

# Graphic Design and Student Enterprise

## Lynn Rollin

### Biography

Lynn Rollin is a graphic designer and Subject Leader at University Campus Barnsley (UCB), teaching on Interdisciplinary Art and Design BA(Hons). She gained a BA(Hons) degree in Graphic Design in 1976. She then worked as a graphic designer in industry, initially in Leeds and Barnsley and then for the Museum and Art Gallery Service for Yorkshire and Humberside where she was responsible for the typographic, illustrative and photographic content of new galleries and travelling exhibitions, including Knaresborough Court House, Horkstow Mosaic Gallery, Hull and phase one of Wakefield Wood Street. She co-founded 'VIP Events Design' in 2000 working primarily with charity fundraisers and designing and organising fundraising events for many different charities, including the British Olympic Committee.

Lynn began her teaching career in 1979 and she has considerable experience in both further and higher education, moving to the University of Huddersfield

in 2005 when the University took over the Higher Education provision at Barnsley College. She undertook a PGCE in 1994 and completed her MA in Arts Education in 1999. She became a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy in 2007 and has continued to work as a freelance graphic designer.

Being the first in her family to go into higher education, she is firmly committed to widening participation, and works closely with staff and students to encourage and educate young people about the benefits of further study. Another area of interest is enterprise and she works with a number of local agencies and organisations developing enterprise and work related experiences for her students. Recently, Lynn has begun researching the life of Lady 'Peter' Norton, born 1891 and christened Noel Evelyn. Lady Norton was a patron of the arts and supporter of young artists.

### Current Research

Lynn's research interests include both pedagogy and enterprise. Her MA thesis in 1999 examined the exacerbation of tensions between the vocational aspects of graphic design education and the provision of a broader graphic design education in the light of the rapid technological developments, which had revolutionised the graphic design industry. She believes that these rapid developments and the increasing democratisation of graphic design will continue to pose new challenges for design education in respect of course design and content. She feels that the Interdisciplinary Art and Design course is a particularly exciting development, allowing students to work across different disciplines and combine materials and processes in exciting and innovative ways. Lynn believes that this flexibility of learning brings its own challenges for staff and students and provides opportunities for research as part of an interdisciplinary team, blurring traditional boundaries between

fine art and graphic design. Lynn is interested in exploring the student experience within the interdisciplinary context, particularly with regard to how experimental and innovative graphic design work is informed by the broader learning experience of the students who bring 2D and 3D processes, collage, printmaking and craft skills into their graphic design work.

Lynn continues to be involved with initiatives to encourage young people to go on to higher education, organising and delivering workshops at UCB, and working with students to develop workshops that can be taken into schools as part of an annual road show. She is firmly committed to integrating and embedding enterprise into the curriculum and has developed a successful Professional Practice module which gives year three students opportunities to research and participate in work related opportunities and to analyse and evaluate these as related to their personal art and design practice.



Lynn's interest in enterprise stems from a fundamental belief in the importance and value of real world experience for students and over the years she has developed and maintains many contacts in industry. She has worked with students to produce work for Barnsley Development Agency (BDA) and is currently developing links with The Civic, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Cooper Art Gallery and The Hepworth, Wakefield. Since September 2009 she has worked with a multidisciplinary team on a project *Graduart* aimed at developing enterprise with students at UCB and involving an interdisciplinary and external stakeholder approach. The initial aim is to open a town centre outlet, where art and design and music students from UCB will be able to showcase and market their work. She explained that *Graduart* had demonstrated the valuable experience students from different schools within the university had gained by working in partnership with each other and with local stakeholders. The project had also highlighted the challenges inherent in such

an enterprise, and the development of a sustainable model is still ongoing.

An Arts Council grant secured by Prof Tim Thornton in 2006 led to the exhibition *Voices in the Stone* which celebrated the 75th anniversary of the iconic building which is now UCB by giving insight into the lives and aspirations of the many people who had passed through the building since it opened in 1932 as The Barnsley Mining and Technical College. Lynn worked closely with a small team at UCB including two artists in residence (a photographer and a writer) in order to develop the theme and mount the exhibition. She later contributed a chapter 'Voices in the Stone' to the book *Changing Barnsley* (2009), edited by Tim Thornton and Cathy Doggett.

Lynn is currently researching the life and work of Lady 'Peter' Norton, an inspiring woman who was passionately interested in modern art and in supporting and encouraging young artists. Lady Norton was a close friend and supporter of Walter Gropius,

Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinski, and was responsible for opening the London Gallery in 1936 with Roland Penrose. This gallery was to show artists such as Naum Gabo, László Moholy-Nagy and Alexander Calder, who were almost unknown at the time, side by side with Barbara Hepworth, Ben Nicholson and Henry Moore. Lynn revealed that a recent interview with the author Rosie Allison, Lady Peter's goddaughter, had provided a fascinating insight into this extraordinary woman who was not only a patron of the arts but whilst resident in Warsaw with her husband, the Diplomat Sir Clifford Norton, took aid to Polish refugees. After her death in 1972, Roland Penrose wrote in her obituary "but never did she cease, both at home or abroad to animate those around her with a sense of the importance of contemporary art and the profound pleasure to be found in it." Lynn is working towards to an essay or exhibition about Lady Norton's life, her involvement with the arts and her encouragement of emerging artists.

