A Recent History of Writing and Drawing
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Ludwig

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ICA Education Programme

Our dynamic, artist-led Education Programme provides opportunities for schools, families and community groups to engage in creative ways with ICA exhibitions. The gallery is open for school visits between 10am and 12pm, Monday—Friday.

This pack is geared towards secondary school students pursuing Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. Teachers may find it useful to visit the exhibitions before bringing a group. If you would like to plan a trip to the ICA, get in touch and find out how we can meet the needs of your group.

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email: emma-jayne.taylor@ica.org.uk

For more information and to view our archive of previous learning activities, please visit www.ica.org.uk/education

What We Do

Artist Led Projects: Our programme includes artist-led workshops with schools and innovative collaborations between artists and community groups.

Teachers Packs: These are available with each exhibition and include exhibition notes, suggested discussion points and activities for your visit, how to prepare before visiting the exhibition and suggested activities for the classroom.

 Insets: The ICA offers professional development sessions for teachers as an opportunity to meet with artists and gallery staff, and discuss how best to bring contemporary art to the classroom.

Schools Mailing List: Keep up to date with the exciting education projects, events and workshops happening at the ICA by signing up for our mailing list.

Educators’ Openings: These private views are dedicated to education resources and offer ideas for your pupils’ visit to the ICA. Come as a teacher or as yourself to enjoy a relaxing evening in the gallery.
A Recent History of Writing and Drawing is an exhibition which brings together a number of examples of machines created to enable writing and drawing, using mechanisms such as chalk on board, holes punched in paper and images on screen.

In 2002 the programmer/designer Jürg Lehni pioneered the spray-can drawing device Hektor. Powered by Scriptographer, a piece of plug-in software crafted by Lehni which allows designers to customise Adobe Illustrator, the machine creates drawings according to the vectors defined by the proprietary package. Hektor’s performances are extremely entertaining, but they also make the important point that software need not be accepted as sold. Technologies can be personalised, adapted and refashioned to suit individual desires and needs.

After seeing Hektor at work, graphic designer Alex Rich pointed out to Lehni that the device has a significant context and history. Technologies, specifically those connected to writing and drawing, but also in a more general sense, are often customised and corralled into unexpected uses. Over the last couple of years the pair have been exchanging ideas and compiling a record of relevant examples. The gallery will contain four exhibits, two of which will perform for the viewer and two of which will be interactive.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a programme of talks and workshops that will generate content displayed in the exhibition, and which will be compiled into a catalogue at the end of the project.

Photos © Marcus Leith
Exhibits

**Viktor** is the new sibling of Hektor. It is similar to Hektor but uses four motors instead of two and employs chalk rather than spray paint. Viktor will work on a large scale, covering an entire blackboard-painted gallery wall. It will reproduce texts and drawings that elaborate on the themes of the show and which will be derived in part from talks and workshops in the gallery.

**Flood Fill** is the algorithm that drives 'paint' software. In the exhibition the potential of this software will be explored on three small screens, each driven by an adapted Apple TV. Flood Fill causes the screen to be coloured pixel by pixel, in an hypnotic fashion, and will be presented as a self-contained, functioning unit. It will reproduce drawings that will be derived in part from talks and workshops in the gallery.

**Dots on Demand** is a hole-cutting service. A workstation with a very simple graphic interface will allow visitors to type in their own sentences. They will feed a sheet of paper into the cutter and see their sentence cut out.

**News on Demand** is based on the Speed-I-Jet 798, a singular product manufactured by the German company Reiner. A handheld ink-jet printer head, the Speed-I-Jet creates single lines of text of up to 40 characters long. In the exhibition three of these devices will be loaded each day with information drawn from different news streams: headlines; economic bulletins; sports results. Visitors will be able to use them to print their customised record of the day’s events on postcards.
### Themes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Art and Design—Key Stage 3</th>
<th>Link to Key Stage 3 Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Writing</strong></td>
<td>English: After your visit think of a phrase to describe the exhibition. Experiment with using different fonts and layouts in order to best demonstrate and support the phrase’s meaning. After your visit, design your own font and give it a name.</td>
<td>Media and Moving Image: Develop understanding of how form, layout and presentation contribute to effect. For example, font, caption or illustration in printed text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Drawing</strong></td>
<td>Art and Design: During the exhibition sketch one of the machines and make notes about how watching the process affects your interpretation of the end result. After the exhibition, experiment with different tools and techniques in your sketchbook.</td>
<td>Knowledge and Understanding: Develop understanding of the visual and tactile qualities of materials and processes and how these can be manipulated and matched to ideas, purposes and audiences. Investigating and Making Art, Craft and Design: Apply and extend their experience of a range of materials and processes, including drawing, refining their control of tools and techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. The History of Tools Used to Write and Draw</strong></td>
<td>Art and Design: In groups, before the exhibition research the history and use of tools to write and draw in a certain country. Your group should then present your findings to the rest of the class.</td>
<td>Knowledge and Understanding: Develop understanding of continuity and change in the purposes and audiences of artists, craftspeople and designers from Western Europe and the wider world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. The History of Machinery Used to Write and Draw</strong></td>
<td>Art and Design: Before the exhibition choose a machine used to write or draw and investigate its history. Design a poster explaining the history of the machine to be displayed in a primary school classroom.</td>
<td>Knowledge and Understanding: Develop understanding of continuity and change in the purposes and audiences of artists, craftspeople and designers from Western Europe and the wider world.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Collaboration</strong></td>
<td>English: After your visit choose one of the machines and prepare your contributions to a debate about which of the machines is the most intriguing and why. Art and Design: After your visit work in groups and compare and contrast the sketches and notes you made during the visit and about the exhibitions.</td>
<td>Group Discussion and Interaction: Take different views into account and modify their own views in light of what others say. Evaluating and Developing Work: Analyse and evaluate their own and others’ work, express opinions and make reasoned judgements.</td>
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## Themes:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Art and Design—Key Stage 4</th>
<th>Link to Key Stage 4 Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Writing</strong></td>
<td>Before the exhibition, find the meaning of these terms: Glyph, serif, x-height, waistlyne, font, typeface, foundry, ascent, greeking, lorem ipsum.</td>
<td>How ideas, feelings and meanings are conveyed in images, artefacts and other media.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Drawing</strong></td>
<td>Before the exhibition, experiment with using a range of programs to draw the same image e.g. Paint, Adobe and compare the end results. <strong>After the exhibition</strong>, using something you made during the exhibition, create a new art work. You could sketch or paint your work from the exhibition, or incorporate it into a mixed-media piece.</td>
<td>Develop understanding of the appropriateness of the medium and a realisation of the full potential of ideas through a variety of techniques.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. The History of Tools Used to Write and Draw</strong></td>
<td>Before the exhibition, in pairs, research a certain artistic tool in terms of its history and development. Use that tool, or its modern variation, to create images to support your research when you present it.</td>
<td>Know and understand a range of work, from contemporary practice so that they are able to demonstrate an understanding of continuity and change in art, craft and design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. The History of Machinery Used to Write and Draw</strong></td>
<td>During the exhibition, sketch one of the machines. Make notes on your observations about how the machine works, what it produces and ideas it gives you for your own art work.</td>
<td>Undertake visual research using primary and secondary sources and record observations, experiences and ideas in appropriate ways.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Collaboration</strong></td>
<td>After your visit, in groups, research one of the speakers at one of A Recent History of Writing and Drawing’s Thursday Night Events at the ICA. Consider why this speaker has been asked to take part in the exhibition. Prepare a presentation with visual prompts to feedback the rest of your class.</td>
<td>Understanding of a variety of approaches, methods and intentions and the contribution of contemporary practitioners.</td>
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<th>Theme</th>
<th>Art and Design—Key Stage 5</th>
<th>Link to Key Stage 5 Curriculum</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Drawing</td>
<td>During your visit, make a detailed sketch or series of sketches of one of the drawings produced by a machine in the exhibition. Make detailed notes on the processes involved and the finished product.</td>
<td>How ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts created in the context of chosen area(s) of study within AS/ A2 Subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The History of Tools Used to Write and Draw</td>
<td>Before your visit, research the history of a certain tool used to write or draw. Present your findings in your sketchbook and present to the rest of the class. After your visit, in pairs, design a new tool which could be used to write or draw.</td>
<td>Continuity and change in different styles, genres and traditions relevant to the area of study within AS/A2 Subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The History of Machinery Used to Write and Draw</td>
<td>After your visit, from what you have observed about machinery used to write and draw in the exhibition and your own research, design your own machine which can be used to write or draw.</td>
<td>Continuity and change in different styles, genres and traditions relevant to the area of study within AS/A2 Subject.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Collaboration</td>
<td>During your visit, make notes on the experience of watching the machines at work. Include observations of how people react to seeing the machines at work. Use your notes to produce a piece of art based on the exhibition.</td>
<td>The production processes of artworks in a range of non-traditional media, such as mixed media, installation, site-specific work, assemblage, digital, film and video.</td>
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1. Writing

The exhibition explores the evolving relationship between technologies of communication and their users. Writing, as textual representation of language through signs and symbols, emerged long after the existence of language. Rather than being driven by desire to transfer more complex ideas and concepts, it grew out of the early accountancy necessity to record the facts and figures extending the capacity of frail human memory. Writing ranks third in importance as a discovery, just after the invention of the wheel and the harnessing of fire.

• What would be your modern day invention of comparable importance?

• Can you think of other communication systems, verbal and non-verbal?

Before Helvetica

The first typeface was designed by Johann Gutenberg in the 15th century for his movable type press. Today, despite the myriad of fonts available, when you look around, whether it is the mass media, advertising or infrastructure communications, the written form appears unified.

• What are the most important attributes and functions of a typeface and is it their beauty that makes some of them so ubiquitous?

Victor

“The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

“The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog

“The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog”

• Why do the typesetters and designers often use this particular phrase as a sample when testing and displaying new typeface rather than an ordinary sentence with a more relevant meaning?

Create your own poster using Alex’s font typewriter

www.lineto.com/The+Designers/Alex+Rich
2. Drawing

In The Mind’s Eye

Drawing as a form of visual expression belongs to primal human instincts. From the earliest cave drawings to the masterpieces of Dürer or Picasso, cognitive science proves that there are reasons why we draw the way we do.

• Look at Dürer’s studies of plants and compare his technique and style with that of the plant drawings by Henri Matisse and Ellsworth Kelly.

• Can you draw? Support your statement, whether negative or positive, on paper and let others be the judges.

“The Pencil of Nature”

It was both the desire and failure to capture faithfully the beauty of nature in drawing that eventually led William Henry Fox Talbot, to experiment with photographic processes in the 19th century. Not being satisfied with the limited aid of Camera Obscura, he aimed at creating a permanent imprint of nature that would remain fixed on paper.

Modern Day Hieroglyphs

At an early stage of writing, pictographs were used to represent people, places and things. As communication became more complex, different pictographs were combined to represent ideas and concepts. These new symbols became ideographs, abstract symbols that evolved beyond the original drawings.

• Think of the most commonly used modern day pictograms and invent your own.
3. The History of Tools Used to Write and Draw

The Death of handwriting?

Since the invention of the telephone, typewriter and now with our daily use of communication technology is there still need for handwriting? Graphologists, on the other hand would perhaps argue that this very personal and individual imprint can reveal some clues of our character and personality traits.

“I can write beautifully if I do it really slow”

• Write a sentence starting with your neatest and most aesthetic handwriting to the fastest and most efficient.

Sumerian scribes used to write on long, vertical tablets of wet clay, from top to bottom, right to left. Right-handed scribes had problems, since they would sometimes smudge the symbols as they wrote.

The first pantograph was constructed in 1603 by Christoph Scheiner. This was a device used to re-create diagrams. It consisted of two arms, one of which was a pointer. The other held a drawing implement. The pointer as held over the diagram in order to copy it. William Wallace invented a more complex version in 1831 called theeidograph was developed by in 1831.

“All media work us over completely. They are so pervasive in their personal, political, economic, aesthetic, psychological, moral, ethical, and social consequences that they leave no part of us untouched, unaffected, unaltered. The medium is the massage. Any understanding of social and cultural change is impossible without a knowledge of the way media work as environments.”

The Medium is the Message—Marshall McLuhan & Quentin Fiore
4. The History of Machinery Used to Write and Draw

The history of machine translation dates back to the seventeenth century. Translation machines were most commonly used during the Second World War. The Enigma machine was a cipher machine used to encrypt and decrypt secret messages.

- **Design a code and code-breaker. Write a message in your code and swap it with a friend to translate.**

The typewriter is one of the great inventions of 19th century communications technology, alongside the telegraph, the telephone, photography and the gramophone.

**QWERTY**

Qwerty, the standardized English language keyboard layout takes its name from the first six characters in the top left first row of letters. It was designed to prevent the frequent jamming of the machine by placing the most commonly used letters in English further away from each other.

- **Such layout is far from being the most efficient, intuitive or ergonomic so why do we stick at it some 130 years after its invention?**

**The Beauty of the Mechanism**

The exhibition involves a variety of interactive and non-interactive devices for writing and drawing.

Fascination by mechanical contraptions is evident in Jean Tinguely's *Méta-matics*, beautifully constructed interactive drawing machines partly inspired by Marcel Duchamp’s roto-reliefs. Peter Fischli and David Weiss have displayed their fascination with kinetic constructions in their highly entertaining and playful installation *The Way Things Go.*
5. Collaboration

The exhibition is a collaborative project by the programmer / designer Jürg Lehni and the graphic designer Alex Rich. They both share an interest in the use, misuse and reuse of recent technology and the creation of new tools. The exhibition presents a culmination of their creative exchange and exploration.

“The Exquisite Corpse”

Based on an old parlour game, in 1925 the Surrealists created their own version, named Le Cadavre Exquis. Participants would draw in turn on a sheet of paper, fold it to conceal their creation and then pass it to the next player for a further contribution. The name was derived from the words written during one of the initial games: “The exquisite/corpse/will drink/the new/wine”.

- Play a round of the game with words or drawings.

Whodunnit?

It is rumoured that the British artists, twin sisters Jane and Louise Wilson, submitted identical work for their degree shows though studying separately at different art colleges.

- What issues with regards to perception and assessment arise around their collaborative method?

In the true spirit of collaboration we asked teachers at our most recent Teachers Preview to comment on and contribute to this pack.

With thanks to Teachers from Bullers Wood School, Coulsdon College, Florida State University, King’s College London, Ravenscroft School, Selsdon High School and Sir George Monoux College who enjoyed the chance to experiment with Letterset fonts.
Events

Thursday night events (all start at 7pm)

17 July: Paul Elliman
The London-based graphic designer Paul Elliman will collaborate with Viktor on a public performance of his recent whispering-gallery podcast.

24 July: Ryan Gander
The artist Ryan Gander will employ Viktor to create a new piece from his extensive inventory of unrealised works.

31 July: Leila McAlister, James Alwyn and Caitlin Elster
Shopkeeper Leila McAlister will team up with sustainable materials and construction experts James Alwyn and Caitlin Elster, and Viktor, to propose new ways of distributing locally-produced food.

7 August: Tuomas Toivonen
Helsinki-based architect and electronic composer Tuomas Toivonen will play a concert on the Hyalonium, an electronic glass harp, with Viktor creating a visual accompaniment.

14 August: Konstantin Grcic
German industrial product designer Konstantin Grcic will present his work accompanied by Viktor.

21 August: Michael Marriott
The product designer Michael Marriott will present a 3000-year history of technology and design told through the story of the chair, illustrated via Viktor.

28 August: Jason Evans
Photographer Jason Evans will discuss his abuse of basic

Other Artists and links

More To Look At
Bob & Roberta Smiths (Patrick Brill): en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick_Brill
Tim Rollins and KOS: www.crownpoint.com/artists/rollins
“Collaborations” (Clemente, Basquiat, Warhol): http://findarticles.com
Cy Tombly: www.tate.org.uk/modern/exhibitions
The Big Draw: www.show.me.uk
Scriptographer: www.scriptographer.com
Hektor: www.hektor.ch/
Angela Bulloch’s Pushmepullme, Blue Horizon, Betaville: www.installationart.net/PDF/Bulloch.pdf
Dream Machines: www.frieze.com/issue/article/dream_machines/

Places to visit
The British Museum Department of Prints and Drawings:
www.britishmuseum.org