

ramm

► Home to a million thoughts

ANNUAL REVIEW 2020-21



#1

of 88 things
to do in Exeter
and rated



on TripAdvisor



INTRODUCTION



Councillor Amal Ghusain, Portfolio Holder Communities & Culture, Exeter City Council

This has been, without doubt, one of most challenging years in the museum's 153-year history and certainly in the lives of many of us. I am immensely proud of what the RAMM team has achieved in the face of what at times has seemed like a chaotic and uncertain world.

RAMM benefits from a strong team ethos founded on its mission and values with high levels of ownership and pride in the museum. The team's response to the museum's sudden closure and the lockdown was exemplary, showing flexibility and resilience. RAMM was able to respond quickly: transferring work to home overnight, moving services online, developing new services in response to community need and maintaining skeleton staffing to care for buildings and collections. All of this was accomplished by a team much reduced by staff furlough.

The pandemic showed how important culture is in people's lives and how it can see us through rough times.

It also showed us how much the museum means to our local population. It soon became clear that RAMM had a very important role to play in connecting people with culture and each other during the crisis. The whole team stepped up to the challenge of providing hope, inspiration, beauty and a bit of fun to the people of Exeter and Devon.

We are aware that creativity will continue to be a lifeline for many, as we continue to emerge from the pandemic. The museum's work with young people experiencing difficulties with their mental health is just one way that RAMM is supporting this recovery.

The future is not going to be easy as RAMM, like many other cultural organisations, faces financial challenges and continues to operate under restrictive conditions to mitigate the risk of Covid. However, RAMM is well placed to come out of this stronger than ever, rooted as it is in the community it serves. The breadth and ambition of RAMM's work gives it an instrumental role in the creative and cultural life of the city and region. This is never more important than now as we transition to a new, brighter future.



INTRODUCTION



Camilla Hampshire, Museum Manager

This last year has been a true test of our resilience as we have adapted to ever-changing circumstances. The museum was open for only 32 days in the year and much of the team was on furlough, but, despite these challenges, we achieved so much.

Lockdown highlighted the importance of personal creativity. We celebrated community spirit with our online and physical exhibition *Lockdown Legends* and offered regular weekly guided creative challenges under the RAMM at Home banner. Recognising that some households have limited digital access, we worked with Exeter City Community Trust to deliver 500 physical packs of creative materials to local people.

RAMM, along with so many organisations, made a 'digital pivot' to support communities and individuals in their homes.

This year demonstrated the value of our online assets and services. We launched Showcase, a web platform for digital exhibitions, collaborations and untold stories, and unveiled a new online museum shop. We increased and improved existing collections content on RAMM's Collections Explorer, offered virtual museum tours and developed online materials for home learning. Online storytelling, workshops and talks connected people through music, song, rhythm and rhyme. As lockdown eased, we encouraged Covid-safe explorations of local heritage, offering online Roaming with RAMM activities and interactive tours of Exeter.

Covid curtailed much of the targeted work that we would normally undertake with communities. However, we managed to move our *Out and About: Queering the Museum* and Youth Panel projects online.

Throughout this period, RAMM supported local and regional artists by creating new opportunities. Devon-based artist-photographer Léonie Hampton produced *A Language of Seeds* and Amy Shelton was commissioned to create *Biophilia: The Exeter Florilegium*. The museum was able to acquire *Breathe* by Michelle Sank, part of a series of social documentary photographs shot during lockdown, thanks to the Contemporary Art Society's Rapid Response Fund.

Since reopening in May, we have begun to build back our visitor numbers and we are looking forward to better times ahead. I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all of the individuals, communities, supporters and friends who have uplifted, inspired and helped us to continue making a vital contribution to the people of Exeter and beyond.

3,069

views on Online Learning
web pages

STATISTICS



7,007
visits

OUR PEOPLE

55
members of staff

14
internships and work placements

197
volunteers contributing
2,191 hours

601
Friends members

WEB VIEWS



201,891
on main museum website

132,295
on RAMM Collections

16,062
on South West Collections Explorer

36,320
on Exeter Time Trail

7,778
on Young Visitors web pages

3,069
on Online Learning web pages

OBJECTS

17
acquisitions

24
loans



7.6%
volunteers
identify as BAME



11.2%
volunteers have
declared a disability



13.7%
volunteers identify
as LGBTQ+



41.0%
volunteers are
25 or younger

COMMERCIAL



£15.86
average spend per transaction in shop
(▲ last year's £11)

£3.26
spend per visitor head
(▲ last year's 87p)

£20.28
average spend per online transaction

EVENTS

8
exhibitions and displays

4
digital Showcase exhibitions

20
live digital events

830
tickets sold for live digital events



CANCELLED

7 exhibitions
211 performances
78 gallery handling sessions
59 museum-led school visits
70 tours

OR POSTPONED

GETTING SOCIAL

FOLLOWERS & SUBSCRIBERS



6455



16097



5168



363
subscribers

53
new
content
uploads

5755
new
content
views

RATINGS, GRANTS & AWARDS



Rated 4.5/5 and #1 of 88
things to do in Exeter on TripAdvisor

14 grants awarded

Achates Philanthropy Prize 2020
National Showcase (South West)

**Bronze Visitor Attraction
of the Year**
Visit Devon Tourism Awards 2020

EXHIBITIONS

RAMM's varied exhibitions programme reflects the quality and diversity of the wonderful permanent collections on display, but as with all venues, three national lockdowns had a huge impact on our schedule and many displays were either delayed or cancelled. We are grateful to all our partners for their flexibility in re-writing contracts and extending loans to enable the following exhibitions to continue despite such change and uncertainty.



Anita Corbin: 100 First Women Portraits

This visually stunning exhibition featured a fascinating mix of celebrities, famous personalities, dignitaries and unsung heroines from across the decades. In sport, in the arts, in politics and the professions, these women have all broken through the glass ceiling. One hundred powerful images by renowned photographer Anita Corbin were on display to highlight and celebrate the achievements of British women over the past century. The Royal Albert Memorial Museum would like to thank Anita Corbin and Hawkmoor Investment Management for sponsoring the exhibition at RAMM.



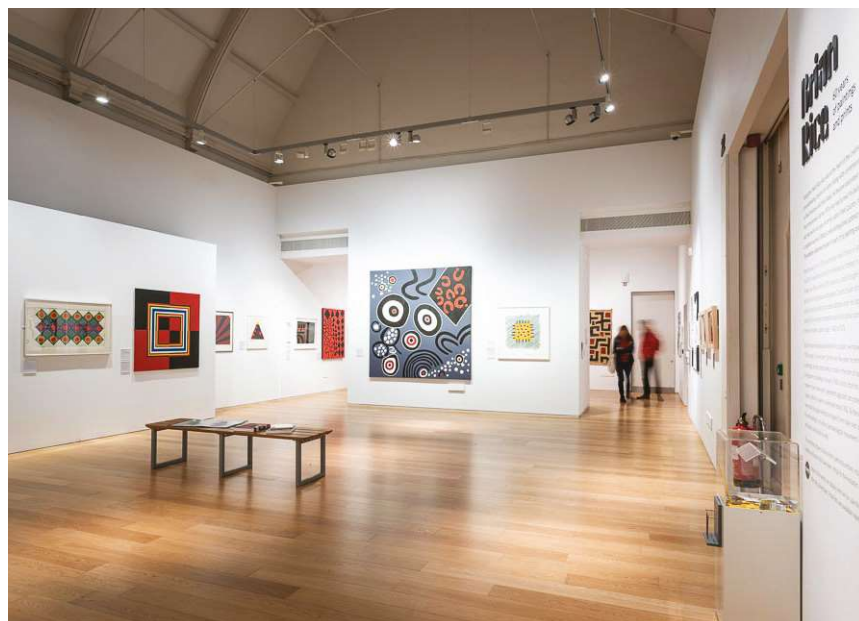
Local Art Show 2020

The annual *Local Art Show* gives art groups and societies from Exeter and the surrounding area the chance to display their members' work in an exhibition at RAMM. This year's theme was RAMM and its Collections and shortlisted entries were featured in Exeter Living, where readers were invited to vote for their favourite group. Double Elephant Print Workshop were voted the winners, producing some striking work inspired by the artists' visits to RAMM. The Royal Albert Memorial Museum would like to thank Exeter Living for their support. Due to its short run prior to lockdown, this show will be exhibited again at the end of 2021.



'I finally made it to the @RAMMuseum yesterday – my new local museum. They run a fantabulous Instagram account which has been enticing me across the last five months with seeds projects and life stories of inspiring women....Found myself surrounded by photographic portraits of First Women – @firstwomenuk and feeling proud to be a woman. Proud and inspired. It made me feel powerful'

Received as part of RAMM's 100 First Women Portraits social media engagement



Brian Rice: 60 years of Paintings and Prints

Celebrating the abstract work of distinguished West Country artist Brian Rice, this exhibition included his paintings and prints created over the last 60 years. In the 1960s, Brian Rice was at the heart of the creative and ground-breaking London Art Scene. Alongside David Hockney and Peter Blake, he was part of the crowd of artists associated with the Royal College of Art. These formative London years from 1962-1978 strengthened Rice's conviction in his abstract style and saw his reputation grow. Several of his artworks are in RAMM's fine art collection and the Royal Albert Memorial Museum is grateful to Brian Rice both for his support with the exhibition and his generous offer of additional works for the collection.



By Royal Appointment: Devon lace-makers

By Royal Appointment was part of RAMM's theme of Untold Stories which focuses on narratives less often heard. This multidisciplinary show explored and celebrated Devon's lace industry through the eyes of Devon lace-makers past and present, including those who made lace for the royal family. This exhibition unravelled the threads of some previously untold stories, revealing the beauty and technical skill of Devon lace and the history of the people who wore it.



The Royal Albert Memorial Museum would like to express its gratitude to the following individuals and institutions who helped to make this exhibition possible: Carol McFadzean and Liz Trebble, members of Devon Lace Teachers and longstanding RAMM volunteers, for their invaluable assistance with the content and loans for this exhibition, and the Textile Society for a grant to conserve two 19th century lace designs. Additional objects were lent by Her Majesty The Queen; Allhallows Museum, Honiton; Cosprop Limited, London; Dean and Chapter Exeter Cathedral; Devon Lace Teachers; Fairlynch Museum and Arts Centre, Budleigh Salterton; Mrs Gould; Pat Perryman; Pat Webber; and Woodbury Salterton C of E Primary School.

RAMM would also like to thank HM Government for providing Government Indemnity for several of the loans and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England for arranging the indemnity.

EVENTS

With the museum closed and physical events cancelled, we had to be creative and adaptable throughout 2020 with our events programme.

In April 2020, we launched our online craft activities programme RAMM at Home. These engaging videos were presented by an artist, who demonstrated how to create your own art inspired by items in RAMM's collections. There were plenty of activities to inspire everyone, such as jelly fish made from plastic bottles and paintbrush Romans.

Across the summer, Roaming with RAMM encouraged people to unleash their inner-detective and go head-to-head in a family-friendly adventure through the hidden history of Exeter. We released a series of clues to get people exploring the city on foot, unravelling riddles and breaking ancient codes as they searched for six intriguing treasures lost to time yet standing in plain sight.

We delivered the first of our digital events in August encouraging people to discover, explore and interact with RAMM from the comfort of their own homes. Our Storytelling Live from RAMM sessions were inspired by objects in the museum and attracted an audience of over 950.

Throughout the year, our programme of events continued with online talks covering subjects such as Girtin's Cathedral and Seedscapes: Botanical Photography. We also held two high-profile online speaker events to tie in with our *100 First Women* exhibition featuring swimmer Beth French and Antarctic explorer Felicity Aston. These gave fascinating insights into the achievements of two extraordinary women.

We brought our varied programme of short courses online, including Blueprints: The History of the Sewing Pattern and Straight Laced: Corsetry Through the Ages. These were incredibly popular, attracting not only people from the UK but an international audience including people living in Japan, Australia and Canada. This is something we would never have been able to achieve if they had not been online.

We also moved our RAMM Lates online as free events. These included In Conversation events with artists, live storytelling from around the world, and fascinating speaker events. We combined live Zoom sessions that people could join on the night with pre-recorded content released across our social media accounts and interactive elements such as debates, live quizzes and bingo sessions. They were incredibly well received and attracted around 700 people across the two events we held.



HISTORY OF CORSETS

'Even though it meant getting up at 4:30am NY time, I thoroughly enjoyed the program and am so impressed with all that RAMM offers during this pandemic time.'

Gwendolyn Saul, PhD
Curator of Ethnography and
Ethnology, New York State Museum

GETTING OUTDOORS

'Huge numbers of young people are currently experiencing difficulty with their mental health. [...] Getting outdoors and being creative can help young people, and all of us, to improve our health and happiness.'

Laura Blatherwick, project partner
from Youth Arts and Health Trust



COLLECTIONS

Despite the pandemic and lockdowns, this year saw several significant additions to RAMM's collections. Some came from locations close to home, including finds from six archaeological sites and additional beetle specimens collected by former RAMM volunteer Nigel Tucker.

Devon Lace Teachers and their students made a new piece of coloured lace for RAMM's exhibition *By Royal Appointment*. Inspired by an old Honiton lace design in the museum's collection and an historic style of Devon lace, the piece named *Exeter Chromatic* brings RAMM's extensive lace collection into the 21st century.

RAMM also acquired a banner made by Fridays for Future Exeter relating to the Global Climate Strike in 2019. We also began collecting items relating to the Covid-19 pandemic in Devon.

Other items such as a writing desk that belonged to the journalist James Chadwick (1771-1855) came from much further afield. In 1837, he left Exeter and emigrated to Brooklyn accompanied by his wife, children and lap desk. Chadwick's son Henry also became a journalist, but is now best known as the Englishman who was the 'father of baseball'. An American descendent of Chadwick generously returned this intriguing item to its Exeter home.

Through support from Art Fund, the Friends of RAMM and the Kent Kingdon Bequest, RAMM purchased an important watercolour by Thomas Girtin (1775-1802) of Exeter Cathedral. Dated 1797, it is the most informative view that survives showing the cathedral interior before major changes were undertaken by John Kendall in 1810-30. It is a unique record of the box pews in the nave installed in the 1680s, the arrangement of organ pipes which were subsequently removed and the appearance of the nave floor before it was repaved. Although he died aged just 27, Thomas Girtin is widely recognised as one of the most influential figures in the history of British art.



'A model lecture! Excellent illustration, super actual examples, clear delivery and Shelley's boundless enthusiasm. Thank you!'

Participant in Well Heeled: Shoes and Boots



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CONTEMPORARY ART

Acquisitions

2020 saw some major acquisitions of contemporary art and kick-started the new collecting policy for photography.



RAMM acquired *Eden 6* by critically-acclaimed artist Susan Derges, whose experimental photographic techniques, along with a move to Dartmoor in 1992, led her to create new, innovative work of local rivers. Derges is best known for her camera-less techniques which allow her to produce unique photographic prints. *Eden 6* was created in the River Taw in 2004 on a moonless but starlit night by submerging photographic positive paper just beneath the water's surface and exposing it to a brief flash of light. Two other works in the series, *Eden 4* and *Eden 5*, are held in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Breathe by Michelle Sank was purchased by the Contemporary Art Society through its Rapid Response Fund which, in partnership with Frieze London, was a response to the Covid-19 pandemic to support both artists and museums across the UK. Michelle Sank is an internationally-acclaimed photographer based in Exeter. *Breathe* is part of a series of social documentary photographs shot during last year's lockdown in the Wonford area of the city. Through these images, Sank explored how Exeter residents negotiated their relationships to each other and their interactions with, and in, private and public spaces.



Ocean Flowers by Susan Derges & John Wedgwood Clarke was donated by the artist following its showing in the RAMM exhibition *Sea Garden*, 2019. It is a unique artists' book of 23 Giclée prints and 23 poems by Exeter-based poet John Wedgwood Clarke. The photographic images are inspired by Victorian botanist and photographer Anna Atkins, who published one of the first photography books.



Partnerships

The Contemporary Art Curator continued to work in partnership with organisations across the city.

Despite lockdowns and travel restrictions, the major partnership with Arts & Culture at the University of Exeter, *Here's to Thee* led by the internationally-renowned artist Simon Pope continued through online research, workshops and events. Pope is collaborating with a team of creative practitioners and academics to explore the ecology and human cultures of cider-making. Supported by Canada Council for the Arts and Gray's Devon Cider, the public events provided new discoveries into the rich and fascinating world of microbiomes.

Commissions

During the first UK lockdown, RAMM supported local and regional artists by creating new opportunities. These new commissions were selected by specialist independent panels.



A Language of Seeds

Devon-based artist-photographer Léonie Hampton was selected to complement the touring exhibition *Seedscares: Future Proofing Nature* (displayed June to September 2021) and the museum's extensive collections of seeds. This series of photographs created between May and October 2020 celebrates the artist's vegetable garden, family and friends while responding to RAMM's botany collections. Hampton's lens captures the beauty of the natural world while attending to the urgent climate crisis.



Biophilia: The Exeter Florilegium

Amy Shelton began creating an herbarium of pressed plant and wildflower specimens compiled from her daily lockdown walks around Exeter in spring and summer 2020. She collected flower contributions from staff and patients at the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS hospital, as well as specimens from the gardens of people self-isolating. Shelton's proposal was selected by the panel Peter Randall-Page, sculptor; Julien Parsons, Collections and Content Lead at RAMM; and Lara Goodband, Contemporary Art Curator and Programmer at RAMM.



The Silver Wave

Inspired by RAMM's objects from the Arctic region, Michelle Williams Gamaker completed her film during the first lockdown. *The Silver Wave* tells the story of Ada Blackjack, an Iñupiat woman from Nome, Alaska, who was the sole survivor of a doomed expedition to Russia's Wrangel Island. Based in London, Gamaker focuses on the development of fictional activism in which she restores marginalised brown characters as central figures to challenge historical fictional injustices. Gamaker won the prestigious Film London Jarman Award 2020.

After being displayed for 6 days before closure, RAMM shared this commission online in 2020. A teacher at Montessori School in Toronto, Canada showed the film to a class of 8 to 11-year-olds, calling it 'Beautiful. Sobering.'

'It is a superb case study of art creating a conduit for the free flow of feeling and ideas that empirical, academic study cannot aspire to.'

'So pleased to see that the interface between art and anthropology is thriving at RAMM'

David Andrews, Moving Image Art London

'I called in at RAMM and went to see *The Silver Wave* – I was completely bowled over by the film. Really well done whoever commissioned it...'

Organiser of Exeter-based refugee group



DIGITAL



This year saw RAMM respond to Covid-19 by building on its established digital presence. Digital was used to provide news, engagement, learning resources, family and creative activities plus advice on reopening and safe visiting.

Home Learning

On our website, new and existing content were combined to deliver fresh online learning resources for home learning. This response to the pandemic has created an exciting and sustainable resource for the future. Our Young Visitors section offered families a variety of creative activities to enjoy together throughout the year.



Online Exhibitions

Showcase went live during the pandemic. This ACE funded project provided a digital exhibition space outside the museum for extra content such as online community projects and collections stories. All of the content on Showcase connected to our exhibitions programming, including two in-house curated shows based on collections research. Additionally, there was a photographic exhibition by our Youth Panel alongside *Lockdown Legends*, which also had a physical presence in the city.



Online Shop

We also launched an online shop in time for Christmas. Our online visitors continued to access high-quality products and benefit from special offers seen in the physical shop.

Collections Website Update

Thanks to Elastic Search, RAMM's Collections website now provides faster search results and better filters to help online visitors reach the object of their search. RAMM's Collections website and its collections aggregator, South West Collections Explorer, have grown in views as well as the number of objects available. A new collection, South West Implement Petrology Group, was added to Collections Explorer as part of an English Heritage funded project.

Time Trail

Our Exeter Time Trail website continues to attract new visitors. During lockdown, its outdoor tours were an invaluable resource for people wanting a cultural walk in Exeter. Some content also features in the Hidden Exeter app, developed with the University of Exeter as part of the Hidden Cities EU Horizon project.

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**In remembrance of
our friend and colleague
Rick Lawrence
1960-2021**

.....

CONSERVATION

Caring for the collections in store and on display over the last year required enormous flexibility and resilience. The Conservation and Technical team rose to the challenge as work schedules constantly changed and work procedures had to be carried out in a Covid-safe manner.

Behind the Scenes

We looked after our collections remotely during most of the lockdown periods. Once we were able to gradually return to RAMM, we used the time without any visitors in the building to tackle long overdue storage improvement tasks. This included rationalising space at our off-site store, the Ark, creating space for new acquisitions and improving documentation.

The lockdown period also gave us the opportunity to deep clean all museum galleries, mainly focusing on cleaning and checking objects on open display. With necessary maintenance and repair work carried out by the Technical team throughout the building, we were able to ensure that RAMM sparkled when we finally welcomed visitors back.

Exhibitions

Even though the exhibitions schedule was very fluid at times, we nevertheless installed, de-installed and condition-checked six exhibitions and one smaller video installation. This also included practical conservation work on approximately 30 different seeds and 10 herbarium sheets from our Natural Science collection for the exhibition *A Language of Seeds*.

We were able to make changes to our permanent displays and give two delicate dresses a much-needed rest by changing them for newly conserved and mounted costumes. We also started conservation work on ethnographic objects for our much-anticipated exhibition *In Plain Sight* in 2022.

Placements

We are proud to have supported two student placements throughout the pandemic and three national lockdowns. While we had to adapt the work programme to accommodate working from home, these students gained valuable practical experience in hands-on conservation. This is something that had been difficult for their university to provide at the time.

We also supported the learning experience of conservation students abroad by giving a talk as part of a symposium organised by the Department for Fabric and Apparel Science at Delhi University. Additionally, we spread the word about conservation online by taking part in #AskAConservatorDay.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Out and About: Queering the Museum Diwali Celebrations

Out and About: Queering the Museum is a multi-faceted project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This project explores how to empower lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) communities to uncover and create existing and new LGBTQ+ heritage at RAMM.

Curators and engagement specialists at RAMM have been working with Dr Jana Funke (University of Exeter) and socially engaged artist and writer Natalie McGrath to invite LGBTQ+ people to interpret the collections and reveal previously obscured aspects of LGBTQ+ heritage.

This is being achieved through a wide-ranging series of events, an online trail and website, six new artist commissions, a new piece of creative heritage writing, a series of blog pieces from the project's research volunteers, a digital Queer Collectors' Case, staff and volunteer training, and a new interactive by Stand + Stare to house oral histories. This phase of the project will be completed in Jan 2022.



Museum at Home

Together with Exeter City Community Trust and Wellbeing Exeter social prescribing network, RAMM sent out 500 physical activity packs to shielded, vulnerable and isolated people in the city. These packs contained three activity sheets, word searches, coloured pencils, a postcard and a small gift. This meant that people without access to our online resources could benefit from the sense of achievement and connection that doing something creative can bring.

Digital schools resources

We released a comprehensive set of digital learning resources on Ancient Egypt, Romans in Devon and the Second World War. These resources are aimed at Key Stage 2 (7 to 11 year olds) and are designed to help teachers, parents and carers who are looking for school activities to do at home. We designed the Romans in Devon resource in collaboration with freelance education advisor Sarah Creek. We also produced teachers' notes in order to support teachers using the resources.

To celebrate Diwali this year, we worked with the Exeter Hindu Cultural Centre to host virtual festivities over social media. We shared content such as videos that looked back on our past celebrations, recipes such as Coconut Ladoo, crafts such as Rangoli, and even a tutorial for a Bollywood dance routine.



Holocaust Memorial Day

RAMM joined in Holocaust Memorial Day commemorations by co-hosting an online workshop to paint stones.

Art and wellbeing

Artist Amy Shelton explored the healing power of pressed flowers in preparation for an exhibition that would eventually be shown in 2021. She worked through remote activity packs with older people in ECC sheltered housing, and the staff welfare team at the local hospital.

Lockdown Legends

In July 2020, we joined award-winning broadcaster and presenter Angela Rippon CBE, Liveable Exeter and Exeter City Council in asking people across Devon to nominate their *Lockdown Legends*. Local people who had shown particular kindness, courage, humanity or ingenuity during the coronavirus pandemic were celebrated in an online exhibition supported by Radio Exe and Archant. *Lockdown Legends* honoured an incredible variety of people, from refuse collectors and cleaners to food banks and pharmacy staff. They included volunteers who made face masks, young children who raised funds through walks, older people bringing colour and meals to their communities, as well as doctors and care home staff. The online exhibition is at: showcase.rammuseum.org.uk/showcase/lockdown-legends.



'The world has become a very small place for me and RAMM [...] takes me beyond the pinched smallness of my current life to expand through cultures, particularly those overseas people that I knew and love, and transports me across time and place.'

RAMM Supporter



SKILLS DEVELOPMENT



Youth Panel Update

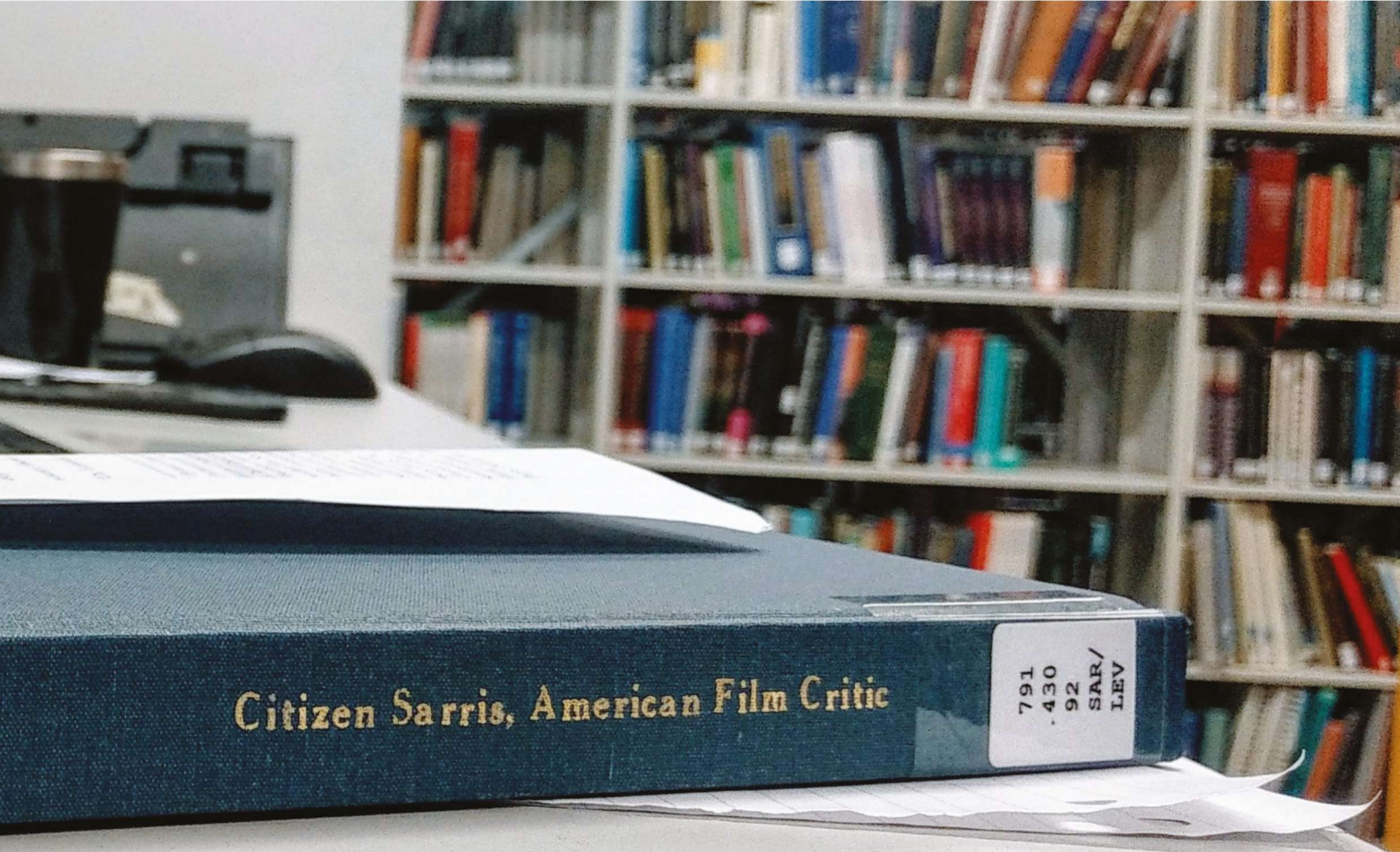
Despite the impact of Covid-19, RAMM's Youth Panel achieved a huge amount this year. With many members working from home, our collaboration had a truly international dimension with panelists contributing from various different areas of the UK, Europe and India.

In June 2020, the Youth Panel took part in the Kids in Museums social media takeover day. The panel put together varied and interesting content with a focus on keeping inspired and active during lockdown, all linked in creative ways to the museum and its collections. The day was a huge success with content that was both professionally executed and different from RAMM's usual social media output.

We developed a series of social media campaigns looking at different museum objects, thinking about personal collections and asking members of staff about their jobs. Having the Youth Panel design and deliver regular content that appeals to their age group has been an effective way of attracting younger audiences.

The panel worked together on a photography exhibition with Exeter-based photographer and educator Brendan Barry, alongside RAMM's Curator of Contemporary Art. Shot and selected by the panel, the intimate visuals revealed in this exhibition document the personal experiences of a small group of students, at a particular moment in time. Taken pre-pandemic, the images are especially meaningful to the panelists as they reflect on what now seems a very uninhibited student life. This exhibition debuted in July 2020 on Showcase and is currently being exhibited in the RAMM café until December 2021.

Due to the ongoing success of RAMM's Youth Panel, the Art Fund have agreed to continue their support for 2021/2022. Applications for new panel members close on 22 October 2021. For more information on RAMM's Youth Panel or how to apply, please look at the website: rammuseum.org.uk/ramms-youth-panel.



Internships

RAMM has continued to work in partnership with the University of Exeter, providing students who meet their Widening Participation Criteria (for example, being a care leaver, having refugee status, a disability or Black, Asian and minority ethnic students who attended a state school/college in a 'low participation neighbourhood') with secure paid internships. This year, RAMM supported three students to take part in a 140 hour (4 week) placement as part of the A2I (Access to Internships) scheme.

RAMM also took part in the University of Exeter's award-winning green consultancy programme. This provides students with additional skills and experience required to work in the highly competitive environmental and sustainability sector. As well as an interactive programme of learning, students gain practical experience through working on live business projects. RAMM worked with two geography students in a week long internship opportunity. One student focused on waste

management across RAMM, while the other looked at making RAMM's museum building more energy efficient.

Finally, RAMM produced a new education pack for schools. Designed to complement *The Silver Wave*, the Key Stage 2 pack contains background information about the film and contemporary art practice, alongside ideas for classroom activities linked to the National Curriculum. The pack was researched and written by a student from Plymouth University in collaboration with Michelle Williams Gamaker, RAMM's Contemporary Art Curator and Skills Development Officer. The Museums Association featured this pack in their 'In Practice' section as a case study focusing on how museums can effectively help teachers talk about colonial violence.

'I feel extremely fortunate to have furthered my career with such an appropriate step-up, despite the national situation. I would not be in such a fortunate position without the experience and mentoring I received as part of the Resilient RAMM project. Thank you.'

Feedback from a departing Graduate Business Placement who secured a job at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

FRONT OF HOUSE



As with all teams at RAMM this year, Front of House have had to adapt to countless challenges. We rose to the occasion by planning, adjusting, reacting and adapting in order to support our dedicated visitors and staff.

RAMM closed

Even with RAMM closed, the work for Front of House did not stop. The security of the building and its maintenance schedule were kept up by a small but dedicated team. Front of House completed an extensive list of cleaning, decorating, fixing, and updating around the building. They provided additional support to other teams who were unable to access the building.

This support included making up activity packs, shop stock take, scanning Natural Sciences donor's and collector's archives, updating contacts, social media posts and research, post/admin for all departments and sorting out events resources.

Their own tasks included a deep clean across all museum stores (including the Ark), galleries and back of house areas, fire tests, tap flushing, closure checklists, processing donations for RAMM Development Trust and the Friends of RAMM, refunds for corporate hires, developing a new Museum Assistant induction and updating procedures files. Front of House also helped to organise all of the equipment and desks so that people in other teams could both work from home and be at RAMM as needed. This was all done whilst juggling key holder cover so that contractors could continue to carry out essential work, including installing a new accessible lift.

RAMM re-opened

It was a new world of one way systems, hand sanitising, safety advice, face coverings, hand washing, people counting, risk assessing, room moving, desk booking and beyond when we reopened. We had to quickly adapt to a new way of ensuring that our visitors (and staff) were safe, whilst making sure that they enjoyed their visit to RAMM after missing it for so long.

A new team

During the various openings and closures, the Front of House team continued to develop and evolve. We said goodbye to some familiar faces, but welcomed new ones with different skills and backgrounds. This included two new Kickstart Museum Assistant trainees to help us with day-to-day service whilst increasing their knowledge of the museum world.

We have become more focused on the visitor experience whilst still achieving all of the operational demands. Despite not being back to our full offer and having restrictions in place, we received an increase on our annual VAQAS score to achieve 85% in July.



COMMERCIAL

Following a record year's trading in 2019/20, it was disappointing to have to close the doors to the Shop at RAMM during lockdown. However, this year still had its highlights as we, like so many others, pivoted to adapt.



Launch of new website

During the November lockdown, staff worked hard behind the scenes to launch the Shop at RAMM online. Available in time for Christmas, the online shop did an excellent first month's trading. In January, the online shop helped people to stay in touch as they adapted to another lockdown, selling over £1,000 worth of greetings cards in less than a month. It continues to do well and is a great marketplace for RAMM's unique gifts and special offers. Find out more at: shop.rammuseum.org.uk.

Six weeks of sales

Although the physical shop could only be open for 6 weeks of the financial year, we were heartened by the support of our visitors and customers who were able to come in to RAMM. Despite only receiving 25% of our usual visitor numbers, we took over 45% of our usual sales for the time of year. People particularly enjoyed gifts relating to Anita Corbin's *100 First Women* exhibition and Anna Grayson's *Art Thief* photographs, alongside the puzzles, games and books that were so popular this year.

TOP PRODUCTS BY QUANTITY



Face masks

RAMM's Albert's Ale



RAMM's Cityscape Christmas card

TOP PRODUCTS BY INCOME



Double Elephant prints



100 First Women catalogue



Brian Rice prints

FUNDING

'RAMM is my release, my escape and my transportation to lives past and possible futures. [...] Whether a planned visit or a 10-minute pop-in, RAMM is a release for my soul and juice for my intellect.'

Received as part of the My RAMM campaign from a RAMM supporter



Despite incredible support from Exeter City Council and Arts Council England, RAMM like many cultural organisations has been hit hard by the pandemic. Several unpredictable factors meant that RAMM could only open to the public for 32 days between April 2020 and March 2021. With RAMM's doors closed, many of the income streams that sustain RAMM's work disappeared overnight. Thanks to support from a variety of organisations, we found new opportunities to connect with our local and wider communities.

Eden 6 by Susan Derges was purchased with assistance from the ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the Friends of RAMM, and private donors after a review of the collecting policy for fine art photography. It was undertaken by an Assistant Curator of Photographs who worked at RAMM for six months in 2019 as part of the Victoria & Albert Museum's photography curators' training programme, which is funded by Art Fund.

Thanks to the generous support of the Art Fund, the Friends of RAMM and the Kent Kingdon Bequest Trust, RAMM acquired a stunning watercolour painting by eighteenth-century artist Thomas Girtin. First exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1798, *The Interior of Exeter Cathedral* is an important source of information and inspiration for exploring Exeter's heritage.

RAMM's intergenerational project *Out and About: Queering the Museum* has been empowering LGBTQ+ communities with the invaluable support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Building on the success of the Rainbow Trail, the 18-month project invites LGBTQ+ people to reveal, create and celebrate LGBTQ+ heritage in RAMM's collections.

The Youth Panel's photography exhibition *Shots Taken: Books, Bars and Beyond* was made possible by the continuing support from the Art Fund, who helped to set up the Youth Panel in 2019. This project afforded young people the opportunity to contribute to the museum's work in an active and meaningful way. At a time of uncertainty, panel members were able to reflect on their shared experiences, while gaining new skills and knowledge at RAMM.

Hawksmoor Investment Management generously sponsored Anita Corbin's *100 First Women Portraits* exhibition at RAMM. Fifteen of the 100 First Women had direct links to the South West, whose incredible achievements are inspiring the next generation. RAMM would like to thank Hawksmoor for their continued support in a challenging year.



Special thanks to:

RAMM's dedicated family of volunteers, including those who run the museums supporting charities, the Friends of RAMM and the RAMM Development Trust.

RAMM's supportive Patrons

Edmund Burke, Andrew Gould, Madeleine Jevon, Chris Rolfe, Jenny Rolfe, Adrian Sassoon, Julian Steer-Fowler.

Plus our Patrons who wish to remain anonymous.

Honorary Patrons

Nick Baker, Sir Alan Budd, Charles Courtenay Lord Devon, David Fursdon HM's Lord Lieutenant of Devon, Steve Knightley, Heleen Lindsay-Fynn DL, John Lloyd Maunder, Julia Tremlett, General Sir John Waters.

Thank you to our loyal Friends

Over 150 years ago, public support helped to make RAMM a reality. This year, your support matters more than ever in securing the museum's future. We would like to thank all the individuals and organisations who have supported this much-loved institution over a challenging year. We would like to thank those who have made a vital contribution over the past financial year. Without you, so many of the achievements you have read about in this annual review would not have been possible.



Thank you to all our 2020-21 funders, sponsors and partners:

- ▶ Allhallows Museum
- ▶ Archant
- ▶ Art Fund
- ▶ Arts Council England
- ▶ Barnstaple Library
- ▶ Canada Council for the Arts
- ▶ Clare Milne Trust
- ▶ Contemporary Art Society
- ▶ Cosprop Ltd
- ▶ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
- ▶ Devon Lace Teachers
- ▶ Devon Wildlife Trust
- ▶ Double Elephant Print Workshop
- ▶ Elmgrant Trust
- ▶ Exe Decorative and Fine Arts Society
- ▶ Exeter Cathedral
- ▶ Exeter City Community Trust
- ▶ Exeter City Council
- ▶ Exeter City of Literature
- ▶ Exeter College
- ▶ Exeter Community Wellbeing (ECC)
- ▶ Exeter Hindu Cultural Centre
- ▶ Exeter Historic Guildhall
- ▶ Exeter Library
- ▶ Exeter Living
- ▶ Exeter Pride
- ▶ Exeter Princesshay
- ▶ Fairlynch Museum and Arts Centre
- ▶ Friends of RAMM
- ▶ Gray's Devon Cider
- ▶ Hawksmoor Investment Management
- ▶ Her Majesty The Queen
- ▶ HM Government
- ▶ InExeter
- ▶ Intercom Trust
- ▶ Kent Kingdon Bequest Trust
- ▶ Liveable Exeter
- ▶ Museums Association
- ▶ National Lottery Heritage Fund
- ▶ Natural Sciences Collections Association
- ▶ Powderham Castle

'I am disabled and have mobility issues so being able to be part of events like this has been life changing - please ensure that the on-line inclusive experience remains available to me and countless others who cannot attend events in person.'

RAMM Lates Online

- ▶ Radio Exe
- ▶ RAMM Development Trust
- ▶ Refugee Support Devon
- ▶ Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Hospital
- ▶ St Leonards Primary School
- ▶ The Textile Society
- ▶ Toronto Montessori School
- ▶ UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation
- ▶ University of Delhi
- ▶ University of Exeter
- ▶ V&A Purchase Grant Fund
- ▶ Wellbeing Exeter
- ▶ Woodbury C of E Primary School
- ▶ X-Plore Youth
- ▶ YAY! Cornwall



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