ART MUSEUM ATTENDANCE AND THE PUBLIC REALM:

THE AGENCY OF VISITOR INFORMATION IN TATE'S ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES OF MAKING THE ART MUSEUM'S AUDIENCES

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements of London South Bank University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

This research programme was funded
by the Arts & Humanities Research Council,
and carried out in collaboration with Tate art museum

December 2019

Abstract

This study presents an original contribution to knowledge in its investigation of Tate's strategic practices of audience, via materially-traced networks of action. In recent years, museological literature has examined issues of access and evaluation, their relation to cultural policy, and the wider framework of value delivery within the public realm. The present study employs ethnographic observation over a fifteen month period, combined with a theoretical approach, to trace and describe the social construction of Tate's understandings of its audiences. The study provides insights into how the visitor information is generated, distributed, mediated, valued and applied across the various departments of the museum, and in what forms it exerts agency upon the daily practices of the art museum. This study advances understandings of audiences within museological discourse by moving beyond the customary calls for the generation of more data, or improved data-collection methods, to consider the effects of the application of visitor information in the formation of audiences, and the significance of this agency in terms of structures of power.

Keywords: Audiences, evaluation, key performance indicators, ethnography, Actor Network Theory, legitimacy, public value

Statement of redaction

In order to safeguard the anonymity of Staff members, the identity of participating research informants at strategy meetings, at All Staff meetings and subsequent interviews, has been anonymised. In order to protect the confidentiality of commercially sensitive material, data that relates to Tate's working practices and operational performance, gathered during the doctoral fieldwork process, has been redacted, at the request of Tate. In those instances involving sensitive data, the process of the application of that data is described, without disclosure of the specific data. Data that are available within the public domain, [e.g. Grant-in-aid funding awarded, Tate membership numbers, social media presence, annual attendance figures, temporary exhibition visitor figures, self-generated income, trading costs, donated and purchased works of art], sourced from Tate's Annual Reports, Press Releases, Annual Accounts for the Board of Trustees, from Tate's website or from governmental reports or publications, are retained. (See: Inventory of redacted content, Appendix).

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Introduction

This study investigates the Tate art museum's strategic and operational practices of audience, via materially-traced networks of action. Funded by the Arts & Humanities Research Council, this collaborative research follows and deconstructs the workplace strategies, operational routines and complex "ensemble of procedures" (De Certeau,1984,p43) that are involved in the generation of the art museum's situated institutional knowledge of its audiences. The study seeks new understandings of how Tate makes sense of its visitor typologies and behaviours, and analyses in what ways this data is applied to working practice, shaping the cyclical formation of the multiple conceptualisations of audience that circulate the museum.

Whilst mapping this 'landscape of practice', with its boundaries, overlaps and connections (Wenger, 1998 p118), the study also explores the alignment of Tate's internal and external institutional narratives of audience, and moreover, relates Tate's affirmed organisational priorities to those of evolving government cultural policy and to concepts of value within the public realm. In a parallel theoretical process, the study also considers the socially-constructed field within which the museum generates and applies its knowledge of its audiences (Bourdieu, 1979), and the apparatus of operations of power, representation and agency that reflect the art museum's ways of thinking "embedded in ways of operating" (Foucault, 1977, 1980; De Certeau, 1984, p45).

In accordance with the *Museums and Galleries Act 1992*, Tate is one of fifteen museums sponsored by the Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) in a three year cycle of grant-in-aid funding, and is therefore required to provide free admission to its permanent collection. Holding full charitable status, and therefore designated 'for public benefit', the family of four Tate art museums, Tate Britain, Tate Modern, Tate Liverpool and Tate St Ives are exempt from regulation by the Charities Commission. The Prime Minister approves appointments to Tate's Board of Trustees, who collectively provide governance, act as guardians of the public interest, and delegate responsibility to the museum Director for the daily operation of the art museums. This research focuses on the original Tate site, which first opened in 1897 and is now described by Tate as 'the home of British art from 1500 to the present day': Tate Britain. Here, the Director's Office is located, beside the River Thames at Millbank, in the London borough of the City of Westminster.

Chapter One

Figure 1: Tate Britain, Millbank

> ‘We have all developed an obsession with attendance as a way to justify what we do.’
>
> (Max Hollein, Director of the Stadel Museum, Frankfurt, *The Art Newspaper*, 31.3.2016)

1.1 Attendance, always attendance

Whilst museological discourse has tilted over the past thirty years from foregrounding issues of access and diversity (Bailey & Falconer, 1998; Selwood, 1999; ACE 2010; DCMS, 2016), to questions of excellence (McMaster, 2008; ACE, 2010) and intrinsic value (Jowell, 2004), to notions of economic impact (ACE, 2013) or wider public value (Holden, 2004; Museums Association, 2013), to co-production and distributed practice (Bautista & Balsamo, 2011), and recently, to the combined peer and audience review of quality standards (ACE, 2014), underpinning these debates, a continuum of audience measurement and the ritualised reporting of visitor data, at both intraorganisational levels and externally to funders, has codified a performance evaluation substructure for increasingly audience-centric museum practice. The museum has shifted from being about something to being for somebody (Weil, 1999, p229), and counting and identifying that ‘somebody’ has never been a higher priority. The advent of twenty-first century accountability linked to funding, requiring the evidence-based justification of operational practices within the cultural sector, and translated into quantifiable financial and non-monetary measures, reflects both the shifting political landscape and the corresponding evolving role of the contemporary museum and its place not just within the cultural sector, but also within the wider public realm. No longer confined to institutional annual reports, UK museum visitor attendance figures have become contested measures of success, which now inform organisational, regional, national and global fields of comparability, with data published by Arts Council England (ACE), the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA), the Museums Association, and feted in an annual review in the international arts journal, *The Art Newspaper*.

Attendance figures matter, not only in terms of compliance and the mission fulfillment of the publicly-funded museum, but also representationally, in the reduction of the museum as institution to the codified and subdued Nietzschean "calculable, simplified, comprehensible object." (Nietzsche, trans. Kaufmann & Hollingdale, 1968). And yet, in semantic terms, the linguistic scope of the term "attendance" remains problematic in the context of this study. Defined by the Oxford Dictionary of English as the action of 'going regularly' or 'being present at a particular place or event' (2010), attendance entails an intentional presence at an event within a physical space. With its linguistic origins in both late Middle English and Old French, in 'atendre', meaning 'to give one's attention to', for our study, therefore, *museum attendance* focuses primarily on the physical presence of visitors within the geographic boundaries of the object of their attention: the site-specific institution.

Critically, the evolving role and practices of the 21st century museum, and its reconfiguration as a civic-minded, community-building, learning space for knowledge production processes (Lundgaard & Jensen, 2013) and social sharing (Stylianou-Lambert, 2016, p.13), with blurred boundaries of in-person or online engagement, exposes the limitations of such fixed understandings of attendance. Within the new museum landscape, the participatory fluidity between attending, visiting, sharing and co-creating, both in person and online, disregards the early modality and constraining conceptual boundaries of audience *attendance.* In practice, visitors, attenders, participants, viewers, co-creators and multiple other conceptualisations of those publics engaged with museums, either in-person or via the digital realm, are forecast, tracked, interviewed and counted, with their motivations, behaviours and levels of satisfaction analysed, codified and reported as never before. Museums are tied not only to performance management, but to the performance of performance management. How far museums have come.

1.2 From philosophy to instrumentalism, via notions of public value, and a financial crisis

From early sites of philosophical discussion rooted in antiquity, to Renaissance spaces displaying royal collections with condescending authority, to post-war institutions entrusted with the collecting, conserving and sharing of culture, public museums, their priorities and practices, constantly evolve. Propelled by dynamic, external factors within the political, economic, social or technological environment, and also by shifting theoretical approaches to the conceptualisation of the institution and its place within the public realm, museums, at their core, still define and transmit knowledge, certify values, articulate selected social ideas, reproduce identities, explore cultural differences, and nurture meaning-making. In the United Kingdom, over 2000 national, local authority and independent museums co-exist within a complex ecology. Non-linear, fluid relationships connect and demarcate territories of institutions in receipt of central funding, philanthropy or sponsorship, underpinned by needs-driven entrepreneurialism, and capturing Holden's use values and non-use values (2004, p31) in a blended model of mixed economies.

As not-for-profit organisations, with surplus revenues reinvested in the delivery of institutional aims, museums offer multiple and contested modes of value, described by Moore and Benington as "planned outcomes which add benefit to the public sphere" (Moore & Benington, 2011, p43), and with this benefit ideally determined and authorized by the public itself (Moore, 1995). In non-monetary terms, these contributions to the public good include the intrinsic, experiential value for the assorted visitors or audiences, or the role in building trust in institutions within the wider public realm (Holden, 2004, p10; Holden, 2006, p17).

Equally, the museum's value can be framed by its instrumental contribution to the measurable attainment of externally-imposed economic, social and policy objectives, or by ratio calculations of the financial return on funding investment (Scott, Dodd & Sandell, 2014; Scott 2007), or by the indirect contribution of cultural spaces to urban regeneration and renewal (Bianchini & Parkinson, 1993).

In whatever terms the value of museums is framed, unequivocally, the cultural sector has been forced to respond to the global economic downturn of 2007/8 both strategically and operationally, and in unprecedented ways. The UK's cultural infrastructure has turned inside out, in a "wholesale renovation born out of an urgent requirement to change or die" (Fleming, 2009). Prior to the advent of the Conservative-Liberal coalition in 2010, thirteen years of heavy investment in the arts by the Blair-Brown uninterrupted Labour administrations of 1997 to 2010, saw total grant-in-aid funding by the Department of Culture Media and Sport rise from £188m in 1997, to £424m at the onset of the global economic crisis of 2007/8, and peaking at £453m in 2010 (ACE 2010,p.9). This long period of robust public spending on the arts was matched by record levels investment by private individuals and businesses, with individual-giving reaching £363m and sponsorship totalling £686m respectively in 2008, (Arts & Business, 2010). Over the same period, public sector debt rose from 42% to 50% of GDP (1997 to 2010), as government spending increased faster than GDP growth, with healthcare almost doubling in real terms, and marked increases in spending on education and social security. Lower tax receipts from 2008 onwards, driven down by falling house prices and lower corporation tax, combined with the financial bailout of Northern Rock, Royal Bank of Scotland and Lloyds, pushed the public sector debt still higher between 2008 and 2013.

The biting austerity measures heralded by the change of government to a Conservative-Liberal coalition in 2010, targeted a steeper rate of deficit-reduction, in response to the new financial reality encapsulated by outgoing Labour Treasury minister Liam Byrne's note to his Liberal Democrat successor, "There is no money" (Byrne, 2010). These measures included principally the reduction of welfare, the shrinkage and redefinition of the state, and a 40% reduction in government funding for councils between 2010 and 2015. The Arts

Council was tasked with halving its own operating costs from £22m in 2010, to £11m by 2015, with real-term total budget cuts of £457m over the same period. The contraction of public funding is set to continue, with local councils in England to receive zero funds from central government by 2020, but retaining instead revenues raised from business rates.

Since 2010, new ways of working have been devised: with reduced opening hours, a reliance on volunteers, part-closures of sites, the outsourcing of jobs, and instances of collections put at risk of "unethical" disposal to meet funding shortfalls (Museums Association, 2015). In synchronicity with the adopted mode of crisis-management, museums have been reconceived as entrepreneurial and participatory institutions, with visiting publics and digitally-native online audiences actively sought and relocated to the foreground, whilst distributed sites and channels offered by museums are deployed as receptive spaces for co-production, contestation and civic debate.

As the operational priorities of contemporary museum practice submit to this reconfiguration, museum visitors, formerly framed as passive recipients of institutional messages (Scott et al, 2014, p.10), step forward to become actors engaged in the shared participation and interpretation of culture, simultaneously co-creating the relevance of the institution, inadvertently building resilience to governance scrutiny, and contributing to the delivery of the funders' multiple strategic agenda.

> "An enhanced understanding of audience, current and potential, has to be at the heart of any twenty-first century museum's business model." (Falk, 2016 p21)

This new era responds not only to the economic and technological drivers of the immediate past, but also to the prevailing social and policy contexts of the preceding seventy years. (Abt 2011; Karp, Muller Kreamer & Levine 1992; Harris 1990).

1.3 The roots of formal public arts subsidy, in Britain (1940-1979)

Public spending on the arts in Britain was first formalized in 1940, with the Government's foundation of the Committee for Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA). Chaired by economist John Maynard Keynes, CEMA's purpose was to champion the idea of 'The Best for the Most', encouraging national pride and fostering war-time camaraderie. To Keynes, culture was conceived as the high point of civilization (Upchurch, 2004, pp.203-18). Entering the post-war era, in 1946, Keynes requested £500,000, or £19.2m at current values, from Churchill's outgoing Cabinet, to replace CEMA with the British Arts Council; he was granted half that sum, and a Royal Charter. Keynes described the new Council's purpose as "to
stimulate, comfort and support any societies or bodies brought together on private or local initiative, which are striving with serious purpose and a reasonable prospect of success to present for public enjoyment the arts of drama, music and painting." (Keynes, 1982, p.368).

In an innovative departure, the British Arts Council was to run on a discretionary basis, as an autonomous body at "arm's-length" from government influence, supporting artists and arts organisations via devolved budgets and decision-making powers, without political interference and safeguarding the nature of creative expression (Bell & Oakley, 2015, p.56; Mirza, 2012, pp29, 43; Parliament. Committee publications, 2011). This problematic model, with theoretical slippage in terms of centralized control and institutional autonomy, continues to fuel debate on strategic objectives, and regulatory evaluation and reporting practices operating within the cultural sector to the present day.

As Britain entered the 1950's, and troops were sent to engage in supporting America's defense of South Korea, the Festival of Britain was devised to promote the post-war recovery of the nation, demonstrated by Britain's contribution to the arts, sciences and technology, with a 27 acre site constructed on the South Bank, London. The Festival, which also commemorated the centenary of that early union of culture and commerce, the Great Exhibition of 1851, featured a vast

Dome of Discovery, showcase pavilions, the futuristic Skylon tower, a 3D cinema, and the Royal Festival Hall, which stands today. The immediate demolition of all but the concert hall, by the incoming Conservative government in 1951, would presage reversals of cultural initiatives in the years to follow, with policy changes driven by the contradictory approaches of successive governments. Both in terms of creative practice and funding, the 1960's in Britain were regarded as a golden age, with an emerging generation of world-class theatre actors, directors, producers and screenwriters: Olivier, Gielgud, Richardson, Redgrave, Brook, Hall, Miller, and the Arts Council duly distributed "public largesse across an unprecedented range of local and national festivals and institutions, as well as arts education" (Judt, 2010 p.377). The following decade, at an international level, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) began to develop statements on cultural policy, specifically, on the protection of cultural heritage, and the impact of displaced minorities in Europe (Mirza, 2012, p.42).

In 1970's Britain, the effects of the international oil crisis, surging inflation and spiraling unemployment, overlapped with the surfacing of the radicalised Community arts movement, which arose from the counter-cultures of the late 1960's (Bilton, 1997, p.1). Arts activists engaged with marginalised or minority groups to address areas of financial, cultural, environmental or educational deprivation and exclusion, with workshops central to their working practice, and proposing "the use of art to effect social change and affect social policies, and [encompass] the expression of political action" (Kelly, 1984, pp1-2). This drive for social justice and community engagement, mediated by cultural activism, was taken up by the administrative body responsible for the entirety of London, the Greater London Council, initially under the Labour leadership of Reginald Goodwin, and later, Ken Livingstone. The GLC's priorities in relation to the cultural sector involved the favouring over high culture, of funding for community-focused projects and previously marginalized ethnic artists (Hylton, 2007, p47), combined with open-air entertainment and festivals, as a means of empowering those constituents that the GLC sought to engage, in "a model that linked together the economic case for the arts and culture, with the case for social justice and community engagement" (Mirza, 2012 p59-60). In the year that the

GLC was dismantled by the second Thatcher ministry, Mulgan and Warpole's pioneering *'Saturday Night or Sunday Morning'* (1986) recognised the deep involvement of governments in the structural endorsement of hierarchies of taste and value, that privileged elite art forms over those which were most associated with the framing of a sense of collective identity, but remained outside the conventional institutions and policies of governments, (Stevenson, 2010 pp82-83).

1.4 Crises in the exercise of authority, New Public Management, and the National Lottery (1980- 1996)

As the recession of the early 1980's began to bite, under Margaret Thatcher's new Conservative administration, manufacturing capacity fell by one fifth, and unemployment doubled from 5.7% to 13%, between 1979 and 1982 (Office of National Statistics, 1996, p.7). In the wake of the Brixton riots, Lord Scarman's report identified that "racial disadvantage" risked becoming "an endemic, ineradicable disease threatening the very survival of our society"; however, Scarman denied that fundamental and systematic processes of racial exclusion existed in Britain, and instead attributed heavy-handed policing practices to individual misjudgment, rather than as a consequence of institutional racist attitudes (Scarman, 1981; Neal, 2003, p.71). The exercise of authority was again a matter of public scrutiny, during the miners' strikes of the 1980's, and specifically, at the confrontation at Orgreave in 1984; despite evidence that the South Yorkshire Police had fabricated evidence, it was decided in June 2015 that the Independent Police Complaints Commission would not mount a formal investigation.

The reputation of the police service was once again under scrutiny in Lord Justice Taylor's report, following the Hillsborough stadium disaster of 1989, when the manipulation by police of police witness statements sought to deflect responsibility for the deaths of 96 football fans, in what would ultimately prove to be the longest case heard by a jury in British legal history, (Conn, 2016). More recently, in 2012, the "plebgate" altercation involving Conservative MP Andrew Mitchell, and police officers at the exit of Downing Street, culminated in the charging of one officer with misconduct, and legal costs of over £2m payable by Mr. Mitchell, following a civil libel case, as issues of selective impunity and the distribution of power within the public realm spilled over into messy public debate.

In the meantime, the interval between the publication of the Scarman report in 1981, and the Macpherson report (1999), which followed the death of Stephen Lawrence, marked a shift in the trajectory of race relations media discourse. “The [Macpherson] inquiry facilitated a period of unprecedented introspection, examination, reflection and catharsis regarding race relations in Britain” (Mcghee, 2005, p.17). Less progress was noted, however, in the media coverage of racial equality policy-making, (Neal, 2003, p,72).

At the same time as this evidence of abuse of institutional power was unfolding in the public domain, new models of governance emerged as the product of sweeping reforms that sought greater control and efficiency in the use of public funds, and which were also triggered by structural transformations brought about by the transition to a post-industrial society (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992, pp19-20). The management practices and regulatory environments of market organisations were applied to public services at the same time as large swathes of public service provision were opened up to competition from the private sector (Scott, 2013 p.4; O’Brien, 2014, p26). The conceptualization of this interventionist, modernizing agenda, New Public Management, and its deployment as the dominant set of governance ideas of the past thirty years, had advanced through New Zealand, Australian and European public administration systems, from the late 1970’s onwards. Private sector models of performance evaluation were developed with tight budgetary controls, internal markets, contracting out and tendering processes, in top-down constructed networks of hierarchical state control, articulated and performed as evidence-based policy (Gamble, 1994; Scott, 2013, p.4; Lukes, 1974). A new emphasis was placed on an “information infrastructure” (Schuster 2002), with metrics of measurement, data collection, evaluation, target-setting and performance indicators of ‘success’ (Belfiore, 2004, p.183), and critically, these processes and measures were linked to funding, reducing notions of merit to exchange value (Mcguigan, 2004, p42).

This “capitalization of cultural production” (Miege, 1989) was exemplified by Rees-Mogg’s lecture at IBM’s headquarters in 1985, in which the justification offered by the former chair of the British Arts Council for the public expenditure on the arts, was articulated in terms of the financial return on investment: the 1984/5 expenditure of £100m of public funds was successfully converted into a £125m net gain, taking into account the National Insurance contributions and taxable income of the 25,000 arts workers, and also including in this reckoning, the sum saved in unemployment benefits (McGuigan, 2004, p.44).

Since its launch in 1994, the National Lottery has enabled the distribution to Good Causes (defined as such, in part, by the public and local communities) of in excess of £34 billion, supporting over 450,000 projects in the arts, sports, heritage, charity, voluntary, education and environmental sectors. The National Lottery also raised £2.2bn towards the cost of staging the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, with funding supplied for five major new sports facilities at the Olympic Park: the new VeloPark, Aquatics Centre, Handball Arena and Hockey Centre.

Proceeds from the Lottery were intended to augment rather than replace public expenditure, although this proved contentious when institutions that already received Arts Council funding were allocated further financing for major capital schemes. To date, 66 arts capital building projects have received investment of £5m or more, including the Sage and The Baltic in Gateshead, The Lowry in Salford, The Hepworth Gallery in Wakefield and Walsall’s New Art Gallery.

A key justification in successful lottery applications was the potential to attract new visitors, as cultural venues sought funding for new sites, extensions or refurbishments, as well as projecting increased visitor spending through their catering and retail facilities, or through corporate hire of their new public spaces (Davies & Selwood, 2005). Whilst the bulk of the early funding, from 1994/5 to 1998/9 was applied to capital building or site improvements, the early measures of reported success were defined by the funds distributed, rather than any other interpretation of effectiveness, (Selwood, 2001 pp.142-143).

1.5 New Labour's modernising agenda, the DCMS, free admission, and Taking Part, (1997 – 2010)

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Tony Blair, Labour set out an ambitious, modernising agenda, to tackle poverty and social exclusion, to address inequalities in health and educational outcomes, to narrow socio-economic gaps, reform public services and reduce social inequalities, particularly in childhood. Falling waiting-times for health services, improved pupil-teacher ratios, and increased access to early years education were all measures of success (Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion, CASE, 2013). A new regime for planning and controlling public expenditure, Total Managed Expenditure, was introduced in 1998, combining Departmental expenditure limits and annually managed expenditure, and shifting from the previously annual arrangement, that had been in place since the 1960's, to a three year planning cycle: the Comprehensive Spending Review. This new process, involving measurable and demanding target requirements, articulated in the Public Service Agreements, was to provide greater certainty for publicly-funded bodies, and flexibility for long-term planning and management.

With the Department of National Heritage renamed as the Department for Media, Culture and Sport, the new department's explicit concern was to contribute to the government's manifesto commitments via "joined-up government", adopting a new strategic role in the delivery of cultural policy and funding, and arguing for "recognition of the part the arts, sport, tourism etc. can play in delivering government policies beyond this department's direct interests" (DCMS, 1998, cited in Selwood (2002). The first Creative Industries Mapping Document (DCMS, 1998), aimed to systematically define and value the economic contribution of these industries to the UK, with the rapid rate of employment growth in the creative sector, at twice the rate of the rest of the economy, informing the government's 'blueprint for action' (DCMS, 2001). The claimed social impact of arts-based projects (Landry 1993; Matarasso 1997) was a familiar narrative in policy statements of the era, although substantiation of these claims with robust methodologies of evidence-gathering was less consistent (Selwood, 2002).

In accordance with Labour's policy priorities of access and inclusion, and with the aim of not just increasing visitor numbers, but also broadening the socio-demographic profile of visitors, free entry was reintroduced at National museums in England, after a period of charging owing to pressure from the Conservative government from the 1980's onwards. The free entry policy was phased into practice, first for children in 1999, and then the over 60s in April 2001, with universal free admission to permanent collections, but not to special exhibitions, from December 2001. The devolved Scottish and Welsh administrations also supported free entry for all from April 2001, (Museums Association).

Whilst there is some evidence of the effectiveness of this policy, in terms of visitor numbers, with overall attendances at all DCMS museums introducing free admission, including London and the regions, increased by 59% in the twelve months following implementation, (with the V&A's visitors increasing in number by 111%), there were also indications that the uplift was initially driven by a higher frequency of attendance amongst existing affluent visitors. Visits by ethnic minorities and low income groups, who were the primary intended beneficiaries of the free admissions policy, actually fell by 15.5% between 2009/10 and 2011/12 (Selwood, Museums Association). The policy failed to address the issue that not just price, but also a deficit in the prerequisite cultural capital were barriers to engagement (Bourdieu, 1984).

The annual major household survey of participation in sports and culture, 'Taking Part', launched in 2005, in partnership with DCMS, Arts Council England, Sports England and Historic England, and except for the addition of a longitudinal element from 2012/13 onwards, continues today largely unchanged. With a random sampling methodology and data collected via in-person interviews with a combined total of over 12,000 respondents aged 16yrs + (adults), and children aged 5-15yrs, the report covers engagement with the arts, participation in heritage, attending museums, galleries and libraries, and sports participation. Data on the motivation for both participation and non-participation are collected, together with frequency of participation and barriers to entry. In the final 12 months leading to the General Election in 2010, the Chief Executive of Arts Council England, Alan Davey, noted the potential "perfect storm" for the arts, as the recession took hold, with reductions in public funding, corporate sponsorship, income from trusts and foundations and local authority funding were all diminishing (Davey, 2009).

1.6 The Conservative 'Big Society', and the end of "the age of irresponsibility" (2010 to 2015)

The flagship policy of the Conservative 2010 election manifesto, albeit subsequently deployed in the Coalition partnership, the 'Big Society', sought "to help people to come together in their neighbourhoods to do good things" (Cameron, Liverpool 2010), by transferring and redistributing power from the centralised structures of state, to a motivated and enabled electorate who would embrace localism, and take up an active role in their communities. This reframing of the citizen in relation to the state, with society itself becoming the locus of social change, was intended to empower the public to help run local services, alleviating dependency on central government provision, and at the time of contracting local funding. Third sector organisations were conflicted: simultaneously sceptical of the purpose and content of the 'Big Society', whilst also seeking "an advantageous position in a space of new opportunities" (Macmillan, 2013, p.13).

> "I don't have an issue with using the term or even agreeing with the general thrust, but I'm also quite happy...sneering with the rest of my colleagues about the cynicism with which it's being promoted."
>
> (Macmillan, 2013, p.13).

In this field or domain, the actors endeavour to construct sets of understanding of new iterations of the Third Sector field, from conflicting counter-narratives, and to develop strategies to protect their position accordingly.

The historical narratives of cultural policy in the UK, through successive political administrations, trace the increasing legitimization of state intervention in building social equality and inclusion within not-for-profit arts (Mcguigan, 2004), and in ways that require quantifiable measures of efficiency and effectiveness. At odds with the principles of "arms-length" policy-making, this controlling intervention develops alongside a simultaneous, ethos of entrepreneurialism required of publicly-funded organisations, resulting in a collision of the ideologies of the economic right and the cultural left (Appleton, 2001). This collision of incompatibility is framed by the neoliberalist assumption that market mechanisms are the superior means for allocating resources, producing and circulating cultural products, (Mcguigan, 2004, pp33-60).

Even the notion of evidence-based policy is turned on its head. Matthew Taylor, who formerly ran Blair's strategy unit, observed recently:

> "We're not talking about evidence-based policy-making, we're talking about policy-based evidence-making. That is to say, what politicians say to civil servants is that 'this is the policy that I'm determined to pursue, now provide me the best case that you can make for it…Politicians are constantly trying to deliver more than they can, and in that environment, civil servants are expected to support politicians in trying to fulfill that impossible task, rather than challenge politicians with evidence and questions that might force politicians to change their mind.' (*Deciding fast and slow* (2016). BBC Radio 4, 18 January).

At the Bank of England Open Forum in London, on 11th November 2015, policymakers, economists, trade unionists and ballot-winning members of the public gathered at London's Guildhall, to discuss the need not only for collaboration between public authorities and private market participants, but also for the restoration of public trust in financial institutions, in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008, and the ensuing $235bn of fines and compensation, paid by twenty of the world's biggest banks. In seeking "to reverse the tide of ethical drift", and to map a positive future for financial markets, the proposals focused on the need to rebuild the markets' social license, defined as "the consent of society to operate and innovate" (Bank of England, 2015), which had been gravely eroded by a loss of trust amongst the public and an increasing lack of accountability, both perceived and real. The misalignment between the orientation of the markets and their own supporting infrastructures, was identified as a principal cause for the lack of economic resilience, compounded by weak regulation and inadequate transparency, (Haldane, 2015).

Governor Mark Carney announced "the age of irresponsibility is over." Current professional practice would have to change, as current financial practices are "much more about capturing value from the consumer and much less about offering value to the consumer." His objective was to "turn the bank back towards a customer-centered organisation rather than a product-centered organisation." At a time when funding for the arts, at the level of national museums and galleries, is unexpectedly pegged at a 5% reduction in real terms between 2015/16 and 2019/20, and with the Chancellor George Osborne framing this decision by describing the arts as "one of the best investment we can make as a nation" (Osborne, 2015), the question becomes, in terms of retaining a trustworthy social legitimacy, or the consent of society to operate within the public realm, whose interests are currently served by current investment policy in the arts?

1.7 The global economic environment

The "age of irresponsibility" described by Mark Carney defined the unravelling economic environment inhabited by international and domestic markets, characterized by growing consumption patterns within a stagnant economy (see Fig.1), and therein, the global cultural sector. The easing of banking regulations, allowing global financial institutions to adopt their own risk-assessment models, combined with complex chains of debt that traced back to irresponsible subprime mortgage-lending in America, and low interest rates driving the pursuit of riskier assets offering high returns, led to the financial crisis of 2008, with economic shockwaves reverberating worldwide (Verick & Islam, 2010; Crotty, 2009; Hossein-Zadeh 2014; *Economist*, 7.9.13).

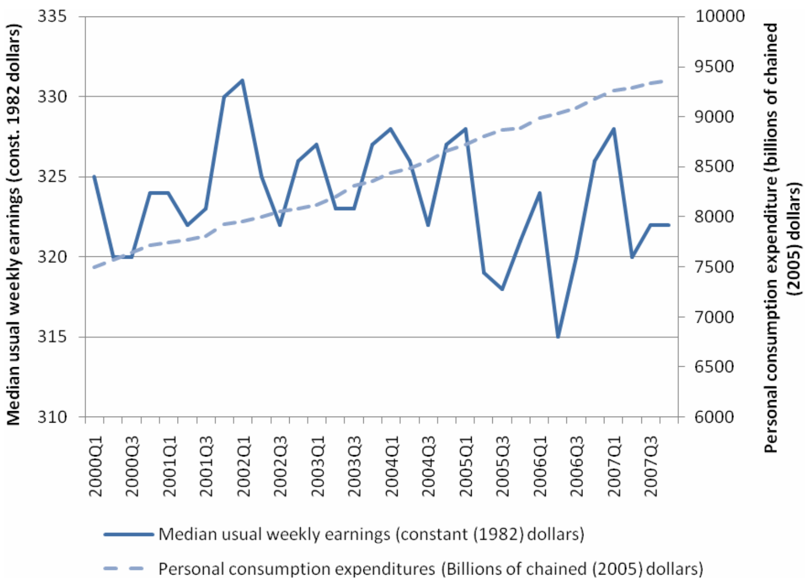

Figure 2: Growing consumption in the US during the boom years despite stagnant real wages, 2000-2007. Source: Bureau of Labour Statistics, www.bls.gov, and Bureau of Economic Administration, cited by Verick & Islam (2010, p11).

In the preceding forty years, post-war global economic order had been reshaped by the gradual disintegration of manufacturing processes: the Fordist model of mass-production of homogenous products, with standardised production processes, delivered by a de-skilled labour force, and mediated by powerful trades unions, met with the resisting economic forces of market saturation, the expansion of the East Asian markets, and cost-effective international outsourcing (Clarke, 1990; Tempest, 1996; Feenstra, 1998). In 2008-2009, global trade in manufactured goods collapsed by an unprecedented -29%, driven by tightening trade credit and increasing protectionism enforced via trade barriers (Eaton et al 2011; Amiti & Weinstein 2011; Chor & Manova 2011; Brock, 2009).

Such was the sensitivity of markets to the acknowledgement of economic recession, that in the aftermath of 2008's economic meltdown, the International Monetary Fund resisted defining the term:

> "There is no official definition of recession, but there is general recognition that the term refers to a period of decline in economic activity... Most commentators and analysts use, as a practical definition of recession, two consecutive quarters of decline in a country's real (inflation adjusted) gross domestic product"
> (http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2009/03/basics.htm. Accessed 23.7.16)

Instead, the IMF outlined a set of criteria for identifying the conditions associated with global recession:

> "a decline in real per-capita world GDP, backed up by other global macroeconomic indicators: Industrial production, trade, capital flows, oil consumption, unemployment rate, per-capita investment, and per-capita consumption" (Davis, *The Wall Street Journal*, 22.9.09)

On four occasions since World War II, these economic conditions have been met: in 1975, 1982, 1991 and 2008. Were it not for the discarding of the previous classification that required global GDP growth of <3% , by IMF's chief economist, Olivier Blanchard, then six global recessions would have been recorded since 1970 alone (IMF World Economic Outlook 2013).

From the 1970's onwards, and irrespective of the contested incidence of recession, new forms of economic organization had emerged, as advanced capitalist societies transitioned from Fordism to post-Fordism, propelled by the transformative effect of new technologies, the advent of knowledge-based economies and the gradual emergence of the strengthening service economy (Albertsen, 1988).

1.8 The economic power of the branded global city, and the tilt towards the East

For most of history, the world's population has depended on hunting and subsequently agriculture for survival, with only 3% living in urban areas as recently as 1800. By 1900, almost 14% of the world's population were city-dwellers, and this increased to 30% by 1950. In 2008, the global population was evenly divided between rural and urban areas, and since then, the balance has tipped, with city-dwellers accounting for more than half (54%) of the world's population, (Population Reference Bureau, 2016).

By 2050, according to projections by The United Nations, almost 70% of the world's total population will comprise city-dwellers, and this migration has been called the most important since the demise of nomadic living. (Next City, 2012). Currently, just 600 cities (the "City 600") with only 20% of the world's population, generate 60% of global GDP, and this is forecast to remain the case in 2025. However, critically, by 2025, it is anticipated that of those 600 cities, 136 will have been displaced from their ranking by new cities located in developing economies, and with cities in China accounting for 100 of these 136 new listings. In an unmistakable shift of the gravitational centre of the worldwide economy, just 216 cities in China are forecast to account for over 45% of global economic activity, over the period of 2007 and 2025, (McKinsey Global Institute, 2011).

Rather than economic performance alone, however, it is a city's sustained capacity to attract and retain global capital, people and ideas that is identified as the key attribute shared by the cities of the global elite, and measured annually in metrics that span dimensions of business activity, human capital, information exchange, cultural experience and political engagement (Kearney, 2016).

1.9 The role of the museum in culture-led economic urban regeneration, the McGuggenisation trend, "dirty secrets", and the Ego-seum

> "A thriving cultural sector is an essential part
> of what makes a city great"
>
> (McKinsey, 2013, reported in *Economist*, 21.12.2013)

The opening in 1997 of the Guggenheim modern and contemporary art museum in the centre of the post-industrialist port of Bilbao, signaled a landmark in the autonomous Basque country's reputational transition from a site of isolationism and violent separatist protest, to an exemplar of the economic engine of culture-led city branding.

> "The Guggenheim Bilbao was a rare occurrence," says museum consultant Maria Fernandez Sabau. "There was an incredible confluence of amazing, talented people. You had a museum that was hungry to expand, available land for cheap, a government with money, an architect itching to make a statement, and a city that desperately needed a new reason to exist. You can't just buy that." (*Guardian*, 30.4.15)

Almost half of Bilbao's existing jobs in the heavy industries sector, shipyards and machine engineering, had been lost between 1975 and 1995, with the new mechanization or total collapse of the city's steelworks, leaving the metropolitan area degraded and polluted. The possibility of effecting lasting urban regeneration was enhanced by Spain's entry to the European Union in 1986, as this gave access to the economic funding that enabled ambitious restructuring, negotiated and delivered by new partnerships between public and private sectors: Bilbamo Metropoli 30, and Bilbao Rio2000, (Ploger, 2007). In addition to a new airport, bridge and metro system, Frank Gehry's titanium-clad design for the new Guggenheim Bilbao, became "the lynchpin in the city's strategic international transformation" (Next City, 2012).

The ensuing success of the new art museum, which recouped its construction cost of $89m within just three years of opening, and attracted consistently over one million visitors annually, (crucially comprising over two thirds from overseas), resulted in the coining of the term: "the Bilbao Effect", (Rodriguez, Martinez & Guenaga, 2001; Vicario & Monje, 2003, Prytherch & Huntoon, 2005; Ploger, 2007). The museum's own press releases quantifies this at 362.9m Euros of direct expenditure within the Basque region, generating an estimated 49.3m Euros in revenue for the Basque treasury and tax authorities, (Guggenheim Bilbao press release. https://prensa.guggenheim-bilbao.eus/en/categoria/press-releases/corporate/).

Nevertheless, in response to the perceived extreme commodification of art, and the continuing process of American cultural imperialism and supremacy over defenseless cultural spaces, the unfavourable “McGuggenisation” descriptor was applied to the new landmark cultural institution, and its role in the global reframing of the identity of Bilbao and the wider Basque region, (McNeill, 2000). The term also acknowledged the franchise model extending from the Frank Lloyd-designed museum in Manhattan, to the Guggenheim collection housed in Venice, and to the Deutsche Guggenheim, since closed in 2013. Arguably, this specific instance of transnational corporate branding, albeit by a non-profit institution such as Guggenheim Foundation, has met recent local political resistance, with the failure to obtain funding for the proposed Guggenheim museum in Helsinki, and the largest of all the Guggenheim sites, at Abu Dhabi, currently five years behind schedule and beset with security concerns, without clear prospects of completion, (*The Art Newspaper*, 27.3.2017. http://theartnewspaper.com/news/museums/why-is-the-guggenheim-abu-dhabi-still-not-built-thomas-krens-offers-a-clue/).

The development or expansion of museum sites, to accommodate performance art forms, provide enhanced community or public space, to celebrate new acquisitions, to show more of the collections, or incorporate teaching spaces, are high profile, material accomplishments for directors, trustees, board members and donors alike. In the USA, between 2007 and 2014, and therefore during the deepest recession since the Great Depression of 1929 (Grusky, Western & Wimer, 2011; Bordo & Haubrich, 2012), nearly $5bn was spent by just 26 museums, to initiate or complete an expanded redevelopment of their physical sites. Those museums that invested in expansion programmes saw visitor attendance rise significantly faster (at +14.1%) than those museums that did not (+10.2%), (*The Art Newspaper*, http://theartnewspaper.com/news/us-museums-spent-5bn-to-expand-as-economy-shrank/.

In the UK, this pattern persists, with David Chipperfield’s expansion of the site of the Royal Academy of Art, and the reconfiguration of the Sackler entrance and gallery spaces by Amanda Levete Architects at the V&A site, attributed with the boosting of attendance, by 50% and 4% respectively, (https://news.artnet.com/art-world/tate-modern-uk-museum-attendance-1624999; http://theartnewspaper.com/reports/if-you-build-it-they-will-come-at-least-for-a-while/31.3.2016. Accessed 23.7.2016.

In affirmation of the twenty-first century cult of celebrity (Hollander, 2010; Robinson, 2010), the profile of the leading architect matters: at museums with capital building projects led by "starchitects" , - that clique of architects elevated by the design sector's magazine *Dezeen,* (online profile of 10 million page impressions per month and 690,000 Instagram followers), attendance increases more than twice as much than at those projects led by lesser known architects, (+97% vs. +46%), although this uplift is not sustained (*The Art Newspaper*, 4.4.2016; *The Financial Times*, 'Starchitects struggle to build brands that last beyond a lifetime', see https://www.ft.com/content/762ed520-fa4c-11e5-b3f6-11d5706b613b, 4.4.2016).

Whilst the mixed economy of the UK cultural sector combines the funding of a portfolio of national institutions and major partners by the Arts Council (in cycles newly-extended from 3 to 4 years from 2018 onwards), strategic programme funding for targeted initiatives to promote access, direct funding from local authorities, lottery-funding, revenue from trusts and foundations, donations and self-generated income, the markedly different patron-led funding model in the USA is reflected in the structural power networks in operation within museum practice. Donors' and members' wishes influence the strategic planning and allocation of resources,

> "For museum executives, the *dirty secret* of expansions has been that they are often motivated by the need to have some exciting new thing to rally board members and interest potential patrons. These Institutions depend heavily on rich people to fund them. Those rich people like to pay for flashy new buildings; no-one wants to donate to boring old museum upkeep." (New York Times, 22.7.2016)

To a lesser extent, this issue will surface during this study's fieldwork at Tate Britain, in relation to the tension between the funding allocation preferences of the 115,000 Tate members, expressed at an Extraordinary General Meeting held in February 2016 at the art museum, and those wishes of Tate's governance board. Two and a half miles from Tate Britain, at the South Kensington site of the Victoria & Albert Museum, just four donors contributed 75% of the funding for the recent £50m development scheme. Not only responding to the influx of an additional one million visitors to the museum in the period from 2004 to 2016, rising from 2.01m to 3.02m (source: ALVA http://www.alva.org.uk/details.cfm?p=603), the enhanced entrance courtyard, enlarged public spaces, and the creation of "one of Europe's largest temporary exhibition galleries" (*The Art Newspaper*, 25.6.2017), also serve the strategic redefinition of the institution, by the incoming director Tristam Hunt, as a museum of art and design and *performance*. The recent successes of performance-themed, revenue-driving temporary exhibitions (*Kylie*: 271,000 visitors, 2007; *Bowie*: 312,000 visitors, 2013; *Pink Floyd*, over 300, 000 visitors, 2017), signal an important shift in the remit of the 165-year old museum, from its long-standing conceptualisation as the world's "leading museum of art and design." Therefore, rather than solely meeting the objective of accommodating greater visitor numbers, the expanding capital ambitions of the major art museums serve the economic necessity of strategic repositioning, whilst continuing to attract and engage with major donors. Beyond this, the spectacular and costly extensions simultaneously challenge the recent tendency for wealthy collectors to fund privately-owned sites: the "Ego-seums." This term first appeared in the art press in 2009, and is explained, by Sotheby's senior international specialist, Oliver Barker, as a response by the super-rich to the lack of "creative involvement" to be gained from simply donating to public museums. Billionaire philanthropist Eli Broad has masterminded one such site, 'The Broad', which opened in Los Angeles in 2015: a 120,000sqft museum, housing over 2000 privately-owned works, and underpinned by an annual $12m contribution towards operating costs, provided by the Broad's $200m endowment. Similarly, professional gambler David Walsh, who in 2011 funded the £44m Museum of Old and New Art, and its privately owned collection valued at £58.5m, outside Hobart, Tasmania, explained:

> "My gallery is to some extent, a megaphone, and I'm standing at Hyde Park Corner. The fact that I can collect says something about me. It says that I can't do anything, so I'll leech off those that can." (*Guardian*, 11.7.2010)

Such unflinching twenty-first century motivations are far removed from the originating forces that led to the formation of the research focus of this study, Tate Britain at London's Millbank.

1.10. From prison site to Death Star: the powerhouse of Tate, with slippery purpose and an evolving self-identity

Beside the River Thames, and constructed upon the foundations of the prison walls, the courtyard watchtowers and the perimeter ditches of the Millbank penitentiary, Tate Britain, in its initial iteration as the National Gallery of British Art, first opened in 1897. Only 30 years earlier, the last convicts sentenced to transportation, (the original POM's, Prisoners of Millbank), had embarked from the river steps for the four month, one-way journey to Australia. Today, on the North riverbank, the weighty stone mooring bollard, used by the boats transferring convicts twelve miles downriver to the larger prison ships at Woolwich Arsenal, still stands opposite the Corinthian portico of the riverside entrance of Tate Britain.

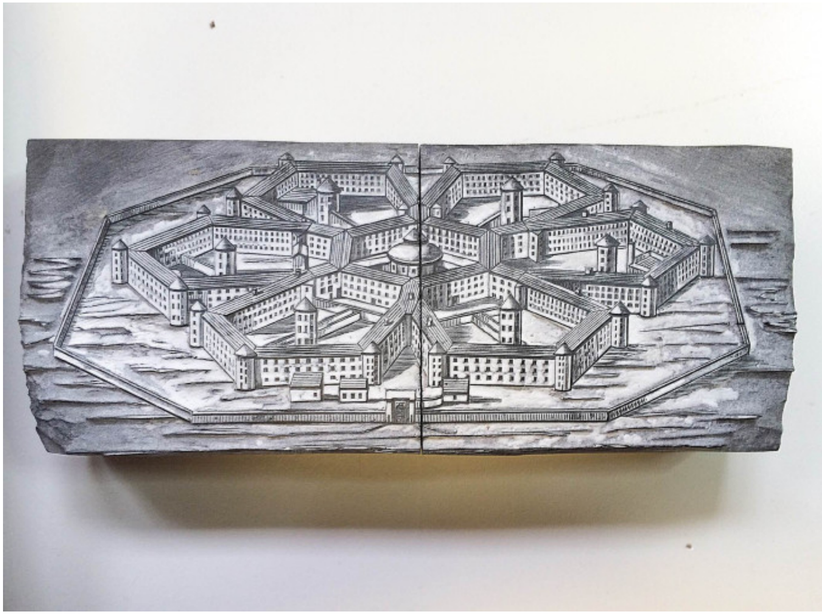

Figure 3: Mayhew & Binney (1862) 'The criminal prisons of London and scenes of prison life'

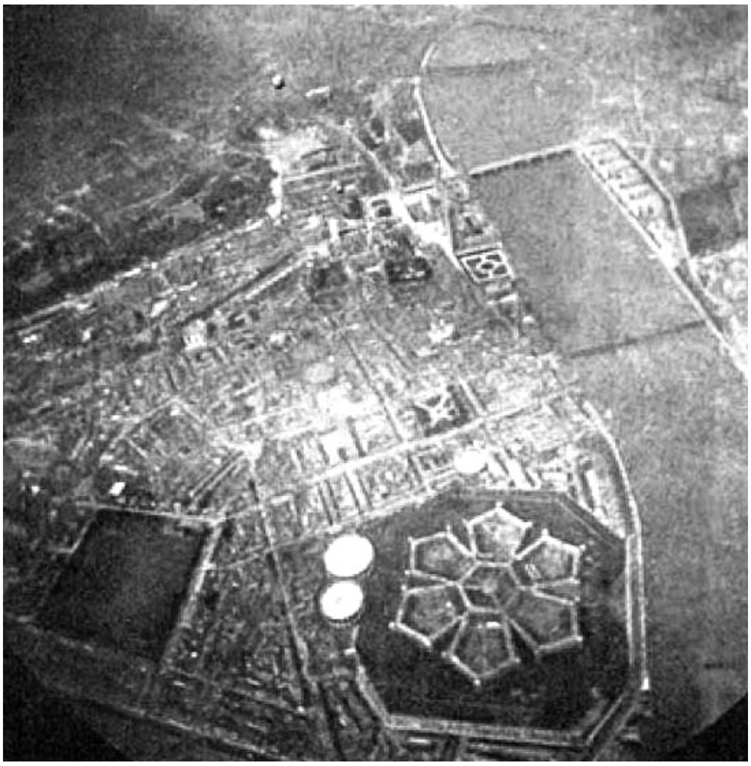

Figure 4: Photographed from balloon, by Brewer, 1891.
The Strand Magazine, no.11

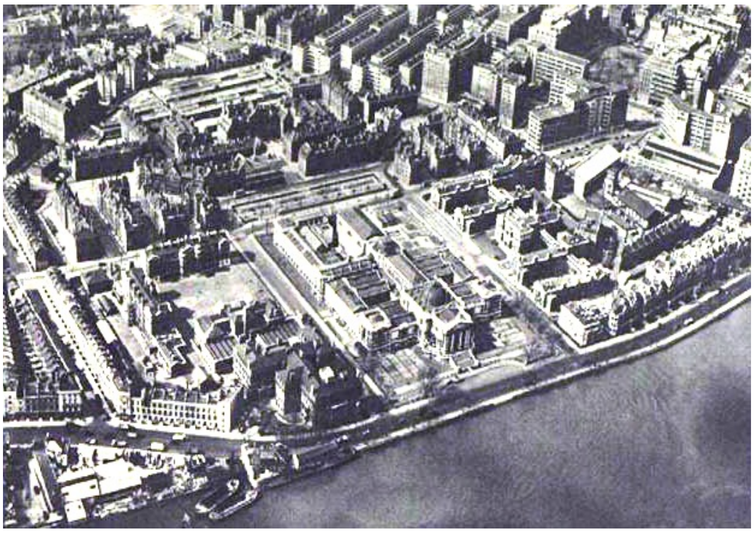

Figure 5: The Tate Gallery, in the 1950's. *London Illustrated News.*
(https://blackcablondon.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/tate-1950sjpeg)

Figure 6: Tate Britain and its environs today. (Image: Google)
(https://blackcablondon.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/millbank-today-map.jpg)

When industrialist and sugar tycoon Henry Tate presented to the nation the new gallery and sixty-five of the 245 exhibited paintings, “for the encouragement and development of British art”, in administrative terms, the site had no purchase grant of its own, and as an annexe to the National Gallery, remained accountable to the Trustees of the senior institution. Thwarted by his lack of influence on acquisitions during his early tenure, Director D.S.Macoll later remarked in his memoirs that it was “harder to get a picture in than it would have been to steal one of those already there” (Spalding 1998p23, p32; MacColl, 1931). Landmark events included the opening of the Turner wing in 1910, the granting of Tate’s own Board of Trustees in 1917, the great floods of 1928, the installation of the 300ft long marbled Duveen sculpture galleries in 1935, and in 1940, withstanding a direct hit during heavy raids on London. Finally, an official purchasing grant of £2000 per year was awarded in 1946, and within ten years, Tate had become a legally separate entity from the National Gallery, following the National Gallery and Tate Gallery Act of 1955.

By the mid to late 1970's, the Tate Gallery began to match and then exceed the visitor numbers achieved by the Victoria & Albert museum, attracting over a million visitors annually (years ending 1976 and 1978, Spalding, 1998, p193). This prompted Tate's first active pursuit of closer links with sponsors, and the introduction of goods and services to meet demand: shops selling postcards and calendars, school visits, and volunteer guide-lecturers. From 1986, the introduction of the new Grant-in-Aid system afforded more power to Tate's Trustees, who could now retain unspent funds at the end of each financial year; however this devolutionary process also required the art museum to take responsibility for both the daily maintenance and major repair of its buildings, at a time that coincided with steep running costs for the Clore Gallery, and also for the opening of the new Tate site in a former warehouse at the Albert Dock, Liverpool.

Just four years after the appointment in 1988 of Tate's longest-serving Director, Nicholas Serota (who stepped down after 29 years in 2017), the *Museums & Galleries Act 1992* marked the separation from the Civil Service of the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery and the Wallace Collection, and established in law a number of provisions for their financing and governance. Thirty-two pages of legal schedules granted each gallery corporate status, with all the property, rights and liabilities transferred to the respective Board of Trustees, who wouid now to serve no more than five years. At Tate, a minimum of 3 of the 14 serving Trustees are required to be practicing artists. Critically, for Tate's future financial sustainability, the new Board becomes entitled to devise "the production and publication of books, films or other informative material" relating to British or contemporary art, including the production of replicas, souvenirs, goods and also catering services, (*Museums & Galleries Act 1992*, chapter 44, p6).

Whilst the original mission for the art museum was defined in 1897 by Henry Tate as "the encouragement and development of British art", a strategic separation has opened between this early statement of the organisation's purpose and more recent reinterpretations, producing considerable "mission creep", i.e. the expansion of a project or task beyond its original goals, usually in a military context (Gonzales, 2013). The role of a corporate mission statement is to form an enduring record of purpose (Pearce & David, 1987), and a consistent identity and direction, with identified target customers, a principal offering and specific geographic domain, a commitment to survival, growth and profitability, a statement of the company's philosophy, a conceptualisation of its own entity and its desired public image, (Leuthesser & Kohli, 1997, p59). It must be articulated with an operational focus, so that everyone in the organisation can recognise their own contribution to the specified goal (Drucker, 2004).

The introduction of the *Museums & Galleries Act, 1992,* required Tate's Board of Trustees to:

> "maintain a collection of British works of art and documents relating to those works, and a collection of twentieth century and contemporary works of art and of documents relating to those works."
>
> (*Museums & Galleries Act 1992*, ch.44, 2, (2))

The Act also mandated that the Tate's Board must "care for, preserve and add to the works of art and the documents in their collections", and ensure that the works of art are exhibited to the public, and available for inspection for study or research purposes. The Board should also

> "generally promote the public's enjoyment and understanding of British art, and of Twentieth century and contemporary art, both by means of the Board's collections and by such other means as they consider appropriate."

Notably, the collection is deemed to be held in the possession of the Trustees, and in their distributed custodianship, rather than owned by the museum itself, nor by operational departments within the museum. In juxtaposing the successive mission statements of the art museum (Figure 7, p36), the evolution of successive strategic objectives becomes apparent, with the original focus on the nurturing an development of British art, usurped by successive shifts of focus and the introduction of audience-centric metrics of varying measurability.

Source: Tate Annual Accounts	Comparing Henry Tate's original mission, ("the encouragement and development of British art"), with more recent mission statements
1999/2000	*Increasing* public awareness *Increasing* public understanding *Increasing* public appreciation of British art from the sixteenth century to the present day, and of modern and contemporary art from around the world.
2000/2001	*Engaging* people with art *Fostering* appreciation of art *Engaging* people with the meaning and experience of art *Promoting* awareness and understanding *Improving* people's confidence and familiarity with art *Increasing* knowledge of art *Building* relationships with artists *Building* relationships with the wider community
2009/10	To *promote* the public's enjoyment and understanding of British art and of twentieth century and contemporary art
2015/16	To *increase* the public's enjoyment and understanding of British art from the sixteenth century to the present day and of international, modern and contemporary art
2016-2019 Vision and Plan	To *promote* public understanding and enjoyment of British, modern and contemporary art

Figure 7: Tate's evolving mission. (Annual Accounts to the Board of Trustees, 1999-2016)

Achieving success in 'fostering appreciation of art' (Tate's 2000/2001 *Annual Accounts*) and quantifying that success in a demonstrable way is a far more challenging task than is required by the current stated mission, of simply "promoting public understanding and enjoyment of art'" (Tate's 2016-2019 *Vision and Plan*). The subject and focus of the art museum's mission has changed entirely: from developing art, via the difficult task of "increasing knowledge of art", to the more readily empirical but fundamentally lesser challenge of *promoting* the public's understanding and enjoyment of art.

The museum's endeavours invested in promoting understanding have been separated from the agency of that effort, evidenced by a measurable outcome. Critically, the reference to "public enjoyment" in the Museums & Galleries Act 1992, which relates to the civil right of the public to have access to, or use or benefit from the art in Tate's collection, is reinterpreted by 2015, in terms of an orientation towards the public's enjoyment and entertainment. The art museum's mission now focuses on the audience's relationship with the art, rather than the development of the art itself.

> "These days, audience interaction and the popularity it triggers
> have become the be all and end all", (Januszczak, Guardian, 4.5.2017)

Museums are popular. The DCMS reported in February 2017 that 47.7 million people had visited the UK's 15 sponsored museums in 2015/16, with 7.9 million child visits by under 15 year olds, 2.5 million instances of under 18 year olds participating in on-site events, and almost half of all visits (22.4 million visits, i.e. 47% of all visits) to sponsored museums by overseas visitors, (DCMS, 2017). In just one weekend, 143,000 visitors (equating to almost 50% of the record-breaking crowds who in 2013 visited the 'David Bowie Is' retrospective show at the V&A museum), attended the opening in June 2016 of the Tate Modern extension, the Switch House, newly renamed the Blavatnik Building. Since then, over 6 million people have visited Herzog & de Meuron's ten storey, brick-clad, £260m twisted ziggurat, which is designed to accommodate the unforeseen growth in numbers from the planned 2 million visitors at the former power station, to the 5 million or more visitors who have attended the site since within five years of it opening. The new extension increases display areas by 60%, and offers bars, a Member's room, restaurants, shops, public foyers, teaching and social spaces, and critically, in a sector-leading move, areas that meet the performance requirements of new artistic forms of practice.

Whilst one critic likened the newly enlarged space to "a gigantic corporate headquarters for the huge multinational concern that is contemporary art" (Januszczak, *Guardian* 19.6.2016), another celebrated Tate's achievement in effecting real change in social and cultural practice: "Tate Modern has done a wonderful thing in getting tens of millions of people to come and look at contemporary art. It has made it popular. It has made it fashionable" (Paterson, *Guardian*, 16.6.2016). However, presumably with reference to Tate's global reputation, unassailable expansion, financial power and dominant status within the cultural sector, a more cynical online commentator remarked that the Tate brand and its new iteration had become "the big money Death Star of the modern art establishment." (Smith, G responding to article by Patterson*Guardian*, 16.6.2016).

With more objectivity, a brief review of Tate's financial and operational credentials swiftly establishes that cumulatively, the family of four galleries, at Tate Britain, Tate Modern, Tate St. Ives and Tate Liverpool, wields extraordinary cultural power: the scope, strength and size of the national collection of over 70,000 artworks, entrusted to the museum's safe custodianship, are all sustained by curatorial scholarship and expertise in the artworks representing British art from 1500 to the present day, in both international modern and contemporary art. This custodianship, with three decades of stewardship by the erstwhile Director and figurehead Sir Nicholas Serota, has warranted significant political and financial endorsement, benefitting from high levels of Grant-in-aid allocations, (£30.4m, 2013/14); £29.6m, 2014/15; £28.7m, 2015/16), despite the vagaries of a challenging financial environment, and unprecedented funding contractions. The art museum has achieved the status of ranking as the most-visited DCMS-sponsored museum in England, with 7.9m visitors across the four Tate galleries (2014/15); the highest number of visits by young people for any art museum in the world, with over 3.5m aged under 35years (2015/16); and success in attracting 560,000 visitors to the Tate's most successful exhibition in its history, 'Matisse: The Cut-Outs', (DCMS (2017) *'Sponsored Museum Performance Indicators 2015/16)';* Tate Annual Reports).

This genre of high levels of attendance at paid-for exhibitions has had a positive impact upon the financial performance of the Tate Gallery Group; taking into account fundraising, donated artworks, admissions and trading income, the art museum consistently ranks as the producer of the largest self-generated income of all the DCMS-sponsored museums, (£74.2m 2016/17; £81.3m 2017/18; £85.1m 2018/19, (Tate Annual Report 2018/19). And beyond generating these sector-leading levels of income, Tate also produces the largest net profit of all DCMS-sponsored museums, at £24.4m (2015/16), and the most revenue from fundraising, at £81.2m (2015/6).

In a virtuous circle, such strong financial performance enables the art museum to invest in sector-leading innovation in operating channels, partnerships, practices and events, and in acquisitions of unlimited genre and geographical provenance. In turn, these account for Tate's facility to attract Members, whose numbers passed the 100,000 threshold in 2011/12, and climbed to 109,904 by 2015/16, generating £10.7m in that single financial year (Tate Annual Report 2015/16). More recently, Tate's success extends to include the rapid expansion of Digital engagement, with almost 19 million website visitors, a collective social media following of 9.9 million, across Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and PInterest, and content that was viewed 466 million times via social media feeds (Tate Annual Report 2018/19). And success breeds success, with the museum attracting Donors, who in 2014/15 alone donated artworks valued at £72m to the national collection.

Understanding this context, therefore, renders Tate's longstanding triumphal institutional external voice more palatable. For most of the past decade, the customary mode employed in the art museum's external communications and Annual Reports has been one of superlative description: “the most popular arts website”, “global leader in its field”, “the world's pre-eminent collection”, “internationally recognised iconic status”, although this has become tempered, since the advent, in June 2017, of new Director of Tate, Maria Balshaw. In summary, therefore, this accrual of indicators of status and power informs not only the way in which the art museum is regarded on a global cultural stage, but also reflects the art museum's evolving notion of its own identity.

1.11 Tate as a research setting, collaborative practice with London South Bank University, and restating the research problem of this study

In a claim of centric-positionality matched by almost every department in the museum, Tate's Research department, mediated by the institutional voice of the Annual Report, locates research at the core of the majority of the art museum's activity: "Research provides the foundation for much of the work we do", (Tate, *Annual Report 2012/13*, p21). The success of the museum is reported as a product of deeper understanding, fostered debate and active, external, knowledge-sharing networks, all informed by research.

> "A strong research culture is fundamental to Tate's success:
> it generates new knowledge about the collection, the museum and its activities, opening up new fields of enquiry, developing professional practice and encouraging more people to engage deeply with art."
> (Tate *Annual Report* 2014/15, p20)

The thirtieth issue of Tate's online research journal, *Tate Papers*, was published this year, with a readership of more than quarter of a million researchers. In partnership with over 20 higher education institutions, the on-going Collaborative Doctoral Partnership encompasses research projects of a broad scope. Whilst the principal research concerns at Tate have long focused on enhancing and developing curatorial knowledge, more recently, conservation science and the management of modern and contemporary art have moved towards the foreground (Tate *Annual Report* 2014/15, p21).

Recent studies involve for example, the investigation of light-sensitive materials, new technologies for low oxygen environments, or the properties of nanomaterial. The broader collaborative research programmes incorporate art history, cultural theory and museum practice, across multiple Research Centres, supported by Tate's hosting of international exchange and secondments for visiting research fellows:

British and Romantic Art:	Promoting research on British art from 1750 to 1850.
Victorian and Edwardian Art:	Promoting research on British art from 1840 to 1915.
Curatorial Practice and Museology:	At Tate Liverpool, 'Museum as a learning machine', seeks to embed research at the core of all the museum's public activities.
Creative Communities:	At Tate St. Ives, focusing on artist colonies and the future of creative communities in Britain and internationally.
Asia-Pacific **(established 2012/13)**:	Focusing on Chinese, Japanese and Korean modern and contemporary art.
Learning **(established 2014/15)**:	To promote Learning research and knowledge exchange across the sector and internationally.

Figure 8: The thematic focus of Tate's multiple Research Centre

As one of sixty designated Independent Research Organisations (IROs) in the UK, of which only thirteen are National museums, Tate meets the Research Councils UK requirement to demonstrate both an independent capability to lead research programmes, and

> "an existing in-house capacity to carry out research that materially extends and enhances the national research base."
> http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/funding/research/iro/
> (Accessed 9th September 2017).

This IRO status renders Tate eligible to seek funding from the Research Councils UK (RCUK), the strategic partnership of the seven Research Councils, investing in the region of £3 billion annually across all academic disciplines. As one of these seven Research Councils, the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) has awarded over 600 Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) studentships since the scheme's launch in 2005, and from 2013 onwards, through the Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDP). In conjunction with a partnering academic institution, which conducts the open competition to award the studentships, award-holders have the opportunity to gain first-hand experience of situated, research-led work, outside the university environment. With this support from the AHRC, since 2012, Tate has offered 28 collaborative doctoral studentships of a primarily traditional, historic curatorial focus; more recently however, the scope of these research topics has expanded to address, for example, new media technologies, or the effects of hacking in the cultural heritage sector.

> "Research is no longer the exclusive preserve of the lone scholar or even a single institution. The modern research landscape is highly organized and depends upon strong partnerships across Tate's departments and with external scholars" (Tate, *Annual Report* 2010/11, p15)

The collaborative research practice shared between London South Bank University and Tate dates from 2007, with the three year interdisciplinary and embedded research project, Tate Encounters, *'Britishness and Visual Culture'*. Funded by the AHRC, and led by Professor Andrew Dewdney, and co-investigators Dr. Victoria Walsh and Dr. David Dibosa, Tate Encounters was conducted in further partnership with a college of the University of the Arts, London: Wimbledon School of Arts.

In an interdisciplinary mode, and with reflexivity as a key methodological approach, Tate Encounters sought deeper understanding of the changing cultural identities of Tate Britain's audiences, and the interface between the construction of narratives of Britishness, and the responses from migrant and diasporic families to those notions of Britishness as reproduced within Tate Britain's curatorial practices. The research addressed the continuing under-representation of minority audiences, classified as 'Black, Minority and Ethnic' (BME), despite both growth in museum attendance in the preceding decade, and parallel targeted governmental implementation of policies supporting cultural diversity education programmes. In a key finding, the division between core and marginal audiences in organisational practice at the museum, located within demand-led models of audience targeting, served to reinforce a form of cultural welfarism, by reproducing the markers and status of difference that cultural diversity thinking at the museum had sought to address.

1.12 Restating the research problem of this study, and the value of further investigation

This study meets the Arts & Humanities Research Council Highlight call for further collaborative research in museology, and takes up issues raised by the interdisciplinary Tate Encounters project, in relation to audience-related practices within the art museum.

The study investigates what occurs within Tate when formal sets of knowledge of the art museum's audiences come into contact with resisting forces of practice, and are negotiated and mediated by differing departments across the organisation. In tracing, describing and deconstructing Tate's strategic and operational practices of audience, describing the 'how' and 'when' of their cyclical formation, the study attains a more nuanced understanding of Tate's audiences, and their codification and reproduction within the art museum, than is offered by the existing standard framework of socio-demographic interpretation of audience and audience practice, described as "the tyranny of numbers" , (Lumley, 1988, intro.)

The global renaissance of the museum, and its emergence in the late twentieth century from its earlier conceptualisation as an authored, fixed representation of mapped taste, values and identities (Bourdieu, 1984), overseen by the sovereign expertise of the curator (Hooper-Greenhill, 1988, p213-32), is a familiar narrative in museology literature. The museum is no longer "the prison for objects" where interloping visitors are merely tolerated, (Lumley, 1988, p226-227). Instead, the museum has become a receptive social site, an architectural innovation at the hub of urban development (Landry, 2012; Lumley, 1988; Vergo, 1989), a digital host (Parry, 2007), a participatory centre for the co-creation of meaning (Simon, 2010), a "fun-palace" (Januszczak, 1988) or an experience factory (Mallory, 2016).

> "Debate around museums and society has moved on and thus new terms of debate need to be fashioned to negotiate with the various types of pressure that seek to pass themselves off as measures of empowerment for those whom the traditional museum is said to neglect." (Tlili, 2014, p174)

This research seeks to introduce new terms of debate.

The context, therefore, for these new terms of debate is the convergence of multiple strands: the politicization of data-gathering, the ascendance of corporate professionalism in museum managerial practice (McGuigan, 2004, p46), the PR-ization of the cultural sector (Wu, 1998, p43), the economic necessity to reduce dependency on subsidized sources of income, the changes in household structures, the ageing population and growing diversity of UK residents (CORAB, 2015; ESRC Centre for Population Change), combined with notions of representation, public value and the rise of the twenty-first century citizen.

More interesting, more impactful research arises from problematisation rather than gap-spotting, which tends to reinforce existing assumptions (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011, p247-271). Therefore, this study addresses the short-coming in existing literature on audience practice within museums: abstractions of the public, and the various methods of visitor evaluation and performance-measurement are foregrounded, without enquiring how the data, or accumulated sets of knowledge in relation to this public, are applied, negotiated or resisted in working practice. More recently, the professional discipline of Knowledge Management within the museum is framed as a technical field of data-gathering and distribution, involving the sharing of information assets in pursuit of organisational objectives, and requiring unified knowledge-based content management frameworks, (Hsu & Yeh, 2014). Instead, this research considers Knowledge Management from a relational stance: the museum is populated by staff actors, with their own perspectives and priorities, located in networks of socially-constructed power within the art museum.

Organisations are scenes of struggle, with power "not as an abstract entity but as a pattern of interactions and social relationships that is instantiated in specific projects of domination and resistance", and embedded throughout their fibre (Courpasson, Golsorkhi & Sallaz (1999, p2-3). As a research site, the Tate offers a unique organisational system for study, and an intraorganisational context for the exploration of Bourdieu's perspectives on doxa, field, capital and habitus, which tend to be considered at an inter-organisational level rather within a single institution, (Dobbin, 2008, p53-63).

In a chastening reminder, Latour reflects on his examination of the process of the social construction of knowledge within the laboratory, and observes: "It is unlikely that our discussion will tell working scientists anything that they do not know" (Latour & Woolgar, 1979, p30). Differing expectations between research collaborators in terms of the utility of findings may likewise impact upon the perceived success of a shared project (Campbell, 2005; Bryson, Crosby & Stone, 2006), and this can be compounded by the "theory/practice impasse" or "epistemic fault line" that separates the production of theory from its reception and absorption into the concrete practices of the sceptical museum (Dewdney, Dibosa, Walsh, 2013, p221). And yet, collaborative research that bridges academia and museum operational practice has the potential to advance existing understandings in more nuanced ways, or, in the Latourian context, "a new perspective on what working scientists know to be the case" (Latour & Woolgar, 1979, p31). Furthermore, this external perspective may confer legitimacy upon existing ideas within an organisation, thereby inscribing these ideas, sustaining and advancing them within the organisational discourse (Venter, Wright & Dibb, 2015, p77).

Almost three decades ago, Hooper-Greenhill called for greater flexibility in terms of research approaches within the museum sector, and for "a model of research that moves beyond demographics into interpretive or ethno-methodological understandings and methods" (Hooper-Greenhill, 1988, p219) This was followed shortly afterwards by Jordanova's appeal for more reflexivity,

> "it is important to find new ways to be more reflexive about our museum practices..the social and cultural construction of museums demands our closest attention, - it is a large and important project not to be hived off as only of special interest."
> (Jordanova, 1989, p40).

More recently, Hallett & Ventresca (2006), remind us that ethnographic studies of power within organisations bring much-needed, detailed empirical content to the study of workplace power relations; whilst Vallas & Hill (2012, p165-197) affirm that situated ethnographic studies of power also force us to question our generalisations, and render visible those underlying tensions of negotiated authority. In this digital age, the role of thick, descriptive ethnography is defended by Voyer & Trondman (2015) as a counterbalance to other forms of research, with the ethnographic mode of enquiry operating uniquely between theory and social reality. This endeavor to occupy the museological space between academic knowledge production and the reproduction of operational 'know-how' within the museum, encapsulates the approach of post-critical museology: in a radical re-examination of the role of museums in society, post-critical museology supplants both the focus on method-orientation, of 'old' museology, and its underserving of issues of purpose (Vergo, 1989, p3) and the predominantly theoretical critique of 'new museology', (Dewdney, Dibosa & Walsh, 2013, p15).

The timeliness of this research relates not only to current museological discourse, but also to contextual issues of demographic change, and shifts in patterns of cultural consumption. There is no such thing as the typical visitor, and the museum "has to cater for increasingly fragmented publics, who want to learn and do different things at different speeds (Wright, 1989, p119). Our population is changing, and ageing, with more diversity in terms of ethnicity, families and households, more blended families, and more living alone (ESRC Centre for Population Change, see Appendix). Behaviours of cultural consumption are also changing, with more adults attending museums and galleries, (42.3% in 2005/6 vs. 52.3% in 2016/17), and more frequently (1+ visits pcm at 3.4% in 2005/6, vs. .4.7% in 2016/17, *Taking Part Survey*). Attendance by children young children is falling (5-10yr olds in 2008/9, reporting 66% attended museum or gallery in past year , vs. 63% 2016/17, *Taking Part Survey, 2016/17*), becoming jeopardized by changes to the national curriculum. More adults of all ethnicities attend than before, yet the participation gap between White and Black Minority Ethnic group attendance remains broadly unchanged; and an even larger gulf exists between attendance by low income and higher income households. The present study traces from within the institution the ways in which the art museum applies its own conceptualisations of audience to these shifting sands.

Chapter Two of this study will outline the research strategy and analytical framework of this study. Chapter Three sets out the conceptual framework, addressing issues of agency, power and representation within the public realm, organisational theory, knowledge management and audience development. Chapter Four describes the methodological approach and processes of this study, including entry to the hard-to-access field that is the art museum. In Part Two of this study, Chapter Five reports the thematic research findings, illustrated with five case studies; this chapter also outlines the types of visitor information generated, stored and distributed at the art museum, and its agency in operational practice; in addition, Tate's differing conceptualisations of its audiences are presented, alongside a compilation of conceptualisations currently used elsewhere in museum practice, and from the literature. Part Three of this study, in Chapter six, a summary and discussion of the key findings includes the researcher's progression towards understanding the patterned, socio-materiality of the museum's application of visitor data to working practices.

Chapter Two

2.1 The research aims and objectives

Taking the form of an organisational study of Tate, and seeking to construct more nuanced understandings of audience-related operational practice within the art museum, this research addresses the institution's perceptions of its own multiple audiences, and also the impact of these perceptions on ways of working. Adopting a stance of post-critical museology, with an action-oriented, immersed, collaborative and reflexive approach, the study enquires into how understandings of audience are generated, interpreted, adapted, perpetuated and valued by differing departments, of the art museum, predominantly, via protracted, embedded observation of the organisational negotiations that occur within the managerial strategy practices of audience at Tate Britain.

The research aims:

i. To critically examine the organisational notions of cultural value in circulation at Tate, as defined by the modeling of the art museum's audiences, and mediated through curatorial, education and marketing practices.
ii. To describe how the conceptual framework, comprising the ground between Bourdieu's articulation of cultural capital and Latour's tracing the social, relates to Tate's existing organisational systems and networks of audience practice.

The research objectives:

i. To identify, trace and map the formative effects of Tate's existing institutional knowledge of its annual visitors, upon the cyclical formation of the art museum's audiences.
ii. To assess whether there exist potential areas of organisational practice in opposition, such as lines of tension and contradiction in the modeling of audiences, through marketing initiatives aimed at increasing income generation, and those aimed at audience development through learning-oriented programming.

iii. To define and evaluate the sources, forms and multiple perspectives of Tate's institutional knowledge of its visitors, the empirical models of data demand and supply, the differing modalities and speed of distribution, the flow of knowledge via operational networks within Tate Britain, and connections or disconnections in the pathways and agency of this visitor data.
iv. To examine the relationship between governmental cultural policies on audience development and Tate's audience modelling and marketing practices.
v. To provide a narrative account of the forms of agency that governmental cultural policy and visitor data produce across Tate's differing departments.

2.2 The analytical framework

> "Theory without empirical work is empty, but empirical data without theory are blind."
>
> (Turner, 2009,p4)

Social knowledge is constructed at the intersection of two meaning-systems: theory and fact, (Reed, 2011, p15), with facts understood from a stance of mechanical objectivity as observable entities or "individual manifestations", (Durkheim, 1964), and theory tasked with making the empirical come alive in a multidimensional way (Willis & Trondman, 2000). Sociological theorizing, of a social world conceptualised as a human produced reality (Berger & Luckmann (1966, p76), accordingly involves "the creation of abstract models of those observable realities in order to aid our better understanding of what goes on in the world of humans" (Jenkins, 2002).

Social order is relational. It is socially fabricated, assembled as the product of individual or collective actions, interactions, interpretations and negotiations between actors, (Fine, 2003, p44), and represents "the concrete work of concrete actors that incarnate certain interests and values" (Courpasson, Golshorkhi & Sallaz, 2012, p16). In the realist epistemic mode, the framework of analysis transcends the empirical, to construct a representation of the social world that abides by rules of generality, internal coherence and reference (Reed, 2011, p42), in describing a mechanistic view of a social reality (Hedstrom, 2005, p28). Within the literature of the field, the depth of interpretation and theoretical explanation of realist maximal interpretation is exemplified by Geertz's celebrated account of the Balinese cockfight (Geertz, 2000, p432-33): the events of the social action, - the metaphorical cultivation of the fighting bird, and the complex structures and rules of the axial and peripheral betting systems, are resignified via an explanation of theoretical concepts, of masculinity or status, to illuminate further the social context (Reed, 2011, p94).

And yet this approach to the construction of knowledge has its own politics, with processes of sense-making informed by the investigator's worldview, 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1977), assembled via the socialisation and experience that construct personal systems of meaning (Stones, 2009, p93). In response to this, the reflexive methodological approach turns the researcher's self-critical eye onto their own authority or positionality as an interpreter of observed action. "There is no such thing as unmediated data or facts: these are always the results of interpretation" (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p9); in this way, the "interpretation of interpretation" takes into consideration the perceptual, cognitive, theoretical, linguistic, political and cultural circumstances that inform the researcher's perspective, (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p.vii, and p7). This consciousness of ways of thinking plays a role external to the researcher, and within the organisational context of this study, as institutional logics of shared values and beliefs are conducive to reproductions of mimetic behavior (Thornton, 2002; Czarniawska, 2008). These taken for granted, unquestioned 'truths' are the focus of this study, set within the specific "landscapes of meaning" of the research site: the everyday ways of working that reflect embedded ways of thinking, (De Certeau, 1984).

A further key element of the analytical framework of this study, is the semiotic ordering of the Actor Network approach, descried by Law as "a theory of agency, a theory of knowledge and a theory of machines", that treats agents, organisations and devices as interactive effects (Law, 1992, p389). In applying the material-semiotic tools of Actor Network theory (Callon, 1985; Law, 2009) to the procedural detail of these operational relations and habitualised activities at this study's research site at Tate Britain, the research describes and characterises the webs and operational practices of audience that circulate within the art museum, and the chains of calculation that construct the 'becoming' of this knowledge. A study of the socio-material practices of the Norwegian Maritime Museum applied this same ANT analytical framework, to rethink the chains of collaborative co-design translation in the enactment of constructing the museum's social media activity, (Stuedahl and Smordal, 2015). At Tate, an analysis of the interplay between structure and agency will explore the system of people and objects valued in generalized symmetry at the art museum, following Callon's model of the sociology of translation, applied with agnostic impartiality to the fisherman, larvae and scallops of St Brieuc Bay, (Callon, 1986)

Similarly, the methodological approach of Latour & Woolgar's study of the cycle of truth-claim production with laboratory-based practices, in which arguments are transformed "from an issue of hotly contested discussion in to a well-known, unremarkable and non-contentious fact" (Latour & Woolgar, 1979, p76) will inform this study's exploration of the cyclical production and materiality of networked practices of audience at Tate Britain. In studying "the intimacy of life among tribes which are much nearer to hand" (ibid,p17), the present study draws attention to "the complex activities which constitute the internal workings" (ibid,p17) of the audience-related activity within the art museum: how audiences are 'done.'

The social sciences are characterized by discourse, as well as explanation, and will therefore be unified by the presuppositions that govern discourse, rather than by the positivist application of method (Holmwood, 2016, p48). In traditional positivist terms, research has sought "the creation of true, objective knowledge, following a scientific method" in the pursuit of empirically-grounded conclusions, leading to generalisations and the building of theory (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000 p.ix; Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p28). Rather than seeking the construction of predictive theories of causality (Hatch 1973; Geertz 1973, 1983), the present study seeks context-specific understandings and "thick descriptions" (Geertz 1973; Alvesson 1998) of ritualised audience operational practice at the art museum. In lieu of informing general theory, the study prioritises context-specific sense-making of the reified, observed culture, “generalizing within” (Geertz 1973, p25), rather than across the wider museum sector.

The pragmatism of this study, however, will remain close to the site-specific empirical material of an explorative grounded theoretical approach, starting inductively from the qualitative data gathered, and seeking to allow the analytical emergence of categories uncontaminated by pre-existing concepts.

Notwithstanding, this study’s fieldwork will allow for Malinowski’s conceptualisation of “foreshadowed problems” (1922, p8).

> “Good training in theory, and acquaintance with its latest results, is not identical with being burdened with ‘preconceived ideas.’ If a man sets out on an expedition, determined to prove certain hypotheses, if he is incapable of changing his views constantly and casting them off ungrudgingly under the pressure of evidence, needless to say his work will be worthless. The more problems he brings with him into the field, the more he is in the habit of moulding his theories according to facts, and of seeing facts in their bearing upon theory, the better he is equipped for the work. Preconceived ideas are pernicious in any scientific work, but foreshadowed problems are the main endowment of the scientific thinker, and these problems are first revealed to the observer by his theoretical studies.”
>
> (Malinowski, 1922, p8-9).

Chapter Three: The conceptual framework

3.1 The museum as research site within museology

As historically contested sites within the public realm, museums, their collections, and ways of operating, are located at the nexus of concepts of authority, cultural and democratic representation and public value. Museums are dynamic cultural institutions, rethinking their role (Selwood, 2012), and submitting to a transformation from earlier fixed, situated spaces to the dispersed post-modern spaces and cultural environments of the digital age (Bautista & Balsamo, 2011). Unsurprisingly, therefore, the intrinsic interdisciplinarity of museology, understood as the entirety of theoretical and critical thinking within the museum field, has produced discourse that has shifted from objects to ideas (Weil, 1990), setting aside the longstanding collections-focused practices of the museum sector (Kundu, 2013), and taking up a focus on the social and political roles of museums, and their relationship with their publics (McAll & Gray, 2013). Issues of access and representation (Stam, 1993), the redistributed authority of collaboratively engaged audiences and shared co-production (Black, 2005; Kreps, 2009; Bautista & Balsamo, 2011), and the theoretical re-centering of the institutions towards a visitor-orientation now occupy the foreground.

Whilst this theoretical transformation is well-established within the literature of the field, less is known of the extent to which the ideology of these new ways of working, and distributed networks of has been applied in practice, nor of its effect. The external pressures of accountability, outlined in Chapter One, coexist with those endogenous pressures that materialize within the institution, as staff roles and ways of working within the museum evolve (Kundu, 2013).

Whilst institutional practice is described as “the purposive action of individuals and organisations” aimed at creating and maintaining institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006), the interplay of actors and agency has its own “taken-for-grantedness of routines and assumptions” (Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2009), as the constituent members of the organisation compete for access to resources (Tsai, 2002) across the distributed practice of the museum.

As sites of research, museums have been at the focus of an increasing body of work over the past twenty-five years, covering visitor engagement with museums, visitor demographics, motivations, expectations, levels of satisfaction and the nature of participation. Arts Council England's 'Review of Research and Literature on Museums and Libraries' (2011) acknowledged the conceptual shift of the museum from a centre of scholarship and curatorial expertise, towards a social role as public-oriented sites, facilitating learning practice and providing entertainment (Travers, 2006). However, the lack of consistent, meaningful and easily verifiable sets of measures of a museum's "success' for reporting, linked to the museum's capacity to meet the demands of its own mission (Babbidge, 2005), remains an ongoing gap in the evidence-based culture of the funded museum (ACE, 2011).

3.2 Social structures of agency, power, representation within the public realm

In Giddens' theory of structuration, social structures are assembled via the performance through time and across space of "generalized procedures applied in the enactment/reproduction of social life", combined with human and inhuman resources, that are deployed to enhance or maintain power, (Giddens, 1984). The discursive spaces of the public sphere, that facilitate mediation between the abstracted people, the public, and centers of authority, are regulated by morally-conditioned interactions. Issues of trust, consent, transparency and social license legitimize the exercise of power, defined as "the ability to overcome resistance to one's intended actions from another actor, the capacity to impact the surrounding world and the capacity to dominate other beings", (Lukes, 1974). Whilst agency refers to an actor's ability to affect the social world, power can is a capacity rather than necessarily the exercise of that capacity, as "power can be held even where it is not used or needed", exemplified by the function of non-decision-making in suffocating the allocation or redistribution of privilege before those demands for change gain access to the decision-making arena (ibid, p18-19).

Within this context, publicly funded organisations are gravitating of necessity towards the market mechanisms that undermine their own legitimacy (McGuigan, 2004). The engagement of external consultants lends external authority or legitimacy to newly adopted organisational processes, which, on becoming inscribed into material artefacts, are produced, distributed and consumed thereby entering the official institutional discourse (Venter, Wright & Dibb, 2015).

3.3 Organisational theory and knowledge management

> "An organisation is a complex entity. It is an intricate mix of diverse individuals, corporate cultures, structures, systems, technologies and processes." (McLean, 2011, p32)

Optimised and effective management lies at the core of the early literature on organisational theory, with the structural management of change and the marshalling of institutional knowledge assets (collecting, sharing, distribution) emerging as foremost themes (Davenport & Prusak, 1988; Prusak, 1997; Winter, 1994). More recently, issues relating to corporate decision-making are addressed: locked-in behavioural patterns or organisational path-dependency (Cairns & Beech, 1999; Greener, 2005; Wagner, Morton, Dainty & Burns, 2011), the application of quantitative and qualitative modeling to both routine decision-making and problem-solving (Ranyard, Fildes & Hu, 2015; Luoma, 2016), and innovation diffusion into organisations (Sharma & Yetton, 2007; Freitas, 2008).

Organisational culture is explained as "the specific collection of values and norms that are shared by people and groups in an organisation and that control the way they interact with each other and with stakeholders outside the organisation." (Hill & Jones, 2001). This understanding overlaps with Hodgson's definition of *institutions*, as "systems of established and embedded social rules that structure social interactions" (Hodgson, 2006), perhaps initially accounting for the commonplace interchangeability of the terms institution and organisation. However, Hodgson also differentiates organisations by introducing power structuration, beyond the rules of social interaction, observing that

> "Organisations are special institutions that involve a) criteria to establish their boundaries and to distinguish their members from non-members, b) principles of sovereignty concerning who is in charge, and c) chains of command delineating responsibilities within the organisation." (Hodgson, 2006, p18).

The “material proofs” of organisational ‘thinking activity’ (Bellier, in Wodak & Chilton, eds.,2005, p283) take the form of oral statements and written documents. In Giddens’ model of institutions, human and non-human resources can be used “to enhance or maintain power” within the “generalized procedures applied in the enactment/reproduction of social life” (Sewell, 1992, p9). These generalized procedures, or rules are both “the medium and the outcome of the practices they recursively organize” (Giddens, 1984,p25). Material artefacts are produced, distributed and consumed and become integrated into existing and processes, in a form of structural embedding, (Venter, Wright & Dibb, 2015,p79).

These structures of relevance inform decision-making within the museum, (Hooper-Greenhill, 1998,p228), in relation to internal concerns and external political networks. Within this context, information applied to decision-making processes is never raw, “but always processed” (Hanson, 1981), and Beech acknowledges the tendency to make sense of complexity by attributing labels or classifications that place knowledge into hierarchical structures (Beech, 1998). Most human social activity is organized and regulated by socially produced and reproduced rules and systems of rules, (Burns & Flam 1987). The multiplicity and heterogeneity of multiple perspectives within complex organisations, is positioned as an opportunity that can foster innovation and creativity, and is placed in direct opposition to the process of “knowledge extraction and refinement” of most Knowledge Management systems, that seek to remove all subjective and contextual aspects, to create an objective representation for reuse in a variety of circumstances (Bonifacio, Bouquet, Mameli & Nori , 2002).

Daft & Lenghel (1986) assert that organisations process information to confront the dual forces: uncertainty and equivocality, and that, critically, the issue for managers is not a lack of data, but a lack of clarity. Galbraith (1973) defines task uncertainty as “the difference between the amount of information required to perform the task and the amount of information already possessed by the organisation,” and Ungson, Braunstein and Hall (1981), acknowledge that decisions are often made by groups, requiring a coalition, albeit with members potentially pursuing different organisational priorities, and thereby possibly resisting the application of the data if regarded as less critical to the attainment of their subjective goal.

The three most important applications of business intelligence, and specifically data, are identified as: to plan and execute more efficiently, to manage relationships with consumers and to report the results of business activities (Retail Systems Research, 'Retail analytics moves to the frontline', 2014). Within this context, business intelligence is defined as a broad category of technologies, applications and processes for gathering, storing, accessing and analysing data to help users make better decisions (Wixom & Watson, 2001). Recent movement towards real-time decision support data, rather than data warehousing that involves data organized as an enterprise-wide resource supporting a wide variety of applications, represents a paradigm shift in the application of data to operational decision-making (ibid, p18-19).

Hsu & Yeh (2014) alert museums to the Content Silo Trap, where content, applications and services are created in isolation, potentially leading to increased costs, reduced quality or potentially ineffective materials (ibid, p.13): "Unfortunately, Knowledge management in museums tends to fail due to the control of knowledge as an artefact and the lack of management/strategic engagement. This isolating effect is anticipated, with considerable foresight, by Cameron (1971), who observes:

> "consideration of the museum and the computer must be preceded by consideration of the museum as a system….Each museum is a complexity of systems which optimally function in harmony, but more often than not are found operating competitively and in conflict, or at least out of phase with one another. (Cameron, 1971)

This vision of an optimal, harmonious and functioning museum system is also outward-facing, socially-oriented, and offering public benefit

> "as a responsive agency, meeting its community's immediate needs, for interpreted and relevant models of reality against which the individual can test and evaluate his own perceptual models of his world, then continuous input from the potential audience is essential."
>
> (Cameron, 1971).

3.4 Audiences and their ‘development’

> “Audience development is not an optional activity but a way of working which needs to become central to the philosophy and function of organisations.”
>
> (Dodd & Sandell,p6 1998)

Described as “a foggy concept” (Bollo, Da Milano, Gariboldi & Torch, 2017), audience development remains a collective challenge requiring commitment from cultural policy-makers and professionals alike. The term describes both a process, and the desired outcome of this process, and is associated with differing contextual functions and subjective interpretations at the respective levels of governmental policy, cultural theory and operational practice. Areas of dissent on the term ‘audience development’ encompass aspects of its purpose, potential and practice, with divergent interpretations of its relationship with marketing disciplines, with organisational strategic goals, and with the wider political agenda. This process encompasses “mainstream activities” targeting existing arts attenders, and “missionary undertakings” aimed at traditional non-attendees, (Hayes & Slater, 2002), and can include “aspects of marketing, commissioning, programming, education, customer care and distribution, (ACE, 2011,p2).

The early RAND model (McCarthy & Jinnett, 2001,p28) segments potential audiences into ‘disinclined to participate’, ‘inclined to participate’ and ‘participating’, and suggests a potential progression towards participation; the study maps the factors that influence individual likelihood of participating, whether seeking entertainment or fulfillment, via a self-focused development of proficiency, or more casual social experience. Limited by failing to acknowledge barriers to participation, and also overlooking the role for marketing strategy to impact on multiple audience segments, the RAND model was further developed into the MAO model (Wiggins 2004), to take account of audience members’ motivation, ability and opportunity to participate. Hayes and Slater bring a more longitudinal strategic approach, identifying that the key challenge remains “to acquire new audiences whilst retaining and developing the loyalty patterns of existing audiences through the implementation of selective strategies with short, medium and long-term potential.” (Hayes & Slater, 2002).

A framework of five audience development tools is proposed by Tajtakova, Zak & Filo (2012, p128), including ‘relationship-building’ alongside the more familiar areas of activity: marketing, education, programming, social projects. Within the context of shifting audience development strategies at times of economic crises, with cultural participation framed as an “escapist therapy”, long-standing audience development models analyse and segment audience and non-audience members, separating the softer, more readily convertible participants from those targets who are harder to reach or to engage (ibid, p137). Whilst this context-dependent approach is endorsed by Bollo et al (2017), their more user-friendly model identifies audiences whose participation behaviours are classified by *habit* (regular attenders), by *choice* (intermittent attenders) and by *surprise* (those indifferent, hard to reach or hostile), with instruments defined as “action assets”, such as unique attributes of a cultural venue (‘The Place Factor’), co-creation practices and the digital audience relationship.

The current conceptual and operational foreground afforded to audience development within contemporary cultural ecologies, contrasts starkly with the prevailing institutional priorities of earlier years. The establishment of national museums and galleries in the second half of the nineteenth century, set the foundations for the social construction of a prominent public culture in Britain (Roche 1998; Kawashima 2000). However, the degree of cultural competency required to access these elite cultural institutions, reinforced their reproduction of social separation. The necessity of both geographical and economic access, and critically, the requirement of privileged understanding of the rituals of cultural participation (Duncan, 1995), gained via a slow and cumulative process of educational or inherited social experience (Bourdieu, 1984), continued to disadvantage lower income visitors.

In post-war Britain, the focus of early cultural policy endeavour led by CEMA (Centre for Encouragement of Music & Arts) was a participatory approach, designed to build morale via “the encouragement of music-making and play-acting by the people themselves.” The funding debate, with regard to support for excellence rather than access, emerged during Maynard Keynes’ tenure as chairman of the newly formed ACGB, when raising the standard of execution of the fine arts became a key objective for ACGB.

After a long period of focus on the high arts in metropolitan settings, the cultural policy landscape of the 1960-70's was characterised by a shift towards focusing on the community and the removal of barriers to access (Braden, 1978, cited by Kawashima, 2000; Shaw, 1979). From the early 1980's onwards, the economic contribution made by cultural practice towards local regeneration was recognised (Myerscough, 1988). This was accompanied by an ethos of public scrutiny, and formal accountability, leading to the professionalisation of cultural management, and, in the light of funding cuts, the pursuit of private giving to meet organisational aims. Those governmental policies, intended to encourage a greater diversification culturally-engaged audiences, involving the unprecedented capital investment of funding generated by the launch of the National Lottery in 1994, the introduction of targets and performance measures, and free admission to museums from 1991 onwards, are covered earlier in this study.

From an inauspicious start in terms of policy, therefore, audience development has evolved to become a highly visible means for successive governments to address specific policy objectives, via the arms-length protocols of the Arts Council relationship. Audience development remains closely associated with DCMS evaluation and reporting mechanisms. These in turn, have the potential to inform and improve decision-making processes at policy level (Selwood, 2001). An increasingly data-driven approach, keys into the Art Council England's objective to review and improve funding programmes, by demonstrating the relative impact delivered by the recipients of funding, ('Achieving great art for everyone', ACE, 2010).

In terms of cultural management theory, the function of audience development sits between marketing and management practice and extends beyond notions of inclusivity: in this context, audience development encompasses the cultural organisation's relationship with existing, lapsed and potential audience members. Prompted by social, educational, artistic or financial motives, the purpose of audience development is:

i) to expand the audience base or alter its composition via strategic initiatives
ii) to enrich the experience of current cultural participants or attenders and
iii) to increase the frequency of their engagement.

The advent of audience development and its inclusion in the professionalisation of cultural delivery is regarded as legitimate, appropriate and necessary practice, in reaching out to those currently under-represented amongst existing audiences, those described by Kawashima as the “not easily available”, (Kawashima, 2000).

Although customarily located within the “strategic and systematic approach” of marketing (French & Runyard, 2011), which in turn is “an exchange process between those who seek a product or service (experience, idea, place, information) and those who can supply that product” (Kotler, 2008, p22), the crux of audience development is that in many instances, those under-represented populations do not actively seek the product or service that is offered, in this case, by the museum. In an increasingly visitor-oriented market, there is a case for audience development to be seen as organisational function, rather than a subset of marketing, as optimal audience development in a museum context, will require the alignment of exhibition and event programming, learning functions, pricing strategies, and communications, as well as addressing those in-gallery or capital structural issues that present barriers to entry. Black observes “there must be a willingness to change what is on offer, or there is no point in starting the process, “ (Black, 2005,p.67). Within the cultural sector, there is an assumption that equal access to the arts is desirable, and beneficial, at a number of levels, and that audience development has a role to play in achieving this.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

4.1 Research design: the mode of enquiry, the overall plan and justification for the methodology

As an empirically grounded study of the art museum's conceptions and operations of audience, contextualized by the socio-political instrumentality of audience development, and informed by the lines of tension and contradiction in the modeling of these audiences, this study is situated within the outlined analytical and conceptual frameworks, and invested with Malinowski's understanding of "foreshadowed problems" (Malinowski, 1922). Adopting the stance of post-critical museology, in a collaborative mode that combined action-oriented, immersed, reflexive approach, the research design required a mixed mode of qualitative and analytical approaches, involving Actor Network Theory (ANT), grounded theory and ethnography.

Taking a similar research approach to the previous collaborative research practice shared between Tate and London South Bank University, the Tate Encounters programme (2006-2009), the core part of the research for this study took the form of an embedded, qualitative study, structured in partnership with Tate, which, in its conception, permitted the researcher an extraordinary degree of access to the staff and organisational culture of the art museum, principally at Tate Britain, "the home of British art from 1500 to the present day", (Tate website, http://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-britain. Accessed 19 September 2017). The long-standing and collaborative nature of the partnership between Tate and London South Bank University enabled stable and prolonged access for the researcher, conferring a partial 'insider' status within the organisation, and exposure to the "know-how of daily practices" (de Certeau, 1984; Willis, 1977). In tracing and describing the messy webs and practices of the social, and specifically, of the role of visitor data in the negotiation of strategic operations within the art museum, the study adopts a mode of reflexivity, acknowledging the researcher's own sense of the field of action (Pollner & Emerson, 2001), and representing the social reality of others "through the analysis of one's own experience in the world of these others" (Van Maanen, 2011, xiii).

The scope of this study encompasses observation of cross-departmental audience practices located within Tate Britain, reflecting the location of both Tate's marketing department and Tate's research centre at that site. The collaborative practices of the art museum, in relation to strategy development and inter-departmental implementation of these strategies, involved the participation of senior staff from across Tate's family of four galleries. At the time of fieldwork of this study, a parallel doctoral research project was underway, involving collaboration between Tate and the University of Leicester, and which investigated evaluation models and performance measurement frameworks for the art museum's social media activities, (Villaespesa, 2014). It was therefore important to ensure that there was minimal overlap between both studies. The audience-driven stance of that study, however, in its conceptualisation of Tate's digital team as "audience advocates…championing the voice of [our] visitors" becomes a reference point in relation to the findings of the present study, (http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/blogs/digital-blog-insight-action-implementing-audience-driven-approach) Whilst Villaespesa's concurrent digital study at Tate takes the form of Action Research and seeks to effect change, in that instance, by modifying Kaplan's (2001) Balanced Scorecard framework, and applying it to the evaluation of Tate's social media activity, the present study seeks to render intelligible an understanding of the social construction of sets of knowledge at the art museum and their application to situated practice, and in doing so, to introduce new frames of reference and debate.

> "While theoretical fashions can come and go, the products of ethnographic research remain extraordinarily durable. Ethnographic data do not exist to substantiate or disprove theories. The data, the descriptions and interpretations are not the means to something else: They are the end. The definitions and theories and paradigms are the means: They exist to help us understand the data. The enduring value of the ethnographic tradition is grounded in its attention to the singular and the concrete." (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland & Lofland,2001)

4.2 The ethnographic tradition

The early 'core Chicago ethnographies' of 1917 to 1942 analysed the everyday existence, communities and symbolic interactions that were characteristic of a particular group (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland & Lofland, (2007, p11), with their descriptive narratives portraying 'social worlds' experienced in daily life. In seeking to render an environment or phenomenon intelligible (Hatch, 1973), whether the tensions between the power structures of Japanese corporate and family life (Kondo, 1990), the entry of working class boys into employment culture in the Midlands (Willis, 1977), the cultural capital of football fandom (Richardson & Turley, 2007), the practices of Canadian nightclub security staff (Rigakos, 2008), or drug-culture in Perth, Australia (Moore, 1993), ethnographic studies have the potential to

> "reveal to us things that we cannot know by conducting a survey, by interviewing individuals out of context, by doing archival research or by performing experiment in carefully controlled settings. They convey a vivid, dynamic and processual portrayal of a lived experience."
>
> (Smith, cited by Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland & Lofland, 2001).

Aull Davies (1988, p83) develops Whyte's view (1955) on the fluidity of the observer's role, by arguing that the success of the ethnography is not determined by the degree of acceptance of the ethnographer within the research field, but rather by "the nature, circumstances and quality of the observation". The ethnographic researcher's role is that of a translator, not an empathiser (Geertz, 1983), leading to interpretations rather than projected outcomes, (Hatch, 1973), in an attempt "to understand another life world, using the self, - as much of it as possible, as the instrument of knowing." (Ortner, 1995, p.173)

4.3 Entry to the field

Rather than motivated by the ethnographer's self-initiating "impulse to be so moved with curiosity about a social puzzle….that you are seized to go and look for yourself to see 'what's going on'", (Willis, 2000, pxiii), the researcher was recruited to a funded doctoral studentship, that in turn, responded to the Arts & Humanities Research Council's Highlight call for Museology. Cassell (1998) separates access to the field into two phases: '*getting in'* or 'achieving physical access to the place' and '*getting on'*, that is, achieving social access within the situated group of study (Cassell, 1988, p93-95). Without the long-standing relationship between Tate and LSBU, it is unlikely that the 'getting in' phase for this fieldwork would have been possible, given Gobo's stark warning: "Gaining access to the field is the most difficult phase in the entire process of ethnographic research", for the extent of co-operation that it requires of the host organisation", (Gobo, 2008, p118). Nonetheless, entry by the researcher to the field that is Tate required multiple attempts, via differing routes, and at varying procedural levels, over a period of three months, before access was fully granted. Here follows an account:

In the Spring of 2010, I responded to a press advertisement in the *Guardian*, for a junior marketing role at Tate Britain. A few days later, the Head of Marketing telephoned to say that my application was unsuccessful, but suggested that I apply instead for a six-month placement, funded by the Cultural Leadership Programme, a now discontinued government funded programme, with the objective of building new networks, sharing best practice and developing leadership behaviours across the creative and cultural industries. I applied, was short-listed, and interviewed at the Arts Council offices, at their long-standing Great Peter Street headquarters, prior to their relocation in 2013, in a cost-saving measure, to new open-plan offices in Bloomsbury Street, opposite the British Museum. Although my earlier career, as an Account director in brand strategy and communications at a London-based international agency, had involved weekly presentations to clients and colleagues, I'd taken a career break of a decade, to raise three children, with only the completion of a Masters degree in Arts Management and Cultural Policy during that period offering any kind of academic or professional challenge. On the day of the interview at the Arts Council England, my anxiety translated into an over-hasty start to my pre-prepared presentation. Having been recruited as a modern languages graduate trainee for my initial employment, and then subsequently headhunted to a more senior role at another agency, I was inexperienced at handling structured competency-based recruitment questions, and had erred in prioritizing my preparation of what I wanted to tell the interviewers rather than considering what they might want to hear. Having wrong-footed myself from the outset, the interview didn't go well, although one of the two Tate staff present was kindly.

Twenty-four hours later, when the telephone call came, from a member of the interview panel, to notify me that my interview had been unsuccessful, it was suggested to me that I should make a third application to Tate, for an upcoming, funded studentship, in collaboration with London South Bank University. By coincidence, I'd already spent some time developing a doctoral research proposal, that expanded upon the long study I'd conducted for my Masters degree, on word-of-mouth activity amongst arts audiences, and was in discussion with King's College London, for an unfunded PhD place. The prospect of the security of a funded place at London South Bank University, some income, and the supportive structure of a collaborative partnership with both a research organisation and Tate, appealed more. At the time, I didn't fully understand the prescribed thesis title attached to the studentship: "Art museum attendance and the public realm: The agency of visitor information in Tate's organisational practices of making the art museum's audiences." I had never even heard the juxtaposition of "art" with "museum" before: to me, there were just 'galleries' and 'museums.' In reality, it would take another twelve months for me to fully decode the meaning of the thesis title; however, in June 2010, I wrote a short paper as required by the application process, was shortlisted, and on July 14th, arrived early in the Duveen galleries at Tate Britain, for an interview. A new commission had recently been installed in the 300 foot long neoclassical sculpture galleries, (named after funder and art-dealer, Sir Joseph Duveen), that since 1937 had formed the central spine of Tate Britain, on a North-West, South-East axis. This new commission, Fiona Banner's installation, was startling in its scale and conception: a pair of decommissioned fighter planes, one suspended in a perpetual hawk-like nosedive, and the other, an inverted, chromed Jaguar jet.

Figure 9: Fiona Banner commission, Duveen galleries, Tate Britain (2010)

I remember realising, as I waited at the physical core of the museum, beneath the domed Rotunda of Tate's circular atrium, that as I was the last of six short-listed candidates, the interviewing panel would already have spent five hours interviewing that day. And I also remember feeling the thrill of ascending a white marble spiral staircase, which was gated off from the public, to access the upper level, and the location of the interview. The interview took place in a small, but improbably high-ceilinged meeting room at the south-western corner of the museum, which I later understood had been partitioned off from the adjacent Grand Saloon, to create workspaces on the upper floor following a devastating flood in 1928. The retention of the partitioned space, 90 years later, was an early signal that perhaps certain things move slowly at a national museum; equally, it indicated that the scale and operational practices of the museum had evolved over the past century, requiring differing priorities in the allocation of space than were anticipated at the time of the museum's construction. On the same first floor of the building, and on the opposite flank of the Grand Saloon, at the south-east corner, another small meeting-room was located, directly above the neo-classical portico and overlooking the Thames. All three spaces would be reintegrated into the restored Grand Saloon during the £45m Millbank Project, that would slowly materialize over the course of the next two years, and which gradually and painstakingly reconfigured the built spaces of the research fieldwork at Tate Britain.

Figure 10: Refurbished Grand Saloon, on completion of Millbank Project, 2012

I'd spent the four hour journey travelling down that morning from Norfolk to London, reminding myself en route of differing research methodologies, and was happily able to differentiate between deductive and inductive approaches when asked in the interview. The turning point, from my perspective, was when the panel of six asked why I wanted the doctoral studentship; this time, remembering my experience at the Arts Council, I was better prepared, and setting aside my attempts at reasonable academic discourse, just said: "Because it's *Tate."* The panel responded: "We've been waiting all day to hear that."

At the end of the interview, I was advised that the successful applicant would be notified by telephone that evening. I set off back to Norfolk by train, and was disappointed but not surprised when no 'phonecall came. The following morning, I emailed for confirmation that I'd been unsuccessful, on my third attempt at accessing Tate, and shortly after, Professor Dewdney phoned me: the studentship was mine. I said something crass like, 'that's just changed my life", but in reality, it had: I'd gone from being a long-term, stay-at-home mum of three, to a funded doctoral student.

In this way, my entry to the field was produced by an ensemble of actors:

i) the Intermediary, who established communication between me and the research organisation
ii) the Guarantor, a trusted member of the group of informants, and
iii) the Gatekeeper, who supervised the territory of the fieldwork (Gobo, 2008,p127)

4.4 Gaining operational access

Obtaining the studentship secured initial entry to the field, however gaining operational access to Tate was an altogether more complex and protracted process. Gobo advises that "once access to the organisation or group has been gained, the researcher must devote a great deal of time and energy to winning the trust of his or her interlocutors, and to maintaining that trust throughout the research (Gobo, 2008, p118). For me, the pressing priority was devoting a great deal of time and energy to obtaining the essential security pass required for access to the staff spaces of Tate Britain.

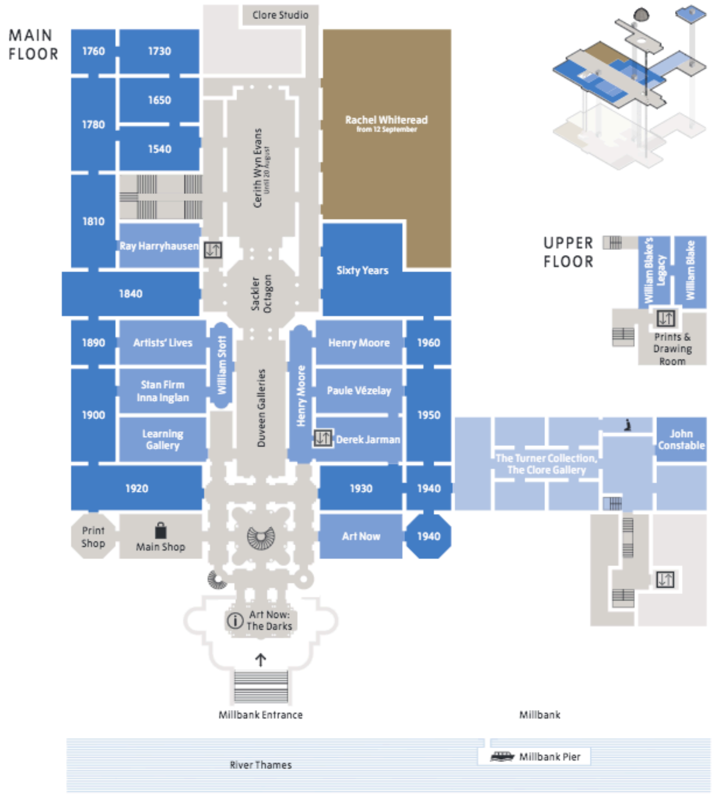

Figure 11: The main floor public spaces of Tate Britain

Whilst the more familiar public spaces of the Tate Britain site are represented in Fig.11, for staff at the art museum, access to the Research, Marketing and Development departments is via a dedicated entrance, at "Block 20", to the North East of the gallery, on John Islip street, on the site of former Queen Alexandra's Military Hospital.

Figure 12: The staff entrance, John Islip street, London.

Without a digital fob, the entry process involves ringing a doorbell, being viewed on a monitor, and 'buzzed' onto the premises by the security guard, who sits at a desk just to the left of the doorway.

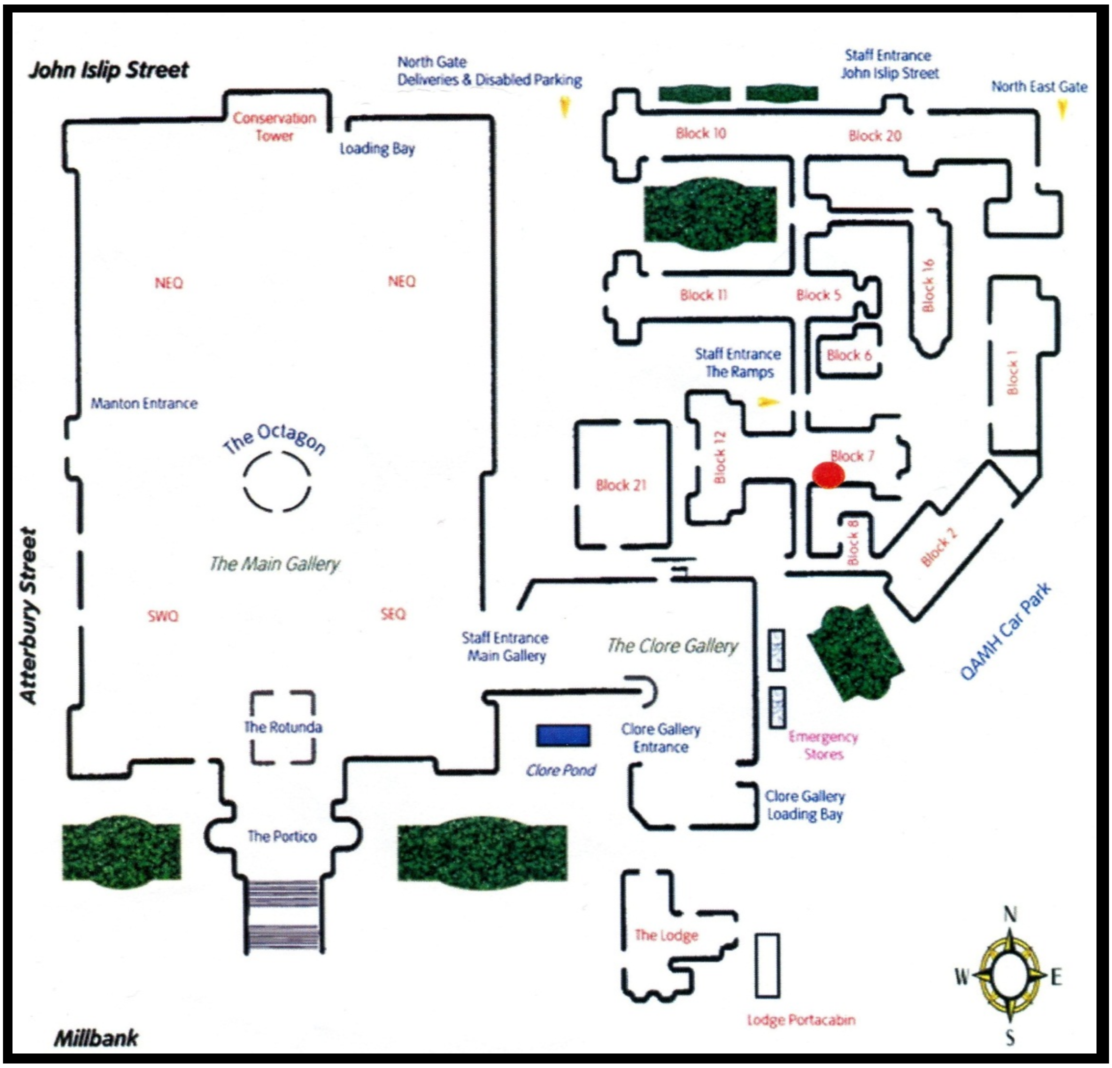

Figure 13: The wider research site at Tate Britain, London. Map issued to staff.

Access to the various spaces of the entire site is controlled by the mixed framework of photo ID cards for staff, digital fobs for rapid independent access to controlled areas, and knowledge of the four-digit security codes for various push-button door-locks that separate the public areas from the working zones for staff. Having been offered the studentship on July 15th 2010, the next hurdle was the nomination of my candidacy to the funding body for their approval, which was granted on August 17th, followed by a formal induction at London South Bank University, and an informal meeting at Tate in September, to collect my interim paper staff pass.

Although the Directorate of the museum opts not to disclose the value of its holding of the national collection of 70,000 artworks, the new acquisitions are itemised in each published Annual Report, (available online at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tate-annual-report-and-accounts-2016-to-2017). Between 2008 and 2016, Tate acquired over quarter of one billion pounds worth of artworks (£275.9m), of which one third were purchased and the majority donated. Security is evidently a high priority.

Notwithstanding, the issuing of my permanent staff pass and security fob, allowing access to the John Islip street entrance, the secret short-cut routes that traverse the gallery, the boundary threshold doorways between departments, the museum's hidden offsite storerooms, and also free passage for the 18 minute boat journey downriver to Tate Modern), was repeatedly delayed. Even the issuing of the temporary pass required a passport, proof of current address and a five year address history; in return, the temporary pass enabled the most basic, partial access to the site, reinforcing my status as an outsider. It would take almost six months to complete the issuing of my plastic pass and digital security fob. By February 2011, I was officially a staff member.

4.5 Access to facilities

Much like the gallery's new Keeper, Dugald Sutherland MacColl, on his arrival at Tate in 1906, I couldn't help but notice "how difficult it was to obtain a desk" (Spalding, 1998,p32). Whilst between 25-35 doctoral researchers were conducting research at Tate at any given time, the study space for those beneath the rank of post-doc at the Research department could accommodate only 5 students, in a hot-desk arrangement, in a narrow room at the John Islip Street site. An L-shaped counter wrapped around one long and one short side of the restricted space, allowing for no more than 60cm of workspace per person, with a system of non-allocated computers, requiring individual users to log on and log off, subject to meeting the demanding security protocol requirements of the software system. New software processes in May 2012 required staff to complete a timed online examination in the complex, detailed legal guidelines and intellectual property issues surrounding use of the museum's networked computer system, without which continuing access would be denied. Three attempts were allowed. Aware of the high stakes, it took me two attempts to pass.

The hot desk arrangement, as its name would suggest, did not allow researchers to reserve space, so I'd often make the hour's journey from home to the art museum, carrying assorted books and notes, to find no desk available. On occasion, the research administrator would reluctantly grant permission for my use of a post-doctoral researcher's dedicated desk space in an office further along the corridor; however, the hierarchy of desk allocation was unmistakable, and my status as the lowest ranking new researcher, with a non-curatorial thesis topic, was unambiguous. And once, on a single occasion in the entire sixteen months of fieldwork, I was given permission to sit for a few hours one afternoon, at a vacant desk in the Marketing department. I'd hoped for more frequent access to that space, to see the daily audience practices of the Marketing department. I was welcomed, but only up to a point, and that point was clearly demarked in the deliberate confinement of my principal activity: observation of the strategy meetings.

Once my full staff status was in place, I was granted access to Tate's Christmas party (for me, an annual exercise in the discomfort of interstitial spaces), and, also to the staff canteen on site at Tate Britain. The staff canteen became a temporal metaphor signifying the duration of my embeddedness on site at Tate: throughout the Millbank renovation project, the canteen occupied a Portakabin site, deposited in a car park to the rear of the gallery, until its permanent relocation to the repurposed chapel of the Queen Alexandra's Military Hospital. The long, windowed corridor that intersected these two spaces, (the car park and the chapel) connected the public and staff spaces of Tate Britain. The corridor has remained largely unchanged since the hospital's closure in the 1970's, with the exception of the addition of multiple combination security locks stationed at different intervals and at different access points along the corridor. To the researcher, this corridor became the boundary threshold that marked the transition from the public spaces of the art museum, to the behind-the-scenes centres of daily administrative practice.

4.6 Informants, the fieldwork design and fieldwork schedule

The research proposal for this study advocated prolonged access and a degree of embeddedness, which would not be feasible in a conventional studentship. Initially, the researcher was invited to become a regular attender at the Audience Strategy Steering Group, attended on average, by 14 senior staff members from departments across the art museum: Tate Media and Audiences, Tate National, Learning Practice, Marketing, the Director's office, Visitor Services and also Curatorial. Within eight weeks of the initial fieldwork commencing, the researcher had attained sufficient "degree of acceptance" (Aull Davies, 1998) to negotiate the expansion of the scope of the fieldwork, to include further strategy groups. The initial research plan granted access to observation of 6 Audience Strategy groups, which were scheduled at intervals of 6-8 weeks apart. However, as the fieldwork gradually progressed, the duration of the data-collection extended to a period of sixteen months, and its scope expanded to include ethnographic observation of 19 Staff strategy implementation meetings. These comprised: 6 for the Audience Strategy Steering Group, 7 meetings for the Young Persons Strategy Group and 6 for the Families Strategy Implementation Group. The fieldwork also encompassed 7 All Staff briefings and presentations: 2 of the annual reporting presentations by external consultants, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 3 meetings led by Curatorial, preparing for the installation of the forthcoming 'Picasso and Britain' exhibition, a further Curatorial planning meeting for the 'Pre-Raphaelites' exhibition, and an Extraordinary General Meeting held at Tate Britain towards the latter part of my fieldwork.

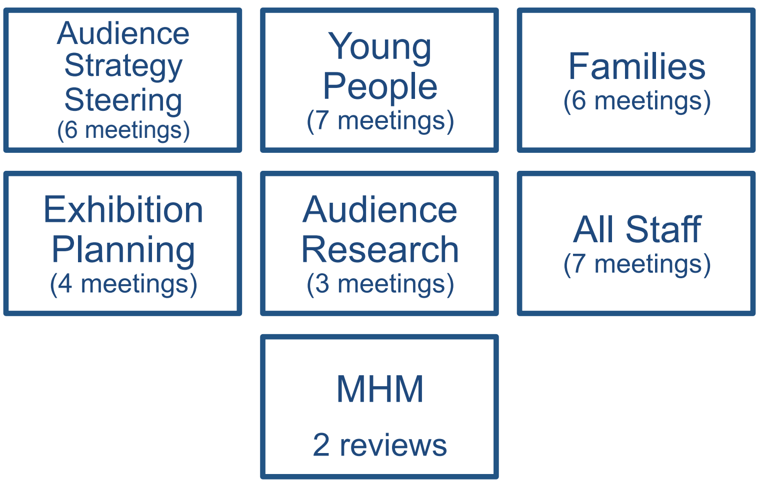

Figure 14: Core fieldwork: Ethnographic observation of strategy and staff meetings

Access was also granted to an interdepartmental meeting to discuss the selection of the core visual image that would support the marketing and merchandising materials for the forthcoming Pre-Raphaelites ticketed show at Tate Britain. For exposure to the satellite Tate centres of activity, the fieldwork also included attendance at Tate Liverpool of one of the touring presentations of the museum's new strategy, 'Tate Vision', at a Tate Liverpool All Staff meeting. (In a surreal closure to that meeting, the staff were invited to fill out a postcard to the Tate's Director, Serota, expressing individual wishes, not unlike a letter to Father Christmas). In total, therefore, this accumulation of fieldwork involved direct access to the observation of over 70 members of staff, from across all the departments of Tate. From the outset of the observation of meetings, the informants were made aware of the researcher's role, framed within legitimating staff status. The complexity of the overall fieldwork schedule is mapped in Figure 16, p75.

As the ethnographic observational fieldwork progressed, it became evident that a systematic framework would be required to organize the quantity and diversity of the multiple forms of emerging data. Stake's template for the design of cases studies (2006,p5) served this purpose as a means of conceptualizing and organizing the data from across multiple spaces of operational activity; this template (Figure 15, below) facilitated the incorporation of interviews, the analysis of documentation and the emergence of embedded mini case studies or vignettes.

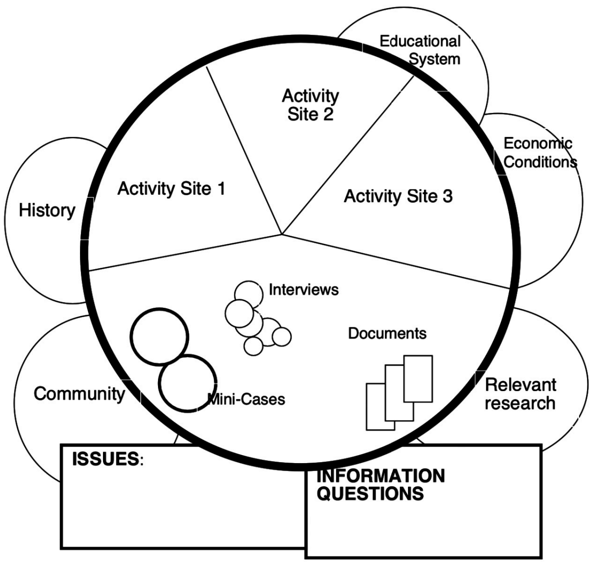

Figure 15: Graphic design of a case study, Stake (2006, p5)

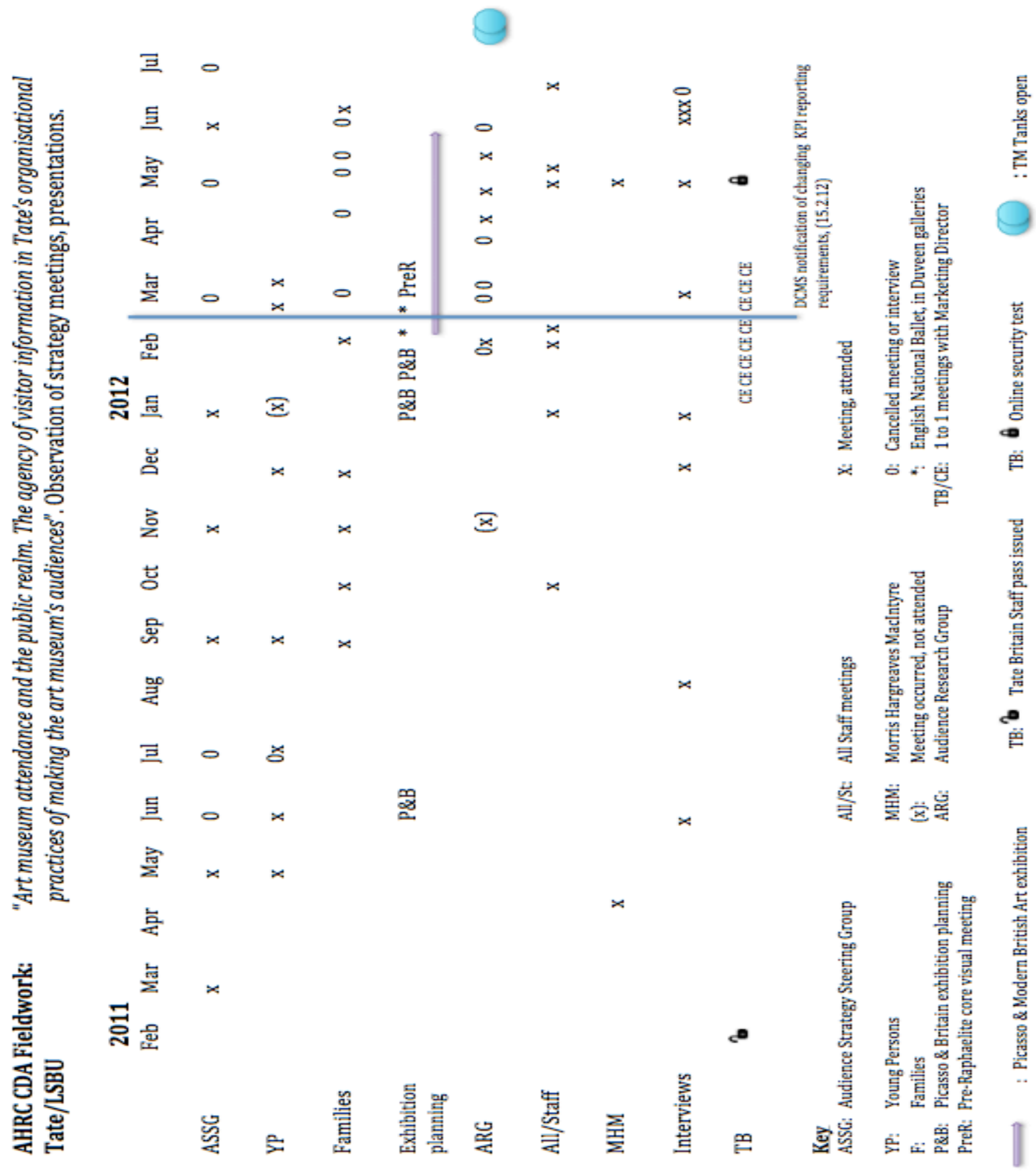

Figure 16: Mapping the fieldwork, 2011-2012

As the fieldwork progressed and the researcher began to better understand the situational and spatial dynamics, the actors, their roles, their stance towards emerging key themes, and their location in the network of events that constructed the application of visitor data, key informants were identified for interviewing at a later stage of the fieldwork.

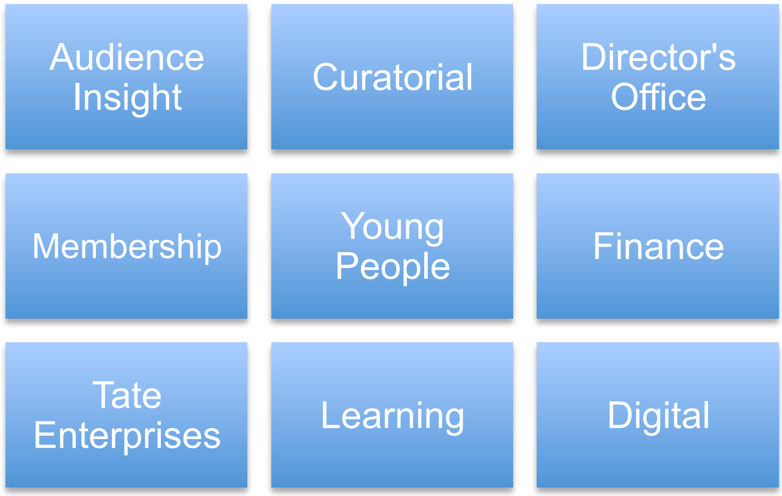

Figure 17. Core data-collection fieldwork : interviewees from each of 9 departments

Nine interviews in total were conducted, each of 50 minutes' duration. Marketing was excluded from this list, as the researcher's Guarantor (Gobo, 2008, p.127) held a lead role within that department, and met with the researcher at weekly 1:1 'master-classes' from January to March 2012, in addition to the multiple overlaps between their shared attendance of the various strategy group meetings. Interviewees were drawn from across the various teams or departments of the art museum: from Media, the Director's Office, Digital, Membership, Audience Insight, Tate Enterprises, Learning, Finance and Curatorial, and from differing levels of seniority and responsibility. These respondents also ranged from having recently joined Tate, to having been employed for over five years at the art museum.

Of the 9 semi-structured interviews, the first four took place in the first half of the data-collection process and were not recorded, as the researcher felt that by that stage, insufficient levels of trust had been established between the interviewer-respondent, owing to the low frequency of contact up until that point. There was also a degree of urgency in scheduling the early four interviews at short notice:

two of the interviewees were leaving Tate shortly, and a third was about to take maternity leave. The researcher found, in an unforeseen benefit, that two interview conditions (of a respondent permanently leaving the organisation soon, and the absence of recording equipment) led to more frank disclosures than had been expected.

All of the interviewees signed informed consent paperwork, (see Appendix). The interviews were conducted in private offices, or pre-booked meeting rooms, with signage on the exterior of the door to minimise the risk of interruption. During the course of the interview data-collection process, there were two situational circumstances that the researcher was required to accommodate: firstly, one respondent wore a leather jacket that gave an audible creaking sound throughout the digital recording. The researcher took the risk of similar audio disruption into consideration in subsequent interviews. Secondly, in the Finance meeting, there were multiple rapid-fire references to specific documents that the respondent had brought, saying “this one” or “this”, so it was necessary to identify those documents verbally during the interview, by referencing their title and purpose, for clarification purposes during the subsequent transcription process.

4.7 Participant-observer fieldwork procedures and data-collection methods

Data-collection via the researcher’s observation of multiple strands of the institution’s strategy work, performed as cross-departmental meetings, was combined with simultaneous reflexive writing, as the researcher gradually constructed understandings of operational procedures at Tate, and their wider significance. The extended, sixteen month process, enabled the researcher to resist the “race to critique” (Goodman, 1998 p55).

> “Ethnography is research on the slow boil, something that’s getting harder to justify at a time when our public debate increasingly favours the quick flash in the pan.”
> (Andersson, BBC Radio 4, ‘Thinking Allowed’, 29 June 2016)

The researcher’s attendance at the next New Staff Induction meeting, held at Block 20 of the John Islip street site, on 18th November 2010, provided the researcher with an opportunity to conduct a preliminary study for the intensive participant-observer data-collection that was to follow:

> "I had identified in advance the staff who were hosting the event, held at monthly intervals in a Ground Floor training space, behind the scenes at Tate Britain. Arriving 15 minutes early gave me the opportunity to 'read' the meeting space at John Islip street: the rectangular Formica desks clustered into friendly configurations each accommodating up to 6 participants, and the incongruous soundtrack playing (Katy Perry's up tempo *Firework*), more reminiscent of the ambient-setting audioscapes at the opening day of a political party conference. After some ice-breaking deskbound team challenges, deputy Director Alex Beard arrived, and in the role of deputy party leader (the latter role unequivocally occupied by Nicholas Serota), delivered an eloquent set-piece on Tate's core purpose and values." (Fieldwork notebook)

Such is the scale of the art museum, with over 600 staff distributed across the Tate Britain and Tate Modern sites, that it took over six months for the researcher's path to cross again with any of the other 15 new staff members who attended the induction meeting that day.

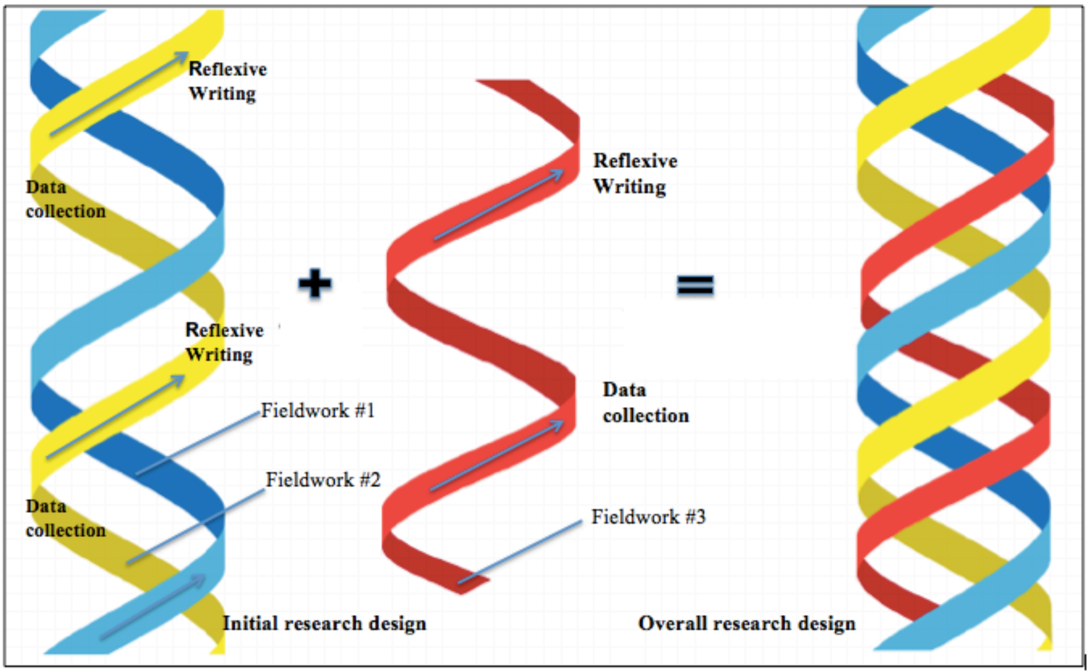

Figure 18: The simultaneity of multiple fieldwork strands, with an embedded reflexive narrative

The simultaneity of the interwoven strands of data-gathering is represented by ribbons of successive fieldwork events, for each strategy group, is shown in Figure 18. As the fieldwork progressed, the researcher, gaining confidence in the process, acquired the ability to follow a data-gathering schedule of increasing complexity, resulting from requested access to more meetings; as an invited observer, however, the researcher was without agency in influencing the scheduling or frequency of these events. The researcher was particularly conscious of the importance of the initial encounters within the research site, prior to acclimatization to the working environment, when "commonplace behaviours will strike one as peculiar" (Nash, 1989 p2). The researcher captured the observational data in A4 lined field notebooks, with separate notebooks assigned for each strategy group that was being observed. As the number of notebooks increased, key events were listed on the cover of each notebook, to facilitate subsequent data analysis. To accelerate familiarization and identification of the informants, the researcher produced a photographic grid reference of key personnel involved in the successive strategy groups, using a colour passport-sized photo of each staff member, taken from the museum's intranet server, and adhered in a grid formation to the inside back cover of each notebook. This enabled the researcher to recognise the staff member at the early stages of the fieldwork, to recall their name and job function, but also, critically, it served as reminder during the intense process of data-collection, of the informants' initials to be noted alongside the written record of each meeting's dialogue. The digitally recorded interviews were each assigned a calendar date and participant code, and were transcribed within twenty-four hours of the data collection. Transcription alone required a 5:1 time ratio for the completion of that task. The data, notebooks and equipment were protected in a locked file, to meet data protection ethical requirements.

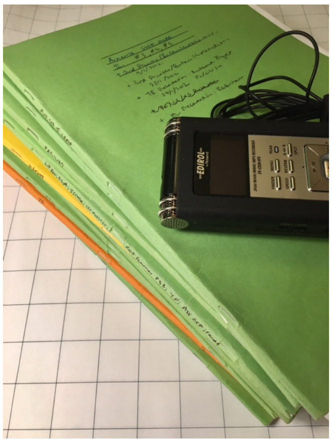

Figure 19: Fieldwork notebooks and audio equipment

In addition to the ethnographic observations and interviews, the researcher sought examples of non-human actors or material artifacts, such as research strategy documents, minutes from meetings, Annual Reports, Press releases or intranet site content, for textual interpretation. The researcher traced actions and the social construction of knowledge of Tate's audiences occurring within landscapes of meaning (Reed, 2011), from that ethnographic position situated between theory and social reality.

4.8 Positionality of the researcher

Between my 16th and 17th birthdays, two books were published which would determine my career path: 'Ogilvy on Advertising' (Ogilvy, 1983) and 'The Complete Guide to Advertising' (Douglas, 1984). Both books were heavily illustrated hardback texts, which demystified the practices of a profession that at the time, was difficult to access. It was the year of David Bowie's '*Let's Dance'*, Boy George's '*Karma Chameleon'* and Michael Jackson's '*Billie Jean*.' Seat belts became compulsory for the front of vehicles, the one pound coin was introduced, and Neil Kinnock was elected to the leadership of the Labour party. At the time of Ogilvy's publication in 1983, the most famous copywriter of the day had already helmed his own agency for almost 40 years, and Ogilvy & Mather was firmly on its trajectory to become one of the largest advertising and communications networks in the world. With characteristic precision but unusual economy of words, Ogilvy distilled his professional advice into 7 Commandments below:

1. Your role is to sell, don't let anything distract you from the sole purpose of advertising.
2. Clearly define your positioning: What and for who?
3. Do your homework. Study your consumer in detail.
4. Think of your consumer as a woman. She wants all the information you can give her.
5. Talk to them in the language they use every day.
6. Write great headlines and you'll have successfully invested 80% of your money.
7. Highlight the product by making it the hero.

Figure 20: Ogilvy, *Ogilvy on Advertising*, 1983.

Seven years later, I was offered a graduate traineeship at a multinational agency in London, having completed a challenging process that reduced 1400 applicants to the final appointed 6 candidates. An intensive six-month training programme ensured that I was versed in the fundamentals of the industry: the accurate identification of a precise target audience, for the delivery of the marketing strategy, with minimal financial wastage in terms of the production cost, across television, cinema commercial, or print campaigns. As is was 1990, the selfsame year that Tim Berners-Lee unleashed the World Wide Web, there was no digital dimension yet to the workplace. Operating with rapid and decisive efficiency was however, a means of protecting the agency's profitability, and further economies were sought by reducing the risk of wastage during the costlier purchasing of the media, measured in cost per thousand, the "opportunity to see', and other metrics of coverage and frequency. The target audience defined who the advertiser sought to reach, to either increase the frequency of the their purchasing behaviours, to adjust the brand proposition in the minds of the audience, or to raise awareness of the product amongst those who had not yet encountered it. Not knowing or understanding the audience was unimaginable.

Fast forward another 25 years, and here I was in a small meeting room at Tate Britain, listening to a Senior curator:

> "the programming isn't really conceived in terms of targeting or excluding particular audiences. It's sort of trying to have a varied programme that represents art that artists have made historically, or are making, and that's where the focus is, that's where the priority in terms of decision-making lies…….The exhibitions are for anyone and everyone, we don't really give much thought to our audiences. I simply don't think that comes into the picture….Curatorial is all about producing something here on site, and the process of it doesn't necessarily involve audiences until at a very late stage, so it doesn't have direct interface with visitors."

Trying to reconcile these differing professional perspectives, on the relevance of the interface and relationship between an organisation and its audiences, and the differences between those orientations when comparing market-driven environments, and non-profit sectors, is a tense negotiation. And the complexity of this issue of institutional orientation will become evident from the co-existing differences of view that prevail not just between academic discourse, and working practice, but also at Tate, *between* departments, and also *within* those self-same departments. Chris Dercon, Tate Modern's Director, wearing a construction-worker's hard hat, and standing in the empty shell of the building site, at the Level 4 gallery of the evolving Tate Modern extension affirmed:

> "People want much more than ever to be part of a public space, a city within a city. The public wants to be part of an adventure called culture." (2014)

This public-orientation is recognised as a long-standing issue within museology, as the balance tilts away from those core curatorial activities of collection, conservation and display, to a new sharper focus on an expanding set of visitor needs.

> "Central is the need to focus on the visitors, actual and latent, to the museum, and to place visitors at the centre of museology. Traditionally, the strengths of museums have been in their collection, conservation and display of artifacts, and this activity has implicitly formed the core product of museology." (Prentice, 1996, p182).

What is enacted, what is produced by this sharper focus on the centrality of audiences, and what part does the museum's knowledge of its audiences play in actualizing this shifting orientation? This tension makes me consider my own positionality in relation to the purpose of the funded museum, and the notion of reconciling a vision-led organisation with the necessity of audience-focused ways of working, to prevent the institution from folding into an interiorized, self-serving entity. And I'm also aware of my shifting position in terms of the process of this fieldwork: I'm frequently locked into "those uncomfortable in-between spaces" (Mulcock, 2001,p42), of being an insider-outsider, staff member-observer, witness to and collaborator with the museum as it grapples with its evolving role and identity. Frequently, I feel welcomed, privileged to have access to these conversations; at other times, the researcher's role feels marginalised or ignored. During the fieldwork stages, the lack of access to a fixed workspace, in anything other than a hot-desk arrangement in either LSBU's or Tate's research department, and the impossibility of sitting alongside the Marketing team as they go about their daily work, troubles me in terms of whether I can fully meet those research objectives which were defined in partnership between Tate and the university. And long after the fieldwork is completed, when my Tate staff member email has been relinquished, I'm once again closed outside the boundaries of the museum, with the research department not continuing their erstwhile correspondence nor responding to my emails. Perhaps if my role had been defined more clearly from the outset as that of Participant-Observer, the situation might have been different. As it stands, on Gold's 'Continuum of Involvement' (1958), my role is that of a Complete Observer, (see Fig. 18), with no allocated task that might better integrate me into the department, other than my own fieldwork: observing, and noting my observations.

Complete Participant	→	Participant as Observer	→	Observer as Participant	→	Complete Observer

Figure 21: The Continuum of Involvement, Gold (1958)

In terms that I readily recognise, Ortner describes the ethnographic stance "as much an intellectual (and moral) positionality, a constructive and interpretive mode as it is a bodily process in space and time." (Ortner 1995, p.173). This facility to see events with the eyes of an outsider and simultaneously with those of an insider is a key requirement of the ethnographer, (Hume & Mulcock, 2004).

> "The researchers can come closer to experiencing and understanding the "insider's" point of view….the importance of maintaining enough intellectual distance to ensure that researchers are able to undertake a critical analysis of the events in which they are participating…..They should be willing and able to take a step back from the relationships they form with the people they encounter in the field for long enough to identify and reflect upon some of the taken-for-granted rules and expectations of the social world they are studying," (ibid).

The initial challenges of this methodological approach, in terms of entry to the field, prolonged access and 'getting on' (Cassell, 1988), the researcher's unfamiliarity with the ways of working within the specific environment, and the sheer complexity and volume of emerging data, were supplanted by the necessary early onset of the cyclical data analysis.

4.9 Methods of data analysis: Grounded theory and multiple case studies

In a restatement of the analytical framework of this inquiry, this empirically grounded study of the art museum's conceptions and operations of audience combines an action-oriented, reflexive approach and a mixed mode of qualitative analyses, involving Actor Network Theory, grounded theory and ethnography. Rooted in Blumer's (1956) conceptualisation of symbolic interactionism, in which social exchanges between actors create shared meaning, and concepts perform a sensitizing role rather than delivering concrete quantifiable correlations, the grounded theory method was first described by Glaser and Strauss (1967), prior to the divergence of their methodological approaches (Glaser 1978; Strauss 1987; Strauss & Corbin 1990), owing to differences of emphasis upon the role played by the point of recourse to the literature, and also those of induction, emergence and deduction. In the Glaserian approach to grounded theory, the researcher perseveres the noisy data and confusion and of the early fieldwork, in which all data matters, whilst also immersed in the time-consuming, intensive, continual reflection and comparative analysis of the coding procedure, in the lengthy progression from data to emerging insight and the gradual generation of theory (Glaser 1999; Heath & Cowley 2004).

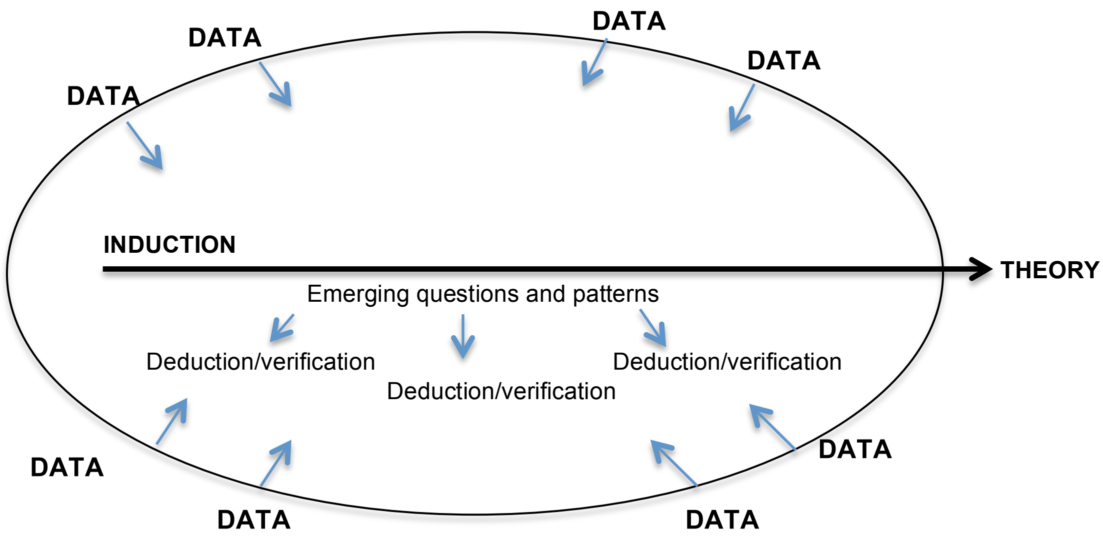

Figure 22. Glaser (1978) Locating induction, deduction and verification within the analytical processes of developing grounded theory

To a novice researcher, in an unfamiliar field, this was an intimidating process. At each strategy meeting that was the focus of ethnographic observation, rather than making solely observational notes, the researcher transcribed at speed the verbatim conversations between the group members. This facilitated the capture of the nuanced negotiations that took place, those punctuating moments or points of tension and resistance in which the data came into being, in contrast with the static, fixed noting of decisions reached that would be reported in conventional meeting minutes. In tandem with the on-going process of data-collection, the researcher undertook an initial attempt at coding the data into multiple theoretical categories. The initially descriptive categories evolved, via a process of comparison, refinement and reduction, into an assimilation of abstract themes, enabling the discovery of the emerging theory rather than fitting, at each cyclical operation of this process, the newly emerging data to a predetermined framework.

The fieldwork process had produced unwieldy quantities of material: in addition to the fourteen A4 notebooks that were filled with rapid notation, five Nobo pads of A1-sized squared paper (58 x 81cm), customarily used for meeting flipboards, were used for charting the identification and mapping of emerging themes. Specifically, this was achieved by allocating one A1 sheet per group of study, i.e. the Audience Strategy Steering group, or the Families group, and capturing the emergence of themes within the evolving fieldwork, and across the longitudinal development of the fieldwork. Separately, as themes began to emerge, these were transferred to a fresh sheet of their own, and with attempts at constant comparison between and across the groups, the findings emerged from the data. Once this long and iterative coding was complete, at the point of saturation (Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006), when no new information or themes were observable, the identified themes were transcribed into word documents and populated with the supporting verbatim evidence from the notebooks. It was a labour-intensive process, supplemented by a linear mapping of the fieldwork process, which extended across a number of connected A1 sheets, and which was subsequently reduced to the fieldwork schedule produced in Figure 16, p.75. This was termed the 'Bayeux Tapestry of fieldwork' by my Supervisor.

In a parallel process of qualitative data analysis and reporting, the researcher developed individual case studies in order to spotlight a particular instance or moment that illustrated a singular aspect of the phenomenon of focus, the agency of visitor information on organizational practices of making the art museum's audiences. Yamashita (2014) suggests that an assemblage of embedded case studies, understood as research instruments aimed at describing a phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2002), and in this instance reported across Chapter Five of this study, renders vividly the detailed interactions of the experimental setting, and is preferable to case selection based upon availability, for reasons of internal validity.

Achieving validity, or the measure of how accurately the research findings accurately reflect the field they purport to describe (Wilcox 2008), in methodologies other than ethnography, is achieved by careful population sampling, measurement of variation or quantitative analysis across multiple cases. As Yamashita observes, case studies within the ethnographic method, however, "are better at assessing *whether* and *how* a variable mattered to the outcome rather than *how much* it mattered."(Ibid). Conversely, George and Bennett (2005) argue that

> "case studies involve detailed consideration of contextual factors leading to higher construct validity. They can also deal with complex causal relations and complex interaction effects."
>
> (George & Bennett, 2005).

The shortfall of this approach, however, was the lack of ease in comparability across the multiple case studies of points of ethnographic data. To address this, the researcher re-analysed the data, applying Stake's framework of analysis (1995), and in this way aggregated and cross-referred the data more systematically. That process involved multiple individual case sheets, capturing a case synopsis, listing findings, including reference to case differentiation and situation factors, shown overleaf in Fig. 23,p87. Further worksheet templates mapped the aggregated case sheets and their themes (Fig.24,p87), and a framework for the assertions of findings per case for the final report (Fig.25,p87) One process advocated by Stake was omitted, (Fig.26,p88) owing to its focus on factors that might be used in a more quantitative study.

Case ID ________

Synopsis of case:	Case Findings: I. II. III. IV.
Uniqueness of case situation for program/phenomenon:	
Relevance of case for cross-case Themes: Theme 1______ Theme 2______ Theme 3______ Theme 4______ Theme 5______ Theme 6______	Possible excerpts for cross-case report: Page Page Page
General influences (optional):	Situational Factors (optional)
Commentary:	

Fig.23. Worksheet template: Analyst's notes for case synopsis (Stake, 2006)

W = highly unusual situation, u = somewhat unusual situation, blank = ordinary situation
M = high manifestation, m = some manifestation, blank = almost no manifestation

	Case A	Case B	Case C	Case D	Case E
Ordinariness of this Case's situation:					
Original Multicase Themes					
Theme 1					
Theme 2					
Theme 3					
Theme 4					
Theme 5					
Theme 6					
Added Multicase Themes					
Theme 7					
Theme 8					

High manifestation means that the Theme is prominent in this particular case study.
A highly unusual situation (far from ordinary) is one that is expected to challenge the generality of themes.
As indicated, the original themes can be augmented by additional themes even as late as the beginning of the cross-case analysis. The paragraphs on each Theme should be attached to the matrix so that the basis for estimates can be readily examined.

Fig.24. Worksheet template: Manifestation of multicase themes (Stake, 2006)

	Themes							
Case A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Finding I								
Finding II								
Finding III								
Finding IV								
Case B								
Finding I								
Finding II								
Finding III								
Case C								
Finding I								
Finding II								
Finding III								
Finding IV								
Finding V								
And so on for the remaining Cases								

A High mark means that the Theme is an important part of this particular case study and relevant to the theme.

Fig.25. Worksheet template Aggregated assertions for final report (Stake, 2006)

Theme 1: If more quantitative, Factors:	
Theme 2: If more quantitative, Factors:	
Theme 3: If more quantitative, Factors:	
Theme 4: If more quantitative, Factors:	
Theme 5: If more quantitative, Factors:	
Theme 6: If more quantitative, Factors:	

Fig.26. The research themes or multicase study factors for a quantitative study (Worksheet, Stake, 2006, p47 and at https://www.guilford.com/stake-forms)

In this way, the application of Stake's additional systematic process of data analysis supported the validity of the research findings, and the generalizability of the findings within and across the fieldwork as a whole.

Observational data-gathering methods are rated as the most meaningful data-gathering methods, as the activity of the case is experienced as it occurs; with each case becoming a specific entity, the interactions within an entity and overlaps across an assemblage of entities, renders the context more recognizable as an integrated system (Stake, 2006 pp2-4). In the context of Tate, therefore, these methods of data analysis applied to the art museum enable the site's conceptualisation as a networked system, composed of interrelated departments, charged with organizational activities and objectives, operating towards a purported shared vision, and with incidents of thematic congruity.

4.10 The issue of redaction

The issue of redaction was initially set out in the early pages of this report (p2), and restated here:

In order to safeguard the anonymity of Staff members, the identity of participating research informants at strategy meetings, at All Staff meetings and subsequent interviews, has been anonymised. In order to protect the confidentiality of commercially sensitive material, data that relates to Tate's working practices and operational performance, gathered during the doctoral fieldwork process, have been redacted, at the request of Tate. In those instances involving sensitive data, the process of the application of that data is described, without disclosure of the specific data. Data that are available within the public domain, [e.g. Grant-in-aid funding awarded, Tate membership numbers, social media presence, annual attendance figures, temporary exhibition visitor figures, self-generated income, trading costs, donated and purchased works of art], sourced from Tate's Annual Reports, Press Releases, Annual Accounts for the Board of Trustees, from Tate's website or from governmental reports or publications, are retained.

The challenges for the researcher were considerable, and perhaps rendered more complex by the overlap in the supervision arrangements of the collaborating partnership with Tate: the researcher's line of reporting at Tate coincided with one of the researcher's principal research informants. Additionally, at the departure from Tate of this research informant/collaborating supervisor, the absence of an allocated Tate staff member to fulfill this function brought complications at a later date, in terms of ownership of the project. As the fieldwork had already been completed by this stage, and the researcher no longer gathering ethnographic fieldwork data on site at Tate, the supervision issue had been deprioritized.

An initial thesis draft was submitted to Tate for approval as a collaborating partner, in September 2017. In a risk reduction exercise, and in the absence of a supervisory staff member at Tate, a cautious response from the art museum led to a request for the removal of considerable quantities of data, from a collaborative, funded thesis with a research focus on the application of data to strategic and operational practice. Twenty items were redacted (see inventory, Appendix). These included the key document produced by Tate in partnership with external consultants Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, on their segmentation analysis of Tate's visitors. Research brief templates, visitor research results documentation, online questionnaire formats, admission and income data, photographs of the interior of the researcher's fieldwork notebooks, and tracked surveys of market conditions were amongst other items that were redacted.

PART TWO

Chapter Five: Research findings and analysis

5.1 Social structures of agency, power and representation

This investigation reports on Tate's conceptualisation of its visitors and the role that the art museum's knowledge of these visitors plays in informing and shaping Tate's operations of audience. For the purposes of this study, the most significant contextual period, both in terms of cultural policy and also the financial constraints of the operating environment, is the decade that precedes the fieldwork (i.e. 2001-2011), and the interim since; specifically, the key contextual issues comprise: the significant rise in museum visits (+40%, DCMS, *Taking Part Survey*, 2016/7 vs. 2005/6), the increase in the overall proportion of adults visiting a museum or gallery in this period, the increase in the frequency of these visits, and the respective proportional increase, in terms of engagement by age, ethnicity, socio-economic group and disability. The long-term impact of the introduction of free admission to national museums and their collections, in 2001, as a strategy that aspired to deliver the democratization of participation, has failed to translate into a reduction of long-standing gaps in participation (see Chapter Six).

In addition, the research findings of this study that follow are also contextualized by the continuing pressures on museums' financial sustainability exacerbated by government cuts to funding of the arts, and the -20% fall in self-generated income for DCMS-sponsored museums recorded in 2014/15, versus 2013/14, (DCMS Sponsored Museums Performance Indicators, 2017, p8). In an unforeseen development, the research fieldwork of the present study coincided with the notification by the DCMS of a critical step-change in the Key Performance Indicator reporting requirements of funded museums, that would take effect from 2013/14. The research findings that follow report on the periods pre and post that notification, at Tate.

5.1.1 Research findings: Key performance indicators, social license and governance

As part of the annual funding agreement between the DCMS and Tate, the art museum receives Grant-in-Aid funding, comprising a revenue grant (to support on-going operations) and a general capital expenditure grant, (to support the maintenance and purchase of fixed assets):

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Revenue grant, to support on-going operations	£33.4m	£32.3m	£32.7m	£31.4m	£30.3m	£29.6m	£28.6m **- 14.4% vs. 09/10**
General capital expenditure grant to support the maintenance and purchase of fixed assets	£3.8m	£3m	£2.5m	£2.5m	£2.5m	£2.5m	£2.4m **- 36.9% vs.09/10**

Figure 27: Tate's Grant-in-aid funding, 2009/10 to 2015/16
(Source: Board of Trustees of Tate Gallery Accounts)

The discernible fall in the revenue grant, with an overall drop of – 14.4%, from 2009/10 to 2015/16, is outstripped by the reduction in the general capital expenditure grant, that falls at over twice that rate, equating to a decrease of -36.9% over the same period (Fig.23). As part of this funding agreement, Tate is required to gather data in relation to performance indicators that are set by the DCMS, with monthly, quarterly and annual reports submitted to the DCMS for monitoring. This data quantifies: the number of ordinary daytime visits (excluding educational programme attendance), visits to evening events, numbers of UK and overseas visitors, visits by children, and visits by facilitated school groups, together with specific audience profiles, measures of visitor satisfaction, plus levels of self-generated income and numbers of loans to regional museums. For purposes of transparency, and as a recipient of public funding, the museum is also required to make monthly reports of every out-going made by the gallery in excess of £25,000.

At the outset of the fieldwork for the present study, in 2011, when the Departmental Strategic Objective 2008-2011 was still in operation (regarding wider participation priorities), these reporting requirements specified data-collection that supported the governmental social inclusion agenda. Funded museums were required to quantify the number of visits by adult visitors from occupation groups defined by the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification system, NS-SEC 5-8. In addition, the numbers of UK adult visitors from ethnic minority backgrounds defined as Asian, Asian British, Black or Black British, Mixed, Chinese or other ethnic group, were reported. The DCMS guidelines also required the museums to count the number of visits by people with a physical or mental disability "that limits their activities in any way", (DCMS Performance Indicator Guidance, 2008).

On February 15th 2012, and following a period of consultation with the fourteen national museums (British Museum, Imperial War Museum, National Gallery, National Maritime Museum, National Museums Liverpool, the Science Museum Group, the National Portrait Gallery, the National Army Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Royal Armouries, Sir John Soane's Museum, the Victoria & Albert Museum, Tate and the Wallace Collection, and a further eight sponsored museums, all museums in receipt of funding were notified of a key change of practice, by an email from the DCMS.

Measures of ethnicity, disability or socio-economic status were no longer compulsory key performance indicators nor reporting requirements. This change of policy, or specifically, the abandonment of measuring the progress of wider diversity of inclusion, was explained by the DCMS as a means of reducing "the burden of data collection on the Museums and Galleries" (DCMS email, 15.2.2012). Despite this reversal of policy, Tate's Director, Nicholas Serota, remained committed to quantifying and demonstrating the social role of the museum. Tate continued to gather that data nonetheless, for reporting to the public realm in the annual Tate Report publication, accessible via the museum's website. Tate's Annual Accounts, however, itemised only the remaining mandatory performance indicators as submitted to the DCMS. As a measure of the organisational culture at Tate, the art museum opted to exceed the newly reduced reporting requirements, and gathered additional data, on the number of under 18s participating in museum outreach activities offsite, adults both onsite and offsite, and also digital activity for both adults and under 18s, beyond website visits.

Tate's service to the civic abstraction of audience, the public, is integral to the museum's identity and core values: "regional work forms a core part of Tate's public mission…Tate is proud to serve the nation as a whole, not just the capital," (Tate Report, 2013/14), and the museum frames its value delivery by quantifying the cost to the nation of every visitor: "Tate is one of the most efficient of the national museums and galleries, costing the public purse just £4.17 per visitor" (Tate Report, 2013/14,p7). It is evident that Tate recognises its responsibility to deliver public value, and frames the institution's fulfillment of this duty in quantified, monetary terms. In order to maintain this return on the nation's investment, Tate's governance framework tasks the unremunerated Trustees, with monitoring the museum's performance "against agreed objectives and targets, and ensures the stewardship of public funds." (http://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/board-trustees).

5.1.2 Case Study One: The optimisation of reporting practices

The first Case Study of this research ('The optimisation of reporting practices' pp91-92) outlines the constant generation, compilation and quarterly reporting of Tate's visitor data. This reporting function serves as an important factor and process in the safeguarding of the sustainability of the art museum, and its performance of the legitimacy of the organisation, as a non-departmental public body (NDPB) in receipt of grant funding distributed by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The case study details the unremitting effort on the part of a single staff member of the Finance Department, to generate, collate, funnel, analyse, produce and distribute Tate's visitor data, whilst seeking to constantly upgrade the internal reporting practices, in response to a variety of catalysts or motivations.

Case Study One:
The optimisation of reporting practices

"We're constantly looking for a better way to present the data"
(Finance Department)

The scope of Tate's principal internal reporting mechanism is described. Subsequently, the persistent upgrading of visitor data internal reporting practices is explained by a Finance department staff member, who acknowledges that the catalyst for these improvements is either a request from the Executive Group of Directors, or to meet the best practice expectations within the Finance Department. Equally, the data reporting adjustments can be unsolicited improvements, or at times, purely for her own convenience.

The methods of reporting data have evolved continuously, with a history of incoming senior staff introducing changes and expanding the originally slim format, or more junior staff seeking to optimise the legibility of the data, but with these adjustments stabilizing over the past decade, resulting in the current format of the report: a weekly seven page deck of Excel spreadsheets.

The Finance Department's weekly Excel spreadsheet summarises the delivery against four key performance indicators, for each of the sites in turn: Tate Britain, Tate Modern, Tate Liverpool and Tate St Ives. For each location, the report records the actual attendance for both the collection (or Display), and the total attendance (i.e. visitors to the collection plus the paid-for exhibitions), and compares this data with both forecast figures, and prior year performance. The variance of the on-going visitor figures compared with the forecast figures is visualized with a colour-coded system, flagging in orange any data that indicates performance below 90% of forecast, whilst performance at 90-99% of target is shown in yellow, and performance that exceeds forecast is shown in green. In addition, exhibition income per visitor is recorded, and similarly compared with forecast income, with the variance also colour-coded. Trading income, in terms of Tate Enterprises retail activity or catering activity across all sites, is also shown, with the same measurement criteria.

This comprehensive summary of performance is supported by a further extensive spreadsheet per site, which itemises in detail the cumulative visitor attendance at each specific paid-for exhibition, the historical paid-for exhibition attendance records, with both the weekly and monthly visitor attendance data, and the cumulative income totals generated by each paid-for exhibition. It is a systematic, rigorously structured document, that is distributed internally each week at Tate, and meticulously updated. For internal purposes only, this document of sensitive data that records performance across the art museum, and communicates this captured data in the format of a management tool itself, is not permitted for release into the public domain.

> "It's kind of organic, and recently the income per visitor, that column has been added, only in the last few weeks. That wasn't there a couple of months ago, so we're constantly looking at them and seeing if there's a better way to present the data. On the graph there's a forecasting line in light blue that shows the daily average and bi-weekly average, and that was specifically requested a few months ago with feedback from [a Director]. And I think we have plans for the future, to change the way it looks, to make it more accessible I think and easier." (Finance Department staff member, interview 14.6.12)

Critically, the fieldwork ascertained that the catalysts for these planned further adjustments in the internal reporting of visitor data, tend to fall within one of five categories: the revisions are requested by incoming new senior staff from across the art museum; or, specific requests or feedback from long-established staff members at Director level are addressed; or adjustments to reporting practices are tailored in order to meet the expectations and requirements of either the Finance Department or the Management Accounts team; in addition, some upgrades to internal reporting practices are unsolicited, such as improving or optimising accessibility for those Directors without finance-training to read the forecast data, which is the product of a complex combination of both actual attendance and budgeted figures. On occasions, the application of this data prompts the revision downwards of overall forecast visitor levels, with those decisions made at specific attendance meetings. In exceptional circumstances, forecasts are reduced on the basis of lower than expected ticket pre-sales for forthcoming paid-for exhibitions.

> "So the example with the forecasting with, say, the Barry Flanagan exhibition that we've just had, in its first few weeks it was getting sort of 20% attendance against budget but we were forecasting 85% because we were still taking 100% budget for the next few months. So we're having a look at changing that so that its more reflective. " (Interview 14.6.12)

Or finally, the internal visitor data reporting practices are fine-tuned in order to simplify the data compilation processes:

> "And then for me, when I eventually suggest changes to [the Finance Director], it will be for ease of preparing, as its quite a long report, rolling it over every month is very difficult, rolling it over at Year End is like a good three or four days work." (Interview 14.6.12)

Conversely, the actual Key Performance Indicator external reporting requirements of the DCMS have contracted in scope since 2012, (see p89).

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5.1.3 Case Study Two: Governance, accountability and public service

The second Case Study (pp95-96) presents the uncomfortable experience of a museum Director being held to account by the museum's Board of Trustees, on the issue of visitor demographics, and the relaying of this encounter a few days later, to colleagues at a cross-departmental meeting. A short description of Tate's organisational power structures follows, to contextualise the subsequent research findings.

Tate's Board of Trustees is located at the apex of the museum's hierarchy of governance (Fig. 24). Each Trustee's appointment is sanctioned by the approval of the Prime Minister, and collectively, the Board of Trustees delegates the responsibility of the day-to-day running of the art museum to the Director: formerly Nicholas Serota (with the longest tenure in the museum's history, from 1988 to 2017), and now Maria Balshaw (from 2017 to date). The Executive Group of Directors at Tate, that is, each Director of the individual Tate sites, at Tate Britain and Tate Modern in London, Tate St. Ives and Tate Liverpool, together with the highest status operational and strategic functions (Collection Care, and Learning & Research) is held accountable to the Trustees.

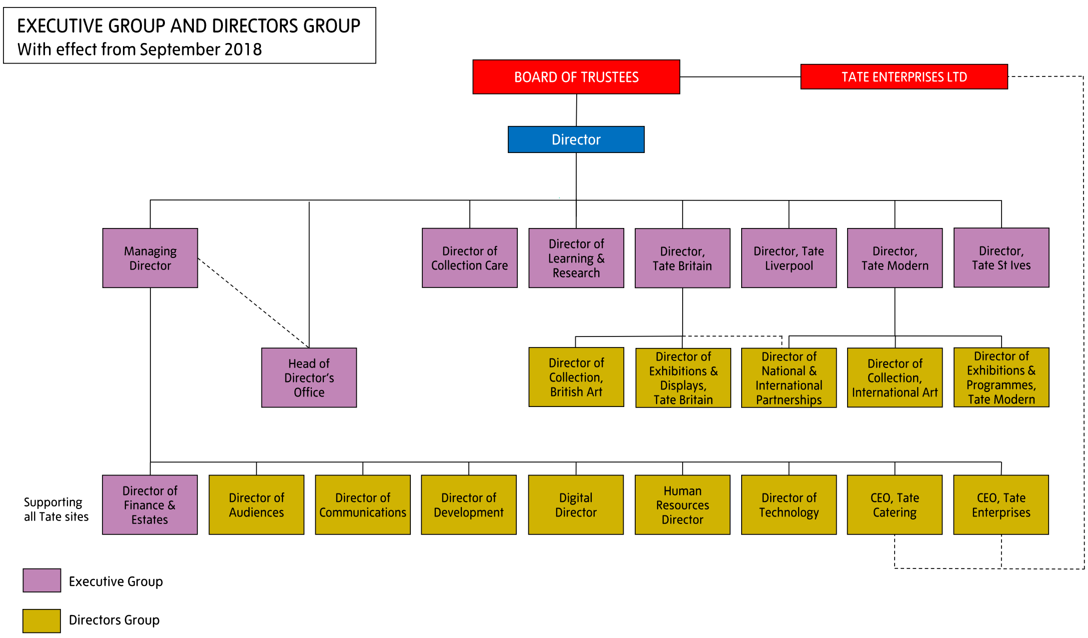

Fig. 28: Tate's organisational hierarchy. (Source: Tate, 2018)

According to the terms of the Museums and Galleries Act 1992, Tate's presiding Director is the actor most acutely held to account by the Trustees, and this is reflected in the structural framework of the museum's own organogram (Fig.24); yet the location of this accountability is adjusted or displaced by Nicholas Serota within the discourse of the museum, by seemingly assigning himself a position of equal rank to that of the Trustees, and it is this combined notional single unit, to whom the collective art museum staff are accountable:

> "It is service to the public that drives Tate and those who work here. It is the single most important principle *to which my fellow Trustees and I hold the organisation to account…"*

Serota's acknowledgement of his own subordinated accountability is framed as a shared subordination, *alongside* rather than secondary to the Trustees, and added in a concessionary clause at the close of the statement:

> "…and *for which we are ourselves accountable*. The sense of public service builds from the belief that art is an ongoing conversation between values and ideas, artists and movements. Tate opens up that conversation to as many people as possible. It is the responsibility that comes with building and protecting the nation's Collection and giving as many as possible the chance to experience it." (Nicholas Serota, Tate Report 2011/12 p4)

Case Study Two (p95-96) pinpoints a critical moment in the application of visitor data at Tate, not only in terms of the Trustees' pursuit of operational accountability, but also in their setting an urgent priority in terms of the art museum's shared language of audience and the cross-departmental necessity to value the audience strategy.

Case Study Two:
Governance, accountability and public service

"I can't bear to have another Trustees meeting like that"
(Media & Audiences, 23.5.11)

As a key part of Tate's digital transformation (2010-2015) and pursuit of broader audiences, the former leadership roles with responsibility for Media & Audiences were amalgamated. This involved consolidating the strategic leadership of Tate's marketing function, with the task of building the brand across multiple media platforms, the website relaunch, engaging with a broader audience base, strengthening online social networks for the art museum and all digital activity, with additional responsibility for Tate's magazine, press, public relations, membership and ticket sales. The digital platforms, in particular, were key to the pursuit of those developmental audiences sought so keenly, to address Tate's mission of 'art for all', and via measurable progress. Sharp focus on this role, its purpose and objectives led to close scrutiny by the Trustees of the attainment of performance goals.

As guardians of the public interest, Tate's Trustees perform the principal governance function within the art museum, and are tasked with considering "issues of strategic importance and to review performance" (www.tate.org.uk/about-us/board-trustees). Comprising fourteen unremunerated members, of whom thirteen are appointed by the Prime Minister, plus one member of the National Gallery Board of Trustees, (in a long-standing and reciprocated quirk of institutional governance linked to the origins of the art museum's Collection), the Trustees meet formally six times per year.

Subject to exemptions from the Freedom of Information Act that would "prejudice the commercial interests of any person" (Section 43, 2 Freedom of Information Act), the Minutes of the Trustee Meetings are routinely published on Tate's website, ostensibly as part of the museum's commitment to openness and transparency. Less visible to the public, however, is the accountability of the newly appointed Head of Media & Audiences, in terms of meeting audience targets that were set six months before that new role had even been advertised.

On this occasion, in the cramped meeting room of the Director's Lodge at Tate Britain, beside the Thames at Millbank, the fourteen attendees around the undersized table were not the Trustees, but rather, the departmental heads, listening with evident empathy to the Media & Audiences staff member, providing a debrief of a challenging Trustees meeting that had taken place five days earlier in the Grand Saloon of Tate Britain.

(cont.)

> "I found it quite tough, with the Trustees, reporting on the audience strategy and how it's proceeding. They've asked us to deliver on the developmental audience that they asked us to deliver on eighteen months ago. There were a couple of new Trustees who were quite interested in this subject, and it was difficult. A lot of what they said is absolutely right. I found myself defending a position that we haven't done much about. Firstly, we need to be ensuring that from the marketing point of view, that we make concerted efforts to market the current programme to developmental audiences. If we find that the audiences are not moving, then we need to have another conversation about the relationship between audiences and that programme. I found that a very difficult conversation. I can't bear to have another Trustees meeting like that. It was horrible."

This monologue established a number of findings: the operational authority and control with which the Trustees perform their governance task, the pressure exerted on those regarded as responsible for any shortfall, the effect of the particular interest of a newly-appointed Trustee bringing personally heightened expectations, and the unusual discomfort of the experienced interlocutor when challenged directly and in a professional environment in this way. The Trustees views were transmitted to the heads of department through the filter of a demeaned colleague, whose first directive was to redouble the communication of the existing programme, in a 'more of the same' approach, rather than reviewing, as a priority, the relevance and appeal of the programming to the targeted audiences.

A fortnight later, the same Media & Audiences staff member had become exasperated at the way curators "programme for their peer group" rather than for those outside the core category of current visitors, with this exclusionary approach exemplified by the esoteric titles allocated to paid-for exhibitions: "If '*Iconoclasm*' goes ahead in two years' time, without changing its name, I'll slit my wrists." Two years later, the selfsame exhibition opens at Tate Britain, titled '*Art under attack: Iconoclasm'*. The curators have successfully retained their exhibition title of choice, despite the imperative to broaden the art museum's audiences, by appealing to first-time visitors, to families, and to young people. The necessity to value the audience strategy had been framed as an urgent priority in that awkward Trustees meeting, and when the minutes were circulated, it was noted that

> "progress had been made in capturing audience information, understanding visitors better and sharing this information across Tate. Tate can and should be a trailblazer in developing new audiences. The need to continue to work to instill a common audience language and the value of the audience strategy across the organisation was underlined as an urgent priority."
> [Minutes of Meeting of Board of Trustees, 18.5.2011]

Despite structural accountability, direct instruction from the Trustees, and Tate's public service mission, universal shared understandings would prove elusive.

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5.1.4 Research findings: Success and power, the institutional mode of speech, and deconstructing a persistent institutional myth

It is perhaps, this spirit of 'going beyond', of setting higher standards, as demonstrated by Tate's monitoring of audience profiles beyond the DCMS requirements (p89), that accounts for Tate's success. But how is success understood by the museum? The institution's triumphal mode of speech has been noted earlier in this study (p39), with statements asserting the museum's "iconic" or "pre-eminent" status proliferating in the Annual Reports, which are consumed as both internal and external pieces of organisational communication. The analysis revisits this tendency in more detail, and then explores what success means in relation to a specific and contentious paid-for solo exhibition by artist Chris Ofili, and the lack of agency of the visitor data in discrediting this show's mythologized status.

In Tate's Annual Report, the museum's achievements are communicated in differing modes, and with varying degrees of self-assurance. Firstly, there's the reporting of operational accomplishments:

> "Tate Modern has become the most visited museum of modern art in the world" (Tate Report, 2009/10)", "the most visited museum and gallery website in the UK (Tate Report, 2012/3), "the largest following on Twitter of any art gallery in Europe, and third most followed arts institution in the world" (Tate Report 2013/14); "we generate more of our income from donations and trading than other major national museums (Tate Report, 2009/10), and "the largest archive of British art in the world" (Tate Report, 2009/10*).*

And then there are claims of wider scope, in expansive statements, that speak of dominance and supremacy:

> "Tate is a global leader in its field" (Tate Report, 2009/10), "a leader in collection care" (Tate Report, 2010/11), "the new Tate Modern will set new standards for museums with global reach" (Tate Report, 2014/15), "Tate will set a new standard for museums of modern art" (Tate Report, 2015/16), "Tate Modern is broadening the story of modern

art "(Tate Report, 2015/16), "Tate remains at the forefront of contemporary art conservation research (Tate Report, 2015/16), "Tate aspires to …a reshaping of art history" (Tate Report, 2010/11).

It's a narrative of game-changing, sector-leading innovation, global influence and ambition.

Elsewhere in the museum's institutional discourse, the rationale for the development of the Tanks and the Switch House (now renamed the Blavatnik Building) at Tate Modern, is attributed to the success of that site in regularly attracting over 5 million visitors, despite the original planned capacity of just 2 million visitors, for the converted power station. The building "will be a model of environmental sustainability, setting new benchmarks for museums and galleries, " (Tate Report, 2009/10).

The institution offers its own interpretation of the meaning of success:

"We define success by our ability to balance such shows [the Henri Matisse exhibition, the most attended show in Tate's history] with new and less familiar names." (Tate Report, 2014/15,p5).

A more independent view, however, might observe that it's not the production of programming that balances unfamiliar names with record-breaking ones that is a strong measure of success, but rather, the facility of doing so whilst still achieving the targets set for each respective strand of the programme.

Figure 29: Ofili show, Tate Britain, January to May 2010

In calibrating and understanding what success means to Tate, the Ofili show, which ran for 110 days from January in 2010, received great critical acclaim: "opulent, glittering, dazzling” (*Observer, 31.1.2010*); “dense and dazzling” (*Independent*, 27.1.2010), “dazzling and surprising” (*Artsdesk.com* 28.1.2010). The Ofili show had been designated in the Audience Strategy for 2010, as “a priority show to attract new audiences,” and by the time it ended, in mid May that year, the show had edged past its targeted 100,000 visitors, by 1%, with on average 900 visitors viewing the exhibition every day. Throughout my observational fieldwork at Tate, I encountered the consensus that the show, which was classified as ‘a contemporary monographic’, had been hugely successful. However, the telling and re-telling within the art museum of the particular ‘success’ of the Ofili show, as an important benchmark in Tate’s history, has evolved into a form of institutional mythologizing that obfuscates the actual performance metrics of the exhibition.

In examining more closely the operational metrics of success:

For its duration, levels of visitor satisfaction at Tate Britain had edged above those at Tate Modern, with visits rated as ‘excellent, very good or good’ (98% TB vs. 96% TM, source: Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, May 2011, *Annual Rolling Visitor Survey*, p45). In a more abstract understanding of audience typologies, the audience segmentation analysis, to be explored later in this study, showed that high numbers of visitors with the psychographic profiles “Urban Cool” and “Sensualists” had also visited the show. However, I had noticed a tendency at Tate, at that stage, to conflate diversity issues into questions of ethnicity, rather than the broader definition of classification by socio-economic and demographic profiling, in terms of age, ethnicity, and occupation. So the Ofili show was celebrated for marginally exceeding (by +1.1%) its targeted attendance level of 100,000 visitors, and for attracting an overall visitor profile of 8% BME audiences, compared with the Francis Bacon show at Tate Britain, which had attracted a visitor profile of only 2% Black and Minority Ethnic communities (MHM Visitor survey, 2010/11).

Less frequently acknowledged, however, in the institutional process of mythologizing of the show (for its apparent success in attracting more diverse audiences), was that the Ofili exhibition had fallen short of its income target by 10.5%. In addition, rather than attracting new audiences, a disproportionately high number of existing Members attended, with fewer First Time visitors than had been recorded by other shows. Critically, whilst on average annually at Tate Britain, 38% of attenders are

Members, at the Ofili show, 44% of the 101,146 attenders were existing Members, and this exceeds the proportion of membership attendance at other Tate Britain shows that year:

Rude Britannia Comic Art: (June-Sept.2010)	36% of attenders were Members
Henry Moore: (Feb.-Aug.2010)	36% of attenders were Members
Edward Muybridge: (Sep. 2010- Jan 2010)	32% of attenders were members

(Source: Tate Finance Past Exhibition database)

In addition, there were fewer 'First time' visitors to the Ofili show: only 15% of attenders were 'First Time' visitors, compared with the annual average (2010/11) of 38% of Tate Britain attenders being First Time visitors (source: MHM *Annual Rolling Visitor Survey*, 2011 p42). Other paid-for exhibitions at Tate Britain in 2010/11 had more success in attracting greater percentages of 'First Time' visitors:

	% of attenders, 'First Time' visitors
Rude Britannia Comic Art	29%
Henry Moore	22%
Edward Muybridge	22%
Turner Prize	23%

(Source: Tate Finance Past Exhibition database)

Overall attendance by NS-SEC 5-8 visitors at Tate Britain remained at a consistent level, of between 4% and 5%, for the period of the Ofili show (source: MHM *Annual Rolling Visitor Survey* 2010/11, p27). So in summary, the Ofili show achieved critical acclaim, was liked by visitors, but attracted audiences of ethnic diversity significantly below the 2011 measure of the ethnic diversity data for London, where 40.2% of residents identified with either the Asian, Black Mixed or Other ethnic group (source: https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/regional-ethnic-diversity/latest).

In addition, the show drew higher proportions of existing Members, and lower proportions of the priority targeted 'First Time' audience, and also failed to meet its financial objectives. And yet it is recalled, mythologized by the institution, as a persisting benchmark of success in terms of audience development. There seems to be a fluidity or a selectivity in the interpretation of visitor data and definitions of success, and a readiness on the part of the institution to enable confirmation bias, understood as "the tendency to perceive and seek out information that confirms one's pre-existing beliefs, and avoid information that conflicts", (Nelson, 2014, p211).

5.1.5 Research findings: Listening to the market : The audience-centrality of Tate's differing departmental practices.

"No-one believes we should be audience-led"
(Tate staff member, Media & Audiences, 2012)

The various iterations of Tate's mission (see discussion p36), are derived from the 1992 Museums and Galleries Act, which specifies that amongst other duties of care and conservation, and the necessity to allow access for study or research, the general function of Tate's Board of Trustees is "to increase the public's understanding and enjoyment of British art from the sixteenth century to the present day, and of international, modern and contemporary art." (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/44/section/2).

In the process of meeting this requirement, the art museum performs and transmits multiple internal and external narratives, across Annual Reports, press releases, publications and at staff only or public events within and beyond the institution, and the wider sector, stating and reaffirming Tate's institutional commitment to engage fully and globally with its audiences. Director Nicholas Serota notes that "those institutions which take up this notion fastest and furthest will be the ones which have the authority in the future." (Source: Tate's Digital Strategy, 2013-2015, 'Digital as a dimension of everything'). Contentious issues around this stated commitment to engage fully and globally with audiences surfaced during the observational fieldwork of this study, in relation to the cross-departmental Audience Strategy Steering Group meetings, held from March 2011 to June 2012. Six meetings were scheduled for this strategic working group, and the researcher conducted ethnographic observation at each. Across these six meetings, which involved attendance by representatives from the Curatorial, Media and Audiences, Learning and Research departments, together with senior staff from Tate Enterprises, Tate St Ives and Tate Liverpool a distinct tension emerged between the audience-focused institutional strategic goals and their operational reality, with particular reference to issues of programming. For the purposes of anonymity, the following comments are attributed to the relevant department(s) rather than to individuals.

The programming debate within Tate centers upon the extent to which programming is influenced or determined by the intellectual interests or sphere of knowledge of the curators, at the expense of appealing to new audiences. In earnest conversation at the Audience Strategy Steering meetings, Tate's staff ponder:

> "Are we programming for audiences or by curators? We should ask 'is it necessary to do this show? We should ask our peers and audiences. We need to consider how this will play with audiences other than curators."

Three voices, from Tate Liverpool, Tate Britain and Tate Enterprises are in unison, acknowledging the limitations of current programming practice, or other museum practice in which the audiences are seemingly an afterthought:

> "Programming goes right in at the beginning. It's not perfect, we're not doing all we can" (Tate Liverpool)
>
> "We're only programming for people who already attend"
> (Tate Britain)
>
> "I've sat in meetings when audiences haven't been considered. We [the museum] just market it."
> (Tate Enterprises)

The differing departmental perspectives are captured by the contemplative observation from the Learning department that ""there's this awkward moment about purpose. Who is it for? Why are you doing it? It's a very blurry edged thing".

This is swiftly rebutted by Media and Audiences: "No-one believes we should be audience-led".

Tate's perception of its relationship with its visitors and audiences is a mobile construct: the art museum shifts between positions of being audience-informed, audience-focused, audience-centered, audience-led and audience-driven, with these varying states bounded and differentiated by differing departmental perspectives. The dominant perspective of the institution, however, is represented by the worldview emanating from the Director's Lodge, and articulated in the annual Tate Reports. The museum's collection, or rather, the national collection held by the museum, is described at the epicenter of the museum's focus, as "the lifeblood" of Tate. All of our activities emanate from it" (Tate Report 2011/12, p12). However, the changing expectations, behaviours and requirements of the museum's visitors are acknowledged, accommodated and even welcomed, as Tate adjusts from being 'keepers' to 'sharers' of art (Tate Report 2010/11); the new imperative for the successful 21st century museum, is the creation of personal encounters with art through the spaces and architecture of the buildings as well as through the website (Tate Report 2013/14,p69), with the museum offering places for contemplation, and for personal development, for learning through participation, and for opening up debate and discussion.

The Learning department perceives its role as core to the activities of Tate, with a Learner-centered approach, and tasked, in the past, with delivering the institution's social and instrumental value: "historically, it's been Learning's job to kind of tick the 'social value' box", "a sense that those more developmental audiences, 'well Learning can deal with those;" (Learning, interview 13..6.2012). Again, the worldview of key individuals shapes the institution's identity and purpose:

> "I do think for an organisation of this size and scale,
> we are shaped by the personal principles of a few key individuals,
> and a historic practice which this institution has always had,
> coming from that nineteenth century model of the museum as a
> force for social and educational improvement."
>
> (Learning, interview 13.6.2012)

The Visitor Experience department, in its everyday proximity to the museum's in-person audiences, in a public-facing and highly visible role, offers visitor care and support in terms of welcoming and way-finding, and is oriented in a fundamentally audience-centric way. As an evolution of the former assistant role, in which gallery staff were actors enforcing the authority of the museum within the gallery spaces, the function has evolved into a visitor-focused service role, with hosts offering knowledge and expertise, and separated from the original functions of asset security and public safety. Nevertheless, interdepartmental tensions surface, in relation to the operational differences of hierarchy between Tate's visitors and Members, with [Visitor Experience] remarking:

> "If I'm honest, when it comes to Members, they think they've bought a share of the gallery, and get annoyed if they don't have instant access to a show." (Departmental presentation, within public lecture series 'Towards Tomorrow's Museum', 3.3.2011)

On a more conciliatory note, the Director of Tate Modern, Chris Dercon, (who later left Tate in 2016 and was succeeded by France Morris), expressly thanked the Visitor Experiences department during an All Staff presentation, for

> "becoming the bridge between audience, artists and exhibitions. It's as important as curating, not just front of house, visitors want to feel good in the spaces that Tate has to offer, its most of all about creating a social space, an agora."
> (All Staff meeting, Tate Modern, 22.5.2012).

Tate Enterprises, a separate company registered with Companies House, and comprising the two distinct strands of Retail publishing and Catering, conceptualizes its role in a fully support function to Tate, and in a collaborative transactional relationship with audiences, generating a turnover in 2014/15 of £17.7m, and yielding to Tate a profit of £3.6m, to support Tate in the delivery of the art museum's mission, (Tate Enterprises Annual Accounts 2014/15).

> "I think we're unlike other bits of the organisation: we start from what our customers want. So in that sense, it's entirely collaborative, because if we put something in the shops and they don't want it, they just don't buy it…If you know who they are, you can offer them what they want, and you can get them to spend."
> (Tate Enterprises, interview 5.5.2012)

This view is tempered by the acknowledgement that a certain insularity of worldviews amongst the staff risks undermining the museum's relationship with its audiences:

> “there’s a real idealism there, and a real desire to extend our audiences, but at the same time, people exist in very narrow worlds, and they don’t really come across lots and lots of people outside that core group of visitors. And the higher up Tate you get, the more that is true.”
>
> (Tate Enterprises, interview, 5.5.2012).

With the curatorial department occupying the implicit highest status of the organisation, owing to their scholarship and proprietorship of the museum’s “lifeblood”, the Collection, the issue of audience-centrality to departmental practice is more intractable. At an All Staff presentation at Tate Modern, a senior curator broke away from the scripted presentation of forthcoming programming, and commented, in a mode of stream-of-consciousness:

> “Audiences want many more things than just to see exhibitions. They want to meet friends, they want to hang out, to learn how to make art. We have to be very careful to listen to what the audience wants. We’re also wondering what an audience expects from an exhibition. Who would’ve guessed that almost 250,000 people would come to the Richter, when if we’d shown that ten years ago, we’d have had about 50,000? And it’s the same for Kusama [186,000 visitors].And these are complex and demanding shows. The audience is not dumbing down, but engagement doesn’t mean showing what they want or dumbing down. Doing what people want is different from working with people.”

This sensitivity towards the twenty-first century museum visitors’ new expectations and requirements is reinforced, at the same presentation, by the inclusivity and co-participatory message of [another senior Tate Director]:

> “We are living in a period of art *with* people, not *to* people or *at* people. It’s *with*. It’s very important to listen to the market.”

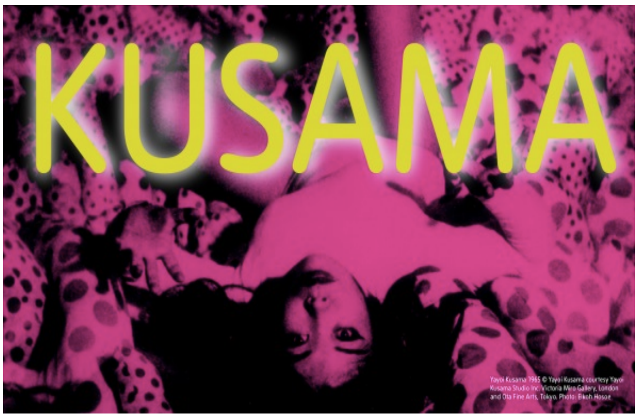

Figure 30: Kusama poster, Tate Modern paid-for show, February –June 2012

"Art *with* people, not *to* people or *at* people" is a strong statement of core values. And yet it is a statement that doesn't align with the decision, a year later, to remove the informative interpretation panels at the time of the rehang of the national Collection at Tate Britain. At the time, in May 2013, the Director of Tate Britain explained publicly that this decision enabled visitors "to interpret more of the art for themselves." The didactic imposition of this approach was matched, four years later, when the decision was reversed by the successor to that post, "to invite the audiences to understand the works *properly*." Both approaches posit a view of the correct way to engage with the work, and control the context and environment in order to oblige visitors to experience the Collection from this particular perspective. In contrast, "Art *with* people" might have involved retaining the interpretation from the outset, but accepting that visitors can enjoy the Collection without the obligation of conforming to the curatorial team's prescribed way of responding to the work, suggested by the "*proper"* responses to the Collection, rather than those not sanctioned by the institution.

Listening to the market, and allowing that market to shape and determine practice is the customary approach of Digital work at Tate. "We need to be where they are", says [Digital department, Tate], in terms of taking Tate out into those social media spaces already occupied by their audiences, thereby engaging with audiences on the audiences' own terms. It's an approach that has worked, and Tate now the leads museums sector worldwide on Twitter, with 2.6m followers, the museum's website receives 12.8m unique visits, 912,000 followers on Facebook, and 667,000 following on Instagram. And it's also a measure of having the empathetic dexterity to occupy the audience perspective, and seek better alignment of communication, such as the renaming on Tate's website of access to the Collection, as "Art and Artists", in a more accessible, user-friendly positioning. A Digital Analyst at Tate described her role as that of an audience advocate working with an insight-driven, audience-centered approach, "championing the voice of our visitors among the digital team and across the gallery, allowing us to respond to their needs." (http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/blogs/digital-blog-insight-action-implementing-audience-driven-approach). This departmental confidence within Tate's Digital teams exerts a philosophical and operational tension with the curators' selective resistance to audience-orientation. At an All Staff meeting in March 2012, the Director of Tate Modern alluded to the museum's drastic under-estimation of the popularity of the solo show by Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama at Tate Modern, which had featured an interactive space (the Obliteration Room) and an Infinity Room that was entirely mirrored.

> "Do we know what is a blockbuster? Because *Kusama* is already busting our block. We expected 100,000 and we already have 50,000 [after 3 weeks of 12 week programme]. The public is reacting. It's more important to listen to audiences and their questions, sharing thoughts and debating ideas. People are looking at us because we are setting examples. What are we going to do with these questions? Will we take them seriously, as people want to feel represented again?"
>
> (All Staff meeting, 6.3.2012)

This top-down curatorial urgency to decode the seemingly illegible preferences of the audiences, and to value and share the public's ideas, translates into a simultaneous blend of disoriented and confused intention, and a call to action.

5.1.6 Research findings:
The role of data in forecasting, budget-setting and decision-making

As the fieldwork progressed, the contradictions and ambivalences of the inter- and intra-departmental positions towards Tate's visitors, surfaced repeatedly. However, ten days after the Director's exploration of 'what is a blockbuster?', an opportunity arose for visitor information to effect direct agency on Tate's operational practice. The gap between the internal narratives of responding to audiences, and actual ways of working, was beginning to become apparent. I'd already been instructed in the basics of the planning processes for Exhibitions, from the perspective of the Marketing department, and learned that an apparent formula existed. This involved a combination of exhibitions of four genres: Type A (the "blockbuster"), Type B (the "middle"), Type C (the "niche") and Type D exhibitions (which featured artworks from the Collection).

This approach is standard practice across the sector. Forecasting is a key part of the programming process, and meshes together understandings of accurate historical exhibition data, projected income and attendance, with the subjective views of the Curatorial, Marketing teams, and Directors' Office, and calculated by Finance as a combination of Actuals and Budget. In mistakenly programming the *Kusama* show at Tate Modern in 2012 as niche, the museum in effect benefitted from 270% visitor attendance vs. forecast, with a similar uplift in actual total admission income. Conversely, forecasts can be adjusted downwards, if reported ticket-sales give an early indication of low demand.

The key non-human actor at Tate for the assembling of the programme (up to five years in advance), is the historical attendance data, affectionately known in its early iteration as the 'Top of the Pops' list, [Figure redacted]. This comprises ten A4 sheets of white paper, with double-spaced black typing, ranking the highest attended, paid-for exhibitions from 1969 onwards. The lowest recorded show dated from 1988, attracted only 78 visitors per day, (so less than ten per hour), compared with the highest at that stage, which was the Matisse Picasso show of 2002 at Tate Modern, which drew 4671 visitors daily. The original TOTP chart only included the name of the exhibition, the venue (Tate Britain in blue ink, Tate Modern listed in red ink), dates, duration total attendance and average daily attendance (see Fig.50, Ch.7). From 2013 onwards, the upgraded spreadsheet ('Past exhibition database') includes far more nuanced data sets, reflecting the greater complexity of contemporary business operations at the art museum. [Figure redacted]. The historical performance data reported in this new TOTP format includes: the name of the show, its venue, dates and duration, the total attendance numbers, pricing and income (targets and actuals), daily attendance (targets and actuals), total admission income per head (targets and actuals), concessionary prices and their uptake, Gift Aid uptake, numbers of Members attending, and ticket pricing data, such as percentage of visitors paying full price or concessions. A traffic-light colour-coding system flags the fulfillment of targets (green), yellow(shortfall of <10%, or orange/red for shortfalls of over 10%. Predictive software, MUSE, also informs the decision-making process.

At this point, the prior dependence on codified sets of historical attendance data gives way to the negotiated co-constructed, interdepartmental envisioning, informed by tacit knowledge and professional experience. I'd heard the view in one meeting that, despite six years' of psychographic profiling of Tate's audience types, by venue, curators were unconcerned with understanding audiences when programming, and that “universal audiences” were the defined target of most shows. In marked contrast, following the closure of the exhibitions, the curators were more interested in the actual visitor numbers achieved, as this would impact on future budget allocations. This reinforced other observations, to the effect that the curators, who received weekly emailed attendance figures of the current shows, would sometimes casually ask the Marketing team, at the outset of a cross-departmental meeting, ‘how is the show going?’ This indicated that these curators were not in the habit of tracking on-going attendance within their daily working practices. These tensions and contradictions illustrated to me the different ways that audience data appears to be valued by differing departments, and at what stage this data is valued in the production cycle of their activities.

The operational tension between data-informed, audience-centric decision-making, and decisions driven by subjective, professional opinion is explored during the selection of the core visual image for the forthcoming Pre-Raphaelites show at Tate Britain, described in Case Study 3, p113.

Case Study Three

The Pre-Raphaelite decision

"The Burne Jones is all enervation and lassitude"

(Curator, March 2012)

Six months prior to the opening of the major survey show 'Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant Garde' at Tate Britain, which ran from September 2012 to January 2013, a group of six staff assembled in a small meeting room in the curatorial department, to select the single key image that would be used to promote the forthcoming show, on the poster, the catalogue, online and in other publicity material.

The show would include paintings, photography, sculpture, tapestry, stained glass, and furniture, and had involved five years of planning and preparation, in collaboration with Tim Barringer, professor of History of Art at Yale University, Jason Rosenfeld, Professor of Art History at Marymount Manhattan College, New York and Alison Smith of Tate. Those represented around the meeting-table were: Tate Enterprises (publishing), Curatorial, Marketing, Legal (copyright assistant), and Publicity (press officer). The urgency to commit to a decision on the key promotional image was driven by the imminent lead times required for the production of Press packs. The candidate images were: clockwise from top left: Rossetti's 'Lady Lilith', on loan from the Delaware Art Museum'; Rossetti's 'Astarte Syriaca'; Rossetti's 'The Beloved'; Hunt's 'The Lady of Shalott'; and Burne Jones' 'Laus Veneris')

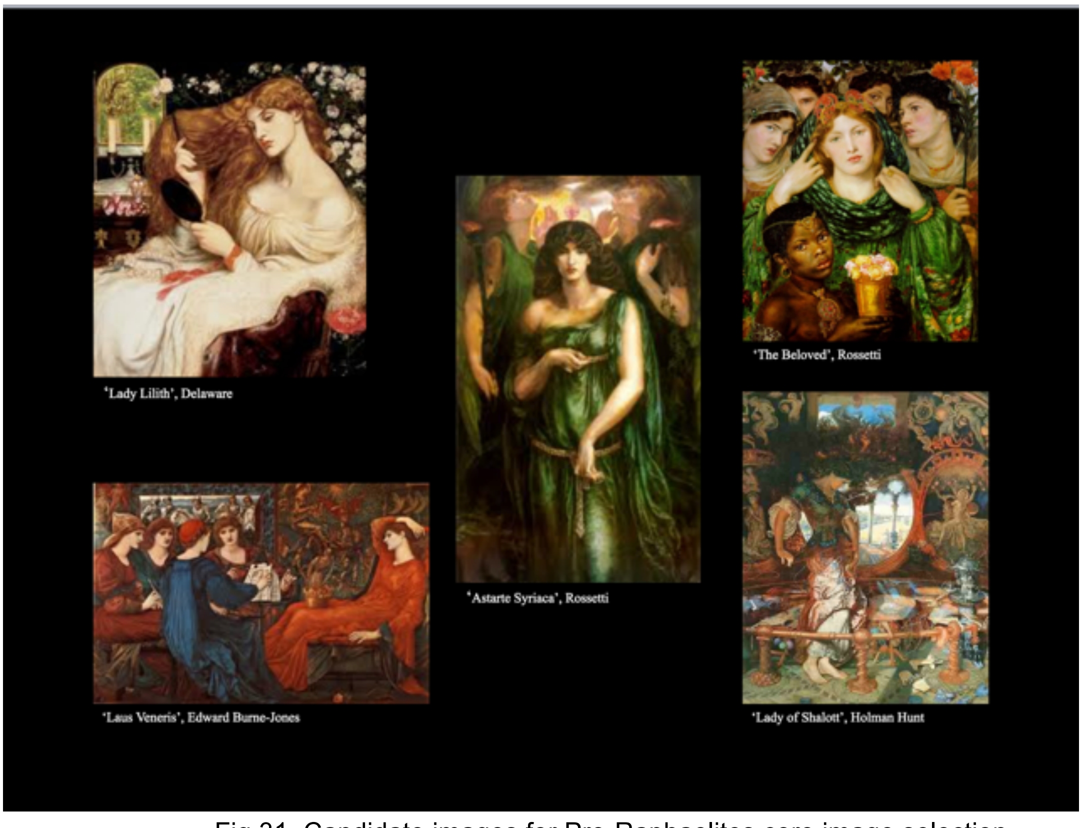

Fig.31. Candidate images for Pre-Raphaelites core image selection

The group set about debating which artwork was the best fit with their objectives. As the negotiation commenced, the differing priorities of each department came to the fore: [Marketing] didn't want too predictable an image, concerned that it may not achieve the cut-through or visibility that the marketing campaign would require. They wanted something that would generate interest: "We have to get people through the door."

[Enterprises] wanted the most attractive commercial image, something that had the versatility to lend itself to multiple reinterpretations on licensed products; Enterprises were also mindful that the recent shows 'Migrations', 'John Martin' and 'Barry Flanagan" had performed slightly below their income targets, and that merchandise for the Pre-Raphaelit show could address that shortfall. And [Curatorial] wanted the image that best encapsulated the intellectual rationale for the entire show:

> "We want something jarring, radical, with psychological complexity. We're dead against using the Rosetti. We don't want a sexy woman to sell the show. And we don't want too much text superimposed onto flesh.

[Marketing] persisted with focusing on the specific target groups for the exhibition, defined as Sensualists, Self-Improvers and Aficionados, according to the segmentation study devised by external consultants Morris Hargreaves McIntyre. In addition, there were production issues to consider: how would the image appear when reproduced on a quarter page, and would it be permitted to crop the image ?

The five shortlisted images were researched using Tate's online survey of 12,000 of its own visitors, established in 2011, for the purpose of pre-testing ideas, minimizing risk, and improving service quality standards. Forty-eight hours later, The Audience Insight manager first reported the findings to the Exhibition planning group, initially with raw data, and then with a single sheet showing a bar chart that ranked the candidate images according to their degree of appeal to the survey respondents.

Despite being ranked overall third by Tate's Audience Panel, the image that was ultimately used by the art museum was Rossetti's 'Astarte Syriaca'. (Fig.32,p115)

[Media & Audiences], who first initiated the Panel on his arrival from [a national newspaper] observed:

> "You absolutely involve the Audience Panel in a sort of progressive involvement, rather than 'Yes' or 'No.' You don't give the audience the keys to the safe."

This instance again shows the complexity of Tate's relationship with its audiences: authority and control remains centered within the institution, and the performance of audience consultation, described here as "progressive involvement" seems to have a limited effect upon actual operational practice.

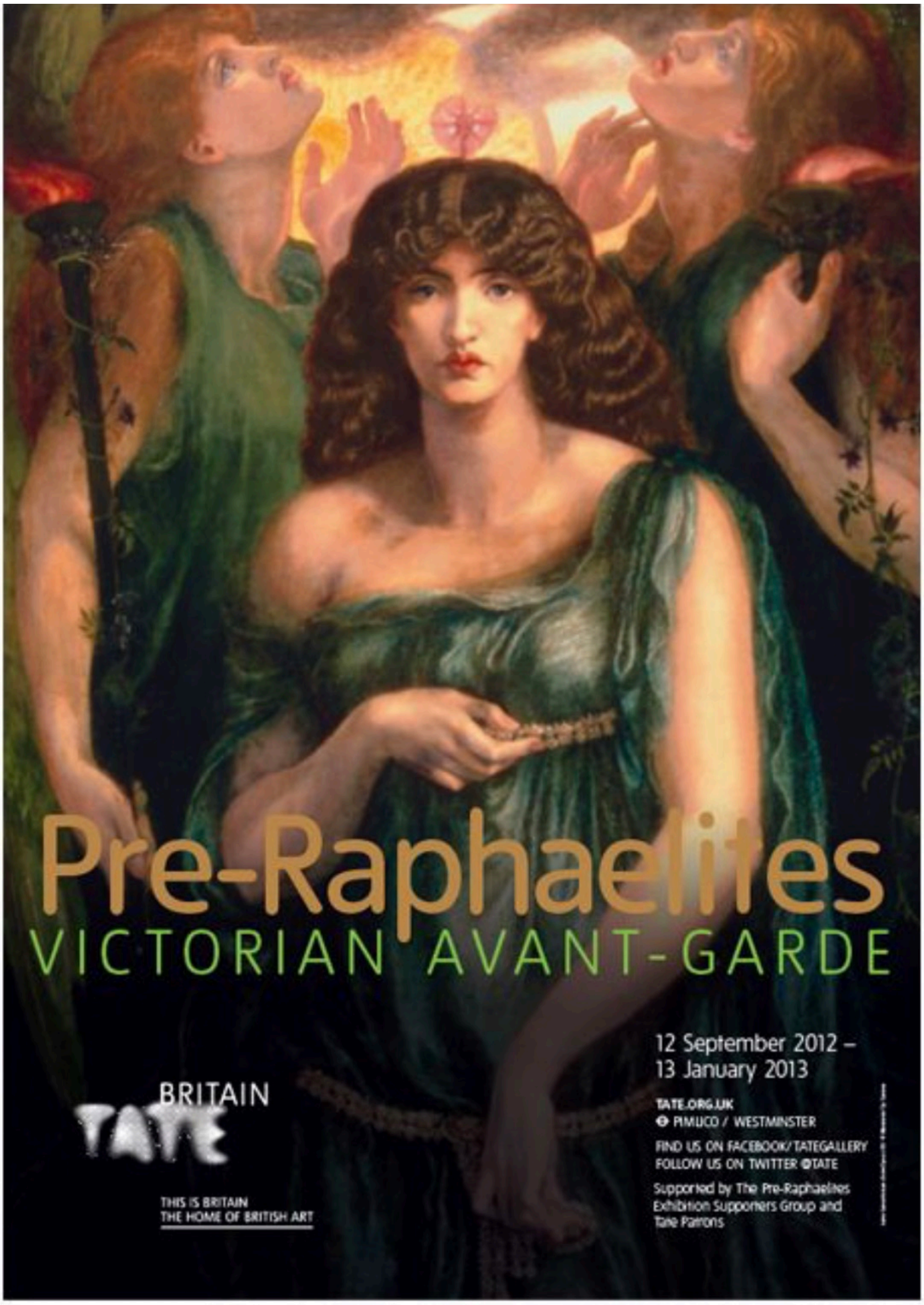

Fig.32. Final core visual for Pre-Raphaelites poster and press campaign

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5.1.8 Research findings : Representation. “Who is this all for?”

Tate’s role as champion of art and its value to society surfaced repeatedly throughout the fieldwork, in instances that both endorsed and conversely undermined that conscious institutional positioning of speaking up on behalf of others and their interests: representation. In addition to the observed criticism by Tate staff of the curatorial department, for programming for their own peer group rather than developmental audiences, - an observation compounded by the curatorial resistance to jettisoning the inaccessible exhibition title, *Iconoclasm*, (which subsequently was addressed by a negotiated compromise), there were also issues surrounding the participation of curators in the new blog habits of staff. Engaging Tate’s audiences in dialogue with the institution is a new strategic focus for the art museum, with staff encouraged to blog on their daily activities, on the platform of Tate’s website, and responding to issues raised by audiences.

When the Gauguin show opened at Tate Modern, in September 2010, Nick Serota initiated the new blog behavior, which was intended to generate a hub of rich content for Tate’s audiences to co-construct, share and re-share online.

> “Why are we doing the Gauguin show? It is not simply because we’ve reached ‘G’ in the alphabet, it is part of a programme for Tate Modern to show the antecedents and foundations of modern art as we know it.”
>
> (Serota, blog, Tate website, 28.9.20)

By the time the exhibition closed four months later, 1072 comments had been posted on the website. These ranged from complaints that the interpretation panels were too small, that the exhibition spaces were uncomfortably warm, that queuing was unpleasant for Members, that queuing was unpleasant for everyone at the café, that there was over-crowding and jostling, that the number of prams was irritating, and that there were few tolerable sightlines of the work. Visitors protested that they felt “well and truly ripped off.” In an internal meeting in which the visitors’ responses were discussed, it was commented by the curators that “although there were good audience responses, the whole exchange and calibre of the responses were insufficiently intellectual.” The seemingly unbreachable divide between the curatorial preference that audience responses should contribute to informed discourse, and the complaints from those same audiences, regarding experiential problems and issues, captures perhaps one of the most significant fissures across the art museum, in terms of aligning visitor wants and needs with the aspirations of the curatorial teams. This resistance to an audience-focused approach, raises the question ‘Who is this all for?’, and all the more so for an organisation in receipt of considerable public funding (Fig.27,p91).

By January 2012, this question had resurfaced, and was addressed in the Audience Strategy Steering Group meeting. Initially, the conversation focused on the lack of visitor surveys involving school groups, which traditionally have been excluded from that process owing to the logistical challenges of handling interviews with large groups. And then the issue of Tate’s degree of audience-focus shifted to new, spatial and even philosophical territory, when the discussion turned towards Families and playgrounds. Tate Enterprises, arguably the most audience or customer-responsive department at Tate aired a grievance about the lack of facilities for the developmental audience, Families:

> “It’s such a big mistake not having a play area on the landscape at Tate Modern. It’s a philosophical problem about making Tate Modern into a playground. It could be brilliant. We’ve got individual interventions, like ice cream and coffee, but a playground will never get past the Tate Modern II group [*the group leading the development of the Tanks and Blavatnik extension at Tate Modern].*
> We’re losing people, it needs to be a destination.”
>
> (Tate Enterprises)

It becomes evident from informal conversation around the table that it is the Executive Group and the curators who are unenthusiastic about providing play facilities for families. To wry laughter, it’s observed:

> “Just imagine the pain of this discussion with
> [Tate Modern architects] Herzog & de Meuron”
>
> (Media and Audiences)

Another Executive Director remarks:

> “Well, at the Trustees meeting, I tentatively asked
> ‘are Families and Kids looking at art?’ I got the feeling
> that it doesn’t matter about whether they see the art
> or not, just get them in.”

Marketing concurs that "we want to increase Families' attendance by giving them a better experience", and just as the consensus in the room begins to tip in favour of the playground agenda, a cynical voice chips in "I don't know, we'll end up with kids in the Members room, which everyone hates", and the matter is dropped.

The inference from this conversation is that those who exert strong influence at the art museum would suppress the introduction of external facilities that would potentially serve and attract Tate's developmental audiences, due to those facilities' lack of conformity to higher priority interests: the aesthetic required by the architects of Tate Modern's site. Elsewhere at Tate, in the Families Strategy meetings, the opposing view held sway: that engaging children on site is a key way to diversify audiences, (fieldwork, 3.11.11). Curiously, and in a recent development, the new Hyundai commission at the Turbine Hall by Superflex, which opened on 3rd October 2017 and will remain in situ until April 2018, obliquely addresses the issue of the forbidden play facilities at Tate Modern. Multiple 3-seat swings, inviting community-connecting conversations, legitimise the short-term installation of play facilities in terms deemed acceptable by the institution. This is achieved by framing the swings as "intelligent fun", or "playful subversion", and conceptually positioned by the curators as addressing issues of capitalism, production and apathy. To me, they're reminiscent of Carsten Höller's steel slides that were installed in the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern, from October 2006 to April 2007. At that time, the duality of that installation met the conceptual brief by delivering both the inner ('emotional') and outer ('visual') spectacle provided by the slides, which were also just good fun.

Figure 33: Danish art collective, Superflex, on 'One Two Three Swing!' at Tate Modern's Turbine Hall

In this way, the authorized allocation of space within the art museum enters into the audience-centric, data-driven drama, as the focus shifts from the agency of documentation, to the agency of space. The above examples illustrate moments and spaces of disjuncture in the alignment of the institution's purpose, in relation to its own audiences. However, many more examples abound of Tate's commitment to serving its audiences: in attracting younger, more diverse local visitors to on-site events with 'Late at Tate' evenings, to the success of the ARTIST ROOMS, involving the displays and exhibition of over 1600 modern and contemporary works that have been seen around the UK by over 30 million people (2013/14), to Tate Exchange which fosters engaging conversations between artists and the public, from an entire dedicated floor at the new Blavatnik Tate Modern extension, to the loan worldwide of 1264 works from the Collection in 2015/16, to addressing the gender imbalance in the artists' work displayed on site, and the involvement of over 200,000 under 18s in offsite facilitated activity, and over 370,000 adults in onsite activities (2015/16). Perhaps the highest profile instance in recent years, of Tate's championing stance, is the museum's highly visible public statement objecting to the imprisonment by the Chinese authorities of artist Ai WeiWei, whose '*Sunflower Seeds'* installation was at the time on display in Tate Modern's Turbine Hall.

Figure 34: Exterior of Tate Modern, protesting detainment of Ai WeiWei

And yet, the breadth of Tate's activities, the scope of its mission, the scale of its ambition, all operating against a backdrop of declining grant-in-aid, will inevitably bring moments of resistance or contention from its audiences, in terms of their exertion of influence over the museum's working practices, as the fourth Case Study will describe, overleaf.

5.1.9

Case Study Four:
Tate Members, the Extraordinary General Meeting
and "an undemocratic merger"

In 2015/16, the subscriptions from Tate's 110,000 members generated £10.7million for the art museum, thereby funding new acquisitions and special projects in Collection Care. Since the inception of the membership scheme as the 'Friends of Tate Gallery' in 1958, its principal objective had been to top up deficiencies in the government's purchase grant. However, the planned merger of the Members' charity with the charitable status of Tate caused disquiet amongst Members, and as legally required, the matter was debated in an Extraordinary General Meeting on site at Tate Britain, 26th February 2016. A vote in favour by just 5% of the Members was reported by Tate as "overwhelming support," and the merger was enacted.

Tate's membership scheme has proven almost too successful. With annual subscription rates starting at £70, the scheme offers unlimited free entry to paid-for exhibitions across all four of Tate's galleries, with use of the Members Rooms, free access to talks and events, the *Tate Etc* magazine, and year-long discounts in Tate's shops, cafés and restaurants. Consequently, whilst turnover and gross margins achieved by Tate Enterprises, from the cafes, publishing and retail sales, has risen, the effect of the multiple different Membership concessions has led to a reduction in overall revenue for Tate, owing to the fall in ticket sales. This financial dynamic was compounded by the on-going crisis in the national funding of the arts, with grants pegged at a 5% reduction in real terms between 2015/16 and 2019/20. Members had been invited to vote by post or in-person at the EGM, on whether to support the amalgamation of their charity, with Tate. Letters were written to *The Times*, in which the proposed merger was described as "undemocratic and unethical," owing to the lack of transparency in relation to the folding in of the valuable membership subscriptions, into Tate's annual operating income.

Fig.35 Clore auditorium, Tate Britain.

With fewer than 50 Members present in the Clore auditorium at Tate Britain, Tate's Director, Nicholas Serota, was keen to convey that the proposed integration of both charities would bring no change to the Members benefits and concessions. Until this point, 30% of the Members subscriptions were allocated to new acquisitions. The main concern for the Members, at the prospect of the charities merging, was the risk that the valuable Members subscriptions would be absorbed into the museum's general finances, and could be deployed in any manner that Tate saw fit.

Seeking to persuade the modest-sized audience, Nicholas Serota spoke up:

> "The more we put Members at the heart of the institution,
> the more we extend the commitment made by Members to the Institution."

After deflecting concerns that the Members' subscriptions might be used to fund legal proceedings (in relation to BP), or allocated to roof repairs, rather than acquisitions or conservation, Serota made an appeal to the Members by stating that "it's basically about securing the existence of Tate and its future." He also acknowledged that Tate's Members had been instrumental in raising within 30 days the £1m contribution that, in turn, prompted a larger donation for the Tate Modern extension. Before the vote, it was rapidly confirmed that it would not be legally possible to reinstate the Tate Friends group at a later date. Members present voted. 6302 had voted online or by post, in favour of the proposed amalgamation, but only having been informed that their benefits would remain unchanged, and without having heard the more nuanced issues discussed in the room at the EGM. 543 had voted in advance of the EGM against the motion, and a further 70 Member votes were cast in-person at the EGM.

The resolution was passed, to the effect that the Members had voted to authorize the transfer of the assets and liabilities of their Membership charity, to the art museum's Board of Trustees. Tate's Annual Accounts that year (2015/16) reported that the Members had voted "overwhelming in support for the change, with 92% of Members voting in favour of the merger". However, with only 6349 votes cast in favour, whether in-person, by post or online, the reality was that only 5% of the 110,000 Members had actually voted to support the merger.

With curious circularity, it transpires that 47 years earlier at Tate, a breakaway membership group had formed, to offer its own programme of lectures, concessions and art classes for children (Spalding1998, p50). At the time, Tate's Board of Trustees requested that the breakaway Friends group desist, and shortly afterwards the scheme collapsed, on the resignation of its 24yr old Chairman, Nicholas Serota.

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5.2 Organisational theory and knowledge management

Tate's knowledge of its audiences is an intangible asset, stored in both material modes and subjective, experiential ways of thinking. It is intellectual capital, defined as knowledge that can be converted into value for the organisation, (Edvinsson & Sullivan, 1996), and it is mediated in its generation, assemblage, distribution, negotiation and application.. Effective Knowledge management practices contribute positively towards higher performance levels and enhanced organisational competitiveness (Bogner & Bansal, 2007; Santos & Wane, 2013). However, the implementation of Knowledge Management practices, usually led by an "enabler", is insufficient to improve overall organisational performance in the absence of a "favourable organisational context." (Forcadell & Guadamillas, 2002). Approaches to Knowledge Management tend to divide into one of two frameworks: either from an IT perspective, focusing on information systems, or alternatively, from a humanist approach, which addresses the social relations of organisational knowledge (Gloet & Terziovski, 2004). From the humanist perspective, the introduction of organisational mechanisms and initiatives, such as a learning network, discussion forum or another opportunity to share "lessons learned", can contribute positively to the leveraging of existing organisational knowledge (Lee & Choi, 2003; Gloet & Terziovski, 2004). Within the context of the social relations of organisational knowledge, data, information and knowledge are differentiated as in Figure. 28 below:

Data	Objective facts or statistics
Information	Organised data, endowed with relevance and purpose (Drucker, 1988)
Knowledge	Information given meaning and integrated with other contents of understanding (Bates, 2006)

Figure 36: Differentiating data, information and knowledge

5.2.1 Research findings: Tate's Visitor Information

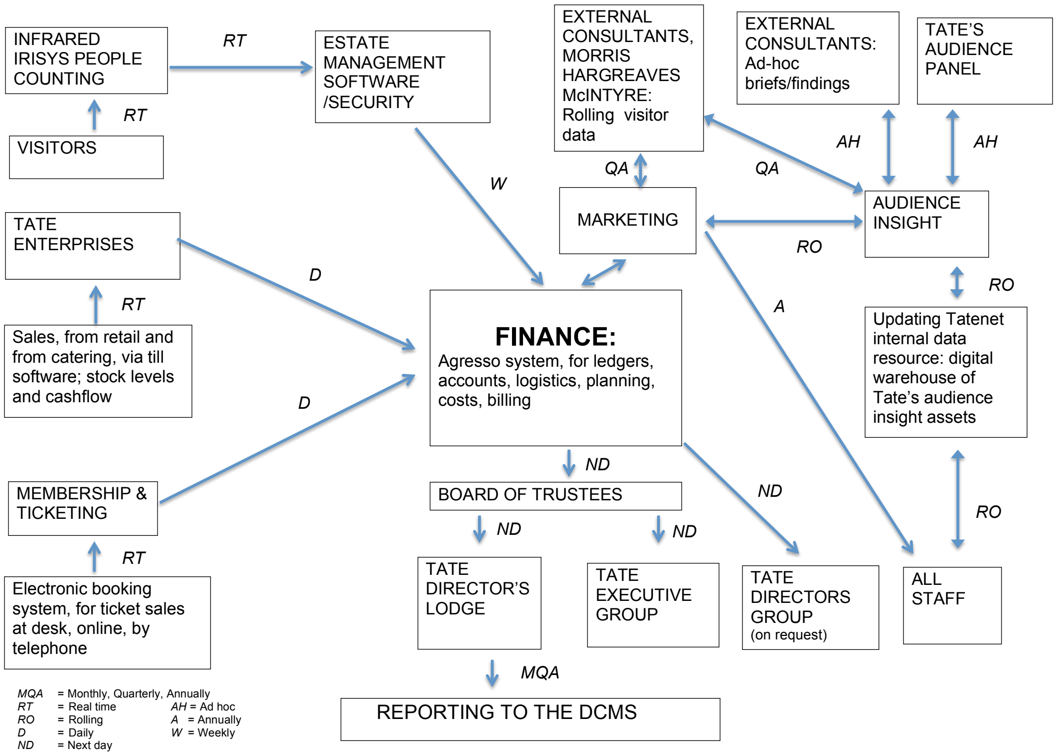

Fig. 37. The cyclical production, flow and frequency of distribution of data visitor data at Tate

In a continuous cycle of accumulating knowledge, Tate constructs, operates and strategically maintains, a data-rich environment, in which multiple types of visitor information, both qualitative and also codified as data, are generated, stored, shared and ritually distributed via multiple channels across the departments of the art museum. This study focuses on the interior operationalisation of the museum's conceptualisation and knowledge of its audiences, made material in its visitor information. The study approaches these cyclical operations of audience from an actor-network theoretical approach, and whilst reference is made to some technological systems at the art museum, in relation to the generation of quantified understandings of audience, the primary focus of this study is the social construction of this knowledge, rather than a systems-based account of the technological infrastructure at Tate.

Visitor information is generated from both internal and external sources, at different intervals and frequency of practice.

The fourteen internal sources include:

a) General on-site attendance visitor numbers, captured in real-time, reported weekly to Finance

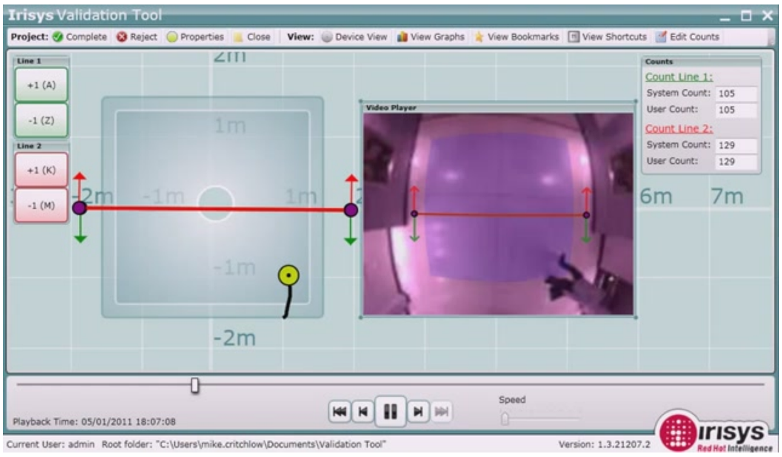

Figure 38: The Irisys people-counting system in operation at Tate

Having progressed from manual ‘clickers’ used by in-gallery staff, Tate now relies upon a system drawn from retail analytics, traditionally applied to queue management or security applications, to quantify the number of visitors on-site: the Irisys people-counting system. Ceiling-mounted sensors within the gallery spaces are oriented facing downwards, and using thermal technology, detect and count visitors as infrared radiation as they pass between defined virtual gateway posts, (Fig.50, Ch.7). This real-time data is transmitted via beacon technology, to estate management software, which then issues the weekly data sets to the Finance department every Monday, for inclusion in onward reporting by midday on Tuesdays, via email to the Trustees, Director’s Lodge and Executive Group.

b) Paid-for Exhibition attendance

Tate’s Membership and Ticketing department (MTS), operates an electronic booking system (ENTA) which records all ticket sales either in-person at the ticket-desk, online or by telephone, for paid-for exhibition attendance, for “low-level” transactions in cash, by cheque or credit/debit card payment. This raw data is forwarded to Tate’s Finance department, with each event coded for identification, and this tallies with the finance department’s electronic finance system ‘AGRESSO’. AGRESSO is a fully integrated system which encompasses General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Logistics, Planning Costing and Billing, by aggregating “high level” summaries of financial information. Every Monday, a staff member from

Finance takes this data and calculates the net revenue from each exhibition, distributing the revenue of joint ticket purchases across the respective paid-for exhibitions, for reporting weekly and monthly to senior management, together with a calculation of Actual performance vs. Budgeted or target performance. Non-ticketed events are not captured by the ENTA system, so non-ticketed attendance is calculated by subtracting the ticketed attendance from the overall attendance monitored by the Irisys people-counting system, above. The Ticket sale information is stored electronically on Tate's IT systems, for a retention period of seven years, and is not archived in hard copy form. The AGRESSO system has a retention policy of four years, after which the information is deleted (Freedom of Information Act 2000, Decision notice, 4.1.2012).

c) Tracked attendance and income per paid-for exhibition

Tabs on the Excel spreadsheets enable data specific to each of Tate's sites (Tate Britain, Tate Modern, Tate Liverpool and Tate St.Ives) to be viewed separately, together with summaries of recent exhibitions, and tracked attendance and income for the duration of the show.

> "The Liverpool stuff comes in by late morning on a Monday, the Catering stuff can come in Tuesday morning. Once I've prepared it all, most of it flows through onto the summary sheet and into the pie charts…So it goes to the Directors, and then the Attendance report email group, basically anybody who kind of requests to go on it goes on it. So it obviously has all of the Directors again, Management Accounts and Head of Financial Control, to budget holders and Head of Departments, to a whole long list of people. It goes to the whole of Exhibitions Tate Modern department, it goes to the whole of St Ives Business group, and Development get it as they have to do a lot of reporting on visitor numbers for grants."
>
> (Interview, Finance, 14.6.2012).

d) 'Top of the Pops': Highest historical attendance data

The highest historic attendance data is ranked and shown in the Top of the Pops chart, as previously discussed earlier in this chapter (5.1.6, p111). The visual reference of this document has been redacted at the request of Tate.

e) Key Performance Indicators

Tate's Attendance Performance Indicators record the Year to date attendance figures, for Exhibition ('Display') and Total attendance, the Year to date budgeted attendance figures, the Actual and Budgeted income, and vs. the previous year, and also a calculation of the variance vs. Budget. Trading income is also included as a Key Performance Indicator. Delivery vs. the KPI is shown within the distributed spreadsheet using a traffic light system, indicating performance delivery above, below and in keeping with required targets. The Director's Lodge requested the addition of a graph visualization of this data within the regular reporting framework, for ease of legibility.

f) Tate Enterprises

> "All of the galleries use the same till software, and that's all pulled back centrally, so you can look and see what's sold in Liverpool, or what's sold in St.Ives, and they can look and see what's sold in London….There's lots and lots of different data; One of the things we're trying to do at the moment is to streamline that so we're not reliant on people accessing individual systems; what we're trying to do is say 'what suite of reports do you want to have? We're going to mail that to you regularly, so you can just have it at your fingertips.'"
>
> (Interview, Enterprises, 5.5.2012).

The data types and sources used by Tate Enterprise include: sales data (using Tracks data software), data streamed from the online shop, using Vendor system, and also from tills on-site. Tate Enterprises also warehouses data, using Trilogy, and tracks Trade Sales data to monitor stock levels and cash flow. Membership data, and who Tate sells to within Members is also monitored, with purchasing behaviours tracked. Finally, Tate Enterprises tracks levels of income by department within the retail function, in terms of the transactional performance of varying product categories or groups.

g) Rolling visitor research reports by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre

This continuous, rolling visitor research, conducted from October 2010 onwards, is the quarterly product of data-collection involving 325 in-person exit questionnaires per quarter for adults at Tate Britain and likewise at Tate Modern, conducted by trained Tate staff (with multiple language options for the data capture). The resulting 96 page reports for each of the London sites provide an analysis of overall visitor trends at Tate Britain and Tate Modern, benchmarked within sector. The reports also outline visitor profiles, in terms of origin (London, UK, overseas), with a trend analysis for the preceding 5 years' of that data. The reports track numbers of First time vs regular visitors (i.e. repeat visit within past 12 months), visitor age, and a trend analysis of respondent age, for previous 5 years. In addition, gender, disability and ethnicity data is provided, within a 5 year trend analysis. Employment and NS-SEC status are also tracked. Visitor behaviours are reported, in terms the visitor segmentation type, their motive for visiting (Spiritual, Emotional, Intellectual, Social), dwell time, and usage of the shops, restaurants or cafes. The percentage of visitors purchasing from the restaurant or café, within a 5 year trend analysis, is reported, together with measures of awareness of the shops and their location on site.

The efficacy of Marketing activity is evaluated, in terms of visitor awareness of marketing material, recalled from specific media. Levels of Sponsorship awareness (both prompted and unprompted) are reported. The visit outcomes are tracked, in terms of the visitors' propensity to recommend a visit to friends and family, and overall satisfaction levels are reported, alongside the visitors' perception of whether their attendance represented value for money, again, within a 5 year trend analysis.
The MHM reports include a segmentation analysis of visitor motivations according to demographic profiles and exhibitions attended. And finally, MHM also produce Special exhibition reports, which collate all of the above metrics and evaluate exhibition performance for ticketed shows. This considerable volume of visitor data is presented to staff at the Annual Rolling Visitor Survey, in May of each year: a presentation of 96 charts is delivered in turn at both Tate Britain and Tate Modern, with supplementary information regarding external trends and influences, in terms of the consumer and market environment, and tourism trends. The annual report also profiles specific exhibitions by socio-demographic data, by segmentation and by visit frequency, and maps satisfaction levels and value for money perceptions. All Tate's staff are invited to attend, as outlined in Case Study (5) overleaf. A visual reference of the Morris Hargreaves McIntyre reports have been redacted at the request of Tate.

5.2.2

Case Study Five

Visitor Data: “It’s important stuff’

Fig. 39: The Starr Auditorium, Tate Modern

The gap between the strategic priority of visitor data, and operational engagement

The Starr Auditorium, Tate Modern, 27th May 2011. The Annual Rolling Visitor Data presentation by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre was due to start in twenty minutes. An all-staff memo ten days in advance had advised that the presentation would be made first at Tate Modern at 11am, and repeated at Tate Britain at 2pm that afternoon. Here, at the Starr auditorium, seating capacity 234, and part cinema screening room, part lecture theatre, it was very quiet. Two staff had arrived: one from Marketing, and another, the Audience Insight Manager, both of whom had a long-standing rapport with the presenters from MHM, and were familiar with the data sets and their utility. By 11.03am, more staff had arrived: from Learning, from Information, from Tate Enterprises and from Collections Care. The last to join the room were a Retail Manager, a Volunteer Manager and an Information assistant. The presentation starts, with 13 Tate staff attending, plus myself, observing. We barely fill a single row of seats, in the raked, air-conditioned, auditorium. For forty-five minutes, MHM present their 96 charts at some pace. “Understanding [our] audiences better and sharing knowledge” is a key component of Tate’s 2010/2011 audience strategy. With the presentation stored on Tate’s intranet, ‘Tatenet’, and located within a broader warehousing of audience-related data, staff had access to the presentation charts for exploration at a time to suit. After almost an hour in the Starr auditorium, there’s a brief Q&A session: an anomalous dip in exhibition attendance in April 2010 is attributed to an ash cloud that followed the eruption of Iceland’s most active volcano, causing the cancellation of 100,000 flights across Europe. And the presentation ends. A couple of hours later, the reprise presentation at Tate Britain brings treble the attendance. With 44 staff attending, the Membership, Enterprises, Licensing, Staff Training, and Development departments are all represented. Fifty-seven staff out of the possible seven hundred and fifty staff based in London, chose to attend, yet over 92% stayed away. A whole year later, at the 2011/2012 MHM Annual Visitor Data presentation, staff engagement levels with this data presentation remained unchanged. Just twelve staff attend the 90 minute presentation, in the Clore auditorium at Tate Britain. The Media and Audiences Director introduces the MHM team, and the discrepancy between his words and the apparent operational reality is stark:

> “Increasingly, audiences are becoming part of the central conversation that‘s going on, rather than at the fringe, and what we see today will affect both audience development and programming development. What we’re looking for is some of the different nuances. It’s important stuff.”

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h) Historic audience research reports:

Morris Hargreaves McIntyre's 'Through Visitors' Eyes' (2004), 'Anatomy of a Visit' (2004), 'Closer to Tate' (2004), 'Visitor Barometer' (2010), 'Even Closer to Tate' (2010), Pen Portraits (2010); 'Understanding Tate's Visitors' (Audience Insight Manager, 2011).

i) Audience Strategy documents:

Tate Audience Strategy 2010/11, Tate Audience Strategy update 2010/11, Tate Diversity Strategy 2009, and Tate's Segmentation leaflet: "How does the segmentation relate to the audience strategy?" [Redacted].

The Tate Segmentation leaflet [redacted] was developed in conjunction with Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, and produced in a double-sided, colourful, folding A4 leaflet format, and distributed to all staff as an aide-memoire. The leaflet sought to build familiarity with the segmentation framework, across all of Tate's sites, and promoted its application to working practice. The separation between the theoretical framework of the motivational segmentation,(which classified visitors as either Aficionados, Actualisers, Sensualists, Researchers, Self-Improvers, Social Spacers, Urban Cool, Site Seers, of Families) and its utility in operational practice had emerged as a persistent and contentious theme during the Audience Strategy Steering group meetings. (See later in this chapter, p146).

j) Visitor information stored on Tatenet

[Screenshots of Tatenet data warehouse redacted].

The categories of visitor information stored on Tatenet are outlined in Figure 40, overleaf.

Exhibitions	Generic audience research	'How to' tools
• Audience potential and attendance forecasts • Exhibition test • Formative audience research • The Tanks • Paid-for exhibition report by MHM • Satisfaction reports • Audience profiles • Exhibition audience reports • London temporary exhibitions	• Shop & catering spend • Overseas market • Members surveys • Potential audience for expanded TM • Users of mobile devices • Online and social media audiences • DCMS study 'Ways to engage broader audience' • Focus groups on segment types • Members Survey • Youth Survey	• Lunch & Learn sessions: internal comms. • Audience research brief template • Diversity monitoring guidelines • Interview training • Good survey design • Diversity Monitoring guidelines • Interview training • Good survey design • Code of conduct • Online survey design • Audience 'bites': series of digestible data-informed insight
Segmentation	Learning Programmes	Benchmarking
• Guide 2011 • Decision tree 2012 • Workshops 2013 • Anatomy of a visit (2012/3) • Pen portraits (2012) • Segments • Golden Question • Leaflet (2013) • Barometer report (2010)	• Events research debriefs • Evaluation of interpretive material • Tate Forum • Families Research	• Current audiences • Regional • National museums data, ALVA
Collection	Audience Panel	'Visitor Surveys TB/TM
• Engaging with Displays (2009) • TB display/signage research by Firefish (2011, 2012)	• Outline • Brief • Rate-card • Results	• Reports • Annual data tables • Executive summaries • For all Tate sites

Fig. 40: Visitor information warehouse on Tatenet, maintained by Audience Insight Manager

k) Tate Reports

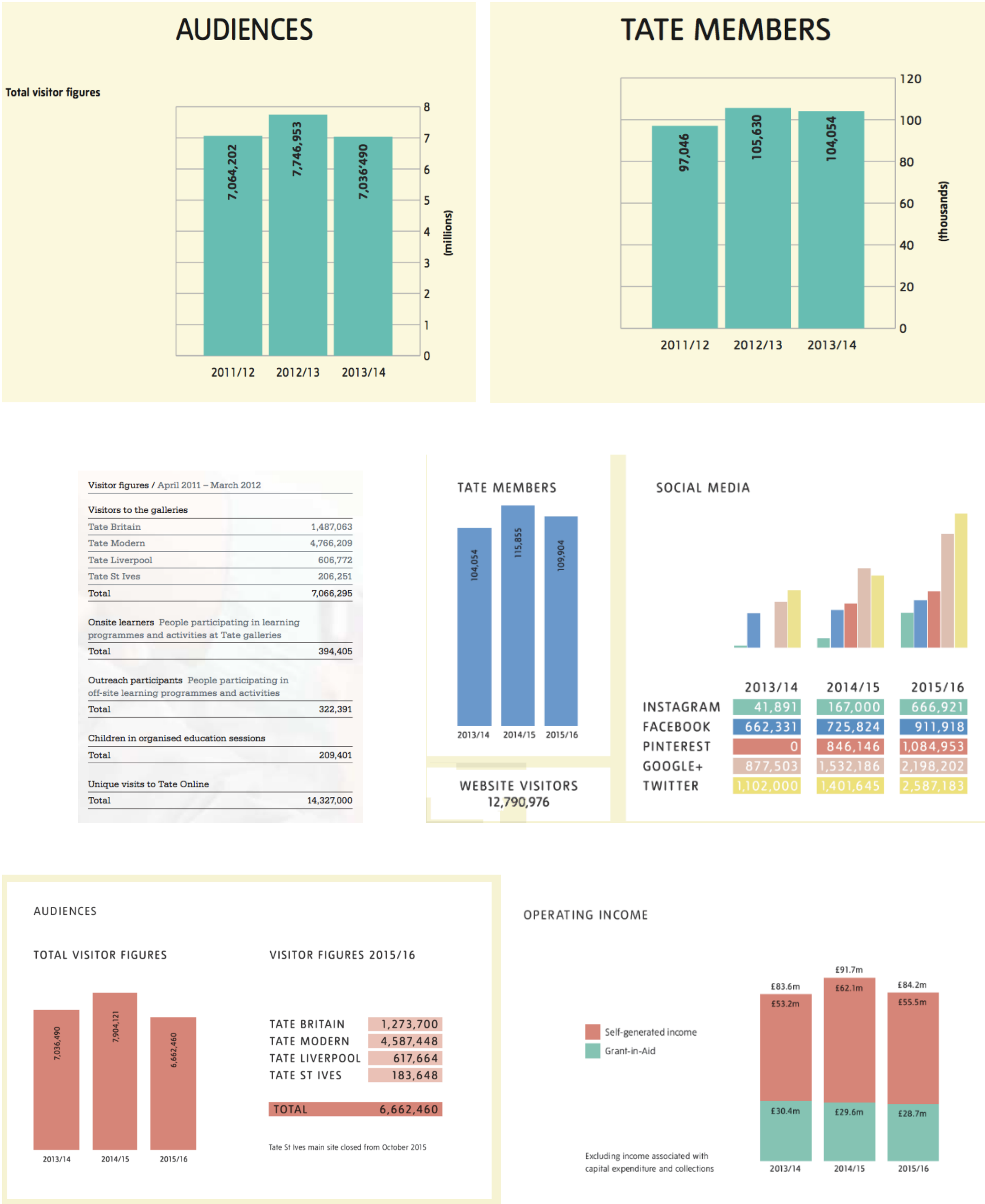

Fig. 41: The reporting of Tate attendance, membership, social media data, and operating income, in the annual Tate Report, distributed online via Tate website.

l) External research reports, consultations

[Debrief documentation, on in-gallery curatorial practice, by external consultants redacted].

m) Visitor comments
Collated by Finance from online capture, distributed to Audience Insights Manger, and stored at Tatenet data warehouse. [Screengrab of visitor comments redacted].

n) Monthly benchmarked performance vs. other leading Visitor Attractions

These monthly reviews of market conditions showing visitor compare attendance versus the previous year, mapped against other benchmarked visitor attractions in London. This data is collated by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA), and distributed to the 42 participating museums, galleries and heritage sites in London. Again, Tate's Finance department distributes this information weekly, but commented "We don't look at what's going on at other galleries."

(Interview, Finance, June 14th 2012).

5.2.3 Terms of differentiation in Tate's circulation and application of data: Speed, phasing, frequency, demand, centrality to core departmental practice, perceived utility, and selective application

From a lengthy ethnographic embedded observation of Tate's working practices, the visitor data material networks of action within this data-rich art museum are propelled both by the routinizing effect of technology and the calls for better understandings of audiences, and for those understandings to shape and inform operational practice, rather than to define it. In a retail context, knowledge of consumers is applied to operational practice in order to reduce wastage of resources, thereby protecting net profit margins. In the not-for-profit context of the art museum, the application of the institution's knowledge of its audiences has a role to play in the reduction of risk, and also in the funded museum's inclusive role within the public realm. And yet, the department that most exposes the organisational culture to operational risk, the Curatorial department, in its lead role in the shaping of programming, is that which has least engagement with the risk-reducing operationalisation of the art museum's knowledge of its audiences.

Across Tate, differing speeds of practice govern the application of visitor information to daily ways of working. In Tate Enterprises, Visitor Services and Ticketing, live data is captured, analysed and applied instantly. In Marketing and Learning, there is less immediacy to the agency of the aggregated visitor information, which in this context, informs long-term strategy rather than predominantly daily operations, and is therefore stored and redistributed at weekly, monthly or quarterly intervals. Difference of phasing and frequency separate the application of knowledge of Tate's audiences, and also variances in the gearing of demand for data in relation to its supply. In addition, further operational variance is noted in terms of the centrality of the application of knowledge of audiences to the working practices of the respective departments, with this dimension appearing also to impact upon the extent that the visitor data is valued. Expectations differ across Tate in terms of the anticipation that the knowledge of the museum's audiences will be applied. From some quarters, a mild indifference was noted, "So what? What does that mean? Will it change anything?" (Curatorial), compared with the more anguished response: "If we don't act on the findings of this, I will hang myself" (Learning). Further differences between departments were noted in the selective application of visitor information, or degree to which the museum's knowledge of audiences was mediated and applied in an unfiltered, unbiased way. The greatest commonality across much of the museum was the ritualised, performance of data-gathering, even when the potential purposelessness of that activity, in terms of utility both for outward sharing across the sector, and internally within the art museum, was acknowledged by the self-same actor engaged in its generation.

The most consistent finding, in terms of the agency of visitor information in Tate's operational practices, is the consensus that the art museum is governed by strong personalities, and that the process of bringing the audience voice into the room introduces a potential catalyst for both organisational reflexivity and the reduction of opinion-driven conflict. This is however, only an opportunity for this catalyst, rather than a certainty of its actualisation.

5.2.4 <u>Research findings:</u>

Visitor attendance data exerts more operational agency than qualitative audience research

After a year of fieldwork, observing the strategy and implementation groups, it was apparent that since it's advent in 2010, Tate's audience panel, which was intended as a research facility to inform Tate's decision-making processes in relation to the audience appeal of programming concepts, marketing ideas, visitor experience innovations and aspects of curatorial practice, had translated in operational reality into a complex object. The appetite for a closer understanding of Tate's audiences, for more integrated data, and for a shared language of audiences, was more keenly felt at a strategic rather than operational level; conversely, there was a tendency for strong-willed senior staff to either assert their views over the identified preferences of the visitors, as reported in the audience research debriefs, or to value selectively those research findings that endorsed pre-existing opinions and preferences, in lieu of evidence-based decision-making.

A case in point is the discussion in 2012 of the planned interpretation strategy for the chronological rehang of the Collection at Tate Britain planned for the following year. The interpretation, or signage beside the artworks in the museum, is a means of communicating information to visitors, to convey meanings, tell stories, provide enriching explanations and to support visitors in engaging in sense-making of their own. Eighteen months in advance of the planned rehang of the national Collection, reinterpreted as 'A Walk Through British Art', at Tate Britain, research was conducted by external research agency Firefish, to investigate whether the interpretation should offer stimulus and provocation rather than basic information. At the time, there was no cross-gallery view interpretation strategy, as the Director at each of Tate's sites made that judgement independently.

When the findings of the Firefish research were shared, indicating a visitor preference for explanatory interpretation panels, there was resistance at the level of the Executive Group level, where "people didn't like the answers." The research had indicated that that the information needs of diverse in-gallery visitors reflected those of the meta-classifications of the Morris Hargreaves

McIntyre segmentation system, clustering visitor types into nine different psychographic profiles. Explorer-type visitors, who were happy to create their own interpretation of artworks, had different information preferences to those of Follower-type visitors, who sought explanations. Contrary to the research recommendations, when the rehang opened in May 2013, it was with the barest of interpretation signage, reflecting the preference of the principal Curator, rather than the identified preferences of the MHM visitor segmentation profiles that the rehang sought to attract. Reminiscent of the Pre-Raphaelite decision (see Ch.5,p113), the Firefish research findings were set aside; however on this occasion, this was the choice of one individual, rather than serving to initiate the negotiation of a compromise, as was the case in the scenario that involved the collaborative decision-making process of the Pre-Raphaelite promotional image.

On reflection, it is apparent that more value is attached by Tate's staff to the generation and distribution of its knowledge of audiences, than in universally valuing its utility and overseeing its consistent application. The quantifiable visitor attendance data is applied swiftly to working practices, with less negotiation or resistance than the qualitative audience research, which is valued, instead, as a catalyst for discussion, rather than a moment of translation and enactment. However, Tate Enterprises provides an exception to this, with the commercial unit's strong visitor-orientation and understanding of the in-gallery and online customers accounting for their commercial success: Tate Enterprises achieved a turnover of £13.5m, and yielded a contribution of £2.45m to Tate through core business (Tate Report 2011/12). "We start from what our customers want" (Interview). And yet exchanges in strategy meetings suggest that the audience voice so keenly heeded by Tate Enterprises encounters an impasse at the boundary of that unit, and does not transmit so readily beyond their departmental practice.

> "I've sat in meetings and argued really vociferously for something, and it's got to the stage where people just roll their eyes. There's no way of pushing this kind of discussion through."
>
> (Tate Enterprises, interview)

Elsewhere in the art museum, there is a performative aspect to Tate's operational practices of audiences: being seen to do the right thing matters, as a leader, and innovator within the sector. And yet there are discrepancies between the external narrative and the internal reality of the operations of audience and the role of visitor information therein.

5.3 Audiences and Audience development.

A literature review of audience development was provided within the conceptual framework of this study, (Ch.3,p58). The strategic function of audience development, in terms of expanding an audience base, adjusting its composition, to include harder-to-reach or under-represented audiences, or enriching the experience of current cultural participants, is all the more challenging within the context of a swiftly changing population. The UK population is growing rapidly, ageing, increasingly diverse, and this is also characterized by changing family structures, with a reduction in the past 30 years in the number of marriages, a corresponding increase in cohabitation, and an increasing age at motherhood (ESRC Centre for Population change, 'Population change in the UK', 2017).

> "Museums are very various indeed. Those that are beginning to expand and cherish their audiences, redefine their objectives and re-evaluate long-standing work practices are those that are visited and revisited with pleasure. Those that cling to irrelevant and insular activities will find (as some are already finding) that their visitor numbers are falling, and that they are left as residual cultural forms. Museums must demonstrate their relevance and recruit their audiences in a new aggressive leisure market. It is no longer (if it ever was) merely enough to exist."
>
> (Hooper-Greenhill, in Lumley (ed) 1988, p230).

Hooper-Greenhill's acknowledgement of the framing of cultural consumption within the leisure market is a useful precursor to the issue of Tate's market orientation, which will be developed in Part Three of this study. Prior to that, a review of the multiple operational and theoretical conceptualisations of museum visitors compares the standard notions of audience within museum practice (geographic clustering, the frequency of participation, socioeconomic profile) with more recent conceptualisations (motivational segmentations, character portrait segmentations, digital behaviours), and also with those interpretations proposed by the literature, such as 'end-user beneficiaries' (Scott, 2010), 'strangers, intruders or guests' (Doering, 1999), 'explorers of the unfamiliar' (Gabriel & Lang, 1995) or 'source communities' (Barrett, 2012). There also follows an index of the 82 differing conceptualisations of visitors identified by this research as currently in operation across the differing departments of Tate.

Operational and theoretical conceptualisations of museum visitors

Standard notions of audience within museum practice	**Newer conceptualisations**	**Within the literature**
DCMS 'Taking Part' longitudinal survey, from 2005/6, visitor types: New Former Consistent Occasional Never FREQUENCY/INCIDENCE OF PARTICIPATION	Digital participants, defined by 'Taking Part' survey: Those who visit website or apps, in order to - look at items from the Collection - find out about a subject - take a virtual tour TYPES OF ONLINE ENGAGEMENT	Museum visitors as the public: end-user beneficiaries of services, equally available to all members of the population, authorized by government and delivered via accountable, funded institutions (Scott, (2010) END-USER BENEFICIARIES OF DEMOCRATIC, FUNDED SERVICES
DCMS 'Taking Part' longitudinal survey, area classifications for subsets of demographic groups: Wealthy Achievers Urban Prosperity Multiple Deprivation Hard-Pressed GEOGRAPHIC CLUSTERS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS	*Sightseers, Days Out, Self-Developers, Experts, Empathisers, Kids First, Learning Families, Forn Learners.* Psychographic 'Culture Segments', based on values and beliefs, by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre. MOTIVATIONAL SEGMENTATIONS (1)	Visitors as *strangers, intruders, guests or clients*. The museum prioritises the interests of the collection but tolerates the admittance of strangers or intruders; or the museum serves its mission by "doing good" for visitors (guests); or the museum as an accountable agent meeting the wants and needs of visitors (clients). (Doering, 1999) CORE VALUE-DEPENDENT IDENTITIES
Employment status and occupation of highest-income householder gender, age, ethnicity. National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC): occupation-based classification, system used by Office for National Statistics since 2001 to explain causal narratives of variation in social behavior. SOCIO-ECONOMIC & SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CLASSIFICATION	*Facebook Families, Kaleidoscope Creativity, Heydays, Up our Street, Trips & Treats, Experience Seekers, Dormitory Dependables, Metroculturals, Home & Heritage, Commuterland Culturebuffs.* Audience Spectrum segmentation, developed by The Audience Agency. Geo-located, attendance, behavioural, and demographic variables. CHARACTER PORTRAIT SEGMENTATIONS (2)	Visitors as *customers*, with the museum embedding marketing strategies at all operational levels, to secure the financial sustainability of the institution. (Mastai, 2007) TRANSACTIONAL ORIENTATION

Figs. 42a Operational and theoretical conceptualisations of audience

Existing visitor, or visitor vs. Non-visitor ATTENDANCE MODALITY	Virtual visitors, website users, current users vs. non-users ONLINE IDENTIFIER	Visitors as *source communities,* in the context of Australian indigenous communities. (Barrett, 2012) EMPOWERED PARTNERING CONTRIBUTORS
Core visitors vs. non-core HIERARCHY STRATEGISATION	Gamers, Explorers (Nat. Museums of Scotland) DIFFERENTIATION OF WEBSITE USAGE	Visitors as *consumers* or *latent consumers,* (Prentice, 1996), CURRENT OR POTENTIAL USERS OF PRODUCTS OR SERVICES, NOT NECESSARILY TRANSACTIONAL
Pre-schools, Schools & School teachers EDUCATION SECTOR	Social media users DIGITAL BEHAVIOURS	Visitors as *explorers of the unfamiliar*, seeking difference. (Gabriel & Lang, 1995) CURIOUS EXPLORERS
Families GROUP COMPOSITION	Under-represented REPRESENTATIONAL DEFICIT	Visitors as *seekers of 'alterity'*, of multiple alternative interpretations and representations. (Prentice, 1996) REJECTORS OF MONO-AUTHORITARIAN PERSPECTIVES
UK or Overseas ORIGIN	History Hobbyists (Nat. Museums of Scotland) INTEREST/LAY EXPERTISE IDENTIFIER	Visitors as *outsiders,* viewing artifacts of past or distant societies, (Tuan, 1974, 1990)

Fig. 42b: Operational and theoretical conceptualisations of audience

Annual, weekly FREQUENCY OF VISIT	Gatekeepers, within tourist groups DECISION-MAKERS	Visitors as detached *spectators,* of decontextualized subjects and objects (Smith, 1993).
Participants	Small family units & families in holiday periods (Nat. Arm Museum) FAMILIAL FRAGMENTATIONS, in group size and scheduling	Visitors as *potential existential insiders*, unselfconsciously belonging within the museum space (Relph, 1976) Visitors as *willingly self-deluded imagineers*, participating in transposition to an earlier temporal reality (Kamphausen, Nafzger & Nafzger, 1975)
Respondents FIELDWORK PARTICIPANTS		Visitors as *behavioural insiders rather than existential insiders*, owing to population mobility and circulation (Prentice, 1996). Visitors as *agents of cognitive flexibility*, with online searches facilitating subject boundary-crossing (Ruhleder, 1995)
Target audiences; Non-repeat visitors; New vs. old; Recently acquired.		Visitors as *insight outsiders* or *post-tourists,* embracing their condition as outsiders, and seeking contextualised insight. (Feifer, 1985) Visitors as "increasingly fragmented publics", and "Generalists" (Wright, 1989)

Fig. 42c: Operational and theoretical conceptualisations of audience

MARKETING	LEARNING	ENTERPRISES & CATERING	FINANCE	CURATORIAL	VISITOR SERVICES	KPIs, & Reporting (2015/16)
"Core audiences": current visitors	Self-directed visits by <18yrs in formal education	No. of transactions	Members	Universal audience, during programming	Families	Actual visits/visitors
"Developmental audiences": Families, schools, teachers, students, young individuals, local residents	Visitors 18<yrs participating in onsite organized activities	Average spend per head	Full-paying, Concessions	Total Exhibition visitors, post closure of show	Schools and teachers	Number of unique users visiting website
Local audiences	Adults participating in on-site organized activities	Kids	Other Free		Local communities, including residents, artists	Overseas visitors

Fig. 43a: Tate's multiple operational conceptualisations of audiences

Local audiences	Adults participating in on-site organized activities	Kids	Other Free		Local communities, including residents, artists	Overseas visitors
Regional audiences	Adults participating in off-site and digital activities	Artists, in production of stock	Weekly & monthly forecast attenders		Local businesses	Facilitated and self-directed visitors, <18yrs in formal education
Overseas/London /UK audiences	Schools and teachers	Designers, in production of stock Trade customers	Weekly & monthly budgeted attenders			Visitors <18yrs participating in on-site organized activities
Segmentation audiences	Students	Makers, in production of stock	Weekly & monthly actual attenders			Visitors who would recommend a visit

Fig. 43b: Tate's multiple operational conceptualisations of audiences

Tate Website visitors	Early Years & Families	In-gallery Customers				Regional loan venues
Social media: Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Google, Twitter	International projects: turbine generation	Online customers				
Regular, first time, repeat, infrequent, lapsed	Digital programmes	Members				
0-4yrs, 5-11, 12-15, 16-17, 18-24, 25-34, 45-54, 55-59. 60-64, 65+, prefer not to say	Adult Learning	Families				

Fig. 43c: Tate's multiple operational conceptualisations of audiences

Ethnicity: White, Mixed, Asian, Black, Chinese, Other	Young People/ Tate Collectives	Publishers	Monthly actual attenders			
Working FT, working PT, self-employed	Attenders, artist-led workshops	Young People				
Unemployed <12months, unemployed >12months	Attenders, Study days	Developmental audiences				
Never worked	Cultural institutions (turbinegeneration)	"Middle class & moneyed"				
FT student	Attenders of conferences, symposia	"Buggy-pushers"				
Retired	Attenders of Artist talks	Local schools: work placements				

Fig. 43d: Tate's multiple operational conceptualisations of audiences

Looking after home and family		"State-educated kids"				
		Sensualists, Self-Improvers, Tourists				
		Non-specialist & specialist, real specialist				
		Price-sensitive disloyals				
		Print buyers				
		Ticket buyers				

Fig. 43e Tate's multiple operational conceptualisations of audiences

5.3.2 The Audience Strategy Steering Group

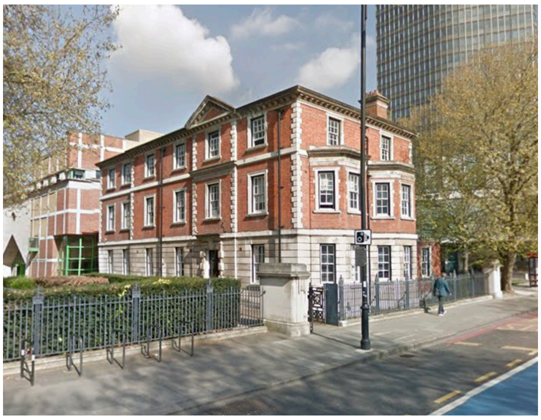

Fig.44: Director's Lodge, Tate Britain

London was festooned with patriotic bunting. There was still one month to go before the Royal wedding at Westminster Abbey, and less than a mile upriver, beside the Thames, a small group of museum staff were assembling for a meeting, in the neoclassical Director's Lodge, at Tate Britain. It was Monday 28th March 2011, and the occasion was the inaugural meeting of the Audience Strategy Steering Group, led by the Director of Media and Audiences. The creation of this role, ten months earlier, signaled Tate's sharpening focus on the institution's digital agenda, and on the museum's "commitment to a culture of openness and interactivity", by capturing, retaining and engaging with new online audiences for the art museum (Tate Annual Review, 2010/11). The inclusion of 'Audiences' in the new Director's job title was intentional: "It sounds like just a name change but it represents a significant change of approach...it means I was asked less for my own opinion and more to bring the views and opinions of multiple audiences to the table", (Director of Media and Audiences, interview, https://www.research-live.com/article/features/the-art-of-consumerunderstanding/id/4010701).

With a decade of experience as Marketing Director at two national press titles and earlier experience in television and digital services, the new Director had started his career, as had I, as a graduate trainee in the London advertising agency, Darcy Masius Benton & Bowles, at 2 St James' Square. He'd started a couple of years ahead of me, and our paths only crossed for the first time, twenty-one years later, at Tate in 2010: his arrival in May that year coincided with the closing weeks of Turner Prize winner Chris Ofili's much heralded show at Tate Britain, (see Ch.5, 5.1.4 p101).

At the time of the inaugural Audience Strategy Group meeting, Tate's family of galleries, at Tate Britain and Tate Modern in London, Liverpool and St Ives, drew just over seven million visitors each year (2011/12), with over five million of these visits accounted for the Tate Modern site alone. It was a time of change: Chris Dercon was shortly to leave his post as Director the Haus der Kunst, Munich, to take up his appointment as the new Director of Tate Modern. Tate had also recently appointed the art museum's first Director of Learning, tasked with developing an artist-centered approach, and a more international, interactive and generative programme, to meet the needs of a knowledge-thirsty and participative audience.

At the Tate Britain site, the Millbank Project was also underway. Architects Caruso St John, had been appointed to open up new public spaces within the original building, to improve circulation around the museum, enhance its facilities, and provide the structure for the forthcoming chronological rehang of Tate's collection of British artworks from 1500 to the present day. To the East of architect Sidney Smith's original sweeping stone stair, and grand portico and pillared entrance to Tate Britain, stands the Director's Lodge. This elegant three storied red brick building, of six bays, and dolls house proportions, faced in stone at the ground floor level, with neatly painted twelve-panelled sash windows, and embellished stone cornices and quoins, houses the centre of governance of Tate's family of galleries. On the ground floor, in a white painted room, with a South-facing bay window overlooking the Millenium Pier, and the river beyond, a meeting was getting underway. Thirteen staff, all departmental heads, were sitting around the central boardroom table. The Director of Media & Audiences opened the inaugural meeting of the Audience Strategy Steering Group

> "There are so many different understandings of audiences, and audience segmentation. That's the purpose of this group, of these meetings, they're to try to reach a common understanding. This group can be a model of how we can work cross-departmentally. The issue of audiences is coming up everywhere. We have to come to a collective view of how we want to define audiences. We're being asked for a much more coherent idea of audiences. Customer relationship management is very closely related to this, - we're trying to engage with those visitors, to understand what is the right language, what is the methodology, and it's all geared towards getting a means of engagement with them, a means of communication that is beyond the face-to-face, and beyond the transactional." (28.3.2011)

Shared and, inversely, contested understandings of Tate's audiences, and issues of consistency in the operational application of the institution's knowledge of these audiences, were to become recurring themes in the Group meetings that were traced in the fifteen months of fieldwork that followed this initial session. Perhaps it was the collaborative nature of embarking upon a shared task that fostered a degree of organizational reflexivity in that germinal meeting, with the Directors of Learning, Programming, Marketing, Visitor Experience and Curating willingly divulging past errors that had arisen from insular thinking:

> "We didn't listen to retail expertise, with the souvenir guide, it was done by committee and the result was a £45,000 failure."
>
> "We do things for people like us, and that's why the audiences don't change."
>
> "It's significant progress that we're not just relying on internal prejudices."

The slow traction in project management and the problematic scarcity of diverse views within the art museum were acknowledged:

> "We've been discussing the displays research for a year and a half. It's the first time that someone outside this building has entered into the conversation."
>
> "We do things for people like us, and that's why the audiences don't change."

The contentious issue of programming also came under fire:

> "We need to break out of the programming circle. It's in a zone, totally of a type",

and the benefit of fewer dominant opinions holding forth in decision-making processes, were all recognised:

> "the research is not just the opinion of the people who work here."

Within days of that initial meeting, Tate became a global news item, at the detention of Chinese artist and political activist, Ai WeiWei, when boarding a flight from Beijing to Hong Kong. The artist's installation of 100 million individually painted porcelain sunflower seeds, was already garnering the world's attention, as the latest iteration of the annual Unilever Series, in the Turbine Hall at Tate

Modern. Now Tate became a political player, extending the duration of the sunflower seed installation, in support of the artist, whose whereabouts were unknown, and Tate's Director, Nicholas Serota personally authorised the addition of rooftop signage at the Tate Modern site, which called for Ai WeiWei's release.

As the successive Audience Strategy Steering meetings rolled out, over the next 15 months' of fieldwork observation, recurring themes gradually emerged. The intermittent jocularity of these meetings often gave way to moments of more earnest insight. The Late at Tate evenings at the museum attracted particular attention in the meetings: these free, special on-site, after-hours events (from 6pm-9.30pm), occur at 8 weekly intervals, across Tate Britain and Tate Modern. Curated by the Tate Collective panel of 15-25 yr olds, and offering booking-free access to an informal experience of the art museum, mixed with film, music, food and drink, the Late at Tate evenings draw a younger and more diverse audience than the usual visitor profile, and this is particularly the case at Tate Britain, where 36% of regular TB visitors are aged 25-44yrs (vs Tate Modern: 46%), and 7% of TB visitors are UK adults NS-SEC 5-8 (vs 9% at TM equivalent), source: MHM *Annual Rolling Visitor Survey* 2010/11.

Media & Audiences: "Late at Tate is a minority sport, done by people who quite like it. There's no heavyweight curatorial support…"

Tate National: "…that's probably why it's a success."

However, the museum is yet to succeed in converting these enthusiastic attenders of Late at Tate evenings, into core audiences: i.e. regular visitors to the Collection, or to paid-for exhibitions. This disconnection translates within Tate into a view of the museum's situational powerlessness:

> "Do they ever return? We definitely don't just bring them in to do skateboarding."
>
> "There's definitely a view that we can't change anything"
>
> "Are we the anomaly, or are we line with general trends? It's unrealistic for us to change the world."
>
> "How do we get people to go from social events to go to a normal gallery day?"
>
> "It's all about the atmosphere, not the works at all."
>
> "Isn't this fundamentally what the strategy is supposed to deliver?"

> “What turns a Young Person who attends an event into an engaged participant? We’d like to do some research.”
>
> “That’s a holy grail sort of question.”

Similar perplexity surfaces with the observation of the lack of integration between co-existing organisational metrics: “We can’t report on our very strategy. We’re doing ourselves a disservice.” This disconnection sets in opposition the quantified data reporting required to assess the delivery of Tate’s internal Key Performance Indicators for audience types (core and developmental audiences, young, local, schools, exhibition vs. collection, plus social media and website engagement) with the parallel with the conceptual audience profiling of the Morris Hargreaves McIntyre Segmentation model (overleaf).

Whilst the catalogue of external Key Performance Indicators specified by the DCMS at that stage (visits by under 16s, NS-SEC 5-8 adults, BME adults, adults with long-term infirmity or disability, overseas visits, offsite and digital activity for under 18s, amongst other factors such as visitor satisfaction, income generation and regional engagement), seems not to inform decision-making consistently throughout the art museum, questions of representation, and reflection on Tate’s own purpose and mission, as a publicly-funded museum come to the foreground.

By late May 2011, therefore, members of the Audience Strategy Steering Group had agreed that in order to manage their interaction with Trustees in a more positive and effective way, that there was a need for “less assertion, more evidence”, and for visitor data to be delivered “in a more granular format.” Each forthcoming show would have now need to add forecast visitor profiles to the existing metrics for measuring visitor attendance. The defensive strategy is formed, to cope with moments of accountability to the Trustees: **“**To stop them asserting, we need to stop asserting.” And in a somewhat controversial oversimplification, whilst conflating diversity into ethnicity, the suggestion is made that

> “You could bypass the whole issue of visitors: it’s about persuading the 18yr old black kid to engage with Tate online.”

5.3.3 Morris Hargreaves McIntyre's Segmentation model

The opening of Tate Modern on 12th May 2000 marked a turning point, not only in the scale of the art museum's operations, but also in its ways of working with its knowledge of its audiences. In the period 1990 – 2000, eighty per cent of the museum's revenue was from government funding (Tate Report 2002-2004). By adopting a more entrepreneurial approach (involving the growth of the Membership scheme, attracting corporate sponsorship, and the development of trading revenue via Tate Enterprises), this dependency on grant-in-aid funding was reduced to 54% of the museum's revenue by 2004, with increasing financial resilience reducing this dependency further, so that funding equated to 32% of operating income in 2014/15 and 34% in 2015/16 (Tate Report 2015/16, p79). Visitor numbers across the galleries had escalated from 2.5m in 1999-2000 (prior to Tate Modern opening), to 6.2m in 2003-04, with another 3.4m visiting Tate Online, compared with current visitor levels of 6.6m (2015/16).

This financial agility and increased 'customer base' required scenario reduction, in terms of managing the museum's knowledge of its audiences, for strategic planning and forecasting, and Tate addressed this through a process of market segmentation. Segmentation relies upon the identification or creation of a set of descriptive variables from which differences, defined as distances, between customers are calculated, enabling the division of customers into groups or clusters with similar attitudes or behaviours (Murray, Agard & Barajas, 2017; Calvet, Ferrer, Gomes, Juan & Masip, 2016).

> "Grouping together customers with similar product preferences and buying behaviours aids organisations in dealing with market heterogeneity, thereby focusing resources on relatively homogeneous customer segments and thus ensuring an efficient allocation of resources"
>
> (Smith, 1956)

The model below, by Murray et al (2017, p5), shows five segmentation strategies, ranging from the low level of analytical rigour of the 'a priori' approach, which relies entirely on the practitioner's instinctive knowledge of differentiation of groups (Gann, 1996), to the more complex behavior extraction method, in which observed customer behavior is classified according to segments that have been pre-determined by the analyst in a qualitative decision process leading to the creation of a range of variables.

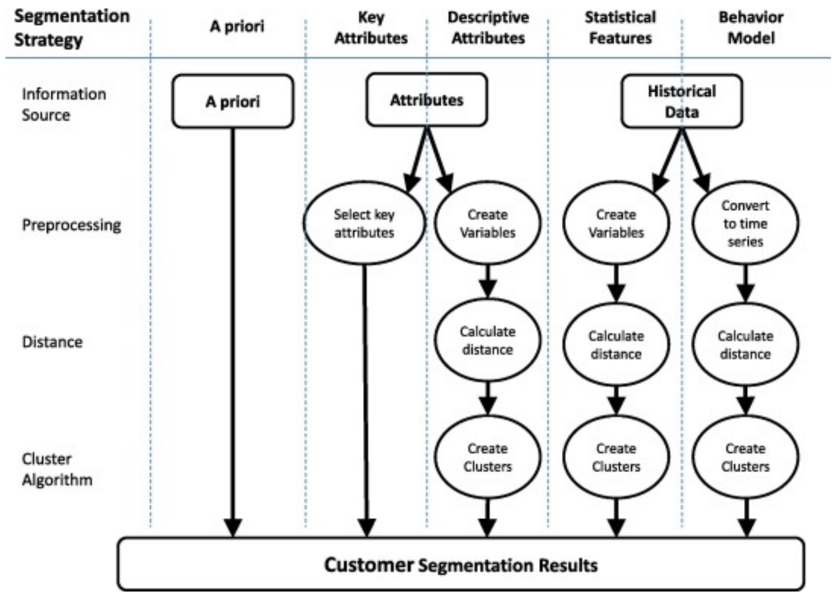

Figure 45: Segmentation strategies, (Murray , Agard & Barajas, 2017, p5)

The segmentation model developed for Tate by cultural strategy and research agency, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre (MHM), in 2004, used this latter approach. MHM sought to investigate the visitor experience at Tate, analysing ways visitors construct their in-gallery experience and exploring their motivations, attitudes, perceptions, reactions in relation to the art museum. Two months of fieldwork, involving a team of 4 MHM researchers and enlisting 50 Tate staff, led to the MHM reports in 2004: '*Through Visitors' Eyes'* (introduction and summary of findings), '*Anatomy of a Visit'*(detailed findings and analysis), and '*Closer to Tate'* (which focused on orientation, interpretation, engagement, brand, audience development as five key action areas).

Based on the benefits that visitors believe they will derive from a visit to the art museum, MHM divide Tate's current and potential visitors by primarily psychographic rather than socio-demographic criteria, into mutually exclusive and measurable segments, each with its own 'anatomy.' The analysis is a product of five defining factors: motivation, specialist involvement, first-time or repeat attendance, plus whether the visitor is part of a family group. This analysis identifies four key drivers for visiting Tate, with their own further subsets:

1. Spiritual

Aficionados:	Visual arts professionals looking for inspiration and deep engagement
Actualisers:	Non-visual arts professionals seeking inspiration and fulfillment

2. Emotional

Sensualists:	Culture vultures seeking an uplifting, sensory experience

3. Intellectual

Researchers:	Visual arts professsionals on research and development visits
Self-Improvers:	Non-visual arts professionals wanting to develop their knowledge of art

4. Social

Social Spacers:	Spending quality time with others while broadening their horizons
Urban Cool:	Cosmopolitan young people seeking entertainment and socializing
Site-Seers:	UK and overseas tourists wanting to 'do' Tate

5. Social/Intellectual: For people looking for an enjoyable and educational trip with children

Four years after the introduction of this segmentation model, Tate's Head of Marketing spoke at a conference, on the traction exerted by this model within the art museum. She acknowledged that the segmentation "rang true, but it took time to gain acceptance and influence the practices of the organisation." Now that a full thirteen years have passed since its introduction, the segmentation model still lacks full integration and acceptance within Tate ("unless you know the numbers, you just think 'Great.'"). The continuing confusion amongst Tate's staff, in relation to the utility of the segmentation model is captured in the dialogue of an Audience Strategy Steering meeting:

Tate Liverpool: "Is it business as usual or a radical change of direction?"

Visitor Experience:	"Is it going to influence what we do? It's getting increasingly complex"
Director's office:	"The MHM segmentation doesn't match the audience strategy. We don't know how those characteristics spread across the categories"
Media & Audiences:	'This is to highlight issues, not determine the programme.'
Tate Liverpool:	"Are there other organisations that do this as well?"
Media & Audiences: better	"I'd be astonished if anyone in the sector were doing it better than we are. In the more commercial sector, you would start with the audience and deliver shows around them."

Luke & Ancelet remark that the degree of internal motivation and interest among staff relates to whether a new process is "mandated by a top-down approach or [arises] out of a common goal" (Luke & Ancelet, 2014, p204). The extent to which the differing departments of Tate are connected by a shared goal is contentious. A more positive interpretation on the matter is offered by the report in the Annual Accounts of 2011/12:

> "Tate has developed in-depth knowledge about the motivations and needs of its visitors, which enables it to tailor its buildings, interpretation and programmes to improve people's experiences."
> (Board of Trustees of Tate Gallery, Annual Accounts 2011/12, p8)

In the thirteen years that have elapsed since the introduction of the MHM model, the segmentation tool has become inscribed and implanted, not only into the discourse at Tate, with varying degrees of uptake, acceptance and utility, but also across the worldwide museum sector, regardless of whether it is a system that is operationalised with consistency and stability, and irrespective of whether it is valued equally across the art museum.

PART THREE

Chapter Six: Discussion of findings

6.1 The progression of the researcher's understanding

"Museums do their work in the midst of an extremely complex network of relationships and interdependencies" (Rounds, 2012), with the legitimacy and reliability of the publicly funded institution determined by the consistent production of externally imposed intended outcomes. This complex assemblage of social interactions, of networked interdependencies, and relational structures renders the workplace a "site of struggle" (Courpasson, Golshorkhi & Sallaz, 1999, pp2-3). Unlike Weil's Rationalist Model in which a system of closely-linked, planned sequences of events seamlessly produce required outcomes, at Tate, the findings of this study describe in what ways the "ensemble of procedures" (De Certeau, 1984,p43), the various workplace strategies and negotiations, shape the social construction of knowledge of the art museum's multiple audiences, the application of that information, and its onward effect. Audience strategy documents, attendance data and visitor research processes, amongst many other socially constructed artifacts, generate the material proofs of Tate's 'thinking activity' (Bellier, in Wodak & Chilton, eds.2005, p283), facilitating this study's investigation of strategic practices of audience via materially-traced networks of action.

In parallel with Tate's own process of sense-making in terms of the art museum's approach to its understanding of its audiences, the analytical process of this study required the researcher to move back and forth between theory and the social reality that gradually emerged from fifteen months of ethnographic fieldwork data and its categorization into a gradually expanding set of emerging themes. This process culminated in the eighteen following areas of interest:

INTERDEPARTMENTAL TENSIONS

THE OPPOSITIONAL NATURE OF WORK PRACTICES

UPTAKE OF IMPOSED MHM SEGMENTATION MODEL

ALIGNMENT OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL NARRATIVES

INSTITUTIONAL SELF-IMAGE

PUBLIC REPUTATION

THE CENTRALITY OF DATA TO CORE DEPARTMENTAL PRACTICE

INSULARITY OF PERSPECTIVE

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILTY

LEGITIMACY, PUBLIC VALUE & REPRESENTATION

ORGANISATIONAL REFLEXIVITY

KNOWLEDGE-IMBUED CURATORS AS HIGH STATUS
GUARDIANS OF THE NATIONAL COLLECTION

THE CYCLICAL NATURE OF DATA PRODUCTION AND ITS RITUAL DISTRIBUTION

TYPES OF VISITOR INFORMATION

CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF VISITORS AND AUDIENCES

THE SPEED OF DATA FLOWS

WAYS IN WHICH DATA IS VALUED OR RENEGOTIATED

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE AGENCY OF QUALITATIVE DATA
AND THAT OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

6.2 The iterative research research process

Situated between theory and social reality (Voyer & Trondman, 2015), the ethnographic process led to the generation of context-specific descriptions or explanations of the working processes and practices at Tate, in relation to the art museum's conceptualisation of its audiences, and its operations of audience. As part of the researcher's progression towards understanding the research site, the representation of data flows at Tate was produced, indicating the cyclical production, flow and frequency of the distribution of visitor data, in its multiple forms, across the art museum (overleaf, also p123). The iterative approach of the combined fieldwork and writing process led to a re-formulation of this data, to include representation of the Curatorial department. The reinterpreted diagram (Fig.xx) includes an indication of the interrupted data flow between the operations elsewhere in the museum and the curators, to reflect the researcher's observation that the both the uptake and application of data within that department is infrequent, and used primarily retrospectively to evaluate an exhibition's performance, linked to the budget release for onward programming activity.

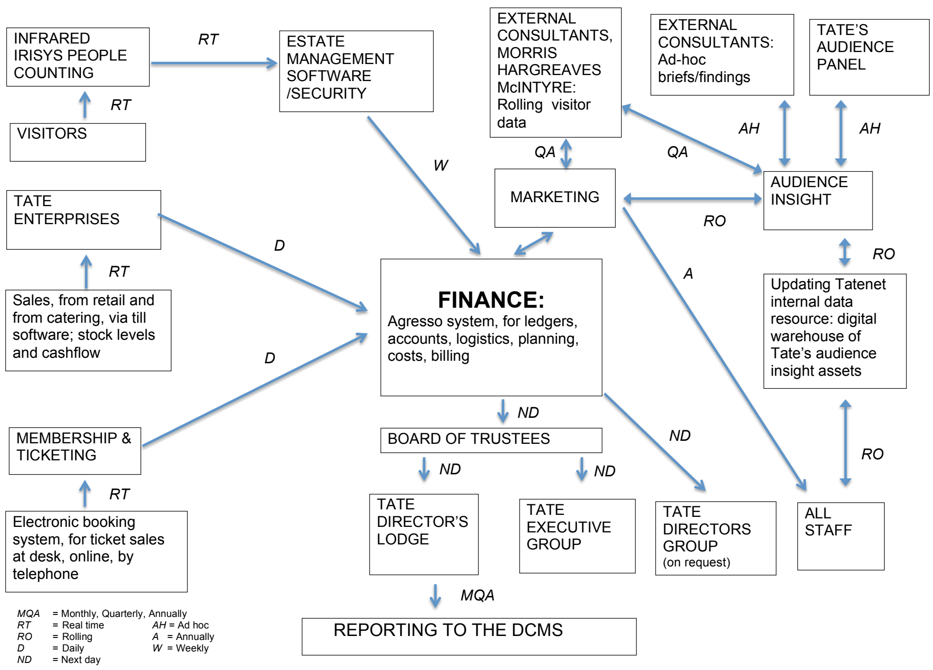

Fig.46 The cyclical production, flow, frequency of distribution of visitor data at Tate

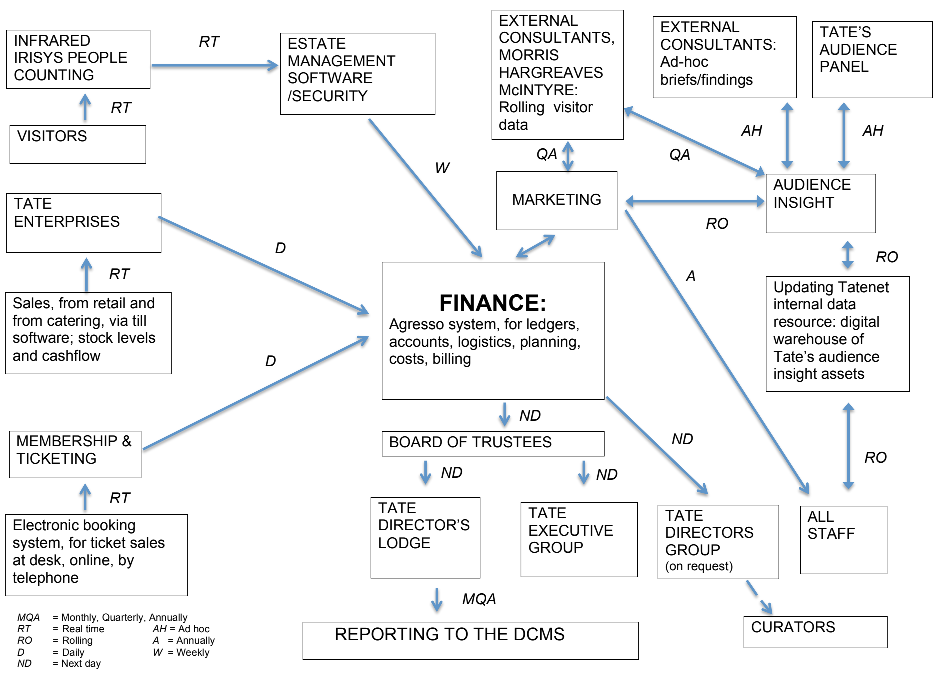

Fig.46 The cyclical production, flow, and frequency of distribution of visitor data at Tate including Curatorial

6.3 Multiple issues and tensions

Multiple tensions and issues of alignment in relation to audiences surfaced during the extended ethnographic fieldwork. Critically, the development or 'playing out' of these tensions and negotiations is seldom recorded materially within a workplace, as minutes of meetings, strategy documents and Annual Reports offer tidied institutional accounts of decisions or outcomes, rather than capturing the lived experience of the negotiated processes of their social construction. Arising from co-existing but conflicting internal logics of Tate's strategic and operational practices, these issues were unresolved points of impasse for the art museum: How would Tate reconcile encouraging school groups, or families and children, with the delivery in shared spaces of positive, experiences for other visitors? How will Tate retain and convert those more diverse, lower socio-economic groups (who attend events and social experiences on site) to closer engagement with the Collection? How should Tate address the variances in pricing strategies, which favour the adept navigation of existing ticketing systems by current visitors, whilst developmental audiences benefit less from affordable pricing? What more can Tate do to address the continuing ambiguity of language in relation to audience practices within Tate? "In all the time I've been here, no one has been able to give me a clear idea of what the Trustees mean by *audience development*." (Families implementation meeting.) By what means can Tate add programming to attract new audiences when budgets are being cut? In what way can Tate balance the art museum's primary focus on the Collection, with the need for the institution to acknowledge that Events address the key strategic priority of attracting more diverse audiences? How can Tate programme for financial sustainability and to increase audience diversity, whilst reconciling these organisational priorities with the relative inaccessibility (to developmental audiences) of the dominant curatorial approach?

How can Tate ensure that the art museum in its entirety is engaged in the strategic priority of development of under-represented audiences, rather than leaving this, as has historically been the case, to the Learning department? In what ways can Tate respond to more discursive ways of working with audiences, such as blogging, when this is resisted by some departments?(*"The comments aren't that interesting,"* (Curator). "That's your public, we're not all super-smart." (Marketing).These lines of tension and disconnection at Tate were shaped by the process that the art museum was undergoing, in terms of reframing its role within the public realm as a twenty-first century site of engagement, whilst negotiating that balance between innovative leadership, financial sustainability and service to the abstract notion of pubic. The fieldwork coincided with a moment in which the museum sector was adjusting not only to the shifting boundaries of governmental reporting requirements, but also to the evolving expectations of the audiences.

Within Tate, there were also significant changes to the structure and operations of the museum, with the merging of Learning and Research into one department, the impact of the confident, authoritative and intrinsically audience-focused Digital teams, the introduction of cross-departmental working groups and the directive to focus on developmental audiences across the museum's operations. "We're at in incredible moment, we're at a unique time" (Nicholas Serota, Tate All Staff meeting, 2012). Outwith Tate, national levels of participation and engagement for the preceding decade indicated that the introduction in 2001 of free admission to national museums and their collections had failed to deliver the democratisation of participation. The largest gap in participation remains between the upper and lower socio-economic groups, rather than by difference of gender, ethnicity or ability (DCMS *Taking Part*, 2017,p12-13). For this reason, the reduction in scope of the KPI reporting metrics for national museums was an unexpected development during the research fieldwork.

6.4 The analytical framework

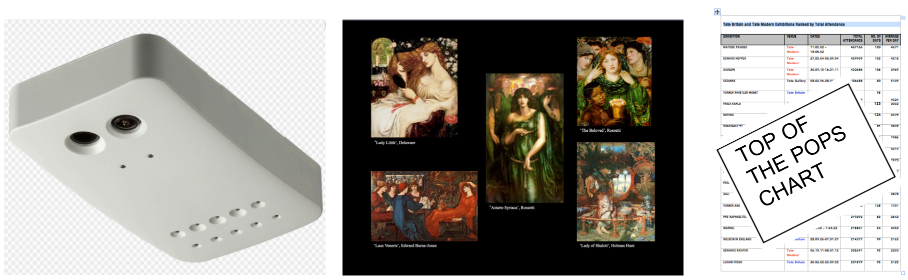

Figure 48: ANT Actors within the network of relationships at Tate:
Irisys thermal visitor counter; Pre-Raphaelite research materials;
and museum attendance 'Top of The Pops' chart

The analytical framework of this study enabled the construction of social knowledge at the intersection of two meaning-systems: theory and fact (Reed, 2011, p15), by tracing the relational fabrication of knowledge from the perspective of the researcher's own 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1977). In applying the material-semiotic tools of Actor Network Theory to the procedural detail of the operationalized relations and activities at Tate, the research identified the chains of calculation that construct the 'becoming' of knowledge. Following Callon's model of the sociology of translation, applied with agnostic impartiality to the fishermen, larvae and scallops of St. Brieuc Bay (Callon, 1986), so the Irisys thermal visitor counter, the Pre-Raphaelite research material and the 'Top of the Pops' visitor attendance chart (Fig. xx) played their part in the generalised symmetry of the theoretical approach, which favoured human and non-human actors alike.

Prolonged access to this type of organisational internal narrative informed the researcher's understanding of the agency of visitor data within the audience practices of the art museum, and this depth of understanding developed progressively throughout the research process. Early recognition of the energy and commitment in the ritualised generation and storage of audience data within the isolated practices of the Audience Insight Manager gave way to more informed understandings of other, less visible centres of audience data generation across the art museum, and in turn, to the empirical identification of ways in which this information was mediated, distributed and applied. From an early recognition of the asymmetry that existed between the supply of and demand for visitor information, the researcher then identified the issue of the centrality of visitor information to the respective departmental practices of audience, in all its varied conceptualisations. As the research proceeded, this understanding of data-centrality-to-practice developed into a more nuanced conceptualisation of speeds of practice, and both phasing and frequency of the application of this information. In turn, this evolved and unfolded into more complex considerations of whether the visitor information was applied selectively or wholly unmediated, and how this application of visitor information affected outcomes and practices, in relation to prompting organisational reflexivity, informing audience strategy, reducing interdepartmental conflict, bringing the audience voice to the table, managing risk, accounting for past business performance, challenging the dominant views of strong personalities in positions of power, the deployment of visitor information as an arbitrating force, the performance of Tate's public role and social responsibility and the selective application of visitor information by individuals seeking endorsement for pre-existing tacit opinions.

6.5 Summary of key research findings

1. The researcher observed repeated organisational narratives purporting audience-centric ways of working, embedded in both internal and external institutional positions. Externally, this narrative is performed via Tate's website, partnership programmes, loans and tours, in Annual Reports, and within the physical structure of the art museum site. From within the museum, this internal audience-centric narrative is enacted via strategy documents, all-staff presentations, and to varying degrees, in working practices. Rather than reflecting the volume or frequency of visitor data alone, the centrality of the data application to the core activities of each department defines the audience-centricity of the respective departments of the museum.

2. Within Tate, the generation, compilation and storage of audience data is a ritualised activity that is valued inconsistently, and conducted by few 'knowledge brokers' (Davenport & Prusak, 1998) on behalf of the many. Diverse forms of the institution's knowledge of its visitors are generated, stored and to varying degrees, circulated in pathways of information that inform action, whether or not this action-potential is realized in working practice. These include visitor numbers, visitor demographic profiles (age, ethnicity, gender), socio-economic profiles (NS-SEC and working status), country of origin, motivation for visiting, frequency of visits, trend analysis of dwell time spent in the gallery, usage of the cafes or restaurants, online engagement, and retail spending patterns. In addition, across certain departments, consultation with visitors plays a strategic role in planning within the art museum. Tacit departmental knowledge, developed and

internalised by the knower over a long period of time, and defined as intuitive, subjective understanding that resists codification (Polanyi, 1957, 1984; Prusak 1997; Davenport & Prusak, 1998), meets and at times constrains the agency of these forms of institutional audience data.

3. In contrast with standardised subsets of audience (schools, families, young people, domestic, local or overseas visitors), multiple notions of audiences are in operation within working practice at Tate. These include audited business models of visitors (with actual, budgeted and forecast numbers of visitors), “core”, “developmental” and “new” audiences, research panel members, facilitated and self-directed visitors, members, individuals, groups, visitors to the Collection or to temporary exhibitions, patrons, ticket-buyers, online e-bulletin subscribers, social media followers, legacy-givers, donor prospects, critics, journalists and corporate sponsors, as well as more informal descriptions used in departmental practice (“buggy pushers”).

4. Issues of external accountability (to funders), and internal accountability (to the art museum’s Trustees), are key drivers of the selective application of the institution’s knowledge of its audiences.

5. Across Tate’s departments, the research traces an asymmetry of the generation of, demand for, and application of visitor data. Variances in the speed with which the visitor data is applied, and the reception of the institution’s knowledge of this information are also observed. Critically, codified visitor data exerts agency or is applied faster and with less mediation than qualitative audience data.

6. Data repositories operate and are maintained and enabled by knowledge brokers within the art museum, with the centrality of this data’s application to working practice differing significantly by department, according to the priorities of those in power within departmental hierarchies

7. Within an organisation controlled by few, but high status, and robust personalities, the application of visitor information legitimises the challenging of strongly-held tacit opinions by other actors within the museum.

8. Conversely, access to in-depth visitor information introduces the risk of staff applying this knowledge of audiences in selective ways, to substantiate pre-existing views and thereby raise the risk of distorting the institutional memory via mythologized events.

9. Spaces of interruption or separation within the internal negotiation of audience practice prevent the foregrounding and addressing of legitimate concerns raised by departments, unless these concerns are shared by those in positions of controlling authority.

10. The increased availability of visitor information, to expand understandings of audiences and to inform decision-making processes, acts as a catalyst for initiating organisational reflexivity, rather than solely having direct agency upon the operationalisation of audience practice.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.1 Revisiting the rationale for this study

In a continuation of the long-standing collaboration between London South Bank University and the Tate art museum, this study has investigated the art museum's strategic and operational practices of audience, from within an interpretivist epistemological paradigm. Taking the form of an organisational study of the art museum, this research has enquired how the multiple understandings of Tate's audiences are generated, interpreted and valued by the art museum's differing departments. Via embedded ethnographic observation of Tate's ways of working, the research has traced and described the strategic and operational negotiations, and the connections and disconnections that occur within the museum's cyclical and socially-constructed visitor data practices. In a parallel theoretical stance, the study has enquired in what ways do these differing inscribed notions of audience reflect the museum's ways of thinking, and how are these conceptualisations represented, codified and embodied in routinised ways of working? Providing richly detailed explanations of the assemblage of internal forces and external constraints that shape the enactment of these operations, the study traces the recurrent production and distribution of the museum's knowledge of its audiences, and explains what occurs within these terrains of production when formal sets of knowledge of Tate's audiences are met with resisting forces of practice.

The discourse of museology of the past three decades has tilted from issues of access and diversity, to questions of excellence, concepts of economic impact or public value, to the twenty-first century focus on civic-minded, participatory, co-creative interactions between museums and their audiences, facilitated by wider access to digital channels of engagement. Museums have shifted from being 'about something' to being 'for somebody', (Weil 1999,p229). However, the global economic downturn of 2007/8, and the subsequent austerity measures ushered in drastic contractions to public funding in the UK, with the Arts Council tasked with halving its own operating costs from £22m to £11m between 2010 and 2015. Measures of accountability linked to public funding cycles have since required an evidence-based justification for funded operational practices, with the imposition of managerial performance metrics. In this climate of restricted resources, and in conjunction with the necessity for new modes of resilient entrepreneurialism within the cultural sector, the comparability of cyclical museum attendance figures has become an important indicator of institutional compliance and effective mission fulfillment.

The global renaissance of the museum, and its emergence in the late twentieth century from its earlier conceptualisation as an authored, fixed representation of mapped taste, values and identities (Bourdieu, 1984), overseen by the sovereign expertise of the curator (Hooper-Greenhill, 1988, p213-32), is a familiar narrative in museology literature. The museum is no longer "the prison for objects" where interloping visitors are merely tolerated, (Lumley, 1988, p226-227).

Instead, the museum has become a receptive social site, an architectural innovation at the hub of urban development (Landry, 2012; Lumley, 1988; Vergo, 1989), a digital host (Parry, 2007), a participatory centre for the co-creation of meaning (Simon, 2010), a "fun-palace" (Januszczak, 1988) or an experience factory (Mallory, 2016).

> "Debate around museums and society has moved on and thus new terms of debate need to be fashioned to negotiate with the various types of pressure that seek to pass themselves off as measures of empowerment for those whom the traditional museum is said to neglect." (Tlili, 2014, p174)

This research seeks to introduce new terms of debate.

Alvesson & Sandberg assert that more impactful research arises from problematisation rather than gap-spotting, which tends to reinforce existing assumptions (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2011,p247-271). This study, therefore, addresses a shortcoming in the literature: existing literature on cultural audience practice leads with strategies for the generation of visitor data, or presents new methods of evaluation practice, but neglects to address how these accumulated knowledge outputs produced by visitor evaluation, amongst other sources, are negotiated, mediated and applied in working practice, and to what effect.

Despite Bourdieu's long-established preoccupation with the structure and dynamics of power in society, understood via concepts of 'field', in which a group is organized around a common stake, competing for a shared set of resources, and 'habitus', in which an individual's worldview is formed by their respective social class and personal history, the influence of Bourdieu's theory is explored less frequently as an approach to understanding a single organisation. Dobbin (2008) laments this poverty of organisational theory: "Where Bourdieu's insights have been picked up, they have been considered at the interorganisational level not the intraorganisational level" (Dobbin, 2008). The present organisational study of Tate, therefore, has offered a timely opportunity to study a unique organisational system from the relational stance of a single organisation's strategic and operational management practices of audience.

Cultural behaviours are changing, and our population in the UK is changing too, with more diversity in terms of ethnicity, blended families and single households, (ESRC Centre for Population Change). With an increasingly fragmented public, the concept of the 'traditional' visitor is lost:

> "the museum has to cater for increasingly fragmented publics,
> who want to learn and do different things at different speeds"
> (Wright, 1989,p119)

Within this new museum landscape, the participatory fluidity between attending, visiting, sharing and co-creating, both in-person and online, disregards the early modality and constraining conceptual boundaries of audience or visitor attendance. In practice, visitors, attenders, viewers and multiple other conceptualisations of those publics engaged with museums, are forecast, tracked, interviewed and counted, with their motivations, behaviours, levels of satisfaction codified and reported as never before. Museums have become tied to codified performance management, and with visitor attendance data the most accessible metric of success, museums are entwined in the performance of performance management.

7.2 The methodology

Almost three decades ago, Hooper-Greenhill called for greater flexibility in terms of research approaches within the museum sector, and for “a model of research that moves beyond demographics into interpretive or ethno-methodological understandings and methods” (Hooper-Greenhill, 1988, p219). This was followed shortly afterwards by Jordanova’s appeal for more reflexivity,

> “it is important to find new ways to be more reflexive about our museum practices. The social and cultural construction of museums demands our closest attention, - it is a large and important project not to be hived off as only of special interest.” (Jordanova, 1989, p40).

More recently, Hallett & Ventresca (2006), remind us that ethnographic studies of power within organisations bring much-needed, detailed empirical content to the study of workplace power relations; whilst Vallas & Hill (2012, p165-197) affirm that situated ethnographic studies of power also force us to question our generalisations, and render visible those underlying tensions of negotiated authority. In this digital age, the role of thick, descriptive ethnography is defended by Voyer & Trondman (2015) as a counterbalance to other forms of research, with the ethnographic mode of enquiry operating uniquely between theory and social reality. This endeavor to occupy the museological space between academic knowledge production and the reproduction of operational ‘know-how’ within the museum, encapsulates the approach of post-critical museology: in a radical re-examination of the role of museums in society, post-critical museology supplants both the focus on method-orientation, of ‘old’ museology, and its underserving of issues of purpose (Vergo, 1989, p3) and the predominantly theoretical critique of ‘new museology’, (Dewdney, Dibosa & Walsh, 2013, p15).
(900)

> “While theoretical fashions can come and go, the products of ethnographic research remain extraordinarily durable. Ethnographic data do not exist to substantiate or disprove theories. The data, the descriptions and interpretations are not the means to something else: They are the end. The definitions and theories and paradigms are the means: They exist to help us understand the data. The enduring value of the ethnographic tradition is grounded in its attention to the singular and the concrete.” (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland & Lofland, 2001)

Taking a similar approach as the previous collaborative research practice shared between Tate and London South Bank University in the Tate Encounters programme (2006-2009), the core part of the present report took the form of an embedded qualitative study, structured in partnership with Tate, and which permitted the researcher an exceptional level of access to the staff and organisational culture, for a fieldwork period of fifteen months. This conferral of partial 'insider' status within the art museum afforded the researcher stable levels of exposure to the "know-how of daily practices" (de Certeau, 1984; Willis, 1977). In tracing and describing the messy webs and procedures of the strategic and operational practices of visitor data within Tate, the study has adopted a mode of reflexivity, acknowledging the researcher's own sense of the field of action (Pollner & Emerson, 2001), and representing the social reality of others through the researcher's "own experience in the world of these others" (Van Maanen, 2011). In this way, a mixed mode of qualitative analyses, involving Actor Network Theory, grounded theory and ethnography has sensitized the researcher to the construction of shared meaning through the social exchanges between the actors of this study.

The study has described the challenges of gaining entry to the field, satisfying Tate's boundary requirements, such as obtaining a Staff pass, meeting the security protocols of the IT system, and obtaining access to one of the five hot-desks on site within Tate's Research department, in an environment that hosted between twenty-five and thirty doctoral students annually, and whose studies on curatorial practice bestowed them with higher rank and status. These processes of "getting in" and "getting on" (Cassell, 1988, p93-95) were overtaken by the scale and complexity of the data-collection. Mapping Reed's (2011) theoretical "landscapes of meaning", within Tate's audience practice, involved the thick description of the social patterns in which the agency of Tate's visitor data materializes. The scale and complexity of the parallel data-collection processes, which involved a fifteen month schedule of ethnographic observations at Tate's multiple cross-departmental working groups (Families, Young People, Audience Strategy Steering, Curatorial, Exhibition Planning), and over 70 Tate staff members, combined with semi-structured interviews with informants from each of Tate's departments, presented logistical challenges to the researcher (ref.p75 for fieldwork schedule). This was compounded by the analytical necessity of moving back and forth between the data and the emerging categories (ref.p78), whilst developing explaining concepts for the observed relationships between the social construction of knowledge of audiences within the museum, and the constraining effects that mediated that knowledge production and application to working practice.(1636)

In the Latourian vein of the novice Observer who knows nothing of laboratories nor scientists (Latour & Woolgar, 1979), the researcher sought new understandings of how conceptualisations of audience, and the data in which those conceptualisations are fixed and stabilized, circulate through the departments of the art museum, and to what effect. In making visual the tensions underlying the cyclical operations of audience data, the research sought to show the sociology of power relations translated into the otherwise hard-to-access working practices of Tate. The context-specific, explanatory approach of ethnography is time-consuming methodology, and one which is rightly described as

> "research on the slow boil. It is something that's getting harder to justify at a time when our public debate increasingly favours the quick flash in the pan."
> (Andersson, BBC Radio 4, 'Thinkgin Allowed', 29.6.2016)

Yet as an analytical approach, ethnographic studies have the potential to

> "reveal to us things that we cannot know by conducting a survey, by interviewing individuals out of context, by doing archival research or by performing experiments in carefully controlled settings," (Smith, cited by Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland & Lofland, 2001).

7.3 Research findings

In combining a mixed mode of investigative and conceptual approaches, and a fifteen month fieldwork period of immersion, with 'insider' access and Staff status, this study has delivered a broad scope of findings and considerable depth of insight (Key research findings, summary, Chapter Six, p156). Embracing subjectivity, the findings of this research explain and describe the multiple and conflicting co-existing institutional logics (De Certeau, 1984) that give rise to tensions and contradictions of audience organisational practices within the data-rich single field of Tate. These conflicting logics are compiled in the preceding chapter (6.3, p153), however, two salient instances are summarised below:

i) The museum's long-standing endeavor to apply the Morris Hargreaves McIntyre segmentation system (2004), as a shared language of audiences across all areas of operational practice, (5.3.3,p146). At a strategic level, this organisational endeavor persists despite the segmentation system's weak traction at the interface between the conceptual typographic profiles (e.g. Aficionados, Actualisers) and the operational functions of departmental practice. A similar disconnect prevails at the interface between the segmentation system and the external key performance indicators that govern the legitimacy of this national museum in receipt of public funding (fig.27, p.91). The exception to this phenomenon is the success of Tate Enterprises in applying the segmentation model to their retail and catering offering, and this success is attributable to Tate Enterprise's authentically audience-centric practice. As part of the process of locating this issue within a wider framework of reference, the present study generated compilations of Tate's multiple operational conceptualisations of audiences (fig.43,p139), together with operational understandings of audiences in the museum sector, and within the literature (fig.42,p137).

ii) Secondly, how can Tate persist with narrative that the entirety of the museum is engaged in the strategic priority of attracting under-represented audiences, whilst core programming decisions fail to align with this objective, or the responsibility is notionally distributed as the responsibility of the Learning department alone?

These instances above have evolved into spaces of misalignment between the art museum's external narratives of audience and the internal operational realities that emerge from the data, with the museum endeavouring at a strategic level to prioritise attendance and engagement for the under-represented 'developmental audiences' (Families, Young People, Students, residents local to Tate), whilst the operating frameworks of power within Tate seek to perpetuate longstanding programming approaches that develop exhibitions, to some extent, "for people like us." Status afforded to the curatorial teams permits the over-ruling of data-informed decision-making, seen in two instances in this study, with the decision, contrary to audience research, not to include interpretation panels in the 2013 rehang of the national collection at Tate Britain, and again, with the selection of the Rossetti portrait for the Pre-Raphaelite promotional image, Case Study Three, (p.113).

Repeatedly, visitor data is used selectively, in order to justify strongly-held opinions within Tate's management structures of Executive Group and above (fig.28,p96). Conversely, whilst the facility of the audience panel research testing forum may not consistently enable the unmediated implementation of research findings (Case Study Three, p113), the data generated by the audience panel, and shared in Tate's online data warehouse, with advocacy for that data performed by the Audience Insight Team, brings the visitor voice to the table, and prompts organisational reflexivity regarding the museum's mission and purpose.

The production of visitor data is characterized by this study as cyclical, in its representation of complete sets of events that are repeated in the same regular patterned order, at standardised intervals, involving stable routines of behavior and via consistent networks of relationships. (See figs.45 & 46,p152). Within this cyclical dimension, however, variations are apparent, in terms of the rate of production, the distribution pathways and distribution frequency of this highly structured flow of the socio-material data objects that render the institution's thinking into stable forms: attendance figures, paid-for exhibition visitors, income per visitor, exit questionnaires, benchmarking, forecasting, segmentation, satisfaction reports, external consultation debriefs.

From this processual and socio-material perspective, and reflecting the principles of Actor Network Theory's generalised symmetry, in which human and non-human actors are valued equally, just as the fishermen of St. Brieuc Bay, their scientific colleagues and the scallops themselves are valued equally in the system of alliances or associations between these entities, (Callon, 1986), so the non-human actors of Tate's visitor data negotiations, such as the thermal visitor counters, or the audience research stimulus materials, or the 'Top of the Pops' list of highest historical exhibition attendance, play their part in the problematisation and devices of 'intéressement' at the art museum (fig.48, p154).

Additional findings include: recognizing that the centrality of the data application to the core activities of each department defines the audience-centricity of the museum's respective departments; the generation, compilation and storage of audience data is a ritualised activity that is valued inconsistently, and conducted by few 'knowledge brokers' (Davenport & Prusak, 1998) on behalf of the many. Diverse forms (p.123) of the institution's knowledge of its visitors are generated, stored and to varying degrees, circulated in pathways of information that inform action, whether or not this action-potential is realized in working practice.

Tacit departmental knowledge, developed and internalised by the knower over a long period of time, and defined as intuitive, subjective understanding that resists codification (Polanyi, 1957, 1984; Prusak 1997; Davenport & Prusak, 1998), meets and at times constrains the agency of these forms of institutional audience data. In contrast with standardised subsets of audience (schools, families, young people, domestic, local or overseas visitors), multiple notions of audiences are in operation within working practice at Tate. These include audited business models of visitors (with actual, budgeted and forecast numbers of visitors), "core", "developmental" and "new" audiences, research panel members, facilitated and self-directed visitors, members, individuals, groups, visitors to the Collection or to temporary exhibitions, patrons, ticket-buyers, online e-bulletin subscribers, social media followers, legacy-givers, donor prospects, critics, journalists and corporate sponsors, as well as more informal descriptions used in departmental practice ("buggy pushers"). Issues of external accountability (to funders), and internal accountability (to the art museum's Trustees), are key drivers of the selective application of the institution's knowledge of its audiences.

Across Tate's departments, the research traces an asymmetry of the generation of, demand for, and application of visitor data. Variances in the speed with which the visitor data is applied, and the reception of the institution's knowledge of this information are also observed. Critically, codified visitor data exerts agency or is applied faster and with less mediation than qualitative audience data. Data repositories operate and are maintained and enabled by knowledge brokers within the art museum, with the centrality of this data's application to working practice differing significantly by department, according to the priorities of those in power within departmental hierarchies. Within an organisation controlled by few, but high status, and robust personalities, the application of visitor information legitimises the challenging of strongly-held tacit opinions by other actors within the museum. Conversely, access to in-depth visitor information introduces the risk of staff applying this knowledge of audiences in selective ways, to substantiate pre-existing views, leading to a distorted institutional memory and the mythologizing of events. Spaces of interruption or separation within the internal negotiation of audience practice prevent the foregrounding and addressing of legitimate concerns raised by departments, unless these concerns are shared by those in positions of controlling authority. And finally, the increased availability of visitor information, intended to expand understandings of audiences and to inform decision-making processes, acts as a catalyst for initiating organisational broader reflexivity, rather than solely having direct agency upon the operationalisation of audience practice.

Significantly, and in an unintended way, this AHRC-funded study, which was conceptualised and produced from within a long-standing collaboration between London South Bank University and Tate, has also rendered visible the controlling tactics of the materializing negotiations of power, in the imposition of redaction by the art museum. (See Statement of redaction p2, Chapter Four p88, and the index of redacted content, Appendix, p194).

7.4 Theoretical conclusions

The analytical framework of this intra-organisational, empirical study enabled the construction of social knowledge at the intersection of two meaning-systems: theory and fact (Reed, 2011, p15), by tracing the relational fabrication of knowledge from the perspective of the researcher's own 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1977). In applying the material-semiotic tools of Actor Network Theory to the procedural detail of the operationalized relations and activities at Tate, the research identified the chains of calculation that construct the 'becoming' of knowledge within Tate, and their legitimising role in the governance of this publicly-funded art museum.

The ethnographic component of this study's methodology sought to provide "thick descriptions" and explanations of the "webs of significance" (Geertz, 1973), and to generalize within those descriptions, allowing this interpretivist approach to focus on reaching a deep understanding of the agency of Tate's visitor data rather than attempting to measure it (Patton, 1990; Stake, 2006) or to effect change via prescriptive action research recommendations.

> "Ethnographic data do not exist to substantiate or disprove theories. The data, the descriptions and interpretations are not the means to something else: They are the end. The definitions and theories and paradigms are the means: They exist to help us understand the data.
>
> (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland & Lofland, 2001)

The ethnographic data of this study, therefore, are explained by the constraining logics of the art museum: the interdepartmental tensions, the misalignments between the museum's internal and external narratives, the impeding effect of insular perspectives on the pursuit of democratising institutional objectives, and issues of legitimacy, value and representation within the public realm.

7.5 Original contribution to knowledge

In tracing and explaining the agency of the cyclical visitor information enactments of Tate's socially constructed strategies and operations for the art museum's multiple conceptualisations of audience, this study offers new terms of debate and a contribution to the literature of the ethnographic method. By examining the agency of this visitor data on the strategic and operational practices of the art museum, this delineation of the art museum as a data-rich terrain of production for the negotiated understandings of audiences, brings a new perspective to a literature that has to date focused on the need for better understandings of audiences, new methods of data-collection or audience evaluation. In applying the material-semiotic tools of Actor Network Theory to the procedural detail of these organisational activities, the study delivers more nuanced understandings of situated strategic and operational audience practice, at Tate.

In terms of future research, this study can be taken forward by examining in what ways the negotiated, socially-constructed visitor data operational and strategic practices at institutions within or beyond the cultural sector, and of differing structural hierarchies or organisational scales, reflect the findings of this research. A further extension of this study would be an investigation of whether the heterogeneity of shared visitor information and shared segmentation analyses across the landscape of the museums sector inhibits innovative practice, and whether, conversely, that commonality drives innovative practice in the pursuit of differentiation, and the extent to which differentiated practice matters within the non-profit cultural sector.

Finally, this study's description and analysis of the landscape and agency of visitor information operations within the art museum opens the gateway for research into the potential for Artificial Intelligence, and the capability of machine learning, within the visitor data ecosystem of the cultural sector.

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Appendix:

1. Inventory of redacted content
2. Mapping the fieldwork, 2011-2012
3. Informed consent document
4. Informed consent
5. Interview transcripts

Inventory of redacted content:

1. Tate reference leaflet, and guide to segmentation: 'Understanding Tate's Visitors'
2. Tate 'Top of the Pops' historic attendance ranking, 1969-2012
3. Tate Audience Panel Research Brief Template
4. Tate Audience Panel brief: Poster selection for *Pre-Raphaelites* exhibition
5. Tate Online Audience questionnaire, by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre
6. Tate Audience Panel research result, selection of *Pre-Raphaelites* image
7. Tate admission figures (daily, total) for ticketed exhibitions 2010-2016
8. Tate weekly reported attendance data
9. Tate admission vs targeted income, for ticketed exhibitions 2010-2016
10. Tate staff member security pass
11. Fieldwork notebooks, interior covers showing staff photographs
12. Tate's schedule of quarterly Key Performance Indicator reporting to DCMS
13. Tate Performance Indicators, statement reports
14. Tate's reports of exhibition performance data, issued by Finance Dept.
15. Morris Hargreaves McIntyre Rolling Visitor Research, survey reports
16. Screenshot of Tatenet data warehouse, storing visitor information
17. Research report by external consultants, Firefish
18. Tate Visitor comments, distributed internally by Finance
19. Tracked weekly income from Tate's exhibition data
20. Tate's monthly survey of market conditions

AHRC CDA Fieldwork: Tate/LSBU

"Art museum attendance and the public realm. The agency of visitor information in Tate's organisational practices of making the art museum's audiences". Observation of strategy meetings, presentations.

	2011											2012						
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
ASSG		x		x	0	0		x		x		x		0		0	x	0
YP				x	x	0x		x			x	(x)		x x				
Families								x	x	x	x		x	0	0	0 0	0 x	
Exhibition planning					P&B							P&B	P&B *	* PreR				
ARG										(x)			0x	0 0	0 x	x x	0	
All/Staff									x			x	x x			x x		x
MHM			x													x		
Interviews					x		x				x	x		x		x	xxx 0	
TB													CE CE CE CE	CE CE CE				

DCMS notification of changing KPI reporting requirements, (15.2.12)

Key

ASSG: Audience Strategy Steering Group
All/St: All Staff meetings
X: Meeting, attended

YP: Young Persons
F: Families
P&B: Picasso & Britain exhibition planning
PreR: Pre-Raphaelite core visual meeting
MHM: Morris Hargreaves MacIntyre
(x): Meeting occurred, not attended
ARG: Audience Research Group
0: Cancelled meeting or interview
*: English National Ballet, in Duveen galleries
TB/CE: 1 to 1 meetings with Marketing Director

: Picasso & Modern British Art exhibition
TB: Tate Britain Staff pass issued
TB: Online security test
: TM Tanks open

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Background:

You are invited to take part in a collaborative research study, initiated jointly by Tate and LSBU, and funded by the Arts & Humanities Research Council. Before you decide whether to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear, or if you need more information.

Purpose of Study:

The purpose of this study is to generate new understandings of how art museums construct notions of audience. In the form of an organisational study, the research examines the effect of cultural policy (related to museums and galleries) upon the formation Tate's audiences; how Tate's knowledge of its audiences influences audience development practices; the lines of tension or contradiction in the modelling of audiences from differing departmental perspectives; and the relationship between the art museum audience, notions of engagement, and cultural value within the public realm.

Study Procedure:

Your expected time commitment for this study is 50 minutes. Your participation will take the form of a 1:1 discussion with the researcher, who will record your responses.

Risks:

The risks of this study are minimal. All data collected and recorded is anonymised. You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose, and without being required to give a reason for this decision.

Benefits:

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, it is hoped that the information and analysis obtained from this study will support Tate's own strong research culture, and expand Tate's contributions to current knowledge, promoting new thinking about audiences and audience development within the professional sector, on a national and international level.

Page 1 of 2

Confidentiality:

Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality, including the following: Assigning code names/numbers for participants that will be used on researcher notes and documents. Notes, interview transcriptions and any other identifying participant information will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher. When no longer necessary for research, all the materials will be destroyed. Information from this research will be used solely for the purpose of this study and any publications that may result from this study. Each participant has the opportunity to obtain a transcribed copy of their interview. Participants should notify the researcher if a copy of the interview is desired, in due course.

Person to Contact:

Should you have any questions about the research or any related matters, please contact the researcher at Victoria.young@tate.org.uk or 07957 486104.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the Investigator, please contact the Head of Tate's Research Department, Nigel Llewellyn.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to provide your written consent by signing this form.

Costs to Subject:

There are no costs to you for your participation in this study.

Compensation:

There is no monetary compensation to you for your participation in this study.

Consent:

By signing this consent form, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Signature...

Date…………………………

Page 2 of 2

Interviews with staff from:

Audience Insight, Tate Enterprise, Learning, Curatorial and Finance departments.

In conversation (1) : Tate Audience Insight, March 9th 2012

The Audience Insight Manager discusses the relevance of the overlaps of her business undergraduate degree, her earlier career within a data-focused FMCG company, and subsequent art history degree, to her construction and delivery of her newly-formed role at Tate. She acknowledges that her limited experience of market research has necessitated the appointment of external agencies. She interprets her role that of an on-going contributor to the strategic frameworks within the art museum, as well as project-based, bringing an impartial consolidation and sharing of the institution's knowledge of its audiences via new cross-departmental frameworks of practice. She expresses frustration at the slow pace of implementation, but recognises that the surfacing of empirical evidence of audiences serves to confront subjective resistance within the organisation, by foregrounding the public's voice, which the museum may choose to heed. In structural terms, she identifies her role as situated at a hub, which suggests a perceived location of organisational centrality in terms of data consolidation and redistribution. Differing distances and paces of operation separate the respective departments from the data, which is captured and stabilized in material forms, for external utility in substantiating the legitimacy of the art museum.

Informant:
My background is...I've done an Art History degree as a postgraduate before starting work here. I came in here through the Cultural Leadership Programme, and just a project at first. But before I did that, my background was, I worked for 15 years in the Fast Moving Consumer Goods industry in a marketing role in a global multinational. I worked for Procter & Gamble, in various marketing roles, and that is a very data-focused company, and it's very focused on its consumers at the same time, they are at the centre of everything, and a lot of data is looked at before products are rolled out in the market. And before that, my first degree is a business degree, coming more from the business side, and then I did the art history degree, I wanted to change to the cultural field, ideally in a museum, and I like that field of work around audience development, and so on. I think what I'm bringing in here is an ability to deal with data, to read data. I'm not a market research specialist, and that's why we can use market research agencies, - I can do simple surveys and so on, but in general, I like to rely on market agencies to bring that real methodological and statistical expertise and so on. But what I can do, is I can bring in a way to deal with data, to draw conclusions out of data, and also kind of running projects, and working cross-departmentally with a lot of different people, and bringing them together.

I know that you work across all of the disciplines, and have really good access to all of the departments..

Well, sometimes it's less, and I'm still working on it. You know the role is a new one, so I'm kind of building it as I'm going.

Can you tell me how the role was positioned to you? And how you might have adapted it?

Well, it started out as this project as part of the Cultural Leadership programme, which was a 6 month placement, and it was put there with a focus on the developmental audiences, so mainly young people and families, and how to understand them better. At first I didn't want to apply because it was kind of asking for a lot of knowledge around young people and families in museums, and that was not my field of expertise, but then looking at it in more detail, and talking to people, I thought I could try it anyway. And I think it turns out now to be more about helping Tate to understand these groups and these visitors, in coming up with some frameworks to look at that with Tate. And after that six months, it was just extended on a temporary basis and it's turned into a permanent job now. And the remit is really helping Tate to understand their visitors and putting some frameworks and processes in place, and also being there as kind of a hub that brings things together because it's not that there was no research before I arrived, of course there was, but its just happening in different parts of the organisation, it was maybe never pulled together or looked at by different people, because this was commissioned by one department and meeting their needs but others might not even have kind of known about it, or were not able to input from the beginning the certain things that they would want to get out of it.

So I've been this kind of hub, and also being there just as somebody people can approach and ask, who can then help them further, rather than everything just being on a website, and as a person, who can give a bit of consulting or support, or showing them what is there, or helping them analyse or helping them write a research brief, things like that.

Did you sense when you started working with some of the departments that they haven't really had the opportunity to have the type of conversations that you were there to have with them?

Yeah, and I think the benefit that I saw most strongly in a project that I've run last year was the research around the new hang at Tate Britain. And we ran that as a cross-departmental project: people kept saying to me 'that has not happened before', which I can never really believe. It must have happened before, but anyhow that was the impression that people…well anyhow, we had Curatorial, Learning, Marketing, Visitor Experiences in there, and we were really thinking from scratch: 'What do we want to find out? How can it go in a research brief?

Which agencies do we want to brief? Which agency do we select? How do we do that? What do we do with the learnings now? It was as a cross-functional team, and what people fed back to me was that I was a neutral person. This was not research that Marketing did, and they could give some input, or that Visitor Experiences did: this was owned by everybody, and there was a neutral person, who was me, who was writing it up, and who was doing the meetings and so on, and I think that was what they appreciated.

So what was that process like?

Erm, for me it worked very well. I'm very used to working cross-departmentally and I wonder why people struggle with that at all. It was a struggle at the beginning: there was a lot of…some people mentioned in the beginning that they needed to build trust before we could work together really, so there was a lot of meetings and getting to know what everybody's agendas are, and kind of so on. But I think in the end, it made it better as you got the different viewpoints in, and what we wanted to find out. And I've found that people have much more ownership of the results now, because they have a stake in from the beginning, and for the whole process: which agency was selected, which methodology we chose, how this was going, and so on.

So was it a process of negotiation then? Or you led it and they concurred?

Yeah, that was always trying to find the balance: how much can I lead it and how much do you let people just get out what they want to say and what they want to do and so on, and so finding the balance between that. You know, we had very open discussions and I let people talk and discuss a lot in the meetings, but then I would put that in the document: this is our briefing…the discussion was…and what I understood from everybody's interest…do you agree with that? Then we'd have something that we could also refer back to, should any conflict occur, which didn't really happen, but you never really know, half way through…then you have the brief and can say 'this is what we agreed that we want to get out of that.' We didn't have a situation like that but I think it was a good thing to have, and also what people fed back to me, was that it was also good for them, to be able to look back and see what we had agreed and what did we discuss, in a concise way.

You mentioned that in the early days people may have had different agendas, and that you were somehow finding a way through. Is it possible to characterise or summarise how different those positions were initially, or were they fine nuances of difference of expectation?

I think the impression I had was that the whole thing began because the Collection was rehung because of the building work, I'm sure you're aware of that. And that seemed to have been a Curatorial decision, and that was *done,* and it happened and it was there, and other departments were sort of saying 'this is so very different from what it was before' because it was a very stripped down interpretation in what is now called A Walk Through the Twentieth Century', so only the very basic labels, no wall texts, no themes, no room numbers: very different. And then these In Focus rooms. And I think that some of the other departments were thinking 'Ok, something happened which has an impact on our work but we havent' really had so much say in that, but now we have to deal with that, and *we* actually have the feeling that some things are not quite right for our visitors. So in a way it kind of brought people together but saying 'let's just find out what the visitor experience is, rather than just having opinions around the table, lets find out what the visitors say, but lets also bring in our particular interest of our department. So for Visitor Experience, the challenge was really finding out how visitors could find Information; Learning department were very much wanting to find out 'Do people actually take something away, more, or do they engage less; Curatorial was more 'Do we want people to have an emotional or visual experience? So it was this.. somebody's after learning, are they able to learn, others are going 'we want people to have a visual experience, learning can also be visual..and you had all these kind of things around the table, and Marketing was kind of 'and we have to build visitor numbers..(laughter), so it was really interesting, but it was a kind of challenge at times, to bring that all together, to make sure that we don't end up with the research that is going down one way or another, because it is influenced too much. I think that was this whole kind of trust thing: let's not just ask people whether they have learned something, or whether they want labels or not, or whether they are frustrated because there are no wall texts, let's not ask these questions. Let's do some in depth research, and understand what people's experience is, and then we can pull out where that experience is coming from, or what is not there that makes it happen, rather than saying 'We want to evaluate the..and saying at the end, 'this was positive..this was negative', we wanted it more subtle and more understanding what is actually going on.

So what was the timeline, for that whole journey? The discussions, conversations, research all evolved once the hang was already decided?

Yes, the hang was there, in place, and then…

Retrospectively…

..that kind of started, yeah, yeah. There were some challenging discussions but that was, I don't know, …I find…Tate is very departmental, and when you have one concrete project it makes it easier to work together. I always find that if you work together in theory, you need to work together with a lot of departments, and they they say, 'but I don't even know what it is they're doing..we'll have sessions to explain to you what they're doing..for me that doesn't work. It's not the same as when you have one project that brings you together, and you work on that, and everybody has an interest in that project, for very different reasons, but they still think that it's an important thing to do, and that's what kind of connects, and you just have to give people room to get their frustrations out at times (laughter). And for me…(laughter), but we got through it, and I think everybody was happy with the process, and it turned out to be a really good project, and we're actually implementing things, and we're going to continue the research of things that are changed now. For my taste, it still takes long, but that's from my FMCG background, they're called Fast Moving Consumer Goods for a reason, and it is a very fast market, and things take a little more time here. But what I'm really pleased to see is that some things are changing and implemented on that basis, and we want to go and research a little bit more about changes that are implemented now, and then when in 2013 when everything is rehung again, then also again do some research and see what is happening.

So, now that you have that precedent, that you managed to pull everyone together, with a shared objective, and delivered something that everyone is happy with, having had that experience, do you feel that ways of working have adjusted, or that expectations have adjusted, or the way that collaborative projects are approached?

I wouldn't say in general, as not everyone is aware of the project. The people who were in the team: I think we have a good working relationship, and that has brought it to a different level. And I know one of my colleagues in the meetings, she was fairly new at Tate at that time, and for her, that was a great start to build really close relationships with the people involved, and she keeps telling me that that was a good outcome for her, next to the project outcomes, but that helped her a lot.

Whether that is directly transferable to other projects, with other people, that's always hard to say.

Well, a lot of other things happen in peoples' lives as well, as they move on from one project to the next

Exactly…

Good, ok. At this point, I'm supposed to say, 'I'm looking at working practices, routines, procedures, that lead to the formation of audiences, so perhaps we could look at your project list, and go through..with each project, who has it been initiated by, who has to approve it, who actions it, that kind of detail, so that the whole chain or sequence of events, who initiates it, actions it, approves it, the chain and sequence of events, generally how its executed from start to finish. Because I don't know if these are projects that you have proposed, or did differing departments propose them, I'm not quite sure..

Are you talking about audience research projects? Because I've things on my project list which are more on a kind of strategic or you know, framework basis, kind of looking into certain frameworks…The way I think about my projects is that some are really… an ongoing process, …what is my audience research strategy: I'm not building this to have a fancy document or anything, but I think this is more building, and I'm checking this back with our Director at times, but what is in this strategy is one chunk of work building certain frameworks for research, which is looking at our visitor survey for instance, and trying to see if we can have it comparable across all four sites, and these kind of things you know. And how can we build up a framework within the learning department for the events that they are doing, and measure and monitor more what audiences we reach with these events, because we have certain numbers, with the DCMS KPIs, but there's not a structured way to understand the audience profiles…

From my understanding, there are different KPIs: there's the DCMS KPIs and then there's Tate's own KPIs

Yeah, yeah, although the Tate KPIs are still kind of worked on now, to sort of. To broaden them out a bit. But if you look at the audience now, we have an audience that comes through the gallery: they come to look at the exhibitions, they come to the shop, they come to the café, and we capture those in research through our ongoing visitor survey. But you also have audiences that come to special events, and they might not be captured by the Visitor Survey, because that might be in the evening, when the gallery isn't open, or it might happen in the gallery but not that many people: it's just a random exit survey, you don't get that big base size, so these are not captured. School visits and groups are not captured by the survey because it excludes groups because the methodology doesn't allow that. So we have the feeling that we have an audience but there are certain gaps in what we know about them, and when you look at our audience development and our audience strategy…a lot of these programmes do a lot for our audience development, and reach the people and broaden out the audiences that are our developmental audiences, and are more diverse and so on, but we don't really capture that, so I think there's a bit of a gap in reporting that back to the Trustees, and also the good work that is happening in a structured way. So one project is around, 'how can we stage a framework for that?'

And is that driven by a need to provide information that the Trustees have requested, or is that driven by some other impetus?

I think the need is driven by Tate having an audience strategy, and how do we know we're making progress on that? That's what the Trustees are asking, and that's what the organisation is asking itself, in some parts more than in others as well. Are we actually making progress on that?

Which parts do you think are not asking that question?

(Laughter) Not sure I can answer that…(laughter, pauses, more laughter). Let's put it more generally. In general, I find there are certain departments that are very open to understanding audiences, or audience thinking, who is our target, they tend to be the more commercial functions. So Marketing, Tate Enterprises, I think are the most there… Visitor Experience, because they're there, they talk with our visitors day in and out. And then it gets a little bit less, Learning I find is in-between, because they have a research function also, and they do evaluation, but I think they intend to do more research relating to Learning and educational things, but I find that its less how it works with our audience strategy. But on the other hand, they often convey that they feel the organisation is looking just at them to do audience development…

That's interesting….

…Which I don't think is the case, I thing they're projecting that, but I have heard that, and you have heard that in many of the meetings around audiences. They have this frustration that they have to do the audience development.

..I'm interested in the differences of perspectives, so it's very interesting to hear that they may have very strong views of their own audience learning strategies and things to deliver against, but that's something that may have a disconnection with other peoples perception of audience development, and the fact that they may feel that they're carrying all the responsibility for developing audiences is really interesting…

I'm never really sure where that comes from because its not the *impression* that I have, but I've heard that many times coming from that area, but then on the other hand I find it a difficult project to come up with this framework, and to see how we can measure this audience, and we'll have to work together, in a way that works for everybody, and I still find that quite hard and we haven't got to the bottom of it yet, of why that is.

So what do you think audiences mean to the Curatorial department?

Curatorial…(pauses), I find is the furthest away and I have to say I find I have the least strong relationship with. We had that Tate Britain project that worked really well, but otherwise I find that very hard. I think its not a secret, it's a kind of general thing. I don't know where its coming from on. I can understand how they think of and conceive of any exhibition.

How do they do that? What's your understanding?

I looked the other day at the proposal for the exhibition, it has a point on there 'Audience.' I've only seen the template, I haven't seen actual proposals, but we've discussed it the other day in a meeting and they said yeah we do that but its not really that meaningful. What is in there is kind of Everybody, Broad audiences, its very unspecific in that way.

Where does that go?

I am as curious as you are. I don't know. I'm working with [A.] at the moment on the KPIs, we're trying to come up with a process… something like "Exhibition Success Criteria", so locating in which documents you can find existing information and in which meetings that we reviewed, rather than creating a whole new process. And I was wondering myself is there just a proposal that is done at the initial stage, does it get updated, how does that work? I've not been so much part of that as there's an Exhibition Implementation Meeting which kicks off the whole thing, and then at some point there's also a review meeting. I've seen minutes of the review meeting, which is not very action-oriented. They're very much 'so and so said this, and so and so said that, and we found that it was difficult to hang the artwork because the room was very narrow, or these are audience numbers', which is all fine but there's no, what I'd like to see is,…there's no Lessons Learned out of that that you can take forward to the next project. We're trying to see whether we can get there somehow and have that discussion. So, yeah, I don't know how much exactly time Curators spend on thinking about the audiences and so on. It might be prejudiced, (laughter), but my hunch is that it is not a key concern. I think numbers are, **visitor numbers are, because they are directly related to income and income is related to what they can spend on an exhibition, and is the exhibition going to happen or not, and in the current budget situation that is an important number.**

Are they given numbers? I know they have access to attendance numbers, and I remember that Claire made a comment that someone on the curatorial staff had mentioned to her 'how are we doing?' and 'well, why don't you know? Because I'm sure all the processes are there and the information is available.'

Yes, that's the funny thing, yeah, yeah.

Ok, so we've talked about the Rehang, and you were telling me about your projects

Yes, this is more setting up frameworks and resources. So I'm working more on things like streaming our visitor surveys, having a Tatenet sharepoint site where post things that people can access or the research studies and reports are they and people can see them. And the audience panel. We have used it for a couple of things: we did a wave of 3 or 4 in November, which was understanding exhibition propositions, appeal of exhibitions, value for money and so on.

So who initiated that?

These are for now I think mostly initiated by Media and Audiences, coming out of meetings that they might have had, and we need a bit of data so other people might have influenced that. But the drive is mainly there. I've tried to communicate the panel quite broadly through Tatenet. **So people get in touch with me also asking about it. I have a lot of requests but not everything turns into a project, if timings are too tight, if decisions need to be taken before the results are back, money**

What's the turnaround time?

We can do something in 2 weeks, depending on the methodology, but if we do it in 2 weeks, we can actually do it quite fast.

Do you go to the panel with one topic at a time, or do you go with multiple topics?

Sometimes we combine things, either because they happen at the same time, or for money efficiencies. We've just done on two different exhibition visuals

Was this the PreRaph? It comes back to different persepectives again, the Curatorial wanting a religion based image

Yeah, I think it's a fine line with the panel. What I don't want the panel to become is "Curatorial says this, Marketing says this, lets get the results and this our winner, see!" I don't want that to happen. It's very hard as timing is obviously very tight. In my ideal case I would have an opportunity to sit together with everyone who has a stake, in Curatorial and Marketing, and come up with what we want to ask. It never happens, because people don't have time for meetings, so we kind of draft something, and make sure the viewpoint is kind of in there, but I'd like a bit more engagement at that stage than I can get right now. But also look at the results in a bit more detail, rather than saying let's go for the highest score. We get breakouts, we can look at what do different age ranges think, what do different segments think, and we get literal comments because we put some open questions in there which I find very interesting because they help you to understand the numbers. But things move slowly on the one hand, and then on the other quite fast, "Ok we got a result, this is it, let's go" because usually Marketing is quite tight: it takes ages to get to the visual options, to mock it up and so, and they need to get to a decision, and start designing and printing. But I'm hoping that we can get there more over time, with people understanding what the Panel can do.

But also in the whole process of an exhibition, I find that there is not a clear outline: 'this is the audiences we think will find this proposition interesting, you can do that based on the basic idea'. And then after that have the discussion on top of that: so who do you think the exhibition would attract if we did a few extra things. Would there be one that would be really suitable for families? And then you can go later on, and say okay, now we are testing this: if this is our target audience, and this is the general data, but what does that audience say. But as we are not very detailed at the beginning, it's then also hard to put that.. you know. And once the exhibition is over, to look at the data, you know, pulling together all of the exhibitions, and lets look at all of the audience profile, it's very hard, looking at the audience data, but what do you benchmark it against if you don't have a very clear start point? I don't think we'll ever have a start point that says "25% will be between 35 and 45 years old. You don't need to go to that amount of detail, but a broader thing, and then you can put it in perspective, and then you can have a very meaningful discussion. Ok did we actually reach the audience we set out to reach? Or was it different and if so why? And it doesn't have to be negative.

The Audience Panel has been in place for a relatively short time, so it might be difficult to find a pattern in what I'm going to ask you, but the feedback from the Panel: does it inform decisions, does it direct decisions? If it's contentious, …

I am not part of all the meetings where it gets discussed, but I think it does, and I think its really good, **it brings the discussion to a different level. It's not 'I think this, because I'm a curator, and I think this is better.' All of a sudden, it's ' the audience thinks this, lets talk about that. All of a sudden that changes the discussion quite a bit, and people relate their opinion then to what the audience says**, and why that could be different or not, and so on. And I think that is a benefit and I've heard Marc often mentioning that he's had different types of discussions around certain exhibitions and other things because of that, because of that. And I think that if we go from there, that would be a good thing to continue, and then we could refine that over time by looking more into the detail and going that level deeper, but if it starts like that, just opening up the discussion, there's actually as you say, somebody else in the room, and that's a positive effect.

One project that might be interesting to you is around the oil tanks, what do we do about understanding the audiences for the oil tanks, we're just kicking that off. And I'm trying to set up a meeting, but we might not be able to have a meeting with everyone around the table, for time reasons, so I might have to do it individually as everyone's in so many meetings, to find out what do we actually want to find out? And for me, it's: What are the oil tanks all about? What is the premise? What to we want to do? Do we want to build an audience for performance, art dance and so on?

I think its' quite interesting that this conversation is starting now? How do you feel about that?

Yeah, (laughter) we might have started earlier, but fine, I think what we were thinking, and that was just in a very short meeting, and you were there anyway in the Audience Research meeting, where we came to discuss that there might be this premise that we're building a new audience around performance art or not, so should we do some baseline audience research before they open? What are oil tanks all about? What do want to achieve in terms of audience? What do want to know as a baseline, and how are we going to research while they are open.

So the fact that the programming was already on the agenda, and had been for some time, might suggest that the programming had occurred before the audience consideration had been discussed?

(Laughter) I can't comment on that, maybe, I don't know. Maybe it's all there, all summarised in a wonderful document saying 'this is what we want to achieve.' I don't know. I think a lot of times, these things, sometimes, they might not be spelled out in the handy one-pager, but they might exist in people's heads. And I think, Chris Dercon, in his head, he has an idea, I don't know whether it's a clear idea, in his head, about how can Tate Modern be the museum of the future and what are we doing on that way? And I'm sure that these oil tanks and around these art forms have very much to do with audiences, but it might not be spelled out in the way that we would like to see that, with me in my business mind. (Laughter)

Yes how does that materialize if it stays up in head?

I think it is happening, oftentimes, because Tate is not as structured as the corporate, it leaves a lot of freedom for new ideas and for people to go and do things without too many limitations or approval levels. That's why people can bring in their own ideas which is why good new innovative things are happening, even though we're such a large organisation. What I feel we're not so good at is sort of being strategic in a sense of 'this is where we're starting from, these are our resources, lets measure how we are making progress, and how can we establish that more. Yes we have these great ideas, yes, we want to move our organisation forward and the audience, people do want to do that, but how do we track whether or not we're doing that. And often-times its these things like Kusama: it's super-successful, you know…and especially when things are successful you often-times feel maybe the less the need to analyse in depth it rather than when things go wrong. It's like Tate Modern being so much above anything that anyone ever expected. But it seems to happen in other areas: Margate is so successful, they have more visitors in one year than they thought they'd have in five years and so. How do you capture that type of dynamics?

In conversation (2): Tate Enterprises, May 5th 2012.

A senior staff member at Tate Enterprises describes the company's role in sharing Tate's mission to promote public knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of British, modern and contemporary art, by maximizing the profits that support Tate's work. Whilst describing the subordinate nature of this financial service, and the differentiated, innovative products that are offered, the staff member attaches value to Tate Enterprises' particular perspective on audiences, and the respect in which audiences are held. Critically, consideration of the customer wants or needs is at the start-point of Enterprises' activity, with retail transactions framed as a collaborative act, involving rapid customer feedback. The conversation covers differing attitudes towards risk within the art museum, and the notions of audiences ranked in terms of the institution's priorities. Differing data types in circulation, and software systems operating within the company are outlined, raising issues of duplication of effort, and references to work effort siloed according to function (publishing, product, online), rather than across audience type (Family, children). Finally, the informant covers the early uptake by Enterprises of the MHM Segmentation model, and the limitations of its utility for Tate Enterprises, at the boundary of the institution, with traders, compared with the context of the in-gallery experience.

Informant:
Tate Enterprises is a company which is registered with Companies House, so within Tate Enterprises, are things like Education and the magazine, and some bits of Tate Media. But for all intents and purposes, how it works is two separate companies: one is Catering, and all the catering activities, and one is Retail publishing, product development and so on, and they work to the Board, but clearly the Board has Tate staff on it, and over the last couple of years I'd say that Tate Enterprises has come increasingly close to Tate, and certainly, one of my ambitions has been to ensure that we work incredibly closely with Tate, to support their mission.

Interviewer:
How do you think that's manifested?

In some ways, just purely functionally, I suppose, so I'm included in the Director's Group, our HR teams are working closer together, and I suppose in some ways, it's more of a cultural shift: **that sense of being there to serve Tate**, and getting our strength from Tate and its activities and its brand. I think previously, there was a very strong sense that 'we're a separate company', but I don't espouse that because I think that can be an incredible weakness. I think that we have a perspective, in Enterprises, a perspective on. in particular, audiences, that's **a valuable perspective.** And if we make ourselves too separate, then Tate don't get the benefit of our huge *(pause)* wisdom *(delivered with smile),* and we don't get the benefit of working with all our colleagues in the galleries.

So would you say that this convergence is a product of ways of working, or was it a particular goal that you've achieved, or was it something that evolved through natural practice?

I think it's partly driven by personality, and **I wouldn't underestimate the degree to which Tate is driven by personalities.** I think the product of some of those personalities has now led to us starting to investigate different ways of working, so for example, we're reviewing our publishing processes, so that we are more closely linked to Tate programme, and to Tate activity and brainstorming. And that has come out of shifting the culture a bit, and realising that some work practices had to change a bit to accommodate that. And also, it's come out of Tate moving. I mean, Tate's undergoing huge change at the moment, and I think, thinking quite carefully about change management, and has had a lot of different people leave and join, and those new personalities have shifted the way in which Tate's working. So all of those things have come together, to put us in a slightly different direction.

I noticed, in the articulation of Tate Enterprise's Vision, that your aim is that customers will see Tate as innovative, collaborative and responsive. Can you talk to me a little bit about those in turn?

Yes, we work quite differently to other museums in making stuff for our shops, and in buying stuff for our shops. So for example, it's a very proud claim that with our Kids range, we read every single one of the childrens books before we put them in the store, and there's a huge amount of trust their, from parents and grandparents, in what they're buying for their children, and there should be, and we really value that, so we're very very careful not to betray that trust. We don't just buy things, we very much make a lot of our products, and that stemmed from years ago, thinking we didn't want people walking into the shops and thinking they were just the same as any other museum shop. And if you compare us to MOMA, which a lot of people always do, it's a very different approach from them: they're very much curators of already existing product, so they buy in stuff that already exists, but the way they buy it, and select it, is a reflection of their brand. Whereas we make a lot of things from scratch, so we work with artists and designers, makers, and so some of our innovation stems from the books and products that we make and put out into the world.

So it's a unique offering then?

Yes, it's unique, and you should walk into the Tate shop and think 'this is different from anything else I've seen.'

Right, and where does collaboration fit with that process of selecting the stock..

Particularly in terms of customers? I think it's used in a loose sense, in that, unlike other bits of the organisation, **we start from what our customers want**. So in that sense, it's incredibly collaborative, because if we put something in the shops and they don't want it, they just don't buy it. And so we've got a massive amount of respect for what they bring to it as well. And our customers are very demanding, and what I love about being in the shops is that customers come in and say 'why are you selling this? Tell me why this is on the shelf?' And you need to know why, as they're very very smart people. And they're not content to just go 'that's fine', they're quite challenging, so it is a bit of a collaborative act to stock and sell what we're making.

So I guess that's where the responsive part comes in, as you're dealing at the rock face of the exchange with visitors to the museum and the shops.

Yes, very much.

I think you might already have answered this question, then , as I was going to ask you about the prioritisation and championing of the customer needs. The mission statement mentions calculated risk, I wondered if you could tell me a bit about how that functions?

Yes, one of the things to recognise about our Mission Statement is that its very new for us. We've talked already about the cultural shift for us, but one of the cultural shifts we've made is to have a Mission: Tate Enterprises has never had one before. And so that was written in recognition of the fact that we were coming from a very risk averse culture, and one of the things that we were used to doing was playing it relatively safe in some areas. And I think what I wanted to do was to think 'one of the things that Tate is best at is taking risks and taking chances within its Programme, and I wanted to reflect some of that back into the business. Of course, it has to be calculated, because, you know, Tate's relying on our profit and we can't just throw it all away on a whim. But on the other hand, business is changing, publishing is changing hugely, technology is changing everything, and we need to take some risks around that, so that's where that came from.

Do you thing Tate Enterprises has a more comfortable attitude towards risk than perhaps some of the other departments, because it's so quantifiable?

Do you mean, are we more comfortable with taking risks? I'm not sure that's the case, I think you'd have think where the risk was located. I think that Tate will take any amount of risk (also it's interesting to think 'where am I locating the word Tate, I suppose), I think curatorially, we will take any amount of risk in relation to an artist, and that can be financially, reputationally, if it's about an artist's will and desire, then Tate will push out all of the stops. But there are some other areas where we are very very risk averse, where Tate is very risk averse, so that might be within branding partnerships, or some activities around financial, or incomes, or some activities around the audience. I think Tate Enterprise is quite comfortable in taking risks, weighted and measured risks, with partnership and brand, because we're being driven by what customers want, and also by money. But we might be much more risk averse when it comes to what might be seen as an artist's whim, and I think that's where some of those risks don't come together and you have to have those conversations about 'are we prepared to spend this much money as an organisation on something that's going to give us little financial return?' Of course, the answer should be Yes, but it's got to be weighed against the other things that balance that.

Yes, I can see that. And I know you mentioned that sometimes Tate is risk averse in terms of audience, can you tell me a bit about that?

Well, I guess if I were to choose my words a little bit more bluntly, I'd say they don't care as much about the audience as they do about the artist. So there are definitely times when what would be worthwhile for an audience is not prioritised or selected. I'm not sure that's risk averseness, that's probably prioritising, you know, where you put your energy. **Sometimes I feel that the audience can come lower down on those priority lists than perhaps it should.**

If I start asking you specifically about data that you use: what are the sources and types of data that you use most frequently? How are those accessed?

Sales data, most obviously, so that's all the sales coming through our shops and the tills, and sales out to the Trade, stock data, customers, including membership data and who we're selling to there (tracking what members buy). I'm trying to pick out bits that you might be more interested in than others…so cash flow and stock levels, and which departments are taking most money in the shops, they're broken down by product categories and product groups, and we're looking at some staff KPIs, and staff turnover, and we're looking at customer data, but largely measured through the membership schemes. And one of the things we're trying to work out is the data that we don't look at, so at the moment we're looking at how we measure non-member customer data, because that's a whole swathe of customer data that we don't really interrogate in the same way. So we'll look at things like baskets: what people are buying with what, and then I suppose what you might call qualitative data, so we're looking at the First Customer Survey, the First Visitor Survey: I think I'm right in saying that we're probably the area that used it the most and leapt on it, because it was telling us something about customers in a really really useful way. And so the Second Survey has followed that up, and has sort of embedded some of our thinking about customers.

So where does all of this data reside, in terms of who accesses it? Who applies it to daily practice? How is that approached? It's a very rich data environment, probably one of the richest data environments…

Well, it's coming through all sorts of different systems, and people have different access into those systems, so we run one data system called Tracks and that's all of our data software. We run a system called Trilogy and that's all of our warehousing, trade sales, and then we run an online shop system called Vendor so that's all our online shop sales, all our online customers, where we're selling out in the world, and anybody in the company can have access to those if they want, but depending on the area you're in, you'll look at some bits more than others I suppose. All of the galleries use the same till software, and that's all pulled back centrally, so you can look and see what's sold in Liverpool, or what's sold in St Ives, and they can look and see what's sold in London. The Trilogy system tends to be used more by people in the Sales team, in the Online team, in the publishing team, so they're looking to see what's being sold around the country and out in the world actually, through the bookshops. So there's lots and lots of different data. One of the things we're trying to do at the moment is streamline that so we're not reliant on people accessing individual systems; what we're trying to do is say 'what suite of reports do you want to have? We're going to mail that to you regularly, so you can just have it at your fingertips?' But that goes back to investment, and what systems we're going to choose to put in place in the future.

So if that's where you want to get to, how would you characterise the reporting mechanisms at the moment?

I'd say they're fairly comprehensive, but rather ad hoc, and I think that we probably do rather a lot of duplication, and it's perfectly possible that one person in the company could be running off quite a complicated set of reports that might be useful for somebody else, but that other person wouldn't know, and they'd be off to do the same bit of work again, and that's what we're going to try and get away from, because we need to save time.

So do you have any sense of differences in terms of depth of knowledge of audiences between Tate Enterprises and elsewhere in Tate ?

Well, I think that some of our assumptions about audiences can really be pinned down by sales data. So if we think 'what do families want?', we can take a fairly good look at what we're selling in those areas and say any number of things: they want these kinds of products at these kinds of prices, they're buying that with that, we're pretty sure that families, taking a guess here, families have a pretty stand alone visit because they're not buying vast swathes of art theory with their kids books, so it's likely that they're just in the kids section, and then they go off and do another activity. So I think there's quite a lot of different things we know from our data.

It's interesting that you mention families as it cropped up in one of the sessions when you described families as a tremendously missed opportunity, signalling across Tate a degree of unwillingness to engage with families. Is that something you feel quite keenly?

I quite often end up picking up on families I suppose because demographically they're quite easy to quantify, and also because we do loads of brilliant work around families, but we haven't found a way yet…we've found a way to tell each other what we're doing, but it's not good enough really is it? I'd really like to see us start from <u>way</u> back and go 'What are we doing for families? How does that…what are we going to end up making and saying and sharing with families? I don't think we do that very well. **We tend to, as an organisation, silo by activity, and I'd really like to see us start to think about working across audience types**. But I do think that's a tremendously difficult thing to do, and I don't even think we do that very well within the company. So at the moment, we've got a whole set of questions going on about should there be, within any area, somebody who's responsible for kids activity, and that makes a kids team who will always talk to us about what we're doing, rather than saying 'here's the publishing team, here's the product team, here's the online team.'

That's really interesting. So you're talking about having a hub of expertise for that particular sector?

Exactly. And we <u>can</u> do that, because within the Retail team, we have kids specialists, in the Product Development team we have kids specialists, and we've just appointed a kids, children's editor for our Publishing team, so I think we're moving, definitely moving in that direction.

*You mentioned that there may be some assumptions in place: I had a quote from you, I think a year ago, when you said **"I've sat in meetings when we don't consider audiences, we just market what we have".** I take it that was a response in relation to Tate overall, rather than in relation to Tate Enterprises…?*

Yes, yes (Laughter)

The other issue that I'd picked up from that same meeting was in relation to segmentation. You made an observation that you thought that everyone within the organisation should identify their own segmentation, and I wondered if you felt that that's what it would take for everyone to adopt or appropriate that model, that way of thinking?

Well, I think that would be a very basic starting-point actually. I think that what people do poorly in Tate is to say 'I think this sector of our audience would like this , and I'm saying that because I am one of those people'. Instead, what people do is say 'Of course everyone will want to do this' and you just think (shakes head from side to side, suggesting No). And that happens across the whole organisation: it happens from Trustees down. So I had a conversation the other day with a Tate Britain council-member, who said 'This is what we should be doing', and I can tell you exactly what kind of person he was: he was an Aficionado (he may not have known he was, but he was), and he was talking from that very particular standpoint. He has money. **And what I wanted to be able to say was 'You are speaking for that sector, and you need to recognise that you're doing that.'** And actually, if you then say '…And I'll value your comment more if you do that actually'. Because if you say 'Speaking as a Self-Improver, what I would like to see when I come in the shop is…' and I'll be writing down all your suggestions. But if you say 'everyone wants this', then I'm just not interested, as you don't speak for everybody.'

Given the role that the Trustees have, do you think that kind of conversation is desirable?

Yes, totally. I think somebody at a high level should lead all of Tate staff to answer those 5 Golden Questions, and you could say 'pick a Saturday afternoon when you're coming with your kids, pick a Tuesday morning when you're going round with your friend', because people are different at different times, and we should get the Tate Families group to do that as well. And then when we have conversations about what audiences want, it should almost be like an AA (*Alcoholics Anonymous*) thing, where you know, 'I'm whoever, and I'm a Self-Improver' (laughter)..it would be quite a useful thing to say. And what I try to do is to have a think when I'm having a conversation, 'this is where I'm coming from', and I quite often try to think 'and that's where you're coming from.' So what I want to do is to value what they're saying, but to do that, I sometimes need to funnel it down what kind of audience type I think they are.

*So you've found a real application, then, for that model, because I remember you saying **"If you know who they are, you can offer them what they want, and you can get them to spend."** As an intuitive understanding.*

Yes, and I think that the great things are: this gave us a way to segment our audience, an interesting way to segment our audience. It's not useful to say they're 40yr old women and therefore they want this…so that demographic way has never been particularly interesting. When we got the first Visitor Survey back, it told us so many things about some of those audiences, and we really did focus what we were making on particular types of people. And that's still useful, really really useful and very embedded, and if you talk to particular people within the company, they will use those segments, and talk about those kinds of people, but I guess what it doesn't do is, it doesn't offer a way of thinking about customers outside of the gallery context, because it's very much about a gallery visit. So the areas where we come up against difficulties are when we're talking about selling out into the Trade, so we make and sell books out into the Trade, and the book Trade has a very particular way of segmenting customer types, and it doesn't in anyway overlap with what we're talking about in the galleries.

Can you give me an example of that?

So they might say, 'Kids, 7-9yr olds', or if you talk to publishers, they'll say 'it's a general trade paperback' and that's as far as they'll go, and actually I thought to myself, I'm sure other publishers are better at this. But actually, I don't think they are at all, and I've talked to a number of publishers who say 'digital publishing has been a revelation, because suddenly we're in very direct contact with our customers, and we've never known anything about them before.' So their customers have always been the bookshops, not the very end user, so I think we're well ahead in that, and I think that I would like to develop a kind of language about our customers in the Trade that can have some connection to our customers in gallery, because I'm sure there's huge amounts of overlap. Equally, online customers are another difficult one to classify because there must be Self-Improvers and Sensualists and Family visitors visiting the website but it's very very difficult to pin that down if they're not in the gallery. So although I think that segmentation is brilliant in the gallery, I think there are some weaknesses when it comes to other areas of Tate activity, online in particular.

That's very clear. I remember you saying "Unless you know the numbers, you just look at the segmentation and you think 'Great!'

Yes, you have to know the numbers, absolutely, because one of the things that I feel really strongly that we've started to say 'this Programme is going to attract these people.' **Well, if you're not used to looking and thinking about visitors, you just look at it and go 'oh great, it's attracting everybody', and that's pointless.** It needs to be much much more embedded than that, and much more particular than that.

One of the questions I had was how to reconcile Tate Enterprise's goals with Tate's broader goals, and that's specifically in relation to developmental audiences, because I remember a comment that you made about you have to attract developmental audiences but they don't actually spend any money. So I just wondered how that sits with you?

Mm. Well, do you know, it's still something that I haven't really reconciled, and I don't know if I'm just wrong about this, but some audiences that Tate wants to attract will be our customers, and families and young people will be our customers, and if we can get a bit more data about them, what we can do is make things within the price points they want to hit… But some developmental audiences we're wanting to attract because part of Tate's remit is to broaden knowledge and understanding and appreciation of art, and they're not our natural middle class, moneyed sectors, and they don't have so much money to spend. And actually **one of the things about Retailing in particular, is that you have to choose what customers you're serving:** shops are not there to draw in everybody, they're there to draw in people who will spend with them. So that is quite a difficult thing, because we don't want to …one of the things we feel really proud about for our shops is that we feel they're quite democratic in feel, particularly if you think about Tate Modern: it doesn't have high-end materials, it does have lots of open tables for people to look at, it does feel like you can wheel your kids buggy and leave it without it being a nuisance, and so I'm sure lots of people have come to that shop and ended up buying things they wouldn't have thought about because they were in an environment where they were able to do that. So I wouldn't want us to move too far in the opposite direction: **I want it to be accessible to people, but on the other hand, we have to make some money, so it's quite tricky.**

And what about non-visitor research, because I remember you were saying that you were very curious about it, and perhaps Tate didn't do enough about that?

Mm, well, I don't think it's happening within the gallery. I think we've made choices to prioritise other kinds of research, and I guess I'm interested in that because I'm interested in what Tate does, but I'm not so interested in that from an Enterprises point of view, just practically speaking. We've got a big enough captive audience to sell to already. But I think that we sometimes… this I think stemmed out of one of the conversations where I was saying 'well we just say...we don't change our Programming, we just market' and I don't think that's good enough actually, **if we genuinely want to attract different kinds of audiences, we need to do different kinds of things**. If we don't want to do different kinds of things, then we should be very clear about saying that's what we're doing.

That's almost in a sort of furtive whisper (laughter).

Almost in the first week that I was at Tate, I remember someone saying 'why are we so apologetic about this? Let's just say what we do, and if people want to come and consume it, they can?' So I think **there's a real idealism there, and a real desire to extend our audiences, but at the same time, people exist in very narrow worlds, and they don't really come across lots and lots of people outside of that core group of visitors**, and the higher up the Tate you get, the more that is true, and you know, we have...this is my bugbear at the moment, so I'll just bang on about it to you, we have school placements for local schools, which Tate doesn't do, and I think they are brilliant, because what they do is remind you that there are some tongue-tied, state-educated kids out there who've never been to Tate and have no idea how to talk about what we do, and are very inarticulate. And we had one particular person recently, and we did think 'OMG is she getting anything out of this at all?', and then we saw her written report on her week in the company and she had been absolutely blown away by it. So I think having the opportunity to meet people outside the Tate core group is just so important, but I don't know how often any of us manage to really do that.

The breadth of audiences that you are serving is phenomenal isn't it?

Yes, it's worldwide. And I think we're so new as an organisation to thinking about audiences, and at the moment it's very in-gallery isn't it? So having a think about online would be really interesting, it might help us to develop some kinds of languages which we want to think about audiences that aren't specifically visiting. We've just done a piece of customer research, focussing on 3 different kinds of audiences: Self-Improvers, Sensualists and..was it Tourists? But it was 3 types of non-specialist audiences, and we asked them about what they like to buy, their relationship with Tate, and the Tate shops, price sensitivities, and so on. And what we got back was really fascinating, because what it showed was that they're very culturally-engaged, but across a wide range of organisations, so they're not necessarily absolutely wedded to Tate. You know, they might easily go to the British Museum, or a National Trust property, and they're very very price-sensitive, they're very focused on value-for-money, in particular Self-Improvers were very focused on finding value-for-money and using Tate to do that. So they're happy to come in and write down or scan all the books we've got in stock, and then go away and buy them on Amazon, and they were completely unapologetic about that, because what they're after is the most value they can get for their cultural life, and it's not all about Tate. So even if you say 'Do you know that if you buy in store, you help support Tate's activities?' it doesn't really matter to them. Sensualists were slightly more willing to buy with us if they realised the connection that the money they spent went into the Programme. So that was really really fascinating, quite salutary I think, really. We were quite shocked by the lack of loyalty of some of those groups.

What was the methodology for that study?

That went through MHM and was facilitated by Sabine, and what we said was that we would like to know more about these types of customers: they're 40% of our total mix, and we feel we have lost focus on them. And what we want to do next is to pick up those Specialist audiences, because one of the things **we really want to do is differentiate more, and really make things that are very right for the people we're serving.** I think we do do that to a large degree, but for example, we try to keep all our exhibition catalogues to £25 or under, but we know that for some audiences, £15 is what they want to spend, and for some audiences £40 is what they will probably spend. They are real specialists, they want that publication on that artist. And so instead of trying to get to that £25 point for everybody, actually, what we want to do is be bold enough to print enough to hit the £15 price point and then make a beautiful enough book to tempt people to buy on the £40 price point. So the next bit of research we're doing is very focused on the Specialist types of customers. So that's one thing. Another thing we're doing, I've been working with Sabine and Sarah to say 'How are we thinking about audiences around a Programme before we put the Programme out?' So instead of just measuring it afterwards, so ..and I think Amanda became involved, and she's picked that up, so now we're saying beforehand, what we want to get out of that exhibition, and who we think we're making it for. So I think at the moment it's being measured after the show, but one of the things that I would like to see is a very specific bit of writing before the show, about, say, the catalogue, with those audience types mentioned. **The more we talk about them and use that language, the more embedded it will become.** Then we want to do some online research, and we're thinking quite carefully, because we've got a new shop platform, about how we ask people about their shopping habits, and whether we can find out what kind of visitors they are to the gallery. So again, we'll be working with Sabine on that. And lastly, we want to do some kind of survey for our Trade customers. And I suppose one of the things about Trade customers is..it's over a much broader period of time, because, you know, somebody buying a book in America might not buy it for six more months. So that might be a very ongoing bit of research, which I imagine we'll do by asking people to log online, telling us something about the book they bought..or, we've got to find some way of giving them a hook back to give us that information. And what we might find there is that actually people are very very far removed from Tate, and they 're not really,…it's not really about their relationship with Tate, it's about their relationship with that particular book. But that would still be fascinating. So those are the things that we're thinking about at the moment.

When findings are reported, are they encapsulated within Tate Enterprises within a sort of sealed bubble, or do you feel that…

We push them out?..

..Are relevant elsewhere. I'm interested in the whole cycle of information.

I don't think there's a very good formal way of picking things up. I think stuff gets picked up because people are interested. Not many areas are tasked with really being on top of that. So when we got that bit of research back, I sent it through to Marc Sands, Sabine has got it, so hopefully, she'll push that out through some different forums, and we're following it up with actions around, say, signage in our shops, in relationship to Online, and then that will be picked up in a very tangential way through people's interest in how we're building our Online sales for example. And every time there's an opportunity to talk about those audiences in context, then we will. But no, I don't think there's a particularly very formal way of following that up.

Has there been a Tate Enterprises session in the Lunch and Learn series? Because I know there's been one by Visitor Experience, Learning and Curatorial?

No, and I don't know if that would be that useful?..

..Useful to whom?

For the gallery? I don't think *(sounds questioning?)* Because it would have to be such a high level thing, to be about the whole of the company..or it could be about Kids? I don't know…?

I see Tate Enterprises as a vast repository of data and knowledge and understanding, and I don't necessarily feel that that's understood elsewhere.

Well, we're trying to do it in different ways I suppose. One of the comments we had about the publishing process, for example, is that people don't really understand any of the return that their efforts make to the company, and that they don't see much data back. And I'm wary of just bombarding people with emails, so what we've said will do is to set up a couple of sessions a year when we say 'this is what's happened over the last six months, here's what we're planning for the future, and then it'll become a brainstorm. Because I don't want it just to become a blanket 'we're doing this, we're telling you this'. I want it to be much more collaborative in generating ideas. So that would be a kind of brainstorming session. But again, if you ask about personality, that's very much because we've got Chris now at Tate Modern, and he's open to those kinds of ways of working, and he enjoys that process, so that's coming out of really his way that he's structured his meetings at Tate Modern.

I've heard Chris say a number of times 'do we really know who we're attracting? Do we really know who will come to what we programme? And he keeps throwing this question up about how we were so amazed by the Kusama and the Richter response, I just wonder where forecasting fits with all of that uncertainty about who do we anticipate will visit the gallery, and shop online, and what the reality is.

Yes, they're really interesting questions. I'm not sure how they'll get picked up. I do think that **the way Tate tends to work is that if you bang on about something for long enough, somewhere it'll get picked up**. With the first survey, when was that done? 2003? We basically used that survey and language for seven or eight years before anyone else started talking the same way about it. So I'm really glad that everybody is, but I feel like 'that's a long time' and we could be moving further forward now. But I think that language has to be picked up and used in a lot of different areas of Tate for it to get some traction, and for it to be useful and for it to move forward.

In conversation (3): Tate Learning, June 13th 2012

The Learning staff member describes the evolution of the Learning department at Tate, from its somewhat marginal and uneasy position of the late 1960s and '70s, to its new reconfiguration in 2010/11, and led by the first time by a departmental Director. The issue of institutional alignment emerges, as the Learning department are instructed to integrate their practice across the varying departments of the art museum, without the other departments at Tate being tasked with supporting that objective. Attention is drawn to the oppositional nature of Curatorial and Learning practice, although the Late at Tate model indicates the possibility of positive, collaborative ways of working. Staff members of the Learning department feel charged with the sole responsibility for nurturing developmental audiences, rather than this being a shared institutional responsibility. The staff member attributes the reflective practice of the Learning department to its recent structural change, and laments the deficit of reflexivity elsewhere in the art museum: "If you're not asked to change, you're probably not asked to think about why you're doing something." The shaping effect of strong personalities at a senior level within the museum drives the institution's position of cultural value as a potent force for good.

Well, I think that my understanding is that there has been some form of Education practice at Tate really since the mid to late 1960's and 70s, and the institution as a whole was set up in part with an educational remit in the nineteenth century. So arguably Learning or Education has always been present within the institution, but historically, it's occupied quite a maverick role where the department has both. All the Tates (sic) have a Learning department, but it can be seen to be both core to the institution's activities but also operate rather on the outside, and it has a rather uneasy relationship. More recently that's changed, partly because we have a Director of Learning and I think that's a very significant commitment on the part of the organisation, to Learning, and how this institution values Learning. Also, in London, the Learning departments went through almost a crisis point about 3, 4 years ago, when there was a sense of 'really what responsibility did Learning have?' There was the growth of Tate Media, and the understanding that there was a whole area of activity that could be done online, and what did Learning actually do? And the sense that it was rather on the margins and occupying rather a critical position rather than being integrated into the core function of what we did. And I think post that crisis point, there was a decision either, as I understand it, there was a point where it was 'do we get rid of Learning altogether, and try and integrate what Learning was trying to do across the institution, or do we really focus and boost it, and give it support, and make it a much more integrated purpose?' And the decision was taken to go with that latter route, so hence the decision to appoint a Director of Learning, the decision to bring both London Learning teams together, and Anna Cutler, the Director of Learning, to write a Learning Strategy that had as one of its key remits, the integration of the Learning department with the others. And I think that is really bearing fruit now, and you have a Learning department that sees its role as core to the activities of Tate. And I can talk a bit about what that is, if that would be useful.

Yes, I'm curious to hear how that new function, that role, has developed.

Well, the Learning department was formally under review for a long period, but the actual restructure happened in the Autumn of 2010 going through to April 2011. So from April 2011 to now, June 2012, that's a year really, that we've been functioning as the reconfigured team and it's early days, and we are really just I think getting the hang of what this means now. And it was quite, I think, a significant process of change. Any kind of review is bruising, and in fact we had a team meeting yesterday, and people were talking about it now, and looking back, and I did for the first time get a sense that people felt that they were out of that process, and we were actually now a functioning department and that we were just getting on with what we do. But that's a long time to have been getting our heads around what it was. And I think one of the things that has become really clear to us departmentally is that we were tasked with changing as a department and we feel that we have changed quite significantly, and have embraced a lot of the things that were being asked of us. What we're acutely aware of now, is that other departments didn't change with us, haven't changed with us. And it's not their fault because they weren't tasked with changing particularly, we were. But to task one department to work in a more integrated way, but then not to actually have those conversations with the departments that they are supposed to integrating with, is a slightly incomplete process. And I get the sense that the institution is now waking up to the idea that actually for Learning, you really have to reconfigure your relationship with your audience, for that to happen. You can't just change your Learning department. You have to really think about how the institution as a whole needs to be reframing itself.

So do you find there's a contradiction between a strong, newly-defined, clearly-briefed department, and yet this notion of blurring of boundaries Education, Learning and Curatorial practice, and how that works with engaging with artists, and engaging with audiences?

Yes, I think at best it's an ambivalence, at worst it's a contradiction, and it manifests itself, and this is what we talk about a lot, in actually systems and structures that really don't support the way we want to work in the future. The most obvious example of this recently is the Tanks programme, which was tasked with being an integrated programme, and it's proved very challenging to try and put an integrated programme together. Again, I don't think it's the fault of anybody, it's just that the organisation is not set up to support that way of working yet, and maybe when we come, we're going to do a big review of the Tanks programme when it's finished, the lessons we've learnt through trying to work in that way, will productively inform how we might work in the future. What it's made me realise, working on that programme, is that rather there being a sense of , kind of, how can I put this, ..it's highlighted the almost oppositional nature of a curatorial and a learning practice, rather than in a sense, made me realise how they could work together. Until we really interrogate the nature of that oppositional practice, we need to get that out into the open before we can go 'how do we work with that? 'How do we understand that a curatorial practice, which is about essentially, the display of art, and a learning practice, which is about enabling people to engage with that? Let's recognise that, and explore the implications of that, and then start to think about how we work, and we put the systems and structures in place to make that happen usefully. And at the moment, we launched into that without having had those conversations.

And arguably, as well, the Tanks were always going to be difficult: it's a new process and there's going to be more pressure and a lot more focus on programming.

Absolutely.

Can you think of other examples of those systems and procedures other than the Tank, if I set the Tanks aside, for the moment?

Yes, there are, ironically at the moment, there are other more integrated ways of working which are much better models, and actually the Late at Tate is a much better model, where I think integrated working can work really productively and interestingly, where you are bringing together showcasing new practices, or art in the expanded sense, with a strong remit to kind of engage different audiences in new and creative and different ways. And I would love to sit down and look at what we can from Late at Tate, and take the models that are models of good practice there, about relationships between Curatorial, Learning and Marketing, and bring some of that to other forms of programming across the institution.

It's very interesting to hear you say that , as I've sensed on occasion that there's almost a frustration that Learning has been tasked with a burden that you might feel hasn't been equally shared across the departments in terms of carrying responsibility for converting young people who might attend an event into an engaged attender subsequently. And I think you've even said something along those lines, that "we can't do this alone." Can you talk to me a bit about that?

Yes, and we feel that really really strongly, and I think you are absolutely right in identifying that, I think there has been a sense that those more developmental audiences, ‘well Learning can deal with those.’ And I think one of the kind of shifts in the more empowered Learning department, is Learning turning round and going ‘actually, No, it is the institutional responsibility: it’s about what kind of exhibitions we programme, its how we market ourselves across the piece, <u>we</u> will do activities for those particular groups, because that’s what we do, but that’s different from it being solely our_responsibility.’ And again, I think, when programming becomes interesting, it is when you get a much more holistic sense..and I think the Chris Ofili was a really good example where you have a more joined up way of thinking about what happens if a show like that is within the gallery: what kind of audiences is that likely to attract? How can Learning work with Curatorial to enhance that and add something interesting to that, without the sense of there being an exhibition that potentially has little or no relevance to a young person, so how do we absolutely bring that audience to something that may or not be of interest to them?

Do you sense that at some point in the future the whole programming process will absorb considerations like this, without it having to be flagged as a big issue? Do you think it will become normal practice for programming to share equally the agenda of each respective department?

I think these are interesting times. For instance, the meeting that we had yesterday was to talk about the document that is being produced around Tate’s responsibility in terms of social value. I don’t know if you’re plugged into that work at all. It’s coming out of the Lodge, and it’s very much of the sense that we need to think about how Tate understands itself in terms of its social value. And it has <u>huge</u> implications for *how* we programme, *what* we do, *how* we fundraise. What are the kind of people, the kinds of audiences, that we feel we should be addressing, and why? And just the fact that that piece of work has been commissioned makes me feel optimistic, that there is this understanding of the institution as a whole starting to think about those issues. Whereas, going back to what you said, historically it’s been Learning’s job to kind of tick the ‘social value’ box. And the conversation we had yesterday was around how we move away from that. In my positive moments, I definitely think there will be a shift, and one of the things that shift should instigate, is a more joined-up sense of programming, that moves away from ‘Well there’s art that goes on over here, and there’s the social value bit that happens over here, somewhere else completely within the institution.’

I hear this refrain very frequently that ‘Audiences are at the centre of what we do’, ‘it’s a conversation that’s moving to the centre’, it’s driving everything’, and yet I’m curious about the disconnection that seems to happen within the organisation. For example, there’s the presentation of the annual Visitor Survey, on who *comes to Tate: an hour and half presentation, in the Clore auditorium, and only 12 people turn up.*

(Interviewee sighs)

There's a very consistent narrative happening at the top of the organisation, but how relevant is it throughout the organisation?

I think that's very true. And one of the things, to go back to the notion of organisational change and institutional change, is that when we were talking yesterday, because we'd been sent a briefing note around this. One of our kind of critiques of it was that it felt a very top-down model; whereas my sense, and certainly the sense of the team, given the conversation yesterday, was that 'people have to buy into this within the institution'. And if we don't get that, if it's the sense that it's yet another thing coming from on-high, ('you will change your practice, because this is what we're going to do'), people don't. Until people can totally understand the value of engaging the audience much more in what Tate is about, it will remain as *'Jeez, do we have to? I don't have to do that because my job is about putting on that exhibition, or conserving that work of art. Who cares about the audience?'* And I think is still there is a clear sense that there are departments that are outward-facing as well as inward-looking, of which there's Learning, Visitor Experience and Marketing really, and Tate Media possibly. And we're the ones who are really having to grapple with this all the time, really. In fact, again what we talked about yesterday was this very interesting thing about how these kind of difficult decisions around 'how much do we prioritise audience in relation to art?' are played out in every decision we make, because we sit looking In and Out as a department, and absolutely should be, you know, coming from art. And we all absolutely agree that art is fundamental to what we do, but it's not just that: it's art and…it's getting people…*(laughter)* forcing people *(laughter)…*bringing them in and FORCING them to learn *(laughter)…*THAT IS OUR JOB *(laughter).*

Tell me more about the agenda that's really apparent, about encouraging people to learn for themselves, and how that plays out in the department, and how that relates to knowledge of audiences.

I think that for me, it is fundamental to the history of gallery learning and educational practice, and the fact that artists have always been very core to this practice, and that in the history of the practice, really in the 1970s in this country, it was very much an artist-led practice and artists were coming into galleries and artists were employed as educators. Historically, that's always been the case in this country, which differentiates us from the States, who have a model based much more upon the docent. We work with artists.

Is that 'we Tate', 'we Learning', 'we UK'?

It's We Learning in the UK, in modern and contemporary art, but also, for example, the National Gallery, who work predominantly with artists. Because of that sense of what art practice is, and that in and of itself, it's a process of learning, so what an artist does through practice can be understood as a form of meaning-making, and generating new knowledge and understanding. And if you take artists into a learning context, and this is always a little test that I quite often do with artists, I ask 'do you describe yourself as a teacher?', and almost without exception they will always say no, because the way they frame themselves is as learners. And what you create then, in the context of the learning situation, is you construct yourself as a learner alongside people who you invite into the gallery to learn with you. So that's the kind of bedrock of the practice that's been around: constructing scenarios where we learn.

So that's inclusive rather than didactic?

It's very much a move away from the didactic. It's a kind of constructive model, where people are constructing knowledge for themselves, rather than having knowledge kind of imposed on them. And actually, more than that, it's actually a CO-constructive model, where you the leader, or facilitator, learn alongside the learners, so to speak. And I think this has been the model at Tate for as long as I've known it, but not exclusively at Tate, I don't think we can claim credit for it, but Tate has kind of got a good reputation for this; and I think it's now really enshrined, it's in the Learning strategy, that it's good learning. And one of the significant things is the fact that we are called a Learning rather than an Education department, because what we want to do is enable people to learn, and Education, you know, I have this conversation quite often, 'what is the difference between Education and Learning?' And I think that Education can be understood as the kind of systems and formal structures that should enable Teaching and Learning, but they don't always. So you can have an Education department: whether or not anyone learns anything is another matter. We are unashamedly about trying to enable people to connect with art, and generate new meaning and understanding for themselves through that.

So that's Education as a framework and Learning as a process?

Yes, and Learning is very much understood as an on-going process.

I'm going to switch to the research process now, and I see you a bit as a sole torchbearer, really, in terms of asking all the big questions in the meetings, ("What are the implications of this?.. How useful is this?.. Why is it important?") …

Yes, yes.

…Do you feel that you're carrying that, or that these issues are understood when you engage in the research process, whether it's an evaluation, or seeking to acquire knowledge about programming? How broad is the interest in acquiring that new knowledge, or do you feel that you are solely charged with keeping it on track? …

Yes, yes.

…They're all the big questions that nobody else seems to be asking.

I think I'm unusual in the institution in that I think I'm possibly the only person outside the Research department who has Research in their job title. So I sit in a programming department but with a Research remit, which is for me, a fantastic place to be. But I think it does give me a different perspective, because I'm both involved in trying to get the stuff done, so the doing, the programming, but because of where I've come from professionally, which is a research background, and because of what I've been tasked with doing, I'm also very conscious of needing to bring that research perspective to everything that we do. And I think I have been surprised in meetings: I thought Tate was more of a reflective organisation than it is. I think it's becoming more reflective, though, and so I do sometimes feel that I'm the only one going 'why are we doing this?'. I don't mind, actually. I love asking that question, but I think that, I'm sometimes curious as to why more people don't ask that question, but maybe it's just that they've never thought that they had to ask that question, because it's a given. And maybe it's because, as a department, because we've gone through a period of change, we had to ask why are we doing everything that we're doing. And maybe departments that haven't gone through that, are much more well, *'This is what we do, this is what we've always done. Why would we need to question this? We put exhibitions on, we market exhibitions, we talk to Press. That's what we do.'* If you're not asked to change, you're probably not asked to think about why you're doing something.

That's really fascinating. I also sense that you're managing other peoples expectations in terms of what the research can and can't deliver.

Yes.

Do you feel that there might be an expectation: 'do a bit of research, get a bit of data, and everything will change..', because I'm getting some mixed messages, about how 'we've got to apply this', and yet I question whether it will be adopted within the organisation. Particularly in relation to the interpretation, which was clearly quite sensitive…

Yes.

Marc on the one hand is saying, 'whatever we find out, endorsement is sought rather than challenge, and nothing's going to change'…

Yes.

…There is this sort of tension between doing the work, and getting the information…

Yes, I know

…and what traction that has in how it's applied.

Yes, I think you're absolutely right. And I think that again, it's possibly because, as an institution, I think it frames research in an interesting and (if I'm being really honest), in quite an odd way, because it has a research department which is quite detached in some respects, from the kind of doing side of it. So whereas my experience of research has always been very much about research that is about practice: it's very much about taking theory into practice, and practice into theory, so it's a very fluid relationship between research and practice. Here, I've just had a sense that there's research over here, and the actual stuff that gets the nuts and bolts of getting exhibitions up, and getting people in the door, is something that is very separate. So the idea that you would take research and really use it to inform activity across the piece, is something that I just don't think institutionally we've got our head around yet. I certainly think that within Learning, in a small scale, we are doing that…

Right, come on, tell me how…

Because of taking the model of action research as the kind of research that we want to do, and through tasking the programmers, to greater or lesser extent, as researchers. So at its kind of most, sort of, (I don't want to say 'simplest' level)..at it's *lightest touch* level, it's saying 'you need to have a question to inform the programming you're doing', rather than just doing the programme. So every strand of programming should be investigating something; so in that sense, you're framing your practice, not as a very intense kind of research, but it is about asking questions all the way through, and trying to seek new knowledge through the doing of something, and that new knowledge then feeds back into the programme that you're putting in place…To more formalised, little kind of pilot research projects, where we are bringing in researchers to work with us, but on the understanding that we jointly frame the research question, that the researcher will be doing the data collection, but that whatever findings we have, don't just canter off into the academy: they come right back into helping us to do what we do.. better.

So for example, the Obliteration Room, or the Learning resource, that kind of content…

Yes...and particularly, say…one of the programmes that we're really looking at is the Families activity that happen at weekends at Tate Modern, the Open Studio. That has been framed very much as a pilot research project. So there's an articulated research question, there are particular data-collection methods that have been put in place. So there's observation, there are interviews, the artists are keeping journals, there are meetings that are taped and recorded and documented, all being led by the convenor for that programme. And come September, she will gather all that data together, analyse it, that will be written up. So that is in a way, a piece of programme as research. Whilst this is going on, she, by her own admission, everything that they do, she learns, and has shifted the programme according to things that she has found out already, so, you know, the outputs from that process may include a paper, so it may go on Tate papers, so it will have a kind of research output that one would understand in conventional research terms. But more fundamentally, it will inform the practice. And that's what we want, and that's my kind of sense of the value of research, at the point we're at now. What I then would like to happen possibly in a couple of years' time, is that we'd possibly get much bigger research projects going, where we really possibly would get an HE involved, and it becomes again, a more conventional research project. But we will be confident enough as a department, to be very involved in how we frame anything of that nature.

And yet, the message from the Trustees is that it's about getting the numbers rather than engagement.

Mm, we don't hear that message very...maybe we choose to ignore it…

It's just something Marc said in a meeting…whether it's getting people in the door, sitting on some furniture, or engaging with the art itself, and the message seemed to be, via Marc, that the Trustees' priority was getting the numbers right…

Yes, yes..I think you're right, and I think we do feel we have a responsibility to ensure that peoples' experience, when they get through the door, is not just that you wander around and you have no idea what this is, and you don't have any kind of moment of sort of, a new thought or an experience that you take away that has given you something amazing. Because that definitely, as a department, I think, we think, we really should be trying to ensure that that happens. I mean I think we...it's interesting because we have different departments that have different teams that have different responsibilities. So for example, I know for the schools team, that numbers thing, they are very aware of, because a lot of our numbers, the boxes get fantastically ticked by the quarter of a million school kids that go through Tate Modern every year, things like that. Or, if we have a youth programme event, like a Late at Tate, and we get 4000 young people…tick! We can kind of…we've got quite...you know *(laughter)…*we can't work with 15 people, so one of the things that's articulated in the strategy is the idea of doing the light lighter and the deep deeper: so you can do really good quality events but you can reach a lot of people, and then you also do equally good quality events that are very focused. And that's how we would argue that we can kind of address those numbers things, without any sense of it being a poorer experience.

And is that going to change at all, the whole data-collection, excluding school groups and events?

I know there was something that happened a while back, wasn't there, how the DCMS are asking us to…?

..discontinue certain monitoring..

…yes, yes…and I know there was a flurry of emails around us going back, and saying 'this is absolutely fundamental that we continue to monitor this, and we will whether we're asked to or not'. Because I think we feel we have a responsibility, and actually at the moment, we have a huge responsibility to the school sector, because of what's happening in schools around art being downgraded in the curriculum. So our motivations come from that, and I don't think I'm speaking out of turn when I say that we're aware that the Trustees are conscious of numbers, but I also think that we feel that the Trustees are very supportive of what we do, and that a lot of what we do is what they want Tate to be doing. I think the whole social value thing has come in part from the Trustees, so I don't think we feel worried on that level at all. But equally, we're in a position where it isn't our responsibility to get numbers to come in to see an exhibition like Barry Flanagan..I think we'd probably all really rather breathe a sigh of relief that that isn't our gig, you know, that's somebody else's headache *(laughter),* that's not ours…

Run away from Barry Flanagan…

Run away from Barry Flanagan…well you know…

How did that happen?

I have no idea. I'm curious...it's a curious anomaly, and one of the interesting that is happening is this exhibitions planning and evaluation process, which again, I don't know if you're familiar with this? It's actually being led by [A.], where I think she's trying to put in place a more formal structure that's around exhibition planning and evaluation, that's cross-departmental. And this again taps into what you were saying earlier, and why I think that possibly Tate is becoming a more reflective organisation: this is a process that is new, where it's about 'what are we trying to do with these exhibitions?' and then coming together after them and 'did we actually do any of it?' And they're piloting it by looking retrospectively at the Flanagan, the Martin and then the Richter at Tate Modern, and I think it's got a way to go..

I should get in touch with them, because it was really interesting to hear Chris Dercon saying that 'we were all so surprised by the Kusama, we were all so surprised by the Richter..do we really know, do we really understand what our audiences want? How can we get caught on the hop like this?' …

Yes, but equally, you know, how could we not know that nobody would come to Flanagan? Or even perhaps that sense of 'we know that the appetite for this will be quite low, but that's not why we're doing it.' So that at least there's a more strategic view taken on... and then with that, we could conceivably done more around it. It's that sort of thing. So if a view is taken that 'this is going to be a show that will have low audience numbers, ..but ..' You know, I think we did one of the Late at Tate's on both Flanagan and Martin, and you can then start possibly to join things up a bit.. more, and that notion of integration has a bit more purchase, really.

Two last questions. One is: I think it was a throw away comment, but it caught my attention. I think you mentioned that Chris Dercon's notion of what Learning is is very different from the Learning Department's notion of Learning…Is that something you can expand on?

(Laughter) I must stop making these irrational, ill-judged comments. No, I think we have a sense sometimes that he has a perception of Learning that possibly comes more from possibly the educational turn in curating, rather than our understanding of what Learning is. Sometimes I've heard him talk about it in terms of an artist who involves young people, or anybody actually, in an artistic project, because that is their practice. There are examples of artists such as Tania Broguera, who's one who is quite often brought up, or someone like Jeremy Deller, whose practice is participatory. But the ongoing thing that we have is, that that's great, it's not saying that that's bad practice, but that practice does not have at its heart a notion of enabling people to learn. It is about an artist's practice that finds form possibly in a pedagogic exchange, or a participatory moment. And it's also not to say that people don't learn through doing that. Everything about how we frame our practice with artists is about how we are enabling people to learn. So we work with artists who are very skilled at enabling people to learn. We don't work with artists because their practice is participatory, and they want to have a show at Tate: that's the responsibility of the curatorial team, that's not our job. And I think sometimes, and its not just Chris, that is something that's not clear to people, and sometimes its not clear to us, and that you'll find Learning curators sometimes slightly going off into the realm of working with artists because they're really interesting and they've got a participatory practice, and they really want to work with them…and you think 'hang on a minute, what are your motives for working with that artist? Is it because they will enable Learning for people or is it just that you are just quite interested in them and in their practice? And if it's the latter, then you should not be doing it. So it's more about that..but sometimes when you hear Chris talk about it, and you think 'it's a slightly different deal'.

So, last question: I think Caroline mentioned that Tate is very ideological, and your view was that Tate is principled, rather than ideological. Is that something you can expand on, and how might it relate to Tate's audiences?

Well, this I think comes back to this whole social value thing. And I think it comes from Nick, actually, and I had a conversation with Anna about it: that idea about how much institutions are shaped by the values of the person at the top. And you know, I think we do have a director that is very committed to the notion of art as being a potent force for good, and that we as a national institution do have a responsibility to both preserve the collection, but also to make that collection accessible to as wide a public as possible. And I think it is one example, this is his real commitment to the notion of interpretation, and that is a principle which informs how this institution works. And similarly, someone like Caroline has very strong principles about how we should work nationally, and particularly, how we should work internationally, which are kind of almost much more coming from a personal set of beliefs which then imbue the organisation, rather than an ideology which is brought in wholesale and adopted. I do think we are, for an organisation of this size and scale, we are shaped by the personal principles of a few key individuals, and a historic practice which this institution has always had, coming from that nineteenth century model of the museum as a force for social and educational improvement.

In conversation (4): Curatorial department, June 14th 2012.

*I remember you saying: "*I don't have a clear sense of what you need from me or from my department. I'm just sitting in to find out what's going on, to contribute information, to make it more family-friendly." *And there was a bit of frustration that it was seemed very much to be an information-sharing meeting rather than necessarily a meeting that was going to help form strategy for the Families group in particular.*

From what I can gather there's been a succession of chairs, and I don't know why, but I think that what's happened is that maybe the purpose of the group had shifted, because it did seem to be going back, because there were so many new people there, to sort of information-sharing or whether there was still an ambition for the group to set strategy. In a way, you're never introduced to the context of why the people have changed or who's leading it has changed, it was a genuine question.

I think you're right. I've only been to six of those meetings in the last year and some of them have been at 8 week intervals, and the last one was after a 20 week gap. I was very interested in your involvement in the group, as I wasn't sure if you had been invited to attend or if you'd said 'it would be really interesting to have a curatorial perspective' here. I wasn't sure how that arose.

I think I was involved initially in the audience strategy, some of the early, really brain-storming sessions, and then it was really to do with the fact that the family strategy came out of that, and I can't remember... And I think Chris was supposed to be on both audience and family and I guess that was too much. And I guess that because I have a young family, I didn't volunteer, but I was quite happy to be a part of.

I remember at one point that there was a suggestion that Chris could come along to one of the meetings, with the intention being that the group could brief Chris as to what their expectation might be, and then that dissipated away and it came back to information sharing. For me its very interesting to see where cross-departmental collaboration works and where it doesn't work, because you were very keen to engage with the group but there doesn't seem to be much traction.

It's been an incredibly different time as Learning have had a big review and therefore personnel and job titles and job descriptions have changed along with the director, which inevitably informs change of vision for the department. And then I think that's happened with Tate Media (is that what it's called?) not necessarily with the restructuring, but it does still feel as though its been restructured, and I think Tate's quite bad at intercommunication, so how that is actually communicated, so its just simply the result of that, that there's kind of unfocused or shifting personnel being at that meeting, I assume it's because of that. I don't quite know, I mean, (laughter) did that woman leave? Who was the last one? the older woman? I'm terrible with names, but frankly I give up because of these situations. She seemed to be quite forceful, and trying to shape, but now she's out of the scene. Then I was a bit late for the last meeting and it was more a case just trying to grasp what was going on.

A lot of the points that you made were specifically about seeking some kind of interaction between actual people who attend, and strategy. 'Who are families? What is the definition of a family?' And what is the awareness that schools and families are the same audience and can we not work with that?'

They probably sound like naïve questions to the people who are specialists in that area, but it's just genuine, for me to understand how they understand the groups that they work with, in terms of overlap. And I suppose, maybe, an innate suspicion that Tate has a tendency to compartmentalize, so it's just sort of a genuine questioning as to whether it may already be happening, but whether there is a crossover in terms of how groups are considered…Questioning what Tate's understanding of a family genuinely is. It's not trying to challenge.

Maybe there's a kind of sense that to a certain extent, Curatorial, we set the exhibition programme and sometimes events coincide and sometimes they're independent. But to say, how do *you* want to work with us? Historically at Tate there's been the feeling that Curatorial dictates the programme and everything stems from that but I don't think that's the case any more. But to genuinely understand what kind of information do you need?

I need to really understand how that perception might have been in place in the past, and how that might have changed now. Because you mentioned Learning, and the huge upheaval in terms of being required to have an integrated approach to programming. There's clearly an intention for things to be different, but how has that manifested itself? How have things actually changed, in terms of how programming is driven, and where the influences are? As I'm an outsider, I don't really see the programming process at all.

I don't know, its very early days. My reference back historically goes back along way, because I came to the institution about 12 years ago when it was so much smaller, and even when it was one site, and there were separate curators who were seen as… (and again this is my interpretation, as I was seen as one of the new wave), …were seen as holders of knowledge and the ones that decided what happened with the collection. And learning events centered around curatorial activities. That was my impression at the time. Gradually, you know, Tate has got bigger, and there's been more activity, so it hasn't been more a more centred, position, and things going out from the Curatorial programme, simply because there is so much concurrent activity. How things have changed in the recent learning review? I honestly don't know. It's only been a year, and there's no distinct change in how I work with colleagues in that department, to be frank. And apart from seeing an initial statement from Anna, it's not been filtered down any more in terms of integrated practice, and how that's supposed to work, or how it might work. So in practice, things are quite similar to how they were before. There's discussion and dialogue about programmes, but essentially, they're all owned by separate departments and within that separate individuals.

It is very interesting that separate departments have their own directives, separate sites have their own strategies and it's very interesting trying to reconcile that intention to change with the long tail of things actually running in a different way. I wondered if it's a product of content for families being geared around events rather than being geared around exhibition programming. [Programming means events as well] *I also wondered if it's a product of content for families being geared around events rather than exhibition programming,* *whether the strong history of programming events for families, that family priorities or interests might be marginalized when it comes to exhibition programming, as families have been 'dealt with.'*

No I don't think it's even discussed as that or even thought of in that way. I strongly object to that idea that there are certain types of art or themes that are more relevant to children or families because any art can be made accessible to any audience. **So the programming isn't really conceived in terms of targeting or excluding particular audiences.** It's sort of trying to have a varied programme that represents art that artists have made historically or are making, and that's where its focus is, that's where the priority in terms of decision-making lies, in terms of trying to represent the art and the themes that have come through from the content of the work, rather than necessarily second-guessing what might or might not interest audiences or who might be served elsewhere. I simply don't think that comes into the picture.

That's really interesting, so if I was to relate that to what [x] was saying , "Do we really know what people want to see?", - he was just registering his surprise at one of the All Staff meetings about his surprise at how successful Kusama was, and Richter was, and how these exhibitions had massively over-delivered against expectation. He was asking the bigger question: Do we really know what people want to see, when we're slightly taken aback at the phenomenal success of this particular success of programming.

I don't mean we think of art as a separate realm to the audience. I mean, it does come into account to a certain extent, you might think about what might be popular, but instead of picking a theme that an audience might like, say, for the sake of example, cats, children like cats, so lets do an exhibition about cats. Then it's a more hopefully sophisticated, complex…. So for example with Migrations, which Penelope programmed, I think that's an example of something very important in terms of art history, in terms of how artists who have come to Britain as migrants, and have become assimilated into a history of British art, and her wish was to reflect that in a history of Britain, and at the same time, awareness that that actually would be of interest, as artists are citizens and the audience are citizens of this country. So it is done very much in terms of thinking about the content and history of art. It comes from trying to represent art and artists, as much as coming out with a theme that we know will be a crowd-pleaser.

So can you take me through the different tiering of A category and B category programming?

Well, you must bear in mind that we've had our own director change, so Penelope in the last two years has brought in a different way of doing exhibitions as well, that we're also getting to grips with. So its quite hard for me to represent Tate Britain programming, because that's something that she has very much changed. The obvious basic tenets are that there are paying exhibitions that therefore need to be big enough and sufficiently a draw to merit them being paying exhibitions. But what Penelope has done is to shift the focus very much back onto the collection of Tate Britain, so its about showing off the collection, and display more of it, and then to curate themes and focuses out of the collection, rather than it always having to be loaned in projects and exhibitions. And I think also there's the collective view that those sort of differentiations don't really mean much to an audience, apart from the fact that you have to pay for one bit but not another. Again I think Tate's trying to figure that out, in terms of collection exhibitions which cost money to put on, but are more collections. All of that's complicated as well. But there's different scale projects in terms of A, B, C. I guess it comes down more to scale rather than priorities, as an ABC code might indicate, so large scale projects, such as a commission or a major exhibition, and then a smaller exhibition, so In Focus displays or an Art Now project, that sort of happen alongside.

So in terms of differentiating the As, Bs and Cs, it's not just scale? Are they hitting different agenda as well?

They're just different types.

In terms of how that mixture is devised. As you say, it's not just about scale, it's about the objective that's served by each of those differing elements of the whole programme?

It's not just about scale, it's the objective that's served

We're in transition, in terms of Penelope changing. Her emphasis is very much in terms of putting in place a walk through the collection, which is one type of experience, you could say its agenda-less, but then it does have an agenda in terms of trying to be without interpretation, trying to prioritise the work. But it doesn't have an agenda in terms of the audience, as we are trying absolutely to display every type of work, and show the variety of art that's been made through the last 500 years, That's the agenda, in a way. To complement that, there are more focused looks at a period or a subject or an artist, and I think the agenda is variety, to show different types of art, and therefore hopefully speak to different types of audiences at the same time. And then the exhibition programme is always determined by trying to devise something that has integrity in terms of why to do it, what will it contribute to art history, is it popular enough to be a draw? Will it speak to multiple audiences? There's a number of factors rather than it being any one agenda. And that s a difficult thing to pull off, to pull of a programme that his different elements to it.

And when the exhibition is complete, can you talk me through how it's evaluated, what the criteria are, how that process works?

There's evaluation, in terms that are more logistical, how did it function internally as a process? I guess the immediate assessment and the one that in the end seems to count the most: is how many people went to see it? And whether that was above or below expectations. And then there's the critical discourse around the show, the Press reception which has obviously, a direct effect on how many people come to see it. So, again, everything is sort of integrated. But there is no formal questionnairing, there's no formal process.

But I gather there's some sort of forum that gathers to review, subsequent to the exhibition, all those different criteria.

In the exhibition process, there is a forum, but that tends to be, unless you're talking about a *management forum that I don't know about*, to sort of assist as a learning experience moving forward, to pinpoint the things that were difficult, but it tends to be more logistical, what we've done rather than what other people may be telling us. We don't sort of sit down and review the press response, or sort of sit down and review the numbers.

So the critical discourse is an important factor in reflecting on the impact of that piece of programming*?*

Yeah, within the curatorial department*,* and I guess in the Press department, but its not something that's discussed Tate wide.

I keep hearing, so many times, about how Tate is still very compartmentalized. Is that something that you find holds true, or is that changing?

I think it's getting worse, because there's been such hiatus over the last few years. Nearly every department has had a different Director, so TB TM Tate Media, Tate Learning in the London sites, and actually even in Liverpool and St Ives, with a change of personnel and of vision. So in a way it does feel a lot more like people are just trying to get to grips with what that new direction is, and how they now sit within a new structure, whether that's been formally changed or not. And also just the size of Tate. It's just very hard. There's a lot of energy required to get your own thing that you're doing, done. Its actually quite hard, raather than trying to work across. It does still happen, but it doesn't feel like its getting better. Like most situations, its about personal dynamics rather than formal structures.

Going back to the assumption that's quite commonplace about departments at Tate being quite introspective, there's been an observation that some of the departments are outward looking (Visitor Experience, Marketing) and some are outward looking. Do you think its fair to say that other departments are relatively inward-looking, and much more focused on their own work rather than on how that work plays out externally?

I don't know. It's difficult to characterize a department in that way.

There are certain types of work, Marketing is all about outward communication, and Curatorial is all about producing something here on site, and the process of it doesn't necessarily involve audiences until at a very late stage, so it doesn't have direct interface with visitors. So I think that's probably true, but its also determined by the nature of the work, and then whats necessary then is for all those departments and interests to work together because they're doing different things. Within that, you might have individuals who are thinking more outside.

So I've been thinking about the the multiple notions of audience that function at Tate, so for example, Tate Enterprises have to think about book distributors, and Tate Learning have to think about who's booking in the school visit. Can you think about the different types of audiences that Curatorial have to engage with, and I don't just mean Families and Young Children.

The baseline is always the assumption that any visitor of any description should be accommodated within a project. And that's certainly borne out in terms of the design of the physical environment of the exhibition, and in terms of the language, for interpretation, that the language is of a kind that is accessible according to different viewpoints. I don't think its thinking about or targeted to any particular audience, but there's a slight shift, also we're not just thinking about audiences, also for me, I work with living artists, so I'm thinking about representing and working with living artists.

I'm interested in hearing beyond the social demographics, the diversity, the age, it's hearing each department's different perspective when it comes to the people who are in the consideration set for all the work that you do. So for you, it's the living artist who's a key audience for you. It might seem self-evident, but I have to ask these things, but I do actually have to ask who are the audiences that you engage with, in order for me to be able to say that Curatorial engage with living artists? [Families with Hirst at Covent Garden]

We only have direct knowledge, at times we don't even have that, of what the Families curator might be doing alongside a project that I'm working on, for contemporary projects across the board. Other times we just programme things coincide without there necessarily being a dialogue. The structure is that there is 4 teams: contemporary team which I'm in, the modern team headed up by Chris, then 19th century headed which is Alison, and the pre, which is Martin. So there's dialogue about contemporary within that team for the relevant period. So the senior team leaders meet with Penelope to talk about programme. Then there's other groups that meet about displays and also a monthly curatorial forum for all of the curators to get together with Penelope ,and there's a different topic for each, so that s a wider forum. And essentially we're project-based so we will individually lead or assist on projects, so I'll have a portfolio of 5 or 6 projects at any time, some of which are more immediate, and of different sales, so I'm always juggling. And there's also collection work, and assessing works for acquisition, so it's a layered thing. There's a programme manager who oversees the projects from a more logistical side.

In a lot of documentation about the future strategy for Tate and also in a lot of *the All Staff presentations, there is a recurring theme about how audiences are becoming more central to the way Tate works, and there's this huge endeavor in terms of attendance numbers, and income per head, incredibly rich data, but whenever the big presentations happen in the Clore Auditorium, by MHM, and its annual visitor survey, so it's who's been visiting the gallery, how long they stay, how much they spend, how they feel about it, there seems to be a disconnect between the aspiration that audiences are really central to Tate and then, then there seems to be this contrast when only 10 or 12 people turn up to here the presentation about Tate's visitors. Is that something that Curatorial department are conscious of, this claimed aspiration is that its all about audiences, and actually the reality, that there seems to be considerably less interest and engagement?*

I think the low turnout at those meetings is mostly just down to workload (laughter), mostly when those meetings have happened, I just haven't been able to attend, but possibly, to be frank, there is some.. for myself, I don't really understand how they sit together. How does it affect programming? That is mainly done at a higher level to me, and I don't know how much that feeds in… I mean that is of interest, but what are we meant to do with that information?

I had a very interesting session with Finance this morning, who report weekly exactly all the numbers, and its distributed everywhere, and what happens when that information is circulated? Does it just disappear into the ether and that's ok, because someone else is thinking about it, someone else has dealt with it, or is it actually pulled down into the organisation and applied, and that's what I'm trying to understand: the dynamic between the provision of information and the demand for information, and the way it's actually applied.

Mm, it's genuinely a problem, mm.. not a problem. I don't know how much discussion there is, with art, and possibly more so with contemporary art, unless you're always going to programme Damien Hirst, which is only very rarely, there's very few artists who you can programme who anyone's heard of anyway, beyond a very small group of people. So we're also thinking about the wider audience. Its much more about who we think is representing the most interesting artist making things, but that's not something that you can work out polling an audience, as its barely known, even to us.

Yes, that ties in with what NS was saying in one of his presentations, on the importance of the leadership role, about how important it was for Tate to be seen to take this leading role and to not play to smaller interests necessarily, but to have the confidence to be Tate, and to be seen as Tate.

And we've got a track record (laughter). To give the Art Now example, I've been closely involved with it, and so many of the artists are not very well known, but they've gone on to win the Turner prize so it's investing in artists, and that's what I believe in, and that's my personal thing, my personal agenda, to fit amongst everyone else who has their personal agenda, and we can present art. And it is a process of rigorous discussion with colleagues, but if we think it's good enough to put out there, then we can with confidence say that its of interest to an audience. And who knows which audience, but the important thing is to have a varied programme in order to try… and that 's what we bear in mind with Art Now, so varied in terms of subject, medium, sometimes ethnicity but then I think that isn't a leading thing its something we have in mind, or gender, its not a tickbox thing, its just reflecting whats happening in art and then finding a way to communicate that. Having done the Turner Prize a number of times, that's what I think our role is: to then communicate new confusing sometimes difficult art in a way that is then understood more widely.

That's a great quote, lets stop there.

In conversation (5): Finance, 14th June 2012

I've only been doing them for about 9 months as I'm relatively new in my job. Someone else was doing this before I joined. I used to work in the Accounts office, and I moved to Finance. Looking back, they've been going in some format or other from probably about 2004 financial year, but at that point they were a much slimmer format than this, and they've evolved over time, so in the current format its probably from 2008/9 onwards. When Lesley, who is the head of Financial Management when she took that job, she changed the format. But I think its kind of organic, and recently the income per visitor, that column has been added, only in the last few weeks. That wasn't there a couple of months ago, so we're constantly looking at them and seeing if there's a better way to present the data.

Does that tend to be in response to people requesting it?

Sometimes, yes, see on the graph there's a line that has a forecast line in a light blue colour, that was added a few months ago with feedback from Alex.

So that's the financial forecast daily average and bi-weekly, and that was specifically requested by Alex.

And I think we have plans for the future, to change the way it looks, to make it more accessible I think and easier.

Do you think there's been an issue with that? Has there been any feedback that its difficult?

Not necessarily, I think that sometimes the forecast figures are difficult to understand because they're based on actuals and budget. So if an exhibition does particularly badly in its first two weeks, its forecast is still quite high because its taken in budget. It takes two weeks of actuals and then it takes the rest in budgeted figures, so it could have an attendance of, like, 40%, but its still forecasting an attendance of 80% because budget will always be 100%. So that doesn't always work.

Is the forecast ever adjusted?

Sometimes we bring the forecast down.

What are the circumstances when those figures have to change?

I think those decisions are made at, sort of, attendance meetings . So, *Migrations*, the current exhibition, that was brought down before it opened because of ticket pre-sales, because it was thought that…so… but I think it's exceptional, it's not done all the time. So the example with the forecasting with, say, the *Barry Flanagan* exhibition that we've just had, in its first few weeks it was getting sort of 20% attendance against budget but we were forecasting 85% because we were still taking 100% budget for the next few months, so we haven't actually changed that. So we're having a look at changing that so that its more reflective. So the changes are made because of who sees it, and also Finance, or Management Accounts specifically. And then for me, when I eventually suggest changes to Lesley, it will be for ease of preparing, as its quite a long report to do, rolling it over every month is very difficult to do, rolling it over at Year End is like a good three or four days work, (laughter).

The amount of information on here is just phenomenal. Tell me about preparing it.

So, it comes from all sorts of sources. For the exhibition sources, it all comes from Enter, so every Monday I run the last week's worth of data from Enter,for all the current exhibitions and also for St Ives for its admissions. [Jane Kennedy has just taken over from Martin as head of MTS]. Enter's got a reporting function so I take that out. And then it starts to get tricky, as Enter has gross figures but we only put net figures in here, because obviously the vat we don't have it as income, so first of all I have to work out the net revenue. If there are any tickets that are joint tickets, so Picasso and Migrations have a joint ticket, the way Enter is, it puts the money into the largest exhibition, so then MTS send me the split between the ticket, and I work out a split, so if its 50:50, which it never is, I just take a category for the combined tickets for the two exhibitions, I put them into a separate spreadsheet where there's a formula that works out how much should go to Picasso and how should go to Migrations, and then I put those figures back into my download. So effectively, the actual attendance, they both get the same amount, we don't split that in half, as people will go to both, but the income gets split, depending on whatever the split is.

And how does that impact on total visitor numbers, because you're double-counting aren't you?

(Laughter) Well, for exhibitions, well, yeah we are, because its based on who pays to go in, whereas general attendance, that comes from a different source, that comes from Enter. Enter is just for paid exhibitions and St Ives, charges everyone who comes through the door. So, someone could go to Picasso and Hirst, and we would count them twice, it's literally who's paid to go that exhibition. So then I put all of that in and then it pulls through the weekly totals, and everything is formulated so that it all rolls forward and the weekly totals go into the monthly totals and goes into the grand total etc, and then there's formula to calculate Actual against Budget. So the percentages here are Actual against Budget.

And the variances against Budget, how does that inform, what tends to happen?

I'm not sure it does. Things like that are discussed at Income Group and Attendance meetings. Kerry Gill, she's a Senior management accountant, sits down with TM and TB, they sit down and talk about all the different exhibitions coming up in the next three years. But then we also use MUSE for predictions, so that informs some of the decisions. And we've also got the staged exhibitions, so we've got A for blockbuster, and so that is done like that. This year's been very difficult because we don't know what the effect of the Olympics will be. With the Hirst, we don't really know. We budgeted for 350,000 people but with the Olympics nobody really knows what's going to happen. Kerry's got spreadsheets with all sort of ..the budgeted attendance and income for future years, and I use those to input the budget into the attendance report, so at the beginning of the financial year, I put all of the budgets in, which is fun (laughter). And with the other things, so the General Attendance, people that just come into the galleries, for TB and TM I get those figures from Chris Berry who works in security at TM, and for TL I get them from RD who's like the Visitor Services administrator, so they have spreadsheet for each month that they update. They use the people counters at the doors, and add in functions, like Late at Tate sometimes, and then I literally just copy and paste them in to the Attendance report. So what the Weekly Attendance, what it does, it takes the Total (which is what Chris and RD would send me) minus who went into the Exhibition, which gives you the Display. We can't guarantee that they've been to the Display, they might just have gone to the Restaurant, not much we can do apart from asking everyone who comes through the door. And then Tate Catering figures come directly from Adam Storey. He does the total for each site, so if there's a café and a restaurant that all just comes in as one, he'll just do a total and send them, weekly, so the sales and the number of transactions.

So now I know that they're reporting their data to you, but does the data they collect, does that get distributed elsewhere as well? Or is the purpose of their data collection entirely for feeding into this weekly report? Because I think Laura has a lot of data.

I'm assuming they must use it for their own. I'm sure Adam (Catering) uses our attendance figures to inform some of his reporting. It must go into their management reports, monthly, at least, for them to look at.

I'm just trying to see how it all connects, because in some cases there are some incredibly rich pockets of data, and I'm just seeing how far it actually flows through the organisation, and whether it just informs that department, and whether there's any benefit in anybody else getting to learn a bit more about it.

Yeah, I've only looked at the Management reports once or twice, but I'm sure it goes into the Management reports, and I'm assuming they must do a report to Trustees. And then with Enterprise, they use Pulleys?Poise? which I'm assuming is their sales engine, and that produces a report automatically every Monday morning for the last week, so it just comes straight through by email, it runs at 6am on Monday morning.

So by what point do you have all this data? Is it constantly rolling, or does it just hit your desk and you've got Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday to put it all together?

So the Attendance report is supposed to go out by midday on a Tuesday, well second working day if there's a bank holiday. So I always get the Poise stuff first thing in the morning, and I can pull the other stuff off myself, when I've got time, and the other stuff comes through as and when. The Liverpool stuff comes in by late morning Monday, the Catering stuff can come in Tuesday morning. Once I've prepared it all, (laughter), most of it flows through onto the summary sheet and into the pie charts. The only thing I have to do manually is the Gift Aid uptake, which I just use a pivot table for, to bring out all of the Gift Aid tickets. The amount sold on Gift Aid gets divided by the amount that are paying tickets, not members, and then that works out the percentage of the Gift Aid uptake. Then most of the other stuff updates itself.

This has changed, hasn't it, I remember that a note came out, and they're adding past exhibitions. There used to be a Top of the Pops list.

There still a Top of the Pops list. Its only for TB and TM. Its just sorted by total attendance and average daily attendance, and I update that once the exhibition's finished. [Also another doc. Including TL. Historic attendance, chronological, by site] St Ives, we don't sell tickets for specific exhibitions, it's a general attendance, so we don't keep their data the same. We used to keep it separately, then it was added in, and updated when exhibitions are closed.

Was there a request for that or was it something that you had available so you decided to add it in? I'm just really interested in the pull and the push, because there's a lot of data and I'm trying to sense what the demand for data is in comparison to the availability, as I'm getting the impression that there's an incredibly rich supply of data, and I'm just interested in how that's being pulled through. So whether there's a request for this summary, or whether its something *that you've made available?*

So, not the best response, but I had three weeks off, so I added it into the attendance report, so that's what I did. All the visitor numbers, press, income comes in, so I put that in, retail comes from Enterprises, then visitor comments, corporate comes from the visitor surveys, but they come out quarterly. That's not stuff we control in Finance. *Who inputs all of the MHM data?* I assume it's going to be me! Its what we call one of our Olympic projects, that we're hoping we'll do because no one will be here, so that's when we'll get it done when things are done. We have a long list. And with the visitor surveys there are reports that do look at the visitor surveys for the exhibitions specifically. I think its all posted by Sabine, is it Sabine? She posts all the visitor comments on exhibitions.

I'm really curious about this, as its an incredibly tidy format, and I'm really curious about what happens next with this, as I know it gets sent out, to Directors Group Tate wide.

So it goes to the Directors, and then the Attendance report email group, basically anybody who kind of requests to go on it goes on it. So it obviously has all of the Directors again, Management Accounts and Head of Financial Control, to budget holders and Head of departments, to a whole long list of people. It goes to the whole of Exhibitions Tate Modern department, it goes to the whole of St Ives business group, Development get it as they have to do a lot of reporting on visitor numbers for grants.

Has anyone ever picked up the phone and said 'Natalie, can you just help me to understand that?'

I had specifically to deal with the question about the Barry Flanagan forecast, about why the forecast was so high when the attendance was so low, (awkward laughter), and I had to explain that we use the budget figures. And I think Alex [Beard] must have called me once to ask about forecast figures, it was about the Richter I think. We had a lot of problems trying to predict how much we were going to make out of Richter, because he wanted Enterprise to up their forecast for the catalogue sales, because Richter ran over two years, I think it was 11/12, so he rang me up specifically to ask me if it was 11/12 or 12/13. Has anyone else ever asked me? People sometimes ask me for historical data. But people ring me and ask 'what was the attendance for an exhibition that was 3 years ago', because they're obviously doing some sort of reporting. Sometimes it can be Development as they have to prove the success of a lot of previous exhibitions, so I have a lot of that, and St Ives as well, as their attendance is reported differently. For them, its general attendance, and the Marketing people at St Ives sometimes ask for the attendance during the length of an exhibition, so sometimes that happens.

They've got so many different teams in Development: individual and corporate teams in Development.

When I first started doing this, I was expecting more questions about it. I very rarely get a lot of questions about it. So I don't know whether that's because people don't look at it or because it's so perfect. I would expect more discussion about it, but I very rarely get questions. So, like if attendance starts to go down quite drastically, I wonder if people are noticing that or they just assume that that's what happens to attendance. I'm not really sure what impact it has outside, once I send it what happens with it really.

I know that conversations sometimes happen between people who would have received that weekly report and they just say in an offhand way 'Oh how's that exhibition going?', so I think its very reassuring for people to know that that data exists, but I don't know how much they're actually applying that information.

I know that we discuss it a lot, every week when we're updating the tables, we discuss it. We did quite badly the Jubilee week, and I know that historically we did quite badly during the Royal Wedding, so its probably those sort of blips that are probably more useful across the organisation. Definitely with things like bank holidays, and half-term spikes. You can start to see…And I know that marketing do their predictions for the exhibitions, so when those exhibitions start, I get data from marketing where they've done the prediction per week for the exhibition. So Damien Hirst will be 350,000 total, and then they'll do a weekly, so then on that graph we're comparing what marketing thinks and what is actually happening. The graph is the easiest thing to look at if you're looking at just exhibitions, although it doesn't show general attendance.

MHM Annual visitor presentation, 12 people turn up

ALVA reporting, for attractions with 100,000 visitors, and template

DCMS reporting

Every month I have to send the total attendance per site. They send a template, Modern, Britain, Liverpool, St Ives.

All the other major galleries, we share our monthly attendance figures by email,

And what do you do with the information they send you? Nothing.

Annual Report

Quarterly figures for Alva (corporate hospitality, tour figures) and DCMS KPIs have just changed, and they have learning figures. They go in our Statutory accounts: total attendance vs last year, unique website visits, learning, BME information, international visitors, loans, fundraising. They've just changed it for this year, they've slimmed it down quite a bit. That's what the DCMS is doing, I hope that's what they're doing. They've taken out a lot of the learning, visitors with disability, BME, visitors within socio economic group 5-8, I assume they're just not interested.

But Alex has said we're going to still do that, but DCMS aren't asking any more (Learning is adults and children). Unique website visits. But it adjusts up and down every year. I do them every quarter because the visitor survey is quarterly, and we report to DCMS when we have the audit in May/June.

We've added in a lot more KPIs recently. For previously, it was just what we were reporting to DCMS, but recently a lot of stuff has been added in, like HR data, diversity, turnover etc has been added in . So this is the first one. Internal information as well as DCMS KPIs. If DCMS don't want it any more, it doesn't mean that we should stop looking at that stuff. For diversity of candidates.

The scale of it is phenomenal.

Change question

I am looking at the attendance report and I'm looking to change it, and I think its just cosmetic

This summary sheet and the enterprises and catering figures go in a separate report each month and they go to Income Group, I send it over to the Directors office.

I don't really have much to do with it once it has gone, so I don't really know how people use it. Sometimes the director of st ives will go to me 'oh we've done quite well this week.' So I know people are looking at it, but I really don't know what people are taking from it. So sometimes it feels a bit like doing it for doing it's sake. But I'm sure people do look at it. I hope people are looking at it. Otherwise I'm wasting a whole day every week just putting this thing together.

I suppose, in some ways, there's almost a risk that when someone's doing their job very thoroughly, there's almost that risk of other people saying 'well I know that person's dealing with that so I don't need to engage with it' That can happen in organisations.

I don't know whether people look at it and assume Finance is doing something with it. Because obviously we look at the income, if something comes majorly under budget, we think how are we going to fill that gap? So when Flanagan did really bad, Richter was on at the same time, so we looked at the income and saw that Richter will fill the gap that Flanagan's not producing

Was it programmed anticipating that Flanagan might be relatively weak and therefore we ought to programme it against something more robust that could carry it through?

The thing is to look at the difference between Actual and Budget, because budget should really be how people think its going to perform. So the fact that Flanagan underperformed so much, then people had to look at it and think 'was it the ticket price?'. Was it external factors, was there another Barry Flanagan show 6 months ago somewhere else? When things do badly…. But then also, Why did Richter do so well: was it there hasn't been a Richter show for a very long time? Is it the quality of the work? That sort of thing goes across the organisation, and you have to look at marketing, what kind of marketing was done, what other things are happening at the same time.

I know Chris Dercon was saying he was amazed, everyone was surprised and slightly wrong-footed by how well Kusama did, and how well Richter did, and how come we're so wrong-footed, do we not understand what the audience wants?

I don't have much to do with the Muse predictions, but Muse predictions do things like name recognition, so in terms of name recognition, Kusama's probably not as recognizable as Damien Hirst, lets say, but then the Kusama work that was at South Bank a couple of years ago had an impact. With Tate, it's a very difficult thing

The Kusama is quite interactive, we had the Obliteration room. When the Hirst opened, the Kusama attendance went down, because people were queuing for tickets for Hirst, but the membership went up, it impacts a lot of other things. I read in the paper the other day, the RAcademy membership has gone up to 96,000 and 10,000 of those was during the Hockney exhibition. Is that because people went to the Hockney exhibition and thought it was brilliant, or was it so that they could skip the queue? So there's the raw data, and the more interesting thing is the implication of it, and why things are happening.

So, like, why has Hirst come down quite a lot, why is that happening? So this is Marketing's forecast, this is what you have to do Budget wise, and this is Actual, and this Finance forecast is the difference between Marketing and the Actual. Ideally we want to be ahead of budget.

Marketing do it average pw so it adds up to 350,000. Then theres a lot of talk after that. Gauguin, Rothko, Kusama, Richeter, because we had these massive blockbusters the hope is that Hirst will do better than budgeted to do. We budget quite reserved. We don't have that many revenues of income. There's a lot of discussion about how Hirst is a character that splits opinions. You'll see with Kusama, it starts high, and then goes up like crazy at the end. We don't look at what's going on at other galleries.