I cannot learn in same way at a hearing art group. Practising at home and picking up ideas and skills in this group. Many thanks."

"The tour was well led once again, the workshop enabled me to try something new. All the experience was good, good interaction with deaf and hearing people."

Deaf-led BSL Teen Tour

This year we worked with a young Deaf person, Jovita Bodamer-MacGregor, to develop and deliver a very personal tour on the Wallace Collection. Jovita is 14 and expressed an interest in the Teen Tour young people's programme. We were delighted to be able to support her and her communication needs.

Over five weeks Jovita worked with an author and a BSL interpreter to create, research and practice her own tour for the public. The tour took place on a Saturday in June and was attended by 16 both d/Deaf and hearing visitors. The tour was such a wonderful success

that Jovita repeated her tour in November to celebrate our exhibition *Sir Richard Wallace: The Collector*. Her achievement has also been highlighted in an interview for the National Deaf Children's Society family newsletter and website.

"I applied, and they asked me if I wanted an interpreter, which was amazing – it was the first time someone had asked that! I was the first Deaf young person to be presenting." – Jovita, BSL guide



Jovita during her talk

BSL interpreted events

As part of our commitment to make more of our public programme accessible to our d/Deaf visitors this year we have had a BSL interpreter for talks at large events such as our Diwali-themed Morgan Stanley Friday Late: *A Festival of Lights*. Many of the visitors to the event had never been to the Wallace before and have since attended other activities on the access programme.

Right: A BSL interpreted talk at Morgan Stanley Friday Late: *A Festival of Lights*, 9 November 2018



Sir Richard Wallace: The Collector Exhibition Event for lipreaders

In August we hosted an event for lipreaders with Wallace guide Andrew Shingleton. Andrew was supported by a lipspeaker, Lynne Dubin, and a lipspeaker with additional sign, Sarah Mackay. The event was very popular with 15 people attending. The afternoon began with a talk in our Meeting Room which then continued in to the exhibition after which people were free to explore at their own pace.

Feedback from participants complimented the clear preparation that had gone in to the event as well as the range of access needs supported.

"Several of us have been to many access events at the Wallace Collection but this gave us such insight into the personality and way of life behind Richard Wallace. The exhibition itself was the icing on the cake!"

"Lipreading takes a lot of skill and is very tiring for lipreaders. They need time to absorb the information gained and store in their long term memory. So to be able to go back and look again at each piece at their own pace is particularly useful for them...to have the information beforehand and work to Andrew's beautifully paced presentation and clear diction made our work a pleasure" - feedback from lipspeaker.

Such is the success we have been approached by other lipreading groups to run events. The deaf awareness provided by the Wallace programme is very much appreciated.



'StageText' supported talks, tours and lectures on the public programme

We continue to work with the charity Stagetext, who have enabled us to make a proportion of our public programme's talks and lectures accessible to deaf and hard of hearing visitors through live subtitling. A speech-to-text-reporter transcribes the speech into live subtitles, which can then be seen either on a tablet or on the lecture screen in the lecture theatre.

Owing to a rise in the cost of Stagetext support this year we have ran 11 events (12 last year). This has in turn allowed us to refocus our resources in deciding which events we have subtitled for visitors. This year we have live-subtitled the Director's Annual Lecture, the Curator's Introduction to the exhibition *Henry Moore: The Helmet Heads* as well as 9 tablet tours in the galleries and exhibitions.

In total 378 visitors attended these events (up from 323 last year) with up to a quarter coming from the deaf and hard of hearing community.

We continue to receive positive feedback from participants, particularly from older adults who have become deaf later in life and are unable to use BSL

"Interesting talk today. I'll look at the animal pictures in a new light!"



Project with Ealing Deaf and Hard of Hearing Women's Group

In June this year we ran a short project with a group of women focusing on plants, nature and wellbeing. Taking inspiration from the Wallace Collection's beautiful Dutch still life paintings artist Alex Hirtzel ran an outreach session at the Ealing Centre for Independent Living.

This was followed by a collage workshop at the Wallace led by illustrator Luisa Rivera. Both sessions focused on botanical drawing, exploring the healing properties of plants as



well as discussions around the importance of art and the natural environment for our health and wellbeing.

The final session took place at Kew Gardens in partnership with Justine Parker, Discover and Access Coordinator at Kew. One of the outcomes for the project was to encourage the group to be more independent and confident in travelling across London. Artist Alex Hirtzel then led the session around Kew, searching for plants seen in Wallace paintings and adding further to the art works produced over previous weeks.

“Thank you so much for the great opportunities you both have given us, especially most recently at Kew Gardens.

The joy of exploring deeper into the plant life at Kew Gardens and with previous sessions at the Wallace Collection and ECIL has been a wonderful experience for all who participated. I know that we won't look at a flower the same way, and I think we'll try and buy some loupes as a gift for each member.” –Group leader.

Events for blind and partially sighted visitors

Over the course of the year we ran 10 events for blind and partially sighted visitors, attended by 133 adults and 3 children, an average of 11 visitors per month.

Sensations

Our Sensations sessions take the form of a themed audio-described tour of the Museum, followed by a creative element. Some of the talks that have proven popular this past year included:

- *Gardens, Gaiety and the Galante*- exploring the ‘Fête Galante’ paintings by Watteau and his contemporaries.
- *Sir Richard Wallace: The Collector* – including an introduction from exhibition curator, Suzanne Higgott.

- *A very Victorian Christmas* - spread some goodwill early by learning more about the objects and paintings Richard Wallace loaned to the Bethnal Green Museum in 1842 and making some Victorian tree decorations to take home.
- *Heartbreak, Misery and Regret!* - A special anti-Valentines celebration looking at some of the less romantic stories at the Wallace Collection.
- *Journey to the East* - discovering the rich textures, heady scents and bejewelled splendour of the Wallace oriental galleries.



For our Journey to the East session we partnered with scent artist John Foley and designer Sarah Krauss for a special sensory workshop. John created bespoke smells for the paintings and objects audio-described in the session and Sarah sourced some spectacular handling objects to bring the galleries to life. The group were then able to create their own scents in a workshop.

"I thought the Scent workshop one of the very best and most original, thank you for arranging this." - participant



Describe and Draw

Describe and Draw is our innovative programme of life-drawing classes for blind and partially sighted audience. This year we ran 4 classes, engaging 32 participants. We continue to push boundaries, working with new teaching artists Nikki Gardham and Marc Woodhead, and adapting content and format in response to feedback.

Participant feedback:

"I loved expressing myself again and having a really amazing opportunity to be creative. It meant a lot to me and served as a springboard to do more creative activities independently outside the session"

"It was great that the environment and tone were inclusive in a really natural way. It was great that potential issues had been thought about but weren't laboured on the day"

Having held 7 workshops since our pilot in 2017 we were asked to share our learning and experience with sector colleagues embarking on similar programming at the Royal Academy and the Royal Collection as well as with *Engage* members. *Engage* is the lead advocacy and training network for gallery education. We contributed an article to a 'Sharing Practice' focusing on removing barriers to access. We sent you the article earlier this year, but others may also find it interesting to read:

<https://www.engage.org/DescribeandDraw.aspx>

Family Day in partnership with RNIB and Wigmore Hall

This year the group took inspiration from the story of Daphne and Apollo. Families worked with artist Marc Woodhead, composer Jackie Walduck as well as a guitarist, flautist and an accordion player. Instruments were taken up to the galleries and musicians from Wigmore Hall supported the children in creating a piece of live music with several songs and actions. The children and their families then performed their piece in Wigmore Hall with props and settings they had made together throughout the day.



"Thank you so much for such an amazing day on Saturday. We thoroughly enjoyed it. xxx was only sad about one thing - that he will soon be 13 and be too old to attend! Perhaps as a helper one day!"

"It was a true joy to see you and Marc and Sarah again. And to meet Jackie, Dan, Tim and Íñigo (musicians). We are truly grateful to you all and to the venues for hosting such a brilliant event. We are already looking forward to your next event, whenever that may be!" -feedback from parents.

Events for visitors with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

May 2018 saw the celebratory culmination of the 2nd West London Inclusive Arts Festival, a partnership between the Wallace Collection, the Lyric Theatre, the English National Opera and four schools for children with special educational needs (SEN) located in west London; QEII Jubilee School, College Park School, St. Ann's School and Cambridge School.

From January 2018 the children had been studying the stories of Greek heroes, such as Perseus and Herakles, during a set of 12 classes, using many of the paintings and objects from the Wallace Collection as their starting point. These classes took place at the Wallace and at their schools. These resulted in three performances a day of A Hero's Quest - A Sensory Story which took place at QEII School. This sensory story was a fully

immersive theatrical performance designed for students with PLD (profound learning difficulties) and PMLD (profound and multiple learning difficulties). Different classrooms and corridors throughout the school were transformed into different 'sets' where the students met characters and could explore the story through touch, smell, sound and creative play. For example, the school's main hall became an ocean scene where Poseidon ruled over a shipwreck. Students were sprayed with water, encouraged to collect fish and listened to thunder and the sounds of the waves. SEN schools and schools with SEN units from throughout west London travelled to QEII to take part in the sensory story.

In addition, on 17 and 18 May 2018 A Hero's Quest - A Dramatic Performance took place at the Lyric Theatre in Hammersmith. The production was written and directed by The@trical and was performed by students from College Park, QEII Jubilee School and Cambridge School. The many paintings and objects featuring Greek Heroes on display at the Wallace Collection were once again the stimulus for the performance, with input from Th@trical, the ENO and most importantly the teachers and students from each of the schools. Each time the audience was packed with students, families, friends and well-wishers. The talent and creativity on show was truly moving and all schools and partners involved in the project gained a huge amount from the experience.

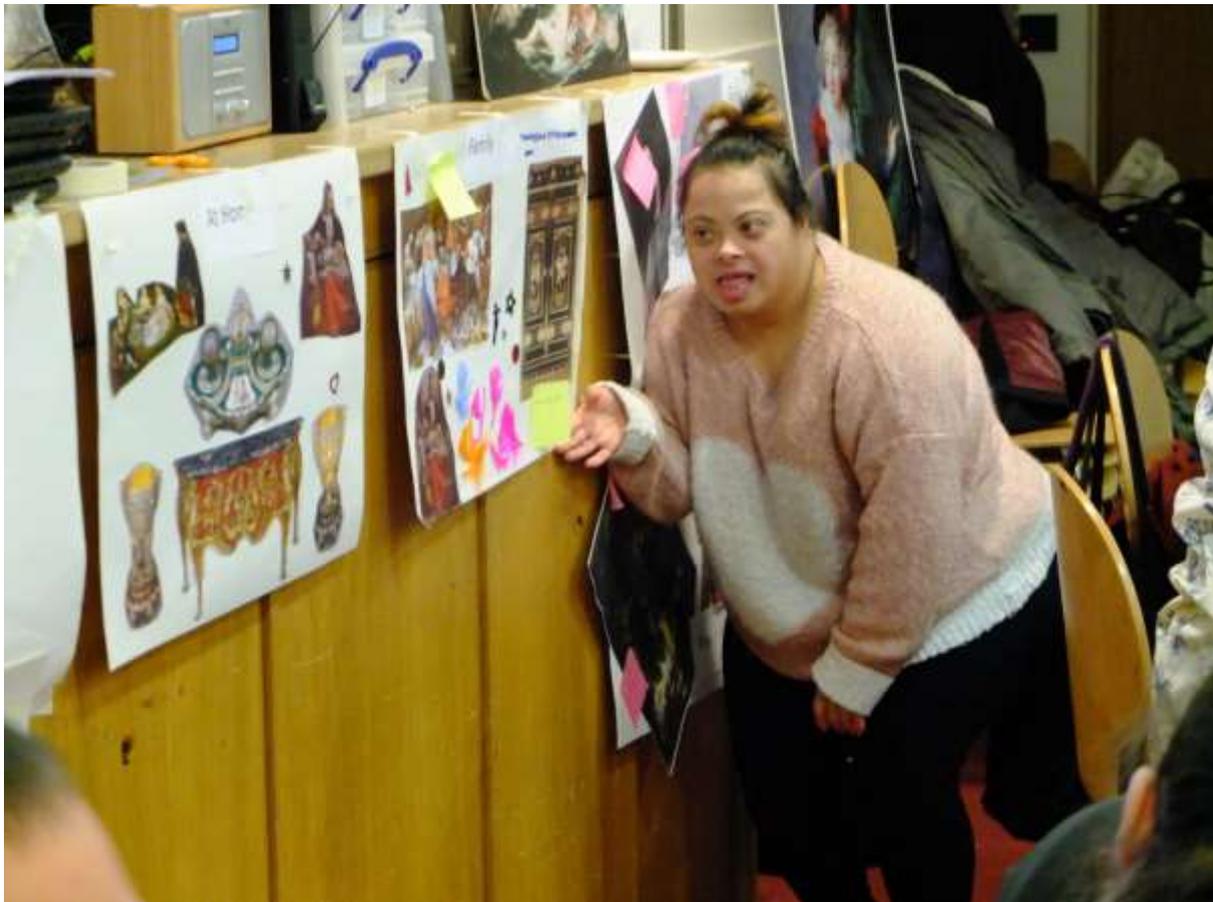
The festival in what can be described as in its infancy in year two continues to demonstrate that the need remains high. This is clearly articulated by the number of local SEND Schools and institutions that accessed the festival. There was a significant increase from the four initial partner Schools to 9 SEND schools either attending the sensory stories and, or the performance at The Lyric and one adult provision for people with SEND. The reach of the festival is now at 11 SEND schools and 1 adult provision, a clear indicator of its continued need. In year 3, we also have two of these schools joining us formally within the partnership; Springhallow and Queensmill schools. In December 2018, representatives of all of the participating partners met at the Wallace Collection to discuss and explore the theme for Year 3. After lengthy discussions and visits to the galleries, the group decided to focus on our magnificent collection of arms and armour. This year's festival is called 'U-Knighted' and will look at knights, castles, concepts of chivalry and valour and the legends and stories around these (such as St. George and the Dragon, the Knights of the Round Table etc). The first visits by participating schools to the Wallace Collection commenced in March 2019 and will continue until the performance at the Lyric in May 2019. While the majority of the festival is funded by the John Lyons Charity, the Wallace Collection's contribution would not have been possible without the support of The Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation.

The impact of the festival continues to reach beyond its remit. Not only has the participation and its reach increased there have been two other significant developments; the festival has directly led to the Cultural Inclusion Manifesto which has a national profile and a launch in parliament of its first report in January 2019. There have also been developments within the measures of its impact directly on the young people it engages. The Wallace Collection was one of the first signatories of the Manifesto.

A growing body of knowledge is being generated on the direct impact of creative arts on young people with a diagnosis of autism through research conducted by the research lead in one of the partner schools and shared within other networks, specifically PLASN (Pan London Autism Schools Network). The festival continues to be a vehicle that is driving significant change within the field of arts, culture and inclusion.

Adult SEN

This year we ran 6 workshops for adult SEN groups, both in the museum and out in the community at day centres, reaching a total of 78 participants. We have continued to work with groups with high support needs taking out sensory, tactile objects and delivering short sessions either to small groups or one-to-one.



A note on recent staff changes and Thank you

At the end of March 2019 Sarah Fairbairn, who has been running the Access Programme at the Wallace Collection with so much enthusiasm and result for the past 2.5 years, left us to take up an exciting new post at Historic Royal Palaces. Her replacement, Amy Chang, started in post on 1 April 2019 and is keen to build on Sarah's success and shepherd the programme into the future.

Amy has started her new position heading a thriving and ever growing Access and SEN Programme that has really achieved its current size and quality due to the support from

the Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation. We cannot thank you enough for this. As you know, your continued and generous support means that we can use all our precious time developing and executing the sessions and courses, without worrying about the continued existence of everything we do.

