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KINGSTON RPM

RECORDS, PEOPLE AND MUSIC



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**Celebrating Kingston's
rich music heritage**

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THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
**KINGSTON
UPON THAMES**

A LEARNING

TOOLKIT



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TOOLKIT

OVERVIEW

Who is this toolkit for?

This toolkit has been predominantly designed for use by KS3 and KS4 teachers and those working in a youth work setting, but should prove interesting reading to anybody with an interest in Kingston-upon-Thames' rich musical heritage.

What will I find in the toolkit?

This toolkit provides a brief overview of the three key themes uncovered by the Kingston RPM: Records, Music and People project, as well as accompanying curriculum-focused activities to complete with your group.

Curriculum Links

English:

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- Develop their competency in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

History:

Pupils should be taught to:

- Understand how different types of historical sources are used rigorously to make historical claims and discern how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been constructed

Pupils should be taught about:

- Challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world 1901 to the present day
- Pupils should be taught about a local history study

Music:

Pupils should be taught to:

- Listen with increasing discrimination to a wide range of music from great composers and musicians
- Develop a deepening understanding of the music that they perform and to which they listen, and its history

How should I use the toolkit?

In whichever way is most useful to you! The toolkit has been designed as a springboard from which to begin exploration of the exciting musical heritage of the area, rather than a stand-alone resource. Feel free to use the suggested activities as they are or to expand upon or alter them. You might also like to use the rest of the Kingston RPM website to conduct some more in-depth research with your group, focusing particularly on areas which prove of interest to them.

RECORDS, PEOPLE & MUSIC PROJECT AT A GLANCE

In 2017 Kingston based charity Creative Youth led on the Kingston RPM project, uncovering the musical heritage of Kingston upon Thames and the surrounding area. The project brought this heritage to life with an exciting summer of public events, including an exhibition, focusing on the three main themes that emerged from the research:

- American musical influences brought to the area by US Army servicemen at their Bushy Park wartime base
- The Decca Records pressing plant (factory) at New Malden
- The live venues that hosted the likes of David Bowie, Pink Floyd and the Rolling Stones

Kingston RPM Gig Day



STRANGERS FROM ANOTHER LAND: THE US ARMY AT BUSHY PARK

Between 1942 and 1963, the American military were frequently stationed at Bushy Park. The servicemen interacted freely with local residents and attended dances in town as well as hosting their own parties back at the base. With them they brought American blues and jazz records, many of which ended up in the hands of British friends and girlfriends. Some troops ended up marrying local women, and went on to have children together.

Bushy Park Base



LISTEN TO

- GLENN MILLER:** In the Mood (1940 but remained popular for many years)
- HOWLIN' WOLF:** Smokestack Lightning (1956)
- ELLA FITZGERALD AND LOUIS ARMSTRONG:** Cheek to Cheek (1956)

BUSHY PARK

REMEMBERED

What can you learn about the relationship between American soldiers and the British community they were living in from these 'dos and don'ts', issued by the American Military in the Second World War?

- Be friendly but don't intrude anywhere it seems you are not wanted. You will find the British money system easier than you think. A little study beforehand will make it still easier.
- You are higher paid than the British "Tommy." Don't rub it in. Play fair with him. He can be a pal in need.
- Don't show off or brag or bluster-"swank" as the British say. If somebody looks in your direction and says, "he's chucking his weight about," you can be pretty sure you're off base. That's the time to pull in your ears.
- If you are invited to eat with a family don't eat too much. Otherwise you may eat up their weekly rations.
- Don't make fun of British speech or accents. You sound just as funny to them but they are too polite to show it.



BUSHY PARK REMEMBERED continued

- Avoid comments on the British Government or politics.
- Don't try to tell the British that America won the last war or make wise-cracks about the war debts or about British defeats in this war.
- Never criticise the King or Queen.
- Don't criticise the food, beer, or cigarettes to the British. Remember they have been at war since 1939.
- Use common sense on all occasions. By your conduct you have great power to bring about a better understanding between the two countries after the war is over.
- You will soon find yourself among a kindly, quiet, hardworking people who have been living under a strain such as few people in the world have ever known. In your dealings with them, let this be your slogan :

**It is always impolite to criticise your hosts;
It is militarily stupid to criticise your allies.**



BUSHY PARK REMEMBERED continued

Ken Howe grew up next door to Bushy Park and made several visits to Camp Griffiss as a child with his parents, who had friends there. He remembers this of the American soldiers stationed there:

“ They were quite resented in wartime because they had more of everything. They could go into their restaurant in the camp and have anything they wanted. And they would get the ladies running after them – if you ever saw a lady with a new pair of stockings you knew damn well how she’d got them. ”

 To listen to this please go to:
www.kingstonrpm.org/american-army/people

**DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES**

Do Ken’s memories teach us anything more about the relationship between the two communities?

- Why does Ken think that British women were interested in spending time with the servicemen? Could there be any other reasons for this?
- How might it have felt to be an American stationed at Bushy Park at this time?



BE A G.I.

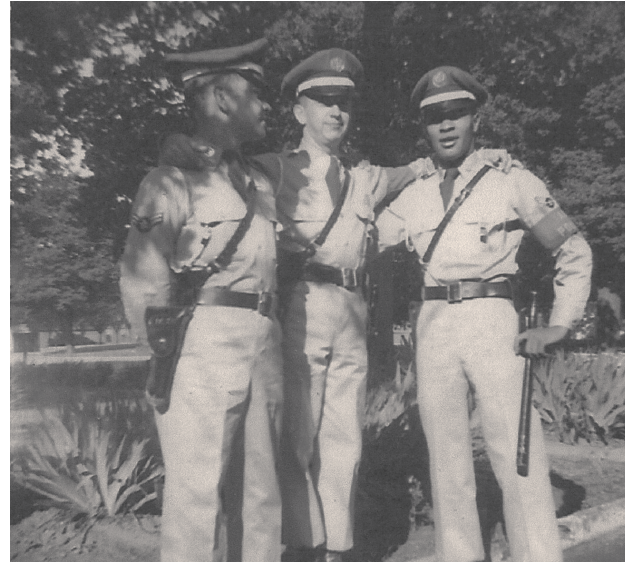
The initials G.I. are widely used to describe soldiers and airmen of the United States Army and Air Forces. They originally referred to the letters stamped on US issue military trash cans and buckets, standing for 'galvanised iron'.



PRACTICAL ACTIVITY

Write a postcard home imagining you are a G.I. stationed at Camp Griffiss. Use the prompts below to help if you get stuck.

- **Dear?** – who are you writing to? What is your relationship like with that person?
- **Home** – what do you want to know about how life has been at home since you were last in contact? Who and what are you missing?
- **Event** – what specific event are you writing to tell them about? A dance at Bushy Park? A visit to Kingston upon Thames? A new British friend or girlfriend? Something else?
- **Feelings** – how do you feel about being stationed at Bushy Park? What do you think of Kingston upon Thames? What do you think of the British people?



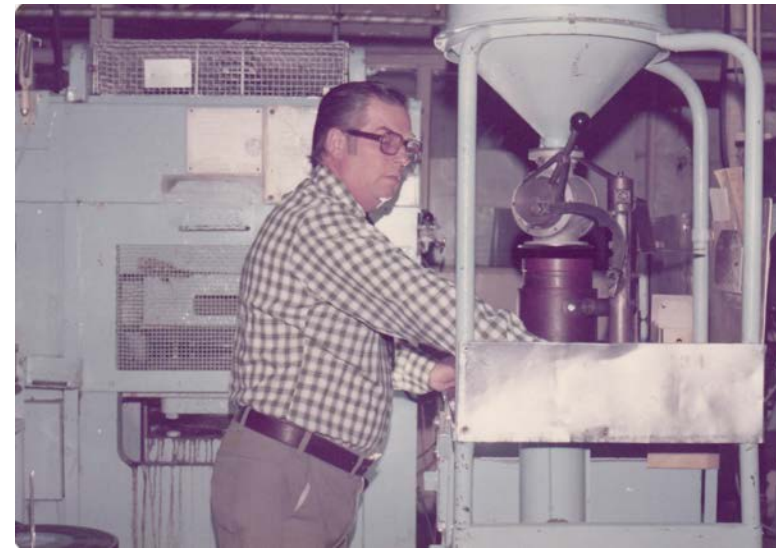
American G.I.s out and about in Kingston



“GET OUT THOSE OLD RECORDS”: THE DECCA PLANT IN NEW MALDEN

If you own any old records, there’s a good chance one or more of them were made in New Malden, home to the Decca Records pressing plant (factory) between 1929 and 1980 and just a stone’s throw from Kingston-upon-Thames. Decca Records were a major employer in the area, and hundreds of people worked at the pressing plant. 60,000 records a day were pressed on site, and these can still be found in homes all over the world. Decca famously failed to sign The Beatles in 1962, but made up for it later by signing successful acts such as The Rolling Stones (who played fifteen times on the legendary Eel Pie Island in neighbouring Richmond), Engelbert Humperdinck and Tom Jones. Decca records are well known for their high sound quality.

The Decca Pressing Plant at New Malden operated from 1929 to 1980



- LISTEN TO**
- ENGLEBERT HUMPERDINCK:** Release Me (And Let Me Love Again) (1967)
- TOM JONES:** Green Green Grass of Home (1967)
- THE ROLLING STONES:** Gimme Shelter (1969)

VINYL RECORDS

MANUFACTURING PROCESS

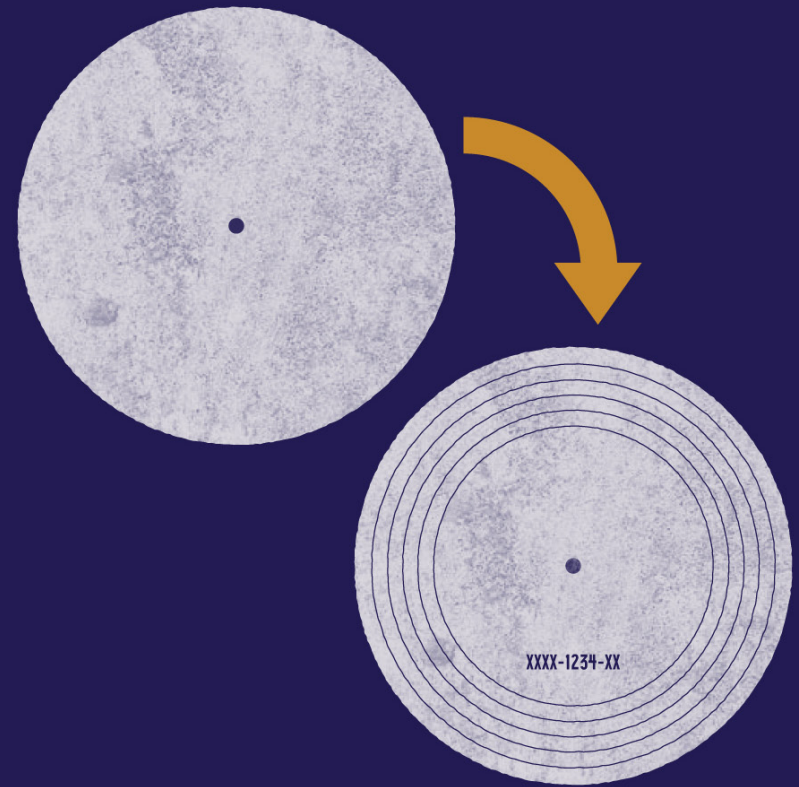
STEP 1.

The Master Lathe Machine is used to cut the grooves in the "Master Disk"

Deep cuts for bass & small cuts for high pitch sounds

The matrix number is engraved

After this process the disk is now called the "Master Lacquer"



VINYL RECORD MANUFACTURING PROCESS continued

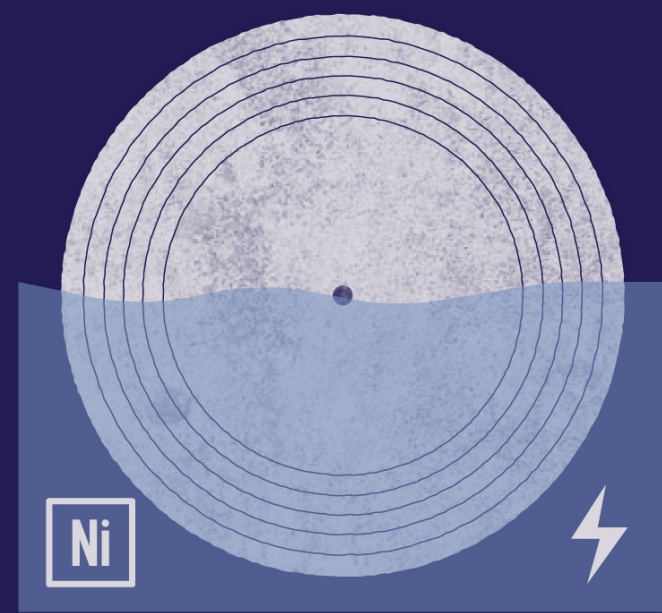
STEP 2.

The Master Lacquer is sprayed with thin layer of liquid chloride & silver

Then a nickel solution bath

An electric current flows through the disk (nickel particles are attracted to the surface of the disc)

The process creates the "Metal Master"



VINYL RECORD MANUFACTURING PROCESS continued

STEP 3.

The Metal Master is used to produce the "Metal Mother"

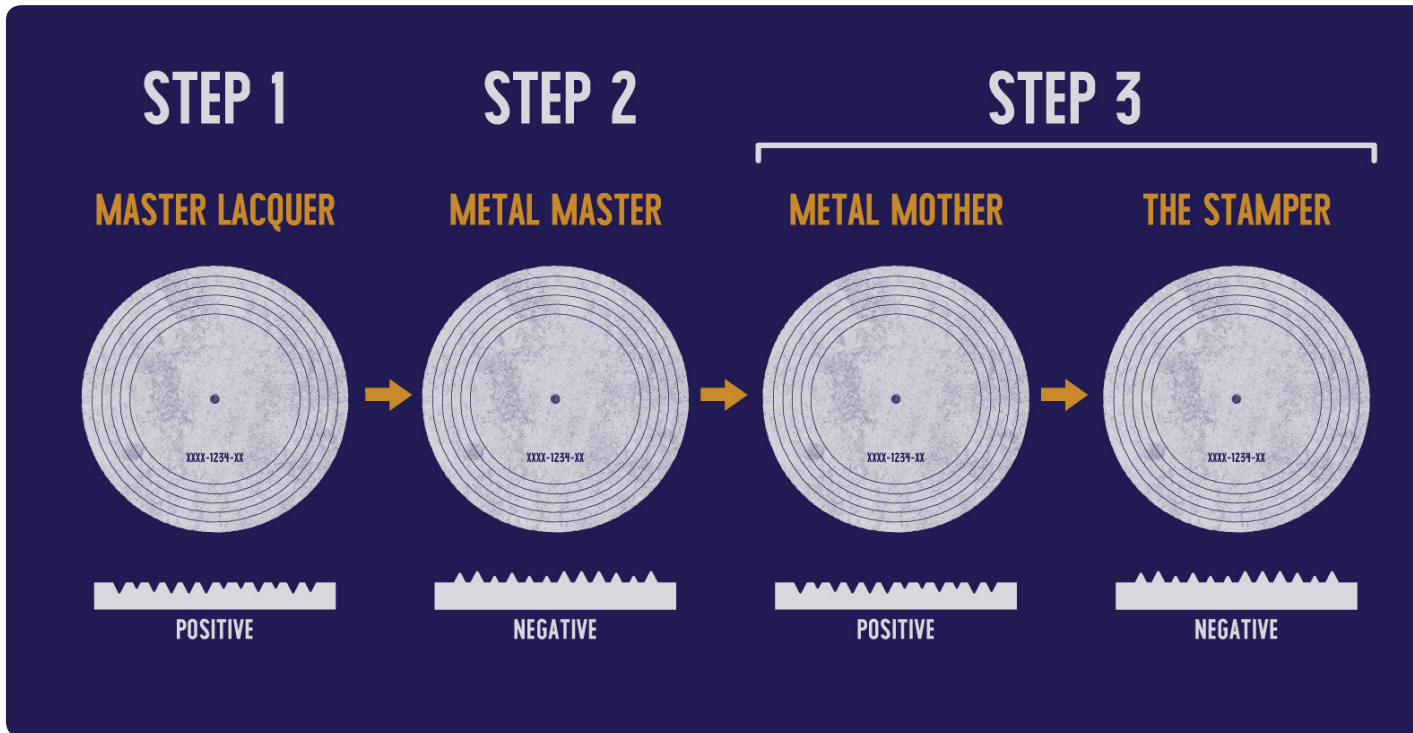
From the Metal Mother the "Stamper" is created, which is a negative version of the Master Disc

The Stamper is placed in the Press. Then a piece of vinyl is placed between the plates. The press jaws are then closed and are heated to soften the vinyl to allow it to flow

The jaws are cooled to harden the disc



VINYL RECORD MANUFACTURING PROCESS continued



DECCA RECORDS REMEMBERED

ETHEL OAKLEY began working at the Decca Records processing plant at New Malden in 1965. She and her husband Richard – whose job it was to imprint pre-heated vinyl ‘cakes’ with the impressions from a master disc – left Decca in 1980 when the pressing plant closed.

Here she talks about her daily routine at the pressing plant:

“ We’d clock on at quarter to eight. Three quarters of an hour lunch and then finish at half four. So that made up the probably forty hour week First of all, I was listening to faults on records with plugs in all day long. I used to just sit there and listen, there’s about twenty odd people being in the listening room, you know, and you’d be listening for faults. All the time. Not to the music, you’d listen to whether there’s anything wrong, you know, damages, and I did that for quite a while. You went from one extreme to the other, from the Rolling Stones to very classical music. We had to listen to it all. I liked it alright.”



To listen to this please go to:
www.kingstonrpm.org/decca-records/decca-records-people

DECCA RECORDS REMEMBERED *continued*

And here, Ethel talks about the room where they actually pressed the records:

“ You pull a thing, and you get a little cake of black and then you put that in the press with the label, and then you’d pull the press down and it takes about a minute and it’s ever so noisy, there’s about a hundred presses in the room. You had to shout all the time, the noise. Dreadful. ”



DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES

- What do you think it would have been like to work at the Decca pressing plant?
- In what ways do you think a modern pressing plant would be different to the Decca pressing plant Ethel remembers? And in what ways would it be the same?

BE A GRAPHIC

DESIGNER

Decca Records couldn't have possibly predicted that 37 years after they made the decision to close the plant in 1980, sales of vinyl are reported as reaching a 25 year high. More money is currently being spent on physical LPs than on digital downloads with experts predicting continued growth in the industry over the next ten years. Records, to put it simply, are back.



DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

What do you think the reasons for this might be?

- Many have pointed to the visual appeal of the record as a key element in its renewed popularity.



BE A GRAPHIC DESIGNER continued



PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

ONE Compile a selection of classic or interesting LP covers (you can find pictures on the internet if you don't have access to the real thing). What makes each successful?

You might like to consider:

- The use of colour
- The use of lettering/fonts
- The placement of the artist's name and album title
- The presentation of any people pictured on the record (camera angles, clothes, props etc.)
- Any associations you have with the imagery
- The relationship (if any) between the image and the music

DISCUSS Could you find any albums for which there seems to be a contradictory relationship between the cover design and the music? What is the effect?

TWO Design an alternative cover for your favourite album.

THREE Share and discuss your design with the rest of the group



THE CRADLE OF ROCK: KINGSTON'S ROLE IN A MUSICAL REVOLUTION

Kingston-upon-Thames' back catalogue of live music is impressive. Over the years a variety of venues have played host to some of the biggest names in the industry, including The Yardbirds at the Granada Theatre, Queen at the Kingston Polytechnic and Fleetwood Mac at The Toby Jug in Tolworth. The last venue was also host to one of the most famous gigs of all in February 1972, in which David Bowie unveiled his alter ego Ziggy Stardust for the first time.

THE TOBY JUG
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THE ROLLING STONES
MIKE BERRY **BILLIE DAVIS**
and the LEROYS
and the INNOCENTS **JET HARRIS**
... And the return of
BOOK NOW



Several famous bands played Kingston-upon-Thames in the 60s and 70s

LISTEN TO

THE YARDBIRDS: For Your Love (1965)
FLEETWOOD MAC: Man of the World (1968)
DAVID BOWIE: Ziggy Stardust (1972)

LIVE MUSIC REMEMBERED:**FASHION & IDENTITY**

From the suede crepe-soled shoes of Teddy Boys to the Nike Air Max favoured by Grime stars of today, there has always been a strong relationship between fashion and music.

Margaret and Robin Willes were regulars on Kingston's live music scene in the 1950s and 1960s. They met at the Toby Jug in Tolworth in 1963. Here they remember the importance of clothing at the time:



“ There was this particular brand shoes you had to have. And stockings went out and you had tights, so you could get shorter and shorter because you couldn't wear stockings and short skirts. When I say short, I mean short. And stiletto heels. You wore – stiletto heels and the tights, straight skirt. Tight as you could get it. Stiletto heels. Stagger around. You had to wear them – you wore them everywhere. You walked – everywhere in them – you wouldn't go out without your heels. [Laughs]”

MARGARET



To listen to this please go to:

www.kingstonrpm.org/venues/live-venues-people

LIVE MUSIC REMEMBERED: FASHION & IDENTITY continued

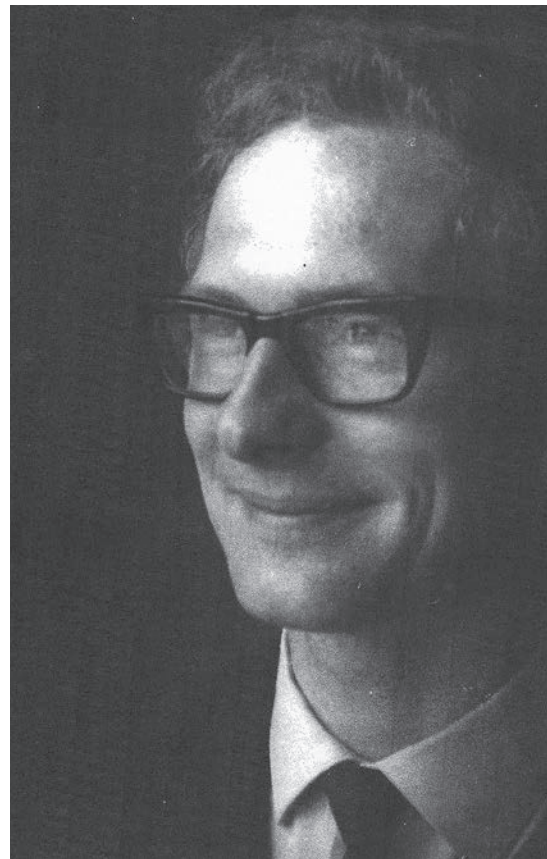
“ I remember buying a shirt because I'd seen the Everly Brothers wearing something similar. With the collar turned up. I actually remember posing in front of the mirror at home and I must have been sort of 16 or so. Guitar, the Everly Brothers shirt. This is hip.”

ROBIN

”



To listen to this please go to:

www.kingstonrpm.org/venues/live-venues-people**DISCUSSION ACTIVITY**

- Are there any particular brands people 'have to have' today?
- Margaret's stilettos sound uncomfortable! Can you think of any uncomfortable things people your age wear today because they are in fashion?
- Robin was heavily influenced by the music stars of his generation. Do you know people that are directly influenced by the musical artists they listen to? Or are things less clear-cut now?

BE A PORTRAIT

PHOTOGRAPHER



PRACTICAL ACTIVITY

ONE Compile a selection of portrait photographs cut out of newspapers or magazines. What do the portraits say about the subject (the person being photographed)?

You might like to consider:

- The person's clothes/make up/body modifications
- Any props they have used
- The way they are posing
- The location/background
- The lighting
- The camera angle



DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

Which of the above decisions have been made by the subject? And which by the photographer? Where does the word 'subject' come from? The word 'sitter'? What associations do they hold?

BE A PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHER continued**PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES**

TWO In pairs take it in turns to create a photographic portrait of each other that effectively communicates your identity. Try each of these experimental approaches to see what works best for you:

Vary the angle of approach, for example by standing on a chair and having your partner looking up into the lens

Focus on a detail of clothing – for example customised trainer laces, a brand logo or a frayed hem.

Focus on a detail of personal styling, for example painted or bitten nails, an elaborate hairstyle or a tattoo

Take an action shot, for example hands doodling, feet dancing or the upper body bent over an exam paper

THREE Choose the image that best communicates your partner's identity and share and discuss with the rest of the group.



BE THE FUTURE



DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

Of all the original live music venues pictured on this map of the area, only two are still in operation. Why do you think this is? What is the future of live music in Kingston? And beyond?



BE THE FUTURE *continued***DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES**

ONE Split into eight pairs or groups (or work alone if you have a small group).

Take some time to read over your character card. If you like try to find a prop in the room that in some way represents your character to the rest of the room (e.g. a wallet for the Property Developer).

TWO Time to debate!

1. Take it in turns to read out your key information to the room. What are the group's initial thoughts? Who do you agree with? Who do you disagree with?
2. Take it in turns to read out your fact. Does it change the way anybody thinks?
3. Now share your issues with the room. Again, has this changed things?
4. Ask your question to another character of your choice.

THREE Discuss as a group what surprised you about the activity (if anything) and if your initial ideas have developed or changed. What can be done to preserve the future of live music in Kingston?



BE THE FUTURE: DEBATE CHARACTER CARDS

NAME: DANIEL MORGAN

ABOUT: I am a self-made property developer in my thirties who started by renovating the flat I was living in at 23 and doubling my investment. I have since developed several high-value flats in South London, including former clubs and bars. I am contributing to the economy and also breathing new life into old buildings by making them into somebody's home.

FACT: Small property developers in the UK now pay tax at a rate of 38.1%

ISSUE: I don't see why we need to preserve the 'culture' of some dive bar with sticky carpets playing host to terrible student rock.

QUESTION: Aren't music venues just commercial ventures like everything else? Why should I miss out on my potential for profit just to maximise somebody else's?



BE THE FUTURE: DEBATE CHARACTER CARDS

NAME: ZOE LIVINGSTONE

ABOUT: I manage an independent live music venue with a capacity of 200 and am passionate about supporting new talent. I ensure every band that plays for us is paid, and I employ young people to programme our content so that it stays fresh and relevant.

FACT: Last year we paid out £12,000 in legal charges related to noise complaints. If we receive three more in the next twelve months, we will have to close our doors forever.

QUESTION: Why do people have the power to complain about noise after knowingly moving in to a property adjacent to a bar or club?

BE THE FUTURE: DEBATE CHARACTER CARDS

NAME: JESSICA WITCHALLS

ABOUT: My partner and I bought a flat above a small bar last year and are constantly disturbed by excessive noise, particularly on a Friday and Saturday night. I am currently six months pregnant and getting increasingly anxious about the prospect of the noise waking up my newborn baby too!

FACT: We paid over half a million for our home, which was advertised as being 'perfect for young families'

ISSUE: If you can't control the noise and antisocial behaviour of your customers, why should you have a license for alcohol and live music?

BE THE FUTURE: DEBATE CHARACTER CARDS

NAME: RICHARD GOWER

ABOUT: I manage a pub which is part of a small chain in the London area. I would love to host more live music but need to keep my eye on the bottom line. I can make more money on food than I can on drink and have learnt the hard way to stick to programming just one 'heritage' band a month that appeal to an older crowd with more disposable income. Younger crowds simply don't spend enough at the bar.

FACT: A pint in our pub costs £4.20, but once you take away tax and overheads, only £1 of that is profit for us.

QUESTION: Why can't pubs and venues that stage live music be offered tax breaks and subsidies in recognition of the vital role they play in ensuring the cultural and financial assets of tomorrow?

BE THE FUTURE: DEBATE CHARACTER CARDS

NAME: RIKESH PARMAR

ABOUT: I'm a drummer in a band with 1000 likes on Facebook and almost the same number of followers on Instagram. We have played to an audience of over 300 before for a show at a local college, and have loyal fans who would love to see us play more often.

FACT: Larger venues are booked out weekly by big name national franchise nights and big promoters.

QUESTION: How are up and coming bands supposed to progress without access to medium sized venues?

BE THE FUTURE: DEBATE CHARACTER CARDS

NAME: ASHA ENGLISH

ABOUT: I work for a registered charity that aims to protect and support the United Kingdom's remaining independent live music venues. I am passionate about ensuring that we continue to invest in physical spaces in which new music can thrive and grow.

FACT: Last year Arts Council England awarded 85% of its music grants to organisations representing opera and classical music.

QUESTION: Why is popular music seen as less deserving of support than other so-called 'high-brow' art-forms, when it is arguably the most powerful and accessible form of creative expression around?

BE THE FUTURE: DEBATE CHARACTER CARDS

NAME: ELLA MEAD

ABOUT: I live for music and love nothing better than discovering new bands on Spotify and YouTube. However I am seventeen and my only disposable income is from a Saturday job in a shoe shop as I'm in college full time. In reality this means that I can't go to any gigs in pubs as I am under eighteen, and can't afford many of the larger music events on my wages. Young people are still interested in live music, but there are more barriers in place than there used to be!

FACT: The cheapest tickets to see Ed Sheeran at Wembley Stadium in 2018 cost £88 each.

QUESTION: Who is making all the profit from live music, and how can we make going to gigs affordable again?

BE THE FUTURE: DEBATE CHARACTER CARDS

NAME: DYLAN BISHOP

ABOUT: I am a young promoter who puts on several successful DJ nights at local pubs and clubs. People talking about the death of 'live music' are massively out of touch. Live music doesn't mean two guitars and a drum-kit anymore! Things have moved on now – we just need a mixer, some speakers and an audio jack and we're good to go!

FACT: You can go out every night of the week in London and see a decent DJ set for an affordable ticket price.

QUESTION: Doesn't it tell you something that most people getting worked up about the 'death of live music' non-issue are all over thirty?

BE AN ORAL HISTORIAN

At the heart of the Kingston RPM project are fifteen oral history interviews with people who lived in the area and have first-hand experience of some of the places and events we focused on. Oral history is a way of capturing and preserving people's memories for future generations. It is particularly important as it ensures that people's everyday experiences, which might easily be lost in time, are recorded.

We hope Kingston RPM started to uncover some new stories, but we definitely don't want it to be the last word! Can you help us continue our exploration of Kingston's relationship with music by capturing the memories and opinions of people your own age?



PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

ONE – PLANNING

Develop an interview guide to use – a menu of potential questions under broad themes such as 'First Memories of Music', 'Music and Fashion', 'Music in Kingston' or 'The Future of Music'. Don't feel you have to stick to your questions too closely, you can take your interviewee's lead and talk about the things that most interest them.

Open-ended questions work better than closed. Try questions that start with 'how' or 'what', or ask people to expand by asking 'could you tell me a little more about that?'.

BE AN ORAL HISTORIAN *continued*



TWO – INTERVIEWING

Make sure everybody involved has their phones turned off and that you are somewhere you won't be disturbed.

Spend some time just chatting generally before you start recording to make your interviewee feel relaxed.

Resist the urge to interrupt and count to five in your head before asking each new question to encourage your interviewee to fill the silence with more of their thoughts before you do.

THREE – SHARING

Think about the best way to share your research. Could you create a podcast? Or put on an exhibition featuring key quotes and some portrait photographs? We would also love to hear about your project here at Creative Youth! Please use the 'Get in Touch' page on the Kingston RPM website to tell us what you're doing.



FIND OUT MORE

Use the rest of the Kingston RPM website to explore the three strands in more detail. The site includes audio files of each of the oral histories as well as more photographs and music to explore.



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