

# CENTREPIECES ARTISTS UPDATE

# MARCH – APRIL 2022

**PREMISES**

**As most people will be aware, Centrepieces was forced to vacate both of our Pop Up premises in Bexleyheath last year. As we were unable to find suitable alternative spaces, we ended up putting most of our artists’ studio equipment and furniture as well as much artwork , resources and art materials into 2 storage units which are currently located in Belvedere and Sandwich, Kent. The Lodge is also being used for storage, as well as the base for all our current face to face workshops and office administration.**

**We are still continuing to look in earnest for affordable space to rent for our Gallery and Artists’ Studios and will continue to do so, but due to the amount of work and stress for volunteers in the moving which happened over the last year, we will be looking for accommodation on a longer term lease. Under our previous Pop Up scheme, we had a low rent but were always under threat of short term notice to vacate when the premises were needed for commercial leasing.**

**FINANCIAL MEASURES TO ENSURE CENTREPIECES CONTINUITY**

**At the last Centrepieces Trustees Meeting on 2/2/22 our financial position was scrutinised and it was agreed that measures were needed to be put in place in order to ensure that we can continue to provide for everything which we currently do, and to cover all our overheads for rent, utilities and other support costs. This is largely due to having lost the economy of our Pop Up Gallery and Art Studios which was working very well, with good sales of artwork and income generation. We have also used up the funds which were successfully raised to enable us to survive the pandemic and lockdown. As mentioned, we will continue to try and find solutions for this through alternative premises and fundraising but in the meantime, everyone will need to share some of the burden, so a package was agreed to address this. Full details will be sent out shortly to all artists in the email group, but some of the additional costs include an increase in this year’s Annual Subscription fees from £30 to £35, an increase of workshop fees from £3 to £4, and a fee of £1 per piece of artwork being shown in future exhibitions. All increases will become effective from the beginning of our next financial year 1/4/22.**

**ART WORKSHOP PROGRAMME**

**Most workshops have now returned to the Lodge at Hall Place as face to face sessions. As we move forward and COVID 19 restrictions continue to be lifted, we will be increasing the number of workshop spaces available whilst continuing to ensure safe practice by following government recommendations. Some workshops in future will be on a Drop In basis and it won’t always be necessary to book in advance. However, it is important to check the Monthly Art Workshop Programme which is sent out to the artists@centrepieces.org email group or by post to those who can’t access it in this way, for amendments and updates notifying any changes which become necessary throughout the month.**

**Please contact Sue Turner on suet998@gmail.com for all workshop related queries.**

**Payments for workshops will continue to be paid by ART Credits so it is important to keep these topped up. ART Credit payments can be made in person (by prior arrangement) at the Lodge or by Bank Transfer – see workshop payment information at the end of this update for more details.**

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

**The Photography Group has now reverted to a more informal group so if you are interested in becoming involved, please email Nicki Lessing at centrepiecespopup@gmail.com for more information.**

**Full details, including a monthly calendar and flyers are sent out via the email group or by post. The calendar is also available to view on the website, www.centrepieces.org**

**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 usually the same for each session although they can change so always check for emails announcing new log in details.**

**https://zoom.us/j/9044769010?pwd=ZmwwdVZKdjFMVnNJWlMvbXRzOUpSdz09**

**Meeting ID: 904 476 9010**

**Passcode: 624813**

**WHATSAPP**

**There are two social WhatsApp groups which are 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 for the Photography Club. If you would like to join either of these groups then contact Nicki Lessing on centrepiecespopup@gmail.com for more information.**

**FACEBOOK**

**The main Facebook page is managed by Jo Bowes 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 also 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**

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH (October) – ‘Proud to Be’ The Pop Up Gallery featured Centrepieces artist Nadia Halliday as well as showcasing artwork by George Adeniran, a window piece self portrait by one of our Trustees, Merissa Hylton and some examples of the Carnival Costumes from workshops and our stall at the Erith Festival last year. Unfortunately this exhibition was cut short by the Pop Up closure so most artwork went into the January Stables Exhibition instead.**

**THE STABLES EXHIBITION JAN/ FEB 2022 Due to the closure of the Pop Up Gallery we negotiated an additional Stables Gallery Exhibition for 2022, utilising new and recent work which was scheduled to have been shown at the Pop Up Gallery. About 35 artists work was on show, 142 pieces in total including ceramics created by Nadia. The exhibition looked fantastic and was well received by the public. About 20 pieces sold along with a good number of cards and other merchandise.**

**THE NEXT STABLES EXHIBITION is scheduled for 8th Sept to 16th October 2022. The theme is yet to be decided but will be announced soon to give all artists ample time to produce new work.**

**LIBRARIES: The Sidcup Library Exhibition is still showing.**

**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.**

**FURTHER EXHIBITIONS IN 2022 AND BEYOND**

**Having lost our Pop Up Gallery for exhibitions our new arts admin volunteer Rosie Pinsent has been busy searching for alternative spaces at minimum cost to show Centrepieces Artists work. Details of these will be circulated as soon as we have agreements set up, the first is likely to be May - July 2022 in the Elixir Gallery at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Woolwich to coincide with Creativity and Well Being Week.**

**We will also be contacting venues which we have used before such as Creek Creative in Faversham and the Drill House Sandwich. If you are interested in a solo or small group exhibition then please let Geoff or Rosie know asap,** [**info@centrepieces.org**](mailto:info@centrepieces.org) **or 01322 554 589.**

**Centrepieces Trustees Britta, Guy and Rosie have been working for several years on holding an Exhibition entitled ‘LOCKED IN’. This is based on the work of people who have been incarcerated and who have expressed their experience of this through their art (it is not connected to lockdown or the pandemic). Guy and Rosie have visited the Linden Hall Gallery in Deal, Kent and are currently negotiating to try and hold the exhibition at this prestigious venue.**

**SANE AWARDS: Congratulations to all Centrepieces artists who applied for last years awards, everyone was successful this time ! The artists were: Peter Kent, Stuart Smith, Sally Thompson, Waheed Adeniran, Andrea Montague, Dorota Chioma, Jo Bowes and Kim Campbell.**

**MERCHANDISE:**

**The following are available from the Lodge:**

**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 has just finished two new books ‘Pictures from the Edge’, a visual introduction to art therapy in Bexley Hospital, and ‘People and their Pictures’, the stories and images of artwork produced by Bexley Hospital patients, both to be published with 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 books, ‘Mental Health in Pictures’ comprising artwork, narrative and poetry which 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.**

**Prints and Cards: We now create a good selection of cards from images of C/P artists work, which have sold well both at the Pop Up Gallery and other exhibitions such as the Stables. They are primarily to help with 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**](mailto:info@centrepieces.org)

**Xmas Cards: A large selection of good quality Christmas cards was produced last December of which we sold several hundred.**

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

**BAME ETHNIC DIVERSITY ACCESS PROGRAMME:**

**Art workshops held during Black History Month last October included some run by Karen Larkin based on the work of Black American Artist Alma Thomas. Workshops which Centrepieces now offers include some based on the work of a diverse range of famous artists from different countries, cultures and religions etc.**

**We are planning to develop a programme of workshops based on Faith and Spirituality with local groups which will enable us to make connections with different local communities to improve access to and awareness of Centrepieces and what we can offer.**

**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: Members of the schools Project team worked on 2 projects with Year 7 students at this local secondary school in Crayford to help increase awareness of mental health issues amongst young people. Both projects produced great collaborative artwork by the students and we look forward to working with the school again in the future.**

**Hurstmere School Sidcup: Members of the schools project team have recently been working with Year 9 on a project called “The Masks we Wear”. Using the influence of the artist Jean Michelle Basquiat, the students have created expressive self portraits using oil pastels. These will be used as part of a larger group art piece in the summer term.**

**Red Hill Primary School: Members of the school project team are currently working on a rainbow mosaic mural to commemorate the school’s 70th anniversary in 2021. This project is funded by the school and will include creative mosaic sessions with all the classes in the Summer term.**

**DISCOUNT CARDS The Centrepieces Membership Card offers artists a discount at a range of local venues. These currently include: a 10% discount at Hobbycraft in Crayford, Costa Coffee and Gallery Gifts in Bexleyheath, and the Butterfly Jungle and Jambs Owls at Hall Place. New for 2022 is a 10% at the Riverside Café at Hall Place. These are available to all those who have paid their annual subscription.**

**AGM: This year’s AGM took place on Thursday 25th November by Zoom with some great talks and presentations by Centrepieces volunteers and artists including Karen Larkin, Jo Bowes, Nadia Halliday, Rosie Pinsent, Dorota Chioma and our patron Willow Winston.**

**This years winners of the coveted ‘Inspire Awards’ were also presented at the AGM. They were: George Adeniran, Andrea Montague, Nadia Halliday, Rosie Pinsent and Jo Bowes.**

**ART AUCTION: We are currently discussing whether it might be possible to hold an online Art Auction this year, which would be a new venture for Centrepieces, or a combination of real space and online. Watch this space.**

**VOLUNTEERS: Geoff and Karen are continuing to recruit new volunteers as people move on, with roles needed also changing with Centrepieces circumstances, in particular the move back to the Lodge from the Pop Up spaces in Bexleyheath shopping Centre.**