

## ARLIS UK & Ireland Conference 2026

Carriageworks Theatre, Leeds

Draft programme

20-minute talk

10-minute lightning talk

1-hour workshop

<b>Monday 6th July</b>	
<b>All day: Makerspace / Meet the sponsors</b>	
<b>09:00 – 10:00</b>	Registration with tea and coffee
<b>10:00 – 11:00</b>	<p>Welcome</p> <p><b>Keynote: Sam Wilkinson</b>, Director of Public Art, University College London with artists from <a href="#">the Words Matter project</a></p>
<b>11:00 – 11:30</b>	Refreshment break
<b>11:30 – 12:30</b>	<p><b>Unlocking the Studio: How Ongoing Archival Reorganization Transforms the Art Historical Study of Marino Marini</b> <i>Nausicaa Bertellotti (University La Sapienza of Rome)</i></p> <p>For decades, the study of Marino Marini has been hindered by fragmented records and a somewhat superficial approach to cataloguing. This has left a significant gap between the finished masterpiece and the "material thought" that lived within the studio. In this paper, we'll explore how the ongoing systematic reorganization at the Fondazione Marino Marini in Pistoia (Italy) is finally changing this landscape.</p> <p><b>Unlocking the gate: Developing a Toolkit for Artists' Archiving at the National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL)</b> <i>Ruth Hallinan (National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL))</i></p> <p>The National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL) collects, stores and makes accessible for research an unparalleled collection of material about Irish art and design in all media. NIVAL's acquisitions policy does not discriminate between professional or amateur artists and designers and passes no judgement on quality, proficiency or reputation. Despite this, there is as yet a lack of information on practitioners from diverse backgrounds. This talk will build on a residency held at NIVAL and a workshop at the ARLIS Conference in Limerick last year to explore the development of a toolkit to overcome these gaps.</p> <p><b>Found handwriting and the ethics of collecting</b> <i>Lisa Tustian (Cardiff Metropolitan University)</i></p> <p>This presentation will look at the ethical considerations of using found handwriting, as a potentially sensitive and sensational material. How can we, as uninvited agent, justify using the words of an unwitting contributor who has no comeback? How do we tread the line between making engaging work whilst respecting the privacy of this absent "collaborator"?</p>

	<p><b>“Why are you keeping these?”: Retrieving Archival Value from Automotive Technical Sketches and Drafts</b> <i>Thomas Poole (British Motor Industry Heritage Trust)</i></p> <p>The British Motor Industry Heritage Trust (BMIHT) Archive holds an extensive collection of design records, including cancelled drafts of technical drawings, vehicular concept art, and the early sketches of prominent automotive designers. Such technical records are not typically viewed as artistic. However, these sketches are artworks in their own right. Is there any informational or artistic value to such materials? To what extent can a technical sketch be an archival record? Furthermore, how can we convey value to audiences, through display, archival description, or interpersonally?</p>
<p><b>12:30 – 13:30</b></p>	<p>Lunch (not provided)</p>
<p><b>13:30 – 15:00</b></p>	<p><b>Visits (optional, sign up on the day, subject to capacity)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The Leeds Library</a> – 15 delegates Guided tour of the oldest surviving subscription library of its type in the UK, founded in 1768 (10 mins walk)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Leeds Arts University Library</a> – 15 delegates Guided tour of the library for the only specialist arts university in the North of England (20 mins walk)</li> <li>• Leeds walking tour – 20 delegates Come along on a whistle-stop tour of some of Leeds’s heritage, architecture and street art (walking for approx. 1 hour)</li> </ul> <p>Or</p> <p><b>Facilitated networking</b></p>
<p><b>15:00 – 16:00</b></p>	<p><b>Artists in residence at the RCA library</b> <i>Angie Applegate and Corinne Noble (Royal College of Art)</i></p> <p>The RCA Library’s artist in residency programme invites RCA staff or students to respond to our collections or space. Together with Library staff, the ‘Residents’ install artworks, offer participatory events, curate an associated reading list and design an accompanying bookplate. This workshop illustrates that by accommodating creative responses we will “not look at the Library in the same way again”. We will discuss the background and development of the programme, provide an overview of each Residency and reflect on the lessons learned, and will include a repeat of the zine-making poetry workshop with Resident Beth Malcolm.</p> <p>Or</p> <p><b>Challenging Collections: Balancing Ethics, Pedagogy, and Access</b> <i>Carrie Winstanley, Kornelia Cepok, Sandra Celada, and Kerenza Ghosh, (University of Roehampton)</i></p> <p>We’ll examine the challenge of managing contested educational resources, asking how special collections in libraries and archives can respond to materials with complex, difficult or provocative histories. The session draws on our on-going ‘Challenging Books’ project; an initiative exploring how higher education libraries, students, teacher educators and partner-schools can develop principled, evidence-informed approaches to collection management balancing preservation, pedagogy, and ethical responsibility. The workshop foregrounds practical strategies for contextualisation, interpretation and audience engagement to support transparent, accountable and educationally defensible stewardship of challenging collections.</p>

16:00 – 16:20	Refreshment break
16:20 – 17:20	<p><b>Indelible / Ephemeral: Collecting the Commemorative Tattoo through Contemporary Print and Ceramic Practices</b> <i>Lauren Anderson Clarke (Ulster University Belfast School of Art)</i></p> <p>As indelible yet ultimately ephemeral inscriptions on the body, tattoos operate as archives of psychosocial and sociocultural memory, reflecting the cultural values and lived experiences of their time of creation. Adopting an art historical and practice-as-research approach, the project explores tattoos through the lens of ceramic and print-based forms by transforming their visual and embodied narratives into tangible objects that can exist beyond their natural lifespan. In doing so, the artistic object becomes both a recording medium and an archival material, capable of preserving not only tattoos' visual aesthetics, but recontextualises them as collectible, archivable artefacts, ensuring that their cultural and affective meanings remain accessible to future generations.</p> <p><b>Adopting a mode 2 methodology in archival processes</b> <i>Sue Ball (University of Leeds)</i></p> <p>Launched in 2009 in Leeds, Light Neville Street is a case study of artist-led design and the prioritisation of sound and light in an engineered 100m-long infrastructure. With The Henry Moore Foundation's Sculptors' Papers, the author archived the project as a form of protest at its de-installation (2022) and as research into the use of intangible materials of sound and space in public sculpture. This talk presents the impact on archival processes of adopting a Mode 2 methodology. Realised through iterative interventions into the collection by the originating design team, stakeholders, and publics, project documentation and archival logics become material for interdisciplinary interrogation. Using this reflexive methodology, a community of co-researchers consolidates to strengthen the 'ownership' of the collection.</p>
17:20 – 18:00	Free time
18:00 – 19:30	Drinks Reception at Carriageworks Theatre

20-minute talk

10-minute lightning talk

1 hour workshop

<b>Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July</b>	
<b>All day: Makerspace / Meet the sponsors</b>	
<b>09:00 – 09:30</b>	Registration with tea and coffee
<b>09:30 – 10:30</b>	<p>Welcome</p> <p><b>Keynote: Kate Dossett</b> (Professor of American History, University of Leeds)</p>
<b>10:30 – 11:00</b>	Refreshment break
<b>11:00 – 11:50</b>	<p><b>Storehouse of Stories: V&amp;A East Storehouse and the Renier Collection of Historic &amp; Contemporary Children's Books</b> <i>Laura Wood (National Art Library, V&amp;A Museum; ARLIS UK &amp; Ireland)</i></p> <p>The new V&amp;A East Storehouse reimagines the way that collections are stored, presented and accessed. A working museum store with more than 250,000 objects available to 'order', Storehouse is also home to a large part of the National Art Library's collection, with approximately 350,000 books, journals and other publications (and counting). This presentation will discuss the challenges delivering a library service within the museological concept of Storehouse and what this means for our collections. Thinking further about what it means to collect, we will discuss the Renier Collection of Contemporary and Historical Publications for Children: one of the largest collections of children's books in the country and a highlight of the NAL's collections at Storehouse. Put together by Anne and Fernand Renier and gifted to the V&amp;A in the early 1970s, the resumption of work on the collection brings its own challenges. Largely uncatalogued, the collection is also deeply political, often propagandistic and certainly provocative. This short paper will touch on our current approach to cataloguing, and cataloguing with care, as well as our plans for the future of the collection in its new home.</p> <p><b>Double Inequality in "Named" Collections: Sheila's Books, Rosalynde's Puppets, and Gendered Value in Special Collections</b> <i>Jacquelyn Sundberg and Jacqueline Reid-Walsh (McGill University and Pennsylvania State University)</i></p> <p>In special collections we often privilege named collections, legacies of the largely male collectors who created them. This practice unites yet segregates collector's materials within the library. We explore this bifurcation focusing on two women's collections that were transformed when "named" – they went from being "Sheila's Books" and "Rosalynde's Puppets" to capital-C Collections.</p>
<b>11:50 – 12:00</b>	Comfort break
<b>12:00 – 12:40</b>	<p><b>Managing name authorities for indigenous cultural groups at the SRU Library</b> <i>Lexi Frost (University of East Anglia)</i></p> <p>The Sainsbury Research Unit (SRU) Library is a specialist research library focusing on the indigenous arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas. It is situated within the Sainsbury Centre, a public art gallery at the University of East Anglia. The gallery and research library are funded by bequests from Lord and Lady Sainsbury, who wanted their extensive collection of modern and 'non-Western' art to form part of an educational establishment to enhance knowledge and appreciation of art from these regions among the public and within academic research. Many of the naming conventions in our cataloguing and classification schemes continue to reinforce damaging colonial precedents. We are currently in the process of reviewing and revising them to ensure that our naming conventions reflect self-</p>

	<p>identification – no easy task. In this paper, I will highlight some of the challenges we have encountered, and the complexities of handling material with a colonial legacy.</p> <p><b>Capturing the Beloved Object: Pastimes, Possession, and Incompleteness</b> <i>Alice Richardson (University College London)</i></p> <p>This short talk reflects on collecting, archiving, and analogue practices as ethical responses to contemporary conditions of archival anxiety and digital acceleration. Drawing on Jean Baudrillard’s account of collecting as a pastime that abolishes linear time, Jacques Derrida’s concept of archive fever, and Byung-Chul Han’s critique of the erosion of symbolic life, the paper examines a personal project of digitally archiving abandoned sketchbooks as both a gesture of relief and an intensification of archival desire.</p> <p><b>‘Your notebook will never help me, nor mine you’: some reflections on encountering notebooks in the archive</b> <i>Wendy Russell (British Film Archive)</i></p> <p>In her essay ‘On Keeping a Notebook’ Joan Didion writes of the personal nature of the notebook, how it ‘has meaning for it’s maker’ and therefore ‘your notebook will never help me, nor mine you.’ What, then, does this mean when we think about notebooks in the archive, which are ultimately there to be interpreted, re-activated and re-used by others?</p>
<p><b>12:50</b></p>	<p>Lunch</p>
	<p><b>Visits (optional, sign up on the day, subject to capacity)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Leeds City Museum</a> – 15 delegates Behind the scenes at our fascinating museum (2 mins walk)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Leeds Public Art Library / Art Gallery / Henry Moore Institute Library</a> Guided tour of the interconnected Public Art Library (the largest and most comprehensive specialist public art library in the North of England), Art Gallery, and the unique Henry Moore Institute Sculpture Research Library (2 mins walk)</li> <li>• University of Leeds <a href="#">Brotherton Library</a>, <a href="#">Special Collections</a> and <a href="#">Galleries</a> Guided tour of one of the UK’s largest universities – the Brotherton Library is a 1936 Grade II listed Neoclassical building and contains the research collections for languages and the arts. You will also be able to view some of the treasures of the Special Collections, and visit The Stanley &amp; Audrey Burton Gallery and Treasures of the Brotherton Gallery (20 mins walk)</li> </ul>
<p><b>15:00 – 16:00</b></p>	<p><b>Inclusive cataloguing: past, present and future challenges</b> <i>ARLIS Cataloguing and Classification Committee</i></p> <p>Art and cultural collections often reflect long-standing institutional norms that intentionally or unintentionally have marginalised voices, materials and narratives. This workshop aims to explore how we can challenge traditional cataloguing practices by sharing experiences of adopting inclusive cataloguing practices, participatory description strategies, and active audience participation.</p> <p>Or</p>

	<p><b>Workshop: Professional writing for publication: Why? Where? How?</b> <i>Art Libraries Journal editorial team</i></p> <p>This is a practical workshop for anyone thinking about professional writing, particularly, but not only, for journals. Reviews, short articles, opinion pieces or in-depth surveys, many of us have something to contribute but are often unsure about how to get started. We would like the workshop to be informal and driven by questions from participants. We will de-mystify the publishing landscape and the process of contributing to a journal, covering ongoing changes and features of current scholarly and professional communication, including peer review, open access, publishing models, re-using your content, copyright, and what to think about when choosing a journal for submission.</p>
<b>16:00 – 16:20</b>	Refreshment break
<b>16:20 – 17:20</b>	<p><b>The Museum of Breathing: The Medical Museum as Artwork and Interpretation</b> <i>Louise Atkinson (University of Sheffield)</i></p> <p>Emerging from the heterogeneous origins of the museum, where art, natural history, anthropology and medicine once coexisted, the Museum of Breathing critically reconsiders what constitutes a collection and how it operates. Developed on Instagram as part of the Wellcome Trust-funded research project, Crippling Breath: Towards a New Cultural Politics of Respiration, it challenges the authority, categorisation and bodily norms embedded within medical and museological histories of respiration.</p> <p><b>Threads of History: Contextualizing and Confronting Challenging Collections through Exhibition</b> <i>Marcie Farwell (Cornell University)</i></p> <p>Exhibitions offer the opportunity for challenging collections to be read against the archival grain by students, scholars, and artists and placed in conversation with works of art and design. In 2022-2023, Cornell University Library launched Threads of History: Textiles at Cornell, a series of 13 exhibits across 8 libraries and the Cornell Fashion + Textile Collection highlighting the acquisition of collections from the American Textile History Museum. This presentation discusses this series including the anchor exhibit, Social Fabric: Land, Labor, and the World the Textile Industry Created that incorporated voices of incarcerated, enslaved, indigenous communities, immigrants, factory workers, even the environment to tell stories of how textiles have shaped the economics, landscape, and history of the United States.</p>
<b>17:20 – 18:00</b>	Free time
<b>18:00 – 20:00</b>	Conference Buffet at The Tiled Hall at Leeds Art Gallery

20-minute talk

10-minute lightning talk

1 hour workshop

<b>Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July</b>	
<b>All day: Makerspace / Meet the sponsors</b>	
<b>09:00 – 09:30</b>	Registration with tea and coffee
<b>09:30 – 10:30</b>	<p>Welcome</p> <p><b>Keynote: Hannah Ishmael</b> (Lecturer in Digital Culture and Race, King’s College London)</p>
<b>10:30 – 11:00</b>	Refreshment break
<b>11:00 – 12:00</b>	<p><b>Challenging Absence: Collecting Montserratian Visual Culture, Community Memory and Diasporic Art Histories</b> <i>Tavian Hunter (Institute of International Visual Arts – INVIVA / ARLIS)</i></p> <p>This paper examines absence as a central challenge in art libraries and archives, using Montserratian visual culture as a case study. Although Montserrat has rich cultural histories, its artists remain largely underrepresented in Caribbean British art canons, institutional collections, and survey narratives. Such absence is shaped by colonial legacies, geographic marginalisation, migration, and limited collecting infrastructures rather than simple oversight. Drawing on fieldwork in Montserrat and archival research in the UK, including community exhibitions, oral histories, and dispersed collections, this paper asks how collections can be challenged or expanded when material has never been systematically gathered, catalogued, or formally recognised.</p> <p><b>Cultural Riches and Historical Redress: the property, ownership and use of rare books</b> <i>Christian Algar (British Library)</i></p> <p>Most British people with financial connections to the nation’s transatlantic system of slavery have insulated themselves against the human consequences and social circumstances of their investments and wealth. They have benefited from a ‘distantization’ from the circular relationship between Enslaved People, excised from Africa to the Caribbean; the produce created by enslaved labour, transported by British shipping and trade for British and European consumption and benefit; and the continuing possession, profit and enrichment – both material and cultural – derived from this circular relationship. To illustrate this relationship and address some consequences, this talk looks at the valuable and curious collection of rare and early printed books collected and used by John Bellingham Inglis (1780-1870). This talk asks, what do the descendants of merchants and collectors like John Bellingham Inglis, their families, their class, the government, and the societies they helped to construct owe to the descendants of the enslaved people?</p>
<b>12:00 – 12:10</b>	Comfort break
<b>12:10 – 12:40</b>	<p><b>The Art in the Everyday: Working with filmmakers' journals</b> <i>Dan Copley and Aimy Stevens (Edge Hill University)</i></p> <p>Edge Hill University is home to both the Terence Davies Archive and the archive of another British film director, which include significant numbers of journals. With some, there is a clear case for preservation – where they were a place for creative ideas and screenplay drafts, for example. However, the journals in both collections include sensitive information that we cannot share with researchers, but this would mean making artistic works unavailable on the basis of a few lines within a larger volume. This paper will examine the careful thinking that lies behind access decisions and reflect on our experiences working with the donors of the archive collections to make decisions that maintain the collections as research archives and satisfy legislative requirements.</p>

	<p><b>Managing a Moving Image Archive: Challenges and Opportunities</b> (not final title) <i>Jolene de Verges (Southern Methodist University)</i></p> <p>Physical collections in academic libraries always require expert care, but some have especially complex needs. This presentation explores the management of a moving image archive of over 12,000 items within an academic art library, including 16mm and 35mm prints, obsolete formats, antique equipment, feature films, news footage, animation classics, documentaries, advertising materials, and student films. What do librarians need to know to manage an archive containing fragile, rare, and sometimes hazardous materials like nitrate film? The presentation also addresses the ethical challenges of collections containing racist or propagandistic content, describing film screening events with panel discussions that explore how historically significant works can be celebrated artistically while critically examining the harmful attitudes they reflect.</p> <p><b>Careful Archiving: The Ethics of Collaborative Archiving at End-of-Life</b> <i>Elsa van Helfteren (Institute of Art Design and Technology, Dún Laoghaire)</i></p> <p>This presentation will discuss my experience as an archivist working collaboratively with a terminally ill influential Irish modern artist to record and preserve his studio and legacy, whilst placing at the centre of the project the agency of the still living archive. The project stress tested the principles of the archive to its very limits. The role of archivist became fused with the role of carer, confidante and friend as medication and illness created confusion, vulnerability, and unboundedness. The idea of the word care, and who decides what should be cared for and how, will be scrutinised. Privacy, agency, and consent will be looked at to propose an applied ethics framework or approach.</p>
<p><b>12:40 – 13:00</b></p>	<p>Conference close</p> <p>Closing remarks: ARLIS</p>
	<p><b>Visits (optional, sign up on the day, subject to capacity)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leeds Discovery Centre – 25 delegates Guided tour of the incredible museum store with over 1 million fascinating objects (30 mins walk – this visit is also then 20 mins walk from the train station if you're heading home after)</li> <li>• M&amp;S Archive – 15 delegates Did you know that British retail icon Marks and Spencer began in Leeds in 1884? Come along to see some fabulous M&amp;S collections (25 mins)</li> <li>• Royal Armouries Library – 20 delegates Guided tour of the Library and Archives collections within the National Museum of Arms and Armour. You can then stay and look around the museum galleries, or even pop into the nearby Holdfast Bookshop – Leeds's unique bookshop on a barge! (30 mins walk – this visit is also then 20 mins walk from the train station if you're heading home after)</li> </ul>