

“*Eating the Archives* - sharing archival stories in a digital age”

The stories inherent in archives and archives collections are often hidden. Utilising new and developing methods of exhibiting and displaying archives, including the use of multiple forms of media, these hidden stories can be taken out of the archives and revealed to new audiences in contemporary ways.

An emergent form of digital media practice, *transmedia* involves creating content that engages an audience using the various media that permeate their daily lives. *Eating the Archives*, an event and online exhibition developed by the State Records Office of Western Australia and Inkubator Creative Director Danielle Giles for the Commonwealth Festival Perth 2011, is a case study describing the use of cross media and *transmedia* methods to bring unexpected stories in the archives out into the public sphere.

Developments in social media and online delivery expand the ways archives can be exhibited and displayed. Archives are not museum pieces or artworks, but the stories they hold are sometimes fascinating and unexpected. Using contemporary and developing multi-platform methods for content delivery, the emphasis can be purely on the archives as the basis for displaying and exhibiting unique and heretofore undiscovered stories, stories that can also be linked to contemporary social movements, including fads and fashions.

The paper and presentation will reveal how cross media and *transmedia* methods were used to produce and exhibit the *Eating the Archives* story for the State Records Office of WA. The successes and pitfalls of presenting an event and online exhibition such as *Eating the Archives* will be described and the value of using cross media and *transmedia* methods will be investigated.

The traditional methods of exhibiting archives have often involved static displays, in which archives often compete unsuccessfully with objects. By using cross media and *transmedia* storytelling methods, the potential to invigorate the stories in archives can be realised.

Co-Authors/Presenters

Gerard Foley – is a Senior Archivist at the State Records Office of Western Australia (SROWA). An Archivist for over 20 years, his experience includes periods managing the State Film Archives and Private Archives collections in the J.S. Batty Library of West Australian History. From 2003-2008 he served on the national Council of the Australian Society of Archivists and was Co-Convenor of the Conference of the Australian Society of Archivists held in Perth in 2008. Since 2006 he has worked in SROWA overseeing its public programs among other duties.

Danielle Giles – is Creative Director of *Inkubator Pty Ltd*, a company which creates projects focussing on communication, participatory storytelling and experience, and utilising the possibilities offered by new media technologies. She has a background in professional TV and Film production and *transmedia* development, and with her team from the WA Museum, was selected to attend the inaugural Screen Australia Digital Ignition Multi-platform Clinic in New South Wales in November 2011. In 2011 she was also engaged by SROWA for concept development and creation of audio-visual content for the *Eating the Archives* event and online exhibition.