

Speaker Biographies for the Fifth British Library Labs (BL Labs) Symposium Monday October 30, 2017



Dr Adam Farquhar, Head of Digital Scholarship at the British Library. Adam leads the development and implementation of the Collection Division's Digital Scholarship and Digitisation strategies. He established the Library's Digital Preservation Team, initiating and managing the Library's dataset programme (DataCite) and Technical and Human Infrastructure for Open Research (THOR), and co-ordinating the PLANETS Digital Preservation project. Adam has worked as Principal Knowledge Management Architect for Schlumberger in the oil industry and as a research scientist in the Knowledge Systems Laboratory of Stanford University.



Josie Fraser, Senior Technology Adviser on the National Technology Team, based in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in the UK Government. Josie has worked across education sectors, with governments, commercial service providers and not-for-profit organisations, developing innovative and effective practice in the use of technology. The significance of her work was recognised earlier this year by the Association for Learning Technology who awarded her Honorary Life Membership. She is chair of Wikimedia UK, a charity dedicated to supporting access to knowledge for all, promoting engagement with Wikimedia projects, including Wikipedia, Wiki Data, and the Wikimedia Commons. Between 2010-2016, she led the technology strand of Leicester City Council's £340 million Building Schools for the Future Programme - setting, promoting and delivering an agenda for educational transformation in relation to the use of technology within schools. Her work developing school workforce digital literacy, and introducing open education licences and practices to the compulsory education sector has been recognised internationally. She has worked on behalf of Childnet International to produce national cyberbullying guidance for both Labour and Conservative UK governments.



Michael Takeo Magruder, Visual artist and Researcher. Michael works with new media including real-time data, digital archives, immersive environments, mobile devices and virtual worlds. His practice explores concepts ranging from media criticism and aesthetic journalism to digital formalism and computational aesthetics, deploying Information Age technologies and systems to examine our networked, media-rich world.



Jennifer Batt, Lecturer in English at the University of Bristol. Jennifer's research focuses on eighteenth-century poetry, with a particular interest in the ways that verse is printed and reprinted across a range of different media. From 2010 to 2013, she was project manager and editor of the Digital Miscellanies Index (digitalmiscellaniesindex.org) based at the University of Oxford.



Mahendra Mahey, Manager of British Library Labs. Mahendra was at UKOLN at the University of Bath managing several projects; the Jisc-funded Developer Community Supporting Innovation (DevCSI) initiative organising several successful "Developer Happiness" events (Dev8D); how UK academic institutions could manage their research information using a common European metadata standard and supporting research in digital repositories of scholarly outputs, especially scientific datasets. He was also a technology adviser for the Jisc Regional Support Centres in the West Midlands and Scotland, encouraging academics and librarians in Further and Higher Education to use digital learning resources and make effective use of e-learning technologies and techniques in their practice. For over 10 years, he worked as a lecturer in Psychology, Social Sciences, Computing, Multimedia and English for Speakers of Other Languages in Further and Higher Education colleges in the UK and in Poland.



Stella Wisdom, Digital Curator at the British Library. In 2013, Stella co-founded with GameCity a competition for Higher Education videogame design students called Off the Map, where students are challenged to create videogames inspired by British Library collections. She has also managed Collection Storage at the British Library in Boston Spa, Yorkshire, previously worked at the Library and Information Statistics Unit based at Loughborough University, the Warburg Institute Library and the National Library of Scotland.



Jamie Andrews, Head of Culture and Learning at the British Library. Jamie led the development of literary policies and collections at the British Library prior to establishing a new role of Head of Cultural Engagement. He was awarded a Fellowship on the Clore Leadership Programme in 2012 and is currently a Trustee of Oxford House. Jamie has previous non-executive and other collaborative experience in the cultural and Higher Education sectors. He has supervised PhD students in literary and cultural studies and led several major European and UK research and cultural collaborative projects.



Jessica Mahoney, Business Partnerships Manager, The British Library. Jess has been managing the Business Audiences partnership strategy and programming at the British Library Library's Business & IP (Intellectual Property) Centre, with the aim of delivering a comprehensive service for entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). She has also supported the development and growth of the Library's national network of Business & IP Centres, based in city libraries across the UK. Prior to this, she worked as a Project Manager and Research Fellow at the University of South Wales, where she was responsible for a programme which supported women to become self-employed or start a business, with a specialist focus on the development of mentoring. She also worked as a Learning and Participation Manager at the Central School of Ballet and the National Dance Company Wales and in a voluntary capacity in the team which organised the annual Hay Festival of Literature.



Ria Bartlett, Learning Programmes Manager at the British Library. Ria has worked in the Learning Team for 14 year and manages the onsite learning programme supporting a broad range of audiences including schools, teachers, families, communities and adult learners. She is a trustee of Camden Spark; a mentor for students on the Museum Learning course led by GEM; and recently became a Governor at Regent High School in Camden.



Amelie Roper, Research Development Manager at the British Library. Amelie's role involves coordinating and supporting various activities to foster research relating to the British Library's collections. Prior to this, she worked as Digital Music Curator at the British Library and as College Librarian at Christ's College, Cambridge. She recently completed a PhD on music printing in sixteenth-century Augsburg at the University of St Andrews.



David Sparling, Head of Information Technology at the British Library. David has just joined the British Library as the new Head of Information Technology. He previously spent 20 years with First Direct and HSBC banks in various roles including Head of Architecture and Head of IT in Global Retail Banking. More recently David has been working for Cap Gemini as senior director on a major transformation programme for a European Bank. He is delighted and honoured to be leading IT for The British Library.



Ben O'Steen, Technical Lead of British Library Labs. Ben previously worked as a freelance software developer in the academic sector. He has formal training in Chemistry and he has authored a Physics GCSE course, created electronics for Art installations and co-founded the "Developer Happiness" conference (dev&d.org). Ben was the lead developer in the Bodleian Library's Research and Development department, building their Resource Description Framework (RDF) powered repository and digital asset management systems. Ben has worked on Jisc funded projects (OpenBibliography, OpenCitation) and has sat on technical advisory boards for the Web-service Offering Repository Deposit (SWORD) protocol and ORCID.



Coral Manton, Visual Artist and Researcher. Coral is an interdisciplinary artist and technologist - part of the i-DAT Research and Design Collective - with a special interest in immersive cinema and shared Virtual Reality (VR) experiences. Her present PhD research brings together her digital arts practice and professional background in museums specialising in collections, exhibitions and interactivity. She is currently working with Birmingham Museums Trust prototyping a digital collection database navigable in a 3 Dimensional game engine. She is a live visualist performing regularly at Algoraves and festivals across Europe. Recently she completed a research placement with the British Library's EThOS team exploring multimedia PhD research - a project she has presented at conferences internationally including Washington DC.



Joanne Armitage, Researcher and Artist. Joanne works with sound, embedded systems, haptic technologies, digital media and interaction design and lectures in digital media at the School of Media & Communications, University of Leeds. She recently submitted her practice-based PhD that investigates haptic technologies in computer music performance. Active as a live coder and synthesist, she performs internationally within the Algorave and experimental electronic music scenes. She has delivered numerous workshops and talks on live coding at universities and institutions in the United Kingdom and the United States of America.



Eleanor Cooper, British Library Labs Project Officer. Eleanor has just joined the BL Labs team, and is looking forward to supporting the drive to encourage creative engagement with the library's vast digital collections. From 2014 to 2017 she was Curator of the Mongolian and Manchu collections at the British Library. Eleanor has worked in various roles in the museum world and in business consultancy and is currently studying for an Arts Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded DPhil on contemporary art practice in Mongolia. She holds an MPhil in Material Anthropology and a BSc in Astrophysics.