



## The Wallace Collection Access Programme Annual Report, April 2019 - March 2020

Although this report is submitted whilst the Wallace Collection is currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are pleased to report that overall this has been another successful year for the Access Events programme at the Wallace Collection. We have continued to run our popular regular programmes, inspiring many repeat visits, whilst also diversifying our offer to engage new audiences.

From April 2019 - March 2020 we scheduled a total of 42 events for adults, young people and families, reaching 436 adults and 42 children/young people. This year we ran nine SEN school workshops, reaching 476 pupils and teachers.

## Events for D/deaf and hard of hearing visitors

This year we have held a total of 19 talks, lectures, workshops and other events which have engaged 243 D/deaf and hard of hearing visitors, including 234 adults and nine children. This matches the engagement of the previous year.

The Wallace can support a wide range of needs through the variety of the events we offer. Our events are frequently Deaf-led, and always have interpretation provision to open them up to a wide variety of visitors.

*"I just wanted to say thank you - I really appreciate these events in BSL and led by a BSL speaker, it's really brilliant."*



Image of BSL lecturer Alan Murray delivering a talk in front of Wallace Collection paintings, with small crowd of visitors

## Deaf-led BSL Talks and Workshops

This year we ran four events on our *Deaf Visions* programme. These are Deaf-led and combine a talk or tour with a practical, creative activity thereby giving visitors several different routes to engagement with our collection.

Activities have ranged from a focus on the works of Rembrandt followed by a life drawing class, to exploring the history of Hertford House and the Wallace archives, from celebrating fashion past and present with the Manolo Blahnik displays, to a tour of the Wallace's most recent exhibition *Forgotten Masters: Indian Painting for the East India Company* with a natural illustration workshop.

We have also run three Deaf-led BSL museum tours this year, on varied topics such as 'Fakes and Forgeries' and 'Nudes in the Wallace Collection'. These tours take place on a Friday evening, creating a social atmosphere in the enjoyment of the museum after hours.

*"Thanks for the enjoyable time at the Wallace today. Never have I enjoyed myself painting before!"*



Image: A round table covered with assorted art materials - water pots, watercolour paints, and paintings of trees in progress

## Events for lipreaders, supported by SSE

We have increased the regularity of our events for lipreaders due to popular demand. We are now running these events for each temporary exhibition. This year we hosted two exhibition talks by Wallace Guide Lecturers. The lecturer was supported on each occasion by a lipspeaker, and a lipspeaker with SSE.

*"What a super event for the Collection! The engagement levels were clear from all attendees, and Andrew [the Lecturer] looked like he thoroughly enjoyed himself too!"*



Image: Three speakers in a dark exhibition space - one lipspeaking, one providing sign language interpretation. A helmet in a case is in the forefront.

We also offer events for external groups, such as a tour for lipreading teachers in May 2019.

*"The Wallace is well-known amongst the hard-of-hearing and deaf community for being easily-accessible - that's a compliment to your policy of providing facilities to all. Well done to you all! It is deeply appreciated that you care to offer these opportunities."*

## Public Programme events supported with closed captions

We continue to work with the fantastic charity Stagertext, who have enabled us to make a proportion of our public programme's talks accessible to deaf and hard of hearing visitors through the provision of live subtitling. A speech-to-text reporter transcribes the speaker's words which are then uploaded onto a hand-held tablet.

We held five events this year, having decreased the number of Stagertext-supported events this year to alternate months, to allow us to allocate resources to alternative events with a different reach. However, we continue to highly value the accessibility that closed captions provide to many visitors, and we hope to increase the number of subtitled events in the future.

*"I really enjoyed the gallery talk on Rubens earlier this month. As I told your colleagues afterwards, the transcription on the tablet was near perfect. And the speaker was very good too!"*

## BSL Family Day

In the school summer holiday, we ran a Deaf-friendly family day. The theme was 'Horrible Helmets'. Families were taken on a tour of the Wallace Collection's armouries, exploring armour from around the world and having the chance to try some on. This was followed by a workshop to create your own helmet. The tour and workshop were Deaf-led and delivered in BSL, with voiceover into spoken English. Although intended for families with D/deaf members, we actually had more hearing families attend as the workshop was drop-in and open to all. This created a really inclusive event, and we would definitely like to do more integrated deaf-friendly family programming in the future.



Image: A child sits on the floor cutting out colourful shapes with the assistance of adults.

## Partnership with community groups

This year we continued to connect with the Ealing Deaf and Hard of Hearing Women's Group. The group visited three times this year.

The first event incorporated a visit to *Henry Moore: The Helmet Heads*, followed by a family-friendly sculpture workshop with Deaf artist Ruby Sharp. Designing the activities to be suitable for children and adults meant the workshop was accessible to the whole group.

The second visit was a tour of the wonderful Manolo Blahnik displays in the permanent galleries. The third event was a visit to *Forgotten Masters: Indian Painting for the East India Company*, followed by a lino-printing workshop.

Focusing on the temporary exhibitions enabled the group to engage in new ways and respond to different artworks.

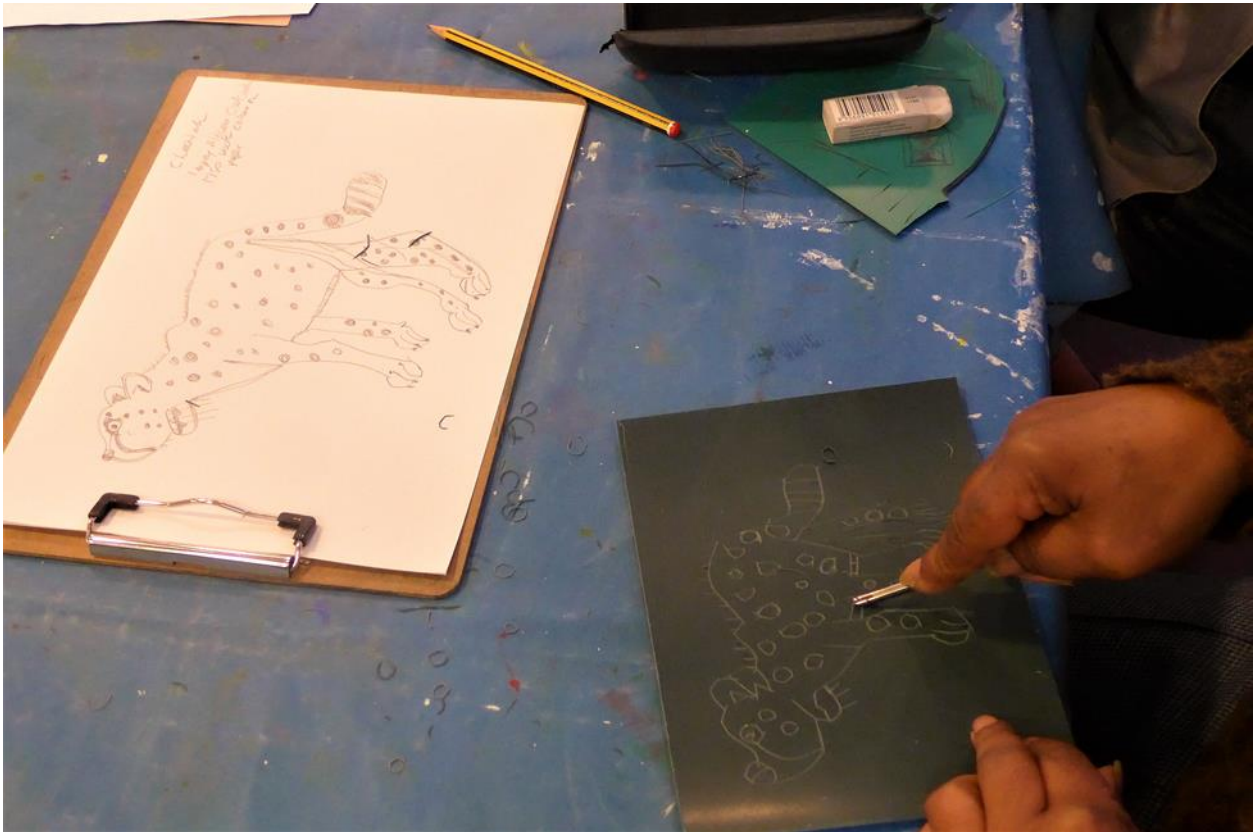


Image: A sketch of a cheetah next to hands cutting into lino with a tool to recreate the image

## BSL interpreted events

As part of our commitment to make more of our public programme accessible to our d/Deaf visitors this year, we had planned to have BSL interpretation at our exhibition-specific Friday Late - supporting a Deaf artist's performance with voiceover, and interpreting a panel discussion and exhibition talk from English into BSL. Unfortunately, this event was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Events for blind and partially sighted visitors

This year, we ran 11 events for blind and partially sighted visitors, attended by 117 adults and 17 children. This matches the engagement of the previous year, but with an increased engagement for children.



Image: A large seated group face a speaker who gestures towards an ornate clock in the Wallace galleries

## Audio-described tours and creative workshops

This year we ran four events on our *Sensations!* programme. These consist of an audio-described tour of the collection with sensory handling, followed by a practical creative activity.



Events this year have included a visit to temporary exhibition *Henry Moore: The Helmet Heads* with armour handling, exploring the Wallace Collection's clocks with the conservation team, and most recently greeting the arrival of spring with Sèvres porcelain, scented flowers, and collaborative poetry.

*"It was a well-run session and very interesting, I got a lot out of it!"*

## Describe and Draw

*Describe and Draw* is our innovative programme of life-drawing classes specially designed for blind and partially sighted visitors. Each class begins with engagement with one painting - an audio-described introduction, and ensuing discussion. During the life-drawing class, the artist and model will respond to the work in question. A wide range of materials are provided, and a relaxed atmosphere created. This year we ran four classes engaging 42 participants (32 last year), continuing to attract new visitors to the Collection.

*"Just love being with the group as it has given a love of drawing. So wonderful, before attending I had never known how to even start a drawing!"*

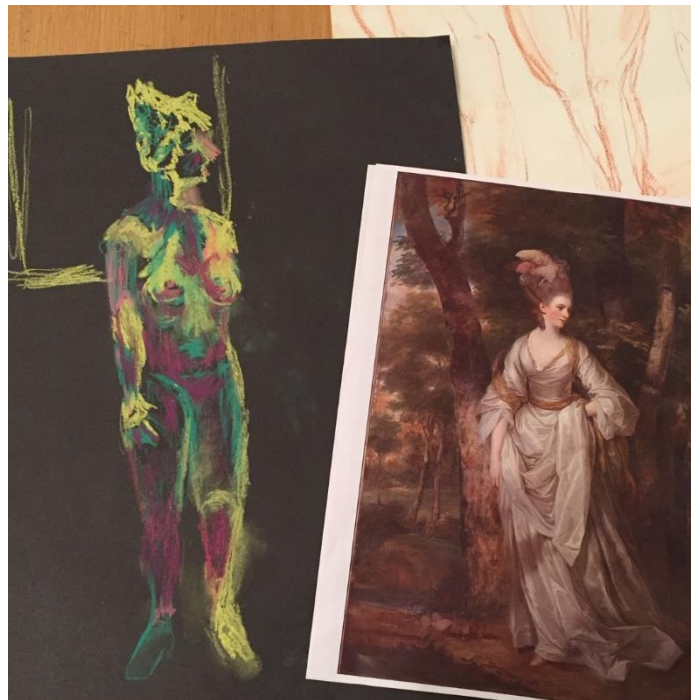


Image: A colourful drawing of a standing nude female figure, next to a printed copy of a full length portrait of a woman by Joshua Reynolds

## Audio-described exhibition tours

Due to the growing popularity of the Wallace's temporary exhibitions programme, we piloted out-of-hours audio described exhibition tours, trialing both early morning and early evening timings. We hope to make this a regular offer to accompany temporary exhibitions.

## Family Day in partnership with the RNIB and Wigmore Hall

This year the group took inspiration from the waterways of Venice. Families worked with artists to explore the Wallace's Venetian views. Instruments were taken in to the gallery 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.



Image: A large painting of Venice in a gold frame is looked by two adults and a child seated on the floor in front

*"My overriding memory of the day is that it was very calm, relaxed, and at the same time full of fun and creativity in imagining a journey through Venice."*

## Events for visitors with Special Educational Needs

This year we welcomed several family and adult groups with SEN to the Wallace, reaching a total of 42 adults and 31 children. This included welcoming two entirely new adult education groups on sensory themed tours.

We have worked with Westminster organisation City Lions, who aim to provide 13-16 year olds with access to cultural content and opportunities in the borough. Through City Lions, we engaged three groups of young people from a local SEN school to explore themes in the Wallace and compose creative responses.

Working in partnership with Open City, we also held two family days as part of *Open House Families*. In June, the Wallace Collection hosted a day of sensory music and art workshops for families of children from three SEN schools, reaching 36 family members in total. In October, we did a second family-friendly morning, working in response to the theme 'A Home for Me' that the children had been working on at school as part of the project *Architecture in Schools*. Open City receives funding from John Lyons for the project, but the Wallace could not offer these valuable contributions without the support of The Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation.

*"We all loved our trip to the museum... we feel so lucky to have been able to see and enjoy this amazing building."*

## West London Inclusive Arts Festival

This was our third year as a cultural partner in the West London Inclusive Arts Festival. At the heart of the festival is a partnership of six special schools: College Park School, QEII Jubilee School, Springhallow School, Cambridge School, St Ann's School, and Queensmill School. There are also cultural partners, and together we aim to give the students rich cultural experiences. The students work on a theme to produce wonderful performances and responses.

This year we explored the theme U - Knighted, looking 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), inspired in part by the Wallace Collection's armouries.

The festival took place over a number of months, and for the Wallace included five gallery visits by schools, three full outreach days at school, and- new for this year - an activity morning for families to join, including a pop up sensory story at the Wallace Collection. The culmination of the festival is a series of Sensory Stories at the schools, and a series of performances at the Lyric Theatre.

While the majority of the festival is funded by the John Lyons Charity, the Wallace Collection's participation would not have been possible without the support of The Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation.

It is a wonderful opportunity for us to welcome many students with multiple needs to engage with the Wallace Collection, working in collaboration with the teachers and parents to ensure high quality experiences. It offers us an opportunity for development as we learn from the students too, to further improve our accessibility. Continuing development is an aim of the festival as it continues to grow and continues to be a vehicle that is driving significant change within the field of arts, culture and inclusion.

The exciting planning meetings for the fourth year of the festival had already begun before pausing in March 2020.



Image: Paper and cardboard castle keep created by children at Springhallow School

Thank you

We would like express how grateful we are for the continued support for our Access programmes at the Wallace Collection. The financial support provided allows us to make all these programmes inclusive and free to access, thus enabling us to create a truly welcoming environment. We have been able to continue to respond to new ideas, pilot new programmes, and share our learning and experiences across the sector.

We wish everyone at the Lord Leonard and Lady Estelle Wolfson Foundation safe and well during this time.



Image: Hertford House surrounded by springtime trees