

***Added Value: Fine Art in a Changing Environment***

Call for Proposals to participate in the NAFAE AGM and members Forum in March 2010

Name: **Sue Spark**

University: Northumbria University

Title of presentation: **GSN – Graduate Studio Northumbria - Supporting Professional Development beyond Graduation**

GSN is the exciting new artist's studio resource in the Department of Arts at Northumbria University. The studios are located in the heart of Newcastle city centre above Gallery North, the dynamic new contemporary exhibition space that was opened in 2009.

Northumbria University is proud of the reputation of its arts graduates. Each year an energised cohort of artists present their work through a number of Degree shows and presentations. The School of Arts and Social Sciences has created GSN to help these talented artists develop their practice and activate professional contacts across the arts, business and community networks.

At GSN a resident group of 20 artists work in generous studio spaces over a 620 sqm site for up to a two year period. GSN also provides business support, a professional meeting space, dedicated office equipment and an archive / storage facility. In the past year GSN artists achievements have included a £50,000 city council grant to establish a new gallery space in Newcastle; exhibitions in London, Gateshead, Manchester and York; a Prince's Trust Award and an animated film commissioned by Channel 4.

The key physical resource includes two large open-plan studio workshops and a white cube project space. There is also a black-out studio for animation, video and photography practices.

A professional Mac media suite is housed in a replica of Charles Darwin's potting shed. This was created by one of the studio artists and featured in his exhibition at the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art in 2009.

The GSN Skylight is connected to the studios. This is a multi-disciplinary centre for research, enterprise and teaching, including year two and three Professional Practice seminars. This resource links the delivery of the undergraduate curriculum and teaching at all levels, including MA and PhD, to the activities and the busy professional environment of the GSN studios. The GSN initiative has offered an innovative way of enhancing and "Adding Value" to both the cultural environment and the student experience at Northumbria.

Text: Keith McIntyre, Director GSN/Sue Spark Head of Painting BA (Hons) Fine Art Northumbria University