

<b>Institution:</b> University of Bolton		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> D32 Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Raising Awareness of the Berlin Olympic Village: Art, Place and History		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> August 2015 – February 2017		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Dr. David Gledhill	Lecturer in Fine Art	01.07.2008 – present
Peter Lewis	Lecturer in Fine Art	01.01.1989 - 28.07.2017
Prof. Robert Snape	Professor of Cultural History	01.09.1997 - present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> July 2016 – February 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>The Berlin Olympic Village Project achieved significant international impact as an artistic contribution to public understanding of the Athlete's Village at Elstal. It was used by Deutsche Kreditbank Foundation for Social Engagement (DKB) for an awareness-raising programme focusing on the historical and cultural importance of the Village. It helped the Palis Advisory GmbH (PA) to develop the art initiative "Bridging the Gap" bringing individual artists together on joint projects to offer new perspectives on environment and society. It succeeded in engaging new audiences and demonstrated the effect of creative approaches to conservation and public accessibility of historical sites.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<p>The Project was initiated by Wolfgang Schnurr of Palis Advisory GmbH (PA) jointly with the four participating artists, and was supported by the University of Bolton (UoB) and DKB. It resulted in artistic works curated into three major exhibitions and two publications. All the artists had been independently investigating themes relating to place and history in their research prior to their study visit to the Olympic Village and outcomes from the Project have been exhibited since it was formally concluded in 2017.</p> <p>In his essay 'Strength through joy' (2017) Robert Snape identified how by the time of the Berlin Games in 1936, leisure had been re-imagined and imposed as a national German culture shared by the whole community. As Snape observes, the village - constructed between 1934 and 1936 - was a high-profile expression of this cultural identity. After the Games the village was in use as a military hospital until the end of WWII. Located in the former East Germany, it functioned as a forward reconnaissance base by the Russian Army from 1945 until 1992, when it was abandoned. The site combines surviving buildings from both the Nazi and communist periods and constitutes a material index of European political history. The art works produced between the site visit and the Berlin exhibitions in July and September 2016, documented and interpreted this key historical and cultural asset, and represented a unique artistic record of a location of major significance in the history of sport, WWII and the Cold War.</p> <p>The distinctive research insights of the Project flowed from its methodology. The four artists were granted unique access to the site on a three day study visit (August-September 2015) which enabled them to engage with the landscape of the Village itself, its buildings and flaking</p>		

murals. Informed by Edward Soja's (1989) postmodern geography which highlights the politics of the 'spatial' at the heart of the historical, they drew on the unique atmosphere of the place and its competing material narratives. This inspired David Gledhill to address themes that had been marginalised in conventional accounts, such as the fate of Village Kommandant Wolfgang Fürstner as both perpetrator and victim of Nazism, and the later Russian occupation of the site.

Gledhill also produced a sequence of paintings based on amateur snapshots of buildings at the Village taken during the Games, whilst a further group addressed the later communist phase of its history. Peter Lewis made a series of ceramic vessels and plaques based on commemorative forms produced as souvenirs of the Games, which he reconfigured using fragments of paint, newspaper and metal taken from the site itself. The aim was to stage a dialogue between the pleasing aesthetic qualities of the art forms and the chequered political narratives they convey.

Collectively, these disparate works challenged standard historiographical representations of the Village and undercut any sense of an overarching narrative. Additionally, the exhibited work reminded audiences of a heritage site that was hitherto almost neglected, impressing upon them that the past is a contested realm and its meanings persist in the places of the present.

### 3. References to the research

1. Bertram-Becker, Wolf, Cahill, Margaret, Gledhill, David, Lewis, Peter  
*Olydo Berlin 16* (2016) [Listed in REF 2]  
iv. Exhibition Deutsche Kreditbank AG Berlin, July 19 – August 26, 2016.  
In his essay 'Ghosts are Much of What Makes a Space a Place: Interpreting the Relics of the 1936 Berlin Olympic Village through Art' (2019) Dr. Iain Adams discusses in detail the quality of the work of the four artists involved in the *Olydo Berlin 16* exhibition. He writes: 'The artists invite viewers to engage with their work, to communicate with it, and to reflect and create their own narratives assisted by the common denominator of the village itself, portrayed in a variety of media and styles.' [See corroboration item 3].  
*art-in-berlin* commented that 'The four artists have created impressive and diverse works that have been presented to the public for the first time.' [See corroboration item 5].  
This project won a University of Bolton Jenkinson Award for innovative and impactful research.
2. Bertram-Becker, Wolf Bertram, Cahill, Margaret, Gledhill, David, Lewis, Peter  
*Olydo Berlin 16* (2016) [Listed in REF 2]  
iv. Exhibition Olympic Village Elstal, Wustermark, September 11<sup>th</sup>
3. Bertram-Becker, Wolf, Cahill, Margaret, Gledhill, David, Lewis, Peter  
*Berlin 1936: Olympic Village Project* (2017) [Listed in REF 2]  
iv. Exhibition neo:gallery23 Bolton, March 18 – April 30, 2017.  
This project won a second University of Bolton Jenkinson award for innovative and impactful research. It was described by the *Bolton Evening News* as a 'powerful exhibition' and 'amazing' on Instagram. [See corroboration items 6, 8].
4. Schnurr, W. (2017) *Olydo Berlin 16* Exhibition catalogue containing detailed accounts of their work by the four artists. (Palis Advisory GmbH Berlin)  
ISBN 978-3-00-055493-3 [Copy supplied in REF 2]
5. Snape, Robert, ' "Strength through joy": The cultural appropriation of the Berlin 1936 Olympic Village'  
i. (part of book)  
Bertram-Becker, W. Cahill M. Gledhill, D. Lewis, P. Snape, R. (2017) *Berlin 1936 Olympic Village Project* Exhibition catalogue detailing further accounts of the work by the four artists . (University of Bolton) ISBN 978-0-9929770-1-6, pp. 6-10. [Copy supplied in REF 2 and available as PDF]
6. Gledhill, David  
*the experience of history* (2019-20) [Listed in REF 2]  
iv. Exhibition Rogue Project Space, December 16 2019 - February 24 2020  
Critical comments from the private view described this exhibition as 'incredibly impressive' and an 'exemplary exhibition'. [See contextual information, REF 2].

#### 4. Details of the impact

The impact and benefits of the Project centre on its contribution to the recognition and enhanced understanding of the Berlin Olympic Village site as a location of extraordinary historical and heritage significance. The Project is a successful model of pan-European co-operation between British and German public and private sector organisations and international artists, which set a precedent for the integration of arts-based research into the conservation of sites of historic interest. The reach of the Project was extremely broad as a result of the artists and organisations working to disseminate outcomes through multiple platforms, including exhibitions, publications, websites and ongoing individual and collaborative projects.

The beneficiaries of the research were Palis Advisory GmbH (PA), the Deutsche Kreditbank Foundation for Social Engagement (DKB) and audiences in both Germany and the UK. The Project benefited the activities of the sponsor organisations by enabling each to achieve and extend their operational aims in contrasting ways. PA were able to launch their collaborative arts programme 'Bridging the Gap' with an ambitious project drawing in public (UoB) and private (DKB) sector funding partners and producing a model for international cultural initiatives (1, 3). Since the Project, PA have continued to develop their programme of collaborative projects with international artists, and now employ Peter Lewis as their UK Art Consultant and Curator to those ends (1).

The benefit to DKB lay in the raising of public awareness of the Olympic Village site, which is owned and administrated by them. The mission of the Foundation includes cultural heritage preservation and art and culture projects. Ulrike Eichentopf, Head of DKB arts and culture department said that 'the project encompassed DKB's commitment to preserve historic sites and the creation of contemporary art works' (2). She commented on the significant impact of the research on public understanding: '*Olydo Berlin 2016* served the purposes of DKB STIFTUNG as one of our objectives is to make the history of these monuments both accessible and understandable and in so doing bring them into public consciousness' (2). Eichentopf also commented that the Project engaged 'a wider public and thus made the Olympic Village 1936 accessible to different audiences' (2). Guided tours were held for DKB staff under the banner of 'art@lunchtime' and two series of free public talks about the Project were given for both staff and the public (2, 3, 7). The Project featured as the central artistic element of DKB's public engagement programme of cultural and educational events during 2016 and is documented in their Yearbooks for 2015 and 2016 (4). The Yearbook for 2016 features a photograph from the 'Day of the Open Monument' with accompanying text highlighting how the site-specific research at Elstal was fundamental to the impact of the exhibited work: 'Seldom have visitors to an exhibition had the opportunity to see the source of inspiration and the artwork alongside one another' (4).

The reach and impact of the Project on public audiences was also achieved through the dissemination of research outcomes internationally. Exhibitions in Berlin and Bolton and their accompanying publications introduced new audiences in Germany and the UK to the cultural and historical significance of the Olympic Village. In particular, the two Berlin exhibitions brought this important site back into the public arena at a time when the 2016 Games in Brazil were the focus of global attention.

The second Berlin exhibition in the gymnasium of the Village during the 'Day of the Open Monument' on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2016, was used by DKB as the starting point for an enhanced visitor experience. Attendance at the Olympic Village during the 'Day of the Open Monument' was estimated by DKB at 2,500, with 40-45% of the visitors attending the exhibition (2). Thus the Project rescued the site from near-invisibility and encouraged a deep understanding of the site's world-historic importance and cultural context from an artistic perspective (2, 3, 4).

The exhibition was covered by a number of different German media organisations, including *art-*

*in-berlin* who commented that “the four artists have created impressive and diverse works that have been presented to the public for the first time” (5). Back in the UK, the works were described by the *Bolton Evening News* as constituting a ‘powerful exhibition’ (6).

Attendance at the exhibition opening at Bolton neo:gallery23 was estimated at 400 (8). The accessibility of this venue in the Marketplace Shopping Centre in Bolton greatly enhanced the reach of the Project in the UK. Audience feedback for the artworks was consistently enthusiastic and evidenced the benefit to the public of new creative approaches to sites of historic significance. Gledhill’s dissemination of his contribution to the Project at ‘the experience of history’ exhibition (7<sup>th</sup> December-24<sup>th</sup> February, Rogue Project Space, Manchester) elicited responses such as: ‘Powerful, sympathetic, questioning, peeling back layers of history’ (detailed in [Ref 2]).

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Palis Advisory GmbH website:

<https://www.palisadvisory.berlin/>

<https://palisadvisory.berlin/Start/OLYDO-BERLIN-2016/index.php/>

<https://www.palisadvisory.berlin/Start/OLYDO-BERLIN-2016/index.php/>

[Provides evidence of the impact of the artists’ research on the success of the ‘Bridging the Gap’ initiative]. [Last accessed 31/12/20].

2. Letter from Ulrike Eichentopf, Head of Arts and Culture department, DKB Stiftung PDF

[Provides evidence of the benefit of the artists’ research to the awareness raising programme of DKB and to the development of new audiences for the Olympic village].

3. Adams, Iain (2019) ‘Ghosts are Much of What Makes a Space a Place: Interpreting the Relics of the 1936 Berlin Olympic Village through Art’. Book chapter about Berlin Olympic Village Project in *Sporting Cultures: Global perspectives* (Manchester Metropolitan University)

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336217052\\_%27Ghosts\\_are\\_Much\\_of\\_What\\_Makes\\_a\\_Space\\_a\\_Place%27\\_Interpreting\\_the\\_Relics\\_of\\_the\\_1936\\_Berlin\\_Olympic\\_Village\\_through\\_Art](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336217052_%27Ghosts_are_Much_of_What_Makes_a_Space_a_Place%27_Interpreting_the_Relics_of_the_1936_Berlin_Olympic_Village_through_Art)

PDF [Provides evidence of the effect of creative approaches to the conservation and public accessibility of historical sites].

4. DKB Stiftung Yearbooks

2015: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=DKB+Jahrbuch+2015>

2016: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=DKB+Jahrbuch+2016>

2016 Yearbook also available as PDF

[Provides evidence of the impact of the exhibitions on raising awareness of the Olympic village site].

5. German Press coverage for *Olydo Berlin 16*. 2016-2017 PDF. [Provides evidence of the impact of the exhibition on international audiences].

6. Bolton News Online: Berlin Olympic Village Project (2017)

[http://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/15241364.Artists\\_present\\_powerful\\_exhibition\\_inspired\\_by\\_1936\\_Berlin\\_Olympics/](http://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/15241364.Artists_present_powerful_exhibition_inspired_by_1936_Berlin_Olympics/)

Art Rabbit website: <https://www.artrabbit.com/events/berlin-1936-olympic-village-project>

a-n website: <https://www.a-n.co.uk/events/berlin-1936-olympic-village-project/>

[Provides evidence of the impact of the Project on UK audiences]. [Last accessed 31/12/10].

7. Gledhill, D. (2016) *Olydo Berlin 16* (Film)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ReBp94I-WfI&t=83s>

[Provides evidence of the significant public engagement with the exhibitions at both DKB and Elstal. The film documents the guided tours and talks which accompanied both exhibitions]. [Last accessed 31/12/20].

8. neo:artists Instagram account: <https://www.instagram.com/p/BRya5FOjGHp/>  
[Provides evidence of audience engagement with the artwork at neo:gallery23, Bolton]. [Last accessed 31/12/20].