



Mental Health Arts Project

Registered Charity 1160300

CENTREPIECES ARTISTS UPDATE

APRIL -MAY 2021

WE NOW HAVE NEW POP UP STUDIO SPACES !

There have been some exciting new developments since the last Artists update. In particular we have moved out of the old Argos shop space in Bexleyheath Broadway into two new empty shop spaces very close by. What was once the Carphone Warehouse next to Boots inside the shopping centre is now being transformed into our new Pop Up Art Gallery, and the old Foot Asylum shop a couple of doors down from Argos has become our new Artists Studio Spaces downstairs, with workshops and office area upstairs. Both venues have storage space and a kitchen, and the Artists' Studio Spaces have a disability access WC.

The Pop Up volunteer team has been working hard over the last few weeks moving all our equipment, furniture, screens, art materials and artwork into the new spaces, and installing the new hanging system, which has transferred well from the old Argos unit. Both spaces are already well decorated, which has reduced the need for repainting. The Gallery in particular looks like it is made for purpose.

If the current government roadmap out of lockdown stays the same, then it is expected that the Artists' Studios will be able to reopen on 1st April and the Gallery with some public access from 12th April. There is currently a waiting list for the Artist Studio Spaces at £15 pcm, a rate which helps with the rental costs of the two Pop Up Spaces. A timetable for 2021 Exhibitions in the Gallery is now being planned, and will commence with the 'Art Healing', 'Lockdown Art' (just moved from the Stables Gallery Hall Place), and Youth Service Calendar images partnership exhibition. It is also expected that art workshops in the upstairs studio space will re-commence soon in tandem with the current Zoom workshops.

The Lodge at Hall Place is still currently closed for general artist activities. Successful fundraising last year has enabled us to purchase equipment needed to be able to return to both premises once Covid19 Lockdown restrictions are sufficiently relaxed. Phased reopening of both premises will include measures for social distancing and Covid safety

compliance, with strict rules for the use of face masks and handwashing etc. It is planned that most art workshop group sessions will initially take place at the Pop Up Studios due to the larger space available, but we intend to reopen the Lodge in a limited way with fewer people, and to utilise the outdoor areas there as much as possible for sculpture etc.

And as most will be aware, we are continuing to offer 'Operation Art Lockdown', the online arts workshop programme delivered through Zoom, WhatsApp groups, Facebook and Instagram.

A big thanks once again to the team of Centrepieces volunteers and tutors who have worked so hard to ensure that all of the above has been possible, some from the Lodge and the Pop Up Studios, but many from home. We are planning to reschedule most exhibitions and events that have not been able to take place over the past year and will continue to keep everyone informed as things progress.

TRANSFER OF CENTREPIECES 'LOCKDOWN ART' EXHIBITION FROM THE STABLES GALLERY HALL PLACE TO THE NEW POP UP GALLERY

The artwork from this exhibition is now being installed into our new gallery, along with the ART HEALING EXHIBITION and the YOUTH SERVICES CALENDAR IMAGES EXHIBITION. We would like to keep up all work that has been showing, but if anyone wishes to have their artwork returned then please let Geoff know on info@centrepieces.org to make arrangements. Likewise if there is any further artwork produced recently that you would like to submit (subject to availability of gallery space) then please let Geoff know on info@centrepieces.org

'CENTREPIECES OPERATION ART LOCKDOWN' As stated, the online arts programme which Centrepieces tutors and volunteers created and have been offering since April 2020 is still continuing. This involves the use of live Zoom workshops supported by WhatsApp groups, Facebook and Instagram, and the artists@centrepieces.org email group. We continue to send information out by post to those without a PC or internet access, with ideas to help people continue to make art at home. This is to ensure that most members can continue to benefit from Centrepieces in one way or another. We have also continued to maintain a network of support as far as possible for any of our members who have been needing this through telephone calls and emails, to help reduce feelings of isolation or any other negative experience which some may have been having.

OVERVIEW OF OPERATION ART LOCKDOWN

Karen puts out an occasional newsletter entitled Centrepieces Operation Art Lockdown, which contains the details of our arts programme and other useful links/ideas while we have all been under lockdown. This is available via the email group, social media and the website, and is posted to those without internet access. For the time being please feel free to send any artwork you have been working on which you would like to be included in the newsletter to info@centrepieces.org

LIVE ZOOM ART WORKSHOPS

We are continuing our weekly Zoom programme with workshops covering various painting styles and techniques, mixed media and creative writing. The Wednesday 'Tea and Talk' sessions have now been postponed as the Queens Gallery Community Zoom sessions are continuing for the time being. We also have a Book Club which meets on Zoom on the third Thursday of each month from 7.30pm – 9pm. This is a social evening where those attending discuss their favourite books and others that the group has chosen to read. These sessions are free and anyone can join in. Look out for the new flyer which is coming soon or contact centrepiecespopup@gmail.com for more information.

A weekly update and fliers are sent out with full details for each workshop. If you would like to join but are not sure how to use/set up Zoom then contact centrepiecespopup@gmail.com and you will be guided through the process. You must book your place and pay in advance (ART Credits) for any workshop you wish to join by contacting Sue Turner on suet998@gmail.com (see attached page with full details of how to go about joining the Zoom workshops). The cost is £2 per workshop which helps to pay our tutors something for all the hard work and long hours they have been putting in to create such an extensive programme for our artists.

Payments for these workshops can be made in person (by prior arrangement) at the Lodge or by bank transfer..

Zoom Art Workshops are currently being run by Peter Kent, Lucy Thomas, Liam Davies, Karen Larkin, Nicki Lessing and Mala Morgan.

<u>MONDAYS</u>	11 – 1pm	WATERCOLOURS WITH NICKI	(Nicki Lessing)
	7:30 - 9pm	'DOODLE PARTY'	(Lucy Thomas)
<u>TUESDAYS</u>	11 – 1pm	ART TECHNIQUES WITH MALA	(Mala Morgan)
	2 – 3pm	ROYAL COLLECTION CENTREPIECES SESSION (free)	
<u>WEDNESDAYS</u>	2 - 3pm	ROYAL COLLECTION COMMUNITY TALKS (free)	(Queens Gallery)
<u>THURSDAYS</u>	11 – 1pm	MIXED MEDIA WORKSHOPS	(Lucy Thomas)
<u>FRIDAYS</u>	11 – 1pm	ART TECHNIQUES WITH PETER	(Peter Kent)
	2 - 3pm	'CREATIVE WRITING'	(Karen/Liam Davies)

Full details of the Zoom workshops are sent out weekly with individual flyers for each.

Each Zoom workshop has a WhatsApp group attached to it where artists can share images of their work as it is being created and the finished product at the end, with some examples available to be seen more widely on Instagram and Facebook.

WHATSAPP

There are two WhatsApp groups in addition to those attached to each Zoom workshop, both open to all Centrepieces artists. The first is a social support group with quizzes, art challenges and the opportunity for those not using social media to take part in the Facebook challenges and show any artwork they wish to share, and the second is with the Photography Club. If you'd like to join either of these then contact Karen on karen.larkin@centrepieces.org

FACEBOOK

The main Facebook page is managed by Lucy and other volunteers, and features updates of what is happening in the Zoom workshops and other Centrepieces Artists work.

There is an additional Facebook group called the 'Centrepieces Arty F'Arty Party' where people can take part in Art Challenges and share images of artwork they are making. This is managed by the Social Admin Team.

INSTAGRAM

Lucy has been facilitating this and supporting C/P artists in the use of Instagram to enable them to show their artwork, with many great examples of work on show. So get in touch with centrepiecespopup@gmail.com if you would like to get involved or would like more information about becoming one of the featured artists.

FUTURE EXHIBITIONS

'FRACTURED': Exhibition to be rescheduled in the new POP UP Gallery.

'ART HEALING': Exhibition being installed in the new POP UP Gallery for April.

YOUTH SERVICES CALENDAR IMAGES: We have worked in partnership with local young people and the Youth Team to create an Exhibition of artwork from their new Calendar and associated artwork based around their Lockdown and Mental Health experiences, which is due to commence in the new POP UP Gallery in April.

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK: This takes place 10th – 16th May 2021 and this year's theme is 'Nature and the benefits to Mental Health' so we will be inviting submissions for an exhibition in the Pop Up Gallery in May for any artwork which people have been making that explores this theme. Clearly it connects to experiences that many people will have had during the Covid19 Lockdown periods.

MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK: This takes place 4th – 9th May 2021 with a venue/ online exhibition still being decided. It is a partnership project between the Charity 'Mum's Aid' and Centrepieces, which C/P artist Dorota Chioma is helping to coordinate. Information and submission invites have already been sent out to the artists email group and social media.

STABLES GALLERY EXHIBITION 2021: This year's Centrepieces Annual Open Exhibition takes place from 5th August – 5th September. It has been decided to keep to the theme of 'Nature' as per Mental Health Awareness Week so any artwork produced and submitted for this will also be eligible for this exhibition.

LIBRARIES: The Sidcup Library Exhibition is due to be installed when the library reopens, which is expected to be in April.

CAPITAL ARTS GALLERY: Contact Geoff if you would like to be considered to exhibit/ sell your artwork at Capital Arts Gallery in Eltham when it reopens. Centrepieces will continue to help with costs.

BEXLEYHEATH RAILWAY STATION Mark Harrison continues to show his work in the station waiting room and is exploring the possibility of doing this at more stations along the line. We will organise rotation of C/P artists work once pandemic restrictions have eased.

QUEENS GALLERY ROYAL COLLECTION The Queens Gallery continues to offer free Community Zoom sessions to show and present their new exhibition 'Masterpieces from Buckingham Palace' on Wednesday afternoons, and an additional session specifically for Centrepieces artists, volunteers, friends and families on Tuesday afternoons. Both Zoom sessions have been getting rave reviews from everyone who has been able to attend, full details are circulated to the artists@centrepieces email group every week.

Zoom login details are the same for each session: (these may change so always look out for emails announcing new log in details).

<https://zoom.us/j/9044769010?pwd=ZmwwdVZKdjFMVnNJWIMvbXRzOUUpSdz09>

Meeting ID: 904 476 9010

Passcode: 624813

'INNER EYE' PROJECT We have been engaging with 1st year Fine Art course students at the University of East London where Centrepieces artist Beverley Coldron is currently attending, to explore the impact of Centrepieces art activities on our artists' mental health.

MERCHANDISE Centrepieces T shirts and Sweat Shirts are on sale for £10 and .. respectively
Centrepieces Trustee Britta Von Zweigbergk's third new book, 'Words from the Edge' a collection of Words, Pictures, Poems and Objects from the Bexley Hospital 1973 – 1996 is available from the Lodge at £8.99. And Britta's 'Centrepieces, A Story of Mental Health and Art in Bexley' is still on sale at the Lodge for £14.99, available to Centrepieces artists and volunteers at the reduced rate of £12.99.

Ann Cronin's excellent little booklet of artwork with text which she created during Lockdown entitled 'Creative Insomnia' is still available from the Lodge for a minimum donation of £1 to Centrepieces.

Dorota Chioma's first published book of artwork, narratives and poetry from her first solo exhibition at Creek Creative entitled 'Mental Health in Pictures' explores varying states of

mind and mental health, and is available to order from the Lodge at £18 for Centrepieces artists, or can be loaned through our new library system. Highly recommended.

FUNDRAISING

We have been busy spending the money received from the 4 major successful funding bids from last year: Winners Chapel Dartford, Baring Foundation, National Lottery Covid19 Community Fund and Bexley Council Discretionary Business Grant. Much has been spent already to achieve Covid-safe transformation of our spaces and pay our tutors to run the Zoom art workshops and other aspects of Operation Art Lockdown, with more to come to improve facilities and resources available, and for future exhibitions and projects in schools and the community and public art.

We have also continued to receive smaller donations from a number of individuals which likewise has helped us enormously. Donations from an art shop which closed have included a large number of good quality art books and materials, which has enabled us to create an improved library system at both the Lodge and the Pop Up Studios, and a lot of additional resources and art materials for use by Centrepieces artists in the workshops and the studio spaces.

Possible further bid to the Baring Foundation: Following a recent report by the Baring Foundation entitled 'Creatively Minded and Ethnically Diverse', to which Centrepieces contributed, they have now created a new Arts Funding programme to promote the role of creativity in the lives of people with mental health problems from ethnically diverse backgrounds. We are currently considering making a proposal, if you would like to get involved then please contact Geoff on info@centrepieces.org or 01322 554 589 at the Lodge.

MORE HALL PLACE INSTALLATIONS – 'THE SIX' We will be returning to these proposals once lockdown restrictions have eased.

HABERDASHERS' ASKE'S Karen and Centrepieces Art Tutors Lucy and Stella have been planning an Art project with Year 7 at this local secondary school in Crayford to help increase awareness of mental health issues amongst young people, which will culminate in an art exhibition in the Pop Up Gallery at the end of the summer term this year. The first of 6 sessions with year 7 classes took place on 22nd March at the school.

DISCOUNT CARDS Centrepieces Membership Cards now allow a 10% discount at Hobbycraft in Crayford, Costa Coffee and Gallery Gifts in Bexleyheath, and the Butterfly Jungle and Jambs Owls at Hall Place. These are available to all those who have paid their annual subscription.