

<b>Institution:</b> Newcastle University		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 32 Art and Design		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Expanded Interiors: Enhancing Audience Experience and Deepening Understanding of Archaeological Sites Through Site-Specific Contemporary Art		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> May 2017 – December 2019		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b> Professor Catrin Huber	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b> Professor in Fine Art	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b> August 2007 – ongoing
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> January 2018 – December 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p><i>Expanded Interiors (EI)</i> investigated Roman wall paintings, while developing site-specific fine-art installations for UNESCO World Heritage sites at Pompeii and Herculaneum. In collaboration with Parco Archeologico di Ercolano (PaErco), Parco Archeologico di Pompei (PaP), and the Herculaneum Conservation Project (HCP), the research generated multiple impacts:</p> <p><b>A.</b> Enhancing the experiences of more than 600,000 visitors from across the world. <b>B.</b> Raising awareness amongst local communities of their own heritage and culture by involving them with the research. <b>C.</b> Establishing an exemplar of best practice for the organisations managing Herculaneum and Pompeii, changing their future practice and working methods with artists creating interventions within their archaeological sites.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<p><i>Expanded Interiors</i>, funded by a peer-reviewed grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) was conducted by Professor Huber and her interdisciplinary team from 2017-2019. The project investigated how contemporary fine art practice can provide new insights into Roman wall painting and how, in turn, Roman wall painting can inform and enhance site-specific, contemporary art practice. The project also explored new strategies for the display of (replica) Roman artefacts, while allowing for the creative exploration of these replicas.</p> <p><i>Expanded Interior's</i> main stages and achievements include:</p> <p>a) New insights into the sophisticated technical / artistic methods used by Roman wall painters, including their tailored, creative responses to specific architectural settings including public and private spaces, and the social, economic and cultural contexts of the spaces within which they worked. The research focussed on two Roman houses with wall decorations (PUB3 and PUB4).</p> <p>b) An artistic re-interpretation of some compositional, perspectival and contextual methodologies used by Roman wall painters (PUB1 and PUB2), and the development of practice-led methods relevant to contemporary fine-art making. These include use of specially designed perspectival systems to help create immersive environments (PUB3 and PUB4).</p> <p>c) The display of three large-scale site-responsive art installations in two Roman houses, the House of the Beautiful Courtyard in Herculaneum, and the House of the Cryptoporticus in Pompeii. The installations also included innovative display systems for eighteen 3D printed replicas of Roman artefacts, (PUB1 and PUB2).</p> <p>d) Huber's peer-reviewed chapter for <i>Contemporary Art in Heritage Spaces</i>. Reviewers highlighted the '<i>innovative and engaging approach to the contemporary art/heritage discussion</i>' and that it '<i>demonstrates first-hand the way in which artistic practice can impact upon historical interpretation</i>' (PUB4).</p>		



Photo: Amedeo Benestante

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*Expanded Interiors* at Pompeii (July 2018 to January 2019) and Herculaneum (May 2018 to January 2019). All images courtesy of Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali: Parco Archeologico di Ercolano and Parco Archeologico di Pompei.

### 3. References to the research

**PUB1:** Huber, C.; *Expanded Interiors - Herculaneum*, 17 May 2018 – 15 January 2019, large-scale installation and exhibition at the House of the Beautiful Courtyard in Herculaneum, <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/art/>

**PUB2:** Huber, C.; *Expanded Interiors - Pompeii*, 14 July 2018 – 20 January 2019, two large-scale installations and exhibition at the House of the Cryptoporticus in Pompeii, <http://pompeii.org/en/exhibitions/expanded-interiors/>

**PUB3:** Anderson, A., Ashton, S., Huber, C., Roelstraete, D.; *Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum and Pompeii*; 2019; book (English / Italian / German), Kerber Verlag. <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/resources/pressinformationpublications/>

**PUB4:** Huber, C.; *Expanded Interiors: Bringing contemporary site-specific practice to Roman houses at Herculaneum and Pompeii*; chapter in *Contemporary Art in Heritage Spaces* (Cass, N., Park, G., Powell, A. Eds.); 2020, Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429053498>

**PUB5:** Haynes, I., Huber, C., Morris, R., Ravasi, T., Turner, A., *Expanded Interiors: Bringing contemporary site-specific practice to Roman houses at Herculaneum and Pompeii*; 2017; website (English / Italian). Provides context about the project and the archaeological sites. Contains a blog, podcasts, links to *Expanded Interiors* social media channels, and resources. <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/>

The art installations received positive international press coverage (**IMP8**) (e.g. *Guardian*, July 18, *El Pais*, July 18; *Kunstzeitung*, September 18; *Artribune*, November 18; *Apollo*, May 18; *Current World Archaeology*, May 18 / January 19) and invitations to speak at public events (e.g. *Archeologia, Arti e Territorio: dal percorso Maiuri Pop Up al Nuovo Programma 2019*, Parco Archeologico di Ercolano, (2019); *Heritage Studies: Critical Approaches and New Directions*, British Academy, London (2017)).

*Expanded Interiors* was awarded an AHRC grant of GBP279,794, AH/P007007/1, (2017-2019), *Expanded Interiors: Bringing contemporary site-specific fine-art practice to Roman houses at Herculaneum and Pompeii*. <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=AH%2FP007007%2F1>

### 4. Details of the impact

*Expanded Interiors (EI)* **(A)** changed visitor experiences and understanding for worldwide audiences at Pompeii and Herculaneum. **(B)** Drew together local and regional communities and stakeholders with the archaeological site. **(C)** Impacted upon organisational practices of its key partners in Herculaneum and Pompeii.

**(A)** *EI* engaged a worldwide audience with site-specific contemporary art installations at two world-famous archaeological sites. Combined, these attracted over 4,000,000 visitors in 2018. This afforded visitors new experiences, changing understanding and appreciation of the contemporary relevance of Roman Wall painting, Roman objects and the relationship between

contemporary art and archaeology. This is evidenced through visitor questionnaires conducted on-site and online (**IMP1**), and a testimonial from the Director of Parco Archeologico di Ercolano (PaErco) (**IMP3**).

**IMP1:** Our visitor survey showed 92% of visitors enjoyed the exhibition. For 50% of under 24-year-olds, a key target group for the organisations, the project changed their perception of Roman wall painting, one visitor explaining how the exhibition *'validates the Roman painting as art, not just tired artefacts'*. 54% of visitors said that *EI* helped them to look at Roman objects in a different way: *'one sees them together and relating to each other, not like an exhibition display in the museum'*. Almost 50% visitors aged under 24 felt that the exhibition had encouraged them to look at fine art, heritage and archaeology in new ways: *'I have always enjoyed fine art, but I've never seen it used within an archaeological context - the art reinvigorates. Until now I thought of both being quite separate from one another'*. The exhibitions successfully engaged young adults – outside of school visits, traditionally a challenge for Italian heritage sites as noted at the *EI* Arts and Archaeology Symposium (**IMP9**, from 1.45.05). The exhibitions changed attitudes towards art and archaeology among adults with educational attainment at secondary school level and below (reported as 10% of total visitors). Of this group, 100% liked the exhibition and gave very high scores in relation to the impact it had on their appreciation of contemporary art within an archaeological site. The data shows the potential of innovative multidisciplinary projects such as *EI*, not just in involving groups of visitors traditionally underrepresented among exhibition visitors, but also in transforming people's perception and understanding of research fields such as fine art and archaeology.

**IMP3:** The Director of PaErco said, *'We recognise art's importance for provoking new ways of understanding the past and its role in the present. The Expanded Interiors exhibition has offered a new and exciting visitor experience for our local, national and international visitors..., and has attracted new (and in particular local) visitors, also through Expanded Interiors workshop and event programme'*.

**(B):** *EI* had positive cultural and societal impact on local communities. In Ercolano, key stakeholders were involved through an extensive workshop programme. This resulted in closer relationships between surrounding communities and the archaeological site; changed opinions and behaviour regarding local Roman heritage; and attracted new visitors to the site. Evidence for this includes feedback from workshop participants and schoolchildren (**IMP2**); independent follow-on activities from the teachers and art students who used our workshops as an inspiration (**IMP7**); visitor numbers (**IMP5**); statements from the Director at PaErco (**IMP3**) and Senior Manager and Community Consultant at HCP (**IMP6**).



*EI* workshops with local teachers (PaErco, January 2018) and in local schools in Ercolano (October 2018).

**IMP2:** *EI* offered a teacher training workshop (January 2018), artist tours of the exhibition for primary school classes (May 2018), and student workshops for primary and secondary schools in Ercolano (October 2018, 7 classes) and also in Newcastle (July 2019, 2 classes), involving 290 people. Outcomes from these workshops have been instrumental in setting up teaching and learning resources for families and schools - available in Italian and in English on the *EI* website. These are enabling teachers in Ercolano to creatively engage with the research and the site in a sustainable way. Our survey (**IMP2**) showed that *EI* workshops changed both teachers' and pupils' attitudes towards heritage, prompting feelings of belonging and new understanding of the relationship between contemporary art practice and Roman archaeology. Teachers were inspired to incorporate contemporary art into their teaching, including during site visits: *'The workshop gave me good ideas that I will take with me at work; It gave me ideas of how to prepare my young students for the next visit to the site using a method completely different than*

*the one I had been using so far; It gave us good ideas for creative development in the school community; The ideas and new points of view I gained during the workshop will definitely help me set up my lessons with a wider and different open-mindedness; I will change the way I teach my students, showing them the findings in a different way' (workshop feedback).*

**IMP4:** A primary teacher at F. Giampaglia primary school in Ercolano said: *'We learned so much... with the teaching of Catrin Huber, we look back with other eyes... we perhaps didn't realise we have so much here... As a teacher, I think only when students know and understand what they have around them [Herculaneum], they can have respect of it...'* (testimonial video, May 2018).

**IMP7:** Teachers' and pupils' sense of connection to, and understanding of their local heritage site were further enhanced by: 1) An exhibition at Parco Archeologico di Ercolano of the work created in the schools inspired by the *EI* workshops; 2) 60 children joining artist tours of the *EI* exhibition; 3) After participating in *EI* workshops, students from the Accademia di Belle Arti di Napoli organised art laboratories at PaErco in which 200 children took part.

**IMP5:** The biggest increase of visitor numbers to Herculaneum in 2018 was in May 2018 (up 15,375 from the previous year), when *EI* opened and these activities took place.



Exhibits of pupils' work and art laboratories at PaErco (May 2018); Tours with Huber of the *EI* exhibition with local school classes (May 2018).

**IMP3:** The Director of PaErco said: *'Expanded Interiors community-focused workshops and engagement activities support PaErco's and HCP's efforts in bringing the old and new cities of Herculaneum and Ercolano closer together [and] renewing the relationship between the site and the community... The students were incredibly enthusiastic and the feedback from the children and teachers has been overwhelmingly positive. Teachers stressed the importance of enthusing the children about 'their' archaeological site and of giving them ownership of it'.*

**IMP6:** In their introduction *The Artistic Process Triggering Change At Herculaneum* to the *Expanded Interiors* book, senior manager and community consultant from HCP write: *'The Expanded Interiors project became a platform for multiple dialogues between the ancient and modern worlds and a stimulus for new reflections – and by communities not previously involved [which] took on central roles in the process and were inspired to engage with the ancient world in new and innovative ways'.*

**(C):** *EI* has also influenced the organisational practices of its key partners in Herculaneum, by setting up new connections with regional stakeholders, which have since developed into closer, sustained relationships with PaErco and HCP (**IMP3**). By featuring as an example of good practice for Herculaneum and Pompeii, *EI* has influenced future commissioning practice around artistic interventions at the sites (**IMP7**).



Audience of heritage guides at *EI* talk and *EI* workshop at PaErco discussing replicas (January 2018). *EI* workshop with art students at PaErco (January 2018).

**IMP7:** *El - Mischievous Objects* talk and workshops at PaErco, January 2018 involved 73 local heritage guides and fine art students from the Accademia di Belle Arti di Napoli, to discuss together the potential for fine art practice to create change within heritage sites. This initiative led to the establishment of an on-going cross-PaErco and HCP focus group of local heritage guides, which enables them to feedback directly to the sites' management, affording them a greater sense of involvement and ownership of the sites' activities. The workshop with heritage guides also triggered new ideas for engaging tourists, for instance enabling them to handle (replica) Roman objects (**IMP2**) and initiated a brand-new collaboration between PaErco and the Accademia (**IMP3**).

**IMP3:** *El* has helped change PaErco's strategy for working with artists. The Director of PaErco said: *'These activities [exhibition, workshops, tours, events] made Expanded Interiors a successful event for the partnership between PaErco, HCP and Newcastle University. Expanded Interiors functions also as a case study and example of good practice for PaErco, changing practice of working with artists to support PaErco's local agenda of fostering connections with local communities and creating sense of ownership of site among local communities'*. The Director of Parco Archeologico di Pompeii highlighted that *'Expanded Interior's interdisciplinary, practice-led research offered a unique approach to integrating contemporary artistic practice directly within the site and – for the first time [in Pompeii] – within a Roman house... As such, it has functioned as a case study for the Parco Archeologico di Pompeii and has informed the planning for future artistic commissions to be situated directly within and as a response to the archaeological site'* (**IMP3**).

*El's* unique approach of linking interdisciplinary, practice-led research, culminating in on-site contemporary art installations with extensive local community engagement, offers a transferable model for other heritage sites. By influencing stakeholders from heritage and educational contexts, and by providing accessible and flexible resources including a teaching pack and podcasts, it generates sustainable impacts on professional practice and public understanding. An AHRC Follow-On funding grant (December 2020) for *El Re-Staged* will build further value by engaging new groups of young adults with the research. By expanding online resources, including a VR environment, compatible within Covid19 restrictions the reach and impact of *Expanded Interiors* will be further extended for the long term.

##### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

**IMP1:** Feedback from visitor questionnaires (209) from the *Expanded Interiors* exhibitions.

**IMP2:** Workshop feedback (2a: heritage guides (8), art students from Naples (5), primary school teachers from Ercolano (9) at PaErco; 2b: their translation; 2c: primary school children at Ercolano schools (60); 2d: primary school children from Whitley Bay (53).

**IMP3:** Official letters (3a: the director of Parco Archeologico di Ercolano; 3b. the director of Parco Archeologico di Pompeii)

**IMP4:** Testimonial video with primary teacher "F. Giampaglia" primary school, Ercolano.

**IMP5:** Visitor numbers from both archaeological sites.

**IMP6:** Introduction (*El* book, PUB3) *Artistic process triggering change at Herculaneum* by the senior manager and the community consultant at Herculaneum Conservation Project.

**IMP7:** Announcements on PaErco's website of The Focus Group with heritage guides; *El* related activities in May 2018; PaErco's conference.

**IMP8:** International Press coverage for *Expanded Interiors* (selection).

**IMP9:** Podcast from *El Arts and Archaeology Symposium*.

Sources of evidence are available on request.