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# Musiceum

Museums as spaces for  
early childhood music-making  
– a mapping exercise

*Report to the Research Committee  
Faculty of Education*



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# **MUSICEUM: Museums as spaces for early childhood music-making – a mapping exercise**

## **Report to the Research Committee Faculty of Education**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project was conducted under the auspices of the Faculty of Education, Research and Development Fund that provided the finance, infrastructure, and support for the initiative. It is one of three R&D Fund projects in 2017-18 with the aim to serve as a pump-priming pilot study what will enhance opportunities to secure external funding by: (a) testing the project's feasibility' (b) identifying team formations and processes; and (c) identifying the potential extent of impact and actual support for museums as spaces for early childhood music-making.

MUSICEUM set out as a mapping and scoping exercise, involving (a) literatures and policy analysis (b) two case study museums including interviews and observations and (c) a one-day SUMMIT for the purpose of bringing national stakeholders diverse perspectives together for mapping and critical analysis of current research, programmes, practices, policies and debates on current practices for inclusive community engagement / Early Years / music / and museum education.

Firstly, one of two RAs (Dr. Alex Elwick) undertook desk-based research gathering and review of literatures and policy analysis of Early Years provision and music-making documents. Two on-site Case Studies, involving observations and interviews, were conducted at The Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge (by our second RA Dr. Jessica Pitts) and The V&A's Museum of Childhood (by Co-PI Professor Jayne Osgood). We concluded the project with a one-day SUMMIT event which facilitated network sharing and storying of museum practices, partnership, participatory programmes, critical discussion of emergent project themes, a simulated Museum Workshop, and focus group discussions unpacking and evaluating key issues that have impacted on museums, programmes, practices, challenges and research needs. The SUMMIT drew together a range of stakeholders including early years practitioners, museum educators and officers, artists and researchers. The broad membership did allow for a range of perspectives to be heard and woven into this final report. These discussions recognised the devolved nature of museum education in the UK, including the emerging convergence of some aspects of early years educational priorities, inclusion and diversity issues in museum education (including 'translanguaging'), and early childhood music-making.

## KEY FINDINGS

### *1. Themes arising from the Literature Review*

Although, as previously stated, no literature has been identified which correlates directly and exactly with this project's focus (namely around music-making programmes for young children and their families in museums) this review has nonetheless provided a broad context to understand the intersections between these different elements.

Some aspects of the multiple literatures studied (drawing on disciplines comprising education, psychology, and museology amongst others) do appear to cut across and have particular relevance for this pilot project, including:

- Interactions between adults and children were a central feature of the review and much research has focused on the importance of this characteristic of early years programming, whether concerned with music-making or located within the confines of a museum.
- Space is an important consideration when working with young children, and the uniqueness of museum spaces makes them conspicuous when considering the role that multi-modal arts practices can play in children's lives.
- The benefits of music-making and an engagement with museum spaces are regularly emphasised by researchers, particularly in developmental terms (including emotional, social, cultural, and linguistic development). The implication from much of the literature is that benefits for both children and adults go beyond the context of individual sessions or activities and can be transformative.
- Such benefits are especially important when considering reasons to engage the community more widely in such programmes, including the targeting of so-called 'hard-to-reach' families (a term which has been problematised previously).

The project builds upon the specific literature identified over the course of this chapter and develops within the theoretical and conceptual spaces outlined above. The myriad benefits found from early years programmes (both in terms of music-making and in museums) provides motivation and aspirational value to the study and our research will explore the extent to which this existing literature from distinct fields can be brought together to inform and understand practice.

A difficulty in critically reviewing the literature, and understanding the perceptions and practices, as gleaned through conversations with museum educators, community engagement and early childhood music/ arts practitioners, was the lack of research which seeks to go beyond reading webs of knowledge production and instead participate in a process of reconfiguring both practice and knowledge in collaboration with museums, musicians, music-educators and children within and beyond museums and into community spaces.

### ***We recommend:***

1. Further research setting out and connecting the various conceptions, theorisations and practices of early years programming and practices in museum education within and beyond the UK.
2. Further research by a national group of researchers to report on their work as well as a range of approaches to reconceptualise the complexity of connections between early years music-making and museum spaces.
3. Further research with the academic focus of museum education on and towards pedagogies of childhood music-making for museum spaces.



4. Further research by interdisciplinary teams including early childhood researchers who can locate their research, think with and apply various new materialist theorists and their concepts for understanding and rethinking museum education.
5. Further research which does more conceptual work on what might be meant by 'childhood music-making' with parents/carers in museum spaces and museum creativity in relation to approaches to early childhood programming and practices.

## ***2. Themes arising from the V&A Museum of Childhood: Fieldwork***

### *Maintaining connections to the local community through EYMM*

In many of its activities (collections, events, festivals) the museum was effective at working with, engaging and 'creating & curating' with groups from across the local community. However, the EYMM session did not appear to foreground this objective. The free provision was well attended, but other than the fact that the facilitators were long serving employees and local residents, there was little intentional connection to Bethnal Green / the East End, the museum's cultural heritage or connection to the Community Engagement strategy.

### *Developing / applying some of the good practice from Community Development*

Animal Magic could usefully take up some of the practices that the CDO undertakes in outreach projects so that the drop-in sessions could be more inclusive of a wider range of families than those that generally attend (i.e. well networked, middle-class families and their carers). At the time of this study the Family Learning Officer was embarking upon some dedicated research and development work with local Children's Centres to explore possibilities for developing music-making sessions specifically for the under twos – which involved working alongside and visual and movement artists. Making connections to the museum as space and working with the collections/exhibitions as rich resources is a potential avenue that was not being considered at the time but that could form part of the AHRC proposal.

### *Negotiation / transformation of the space*

The context in which Animal Magic took place was visible and well located (families accessed the mezzanine level very easily). However, opportunities to engage with the materiality, history, acoustics, aesthetics of the museum building were entirely missed. The ready transformation of the music-making space to arts and crafts activity (which succeeded in connecting to museum collections) was notable. The music-making was a pop-up activity that was very quickly disassembled and packed away. There are musical toys and instruments within some of the museum collections but these were not incorporated or connected to as part of the session. Similarly, the jungle adaptation of the Bear Hunt story failed to connect to museum artefacts or the local community.

### *Materiality and space*

Animal Magic, other than taking place on museum premises, and being facilitated by museum staff was in all other senses disconnected from the museum as cultural space. Whereas outreach makes use of the museum collections and artefacts as inspiration for project work, Animal Magic failed to exploit the possibilities available to use the space and artefacts to inform or connect to the music session. The mezzanine within the museum provided a convenient, 'warm and free' community venue. However, the materials that were put to use (silk voile, hand puppets, fabric tunnel) generated great interest.

### *Musical activities*

The music-making session was clearly enjoyed by the children; they were engaged and animated and appeared to enjoy the structure and predictability. Whilst highly structured and adult-led the emphasis on rhyming, movement, counting and sociable interaction appeared to appeal to the children.

## ***3. Themes arising from The Fitzwilliam Museum: Fieldwork***

### *Negotiation of the space*

There was a moment of tension when the children were exploring the wire that surrounded the painting we had been engaging with as a group. A room guide moved towards the children and caregivers at the wire, but the Baby Magic facilitation assistant subtly intervened to move the children towards the next activity. The gentleman with whom a child had the encounter could have reacted differently.

The facilitator explained afterwards about how she felt 'positioned' when running the family groups in the museum. The learning team have to be mindful of the tensions that exist in having children in the gallery spaces: getting too close to the artwork, interfering with other visitors' enjoyment. This necessitates being sensitive to the curator's presence in the room during the session, and if room guides start moving in towards children and families, trying to intervene before an encounter. There are many layers and dynamics to contend with and while still having to create a relaxed, carefully planned and gentle experience for the families.

### *Welcome*

The prepared place at the door clearly invites young children: fabric and objects on the floor gave a clear signal to us as we entered for the activity that we were welcome at the museum. The facilitator was ready and smiling and this gave a clear and friendly welcome to anyone feeling apprehensive. It was cleared away the moment that we all moved to the gallery. This welcome area for children isn't permanent; it is only there for the session.

### *Musical activities*

Although there were musical features to many of the activities in the gallery space: the rhymes, the movement that was encouraged and the twirling with scarves, when it came to the overtly 'musical' part of the gallery activity it was adult-led and directed (e.g., copying rhythm patterns that were demonstrated and keeping to a pulse). If facilitators are not experienced (or have received no training) in child-led approaches to music education in EY they tend to rely on stereotypical notions of music teaching and learning that may be firmly rooted in the Western classical tradition. This model is the dominant one in many primary education books about teaching music. The free vocalisations from the children that occurred in the space, perhaps prompted by the experiences, or expressing feelings, of being in the gallery with others, were neither taken up nor engaged with by the facilitator. Improvisatory, child-led musical practice is not the dominant model of music education: strategies for working with children's music may not be available.

### *In-between Space*

The Baby Magic session offered different sorts of spaces for the parents and children to interact in together. Some were facilitated by Museum staff and others were very informal, yet all played an important part in building the group as a unit. The journeying between the various spaces within the museum for the activity session might seem to be an interruption and inconvenient for the families who have to carry bags and manage children on stairs. The facilitators lose control of the group during the periods of movement between spaces. However, my observation was that the moving-between times had a different atmosphere. Cohesion formed through the conversations in the in-between spaces, outside and on the stairs. Familiarity with each other was established for the group-facilitated times which helped everyone feel a sense of togetherness in the unfamiliar spaces, for some, of the gallery and to a lesser extent, the studio. It had a different sense of time, not ordered in the same way as the facilitated aspects of the session. This liminal space and time seemed helpful for building a sense of safety and belonging amongst group members.

### *Leaving*

The session drew to a natural close and families packed up and left in a relaxed manner in their own time. Some chatted to me at the door: one parent explained that she came to the sessions because her parents had taken her to Kettle's Yard as a child and she wanted her child to feel relaxed and comfortable in museums. She felt that coming to the sessions had allowed him to be more creative. She thought this might be the last time that they come to the baby session - "he's got it now!" and it's time to move to the bigger group. Another parent said how much she'd loved it and that she'd been meaning to come for ages, but it was difficult to be organised enough to phone and book tickets; the sessions are so popular you have to be well organised as they only happen once every two months. She was delighted with herself that she had at last managed it!

### *Museum practices and policy*

Passing through the galleries I was struck by an image composed of light, projected onto a classical bust (see figure 17, p51) which echoed my experience of being together with the families in the museum. The messy, busyness of active children, parents / caregivers, bags, buggies, noise and perceived lack of understanding of rules of appropriate museum behaviour, are added to the museum, enhancing and giving new life to the artefacts and perhaps the building and organisation, by their presence and inclusion. The Museum organisation may have to adjust in order to include the new, or the young. This may require shifts in understanding about how to engender relationships between objects and people. The learning team are at the pioneering edge of the interface and this can sometimes feel tricky.

### ***We recommend:***

1. Systematic consideration and development of the practices, programmes and contemporary emerging issues that enable, enhance and increase early childhood music-making in museums.
2. Systematic consideration/rethinking of the role and value of materiality and space dimensions and addressing the competing discourses, and the educational implications of such transformative practices for family and community engagement in museum spaces and surrounding areas.
3. Systematic documentation, analysis and theorizing of engagement with family learning and community engagement in the creative and affective dimensions of early childhood music-making in museum education.
4. Systematic documentation of the role of 'translanguaging' practices, interculturality, identity, digital technology, children's voice and participation within early childhood music-making in museum education.
5. (A review of the specific needs of employers in relation to early childhood music-making in museum spaces.
6. Systematic consideration/rethinking of how to develop child-led musical experiences in museum spaces and the role of children's voices when developing the EY music in museums programme.
7. Systematic consideration for rethinking of how family-centred group musical experiences can be inspired by the museum organisation, artefacts and objects, where there is chance and choice to enliven and animate the whole; where Families can explore the material through the abstract temporal artform of music which in turn may impact the museum structures giving a new sense of place-making and belonging.
8. Systematic consideration/empirical understanding of how adopting cultural, conceptual and contextual approaches to early childhood music-making, embedding children's voice and participation, can be an accepted feature of the museum space.

### ***R&D Research Team:***

Prof. Pam Burnard (University of Cambridge); Prof. Jayne Osgood (Middlesex University); Dr. Laura Huhtinen-Hilden (Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Finland); Dr. Alex Elwick (Research Associate, Middlesex University); Dr. Jessica Pitt (Research Associate, Roehampton University); Julie Blake (Summit Research Assistant, University of Cambridge); Susanne Jasilek (Summit Videographer, University of Cambridge).

# 1. RESEARCH AIMS & DESCRIPTION

Since museums are located within the heart of communities, they represent a potentially rich space for families with young children in disadvantaged communities to access, and hence enjoy, multiple benefits. Specifically, museums hold the potential to engage such families in Early Years music-making programmes, which have been shown to offer myriad cognitive, social, emotional, and educational advantages (Pitt & Hargreaves, 2017; Pitt & Hargreaves, 2016; Osgood et al., 2013). However, despite the recent and dramatic increase in museum education, disadvantaged communities neither regularly access museums nor do museums offer inclusive music programmes for Early Years. Having identified this gap in practice and knowledge, we formed a team and began preparing an AHRC grant proposal in July to fund a national study of Early Years music-making and inclusive community engagement with museums (called MUSICEUM). The team includes experts at the University of Cambridge (Early Years creativities, researcher, music practitioner), Middlesex University (Early Childhood education and care), Manchester Metropolitan University (Museum Education, Communities, Childhood, sensory ethnography and visual methodologies), Roehampton University (Early Childhood Education, Early Years Music Education) and Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (Researcher and a Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Music Education and Community Music). The literature shows overwhelming gaps in Early Years music-making programmes, provision and practice in museums. This application is for a pilot study which will inform the development of a large grant application to the AHRC. The aim of this R&D funded mapping exercise is to serve as a pump-priming pilot study that will enhance opportunities to secure external funding by: (a) testing the project's feasibility; (b) identifying team formations and processes; and (c) identifying the potential extent of impact and actual support for museums as spaces for early childhood music-making. If we are successful in securing this R&D funding we will use the data and partnership formations to write the grant application for AHRC submission in January 2018.

The **Research Aims** for the pilot R&D funding are for:

Mapping an accurate and grounded understanding of the policies and practices that a sample of museums employ regarding their music programmes, Early Years provision, and/or inclusive community engagement (to be completed by early October).

Gathering perceptions of Museum educators and senior management stakeholders (including the chair of the Museum Association) and the attempts they are making, or have made, to include and sustain music programmes, Early Years provision, and/or inclusive community engagement (to be completed by early October). <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The two museums selected for the pilot study will be located in East Anglia and London but Manchester will be included as the 3rd regional cluster of museums for the AHRC bid. Hence, costs to cover the travel for key Manchester

Identifying and growing the three regional teams (East Anglia, London, Manchester), and regional community networks; to develop the processes of teamwork (to include museum educators, community workers, Early Years artist practitioners, Early Years music educators and researchers); and to establish a basis for joint planning and collaborative practices. This phase will include a one-day team building and programme development workshop (by late November).

Coming to understand the crucial issues concerning programme evaluation and what this means for the development of an innovative tool for evaluating Early Years music-making in museums, emphasizing the role of collaboration and reflection in museums and community engagement.

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experts to attend the SUMMIT for the purpose of generating knowledge but also crucial team building forms a significant part of this R&D project.

## 2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS–DESIGN–METHODS

Methods	Data sets	Aspects of the FIELDWORK each of the participants will take on	ANALYSIS PROCEDURES AND STAFF ALLOCATION	Research questions
				Framing the research/Sharpening arguments to be made/
<b>Desk-based research gathering</b>	Literatures and policy analysis  Early Years provision and music-making documents provided by the museums to the research team for specific analysis	ALEX RA1 – 5 days	Analysis of web pages, information made publicly available about the approaches the museum takes to reach groups, Early Years provision and music-making, community engagement, working with 'hard to reach' groups;  ALEX WRITING UP – 6 DAYS	<b>RQ1:</b>  What does a critique of the existing body of research tell us about the <b>policies</b> and <b>programmes</b> that museums employ regarding their music programmes, Early Years provision, and/or inclusive community engagement (to be completed by early October).
<b>Semi-structured interviews</b>	Interview transcriptions	ALEX: National Stakeholder interviews at the Summit (sample n=5) plus London Museum (n=3)  2 days  JESSICA – East Anglian Museum (n=3)  2 days  Total 4 days	Conducting national stakeholder interviews, e.g. with the Chair of the Museum Association etc.  Interviews with strategic personnel at each museum.  These are to include: Community Engagement Officers, Museum Education Officers, Chair of the Board of Governors / Trustees (if they have them).  ALEX 2 days analysis which includes the 'note and quote transcription'  JESSICA 2 days analysis	<b>RQ2:</b>  What are stakeholder's <b>perceptions</b> of Museum educators and senior management stakeholders and the attempts they are making, or have made, to include and sustain music programmes, Early Years provision, and/or inclusive community engagement (to be completed by early October).
<b>Observations</b>	On-site research: Field notes	ALEX 2 days JESSICA 2 days Total 4 days	Undertaking observations at each museum to capture some of the current practices for inclusive community engagement / Early Years / music / museum education.  ALEX 2 days analysis JESSICA 2 days analysis	<b>RQ3:</b>  What is currently happening in a sample of museums?



<b>SUMMIT</b> <b>(1 day)<sup>2</sup></b>	Mapping of focus group discussions, Workshop practices documented; multiple perspectives on museum practice documented	ALEX will be planning and administrating, materials developed, plus data collection; 5 days JESSICA Summit: gathering observational data of practices, some assistance with Alex for organization and writing up 1.5 days	Bringing national stakeholder's diverse perspectives together for mapping and critical analysis of current research, programmes, practices and policies and debates on current practices for inclusive community engagement / Early Years / music / museum education. ALEX WRITING UP Total 3 days	<b>RQs 4&amp;5:</b> What are the major themes that emerge from focus group discussions which facilitate network sharing and storytelling of museum practices, partnership / participatory programmes and the policy space from various stakeholder perspectives; What unique theoretical framing and thinking tools can we develop for: (a) building and evaluating diverse community partnerships and research relationships; (b) unpacking and evaluating neighbourhood issues that have impacted on museums; (c) critically thinking about theory and methods that have had impact on museum practice; and (d) evaluating existing programmes and practices, challenges and expectations.
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<sup>2</sup> 1 day indicates the length of field activity calculated originally at the rate of 4 people contributing to this aspect of the work. We have now removed the costing of staff time for Co-Is, as advised by the reviewers. Instead, we have re-allocated funds and costed specifically detailed aspects of the work between RA1 (Alex) and RA2 (Jessica). The rationale for this distribution can be found at footnote No. 5.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review provides background and context to the project that has been undertaken – focusing on parents and young children; music-making and multi-modal arts practice; museum spaces; and community engagement (particularly with so-called ‘hard-to-reach’ families). We have found that there are virtually no studies which explicitly focus on music-making with young children in museum spaces, and so this review has instead concentrated on the intersections between these broader foci.

Owing to the nature of this project as a small-scale study our search has been systematic, but not comprehensive. We have used inclusion and exclusion criteria in order to structure our search and to determine which documents to review. These criteria included:

Language of publication, which we decided would be English only.

Date of publication, which we set at 2010 for policy papers (representing the change of government in the UK and the associated changes in early years policy) and 1997 for older literature (and with a focus on more recent studies).

The topic, which we decided had to include at least two of the areas of focus: i.e. studies had either been located within museum spaces; involve participants comprised of young children and their parents; or involve music-making/multi-modal arts practice.

Our search strategy itself was designed to maximise the experience and expertise of the whole research team and thus allowed for individual team members to nominate prospective papers and sources for review – these were collated in an online ‘cloud’ storage system and reviewed alongside other literature that was identified via a search of online databases including ‘Summon’ (Middlesex University’s in-house platform); ‘Web of Science’; and ‘ERIC’. Policy documentation was also included, via direct searches of websites including the DfE, OECD and UNESCO.

All items that met the inclusion criteria were reviewed, initially via their abstracts and then in their entirety. Items that were still deemed to be relevant were then entered into a spreadsheet which included the reference, a brief synopsis with respect to this project and key words. In total 47 items were found that met the criteria and were included in this sheet – which has subsequently formed the basis of this literature review.

This review is organised into sections which deal with the prevalent areas of study – museums (specifically the museum experiences of young children and their families); music-making in the early years; and community engagement (either in museums or music-making programmes for early years). There is also a section which outlines the theoretical and conceptual spaces in which our own study is situated.

### 3.1 Museums

There is a considerable body of research around the experiences of children and families in museum spaces (e.g. Borun et al. 1997; Leinhardt et al. 2002; Dierking 2010) often aimed at improving displays and exhibitions from a curatorial perspective or understanding the learning experience of those involved from a museum educator's perspective. There is, however, a notable dearth of research around activities involving music for such groups; although some museums have explored the role of music in their programming more widely (e.g. Ridding 2017) this rarely involves very young children. As such, this section of the literature review will focus on the broader experiences of young children and their families (often their parents/guardians) in museum spaces, focusing on the benefits of such experiences; the uniqueness of the museum environment itself, and other related spatial concerns; and the role of communication, particularly between adults and children. It will end with a brief outline of literature on more general music programmes in museums.

Wolf and Wood have argued that the benefits of attending museum exhibits and environments (in their case, specifically children's museums) extend beyond the acquisition of content knowledge into developmental areas (2012). Similarly, Krakowski has explored the role of play as a vehicle to engage young children in the museum, contending that intellectual, social and emotional development can all be supported in such a situation, providing a link to help children understand 'themselves, others and their world' (2012). Furthermore, research by Bowers suggested that although there was often a fear (amongst museum professionals) that young children's presence in museums could be a 'disruptive influence' in reality those that worked with such audiences rarely found 'maintaining focus and control' a challenge within gallery spaces (2012).

The uniqueness of a museum space is often identified as key in delivering such benefits – providing an alternative environment to the classroom or home. Hackett's research has focused on the way that young children, often together with their families, use this space and the way that the space can shape interactions (2016). Contemporary museums are more likely to include spaces dedicated to children (Clore Duffield 2015) – whether they are part of the traditional gallery or a more discrete activity/learning room – although as Hackett et al. point out, there is no 'one solution' in planning space for young children (2018). Museums can be places of exploration for young children and their families – as in the 'Art Trek' programme run at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, which focused very explicitly on the architectural elements of space (Chang 2012). Indeed, as Hackett et al. note, museum spaces can actually invite such exploration – with the space itself positioned as a kind of facilitator:

Exploring the physical elements of a building, including aspects such as lifts and staircases, was significant for families. Things to catch the eye up high or down low, from high ceilings to images on the floor, invited this kind of exploration (Hackett et al. 2018: 8).

Chang proposes that children are allowed to engage with art objects ‘from their own points of view’ as opposed to from the point of view of adult facilitators, hence the importance of free exploration of space (2012); although MacLeod cautions against ignoring the balance between more traditional didactic engagement and provision of open space for reflection or creativity (2005). Piscitelli and Penfold have observed that experiential exhibitions that deliberately focus on children’s creativity – providing content-rich environments and taking account of spatial quality (including factors such as room layout and furniture design) often provide the best learning environments for children (2015). Specially-designed spaces in museums often provide more hands-on interactions and activities for young children and families, sometimes including visual representations of artworks or museum objects (Knutson & Crowley 2010) which can lead to more meaningful engagement and which can encourage children’s creativity without needing to overcome many of the hurdles associated with more traditional museum spaces (e.g. Mallos 2012). Nonetheless, it is pragmatic to anticipate that museum spaces will inevitably serve multiple functions and ‘zoned’ landscapes which allow for this multiplicity of uses are a way to marry the latter with such practical concerns (Clayton & Shuttleworth 2018).

The importance of certain spatial elements within the museum should not be discounted: landmarks in particular can help children and their families to make connections, both personal and social, and to negotiate buildings via fixed and constant points (Clayton & Shuttleworth 2018). Likewise, these spaces can provide a forum for understanding non-verbal communication, i.e. through the way that children move around a space. Hackett suggests that walking is communicative and movement around museum spaces can ‘provide a realistic context for the meaning making of young children in that place’ (2014: 20). Ultimately, the importance of space (and the uniqueness of museum spaces) is a way to understand young children’s experiences:

As place, children and objects come together, they design and make one another  
(Hackett et al. 2018).

Interaction between children and adults in museums (normally their parents or guardians) was a further area of rich discussion within the literature (e.g. Leinhardt et al. 2002). Dockett et al. emphasised the importance of intergenerational interaction within museum spaces, particularly, for example, in order to engage with many of the activities provided by museum staff (2011); they found that adult instruction enabled children to complete and participate in such activities which would otherwise be beyond their ability or interest (e.g. the Vygotskian concept of scaffolding). Meanwhile Dooley and Welch found that as part of their navigation of museums, interactions between children and adults were frequently collaborative (2014). Their study found that such interactions could be both child-led and adult-led, emphasising that children in such contexts did have agency to direct their own experiences – categorised by the authors as often ‘show-and-tell’ or ‘learning’ interactions; while adult-led exchanges were more likely to involve ‘telling’, ‘prompting’ and ‘labelling’ (ibid.: 129). Nonetheless, despite the

clear indication that children's roles should not be discounted, much of the research around such connections focused on the adult role:

Adults played a strong role even in the presence of museum educators, and these adults used a variety of strategies to maintain and support their role as learning facilitators for their families (Pattison & Dierking 2012: 76).

Such strategies often centred on the role of explanatory talk provided by parents to their children in order to explain exhibit content – which in turn makes it more likely that such children will 'manipulate and attend to key aspects of exhibits' (To et al. 2016: 370). Indeed, Wolf and Wood suggested that active adult guidance directly led to 'positive effects on children's learning cycles' (2012: 31). While such benefits were widely espoused, there remains a scepticism regarding parents' own abilities to support or guide their children in their learning experiences within the museum: Downey et al. claimed that most parents lacked 'confidence in and knowledge of how to play with their children' in a children's museum (2010: 27). While there is little doubt that in general families engaged in active conversations in museum and gallery spaces, there was a perceived deficiency in the knowledge and tools that would enable adults to 'make their talk richer' (Knutson & Crowley 2010). Furthermore, it may be that both the nature and design of museum spaces does not always best facilitate these interactions between parents and children (Downey et al. 2010). Hackett's research co-opted parents as active researchers in order to utilise their expertise and their unique insights into their children's lives (2016); which led to them paying greater attention to the 'moments and incidences which are usually fleeting and given little attention' (ibid.: 12) and which helped them challenge the hegemony of museum professionals telling that what to do (Mayall 2000). Despite this evident tension, there is likely a role for both museum staff (see Piscitelli & Penfold 2015) and the adults within a child's family, and although these groups might play divergent roles (Wolf & Wood 2012) through negotiation they can each provide support and guidance.

While museums and gallery spaces have vastly different collections, the importance of engagement with those collections and exhibitions was apparent in much of the research around young children's relationships with such institutions. Artworks specifically were cited as being powerful objects to stimulate both interest and excitement in young children, engagement including a 'willingness to describe images, suggest changes, and imagine themselves in the paintings' (Lopatovska et al. 2016: 1214). Chang described art-orientated activities as one way to nurture children's development:

If educational programmes encourage children to interact with artworks in meaningful ways, art museums can provide significant learning environments for young children (Chang 2012).

Although previously infrequently reported on, some museums are exploring the role that music and music-making can play within their environments – a recent series of articles collated by the Museums Association focused on this very topic. Two such

examples include the British Museum, which has regularly used music or ambient sound within their exhibits (Frost 2017); while the much smaller Buxton Museum and Art Gallery has appointed a composer-in-residence to create and compose unique musical pieces (Johnson 2017). Based upon evaluations and research into such practices, Frost argues that there are positive and negative aspects to the inclusion of music within a museum space:

Soundscapes and well-chosen pieces of music can be exceptionally effective at creating atmosphere, signalling narrative change and engendering emotional engagement. Objections usually focus around an inability to block-out distracting sound, frustration about repetition or sound inadvertently spilling into other areas (Frost 2017).

While music-making activities within a museum, aimed specifically at young children and their families, clearly represent a different proposition to an approach which directly incorporates music into an exhibition for all visitors, there are nonetheless crossovers. Johnson's belief that 'music has the power to engage visitors emotionally with the people and a story behind the objects' (2017) has significant resonance for activities taking place in museums which explicitly seek to make connections with their space (and the objects within it).

### **3.2 Early years and music-making**

While there is little research investigating the role of music-making in the early years within museum spaces, there is a wider body of evidence from other contexts. The value of such activities for young children has been professed by numerous studies and relates to a number of benefits, including the development of language and literacy skills, emotional skills, mental wellbeing and happiness.

Hallam's comprehensive synthesis and review of literature suggests that active engagement with music can be of benefit throughout our lives, but specifically cites the development of 'perceptual skills which affect language learning'; 'acquisition of literacy skills'; 'fine motor coordination'; and improved 'spatial reasoning' as benefits that emerge during early childhood music activities and the playing of instruments (2010: 277-280). As above, interactions between young children and adults/their families are important in recognising such benefits: music can be a central pillar of emotional coordination between mothers and their children (Dissanayake 2010); and Blandon's research around music sessions involving young children and care home residents showed that both groups' happiness improved after taking part (2017). Although with older children, Zarobe and Bungay's research suggested that structured group activities help build resilience and mental wellbeing (2017); while Pitt and Hargreaves found that group activity:

Facilitates connections with others through the structured medium of music where anticipation and shared understanding of songs and rhymes can display to

practitioners a child's understanding and memory of language perhaps more clearly than a free play activity would allow (Pitt & Hargreaves 2017: 14).

Furthermore, this can lead to happiness and enjoyment and music can help overall learning according to practitioners (ibid.). Barrett suggested that music can be a form of story-telling, and performing/engaging in music can help young children to:

Identify the characteristic features of their worlds and how these operate, the nature and extent of the web of relationships in which they live, and give voice to their innermost feelings, their likes, their dislikes, their wishes and desires [providing] a means of making sense of events that might otherwise seem disconnected, even chaotic in their life work (Barrett 2010: 406).

As well as the benefits that music-making activities bring for young children, there are policy imperatives and obligations to meet for practitioners, particularly in the UK. The most recent statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS), detailing mandatory provision that all early years settings must abide by, contains a number of references to the arts more generally (DfE 2017). One area in which providers must support children is described as 'expressive arts and design' which involves:

Enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology (DfE 2017: 8-9).

In addition, specific reference is made to children singing songs, making music and dancing (ibid.). Meanwhile, non-statutory guidance from Early Education outlines possible activities appropriate at different stages of a child's development, as well as advice on what role adults can play in this development, e.g. 'listen with children to a variety of sounds, talking about favourite sounds, songs and music' (2012: 43).

International policy literature also speaks to the importance of music-making activities in early childhood, OECD guidance on curricula in early childhood education and care suggests that 'singing songs and nursery rhymes' can be beneficially promoted by adults (c.2011: 3) and that 'intensive music training can help train children for geometry tasks and map reading' (ibid.: 5). It should be noted that the guidance cites Litjens and Taguma (2010) in stating that there is 'little attention in research to children's use of art and music practices and its effect on developmental outcomes' (OECD c.2011: 5).

Of particular importance to this project are the relationships between adults and young children, with regards taking part in music-making activities. Williams et al. have shown that the frequency of shared music activities between parents and their children positively correlates with 'children's later prosocial skills, vocabulary, numeracy and attentional and emotional regulation' (2015). Meanwhile, Pitt and Hargreaves' work with parent-child group music-making found many benefits for both children and the parents: social, cultural, emotional and cognitive (2016). They went on to show that as

well as parent-child interactions in such groups, peer-to-peer interactions also took place:

This may provide a rich learning environment for children to rehearse, try out, and practise tasks with close adult guidance in the one-to-one space, and then to self-assess with peers in the wider group interaction context (Pitt & Hargreaves 2016: 14).

Furthermore, their research showed that the majority of families in their study continued musical activities at home and began to integrate singing and music into their daily routine (2017) – a finding shared by Koops; suggesting that parental influence may have been a factor in this continuation away from formal or practitioner-led activities (2012). There is little doubt that parents and wider families are normally the most influential people in children's lives (Magsamen 2011) but the quality of these relationships, and also of the individual interactions, are key according to Wolfe and Flewitt: arguing that adults need to explain and model processes (2010). Such behaviours promote mutual cooperation and both parent direction or actions, and parent-child interaction can contribute to 'positive emotional ambience' during shared music activities (Pasiali 2012: 331). Koops emphasises the importance in recognising the role that enjoyment can play – advising practitioners and music educators to structure early childhood classes in such a way that enjoyment is maximised for both children and their parents – which in turn may help 'build motivation to continue over time' (2012: 340) and to incorporate music-making into the day-to-day family life (Campbell 1998). It should be noted that Blackburn has expressed concern that parents might not always have the confidence to lead or to encourage such activities with their children in the home, although this confidence can be built through formal, practitioner-led activities (2016).

While music-making in museum spaces is under-researched at present, Eriksson and Sand have explored the effect that space has on voice/sound-making amongst young children: their research focused on a tunnel in Stockholm and the effect that not only the spatial qualities of this tunnel, but also its nature as a public space (with other people moving through it), had on the sound-making activities of pre-school children (2017).

### **3.3 Community engagement**

The third area of focus for this review of literature centres on community engagement – particularly engaging so-called 'hard-to-reach' families. Osgood et al.'s authoritative research centred on traditional notions of these groups and early years music-making activities: highlighting the deficit model that such terminology inevitably resorts to (2013a). They make the point that any such study must question their 'underlying motivations to engage parents in music-making' (ibid.: 12). As such, this project will conceive of community engagement in broader terms – recognising that there are barriers to engaging in both formal music-making activities and music-making in the



home amongst some families with young children; and that these barriers might be different (ibid.). As the same authors go on to note in a different article:

In many respects formal early years music-making represents an innocuous striated space in which to herd the 'hard to reach' to access the much-vaunted cultural capital in order to emulate normative modes of parenting and ways of being (Osgood et al. 2013b: 210).

It is certainly the case that often both music-making projects for young children and museum spaces can be exclusionary and complicit in the creation of barriers for certain groups. Formal early years music-making activities are often delivered by white middle-class musicians and the music choices are often 'traditional' English ones – which can combine to demand certain normative behaviours and discourage certain groups (ibid.). Symptomatically, Herman recounts a commonly-cited feeling among mothers with babies – 'ultimately I decided we didn't belong' (2012).

It should be noted, however, that museums are not always exclusionary by their nature: Jensen's work 'calls into questions the political view that art museums are inherently exclusionary' and finds evidence that what he refers to as 'home town museums' often engage strongly with disadvantaged communities (2010). Similarly, Halstead, while recognising the challenge that cultural organisations inevitably face attracting and retaining non-regular visitors/participants, identifies a number of successful partnerships, often created by working with early years providers in the wider community (2018). To this end, the literature more broadly identifies features and characteristics of successful attempts to engage communities by museums and other multi-modal arts organisations – with a specific focus on engaging families and those with young children. Many of the individual features identified centre on the quality of relationships created and maintained between families and practitioners (see Halstead 2018). Within these relationships, in order for a level of trust to be built up (often over a period of months or even longer) flexibility (Osgood et al. 2013a; Herman 2012), innovation (Osgood et al. 2013a) and a long-term approach (ibid.) were all important. Osgood et al. also suggest that working with sound interagency practice is essential in order to provide support, and being open and honest internally to recognise potential exclusionary behaviour (ibid.). In terms of the practical aspects of activities or sessions, Herman suggests that relatively unstructured start times, the ability to not require advanced registration, and buy-in from/negotiation with other parts of the host organisation are all vital (2012). The social aspect of music-making sessions has also been emphasised: Parkinson and Knight urge practitioners to allow time before/after formal activities for participants to 'unwind and chat' (2016). Furthermore, for some participants, in order to feel welcome in a museum space an explicit invitation is required – particularly for families with babies or very young children who might otherwise feel that they do not belong (ibid.; Herman 2012).

Knight et al. outline the benefits of participation for children, in particular, who have not previously experienced music-making activities or performances – claiming that their

confidence, language skills, social and emotional interaction all improved (2017). Jensen, meanwhile, noted that without child-linked events, mothers would not have otherwise felt confident to visit a museum space – bringing them additional benefits (2010).

The relationship between children and their parents/guardians is again an area of importance when engaging communities that otherwise are reluctant to do so – Parkinson and Knight note that parents often expect to be able to remove themselves from the activities or the sessions when they are more obviously aimed at their children, but that they challenge this and ‘look to equip them with the skills to make their own music, interacting creatively between them, so that the processes can extend into their homes and daily lives’ (2016: 4). A similar issue was highlighted by Herman, who reflected that activities tied only to children’s interests are unlikely to maintain the engagement of parents: ‘if museums could find ways to connect with mothers, and not just their children, perhaps museums could retain these visitors longer’ (2012).

There are challenges, but also benefits, to engage communities in programmes – potentially providing ‘an emotionally safe and positive introduction to the museum’ (Jensen 2010: 46), but this ‘requires space to think differently’ (Osgood et al. 2013b: 218) and to acknowledge that the nature of certain groups being ‘hard-to-reach’ is as a result of barriers that are constructed (tacitly or not) by both museums and musical practitioners.

### **3.4 Theories and conceptual spaces**

The literature reviewed evidently draws upon a wide range of theoretical traditions from social learning theories to sociological attention to the cultural capital and exclusionary practices often associated with music and museums. Framing investigations to interrogate the value, experiences and potential of music, museums and community engagement with varying theoretical lenses inevitably foregrounds different foci. For example, the sociological research undertaken by Osgood et al. (2013a) was framed by a concern to trouble the concept of ‘hard-to-reach families’ and to turn attention to the structural barriers that are often (unwittingly) in place by the ways in which music-making activities are organised and delivered, and the agendas that underpin them. Meanwhile, other research, such as Young’s extensive research into early years music-making is more concerned with the educational benefits of participation. The work of human geographers and cultural theorists (e.g. Hackett 2014; 2016) is particularly pertinent to the pilot study as it highlights the significance of place and matter and how children’s engagements with space are a way to understand their experiences. Within the pilot study we sought to work with a range of theoretical traditions to investigate the potential of taking music-making into museum spaces to enhance community engagement. Through interview, observation, policy analysis and a simulated music-making workshop it was possible for the research team to attend to a multi-layered analysis that addresses levels of participation, engagement and learning that takes place when music takes place with young children in museum spaces (see chapter six).

Furthermore, attention was drawn to the sociological, historical and cultural context of two case study museums and the possibilities to explore the role of music in engaging local communities.

The intention is to learn from this pilot and develop a new materialist framework to extend our understandings of how young children and their families experience museums and music as material-discursive-semiotic entanglements. This is necessary because whilst many social constructionist theories grant the existence of material reality, it is often viewed separately to language, discourse, and culture. This presumed separateness has meant that the textual, linguistic, and discursive have remained the focus of research; and materiality, the body, and nature viewed as products of discourse. The new materialist turn in educational research moves away from privileging only textual representation, systems of thought and discourses and instead emphasises social production rather than social construction. Or as Haraway states, we must engage in practices of materialized refiguration:

Textual re-reading is never enough, even if one defines the text as the world. Reading however active, is not a powerful enough trope ... the trick is to make metaphor and materiality implode in culturally specific apparatuses of bodily production ... engaging in the always messy projects of description, narration, invention, inhabiting, conversing, exchanging and building. The point is to get at how worlds are made and unmade, in order to participate in the processes.... The point is not just to read the webs of knowledge production; the point is to reconfigure what counts as knowledge in the interests of reconstituting the generative forces of embodiment (Haraway 1994: 61).

The next stage of this project will build upon the existing bodies of knowledge outlined in this literature review. Existing research stresses the importance of music-making in the early years, the centrality of museum as spaces for childhood; and the need to ensure more inclusive community engagement in both. We take note of Haraway's (op., cit) insistence that research should seek to go beyond reading webs of knowledge production and instead participate in processes of reconfiguring both practice and knowledge. Therefore, our objective is to work in collaboration with museums, musicians, music-educators, children and within community spaces to participate in processes of extending ideas and practices about what is possible for early years music in museum spaces. Haraway (2008) suggested that research should resemble 'deep hanging out' which for feminist new materialist researchers researching with children insists upon a different starting point; rather than gathering data to answer a predefined set of questions the goal is more open-ended and uncertain; the ultimate aim is to produce new knowledges, new ways of sensing and being in the world; and it is within processes of creative experimentation, exercising curiosity and resisting habitual ways of seeking out what is already known that Musiceum will open ideas about what might be possible.

### 3.5. Concluding Reflections

Although, as previously stated, no literature has been identified which correlates directly and exactly with this project's focus (namely around music-making programmes for young children and their families in museums) this review has nonetheless provided a broad context to understand the intersections between these different elements.

Some aspects of the multiple literatures studied (drawing on disciplines comprising education, psychology, and museology amongst others) do appear to cut across and have particular relevance for this pilot project, including:

**Interactions between adults and children** were a central feature of the review and much research has focused on the importance of this characteristic of early years programming, whether concerned with music-making or located within the confines of a museum.

**Space** is an important consideration when working with young children, and the uniqueness of museum spaces makes them conspicuous when considering the role that multi-modal arts practices can play in children's lives.

The benefits of **music-making and an engagement** with museum spaces are regularly emphasised by researchers, particularly in developmental terms (including emotional, social, cultural, and linguistic development). The implication from much of the literature is that benefits for both children and adults go beyond the context of individual sessions or activities and can be transformative.

Such benefits are especially important when considering reasons to engage the community more widely in such programmes, including the targeting of so-called 'hard-to-reach' families (a term which has been problematized previously).

The project builds upon the specific literature identified over the course of this chapter and develops within the theoretical and conceptual spaces outlined above. The myriad benefits found from early years programmes (both in terms of music-making and in museums) provides motivation and aspirational value to the study and our research will explore the extent to which this existing literature from distinct fields can be brought together to inform and understand practice.

## 4. THE FIELDWORK

### 4.1 The V&A Museum of Childhood case study

*The V&A Museum of Childhood is the UK's National Museum of Childhood. It is the largest institution of its kind in the world. Its mission is to hold in trust the nation's childhood collections and to be an international leader in engaging audiences in the material culture and experiences of childhood. <http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc>*

#### **Background & history**

The V&A Museum of Childhood is located in the heart of Bethnal Green, in the East End of London. It is housed in a large, three story, open plan building that sits prominently on the main road. The Museum dates back to the Victorian era and is a product of the industrial revolution. At the time museums were viewed as an important means by which (poor) urban populations could improve their minds via 'rational recreation' in their leisure time.



Figure 1: V&A Museum of Childhood, Bethnal Green

The Bethnal Green Museum was opened in 1872 but due to lack of funds was less grand than intended. However, the Museum building achieved its goal of being educational with female inmates of Woking Gaol laying the fish scale pattern marble floor and murals in

the north and south exterior walls; one depicting agricultural scenes,

the other art and industry. The murals, echoing the style of those at the V&A in South Kensington, were created with the assistance of female students of the South Kensington Museum Mosaic Class.

Other than bringing an awareness of Britain's cultural heritage to the East End, the purpose of the Museum was unclear. Exhibits comprised collections from the Great Exhibition, South Kensington collections, a loan of 18th century French art, and gifts to the Royal family. The museum closed during the First World War. It was not until 1922 that the Museum began its transformation into the Museum of Childhood. The museum was frequently filled with bored, noisy children which therefore prompted the curator to make it more engaging for children by installing classrooms and employing teachers; sourcing child-related objects (supported by Queen Mary



Figure 2: V&A gallery

who donated many toys of her own). During the Second World War and until 1950, the museum operated as a British Canteen, for feeding the general public. When it re-opened, a small collection of childhood-related objects was displayed next to the V&A exhibitions.

In 1974 Bethnal Green Museum was re-opened as the Museum of Childhood. All childhood-related collections held at the South Kensington site came to Bethnal Green, and the childhood collection continued to grow with acquisitions from toy companies, the BBC, members of the public and government funds. Due to a persistent lack of investment into the building's structure since opening in 1872 the museum closed for refurbishment in 2005-2006. A new entrance was added with additional facilities including toilets, lifts and more teaching space.



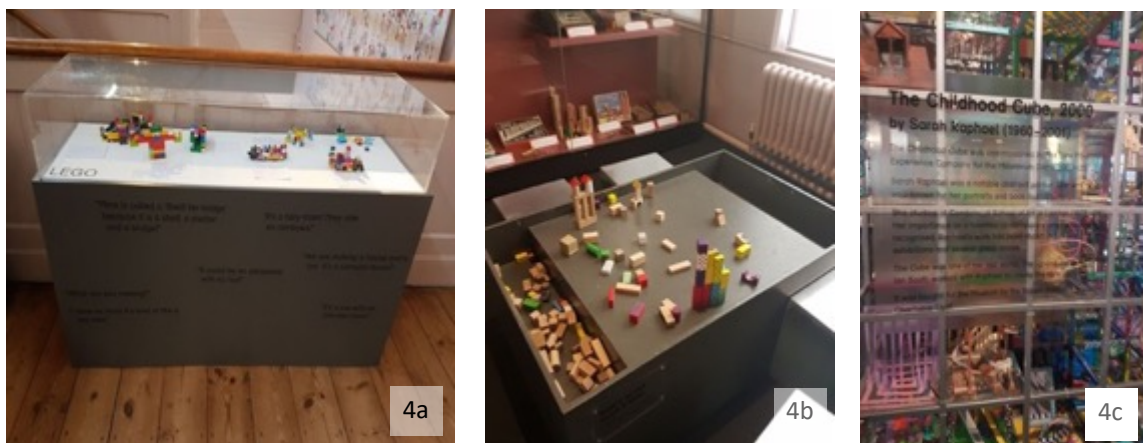
*Figure 3: Fish scale marble floor laid by female inmates*

### ***Contemporary offer at V&A Museum of Childhood***

Today the V&A Museum of Childhood at Bethnal Green opens its doors daily to the people of east London (and further afield), free of charge, and offers a broad range of activities, collections, exhibitions, archives as well as a number of outreach projects.

### ***Museum collections***

The Museum hosts collections of: clothing, construction toys, dolls, furniture, games, learning and development resources, mechanical toys, 'must have toys', optical toys,



*Figure 4: a) Lego blocks, b) Building blocks and c) Childhood Cube displays*



paper models, paintings, puppets and toy theatres, dolls houses, teddy bears, toy figures and vehicles. The vast majority of objects within these collections are displayed in large glass cases. The Formal Learning Manager pointed out the frustration that is generated from the lack of interactive possibilities, as she commented: “the cleaners only have to clean up to about 3ft on these glass cases: to remove the nose prints of curious children that can’t touch!”. There are several hands-on interactive collections that complement the displays, and the Moving Toys Gallery has touch screens and it is possible to see some of the toys moving.

### *Archive collection*

The Museum holds a number of archive collections relating to different aspects of childhood. These include children’s clothing, material from toy manufacturers and from individuals involved in the toy industry, as well as collections relating to schools and education.

### *Exhibitions*

There are between four and six exhibitions running at any one time with some permanent e.g. Place (Village) an exhibition by Rachel Whiteread <https://youtu.be/ctapbOgYZI8> of a sculptural work featuring a ‘community’ of around 150 dolls’ houses lit from within, but deserted, their emptiness evoking haunting memories and melancholy.

Also, at the time of the fieldwork visit, a free-to-visit exhibition of Michael Morpurgo’s work was open to the public. The exhibition, a partnership with Seven Stories, offered an opportunity to explore the secrets behind his storytelling through engagement with original drafts, adaptations, scripts and unpublished manuscripts. The exhibition looks at the processes behind some of the familiar themes in Morpurgo’s storytelling: war, animals and friendship, which are explored using atmospheric



*Figure 5: Place (Village) by Rachel Whiteread*

soundscapes. The exhibitions provide a direct contrast to the static displays in cases, children are invited to interact in multisensory exploration of the sounds and textures that are so prominent in the stories e.g. the war horse was installed within the exhibition. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=35&v=x0EBGhiSi60](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=35&v=x0EBGhiSi60)

## ***Participants and data collection***

The case study investigation comprised data collection from interviews, observation, photographs and online resources.

1. Interviews were conducted with:
  - Formal Learning Manager
  - Community Development Officer (outreach and project work)
  - Family Engagement Officer (family learning and EY settings)
  - Animal Magic facilitators
2. Observations of the early years public programming session:
  - Animal Magic
3. Photographs were taken at the observation visit
  - Of the museum collections
  - Museum space and surrounding area
  - The Animal Magic Session (with permission of facilitators and families).
4. Online resources were accessed November 2017- January 2018

## ***Musical activities for families with young children***

The Museum regularly hosts special events and workshops that involve the expertise of local artists and musicians which aim to bring the museum as space and resource to multisensory life, for example the Sounds of Christmas display and Audio Trail.  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc/events/sounds-of-christmas-display-and-audio-trail/>

Other examples include: Make Noise Days, Sing a-long Saturdays and Fogonogo (opera for Under 5s).

<http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc/events/make-noise-days/>  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc/events/sing-long-saturdays/>  
<http://www.vam.ac.uk/moc/events/fogonogo/>

## ***Family Learning at the V&A Museum of Childhood***

Managing the engagement of families at drop-in sessions falls to the Family Learning Officer, whose main role is to manage, coordinate and develop the drop-in programmes available as part of the core offer to existing visitors. Families with children under five are amongst the largest group of visitors:

*Museums tend to attract pre-school aged children. Families with children from birth-to-four account for a significant proportion of our family audience.*

The daily offer (Animal Magic & Art Smarts) is very popular and over-subscribed. It is intended for two to five-year-olds but attracts much young children (under twos). Consequently, the Friends of the V&A have made funding available for the development of a programme specifically targeted at the under twos. A pilot is currently underway involving three local Children's Centres, artists and an early years consultant. It is in its very earliest stages and will involve two sessions with each centre – one in the



Children's Centre and the other at the museum – and will involve a visual artist and a movement artist.

The V&A Museum of Childhood has done considerable work with Children's Centres locally over the years but this has tended to feature within community development work. Working with Children's Centres is an important way to bring new visitors to the museum. Current data held by the Museum indicates that the most heavily represented group is white, middle-class families – which is not representative of the local community. However, Animal Magic facilitators argue that there is far more diverse range of families attending their sessions than the audience data (gathered by an independent research organisation) suggests.

### ***Public Programme for early years***

The Museum offers a programme of free daily activities intended for families with children under the age of five. This includes a daily music session (Animal Magic; multi-sensory storytelling inspired by well-loved animal tales) followed a daily arts and crafts session (Art Smarts; where children make a piece of art inspired by the Museum's collection and displays to take home). At the weekend these sessions are supplemented with Explore (talk and tour of the museum's collections); Telling Tales (storytelling with sounds and props); and a hands-on 'Play at the Museum' session when children are invited to interact with toys on display.

The Museum also offers Family Packs for children aged five and under to borrow from the Information Desk for an hour. The Montessori pack contains a map, activity suggestions, storybooks and toys to touch. The Making Sense packs intended to make the Museum more accessible for families with additional needs. Packs are available for families with children on the autistic spectrum, with toys to touch, sound mufflers, PECs symbols, a photo booklet and colouring in sheets. There are also packs for families with a visually impaired child, containing large print, Braille translation, raised images, a Pen friend audio guide and toys to touch.

### ***Community Engagement***

In 2002 the Museum launched a community strategy, which identified the potential for reaching out to a local audience. The Museum's community programme aims to foster relations with a whole range of voluntary and statutory partners. Working with local schools, colleges, universities, community and arts organisations and cultural interest groups to provide an introduction to the Museum for newcomers (i.e. 'hard to reach').

With respect to families with young children the Formal Learning Manager noted the challenges that the Museum faces in terms of community engagement and the demographic profile of the local area:

*The immediate area around the Museum, Bethnal Green, the east end, has a split personality. You see increasing pockets of gentrification occupied by 'yummy*

*mummies'; the NCT gang who know each other from breast feeding groups and so on, you know the hipster groups that go on to have children and then stay at home; the blogging, entrepreneurial mums... Whereas on the other side is a very high percentage of Afro-Caribbean [and] Bengali families that have lived in the area for generations. There are also trafficked [women], refugees, and young white teenage mums – who fall into the 'hard to reach' category of local families and which the museum actively seeks to engage but who are very difficult to persuade that the museum is a place for them.*

Whilst the Museum strategy courses through many strands of its work, community engagement principally falls under the remit of the Community Development Officer (CDO). The CDO has an Arts background having worked in Arts Centres, theatre design and participatory arts practice, she views the Museum as a resource for arts-based practices in outreach work with groups within the local community. She described how outreach projects effectively make use of exhibitions and collections to engage 'hard to reach' groups i.e. targeting BAME groups and non-traditional museum goers.

*The ultimate aim is to encourage those who are disengaged to attend the Museum independently. We have key events throughout the year that should appeal to specific groups e.g. Chinese New Year events have a participatory element which involves making music, children performing. Similarly, St George's day events are intended to attract the white working-class living near to the Museum.*

The CDO also described how outreach work often involves a musical element, sometimes with small children. For example, PRAXIS (a project with trafficked women with small children) involves regular off-site work, which in turn feeds into festivals and events that the museum coordinates. The PRAXIS choir is notable, comprising women who perform at various events at the V&A Museum of Childhood. Work with this group takes place at a centre (church hall) close to the Museum. When the children were very small (and easy to contain) they undertook the project work at the Museum but 'as the children become more mobile the Museum is not the best venue'. The project is principally targeted at supporting the mothers; it has involved looking at their own childhoods; a topic that connects across space, time, geography, invites the women to reengage with their native homes. Music is often a key part of the memory work. The aim of the project is to recreate a sense of family, viewing homes as virtual/mobile/transient and has the express objective of making use of the museum collections to facilitate 'making and doing'/'create and curate'. Outputs from PRAXIS activities have been performed during Refugee Week.

Other examples of community engagement shaped in some sense by music include: Choral productions (including a resident Shanti choir; local school choirs; intergenerational projects to connect elderly local residents and children). The Summer Festival is also a big event designed to engage local residents which includes live bands and musical performances (from local residents and musicians).

The CDO stressed how important Outreach Project Design is; careful and sensitive planning, connecting with the local community, working in partnership and making effective use of the 'museum as resource' are all central. There are various exhibitions that have been co-created with local residents engaged in outreach projects. The projects are given dedicated museum space in which to exhibit. These tend to be themed, examples include:

- social housing in East London – Boundary Estate near Brick Lane features as an intergenerational project – elders and girls work together to compare childhoods. This inadvertently brought musicality into the project as older generation reminisced via song.
- The installation of the Doll's House project also (inadvertently) engaged groups in musicality.
- The Refugee Group – very vocal, drive the direction of the outreach project composed lyrics and performed songs/lullabies.
- Collaborating with local partner organisations is also a very important part of outreach – e.g. Spitalfields Music Festival at which the museum hosts projects included interactive Opera for children and small children.

The CDO is planning a project: Bump Buddies in partnership with Hackney Museum & Shoreditch Trust which will work with young women who are in some sense 'at risk'. It is essentially a befriending scheme and involves a handling session (engaging with museum artefacts) and will engage the group in collaboration, creation, curation. The project is funded by South Kensington V&A.

### ***Early Years Community Engagement***

The Formal Learning Manager stressed that engaging 'hard to reach' communities is a core part of the museum's history, as outlined above it began life as a form of Victorian philanthropy, offering a museum/space for the (generally poor) local community. But the museum recognises that it can be an uncomfortable space for parents, most typically mums, who are not connected to parenting networks, accessing other services, or who do not realise it is a free offer. And 'often they simply lack the cultural capital to feel entitled to access which makes them hard to reach'.

She went on to stress that whilst there are some exciting examples of work that engages 'hard to reach' groups within the community e.g. with CAMHS & Hospital Schools; Toy Theatres; Dolls Houses without exception these projects rely on external funding. At the time of fieldwork, the museum was preparing for a two-year phase of re-development when these issues (i.e. chronic lack of funding and how to creatively overcome that) will be readdressed.

The museum recognises that despite some notable successes (specifically through outreach and specific targeted events) those most readily participating at the museum continues to be white middle-class families (with engagement of that group continuing to rise). The Family Learning Manager spoke of 'a snowball effect' (see Vincent, 2006;

Osgood et al 2013) where savvy middle-class mums pass on their 'hot knowledge' to other white, middle-class mums which ensures the colonisation of services that actively deters harder to reach groups from attending. The museum is particularly appealing to this group as it offers a chance for them to nostalgically re-engage with their own childhoods, they can afford the price of refreshments available in the café, and generally have a sense of entitlement – and therefore children roam and run around in wide open spaces available at the museum.

### ***An observation at Animal Magic***

In addition to the interviews with core member of staff at the museum the pilot study involved observation of an early years music-making session. The session: Animal Magic, runs daily for children aged 18 months-to-five years. It is described as multi-sensory storytelling inspired by well-loved animal tales, for early years children.

The session takes place in a designated area near the main entrance to the museum. The area is arranged with two facilitators at the front facing the audience of pre-schoolers and their parents, grandparents, and carers.

The facilitators were equipped with micro phoned headsets, wearing uniforms (black skirts/trousers and purple polo shirts). I had been advised earlier (by the Formal Learning Manager) that the EYMM facilitators have multiple roles within the museum including security, front desk/information, and facilitating the early years sessions.

Despite their multiple roles both facilitators held relevant qualifications and knowledge of the local community. For example, facilitator 1 held an NVQ Level 3 in Childcare; grew up in the local area and raised her children in Bethnal Green, the museum was central to her childhood/motherhood and she views it as a vital hub within her local community.

Facilitator 2 is musically trained and has performed publicly in her native Hungary – she plays the Mandolin and is fan of Jazz and musical improvisation; her mother worked in a nursery and therefore music and early years have been a significant part of her life. She moved to London a decade ago and the museum has been significant for her: attended with her children and recognised its important function is providing much needed space and activities for parents new to the area.

The session began promptly at 2pm but it was very relaxed, some parents and children were already seated but a steady trickle of additional families filtered in throughout the course of the session. It appeared that most had attended previously – all the children had a clear sense of what to expect and how and when they should participate.

## Space and matter

The designated area had a backdrop of props, the facilitators made ready use of additional props (puppets) and materials (silk sheets, viscose tunnel) throughout the session. The area had been pre-arranged: six tables, with benches either side of each, were arranged in a semi-circle facing the 'stage'. In front of the tables was further seating of mats and beanbags (principally intended for the children). The space invited children to engage with the facilitators and the activity independently from their parents/carers but the close proximity of the adults provided a safe place to retreat (which some children took advantage of – running back and forth into the arms of the adults when feigning mock fear at the snapping crocodile).

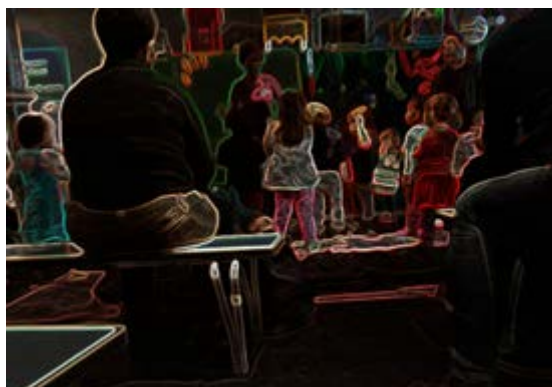


Figure 6: Animal Magic

There were around 15 children in total and at least one parent/carer to each child although in some cases there were two adults (both parents, dad and nanny; grandparents and child-carers were also present; and small number of babies in prams/buggies/slides were also present). The families were quite diverse: Chinese, Italian, Black British, South Asian, Eastern European, four White British (apparently middle-class based upon accent and clothes). These parents, three mothers, one father and a nanny had eaten in the Museum café beforehand, in anticipation of attending Animal Magic, and then crafting session that followed it. One of the mothers told me that:

*You can really make a day of it, we just whizz down the road on the number 8 bus, and then we can spend the morning running around the exhibitions, have lunch in the cafe and then come to this- which she absolutely loves. When we get home feeling I feel I am winning at being a mum today! And then she can sit watching TV and I remain guilt free – it's a good day all round!*

The session began with the facilitator introducing the children to a series of animals (hand puppets) that were enticed out from a closed plastic box: some puppets were shy, others very excitable. The pace and volume of the session was quite intense (made more intense by the amplified voices through the microphone headsets). However, the noise emanating from the session raises interesting questions about the feasibility/relevance of EYMM in museum spaces – although the designated area was separate, the open plan arrangement of the entire museum meant that sounds were freely travelling from one space to another.

The Animal-Magic session emphasis was very much on counting, rhyming, clapping and the use of hand puppets to exaggerate and elongate nursery rhymes. Children were invited to stroke the animal puppets, to make friends with them. One facilitator was the

puppeteer, she used exaggerated tones (low gruffly bear voice, yawning lion, snapping crocodile) – in a high-octane fashion to engage with the children by eating pretend food, joking with them.

Row-Row-Row Your Boat was a feature of the session and acted as an ice-breaker with children being invited to participate (by following the enthusiastic instructions issued by the facilitators).

The latter half of the session was structured around Michael Rosen's *'We're Going on A Bear Hunt'* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gyI6ykDwds>



Figure 7: Book Cover

The facilitators had extended and embellished the storyline so that the animals that had been introduced from the box were now the main characters in the story – and they were marching through jungle, gushing rivers etc. – the storyline took on a much more exotic and worldly frame than the original. Many of the children were acutely familiar with the story (and the facilitators' adaptation of the storyline) and participated with joyful enthusiasm. The adults also participated – albeit from the benches that they remained seated on throughout the session.

Punctuating the entire session was the facilitator's request that the children 'sit on your bottoms'. Whilst the children were invited to participate there were unspoken rules of engagement – e.g. when going through the viscose tunnel the facilitator physically used her arm as a turnstile to regulate the flow of children. When instruments (tambourines and shakers) were made available they were issued 'one for you; one for you; one for you' to 'avoid a stampede' but some children exchanged the instrument they had been given for an alternative. When the facilitator offered the hand puppets to the audience to engage with 'sit on your bottoms; he'll come to you!' Children were invited to stroke the hand puppets – one child (two-year-old Chinese girl) found a fibre from the lion's mane stuck to her finger and became completely transfixed by the near invisible, but sensed fibre that was attached to her body – losing all interest in the frenetic and lively Animal Magic session for a prolonged moment. She was consumed by the sensation of the invisible nylon fibre that passed between finger and thumb as she repeatedly attempted to grasp it. Eventually she was drawn back into the music-making activities.

### **Structure and rhythm**

Whilst energetic and fun the session was quite tightly controlled – not only by the facilitator but by the materials and the space. Children were given clear instruction to follow the lead provided by the facilitators. Large silk sheets were floated above the heads of the children to denote water. The iridescence, near invisible weight of the silk sheet grabbed the attention of all the children at once, lifting their arms to stroke the

silk which then lifted higher from the waft of air that was created. Laughter, stamping, flapping, gasping, punctuated by the amplified tones of the facilitator as she maintained the high-energy pace. Towards the end of the Bear Hunt the entire ‘cast’ ventured around the larger space (mezzanine floor behind the staged area where the rest of the session had taken place). They marched around and amongst the large glass cases, following the lead of the facilitators– who consistently provided loud commentary from their headsets).

For most, the familiar story-line and the instructions from the facilitator kept the session moving, most children instinctively knew what was expected of them in terms of when to clap, stomp, make hand movements for ‘a big one’ ‘splish splash’ ‘squelch squelch’.

Interestingly, parents, carers, grandparents remained seated throughout, taking photos on mobile phones, chatting to each other, tending to younger baby-siblings. The young children enjoyed a sense of freedom from their parents and carers and the session clearly provided a safe and familiar environment.

*‘Line up! This way! One at a time, into the cave’.*

Very late into the session a mother (Black British) joins the group with a small baby asleep in a buggy.

At one point everybody claps the floor with their hands – the room reverberates through our bodies, through the furniture, through the building – the noise! The noise!

### ***Transformation of space: Animal Magic becomes Art Smarts***

The session concludes with the Goodbye Rhyme – which all the children (and many of the adults) join in enthusiastically. I notice one of the white, middle-class mothers pretend to nibble her baby’s chubby cheek.

The session is over ... in five minutes there will be a making/doing Arts Smarts – the space is slowly transformed from musical stage and stalls for the audience to crafting tables adorned with pre-cut out shapes, scissors, glue, glitter, pom poms ...



*Figure 8: Creative processes poster*



*Figure 9: Space reserved for activity*



## *Discussion and conclusion*

### *Maintaining connections to the local community through EYMM*

In many of its activities (collections, events, festivals) the museum was effective at working with, engaging and ‘creating & curating’ with groups from across the local community. However, the EYMM session did not appear to foreground this objective. The free provision was well attended, but other than the fact that the facilitators were long serving employees and local residents, there was little intentional connection to Bethnal Green/ the East End, the museum’s cultural heritage or connection to the Community Engagement strategy.

### *Developing/applying some of the good practice from Community Development*

Animal Magic could usefully take up some of the practices that the CDO undertakes in outreach projects so that the drop-in sessions could be more inclusive of a wider range of families than those that generally attend (i.e. well networked, middle-class families and their carers). At the time of this study the Family Learning Officer was embarking upon some dedicated research and development work with local Children’s Centres to explore possibilities for developing music-making sessions specifically for the under twos – which involved working alongside visual and movement artists. Making connections to the museum as space, and working with the collections/exhibitions as rich resources, is a potential avenue that might be considered (and useful to inform the development of the AHRC proposal for the larger project).

### *Negotiation/transformation of the space*

The context in which Animal Magic took place was visible and well located (families accessed the mezzanine level very easily). However, opportunities to engage with the materiality, history, acoustics, aesthetics of the museum building were not exploited. The ready transformation of the music-making space to arts and crafts activity (which succeeded in connecting to museum collections) was notable. The music-making was a pop-up activity that was very quickly disassembled and packed away. There were musical toys and instruments within some of the museum collections but these were not incorporated or connected to as part of the session. Similarly, the jungle adaptation of the Bear Hunt story could have made connections to museum artefacts or the local community.

### *Materiality and space*

Animal Magic, other than taking place on museum premises, and being facilitated by museum staff was in all other senses disconnected from museum as cultural space. Whereas outreach makes use of the museum collections and artefacts as inspiration for project work, Animal Magic did not explore possibilities available to use the space and artefacts to inform or connect to the music session. The mezzanine within the museum provided a convenient, ‘warm and free’ community venue. However, the materials that



were put to use (silk voile, hand puppets, fabric tunnel) generated interest and regulated bodies in interesting ways.



*Figure 10: Hand puppets from Animal Magic activity*

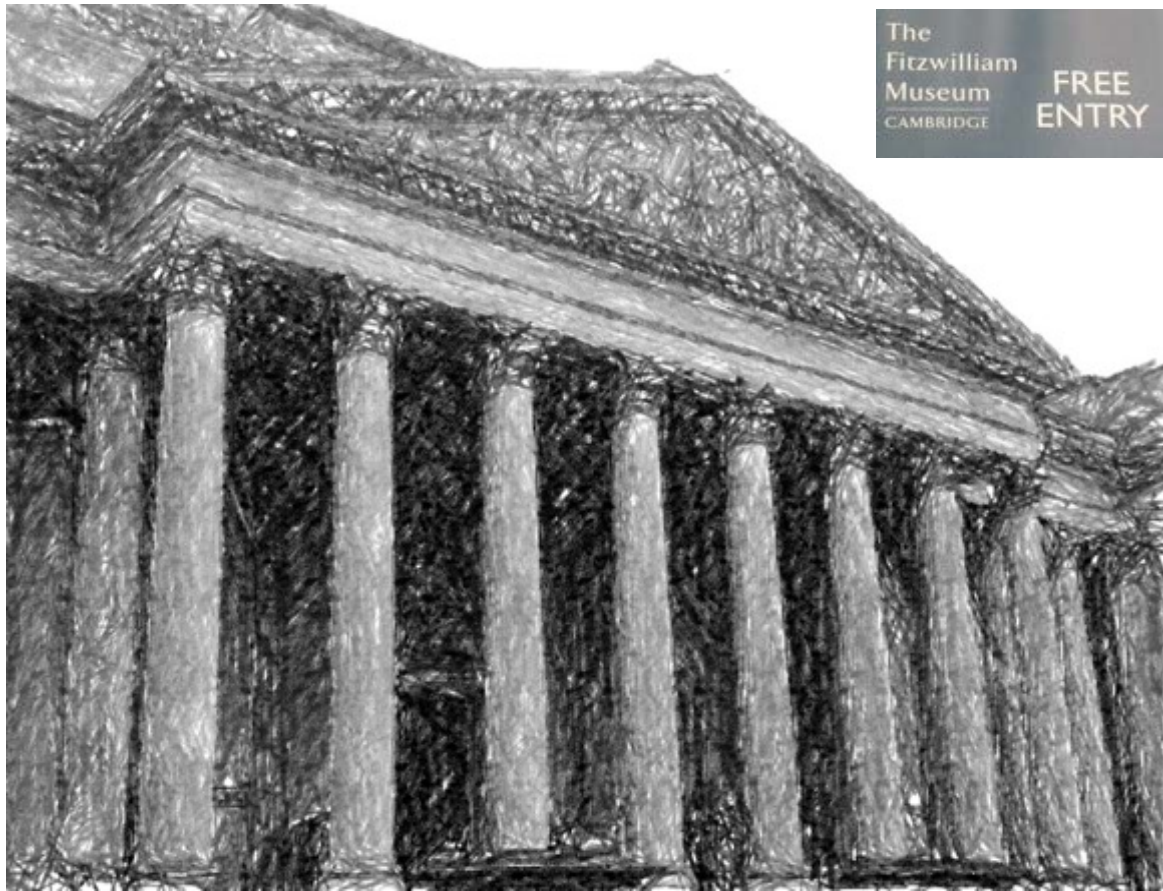


*Figure 11: Example of materials from Animal Magic*

### ***Musical activities***

The music-making session was clearly enjoyed by the children; they were engaged and animated and appeared to enjoy the structure and predictability. Whilst highly structured and adult-led the emphasis on rhyming, movement, counting and sociable interaction appeared to appeal to the children.

## 4.2 The Fitzwilliam Museum case study



*Figure 12: Fitzwilliam Museum Frontage (Top right: Free Entry signage)*

### **Introduction**

The Fitzwilliam Museum is the principle art and antiquities museum of the University of Cambridge. Its stated mission is: ‘to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence, by preserving and extending its world-class collections and by offering exhibitions and public programmes to engage as wide an audience as possible.’

The Fitzwilliam Museum leads the University of Cambridge Museums (UCM) consortium, a partnership of 8 museums and a Botanic Garden supported by Arts Council England with public money as part of their National Portfolio. The Fitzwilliam Museum and its fellow UCM are the principal cultural providers for the people of the city of Cambridge, the county of Cambridgeshire and surrounding areas, with an extensive public, educational and outreach programme which engages many 100s of thousands of local people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Fitzwilliam Museum collections include: illustrated manuscripts, musical manuscripts, fine printed books, sculpture, artefacts from Egypt, Greece, Rome, Ancient Near East, Africa and Asia. There are also collections of coins, armour, ceramics, musical instruments and paintings.

Cambridge has very low social mobility, ranked 5th worst local authority in the country for youth social mobility in the 2016 Social Mobility Index (Stearn, 2017), and the Museum's programmes seek to engage with this agenda and other local priorities.

### ***Audiences and Audience development***

The Museum's vision for audience development and community engagement, reflected in the UCM NPO programme, is for more people to be engaged and excited throughout their lives by the Fitzwilliam and other University of Cambridge collections. The Museum's stated vision for audience development and engagement is underpinned by the following values:

- 'We **welcome** everyone to the museum, respecting individual needs and creating a positive ongoing relationship with cultural spaces
- We **enable** learning from a wide variety of real objects in a unique environment
- We **encourage** creative, independent enquiry-based learning
- We **share** expertise in learning and collections
- We **collaborate** with audiences to plan our programme'

Guided by a strategic UCM-wide approach to audience development, the programme aims to build on existing strengths to develop and maintain partnerships in areas of low participation in higher education and cultural activities, and, as the principal museum service for Cambridgeshire and the surrounding areas, to provide a creative cultural learning service to meet the needs of a growing population.

As the lead for the UCM ACE NPO, the museum's approach to audience development is shaped by its commitment to delivering on UCM wide Audience Development Priorities (ADPs), as follows:

**ADP 1: Families** - To work to make the Museum a fun, inspiring and family - friendly local venue for families from all backgrounds through a range of paid for and subsidised programming.

**ADP 2: Adults** - To work to make the Museum as intellectually, emotionally and physically accessible as possible for adults of all ages and make our content relevant to their daily lives.

**ADP 3: Young People** - To run programmes which actively invite in, and provide opportunities for young people from diverse backgrounds to create their own cultural experiences.

**ADP 4: Underrepresented audiences** - To deliver targeted projects for those in our city and region who we know are under-represented in our visitor base, reducing barriers, perceived or actual to visiting, and actively enabling access and discovery.

**ADP 5: Schools and teachers** -To be an invaluable resource to, and provide support for schools, teachers, students, Further and Higher Education institutions in our region, and beyond, including supporting the University's

aspiration to ensure the widest possible student access to the University through targeted Widening Participation activity.

**ADP 6: Our City and region** - To be an active member of the cultural life of the city and the region, ensuring that we contribute to developing an open, accessible and creative community for all visitors to, and residents of our City and region.

**ADP 7: Our University Community and the wider HE sector** - To give University students and staff from Cambridge and the wider HE sector, nationally and internationally, the opportunity to engage with the collections for enjoyment, learning, teaching and research, working with departments, colleges and institutions within the University and joining in with the University's and wider HE sector's Public Engagement initiatives.

To shape audience priorities and programming, the Museum use audience research findings (including using audience segmentation), government datasets, and University Admissions Office data. In order to reach these audiences, the Museum works with a range of partners. In 2014 and in 2017, UCM held non-user focus groups with various audience segments, two of which were family-centred. The aim was to gather perceptions and assumptions about the UCM based on their marketing materials. Findings provided a range of insights including suggesting that there were mixed views about paying to visit (some thought there was a museum entry fee), and families' confusion about what different museums contained.

### ***Participants and data collection***

The case study comprised data collection from interviews, observation, photographs and online resources.

1. Interviews were conducted with:
  - Head of Learning
  - Education Officer
  - Early Years (EY) programming (family learning and EY settings)
  - Learning Associate: Schools and Families
  - Studio Support Assistant for education programming(Most of the above have a background in visual arts or education, with an MA in Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies).
2. Observations of the early years public programming session:
  - Baby Magic
3. Online resources were accessed November 2017- January 2018

### ***Learning and engagement programme overview***

The Learning Department work collaboratively with colleagues across the Museum and the wider UCM to develop and deliver programmes with a wide range of audiences:

- A **schools** offer includes a range of taught sessions across a variety of curriculum subjects. In the last three years, the museum has delivered over 2,000 sessions to almost 50,000 pupils from over 300 schools.
- The Museum is a member of **Local Cultural Education Partnerships** (LCEPs) across the region.
- Through strategic schools partnerships, they deliver projects targeting young people in receipt of Pupil Premium funding to support raising aspiration and attainment as part of working to address **social mobility** challenges in the city and region.
- A partnership with the Faculty of Education and the National Gallery offers placements for **trainee teachers**, introducing them to object-based teaching. The Museum also offer INSET and contribute to school governor training relating to cultural and creative learning.
- The Museum works with the University Admissions Office, college Schools Liaison Officers and departmental Outreach Officers on a **Widening Participation** programme and develop strategic relationships with target schools to create opportunities for longer term, in-depth engagement connecting pupils and teachers with the collection.
- A programme for **early years** audiences, including families with children 0-5, nurseries and community groups, engages our youngest audiences with the collection.
- Targeted projects and programmes support young people to connect with the collections and be inspired to achieve **Arts Awards**. These include local looked after young people, young parents, home educated groups and disabled young people attending a regular museum-based after-school club.
- 'Source' and 'Resource' programmes, and expanding 16+ offer, support young people's attainment at **GCSE, BTEC and A level**.
- **Work experience** taster days, placements, paid internships and apprenticeships support young people to explore and begin careers in museums.
- The Museum delivers a programme of regular free events for **families**, and offer a wide range of self-guided resources for families visiting independently.
- The **adult** programme includes talks and tours, practical workshops and study days, often linked to current research and exhibitions. The Museum plays an active role in the University's **Public Engagement** festivals and initiatives. They aim for an inclusive programme including activities for blind and partially sighted audiences.
- Ongoing programmes with community partners provide opportunities for adults who would not otherwise access the museum to participate in activities combatting social isolation. These include older adults with dementia and their care partners, older people living in the city's sheltered housing, and people who are homeless or vulnerably housed in the city.
- The Museum works with **health** partners including Addenbrookes NHS Trust, GPs and charities such as Arts and Minds on programmes promoting wellbeing.

These learning and inclusion programmes are supported from a range of sources including University funds, Arts Council England, City and County Council funding, trust and foundation funding, individual gifts and donations, sponsorship, and fees and charges.

## ***Musical activities at The Fitzwilliam Museum***

The Fitzwilliam Museum's founding collection contained an number of music manuscripts reflecting the founder's love of music and the current collection also contains a number of historic musical instruments and, with this in mind, the musical programme has been an established part of the Museum's offer for many years. There are a number of partnerships and projects with music organisations at the Fitzwilliam - including Promenade Concerts, partnership working with the Academy of Ancient Music, and an ongoing five-year partnership project with Britten Sinfonia Academy, which in recent years has included the provision of a family concert and in 2018 a focus on young composers (12-15 years old), offering each young composer a gallery space to compose a piece based on the paintings there. While some of these partnerships have included experiments with collaborations within the Early Years programme, this work has not been integrated into the ongoing offer.

It was noted that families are more likely to attend concerts at the museum when they are called a 'Family Concert'. These events employ an animateur to help the children understand and listen to the music. One experienced museum learning practitioner felt the children seemed to ignore the animateur, "...the children can understand the music for its own sake and they don't need some kind of guidance, she [the animateur] was ... a distraction." (Learning team respondent A)

## ***Family programmes***

Over the last fifteen years, The Fitzwilliam Museum has become more family-friendly, with staff resource, budgets and programmes dedicated to the audience. This has included introducing drop-in, open-door, family sessions under the Family First Saturday programme, self-guided trails and resources for a variety of ages, family events as part of university festivals and UCM initiatives, and targeted projects with community and education sector partners. It is common for several languages to be spoken at these family sessions (Fitzwilliam Museum Annual Report, 2016).

*If the museum just sits here with these things in it, it is not a neutral space. It won't be used by a random sample of people. So, for me, bringing groups in and creating events around the objects is a way of communicating about those things in a way that generates a relationship between people and the objects. So, it is about bringing new people into the museum but it is about the experience that they have here, that it is something meaningful for them. (Learning team respondent A)*

*Sometimes Museums are thought of as a 'place-maker', they help you feel you can form your own place-making within an environment. (Learning team respondent B)*

The Learning Associate for Schools and Families has noticed that the number of children arriving in buggies has increased in recent years and to suit the younger children the programme has been altered to include more collaborative learning in the studio space



and less time touring the museum. It is challenging to include activities for the wide age range that attend sessions (from babies to fifteen-year olds). There is also societal expectation to provide something extra:

*I think these days people are coming to a museum for an experience [...] we've just opened a code trail that families can do together. Outreach programmes also have to include these experiences. (Learning team respondent B)*

The Fitzwilliam Museum website ([www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk](http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk)) offers suggestions for self-guided family visits with ideas such as sketching, imagining, searching for colours, following a trail or playing I-Spy.

There is an outreach strand within the family learning programme, often delivered in partnership with other organisations. The Learning team works with the ChYpPs programme (Children and Young People's Participation Service) during school holidays to offer workshops based in communities, in recreational grounds or community centres. There are challenges in the outreach work:

*...when you're that far out it costs money to come in... This building has quite a big façade and its quite scary for families. Even if we've done the workshops and they've loved it, I could tell that many of the parents might not come into the city even if they wanted to come. So that's a really big challenge." (Learning team respondent B)*

Targeted family programme initiatives also include work in partnership with East Anglia's Children's Hospices, and initiatives to encourage children who have visited with school to return with their families through working with them to co-design branded family trails.

### **Public Programme for early years**

In addition to the Family First Saturday programme there is a public, early years-specific offer of activity sessions every two months (*Baby Magic* for children aged 0-2 years, and *It's Magic* for 3 to 5-year-olds). Sessions are very popular and places must be booked in advance (£3 per child in January 2018). About fifteen children and their parents / caregivers attend each session. The Museum also delivers special events aimed at Early Years audiences within the University's major public engagement festivals.

### **Community Engagement**

Community engagement is shaped by the audience development plan (see above), local needs analysis, stakeholder priorities, and discussions with strategic partners and community leaders. For many groups, a community ambassador, for example an engagement worker at a Children's Centre who advocates for the museum and is prepared to visit with families, is absolutely essential in getting people through the door. The work takes time. It can take 5 years to build trust and establish a community ambassador. Examples given by the Education Officer were of a Bangladeshi women's

group who brought their children to the museum and a local Chinese community that developed storytelling resources that were shared at the museum.

The audience development plan's priority audiences include young children and families, visitors with disabilities and those within the region (not just the city). Postcode information is collected from museum visitors through regular sampling of general visitors and family drop in activities (not collected from the baby / young child programmes). Working strategically with particular schools has also been identified in the plan and links with Headteachers have been developed with several schools.

For all the outreach work it was emphasised that partnership working with local communities and local museums is essential. All members of the learning team have a responsibility for contributing to work which reaches priority audiences, and within the team 1 FTE post is dedicated to targeted inclusion work with adult audiences.

### ***Early Years Community Engagement***

There is a substantial amount of work with children under five that is not public, having been built over several years through the development of relationships and collaborations with community groups and settings. This community engagement is more frequent than the once every two months *Baby Magic* and *It's Magic* public programmes offer. It is designed around a framework that is responsive to the needs of the groups. The aim of these 'hidden sessions' is to work with families who wouldn't access the public sessions.

Much of the work depends on partnerships and collaborations, e.g., a Nursery-in-Residence project, a collaboration between a nursery from Cambridge, the Botanic Gardens and The Fitzwilliam Museum. One aim was to see the benefits of having a dual setting to visit. The interview respondent found that the children, "...plaited together the issues that popped up in the garden with the paintings and objects in the space here in ways that we might sometimes have missed."

Partnerships with Children's centres have been important in this work, for example learning programmes focused on young parents provide opportunities to encourage these parents to return to the museum with their Early Years children as part of targeted sessions.

### ***An observation at Baby Magic***

I attended Baby Magic on Wednesday 22nd November 2017 10:00-11:00. The activity is described online as: *"Baby Magic: 0 - 2 yrs. This gently structured session allows babies to discover aspects of our collection through sensory exploration of colour, shape, texture, sounds and movement. We will enjoy the galleries together and get creative in the studio."* (<http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/calendar/whatson/baby-magic-4>)



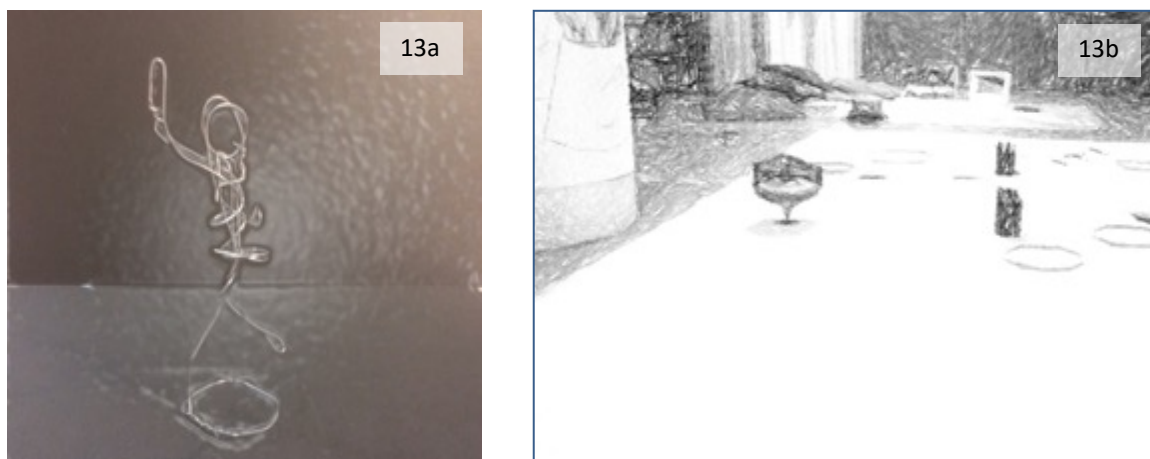
## ***Spaces***

Baby Magic took place in three different spaces in the museum building: the public gallery-space, the private studio space, and the in-between stair / lift spaces.

An additional informal space was the queue outside as we formed a group waiting to enter the museum. People began to chat. Not everyone was attending Baby Magic but most were - they had arrived in good time so were at the front of the queue.

The welcome began as soon as we entered the building with an unspoken invitation to gather at a square of material that had been set up in readiness with interesting items to explore, many of them circular in shape, as families signed in with the session facilitator. We were invited to make our way down to the Studio space, either by lift or stairs, to leave our belongings. Baby Magic had begun, and conversations developed between adults in the in-between space on the way to the studio space.

## ***Studio Space***



*Figure 13: Examples of objects from studio floor*

On entering the Studio, the circular theme was evident, with objects to explore later set out on the floor. Even though families visited to simply leave their bags, coats and buggies, the visual message about the theme of the visit was communicated.

## ***In-between spaces***

We returned to the Welcome Area for a brief introduction and explanation about the activities and the gallery that we would visit for the session. Everyone was invited to join in as much or as little as they wished and to explore the space in their own way.

We climbed two flights of stairs to the Degas Gallery; the facilitator led the way followed by parents and children. Parents walked up, some carrying their children, plus nappy / change bag and handbags. They used this time to chat together about everyday child-rearing: their child's sleep time, getting to the museum in time etc.

## *Gallery Space*

On entering the gallery, the facilitator took us to the statue of a dancer. “Can you see a dancer?”, she asked.

We gathered by a painting of dancers and wiggled our fingers and stretched our bodies because dancers have to warm-up. We said a rhyme based on ‘jelly on a plate’ – ‘hands upon your head’. We made the shapes that the dancer was making in the picture. We sang ‘Heads, shoulders, knees and toes’ in both English and French. The group gathered in a loose circle and children and parents moved off to explore as they wished in a free and relaxed manner.

The group was invited to move on to the next image, but a couple of children remained, interested in the wire surrounding the painting we had sat by and began bouncing it up and down. When a room guide moved into view, a helper subtly guided the children on to the next activity. Children walked confidently in the gallery space and were free to move around as they wished. Because the group session began at opening time, there were few other visitors in the gallery.

At the next painting, we sat and noticed the dancing master using a stick to tap the rhythm of the dance. The facilitator used a clave to tap out a rhythm on the floor, inviting others to join the tempo. She accelerated and slowed down, playing a ‘ta, ta te-te, ta’ pattern and inviting us all to copy it. Some children had wandered away to explore other parts of the gallery or the scarves that had been brought for the session to the gallery.

As we wandered around I was aware of lots of vocalising from some of the infants. We were invited to take time to walk around and explore some different movements: hopping, skipping, jumping.

We moved to another image of a spinning Degas dancer on a video loop. A tutu was offered as a prop to be worn. Scarves were given out to anyone that wanted to use the fabric for spinning and were used for singing ‘Wind the bobbin up’.

The group were invited to make their way back to the Studio for the next part of the session. Some families stayed a little longer in the gallery looking at objects and one child was running about in the space and encountered a tall gentleman by one of the paintings. They had a lovely non-verbal interchange and the child almost leapt through his legs to find their parent.

## *Returning to the Studio Space*

The studio had been prepared with the understanding that this is part of the ongoing conversation about Degas, his work on movement, and the display of the objects in the gallery. There was a large piece of paper on the floor for everyone to sit on with hoops and pens for drawing. At one end of the room were mirrors and LED lights. The room

was darkened for spinning lights to shine on the ceiling. The lighting matched the dim lighting of the Degas gallery. Children were free to draw as they wished. There was a take-home spinning toy to make and some parents did this activity - others didn't. Chatting and connecting happened informally. Children moved around, exploring the different objects, lights, mirrors and had opportunities for peer to peer interaction. Parents chatted together.

## *Discussion*

### *The space*

The facilitator skillfully 'positioned' the family groups in the museum. The learning team were mindful of the tensions that exist in having children in the gallery spaces: getting too close to the artwork, interfering with other visitors' enjoyment. Being sensitive to space during the session was significant in the process of designing and negotiating the space.

### *Welcome*

The prepared place at the door clearly invites young children: fabric and objects on the floor gave a clear signal to us as we entered for the activity that we were welcome at the museum. The facilitator was ready and smiling and this gave a clear and friendly welcome to anyone feeling apprehensive. It was cleared away the moment that we all moved to the gallery. This welcome area for children isn't permanent, it is only there for the session.

### *Making connections between museum objects and very young visitors*

Although there were musical features to many of the activities in the gallery space: the rhymes, the movement that was encouraged and the twirling with scarves, when it came to the overtly 'musical' part of the gallery activity it was adult-led and directed (e.g., copying rhythm patterns that were demonstrated and keeping to a pulse). The free vocalisations from the children that occurred in the space, perhaps prompted by the experiences, or expressing feelings, of being in the gallery with others, encouraged improvisatory child-led musical practices.

### *In-between Space*

The *Baby Magic* session offered different sorts of spaces for the parents and children to interact in together. Some were facilitated by Museum staff and others were very informal, yet all played an important part in building the group as a unit. The journeying between the various spaces within the museum for the activity session might seem to be an interruption and inconvenient for the families who have to carry bags and manage children on stairs. The facilitators lose control of the group during the periods of movement between spaces. However, my observation was that the moving-between times had a different atmosphere. Cohesion formed through the conversations in the in-between spaces, outside and on the stairs. Familiarity with each other was established

for the group-facilitated times which helped everyone feel a sense of togetherness in the unfamiliar spaces, for some, of the gallery and to a lesser extent, the studio. It had a different sense of time, not ordered in the same way as the facilitated aspects of the session. This liminal space and time seemed helpful for building a sense of safety and belonging amongst group members.

### *Leaving*

The session drew to a natural close and families packed up and left in a relaxed manner in their own time. Some chatted to me at the door: one parent explained that she came to the sessions because her parents had taken her to Kettle's Yard as a child and she wanted her child to feel relaxed and comfortable in museums. She felt that coming to the sessions had allowed him to be more creative. She thought this might be the last time that they come to the baby session - "he's got it now!" and it's time to move to the bigger group. Another parent said how much she'd loved it and that she'd been meaning to come for ages, but it was difficult to be organised enough to phone and book tickets; the sessions are so popular you have to be well organised as they only happen once every two months. She was delighted with herself that she had, at last managed it!

### *Concluding Comment*

Passing through the galleries I was struck by an image composed of light projected onto a classical bust (see figure 17) which echoed my experience of being together with the families in the museum. The messy, busyness of active children, parents / caregivers, bags, buggies, noise and perceived lack of understanding of rules of appropriate museum behaviour, are added to the museum, enhancing and giving new life to the artefacts and perhaps the building and organisation, by their presence and inclusion. The Museum organisation may have to adjust in order to include the new, or the young, this may require shifts in understanding about how to engender relationships between objects and people. The learning team are at the pioneering edge of the interface and this can sometimes feel tricky.



*Figure 14: Light image projection on classical bust*

By adding family-centred group musical experiences to the museum organisation, artefacts and objects, there will be the chance to enliven and animate the whole. Families can explore the material through the abstract temporal artform of music which in turn may impact the museum structures in a refreshing way giving a new sense of place-making and belonging.

## 5. SUMMIT WORKSHOP

### 5.1 Pedagogical underpinning of the workshop

A core aspect of the Summit was the workshop, which was planned and led by early childhood facilitator and music teacher Dr. Laura Huhtinen-Hildén. She has conducted R&D projects in Finland which have focused on developing music education as part of the outreach programmes of arts institutions. 'The Culture Bridge'- EU project (2008-2011) developed new models for broadening the use of music and arts education. This project was financed by the European Regional Development Fund and the State Provincial Office of Southern Finland. It developed fruitful learning environments for BA-students in Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences through interdisciplinary projects with arts institutions, especially museums. The core aspects of developing the projects in the museum context were engagement, participation and inclusion. These guiding thoughts have also shaped the pedagogical underpinning of the Summit Workshop.

The aim of the workshop as part of the Summit day was to enhance discussion and reflection about current practice as well as the future needs, wishes and demands of inclusive early years music practice in museum context.

The pedagogical underpinning for facilitating this participatory, creative music workshop for families relied on building a shared, creative space for interaction. This can be conceived as a way to support interaction in the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). The activities and non-verbal instructions invited the participants into a space and atmosphere, where a child and a parent can meet in optimal, scaffolded, free-flow moments of creativity. This can offer space for creative experiences beyond normal daily routine and contexts. This was realised by the pedagogical improvisation (Donmoyer, 1983) which allowed the initiatives of the participants to affect the process. The structure of the workshop scaffolded the feeling of safety and trust in the session, whereas the pedagogical improvisation made it possible to support the agency of the participants and include all members of the group in the musical artistic journey. In this approach music/arts specialist knowledge and pedagogical sensitivity were utilized (see Van Manen, 1991, 2008; Huhtinen-Hildén, 2012). The pedagogical aim was to enable negotiation of the meaning making in musical, creative community of practice (Wenger, 1998).

Although learner-centredness in education is a shared underpinning and discourse, there is a need for the implications of this approach to practice (see Huhtinen-Hildén & Pitt, 2018). This understanding needs deeper insight of 1) learning and experiencing music in group activities and 2) how this is facilitated through pedagogical actions and approach (see Biesta, 2013; Sawyer, 2011; Van Manen, 1991, 2008; Huhtinen-Hildén, 2012).

## 5.2 Description of the structure and activities

The workshop consisted of easy and enjoyable, immediately accessible activities with songs, music, movements and visual elements. The process of this workshop was on one hand carefully constructed to make use of various elements of music education practice and arts integration creating a multi-modal environment for experiencing, learning and dialogue as well as building a process of these actions. On the other hand, this preliminary planning aimed to ensure several pathways were available for pedagogical improvisation. The structure was also aiming to provide an environment which allows being open to influences from the group, the interaction and co-created musical/artistic journey.

The structure and instructions of the session were planned to convey the thought that all participants can enter the world of arts in their own way and with their own level of engagement, without any need for prior experience. The workshop was targeted for families with children under 5 and they were invited in the flyer as follows:

Join us for a relaxed, enjoyable 45-minute workshop of song, music and movement and explore the benefits of music and song for young children. For children under 5 and their parents and carers.

The structure of the workshop was created around 3 examples of visual art which all were inspired by water:

1. Painting by Victor Turner
2. Painting by Maggie Hambling
3. Nicola Ravenscroft's sculptural installation 'With the Heart of a Child and a Penguin'

### *Workshop 'Secrets of the Sea'*

In the following the outline of the workshop is described:

#### *1. Tuning: Gathering to the sea shore*

The group was guided to the room by the leader from the room where families had gathered before the workshop. While walking to the room the leader was singing the song 'Secrets of the Sea' (an easy tune especially composed for the family workshop delivered at Fitzwilliam Museum by Laura Huhtinen-Hildén as part of the MERYC, Music Educators and Researchers of Young Children, Conference, 2017) and taught this to the participants. The group gathered to sit on the floor where the 'sea shore' had been made of blue fabrics. In the room and at floor-level there were also sculptures by Nicola Ravenscroft.

The theme of the workshop -water - was introduced with the song, and with music by Miguel Castro (Cadence of Waters), which was played from the CD when entering the room.

## *2. Together in a boat*

Inspired by Victor Turner's painting that was highlighted on the wall, the familiar song 'row, row, row your boat' was sung together with actions. The families were sitting on the floor and rowing the boats in pairs, in larger groups or individually. The penguin - sculpture by Nicola Ravenscroft was used as an instrument: the tail can be played like an African thumb-piano and this formed a bass line for the melody. The song was sung in canon and it was also linked to the first song, it was gradually moved, in flow, to the song secrets of the sea.

## *3. Moving waves*

The picture of Maggie Hambling was shown on the wall and the group explored different types of waves, first moving the fabrics and scarves on the floor and then moving and dancing freely in the space. Movement was encouraged by listening to the music by Maria Kalaniemi. The structure of the music was utilized to create a dance of these movements initiated by the participants.

## *4. Sounds of the waves and water*

### **Rhyme - rhythm**

After the movement/dance section that allowed exploration and improvisation with movement, the intensity and the engagement of the shared focus and activity was drawn with a Finnish rhyme that tells about jumping to the water 'eppelin peppelin peurun meurun, kipulin kapulin kiurun kaurun, kiveltä veteen, pulskis'. This grew into a rhythmic game: first the whole group together holding the edges of Lycra-fabric, then a lap game with the same structure, then the rhythm and structure of the rhyme played with two large drums with the whole group gathered around them.

### **Painting- listening**

The group listened to Castro's 'Cadence of Waters' while painting the waves on brown paper using water.

### **Playing the instruments**

This co-created 'painting' was used as a graphical notation inspiring playing with instruments. This improvised musical moment utilised the musical material of the workshop and tied it together through improvisation.

## *5. Closing*

The closing section started with collecting instruments on the blanket and folding them inside it. Then the song from the beginning was sung with the lyrics 'secrets we have seen, secrets of the sea' gathering the group together, holding hands and gradually moving in a row out of the room.



## Pedagogical remarks and reflections of the workshop

Table X: Pedagogical remarks and reflections of the workshop

Process	Pedagogical remarks	Reflections/stimulated recall
<b>Tuning: Gathering to the sea shore</b>	<p>The beginning of the process acts as a musical encounter. The focus of this activity enhances the sense of togetherness, to build the group and the "space". It also introduces the musical material - the easy tune 'secrets of the sea' forms the frame for the session. The song creates a suitable 'surface' for improvisation with its modal scale. The song is accompanied with chords played with Kantele and on top of this the improvisatory elements are added. In this session the leader improvised with her voice while the group sings the tune. One of the students' assistants added a flute improvisation.</p>	<p><i>This song was new to the participants, but it became very familiar already in the beginning of the workshop. I use body language to engage and invite families to join in the singing: I realize myself going to the floor: I lie on the floor on my stomach, while still playing and singing: I interpret this as an intuitive suggestion of being in the same level/sharing this event together and inviting the group to 'jump to the unknown with me'...</i></p> <p><i>Also, the sculptures caught the attention of some children and they explored them while singing the song and adjusting to the space.</i></p>
<b>Together in a boat</b>	<p>The attention of the group is directed to the painting of Victor Turner, by asking them if anyone has noticed a boat at this seashore. The children immediately point out the painting on the wall, where two people are sitting in a boat. The group is invited to step carefully into the boat.</p> <p>The song 'row, row, row your boat' is familiar to the participants and therefore - with musical means - forms a safe space. After this encounter with familiar musical material the improvisation feels safer.</p> <p>The group is still sitting on the floor, but now are non-verbally asked to join the movements. This adds the level of participation and scaffolds the next phase where the group is moving in the space.</p>	<p><i>I sense when the singing has been established and atmosphere safe enough to add the canon. The group joins the familiar song 'row, row, row your boat' actively and the actions don't need instructions or supportive body language.</i></p> <p><i>At this point I also feel like encouraging the children to explore the penguin-tail-instrument with me. They also come nearer to me and the other sculptures. When I float with music from 'row, row' back to 'secrets of the sea' without interrupting singing, the group seems to be more confident in humming the tune of the song. I feel this creating a scaffolded, exploratory musical moment which we all share - the participating group, the observers in the room and the silent sculptures that are with us at the seashore ...</i></p>
<b>Moving Waves</b>	<p>The actions and musical environment so far have gradually become more participatory, growing into the point where it is safe enough to explore music with bodily movements.</p> <p>The actions/dance to Maria Kalaniemi's music is co-created from the movements created by the participants. To Kalaniemi's piece 'Iho' the group creates a shared dance facilitated by the leader in the moment with movements suitable for the participating families.</p> <p>The choreography of a dance is not a target or aim in itself but rather an exploratory suggestion to listen to the structure of the piece.</p>	<p><i>At this point of the workshop I feel that the atmosphere has been formed to be safe enough, which makes possible to introduce movement as an element of creative process.</i></p> <p><i>I have a feeling that this part of the process is most affected by the fact that there are people observing the activities in the room: The exploration of movement needs the scaffolding and safety of a circle. I had thought of moving freely in the space first to explore the different types of waves and collecting the movements for the circle dance from these explorations, but the moment is too vulnerable for this. We explore the waves with the fabrics and scarves while sitting on the floor instead and the dance is created in a moment after that in the circle while holding hands.</i></p> <p><i>In the video this looks more chaotic than it actually felt, because the gestures that the leader introduces as scaffolds for the situation cannot be seen. Also reactions to initiatives of participants have not been captured by the camera. The music in the video seems to be almost too loud which it was not in reality, it is caused by the technical issues of the recording.</i></p>

<b>Sounds of the waves and water</b>	<p>The action-rhyme 'eppelin peppelin' is brought up to this point in order to recreate the safety and togetherness after the more courage demanding dance section. This shared rhythmic game creates a pulse that the group is joining in and the happy nonsense rhyme is easy to follow. In the end the rest after 'pulskis' is a shared moment of non-verbal understanding.</p> <p>After the rhyme and the attention it has created, the group can focus on painting the waves with water and listening music.</p> <p>The painting is made living by selecting sound sources/ instruments to play these waves. This section allows repetition of the musical material of the workshop and revisiting the former phases of the session. The improvisation is now created with instruments.</p>	<p><i>My reflection of this moment relates to the magic of the shared nonsense language and the silent-part in the end: We are here together, in the same imaginative space, despite our different mother tongues we encounter at this moment.</i></p> <p><i>The improvised musical moment when the group plays from the painting that acts as a graphical notation, grows into a multi-layered group improvisation. The song 'secrets of the sea' appears as a shared base where the group joins together and from where the free exploratory musical improvisational journeys are made from. Also, different dynamics are explored at this improvisatory, floating section of the process.</i></p> <p><i>There occurs a musical dialogue: a girl with a drum 'takes the lead' and most of the group reacts to her initiatives for 'stop' and 'play again'.</i></p>
<b>Closing</b>	<p>The role of the closing is to mark the ending of the shared time and to move back to the everyday life after the artistic journey and imagination. The song is sung again with lyrics with 'secrets we have seen, secrets of the see'. The form - gathering together to a tight circle around the Lycra, holding hands also indicate the sense of togetherness and give a group a change to have a close look of those that shared the same moment.</p>	<p>The closing starts with gathering the instrument to the blanket and folding them inside it. Then we gather together, holding hands and gradually start to move in a row away from the room. A child from the group verbalizes this by saying 'bye, bye room'. I feel happy, grateful and tired by this experience and meeting the energy of so many people...</p>

## **6. THE SUMMIT: SPACES, STRUCTURE, PEOPLE**

Thirty-seven people attended the full-day event held at the Faculty of Education on 6th December. These were museum educators and researchers, academics, independent researchers, music educators and researchers, artists and early years practitioners and researchers.

### **6.1 A sample of questions and suggestions arising from discussion**

1. What is a museum?
2. Who is the space for?
  - How can these spaces become 'inclusive'?
  - How can music-making create a unique space in museums?
  - How can creating an early years space for ethnic minority families/communities become a familiar and accepted practice in museums?
  - How will you include 'translanguaging' with opportunity to celebrate the language skills of those who have English as an additional language i.e. the multiple languages of museum visitors?
  - How can you bring artists and artistic work closer/ central to the early years practice in museums for early years?
  - How can you engage small museums to take part in the projects, encouraging non-museum goers to go to museums and museums to attract non-museum goers through high quality bespoke outreach programmes?

### **6.2 A sample of comments and observations from participants**

1. Very worthwhile. Nothing disappointing.
2. The simulated museum workshop shared unfamiliar ways of creating an early years interaction within a conference style event with familiars in an unfamiliar setting that actually worked.
3. I thought the simulated museum workshop might be/ can be awkward but this had a lovely ebb and flow quality.
4. One of the takeaway messages for me was how valuable positive energy and enthusiasm is as the starting point for research and project beginnings – looking for the opportunity rather than solving a problem.
5. For more SEE APPENDIX B: SUMMIT REPORT ASSEMBLAGE

## **7. A MAPPING EXERCISE CONCLUDED: KEY INSIGHTS**

The major output of the pilot was laying the foundation for a grant proposal to be submitted to the AHRC. The AHRC proposal will be informed by the findings from the pilot study which provides clear evidence of established regional and national networks, participating museums and collaborative partnerships. Furthermore, the pilot demonstrates an effective research team that is working to extend knowledge and inform practice in this neglected field. The significant themes arising from this pilot include:

1. Space, place, materiality and music-making in museums
2. Early Years programmes, programming, family and community engagement in museums and museum discourses;
3. Practices, Practitioners, Play-based/child-centred pedagogies
4. Diversity, voice, cultural pluralism, creative pluralism in early childhood music-making

## **8. NEXT STEPS: EXTERNALLY FUNDED RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATION**

### **8.1 Externally Funded Research**

We have an AHRC grant writing meeting scheduled for Friday 16 February, 10-3pm hosted by the University of Middlesex, London where we will commence this process together with the MUSICEUM team and potential partners identified at the SUMMIT.

### **8.2 Presentations, Papers and Publications**

This substantial report (along with the Executive Findings) foregrounds the main findings from the case studies and drawn from interviews, observations, document analysis and the one-day SUMMIT. As expected the key themes which arise from the data provide clear gaps and theorisations for inclusion in two articles submitted to two peer reviewed journals collaboratively written by researchers.

At least, two articles, collaboratively written by research teams, each one led respectively by Co-PIs (Pam Burnard and Jayne Osgood), with each reporting on: (i) new and existing understandings of Early Years inclusive practices in museums and 'good practice' perspectives and challenges in ways of working collaboratively to deliver Early Years music programmes in museums; and (ii) a critically annotated review of relevant literature and findings from this pilot, drawing the links between results of other research and the results of this pilot. The two journals will include (i) The International Journal of The Inclusive Museum and (ii) The International Journal of Early Years Education. We will present the findings from this pilot at The Inclusive Museum Research Network Conference held at University of Granada, Spain 6-8 September 2018.

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## APPENDIX: SUMMIT ASSEMBLAGE

### THE SUMMIT: SPACES, STRUCTURE, PEOPLE

Thirty-seven people attended the full-day event held at the Faculty of Education on 6th December. These were museum educators and researchers, academics, independent researchers, music educators and researchers, artists and early years practitioners and researchers. The day proceeded by a series of research insights, invitations to new thinking and creative provocations.





### Summit purposes

Professor Pam Burnard opened the summit with its purpose: to explore potentials for partnership and focus research questions ahead of the core project team's writing of a research funding bid. Participants were invited to share the expertise they brought with them from diverse professional contexts.

***Words: Professor Pam Burnard***

"We're knowledge creating.  
We're knowledge exchanging."



### Artefacts and sentinels

Artist Nicola Ravenscroft provided some pieces from her sculptural artwork, 'With the heart of a child'. These functioned as symbols of childhood, sentinels for sustainable creative futures, and as 'artifacts' for participants to explore during the workshop sessions.

***Words: Artist Nicola Ravenscroft***

"may we allow the clarity of a young child's paper clean perspective to inform our adult vision"



### The Musiceum project

Professor Jayne Osgood presented an overview of "Musiceum" which included theoretical underpinnings related to museums, childhood and participatory music experiences; the value of socially engaged arts practices as research method; the literature review; and 2 case studies.

***Words: Professor Jayne Osgood***

"we have identified what is not well known about: the interstices of museums as spaces where music-making can take place, specifically with the intention of engaging very young children and their families"



### Research presentation

Dr Christina McRae explored how young children and their families experience museum visits. Across 3 museums, researchers identified favourite exhibits and spaces, how children made meaning in these spaces, and how family traditions emerge around those spaces and exhibits.

### *Key words from the research:*

“repeated visits”, “movement”, “modes of engagement”, “children’s autonomy”, “navigating”, “architecture”, “position and scale”, “the floor”



### Simulation of a Museum Space

Dr Laura Huhtinen-Hilden led a music-making workshop for very children and their carers in a simulated museum space, observed by summit participants. This is described in detail elsewhere in this report.

### *Words: Dr Laura Huhtinen-Hilden*

“The music gives us all that is needed – words take us away from the experience.”



### Reflections on the simulation

Key thoughts: the value of not instructing but allowing the artist’s musical journey to carry children; the way silences, repetitions and music orchestrated atmospheres; children’s movement and interaction shaping the dynamics

### *Words from carers afterwards:*

“beautiful”, “sensory”, “magical”, “calm”, “embodied”, “stimulating”



### Activating reflection on practices

Dr Laura Huhtinen-Hilden then led a session to activate reflection by summit participants on their experience of Early Years music-making and community engagement. Participants first showed an artifact representing that experience and talked about their related practice.

#### *Words: Dr Laura Huhtinen-Hilden*

"These creative sharings are another modality for our thoughts. There is so much knowledge, practice, experience and thinking in this room."



### Creative sharing

In the second part of this session, the groups of participants were invited to draw together objects and ideas that especially resonated in their discussion of experience and practices, and to create a collaborative performance or installation arising from them.

#### *Words during creative process*

"okay, shall we start?" "you lead..."  
 "I don't know if there's any way we can..."  
 "I like that ..." "there's a connection..."  
 "shall we practise it?"  
 "how will we introduce it?"



### Synthesising thoughts arising from performances

Takeaway ideas: learning from children not providing for them; avoiding preconceived ideas about what should be happening; the need for continual challenge; valuing the perspectives of the child and what communities bring to the museum; risk-taking and vulnerability.

#### *Words after creative process*

"music can order and structure time..."  
 "we enrich our collections by bringing young children into them..."  
 "music can bring objects alive"





### Storying Early Years arts practices and programmes

Dr Jessica Pitt led table discussions:

1. What are you currently doing?
2. What are the issues and challenges for you in having music activities for Early Years in your context?
3. In a dream world, what would be happening?

***Words: Dr Jessica Pitt***

“supposing you had... this is dream-time... if instead you had...”



### Feedback: issues and challenges

Physical barriers to collections... getting the right partners together... involving more men... arguing for the value of this work... children’s centres closing... how to link to the collections... pulling budgets together... funders’ imperatives... spaces to talk about practices

***Words on challenges:***

“People in Early Years are quite good at subversive tactics so while being seen to be delivering on a policy or a tickbox or conformity, in fact there are some quite creative practices that go on”





### Feedback: dream worlds


Despite prompting the discussion of challenges overwhelmed possibility thinking. After short initial contributions about the dram of involving “every single child” in an experience offering “freedom to respond to the space”, participants kept circling back to the challenges.

***Words on dream worlds:***

“We’ve got loads of dreams, just not necessarily solutions...”

 <p><b>The Summit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercultural understandings</li> <li>• Interdisciplinary dialogues</li> <li>• Sharing a spectrum of practices and experiences</li> <li>• Unfolding and performing research</li> <li>• Propositions for the mediated space of museums</li> <li>• Transforming the understanding of 'music' as sound and movement</li> <li>• Through an intercultural and new materialist lens</li> <li>• Using affective methodologies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Synthesis and futurities</b></p>
<p>Professors Jayne Osgood and Pam Burnard presented an expression of possible outcomes of a future research project, and invited participants to consider on what might be missing from this. Then participants were asked to consider this question: what would like us to have done in 3 years' time?</p>	<p><b><i>Words: what is missing?</i></b></p>
<p>"It's okay for some people not to be engaged. It's a right and an entitlement but it's not a requirement."</p>	

	<p><b>Reflections and takeaways</b></p>
<p>Wishlist: links with other sectors e.g. mental health; connect the worlds; don't underestimate what young audiences might want; see children as competent creative collaborators; involve Bridge Organisations; include children's voices; don't build a website, build a hub and a legacy.</p>	<p><b><i>Words: what would you have us do?</i></b></p>
<p>"I'd love to have this conversation with visual artists and drama people. Actually, I'd love to have this conversation about creative arts not specialist art forms."</p>	

	<p>Artist Nicola Ravenscroft finished by explaining how her sculptural artwork is about creating a unique space in which people are brought together so that the children can share the message they bring about our future.</p>
<p><b><i>Words: Nicola Ravenscroft</i></b></p>	<p>"The idea of doing these guys was that if I got them working together as a group and interacting with us, they would be like harbingers."</p>