

<b>Institution:</b> University of Exeter		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> UoA 27 English Language and Literature		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Transforming the way art and heritage institutions document, preserve and exhibit audiences' engagement with their collections		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 1 January 2000 to 31 July 2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b> Gabriella Giannachi	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b> Professor of Performance and New Media	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b> 2004-
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 1 August 2013 to 31 July 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>For art and heritage museums, the ephemerality of performative and digital artworks raises significant documentation, preservation and exhibition challenges. Gabriella Giannachi's research has produced <b>important changes in the ways in which a number of UK, European and US museums now document, preserve and exhibit audiences' engagement with performative and digital artworks</b> in their collections. By initiating new sector practices and digital platforms developed with major UK museums, particularly the Tate, she <b>promoted novel forms of community engagement with art and heritage</b>; and through community co-curation she <b>established a pioneering volunteer-run sporting heritage museum</b> in Exeter that has inspired and supported a range of new national and international initiatives in the sector.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Museum documentation is a field concerned with the gathering of knowledge about objects in museum collections. Good documentation is crucial for the development of solid and innovative interpretation, exhibition and preservation practices. As objects in art and heritage collections have become more complex and hybrid, often entailing a performative or digital dimension, Giannachi's research has demonstrated the importance of documenting the audience experience of these works. This has prompted museums to document, preserve and exhibit audience experiences alongside their collections. The research has been conducted through a series of substantial AHRC, RCUK, and Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funded projects for which she was principal or co-investigator.</p> <p>Through the AHRC-funded Performing Presence project (2004-9), Giannachi's research into performance taking place in virtual and mixed reality, developed in collaboration with colleagues in Computer Science at University College London and Archaeology at Stanford University, identified the importance of promoting and preserving audience-generated documentations alongside documentations created by museums, artists or academics [3.1].</p> <p>Subsequent research into mixed reality performance, funded by RCUK Horizon Digital Economy Research (2009-2020), and developed with colleagues in Computer Science (University of Nottingham), identified a framework for the creation and documentation of mixed reality experiences, establishing the importance of understanding how audiences experience and document such works. Co-authored papers presented at Computer Human Interaction about this research received best paper awards in 2009 and 2012 and were subsequently expanded on in a monograph, <i>Performing Mixed Reality</i> (2011) [3.2]. The research also demonstrated the importance of audience-generated documentations in the preservation of these works in art and heritage museums [3.3].</p> <p>Giannachi's research into the value of audience-generated documentations, developed with the Tate and Computer Scientists at Nottingham University, was used in the creation of two innovative interactive digital platforms funded by Horizon. <i>ArtMaps</i>, documented on a blog on the Tate website, facilitated the experience and annotation of the Tate collection on a</p>		

mobile device both inside and outside of the museum [3.4]. *The Cartography Project* was a prototype for the documentation of participatory artworks in the Tate collection outlining the value of documenting participatory practices from the different stakeholders' points of view, including artists, producers, designers, participants, etc.

This research was further built on through the AHRC-funded Performance at Tate project (2014-16), which used documentations in the Tate collection to create a digital archive showcasing unpublished documents from the history of performance at the museum from 1960 to 2015 (published on the Tate website). The research also traced how documentations of performance works started to be used for exhibition as well as preservation in a number of US and European art museums [3.5].

Giannachi's research into the use of archival documentation and the development of novel experiences with museum collections led to the creation of a mobile digital platform, Time Trails (later renamed Placeify) developed with Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter, and 1010 Media with funding from AHRC-REACT (2012-13). Placeify allows audiences to experience a collection as a trail that can be used both inside and outside of a museum. Subsequent research into community co-curation led to a significant five-year partnership with Exeter City Football Club (ECFC) [3.6] which, thanks to three HLF grants for which she was principal investigator (2016-7; 2017-8 and 2019-20), resulted in the curation, preservation and exhibition of the Club's collection in a digital archive and the creation of new community-run museum in Exeter.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- 3.1. Giannachi, G. and Kaye, N. (2011) *Performing Presence*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, nominated in Theatre Library Association 44th Annual Book Awards.
- 3.2. Benford, S. and Giannachi, G. (2011) *Performing Mixed Reality*, Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.
- 3.3. Giannachi, G. (2015) 'Documenting the user experience', *Revista de Historia da Arte*, Porto: Instituto de Historia da Arte, 32-46; <http://revistaharte.fcsh.unl.pt/rhaw4/RHAW4.pdf>.
- 3.4. Giannachi, G. with Sinker, R., Stack, J., Locatelli, C., Carletti, L., Price, D., McAuley, D., Coughlan, T., Benford, S. (2016) 'ArtMaps: A Technology for Looking at Tate's Collection', *Leonardo Electronic Almanac*, Leonardo/ International Society for the Arts, Sciences and Technology, 50:1, 20-6; [https://doi.org/10.1162/LEON\\_a\\_01078](https://doi.org/10.1162/LEON_a_01078).
- 3.5. Giannachi, G. and Westerman, J. (eds) (2017) *Histories of Performance Documentation*, London and New York: Routledge.
- 3.6. Giannachi, G. (2016) *Archive Everything*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. Tr. Into Italian by Treccani in 2021.

All items can be supplied on request.

#### Related grants

- CI, AHRC, Performing Presence project (2004-9), £275,000 (PI Nick Kaye, Exeter)
- CI, RCUK Horizon Digital Economy Research (2009-2020), £237,000 to Exeter (PI, Tom Rodden, Nottingham)
- PI, REACT (AHRC), HEIF, 'Time Trails', 2012-13); then Placeify, developed in collaboration with Royal Albert Museum and Art Gallery (RAMM) and 1010 Media, £5,740.
- PI, AHRC, 'Performance at Tate project' (2014-16), £278,873.
- PI, HLF, 'The History of St James Park' (2016-7); 'The ECFC Museum', (2017-8) and 'Celebrating Our Heritage: an ECFC Museum Outreach Programme' (2019-20), £153,599.

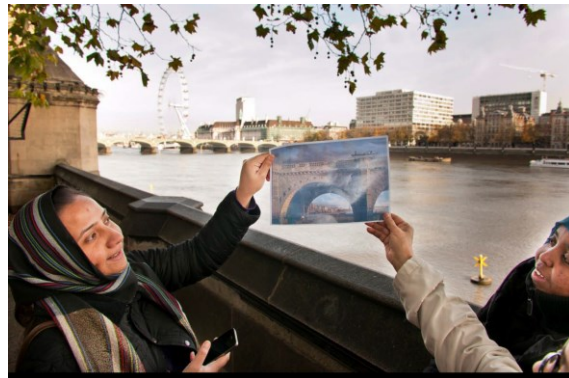
#### 4. Details of the impact

Giannachi's research into the audience experience of performative and digital artworks led to changes in documentation, exhibition and preservation practices for a number of UK and international art and heritage organisations.

Tate's approach to audience engagement was influenced by the *ArtMaps* platform which was used in public engagement exercises on the Tate website and was included in the *Ruin Lust* and *Late Turner* exhibitions, both at Tate Britain (2014), and at the Museo Tattile Statale Omero in Italy (2014).

John Stack, then Head of Tate Online, explained in the project blog on the Tate website that the research influenced the Tate:

*'The Art Maps project is shaping how we think about the role of the museum as a platform for audience engagement and the issues raised by the project are proving to be fundamental for our work in the years ahead.'* [5.1]



ArtMapping workshop 2014, participants from the Migrants Resource Centre. Westminster. (© Tate)

In a subsequent testimony Stack, now Digital Director, Science Museum Group, noted that: 'The *ArtMaps* project's findings across interface design, user experience and audience participation continue to resonate and shape my work on use of digital to transition the museum experience from passive to interactive.' [5.1]

Giannachi worked with the digital learning team at Tate on *The Cartography Project*, which consisted of a digital platform that was developed to create a documentation tool that piloted a new model of museological documentation practice; it enabled participants in a work (i.e. artists, producers, technologists, audiences) to self-document, and is now available on the Tate website, following iterative testing with artists and the public at Tate Britain (2016), Tate Liverpool and Tate Modern (2017). In a film about the project, Tate Curator for Digital Learning Rebecca Sinker indicated that 'the project is addressing a gap in knowledge' by 'looking at how these practices are thought about and documented by participants themselves and this is what makes this project unique' [5.2].

With respect to the Performance at Tate digital archive, the then Head of Art Historical Research at Tate, Jennifer Mundy, noted that before starting the project the Tate 'didn't really know what [the material in the archives] was or understand its significance' and that the project illustrated how 'the museum sector as a whole' was changed by performance. The research, further developed by her Collaborative Doctoral Award researcher Acatia Finbow and researchers at the Tate, led to changes in documentation practice at the museum through the documentation of the ongoing life of a work within the museum [5.2].

Giannachi's research arguing for the audience documentation of digital artworks has had significant reach. A presentation at an expert workshop at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, led curator Jill Sterrett, then Director of Collections and Conservation, to note that Giannachi's research 'initiated a big change for [the museum] pushing [the museum] to rethink what's possible.' [5.3] Giannachi's research was also presented at UNFOLD, a network of European curators, artists and researchers, at the Stedelijk Museum (2015), and at the new media art museum LIMA in Amsterdam (2016, 2017). The influence of her research upon LIMA's Director, Gaby Wijers, a leading authority in the field of media documentation, led to the commission of new creative works that use artist- and audience-generated documentations to remediate artworks for the museum [5.4].

Research into the creation of digital platforms to disseminate collections among remote audiences led to the development of the Time Trails (Placeify) platform. This was innovative

in allowing museums to place their collection digitally on a map and engage audiences with heritage outside of the physical museum. The platform impacted the heritage sector by being adopted by a significant number of regional museums: RAMM, Exeter Civic Society, Topsham Museum, Sidmouth Museum, Tiverton Museum, Newton Abbott Museum, Barnstaple Museum, Royal Cornwall Museum, Mevagissey Museum, The Museum of Witchcraft, Wheal Martyn, Padstow Museum, Bodmin Museum, Fairfield House, Devon Garden Trust, St Ives Archive, and Exeter City Football Club Museum. RAMM alone has 16 trails on its website. More recently, Placeify was utilised by organisations and individuals in the UK to create Park Trails, Local History Trails and children's treasure hunts. [5.5]

Giannachi's research into using documentation to build a sense of community, presence and belonging was rewarded by three consecutive grants from the HLF. These funded her to collaborate with the fan-owned ECFC and her Collaborative Doctoral Award researcher Will Barrett: they worked with volunteers to develop a framework for the documentation, preservation and exhibition of a substantial body of tangible and intangible sporting heritage. This was used to develop sporting memory workshops, wellbeing sessions, stadium tours, eleven permanent exhibitions, five films, and finally to create from scratch the museum and its physical and digital collections. The ECFC Museum (currently working towards Arts Council England accreditation), is now part of the Devon Museums Group.



*The Grecian Archive* (2015-), the digital archive hosting the club's digital collection, has been co-curated by over 150 volunteers and currently contains over 10,000 digital files. Content has been looked at in 144 countries (Google Analytics 2020), with an average of 57,955 new users generating 601,102-page views (May 2015 - June 2020), peaking during the COVID19 pandemic. It was also used for filming an episode of the TV show *Bargain Hunt* at St James Park (aired in April 2018 and June 2020). A film documenting the creation of the museum, featuring interviews with Giannachi and Barrett, was produced as an example of best practice by HLF engagement manager Tim Bland [5.6].

The co-curation of sporting heritage has had beneficial effects for a range of communities, who have felt valued by being able to contribute their memories, and on some occasions their collections, to the museum. Former Club and Supporters Trust Directors Paul Farley and Martin Weiler noted respectively that:

*'this project has changed the way everyone in the Club thinks about our history and engages with it'. [5.7]*

*'[the project] has been "transformational" in the Club's approach to our stated aim to conserve and share the history of the Club'. [5.7]*

Tim Bland praised the three projects' innovative forms of community engagement and commented that the 'stadium wide approach to heritage means that match days are transformed into intergenerational heritage engagement sessions and the gentle curation, as opposed to forcing a master narrative upon visitors, enabled an inclusive and diverse approach to engaging with heritage' [5.7]. Among the fan volunteer groups are the Senior Reds whose Chairman, Phil Bater, noted that the project 'had a really positive impact on our group' helping 'us to value our history and build a stronger sense of belonging to the City community'. [5.8] Phil Broom, a fan at the club for 51 years, commented that the work 'makes you feel like you are a valued part of the community, and that you are helping' [5.9].

The Grecian Archive has had a broader impact on the exhibition and preservation of sporting heritage in that the team have been asked for materials by other organisations and museums, including the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation, Devon Family Historian, The Guardian, Topsham Museum, Historical Kits, BBC Radio Devon, ITV West Country, The

Moorlander, the FIFA Football Museum in Zurich, and the National Football Museum. A number of sports organisations have also sought advice from the ECFC Museum as a model for how to research and curate their history, including Portsmouth Football Club, Yeovil Town Football Club, AFC Wimbledon, Plymouth Argyle, Wycombe Wanderers Supporters Trust, Cambridge United, Charlton Athletics, Dundalk FC, AFC Halifax, and the Jason Roberts Foundation [5.9]. Portsmouth Football Club commented: the project ‘has influenced our thinking and shaped our approach to heritage’ acting as a ‘foundation to inspire our own volunteer base’. For AFC Wimbledon and Yeovil Town FC, learning about our work provided guidance and inspiration for the development of their own sporting heritage projects [5.10].

### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- 5.1. John Stack, ‘ArtMaps and the museum as platform’ (<https://web.archive.org/web/20160514061911/https://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/blogs/art-maps-and-museum-platform>, screenshot available); John Stack, email to Gabriella Giannachi (8/12/2016, screenshot available).
- 5.2. Rebecca Sinker, ‘The Cartography Research Project’, <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/research-centres/tate-research-centre-learningcartography-research-project> (0.50) verified 6/1/2019; Jennifer Mundy, ‘How having IRO status helped Tate build a truly adventurous research programme’, <https://ahrc.ukri.org/research/readwatchlisten/features/how-having-iro-status-helped-tate-build-a-truly-adventurous-research-programme/>, verified 7/1/2019; and Pip Laurenson in Giannachi, G. and Westerman, J. (eds) (2018) *Histories of Performance Documentation*, London and New York, Routledge, p. 33.
- 5.3. Gill Sterrett in Gabriella Giannachi and Jonah Westerman (eds) (2017) *Histories of Performance Documentation*, London and New York: Routledge, p. 40.
- 5.4. Gaby Wijers, email to Gabriella Giannachi (24/3/2016, screenshot available); *Unfold*, manifesto, 8/2/2017 [https://www.li-ma.nl/lima/sites/default/files/UNFOLD\\_Manifest.pdf](https://www.li-ma.nl/lima/sites/default/files/UNFOLD_Manifest.pdf).
- 5.5. Andy Chapman, 1010 Media and Placeify developer, email to Gabriella Giannachi (19/4/2021, screenshot available).
- 5.6. Tim Bland, *Exeter City: Creating the City Museum*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OkarCL4vcQ&feature=youtu.be>, verified 23/4/2020, screenshot available.
- 5.7. Paul Farley in: *Devon Independent* (24/1/2016); Martin Weiler, email to Gabriella Giannachi dated 25/7/2015, screenshot available; Tim Bland, email/letter to Will Barrett, 20/3/2020, screenshot available (see also [5.9]).
- 5.8. Phil Bater, ‘Senior Reds Celebrate Fifth Anniversary’, <https://www.exetercityfc.co.uk/news/2017/january/senior-reds-celebrate-fifth-anniversary/> verified 7/1/2019.
- 5.9. ECFC Museum & Grecian Archive Impact.pdf (Broom, p. 5; other organisations, pp. 25ff).
- 5.10. Colin Farmery, letter 16/1/2019; John Lynch, email to Will Barrett, 1/2/2019, screenshot available; Adrian Hopper, letter to Will Barrett, screenshot available.