

15–23 November 2014



Being Human

A FESTIVAL OF THE HUMANITIES

Funding awards

The UK's first national
festival of the humanities,
engaging people with
innovative research

beinghumanfestival.org

 [@BeingHumanFest](https://twitter.com/BeingHumanFest)

[#BeingHuman14](https://twitter.com/BeingHumanFest)

Led by



SCHOOL of
ADVANCED STUDY
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Supported by



Arts & Humanities
Research Council



BRITISH
ACADEMY

for the humanities and social sciences

Being Human: A festival of the humanities - 15–23 November 2014

Funding awards

Being Human Festival – Aberdeen

Dr Kenneth Skeldon, University of Aberdeen

This mini-festival will be a prominent and ongoing feature of Aberdeen's vibrant annual calendar. Events will highlight research projects across the university, including Bridges and Gaps – an intimate, emotionally-charged evening featuring dramatic readings and performances of transcripts from participants in mental health research.

Heritage together

Professor Raimund Karl, Bangor University

As part of the university's Co-production of alternative views of lost heritage project, community members will participate in guided field trips to heritage sites in North Wales. During the trips, they will be encouraged to take photographs of the heritage artefacts and environments to upload to a specially designed website. The trips will culminate in a hands-on 3D printing technology workshop, where participants can learn how to create 3D models from their photographic images.

Feeling funny/being human: what can humour tell us about 'being human'?

Dr Sharon Lockyer, Brunel University

This multi-format event is divided into three parts. The first is designed to be a lively and accessible discussion, to examine the relationship between humour and being human. The second, an opportunity for audiences to meet, and interact, with a Joking Computer and the finale is the Funny Women Players comedy improvisation group in a live performance.

Voicing gender: vocal authority for the public platform

Dr Jane Boston, Central School of Speech & Drama, University of London

Live discussions and online submissions feature in this event, in response to an article by Cambridge classicist and author Mary Beard about the need for consciousness-raising around what is meant by the voice of authority in society, Voicing gender will commission three podcasts about speaking out in a public place. They will explore the ways in which embodied vocal strategies, developed and researched within voice training, can help to inform the positioning of that authority for a number of speakers and thereby contribute to their successful reception.

Facing out: The new humanities

Professor Barbara Graziosi, University of Durham

This event will comprise interactive public workshops, multi-media exhibitions and a public lecture. The public will be engaged in new research based on encounter and collaboration – between medieval and modern science, between health professionals and experts by experience, between ancient authors and later readers who imagine their faces.

Visualising voices

Professor Jolyon Mitchell, University of Edinburgh

Visualising voices involves the screening of two films, both produced by the Scottish Documentary Institute (SDI), and directed by researchers at Edinburgh College of Art. *I Am Breathing* (Emma Davie, 2012) and *The Edge of Dreaming* (Amy Hardie, 2010) are award-winning investigations into how the arts and humanities can help us interpret, engage, and interact with experiences of being human beyond the traditional realm of the arts. Following the screenings, Roanne Dods, an important innovator in the field of the impact of the arts in Scotland, will chair a discussion panel on the issues raised by the films.

From a Cornish window: individual, landscape, community

Dr Kate Hext, University of Exeter

This multi-platform mini-festival takes the broad theme of being human and tailors it specifically around the dialogues, tensions, and relationships between the individual and their environment. The main events, held at the Royal Cornwall Museum, will feature short story and painting competitions with local schools, a trail around the museum's exhibits and academic talks on piracy, Cornish literature and the poetry of place.

Only human? Being with animals, elements and environments

Professor Deirdre Heddon, University of Glasgow

This event brings together established and early-career researchers from film, geography, philosophy and theatre studies, for a festival of art and ideas. Events include performances, films, installations, audio and guided walks and culture café discussions focusing on our interrelations with the 'more-than-human' such as water, architecture, islands, pets and gravitational fields.

Wilder being: destruction and creation in the littoral zone

Professor Jane Downes, University of the Highlands and Islands

A coming together of archaeologists, artists, environmental scientists and the local community for a field workshop at one of Orkney's coastal archaeological sites, which is eroding into the sea. Participants will observe and record artefacts and materials using photography, 3D laser scanning, measured survey and phone apps. Young artists and textile designers plan to create a 'wilder mann' or 'wilder being' costume, constructed from the local environment and influenced by the folklore of the islands. This wilder costume will feature in a live, contemporary performance – a fusion of past and present.

A roving soul: walking the city with Walter Benjamin

Dr Campbell Edinborough, University of Hull

Drawing on the work of the philosopher Walter Benjamin, this event will present a newly-created audio walk for urban environments. Through A Roving Soul, participants can examine his engagement with cityscapes and consider how his ideas about image, phantasmagoria and the flâneur can help promote an increased depth of engagement with the history of the environments in which we live and work. The audio-walk (available for download as a podcast) will encourage listeners to go for a walk and re-experience their local urban contexts in Hull and beyond.

My life in advertising

Dr David Clampin, Liverpool John Moores University

This events series will extend and expand the life of historic advertising. Working in collaboration with Merseyside Maritime Museum, researchers will show how sources including Second World War advertising and propaganda and advertising posters used by shipping lines can be utilised in a range of contexts and for different purposes. These include reminiscence therapy, primary school resources and as a significant part of our modern visual culture.

Exhibiting modernity: arts and politics in Italy, Spain, Brazil and Argentina

Dr Ignacio Aguilo, University of Manchester

This exhibition will explore cultural and political responses to the driving force of modernity in Italy, Spain, Brazil and Argentina between 1909 and 1945. It will offer a range of visual and literary material encompassing both high and popular art and culture, from Fascist architectural designs by Sironi to Borges's literature and Lorca's and Mário de Andrade's poetry and from realist painting to Picasso's Guernica.

Forever young: eight decades of youth culture told by people who were there

Mrs Helen Malarky, Manchester Metropolitan University

Forever young is an original project designed to bring together a multi-generational group of North West residents to talk about their experiences of being young throughout the past 80 years. Their recollections will be filmed and shown on the internet and at a live event, where the participants will also take part in a collective public discussion led by Dave Haslam, author, DJ, and youth culture expert.

Un-musical sonic fictions: inventing your own music

Mr Charlie Bramley, University of Newcastle

This event series will gather together members of the public who consider themselves 'non-musicians' or 'unmusical', to participate in improvised music-making workshops, culminating in a night of live performance to a public audience. Each session of collective improvisation will be recorded, produced and released for download via the independent distribution platform Felt Beak.

18th century legacies: the past in our present

Dr Claudine Van Hensbergen, University of Northumbria

This series of workshops, public lectures, talks, discussions, debates and film screenings – taking place at city centre venues across Newcastle – will explore the legacies of the 18th century. There will be screenings and academic-led discussions of Nicholas Hytner's *The Madness of King George* (1994), Jane Campion's *Bright Star* (2009), and Michael Winterbottom's *Tristram Shandy: A Cock and Bull Story* (2005).

Being human: subversion and rebellion

Professor Pat Thomson, University of Nottingham

Working with a range of partners in the East Midlands, these events across Nottingham will focus on being human as expressed through subversion and rebellion. The programme will include an exploration of mythical and real characters and events of rebellion synonymous with the region – Robin Hood, Mary Cavendish, Byron, the Luddites, the 1831 Nottingham revolt, D.H. Lawrence and Alan Sillitoe. Public debates, soap box street interventions, family fun days and film screenings will complete the line-up.

Ancient fragments

Dr Laura Swift, Open University

Greek tragedy was the wellspring of modern drama, yet the plays that survive today represent less than 5 per cent of what used to exist. But many of these 'lost plays' are not entirely irrecoverable, for fragments still survive. Collaborating with the theatre company Potential Difference, Ancient fragments will create a piece of modern theatre based on fragments of Greek tragedy. This is an opportunity to stage texts that have not been performed for 2,000 years, and to rediscover pieces of theatre history that have been almost entirely forgotten.

The shock of the old: glass plate negatives and photographs of late 19th century England

Dr Sally Crawford and Dr Katharina Ulmschneider, University of Oxford

The information contained in tens of thousands of historic lantern slides amassed by the university over the last 120 years, will be unlocked during workshops, exhibitions, a Victorian lecture performance and a 'tagathon'. The Victorian lecture performance, based on an original 1880s travel series, will take place in the St Margaret's Institute community hall, which was built by public subscription in 1889. Both the hall and the contemporary lantern slides were designed to provide a locus around which to demonstrate the vitality and public relevance of the humanities.

Understanding others: why the humanities matter

Professor Constantine Sandis, Oxford Brookes University

Join a day of philosophical dialogues, presentations, debates, and conversations to be held at the Ashmolean Museum. Human beings regularly have trouble understanding each other: our words, thoughts, intentions, motives, actions, outlook, and lives can be opaque or distorted to our fellows. This programme will focus on a range of exhibits in the collections of the museum and address issues such as: understanding in the humanities vs. the natural sciences; explanation and understanding in historiography; the role of museums in understanding other cultures and their heritage; understanding others via interfaith dialogue.

How we read: a sensory history of books for blind people

Dr Matthew Rubery, Queen Mary, University of London

This exhibition of assistive technologies designed to help blind people read will introduce visitors to a range of reading formats beyond the ink print book. Held at the Birkbeck, University of London's Peltz Gallery, a variety of books will be on display in the form of embossed print, Braille, talking book records, speech synthesizers, screen magnification systems, and optical character recognition reading machines. It will encourage reflection on the ways in which different sensory modes have been privileged at certain historical moments and changing communities of readers.

Be(com)ing human: a tale of two caves

Dr Chris Hunt, Queens University, Belfast

An exhibition of posters, small objects and video display backed by a dedicated website with materials from the AHRC-sponsored Niah Cave Project and the ERC-sponsored Hauh Fteah Project. It will communicate important advances in our understanding of the sophisticated nature of early modern human's use of landscapes, resources and ritual to penetrate and flourish in extreme environments such as the rainforests of Southeast Asia and the deserts of North Africa.

Memory banq-uet: food and acts of remembering

Dr Sara Pennell, University of Roehampton

A event on food and memory that centres on a communal meal incorporating different registers of food (ingredients, objects, materials and performance) as memory transmitters, enhancers, and representations of past events. Encompassing the sacramental and symbolic, familial, literary, neuro-physiological, the banq-uet will also bring together interdisciplinary scholarship on the roles of food and food texts in historic and contemporary practice.

Punch and Judy's chocolate cornucopia of human knowledge

Dr Barnaby Dicker, Royal College of Art

During the festival week, at London's Old Spitalfields Market, a handful of 'purveyors of fine ideas and complimentary foodstuffs' (read 'scholarly street hawkers') will engage members of the public in playful, yet productive conversations, over matters – philosophical, social, political, economic, aesthetic – directly relevant to their lives. The hawkers will attract the attention of passers-by with exuberant streams of marketplace verbiage promoting their wares of confectionaries, hot chocolate and ideas.

Memory Reels: singing cultural memory through film

Ms Stephanie Vos, Royal Holloway

This event will explore the relationships between artistic communities, archives, and research while illustrating their tensions and also their creative potential. At its heart is a screening of the South African documentary, *An Inconsolable Memory* (Aryan Kaganof, 2013), the reconstruction of the history of the Eoan Opera Group, through interviews with former members, photos, newspaper clippings, archived footage and sound recordings. Discussions between London's creative community, archivists and researchers will explore types of cultural memory, particularly memories of mixed ethnic communities and conflict. The award-winning filmmaker Aryan Kaganof will present a workshop for young film makers, delving into the creative potential of the film as an increasingly accessible and affordable medium for documenting cultural practices and community memory.

Wealthy Sunday

Dr Jane Hodson, University of Sheffield

A multi-format participatory event themed around the famous quotation from John Ruskin: 'There is no wealth but life'. At its centre is the question of what it is that we, as humans, value in our lives. *Wealthy Sunday*, held at Sheffield's city-centre Millennium Galleries and neighbouring Winter Gardens, will comprise talks by academics and other specialists, plus interactive stations run by a mix of academics and local cultural organisations. Many will include family-friendly activities like craft making, storytelling and object handling.

Fortitude and frailty: reading the human condition in Yorkshire, 1850–1950

Dr Melodee Beals, Sheffield Hallam University

This Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon springs from the university's research expertise in popular fiction and regional newspaper printing. A collaboration between the English and history subject groups, it will integrate neglected or absent Yorkshire authors and printers into Wikipedia and share the department's ongoing research with the wider community.

The sea and me

Ms Zena Hilton, University of Southampton

This one-day event will bring together humanities researchers, local cultural institutions, and the wider public for a series of talks, workshops and hands-on activities around the theme of the sea. Conceived and delivered by humanities researchers working with a number of other partners, the day is open to everyone and includes a variety of activities. As a port city, Southampton has a long history of interaction with the sea and the industries surrounding it, so this event will be an opportunity for the public to learn about, and engage with, innovative humanities-based research on the sea across space and time.

Being mass observed

Ms Fiona Courage, University of Sussex

Mass Observation's objective to gather information from the people, by the people, for the people, has been going on for more than 75 years. The result is a substantial data archive, which is extensively used by scholars and students to support learning and research in the humanities. The university will coordinate two events exploring different ways of accessing and updating this data. In the first event, students and developers will be invited to The Keep (home of the Mass Observation Archive) to participate in a hack day. Using data and knowledge gained from the hack day, archival visualisation tools will translate Mass Observation data relating to morale and happiness during 1937–45, into 'maps' to be used as a backdrop to the event.

Being Human: A festival of the humanities - 15–23 November 2014

Funding awards

Rediscovering Dylan

Dr Elaine Canning, University of Swansea

To mark the centenary of Dylan Thomas's birth, Wales's most famous poet, and to complement the diverse activities being put on for the Dylan Thomas 100 Festival, the Research Institute for Arts and Humanities will hold a series of events as part of Being Human. Themed Rediscovering Dylan events will include theatre creative writing workshops, public lectures and seminars, a book launch and exhibition.

Wear your culture

Professor Dilys Williams, University of the Arts London, London College of Fashion

This visual exploration of facets of fashion that embody the notions of citizenship and human connection will explore what role fashion can play in being human. It will be led by Dilys Williams, director of the Centre for Sustainable Fashion, with Zakee Sharriff, fashion and print designer and collaborators from other disciplines such as architecture and systems planning.

Desire and decadence, murder and martyrdom: experiencing the ancient world in silent cinema

Professor Maria Wyke, University College London

Scattered across the UK, Europe and the US, in the vaults of film archives, there survives in fragile condition, a very large number of interesting, entertaining and thought-provoking silent films that are set in ancient Greece and Rome. Participants will have the chance to view some of these rarely seen, and aesthetically rich, silent films that were originally made and exhibited about a century ago. Through their enticing use of gesticulation and look, beautiful and exotic sets and costumes, colour, music and movement, these films draw their audiences into an ancient world where life is lived intensely, differently or to an extreme. Screenings will include piano accompaniment, introductory talks and post-screening discussion.

Human; nature, nurture, now

Dr Joanna Heaton-Marriott, University of Central Lancashire

A programme of activities will take place over several days, including workshops, musical performances, dramatic tableaux, debates, researcher Q&As, a mini film festival and a range of hands-on activities in the Ideas Showcase. Confirmed events include: Demon Drink; Hard Times and Hard Travellin'; Our Impact; Spot the Lie; High Stakes; Our Place in the Universe.

From Humanism to the human: a medieval and Renaissance journey

Dr William Rossiter, University of East Anglia

Did being human in the medieval and Renaissance periods mean the same thing as being human today? Did the humanities play the same role in shaping understandings of what it meant to be human? And how can reflection on the changing nature of the humanities over time help us to understand the role of the humanities today? This two-part event – in collaboration with Norwich's major archives, the Norfolk Record Office, Norfolk Heritage Centre and the Castle Museum – will tackle these questions. Drawing on new historical research, academics, archivists and non-academic respondents will engage in a series of interdisciplinary dialogues, showing how particular local books and manuscripts illuminate global questions about the changing nature of the human and the humanities.

Romancing the gibbet: public punishment and local memory in the Georgian West Country

Professor Steve Poole, University of the West of England

The occasional, and extraordinary, 18th century practice of hanging and/or gibbeting some felons (exhibiting their bodies to public view in iron cages) at the scene of their crime, was intended to leave an indelible and exemplary impression on disorderly peripheral villages and small towns. They were often staged in remote locations before very large crowds and were spectacular, processional events. Historian Steve Poole, poet Ralph Hoyte and artist Michael Fairfax will use public performances involving poetry, sculpture, music, and sound installations in these places to promote deep engagement with the past and its impact on the present, and what it is to be human.

Acting against the grain: non-traditional Shakespeare

Dr Paul Prescott, University of Warwick

It is claimed that Shakespeare explored what it is to be human more intensively and creatively than any artist before, or since. This event will bring together university academics leading two major research projects exploring Shakespeare and his work as a mirror for cultural identity, with Shakespearean practitioners from English-speaking theatre in North America and the UK. These performers have overcome many obstacles – racial and gender stereotyping, ingrained casting habits and pre-conceived cultural expectations. A panel discussion in front of a live audience will be videoed and distributed widely through a network of websites. The questions will be sourced from the public through social media.

Within the walls: heritage, public history and the historic city

Dr Sara Rees Jones, University of York

York is a city of complex, layered and cacophonous history. The past clamours for attention, from the rich archaeology preserved in its anaerobic soil to its stock of medieval monuments and major archive collections, from the architecture of Georgian society to the invention of the Kit-Kat. The week-long multi-media and multi-format series of events is being organised to involve those who work, volunteer and participate with the city's past, both locally and remotely. The focus will be on research in public history and cultural heritage management exploring the multiple meanings of the past in the present.

Enquiries

Please contact Rosemary Lambeth:

E: rosemary.lambeth@sas.ac.uk

T: 020 7862 8695