



Mental Health Arts Project
Registered Charity 1160300

CENTREPIECES ARTISTS UPDATE

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2022

LIFE BACK AT THE LODGE HALL PLACE

For the time being, all Centrepieces operations have been continuing at the Lodge where our office is based, and all workshops taking place from there with a few still additionally on Zoom. We are currently continuing off site storage arrangements with artwork in Belvedere and the artists' studio equipment down in Sandwich. The Lodge itself is also being used for storage so that means an economical use of the space with so much activity now taking place there. We are still actively seeking additional premises to the Lodge and have looked at a few empty shops but these have mostly not been viable due to our need for a minimum of one year lease on any property we take on, to reduce the work and stress levels involved each time we need to vacate and relocate. The advantage of having our own Gallery and Artists Studio spaces have been shown to be tremendous from our experience with the Bexleyheath Pop Up shops, and also ideal for engaging with the public. Another idea is to seek funding for a commercial lease so this is being explored alongside shorter term premise solutions. We can announce the good news of having just secured another 5 year lease with the Council for the Lodge itself, which is great for the security of Centrepieces in the medium term.

XMAS ARRANGEMENTS

It is planned to hold a Xmas Party at the Lodge on Monday 19th December 12-3pm, details to be circulated.

The Lodge will be closed for two weeks from Friday 23rd December, reopening on Thursday 5th January 2023. There will be one or two Zoom sessions over the period and these and anything else happening will be publicised on the artists email group.

ART WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

Weekly workshops are now all based at the Lodge at Hall Place. As COVID 19 restrictions continue to be lifted, we have increased the number of workshop spaces available whilst

ensuring safe practice and following government guidelines. Some workshops are still available on Zoom, see the monthly programme.

The Thursday Mixed Media workshops are now advertised as “drop in”. If attending you will be charged via ART Credits in the usual way. Please continue to check the Monthly Art Workshop Programme sent out to the artists@centrepieces.org email group or by post, for amendments and updates notifying any changes during the month and contact Sue Turner on suet998@gmail.com for all workshop related queries.

Payments for workshops 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 – *Please note that we can't use our new SumUp Card reader for ART Credits but can now take card payments for the sale of items from the Lodge.*

Centrepieces Tutors are: Peter Kent, Lucy Thomas, Karen Larkin, Nicki Lessing, Alex Spendley, Kim Campbell. Liam Davies, Nadia Halliday, Mandy Fernandez, Sue Wieck and John Exell for sculpting and creative writing support.

The Photography Group has reverted back to being more informal, so if you are interested in becoming involved, please email Nicki Lessing at centrepiecespopup@gmail.com for further information and also look out for a poster advertising a Photography Competition in January 2023!

The monthly calendar and flyers sent out via the email group and post are also available to view on the website, www.centrepieces.org

Arts Train Workshops: Centrepieces collaborated with Arts Train in September to run 2 successful Saturday workshops around the theme “JOURNEYS”. The target group for this project was our young adult artists and we made up the numbers with our artists, who were definitely Young At Heart! Session 1 involved the group of 10 creating music with the help of two music producers. Splitting into 2 groups we created backing music with art resources (brushes, paper etc) and the lyrics to a song (“The Journey Inside My Head”) which we will share with everyone once we have received the final version, with music and singing by the artists. Anyone wishing to hear more about this experience and to see the artwork produced can join us at the Lodge on SATURDAY 10TH DECEMBER from 11am – 2pm. We will also be showing the artwork produced during a recent block of workshops called “SNAP OUT OF IT” (Details will follow in the December Workshop Brochure).

FEEDBACK from Journeys Project: *“Really great to express myself and to use our song for inspiration!” ~ “I loved it!” ~ “Creating art to music, this was right up my street!” ~ “It was fun!” ~ “It was challenging, but I did enjoy the music and learning about my new hearing aids – I can hear words and music!!” “This workshop has been amazing!”*

African Soapstone Sculpture: The Sculpture group bought some stone from the Africart Project in Brighton and after an excellent introduction from Kim Campbell showing the

history and development of the use of different types of stone in Zimbabwe, a series of workshops are now underway with the prospect of the sculptures produced being exhibited in 2023.

QUEENS GALLERY ROYAL COLLECTION The Queens Gallery continues to offer free Community Zoom sessions on a Wednesday, please see attachment for full details

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=ZmwwdVZKdjFMVnNjWlMvbXRzOUpScz09>

Meeting ID: 904 476 9010

Passcode: 624813

WHATSAPP

There is a social WhatsApp group which is open to all Centrepieces artists 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. Other WhatsApp groups include the Photography Club and groups set up for each workshop as a way to share the artwork produced. If you would like to join any of these groups then contact Nicki Lessing on centrepiecespopup@gmail.com for more information.

FACEBOOK

The main Facebook page is managed by 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 overseen by our team of volunteers 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 Karen 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

REFUGEE FUNDRAISING EXHIBITION: Centrepieces artists contributed a significant amount of artwork to this late Summer exhibition, which was organised by former Centrepieces tutor and artist Pam Rowlatt. The feedback from those who attended was very positive. A lot of artwork was sold and the proceeds sent to charities supporting Ukrainian and other refugees.

ELIXIR GALLERY: Following the interest generated by our recent exhibition in this gallery in the West Entrance of Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Greenwich, we have been invited to hold a further 2 month exhibition there in 2023, date to be confirmed.

THE STABLES GALLERY EXHIBITION SEPT/OCT 2022: Our most recent exhibition at Hall Place was based around the World Mental Health 2022 theme 'Mental Health in an Unequal World' and also featured work from Centrepieces 'Art Healing' and 'Snap Out of It' workshops. The exhibition looked good and was well received with around 20 pieces of artwork sold. Engagement with the public was very good when stewards were present, and that is when most work got sold. So we are considering asking all contributing artists at future Stables Exhibitions to commit to doing some stewarding where possible. The next exhibition will be AUGUST/SEPT 2023.

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. Or go directly to their website: www.capitalartgallery.co.uk A number of Centrepieces artists have used this gallery over the past few years and they often have special projects which artists can apply to.

'LOCKED IN'. This exhibition proposal is based on the work of people who have been incarcerated and have expressed their experiences through art (not connected in any way to lockdown or the pandemic). Trustees Guy and Rosie have visited the Linden Hall Gallery in Deal, Kent and agreed that we will be able to hold an exhibition at this prestigious venue in 2023 once we have secured funding.

DRILL HOUSE SANDWICH: We have a one month exhibition booked for May 2023 at this friendly community art café/pizza venue (where we held our 'Body Image' exhibition about 3 years ago). The theme of the 2023 exhibition is yet to be decided.

CREEK CREATIVE FAVERSHAM: If you are interested in holding a 2023 solo exhibition or being part of a small group in the Upper Café or Lower Basement at this venue then please contact Geoff on 01322 554 589 or info@centrepieces.org

PICTURE LOAN SCHEMES

We currently have artists work on show at the following venues: Woodlands Reception area at QMH Sidcup, Slade Green Community Centre and Repton Community Centre in Ashford Kent. These schemes are a good opportunity to publicise Centrepieces and sell our artists' work. Artwork is generally rotated.

MERCHANDISE:

The following are available from the Lodge:

Centrepieces T shirts and Sweat Shirts at £10 and £18 (£8 and £15 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 three new books 'Pictures from the Edge', a visual introduction to art therapy in Bexley Hospital, 'People and their Pictures', the stories and images of artwork produced by Bexley Hospital patients, and 'Talking about Art' a series of essays, all to be published through Centrepieces Press.

Ann Cronin's excellent little booklet of artwork with text '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 is available at £18 for Centrepieces artists and volunteers, and 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. Dorota has now co-produced a new publication 'Sleep and Mental Health' which is part of the regular 'This Zine has Issues', a journal which is devoted to breaking the stigma of mental ill health. Copies are available at the Lodge price £15 and make very interesting bedtime reading.

Prints and Cards: We now produce a good selection of cards from images of C/P artists work, which sell well at our exhibitions and other spaces such as the Stables Shop and the Lodge. 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

We are now producing the 2022 Xmas cards which will be available soon from the Lodge.

DIVERSITY ACCESS PROGRAMME:

Janine Miller has been working p/t at Centrepieces on secondment from John Lewis plc since June, and has been busy helping to apply for funding and starting to develop links with community groups and in the schools programme, as well as general work in our exhibitions and other projects.

Two Centrepieces artists, Waheed Adeniran and Nadia Halliday were successful in their application for 'Horizon Lines' awards (through the 'Three Rivers Programme') to promote the development of black artists in the Borough, and have since been involved in showcasing their work at various events and exhibitions. We applied for a 'Bexley Collective' £10K grant to undertake a project with community groups in Belvedere, and although unsuccessful have been encouraged to discuss our ideas and seek other ways of acquiring funding to fulfil these through the Three Rivers Programme.

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.

Hurstmere School Sidcup: Year 9s at Hurstmere School finished this Project by creating 5 large canvases around the subject of mental health awareness and emotional expression through the arts. These pieces will be displayed around the school with information about Mental Health and Well Being.

Red Hill Primary School: Members of the school project team are still working on the rainbow mosaic mural to commemorate the school's 70th anniversary in 2021. This project is funded by the school and may include mosaic workshops with individual classes in the future.

SANE INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS AWARDS: The application for these awards for up to £300 per person has been open for several months now, closing 7th November. Tom Andrews from SANE who administers the scheme visited the Lodge and spoke to a number of Centrepieces artists encouraging them to apply, and a number of people have now done so. We have been very successful with these applications over the past two years.

HALL PLACE PLANT TIMELINE: We are still planning to undertake the painting of a new set of stones which outline the timeline of plants introduced into the UK and their botanical names, which are situated along one of the walkways in the nursery garden. Hall Place are providing all materials and a space to work in one of the greenhouses. This should be a leisurely fun project for a group of Centrepieces artists to undertake, we already have one or two interested so please contact Geoff on 01322 554 589 or info@centrepieces.org if you fancy getting involved.

DISCOUNT CARDS The Centrepieces Membership Card offers artists a 10% discount at a range of local venues. These currently include: Hobbycraft in Crayford and Gallery Gifts in Bexleyheath, Jambs Owls and Riverside Café (volunteers only) at Hall Place. These are available to all those who have paid their annual subscription and to our volunteers.

ART AUCTION: This year's Centrepieces Art Auction is being planned for Saturday Dec 3rd at the Exchange in Erith. It will most likely be set up on 21st/22nd November with viewing up to the day of the Auction itself. We will need the usual team of helpers, both with the preparations, admin and on the day. Please contact Geoff at the Lodge on 01322 554 589 or info@centrepieces.org We are currently choosing artwork and will be contacting artists to discuss pricing.

VOLUNTEERS: The summer has been a busy time with some volunteers leaving and new recruits starting. This is often the case with Centrepieces being run entirely by volunteers. Many thanks to Rosie Pinsent and good luck in her new job, welcome to Kohinoor Begum, Lesley Cody, Veronika Shmorun, Mandy Fernandez, Joshikka Sivabalan and others about to start soon.

AGM: Centrepieces Annual General Meeting will now take place early in the new year with details to be sent out before Xmas.