



the online resource for visual arts

# Captivate

audience engagement and the  
digital image repository in the visual arts

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Visual Arts Data Service  
University for the Creative Arts

# Outline

- Visual Arts Data Service
- the project: enhancing the VADS image collection
  - objectives
  - outcomes
- the future...



Posters of Conflict, Imperial War Museum

# Learning Outcomes

- an appreciation of who uses digital collections and for what reasons
- an understanding of how collections can be presented to increase their discoverability, usage and engagement
- know where to find us, what we do, and why...



Artworld, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts

# Visual Arts Data Service

- established in 1996
- research centre: collection, preservation and usage of digital images for learning, teaching and research
- 120,000 items; 300 collections; range of educational resources; 60,000 users view 1.75 million images a month; focuses on the visual and creative arts; free for educational use



Eckersley, University of the Arts London

## Why bother?

- learning and teaching
- research
- preservation
- accessibility
- marketing and commercial potential
- need!



Posters of Conflict, Imperial War Museum

# The Project

- September 2007 – September 2008
- Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC)
- objectives
  - sharing and repurposing data
  - increasing usage
  - enhancing the user experience



Adopting a stance, Elaine Thomas

JISC

## Project Outcomes

- greater understanding of users
- improved discoverability
  - shared data
- improved searching
- enhanced usability
- additional content



Gala Archive, London College of Fashion

# Understanding Users

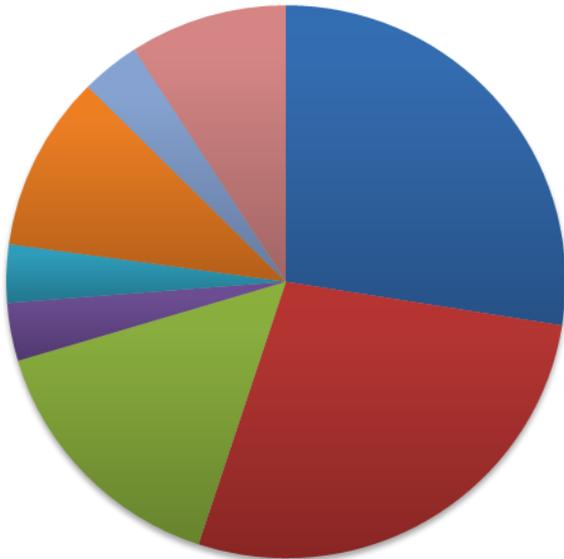
## summary of findings

- content
- diversity
  - users
  - usage
- collection
- need



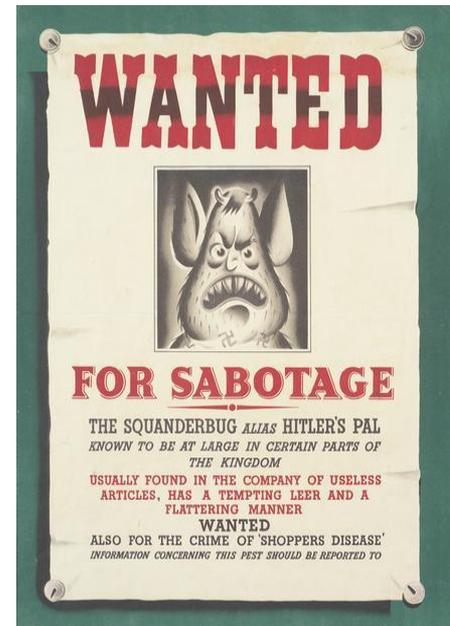
John Johnson, University of Oxford

# Nature



- academic (27.5%)
  - library (27.5%)
  - other (15.3%)
  - postgraduate (3.4%)
  - publisher (3.4%)
  - researcher (10.3%)
  - technologist (3.4%)
  - undergraduate (9.1%)
- others include: artists; designers; general public; curators; archivists*

VADS User Survey 2009



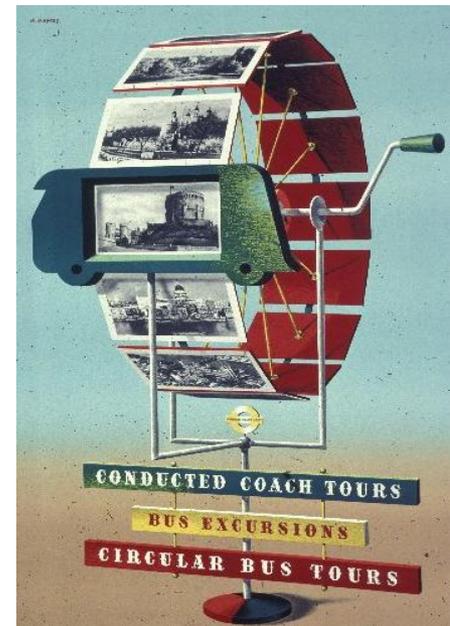
Posters of Conflict, Imperial War Museum

# Sector



- higher education (47.1%)
- further education (16.0%)
- other (15.3%)
- postgraduate (3.4%)
- publisher (3.4%)

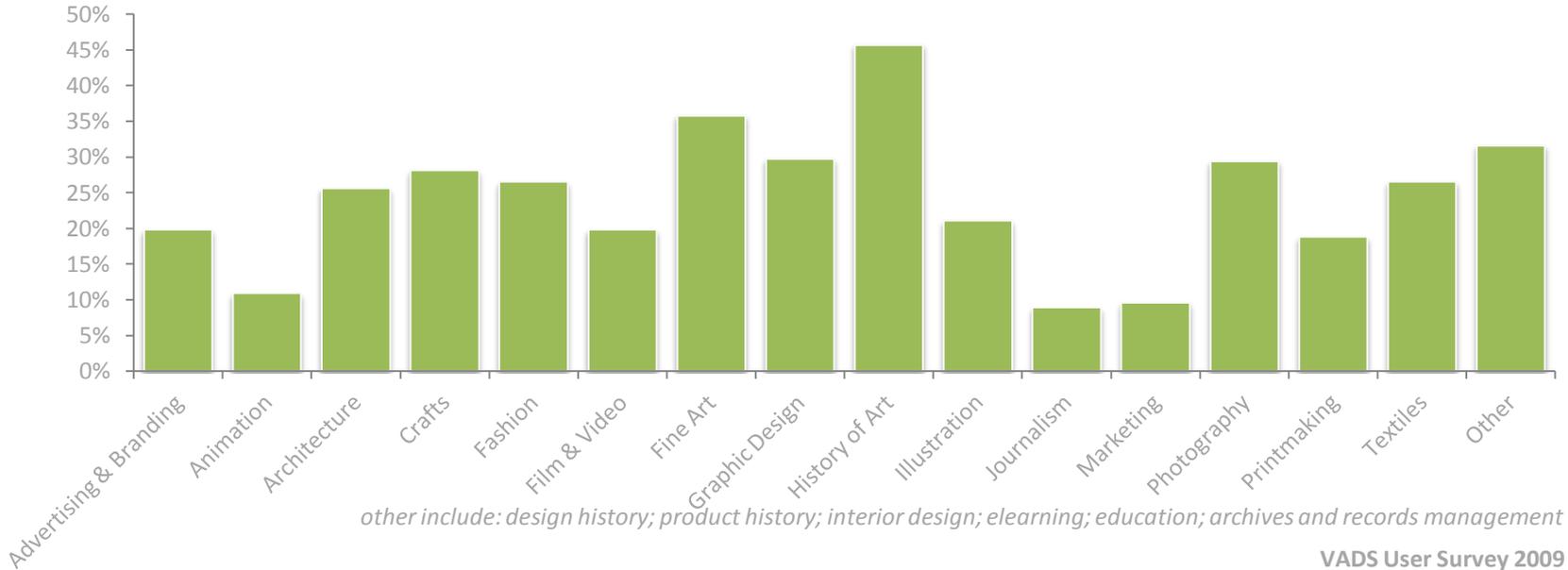
*others includes: public sector; business and commercial; artists and designers; general public*



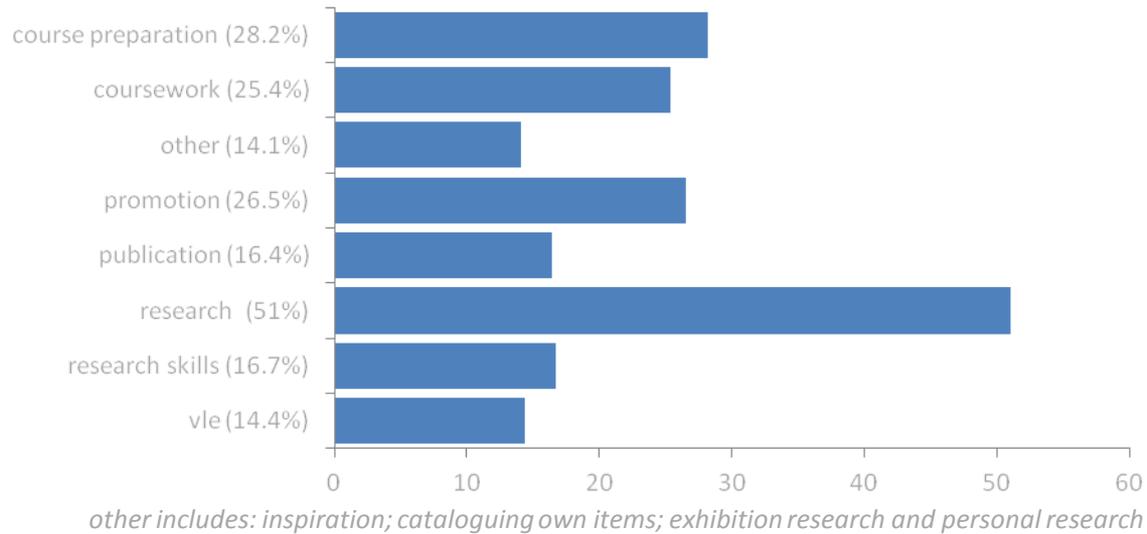
Design Council Slide Collection

VADS User Survey 2009

# Disciplines



# Why?

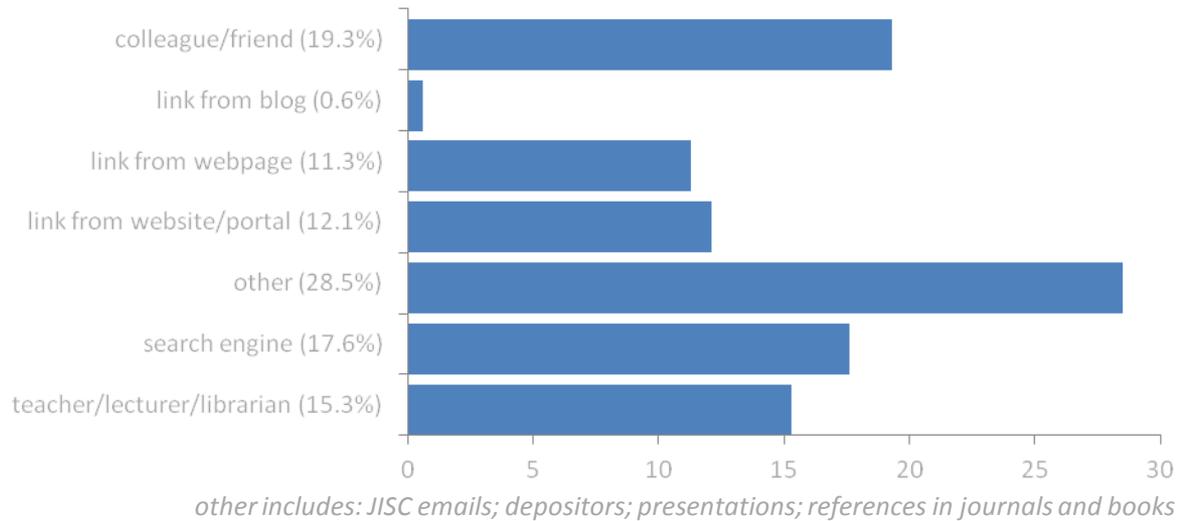


VADS User Survey 2009



Frederick Parker, London Metropolitan University

# How?



VADS User Survey 2009



Craft Study Centre, UCA

# VADS Survey: Likes

ease of use	56
range of images	54
web design and simplicity of presentation	38
free images	34
quality of images	24
excellent images/collections	15
easy to access	15
huge size of archive	13
quality of catalogue records	13
lightbox feature for saving images	9
provides images not available elsewhere	8
good resource for teaching	6
personal approach and prompt response of staff	5
images of good size	5
collections of an academic pedigree	4
good source for design images	4



Woolmark Company, London College of Fashion

VADS User Survey 2009

# VADS Survey: Comments

continue to add more images	57
no improvement necessary	16
larger images/zooming	12
unsure why they get certain search results	9
more information on the items	7
browse images by subject	6
darken the pale font text	6
more promotion of the website	5
all records to have images	5
speed	5
help information on searching	4
browse images from individual collections pages	4



VADS User Survey 2009

Design Archive, AUCB

# Improved Discoverability

- search engine optimisation
- online databases, repositories and aggregators
- marketing



Latin American Art, University of Essex

## Sharing Data

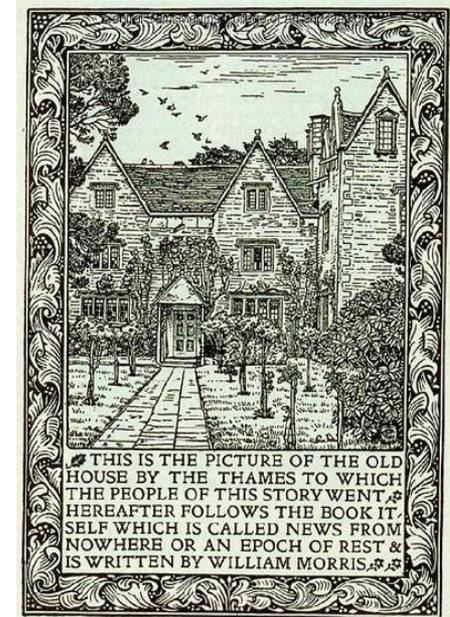
CenturyShare Beta  
Bringing archives together

OpenDOAR

OAIster  
Find the pearls



Australia  
**Trove**  
one search ... a wealth of information



William Morris, Central Saint Martins Museum



**CenturyShare Beta**  
Bringing archives together

14 results

Two women window shop for shoes outsi...

Two women wait to be served in an Ita

1960s

6 results

Two women window shop for shoes outsi...

1970s

4 results

Monsoon - catalogue

1980s

BBC CenturyShare

# Improved Searching

- metadata
- classification
- tagging and other web 2.0 tools
- interface enhancements



American Museum in Britain, NICE

# Dublin Core

- title
- creator
- subject
- description
- publisher
- contributor
- date
- type
- format
- identifier
- source
- language
- relation
- coverage
- rights

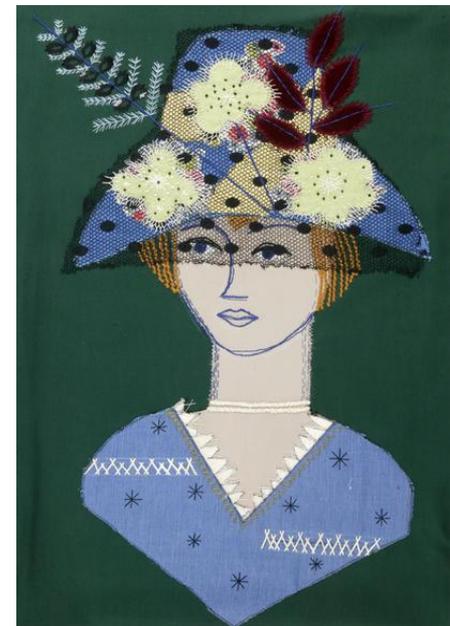


Spellman Collection, University of Reading

# Metadata

Collection	Constance Howard Resource and Research Centre in Textiles: Material Collection
Object Name	embroidered panel, collage
Date	1950s or early 1960s
Brief Physical Description	Panel featuring a portrait bust of a girl wearing a blue flowery hat with a black net veil, the design is collaged on to a dark green ground and the detail is embroidered. <b>Select this link for more description information.</b>
Id Number	4544
Current Accession	
Location	England, London, Goldsmiths College
Creation Site	
Subject	embroidery, education, collage, stitch, stitched panel, embroidered panel, embroidered picture, British
Measurements	Dimensions 720mm x 46mm
Number Of Items	1
Materials Used (aat)	cotton, synthetic
Content And Subject Information	Students taking the Embroidery course at Goldsmiths College under Constance Howard during the 1960s and before were encouraged to experiment with textile techniques at all times. Students began by learning the basic traditional method of work and then applied their imagination. The course at this early time was project based with projects set by the internal staff of the department. Examinations were constructed in the same way, a title or subject was set and students expected to respond accordingly. Students were encouraged to be as imaginative as possible with their interpretations of a subject but at this point no student was really allowed to stray too far from the use of embroidery.
Production Information	Made in a studio situation in response to an examination question for the National Diploma in Design Examination.
Rights	Goldsmiths College, University of London. Constance Howard Resource and Research Centre in Textiles.
Techniques Used (aat)	collage, appliqué, couching
Techniques Used (CH)	machine embroidery, Cretan stitch, fly stitch

Core Record



Constance Howard Textile Collection

# Classification



Materials



Objects



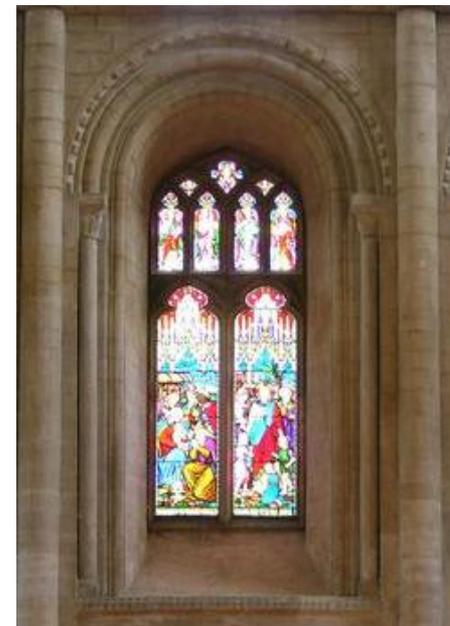
Processes



Subjects

- coins, medals and currency
- buildings and exteriors
- ceramics
- consumer goods
- dress and accessories
- ephemera
- furniture
- jewellery and metalwork
- media and communications
- musical instruments
- preparatory artworks and supporting material
- rooms and interiors
- textiles
- transportation

classification v10  
 level 1: 4  
 level 2: 14  
 level 3: 45



Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture

# Engaging Users

## tagging

- enables users to add their own metadata
- tag clouds are weighted lists of user tags

**Drawing**<sup>(11)</sup> **teddy**<sup>(5)</sup> **fluffy**<sup>(5)</sup>  
**light**<sup>(3)</sup> **Mickey Mouse**<sup>(3)</sup> **dress**<sup>(3)</sup>  
**and**<sup>(3)</sup> **Mackintosh**<sup>(3)</sup> **hippo**<sup>(3)</sup> **war**<sup>(3)</sup>

or go to the "[tag cloud](#)"

[Full Catalogue Record](#) | [Search Results](#) | [New Search](#)



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS  
 LONDON **LONDON COLLEGE OF FASHION**

The Woolmark Company



[Larger Image](#) | [Add to Lightbox](#)

Tag this image:

You need to be logged in to tag  
 images [login here](#)

Tags

VADS test website

# Engaging Users

## lightbox

Current lightbox  Contains 4 images

Lightbox: [View](#) | [Create New](#) | [Delete](#) | [Rename](#) | [Download](#) | [Your Comments](#) | [Logout](#)



The advert is for ra...  
Eckersley Archive: University of the Arts London



dance mask for the Ekpo society  
Artworld: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts



Double breasted redi...  
London College of Fashion: The Woolmark Company



Sopwith Scout  
Imperial War Museum Concise Art Collection

VADS Lightbox Tool



Women's Library Suffrage Banners Collection

# Engaging Users

## additional content

- Design Council Side Collection
- Peter King Sculpture Archive
- London College of Fashion Gala Archive
- Museum of Design in Plastics Collection
- Royal College of Art Collection
- Jocelyn Herbert Archive
- Stanley Kubrick Archive



Mr Potato Head, Museum of Design in Plastics  
courtesy of the Arts University College at Bournemouth

# The Future...

## other tools and services

- more content
  - user generated
- social bookmarking
- comments, recommendations and reviews
- federated searching
- storytelling
- three-dimensional digitisation
- myVADS



Imperial War Museum Collection (VADS)

## Look Here!

- embedding digitisation skills across the arts sector
- modelling the digitisation cycle based on the knitting collections, University of Southampton
- VADS and Arts University College Bournemouth; University College Falmouth; University for the Creative Arts; University of the Arts London; University of Southampton; joined by Bradford College and the Royal School of Needlework

JISC



Knitted elephant, Montse Stanley Collection, courtesy of the University of Southampton Library



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