

# **INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME 2019 REPORT**

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**Supported by the Aall Foundation**

## **Introduction**

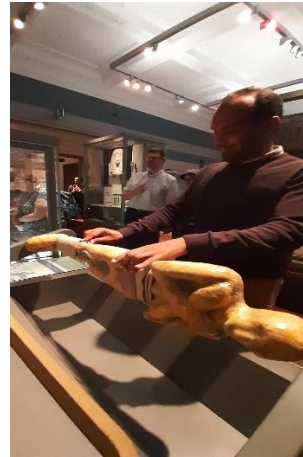
The 2019 International Training programme (ITP) was one of the best things that has happened to me in the museum field. The programme afforded me the opportunity to meet different museum professionals from various countries. A chance that can mostly be experienced at International conferences or symposia for a very short period. This experience was sponsored by the Aall Foundation and their sponsorship helped me explore beyond the British Museum and Glasgow Museums, my UK Partner Museum for ITP 2019.

## **Benefits of ITP**

The training programme was designed in a way that affect one's personality both in their private life and the working field. The programme created a space that boosts confidence, articulation and ambitions.

We had dialogues with the British Museum Director, Hartwig Fischer, and the Deputy Director, Jonathan Williams, one of highlights in which I noticed my confidence and articulation in discussions had changed. I analysed my thoughts more carefully before putting out any information or responses, generating healthy discussions within the many conversations we had with various professionals and during visits to other museums. My sense of observation has become a bit more analytical.

I noticed that there were handling (hands-on) desks, language barriers breakers and ways to involve children in displays.



*Hands-on corner at the Kelvingrove Museum with Yasser*

These are some things that National Museum of Ghana is now developing to include in the opening of our new gallery. In one of our usual morning discussions on the re-opening of the National Museum gallery, I proposed this idea. The idea was well received since it would make the museum more viable for all to visit. The displays in the gallery are mostly designed to suit only the adults and academics but having had this discussion with the Assistant Deputy Director of Museums and the Curatorial team, there will be a change to gradually include persons who were previously left out of the museum. Before being sponsored by the Aall Foundation to be part of ITP 2019, I had started developing and creating puzzle pieces of some National Monuments for both children and adults. I selected four monuments and the new Ghana map for the puzzles. This project allowed me to relate and know the relevance of some sections of the training programme I saw at Kelvin Hall in Glasgow.

The ITP, through various subject sessions, has improved my way of thinking when planning exhibitions. Though I wished to have had a more intensive session in conservation, every session enhanced my thinking ability.

## Implementation and Changes



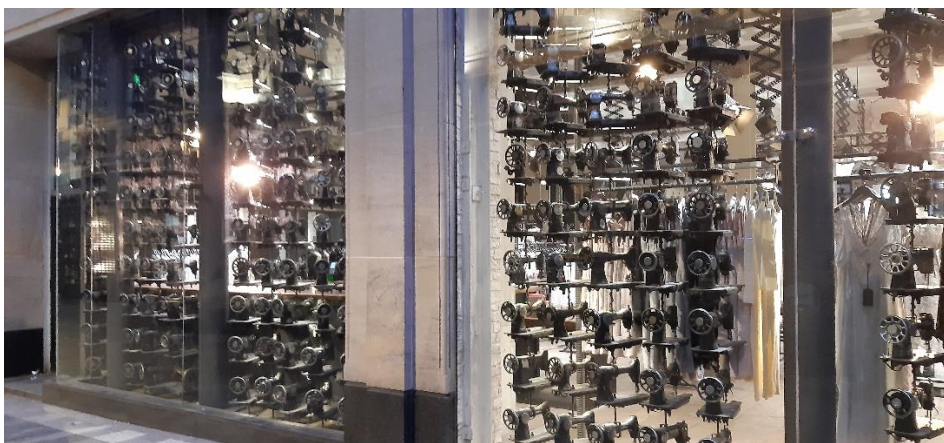
*Open Museum of Charms at Glasgow Museum Resource Centre*

The specialist session for 'Training the trainer' was one area in which I would say, I have picked up a few tricks that I can use to engage managers in our institution very well. I have experienced a situation where ideas conceived and developed by others were not easily accepted, but gradually the curators are introducing our ideas in our meetings and discussions to make concept papers more easily acceptable.

There are many things that can be corrected before the National Gallery is officially opened to the public. The ones I can comfortably influence are the planning stages of the exhibitions, the design and mounting of objects, introducing an 'Open Museum', a handling desk, '10 Must See Objects' within the gallery, an aid for the visually impaired and inviting various departments to participate in exhibition planning. Introducing museum maps can easily help with self-guided tours and this will also help everyone find the way around the museum to find the *10 Must See Objects*. I am currently working on a proposal to initiate the first 'Open Museum' in the department. If successful, many others will be developed and used for different visitors in our space. The challenge I will temporarily face with the 'Open Museum' idea will be funds to purchase materials to put the museum in motion.

The knowledge I shared has made some managers uncomfortable and they see me as a threat to their positions. Though while I feel sharing what I have learnt is good, they are creating virtual barriers. I believe that as I discuss in a presentation what I have seen and

experienced from the various museums, it will clear the virtual barriers. So I will no longer be a threat but rather the solution to some exhibitions, if not all.

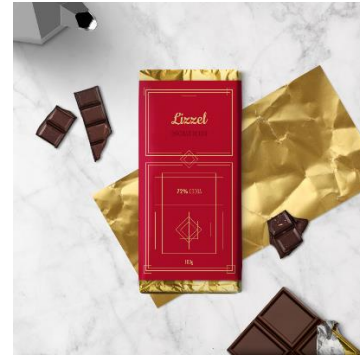


*Different forms of display from the Modern Art Gallery, Edinburgh and a clothing store.*

### **My Personal ITP Benefit**

I have never travelled beyond the continent of Africa before and having such an opportunity was one thing that I will remember for a very long time. Personally, I noticed I have partly missed out on a portion of the world and what can be said about their museums and country. This training programme introduced me to some museums I never even knew existed and had so much to teach about the civilisation of the human race.





***Museum of Brands and my Shell creative product***

One such museum was the Museum of Brands. The collection of the museum explores the history of consumers from the Victorian period to the present. There were some products and companies which exist now but have evolved through the periods. The collection is of posters, toys, children story books, food packaging, confectionary wrappers and anything worth collecting but it also reflects on inventions that made daily life much easier through motor cars, railways, cinema and other gadgets like televisions and washing machines.



***Bike of the years and the first train in Glasgow at Riverside Museum.***

I had the opportunity to also create and design my own product in the Shell interactive room.

Travelling to various places in the shortest possible time was interesting using the Tube. I was surprised how I was able to read the Tube map in London to get the most out of my destinations. Every place I visited made me view things differently; informative engraving on walk ways, presentations of exhibitions and how interactive they can be.



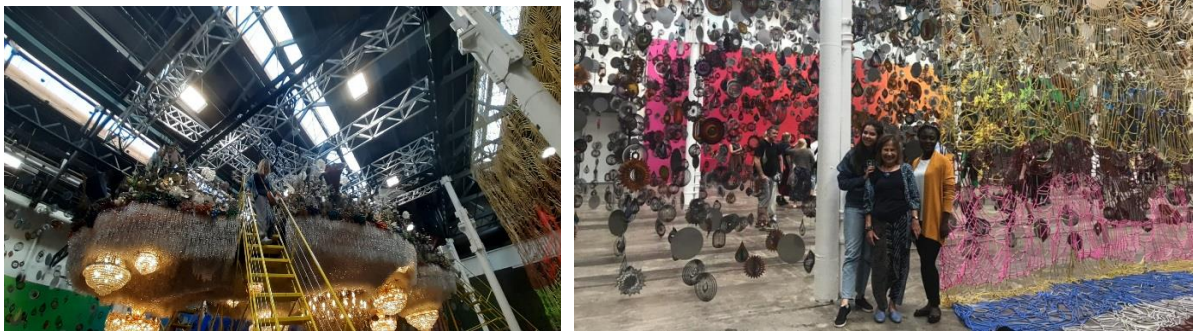
*The summer activity in Kelvingrove*

It unearthed other qualities in me that I had not previously explored. One such quality was related to breaking through language barriers at my UK Partner museum, Glasgow Museums. At Kelvingrove Museum, we were introduced to their summer school programme activities which were a hands-on experience with Clare Gray. The activity for the day was titled 'Magical Masterpieces' which involved children creating their own magical artwork using different drawing and collage techniques. I worked with a number of kids but I took particular interest in two children with different languages; one shy Chinese girl and the other, also a girl, but Scottish. A challenge I felt good about was when the girls understood and completed the activity for the day. They were to look through a frame in front of Henry and Hornel's masterpiece, *The Druids: Bringing in the Mistletoe*, then create their own masterpiece from any portion of the art piece. Their parents trusted me with the children and our activity was a great success. The children and I had fun with this activity.

## **Exhibition**

I have an exhibition planned before the end of the year (2019) and the *Object in Focus* session will help in my final exhibition. This session engaged us to think outside the obvious themes for that project. The proposal for the Object in Focus allowed us to consider what visitors can carry away at the end of the exhibition or what the exhibition can be remembered by. These are some of the ideas I have crafted into my current exhibition. Though the exhibition is an academic requirement, it can also make a statement about the artist who I have done some research on.

I also had the opportunity to visit the Tramway Contemporary Art-Space for an exhibition by Nick Cave titled *UNTIL*. This installation shed a new light on complex issues of gun violence, racial profiling and gender. This was an interesting experience and I was able to have a brief discussion with the artist about his work and the inspiration behind it. The installation transformed the atmosphere of the space into three different kinds which can only be experienced. This was my first ever international contemporary exhibition. The installation was amazing, appeared subtle but in-depth.



*Nick Cave's art installations titled UNTIL at Tramway*

I also learnt how best to select 'gate-way' objects - that they are to be iconic, intrinsically attractive and important objects in the collection. These gate-way objects are sometimes made more attractive by the use of a colourful background for their display. Having a contingency plan for borrowed objects is also very important and this I would employ in my up-coming exhibition since quite a number of the objects will be borrowed to make the statement needed. A well taken note from the making of the *Manga* exhibition is that the displaying of art works should not always be presented in a boring format but that the exhibits should be used to create moods or an illusion of chronology.

### **The Global Network**

The ITP global network is a pool of professionals who are ready to help with ideas shared that will develop programmes that will benefit all. Being part of this global network means that I can share my knowledge in my field with other professionals. This I can do through writing for the blog of the group, for the ITP newsletter and through various exchanges with colleagues for collaborations.



I am very grateful for the sponsorship from the Aall Foundation. They have helped expand my scope and knowledge about museums and to gain a family of international museum professionals and a global museum network.



*Yasser, the best selfie photographer*



*The Family of ITP 2019 from 16 countries*