

# Oral History Collective: OH & Creative Practice Seminar & Workshop

Wednesday 19 September 2018 , 17.30-19.00  
Armstrong Building: Room 2.50

**Helen Foster**

## Telling Tales:

The story of a writer's relationship with an oral history archive

Helen Foster is a PhD student in creative writing at the University of Strathclyde. Her practice-led research explores the use of oral history archives as an inspiration for fiction. Helen will discuss the delights of working with oral histories as a writer, touching on some of the ethical issues that arise from this way of working.

Thursday 20 September 2018 , 10.0-15.45  
Barbara Strang: Room 3.31

## Show & Tell:

Exploring creativity and oral history in practice

- 11.00am Introduction to the themes of the day
- 11.15am **Helix Arts**: a short presentation about co-production with artists, oral historians and diverse communities.  
Followed by table group discussion
- 12.15pm Lunch (BYO)
- 13:00 Project presentations (poetry, film and visual arts):  
**Sarah Hesketh**, 2016: a voice work  
**Simona Paladino**, Giving history back to the people  
**Melanie Stephenson**, Artists' history: rethinking the archives?
- 14:30 Coffee break
- 14:45 Plenary discussion: provokations in response to issues raised;  
plans for ways forward.
- 15:45 Close

# Oral History Collective: OH & Creative Practice Show & Tell

## Abstracts & Speaker Biographies

Helix Arts (Speakers: Catherine Hearne, Chief Executive, and Toby Phips Lloyd, Creative Practice PhD)

### Who we are and what we do

This presentation will showcase examples of our work, including Ben Houston's exhibition, Teenie Harris Photographs: In their own Voice. Visual artist and practice-based PhD candidate Toby Phips Lloyd will outline stories he is gathering with diverse communities and show some of his work. We will also outline our ambitions with our 35-year-old archive and the communities and artists who co-produce the work.

Helix Arts has been connecting talented artists and diverse communities for more than 30 years to co-produce and co-curate great art. Their practice centres on the importance of supporting individuals to find and express their cultural voice. They prioritise working with communities who are heard less often. Groups tend to rely on their own personal stories, experiences and memories (and those of their community) to shape their work.

Sarah Hesketh, University of Roehampton

### 2016: a voice work

This presentation will explore the process of making poetry from oral history.

Sarah Hesketh is a poet whose practice has centred in recent years around socially engaged commissions and the incorporation of interview material into her creative work. Prompted by this development in her work, in January 2017 she began a creative writing PhD at the University of Roehampton, focusing on the use of oral history/transcribed text in poetry. For her PhD project she is conducting a series of interviews about major events in 2016 and then editing and adapting the interviews into 'poetic' texts.

Simona Palladino, Newcastle University

### Giving history back to the people, in their own film

This presentation refers to a recent public engagement project that led to the film-documentary 'Age is Just a Bingo Number'. Featuring an ageing Italian migrant community in Newcastle, the film illustrates oral histories about migration, addressing themes of identity, attachment to place and ageing in the context of migration. Based on an attempt to disseminate research findings through creative practices, I will draw on extracts from the documentary and discuss how the interactions between oral history and creative practices might offer insights into how to tackle contemporary social issues.

Simona Palladino is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Health and Society at Newcastle University. Her research interests lie in ageing and migration and she wishes to explore meanings and experiences of places among a migrant population. In particular Simona is interested in how attachment to places and sense of identity relates to health and well-being in later life among older Italian migrants.

Melanie Stephenson, Newcastle University

### Artists' histories: rethinking the archives

A brief description of our approach to a research subject that looks back to art education over half a century ago, recording the retrospection of former students. I will consider some of the issues and outcomes of the work so far.

Melanie Stephenson is a PhD candidate in Fine Art in the School of Arts and Cultures. She is part of a collaborative project supported and funded by Newcastle University, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (TWAM), which is studying art education and culture in the North East between the 1930s and 1970s and re-evaluating their national and international influence and importance.