**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSPIRATION: INSPIRING CREATIVE RESPONSES TO UNDERSTANDING THE PAST AND SHAPING THE FUTURE**

Organiser(s): Megan Clement (Great Place Wentworth and Elsecar) & John Mabbitt (Wood E&IS UK)

**Session 1**

11.30 - Introduction

11.45 – Talk 1

12.00 – Talk 2

12.15 – Talk 3

12.30 – Talk 4

12.45 – Discussion

13.00 – Close

**Session 2**

14.00 – Introduction

14.10 – Talk 5

14.25 – Talk 6

14.40 – Talk 7

14.55 – Talk 8

15.10 - 15.30 – Discussion

**Talk 1**

**From Find to Mind: how can we transform archaeology into cultural capital**

*Neil Redfern (Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Historic England)*

Synopsis: Archaeology is not a thing; it’s not an outcome –  it is just a process. The material in the ground is not archaeology; it’s not a precious artefact; it is not treasure – it is just stuff. It is the process of archaeology and the thoughts and ideas of archaeologist that transforms this stuff into a cultural product – what product it is transformed into is up to us. We could see what we do as mitigation; as the creation of the archaeological record; as the preservation of the past. Or we can see it as an endless opportunity to create cultural value; to create and share cultural meaning and experience; to share and debate what we think and what we do. This presentation will explore how I use contemporary culture, ancient philosophy and my own personal experiences to communicate and share what I do. It will set out how I hope to inspire people to understand the past, explore their own identity and help them contribute to the stories of their place. It will illustrate how by thinking differently we can develop outputs from our work as archaeologists that have real cultural capital and lasting legacies.

**Talk 2**

**Rethinking the perception of magic and rituals in archaeological contexts and in material culture: A three-fold dialogue between field archaeologists, academics and the public.**

*Debora Moretti*

‘Magic is a perennially fascinating subject’ and as such it holds the imagination of the wider public. In recent times this fascination has taken hold of academia and the advancement in the study of magical practices and the rituals connected to them from antiquity to modern Europe have created historical narratives which engage, entice and inspire not only future academics but also the general public. Despite the wider fascination with this topic, there is still a lack of understanding/interest in material objects indicating the existence of ritualistic and magical behaviour among field archaeologists and specifically so among commercial archaeologists. Considering the high percentage of archaeological data coming from development-based excavations into academic research, it is worrying to know that there are huge gaps in knowledge. How can we professional archaeologists inspire people, if we ourselves are not inspired? Perhaps it is time to break the interdisciplinary boundaries and be creative.

**Talk 3**

**Inspiring and experiencing at the London Mithraeum**

*Sophie Jackson (Director of Research and Engagement, MOLA)*

London Mithraeum Bloomberg SPACE, featuring the relocated and reconstructed remains of London’s Roman Temple to Mithras, opened in November 2017 and has been visited by over 110,000 people in its first year.  Its popularity is due in part to the experiential and artistic approach to the interpretation of the ruins.  The reconstruction, located within the basement of global financial information company Bloomberg, is designed as an immersive sensory experience, to trigger the visitor’s imagination and create an emotional connection with the past.  The ground floor space above is reserved for contemporary art commissions that reflect on the archaeology and history of the site.  This paper looks at how the consultants, artists, scholars and design team approached translating the archaeological and historical evidence for the worship of Mithras on this site into installations and sensory effects for a 21st century audience.

**Talk 4**

**Managing interpretation on HMS Victory**

*Rosemary Thornber - Principal Heritage Advisor, HMS Victory*

There are factors that help us decide how to present Victory, to meet a variety of audiences and in terms of authenticity and for conservation requirements. Sometimes these factors can conflict with each other. We as archaeologists, work with curators regarding selection of artefacts to be shown on board, we work with conservators for the ongoing care of the ship and artefacts, riggers and shipwrights to repair elements of the ship and to replace unsympathetic earlier repairs. We also strive to get the documentary archive in order, to inform these works and to provide a resource for researchers. Victory means different things to different people and we try to maintain the vessel and archive to enable the various audiences to continue to enjoy her.

**Talk 5**

**Creating Archaeology: practice, process, purpose.**

*Gavin MacGregor (Northlight Heritage)*

In this paper I will briefly explore the nature of archaeological practice and how it has been traditionally framed. I will then reflect on issues raised by recent debates on the intersection between art / archaeology have raised and the ramifications they have for future practices. More specifically I will explore creative strategies for content and value production through the concepts of the Archaeological Encounter and Archaeological Activation.

**Talk 6**

**Weaving bright futures from murky pasts: archaeology as arts-for-health.**

*Penelope Forman (Unloved Heritage Project Officer, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust)*

Isolation, loneliness, closure of vital services, unemployment, poverty; all contribute to a significant impact upon mental wellbeing. What if archaeology could make even a small impact on this - by drawing together networks of artists alongside traditional fieldwork, bringing the past alive through music, expressive arts, poetry, sculpture?

The burgeoning field of arts for wellbeing is redolent with examples of its positive effect on mental health. Give people the chance to form a pot, walk ritual paths, witness sunrises in dark chambers, hold the weight of a shield for an hour, boast in Anglo Saxon poetic form. Inspire them to be curious. Curiosity opens every door that was ever closed to us.

This paper examines ways this creative practice can work in tandem with archaeology to not only enable archaeologists to tell their stories to more diverse audiences, but also to deliver genuinely impactful, beneficial projects in communities they work within.

**Talk 7**

**Drawing on the coast – art, archaeology and future legacies**

*Lara Band (CITiZAN) and Sarah Colbourne (University of Brighton)*

Since 2015 the community archaeology project CITiZAN (Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network) has collaborated with University of Brighton School Of Arts on their 2nd year undergraduate faculty option *Land and Sea*. Students taking this on-site drawing course come from sub-disciplines including architecture, graphic design, illustration and fine art. Through visiting five different locations they focus on the distinctive qualities of each coastal or estuarine landscape and develop an understanding of the drawing methods through which these landscapes can be examined and recorded. During each visit CITiZAN explores the historical and archaeological elements of the site with the students, adding to the visual narrative and to the special sense of place each location inspires. This paper will look at the aims, the process and the outcomes of collaboration as well as the things we’ve both learnt on the way about working with another discipline.

**Talk 8**

**Making a Great Place: How the Creative Arts can enhance the Heritage experience.**

*Dominic Somers (Art Specialist - Great Place Wentworth and Elsecar ) and Megan Clement (Heritage Specialist - Great Place Wentworth and Elsecar)*

Great Places Wentworth and Elsecar are part of a new funded initiative which aims to bring arts and heritage closer together. The project is based across Barnsley and Rotherham, two South Yorkshire cities, which have recently had significant bad press. Great Place Wentworth and Elsecar aims to bring out the good news narratives through storytelling demonstrating cutting edge innovation, local artist of quality and an astonishing history to inspiring pride and ownership for the local community of these places and stories.

This paper will focus on a case study of a community excavation in Barnsley and how and why art was drawn into the excavation. It will examine how those communities who do not engage with heritage might participate with heritage through art. It will explore how we can enhance the attraction of heritage using the creative arts and increase the experience for those who already engage.