

M4C Collaborative Doctoral Award

Project Title			
Richard III's Afterlife: Adaptation and Heritage			
LEAD INSTITUTION			
Name of HEI institution	Nottingham Trent University		
Lead regional city	Birmingham <input type="checkbox"/>	Coventry <input type="checkbox"/>	Leicester <input type="checkbox"/> Nottingham <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PARTNER ORGANISATION			
Name of organisation	The King Richard III Visitor Centre		
Website URL	https://kriii.com/		
THE RESEARCH PROJECT			
<p>The discovery of Richard III's remains in Leicester in August 2012 hit the headlines around the world. This research project focuses on the cultural reception of Richard III, from the demonic figure of Tudor propaganda to Shakespeare's play and its performance history, to revisions of the monarch in historical fiction.</p> <p>The King Richard III Visitor Centre (KRIIIVC) tells the story of the discovery and is an important institution of culture and historical learning situated in the heart of Leicester's historic quarter. Since opening in July 2014, it has attracted nearly 400,000 visitors, received 18,000 school visits, 22,000 group visits, and delivered hundreds of educational talks, workshops, and events. KRIIIVC plays a key role in the ongoing economic impact and legacy of the discovery and plays an active part in local and regional tourism.</p> <p>This research project will bring together two distinct areas of literary and museum studies through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 – study of literary, theatrical, cinematic and other cultural afterlives of the historical figure, Richard III 2 – analysis of the promotion and promulgation of ideas about a historical figure through the agency of a single cultural centre. <p>It is thus a truly interdisciplinary project, drawing upon (for 1) literary history and criticism, performance history (stage and screen) and adaptation studies. But it will also consider (for 2) the</p>			

methodology KRIIIVC uses in both educating and entertaining visitors as well as attracting public engagement, and so will demand attention to heritage studies, community relations, marketing, outreach and the design of education programmes.

This cultural analysis will demand exploration of the ways in which the KRIIIVC has engaged with local, regional and national audiences since its foundation. This is an especially fraught time for museums, galleries and arts centres given the financial implications of extended periods of closure as a result of the pandemic. Documenting and analysing the recovery of the KRIIIVC will be of obvious benefit to other regional arts and heritage venues. This CDA will explore initiatives dedicated to encouraging audience engagement and analyse the importance of such programmes.

Research material will include archives held by the KRIIIVC in relation to the discovery of King Richard; the subsequent founding of the Centre as well as interviews with its staff, both front and back of house, and will explore the situatedness of the KRIIIVC in the context of local history, in regional and national news media (especially surrounding the discovery of the remains) and will draw on responses from interested creatives and relevant communities.

The project is timely as the KRIIIVC is such a young institution, the importance of which was increasing until it was subject to the privations of lockdown. As such it offers an exemplum of the recovery of a medium sized cultural centre which will be of use to other similar institutions.

Indicative research questions include:

- To what extent do the mythologies of Richard (Richard's own self-promotion, More's biography, Shakespeare's history plays, contemporary film versions, historical fiction etc) shape our expectations of and responses to the KRIIIVC?
- How have past practices influenced the representation of the monarch, both in relation to the media coverage of the discovery of the monarch's remains, and in the creation and development of the KRIIIVC? How might the Centre's legacy be developed and its profile increased?

Student support and output:

The supervisory team will meet with the student regularly at NTU, DMU or KRIIIVC. Smith will ensure that the award holder is integrated into NTU's research culture in Arts & Humanities and through the Doctoral School (including enrolment on the Doctorate Plus programme of professional developmental



courses), as well as M4C processes and training, and support their participation in germane conferences, impact activities and events.

There will be an opportunity for the award holder to assist Cartmell in her work as Director of the Centre for Adaptations as well as on the production of *Shakespeare*, assisting in the editorial process and liaising with peer reviewers.

KRIIIVC will offer a hot desk on site (subject to Covid restrictions) and access to information relating to public engagement and programming as a key primary research source. KRIIIVC will arrange thorough induction into relevant activities and undertake necessary training including Health & Safety, GDPR and EDI.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

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