



Mental Health Arts Project  
Registered Charity 1160300

## **CENTREPIECES ARTISTS UPDATE**

### **JULY -AUGUST 2021**

#### **ON THE MOVE AGAIN**

We heard recently that Centrepieces needs to vacate our new Pop Up Studios and Workshop Premises in the old Foot Asylum shop in Bexleyheath Broadway by Saturday July 10<sup>th</sup>. Although this was always going to happen at some point, we were somewhat surprised by how quickly this time, having worked hard to get everything ready to reopen since recent easing of Lockdown. The Artists were already in their studios (15 of these) and real space workshops including clay were just beginning to start, alongside continuing Zoom Art workshops from Operation Art Lockdown. We moved into both new spaces in February 2021; thankfully the Pop Up Gallery can remain where it is for the time being. We packed everything up, work which was coordinated by Karen and Lucy with fantastic help from volunteers and the move to a nearby empty shop for temporary storage took place on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> July. We are hoping to be in a new Pop Up space for the Artists Studios and workshops by August.

We realise that the Pop Up premises situation is not ideal; although the rent is much lower, the risk of 4 weeks' notice to quit seems to be fairly high at the moment. The spaces themselves have of course otherwise worked out very well. We have brought this to the attention of the Centrepieces Trustees and will endeavour to explore what else is available to try and secure somewhere on a longer term lease, although this will naturally be more expensive and needs to be affordable for the organisation.

Outdoor Sculpture Sessions restarted at the Lodge at Hall Place on 3<sup>rd</sup> June. They are currently being held on Thursdays 10am -1pm led by Alex Spendley and Kim Campbell and have started well. We are reopening the Lodge more generally in a limited way with fewer people, utilising the outdoor areas as much as possible and have just purchased a new large parasol covering for the patio area. Some indoor activities/small group workshops are starting from w/c Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July at the Lodge which will help with the transfer of some of the Zoom workshops back to real space and for when we acquire new Pop Up studio/workshop premises.

There was a 2 week break from 26<sup>th</sup> June to 11<sup>th</sup> July from ALL workshops (including ZOOM) apart from anything taking place at the Lodge, and the Queens Gallery Royal Collection weekly Zoom Workshops on Wednesdays which are run externally.

A big thanks once again to the team of Centrepieces Volunteers and Tutors who have continued to work hard to ensure that our ever growing programme of art workshops and Exhibitions have been able to take place throughout the turbulent circumstances that we have been in.

**'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, Social Media with Facebook and Instagram, and the [artists@centrepieces.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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 – see workshop payment information sheet at the end of this update for more details.

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

<b><u>MONDAYS</u></b>	10:30 – 1pm	INDOOR SCULPTURE (LODGE)	(Lucy Thomas)
	2:00 – 4pm	WATERCOLOURS (LODGE)	(Nicki Lessing)
	7:30 - 9pm	‘DOODLE PARTY’ (ZOOM)	(Lucy Thomas)
<b><u>TUESDAYS</u></b>	11 – 1pm	PAINTING TECHNIQUES (ZOOM)	(Mala Morgan)
<b><u>WEDNESDAYS</u></b>	2 - 3pm	ROYAL COLLECTION COMMUNITY ZOOMS (free) (Queens Gallery)	
<b><u>THURSDAYS</u></b>	11:00 – 1pm	MIXED MEDIA WORKSHOPS (ZOOM)	(Lucy Thomas)
	10:00 - 1pm	SCULPTURE AT LODGE	(Alex and Kim)
<b><u>FRIDAYS</u></b>	11:00 – 1pm	PAINTING (ZOOM)	(Peter Kent)
	2:00 – 3:30pm	CREATIVE WRITING (ZOOM)	(Karen/Liam Davies)

**Full details of the Zoom and other 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.

**QUEENS GALLERY ROYAL COLLECTION** The Queens Gallery continues to offer free Community Zoom sessions currently exploring the lives of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

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=ZmwwdVZKdjFMVnNjWlMvbXRzOUpScz09>

Meeting ID: 904 476 9010

Passcode: 624813

### **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](mailto: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](mailto:centrepiecespopup@gmail.com) if you would like to get involved or would like more information about becoming one of the featured artists.

### ART EXHIBITIONS

**'NATURE AND THE BENEFITS TO MENTAL HEALTH'** This exhibition took place at the Pop Up Gallery from 10<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> May based on the theme for this years Mental Health Awareness Week with a preview attended by the Deputy Mayor. It was a great exhibition which clearly connected to peoples experiences during Lockdown and much work was sold.

**'PERINATAL ART EXHIBITION'**: This took place online between 4<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2021 as a partnership project between the Charity 'Mum's Aid' and Centrepieces, which C/P artist Dorota Chioma helped to coordinate. Dorota also helped organise and lead in other associated online events including podcasts.

**STABLES GALLERY EXHIBITION 2021'**: This years Centrepieces Annual Open Exhibition will take place from 5<sup>th</sup> August – 5<sup>th</sup> September with installation on Wed 4<sup>th</sup> August. The theme of 'Nature' has been extended in the new brief which has been circulated - 'Nature as a Reflection of our Inner Landscape'. Any artwork previously submitted for the first Nature Exhibition will automatically be eligible for consideration. It is important to get any new work submitted promptly, if you intend to submit then please let Geoff know at [info@centrepieces.org](mailto:info@centrepieces.org). We need the title, medium, size and artist price for each new piece and work to be brought to the Lodge as soon as it is ready, deadline Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July. A good quality photo of each piece before framing would also be very helpful.

**DOROTA CHIOMA and ABDUL WAHEED ADENIRAN'**: These two excellent exhibitions have been taking place at the Pop Up Gallery and finished on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July. Both have sold artwork and prints etc and some of Dorota's books 'Mental Health in Pictures' based on

the artwork in her exhibition. Abduls' exhibition was entitled 'Mental Health Recovery through Art'.

**ANN CRONIN and PETER KENT:** These are the next two exhibitions to be shown at the Pop Up Gallery, Ann's is her lifetime retrospective of 40 years as an artist. The preview is on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 5pm-7:30pm, all welcome.

**LIBRARIES:** The Sidcup Library Exhibition is due to be installed very soon.

**'FRACTURED':** Exhibition to be rescheduled in the new Pop Up Gallery.

**CAPITAL ARTS GALLERY:** Contact Geoff if you would like to be considered for help to exhibit/ sell your artwork at Capital Arts Gallery in Eltham.

**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 more time is available following our latest premises relocation .

**MERCHANDISE:** The following are available from both the Lodge and Pop Up Gallery:

**Centrepieces T shirts and Sweat Shirts** at £10 and £15 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 at £8.99. Britta's 'Centrepieces, A Story of Mental Health and Art in Bexley' at £14.99, reduced rate to Centrepieces artists and volunteers £12.99.

Ann Cronin's excellent little booklet of artwork with text which she created during Lockdown 'Creative Insomnia' for a minimum donation of £1 to Centrepieces.

Dorota Chioma's two new published books. The first, 'Mental Health in Pictures' comprises artwork, narrative and poetry from her solo exhibition at Creek Creative and the Pop Up Gallery, explores varying states of mind and mental health and is available at £18 for Centrepieces artists and volunteers. The second, 'Notes from Postnatal Depression, Healing through Art' is similarly rich in beautiful artwork with accompanying poetry and contains much interesting information about postnatal depression and Dorota's personal experiences, also priced at £18.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Following a recent report by the Baring Foundation (from whom we were successful in obtaining funding during Lockdown) entitled 'Creatively Minded and Ethnically Diverse' and to which Centrepieces contributed, they 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 submitted a grant application which involves a number of different projects with different local organisations and potential partners; Rose Bruford College, Erith Exchange, local churches, Belvedere Community Centre and the nearby Sikh Temple, also continuation

of our own workshops of cultural and religious significance to people from various BAME communities. We were advised that the funding bid would be highly competitive but made a decision to go ahead and commit Centrepieces to this area of work in any case, but unfortunately we have just heard that we were unsuccessful. We had already decided to make a start on those projects we could afford to fund from existing fundraising, and will now plan how to fund the others.

**ERITH MADE FESTIVAL:** The first new project we are undertaking to help increase access to the arts for BAME people experiencing mental ill health involves running a series of Carnival Themed Workshops at both the Erith Exchange and the Lodge in August, and then a stall at the Erith Made Festival on B/H Monday 30<sup>th</sup> August. This will involve public participation in the creation of Carnival costume and is open to all Centrepieces artists. The project is led by C/P Trustee, tutor and artist Merissa Hylton assisted by volunteer Stella Kajombo and senior tutor Lucy Thomas. Full details to be issued shortly.

### **SCHOOLS PROGRAMME:**

Centrepieces has been working in schools for many years now but the increase in prevalence of mental health issues amongst young people, and in particular the impact of the pandemic and lockdown has led to us giving this an increased focus. We have currently either started or are in the planning stages of 4 new School Projects:

**Haberdashers' Aske's Crayford Academy** Karen and Centrepieces Art Tutors Lucy and Stella are undertaking an art project with Year 7 at this local all through academy in Crayford to help increase awareness of mental health issues amongst young people, culminating in an art exhibition in the Pop Up Gallery. The first 6 sessions with year 7 classes have already taken place and work produced shown at the school.

**Hurstmere School, Sidcup:** Centrepieces received a £1K donation from a family friend of a young person with mental health issues who sadly passed away who used to attend this school, so Karen and Lucy are currently making plans to use this money to run an art project next academic year in collaboration with the family and Art Dept at the school.

**Red Hill Primary School:** We have been approached by the daughter of one of our Trustees to create some rainbow mosaic murals at this school and discussions have just started. The school will fund the project.

**Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar school:** The school has made a donation of £1K to Centrepieces so we have suggested using the money to undertake an art project with students at the school. This is at an early planning stage.

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

**DISCOUNT CARDS** Centrepieces Membership Cards 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.