

REF Report and Summary

Holly Maples, *Viking: Discover the Legend*

Author: Holly Maples

Output Title: Viking: Discover the Legend

Brief description: A series of interactive experiences created for the Norwich Castle Museum designed to decolonise the museum space through animating the voices of lesser-known characters and events to complicate and challenge the museum space engagement with history.

Type of Output: Interactive museum performance submitted as two scripts: 'A Very Victorian Tour of the Vikings' and 'Shieldmaiden'

Venue: Norwich Castle Museum

Media of output: PDF of scripts (item 1 - 2)

Contextual information: Norwich Castle Museum Programme, Norwich Castle Museum Briefing, Exhibition promotional flyer, event page, photographs of performance (items 3-9)

Index of information available for assessment on this site

Output

	Item/Link	Description	Additional information
1	Script for A Very Victorian Tour of the Vikings	PDF (10 pages)	The interactive nature of these performances means that only scripts and images are available. The tour was 45 minutes long and covered 17 points through the exhibition. 8 performances over the August bank holiday weekend 2019.
2	Script for 'Shieldmaiden'	PDF (34 pages)	45-minute performance exploring lives of Viking women through with Nordic myths, historical evidence, song and movement. Performed in the Castle Keep. 8 performances over the August bank holiday weekend 2019.

Contextual information

	Item/Link	Description	Additional information
3	Museum programme	PDF (9 pages) Shieldmaiden tour is on p. 6	Evidence of dissemination
4	Museum briefing	PDF (3 pages). Summary of the exhibition at Norwich Castle Museum is on p.1. Quote relating to the visitor event is on p. 3	Evidence of significance of the exhibition and impact on the museum.
5	Viking: Exhibition Promotional flyer	PDF (1 page)	
6	Shieldmaiden: Event page	PDF (1 page)	
7	Image of tour in museum	Jpg	Evidence of research process/ performance
8	Image of tour in museum	Jpg	Evidence of research process/ performance
9	Image of tour in museum	Jpg	Evidence of research process/ performance

Copy of 300-word statement

‘Viking: Discover the Legend’ is a series of interactive experiences created for the Norwich Castle Museum designed to decolonise the museum space through animating the voices of lesser-known characters and events to complicate and challenge the museum space engagement with history.

The Norwich Castle Museum had commissioned me to design a series of interactive events for the ‘Viking: Discover the Legend’ exhibition particularly targeting 18 to 30-year olds, an age group who have proven difficult to attract to the museum’s exhibitions and events. This series included an immersive performance, Shieldmaiden on Viking Warrior Women, a performative tour, ‘A Very Victorian Tour of the Vikings’ designed to critically engage audiences with the Victorian Empire building construction of the Vikings that continues in the present, and the creation of an immersive, interactive scavenger hunt, “Plunder Woman.”

In producing this performance-based research, I specifically designed performances to experiment with immersive and interactive methods to both attract new audiences and critically engage museumgoers in challenging understandings of cultural values and societal power dynamics that influence and exploit popular understandings of history.

I created the immersive performance ‘Shieldmaiden’, which intertwines debates surrounding new archaeological evidence of female Viking warriors and Old Norse sagas. The research process involved a performative “decolonising the museum” tour examining the Victorian construction of the Vikings in support of empirical expansion and British national identity, as well as a scavenger hunt including social media and games design techniques into the museum space. This project facilitates research into the use of immersive performance and new technologies to transform expectations of the museum site.

The research findings showed that the use of immersive experience methods proved successful at attracting more diverse publics to the museum. The performances and participatory methods were useful in critically engaging audiences with more complex understandings of history.

URL: <https://doi.org/10.17633/rd.brunel.13365947>