

The logo for BALTIC, featuring the word "BALTIC" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.The logo for BxNU, featuring the letters "BxNU" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The "x" is stylized with a blue square and a white cross.The logo for Northumbria University, featuring a blue arc above the words "northumbria" and "UNIVERSITY" in a black, sans-serif font.

Monday, 3 December 2012

Cultural collaboration wins award

Northumbria University has won a *Times Higher Education* award for its innovative partnership with BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art.

The collaboration, which has led to the formation of BxNU, a new Institute of Contemporary Art uniting academic research excellence and cutting edge contemporary art practice, is the only partnership in the UK where an art school sits alongside a major international centre for contemporary art.

The partnership was commended by the *Times Higher Education* magazine as the UK higher education sector's "best example of Excellence in Innovation and the Arts."

The judging panel said: "This is a rare international example of academics and top practitioners coming together in a visionary partnership."

The collaboration led to the establishment of the BxNU Institute of Contemporary Art, a new cultural hub for contemporary art based in BALTIC 39 on Newcastle's High Bridge, which opened earlier this year. BALTIC 39 houses a public gallery programmed by BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, 32 artists' studios and fine art students from Northumbria University.

Professor Andrew Wathey, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive at Northumbria University said: "Northumbria University is committed to creating meaningful, pioneering partnerships which drive our contribution to regional, economic, cultural and social development.

"The relationship with BALTIC is just one example of our exciting strategic vision to prioritise quality partnerships and diversify from traditional ways of working.

“We are delighted that the judging panel has recognised the University’s collaborative culture, as well as the innovative ways of working and the positive impact it has had on the region.”

Godfrey Worsdale, Director BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art said: “All at BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art are thrilled with this award. Northumbria University is very far-sighted in its openness to new forms of collaboration, and through our unique partnership, BALTIC and Northumbria have been able to contribute something that could represent a revolutionary model for the way in which the higher education and cultural sectors can support one another’s ambitions.”

Northumbria University and BALTIC’s partnership extends beyond the contemporary arts, with the University providing accredited training programmes for the professional development of BALTIC staff, as well as linking broader cultural and design initiatives with the Centre, which has hosted the University’s annual Fashion degree show for three years.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Directed by BALTIC Professor and Turner Prize nominee Professor Christine Borland, the BxNU Institute of Contemporary Art aims to extend BALTIC’s educational programme, enabling it to guide and encourage participation in visual art from pre-school to PhD, and to enhance the creative and learning opportunities open to Northumbria University students. It also seeks to increase Northumbria’s appeal as the university of choice for undergraduate, masters and PhD study and research in the field of art and design.

BALTIC 39 brings together a stimulating community of researchers and internationally renowned artists, offering unique opportunities for collaboration and creative development. Students work alongside the established professional artists on an evolving series of BALTIC-curated exhibitions and an artistic community from the region and beyond.

Northumbria staff will curate an annual arts festival around BALTIC 39 in High Bridge each summer, contributing to business growth and cultural regeneration in the heart of Newcastle.

Northumbria University’s partnership with Gateshead Council is another example of the University’s innovative partnership working. It demonstrates Northumbria’s commitment to broader collaboration and the provision of opportunities for businesses and individuals. The University is helping to revitalise the area through the building of high-quality accommodation for almost 1,000 students as well as providing a wider programme to enrich civic life through increased student volunteering, cultural and sporting activities. The University is working with schools to encourage children into higher education and ensuring easy access to expertise within the University for businesses to support their knowledge transfer, research and development schemes.

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