Young people unite to explore cultural heritage

08/10/2012

Awarded a grant of £24,700 through HLF's Young Roots programme, the film and soft sculptures will be exhibited at Yorkshire Sculpture Park (YSP) from 4 October until 31 October as part of YSP's Black History Month celebrations.

The project aims to challenge stereotypes and assumptions about cultural heritage and identity through making film and sculpture informed by discussion between the young people and their families and communities.

As part of the project, 20 young people from the City of Leeds School and Almondbury High School, Huddersfield have interviewed family and community members, collected objects and images reflecting the identities of their families and local communities, and shared these insights with their peers.

The project began with both schools visiting YSP to take part in workshops with both the artists working with them on their respective projects back at their schools:

- Vincent James, a soft sculpture artist, and YSP's learning and curating staff support his group to explore themes of cultural identity and the process of curating an exhibition, through looking at and discussing the recent Sophie Ernst exhibition
- Ken George, a filmmaker, on developing interview skills, devising key questions, and developing camera and editing skills through interviewing local people.

The artists then followed up on this visit with a series of workshops in the students' schools. Vincent in City of Leeds school working with young people in making soft sculpture using textiles, and film maker Ken George working in Almondbury High School.

Not only have the young people had opportunities to develop an insight and experience of curating an exhibition, but they have also been involved in deciding how to celebrate their work with teachers, friends and family. As well as their work being exhibited at the Park, a DVD resource will be available to other schools documenting the process of the project with an educational resource for starting conversations about cultural heritage and identity for schools and community groups.

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber, said: "By exploring their cultural heritage and identity, the young people involved in this project have had opportunities to gain new skills, develop a greater understanding of their heritage and share this with the wider community."

Further information

YSP, please visit YSP's website
Cida co, please visit Cida Co's website or email jo@cida.org.