The Your Paintings Project

Andrew Ellis
Director, The Public Catalogue Foundation

The Work of The Public Catalogue Foundation
Opening up the Nation’s Art Collections for Enjoyment, Learning and Research
What our Work Covers
Claude Monet (1840-1926)
The Church at Vetheuil, 1880
Southampton City Art Gallery

Edwin George Lucas (1911-1990)
Pentland Hills from Kingsknowe, Winter, 1947
City of Edinburgh Council
Simone Martini (1284-1344)
Christ Discovered in the Temple, 1342
Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool

Andrew Tift (b.1968)
Alan Garner, 2010
Grosvener Museum, Chester
Henry Raeburn (1756 – 1823)
Mr George Patterson of Castle Huntly
Dundee Art Gallery and Museum Service

Essex Police, 1990, Bradwell on Sea
Essex Police Museum
Mark Senior (1864-1927)
Joshua Wilson
Leeds City Art Gallery

Richard Wilson (1713-1782)
Niagara Falls
Laura Knight (1877-1970)
The Nuremberg Trial, 1946
The Imperial War Museum, London.

Art Gallery and Museum Kelvingrove (Glasgow Life)
Museum of Scottish Lighthouses

Francis Campbell Boileau Cadell (1883–1937)
Cecilia No.2 (1912)
University of Dundee Fine Art Collections
Raúl Martínez (1927–1995)
Repetitions with a Flag, c.1966
University of Essex Collection of Latin American Art

Simon Black (1958 - 2008)
The Hospital Works, 2003
The Royal Free
Leith Police Station

Digitisation Progress
Oil Painting Digitisation

Project Completion: Dec 12

- >200,000 paintings online
- c.3,000 participating collections
- Approaching 50,000 artists

- Digitisation will have taken 10 years
Your Paintings
Tagging
Additional Search Criteria

- Types of painting
- Subjects
- Keywords
- Styles and movements

Project Planning

- Enhanced Metadata Needs
- User input and experience
- Terminology
- Collections’ input
- Existing systems/projects
Art meets Astrophysics
Your Paintings Tagger

http://tagger.thepcf.org.uk/
Free Text Workflows

• Free use of terms
• Dropdown lists
Fixed Lists Workflows

Types

Subjects
Public and Expert Tagging

The Taggers
At present there are 6,600 registered Taggers

Public: 5,806
Expert: 465
Supervisor: 19
Administrator: 9
Expert-only Tagging

Dates
Styles & Movements

Getting the Best Tags
Thresholds

Supervisory Interface

- Ambiguities
- Specific Subject tags
- People, Places, Events
- Types
A Completed Painting

Types: Portrait; Landscape

Subcategories:
- People > Children
- Fashion and costume > Children’s
- Animals and plants > Dogs; Plants and flowers; Trees and shrubs
- Natural world > Countryside; Rivers and lakes

Terms:
- Basket
- Bonnet
- Flower
- Dog
- Girl
- Lake
- Linen
- Child
- Tree
- Wall
- Sky
- Dress
- Cloud
- Plant
- River
- Flowers
- Ribbon
- Shoe
- Garden
- Landscape
- Trees
- Plinth
- Grass
- Water
- House
- River
- Sash
- Basket of flowers
- Building
- Forest
- Cliff
- Young girl

People: Miss Elizabeth Heathcote

Miss Elizabeth Heathcote (1788)
Vaslet, Lewis, 1742–1808
York Museums Trust

Public Encouragement

- Thank you messages
- Tagger levels
  - Green (2476) – 0 to 5 paintings
  - Yellow (2976) – 6 to 50 paintings
  - Red (854) – 51 to 250 paintings
  - Blue (83) – 251 to 300 paintings
  - Gold (35) – 501 to 1000 paintings
  - Master (24) – over 1000 paintings
Quotes

• “The level of engagement has been really exciting, and pupils who would normally be out playing football are staying in to tag!” Sophie Brain, Teacher at Uffculme School, Devon

• “I am having such fun! I am really looking at the pictures and thinking how I feel about them, and coming from a non-art background this is a new experience. Instead of just walking past an abstract, I have to stop and look at it, I then discover not only do I see things but I actually like the painting. Whole new world.” Marion Allen, Tagger

Benefits

• Searching Your Paintings
• Metadata for collections
• Broadens public interest in national collection
• Satisfaction of looking at paintings for longer
DATA

PCF Aims:
- Enhance quality
- Keep updated
- Add other learning resources/links
- Share with collections (APIs)

Your Paintings Website

Public Engagement Interfaces
  e.g. Tagger, Art Detective

Other Public Engagement

Art Detective
Knowledge Gaps and Errors

Valuable input from knowledgeable public

Unknown artist
Portrait of an Unknown Gentleman, c.1900
oil on canvas 73 x 52
Buxton Museum & Art Gallery

Unknown artist 20th C
Portrait of an Unknown Rheumatologist
oil on canvas 44.5 x 39.7
The Royal Free Hospital, London
Snell, Olive Constance c.1888–1962
Wing Commander Paul H. M. Richey, DFC 1942
IWM (Imperial War Museums)

Dear BBC/Your Paintings,

Thank you - the happiest surprise to find Paul's portrait on your internet site. I was the proud owner of the painting that with much sadness I sold at auction in 1995, when it was bought by the Imperial War Museum. The portrait was painted by Olive Snell at Carne’s Seat, Goodwood (home of the Duke of Richmond, friend of both sitter and artist) …

...Olive Snell had not long before exhibited her work in the US; she was the mother of the Marchioness of Zetland (now probably Dowager).

Kind regards, Diana

Public Engagement

In the Future
Citizen Curating

- Audience opinions and comments
- Audience ratings of paintings
- Views on which paintings should come out of store
- Help with artist and sitter biographies

Improving the Data Further
Enter the Experts
Conclusion

- Entire UK collection of 200,000 paintings on one website by end 2012
- Broad collaboration
- Significant audience involvement
- Unique learning resource
Thank You