



Mental Health Arts Project
Registered Charity 1160300

CENTREPIECES ARTISTS UPDATE

OCT - NOV 2021

LATEST NEWS ON PREMISES We are still waiting to hear about replacement Pop Up premises in Bexleyheath Broadway for the Centrepieces Artists Studios and workshops. All equipment and art materials are currently in storage in the old Burton's shop while we are waiting to move into either the old Monsoon or similar premises. Meanwhile we have been utilising our two other spaces, the Pop Up Gallery in Bexleyheath Broadway which has been hosting a number of art exhibitions since opening in March, and the Lodge at Hall place where the number of real space art workshops and other art activities has been steadily growing. Thanks to the Centrepieces team of volunteers and tutors who have kept things going so well, including a continuing programme of Zoom Art workshops.

As previously noted, the Pop Up premises situation is not ideal, as although the rent is much lower, the risk of 4 weeks' notice to vacate the premises is still fairly high. The spaces themselves have worked out well, but the Centrepieces Trustees and others have been exploring what is available locally to try and secure a space on a longer term lease, which will most likely require further fundraising. The Council and private/voluntary sector organisations such as local Housing Associations are all being approached.

'CENTREPIECES OPERATION ART LOCKDOWN' The online arts programme which has been running since March 2020 will continue for the time being but will gradually change as we are currently out of Lockdown and most COVID 19 restrictions have been lifted. Outdoor sculpture restarted at the Lodge on 3rd June and on Monday 12th July we re-introduced more real space workshops and activities there with Lucy's Indoor Sculpture Workshop in the morning and Nicki's Watercolour Workshop now in the afternoon. These will both continue on a Monday and will no longer be available on Zoom. The rest of our weekly workshop programme will continue via Zoom for the time being. Sue Turner oversees the Workshop programme and sends out a weekly timetable for the workshops and how to book them. (See Weekly Art Workshops section below).

NEWSLETTER - We will be bringing out a more regular quarterly newsletter to replace the Operation Lockdown newsletter and will continue to let everyone know what Centrepieces has to offer via the email group, social media and the website, and post to

those without internet access. This is to ensure that most members can continue to benefit from Centrepieces in one way or another. Throughout Lockdown we have aimed to maintain a network of support 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 had. Please contact us if you have anything that you would like to discuss.

If you have any suggestions or articles to be included in this new Newsletter please email them to info@centrepieces.org

WEEKLY ART WORKSHOPS

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 Sue Turner and she will make sure that someone from the volunteer team will guide you 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 . The cost is £2 per Zoom workshop and £3 for real space workshops (currently available at the Lodge).

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

Outdoor Sculpture Sessions at the Lodge are currently being held on Thursdays 10 -1pm led by Alex Spendley and Kim Campbell. They have started well and have now become established. As stated, 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.

Current Art Workshops Tutors are: Peter Kent, Lucy Thomas, Karen Larkin, John Exell, Nicki Lessing, Mala Morgan, Alex Spendley and Kim Campbell.

John Exell has stepped in to help run the Creative Writing Workshops as Liam has started a degree in Anthropology at Goldsmiths University.

The Photography Group will now be following a new structure with tutoring support from Mala Morgan as well as continuing with outdoor photography sessions as usual. If you are interested in joining the Photography Group, or would like to attend any of the tutored zoom workshops that are coming up then check for more information on the weekly workshop flyer which Sue sends out.

<u>MONDAYS</u>	10:30 – 1pm	INDOOR SCULPTURE (LODGE)	<i>(Lucy Thomas)</i>
	2:00 – 4pm	WATERCOLOURS (LODGE)	<i>(Nicki Lessing)</i>
	<i>Postponed</i>	‘DOODLE PARTY’ (ZOOM)	<i>(Lucy Thomas)</i>

<u>TUESDAYS</u>	11 – 1pm	PAINTING TECHNIQUES (ZOOM)	<i>(Mala Morgan)</i>
<u>WEDNESDAYS</u>	11 – 1pm	PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP (ZOOM/in person Or Outdoor)	<i>(Mala Morgan)</i>
	2 - 3pm	ROYAL COLLECTION COMMUNITY ZOOMS (free) (Queens Gallery)	
<u>THURSDAYS</u>	11:00 – 1pm	MIXED MEDIA WORKSHOPS (ZOOM)	<i>(varies Tutors)</i>
	10:00 - 1pm	OUTDOOR SCULPTURE (LODGE)	<i>(Alex and Kim)</i>
<u>FRIDAYS</u>	11:00 – 1pm	PAINTING (ZOOM)	<i>(Peter Kent)</i>
	2:00 – 3:30pm	CREATIVE WRITING (ZOOM)	<i>(Karen/John Exell)</i>

Full details of the Zoom and other workshops are sent out on a Weekly Flyer

Most Zoom workshops have a WhatsApp group attached to them 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 on a Wednesday, 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

FACEBOOK

The main Facebook page is managed by Jo and a team of volunteers, and features updates of what is happening in the Zoom workshops and other Centrepieces Artists work. This page also links to 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.

INSTAGRAM

The @centrepiecesart Instagram page is now being overseen by Jo and promotes Centrepieces artists by showcasing their artwork and sharing their mental health journeys. It also showcases workshop photos and provides art challenges and information that promotes art as a mental health recovery aid. Please get in touch with Jo via email centrepiecespopup@gmail.com if you would like to get involved or would like more information about becoming one of the featured artists.

ART EXHIBITIONS

Exhibitions continue at our Pop Up Gallery in Bexleyheath with recent shows by Centrepieces Artists PETER KENT and ANN CRONIN. Both were well received and a number of pieces sold.

September 13th saw the start of our Recovery through Art programme which took off with “Fantasy Art – is this the real life, or is this just fantasy”. The exhibition showcased a variety of artwork by 24 Centrepieces artists and incorporated the collective boards from our previous ‘Body Image Exhibition’ in 2019. The artwork has received a very positive reaction from members of the public and art work was sold by 7 artists.

World Mental Health Day (October 10th) – ‘Mental Health in an Unequal World’ was celebrated on Saturday 9th October with a tombola to entice people in! The tombola will remain up for the next few weeks so why not drop by to try your luck at winning a prize and to support our schools programme as we raise awareness of Centrepieces and its objective of Mental Health Recovery through Art.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH (October) – ‘Proud to Be’ The Gallery is pleased to be featuring Centrepieces Artist Nadia Halliday as well as showcasing artwork by George Adeniran amongst others. Our current window piece is a self portrait by one of our Trustees, Merissa Hylton and we are also displaying some examples of the Carnival Costumes made during recent workshops and from our stall at the Erith Festival over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

THE STABLES EXHIBITION 2021 with theme ‘Nature as a Reflection of our Inner Landscape’ took place in August and was well presented and received good feedback from the public. Although less artwork sold than usual, the sale of cards with images from the exhibition was very successful, and as a result we will now be selling our cards in the Visitors Centre shop at the Stables Gallery.

LIBRARIES: The latest Sidcup Library Exhibition will be installed very soon.

CAPITAL ARTS GALLERY: Contact Geoff if you would like to be considered for help to exhibit/ sell your artwork at the 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 time allows.

MERCHANDISE:

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

Centrepieces T shirts and Sweat Shirts at £10 and £15 (£8 and £12 respectively to volunteers).

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.

Britta is currently finishing a new book '**Pictures from the Edge**' to be published under Centrepieces Press.

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

Dorota Chioma's two newly published books. The first, '**Mental Health in Pictures**' comprises artwork, narrative and poetry from her solo exhibitions at Creek Creative and the Pop Up Gallery, which explore 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.

Prints and Cards: We are starting to create more cards from images of C/P artists work, and these have been selling well both at the Pop Up Gallery and other exhibitions such as the Stables. These are primarily for fundraising for Centrepieces and hence proceeds go to the organisation itself. If any artists require any part of the money from sales of cards then please let us know by emailing Geoff on info@centrepieces.org

We are also considering ways of making prints from original artwork, which we have already started to do, of various grades, quality and prices. Please let us know if you have any suggestions or can help with this.

BAME ETHNIC DIVERSITY ACCESS PROGRAMME:

The first new project we undertook to help increase access to the arts for those from BAME communities experiencing mental ill health involved running a series of Carnival Themed Workshops at the Erith Exchange and the Lodge in August, and then holding a stall at the Erith Made Festival on B/H Monday 30th August. This involved public participation in the creation of Carnival costume and was open to all Centrepieces artists. The workshops were a great success, especially at the Lodge, and the Festival stall itself went extremely well, attended by the local community, their families and children. The project was led by C/P Trustee, Tutor and Artist Merissa Hylton, assisted by Volunteers Stella Kajombo, Rosie Pinsent and Andrea Montague.

Next up is Black History Month in October, during which Karen Larkin is holding two Thursday workshops at the Lodge based on the work of Black American Artist Alma Thomas on the 7th and 14th Oct 11am – 1pm, and Merissa will be running two further workshops, the first based on the work of South African Artist Esther Mahlangu on 21st Oct and the second on London based artist Sharon Walters on the 28th Oct, both courses 10:30 – 11:00am.

We are also planning to develop a programme of workshops based on Faith and Spirituality which will enable us to make connections with the whole community regardless of any particular beliefs or religion etc.

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 four 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 school 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 was 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.

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.

AGM: this year's AGM is being planned for Thursday 25th November 12-2pm, venue to be confirmed but possibly in the Education Centre at Hall Place.

ART AUCTION: We are currently considering whether it is possible to hold an Art Auction this year, and if so where and when. The Pop Up Gallery would be the ideal space as it easier for us to manage there. It may be that we put the Auction back to Spring 2022.

VOLUNTEERS: As everyone is aware Centrepieces is completely reliant on volunteers to carry out all our aims and objectives, the wide range of art activities which we offer and all the administrative and other support that is required to achieve this. Geoff and Karen are continually monitoring and reviewing our volunteering needs and recruiting people to appropriate roles. All of this requires a lot of work as inevitably many volunteers move on into employment or other life activities, and is a continual process.